

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



MAIL

FIRST CLASS



THE COMMUNICATOR
THE COMMUNICATOR

FCARC December 2020 Newsletter

Calendar

December 12th, Virtual Denny's Breakfast-see below for connection info

December 14th, we will be having a club meeting over zoom.=see below for connection info

December 28th, Submissions are due for the January issue of the Communicator.

January 11th, Meeting via zoom

From Aaron Addison, current FCARC president.

Last month Silas Cutler resigned from the position of President, I wish to thank him for his time as President. As an all volunteer organization we ask a great deal from our officers, and I would like to thank everyone who has served while I have been President.

It is with a sad heart that I share the following Carter MacDonald, age 80, of Whately, MA, passed away peacefully at Buckley Healthcare Center, on November 21, 2020. He was a long time member of the club and he served as president of the club for a number of years. He was a trusted friend and mentor for many club members. I was proud to know him for the last several years and found him a warm and wonderful person. The world is a poorer place without him in it and he will be missed.

His obituary is here <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/recorder/obituary.aspx?n=carter-m-macdonald&pid=197152142>

On December 3rd we are going to try to have a gathering on the kb1bss repeater (146.985 MHz with a 136.5 PL and a minus offset of 600 KHz) at 8:00pm during the information net. Carter tried to get people on the Thursday information net, even offering candy bars and lottery tickets to get members on. So everyone is welcome to join us – bring your own candy bar or ticket and share with everyone on the net.

Our peer club HCRA is having a free 'Online Ham Radio Class' people are invited to register at www.HCRA.org/licensing-classes. It will be held for 5 Wednesday nights from Feb 3rd to March 3rd 2021. Please join them on these classes, held over zoom.

On December 14th, we will be having a club meeting over zoom. The subject will be a holiday trivia contest. I will offer prizes for each group of Technicians, General and Extra class license holders that has more than three people competing in it. Prizes will be the winners choice of an Amazon gift card, or an ARRL gift card. I hope to have enough people from each license category to have a good contest, questions will be from FCC question pools. Normally in December we have a club auction and potluck but with Covid-19 and how it impacts even the delivery of auction winnings, I want to play it safe. I hope in the summer we can have an auction and maybe a potluck field day? Next month we will have a presentation from Brad Councilman on QRZ.com, get your questions ready for him in January.

Topic: General Meeting

Time: Dec 14, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

[https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/99647516932?
pwd=SE8rS3NtY1FtVUVFdXVIQmhjTW5GZz09](https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/99647516932?pwd=SE8rS3NtY1FtVUVFdXVIQmhjTW5GZz09)

Meeting ID: 996 4751 6932

Passcode: 431906

I serve as an Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator (ASEC) for ARES and we are looking for new members for the Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES). Bob Meneguzzo the SEC for western MA and I are working on new training materials and are looking for new members. Everyone is welcome and you do not need experience just a willingness to help during an emergency. Please contact me at kf1g@arrl.net if you want to help or have any questions.

I have been doing lots of research on batteries, please let me know kf1g@arrl.net if this is something that you would like to see a presentation of at a future meeting.

Thank you,

Aaron KF1G

Franklin County Amateur Radio Club (FRARC) – Minutes

September 14, 2020

Board Members Present- Silas Cutler KC1BTV - President

Board Members Absent – Dick Merriott KC1JQJ – Vice President, Howard Field N1LUP – Treasurer, Erika LaForme KC1IJJ – Secretary/Clerk – tried, but unable to get in thru zoom, Jeanne Dodge KC1DCQ – Director – tried, but unable to get in thru zoom, Belle Dyer KB1NOG - Director

Others Present – Al Woodhull N1AW

Board Meeting Notes :

No Quorum, no official meeting

Silas and Al discussed repeaters, etc.

General Meeting Notes :

Present : Scott Conti N1LYW, Silas Cutler KC1BTV, Gene Howard K1WMA, Erika LaForme KC1IJJ, Dick Merriott KC1JQJ, Lad Nagumey WA3EEC, Ron Niswander K8HSF, Richard Stewart KB1NOX, Al Woodhull N1AW

Most of the meeting was spent discussing the need for programs and speakers for our general meetings. It was noted that because we are meeting remotely, it opens greater possibilities as we aren't constrained by distance. Some of the suggestions were: virtual tours of factories producing radio equipment, learning more about Zoom and its possibilities, and getting someone from HCRA to come and talk about their fox boxes.

Submitted by,

Erika LaForme KC1IJJ - Secretary

October 12, 2020

Board Members Present- Silas Cutler KC1BTV – President, Erika LaForme KC1IJJ – Secretary/Clerk

Board Members Absent – Dick Merriott KC1JQJ – Vice President, Howard Field N1LUP – Treasurer, Jeanne Dodge KC1DCQ – Director, Belle Dyer KB1NOG - Director,

Others Present – Chris Meyers KB1NEK

Board Meeting Notes :

No Quorum, no official meeting

Chris and Silas discussed the new lock on the storage unit and getting keys for it; Chris would like to borrow sandbags for the flu clinic and EDS at Mohawk on Oct. 17; Silas, Chris and Erika discussed ways of getting more people to attend meetings, especially the board meetings as we haven't had a quorum lately, luckily there has been little to vote on; Silas will set up an email list to be sent out a day or two in advance as a reminder of the monthly meeting.

General Meeting Notes :

Present : Silas Cutler KC1BTV, Gene Howard K1WMA, Anne Kring N1YL, Erika LaForme KC1IJJ, Chris Meyers KB1NEK, Lad Nagurney WA3EEC, Mark Swartwout NX1K, Al Woodhull N1AW

Silas presented an informative powerpoint regarding the many uses of Zoom, entitled "Zoom Survival Guide." As so many people are now using Zoom in their everyday life, there had been interest in learning, beyond the basics, how to get the most out of the application.

Submitted by,

Erika LaForme KC1IJJ - Secretary

November 16, 2020

Board Members Present- Dick Merriott KC1JQJ – Vice President, Howard Field N1LUP – Treasurer, Erika LaForme KC1IJJ – Secretary/Clerk, Jeanne Dodge KC1DCQ – Director,

Board Members Absent – Silas Cutler KC1BTV – President, Belle Dyer KB1NOG - Director

Others Present – Aaron Addison KF1G, Scott Conti N1LYW, Brad Councilman W1BCC, Gene Howard K1WMA, Anne Kring N1YL, Chris Meyers KB1NEK, Al Woodhull N1AW

Board Meeting Notes :

This special meeting was the rescheduling of our regular monthly meeting from Nov. 9, 2020, which had to be cancelled due to last minute conflicts. The board meeting was called to order by Vice President Dick Merriott. The most pressing issue is finding a new president. Unfortunately, Silas Cutler has decided to resign his position at this time. According to our by-laws, the position passes to the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Directors, and then if it is still not filled, to the most recent President. Fortunately, Aaron Addison KF1G, our last President, has agreed to take over Silas' term. We are grateful to him for his willingness to step in and help out. Aaron's appointment was unanimously approved by the four board members present.

Several other topics were discussed with no resolutions. (1) We need to check our by-laws and then make changes if necessary, to be able to legally vote on line. (2) Should we change the time or day of our board meetings to try to get better attendance? Would our usual Denny's breakfast day and time work for the time being, as breakfasts are on hold? (3) Can we increase our on-line presence to try to attract more members and visitors? Rebecca Addison K1BKY has been posting to Facebook for us, are there others who could help and/or expand into Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.? Are there people interesting in helping to work on the website?

Motion to adjourn meeting by Erika, seconded by Howard.

Submitted by,

Erika LaForme - Secretary

A 20-40-80m Antenna for a Very Small Space

Bob Solosko, W1SRB

I recently moved to Lathrop, a senior community in Northampton. We live in what Lathrop calls a town home, an attached 1 floor unit, with 4 units in each building.

The problem was what could I do for an antenna for the HF bands. I have access to the attic above my unit but any antenna I put in the attic was a total failure, probably because there is too much metal in the attic. Since the units are built on concrete slabs, all heating and plumbing goes through the attic. In addition, all phone and internet cables for all four units go through my attic. But each unit has a 12' x 12' patio. While we can do almost anything we want on our patio, space beyond our patio is considered to be a common area and thus I can't put anything beyond our patio (and I also can't put anything on the roof). I also have



additional constraints: we use the patio during warm weather and my wife is somewhat averse to large visible antennas. This means that any antenna that I put up on the patio has to essentially be completely contained within the patio edges, and the antenna has to be one that can be easily put up and taken down when not in use.

My solution was to create an antenna using 20, 40 and 80m mobile whips in a fan dipole configuration on a push up mast. MFJ HF Stick mobile antennas fit the bill which are 8' adjustable mobile whip antennas. I used two each to create horizontal dipole antennas for each band. An MFJ 3/8-24 Double T Pipe mount is used create each of the dipoles and connect it to a coax cable. The three dipole antennas are clamped to a thick section of bamboo, about 6" apart (I had the bamboo from a previous garden project). The 3 dipoles are joined to each other through short lengths of coax.

The bamboo is just the right size to fit into the top of a DX Engineering 15' telescoping fiberglass mast. The mast has cam lock clamps which makes it easy to push up and lock the sections in place. The bottom of the mast is shock corded to out heavy metal patio umbrella stand. For stability, I also have it shock corded to our metal patio table. While this setup is pretty stable by itself, to prevent it from coming down in strong winds, I have four guy ropes between the mast and ground anchors in each corner of our patio. The guy ropes are attached with spring clips for quick attachment and removal. The total cost was about \$450, not including the coax cable needed to connect it to my rig.



While a 16' antenna is quite inefficient on 40m and 80m, it does work. On both 40m and 80m, using 100w on CW, I've had contacts in most of the north east and mid-Atlantic states as well as Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia (40m), Kentucky (40m), Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Michigan (40M), Quebec and Ohio. You'd expect that the 20m dipole at 16' in the air would be somewhat more efficient, and it proved to be. During the SSB Sweepstakes the weekend before thanksgiving, using 100 watts on SSB, I had contacts throughout the US and Canada, as far west as California and Washington, and as far south as Florida, Louisiana and Texas.



A first ham radio experience

I enjoy hearing about first ham radio experiences. Here is mine:

First Amateur Radio Experience: In October of 1957 I was a few weeks shy of my 6th birthday and vividly remember the fear my parents and other adults experienced over the launch of Sputnik.

Down the street lived Carle Ellis, W1TZZ (his son holds the call now). For several days he placed a speaker on his porch with a receiver tuned to the telemetry (20 MHz, I assume). Audio proof those godless communists were directly overhead!

<https://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/sound/sputnik.wav>

Years later Mr. Ellis (he was my junior high science teacher) gave me the novice test.

Recent antenna project: When I returned to the hobby I recycled an old CB antenna into a tubular 2 meter dipole which I mounted vertically on my TV antenna mast. I knew it was far from ideal, but it got me on the club's 2m repeater using my handheld.

Recently I purchased a used dual band vertical via Facebook Marketplace. Even though I wasn't exactly in the market for an antenna, the price was very attractive and was the claim of 8.5 dBi in gain. A considerable improvement over my low-gain poorly matched dipole. It was a lovely day for a drive to Pittsfield and as a bonus I bought some LMR-400 as well.

No problems assembling and erecting without help. I mounted the antenna the top of a 10' section of chain link top rail and tipped the assembly up to be secured by a standard roof edge bracket. The mast rests on the ground. With the bracket loose, I added a 5' section in order to get the antenna above the ridge of the roof.

A huge improvement. I can hit 2m repeaters up and down the valley using my recently acquired FT-2900.

Questions are always welcome.

73,--Brad

Virtual Denny's Breakfast

As Monday 12/14 is our next meeting, I've scheduled the Virtual Denny's Breakfast for Saturday 12/12.

Link below.

Bradford Councilman is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Denny's Virtual Breakfast

Time: Dec 12, 2020 08:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

[https://zoom.us/j/97263909025?](https://zoom.us/j/97263909025?pwd=aHFRYkqvRUF0cWlabXVZakNBUIVxZz09)

[pwd=aHFRYkqvRUF0cWlabXVZakNBUIVxZz09](https://zoom.us/j/97263909025?pwd=aHFRYkqvRUF0cWlabXVZakNBUIVxZz09)

Meeting ID: 972 6390 9025

Passcode: dWDpr0

Licensing tests

The Pioneer Valley VE Team (PVVET), which helps out the FCARC with examinations, is still in a holding pattern. The venues that the PVVET normally uses have placed restrictions and in most cases won't allow us to host examinations due to concerns with COVID-19. The PVVET respects their choices as we also want everyone to be safe. At this moment in time, we do not have any examinations scheduled.

However, we are looking for venues to host an examination. The phrase "beggars should not be choosers" sticks out when looking for a venue but we're in a unique situation. Since the PVVET does not deal with money at all, we would need a venue that is free of charge and will meet and/or exceed the guidelines/laws set by municipalities. We want both the examiners and the examinees to be safe. Even if that means limiting the amount of people involved. If you have access to a venue that we can use, please contact NT1K (@ NT1K.COM).

Until then, if you would like to obtain or upgrade your FCC amateur radio license, it's possible to do it without ever leaving your house! The ARRL, W5YI and the Greater LA Amateur Radio Group (GLAARG) VEC have been doing online examinations since March. The FCC authorized remote examinations in 2014. Basic requirements are a computer/laptop with a moveable webcam (to show your environment), high speed internet (enough to allow video/audio streaming), zoom software and internet browser. Some VECs require an additional camera (smartphone).

If you would like to take an online (remote) examination, please visit <https://hamstudy.org/sessions/online> . You'll find many examinations. Make sure that there are slots available. Also make sure before signing up to fully read and understand the testing guidelines as each team and VEC have their unique way of doing examinations and they will be different. Fees will most likely apply.

The PVVET strongly encourages online remote examinations as the FCC may start charging \$50 application fees for upgrades/new licenses. FCC fees will be different from VEC fees. In the future, the FCC will be requiring ALL candidates to have a FCC registration number (FRN) prior to taking an examination. This is already policy of the PVVET.

Once we obtain a venue, date and time, we will promote it on our website (<http://pvvet.org>), social media accounts and to those who inquired.

- Jeffrey Bail (NT1K)
Pioneer Valley VE Team

Ham Radio in Greenfield almost Century Ago

Lad Nagurney WA3EEC

Recently, the Radio Club of America, as part of its radio history collection, gave access to a Callbook Collection dating from about 1910. The first Callbook I looked at was the 1927 one which is interesting since it is the first time call signs used a "W" as the first letter. Also the 1927 Callbook listed hams by QTH. Looking under Massachusetts showed 5 hams in Greenfield, the only town I recognized in Franklin County, and 6 in Northampton and 1 in Amherst, the only towns I recognized in Hampshire County.

Of the 5 Greenfield Hams, 3 appear to be of the same family.

W1AOF Henry C. Wing 62 Pierce St.
W1BNW Howard E. Wing 66 Pierce St
W1BOM Dana Darling 19 Maple St
W1CDP Henry C. Wing 62 Pierce St
W1HG Philip N. Jensen 73-1/2 Main St

Those of you who hail from Greenfield or have lived there for longer than I have been in Western MA, you may know much more about the history of the Wing family than I do. The patriarch of the family, Chauncey Wing bought the property in 1894. He opened his firm on Pierce St that produced the Wing Mailer label applicator. (For a history of the company see <http://www.chaunceywing.com/>) The firm continued in existence until the end of 2017, closing after the death of his great-grandson Donald Wing. You still can buy supplies for the Wing Mailer today. I can only assume that one of the hams was either the grandfather or father of Donald Wing. The houses that they lived in still stand and a quick search of the Franklin County Register of Deeds gave several intra-family transactions for the Pierce Street QTHs. The street view from Google Maps shows the building on Pierce Street that housed Chauncey's firm still stands with the Wing sign on it.

While Dana Darling is listed in housing transactions in the late 1940s, I could not find much about him. However, looking at the 1921 Callbook, he was listed as a Ham then, the only Franklin County Ham I found from a century ago.

W1BOM's QTH appears to be the parking lot between the Mohawk Mall and F.L. Roberts Gas Station. Maybe someone will know if the street numbers on Mail St. were changed over the years.

THE COMMUNICATOR is an informational publication for members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club. Officers: President: Aaron Addison (kf1g@arrl.net), Vice President: Richard Merriott, KC1JQJ, Treasurer: Howard Field, N1LUP, Secretary: Erika LaForme, KC1IJJ, Director: Belle Dyer, KB1NOG, Director: Jeanne Dodge, KC1DCQ

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 online at <http://www.fcarc.org/commun.htm>