



## Next Meeting

**Wednesday, June 11  
7:30PM**

**Lunenburg Public Library  
Annual Meeting & Elections  
also**

**Jim Hanson W1TRC  
“LT-Spice Circuit Analysis”**

The June meeting is the MARA Annual Meeting wherein we elect officers for the next year. Nominations were made at the May meeting; President Ray KB1LRL, Vice President Bill N1UZ, Treasurer Gordon N1MGO, Secretary Pauline KB1JXJ.

Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the start of the meeting.

The meeting presentation will be given by Jim Hanson W1TRC.

## W1HFN Hosts “Fox” Hunts

de Barry W1HFN

Barry W1HFN has resumed hidden transmitter searches - a.k.a. “fox” hunting - for all interested. Two hides have been done

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## Contributors To This Issue:

W1HFN, KB1JXJ, N1MGO, NZ1D,  
KB1LRL

thus far; the first was off Brockelman Rd in Lancaster with two successful finds. The second hiding of the W1HFN foxbox was over Memorial Day weekend with one successful find. In order to save expensive gas Barry has decided to identify a parking spot and the hunt will proceed on foot from there. The next hunt will be the weekend of June 7 & 8 at the Cowdry Nature Preserve on Rte 2A in Lunenburg.

The fox consists of a 50mw transmitter on the national fox hunt frequency of 146.565, there will be a 20 second voice ID every 3 minutes.

With the fox there is a log in a plastic baggie; finders can also report their finds via email to [w1hfn@arrl.net](mailto:w1hfn@arrl.net) with a note detailing the message printed on the foxbox.

Go to <http://home.comcast.net/~foxbw/site> for further details about these foxhunts.

## 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/>

**Sunday, 15 June, Cambridge MA**  
Flea at MIT; third Sunday April-October

**22-24 August, Boxboro MA**  
ARRL New England Convention

**10-11 October, Deerfield NH**  
NEAR-Fest

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

## VE Team Report

After a several-month lag in exam requests,  
the MARA / Harvard Repeater Association  
Volunteer Examiner Team held an exam  
session on May 28.

One upgrade to Extra class was earned.

Volunteer Examiners Tom K1JHC, Ralph  
KD1SM, Paul KD1YH, John KK1X, Gordon  
N1MGO, and Tom WA1RHP conducted this  
session.

The next scheduled session is June 25;  
that's the Wednesday before Field Day.

## ID Badges

de Ray KB1LRL

The club has a new ID badge that is  
available to current members. They have  
been distributed during the meetings. If you  
cannot come to the meeting and would like  
one, please send a stamped, self addressed  
envelope to: Ray Lajoie 134 Clarendon St.  
Fitchburg, Ma. 01420



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:

Editors: Ralph Swick KD1SM  
978-582-7351 kd1sm@arrl.net  
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  
PO Box 95  
Leominster, MA 01453

Web site: <http://www.w1gz.org/>

### OFFICERS:

Bill Leger, N1UZ	President
Ray Lajoie, KB1LRL rplajoie@comcast.net	Vice President
Pauline Carulli, KB1JXJ kb1jxj@arrl.net	Secretary
Gordon LaPoint, N1MGO n1mgo@arrl.net	Treasurer
Charlie Cayen, KT1I kt1i@arrl.net	Trustee

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

## May Meeting Report

14 May 2008

Lunenburg Public Library Wallace Room,  
Lunenburg MA.

Present: 21; Bill N1UZ, Ray KB1LRL, Gordon N1MGO, Pauline KB1JXJ, Charlie KT1I, Tom AB1GF, Norm W1BYH, John KK1X, Barry W1HFN, Bob KB1JZU, David KB1OPS, Al KA1AKD, Ralph KD1SM, Ed KB1LJJ, Joseph N1QDZ, Paul KD1YH, Mark Turmaine (guest), Tom WA1RHP, Dennis K1LGQ, Gary K1YTS, Stan KD1LE, Bob W1XP, and Tony KX1G.

7:00 - Members gathered to start the first card sort hosted by the club.

The secretary on behalf of the club wants to thank Bill, Ralph and Stan for all the work in organizing this outreach activity for the club. It proved to be a very successful evening. Work, laughter, and conversation abounded.

Thank you again for your work

Pauline KB1JXJ, Secretary.

8:18 Bill N1UZ called the gathering into a short meeting. The only item on the agenda was to have a report from the nominating committee to announce the slate of officers running for the June elections.

The slate;

President	Ray KB1LRL
Vice President	Bill N1UZ
Treasurer	Gordon N1MGO
Secretary	Pauline KB1JXJ

Motion was made and approved

8:20 adjourn

8:20pm Card sort continues with pizza and refreshments before final adjournment

9:00pm Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted  
 Pauline R. Carulli, KB1JXJ  
 Secretary



above: QSL sorters busy at the sorting boxes provided by Stan KD1LE

## Contesting Chatter

de Gordon  
 N1MGO



June 2008

Contests coming up in June:

7- 8 Sat 0000 - Sun 2400  
 Open Season Ten Meter PSK Contest - BPSK31

14-15 Sat 0000 - Sun 2400  
 ANARTS WW RTTY Contest - Digi

14-15 Sat 1600 - Sun 0200  
 West Virginia QSO Party - CW/SSB

21-22 Sat 0000 - Sun 2400  
 All Asian DX Contest - CW

28-29 Sat 1200 - Sun 1200  
 H. M. The King of Spain Contest - SSB

28-29 Sat 1200 - Sun 1200  
 Ukrainian DX DIGI Contest - RTTY/PSK31

28-29 Sat 1400 - Sun 1400  
 MARCONI Memorial Contest HF - CW

28-29 Sat 1800 - Sun 2100  
 ARRL Field Day - All

Contests coming up the rest of the Summer!

July:

5- 6 Sat 1100 - Sun 1059  
 DL-DX RTTY Contest - RTTY/PSK31/PSK63

12-13 Sat 1200 - Sun 1200  
 IARU HF World Championship - CW/SSB

19-20 Sat 1800 - Sun 0600  
 North American QSO Party - RTTY

26-27 Sat 1200 - Sun 1200  
 RSGB IOTA Contest - CW/SSB

August:

2 Sat 0000 - 2400  
 TARA Grid Dip - PSK/RTTY

2- 3 Sat 0001 - Sun 2359  
 10-10 Int. Summer QSO Party - Phone

2- 3 Sat 0001 - Sun 2359  
 National Lighthouse-Lightship Weekend

2- 3 Sat 1800 - Sun 0600  
 North American QSO Party - CW

9-10 Sat 0000 - Sun 2359  
 Worked All Europe DX-Contest - CW

16 Sat 0000 - 0800  
 SARTG WW RTTY Contest (1) - RTTY

30-31 Sat 1200 - Sun 1159  
 SCC RTTY Championship - RTTY

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

There are many other contests also going on during the summer months, including many State qso parties. For more contests and information, with links to the rules see:

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

So you don't want the fast pace of the normal SSB, CW or RTTY contest? Then try some of the other modes, like BPSK31, Feld-Hell or SSTV. All of these modes, and others are used for some of the summer contests, and they are slower paced than the "normal" modes! BPSK31 especially is very well represented for contests, especially with the TARA group and the PODXS 070 Club.

See <http://www.podxs070.com/> for the PODXS 070 club contest calendar, and other info.

See [http://www.n2ty.org/seasons/tara\\_seasons.html](http://www.n2ty.org/seasons/tara_seasons.html) for the TARA contests. There are 4 contests sponsored by Amateur Radio Association (TARA). The slowest mode for contests is probably SSTV, where it can take 5 or more minutes to complete each contact. For a list of the SSTV contests see [http://www.mathiesen.com/oz9au/contest/sstv\\_contest\\_kalender.htm](http://www.mathiesen.com/oz9au/contest/sstv_contest_kalender.htm)

MMSSTV or MixW are the software of choice for SSTV modes. For Feld-Hell you can use MixW or Hellschreiber. Hellschreiber is at <http://xoomer.alice.it/aporcino/Hell/index.htm>

MixW is at: <http://www.mixw.net/> . All the above software except MixW is free. The BPSK31 contests can be done with the normal contest software, either N1MM or WriteLog.

Don't forget FieldDay, its NOT a contest, but is lots of fun and resembles a contest for some people.

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 [n1mgo@arrl.net](mailto:n1mgo@arrl.net)

## View from the Southern Trace

de NZ1D/4

I was sitting on my lanai (a Hawaiian name that pretentious neo-Floridians call their porches) shuffling papers and half listening to the Maritime Mobile Net on 20. Conditions weren't the greatest and the NCS, located in western Colorado, was barely readable. I thought I heard a familiar call trying to check in. A net relay from 8-land repeated the check-in: "Kilo Tango One India is looking for November Zulu One Delta." Hey, that's Charlie and he's looking for me! I yelled "Contact!" and after some jockeying between us, the net relay and the NCS, we finally hooked up and moved off to a new frequency, where we had a nice chat until the path dropped out.

As a bonus, several weeks later, during the NEQP, 20 meters also provided welcome chats with Norm W1BYH, Steve N1GKX (wow, long time no hear!) and QRP-enthusiast Dennis K1LGQ, of Brookline, NH (some club members may remember that Dennis made a QRP presentation to a MARA meeting about 10 years ago). What a thrill it was to finally make the connection with some old friends!

## Parker Classic Race @Devens

MARA members Tom K1JHC, Gary K1YTS, Nancy KB1KEF, Ralph KD1SM, and John KK1X joined NVARC members Larry KB1ESR, Stan KD1LE, Dave N1MNX, and Joel W1JMM for a fine Sunday morning on May 18 at the Parker Essential Charter School in Devens for the 13th running of the Parker Classic Road Race.

This event has two races; a 2 mile and a 5 mile run. The interesting feature of this event is to see how the roads in Devens have changed each year.



We caught Jerry AA2T preparing and participating in the 2 mile race:



all photos by  
KD1SM



As we were staging for the event, we noticed that K1JHC's mobile whip switch box had seen long service. KK1X contributed an upgrade, which then appeared in service at the VE session:



**Longsjo Classic - July 4, 5, 6**

The Longsjo Classic Organizers are asking for assistance from Amateur Radio operators for the 49th Fitchburg Longsjo Classic bicycle race.

To accommodate the Independence Day activities in downtown Fitchburg, the order of the events this year is different from most previous years. The main event that needs our assistance is the Wachusett Mountain Road Race, which will be on Friday July 4. 12 to 14 operators are needed for the mountain course. The Downtown Criterium will be held on Sunday as usual. 4 to 6 operators can cover this course adequately.



In addition this year, we have been asked if we can provide communications for the Circuit Race on Saturday, July 5. If there are at least 5 volunteers for Saturday we can respond to this request.

Please contact Ralph KD1SM if you are available for any of these three days.

## How I got into Amateur Radio - KB1LRL

de Ray Lajoie KB1LRL

My interest in radio had its beginnings when I was a little kid in Billerica, MA. In the basement of our house my father had an old receiver he brought back from the Air Force. To this day, I can't remember what the name was, all I know the band selection was sliding a crystal unit (for lack of a better description) which was the size of a VCR! I used to tune up and down the band with a 6 inch vernier dial and I used to hear dx broadcast, cw, am, and some other forms of communication. It used to fascinate me what I was hearing.

The mid seventies introduced us to disco music and Jimmy Carter. My interest went to CB radio fueled by the movie and song "Convoy". Everywhere you looked there was a CB antenna on a lot of cars. I used to chat on the radio as much as kids are IM-ing today. I remember working skip and getting a station out west-what a treat at 5 watts!

The nineties brought on a lot of changes in my life and needed a hobby that a lot of time or a lot of expense wasn't required. I discovered police scanning and bought my first Radio Shack scanner, a 50 channel 800 MHz model. Since then, I have been expanding my collection to at one time owning some 13 scanners. Needless to say scanning was deeply rooted.

2003 rolls up and I am working for Comcast doing a service call in Chelmsford and

complimented him on a radio he had in the corner of his basement. It was a Hallicrafters SX71 with the separate speaker. I went about the repair and as he signed the work order he asked me if I was interested in the radio, I said yes and inquired how much he wanted for it, not really thinking about buying it, he said I looked like a guy who would appreciate it and give it as good home. So the next day I took my truck and loaded up a radio, speaker, and a pile of Ham radio books, free. That was my official introduction to Ham radio.

I started by exploring at the 2004 Boxboro convention and buying "the book", and started studying, joining the ARRL, discovering MARA, and finding Hosstraders and there in Oct. 2004 took my exam. To this day, my radio collection has expanded somewhat, (a lot) and the only regret is that I didn't do it a long time ago.

*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.*

*Next time: NZ1D*

## Red Cross Liaison Report

30 May 2008

Ralph Swick KD1SM

Emergency Coordinator WMA Red Cross Liaison

WMA ARES liaison with the American Red Cross continues to be active and mutually beneficial. This is an update on the status of ARES-ARC relationships and recent changes in the Red Cross that are of interest to ARES volunteers.

## Chapter Merges and Expansions

There are now 5 Red Cross chapters in WMA:

Berkshire County (Pittsfield)  
 Central Massachusetts (Worcester)  
 Hampshire-Franklin County (Northampton)  
 Pioneer Valley (Springfield)  
 Greater Westfield (Westfield)

The former North Central Massachusetts Chapter (Leominster) has been merged with the Central Massachusetts and Hampshire Chapters. The Franklin County portion of its former coverage area is now added to the Hampshire-Franklin County Chapter and the Worcester County portion of its former area is now in the Central Mass Chapter coverage area.

This merger primarily affects those ARES volunteers in Franklin County. Those ARES personnel should expect their primary contact to now be with Northampton. ARES volunteers in North Worcester County will continue to see a Red Cross presence in Leominster, though the Red Cross staff are in the new Red Cross facility in West Boylston (still referred to as "Worcester" in Red Cross materials).

## ARES Support of Red Cross

The Red Cross background check requirements have been an issue of significant concern for ARES volunteers since the Red Cross expanded those requirements to its "partner organizations" in 2006. The renewal of the MOU between ARRL and the American Red Cross has been delayed for over a year due to concerns over the expanded Red Cross requirements.

As was announced in an ARRL message on 18 May [1], the Red Cross is revising its background check requirements in response to ARRL and other organizations' concerns.

[1] <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/05/18/10104/>

Although the Red Cross had said in its 2006 procedures that the credit check portion of its background check would not be applied to volunteers from "partner organizations", the consent form that ARES volunteers were required to sign was the same form given to Red Cross volunteers and did include the consent for a credit check. In a recent internal memorandum, the Red Cross announced that it would require its background check service provider to change its consent form so that a volunteer who identifies himself as a member of a partner volunteer group and not affiliated with a Red Cross chapter will not see, and will not be giving consent for, a credit check.

In the 18 May ARRL announcement, ARRL CEO Dave Sumner K1ZZ is quoted as saying "We believe it now will be possible to go forward to negotiate a statement of understanding between the two organizations. We look forward to renewing and expanding the relationship with the Red Cross."

This announcement should remove the impediments to closer ARES support of the Red Cross that have arisen since 2006. With this change and the continued heightened level of planning for disaster communication across all emergency services, we can expect to see an increase in our contact with local Red Cross chapters.

## Red Cross Disaster Drills

The Central Massachusetts Chapter is planning a drill to be held "sometime in the next three months". The date is intentionally not being pre-announced; part of the intent of this particular drill is to test a "real time" disaster and see how many Red Cross volunteers and partner organizations report that they would be able to respond to complete the exercise.

ARES volunteers in the Central Mass area should verify with your District Emergency Coordinators that your contact information is up-to-date so that you can be contacted if the Central Mass Red Cross disaster drill requests ARES support. The Central Mass Chapter area



is now all of Worcester County plus the towns of Ware, Ashby, Townsend, Shirley, Groton, Ayer, Littleton, Hudson, and Marlboro.

### Personal Note

I became a local Red Cross disaster volunteer in 1995 while helping my wife Jeanine N1QIT and ARES EC Bill Wornham NZ1D produce an MOU between what we called the Montachusett Amateur Radio Emergency Service and the (former) North Central Mass chapter. In that role I was able to improve the contact between the local Amateur Radio community and the local Red Cross disaster services. Though it had a large geographical area of responsibility, the North Central Mass chapter remained relatively small in resources and generally called for Amateur Radio support only for planned public service events such as the annual Fitchburg Longsjø Classic bicycle race. Fortunately, too, there were few local disasters of a scale that required extra radio communications.

On the basis of the relationships I built with ARES colleagues in many of the Red Cross chapters in Massachusetts, and WMA in particular, I was pleased to accept the appointment to Emergency Coordinator / Red Cross Liaison offered by Section Emergency Coordinator John Ruggiero N2YHK.

Now with the merger of the North Central Mass chapter into the Worcester chapter, I have become part of a well-functioning Red Cross radio communications team whom I feel privileged to have known for a long time. The resources of the Central Mass chapter far exceed those ever envisioned for my former chapter. The understanding of the importance of a close relationship with ARES is also better understood by many more of the Red Cross staff. I fully expect this organizational change in the Red Cross chapters in WMA to have great benefit for ARES in North Worcester County over time.

With this local chapter change, I have also decided to step up my own participation in the national Red Cross. Earlier this month I completed the training and became part of the nationwide ~160-member crew for the Red Cross' Emergency Communications Response Vehicles [2]. This ECRV team now includes 3 Amateur Radio operators from WMA; Tom Carrigan NE1R (who completed his training in January and co-taught the May class), John Noble W1JWN (who completed training with me in May), and myself.

[2] <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ECRV>

Tom, John, and I will be very happy to talk about the ECRVs to any Amateur Radio group who is interested. There are 12 of these trucks housed around the US. Their primary mission is to rapidly bring critical computer and telephony networking services to setup a disaster relief operation center for larger-scale disasters. This allows the Red Cross to immediately begin providing local recovery services to those affected by the disaster.

The ECRV for which Tom, John, and I are members of the primary crew is kept in Farmington CT. There are plans in place for it to be on display at Boxboro in August; we all hope it is not deployed to a disaster at that time. Please look for us and our colleagues from EMA and Connecticut if you come to Boxboro.

From the expansion of the Central Mass Chapter resources and responsibilities to the resolution of the ARRL-ARC MOU to the new arrival in our region of a high-tech resource that will be an attraction to Hams, I feel the next several years will bring a significantly increased level of partnership between ARES and the Red Cross in Western Massachusetts. I am proud to be able to serve as part of that partnership.

73,  
Ralph KD1SM

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Montachusett Amateur Radio Association  
PO Box 95 Leominster MA 01453

