SinePost
Eastern Connecticut Amateur Radio Association (ECARA)

October 2026

Edited by Brian Battles WS1O

ECARA OFFICERS 2026

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web site: **http://www.ecara.net/**

Repeaters

s1MUJ	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 John Szamocki K1CSP

Hello ECARA members and associates!

I want to thank everyone for their participation in our club meetings and the ECARA Emergency Net. The attendance at our monthly meetings is impressive. I remember in past years when we did not have enough members present to have a quorum and could not hold an official meeting. Looking out into the meeting room, seeing the many rows of seats filled shows how our club is thriving even in these uncertain times. The check-ins for the ECARA Emergency Net also have been exceptional. We usually have a minimum of 12 check-ins, with some nights exceeding 18 check-ins. We also have about 4 Emergency Management representatives from various towns and occasionally a Skywarn representative for our liaison stations. The report for these nets is forwarded to ARES, to display our commitment to Emergency Communications. This helps us tremendously with funding distributed from Homeland Security for emergency communications. Keep up the good work!

As we finish the fall season and move into the colder months, we must think about the club Officer and Board of Directors positions. November is nomination of officers for ECARA, followed by Election of Officers at the December meeting. I am asking everyone to think to themselves, "What do I want to see for changes to ECARA, and what can I do to help facilitate change?" Sometimes a change in administration can give an organization or group a boost of energy to bring in new ideas and activities. I am asking the newer members of ECARA to seriously think about considering a position within the board of directors. I personally have been club President many times in my tenure with ECARA and would like to see some new blood to step up and give it a try. New ideas sometimes bring new energy. Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome.

On Saturday, October 24, the Connecticut ARES Statewide Emergency Test will take place from 9 AM to 12 noon. This year we will support Emergency Management. Please do your best to sign on the air to the K1MUJ Repeater and await instructions for the drill. I will be away, but John K1JFT has agreed to coordinate the ECARA activities and assignments for the SET. Emergency Preparedness is a key role all amateur radio operators are involved in, just by the definition of amateur radio according to the FCC. Please do your best to represent Region 4 North and help achieve our mission during emergencies.

I am still waiting for confirmation on the Woodstock Grill and Tavern for the December Holiday Dinner. Please stay tuned.

73 for now.

John K1CSP

Secretary's Report

Respectfully Submitted by Secretary Virginia, KC1TCL

The Eastern Connecticut Amateur Radio Association (ECARA) held its regular monthly meeting on September 14, 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. Next meeting is October 12, 7 PM, at the East Putnam Fire Station, 263 Providence Pike (Rte 44), Putnam, CT

ATTENDEES: 17 Members attended.

CALLED TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM by President John, K1CSP

SECRETARIES REPORT for

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the Secretaries Report for June 8, 2026

TREASURER'S REPORT

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the June 2026 Treasurer's Report.

OLD BUSINESS:

FIELD DAY: John, K1CSP: Field day was a success. It was well attended, with fair weather and good food. There was help for the 20m station, and the new hams did a great job. 583 contacts total. We didn't have a CW station. Some operated from the GOTA station. We had Senator Jeff Gordon attend and he was impressed. John sent a message from Winlink. Steve came from EOM, Thompon. ARRL Section Manager, Douglas Sharafanowich said hello. Terry, KC1WOH: One family drove in from Boston, a schoolteacher. He wants to set up a club at the school where he teaches. He had antenna trouble on 20m, but worked ok on 40m. He was licensed; he wanted to get children on the air. One member experienced interference. Good idea to consider using handheld radios. All done by 1 PM on Sunday.

VJ DAY PARADE: John, K1CSP. Another success, the organizers were very appreciative of the club using communications. New HAMs showed up to help this year, which was good. There were communication issues with Dick at the American Legion. Jonathan was a big help taking up the antenna, Glenn helped also. All went well. Next year: set up a Yagi and point towards Dick, everyone else should have good reception. There was no cross-ban repeater this year.

TESTING TABLETS: Jon, KA1MPG. The tablets are all set up. We are waiting for our next VE session. Jon will charge the tablets before the next VE session and will do any required updates. Virginia applied for an ARRL grant to cover the cost of the tablets.

BROOKLYN FAIR: The trailer ended up being in a bad location. All went well for set up, then on Thursday the trailer was surrounded by an Antique Car Club. As a result, we had 4 visitors for the entire fair. We staffed the trailer, we made contacts, we put up the dipole antenna, we ran 20, 40, FT8 and POTA station.

WOODSTOCK FAIR: John, K1CSP asked for a coordinator, that fell through.

Next year: focus on the Woodstock Fair if we can secure the same location as last time. There was a lot of foot traffic past the trailer at the Woodstock Fair in the past.

AUGUST MEETING: John, K1CSP. The club had a picnic at the Turner's home in Putnam on August 10, 2026. There were 18 attendees, great food and a chance to visit with club members. There was no official business.

NEW BUSINESS:

SET: John, K1CSP: There will be a Simulated Emergency Test, Saturday Oct 24, 9 AM-12 noon, similar to last year. A week out we will get an email regarding the scenario and the situation. John, K1SCP will be on a cruise, so John, K1JFT will possibly coordinate. Same scenario as last year with a mobile station at each emergency location in the county. Brian, WS1O visited various locations last year and radio tested, which gave us an idea where the radios worked. There were reception problems at Thompson and Muddy Brook. Concept last year wanted to see how simplex worked out. Best thing we could have done was to open a station at the QV dispatch center, on the hill in East Killingly there is a 200 ft tower. We were able to set up 20m and 40 meters. We were able to send reports via Winlink. John, K1JFT will organize hopefully.

TRAILER: Last purchase was an IComm 7100, new power pole distribution, new antennas.

COMMUNITY DAY: Thompson, October 3. Trailer will be set up to see if we can do amateur radio. John, K1CSP needs help for this date. An email will go out on the Reflector.

HOMELAND SECURITY: John, K1CSP. Money from ARES is available. We could use a full-length roof rack and pipes for telescopic and comet antennas. Any ideas? Pneumatic antenna would be great, cost 12K, need compressor and need mast, very expensive. 3 element beam, we need band filters for HF, 20, 40, 8 filters. VHF, UHF filters needed.

John, K1CSP was contacted by QV: QV doing inventory at South Killingly tower, they had questions about our antennas and what we were running. Sounds like they are taking down the 72 MHz antennas, and they will be replacing them with other antennas. We have back up K1MUJ, packet radio and UHF DMR system. The DMR was on a spare antenna, we talked to Chuck. They will tell us if they have to do anything with the DMR. They are having a problem with MED9 in Putnam.

FLEA MARKET, 2027: Jon, K1MPG. Can we check with the Raceway Restaurant for the Flea Market 2027?. DX Engineering will do more next year. Brian will reach out to DX Engineering. Flea Market Date: Sunday, April 25, 2027. No conflicting events. Virginia will reach out to Mark at Ham Radio Outlet for a raffle donation.

ECOLINK: Brian, WS1O: Tried to set up Echolink at Brians. Jeff, W1QL, reimaged the computer, and it is working at Jeff's house. If you have the Echolink app, you can try to get other clubs to check in to our repeater via Echolink. Download the app, register with your license. Once you have the app there are thousands of stations that you can log into. Brian has been on our repeater and contacted Russia and Canada. Ecolink can access it from phone, computer, handheld radio and mobile radio. If you know the node number, you can connect to the repeater in another country. You can connect all over the world. Can link repeaters, Brooklyn to Vernon. There is a lag, so leave pauses when speaking. Takes a little time to transmit. People don't watch their phones, must shut off the transmission. Brian logged in when in Vernon.

VHF CONTEST: Ed, K1ZE. Everyone is on FT8 these days, Ed and Brian, WS1O worked the contest. Ed talked to someone in Buffalo on 2m. Used to be everyone on 6m around the clock. Next contest is in January. Contest in the summer FT8 and Non FT8.

REPEATER: Ed, K1ZE: We don't do much other than nets on the repeater. How about we try another simplex channel? Monday could be 2m simplex test? 146.400? Virginia will work on scheduling a net on this channel. We can try the QV station and see what we can get there.

NEW ACTIVITIES: John, K1CSP: What can we do to spice up the club? Brian, WS1O: Plans for Christmas party? Christmas party at Woodstock Tavern, Monday, December 14th. James, set up POTA set up. Ed: Fixing a power Supply. New ones are a trick, old Astrons.

RAFFLE: Ed, K1ZE, Shirt and ARRL book set were raffled off. Raffle tickets needed.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: at 8:00 PM, was seconded and carried

SECARS Auction

The Southeastern CT Amateur Radio Society will be holding its annual Fall Auction Fundraiser on Saturday, October 24, 2026 at St. Paul's Church Hall, 170 Rope Ferry Rd. Waterford, CT. Proceeds from this auction are used to sustain our amateur radio club and support our amateur radio community with repeaters, educational programs and activities. This is a great opportunity to buy or sell amateur radio gear and related items and to meet new hams. All are welcome to attend.

Due to water tower painting, our repeater is currently down. Therefore, the talk in frequency is now 146.970 MHz (SCRAMS repeater, - Offset, PL 156.7 Hz).

Please visit our website https://secars.org and https://secars.org/secars-auction-information/ for more information. Let me know if you have any questions.

Many thanks,

Mark Noe KE1IU

DIGITAL VOICE AND THE EVOLUTION OF AMATEUR RADIO

By Jason Bousquet N7PRD

“Integrating the internet as a medium for amateur radio isn’t ham radio!” How many of us have heard that said? At one time, I might have agreed. But then came evolution. The world changes, technology advances, and amateur radio continues to develop new ways for operators to communicate, experiment, and connect.

Over the years, amateur radio has embraced modes such as PacTOR, Packet, FT4, FT8, Winlink, MeshNet, and many others. The digital voice modes discussed in this series are not new in today’s terms, but they remain highly relevant. DMR and D-STAR are two digital voice repeater modes that are readily available in northeast Connecticut, alongside the analog FM repeaters many of us have used for years.

What Digital Voice Adds

DMR and D-STAR offer a dynamic and robust form of communication that stand-alone analog repeaters cannot provide: dynamic linking. Through internet-connected networks, these repeaters can connect local operators to regional, national, and international conversations. In addition, D-STAR systems, where available, can support data connections up to 128 kbps.

Of course, the linking function depends on the internet, which creates a single point of failure for network connectivity only. Each repeater, regardless of its digital mode, remains a local repeater first and always. If the network link is unavailable, local communication can still continue.

DMR, among its many implementations, can support two completely separate digital voice conversations on the same repeater at the same time. Here is another concept that may sound surprising at first: two simultaneous conversations on a simplex frequency without interference. We will explore that idea in more detail later in this series.

The Learning Curve

Here is the catch: the analog radios many of us already have in the shack will not work directly with DMR or D-STAR systems. In other words, if you want to participate in these modes, you will need compatible equipment. As the saying goes, you have to pay if you want to play.

Once you have a DMR or D-STAR radio, the next question quickly becomes: how do I program this thing? New users will encounter terms such as codeplug, call sign registration, reflectors, X-Reflectors, time slots, color codes, and DMR ID. These are not meant to discourage anyone from exploring digital voice, but they do represent a real learning curve. Before purchasing equipment, take time to understand the basic framework of the system or systems you plan to use. Budget-friendly radios are available from online retailers, though buyer beware. At the other end of the spectrum are commercial-grade options from manufacturers such as Motorola and Kenwood. Portable and mobile radio choices are plentiful, so a little research before buying can save time, money, and frustration.

Where to Begin

DMR and D-STAR repeaters dot the countryside across the United States and around the world. Operators interested in finding DMR, D-STAR, and other digital mode repeaters can start with the maps available at https://radioid.net/maps. Whether you are curious, skeptical, or ready to jump in, digital voice is another example of amateur radio doing what it has always done best: adapting, experimenting, and connecting people through technology.

DIGITAL VOICE TRAFFIC NET

The New England Digital Voice Traffic Net (NEDVTN) is a regional amateur radio traffic net dedicated to handling formal written radiogram traffic, message-handling training, and operating practice using interconnected digital voice systems.

The net meets Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays at 2045 local time and is open to all licensed amateur radio operators. Whether you have traffic to pass, want to develop operating skills, or simply want to check in and hang out, you're welcome to join us.

The network is accessible through the XLX-097 Reflector, DMR, D-STAR, System Fusion, AllStar, EchoLink, the Wolf Pack Repeater System, and other compatible digital voice technologies.

For net information, schedules, announcements, and connection information, please visit:

NEDVTN Website: https://www.nedvtn.net/

New England Digital Radio: https://www.newenglanddigitalradio.com/

73,

Mike Shepherd, W1VEG
Net Manager
New England Digital Voice Traffic Net (NEDVTN)

GET CONNECTED

I would like to introduce my new project named Get Connected. It's an interactive webpage on my XLX159.whiskey7.site that allows for new hams or a ham that is new to Dstar or Hotspots to enter some information and get a downloadable or printable instruction sheet. It's out of Beta and we are looking for feedback. Please take a look and help get the word out. The link to the site is here Get connected — XLX159 Reflector Hub.

I welcome any feedback, suggestions, comments and most importantly mistakes you might find that need corrected. I have also uploaded an article about this to my blog at https://www.whiskey7backroads.com/get-connected-xlx159-dstar-setup-assistant/.

Thanks in advance for your help.

Brent Conklin W7BR
Xlx159.whiskey7.site
whiskey7backroads.com

DxQSO

DxQSO gives your club one live picture of who's on the air and what they're working: shared leaderboards (including club vs club) for DXCC, states, grids, POTA, and contests, plus a private community space on DxSocial just for your members.

Nobody changes how they operate. It reads from what your members already use — N3FJP, Log4OM, N1MM+, HRD, WSJT-X, GridTracker — and from LoTW® and QRZ.

I'm looking for a few founding clubs to try it and tell me what's missing. It's free, and every member of an early club gets an upgraded account.

Worth 15 minutes with you and your board? I'm setting up a zoom meeting for clubs to review.

Let me know if you are interested — or have a look at https://dxqso.org/clubs.

73,

Steve Berry, N1EZ
49 year ham and founder
603-505-4891

CT HAM FREEMASONS

David K1DAV has organized a group of Connecticut Freemasons who are also licensed ham radio operators, meetings to be held in Newington, CT. For information or to join please email k1dav@arrl.net


