



The Resonator

Official Newsletter of The Fair Lawn (NJ) Amateur Radio Club

Volume 5, Number 3

www.FairLawnARC.org

March 2020

From The President:

The first three months of 2020 have started very well at FLARC. We have been able to combine the fun we have in our hobby along with education. The "coffee talks" have been a huge success. Our appreciation to all of those that have stepped up and shared with us experiences and knowledge on areas they feel comfortable to talk about. I have always trusted that among the membership at FLARC, we have a wealth of information we can all learn and use. Remember, if you are passionate about a topic, we want you to share it with us and be one of our next speakers during "coffee talk."

Also our appreciation to all those that participated at Super Science Saturday at Ridgewood High School. We had a great time with students, parents and staff at the school. Our presentations were very well received and we had lots of fun. They hope to have us again next year during the event. Looking forward to it.

And last, but not least, in another section of this Resonator, we will offer information to all of you on COVID-19. As you are all aware, this is a situation that is closer to us now and we should follow some basic steps for our safety and well being. Please follow the suggestions offered by our local, state and federal agencies on how to deal with this coronavirus. Better safe than sorry.

Be well my friends and see you at the Club very soon.

73, Nomar, NP4H
FLARC President

Member Profile

NAME: **Glenn Plescia** CALL: **KD2MDR**

How did you get interested in ham radio?

As a child, I watched my father repair old clocks and radios. This sparked my interest in taking things apart and (trying) to put it back together. Years later I discovered the FLARC and in the Fall of 1990 took the Novice classes they hosted. I was taught CW by Ben Leigh (SK). During a snow storm in January 1991 I passed my Novice exam. (I wasn't going to let 6" of snow stop me from taking the Exam!) Later that same year I took my Technician then General exams. My First Rig was a Kenwood TS-830.

What parts of the hobby most interest you?

As time progressed, I went from 99% CW to 99% Digital. My old Kenwood could not handle the Digital modes, so I donated that to the FLARC and purchased an ICOM-718. Using 15 Watts into a wire antenna I'm up to 83 countries and 49 states, Digital.

I recently made my first tape-measure antenna after seeing it done at the 2019 Field Day event.

What does belonging to FLARC mean to you?

How do you/can you better contribute to the club?

The FLARC was instrumental in getting me licensed into this hobby. Ed, WX2R assisted in my first contact (CW) into Aliquippa, PA just North of Pittsburgh. Collectively, bringing new people into the hobby benefits all.

Continued on page **Error! Reference source not found.9.**

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Fellow FLARC Members,

As we all know, the coronavirus is top of the news and a first positive test occurrence has apparently happened in Bergen County.

Please know that it is perfectly okay to stay home and away from the clubhouse if you are feeling sick or even if you *don't know* if you are, but you are worried about whether you are or not. Rather than subjecting yourself to more pressure and stress, just stay home if you are so inclined. As a community, let's be generous to ourselves and to each other to make sure everyone stays safe, rested and healthy.

We will monitor the situation with regards to opening the club and the use of the Senior Center in coordination with the Borough.

We want to draw your attention The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s preventative measures to help ensure the health and safety of our members:

1. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
2. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
4. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
5. Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
6. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

We need your help to maintain a clean, germ-free club environment. Use the Recreation Center lavatory often to wash your hands. Please throw out all your towels and wipes in the trash. Bring disinfectant for your hands and to use on all work surfaces inside the clubhouse.

Some videos with important info about hand washing: CDC and WHO.

For further information and to keep up-to-date please visit the CDC website.

Thank you for your attention and care. Stay safe.

73

Nomar NP4H
March 5, 2020



The Club Fair Lawn ARC is the fastest growing ham club around, with five operating positions in a permanent clubhouse. Visitors and guests are always welcome. The club is open every Friday night from NLT 6:30 PM. Business meetings are the first Friday of the month at 7:30PM.

Fair Lawn RACES/ARES Corner



2020 Officers, Committees and Assignments

President	Nomar Vizcarrando	NP4H
Vice President	John L. Howard	W2JLH
Treasurer	Al Rasmussen	WA2OWL
Secretary	Randy Smith	WU2S
Trustee	Skip Barker	KD2BRV
Trustee	Ed Efchak	WX2R
Trustee	Don Cassarini	N2PRT
Field Day	Steve Wraga	WA2BYX
Member Services	Judith Shaw	KC2LTM
Publicity	Ed Efchak	WX2R
Publicity	Gene Ottenheimer	WO2W
Publicity	Judith Shaw	KC2LTM
Publicity	Susan Frank	W6SKT
Program	Lowell Vant Slot	W2DLT
Publicity	Karl Frank	W2KBF
Publicity	Nomar Vizcarrando (ex officio)	NP4H
Social Media	Dave Marotti	NK2Q
Video/YouTube	Thom Guida	W2NZ
VE Liaison	Gene Ottenheimer	WO2W
VE Liaison	Pete Senesi	KD2BMX
Education	Gordon Beattie	W2TTT
Education	Randy Smith	WU2S
Education	John L. Howard	K2JLH
Education	Fred Wawra	W2ABE
History	Fred Belghaus	W2AAB
Health and Welfare	Judith Shaw	KC2LTM
Photographer	Don Cassarini	N2PRT
W2NPT Trustee	Paul Cornett	W2IP
Technical	Paul Cornett	W2IP
Technical	Randy Smith	WU2S
Technical	Fred Wawra	W2ABE
RACES Director	Dave Gotlib	KD2MOB
RACES Liaison	Steve Wraga	WA2BYX
Newsletter Editor	Ed Efchak	WX2R
FL Town Liaison	Gene Ottenheimer	WO2W
Net Scheduler	Brian Cirulnick	KD2KLN
Quartermaster	Brian Cirulnick	KD2KLN

I would like to begin the FL-ARES Column on a serious note. As you are aware, the corona virus is out and about so we, as part of emergency preparedness have to take precautions before assisting anyone during an emergency (which is what we should be doing to begin with). We have to attend to ourselves first before attending to others.

I would like to draw your attention The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s preventative measures to help ensure the health and safety of our members:

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- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
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- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

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The FL-ARES members are preparing for emergency communications whenever necessary. Of course, this takes training and experience from our membership which currently numbers more than a dozen. We are fortunate to make Fair Lawn and the surrounding communities our home. With our leadership and support from the FLARC we can grow and be of assistance in many community events.

Continued on page 34.

MASTER EVENT CALENDAR

- March 20, 2020 Wayne Smith WB2ONZ "The Civil Air Patrol: A Contemporary View"—Senior Center
- April 17, 2020 Rich Moseson W2VU "75 Years of CQ Magazine" – Senior Center
- April 18, 2020 World Radio Day Operating Event (tentative)
- April 22, 2020 Special Event Station At Great Falls With National Park Service
- May 15, 2020 Hal Kennedy N4GG "Spark At FLARC" Via Skype – Senior Center
- June 14, 2020 Fair Lawn Spring Street Fair (Radburn)
- June 27-28, 2020 ARRL FIELD DAY – Memorial Park
- July 17, 2020 Neil D Goldstein W2NDG "Raspberry Pi And Digital Operating"—Senior Center
- August 21, 2020 FLARC 3rd Annual Vintage Night – Senior Center
- September 18, 2020 Lowell Van't Slot W2DLT "Working the CQWW SSB Contest At A Caribbean Superstation" – Senior Center
- October 18, 2020 Fair Lawn Fall Street Fair (River Road)
- TBD Return Visit To iHeartRadio/WSUS transmitter
- TBD Field Trip to Sarnoff Center, Princeton
- ** 2nd Friday of month



Hidetsugu Yagi's 130th Birthday Google Doodle

Follow FLARC ON THE WEB

Facebook: <http://facebook.FairLawnARC.org>

Twitter: @FairLawnARC

Blog: <http://blog.FairLawnARC.org>

Youtube: <http://youtube.FairLawnARC.org>

Website: <http://FairLawnARC.org>

<http://bit.ly/FLARC-Testing>

We appreciate your support of the Fair Lawn Amateur Radio Club!

This is your Club! Be part of it!

FLARC VEC Exams

Our next test sessions are scheduled for **Saturday, March 14th** beginning at 09:00 at the Community Center. No advanced registration is required but always appreciated. The fee is \$15.00 (cash or check).

Please bring positive identification (license, passport, etc.), your original license and a copy, original CSCE and a copy (if credit is needed).

The full exam schedule is on the club calendar at the FairLawnARC.org website. For further information contact VE-Liason@FairLawnARC.org.

Please refer also to the "License Exams" link on the main website--

Interested in Chasing DX?

A casual group of FLARCers including Van W2DLT, John KD2NRS, Brad KM2C, Karl W2KBF, Nomar NP4H, Steve WI2W, Jim W2JC, Larry WA2ALY and Fred W2AAB have formed an email group to keep each other in touch in (real) time of when the rare or interesting ones show up to chase.

Interested? See or contact Van W2DLT.

Answer The Census!

Coming in late March you'll be required by law to complete your US Census form. The club is an active sponsor of Fair Lawn's Complete Count 2020 initiative, so your support is important.



Equipment Problem?

If you encounter a piece of club equipment, instrument or tool that is not working correctly or is broken in any way, we now have a Trouble Report form that you can use to describe the problem and report it to the Technical Committee -- who will arrange for repair.

The form can be found on the literature rack across from Position 2.

2020 -- The Year of Learning!



Brad KM2C talks through the Flex equipment on January 10th

Please Note: Operating at W2NPT

Starting in January 2019 club trustees have sign-in sheets for all operating positions. There is a clipboard at Operating Position #1, #2 (digital) and #4 with a form on which to sign up for half-hour time slots. No longer first come-first served, in fairness to all who want to use our club equipment and the new antennas.

Get Direct With FLARC!

Here is a direct link to specific club info: just a click away!

<http://apparel.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://auction.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://blog.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://calendar.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://events.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://exams.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://facebook.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://news.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://swap.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://tech.FairLawnARC.org>
<http://youtube.FairLawnARC.org>

NEW !

<https://groups.io/g/FairLawnARC>



February 2020 Blog Traffic

Even with an extra day, February opened the year a bit under that of 2019. Views as well as traffic were down.

	February 2020	February 2019	Change
Views	363	480	-24%
Visitors	128	216	-69%
Posts	7	7	NC

There is new content nearly every day so it's really worth the look at both FairLawnARC.org and the blog.

<http://blog.FairLawnARC.org>

Larry WA2ALY Discusses “Using Radials With Antennas” As Part Of FLARC’s Brain Snacks Learning Series

Remember “120”! Remember “Near Field”? “Captain” Larry WA2ALY led a lively discussion on ground radials at a Valentine’s Day "Brain Snacks For Hams" session attended by more than 20 members and guests spilling from the coffee room into the clubhouse.

Thanks Larry for a great session!!



The Captain leads us through radial basics



An attentive crowd with lots of questions

Club Apparel — Get Them While They're **RED!**

Club apparel is always in vogue. Red is always "in" and your club friends all have them... you *want* a shirt or jacket for the next FLARC event! Great for Field Day!

Don't forget.... they're easy to order. Go to www.hamthreads.com or visit <http://apparel.FairLawnARC.org>

Check out the item selection that is posted on the FLARC website (with pictures and prices). Order the shirts or other items you want with either the regular FLARC logo or the still-cool 60th anniversary logo. Note: **RED** is the primary and preferred club standard shirt color.

And why not WEAR your nice red shirt when you come to the club, especially for meetings & events.



Thom W2NZ has his FLARC colors on whilst shooting club videos.

2020 FLARC Speaker Series Locations:

SPEAKERS WHO ARE FLARC MEMBERS:
FLARC CLUBHOUSE

SPEAKERS WHO ARE INVITED GUESTS:
FAIR LAWN SENIOR CENTER

Great Falls National Historical Park Special Event Station – Volunteers Needed!

Wednesday, April 22nd starting at 0900

Once again it's Earth Day and FLARC is again participating as part of the Passaic County school system at the National Park education and science day at the Great Falls Historical Park in Paterson.

It's a chance to showcase both the club and ham radio and we're usually the most active exhibit at the Falls. It's a busy but fun day, so please try to find a couple of hours to work with the kids and show off ham radio.

BEQUEATHS AND DONATIONS

Planned gifts usually imply the family donation of amateur equipment to the club when someone has become a Silent Key. But it can be more. Club members might consider making a gift through a will or trust; gifts that help provide lifetime income to the club. Consult with your lawyer, estate planner or tax advisor if you feel such a gift is worthy.

About The Club

The Resonator is published monthly and is the official (and only) newsletter of The Fair Lawn Amateur Radio Club. FLARC was established in 1956 and has met continuously since inception. **The club is sponsored by the Borough of Fair Lawn.** The club meets every Friday at 6PM at the club station in The Fair Lawn Community Center, 10-10 20th Street, Fair Lawn, NJ. Business meetings are the first Friday of the month at 7:30 PM.

Visitors **ARE ALWAYS** welcome at our meetings.

FLARC operates the W2NPT repeater (145.470- PL 167.9) located high atop the Community Center. The analog repeater is open to all amateurs for use without restrictions.

The club has over one hundred paid members. Dues are currently \$25 per year/\$20 for new members.

For more information, please see our website, at <http://membership.FairLawnARC.org>

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“POP-UP TUESDAYS” HAVE ARRIVED!

The club will be open – *but not every Tuesday* – from 6:30 – 9:00. Check the club calendar, the club website and your email each week for the current schedule.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE NEWS

The Publicity Committee is seeking new members to help grow the club with its varied activities. Enthusiasm desired...no experience necessary. Contact Ed WX2R or any other committee member.



FAIR LAWN'S COMMUNICATIONS CENTER! *With New Antennas On The Roof!*



Past FLARC Member Profiles

Here is a list of past member features and we welcome your recommendations for new profiles -- including your own.

Month	Name	Call Sign
January 2016	Pete	KB2BMX
February	Marco	KC2ZMA
March	Ron	KC2TBD
April	Kai	K2TRW
May	Larry	WA2ALY
June	Dave	N8MAR
July	Steve	W12W
August	Thom	W2NZ
September	Brian	KD2KLN
October	Brad	KM2C
November	Al	WA2OWL
December	George	W3EH
January 2017	Fred	W2ABE
February	Dave	KD2MOB
March	Randy	WU2S
April	Lee	KD2DRS
May	Gene	WO2W
June	Carol	KD2NMV
July	Kevin	KC2KCC
August	Robert	KD2NOG
September	Robert	KD2BKD
October	John	KD2NRS
November	Fred	W2AAB
December	Margaret	W2GB
January 2018	Brian	KD2OAZ
February	Bennett	KO2OK
March	Van	W2DLT
April	Aly	ALØY
May	Bruce	NJ2BK
June	Dave	N2AAM
July	Karl and Susan	W2KBF and W2SKT
August	Steve	KA2YRA
September	Paul	K2PJC
October	Skip	KD2BRV
November	Ed	WX2R
December	Tom	N2AAX

By the way, Randy (WU2S) has compiled a binder of all back issues of *The Resonator* and it's located in the club office. Thanks Randy!!!

Van W2DLT Does Ham-Cation

Van W2DLT took some time away from his Florida vacation to stop into the Orlando HamCation February 7-9. While not Dayton, it's a large show and the weather is... fine! The ARRL National Convention is here in 2021 so start to plan early. Thanks Van for the pix!!



A Welcome Sign To Warm Weather Ham Fun



The vendor booths were well occupied and attended



Hmmm... it's clearly not New Jersey in February

Member Profile (Continued)

What should be the club's priorities in the next year?

The FLARC has a great leadership team. They stay on top of technology and make it a learning experience for all. Keeping the public and elected officials up to date on the emergency services we provide is important.

What else can you tell the club about yourself and/or ham radio?

This January 2020 was my first Winter Field Day. It was a fun event and hope to double our score next year. Looking forward to this Summer's Field Day. Hopefully the bands will improve as Sunspot activity picks up. I enjoy working as a team. With teamwork we can accomplish great things.

What other ham related clubs or organizations do you belong to?

The FLARC is my only Radio club membership.

I have been a first responder for 30+ years. (Where do the years go?) Currently serve as a Chaplain to a local Fire Department. My wife and I will always offer prayers to any member of the FLARC Family who is ill or in distress.



Glenn KD2MDR (at W1AW)

Looking To Upgrade Your License? Here Are Some Classes To Help!

Here is the summary of classes offered by our friends at the ARC² Radio Club during 2020.

Amateur Extra License Radio Class

June 6, Saturday, 9 am to 4 pm
June 7, Sunday, 9 am to 3 pm

General License Radio Class

September 19, Saturday, 8 am to 4:30 pm
September 20, Sunday, 8:30 am to 3 pm

Technician License Radio Class

November 21, Saturday, 8 am to 4 pm
November 22, Sunday, 9 am to 3 pm

Location:

Fairfield Red Cross Office
209 Fairfield Road, Fairfield, NJ 07004

Instructor: Bill Kelly
NB1LL.ARC2@gmail.com
201.615.8132

March 2020 Near and Far Net Controls

Here is the roster for net controls for the upcoming month as reported by Brian KD2KLN:

Date	Net Control
March 2	NP4H
March 9	WO2W
March 16	KD2KLN
March 23	N2AAM
March 30	KD2MOB

The Near and Far Net now averages close to 20 check-ins on an average week! Cool beans.

But we need more volunteers to be net controls - if everyone takes their turn it's less burden on the others. And it's easy.

Volunteer --- don't wait to be asked (unless you really want to be flattered).

Around the Shack

Hal Kennedy N4GG/4

Visit Someone

You will likely read this in March, 2020, but I am writing it in early January with things other-than-technical on my mind. I am reflective - this is not the typical "Around the Shack" column.

Several of my long-time friends – DXers and Contesters - have gone SK in the past year. Is it my imagination, or do I lose more friends around the holidays? I know as I grow older I am losing friends faster than I used to. Every old-timer will tell you that's part of the aging process. I don't like it.

Among my friends are three hams that have been treated for the same rare cancer. Two recently, one about six years ago. All are still QRV, but their treatment was tough and outcomes are uncertain for at least five years. I know lots of other cancer patients of course, and I have made that journey twice myself.

All this seems so morose – but I am writing with a purpose. At Dayton, 18 years ago, I gave the "congratulations speech" for Bill Fisher's (W4AN) induction into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame. It was more of a eulogy than congratulatory however, as Bill had been SK for two years. Bill was inducted posthumously.

One thing I said in that speech: While I thought I knew Bill well, I had never met him. I had been in the Atlanta area for two years at that point, and I had never made the effort to visit his shack and get to know him better. Now it was too late. I urged everyone in the room to visit someone – as soon as they got home. Someone they knew on the air, or elsewhere in life, that they had never gotten around to meeting first-person.

I have a new "New Year's Resolution." I plan to get out of my comfortable shack more; to add miles onto my car's odometer. I don't want to give another eulogy and have to say "I feel like I knew him pretty well although I never met him."

Visit someone.

73,
Hal, N4GG/4

Help Someone

Gordon W2TTT reports the following local volunteer activity:

This year's Tour De Cure will be, May 31st. We are excited to be moving to a new location: Bergen County Community College, 400 Paramus Rd, Paramus, NJ 07652. The planning committee is working hard on the event and things are moving along.

As usual, it is my job to cover the safety portion of the biking portion of the event. We need SAG drivers, HAM radio operators, and ride marshals (minimum age 21). Please feel free to forward this to your family, friends, and neighbors. Please be sure they include their cell phone numbers and email address when they reply. I am looking forward to working with all of you again this. Thanks again for your consideration.

Arnold Milstein KD2NVM arnold.milstein@gmail.com

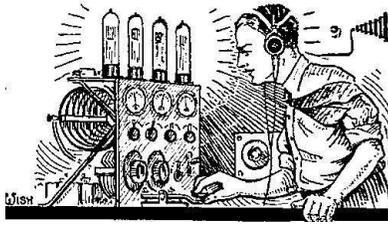


Image from May, 1926 QST, courtesy ARRL

The Way We Were -- By Fred Belghaus W2AAB

New York F.C.C. Office, 1963: A Personal Recollection

Thank heaven (and the F.C.C.) for the V.E. (Volunteer Examiner) program. There was a time, you know, when there was no such convenience available to us. We had to appear before an F.C.C. examiner to take the General, Advanced, Extra Class as well as Commercial license tests; unless we lived more than 175 miles, then 125 miles, then 75 miles away from a local F.C.C. examination office. That's the way it was, from the creation of the Federal Communications Commission back in 1934, and until the V.E. Program was established in more recent years.

Everyone who took the General and higher class exams in New York from the mid-to late 1950s to the mid-to late 1960s can relate to the experiences I'm about to describe. It was not a particularly pleasant experience. The New York F.C.C. office was located in Room 741 of the old Federal Building, at 641 Washington Street in lower Manhattan.

The first time I went there was in June, 1963. Two high school buddies and I had just finished our sophomore year at Fair Lawn High. We were all 15 year old Novices, eager to drop the "N" in our call signs, and get on the "real" ham bands where the grownups were.

In those days, I was WN2CST. My friends and accomplices were Steve, WN2ERM, (now W2SG), and Dave, WN2APW (then WB2APW, but no longer licensed). Dave's Novice license had expired a month or two before, but there was a one year "grace period" during which time you had to get that higher license to keep your basic call sign (the "N" in the call being replaced by a "B" then), or go QRT. The Novice license was only good for one year, and it was not renewable. You could re-take the tests later and be licensed again with a new call, but many ex-Novices never did that.

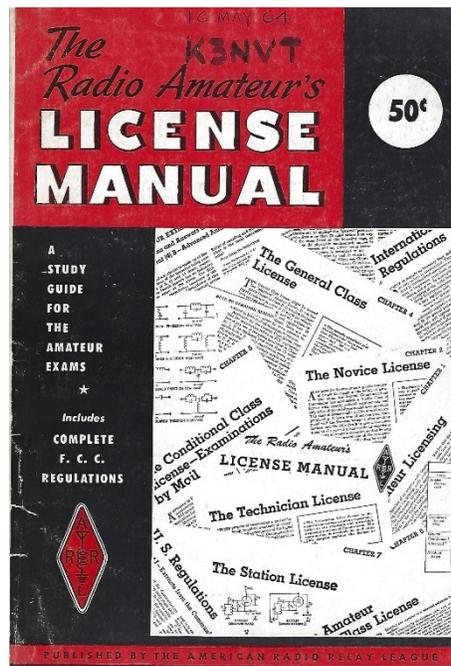


Image: The very edition of the A.R.R.L. *License Manual* that I used to study for the General in 1963

The Way We Were

So, excited to leave our Novice days behind, we had been practicing our code speed and studying the 68 General Class questions in the A.R.R.L. License Manual for the past month or so. I forget how many questions actually appeared on the written test, but there were several versions of it, so we had to be sure to study all of them and learn the correct answers.

The content was chiefly technical, covering basic and intermediate electrical laws and circuits. There were many schematic diagrams, all of which we had to memorize, and be ready to answer questions about their circuit elements. There were math problems, too, some of which involved additive and reciprocal fractions, and others that were basic algebra. The questions about the differences between Class A, Class B and Class C type R.F. amplifiers always got me, though. To this day, I still can't get all of them straight.

There were questions about F.C.C. Regulations, of course, and some on International Agreements. Those were the easiest to remember.

But the first part of the exam was the code test. If you flunked the code, you could not take the written test at all. You had to come back in 30 days, re-take the code, and then, if you passed, take a stab at the theory. In those days, no credit was given if you passed the code but flunked the theory. That would change in later years.

The General Class code requirement was to receive *and accurately send* at the speed of at least 13 words per minute. So we prepared as best we could, until the night before our trip to the F.C.C. We all copied the W1AW Code Practice Qualifying Run at 15 words per minute with perfect copy.



The old Federal Building, 641 Washington Street, NYC (recent photo)
Image: Wikipedia

The Way We Were

Feeling confident, we started out the next morning by meeting at my house. We walked down my street to the bus stop on Plaza Road, and boarded the Number 40 bus, which took us to West 168th Street and 8th Avenue in Manhattan. From the small bus depot there, we walked past the White Tower burger joint, down the steps to the 8th Avenue IND subway, and rode all the way down to Chambers Street, a ride that took about twenty five minutes.

From Chambers Street, it was a short walk to Washington Street, with the Federal Building on the corner. Before we could go take the tests, however, we had to request the license application, known as a Form 610 by mail, complete it ahead of time, and then have it notarized before going to the F.C.C. office. Having fulfilled these three requirements, we now crossed the street and proceeded to the F.C.C. office.

The Federal Building (see previous page) was a large, forbidding, 10 story red brick structure that was built between the years 1892 and 1899, which lies on the borders of Greenwich, Christopher, and Barrow Streets, [1] located in the western part of Greenwich Village.

This was an “interesting” neighborhood even in those days. It was common to see bearded “beatniks” wearing berets strolling by, as well as other “colorful” characters. Some of these were of indeterminate gender. Others lay in doorways or on the sidewalk, sleeping off a night of carousing. You had to be careful where you stepped, too, because here and there, were broken liquor bottles, as well as various deposits of human bodily functions. Just a few blocks west, near the Hudson River, were a string of dive bars that catered to longshoremen, with posters pasted to their windows reminding stevedores to VOTE for some proposal of their union. This was when New York City was still a major port.

After negotiating these various street challenges, we entered the building and took the elevator to the 7th floor. I think there was only one elevator operating then. This piece of antique machinery had a peculiar characteristic. It either stopped too high above the floor, or too low beneath it. You either had to climb up or jump down to get out. I don’t remember which we had to do, but it made me think of that old saw, “Well, it’s good enough for Government work.”

We walked down a long corridor to the F.C.C. office, with its frosted window doors. Inside, the walls were painted that all too familiar “pea green” that seems to be in every government office. I’m told that this color is also favored in torture chambers. There was a characteristic smell, too, common to such places. Think of the unique smell of a Post Office. That’s pretty close.

Inside, there were about a dozen people standing around, all adults. We were the only kids there. Suddenly, a creeping sense of foreboding came over us like a cloud of acrid smoke. We lost our confidence. Moments before, we were still three smart, cocky kids, ready to show off our CW skills and expert technical knowledge. Now, we shrank and shriveled up like a trio of terrified prunes.

Standing behind an old oak desk was a gray haired man in his mid fifties. He wore a pair of brown, rectangular glasses at the end of his nose, and held a cheap cigar with a wooden mouthpiece in his teeth. His name was Charlie Finkelman. He was the “license clerk” who administered the tests and he was the person who would announce who had passed or failed.

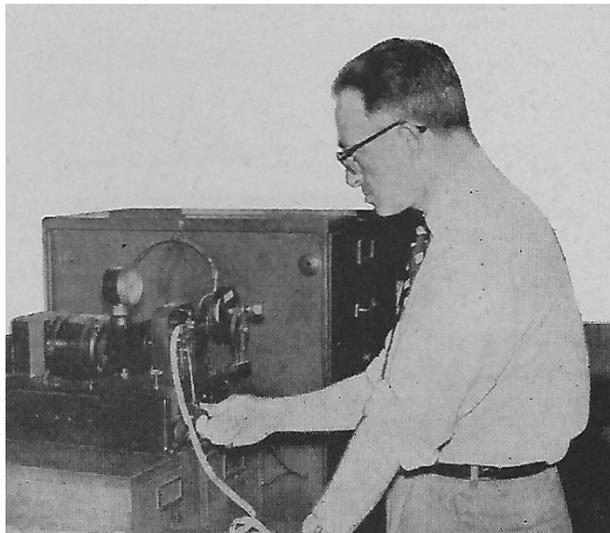
The Way We Were

Charlie called out some names, and said, "You pass." Sighs of relief were heard all over the room. But there were moans, too. One of the moaners said to Charlie, "What about me? I'm-----." "Nope," said Charlie, "You didn't make it. Come back in 30 days." He only called out the names of those who passed.

But these were applicants for Commercial exams, the most common being the First Class Radiotelephone. This was a very valuable license to have back then, because it opened up job opportunities in broadcast engineering, as well as jobs in two-way radio repair. The Radiotelegraph licenses were useful for jobs either as shipboard radio operators or as operators at coast or government stations.

Amateur exams were to be administered next, and now we fidgeted and stared out the big windows in the office at the tugboats and barges making their way up the polluted, stinky Hudson. After a few minutes, the Commercial applicants filed out of the room, some to a bright future in radio, and others, back home to study some more.

The code test came first. We handed in our completed and notarized Form 610's, and Charlie began to fiddle with an ancient code machine that seemed to operate somewhat like a steam engine. The air pressure had to be built up before the thing would start. Meanwhile, we picked up sheets of paper and a pencil for copying, and were led into an adjoining room. Charlie put a reel of paper tape on the machine, in preparation for administering the 13 WPM code test. There was no take-up reel. The paper tape just ran down to a wastebasket, and it was never supposed to be used again.



Charlie Finkelman at the code machine
Image: See Note 2

The Way We Were

The room we were led into was equipped with about a dozen old fashioned wooden school desks, with a wooden chair behind each of them. Every desk had a World War II "J-38" type key screwed down at the upper right. Lying on top of the desk was a pair of World War II Army surplus headphones wired to the code machine, which we were expected to wear while copying.



School desks in the code copying room
Image: See Note 2

We sat at our desks, and after another few minutes, the headphones suddenly came to life. The code machine started sending a series of dots. They were quite loud, and they startled me. I had to move the earpieces somewhat off my ears to find a comfortable volume level.

After another minute or two, the machine sent a series of "V's," the standard signal indicating a test transmission. Then, the text started, and we began to copy. I held the U.S. Government "standard issue" pencil (with no eraser) in my hand, but my nerves took over. Where was my confidence now? I was so jittery, so anxious, that the pencil dropped out of my hand, hit the desk, and rolled off onto the floor. "Oh, no," I mumbled, picking up the pencil and trying desperately to catch up with the text.

But I had missed too much, and I made a lot of indecipherable scratches on the paper, and then the code machine stopped sending. I tried to go back and fix some obvious errors, but it was too late. Charlie was standing over me, and I knew I had blown it. Damn!

My two school chums had also blown it. We were all a bundle of nerves, our hands clammy, and sweat beading on our brows. We all had to come back in 30 days to try again!

Alas, it was not to be for me, though. Steve and Dave went back in July and passed, but I was away on vacation with my parents somewhere in New England, chomping at the bit for a repeat performance. I could hardly wait to get home.

It was early August when I could go back. My Novice license had just expired, and I didn't want to mess up this time. I had been reviewing the theory while on vacation, and as soon as I got home, I practiced the code again. I felt a bit more confident now, and my friend Steve accompanied me upon my return. We went back down to that "interesting" neighborhood, dodging various challenging obstacles, human and inanimate. It was a hot, humid day. Temperatures were in the low to mid 90's as I recall, and the F.C.C. office was not air conditioned.

Back we went to the Federal Building, up that creaky old elevator, down that long corridor, back to Room 741, full of hopeful applicants, and old Charlie Finkelman, standing, as usual, behind his oak desk. The cigar still clenched in his teeth, I handed in my notarized Form 610, and joined the march into the code room.

The Way We Were

As I sat there, headphones on my head, I noticed a lot of graffiti carved into the school desk. There were call letters of old Novices, some dating from the 1950s, with comments like “flunked again!” and expletives directed at Charlie and the F.C.C. I sympathized with these fellow sufferers from the past, and wondered how many of them eventually passed and became licensed.

Charlie started up the code machine, but something went wrong. The code came out as gibberish, and all of us at our little school desks wondered what to do. Would we be expected to write down the gibberish, or what? In another moment, Charlie came into the room, and said that the code machine was inoperative. “You can all relax for awhile, until we get a replacement.”

Maybe ten minutes later, one of the other F.C.C. employees lugged an old — a very old — Webcor tape machine into the code testing room and placed it on one of the empty school desks. The power cord didn’t reach an outlet, so an extension cord was procured. He put on a tape, and pressed the playback button. The tape started to play, but the sound was too low, so he adjusted the volume.

Then Charlie came into the room, and the other guy left, disappearing into one of the offices. “Can everybody hear the tape machine?” Charlie asked. We said “Yes.” “Good,” he said, “Then we’ll get started.” We’d have to copy using the speaker in the tape machine only, and without headphones. Oh, boy, I thought, how terrific. What else is going to go wrong today?

Another minute or two, and the tape started, with a string of “V’s” again, and then the text. But this time, I had no trouble copying, despite the heat and my anxiety, despite a fly buzzing near my ear, and despite the annoying sound of tugboats honking down on the river.

It was a breeze. I had perfect copy. I even remember a call that was inserted in the text, to test our knowledge of numbers and punctuation. It was W3QFN/2, *whoever* he was. His call was now immortalized in the F.C.C. code test. Come to think of it, it was also used on the paper tape version that I heard one month before.

But the code test was not quite over. It’s one thing to copy well, but now I had to prove that I could *send* at a speed of at least 13 words per minute. I didn’t feel much anxiety from this. I had already traded my straight key for a Vibroplex “Blue Racer” bug, which I had to slow way down to work other Novices, or just use the dash side of the bug as a straight key when working slowpokes.

Charlie stood over each of us, and when he came to me, I felt really confident. Show-off that I couldn’t resist being, I pounded away at that J-38, sending at least 20 words per minute. I only had to send a few words, though, before he stopped me. “Okay, you pass the code,” he said.



Charlie Finkelman testing an applicant’s sending
Image: See Note 2

The Way We Were

Some of the others didn't pass. Their forlorn faces told me that. But for me, it was on to the written test, and once again, I began to feel uneasy. I never was a whiz at math, so I hoped there weren't too many math problems. The rest was pretty easy, I thought, except for those Class A, B, and C amplifier questions.

Those of us who had passed the code were now given the sealed envelopes containing the written portion of the test. Upon Charlie's signal, we opened the envelope, and started on the questions. I don't recall whether there was a time limit, but there must have been, because other tests would be administered later that day.

In any case, although stumbling over the correct schematic for a Colpitts oscillator, I remembered most of the answers, and had no trouble with calculating problems involving capacitors connected in series and inductors in parallel. I felt pretty sure I'd pass, but there was always some doubt in my mind.

After awhile, Charlie collected our papers, and we followed behind him into the outside room. He used a template to grade them, holding the template over the checked boxes on the multiple choice test. As he finished each one, he made two piles; one for "passed," one for "failed." Then he called out some names. Mine was one of them.

"Okay," he said, upon reading off my name. "Really?" I said, "You mean I passed?" "Yes, you pass," he answered. My face lit up like a neon sign on a dark night, and I felt ten feet tall. I was no longer a "Johnny Novice." I was a Real Ham now, just like my two ham uncles and other grownups.

"Congratulations, O.M.," my friend Steve said, and we skipped out of the room, down the hall, down that silly old elevator, and out onto the street. We once again negotiated strange characters, assorted winos and beatniks, making our way to the IND subway, and rode all the way up to 168th Street to take the bus back to Fair Lawn.

But before boarding the bus, we stopped for lunch. We had a cheeseburger and a Coke with crushed ice at the White Tower next to the bus terminal. Boy, those tiny cheeseburgers tasted good, even though the burgers were barely larger than a silver dollar. And the pickle slice was great, too, not to mention the ketchup. Hell, anything—even an old sock would have tasted good to me, now.



The White Tower at the 168th Street bus terminal (1930s)

Image: Pinterest

By the way, all the pictures of the New York F.C.C. office on Washington Street in this month's column were originally taken in 1954. The code machine, the school desks, and the picture of Charlie listening to code sent by a license applicant, looked exactly the same to me as when I took the test 9 years later in 1963. Only the number of gray hairs on Charlie's head had increased.

The F.C.C. handled all licensing manually in those days, and it took about three weeks to receive my General license in the mail. Later that year, they implemented their new computerized licensing system with a great deal of fanfare. One of my other friends, Barry, then WN2GHL (now WV2X), had to wait

several *months* before their “highly efficient” computer system sent him his General license!

The Way We Were

Poor Barry was nearly in despair, but it finally came, much to his relief. He had some choice words to say about the F.C.C. and its “efficient” computerized licensing, though.

Just who *was* Charlie Finkelman, our nemesis at the F.C.C.? His call was W2UHS, and he held an Advanced Class license. He lived at the time in Knickerbocker Village, a housing project on Monroe Street in the Two Bridges section of the lower east side. There were several other prominent residents in Charlie’s building. The most famous, or infamous, were convicted Soviet spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. [3] Julius, by the way, was, like Charlie, an electrical engineer. [4]



Knickerbocker Village
Image: Wikipedia

Charlie was an imposing figure, especially to young people taking the F.C.C. tests. He wasn’t a bad guy at all, but he seemed to always inspire fear and resentment from anyone who felt intimidated by him. Years later, I’ve heard various epithets hurled at him from hams. “Old pickle puss,” was one. Another made up certain obscene phonetics for “F.C.C.,” and which focused its ire on Charlie. I knew a fellow ham, a senior at Fair Lawn High when I was a sophomore, who had written a song about Charlie. I dare not repeat the words.

I only returned to the old F.C.C. office one more time, in 1968. I was a junior in college, and anticipating a job in the broadcasting industry, I went there to sit for the Third Class Commercial Radiotelephone License with Broadcast Endorsement, the basic commercial ticket for a job either as announcer or engineer. I purposely didn’t want a First Class ‘Phone, because most jobs offered to those with that license were “babysitting” the broadcast transmitter. That meant doing little more than taking transmitter meter readings every half hour and keeping the broadcast log. B-O-R-I-N-G! Charlie Finkelman was still there, and this time, I had no fear at all. The test was a snap, and I passed easily. I would never see Charlie again.

Sometime in the mid-1970s, I learned that Charlie had retired and moved to Florida. He had let his amateur license expire. I guess Charlie had become sick and tired of hams and amateur radio itself after facing thousands of disgruntled, often nasty license applicants over the years. None of us ever seemed to consider the fact that Charlie was just a working man doing his job.

There were two other F.C.C. engineers at the New York office that I know of from those days. One was Henry Paulisen, W2JOT. The other was Al Zetekoff, then W2BHB, and later, W2AL. I never heard Henry on the air. His license expired sometime in the 1960s. I never heard Charlie on the air, either. I don’t think anybody has. I once heard Al operating as W2AL on 40 meter SSB, though, but I never worked him.

The Way We Were

All these memories became distant history sometime in the 1980s, I think, when the F.C.C. office moved from the Washington Street Federal Building to its newer location at 201 Varick Street. Those who went to the Varick Street address to take their amateur exams will no doubt have memories of their own. The Varick Street office remained open for license exams until it was phased out in favor of the Volunteer Examiner program.



Federal Building, 201 Varick St
Image: Wikipedia

Taking the amateur license exam before a Federal employee was never much fun, but it was a rite of passage for those of us young enough to have lived through it, and survived. For all of us who did survive this minor ordeal, the experience has left us with memories that will last a lifetime.

Thanks, Charlie, wherever you are.

Special thanks to Jim Cooper, W2JC, for some excellent photo editing for this article.

Until next month,

73,

Fred W2AAB

NOTES:

[1] "Federal Office Building (New York City)," *Wikipedia* at:
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Office_Building_\(New_York_City\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Office_Building_(New_York_City))

[2] Hertzberg, Robert, W2DJJ, "So You Want to Become a Ham," *Popular Electronics*, December, 1954, pp. 42-43.

[3] "Knickerbocker Village, Notable Residents," *Wikipedia*, at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knickerbocker_Village

[4] Alexandra, Giulia, "Yellow Fever and Red Scare: the Very Colorful History of Knickerbocker Village," *Bedford + Bowery* website, December 31, 2014, at: <https://bedfordandbowery.com/2014/12/yellow-fever-and-red-scare-the-very-colorful-history-of-knickerbocker-village/>

In My Opinion:

Talk or Babble: Communications And The Radio Amateur

From Lou Janicek N2CYY

Reprinted with permission from
CQ Magazine

Thanks Lou!

As timely today as back then.

BY LOUIS JANICEK*

Stop! Put your mike down. Push that key away. Power everything down. Danger is near but we don't see it. We don't even know it's there. What's that you say? The commies are coming? No, the danger is not a commie behind every bush. The danger lies in that we have taken the meaning of communication lightly. Let's sit back and take a good hard look at ourselves, our hobby, and our understanding of communication.

Webster says communication is "to be connected . . . to exchange ideas . . . sharing. . ." The *ARRL Handbook* says of our hobby, ". . . it's a way of discovering new friends while experimenting with different and exciting new ways to advance the art of our hobby. Ham radio is a global fraternity of people with common and yet widely varying interests, able to exchange ideas and learn more about each other."

We've lost sight of that. We are losing our ability to communicate. We've come to emphasize the *means* of communication over the *content* of communication. We are not alone in this, however. Society itself is now consumed with faster, shinier, flashier, but not necessarily better.

Look at Ma Bell. Remember those nice, cozy phone booths in ice cream parlors and drug stores? Or those great protective (not to mention dry) phone booths on street corners and highways? Well, they are going the way of the dinosaur. One by one, they are being replaced by open-air wall units. And with them goes the possibility of the intimate, thoughtful, personal conversations that used to be possible in a booth. The entire pattern of communication in America is changing as a result, but that's progress. It's just another triumph of technological means over human needs—a victory of means over meaning. Sure phones work better now. They are faster, come in "designer" colors and styles, are more electromechanically reliable (with pushbuttons to

boot), but the communication they allow is more superficial and less personal. They are fine for finding out what to pick up at the corner store after work, but not at all satisfactory for patching up a fight between mates—not at all conducive to real, personal, meaningful talk.

Look at CB radio (shudder if you must, but read on). Except for emergency highway monitoring and CD work, the CB "happening" is but the mindless explosive chatter of gadget-oriented consumers playing with a new toy—a shiny toy, and yet only silly inanities to mumble about from "Rubber Ducky" and "Felix the Cat" to "Where's Smokey?" Silhouetted in the glow of their fancy digital readouts, they sit babbling to one another on the level of your average one-year-old. They've got top-notch sophisticated equipment, but nothing worthwhile to say. All the emphasis is placed on the means of communication—faster, sharper, newer—but no thought is given to increasing the value, content, or meaning of what is being communicated.

Hold on now. What's all this got to do with me? I'm no lid. I'm an educated amateur radio operator. Well, don't look now, but it's happening to us, too!

Amateur radio is a broad service. It attracts people of widely differing interests. There are those with a keen experimental and technological bent, those exploring the fringes of the latest advanced communication techniques. In our hearts we all have that incurable love of tinkering, of fostering the growth and advancement of newer, better ways to communicate electronically. However, there is much more to amateur radio than even that.

The majority of amateurs like to just plain talk. Ragchewing with other amateurs is great, but from my listening post, our conversations are more and more empty, meaningless, and joyless QSO's. (I won't even go into the problem of the increasing number of rude amateurs who are jamming, QRMIing, and otherwise polluting our bands with their lack of courtesy and proper operating savvy.) Most times an operator will just mumble along

about his latest new-fangled platinum-plated widget. That's fine to a point, but amateur radio is supposed to bring people together in understanding and sharing. We are instead becoming like the amateur photographer who spends so much time at the camera shop buying the latest high-spec lenses and film, that he has no time to actually go out and take some pictures. We'll spend hundreds, sometimes many thousands, of dollars in new rigs, antennas, and digital whatever's, and then with mike in hand, we'll run through 100 3-minute QSO's about the local temperature and humidity without really having touched or having been touched by the other amateur.

The ultimate ironic technological folly is that of the amateur who has at his fingertips the means to talk halfway around the globe and then can only mumble vague comments about signal strength and local weather conditions once his signal gets there.

We are fast letting ourselves be done-in by our own technology. I'm not against progress and growth. I'm not a back-to-the-woods hermit. However, technology is swiftly outpacing man's ability to understand himself. We are being swallowed up by our own creation. So much is possible through our hobby, but so many possibilities for mutual enrichment and sharing are being overshadowed and smothered by our emphasis on the trivial. We talk more and more about less and less using better and better equipment.

Okay, you've been warned! Power up those rigs again and get out those propagation charts. Think to yourself "content, meaning, and sharing." Let's get back to that good old serious ragchewing. Let's get down to talking to each other about ourselves—our interests, our ideas, and our other hobbies. Let's really talk—talk about fishing, hunting, politics, astronomy, beer drinking, and even beer stein collecting. Let's share a real personal part of ourselves on the air. We'd better, lest we gradually but surely become nothing but simple-minded drones babbling across the continents.

*85-32 76 St., Woodhaven, NY 11421



FLARC Proof Of Performance

Why is FLARC New Jersey's most exciting radio club?

Here are just a few reasons so far in 2019:

- Field Day at Memorial Park
- Winter Field Day
- World Amateur Radio Day special event
- Earth Day At Great Falls special event station
- Garretson House special event station
- Memorial Day parade public event
- Portable Day(s) with BARA
- Fair Lawn Street Fair(s) public event
- Independence Day Fireworks public event
- Vintage Night
- "Kids Day" public event with TCRA
- North American QSO Party
- NJ QSO Party
- Foxhunts
- Summer VANFEST at W2DLT
- Field Trip to iHeart Radio

Plus:

- Thursday Night open house and CW class
- Soldering classes
- RACES/ARES public service
- Monthly w sessions
- Projects such as end fed and 2m antennas
- Annual member interest survey
- Weekly Monday "Near and Far" Net
- FLARC auction
- FLARC Holiday Party free to members

Plus:

- Over 45 consecutive months of speaker programs including K1JT in 2019!
- New equipment in the shack!
- New antennas on the roof!
- Coming Soon: Tuesday evening and Saturday morning club openings
- And...a clubhouse!!

That's why FLARC is the best club around!!
Join us with more activities, speakers and projects to come!

The Vanished Landmark

By: Fred Belghaus W2AAB

Can you identify this landmark of electronic communications history?

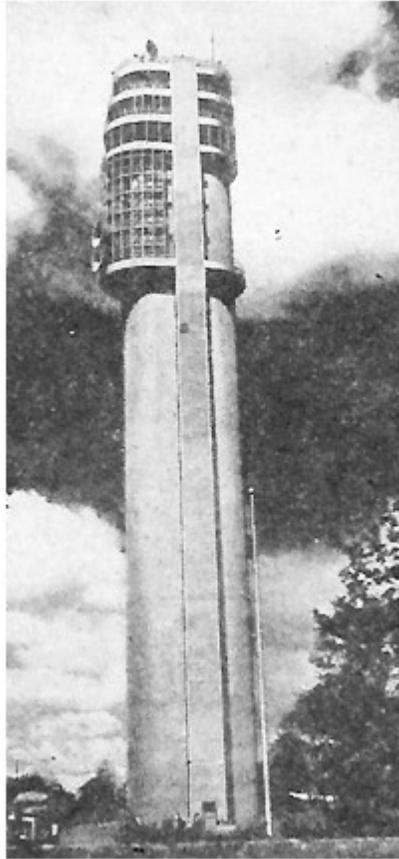


Image: *Radio Craft*, July, 1948

Hints:

- It was built in 1947 and demolished in 1996
- It was located within 10 miles of FLARC HQ
- It was used for sending microwave signals as part of a joint military and industrial project
- An urban legend says that someone committed suicide by jumping off it
- The site where it was located was sold to developers, who have built condos where it once stood

WHAT WAS IT, AND WHERE WAS IT LOCATED?

Major Wayne Smith WB2ONZ Discusses “The Civil Air Patrol Communications Program” March 20th As The 2020 FLARC Speaker Series Continues

The March 20, 2020 FLARC speaker program discusses a critical but often unnoticed part of our communications security infrastructure – The Civil Air Patrol (CAP).

The program will be held at the Fair Lawn Senior Center, 11-05 Gardiner Road in Fair Lawn. The program begins at 7PM and refreshments will be served.

CAP's radio systems are well-prepared to provide contingency communications when commercial communications systems are unavailable or overloaded. CAP holds 15 national voice nets a week on multiple HF frequencies with close to 120 daily check-ins. All 50 states plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia are represented in the national nets. There are many region and state-level HF nets on various schedules. Some areas conduct local VHF nets. CAP also maintains duty station watch on a national suite of dedicated ALE frequencies, ready for unscheduled relay of internal and external traffic, and is developing an infrastructure of MilStd 188-110 data communications, which will have HF modems installed at all levels of the organization. Over 19,000 CAP members are trained in use of these radio systems, including close to 4,500 holding, or in training for, advanced communications qualifications. Many, but by no means all, are amateur radio operators.

Our speaker is Major Wayne Smith who is the Deputy Group Commander and Communications Officer for Long Island Group, Civil Air Patrol / US Air Force Auxiliary. He manages a volunteer team supporting air and ground based VHF and HF radio communications, supporting Civil Air Patrol missions including: Emergency services, air search and rescue, homeland security and cadet programs. He has more than eleven years of experience in this role.

Major Smith is responsible for training and supervision of communications officers and radio operators in eight CAP squadrons located throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties (NY), communications support of Group and Squadron activities, communications planning including emergency response, inter-agency communications liaison and communications infrastructure and equipment requirements planning and management.

He was recognized as New York Wing Civil Air Patrol "Communicator of the Year" in 2016 and 2010 and a Northeast Region Commander's Commendation for Communications Support (2013). Major Smith was awarded a Civil Air Patrol Disaster Relief Ribbon for support he provided in response to hurricane Sandy and Irene. He is also an active, FAA licensed Private Pilot and a Civil Air Patrol Mission Transport Pilot.

Wayne has been an active ham since the 1970's. He has an Advanced Class license (WB2ONZ). He enjoys digital communications modes and mobile operating, including mobile HF. He is a member of the Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club.



Major Wayne Smith WB2ONZ



CAP Communications Team

Theoretics Demystified

More on test equipment and other things. After writing about test equipment basics, I got working on a very unusual piece of test equipment, a signal tracer that is battery operated but uses a 1t4 vacuum tube! The tube is inside the probe! The grid of the tube is connected directly to the probe tip via a flat mica capacitor, 0.01 uF I think, and the It4 having a battery powered heater has no cathode element.

The heater is the cathode itself! Being a pentode (but used as a triode) it is very simple but complicated in that aside from putting a pair of high impedance headphones like the type used with crystal sets in the plate circuit, there is a meter that can be switched into the plate circuit in place of the headphones. The meter part of the circuit also has a 1 1/2-volt battery added into the meter circuit with an adjustment pot. This meter circuit is part of the plate circuit with the 'bias' battery is added into the b+ circuit. The purpose looks to be an adjustment for meter sensitivity and is called 'balance' but there seems to be no documentation or instructions on usage of the tracer. The tracer is a Superior Instruments model ca-11, circa 1946.

Getting on to other types of test equipment, a continuity tester is quite useful especially if there is an audible device included to indicate continuity. A meter is good for this, but you need to look at it to see if there is continuity. Many times, you need to be doing other things as part of the test procedure. Test leads with alligator clips is quite the thing to make the testing procedure easier and safer. When testing continuity of a component or wiring, power to the circuit must be OFF! or you will blow up the continuity tester. As I said before a tester with sound and light is desirable.



Continued on page 34

In A Nutshell

Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their antennas! With spring being here, or almost here, it is time to spruce up all of those weather-beaten connections, mounting hardware and grounding connections and radials if part of your antenna setup.

This is not to say that we in the northeast will not have snowstorms into April! Most important is safety. Ham radio, although a beloved hobby, is not worth dying for or having a life changing injury because of a safety shortcut!

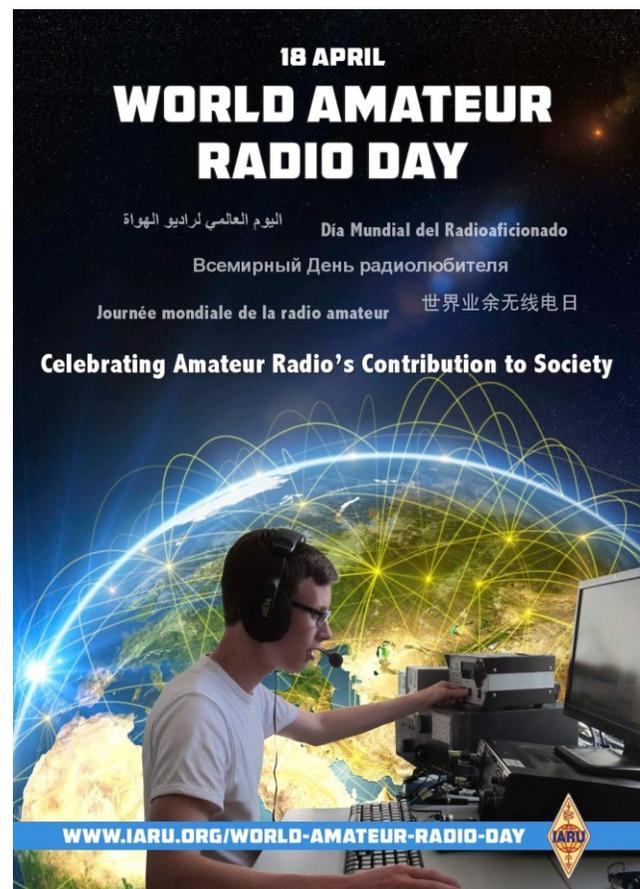
The best news is that with springtime, hamfests are back! Most importantly, it is not the equipment but the people that make this hobby so interesting!

So go meet new people, have fun with the hobby, learn and Elmer a new ham that you bring into the fold.

Fred Wawra W2ABE, 73.

World Amateur Radio Day Is Coming!

The clubhouse will be open April 18 from noon – 5PM.



FLARC DOES RIDGEWOOD SUPER SCIENCE SATURDAY

On Saturday, February 29, hundreds of students and their parents visited the FLARC exhibit at “Super Science Saturday” in Ridgewood, NJ. Captain Larry WA2ALY was on hand to introduce students to Morse Code and tutor them on dits and dahs. Every student graduated by sending their name using a J-38 key. A HF station was set up and operated by Nomar NP4H, John W2JLH, Stan KC2K and David KD2MOB. They used an end-fed wire antenna that John built from a FLARC antenna kit. Karl W2KBF and Dave KD2JIP hid a small 2 meter transmitter at various locations in the classroom then encouraged students to locate the transmitter with a simple “FoxFinder.” Finally, Fred W2ABE and Judith KC2LTM brought an antique wooden hand-cranked telephone generator and bell to show how communications equipment looked and sounded like over a century ago.



Karl W2KBF shows off foxhunting



Captain Larry teaches Morse Code



L to R: NP4H, WA2ALY, W2JLH, N2JIP and W2KBF



John W2JLH and Dave KD2MOB at the HF station



Stan KC2K takes his turn operating the HF setup

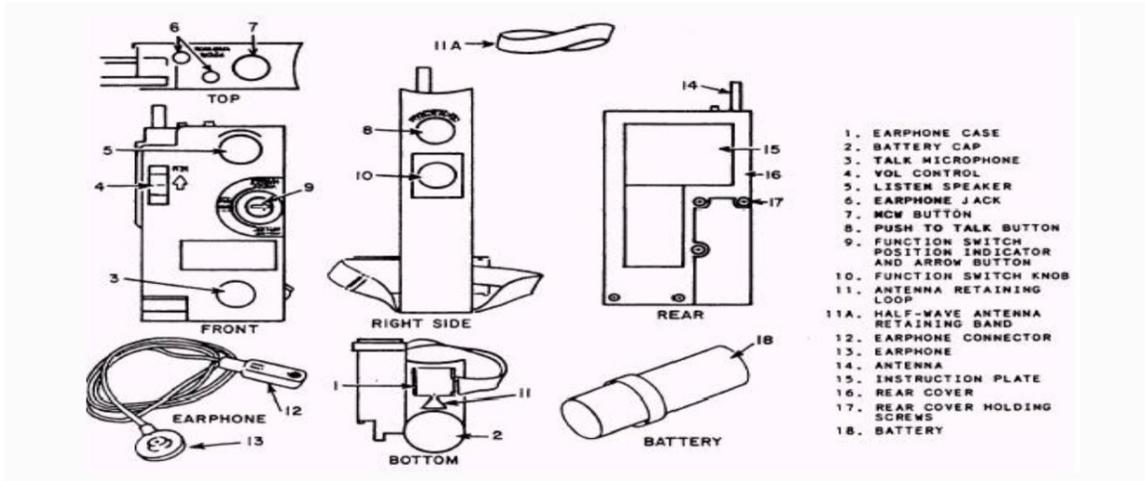


Larry WA2ALY and a happy Morse student at the fair

Radios From The Road

This past month Lee Smith KD2DRS attended a OneWeb Satellite function in Cocoa Beach, FL. For dinner they took the five buses of folks over to the **Valiant Air Command Warbird Museum** in Titusville, FL.

We were in the Vietnam era section which allowed me to get photos of two PRC-90s, a survival, Search and Rescue radio using military VHF frequencies. The three options were: voice, beacon, and mcw or modulated CW should they have wanted to send code. Frequencies are shown. A diagram of the radio's components is attached. These were manufactured by Sylvania. Thanks Lee!



PRC 90 Radio Diagram



PRC 90 Radio



PRC 90 Radio

Images from Space

By Robert Holstrom, KD2BKD, 01/03/2020

While going over some amateur radio news site on the internet I came across an article about that the Amateur Radio International Space Station (ARISS) will be transmitting Slow Scan Television (SSTV) signals for the New Year.

<http://www.southgatearc.org/news/2019/december/ariss-sstv-transmissions.htm#.Xg39tvx7nRY>

This was interesting to me as I have tried to make satellite QSOs several times without much luck. I could hear others satellite QSOs going on but have never made any contacts. I tried this using my Elk 2M/440L5 Antenna and HT.

As the SSTV transmissions were to start soon, I had to learn what it would take to receive them. Well it should not require any equipment I do not already have just the software to decode the signal. This “frequently asked question” site tells of what software is needed.

https://www.spaceflightsoftware.com/ARISS_SSTV/faq.php

I downloaded “MMSSTV” for my Win10 Laptop and also got “Robot36” SSTV Image Decoder for my Android phone.

My first try on Saturday, December 28th, 10:20 AM our time was using the Elk antenna connected to my HT. I used the Win10 Laptop microphone to listen to the audio out the HT. I also used “Heavens Above” to track the ISS on my Android phone. Max elevation was 60 degrees so it should be a strong and long enough signal. To the right is what I got.



Not sure what the problem was. Maybe it too much background noise? Maybe the HT audio was not as good as what was needed?

Because of the poor picture quality, I got out my Kenwood TS-2000 and connected the audio directly from the radio using a homemade audio interface. I still used the Elk antenna and “Heavens Above” on the Android phone to visually track the ISS to know where the antenna should point.



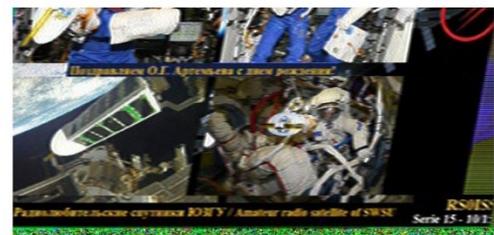
Next pass was Sunday, December 29th, 10:20 AM our time. This was a max elevation 68-degree pass.

Much better but not sure why it is at an angle.



Next time I tried was Tuesday, December 31st, 8:10 AM our time still using the TS-2000. Max elevation on this pass was only 17 degrees so the pass was very fast with less time.

The pass was so low on the horizon the beginning of the transmission was not heard and then the signal was gone.



Another pass was in just 90 minutes, Tuesday, December 31st, at 9:40 our time. This time the max elevation was 41 degrees, so I receive the complete transmission. I guess the signal was a bit noisy 3/4 down on the transmission or my arm got tired from pointing the antenna and turning it for the best signal.



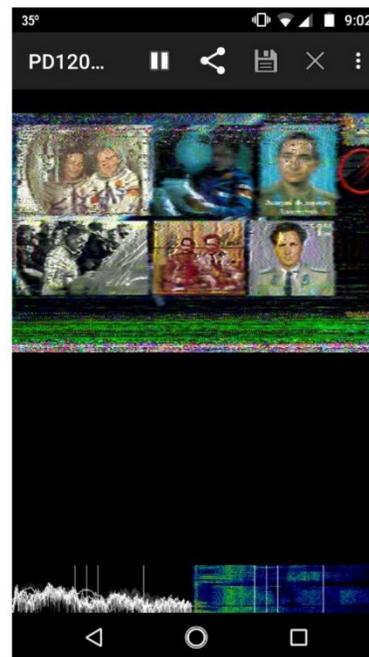
Next pass was Wednesday, January 1st, at 9:00 AM our time at a 75-degree elevation.

Now with a bit of experience I wanted to try with less equipment since the elevation was so high and I had a good view for the pass.

I used just a HT with Diamond RH77CA HT antenna. *You can see the antenna on the HT in the 2nd photo above.*

To decode the picture, I used an Android phone using just the microphone from the audio out the HT acoustically. I did not get the beginning of this transmission, but the end came out fairly clear for having just a simple HT antenna. The transmission of the image was finished less than 1/2 the total pass.

Each transmission is 2 minutes with a 1 minute break in between so maybe I can get a 2nd in a single pass.



I hooked up the Elk antenna to HT to see if I could get the next transmission within the same pass. Ask you can see at the right it did just fine until the end were the ISS was on the horizon and then gone. The noisy spots in the middle is from were my arm got tired of holding and pointing the antenna toward the ISS and spinning it for the clearest signal.

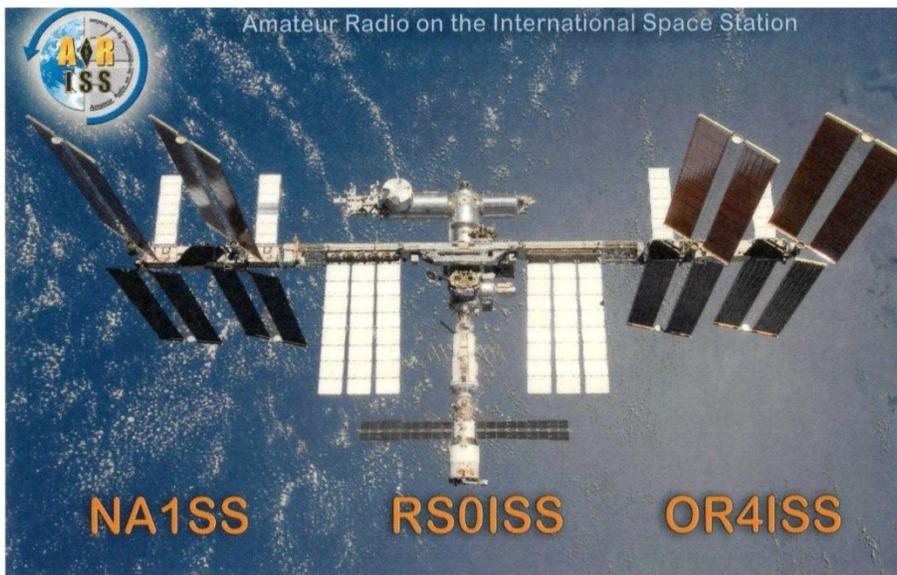
From my experience it does not take that much equipment to get a decent SSTV image from the ARISS. I would recommend either the Elk, Arrow, or home-made directional antenna like a tape measure antenna used for fox hunting. If you are using a smart phone to decode, I would recommend using an old smart phone to track where the ISS is so you will know where to point the antenna.



I logged in my received CCTV images on the internet along with location and equipment used on each pass. By being part of this program, I received the following certificate.



ARISS QSL Card received by KD2BKD for receiving SSTV Images from SPACE



The International Space Station (ISS) is sponsored by **Canada, Japan, Russia, the USA and many nations in Europe**. ISS crews hail from these and other nations. Major hardware elements are:

- Zarya , Zvezda, Pirs, research modules Poisk and MRM-1 Rassvet built by Russia
- Science lab Destiny, Unity, Quest, Harmony and Tranquility modules provided by the US
- Canadian Mobile Servicing System, a 55-foot mobile robotic arm used for assembly and maintenance
- Columbus module, a science laboratory provided by ESA
- Kibo module, a science laboratory provided by Japan.

ISS crews and visitors often use their Amateur Radio station, first set up in Zarya and then Zvezda, to talk with school students to aid in their education, plus chat with fellow radio amateurs around the world. The ARISS Team continually works to extend ISS Amateur Radio station capability with new operation modes and, more recently, equipment placement in the Columbus module.

To **KD2BKD**

From	Day	Month	Year	UTC	MHz
<input type="checkbox"/> NA1SS	28			1530	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RS0ISS	29	12	2019	1314	145.8
<input type="checkbox"/> OR4ISS	31			1410	

Mode : Voice Packet SSTV APRS Repeater SWL

ROSOFT-THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING!

-73-

Here Are The Top-Line Findings From The 2020 FLARC Member Survey

The club has grown rapidly and a majority of club members *want it to continue to grow* in both size and reputation.

But growth has its consequences and a larger percentage of members believe that we are large enough at its current level than previous years.

The percentage of those claiming to be “active” in the club is down over previous years as membership has grown.

There continues to be *high satisfaction* in the current direction of the club but the overall rating score is marginally lower than last year – driven mostly by long-time members.

The weekly club meetings are most important for *staying connected* with other members.

Creating more time for the club to be open aside from Friday is a clear desire from many members but many still cannot find the time to attend other days.

Having more projects and items that involve learning are very important to members as well as more *activities geared to new hams*.

“Finding me more time” to be involved is a frustration for more than four in ten members.

A majority of survey respondents would be willing to make an additional voluntary monetary contribution to the club to improve equipment.

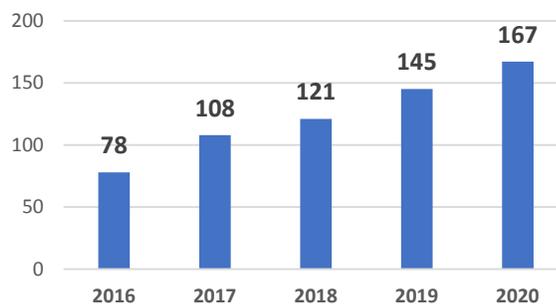
Nearly half of all members belong only to FLARC.

Fewer than one third claim to be *currently active* in the club.

Four in ten would be “active participants” in taking advantage of the club’s being open on a day other than Friday; one in eight have already taken advantage of the additional days.

Getting more members involved is a key concern for many. Recruiting younger members is also a concern for some members.

Most are interested in learning more about antennas and how they work followed by activities about computers/software and kit construction.



FLARC Membership: 2016-2020

Fair Lawn RACES/ARES Corner, continued

The FL-ARES KB2FLA Net takes place every Wednesday at 1900 hours on the FLARC Repeater. Please join us every Wednesday for any updates, messages or activities which may take place. FL-ARES would like to thank the FLARC for the use of its repeater.

A few people who are part of FL-ARES attended Super Science Saturday with the FLARC at Ridgewood High School on February 29th. We leaped at this great opportunity to show students of all ages what amateur radio is all about and the communications which can be provided in the event of an emergency. Thank you for attending Super Science Saturday.

We will be assisting FL-CERT with various events going forward. There will be 5K Run at the Radburn School which will be taking place on Sunday, March 15th. FL-ARES will meet at Memorial Middle School around 9:45 AM on March 15th to receive our assignments.

ARES through the ARRL is undergoing a 21st century makeover - the timing can't be any better. Please see the ARRL-ARES article linked below. New ARES plan aligns ARES with the needs of Served Agencies: <http://www.arrl.org/news/new-plan-aligns-ares-with-the-needs-of-served-agencies> Please sign up for various nets and activities taking place at the following web address: <https://arrl.volunteerhub.com /lp/nnj>

Now, getting back to FL-RACES: Our next FL-RACES KB2FLR net will take place on Wednesday, March 11th at 1920 hours. The Fair Lawn ARC Repeater is used (RX 145.47 MHz / TX 144.87, PL TX Tone 167.9 Hz). Thank you to the Fair Lawn Amateur Radio Club for permitting FL-RACES for using the repeater.

FL-RACES is part of several RACES groups which operate within Bergen County and from time to time has training opportunities with Bergen County RACES. The volunteer efforts of our members are very much appreciated.

Our monthly meetings usually take place right after the FLARC business meeting. Please join us for the next FL-RACES meeting. If you are interested in joining the Fair Lawn RACES, please contact me. Anyone who's a licensed amateur radio operator may join Fair Lawn RACES and there's no residential requirement.

For information regarding Bergen County RACES, please go to <http://www.bcnjraces.org>. Thank you very much.

73. David KD2MOB

Theoretics Demystified, cont'd

Ideal-Sperry made a handheld continuity tester (61-505) where you hold the tester in one hand with your hand touching a metal contact, then using your other hand, touch one side of the area to be checked for continuity and then use the probe tip to touch the other side of the area in question. If there is continuity a lad would light up. The path through your body was part of the circuit! Obviously, the circuit had to be off and components discharged.

You can make your own continuity tester using a battery, led, a sounder of some type and appropriate test leads, preferably with clips of some type. Signal tracers are available for audio and rf, ranging from vintage and used equipment sold at ham fests to much sophisticated new units. Scopes can also and are used as visual signal tracers. Scopes will give you much needed analytical information over and above a simple go- or no-go indication. Audio/rf tracers can let you hear an audio signal or a demodulated rf signal.

Remember when working on tube equipment, keep one hand away from the equipment when testing or tracing to avoid being part of the high voltage circuit and becoming a Silent Key!

That said, explore and learn!

Fred Wawra W2ABE, 73.

March 2020 Business Meeting



Getting ready for the March 2020 business meeting

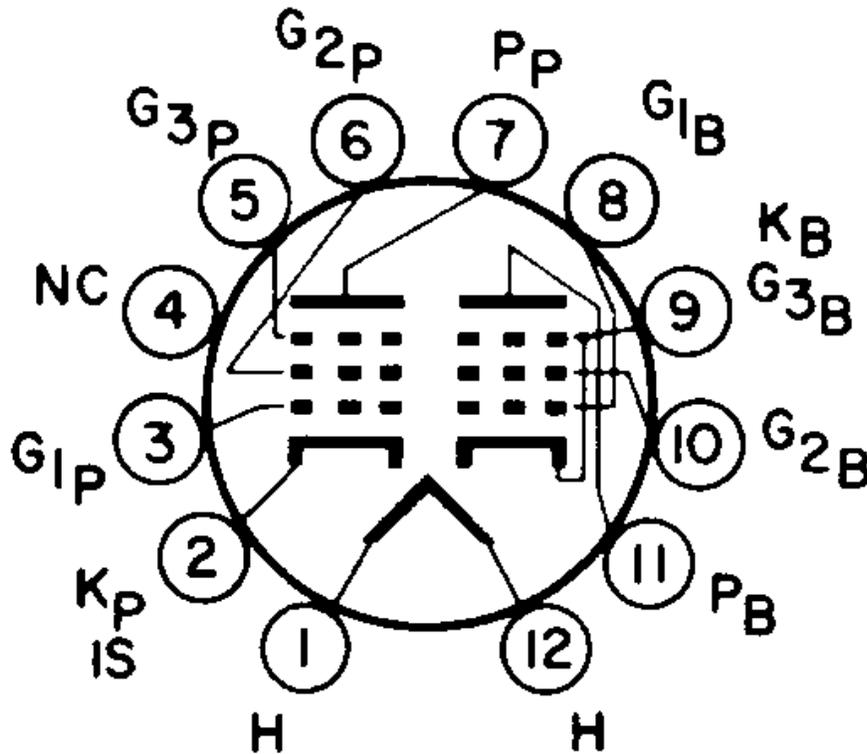
Christmas Magic With A Vacuum Tube

By: Fred Belghaus W2AAB

Introduction: Bobby Drummond, AK4JA of Newnan, Georgia is an avid QRP (low power) operator. But he's not your typical QRPer. Bobby is a successful designer and builder of simple, effective, but unusual low power transmitters using vacuum tubes. But Bobby makes his transmitters unique and interesting by choosing uncommon and little known tube types for these efforts.

Recently, Bobby built a crystal-controlled M.O.P.A. (Master Oscillator Power Amplifier) transmitter for the 60 meter band. The circuit uses a 12T10 tube, which is a 12-pin Compactron type which has been described as a pentode-beam power amplifier and as a "double dissimilar pentode." The oscillator is a Colpitts circuit with pi-network output, delivering 5 Watts. The 12T10 is identical to a 6T10, except that the 12T10 requires 12.6 Volts for the filament, while the 6T10 requires a filament voltage of 6.3 Volts.

Here's the internal schematic drawing of this unusual tube:



12EZ

Image: <https://rtellason.com/tubedata/12EZ.png>

Christmas Magic With A Vacuum Tube

Here are some pictures of Bobby's unusual transmitter, which he has supplied for this article:



Christmas Magic With A Vacuum Tube



Now, we could stop right here, after showing what can be done with some “junkbox” parts, a cake pan, an unusual vacuum tube, and a lot of imagination. But this is just the beginning of our story.

One week before Christmas, Bobby took his wife on a trip to Tennessee. When he got back home in Georgia, he had one of those “magical” ham radio experiences that some of us have been fortunate enough to have had over the years. Bobby posted his unusual story on the QRP-L email list, and we have obtained his permission to reproduce it here. Here’s Bobby’s story....

Last week my family and I traveled to Gatlinburg, TN to spend some time in the Smoky Mountains with extended family just before Christmas. This was a rare event, a first in fact, in our 43 years as a married couple.

It was a great time, with snow in Gatlinburg during our drive up and during the first night there. We stayed until Sunday and decided to travel up to Asheville, NC. My wife decided that a trip to the Biltmore Estate would be a nice Christmas present. (They had the Downton Abbey exhibit there at the time and she's a big fan.) Since I didn't have to wrap that Christmas present and it was only about 100 miles further up the road, I jumped at the chance to give her an early Christmas present - especially one that she truly would enjoy.

We stayed at a hotel south of Asheville on Sunday night, in the Mills River area, and traveled to the Estate on Monday afternoon. After checking in at the ticket office on site, my wife decided to not go until Tuesday, when senior citizens get a discount.

We saw other sites and attractions in the area and enjoyed some more of Asheville Monday afternoon and Monday night. On Tuesday we went to the Biltmore Estate again. This time my wife took in the tour and loved it. Afterwards we drove home.

Christmas Magic With A Vacuum Tube

I had been going through ham radio withdrawals most of the entire week-long visit. I didn't take a radio along on this trip but should have because there were plenty of tall trees all around the rental cabin we stayed at. Launching an antenna with the pneumatic launcher would have been easier than pumpkin pie.

So, after arriving home one of the first things I did after getting things in order was to get on the air. I chose one of my 60 meter homebrew transmitters and called CQ on "channel 5" (5.405 MHz)

Well, who would answer but a ham just a few miles down the road from where we stayed those two nights in Asheville! We had a nice long QSO, comparing notes about Asheville and the area's attractions. He was a dulcimer player and soon to be on his way to Mexico City to visit friends. One of the locations we ate at on Tuesday was where his son and his son's girlfriend had just visited.

I just love these odd ham radio coincidences, something that has happened many times as a ham. I just so happened to call CQ on 60 meters when he was listening as well. (I have called CQ on 60 meters countless times without a single reply in the past.) Not only that but he lives just a hop, skip and a jump from where we visited the day before. I had never worked him before and the first time I did this wouldn't you know that these odd coincidences were delightfully present.

It's another reason that keeps me coming back to ham radio, keeps me calling CQ, all too often to no replies, and when these kinds of things happen, it always leaves me with a sense of gratitude and wonder as a ham radio operator.

73 DE AK4JA <><><><><><>

I loved this story, and sent the following reply to Bobby and the QRP-L email group:

Great Christmas story, Bobby, and best of all, it's true. Well, you gave your wife a nice present, and you got one in return... A QSO you will always remember.

That's the magic of Christmas... And ham radio.

73, MX and HNY
Fred W2AAB

<><><><><><>

Then, Bobby replied to me, as follows:

Thanks, Fred. I hadn't thought of it that way before but you're probably right.
Thanks for pointing that out. Have a wonderful Christmas and fantastic New Year.

<><><><><><>

If anybody still doubts that ham radio is the King of Hobbies, they ought to let their license expire and take up basket weaving, instead!

72, and keep those filaments hot, Bobby, DE Fred, W2AAB

Dues Are Due - Time is Running Out!!

It's that time of the year again as dues for 2020 are now being received by our Treasurer, AI WA2OWL.

It's always good to get your dues in early and save the task of chasing you down after New Year's. And they remain at the same level as they have for many years while the club has grown in size and activities.

This year we renewed over 85% of our 2018 members; quite a feat with a base membership number of around 145.

The FLARC member count closed 2019 at 167.

Thanks to you, this is the best club around and you vote your satisfaction with the club by getting your dues in and done for. AI can explain other dues levels beyond basic renewal.

Dues are the lifeblood of the club. An ad earlier in the newsletter points out what's been done this year to earn your renewal. So renew now while you're thinking it and give FLARC a great start into 2020!!



At Deadline:

As of February 24, we have now renewed 120 + members... and on course to match or exceed the record level of 2019. Don't put it off — renew NOW while you're thinking about it.



FLARC "Year of Learning"

To be decided	How many ways do hams use CW ?	Fred W2AAB
To be decided	Logging and QSL Bureaus	Jim W2JC
What Can You Contribute To The Club??!!		

News and Notes

Trustee Don N2PRT is now K2PD. Quite an outstanding call.

Get well wishes to Treasurer AI WA2OWL who is recovering from surgery.

FLARC'ers Dave N2AAM, Bob N2SU and Ed WX2R were seen at the annual SWL FEST in Plymouth Meeting, PA on February 28th.

AI KC2RG sent along a pix of a recent visit to a club station in Asuncion, Paraguay.

Welcome to FLARC, AI!!



KC2RG visiting ZP5AA Radio Club Paraguay in Asuncion

March 2020 Meeting Notes

FLARC Business Meeting Minutes 6 March 2020

Vice President John W2JLH called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

The members rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Secretary Randy WU2S called the roll of officers and trustees and President Nomar NP4H and Trustee Don K2PD were absent. The meeting had a quorum to conduct club business. Don K2PD arrived at 7:50 p.m.

Secretary Randy WU2S announced that the minutes from the February meeting were sent to all members of record and published in the club's newsletter, The Resonator, which is on the club's website at

<http://newsletters.FairLawnARC.org>

He asked the members present if there were any corrections or amendments needed. There were none so Skip KD2BRV moved to accept the minutes as published and Brian KD2KLN seconded the motion. The motion passed by acclamation.

Vice President John W2JLH asked if any new members or guests were present. A new member, Henry, rose and introduced himself. He does not yet have a call sign.

Treasurer Al WA2OWL read this month's Treasurer's Report. Judith KC2LTM moved to accept the report as presented and Dave N2AAM seconded the motion. The motion passed by acclamation.

Ed WX2R reported for the Publicity Committee that the next committee meeting will be on Friday March 13 at 6:00 p.m.

Ed WX2R announced the schedule for the guest speaker series.

March 20 – Major Wayne Smith WB2ONZ, Deputy Commander of the Long Island Group Civil Air Patrol will speak about the Civil Air Patrol communications and their interaction with amateur radio.

April 17 – Rich Moseson W2VU. Editor of CQ magazine and Editorial Director of CQ Communications, Inc.

May 15 – TBD this is a change in schedule from last month's report.

June 19 – Hal Kennedy N4GG will present "Spark at FLARC" via Skype video conference.

July 17 – Neil Goldstein W2NDG will discuss Raspberry Pi computer applications.

Continued in next column.

March 2020 Meeting Notes

August 21 – Vintage Night at FLARC – see and operate antique amateur radio equipment.

September 18 – Van W2DLT talks about his DXpedition to the Caribbean on the island of Antigua.

Other dates that Ed WX2R asked members to keep in mind are:

April 18 – World Amateur Radio Day. This is not a contest but an opportunity to celebrate everything about ham radio. Last year FLARC was the only club station in North America to participate. Since this year's event is on a Saturday, we will likely host an open house for all visitors.

April 22 – Great Falls Earth Day event.

June 14 – Radburn Street Fair

October 18 – River Road Street Fair

Randy WU2S reported for the Tech Committee that he and Jim W2JC are planning to test a configuration of several computers running N1MM logging software and communicating across an AREDN mesh network. If anyone is interested in learning about how to setup N1MM on a network, please contact Randy or Jim. Judith KC2LTM said that the laptop computer at position #3 is not working. Randy said that he would investigate it. Gene WO2W asked if the club could obtain a VTVM or a VOM since the current equipment is not operating. Randy said that he will contribute one of each type of meter to the club.

Secretary Randy WU2S read a summary of the statistics of the FLARC YouTube channel provided by Thom W2NZ. We added 18 subscribers in the past month, views are up by 18 per cent and watch time is up by 32 per cent.

Jim W2JC reported on improvement to the FLARC web site. There is now a scrolling banner which alerts you to upcoming events. Jim enhanced the event calendar to make it easier to maintain. Jim W2JC reminded members that 'alerts' are sent out on our Twitter feed as well as the groups.io email group and the main web page. Jim W2JC also indicated problems sending email info to members using optimum.net email addresses, and requested those who have not seen recent club emails to advise Jim W2JC so that can be investigated.

Brian KD2KLN reported that a radio was loaned to Fred W2AAB for this weekend, to use in the SSB contest. Brian asked members for volunteers to act as net control for upcoming Monday night Near and Far net sessions. Gene WO2W volunteered to be net control on March 9 and Dave N2AAM will control the March 23 session.

Continued on next page.

March 2020 Meeting Notes

Brian KD2KLN reported that a radio was loaned to Fred W2AAB for this weekend, to use in the SSB contest. Brian asked members for volunteers to act as net control for upcoming Monday night Near and Far net sessions. Gene WO2W volunteered to be net control on March 9 and Dave N2AAM will control the March 23 session.

Vice President John W2JLH announced that the ARES meeting scheduled for after the FLARC business meeting has been cancelled.

Vice President John W2JLH asked for a motion to authorize the Council to purchase a plaque to commemorate all who contributed to last year's fundraising efforts which resulted in our new Flex radios and accessories. Judith KC2LTM so moved and Gene WO2W seconded the motion. After a short discussion the motion passed.

Vice President John W2JLH noted that there was a lot of discussion about Brad KM2C's offer to sell his radio trailer. The Council concluded that it was not in the best interests of the club to buy the trailer, given the significant drain on our funds that it would cause, and the challenges of registration, insurance, maintenance and the scarcity of vehicles able to pull it.

Vice President John W2JLH said that FLARC's participation in the Ridgewood High School Super Science Sunday event was a big success.

Larry WA2ALY and his Morse code demonstration was popular with the children. His youngest participant was 3 years old. Karl W2KBF generated a lot of interest among the students with a mini fox hunt.

Judith KC2LTM said that the FLARC banner Jim W2JC created ("Yes, We still do that") received a lot of compliments. John W2JLH thanked all who helped make this event a success.

Vice President John W2JLH noted that we are off to a good start with the plan to make this a year of education. The two inaugural coffee talks by Larry WA2ALY and Fred W2AAB were very well received. John said he is looking for volunteers to present more topics.

Ed WX2R volunteered to coordinate the speakers.

Steve WI2W said he would like to do an antenna building workshop with a very simple and cheap 2-meter Yagi as the project. He agreed to do the workshop as a coffee talk on May 29.

Continued in next column.

March 2020 Meeting Notes

Brian KD2KLN agreed to do a talk on programming inexpensive handheld radios on March 27.

Bob N2SU suggested a talk on operating 6 meters and agreed to present this topic on April 24.

Steve WI2W suggested that someone talk about programming DMR radios for local repeaters. John W2JLH said that he thought Noel W2MSA might be a good speaker on this subject. John will ask Noel about it.

In new business, Vice President John W2JLH mentioned that we sent out an email to all members regarding suitable precautions for the corona virus. Don K2PD asked about obtaining hand sanitizer(s) for the club. Judith KC2LTM responded that sanitizers are largely unavailable, due to the high demand. Randy WU2S said that an effective hand sanitizer can be made easily and cheaply by combining 1/3 cup of aloe vera gel and 2/3 cup 90 percent isopropyl alcohol. Both ingredients are readily available at most drug stores.

Vice President John W2JLH announced that he will send emails to begin organizing our Field Day effort.

Vice President John W2JLH announced that Secretary Randy WU2S will donate his extensive radio and electronics library to FLARC. We will move some of our older literature to our archives.

Treasurer Al WA2OWL announced that we have 128 paid up members as of today.

Having no further business, Vice President John W2JLH asked for a motion to adjourn. Gene WO2W so moved and Judith KC2LTM seconded the motion. The members present voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy WU2S,
Secretary

