

The Framingham Circuit



Newsletter of the Framingham Amateur Radio Association

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Thursday, Jan 3 This Month's Meeting

Our January meeting will be our annual Show and Tell Night along with QLF (sending CW with one's left foot!) contest. Bring in anything related to radio and/or electronics to share with the group. There will even be prizes for the best QLF'ers! This was a lot of fun last year, so get that left leg limbered up!

Submitting Material to the Circuit

Material may be submitted for publication by sending it directly to the editor. This can be done by US Mail, or via the Internet (preferred). The deadline for each issue is the **Wednesday**, one week before the monthly meeting.

by mail
Robert Hess, N1UVA
178 Mountain View Ave
Bristol, CT
06010

by internet
circuit@fara.org

President's Message

Happy New Year FARA members and welcome to our Diamond Anniversary Season! We had another good crowd of 25 people at our last meeting with Rick Zach, K1RJZ, showing us the complex six meter repeater system operating between Massachusetts and New Hampshire. It was indeed impressive seeing the hard work and technology behind this system.

Now that we are in the New Year, why not make a resolution to attend some monthly club meetings? If we could get at least 30 people, that would be fantastic, and I will wear my silly hat! We CAN do it! We have only been shy by five people at the last two meetings, and our presentations have been great!

A lot has been going on at the club with you the member in mind. First, our 75th Anniversary bash will take place on June 14 at the Marlborough Marriott Hotel. More details will be released later, but out of state FARA members will be in attendance, even as far away as W6 land! The party will be open to all present and past FARA members, so spread the word!

Second, Ed, W1NXC has lined up several FREE training sessions for you to take advantage of. See the class schedule elsewhere in this Circuit. Third, have you checked out the cool new look of our website yet? You're in for a pleasant surprise! Thanks to our webmaster, Sharon, KC1YR, the new FARA.org is very user friendly and is sure to please!

I would like to recognize the following people for stepping up for FARA. Eric, KB1PJN, and Steve KB1NIV, are our newest Saturday shack openers, and Steve has also volunteered to take a turn at net control along with Lowell, KB1FHJ. Even more kudos go to Bryan, W1BRI. Bryan is not a FARA member, but he got our 147.15 repeater up and running after sacrificing several hours of his free time trouble shooting it. Now that we have a nice machine, let's start giving it more use!

Our January meeting will be our annual Show and Tell Night along with QLF (sending CW with one's left foot!) contest. Bring in anything related to radio and/or electronics to share with the group. Even an old magazine or interesting QSL card is fine. There will even be prizes for the best QLF'ers! This was a lot of fun last year, so get that left leg limbered up!

73, Gordy K1GB

**Official FARA 75th Anniversary Logo
Created by Greg Andrews W1TDF**

Don't forget the 75th Anniversary bash on June 14th!



Repeater Usage and Protocols

By Ed, W1NXC

The FARA repeaters on 2 meters and 70 cm are fully operational and provide excellent coverage in the Metrowest and outlying areas, but the increasing availability and usage of cellphones in this same area has to some extent, reduced the use of these repeaters. Cellphones are relatively inexpensive, don't require a license or special skill to operate.

They do, however, require a fairly complicated central switching system which can get overloaded and/or fail in emergency situations. In comparison the Ham radio repeater system is less intricate, and is controlled by trained and licensed operators and most have emergency power facilities.

Obviously, Amateur radio in general and the VHF/UHF repeater system in particular can play an important role in providing radio communications in emergency situations. Amateur radio has an infrastructure that is not complex, free of bureaucratic roadblocks, and has available many skilled specialists in providing radio communications as needed in very short notice.

The use of Ham radio repeaters in meeting the needs of the Red Cross and other agencies responding to floods, hurricanes or wild fires has been invaluable especially, for example, in handling health and welfare traffic out of disaster areas.

Let's review, therefore, some of the basic operating procedures that are peculiar to VHF/UHF repeaters. Most hams know that calling CQ on a repeater, or tying up the machine with long-winded discussions is not considered good operating practice. The ARRL repeater directory has an excellent summary of so-called good operating practices, but here are a few additional hints or suggestions that are not listed in the directory

TIP #1

DON'T OVER-IDENTIFY-While this is not against the FCC rules, It's not required. Per the rules you only need to

identify your station, at the end of the transmission, not the exchange, and of course you must follow the 10 minute rule, identifying YOUR station at 10 minute intervals. Note that some operators do give the call signs of the other operator, which of course is permissible but it is not an FCC requirement. On short back and forth transmissions it can even be annoying to anyone listening.

An exception to this could be in the instance of three or more operators engaging in a so-called rotation QSO, where the "next in line" participant is identified by call sign. This is of course quite permissible, but still is not required by the FCC rules.

TIP # 2

GIVE HONEST, REALISTIC REPORTS .Since the RST system is not used on repeaters, the usual report if the signal is noise-free and very readable is "Full Quieting". If on the other hand, the signal falls short of this description, don't hesitate to tell the other operator-most if not all hams would appreciate knowing that their signal is noisy or has noticeable hum. It is not necessary to be too specific, unless you feel your comments would be helpful, for example, describing signals from a mobile with excessive ignition noise or alternator whine.

TIP # 3

HERE IS A FINAL TIP -Remember that the repeater is like a giant party line! Other hams and non-hams (with scanners/radios) can listen to your transmissions. Discretion is the key-word, you don't want to give the wrong impression of Amateur radio. It is best to avoid controversial subjects such as politics or religion, listen carefully and pause between transmissions to allow others to break in.

Note: neither FARA repeater has a time-out feature. The 440 machine has a PL of 88.5, the 2 meter has no PL.

AMATEUR RADIO CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

Sponsored by the Framingham Amateur Radio Association

By Ed, W1NXC

A series of educational programs will be held monthly at the Framingham Radio Club location in downtown Framingham starting in December 2007. These are intended primarily for current license holders wishing to improve their Ham-radio skills or knowledge, but anyone interested in Ham radio or would like to become a FCC licensed radio operator is also welcome to attend the classes. There is no fee or other requirement, but pre-registration is recommended as class size is limited.

All sessions will be held at the Club location in the Danforth Museum basement, on Lexington St. downtown Framingham. The Club radio shack where the classes

Continued on next page...

Sunday Night FARA Net Control Schedule 2007

W1NXC	1/6	2/24
K1GB	1/13	3/2
WA1HAM	1/20	3/9
KB1FHJ	1/27	3/16
KB1NIV	2/3	2/23
W1EQW	2/10	3/30
W1VIV	2/17	

Learn about more Ham Radio by checking in every week to the FARA Sunday Night Net on 147.15 MHz at 7:30 local time. Listen for the Sunday Night Ham Radio Question of the Week. Can you come up with the right answer? Here's your chance to show your ham radio knowledge.

FARA Email Reflector

If you have email and aren't signed up for the FARA email reflector, you're missing out on the last-minute news and updates. To sign up, send an email to Sharon at kc1yr@kc1yr.com requesting her to add you to the reflector.

Shopping Online?

Use fara.org/amazon and help out the club. FARA receives a small percentage of your order.

Membership Dues

Annual membership dues are as follows: (Make checks payable to FARA)

Regular FARA \$15

Student / Retired \$10

Repeater (voluntary) \$10

will take place is adjacent to the Framingham library, and the entrance is via the underground parking garage, also on Lexington St. Lexington St is 3 blocks north off Union Ave, from the Memorial building where route 126(Concord St)and Union Ave intersect.

Class schedule

January 19, 2008 M o r s e
Code workshop

February 23, 2008 E m e r -
gency Communications Ori-
entation

March 14/15, 2008

License-in-a-Weekend
(Technician entry level)

April 26, 2008 Soldering
Technique

May 24, 2008 Antenna
Basics

Note: Except for the 2-day Tech class in March, the classes will meet on Saturday mornings, 9 to 12 noon.

For further information contact any Club officer or Ed W1NXC at 508-881-2301(e-mail w1nxc@arrl.net)

December Meeting—Photos By, Lowell KB1FHJ



FARA Horizons

- Jan: (Meeting) Show and Tell Night/QLF Contest
- Jan 9: VE session
- Feb: (Meeting) Bill Ricker, N1VUX on VHF propagation
- March: (Meeting) Mark Rubin, WB1ARZ and John Ruggerio, N2YHK from W.E.C.T (Worcester Emergency Communications Team).
- April: (Meeting) Scott Anderson, NE1RD on "The 100 pound DXpedition"
- April 6: Flea Market
- May: (Meeting) Pizza Party after Flea Market
- June: (Meeting) TBD/FARA
- June 14: FARA 75th Anniversary Party at Marlborough Courtyard Marriott Hotel
- June 28: Field Day

This month's Circuit sponsored by:

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Club Information 2008

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Meeting: Club meetings are normally held on the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:30PM in the basement of the Danforth Museum, on Lexington St.

Club Nets: FARA Net: Sunday, 7:30PM, 147.75/147.15 - social/chat, ARES preparedness

Club Station: W1FY, the club station and shack, is open Saturday mornings from 8:30-12:00. Call the club number, 879-8097 to confirm.

Club Web Site: <http://www.fara.org>