

MARA W1⚡GaZette



April 2018

MONTACHUSETT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

Vol 59, No 8

Next Meeting

Wednesday, April 11th, **7:00 pm**, Lunenburg Library. Program: The annual incoming QSL card sort.

**** Note the meeting start time is ONE-HALF HOUR EARLIER than usual. ****

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Contributors To This Issue:

AB1GF, K1JHC, KD1SM, KD1YH, NZ1D, W1HFN

The President's Corner

de Tom, AB1GF

Hello all. Spring is here and so are the hamfests. NEAR-Fest is around the corner May 4th and 5th. I will be there. It is also time to check out your antennas for any damage from winter. I will be making improvements on mine. The next meeting is the annual card sort so come on down and help sort the incoming QSL cards. **The meeting starts at 7:00 pm.** Pizza will be served after.

March Meeting Report

de Barry Fox W1HFN, MARA Secretary

The March meeting was called to order at 1930 by Tom, AB1GF, President.

Introductions were made, those in attendance were: W1QED-Eric, KT1I-Charlie, KD1YH-Paul, K1YTS-Gary, W0TJP-Tim, N1MGO-Gordon, K1JHC-Tom, KK1X-John, KD1SM-Ralph, KC1BNE-Dave, K1YOW-Joe and W1HFN-Barry.

Treasurer's report; \$2325.96 in the account.

Technical Committee report: a work party went to the repeater site on Sunday, 11th March. Those involved were Tom-AB1GF, Paul-KD1YH, Gary-K1YTS and Barry-W1HFN. The damaged 2 meter antenna was repaired, the borrowed one removed and the repaired one re-installed. All feedlines were replaced with new hardline which was very neatly dressed on the walls. Initial reports were favorable as to clean audio, no random noises. An SWR plot of the 2 meter repeater, provided by Barry, W1HFN, is shown in the State of the Repeaters below. The group returned Monday to do some clean up.

A motion was made and approved to allocate \$200.00 to procure an amp for the 220MHz repeater.

A short coffee/snack break was held at 1945, following which Dave, K1YOW, gave a very interesting talk on sporadic E-layer propagation.

Next months meeting will be our QSL card sort.

The meeting was adjourned at 2035L.

Respectfully submitted, Barry-W1HFN, Secretary

State of the Repeaters

de Tom AB1GF, Paul KD1YH

All three repeaters are up and running. The 224.34 MHz repeater is up and running with a solid 30 watts out to the antenna. Try it out. There is desense issue with 220; I am considering separate antennas for RX/TX with 10' vertical separation, RX on top and TX inverted on the bottom and split the duplexors. This will require one more feed line.

FLASH! Just released!

Dateline; Fitchburg, MA, de Barry W1HFN

Thanks to the efforts of Gary-K1YTS, Paul-KD1YH and Tom-AB1GF the W1HFN 900MHz repeater is back on the air! The output frequency is 927.5625 MHz, input -25MHz with a 74.4 PL. If you are in the area, give it a go.

The Old Timers' Lunch

de Tom K1JHC

The day was bright and sunny, but the second day of cold rainy weather as we met at the Airport Diner on Wednesday. Members present were Charlie KT1I, Gary K1YTS, Paul KD1YH, Barry W1HFN, and Tom K1JHC. Many items were covered as we ate, from Travels, Autos, and Local News.

Remember, we meet the 1st Wednesday of every month and new members, young or old, are always welcome. Come out and enjoy a good lunch and some friendly "eyeball" chatter.

[Tom, reminding your editor of how much he misses New England weather [not], said "As I write this we are getting strong winds and my trash barrels lay on their sides waiting for pickup. Thankfully the covers are the holding contents in. Friday brings snow and freezing rain and more snow on Saturday.", Ed.]

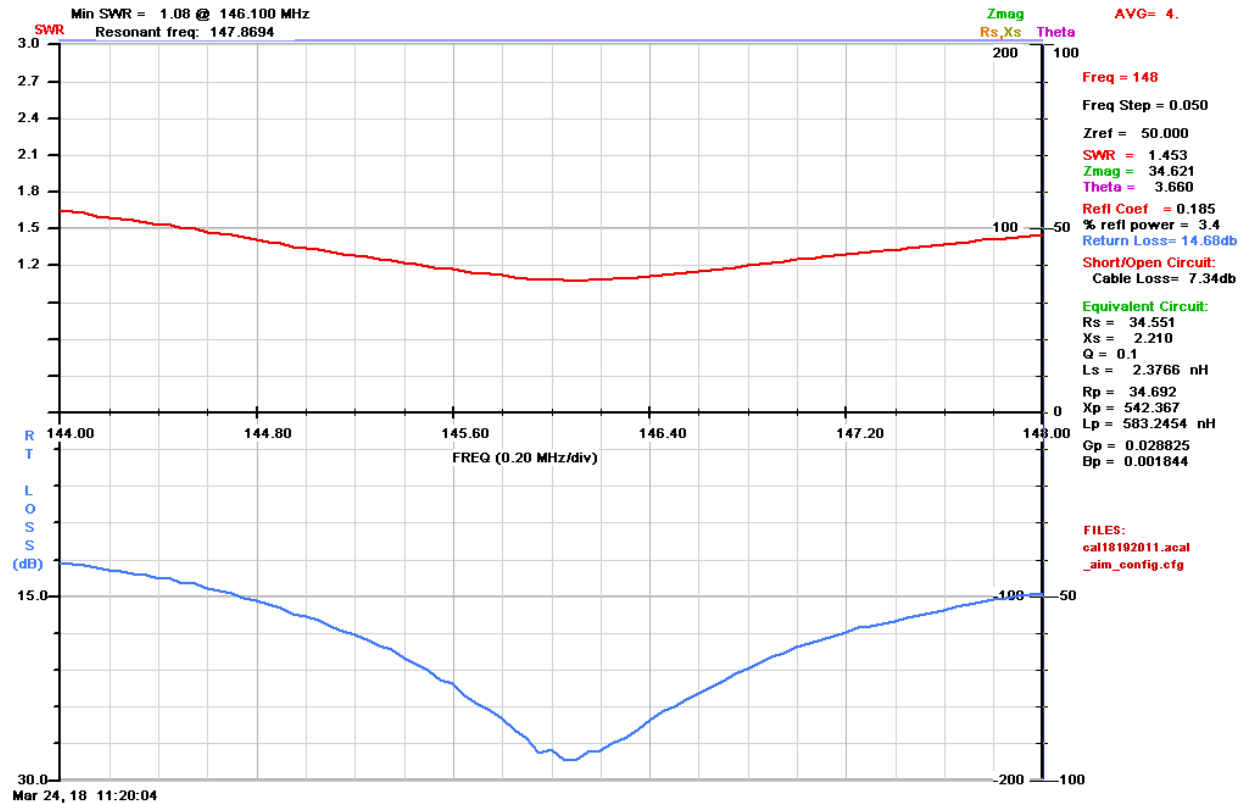


Illustration 1: SWR plot of the 2 meter repeater. Courtesy Barry WIHFN

Public Service

de Ralph, KDISM

To: Recent Groton Road Race Volunteers, BARC, NVARC, MARA Members, and other interested Amateur Radio Operators

**** The 2018 Groton Road Race date is Sunday April 29 2018 ****

After the snow and nor'easters the beginning of March I expect we are all relieved that warmer temperatures have started to appear this week. And that means, like the flowers, the Groton Road Race will be coming up soon.

April 29 will be the 27th running of this race and the race committee is again asking the Amateur Radio community to provide the logistics and safety communications for this high-profile event.

There is one schedule change this year that I hope will please all of you. The two main races (5k and 10k) will start 90 minutes earlier than in previous years. The Race Committee wants to make it possible for people with other afternoon activities to participate by having these races end earlier. We'll therefore begin our day at 8am with the (optional) police briefing, be on station for the 5k and 10 races around 9:30 and we should be done shortly after 1pm. As has been done the past 3 years, the 5k and 10k races will run concurrently. The courses themselves will be the same as last year. The maps, etc from previous years are available on the NVARC Public Service Events page [1]. A second and less impactful change for us is the addition of a fourth "fun run" that will close Champney Street at 9am and will require our Net Control operation and a few other stations to be up and running by 08:30.

The Groton Road Race continues to be a major event for Amateur Radio in North Central Massachusetts. Those of you who have joined us in past years know that the runners sincerely appreciate our presence and many say so as they run past. This event is so large that Police Departments from several other communities come to assist the Groton PD. Part of our role is to provide the communications from the Groton Police to these out-of-town officers who come to help with this event.

Contributing to the public good is one of the reasons Amateur Radio exists. Our public service events are a key opportunity for us to show our colors, volunteer our skills and equipment, and demonstrate why it is in the public's interest to continue to allocate precious RF spectrum to our the Amateur Radio Service. The Groton Road Race is a low-stress event and a great way to gain more experience with the public service aspect of amateur radio. Please consider joining us on the 29th.

If you are interested in helping at these events but unsure of what is expected of you or what equipment you may need, please do not hesitate to ask me, Stan KD1LE, or John KK1X.

The Squannacook River Runners and the Groton Police Department repeatedly praise and express their appreciation for your assistance in providing communications for this event. I do hope you will be able to join us this year; please let me know.

Thanks and 73,
-Ralph

[1] <http://www.n1nc.org/Events/>

Sunday Net Control operators needed

de Ray KB1LRL

We still need more back-up Net Controls 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. Give it a try! *[Please drop Ray an email if you're interested, Ed.]*.

Operating

de Bill, NZ1D

For upcoming contests, see the ARRL Contest Calendar at www.arrl.org/contests and the link to WA7BNM's calendar at www.contestcalendar.com. For in-depth reporting on Amateur Radio contesting, you can subscribe to The ARRL Contest Update via your ARRL member profile e-mail preferences.

VE Sessions

de Paul, KD1YH

VEs Gary K1YTS, Paul KD1YH, John KK1X, Tom K1JHC, Ralph KD1SM tested four candidates: results were one upgrade to general, two techs and one tech to general in one shot

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. 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.

R. L. Drake History

de Barry, W1HFN

As part of his amateur radio equipment series Barry wrote, *"I planned on doing a brief article on the history of R. L. Drake equipment, but while doing the initial research, I found the following web site which presents an excellent job on the company's history."* The link is:

<http://www.wb4hfn.com/DRAKE/DrakePageHome.htm>

[Note: Reinforcing Tom's earlier comment about the weather, Barry wrote, "Second day of Spring, yet another Nor'easter for W1 land, ah well.....", Ed.]

The MARA W1/GaZette

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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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Annual Dues: Regular \$25

Family \$30

Fixed income \$15

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

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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

For Sale/Ads

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

10 Rohn 25 ft sections	\$50 each
EZ Way HD40 40' Crank-up tower	\$200
Hygain TH-6 Tribander, complete	\$150
Tarheel 100A-HP continuous coverage HF Antenna, with MFJ Memory tuner	\$475
Mosley CL 33 WARC, needs insulator kit	\$175

de Bill Leger, NIUZ@ARRL.NET

Montachusett Amateur Radio Association

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Mohawk ARC has a used MFJ-1798 HF vertical for sale. Operate 10 bands -- 75/80, 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, 12, 10, 6 and 2 Meters with this antenna and get full size performance with no ground or radials. All proceeds will go towards the DMR repeater project. \$100

Repeater Technical Team at Work

de AB1GF, KDIYH



*Illustration 2: MARA's resident "aerialist" AB1GF installing the 900 MHz antenna.
Photo KDIYH*



*Illustration 3: The triad is complete; W1GZ's 2 meter, AB1GF's 220 MHz and W1HFN's 900 MHz antennas are now "in service."
Photo KD1YH*