



Capers

December 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, Dec 11, 8 p.m.
Stony Hill Fire Station***

From the President

Happy Holidays to all CARA members and Radio Amateurs!

The December meeting is CARA's annual holiday party. Please feel free to bring your spouse and family. The party will be pot luck, so bring a dish. If you are not such a great cook you can bring a store-bought item. CARA will supply sodas, but even here, the more the merrier.

We will also have a gift exchange. The procedure is if you bring one you may then take one. The items should be approximately \$15.00 in value and in some way ham radio related. We will also have a free raffle consisting of a few items. These items will not include an IC-7800. HI HI.

We still need a volunteer for field day chairman. Please feel free to speak up during the party. I am also requesting volunteers to present a 10-15 minute show-and-tell during one of the Spring meetings (March-May). Four or Five volunteers will be needed.

I look forward to seeing each of you at the Holiday Party. Thanks to all who have made 2009 a successful year.
73 de Frank, N8WXQ

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CARA Meeting Minutes for November 13, 2009

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

The program for the evening was a discussion of the *ARRL Operating Manual* by Frank, N8WXQ. He used the table of contents as an outline for his talk, selecting topics from each of the chapters. His aim was not to cover the manual in detail but to point out the wide range of information available in this publication and its importance in helping us to properly operate our stations.

A few of the topics he touched on were:

Amateur Radio rules, both formal and informal, including Band Plans. He also mentioned the National Simplex calling frequency of 146.52 MHz.

The Grid Locator Map is very useful, both for giving your location and finding out where the station on the other end is located.

Most of us are familiar with the material covered in the Emergency Communications chapter and Frank emphasized several items, including the ARES Personal Checklist.

As any one who knows Frank will tell you, DXing and Contesting are his babies and he enthusiastically covered those two Chapters and the one on Operating Awards.

Note: "Cute" or "witty" phonetics are ok, Frank said, as long as they don't get in the way of communication. But it is usually best to stay with the standard

phonetic alphabet as published in the References section of the Operating Manual- NITIW.

When it comes to day-to-day station operation this manual is extremely useful and we thank Frank for his presentation.

While on the subject, we are always in the market for monthly meeting programs. In the future I will be doing one on solar power and would be happy to share the stage with anyone else who is working with solar (electric or heating). As many of our past programs have shown, CARA members are doing interesting things and we would like to hear about them. Remember--you are among friends.

The Secretary's report was accepted as was the Treasurer's report of \$10,998.49.

There was a motion to provide up to \$100 to cover some of the costs of the General License up-grade classes. John, W1JMA, made the motion which was seconded by Ken, KD1DD, and it was passed by a voice vote of the members present.

Joe, AB1DO, has once again agreed to be Hamfest chairman. This is our main source of CARA operating funds so, please, everyone needs to get involved to make this event a success. It is especially important to have a full shift available on Hamfest day to ensure a smooth running, welcoming atmosphere.

We are also looking for a Field Day Chairman. Whereas the Hamfest mainly draws its attendance from Hams

(and their long-suffering significant others!), Field Day is our chance to present ourselves to the larger community.

Please contact Frank, N8WXQ, if you would be interested in this position.

Bill Thoren, N1TIW
Secretary

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.

On-Line DX Map Available

Due to the increasing interest in local HF communications, Eric, KB1EHE has coded a simple Web page that combines two great propagation resources in one spot. "I put it online using one of my Web servers." Eric said. Check it out at www.remarkable.com/HFpropagation.html

Eric invites everyone to use the site as often as you'd like.

"I coded the Web page so that the screen automatically refreshes every 5 minutes -- so you'll always have the latest propagation data.

"It's interesting to see the ebb and flow of propagation characteristics during the day and night.

"Beware of the white "hole" that's been challenging local HF communications after sunset!"

73, Eric KB1EHE.

NVIS Test Results de KB1EHE

Note: As many of you active in ARES know, Eric KB1EHE organized and conducted an NVIS test Saturday on 80M. Those that participated received this note from Ken and his chart reporting statewide results. But your editor thought it might be of interest to CARA club members in general as a report on 80M propagation locally. -KA1JDD

"Dear all,

"First off, I want to thank everyone who participated in yesterday's NVIS experimental net. As I mentioned to

someone on the air, I didn't know what to expect at 1:00 p.m. yesterday ...perhaps just crickets. I was pleased to hear the contrary. We had a whopping 41 check-ins and reports -- and (by the feedback I've received via e-mail) lots of fun. I've compiled the results into a single Web page. With standard (1024 x 768) settings on your monitor, the tabular data should appear nicely formatted whether you're running IE or Firefox as your browser. I tossed the Web page onto one of my servers. Check it out at the following link <http://www.remarkable.com/NVISnet.html>.

"I also want to thank my wife, Elsie KB1IFZ, who was feverishly typing the information that was flowing in during our QSOs. I had the easy job...just talking into the mic. Thanks, again, for taking up some of your Saturday for this exercise. I hope you found it of value.

73, Eric KB1EHE

FCC Looks to Revise, Clarify Vanity Call Sign Rules

On Wednesday, November 25, the FCC issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) -- WT Docket No. 09-209 -- seeking to amend the Commission's Amateur Radio Service rules to clarify certain rules and codify existing procedures governing the vanity call sign system, as well as revise certain rules applicable to club stations.

According to the FCC, almost 80,000 licensees have replaced their sequentially issued Amateur Radio call signs with a vanity call sign since the program began in 1996. When the program began, the Commission established what they called "the broad outlines" of the vanity call sign system, concluding that call signs generally should not be available for reassignment for two years following the death of a licensee, or expiration or termination of the license for that call sign. In doing so, the Commission made exceptions for former

holders of the call sign, close relatives of a deceased former holder and club stations of which a deceased former holder was a member.

The Commission did not, however, specify all of the procedures governing the vanity call sign system, but indicated that the procedures "would be set out in the Public Notices announcing 'starting gates' for the groups receiving initial priority and that the procedures would be adjusted from gate to gate as experience dictated." The procedures announced in the Public Notices announcing the gates are still in effect, but they are not set forth in the Commission's Rules.

The NPRM states that the FCC "now believe[s] that certain provisions should be codified in our rules, and others added, so that the vanity call sign system will be fair, equitable and transparent to all amateur service licensees. The Commission also decided in the Vanity Report and Order [issued in 1996] to resume issuing new club station licenses. We believe that certain rule changes to the club station licensing rules may be appropriate."

Further information can be found on the web at, <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/11/25/11220/?nc=1>.



Happy Holidays to all at CARA!