

The

Modulator

Newsletter of the Newport County Radio Club, May 2016

Public Acknowledgments

The recent Amateur Radio exchange with the International Space Station was well covered by virtually all Rhode Island media.



Weekend Newport Daily News

Following are links to some of that coverage. These links are typically maintained for three weeks, so should be active through May 27th.

WLNE ABC 6

<http://ww.abc6.com/story/31912982/middletown-students-contact-astronaut-in-space>

WJAR NBC 10

<http://turnto10.com/news/local/middletown-students-converse-with-international-space-station>

WPRI Channel 12

<http://wpri.com/2016/05/06/local-students-make-contact-with-international-space-station/>

Newport Daily News

http://www.newportri.com/newportdailynews/news/page_one/one-giant-step/article_8316e623-adb5-526b-8ed1-6c568f6b9be3.html

International Space Station Success!

Calling

NA1SS, NA1SS, this is N1ASA, N1ASA— 8th grader Paula calling—NA1SS, NA1SS... Station five degrees above the horizon. NA1SS... Six, seven, eight degrees. NA1SS... Ten degrees and no reply—but wait—the background noise is changing.



Paula Perez, KC1DLR

Then the return call, noisy at first and then settling to near full quieting and the house went nuts! Lots of shiny eyes as Paula guided the first student to the mike to ask her astronaut question. At 17,000 MPH, the horizon to horizon ISS pass allowed only an eleven minute contact, but in that short time twenty-four students were able to ask and have answered their carefully prepared questions. Paula, ever composed, working the pickle through each exchange.

Large Group Effort

This very successful first Rhode Island ISS contact was the culmination of efforts by many NCRC members working together under the able leadership of Mike Cullen, N1NPT.



Mike Cullen, N1NPT

This effort began over a year ago with a complex and demanding application process followed by weeks of testing and practice preceding the actual contact.

Willy MacLean Said it Best

“When the ISS finally broke thru the static and the contact was loud and clear, the emotional level was immense. I was extremely proud of the kids, the school, NCRC, and especially the Cullens.

“I cannot remember a time I was more proud to be a Radio Amateur. Thank You All, Willy” [W1LY].

Computer logging

From the early days of radio, hams have sought to have their contacts confirmed by the exchange of an acknowledgement. For decades this was done with log books and QSL cards, but things are changing ever more rapidly.

The main driving force is the effort needed to exchange QSL cards and check contest log sheets manually. Last summer our island activations were acknowledged by QSL cards, this summer this task will be done electronically via Logbook of The World.

Field Day and Logging

Our Field Day operators have always kept paper logs, but again that necessitates another labor-intensive step in the reporting process. It would seem that computer logging would be the ideal solution, but it's not that simple.

At the highest contest level, the act of operating and recording is a highly developed automatic skill. To ask the operator to use a computer at the same time will surely depress the contact rate. How do we generate computer logs without slowing the contact rate?

Several solutions are under consideration, but all involve a logger working with the operator. The logger may log as contacts are made, or perhaps from the paper logs after the contact. Either way, we will need computer loggers. If you would like to help with computer logging, see the June *Modulator* for details.

Field Day is Coming Next Month

The Biggest Weekend in Amateur radio

Field Day is the most popular Amateur Radio event of the year. Conceived as an emergency communications drill, it is a multifaceted round-the-clock radio festival with the goal to work as many stations as possible on the amateur radio bands.

Our Field Day is not limited to experienced hams. Non-hams, new hams, and recent up graders can try their hand at the Get On The Air station under the guidance of a mentor. Last year our GOTA station earned a significant portion of our final score.

And here's the fun part—although a relatively small club, we score consistently among the top few across the country! And of course there is the family picnic on Saturday with excellent food by Ed Gosling's crew.

Although Field Day is nearly six weeks away, preliminary schedules are beginning to be drawn up. If you're thinking of joining the fun, why not sign up now? Early sign-ups make things so much easier for all. Following are the main categories of helpers with contacts.

Field Day Setup

Friday 0800 to sunset.

Many volunteers are needed throughout the day. Tasks include setting up operating tents, setting up and testing radio gear, and erecting the tall antenna towers. All persons on site are required to wear a hard hat. Bring

your hard hat and whatever hand tools you can.

Contacts:

- Willy MacLean W1LY
w1ly@cox.net
- John King WA1ABI
wa1abi@cox.net

Field Day Tear Down

Sunday 1400 to 1800.

Similar to Field Day Setup with the same contacts.

Operators

Operators are needed for the CW and SSB tents and other operations.

Contact:

- John King WA1ABI
wa1abi@cox.net
- Willy MacLean W1LY
w1ly@cox.net

Computer Loggers

We will probably use some form of computer logging this year. The details of computer logging are still under development (See left column).

Picnic and Hospitality

Saturday picnic and Sunday breakfast

Two sign ups here:

1. Sign up yourself and guests for the picnic.
2. Sign up as a helper for food prep, serving and clean-up.

Contact:

- Ed Gosling W1NQH
edward.gosling@cox.net