



# CAPERS

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

President – Frank Etzler – N8WXQ - phone - 860-350-3523  
Vice President – Harlan Ford – KB1ILY – phone- 203-798-8096  
Secretary – Martha Babbitt – KB1IES - phone - 860-350-8804  
Treasurer - John Ahle – W1JMA - phone - 203-438-6782



**Issue: October 2004**

***Meeting this Month: Friday, October 8 at 8 p.m.***

## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

The CARA Hamfest this past month was one of the more successful hamfests of recent years despite some last minute challenges. My thanks to all for their hard work. Special thanks to Bill N1JG, John W1JMA, and Rosty N2FEX, for the special effort. My general impression was that all had a good time socializing and acquiring a few Ham Shack goodies. Let us take some pride in the successful effort. I look forward to your contributions next year.

Important legislative action is on the horizon for hams in CT. This subject was discussed at the recent ham club work meeting. This topic will again be discussed at the regular club meeting. Stay tuned.

This month's program will be provided by Ken Neubeck WB2AMU. Ken is a frequent contributor to CQ and World Radio Magazines. He is also well known for his book, 6 meters: the magic band, published by World Radio. He has a new book on VHF propagation with Gordon "Gordo" West that is available, for instance, from CQ publications. The subject of his talk will be VHF propagation. I am sure that Ken will have some special goodies with him so you will want to attend. Invite your friends.

Those that have not explored VHF DXing are missing an interesting challenge in ham radio. When will you earn VUCC?

I look forward to seeing you at the next club meeting.

***73 de Frank, N8WXQ***

## September Speakers Highlight Operating With Battery Power

The September CARA program featured a comprehensive discussion being prepared to operate under emergency generator power, and safe conditions for running your station under battery power.



George N1GS led an interesting PowerPoint presentation outlining conditions like blackouts and other natural disasters that require battery backup or other emergency power options if hams are to provide communications support for their communities. George outlined a series of options, such as generators, direct DC from storage batteries, and DC to AC converters. Some generator recommendations: Don't let gasoline get stale; don't fill until you need to; and do use gas stabilizer for fuel stored over a month. Harlan KB1ILY and Rosty N2FEX discussed battery power options including high capacity AGM (Absorbent Glass Mat) batteries.

Dan W1QK discussed the proper and safe method for charging storage batteries, and for constructing single and dual battery charging and back-up power systems. Worth noting was Dan's recommendation to avoid using switching power supplies in a battery-charging circuit because of their unsuitability for such applications, and to always include a Schottky power rectifier in any charging circuit to protect against feedback from battery malfunction that otherwise could result in serious burns or



explosion. Dan brought along an example of an automatic battery charger suitable for

maintaining gel cell type batteries, and showed a simple DC ammeter in series with the positive line from a power supply to measure battery current draw. A copy of Dan's schematic for a back-up battery charging circuit is included in this month's newsletter.



## Fall Meeting Program Review

In October, Ken, WB2AMU, will review the ins and outs of six meters “the magic band”. And in November, Jim, KD1YV, will demonstrate how to “speak loudly while carrying only a few watts” when he covers the challenging field of QRP QSOs. The December meeting is our traditional holiday get-together. January is the annual QSL card sort event and pizza party. Mark your calendars now and join us for these programs!

## 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.



## Work Meetings are Open to All!

Just a reminder that all members are invited to attend CARA Tuesday night work meetings during the year. The Work meetings are held the second Tuesday following a Friday club meeting and are not just for club officers.

Work meetings, which are held at St. Paul’s Church, usually start at 8 p.m. They are an opportunity to discuss and follow-up on club activities and issues that require more time than is available at regular club meetings. The input and

opinions of all club members are welcome.

## CARA Standing Committees

Just a reminder to all members that these are the standing committees that help make CARA run. Our members and their ideas are our strength. Everyone will be asked to help where they can by signing up with one of these committees.

### *Repeater and Digital Equipment*

- Repeater coordination
- Repeater maintenance
- Packet cluster maintenance
- Other digital equipment

### *Operating Activities*

- Field Day- June 2005
- New England QSO Party – May 2005
- WACC
- Special event station or fall contest

### *Hamfest*

- Plan and organize – September 2005
- Publicity

### *Membership*

- Annual dues notification and follow up
- Annual new member drive

### *Education and Elmering*

- Organize or sponsor class for entry-level license
- Organize Elmer support network for new hams
- Organize two 3-person ARES deployment teams

### *Program Committee*

- Organize and arrange monthly program
- Staff and Net Control for Sunday 7:30 p.m. CARA net
- CARA CAPERS newsletter

## 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:* Second Monday of each month, 8 p.m on CARA repeater: 147.30+ (PL 100)

*Conn ARES Issues Net:* 3.965 Mhz +/- on Thursdays @ approx. 6:15 p.m. (following CT Phone Net).



## CARA 2004 VE Schedule

Make a note of the CARA-sponsored Volunteer Exam (VE) schedule for the remainder of the year:

-- Saturday, December 4

These VE sessions are held at St. Paul's Church in Brookfield Center, the site of our regular monthly meetings. Registration for these exam sessions begins at 11:30 a.m. There is no pre-registration, but an e-mail in advance of the session, or telephone call, would be appreciated so the examiners know how many potential candidates to expect. The current fee for new license exams or

upgrade exams is \$12. Be sure to bring with you two forms of ID – at least one with your photo. Also bring the original AND copy of CSCE's and/or amateur license. The registration form will be supplied at the session.

Questions or comments? Check with Frank, N1PE, [frsileo@att.net](mailto:frsileo@att.net), 203-438-0218 (Ridgefield CT).

## ARRL Welcomes Allen W1AGP as New Media and PR Manager

Allen Pitts, W1AGP, is the newest member of the ARRL Headquarters staff. An Amateur Extra class licensee who lives in New Britain, Connecticut, Pitts came aboard September 20 as the League's new Media and Public Relations Manager, succeeding Jennifer Hagy, N1TDY, who was a member of the HQ staff for 10 years. As Pitts sees it, he's arriving at the League at a critical juncture for Amateur Radio.

"I know of no time in history that our service has been under greater threats, nor any other time in which we have so many opportunities to shine," he said. Pitts emphasizes that while he takes his public relations role most seriously, he also wants it understood that he's an active radio amateur and "not just a PR person."

Pitts comes to the ARRL after a three-year stint as executive director of The Box Project Inc--a national, member-based charity that matches volunteers with families needing help. A radio amateur for five years, he's no stranger to the ARRL Field Organization, having served as an ARES District emergency Coordinator and later as Connecticut's Section Emergency Coordinator. He's also an ARRL Assistant Section Manager.

Pitts holds a bachelor's degree from the University of South Carolina and a master's degree from the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (he served



congregations in Kansas and Connecticut in the 1970s and 1980s). He and his wife, Donna, have three grown children and six grandchildren. They're currently "raising" an English mastiff named Dozer, who, Pitts says, "believes the radio room couch belongs to her."

### **FCC Poised to Act on BPL Report and Order in mid-October**

The FCC Office of Engineering and technology (OET) will present a draft broadband over power line (BPL) Report and Order to the full Commission when it meets October 14, the ARRL has learned. More than 6100 comments have been filed on the topic since the FCC released its initial Notice of Inquiry in the proceeding, ET Docket 03-104, in April 2003 and a subsequent Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM), ET Docket 04-37, in February of this year. The ARRL so far on this round has taken its concerns regarding Amateur Radio and BPL to three of the Commission's five members. In a meeting this week with FCC Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein, an ARRL delegation again asserted that the FCC is pushing the proceeding to a predetermined conclusion with little regard for technical issues.

"Because the FCC has been unwilling to release for public review the results of its own tests and observations of BPL systems, the ARRL has no confidence that the draft Report and Order will be based on sound engineering and believes the rush to adoption is unwarranted and premature," ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, said in a follow-up letter to Adelstein. The letter reiterated the League's key points that, it said, "represent the minimum protection" that should be incorporated into the BPL Report and Order prior to Commission adoption.

The League argued that a reduction in the radiated emission limit for BPL systems be included in the R&O. The ARRL wants the limit "Given the number of amateur stations

and the fact that they almost invariably are located near power lines, the areas of potential interference at the existing Part 15 limit are clearly too large to permit case-by-case resolution of interference issues," Sumner said. Based on past experience with BPL field trials, the ARRL told Adelstein, "widespread BPL deployment at the existing Part 15 radiated emission limit will result in an unmanageable incidence of interference.

### **Storm-Weary Hams Confront Hurricane's Aftermath**

Amateur Radio this past week once again was part of a storm relief and recovery effort in the wake of Hurricane Jeanne--the fourth storm in six weeks to hit Florida. Jeanne made landfall September 25 some 5 miles southeast of Stuart--not far from here Hurricane Frances struck September 5. Authorities blamed the storm--a Category 3 hurricane with 120 MPH winds--for at least six deaths, and the state was declared a major disaster area. The Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) <--whose" [target=externalhttp://www.hwn.org](http://www.hwn.org)--whose members tracked the storm up through the Caribbean--wrapped up three full days of communication support September 26.

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) volunteers were at the ready before Hurricane Jeanne arrived, supplementing communication at emergency operations centers and shelters set up for evacuees. ARRL Southern Florida Section Emergency Coordinator Jim Goldsberry, KD4GR, said Indian River County appeared to be the hardest hit. ARES teams in Palm Beach, Martin, St Lucie, Brevard and Indian River counties also assisted American Red Cross and Salvation Army relief and damage assessment efforts.

### **Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) Scheduled October 16-17**

The 47th Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) takes place October 16-17. Details on JOTA also appear in September QST, page 104. JOTA is an annual event in which Boy and Girl

Scouts and Guides from all over the world speak to each other via Amateur Radio to share experiences and ideas. Since 1958, when the first Jamboree On The Air was held, millions of Scouts have become acquainted through this event.

Amateur Radio clubs and individual licensees make it possible for Scouts to get on the air, and your club is invited to be a part of JOTA 2004. If your club is planning a JOTA activity, register it on the ARRL Youth Skeds Database page <." [target=externalhttp://www.arrl.org/FandES/ad/youthskeds/](http://www.arrl.org/FandES/ad/youthskeds/)>. There, youngsters and parents can search for scheduled on-the-air activities in which to participate. You also can contact your local Boy Scouts of America Council <" [target=externalhttp://www.scouting.org/nav/enter.jsp?s=xx&c=lc](http://www.scouting.org/nav/enter.jsp?s=xx&c=lc)> and let it know that you're planning a JOTA activity.

With assistance from ARRL HQ staff members, Education and Technology Program Coordinator Mark Spencer, WA8SME, will operate Maxim Memorial Station W1AW on Saturday, October 16, for JOTA. "This year the focus will be on achieving the radio merit badge," he noted. Spencer has set up a program that should allow Scouts participating at W1AW to walk away from the JOTA experience with the merit badge, "with some preparation and a little homework on the Scout's part," he added.

Scouts and scouters worldwide also can participate in JOTA via Internet Radio Linking Project (IRLP) Reflector 9205. There's more information on the IRLP Web site <." [target=externalhttp://www.irlp.net](http://www.irlp.net)>.

If you hear any participating JOTA stations on the air, be sure to make a contact--and don't forget to QSL. There's more information about JOTA on the Web <" [target=externalhttp://www.scouting.org/international/jota.html](http://www.scouting.org/international/jota.html)>

### **ARRL Course Offered**

Registration for the ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level I on-line course (EC-001) opens Monday, October 4, 1201 AM EDT, and remains open through the October 9-10 weekend or until all available seats have been filled. Class begins Friday, October 22. Radio amateurs over age 55 are strongly encouraged to participate. 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, seats are being offered to ARRL members on a first-come, first-served basis. To learn more, visit the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education Web page <." [target=externalhttp://www.arrl.org/cce](http://www.arrl.org/cce)>.

For more information, contact Emergency Communications Course Manager Dan Miller, K3UFG, [cce@arrl.org](mailto:cce@arrl.org); 860-594-0340.

### **Editor's Note:**

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







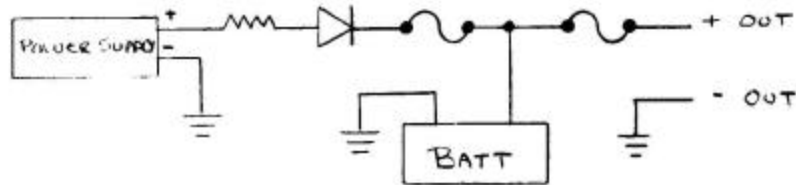
Thanks to all  
who made the  
Sept 2004  
CARA Hamfest  
such a success  
and lots of fun!



W1QK battery back-up charging circuits.

Shottky diode is type NTE6084 silicon power rectifier or equivalent. NTE 6084 available from NTE Electronics, Bloomfield NJ, Tel: 973-748-5089.

### SINGLE BACK-UP BATTERY



### DUAL OR MORE BACK-UP BATTERY

