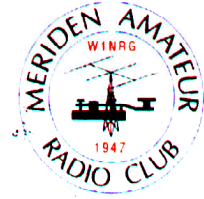




# Key Klix



*The Monthly Newsletter of the Meriden Amateur Radio Club December 2008  
Supporting Wallingford Office of Emergency Management Communications*

## CHANGE THE CLUB CALLSIGN?

The family of Frank Darmofalski, W1FD (SK) has offered his callsign to the club. This was mentioned at the last meeting and discussion of this was tabled until the January meeting.

Not only was this offer made so the club could take the W1FD callsign, but also the offer was made to any individual in the club.

The current club call is W1NRG. The club adopted this call around 1960 to honor one of the founding members, Ed Bishert. Ed was a WW2 ex-Navy CW operator, who was also considered one of the best CW operators in the club and it was Frank himself who led the move to have the club take Ed's call.

I feel we should keep the W1NRG callsign because of our club history and traditions using that callsign. Also, it is one of the very few callsigns that do not need phonetics. One downside to the W1FD callsign was made very apparent one year, when the club used it as their Field Day callsign. About half of our contacts kept asking for a repeat on our callsign.

In any case, the discussion will take place on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

73, Bill, W1KKF

## Required FEMA Courses for A.R.E.S & Emergency Management

Starting in January 2009, I will be presenting the ICS classes. These classes are part of the National Incident Command System. NIMS has been mandated by Homeland Security for standardization of all incident responses in the Federal, State and Local jurisdictions.

The way we interact with any served agency has changed over the last few years. Amateur radio has changed over the last few years. Change is good. However, we need to take steps to embrace these changes. I am working on a plan to go through the approximately six to seven FEMA courses over the next few months. At this time, I would like to use the third Thursday of each month for these presentations. We will start at 7:30 PM and run until 9:00 PM. Based upon the number of people that turn out, we may use the downstairs.

The reason that I have used the word presentation, I am far from an instructor. However it is my goal to present the material so that we can all pass the tests and become better qualified in the eyes of our severed agencies. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to call me @ 860-558-7452 or on the repeater

73, Chris WA1VXH

## SWEEPSTAKES PRIZES

I checked the ARRL website for the rules. We have until January 31st, 2009 to get our order in for the pins or Clean Sweep mugs. The pins are \$6 and the Special Crystal 75th Anniversary Clean Sweep mugs are \$16.

I will take care of the SSCW prizes. The SSCW operators are eligible for the pins only. If you want one get your \$6 to me.

Since they got a clean sweep, the Phone guys are eligible for both pins and the special mug,. I think Skip or Bob/CIW will take care of collecting those funds.

As far as the Clean Sweep Whisk Broom and the free magnets. Here is what I found in the rules, "Magnets and Clean Sweep whisk brooms will be shipped without any action required by those who qualify."

So, I take that to mean only one to an entry. Congratulations to all who participated. Nice going.  
73, Bill



Communications is often more than a single mode or single method or even a single technology. Communications is often a smorgasbord of modes, methods and technologies. History shows that errors, even a single simple error, are the impetus for many of our great advancements. These platitudes serve as an opening for a global, international, multi-culture, quassi-military arrangement that has an enormous impact on millions of the world's citizens. A small typing error more than fifty years ago is one of those monumental events that still affect the world today.

In 1955, a Colorado Springs-based Sears store ran an advertisement encouraging children to call Santa Claus on a special telephone hotline. Due to a printing error, the phone number that was printed was the hotline for the Director of Operations at the Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD). Colonel Harry Shoup took the first Santa call on Christmas Eve of 1955 from a six-year old boy who began reciting his Christmas list. Shoup did not find the call funny. After asking the mother of a second caller what was happening, he realized the mistake that occurred and instructed his staff to give Santa's position to any child who called in. Three years later, the governments of the United States and Canada combined their national domestic air defenses into the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), but the tradition continued.

The fictional background storyline has changed with the world political situation: during the Cold War when the tracking team provided updates via radio announcements, only North America was mentioned and Santa's approach was described in tense terms with interceptor aircraft scrambled to shoot down the "bogie." Only at the last minute would the pilot realize who he was engaging. Now the Web shows that as Santa approaches Newfoundland, flights of Canadian and United States Air Force fighters rendezvous with him to provide an honor guard and ensure that he has no difficulty transiting the various Air Defense Identification Zones he must enter.

. Now major media outlets as well as children call in to inquire on Santa's location. NORAD relies on volunteers to help make Santa tracking possible. About 800 military and civilian employees with their families and friends at Cheyenne Mountain and Peterson Air Force Base spend part of their Christmas Eve at NORAD's Santa Tracking Operations Center in order to answer phones and provide Santa updates to thousands of callers. In 1997, Canadian Major Jamie Robertson took over the program and expanded it to the Web where corporation-donated services have given global accessibility to the tradition. By 2006, the Center handled a half-million calls and over 12,500 e-mails from 210 countries and territories. The web site ([www.noradsanta.org](http://www.noradsanta.org)) gets well over one-billion hits.

In the 1950s technology era, both target acquisition systems and message delivery systems were primitive in today's terms. The early DEW line radar, designed to acquire incoming aircraft, showed a CRT blip for the jolly old elf. This data was forwarded to the commercial radio media and to a bank of hot-line operators. Over the years, newer satellite tracking and missile intercept systems enhanced the acquired data. Through this new technology, NORAD found that Rudolph's nose gave off an infrared heat indicator similar to that of a missile. This unique "signature" allowed continuous tracking of the Christmas Eve visitor. In 2005 on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that first hot-line call, NORAD started using Google Earth with the corridor data. This resulted in a pathway presentation of the flight of Santa Claus updated every five minutes and enhanced with vignettes annotated by noted personalities.

The actual flight plan is classified and updated each year by elves in Santa's travel bureau. The track takes a somewhat meandering path to ensure one-hundred percent coverage. This painstaking detail is seen in a recently taken route.

The entourage leaves the North Pole following the International Date Line to New Zealand and passes over the Sydney Opera House making rounds in Australia. After visiting the Pacific Rim countries while hovering over Mount Fuji, the sleigh departs the area at a speed estimated to be one hundred times that of the Japanese Bullet Train. Tracking along the Great Wall of China and into Siberia, Santa visits many countries of Asia going through one of the coldest parts of his journey, the Himalayan Mountains, to linger over the Taj Mahal in India. While over the Indian Ocean, Rudolph leads the convoy upward 240 miles above the earth to visit the International Space Station. The trek continues through the Middle East stopping by military bases in Iraq and the Persian Gulf. As midnight in Europe approaches, all those tiny hooves beat a path past Moscow and a winding journey by the Rome Coliseum, the Eiffel Tower, and the Tower of London – slowing and stopping to visit boys and girls along the way. Finished with Europe, Santa heads southwest through the Azores circling near the Christ the Redeemer in Brazil and over the ruins of Machu Picchu in Peru. North to North America, the sleigh passes the Space Shuttle at Cape Canaveral and floats a while over the Statue of Liberty visiting millions of homes in the Eastern United States and Canada. Next is a trip through the St. Louis Gateway Arch to the Midwestern and eastern Rocky Mountain states. The group slows a bit over Reindeer Lake, Saskatchewan where Donner and Blitzen have relatives and then head toward the Pacific coast. Santa travels down the western North American coast visiting California, Mexico and Central America. West again for a brief warm Hawaiian leg before the closing passage north to Alaska and finally back to the North Pole.

A simple mistake, tons of technology, thousands of helping hands and we can enjoy one of the simple pleasures in life. ***Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!***

## Station Activities

Last month I touched on the idea of getting our logs (all of them) into some kind of electronic format. That is going to be one of the first projects in 2009. There are also some things that I am going to change in the shack to hopefully make our radio experience more enjoyable. While hanging around during both the most recent CW and SSB Sweepstakes efforts, I saw a few areas where we can make improvements.

Although we have floor mounted foot switches to allow a phone operator to key the rig hands free while typing on the computer keyboard, I found not many ops actually used it. I tried it myself and found it to be "awkward" at best. It's a very small thing about 4 inches square and during the heat of the contest, the op could easily lose track of where it was, forcing him to stop and look under the counter. I tried leaving my foot poised just above it. But trying to keep your foot hung in the air so as to not make the switch and also keeping your foot in one position for many minutes (hours?) at a time ends up with your leg cramping up and quickly becomes a PITA (Pain in the leg) as opposed to a PITA. <grin>

There's must be a better way. So I think we are going to design a nice platform with a momentary switch built into one side. It will be big enough and angled properly to make it a comfortable footrest. To activate the rig keying you will only have to slide your foot to the right and depress the switch. The whole footrest will have the left side fixed and the right side (flush with the left side) will be spring-loaded. I've been meaning to make one of these for my own shack but just never got around to it. So I think I'll build a prototype to test at the club shack and if it works out, will build one for each operating position. Something like that would be VERY handy for the VHF station. During an emergency operation, it would give the op two free hands to write / type messages.

I'd also like to see the club invest in some decent phone filters. We already have fairly good CW narrow filters, but have nothing special for phone. The club owned rig (the TS-690) is where we would add that mod of course. I personally do very little HF SSB work myself, so I welcome any comments or suggestions. How tight a filter could we get and still have understandable receiving audio? Maybe 1200, or 1500 hz ?? Who makes filters for the Kenwood radios with nice steep skirts for SSB ??

Long ago I used to use an Autek audio filter with good results. You could adjust the notch and peak and make that hard to hear station seem like he was all-alone on the band. This was great for rag-chewing and general chitchat. But it was somewhat impractical in a contest environment.

## **Station Activities** (continued from page 4)

There would too much constant adjustment for each new signal you were trying to work in quick succession. Yep, a good narrow band built in phone IF filter is what we need. Mark, K1PU donated a pair of nice headsets for our shack. I used both of them for a while during the recent CW and SSB Sweeps contest, once while operating and also while listening on the second receiver for spots. These were not like the commonly used computer type headsets. Rather they had nice well-padded earmuffs and a very good directional boom mike. I found the headsets did a fine job of killing any ambient noise. And also found them to be quite comfortable when worn for an extended time.

That is saying something, as most of you know I have a behind-the-ear hearing aid that makes for full ear covered muffs being very uncomfortable. I've always preferred those cheap small foam type headphones in the past. With those I could just sort of position the earpiece right over my hearing aid. The better large muff-types that completely enclose your ear were always uncomfortable for me and also would cause audio feed back most of the time. I do have a switch on my aid, where I can set it to inductive coupling so it could be used with a telephone. But then the telephone (or headset) has to be hearing aid compatible to work without feedback. Well Mark's new headsets worked out quite well for me. They seem to work fine with my hearing aid in inductive mode and they were surprisingly comfortable. These headsets have two earmuffs so when wearing them you aren't bothered by nearby noise. The only thing that was an issue was a minor one. It seems the mic has two positions. It can be bent/turned 180 degrees physically so that one side is more or less omni-directional and the other side is noise canceling and somewhat directional. It also has windscreen foam covering, which works well to stop your heavy breathing and wind etc. from being picked up. Just how loud the mic drives the rig is dependant on which way the mic element is facing. So when you first pick it up you should check to see that the flat of the mic is facing you. Once you have that set, you are good to go. I only mention this because some of the guys, who were using it, were adjusting it and bending it to fit. I think in some cases the element might have gotten turned slightly. Although we never had a problem driving the rig with decent audio.

More next month. Meanwhile I hope to see you all at the big party December 12th.

73, Rich WA1TRY SAM

# Minutes of Meriden Amateur Radio Club

The business meeting opened at 1930 on November 13, 2008 with approximately 30 people in attendance. A quorum was present.

## November 2008

### Announcements -

- Frank Darmofalski W1FD became a Silent Key on November 2, 2008. A remembrance period will take place at the Christmas Party on December 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Bill Munger N1PBF, a former member, became a Silent Key in October.
- Introductions.
- Next meeting is on Friday, December 12th at 7:00 PM - Christmas Party
- Note date is Friday
- Family of W1FD has offered Frank's call to MARC as vanity call or to interested MARC member. Will be KK article and discussion/decision in January.

### Secretary's Report -

- Accepted as presented and published. Correction: 2008 is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sweeps Stakes, not the 50<sup>th</sup>.

### Treasurer's Report -

- Accepted as presented.
- Impact of economy on the Mutual Fund will be detailed at the January meeting.
- Annual audit committee: N1GNV, K1SEZ and N1ZN.

### Contributions –

- Club – K1PU donated headsets for club station from McKay Products.
- Club – Several items of test equipment was donated by Ian W1YVC.
- Scholarship - The Darmofalski family suggested that friends may donate to the scholarship fund in Frank's name

### Correspondence –

- Sympathy cards sent to the families of Frank Darmofalski W1FD and Bill Munger N1PBF.
- Floral arrangement sent to services for Frank Darmofalski W1FD.
- Miscellaneous catalogs.

### Scholarship – (KE1AY)

- Letters for 2009 scholarship announcement will go to schools in March.

### Club Station & Facilities - (WA1TRY)

- Station worked OK for SS-CW
- A bad connector in the antenna panel to be repaired before SS-SSB.
- Ten-Tec tuner squeaks.

### Club Activities & Program (KB1CIW)

- Next activity meeting is January 22, 2009. Bob needs suggestions and collaborators.
- Sweep Stakes-SSB November 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>. See Skip W1SKP or KB1CIW to sign-up.
- Sweep Stakes-CW was November 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>. Missed a sweep by one – NT.
- Next regular activity meeting is Thursday January 24<sup>th</sup>.

## Meeting (continued from page 6)

Nets – All nets are doing well

- HF-SSB 28.375 Tuesdays at 8:00 PM, NC John K1VDF.
- VHF-FM 147.36R Tuesdays at 7:00 PM, NC Bob KB1CIW.
- VHF-SSB 50.275 Mondays at 8 PM, NC Jim N1ZN, Skip W1SKP & Mike K1MVM

Castle Craig – (N1API)

- 10/10 QSO parties: CW/Dig May 2009, SSB Feb 7<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009.
- AI has been entering W1NRG contacts for 10/10 awards. MARC has earned 400 Bar and Basic County plus 100 awards.
- Some Castle Craig applications and upgrades.

Membership – (N1GNV)

- Seventy-seven members more or less.

Interference and Technical – (WA1TRY)

- Noticed some 40-meter interference during SS.

Instruction – (VE-KE1AY, Instruction-Open)

No VE session scheduled

January one-day Tech class by N1GNV on hold.

Nutmeg Hamfest – (W1KKF) October 12, 2008

- Nutfest unedited results: Attendance-521, MARC distribution \$\*\*\*.\*\* (est), VE session \$\*\*.00, Club table \$\*\*\*.00.
- IC718 and Switching power supply did not sell, they will be offered on Ebay.

Candy Store – (N1ZN)

- Running smoothly.
- MARC logo hats are available – See Jim N1ZN

Key Klix – (WA1MVJ & staff)

- Always need articles and authors.
- Motion by N1GNV second by W1POP to purchase a new printer for WA1TRY replacing one worn out on KeyKlix printing. Not to exceed \$50.00. Passed.

EmComm – (WA1VXH)

There may be a nationwide ID system. More to follow.

Wallingford announced “no communications CERT program. May put amateur-town relationship in jeopardy.

Discussion on SET participation during October.

Miscellaneous

Motion by N1KGP second by W1SKP to fund annual awards upto \$100. Passed

- Chris WA1VXH will request Marcus Cooke Park for Field Day 2009 in January.
- W1SKP said that the Church Ladies would cater the Christmas Party for \$550. Subcommittee will decide

Annual Meeting –

The November business meeting is the Annual Meeting per our bylaws. K1VDF took the floor as teller. The current officer slate has agreed to run again. Nominations from the floor were: John N1GNV-President, Paul K1SEZ-Secretary, and Haggy KB1HCC-Treasurer. A secret ballot was initiated for President and Secretary. After determining that John N1GNV had won the Presidency and Dan W1DMM had won as Secretary, (continued on page 8)

Meeting (continued from page 7)

John N1GNV declined his nomination for Treasurer. The remaining uncontested offices were accepted by acclamation.

The reelected 2009 officers are:

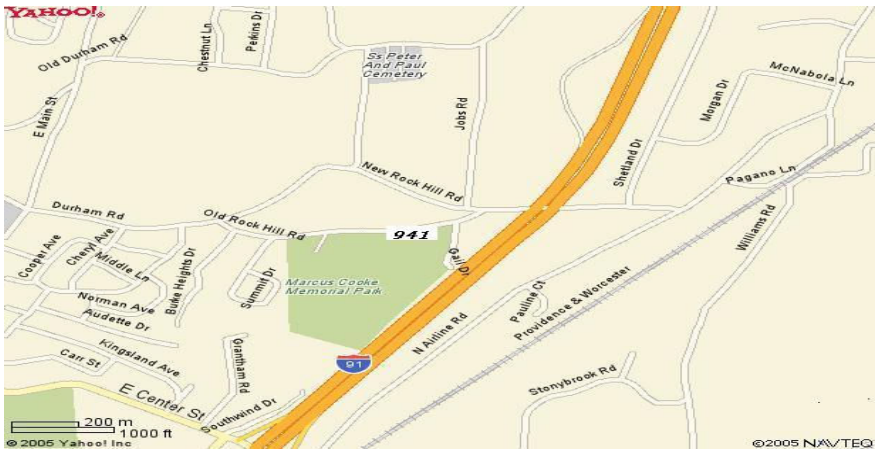
President	John N1GNV	Secretary	Dan W1DMM
Vice President	Jim N1ZN	Treasurer	Haggie KB1HCC
Station Facilities Manager	Rich WA1TRY		

Elmer/Ham of the Year - Secret ballots were collected for the Ham of the Year and Elmer of the Year. Results and presentation to be made at December Holiday Party.

50/50 – N1KGP

Meeting Adjourned about 21:15

Submitted Dan Murphy, W1DMM, Secretary



## ***The Meriden Amateur Radio Club Holiday Party 2008 Dec 12 7pm***

First United Methodist Church at 941 Old Rock Hill Road , Wallingford, CT.

Directions: Rt 5 North Colony Rd, on to Christian St, Passed Choate School, passed E.Main St, Durham Rd, to Old Rock Hill Rd on the right. **See ya there Friday night**

## **Aircraft Flights Overhead !**

Flightaware.com is a Internet site where you can see Aircraft flying over Connecticut or anywhere in the country. Go to the site , Register, Down the left side of the page scroll down to : Airport Code, Enter MMK for Meriden Markham Airport, Enter.. When the new screen comes up with the map in right corner, Bookmark this page. Then you can get this page next time. Click on the MAP in the right hand corner. It will in large showing all the aircraft in CT. The info of each plane is The top line is the Airline , the next line down is Altitude and speed200v (altitude) descending ( inverted V is assenting) then the speed. The line under that is the airport From & To .At the site you can get a list of airport codes for this state and others. Sso you know where you are in relation to the planes

At [www.naco.faa.gov/index.asp?xml=naco/onlineproducts](http://www.naco.faa.gov/index.asp?xml=naco/onlineproducts) you can download maps and information about any airport in the country (Ed WA1MVJ)



## Club Information Page

**Meriden ARC PO Box 583 Meriden, CT 06450**

### **MARC 2009 Officers**

President – John Bee	N1GNV
Vice President – Jim Savage	N1ZN    james.savage@snet.net
Secretary – Dan Murphy	W1DMM    w1dmm@arrl.net
Treasurer – Jonathan Winslow	KB1HCC
Station Activities Manager - Rich Aubin	WA1TRY    wa1try@cox.net

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### **Committees**

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Key Klix Editor - Ed Stanton - WA1MVJ	keyklix-editor@snet.net
KeyKlix Staff - Dan Murphy - W1DMM,	John Bee    – N1GNV
Rich Aubin - WA1TRY	

Program & Entertainment - Bob Stephens KB1CIW  
Club QSL Manager - Bob Kaczor - KE1AU  
VE/Education –  
Membership - John Bee - N1GNV  
Castle Craig - Al Kaiser - N1API  
Interference & Technical - Rich Aubin – WA1TRY

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### **Club Nets**

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28.275 mhz	CW Slow Net	Mondays	7:00pm	(NC W1JKP )
50.275 mhz	VHF SSB	Mondays	8:00 pm	(NC – N1ZN & W1SKP)
28.375mhz	HF SSB	Tuesdays	8:00 pm	( NC – K1VDF )
147.36 R	FM	Tuesdays	7:00 – 8:00 pm	( NC – KB1CIW )

Membership/ Dues: regular \$15    Senior \$10    Family Member \$5.00

**Holiday Party Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup>**

**At the First United Methodist Church    941 Old Rock Hill RD. 7 P.M.**

Business Meetings - 2nd Thursday    Activity Meetings - 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month.  
All meetings start at 7:30 PM

Location of meetings: Wallingford Office of Emergency Management  
284 Washington Street, Wallingford, Connecticut

# **Rogus Electronics**

## **New & Used Ham Radio Gear Service / Repairs**

**250 Meriden Waterbury Road  
Southington, CT 06489  
Phone: 860-621-2252**

### ***The Meriden Amateur Radio Club Christmas Party 2008 Dec 12 7pm***

First United Methodist Church at 941  
Old Rock Hill Road, Wallingford, CT.

Directions: Rt 5 North Colony Rd, on to  
Christian St, Passed Choate School,  
passed E.Main St, Durham Rd, to Old  
Rock Hill Rd on the right. **See ya there  
Friday night**

**Meriden Amateur Radio Club  
Post Office Box 583  
Meriden, CT 06450**

**«Fname» «Lname» - «Call\_sign»  
«Street»  
«City», «State» «Zip»**

**First Class**