

MARA W1⚡GaZette



February 2008

MONTACHUSETT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

Vol 50 No. 6

Next Meeting

Wednesday, 13 February
7:30PM
Lunenburg Public Library

Matt Slomcheck AA1JD
220 Repeaters

MARA's February meeting will feature Matt Slomcheck AA1JD of Winchendon talking about 220 repeater systems.

The meeting will be in the Wallace Room of the Lunenburg Public Library. The Lunenburg Public Library is on Route 2A (Massachusetts Ave.) just east of the center of town.

Advance notice: the April MARA meeting will *not* be held at this location. Look for an upcoming location announcement. The April meeting is planned to be a QSL card sort.

Old Timers Lunch

de Tom K1JHC

A meeting of the Old Timers was held on Wednesday January 2nd. Members present were Charlie KT1I, Roy W1OOY, Al KA1IKD, Gary K1YTS, and Tom K1JHC.

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Contributors To This Issue:

K1JHC, KB1JXJ, N1MGO,
AA2T, W1HFN, KK1X

We note the passing of Roger Hill on January 17th. He was a member of MARA, but neither Bill W1UD or myself could find if he had a call. [Ed. note: Roger was KA1MQG.]

Why not join us at Bickford's Restaurant on the first Wednesday of the each month at 12:30 PM.

Who, How, or What got you interested in Amateur Radio? Tell us your story. Please mail it to Ralph <kd1sm@arrl.net>. If you'd prefer to be interviewed and have someone else do the writing, let Ralph know that too. We'll publish stories as we receive them.

Watt's Happening

Sundays, 0800 local 5330.5 (ch 1) USB
Western Mass Emergency 60M Net
Alternate frequencies are 5346.5 (ch 2),
5366.5 (ch 3), 5371.5 (ch 4), and 5403.5 (ch 5).

Sundays, 0830 local 3937
Western Mass Emergency Net. Alternate
frequency is 3942 in case of QRN, QRM, or
frequency in-use. Also a good idea to scan up
and down 10kHz if you cannot find the net.

Sundays, 0900 local 145.45-
Montachusett Emergency Net

Mondays, 2000 local 147.525 simplex
Worcester Emergency Simplex Net

Tuesdays, 1930 local 145.37-
Templeton Emergency Net

Wednesdays, 2100 local 28.341
Harvard Repeater Club
10 meter sideband net "Activity Night"

Nightly, 2100 local 146.97-
Central Mass Traffic Net

First Monday, 1900 local 3943, 7245
RACES Net

First Wednesday, 2000 local 3915
K1ARC Red Cross Net
<http://www.qsl.net/k1arc/>

Saturday, 16 February 2008, Marlboro
AARC Hamfest

Sunday, 17 February 2008, Westboro
Antique Radio fest

Saturday, 5 April 2008, Londonderry
IRS Hamfest

Sunday, 6 April 2008, Framingham
FARA Hamfest

For more information and other 'Fests, see
<http://web.mit.edu/w1gsl/Public/ne-fleas>

VE Team Report

The MARA/Harvard Repeater Association VE Team held an exam session on December 26 for 4 candidates. All the candidates were successful, earning one new Technician license, two General upgrades and one Extra upgrade.

Volunteer examiners for the December session were John KK1X, Paul KD1YH, Tom K1JHC, and Jim W1DF.

The January VE session had no exam candidates pre-registered so the session was canceled.

The MARA/HRC VE Team holds exam sessions on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Those wishing to take exams are asked to pre-register with Paul KD1YH at 978-597-6535.

If we have no pre-registered candidates by the weekend prior to the scheduled session we will cancel the session.



DICK WILBORG W1ZC
JOHN ROSE WW1Z

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Tell them you saw it in the W1/GaZette

The MARA W1/GaZette

is published by the Montachusett Amateur Radio Association just prior to the monthly meeting. The newsletter is distributed free to members and friends of Amateur Radio.

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The deadline for materials to appear in the W1/GaZette is noon on the Sunday before the first Wednesday of the month.

NEWSLETTER STAFF:

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Webmaster: Paul Upham KD1YH

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Club Secretary: Pauline Carulli KB1JXJ
Annual Dues: Regular \$25
Family \$30
Fixed income \$15
Meetings: 2nd Wednesday, 7:30pm
September to June

Mailing address: MARA
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MARA owns and operates the W1GZ repeater on 145.45 (CTCSS 74.4) in Fitchburg.

January Meeting Report

de Pauline KB1JXJ

9 January 2008

Lunenburg Public Library Wallace Room,
Lunenburg MA.

Present: 23; Bill N1UZ, Gordon N1MGO, Pauline KB1JXJ, Charlie KT1I, Ray KB1LRL, Tom AB1GF, Gary K1YTS, Norm W1BYH, John KK1X, Barry W1HFN, Nancy KB1KEF, Bob KB1JZU, David KB1OPS, Tom K1JHC, Al KA1AKD, Bette KB1PSP, Ralph KD1SM, Ed KB1LJJ, Duane KB1JAZ, George N7QU, Russ K1TSU, Bill W1UD, and Ann WA1S.

07:30 - General Meeting called to order and Introductions

07:31--- Reports:

Gordon - N1MGO Treasurer's Report

November 2007

Starting balance	\$1018.35
Income	\$260.00
Dues & Raffle, holiday luncheon	
Ending Balance	\$1238.35

December 2007

Starting Balance	\$1238.35
Income	\$121.00
raffle & dues	
Expenses	

	\$10.00
W1QSL cards	
	\$90.00
Holiday luncheon checks	
	\$84.00
Post Office Box	
Ending Balance	\$1215.35

07:35-- Motion to accept financial report, Motion passed

07:36 Motion to accept November 2007 Secretary's report (written by KD1SM) as printed in newsletter

07:37 Motion Passed

07:37 Reports

1. VP Report KB1LRL

Name tags and mailing of brochures discussed

2. publicity KB1LRL

Looking for a reliable source at the Sentinel and Enterprise

Has worked with the Telegram and Gazette

3. Web Master

Has been to school for one month to improve his skills

Asks for suggestions as to what club members want to see on the web page

4. Repeater

New repeater in Gary's barn

Crystals not ordered yet

7:45 Club recognitions

Ralph KD1SM For his hard work on the newsletter each month

Pauline KB1JXJ For her organizational work with social events and scheduling monthly speakers

7:55 Ralph KD1SM Idea for newsletter Club members interview each other topic How did you get started in HAM Radio?

7:56 Deerfield May 2 & 3 Details not all published Ray = table?

Field Day; Westminster Academy Hill, Letters going out to abutters

February Meeting; Matt AA1JD, His 220 Repeaters

Ralph KD1SM; Longsjo 4th of July weekend. Order of events will be different

Norm W1BYH; Guatemala TG9/W1BYH all modes RTTY, PSK 17 & 30 meters

7:50 Break

7:58 Presentation Ann Santos WA1S Clipperton TX5C DVD presentation of expedition

8:35 Q & A

8:45 Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted
Pauline R. Carulli, KB1JXJ
Secretary



John KK1X (above) and Al KA1AKD (below) win the January raffle drawings. Each received a gift certificate to the local caffeine & donut dispensary.



Above: Paul KD1YH and Gary K1YTS examine a new piece of photographic equipment that came down Paul's chimney. Paul, this qualifies you to be another contributor to the GaZette!



Above: Ann WA1S prepares to talk about the Kure Atoll DXpedition. Her T-shirt notes the upcoming Clipperton Atoll DXpedition and the 30 year anniversary of the Clipperton DX Club.

Contesting Chatter

de Gordon
N1MGO



February 2008

Contests coming up in February:

9-10 Sat 0000 - Sun 2400
CQ World-Wide RTTY WPX Contest - RTTY

16-17 Sat 0000 - Sun 2400
ARRL International DX Contest - CW

22-23 Fri 2100 - Sat 2100
Russian PSK WW Contest - PSK31

23-24 Sat 0000 - Sun 2359
CQ WW 160-Meter Contest - SSB

23-24 Sat 1800 - Sun 0600
North American QSO Party - RTTY

Contests coming up in March:

1- 2 Sat 0000 - Sun 2400
ARRL International DX Contest - SSB

8- 9 Sat 1000 - Sun 1000
RSGB Commonwealth Contest - CW

9 Sun 0000 - 0400
North American Sprint Contest - RTTY

15 Sat 0001 - 2359
10-10 International Mobile QSO Party - All

15-16 Sat 1200 - Sun 1200
DARC HF-SSTV Contest - SSTV

22-24 Sat 0200 - Mon 0200
BARTG Spring RTTY Contest - RTTY

29-30 Sat 0000 - Sun 2359
CQ WW WPX Contest - SSB

The above contests are some of the big ones of the winter contest season.

There are many other contests also going on during February and March, including many State qso parties. Virginia, Idaho, Oklahoma, and Louisiana are just some of the states!

For more contests and information, with links to the rules see:

<http://www.sk3bg.se/contest/> or
<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

KT1I and I will be setting up for multioperator from my house for the CQ World-Wide RTTY WPX Contest, this will be a great time to try your hand at RTTY contesting! Let me know if you would like to operate, or just observe, during that weekend, or any other that I'm contesting. The CQ WPX contests, which include RTTY, CW and SSB on different weekends, are lots of fun because the multipliers are all the different prefixes found in all the call-signs. That is why we will use KT1I for the station call, it much rarer than N1 or W1 prefix, so more stations will be looking for us! We may also setup to do the CW and SSB CQ WPX later in the spring.

During the last several RTTY contests I have seen a few signals that had problems, spurs, harmonics (audio), tx and rx on different frequencies and other artifacts that indicate the person is using AFSK and not FSK for RTTY. If you use AFSK for RTTY, or any of the other digital modes

using the sound card audio for transmit you should make a special effort to check your signal quality going out over the air.

If you have any questions about your signal quality on the air, check it! If you don't know how, or don't have an o'scope, ask for help! There are many club members that can help you check your signal quality, from as simple as just listening to your signal, to as complex as bringing test equipment to your shack.

I will be doing various contests through out the year, if you are interested in watching or participating in any contest let me know. Many of the contests have a multi-operator category that I will switch to if I have any other operators. I can use WriteLog or N1MM contest software, if you have a preference.

If you need help with log submission, or setup for a contest, I will try to help. Call me on the club repeater, or e-mail me, or stop by.

Gordon N1MGO

Dave WB1FCV in Web Video

Barry W1HFN forwarded an email from Dave Farrington WB1FCV. Dave is well known to MARA Old Timers. He is now a minister in a church in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Dave's recognition of Martin Luther King is recorded in
<http://www.caller.com/video/?bcpid=980289782&bctid=1385224657>

Thanks to W1HFN for forwarding this.

Links of Interest

de Randy KB3IFH

I thought it might be fun to post one or two links every week of some interesting websites we all come across. Obviously we could ask everyone to send theirs.

Here s a short list of examples. I keep quite a list broken out by all different categories such as DX, Antennas, Nets, Boat Anchors, Radio Clubs, etc.

<http://n5xu.ece.utexas.edu/rfsafety/>
 - RF Safety Calculator

<http://www.iaru.org/statsum00.html>
 - Number of Amateur operators worldwide by country

<http://www.amateurlogic.com/blog/>
 - Amateur Logic TV (TV shows on the internet by Amateurs for Amateurs)

<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/faq-60.html#two>
 - 60M FAQ s

<http://www.solarcycle24.com/>
 - Nice website if your into this stuff

73's
 Randy
 KB3IFH

Thanks to AA2T for submitting this.

MTARA 20th Annual Amateur Radio & Electronics Hamfest

DATE: Saturday, March 08, 2007

LOCATION:

Springfield Turnverein Club
176 Garden Street
Feeding Hills, Ma. 01030-2528

TIMES:

Doors Open:

7:00 AM for Vendors
9:00 AM for Bargain Hunters

ADMISSION:

Adults: \$5.00
Children under 12 - FREE!

Tailgating: \$10 per parking space.

Tables: \$15.00 per 8 foot table.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TABLE
RESERVATIONS CONTACT:

Cindy Loiero - K1ISS
27 Deepwoods Drive.
Westfield, MA 01085-1703
Tel.: (413)-568-1175
k1iss-n1fi@comcast.net

Did you hear about the hungry clock?

It went back four seconds.

How I Got Started - KK1X

No magic story. I was interested in science from childhood, and radio figured into that after I helped my older brother assemble some HeathKit CB walkie-talkies back in the 60's. I even joined the League as an Associate Member back in 1976 until my inability to learn Morse code frustrated my attempts to join the Amateur ranks. Cut to 2001. I found out that my neighbor (now N1PZ) was a ham and expressed interest. Philip told me that I no longer needed to learn Morse code, and after taking a number of practice tests on QRZ, I drove into MIT one evening and earned my Tech ticket - about two weeks before 9/11.

Since then I've gotten involved with the Nashoba club (via breakfast invitation from K1BG), the Montachusett club (via VE sessions in Shirley), and have joined the Minuteman group (via the now-defunct Crocker Public Service Group). Although I have managed to learn something from just about everyone, among my primary Elmers are W1XP, KD1SM, KD1LE, and N1MGO. I'm glad I finally got into the hobby - I should have stuck with it back in the 70's!

John KK1X

Ed: Please share your story in the W1/GaZette. What got you started? Why were you interested? Who helped to motivate you?

Next month: W1HFN's story.

Editorial - DWD

de KD1SM

The Amateur Radio community appears to have successfully turned away last month a potentially huge restriction on mobile operation on the roads of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In an attempt to make it easier for traffic safety enforcement officers to stop drivers who hold cell phones to their ears, a bill was introduced in the House to make it an offense to “operate a motor vehicle on a public way while using a mobile electronic device or a mobile telephone, unless said telephone is a hands-free mobile telephone.”

The bill defined a “mobile electronic device” as “any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more persons”. Sounds like that definition might cover all two-way radio, including Amateur Radio, right?

To accomplish this, the bill -- House 4477 -- proposed to modify the existing Law that specifically *permits* use of a “mobile telephone” *as long as one hand remains on the steering wheel at all times.*

We’ve all seen drivers who are not giving their full attention to driving. They’re doing all sorts of things, including reaching for stuff on the back seat, adjusting iPods, perhaps even typing an address into a GPS navigator. The number of electronic distractions available to us is certainly increasing. Clearly typing a text message on a cell phone is not among those things a Person With Common Sense would think wise to do while driving.

But, I’m sad to have to remind you, Common Sense is not as common as we all wish.

A quick letter-writing campaign from the Ham community rallied sufficient support from our elected representatives to have an amendment to this Bill accepted. The amendment changed the critical sentence in the middle of the bill striking out the exemption for mobile telephones and replacing that exemption with one for amateur radio. The bill that passed the House now explicitly puts amateur radio next to “citizens band radio” as permitted while operating a vehicle.

While this is an important recognition for the Amateur Radio Service and allows us to continue to provide all the volunteer and emergency communications that we have been providing for so long -- oh yes, and to continue our mobile rag-chews as well -- let’s not forget that despite all our training and practice, we are not immune from the trap of Driving While Distracted.

Read Stan Horzepa WA1LOU’s timely editorial “Buying the Farm” (January 11) <http://www.arrl.org/news/features/2008/01/11/1/> for a reminder of how quickly things can go Very Bad at 60 miles an hour.

Stan recommends that every mobile operator read Alan Applegate K0BG’s Web site “Safe Mobile Operation” <http://www.k0bg.com/safety.html>

While you may feel that some of Alan’s points go a bit far, let’s not forget that we have a responsibility to operate legally *and* safely -- both our radios and our vehicles.

73 es be safe out there
-Ralph



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