

F.C.A.R.C. Inc.
P.O. Box 773
Greenfield, MA 01302

FIRST CLASS MAIL



THE COMMUNICATOR

THE COMMUNICATOR

November 2015

Upcoming Events

- Club Breakfast: Saturday Nov 14, 8 a.m.: Denny's, Greenfield
- Fox Hunt: Saturday Nov 14, ~10 a.m.: Start at Poet's Seat Tower
- E-Board meeting: Monday Nov 16, 6:00 p.m. : GCC
- Program Meeting: Monday Nov 16, 7:15 p.m.: Program Pixie Project: GCC
- Second Pixie Building session: Saturday November 21, 10 am-noon: GCC-Hammond Studio, East Building
- VE license tests: Monday Nov 23, 7 p.m.: Northfield Unitarian Church
- E-Board meeting: Monday Dec TBA
- Club Breakfast: Saturday Dec 19, 8 a.m.: Denny's, Greenfield

- Holiday Potluck: TBA
- New Year's net : Wednesday Dec 31, 11:50 pm. : 146.985 MHz

DUES are DUE now! **November 2015**

DUES ARE DUE NOW!

Dues support the repeaters, the club activities and the Communicator.

General Adult - \$15/year

Family Group membership - \$18 /year

Repeater Patron donation - \$10.00 or more Suggested

You may pay for multiple years of membership.

Mail dues to:

Franklin County Amateur Radio Club

PO Box 773

Greenfield, MA 01302

or to

Howard Field

7 Laurel St.

Shelburne Falls, MA 01370-1512

Make checks payable to **FCARC**.

Please include SASE if you wish to have a receipt mailed to you.

New format for the newsletter

In an effort to increase accessibility, I am changing the formatting of the newsletter so that if someone needs or prefers to use a screen reader (text to voice), it will be easier to do. If you don't, you should only notice that some of the fonts have changed.

Should you want to try this, here is the instruction that comes with Word: [Enable text-to-speech](#)

Speak is a built-in feature of Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, and OneNote, in the language of your version of Office. For example, if you are using the English version of Office, the English TTS engine is automatically installed.

To use text-to-speech in different languages, see [Using the Speak feature with Multilingual TTS](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Add Speak to the Quick Access Toolbar

You can add the Speak command to your Quick Access Toolbar by doing the following:

1. Next to the Quick Access Toolbar, click **Customize Quick Access Toolbar**.



2. Click **More Commands**.
3. In the **Choose commands from** list, select **All Commands**.
4. Scroll down to the **Speak** command, select it, and then click **Add**.
5. Click **OK**.
6. When you want to use the text-to-speech command, click the icon on the Quick Access Toolbar.

Calendar

Fox Hunt following the club breakfast on Saturday, November 14th.

Al Woodhull, N1AW

After the November breakfast we are going to have a hidden transmitter hunt - a Fox Hunt! In the past fox hunts were a frequent club activity. Four years ago we revived this activity.

Fox hunting skills can be useful. Sometimes an unidentified transmitter comes on the air, causing interference to other users. There are stories about dogs and cats that somehow activate a transmitter when the owner is not at home. Small aircraft carry locator transmitters activated during crashes. I was once personally involved in a hunt for a transmitter that overheated and jammed the frequency used by a data network connecting research institutions and university laboratories in a Central American country where I was a visiting faculty member.

So fox hunting is not just a game. On many occasions US hams have hunted down ham-band intruders and repeater jammers. Amateurs prepare (and have fun, too) by exercises like the fox hunt we are planning to have after the November 14th FCARC breakfast. One member, the Fox Master, will take the club's Fox Box (a portable transmitter, timer, and ID generator) to a secret location. The hunters will gather at Poet's Seat. The Fox Master will announce the start of the event, and turn on the Fox Box. Every 5 minutes or so it will transmit its message on the Leyden repeater's output frequency. The hunters will then try to find it. The Fox Master will alert the hunters when a Fox Box transmission is due and may from time to time transmit hints if some hunters have difficulty.

Come and join us after the breakfast at Poet's Seat tower. If you don't have a directional antenna we will have several loaners available. If you haven't done this before you can ride along with someone else. If you were not able to attend the breakfast but want to participate, call on the KB1BSS repeater around 9:30 to let us know you are coming.



Chris KB1NEK was first to find the Fox Box (hidden in leaves under his foot) at our November 2013 Fox Hunt.

Secretary's Report

E-Board meeting Monday, October 19, 2015 – Chris Myers KB1NEK

1. Al reported that Rich Chedester did some work on one of the six cans in the duplexer for the 440 repeater. We are still using the high gain antenna for receiving only, and a small ground plain antenna for transmitting, so transmission strength isn't what it should be. Bob D. reminded us that Rich Stewart knows someone who might help tune the duplexer. Chris mentioned that Bruce Beliveau could help. Bruce still hasn't responded to Al's inquiry about the specs on the antennas on the towers. Al asked if we should consider paying Bruce to do it. Bob D. offered to ask Rich Stewart who he had in mind. Bob has notes on the specs for the duplexer. The 440 repeater worked well for the Crop Walk.
2. Question about IRS form 990. Was due May 15, 2015. Bob D. said he would call the IRS to find out what to do now that it is late. It seems that, although IRS allows 3 years of not filing 990 before taking away corporation's tax-exempt status, they still ask for filing every year
3. Al reported selling about \$500 worth of old equipment belonging to high school club, and \$155 worth of club equipment at the Deerfield, NH, Nearfest. Club's sale included 150 feet of hard line recently contributed by Bob Weissman, W1CKT.. Al Mason offered some old equipment to the club, which N1AW will pick up from him. (An old Kenwood TS-440, and an oscilloscope)
4. There is more surplus equipment that the club can sell. Al will list it on the For Sale page of our web site.
5. Need keys for Ron and Bob D. for storage locker.
6. Jeanne mentioned need for vests for public service events, enough so regulars can keep one at home. Al asked about T-shirts. Last time we ordered from Valley T, in Greenfield, which may still have a silk screen with the right pattern. Anne Kring had offered to help. We need to ask if she agrees.
7. Chris mentioned need for ID cards. Said he would ask Rob Quinn-O'Connor if he can make us some using FRCOG equipment.
8. Jeanne asked for agreement to change format of Communicator so it could be read by computer software, for visually impaired people. She said it might raise price for the few copies that are sent by mail. Jeanne will start by some reformatting so the font is larger and

simpler. Computer software can be used to read the text out loud. The largest issue is usually in September, which might not all fit on eight pages. Jeanne will prepare a sample document for people to test. Such a system cannot use italics, but can use bold font. May just do it for November Communicator, with a short article explaining it to readers. Might also mention how to take advantage of such software.

9. Al will ask high school about whether we can use the cafeteria for a holiday party in December. He also said we need ideas for programs for the new year. There will be a fox hunt after the November club breakfast.

10. Phill will do an instruction on assembling a Pixie QRP transceiver. Phill wants to do it in two sessions. He prefers to do the first session will be show and tell and the second session will be building the Pixie. Jeanne can get space at GCC. People can still sign up by contacting Phill.

11. Rich Stewart mentioned poor attendance at the two weekly nets. Belle suggested we put out a call for more net control volunteers.

12. E-board mtg ended 7:12 PM

October meeting notes - Monday, October 19,2015 – Chris Myers KB1NEK

N1IMW, Dennis Markell was introduced as guest speaker for the evening.

Dennis has an interest in early telecommunications history, specifically the original Marconi stations on Cape Cod. He explained how in 1914, Guglielmo Marconi built the high powered wireless station in Massachusetts. The receivers were in Chatham and the transmitters were forty miles west, in Marion. After World War I, the station was bought by RCA and, except during World War II, stayed in operation as a wireless maritime station for over seventy years until 1997.

This museum shows how the station's Morse code operators were able to communicate with ships across the world even a hundred years ago. And it shows the secret role that the station played during WWII. Today visitors can even use the associated amateur radio equipment in the station at Chatham.

Dennis showed his collection of old documents and pictures from the early days of the station. The museum is open June through October 11. See the website at chathammarconi.org for more information.

News, Activities & Articles

Ham Radio (Pixie Project) Workshop

Exciting news...FCARC is having a November workshop! Our project will be a QRP 80m CW transceiver built from a kit. The club will supply the kit and venue (likely at GCC), and the

builder will supply a 9 volt battery, headphones and a key. Also, a soldering iron or pencil...nothing larger than 25 watts.

The first session will be a show and tell session explaining the design and how it works, with hopefully a demonstration. This will be during our November meeting.

The second session will be the following Saturday (November 21st), from 10:00 am to noon (if a second working session is necessary it will be on December 5th). The working sessions will take place at GCC in Hammond Studio (the East Building-the low one story building out front).

First signed up - first served! Contact Phill Grant N1YPS via email at: phill112643@verizon.net or 119 Hoe Shop Road Bernardston, MA 01337.

Franklin County Crop Hunger Walk, Sunday October 18, Phill Grant N1YPS

CROP Walk 2015

Talk about a chilly Day! Sunday, October 18th was all that and a snow storm to boot. No accumulation... just a sample of things to come. The walk began at 2pm and was over by 4. We were shy a few, so N1LUP and WA1QKT did double duty. Many walkers thanked us for being there. One person needed a ride back after walking half way. Our job of escorting walkers across busy streets is always a challenge. Some walkers don't realize that we are there for their safety, not to control traffic.

Those of us who participated were: Bob, WA1QKT; Jeanne, KC1DCQ; Carter, WA1TVS; Howard, N1LUP; Chet, N1XPT (net control); Anne, KC1CRS; and me, Phill, N1YPS.

Emergency communications

This past week the ARRL's monthly ARES newsletter carried an interesting announcement:

"Beginning the week of November 8, 2015, the Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS) will participate in a quarterly contingency HF exercise in support of the Department of Defense. The exercise scenario will simulate a Coronal Mass Ejection (CME) event and focus on actions that radio operators should take prior to and following such an event."

The document released by MARS explains the scenario this way:

"In 1859, one of the largest geomagnetic storms on record occurred. Known as the Carrington event, the CME associated with this solar storm was a direct hit on the earth. Telegraph communications across the globe, which had become the primary method for communications around the world, failed. In 1989, another CME knocked out electricity for 12 hours to over 6 million residents in Quebec. The solar storm of 2012 was of similar magnitude to the Carrington event but passed earth's orbit without striking the planet. Should a CME of this magnitude strike earth today, the resulting geomagnetic storm is expected to cause significant damage to electrical and telecommunications infrastructure, consumer electronics, and cause widespread economic and social disruptions. Some estimates indicate up to 2 trillion dollars in damage and recovery from such an event may extend from several months

to years. Only equipment that has been protected during the geomagnetic storm should be expected to operate post-event.”

MARS organizers want their operators to test interoperability with ordinary ham operators, primarily on the HF bands, but also on any other regularly used ARES nets, such as the ones we use on 2 meters.

I have contacted Kathi Walbridge, K1WAL, in Shelburne VT, who is coordinating the exercise for the New England area, and expressed a willingness to assist.

Chris Myers, KB1NEK, ARES Emergency Coordinator for Franklin County

Club shirts



The club is looking at ordering t-shirts (possibly also sweatshirts). They will need to be preordered and will have the club logo on them.

The t-shirts will be available for approximately \$11 each and sweatshirts \$20 each, which is approximately the cost. In addition to standard tees, pocket tees, sweats, and hooded sweats (pullover or zippered) will be available, as well as hats. Shirt types can be mixed for quantity prices, as the silkscreen setup is the same for all types of shirts.

We will make up order forms which will be available by the time of the November breakfast and meeting. If you are interested an order will be made after the November meeting (so that we can have them for the December holiday party). Orders and money will be collected at the November breakfast and meeting.

Club ID cards

Rob Quinn-O'Connor, coordinator of the Franklin County Citizens Corps has offered to make ID cards for club members. He recently made four to facilitate club officers get access to the storage container located at the side of the jail. Many club members joined after the last time the club made ID cards, and even those with old cards may want new ones. Those who want cards should send me a passport style photo. When I have as many as want to get the cards, I will send the photos to Rob. He prefers to do the job all at once, since each time he makes a card he has to do work setting up the machine.

The practical value for such a card would be when club members volunteer to staff a table at a hamfest, or at Field Day, or to do emergency communication during a disaster.

Chris Myers, KB1NEK

FCARC Nets

Al Woodhull N1AW

Two club nets take place weekly on the FCARC 2 meter repeater. Tuesday at 9 p.m. is the Emergency Net, where we practice procedures that would be used in an emergency operation. Thursday at 8 p.m. is the Information Net, a less formal occasion for sharing comments and information about anything of interest to anyone. Formal announcements of general interest are welcome on either net.

Net control duties are shared by volunteers. We can use more net control volunteers. Currently three people take turns as net control on Tuesdays and four take turns for the Thursday net. More net control operators would make it easier for all, and would also increase our pool of potential control operators for public service or emergency events. Please consider volunteering. If you are on the schedule and find that on a particular night you know you can't make it, you can call someone else or send an e-mail to others to ask to swap for another night.

Also, if you are listening to the repeater at net time and nobody announces the beginning of the net, don't be shy. Just key your microphone on yourself and ask if there is anyone on frequency willing to act as net control. Or volunteer yourself. There is a formal protocol (script) for each net. Links to the preambles and templates can be found on the FCARC website (<http://www.fcarc.org/netlistings.htm>). But these words were not given to us graven on stone, and there is nothing wrong with improvising.

The Net Listings page also shows the schedule of operators for the Tuesday and Thursday nets. The page also has information about the monthly statewide ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) net on 75 meter SSB and the local slow speed 80 meter CW practice Snail Net

Courtesy of Susan Urquhart KB1EZO

Wanted to tell you that next Friday night, November 6, at 6:00 p.m. some ham radio equipment will be selling at auction at Douglas Auctioneers (Routes 5 & 10 in Deerfield). Their website has a listing of items -- www.douglasauctioneers.com.

THE COMMUNICATOR is an informational publication for members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club. Officers: President: Al Woodhull, N1AW (n1aw@arrl.net), Vice President: Ron Niswander, K8HSF (reniswander@gmail.com), Treasurer: Howard Field, N1LUP (howfield@comcast.net), Secretary: Chris Myers, KB1NEK (camyers1@verizon.net), Director: Belle Dyer, KB1NOG (bdyer58@mtdata.com), Director: Bruce Fuller KB1TLX, perkinsdowns@yahoo.com. This is your newsletter! Amateur radio information of general interest, club member project descriptions and doings, radio applications to other activities, corrections, or suggestions are all welcome. Individual submissions make for variety! We need more writers! Send submissions to Jeanne A. Dodge KC1DCQ (j.anndodge@gmail.com).