



CAPERS

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

President – Frank Etzler – N8WXQ - phone - 860-350-3523
Vice President – Jeff Cantor –K1ZN - phone 203-798-6860
Secretary – Martha Babbitt – KB1IES - phone - 860-350-8804
Treasurer - John Ahle – W1JMA - phone - 203-438-6782



*Happy
Valentine's
Day*



Issue: February 13, 2004

Meeting: Friday, February 13 at 8:00 p.m.

President's Message

I hope that the past month has been full of good low band DX for each of you. I know we are all ready for the spring.

The February meeting will be a special meeting – it will be a joint meeting with the Yankee Clipper Contesting Club (YCCC). YCCC is one of the biggest contesting groups in the country. I expect an interesting program from them.

The next few months offer numerous contesting opportunities. For those who have not participated in a contest, I hope that you will give it a try. They are an excellent test of your station and operating skill. You certainly don't have to win to have fun. For those interested in DXCC and other operating awards contests offer the best opportunity to work rare DX.

You may have noticed that the ARRL is considering restructuring licensing once again. The big highlights appear to be no code HF and elimination of code except for Amateur Extra. What do you think of such changes? While I am not a stick-in-the-mud about CW, I know I have a lot of QSL cards that I would not have if not for CW.

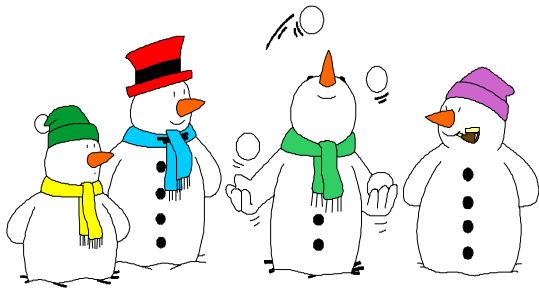
Keyboards and code readers make the introduction easier. Code readers aren't perfect so you still need your ears. After you work a few contests you will find yourself not looking at the readers as often. Code readers are excellent for practicing your sending skills. When the reader can decode what you have sent, you know that you have an excellent fist.

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

73 de Frank, N8WXQ

Meetings

CARA's regular meetings are held on the second Friday of each month, beginning at 8 p.m., at St. Paul's Church Hall, Brookfield Center, CT. Informal "rag chewing" begins at 7:30 p.m.



Minutes of January Meeting

The regular meeting of CARA was held on January 9, 2004 at St. Paul's Church in Brookfield Center. Following a time of refreshments and talking, the meeting was called to order at 8:20 PM.

The Treasurer reported on the finances of the club. Dues are due now. The email addresses and mailing addresses will be updated.

Motions were made to accept the Treasurer's report and Secretary's minutes as reported in the Capers.

The Repeater Committee reported that the repeater directory was updated. Committee members are George S., Ken W., James D. and Rosti.

Jim R. will be unable to carry on Field Day. John A. will handle Field Day this year.

Volunteer is needed to print and mail out Capers that are not e-mailed. Don and Martha will do this.

Hamfest is September 12, 2004 at Edmund Town Hall. Set-up is from 7:30 AM to 8:00

AM. Hamfest will be from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

Classes: Bob will be conducting an Adult Education Class in New Fairfield. Don and Martha are conducting two classes per week at Newtown Middle School. Both will keep the club posted as to needs and progress.

The meeting was adjourned, and the QSL sort was conducted.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Babbitt KB1IES

Membership Renewal Reminder

If you have not already renewed your membership for 2004, please see the 2004 membership renewal form at the end of this month's newsletter. Complete the form and mail it with your check to John Ahle, W1JMA, club treasurer. Thanks!

Nets



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

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 Area One (North) VHF Net:
Mondays, 8 p.m., alternately on 147.30+ (PL 100), or 146.73- (PL 77 or 100).

ConnARES Issues Net: 3.965 Mhz +/-,
Thursdays @ approx. 6:15 p.m. (following CT Phone Net)

Tech Class Offered

The New Fairfield Adult & Continuing Education organization [<http://www.newfairfieldschools.org/continuin geducationhomepage.htm>] is offering a Tech licensing class Monday and Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 PM beginning February 9, 2004. The fee, including text, is \$35.

Address questions to Bob Bell
N1OCM@ARRL.NET, or call the Adult Ed administrators at 203-746-1224.

League Files a Plan for Next Decade

The ARRL has filed a Petition for Rule Making asking the FCC to amend its Part 97 rules to complete the Amateur Service restructuring the Commission left unfinished in 1999. The League wants the FCC to create a new entry-level license, reduce the number of actual license classes to three and drop the Morse code testing requirement for all classes except for Amateur Extra (see "ARRL to Propose New Entry-Level License, Code-Free HF Access" <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2004/01/19/1/>>).

The ARRL says its petition follows in the footsteps of changes in Article 25 of the International Radio Regulations adopted at World Radiocommunication Conference 2003. Among those changes, WRC-03 left it up to individual countries to determine whether or not to mandate Morse testing for HF access. While several countries--including Germany, the UK and Australia--already have dropped their Morse requirements, the ARRL

emphasized in its petition that Morse code is not the central issue.

"Changes in Morse telegraphy are one aspect of the proposal, and it would be insufficient for the Commission to address those issues in a vacuum," the League said, calling its licensing proposal "a plan for the next decade." The ARRL said that the plan's overall intention is "to encourage newcomers to the Amateur Service and to encourage those who enter its ranks to proceed further on a course of technical self-training and exposure to all aspects of the avocation."

Last fall a total of 14 Morse-related petitions were filed with the FCC. Several called on the Commission to drop the Morse requirement altogether, while others proposed to keep and even expand the requirement or put forth various license restructuring schemes of their own. The petitions, RM-10781-10787 and RM-10805-10811, attracted thousands of comments from the amateur community.

Beyond the Morse question, the ARRL says, the time is right--now that WRC-03 has finished its work--to follow through on the restructuring process the FCC began with its 1999 restructuring Report and Order (WT 98-143) <<http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/wt98-143ro.pdf>>. Among other things, that landmark Order-- which became effective April 15, 2000 -- reduced the number of Morse code test elements from three to a single 5 WPM requirement for all license classes offering HF privileges.

Simply dropping the Element 1 (5 WPM) Morse requirement, the ARRL asserted, would fail to address the critical need for an entry-level ticket other than the Technician. Calling the Technician license "a dead end" for many people, the ARRL said its proposed entry-level license--being called "Novice" for now--would offer newcomers a much wider sampling of Amateur Radio. It would require passing a 25-question written

examination--but no code test--and offer limited HF phone, image, CW and data privileges at modest power output levels.

"This structure provides a true, entry-level license with HF and other operating privileges which will both promote growth in the Amateur Service and integrate newcomers into the mainstream of Amateur Radio," the ARRL told the FCC. "It will better introduce newcomers to more seasoned licensees who will assist them."

The League proposal also would consolidate current Technician and General licensees into General class without further examination. Future General applicants would not have to pass a code test, but the written exam would remain the same. Current Advanced licensees would be merged into Amateur Extra class without further testing, and the Extra exam would remain intact. The ARRL proposal would retain the Element 1 Morse exam for Extra class applicants.

The ARRL said its overall plan dovetails with the FCC philosophy and goals stated in its 1999 Report and Order--to simplify the license structure and streamline the licensing process. The League said its plan would implement licensing requirements and privileges that are in harmony with each other and is designed to attract and retain "technically inclined persons, particularly the youth of our country" and encourage them to advance in areas "where the United States needs expertise."

"Now, the issue is not merely whether there should or should not be Morse telegraphy as an examination requirement," the ARRL said, "but rather what is the best overall approach for positioning the Amateur Service for future growth and incentive-based self-training."

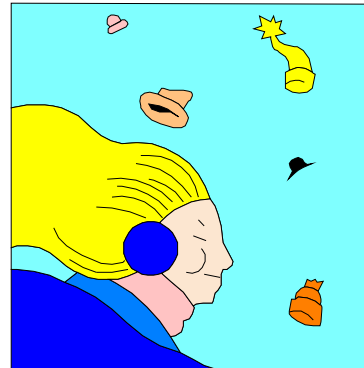
A copy of the ARRL's Petition for Rule Making is available on the ARRL Web

site
<<http://www.arrl.org/news/restructuring2/restr ux2-petition.pdf>>. The FCC has requested that individuals refrain from contacting or attempting to comment to the FCC on the ARRL's restructuring proposal before the FCC issues a Rule Making (RM) number for the ARRL petition and invites public comments on it. Until that happens, it is premature to comment to the FCC.

Skywarn Training

Please mark these dates on your calendar and pass the word around.

A training class, taught by the National Weather Service (NWS), will be held on Thursday, April 15, 2004, from 7:PM to 10:PM, at the Greater Hartford Chapter of the American Red Cross, 209 Farmington Ave, Farmington, CT.



A second Skywarn class will be held on Monday, April 19, 2004, from 7:PM to 10 PM, at the Manchester Community College, in Manchester, CT. All radio amateurs and interested parties are welcome to attend.

Even if you have attended in the past year, it would be worth your while to refresh your knowledge of severe weather. For additional information contact Roger K1PAI, k1pai@sbcglobal.net.

ConnARES Area One Reminder

ConnARES Area One (North) VHF Net is currently meeting bi-weekly, on Monday nights at 8 p.m. The net will be held alternately on the CARA 147.30+ (PL 100) repeater, and on the New Milford repeater, 146.73- (PL 77 or 100). Announcements will be made at the beginning of each net confirming the repeater in use for that evening.

For additional information contact Harlan, KB1ILY, hford01@snet.net or Bill, W1WJB, DEC, Area One, bill@StudioOne-ct.com.

ARRL Emergency Communications Course Registration

Registration opens Monday, February 9, 12:01 AM Eastern Time (0501 UTC), for the Level II Emergency Communications on-line course (EC-002). Registration remains open through the February 14-15 weekend or until all seats are filled--whichever occurs first. Class begins Tuesday, February 24.

Thanks to our grant sponsors--the Corporation for National and Community Service and the United Technologies Corporation--the \$45 registration fee paid upon enrollment will be reimbursed after successful completion of the course.

During this registration period, approximately 60 seats are being offered to ARRL members on a first-come, first-served basis.

To learn more, visit the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education (C-CE) at <http://www.arrl.org/cce/> And for additional information, contact Emergency Communications Course manager Dan Miller, K3UFG, dmiller@arrl.org, 860-594-0340.

Repeaters, Echolink and DX

By Pete Kemp, KZ1Z

Echolink is fast becoming an enjoyable mode for many via linked repeaters. Having a conversation with someone in a foreign country always brings with it a certain fascination. To understand the process a bit better one should understand that these conversations are a blend of the Internet and Amateur radio. Contacts (QSOs) don't count for anything except fun. You don't QSL a DX contact on a repeater for what is, in essence, an enhanced telephone call with a computer. Imagine the day when certificates are given for Working All Area Codes via telephone modems? Some amateurs may send you an e-mail or QSL to confirm a particularly friendly exchange, but they are off the books for awards.

With the growth of our hobby, there is a large segment of licensed amateurs who have never operated on HF frequencies. The procedures on short wave are a bit different than a local rag chew on the repeater. This can be confusing to some. To assist with this process, here are some helpful hints that may make your conversations go a little more smoothly.

1. Know your call letters. Have a DXCC or UTC Call sign Assignment list readily available if you are unfamiliar with prefixes. This will help you zero in a bit to start off your conversation. Remember that on EchoLink or IRLP, you're likely to hear prefixes that you would never hear on HF. This is because some countries have a license class equivalent to our Technician (VHF privileges only.) The licensing authority often assigns special prefixes to these operators. For example, many Brazilian stations have a ZZ prefix.

2. Know the International or Standard Phonetic Alphabet. Cute words are most confusing to others. Saying your name is Pete, Pizza Every Thursday Evening will destroy the flow on a conversation, as you have confused, instead of clarified, a response to the other operator. There are other lesser known alphabets used mostly for domestic contacts. Pete

could be Portugal Espana Tango Espana, if conversing with a Spanish speaking station. In general, it is best to "stick to the standard."

3. Have a metric conversation chart handy. This helps when describing your QTH as being 60 Kilometers northeast of New York City or giving the temperature in Celsius instead of Fahrenheit. This always seems so much colder to us.

4. Time zones apply to the Internet. Remember the UTC/GMT are the international standard. If you want to meet again, you have to have base to start from. If one operator were to say "I'll work you again at 5" you are in big trouble. Five in the morning or five in the afternoon? His local time or yours? Don't forget the International Dateline, as it is possible to talk to tomorrow.

5. Speak slowly. While English is taught in the schools of most nations, and is the most common language on HF, it is a secondary language for most DX stations. This does NOT mean you speak s-o s-l-o-w-l-y that you are talking to a 3 year old. The proper procedure would be to take your time, speaking in an un-rushed fashion, clearly pronouncing each word. As an example, The Voice of America (VOA) was well known for their use of "special" English for newscasts. This was done specifically to assist foreign listeners in learning English. To test this theory, have a native English speaker turn on Telemundo or Univision on TV to watch the news. You can pick out a

word here and there, but everything seems so fast.

6. As long as you identify in English, in accordance with the rules, you are allowed to try to converse in the other operator's languages. In the true ham spirit of enhancing International Good Will, try using some phrases in a foreign language. DXers have long known that a friendly hello works wonders. DX operators are always glad to help you out with pronunciation and phrasing. Learning is a life long process.

7. As with all amateur radio conversations, they should be friendly, informative and enlightening. Stay away from politics and other hot button issues, as they do little build bridges.

Amateur radio is a fun hobby/public service because there are so many avenues to pursue. Echolink has proven to be a fun road to travel, offering a fine adjunct to our hobby!

Editor's Note:

Just a reminder that we're always looking for interesting features and news articles for the CARA CAPERS. Contact the CAPERS editor, Barry, KA1JDD, barry@connollyco.com, or call: 203-748-1033.



Candlewood Amateur Radio Association
P.O. Box 3441
Danbury, CT 06813

Membership Application

Name: _____ Call: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
Class: _____ Phone: _____ VE: _____ ARRL: _____ Email Capers: _____x____
e-mail _____

DUES:

Associate Member (non-ham) \$15 _____
Full Member \$30 _____
Senior/Student (>65 yrs/ <18yrs)
\$23.50 _____
Family (2 members) \$52.50 _____
Family(3 members) \$65.00 _____
Family(4 members) \$75.00* _____

Send Dues to:

John M. Ahle W1JMA
120 Fire Hill Road
Ridgefield, CT 06877
W1JMA@aol.com

* \$10 each additional member