



**January 2025**

Edited by Brian Battles WS1O

### **ECARA OFFICERS 2025**

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web site: <http://www.ecara.net/>

### **Repeaters**

K1MUJ	147.225 MHz (input +600)	CTCSS 156.7 Hz	Brooklyn, CT
DMR	444.800 MHz	CC1 CT ARES	Brooklyn, CT
DMR Net	KZ1M		South Killingly, CT

### **Weekly Thursday Night Nets**

7:00 PM	ECARA Emergency Net	K1MUJ 147.225 MHz 2-meter repeater
9:00 PM	Flying Saucer Net	28.475 MHz USB

## *Here's the latest ECARA News...*

### **President's Message**

*By Brian Battles WS1O*

Welcome to the January 2025 edition of the *Sinepost*, ECARA's monthly newsletter.

Happy New Year!

I'm proud to be starting my second term as ECARA president...it kinda reminds me of someone else who was a past president, took a term off, and came back (although I was never defeated in an election...ahem).

I was so pleased to see the amazing turnout we had at the December meeting/Holiday Party in Woodstock. Thanks to the Woodstock Tavern for hosting us, we enjoyed fine food and drink and great service! Attendance was the best I've ever seen for an ECARA event, and I hope we can maintain a high level of participation throughout 2025. In fact, I'm going to propose that we may consider holding every other monthly meeting at a local restaurant since we often have only a small amount of business to conduct and people seem to greatly enjoy socializing and informal discussion. Let's talk about this at our next meeting on Monday, January 13, at 7 PM, at the East Putnam Fire Department.

We've also arranged to have a guest presentation by ARRL Connecticut Section Emergency Coordinator Phil Crombie K1XFC, please give him a warm welcome at our February meeting.

We are working on the new Discord server and I want to make sure we keep the ECARA web site maintained and up to date, and let's decide if we have any problems to solve or new projects club members want to undertake for 2025.

We're going to set up to operate Winter Field Day on Saturday and Sunday January 25-26, 2025. I've participated in this event for several years as a member of the Middlesex Amateur Radio Society/Connecticut Amateur Radio Emergency Service (MARS/CARES), and that club has a pretty good turnout each year with a dozen or more members participating. It's sponsored by the Winter Field Day Association (WFDA), and it's not an official ARRL event, but it's quite similar. It's a great way to stay active on the air and hang with friends on a cold winter weekend. John K1CSP and John K1JFT have let us know that the ECARA communication trailer will be deployed at Gawron Farm in Thompson (the same place we hold ARRL Field Day in June). We have power, radios and heat...and of course, our big tower. Let me know if you can show up! We'll scrounge up some coffee and snacks, too. Check out [WinterFieldDay.org](https://www.winterfieldday.org)

Paul KE1LI has been assisting me in prepping for yet another VHF contest in January. Last June Ron N1LSJ and I operated as a Rover and we came in first place in the ARRL New England Division, and ECARA also placed at the top as a club entry! Maybe we can pull off a higher score this month. You can help, and test your own home, mobile or portable station. Anyone with an HT, 6 meters, 2 meters, 222 MHz, and 432 MHz mainly, can try. I don't know of anyone in the club who can't get on at least one of these frequencies. Read Paul's article below and have some fun!

If you haven't done so already, please join the ECARA club email reflector; sign up at [ecara-reflector+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:ecara-reflector+subscribe@groups.io) (link also on the ECARA web site). Check your email regularly to watch for club news and information. We've also just established a Discord server for the club; please take time to get familiar with Discord at [discord.com](https://discord.com), install the app on your smartphone and join the ECARA group. Don't be shy, we're all learning how to play with Discord so you'll be just as green as the rest of us!

The club will be offering free Amateur Radio training classes including FCC license preparation starting in February 2025, please spread the word. See Ed's article below.

As mentioned last month, there are plans to hold another Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training course in April or May of 2025. Please consider expanding your local community service efforts to include participation in the

Northeastern CT CERT Team, which is sponsored by FEMA, Emergency Management and the Department of Homeland Security. It's an interesting and worthwhile training course, and all interested citizens are encouraged to participate. CERT has a lot in common with the Amateur Radio community service activity, with additional in-depth training in basic first aid, search and rescue, traffic, emergency protocols and organization, and more. It's not a huge commitment, there are a few events and drills each year, and it could be critical to be able to lend a hand if we are ever faced with a serious emergency. Training is free, and the NE CERT Team holds periodical drills and is called in to serve at local events, parades, demonstrations, fairs, exercises and so on. ECARA's John Turner K1JFT, who is with Putnam Emergency Management and is the NE CT CERT team leader; let him know if you're interested in taking part!

As president one of my administration's main goals for this fine organization is to increase participation in Amateur Radio activities. I'd like to see you personally attend more events than you did last year, such as monthly meetings, Field Day (last full weekend every June), check into the weekly Thursday night nets on 2 meters and 10 meters, and of course help out at parades, public events, walkathons, marathons, bikeathons, fairs and emergency drills. We always have fun at our club picnics and holiday parties, and we want to see everybody there, with their family members. And can you help teach a training class or become a Volunteer Examiner to give Amateur Radio license exams?

At the least, here are a few fun things to keep in mind if you haven't already been doing them. Put these on your calendar...or since it's 2025, set reminders on your smartphone:

- ARRL VHF Contest January 18-20.
- Winter Field Day is Saturday-Sunday January 25-26, 2025.
- Take 5 or 10 minutes each Thursday evening at 7 to check in to the ECARA 2-meter Emergency Net on K1MUJ.
- Come to the regular club meeting at the East Putnam Fire Department, the second Monday of the month at 7 PM.
- ARRL Field Day 2025 is June 28-29 at Gawron Farm in Thompson.

And there are plenty of other fun and rewarding events. Let's all step up our level of participation as we head into 2025. Maybe we'll even be able to recruit some new members, especially some fresh young blood! Don't sit back and let the same 2 or 3 people run every club event; most of our activities don't require an inordinate amount of effort if several members pitch in, and you can help prevent the people who seem to do everything from getting burned out if you raise your hand and help. Please be an active member, not just a call sign on a roster!

We're also exploring some new things, such as finding about Mesh networking and how it may relate to ham radio. The New England Mesh Network Working Group has its monthly meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 7:30 PM ET. They'll be discussing the current state and expansion of the Mesh network in New England.

If you have ever delved into packet radio or other digital communication modes, you might find this fascinating. Mesh networking is a way for Amateur Radio operators to create high-speed *ad hoc* data networks for use in emergency and service-oriented communications. This is often done via consumer or "prosumer" wireless networking gear running custom software. Currently, there are mesh networks in Rhode Island and they reach as far as Tiverton, an emerging effort on Cape Cod, and they're experimenting with their first link in Dartmouth. I've asked some of the guys involved with this Mesh initiative to come make a presentation to ECARA.

If you haven't paid yet, please submit your annual club dues for 2025 (just \$20). Pay at the next meeting, or you can pay on line via PayPal, look for the link on the club web site at <http://www.ecara.net/> When you pay via PayPal, remember to include a couple extra dollars to cover the fee PayPal charges!

And once again this reminder: We urge you to send in *Sinepost* article contributions. Send along any information or ideas of interest to the club or the general Amateur Radio community. Please email your contributions to [brian@brianbattles.com](mailto:brian@brianbattles.com)

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*Brian WS1O*

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## Contesting

### ARRL January VHF Contest

*By Paul Rollinson KE1LI*

Each year I participate in the January version of the ARRL VHF Contest January 18-20. This tests capabilities on all ham frequencies above 50.000 MHz. You can set schedules so that is why I'm writing. Most of you have hand-held transceivers (HTs) and many have more elaborate stations. I operate 6M, 2M, 222 MHz, and 432 MHz (maybe more) here with power and preamps. I should be able to work anyone from the shoreline and into Windam County. As stated earlier, this will test your simplex capabilities should widespread outages take place.

You don't have to submit a score to participate but it will help in the "small club category" (which we won last January) if you do. I will need to know before the contest starts to add you to the list of eligible participants submitting logs. It may seem like a small thing to play in the contest but this is how it effects things.

You will better know your capabilities should there be a widespread disaster. Reliance on the repeater is fine until there isn't one. This is the underlying desire for this type of event. Much of the activity will be on digital, but this does not limit you from participation.

Charge up that HT! Get to the best spot you can and call out. I will be monitoring 144.340 MHz FM at 8 AM on January 19 (and can schedule other times if this doesn't work). If I work you there, we can go to 432.500 MHz FM and try there or any other VHF/UHF band you have. Set an alarm on your phone...I just did that myself.

Your participation helps you know your capabilities and it helps me and the club with increased scores. If I work your station on 2 meters & 432 MHz, by the end of the contest, those contacts could be worth an additional 500 points because of the multiplier effect. That means if I can work 10 locals, it can really effect the final score.

What can I do to help you get your station ready? I'm willing to chat and maybe show up at your QTH to assist before the contest. I understand new hams may be a bit shy to get on or think they need to have a powerhouse on a mountain. I started with low power and 3 bands from my Kenwood TS-2000. I have improved over the years but I'm still at 345 feet ASL. I should have bought a better location 35 years ago!

Let's put the radio back in Amateur Radio. I'm willing to help anyone who contacts me, time permitting. I want to help you enjoy the hobby I have loved for more than 25 years. I look forward to hearing from you. Maybe the bug will bite you. I have enjoyed many hours with friends that I have made in this hobby. I hope you'll receive the same enjoyment.

I'm putting the Pom Poms away. Get on the air and have fun.

Thanks es 73,

*Paul Rollinson, KE1LI*

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## Technician License Training Course

According to Ed Shekleton K1ZE, this year we may want to squeeze the course down to 8 weeks, we combined some chapters last year. We might try combining Chapters 5-6 and 7-8 into one night each. Ed suggested Amazon for License Manuals as that was less money than the instructor's discount from the ARRL.

Who may be available to serve as an instructor? Based on last year we had the following:

Chapter 1 everyone

Chapter 2 Signals K1ZE

Chapter 3 Electricity KA1MPG??

Chapter 4 Antennas W1UJ

Chapter 5/6 Radio gear KB1JDX?

Chapter 7/8 Regulations K1CSP?

Chapter 9 Safety

The double classes may need 2 instructors to break it up.

License exams to be administered March 26 or review, or perhaps have the VE session on April 2 if we need extra time (*eg*, if there are any snowstorms). How many Volunteer Examiners do we have available?

As far as candidates/students are concerned, Ed currently has only one name from the ECARA web site. Does anyone know of additional people who may be interested, does someone have the Brooklyn Fair sign-up sheet for the class?

The East Putnam Fire Chief has approved use the firehouse on Wednesday evenings for our training classes.

For more info get in touch Ed Shekleton K1ZE...he's also easy to reach any Thursday night on the 10-meter Flying Saucer Net!

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## Secretary's Report (minutes) ECARA Monthly Business Meeting December 9, 2024

Woodstock Tavern Holiday Party/Meeting

Great turnout, we elected officers for 2025, and all had a great time!

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## **Next Meeting**

January 13, 2025 at 7 PM at the East Putnam Fire Department on Providence Pike. The following meeting will be held on Monday, February 10, and may be at another location: I am proposing to have some meetings at restaurants this year, so watch for emails letting you know. Better yet, be at the January meeting and let us know what you think! And by all means, bring friends and family to join us, too.

***73 and Happy New Year To All!***