



## Next Meeting

Annual Holiday Celebration, Sunday, December 3, 1:30 pm at Gordon and Pauline's. See p. 5 for details

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Contributors To This Issue:

AB1GF, K1JHC, KB1JXJ, KD1YH, KT1I, NZ1D, W1HFN

## The President's Corner

*de Tom, AB1GF*

Here we are almost December already. In a few days, on Sunday December 3 at 1pm, we be gathering at the club's Holiday Celebration at Gordon's and Pauline's. Plenty of food and the Yankee Swap. Also I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

CW enthusiasts, you are reminded that December 31 is ARRL's Straight Key Night (SKN). While it is not a contest, it is a great chance the dust off your bug or straight Key and have a QSO with someone. It's a good way to meet someone new, have fun and it's also good code practice.

## Slip of the pen –

*[Apparently your editor failed to update the masthead in last month's issue. It was erroneously, but inadvertently, labeled "October... No. 2" instead of "November... No. 3." Perhaps no one noticed but I feel better now, Ed.]*

## **November Meeting Report**

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

Due to the illness of president AB1GF-Tom, the meeting was called to order at 1930 by our vice-president, W1QED-Erik. Introductions were made, those in attendance were: KT1I-Charlie, KD1YH-Paul, K1YTS-Gary, W0TJP-Tim, N1MGO-Gordon, K1JHC-Tom, KB1LRL-Ray, and yrftlhrvnt, W1HFN- Barry.

Treasurer's report; \$2924.93 in the account, an estimated \$500.00 was earmarked for new coax for the repeaters.

Technical Committee report; the 2M repeater appears to be working well as the RX audio was recently adjusted. *[Since Barry's report, the 2 meter machine has developed a noise problem; see the state of the repeaters infra, Ed.]*

Ray, KB1LRL, gave a short synopsis of the ARRL WMA doings; new ASM will be WA1JXR-Greg, KD1SM-Ralph to continue his post, the ARRL may revamp the OO program and all ECs must take Incident Command System courses.

The annual Holiday Celebration will be held at the QTH of Gordon and Pauline, N1MGO and KB1JXJ on 3 December at 1300L. There will be lots of sweet and savory goodies, conversation and a Yankee Swap. The Swap has a \$15.00 limit.

KT1I-Charlie, notified the club that when his term as trustee for the W1GZ license expires next year, he will not be interested in continuing the office. Volunteers are solicited.

After a short coffee/snack break, W1QED-Erik, gave a demo of his Elecraft KX2. Even with limited antenna and much QRM, it was a very interesting rig.

The meeting was adjourned at 2030L.

Respectfully submitted, Barry-W1HFN, Secretary

## **State of the Repeater**

*de Tom AB1GF, Paul KD1YH*

W1GZ (our 2 meter repeater) has developed a chronic "popping" noise in the last few days . Tom AB1GF and Paul KD1YH went to the repeater site on Saturday Nov 25th to try an exorcism on any demons. Multiple different test configurations were tried but they were unsuccessful in isolating the source of the noise. More tests are planned shortly. Meanwhile, Paul is working diligently to have the new controller installed in the near future,

## **The Old Timers' Lunch**

*de Tom KIJHC*



*Illustration 1: The Old Timers' lunch crowd meets monthly at noon on the first Wednesday of each month at the Airport Diner . Young or old, all are welcome. Come out and enjoy a good lunch and some friendly “eyeball” chatter.*

## **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. Participation will be on an as needed basis but you will be guaranteed a slot 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, Ed.]*

## **Contesting/Operating**

*[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.]*

### **January 1**

ARRL Straight Key Night (SKN)

### **January 7**

Kid's Day

**January 7-8**  
RTTY Tround-up

**January 21-23**  
January VHF Contest

## **VE Sessions**

*de Paul, KD1YH*

The VE team had five candidates, all received what they came for: three techs, one general and one extra. Seven VE's were in attendance.

As a reminder, the MARA VE Team schedules license exam sessions monthly on the 4th Wednesday. Pre-registration is requested, contact Paul KD1YH [kd1yh@arrl.net](mailto: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.

## **Charlie's QRP and CW Ramblings**

*de Charlie, KT1I*

As I wrote last month, I recently have been on CW with the Cricket QRPP kit and the Elecraft K1. I'm getting better but have a long way to go. With the Cricket I'm still hanging at nine contacts; one more and I can apply for the Cricketeer certificate; I did finally make a Cricket to Cricket contact!

As a companion for the Cricket I built an Ultra Picokeyer kit from HamGadgets. As you can see in the photo my old '80s keyer is huge in comparison. The Picokeyer features a speed control (pot) and four push buttons. It has eight memories and all the needed features and runs on a coin cell that may last for three years.

If anyone wants to try out some slow speed CW, contact me, [kt1i@arrl.net](mailto:kt1i@arrl.net), and we'll set up a sked. More next month; 72 Charlie KT1I



Illustration 2: Not your father's keyer: Ham Gadget's Ultra Picokeyer (on top of Charlie's vintage Trac keyer) provides a nice adjunct for the tiny Cricket QRP rig. (KT11 Photo)

*MARA Holiday Celebration  
de Pauline KBIJXJ*

*When* 3 December 2017  
*Time* 1-3:30pm Yankee Swap at 2:30pm  
*Where* QTH Pauline's & Gordon's  
*Address* 144 Wilder Road  
Leominster, Ma 01453  
*RSVP* 27 November 2017  
[paulinegal2@gmail.com](mailto:paulinegal2@gmail.com)  
[n1mgo@arrl.net](mailto:n1mgo@arrl.net)  
*Please state whether you are bringing  
a sweet or savory item*

*What to bring*  
*A sweet or savory item to share*  
*Examples:*  
*Sweet = finger dessert*

*Savory = finger appetizer  
A Yankee Swap gift per person  
(Value \$10- \$15 each)*

*Provided*

*A warm welcome; Coffee, Tea, Punch*

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### The MARA W1/GaZette

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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

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VE Team: KD1YH@arrl.net

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**OFFICERS:**

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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



*Illustration 3: Tom "the Tower Czar" AB1GF installing antennas at Barry WIHFN's QTH*

**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