

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



FIRST CLASS MAIL



THE COMMUNICATOR

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March 2013

Upcoming Events

- MTARA Hamfest and Flea Market: Saturday March 2, x a.m., Springfield
- Club breakfast: Saturday March 16, 8 a.m.: Denny's, Greenfield
- E-Board meeting: Monday March 18, 6 p.m.: Greenfield High School
- Meeting & Program: Monday March 18, 7:15 p.m.: Greenfield High School - Mary Nathan, American Red Cross
- Club breakfast: Saturday. April 13, 8 a.m.: Denny's, Greenfield
- E-Board meeting: Monday April 22, 6:00 p.m.: Greenfield High School
- Meeting & Program: Monday April 22, 7:15 p.m.: Greenfield High School - Field Day Planning

March 2013

Calendar

MTARA HAMFEST AND FLEA MARKET, SATURDAY MARCH 2, 8:30 A.M., FEEDING HILLS

The Mt Tom ARA Hamfest and Flea Market will take place on Saturday March 2nd at the Springfield Turnverein Club, 176 Garden Street, Feeding Hills, MA. They have invited FCARC and other local clubs to have tables, and we will do so. We plan to sell some surplus club equipment and club members with things they would like to sell can put them on our table. In exchange, if you come, you can help with the table. For more info see the MTARA Hamfest flier at http://www.mtara.org/images/pdf_files/hamfest/2013_mtara%20flea%20market%20flyer.pdf

PROGRAM MEETING, MONDAY MARCH 18, 7:15 P.M., GREENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL,

Mary Nathan, from the American Red Cross will talk about the Red Cross's emergency support activities at our March 18 program meeting. If you are interested in emergency service this will be a good meeting to attend. CERT and MRC people are also welcome.

Secretary's Report

E-BOARD MEETING, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2013 – BOB DICKERMAN WA1QKT

1. Sleigh Bell race comments
 - 440 MHz repeater seemed to work well
 - Civil Air Patrol (CAP)/FCARC coordination meeting prior to event might be useful
 - OK for FCARC members to direct runners, but not traffic
 - Signs or markers warning of ice might be useful
 - KB1NEK NCS seemed to fix "buzzing modulation on audio" by moving ant farther from radio; guessing this might have reduced r.f. feedback/interference?
 - Speaker-mic attachments for radios might prevent cold hands
2. Planning for meeting topics
 - Had request for "How to use FT-60s" from Bruce KB1TLX; Bob WA1QKT volunteered to make this presentation at February 11 meeting
 - March 18 meeting - Mary Nathan of Red Cross will discuss disaster operations, and, we hope, the role of ham radio in assisting Red Cross
3. MTARA Hamfest Saturday AM, March 2
 - Springfield Turnverein Club, 176 Garden St., Feeding Hills, MA 01030
 - Perhaps we can sell Swan radio, some other radios and ants from N1IUM's estate for club
4. Technician Class - KB1NOG has 3 potential students, at least one other student from first session; no decision yet

E-BOARD MEETING, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2013 – BOB DICKERMAN WA1QKT

1. Curt Dean W1UXI SK
2. Carter WA1TVS has been heard on 2m repeater; recovery is progressing
3. Plan for new meeting place once GHS construction begins this summer: we hope to, at a minimum, merely ask permission to meet in the new Faculty Lounge, wherever that may be; we may still be able to use small auditorium in first phase of construction.
4. Chris KB1NEK and Cathy KB1SNA mentioned that 1300 people are sheltering in 23 locations on the Massachusetts coast, following Nemo snowstorm, and Cape Cod is calling for shelter volunteers (not specifically radio ops).
5. Tom N1OTS is talking about perhaps having another SKYWARN class, for CERT/MRC, and public; Eric N1QKO, or Weather Service may conduct this.

6. Planning for upcoming meeting topics
 - March 18 meeting - Mary Nathan of Red Cross will discuss disaster operations, and, we hope, the role of ham radio in assisting Red Cross
 - April - Nina KB1WVA on CERT/SKYWARN/MRC/DART emergency services; we need to ask these potential speakers if they are available
 - May - Picnic / Field Day (FD) preparations and overview
 - Annual FD meeting
7. Board voted to reimburse Howard KB1LUP for container for treasurer records
8. Board voted to allocate VHF/UHF antenna, generously donated by Rich KB1NOX, to Colrain EOC.
9. Technician Class - KB1NOG has 3 potential students, at least one other student from first session, may want to wait until after SKYWARN class, to recruit more potential students.
10. Might be best to leave HF Hamstick antenna at Greenfield EOC as backup, in case repeaters fail during emergency ops.

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 19, 2013 FCARC MEETING – BOB DICKERMAN WA1QKT

After we enjoyed coffee and snacks, the meeting was started at 7:15 PM.

Since attendance was small, and all attendees had arrived during the E-board meeting, perhaps due to the snow and freezing rain, all business was conducted in the E-board meeting prior to the general meeting.

Bob WA1QKT gave a presentation on "How to use your FT-60". He discussed the basic controls and operation of the radio, and went on to describe and demonstrate procedures for configuring it. Some of the challenges in setting up this radio are due to the fact that most of the radio's keypad buttons have 3 functions, and the fact that the user manual has no index! Bob was able to guide a couple of audience members through a number of simple procedures such as locking and unlocking keypad, changing power, listening to NOAA weather, reversing repeater input and output frequencies, and resetting that pernicious Internet Connection setting. He discussed the VFO and Memory tuning modes, and simplex and repeater communication channel modes, including how to switch between modes, and how to tune in the different modes. Audience members tuned their radios to a repeater using pre-programmed Memory channels. They then communicated by programming and using a simplex frequency in VFO mode. Then they programmed their radios for a local FCARC repeater and communicated using the repeater in VFO mode. Memory channel scanning operation was demonstrated. Changing memory labels from frequency labels to alphanumeric labels, writing to memories, and deleting memories were discussed; writing from memory to VFO was demonstrated.

The MS PowerPoint presentation that Bob used has text colors that correspond to keypad key colors; this may make it easier to follow programming procedures. The entire PowerPoint presentation is presently accessible on the club website at <http://www.fcarc.org>, at the top of the home page.

7 people attended the meeting.

News, Activities & Articles

SLEIGH BELL RACE – CHRIS MYERS, KB1NEK

On Saturday, Feb. 2, eleven members of the FCARC convened in Greenfield to provide radio communications for runner safety during the annual Sleigh Bell Race. The race is a regular feature of the Winter Carnival.

This year we used the club's 440 repeater during the event. As most readers know, the repeater was out of action for much of 2012. It took a lot of persistent work on the part of several club members to get the repeater working again in December. The Sleigh Bell race was our opportunity to test the repeater under pressure, and it came through with flying colors.

Participants in the radio effort included Mike, KB1YXD, who came all the way down from Keene, NH, and Alex, KB1YZA who obtained his license only a few months ago. Jenna Dickerman, KB1SMZ, actually ran the race. Her parents and younger brother were radio operators.

VE SESSION MONDAY FEBRUARY 25, NORTHFIELD

Chris KB1NEK, Cindy W1CAD, Dick W1CAD, Ron K8HSF, and Belle KB1NOG were on hand ready to supervise the tests, but no candidates showed up.

CURT DEAN, W1UXI, SK

News was received that Curt Dean, W1UXI, passed away on February 11th. He had been fighting a chronic illness for some time. Curt was a member of our club for many years and among other things, he maintained the FCARC website until a few years ago.

KB1YXD'S PREPAREDNESS CORNER - MIKE CANCELLIERI, KB1YXD

There are many facets of the Amateur Radio hobby that appeal to different people. Whether one's interest lies in chasing rare DX with the latest equipment, home brewing delicate electronics without "letting the smoke out", or simply rag chewing on the local repeater; a ham is likely to be better prepared for an emergency situation than your average Joe. My long-standing interest in survival and preparedness topics naturally led me to Amateur Radio. The spirit of camaraderie and ingenuity that pervades the Ham Radio community is an ideal mixture for ensuring reliable communications during the worst of circumstances. If a message absolutely must get through, a ham and his or her buddies will figure out a way. In the brief time I've been a part of this community, I have been continually impressed with the breadth and depth of knowledge I've encountered. Amazingly, this wealth of know-how and experience rarely manifests itself as arrogance or patronizing attitude. It is in this spirit that I come to you to discuss Emergency Preparedness and Survival; not by a means as an expert but as an enthusiast.

In this article I will focus on the concept of Every Day Carry or EDC. This means just what it says: items that you have on your person every day. In my opinion, this is a foundational concept to any emergency preparedness or survival philosophy. Every person reading this currently has an EDC. These are things that you unquestionably have with you when you step out of the house. Typically, this will include your car keys, wallet, cell phone, etc. A preparedness-minded individual will necessarily have a few more items that he or she would not think of leaving the house without. For my personal EDC, I rely heavily on Dave Canterbury's 5 "C"s of Survival. This is a modified version of the classic hiker's "10 Essentials". Each of the five "C"s represent items that range from beneficial to critical for one's survival. They are as follows: Cutting, Cordage, Combustion, Container, and Cover. I'll discuss each as they relate to the concept of EDC.

I am willing to bet that the majority of Amateur Radio Operators typically carry some kind of pocket knife on a daily basis. Think of all the daily tasks, from food preparation to hygiene, that involve cutting. A knife is the absolutely indispensable tool of survival. With it, one can produce many other supplies and tools critical to survival. A small Swiss Army knife is a good choice for EDC. It is small and light enough to be unobtrusive when added to your daily carry. There are many benefits to carrying a larger folding knife and/or a multi-tool. Perhaps I will discuss these benefits in a future article.

Cordage, of some kind, is another very important item to have handy during any kind of emergency or survival situation. It is important in the construction or improvement of shelter, the procurement and transportation of food and other supplies, and for countless other uses. Cordage is an item that is very difficult and energy-inefficient to make from scrounged supplies. As such, the preparedness-minded individual will want to carry some amount of cordage as part of his or her EDC. Recently, paracord bracelets have become popular as a fashion statement. This is an excellent way to ensure that you have several feet of strong cordage on your person at all times. Store-bought bracelets are often made with inferior techniques and products. I would recommend making your own from mil-spec 550 cord. There are plenty of entertaining and informative Youtube videos on the subject.

Fire is a primordial prerequisite for survival. Therefore, combustion occupies an important place in our 5 “C”s. It is my sincere wish that nobody reading this is ever in a situation where they find it necessary to build a fire to effect basic survival. That being said, the price of admission to be squared-away in this respect is extremely cheap. Carrying a small lighter in your pocket will not in any way negatively impact your mobility or general lifestyle and it just may save your life some dark day.

History teaches us that containers were the basis of early economies and civilization at large. They give us the ability to transport items from areas of plenty to areas of scarcity. They also give us the ability to store water and other essentials that are difficult to carry with our hands. As it relates to EDC, a container can be as simple as an Altoids tin or a small Ziploc bag folded in a pocket. Since I am in the human-services field, I always have a pair of nitrile or latex gloves in a pocket. Just one glove can hold almost a quart of water or many hundreds of calories worth of berries or other wild edibles. Here is another item that costs nothing to have available at all times. Finally, “cover” addresses clothing and shelter. In terms of EDC, it refers to the clothes that one wears on an every day basis. Many of us are limited in this area by the requirements of our jobs. Suffice it to say that a preparedness-minded individual will be sure to have footwear that enables him or her to walk for several miles without sustaining injury. Dressing in layers gives us the option of regulating our core body temperature and can be accomplished within a variety of clothing styles. Many preparedness and survival enthusiasts tailor their clothing to accommodate EDC items or improve efficiency of carry. This level of commitment is not strictly necessary. The simple act of evaluating your daily clothing choices and imagining their strengths and weaknesses in an emergency situation will put you ahead of the game.

I hope you’ve enjoyed reading one Ham’s take on one aspect of emergency preparedness. Below, you’ll find a few web addresses that will be of interest should you decide to incorporate these ideas into your own EDC. Each of the topics discussed above can be expanded almost infinitely.

Dave Canterbury’s excellent Youtube videos: <http://www.youtube.com/user/wildernessoutfitters>
Bedford New Hampshire’s The Paracordist: <http://www.paracordist.com/>

HAM RADIO ON N1AW’S TRIP TO THE SOUTHWEST – AL WOODHULL, N1AW

On our trip to Tucson I visited with old friend John KC5AYN in Albuquerque, and went with him to the club station at the Albuquerque VA Hospital, N5VA. John and several other Albuquerque area hams keep the station running, participate in several nets, and make the facility available as a resource to veterans at the hospital. Later, in Tucson, I connected with several local hams on the University of Arizona Radio Club’s repeater, K7UAZ. I was invited to join a group who come together for brunch at a local restaurant once a week, and found myself sitting with three hams that had all started in ham radio in Massachusetts at about the same time I first got on the air.

Mobile operation with an FT-817 in my Prius just did not work out well on our trip. The only place I could mount an antenna on the car with a good connection to metal was too high for anything

longer than an old CB antenna, and 10 meters was never active at the times I tried it. And the electrical noise generated by a Prius makes non-fm modes difficult when the car is running. The FT-817 works well on repeaters that can be hit with 5 watts, but the tiny display and controls are almost impossible to use while driving. I did bring the rig into my stepson's apartment where we were staying and managed to make a few cw QSOs on 20 and 40 meters with a minimal wire antenna draped over the highest branches I could reach on a nearby tree. (Pictures of house and tree, kitchen ham shack attached).



THE BATTLE OF THE HAMS

Al, N1AW, noticed in the ARRL's weekly contest update reference to a 1958 Sports Illustrated article about amateur radio contests entitled "The Battle Of The Hams - The star of CBS-TV's 'Eye on New York' reports on a hobby—amateur radio—that is distinguished by one of the most grueling international competitions in all sport". See

<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1002473/index.htm>

THE COMMUNICATOR is an informational publication for members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club. Officers: President: Chris Myers, KB1NEK (camyers_1@verizon.net), Vice President: Al Woodhull, N1AW (n1aw@arrl.net), Treasurer: Howard Field, N1LUP (howfield@comcast.net), Secretary: Bob Dickerman, WA1QKT (rld@dickermanelectronics.com), Director: Belle Dyer, KB1NOG (bdyer58@mtdata.com), Director: Bob Solosko, W1SRB (w1srb@arrl.net)

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 Bob Solosko at w1srb@arrl.net.