



CAARA Newsletter



CAPE ANN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2015

President's Desk

by *Hank-W4RIG*



Comments on 2014-2015
from CAARA President Hank
McCarl W4RIG

To say this past year was without its moments would be an understatement. We seemed to go from one crisis to another - well documented by e-mail and via the CAARA repeater. The good news is that things have finally settled down, crises averted and really some significant progress on the station at 6 Stanwood.

We did finally register the property in Salem at the Registry of Deeds in January followed by three months of record snowfall and the complaints about parking and snow removal. In the process we did manage to tear down the kitchen ceiling and get it replaced and repaired. We also got the annual permit for continuing food preparation as posted on the wall in the kitchen. Many good efforts from Jon Cunningham, Roger Smith, Bob Spanks, Jake Hurd, Ross Burton, and many others who contributed to that effort.

We struggled through Field Day with terrible weather and much scurrying with the radio equipment which made it without damage from wind or rain. Lessons learned and everything made it back to 6 Stanwood. Thanks to Paul, Gardi, Dave, Ross, Ruth and Bob for their efforts - and special thanks to Bill Canty for his guidance and help.

We presented 4 scholarships from CAARA thanks to the efforts of Stan Stone and his culinary expertise with the fund raising breakfasts.

Gardi Winchester did a yeoman's job - outstanding - with the 16+ Special events and all those who assisted - Evan, Carol, Stan, Hank, Charlie, Ruth, Roger, and others who Gardi may wish to mention in his Special Events report - we still have 6 or 7 events to go in calendar 2015, so any and all volunteers will be appreciated.

The gem of the year turns out to be the recent repair

and construction of the antennas at 6 Stanwood - Jon Cunningham and Bob Spanks led the effort with help from Ross, Jake, Bill Canty, Bob Quinn and others.

Bob Quinn led the regular VE sessions during the year and worked harder than the rest of us combined at the recent Tech-in-a-Day session at the ARRL Regional convention in Boxboro. Assistance in Boxboro by Bill Poulin, Stan Stone, Hank McCarl, Mark Watson and other VE's was greatly appreciated.

I think we can all be proud of retaining our Special Service Club status during this past year with service to the Cape Ann Community Emergency Response Team and related training activities.

And lest we forget - we finally accomplished the restoration of the front of 6 Stanwood and are proceeding to explore sources of funding to finish the work on the other 3 sides. We are also working to get an emergency power generator to work from natural gas for the facilities at 6 Stanwood.

We now have repeaters in operation on 145, 220 and 440 MHz and are pleased to report that we will soon have multiple antennas for both VHF and UHF frequencies for use by our members and once we get the protocol worked out, we hope to have remote operation capability. With the new weather station, APRS relay, USGS Net Quake seismograph, internet and wifi capability we can continue to provide important technical services to the Cape Ann Community.

Information Desk

by *Dean-KB1PGH*



Well after a brief hiatus it's good to be back writing the "Information Desk" column for the CAARA Newsletter as your ARRL Eastern Mass Public information officer. Speaking of the ARRL-Did you know that that yearly membership cost is scheduled to increase \$10.00 to a total of \$49.00? This change will take place on January 1st 2016 so renew your subscription before then to save the extra ten bucks. If you already didn't know by now the FCC



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CAARA Newsletter
Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association
6 Stanwood Street
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 Cingular 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. The former W1RK 443.700 repeater with antennas located in Magnolia is now located at the CAARA clubhouse and has a very limited range.

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 rotating beam and vertical antenna along with a 2 meter packet station and 2 meter voice and 220 MHz transceivers.

Amateur radio exams are held on the second Sunday of each month at 10:00AM 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 Bob Quinn if you have any questions about monthly testing. Monthly member meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM except for July and August

Each Sunday evening at 9:00pm, 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 4-8PM for CAARA members to stop by and socialize, as well as use the extensive collection of ham radio gear.

Information Desk

by Dean-KB1PGH



is no longer issuing paper licenses to all new and renewed amateur radio operators. They cite the reason as a cost cutting measure. Of course the ULS database has all your information so you can either print that out as a reference copy. You can also contact the FCC and they will issue you a paper license or you can go to www.ae7q.com and that website is a paper license generator which you can use and print at home as your reference copy of your FCC license. It even comes out in color which spices it up. Moving on, several members of CAARA held an impromptu HF portable ops session up at Hospital Hill in Rockport on Sunday October 18th. We made a bunch of contacts and had a lot of fun. CAARA member Mark Watson W1MAW was there and he and I were working 10 meters on my Buddipole and he showed me a tip to get more notice on the bands. If you don't already know this there is a website which is a "Spotting" network. This spotting network lets all the hams around the world know that you're on the air. The website is www.dxsummit.fi. It worked out great as I sat on one frequency and gave out a CQ and many stations came back to me! I recommend you give it a try. One other trick I know of is before I get on either of the higher bands, say 10 or 6 meters, I take a look at www.dxmaps.com to see if there is any activity on those bands. This website is a real time QSO map generator and the maps clearly point out where the signals are landing and if there is any "Sporadic E". Next we'll move on to my "Preppers" tip of the month. Please make sure you drain the gas out of your portable generators carburetor for winter storage. The gas will gum up the jets inside of it and you'll have to have it serviced in the spring. You can also fill up your gas tank in your genny and treat it with "SeaFoam" gas treatment and you'll be set in the spring. You see gas likes to draw moisture but if your tank is completely topped off there will be no room for condensation inside the gas tank. Of course you can do all of this to winter store any engine. For the last bit of news I have heard that we will be getting a new ARRL Eastern Mass Public Information Coordinator soon so I will let you know who it is when I find out. So if there are any amateur radio topics that you would like me to cover in my monthly column please let me know at dburg101@aol.com.

73

Dean

On Sunday October 18th at noontime several hams met at Hospital Hill in Rockport Mass for an impromptu portable HF operation session. The site used to be the old field day site for CAARA. This was the second in a series of sessions this year after the last one in August at Stage Fort Park in Gloucester. The following enjoyed an afternoon of camaraderie, great food and a lot of fun talking around the world: Ross W1RAB, Ruth WW1N, Jake W1LDL, Gardy KA1BTK, Jon K1TP and Mark W1MAW. All of us were able to make contacts on every band from 40 through 10 meters with mostly SSB but CW as well! We had portable power and worked off dipoles and screwdriver antennas and we even had a 440 mobile repeater. These unplanned portable op sessions are great for practicing quick deployment for emergency communications plus they give us the opportunity to grow and to learn the art of ham radio. If you are interested in joining the fun please contact Dean KB1PGH at dburg101@aol.com.



Mark- W1MAW operating Dean's Icom 7000

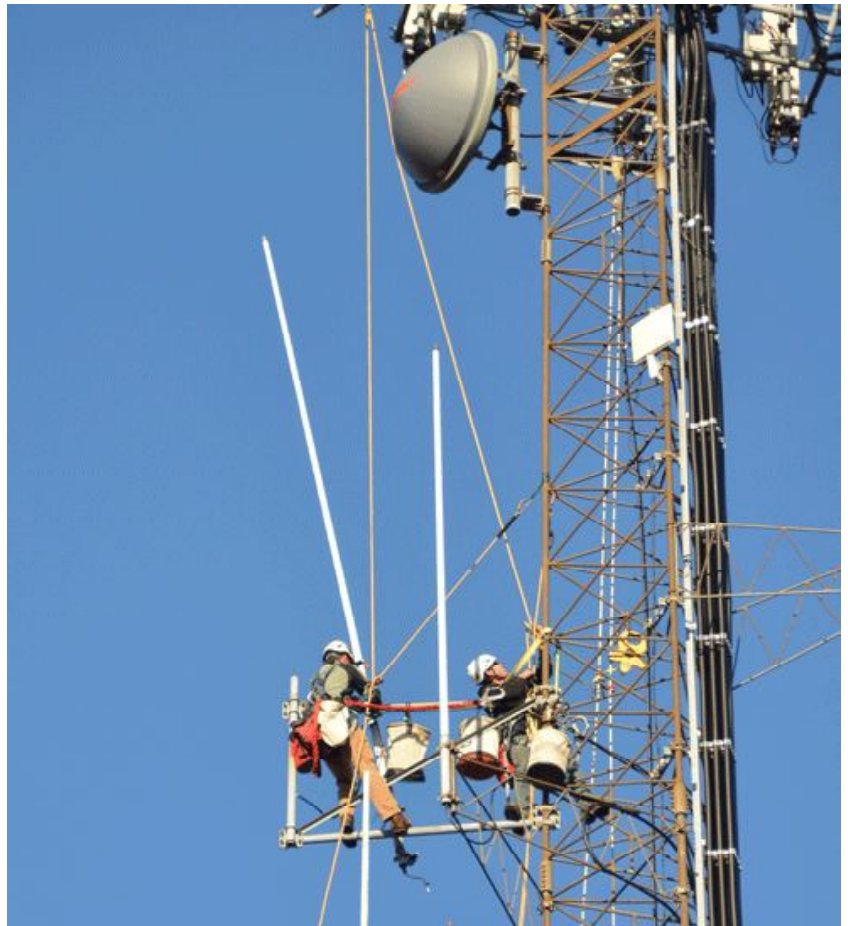
WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE CAARA EMCOM CENTER?

<u>Top Cities</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>%</u>
Gloucester	42	35%
Rockport	9	8%
Essex	4	3%
Manchester	9	8%
Ipswich	6	5%
Beverly	3	3%
Newburypor	4	3%
Topsfield	2	2%
Wilmington	3	3%
Reading	3	3%

Total Members 120

<u>Class</u>	
General	33
Extra	44
Tech	36
Advanced	5
No Lic.	2

A LOOK AT OUR MEMBERSHIP



Photo's showing the replacement of our repeater antennas performed by Green Mountain at a cost of \$3400.00 at the ATT Cell Site. We installed new Station Master antennas for the 2 and 440 repeaters. This photo shows the two climbers at 190 feet installing the 2 meter antenna. They climbed the tower at 10am and did not come down until 4pm.....that is a long day in the air!

On October 18th, CAARA members held another “Portable Ops Day”, this time at Hospital Hill at the top of Summit Avenue in Rockport. 4 HF stations and a 440 repeater were set up and all made solid QSOs!



The photo above shows Mark and Dean at the operating station and John and Ross at the truck. Not shown in the photo are Gardi in his truck station, Jake in his van operating his FT897 and Ruth at a tent running a FT817. We grilled dogs and had a great time and made contacts on all radios.

This is a great spot 200 feet above sealevel overlooking the ocean with easy access by car, it might be a great spot for Field Day if Fuller School is taken away from us.



top left- Ross-W1RAB setting up a temporary 440 repeater on Hospital Hill (yes, there used to be a Hospital in Rockport)

above right- Gardi-KB1BTK setup on the Kancamagus Highway.

left-Ruth setup with her tent and FT817 and buddipole operating CW on Hospital Hill

HOSPITAL HILL PORTABLE OPERATION



JON-K1TP PROVIDING THE GRILLED HOT DOGS



JAKE- W1LDL



GARDI-KA1BTK





On July 25th CAARA members again supported the NSRA with public safety communications at the 2015 Blackburn Challenge, around Cape Ann rowing race. At this year's event the weather conditions deteriorated so as to make the course very unsafe. Several boats were damaged and broken and many were forced to withdraw. In several cases the boat's occupants went overboard. Amateur Radio took no small part in insuring everyone's safety and accounting for all.



CAARA members supported NSRA with public safety communications at the 11th Annual Reid's Ride Bike-a-Thon from Lynnfield to Gloucester on July 19th. Proceeds from the ride support programs designed to improve the prognosis and treatment of adolescents and young adults with cancer.



On July 26th CAARA members again supported the NSRA with public safety communications at the 27th Annual Emmaus Cycle for Shelter. Amateur Radio operators supported riders over three courses of varying lengths. Net Control was set up at the event's Start/Finish at the Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill. The races covered roads through northeastern Massachusetts and southeastern New Hampshire. Because of the coverage we utilized two repeaters for controlling this net.

CAARA PUBLIC SERVICE COVERS THE ENTIRE NORTH SHORE



CAARA AT BOXBORO HAMFEST: CAARA members ran a Tech-in-a-Day program at this year's ARRL New England Convention in Boxboro which produced an estimated 21 new Hams! They also supported the NEAR-Fest booth at the event.

Hank-W4RIG, Bob-WV1A, and Stan-W4HIX at the registration table at Boxboro Hamfest. They have asked us back next year to perform the exams!

DX Engineering Acquires InLogis, Exclusive Rights to Make and Market Active Magnetic Loop Antenna

DX Engineering of Tallmadge, Ohio, has acquired the assets of InLogis and the exclusive right to manufacture and sell the Inlogis (formally Pixel) Active Magnetic Loop Antenna, model **RF-PRO-1B**. All manufacturing operations and equipment for the RF-PRO-1B have been moved from Golden, Colorado, to Tallmadge, Ohio.

DX Engineering says it will serve all existing RF-PRO-1B customers with replacement or service parts and expert advice. The DX Engineering Active Magnetic Loop Antenna is a receiving antenna for HF with “figure 8” directivity and rotating capability, without occupying the space needed for a typical Beverage system.

NASA orders SpaceX crew mission to International Space Station

NASA took a significant step Friday toward expanding research opportunities aboard the International Space Station with its first mission order from Hawthorne, California based-company **SpaceX** to launch astronauts from U.S. soil.

This is the second in a series of four guaranteed orders NASA will make under the Commercial Crew Transportation Capability (CCtCap) contracts. The Boeing Company of Houston received its first crew mission order in May.

“It’s really exciting to see SpaceX and Boeing with hardware in flow for their first crew rotation missions,” said Kathy Lueders, manager of NASA’s Commercial Crew Program. “It is important to have at least two healthy and robust capabilities from U.S. companies to deliver crew and critical scientific experiments from American soil to the space station throughout its lifespan.”



Summer Camping with Mike- N1XW, unknown ham, Jon- K1TP, and Joe-K1JEK. Gardi- KB1BTK took the shot and was present for camping as well. These hams are usually on 3862+ or _ in the late afternoon.0



Thanksgiving by Curtis- AA3JE

Now I am not against getting older. The alternative is pushing up daisies. But I do resent KNOWING what will happen.

Every year.

Every Thanksgiving.

Now for most of us, Thanksgiving is a happy time when we see family members, renew our bonds to each other, and eat till we are stuporous.

But not for members of the “Cranky Old Goats Home Repair and Emergency Response Team” (COGHPRERT). We are the fathers, grandfathers, uncles and sons, who are the person in the family turns to for technical assistance.

Now I am an Expert Class Radio operator. In the event of alien invasion, or revolution, I can go into my basement and cobble together communications to anywhere. I can do that.

But that does not mean I know everything. For example.

“Curt? There is something jammed in the vacuum cleaner hose.”

So I put down my book, and check each end of the hose. Nothing. Then I go downstairs, go to unlock the workshop (power tools and grandkids), realize the keys are upstairs, go upstairs, get the keys, go downstairs, find the length of garden hose I use, ream out the toy car jamming the hose, reassemble, and sit back down.

I was able to find my place before the next call.

“Grampie!” came a small voice, “The toilet is plugged!”

Downstairs again. Yep! Plugged with what appears to be two rolls of toilet paper. (Little girls wish to be VERY clean down here) Back upstairs, back downstairs, get the snake, snake out the clog, back downstairs, get the wet vac, clean up, go to the kitchen, get the sanitizer, wipe everything down. Take everything back down.

And sit down again.

“POP! Got a problem here.”

The faucet on the sink has unscrewed. Water is pouring out all over.

Shut off the water. Go back downstairs, get the wet vac, get the weird socket that the faucet uses, back upstairs, forget the channel locks, back downstairs, back upstairs, reassemble, and pack it all downstairs again.

And sit down.

I will not bore you with the details of the jammed trash can, the missing turkey roaster, the stuck food processor, the upset dog that pissed on the rug, the the upset dog that crapped on the rug, the toy helicopter that will not charge, the broken toy truck, and the mountains and mountains of Tupperware with missing lids, and dishes. Tons of dishes. Dishes that need to go upstairs, dishes that need to go back down.

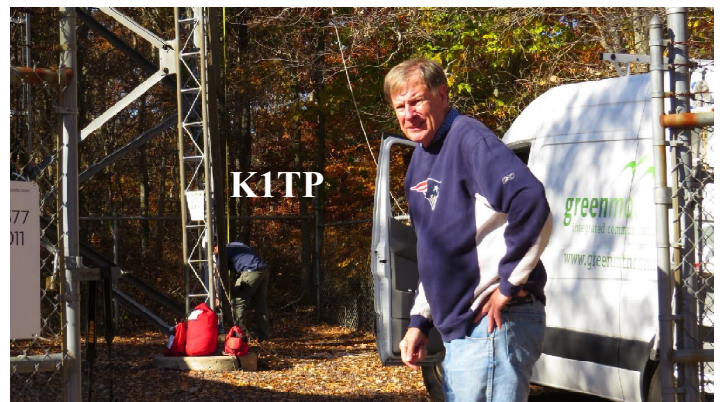
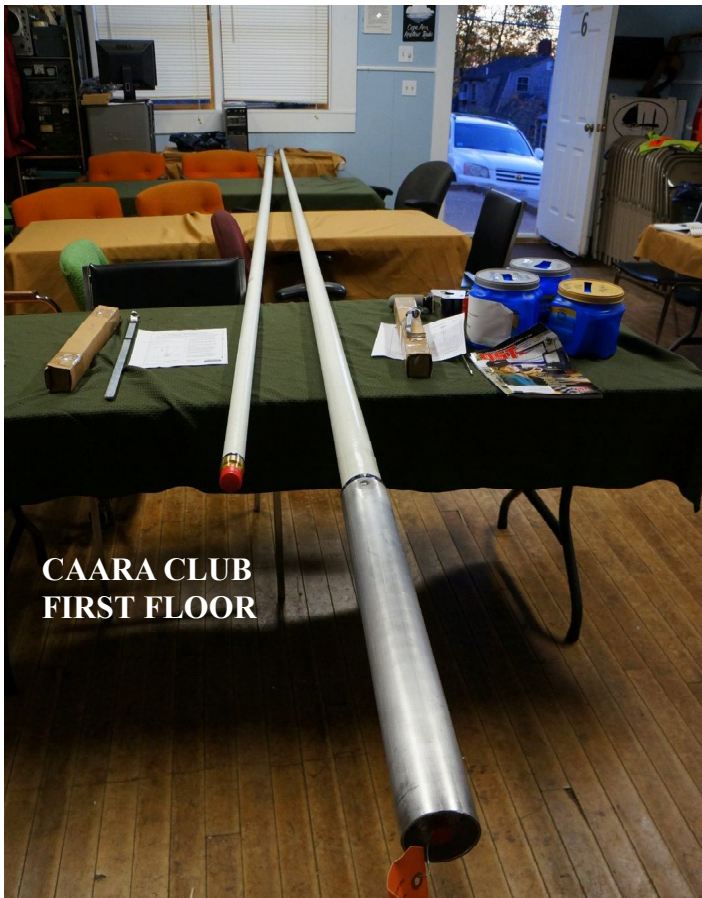
And after the end of it. At the very end. I sit back down. And make the mistake.

“Wow, I’m bushed.”

And “She Who Must Be Obeyed” answers.

“I SEE NO REASON FOR YOU TO COMPLAIN. ALL YOU DID WAS SIT ON YOUR BEHIND ALL DAY.”

Just pretend to be a lamp. It’s easier.



Pictures by Tony-N1JEI showing us in action the day we transported the new repeater antennas from the CAARA Club over to the ATT tower site. A picture of the inside of the ATT bunker, our repeaters, 2 and 440, straight ahead against the wall in a rack.

Why Public Service Oriented Hams Should Participate in Contests

You may have heard of the Fireman Olympics or lumberjack competitions. Most of you have seen a rodeo - at least on television - where cowboys (and cowgirls) do their thing in a stadium rather than on the range. What do all these have in common? They test skills used on the job in an enjoyable yet challenging environment. Guess what? Amateur Radio operators compete, too, in a variety of contests held throughout the country and the world. Internationally, this is called “Radiosport.” Domestically, we just call it “Contesting.” Many highly competitive radio amateurs consider their regular operating time to be part of their training for competitions. In a larger sense, though, radio contests are training that improves our ability to do whatever else we do in Amateur Radio more effectively.

Contesting helps prepare us for demanding communication tasks such as might be encountered during a major disaster. Why do I call contests training events? Simply put, all the skills built through contesting experience are valuable in emergency communications situations:

- Hearing, understanding and recording information quickly and accurately.
- Extracting information from weak signals or through interference and noise.
- Establishing and completing contacts with rapid efficiency.
- Finding work-arounds when the unexpected happens, rather than giving up.
- Knowing how to get the most out of your equipment and antennas.
- Understanding propagation and making those tough long-haul contacts.

Each contest has its own unique rules that define the challenge. There are specific starting and ending times, encompassing operating periods as short as four hours or as long as two days. Eligible stations (i.e., those with whom contacts count for contest credit) may be confined to a specific state or country or may include all hams worldwide.

There is a defined exchange, a set of information that must be sent, received and logged accurately. Exchanges can be as simple as three or four characters to a lengthy data set that simulates the message header in a formal radiogram.

Each contact adds points, and often there is a “multiplier” for each geographic area contacted. The sum of contact points times the sum of multipliers yields the final score. Participating operators usually submit their contest logs to the sponsoring organization in electronic form, which enables rigorous cross-checking for accuracy and facilitates timely publishing of the results.

Contests are not limited to the HF bands that are primarily the domain of many General-class and higher licensees. There are VHF, UHF and even microwave contests, all available to holders of every class of license. If you think that the two-meter or 70-centimeter band is limited to supporting nearby and repeater contacts, you’re in for a surprise!

Communication over hundreds of miles and more is possible with suitable antennas and equipment. By participating in these competitions, you will learn what works best and how your station’s effectiveness can be improved.

You don’t have to be in it to win it; just take part, and have fun while you’re learning to enhance your and your station’s performance. When former FCC Enforcement Bureau Chief Riley Hollingsworth addressed an audience of hams at a major radio convention a few years ago, he advised them to watch and learn from testers. “They’re the best operators in the world,” he said. Having participated with many top-notch testers myself over the last

four decades, I would have to agree. If my life depended on a message getting through quickly and accurately under difficult conditions, having world-class testers at each end of the circuit would greatly enhance the likelihood that I would survive.

Of course, most of us aren't world-class testers. Yet we, too, can sharpen our operating skills by exercising them in organized competitions. With standardized rules and widely disseminated results, we can compare our performance with that of our peers and measure our improvement from one year to the next.

We can identify and correct weaknesses in our stations, evaluate the impact of equipment and antenna changes, and push ourselves to solve real-time communication problems as efficiently as possible.

All this builds and hones transferable skills. It makes us better at what we do, which is getting the message through. Remember, when all else fails, Amateur Radio works, and properly trained, dedicated hams make it happen.

- Marty Woll, N6VI, ARRL Vice Director, Southwestern Division, from the [Southern California Contest Club](#) website.

Editor Roundup

by Jon-K1TP

It has been a while since I have put out a newsletter for the club. I was burned out and had a lot on my plate and gave myself time off. I can not promise a monthly newsletter but will at least get one out each season- Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer. It is important for the membership to see what is going on at CAARA and I can guarantee you it is very, very active group.

We have completed a new ceiling in the kitchen and updated wiring, had it inspected by the city and it is ready to go.

We have completed another phase of the second floor reorganization and cleanup. We now have a operating test area and workbench, tools have been sorted, and you can actually work on a project.

We installed another tower on the building and added a 2 and 6 meter rotatable beam along with a new 2/440 vertical antenna donated by Hank. We have installed a 120 foot end fed with Balun donated by Jon-K1TP which allows us to work 10-160 meters.

We have installed a new rotator on the original tower with the Cushcraft

10-20 beam. We also added a new 220 vertical for the 220 repeater located at the club. We added a weather station to the tower donated by Stan. We installed a new club built 10-40 meter G5RV antenna.

We added a VHF-UHF workstation capable of am, ssb, fm, and cw modes.

We added an antenna patch panel that makes swapping antennas to work stations extremely easy.

We will soon have the Vintage Radio Room in operation after shelving is completed.

We have a Flex Radio which can be run by remote control on 10-160 meters.

We have full digital capabilities at one station- PSK, RTTY, etc. thanks to Stan.

Ross- W1RAB has added an emergency outlet on the building so we can run the building on emergency power with the generator running out of the back of the emergency trailer if needed.

Roger, the house committee, has mowed and raked the entire outside of the building and is working on cleaning up the first floor.

One member, who wishes to be anonymous, regularly cleans the prop-

erty of debris, butts, cans, etc.

Gardi cleans and vacuums the first floor and cleans the bathrooms before meetings.

We have sent you an important survey asking what you like and/or dislike about the club and how we can improve things. I thank the 60 member who took the five minutes it took to complete the survey. I can only assume the rest of the membership is so happy with the way we do business they did not bother to submit one.

The current Board of Directors will listen to you and discuss anything you want to bring up. You can email, call, or come to any BOD meeting and we will welcome your input.

We meet every Tuesday afternoon into the early evening. Members bring a bite to eat and use the radios, work on club equipment, shoot the breeze, etc. All are welcome!

We thanks the members who support us by belonging to the club. Without your financial support we would not be able to offer you a clubhouse with \$10,000+ worth of gear, meetings, repeaters, dinners, etc. I wish more of you could make it to meetings, etc. but realize work, family and the distance to the club are sometimes factors.