

EASTERN CONNECTICUT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION (ECARA) Monthly Meeting March 9, 2026



Respectfully Submitted by Secretary Virginia, KC1TCL

The Eastern Connecticut Amateur Radio Association (ECARA) held its regular monthly meeting on March 9, 2026 at 7:00 pm at the East Putnam Fire Station, 263 Providence Pike, East Putnam, CT. Monthly meetings are normally held at 7:00 pm on the second Monday of the month at the East Putnam Fire Station.

ATTENDEES: 27 Members were Present

Prior to starting the meeting Virginia, KC1TCL circulated a current membership roster for check-in and updating of contact info. Jeff, W1QL collected dues from members. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Vice President Jon, KA1MPG.

SECRETARIES REPORT for February 8, 2026

Secretary Virginia, KC1TCL read the February 2026 Report. After reading the report a motion was made to accept the report. Angie, KB1UWC stated that the club had agreed to not include last names in the report, which was duly noted. The motion was seconded and carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Jeff, W1QL presented the report

- Paypal is set up on the website and working. It is tied directly to the ECARA bank account.
- Bank accounts are all complete and checks were purchased
- Treasurer audit will be delayed until the next meeting
- Expenses: \$55 for checks, have not issued a check yet for the speedway.
- Income \$217.89
- Balance \$6,712.80 in the checking account.
- Dues collected tonight - 65\$
- Membership Roster: 24 regular, 78 seniors, 10 family, 4 life.
- Jeff will transcribe the ledger onto a spreadsheet to evaluate membership trends

Motion was made to accept the treasurer's report, seconded and carried.

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OLD BUSINESS:

ECARA TRAILER:

John, K1JFT reported:

- EDS Mechanical will be installing a mini-split. Alterations were made to have the HVAC added. A new extension was purchased and installed for \$67. John was contacted by ESF 2, DEMHS, team leader, Wayne, who agreed to purchase approximately \$2,500 in new radio equipment for the trailer.

John, KC1WFD reported:

- A new Duromax Portable 7k generator is being donated for the ECARA trailer from Accurate Power LLC, which comes with a two-year parts/maintenance service agreement and all-weather cover for a value of \$3,305.87. The generator is Tri fuel, gasoline, propane or natural gas. It will need cord ends. John, K1JFT will make the cord ends for the new generator. A thank you letter needs to be sent to Accurate Power LLC.

ECARA HAMFEST, Thompson Speedway, Raceway Restaurant

April 26, 8 am-12 pm:

John, K1JFT reported on the recent Marlborough Ham Flea Market

- Decent turn out, similar to the ECARA flea market, although more people and vendors, some old stuff other than radio.
- Approximately 100 people were there, wait was over an hour, door prizes were cash. What should we do for door prizes, ARRL usually helps. Hamfest flyers were distributed.

ECARA HAMFEST, APRIL 26

Jon, KA1MPG reported:

- Saturday evening for set up, 6 am set up. 6 tables reserved now, more will be coming in April.
- Jon, KA1MPG will send 2 more rounds of emails to vendors.
- In need of raffle ideas: HRO will potentially match what we donate for a door prize.
- Two years ago, not enough help, no one to run the raffle.
- Volunteers needed for set-up. Elaine, KC1UXE and Terry G, KC1WOH will man the doors selling raffle tickets.
- Jon, KA1MPG will post on the Reflector.
- We need donations for the ECARA table.

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- We will pick up tables in the morning from Thompson Hill Fire, they have 30. Raceway has 17 tables, and we can get more from E. Thompson Fire.
- How much should we spend on the raffle? One gift certificate for \$200, HRO will possibly provide a \$100 match
- Raffle tickets \$2 each. ECARA Hamfest admission will be \$7

A motion was made, seconded and carried to spend up to \$100 for the HAMFEST raffle match.

PUTNAM ROAD RACE:

Terry G, KC1WOH reported:

- ECARA didn't use the trailer for the road race, 5 stations, Terry station 1, race started at 12:30 pm with the kids race, which took about 10 minutes, adult race was after and lasted about 15 minutes, ladies run 18 minutes, little over an hour for all to finish, over 1000 runners.

WEBSITE PROBLEMS:

Jon, KA1MPG reported:

- Issues with the contact forms: 7 people filled out the contact form, Jon, K1MPG will troubleshoot the website, 2 were about the class, Jon sent them information about the class.
- Virginia, KC1TCL suggested posting Secretaries Reports to the website excluding names. Motion was made, seconded and carried to include the Secretaries Reports on the Website.

UPCOMING TECHNICIANS CLASS:

Ed, K1ZE reported:

- Starting Mar 18, 7-9 pm, If anyone has a current tech manual, please consider donating your tech manual, go to Ebay for used.
- Looks like we have full list of instructors, May 20th will be the testing. Testing will be for General and Extra also. Testing forms will be entered online.
- Testing will not be on computer. Ed will be printing out the paperwork. ARRL wants us to buy computers.
- Brian, WS1O will try to have Middlesex club come to April meeting to talk about computer testing. They did the testing at Hamfest in the past.

CERT:

John, K1JFT reported

- Training starts this week, Thursday night. 16 people signed up for the class.

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- Held at the town hall, Thursdays 7-9 pm, Saturdays 9-1/2 Free, state sponsored, state provides all the materials.

NEW BUSINESS:

SKYWARN:

John, K1JFT reported:

- Town of Putnam is sponsoring a Skywarn Class to be held on April 2, 6-8 pm, at the Putnam Municipal Bld.

NEW TV FOR THE E. PUTNAM FIRE HOUSE:

John, K1JFT reported:

- We would like to purchase a large screen TV for our meetings and classes, and donate it to the Fire Station. Walmart is getting rid of all 2025 TVs. John could purchase a 75" for less than \$600. John, K1CSP and John, K1JFT talked to the Fire Marshall. There used to be one here in the past.
- A motion was made to allow John, K1JFT to spend up to \$800 to purchase a TV for the Fire station. Motion was seconded and carried.

ECARA DONATION:

Jeff, W1QL, reported:

- Scott, K1RSO from MA, a member of the NSAR club made a donation of \$50 to the ECARA club.
- Jeff made a motion to accept Scott as a member, seconded and carried.

TRAIN WRECK IN MANSFIELD:

John, K1JFT reported:

- A 40+ car train was passing through an area of Mansfield, near the Willimantic river where there was a washout under the tracks. As the train passed by, the first few cars went over then 7 cars went into the river with propane, another 5 cars with grease. All went smoothly for the recovery operation. It was a freezing cold night, which took a lot of pressure off the tanks, about 200 people worked the first night. By 3 am we had large cranes, by morning tankers were getting hauled out of the river.
- Then railroad crew had to fix the tracks, took about 24 hours per tanker, then flared off residual propane. Went on for 7 days, then went back to clean up.
- John, K1JFT was on a state management team, involving the command trailer and planning to get resources out there. Police, CTS radio, railroad, we had it all out there. Fire Department remains in charge, a plan of action is started. We got cranes

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in right away and helped with the scheduling, 12-14 engine companies responded or were on standby.

- Feeding the workers, Red Cross was there, 100+ people working round the clock on a 24-hour basis.
- Fire Chief is the incident commander, state comes in and works below him, so he gets what he needs, then safety officers, logistics, person in charge of every aspect. One of our guys fell off the trailer, EMT and doctor responded right away. Safety officer did paperwork for injury. Weather station was there.
- DEP was there with their group. Hardest part was getting the equipment there. No evacuations were needed. All went smoothly. Fire departments from all over, covering for each other, 20-30 engine companies responded.
- Important to keep people safe from the cold.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **CERT Drill coming up on June 25th:** John, K1JFT: Radio operators needed, making sure radios are working and handing out. Open a distribution center, will take place at the Putnam Elementary school. Terrorist attack simulation. Help is needed for parking, distribution of medicines, etc. Angie, KB1UWC and Terry G, KC1WOH volunteered.
- **Memorial Day Woodstock Road Race:** Volunteers needed
- **Windham County Skywarn:** Marshal, AC1TA needs help. Virginia offered to help

Motion to adjourn at 8:03 pm, seconded and carried.