

CAARA NEWS



Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association
Gloucester, Massachusetts
AUGUST- 2025 EDITION



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Brandon- NQ1W

To the Esteemed Members of the Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association (CAARA),



As August arrives, I hope this letter finds you well, enjoying the warmth of summer, and perhaps even getting some quality time on the air or outdoors.

I want to extend a heartfelt congratulations to our incredible Special Events team for a fantastic season so far. Your dedication and hard work have truly shone through in every event. Your participation has kept runners and the public informed and safe. A special shout-out is due to Kevin Lyons, K1KL, and Chris, WITAT, for their outstanding contributions and leadership. Your efforts are what make CAARA's special events so memorable and successful.

Speaking of memorable events, I must also express my sincere gratitude to Thomas Stephenson, AA1TS, for the absolutely delicious food at the recent BBQ celebrating the service year and its participants. I heard nothing but rave reviews, and it's clear that his choices in catering are as impressive as his radio knowledge! I deeply regret not being able to attend personally and share in the camaraderie, but I was there in spirit, thinking of all of you.

I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank two individuals who have been instrumental in these efforts: Paul Krueger, N1JDH, who has brought invaluable experience in parliamentary procedures and corporate governance to continually update our selective bylaw change proposals; and Thomas Stephenson, AA1TS, for his significant help in strengthening the effectiveness of club governance and in finding hard-working and dedicated directors and officers to serve

the membership. Their commitment to CAARA's structural integrity is truly appreciated.

Looking further into the next year, I'm incredibly excited about some significant changes we plan to implement. We aim for a much more structured members' meeting format that will help us connect more effectively and bring the items you, the members, are interested in pursuing directly into action by the club. This will foster a more dynamic and responsive environment.

Furthermore, we will be focusing heavily on the formation of a new Communications Committee. This committee will be tasked with helping to maintain and promote the club through our various digital assets, including our website, social media channels, digital video content, and email communications. We believe this will be a major focus for the coming year, enhancing our outreach and engagement with both current and prospective members.

As we look ahead, I want to remind everyone about our upcoming members' meeting on August 9th. This will be a crucial meeting where we will discuss some proposed changes to our bylaws. These changes are designed to ensure our club operates with the utmost efficiency and adheres to current best practices in corporate governance. The Nomination Committee has also been hard at work compiling a list of dedicated and hardworking candidates for the upcoming annual members' meeting in September. Your participation in both these discussions is vital for the future direction of CAARA.

Regards and 73,

Brandon Hockle, NQ1W President, Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association (CAARA)

CAARA Newsletter
Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association
6 Stanwood Street
Gloucester, MA 01930

CAARA Newsletter is a monthly publication of the Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association (CAARA).

It is the policy of the editor to publish all material submitted by the membership provided such material is in good taste, relevant to amateur radio and of interest to CAARA members, and space is available. Material is accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Articles and other materials may be submitted by internet to Jon at jpcrockport@gmail.com. If possible, material should be in Word format. Material may also be submitted as hard copy to Jon-K1TP or any Club Officer.

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Welcome to CAARA:

CAARA, an ARRL affiliated club, operates the 2 meter W1GLO repeater on 145.130 MHz with antennas located on the ATT cell tower in the Blackburn Industrial Complex in Gloucester Massachusetts. It has an average effective radius of 60 miles, and serves Eastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod, Rhode Island, Southern New Hampshire, and maritime mobile stations.

CAARA also operates the W1GLO repeater on 224.900 located at the CAARA clubhouse.

The 443.700 repeater is now on the ATT cell tower in the Blackburn Industrial Complex with greatly enhanced performance running in fusion mode and linked to 10 other repeaters in the New England area.

The Association is one of the few amateur radio clubs that has its own clubhouse. Located at 6 Stanwood Street in Gloucester, with a variety of HF stations with beam, vertical, or G5RV antennas.

Amateur radio exams are held on REQUEST at the CAARA clubhouse. Anyone who is considering a new license or an upgrade, is welcome to test with us. Currently pre-registration is necessary. Contact the head of our VE team Bill Poulin- WZ1L if you have any questions about monthly testing.

Monthly member meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at noon except for July and August.

Each Sunday evening at 9:00 PM, the club operates a 2 meter fm net on 145.130. This is an open and informal net which disseminates club news and prepares operators for emergency communications work. All are invited to check into the net as club membership is not a requirement.

The club is open every Wednesday from 10- Noon for CAARA members and interested parties to stop by and socialize, as well as use the extensive collection of ham radio gear.

This newsletter is published under the auspices of the Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association (CAARA), However, all content is the work of individual contributors and may contain ideas, opinions or views not necessarily shared or supported by the CAARA Board of Directors or the membership.

THE EMCOMM MINUTE

By Dean- KB1PGH

A quick look at the YAESU FT 5DR dual band handheld



So it had been a decade since I had purchased a HT and since CAARA has the YAESU System fusion on the clubs 440 repeater I decided to purchase the YAESU FT 5 DR digital dual band handheld radio.

I have always had good luck with YAESU HT's with I guess only one sort of exception. I had the YAESU FT 70 DR and while I liked the overall radio the battery life was really short in the radio and it would drain quicker as well even in the off position. So anyway I called up HRO in Salem New Hampshire and purchased one for \$389. It really killed me though to have to pay that state sales tax of 5% on top of that-UGH. Anyway-I really wanted a true dual band handheld for ARRL ARES communications and for wideband monitoring.

So overall I would have to say is that the YAESU FT 5 DR HT is sort of a "Atomic Bomb" of a radio for communications. It pretty much has everything that you could imagine a HT would have. I haven't even gotten to use half of the features in this HT yet. So right out of the box this HT has a really good feel to it in my hands. It's funny, without the battery connected to it the radio itself is lightweight and pretty small but once the battery is



on it's got a good feel to it. The HT has rubber corners on the bottom of it to protect it from drops.

I had mentioned out of the box- so when I literally opened up the box and got the HT out-you know the plastic film that covers the screens on new rigs? Well it looks like YAESU put way too much glue on the center of the plastic film on the screen and it left a blob of sticky glue/screen residue that I couldn't get off.

I thought I was going to have to send the radio back as I literally could not see the center of the screen. So I took a chance and used some of that Goof Off sticker remover with a Q tip and I lucked out and I was able to get all the glue/sticker blob off the touch screen-I have never seen that before so if it happens to you give it a try.

So anyway-the HT has a full 1 watt of audio out of the speaker and is plenty loud enough and the audio sound is crisp and clear. The color touchscreen is very clear and bright and easy to read but like most displays it gets a bit harder to read in the sunlight. I would advise getting a stylus for it to help with navigating the menu system. Speaking of the menu system on the HT-it's really not that bad to operate once you get to use it a bit-Maybe I'm just used to the Yaesu menu system.

One thing though. Yaesu only gives you a "Basic" paper operations manual in the box. You have to go to the Yaesu website to download the "Advanced" and APRS manuals-UGH. Why Yaesu just can't spend a few more bucks and give you the whole manual in the box is beyond me.

Anyway-there is a solution. In the second photo you can see the "Nifty" manual for it that you can buy separately. It covers every aspect of the operation of the radio-think of it like a Cliffs notes for the radio. The Nifty manual costs around \$35. One reason why I mention this is that I found out that by reading the other manuals online that Yaesu leaves the GPS automatically in the on position which drains the battery. So I had to shut it off to extend battery life-but who would know that in just the basic manual?

So the FT 5 DR has wideband receive from 0.5 MHz all the way up to 999.99 MHz so that's pretty good. It's funny listening to FM radio while you monitoring the other band. Plus this HT has pre set scans to it so you can listen to the Air band or marine band and others if you want. I like that the FT 5 DR comes with a 2,200 mah battery with it-it needs it to run the GPS and APRS.

This HT is IPX 7 waterproof and I mean waterproof-It is rated to be underwater for up to 30 minutes. I've seen a Youtube video of someone dunking their FT 5 DR in a glass full of water and it still ran after 5 minutes of sitting there underwater-Yikes!

This HT like I mentioned has GPS and APRS which can help with emergency communications work in APRS location beaconing. This HT also has a pretty good band scope as well if you wish to scan a frequency band to see what is there.

This HT just keeps going as it has Bluetooth capability as well as a micro SD card to record data and voice. Since this HT works Yaesu System fusion C4FM it also can be it's own Wires X node. All you have to do it directly connect it to your computer.

This HT is so feature rich I can't possibly cover everything here. So in conclusion the Yaesu FT 5 DR has a lot to offer in a HT and is built for emergency communications and rugged outdoor use.

So for a new ham who just got their tech license this HT may be a bit over their head but if your willing to take the time to learn how to operate it and the Yaesu menu system then you will be rewarded with a higher end HT .

Even though the price tag is about \$389 it still is a decent price for having GPS, APRS, Bluetooth, True dual band capability and wideband receive as well as full Yaesu System functionality.

I would recommend it to those who want to get into the Yaesu System fusion or have a fusion repeater them.

This HT is built to last a life time !

Program Manager Paul Bourque, N1SFE, 4,369 entries detailed 31,785 people taking part in in the event. That's up from last year.

"There's a growing interest in ham radio, especially after last year's hurricane season and other high-profile situations in which radio has been essential," noted Bourque. "ARRL Field Day serves as a great chance to get engaged with your local amateur radio community."

The uptick in numbers may not be complete, as there's still an opportunity for a few more entries to be added. "Occasionally, a club will need to update their entry. We work with them to make sure it is correct," said Bourque.

Field Day participants should check that all the required supporting documentation related to their entries has been received by checking the Entries Received web page at field-day.arrl.org/fdentriescvd.php. If the status of your entry is listed as Pending Documents, one or more of the required documents still needs to be submitted to complete your entry. Entrants may use the link provided in the confirmation email they received to upload additional documents or to modify their entries. Currently, 223 entries are listed as being incomplete. Updates to existing entries will be accepted until August 29, 2025.

On the public outreach front, final measurement numbers of the media coverage earned by amateur radio public information volunteers have been tallied. ARRL Public Relations and Outreach Manager Sierra Harrop, W5DX, reports that the total ad value equivalence (AVE) of 2025 ARRL Field Day is \$37.9 million. "We had a tremendous response from clubs and ARRL public information volunteers this year on the heels of Ham Radio Open House into ARRL Field Day," she said. "The ARRL Public Relations Committee prepared resources to help the volunteers succeed, but they really took it to the next level in communities across the country."

AVE measures the amount of money that would have to be spent to buy ads in media and social media to replace the news coverage volunteers secured with press outreach. The \$37.9M figure measures only mentions of ARRL Field Day from January 1 – July 31 of each year. In 2024, the figure was \$20M, and \$18M in 2023. Harrop hopes to see further strengthening of public information volunteers leading into 2026, which ARRL has designated as the Year of the Club. Hams seeking to serve as an ARRL public information volunteer may express interest to their ARRL Section Manager.

The overall growth is encouraging to ARRL. "I'm very pleased with the amount of active ARRL Field Day participants this year. It's nice to see more and more people participating!" said Bourque.

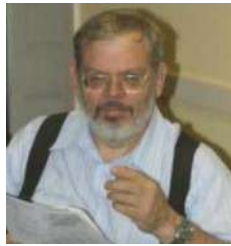


ARRL Field Day 2025 Saw Growth in Participants and Entries

The numbers are in and showing growth. 2025 ARRL Field Day showed an increase in both participants and entries, compared to 2024. According to ARRL Contest

EASY SETUP

by Curtis- AA3JE



It happens every few months. My wife turns on the TV. It doesn't turn on. She messes with it trying home remedies, then calls for the TV specialist (me).

In the old days, when dinosaurs walked the earth, twin lead came down from the antenna on the roof, ran to two screws on the back of the TV, you turned the knob to the channel you wanted to watch, and BINGO! It worked. If it didn't you checked the antenna end, the cable, the connection and if they were all OK, you picked it up and took it to the TV guy. He fixed it.

That was then. Then came cable. So you had a coaxial cable that connected to a cable box. You turned on the cable box, turned on the TV, and watched your show. If it didn't work, you called the cable guy and he came and fixed it.

But now is now. Today the cable comes into the house, connected to a modem which connects to a router, which connects to the streaming device, which connects to the TV. To watch TV you turn all this s###t on, using one of two remotes (one for TV, one for streaming box), and push buttons. There is no hope if you mislay the remote.

Now every month, the cable company sends a signal to test if you are paying your bill. So every month the TV goes out. Then you call the company, their computer (you never speak to a person), affirms you paid your bill, and it comes on again.

Till it doesn't.



Then you have to chat with the AI on the website, who recommends you unplug everything and try again. Which does not work. After screaming "HELP" into the phone for five minutes, the connect you to Habib, his English is not so good, but he tries and fails. He then passes you to Mike. Mike is very clear.

"Your modem is shit. It's eight years old. We don't even stock them anymore. I'll send you a new one."

"Will I have problems setting it up?"

"Naw, it's a snap."

So I wait for the FEDEX guy, who does not ask for a signature.

"Nobody steals this s###t," he says," worthless even if free."

I unpack, follow the steps, enter the new password, and I get a blue screen.

I call the computer at he cable company.

"YOU DIDN'T USE THE EASY STEP APP!" it says.

"I forgot the password."

Electronic sigh

"Oh well, I will refresh your account for the new modem,"

"Thank you."

And after twenty minutes of very strange channels in Chinese, it worked again.

My wife expressed my thoughts.

"It was easier in 1955."

Jeff Cohen – KC1JSN – My Shack

As previously reported, I am not a radio hoarder, I am a curator – not sure who I am trying to convince there but I thought I should get that out of the way when highlighting my shack.

My operating station consists of an old computer table and houses my primary rig, a Kenwood TS-690S, 10-160m all mode with 6m. I won this radio at a Cable TV Engineering raffle when it was new and it has been my favorite since. I use it for digital modes, FT8 and JS8Call mostly, it is a good SSB rig and has all of the available filters installed but I have to unplug the mic when running FT8 and often forget to plug it back in.

I had been using an Icom 718 for SSB but this week replaced that with a Yaesu FT-710. S7b noise levels don't look any better on SDR receivers but this is a rig I look forward to getting familiar with. The 718 will be for sale at Nearfest. I plan to use the 710 for 6m work, I ordered a 6m loop last week. The TS-690S can work 6m FT8.

My other primary rig is an Icom 9700 which I use for 2m and 70cm repeater contacts, local DSTAR and DSTAR with a hotspot. I plan to use this rig for satellite comms, I have the software installed and CAT control set up but so far haven't received anything. I suspect I have one of the thousand boxes checked wrong, I will get that working in 2025.

For VHF/UHF digital modes I have a DMR HT, a hotspot and the 9700 for DSTAR. I am still experimenting here with talk groups, programming and such but I am on the air with both modes. Standard FM VHF/UHF include a Yaesu FT-60 and two Baofaeng HTs.

The rest of my transceivers are 'legacy' types, heavy metal and just cool to look at. A Yeasu FT-101EE, Collins KWM-2, Drake TR-4 and TR7 and SBE33 warm the shack when in use. A TenTec Omni, Atlas 210 and Icom 751A were picked up along the way, memories of friends and hamfests.

I have several general coverage and ham receivers; Collins R390A, National 183D, Hallicrafters S53A and SX-25, Hammurland HQ145, Knight Star Roamer, Kenwood

R2000, Radio Shack DX 300 and DX 160 and Morrow MBR-5.

I have an Ameritron 811H amplifier and a SBE-1 amplifier, a matching pair for the SBE-33 transceiver. The Ameritron has been used into a dummy load but my primary antenna is only rated for 300w max so I think I was the dummy to buy it.

Plum Island is not known for large lots or trees so my antennas are all mounted on the backside of the house and back porch. A hustler BTV6 HF vertical covers 30, 40 and 80m, a Cobweb antenna covers 10, 12, 15, 17 and 20m, a 2m/70cm vertical covers those bands.

While not ham radio related, my shack does include a collection of novelty AM radios and military/aircraft radios including shipboard, aircraft used and tank used models.

Admittedly, I only use four radios regularly. I try to schedule time to make the rounds and put the others on the air for health checks and the feel of peaking and dipping plates. I even try to power up all of those receivers now and then. Everything I have that works is connected to the antenna farm so no wiring is needed to bring anything on line.

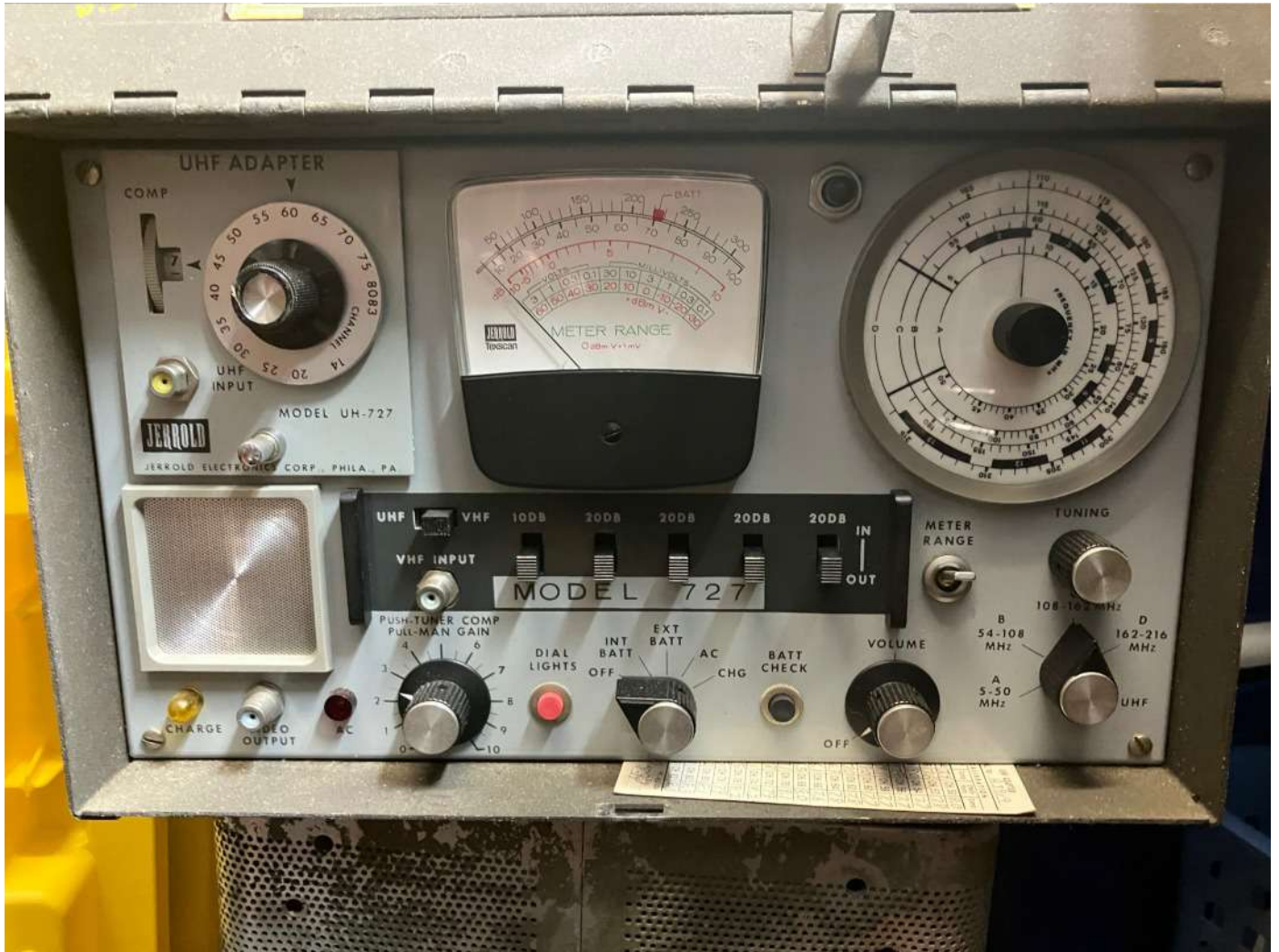
Although my shack is very cramped, it is like stepping into a time machine and I enjoy going back to the early days. My most recent find was a Globe Scout Deluxe, my first novice transmitter. Maybe I will get that on the air soon and complete my time travels.



CAARA MEMBER SHACK JEFF-KC1JSN



CAARA MEMBER SHACK JEFF-KC1JSN



CAARA and NSRA provide communications for Gloucester's Horrible Parade

Several members of CAARA and the NSRA help provide public safety and logistical communications for the Gloucester Horribles parade which was held on July 3rd. We had amateur radio operator in the lead vehicle as well as on the tail end of the parade .

We had a ham radio operator at the start/finish stage point at the high school as well as several members along certain points in the parade route. In the past we have had medical emergencies to call in as well as broken down floats and missing children but this year we were event free.

The parade net control started at 5:30 and was run by Bill W1WMM. We had Jim Palmer KB1KQW in the lead cruiser and Dean KB1PGH was the tail end of the parade. We also had the following hams at certain check points along the parade route-Jeff KC1JSN, Charles W1CAF, Steve K8ZBE, Tom, AA1TS, Dottie KB1WFZ and Nick KC1WZQ at the start/finish stage point at the high school.

The parade net started at 5:30 PM and ended at 8:30 PM so in total we were able to provide 27 hours of volunteer time to the public and the city of Gloucester. We would like to thank the CAARA repeater committee of Jon and Larry for allowing us for the use of the clubs 2 meter repeater system as well as the 440 system for back up communications.



We would also like to thank Jim KB1KQW and Rob Macedo KD1CY for providing us National Weather Service Skywarn weather updates through the parade as there were thunderstorms in the area during the entirety of the parade. A thank you goes out to all those who could come out and volunteer to man the check points.

By Dean- KB1PGH

RADIO ACTIVE CAPE ANN PRESENTS :

The Six Meter Fish Net!

WHEN: Thursdays starting August 7th at 7:30 PM

WHERE: 50.200 USB Simplex

HOW: K1TT will be initial net control but this will be almost but not quite entirely unlike any other local net. Net control may pass hands during the net and relays will be allowed.

WHY: This net is more of a challenge than most local nets. There is no repeater, no digital access, no NetLogger and no EchoLink to get in. Participants must figure out what antenna to run, how to deploy it, and make changes on the fly. This net more accurately mimics emergency communication conditions where internet and repeaters may be down. Hopefully, this net will inspire folks to use this band they have not experienced much and build / deploy antennas to get on.

Don't Panic

If you tune into 50.200 USB at the correct time and hear nothing, just stand by. You will not be able to hear everyone on the net nor will everyone hear you. Hang in there. Do not start calling CQ. We will work from Gloucester and Rockport, then call for folks south of Gloucester and Rockport and later for folks to the west and north. As we move from area to area, a strong station may take on the role of net control and relay back to the others.

This ability to hear and be heard will fluctuate somewhat week to week and will be strongly influenced by the polarity of the antennas involved. This is all part of the experimentation.

73 til then, K1TT

CAARA PUBLIC SERVICE



Triple Threat 1/2 Marathon Communications Team					
Event date: Sunday, August 3, 2025				Last Updated 7/31/2025	
Location: Rockport and Gloucester					
Start/Finish Location: Rockport High School 24 Jerdens Lane Rockport					
Starts: Half Marathon Run = 8:00 AM					
Freq: W1GLO 2m 145.13 (Dup-) PL Tone 107.2					
Back-up Freq: W1GLO 70cm 440 443.7 (Dup+) PL Tone:107.2					
Pre-Race Information and Updates: https://sites.google.com/view/caararaces/home					
Rockport Police 978-546-1212 Fire 978-375-2103					
Gloucester Police 978-325-5400 Fire 978-325-5300					
Triple Threat Half Marathon Staffing and Logistics					
	Station Location	Call sign	Name	Cell Phone	On Station
NC	Net Control	WA1ESU	Fred	[Redacted]	7:30 a.m.
S/F	Start/Finish	WA1ESU	Fred		7:30 a.m.
LV	Lead Vehicle / Rover Unit 1	AAITS	Tom		7:30 a.m.
TV	Trail Vehicle / Rover Unit 2	W1PAG	Paul		7:30 a.m.
CP1	Marmion Way (S) & South St. @ 60 South St. (there are 2 Marmion Way & South St. Interse	KC1SJR	Aaron		7:30 a.m.
	Mile 1.5 & 10.5 (Rkpt)				Map
CP2	South St. and Eden Rd. Mile 2 & 10 (Rkpt)	KC1BAZ	Charlie		7:30 a.m.
CP3	Penzance Rd. and Eden Rd Mile 3 & 9 (Rkpt)	W1CAF	Charles		7:30 a.m.
CP4	South St. and Penzance Rd. Mile 4 & 8 (Rkpt)	K1KL	Kevin		8:00 a.m.
CP5	Thatcher Rd. and Red Fox Ln. Mile 5 & 7 (Rkpt)	KC1FPR	Dennis		8:00 a.m.
CP6	Salt Is. Rd. & Barberry Way Mile 6 (Glouc.)	N1RJB	Ron	8:00 a.m.	

To all CAARA Members,

The September meeting is the annual meeting where we elect the officers and board members to fill any open slots. As has been done in the past, a Nominating Committee has been appointed, this year comprising Tom Stephenson (AA1TS), Paul Doherty (KC1HHK), and Paul Gilberti (W1PAG). The nominating committee recommends a slate of Officers and Directors to fill the open slots. The recommended slate is also sent via email to the membership along with a reminder that anyone who wishes to nominate themselves or another member is free to do so. The names of additional candidates should be sent to the Nominating Committee or any member of the Board of Directors. At the September members meeting, we will again ask if there are additional nominations from the floor. According to the ByLaws each nomination must receive 5 seconding votes. The process is described in Section 4.20 of our ByLaws.

4.20 Election of Officers and Directors

The election of Officers and Directors at an Annual Meeting shall be conducted in two stages, with the Officers being elected in the first stage and the Directors in the second stage. Candidates for Office who fail to get elected may, at their option, become automatically candidates for election as Director. There shall be provided ample opportunity for nominations from the floor for all elective offices, but each nomination from the floor shall receive five (5) seconding votes by Members, in good standing, to be accepted as a candidate for election. When only one candidate stands for election as an Officer, election may be by voice vote. When two or more candidates stand for election as an Officer, voting shall be by secret written ballot. If the number of candidates for election as Director equals the number of Directors to be elected election may be by voice vote either individually or as a group as the majority of the Members present may decide. When the number of candidates for election as Director exceeds the number of Directors to be elected, voting shall be by secret written ballot and election will be ranked by the number of votes each candidate receives.



YUKAN RUN VOLUNTEERS THANKED AT BBQ COOKOUT AT TOM'S - AA1TS QTH







Ham Radio in Popular Culture: TV Shows, Movies, and Books

Ham radio has made its appearances in various forms of popular culture over the years. Here are a few examples:

TV Shows:

“Emergency!”: The popular 1970s show often depicted the use of ham radio communication in emergency situations.

“Fargo”: In the show, the character Hanzee Dent uses ham radio to communicate with a local ham operator in order to track a suspect.

“Jericho”: The post-apocalyptic show features ham radio communication as a means of communication in the aftermath of a disaster.

“MacGyver”: The TV show features the character MacGyver as an amateur radio operator who often uses his handheld ham radio to communicate with others in different parts of the world.

“The Walking Dead”: Ham radio is used by various characters throughout the show to try and make contact with other survivors or communities outside their own.

“The X-Files”: In the episode “Max”, Mulder and Scully use ham radio to communicate with a group of UFO enthusiasts who believe they have captured a signal from an alien spacecraft.

“Breaking Bad”: In one episode, Walter White uses a ham radio to listen in on police frequencies and avoid being caught.

“Stranger Things”: The characters often use portable radios to communicate locally, and in a few episodes they use them to communicate longer distances across the nation.

Movies:

“Frequency”: The movie tells the story of a man who is able to communicate with his deceased father through a ham radio that somehow allows communication across time.

“Apollo 13”: Ham radio communication is used to establish contact with the crew during their space mission.

“Jurassic Park III”: Ham radio is used by the characters in the movie to try and make contact with a rescue team after their plane crashes on an island filled with dangerous dinosaurs.

“The Peacemaker”: George Clooney’s character uses a ham radio to communicate with the U.S. government during a crisis involving stolen nuclear weapons in Eastern Europe.

“The Andromeda Strain”: Ham radio is used by a group of scientists to communicate with a satellite and track down the source of a deadly virus.

Books:

“The Art of Possibility”: In the book by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander, a group of hams use their radio equipment to create a world-wide network that facilitates communication during natural disasters and other emergencies.

“Alas, Babylon”: In the novel by Pat Frank, ham radio is the only means of long-distance communication in a post-apocalyptic world.

“The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo”: In the novel, Lisbeth Salander uses her ham radio to communicate with a hacker friend and obtain important information.

“Peak”: In the book by Roland Smith, a teenage boy uses his ham radio to communicate with his father during a climbing competition.

“The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind”: In this memoir by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer, the author describes how he used ham radio to communicate with people outside of his village in Malawi and gain access to educational resources.

“The Road”: Ham radio is mentioned briefly in Cormac McCarthy’s post-apocalyptic novel as a means of communication, although its actual use is not described in detail.

Amateur Radio Helps Locate Missing Mother and Son

Amateur radio had a crucial role in locating a mother and her 9-year son lost in California’s Stanislaus National Forest. On Friday July 11, 2025, the pair was reported overdue from a day trip to Camp Wolfboro, a popular scout camp in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, according to a news release.

On Saturday July 12, the Calaveras County Volunteer Search and Rescue Team (SAR) was conducting its monthly training exercise along the Stanislaus River when members received notification that Tami and son Stirling had been reported missing since Friday afternoon and were not answering their cell phones.

The SAR team set up a command post at Black Springs Off-Highway Vehicle riding (OHV) Recreational Area and quickly began initiating a road-based search using four-wheel-drive vehicles and air support from the California Highway Patrol.

Joining the search was a Deputy and a Forest Service Law Enforcement Ranger who responded to 911 texts from campers in the area that a vehicle possibly matching the description of the pair’s missing car had been found. The SAR team began to find handwritten notes posted near a remote Forest Service road and then another about a mile away that included a telephone number and the names of the missing individuals. Just before 6:00 PM, the car and the lost mother and son were found. But the rescue was not over.

SAR team members were unable to communicate with their command post using conventional frequencies and cell phones from their deep woods location. So they used amateur radio frequency to report their emergency traffic. The call was immediately answered by a retired El Dorado County communications supervisor, who is also an amateur radio operator, monitoring from his home. He contacted the El Dorado 911 center, which provided the information to Calaveras County Dispatch. The SAR command post was notified, and the mother and her son were transported to waiting family members.

Young Stirling also had a hand with the rescue. He used his scout whistle to blow SOS, the internationally recognized Morse code distress signal, to give searchers a better chance of locating their position.

IMPORTANT CLUB MEETING ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 9 TO DISCUSS AND VOTE ON PROPOSED BY-LAW CHANGES....PLEASE MAKE THE TIME TO GO TO THIS MEETING!