

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



FIRST CLASS MAIL



THE COMMUNICATOR
THE COMMUNICATOR

September 2018

Upcoming Events

- Sep 7,8,9 ARRL New England Division Hamfest, Boxboro MA
- Sep 8 Sat 8:00 am Breakfast, Denny's Pantry
- Sep 8 Sat 10:00 am Franklin County Amateur Radio Emergency Communications group, GCC Hammond Studio
- Sep 10 Mon 6:00 pm E-Board; 7:15 pm General Meeting, GCC Hammond Studio.
- Sep 30 Sun WB4F (Will Bike for Food), Hatfield to Vermont
- Oct 6 Sat 8:00 am Breakfast, Denny's Pantry
- Oct 6 Sat 10:00 am Franklin County Amateur Radio Emergency Communications group, GCC Hammond Studio

August 2018 Meeting notes

Secretary's Report

Minutes of e-board meeting, 13 August 2018

Elected board members present: Al, Belle, Howard, Joe, and Chris (taking notes)

Others present: Aaron, Anne, Erika, Keith, Rebecca

1. Discussion of possible upgrades to Yaesu DR-1X repeaters:

Al and Keith have found a way to use FT-60 HT's to mute, temporarily, the transmit function of the newer of the two units. The older unit cannot be muted without a firmware upgrade, which requires sending it to the Yaesu distribution center in California.

Keith has had several conversations with Yaesu representatives to figure out the many options on offer. Yaesu offers to upgrade the firmware for free, if we pay to send the unit out there. The most basic level of upgrade would allow using an FT-60 to mute the transmit by sending brief codes in analog FM mode. The higher level of upgrade would allow sending the mute instructions from a digital mode HT. This is easier than using the analog mode, but would then make the older unit one step better than the new unit.

Yaesu also offered to take our old unit in trade for the newer model, the DR-2X, at a cost to us of \$400.

After much discussion, a motion was made and accepted to send the older unit to Yaesu to get the higher level of upgrade. Then once we have tested the usefulness of that upgrade, we can decide to send the newer unit out for the same upgrade.

Even with the ability to mute the transmit function, we still need better remote control of the DR-1X's in order to comply fully with the intent of FCC regulations. Keith has investigated relatively inexpensive control boards that could be used, but the sense of the meeting was to put off that decision for later.

2. Discussion of buying an amplifier unit for one or both DR-1X's:

The NOBARC showed its DR-1X set up to Al, Aaron, Chris, and Keith, about a month ago. NOBARC uses an amplifier in order to run the DR-1X at its lowest power setting, 5W. The amplifier is set to boost the signal to the antenna to the level of 50W. In the first year of use, many clubs found the DR-1X cannot run for long at its full power rating, 50 W without burning out. In response to this warning, we have set both of our units to run at medium power, about 25 W. Some members feel the NOBARC solution is a good one, saving wear on the DR-1X but getting 50 W RF power to the antenna. Aaron and Rebecca plan to go to the Huntsville hamfest and will look around for suitable units. Presumably if they see a really good deal, they would have to call other e-board members to see if we agree to buy it on the spot.

3. The next license test will be given on Aug. 27, at the First Congregational Church in Greenfield. Aaron has arranged for the space, and remains the contact person for the test. Since Al will not be there, he will pass on the box of forms to Anne and Keith within the next couple of days.

4. Aaron reported on a discussion with Jeff Bail, president of the Hampshire County Radio Club. Jeff asked if we would be willing to give to people who successfully pass our tests free one year memberships not only in our club, but also their club. They would do the same for us. That way any newly licensed ham from either test session would get automatic free membership in both clubs.

Possibly a third club will take part. The group approved the plan.

5. A license class has already been published in the GCC fall calendar. Al cannot spend so much time on it as he did last winter. Aaron agreed to take responsibility for putting together a schedule of instructors. He will probably use much of the written material used in our previous classes.

6. Aaron agreed to give Denny's Pantry a schedule of our Saturday breakfasts for the next year.

7. In Jeanne's absence, Rebecca will put together the next Communicator. She needs material by August 27.

We Did not have a general membership meeting – Editor.

News, Activities & Articles

From the president:

Are you newly licensed in ham radio? Do you have questions? Do you need a little or even lots of help getting started?

The FCARC is here to help you, we have monthly meetings at 7pm on the second Monday of each month. These meetings have demonstrations and talks on a wide variety of topics and will provide you a good place to meet people like you, and people who have decades of experience. Please check <http://www.fcarc.org> for the exact schedule.

If you have specific questions you are welcome to contact me at kc1cxx@arrl.net with any questions. We also welcome suggestions on things you would like to have a demonstration on at one of our meetings.

These are some topics we are considering: What's Pathfinder Regional doing with ham radio, Emergency Communications, learning about FT-8, Programming your radio, Building antennas (let us know if there is a particular kind), mobile communications, A General exam prep class.

This issue is fairly full so I plan to start a small series of articles about Anderson Powerpoles, at some of our events this summer lots of people had questions, I hope to be able to answer some of them.

Please let us know how we can help you be successful in ham radio.

Aaron Addison: kc1cxx@arrl.net; <http://www.kc1cxx.com>
President: Franklin County Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.fcarc.org>

General Reminder:

It's Membership renewal time! If you got your license with us in the past year you got your first year free but those memberships are up for renewal now along with everyone else. FCARC dues are just \$15 per year:

FCARC dues cover membership for the "club year" which runs from September 1 to August 31. However, the membership list is not purged until January, allowing a grace period for late payment of dues. It is a club tradition to offer a free one year membership to anyone who obtains their first amateur radio license at one of our license exam sessions. Click here for more information on club membership and dues.

Everyone's memberships are due right now unless you have a multi-year membership. Please bring them with you to the next club meeting or mail them to:

Membership runs from September 1 to August 31 each year.

Costs:

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 Membership Form to:
Franklin County Amateur Radio Club**

PO Box 773

Greenfield, MA 01302

Please include an SASE if you wish to have a receipt mailed to you.

Upcomming Ham Fests and conventions:

The ARRL New England Division Convention

September 7-9, 2018

Boxboro Regency Hotel & Conference Center, Boxborough, Massachusetts

www.boxboro.org

NEAR-Fest XXIV

October 12 & 13, 2018

Deerfield, New Hampshire

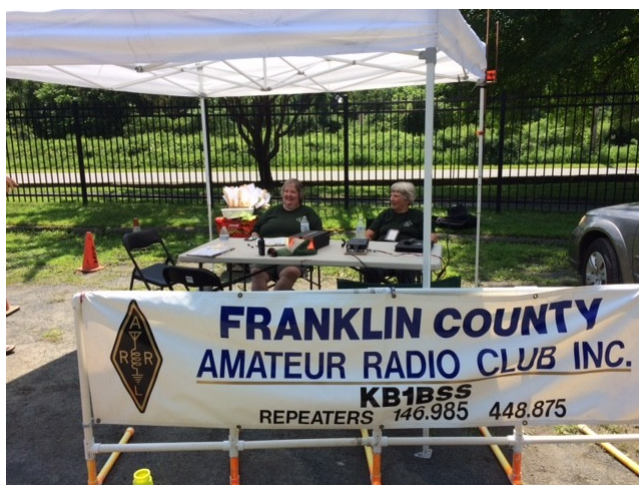
Events:

Greenfield Triathlon

The radio club's busy summer schedule kicked off on Sunday, August 5th, with the 35th annual running of the Greenfield Triathlon. We lucked out as first, the course remained unchanged from past years since bridge repair hasn't begun yet, and secondly, the threatening rain held off until the race was over.

I really want to thank the club members who helped out: Belle KB1NOG, Sean KC1JQC, Erik KC1JQN, Keith KU1N, Al N1AW, Justin KC1HEG, Anne KC1CRS, Gary KB1AKU, Chris KB1NEK, Ron K8HSF, and Keith KC1BZB. Your work helped to ensure that the day's events went off smoothly and the over 350 participants stayed safe.

We received our annual visit from Bob Betts KB1WWR, head referee for the triathlon. Always fun to see other Hams at events.



Erika KC1IJJ

FCARC Provides Radio Support for Green River Marathon

The first New England Green River Marathon was run Sunday, August 26 th . The race began at 7 a.m. on the campus of Marlboro College in Vermont and ended 6 hours and 27 minutes later on the field at Greenfield Community College. The race organizers, the Sugarloaf Mountain Athletic Club and the Connecticut River Conservancy, had asked the FCARC to provide radio support on the 26.2 mile course which followed the Green River, and mobile radios proved the only reliable communication tools on the course.

The FCARC provided five radio volunteers for the event. Rich Stewart, KB1NOX, served as Net Control, located at GCC for the day; Karen Bierwert, KC1IJH, was with the race director, Tom Van den Broeck Raffensperger, for the day; Keith Rowley, KU1N, and Anne Kring, KC1CRS, were at the covered bridge in Guilford, Vermont; Justin Norman, KC1HEG, was with the medical team at the junction of W. Leyden and River Roads, and Joe Henefield, KB1WVO, trailed the race, acting as SAG wagon. These volunteers did a great job on short notice (according to the race director).

Meg Brockett, 23, of Hampshire, N.H., won the race in a time of 2:46:37.86, a pace of 6 minutes and 21 seconds. About 350 runners from 21 states began the race, and only a handful of runners retired from this Boston Marathon-qualifying event. One runner collapsed at the rotary entrance to GCC, a quarter-mile from the finish line and was taken by ambulance to Baystate Franklin Medical. The Green River is a beautiful course, and amateur radio plays an essential role in the successful conduct of this marathon. The race sponsors plan to make this an annual event, on the fourth Sunday of every August, and they have asked the FCARC to take part in next year. August is already busy for FCARC members, with the Greenfield Triathlon, Bridge of Flowers Race, and D2R2, but if the Green River Marathon stays on the calendar it needs and deserves our support. It is a beautiful and, in some places remote area, and provides a good day of operating in challenging conditions.

There's more to see than just a runner's backside.



Joe KB1WVO

Bridge of Flowers Race.

Thank you all who helped yesterday. MassLive, the online version of the Springfield Republican, had an article about the race, which included the comment:

"There were 702 entries in the 8K race and 255 entries in 3K race. Since this was the first year for the 8K race, those winning times are records. The Bridge of Flowers Road Race had another change this year. Sue Monohan is the new race director. As the director, she got to start the races with the traditional cowbell.

"There are a lot of volunteers who know what they're doing." Monohan said."

Anne took time to snap a few pictures, which are attached.

Chris - KB1NEK



Anne - KC1CRS

D2R2 2018 Report

AI N1AW

This was our sixth year supporting the Franklin Land Trust's biggest annual benefit event, the Deerfield Dirt Road Randonne, a bicycle tour event. This is not a race, but it offers a range of events ranging from 180 Km and 160 Km rides that feature dirt roads into Vermont and everywhere west to Heath and Charlemont, and many lesser challenges, including a 10 mile family ride. Back roads are chosen to emphasize the natural beauty of the landscapes that the Franklin Land Trust works to preserve. Adding to the beauty of the countryside, cyclists

benefit from routes with little automobile traffic, and those cars that are on the roads are necessarily going slowly.

The back roads are also places where cell service is minimal, houses are few and far between, and gas stations or restaurants are non-existent. In order to serve lunch to 1300 riders in remote locations communications is needed to coordinate the efforts of the Land Trust staff and volunteers. That's where ham radio comes in.

This year we provided communications between the event HQ tents in fields south of historic Old Deerfield and locations in Colrain MA, Guilford VT, and Whitingham VT. It started with setting up our FCARC tent in Deerfield by Keith KC1BZB, Keith KU1N, and AI N1AW on Friday afternoon. On Saturday morning Erika KC1IJJ and AI N1AW were there to set up the radio equipment and activate net control at 8 a.m.

The longer bike rides start as early as 6 a.m., but there is little need for communications until the event support staff are in place at remote locations. Erika kept net control on all day until around 5 p.m., aided by Keith KC1BZB for most of the day, and with Carter WA1TVS and Erik KC1IJN providing some relief during the day.

Further out, Anne KC1CRS and Keith KU1N arrived at the start and end point of the family ride at 9 a.m. This is on Green River Road in Colrain, just north of the Ten Mile Bridge between Colrain and Leyden, and a few miles south of the Vermont state line. Five miles to the north at the same time Chris KB1NEK and Mark KC1JQD started setting up near the covered bridge in Guilford VT, where eventually over 1000 riders would be served lunch. At about 10 a.m. Amy AB1WH arrived at a historic house in Whitingham VT where lunch was to be served to more than 300 members of three waves of riders until 3 p.m.

We had been concerned that this year's event could be more challenging than in past years - for five years the third weekend in August had featured beautiful weather. This year was different. It didn't rain everywhere all of the time, but, especially in the afternoon, several thunderstorms came through the southern Vermont - northern Massachusetts area. Fortunately this did not cause any serious accidents to riders, and there were no emergencies for us to deal with.

Our volunteers at the various lunch sites are also provided lunch if they want it. Back in Deerfield all riders and all volunteers can partake of a dinner that is served from about 2 p.m. until 8 p.m. One of the features of the dinner is that Berkshire Brewing Company donates their Preservation Ale, devoted to the work of the Franklin Land Trust. Along with the ale, souvenir beer glasses are provided. All volunteers, including FCARC communications volunteers, are invited to participate, and many of us did so.

NEEDED : WILL BIKE 4 FOOD EVENT VOLUNTEERS

We will again this year provide communication assistance for The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts fund raising event on September 30 th. At a meeting that I had with the Food Bank

organizers, they requested our assistance in areas that have poor or not cell phone coverage. The routes are unchanged from last year which will require us to cover the area in Vermont, extending through Leyden, Colrain and Shelburne. In addition there is a small area in Whately and Williamsburg which includes the water stop in Williamsburg.

Net Control will set up at the event HQ located at the Lion's Club Pavilion in Hatfield same as last year. The 100 mile route begins at 7am, but will not arrive in the Vermont area that we cover until sometime after 8am. The Whately area will not need coverage until later in the morning, possible 10am or 11am. These times will be better determined in the next week. We will need volunteers to cover the above route areas and net control. We may also have riders with the Food Bank volunteer route monitors and at the Williamsburg and Guilford water stops.

We will have a signup sheet at the September club breakfast and at the club meeting. You may also contact me directly if you interested in working a specific location.

Submitted by Ron Niswander K8HSF

THE COMMUNICATOR is an informational publication for members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club. Officers: President: Aaron Addison (kc1cxx@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 Communcicator are online at <http://www.fcarc.org/commun.htm>