



LFCARC

CHRISTMAS PARTY

December 20, 2025

5:00pm to 8:00pm

Pizza Cottage
W. Fair Ave. & Ety Rd.
Lancaster, OH

(The Club will provide the pizza.)

Lots of door prizes!

Due to limitation on room size available,
MEMBERS and one guest are invited.





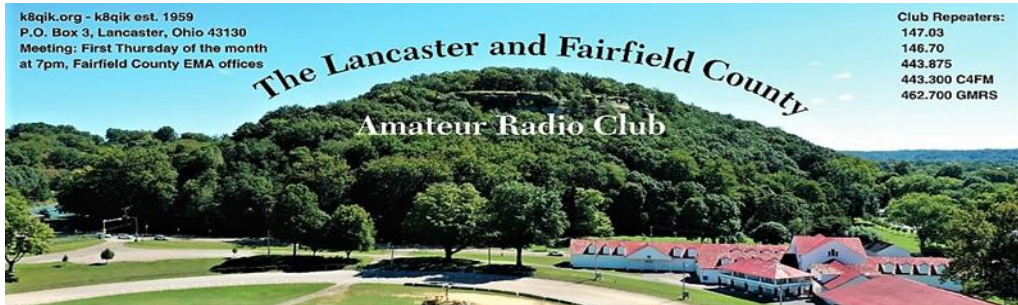
The Ragchewer

MERRY CHRISTMAS

December 2025



K8QIK =The "Voice" of Amateur Radio in
Fairfield County



Fairfield County's Amateur Radio Club Since 6-3-1959

Club Meetings:

1st Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM. Location: **EMA building 240 Baldwin Dr, Lancaster, OH 43130.**

Nets:

MONDAY

NEWSLINE: 8:00pm
CLUB NET at 9:00pm
Monday AM Net at 9:00am
 147.03 MHz (+.6)
 146.70 MHz (-.6) Alt. Freq.

Packet:

BBS 145.53MHz
 K8QIK-1 BBS
 K8QIK-2: Ohio53

Weather Spotter Net:

146.700 Repeater with 94.8 Hz tone Monday at 7:30 Pm

GMRS REPEATER

Transmits on 462.70 MHz
 Receives on 467.70 MHz
 PL code 77Hz

FACEBOOK LINK

[Club Facebook Link](#)

www.k8qik.org

ARRL Membership

When you join the ARRL, or renew your membership through the club, we retain \$15 for each new membership OR lapsed membership (of two years or more), and we retain \$2 for each renewal. Please support our club, it doesn't cost any more. Send or give all paperwork to Treasurer with your money.

Free Swap and Sell

If you have anything ham radio related, you can swap it or sell it here. List your items for free. Give a price and how to contact you. Send the list to Webmaster@K8QIK.ORG or Ragchewer Editor at ragchewerk8qik@sbcglobal.net

HAMFESTS

To find a convention or hamfest near you, click [here](#)

Special Event Stations

<http://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>

2026 Officers

President:

Mark Urbine, KC8TUW

Vice President:

Eric Fox, KE8BZZ

Secretary:

Mary Travis, KD8EEI

Treasurer:

Guy Ingram, W8AGI

Trustee:

John Hilliard, W8OF

Station Engineer:

John Hilliard, W8OF

Volunteer Examiner:

Walter Callahan, W8ALT

Trainer:

Tim Lentz, KD8QCA

Activities Manager:

Mark Urbine, KC8TUW

Public Relations:

Jim Mills, KE8IID

Safety Officer:

Mark Urbine, KC8TUW

Web Master:

Walter Callahan, W8ALT
webmaster@k8qik.org

News Editor:

Ralph Howes, W8BVH
ragchewer@sbcglobal.net

December 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes



At 7:00 p.m., Mark called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 7 members, 5 on zoom and one guest Stanley Boch KD8QVS total of 13.

Mark swore in Mary Travis as Secretary.

One application for 2nd review Stanley Boch, KD8QVS. Guy W8AGI made motion to approve Stanley Boch as member, seconded by Steve W8JLA. All in favor

Steve Anderson W8JLA Zoom Paul Bohn KE8WG Eric Fox KE8BZZ John Hilliard W8OF	Guy Ingram W8AGI Patricia Jackson KJ8CXB Paul Kidwell W8PDK Larry Larson KF8EIV	Devon Marshall KE8CVP Robert Northrup KC8PSW Mary Travis KD8EEI Mark Urbine KC8TUW
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Minutes were posted in Ragchewer and motion to approve by Guy W8AGI and seconded by Steve KD8JLA. All in favor.

Guy gave the Treasurer report. Mary KD8EEI made motion to approve treasurer's report and seconded by Steve KD8JLA. All in favor

No Volunteer Trainer report since Tim was absent.

Volunteer Examiner report given by Guy and there are three applicants for Saturday's test. Two for Technician and 1 Tech & General.

The following people volunteered to run the net: Dec. 8th Robert KC8PSW; Dec. 15th Eric KE8BZZ; Dec. 22nd Guy W8AGI; Dec. 29th Mark KC8TUW; Jan. 5th Robert KC8PSW; Jan. 12th Guy W8AGI; Jan. 19th Eric KE8BZZ; Jan 26th Mark KC8TUW and Feb. 2nd Paul W8PDK.

John W8OF reported there has been a problem with someone getting on repeater and playing music, etc. and he has had to shut them down on a couple of occasions.

Mark KC8TUW asked everyone to be safe with the winter weather approaching.

Mark KC8TUW suggested we purchase pizza for the Christmas party which will cost around \$120 and he had a safety vest which can be purchased on Amazon for \$9 and it was proposed that we purchase 9 of these for door prizes and we will add our club logo patch on them. After discussion, Guy W8AGI made motion to authorize \$250 for food and door prizes, seconded by Steve KD8JLA. All in favor. A \$250 check was issued and given to Mark KC8TUW.

Christmas Party is being held at Pizza Cottage, Fair Avenue on Saturday December 20th from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Mark KC8TUW is sponsoring Hayden Lansinger, Senior at Lancaster High School for submission of application for ARRL scholarship. Mark has letters of recommendation from teachers at the high school as well as Lancaster Bank leader. Mark will complete necessary paperwork prior to deadline on December 21st.

Guy W8AGI made motion to adjourn, seconded by Steve KD8JLA. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Mary Travis, KD8EEI
Secretary

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Currently the K8QIK Radio Club in Lancaster, Ohio installed a GMRS repeater that transmits on 462.70 MHz and receives on 467.70 using PL code 77Hz. The repeater is located on a 60-foot tower at a ground elevation of 1,100 on the north end of the city. Range has been exceptionally good with hand-held coverage to most of the county. The repeater is open to anyone that has a current GMRS license and uses it to identify themselves every 15 minutes of use.

John, W8OF

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The Lancaster and Fairfield County Amateur Radio Club (LFCARO)

Exam sessions will be at the Fairfield County EMA, 240 Baldwin Dr in Lancaster Ohio, 43130, ***on the first Saturday of each month at 10:00 am***. Please visit our website at <http://www.k8qik.org> for exam dates on our calendar and navigate to our Learning Center/Taking the Exam link for information and requirements. Our VE team looks forward to serving the Amateur Radio community in Central Ohio and across our nation. We have an experienced team which has tested candidates from Alaska, Florida, Texas and points in between!

Contact me at ve_testing@k8qik.org to register.

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Print an Official or Unofficial Copy of Your Amateur Radio License *(By Anthony Luscre, K8ZT)*

As of February 17, 2015, the **FCC no longer routinely issues paper license documents** to Amateur Radio applicants and licensees. The Commission has maintained for some time now that the official Amateur Radio license authorization is the electronic record that exists in its Universal Licensing System (ULS). The FCC will continue to provide paper license documents to all licensees who notify the Commission that they prefer to receive one.

Licensees also will be able to print out an official authorization — as well as an unofficial “reference copy” — from the ULS License Manager. I’ve created a set of instructions on how you can request an “**official**” **printed copy of your license*** [Click here to download the instructions](#)



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Need

ideas or a place to discover those billions of other things in ham radio? The ARRL has [four online publications](#) (or in some cases print):

- [QST](#) – monthly publication including news, reviews, technical tips, and projects
- [On The Air](#) – for beginners and experts alike covering a wide range of operating interests and topics
- [QEX](#) – bimonthly technical publication featuring experimentation, technical articles, and columns for hams and radio professionals
- [NCJ](#) – bimonthly contesting journal with hints, stats, scores, and QSO parties

Current ARRL members have access to the latest issues online through the links above or can [search past articles](#). Non-members can find these resources on the ARRL Periodical DVD available for the last couple years via the store (under [Station Resources](#)), try the local library, or ask a member to borrow theirs

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ARRL Youth Licensing Grant Program

The ARRL Youth Licensing Grant Program, in effect since April 19, 2022, will cover the one-time \$35 application fee for new amateur radio license candidates younger than 18 years old for tests administered under the ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) program.

"We are thrilled that we are able to provide this opportunity to our youth candidates," said ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM.

The \$35 Federal Communications Commission (FCC) application fee will be reimbursed after the ARRL VEC receives the completed reimbursement form and after the new license has been issued. The reimbursement check will be mailed to the fee payer. Also, candidates younger than 18 years old would pay a reduced exam session fee of \$5 to the ARRL VEC team at the time of the exam. The \$5 fee is for all candidates under the age of 18, regardless of the exam level taken. Proof of under 18 status is required at the session.

The ARRL Board approved the Youth Licensing Grant Program at its July 2021 meeting in Hartford, Connecticut, expanding on the scope of the original motion proposed by ARRL Southeastern Division Director Mickey Baker, N4MB.

The Board believes the recruitment and training of young amateur radio operators is a necessary and proper mission of the ARRL and subsidization of the \$35 fee will reduce the number of new amateurs that would otherwise be lost from these groups. Initially the new program would serve up to 1,000 new license applicants under 18 years old. The program length is indefinite; it may be renewed or terminated by the Administration and Finance Committee or by the Board of Directors.

Visit the ARRL website for the program instructions and reimbursement form at www.arrl.org/youth-licensing-grant-program.

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Estate Planning for Hams (What happens to all your stuff?)

August is National Make-a-Will month. Some estimates show that nearly two-thirds of Americans don't have a plan. For some, it's procrastination. Others don't know where to start. "So many times we hear from the family of a Silent Key who are overwhelmed with what to do with a lifetime worth of amateur radio gear," said ARRL Director of Development Kevin Beal, K8EAL. "Simply thinking through what needs to be done ahead of time can prevent the stress on our loved ones after we are gone."

ARRL this week held a webinar, hosted by Beal and Dino Papas, KLØS, to discuss the first steps of planning. "It is something that, unfortunately, doesn't get a lot of attention. The bottom-line up front is, 'what happens to all our beloved ham gear when that inevitable day comes along that we become a Silent Key?'... Unfortunately, that day may arrive unexpectedly – so we need to prepare ahead of time to make it as simple as possible for our families," said Papas.

On the ARRLHQ YouTube channel, you can see a replay of the 52-minute presentation, along with the question-and-answer section at the end. "Your station is an asset, just like anything else you've built and put resources into. Deciding now what happens when you become a Silent Key can help solidify your legacy to ham radio," said Beal. The ARRL Legacy Circle recognizes the generosity of individuals who have planned support for ARRL through wills, trusts, life insurance gifts, and other ways. The ARRL Legacy Circle ensures that ARRL and amateur radio will continue to thrive for generations to come.

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Scott's Stuff



Hi Gang,

Well, Thanksgiving is over and there were no major accidents to report at the Yonally home this year. Some of you know my tale about a Thanksgiving some 12 years ago, but for those of you who don't know.... It was Thanksgiving morning here at Yonally Acres and the morning was getting off to a fantastic start. The turkeys are in the oven baking, the ham is in the crockpot simmering away, with potatoes cooking and all the other usual fixin's that go with this celebration. You see we normally have all of the family come here and just enjoy the day while Janie and I do the cookin, cleanin, and making sure that everything is going good for everyone. Well, on this particular Thanksgiving morning it was spitting snow and it had just

started to accumulate some on the driveway. So, Janie suggested that I go out and make sure that the driveway was clean so no one would slip and fall. This was around 10:30 in the morning. I gave it my usual look and thought that it would just take a few minutes to sweep off what little snow there was, so I didn't even put on a coat. I opened the garage doors and started my sweeping when all of a sudden, I hit some ice in the drive and away I went. I didn't just fall; I rolled and tumbled down three quarters of the drive before finally getting my senses back to stop the rolling. Now, there I lay in the middle of the drive, my right leg feeling numb and because of the ice, I couldn't get a grip to at least be able to sit up. So, I started yelling. I saw some neighbors down the street starting to get into their car, so I yelled even louder. They just waved and continued to get into their car. I continued to yell with no one responding. To add insult to all of this the neighbors that were leaving drove up the street and continued waving to me as they passed the drive. I couldn't believe it; there I lay with no coat on in the middle of the drive and they didn't even stop to ask what the heck I was doing.

Well, if that didn't take the cake, I ended up laying there for another 20 minutes screaming my head off until Janie, (remember her?) she's the one that decided I should go out and make sure that the drive was safe for everyone else, opened the door from the kitchen and yelled out and asked what the heck I was doing. I screamed that I was hurt and couldn't get up. For a moment I could tell that she was laughing her head off at me for using that same line as I had joked about in that now infamous commercial. You know, "I've fallen and I can't get up." I have never made fun of that commercial ever since. Janie finally decided that I wasn't joking and came out and tried to pick me up. This was to no avail since in the fall I later found out that I had broken both big bones of my ankle. That's why I couldn't feel anything. Anyway, with her pulling on my arm and me pushing with my good leg we finally got inside the garage. Janie went in and called 911. They came and confirmed that I had broken some things and loaded me up in the back of the squad and took me to the emergency room. Now, please keep in mind that we still had the turkeys, ham and all the fixins' cooking away, and a house full of company coming, so we decided that it would be best for me to just go alone until she could at least greet the company and let them know what happened.

I got the hospital where they sent me to X-ray and then to MRI. They later said that I had not only broken my ankle but fractured a few ribs as well. So, by the time they started taping me up and immobilizing my leg my son in-law shows up. He tells me not to worry about anything as that they will take over and make sure that everything goes as originally planned. But, not for me. I had to stay at the hospital overnight so that the orthopedic surgeon could do his magic on me the next day. This meant that there was no turkey, no dressing, no cranberry sauce, no nothin' except a half a glass of 7-up and some clear Jello. That's because they needed me to be cleaned out before the surgery and this gave them the perfect opportunity to make sure I was.

Later that afternoon Janie, (remember her?) she came to visit and told me that everyone had a good time, which was good to hear, but she then dropped the bomb and said that we were wiped out of food, so it was probably better that I was in the hospital instead of recovering at home. Anyway, the surgery went well the next day, I had a 10-inch steel bar inserted into my ankle area along with 8 screws to hold me all together. Now, if that wasn't enough, they decided that I needed to be in a cast from my foot all the way up to my crotch. So, now I was on crutches and couldn't walk. Janie finally got me home, sat me down on the couch where I just sat there and had a good cry. Remember, I missed out on all the great food yesterday and there wasn't even a small piece of turkey, or anything left over for me to even sniff!

So, every Thanksgiving I'm reminded of how lousy that one Thanksgiving was, all because I was trying to be the really good host and make sure that everyone was safe!!! You know, this would be really funny if it weren't so true.

Okay... Let's switch gears... December is a time when ham radio emphasizes its community spirit. Clubs often host holiday dinners, toy drives, or charity nets, blending service with celebration.

Winter propagation adds a unique twist. Long nights improve low-band conditions (160m and 80m), making December excellent for experimenting with antennas and chasing distant stations. Cold weather also tests portable setups. Operators who brave the outdoors for Winter Field Day prep or holiday portable activations sharpen their skills in resilience and adaptability.

For many, it's also a month of reflection, operators log their final QSOs of the year, review contest scores, and set goals for the upcoming year. What do you have planned for the holidays? Here at the Yonally home, we are in the middle of baking cookies! Yes, I even pitch in and help with the baking. I remember fondly one year Janie and I baked over 100 dozen cookies for me to take in to work and share with everyone. By noon they were completely gone! There wasn't even a crumb left over. Reflecting back on that, I still laugh about it and remember that this is the season for giving.

Okay, I know that this is getting old fast, but it is sooooo important to make sure we have got absolutely everyone to sign their letter to Congress. If you haven't already done this, please take just 1 minute of your time to "Send a Letter" All you have to do is type in your call sign and allow the form to fill in the rest of your information, then hit the big RED button to submit. It's just that easy to do. You don't have to be an ARRL member either. Any ham or licensed GMRS person is able to do this. And we want EVERY Ham in the Great Lakes Division to sign the letter.

Here's a link to it... <https://send-a-letter.org/hoa/>

Oh... And not to skip over an even more important part of this effort, I need all the clubs in the Great Lakes Division to write letters too. Yes, it's easy to do and we've even provided a sample letter where you just add in your club information and signatures of your club officer(s) to it and mail it off to our central collection point.

Here's a link... https://arrl-greatlakes.org/hoa_club.html

Okay... December is also a great month to work those rare ones that you can never get because you're at work, but now you have some vacation time that will make this time an event that you definitely won't forget. Here are just a couple of them...

- **December 2 -- ARS Spartan Sprint (CW)**
- **December 4 -- QRP ARCI Top Band Sprint (CW)**
- **December 4 - 5 -- Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest (CW)**

- December 4 -- NRAU 10m Activity Contest (CW, phone, digital)
- December 4 -- SKCC Sprint Europe (CW)
- December 5 -- NCCC FT4 Sprint (digital)
- December 5 -- Weekly RTTY Test (digital)
- December 5 - 7 -- [ARRL 160-Meter Contest](#) (CW)
- December 5 -- NCCC Sprint (CW)
- December 6 - 7 -- Kalbar Contest (phone)

- December 6 -- Wake-Up! QRP Sprint (CW)
- December 6 - 7 -- PRO CW Contest (CW)
- December 6 - 7 -- INORC Contest (CW)
- December 6 - 7 --FT Challenge (digital)

Now I also want to discuss “The Year of the CLUBS” your club. The EC FSC and HQ are working hard to setup and running for this huge yearlong event.

As part of ARRL’s [Year of the Club](#) ARRL is hosting a Newsletter Contest and the sky’s the limit!

ARRL wants to see what *your* club does with the mix that can go into a newsletter. Enter the Club Contest for the chance to have your newsletter in QST. Click Here for the rules: <https://www.arrl.org/club-newsletter-contest>



with you and get things all

Club

of information Newsletter honored

Oh, and has your club entered the Website Contest yet? This is open to ARRL Affiliated Clubs that maintain a club website.

Submissions must include a completed Club Website Contest Submission Form, which asks for basic information about your club and its website, as well as a 500-word statement on the purpose or goals of your website, and how the features and configuration of the website fulfill the purpose/goals. Part of the judging process will include a comparison of your statement with the website itself.

Click here to go to the Submission Form... <https://www.arrl.org/club-website-contest>

Ok... that’s going to do it from here this time around. Clubs, you have your assignments, let’s get moving and show the rest of the country that the Great Lakes Division is second to NONE...!!!

Enjoy the bands and get Radio Active, but above all, regardless of your preferred mode or band, remember the golden rules of our incredible hobby: Have FUN, be respectful and most importantly, Get On The Air!

73, Scott...

Scott Yonally, N8SY
Director - Great Lakes Division
n8sy@n8sy.com

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2025 Great Lakes Division Hamfests

Here in the Great Lakes Division, we have over 50 hamfests a year.

So, if you haven't started planning your hamfest yet, you really need to start now.

Please post this listing in your club's newsletter and announce the swaps on your local nets. Talk to them up.



50
schedule
and
them up.

Let's fully support all of our hamfests in every way possible. It means success for everyone. Be sure to invite your ARRL Officials as soon as your date is set.

If you are planning on having your hamfest listed in QST please be sure to start your planning well in advance of your Hamfest date, as this allows adequate time for QST Listings. QST announcements require a 3-month lead time.

To be fair to our division's clubs, the Great Lakes Division policy **now has 2 requirements. Any club requesting ARRL sanctioning within the Great Lakes Division must now be an ARRL Affiliated Club with a maximum of two hamfests/swaps in any given calendar year, and they must be at least four months apart.**

<p>12/06/2025 - FCARC Winter Hamfest Location: Delta, OH Sponsor: FCARC Website: https://k8bxq.org/hamfest Learn More</p>	<p>12/07/2025 - LCARC Amateur Radio Swap/Hamfest Location: Troy, MI Sponsor: L'Anse Creuse ARC Website: http://www.n8lc.org Learn More</p>
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You can always find the latest information about upcoming hamfests on the Great Lakes Division website.

Just click to get the latest hamfest updates.



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ARRL's [2025 Holiday Gift Guide](https://www.arrl.org/2025-holiday-gift-guide) is now available, featuring amateur radio equipment and station accessories from well-known businesses. The guide also includes a special offer from ARRL. 'Tis the Season! Browse and shop at tinyurl.com/arrl-holiday-gift-guide-2025.

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Notes from the Hillsboro ARC

A new two-meter simplex net has been started in the Western part of the South 40 Region. KF8DFH, Rick in Wilmington, is the net control for this Sunday evening 9:15 gathering on 146.59. A recent session saw contacts of 42 and 38 miles made between a station in Warren County and stations in Brown and Highland Counties.

2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. Already communities across the nation are planning ways and events to celebrate the occasion. Our part of Ohio played an important part in the opening of the frontier to the nation's expansion and its settlement with the Ohio, Scioto and Muskingum Rivers; the National Road, Zane's Trace and US 50; early railroads and canals and the early settlements at Marietta and Manchester. Plus, Ohio's first capital at Chillicothe and the second at Zanesville. And look at all the famous people who came from Ohio's South 40. What better way to call attention to the existence of amateur radio and the service it provides than for a group of hams or club to conduct some type of a special event operation during the year that calls attention to something unique or historic about your community?

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Top 5 Ways Fraudsters are Targeting YOU

How to recognize the tricks and protect your money



By [Megan Norris](#)

November 25, 2025

The holiday shopping rush has become a hunting ground for cybercriminals. As millions of consumers chase bargains this Black Friday, sophisticated fraud operations are scaling up to meet them. Data from [Pew Research](#) indicates that more than a third of American adults have already experienced some form of online shopping scam, while the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recorded nearly \$435 million in losses from this category of fraud last year.

What makes 2025 particularly dangerous is the industrialization of fraud. Researchers have documented a dramatic increase in fraudulent e-commerce domains appearing in the weeks before Black Friday, with NordVPN [reporting](#) a 250% jump in bogus online storefronts like Amazon and eBay.

Source: National Retail Federation

The [National Retail Federation](#) projects holiday retail sales will reach record levels in 2025, approximately 3-4% higher than 2024, with an estimated 187 million shoppers expected over Thanksgiving weekend alone and 130 million on Black Friday specifically. Of significant concern: 55% of shoppers plan to make purchases online, where fraud detection is more challenging.

“Consumers should watch out for phishing scams in the shape of fake coupons, discount codes, and ‘huge deals!’ cautions Randy Rose, Vice President of Security Operations & Intelligence at the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) at the Center for Internet Security (CIS).

Below are five of the most pressing threats facing shoppers this season, along with practical guidance on how to sidestep them.

1. Phantom Storefronts That Disappear After You Pay

The threat:

Criminals are spinning up convincing replica websites at unprecedented speed. These sites mimic legitimate retailers down to the product images, brand logos, and even trust badges. They advertise jaw-dropping discounts through social media ads – often 70% or more off premium products – then collect payment information and vanish within hours, leaving buyers with nothing or a cheap imitation.

Example of a fake IKEA website

Analysis has identified campaigns impersonating major brands including Amazon, IKEA, and Louis Vuitton. Some operations have leveraged legitimate cloud hosting services to evade spam filters, making them harder to block. The short lifespan of these sites also makes it difficult for authorities to shut them down before the damage is done.

How to stay safe:

- Resist the urge to click through from social media advertisements. Instead, open a separate browser window and navigate to the retailer’s website directly to see if the offer is real.
- Scrutinize web addresses for subtle misspellings, additional words, or unusual domain extensions that differ from the official site.

- Run a quick search combining the store’s name with “scam” or “reviews” to see what others have reported.
- Treat any request to pay by bank transfer, cryptocurrency, or gift card as an immediate red flag. Reputable sellers will always accept standard card payments.

2. Bogus Delivery Alerts Designed to Harvest Your Details

The threat:

When you have several packages enroute, a message about a delivery problem barely raises an eyebrow. Fraudsters exploit this by sending convincing texts or emails claiming a package requires further instructions or is held up and requires a small fee or address update to release.

Source: Federal Trade Commission

It often includes a link that leads to a convincing clone of a postal service or major retailer’s website, where any information you enter goes straight to criminals. The United States Postal Inspection Service calls this particular scheme “[smishing](#),” receiving “unsolicited mobile text messages with an unfamiliar or strange web link that indicates a USPS delivery requires a response from you.”

This tactic has become the single most reported text-based scam in the United States, according to FTC data, costing consumers hundreds of millions of dollars. The peak shopping season amplifies the risk because people genuinely are expecting deliveries and may act without thinking.

How to stay safe:

- Make it a rule never to tap links in unsolicited delivery messages. Go directly to the carrier’s app or website and enter the tracking number you already have.
- Be skeptical of any communication asking for payment to release a package; legitimate couriers do not operate this way.
- If you realize you have entered details on a suspicious site, contact your bank immediately to freeze your card/account and update your passwords.

3. AI-Generated Deception and Deepfake Impersonation

The threat:

Artificial intelligence (AI) has handed fraudsters a powerful new toolkit. Scammers can now generate realistic-looking websites, craft persuasive marketing copy that mirrors a brand’s tone, produce fake product reviews at scale, and even create deepfake videos of company executives announcing fictitious promotions. The telltale signs that once gave scams away – poor grammar, awkward phrasing, low-quality visuals – are rapidly disappearing.

Security researchers have [found](#) that more than three-quarters of phishing sites detected in the second quarter of 2025 contained AI-generated content, contributing to a surge in unique phishing campaigns. Law enforcement agencies have warned that criminals are scraping publicly available photos and videos from social media to train models capable of hyper-personalized attacks.

How to stay safe:

- Look for subtle inconsistencies in video content: unnatural lip movements, strange lighting, or robotic vocal patterns can indicate a deepfake.
- Confirm any sensational announcement by visiting the company’s verified social channels or official website before acting on it.
- Be wary of chatbots or customer service agents who push aggressively for personal details or steer you toward unusual payment methods.
- Approach product reviews with healthy skepticism if they lack specific detail or read identically across different sites.

4. Counterfeit Goods Masquerading as Luxury Bargains

The threat:

Black Friday creates ideal cover for sellers of knock-off merchandise. Listings appear offering designer handbags, premium headphones, branded sneakers, or the latest smartwatch at a fraction of the usual price. Buyers either receive a poor-quality imitation, or nothing at all. The problem is especially acute on marketplace platforms where third-party sellers can set up shop with minimal vetting.

Researchers have flagged campaigns exploiting household names across fashion, technology, and consumer electronics. Amazon remains the most frequently impersonated brand globally, appearing in countless phishing messages and fake coupon schemes. Luxury labels like Louis Vuitton and tech giants like Apple are also common targets.

How to stay safe:

- Treat extreme discounts on high-demand items as a warning sign rather than an opportunity. If a deal seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- Check whether the product is sold directly by the brand or an authorized retailer, rather than an unfamiliar third-party seller.
- Be especially cautious with items that will come into contact with skin, food, or children; counterfeits may not meet safety standards.
- A modest discount from a verified source is far safer than a dramatic markdown from an unknown vendor.

5. Fraudulent Customer Support and Fake Account Alerts

The threat:

When checkout problems strike during a busy sale, many shoppers instinctively search for a customer service number. Criminals have exploited this by seeding search results with fake helplines. Callers are then manipulated into handing over card details or redirected to alternative payment methods like wire transfers or gift cards under the pretense that the retailer's systems are experiencing issues.

A related tactic involves unsolicited messages warning of suspicious account activity and urging recipients to verify their credentials immediately. The link provided leads to a replica login page that captures usernames and passwords. In the frantic atmosphere of a flash sale, harried shoppers are more likely to comply without pausing to verify authenticity.

How to stay safe:

- Only use contact details found on the retailer's official website or app. Never rely on search engine results or unsolicited messages.
- Refuse any request to pay via gift card, wire transfer, or cryptocurrency, regardless of the reason given.
- Legitimate support agents will never ask for your full card number, PIN, or online banking password.
- Enable two-factor authentication wherever possible, so that stolen credentials alone are not enough to access your accounts.

The Bigger Picture: Fraud Is Scaling Up

The financial burden of payment fraud on U.S. businesses has reached historic levels. According to [TransUnion's](#) 2024 survey of business leaders, American companies reported losing an average of 9.8% of annual revenue to fraud over the past year, a 46% increase from the prior survey period and 27% higher than the global average of 7.7%. The data underscores the disproportionate targeting of U.S. enterprises by fraud operations.

Account takeover attacks have emerged as the costliest fraud category for domestic businesses, accounting for nearly one-third of all reported losses. Synthetic identity fraud (use of a combination of personally identifiable information

to fabricate a person or entity to commit a dishonest act for financial or personal gain) follows at 24%, with authorized payment scams close behind at 23%, reflecting the diversity of attack methods across the fraud ecosystem. The trajectory points toward continued escalation. Juniper Research [projected](#) global e-commerce fraud losses will climb from \$44 billion in 2024 to \$107 billion by 2029, a 141% increase. The holiday shopping season concentrates risk factors – elevated transaction volumes, time-sensitive promotions, and reduced consumer vigilance – creating optimal conditions for exploitation at scale.

Quick-Reference Checklist

1. Navigate directly: Type retailer addresses into your browser rather than clicking through from ads or messages.
2. Investigate unfamiliar sellers: A quick search for the store name alongside ‘scam’ or ‘reviews can reveal problems before you commit.
3. Pay by credit card: Credit cards offer stronger fraud protections and chargeback rights than debit cards, transfers, or gift cards.
4. Activate two-factor authentication: Adding a second verification step makes compromised passwords far less useful to attackers.
5. Inspect URLs carefully: Confirm the address matches the official domain exactly, with no extra words or unusual extensions.
6. Steer clear of public Wi-Fi for transactions: Unsecured networks make it easier for criminals to intercept data.
7. Trust your instincts: An offer that seems too generous to be real almost certainly is not. Source: Canva
8. Review statements frequently: Catching a fraudulent charge early makes recovery much simpler.

“Consumers also should be mindful of ‘quishing’ or QR phishing. Don’t scan QR codes from unknown/untrusted sources,” said CIS’s VP Rose.

Black Friday should be an opportunity to secure genuine savings, not a gateway to financial loss. A few moments of caution – verifying a site, double-checking a sender, or questioning an implausible price – can make all the difference. The best bargain is one that actually arrives and works as advertised.

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The word for the week is Antenna Counterpoise.

An antenna counterpoise is a system of conductors—usually wires or a metal screen—placed near the ground but insulated from it, designed to act as an artificial ground plane for an antenna. In simpler terms, it’s a substitute for a physical earth ground when a good ground connection is impractical (e.g., rocky soil, rooftop installations).

The Purpose of an antenna counterpoise is that it Completes the RF circuit. Just like a light bulb needs two wires, an antenna needs a return path for RF current. The counterpoise provides that path when the earth cannot. The benefits are that it improves efficiency. Without a counterpoise, the antenna may radiate poorly and cause stray RF currents on the feedline. It also Reduces common-mode currents. This helps to prevent interference, and it stabilizes impedance matching

Typical Designs are Radial wires where Several wires radiate outward from the antenna base, often used for vertical antennas or Horizontal wires or screens, Suspended above ground under the antenna. In summary, an antenna counterpoise is a deliberate conductor system that replaces or supplements earth ground, ensuring your antenna radiates efficiently and your feedline stays clean

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The Cuyahoga Falls Amateur Radio Club offers free live online classes to get your Amateur (Ham) Radio General Class License. Classes start on Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026.

All sessions are held live via Zoom and are free. For information/to register,



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DX This Week – #351

Bill - AJ8B (thedxmentor@gmail.com / www.aj8b.com)

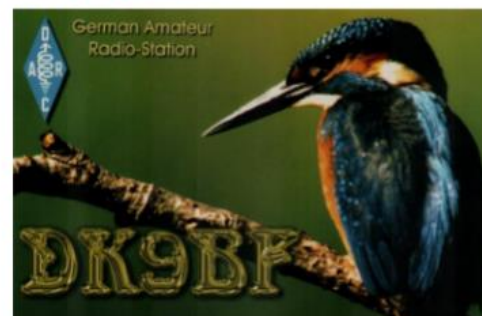
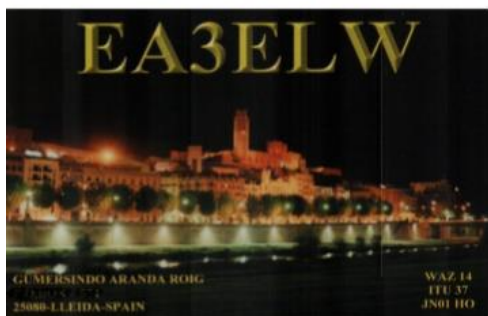


Welcome to another episode of DX This Week. I can't believe that Christmas is only 40 days away. That means the CQWW CW contest is only 2 weeks away. For me, that is the pinnacle of contests for the year! Last year, I added 11 entities to my Marathon listing for 2024. I need that and more this year to keep pace!

Speaking of CQWW CW – remember that the week before and the week after a contest can really yield some great DX, much easier than it might be during the contest.

Wow- was I surprised! I have had 11 readers request the special 160M newsletter that our club put out. Last chance - you can get a copy as well by emailing me at thedxmentor@gmail.com.

I received a couple of great QSL cards. They are featured below. R2DR from European Russia, JE2IDB from Japan, EA3ELW from Spain and DK9BF from Germany. What did you get?



Upcoming Hamfests Ohio Hamfests 2025

<p>12/06/2025 - FCARC Winter Hamfest Location: Delta, OH Type: ARRL Hamfest Sponsor: FCARC Website: https://k8bxq.org/hamfest Learn More</p>	<p>01/18/2026 - SCARF Hamfest Location: Shade, OH Type: ARRL Hamfest Sponsor: SCARF members Learn More</p>
<p>01/31/2026 - Struthers ROAR Mid-Winter Hamfest Location: Struthers, OH Type: ARRL Hamfest Sponsor: Struthers Regional Operators of Amateur Radio Website: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61580196127715 Learn More</p>	<p>03/15/2026 - Toledo Mobile Radio Association Hamfest and Computer Fair Location: Perrysburg, OH Type: ARRL Hamfest Sponsor: Toledo Mobile Radio Association Website: http://www.w8hhf.org Learn More</p>
<p>04/11/2026 - Cuyahoga Falls Amateur Radio Club 70th Hamfest Location: Cuyahoga Falls, OH Type: ARRL Hamfest Sponsor: Cuyahoga Falls Amateur Radio Club, Inc.</p>	<p>07/19/2026 - Van Wert Hamfest Location: Van Wert, OH Type: ARRL Hamfest Sponsor: Van Wert Amateur Radio Club Learn More</p>
<p>Website: https://www.cfarc-hamfest.org Learn More</p>	
<p>08/15/2026 - Cincinnati HamfestSM, ARRL Great Lakes Division Convention Location: Owensville, OH Type: ARRL Convention Sponsor: Milford Amateur Radio Club Website: https://cincinnatihamfest.org/ Learn More</p>	
<p>08/16/2026 - Warren Hamfest Location: Cortland, OH Type: ARRL Hamfest Sponsor: Warren Amateur Radio Association Website: http://w8vtd.com/hamfest Learn More</p>	

Ohio Section Cabinet

Section Manager – Tom Sly, WB8LCD	Section Traffic Manager – Dan Rinaman AC8NP
Asst Section Manager – John Levo, W8KIW	Asst Section Manager – Alan Andres, KD8ZBS
Section Emergency Coordinator – Bret Stemen KD8SCL	Section Youth Coordinator and Asst Section Manager – Anthony Luscre, K8ZT
Technical Coordinator – Jeff Kopcak, K8JTK	Affiliated Clubs Coordinator – Amanda Farone – KC3GFU
State Government Liaison – Bob Winston, W2THU	Public Information Coordinator – Elizabeth Klinc - KE8FMJ

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As always, we want to thank the ARRL, QST, ARRL Ohio Section Manager, and, their contributors and also the Scioto Valley ARC, Hillsdale Michigan Amateur Radio Club, Highland ARA for their contributions to our newsletter.

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