

# MARA W1⚡GaZette



May 2011

MONTACHUSETT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

Vol 53 No. 8

## Next Meeting

**Wednesday, May 11**  
**7:30PM**  
**Lunenburg Public Library**

MARA will be back in the Wallace Room of the Lunenburg Public Library as of the April meeting. See Ray's column below for the topics to be discussed at the meeting.

## The President's Corner

The birds are chirping, the temps are warmer, and the leaves are turning green. We can safely now forget that winter and look forward to getting out and getting those things done and enjoying the sunlight as well. Just one word of caution though; as Alabama and Mississippi recently experienced, nice weather can bring on weather in a much more furious fashion and we are not immune to it. Double check your gear, your go kit, batteries, etc. In case something hits us we are ready.

This past April was a busy one. I can safely say that whoever volunteered for them have survived. Thanks to all who participated and putting in the effort. I think I can say for those who did "a job well done". We also had our beloved Near-Fest this past weekend and we were again treated to some

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## Contributors To This Issue:

KB1LRL, NZ1D, K1JHC

fine weather, good company, and overall a great time. Let's see what May brings.

This month's meeting will be a mix of things. We need to catch up on business since we had none the past two months. It is also the time for our annual nomination of officers for the upcoming year. We will also discuss Field day, the linking project, and some other things. If there is any time left if anyone has anything to present in a short subject, have it ready. I encourage members to attend and participate as it is YOUR club, don't let the crickets take over!

That's it for now, the meeting will be at the library the next two meetings so I look forward to seeing you there

73 de 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, 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 May, Cambridge MA**  
Flea at MIT electronics flea market  
Third Sunday April - October

**Sunday 19 June, Cambridge MA**  
Flea at MIT electronics flea market

**Sunday 3 July, Fitchburg MA**  
Fitchburg Longsjo Classic

For more New England Ham events see  
<http://web.mit.edu/w1gsl/Public/ne-fleas>

## View From The Southern Trace

de NZ1D

Greetings from "fo-wah" land.

Sorry I missed the club's little anniversary party, but I was with y'all in spirit. I did manage to work the special event, found John KK1X early on 40m. Later on the bands were terrible...heard Gordon on 20 but he was in the mud. Speaking of the anniversary, I now believe I can show pretty good continuity from the "first" Fitchburg club and MARA going back almost 80 years. There's always the question of how many of the members does it take moving from a demised predecessor club to a new/reorganization to constitute continuity. I originally planned to revise the "Genesis of a Call Sign" with new info but it now appears that I'll have to write a sequel (or is it a prequel?) Hey, George Lucas can do it!

I recently learned that Donald Brown, last surviving child of Capt. Willis Brown (ex 1-GZ/W1GZ), d. at Exeter, NH in Sept 2010 at age 90. He had been living amongst us all this time, working in Wilmington, MA, as a microwave engineer! Ironically, I was in Exeter, in the hospital parking lot, only a few weeks before he died. Meanwhile, I have obtained what I believe to be one of Nestor Stolba's first W1GZ QSL cards, a temporary "home brew" -- typed on a piece of card stock -- postmarked Feb 7, 1948 for a QSO with VE5HR of Moosejaw, SK. QSO date Jan 28, 1948, which is only a few days after Stolba received Brown's vacated W1GZ call sign.

It's tough to lose the old-timers like W1LXE, W1OOY, W1UD (ex W1QKX),

## The MARA W1/GaZette

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### NEWSLETTER STAFF:

Editors: Ralph Swick KD1SM  
978-582-7351 kd1sm@arrl.net  
Webmaster: Paul Upham KD1YH

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Club Secretary: Barry Fox W1HFN  
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:

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Ray Lajoie, KB1LRL<br>rplajoie@comcast.net | President      |
| Bill Leger, N1UZ                           | Vice President |
| Barry Fox, W1HFN<br>foxbw@comcast.net      | Secretary      |
| Gordon LaPoint, N1MGO<br>n1mgo@arrl.net    | Treasurer      |
| Charlie Cayen, KT1I<br>kt1i@arrl.net       | Trustee        |

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

WA1DWS and WA1NAQ. Sadly it makes you contemplate on your own mortality. I knew Roy 'OOY from RACES days in the 60's when I was WA1CRE and later when we were both CD Directors, John 'NAQ from 6m AM roundtables, 'DWS from RACES and the now defunct Townsend Amateur Radio Society, and of course, Norm and Bill from MARA. Norm probably went back the farthest, getting his license from the WPA "telegraphy" classes held in 1937 but I didn't meet him until MARA days. I wish now I'd have picked his memory more.

P.S. If anyone (hint: W1BYH) has any corrections/changes to the booklet, especially call signs for the group photo, email them to me pronto at nz1d@arrl.net. I'm especially interested in any tidbits about W1JYA (Fred Gibbs) and W1CAI (Leo Wiita), who were very active locally in the 30's and 40's. I think I remember Fred from his stint with 'OOY and the Westminster CD. But I wasn't paying attention then!

73, Bill

"BREAKING NEWS!" from NZ1D: Stolba's (aka W1GZ's) first amateur radio call sign, c. 1914, may have been discovered! And why it probably wasn't 1GZ. Details (hopefully) to be revealed before June newsletter.

## April Meeting

The April MARA meeting was held at the Lunenburg Public Safety Building and featured a QSL card sort.

Thanks to Stan KD1LE for bringing the NVARC sorting boxes from Pepperell.



Above: Bob KB1JZU at the final collection tables. Barry W1HFN sorts to the right.



Left: Paul WB1EWS (center, behind tables), Gordon N1MGO, Bill N1UZ (background, Tom AB1GF

[KD1SM photos]



Left: Tom K1JHC deciphers a destination callsign.

Right: Ken KB1UVP consults with Norm W1BYH on a card. Gary K1YTS is at the end of the table.

[KD1SM photos]





## Old Timer's Lunch

de Tom K1JHC

There was a lively discussion about Emergency Communications during the get together at Bickford's Restaurant during the Old Timer's lunch on Wednesday, May 4th. Nice to see a good sized showing. Present were Don W1IBL, Charlie KT1I, Paul N1QDX, Tom K1JHC, Al KB1TNN, Norm W1BYH, Barry W1HFN, and Gary K1YTS. Please join with us On the First Wednesdays of the month.

## NEAR-Fest IX

de Ray KB1LRL

It's hard to imagine that we are approaching 5 years of this event. I have been around for all of them and a few from Hosstraders. Ever since I started going to them I have been treated to stories of hamfests past and the history it brings. It makes me wish I had come to this hobby long ago.

We got treated to great weather and fine company as the brave ones endured nearly 4 dollars a gallon for gas to make the pilgrimage to "our sanctuary". Our group consisted of Gary K1YTS, Nancy KB1KEF, Killer aka W1OOF, and Charlie KT1I. Tom AB1GF arrived later and visits from many other members. We all shared stories, jokes, food, and shopping and made a little money as well. Those that missed it -- SHAME ON YOU! I think we are already planning for October's event which I hope will bring us the same again. So In the words of a local car dealer, "come on down!"



Above: the treasure hunt is underway

Below: Charle KT1I and Gary K1YTS present the MARA table.

[KB1LRL photos]



Below: the overnight area

[KB1LRL photo]



## Squannacook Canoe and Kayak Race

On Saturday April 16 the Townsend Lion's Club held its annual Squannacook Canoe and Kayak Race.

The race starts at the Townsend VFW and proceeds along the Squannacook River to the pond at Townsend Harbor. The race is timed; paddlers start at 1-minute intervals beginning at 10am and their finish time at Harbor Pond is recorded. The fastest group completes the course in about 90 minutes while the slowest took nearly twice that time.

The river was fairly low this year and the weather was slightly on the chilly side. A brisk wind throughout the day was especially noticeable at the short of Harbor Pond.

Radio operators volunteering for checkpoints along the course this year were: Bob AB1CV, Barry W1HFN, John KK1X, Charlie KT1I, Nancy KB1KEF, Stan KD1LE, Tom K1JHC, Gary K1YTS, and Ralph KD1SM. Gary organized the crew while Stan had a dual

role at the railroad trestle behind Town Hall serving as Net Control for the event.



Above: two paddlers approach the the final portage on the river.

Below: a pair of slightly chilly paddlers reach the finish.

[KD1SM photos]



Left: Julie (daughter of KB1KEF), Nancy KB1KEF, Bob AB1CV, Tom K1JHC, John KK1X, Charlie KT1I, Stan KD1LE, Barry W1HFN, Ralph KD1SM, and Gary K1YTS at the Townsend VFW preparing to head out to their checkpoints.

## Boston Marathon

Each year approximately 200 Amateur Radio Operators volunteer communications support to the Boston Marathon. The Hams provide critical radio support for the starting line logistics, the first aid stations along the course, the buses for transporting runners who cannot finish, the finish line medical personnel, and the chute sweep teams.

Spotted this year at the Marathon were MARA members John KK1X, Gary K1YTS, Ray KB1LRL, Jeanine N1QIT, and Ralph KD1SM.

This is a very rewarding activity. You see the race up close, and get bragging rights for being part of the crew. The BAA provides a special windbreaker to the volunteers as well as a participation pin. These items are coveted by many.

The Amateur Radio support is organized into three teams; the Starting Line team, the Course Team, and the Finish Line team. New volunteers are always welcome; there are additional stations that can be served as well as replacing long-time volunteers who retire. If you are interested, contact Paul W1SEX.

## Groton Road Race

Over one thousand runners participated in the Groton Road Race this year. This annual event is sponsored by the Squannacook River Runners. Normally held the weekend after the Boston Marathon, this year the Groton Road Race was held one

week before the Marathon due to the timing of the Easter holiday.

The Groton Road Race depends on Amateur Radio communications for course safety. We provide critical radio coordination along the course to and from the Groton Police Department.

The MARA members who volunteered their services this year were Tom K1JHC, Gary K1YTS, Nancy KB1KEF, Ray KB1LRL, John KK1X, Tim KQ1Y, and Charlie KT1L. Ralph KD1SM assembled the crew but due to a scheduling conflict was not able to participate on the day of the event.

## VE Team Report

The MARA Amateur Radio Exam Team held its April license exam session on Wednesday the 27th. Three candidates were served with two new Technician licenses and one Extra upgrade earned.

Thanks to examiners John KK1X, Gary K1YTS, Don N1HVA, Paul KD1YH, and Ralph KD1SM for serving at this session.

The MARA VE Team provides Amateur Radio license exams on the fourth Wednesday of every month if at least one candidate has pre-registered for the session.

Contact Paul KD1YH to register for a session.

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**A nominating committee for Club Officers will form in May. Think about who you would like to lead the Club in the coming year. Maybe you should take a turn at it.**





Montachusett Amateur Radio Association  
PO Box 95 Leominster MA 01453

