

Cumberland Amateur Radio Club

Minutes, CARC Monthly Meeting, Wednesday January 21, 2026

Attendance:

Members In-Person 14	Guests/Visitors In-Person 3
Charlene Cash WG3Q(Vice-President) John Luthy, WA3KCP(President) Maura Smith-Mitsky KC3JJH ...(.Secy & Membshp) Doug Stenger KC3CPT(Treasurer)	Michael DiMarco KD3CJZ Joseph DiMarco KD3CFE Dave Mitsky
Mark Anstine KC3UVG Paula Anstine KC3UVH Bob Bennett KV3K Garry Fasick K3EYK Andrew Forsyth AF3I Robert Getty KB3EWJ Val Hoski N8QVT Jon McCown KC3ZYD Frank Mellott KB3PQT Bobbe Rothermel WA3BKK	Members on Zoom Web Meeting 3 Steve Hancock N3FWE Mike Schiding KB3GPX Bill Wagaman N3GTY

President John Luthy WA3KCP **welcomed** everyone to the 1st meeting of 2026, his first as president. He's excited about what this year has in store for us, a rejuvenation of the club. He spoke some thoughts from his **President's Letter, which will follow these minutes.**

John WA3KCP recalled that his father, Pops WD4PFJ, used to call radio club members that he met with "the smart guys" - hams, retired engineers, etc., on phone calls to John. Honoring Pops, John still learns things at every meeting. President Luthy thanked those who helped CARC exist and thrive for sixty years, and thanked Hoss's restaurant and wait staff. He asked the Secretary to give attendance numbers. We had fourteen in-person members attending, three members attending by Zoom, and three visitors. Guests included twelve-year-old Joseph DiMarco KD3CFE, and his father Michael KD3CJZ, who made their first CARC appearance. Dave Mitsky, a CARC spouse who once held a license, attended.

Note: **On the CARC homepage, check “News – Read all about it”** for the one-page, monthly “From the President...” notepad. He’ll place any club-wide updates here, too.

-) **Special Election** to fill the vacancy of the Vice-President position. Our former VP became President last November when the prior president stepped down. Charlene Cash WG3Q has acted as VP after a recommendation by then-President Frank Mellott KB3PQT and was voted in as VP at this meeting. Frank Mellott KB3PQT nominated, seconded by Garry Fasick K3EYK and Valli Hoski N8QVT.

-) **Birthdays** this month: A trio! Michael Migatulski KD3AEA, Doug Stenger KC3CPT, and Art Yingling WA3NQA. Congrats!

-) The **Membership Application** of Brian Hannon KC3TMW, sponsored by Frank KB3PQT was tabled, since Brian was not in attendance.

-) **Milestones:**

-) **Digital Two Meter Net** had a record attendance of six including Charlene WG3Q in her first check in. The net is at 6:00 p.m. local time, Sundays, 146.490 MHz, FM Simplex.¹

-) **POTA, Parks on the Air.** Doug Stenger KC3CPT is our top hunter. Mark Anstine KC3UVG and Paula Anstine KC3UVH are our top activators.

-) We have a new member of the **SKCC, The Straight Key Century Club**, Charlene Cash WG3Q. Charlene WG3Q was committed to make her first CW contacts, and she accomplished this! Two in fact.

-) Mike Wacker N3HR, a former member, **needs a tower climber** and reached out to CARC. It's a 35-foot tower and he needs wire to be attached, in Mechanicsburg.

-) Officers put out a **four question survey** via the USPS and electronic medium. VP Charlene WG3Q is tabulating the results. Of note, Dave Hile W3VRE, now of Gloucester Virginia, renewed his membership after getting the survey. He wanted to keep in touch with us, the first radio club he had been a member of. A couple of other members were confused about CARC's status or a their status in CARC. This suggests that the survey will be valuable.

-) Vice President Report by Charlene Cash WG3Q: The **survey** helped us to get an idea of what members are thinking and what they want. We had twenty-seven surveys returned, representing fifty-seven percent of members. This is enough of a response rate to be useful. Some survey ideas include:

¹ Net info is found on the first page of CARC's website: www.radioclub-CARC.com

-) Working with members to improve the flow of the business aspects of meetings, and have more presentations and social interactions. Members want improved meetings.

-) Member preferences for **method of contact** was split between email and Groups-IO.

-) She thanked Andrew Forsyth AF3I for working to improve our **audio quality on Zoom** transmissions. It's complicated going, and the military term "No plan survives first contact." seemed relevant.

Secretary's Report: The November **minutes** are on our website, scribed by Paula Anstine KC3UVH. They were approved by acclamation. Thanks.

Treasurer's report from Doug Stenger KC3CPT: The checking account balance on January 1, 2026 was \$3848.66. Since then we spent \$450.00 to rent the Shaffer Cabin for Field Day. We received \$40.00 in dues. We received a \$50.00 donation. Current checking account stands at \$3488.66. We have \$82.65 cash in hand. Total funds come to \$3571.31. Report accepted by vote.

No Trustee, Quartermaster, or QSL Master report this month.

Committee Reports:

-) **Luminary** Lighting. Garry Fasick K3EYK reported that we're set for Wednesday 23 December 2026. We're hoping for better weather this time.

-) Dillsburg Farmer's **Parade**: Andrew Forsyth AF3I said the date this year is Saturday, October 17, 2026. Volunteers welcome.

-) Holiday **Luncheon**: Valli N8QVT wants a new volunteer for the luncheon.

-) President Luthy thanked Andrew Forsyth AF3I for conducting the **December Zoom Non-Meeting event**. <3

-) **ARRL Field Day** is Saturday and Sunday June 27-28, 2026. Mark KC3UVG and Paula KC3UVH volunteered to do a site survey prior to FD to evaluate optimal antenna placement. Doug KC3CPT and Garry K3EYK have already reserved the cabin.

Discussions:

-) Paula KC3UVH asked if we are a nonprofit. We are not. President Luthy suggested thinking about how to afford fees should we decide to apply for nonprofit status.
-) Frank KB3PQT thought about a straight key night.
-) John McCown has introduced the club to **Slack**, an online communication and productivity tool, via email and Groups-IO. He gave a presentation at this meeting, placed at the end of the minutes.
-) Valli N8QVT reported learning about **Echolink**, which she said was new and exciting. You can use a cellphone to talk to on-the-air buddies.
-) **CARC dues are due.** Pay with a check to Doug Stenger KC3CPT or contact Andrew Forsyth AF3I for electronic payment methods. Send Andrew AF3I a message at AF3I@radioclub-carc.com and he'll send a payment link. After March 31, dues are delinquent.
-) Bob Bennett KV3K won the **drawing** and was given a can of WD-40 spray.
-) Frank Mellott KB3PQT reported that **Bob Bennett KV3K earned a Lifetime Membership** last year. We are a tad late in acknowledging this milestone. **Garry Fasick K3EYK has also achieved a Lifetime Membership**, this year. Kudos, gentlemen.
-) Frank Mellott KB3PQT also showed us some well-earned gifts he received for his service to CARC, given by several members.
-) **Robert Getty KB3EWJ upgraded his license to General** last weekend! Hooray!

Next Meeting:

The next monthly business meeting will be held Wednesday February 18, 2026 at 6:40 p.m.

CARC Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month, January through November. Check the web site <https://www.RadioClub-CARC.com> for event status info.

We will meet in-person at the Hoss's Restaurant located at 61 Gettysburg Pike, Mechanicsburg, PA.

For others, the meeting will be carried online as a Zoom Web Meeting. Our goal is to open the Zoom connection by 6:30 p.m. so the Zoom audience can be ready for the 6:40 p.m. start.

We had two presentations:

1) Charlene Cash WG3Q gave an informative and entertaining presentation about her **hexbeam antenna** and her adventures erecting and maintaining it. (A hexbeam, AKA a hexagonal-beam, AKA a 'W-antenna,' is a directional antenna functioning akin to a two beam YAGI. Each driven element is a half lambda long wire and is "W" shaped. The reflecting wire is "U" shaped.) Hers has a twenty foot diameter, six spreader arms which hold the wires, about twenty pounds of weight, and about five square feet wind resistance. She got it used at a hamfest. She set a 4 by 4" post in concrete and put the antenna atop a thirty foot push-up mast, with a rotator. It's now on her roof. A TV antenna rotator could be used given the light weight. She's delighted the low noise floor compared to her off-center fed dipole. Gain about 5-6 dBi. It's 20-30 dB front to back. She recommends that hams have a vertical, a horizontal dipole, and a directional antenna since they serve different purposes.

Bands are: 20, 17, 15, 12, and 10. She recommends the website <https://www.Hex-Beam.com> (there is a hyphen between hex and beam) for information on building a hexbeam antenna.

2) Jon McCown KC3ZYD spoke about **Slack**. This is an online communication and productivity tool, popular with home users and businesses. He has established an account for CARC. With the free version, material lasts only thirty days and there are no AI or bots. It's faster than email, good for quick things like satellite work. It's easy to have conversations with others who have various interests, as well as outside groups. He follows Meshtastic and Raspberry Pi stuff, for instance. He Slack-chats with some local hams who live close by. To get on Slack and try it out, give Jon a contact and he'll invite you.

-Charlene WG3Q led a discussion of New Year's Resolutions.

Here is President John Luthy WA3KCP's President's Report 1/21/2026

We come together as a community in common cause, ham radio. CARC is 60+ years old! With enthusiasm, encouragement, energy, a plan, and a team, I look forward to a reinvigorated club this year! This is a fun group of people, curious, eager to learn and to share knowledge.

My dad, Pops WD4PFJ, spoke regularly on our skeds about having "lunch with the smart guys" (hams, retired engineers, etc.). I get it!

We are following a six-point Leadership Guide, based on a vision (initiative #1) to take a fresh look at things to move the club forward. Under the plan's enhanced communication outreach (initiative #4), I contacted every member via email and USPS mail, to explain the leadership change and to capture members' survey input. Tip of the hat to Charlene for constructing and providing the survey system, and to Andy for getting the club's webmail service ready for my all-member outreach. Charlene will provide data analysis in coming weeks, as responses are still coming in.

*I sent out a "nudge" message on groups.io ... We have your survey response, right?! About half have responded. One responder thought the club was inactive; another was surprised to be considered still a member! Both expressed interest in attending a future meeting. Yup! Yup! **On the CARC homepage, check "News – Read all about it" for the one-page, monthly "From the President..." notepad.** I expect to place any club-wide updates here, too.*

*January's **From the President...** mentioned my meeting with all your elected officers in December. This month I met with Andrew, plus have had additional phone meetings and email exchanges with each of them, too.*

These represent first steps taken to enhance communications (initiative #6) within the club management. Each one of us is taking on some new challenges in these roles. We are ready!

Beginning with this meeting, we attempt to conduct the business portion mindful of the by-laws and the need to keep members informed, but also to allow time for scheduled activities or programs (initiative #5). Survey responses so far bode well for this format. Tonight we plan to hear from VP Charlene WG3Q about her recent antenna adventures, and then to join Jon McCown KC3ZYD in discussing his experience with the club's experimental Slack communications environment. – John R. Luthy