

# MARA W1⚡GaZette



March 2009

MONTACHUSETT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

Vol 51 No. 6

## Next Meeting

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

**Don DeMarsh**

## “Technical Operations of W1CN”

The March MARA general meeting is scheduled for March 11 at the Lunenburg Public Library. Don DeMarsh of W1CN will be talking about the engineering operation of a major television station.

## President's Corner

As I write this, our fellow “hammies” are bracing up for yet another snowstorm. I often think during that time about the activities I participate in. Spring and summer are so packed with things that winter seems VERY long because we are in hibernation mode. I have been using the time to plan, think, and prep, in anticipation for a busy, fun season. If you haven't volunteered for anything yet, I encourage you to do so. It's a good way to learn something, perform a good deed, get out of the house, and have some fun and camaraderie with fellow operators such as you.

One thing that goes on during the winter (and all year for that matter) is contesting. I had the privilege to participate in a few with Gordon, N1MGO, who's shack is nicely done

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## Contributors To This Issue:

KB1LRL, KB1JXJ, K1JHC, W1UD

to do multi-operator contesting and find it a lot of fun, and you get to learn a different mode. (RTTY). For those who's do not have the privileges to operate on your own, the rules state that you can, under the control operators license. If you have any questions, just ask any one of us.

For those who do not know, we now have a new site for VE sessions; it's the Lunenburg Senior Center behind the library. They had their first session there on the 25th and reports were that it was well received. The four that went to test walked out with either upgrades or new licenses. Congrats to them. For any information on testing contact Ralph KD1SM, Tom K1JHC, Paul KD1YH, Gordon N1MGO, Gary K1YTS, and there are a host of others.

I hope to see you at the meeting on the 11th, hopefully see some new faces too. If you know someone who hasn't been lately, invite him or her along Spread the word.

Most 73's Ray KB1LRL

## 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, 2000 local 28.410**  
"10/410" Net

**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, 29 March, Framingham MA**  
Framingham ARC Hamfest

**Saturday, 18 April, Townsend MA**  
Townsend Lion's Club Canoe & Kayak Race

**Monday, 20 April**  
Boston Marathon; Ham volunteers needed

**Sunday, 26 April, Groton MA**  
Groton Road Race; contact KD1SM

Additional events are listed on  
<http://web.mit.edu/w1gsl/Public/ne-fleas>

## VE Team Report

The MARA/Harvard Repeater Club Volunteer Examination Team has started the 2009 year in good shape. The January session served two candidates, both of whom earned upgrades to General Class. The February session served four candidates with two earning their Technician licenses and one each upgrading to General and Extra Class.

Thanks to the January examiners John KK1X, Gordon N1MGO, and Tom WA1RHP and to the February examiners John KK1X, Gordon N1MGO, Gary K1YTS, Charlie KT1I, Paul KD1YH, and Ralph KD1SM.

As of February the exams are being held in Lunenburg at the Eagle House Senior Center. 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.

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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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### OFFICERS:

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

## February Meeting Report

11 February 2009

Lunenburg Public Library Wallace Room,  
Lunenburg MA.

Present: 22 -- Ray KB1LRL, Gordon N1MGO, Pauline KB1JXJ, Charlie KT1I, Norm W1BYH, Barry W1HFN, David KB1OPS, Al KA1AKD, Paul KD1YH, Gary K1YTS, Tom K1JHC, John KB1QZE, Bill W1UD, Nancy KB1KEF, John KK1X, Ed KB1LJJ, Ralph KD1SM, Walter K1CMF, Mickey WB1GFZ, Mark KB1QWR, John K1TLV, John N2YHK.

7:30 - Meeting called to order by the President Ray - KB1LRL

Secretary Report - as written in newsletter by KD1SM- Ralph

Accepted

Treasurer

Opening Balance	\$1557.02
Income	\$18.00 Raffle
	\$25.00 Dues
expenses	\$9.95 postage
Balance	\$1590.07

7:34 Report accepted

Repeater -- It is being worked on

7:35 New Business

Ray

1. New Brochure to attract more new members. Passed around for all to see and make adjustments as necessary

2. Field Day 2009

Tabled from last month--

1. Donation of \$150.00 to Lunenburg

Library for the use of the hall for our meetings.

2. Idea of making a gift instead was not accepted

3. Bill, W1UD - motion to make the donation \$300.00

7:38 Motion accepted. Secretary will write the note and send the check

7:40 Gordon N1MGO: This weekend CQWW Pre fix contest -- all welcome at the house

NEAR-Fest is May 1 & 2

May meeting will be a QSL Sort here at meeting site

A short discussion on sending letters to various towns in the area to inform them of how HAMS can help out in emergencies ex. Ice Storm of December 2008.

Ralph KD1SM points out contact needs to be consistent for us to expect any response.

7:46 Bill W1UD recognizes AA2T for his good work at LEMA during the Ice Storm

Norm W1BYH alerts members to a new challenge The Triple Play That is all states on CW, SSB and RTTY

7:53 Public Service opportunities coming up:

1. Townsend Canoe Race
2. Groton Road Race
3. Marathon

7:55pm 5 minute break

8:06pm John N2YHK Section Emergency Coordinator, ARRL Western Mass Section, "Updates on WMA ARES"

9:00pm Adjourn

Added note: March Meeting Presenter Mr. Don DeMarsh "Technical Operations of WICN" plus a small bit on TV TX at their site. We thank Barry, W1HFN, for finding this presenter for us.

All are welcome to help the Board find interesting topics for our meetings. All suggestions are taken into consideration

Respectfully Submitted,  
Pauline R. Carulli KB1JXJ  
Secretary

## Do We Have Your Address?

An electronic version of the W1/GaZette is sent every month to the MARA members' discussion list <mara@w1gz.org>.

All MARA members whose email addresses have been given to the newsletter editor are subscribed to this list (unless specifically requested otherwise).

If you have not been receiving these messages and would like to do so, send an email to Ralph so he will have your address. MARA members are welcome to use this list for other announcements they believe are of interest to Club members.

## Old Timers Lunch

de Tom K1JHC

The Old Timer's lunch was held Wednesday February 4 at Bickford's Restaurant. Those present were Roy W1OOY, Tom K1JHC, Norm W1BYH, Gary K1YTS, Barry W1HFN, and Charlie KT1I. The main topics of discussion were the Triple Play Award and Giga Memory Units. Please join with us on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:30.



Above: Ray KB1LRL (left) addresses the February MARA meeting at the Lunenburg Public Library. [kd1sm photo]



Above: At the February MARA meeting John N2YHK, ARRL Western Massachusetts Section Emergency Coordinator, displayed a portable 2m/70cm repeater constructed by the Worcester Emergency Communications Team. [kd1sm photo]

## 2008 License Exam Statistics

The MARA/Harvard Repeater Club Volunteer Exam Team conducted seven license examination sessions in 2008, serving fifteen individuals wanting to earn new

Amateur Radio licenses or upgrade their existing licenses.

Two examiners, Tom K1JHC and Paul KD1YH, assisted with all seven sessions. The full list of examiners, number of sessions, and number of candidates served is:

KIJHC	7	15
KD1YH	7	15
K1YTS	6	14
KD1SM	6	14
KK1X	6	13
WA1RHP	5	10
N1MGO	3	5
N1HVA	1	4

Five new Technician licenses were earned at these sessions as well as four upgrades to General Class and four upgrades to Extra Class.

Thanks to each of these volunteers for making these licensing sessions available to our community.

## How I Got Started - W1UD

On January 8th 1932, during the Great Depression, my mother brought me into this world. We lived on Prospect Avenue in the Whalom District of Leominster. It was a converted summer camp that my parents bought for \$2000 dollars. After 10 years of my fathers endless hard work, the camp, evolved as a permanent home for his family.

The second world war was drawing to a close. Germany had been defeated and Japan was about to surrender after two atom bombs. During the war the house across the street had been purchased by a family that had two boys that had just

returned from the war. I was a curious kid of thirteen and observed one of the boys building a pair of towers. Curiosity brought me to George's yard. "What are you building George?", I asked. He replied that the towers were for his 'ham' radio station. Maybe I should not have asked but I did. "What is ham radio"? George took me to the second floor of his home and showed me what a ham station looked like. A six foot rack and panel amplifier, exciter and a surplus Hamarlund receiver made up the station. Three switches were thrown and George was on the air. Of course he was using CW and interpreted what the other station was sending.

How would you like to become a 'ham' George said. Needless to say, I was overwhelmed. I left his house with a license manual, handbook and an invitation to attend the Park Department Radio Club in Fitchburg Friday night.

Six months later I was on my way to Boston to take the Federal Class B Amateur Radio license at the Customs House in Boston. It's been so long ago I can't remember if I was twelve or thirteen years old. I played hooky from school and made the trip hitching rides. My mother was very upset when I returned late that afternoon. Maybe actions like this promoted me being call 'Wild Bill' while I was in school and college.

While I was waiting for my license, I built a two tube crystal controlled rig with surplus parts purchased from the Radio Shack. Not the Radio Shack we know today but it predecessor located on Washington Street in Boston. Remember, the war had ended and the government had dumped all the spare parts they had bought at give away prices. The twenty-five watt rig cost me twenty dollars for all parts including the

power supply and chassis. \$39.95 purchased a new BC 348 receiver. Sixty bucks and a couple of dollars worth of wire and W1QKX was on the air.

In those days a ham license was a gateway to an electronic job. One thing I never thought of was another war. The same year I graduated from high school the North Koreans came across the 38th parallel into South Korea. That September found me as a student at Fitchburg State Teachers College. Myself, and three buddies, decided that college would have to wait and we volunteered for active duty.

This is where being a ham paid off. The army had an idea that they could train select troops in a course equivalent to an engineering degree in half the time it would take in a regular engineering college. I took the examination for admittance and was accepted. There were thirteen in the course ranging in education from grammar school to a PhD. We went to school ten hours a day for a year and a half. I can remember spending many nights in the bathroom studying. That was the only room that had lights on all night. I still can't realize how but I graduated with the second highest mark in the course. The army abandoned this course after the first graduating class. It was not cost effective. Oh well, I still have the diploma posted on the wall.

Some fool, sitting behind an office desk at the Pentagon, reviewed my records and decided that the army would be better served having me teach electronics at the Signal School at Fort Monmouth, NJ. That lasted about three months because I had applied to go to the Paratrooper school. Eight weeks later I made the first of seven jumps during my military career. I also gave me \$100 dollars a month extra. That

helped because by that time I had married my high school sweetheart.

From Ft. Bragg North Carolina I was given seventeen days delay in route with a final destination of Korea. I was assigned to the 205th Signal Company (Repair). Someone finally discovered that I was trained in electronics and I should be using my training. After three months traveling along the front line repairing long range RADAR search units, I was assigned to the 51st Signal Detachment that was attached to the 5th Air Force Headquarters at Osan, Korea. My job was to repair, if needed, RADAR, countermeasure IFF equipment and the computers that interfaced the security and direction of missile emplacements and 90mm guns surrounding the largest air base in Korea. After seven months in the 'Land of the Morning Calm' I was sent back to the states. Shortly after returning to the states I was discharged from active duty. I did have the opportunity to get on the air from Korea even though it was not legal to do so. Worked many stations using a Korean call sign that ended with my initials.

Now I was married with a youngster on the way. Ham radio had to be put on the back burner until I could manage some time off. The same home I live in now was purchased and I found my spare time being occupied doing home maintenance instead of hamming. I started my TV and electronic service business to supplement my GI bill that allowed me to complete my college education. The electronic business grew so large that I abandoned any thought of teaching. At the same time I was financially able to start hamming again. Over the years I built six KW amplifiers as well as other equipment. Today nobody builds. I still can't get over someone buying a dipole antenna.

Over the years my XYL and I managed to have five children. Four are college graduates and have various positions in major corporations. We lost our oldest daughter the summer before she was to start nurses training.

Over the years I have been interested in chasing DX and now have QSL cards from 312 countries. I've been thinking that next summer, if I'm still around after 62 years of operating, I will take a trip down to Newington to have the cards checked and join the Century Club. I probably should have done it years ago when there was no charge to join the club.

During my ham career I've held every office in this club as well as thirteen years being Section Manager for Western Massachusetts. Now that I hold no elected position, I realize the amount of work that I devoted to the administrative part of ham radio should have been devoted to operating or building.

For a CW or Phone QSO you can find me any night on the National Traffic System at 7:30 PM on 3570 Khz. Any speed up to 40 wpm. We can move off to the 75 meter phone band or stay on CW.

73 Bill W1UD

## Your Story Wanted

Please share your story in the W1/GaZette. What (or who) got you started in Amateur Radio? Why were you interested? Who helped to motivate you?

If you would like help writing your story, Ralph KD1SM will be glad to help you.

## Groton Road Race

The 2009 Groton Road Race is coming up at the end of April. On Sunday April 26 over one thousand runners are expected to converge on the town of Groton for the 18th Groton Road Race. The Groton Road Race is sponsored by the Squannacook River Runners. There are 4 individual races scheduled; a Tots' Trot, a 2 kilometer, a 5 kilometer, and a 10 kilometer road race.

Amateur Radio Operators working closely with the Groton Police Department have provided logistics, and health and safety communications for this race since the third year of the race. Amateur Radio is a critical component of this event; dozens of public safety personnel come in from outside the town and their radios do not all interoperate. Amateur Radio operators are stationed at key points around the course to provide communications with the course marshals and the public safety officers positioned nearby. The Officer In Charge has said repeatedly that the Town would not be able to sanction this event if Amateur Radio volunteers were not involved.

Ralph KD1SM will be soliciting 36 to 40 volunteers again this year for the event. Some positions require only morning availability, some positions need to be manned all day, but the majority of volunteers are needed only in the afternoon.

This event has been a lot of fun for all involved and we could not ask for better exposure of Ham Radio to the community.

If you are interested in learning more, or if you want to volunteer, please contact Ralph <kd1sm@arrl.net>.

Additional information about the event itself may be found on the race Web site <http://www.grotonroadrace.com>

## BSA Updates Radio Merit Badge Requirements

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) has updated the requirements needed to earn the Radio merit badge. The new requirements became effective with the publication of Boy Scout Requirements 2009. While no new content has been added to the program, the new merit badge pamphlet features lots of new information -- including color pictures and updated charts and text -- that reflects the changes in the Amateur Radio Service since the last pamphlet update in 2002. Approximately 4000 Radio merit badges are earned each year.

According to ARRL ad hoc Scouting Committee member Larry Wolfgang, WR1B, the new Radio Merit Badge pamphlet had been in the works for some time. "BSA has been replacing all merit badge pamphlets with new booklets using color graphics and more modern presentations," he said. "With attractive color photos and clear text explanations of the requirements, the new merit badge pamphlet is a pleasure for the Scouts to read. The new text is due in large part to the efforts of longtime Radio Merit Badge Counselor and K2BSA National Jamboree Staff member Mike Brown, WB2JWD. I am looking forward to using the new pamphlet to teach Radio merit badge at our Council's Merit-Badge-O-Ree this spring, and to having a supply of the new books available for Scouts during the 2009 summer camp season."

Wolfgang said that the requirements for the badge have been shifted around: "The old Part 4 of Requirement 7(b) Broadcast Radio



was pulled out and placed in the main body of the requirements as Requirement 8. In addition, the old Requirement 8 (to visit a radio installation and discuss what types of equipment, how it was used, what types of licenses are required to operate and maintain the equipment, and the purpose of the station) was moved up to Requirement 7, so that now the three options appear as Requirement 9. The main result is one additional full requirement.”

ARRL Rocky Mountain Division Director and Chairman of the League's ad hoc Scouting Committee Brian Milesosky, N5ZGT, called the Radio Merit Badge “a perfect avenue to introduce Scouts and Scouters to the wonderful world of ham radio. Ham clubs across the nation should locate a local Boy Scout Troop, secure permission from their Scoutmaster and/or committee to teach the merit badge and deliver an exceptional Radio merit badge class. What the boys -- and their leaders and parents -- will learn in the process is a fair amount of what is part of the Technician license exam, so the next logical step after a merit badge class is an all-out recruiting effort to get that Troop involved in Amateur Radio. They'll meet new friends and have a great way of communicating while in transit to and from the field, as well as additional peace of mind through an effective means of emergency communications while in the backcountry.”

For a complete overview of the Boy Scout Radio merit badge, see the Radio merit badge page on the BSA Web site <http://www.scouting.org/boyscouts/advancementawards/meritbadges/mb-RADO.aspx>

From *The ARRL Letter*  
Vol. 28, No. 8  
February 27, 2009

## World Amateur Radio Day Recognizes Amateur Radio's Role in Disaster Communications

Each year on April 18, radio amateurs celebrate World Amateur Radio Day. In 2009 the theme of the event is **Amateur Radio: Your Resource in Disaster and Emergency Communication.**

International Amateur Radio Union International Coordinator for Emergency Communication Hans Zimmermann, F5VKP/HB9AQS points out that today's modern communication technologies are “increasingly complex, infrastructure-dependent and therefore also increasingly vulnerable. The Amateur Radio Service puts two equally valuable assets at its disposal for emergency and disaster prevention, preparedness and response: A large number of very flexible and mostly infrastructure-independent, local, national, regional and global networks, and a large number of skilled operators, who know how to communicate with often very limited means and to establish communications even under the most difficult circumstances.”

“Telecommunications have become a commodity that society takes for granted,” Zimmermann stated, adding that “Amateur Radio operators provide communications for the rescuers and relief workers and their organizations and they help to provide communications for those affected by a disaster.”

From *The ARRL Letter*  
Vol. 28, No. 8  
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