

# The KEY

The Newsletter of the Contoocook Valley Radio Club

Volume 11, Number 4

August, 1999

## Programs

**August 10:** Meet Mike Graham, K7CTW, the new ARRL NH Section Manager. Mike will introduce himself to the club, tell us why he wanted to be SM, and fill us in of the future of ham radio in NH. An informal pizza dinner with Mike and any CVRC members who wish to attend will take place before the meeting. Meet at Dimitiri's Pizza in downtown Contoocook at 6:00.

**September 14:** Larry Beavers, W1GTA, will give a lecture on FISTS. Also known as the International Morse Preservation Society, this worldwide group of hams is interested in preserving CW as a viable mode of operation. Larry will present basic information about the group and will have some literature and membership applications available.

CVRC meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at the Hopkinton Town Library in Contoocook, NH. Members and nonmembers alike are welcomed. Talk-in is on the K1BKE 146.895 -600 kHz (100 Hz PL) 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.

## Henniker Old Home Days

**Marc Fraser, N1QGM**

The CVRC is again helping out with Henniker Old Home Days on Saturday, August 14, 1999. We'll have a booth on the Town Common, near the Town Hall, and we'll be providing radio coverage for the parade. Setup is scheduled to begin at 8 AM until 9:30 AM. We'll have radios set up as well as ARRL publications to hand out to the public. We need help setting up a wire antenna and running power from the Town hall to the booth. We'll also need several hams to provide radio coverage for the parade at 11 AM. If we have inclement weather, the event will be held in the Henniker Community School's cafetorium, the same place the Flea Market was held. Please contact any Club officer to volunteer your services. This is a great time to show your support for the Town that really helps our Club with its support of our Repeater site.

See you there!



*This is a view of the CVRC's 1999 Field Day site. See page 2 for more information about the contest*

# CVRC Field Day 1999

## Larry Beavers, W1GTA

After all of the smoke is cleared, the tents and campers and antennas were taken down, the logs tallied, CVRC scored a respectable 5,018 points operating 4A class. With few glitches and the cooperation of everyone, Field Day 1999 came and went with a very successful effort.

We were well organized this year and everyone knew what needed to be done and when. Thanks to our experienced team, set-up and take-down was done with efficiency and safety. Cliff did his usually great job with bow and arrow putting up the G5RV (I love to watch him work). Robin Hood could have used him. Dale, as usual, did his usual masterful job of putting up the beams.

Unfortunately, it looks as though we may have to go elsewhere for those beams next year since they probably will be mounted high atop one of Dale's towers on the mountain working the world.

We can only hope that he may decide to wait until next July to mount them (yeah, right). The other antenna men such as Jason, John and the guys on the ground are to be congratulated for a job well done as well as our safety officer, Skip. Thanks to Lindsay and the computer crew we had a great logging setup this year. It was neat seeing all the CAT5 cable over the ground connecting us to the main logging server. It sure made logging and tallying things up a lot easier and faster. A big thanks to K1JY. Oh, yes, Murph did a great job at the 10 meter novice spot with 504 points, way to go Murph. It was great watching Murph

operate. Once he had the frequency, no one was going to bump him off it!

Being an operator this year was great. I was hoping someone else besides Dale and I would take a crack at CW. Dale did make 10 CW QSO's on 15 and I did 91 QSO's on 40 to help the cause.

We really missed the help of Ann, WA1S this year. She can rack up the CW contacts faster than anyone I know. Well, maybe she will give us a hand next year. SSB contacts were lead as usual by 20 meters and the big gun, John, N1FOJ, who did a yeoman's job tallying 912 QSO's. Next came 15 meters with big gun AF1T and company scoring 624 QSO's. The digital station made a total of 29 QSO's on 40, 20 15 and 2 meters. We scored 400 bonus points for emergency power, natural power (no, not the port-a-potty), media publicity and reception of the FD message from W1AW.

As Field Day chairman, I would like to thank Mark, N1VRT, for his help in executing FD on site and giving me a chance to relax and have fun operating. Thanks to all of you for helping and making the Field Day a reality. Without your help, we couldn't have done it. Congratulations to you all.



*The Field Day team gathers to receive last minute instructions from Mark, N1VRT, and Larry, W1GTA.*



## **Merrimack County ARES Corner Tom, N1SKZ, Emergency Coordinator**

**Net: 20:00 Local Time, Mondays**  
**Frequency: 146.895 - (CVRC Repeater)**  
**Alternate: 147.570 Simplex**

**E-mail: N1SKZ@ARRL.NET**  
**Phone: 464-4095 (evenings)**

As regular readers of this column already know, Merrimack County ARES has been building a working relationship with the Concord Chapter of the American Red Cross. The first test of our abilities took place on July 24th during participation in the 1999 NH Forest Warden's training held at Bear Brook State Park in Allenstown. Our role was to provide communications between fixed, portable and mobile units of the Red Cross. The ARC was to feed the approximately 100 firefighters 3 meals on Saturday and 2 on Sunday. Additionally, they provided basic first aid services for minor burns, sprains and heat exhaustion.

As Saturday progressed, the possibility of severe thunderstorms shifted to a probability. At approximately 0800 the Red Cross and Fire Wardens requested ARES to provide WX updates to augment the information they were receiving from their own assets. Jason (N1IIC), NH Skywarn coordinator, contacted the NWS and provided them with a cell phone number at ARES

HQ (a RV provided by K1PDY) so they could contact the training area directly. At approximately the same time, N1ZIH began monitoring the Weather Channel and public service frequencies from his QTH. By 1000 the Fire Warden was asking ARES for regular WX updates. Based on our input and information received by observers in fire towers to the West, the decision was made at 1130 to stop Saturday's training and to cancel all of Sunday's training. The primary concern was the safety of the approximately 130 individuals in the woods fighting fires and staffing Red Cross and ARES posts.

By 1300 ARES/Skywarn was providing the only visual confirmations of WX conditions since the fire tower personal had to evacuate their positions due to severe weather in their area. At approximately 1400, firefighters were ordered out of the woods and a remote Red Cross food preparation area was ordered evacuated. By 1430 severe storms with hail, strong winds, lightening and driving rains were reported west of Concord and all individuals in the training area were ordered into vehicles. Then at 1515 finally it hit. Nearby strikes, hail, wind gusts and driving rain were all spotted in the immediate area. By the end of the storm, all were relieved the right information was provided, the correct decisions were made and all participants were safe.

All stations that participated can be proud of the service they provided. The sudden change in weather provided ARES with an opportunity to serve not only the ARC, but also the Wardens. Comments made to me by both groups indicated a high level of satisfaction and gratitude that we were there to help with accurate information, professionalism and flexibility. In fact, ARES was asked to join the Wardens and ARC in the fall to provide communications for a second training event.

My thanks goes out to all who assisted with this event. The participants were K1RAB, K1PDY, KB1CSI, KB1EDP, N1IIC, N1NYI, N1WIN and N1ZIH. I would also like to thank K1TXP, N1HXO and N1ZIH for volunteering to be on-site Saturday but were asked to stand down since

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all positions for Saturday were filled.

I would also like to recognize KB1EDP, David, for showing us "old-timers" how it's done. David, who is 12 years old, jumped right in as net control and during the sudden dismantling of ARES HQ. David made it clear to all of us the value of youth in our corps.

Want to know how to help next time, join us on the net!

73, Tom

## ***A Gorgeous Night for the CVRC Cruise!*** ***Marc Fraser, N1QGM***

Tuesday, July 13, 1999 was a perfect evening for the annual CVRC Cruise on the M.V. Mt. Sunapee. Thirty-five Club members showed up and our favorite skipper, Cap'n Al Peterson (K1YOT), took us out for a two-hour cruise of Lake Sunapee. The boat departed at 7:15 PM and we were regaled as usual with stories of the history of the lake, from the residences along the shore, the surrounding mountains of the Sunapee region and even some speculation about what still lies at the bottom of the lake. For those who brought along their cameras there were plenty of opportunities to take beautiful photographs of some of the breathtaking vistas presented during our trip. The cruise first took us out of Sunapee harbor, turning North. After heading in a Southerly direction, Cap'n Al handed the helm over to young Alex who piloted the Sunapee (with a little guidance) for several minutes until we approached the islands at the southern end of the lake.

If you missed the cruise this year, I sincerely hope you'll join us next year. I also hope this has given you a small flavor of what the cruises are like. It's fun for all who come aboard! Don't forget — it's the second Tuesday in July!

## ***The World's Most Accurate Clock*** ***Jock Irvine, N1JI***

Most of you have probably seen the advertisements for radio-controlled clocks in QST. These are the ones that set themselves daily by receiving the time signal sent out by WWV in Boulder, Colorado. You may not know, however, that about a year ago a radio-controlled clock movement came on the market. This movement allows you to convert an analog clock to radio-control — giving you the accuracy of the National Institute of Standards and Technology's atomic clock for a very low price.

The only limitations when choosing a clock to convert are 1) the clock cannot have a metal dial, and 2) the clock needs to be big enough to fit the movement, which is a little larger than a standard AA battery-powered movement. The exact dimensions are 3 5/8" high x 2 1/4" wide x 11/16" deep. I had a clock that was perfect — about 12" in diameter and made out of wood with a plastic dial. I was a little concerned about a metal bezel around the dial but I decided to go ahead and try it anyway. I called the Klockit company in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin at 800-556-2548 to order the kit. Before calling I looked up information about the movement on their Web site at [www.klockit.com](http://www.klockit.com). The movement comes with a free hour and minute hand, but I had to pay a whopping 35¢ extra for a second hand. The total

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price, including shipping, came to \$31.20 and the package arrived at my door less than a week later.

Installing the movement was quite easy, but you should take the time to read the directions first because there are some important differences between this clock and a standard one. It arrives preset to 12:00 and there is a locking pin in the back to ensure it stays that way until you are finished installing it. After attaching the movement to the dial you fasten all three hands, making sure they are each precisely aligned with the 12:00 mark on the dial. You should assemble the rest of the clock (glass, bezel, etc.) before continuing. It is important to have some kind of glass or plastic covering the hands because if they are accidentally moved it may take some time to get them realigned (The literature provided with the movement gives you complete instructions on how to do this, if you need to).

When you are ready to start the clock you set your time zone using a switch on the back, remove the locking pin, and insert one AA battery. The second hand begins to move once every three seconds, indicating that the clock is searching for the time signal. The directions say it may take up to ninety minutes to lock in on the signal so, after staring at the clock for about five minutes, I left to do something else. I checked on it every fifteen minutes or so for the next three hours and it never found the signal so I decided to put it in a different location. I moved it from a wall on the north side of the house to just inside a window on the second floor with a southwest exposure. At this time I also listened for WWV on my shortwave receiver and could barely hear it — I hoped that the signal would get stronger when it got dark.

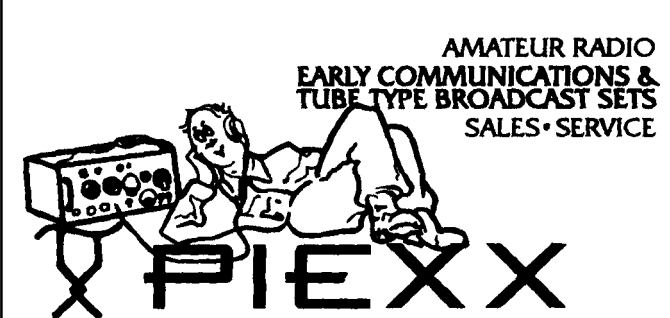
I continued checking on the clock until I went to bed but it never strayed from its relentless three-second ticks. This had been going on for about six hours now and I was worried that this clock may not work at my QTH. As it turns out, however, my apprehension was unnecessary. I had to answer the call of nature at about 2:30 am and on the way back to bed I stopped to look at the clock. The second hand was spinning wildly

around the dial. I remembered that the directions said this was how it would set itself once the time signal was received. I checked my watch and saw that it was about 2:38 so I sat down and waited. It seemed to take forever for the hands to crawl to the correct time then, all of a sudden, the second hand stopped its flight and continued on with leisurely one-second ticks. It was an amazing thing to see.

I grabbed my portable receiver and tuned in WWV. The signal still wasn't very strong but I could make out the clicks. When the voice came on to announce the time the beep came at precisely the same moment that the second hand landed on twelve. I've checked the clock several times since I moved it back down stairs and it matches the broadcast every time. I can't wait until the change back to standard time, because the clock is supposed to adjust itself automatically.

About the only complaint I have is that you must choose one of the US time zones. There's no way to set this clock to UTC and that would be handy for hams to have in the shack. I'd really like to see a radio controlled 24-hour movement, but I imagine it will be some time before I do.

This project was definitely worth the money I spent on it, and it only took me about a half-hour to convert my old clock. Living in downtown Concord, I am probably at one of the lowest (in elevation) locations of any CVRC member. I'm sure that anyone in the club who purchased one of these clock movements would be satisfied with the results.



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