

CAARA NEWS



Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association
August 2018 Edition



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by Jon- K1TP

It has been a fairly quiet month at the club with just a few public service road races to service. I want to thank Chris-K1TAT for doing a great job chairing the Public Service Committee. He is assisted by Gardi- KA1BTK who is a marvel at producing the race maps and showing where where the race check points are located. This group is responsible for securing over \$2500 per year in donations from the race groups.

Another unsung hero at CAARA is Dick Ober-K1VRA who keeps track of our club finances and budget using Quicken and generates the monthly reports for treasurer Hank, W4RIG. Dick also keeps the club website up to date and is our leading authority of the club constitution and bylaws. Dick keeps us walking in a straight line.

We have quite a few club members who do things behind the scenes to keep the club alive and well. Bill-W1WMM and Dave-N1CDL have been appointed by me to the newly activated "Club Awards" Committee. Bill actually came up with the suggestion that we honor individuals on a yearly basis for their contributions to the club. At the annual meeting we will be handing out our first batch of awards and is another good reason to attend this fall meeting.

If anyone wishes to operate the donated Collins transmitter for old times sake, you should contact Jake, W1LDL, during the weekly Tuesday meetings. It was operational during Field Day and worked great.

Field Day results were compiled and submitted to the ARRL by Tony, AB1XK. Thanks for all you did.

Hank, W4RIG, is chairing the nomination committee for the fall BOD lineup. If you have any interest in getting more active with the club, let us know



asap. Enjoy the summer and I hope to meet you at a club meeting soon.

INFORMATION DESK

By Dean- KB1PGH

This is for all the newly licensed hams out there. Be fore warned of the massive amount of electrical noise and interference sources that you are surrounded by. Once you buy an HF rig and start tuning around the bands you will soon hear all the buzzing noises and interference desensitizing your rig and blocking the signals you want to hear. Now I'm not even going to get into all of the exterior noise sources out there. Lets for now just focus on the EMI sources in your house.



Now if you think that you have no EMI and RFI coming into your antenna you may want to think again. What you think you hear on the HF bands as just other signal sources coming in could be locally generated interference created inside your home. Now the one way to find out what is creating the interference is to start by shutting off circuit breakers one by one in your house to find out if that clears the noise up. Just imagine everything that runs off electricity inside your house will create interference and start from there. I mean everything such as a treadmill to a TV to a touch lamp and even the LED light bulbs in your house. Even your washer and dryer and even solar panels.

It's really bad out there. Technically every manufacturer is supposed to make their equipment not radiate EMI and RFI but that's fake news. Even start with what's in your shack. Even your computer monitor, printer and speakers can make EMI. Don't forget that your switching power supply that runs your HF rig can create tons of interference. So have fun hunting down the noise

CAARA Newsletter
Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association
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Gloucester, MA 01930

CAARA Newsletter is a monthly publication of the Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association (CAARA).

It is the policy of the editor to publish all material submitted by the membership provided such material is in good taste, relevant to amateur radio and of interest to CAARA members, and space is available. Material is accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Articles and other materials may be submitted by internet to Jon at k1tp@arrl.net. If possible, material should be in Word format. Material may also be submitted as hard copy to Jon-K1TP or any Club Officer.

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Jon Cunningham- K1TP Editor
Dean Burgess- KB1PGH Reporter

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Welcome to CAARA:

CAARA, an ARRL affiliated club, operates the 2 meter W1GLO repeater on 145.130 MHz with antennas located on the ATT cell tower in the Blackburn Industrial Complex in Gloucester Massachusetts. It has an average effective radius of 60 miles, and serves Eastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod, Rhode Island, Southern New Hampshire, and maritime mobile stations.

CAARA also operates the W1GLO repeater on 224.900 located at the CAARA clubhouse.

The former W1RK 443.700 repeater is now on the ATT cell tower in the Blackburn Industrial Complex with greatly enhanced performance.

The Association is one of the few amateur radio clubs that has its own clubhouse. Located at 6 Stanwood Street in Gloucester, it includes a permanent HF station with beam, vertical/wire antennas along with an operating 2 meter packet station as well as 2/440 meter voice and 220 MHz Transceivers.

Amateur radio exams are held on the second Sunday of each month at 10:00 AM at the CAARA clubhouse. Anyone who is considering a new license or an upgrade, is welcome to test with us. There is no pre-registration necessary. Contact the head of our VE team Rick Maybury if you have any questions about monthly testing.

Monthly member meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at noon except for July and August.

Each Sunday evening at 9:00 PM, the club operates a 2 meter net on 145.130. This is an open and informal net which disseminates club news and prepares operators for emergency communications work. All are invited to check into the net as club membership is not a requirement.

New! The club is open every Tuesday from 5-8PM for CAARA members to stop by and socialize, as well as use the extensive collection of ham radio gear.

and just about every time you can reduce and even eliminate the noise through chokes. If you have been reading the newsletter the past year I have covered a bunch of chokes so take a look back and see.

Moving on, we have the International Lighthouse and lightship weekend coming up on the 18th of August. Here's a tip too if your looking for contacts to make on HF. Go to the ARRL website at www.arrl.org and scroll down to the bottom left and look for the "On the air" section. You will see the "Special Event Stations" link. Click on that and there is a pretty good listing of all the special events stations in calendar order. The ARRL is also having the rookie RTTY roundup on August 19th for you RTTY fans.

As you know I like to do a little bit of emergency preparedness and disaster prepping. One thing I really don't have is a long term storage food supply. I have already seen and heard about the Mountain House brand of Freeze dried food supplies so I decided to try one out before I bought a bunch of them. I got the Lasagna pouch at Dicks Sporting goods in Danvers but of course you can buy them online at Amazon. First off the pouch has about 5 ounces of food and it costs about \$9.00 a pouch. To cook it all you have to do is boil 2 cups of water and dump it into the pouch, mix it for a bit and seal it up for 9 minutes and your done. The whole idea is that for camping and disaster prep that you can eat it right out of the pouch for no mess clean up. The food is guaranteed to be fresh up to almost 30 years and has a 12 year taste guarantee! Well I decided to be the guinea pig on the Lasagna pouch and cook it and taste it to see how they are. These pouches were made for all in one where you can cook the food in it, eat out of it and then seal it up for easy clean up. It takes two cups of boiling water. Just pour the water in, stir it, let it sit for 4 minutes, stir it again and then let it sit for another 5 minutes and your done. I looked inside at the freeze dried lasagna and it looked just like dried out food. It looked pretty good. After

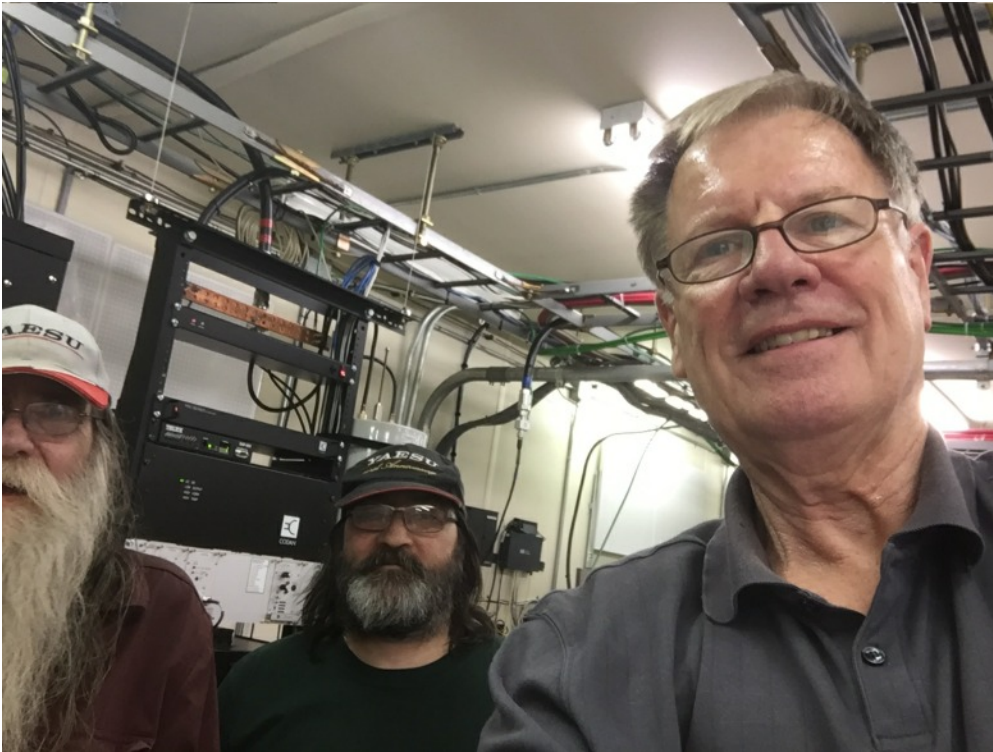
cooking it I took a picture for you of the lasagna on a plate and it looked socially acceptable. I would say a step up from the canned pasta that kids eat. I gave it a taste and I have to say it was pretty good. The texture was not rubbery and the taste was not salty like the canned pasta. It had enough spice and the meat in the meat sauce was good too. I would say these would work



great for camping or an emergency food supply kit. For the 9 bucks I paid for it I say I got my money worth in the quantity of food two. There was definitely enough food for two people in that pouch. I plan to order a 3 day emergency food supply kit from Mountain House and I will review that next month.



A quick look at the repeater site in Gloucester. We stopped over to install the upgraded Yaesu Fusion Repeater on 443.700.



Jake- K1LDL, Chris- K1TAT, and Jon- K1TP visited the repeater site on Sunday at high noon to swap out repeaters.

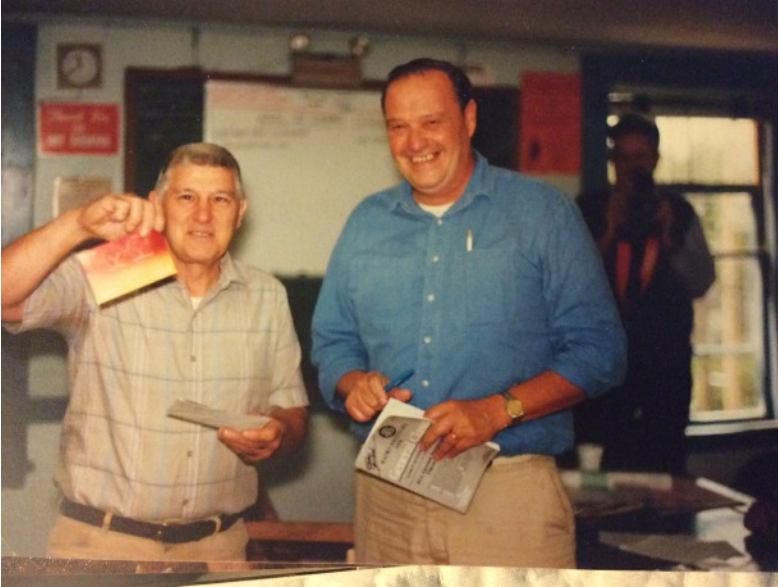
I had upgraded the firmware on one of the Yaesu repeaters and brought the other one home to upgrade that one.

It was the first time Chris- K1TAT had seen the repeater site which we are lucky enough to enjoy with a free lease.

Climate controlled with a generator backup in a cement bunker, it doesn't get much better than this.



1990 CAARA Memories



Ralph- W1RK and Steve- N1FSK....



Mike- K1MB, Larry and Cliff in rear..



Above picture of Larry- W1EGJ being shown lobstering by Charlie Anderson, one of our past presidents out in the bay near Granite Pier in Rockport.

On the left, one of our field days on Hospital Hill in Rockport we borrowed a hot dog stand. What a great field day that was in 1990!

The top picture shows you what the club looked like in the 1990 era.



Tom- KA1GTA, JOE- K1OUM, and Mac- W1OMN

The good old days....



Jon- K1TP, building a screen door for a rented box truck we used for field day in 1990. Dave- N1CDL looking on with hands in pockets....supervising? Can you identify the hams below? *Mac, Joe, Tom, Glenn, and Tony.*





Well this one is a antenna party for Ed, on the far right. (1990's). This group of hams was what it was all about in the 1990's, continuous elmering and helping each other out. Left to right: Larry, Mac, Al, unidentified ham, Al, Ralph, Sandy, and Ed. Larry's ham station below.



Parity Act Options Open Despite Removal from Defense Authorization Act Conference Report

ARRL Hudson Division Director and ad hoc Legislative Advocacy Committee Chair Mike Lisenco, N2YBB, says removal of Amateur Radio Parity Act (HR 555) language from the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Conference Report this week was unfortunate, but does not kill the initiative. The Parity Act would ask the FCC to grant radio amateurs living in deed-restricted communities the right to install effective outdoor antennas. Lisenco said today that while the language was removed from the final NDAA Conference Report, other viable options remain to see the Parity Act succeed.

“We were disappointed the Parity language didn’t survive the conference process, but we do have other House-passed legislative vehicles that contain the language, including the Financial Services & General Government Appropriations bill, which funds the FCC,” Lisenco said.

“We have always known that getting this legislation across the finish line was going to take a lot of effort,” Lisenco said. “The legislative process is sometimes frustrating for ARRL members, but there is a way that our membership can be directly involved,” Lisenco explained. “By contacting your Representative and Senators and telling them you want their support for the Amateur Radio Parity Act, you can help lend thousands of voices to echo the work of the ad hoc Legislative Advocacy Committee on Capitol Hill,” Lisenco urged.

“It’s not unusual for legislation to stall in Congress. To remove the logjam, we need our elected representatives in both chambers to know how much of a priority this bill is for our avocation,” Lisenco explained. “The continued active support of ARRL members is critical in order to do that.”

Lisenco said that Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) has been the lead obstructionist during several stages of efforts to enact the Amateur Radio Parity Act, which has passed the US House of Representatives four times. Lisenco further added that that Nelson’s opposition makes no sense as Florida desperately needs effective Amateur Radio disaster communications during hurricanes, and hurricane season is rapidly approaching.

ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay said the House-passed version of the NDAA included the Parity Act language, but the Senate bill did not, and a House-Senate conference committee had to resolve a variety of differences in the two passed bills. He said the Senate Armed Services Committee Ranking Member was one of the “Big Four” who would have had to agree to keep the Parity Act in the final NDAA Conference Report, but unfortunately, he deferred to Nelson on the matter; without Senator Nelson’s inexplicable opposition to our bill, it would have passed Congress long ago.

Imlay has assured ARRL members that the Parity Act would be beneficial to the many thousands of Amateurs now living in deed-restricted communities, as it would allow those hams to erect effective outdoor antennas notwithstanding the preclusive language of covenants or homeowner association (HOA) regulations.

“That is the principal benefit of this legislation,” he said. “As I see it, without the Parity Act, Amateur Radio will, over a relatively short period of time, face death by a thousand cuts, as more and more communities are subject to private land use regulations that prohibit antennas entirely.”

Lisenco said it was important to keep the legislative efforts in context. “A decade ago, our bill was being introduced every 2 years and gathering less than 2 dozen cosponsors before being forgotten and tossed in the heap. Since we’ve created the ad hoc Legislative Advocacy Committee, we have seen the bill pass the House of Representatives four times in less than 2 years and come within a hair of the President’s desk,” Lisenco continued. “Momentum is clearly on our side, and the wind is at our backs. We need our membership’s active engagement to provide that final push to propel the Parity Act across the finish line.”

Trees

By Curtis- AA3JE

I had a rural childhood. Thus, I should have grown up close to nature, at one with the trees of the field, knowing all the deep folk wisdom that ran below the surface of the countryside like a flowing river of life.

Actually, I watched a lot of TV and read comic books. If you need information on the effects of red kryptonite, I am your go-to guy! Nature? Not so much.

So, when I bought a house in the woods, I knew nothing, absolutely nothing, about trees. To me, they were green things that lived in the woods.

I did know enough to check out the chimney of the wood stove. My previous chimney fire, years ago, taught me that. I still remember.....

“Dad. There is smoke coming out of the electrical outlets in my room.”

“Probably just drying out, son. I just lit the stove.”

“Really thick black smoke, Dad.”

The subsequent adventure with the fire department is to painful to recount.

So, this time, I called the chimney guy, and he showed up, and when he had pulled the shroud, he came up with the “LOOK”.

You know the look. The one the doctor has just before he tells you that you need two new hips and a spinal fusion. I followed him, and inspected the foot high pile of masonry chips at the bottom of the chimney.

“Good chimney in 1966, but needs a liner.”

Evidently chimney liners are made by wizened Oriental masters who sip tea, focus their chi, then whack the steel



once before doing it all over again. They cost about \$1 an inch! But the alternative is checking out your fire insurance, and so I paid.

That meant I was committed to burning wood. Not a problem I thought, I have 10 acres, half of which is forest, so there is lots of raw material.

Being aware that there might be some difficulties to be overcome, I sent off for a good book on forestry. When I arrived, I looked at all 357 pages, and sent off for a less good book in forestry.

Page 1 suggested I start by taking an inventory of what kind of trees I had.

I looked. Big, green, lots of branches. Easy.

But the book suggested that a more discerning strategy might be in order.

So I bought a book on trees. This proved to be a problem. I quote from page 1.



“Do not shy away from botanical keys and terms, they are a tried and tested aid to identification.....”

That was fine, but what was a petiole, what did pinnate mean, and what was inflorescence?

So I sent off for “A Child’s First Book of Trees”. A wise choice. Age appropriate.

But it didn’t matter. No one had been down in the woods on the property for years. Wait, that’s not exactly true. There had been a woodcutter, but he got in a dispute with the previous owners and had picked up his chainsaw and left one day, leaving about 23 big trees lying in a huge tangle at the foot of the hill.

Right where I was planning to put the tower.

So I bought 200 feet of one inch rope, and started pulling them out.

So here is a field guide to trees.

1. Sort of rotten trees- break easily and are kind of soggy.
2. Slimy bark trees- The bark comes off all over the yard. The dump charges \$5 a truckload to burn it.
3. Many sharp little branches trees- wear long sleeves or buy big box of band-aids
4. Leaning against another tree trees- scary, buy another 50 feet of rope.
5. Dumped in a big heap trees- tie the rope to the top one, pull hard, repeat.

My next installment will deal with the issue of chain saws.

(Spoiler- Those funny looking chaps that they sell for when you are using a chain saw? They are amazingly useful. You need them! I know!)

Ham radio technology used in Thailand cave rescue

UK radio amateur John Hey G3TDZ (SK) designed the special low frequency radio equipment, the Heyphone, used in the recent cave rescue in Thailand

Phil Karn KA9Q posted:

Naturally I got interested in the technical aspects of the cave rescue in Thailand, particularly communications.

They used the "Heyphone", a voice radio designed by a UK radio ham, John Hey, G3TDZ, as open-source hardware specifically for cave rescues.

It uses upper (single) sideband voice on 87 kilohertz in the VLF (very low frequency) band. (That's what it says -- 87 kHz is actually LF).

The "antenna" consists of two stakes driven into the ground about 20m apart. Enough of the current between them fringes outward to couple to another antenna up to a few hundred meters away (or down).

John Hey passed away in 2016 so he didn't get to see his work used here. But ham radio should get some of the credit.

John Hey G3TDZ Heyphone Cave Rescue Communication System <http://bcra.org.uk/creg/heyphone/>

Al Williams WD5GNR has written an article on Hackaday about the cave equipment

<https://hackaday.com/2018/07/11/ham-designed-gear-used-in-thailand-cave-rescue/>



NO ONE CAN DO EVERYTHING BUT EVERYONE CAN DO SOMETHING!

By David Linsky NICDL

Are you a "CAARA Angel"? Would you like to be a "CAARA Angel"? It's easy, rewarding, and so very worthwhile being a "CAARA Angel".

Throughout C.A.A.R.A.'s history and even up to the current day, countless C.A.A.R.A. members have (In many instances silently and anonymously) stepped up to the plate time and time again to help C.A.A.R.A. in countless ways to become the successful Amateur Radio Organization that it has become today.

Years ago they were called "CAARA Angels". And that title is still very appropriate even today! Yes, CAARA is so very fortunate to have numerous "CAARA Angels". They quietly go about carrying out their Angelic activities for the good of CAARA.

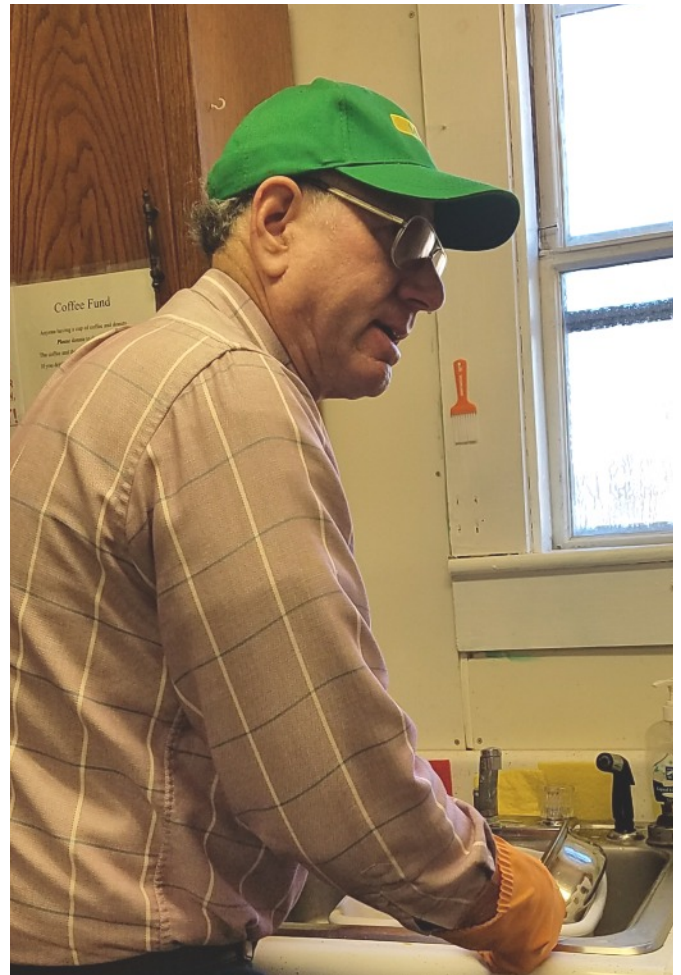
Perhaps you may have noticed how beautiful the CAARA headquarters building looks lately, both inside and outside. Well none of that just happened by osmosis.

It's no exaggeration to say that it was accomplished by the tireless efforts and dedication to CAARA by fellow CAARA members Stan Stone- W4HIX, Hank McCarl- W4RIG, Jon Cunningham- K1TP, and others.

Perhaps you may have attended one of CAARA'S very popular, delicious, and well attended CAARA fundraising breakfasts, lunches, or barbeques. Those great food events have raised significant funds for both the CAARA scholarship fund as well as the for the CAARA general fund.

The CAARA scholarship fund was first launched by Stan Stone- W4HIX, and has provided an annual scholarship of a very respectable amount each year to deserving High School Seniors from the High Schools here on Cape Ann.

These hugely successful breakfast events were started years ago by fellow CAARA member Stan Stone- W4HIX (Stan is one of the very best and hardest working "CAARA Angels" that CAARA has ever had as a member since CAARA'S founding way back in 1976)! It is rumored that they is hidden on the first floor of CAARA Headquarters a very appreciative and much



deserved surprise for Stan which will be unveiled to Stan upon his next visit to CAARA. But please don't say anything about this because it's going to be a wonderful surprise for Stan.

The food events, now expanded to include lunch with member meetings, are now being very capably run by fellow CAARA members **Bill Morris- W1WMM**, who is the very capable and talented Team Captain and head Chef in the CAARA Kitchen. Assisting Bill are kitchen assistant and co-grill master **Jon Cunningham -K1TP**, grill master **Tony Marks-N1JEI**, as well as **dish dog Dave Linsky- N1CDL**. **3Would you like to try your hand** at writing an article for the CAARA newsletter? You may very well have talent for writing. You'll never know unless you try.

Please consider putting some words onto paper about a subject that you are familiar with and will be informative and/or entertaining to the CAARA membership.

We all look forward each month to the well written articles by fellow CAARA members Dean Burgess KB1PBH and Curtis Wright AA3JE. Their articles are always well written and are very interesting.



If you promise not to tell anyone, this writer will share a long held secret with whoever reads this column. But wait! If this writer shares his long held secret, it will no longer be a secret! Okay, if you manage to make it all of the way through to the end of this article without falling asleep, this writer will reluctantly share his years long held deep dark secret!

Chris Winczewski, K1TAT, and Eric Horwitz, KA1NCF, assisted by numerous North Shore Repeater Association and Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association Amateur Radio Operators capably providing critical radio communications for countless public community events throughout Cape Ann.

All C.A.A.R.A. members are encouraged to think of ways in which they can volunteer small amounts of their time and talents to help C.A.A.R.A. continue to grow and flourish into the future.

There is no salary, because being a "CAARA Angle" **IS PRICELESS**

The following narrative is meant to demonstrate of how easy it is to help C.A.A.R.A. in a way and manner that works for you.

PLEASE THINK OF SOMETHING THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO TO ASSIST C.A.A.R.A.

RadioShack “Express Stores” to Open in HobbyTown USA Locations

According to a July 13 article in the New York Post, RadioShack is planning to open “express stores” within HobbyTown USA locations. The nearly century-old, twice-bankrupt retailer has signed a deal with HobbyTown USA to put a mini-RadioShack outlet in some 50 HobbyTown USA stores across the country that would sell items that might appeal to radio amateurs and experimenters. Those locations will be identified with RadioShack signage. HobbyTown markets remote-controlled cars and boats as well as drones and other hobby-related merchandise.

RadioShack shuttered all of its company-owned retail outlets. Its last unsuccessful effort to bail itself out of debt involved a deal with cellular provider Sprint. HobbyTown USA has 140 retail outlets, and, according to the Post article, RadioShack eventually could carve out a presence — on the order of 500 square feet — in all of them. HobbyTown USA stores in Parker, Colorado, and Mooresville, North Carolina, will be among the first to host RadioShack express stores.

“HobbyTown is purchasing the RadioShack merchandise and offering it to its hobbyist customers who need the tools, wires, and other accessories that RadioShack makes,” the Post article said.

The article quoted Steve Moroneso, chief executive of General Wireless Operations Inc. — an affiliate of hedge fund Standard General which acquired RadioShack in 2015 — as saying that RadioShack’s strategy now is not to own brick-and-mortar stores. RadioShack came out of bankruptcy in January with 400 dealers, an online retail presence, and a distribution center. General Wireless acquired the 1,743 retail outlets that survived RadioShack’s 2015 bankruptcy.

Moroneso also told the Post that there is “plenty of interest from dealers who want to open a full-line Radio Shack.”

Dating its founding to 1921, RadioShack once offered a broad array of name-brand Amateur Radio equipment — even beams and towers — along with home entertainment gear and discrete components, including transistors, resistors, and capacitors. Its iconic 1960s-era catalog ran to more than 300 pages. In later years, it sold a fairly popular 2-meter handheld transceiver for a time, as well as Citizens Band equipment, 10-meter single banders, and shortwave receivers. RadioShack’s retail website remains open, marketing many of the same items once available in its retail outlets.

Google Maps pricing changes threaten APRS site

The popular amateur radio APRS tracking site aprs.fi run by Heikki Hannikainen OH7LZB is threatened by changes to the Google Maps pricing model

Heikki Hannikainen OH7LZB writes:

For some time this morning, Google Maps on aprs.fi displayed a pop-up saying "This page can't load Google Maps correctly". The map tiles were dark with "For Development Purposes Only" written on them.

This was because of a configuration accident on my part: the aprs.fi profile on Google Cloud console was not properly linked to the correct payments profile which has my credit card attached. That's now fixed and the maps load fine. For a short while.

Due to the volunteer / charitable / non-profit uses in Amateur Radio circles (SAR, disaster relief, etc) aprs.fi has had a generous free use limit from Google, even after the pricing went up in 2012. With the recent pricing model changes for Google Maps APIs, the free use quota got lost. It was a bit uncertain whether it'll stay there or not, now it's obvious it's gone.

FCC Administrative Law Judge Terminates Long-Standing Amateur License Renewal Case

In a July 9 Order, FCC Administrative Law Judge Richard L. Sippel has ended the decade-old license renewal proceeding involving William Crowell, W6WBJ (ex-N6AYJ), of Diamond Springs, California, upon a motion by Enforcement Bureau Chief Rosemary C. Harold. Termination of the proceeding and the dismissal of Crowell's license renewal application followed his refusal to appear for a hearing in Washington, DC, to consider his license renewal and other issues in an enforcement proceeding that dates back 15 years or more.

"Crowell's decision not to appear at the hearing has the same practical effect as if he had initially failed, pursuant to Section 1.221(c) of the Rules, to file a written notice of appearance or otherwise signal his intent to participate in the hearing on his pending renewal application, i.e., he has waived his right to prosecute that application," Harold said in the Enforcement Bureau's June 12 motion to dismiss Crowell's license renewal application.

In his Order, Sippel said he agreed with Harold's determination. Crowell had asserted that the FCC was obliged to hold field hearings in the city nearest to a licensee's residence, but Sippel said that was incorrect. Crowell invoked financial hardship rules, but Sippel said those would not apply in an Amateur Radio case. Dismissal of the renewal application was "with prejudice," which means that Crowell cannot appeal the finding. It also puts Crowell off the air.

It has been 10 years since the FCC set Crowell's license renewal application for hearing, which was to center on whether he had violated FCC Part 97 rules in the early 2000s, in part by causing intentional interference, transmitting music, and "using indecent language," and whether he was qualified to have his renewal application granted.

Crowell raised the lengthy delay in his response to Harold's June 12 motion. "The more-than-10-year delay in holding a hearing herein (that's only since the Hearing Designation Order [was] issued; the pre-HDO part of the case goes back to 2000!) violates my administrative due process rights," claimed Crowell, who is an attorney. "A violation of administrative due process appears where, due to delay, a party's ability to obtain the truth has been seriously compromised."

Crowell claimed that most of the witnesses who might testify at a hearing are now deceased, and "the evidence is terribly stale." Crowell said the Enforcement Bureau "has no excuse for not having taken this case to a hearing at a much earlier date, and, at this point, my ability to elucidate the truth has been fatally compromised."

Subsequently, in an August 2016 Forfeiture Order (FO), the FCC imposed a \$25,000 fine on Crowell for intentionally interfering with the transmissions of other radio amateurs and transmitting prohibited communications, including music. The FCC said Crowell did not deny making the transmissions but argued, in large part, that those transmissions were protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.

"It is well-established that regulation of radio in general does not violate the First Amendment or [the Communications Act], and courts have made clear that this conclusion applies to the Amateur Service as well," the FCC responded.

Prompting the investigation that led the FCC to impose the substantial fine were complaints by members of the Western Amateur Radio Friendship Association (WARFA), which conducts nets three times a week on 75 meters. Crowell had argued that the WARFA Net monopolized the frequency and refused to let him check in. Sippel said he had stayed the renewal case on the basis of the pending Forfeiture Order proceeding, but said he was later informed that the US Department of Justice had decided not to prosecute the case. The FCC also denied Crowell's request to disqualify Sippel, after Crowell claimed that Sippel was biased.

Crowell's license expired in 2007, but he was allowed to continue to operate while his renewal application was pending. With his license renewal proceeding terminated, he may no longer operate.

WRTC 2018 Teams Produce Amazing Contact Totals Despite Poor Conditions

A crack team of contesters from Lithuania has won the gold medal in World Radiosport Team Championship 2018 (WRTC 2018), held over the weekend in Germany. Operating as Y81N, Gedas Lucinskas, LY9A, and Mindis Jukna, LY4L, topped the real-time scoreboard for much of the event, which is held as a competition within a contest in conjunction with the IARU HF Championship. Lucinskas and Jukna had ended up in sixth place during WRTC 2014, held in New England. They posted a raw score of 594,015 poi, logging 3,668 CW contacts and 1,544 SSB contacts.

Conditions during the event were mediocre at best.

Taking second place to the pleasure of the German sponsors was the Y81A team of Manfred Wolf, DJ5MW, and Stefan von Baltz, DL1IAO, with 538,5432 points, with 3,620 CW contacts and 1,354 SSB contacts. They placed third in a nail-biting finale for the bronze at WRTC 2014. The mostly German audience gave Wolf and Baltz a huge ovation.

In the third spot this time around was the WRTC 2014 defending champion team of Dan Craig, N6MJ, and Chris Hurlbut, KL9A, who operated as Y82V, and racked up 506,461 points, putting 3,769 CW contacts and 1,052 phone contacts into their log

The WRTC 2014 second-place team of Rastislav Hrnko, OM3BH, and Jozef Lang, OM3GI, from the Slovak Republic landed in tenth place at WRTC 2018.

This year's first-place team scored nearly 1.25 million fewer points but some 650 more contacts than the WRTC 2014 first-place team of N6MJ and KL9A. Overall, the competitors logged more than 300,000 contacts during the 24-hour event.

"The excitement of the competitors is at least as high as that of the spectators watching the [Live] Scoreboard," WRTC 2018 organizers said as the event was starting to wind down. "But what distinguishes viewers from contesters is that the spectators can see the current position of all of the stations — the contest teams do not."

Determining the final results of WRTC 2018 involved an extensive log-checking process, based in part on comparisons between IARU HF Contest logs submitted to WRTC 2018 for that purpose.

The father-son Y87B team of Jeff Briggs, K1ZM, and Patrick Briggs, KK6ZM, won the SSB Leader Award. The CW leaders, operating as Y83O, were Tonno Vahk, ES5TV, and Toivo Hallikivi, ES2RR, of Estonia.

Claiming the award for the most accurate log — which was said to be very close — was the Y86V team of Leo Slavov, OR2F, and Pascal Lierman, ON5RA, of Belgium. They made 39 logging errors. The overall logging accuracy was reported to have been "better than 95% accuracy."

Jannsen said he's looking forward to 2022 and the next WRTC, which will take place in Bologna, Italy, as announced at the closing ceremony.



Drive-On, Free Standing Antenna Mast Base

by Gardi- KA1BTK

Now that I have gotten out of the big conversion van and back into a smaller Caravan, I've had to modify plans for my portable station. I tried setting up at home but after a few months of nothing but "10 over S9" noise, and only one QSO, I figured the only way I'm going to enjoy any Amateur Radio will be to go back portable again.

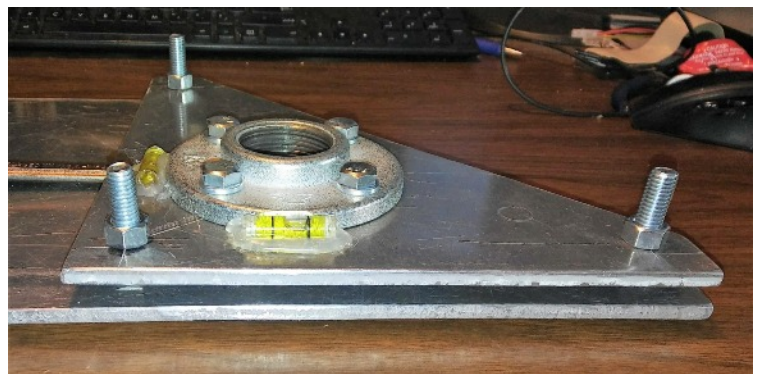


But, how am I going to mount my Painter's Pole mast without guy lines? On the old van, the base of the mast set into keyed cup on the trailer hitch tongue and adjustable struts at the top of the bottom section supported the mast vertically, but I don't want to be drilling holes into my new van for strut mounting eyes?

The mast is a five-section telescopic mast, about 25-ft. tall made from a three-section Mr. Longarm Alumiglass painters pole that extended out to about 18-ft. It has a 5/8 ACME thread on top that allows for a wide range of attachment plans. With the handle on the bottom removed, the bottom section slides perfectly into a piece of 1-1/4-in. copper tubing. From there I had used a 1-1/2-in. piece of PVC pipe for the bottom section and made up some bushings to give the copper tube a good fit. Hose clamps locked extended sections. Although rather complicated, it did the job!

A bit of research showed that I could replace the PVC bottom section of the mast with solid Aluminum conduit available at an electrical contractor's supply, and I was pleasantly surprised to find that the 1-1/4-in. copper tubing fits PERFECTLY inside of 1-1/4-in. Aluminum conduit! Now, with the 1-1/4-in. NPT thread on the Aluminum conduit, I have a very secure and strong base that can be threaded into a 1-1/4-in Floor Flange (thanks so much to KC1JKJ)!

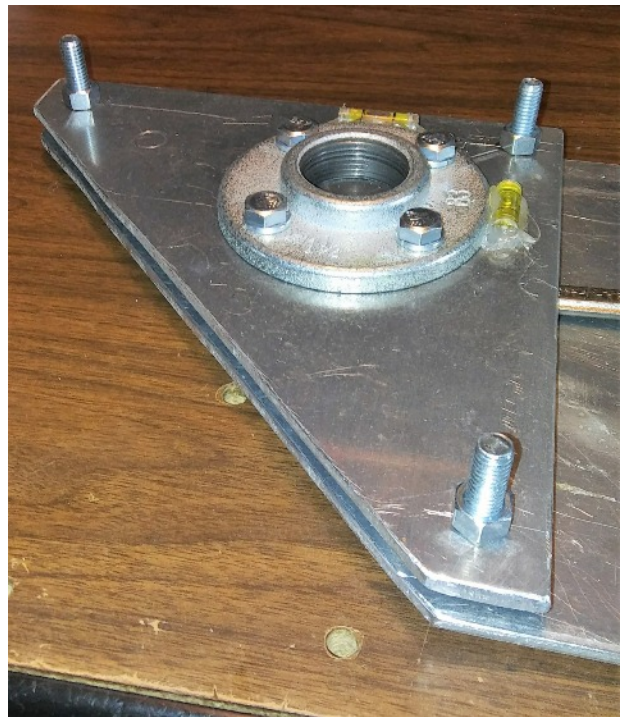
I got a 1-ft. X 2-ft. piece of 1/4-in. Aluminum plate to make up the "Drive-On Base Plate" section. I wanted the base to be able to adjust so the mast could be set up vertical with the plate on an unlevel surface, so I made a separate flange plate section that is adjustable with jack nuts and bolts.



A few more mods: I drilled out the adjusting plate below the flange to allow for rain drainage, and for a loose-fitting NPT to pass through and tighten more securely. I installed a chock stop, which incidentally, on the first shot, chocked the wheel with the mast perfectly aligned with the center of the tire on my Caravan! Thirdly, I replaced the jack bolts which had their heads protruding from the bottom of the plate with tapered “Wedge All” anchor bolts, that pulled the shoulders into the Aluminum plate, and cut them off at the bottom so the plate would lay flush on the ground. Lastly (so far) I hot-glued on a couple of ‘bubble levels” so I could pre-adjust the level of the flange before screwing on the mast.

On Friday, July 27th, I set up my portable station in Ipswich for the Ipswich Library Touch-a-Truck event. The mast went together quickly and securely and stayed solid for the whole event. No worries of kids tripping over the guy-lines or any other calamities!

I would not go too much higher with this mast as the top section can get a bit flimsy carrying the full 8 element “Squid Jig” in a bit of wind. I often need to shorten the top section a few feet to keep it stable. A single guy-line out to windward helps. 40-meters can get a bit NVIS, but the shorter bands seem to reach out nicely!



American radio ham's view of UK 3-tier system

Paul Gacek W6PNG writes about his experiences in doing the UK Foundation and Intermediate amateur radio courses: **Foundation: Start of a journey through a different “Trilogy” (an online free course)**

In the US we have been pretty good at signing people up and then successfully shepherding them through the entry level exam. We mint a lot of new hams each year and the graph looks impressive; up and to the right. Unfortunately the journey seems to end there for a stunningly larger percentage, possibly as high as fifty percent that go no further and never get on the air. Back in Blighty the approach is quite different. Yes, multiple choice exams are held as does the US but the UK has taken a radically different step by requiring candidates to sit a practical assessment prior to the multiple choice exam.

The practical covers a medley of really quite useful and ice breaking activities. First up, you are required to get on the air and make simplex FM and SSB contacts. You get to go through the CQ-ing, callsign and report exchange and also demonstrate you can use basic radio features such as RIT, squelch, volume control and even the on/off button. Pretty nifty really and certainly gets someone past what for many is quite an intimidating step. I think we are all initially self conscious and imagine most of the world is listening and of course laughing at our initial contacts and hence save ourselves that pain by not getting on the air.

Separately, you have to demonstrate that you can connect a station together. Power, coax cables, antenna etc etc which once again is pretty nifty to get someone past what for some maybe a daunting step. After all not everyone coming into the hobby has a technical or hands on background. You get to fiddle with a dipole antenna for 2 meters and last but not least you get to appreciate Morse Code. I already appreciate Morse Code but my ear and brain didn't get that memo and so its never been an easy activity for me. I passed my 5 words per minute test decades ago to get my US General Class license when Morse was mandatory and something more than an appreciation step but never quite took it much further. I've always marveled at Morse, it's old school, nostalgic and in the right hands an efficient and effective communications method. You get to pick the words per minute during the test anywhere from one per month on up and get the option to ask for seemingly endless retransmissions till you get it right. Fortunately my recent re-aquaintance with morse saved me from embarrassment.

So all in all I think the Brits are onto something with the practicals and as daunting as it may seem or even burdensome for the examiner, I think the end goal of creating a ham that is more than that in name is well served.

A little inquiry revealed that a diminishing pool of budding amateur radio candidates had prompted my local radio club to cease hosting exams. In the States and particularly in Southern California you can pretty much find an exam session weekly especially if you are willing to drive a bit. Maybe the overall interest in the UK is lower as the examination opportunities accessible to me in the wild wilderness of north Northumberland were limited.

Edinburgh, just north of my wilderness was an obvious choice and knowing very little of where best to go, I reached out to Andy (MM0FMF) for advice which quickly resulted in the Lothians Radio Society in Edinburgh declaring they would happily examine me!

Looking over the very few sample exam papers available had me chuckle at a word I hadn't seen in decades; invigilator, someone appointed to oversee an exam and that word took me back to my high school and university days in England. I don't think it's a term commonly used in the US. The morning of, I met my two invigilators, Pete (GM4BYF) and Pete (GM4DTH) and as the candidate pool was simply myself and Calum (now MM6NUO), the practicals were held at Peter's house. I don't have an abundance of experience with ham clubs in the US but I began to sense that things in the UK might be a little different to the US, maybe more collegial but its too soon to say if that impression is in fact the truth. Part way through the practicals we had a break for elevenses including coffee and biscuits, quite essential to fortify me for the remainder of the practicals and especially the Morse code appreciation that was about to commence. Appreciation verified, lunch consumed, we head to St Fillian's church hall and sit our 26 question multiple choice exam.

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