

MARA W1⚡GaZette



October 2016

MONTACHUSETT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

Vol 58, No 2

October Meeting

The October meeting will NOT BE AT THE LIBRARY! We will be meeting at the new Lunenburg Middle and High School to have a grand tour of the facility, hosted by Dan, AB2TG.

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Contributors To This Issue:

AB1GF, KB1LRL, KB1YRS, W1HFN, NZ1D

The President's Corner

de Ray KB1LRL

Hi there! We can now say goodbye to summer as the cooler weather is upon us and the leaves are changing. This opens up indoor project time to get the fireplaces tuned up and the radio's warmed up for contacts and contesting. Be warned!! I am planning a show and tell in an upcoming meeting so have your item ready. It's not for a while yet so you have time. No, you cannot bring crickets!

We actually have a busy October in a concentrated amount of time. Naturally there is Near-Fest on the 14th and 15th. As mentioned earlier, our next meeting is on the 12th which will NOT BE AT THE LIBRARY! We are going to meet at the new Lunenburg Middle and High School to have a tour of the new facility. (I need to see what my taxes paid for hi-hi!) This is hosted by Dan, AB2TG. This facility boasts the latest and greatest of technology being offered to the students. Every facet of this is 100% new. This should be an interesting time as most of us remember when calculators were not even allowed in schools!

Next is the Scouting JOTA Event on the 16th which is a world-wide annual event where Scouts around the world contact each other via Ham radio. MARA will be doing a joint effort with the Mohawk club, as they are going to provide their communications trailer. The JOTA event will be held in Lancaster at the Boy Scout Council office at 1980 Lunenburg Rd from 10am – 3pm. This is an excellent opportunity to get the youth involved in the hobby. This has been difficult as this area is so technology rich and they are not interested unless they can post a goofy selfie on it! I would love to see a good showing from kids and

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MEMBERS alike and maybe we can develop this into an annual club event.

And, let's not forget the annual QSL card sort hosted by the Nashoba Club on their meeting night which is the 20th. This is at the Pepperell Community Center which is at the rotary at routes 111 and 113.

Ok, that's enough from me, now I will ask you..."What's in *your* contact log?" and feed the newsletter!

Cheers, Ray

Jamboree on the Air (JOTA/JOTI)

de Bill NZ1D

This month MARA and Mohawk members will participate in JOTA (Jamboree-on-the-Air), a joint Scouting and Amateur Radio event where Scouts world-wide can "virtually" meet young people from another country. Call it a wireless World Jamboree. Each year more than a million Scouts and Guides "get together" over the airwaves to meet and share stories -- the largest Scouting event in the world. It is held annually the third full weekend in October. JOTA uses amateur radio to link Scouts and hams around the world, around the nation, and in your own community. This jamboree requires no travel, other than to a nearby amateur radio operator's ham shack.

Scouts of any age can participate, from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts and Venturers, including girls. Once at the ham radio station, the communication typically involves talking on a microphone and listening on the station speakers. However, many forms of specialized communication may also be taking place, such as video and digital communication. The exchanges include such information as name, location, Scout rank, age, and hobbies. The stations may be across town, across the country, or even around the world. The World Scout Bureau reported that nearly 1 million Scouts and almost 20,000 amateur radio operators participated in the 2015 JOTA, from more than 17,776 stations in 151 countries

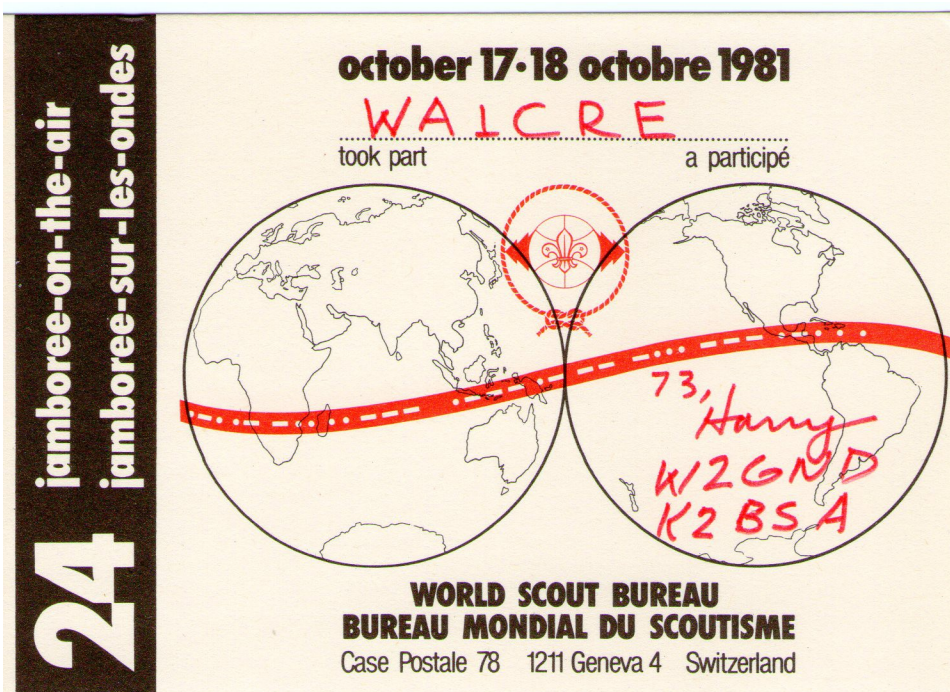
Amateur radio in our area has a long history with Scouting and youth. In early 1916 Howard Cosman, 1ENE, started a wireless telegraphy class for more than a dozen students at the Fitchburg YMCA. The national YMCA already had an established relationship with Scouting. When Amateur wireless was reinstated at the end of the war, local hams formed the Worcester North Radio Association and received club call letters 1BBN. Former YMCA instructor Cosman, recently returned from the US Navy and re-licensed as 1CBM, served as trustee. The club also sponsored the Fitchburg Boy Scouts, and Cosman, now a Scout leader, served as trustee of Scout station 1CV as well.

One hundred years have seen a staggering amount of technological advances, many in just the last decade. As the ARRL wrote, *"Modern technology offers Scouts the exciting opportunity to make friends in other countries without leaving home. JOTA is an annual event in which Boy and Girl Scouts and Guides from all over the world speak to each other by means of Amateur (ham) Radio. Scouting experiences are exchanged and ideas are shared via radio waves. Since 1958 when the first Jamboree-on-the-Air was held, millions of Scouts have met each other through this event."* [ARRL.org]

JOTA contacts often result in pen pals and links between Scout troops that last many years. Some operators use VoIP, television or computer-linked communications and recently the JOTA concept has been expanded to include a strictly internet version called JOTI (Jamboree-on-the-Internet). JOTI contacts do not require the use of Amateur Radio and many contacts are made throughout the year.

I have worked several JOTA weekends and also several other Scouting activities such as Camporees, etc. It always has been a lot of fun both for me and for the Scouts. QSO's included a group of Georgian Girl

Guides (that's Georgia in the old Soviet Union, not USA), Scouts in Canada, England, Scotland, Germany, Switzerland, Israel and several South American countries just to name a few. I have received and traded QSL cards, patches and neckerchiefs from various parts of the world. One of my favorite JOTA QSL cards is shown below.



A treasured K2BSA QSL card from 24th JOTA, October 1981. Harry, W2GND was the trustee of K2BSA at the then Scout HQ in Brunswick, New Jersey. NZ1D (ex-WA1CRE) photo

June Meeting, Treasurer's Report

de Bruce Wilbur KB1YRS, MARA Secretary

Meeting called to order: 7:30 PM

Attendees: Ray KB1LRL, Tom AB1GF, Charlie KT1I, Tom K1JHC, Gary K1YTS, Bruce KB1YRS, Erik W1QED, Gordon N1MGO, John KK1X, Barry W1HFN, Paul KD1YH, Ralph KD1SM, Walter K1CMF, Bill NZ1D, Daniel AB2TG, Ken N3BGN, Ed KC1FTQ, and Steve W1SDH .

Treasurer Report: starting balance \$1888.87 with additions of \$33.00 from May raffle, \$50.00 donation from Townsend Lions club for our participation in the Canoe Race. Expenses: \$73.28 for the card-sort Pizza in April. Final balance \$1898.59 with \$419.61 in repeater fund

Current Business:

There are some upcoming Events in June: Field Day: Saturday June 25- Sunday June 26

For those of you who have never participated. It is a fun time, and a great chance to practice your hobby. Get out and Enjoy! There are many veterans in our group who would be happy to teach you the skills needed.

Thanks to Ray KB1LRL, Bruce KB1YRS, Daniel AB2TG, and Paul KD1YH for bringing snacks!

September's Snacks: TDB

A raffle was run for book "Contact Sport". Thanks to Ray KB1LRL! \$17.00 was collected for the treasury, and Tom AB1GF pulled another Raffle win.

Meeting Presentation: Ray discussed the future of presentations. We need to come up with some meeting presentations, and some educational field events. Some possible ideas are Show and Tell month. Summer cook out to be at Ray's. Antenna and attendance for field day was discussed. People who will be participating on Field Day: Ray KB1LRL, Tom AB1GF, Tom K1JHC, Gary K1YTS, Bruce KB1YRS, Paul KD1YH, Erik W1QED, Gordon N1MGO, John KK1X, Barry W1HFN, Paul KD1YH, Dave KC1BNE, Pam KC1CHC [*and Bill NZ1D, Ed.*]

Barry W1HFN would like to place his 900 MHz repeater at the Hospital.

All four officers have opted to stay for the next year: Ray KB1LRL President, Tom AB1GF Vice President, Gordon N1MGO Treasurer, and Bruce KB1YRS as Secretary.

The meeting continued with lots of munching on pizza, cookies, doughnuts, and cookies. The following members have decided to attend Field Day: Dennis W1UE, Ray KB1LRL, Gordon N1MGO, Gary K1YTS, Tom AB1GF, Steve W1SDH, Walter K1CMF, Erik W1QED, Paul KD1YH, Charlie KT1I, ED KC1FTQ, and Bill NZ1D. Discussion included having dedicated stations for 2 and 6 meters. The possibility is for three triband antennas, and multiple dipoles.

Logging software will be N1MM+, Erik W1QED, maybe Steve W1SDH will run GOTA. We would like to have an Information/Public Safety officer for the event.

Meeting end called: 8:50 PM

September Meeting, Treasurer's Report

de Bruce Wilbur KB1YRS, MARA Secretary

Meeting called to order: 7:30 PM

Attendees: Ray KB1LRL, Tom AB1GF, Charlie KT1I, Tom K1JHC, Bruce KB1YRS, Gordon N1MGO, John KK1X, Barry W1HFN, Paul KD1YH, Ralph KD1SM, Stan KD1LE, Daniel AB2TG, Skip K1NKR, KC1CHC Pam, Katie Jodrey, W0TJP Tim, K1FTW Ed .

Treasurer Report: starting balance \$2409.59 with additions of \$25.00 in dues. Expenses: \$125.00 for field day porta-pottie. Final balance: \$2309.59.

Current Business:

The club has a new hex beam antenna for sale.

New member: Katie Jodrey. Call sign: TBD [*KC1GGW, Ed.*]. Congratulations!!!

Pam Jodrey KC1CHC has volunteered to work on the W1GZ Facebook community page. Please email Pam any pending information: KC1CHC@yahoo.com. Tom AB1GF & Barry W1HFN: nothing new on the quest to find a place for a club station.

The need for a new repeater controller was brought up. A motion was made and carried to purchase a

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new 7330 SCOM controller for \$500.00 plus \$25.00 shipping.

Plans are in place to work with the Sterling cub scouts for Jamboree on the air [JOTA] for 2-3 hours on the 20-40 meter bands. Bruce KB1Yrs and Ray KB1LRL have volunteered. Please contact them should you wish to participate.

Thanks to Pam KC1CHC for bringing snacks!

October's snacks: Anyone???

A raffle was run for book, "Small Antenna Book". Thanks to Ray KB1LRL! \$20.00 was collected for the treasury, and Barry W1HFN pulled a Raffle win.

Meeting Presentation: Skip Youngberg K1NKR gave a presentation on TDOTA (Thinking Day On the AIR). This is a Girl scout activity on or around February 22 every year. It allows the Amateur radio community to help Girl scouts on the air. Thank you Skip. For more information check out <http://www.arrl.org/news/thinking-day-activity-gets-girl-scouts-thinking-about-ham-radio>.

Meeting end called: 8:50 PM

State of the Repeaters

The new S-COM 7330 three port repeater controller is in and Paul, KD1YH, is digging thru the 500-plus page manual (3.6 MB) trying to master the programming nuances of cross-linking three repeaters (three transmitters and three receivers) and all the other "bells and whistles" available.

The Old Timers' Lunch

de Tom K1JHC

The Old Timers', who meet for lunch at noon on the first Wednesday of each month, finally now have a new "home." Meetings will be held at the Airport Diner's former owner-manager's new place, Gene & Steve's Airport Restaurant on 192 Hamilton St, Leominster. *[Join them, being "old" is optional, Ed.]*

OFRs (Old Farts Radios)

de Barry W1HFN

When I was first licensed in 1959, all my receiving and transmitting gear was borrowed (I was 14, no money). I would drool over the ads in *QST* for Collins, Hallicrafters, National, Hammarlund, etc., rigs, knowing they were made of "unobtainium". As the years went by, those expensive rigs soon became flea market bargains, and that is when I acquired some of those dream rigs. Over the years, at least 12 vintage receivers have followed me home, not as many transmitters, maybe 5 or so. This article is about my most recent find, a National NC-270.

Wandering around the Deerfield Hamfest, aka NEAR-Fest, last year, I spotted a pile of old radios sitting on the ground. There it was, next to the bottom of the pile, the National NC-270 I had been looking for. The seller wanted \$60 for it, I offered him \$40 and we settled at \$50. After a great deal of effort, the knobs were mostly cleaned of their 55+ years of grime, the front panel sort of cleaned up and the RX brought up on a Variac. Lo and behold, it actually worked! After tuning around the bands for a while and listening to the loud squeaks from the tuning dial mechanism, I decided to take the covers off and remedy that situation. A little bit of USAF aircraft instrument oil later, the tuning mechanism was much quieter and smoother. So far, no other restoration efforts have been made, maybe some day I will replace all the

filter caps and check the alignment, but so far, it works quite well.

The following are some quotes from the January 2008 issue of Electric Radio: *"The NC-270 was the first model that introduced National's Cosmic Blue color scheme. Available on National distributor's shelves September 15th, 1960 at a price of \$249.95. The overall dimensions are 8 1/4"H x 15 3/4"W x 9"D and weighing 28 pounds. It is an amateur-only six-band, double-conversion, AM/CW/SSB receiver covering 80M thru 6M."*

I use the RX almost exclusively on AM where it sounds just wonderful, as do most of the tube-type RXs of that era. There are five selectivity choices and naturally the widest (5Kcs) *[that's kHz for you youngsters, Ed.]* is best for AM. I pair this RX with a Knight Kit T-150, which may be the basis of a future article.



Behold! A six-band receiver with actual knobs and switches, no menus! W1HFN's latest flea market find, a clean National "NC-two seventy".

The MARA W1/GaZette

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Montachusett Amateur Radio Association

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: Bruce Wilbur KB1YRS

Annual Dues: Regular \$25

Family \$30

Fixed income \$15

Meetings: 2nd Wednesday, 7:30pm September to June

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Charlie Cayen, KT1I Trustee, kt1i@arrl.net

MARA owns and operates three FM repeaters co-located on Burbank Hospital in Fitchburg. W1GZ on 145.45 (CTCSS 74.4), AB1GF on 224.34 MHz (CTCSS 103.5) and W1HFN on 927.5625 (-25 MHz) (CTCSS 74.4). The 2m repeater is also reachable via IRLP node 8433 and Echolink node 688832.

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 3944

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

Tuesdays, 1930 local 145.37-

WMEN Templeton Emergency Net

Wednesdays, 1900 local 145.37-

Gardner/Templeton Emergency Net

Nightly, 2100 local 146.97-

Central Mass Traffic Net

First Monday, 1900 local 3943, 7245

RACES Net

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, 1800 local 3978

Western Mass/RI Phone Net

October 14, 15, Deerfield, NH

NEAR-Fest XX, Deerfield Fairgrounds

October 16, JOTA/JOTI, Lancaster, MA

JOTA/JOTI demonstration, Nashua Valley Council Boy Scouts office, Lancaster

Breaking News!

Congratulations to Pam, KC1CHC, one of our newest (and enthusiastic) members, on her new ham shack and to her daughter Katie on her brand-new call sign KC1GGW!

Public Service: Field Day

de Tom AB1GF and NZ1D

Well folks, another successful Field Day has come and gone. In June MARA Field Day team made our annual trip to the top of Mt Wachusett in Princeton to take on the challenges of setting up equipment and demonstrate our abilities to communicate effectively in disasters and other times of need. Set up commenced on Friday night to ensure that we would be ready to spring into action on Saturday afternoon and continue for 24 hours “off the grid” without outside support. Thankfully the weather was just about perfect this year. Seventeen operators and helpers operated under W1GZ (Class 4A, WMA) for the primary station and under W1QED as the GOTA (Get on the Air) station. The GOTA concept is specifically designed to entice new comers to the hobby and provide an operating experience they might not ordinarily have.

Other than a few appearances of “Murphy,” such as a generator that suffered an unusual mechanical failure (cleverly repaired in “MacGyver” fashion by our stalwart club President,) we soldiered on. We amassed a total of 6,844 points (claimed score of 5,534 plus 1,310 bonus points for attaining certain goals). Sunday afternoon, after a weekend of fun and fellowship, we packed everything up and headed home. A more detailed breakdown of Field Day results will be published in the November W1/GaZette.

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[Editor's note: it's raining and blowing outside my window as I put the finishing touches on your newsletter. A few hours away, Matthew, a Category 4 hurricane, is steadily and relentlessly marching northwesterly out of the Bahamas to a rendezvous with Florida. I apologize for any typos, hopefully the Internet will stay up long enough to send this on its way.]