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

Page Down for your monthly CARA Capers!

Holiday Party Friday, December 13th at 8:00 PM

Meeting Topic:
Annual Holiday Party

CAPERS

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

President – Frank Etzler – N8WXQ - phone - 860-350-3523
Vice President – Tom Goodwin - N1GFE - phone 203-792-0381
Secretary - Judy Etzler – N1TGK - phone - 860-350-3523
Treasurer - John Ahle – W1JMA - phone - 203-438-6782

December 2002

Holiday Social Friday, Dec 13, at 8:00 p.m.

President's Message

The Holiday Season is upon us once again. I want to take the time to wish all CARA members and Radio Amateurs a very happy holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I hope Santa is kind and brings some goodies for the ham shack.

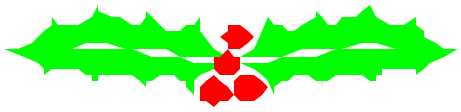
December is the time for the CARA holiday party. Instead of the usual meeting we will have our annual Holiday social. The social is an opportunity for CARA members to introduce family to the group. Remember to bring your XYL or OM and hamlets. I know all will enjoy the ragchew about our recent ham radio adventures.

There will be lots of goodies at the social but the goodies are pot luck. So please bring a dish - hot, cold or desert. Judy, N1TGK, will head up the holiday festivities. Let her know what your are bringing or ask her advice as to what seems to be missing from the platter.

See you at the social!

73, Frank, N8WXQ

Remember: If you're planning to attend the Holiday Social on December 13, please call Judy N1TGK, at 860-350-3523, to coordinate your "pot-luck" items!



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 – the annual holiday social -- will take place on **Friday, December 13 at 8 p.m.**

Propagation Profile
(Courtesy ARRL)

ARRL recently provided a short after-holiday catch-up bulletin to bring us up-to-date on solar flux, sunspot and planetary A index numbers.

From the latter part of November, mean daily sunspot numbers dropped over 24 points and daily solar flux was down nearly 37 points. Average planetary A index was about double, from 11.3 to 23. The numbers run through Thanksgiving, and geomagnetic indices have continued to run unsettled to active since then

Over the early part of December, solar flux should have risen from a range of 155 on Monday, December 2, to 180 by the 6th or 7th. Planetary A index is expected to continue unsettled for a while, with values in the range of 15-20. ARRL also recommended a Finnish web site devoted to photographs of aurora borealis at http://www.saunalahti.fi/~deca39/paasivu/index_eng.php3.

And don't miss paging through the gallery of images at http://www.saunalahti.fi/~deca39/galleria/index_eng.php3.

There are some fantastic aurora borealis photos taken in Finland and

Lapland over the past couple of years.

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

(Image courtesy KZ1Z)

Want the CARA CAPERS by e-mail?

Signing up for the e-Capers is simple. Just send e-mail to 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.

Paid-up members are also welcome to place no-charge classified ads for ham-related items. If you have a jpeg image of the item you may want to include that as well.

Just drop me an email note at 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

(**Editor's Note:** *With the winter hazards season upon us, and the renewed interest in ARES and Amateur Radio emergency communications support in general, CARA Capers is reprinting the following article from eham.net. The article details the construction of a "Near Vertical Incidence Skywave (NVIS)" antenna that can be easily constructed from simple materials and quickly pressed into service on an already-existing mobile mount in order to be able to communicate locally on 80 and 40 meter emergency frequencies. More information on the construction and performance of similar antennas – both mobile and home-based -- can be found at the eham.net Web site, starting at www.eham.net/articles/4141. Our thanks to Pete KZ1Z for calling this to our attention, and to eham.net for providing the article.)*

N.V.I S. Portable Antenna

By Stephen T. Reynolds W4CNG
A.R.E.S. DEC Metro-Atlanta

There are several articles describing the N.V.I.S. antenna theory and a few ways to build them. Portable and Mobile operation using this style of antenna produces a good path of communications in the 100-250 mile range. Adapting a mobile station quickly and easily is the main feature of this article, plus low cost and ease of construction. Here is how to do two bands really easy for about $20. First is the hardware list.

Home Depot 100ft 12Ga Stranded RED wire. ($11.00)

2 #12 Wire Ring-Lugs with 3/8 inch holes. (.30)

2 3/8x24

4 3/8 inch flat washers (.20)

2 Quick Disconnect antenna bases ($6.00) HRO/other Mail order house.

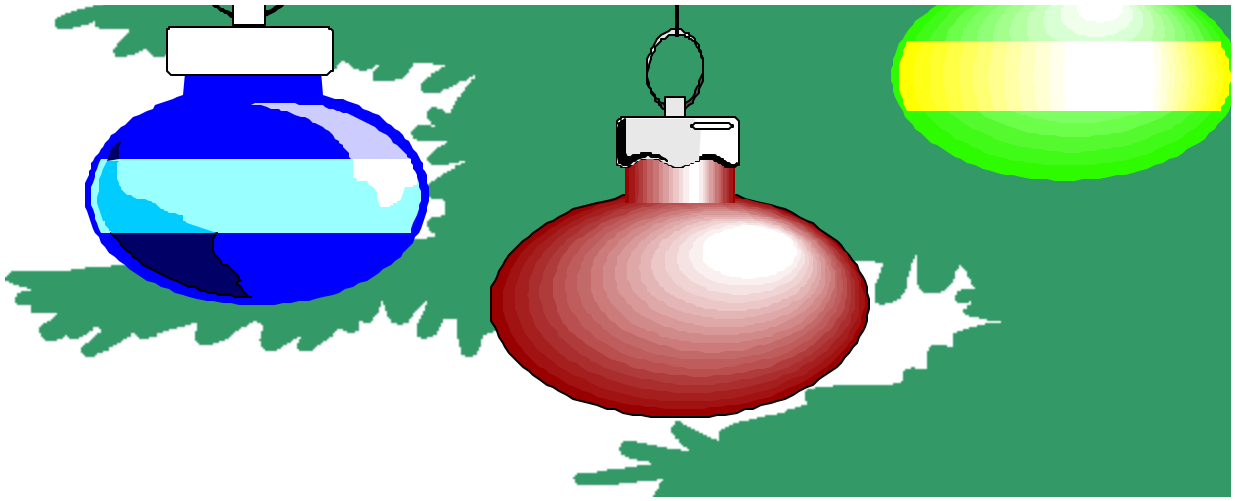
2 Dog bone end insulators and 40 ft nylon rope. Junk box

Take the wire and cut at 33ft. This gives you 33ft for 40 meters, and 67 feet for 75 meters, the two most popular N.V.I.S. bands for A.R.E.S. use. Crimp and solder one of the ring-lugs to one end of each piece of wire.

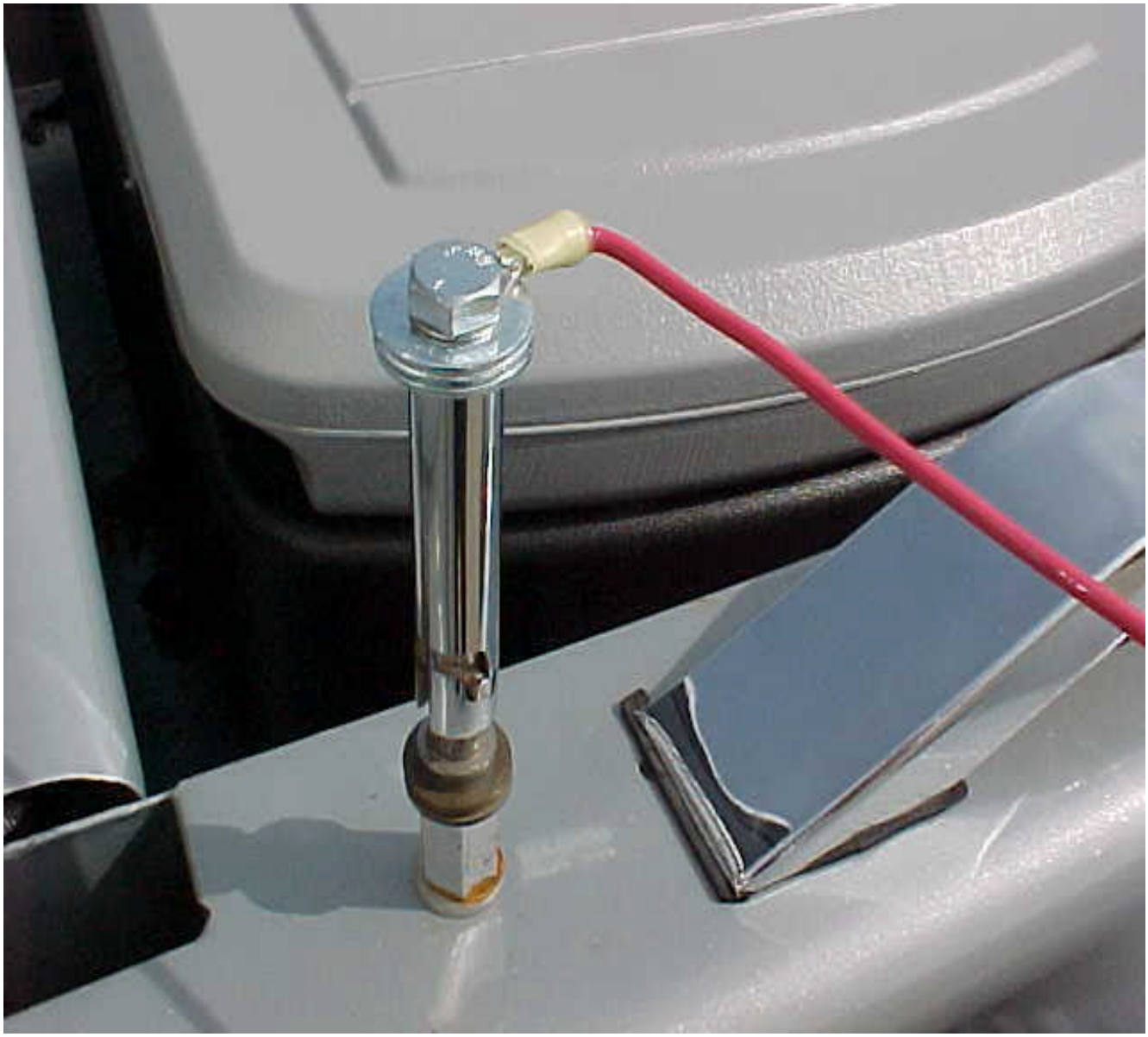
Using the 3/8x24 fine thread bolt and two flat washers, bolt the ring lug to the quick disconnect base (one flat on top and one on bottom of lug). You can have an option here. Use one quick disconnect for both sets of wire lugs (dual band antenna) or build 2 separate antennas and deploy the one you will be using. I built two separate antennas.

The quick disconnect was chosen as lot's of us use singleband mobile HF antennas with quick disconnects. For portable operation, remove the mobile vertical antenna, connect the N.V.I.S. antenna and quick disconnect to your antenna base on your vehicle.

The photo next page shows how the finished NVIS antenna connection fitting looks connected and ready to test.



NVIS Antenna fitting…



This is one of the one-piece 3/8x24 single-hole-to-SO-239 mounts (solid brass center pin, no pressed fitting).

W4CNG's article on the eham Website is followed by additional information on matching the antenna with an antenna tuner, and recommended height above ground for different frequencies – although for the vertical skywave effect, lower (within reason) is better and heights from 10-20 feet above ground appear to be acceptable. *(-Ed.)*