



# Capers

October 2011

Candlewood Amateur Radio Association - Post Office Box 3441 - Danbury, CT  
Visit us on the Web at <http://www.danbury.org/cara>



President – Roger Mitchell – NG1R – phone- 203-790-9697  
Vice President – John Will – KB1LYP- phone - 203-270-0475  
Secretary – Bill Thoren – N1TIW - Phone – 203-744-5138  
Treasurer – Bill Webb – W1AFX - phone - 203-775-0536

**Meeting: Friday, October 14, 8 p.m. @ Stony Hill Fire Station**

***From the President:***

As we come in to the autumn months it is time to get ready for the coming winter months. I have a couple of antennas I want to get up into my attic before the weather gets cold. As winter is the time that I plan on spending more time with the radios, I want to make sure they are in good shape for me to use.

There are a couple of hamfests coming up, the Nutmeg Hamfest this weekend, 10/9, and Nearfest the following week, 10/14-15, to pick up those additional items we need to last out the winter. Looking ahead to other events, daylight savings time ends on November 6 at 2:00 am this year so it is not an October event. It is also time to look to the nets and radio activities to keep us occupied during the colder weather since our outdoor activities are going to be waning. Perhaps it is also time to consider taking a course to improve our knowledge or skill level in a radio topic. I have signed up for the ARRL's online Emergency Communications course so I need to get busy on that. You may want to study for the next license level for our next VE session planned for December 3.

Think about inviting someone new or someone who has not been very active to our next meeting. Our program is going to be Steve Williams, CT ARES DEC for Skywarn, talking about Skywarn in Connecticut and how you can be involved in that. Speaking of Skywarn, there is an advanced Skywarn class to be held at the firehouse in Sharon, CT on October 17. Here is the link if you are interested: <http://cstar.cestm.albany.edu:7775/skywarn/Talks.htm>

**73, Roger NG1R**

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## **CARA Meeting Minutes, September 9, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 8 PM by CARA President Roger Mitchell, NG1R, with 18 members and guests present.

The program for the evening was a description of the features of Internet Linking for Amateur Radio, "EchoLink", by its developer, Jonathan Taylor, K1RFD. Currently this is one of two major Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) systems. The other is the Internet Radio Linking Project (IRLP).

John's EchoLink website gives all the information you need to get up and running but it was good to have him available to answer our questions and demonstrate his system.

Our thanks to John for taking time to help us understand this aspect of Amateur Radio.

After a short break we went on to the business part of the meeting.

The Treasurer's report of \$9,325.27 was accepted.

The Secretary's report for our most recent official meeting (June 10, 2011) was accepted.

*Note: It has been brought to my attention that since the July and August meetings are not Official Meetings, my references to "Meeting Minutes", "called to order" and "meeting adjourned" in the July 8, 2011 "Report" should be deleted.*

This was the last meeting before the Hamfest and Joe, AB1DO, reported that all is ready. He did remind us that we need a full crew on deck, especially for setup and teardown. Also it is helpful to give those selling tickets at the door a break so they too can go spend their money.

Steve, W1SMS, reported on the latest trek up the rocky path to the repeater site. Stairs were installed so we no longer have to balance on a stepping stone and crawl into the container.

The chain-link fence was repaired. During an earlier work party, brush and trees were cut. Future work will include setting up a grounding system tied into the commercial system already there.

Steve is testing the new 2 meter repeater system. When they can be shut down for the required work, we also need to do maintenance on the 440, 220 and 6 meter systems

Thanks to all who helped out (and will help out) on the various parts of this ongoing project.

As reported in the May 13, 2011 meeting minutes, CARA operated a Special Event Station celebrating CARA's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The station was on the air at the same time as the May 8, 2011 NEQSO Party and for their participation, Harlan, W1QH, Roger, NG1R, and Dan, W1QK, were awarded certificates and QSL cards. Congratulations and thanks to Dan, Harlan and Roger for operating this Special Event Station.

Frank, N8WXQ, has moved out of the area and John, W1JMA, has offered to pick up the QSL cards that Frank used to bring to our January card sort and pizza party. Thanks to John for covering this.

Two items on the October meeting agenda are re-structuring the dues schedule and programs that the members would like to see. In previous years we have had the Yankee Clipper Contest Club (YCCC) here and they always put on a good program.

Do you have a program you would like to do? Bring your ideas to the next meeting or let Roger know.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 PM.

Bill Thoren, N1TIW, Secretary

## CARA VE Session Schedule

Exam sessions are held at the Stony Hill Fire Station at 59 Stony Hill Road (Route 6) in Bethel, CT.

Registration begins at **11:30 a.m.** Walk-ins are always welcome. Pre-registration is not required, but is helpful and appreciated.

For further info, contact Frank Sileo, N1PE, in Ridgefield, CT at 203-438-0218 or [frsileo@att.net](mailto:frsileo@att.net).

- **Saturday, Dec 3, 2011**

### **NET CONTROL OPERATORS NEEDED FOR SUNDAY NET!**

Additional volunteer net controllers are still needed for the 7:30 Sunday evening CARA net. Right now, Bill, N1TIW and Harlan W1QH are handling the lion's share of the work. Some additional volunteers – even for one or two Sundays a month – would be appreciated.

Any licensed club member can handle the net. There's a simple script to guide you and it's excellent practice in net operation for ARES work you may be involved in. Contact Harlan or Bill to see how you can help.

### **Bitten by the Bug**

By Craig Miller, W8CR

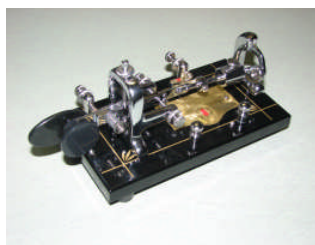
Ahhhhh, just put the kid on the bus, and the wife is on her way to the salt mine. Now, I have 45 minutes to see if I can scare up a quick QSO.

40 meters sounds pretty quiet this morning--no ear splitting static crashes. The usual morning CW junkies must have already headed off to work or out mowing the grass. I spin the dial down to 7.023 to see if any speedsters are still on. Some days, I can even keep up with them at 30-35 wpm. It must be later than I thought,

though. Those guys are gone too.

Tuning back up to 7.030, I hear a couple of guys wrapping up a chat at about 20 wpm: "FB FRED MUST QRT TO WALK THE DOG 73 ES CUL..." (translation: "Good copy, Fred, but I really gotta go to the bathroom! Best regards and see you later.").

I spin the dial up to 7.032, and don't hear any beeps or boops. I guess here is where I'll cast my line. "QRL?" (translation: "Anybody out there working that last rare DX station for your DXCC that I can't hear?"). Nuttin' heard. I'll QRL one more time before "CQ CQ CQ DE W8CR W8CR K". Silence. Again "CQ CQ...". Just the hiss out of the speaker. Well maybe this ain't gonna happen today. One more time...



Bam – I got one! He's got a nice strong signal too. But, wait. What the ...? What is he sending me? "DAAAAHHHHHH DIT DIT DIT DIT DAAAAHHHHHH DAAAAHHHHHHH DAAAAHHHH DIT DITDITDIT DIT DIT DITDITDITDAAAAHHHHHH." NUTS! He's using a bug, a mechanical key dating back to the old railroad days. It's an ingenious mechanism for sending high speed code, but it takes a lot of practice to send clear, copyable code. I can barely make out my callsign let alone his – this isn't gonna be fun.

I have two options:

1. Don't reply and pretend I didn't hear him. He's really strong, though, and most likely I am, too. He knows I can hear him. Plus, that's the coward's way out.
2. Answer him and tough it out.

I answer him. We exchange the usual stuff. My RST is 579, his name is Bill, and he lives in Niassa Fihls, errrrr, Niagara Falls, NY. "Niagara Falls, eh?" We've been wanting to visit there before our kid gets too old to even want to be seen with his parents, let alone ride in a car for 6 hours to look at water flowing over rocks. Plus, that's where Nikola Tesla built his hydro power station that illuminated Buffalo over a hundred years ago. I'm hooked now – lotsa questions for him.

As our conversation progresses, his dot-to-dash ratio varies all over the map, but I slowly get used his style of CW. It's like listening to British shows on PBS. At first, they're totally unintelligible, but over time, your brain figures it out.

I have to give him credit, he's using something that is a passing skill. I have a bug I bought years ago, but could never master it well enough for me to feel comfortable subjecting others to the noise.

Well, that 45 minutes passed fast. Time to get to work. I promised I would look him up whenever we get to Niagara. I guess it wasn't a total nightmare working him and his bug, after all. Kinda like talking to somebody with a thick accent.

After all, he is a New Yorker.

(Guest article courtesy W8CR via KB6NU)

## 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., 3.533 (note correction to 3.533)

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

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 +/- on Thursdays @ approx. 6:15 p.m. (following CT Phone Net.)

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### ***HB9DRV Sells Rights to Ham Radio Deluxe***

Simon Brown, HB9DRV, has sold the rights to his popular [Ham Radio Deluxe](#) software package to a group consisting of Mike Carper, WA9PIE, Randy Gawtry, K0CBH and Rick Ruhl, W4PC. All three principals have more than 25 years of experience with radio data communications. Rick Ruhl is the president of [W4PC Software, Inc](#) whose products include the *PakRatt*, *PKTerm* and *Radio Operations*

*Center* software suites. Randy Gawtry is the president of [Timewave Technology Inc](#) whose products include the PK and DSP families of data controllers and other commercial data products. Mike Carper is an experienced Fortune 500 technology executive, educator and featured speaker in the areas of wireless technologies and IT Service Management.

"After many years writing the *Ham Radio Deluxe* software it's necessary to take a break and hand the whole project over to another team," said Simon Brown, HB9DRV. "The

support effort required has become more than I can realistically manage, with many thousands of users, new radios and other hardware appearing all the time and unexpected changes to the infrastructure used by *Ham Radio Deluxe* such as QRZ.com, I no longer have any time at all for other projects. As some of you will know, I have formed a company called [SDR-RADIO.com GmbH](#) and I am now working in the Software Defined Radio arena with RFspace. This is the technology of the future; a future I want a part of. In 2012 I plan to return to England and get back on the air, something I haven't done much during the last 25 years."

The new owners are in the process of building a development environment for *Ham Radio Deluxe* and they plan to begin by addressing some of the bugs in the existing "To Do List" for an upcoming version 5.1 release. The 5.1 release will be made available at no charge to registered users when completed. (courtesy ARRL Letter)

### **SKYWARN Class October 17**

To All Litchfield County SKYWARN Spotters:

Please see the email below with the link for registration for Advanced SKYWARN Spotter training sessions being held this fall by NWS Albany NY.

An Advanced Spotter Training Session is scheduled to be held on October 17, 2011 from 6:30 to 8:30 P.M. at the Sharon Fire Dept main station. You must pre-register for this class and it is only open to spotters that have already attended basic spotter training.

Please click on the link below to register for this class.

Steve Williams K1SJW  
ARRL CT Section ARES DEC SKYWARN

Home 860-379-8392                      860-379-8392  
Cell 860-601-3323                    860-601-3323  
Email address k1sjw@arrl.net  
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*From: John Quinlan <John.Quinlan@noaa.gov>  
Subject: Re: Fall 2010 SKYWARN Winter Weather Training Sessions.*

*Dear SKYWARN ECs and Amateur Radio Club Presidents,*

*We have posted the Fall 2011 SKYWARN Spotter Training Sessions on our Web Page. We ask that you get the word out that the spotters planning on attending these sessions need to pre-register. This is especially important for those sessions being held jointly with Amateur Radio Club Monthly Meetings. The following link will take you directly to our registration page:  
<http://cstar.cestm.albany.edu:7775/skywarn/Talks.htm>*

*Having those who are planning on attending pre-register is also important so that we know how many handouts to bring with us, and it allows us to print certificates to hand out to those in attendance. If we do not have a session in your county this fall and you have people who are interested in attending a session, please make them aware of a session in an adjacent county which they would be able to attend.*

*These sessions are open to all current SKYWARN Spotters, members of the Amateur Radio clubs and anyone interested in CoCoRaHS. They are not for first time spotters from the general public as it is assumed that those in attendance have some prior knowledge of severe weather.*

**News Articles on ham radio? Items offered for sale or wanted to buy? Contact the CAPERS editor, Barry, at KA1JDD at ARRL.net.**

### CARA Hamfest 2011

Thanks to all the CARA members who came together on September 25<sup>th</sup> to help make the annual CARA Hamfest a success, and congratulations to Joe AB1DO for his organization skills and event leadership. The weather was great and we had a good turnout. Here are some photos of the day's events and activities:





# CARA HamFest 2011