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# The CCDX Aerial

[www.ccdx.org](http://www.ccdx.org)

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CCDX Amateur Radio Club  
111 North Street  
Keene, NH 03431

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## October 2003 Issue



### CCDX President Notes:

Before I forget to mention this: "Bring your VHF (2 meter) Portable radio to THIS NEXT CLUB MEETING." I would like to test out your operations of your portable radio.

During Field Day and the summer several questions popped up in my mind as I was listening to the radio and talked with club members. Some were addressed and discussed at the first meeting and I have some answers which I will inform you about at this next meeting. We have several projects and the SET coming up. The SET is currently scheduled for Oct. 25, 2003. Last year we proved several operational tasks and came in the top 3 counties (forgot if it was 2nd or 3rd place score... maybe someone can let me know this next meeting).

First on the list of projects is the installation of the antennas at the Red Cross Building. Next is the maintenance and radio work that needs to be done at Hyland Hill, home to "Henry". The road up Hyland Hill was washed out in the rain storms this year, but a 4 wheel drive vehicle with ground clearance should have no problem taking it slow. Help is needed with both of these projects and a lot of it is to provide the helping hands.

Larry (KA1VGM) has volunteered to help out with the Resource list, and Bruce (KA1TWX) is helping with the new "Henry" operators manual.

By the way.... If you were not at this last CCDX meeting we have a few new faces that showed. Twenty plus people for the first meeting (Impressive!!) and some of the regulars were missing. Members attending: N1NCI Dale, KB1JIQ Clinton, KA1VGM Larry, WA1ZYX Joel, N1KWE Randy, K1JWM Jeffrey, N1BAC Arnie, W1NAC Dan, KA1TWX Bruce, N1POG Conrad, K1ZS Dave, KB1JHH Anthony, WA1UNN Lenny, KB1XU Dale, KB1KCZ Jesse, KB5STC George, KC5WXC Wayne, N1MXJ Mike, W1WWW Derek, KV1S Doc, N1NGF Jack, WA1FHB David, WA1YZN Bruce.

It is interesting to listen to how other clubs membership is going down, ours has been going up each year and its thanks to you that it works. Oh yeah.... You are stuck with Bruce, KA1TWX and me Dale, N1NCI for another year as Treasurer and President. Hope to see you at the meeting as I have a demonstration to put on and you are all needed in making it work.

Dale, N1NCI

## End of an Era

In the beginning of August, 2003, I had to make a very difficult decision to shut down most of the SWNH ◊ NHDX ◊ KEENE AX25 packet node. This came about because of the new mandates for hardware installation on the new DTV49/CH52 tower. The new mandates require EVERY feed line to be installed using snap-in cable hangers. Now this is not a bad mandate, and in fact is long over due, but those hangers cost money!! I had approached NHOEM quite a while ago, before the new tower construction even began and asked if they had any interest in helping with these mandates, but they didn't, so, long story short, it's gone. Over the past couple years, the SWNH node complex was the ONLY active route from Concord NH into Western Mass via my 9600 baud 430 link that was completely RF based.

Let me give a little history of the SWNH node and how it came to be, what it was, and what it's going to become. SWNH initially began as a stand-alone TNC connected to an old Icom crystal controlled radio jammed into an old crusty bent up Ringo Ranger a couple hundred feet up the tower. This was nothing more than a digipeater back in the mid 80's. Pure and simple, store and forward talking to a few other mountain tops on the same freq. Funny, now that I think about it, 17 years later and that's what APRS is now..... Huh....

Anyway, by the time I arrived in this area, packet was really just beginning to take off, and it wasn't long before we were hooking two TNC's together on the RS232 side and using two different radios to talk to other mountain tops – a real node. The first “back-bone” was on 220, and until I had pulled the plug, we were still using it to talk to Ascutney and Hanover. We also changed frequencies to 145.05, off from 145.01. Now we could go in on .05 here in Keene, step across the back-bone on 220 and come out on Ascutney on .01. Worked real slick! Then Ascutney put in a UHF back-bone over toward Concord to come out over there on yet another VHF frequency. Nodes were popping up all over the place. Eventually, there were 4 TNC's, all connected on the RS232 end – through a device called a “diode matrix”. What the matrix did was to route RS232 signals to whichever TNC a data stream was addressed to, “and” to keep all TNC's quiet “except” the one that was transmitting – to avoid collisions, ie so no two TNC's sent data at the same time. Made for much better throughput when data was heard correctly the first time – very much “unlike” APRS – errr, I mean digipeaters.

The node continued to grow, adding a local computer for a BBS (Bulletin Board System) and 5 more TNC's for a total of 9 TNC's and the computer. We ended up back at the height of packet activity with a VHF user port – SWNH, a UHF “server” port – SWNHU, a DX-Cluster access point – NHDX, a general node stepping point – KEENE and the BBS – BBSZYX. We also needed two diode matrix boards because we had so many TNC's running, they would have been too loaded down (not enough RS232 signal) to have just been connected together, so the node was actually broken up into two node stacks. One side for User/Server ports, and the other for node interconnects – backbones.

If anybody wants to see the node in action, including the BBS, just let me know, I video taped it showing all the blinking lights... Pretty cool!!

Eventually, as time progressed, and packet didn't, Nodes began disappearing, backbone links were becoming more intermittent, BBS's just had outdated bulletins and hardly any personal mail – The internet had arrived. Servers went away, Users went away and eventually entire nodes went away. And now, unfortunately SWNH/SWNHU/NHDX/KEENE joins the ranks of “nodes that used to be”.

I suspect that I will put one or maybe two TNC's back on the air, I just haven't decided on what frequency or what service it will perform. Maybe I'll leave it on it's current freq, maybe I'll put it on the DX-Cluster freq, who knows, only time will tell. The plus side is that the antenna at 300 feet that used to be fed with 9913, now has a run of 1 5/8 heliax going to it! So, if nothing else, it's going to be a valuable antenna location for something!

And if you're interested in just reading about the node, there's still an old web page out there but I wrote one with most of it's contents located at: <http://www.ccdx.org/scrapbook/SWNH/swnh.htm>

Joel – WA1ZYX

## 26th Clarence Demar Marathon September 28<sup>th</sup>

Well, another year and another Clarence Demar marathon has passed. The hams have worked the marathon for the last 25 years. It was Dick Minch K1JKF that got us started helping the marathon committee. I have worked most of the races and still enjoy doing it. My thanks go out to the following that helped this year. They are WK1P, KB1XU, N1ZYF, KA1MTM, N1NCI, W1WWW, KA1VGM, WA1NHP, N1NGF, WA1UNN and K1ZS.

The race actually started at 7:59 AM this year and we finished at around 1 PM. It was a very rainy day for the race, probably the wettest race day I have been in. It seemed to go off with out a hitch.

It would really be nice to have a few more to help. Then we could keep tabs on the slow runners a little better from Swanzey Factory road to the finish line. This race is also a qualifier for the Boston marathon. We even had an official timer from Massachusetts to observe and do the timing. After the race a few of us met at the Swanzey Diner for lunch and chatter.

Thanks again to all and see you next year.

Bruce, WA1ZYN

### **For Sale**

Icom IC 725, 100 watt HF, 9 band transceiver, TX: 10-160 m + WARC RX: 0.03-33 MHz, with a Pioneer PM 2497A 20 Amp power supply, MFJ 941D Versa Tuner II. Manuals for all. Asking \$600.00 for all.

Icom IC 2 AT handheld, with battery, charger & a/c connector adapter, with manual. \$70.00

Yaesu FT-203R 2 meter, handheld, with manual. \$40.00

For more information, call Harry Reed, W1ECA telephone 352-2932, before 9 PM please.

### **Secretary/Treasurer Notes**

We will need some help on a "Brush Cutting" detail on Highland Hill in the next few weeks. A date has not been set, but will be discussed at the meeting This will be a great opportunity to get some fresh air and exercise, if you can help we would appreciate it. It usually is not a full day, but may go until after lunch, so bring some goodies to munch on. And of course, cool drinks.

We should have the updated "K1TQY Repeater Manual" finished by the meeting date this month. Just a few things to correct and it will be available for those who have made a donation to the repeater fund.

In closing, a big thank you to the CCDX members who have paid their dues.

As usual, any for sale items, comments, suggestions or articles for the newsletter can be e-mail to me at: ka1twx@arrl.net.

Bruce, KA1TWX

**October 15**

CCDX Meeting 7 PM – 9 PM  
Red Cross Chapter House  
83 Court Street, Keene, NH  
Bring your 2 meter (VHF) hand-held radios

**October 24 – 25**

**The Keene Pumpkin Festival**

**October 26**

Daylight Saving Time ends.  
Time reverts to standard time at 2 a.m. on the last Sunday of October.  
Remember to set your clocks back one hour.

**October 31**

Halloween  
Trick or Treat in Keene 5:30 – 7:00 PM  
Be careful driving, watch for the little critters!

**Deadline for November Newsletter**

Thursday November 13

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