

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL



THE COMMUNICATOR

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May 2017

Upcoming Events

- Club Breakfast: Saturday May 13, 8 a.m.: Denny's, Greenfield
- E-Board meeting, Saturday May 15, 7:00 pm: Hammond Studio, GCC
- **VE Amateur Radio License Exams**, 7 p.m.: Northfield Unitarian Church.
- FCARC Picnic: Saturday 11 am May 27: Leyden Recreation Department's pavilion at the Pearl Rhodes Elementary School, Leyden
- Club Breakfast: Saturday June 17, 8 a.m.: Denny's, Greenfield The **Emergency Communications Group** meets at 10 a.m.at GCC Hammond Studio.
- *Monday June 19, E-Board meeting.* 6 p.m.; **Annual Business Meeting and Officers Election** 7:15 p.m.: followed by **Understanding Inductance, Capacitance and Reactance**, talk by Bob, W1SRB and Al, N1AW
- Saturday & Sunday June 24-25, all day **ARRL Field Day**: all day: Poet's Seat Tower, Greenfield

Secretary's Report

E-BOARD AND PROGRAM MEETING Monday, April 24, 2017 AT GCC

1. Anne KC1CRS is still compiling an order of FCARC shirts and sweatshirts, but only about a half-dozen shirts have been requested so far.
2. Upcoming meeting topics:
 1. Bob WA1QKT no word from astronaut Cady Coleman yet
 2. May meeting will be our picnic at Leyden Pavilion Sat. May 27, 11:00AM to 3:00 PM, meal at 12:30 PM. KB1TLX Bruce bringing cider, Ron K8HSF has some leftover FCARC soft drinks. Jeanne KC1DCQ and Anne providing club burgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers, but this is a pot luck event, so attendees should bring food to share. There may be a small foxhunt and/or equipment swap.
 3. June meeting will be our annual meeting, with elections. Bruce KB1TLX will not stand for re-election for director. Howard N1LUP will stand for re-election. Ron K8HSF will not run for vice-president, but will consider running for director.
 4. A future meeting topic may be Bob W1SRB explaining inductive reactance, in response to Joe KB1WVO's suggestion.
 5. Another idea (Jeanne's? Joe's?) for a meeting in the fall was to show examples of antennas and how they work.
3. Leyden 2m repeater antenna fix: \$1400.00 voted in previous meetings still available for this, but we need to decide which antenna to buy soon (before antenna parts fall off tower, and before next professional climber visit to tower). Subcommittee includes several members.
4. 440 MHz repeater interference from new CT digital repeater: Options to fix are: Boost our power output to overcome interference, but may have to add amplifier or make other change - Bruce KB1TLX, and apply for new frequency pair to avoid interference.
5. May 15 at 6:00 PM at GCC East Bldg. will be next e-board meeting.
6. Jeanne KC1DCQ arranged for the technician license class to be scheduled at GCC East Bldg. on Oct. 10, 12, 17,19, 21 (Tuesday & Thursday nights, ending on Saturday). Jeanne will be the instructor of record, assisted by several other members. Bruce KB1TLX mentioned a preference for teaching radio theory, vs. "teaching to the test".

The meeting was brought to order at 7:15 PM by AI N1AW.

Anne KC1CRS is still compiling order of FCARC shirts and sweatshirts, but only about a half-dozen shirts have been requested so far. Repeater frequencies may or may not be printed on shirts, since frequencies may soon change for the 440 MHz.

Jeanne KC1DCQ has arranged for a technician license class to be scheduled at GCC East Bldg. on Oct. 10, 12, 17,19, 21 (Tuesday & Thursday nights, ending on Saturday). Jeanne will be the instructor of record, assisted by several other members. Bruce KB1TLX mentioned a preference for teaching radio theory, vs. "teaching to the test".

Our May meeting will be our picnic at Leyden Pavilion Sat. May 27, 11:00AM to 3:00 PM, with the meal at about 12:30 PM. KB1TLX Bruce is bringing cider, Ron K8HSF has some leftover

FCARC soft drinks. Jeanne KC1DCQ and Anne KC1CRS providing club burgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers, but this is a pot luck event, so attendees should bring food to share. There may be a small foxhunt and/or equipment swap.

The main meeting topic was discussion of our upcoming Field Day, which will be on Saturday and Sunday, June 24 & 25.

Al N1AW led the discussion, and started by showing some photos of past Field Days.

Carter WA1TVS will again host the HF SSB voice station in his RV, and serve an early Sunday breakfast. The radio will be the same Yaesu FT-450 that we've used for the past several years. The antennas will probably be a 40 m dipole and 20 m Moxon, tunable on 15 m, and perhaps 80 m.

The HF CW station will again be in a tent or screenhouse, using a wire dipole for low bands and Bob W1SRB's portable hexbeam on 20/15/10 m.

A GOTA station (with a control operator) should be available again, at least part time, for beginner ops or unlicensed persons.

We need to ask Phil N1YPS if he will be setting up his 6 m VHF station again.

We will try to separate antennas as much as possible to avoid interference between the various stations. We should also all use bandpass filters and keep attenuator settings as high as possible, to avoid interference.

Jeanne KC1DCQ and Anne KC1CRS organizing food for Saturday noon, primarily sandwiches that can be made all afternoon. Jeanne said it might be good to have a separate tent or screen tent for the food, to get some of the noisy traffic away from the 6 m and GOTA stations in the tower.

Bruce KB1TLX will direct safety; he wants traffic cones and hard hats, and as many CPR-trained participants as possible, amongst other measures. Bob WA1QKT will bring a traffic cone to protect Carter's WA1TVS RV.

As before, we will be using the N1MM logging program at the main HF stations, and paper logs at the GOTA and 6 m.

From Roy K1LKY's FD hotwash list last year:

1. Protect antenna connectors from rain
2. Use attenuators on radios to eliminate some interference between CW and SSB on 20 meters
3. RG-8 coax through RV window made antenna tuner slide around
4. Need foam strip on RV window to keep mosquitoes out
5. Need Bug Repellant for GOTA station
6. Need adaptors N female to SO-239 female

More than a dozen people attended the meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Bob Dickerman WA1QKT Clerk

News, Activities & Articles

Club Officers' Election Coming in June

Club officers are elected for two-year terms. There are six positions, three will be voted on at the June 2017 Business and Elections meeting. This year the positions of the Vice-President, Treasurer, and one Director come up. See the Club Officers page (<http://www.fcarc.org/clubofficers.htm>) on the website. AI, N1AW, will act as the Nominating Committee - please contact him if you want to nominate someone. Persons nominated must agree to serve; nominations can also be made at the meeting, but persons nominated at the meeting must be present in order to accept nomination.

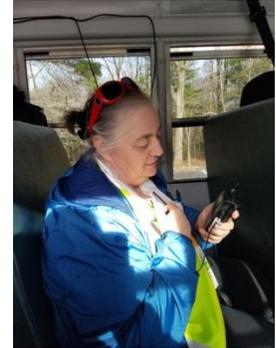
FCARC Picnic, Saturday May 27th

As usual we will have a Saturday picnic instead of a Monday meeting in May. The location will be the same as in other recent years, the Leyden Pavilion behind the Pearl Rhodes Elementary School in Leyden. Save the date: Saturday, May 27th. As in the past this will be a partial pot-luck - soft drinks, hot dogs, burgers, etc., will be provided, but other items - deserts, salads, whatever you feel like bringing will be welcome. If you want a suggestion of what to bring, call AI, N1AW, at 773-3522, but uncoordinated pot-luck is OK. Activities starting at 11 a.m. may include a mini flea market, local fox hunt, a demo portable HF station. Want to sell or trade something, show off a mobile rig, or test your Pixie? Bring it along. We will plan on eating by 12:30 or 1:00.

To get to the Leyden Pavilion from Greenfield, take Leyden Rd, which becomes Greenfield Rd at the Greenfield-Leyden town line. At about 2.8 miles from the town line bear right (still on Greenfield Rd, but Mid County Rd (steep hill) goes straight here. After another half mile bear right on Brattleboro Rd - the school is here. As you pass the school you will see the playing fields and the pavilion down the hill on the right, the entrance is at the far end. Directions and a link to a map are on the website Directions page (<http://www.fcarc.org/directions.htm>).

VE session: the 4th Monday in May is the 23rd, VE session as usual in Northfield.

FCARC MEMBER AT THE BOSTON MARATHON



Ham's provide a support role at the marathon and that has changed over the years. There is now : Boston Athletic Association Communications Committee for Amateur Radio. This Committee membership is drawn from public safety, BAA, private ambulance services and commercial communications providers. Six Amateur Radio volunteers were selected to represent, manage and serve the almost 300 volunteers who provide communications for the BAA on event day.

To quote the Committee "Prompted by the tragic bombing in 2013 and a subsequent increase in public safety concerns, the BAA formed a Communications Committee late in 2014 with a mandate to review and improve the entire communications program at the Boston Marathon. Security and operational challenges had increased, requiring Amateur Radio to function in a highly-structured environment, one following guidelines of the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System (ICS)".

This year I was the radio communications on an express bus at the Boston Marathon. This was a new role for me. I will admit I was nervous; I was doing a fairly new skill, in a new setting with a new team. I did prepare and as always I had amazing support from my local Ham friends and the Hams taking part on the Marathon Day (and leading up to it). The committee does an amazing amount of organizing and preparation. There is a website with many documents to help you be prepared, along with 36 channels to program into your radio.

I brought my HT along with a mag mount and a whip antenna, spare batteries, options for mikes to use, of course the instruction book. I didn't bring my "new to me" mobile because I hadn't used it yet and I figured that there would be enough going on that I shouldn't try to learn it in the moment. Well, when I arrived at the transit center to meet my team, find my bus, get my jacket and credentials, I was handed a mobile unit to use. Considering it didn't have any instructions but was programmed, I did fairly well getting it set up and setting up two mag mounts on the roof of the bus.

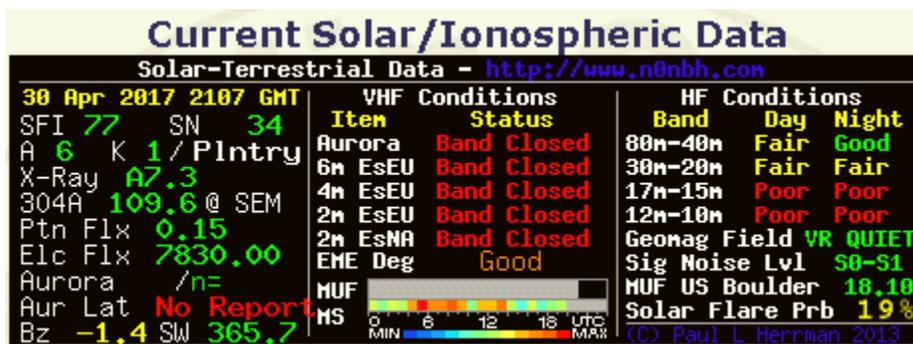
During the day, my team (bus driver, an EMT, a nurse and myself) took runners who had been picked up at medical stations (they didn't need an ambulance but decided to stop running), we then brought them to Copley Square in Boston so the medical folks at the end could check them. At some points the driving around the finish area got really complicated, it was my job to keep the communications going and make sure that all knew where we were and when.

It was a long, but successful day. I did do some “troubleshooting” when there were problems with the radios (channeling Bob Dickerman), we did well. I hope to go back next year with my own mobile and HT.

Jeanne A. Dodge KC1DCQ

Radio Propagation Forecasting

About six months ago I added a page to our website that displays a summary of current solar and ionospheric data. The URL is <http://www.fcarc.org/propagation.htm>. If you go to this page you will see a display like this...



... and below this is an explanation of some of the items that are of most interest to an amateur radio operator. By the time you read this there should also be a permanent link to “Propagation” on the website main menu.

A few other websites are useful for predicting radio conditions. The Space Weather website provides maps showing near-real time MUF (<http://www.spacew.com/www/realtime.php>) and near-real time critical frequency (<http://www.spacew.com/www/fof2.html>). At the Australian site ips-geo-warning@listserver.ips.gov.au you can subscribe to numerous e-mail lists that provide warnings of events that may affect radio wave propagation – I subscribe to the ips-geo-warning list that gives advance warning of radio disturbances.

Yaesu FTM-3200DR fan noise

At this month’s club breakfast I was talking to a couple of members about a radio I had purchased and was not pleased with. They encouraged me to share this in the Communicator so others could be aware.

The club has 2 Yaesu repeaters on Rocky Mount in Greenfield capable of operating in C4FM digital mode as well as analog FM mode. Yaesu currently has 2 digital/fm handhelds and 3 digital/fm mobile transceivers. The mobile transceivers are the FTM-400XDR currently \$499.95 after rebate, the FTM-100DR currently \$309.95, and the FTM-3200DR currently at

\$149.95 after rebate. The FTM-3200DR does not have the features of the other two and in addition is a 2 meter band radio only.

Owners in the reviews/forums mentioned the FTM-3200DR having a fan that ran all the time and some said noisy. Others however mentioned the fan was not noisy and did not bother them. Note this would not be noticed if used in an automobile vs. inside one's shack. I decided to purchase one due to the low cost and hoping the fan was not noisy. Well, the fan is not too noisy but it tends to run all the time and this with the radio idling in receive mode. I did not want to hear a fan running from a radio in receive mode so I passed the radio along to my step son KC1HEG who recently got his license at the last Northfield VE session. At his location we noted the fan situation had gotten worse in the receive mode based on the temperature at his house. The fan was cycling on/off every second or two non-stop. Very annoying. Sent an Email to Yaesu technical support asking if it were normal and if Yaesu had any intention of doing a firmware update to address the continuous running fan. They responded the cycling on/off was normal and that the Japanese engineers had no intention of any firmware changes at this time but passed my info along.

AI, N1AW, reports not noticing any fan noise or much operation of the fan with his FTM-100DR. He adds it is run at it lower DC supply voltage as it is not hooked to a commercial power supply. I didn't even know my FTM-400DR had a fan until I looked. I am hoping Yaesu will eventually do a firmware update for the FTM-3200DR's cooling fan as it is a low priced entry radio for taking advantage of the C4FM digital mode.
Keith

New England QSO Party on May 6th and 7th

The NEQP is a great time to check out antenna systems and offers a moderately paced opportunity to work new states and countries. You'll find a wide variety of participants, from newcomers to experienced contesters, all interested in making contacts with New England stations.

We're working to make sure that all of the New England counties are active again this year and would appreciate your help. Get on for at least an hour or two and join in on the fun. Please let me know if you can put in any time at all so we can work on activity from the rarest counties. **Will you be QRV? Let us know which county you'll be on from with a message to info@neqp.org**

Oh yes, the NEQP is also **lots** of fun when mobile. Every time you cross a county line the action starts over again. It's amazing what a 100w radio and mobile whip can do.

The QSO Party is 20 hours long overall, in two sections with a civilized break for sleep Saturday night. It goes from 4pm Saturday until 1am Sunday, then 9am Sunday until 8pm Sunday. Operate on CW, SSB and digital modes on 80-40-20-15-10 meters. For each QSO you'll give your callsign, a signal report and your county/state. Top scorers can earn a plaque and everyone who makes 25 QSOs and sends in a log will get a certificate.

Last year we had logs from 179 New England stations and 300 more from around the country and world.

The full rules are here -> <http://www.neqp.org/rules.html>

The 2016 results were posted over the weekend and the results since 2002 are also available -> <http://www.neqp.org/results.html>

It's just about a month until the 2017 NEQP. Please make some QSOs even if you don't want to send in a log.

Thanks! 73, Tom/K1KI

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 (bdyer582@juno.com), Director: Bruce Fuller KB1TLX, (perkindsdowns@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).