



**Candlewood Amateur  
Radio Association Inc.**  
P.O. Box 3441  
Danbury, CT 06813

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for your monthly  
CARA Capers!**

**Monthly Meeting Friday,  
November 8th  
at 8:00 PM**

**Meeting Topic:  
UHF/VHF Weak  
Signal Modes**

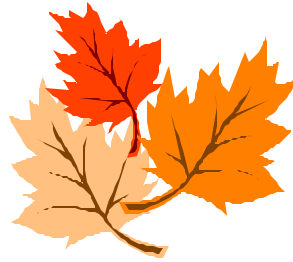


# CAPERS

Candlewood Amateur Radio Association - Post Office Box 3441 - Danbury, CT

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**Treasurer - John Ahle – W1JMA - phone - 203-438-6782**

## November 2002



*Regular Meeting Friday, Nov. 8, at 8:00 p.m.*

### **President's Message**

This month's program will be on UHF/VHF weak signal operation and will be presented by Ron Klimas WZ1V from the North East Weak Signal Group.

Full VHF/UHF operation is open to all amateurs (except any lingering novices). If you have not had the chance to operate the UHF/VHF bands on CW/SSB or one of the digital modes you are missing a great deal of Ham Radio excitement. The recent availability of DC to daylight radios like the ICOM706, Yaesu 847 and Kenwood 2000 make getting on the air quite easy. UHF/VHF operation allows one to explore various exotic modes of propagation such as

sporadic E, tropospheric ducting, and meteor scatter. It is possible to work DX on 6 meters during the high sunspot number years. How many of you have DXCC or WAS on 6 meters? A number of hams do. International contacts are also possible by satellite or by EME (Earth - Moon - Earth) contacts. Has anyone worked all states on 2 meters? UHF and VHF contesting is fun as well. The ARRL sponsors the VUCC award for contacting a certain number (depends on the band) of maidenhead grid squares (like countries for VHF/UHF operators).

Ron will help you get started in this exciting aspect of ham radio. I am sure he would encourage you to participate in the NEWS group activities. The NEWS

members are a very interesting and technically sophisticated group of hams, who would be delighted to help newcomers enter this aspect of the ham radio community.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

**73, Frank, N8WXQ**

## **CARA REMINDER: REPEATER NOW 147.300+ (PL100)**

Just a reminder that the CARA Danbury 2-meter repeater is now operating on 147.300, +600 kHz. PL is 100.0 Hz.

Note that this affects the weekly CARA net on Sunday nights; the monthly ARES/RACES Area 1 North net; Skywarn – Fairfield County North net, and other relevant nets.

## **Mark Your Calendars for Monthly Meetings**

CARA meetings are held the second Friday of every month, September through June, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, in Brookfield, CT, near the junction of Routes 25 and 133.

All regular meetings start at 8:00pm (coffee, story swapping and all around rag chewing begin at 7:30pm). This month's meeting will take place on **Friday, November 8 at 8 p.m.**

## **Reminder: Sign Up for ARRL EC Course!**

CT hams are encouraged to sign up for the United Technology Corporation grant-funded ARRL Emergency Communications (EmCom) course.

You can register for classes by visiting the secure ARRL Course Registration Page at <https://www.arrl.org/forms/cce>, and clicking on the blue hypertext link "Register" next to the class section you prefer.

To learn more, visit the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education Web page at <http://www.arrl.org/cce>, and the C-CE Links found there.

If you signed up for a class but have not yet finished the course, please contact your mentor and make arrangements to complete the class.

For more information on these classes you can also contact Certification and Continuing Education Program Coordinator Dan Miller, K3UFG, [cce@arrl.org](mailto:cce@arrl.org).

## **FCC Rescinds 146.52 MHz Advisory Notices**

FCC Special Counsel for Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth has told five amateurs in Ohio and Michigan to disregard his earlier admonitions to avoid lengthy QSOs on 146.52 MHz. That's the generally recognized national simplex calling frequency and is endorsed as such by the ARRL's 2-meter band plan. Acknowledging, however, that some confusion exists within the amateur community as to whether 146.52 is a national calling channel or just another simplex frequency, Hollingsworth decided to simply rescind the five advisory notices he'd

sent October 15.

"We made an error in issuing that Advisory Notice, and you may disregard it," Hollingsworth wrote October 23 in letters to the affected amateurs.

Commenting to ARRL, Hollingsworth was blunt yet good-natured. "I goofed," he said. "If I were worried about making a fool of myself from time to time, I never would have become a lawyer in the first place."

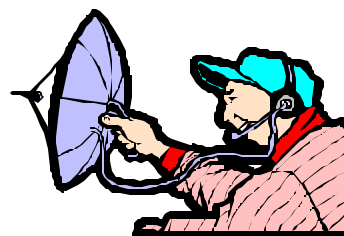
An ARRL error apparently contributed to the confusion. Hollingsworth did not find 146.52 MHz singled out as the national simplex calling frequency in his edition of The ARRL's FCC Rule Book (12th edition, 1st printing). The designation does appear in subsequent printings of the Rule Book, however, as well as in recent editions of The ARRL Operating Manual and The ARRL Repeater Directory 2002/2003.

Hollingsworth says that operation that does not comply with a generally accepted band plan such as ARRL's is not illegal. He points out, however, that band plans--to the extent that they're followed--do help to keep down friction among various users and make his job a lot easier.

"I don't consider it a big deal. I was just trying to raise awareness," he said. Hollingsworth told ARRL this week that he had initially written four amateurs in Ohio and one in Michigan on the basis of complaints about lengthy contacts on 146.52 MHz in late September and early October. Those QSOs, he said, averaged 45 minutes and in some cases lasted up to an hour.

"In an ideal world, stations making initial contact on 146.52 MHz probably should move off to another accepted simplex channel to continue their conversation," Hollingsworth said. "The main thing is, we're all in this together, and the goal is to make Amateur Radio last 1000 years."

## **ARRL RESURRECTS FREQUENCY MEASURING TEST**



The Frequency Measuring Test (FMT)--an ARRL staple for nearly 50 years--will return in early November. A FMT transmission will replace the W1AW SSB bulletin on November 7, 0245 UTC (Wednesday, November 6, in US time zones). The resurrected FMT will kick off a series of measuring tests.

"These tests will exercise the capabilities of hams to measure important operating parameters, improve their understanding of complex radios and give them a better mental picture of their transmitted signals," Contributing Editor Ward Silver, N0AX, said in an October 2002 QST article describing the art and science of frequency measurement. "The goal is a more technically aware amateur confident of compliance with FCC regulations."

Today's amateurs tend to take for granted the accuracy of their

transceiver's frequency readout. But, as Silver notes in his article, relying simply on a transceiver's digital readouts could mean part of your signal is outside the band edge--in violation of FCC Part 97 rules.

Transceiver or receiver readout accuracy "depends entirely on the quality of the receiver's master oscillator," he points out in QST. Increasing technical quality of amateur gear was one of the primary reasons for the decline and fall of FMTs in 1980. In prior decades, however, thousands of amateurs took part in the FMTs, and participation was required of ARRL Official Observer and Official Relay System stations.

The first FMT, held in October 1931, employed three transmitting stations--W1XP at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, W9XAN at Elgin Observatory in Illinois and W6XK at Don Lee Broadcasting System in Los Angeles--and drew more than 200 measurement reports.

"Winners demonstrated better than 99.99% accuracy, and more than half received certificates for better than 99.90% accuracy," Silver reported--not too shabby for the state of the art back then.

The 2002 FMT will begin at the appointed time--0245 UTC November 7 (9:45 PM EST November 6)--with a general Morse code "QST" from W1AW on four amateur frequencies. The test itself will consist of 20 seconds of carrier followed by a series of CW dits followed by a station ID. The test will last about five minutes and will conclude with a series of Vs and another station ID. The approximate

frequencies are 3580, 7047, 14,048 and 21,068 kHz.

FMT 2002 participants should include time of reception, measured frequency and signal report, as well as their name, call sign and location. Participants are encouraged to submit reports on more than one of the frequencies. A Certificate of Participation will be available to all who send in reports. Those who come closest to the measured frequency will be listed in the test report and will receive special recognition.

Send FMT 2002 entries postmarked by December 6, 2002, to W1AW/FMT, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. More information and background on the 2002 FMT is available on the ARRL Frequency Measuring Tests - Supplement page <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/fmt/>.

### **Vanity Application Reminders Worth Repeating**

When applying for a vanity call sign, the application purpose on FCC Form 605 should always be "Modification" (MD). ARRL VEC Manager Bart Jahnke,

W9JJ, advises that vanity applicants within their 90-day license renewal window should not attempt to do a "Renewal/Modification" (RM) when applying for a vanity call sign.

"I would recommend that you renew first," Jahnke said. "If vanity processing is delayed for some reason--as happened last fall and spring--your license could expire

while awaiting processing, and your application would be dismissed."

The fee for a vanity call sign increased to \$14.50 in September. Jahnke says it is possible for vanity applicants to register a name, address or contact information (eg, e-mail or telephone number) change with the FCC while also applying for a vanity call sign, since both actions can be dealt with as a Modification. Note, however, that if you're only changing such data as name, address or contact information and not applying for a new call sign, you should check "Administrative Update" (AU) as the application purpose--and, yes, this is confusing.

By the way, unlike a vanity application, which requires a fee and goes to the FCC's fiscal agent in Pittsburgh, an Administrative Update application requires no fee and goes directly to the FCC in Gettysburg.

Amateur applications may be filed electronically via the FCC's ULS Web site <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/> or on paper (using FCC Form 605).

The FCC says that anyone filing any application with the FCC--whether for a vanity, license renewal, upgrade or modification--first must be registered with the Commission Registration System (CORES) and have obtained an FCC Registration Number (FRN).

For more information on vanity filing, visit the Amateur Radio Vanity CallSigns page <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/vanity.html> on the ARRL Web site.

(Articles courtesy ARRL Letter)

## CARA Home Page

Please visit our home page at <http://www.danbury.org/cara>

## Nets

*CARA Weekly Net* Sunday nights at 7:30 p.m. 147.30+ ( PL 100)

*WestConn Net* Nightly at 8:30 p.m. 147.18+ (PL 114.8)

*Tips Net* – Tuesday evenings at 7:30 on 146.73- (PL77) (linked statewide)

*R-Com Weekly Net*: 145.47- ( PL100) Thursday Eve, local time, 8PM

## Want the CARA CAPERS by e-mail?

Signing up for the e-Capers is simple. Just send e-mail to [KD1YV@arrl.net](mailto:KD1YV@arrl.net).

We'll take care of the rest, and your next e-Capers will arrive in your e-mailbox!

## Editor's Note: Looking for News in All the Right Places...

Just a reminder to our readers that we're always looking for interesting features and news articles for the Capers.

Just drop me a note at [KA1JDD@arrl.net](mailto:KA1JDD@arrl.net), or give me a call: 203-748-1033. Although as early as possible is preferred, our deadline for articles for each month's edition generally is the Friday before (one week before) the regular Friday monthly meeting.

73 de Barry, KA1JDD

## **FEMA - Winter Preparedness Tips**

Timely preparation, including structural and non-structural mitigation measures to avoid the impacts of severe winter weather, can avert heavy personal, business and government expenditures. Experts agree that the following measures can be effective in dealing with the challenges of severe winter weather:

### **BEFORE SEVERE WEATHER ARRIVES:**

Store drinking water, first aid kit, canned/no-cook food, non-electric can opener, radio, flashlight and extra batteries where you can get them easily, even in the dark.

Keep cars and other vehicles fueled and in good repair, with a winter emergency kit in each.

Get a NOAA Weather Radio to monitor severe weather.

Know how the public is warned (siren, radio, TV, etc.) and the warning terms for each kind of disaster in your community; e.g.:

"winter storm watch" --- Be alert, a storm is likely

"winter storm warning" --- Take action, the storm is in or entering the area

"blizzard warning " --- Snow and strong winds combined will produce blinding snow, near zero visibility, deep drifts, and life-threatening

"wind chill"--seek refuge immediately!

"winter weather advisory" --- Winter weather conditions are expected to

cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous, especially to motorists

"frost/freeze warning" --- Below freezing temperatures are expected and may cause damage to plants, crops, or fruit trees

Know how to contact other household members through a common out-of-state contact in the event you and have to evacuate and become separated.

Know how to turn off gas, electric power and water before evacuating.

Know ahead of time what you should do to help elderly or disabled friends, neighbors or employees.

Winterize your house, barn, shed or any other structure that may provide shelter for your family and neighbors.

### **DURING ANY STORM OR EMERGENCY:**

Monitor your NOAA Weather Radio or keep a local radio and/or TV station on for information and emergency instructions.

Have your emergency survival kit ready to go if told to evacuate.

If you go outside for any reason, dress for the season and expected conditions:

For cold weather, wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. Outer garments should be tightly woven and water-repellent. Mittens are warmer than gloves. Wear a hat. Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs from extremely cold air. Wear sturdy, waterproof boots in snow or flooding conditions.

## DURING A WINTER STORM:

Conserve fuel, if necessary, by keeping your house cooler than normal. Temporarily shut off heat to less-used rooms.

If using kerosene heaters, maintain ventilation to avoid build-up of toxic fumes. Keep heaters at least three feet from flammable objects.

Refuel kerosene heaters outside.

Avoid travel if possible. If you must travel, do so during daylight.

Don't travel alone. Stay on main roads, and keep others informed of your schedule.

## IF A BLIZZARD TRAPS YOU IN YOUR CAR:

Pull off the road, set hazard lights to flashing, and hang a distress flag from the radio aerial or window. Remain in your vehicle; rescuers are most likely to find you there.

Conserve fuel, but run the engine and heater about ten minutes each hour to keep warm, cracking a downwind window slightly to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Exercise to maintain body heat but don't overexert.

Huddle with other passengers and use your coat for a blanket.

In extreme cold use road maps, seat covers, floor mats, newspapers or extra clothing for covering--anything to provide additional insulation and warmth.

Turn on the inside dome light so rescue teams can see you at night, but be

careful not to run the battery down. In remote areas, spread a large cloth over the snow to attract the attention of rescue planes.

Do not set out on foot unless you see a building close by where you know you can take shelter.

Once the blizzard is over, you may need to leave the car and proceed on foot. Follow the road if possible. If you need to walk across open country, use distant points as landmarks to help maintain your sense of direction.

## AFTER THE STORM:

Report downed power lines and broken gas lines immediately.

After blizzards, heavy snows or extreme



cold, check to see that no physical damage has occurred and that water pipes are functioning. If there are no other problems, wait for streets and roads to be opened before you attempt to drive anywhere.

Check on neighbors, especially any who might need help.

Beware of overexertion and exhaustion. Shoveling snow in extreme cold causes many heart attacks. Set your priorities and pace yourself. The natural tendency is to do too much too soon.



