



Scuttlebutt

December 2015

Issue 234

Next Meeting: Sunday: December 6th – 12:30 – 4:30 pm
Auburn Elks Hall
754 Southbridge St, Auburn, MA 01501

Captain's Cabin

Tony Brock-Fisher, K1KP

CQWW – BIC!

As this column goes to press just before the CW weekend of CQWW, YCCC holds a slim lead from the SSB weekend. Club Scorekeeper Alec W2JU calculates our advantage at about 3% - so we need to play hard in the CW weekend to pull this one out!

This operator recently got a first-rate education on the value of the Butt-In-Chair (BIC) principal. Due to circumstances at his station, Mark, K1RX was looking for a guest op gig for CQWW Phone, and graciously accepted my invitation to join our cozy Multi-Multi operation. By 'cozy' I mean we have only two operating positions – so we can't claim to be seriously competitive with the Battleships of the Fleet. But we operate this way so that anyone can run and have fun, and we maximize points for the club. Mark issued a challenge to our team – to keep the station manned for the full 48 hours (38 being our usual total on time). We accepted and met this challenge – and the result was amazing! Our raw score was over 50% higher than the previous station record for the same contest! So we have set a new bar for ourselves, and learned a valuable object lesson in BIC. I hope others can consider the benefit of longer BIC hours when planning for the next contest.

The Ham's Eroding Dynamic Range

As some of you may know, we recently did some major renovations at the K1KP QTH. This included the addition of a 10 kW Home Solar Power system, and upgrading of the electrical service from 100 to 200 amps to support additions and a remodeled kitchen. The solar power system involved a lot of work addressing RFI concerns from switchers. Thanks to the selfless assistance of a certain retired MIT professor, the effort was mostly successful, and we are still able to hear a few signals on the HF bands! Another impact of the project was the installation of shiny new Arc Fault Circuit breakers in our electrical panels – 13 of them! And yes, they are affected by RF. I have some circuits that are tripped off by running QRO on 160 meters. And then other circuits are tripped by 25 watts on 2 meters! Sometimes the behavior is load dependent – a kitchen circuit was fine during CQWW until we tried to reheat coffee in the microwave – then it tripped off! So despite the victories claimed by the League on the subject of Arc Fault breakers, they are a real problem for hams.

Of course in my case, these issues were under my direct control. I was able, with help, to make modifications (at my own expense) to the solar power system to reduce the noise it was producing. And if I want to take the risk, I could, after the electrical inspector leaves, replace the AFCI breakers with regular breakers. But consider, for a moment, the predicament I would be in, if these not-so-unusual home improvements had been made by my neighbor? What if they installed a noisy solar power system, and were unable or unwilling to modify it to reduce noise? What if they had remodeled their kitchen, and the lights went out every time I fired up a legal, clean, loud signal on 160?

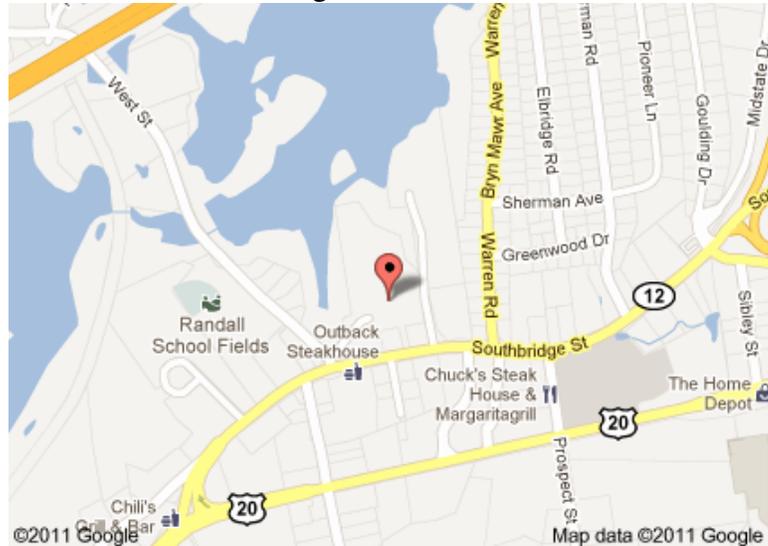
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Directions to Auburn Elks Hall

754 Southbridge St, Auburn, MA 01501



From East & West via Mass Pike Interstate 90; take Exit 10 onto Route 12 South. Travel 7/10 of a mile, pass through two sets of traffic lights, pass by Waterman Road and Warren Road on the right. Take a right into the Lodge before Jiffy Lube.

From East, via Interstate 290 West; Exit 8 in Auburn onto Route 12 South. Travel 9/10 of a mile, pass through two sets of traffic lights, pass by Waterman Road and Warren Road on the right. Take a right into the Lodge before Jiffy Lube.

From North, via interstate 190; South onto Interstate 290 West. Then take Exit 8 in Auburn onto Route 12 South. Travel 9/10 of a mile, pass through two sets of traffic lights, pass by Waterman Road and Warren Road on the right. Take a right into the Lodge before Jiffy Lube.

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Sixth Annual YCCC Holiday Buffet and Yankee Swap!

Sunday, December 6, 2015 12:30-4:30

Auburn Elks Hall

754 Southbridge St, Auburn, MA 01501

The Buffet Menu will be:

American Special: Hot Roast Beef
Hot Oven Roasted Chicken
Hot Rigatoni and Sauce
Garden Salad, Oven Roasted Potato
Rolls, Coffee and Dessert

The price of the buffet tickets is \$20 per person.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING THE BANQUET, PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO ME, K1KP, barockteer@aol.com. Be sure to indicate how many banquet tickets you would want. I will need a final headcount just before CQWW CW.

The Program Will Also Include: CQWW Scores Update – W2JU
Dxpedition and Technical presentations

Plus of course there is the Holiday Buffet and THE 6TH Annual Yankee Swap!

For the Yankee Swap, bring a wrapped ham-radio-related gift, value under \$15 and under 15 pounds. Gifts should be original (please don't recycle last year's gifts; no bedpans or boatanchors please)!

And last but not least, we will be kicking off the 2016 YCCC Scholarship Raffle – Tickets will be \$25 for a chance to win a great prize! Tickets are \$25 – bring cash or checks!

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Western Connecticut Area Meeting November 17, 2015

Just got back from a Western CT area meeting at the Parthenon Diner in Branford, CT. We have two new members: N1DID, Emily Clarke, and KC1ACN, Rob Cichon. W1CTN, N1TM, WD1M (not yet a member), and W1JQ were also in attendance, along with Emily's partner.

Talked about contesting, antennas, and plans for the next two weekends. N1DID just moved in the the state from NCCC territory, and is currently has some wire antennas up for SS Phone and CQWW CW. (Emily is also very interested in VHF contesting). W1CTN told us about his 160M receiving antenna. One theme that came up several times: know who you're competing against. If you're 100W and wires, you're not competing against VY2ZM.

We talked a bit about some an intra-club competition: NCCC does this to increase contest activity. It's a good idea; we should probably organize something like this for the YCCC.

We're going to shoot for another area meeting in February or March, somewhere on the *real* Western side of the state.

Mike Loukides, W1JQ
YCCC Western CT Area Manager

October 3, 2015

General Meeting Minutes including Contest University Report

The General meeting of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club at the Sturbridge Host Hotel was called to order by President Tony K1KP at 1:03 pm. Tony reviewed the agenda for the meeting, and the asked all the members to introduce themselves and tell the group about their upcoming plans for the CQWW contests.

Following the roll call the Secretary's and Treasurers were given and a motion to approve was made by Paul K1XM and Seconded by Charlotte KQ1F.

Tony K1KP asked if there was any old business. There was none

Tony K1KP asked if there was any new business. There was none.

Tony K1KP asked if there were announcements.

- 1) The YCCC will conduct a Mini Contest U at Nearfest XVIII Friday October 16 10:30AM at the Entertainment Building. This will be a Local meeting, so spread the word, and bring a friend to join the YCCC.
- 2) N1RR is coordinating a post contest gathering at Owen O'Leary's (www.owenolearys.com) 17 Connector Rd, Westborough, MA 01581 508-366-9262 the exact date will be announced on the reflector, however reserve the evening of October 27, 28 or 29th.
- 3) W1VE then announced and reported on a project to rebuild the VY1JA station and enhance the remote operation capability. A group of friends (W1NN, VE9DX, N6DE, VE4EA, W1VE) have been operating VY1JA remotely for the past six months. They determined that the remote and antenna situation is less than ideal. J was not in a position to fund a rebuild, but wants his station on. A GoFundMe campaign was started to help fund a station rebuild. The group quietly announced the campaign on various Contest Club reflectors (including ours). In less than 25 days, we raised \$4,200. Of that \$4,200, \$1500 came from YCCC Members **THANK YOU! THANK YOU!** If you would like to contribute the website is <http://www.gofundme.com/vy1ja-help>
- 4) Doug K1DG reported that a book on WRTC2014 is going press.

Tony K1KP then introduced Al, KE1FO the YCCC's awards manager to announce this year's award recipients and distribute the awards at the meeting. Complete details about the YCCC awards program and the list of members who won an award are available on the Clubs Website <http://yccc.org/awards/index.htm> (Note: The awards are not shipped or mailed, but only distributed at meetings.) Several attendees picked up awards for their friends at the meeting.

Tony K1KP the introduced the **first professor of the Contest University - Doug K1DG**. However before class, Tony and Doug treated those in attendance with a very funny comedy routine on the "Nicknames of the Operators at K3LR" based on the Abbott and Castello "who's on first" routine. Several did comment that watching this was worth the drive to the meeting!

Doug K1DG then got serious and presented the first period class of the Contest University on "**Ten Ways to improve your Score**".

10. New radio
9. Amplifier
8. Antennas
7. QTH
6. Add a Second Radio
5. Join a Contest Club
4. Go to a Multiop
3. Use the Cluster (K1DG sigh)
2. Go to Dayton
1. Get on the air a lot

Tony K1KP adjourned the meeting for a 15 minute break.

After the break, the club welcomed three new members and one returning crewmate aboard.

The Next Professor to teach was Tony K1KP and the topic was "Before the Contest" planning. At any level, improving your skills makes the game more fun! Find a way to challenge yourself! Finish up any antenna work at least a week before the contest. Inspect coaxes & Check for obvious problems! Why does the driven element on the 40 swing in the breeze? Test

everything, especially stuff you haven't used recently, Rotate the rotators, Check SWR on all antenna, Listen for intermittent connections

The Shack: Clean up the shack the week before the contest. You want to feel positive, and a clean environment supports this. Adjust/modify shack lighting or good visibility without glare or eye strain. Ensure good shack ventilation to keep cool in heat of battle with amplifiers running. Get good chairs. Not too comfortable, but not uncomfortable either and should be adjustable for different operators.

Software: Update your logging software to the latest version and test it with all interfaced hardware. Run a gray line program on your desktop for quick reference.

Final Prep: Leave out a box of split-core chokes for solving RFI issues in real time. Shortly before the contest, go around the house and unplug wall warts to reduce RFI. Negotiate with your significant others and work to protect the weekend!

Band Plan: Use: <http://www.voacap.com/prediction.html> or <http://www.voacap.com/coverage.html> Remember that the majority of contacts will be to Europe from W1, So Identify best propagation times and bands to major population areas like VK/ZL, JA, PY/LU, and Middle East.

CW Practice: Spend some time 'tuning up' your CW skills on the air or with PC trainers: CWops runs the CWT every Wednesday at 13/19z, Thursday at 03z, VE3NEA's Morse Runner: <http://www.dxatlas.com/MorseRunner/> JE3MAS's PED <http://www.sk3bg.se/contest/softped.htm> DL4MM's RUFZ <http://www.sk3bg.se/contest/softrufz.htm#RUFZ>

Sleep Plan: Have a sleep plan. You can't store up sleep but you can be well rested. Take Friday afternoon off from work and get a nap. Sleep in 90 minute cycles. Set two alarms, one of them battery powered. Don't sleep the same time both nights – stagger your sleep so you don't miss propagation to rare mults both nights. Use caffeine, 5-hour energy, Diet Dr Pepper as needed (but remember, what goes in, must come out)!

Documentation & Labelling: Make up a one-page cheat sheet for your logger. How to log a contact, edit a contact, record and use the DVK or CW function keys, save a note in the log, set operator call sign (OPON), send talk message to other stations, pass messages. Make up a one-page sheet on stubs/filters, Label everything clearly as this really helps at 3am Sunday morning! Make labels for amplifiers showing pre-set positions for each band/antenna combination (or buy an auto-tune amp).

Tony K1KP introduced Professor Dennis W1UE taught us about “Using Telnet to Enhance Our Scores” and offered several “take away files” for use by YCCC members. (Please do not distribute) First Goal- Simplify Telnet Node Selection, Selected 6 DXSpider Nodes, Selected 12 AR Cluster Nodes and wrote Files for import into N1MM+, Command files, to make Telnet Buttons address several different levels of Spot Filtering. DXSpider and AR Cluster use totally different commands, so needed different files. The AR Cluster needs 1 file for SSB, and 1 file for CW to reach the level of spot filtering desired. The CW file includes quality filters to prevent busted spots from reaching your computer.

All files will be posted on the YCCC website as soon as possible.

Next Professor Dennis moved to his tips as to what to be doing during the contest. No other single thing will help you more to improve your scores than your Butt in chair making QSO's. Execute your plan! Is propagation much better or worse than you expected? Make adjustments as needed. Remember to check the next higher or lower band to make sure you don't sit on a dying band too long. During daylight, stay on highest band open to Europe (general rule) Run if at all possible, Find clear frequency, even if high in the band, Try running on bands where you think you can't. You'll be surprised. If your frequency isn't working, be ready to move. There might be big QRM on your frequency that you can't hear. Run, run, run. You can get mults while running, but you can't get a big QSO count S&P'ing. Avoid any frequency fights with nets or a\$\$#@!&s. It takes too much time; it upsets your flow, and it could give you, YCCC, or contesters a bad rep. QRM can be your friend! Often it can cover up rare DX – work through it for the mult! When running, be prepared for rare ones to call in – you must believe! As hard as it can be to believe a VU2 is calling you while you are running EU, it happens!

Make it Fun, Challenge yourself to make it more fun. Saturday AM on 20 is fun; Saturday afternoon on 10 is more fun; 80 and 160 after European sunrise can be 'less fun'. Find ways to challenge yourself and your ops to make it fun. Use cqcontest.net, or find a partner station to compete with in real time.

Remember many contests have a penalty for errors: Loss of QSO or Loss of QSO + 2x penalty! Errors happen however focus on yours and how to prevent them. Post contest “log washing” is not an acceptable practice! NEVER NEVER TRUST CLUSTER SPOTS! Ask for repeats if you are not sure!

Dennis introduced the next professor, Paul K1XM and the topic was “How to Break a Pileup”. Paul started his presentation with the following words of wisdom: In a perfect world multipliers would show up, work you, and then work you

buddies. Then they would QSY to another band to do the same. And they would never work your competition. We don't live in a perfect world.

When should you be spending time calling in a pileup? Answer is when doing so will add more to your score than doing something else, you need the station and you have a reasonable chance of being able to work him.

The Goal is to work the station quickly, don't be a jerk, don't call out of turn, don't transmit when he's transmitting. Call when he will hear you like when he is listening. Use standard phonetics and select standard to control call length to match the flow of the pileup. Use Kilo One Zulu Mary or Kilowatt One Zanzibar Mexico depending on the pileup.

One final thought: The station you are calling would rather work you than any other station in the pile-up! You just have to give him the opportunity!

Tony K1KP then presented the final topic "After the Contest".

- Transfer any correction notes MADE DURING THE CONTEST PERIOD to your log
- The CLUB field of the Cabrillo Log MUST say 'Yankee Clipper Contest Club' (do not abbreviate YCCC)
- At multi-ops, make sure Soapbox indicates % of operators' share goes to the Yankee Clipper Contest Club (and spell it out!)
- Dump a summary sheet (.txt) and a Cabrillo log from your logging program
- Go to www.hornucopia.com/3830score and fill in from summary sheet, post to 3830
- Post your summary sheet to YCCC email reflector and send a copy to scores@yccc.org
- Send your log to the sponsor's robot according to the instructions in the rules.
MAKE SURE YOU GET A GOOD ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FROM THE ROBOT!
- CQWW DEADLINE -> FIVE DAYS AFTER THE CONTEST!!
- ARRL DX DEADLINE →
 - CW: February 20-21 (Submit logs by March 25)
 - SSB: March 5-6 (Submit logs by April 8)
- You can resubmit the log with changes, updates up to the close of the submission period.
- Send a Thank you email with final results to your guest ops or host.
- Make notes on what worked and what didn't for next time.

K1XM made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by KV1J. Motion Carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:10

Submitted
Brian Szewczyk NJ1F
YCCC Secretary

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Silent Key

K0TV - Jeremy "Jerry" Muller, Hudson, New Hampshire

(Captain's Cabin: Continued from Page 1)

The point is, Amateur Radio is under a two-pronged attack! On the one hand, we have noise sources propagating like fruit flies on a rotting watermelon, with the number of switching power supplies that are being produced. This is gradually, but continually, raising the noise floor in all but the most remote locations. The FCC has long had a policy of using "the minimum power necessary to carry out the desired communications", but with an increasing noise floor, isn't this number increasing? If the current trend in ambient noise floor continues to increase, the day will come when we need 10kW to 'maintain communications'. Oh, but the moment we fire up this behemoth amplifier, most of the neighborhood will arrive with pitchforks on our doorstep, after the lights go out all over town, when all their Arc Fault Breakers trip out!

Our useful dynamic range is being eroded, by the increasing noise floor on the one end, and the increasing sensitivity of certain required but poorly engineered devices on the other.

Food for thought – but what can we do about it?

Upcoming Meeting

Our annual Holiday Buffet is coming up soon, to be held Sunday December 6th in Auburn, MA. In keeping with tradition, we will be enjoying a buffet meal which offers more time for socializing and conversation. As for meeting content, we will take a look at our results for CQWW, and enjoy several presentations. This time our talks will be more like New England weather – if you don't like one, wait 15 minutes and it will change! We're going with a larger number of shorter talks, to keep your web-induced ADHD tendencies satisfied.

In keeping with the spirit of the season and the theme of giving, I will be introducing a motion for the club to make donations to WWROF and WRTC. WWROF works behind the scenes for many contests, providing hardware and software support for log checking to keep the competitions fair and support rapid processing of the results. WWROF has recently spent \$5K for a new server to hold the log-receiving robots and the log-checking tools, and they have volunteered to assist with printing award certificates to bring some contests up to date. WWROF is also assisting WRTC2018, by acting as a clearing house for processing donations from US individuals to the German WRTC Organization. WRTC2018 planning is underway, and although the competition will not be 'in our own back yard' this time around, it's important that YCCC show it's continuing support to the contesting community by sponsoring WRTC. I'm looking forward to a lively discussion of ways we can financially assist these two worthy causes.

We will also be kicking off our annual ARRL Youth Scholarship Raffle. Again this year, Elecraft is supporting our fundraising and donation efforts by supplying a K3/100 kit as the Grand Prize at reduced cost to the club. Last year's scholarship was awarded by the ARRL to our own club member Mathew Williams, W1MAT, who is continuing his degree program at RPI, and keeping W2SZ on the air during contests. Tickets will still be only \$25 a chance, cash or checks accepted. Note: Tickets are only sold in person, no mail/email/Paypal transactions can be accepted.

We will wrap up the meeting by unwrapping some gifts – some useful and some humorous – in our 6th Annual Yankee Swap. If you plan to participate, bring along a gift. For the Yankee Swap, bring a wrapped ham-radio-related gift, value under \$15 and under 15 pounds. Gifts should be original (please don't recycle last year's gifts; no bedpans or boatanchors please)!

Call for Papers

Just wanted to mention that we are always looking for interesting material for our meeting programs. Whether it's a DXpedition slide show, a technical presentation, or something on operating a contest station, if it's interesting to you then it's probably interesting to the rest of the club. It need not be a total reinvention of the wheel, in fact, if you have even a 15 minute talk on shining up one of the spokes or checking the tread depth, please let Activities Manager Jim W1EQO or myself know. As you will see at this coming meeting, even short presentations are interesting!

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CQ WPX 7MHz USA Plaque Thanks

Thank you for donating the plaque for 7MHz USA winner for WPX. This is the first plaque I have won from the home station for contesting. I have been contesting for 50 years so it is a big deal for me. I appreciate what your club does for DXing and contesting. Please encourage your members and officers to keep up the good work.

73 Steve AG4W

YCCC CLUB RESOURCE INFORMATION

DUES AND MEMBERSHIP STUFF Dues for the year are payable as of January 1st. The YCCC has adopted a multi-tiered membership format as follows: Please note that payment of dues IS NOT a prerequisite for contributing scores to the Club aggregate, but IS for the various YCCC Awards Programs

Full Member - \$15/yr (Eligible for YCCC member benefits and electronic "Ebutt" delivery of Club newsletter)

Full Member - \$30/yr (Eligible for YCCC member benefits and paper delivery of Club newsletter)

Family Member - \$0 (Grants full membership to all amateurs residing at one domicile on payment of one member's "Full Member" annual dues and entitlement to one Club Newsletter sent to one domicile or email address. All members of said family are eligible for YCCC member benefits.)

Student Member - \$10 (Grants full membership to students at a reduced level. Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper or electronic delivery of the Club Newsletter.)

Subscription - \$** (A "supportive friend of YCCC" - not a member but a possible candidate for future membership. Only receives club newsletter in paper or electronic form. \$10 for electronic "Ebutt" delivery domestically or overseas or \$25 for domestic paper delivery.)

Club members who move out of club territory and so are not eligible to contribute to club aggregate scores can continue to participate in the Club's e-mail reflector and receive the electronic "Ebutt" delivery of newsletter at no cost.

You can tell if you owe dues by checking your 'Butt mailing label or the Club roster in the Members Only section of the website.

NOTE: If your dues are paid to a March 31 date, then you now need to synchronize to the calendar year. Please see the "Dues" area on the Members Only section of the website for the pro-rated dues amount for a partial year.

Mail your dues to the club treasurer, Chet Slabinski, N8RA, 462 W. Hill Rd, New Hartford, CT 06057.

SCUTTLEBUTT ARTICLES should be sent to the Scuttlebutt editor, Steve Rodowicz N1SR, by E-mail at n1sr@arrrl.net The deadline for each issue is the 10th of the preceding month..

Scuttlebutt Advertising: Nominal Business Card sized ad, \$50 per year (6 appearances)

CONTEST SCORES should be sent to the club scorekeeper, Alec Berman, W2JU, preferably by E-mail at scores@yccc.org. Please include details such as numbers of QSOs, QSO points (if appropriate), and multipliers (all types); entry category; and power.

CLUB GOODIES

BADGES YCCC badges are available from Tony, K1KP. Send \$3, name and call desired on the badge, and your mailing address to Tony.

APPAREL Contact Richie, W1STT. Email: richd1313@aol.com

YCCC LOGO ITEMS <http://www.cafepress.com/n1k>

QSL CARDS are ordered through Tom, W1TO. To order, complete the QSL form from the YCCC website, send it to W1TO who will verify all information is included and send to UX5UO after resolving any issues. You will receive a proof copy directly from UX5UO. Approve the proof after resolving any issues with UX5UO. Email acceptance to UX5UO with copy to W1TO. Current price is \$45/thousand (matte) and \$49/thousand heavy matte. Payment to UX5UO representative, KD4POJ at Mr David Lipscomb, KD4POJ, 4201 13th Street NE, Minot, ND, 58703. eMail: kd4poj@srt.com

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER is posed on the YCCC website. Updates are published in 'Movers and Shakers' when members move or change call signs.

COMPUTER STUFF INTERNET REFLECTOR There is an Internet mailing list for YCCC members. To subscribe, send mail to yccc-REQUEST@yccc.org. Insert only the word "subscribe" in the subject of the mail message. (Do not send messages to the reflector that have file attachments, HTML formatting, use boldface or other fancy fonts, etc.)

WWW HOME PAGE Come visit us at <http://www.yccc.org> Our Webmaster is Lyn Glagowski, WB1CCL.

QSL BUREAU – The W1 QSL BUREAU is sponsored by the YCCC. For more information at: www.w1qsl.org Address: W1 QSL Bureau, PO Box 73, Marlborough, MA 01752-0073. Email address: w1qsl@w1qsl.org

ARRL COMMITTEE REPS are:

CAC: New England Dennis Egan, W1UE Hudson George Wilner, K2ONP Atlantic Charles D Fulp Jr, K3WW

DXAC: New England Bob Beaudet, W1YRC Hudson John Sawina, NA2R Atlantic Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

VUAC: New England Ed Parish, K1EP Hudson Frederick Lass, K2TR Atlantic Joe Taylor, K1JT

ARRL LIAISON: Sean Kutzko, KX9X