



Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 11, 7:30 pm, Lunenburg Library. Plans for the club's participation in the BSA's Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA) in October.

IN THIS ISSUE...

Next Meeting	1
The President's Corner	1
September Meeting Report	1
State of the Repeaters	2
Old Timers' Lunch	4
Public Service	5
Contesting/Operating	5
VE Sessions	6
An Alphabetic History of Ham Radios	6
It's an Ill Wind That Blows Off My Roof	9
Watt's Happening	11
For sale	12
Breaking News	12

Contributors To This Issue:

AB1GF, K1JHC, KD1YH, NZ1D, W1HFN, W0TJP

The President's Corner

de Tom, AB1GF

October is here and where did the time go? Soon we will be dealing with the wet white stuff. The upcoming month could be a little bit busy for us. As I mentioned at the last meeting NVARC and the Mohawk group will be teaming up with us this year to put the Boy Scouts on the Air for Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) on Oct 21st. We will set up on Saturday the 21st at the Nashua Valley Boy Scouts Council in Lancaster. This will be a great opportunity to introduce some younger folks into Ham Radio. We did this last year and it went surprisingly well. There is a lot of interest and it is a great opportunity for us to show what we can do.

And don't forget, the end of the year NEAR-Fest on Oct 13th and 14th is the weekend before JOTA.

September Meeting Report

de Barry Fox W1HFN, MARA Secretary; with input from Gordon N1MGO treasurer

The September meeting of MARA was called to order at 1930 by our new president, Tom, AB1GF. Introductions were made; those in attendance were: KT1I-Charlie, KD1YH-Paul, W1QED-Eric, K1YTS-

Gary, W0TJP-Tim, N1MGO-Gordon, K1JHC-Tom, KC1HDG-James, N1ERS-Kevin, KK1X-John, KB1LRL-Ray, and yrftlsvnt, W1HFN-Barry.

First order of business by the club officers was to present out-going president Ray-KB1LRL with a plaque from the club thanking him for his many years of leadership. Well deserved, Ray. He gave a short talk outlining his new appointment as SM of Western Mass.

Treasurer's report: \$2904.93 in the account, maybe \$500.00 earmarked for new coax for the repeaters.

Technical Committee report: the 2M repeater appears to be working well, no sign of "the noise" in quite some time since KD1YH replaced the RX. The 220 repeater needs a new final amp as the present one is only putting out 3W. The 900 repeater is awaiting an antenna and feedline. The new controller is not yet on-line, but has had new software down-loaded to it.

Based on the club's Field Day results, MARA is now the rather sad possessor of the CB Booby Prize, gleefully presented by Kevin-N1ERS of the Mohawk Club. In other news, the Mohawk club is planning to add a 2M DMR to their site and were offering raffle tickets to help toward the purchase price of \$1800.00.

After a short coffee/snack break, Ray-KB1LRL give a short talk on the upcoming JOTA event in which MARA, Mohawk and Nashoba clubs will all participate. The event will be held at the Lanacaster BSA office Oct 21&22.

Tom-AB1GF is planning to operate SweepStakes at his QTH; all are invited to watch/participate.

Tim-W0TJP is trying to set up a public service calender on-line for any hams interested in helping at those events. Coming up is Head of the Charles Regatta, for which many hams are needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2050L.

Respectfully submitted, Barry-W1HFN, Secretary

State of the Repeaters

de Tom AB1GF, Paul KD1YH

W1GZ – 145.45	status = On the Air, 35w into the cans, 18w out
AB1GF – 224.34	status = On the Air, 12w into the cans, 6w out (see below)
W1HFN – 927.5625	status = OFF, needs antenna installed

Additional information on the repeaters is in the September Meeting Minutes above.



Illustration 1: MARA outgoing President Ray, KB1LRL receives plaque for faithful service. Left to right W1HFN, AB1GF, KB1LRL, W1QED, N1MGO. (W1QED photo)



Illustration 2: Tom, AB1GF reluctantly receives the coveted Field Day CB radio "trophy" from rival Mohawk club's Kevin N1ERS. (W1QED photo)

The Old Timers' Lunch

de Tom K1JHC

We had a full table at the September Old Timers' lunch, in spite of being deluged with a monsoon rain when we were arriving, including Charlie KT1I, Jack W1PFZ, Paul N1QDX, Barry W1HFN, Gary K1YTS, and Tom K1JHC. Thanx to Paul N1QDX who kept promoting the lunch on the Sunday Net. Come out and enjoy a good lunch and some friendly chatter. Everyone is welcome, age is not a factor. Remember, we meet at noon on the first Wednesday of each month at the Airport Diner. [According to N1QDX, the real old timers say, "Ya gotta be there by quarter to twelve!", Ed.]

Public Service

de Tim W0TJP [from Brett, AB1RL, Ed.]

With August gone and summer winding down, our attention turns to fall public service events. The BAA has the following major event coming up in October.

BAA Half Marathon: Sunday, October 8: As usual for BAA events, you'll work with medical teams at different points along the route to provide them with any necessary communication, including EMS dispatch requests if necessary. Volunteer registration for this event will be through the BAA's web site, it will open up on Tuesday, August 15. You'll get an announcement from them, and AB1RL, when that happens.

Your work at these events really makes a difference. In recent years, ham radio volunteers handled emergency dispatch calls to get participants, and sometimes spectators, prompt treatment. Those calls wouldn't be as quick or as effective without the communications expertise you bring by showing up. Please join us to make a couple more events that much more successful.

If you have questions about either event, please don't hesitate to ask. Brett Smith, AB1RL <ab1rl-pubserv@brettsmith.org>, Public Service Coordinator, Boston Amateur Radio Club

Also, volunteer registration for Head of the Charles Regatta opens September 1 at the following address: <http://www.hocr.org/volunteering/>

As with the BAA Boston Marathon, all volunteers need to register at the HOCR main site.

Sunday Net Control operators needed

de Ray KB1LRL

We still need two (or more) people to serve as Net Control for the Sunday morning ARES net. This is great practice for operating in special events as well as emergency situations. This will be on an as needed basis but you will be guaranteed time in so you can learn about this function. Just need one-half hour on Sunday. There are times when someone cannot do their turn. I will give up my time in favor of giving that person the experience. Give it a try!

Please drop Ray an email if you're interested.

Contesting/Operating

de Paul, KD1YH

[See the ARRL Contest Calendar for more contesting information. For in-depth reporting on Amateur Radio contesting, you can subscribe to The ARRL Contest Update via your ARRL member profile e-mail preferences, Ed.]

JOTA: Plans are in motion for MARA to operate in the BSA Jamboree on the Air (JOTA), which will be held Oct 21. The club plans to set up a station at the Nashua Valley Council HQ off Rte 2 in Lancaster. *[Details of the event are presented in the 60th Jamboree on the Air flyer from the Nashua Valley Council, BSA, which is provided as a separate file with this newsletter, Ed.]*

VE Sessions

de Paul, KDIYH

In September we had one new technician pass. The MARA VE Team schedules license exam sessions monthly on the 4th Wednesday. Pre-registration is requested, contact Paul KDIYH kd1yh@arrl.net. Sessions will be canceled if no one has registered by Sunday before the scheduled session. If the session is not canceled, walk-ins are welcome, so if you are interested in upgrading or know someone who is looking for an exam session, you may contact Paul at the last minute to see if the session is being held.

An Alphabetic History of Ham Radios

de Barry WIHFN

Collins Radio Company

To many of us older hams who grew up during the tube era, Collins gear was the Rolls-Royce of ham radio. And, I might add, priced accordingly. You can "Google" Arthur A Collins (W0CXX) of Collins Radio and read his biographical info, so I won't go into that here.

Suffice it to say that if it weren't for him, we would most likely still be using AM phone. He was a pioneer in the adoption of single sideband (SSB) and Collins Radio built the first SSB transceiver, the KWM-1 which debuted in the summer of 1957.

[In addition to Art Collins, perhaps the biggest proponent of SSB was General Curtis LeMay (SK), head of the Strategic Air Command at the time. LeMay, a Heathkit customer and amateur radio operator held several callsigns: K0GRL, K4FRA, and W6EZV (K0GRL is still the call sign of the Strategic Air Command Memorial Amateur Radio Club). LeMay was widely known for making QSO's while flying on-board SAC bombers. He quickly realized that the new SSB technology offered a big advantage over AM for SAC aircraft operating long distances from their bases. In conjunction with Heath engineers and Collins, LeMay established SSB as the radio standard for SAC bombers in 1957. At the time, your editor was a communications technician in SAC's 42nd Bomb Wing., Ed.]

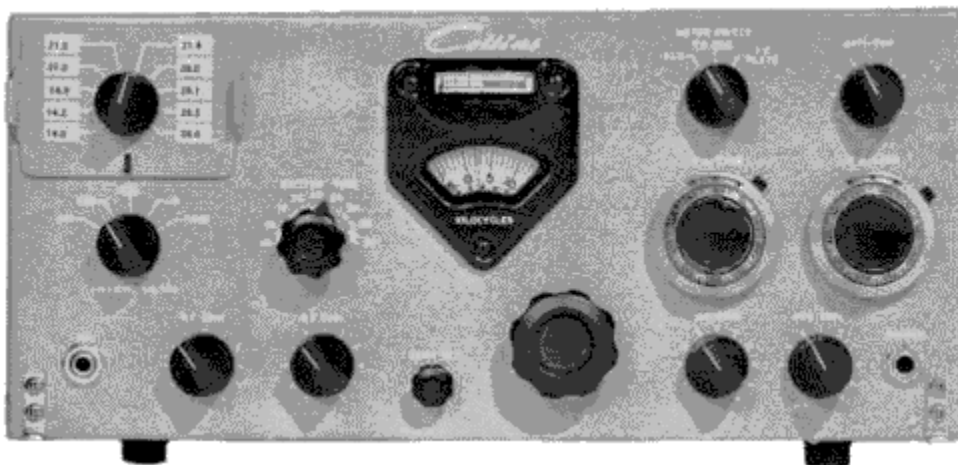


Illustration 3: Collins KWM-1 SSB Transceiver introduced in 1957. (WIHFN Photo)

Before the KWM-1 there were numerous examples of AM gear, the 75A-1 and its successor, the 75A-4.



Illustration 4: Collins 75A-1 Receiver. (WIHFN Photo)



Illustration 5: Collins 75A-4 Receiver. (WIHFN Photo)

Matching transmitters were the 32V-1 thru 32V-3. A 32V-3 is pictured below.



Illustration 6: Collins 32V-3 Transmitter. (WIHFN Photo)

This “beast” weighed in at over 110 pounds. AM plate modulated with a pair of 807s, the final was a RK4D32 for 120W input.

Collins marketed the AM/SSB/CW station in 1955 popularly known as "The Gold Dust Twins". The name probably reflects the 5 pounds or so of gold dust necessary to finance their purchase. In 1955, the 75A-4 RX cost \$695.00, the KWS-1 TX \$1435.00, for a total of \$2130.00. In today's \$\$, only about \$19,000!!!



Illustration 7: Not your father's Collins! Unless he was rich! The Collins "Gold Dust Twins" (WIHFN Photo)

In the illustration above, the speaker is on top, RX in the middle, TX below and power supply / modulator used as the base. The 75A-x series of RX used the then-new Collins mechanical filter, a real improvement over the then current technology. The TX ran a pair of 4X150s in the final, maybe the first use of metal/ceramic tubes in amateur equipment and boasted a cool KW input, about 600W out.

Next edition, the Collins S-Line.

It's an ill wind that blows off my roof...

de Bill, NZID

Sun Sept 10: Hurricane Irma made landfall below Naples about 3 pm, looks like core may go about 70 miles west of us; puts us in the "dirty side" (NE quadrant with higher winds and risk of tornadoes); predicted sustained winds 64 KT (74 mph) here. Shortly thereafter she wobbled easterly, core now predicted to pass almost directly over us with sustained 70-90 mph, gusts 110 plus. Whatevah! Exact track doesn't matter, storm is huge and covers more than the entire width of the state, winds to 50 KT (58 mph) extend out over 110 miles of the center! Will this "crackerbox" stand up to it? Rather not drag my new cat to a shelter. She's already stressed by the howling wind and rain. Just rescued from two months at the Humane Society shelter, living in a carrier for several days would be too stressful.

By late afternoon Irma is chugging north up US 27, heading straight for us. Predicted to stay more or less on a northward track, weakening slightly (105 mph). Core is still a long way off but the wind bands already are arriving, gusts here already to 64 mph. *Many of my neighbors had originally said they were staying. Now it appears they have bailed. Cowards!*

8 pm: lights flickered, then the house went dark. Quiet, except for the hurricane force gusts "singing" in the 400 KV transmission line 50 feet behind my house. Duke Energy wind chimes! *No problema*, concrete poles about 120 ft tall, if they go we will already have been gone!

1030 pm: Radio reports Irma at 27.3/-81.9, several hours due south (we're 28.9/-81.9). Placed several flashlights strategically around the house; have radio, plenty of batteries, Coleman lantern, single-burner stove, two small tanks of propane and an old-style desk-top phone that is powered by the phone line. Fully charged 5Ah battery on the 2 meter rig plus a "spare" on my daughter's moped. Villages water system is self-sustaining so we have water. Other than no A/C, the biggest concern is whether the roof stays on! Might as well go to bed.

Mon: Irma's center arrived here about 2 am. Sleep not happening, too hot and the creaking and groaning of the house makes me nervous. Occasionally it goes "crack" and couple times there is a sensation of it twisting. (Think maybe I watched the *Wizard of Oz* one time too many). The aluminum roof on the carport ripples and thumps like an old washboard as the gusts play macabre tunes on the taut power lines overhead. Seems like about time I drift off something crashes against the window next to my bed. My siding? Parts of my roof?

By noon it's obvious that the house survived; neighbor's flag pole did not. (She foolishly left the flag on it!) My yard is strewn with small branches, apparently that's what was crashing against my window all night. Lost three shingle tabs. Tropical storm force winds all day. Can't leave, entire central Florida is under travel curfew, all roads closed until 7pm.

Tues: Finally venture out. Lots of trees down. One of the larger retention ponds nearby has burst it's banks due to the "150-year" rain event (12- 15 inches fell in less than 24 hours) and flooded several streets and houses in the low-lying portion. All restaurants closed except Dunkin's (there are at least 20

within a 5 minute drive). Grocery stores closed (generators ran out of fuel). No ice, no gasoline. Bought coffee to take home and reheat it on the camp stove tomorrow am. NO DONUTS!

Wed: Duke Energy calls, estimates power will be restored by Sunday night. Great, another four days of sweltering heat! After supper go to check stores, every other traffic light still out on the "four-lane" (US 441), stores and restaurants still closed. Ninety-six degrees at midnite. Can't get comfortable to sleep, difficult to breath, finally go out about 2 am and nap in lawn chair on my car port. Slight breeze helps. Sky is a strange pinkish hue.

Thurs: Noonish: Two ladies from Operation Homebound (local church group that feeds homebound residents) stop by and ask if we need any ice. They hand me two bags of ice and come back 10 minutes later with two warm home cooked dinners, chicken with rice, vegetables, salad, bread and cookies and a muffin for desert. Big box stores finally opening, plenty of dry goods but the frozen food and fresh food shelves are bare (all thawed and had to be discarded). Couldn't keep or cook frozen anyway. However, the beer coolers are well stocked!

Fri 5:11 pm: The lights and TV suddenly click on. Someone across the street yells, "POWER!" Just in time for supper: life is good. Five sweltering days without power meant no TV, no news, no internet, no BS politics, no FB trolls. Not much civilization until Thurs and not much perishable food until the weekend. Field Day, Scout camp, and military bivouac (bathe in cold water, shave in your helmet), all rolled into one experience. As 'QDX jibed, "Sort of like growing up in Townsend in the 40's, right Bill?"

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. Contents copyright © 2017, MARA. Permission to use in other Amateur Radio publications with credit to MARA is hereby granted.

The deadline for materials to appear in the W1/GaZette is noon on the Sunday before the first Wednesday of the month.

NEWSLETTER/PUBLIC RELATIONS STAFF:

Newsletter Editor: Bill Wornham NZ1D, 352-751-4682 nz1d@arrl.net

Webmaster: Paul Upham KD1YH

Community Facebook page administrator: Pam Jodrey, KC1CHC, kc1chc@yahoo.com

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

VE Team: KD1YH@arrl.net
Web site: <http://www.w1gz.org/>

OFFICERS:

Tom Antil, AB1GF President, thantil@comcast.net
Erik Tkal, W1QED Vice President
Barry Fox W1HFN, bwfox@comcast.net
Gordon LaPoint, N1MGO Treasurer, n1mgo@arrl.net
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

Sunday, October 8

BAA Half Marathon, Boston

October 13, 14, Deerfield, NH
NEAR-Fest XXII, Deerfield Fairgrounds

October 21, JOTA/JOTI, Lancaster, MA
JOTA/JOTI demonstration, Nashua Valley Council Boy Scouts office, Lancaster

For Sale/Ads

de Tom AB1GF, Ab1gf@arrl.net, 978 467-6658 .

10 Rohn 25 ft sections	\$50.00 each
EZ Way HD40 40' Crank-up tower	\$200.00
Hygain TH-6 Tribander, complete	\$150.00
Tarheel 100A-HP continuous coverage HF Antenna, with MFJ Memory tuner	\$475.00
Mosley CL 33 WARC, needs insulator kit	\$175.00

Breaking News

Kudos to Ray, KB1LRL, our outgoing President, who officially is the new Section Manager (SM) for the ARRL's Western Mass Section. In his words, "Now a lot of work begins!" Congratulations Ray!

.-- .---- --. --..