

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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# THE COMMUNICATOR

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**October 2016**

### Upcoming Events

- Club Breakfast: Saturday Oct 15, 8 a.m.: Denny's, Greenfield 10:00 am Franklin County Amateur Radio Emergency Communications group at GCC Hammond Studio
- Crop Hunger Walk: Sunday Oct 16, 1 p.m. for radio ops
- E-Board meeting: Monday Oct 17, 6:00 p.m.: at GCC Program Meeting: 7:15 p.m. Speaker: Rich Stewart on Fox Hunts
- Club Breakfast: Saturday Nov 12, 8 a.m.: Denny's, Greenfield
- Fox Hunt: Saturday Nov 12, 10 a.m.: Emergency Communication Group invited.
- E-Board meeting: Monday Nov 21, 6:00 p.m. : GCC 7:15 p.m. General Meeting, Topic: APRS (Phill and Al)
- VE license tests: Monday Nov 28, 7 p.m.: Northfield Unitarian Church

## **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**.

## **Calendar**

### **Public Service Event: Franklin County Crop Hunger Walk:**

CROP Walk on Sunday, October 16, 2016

When CROP began in 1947 (under the wing of Church World Service, which was founded in 1946), CROP was an acronym for the Christian Rural Overseas Program. Its primary mission was to help Midwest farm families to share their grain with hungry neighbors in post-World War II Europe and Asia.

Today, we've outgrown the acronym but we retain it as the historic name of the program. CROP Hunger Walks are interfaith hunger education and fundraising events sponsored by Church World Service and organized by CWS local offices across the U.S.

Contact Phill Grant, N1YPS for sign-up and other details.

## **Secretary's Report**

### **E-Board Meeting Monday, September 19, 2016 – Chris Myers KB1NEK**

1. Bike for Food. Route has few water stops, most with decent cell phone service. There are stretches along the road without cell phone service, where roaming radio operators can help. Food Bank has a new person in charge of volunteers. Al and Ron tested Deerfield repeater for a back-up. It works better in Williamsburg than the Leyden repeater. Ron has seven

volunteers, would like another two or three.

2. Phill will take charge of the Crop Walk, which probably will be in South Deerfield.

3. Some discussion of other future projects: kit building, fox hunting, etc. Jeanne talked about possible license class to be given at GCC, maybe in the fall. Jeanne knows a former ham, who could help give publicity for such a class. Would be part of Community Education Program. Al brought up the possibility of ordering books. Chris asked about course philosophy, quick and dirty or with some better understanding of the science of radio transmission. Ron pointed out that a class at a community college should teach some science. Jeanne emphasized need to pick a date. Consensus was to schedule a class for the end of February. We should work on developing a course. Chris offered to help teach. Al suggested someone check on line to see if there are examples of how other clubs teach courses. Chris offered to do some looking around.

Chris asked if board should make a decision to buy study books. Howard said we need a dollar amount for buying is \$200. Consensus was to wait until main meeting. Jeanne offered to keep books in her office.

4. Jeanne mentioned meeting the instructor of the outdoor leadership program. She asked him if they bring a radio. He said no, but is interested in our fox hunt plans.

5. Roy did a draft for a new pamphlet. Al said he would send a copy to e-board members for review.

6. Al asked for suggestions for future meetings. Phill will talk about APRS at November meeting. Al suggested a discussion about fox hunting in October. Rich Stewart, KB1NOX, offered to present information at a meeting, with the fox box and antennas with attenuators to display.

7. Howard has made arrangements for holiday party at the Senior Center in Shelburne Falls, Dec. 12.

8. Saw Mill River Race is on Dec. 31 this year, so as not to have it on a Sunday. Al said he has already received a message from Jon Dobosz, the recreation director in Montague.

9. Al reminded people that the Boutwells are still trying to dispose of an antenna tower. It comes in three sections, a total height of about 25 to 30 ft. Al may also need help putting up a tower in his yard.

10. Bob Dicherman raised question about whether public service event organizers have been informing 911 Dispatch centers in advance. Apparently not done for D2R2. Chris suggested Ron inform the Food Bank about the wisdom of sending a message to Shelburne Control.

## **General Meeting Monday, September 19, 2016 – Chris Myers KB1NEK**

1. Mentioned licensing class, and the desire to buy bulk order of books. Belle made a motion for the club to spend up to \$350 to buy books, Bob D. seconded it. Passed unanimously.

2. Al opened discussion about problems with Leyden repeater. Al showed picture of the antenna taken in 2013 and another taken within the last two weeks by the broadcast FM radio station's climber. The recent picture shows a bend near the bottom of the antenna.
3. Al showed a few features of APRS that can be used with digital radios he and Keith have bought recently.
4. Al and Keith together demonstrated features of the new Yaesu repeaters we have installed on Rocky Mountain over the water tank in Greenfield.

## **WILL BIKE 4 FOOD SUCCESS**

The sixth annual Will Bike 4 Food fund raising event was a success with 340 registered riders raising \$114,000 for the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. Communications support for this event was provided by Al W1AW, Chris KB1NEK, Bob WA1QKT, Roy K1LKY, Carter WA1TVS, Rich KB1NOX, Jeanne KC1DCQ, Ron K8HSF and Erika Laforme.

The location of net control was an improvement from last year as it was adjacent to the Food Bank volunteer coordinator allowing for ease of communication between our people and the event organizers.

During the event we were able to provide communications between a participant in distress located where cell phone service was void and the event organizers. A message was also forwarded to the participant's wife from our net control.

We were also able to utilize the clubs FT-8800 dual channel capability as signals into the Leyden repeater were marginal in some of the areas we were covering. Net control was utilizing the Leyden repeater to communicate with stations in the northern areas while utilizing the Deerfield repeater to communicate with stations in the southwest areas, thus providing good practice on dual channel operation.

As always, these events provide good practice for event and emergency communications as well as verification that equipment is operational. The food bank expressed thanks for our event support.

## **High Speed CW In Your Head**

Al N1AW

I had a conflict on Saturday of the Boxboro Hamfest three day event, and I expected the flea market would be sparsely populated on Sunday because of the Saratoga event scheduled for that day. But one talk scheduled for Sunday really attracted me. Keith, KU1N, who had

already attended on Saturday also noticed it, and he decided to go back with me on Sunday to hear the talk by George Allison, K1IG, on "High Speed CW in Your Head."

The modern recommended method for learning Morse Code was popularized by Russ Farnsworth, W6TTB, in the late 1950s. With the Farnsworth method, individual letters are sent at a relatively high speed, typically 13 wpm (words per minute) with long spaces between the letters, so the actual words per minute is much slower, maybe only 2 or 3 words per minute for a beginner. This way the learner becomes used to the sound of each letter at high speed, rather than learning to hear a slow sequence of dits and dahs.

K1IG's talk at Boxboro explained that many amateurs feel they cannot possibly go higher than about 20 or 25 wpm. This is because they are learning to copy, that is to put down a sequence of letters on a piece of paper. Historically the goal of teaching Morse Code to commercial telegraphers or military operators was always to produce a written or typed document intended to be read or understood by someone other than the person who copied the signals from a wire or off the air.

But hams usually don't really want a message on paper to show someone else, they want to carry on a conversation. They want to understand words as they are received, not by reading a message on paper after the transmission. Some hams really can do this at speeds of 40 to 50 or more wpm. John Ragle, W1ZI, in Hadley is one I know who can do this.

Of course you are not going to learn to recognize by ear every word in the English language. But a list of words of four or fewer letters commonly encountered in amateur radio conversations is not as long as you would think. In reading printed text we learn very early to recognize a large vocabulary of common words. if you instantly recognize I'm excited about this. It is easy to generate practice material by using a word processor to substitute multiple spaces for each single space in a document. Fldigi or CWtype are two common programs that can be used to send the practice audio. I hope to report progress soon.

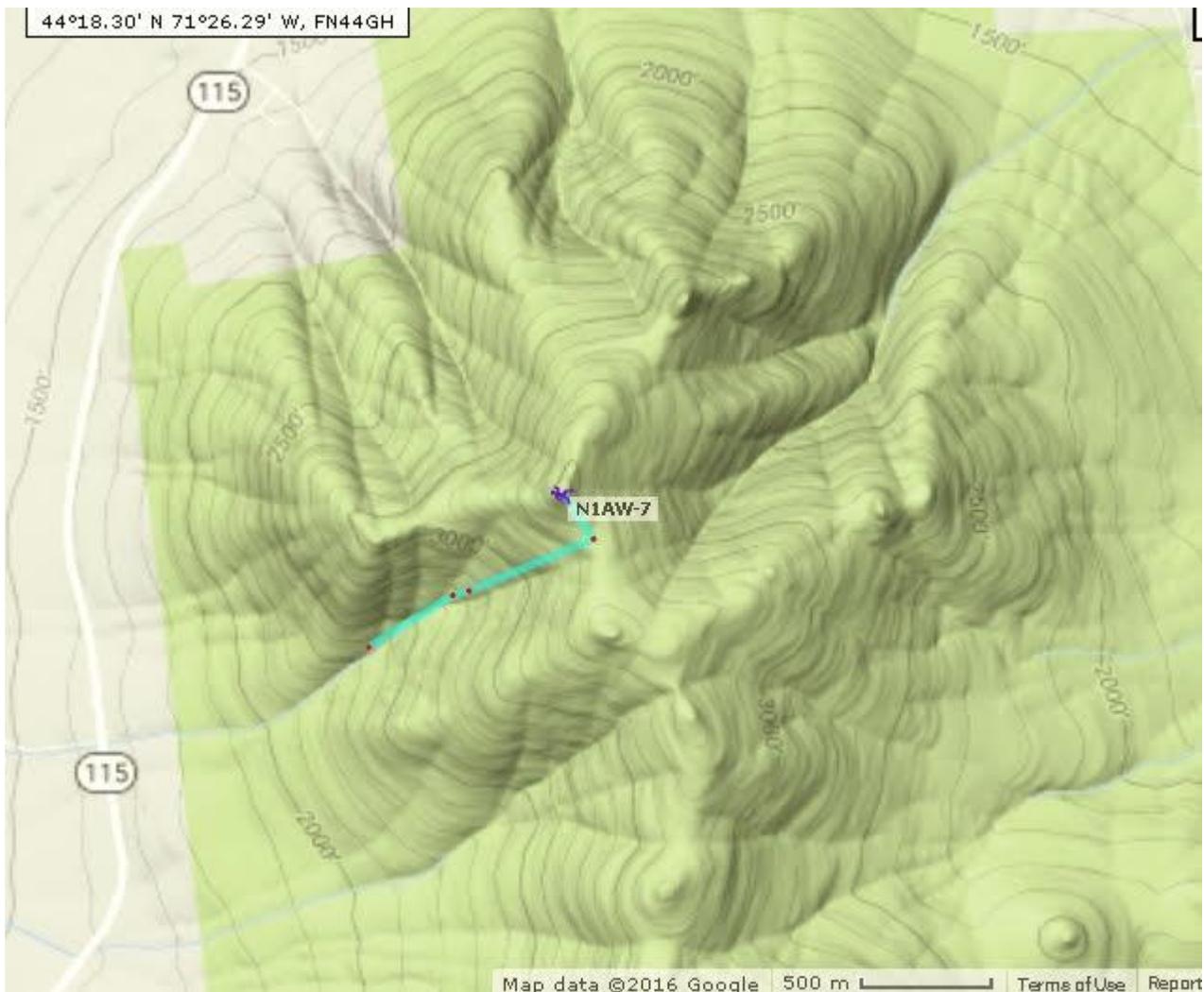
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## Tracking a SOTA Excursion

by AI, N1AW

The attached picture is from the website [aprs.fi](http://aprs.fi), which displays GPS location information transmitted via APRS (Amateur Position Reporting System). This picture shows locations at various stops along the way as AI N1AW ascended Mt Martha, a 3500' hill in the New Hampshire White Mountains, for a SOTA (Summits on the Air) activation on September 2nd.

A presentation on APRS by Phill N1YPS will be the subject of the November club meeting



THE COMMUNICATOR is an informational publication for members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club. Officers: President: Al Woodhull, N1AW ([n1aw@arrl.net](mailto:n1aw@arrl.net)), Vice President: Ron Niswander, K8HSF ([reniswander@gmail.com](mailto:reniswander@gmail.com)), Treasurer: Howard Field, N1LUP ([howfield@comcast.net](mailto:howfield@comcast.net)), Secretary: Chris Myers, KB1NEK ([camyers1@verizon.net](mailto:camyers1@verizon.net)), Director: Belle Dyer, KB1NOG ([bdyer58@mtdata.com](mailto:bdyer58@mtdata.com)), Director: Bruce Fuller KB1TLX, ([perkinsdowns@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:j.anndodge@gmail.com)).