



# The Hamcall

The Official Newsletter of the Kentucky Colonels Amateur Radio Club  
Bowling Green, Kentucky

[www.kcarconline.com](http://www.kcarconline.com)



## Important Dates

Next Meeting



**September 13**  
**Potluck/Picnic**  
**Covington Woods**

**5 pm—Tailgating**  
**6 pm—Potluck**

**Meat & Drinks**  
**Provided**

**Hamfest—October 1**

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Volume 59

Issue 9

September 2016

## They're listening: What cops need to know about criminals on police frequencies by Dick Fairburn

### These cheap radios pose an officer safety issue you must be prepared for

A sharp young officer in my state recently noticed a hand-held radio on the seat of a car he had stopped, and it seemed to be monitoring police radio traffic. The driver claimed it was a "scanner" as he handed it over, but the officer suspected otherwise. Hearing his own channel coming from the speaker, the officer pushed the "talk" button on the radio and spoke with his dispatcher — the radio was fully programmed to operate on the PD's repeater system!

The incident was sent out on a law enforcement email net with the question: "Is this legal?"

Generally, the answer is yes. With a few exceptions, it is perfectly legal to possess such a transmitter, though illegal to actually transmit (except during a legitimate life or death emergency). After some local agencies had been experiencing unauthorized, profane radio traffic on their frequencies, they discovered a local gang had been using the Baofeng UV5R, the most common user programmable talkie on the market. They sell for about \$30 on Ebay or Amazon.



### They've Been Listening for Years

For more than a generation, we have lived with the reality of having our radio traffic monitored by anyone with a programmable scanner. The devices are inexpensive and capable of receiving any non-encrypted public safety radio traffic. A few jurisdictions have bans on police radio frequency receivers in vehicles, in an attempt to minimize their use by criminals, but monitoring is otherwise legal. The advent of cheap, high-tech transceivers from China now make it possible for anyone to both receive and transmit on many police frequencies.

The Baofeng and similar radios will program any public safety frequency in the VHF (150-174 MHz) and UHF (450-475MHz) bands. They will not interface with the upper UHF bands in the 700/800MHz frequency ranges or operate on trunked or cellular-based systems. But, the vast majority of US police agencies still operate on radio channels compatible with the little \$30 technological wonders.

The programmable portables are sold for use by amateur radio, HAM operators for use on their two-meter and 70-centimeter bands, which are adjacent to the public safety bands. They can be user programmed with up to 128 channels using the keyboard on the face or by computer software and have up to eight watts of transmit power. The units can monitor two channels simultaneously or scan through all the programmed channels. Preppers and Militia-types are buying these radios by the boatloads.

*(continued on p. 3)*



Ed Gann - N4HID

**President's Corner**

Hello to everyone

I am still trying to work NPOTAstations. Planning on going to Greater Louisville Hamfest on September 10.

The club picnic will be on the 13th. Looking forward to good food and seeing everyone there.

Remember KCARC hamfest will be on Oct 1. We will discuss the hamfest at the picnic.

Ed N4HID



Image courtesy: Decatur County Amateur Radio Club



**SEPTEMBER CONTESTS & EVENTS**

- 1/1 National Parks OTA Begins
- 9/3 Colorado QSO Party CW/Ph/Dig
- 9/4 Tennessee QSO Party CW/Ph/Dig
- 9/10 FOC QSO Party CW
- 9/10 Ohio State Parks Ph
- 9/10 AARL VHF Contest CW/Ph/Dig
- 9/11 N. American Spring CW
- 9/17 ARRL 10 GHz & Up CW/Ph/Dig
- 9/17 New Jersey QSO Party CW/Ph
- 9/17 N. Hampshire QSO Party CW/Ph/Dig
- 9/18 N. American Spring RTTY Dig
- 9/19 Run for Bacon QRP CW
- 9/24 ARRL EME Contest CW/Ph/Dig
- 9/24 CQ WW DX Contest RTTY Dig
- 9/24 MaineQSO Party CW/Ph
- 9/24 Texas QSP Party CW/Ph/Dig

From ARRL Calendar

**KCARC Meeting Refreshment Schedule**

- 1/12 Mills
- 2/9 Ford
- 3/8 Lake
- 4/12 Painter
- 5/10 Gann
- 6/14 Williams
- 7/12 Hext
- 8/9 Wofford
- 9/13 Picnic
- 10/11 Moser
- 11/8/ Awards Dinner

**KCARC**

**ANNUAL POTLUCK/PICNIC/TAILGATING**

September 13—Covington Woods Park

5 pm—Tailgating

6 pm—Potluck

Meat & Drinks Provided



## They're listening: *(continued from p. 1)*

The \$30 Chinese HAM radios are not certified by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for public safety use, but an upgraded version (Baofeng BF-F9 V2+ model, \$50 on Amazon and Ebay) is part 90 FCC certified for use on public safety frequencies. With top-end Motorola radios costing up to \$5,000 each, keeping a few \$50 throw-away portables on hand for emergency backup makes a lot of sense. Add a few accessory battery packs which use common AA batteries and the radios are good to go even when a natural disaster knocks out AC power for long periods preventing a recharge of their lithium batteries.

### Your Local HAM Radio Club

If you suspect illegal transmissions in your area, contact the FCC immediately. They have specialized gear and technicians to perform direction finding to try to pin down the perpetrators. Another excellent resource — who can probably assist you long before the FCC can respond — is your local amateur radio club. The FCC has volunteer “monitors” among HAM users and they have the technology to help you find the illegal transmitters. HAM radio folks are among the most upstanding people in your community and they will come like gangbusters if you ask for their help.

### An Officer Safety Threat

Be alert for small, walkie-talkie radios in the hands of people you wouldn't expect. Most are probably the harmless, low-powered Family Radio Service (FRS) units available at Walmart, but some may be fully functioning FM transmitters which can both monitor and transmit on your frequencies. Bogus calls, misdirection and harassment are only a few of the problems you could experience.

We face the potential threat of great civil unrest through at least the end of this election season. These cheap radios pose an officer safety issue you must be prepared for.

### About the author

Dick Fairburn has more than 30 years of law enforcement experience in both Illinois and Wyoming, working patrol, investigations and administrative assignments. Dick has also served as a Criminal Intelligence Analyst and as the Section Chief of a major academy's Firearms Training Unit and Critical Incident training program. He has a B.S. in Law Enforcement Administration from Western Illinois University and was the Valedictorian of his recruit class at the Illinois State Police Academy. He has published more than 100 feature articles and two books: *Police Rifles* and *Building a Better Gunfighter*.

*Source:* [www.policeone.com](http://www.policeone.com)

## National Parks on the Air Update from ARRL September Letter

The National Park Service Centennial last week was a great celebration of our National Parks. Amateur Radio operators played their part, transmitting from an amazing 174 units during the Centennial Week, as part of ARRL's National Parks on the Air (NPOTA) program. There were 77 units active on August 25, the actual date of the NPS Centennial, and 286 activations resulted in 14,559 QSOs between August 22-28. Thanks to all the NPOTA activators who made this possible!

The first activation of the newly-created Katahdin Woods and Rivers National Monument (MN84) in Maine occurred on August 30, just 6 days after President Obama created the monument. Fred Kemmerer, AB1OC, and his wife Anita, AB1QB, had to work “split” to handle the pileups. They will return to MN84 on September 3, and others are planning to activate this new one as well.

There are 41 activations are scheduled for September 1-7, including Hovenweep National Monument in Utah, and Weir Farm National Historic Site in Connecticut.

Details about these and other upcoming activations can be found on the [NPOTA Activations calendar](#).

Keep up with the latest NPOTA news on [Facebook](#). Follow [NPOTA on Twitter \(@ARRL NPOTA\)](#).

**We're on the Web!**  
[www.kcarconline.com](http://www.kcarconline.com)

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AMATEUR RADIO  
CLUB  
BOWLING GREEN, KY**

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**Upcoming Hamfests**

[Louisville Hamfest \(KY State Convention\)](#)—Sept. 10, 2016

[Richmond Hamfest](#)—September 24, 2016

[Vette City Hamfest](#)—October 1, 2016

[Indiana State Convention](#)—November 12-13, 2016

**Club Testing Dates**

**September 18 & November 20**

**2 p.m.**

**Modern Woodman Building**

**519 Old Morgantown Road**

**Bowling Green, KY**

**AREA REPEATER ACTIVITY**

**Warren County ARES Net**

Each Thursday 8:30 pm  
147.165 repeater

**Traders Net**

Each Monday at 7 pm  
147.330 repeater Tone 107.2

**KCARC Net**

Each Tuesday at 7 pm  
147.330 repeater Tone 107.2  
KG4TOO Net Control

**4th District ARES Net**

Mon., Wed., Fri. at 9 pm  
147.165 MHz W4WSM Repeater  
Secondary Frequency: 147.330 MHz  
PLL Tone 107.2  
KY4BG—KCARC Repeater

**10 Meter Net**

Sunday night at 8:30 pm  
Frequency: 28.460 MHz  
KY3B Net Control

**Bowling Green/Warren Co. Net**

Generally meets Tue., Thurs., Sat., & Sun. at 9 pm called by various ops  
147.165 MHz W4WSM Repeater  
This is an informal net for anyone, anywhere.

**ATV Repeater**

Nightly net at 8:30 pm  
Voice 144.340 Simplex  
Video Output 421.250 MHz (analog cable channel 57  
Video Input 439.250 MHz (analog cable channel 60) and 1280 MHz FM  
The repeater ID's every 10 minutes or you can command it ON with your TT pad 0\* and OFF with 0#  
The repeater is located on Cherry Hall at WKU.

[KY Phone Net](#)

Every Day at 7:30 am and 6 pm CT  
Frequency: 3.810 and 3.816