

The **KEY**

The Newsletter of the Contoocook Valley Radio Club

<http://www.qsl.net/k1bke>

Volume 16, Number 3

Nov, 2004

A Word from the President ***John Moore - N1FOJ***

Hello to All Members and Non-Members (You did remember to pay your 2004 dues, right ?), I have an Important Announcement to Make ! Our November Meeting will feature the nomination of Club Officers for the coming year 2005. If you have someone that you would like to nominate, Please Plan to attend this Meeting ! If you have not paid your 2004 dues yet, I'm sure our Treasurer would be glad to accept them there. It is Very Important that we receive input from All the Club Members. I would like to see at least two Nominees for each Position. Let's make it a Good Race for the Election. Come on out and tell us who you want to run Your Club during the next Year ! Per our Bylaws and Constitution, Election of Club Officers will be held during our Club Christmas Party at the Cat'n Fiddle Restaurant, in Concord, on December 11, 2004. Please note that this is a Saturday Night. The December Meeting Night has been changed to accommodate our members who were unable to attend our Tuesday Night Christmas Party in the Past. I hope that this will increase our Turn Out Rate ! Also during the December meeting, Club Dues for 2005 will be Gratefully Accepted.

On another Personal Note, I would Like to say that it has been a Pleasure to serve as Club President this past Year . I want to Thank all the Members and Fellow Officers that have helped the Club get to where it is now! A New Repeater, Great Flea Market, Fun Presentations at the Meetings, and a Good Balance in the Club Account - Things just keep getting Better and Better! Now We need to keep these Good Things Happening and Add Some More . I would like to see the Club

Re-Institute Licensing Classes in the upcoming year . Folks, This is the Future of our Hobby I'm talking about here - No New Hams = No Future for Amateur Radio! Our Radio Spectrum is under Attack daily and We are not getting any Younger. The more New Amateurs we can create, the easier it is to Justify and Protect our Spectrum Resources ! If you can Volunteer some time to help with a License Class now, It Just May Pay a Big Dividend for YOU in the Future! Well, I've run on Enough ! I'll see You all at the November Meeting . Remember to Get On The Air and Make Some Noise ! Best Regards,

73, John - N1FOJ

CVRC Fleamarket ***Jim McElroy - NS1E***

Planning is in the works for the next fleamarket. Jim has graciously accepted (spelled shanghaied) being the chairperson for the event. Our current plan is to have it on the 27th of March at the Henniker school. We will have our own Hot Dog Cooker - see K1MIDs article.

The following chairpersons are committed:
NS1O is in charge of the VE session
AA1YN is in charge of obtaining the speakers.
N1ZIH will handle advertising.
N1ZIH provide the talk in.
N1FOJ will be looking into the door prizes.
W1MKY & K1LAS - refreshments.

More volunteers are needed to make this even more successful than last year. A lot more work needs to be done.

CAARES PUBLIC SERVICE EVENT

Donald Curtis - N1ZIH

On Saturday, October 16th, CAARES provided communications support for the NH championship regatta held at Memorial field in Pembroke.

Thanks to Rob Farley - K1CFI for organizing this event and Thanks to the following hams for volunteering their time;

Jim Van Dongen - KB1EJY start line, Don Curtis - N1ZIH finish line, Al Bardwell - NS10 patrol boat 1, Jim Cluett - W1PID patrol boat 2, Russell Richards - KB1JCX patrol boat 3 and Ron Herman - K1PDY command with Rob in charge of overall operations.

There were over 400 boats and over 1000 participants registered for this event from high schools, colleges, and rowing clubs from all over New England.

With the exception of a brief search for a missing woman with medication issues and an accident involving two boats toward the end of the day which resulted in one overturned boat and 5 ladies dumped into the chilly Merrimack river with minor injuries, including a bruised elbow and a cut hand, it was a safe and well organized event. Thanks to the sponsors for inviting us and thanks again to all the hams that gave up their day to make this event a success. A special thanks goes to Ted Gamlin - K1OX for allowing us to use the Bow repeater.



The Dreaded Trip To Boston -

or

Getting your ham license in the fifties could be quite challenging

By Louise French - K1LAS

Getting your ham license in the fifties could be quite challenging. First off you were pretty much on your own. There were no classes or tapes to listen to. If you were lucky and knew a ham he would help you out. Here is the story of how I became a Ham Radio operator.

When Frenchy got his license in 1957 I was not interested in his hobby at all. His father was a ham and he had grown up listening to him. I remember he was so excited about getting his novice license. He would call the post office every day to see if his license had arrived. One afternoon the postmaster came to the house and he had his license. Can you imagine that happening nowadays?

At first his hobby was very annoying. I hooked some old earphones up to the TV and tried to cancel out all the noise. As he continued to upgrade things sounded more interesting. I would sometimes take one earphone off and listen. All of a sudden I became hooked. But how would I learn this crazy code? It was a must then.

Frenchy was able to take his General Class license in Concord at a Hamfest. He was pleased that he could do it there as he despised Boston. He passed with flying colors. By now I was trying to learn the code. When he was at work I would turn on the radio and listen to it. I started studying the theory from his novice book. Frenchy was happy that I wanted to become a ham. Our friend W1MAS gave me my test. I knew that I only had a year to upgrade or my license would run out. Frenchy made it very clear that he didn't like Boston. There weren't any Hamfests around. He said, OK I will take you to Boston. You had better pass the first time because I am only going once. At least know that I knew my material. Our same

friend gave me the test . Now I had to get my 13 WPM.

As the months passed I was getting pretty good with the code. I could even copy it in my head. I felt I was ready. Frenchy took the day off and we headed for Boston. We had a little Fiat car with a big hula hoop on the roof. I don't know why but I read those questions over and over again all the way down. Now comes the big problem. How do we get to the Customs House? We could see it in the distance but could we get to it, no way. Lets go left up here. Oh no! It's a one-way street. Now what do we do? There is traffic all around us. Then Frenchy made a complete circle right in the middle of the street. Everyone stopped and starred at this silly little car with NH plates. All of a sudden the Customs House was right in front of us, and a parking lot too! I jumped out of the car and headed across the street before Frenchy had paid the attendant. The exam room was several floors up. I was anxious to get started. I felt like all eyes in the room were on me as I was the only female there. I put the earphones on and nervously asked the instructor, When do I start copying? He said when you hear something. Oh gosh was that a B or a 6? I passed the code, now for the theory. This isn't so bad. Hope I got that diagram right. I only waited a short time but it seemed forever. Then the instructor told me I had passed and that if I wanted to get the paper notarized I could be a General right off. He told me that across the street on the third floor they would do it for one dollar. I was so excited, I ran out of the building and around and around a lamppost, across the street, and ran up all the stairs. I was completely out of breath. As I stood there with my dollar and my paper in my hand I m not too sure what these people thought. Still on the run I went back to the instructor and he gave me my license. I made it! I m a General! I ran to the car and Frenchy was trying to keep up. I started ripping up my license manual and throwing it all around. He said calm down; do you want us to get arrested?

We headed in the only direction we could .He was depending on me to give him directions. Bad move! I had no idea where to go and I was so excited I couldn't see straight anyway. We went

over a bridge. Look at all the signs. Go that way I said. We drove and drove. Then I saw a sign that said Newburyport. I think we are lost. It was getting late and neither of us had a clue where we were. We somehow managed to get away from the coast and got headed toward home. Frenchy said he had no idea how we got out of Massachusetts without getting arrested.

I got right on the air as K1LAS. My friends didn't believe that I had the license as you usually had to wait for it in the mail. I think they thought I was operating before I should have been.

That was our one and only trip to Boston. When we both started studying for our Advanced Class, we made sure there was a place near by for us to take the test.

This isn't a made up story. This is all true. Frenchy is probably looking down on us and saying, You better believe it, I thought she was going to have me in jail.

Programs

By Dale Clement, AF1T

November 9th - 7:30 PM at the Hopkinton Library. Nomination of officers and "Adventures in Antarctica" wit Ernie Grey - W1MRQ who will be departing again shortly.

December 11th - 6:00 PM at the Cat'n Fiddle - Christmas Dinner - Contact N1FOJ now. Don't forget to bring your family and a gift for Yankee Swap.

January 11th - 7:30 PM at the Hopkinton Library. Your input is NEEDED!

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.

Missed the meeting? Want to know what was discussed in your absence? The club is trying to maintain a good collection of the meeting minutes online. Goto www.qsl.net/k1bke/minutes.html and see what you missed. We try to get the minutes online within two weeks of the last meeting.

2004 Field Day Results ***Jerry Blanchard - K1BBQ***

This years Field Day results were just released on the ARRL web site. K1BKE – CVRC scored 8,044 points in category 5A. We were 8 out of 65 in the category.

Thanks to the band captains for 2,601 QSO's:

80M Lee/AA1YN
40 M Art/K1BX
20 M Al/NS1O
15 M Dale/AF1T
10M Micki/W1MKY
VHF Steve/N1JHJ
GOTA Lee/AF1T

Thanks to the following for the 1700 bonus points:

Media Publicity Jim/NS1E
Information Booth Louise/K1LAS
NTS Messages Don/N1ZIH
W1AW FD Message Dale/AF1T
Satellite QSO Dale/AF1T
APRS/Packet Rob/K1CFI
Laser Steve/N1JHJ
SSTV Lee/AA1YN

Many thanks to the members who made the CVRC FD 2004 a success, and especially for the good time we all had.

Dale is trying to get a better idea on the types of programs you would like to see at our meetings. Please take the time to fill out the Programs form located on the web and return it to Dale, AF1T

A friendly reminder

Dues are due in January for the 2005 calender year. Please renew your membership by sending a check in the amount of \$20.00 payable to the Contoocook Valley Radio Club and mail either to the club or Scott - N1ZGO.

To the Moon or Bust

Lee Scott - AA1YN

Well, NS1O and I decided to participate in this years EME contest, more for a learning experience and debug in preparation for next year. EME (Earth Moon Earth) is using the Moon as a reflector to bounce your signals off of for long distance VHF and Up Communications. I did not have a chance to get my EME tower and array built. I'm a long way from it even though I started 4 months ago.

We set up a temporary tower (1 section guyed by rope) much like you would expect in the ARRL Field Day exercise. We borrowed a 16 ele homebrew 28' yagi for 2 meters from AF1T. We braced a mast in the tower section and placed a cross boom at the top of the mast with a linear actuator for elevation. The cross boom is actually my gin pole. I used a section of boom from my old 6 ele Cushcraft 6m beam for the antenna mast and counter balanced it with a solid steel rod.

The evening before, I tried to listen for some signals but just before moonrise, the fog rolled in so thick I couldn't see my house 100' away let alone the moon. So pointing the antenna was out of the question. On Friday, I set up my 10GHz tripod and calibrated the compass rose with the sun so we would have azimuth and took a navigation plotter with a string and weight to provide us with elevation indication. Woke up at 2 AM local time to find no fog and when the moon was at 8 deg elevation I was able to point the antenna. I started to hear some signals so I gave NS1O a wake up call.

By 3 AM local time, we were ready to go. Setup with WSJT, an Internet connection, and monitoring Pingjockey we were able to decode some signals so we tried to give some calls but no-one answered. At 0500 local (0900 UTC) we were copying S52LM quite well with the speaker at times so we gave Milos a call. We were able to decode some of his signals and picked up a few of his calls to others. Nothing happened. Considering our setup - a single antenna and 300 watts output and manual positioning of the antenna, it wasn't too surprising. We were able to somewhat

copy some CW signals but with our small station, we didn't try to work CW. Perhaps we should have but inexperience and wanting to use WSJT, we left it alone. Signals were just too weak for us to reliably copy.

We didn't give up. Tried working a number of others and at noon time (1615 UTC) we heard KB8RQ calling CQ so we gave him a call. We were able to decode his reply to K3MF but garbage after that. Heard him again work EI5FK and then W8BYA and then back to CQ. After 45 minutes of trying, we decoded

AA1YN KB8RQ EM79 OOO

He heard us !!! We sent him our RO reply back a few times and finally his 73's. We had our first contact. It only took 3 full days of construction and setup and 10 hours of attempts for one contact. But - we weren't discouraged. We did it and celebrated. All that time and effort to make a 2 meter contact all the way to Ohio. Thank you Gary !!!!

We tried a number of times after that but no further contact was to happen. At moonset, we of course had to call it quits and take a nap. It was a long first day and I was dead. AI - NS1O was too.

For Sunday, I set the alarm at 3:15 AM but woke up 15 minutes earlier. Grabbed the all important COFFEE and walked out to our EME shack. Luck was with us and no fog but the sky was overcast. Back to the tried and somewhat inaccurate method of pointing by measurement. With a break in the clouds, I was able to reset my azimuth and elevation with a visual on the moon. Then - A signal was heard and decoded. I tried to call the station (forgot what the call was) but no luck. I finally gave NS1O a call at 4:30 AM local - gave him an extra hour's sleep. At 0958 UTC, I heard HB9Q calling CQ so I replied. Heard him work W5UN so we stopped calling. Heard him call CQ again so we replied again. Then came the decode "AA1YN HB9Q JN47 OOO" - quick - send him "RO". He came back to us with "RRR". We now had the second contact in the log. Another jump for joy and celebrate with a cup of COFFEE !!!

Finally at sunrise, I was able to get a good sun sighting so I could reset my azimuth bearing

and get a better aim point at the moon. For the most part the clouds were too heavy to point visually.

We tried a number of times replying to CQ calls but nothing. At 1254 UTC, we heard W5UN calling CQ

125400 3 -22 3.5 -600 7* CQ W5UN EM23

(actually I remember hearing and decoding him calling CQ a few other times before) We adjusted our frequency, picked up another CQ and sent a reply. Dave came back with

AA1YN W5UN EM23 OOO

We sent him our "RO" and he replied back with "RRR" 3 times so we sent him our 73's. Our 3rd contact was in the log.

We tried for the rest of the afternoon but the signals were getting weaker and we finally gave up a 3PM. Could not get another visual sighting on the moon.

Since this was my first try at EME, I kept all the recordings from WSJT and ended up with over 500mb of 1 minute sound files. This morning I decided to try to re-decode the files we recorded from our attempt with S52LM. We hadn't been able to get his attention during the contest or at least we thought. When I decoded the first file, I was able to get "XE2AT S52LM JN65" where Milos was trying to work AI in Mexico. The second file was a little surprise to me. More like a shock. It was weak at -30db and we weren't able to decode anything below -22db but to my amazement here is the complete decode:

093400 3 -30 3.5 9 10 # AA1YN S52LM JN65 OOO

It was at -30db and we were only 9Hz off frequency! My noise floor was at -33db. So with just a 3dB margin, I should have been able to decode with no problem. I then decoded the next few files.

093600 1 -29 3.3 26 28 # AA1YN S52LM JN65 OOO

094400 3 -30 3.7 57 11 # AA1YN S52LM JN65 OOO

Why was it I could decode the files on my workstation but not on AI's laptop? He had a faster processor than I and probably a more up to date sound card. I have a slower CPU, and an old sound card on my workstation.

After analyzing some of the other files, I could not find any others where we might have missed but I did notice two interesting points.

1) the sound card had a number of birdies built in to it.

2) The microphone on the laptop was picking up background noise and was mixed in with the signal though this was not on every recording. We can't figure out what was turning it on and off.

NS1O and I had decided on Sunday, it wasn't worth the effort to try the December weekend but after some analysis, I may leave the temporary setup in place and give it a try. We have a few weekends or evenings, we can work to get in some practice and debugging. We'll see what happens. Maybe we will be available for December.

In spite of it all, we had fun and very glad we made the effort. I wish I had taken some notes including a list of who I heard and the times so I could correlate the sound files - next time. We learn and we do better as we get experience. It's all part of the process.

73 to all and if we missed some - maybe we'll catch you the next weekend.



The ARRL 10GHz Contest or, How did I end up Here? *John Moore - N1FOJ*

Since I am always interested in doing new things, I guess I kind of fell into this one. Dale - AF1T mentioned that he would have a 200Mw 10GHz rig available for the upcoming contest at our regular meeting in August. I already had a 2 meter multi-mode rig that would serve as the IF radio and managed to borrow a large battery and

tripod from Lee - AA1YN. I was now ready to go.

Saturday, August 21st, the opening day of the contest. I awoke early to the sound of falling rain. Not a very good omen, but I decided to go setup on Mt. Kearsarge anyway. Lee- AA1YN and AI - NS1O were supposed to be there too. I arrived at the South side parking lot around 9:30 AM and encountered misting and high winds. I decided to setup anyway. Got it all hooked up. turned it on and started listing for contacts. Imagine my surprise to hear Lee and AI working others from Lee's barn! I worked both Lee & AI in FN43gc, closed down and got out of there just ahead of a driving rain. Tomorrow is another day!

Sunday August 22nd, much better! Weather clear and RF conditions very good. Rig is deaf, but I set it up and worked 13 contacts, including W1AUV in FN32kp, 5 stations on Mt. Washington - FN44ig, KB1VC in FN42bl, W1MKY and AF1T on Block Island in FN41ee (my longest QSOs at 246km) and WA1VVH in FN43bj, KA1OJ in FN42em. A great time and I actually worked 5 different grids to qualify for VUCC on 10GHz! I could enjoy this! - On to the second weekend.

Saturday, Sept 17th - start of the second contest weekend. Woke up to heavy rain! Humm, do I detect a pattern here? Back to sleep and hope Sunday is better.

Sunday - Sept 18th - Last day of the contest. Day dawned early and weather is good. Drive to Kearsarge and arrive late. Find some other hams already set up. In fact, more hams than I could keep track of. Setup and started to listen. Rig still deaf - no reception Quick work by Lee - AA1YN and Mike - N1JEZ to get me on the air. Managed to work 7 more contacts before the end. My score calculations were 17 unique contacts for 1700 points and 2650 total kilometers for a grand total of 4,350 points. Met some neat people during this contest, including K1ZZ - Dave Sumner. Would I do this again? You Bet!

Thanks to All and 73 John.

New Repeater Battery Backup

Ken Wilkens - K1MID

At the August club meeting the members discussed and voted to spend sufficient money to replace the failed battery backup power source at the repeater site on Craney Hill.

I was appointed to get a new deep cycle battery and "battery maintainer" charger. A new Exide battery was obtained from Sanel and a constant voltage type low current charger was ordered from Northern Tool.

The charger is designed to prevent over charging and is meant to be permanently left on standby type battery applications. Its output current is only about 1 amp and the maximum output voltage is carefully regulated.

Both units were passed along to Lindsay, K1JY, for installation on the repeater. He and Tom, N1SKZ, had everything installed and running before Hosstraders in Early October.

Time will tell if the new charger will prevent the early demise of the battery that has been a problem at the site.

Lost and Found

Ken Wilkens - K1MID

Early last March while preparing for the club hamfest and flea market, a search was begun to locate all the items we use at the annual event.

A trip to Scott Clay's attic located everything we needed except the club hot dog steamer!

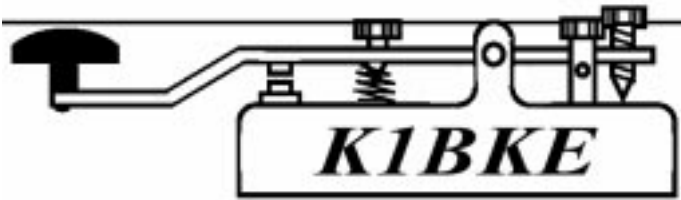
Telephone calls to many members failed to reveal the location of the stainless steel and red painted machine.

The Sunday for the flea market was quickly approaching and the missing hot dog cooker would certainly cause a loss of revenue since we typically sell over 100 hot dogs at the event.

Thanks to the Warner American Legion, who let us borrow their cooker.

Fast forward to the summer club picnic at AA1YN's QTH where I saw Skip - N1PHZ. He said he has located the missing hot dog cooker. The machine had been stored in his garage but was seriously misplaced when one of his relatives had moved their possessions in or out of the building a year or so ago. I guess the relative moved back and the hot dog cooker reappeared.

The cooker is now in my garage and I hope to get it up into N1ZGO's attic before it gets buried under my junk, in which case it will never be found again.



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CVRC CLUB CALL: K1BKE

CVRC operates:

K1BKE/Rptr 146.295/146.895

K1BKE:CENTNH 145.57 Packet Node

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Vice President	AF1T, Dale Clement	428-3840
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Secretary	Don Curtis, N1ZIH	927-6012
Trustee of club call	W1JS, Jack Sheehy	529-5635
K1BKE Repeater trustee		
Packet node trustee	K1JY, Lindsay Collins	495-3983

ACTIVITIES & COMMITTEES

Flea Market	JimMcElroy, NS1E	428-7436
Programs	Dale Clement, AF1T	428-3840
V.E. Sessions	Al Bardwell, NS1O	228-1407
License Classes	Need Volunteer	
Field Day	Jerry Blanchard, K1BBQ	227-0541
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