

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



FIRST CLASS MAIL



THE COMMUNICATOR THE COMMUNICATOR

July-August 2020

Upcoming Events

- Aug 10 Mon 6:00 pm E-Board followed by General Meeting. Access by Zoom, see next page.

If things were normal we would begin the 2020-2021 club year in September. This year is not normal! Here are the dates and times that would be expected in a normal year. None of the following are definite, look for more info later in August:

- Sep 12 Sat 8:00 am Club Breakfast
- Sep 14 Mon 6:00 pm E-Board
- Sep 14 Mon 7:15 pm General Meeting

August 2020

Calendar

Meetings: E-Board Mon Aug 10 at 6:00 p.m. , followed by General Meeting.

Info from Aaron: We do not right now have a speaker, but at least I can introduce Silas to the membership who join us. A speaker may be found as we get closer.

Access: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/91992401743?pwd=d0xLK256QThEMUhUTk9pU3pPU1BVZz09>

Meeting ID: 919 9240 1743

Passcode: 312595

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Report on June 10 Business and Elections Meeting

(As previously reported on FCARC.org website, this is not an official Secretary's report)

FCARC Officer Election Results

At the FCARC annual Business and Elections meeting, conducted via Zoom on Monday, June 8th, one candidate was nominated for each open office, and the slate was unanimously approved by all voters.

New officers effective September 1st:

- President: Silas Cutler, KC1BTV
- Secretary: Erika LaForme, KC1IJJ
- Director: Harriet (Belle) Dyer, KB1NOG (re-elected)

There are six elected offices, terms are two years, and three offices come up for election every year.

Current officers and contact info are posted on the FCARC website Club Officers page,

<http://www.fcarc.org/clubofficers.htm> .

Officers terms begin on September 1st and the Club Officers Page will be updated on that date. A preview can be seen here: <http://www.fcarc.org/clubofficers2020.htm>

VE License Exams

Normally we conduct a license exam session at the end of August. As of late July we don't know if we can do it this year. Please check the website later in the month for news .

News, Activities & Articles

FIELD DAY 2020

Several club members sent reports of individual Field Day efforts to the ARRL, designating the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club (MA) to be the recipient of their scores for the new-this-year club aggregate score competition. Stations who contributed to the FCARC aggregate score:

KC1BTV	Silas Cutler	Greenfield	1D
KC1DCQ	Jeanne Dodge	Greenfield	1D
N1AW	Al Woodhull	Leyden	1E
N1YL	Anne Kring	Greenfield	1D
WA1QKT	Bob Dickerman	Northfield	1D

Class 1D: regular home stations; Class 1E: home stations operated entirely with emergency power.

Anne N1YL:

Field Day was a very different in 2020. While it was an amazing opportunity for me to spend a weekend with my OM doing something I love together, it definitely was not like a regular Field Day. I missed the excitement of the GOTA station watching newly licensed hams, visitors, and Technicians get on the air making contacts and learning to log them. I missed the socialization and also Carter and his amazing hot breakfast on Sunday morning. It was great to be able to hear some of our club members on 2 meter simplex and make contacts. I also enjoyed making contacts with my teachers and friends from around the country that I have met through Long Island CW Club and CW Academy. My set up this year was easy by comparison because I used our home station. During previous Field Days I enjoyed the opportunities to set up a number of tents, antennas, radios, and emergency power thus practicing as a team the set up and skills needed for a real emergency. While setup was easier this year I did not miss being overtired and freaking out after catching my radio as it was sliding across the table when the temporary GOTA antenna fell pulling my radio with it during a high winds of last year's Field Day. Clean up last year still had to be done when we were tired. This year when Field Day was done I slept for a couple of days.

My OM and I used my call sign, N1YL for 2020 Field Day. The station was operated for 23.5 hours as a 1D home station. To qualify as a 1D station 1 transmitter was used operating from home with commercial power. I ended 30 minutes early due to a thunderstorm. The final score was 2588 with 625 qso's (570 cw + 24 digital + 31 phone) + 100 pts for copying and submitting FD bulletin + 50 points for submitting log electronically to ARRL.

Bob WA1QKT:

I received Aaron's email the Friday before Field Day, so I belatedly cleaned years of clutter off our operating bench and began attempting to load my old laptop with updated logging software. That effort devolved into trying to get

WiFi working on the laptop, which I failed to do. To simplify matters, I finally resigned myself to using a paper log and submitting paper dupe sheets, which I had never done before - so that was interesting, in a retro way. I listened to 2m simplex for a couple of hours or so, trying to work Jeanne, and was able to hear her, but she couldn't hear me, even though I was using 50W (maybe her receiver's squelch setting too high?). Anyway, I did get to talk to Al, Anne, Keith, and Jeremy on 2m simplex, heard a couple more ops there, and while waiting for action on 2m, I worked a few stations across the country on 10m using a Moxon that's been hanging, unused, on the side of my house for half a decade. Field Day activity on the bands sounded "the same as it ever was", despite the virus calamity. Yay! Hello to everybody in the club!

AI N1AW:

At the last minute I decided to join in from my home station, using my solar electric system to enter as Class 1E. I use N1MM logger for all my logging, so the program was up to date, but I did not have it configured for rig control. So I basically logged on a pad of paper and keyboarded the info after each Q. This was a far cry from the level of contest operation that I had become used to in recent years, sharing the club's CW Field Day operation with super-operator Al Mason. I operated an hour or two at a time for a total of six hours operation. I made 55 CW contacts, mostly on 20 meters, and two contacts on two meters. Total score was 232 points.

Jeanne KC1DCQ:

I decided to try and make contacts from home several times over the weekend. I focused on 2m simplex and only made a few contacts. I'm told that some folks heard me and tried to respond, I didn't hear them. Where I live, the apartments are brick and I can rarely make contacts. At least with trying several hours, I made a few.

Possible Repeater upgrade

AI N1AW

Yaesu has announced an opportunity to buy a new Yaesu DR-2X or a refurbished DR-1XFR repeater at a reduced price direct from Yaesu. This is similar to the programs through which we purchased our Yaesu repeaters now in use. This program will be in effect until December 31st.

I feel that we should discuss the state of our repeaters during our next club year. All of them, both our Yaesu 2 meter and 70 cm repeaters on Rocky Mountain in Greenfield as well as our old Motorola-based 2 meter repeater on Frizzell Hill in Leyden seem to be working fairly well, although the Leyden machine has occasional problems that have not been resolved.

As the trustee of our KB1BSS repeaters I am not recommending changes at this time, but I recognize that I am not a heavy user and I don't have much interest in the digital and networking capabilities of the Yaesu machines. There could be members or potential members of our club who would be interested in doing more.

Free Morse Code Lessons For Children:

info from N1YL



Long Island CW Club decided in March to help during these covid times by giving free Morse code classes to home bound kids. It has become a popular program and some have made qso's.

LICW gives these free online Zoom classes for children in grades K-12. Explore the "kids cw program" tab at their website: <https://longislandcwclub.org/teaching-kids-morse-code/> and for more info and better contact information use this ARRL article: <http://www.arrl.org/news/long-island-cw-club-offering-free-online-morse-code-instruction-for-homebound-youngsters>

A new children's class just started July 20 and it may not be too late to join the current class.

Light Up 2 Meters Night



Almost every amateur radio operator has a radio that is capable of two meter FM Simplex, it could be a handheld transceiver or an all mode fixed station with stacked vertically polarized yagis, it is the most common band/mode that can connect all amateurs. Whether you operate out in the field, from your mobile, or in your shack, Light Up 2

Meters Night is an opportunity to make new contacts, give your equipment a test, and maybe learn a thing or two about your equipment's capabilities, so join us for the fun on August 30 at 6pm local time.

<https://www.facebook.com/2MFMSimplex/photos/a.436518910448831/699785180788868/?ifg=1>

Two Takes on License Classes in Covid Times

W1AST: HCRA July License Class

The Hampden County Radio Association conducted an on-line Technician license class during July. Al asked HCRA President Larry Krainson W1AST how it went, he replied:

I was away on vacation and missed being able to view any of it. But Mike, N1TA said it went well. Jeff did not do any online testing, but so far 3 of the students have taken tests and have passed. The others are awaiting an opportunity to do so too.

Each module was recorded and is being edited and will be posted on the HCRA web site eventually. Summer and vacations tend to slow things down a bit. But they will go up. Then prospective students can watch and submit questions or watch with an instructor online to field questions.

It's still a work in progress, but one the HCRA will work at to make it successful and make the students comfortable with this new learning tool.

KB6NU: Tech Classes Move Online

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

I've been teaching ham classes for more than a dozen years now. My specialty has been the one-day Tech class. In this type of class, you review all of the questions in the question pool with the students over the course of six to eight hours, and then immediately give them the test before they can forget anything.

I would hold these classes three or four times a year and regularly have 20 – 30 students in each class. The pandemic, of course, has put the kibosh on these classes. The last one I taught was in January.

Frankly, I was wondering if I'd ever teach one again. A little over a month ago, however, I was approached by a fellow in Portland, Oregon about teaching an online class for some folks that he'd corralled there. After giving it some thought, I said yes.

So, now, in place of face-to-face classes, I'm teaching online Tech classes. There are plusses and minuses to this approach. One negative is that I miss the face-to-face interaction with the students. On the plus side, teaching online allows me to offer classes more frequently. My first was in June. Last week, I completed the second class, and in August, I will teach a third class.

I have had to make some changes to the format. Making people sit in front of a computer for six hours or more seemed like cruel and unusual punishment. So, instead of a one-day class, the online class consists of four, two-hour sessions, spanning two weeks:

- Session 1
 - Electrical Principles
 - Electronic Components and Circuit Diagrams
- Session 2
 - Radio Wave Characteristics
 - Antennas and Feed Lines
- Session 3
 - Amateur Radio Signals
 - Electrical Safety
 - Amateur Radio Practices and Station Setup
- Sessions 4
 - Station Equipment
 - Operating Procedures
 - Rules and Regulations

This seems to be working out pretty well. I'm using Zoom, and most people have been able to attend without too much hassle. To simulate the whiteboard that I use extensively in the face-to-face class, I'm using the Autodesk Sketchbook program (<https://www.sketchbook.com/>) and sharing my screen with the Zoom meeting attendees. To write on the "whiteboard," I'm using a Gaomon M10K2018 drawing tablet.

Sketchbook allows me to build up a document in layers, and the result is kind of a hybrid PowerPoint presentation and whiteboard. I can make layers appear when I start discussing a particular topic and then write over them. For example, when I go over the questions that use Ohm's Law to calculate current in a circuit, I display the later with " $E = I \times R$ " and on a second layer, show how to calculate the answers to the questions

To take the test, students have to sign up for an online test session. Fortunately, several VE groups are offering online, remote testing. To sign up for one of these sessions, all students have to do is go to <https://hamstudy.org/sessions>. For the first two classes, the W5YI VEC scheduled a special test session.

I foresee teaching these classes monthly until the demand wanes. The next class will start on Monday, August 3. To register for the class, go to <https://www.kb6nu.com/product/next-online-tech-class/>. To find out when these classes will take place in the future, potential students can sign up for my mailing list by going to <https://landing.mailerlite.com/webforms/landing/m6l6t4>.

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the "No

Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides (KB6NU.Com/study-guides/), and often appears on the ICQPodcast (icqpodcast.com). When he's not teaching ham radio classes, he likes to operate CW on the HF bands, go for long walks around Ann Arbor, MI, and volunteer for Rotary Club service projects.

The Event Formerly Known as Boxboro: Northeast HamXposition Update

From: Bob DeMattia (k1iw@hamxposition.org)

Date: Saturday, August 1, 2020, 8:14 AM EDT

Hello All,

Large indoor gatherings such as our convention are currently prohibited by Massachusetts state law. This is highly unlikely to change by November. Unfortunately, we will not be able to hold a physical convention this year.

However, we do plan some virtual activities, all free. We are currently working on the details for these and will keep you posted as they develop:

We plan to operate the W1A special event station over the weekend of October 31st - November 1st.

To avoid a conflict with the November Sweepstakes, we moved this to one week earlier.

W1A will be operated from the operator's home stations. Dennis, W1UE, is coordinating the schedule. If you would like to be a W1A operator, please contact W1UE by email at w1ue@hamxposition.org. For those who would like to work W1A, we will be posting the operating schedule once it is ready. Note that this will give regular attendees the unique opportunity to work W1A (something which would have been more difficult for many to do operating portable from a hotel room).

We will also be hosting a Saturday evening virtual banquet on November 7th, featuring a guest speaker.

There will be no charge for this event. Order your favorite take-out or delivery, pull up a chair to your screen and join your friends for an interesting presentation. After the talk, virtual break-out rooms will be available for you to converse with your "table".

The Nashua Area Radio Club will be running an online version of the "Ham Boot Camp".

This is a multisession program for hams young and old to learn about the various activities they can do with their license. Details to follow.

Eastern Mass ARES will be running online versions of their training sessions.

Details to follow.

From the entire HamXposition committee, we wish you good health, be safe, and we look forward to seeing everyone in

person at our 2021 convention on July 23-24-25, 2021.

73, Bob – K1IW, Chairman, HamXposition 2020



We are reaching out to let you know that despite the closure of all ham radio events, there is a great opportunity to join your fellow hams and us at the first ever **QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo on Saturday and Sunday, August 8 - 9, 2020**. Attendance is free and registration is now open at <https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com/>

Built on a cool live, virtual reality platform this ARRL-sanctioned hamfest will let you:

- Learn from a packed line-up of world renowned ham radio speakers such as Ward Silver, NOAX, on Grounding and Bonding; Glen Johnson, WO6J, on DXpeditions, and John Portune, W6NBC, on building slot antennas for HOA.
- See demos of the latest ham radio equipment from the world's top equipment companies. You can easily ask questions and engage with Exhibitors through video, audio, or chat. (Note: CQ is an Exhibitor!)
- Come and compete in our exciting Expo game, Leader Board, to win from a pool of tens of thousands of dollars in ham radio equipment and swag donated by our Sponsors. Prizes include Icom IC-7300 Transceiver, Elecraft KX2 HF QRP Transceiver, Rig Expert AA-1000 antenna analyzer, and an RFinder B1 Dual Band VHF/UHF Android Radio. It's easy and fun!

And if you've never been to a Hamfest or Expo, you can participate from the convenience of your home or office without spending a dime on travel!

This platform simulates a full convention experience with an exhibit hall and exhibit booths staffed by live attendants, speaker auditorium, lobby, and lounges.



Icom is the Expo's Platinum Sponsor, along with Gold Sponsors GigaParts, RT Systems, FlexRadio, RFinder, DX Engineering, Elecraft, RigExpert, and NCG Company (Comet Antenna).

Go to <https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com/> to learn more!

We look forward to having you join us at Expo for an amazing and engaging experience.

Link: <https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com/>

THE COMMUNICATOR is an informational publication for members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club. Officers: President: Aaron Addison, KF1G (rangerfriday@gmail.com), Vice President: Richard Merriott, KC1JQJ (rcmpilot@comcast.net), Treasurer: Howard Field, N1LUP (howfield@comcast.net), Secretary: Chris Myers, KB1NEK (camyers@protonmail.com), 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) or Al Woodhull, N1AW (aswoodhull@yahoo.com).

*Change of address or missing an issue? Please contact Al Woodhull, N1AW, aswoodhull@yahoo.com This issue and back issues of the **Communicator** are online at <http://www.fcarc.org/commun.htm>*