

December 2006

Issue 187

Next General Meeting: - Sunday December 10th - 1pm - 5pm Holiday Inn - Hampton Room , Marlboro, MA Off Interstate 495, on Rt. 20 (East side of I-495)

Captain's Cabin

CQ WW 2006 is now a memory, but oh what a memory! How can it be? At the bottom of the sunspot cycle we are able to enjoy such incredible conditions, especially on the low bands! (Well maybe that was expected but what about 10 meters?) What fun for all of us! How did the club do in the highly competitive category of Unlimited Club? Time will tell but one thing is clear – we need every score that is eligible to make note that club credit goes to the Yankee Clipper Contest Club. Like last year when we won, we need every score on both modes to pull it off again! Don't you enjoy the knowledge of being apart of the biggest and best contest club in the world? I sure do!

How many of you got some practice in with the November CW and SSB Sweepstakes contest? I was able to play with a little different (improved?) SO2R setup plus turned some low antennas to the west to see if this might make a difference – I found it worth the effort – an incremental score increase over last year. And that is what all this contesting is about – incremental changes have a positive impact to our scores. It is an evolutionary process – learn from the last contest, apply new approaches, and the net result is an excellent contest operator (45 years and I am still working at this!).

In my usual multi multi mode at K1RX, we did have fun in the SSB contest but on CW, it was special as we put W2PV on the air, to commemorate Jim's contribution to the contesting world! We did not bring in the top MM score beating the likes of W3LPL or K3LR but just putting the call on the air was the real treat – received a tremendous number of nice comments from members of our club as well as others from around the world – all were pleased to work W2PV in the contest for 2006. It brought back some very nice memories for all of us that knew Jim or know his work and contribution to our hobby. I have committed to those that did work us in the CQ WW CW contest, a special QSL card is on the way!

Beyond all this fun, we have scheduled to present on Sunday, December 10, John Corini, KE1IH who will share his interesting work on the topic of Antenna Stress and Vibration. I think we are ALL affected so it should be an interesting topic for all to consider. An awards presentation is planned as well. Socializing the contest theme and just swapping stories of the recent CQ WW contest events are another favorite topic. Our Official Score Keeper, Dave, K1HT will provide an update during the meeting as well – Due dates are fast approaching (Dec. 1 for SSB) and Jan. 15, 2007 is the due date for the CQ WW CW event.

See you all at the next General Meeting in Marlboro, MA on the 10th!

73, Good Contesting! Mark, K1RX

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W2PV at K1RX! CQWW-CW 2006



K1RX K1FWE K8PO KF1V

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Flotsam & Jetsam

Barnacle Jack Schuster, W1WEF w1wef@arrl.net

Ahoy Maties!

It's Thanksgiving day and I've done my part in our annual panic getting the house ready before our 15 guests arrive. TZ6 was very LOUD on 10M this morning, but I'm seeing spots on DX Summit from some of the boys down South for stations I cant hear a peep from. Hope this changes tomorrow ! It's been a while since I put full efforts into both modes of WW AND SS, but the part time efforts this year have been fun and I actually enjoyed SS phone. Perhaps it was because I didn't put any pressure on myself.

After WW phone, which I didn't REALLY enjoy all that much, I asked K5ZD how he sets the controls on his FT1000D. I learned that he did a few things differently than what I generally did. For example, he ALWAYS uses the 2.0K filter on phone. I almost never did, because I didn't like the audio quality compared to the 2.4K. In SS I left it on 2.0 and quickly got used to it. Randy always leaves his AGC on fast...I used slow on phone, fast on CW. Now I'm leaving it on fast all the time. Randy always selects IPO (no preamp) on 40, 80 and 160...I never used any attenuation on 40, but did on 80 and sometimes 160. Maybe what I learned from Randy was the reason I liked SS Phone better than WW phone. Consider comparing notes on YOUR radio with others using the same radio and maybe you'll find a better idea too!

As many of you know, my 4 square on 80 is all wires in the woods. After making a decision to go to ground radials instead of 48 elevated radials that were always susceptible to dead branches and trees falling on them, I reworked the vertical wires in the process of retuning. A lesson learned is not to use insulators at the top of the vertical in a tree (unless the tree is VERY tall). In cases where the tree turned out to be a bit short, and the top end of the wire bent over the treetop, the insulator would get caught on the branches when I tried to pull it back to shorten the wire. Instead of an insulator, I tied a bowline in the end of the wire, tied the rope to it with another bowline, and taped it all up for a smooth transition through the tree.

Speaking of rope, in some recent extreme winds the rope going from the top of the tower to the 160 inverted L broke. It went over a pulley at the top, and down the side of the tower to a winch mounted at the bottom of the tower. Theoretically, the winch lets me relieve the tension when I'm not using it or when high winds are expected (the opposite end is supported by a rope that goes over a treetop). Well, I forgot to loosen it and had to replace the rope. I couldn't find anyplace that carried 100 ft lengths of my preferred polyester, but Home Depot had a polyester/nylon in 100 ft lengts. I have avoided nylon partly because of stretching when wet, but thought I'd give this a try. I found it still stretches, but maybe it's good insurance, at least if the wind and rain come together as is often the case.

I recently considered getting a bunch of tower sections galvanized at a local place that makes highway fencing. They have a min order of \$280, but will do 640 lbs of steel for that price. In case you were ever wondering...

Every once in a while I think I must be getting old, because there are no more tools that I don't already have! I recently needed something to cut a lolly column sticking out of a concrete floor about two inches, and was on my way to rent a jackhammer when N1MM on two meters suggested an angle grinder. The Ryobi that I bought for \$30 not only cut through the lolly steel right at the floor, but I have used it for six other jobs since I bought it. I don't know how I lived the first 67 years without one! BTW, I have a lolly column cutter...it's like a giant copper tubing cutter and goes thru a lolly like butter. How many of YOU have one of them??? PS if you ever want to borrow it let me know.

A funny thing happened in SS CW. Maybe I already reported this on the reflector...sri if I'm repeating myself again. I worked 79 sections and had one to go according to CT, but knew I didn't work PR or VY1 yet. I was wondering if a new section was added, when I figured out what happened. To save typing time, I abbreviated North Tx as NT...after typing NTX a few times. Of course NT was Nortwest Territory so the log had a gazzilion Northwest territories without working Jay!

I just noticed that I beat W2IOP's score in SSCW, as well as W1JYH, W1EOB (aka W1AX, N4XR) and W1BIH. W2IOP(aka W9IOP) was one of the top SSCW ops in his day, as were our own current YCCC members. Oh...did I mention I'm comparing my 2006 score to their 1947 scores I ran across in my "ARRL archives"? SS was two weekends in those days.

Time to get ready for our company that should be arriving any minute.

Happy Holidays JACK W1WEF

<u>w1wef@arrl.net</u> for your input!



K1RX KF1V K1FWE K1YU

Upcoming Contests

December, 2006

ARRL 160-Meter Contest TARA RTTY Melee New Mexico QSO Party ARS Spartan Sprint ARRL 10-Meter Contest NA High Speed Meteor Scatter Winter Rally 0000Z, Dec 10 to 0700Z, Dec 18 NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint OK DX RTTY Contest International Naval Contest RAEM Contest DARC Christmas Contest RAC Winter Contest Stew Perry Topband Challenge

January, 2007

SARTG New Year RTTY Contest ARRL RTTY Roundup EUCW 160m Contest

Kid's Day Contest North American QSO Party, CW DARC 10-Meter Contest LZ Open Contest North American QSO Party, SSB ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW REF Contest, CW BARTG RTTY Sprint

2200Z, Dec 1 to 1600Z, Dec 3 0000Z-2400Z, Dec 2 0000Z-2359Z, Dec 3 0200Z-0400Z, Dec 5 0000Z, Dec 9 to 2400Z, Dec 10 0130Z-0330Z, Dec 13 0000Z-2400Z, Dec 16 1600Z, Dec 16 to 1559Z, Dec 17 0200Z-0959Z, Dec 24 0830Z-1059Z, Dec 26 0000Z-2359Z, Dec 30 1500Z, Dec 30 to 1500Z, Dec 31

_____ 0800Z-1100Z, Jan 1 1800Z, Jan 6 to 2400Z, Jan 7 2000Z-2300Z, Jan 6 and 0400Z-0700Z, Jan 7 1800Z-2400Z, Jan 7 1800Z, Jan 13 to 0600Z, Jan 14 0900Z-1059Z, Jan 14 0400Z-1200Z, Jan 20 1800Z, Jan 20 to 0600Z, Jan 21 1900Z, Jan 20 to 0400Z, Jan 22 0000Z, Jan 27 to 2359Z, Jan 28 0600Z, Jan 27 to 1800Z, Jan 28 1200Z, Jan 27 to 1200Z, Jan 28

Tnx to Bruce Horn, WA7BNM, "WA7BNM 12-Month Contest Calendar" http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/



CQ WW CW 2006 Special Event Station W2PV (operating at K1RX)

Team: WA1T, K1EP, K1EO, K8PO, K1FWE, NF1R, K1YU, N1IX, K1RX, KF1V

It was 25 years ago that the super station, W2PV did their last CQ WW CW contest in the Multi Multi category. The crew that assembled this time had past experience operating at W2PV with a few exceptions. As recently noted in the NCJ, the legacy Jim Lawson left us was incredible. And for the operators attending this year's operation at K1RX using W2PV as the call sign – it was an honor to put the then famous call on the air once again!

In W2PV's heyday, the station and construction practices were the state of the art. Jim's tremendous level of enthusiasm for the hobby and the contest operation that always took place here was marvelous. Jim was a terrific host (assisted happily by his wife, Molly) with an amazing technical mind. And the station was the best for interstation interference, so all the operators back then got the distinct impression they were by themselves all weekend. Transmitting and receiving filters for each band, along with a select set of stubs made this setup one of the cleanest MM stations in the world. Recall hearing the 80 CW harmonic on 40M at S3 (could hardly find the signal during the contest!).

As memory serves, Jim's station had a Big Bertha rotating pole that had 10 over 10 on 10M, 8 over 8 on 15M, 6 over 6 on 20M and in the middle of all that at 85 ft. the 3 el. Full size 40M yagi. It became the main 15M antenna system for the MM operations and at night, the array was turned south for 40M to use as their South antenna. On another tower, 180 ft. in height was the 3 over 3 on 40M (180/90 ft.) with the bottom one fixed on Europe. A 2 el. Delta Loop array for 75/80M was at 170 ft. firing NE/SW. A 150 ft. high dipole for 80 was stretched between towers. This tower also had a 6 over 6 on 10M that covered 300 degrees. The third tower was 150 ft. that at one time had a 7 over 7 on 20M. Scattered around were several smaller stacked yagis pointed south. The 160M antenna was an inverted vee. Impressive or what? In the early days of MM operation, Jim used Signal One radios (CX7A) and Alpha 77 amps throughout. Over time, several operators brought their own rigs (TS-520S, Drake B lines, Collins, etc.).

Of course, nothing like that setup, the MM operation at K1RX was run with 4 stations as shown in the photos. Antennas are typically $\frac{1}{2}$ of what the original W2PV station consisted of. Everything ran well and there were no equipment failures. The special banners were placed in front of each operating position and to spur us all on, our sign maker, K1YU prepared a nice banner to hang across the back of the equipment. A very nice, professional job on the signage, Chris! Thanks!

Call sign recognition – we found it a bit of struggle to get the call through some of the pileups – not sure why but perhaps some were in disbelief that W2PV was on the air! Perhaps the team should have advertised a bit more in advance to generate some attention but this did not happen. Instead, the team just put it out there and thought this would be sufficient. I understand as a test on a certain JA7 on 20M, it took 2 calls with K1RX while it took over 10 with Jim's call to get through the pileup. Guess calls do fade from memory! All this assumes a lot of course given the dynamics of the pileup.

Special QSL Card

A special card is being prepared to earmark this event and the plan is to QSL 100% to all stations worked during the CQ WW CW contest for 2006. Thanks in advance to George, K2ONP for sending out the cards. They need to be printed still, so standby.

The Yankee Clipper Contest Club holds the call, W2PV and is used in special contest related events.

YCCC Regular Meeting October 8, 2006—Vernon, CT

Mark, K1RX, called the meeting to order at 1:19pm at the Quality Inn, Vernon, CT, starting off with a round of self-introductions with each attendee's individual plans for the upcoming CQWW phone and CW contests.

Paul, K1XM, announced his plan to be VP9I for SSB and 6V7D for CW. Scott, NE1RD, was introduced as the new Northeast MA area manager, filling a position long open in one of the most densely populated areas for YCCC. Don, K2KQ, announced that Sergiy, W2WB, has relocated to CA.

George, W1EBI, gave the secretary's report. Active membership as of the meeting date was 377, with 269 members current with dues. We acquired 11 new members at Boxboro 2006 in August plus one new member at a WCT area meeting in September. We were saddened to learn that Marty Miller, NN2C, of Melville, NY, became a silent key in September. Notes of thanks were sent to the Boxboro presenters, MC Doug, K1DG, and seven suppliers of raffle items offered to the club at no charge or at a discount. The minutes of the August meeting in Boxborough were accepted as published in Scuttlebutt.

Ed, K1EP, gave the treasurer's report, announcing that the cash balance as of the end of September was \$12,167.16. Net income from the Boxboro raffle was \$843. The report was accepted.

K1XM, moved to bring the youth scholarship fund up to \$1,000 with a contribution from the club treasury. His motion carried. Chuck, W1HIS, asked why the 2006 raffle was less financially successful than in 2005. K1EP explained that ticket sales were virtually identical in both years, but we spent more on raffle prizes in 2006. K1RX indicated that there is expected to be another raffle in 2007 with a plan to organize earlier and improve the pre-raffle promotional efforts to yield greater financial results.

W1EBI announced that the online roster would include a new field for each member's club area (there are 14) with the next update, approximately one week after the meeting.

Tom, K1KI, presented a New England Division ARRL update. Southern NE (MA, CT, RI) has seen declining membership in recent years while Northern NE (ME, NH, VT) has been holding steady. The governor of ME is a newly licensed ham. Tom pointed to a need to offer more mentoring to new hams beyond license exam classes. ARRL intends to take the FCC to court over BPL, particularly the provision for 20dB notch, which amounts to favoring an unlicensed service over a licensed one (i.e., amateur radio). W1AW is overhauling its entire antenna farm with new gear from M2. KC1J is the new head of the Contest branch, succeeding N1ND. Tom mentioned a new BPL trial slated for Concord, MA. The next WRC is scheduled for Geneva in 2007.

Following a break, W1HIS showed some photos of the Hamsters' station at Winn Brook School in Belmont, MA. The IC-746 Pro and PW-1 linear make for a super setup for those first-graders.

K1RX played a new NCCC video seminar on SO2R operation, featuring N6RO, K7NV and YCCC member Dean, N6BV.

Tom, N1MM, closed the meeting with a summary of the latest features in N1MM Logger, including N+1 checking, rotor control, and a real time score reporting interface.

Respectfully submitted, George Harlem, W1EBI Secretary

Stainless Steel Antenna Hardware

Randy, K5ZD

I recently need some stainless steel hardware for my TH7DXX boom-to-mast clamp. The hardware stores have bolts that will work, but you have to get the right length because they are not threaded all the way.

I discovered a local source for these right in our own backyard. <u>www.boltdepot.com</u> They specialize in ss nuts and bolts and they are close enough that the shipping is minimal (and fast).

Here is what you need for one Hygain boom-to-mast clamp:

<u>Product #</u> 3833	Description Hex bolts, Full thread tap bolts, Stainless steel 18-8, 5/16-18 x 3	$\frac{\mathbf{Oty}}{2}$	<u>Price</u> \$1.09	<u>Subtotal</u> \$2.18
9031	Hex bolts, Full thread tap bolts, Stainless steel 18-8, 5/16-18 x 5	4	\$2.05	\$8.20
2564	Hex nuts, Stainless steel 18-8, 5/16-18 Box (100)	1	\$6.93	\$6.93
2948	Washers, Flat washers, Stainless steel 18-8, 5/16 Box (100)	1	\$3.68	\$3.68
2957	Washers, Lock washers, Stainless steel 18-8, 5/16 Box (100)	1	\$3.97	\$3.97

I bought whole boxes of washers and nuts because I never have enough of them when working on projects. They will sell them to you in smaller quantities.

Unfortunately, they don't carry stainless U-bolts.

Always buy a few extra SS bolts because you are sure to have one seize up somewhere along the way.

Randy, K5ZD

(Ed Note: Using antiseize lubricant on the bolts will reduce seizing due to stainless-on-stainless galling.)

NN2C, Marty Miller - SK

NN2C, Marty Miller, passed away September 30th. Marty was active in the Long Island DX Association, LIDXA, for the last 25 years. He was President of the club for seven of those years. Marty was also President of the Quarter Century Wireless Association Long Island Chapter 81, an honorary member of the Mid-Florida DX Association, and was active in the Grumman Amateur Radio Club. Marty regularly brought his new Dxpedition videos to LIDXA meetings and, according to K2MFY, Ed Whitman, was always trying out new software and hardware in his station. Ed says Marty "loved the hobby with a fervor and would relate to us, with gleeful excitement, his stories about chasing down a new IOTA."

First licensed as WB2VEX, Marty was encouraged in ham radio by his older brother. Marty was active with DXCC, IOTA and lighthouses, a regular Dayton Hamvention attendee, and often went to the IOTA Conference in England. Marty was 82 and was part of the D-Day invasion of Normandy, France.

RIP My Friend de John W2GB

Measuring Cable Loss

Eric Scace K3NA From YCCC Reflector - 20 November 2006

A common method for measuring cable loss involves an MFJ or AEA analyzer as a measuring tool, and shorting the distant end of the cable.

These analyzers do not do a very good job in measuring cable loss in this manner. That's because the analyzers have a very tough time giving an accurate impedance measurement when open or short (very high Z) conditions exist.

Two related methods were written up in "QEX" magazine by AI1J and WA8VCQ a couple of years ago that allow these analyzers to produce a more accurate result. I use the AI1H method, which works as follows:

- Attach a load of 1/2 the characteristic impedance at the end of the coax. For 50 ohm coax, use 25 ohms... etc. I built a PL-259 connector with a 1% resistor combination for this load.
- 2) Use the MFJ/AEA to measure R and |X| (the scalar value of X --the sign is unimportant). Use 29 MHz if you're just interested in the condition of the cable; use the intended operating frequency if you want to know the relevant loss there.
- 3) Repeat steps 1 and 2 with a load of twice the characteristic impedance; e.g., 100 ohms.
- 4) Do some math.
- 5) Compare results to the MISMATCHED ideal loss of a new cable of that type to determine if your cable has additional losses beyond spec.

To simplify step 4, I build a little Excel spreadsheet form. It's posted now at my mini-website: <u>www.k3na.org</u>. (Please don't make fun of my primitive HTML skills.) To use the form, just plug in your answers for the items in BLUE:

- characteristic impedance
- cable type (RG-213 or RG-8 foam are the only permitted answers right now)
- physical cable length in feet
- R and X, if you use the AI1H loss method illustrated next to the top box.
- SWR, if you want to use the less accurate version of the AI1H loss method
 - (i.e., only have a simple SWR meter at hand) illustrated in the middle box.
- WA8VCQ method: similar but uses a pad of -3 dB or so in addition to open/short termination.

My math averages out the results from the two methods. I'm just a babe in the woods at RF engineering, so those who spot formula or concept errors should feel free to send feedback.

The theory:

- Each load should produce a 2.0:1 SWR, if the cable is perfectly lossless.
- A real cable will have less than 2.0 SWR. The difference can be converted to dB loss.
- We plug R and |X| into the spreadsheet because the MFJ/AEA analyzers give an extra digit of readout for these values, as opposed to SWR. But, if one only has an SWR meter on hand, a rough result can also be obtained.

I hope this helps.

73, Eric K3NA

p.s.: Every contester should subscribe to TWO magazines: the National Contest Journal and QEX

Reading QEX's articles every month will definitely help improve one's understanding of station engineering. While some articles aren't of interest to those of us focusing on HF contesting, others are very relevant. If you haven't been reading both of these publications, you are handicapping your performance unnecessarily.

YCCC CLUB RESOURCE INFORMATION

DUES AND MEMBERSHIP STUFF Dues are payable as of the April election meeting, which begins our club "contest year". 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 - \$20 (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper delivery of Club newsletter)

Full Member - \$15 (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and electronic "Ebutt" 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 awards programs.)

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 "friend of YCCC" - not a member but a possible candidate for future membership. Receives club newsletter only in paper or electronic form. Fee basis is \$20 for overseas paper delivery, \$15 for domestic paper delivery and \$10 for electronic "Ebutt" delivery domestically or overseas.)

Club members who move out of club territory and so are not eligible to contribute to club aggregate scores automatically become subscribers. New members who join at the February meeting are credited with dues for the year beginning the following April. You can tell if you owe dues by checking your 'Butt mailing label. Mail your dues to the club treasurer, Ed Parish, K1EP, 9 Spoon Way, N. Reading, MA 01864

SCUTTLEBUTT ARTICLES should be sent to the Scuttlebutt editor, Steve Rodowicz N1SR, preferably by E-mail at **n1sr@arrl.net** or on 3½" disk (in MS-Word format or text file) by snail mail to Steve Rodowicz, 809 Pendleton Avenue, Chicopee, MA 01020. 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, Dave Hoaglin, K1HT, 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 Ric, KV1W. Send \$2, name and call desired on the badge, and your mailing address to: Ric Plummer - YCCC Badge, PO Box 1158, Berlin, MA 01503-2158.

APPAREL Contact Bob Rogers KB1LN@yahoo.com

YCCC LOGO ITEMS http://www.cafepress.com/n1ik

QSL CARDS are ordered through Burt Eldridge, W1ZS. To order, send Burt an email at **eldr@adelphia.net**, detailing card information per "QSL Request" form available at <u>http://www.yccc.org/members/yccc_qsl.htm</u>. You will receive a proof by email. Approve the proof, making any corrections, and return to Burt *with payment* (make checks out to Burt, not YCCC). Current price is \$35 (delivered) for 1,000 cards.

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

COMPUTER STUFF *INTERNET REFLECTOR* There is an Internet mailing list for YCCC members. To subscribe, send mail to yccc-request@yccc.org. Include the word "subscribe" in the body 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 Mike Gilmer, N2MG.

ADMINISTRATIVE STUFF *The W1 QSL BUREAU* is sponsored by the YCCC. Keep your account up to date by sending a check. Stamps are sold at face value, envelopes are 20 cents each. Address: W1 QSL Bureau, PO Box 7388, Milford, MA 01757-7388. Email address: w1qsl@yccc.org.

ARRL COMMITTEE REPS are:

CAC: New England Dick Green, WC1M	Hudson George Wilner, K2ONP	Atlantic Rus Healy, K2UA
DXAC: New England Jim Reisert, AD1C	Hudson John Sawina, NA2R	Atlantic Tony Gargano, N2SS
ARRL LIAISON: Tom Frenave, K1KI.		

Upcoming Meetings

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Next General Meeting of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club Sunday December 10, 2006 - 1:00pm - 5:00pm Hampton Room at the Holiday Inn, Marlboro, MA

The YCCC Scuttlebutt 18 Bancroft Tower Road Worcester, MA 01609

FIRST CLASS MAIL