



Capers

November 2009

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

Visit us on the Web at <http://www.danbury.org/cara>

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Treasurer – Bill Webb – W1AFX - phone - 203-775-0536



***Meeting: Friday, Nov. 13, 8 p.m.
Stony Hill Fire Station***

From the President

The holiday season is almost upon us again. I wish to extend Thanksgiving greetings to all CARA members and fellow radio amateurs.

The December meeting will be the traditional holiday party. Spouses and children are welcome at the holiday party. As is tradition, the party will be pot luck. Please begin to think of a dish to bring. We will also have a gift exchange. The exchange is: bring one get one. Items should be about \$15 in value and ham radio-related in some way. There may be a few special surprises as well.

We need now to look to next year's activities. Chairman and other volunteers for Field Day and the Hamfest are needed.

At the work meeting we discussed various future programs. Please, feel free to suggest program topics but be prepared to help organize this

program. You may choose to give the program yourself or perhaps trick someone into doing it for you! Invitations to guest speakers are welcome too.

As part of the discussion it was discussed that a program directed to beginners that would also of interest to others would be appropriate. I have decided to provide an introduction to one of the ARRL's most important publications – The Operating Manual. Various topics discussed in the Manual will be introduced and hopefully will yield a lively discussion. Every Amateur should have a recent copy of this book.

I look forward to seeing each of you at the meeting.

73 de Frank, N8WXQ

CARA Minutes for October

The meeting was called to order by President Frank Etzler, N8WXQ, at 8 PM with 20 members and visitors in attendance.

As people arrived at the Stony Hill Firehouse parking lot, they were treated to a preview of the program for the evening in the form of John D'Ausilio, W1RT's, "Intergalactic Roving Battle Jitney, MK3". A picture is worth a thousand words so I will refer you to photos of his setup elsewhere in this newsletter. Also, he has an equipment list on his "W1RT" entry in QRZ.

Ok, so what's he up to?

Amateur Radio has many types of contests to tax your hardware and software (including your brain). All contests involve making two-way contacts of some sort; voice, CW, moon bounce etc. John's specialty is UHF/VHF/ microwave communication from, in his case, a van modified with suitable radios, antennas and power sources for portable operation. Notice I did not say *mobile*. He plans a route that passes through the maximum number of grid squares and includes the accessible high-spots required for contacts at 50 MHz and above. Since the "squares" (actually rectangles of 1 degree latitude by 2 degrees longitude) are shorter north to south, he tries to plan his mileage more N-S than E-W to squeeze out the maximum number of grids and hence a higher multiplier and more points.

John's presentation was fast-paced and it was obvious that he loved the Roving Contest type of operation. His talk included many pictures of the van conversion process and details of the equipment installation. There was also a discussion and Q&A of things that work and what he will do differently next time. He recommended looking in stores that handle boating equipment for high current DC components. He does not recommend

altering the air flow around an alternator: you can cook the bridge diodes!

We thank John for an excellent program and wish him well in his travels.

Note: Further information on roving operation can be found on the ARRL web site.

Joe, AB1DO, had the final report for the Hamfest. This is the major source of club operating funds so it is critical that we do well in order to cover our activities for the year. The final number was \$2,200 net from sales of admission and raffle tickets, batteries, the CARA club table and food. This is a club activity and thanks to all who helped out.

Continuing with things financial, our Treasurer Bill Webb, W1AFX, reported a balance of \$12,111.49.

Oscar Fuller, KO1F, announced that there would be a cable pulling party to bring coax from the roof of the Danbury City Hall to the EOC in the basement. Weather permitting, the work was scheduled for Saturday, October 10 from 9AM to Noon and he was asking for volunteers to help out.

Finally, there was the continuing discussion on finding a more advantageous CARA repeater location.

Bill Thoren, N1TIW
Secretary

W1RT Rover at October Meeting

Tnx to John, W1RT, for bringing his VHF/UHF Rover van with him when he presented at the October meeting. The nighttime photos really don't do this rolling ham station justice, so the following are some daytime photos from a recent article about W1RT and his exploits. Save these photos for the next time a spouse of other family member frowns at that portable magnetic mount you want to affix to the roof

of the family chariot as you head out on vacation. Hmnn. Not all that bad, is it?



Top: W1RT Rover ready to roll.
Bottom: Interior view showing the VHF/UHF mobile units. The chair was an acquisition from a boating supply retailer.

Upper right: The antennas deployed (John said his enemy is trees...and bridges...)

Lower right: John W1RT, left, exchanges greetings with NN3Q as they pass on the road.



Connector Tip from KZ1Z

Hi Gang,

Often when out in the field you must make a connection watertight or find a way to easily distinguish different cables. One product that has found acceptance by many in the EMCOMM community is Rescue Tape.

This tape works well in all temperatures, makes a great seal and comes in various colors. Check it out at <http://www.rescuetape.com/>

This item would be handy to have in your go-kit. Rescue Tape remains flexible to -85 degrees, so will work during a Connecticut heat wave or a super cold Torrington ice storm. For take down, no need to use a knife to scrape off the coax seal for connectors. It is worth the look.

73,
Pete, KZ1Z

Last 2009 CARA-sponsored VE session

- **Saturday, December 5th**

Sessions will continue to be held at the Stony Hill Fire Station at 59 Stony Hill Road (Route 6) in Bethel, CT.

Registration begins at 11:30 AM. Walk-ins are always welcome—pre-registration is not required. But if you know you will be attending a session a “heads up” e-mail or phone call is always appreciated.

By the way, extra helping hands are always appreciated at license test events. If you're free on one or more exam dates please give Frank a call.

For further info, contact Frank Sileo, N1PE, frsileo@att.net, 203-438-0218.

Nets

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

Connecticut Phone Net (CPN) Monday through Saturday, 6 p.m., on 3.973 and Sundays at 10 a.m. on 3.965...

CW Connecticut Net, Nightly, 7 p.m., 3.640

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 Local VHF Net (now part of Area 5) : 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.)

Note: The CT Phone Net often moves to 3.973 to avoid ongoing early evening interference from a short wave operator

Get Ready, Get SET... Nov 14

It's time to get ready for the 2009 ARRL Simulated Emergency Test! ARRL Field Organization leaders are planning an event Saturday, Nov. 4, that will actively involve members of the Amateur Radio Emergency



Service (ARES), the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES), the ARRL

National Traffic System (NTS) and many other related groups that prepare for and respond to emergencies. Public service agencies and organizations in your community, ARRL Section or state will also be invited to participate.

If you don't know who to contact, please touch base with your ARRL Section Manager and/or Section Emergency Coordinator or Section Traffic Manager for assistance. See page 16 of QST for Section Manager contact information or check the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/sections/>>.

From there, you'll find links to ARRL section pages with appropriate contact information. There can be a role for you no matter what your level of experience. After all, it is a training opportunity to try out something new under simulated emergency conditions, learn or practice useful skills in traffic handling and net operation, and observe emergency communications protocols and management.

ARRL Field Organization officials in your area and Section are planning the simulated emergency scenarios that will be used during the SET event. These scenarios are designed to help you gain valuable operating experience, or to practice what you have learned previously or to put your Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course training into action. In any emergency -- real or simulated -- a number of public service or public safety agencies and organizations are often also involved in the response.

ARRL Section Leaders and local or district-level leaders are encouraged to work closely with these served agencies, and the SET is a great chance to demonstrate the capabilities of Amateur Radio in the community and beyond. For more information on whom the ARRL maintains a National Memoranda of Understanding with, check this page <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/mou/>>.

Guidelines and specific SET reporting forms for ARRL Section and Field Leaders will be posted online <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/forms>>. Please report your SET activities to your Section Leaders and to HQ.

(Some articles courtesy ARRL Letter)

Danbury City Hall – Cable Pulling Party – by Oscar KO1F

For years now, the Danbury City Hall – Emergency Operations Center has been plagued with limited feed lines to the roof for the Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) team. In fact, we had more antennas than feed lines. We were forced to continually swap lines depending on which radio we needed and what antenna was available. In addition, the cables were old, no one could remember just when the existing four cables were installed, and one of the four had to be taken out of service due to an open in the line (somewhere) that prevented its use. The situation was difficult and limited our options for operations.



Now that problem is behind us. Under the stewardship of Paul Estefan – Danbury Director of Emergency Management, the city generously provided 8 new cables for amateur use. In addition, a conduit was installed specifically to house the new cables to the EOC Radio Room.

The City had done their part, so it was up to us to get the cables in place.

Although the weather was a little threatening as the team assembled for the long-awaited cable installation project at the Danbury City Hall's – Amateur Radio Station (KX1EOC) in the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) everyone was anxious to get started and get the job done.



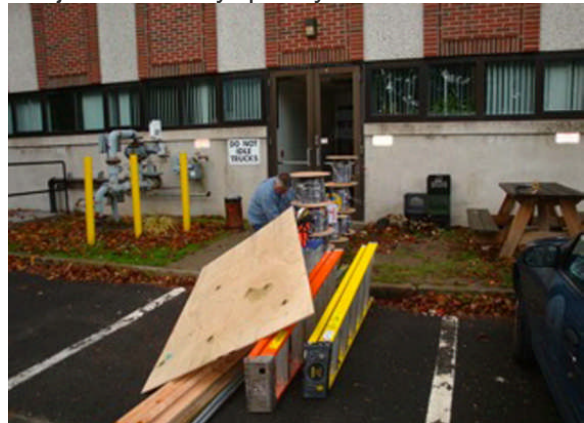
The City of Danbury Fire Department dispatched the big ladder truck to the scene to assist with lifting the equipment needed for the project to the roof. This included 8 reels of cable, additional pull ropes, and a dual ladder arrangement that would serve as a rack to dispense the cables (see photo below).



Once all the pieces were on the roof and assembled, the pulling could begin. The "roof" team fed the line to the newly installed conduit on the rear of the building, while the "basement" team pulled the rope and the eight cables, two CAT 5 cables, and two additional feed ropes (for future pulls if needed) down the pipe.



We were all surprised with the ease the cables made their way through the 4-inch pipe. With only two 90-degree turns and lots of "slime" on the cable, the cables moved quickly down the pipe and were laid out on the basement floor. Once we had enough cable on the floor, it was time to route and secure the cables in the overhead of the basement as we fed the wires down the hall and into the EOC Radio Room. With excellent teamwork and a great attitude from all the workers, this portion of the job went very quickly.



Once the work on the roof was done, the Fire Department returned and assisted by lowering the empty spools, tools, and supplies back down to the ground. We owe a big thank-you to the Danbury Fire

Department as especially, Captain Bernie Meehan and his team for their assistance with this project.

In addition, a special thanks to Jim Vigar of Ridgefield, an electrical engineer who was of great help directing much of this work. Jim has had lots of experience pulling cables and he helped with the planning and was there from start to finish to see the project through. Although he is not a ham - he volunteered his time and energy to help us make sure the job was done right. This project started at 9AM and by 1:30PM not only had we finished the project but also had time to enjoy a slice of pizza before departing.



The hams that showed up to assist demonstrated a great example of cooperation / collaboration / mutual aid 15 Hams from Danbury, Ridgefield, Sandy Hook, and Bethel showed up to help. And frankly the job could not have been done without them. Everyone pitched in as needed and all were kept busy throughout the morning.

The results were simply spectacular, we now have 8 new coax cables from the roof to the basement EOC Radio Room – ALL are dedicated to amateur radio and our needs. Over the course of the next few weeks, we'll dress it up a bit with patch panels and cleaning up the way the lines come into the room. This addition will yield a significant improvement in operations and provide us with flexibility we have not had in the past. As part of this project, we included

two CAT-5 cables for future use, plus two new pull-ropes, just in case there are additional cables that need to come down in the future.

Listed below are the hams that came to help

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A **BIG THANKS** to all!!

LILLIAN W RILEY, KB1SOU
ROGER W STRONG, KB1NYY
HERBERT K KOMMRITZ, N1KWV
CHRISTOPHER H DAY, KB1RXA
WILLIAM T THOREN, N1TIW
DANIEL W BARILE, KB1SQH
ROGER A MITCHELL, KB1STT
JOHN H WILL, III, KB1LYP
MICHAEL D ORAWSKY, JR, KB1SXW
JOHN M AHLE, W1JMA
GEORGE M SLATER, N1GS
KENNETH B WEITH, KD1DD
PAUL D ESTEFAN, KB1SOY
OSCAR P FULLER, JR, KO1F
HARLAN A FORD, W1QH

Finally we owe a big thank you to the City of Danbury and Mayor Mark Boughton for their continuing support and assistance.



Registration remains open through Sunday, November 22, 2009, for these online course sessions beginning on Friday, December 4, 2009: Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level 1; Antenna Modeling; Radio Frequency Interference; Antenna Design and Construction; Ham Radio (Technician) License Course; Propagation; Analog Electronics, and Digital Electronics. To learn more, visit the [CEP Course Listing page](#) or contact the [Continuing Education Program Coordinator](#).