



PCARA Update



Volume 5, Issue 7

Peekskill / Cortlandt Amateur Radio Association Inc.

July 2004

Field Day fun and gains

Field Day 2004 was a big success! After a bit of a damp start Saturday morning, the weather was glorious. In addition to demonstrating our emergency preparedness, we increased our score for a third year in a row thanks to some serious brass pounding by very dedicated operators! At the conclusion of Field Day we held the drawing for the annual raffle. The Yaesu VX-2 Dual Band HT was won by Garry Maynard, KA2GRS of Middletown, NY. Congratulations Garry!



Karl, N2KZ pounds brass on 40 meters CW while Mike, N2EAB handles the computer logging during Field Day 2004. More pictures on page 4.

For our next club event, PCARA will be taking a table at the Tri-State Amateur Radio Association Hamfest in Matamoras, PA on August 15, 2004. Bring along any equipment you want to sell. If you are successful in unloading some of your boat anchors, all that we ask is that you consider making a small donation to help offset the cost of the table.

I hope to see each of you at the **July 11th** meeting at Hudson Valley Hospital Center at 3:00 PM.

– 73 de Greg, KB2CQE

List Server

PCARA maintains a List Server at Yahoo! Groups. This facility allows sending of e-mail messages to all PCARA members who subscribe. One recent use of the List Server was to organize equipment for Field Day.

To register with the PCARA group, browse to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/w2nyw> or just send an e-mail to the following special address: [w2nyw-subscribe @ yahoo.com](mailto:w2nyw-subscribe@yahoo.com).

To post a message to the List Server, simply send an e-mail message to: [w2nyw @ yahoo.com](mailto:w2nyw@yahoo.com).

To unsubscribe from the group, send an e-mail to: [w2nyw-unsubscribe @ yahoo.com](mailto:w2nyw-unsubscribe@yahoo.com).

Important! Yahoo! Groups only allows you to send messages via the List Server using the email address you originally used to register (or using an alternate email address specified in personal settings.) This requirement can prove significant if you change Internet Service Provider or cancel an old e-mail address to avoid Spam.

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PCARA Officers

President:

Greg Appleyard, KB2CQE [kb2cq @ arrl.net](mailto:kb2cq@arrl.net)

Vice President:

Joe Calabrese, WA2MCR; [wa2mcr @ arrl.net](mailto:wa2mcr@arrl.net)

Secretary/Treasurer:

Mike Aiello, N2HTT; [n2htt @ arrl.net](mailto:n2htt@arrl.net)

Foxes not found – N2EAB

The third PCARA VHF Fox Hunt was a complete success, especially for the fox.

N2CBH, Bob and N2EAB, Mike, the team to first discover the crafty Karl N2KZ, last September, took the role of fox this year. No one discovered our den, though many of the hunters came very close. Some passed by several times.

The first hunters to drive by were the team of Malcolm, NM9J and Joe, WA2MCR. They arrived shortly after our third transmission, about 25 minutes into the event. My immediate thought was we would be caught, and maybe the location we chose was too obvious. Bob and I ducked down so as not to be spotted sitting in the car, we wanted to keep it challenging and be found through RF Direction Finding techniques. The fox eluded the hunters this time, and again two more times as team NM9J/WA2MCR passed by again some time later. At one point they stood 20 feet from us listening with their 440 MHz antenna. They would have heard us without any antenna at that proximity.

Kevin, N2KZE was the second hunter to pass by, unfortunately for him it was during one of our silent intervals.

Next came N2KZ who proved to be a determined hunter. Karl drove by us a total of eight times throughout the hunt. He was clearly zeroing in but couldn't quite pin-point us.

When 4:30 p.m. arrived, I announced the fox hunt had ended and Karl asked where we were. I replied he should look in his rear view mirror. He was that close at the end.

Ray, N2CH was spotted walking by with about 14 minutes left in the hunt, then disappeared to search somewhere else.



Hunters at the Beach Shopping Center prepare for the beginning of the third PCARA foxhunt on June 6. L to R Ray W2CH and Marylyn, Joe WA2MCR, Clint KB2ZRJ, Karl N2KZ, Kevin N2KZE and Adam KC2JNW.

I am not certain as to why we weren't found. Possibly due to the strange radiation pattern emitting from my mag-mount antenna? It was affixed horizontally to the left rear quarter panel of my car, about two feet off the ground, and we were parked between an embankment and a building.



Mike, N2EAB shows where his mag-mount 2 meter antenna was located for horizontal polarization.

At 4:30 p.m. we announced the post fox hunt dinner and June club meeting location. The question most asked from the hunters was "Where were you?" I guess Bob and I were lucky once again. Last year was the first fox hunt for both of us, and we were first to find Karl. This year was another first, we were the first PCARA fox that remained hidden. Hey Bob, want to go halves on a lottery ticket?

– Mike, N2EAB

Hunters' view

After reading the story from this year's foxes, N2EAB and N2CBH, here's how the event appeared to unfold from the hunters' point of view.

Competitors in the PCARA foxhunt gathered at the Beach Shopping Center in Peekskill just before the 3:00 p.m. start time. Nine members signed in, and since some had no DF equipment, people paired off in teams. With antennas at the ready, everyone was waiting for the first transmission on 146.565 MHz.

Your editor joined up with Joe, WA2MCR. Our first bearing on the fox was east south east, in the direction of FDR State Park. We set off down Route 202 and by the time of the next transmission we had reached the disused gas station at Croton Avenue. Our second bearing, from the gas station was in the same ESE direction.



Karl, N2KZ prepares for his first bearing on the fox.

Continuing down Route 202, we pulled into the car park at Staples Shopping Plaza and parked in a clear area at the west end. The 3:20 p.m. transmission was coming from the south east – possibly from the opposite corner of the car park. We set off to investigate, driving around the back of Staples in case our sneaky fox was hiding between the garbage containers. (This had happened to me once before, in the U.K!)

There was no sign of Bob and Mike... and by the time we parked in front of A.C. Moore, the next transmission was about to start. It was strong! Plugging in 20dB of attenuation still produced a strong signal, so we switched over to 439.695 MHz. The third harmonic was audible and coming from the corner of the A.C. Moore building, apparently from inside Party City!

We made a close inspection of the area – should we be looking for one of Bob’s Jeeps or his xyl’s Ford? No sign of either! A further bearing on 440 MHz suggested the station was south of the corner store – so we set off to investigate.

We spent the next 50 minutes laboriously exploring the streets of Yorktown south of Staples Plaza,



A skulk of foxes. L to R N2EAB, N2KZ and N2CBH. (Skulk is the collective noun for a group of foxes.)

reaching as far as Wilkens Fruit Farm. Unfortunately, the 440 MHz signal never reappeared, and all 2 meter bearings led us back to Staples Plaza. There we bumped into Ray W2CH and Marylyn, who were busy checking out the shopping center car park.

In the last transmission at 4:30 p.m., Mike N2EAB told hunters that *nobody* had discovered the foxes’ lair — which made our failure to pin them down a little more bearable. The foxes announced that the meeting place would be the New City Diner on Route 202. There we found what everyone had been dying to know — that Bob and Mike had been parked in Mike’s silver Taurus alongside the A.C. Moore building. Whenever hunters came by, they would slide down in their seats to avoid being detected.

Despite failing to find the foxes, all hunters were in good spirits and those who got in sight of the quarry knew their direction finding skills were close to the mark. Thanks to Bob and Mike for an enjoyable afternoon!

- NM9J

Raffle result

PCARA’s Spring raffle drawing took place during Field Day activities on Bear Mountain. The raffle is organized each year to offset the cost of the club’s insurance bill.



The winning raffle ticket is about to be drawn by Alan at the conclusion of Field Day activities on Bear Mountain.

Alan, son of WA2MCR, pulled the winning ticket from the box on Sunday June 27. The lucky owner of ticket no. 57 was Garry Maynard, KA2GRS of Middletown, NY. Garry’s prize is the Yaesu VX-2R dual-band HT with wideband 500 kHz to 999 MHz receive coverage. Mike, N2HTT sent the radio to Garry on June 29. Congratulations Garry!



Field Day at 1300 feet

PCARA's Field Day 2004 began at the bottom of Bear Mountain on Saturday June 26 with two important questions. Would it stop raining and would the gate be open on time? The weather forecast had suggested showers in the morning, followed by improvement later in the day. Access to the mountain was in question – Perkins Memorial Drive is currently closed on weekdays for resurfacing – and the gate stays closed if the weather is bad. Fortunately, the friendly worker from the Park Commission who came to open up explained that PCARA could drive up to the summit since we had a permit – but we should prevent others from making the ascent until the weather cleared and the gate was officially open. PCARA's early arrivals, including Ray W2CH and Marylyn, Joe WA2MCR and Alan plus your editor all headed up the hill, leaving Jim N2KLC to act as temporary gatekeeper. Later, Karl N2KZ looped a PCARA combination lock through the chain until the weather cleared and the gate was fully opened.

Up at the picnic area, the worst of the rain was over and it was time to erect antennas. As in previous years we pulled up a full-size G5RV antenna between trees for the 40/80 meter station. For the 20/40 meter station, there was an experimental multi-band dipole to try out – this was erected at right angles to the G5RV to reduce interaction. For the VHF bands Ray, W2CH assembled a 3 element Yagi for 6 meters and a combined Yagi for 144/430 MHz. These antennas were mounted on a Jaybeam portable mast, last used for VHF mountain-topping in England.

The 40/80 meter station once again featured Joe, WA2MCR's Kenwood TS-530 transceiver, while the 20/40 meter station was running the NM9J Icom IC-706MkIIIG. Both stations racked up plenty of points, though there was a shaky start on 20 meters on Saturday afternoon. Conditions improved subsequently and



The Field Day crew raises the mast for the VHF antennas. L to R, Karl N2KZ, Bob N2CBH, Marylyn, Ray W2CH, Joe WA2MCR and Jim N2KLC.

contacts were made on the multi-band dipole with Britain and Poland, as well as all U.S. call areas.

The VHF station was powered by Ray W2CH's



Ray W2CH and Marylyn operate the VHF station on 6 meters during Field Day.

Yaesu FT-897 and made lots of contacts in call areas 1 and 2. The three element Yagi for 6 meters did very good work during a number of band openings, allowing contacts with North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, South Texas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi and Nebraska. Not bad for a little beam antenna on VHF!

A good number of club members came up to operate on Saturday, then for the overnight period N2CBH, N2KLC and WA2MCR manned the HF stations during the wee small hours, making many contacts on the lower frequency bands. Cross-band interference was reduced by inserting W3NQN bandpass filters for 20, 40 or 80 meters in the antenna cables. Joe kept the RF radiating through the night and was responsible in large part for the jump in contacts compared to previous years.

Jim, N2KLC was in the middle of a move, and his generator was unavailable. Instead, electrical power was provided by Bob, N2CBH and his sturdy Homelite Generator. During the overnight period, stocks of gasoline were depleted and Jim asked your editor to bring more gas up the mountain to keep the generator running. My Home Office-approved one imperial gallon container didn't seem to fill the tank very far, but it did keep the generator going for another 4½ hours until it spluttered to a halt at 1:30 p.m. The 20 meter station transmitted for a while longer using a 12 volt battery.

Computer logging was in use at all three stations, making scoring at the end of the event much easier. In addition to the CW and phone contacts, we earned bonus points for 100% emergency power, media publicity, set-up in a public place, information booth and copying the W1AW Field Day message. The overall



Joe, WA2MCR operating 20 meter phone.

points are still being totaled, but here's the provisional score along with results from previous years.

Peekskill/Cortlandt ARA, W2NYW

	2001	2002	2003	2004
QSOs:	450	718	733	968
Power		2 (<150W)		
Participants:	16	15	11	12
Total score:	1,540	2,096	2,328	2,946

The continuing improvement is very satisfying, especially in view of the declining sunspots. Let's see where the score places PCARA in Class 2A, ENY when the overall results are published in December's QST.

- NM9J

Eddystone Crossfeeder Aerial System - NM9J

In a recent clean-up, I came across a vintage U.K. manual of short wave equipment — and thought you might like a glimpse of the HF techniques in use almost seventy years ago.

During my short wave listener days, one of the antennas I tried came from this “Eddystone Short Wave Manual” for 1935. The antenna consisted of a half-wave dipole fed with a rather special open-wire feeder. To quote from the Eddystone article: “The Eddystone Crossfeeder System of lead-in and doublet aerial is, therefore, employed, as shown in

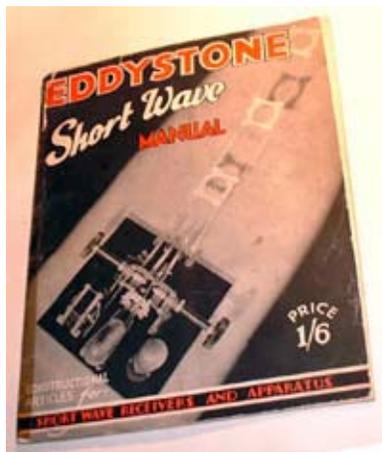
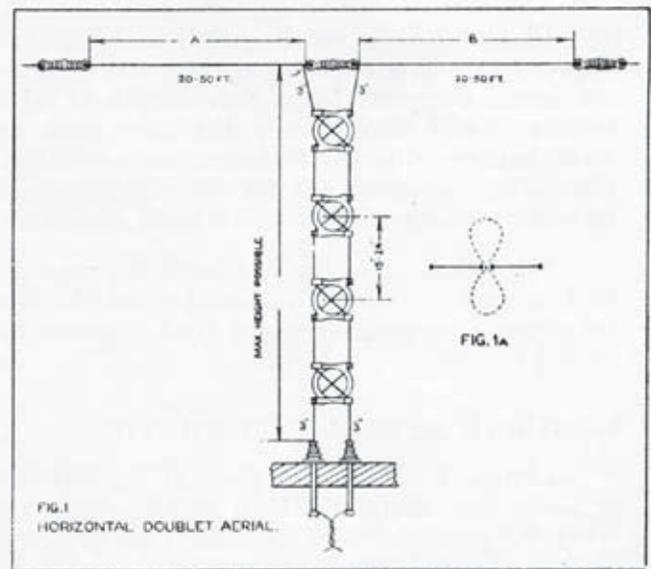
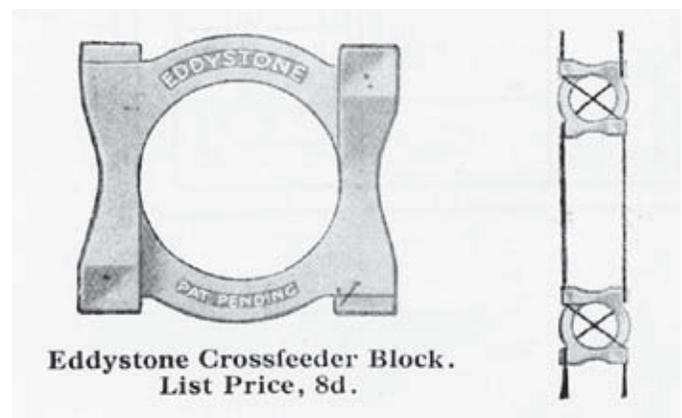


Figure 1. In this, the lead-in consists of two wires which are crossed over by means of the crossfeeder blocks at regular intervals. By this method, the signal voltage induced in one line is 180° out of phase with that in the other.” Crossing over the feeder wires was intended to eliminate local electrical interference picked up on the vertical feeder section. There was no TV timebase or BPL to worry about in 1935, but there was “local man-made interference caused by electric fans, refrigerators, flashing signs, small electric motors, and electric mains switch noises radiated from the house wiring.”



The design used Eddystone Crossfeeder Blocks, which were available for the sum of 8 old pence each. They appear to have been made of porcelain because the manual says “if they fall during erection, they will most surely be broken.” I could not find any crossfeeder blocks in the 1960's so I made my own by cutting squares of Paxolin phenolic insulating sheet and drilling a small hole in each of the four corners. The feeder was threaded through the holes and crossed over on opposite sides of the Paxolin. I remember it took a long time to prepare — it's a lot easier today to use coaxial cable with a balun.



Peekskill / Cortlandt Amateur Radio Association

Mail: PCARA, PO Box 146, Crompond, NY 10517

E-Mail: w2nyw@arrl.net

Web site: <http://www.pcara.org>

PCARA Update Editor: Malcolm Pritchard, NM9J

E-mail: NM9J @ arrl.net

Newsletter contributions are always very welcome!

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 the Hudson Valley Hospital Center, Route 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. * *July meeting delayed one week.*

PCARA Repeaters

W2NYW: 146.67 MHz -0.6, PL 156.7Hz

KB2CQE: 449.925MHz -5.0, PL 179.9Hz
(IRLP node: **4214**)

N2CBH: 448.725MHz -5.0, PL 107.2Hz

PCARA Calendar

Sun July 11: July meeting, HVHC, 3:00 p.m.

Hamfests

Sun Jul 11: Sussex County ARC Hamfest, Sussex County Fairgrounds, Plains Rd. off Rt. 206, Augusta N.J. 8:00 a.m.

Sun Aug 15: Tr-State ARA Hamfest, Matamoras Airport Park, Matamoras, PA, I-84 exit 53. 8:00 a.m. **Club table.**

Sat Aug 21: Ramapo Mountain ARC Hamfest, American Legion Hall, 65 Oak St., Oakland NJ. 8:00 a.m.

Sat Sep 11: Saratoga County R.A.C.E.S. Association Hamfest, Saratoga County Fairgrounds, Ballston Spa, NY, 7:00 a.m.

Sun Sep 12: LIMARC Hamfair, Briarcliffe College, 1055 Stewart Ave., Bethpage, NY. 9:00 a.m.

Sun Sep 12: Candlewood ARA Hamfest, Edmond Town Hall, Rt 6, Newtown CT, 8:30 a.m.

VE Test Sessions

Jul 4: Yonkers ARC, Yonkers Police Dept., 1st Precinct, E Grassy Sprain Rd, 8:30 A.M. Contact: D. Calabrese, 914 667-0587.

Jul 8: WECA, Fire Training Center, 2 Dana Rd., off Rt 9A, Valhalla NY 10595. 7:00 p.m. Preregister with Sanford Fried, (914)273-2741.

Jul 20: W5YI VEC Pel Hams, Pelham Doronco Town House, 20 5th Ave, Pelham, NY 10801, 7:30 p.m. Register with Michael Ciferri, (914) 738-5775.

Jul 26: Columbia Univ ARC, Watson Labs, 612 W 115th St. New York, NY, 6:30 p.m. Contact Alan Crosswell, 212 854-3754.



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PO Box 146
Crompond, NY 10517