



CAPERS

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

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



Issue: April 2005

Friday, April 8 at 8 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring is upon us once again, I know that we will all appreciate the improving weather. I hope all had a happy Easter.

Nominations for club officers and directors are being requested for the elections coming in June. Please consider serving the club.

We were sad to report at the last meeting that the CT PRB-1 bill failed to make it out of committee. I expect that a new effort will be made for the next year. This outcome was not completely unexpected.

The New England QSO Party will be held on May 6-7. Further information can be found on the official website - <http://www.neqp.org>. CARA will be participating by operating W1AW on Sunday, May 8. We will need operators. I particularly invite new hams to participate in this casual contest. Others can operate the QSO party from their home

stations. Even a few QSO's will be helpful. I look forward to working your station.

The program this month will be on the art of QSLing. This will help you get cards you need for DXCC etc.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

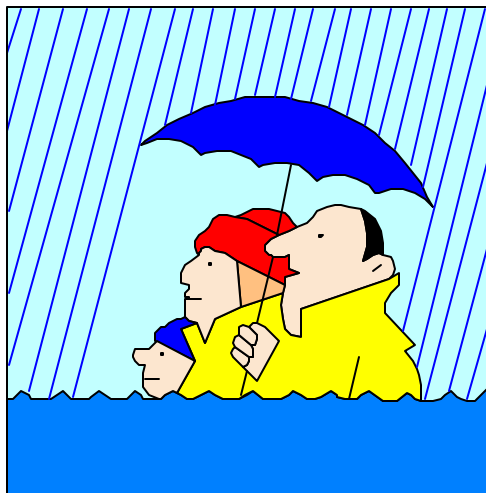
73 de Frank, N8WXQ

Meetings

CARA's regular meetings are held on the second Friday of each month beginning at 8 p.m., at St. Paul's Church Hall, Brookfield Center, CT. Informal "rag chewing" begins at 7:30 p.m.

Upcoming CARA Programs

For the May 13th meeting, Gene of KJI Electronics will be our guest speaker. He will discuss the new ICOM radios—in particular the 756 Pro III. Any members who would like Gene to bring a particular piece of equipment with him are invited to contact him directly through his Web site, www.kjielelectronics.com



In June, our primary program will be Field Day, which takes place the weekend of June 25-26. (Actually, with history as our guide, we usually quip that it takes place “the last rainy weekend in June...” –Ed.) Contact Jim, KD1YV, if you can participate so he can finalize an operating schedule. Field Day is a fun event. Even if you have only a few hours over the weekend, you’ll have a great time if you stop by. Operators are always needed and if you don’t yet have your general ticket it’s a great way to get on HF (since control operators will be there) and make some contacts!

Our meeting theme in July –for the summer period when many of us will be taking to the road for vacations--will be “Operating Mobile.” Club members will demonstrate the best practices for installing mobile radios and antennas in your vehicle, as well as discuss electrical safety and safe mobile operating tips.

BIG E is Looking for HAM Assistance

Connecticut’s Big E exhibition and fair takes place this year September 15 through October 2nd. Organizers are again looking for hams to staff the amateur radio exhibit at this well-attended event. It’s a high-profile opportunity for ham radio and a chance to recruit new members to our hobby. If you can help, please contact Larry, K1EHJ at k1ehj@yahoo.com.

Volunteers Monitoring BPL Activity in CT

John, W1JMA, and a group of volunteers have been assisting as members of an action group called together by Section Manager Betsey K1EIC. The group is monitoring signal strength and interference in order to gather hard numbers and concrete examples that can be used as proof that BPL causes major interference on ham radio frequencies. If you can help, contact John, W1JMA, at w1jma@arrl.net.

CARA Standing Committees

Just a reminder to all members that these are the standing committees that help make CARA run. Our members and their ideas are our strength. Sign up for one of these committees in 2005 if you have not already done so. Talk to any of the club officers at Friday’s meeting!

Repeater and Digital Equipment

- Repeater coordination
- Repeater maintenance
- Packet cluster maintenance
- Other digital equipment

Operating Activities

- Field Day- June 2005
- New England QSO Party – May 2005
- WACC
- Special event station or fall contest

Hamfest

Plan and organize – September 2005
Publicity

Membership

Annual dues notification and follow up
Annual new member drive

Education and Elmering

Organize or sponsor class for entry-level license
Organize Elmer support network for new hams
Organize two 3-person ARES deployment teams

Program Committee

Organize and arrange monthly program
Staff and Net Control for Sunday 7:30 p.m. CARA net
CARA CAPERS newsletter

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 p.m. on 146.73- (PL77) (linked statewide).

R-Com Weekly Net: 145.47- (PL100)
Thursday Evenings, 8 p.m.

ConnARES Area One (North) VHF Net:
Second Monday of each month, 8 p.m. on CARA repeater: 147.30+ (PL 100)

Conn ARES Issues Net: 3.965 Mhz +/- on Thursdays @ approx. 6:15 p.m. (following CT Phone Net).

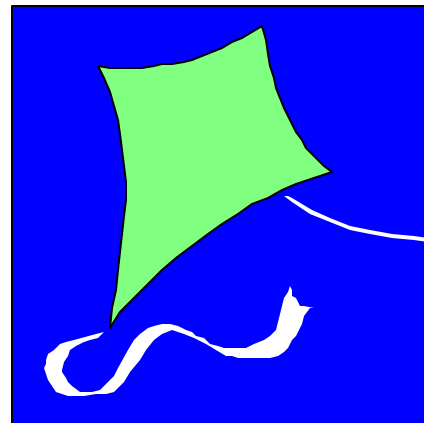
CARA VE exam schedule for 2005:

Make a note of the CARA-sponsored Volunteer Exam (VE) schedule for 2005:

Saturday, June 4
Saturday, September 17
Saturday, December 3

VE sessions are held at St. Paul's Church in Brookfield Center, the site of our regular monthly meetings. Registration for these exam sessions begins at 11:30 a.m. There is no pre-registration, but an e-mail in advance of the session, or telephone call, would be appreciated so the examiners know how many potential candidates to expect. The current fee for new license exams or upgrade exams is \$14. Be sure to bring with you two forms of ID – at least one with your photo. Also bring the original AND copy of CSCE's and/or amateur license. The registration form will be supplied at the session.

Questions or comments? Check with Frank, N1PE, frsileo@att.net, 203-438-0218 (Ridgefield CT).



Special “Youth Membership” Proposed

At the last CARA work session, a special reduced-rate Youth Membership was proposed. The objective would be to enable students and young people –particularly those new to amateur radio--to become affiliated with CARA for a membership fee they could personally afford. Accordingly, the club is proposing a new Youth Membership

rate of \$5 a year for primary and secondary school students. The rate for college students remains unchanged. The club will be seeking to amend the bylaws to allow this change. This is the first published notice of that intent. This proposal will be open for discussion at the April meeting.

March Meeting Features ARES Role

Our March meeting program focused on ham radio's support for ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Services) activities. Bill N1PJG presented a video on the Topoff 2 Homeland Security exercise and Chuck AB1CR, our



Section Emergency Coordinator, talked about the upcoming Topoff 3 exercise, amateur radio's high-profile role in this exercise, and reviewed the basic contents of a practical "Go Kit".

A VCR cabling glitch got the video presentation off to a slightly delayed start.

The "group photo" accompanying this



article illustrates the age-old question, "How many hams does it take to replace a VCR cable?" – or is it just that resourceful hams can't resist a technical challenge? No matter; in a few minutes the problem was solved and our program was off and running. Thanks again to Bill and Chuck for providing the March program!

Largest-Ever Mass Casualty Exercise will Put Amateur Radio Under Scrutiny

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) members in Connecticut and elsewhere in the Northeast are poised to take part in what's being characterized as the most comprehensive terrorism response exercise ever conducted in the US. Sponsored by the US Department of Homeland Security as a realistic test of the nation's homeland security system, the exercise--TOPOFF 3--will run Monday through Friday, April 4-8. Approximately 100 ARES volunteers primarily will support the American Red Cross. Connecticut Section Emergency Coordinator Chuck Rexroad, AB1CR, says that while governmental agencies will comprise the majority of those taking part in TOPOFF 3, Amateur Radio's cooperation with and assistance to the American Red Cross will be under scrutiny.

"We've been assigned evaluators and judges who will be watching what we do and how we do it to determine our suitability for such things in the future," he explained. Rexroad

says at TOPOFF 2 a couple of years ago, evaluators pointed to massive communication problems that Amateur Radio could have helped to resolve, Rexroad said. "So we do hope that this will show that we are very relevant in responding to a disaster situation."

The TOPOFF 3 scenario will depict a complex terrorist campaign beginning in Connecticut and New Jersey and leading to national and international response that will include Canada--where the exercise will be known as "TRIPLE PLAY"--and the United Kingdom--where it will be called "ATLANTIC BLUE."

The only nongovernmental organization with a formal role in the recently released National Disaster Plan, the Red Cross has main responsibility for mass care. Rexroad anticipates that ARES will be providing its traditional "backbone" communication support among Red Cross mobile feeding stations, the organization's temporary stationary facilities and other Red Cross units. ARES also will be ready to provide back-up communication support to the Connecticut Office of Emergency Management, he said.

Rexroad and Connecticut Section Manager Betsey Doane, K1EIC, have been gearing up for TOPOFF 3 for more than a year. Both hope the ARES role in the drill will provide graduates of the ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications courses a chance to put into practice what they've learned--on a national stage.

With the drill just days away, Rexroad said he still needs volunteers. "People who can staff a permanent position, people who can set up a temporary position, people who can do shadowing and--the big one-- we're temporarily putting a radio in a mobile Red Cross van," he explained. "The sections surrounding Connecticut have all offered to provide assistance, and we're looking forward to support from Eastern and Western Massachusetts, Rhode Island and possibly

even some people from New York." Rexroad has been making the rounds to conduct briefing sessions prior to the drill.

TOPOFF 3 ARES volunteers must be comfortable with a high-security environment, realistic-looking "injuries" and military aircraft flying overhead, Rexroad says. In terms of equipment, he says most operation will take place on VHF and UHF, with an HF link to the National Traffic System only. Headsets are advisable because of anticipated high noise levels. Volunteers will wear matching vests that say "Radio Communications" on the back and "ARES" on the front.

Due to security requirements, all volunteers must register with ARES in advance. Information on the exercise and how to volunteer is on the Connecticut ARES Web site <<http://www.ctares.org>>.

(Ed Note: Some articles courtesy ARRL Letter, and thanks also to KZ1Z!)

Are you @arrrl.net?

As many of you know, the ARRL offers a free email forwarding service for members. Using the ARRL email forwarding service gives you a way to tell other hams an easy way to remember your email address. This service allows you to have an email address of yourcallsign@arrrl.net and any email sent to your arrrl.net address can be forwarded to your regular email account. The ARRL does not store email, but does forward messages to your regular email account.

Even if you change your real email address, your arrrl.net address stays the same (unless you change your call sign). Of course, you need to be an ARRL member to take advantage of the free service. If you'd like to sign up for the arrrl.net email forwarding service, visit the ARRL Members Only Web page at <http://www.arrrl.org/members-only/>. A link to setting up your @arrrl.net email forwarding address instructions is located

under the Frequently Asked Questions heading.

CARA Minutes

The regular meeting of CARA for Feb 11, 2005, was called to order at 8:00 PM. The program was on QRP with Steve WA1PDF presenting information on kits available.

The business meeting was called to order at 9:39 PM. The minutes were accepted. The Treasurer reported that we have \$7515.71 in the account.

Old Business:

HamFest -- paper work is done. Date is 9/18/2005. KJI, West Mountain, and Quick Silver will be there. Flyers will be available this week.

Field Day -- working on details Bill is rebuilding the Lazy H.

NE QSO Party -- 1st weekend in May

Repeater Committee -- George has resigned from committee. Joe is interested in being on committee.

New Business:

1. Betsy reported that on Tuesday there was a committee hearing on the BPL bill. There is a belief that there be at least one ham radio operator on the committee.
2. BPL is in Fairfield County. UI in Shelton is offering this. Can people from this club help fight this? John. Ken, and others will discuss this at the work meeting.
3. No ARRL members from the League were at the hearing.
4. Possible class for Senior Citizens in New Milford and at Region #1 school.

The meeting adjourned at 10:17 PM

Respectfully,
Martha Babbitt KB1IES

BPL Inherently Flawed Says League CEO

ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, told a New York City conference on "Alternative Broadband Platforms" March 18 that broadband over power line (BPL) has "an inherent technical flaw"--interference potential--that cannot be completely nor inexpensively eliminated. He also told the gathering that no BPL system operator can guarantee that its system will always work or that it will be allowed to operate. Sumner said the problem is simple: Power lines were not designed to carry broadband signals, so they can't do it very well.

"BPL is not a radio spectrum user. It is a radio spectrum polluter," Sumner told the Columbia Institute for Tele-Information (CITI) workshop, "Alternative Broadband Platforms: Can They Compete With Fiber Optics? Where?" at Columbia University. "And if the pollution causes harmful interference to an authorized radio station, the BPL system operator has the absolute burden of fixing it--even if that means shutting off the system."

Sumner asked his audience to keep this unique shortcoming of BPL in mind as they compare and consider the alternative broadband platforms discussed. The 70 conference participants included BPL manufacturers and proponents as well as individuals involved in some aspect of broadband telecommunications, members of the academic community and students.

Directed by Eli Noam, KE2PN, CITI held its first workshop on BPL--then called PLC--in February 2002 and has held several more since. This month's event was the first in which ARRL was invited to participate. The conference's entire morning session was devoted to BPL.

In addition to the question of interference, Sumner also raised the legal obstacles confronting BPL. "I think you can see--or hear--why we radio amateurs are

concerned," he said after showing the audience a video clip of BPL interference recorded in Briarcliff Manor, New York, last December. "But anyone who is thinking about investing in BPL should also be concerned, because the interference you just heard is illegal," he continued. "It is prohibited by the international radio regulations of the International telecommunication Union, which the United States must observe as a treaty obligation. It is prohibited by the Communications Act. It is prohibited by the FCC's own rules."

Sumner also spoke about BPL interference complaints involving pilot projects in Iowa and Texas.

The emission limits the FCC has applied to BPL originally were established with intermittent, narrowband, point-source radiators in mind, Sumner explained. "Applying them to a high duty cycle, broadband emitter that is attached to a long conductor such as a power line is like saying that there's no difference between the noise of a helicopter that goes over your house once a day and one that hovers over your back yard all the time," Sumner said. "You wouldn't complain about the first, but you'd raise quite a fuss about the second."

Most workshop participants, Sumner said, appeared to believe that fiber optic cable close by or to the home--or a combination of fiber and coaxial cable--would be most likely to provide a broadband pipeline in 10 years. "They also liked wireless because of mobility and portability," he added. When asked at the end of the day who would invest in BPL, "only two or three hands went up."

Sumner's prepared remarks plus additional material relating to his CITI presentation are available on the ARRL Web site

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[target=externalhttp://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/presentations.html](http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/presentations.html)>.

Got News?

Have an article for publication? Want to place a classified ad in the Capers? Contact the editor, Barry, KA1JDD, at ka1jdd@arrl.net, or call 203-748-1033.

REMINDER:

If you have not renewed your CARA dues for 2005, this is the last issue of the CAPERS that you will receive. To renew your dues, please contact John, W1JMA.

If you HAVE PAID your dues and are not receiving the electronic version of CARA CAPERS, any email SPAM filters you use may need to be adjusted to allow mail from barry@connollyco.com, the email host address used by the editor to send out the CARA CAPERS. Thanks!

