

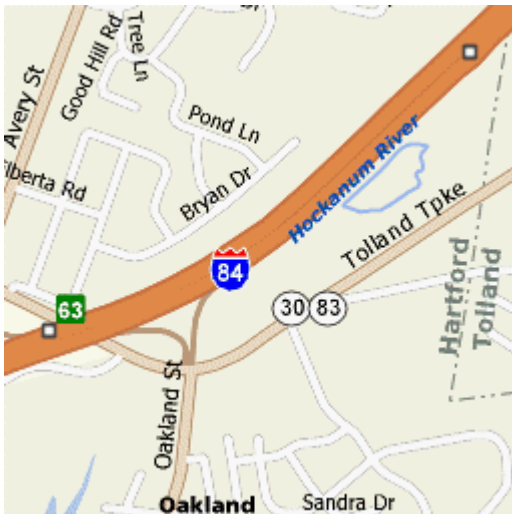
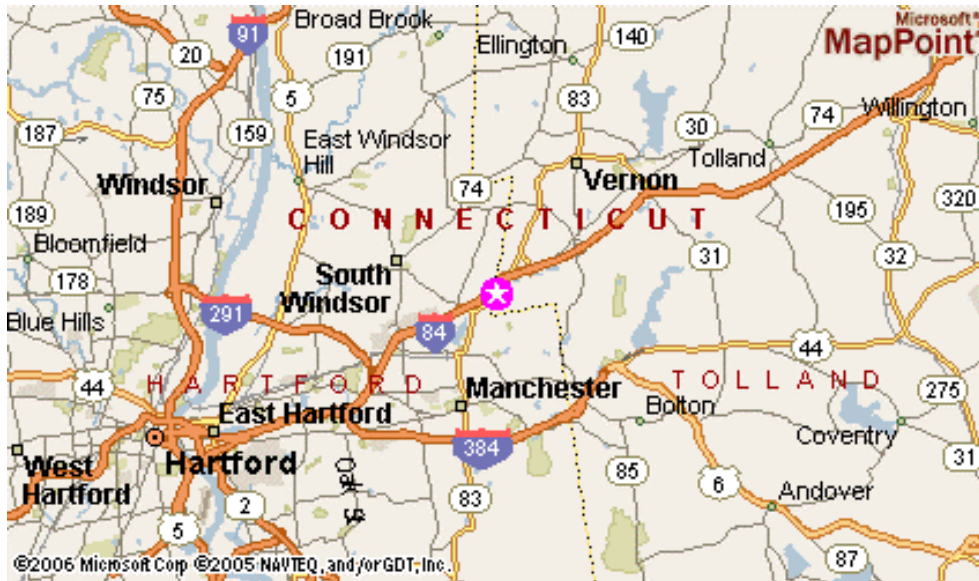


Scuttlebutt

October 2006

Issue 186

**Next General Meeting: - 1:00pm - Sunday October 8th
Quality Inn and Conference Center,
51 Hartford Turnpike (Rte 83), Vernon, CT**



I-84 E. ex. 63 left onto SR 83. Hotel is 1/2 mile on left.

I-84 W. ex. 63 right at light on SR 30. Hotel is 1 mile on left.

Yankee Clipper Contest Club	
President	Mark Pride, K1RX (603) 778-1222 President@YCCC.org
Vice President	Mike Bernock, N1IW VicePresident@YCCC.org
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Secretary	George Harlem, W1EBI Secretary@YCCC.org
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Scorekeeper	Dave Hoaglin, K1HT (978) 443-3603 Scores@YCCC.org

Treasurer's Report

10/01/2006		
	Inflow	Outflow
Dues and Subscriptions	775.00	
Raffle Sales	4390.00	
Gifts to YCCC	5.00	
Interest	37.41	
Subtotal:	5207.41	
ISP		50.20
Meeting Expenses		50.00
Postage and Delivery		31.20
Printing and Reproduction		496.27
Raffle Expenses		3636.95
Subtotal		4364.62
Total:	842.79	
Current Balance : 12,166.94		

K1NU



K1OA

Area Managers

ME	Mike Russo, K1EU	(207) 883-9524	k1eu@maine.rr.com
ENH	Glen Whitehouse, K1GW	(603) 673-6290	glenw@pinnaclewireless.com
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SE MA (508)	Greg Cronin, W1KM	(508) 428-4205	w1km@capecod.net
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	& Mike Loukides, W1JQ	-----	MikeL@oreilly.com
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NNY	John Bradke, W2GB	-----	W2gb@arrl.net
NYC/LI (718)	Rich Cariello, AA2MF	(718) 980-1104	aa2mf@arrl.net
SNY/NJ/PA (914)	Hank Kiernan, KF2O	(914) 235-4940	hankkier@aol.com
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The editorial deadline for the Scuttlebutt is the 10th of every odd month.

Flotsam & Jetsam

Barnacle Jack Schuster, W1WEF w1wef@arri.net

Ahoy Maties!

This is the first document I've typed on my new superfast XP computer. The computer is fast but that doesn't help my two finger typing or my dialup connection, so I can't see any difference. (I don't feel like subscribing to a high speed line for a year when I'm away half the time) Thanks to all who helped when I put out a plea asking how to transfer my address book from the old computer to the new one, even though it didn't work. When I try to export the address book ".wab" file from my old computer to a CD, I get a message telling me that I have no access to the file and I should contact the owner! I thought it was MY computer!!!! I just love computers.

The CW Sprint last weekend was a blast as usual. I thought the bands could not be better, and from the sound of signals in the SAC contest this weekend Fall conditions are already improving to Europe. Last night I worked a couple dozen Scandinavians on 80 to check out my new 4 square configuration, and was very pleased with the F/B which made the difference on some signals between Q5 copy or not hearing them at all.

I decided that maintaining two phased wire 4 squares in the woods was too much of a pain, so went back to the one surrounding the tower. I plan to move the twelve radials on each of the no longer used 4 square verticals to the other, but will lay them on the ground. That will give me 24 radials on each vertical in all, with half elevated.

A recent thread on the Reflector said something like "the ILEC DSL ATSC FIOS RBOC CLEC was kaput"...not sure I got it right, but thought I'd try to decode what they were saying. In case the thread comes up again, here are some definitions: RBOC- Regional bell Operating company, FIOS- Verizon fibre to the house terminology, DSL- digital subscriber line (I knew that!), ILEC- Incumbent local exchange carrier, DSLAM-Digital subscriber line access multiplexer, CLEC- Competitive local exchange carrier, ATSC- Advanced TV systems committee...thanks K2KQ for the clarification.

I recently saw a reference by Scott W4PA to his diary on the internet, and found some interesting reading there. Take a look at w4pa.journalspace.com.

Speaking of interesting reading, I started reading the book I picked up in Boxboro from W1YRC about Don Wallace, W6AM. I've dropped it for the moment, but had never read as much about the early days of radio before. Don was born in 1898 and grew up with radio from it's infancy. He started building spark gear before there was an FCC or any regulations. He became known in early radio days as an authority on radio and wrote radio columns for several newspapers and magazines around the country, including the early years of QST. I was amazed at the power some of the early spark transmitters ran. NSS, the Annapolis Naval station ran 500KW in 1919! They didn't key the rig to turn the spark on and off as I always had assumed. Once the spark was established and the frequency determined by the tank circuit between the spark and antenna, they keyed relays that shorted turns on the tank coil to change the resonant frequency! This was the earliest FSK, frequency shift keying. In commercial service, they would transmit messages for an hour, then receive for an hour. When Don became President Wilson's personal shipboard radio op, Don had to ask Wilson to shorten his messages so he could fit them into the hour. Real interesting history!

One of my projects this year was to tear down an old detached garage and replace it with a new 12 by 16 storage shed that I've almost finished. In the old garage I had my collection of aluminum tubing that I saved just in case. A lot of it was thin walled junk that I probably would never use, so in an effort to avoid filling the new shed with the old junk, I brought 180 lbs of aluminum tubing to a scrap yard and got 45 cents a pound for it. The way metal prices are heading, I wonder if all future antennas will be made of fibreglas with wet noodles inside? Copper is out of sight...in case you haven't noticed. A 250 ft roll of 14 ga Romex that sold for \$18 two years ago is \$78 at Home Depot today. I think these commodities took a clue from the gas companies to see what they could get away with.

I could say "keep those cards and letters coming" if I received any! How about dropping me an email with something to throw overboard for the next Butt...or write a full blown article! Everyone is welcome to submit articles. NIUR or I will be happy to review any and polish up your script if you like, or you can send it direct to N1SR.

73, Barnacle JACK W1WEF

w1wef@arri.net for your input!

Simplify, Simplify...

(A totally out-of-context quote from Henry David Thoreau)

Dave Potter, K1MBO

My wireless equipment is hopelessly enmeshed in wires. The more I try to make things automatic and easy to use, the more the back of the operating table comes to resemble the cable runs in a totally ad-hoc emergency comm center that was thrown together in a hurry with the intent of getting up and running and we'll fix it later. I'm sure other people do it a lot better.

Having a chronic condition of *cableus expansus*, I was intrigued when my classmate and friend Joe, K1JC, told me about a cable that he has going into production that combines rig control and keying. After several pointed hints and reminders of our happy days together in the halls of academia, Joe agreed to ship me a sample and let me be a beta tester. The cable is set up to operate from a USB port on the computer – replacing both a serial and a parallel port cables – and ties in to the rig directly. The funny little transistor switch I had built in the parallel port cable connector housing is incorporated into the cable to key the rig and the correct voltage levels for Icom's CI-V rig control bus are provided as well. A CD with the correct drivers is included.

The cable arrived in a well marked plastic bag and a padded mailing envelope. I immediately – after a brief maneuver to rearrange the XYL's priorities for my time – set about installing the cable and software.

Normally, I key the rig from the front panel connector with paddles using the rig's built-in keyer (it's an IC-756 Pro). Software keying is done with a switch built in to a parallel port connector and goes into a second connector on the rear of the rig. I have a straight key tied in parallel left over from Straight Key Night. Just for I-don't-know-why, I hit the straight key before powering down and ... nothing happened. Well, it's hard to blame software when it's an antique key directly connected to the keying port on the rig.

After tearing the cables apart, the key apart, and the rig apart, I discovered that the key jack had lifted cleanly out of the board inside the rig. So much for a simple test. After pulling the board out- which meant disconnecting about half a dozen flat cables in pressure connectors, I soldered four cold joints on the key jack and reconnected everything. At that point, the rig wouldn't even power up. Clearly, my skills in modern electronics assembly should not be part of whatever portfolio I present a prospective employer...

Pulling out the backup rig, an IC-756, I installed it on the shack table and connected everything up. The cable plugs into a USB port but it emulates a COM port, in my case PORT 3. To do that, I had to install a driver that Joe had provided on a CD. The driver went in with no problem using the usual XP "new hardware" procedure. I was ready to try it out.

First, I checked that the driver was installed by using the Device Manager from the Control Panel. It looked good, showing up as USB Serial Port COM3.

I then started Writelog and configured it for rig control on COM3. Both CW keying and rig control worked flawlessly. That didn't make up for having busted the 'PRO but it helped. On to DxBase.

I reconfigured DxBase, my normal station log program, for Radio 1 on COM3 at the same settings I had used from the serial port, 9600/N/8/1. Rig control worked but keying did not. I went into the setup screen again and set it to assert RTS all the time. The rig keyed up and stayed that way, so clearly the cable and driver were doing the right thing. The CW keyer functionality in DxBase is ignoring me. I am going to figure out why – right after I get the 'PRO working again.

Finally, I set up N1MM logger to use the USB cable and PORT3 emulation. It also worked flawlessly both for rig control and keying.

So there it is. A simple but very effective interface for modern rigs that just comes up and works with Writelog and N1MM. If you want one, try k1jcnh@gmail.com. I'm keeping this one.

YCCC Regular Meeting

August 26, 2006—Boxborough, MA

Since this was a “Boxboro year”, YCCC sponsored a full afternoon on the Saturday program at the ARRL New England Division Convention, “Boxboro 2006”, at the Holiday Inn Boxborough Woods in Boxborough, MA. This year’s open program was entitled “Introduction to Radiosport”, aimed at attracting new contesters and encouraging some of them to go so far as to present themselves for membership in YCCC. The Master of Ceremonies for the program was Doug, K1DG, who presided over a very well attended series of excellent presentations by a number of our members. The open program from 1:00-3:30 PM included the following:



- Overview of RadioSport—Doug, K1DG
- Planning & Evaluating Station Improvements—Bob, WA1Z
- Understanding Propagation—Len, K1NU
- Chasing DX—Jim, AD1C
- Honing Your Operating Skills—Bob, WA1Z
- Resources—Dave, K1TTT
- Logging & Automation—Bob, WA1Z
- Competition—Jim, K1IR

Mark, K1RX, called the business meeting to order at 3:45 PM. Mark welcomed all 107 attendees and started a round of self-introductions, followed by a reference to the announcement in the September issue of QST of YCCC’s victory in the Unlimited Club competition in the 2006 ARRL DX Contest. Piling on the kudos, Mark followed with a reminder of our first place finish in the same category in the 2005 CQ WW DX Contest.



W2GD & YL
visiting from FRC

George, W1EBI, delivered the secretary’s report, and, together with Mark, introduced the following eleven new member prospects who were subsequently voted into the club:

N1GLT	Wally O’Donnell	Auburn, NH
K1JE	Michael Joens	Beverly, MA
WW1M	Bruce Herrick	Sanford, ME
KB1MNT	Roger Thompson	Stratham, NH
NT1N	William Akins	Winthrop, ME
K1PIG	Martin Rigoulot	Kents Hill, ME
K1RKD	Ronald Cady	West Hartford, CT
KA1U	Stephen Miller	Edgartown, MA
WA1ZJE	Robert Feltmate	Taunton, MA
KA2KON	Stephen Colello	Sanbornville, NH
K2TJ	Andrew Mui	Cambridge, MA

Ed, K1EP, gave the treasurer’s report, which was brief as there was a continuing stream of members purchasing raffle tickets in anticipation of the drawing later on the agenda.

Mark introduced the keynote speaker for the meeting, Mitch, W1SJ, who recounted in a very entertaining presentation his adventure from Vermont to St. Martin to put FS5KA on the air for ARRL DX SSB in March of this year. Mitch hit all the high—and some low—points of his contesting experience, and also included an enjoyable photo tour of the island to further illustrate his mini-DXpedition.

Following Mitch’s talk, Mark introduced several YCCC members in attendance who had participated in the recent WRTC event in Florianopolis, Brazil, in July, including (but not limited to) Ann, WA1S; Randy, K5ZD; Tom, K1KI; Jim, K1IR; and

the master of ceremonies of the YCCC-sponsored "Introduction to Radiosport" session earlier in the program and member (along with N2NT) of the Bronze Medalist team at WRTC 2006, Doug, K1DG.

The main event following the business portion of the meeting was the raffle, with proceeds earmarked for the club's Youth Scholarship Program to fund a scholarship for a deserving licensed amateur. (See http://yccc.org/Articles/YouthScholarship/2006_Announcement.htm for information on the Youth Scholarship Program).

Prizes included an Icom 756 Pro III with a PS-125 power supply and Pelican travel case as well as an ACOM 1010 amplifier. A tabletop of additional prizes included a number of operating accessories, ham radio publications, and discount coupons.

Prize winners were:

N2GC (Icom 756 Pro III, PS-125 and Pelican case)
WB1DX (ACOM 1010 amplifier)

W1EQ	N4XR	N1DD
K1KI	KA1ZD	N2FF
W1MAT	W1HIS	K1BG
AB1DR	W1HI	WB1EDI
NC1N	W1NA	W1VE
K1PIG	W1AIR	K1OA

The meeting was adjourned at 5:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
George Harlem, W1EBI
Secretary



Radiosport !



Paint the TOWER

Jack Schuster W1WEF

When I was up the tower recently at my Cape QTH, I found it was beginning to show some rust, and decided it should be painted before the end of the season. I had mentioned painting my CT tower a few years ago in the Butt, and every once in a while still get questions about what I used, so I thought it might be worth repeating. The paint on the CT tower has stood up very well over about five years since I did it.

It was tough getting myself psyched to do it, but now that it's done and it went so fast and easy, I felt I just have to pass this along. The 60 ft of Rohn-25 took only HALF a QUART a quart of paint. I used Rust-oleum Professional "High Performance Protective Enamel", V7515 Aluminum Oil-based paint that I found at Lowes. A quart goes for about \$8. To apply it I used a lambs wool painting mitt which can be found in some Home Depots or better paint stores. The mitts go for a little more than \$3.



I took some fine sandpaper and a wire brush to the top of the tower with me to remove loose rust, but to be honest only used the wire brush to remove bird droppings on the flat top section. I removed tape holding cable as I worked my way down. A small galvanized pail with a carabineer on the handle made it easy to dip the mitt. I found that I could cover about 3 ft of tower with each dip.

When I got to the bottom section, I had to remove the wire fencing wrapping the tower to discourage kids from climbing, so I cleaned my hands and arms up with thinner before doing that last section. The mitt has a rubber liner, but I wore a rubber glove just the same, and still got paint on both hands and arms. Rubber gloves up to the elbow would be nice, but I haven't found them.

The bottom section is only about 7 ft above the concrete base, so I could do it standing on the ground. I don't think that section took me more than 3 minutes! The whole 60 feet took just under 2 hours! The secret is in the throw away mitt...a great way to paint a tower. When I go up again tomorrow to tape cables back to the legs, I'll bring a small brush to touch up any spots I missed.

Spots

September issue of the Florida Contest Group (FCG) "Contest Gazette" has a nice writeup on WRTC-2006 and an article by Ellen, W1YL on her trip to India and Nepal - download from <http://www.floridacontestgroup.org/newsletter/sep06.pdf>

Nutmeg Hamfest in Wallingford is the morning of YCCC meeting not very far away.

Pretty good flea market along with ARRL and Power Line Interference forums.

<http://www.nutmeghamfest.com/>

Movers and Shakers

New Crew

N1GLT	Wally O'Donnell	Auburn, NH
K1JE	Michael Joens	Beverly, MA
WW1M	Bruce Herrick	Sanford, ME
KB1MNT	Roger Thompson	Stratham, NH
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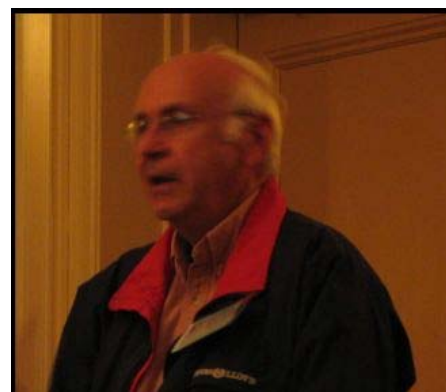
NT1N



K1JE



K1PIG



KA1U

Upcoming Contests

October, 2006

California QSO Party	1600Z, Oct 7 to 2159Z, Oct 8
YLRL Anniversary Party, SSB	1400Z, Oct 10 to 0200Z, Oct 12
Pennsylvania QSO Party	1600Z, Oct 14 to 0500Z, Oct 15
	1300Z-2200Z, Oct 15
North American Sprint, RTTY	0000Z-0400Z, Oct 15
W/VE Islands QSO Party	1600Z, Oct 21 to 2359Z, Oct 22
50 MHz Fall Sprint	2300Z, Oct 21 to 0300Z, Oct 22
Illinois QSO Party	1700Z, Oct 22 to 0100Z, Oct 23
CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB	0000Z, Oct 28 to 2400Z, Oct 29
eXtreme CW World-Wide Challenge	0000Z, Oct 28 to 2359Z, Oct 29

November, 2006

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW	2100Z, Nov 4 to 0300Z, Nov 6
WAE DX Contest, RTTY	0000Z, Nov 11 to 2359Z, Nov 12
Kentucky QSO Party	1400Z, Nov 11 to 0600Z, Nov 12
ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB	2100Z, Nov 18 to 0300Z, Nov 20
NA Collegiate ARC Championship, SSB	2100Z, Nov 18 to 0300Z, Nov 20
CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW	0000Z, Nov 25 to 2400Z, Nov 26

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

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 http://www.yccc.org/members/yccc_qsl.htm. 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 call signs.

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 Frenaye, K1KI.

Upcoming Meetings

Date	Type	Place
October 8 th	General	Vernon, CT

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Simplify, Simplify	Dave Potter, K1MBO	4
Boxboro Meeting		5,6
Paint the Tower Jetsam	Jack Schuster – W1WEF	7
Upcoming Contests		8

Next General Meeting of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club

Sunday October 8, 2006 - 1:00 PM

Quality Inn and Conference Center,

51 Hartford Turnpike (Rte 83), Vernon, CT

The YCCC Scuttlebutt
18 Bancroft Tower Road
Worcester, MA 01609

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