

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



FIRST CLASS MAIL



THE COMMUNICATOR

THE COMMUNICATOR

June 2018

Upcoming Events

- Jun 16 Sat 8:00 am Breakfast @Denny's
- Jun 16 Sat 10:00 am Franklin County Amateur Radio Emergency Communications group, (cancelled - see note below)
- Jun 18 Mon 6:00 pm E-Board; 7:15 pm Elections & Annual Meeting, GCC Hammond Studio
- Jun 23-24 Sat-Sun Field Day, Setup starts at 8 am, Poets Seat
- Jul 4 Wed Independence Day
- Jul 14 Sat 8:00 am Breakfast, Denny's
- Jul 16 Mon E-Board 7:00 pm, GCC Hammond Studio

Jul 21 Sat YL Picnic – see page 8
Aug 4 Sat 8:00 Breakfast, Denny's
Aug 5 Sun Greenfield Triathlon

Note: During summer a single July-August issue of the Communicator will be published. Expect it near the end of July.

Secretary's Report

E-board meeting Monday, May 21, 2018

Chris Myers KB1NEK

We reviewed needs for the picnic, held on May 26.

We reviewed plans for Field Day. Al reported that while Phill, N1YPS, does not want to participate, he will donate his 6m beam antenna to the club. He will happily transfer the large plastic sheeting set-up we have used for many years to keep rain out of the base of the Poet's Seat Tower. From now on, however, the club will have to find a place to store it.

Al has called a company to deliver a Porta Potty, for a cost of about \$110. We may have to pay the Recreation Dept. a fee of \$50 for permission to put in the Porta Potty, although this needs to be clarified. After some discussion, we decided to place it on the south side of the tower, chained to the structure so it can't be tipped over.

A suggestion was made to buy more sand bags. Chris to do it. He will also bring large sealed lead batteries and 100 ft extension cords. Jeanne suggested making signs to mark the tents where the various types of stations will be operating. A question was raised about multi-band wire antenna. We have to look in the storage container.

The nominating committee reported that nominations were received for president and director that included Anne and Keith. They explained that family responsibilities make it unwise to take on jobs they might not always have time to fill. Al said he really would not want to serve another term as president, if we could find another good candidate. Keith suggested Aaron (who was not present at this meeting.) Chris volunteered to contact Aaron by phone to ask if he is interested. [He is.]

It was also mentioned that if Aaron were to become president that meetings could not be held on Mondays due to Aaron's commitments with his town. Tuesday was mentioned with the understanding that the ARES net would have to be moved to another day.

Chris announced that he would like to gather a small work party on Saturday, June 9 to move club's equipment from the container at the jail to the newly rented one on Woodward Ave.

Al and Jeanne discussed need to straighten out the money arrangement with GCC arising from the tech class given earlier in the spring.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The June meeting is our annual club business meeting. The agenda will include election of officers to two year terms for the positions of President, Secretary and Director.

The following have been nominated at this time for these offices:

Aaron Addison, KC1CXX for President
Chris Myer, KBINEK for Secretary
Belle Dyer, KB1NOG for Director

Additional nominations will be accepted at the June business meeting prior to the elections. Any person nominated at the meeting must be present and must accept the nomination at that time.

Submitted by the Nominating Committee, Ron Niswander, K8HSF

Franklin County Amateur Radio Emergency Communications group ...

... usually meets at GCC Hammond Studio after the monthly breakfast. The Jun 16 Sat 10:00 am meeting has been canceled due to several members taking part in a Disaster Drill in Turners Falls.

News, Activities & Articles

VE Session: Thoughts and Results

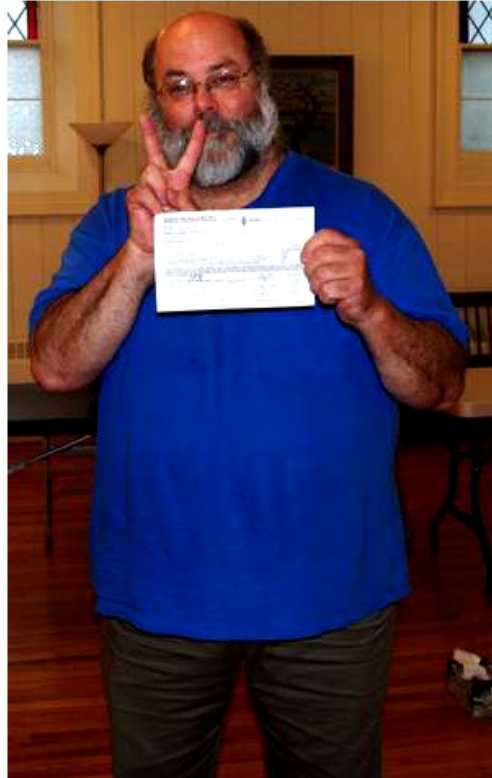
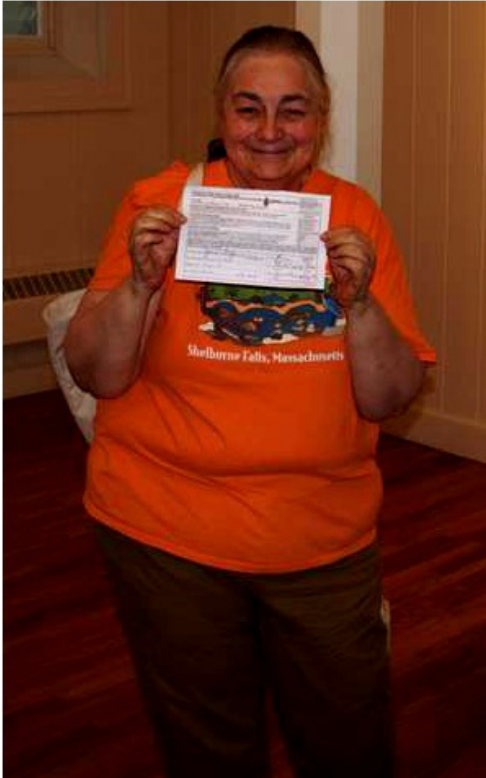
AI N1AW

FCARC has been conducting Volunteer Examiner (VE) license exam sessions at the Northfield Unitarian Church for many years. The arrangement seems to have been initiated by Walt Congdon, W1ZPB, who lived within sight, and walking distance, of the church. Walt is the designated VE Session Liaison person on the records that I have on hand, which go back to 2004. After Walt became incapacitated, a few years before he passed away in 2012, the club continued to hold VE sessions at the church. Several qualified examiner live in Northfield. Having the sessions in Northfield also gives us a something of a presence in the eastern part of our county, and we have had quite a few candidates who have come from New Hampshire, eastern Franklin County, and even from Worcester County to take license exams.

However, recently there has been some dissatisfaction with having our quarterly VE sessions at the Northfield site. For the last two years another group has been using the large room we used to use every Monday. This group pays rent (which the church has never asked us to do) and it seems a bit much to ask them to yield that space four times a year. This has not been a serious problem, several times we have had our sessions upstairs in the vestibule, and recently we have found the small Sunday School room adequate for our small sessions.

But there is another problem; the Northfield Unitarian Church is not handicapped-accessible. I will admit I am used to being able-bodied and had not been sensitive to this until a session last year when a person accompanying a test-taker was not able to come in. He said he was OK waiting in his vehicle outside, but it alerted me to the fact that we had a problem. I mentioned this to our regular contact person with the church; the church is aware that it is a problem, but they don't have resources or plans to become handicapped-accessible.

So, we are seriously looking for another site for our VE sessions. One consideration is cost. We are allowed by the ARRL VEC to deduct up to \$7 of the \$15 examination fee for expenses. We have been doing this and making contributions on an irregular basis to the church. I have been participating as a VE with the FCARC for about 10 years, since 2008. Records go back 14 years, to 2004. I looked over the old records. In summary, our VE sessions have produced 161 new licenses or upgrades in 51 sessions over 13 years, an average of 3.2 licenses or upgrades per session, or 12.4 per year. At that rate we can raise \$86.80 per year, or \$21.70 per quarterly session for expenses. Some venues that have been investigated want up to \$50 rent for an evening's use of a space. We might decide we want to subsidize VE sessions from other funds. We will have to think about this.



Results of May 28, 2018 VE Session

Jeanne, KC1DCQ upgraded to General. Erik, KC1JQN upgraded to Extra

Field Day – Invitation for New Hams

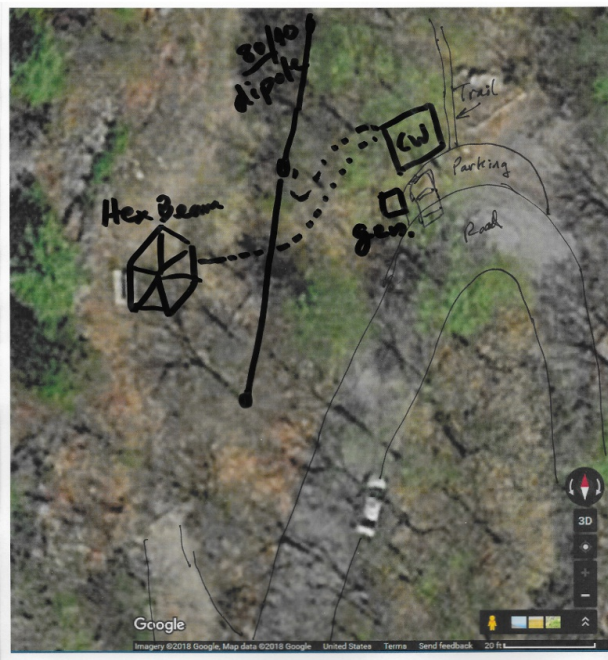
AI N1AW

We have many new amateurs licensed after our recent classes and VE exam sessions who have not experienced ARRL Field Day, coming up this month. This is a 24-hour exercise in operating with portable radios, temporary antennas, and emergency power sources. It is a picnic, for some a camp-out. It is a chance for a Technician or someone with no license at all to experience operating at our GOTA (Get On The Air) station, talking to hams hundreds or thousands of miles away. Come to the June meeting to hear more, come to Field Day at Poets Seat and get on the air. There is much more info on the ARRL website:

<http://www.arrl.org/field-day>

Field Day 2018 Layout

AI N1AW



Without an RV we need to have both the CW station and the SSB station in tents. We also want to have at least two additional tents, one for storage, coffee breaks, etc, and one where someone sleeping over can put an air mattress and sleeping bag.

The GOTA station will be inside the tower as in the past.

We are planning to put the CW tent just inside the woods off the parking area by the loop. This should give us better separation between the two main stations. The CW station will use a separate generator. Also not shown, solar panels.

Antenna locations are approximate. Not shown, a possible VHF station, 2 meters and/or 6 meters (one at a time).

Some Notes from the Club President

AI N1AW

Picnic Notes - I was pleased by the picnic. We seemed to have about 30 people there, maybe a few more than last year. We made some money for the club by selling some of the smaller items that had been bequeathed to us. I was especially pleased by how many people helped out. When I got back from putting up direction signs, Anne had arrived and was already starting to set things up. While I was trying to set up a working HF station using the equipment we will use for GOTA at Field Day, food had arrived and other people were getting things arranged at the end of the pavilion. I was very much relieved when Richard stepped up and took over cooking on the grille.

VE Session - we knew we would have two candidates, Jeanne going for her General and Erik going for Extra. We were half-expecting one more, but he did not show up. Two members of the VE team were concerned with health of partners at home, as it turned out everyone made it and we had extra examiners. Elsewhere in this edition there is a discussion about possibly changing the site where we conduct exams. If we did this in Greenfield, closer to where most of our VEs live, we could be more flexible about calling people if needed.

Summer Events - As this is being written we don't know if the bridge near the Greenfield swimming area is going to be closed for construction before the date of the Triathlon, first Sunday in August. If the bridge is closed it's going to require drastic changes in Triathlon events compared to most years. We may be more needed than usual this year. Later in August we will also have the Bridge of Flowers race and the D2R2 bike tour event.

VHF on Field Day - as noted elsewhere, we don't know now whether we will have a 6 meter station for Field Day. We can have one VHF station and still be in class 2A; we could have a station that operated at different times on 6 meters and 2 meters. The advantage, of course, is that Technicians can operate the VHF station without needing someone with a higher class license there as an official control operator.

Rocky Mount 448.275 KB1BSS Repeater Update

Keith KU1N

Alex Rock AB1FC is the radio engineer who generously assisted the club in determining the desense cause on the Rocky Mount KB1BSS 448.275 repeater. Alex has located a more appropriate duplexer. It was mentioned in the last Communicator that the club's current duplexer would not work with the synthesized VFO of the modern Yaesu DR-1X. It only offered 80 decibels of rejection of the transmit signal from the receiver. At least 90 is needed to prevent the desense.

Alex has found a pass/notch duplexer to replace the club's present notch only unit. Not only will the opposing signal be rejected (notched out) from either the transmit or receive side of the repeater, it will only pass the correct frequency through it. This prevents all the other signals from other equipment at Rocky Mount from passing through to the receiver.

The cost of this used duplexer which will come tuned to 448.275 will be \$400 and this expense will need to be approved by the general membership at the next club meeting. Once this duplexer is installed the construction permit issued through the New England Spectrum Management Council will be converted to a 6 month trial period. If there are no issues with interference in the 6 months of the trial period it is then converted to its final stage.

As the 448.875 frequency does not exist anymore, members should be reprogramming their radios to the new frequency of 448.275 with the same 136.5 PL and negative 5 MHz offset. It will be announced via email once the duplexer is installed and the repeater is back on the air. Members are encouraged to use this new frequency during its 6 month trial period once on the air.

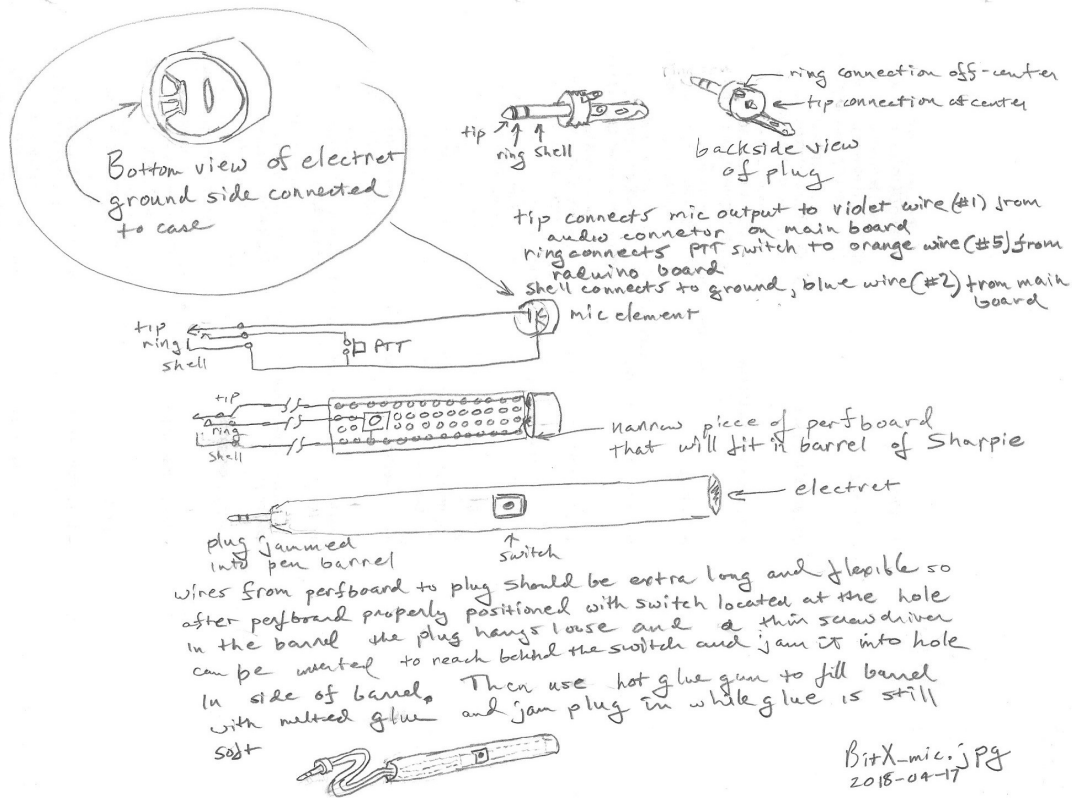
A Homebrew Microphone

AI N1AW

Radio kits from HFSignals.com, based in India, are designed to be inexpensive in order to make modern radio technology accessible to residents of developing countries who do not have the resources available in countries like the US. In addition to a low basic cost, the kits contain many small parts that might be hard to find in rural areas. The Micro-BitX HF transceiver kit that I purchased provides the basic components needed to fabricate a microphone: an electret microphone element and a miniature switch to use for Push-to-Talk. A dried-up Sharpie(R) pen, a small piece of perfboard, a stereo plug, and some scraps of wire are the only additional parts needed. The diagram shows details of how to use



these parts.



Short Brain Teaser

Erik Sherman KC1JQN

You have a box of 1 ohm resistors. What are the smallest numbers you need to create a circuit with a total resistance of $3/5$ ohms and with $5/3$ ohms? (answer on p. 9)

YL Picnic Saturday, July 21, 2018



Are you a woman who is also an Amateur Radio Operator?

Are you a woman who is interested in becoming an Amateur Radio Operator?

Come to a picnic and meet each other. This is meant to be a chance for women to get together

and meet, support each other and have some fun in the process. We know that there are many women who are (or are interested in becoming) Amateur Radio Operators.

Did you know that a YL (Young Lady) is a single female operator and an XYL is a married female operator? There is a lot of history to explore.

Many women are taking part in contest, volunteering for Community Events, volunteering with Disaster work....come share how and why you are involved.

We have use of the pavilion at Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center all day (8:30 am to 7:00 pm) on Saturday, July 21, 2018.

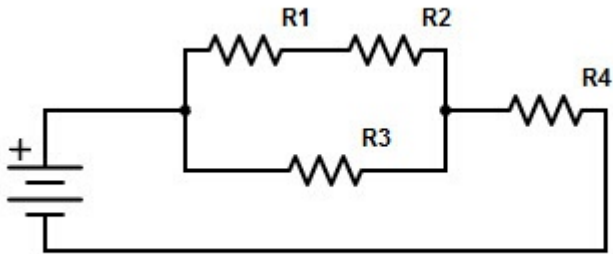
Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center
99 Millers Falls Rd.
Northfield, MA 01360

<http://www.h2opower.com/recreation/northfield-mountain-recreation-and-environmental-center/>

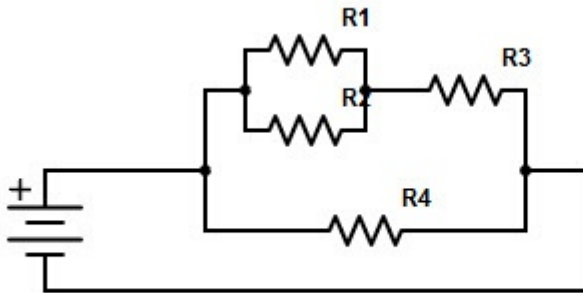
If you are interested, have questions-please contact: Jeanne Dodge, KC1DCQ at j.anndodge@gmail.com

Brain Teaser Answer

Answer: 4 each



$= 5/3$ ohms



$= 3/5$ ohms

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: Joe Henefield, KB1WVO (joehenefield@comcast.net), Treasurer: Howard Field, N1LUP (howfield@comcast.net), Secretary: Chris Myers, KB1NEK (camyers1@verizon.net), Director: Belle Dyer, KB1NOG (bdyer582@juno.com), Director: Ron Niswander, K8HSF (reniswander@gmail.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).

Back issues of the **Communicator** are at <http://www.fcarc.org/commun.htm>