

# MARA W1⚡GaZette



October 2011

MONTACHUSETT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

Vol 54 No. 1

## Next Meeting

**Wednesday, October 12**  
**7:30PM**  
**Lunenburg Public Library**

## President's Corner

Hi There everyone.

Well, I don't know if this will get on the newsletter, but here goes. Another season has started and am looking forward to another fun time. We will have a different agenda as we will be looking at the practical side of radio where we will be presenting topics in an educational fashion. We will be presenting Q and A's on the exam questions and how to make a dipole antenna, coax basics, fittings, etc. Now, some of you are probably saying "been there, done that" this is where you come in and offer to the group your own twist to things as there usually is more than one correct way of doing it to achieve the ultimate goal...making contacts as far as you can. Spread the word and join the meeting.

Another thing I have been meaning to do is again solicit members to help out as net control. I am looking for 2-3 people who can do this. It's easy and it gives you net control

## In This Issue...

Next Meeting .....	1
Watt's Happening .....	2
September Meeting .....	2
June Meeting .....	3
In the Glow of the Filaments ..	4
View from the Southern Trace ..	6
Larry Leblanc W1JQF SK .....	7

## Contributors To This Issue:

KB1LRL, W1HFN, WA1MWF, NZ1D

skills that can become useful if needed. Drop me an email if you are interested.

I am going to keep this one short as our publisher may need the space to catch up on things. Again, my email is also a suggestion box and you are welcome to submit questions, comments, etc. to help this club grow.

Thanks and 73, Ray KB1LRL

## NVARC QSL Sort; Oct 20

MARA members are invited to the October meeting of the Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club at the Pepperell Community Center to sort QSL cards.

NVARC meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month; October's meeting will be held on the 20th. The card sort begins at 7:30pm. Pizza and soda will be available at the conclusion of the sort.

## 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"

**Thursdays, 2000 local 28.345**  
Johnny Appleseed Net [MARA

**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/>

**Friday & Saturday 14-15 October,**  
Deerfield NH NEAR-Fest

**Sunday, 16 October, Cambridge**  
FLEA at MIT

**Sunday, 30 October, Westford MA**  
NE Antique Radio Club

## September Meeting

de Barry W1HFN

14 September 2011

The meeting was called to order by Ray, KB1LRL at 1935. Those in attendance were: Ray KB1LRL, Ed N1EJH, Gordon N1MGO, Barry W1HFN, Charlie KT1I, John KK1X, Bob KB1JZU, Norm W1BYH, Tom K1JHC, Al KB1TNN, Gary K1YTS, Ralph KD1SM, Paul KD1YH, and last but not least, our newest member, Pete KB1VPW.

The Treasurer reports an ending balance of \$1124.54, \$132.50 of which is in the repeater fund.

Due to the light turnout, the question arose do we have enough paid-up members for a quorum? This resulted in a rush of members paying their dues. Now we have a quorum.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to donate \$200.00 to the Friends of the Lunenburg Library in appreciation for the use of facilities.

The W1GZ web site now has a section to list items for sale, contact the webmaster, at; [webmaster@w1gz.org](mailto:webmaster@w1gz.org).

An inquiry was made as to whether the club web site can be made inter-active. Paul replied in the affirmative.

Introductions were belatedly made.

Mention was made that a DJ is using our club call sign "DJW1GZ" on his radio program. The secretary was requested to notify him of his transgression. A Google search found his web site, which mentioned

## 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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### NEWSLETTER STAFF:

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### 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 rplajoie@comcast.net	President
Ed Hendershaw N1EJH	Vice President
Barry Fox, W1HFN foxbw@comcast.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.

an “on-line” radio program. Since this is not over-the-air broadcasting, the secretary thought it appropriate to get an opinion from the FCC. An email was sent to them inquiring to the legality of his use of our call sign.

The status of the IRLP project was given by N1MGO. He has a MOTO radio which needs and interface built and tested.

A suggestion was made to start an HF weekday net. We agreed to meet on 28.345 Thurs at 8PM. The tentative name will be “The Johnny Appleseed Net”.

John, KK1X, mentioned the Lantern Battery Challenge run by the N1NC group. Details at [n1nc.org](http://n1nc.org)

The Boy Scout Expo will be held next Sat at Carter Park in Leominster. Ray asked for volunteer helpers and Tom, K1JHC and Gary, K1YTS came forth. The event is to run from 0800 to 1700.

A motion was made and carried to adjourn at 2049.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Barry W1HFN  
Secretary

## June Meeting

Minutes of the June 2011 Meeting  
of the  
Montachusett Amateur Radio Club

The meeting was called to order at 7:30. Those in attendance were: President, Ray KB1LRL; Vice-President, Bill N1UZ; Treasurer, Gordon N1MGO; Secretary, Barry W1HFN and Al KB1TNN, Tom

K1JHC, Tom AB1GF, Gary K1YTS, Ed N1EJH, Charlie KT1I; Mickey WB1GFZ; Walter K1CMF; and our guest speaker, B Scott Andersen NE1RD.

We received two letters, one from the Townsend Lions Club thanking us for our assistance in the 2011 Townsend Canoe Race along with a donation of \$30.00 for the club treasury, and one from NVARC inviting us to join in the Lantern Battery Challenge.

Treasurers report, May balance \$1,285.99 and \$118.50 for the repeater fund.

Bill, N1UZ mentioned that the insurance binder had been forwarded to the state and that we had access to Mount Wachusett for Field Day. Tom, AB1GF, showed the triplexer he built for the same event, nice job Tom.

Mickey, WB1GFZ, donated a homebrew off center fed dipole as a raffle prize. \$14.00 was collected for the 50/50 raffle, the winner being beats me, I forgot to write it down. Same with the OCF prize.

The nominating committee for the 2011-2012 slate of officers made their presentation. Ray, KB1LRL President; Ed, N1EJH Vice President; Gordon, N1MGO Treasurer and Barry, W1HFN Secretary. N1UZ cast one vote to elect the slate, it was unanimously voted aye.

At 8PM the formal meeting was recessed for general socializing.

The meeting reconvened for the talk by our guest speaker, Scott, NE1RD. He gave a presentation on his "100 Pound DX-Pedition." Very interesting and

informative, how to go on a DX-pedition with "only" 100 pounds of radio + antennas.

A motion was made at 8:50 to adjourn, was seconded and carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barry W1HFN  
Secretary

## In the Glow of the Filaments...

de Bill NZ1D

Part 1: Nestor Stolba's Call Sign Revealed!

Note that the following is somewhat preliminary but it's necessary to "get it on paper." Back in 2006, in my little booklet, Genesis of a Call Sign, I tried to answer that burning question: "Who was the first W1GZ?" We know that prior to 1927 or '28, government-assigned call letters were a numeral followed by two or three letters (e.g., 1GZ). We also know that when the "W" prefix was introduced, it was added to the existing call (e.g., W1GZ). Since we now know that Nestor Stolba did not hold 1GZ, the obvious next question is: "What was Nestor Stolba's first call sign, if not 1GZ?"

But...before we get into that, let's review a little more early local amateur radio activity. We know that MARA sprouted from the Region 9 (CD) Radio club, formed in 1951. And that Nestor Stolba, W1GZ, was the original club's first president. In 1976, Ellis Holden, W1GUI (SK), wrote about MARA: "There were of course radio clubs [in the area] before this one. It seems fitting that they be mentioned, as they too played a part in our local Ham history.

About 1921 there was a group of about 10 who had a club in Fitchburg. We met in a hall above what is now Aubuchon's on upper Main Street. I believe George Starkey was a member. At that time I was 1-BON."

This little tidbit really caught my interest. A little digging (well, actually some pretty serious HEAVY digging) revealed that this first club was called the Worcester North Radio Association and it was issued the station call letters 1EBN in the fall or winter of 1920. The station location at that time was 800 Water Street, Fitchburg, the home of George Starkey, who would later be known as W1ACP. Thus, depending upon how far you want to s-t-r-e-t-c-h the timeline, 1EBN was the call sign of our club's first predecessor.

This was shortly after the federal government had lifted the outright ban on radio operations, except for government and very limited commercial activity, during WWI. In those days, Amateur Radio licenses actually consisted of two distinctly separate licenses printed on separate sheets of paper: (1) a station license, with associated call letters, assigned to a specific location; and (2) an operator license, assigned to an individual. It's important here to note that the call letters were assigned to the station and not to the operator.

Here, the reader should note several items. I have used the term call letters and call signs more or less interchangeably. In the beginning, the official government designation was "call letters"; I don't know when Amateurs started referring to them as call signs. Current licenses, now conjoined, refer to them as "Call Sign/Number". To the government, call letters merely identified a transmitting station (the "apparatus"), they

did not consider them part of any operator's personal identification.

All amateur radio activity and licenses, including call letters, had been terminated by President Wilson's Executive Order in April 1917. In April 1919 when the government allowed radio receiving activity to resume, they stated, "all licenses for transmitting stations have expired, and it will be necessary, when peace is declared, for owners of these stations to reapply to the Department of Commerce for new licenses." In other words, you could listen, but still not transmit.

After the November armistice, new regulations stipulated that all transmitting licenses and call letters had been voided, candidates had to be retested; and new station call letters were to be assigned. The slate had been wiped clean. To be tested, two applications were necessary, one for "Application for operator's license" and one for "Amateur applicant's description of apparatus" (the station license). Holders of expired amateur licenses had a choice: take a 12 wpm code test and waive the written exam or take a 10 wpm code test and sit for the regular written exam. New candidates had to take the full test. Licenses were valid for two years. There was no continuity from previously held call letters.

It was not uncommon to have a "station" licensed to a location that was not the home of an individual operator (such as an unlicensed person or a club). For example, the first 1GZ was issued to Arthur Stansfield's grandmother's address, even though he held the operator's license and did not live with her.

So the first local club, the Worcester North Radio Association, was located at Starkey's



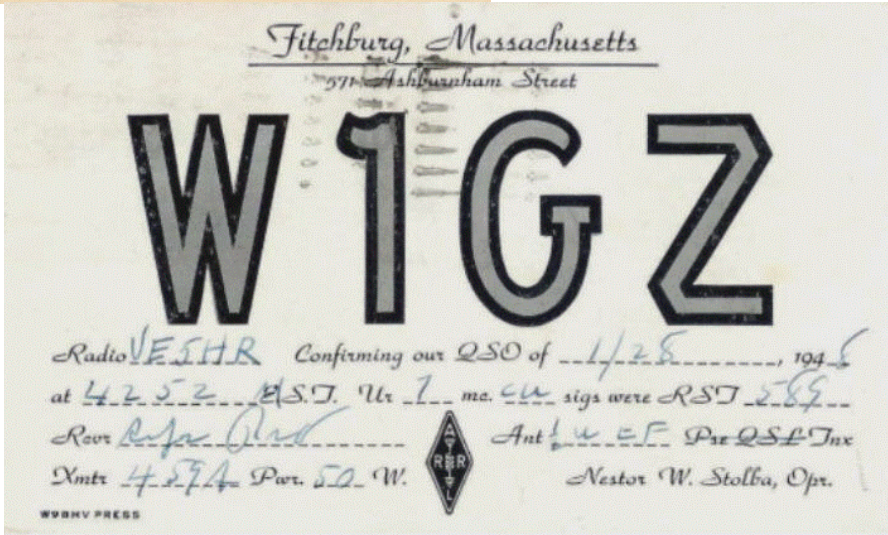
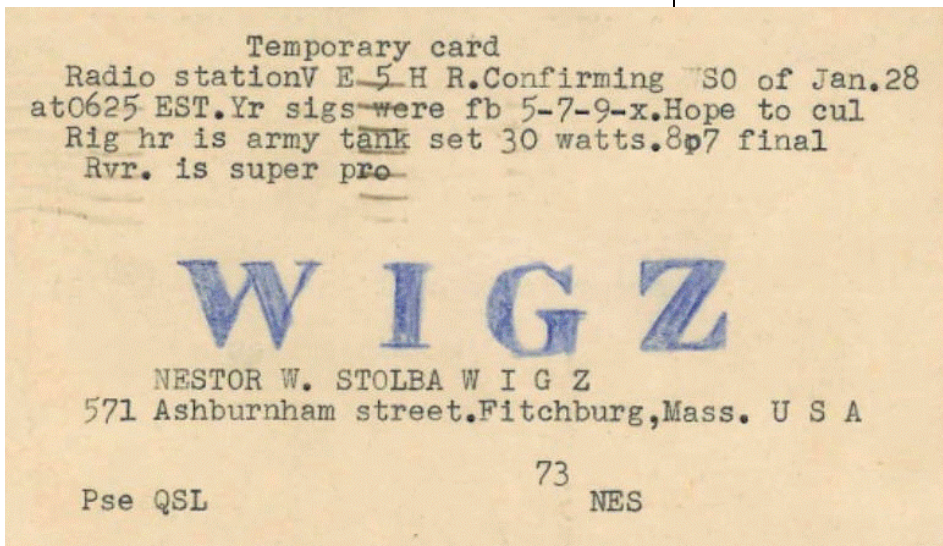
house, who was also club president, but he was not the “owner” of the station. The club was “owner” and the co-trustees for the club, secretary Ellis Holden (1BON), and Howard Cosman (unknown call letters), were legally responsible (i.e, the “control operators”). Ellis at that time was a 15-year-old high school student who had received his license only a few months before, in the fall of 1920. Oddly enough, early activities included “relaying” music (e.g., a 1922 report stated, “Worcester North Radio Club hears concert relayed by phone...”), a general problem that plagued the government often in the early days of amateur radio.

And now, back to the question: “What was Nestor Stolba's first call sign, if not 1GZ?”

Oh darn, we're out of time. Sorry, but you'll have to wait until the next issue of the W1/Gazette. Stay tuned.

**View from the Southern Trace**

*Ed. note: Bill NZ1D supplied the photographs below to accompany his article of this title published in the May W1/GaZette. Ye Olde [and apparently increasingly distracted] Editor somehow overlooked the photographs in Bill's submission.*



## Larry Leblanc W1JQF SK

de Larry Leblanc WA1MWF, 1 August

Folks,

It saddens me to share with the club the news of dad's passing. My dad got his ticket in 1936 and was active in the Montachusett ARC in Leominster throughout the 1950's and 1960's.

\*Joseph (Larry) Leblanc \*

<<http://www.legacy.com/guestbook/sptimes/guestbook.aspx?n=joseph-leblanc-larry&pid=152774675&cid=full>>

LEBLANC, Joseph "Larry" 96, passed away July 24, 2011, in St. Petersburg. Born in Fitchburg, MA, Joseph is survived by his wife of 67 years Gilda V.; two children, Suzanne (William) Arrand and Lawrence A. (Jeannie) Leblanc; 4 grandchildren, William K., Benjamin, Brian and Bethany; and three great-grandchildren. He was honorably discharged from the Navy in February, 1946 as Chief Radio Man and received the Purple Heart on May 17, 1945. Joseph was also a lifetime member of the DAV and retired from the U.S. Postal Service in January, 1975. Guestbook at [davidcgross.com](http://davidcgross.com) <<http://davidcgross.com>> David C. Gross Funeral Homes 6366 Central Ave. 727-381-4911

\*Published in the St. Petersburg Times on July 27, 2011 \*

*Ed. Note:* According to his son, Larry W1JQF moved from Fitchburg to Florida around 1973 and maintained a vacation home in Ashburnham for several years after

that. If you have any Ham recollections about Larry, please let me know and I'll include them in the GaZette.

de NZ1D:

A little more digging finds Larry LeBlanc Sr W1JQF #23 on the roster of charter members of the Montachusett Repeater Association. Larry Jr was #8. The charter was "closed" on Nov 9, 1974 with 42 members. Norm Rivers was #24.

More from Larry WA1MWF:

I was born in 1950 and it seems my dad was always a member of the MARC. I was a member too and I believe I was one of the vice presidents one year. I'm now a member of the Whitman ARC. My QTH is East Bridgewater.

I was the first president of the Montachusett Repeater Association. I dry walled and painted a room in an Caddy's old barn wor the GE Prog-Line repeater. The phone company gave us a hard time installing a phone line out there for control but ultimately did...good times!

I thoroughly enjoyed the fellowship in both club and I learned a lot which I took into my early career as a commercial 2-way radio repair.

My dad said his aunt was an early ham back in the arc-'n-spark days. I don't know any details but it's quite possible one or both were Montachusett Radio Research and Communications Association members.

Before he retired, my dad was a shareholder of a club that owned a shack on Potato Hill.



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