



The Communicator

Franklin County Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 773

Greenfield MA 01302

October 2022

Upcoming Events

- Oct 8 Sat 8:00 am **FCARC** Monthly Club Breakfast, Denny's, Greenfield
Oct 9 Sun 8:00 am Nutmeg Hamfest, North Haven CT (info: <https://nutmeghamfest.com>)
Oct 10 Mon 6:30 pm **FCARC** Monthly Board Meeting, 1 Aviation Way Turners Falls MA
Oct 10 Mon 6:30 pm **FCARC** Monthly General Meeting, 1 Aviation Way Turners Falls MA
Oct 14-15 Fri+Sat NEARFest, Deerfield NH (info: <https://near-fest.com>)
Oct 16 Sun 9:00 am Ham Flea at MIT, Cambridge MA (info: <http://w1mx.mit.edu/flea-at-mit/>)
Oct 28 Thu 12:00 pm **FCARC** Monthly Club Lunch, Denny's, Greenfield

News, Activities & Articles

Secretary's Report, September E-Board 9/12/2022 - Beth K1BRL

Present: Brad W1BCC, Dick N1RCM, Beth K1BRL. Absent: Howard N1LUP, Erika LaForme KC1IJJ

We didn't have a quorum and so no votes were taken.

We discussed using the Turner's Falls Municipal Airport Operations Building as a meeting space.

Recognition was given to the volunteers in the club, including Chris KB1NEK, Al N1AW, Chuck KC1OSJ and Beth. Thanks were also expressed to the past slate of Board members for their contributions to the club.

Expenditures were discussed to support the use of AC1L QSL card and postage. \$50 seemed an appropriate number. We also discussed having door prizes at future club gatherings. A suggestion was made to have "50/50" raffles as a way of raising money.

The Saturday September 24th Trolleyfest was discussed. Unfortunately this falls on the day prior to our club engagement at The Big E. ? provide snacks to the Trolleyfest volunteers. This was questioned by a participant and tabled.

Brad has come to an agreement with Bryan Camden, airport manager, for use of the airport facility. We will be leaving flowers and a QSL card for him this evening as thanks.

We discussed past club events, such as picnics and a Christmas party to include significant others.

Budget Committee: Shall one be formed? Possible chairs? Tabled.

Public Service Committee: Steve Ross is the designated chairman. He does a great job from a distance.

Repeater: Discussion on work that needs to be done. The Leyden repeater has old Mitrek equipment.

There is newer equipment in Greenfield (Yaesu) but we no longer have a key at our disposal to the water tower area. Could we move the Yaesu to Leyden? We'd need a new duplexer. Tabled.

[Secretary's Report , September General Meeting 9/12/2022 - Beth K1BRL](#)

Present: Brad W1BCC, Dick N1RCM, Beth K1BRL, Mark NX1K, Chris KB1NEK, Al N1AW. Gene K1WMA and Anne N1YL joined via Zoom.

Brad gave a presentation on airport frequencies.

Thanks were given to club members who helped with moving things in storage and who volunteered for recent community events.

Discussion ensued on whether to increase the cost of annual dues. We decided that first we need to establish a budget before a decision on increasing dues can be made.

Trolleyfest: Richard AB1RS has asked whether we would like to participate. A mobile station for making contacts will be set up. Some club members are able to volunteer. We can consider doing this annually if it works out, as it is a good community outreach opportunity.

Membership: Discussion over how to entice new club members and lure back ones who have left. We discussed polling current members to get feedback on what they want the club to be and what they like most/least about the club. We'd like to elicit suggestions on what we can do to increase member engagement - where would people like our monthly meetings to be, would members be interested in having an SDR receiver available for their use? One suggestion is to do a poll via Groups.io. Beth also volunteered to attempt to place a poll on our Facebook page. She will run polling questions by the Board members before posting anything. Extended discussion ensued on the value of printed versus/as well as online newsletters. No one has offered to take on the newsletter at this time. Brad will share our newsletter email list with Al.

A message from Steve N1IBS, chairman of the Public Service Committee, was read by Brad. Steve thanked Chris and Al for their exceptional work on recent public service events. Chris volunteered to work as a Public Service Coordinator.

Discussion around former club members who are still active on the air but have "drifted away" from club membership. Brad suggested sending QSL cards to these people in an attempt to re-engage them. A suggestion was made to place QSL cards on the windshields of cars with Ham vanity plates, when we see

them. It was also suggested that we write down their license plate and pass that information on to the Board.

[D2R2 Report - AI N1AW](#)

The Deerfield Dirt Road Randonee (D2R2) has been supported by our club for ten years. It is an annual fundraiser for the Franklin Land Trust. This year more than 1600 cyclists rode seven different backroad routes of up to 180 Km length. This is an event that shows the best of ham radio - our portable radios and our repeater on Frizzell Hill in Leyden are the best, often the only, communications alternative for many locations along the D2R2 routes. This year riders were served lunch in two remote locations, at the Guilford VT covered bridge and at Pelham Lake Park in Rowe. We had radio operators at both of these sites as well as at a rest and water stop in Ashfield – all providing contact with the event headquarters in Deerfield, where the AC1L net control station was active from before 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

It was a hot day, the temperature at Deerfield was over 90 degrees until a thunderstorm came by in mid afternoon. Everything went smoothly in the morning but communication became difficult in the heat of the day. Increasing power did not help. See the article about the Green River Marathon for more on this.

FCARC participants included Amy AB1WH, Bob KA1HAH, Chris KB1NEK, Brad KC1IYF, Amy KC1JFB, Keith KU1N, AI N1AW, Dick N1RCM, Anne N1YL, Mark NX1K, Mark W1MHG, and Bob W1SRB. Two riders who were also hams and had radios with them also checked in: KR7MJ (and a friend whose call was not noted in the log). The FCARC's Dick Burnham memorial call, AC1L, was used for the net control station in Deerfield.



D2R2 family ride participants

[Green River Marathon Report - Chris KB1NEK](#)

On Sunday August 28th 13 of us worked to provide safety communications for 325 runners in the Green River Marathon. Amy Hicks, KC1JFB, and Brad Rice, KC1IYF, worked together for 7 hours in the sweep vehicle, following the last runners. They transported one runner with a leg injury to the aid station, where eventually Amy McNeil, AB1WH, provided transportation back to Greenfield. The sweep team then followed another runner who had to drop out in Guilford. By recording and transmitting the bib numbers of the two drop-outs, we were able to keep the official time keeper informed.

The sweep team's test of compassion and endurance, however, was their willingness to stay with the runner who said when he first registered, months ago, that he is a cancer survivor, and expected to finish last. He was so determined, that Amy and Brad stuck by him until he crossed the finish line at 2 PM, seven hours after starting the race in Marlboro, VT. The man told Amy and Brad how grateful he was to know he was not alone.

Because the race coordinators were short of the volunteers they really wanted, some of our volunteers, such as Chuck Allen, KC1CHA, who was himself operating solo, spent time away from his radio helping two aid station volunteers who were new to the race this year.

Fortunately, the KB1BSS repeater worked without a hitch, in contrast to a week ago during the D2R2 race. Al, N1AW, walked to the repeater site, on Frizzell Hill, in Leyden on Friday to try to figure out what had been wrong during the D2R2. As we suspected, the shed housing our equipment was hot. Al noticed neither of two air conditioners was working. One was partly disassembled. While he was there, Josh, the radio engineer for WPVQ, the owner of the shed and tower we use, arrived. Josh explained to Al that work was supposed to be done by the end of the day. Al checked later, and found the building much cooler, with one air conditioner working, but not the other.

The fortunate coincidence of Al's presence while investigating the repeater problem while the radio station's engineer showed up gave an opportunity to let the station know the club is still involved in serious public service events. It is our reputation for public service, including readiness for emergency service, that enables us to use the privately owned repeater site for free.

[FCARC Support for WB4F - Chris Myers KB1NEK](#)

On Sunday September 25th eight club members and one non-member provided communications over several bicycle tour loops to assist the Food Bank of Western Mass raise money for food assistance to those in need in the 12th annual Will Bike 4 Food (WB4F) event. According to an article in Mass Live, the on-line edition of the Springfield Republican, the event raised \$213,000.

Communications was a challenge. The courses include a 100 mile loop, as well as three shorter loops. There were 350 cyclists participating. The longest route goes up into southern Vermont, along some roads where cell phones will not work and even radio contact was difficult.

For a couple of hours a student from Northfield Mount Herman observed our effort at the Guilford Country Store, where Amy, AB1WH, worked along side a Food Bank volunteer. The student had contacted us a couple of weeks earlier, to say he is interested in learning more about amateur radio.

Steve, N1IBS, worked at Deerfield Academy, where sixteen students, in two shifts, staffed the water stop as Bike for Food volunteers. Threatening weather managed to hold off. The event was nearly over before rain began.

Anne, N1YL, at WB4F



New Years Race in Montague - AI N1AW

For many years past the FCARC supported the New Years Sawmill River 10K Road Race in Montague. This event is truly a classic – it has been held on New Years Day or New Years Eve almost every year since 2000. And the FCARC has provided communication for this small town event for many years. But in 2021 the race did not occur. Last summer a revival of the event was proposed for October – but interest was lacking, and the Montague Parks and Recreation Department decided to go back to the New Years tradition. New Years Day 2023 is a Sunday, and the race will be held on New Years Eve - Saturday December 31, 2022. Montague Parks and Recreation Director Jon Dobosz confirmed that date, expressed his gratitude for FCARC help in the past, hopes we will do it again this year.

Net Control Stations, Nets on FCARC 146.985 Repeater, 2022 Q4 - AI N1AW

Note: we are short one person for the Tuesday net. If you are interested please contact Chris, KB1NEK.

Tuesday 2 meter Emergency Net

Tues Oct 4 Beth K1BRL	Tues Nov 1 Beth K1BRL	Tues Dec 6 Bob KA1HAH
Tues Oct 11 Bob KA1HAH	Tues Nov 8 Bob KA1HAH	Tues Dec 13 --open--
Tues Oct 18 --open--	Tues Nov 15 --open--	Tues Dec 20 Chris KB1NEK
Tues Oct 25 Chris KB1NEK	Tues Nov 22 Chris KB1NEK	Tues Dec 27 Beth K1BRL
	Tues Nov 29 Beth K1BRL	

Thursday 2 meter FCARC Information Net

Thur Oct 6 Mark W1MHG	Thur Nov 3 Mark W1MHG	Thur Dec 1 Mark W1MHG
Thur Oct 13 Chris KB1NEK	Thur Nov 10 Chris KB1NEK	Thur Dec 8 Chris KB1NEK
Thur Oct 20 Dick N1RCM	Thur Nov 17 Dick N1RCM	Thur Dec 15 Dick N1RCM
Thur Oct 27 AI N1AW	Thur Nov 24 AI N1AW	Thur Dec 22 AI N1AW
		Thur Dec 29 Mark W1MHG

About this Newsletter - AI N1AW

The Club has always had a newsletter, as far back as I know (and my collection of old issues contains a few copies from the early 1990s that I inherited). Before anyone had e-mail the Communicator was printed and mailed to members by a commercial printer; this was the major expense paid for by club dues, then, as still now, \$15/year. Just about the time I joined the club, in 2006, the club created a website and many members were beginning to use e-mail. But a master copy of the newsletter was still being delivered to a commercial company to print and mail until 2012. Then it was decided that the number of members who could access it by e-mail had increased to the point that hard copy to be mailed could be printed from the editor's computer.

With the capability to send the Communicator by e-mail came a realization that there was almost no effort or cost to send a copy to anyone who expressed interest in the club, whether or not they had paid dues. Paying dues is still encouraged, of course, and a benefit of having paid dues was that a member, if he or she so desired, could request to have the Communicator delivered by mail. By 2020 there were only about a dozen members getting the Communicator by US Mail. Some, but not all, were older members who did not show up for many events other than the May picnic or Field Day Saturday lunch. The Communicator was being sent by e-mail to more than 200 people.

This October 2022 edition is an experiment. I believe there is a need for a newsletter. I think the newsletter, formatted to be read as a printed paper document, is worthwhile. I know I often look at back issues in my file cabinet for information about a meeting or other event from the past. My paper files have outlived the disk drives of several computers. But using half a sheet of paper for a postal address is not necessary. I am experimenting with this issue with a format that will show the most important information, news of coming events, when the document is read on a computer – even on an old laptop with a small screen.

THE COMMUNICATOR is an informational publication for members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club. Officers: President: Brad Councilman, W1BCC (w1bcc@arrl.net), Vice President: (vacant), Treasurer: Howard Field, N1LUP (howfield@comcast.net), Secretary: Beth Lukin, K1BRL (bethlukin@gmail.com), Director: Richard Merriott, KC1JQJ (rcmpilot@comcast.net), Director: Chris Myers, KB1NEK (camyers@protonmail.com), Clerk: Erika LaForme, KC1IJJ (etlaforme@yahoo.com).

This is your newsletter! Information of general interest, club member project descriptions and doings, radio applications to other activities, corrections, or suggestions are all welcome. Individual submissions make for variety! We need more writers! Send submissions to: Al Woodhull N1AW (n1aw@arrl.net).

Change of address or missing an issue? Please contact Al Woodhull, N1AW, n1aw@arrl.net