



**Candlewood Amateur
Radio Association Inc.**
P.O. Box 3441
Danbury, CT 06810

**Meeting this week
April 12th at 8:00 PM
Ken Neubeck
Speaks About
Six Meters --
The Magic Band**

**Have You Renewed
Your Membership
Yet?**

**Page Down
for your monthly
CARA Capers!**



CAPERS

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

President – Jeff Cantor – K1ZN
Vice President – John Ahle – W1JMA
Secretary - Judy Etzler – N1TGK
Treasurer - Frank Etzler – N8WXQ

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April 2002

Meeting Friday April 12 at 8:00 p.m.

President's Column

Jeff Cantor, K1ZN

The March meeting featured a guest speaker and a ham that we all love and admire, Betsy Doane (K1EIC). Betsy is the Connecticut Section Manager to ARRL. She discussed matters of interest to Connecticut's amateur radio community, and described the Connecticut Section organization. Best of all, we got to spend some quality time with Betsy. Gerry (KH6HU) who is leading the educational project for the League also joined us and discussed the educational project and how we can participate as a club. Gerry came East with his YL who is a student at Yale University and told us about his home QTH as well. Thanks Gerry and we look forward to future "eyeballs" and maybe a future QSO from the Islands.

Herb (N1KWV) a guest at the meeting, asked if CARA would be willing to provide communications service to

SPARTA Cycling, Inc, the sponsor of the Housatonic Valley Classic cycling event. We received a presentation from SPARTA representatives – a commercial venture sponsoring this event. We discussed CARA's possible participation at the Work Meeting last week, and it was determined that CARA would not participate directly as a club, but individual members wishing to participate should contact Herb directly (N1KWV@arrl.net) to indicate their interest.

The April meeting will feature Ken Neubeck (WB2AMU), a renowned 6 meter operator and author on the subject will come to our April meeting and present on "The magic band." Six meters has been very active this winter, and I know that this presentation will be well received.

Finally, we are rapidly approaching the time of the year when we turn our attention to next year's CARA leadership. This should not be taken lightly, as the leadership is expected to

provide the direction and energy for the club as a whole. Not an easy task, as the hobby is evolving and the membership, while growing a bit this past year, is tending to stray to other endeavors such as retirements and other hobbies – computers and the like. The challenge is to keep the group together and growing through events, programs, and educational activities.

Much like any other organization, the time comes when leadership should rotate so that fresh ideas can be brought in and new perspectives highlighted. I say all of this to try and impress on our membership the need for new folks to come forward and new ideas to emerge. Your present leaders – officers and directors - have been in office for three years plus. I am stepping down this year to both move in new directions myself and to make way for new leadership. I hope this vacancy is truly filled by NEW leadership – not just a rotation of faces from one office to another – again, so that new people can bring in new ideas and excitement.

I thank all of my fellow officers and directors for their fine work and dedication to CARA. Frank and Judy give tirelessly to the club, especially behind the scenes in keeping the club moving. John is a born leader and has devoted countless hours to the club, especially in his work infiltrating CSMA and getting our coordination in place. As we all know, in his efforts to promote CARA's interests with respect to our repeater, he built a structure for CSMA. The entire state owes him gratitude.

Dan and our directors also are thanked for their behind the scenes support of the club. Having said all of this, lets give them a break now and have others step up and volunteer to serve for the next year! If you are up to the

challenge, let Tom and the Nominating Committee know of your interest.

I look forward to seeing you at the April meeting.

de Jeff/K1ZN

Secretary's Report

CARA Meeting – March 8, 2002

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 p.m. by President Jeff Cantor K1ZN. He announced the business meeting would be brief as there was a substantial program to cover.

MINUTES – A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes for the February meeting as published in the Capers. The motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Frank N8WXQ reported there have been only minimal expenses. The checking account balance was \$3,858.43. A motion was made and seconded to accept the treasurer's report.

OLD BUSINESS – Full committee reports were waived in the interest of keeping the meeting short.

REPEATER COMMITTEE – Ken KD1DD reported the directional antenna still needed to be put up when weather permits.

FIELD DAY – Jim KD1YV reported the permit for use of the park had been approved. The town waived the fee as long as no damage is done. A grill has been procured and the people for the food committee have been obtained. Field Day will be held the fourth weekend in June.

HAMFEST – John W1JMA reported the new flyer was completed and requested anyone who will be attending any of the various ham events to take a supply to be distributed at those events.

CT/NE QSO PARTY – Frank N8WXQ reported plans for a NorthEast QSO Party have been finalized. There was discussion this may be a yearly event. This event will be held the first weekend in May.

TECHNICIAN CLASS – James KE1AI reported there are three sessions remaining and requested a VE session be scheduled as shortly thereafter as possible so the students have the information still fresh in their minds. PROGRAM – Representatives from The Housatonic Valley Classic bicycle race made a presentation describing the event and requested members of the club to act as tactical communicators to monitor the location of the racers and report the information to the command post.

ARRL – Section Leader, Betsy Doane K1EIC, and Jerry Hill, KH6HU, were in attendance to report on activities of the ARRL at the National level. Betsy reported this is her last year as Section Leader. If anyone is interested in running for this position, please talk with her as she would be delighted to discuss the different aspects of the job. She talked about the various changes that have occurred over the past ten years such as the melding of computers with radios. She spoke of the importance of emergency preparedness, especially in light of September 11th, and to understand a program for emergency services has been in place and not “re-invent the wheel”. Support is needed for the emergency coordinator for the section to implement the program.

AMATEUR RADIO EDUCATIONN AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM aka “The Big Program” – Jerry Hill KH6HU distributed a handout and explained the project which will bring amateur radio into the classroom as a significant resource for teachers. The project will use the technology in wireless communications to enhance student learning through the practical use of mathematical and scientific concepts.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss a motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Etzler, N1TGK
Recording Secretary

Monthly Meetings

Meetings are held the second Friday of every month, September through June at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, in Brookfield, CT, near the junction of Routes 25 and 133.

Meetings start at 8:00pm (coffee, story swapping and all around rag chewing begin at 7:30pm).

This month’s meeting will take place on **Friday, April 12th**

Introducing the New England QSO Party

(Reprinted courtesy of *Scuttlebutt*, the YCCC newsletter)

We hope you'll join us May 4-5, 2002, for an exciting new operating event - the New England QSO Party. It will take place on the first weekend of May (4th and 5th) and we'd like to ask for your

help in making it successful. The contest starts at 4pm on Saturday and goes until 10pm, then on Sunday it runs from 7am until 8pm. The NEQP web site at <http://www.neqp.org> has the full set of rules, plus maps and other related tools. With the cooperation of the groups sponsoring individual state QSO parties in New England, we've combined our efforts to build one event that has the potential for a lot more activity and fun. Thanks to the following groups: Candlewood ARA (CT), Framingham ARA (MA), NH-ARRL (NH), CTRI Contest Group (RI), Central Vermont ARC (VT) and the Yankee Clipper Contest Club.

We are looking for clubs or individuals to sponsor plaques for the top scorers, perhaps you might want to sponsor one? We're estimating the cost to be \$60/plaque but that may drop as we finalize the design and vendor. One of our prime goals is to make sure that all New England counties (67) are active in the contest. YCCers live in about half of the 67 counties - but mostly those that are fairly populated. Overall, there are 7 counties with less than 100 hams, and 38 more with only 100-500 hams.

We do expect to have several mobiles out during the contest trying to get to as many counties as possible. If you can help us identify people who will be active in the smaller counties it will help us a great deal - and if you have the capability to go HF mobile, we'd love to add you to our list of planned mobile operations.

Please contact us (info@neqp.org) if you have any questions or suggestions on how we might boost activity in the NEQP, and especially if you'd like to help out in any way. Hope to hear you on during the NEQP!

-- Tom Frenaye, K1KI
frenaye@pcnet.com
-- Bob Hess, W1RH
bhess@boston.cbs.com

New England QSO Party
P O Box 3005
Framingham MA 01705-3005
<http://www.neqp.org>

New England QSO Party Rules

OBJECT: To contact as many New England stations in as many New England counties as possible. (New England stations work anyone)

DATE: First full weekend of May (May 4-5, 2002; May 3-4,2003).

CONTEST PERIOD: 2000Z Saturday until 0300Z Sunday (4pm ET Saturday until 11pm ET Saturday) and 1100Z Sunday until 2400Z Sunday (7am ET Sunday until 8pm ET Sunday).

CATEGORIES: Single operator high power, low power and QRP categories, plus multi-operator, single transmitter. Same four categories for mobiles. Single operator stations using assistance during the contest (packet or Internet spotting nets, etc.) will compete in the multi-single category.

CONTEST EXCHANGE: Send signal report and state/province (DX stations send signal report and "DX"). New England stations send signal report, county and state.

VALID CONTACT: Work New England stations once per band/mode. New England stations work anyone. CW contacts must not be made in the phone band segments. Mobiles can be worked again in new counties. County line QSOs should be logged as two separate

QSOs. Crossmode, crossband and repeater QSOs are not permitted.

QSO POINTS: Count one point per phone QSO, two points per CW (includes digital modes)QSO.

MULTIPLIER: Stations outside of New England use counties as multipliers for a total of 67 CT/8 MA/14 ME/16 NH/10 RI/5 VT/14). New England stations use states(50), Canadian provinces(14) and DXCC countries(maximum of 20) as multipliers.

SCORING: Total score is QSO points times the multiplier. Mobiles count QSO points per county and multipliers from all counties (counted once).

SUGGESTED FREQUENCIES: CW - 3540 7040 14040 21040 28040, Novice/Tech - 3705 7130 21130 28130, SSB - 3880 7280 14280 21380 28380, VHF - 50.150 144.205 146.55 223.5 432.150 446.0

REPORTING: Logs should indicate times in UTC, bands, modes, calls and complete exchange. Multipliers should be clearly marked in the log. New England stations put your club's name on the summary sheet. Entries must be submitted within 30 days and sent to NEQP, P O Box 3005, Framingham MA 01705-3005 or via e-mail to logs@neqp.org (Cabrillo format preferred). Send a large SASE for a printed copy of the results.

AWARDS: Certificates will be awarded to the top scorers (25 QSO minimum) in each New England county, U S state, Canadian province and DXCC country. A number of special plaques will also be

awarded to top scorers (check the web site for the current list).

MORE INFORMATION: The New England QSO Party web site is at <http://www.neqp.org>. Check there for information on planned fixed station and mobile activity from New England counties, contest software information, county abbreviations, plaques to be awarded, and information on New England state county awards. NEQP results will be posted on the web site when they are complete. Questions can be addressed to info@neqp.org.

QRSS? QRSS?

© 2002 By Jim Ritterbusch, KD1YV

Are you a "low-code Extra"? Or maybe a Tech Plus that just can't copy the 24 words per minute often used in contests? Well, maybe this CW mode is for you! QRS is the signal to "send more slowly". By extrapolation, QRSS means "send extremely slowly".

"Extremely" is certainly a valid modifier to describe this mode. The *fastest* common usage of QRSS has dit elements that are 3 seconds long! That's about one half of a word per minute. The letter "A" takes 24 seconds - 3 seconds for the dit, 3 seconds for the pause, 9 seconds for the dah, and 9 seconds for the inter-character pause.

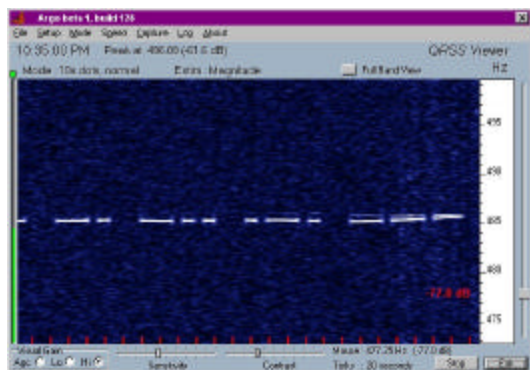
The *slowest* common usage of QRSS uses dit-elements that are *120 seconds long*. To put that into perspective, it's about -43 dB from the 5 WPM that the FCC now demands. More precisely, to send the code-measuring word "PARIS" would take an hour and twenty minutes.

If I haven't lost you yet, no, this is not a *poissons d'avril* article. Right now, you're probably asking yourself, "Why

bother?" The answer is that you can move signals over long distances at some incredibly low levels. This is due to the communications theory that the faster your keying rate, the wider the bandwidth consumed, and the more the power of the signal is spread. Conversely, by keying very slowly, milliwatt and even microwatt signals can be heard thousands of kilometers away.

Undoubtedly, your next question is, "How do you stay awake at this snail's pace?" The right answer is, of course, that you don't! There are free software programs available that you set to monitor the signal using your sound-card equipped computer. One of these can be set to automatically capture screen-shots of itself every minute or so, and store them on your disk for your review later. The author has copied signals that were completely inaudible, but still produced a readable trace on the screen.

The Argo software was a snap to install, and reasonably easy to use. Other users report good results with Spectran, although it may be difficult to install.



Shown here is a screen shot where you can clearly see the letters N D R O scrolling across the screen. This was part of a transmission sent by Paul, AA4XX in Raleigh, North Carolina, using *just 50 milliwatts*, copied in Bethel, CT!

There are numerous stations that set up beacons to run for hours at a time, and announce them on an e-mail

reflector. Some stations operate in the ham bands, while others use Part 15 devices (or their country's equivalent) to run on extremely low frequencies, medium-wave, and short-wave.

To reduce the time of a QSO, certain stations send dual-frequency CW instead of on-off keyed CW. The elapsed time for a dah becomes the same as a dit, but the frequency is shifted down 10 Hz. This causes it to be displayed visibly lower on the screen. Decoding is slightly different, but simple to master.

There are numerous resources on the World Wide Web relating to QRSS. For free downloads of both Argo and Spectran, visit <http://www.qsl.net/padan/>. To read an interesting technical presentation and find numerous other links, have a look at <http://www.ussc.com/~turner/qrss1.html>. To see what some fellow hams on the other side of the Big Pond are doing, go to <http://www.qsl.net/on7yd/136narro.htm#QRSS> or to <http://www.cnts.be/simplexp/>. To join a mail reflector with frequent beacon announcements, send an e-mail to qrss@cnts.be. You will automatically be subscribed.

Happy QRSS! Slower, please!

Help Publicize CARA Hamfest!

John, W1JMA, would appreciate help getting the word out about the September CARA hamfest. It's not too early to start now because our event follows close on the heels of the summer vacation months. If you are planning to attend regional hamfests over the next few months, please contact John for a supply of CARA hamfest flyers that you can take with

you and leave on literature tables for distribution. Skywarn Training April 30

SkyWarn Training Sessions

The National weather service will be conducting a Skywarn Spotter training course on Tuesday, April 30, from 7-10 p.m. at Norwalk City Hall. This session is open to the general public as well as amateur radio operators. All spotters are reminded that a refresher course is required every 2-3 years or the NWS will drop you from the spotter database. If you have any questions, visit www.FairfieldCountySkywarn.com or e-mail Phil, KA1YIQ, at Philb@ctweather.com.

DIY Propagation Paths

Propagation path projections can help you make the most of your time on the air. Sure, you can follow the general ones published periodically by the ARRL --or you can do it yourself with the help of W6Elprop. You can download this program from <http://www.qsl.net/w6elprop/> and prepare a projection that's customized for your own station location and look at paths projected toward anywhere. The ARRL letter reports W6EL has a slightly new version (2.60) and suggests that a good solar flux number to use is the current one averaged with the previous four or five days.

CARA Home Page

Please visit our home page at <http://www.danbury.org/cara>

Vanity Fees May Rise

The FCC has proposed raising the regulatory fee it charges vanity call sign applicants from \$12 to \$14.50 for the

10-year license term. If approved, the new fees likely will become effective sometime in September 2002.

Frequencies of Note

National Simplex - 146.52
Cara, 2 Meter - 146.67- (PL 100)
Cara, 220 - 223.96 (PL 91.5)
Cara, 440 - 447.775 (PL 114.8)
DX Cluster - 145.73
Bethel - 147.03+
New Milford 2 meter -146.73 (PL 77)
New Milford 441.85 (PL 77)
R-Com Repeater: 145.47, PL100

Nets

CARA Weekly Net Sunday nights at 7:30 p.m. 146.67- (PL 100)
WestConn Net Nightly at 8:30 p.m. .147.18+ (PL 114.8)
Tips Net – Tuesday evenings at 7:30 on 146.73-(PL77) (linked statewide)
R-Com Weekly Net: 145.47, PL100
Thursday Eve, local time, 8PM

Want the CARA CAPERS by e-mail?

Signing up for the e-Capers is simple. Just send e-mail to KD1YV@arrl.net. We'll take care of the rest, and your next e-Capers will arrive in your e-mailbox!

URLs of Note

Spring and summer can be great seasons for trying out new antennas.

For lots of information about everything from loops to j-poles and everything in between, you may want to check out the Web site at: <http://ku4ay.net/antenna.html>. In addition to info on specific antenna configurations, the site contains dozens of useful links to other antenna pages and related sites. A useful ham radio directory and reference can be found at <http://ku4ay.net>.

ARRL ASKS FCC TO ELIMINATE, "REFARM" NOVICE CW BANDS

The ARRL has asked the FCC to eliminate the 80, 40 and 15-meter Novice/Technician Plus CW subbands as such and reuse that spectrum in part to expand the phone allocations on 80 and 40 meters. The Petition has not yet been put on public notice for comment.

"The opportunity to eliminate the Novice and Technician-Plus telegraphy subbands and the reapportionment of those inefficiently deployed segments will allow alleviation of significant, sometimes critical, overcrowding in the popular Amateur HF allocations," the ARRL said in its Petition.

The ARRL also cited "substantial advancements in the use of digital techniques" in the HF bands--such as PSK31--to bolster its assertion that a refarming plan for the underutilized Novice HF subbands "cannot wait longer and must proceed now." The refarming plan adopted was based on the recommendations of the ARRL Novice Spectrum Study Committee following a survey of the amateur community last year. Under the proposal, no operator class would lose privileges, and most would gain.

A copy of the ARRL's complete Petition for Rulemaking is available on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/refarm/>>.

Editor's Note:

Just a reminder to our readers that we're always looking for interesting features and news articles for the Capers. If you'd like to recommend a news item or submit an article or classified ad, just drop me a note at KA1JDD@arrl.net, or give me a call: 203-748-1033. Although as early as possible is preferred, our deadline for articles for each month's edition is the Friday before (one week before) the regular Friday monthly meeting.

73 de KA1JDD

CARA MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS!

Just in case you have not yet done so, be sure to renew your CARA membership for 2002. A renewal application is included in this month's newsletter for your convenience. If you're already a member, how about clipping the renewal form and keeping it handy for prospective new members you meet in "eyeball QSOs".



Candlewood Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

P. O. Box 3441, Danbury, CT 06813
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Please Print

(check one) NEW membership _____ RENEWAL membership _____

Name: _____ Call: _____

Class _____

Family member #2 _____ Call: _____

Class _____

Family member #3 _____ Call: _____

Class _____

Family member #4 _____ Call: _____

Class _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

I want to receive the club newsletter via e-mail: Yes _____ / No _____

I am an ARRL member: Yes _____ / No _____

I am a certified Volunteer Examiner Yes _____ / No _____

I AM APPLYING FOR:

_____ Full CARA Membership - \$30.00 (individual) \$45.00 (family of 2)
\$55.75 (family of 3) \$64.25 (family of 4) (requires all applicants to be licensed amateurs.
Includes all CARA privileges)

_____ Student (<18 years) / Senior citizen (>65 years) reduced rate
of \$23.50 (individual)
(Full membership requirement and privileges as above)

_____ Associate membership \$15.00 (individual)
(Available to unlicensed persons having an interest in radio. Includes
all CARA privileges and activities except voting rights)

**Make checks payable to "CARA" and mail check with this form to:
CARA, P. O. Box 3441, Danbury, CT 06813**