



PCARA Update



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Summer brake

Well, Summer is just about over. Kids are back to school. Vacation memories are still fresh. You've had the whole Summer off, and now it's time once again to get serious about Amateur Radio.

During your time off, PCARA has been busy. We participated in the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce Centennial Celebration on August 1, 2015 at the Hudson Valley Exposition at Riverfront Green Park in Peekskill. PCARA set up a tent, a dipole, and fully operational HF Special Event Station **W2H** to demonstrate the abilities of Amateur Radio. Multiple contacts were made from around the country with a few from outside the continental US. The view from the shore of the river with Dunderberg and Bear Mountains in the background was breathtaking. It reaffirmed my deep love for, and appreciation of the scenic beauty of the Hudson Highlands. **Special thanks** to Joe WA2MCR, Malcolm NM9J, Bob N2CBH, Warren K2WD, and David KD2EVI whose hard work made it all possible.



PCARA's Special Event station W2H at the Hudson Valley Exposition was located alongside the River Hudson in Riverfront Green Park, Peekskill, NY. Can you see the antenna above the white tent?

Both of the Yaesu Fusion DR-1X 144/430 MHz Dual Band C4FM Repeaters are now here! After some programming we should be good to go. The 146.670 MHz and 449.925 MHz repeaters will be entering the "digital" age. In addition, the new antenna for the 449.925 MHz machine should be installed within the next couple of weeks. Stay tuned, this will be a good

learning experience and an opportunity to get involved with digital radio. It may be a good time to put a new C4FM radio on your list to Santa!

The **35th Annual Harry Chapin Run against Hunger** is on October

18, 2015 in Croton-on-Hudson, NY.

PCARA has once again been requested to provide communications support for the day's events. This will be a major topic



of our September meeting. We need quite a few members to provide adequate coverage of the race course. If you are interested in helping **PLEASE** email us at: mail@pcara.org. For more detailed information about the Annual Harry Chapin Run Against Hunger please visit <http://www.runagainsthunger.org>. Thank You.

Upcoming Hamfests in September include the Candlewood Amateur Radio Association Western Connecticut Hamfest on Sunday September 13, 2015

(<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests/western-connecticut-hamfest-5>), and the Mount Beacon Hamfest on Saturday September 19, 2015 (<http://wr2abb.org/home/>).

Our next membership meeting will take place — *after* Memorial Day Weekend — on **Sunday September 13, 2015** at 3:00 p.m. at New York-Presbyterian / Hudson Valley Hospital in Cortlandt Manor, NY. I look forward to seeing each of you there.

- 73 de Greg, KB2CQE

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Net night

Peekskill/Cortlandt Amateur Radio Association holds a weekly net on the 146.67 MHz W2NYW repeater on Thursdays at 8:00 p.m. Join net control Karl, N2KZ for news and neighborly information.

Adventures in DXing

- N2KZ

A Whole New World

The year 2015 will be remembered as a time of great change. Television, as we know it, is being dissolved into the world of computers. Ongoing 24 hour a day networks are being replaced by dozens and dozens of on-line icons you can choose as 'video on demand.' Our perspective is changing, too. 4 × 3 SD television is being turned off now that viewers expect a wider 16 × 9 picture frame.

Old fashioned cables are being cut. Nearly every telephone is wireless and many computers are too. The world above 300 MHz has taken on new importance with the influx of Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and cellular telephones and tablets. Over-the-air television is being condensed in spectrum space by 'repacking,' new standards of compression (ATSC 3.0) and the grand concept of 'TV Everywhere.'

What a grand concept it is. Now you can view TV almost everywhere you go. All you need is any one of a multitude of devices that can link to the Internet via Wi-Fi. Back in 1939, they had a similar concept called *television*. Somewhere along the way, everything became cabled but now we are free again!

Add to this brew a whole new world of devices. Every year requires a new idea to keep the electronics business healthy, especially during the upcoming holiday season. To allow many more over-the-air TV signals to be packed into limited spectrum space, engineers are ready-



New TV compression scheme.

Also, get ready for even more new ideas to sell equipment. Would you like enormous flat screens with curved edges and 4K resolution? How about built-in Wi-Fi streaming, multiple HDMI inputs and the ability to control every aspect of your new set via your Smartphone. Speaking of phones, we can even arrange for your phone calls to be announced and answered by your new TV. Would you like to see a picture of your caller. We can do that too!

So, here we are in the world of television courtesy

of Roku and Apple TV boxes and 'radio' via Pandora, iHeart Radio, TuneIn or Radio.com. Even the sacred BBC World Service has become a mostly Internet-delivered audio source. What is the world coming to?

Fancy Wheels

I recently had the experience of test driving an all-electric Tesla Model S sedan. It featured a 17 inch touch-screen mounted in portrait perspective with stunning graphics and convenience. I had to ask about the sound system and the *radio*. There was no radio, I was told. The world is fully reliant on The Internet and there was no need for old noisy and unreliable technologies.



Sarah and Karl try out a Tesla Model S.

By the way, it was, by far, the most amazing drive of my life. Propelled by two direct drive electric motors and no transmission, it rode along without a sound with command and confidence. It was unlike anything I have ever experienced. Silent, sleek, agile and simply elegant in design. Consider it the next time you have \$80,000 or more to spend on a car!

For those of us who remain meek and down to Earth, old-fashioned radio is suffering from continual abuse. During my yearly visit to rural Michigan, I couldn't help but notice that the overall level of electrical interference has now risen a couple of notches to new heights. Everything seems to have a CPU associated with it or, at very least, a loud and noisy switching power supply. I rode along highways, in the most resolute places, and still heard a cacophony of incessant buzzes and blasts. How can AM radio survive this — much less amateur radio?

One highlight of this kind of 'progress' was a purchase made by one of my sisters-in-law. Behold the motion-sensing trash can! With just a swipe of your fingers, the cover miraculously opens awaiting your deposit. No need to do anything else: Its built-in timer will close the lid automati-



cally after a set period of time. It requires four AA batteries and also serves as a delightful wide-spectrum noise generator to add to the roster of nasty nonsense throughout the home.

Things digital are also starting to make inroads in our world, especially on 2 meters and 70 centimeters. Yaesu has been actively offering its digital System Fusion repeaters to amateur radio groups nationwide at deep discounts. These units are basically repackaged mobile transceivers in a rack-mounted chassis. The result is plainly obvious. For those of us still listening with analog FM transceivers (horrors!) you can now enjoy hearing random blasts of digital data as you monitor previously all-analog repeater pairs. Digital repeaters: Can't you go somewhere else?



Yaesu DR-1 X digital repeater

Great lakes. Great friends.

Some things remain sacred. My daughter Sarah and I were the guests of honor at the annual summer meeting of the Michigan Old Goats Net. We convened at The Peppermill Restaurant in Bad Axe to shake hands and exchange stories. What a wonderful time we had! The Michigan version of the Old Goats is on the air daily, except Sundays, on the Lake Huron Amateur Radio Club repeater in Bad Axe (145.47 MHz plus offset, 110.9 Hz PL) at 8:30 am.



Karl (center with K9 friend) meets the original 'Old Goats' in Bad Axe, MI.

As part of our get-together, Ralph, NO8W, took us down to the LHARC repeater site for a tour. The repeater is a modified commercial Motorola cabinet with about 85 watts of output. Two antennas are employed — one for receive and one for transmit — without the use of cavities. The tower rises about 140 feet above the very flat terrain of Huron County and the repeater covers what seems to be forever!

Tropospheric skip is always in full force during my summer visits to Michigan. It is fairly easy to see the

last remaining analog television stations from Canada flying across Lake Huron from Sault St. Marie, Ontario. The seven NOAA weather radio frequencies on 162 MHz along with the two Canadian frequencies: 161.65 and 161.775 MHz also serve as excellent propagation beacons. The female synthesized voices used by Environment Canada are easy to discern from NOAA stations. One Canadian weather broadcast I heard was in French.

Using very modest equipment, no more than a handheld HT, you can often hear two meter repeater traffic from hundreds of miles away when the moisture in the air is just right and tropospheric skip is up. Anywhere in Michigan is fair game along with southwestern Ontario, Ohio and even Indiana. I can't imagine how far a tall tower and a Yagi array might bring you.

It was very interesting to see just how much Lake Huron could affect FM broadcast reception. Right on the lakeshore, it is fairly easy to hear a powerful outlet of the Canadian CBC Radio One network on 98.7 MHz any time of the day or night. CBCB-FM from Owen Sound operates with 100 kilowatts atop a 695 foot



Lake Huron ARC repeater has separate transmit antenna, top center. Receive antenna is below, slightly bent over.



Map shows location of Bad Axe and Port Austin, MI plus Owen Sound and Sault Ste. Marie in Ontario, Canada.

tower! Drive away from the lakeshore and their signal plummets off the dial. It is just like two meter propagation. The three most important elements of success are: location, location, location!

Another delight was observing the Perseid meteor showers in an area that had very low ground light. This part of Michigan is known for its magnificent ability to reveal the Milky Way and even an occasional aurora now and then. Meteor bursts were hard to miss on August 12th and 13th with multiple shooters appearing every few seconds. Some of the shots were amazingly bright and startling! Quite a show!

Unfortunately, I did not hear any meteor scatter on FM radio. Although there are few local stations on FM, the band is still filled with a constantly changing chorus of stations on virtually every frequency from sometimes hundreds of miles away. This really dampens your ability to hear a quick swipe or two provided by meteors falling through the atmosphere. No worries. The spectacular show we saw with our eyes was miraculous enough!

RF Everywhere

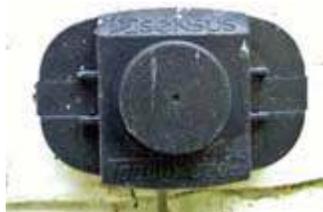
RF really is everywhere. I noticed a black bump had appeared next to our electric meter on the back of our Michigan cottage. At close examination, the big black button announced that it was a Sensus TouchRead. This required some investigation.



A black bump had appeared next to the electricity meter at Karl's holiday cottage.

The FCC ULS database revealed that our local township had a license for a microwave industrial/business pool transmitter on 956 MHz, a Sensus 3600, capable of 2 kbps of data transfer. OK... but what does it do?

Some investigation at the Sensus web site brought all the answers. Instead of laborious time-consuming meter reading by a person on foot, a vehicle or base station can send out a signal that wakes up the little black module that I discovered and requests meter data. Using a comparatively rapid process, each cottage's module is polled and the whole neighborhood gets audited nearly instantly. A laptop computer soaks it all up and pro-



Sensus TouchRead module.

vides the information for eventual billing. How efficient!

Feed the Goats

Have you been humming *Lillibullero* lately? You might be if you had checked into the PCARA Old Goats Net on Thursday night. Let's make a pact: If you call into our net, I will personally explain to you just what *Lillibullero* is! You'll find us on the PCARA 2 meter repeater at 146.67 MHz at 8 pm on Thursday nights. Use a -600 offset and a 156.7 PL to join us. Don't be shy! A good time is guaranteed for all! Until next month, happy trails, 73 es dit dit de N2KZ 'The Old Goat'.



Summer hamfests

Here are a couple of photographs from local Hamfests, taken during the sunny days of Summer 2015.



Mike N2EAB is pictured in the extensive flea market area at the 37th Annual Sussex County ARC Hamfest on July 12.



Greg KB2CQE and Bob N2CBH enjoy the outdoor weather at the Orange County ARC Summer Hamfest on August 16.

The QRP Blowtorch rides again

- Mike N2HTT

[The following article appeared on 73, de N2HTT, the blog site of Mike N2HTT (<http://n2htt.net/>). It is reproduced here with Mike's permission. -Ed.]

Summer in the Northeast is the perfect embodiment of the 80/20 rule: we get 80 percent of our outdoor activities in during the 20 percent of the year when the weather is nice. We really are having a lovely summer so far in New York, and as a consequence I am not spending a lot of time at the bench, or writing blog posts for that matter.

The emphasis has shifted to operating for me this summer, preferably outdoors, portable QRP. My first efforts along these lines was a shot at seaside QRP CW from Cape May, New Jersey early in July. Using a 20 foot Crappie Pole as a support, I put up a 20 meter end-fed half wave antenna in a sloper configuration, and launched a mighty signal — about 2 watts — skyward using my FT-817 and a slew of NiMH batteries. [A “Crappie Pole” is a telescopic fiberglass fishing pole - Ed.]



Mike N2HTT operates low power CW from Cape May, NJ with a Yaesu FT-817 transceiver, wire antenna and fiberglass pole for support. [Pics courtesy N2HTT]

I got curious inquiries, and actually some encouragement from passers-by on the beach, but my signal was so puny I wasn't even picked up on the Reverse Beacon Network. Also, there was S9 +40dB noise from some source near the beach, so I probably wouldn't have heard a reply if there had been any.

And yet, it was really enjoyable to try. I view portable QRP efforts like fishing: sometimes you get a nibble, sometimes not, but the trip is always worth it.

The main story that has been unfolding this summer is that of setting up a new QRP station. It is something of an involved tale, so let's go to the begin-

ning and follow it along.

Back in April of last year, I was selling my HW-16 station via the PCARA club table at the Orange County ARC Hamfest. It was a complete station, including a VFO and a matching Heathkit speaker. A photo of the event appeared in our club newsletter, and my fellow club member and good friend Karl Zuk, N2KZ had noticed the HW-16, and specifically the speaker, in the photo.



The picture that started it all — Mike N2HTT, NM9J and Joe WA2MCR behind PCARA's club table at the Orange County ARA Hamfest in 2014. Mike's Heathkit HW-16 with matching VFO and speaker are on the left side of the photo.

This April Karl sent me an email, asking whether I still had the speaker. As it turns out, by the time Karl had asked, the station was gone, but I had another similar speaker that was paired with an HR-1680 Heathkit receiver. Since I was intending to part with the HR-1680 anyway — the Heathkit gear is cool, but mostly too large for the spaces I have available — I offered the speaker to Karl *gratis*.

Karl countered with another offer: he had a homebrew, tube QRP transmitter that had been given to him, and would I be interested in a trade? Absolutely! Tubes, homebrew, QRP, potentially dangerous voltages, what's not to like? So we agreed to a swap. Karl and I exchanged a few emails trying to set up a date to meet, but it wasn't until the middle of May that we were able to meet up.

Shortly after Karl's first email, I decided to rearrange my QRP stack to use the HR-1680 receiver (but not the speaker) instead of the FT-817 with my tube transmitter. I was not having any success selling the HR-1680 anyway, might as well use it as part of the station. It just fit in one of the cubbies of my operating desk — and that was better than letting it take up space on the floor. Hooked up to the transmit-receive switch, it played nicely with the two-tube transmitter.

The month of April and part of May sped by, and finally Karl drove by my place one Saturday and



The Heathkit HR-1680 CW/SSB receiver (top center) for 80-10 meters fits nicely into the upper shelf of Mike's QRP equipment stack.

dropped off a Bankers Box containing the rig and some documentation from the original builder. It was bigger than I expected, and in two pieces: a 250V power supply, and the actual transmitter itself. It was impressive — not the least because it sported a prominent label, in large red letters, reading “DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE” right in front. This was a serious rig.



The new TX from Karl arrived with separate transmitter chassis (left) and power supply (right).

The rig had a name: *The QRP Blowtorch*. The documentation, written by builder of the rig, Stan WB2LQF, was detailed, including copies of the original articles that inspired the rig, and a journal entry from Stan with his thoughts about it, including observations about what needed improvement.

The rig is an implementation of a design in January 2003 *QST*, entitled “The Two Tube Tuna Tin Transmitter (T5)” by Steve Johnston WD8DAS.

[ARRL members can



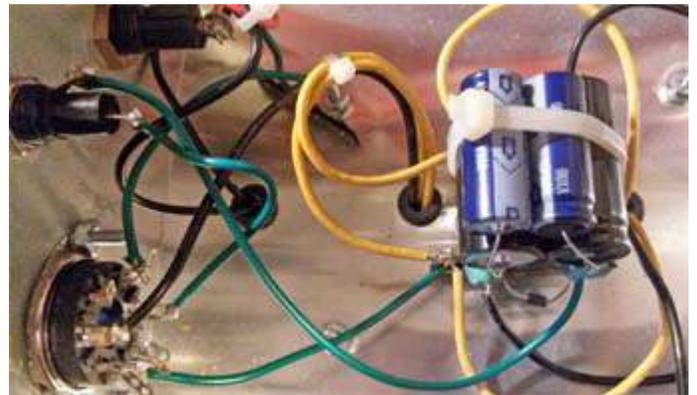
QST article from Jan 2003 describes ‘This easy-to-build, diminutive **blowtorch**...’

download articles from the League’s QST archive - Ed.]

It was a classic MOPA design, using the same two tubes as my two-tuber: a 6C4 oscillator, and a 5763 final amplifier. In fact, the guts of the two circuits are almost identical. It came with a clever power supply made from two filament transformers back-to-back, using a diode voltage doubler to produce a B+ voltage of 250V. The article claimed an output of 5 – 8 watts. I’d be thrilled with five.

I figured I might do some checkout on it, and maybe the two modifications Stan mentioned in his notes, and then take the rig up. Putting it on the bench for checkout revealed a very competent point-to-point wiring job, and no surprises. Everything looked ship-shape, I would have no qualms about firing it up.

Stan had mentioned in his notes that he intended to add some more filter capacitance to the power supply, and possibly to the output tank as well. I ordered a couple of capacitors from Mouser and added them to the power supply, but I wound up not doing anything to the tank. It seemed to be loading up just



Additional filter capacitors for the 250 volt DC line were strapped onto the power supply.

fine on 40 meters, so I let it be for now.

My immediate impression was that the rig was too big to try to incorporate into the QRP stack, with the two bulky boxes and interconnecting cables. We are fortunate enough to have a vacation home in central New York state, where presently I have no station set up. The QRP Blowtorch seemed a likely candidate to become a permanent second station at the up-state QTH.



Mike's upstate location with flamingo garden.

To set up a permanent station, I would need three additional items:

- a receiver,
- some kind of T-R (transmit-receive) switch,
- and an antenna tuner.

The T-R switch was easy: MFJ makes a simple unit with RF-sensing, the MFJ-1708, that got good reviews on eHam.net, <http://www.eham.net/reviews/detail/10354>.



MFJ-1708 RF-sensing Transmit/Receive Switch changes the antenna over from a separate receiver to the transmitter and handles 200 watts PEP.

Looked like just the thing, and I ordered one forthwith.

The receiver was another matter. Having just committed the HR-1660 to use on the QRP stack, I needed to figure out something else. I was fresh out of

receivers. So taking this as a cue to go shopping, I started to look around on the classified ads and eBay, deciding that a vintage tube receiver would be just the ticket. There are lots of boat anchor receivers out there to be had, but the one that kept floating to the top of the searches was the Drake 2B. (Or 2A, I'm not picky.)

This receiver seemed to offer many plusses:

- It is relatively compact for a tube rig. (The typical Hallicrafters receiver takes up a standard parking space, including the matching speaker.)
- They are very highly regarded, positive reviews abound.
- They are plentiful. If you can't find one on eBay, wait 5 minutes.

I started looking... I didn't have to look long. Several classified ads and eBay auctions later, I found my new (old) receiver. In nice cosmetic condition, and good operating order, a working Drake 2B arrived soon. What a lovely receiver. I set it up, hooked up antenna and plugged it in, and began to explore 40 meter CW with it. I was sold.

My 2B was made around the mid-sixties, about the same time as the original QST article that described my two tube transmitter came out. They are a good pair, so I decided to keep the 2B in the QRP stack, and move the HR-1660 upstate. I expected to have to do major surgery to the operating desk, but it turned out that simply popping out one shelf did it.

Okay, so transmitter ✓check; receiver ✓check; T-R switch ✓check; the only remaining item was an antenna tuner I could leave upstate. Back to the ads.



The Drake 2B receiver (top center) was fitted into Mike's QRP stack by removing one of the shelves. The basic Drake 2B covers the 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter amateur bands in 600 kHz segments.

This time, I found the field on eBay to be a tad expensive for my tastes, but a nice MFJ-941C turned up in the classifieds for cheap and I jumped on it. The 941C is not without its faults, but it serves perfectly in the new station.



Equipment line-up at Mike's upstate QTH shows (L to R) the QRP Blowtorch transmitter in its new home, with the MFJ-941C ATU and Heathkit HR-1680 receiver.

So finally, in mid-July, the QRP Blowtorch made its debut. On Sunday 7/26, after hanging around on 7.054 for a while, I called WO1W, Gene in Rhode Island, and we had a brief but solid QSO lasting about 10 minutes. Gene gave me a 589, which pleased me greatly, and the QRP Blowtorch had indeed ridden again.

There are several weeks left to the summer, and I am looking forward to making several more QSOs

as the warm breezes waft in through the shack window, illuminated by the glow of those tubes.



Glow from the vacuum tubes.

- 73, de Mike N2HTT

Hudson Valley Expo

Hudson Valley 100

2015 is the centennial year of the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce. Originally incorporated in January 1915 as the Peekskill Chamber of Commerce, this organization encourages new business, facilitates partnerships and promotes business growth around Peekskill.

In 1980 the Chamber's name was changed to Peekskill/Cortlandt Chamber of Commerce, to include the area in the Town of Cortlandt surrounding Peekskill. In 2002 the Croton-on-Hudson Chamber of Commerce joined and the name was changed to **Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce**, reflecting the wider area served. The Chamber's office in the center of downtown Peekskill also acts as a source of tourist and visitor information.

As part of its 2015 centennial celebrations, the Chamber organized a **Hudson Valley Exposition**, taking place

August 1 at Peekskill's Riverfront Green Park. The event celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Chamber's very first Hudson Valley Exposition, held in August 1945 at Peekskill Stadium on Welcher Avenue, shortly after World War II ended.

Let's join in

PCARA had become aware of the Chamber's upcoming celebrations as far back as February 2015, but our own preparations did not get underway until after Field Day. Although there was a fee involved, agreement was reached that the event was well worth attending. Joe WA2MCR contacted the Chamber of Commerce in early July and was told that the Chamber would be delighted to have us as soon as we mailed in



the necessary fee and filled out the application form.

On July 21 we received full details of the event including PCARA's location at space #E18 in the "Energy and Technology" section, near Trinity Cruises' pier. Set-up would be from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday August 1, ready for opening to visitors at 12 noon prompt.



Map supplied by the Expo organizers, marked to show PCARA's location in the "Energy & Technology" section.

Joe applied to ARRL for a Special Event call sign and we heard on July 23 that the call **W2H** had been assigned for our operations on August 1-2. Unfortunately, information about W2H was not posted on the arrl.org listing of Special Event Stations in time for the event, though it is available on the central database of Special Event stations maintained at the W5YI-VEC site, <http://w5yi-vec.org/page.php?id=315>.

Publicity

PCARA's Expo preparations had all taken place after publication of the *PCARA Update* newsletter for July, so members were mostly unaware of the upcoming event. Mention was made during the Thursday evening Old Goats Net on 146.67 MHz, Greg KB2CQE updated the pcara.org web site, Karl N2KZ posted information on the PCARA Facebook page, while your editor sent out a bulletin of upcoming events to PCARA's newsletter distribution list.

Peekskill/Cortlandt Amateur Radio Association's participation in the Expo was listed on the Hudson Valley Expo's own web site, <http://www.hvexposition.com> and in the pages of the *Northern Westchester Examiner* newspaper for July 28, which included a 24-page supplement all about the Exposition.

Where are we going?

On Friday evening, just prior to the Expo, Joe

WA2MCR and your editor traveled down to Riverfront Green Park to find out exactly where the PCARA tent space was located. We found space #E18 close by the river, between the beach and the Gazebo. There were two sizeable trees nearby and only a few people left in the park, so Joe and I carried out preparatory work for next day's antenna erection by launching nylon lines over the trees.



The big day

On Saturday August 1, volunteers gathered at Joe's location to load heavy equipment into Bob, N2CBH's truck. Bob would only be available for part of the day, so we had to plan on returning equipment in other vehicles at the end of the celebration. PCARA had been issued with six "Vendor Passes" to allow entry of staff and guests. Fortunately this was just sufficient for members who came to Riverfront Green to help set-up and operate the station.



At the park entrance, there was a short line of vehicles waiting to enter the site. Chamber of Commerce volunteers were being careful to only allow authorized visitors and to prevent vehicles from stopping on the railroad tracks as they waited to turn into the vendor parking area. Fortunately our vendor passes did the trick and we were soon parked near the gazebo. Bob's truck was able to cross the grass and drive to space #E18 for unloading.

The first order of business was to raise PCARA's "EZ-Up" pop-up tent within the allotted 10 ft x 10 ft space. At this stage, not too many people were in the park and the opportunity was taken to attach our HF antenna to the lines already in place over two tall trees. The antenna was a multi-band "ZS6BKW" wire dipole,



PCARA's pop-up tent is erected in space #E18 by Greg, KB2CQE, Warren K2WD, Bob N2CBH and David KD2EVI.

previously used at PCARA's special event station to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's discovery of the River that bears his name. The antenna was positioned so its center was directly over space # E18, with the 450 ohm ribbon feeder descending straight down to the tent.



Greg KB2CQE and Joe WA2MCR arrange the 450Ω ribbon cable feeding the ZS6BKW HF antenna.

Impedance at the end of a ZS6BKW antenna's ribbon feeder is close to 50 ohms on five HF bands — see *PCARA Update* July 2009 for further details. A short length of 50 ohm coax was attached to the ribbon feeder in order to reach the Icom IC-7410 HF transceiver that had been brought along by Joe, WA2MCR.

Joe checked transmission on the HF bands plus 6 meters and found the internal tuner of the 7410 was more than adequate to match the antenna impedance. When the IC-7410 was combined with Joe's notebook computer for logging and data modes, it provided a very compact multi-mode HF station.



Joe's IC-7410 transceiver plus Lenovo notebook computer made a compact HF station for voice, CW and data modes.

For VHF/UHF coverage, Greg KB2CQE had brought along his "Go-Kit". This is a rugged plastic box containing a Yaesu FT-90R mobile transceiver with battery and AC charger. The radio was connected to a mag-mount antenna, supported by the steel tent-frame.

At Joe's suggestion, video programs shown to the Cub Scouts at Furnace Woods Elementary School in 2014 were brought out again. They were: ARRL's "The DIY Magic of Amateur Radio" followed by a personal video from Mike N2HTT "Building the AC-1 Jr. Glowbug Transmitter Kit". The programs were on a continuous loop DVD, along with ARRL's "Amateur Radio Today". (These programs are fine to watch a couple of times, but by the twentieth airing, Warren K2WD could recite Walter Cronkite's commentary without hearing the soundtrack.)

Set-up of the Special Event station was completed with PCARA's large vinyl banner, the club publicity photographs plus various free hand-outs introducing amateur radio from ARRL. Power for the electronic equipment was provided by Bob N2CBH's Honda generator, which purred along behind the tent, needing just one refueling all day long.



PCARA's Special Event station, all ready for the Expo opening, complete with club sign and publicity material.

Open for business

The Exposition opened for visitors at 12 noon on August 1. By then, Riverfront Green had filled up with tents and attractions from over a hundred vendors and exhibitors. PCARA was located in a line of technology booths, between the Field Library tent and "Copy Center & Services". Franzoso Contracting and Verizon FiOS were our near-neighbors. On the river, immediately behind our booth,



Debbie Bisaccia's floating Yoga class was taking place nearby.

there were canoes and paddleboards for rental, plus demonstrations of Yoga, afloat on the Hudson.

Joe began HF operations on the 40 meter band. As well as New

York state, we were able to contact stations in the neighboring states of PA, NJ and CT as well as more distant amateurs to the west in Ohio and Michigan plus

south to Virginia, North Carolina and well beyond. Twenty meters and seventeen meters (18 MHz) were also active during our stay, providing several DX contacts. Although some stations were strong, conditions were rather unstable, with deep fading noted on many QSOs. Joe's solution was to try alternative data modes including RTTY and JT65. Additional operators who took part in making the total of 77 special event contacts included Bob N2CBH, David KD2EVI, Warren K2WD, Greg KB2CQE and NM9J.

Location of the station on the edge of Peekskill Bay proved beneficial in several ways. The open waters of the River Hudson provided a clear take-off over a 90° angle from southwest to northwest. The tent's side panel and PCARA sign had been positioned to provide shade from the sun during a warm afternoon. Fortunately there was a brisk breeze blowing off the water and through the tent, keeping equipment and operators reasonably cool. The station operators had a wonderful view across the bay toward the Hudson Highlands.



PCARA's booth was located under the larger white tent, alongside the River Hudson. (Note the wire antenna.)

Nobody went hungry as there were food concessions operating within the Expo plus plenty of restaurants nearby. The sound of air horns as trains approached Metro North's grade crossing and the beat of music from the stage added to the atmosphere.

At one point in the early afternoon, the sky turned dark and rain squalls blew in to our south. Fortunately, Riverfront Green Park stayed dry, but some of the exhibitor tents threatened to take off, with their leaflets scattered to the four winds. Bob had staked down the PCARA tent so it would not move, and our own hand-outs were wrapped together to stay put. But we did have to assist one of our neighbors, as their tent had not been secured very well.

During the afternoon there was a steady stream of visitors who expressed interest in the hobby and went away with club brochures and ARRL literature. One of the visitors was Peekskill Mayor Frank Catalina, who chatted with PCARA volunteers



Frank Catalina

for several minutes on his way around the Technology section. Several fellow exhibitors visited PCARA's tent to acquaint themselves with our organization and promote their own activities — maybe we should try this approach next time?

With the sun descending behind Dunderberg Mountain, temperatures fell and conditions in our section of the park became a lot more comfortable. As the evening progressed, the number of visitors actually increased, partly because of musical concerts in progress on the main stage, and in anticipation of the grand finale, a Laser Light Show sponsored by Entergy.



Lots of visitors to the Hudson Valley Expo saw PCARA's booth by the Hudson.

As darkness approached, more visitors moved toward the stage, and a decision was made to lower the HF dipole antenna while there was still sufficient light to do so safely. The antenna came down in one piece and the task of disassembling equipment began. By this time, other exhibitors were also breaking down displays and vehicles could be driven across the grass for reloading. Without Bob's truck, the main concern was transport for the EZ-Up tent, folding tables and generator, but these items were safely loaded into Joe's capacious trunk and transported back to Cortlandt Manor.

Final thoughts

On August 4, shortly after the Expo ended, Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber Executive Director Deb Milone wrote:

"On behalf of the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce, I would like to thank you for participating in the 2015 Hudson Valley Exposition. Around 12,000 people came throughout the day to celebrate our region's past, present, and unlimited future..."

"The Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce looks forward to be able to continue this event in the future. Please provide us with any feedback and suggestions as to how we can make this event grow and be even more successful."

The *Northern Westchester Examiner* for August 4 published a two-page spread of color photographs from the Expo, showing all the other activities that were being enjoyed by visitors.

Preparation time for PCARA's participation in the Hudson Valley Expo was quite short, and there were concerns about setting up a Special Event station in a small, crowded park with limited access and potentially noisy neighbors. Fortunately the overall operation was a success, with visitors expressing interest in our hobby and PCARA demonstrating its presence to neighboring officials and organizations. Let's hope that our efforts on August 1 produce useful gains for our club and community. Thanks to everyone who took part.

- NM9J

Run Against Hunger

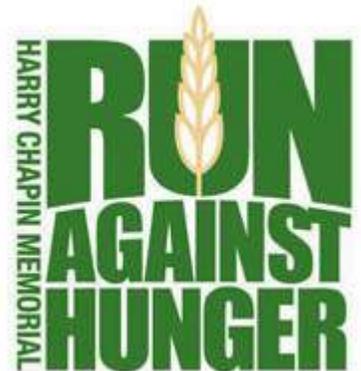
For a second time, PCARA has been invited to provide radio communications at the 35th annual Harry Chapin Run Against Hunger, scheduled for Sunday October 18, 2015

Following the death of singer/songwriter Harry Chapin in 1981, a group of concerned citizens in Croton-on-Hudson created an annual race to raise funds for the fight against hunger.

Some of the organizations supported include the Cortlandt Emergency Food Bank, Caring for the Homeless of Peekskill (C.H.O.P.) and Food Bank for Westchester.

Asst. Race Director Mike Grayeb has said there will be the same three events as last year — a 5K Walk along the Croton Gorge Trail starting at 9:30 a.m., a one mile 'Fun Run' starting at 11 a.m. and the main event, the 10K Race starting at 11:45 a.m., which begins and ends at Croton-Harmon High School and crosses the New Croton Dam. Radio communication needs will be primarily for the 10K race and secondarily for the 5K walk. Course maps are available at the organization's web site, <http://www.runagainsthunger.com> where there is also a video drive-through showing the course of the 10K race.

Volunteers will be needed to 'shadow' the organizers and to provide communication at four water stops plus mile points around the 5K and 10K courses. If you are available, please inform Greg (mail'at'pcara.org) so you can be sent further details nearer the event.



Peekskill / Cortlandt Amateur Radio Association

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E-Mail: mail 'at' pcara.org

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Newsletter contributions are always very welcome!

Archive: <http://home.lanline.com/~pcara/newslett.htm>

PCARA Information

PCARA is a **Non-Profit Community Service**

Organization. PCARA meetings take place the first Sunday of each month* at 3:00 p.m. in Dining Room B of NewYork-Presbyterian/Hudson Valley Hospital, Rt. 202, Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567. Drive round behind the main hospital building and enter from the rear (look for the oxygen tanks). Talk-in is available on the 146.67 repeater. *Apart from holidays and July/August break.

PCARA Repeaters

W2NYW: 146.67 MHz -0.6, PL 156.7Hz

KB2CQE: 449.925MHz -5.0, PL 179.9Hz

N2CBH: 448.725MHz -5.0, PL 107.2Hz

PCARA Calendar

Sun Sept 13: PCARA Meeting, NewYork-Presbyterian / Hudson Valley Hospital, 3:00 p.m.

Sun Oct 18: 35th Annual Harry Chapin Run Against Hunger, Croton-on-Hudson, NY.

Hamfests

Sun Sept 13: Candlewood ARA Western CT Hamfest, Edmond Town Hall, 45 Main St, Newtown, CT. 8:00 a.m.

Sat Sept 19: Mt. Beacon ARC Fall Hamfest, Employee Rec. Center, 83 Red Schoolhouse Rd., Fishkill, NY. 8:00 a.m.

Sat Oct 10: Bergen ARA Fall Hamfest, Westwood Reg. HS, 701 Ridgewood Rd., Township of Washington, NJ. 8:00 a.m.

VE Test Sessions

Sep 5, 12, 19, 26: Westchester ARC Radio Barn, 4 Ledgewood Pl, Armonk NY. 12. Pre-reg. M. Rapp, (914) 907-6482.

Sep 6: Yonkers PAL Ham Radio Club, 127 N Broadway, Yonkers NY. 2:00 p.m. Pre-reg. M. Rapp (914) 907-6482.

Sep 6: Yonkers ARC, Yonkers PD, Grassy Sprain Rd, Yonkers. 8:30 a.m. Pre-reg. John Costa (914) 969-6548.

Sep 10: WECA, Westchester Co Fire Trg Cen, 4 Dana Rd., Valhalla, NY. 7:00 p.m. S. Rothman, 914 831-3258.

Sep 18: Orange County ARC, Munger Cottage, 183 Main St, Cornwall NY. 6:00 p.m. Thomas Ray (845) 391-3620.

Sep 19: Mt. Beacon ARC Hamfest, Fishkill, 9:00 a.m.

Sep 21: Columbia Univ VE Team ARC, 531 Studebaker Bldg, 622 W 132nd St, New York. 6:30 pm. Alan Crosswell 212 854-3754.

Sep 26: PEARL, Mahopac Public Library, 668 Route 6, Mahopac, NY. 10:00 a.m. Contact: Paul Glatz, (845) 661-7991.



Peekskill / Cortlandt Amateur Radio Association Inc.

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