



Capers

November 2011

Candlewood Amateur Radio Association - Post Office Box 3441 - Danbury, CT
Visit us on the Web at <http://www.danbury.org/cara>

President – Roger Mitchell – NG1R – phone- 203-790-9697
Vice President – John Will – KB1LYP- phone - 203-270-0475
Secretary – Bill Thoren – N1TIW - Phone – 203-744-5138
Treasurer – Bill Webb – W1AFX - phone - 203-775-0536



Meeting: Friday, November 11, 8 p.m. @ Stony Hill Fire Station

CARA Meeting Minutes, October 14, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 8 PM by CARA Vice President John Will, KB1LYP with 16 members present.

The program for the evening was an introduction to Skywarn by District Emergency Coordinator Steve Williams, K1SJW.

The National Weather Service established Skywarn to supplement their radar and other observation systems with on-the-ground local observers. The observers are trained in what to look for—Situational Awareness-- and how and when to pass this information on—Disaster Intelligence. Steve is actively involved in presenting classes in addition to doing talks such as the one this evening. Many of the visuals he used for this program are from his training classes and if Skywarn looks like

something you would want to be involved in, watch for announcements of up coming classes. Information is also available at: ctskywarn.com.

Steve pointed out that you do not need a lot of special equipment to participate in Skywarn but, if you *really really need* some more toys that's ok too.

Our thanks to Steve for an interesting program.

I came across a Skywarn spotter at a rest stop on I 80 in Pennsylvania. I have family near Cleveland, Ohio so we make that run a lot. We pulled into the stop and I noticed an 18 wheeler with two huge antennas on the side mirrors. At first I figured it was just a CB running illegal power but then saw the ham callsign and a Skywarn poster. Had a long talk with the operator; anyone who drives for a living has to pay attention to the weather.

After a short break we went on to the business part of the meeting.

The Secretary's report for the September meeting was accepted.

The Treasurer's report of \$10,317.47 was accepted.

Hamfest Chairman Joe de Groot, AB1DO, gave a final report of the financial results of \$1,086.97. He also conducted a raffle among the club members who had helped out at the Hamfest for two magnet mount mobile antennas. The antennas had been donated by Gene, K2KJI, from KJI Electronics. And the winners are: Jim, KD1YV, the MFJ-1729 and Carl, W1ZGZ, the MFJ-1724.

Thanks to KJI for his donation; he has been a long time supporter of our Hamfest and we appreciate it.

Special thanks to Joe for again setting up an excellent Hamfest and thanks to all who worked to make it a success.

Steve, W1SMS, was not at this meeting but he has been working with the new repeater system at his home QTH and putting updates on the CARA reflector. When the time is right (a nice balmy spring day perhaps) we will hike up the hill and install it.

Thanks to Steve for keeping CARA on the air.

At a previous meeting we discussed changing the CARA dues structure.

After further discussion, Oscar, KO1F, made the motion that we keep the current dues alignment.

Jim, KB1SPA, seconded the motion and it passed on a voice vote of the members present.

As mentioned above we are doing some major work on the various CARA repeaters and it was proposed that up to \$1,500 be provided for this work. Bob, AC8O, made the motion.

Bill, N1PJG, seconded the motion which passed by a voice vote of the members present.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

-- Bill Thoren, N1TIW, Secretary

CARA VE Session Schedule

Saturday, Dec 3, 2011

Exam sessions are held at the Stony Hill Fire Station at 59 Stony Hill Road (Route 6) in Bethel, CT.

Registration begins at **11:30 a.m.** Walk-ins are always welcome. Pre-registration is not required, but is helpful and appreciated.

For further info, contact Frank Sileo, N1PE, in Ridgefield, CT at 203-438-0218 or frsileo@att.net.

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NET CONTROL OPERATORS NEEDED FOR SUNDAY NET!

Additional volunteer net controllers are still needed for the 7:30 Sunday evening CARA net. Right now, Bill, N1TIW and Harlan W1QH are handling the lion's share of the work. Some additional volunteers – even for one or two Sundays a month – would be appreciated.

Any licensed club member can handle the net. There's a simple script to guide you and it's excellent practice in net operation for ARES work you may be involved in. Contact Harlan or Bill to see how you can help.

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., 3.533 (note correction to 3.533)

WestConn Net: Nightly at 8:30 p.m. 147.18+ (PL 114.8)

R-Com Weekly Net: 145.47- (PL100)

Telegraphy World Championships



Back in September 1936, Eugene A. Hubbell, W9ERU, took home the silver trophy at what the October 1936 issue of *QST* called the

Kody Low, K3ODY, Kennan Low, KE3X, and Barry Kutner, W2UP, represented the US at the Ninth High Speed Telegraphy IARU World Championship last month in Bielefeld, Germany. Kutner also took the first-ever gold medal won by a non-European in the pileup competition.
[Photo courtesy of Barry Kutner, W2UP]

first official "Amateur Code Speed Contest." Only making one error, Hubbell won first prize

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)

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

Have a news item for CAPERS?
Send your stories, photos, or classified ads to Barry, KA1JDD, at barry.connolly (at) yahoo.com.

with his winning speed of receiving 52.2 words per minute. Held at the ARRL Central Division Convention that year, the contest required operators to decipher plain language text at two minute intervals that ranged in speed from 25 to 52.7 words per minute. But things have changed since Hubbell made history. Today, individuals all over the world compete in High Speed Telegraphy (HST) events where they are challenged to correctly receive and copy Morse code transmissions sent at very high speeds, upwards of 300 characters a minute.

According to Barry Kutner, W2UP, HST has long been considered a sport in Europe, especially Eastern Europe, similar to chess or an Olympic sport.

(Excerpt Courtesy ARRL Letter)

Record Number of Freshmen Take Tech Exam at California University

When 114 freshmen electrical engineering students at California Polytechnic State

University in San Luis Obispo, California, gathered on Friday, November 4 to take their Technician exam, they made history.



Almost 120 Cal Poly-SLO freshmen electrical engineering students sat for the Technician exam; 96 students passed the test. [Marcel Stieber, AI6MS]

Not only was the session one of the largest exam sessions ever, it was the largest exam session sponsored by a college Amateur Radio club *and* the largest exam session ever held in San Luis Obispo County. After all the exams were graded, 96 of the 114 students were brand new licensed amateurs, joining the next generation of radio amateurs in the US. Hosted by the Cal Poly Amateur Radio Club, this exam session broke its previous record of 62 new licensees, set earlier this year in October. These 96 new Amateur Radio operators will join more than 700,000 other hams in the US in providing volunteer and emergency communications support for everything from local bike rides and parades to global disaster relief.

(Courtesy ARRL Letter)

LoTW Processing Update

Logbook of The World (LoTW) has been managing to hold its own against the current high volume of incoming logs. An approximate 60 hour processing delay has been maintained for about a week. As of November 9, there are approximately 2.8 million QSOs in the LoTW queue. Many logs are still coming in from the CQ WW and the ARRL Sweepstakes Contests that were held the last two weekends. If you have already uploaded a log, there is no need to

upload it again. By doing so, you will only add to the length



queue. Also, please do not send entire logs that contain previously uploaded QSOs. Please use the date range option when signing logs. This will allow you to select QSOs from your log within a specific date range. By following these guidelines, this will allow LoTW to process the backlog at a faster pace. The ARRL IT staff has been working diligently to speed up the LoTW processing time and eliminate the backlog. Thanks again for your patience.

(Courtesy ARRL Letter)

Carving Out Time for Ham Radio

BY Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

On a recent episode of This Week in Tech (www.twit.tv), Leo Laporte, W6TWT, mentions ham radio, and a guest asks him how much time he is spending on the air. Leo, who just recently got his Tech license says “Zero!” and laughs.

This is not uncommon. Lots of people seem to get a ham radio license and then do very little with it. I think one reason for this is that they don’t take into account how much time the hobby really can eat up.

They get their ticket because it seems like a cool thing to do, but then they have to carve out some time to actually be a ham radio operator. Even if you don’t make any of your own gear, setting up a station takes time, and then there is the operating time, of course. Carving time out of busy schedules—and I would guess that Laporte has a pretty busy schedule being the owner of TWiT—is a challenge.

I see things like this all the time. At one ham radio club meeting that I attended, the club vice president asked, “OK, here’s the question of the month. How many of you actually got on the air in the past month.” Less than half of those in attendance raised their hands. Geez, I thought to myself, why do they even bother to come to meetings if they don’t get on the air?

Making time for ham radio
So, if you’re a busy person, how do you make time for ham radio? Well, being the Internet geek that I am, I Googled, “making time for things you love.” I got a lot of links to sites that talked about work-life balance and some new-age blogs, but none of them offered much in the way of concrete advice.

Then, I Googled “make time for hobbies” and right off the bat, I found two good articles—7 Creative Ways to Make Time For Your Creative Hobby!
(<http://www.exploringwomanhood.com/homelife>

[/hobbies/maketime.htm](#)) and 5 Ways to Make Time for Your Hobby (<http://o5.com/5-ways-to-make-time-for-your-hobby/>). Both articles offered very similar advice. Here are four points that both made:

1. **Schedule it.** Set aside a specific time during which you’re going to do ham radio. Don’t let that time get pre-empted.
2. **Designate a place** in your home for ham radio. Having to set up your radios or dig out your tools every time you want to operate or build something is not much fun and wastes a lot of time. Having a “shack” and a workspace designated for your projects will let you spend more time on the fun stuff.
3. **Partner up.** Arranging to work with another ham will make it harder to blow off ham radio for some other activity. Besides, it’s a lot of fun to do things with other hams. If you’re a newly licensed ham, find an Elmer. There really are plenty around who would be willing to help you.
4. **Create a project plan.** Setting up an amateur radio station is no small feat. Breaking it down into smaller chunks will make it seem more doable, and you’ll get a feeling of accomplishment when you meet your in-between goals.

There’s so much to learn and do in amateur radio that it can seem quite overwhelming. I think that’s one reason why so many Techs never really get into the hobby and why some experienced hams drift away. I think if you follow the advice above, though, you’ll not only find the time to pursue amateur radio, but get a lot more out of it.

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When he’s not down in his shack, working with a friend on yet another amateur radio project, Dan writes amateur radio study guides. You can find them on his website at www.kb6nu.com/tech-manual. Make some time to e-mail him at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.