



Capers

December 2012

Candlewood Amateur Radio Association - Post Office Box 3441 - Danbury, CT
Visit us on the Web at www.CaraRadioClub.org

President – Roger Strong – KB1NYY – phone- 203-794-1665
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



Party Friday, Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. @ Stony Hill Fire Station

Holiday Party Friday!

73 de Jim, KD1YV

It's only a week away! I hope you will all be there with bells on! Who else is coming? Who else is bringing a dish? All the finest wishes of the holiday season to you and your families. And good DX, my friends :-D

Thoughts of turkey and pilgrims and football are behind us ... time to start thinking about the annual CARA Holiday Party. This year, it will be on Friday, 14 Dec. Doors will be open at 7:30 p.m. Of course, your families are welcome and encouraged to attend.

As in the past, this will be a pot-luck affair, where members are invited to bring a dish to share. Just so that we don't get 27 people all bringing brownies,

please post an email back to this list stating what you intend to bring. I'll keep track of it all, and if I see a pile-up of too many crab cakes, I'll let those people know.

Just to start it off, here are a couple.

-- Bill, N1TIW is bringing homemade rye bread
-- Jim, KD1YV is bringing caramel peanut-butter chocolate cookie bars

Let's add to this list.

The gift exchange is optional. Whoever brings one, takes one. Try to stay to a reasonable price limit, maybe \$15 or so. It would be good if it were a radio-related gift. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you there!

Roger, KB1NYY asked that I include a couple of club business items. Here they are.

There will be a short business meeting convened at the Christmas party on Dec. 14 for the purpose of voting on two items.

1. Dues. The leadership recommends leaving the dues for 2013 at \$30. This is based on our fixed expenses and the number of club members. Dues come due in January.
2. Web site. We would like to allocate \$100 a year to move the web site to a hosting entity that will give us more options and features. Ron, AB1RJ, is working on this.

CARA Minutes...

CARA Meeting November 9, 2012

The meeting was called to order by CARA President Roger Strong, KB1NYY, with 14 members and guests present.

The program for the evening was a discussion of radio frequency interference (RFI) presented by ARRL Lab Manager, Ed Hare, W1RFI. It was a fast moving presentation with several stories from the trenches of tracing and solving interference problems. Ed has been at this for a long time and has seen a lot. Every new gizmo seems to bring along a new problem, compact fluorescents, LED lighting and Plasma TV being recent examples. As problems are identified, Ed and the ARRL Lab staff see what they can do to reduce or, hopefully, eliminate the problem.

Of course there is the old standby of power line noise. This can be tough. First you need to find out where it's coming from and then who to contact about fixing it. This starts as a technical problem and then becomes a human relations situation. Luckily it's usually in everyone's interest to resolve the difficulty since RFI is often an early indication of more serious problems.

There are many resources available when RFI rears its ugly head. The ARRL can help with many on-line and paper publications. One in particular is the paperback, *The ARRL RFI Book-Practical Cures for*

Radio Frequency Interference, 3rd Edition, 2010 edited by Mike Gruber, W1MG, with contributions by Ed Hare and others.

Happy hunting!

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

Jim, KD1YV, is coordinating the Christmas Party pot-luck; please let him know what you will be bringing. Thanks to Jim for handling this.

For the January QSL card sort and pizza party John, W1JMA, will pick up the cards.

Bill, N1PJG, gave the Repeater Committee report. Those of you who have been to the repeater site can appreciate the following statement, "we will wait until spring to transport the equipment we have been assembling up to the site". Steve, W1SMS, put lists of things that need to be done on the CARA reflector and there will be more to come. Let Steve know what you will be able to help him with; it's a good excuse to drill holes and solder stuff.

Ron, AB1RJ, has been working on the CARA website. I still walk around with 3 x 5 file cards in my shirt pocket but the web is where people look for CARA so we need an easy to use site with lots of information about who we are. Ron has already put a lot out there and more is coming. If you have pictures or other things to add, please pass them on to him. Thank you.

We are reviewing the dues and will be voting on what they will be for 2013 at the December meeting. Membership Chairman Carl Braun, W1ZGZ, is working on contacting potential members in the area and, once they show up, how do we keep them coming back? People who stop by share our interest in radio so they may have an interesting story about how they got started and what they are up to now. The recent survey of CARA members showed a strong interest in what other members are doing with radio. There is a reason for the knots of people hanging around in the parking lot after the meeting!

Another way to help new members is with an "Elmer" program of mentoring. The best way to learn something is to try teaching it.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 PM

Corrections to the minutes of the October meeting:

The Remote Ham Radio program was arranged by both John, W1JMA, and Roger, N61R. The first year cost for the Remote Ham Radio is \$5,000 not \$3,000 as I gave in the minutes.

Bill Thoren, N1TIW, Secretary

WHERE'S ELMER...?

CARA would like to start (and publish) a listing of subject matter experts who are willing to “elmer” or coach new and existing hams in specific aspects of ham radio – from antenna construction and setting up your first station to kit building, software defined radio, contesting, digital modes and more.

If you have a favorite skill and are willing to help, please send a note to the CAPERS editor.

THANKS! -- KA1JDD

Bill, N1TIW to Present at Bethel Library

Following is the promotional announcement issued by the Bethel Public Library for this informative program by our own Bill N1TIW.

**Samuel F.B. Morse: Artist and Inventor
presented by William Thoren
Tuesday, February 5
6:30-8:00 pm
Bethel Library Lobby**

When the name Samuel Morse is mentioned, the first thing that may come to mind is his invention--the first electromagnetic telegraph system. However, Morse's talent was not limited to science. He was also a gifted painter and sculptor. In this eye-opening program, we will discover the other side of Morse's extraordinary life and career. We'll even see a model of his telegraph, built by presenter **Bill Thoren**, himself a technical whiz with a deep interest in science, and experience as a technician in the chemical, electromechanical, and electronic fields. For adults and students Grades 6 and up.

Registration is required for this program. Register online, at the Reference Desk, or call (203) 794-8756 ex 4.

GOT NEWS?

If you have a news item or an “item to sell or buy” that you want to see in CAPERS, please send it to the editor, Barry KA1JDD, c/o barry dot connolly at yahoo dot com.

KB6NU Builds an End-Fed, Half-Wave Antenna

I've always been interested in end-fed, half-wave antennas before, but until this recently, I'd never built one. One of the reasons for this is that most designs are for QRP antennas and not made to handle more than 5 – 10 W of power.

A couple of months ago, though, I ran across a design rated at 100 W (http://eatchi.org/proj_homebrew.html). The design seemed relatively simple to build, requiring only a single toroid and a capacitor made with a short length of RG-174 coax. Well, it just so happens that I bought 100-ft. of RG-174 at Dayton this year, and I found the toroid cores online from the "Toroid King" for a very reasonable price, so I decided it was high time to build one.

All told, the parts cost about \$10, the biggest part of that being a 4-in. x 4-in. x 2-in. plastic junction box (Carlson E989NNJ-CAR) I got from Lowe's for \$6.41. Compare that with the \$60 that LNR wants for their end-fed antenna.

I put up the antenna about three weeks ago, on a beautiful fall Sunday, running 34 feet of wire up a trellis attached to a small deck in my backyard, then out to a tree near the back of my lot. With more than a little anticipation, I put the antenna analyzer on it, only to be somewhat disappointed with the readings. The SWR was 2.6:1 at 14.000 MHz, dropping to about 1.5:1 at 14.900 MHz.

Since the internal tuner on my IC-746PRO is supposed to be good to 3:1, I did use it and made a couple of contacts. A guy in MA even gave me a 599 signal report. So, while I was a little uncomfortable with an SWR so close to the limit of my tuner, it did seem to radiate pretty well.

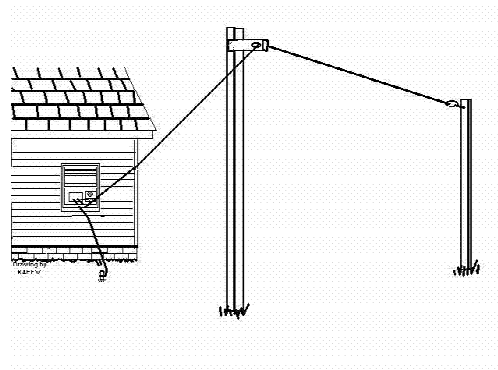
I e-mailed the guy who published the design and asked why he thought the resonant frequency was so high, and he said that all I had to do was add a couple feet of wire to the antenna. I also did some more reading about end-feds and several websites suggested that adding a counterpoise might be a good idea, too.

A week later, I finally got back to playing with the antenna. I added 24-in. of wire to it, and it did indeed bring down the SWR of the antenna to below 2:1 in the CW portion of 20m. I'm happier with this. I made a couple of contacts that day, too, with both stations giving me good reports.

I still do plan to try a counterpoise. Not so much to improve the SWR, but to see if it makes the antenna a little more efficient.

Overall, this has been a fun project. I learned something about end-fed, half-wave antennas and saved a bunch of money by rolling my own. Isn't that what ham radio is all about?

===== *When he's not messing with antennas, Dan, KB6NU publishes the "No-Nonsense" series of amateur radio license study guides. The latest in this series is the No-Nonsense Extra Class License Study Guide. For more information, go to KB6NU.Com or e-mail cwgeek@kb6nu.com*



Note: One example of an end-fed type antenna.

New QuickStats Poll Now Available on ARRL Website

Four new poll questions have just been published on the [QuickStats page](#) on the ARRL website. Let your voice be heard!

Questions in this month's QuickStats poll:

- What is your outlook for Amateur Radio in 2013?
- How do you feel about a [possible low frequency allocation](#) for US amateurs?
- Have you added the [new digital QST app](#) to your iPad, iPhone or iPod touch?
- Is your call sign on prominent display at your home station?



Visit the [QuickStats page](#) and be sure to bookmark it in your browser. Results from this QuickStats poll will be published in the March 2013 issue of *QST* on the QuickStats page, located in the rear advertising section of the magazine. Along with monthly poll results, *QST* QuickStats offers colorful charts and graphs that highlight interesting Amateur Radio statistics.

“This Week” in Radiosport

- December 12 -- NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint; NAQCC-EU Monthly Sprint
- December 12-13 -- CWops Mini-CWT Test

Next week:

- December 14 -- NCCC Sprint; Russian 160 Meter Contest
- December 15 -- OK DX RTTY Contest; Feld Hall Sprint
- December 15-16 -- Croatian CW Contest
- December 16 -- [ARRL Rookie Roundup \(CW\)](#); QRP ARCI Holiday Spirits Homebrew Sprint
- December 17 -- Run for the Bacon QRP Contest

All dates, unless otherwise stated, are UTC. See the [ARRL Contest Branch page](#), the [ARRL Contest Update](#) and the [WA7BNM Contest Calendar](#) for more information. Looking for a Special Event station? Be sure to check out the [ARRL Special Event Stations web page](#).

