



The Communicator

Franklin County Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 773
Greenfield MA 01302

May 2026

May Events

May 9	Saturday	8:00 am	FCARC Club Breakfast, Denny's, Greenfield
May 11	Monday	6:30 pm	FCARC Club Meeting, 1 Aviation Way, Turners Falls
May 28	Thursday	Noon	FCARC Club Luncheon, Denny's, Greenfield
June 20	Saturday	10:00 am	GOTA/POTA/SOTA Quabbin Hill Observation Tower Belchertown MA (Flyer attached)

Check groups.io and the Club Nets for updates

Other Local Events

May 1-2	Friday/Saturday		Nearfest Hillsborough County 4H Fairgrounds New Boston, NH
May 1	Friday	7:00 PM	HCRA Club Meeting – Holyoke Hospital
May 15	Friday	7:30 PM	MTARA Club Meeting – Holyoke Hospital

2026 Public Service Events (tentative)

June 13, 2026 Edge Hill Race in Ashfield Organized by Bob (KA1HAH)
rwellerwho@gmail.com <https://www.beastcoasttrailrunning.org/edge-hill-trail-race>

August 2, 2026 Greenfield Triathlon Organized by Gary (KB1AKU) groy773@gmail.com
<https://www.greenfield-triathlon.com/>

August 22, 2026 D2R2 Organized by AI (N1AW) aswoodhull@yahoo.com
<https://d2r2.franklinlandtrust.org>

August 23, 2026 Green River Marathon Organized by Gary (KB1AKU)
groy773@gmail.com <https://newenglandgreenrivermarathon.com/>

September 20, 2026 Will Bike for Food Organize by Steve (N1IBS) stevenross@aol.com
<https://www.foodbankwma.org/events/will-bike-4-food/>

January 1, 2027 Sawmill River 10k Run Organized by Mark (NX1K) nx1k@arrl.net
<https://montagueparksrec.com/p/1021/Sawmill-River-10K-Run>

If you are willing to help in any of these events, please contact the organizer.

Net Control Schedule May 2026	
Emergency Net --- Tuesday 8 PM	Information Net --- Thursday at 8 PM
May 5 Gary KB1AKU	May 7 Dick N1RCM
May12 Vic NA1K	May 14 Chris KB1NEK
May 19 Bob KA1HAH	May 21 Bob KA1HAH
May 26 Beth WU1S	May 28 Dick N1RCM
The Emergency and Information Nets are on the KB1BSS Repeater 146.985 -- Negative Offset – 136.5 PL	

Local ARES Nets

ARES on Mt. Tom W1TOM repeater 34/94 (127.3) and 443.2/+5 (127.3)
 Sunday 8:45 AM and 9:15 AM --- Tuesday 7:30 PM
 For the Pioneer Valley W1TOM is the primary repeater used for Skywarn nets during foul weather.

ARES nets on the NoBARC K1FFK repeater Sunday mornings
 9:00 146.91 MHz, 9:15 for 53.23 ,9:45 for 449.425, and 10:00 for 224.10. Tone is 162.2,

Pioneer Valley 10 Meter Net

Wednesday Mornings at 9, on 28.354 MHz +/-, NCS is Ralph WA1UOL

Massachusetts Rhode Island Digital Net (MARIDAN)

Tuesdays at 6 PM, on 3.583 MHz using Fldigi - check in using Thor 22

GMRS Net

Wednesday at 7 PM, on the Mt. Tom GMRS repeater, 462.575 MHz, +5 MHz, tone 151.4.
 (Remember one needs a GMRS approved radio and GMRS license to check into this net.)

April 13, 2026 Monthly Meeting Notes

Present

Chuck - KC1CHA
Gary – KB1AKU
Dick - N1RCM

Vic - NA1K
John M.

Zoom

Mark – W1MHG
Lad - WA3EEC
Bob - KA1HAH
Mark – NX1K
Erika - KC1IJJ
Kevin - N1ERS

5 - Members present in person, 4 - Members present on Zoom, 1 – Guest, Total 9 Members Present

The Meeting Opened unofficially at: 18:40 Hrs.

Kevin (N1ERS) opened the meeting with a lot of info on IRLP, (Internet Radio Linking Project) He is a member of the ARRL and the Mohawk Amateur Radio Club. This is the info and project Gary (KB1AKU) has been hoping to get information to have presented to us during a meeting. This took the better part of the Meeting with lots of Questions and Answers to lengthy to get into here. For more info on this head to this Link, [IRLP - Internet Radio Linking Project](#) We also hope to have Kevin do a write up for our Communicator to explain this in more detail. In the future this could allow us to link with Fitchburg and Gardner Repeaters, The Rt. 2 Corridor. It may be possible to do this with existing equipment at minimal cost to the Club. The Club Thanks Kevin (N1ERS) for his time tonight.

The Internet Radio Linking Project

IRLP - Keeping the Radio in Amateur Radio

The aim of this project is too reliably and inexpensively link amateur radio systems without the use of RF links, leased lines, or satellites.

The IRLP uses Voice-Over-IP (VoIP) custom software and hardware. Coupled with the power of the Internet, IRLP will link your repeater site or simplex station to the world in a simple and cost effective way.

IRLP operates a worldwide network of dedicated servers and nodes offering very stable worldwide voice communications between hundreds of towns and cities. All this with unsurpassed uptimes and the full dynamic range of telephone quality audio.

Enjoy IRLP and please "Pass the Word"

[IRLP - Internet Radio Linking Project](#)

Gary (KB1AKU) Opened the Official Meeting at 19:30 Hrs.

Gary (KB1AKU) opened the meeting with the adoption of the Bylaws. After much discussion whether we had a quorum to have the vote, it was found we had 7 out of 9 officers present and/or on Zoom and, thus, a quorum was fulfilled. The current By-Laws state: *For the purpose of transacting business at a meeting of the Board of Directors, the presence of a majority of the current members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.*

Chuck (KC1CHA) made a Motion to vote to accept the changes in the By-Laws suggested by the committee consisting of: Lad (WA3EEC), Mark (W1MHG), Chris (KB1NEK) on this day April 13, 2026. Dick (N1RCM) Seconded the Motion, Gary (KB1AKU) called for a Vote, All were in Favor No Nays, Motion Passed. An Updated set of By-Laws will be made available soon to all Members at the Web Site: fcarc.org

Gary (KB1AKU) moved that we proceed with the purchase and installation of o *Kenwood Repeater, Amplifier, Power Supply, Smart Board with Rack/Cabinet for Mounting* for the Leyden Repeater from Kurt Jackson. The

total cost will not exceed \$1100.00,. Vic (Na1K) Seconded the Motion, Gary (KB1AKU) Called for a Vote, All were in Favor NO Nays, Motion Passed.

Gary (KB1AKU) thanked everyone for their cooperation and willingness to update our repeater and for working together. We all know these have been long time upgrades needing to be done. Thank You.

There was also a brief discussion on raising dues. This discussion will continue at future meetings and be decided upon by the end of June for July approval.

Dick (N1RCM) gave us a Treasures Report, At this time we have: \$7027.75

Gary (KB1AKU) closed the Meeting at 19:50

Antenna Manufacturer Updates

Cushcraft and Hygain Manufacturing Bought by ITU Corporation

When MFJ began to discontinue operations, Martin Jue indicated that he would only sell the company intact, rather than splitting its divisions. As we all know, Martin purchased several companies or the Ham business of several companies including Ameritron, Cushcraft, and Hy-Gain, to form the conglomerate we know of as MFJ. Now several years later, Martin has decided to sell the antenna products of Hy-Gain and Cushcraft to Dave & Kambi Carpenter. The Carpenters will relate the manufacturing of these brands to their factory in Linton, Indiana.

For more information see

<https://forums.qrz.com/index.php?threads/cushcraft-and-hygain-manufacturing-bought-by-itu-corporation.987899/>

And

<https://www.lintonnews.com/itu-corp...nic-amateur-radio-manufacturing-free-article/>

SteppIR returns to the Amateur Radio Market

SteppIR, which exited from the Ham Market almost a year ago to concentrate on commercial products is returning to the Ham Market. They are famous for their broadband, electronically tuned antennas.

For more info, see <https://consumer.steppir.com/>



STEPPIR CONSUMER PRODUCT

ANNOUNCEMENT

As our amateur radio customers know, we exited the consumer market in June of 2025. At that time, we did not know what our exact future was – our plan was to pursue commercial projects in search of more stable long-term income sources, but we never lost hope on the idea of returning to the amateur radio market in some form.

Thanks to some recent (and continuing) exciting developments on the commercial side of things, SteppIR will now be able to guarantee future sales of our consumer product line via online web sales!

All parts and accessories that are on our website are available for purchase and will continue to be available into the future. Multiple items have been substantially reduced in price.

We will be bringing back select antennas that will be purchased as kits on our website – Urban Beam Yagi 40m-6m (dipole on 40m/30m), 3 element Yagi 20m-6m, 4 element Yagi 20m-6m. The 3E and 4E Yagi will also have the 40/30 loop dipole option available.

We will also be selling the SmallIR vertical 20m-6m, and the BigIR vertical, 40m-6m.

Warranty support and services will be in effect for these antennas as well as any purchased parts and accessories

ste
COMMUN

WFWL

Lad WA3EEC

I received my Ham ticket in High School. Although I had a National NCX-3, which was state-of-the-art, in my bedroom, my antennas were wire antennas on a postage stamp sized lot (50'x90') in a city with my mom's requirement that no antennas be in the front of the roof ridge line. When I started graduate school for my PhD, I finally through W1VPY (now K1AD) at Brown had access to a better antenna farm and a legal-limit linear. Of course, at that point, I did not have much time for Ham Radio.

At some point I realized that the research engineer, who kept our spectrometers working and knew much more than I could even know about sample preparation was a ham. Not just a Ham, but the Honor Roll DXer, W1GL (ex K0EKR/W1GMF), Ted introduced me into the world of DXing. Unlike not where we have spotting networks and instant info on the web, most DX info came from the monthly QST and W1AW DX Bulletins, and newsletters, which often had invitation only subscriptions and were "printed" on a mimeograph machine. At some point Paul AK1P (then WA1WXB) joined us for coffee and DX conversation mornings.

Ted's DX mantra was Work First, Worry Later (WFWL). Then, as now, there were bootleg and phony operations letting hams think that they had worked a new one and, maybe, completed an award. Or there were DXpeditions that flaunted the rules.

Recently, I've had several opportunities to think of Ted's mantra.

First, last December, at just about greyline time on 40M, I heard a KH6 with a relatively strong signal, calling CQ on CW. Since I need Hawaii for WAS on 40M, I hung around the pileup and after about 30 minutes trying worked him. It bothered me, since I did not hear any other stations from that general area. A couple days later, I also heard that station on again.

Checking QRZ.com for QSL info, the KH6 was a club station in Hawaii. The QSL info, however, was to a 4-land Ham with the same suffix living in Florida! There was no Clublog page, nor would they QSL by Logbook of the World, but wanted a paper card with an SASE. So, I invested 2 stamps with the hope of receiving a QSL Card. Over 3 months later, I got my card and Hawaii was crossed out and the card had the Florida address of the QSL manager. So. I guess I am not getting Hawaii confirmed on 40, right now.

Second, on April 1st, I checked 20M FT8, and there was, with a big pileup, 1A4F. Of course, 1A is the prefix for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, which is one of the last City States run by the Roman Catholic Church in Rome, but it is not part of either the Vatican or Italy. As far as anyone knows, there are no resident hams and the City State has only 3 citizens. However, there are been HAM operations from the City State. According to Clublog it is the 70th rarest country on the DXCC list out of 340. I saw some well-known hams working them. After working them, I immediately tested Ted and Paul. Ted replied with WFWL. Paul replied with a link suspecting that it was an April Fool's prank! Which it apparently was.

Finally, there was a positive outcome. When the Mt. Athos Dxpediton in Greece came on the air, although it included several famous Dxpeditoneers, many said it was bogus. Mt. Athos is an autonomous monastic state, separate from Greece consisting of 20 monasteries. Since it is the 24th rarest DXCC countries, there immediately was a pileup during the operation. I felt lucky when I had a QSO with the expedition on 40M and 30M. However, all was not good. The monks determined, the that a special permit known as a *diammonitirion* was invalid and the operators were arrested and thrown into jail. One only wonders if the jail there was better than a monk's cell which would have all the amenities of a third-world Gulag. After a few days in jail (or maybe in repentance) the DXers and their equipment were summarily booted off Mt. Athos. Threads on several sites said that no confirmations would be issued. However, a few weeks later, I received a confirmation on Logbook of the World for my 40M QSO. Apparently the ARRL DXCC Advisory Committee, which arbitor of such issues, felt the first few days of the operation were legitimate and thus could be confirmed. Thus, in this case my worries were unfounded.

Operators needed for World Cup Special Event Station

Larry W1AST



Coming to MA is the 2026 World Soccer Tournament being played at Gillette Stadium.

Other games are being played in Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, Kansas City, LA, Miami, NY/NJ, San Francisco, Seattle in the US. Also, Toronto and Vancouver in Canada, and Guadalajara, Mexico City, and Monterey in Mexico.

You can read more here: <https://www.wc2026ses.org>

There are SES ops activating those cities too.

7 dates of operating for MA. - You don't have to be in MA to operate.

Stations working, you could earn a nice QSL card. The opportunity to earn 16 special QSL cards. One from each city. Plus a certificate.

Ops are needed to make contacts on all bands and modes (CW/SSB/digital/satellite).

Sat June 13
Tue June 16
Fri June 19
Tue June 23
Fri June 26
Mon June 29
Thur July 9

All logs must be submitted to me in ADI format.

If you are interested in operating any and all dates, please contact me at: WB1DBY@gmail.com

Please spread the word, we need ops for this event.

May 2026 OPERATING EVENTS

Lad WA3EEC

May 2-3	7 Land QSO Party
May 2-3	Indiana QSO Party
May 2-3	Delaware QSO Party
May 2-3	New England QSO Party
May 9-10	50 MHz Spring Sprint
May 16-17	Arkansas QSO Party
May 30-31	CQ WW WPX Contest CW

For an exhaustive list of Contests see the WA7BNM Contest Calendar <https://www.contestcalendar.com/>

About This Newsletter

Lad WA3EEC

This newsletter is produced as a collaboration between Lad WA3EEC, who collects and formats the articles and AI N1AW who distributes the newsletter. Any complaints on the contents or formatting of this newsletter issue should be sent to Lad at WA3EEC@arrl.net. Contributions to future issues can be sent to WA3EEC. The next issue will be published on or about June 1st!

THE COMMUNICATOR is an informational publication for members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club.

Club Officers 2025-2026

President	Gary Roy	KB1AKU	groy773@gmail.com
Vice President	Steve Ross	N1IBS	stevenross@aol.com
Treasurer	Dick Merriott	N1RCM	rcmpilot@comcast.net
Secretary	Chuck Allen	KC1CHA	faithallen2003@leverettnet.net
Clerk	Erika LaForme	KC1IJJ	etlaforme@yahoo.com
Director	Chris Myers	KB1NEK	camyers@protonmail.com
Director	Vic Augusta-Summers	NA1K	victoriaaugusta1997@gmail.com

This is your newsletter! 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: Lad Nagurney WA3EEC (wa3eec@arrl.net)

Franklin County ARC on Social Media

Website	https://fcarc.org
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/groups/1091163077562307
Groups.io	https://fcarc-ma.groups.io/g/main

Change of address or missing an issue? Please contact AI Woodhull, N1AW (n1aw@arrl.net).