

# The *KEY*

The Newsletter of the Contoocook Valley Radio Club

Volume 9, Number 5

October, 1997

## CVRC Meetings

Do you own a VHF rig? If you do, then October's program applies to you. Mark London, K1PR, will be joining us to talk about VHF Contesting. If you're an old hand at VHF contesting, or if you're just getting started in VHF communications, this program is for you!

In November CVRC president Cal Calvitto, WA1WOK, will present a program on radio operations from the site of the world's worst weather—the top of Mount Washington. Cal's talk will include examples of how the severe winds and ice have damaged antenna systems on the mountain and steps they have taken to strengthen/protect them. You can be sure if it works on Mt. Washington, it will work for your station!

CVRC meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month. The Rag-Chew begins at 7:00 PM; the program at 7:30; and a business meeting follows the program and refreshments. Members and nonmembers alike are welcomed. Talk-in is on the K1BKE 146.895 -600 kHz repeater.

*The KEY* is published every other month at the beginning of the even numbered months. The deadline for articles and submissions is the fourth Tuesday (coinciding with the usual business meeting schedule) of the preceding month.



## You ARE the CVRC!

*Notes from the Nominating Committee (Or - Everything you always wanted to know about Service to the CVRC but were afraid to ask!)*

**Marc Fraser, N1QGM**

Have you ever said to yourself (or to another Club member) "I'd REALLY like to see the Club do some different activities! It seems it's always the same thing, Field Day, bike races or whatever." However, when it comes to getting involved in the direction of the Club's activities, very few hands are raised at a meeting when we ask for help. Maybe it's because you already have a lot on your plate—a full-time job (with lots of over-time available!), a family of five that expects your support, business travel, school activities several times each week and on and on. It seems as if you just CAN'T take on any more! If this sounds familiar to you then you shouldn't feel alone! I just described my own situation, and most Club officers have similar commitments. Yet I feel it's important enough to myself and the rest of the Club's members that I make the time to move the Club forward. Helping out with distribution of the Newsletter, giving opinions at Steering Committee meetings, setting up and cleaning up at meetings, providing refreshments for meetings and generally getting involved with the operation of the Club. It takes the commitment of a small amount of time, but the benefit to the group is well worth the effort (in my opinion). The ad-hoc Nominating Committee (N1QGM [Chairman], N1GJF, N1JI and K1JY) met to discuss those Club members who we viewed as active in Club matters. A list was generated and these individuals contacted. To those who we contacted, we

thank you for your honest answers. I am now extending a general "call-to-arms" for anyone who wants to see the CVRC continue to succeed and not merely to succeed, but to grow in the years to come. Please come forward and be of service! The past two years have already seen a resurgence in member involvement—Field Day this year was the best in recent memory! This year's QSO Party score was among our best! We as a Club need to keep up this momentum if we want our organization to survive. Unfortunately, we've already seen several New Hampshire Radio Clubs fade into obscurity, or very nearly so. One sure way to help the Club grow is to become involved. I think one of the easiest ways is attendance at the Steering Committee meetings. One night a month (the fourth Tuesday, two weeks after the regular meeting) we meet to discuss the Club's direction. One Club member volunteers to host the meeting and provide light refreshment. This location is announced at the preceding regular meeting. Usually the same core group is present, usually expressing the same opinions. It would be refreshing to hear some new ideas once in a while. It sometimes seems as if we're hitting a wall with suggestions. Another way to become involved is to write for the Newsletter. I know I like to see the next issue come out every other month, much as most of you do. It's interesting to read someone's account of their "mountaintop microwaving", or their 20M DX contact to Mongolia in their own words. And you don't have to be a "Shakespeare" to compose a few lines about your experiences. Even if you compose your article with pen-and-paper (the ORIGINAL word processing system), there is a Club member who will type it for you so that it can be submitted (Just ask and you'll find one!).

If you have any questions or comments, please contact any member of the Nominating Committee. We're all packet-capable, and we all have e-mail and landline numbers available. (Hint - the Newsletter has many of our contact numbers in it.) Please use the resources we all have at hand. And don't be afraid to ask how you can contribute. You ARE the CVRC, because without you, there would be no Club!

## **Merrimack County ARES Corner Ron Herman, K1PDY, EC**

**Net: 8:00 Monday, Local Time**  
**Freq: 146.895 (CVRC Repeater)**  
**Alt: 147.57 Simplex**  
**PBBS: 145.57 (K1PDY-1)**

Well now that everyone is settling into their fall/winter routines, maybe it's time to make ARES net time a part of it. New participants are always welcome.

The Simulated Emergency Test (SET) is scheduled in New Hampshire for October 18th from 9 to 12 AM. You don't have to be registered with ARES to participate. Monitor '895' to get the latest status. We usually don't know what is going to happen until it does. One thing is important to remember, the more

check ins there are the better it makes New Hampshire ARES look in the ARRL report. In past years we have done quite well. Of course what makes it really worthwhile is if you join us on a regular basis on Monday nights. Don't be like the guy that only goes to church on Easter and Christmas!

Hope to see you there.  
Ron Herman, K1PDY  
EC, Merrimack County



# **ARLD042 DX News**

## **From ARRL Headquarters**

This week's bulletin was made possible with information provided by Tedd, KB8NW, the OPDX Bulletin, The 599 Report, Fabio, PY1OB, The 425 DX News and Contest Corral from QST. Thanks to all.

SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, S9. Francisco, CT1EAT, will operate from October 21 to November 4. He will begin operations on Sao Tome Island on October 22 until the 30th using the call sign S92FC, then move on to Principe Island from October 31 to November 4 as S91FC. Check 80 through 10 meters, SSB and RTTY, including the newer bands and RS-12. QSL via the CT Bureau (REP) or direct to Francisco Costa, P.O. Box 172, 7800 Beja, Portugal.

CHAGOS ISLAND, VQ9. Rick, WB0BNR, is active as VQ9AI until mid-November. He can be found daily on 14186 or 14260 kHz around 1300z. QSL via home call.

NEPAL, 9N. Rich, 9N1RHM, is now active on RTTY. QSL via KV5V.

GABON, TR. Jean, TR8XX, is regularly active on 40 meters at 0600z, then QSYs to 30 and 20 meters.

UGANDA, 5X. Steve, DJ1US, reports he has received his 5X license. Look for him as 5X1S. QSL to DF2RG.

ICELAND, TF. Preben, OZ5AAH, will be active October 26 through November 10 as TF/OZ5IPA. OZ5IPA is the club call sign of the IPA (International Police Association). QSL via home call.

TURKEY, TA. Look for Special Event Station YM3SV to be active October 25 to 31. Activity will be SSB only on 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 2 meters and 70cm. QSL via TA3YJ, Nilay Mine Aydogmus, Box 876, 35214 Izmir, Turkey

SOUTH AFRICA, ZS. ZS6Y will use the call sign ZS9F during the CQWW SSB Contest. Activity will be on all bands. QSL to KK3S via the bureau or CBA.

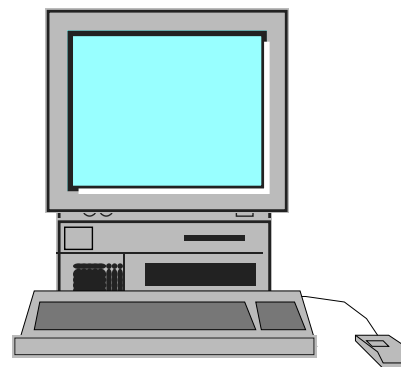
MAURITIUS, 3B8. Skip, JE2HCJ will be visiting Jacky, 3B8CF, from October 3 to 12. Skip

will be active as 3B8/JE2HCJ on 80 through 10 meters CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL via JA2JSF.

PITCAIRN ISLAND, VR6. Mey, JA6CT, has recently become active as VR6CT. QSL to JA6CT via the bureau.

*Visit the CVRC on the  
World Wide Web!*

<http://www.quatron.com/cvrc>



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## **A Portable HF Antenna**

### **Jim Cluett, W1PID**

Have you ever thought about taking your HF rig on vacation, or just on a quick portable jaunt? How many times have you given up the idea because of the nuisance of putting up an antenna? Jim Cluett (W1PID) has this report on a simple, all-band antenna you can put up in minutes.

Pssst... wanna know a secret? One of the best antennas you can use is just a piece of wire... almost any length, at practically any height. No coax, no insulators, no feedline at all! And it works. This summer I put one up to test near my back deck and worked Spain on 20 meter SSB with a 58 signal report. Rob (WA1UKV) took one to Prince Edward Island, Canada this sum-

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## School Club Receives Grant

The Henniker Community School Radio Club, KB1CAH, has received a grant from the ARRL Foundation. The grant is part of the Victor C. Clark Youth Incentive Program, which awards mini-grants of up to \$500 to organizations promoting amateur radio to young people. The grant was awarded in response to a proposal written by Jock Irvine, N1JI, trustee of the club. An excerpt from the proposal, describing the CVRC's involvement with the school club follows:

As soon as I announced my intention to start this club the Contoocook Valley Radio Club (K1BKE, P.O. Box 88, Henniker, NH 03242) became involved as a sponsoring organization. While the club's treasury did not allow for an outlay of cash they have been able to support us in other ways. CVRC President Herbert Calvitto, WA1WOK (603-271-2231), arranged a permanent loan of the club's HF radio (A Kenwood TS 530S that stays in my classroom unless it's needed for Field Day, etc.). CVRC member Stephen Ingham, N1HXO, donated a 2 meter mobile rig and I was able to donate a small power supply and antenna to go with it. Several other members of the club have come up with all the materials we need to build a G5RV HF antenna with as much feedline as we need.

Early in September the ARRL Foundation sent Jock a check for 130 dollars to purchase a new MFJ 949 antenna tuner to go with the G5RV. In the grant application form, the Foundation states that it gives preference to school clubs that have obtained matching funds from another source. Without the help of the CVRC and its members this grant, most likely, would not have been awarded. Thank you for your support!

Meetings of the Henniker Community School Radio Club will be starting in a week or so on Thursday afternoons from 3-4:30. Any Hams who are free at that time are invited to come and visit the kids. If you can't make it in person, listen for them on the 146.895 repeater.



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mer and worked back home with great reports. He uses it often from his cottage in Maine. Rob (WA1UKV) and Brad (W1XV) went to the coast recently and worked dozens of DX stations with good reports. This antenna takes less than 5 minutes to set up. The antenna is known as a long wire or random wire, and it's in most of the books. If you want to know why it works, look in the ARRL Antenna Book. If you want to know how it works, read on.

You need two spools of insulated wire. One wire should be at least 100 feet long. The other part requires only 25 feet or so. I use cheap bell wire from Radio Shack for the longer length and a spool of stranded stuff on a fly reel for the shorter length.

The longer length must be at least 1/2 wave length on the lowest band you plan to operate on. 100 feet of wire will work on all bands from 80 to 10 meters. Get it

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up as high as you can, but it works even when you can't get above 15 feet. It doesn't even have to run in one direction. When I worked Spain, I had about 35 feet going up to a tree branch and another 40 feet running at right angles and down to my daughter's swing set.

The shorter length of wire is a counterpoise. It simulates an RF ground if you don't have one. The length of this can vary according to the band you're on. You'll have to experiment a bit. When I was on 20 meters, I had about 15 feet of wire out for the counterpoise but I was getting RF back at the rig. So I lengthened the counterpoise out another 10 feet, and the RF on the rig went away. Both ways it tuned and worked just fine. The counterpoise can run indoors or out, and it doesn't matter whether it runs under the antenna or off in another direction and it doesn't have to be straight.

Rob's (WA1UKV) setup in Maine is as simple as it gets. He sets his station up on a picnic table on the lawn. He runs the wire up to the gable of the cottage and through a hook-eye. Then it runs to the edge of his property which happens to be the Atlantic Ocean. There aren't any trees so he drilled a hole through a 10 foot section of inch-and-a-half PVC pipe and runs the wire through that. Then the antenna is tied to some twine and anchored to a three pound rock.

This antenna requires a tuner capable of tuning a long wire. MFJ makes several models. I just bought a beauty from Ten Tec for \$89.

The long wire is connected directly to the antenna



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post on the tuner. The counterpoise wire is connected to the ground lug on the tuner.

I carry my entire portable rig including tuner and wire in a camera bag. I also carry a length of nylon cord and a weight for throwing over branches. I've never spent more than a few minutes setting up an antenna. When I'm in the camper van, I wrap the wire a few times around the knob on the roof vent and then out through the top. When I was at Lake Champlain in a cottage for a few days last summer, the wire went straight out the window, wrapped a couple of times around a nail on the roof r after and then out to a tree 100 feet away. Worked great.

This antenna isn't perfect. It won't outperform your beam. It has a tendency to get RF into the shack and will probably cause some TVI. But when you're looking for a hassle-free, quick setup for a few nights while your traveling, it'll do wonders. Give it a try, and let me know when you're out there. I always enjoy a QSO. 73, Jim

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 T T E I L U J B Q U N I F O R M D Y V C

## Word Find for Hams

**Christopher Read, N1HD**

*(via packet)*

Advanced, alpha, amps, antenna, ARRL, bravo, callsign, Charlie, computer, contest, current, delta, echo, E-layer, Extra, foxtrot, General, golf, hotel, India, Juliett, keyer, kilo, license, lima, microphone, Mike, morse-code, November, Novice, Oscar, packet, papa, Quebec, radio, receiver, repeater, Romeo, RTTY, Sierra, single-sideband, slow-scan-TV, tango, Tech-plus, tower, tubes, uniform, Victor, volts, volunteer-examiner, whisker, x-ray, yankee, zulu.