

F.C.A.R.C. Inc.
P.O. Box 773
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FIRST CLASS MAIL



THE COMMUNICATOR THE COMMUNICATOR

January 2020

Upcoming Events

- Jan 1 Wed 9:00 am Sawmill River 10K Race, Montague Center
- Jan 11 Sat 8:00 am Breakfast, Denny's
- Jan 13 Mon 6:00 pm E-Board; 7:15 Meeting, Mark Foster "Are You Ready?", GCC
- Feb 1 Sat Sleigh Bell Race, Greenfield

January 2020

Calendar

PUBLIC SERVICE – 10K Sawmill River Race in Montague Wednesday January 1st

As of publication date of this newsletter a few more volunteers would be helpful. Please contact Richard, KB1NOX, <stwricha@aol.com> if you can help. Meet at 9 a.m. Montague Common Hall (formerly known as Grange Hall), 34 Main St., Montague Center.

MEETING – "Are You Ready": Monday January 13th 7:15 PM.

Mark Foster is a FEMA trainer. He will give a brief version of the 'Are you Ready?' orientation to give club members an idea of the gear they should bring in the event of an emergency.

PUBLIC SERVICE – Sleighbell Race, Saturday February 1st

This is an early alert, the Greenfield Winter Carnival is as early in the month of February as it could be. We have provided communication for the Sleighbell Road Race for many years, and probably will do so in 2020, but a formal commitment has not been made as of Christmas week. Details will be worked out at the January E-Board meeting. Erika, KC1IJJ, coordinated FCARC participation last year and informed the editor she expects to be doing it again. Please check the webpage for information later in January.

Secretary's Report

E-BOARD AND PROGRAM MEETING –

No E-Board, Holiday Potluck Party in place of general meeting in December 2019

News, Activities & Articles

The Cold War's strangest sport

(from BBC via Internet)

The end of the Cold War in 1989 spelled the demise of a little-known, but surprisingly popular sport behind the Iron Curtain – high-speed telegraphy competitions. With the help of two of Czechoslovakia's best former Morse-coders, we revisit the inaugural World Championship in Moscow in 1983 when the Soviet Union rolled out the red carpet for teams from across the Communist bloc. Ashley Byrne reports. The programme is a Made-In-Manchester Production.

Listen to this online here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3csym79>

Mini Review of the Nano-VNA

Aaron KC1CXX

For Christmas this year my wife Rebecca (K1BKY) got me a Nano-VNA. After setting it up, and doing the calibration I did a real worldish test.

Using a LNR Precision EFT-10/20/40 Trail Friendly antenna hung off my deck with a 20 foot fiberglass pole. I compared the SWR readings from my RigExpert AA-54 and the new Nano-VNA.

Band	Frequency	AA-54	Nano-VNA
10m	28140k	3.4	3.3
20m	14070k	2.8	2.7
40m	7070k	5.2	5.4

As you can see they produced fairly equal results, the small amount off could be a rounding error. Or even more likely the AA-54 might be off, as I have never done the calibration for it.

The high SWR for 40 meters is not the fault of the antenna. It is more likely my fault for not putting it up high enough. The antenna could not function well, as my small 20 foot pole had the end of the antenna touching the ground.

So, overall the Nano-VNA seems like a fairly good and quite capable piece of hardware. And SWR readings are only one of many functions it can do.

Holiday Potluck Party

AI N1AW

The FCARC Holiday Party on December 9 at the Shelburne Falls Senior Center was attended by about 25 people (sorry, I did not get an exact count). The food was good and there was plenty.

As we have done for many years we held an auction of surplus club-owned items – mostly items that had been willed to the club. The profit to the club was \$322.





Thanks to Erika KC1IJJ for the photos.

What Are Those Digital Noises On Our Repeater?

Chris KB1NEK & AI N1AW

In December Chris and Anne N1YL attended a conference at UMass Amherst on protecting people with disabilities when responding to disasters. This led into a discussion about amateur radio disaster communications, and the question of preserving privacy and complying with the HIPPA law, which are not always the same thing.

Although radio amateurs are not allowed to encrypt messages, digital messages provide some privacy, since such transmissions are difficult for the average eavesdropper to decode although technically they are not encrypted. Digital techniques are potentially valuable for emergency communications for another reason - once a text message has been composed it can be relayed by radio without errors that could creep in with voice or messages copied by pencil on paper. Although errors are possible with any mode of radio communication, software can be used to detect and often to correct errors in a received digital message.

The ARRL has been encouraging the use of the Open Source software suite called Narrow Band Emergency Messaging Software (NBEMS). Several members of the club have been discussing getting up to speed with these techniques. Chris has been regularly checking into some HF digital nets. Chris proposed to prepare a message to send digitally on the Leyden repeater after the regular Tuesday night ARES net for anyone prepared to copy it. The message would be sent packaged in FMsg, using Flwrap; programs that provide for error-free formatted text messages.

Due to the high quality of audio possible with FM repeaters it is even possible to utilize these programs to send messages without a wired connection between a transceiver and a computer, by coupling via sound

between a laptop and a transceiver. An audio connector box such as Signalink or its MFJ or Quicksilver Radio equivalent is of course probably a better way, but the audio connection technique is certainly simple.

So, anyone interested is urged to check into the Tuesday evening net. If you are not interested, well, at least now you know what is going on if you hear warbling digital modes on the Leyden repeater. A list of HF digital emergency nets has been posted on our website: http://www.fcarc.org/Files/Digital_Nets_List_2019.pdf

Net Control Opportunities

There are two official club nets on the Leyden repeater. The Emergency Net on Tuesday evenings is intended to be for practice of procedures we would use in a real emergency. The information net on Thursday evening is not as formal, it is an opportunity to chat with anyone who wants to chat about anything. Of course it is also a place for announcements about club events; even if you have nothing to say you may find it interesting to listen in.

A fairly small group of people serve as net control operators. We would welcome more participants – please contact Chris KB1NEK if you would like to join the roster on Tuesday nights, or contact Al, N1AW if you would like to be a control station for the Thursday night net. More information, including links to the standard net preambles, can be found on the website netlistings page: <http://www.fcarc.org/netlistings.htm>

The schedule of net control operators is posted four times a year, but we will be happy to edit it to fit in new operators.

Also: don't be shy, if by some chance a scheduled net control station does not appear on the air at the scheduled time, go ahead and ask if someone else listening is willing to take the net that night. Or do it yourself, there is no need to be formal, if you don't have a copy of the standard preamble at hand, just wing it.

Here is the net control schedule for January through March 2020:

ARES 2-Meter Net

Tuesday at 8.00 pm on the KB1BSS repeater, 146.985 MHz, – offset, PL 136.5

January 2020	February 2020	March 2020
Tues 7 Joe, KB1WVO	Tues 4 Joe, KB1WVO	Tues 3 Joe, KB1WVO
Tues 14 Cathy, KB1SNA	Tues 11 Cathy, KB1SNA	Tues 10 Cathy, KB1SNA
Tues 21 Chris, KB1NEK	Tues 18 Chris, KB1NEK	Tues 17 Chris, KB1NEK
Tues 28 Belle, KB1NOG	Tues 25 Belle, KB1NOG	Tues 24 Belle, KB1NOG
		Tues 31 Joe, KB1WVO

FCARC Informational 2-Meter Net

Thursday at 8.00 pm on the KB1BSS repeater 146.985 MHz, – offset, PL 136.5

January 2020	February 2020	March 2020
Thur 2 Chris, KB1NEK	Thur 6 Chris, KB1NEK	Thur 5 Ron, K8HSF
Thur 9 Dick, KC1JQJ	Thur 13 Dick, KC1JQJ	Thur 12 Chris, KB1NEK
Thur 16 Al, N1AW	Thur 20 Al, N1AW	Thur 19 Dick, KC1JQJ
Thur 23 Richard, KB1NOX	Thur 27 Richard, KB1NOX	Thur 26 Al, N1AW
Thur 30 Ron, K8HSF		



Annual meeting of the all-season tires club.

THE COMMUNICATOR is an informational publication for members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club. Officers: President: Aaron Addison, KC1CXX (kc1cxx@arrl.net), Vice President: Richard Merriott, KC1JQJ (rcmpilot@comcast.net), Treasurer: Howard Field, N1LUP (howfield@comcast.net), Secretary: Chris Myers, KB1NEK (camyers1@verizon.net), Director: Belle Dyer, KB1NOG (bdyer582@juno.com), Director: Jeanne Dodge, KC1DCQ (j.anndodge@gmail.com), Clerk: Erika LaForme, KC1IJJ (etlaforme@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).

*This issue and back issues of the **Communicator** are online at <http://www.fcarc.org/commun.htm>*