



# Capers

August 2008

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

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

President – Frank Etzler – N8WXQ - phone - 860-350-3523

Vice President – Harlan Ford – KB1ILY – phone- 203-798-8096

Secretary – John Ahle – W1JMA – Phone – 203-438-6782

Treasurer – Bill Webb – W1AFX - phone - 203-775-0536



**Summer Fun at Ocean City New Jersey  
-KA1JDD**

**Next Meeting: Friday, August 8 at 8 p.m.  
Stony Hill Fire Station**

## **Message From the President**

I hope all are enjoying the summer. While the sunspot numbers remain low (in fact zero as I write this) there is some interesting DX on the bands. It appears that this winter the low bands will still be quite good. Learning CW is a big help in working DX on the low bands. Perhaps this is the time to practice before the Winter.

This month's program will be a video of the 3B7C DX expedition which I was able to work on several bands. This is not a micro-

lite Dxpedition, so it is very different from last month. CW was very useful in breaking the pileups.

Later in the month is Boxboro, I know a number of us will attend this event. It is always a great time. I hope to see many CARA members there. We expect the spirit of T.O.M. to be smiling down upon us.

CARA's own hamfest is coming up next month. Be sure to mention the hamfest to everyone and encourage all to attend. The

CARA hamfest is CARA's primary fundraising activity. We hope you will be able to contribute to the effort.

I encourage all to take every opportunity to raise community awareness of CARA and Amateur Radio. Be sure to extend a welcoming hand to all who show interest in CARA and Amateur Radio.

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

**73 de Frank, N8WXQ**

## Nets

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

*Connecticut Phone Net (CPN)* Monday through Saturday, 6 p.m., on 3.973 and Sundays at 10 a.m. on 3.965...

*CW Connecticut Net, Nightly,* 7 p.m., 3.640

*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 Local VHF Net (now part of Area 5) :* Second Monday of each month, 8 p.m. on CARA repeater: 147.30+ (PL 100)

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

*Note: The CT Phone Net often moves to 3.973 to avoid ongoing early evening interference from a short wave operator.*

## Amateur Station at Smithsonian QRT

After more than 30 years on the air from the nation's capital, NN3SI  
<<http://americanhistory.si.edu/events/programdetail.cfm?newskey=48>>,

the Amateur Radio station at the National Museum of American History  
<<http://americanhistory.si.edu/index.cfm>> -- part of the Smithsonian Institution  
<<http://www.si.edu/>> -- became silent on Thursday, July 31.

Originally located in the Nations of Nations exhibit, the station first went on-the-air in 1976 in celebration of the US Bicentennial. The FCC caught the patriotic spirit, giving the station a temporary call sign -- NN3SI -- standing for Nation of Nations, Smithsonian Institution. The Commission later made the call sign allocation permanent.

NN3SI has been situated in several different exhibitions in the Museum; it was most recently housed in the former Information Age exhibit. This exhibit chronicled the birth and growth of the electronic information age -- from Samuel Morse's invention of a practical telegraph in the 1830s through the development of the telephone, radio, television and computer. The Museum has been closed since 2006 while undergoing a major renovation and is scheduled to reopen to the public this fall.

## Hilberling PT-8000 Production Halted (and Just When I'd Saved 1% Toward a Down Payment...)

In a surprise move, Hilberling GmbH  
<<http://www.hilberling.com/>>  
Has stopped production on the much anticipated PT-8000 series of HF/VHF Amateur Radio transceivers. Apparently due to CE marking regulations  
<[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CE\\_mark](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CE_mark)>,  
Hilberling had to make constant adjustments to the design of the radio and was unable to repeat the performance of prototypes in production models and was

not able to justify the expense involved with further redesign work.

Hans Hilberling, DK7LG, explained in German on the company's Web site why the company canceled production of the PT-8000 series:



"Production of the PT-8000 equipment series has been halted. Due to the persistent challenges we've had to overcome in the process of bringing the official EU-wide manufacturer's model to fruition, it became necessary to make more and more adaptations in the design of this cutting-edge transceiver. The lofty design goals of the PT-8000 could be attained in some prototypes. We encountered difficulties that we could not overcome at justifiable expense in guaranteeing, without reservation, a high standard of mass production involving many suppliers. We appreciate the great interest this project has attracted over its entire course." -- Translation by Rick Lindquist, WW3DE

According to the QST ad, the PT-8000 was set to feature:

- \* An automatically tuned preselector
- \* Precision matched first and second mixers, designed by Synergy Microwave, with third intercept points at 40+ dBm
- \* Three roofing filters at 2.7, 6 and 12 kHz
- \* Six hybrid amplifiers from LF to VHF with third intercept points at 50+ dBm
- \* Seven 16-pole ladder filters working in combination with DSP filters in the 10.7 MHz second IFs of each filter

- \* 13.8 V HF MOSFETs (metal-oxide-semiconductor field-effect transistor) in the 100 W power amplifier; high efficiency (70 percent) SD3933 HF MOSFETs in the 600 W final amplifier
- \* Three additional 70.7 MHz roofing filters in the transmitter stages for clean output
- \* Designed with UHF and microwave transverters in mind, 1 Hz frequency resolution with the ability to connect transverters to both receivers simultaneously
- \* Taps at the first and second IFs for analysis, monitoring and experimentation
- \* Easily updatable firmware.

The price for a 10 W PT-8000 started at \$12,000, going up to \$16,000 for the 600 W model. Commercial and military grades were priced at an additional \$10,000.

### HF Digital Voice Programs Available

Citing codec (coding/decoding) licensing issues, three free Windows programs for sound card-based HF digital voice were yanked from their download site for a short time recently, surprising hams who are interested in HF digital voice operation; several online groups that supported the software were also closed for a short time.

WinDRM, DRMDV and FDMDV, all written by Cesco Lanza, HB9TLK, used a codec that was developed for the US Department of Defense and NATO. Rights to various forms of the codec are held by several companies.

According to Gary Pearce, KN4AQ, the companies have "winked" at ham radio use for several years, but a recent complaint caused the programs to be pulled from the download site. "Lanza did a quick rewrite to use an open-source codec, and

now WinDRM and FDMDV are back," Pearce said.

"DRMDV, an intermediate program between the other two, has been abandoned. WinDRM could always use the open-source Speex codec, but FDMDV users will need to download the new version."

Pearce said these three programs all allow hams to transmit and receive digital voice by connecting their PC sound card to an ordinary SSB transceiver: "The result has been surprisingly high quality audio, with virtually no noise -- sort of like listening to FM, but in the narrow bandwidth of a sideband signal. WinDRM, the best sounding program, uses 2.5 kHz of spectrum. FDMDV sounds a little rougher, but uses only 1.1 kHz of spectrum. The main problem with HF digital voice is that it needs fairly strong signals. FDMDV works better with weaker signals than WinDRM."

FDMDV and WinDRM can both be downloaded from Jason Buchanan's, N1SU, Web site <<http://www.n1su.com/>>.

The AOR digital voice modems and D-STAR radios both use the AMBE 2020 vocoder, and are not affected by the coding changes; the AMBE 2020 vocoder is a proprietary chip that is embedded in each unit.

For more information on WinDRM, check out QST Editor Steve Ford's, WB8IMY, article "Life Could Be a DReaM," pages 38-40] in the April 2007 issue of QST.

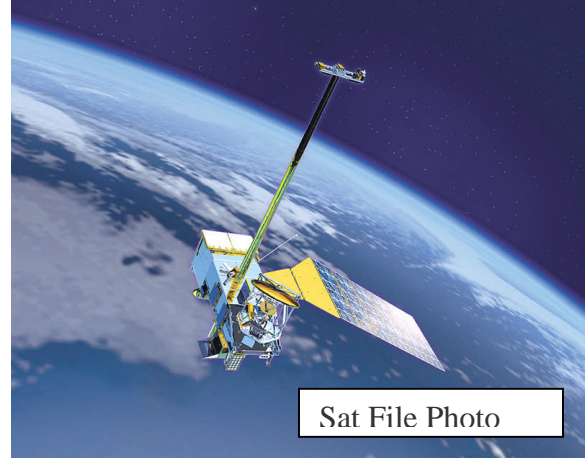
### **Dutch AmSat Now Active**

The linear transponder aboard the new Dutch OSCAR 64 satellite

<<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/05/22/10117/?nc=1>>

(otherwise known as Delfi-C3

<<http://www.delfic3.nl/>>) is now open for CW and SSB operation.



The spacecraft boots into transponder mode whenever it is in full sunlight. Ground controllers will briefly switch the satellite to either "basic" or "science" configuration once every two weeks; otherwise, the linear transponder will be the default mode. The transponder uplink passband is from 435.530-435.570 MHz with a downlink passband from 145.880-145.930 MHz. The transponder CW beacon can be heard at 145.870 MHz.

The satellite was developed by a team of some 60 students and faculty members from various polytechnic schools in The Netherlands. Delfi C-3 carries two experiments -- one involving thin film solar cells developed by Dutch Space, and an autonomous wireless Sun sensor from the Dutch Government Research Institute (TNO). E-mail reports are welcome <[info@delfic3.nl](mailto:info@delfic3.nl)>.

*(Several articles Courtesy ARRL letter)*

**Items for Capers? Send to the editor, Barry, KA1JDD, at [barry.connolly@yahoo.com](mailto:barry.connolly@yahoo.com).**



Sponsored by Candlewood Amateur Radio Association

# Western CT Hamfest



Sanctioned by ARRL

- **Sunday, Sept. 14, 2008**  
(Rain or Shine)
- Edmond Town Hall  
45 Main St (Rt. 6)  
Newtown, CT
- Set-up 7 a.m.
- Doors open 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Talk-in on  
147.300+  
PL 100**

- Admission \$6 (under 10 free)
- Tables \$15 (includes 1 admission)
- Tailgating \$10 (includes 1 admission)
- Ham Radio Equipment
- Computer Gear
- Door Prizes
- Refreshments
- Free Parking

**Battery Exclusive!**  
Big batteries at  
rock bottom prices!

## Commercial Vendors Include

- KJI Electronics
- QuickSilver Radio Products
- Radio Oasis
- The Parent Shop

**Don't Miss the Raffle!**  
Win a New Mobile Rig.

## Seminars

- The Ins and Outs of CW
- Satellite Communications - How to do it
- D-Star Presentation and Demo

## Contact Information

- Joe de Groot - AB1DO: (203) 938-4880
- Jim Ritterbusch - KD1YV: (203) 775-1946
- Email: ab1do@arrl.net
- Web site:  
[www.danbury.org/cara/hamfest.html](http://www.danbury.org/cara/hamfest.html)

## Directions

Take exit 10 off Rt. 84. Go West onto Rt. 6 (westbound make a right, east bound make a left). Approx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile at flag pole make a right onto Main Street/Rt. 6/Rt. 25. Edmond Town Hall will be approx. 100 yds on left.

Candlewood Amateur Radio Association (CARA) Hamfest, Sept. 14, 2008  
c/o Joe de Groot - AB1DO, 30 Sunnyview Drive, Redding, CT 06896. Phone # (203) 938-4880

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ indoor tables @ \$15.00 each. Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I need \_\_\_\_\_ / do not need \_\_\_\_\_ electricity. Please make checks payable to CARA