



Capers

July - 2017

Candlewood Amateur Radio Association

P.O. Box 741 – Hawleyville, CT 06440-0741

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

President – Marcus Swearingen, AB1WV ab1wv@silverswear.net

Vice President – Jay Albano, N1NRP jjalbano@aol.com

Secretary – Gary Adams, N1GSA mrclipper69@yahoo.com

Treasurer – Tom Coury – WX1T couryt1@gmail.com

Directors:

Harlan Ford, W1QH hford01@snet.net

Roger Mitchell, NG1R roger.mitchell@snet.net

Dan Fegley, W1QK w1qk@snet.net

**CAPERS is the MONTHLY NEWSLETTER of the
Candlewood Amateur Radio Association**

Editor: Dan Fegley, W1QK

***Next CARA Meeting: Friday, July 14,
Stony Hill Fire Station***

Doors open at 7:30 for socializing and conversation Meeting begins at 8:00 p.m.

Agenda topics:

- ***KB1YHW – Repeater update***
- ***W1JGM - CARA Hamfest update***
- ***KD1YV - Webmaster update***
- ***NG1R, W1QH, AB1WV, W1QK – Field Day pictures, summary, discussion,
and suggestions for improvement***
- ***Short coffee break***
- ***W1QH – Presentation: Getting started with FLDIGI and PSK31***

President's Message - de AB1WV



Photo Credit: KB1YHW

All,

I'm happy to say we had a great Field Day this year! To all of those who participated and helped with organizing, setup and tear down; a heartfelt thank you. We must, of course, acknowledge the Three Amigos: Roger-NG1R, Dan-W1QK, and Harlan-W1QH, our Directors, without which the entire thing might have been a bust. They once again came through with organizing and getting commitments from enough people to pull it off.

Also thanks to Jay N1NRP, Gary N1GSA - or "that guy that makes the awesome breakfast burritos" as my 9-year-old calls him, did a bang-up job with the food again.

Speaking of my 9-year-old, Tori, I must relay a sincere thank you to everyone there from her. You all made her feel welcome and took her under your collective wings. She told me several times how much fun she had, and how she couldn't wait to do it again. For those of you not there at the end, she was tagging along with me on Sunday, and she helped with the tear down after she made 10 contacts during the last half hour of FD operations. She beamed with pride when Harlan attached an ARRL 2017 Field Day pin to her baseball cap for participation and helping. We'll have a more in-depth evaluation and opportunity to start making the next one even better at our meeting on July 14.

What is next? Why the CARA Hamfest of course! We'll be looking forward to the hamfest and what remains for us to do to make that a success. John, W1JGM, will be looking for volunteers to perform various jobs to make it a success once again. Start thinking about how you can help; and set aside August 27th.

This club is all ours, and it takes all of us to make it a success.

Thanks, and see you at the meeting on July 14.

73, Marcus
AB1WV

Vice-President's Message de N1NRP



Photo Credit: KB1YHW

Greetings CARA members:

First - I'd like to extend my thanks to club members who were involved with FD.

It was nice to see all the active club members enjoying the weekend together. We made a total of 1123 contacts. Roger, NG1R and Dan, W1QK, compiled and submitted our FD entry along with all the supporting evidence for the bonus points. Look for more data in this issue of Capers.

Gary, N1GSA, and Eric, KC1EDE kept us well-nourished. Bacon cooking on the grill, along with the coffee brewing sure did wake me up on Sunday morning. This year's fare didn't disappoint. I especially enjoyed Eric's delicious venison roast. Thanks to Dan and Harlan for proposing and arranging to purchase our two antenna mast kits, which sure made set up more efficient and break down a breeze.

I hope everyone enjoyed the Fourth of July weekend.

I had a good time. My daughter took me out to dinner at Brio Tuscan Grille at the Danbury Mall, where the pasta was out of this world.

Then a massage at the booth at the mall, followed by watching the fireworks display.

I volunteered to help for the second time at the fireworks in Ridgefield CT with other area hams from CARA, Bethel, as well as the Ridgefield CERT Team. It was another great show.

I hope you'll visit the club's web site at www.cararadioclub.org, where you'll notice in the calendar section, that CARA now sponsors a 10-meter Digital Net Tuesday evenings at 7pm on 28.100 MHz. PSK31 with 1500 on the water fall. W1QH is net NCS. Contact Harlan if you're interested in setting up your station for digital contacts.

Also, don't forget the 10 Meter CARA Rag-Chew net is held on Sundays at 7pm on 28.490 MHz. USB - plus the CARA net is held on our 2M repeater at 7:30 pm. All are welcome to check-in.

It's time again for the 39th Annual SCARC Hamfest. It's July 16th, at the Sussex County Farm and Horseshow Fairgrounds; 37 Plains Road, Augusta, NJ. This popular event always draws a crowd. I'll be leaving at 6:30 am Sunday morning and have room for two additional riders. Contact me if you'd like to go. We'll have a convoy with our friends from GBARC, Norwalk, and Stamford. Wear your walking shoes. I'll be distributing CARA Hamfest flyers. I'm looking forward to finding several good bargains - you can never have an enough Ham stuff.

See you at the meeting

73 - Jay

June 9- CARA Meeting Minutes de N1GSA

The meeting was called to order by Vice. Pres. Jay Albano at 8 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Annual Meeting was called to order and Harlan Ford was called, as Director, to run the election. A call for further nominations was called for. None were heard. The slate was elected by affirmation:

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| President | Marcus Swearingen |
| Vice President | Jay Albano |
| Secretary | Gary Adams |
| Treasurer | Tom Coury |

Directors:

Dan Fegley, Harlan Ford, Roger Mitchell

Treasurer reported a balance of \$5630.73

John, W1JGM, reported on the repeater utilization. Spruce Mountain has been reactivated due to the problems with the Motorola machine at Company A firehouse.

Nothing new to report on the Hamfest. There have been no firm commitments coming from vendors. There will be a new message on the repeater promoting this event. Also, a new information flyer will be sent out with the information about our 501c3 status. Hopefully this will be advantageous to our acquisition of door prizes.

The website manager was not present, so there was no update on this.

Dan and Harlan were called upon to present information on the updates for the antennas for Field Day. This involved setting up the new tripods and antennas that were purchased. This took, around 20 minutes, to complete the complete setup. The 40-meter antenna had a great SWR in the middle of the band, but the 75M and 20M had wires that were not even lengths on each half.

Adjustments were made to the 75M antenna, and a 20M replacement antenna is forthcoming.

Field Day discussion continued, with a presentation by Dan and Harlan. Roger, NG1R, explained the Operating Schedule and noted that a few operating slots remained open. Nothing says that there can only be one operator for each time slot. There is plenty of time for everyone to participate. Come out and have some fun. Everyone is welcome; members, friends, and even non-hams with an interest in seeing what Ham Radio is all about.

Motion made and seconded to purchase 20 Field Day Pins, for the first 20 CARA members who sign up and participate in Field Day, at a cost of \$6.00 each. Discussion followed. Motion carried.

Motion made, seconded and moved to forward \$300 to Gary for Food Supplies for Field Day.

It was suggested to start set-up at 9am instead of 8. Reasoning that the newer antennas will take less time to erect.

The Secretary's report was read. Motion made and seconded to accept the minutes as read.

Presentation of the first Worked All Connecticut Counties, WACC, award for 2017 was made to W1QK, Dan Fegley who completed the requirements of a verified contact with all 8 CT counties, totally on the CW mode – for an All CW Endorsement.

Being no further business, we went into the presentation portion of the evening which consisted of a tutoring on both N1MM and the use of the IC 756 pro 3 radios. This is the equipment that will be used for Field Day.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary Adams - Secretary

IARU Contest winner – N1GSA



N1GSA wins the 2016 IARU HF World Championship – Single Operator, Mixed mode, Low power, CT Section.

Congratulations, Gary!



CARA ARRL FD 2017 - another success.
de W1QK

We didn't experience any incidents besides the issue with RF getting into the security system, nor accidents (at least that I'm aware of) - so staying safe while having fun, which is paramount - was achieved.

In my opinion, band conditions were acceptable, considering where we are in

the Solar Cycle. 15M activity was a welcome addition to what I was expecting.

Hopefully, everyone had an enjoyable time.

We made over 1300 contacts - an improvement over last year's total.

This was a total CARA TEAM effort.

Thank you to all who participated - especially to the tear-down team during the brief rain shower that began at 2pm.

Also, while it's still fresh - keep in mind your suggestions and comments for discussion at the July CARA meeting.

What went well? What didn't go so well, nor as expected? What can we do to improve this CARA Team event?

1. Planning and management - NG1R, W1QH, W1QK
2. Equipment lists and operator shift coordination - NG1R
3. Arrangements and coordination with Tarrywile Park - NG1R
4. Transportation of CARA items to and from the Bethel EOC - KD1YV, KB1ZAC, KC1EHW, N1NRP
5. Antenna setup - KD1YV, W1QH, N1NRP, KB1ZAC, WA8UNS, KC1EDE, N1GSA, KC1BJP, W1JGM, W1JMA, WF1K, NG1R, W1NSK, W1QK
6. Food preparation/beverages - N1GSA, KC1EDE
7. CARA computer and software upgrade and setup - AB1WV, W1QH
8. Danbury EOC station equipment coordination - W1QH
9. Station equipment coordination, transportation & setup - W1QH, NG1R, W1QK, KD1YV, W1JGM, KC1BJP, KB1ZAC, W1NSK

- 10. Welcome station equipment and hospitality - KO1F, W1QH, W1JMA
- 11. Press release & publicity - KO1F, W1JGM
- 12. Safety Officer - N1NRP
- 13. Social Media – W1SOP
- 14. ARRL Field Day pins for participants - W1QH
- 15. Bonus Points - KD1YV, W1SOP, KC1BJP, KO1F, W1QK, NG1R, N1NRP
- 16. Tear-down team - KD1YV, W1QH, AB1WV, KB1ZAC, KC1EHW, N1NRP, N1GSA, KC1EDE, WA1JGA, NG1R, W1QK, Tori Swearingen, Jerry Nevins - NY1S
- 17. Results tabulation and log submission - NG1R, W1QH, W1QK

A look back at CARA FD '17:

Photo Credits: W1JGM, N1NRP, W1QH, WA1JGA, KD1YV, W1QK



Thanks to George, K2ZZ at RadioOasis for promptly replacing our 20M dipole. It worked famously during FD!

The FD Numbers:

CW QSO's: 682
CW QSO Points: 1,364

SSB QSO's: 441
SSB QSO Points: 441

Total QSO Points: 1,805 x Power Multiplier of 2 = 3,610 Claimed Score

Total Claimed Bonus Points: 1,170



CARA is an ARRL Affiliated Club





Eric, KC1EDE: CARA '17 FD is awesome!







Tori makes 10 contacts with help from Dad (CARA President), AB1WV and David, KB1ZAC.







Connecticut ARES Region 5 conducts a weekly net each Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

New Milford: 146.730 MHz -600 kHz PL 192.8 Hz
NARA analog repeaters for this net:

Washington: 441.850 MHz +5 MHz PL 77 Hz

Woodbury: 444.800 +5 MHz PL 192.8 Hz

Warren: 53.970 MHz -1 MHz PL 110.9 Hz

Please check in – All are welcome.



Connecticut Phone Net – CPN

Meets daily: M-F 6:00 p.m. 3.973 MHz.

Sunday: 10:00 a.m. 3.965 MHz.

CARA Contributions:

Wednesday Net control: Harlan, W1QH

Net Manager: Tom, WX1T



Weekly Sunday CARA NETS:

CARA 10M “Rag Chew Net”:

28.490 MHz. 7:00 pm Sunday

CARA 2M NET:

W1QI Repeater – 7:30 pm Sunday

CARA PSK Digital NET:

28.100 MHz. 7:00 pm Tuesday

Worked All Connecticut Counties Award, WACC – Sponsored by CARA:
<http://www.cararadioclub.org/activities>



CARA Secretary – Gary, N1GSA presents CARA’s WACC Award Certificate #2017-1 to Dan, W1QK

Photo Credit: N1NRP

Upcoming Contests, Hamfests & Meetings:

- July 8: IARU HF World Championship
- July 10: NARA Meeting
- July 10: ARES Meeting – Danbury EOC
- July 14: Monthly CARA Meeting – Doors open at 7:30
- July 15: NAQP RTTY
- July 15-16: CQWW VHF Contest
- July 5, 12, 19, 26: CWT 1300Z, 1900Z, 0300Z
- September 8-11: ARRL New England Division Convention – Boxboro, MA

New England and other local hamfests:

<http://web.mit.edu/w1gsl/Public/ne-fleas>

Complete Contest calendar at:

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

Upcoming CARA Calendar:

- July 14 : CARA meeting - doors open at 7:30
- July 28 : Monthly CARA planning meeting – SHFD – Begins at 8:00 pm
- August 3: CARA August Capers input deadline



OPERATING TIP

Logging ALL of the Contact Information

It's good practice to log all pertinent information with your contacts, and ensure that information is also included when uploading to LOTW. Many HF operators collect counties, while VHF/UHF operators are interested in grid squares. When uploading logged contacts to LOTW, please make sure that this information is included with each contact, or make sure that your LOTW information includes your grid and county and that it's accurate for each contact. If you've already uploaded contacts to LOTW with incorrect information, you can correct it and upload those contacts again. See this document on [fixing logs uploaded to LOTW](#).

How to Work A VHF Contest

A Basic Introduction to VHF Contesting with a Colorado Emphasis

Bob Witte, KØNR

25 October 2015

This is a brief introduction into how to operate during a VHF contest. The main contests, roughly in order of popularity, are the [ARRL June VHF Contest](#), the [ARRL January VHF Contest](#), the [ARRL September VHF Contest](#) and the [CQ Worldwide VHF Contest](#) in July. I prefer to think of these “contests” as “activity weekends” because the word

“contest” often makes people think of the fast-paced, chaotic, band-crushing experience of HF contests. VHF contests usually have a much different feel. The problem with the VHF bands is that they are often underutilized. You put out a call on simplex and nobody is there. Dead silence. But on VHF contest weekend, you are sure someone is going to be on the air, so the event tends to increase the activity, bringing people out of the woodwork. A VHF contest is more like a friendly reunion of local VHF enthusiasts.

(Sometimes a VHF contest can get pretty intense, especially if there is a significant band opening on 6 Meters. Then things start to sound like the HF bands with signals coming in from across the country.)

Frequencies

Frequencies above 50 MHz (6m and higher) are used during the contest. Most of the operation will be on 6 meters, 2 meters and less on higher bands. Most of the operation will be on the SSB portion of the band, so if you have an all-mode VHF rig, you’ll want to use it. Perhaps you have one of those HF rigs that also does VHF, such as the ICOM IC-706 or the Yaesu FT-100D. This weekend will be a great time to try it out.

The standard SSB calling frequencies are:

50.125 MHz

144.200 MHz

432.100 MHz

Most SSB operation on VHF is done using *horizontal* antenna polarization. A yagi or dipole antenna with radiating elements parallel to the ground produces a horizontally-polarized signal. A vertical whip antenna, commonly used for FM, produces a vertically-polarized signal. Working a station with opposite antenna polarity causes a substantial signal loss, so

it is best to maintain the same polarity. For serious SSB operators, this means horizontal polarization. Kent Britain WA5VJB designed a series of homebrew yagi antennas, that are cheap and easy to construct. See [Cheap Yagi Antennas](#) CW (Morse Code) is used on the weak-signal VHF bands, often intermingled with SSB operation. It is fairly common to have a station switch from SSB to CW when signals are very weak, since CW will get through at lower signal levels. You don’t need to be able to work CW to enjoy a VHF contest but it does have advantages.

If you only have FM gear, you will be at a disadvantage but you may still be able to work a bunch of stations. Starting in 2016 the ARRL contests allow the use of the 2m FM calling frequency, 146.52 MHz. Don’t monopolize this frequency. If it gets busy, move off to any of the other standard simplex frequencies. Never use a repeater for contest contacts.

The FM calling frequencies for the other bands are:

52.525 MHz

446.000 MHz

Operating Categories

The VHF contests have quite a few operating categories to choose from, depending on the number of operators at a particular station, the power level and other factors.

Feel free to read the rules to understand what is available, but for beginners these are the most relevant categories for the ARRL contests (CQ VHF is a little different):

- **Single Operator Low Power** – this is the “standard” single operator category, without running a big amplifier. Power limits are 200 W PEP on 50/144 MHz; 100 W PEP on 222/432 MHz; 50 W PEP on 902 MHz

and higher.

- **Single Operator 3 Band** – this is a new category starting in January 2013. Use 6m, 2m & 432 MHz only; 100 W or less on 6m/2m, 50 W or less on 432 MHz
- **Single Operator Portable** – this is the QRP category, 10 W PEP or less, portable power source, portable antennas, cannot be set up at a permanent station location
- **Single Operator FM Only** – this is a new category starting in January 2013. Use FM only on the bands 6m through 446 MHz, 100 W or less on all bands.

You might also try being a rover, which means operating from more than one grid during the contest. If you operate in a Rover category, you need to say the word “Rover” after your callsign so that other operators know that you will be operating from multiple grids:

- **Rover** – this is the “standard” rover category, 1 or 2 operators, use all bands above 50 MHz, 1500 W PEP
- **Limited Rover** – operator category, 1 or 2 operators, 6m – 432 MHz only; 200 W PEP or less on 6m/2m, 100 W PEP or less on 222/432 MHz

As a beginner, you can probably just choose your category based on the equipment you have. Or, if you want to go mountaintopping, consider operating as Single Op Portable. If you want to operate mobile from a number of grids, then choose one of the rover categories.

Making A Contact

OK, so you get on the right frequency and the right mode. Now what? You need to make a contact. An official contact requires that the two operators exchange callsigns and grid locators. VHF grids are a system that divides the world up into rectangles that are 1 degree of latitude by 2 degrees of longitude. You can

work each station once per band for contest credit (except for rovers, who get to work everyone again in a new grid).

For a map of Colorado with Grid Squares shown, see

http://www.k0nr.com/rwritte/vhf_grids.html
All of Colorado Springs and Pueblo are in grid DM78.

All of greater Denver and Castle Rock are in DM79.

Longmont, Loveland and Fort Collins are in DN70.

If you are close to the edge of a grid, you will need a good map or a GPS receiver to figure out your grid.

More information on VHF operating can be found at the Rocky Mountain VHF Plus web site: www.rmvhf.org

Plug it in, turn it on and work someone on VHF this weekend.

73, Bob K0NR



CARA used N1MM+ Contest Logger during the ARRL 2017 Field Day.

For a free download, visit:

<https://n1mm.hamdocs.com/tiki-index.php>

CT Section Manager's Message:

July, 2017

No CT SM message available.

CARA Western CT Hamfest: de W1JGM

To: All Amateur Radio Enthusiasts,
Commercial, and Related Vendors
The Candlewood Amateur Radio Association,
Inc., is scheduling our annual Western
Connecticut Hamfest on Sunday **August 27,**
2017 this year. Please note this new date!

The venue and time will be the same; set up 6
to 8AM, with doors opening at 8AM till
1:00PM at the Edmond Town Hall, Newtown,
CT.

There is a large indoor display area with
tables and chairs available, electricity can be
available. A large outdoor area for displays
and tailgating is available for those with
outdoor displays requirements.
Refreshments will be available, inside with
seating available to join your friends.

The Western Connecticut Hamfest is an
approved ARRL Hamfest. If you or your
company can sponsor a door prize or a prize
for our raffle, please let us know. We will also
have space available for advertisement and
handouts.

To insure your spot, register early.
For further information or to make
reservations, contact John Morelli (W1JGM)
at (203) 417-0160 or W1JGM@aol.com

Please forward this correspondence to
anyone interested.

See you there!

John Morelli, W1JGM
Chairman – 2017 Western CT Hamfest

2017 CARA Ham Exam Schedule:



2017 Amateur radio exams sponsored by
CARA at the Stony Hill FD:
September 9, December 2
Saturdays - starting at 11:30 a.m.

Walk-ins are welcome, but it's helpful if
candidates call or e-mail Frank Sileo, N1PE,
at 203-438-0218, or send a message to
frsileo @ att.net



June 12 CARA VE Team
(L-R) Leslie - KB1LVW, Jon – NJ1U, Don –
KK1DF, Scott – N1CWV, Frank – N1PE.

Photo Credit: N1NRP



Gerard LaPorte – KC1HPF; upgraded from Technician to General. Congratulations!
Photo Credit: N1NRP

Also: Mike Jasinski – KC1HSP, Technician Class.

Other upcoming VE exam sessions:

Washington CT firehouse on Bee Brook Road at 9 AM Saturday morning on the following dates:
July 8, Oct. 14

Please feel free to direct questions to w8zy@hotmail.com
Walk-ins are welcome and we will be testing for all classes.

Sponsor: Northwest Amt
Location: Litchfield Firehouse, Litchfield, CT
Time: 7:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)

Aug. 8, Sept. 12, Oct. 10, Nov. 14, Dec. 12.



CW Ops CW Academy: Interested in learning CW or improving your skills?

Check out www.cwops.org

“CW is an art of incremental improvements over a lifetime, getting ever closer to an ideal of perfection which is always moving and always presents a new horizon to strive for.” Carlo Consoli

CWops “CWT” Every Wednesday Regular Tests:

Full Speed Start: 13Z, 19Z, 03Z (+1), 1-hour each session Exchange: name/number (members) name/SPC (non-members) **Special Slow Speed sessions for CWA graduates will be June 14, 2017** Avoid DX pileups!

CWops CW Practice Sessions:

For: On-air practice at 13+ wpm for CWA students, graduates, others wishing to have real-time CW practice with others similarly afflicted with a love of CW and a need to improve proficiency, with a goal of 25+ wpm.

Purpose: To improve CW through on-air practice at a time and place when others are likely available. Time and place: 7035-7045 kHz every Tuesday, Friday and Sunday around 6-8 pm local time. That means possible overlap with other time zones, which may mean 5 pm in Texas and 7 pm in New York. Conditions at this stage of the sunspot cycle make a comparable plan on 20m and higher for international contacts a risky proposal so for now we will limit this to 40m local evenings. 73 Jerry, AC4BT, CW Academy Manager

From the CWOps Reflector:

Signal reports are not relevant to contests.

Therefore, contest sponsors should take a page from the CWops book and not include any signal-report requirement for contest exchanges.

What should be included in contest exchanges?

That depends on the contest. Some are optimized for county hunters, in which case a designator for the county is relevant.

An excellent and relevant exchange element is the Maidenhead grid. Whether that should be 2-character, 4-character or 6-character grids depends on the scope of the contest. The Maidenhead system is a very efficient way for contesters to know where a station is located, which is helpful for tracking propagation and setting beam headings.

Operator name is a friendly exchange element. Almost any exchange elements are fine, as long as we throw away those silly signal reports. All HF DXpeditions should replace signal reports with 2-character Maidenhead grids.

73, Bruce Prior N7RR

The actual creator of the 5NN abbreviation for a full report was Don Miller, W9WNV. He was trying to shorten exchanges on his expedition operations. The original report he came up with was FNN, but found the actual 5 was better and quicker than the F. Likewise on expeditions the actual report doesn't matter, it's whether or not you're in the log.

73, Mike AD5A

Hey, guys....in contests, it is NO BIG DEAL. You can either fight it, fuss about it, or go with the flow and wind up with more Qs than the whiners, complainers, and ax grinders.

Larry NN5O (ex-WB5EIN)

> -----

Agree on Maidenhead location. When I work DX my report is normally TU 5nn CA . . Which zeros

in on my location to within 997 miles (the length of Calif) of my actual QTH.

73, Art W6KY

Well after seeing all the bandwidth devoted to the issue of a simple and useless report I have to jump in. Let me first say that I do enjoy CW contesting and have often occupied "2nd chair" as a relief operator for a couple of different WRTC contestants in major contests as well as Single Op efforts from my own antenna disadvantaged QTH and that of W4UH who invites me to keep the corrosion off of his antennas once and a while. I have always viewed contesting in the framework of Hans', K0HB's philosophy of "a boy and his radio" with the owner/operator working to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of his or her station and operating skills, the stated raison d'être of contesting. As a youth, I would enter various contests for new countries, states or zones or the thrill of what to me at the time was high speed CW (20 wpm). Sometime in the early '70s I became aware of "contest stations", entities that seemed to sit idle for a good part of the year only to belch forth prodigious amounts of RF on "contest weekends". It was still pencil and paper logging and an honest report let the station ops on both ends know how they were doing with that effectiveness/ efficiency thing. The advent of computer logging into the hobby marked the change in the flavor of contesting to me. While innocuous and marvelous at first, helping me to avoid mistakes in re-reading my hand-written logs, (my 6th grade teacher predicted that I would become a doctor when she gave me a "D" in handwriting in stark contrast to "As" in everything else. Said she just couldn't give me an "F". I failed my first 20 wpm code test when neither the examiner nor I could read a solid minute of the test text I copied by hand. I taught myself to 4 finger type and came back 90 days later and passed using an IBM Selectric provided by the FCC Field Office upon request.) computer logging rapidly

morphed into a tool that has consumed the operator's responsibilities for precise copying, logging and station control, thereby diluting the very attributes contesting is supposed to enhance. Keyboard CW has all but eliminated any sense of a personal "fist" and the "prefill" aspects of these programs has virtually eliminated a contest op's responsibility to pull weak signals out of the mayhem. Today, when the "logging program" quits so does the RF output of the station and the ops run around in circles with their heads on fire until the designated "IT" guy figures out what went south, the hardware, the software or the keystroke sequence the operator(s) used that inadvertently shut the software down. Now I am not not in awe of the guys that have developed all of this code and marvel at the applications and hardware industries that have been spawned as a result but submit that instead of enhancing an operator's skill set and a station's effectiveness it has done just the opposite when everyone is "599".

The discussion of a "slow speed" CWT enters into this as well. Are we all so married to our keyboards and 30+ wpm code speeds that we truly can't embrace the presence of 15 wpm ops into our midst? We were all there once and if you want the ART of CW to continue we need to treat it as such. I propose a quarterly "mechanical" CWT, straight keys, side swipers and bugs only kind of like the ARRL SKN. I would venture a guess that speeds would drop and we would all remember what it is like to form a CW character by hand, the Art of CW.

For What It Is Worth, Vic WA0USA #645

Thanks John for that great list! And for the others who chimed in with additions....

I've threatened to send accurate RST in CQWW, but I always chicken out. My very first operation as DX .. AD6E/KH9 back in '92, I used a HB logger

on my laptop that needed a 3 digit "number" of some sort. So I copied ... and sent .. accurate RST the whole time I was there. Kind of odd in a way. Quite often I would get the exact same RST back (not HNN) which was not very believable. Maybe next time I'll program the macro this way: <<<<HAN>>>> and see if anyone notices. In the parlay of cut nmbrrs that would translate to 519. Keeping a phony RST as part of a contest exchange is pretty archaic. I note that the oldest contest ... SS ... doesn't use it. Nor do many other events such as CQP, CWO, CWT, Sprint, NAQP, etc ...But then if CQWW got rid of "useless" info such as RST and a zone number that the computer generates from the call sign, they wouldn't have any exchange at all.

73, Alan AD6E

If I can barely hear a station why should I give him a 5NN just because that is so-called tradition? If he is barely readable then he get's say a 319. The "9" is only a guess on my part cuz I can't tell if his tone is perfect or not.

73, "Hank Greeb" N8XX

What you give out for a signal report is up to you. What I record as a received signal report may or may not be different. If you upload SENTERST 319 or 599 to LOTW it doesn't care, it doesn't even record it.

As I recall when we were all paper logging, we sent real signal reports in a contest. It was just as easy and fast to write "579" as "599". The 5NN thing began with computer contest logging. It is meaningless. When someone sends me a 579 forcing me to edit the default 599, it reminds me of folks who drive in the left lane at exactly the speed limit while a bunch of folks behind suppress their road rage because there's a truck in the right lane also going exactly the speed limit.

Rob, K6RB

Seeing this thread continue ad nauseum is infuriating. So, I am finally giving in to a weak moment and giving my completely useless \$.02. There is a distinct difference between Contest Exchanges and non-Contest Exchanges. In a non-Contest Exchange of information, the RST might actually be useful and desired. But in a Contest Exchange, if the RST is a required element, the actual numbers ARE IRRELEVANT. You send 5NN, the rest of the exchange, and MOVE ON. The objective in a contest is almost always to log as many contacts correctly as fast as you possibly can and rack up the highest score you can. The discussion of what your actual signal report is during a contest doesn't matter because nobody cares!!

Sincerely,
John, K4AFE

You are in a contest
You are DX
You gave the other station 5NN
You are the strongest (only?) station on the band
You said you had a brand new radio
You said you had a brand new antenna
You are working someone with a computer generated macro for 5NN
You are a YL
You are working someone who needs your QSL

Feel free to add to the list.
73 de K1ESE
John

Grrr... eetings !

When I make a contest QSO, it is simply because I am searching for particular people I want to work all-time for various reasons. I recognize friends who have the Contestitis, and give them a point - especially from here, rather than at home. I know

(or think I know) that the actual report is irrelevant, so I give a true report in case the operator is actually listening, in the vain hope of being helpful. The "R" bit refers to my local conditions, but if he's trying to work Europe from outer space, maybe R3 helps an intelligent contester, [oxymoron ?] and S2 ought to, too, two, tu-tu. I have given 55A (A for Aurora) in the hope it helps. We are here to help others; what the others are for is beyond my comprehension.

QAC - Mort, SV5/G2JL

In contests I *always* give 5NN. Not only is a signal report (of some kind) req'd in most (but not all) contests, it queues the brain up to accept the exchange element, be it grid, serial #, state, name, whatever. It "resets" the brain or makes it ready, etc. When I get into a contest and someone calls me WITHOUT the req'd signal report and just sends me the exchange I probably blow it in 30-40% of cases. Same with wildly varying speeds. Don't like it ! In HF Q's (even if running EU, say on 160 or 80) I normally give an honest report. On 6m, depending on the opening, I will sometimes skip the 5NN (as nobody cares) and just send "FN66" as the far end just wants the grid (in most cases). I have in normal everyday Q's given 337c reports or even 5NNK reports. Nobody seems to know what I am on about. I still hear guys CQing and then end with B K (not run together)

My wife is right. CW is a dying art.

I hope she's wrong.

Mike VE9AA (licensed since 78)

p.s.-N3QE's comments mirror my own. Hate leading zeros and weird cut #'s. In this past weekend's WPX I had some EU QRPper who I kept missing his serial # and I kept saying "NR?" and would hear 5NN 0 0 6 or something. I even

went so far as to say 6? 6? and would get back the whole 5NN -----6 -----6.....(instead of just a C or an R or even a QSL) .it was exasperating, hi hi In the military, I encountered a phrase that has stuck with me ever since, probably because it is so common.

To wit: CWOps sponsors an academy for people to learn the art of Morse code. It is staffed by dedicated volunteers, and has a waiting list, attesting to its desirability and success.

There are more or less 52 Gregorian Wednesdays in a Gregorian Year, each with 3 CW Tests, spread out through two consecutive UTC days for each of them. On 4 or 5 Gregorian Wednesdays, we're all asked to limit our code speed to 20 wpm as the new folk give it a try. What's sodamned hard about just doing that? Every keyer and logger I've ever seen has a speed control and 20 WPM is on it. 30+ WPM is intimidating to new people, and D4B at a Farnsworth 20 WPM is equally so. For Pete's sake folks, actually getting on CW with a stranger at any speed is intimidating to people who have never done it before, especially in a contest, which CWT clearly is. I would expect, on only rational grounds, that the response to "20 WPM on 14 Jun" should be just "OK" from everyone in a group that is trying to bring new folks into the Morse hobby. Geez, just do it, and maybe meet and help a new ham in the mode. The phrase? All this list chatter is simply "Trying to pick fly poop out of the pepper." 20 WPM isn't going to kill anyone, it will likely encourage new people, and if you just can't go to 20 WPM, take a nap.

73, Fred ("Skip") K6DGW #142
Sparks NV USA

PS: Today is my 77th birthday and as such, I am officially a curmudgeon. I still respect everyone's right to their opinion. I also respect the right of everyone else to ignore it.

I've missed the last couple of Gregorian Wednesdays due to excessive busy-ness, but I started looking for ways to spice up the CWT's for me since I was becoming more than a little bored with typing the same calls and pressing Enter twice. I unloaded the call history around the first of the year although there's one in my head since it's all the same people.

I finally started doing them from home, 100W and sometimes QRP, with a compromised antenna, hand paddling, and logging with a mechanical pencil on a Big Chief tablet. I still know the exchanges for most of the usual suspects, but it's S&P only, I get to touch the radio much more, and Q's aren't slam dunks.

My hands don't work as well as they used to and I'm generally sending in the 20-24 WPM range which is about my speed limit. As some have noted, just because I'm sending at 20 doesn't mean I can't copy faster, but do whatever you want to if I call you and you actually hear me.

I'm planning on at least one and maybe two of the CWT's on 14 Jun, will likely miss 7 Jun. I'll probably set the keyer to 18 WPM or so. I think Tom's suggestion is great! I'll eventually run out of ways to spice up CWT's on my own, some other ideas will extend my time in them. My straight key is a striking hand-made machine-shop wonder from "UN" or something like that. It's very clunky however, not sure I'd last an hour but would be fun to try.

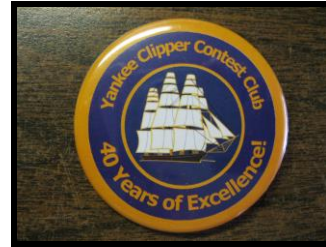
73, Fred ("Skip") K6DGW

For Sale:

Alpha Power –

Alpha 99 High Performance Amplifier

Alpha 99 high performance HF amplifier. 10-160 Meters including WARC bands. Manual tuning. Wired for 240 VAC. Uses two 4CX800 tubes. Full power (1500 watts) output with 55 watts input. This amp is clean both inside and out. The amp was purchased from Alpha in 2002. SN 9902240255. There are no scratches, no rubbed-off lettering, or dents in the case. This is a one-owner amplifier. Non-smoking environment. There are no mods. Included with the amp is a factory operating manual. Includes two new spare matched Svetlana 4CX800 tubes in unopened boxes with receipt. Extra spare parts also included. This amplifier will NOT be shipped - however, original cartons are included. Inspection, demonstration, and local pickup in South Salem, NY. No trades. Being sold by the XYL of WA2EVH (sk). Call to make an appointment to check out this awesome amplifier. Pictures available to email. Serious potential buyers please. Asking \$3200. (914) 548-2040.



YCCC News

The next scheduled meeting of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club will be at the ARRL New England Division Convention in Boxboro, MA on September 9.

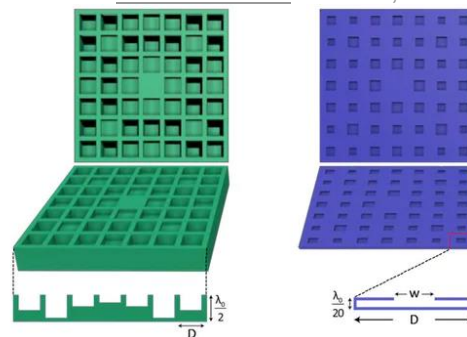
Member and Station News:

Your story could go here in the next Issue of CARA Capers. Contact W1QK, Capers editor

Sound-diffuser panels get a big slim-down



Ben Coxworth June 7, 2017



A conventional Schroeder diffuser (left), compared to the new "ultra-thin" Schroeder diffuser (right) (Credit: North Carolina State University)

In places such as recording studios, movie theaters or concert halls, the walls are covered in panels that minimize echoes by scattering sound waves. Known as sound diffusers, they tend to be quite thick, using a lot of material and taking up a lot of

space. Thanks to research currently being carried out at North Carolina State University and China's Nanjing University, however, such panels may soon only need to be about one tenth the thickness that they are now.

The most commonly used type of sound diffuser, the Schroeder diffuser, is made up of evenly-spaced square depressions that are identical in length and width, but that differ in depth. This arrangement is what causes sound waves that are hitting the panel to get scattered – by contrast, a perfectly flat, uniform surface would reflect the sound waves like light off a mirror, creating echoes.

For regular Schroeder diffusers to work, their thickness has to be about half the wavelength of the lowest sound that they're required to diffuse – this can make them several inches thick, if not thicker. With the *new* version, however, their thickness only needs to be five percent of the wavelength.

As with traditional Schroeder diffusers, they're made up of a series of squares. Each square is actually an opening into an underlying shallow cavity, and the dimensions of those cavities are the same for every square. The openings themselves are different sizes, however. The end result is the same as using same-sized squares of different depths –

the sound gets scattered, and echoes are avoided.

A paper on the research was recently published in the journal *Physical Review X*.

Source: North Carolina State University

Keep in mind the “sound texture” where your home station is set up. The Red Barn Environmental Center at Tarrywile would benefit with some Schroeder diffuser panels. (Editor)

NOTICE TO CAPERS READERS

CAPERS is an important aspect of our club. It's time for **more participation** with this publication.

CAPERS is looking for ANY and ALL input.

Don't be shy, just send a few words, a picture, link, or short message to Dan Fegley, your Editor:

w1qk@snet.net

CAPERS deadline for input: LAST Friday of the Month preceding the meeting.

CAPERS will be released: Monday before the scheduled Friday monthly meeting – or earlier if possible.

73- Dan, W1QK