

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL



THE COMMUNICATOR THE COMMUNICATOR

July 2016

- Saturday July 16: **Club breakfast** at Denny's, 8 a.m.
- Monday July 18: **E-Board** at GCC Hammond Lounge 7 p.m.
- Saturday August 6: **Club breakfast** at Denny's, 8 a.m. **Note**, *not the usual 2nd or 3rd Saturday, public service events on those Saturdays conflict.*
- Sunday August 7: **Greenfield Triathlon** (see below for more information).
- Saturday August 13: **Bridge of Flowers 10K** (see below for more information)..
- Monday August 15: **E-Board** at GCC Hammond Lounge 7 p.m.
- Saturday August 20: **D2R2 (Deerfield Dirt Road Randonee)** (see below for more information)..
- Monday August 22: **VE License Exams, Northfield**

PUBLIC SERVICE: GREENFIELD TRIATHLON, BRIDGE OF FLOWERS 10K, D2R2

August is our big month for public service events.

The Greenfield Lightlife Triathlon takes place Sunday August 7th. The event will be on its traditional route this year, now that the Eunice Williams Covered Bridge has been repaired. Meet at Greenfield Swimming Pool on Nash's Mill Rd at 7 a.m.

Greenfield Lightlife Triathlon just celebrated its 30th year anniversary in 2013 and is the longest running triathlon in New England! Situated in the heart of Franklin County, the Greenfield Lightlife Triathlon course meanders through the back roads of Greenfield, passes through the Historic Eunice Williams Covered Bridge, and features swimming in our very own Green River. All race proceeds benefit the Greenfield Recreation Department.

FCARC support is very important for this event. A signup list will be available at the July 16th breakfast at Denny's or contact Jeanne A. Dodge, KC1DCQ by e-mail, j.anndodge@gmail.com , or phone him at 413-222-8620 to volunteer. Event info is at: <http://www.greenfield-triathlon.com> .

The Bridge of Flowers 10K Road Race is next, on Saturday August 13th. We need volunteer radio operators to provide communications around the course to help insure runner safety. Chris Myers, KB1NEK <camyers_1@verizon.net>, and Howard Field, N1LUP <howfield@comcast.net>will coordinate the club's effort. A net control station will be set up at 6:30 AM, on Bridge St, across the street from the Greenfield Savings Bank. Volunteer radio operators should arrive at 7, in order to find parking space nearby.

FRANKLIN LAND TRUST THE DEERFIELD DIRT ROAD RANDONNEE (D2R2) BICYCLE TOUR, SATURDAY AUGUST 20, 2016

FCARC will again be providing communications for the Franklin Land Trust D2R2 bicycle tour. In this tour, cyclists can choose from routes that are 180 Km, 160 Km, 115 Km, 100 Km, 40 miles or 20 miles in length through Massachusetts and Vermont. See <http://www.franklinlandtrust.org/d2r2> for more information. Unlike races that FCARC supports, this is an all-day event.

FCARC will set up communications between the starting/ending location in Deerfield and at several critical check points along the route. These check points are where lunch is provided to the riders and are at locations where there is no cell phone coverage. The communications that we provided between these locations and the race starting/ending location is the only communications available. We need several people at each of these locations and for morning, afternoon or all day shifts. Dinner, a beer and beer glass are provided to each volunteers. Call Bob, W1SRB, at [413-527-0725](tel:413-527-0725) or e-mail him at atw1srb@arrl.net to volunteer.

Secretary's Report

E-BOARD AND PROGRAM MEETING MONDAY, JUNE 13 2016, CHRIS MYERS KB1NEK

e-board meeting

1. Present: Al, Howard, Ron, Jeanne, Belle, Bob D., Bob S. Anne, Keith, and Chris (recording)
2. Discussion about Field Day.
 - a. Safety Officer, has to be on duty the whole time to earn 100 points. Chris says it is worth the trouble to try to do all the things mentioned, even if we don't qualify for the points. We might find it difficult to ground the equipment. Chris volunteered to be a safety officer. Jeanne would help. We could delegate the job over night.
 - b. Bruce suggested buying hard hats. Motion was made to buy two for the club, up to \$50. Bruce also suggested safety tape. Ron said he has some. Jeanne suggested safety vests.
 - c. Al suggested having VHF - UHF radios handy for local contacts.
 - d. Jeanne suggested literature to provide information for the public.
 - e. Al has sent press releases to the Recorder and the Turner's Falls newspaper. He would like somebody to volunteer as a public information officer. Al suggested revising old folder with cut and paste updates, then later do a better job of it. Jeanne will set up a table and talk to the public.
 - f. We should have someone copy the W1AW Field Day message. Chris volunteered.
 - g. Al asked if someone would originate a message to the Section Manager. No takers.
 - h. Antenna set up is needed for 8 AM start to get the hex beam up while Bob S. is here. Step ladder is needed.
 - i. Anne and Keith will bring the spud gun.
 - j. Anne will be the GOTA manager and coach.
 - k. Chris will be in charge of the generator.
 - l. Al will get the solar panel and controller in the storage container.
 - m. Bob S. will bring a dome tent to protect against rain

The general meeting took nominations for the following club offices:

President - Al Woodhull
Secretary - Chris Myers
Director - Belle Dyer

All three are already serving in their respective positions.

Nominations were opened for last minute names, but none were offered. A motion was made and seconded to have the secretary record the three names as having been elected

The club decided to move the meetings to Hammond Studio, at GCC. This will take effect in the fall. The club thanks Ted Johnson for providing space. At this time, it is easier access for some club members to get to Hammond Studio.

FCARC Greenfield Repeater Update

by Al Woodhull, N1AW

The duplexer for the club's 448.875 MHz repeater at Rocky Mountain in Greenfield has been realigned and reinstalled, so the transmitter and the receiver are now sharing an antenna high on the tower. The repeater is a Yaesu DR-1X and digital voice modes have been enabled.

A second new Yaesu DR-1X repeater has been put into operation on two meters at the same location. We have a new frequency pair for this one, you listen on 147.120 MHz and transmit to it on 147.720 MHz. It uses a PL tone of 131.8 Hz for analog FM voice. At this time it is operating at a low power level with separate transmit and receive antennas. Digital voice modes are enabled on this one also.

If you do not have a radio with digital voice capability these repeaters will work on ordinary FM just the way you are used to. However it is recommended that you set the squelch type on your radio to Tone-Squelch (TSQ). Without Tone Squelch conversations between users using digital modes will just sound like noise to users with analog-only radios.

Currently Al, N1AW, and Anne and Keith, KU1N and KC1CRS have radios capable of using the digital modes provided by our Yaesu repeaters. If anyone else in the club already has, or plans to acquire, equipment that can use these modes it would be appreciated if you would let one of us know about this.

Digital users and analog users need to be aware of each other and cooperate. Analog users will not notice anything unusual when they access these repeaters - the repeater will retransmit using ordinary FM when that mode is received. When digital mode users are using the repeaters the output will be digital, and analog users who are not using Tone Squelch will just hear noise, as mentioned above. Digital mode users should switch to analog FM to reply to calls from analog users. In analog mode the repeater will ID with the KB1BSS callsign in Morse code as all are used to. In digital mode digital users will see the callsigns of other digital users as well as the callsign of the repeater itself, but there will be no Morse code ID.

I am going to suggest that the topic of our first club meeting in the Fall should be repeaters, including an explanation and demonstration of the digital modes.

Next Amateur Radio License examination

Amateur Radio License examination conducted by The Franklin County Amateur Radio Club will be August 22. <http://www.fcarc.org/venews.htm>

All exams are at 7:00 p.m. downstairs at the Unitarian Church on Main Street in Northfield (Routes 10 & 63, corner of Warwick Road, flashing light in center of town).

The fee is \$15 cash or check. Bring 2 forms of ID (one photographic), Social Security number, any current CSCEs and photocopies, any amateur radio license and a copy, pens and pencils. A calculator is OK if it is cleared.

News, Activities & Articles

FIELD DAY, JUNE 25-26, 2016:

AI, N1AW: We made a total of 590 CW contacts and 295 SSB contacts, including 6 meter and GOTA station contacts. 23 operators made at least one on-the-air contact. A total of 32 people actively participated in one way or another, and an uncounted number of visitors stopped by to ask what we were doing.

Tentatively it looks like our QSO score was 2950, our bonus points 1010, for a total of 3960 points.

Phill, N1YPS: Six Meter (VHF) this year on Field Day was totally New England. I witnessed a fade-in from north Florida for less than a minute but no contact. I have a 4 element beam atop the tower and operate using my IC-706. Fair weather brought out lots of "tower people" watching us and asking questions. No bad weather... not even a raindrop.

Richard, KB1NOX: The upper bands of HF were dead. 6 Meters should have had signals from all over the country, but not this year. Phill Grant and myself were attempting to work 6 meters, but the band was so very dead. I believe there were only a total of 11 contacts on 6 meters.

After speaking with friends from other clubs, they too experienced dead bands, Some friends said just about everything above 20 meters was dead. Some New England clubs experienced some success in the 17 and 15 meter bands but not at all what they had hoped for. several friends I spoke with over the phone from Pittsfield Mass, Manchester NH, and Nashua NH, as well as Townshend Vermont all said 12, 10 and 6 were dead. They had never seen such dead air on Field Day.

Art Donahue, W1AWX paid us a visit on Field Day, sent us some photos (see the composite below) and has included us in his QRZ page with Western Mass. radio history: www.qrz.com/db/w1awx

I've long been interested in New England radio and TV history and I try to add these stories to my W1AWX QRZ.com page. My daughter Erin and I drove out to Greenfield last weekend to look at the first of two Massachusetts mountaintop Amateur Radio Field Day Sites: Poet's Seat on Rocky Mountain in Greenfield and Mount Wachusett in Princeton.

Some quick backstory: I worked as a news photographer for WWLP-TV22 in Springfield back in the 1970s. They had a blind anchorman, Paul Caputo. Paul was also a ham and I was sent to film him and his club's Field Day in 1972. I believe it was in Agawam and probably the Hamden County ARC. It was the first Field Day I attended. I knew nothing about ham radio.

Back then I was the closest staff photographer to Franklin County (Florence) and when WRLP-TV32 in Winchester, NH resumed broadcasting a local newscast in 1974, I would monitor 33.54 MHz Franklin County Mutual Aid for fires on a Tennelec crystal scanner. I also used to listen to the Mount Massaemet and Mount Toby fire towers when they were on 31.34 and 31.38 MHz back when low-band VHF ruled.

I got my ham license in 1980 after receiving my FCC First Class commercial license for operating microwave equipment at WBZ TV4 in Boston. In the 90s I produced stories for WCVB-TV5 Boston's "Chronicle" program about early New England films. One 1920's film was of the Greenfield Winter Carnival ski jump on Poet's Seat. Enclosed are a couple of still frames from the film. It looks insanely steep.

Back to today: When Erin and I approached Poet's Seat from Greenfield on Saturday from the valley below I could look up and see the custom wood and plastic large window frame designed as a wind and rain barrier for the radio stations in the base of the tower. I thought that had to have been designed from some past hard-earned experience. I hadn't been up to Poet's Seat in over 40 years and I was glad to see it has been well treated and respected as the town landmark. The folks we met from the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club couldn't have been nicer. I applaud the club members for keeping the tradition of Field Day alive at this amazing site. I know it is a lot of hard work. Your efforts at developing emergency communications skills and protocols for Franklin County symbolize the best of what amateur radio public service is all about. We met some new friends that day and wish you all the best. I put some pictures and text of your 2016 Field Day on my QRZ page. Now if I can just convince my daughter to get her ham license!

Thank you all.

73,

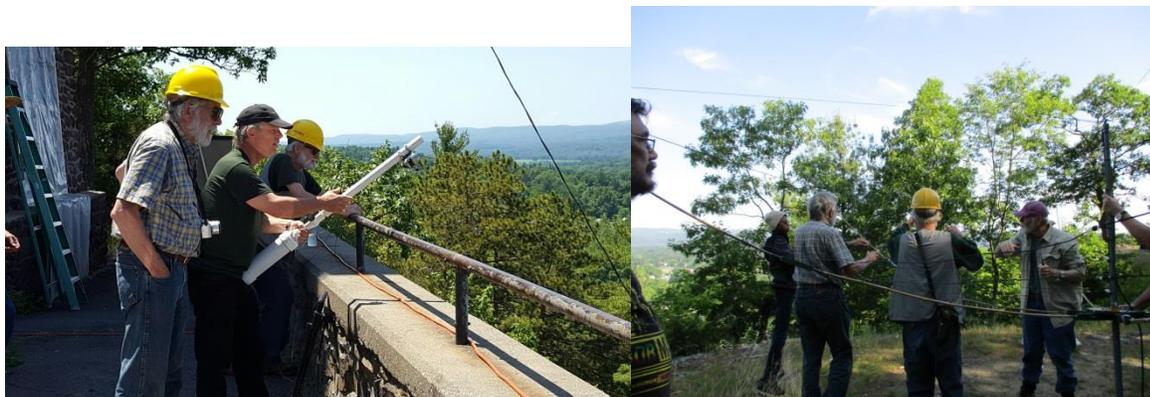
Art Donahue, W1AWX

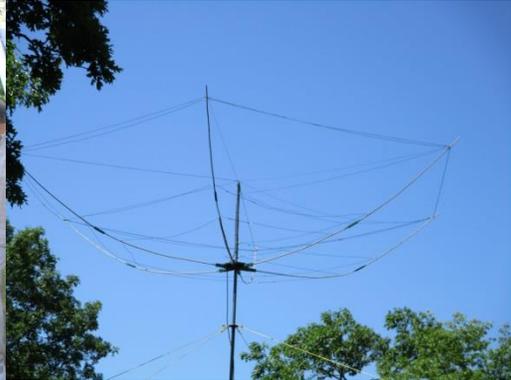


Anne and Bob



Getting an antenna up:





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).