

SIGMA

A club since 1992



Since 1993



Since 1996

de N1NC

August 2017

Volume 26 Number 8

This Month's Meeting

The summer is slipping away. But you didn't miss the meeting this month. We don't meet in July and August. Still, did you enjoy the picnic? And you are geared up for the Solar Eclipse QSO Party, aren't you?

The President's Corner

We are well into the "dog days of summer" but it hasn't been so bad. We had good weather for Field Day and sandwiched in a fine day for the NVARC Cookout between a couple of not so nice days.

Good attendance at the "barn" for the cookout with good food and lots of talk about radio and other subjects. Bob W1XP brought a minimum WSPR set-up that he put together in the back of his car to show how easy it was to do: just a mag-mount antenna, a KX2, and a netbook computer. The radio was "connected" to the computer merely by having the speaker sitting on the keyboard. Checking the WSPRNet database after we ate, it showed we had logged over 35 stations. Thanks to Gene WW1EN for hosting the event again.

During the summer the WSPR and Eclipse presentations went over well with many of the clubs I visited subsequently reporting that five or more WSPR stations would be on the air for the Eclipse. I expect NVARC members will have something more than fif-

teen stations on the air for the 21st of August.

The September meeting should have some reports on Field Day from the Coordinators and me. In my visits to other clubs it was interesting to note that whatever the theme or expressed disinterest in the point total, the post Field Day wrap-ups always included an analysis of the point score and what they might do to improve it. Whether it is hams at FD or five-year-olds at a soccer game, anyone that says the score doesn't matter isn't telling the whole story. Yes, it isn't the only measure—except for the contest nuts—but most of us look at the whole picture. Was the weather good or at least reasonable, did set up go smoothly, was the food delicious, did everyone operate (a particular success for us this year), did we operate safely with no one getting hurt, was it fun, and how many contacts did we make? It seems by every measure this year's event was a success.

So it seems summer is rapidly drawing to a close and we will be back to the regular meetings soon. The fall program schedule is filling up. I anticipate a good year of club meetings.

The ARRL Boxboro Convention is coming up September 8, 9, and 10. When you attend a presentation or have other interactions take note of things that might be of interest to NVARC members as a club presentation or activity.

Also, as we get into the fall presentation schedule remember that December and January meetings are member based. Your

five or ten-minute talks or homebrew projects will be what make the meetings interesting.

Hope to see everyone at the September meeting.

73, Stan KD1LE

News and Happenings

(All photos in this section by KD1SM)

Field Day Wrap-up

We made close to clean sweep. We only missed Northern New York, Nebraska, and Alaska in the US; Newfoundland, Manitoba, Northern Territories in Canada. And that without specifically trying.



de Jim AB1WQ

FD Hero #1



Leo, K1LK, of Pepperell., is a stalwart of the club's Field Day efforts. Leo is "Mr. Food and Shelter. He's a pretty quiet guy but every once in a

while he steals an HF DX QSO that you were calling on or drops in on the repeater when you least expect him.

de K1NKR

FD Hero #A (No sequence. It's not #1 and #2...)



Bob, AB1CV, of Groton, knows that hams do not live by

QSOs alone—they need lemonade and chocolate chip cookies. Bob's station? "My station is my HT. I live in a small apartment!" Rest assured, this Veterans Agent does his best to make sure the world keeps turning smoothly. (Probably with cookies and lemonade.)

de K1NKR

Editor's Note

HF

We've done a lot of talking about VHF recently. HF deserves its due. Nothing makes the world smaller than HF. Oh sure, there's DX, DXCC, and county hunting. But there's also what I call the "Lowell Thomas effect:" connecting with people, places, culture out there to expand our minds and perspectives. Our world is traversed by RF bridges, not bounded by walls.



“...And did you ever hear the story
The story 'bout neil armstrong
He was standing in his spacesuit
Looking back from the moon
He sees the great wall of china
He sees the mississippi river
He says, listen to me houston
I can kinda see dubuque
From "Iowa," Susan Werner on Hayseed

And in case you think I'm waxing poetic—or getting political—I'm not. This is just another "get on the air" thought about our great hobby.

73, Skip K1NKR

On the Air At the Barn

One More Terrific Picnic!

We had a great time at the QTH of WW4EN. This is the third (third, right?) time

Gene has hosted us. His hospitality, and the club camaraderie, made the day.



WW4EN photo

The following were in attendance.

Harvey W1HBS

Gary K1YTS

Gene WW4EN

John KK1X, Peg KC1EIV, and Peg's friend Kathleen

Bob W1XP and Karen KA1JVU

Stan KD1LE and Lynda N1PBL

Bruce K1BG and XYL Jane

Jim N8VIM

Peter N1ZRG

Dan KW2T

Jim AB1WQ, XYL Alexia, and harmonic Elie.



WW4EN photo

Thanks, Gene! It's hard to tell whether visiting you is a fitting conclusion to a good summer or the beginning of a good club year.

de Skip K1NKR

Hints and Kinks

Dipole Antenna Construction

As the August eclipse was approaching, I recognized that I needed to build a dipole for ten meters so that I could cover all the bands I wanted. As I went along, I thought about one aspect of the process and how it could be improved.

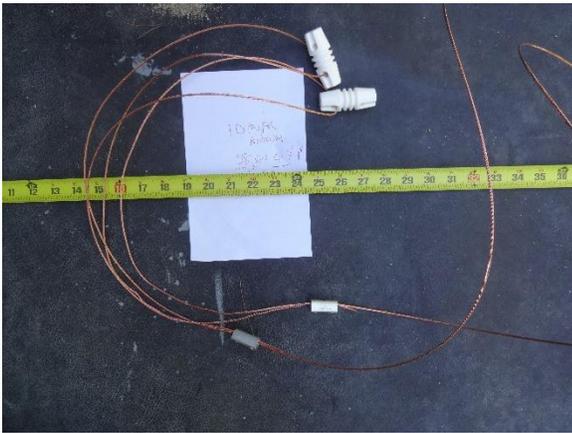
I generally decide how long an antenna should be, then build one a little longer and put it up to test and tune, test and tune. In that process, I put the ends through insulators and fold them back by wrapping the wire around itself temporarily to establish the lengths of the two one-quarter wave element sections. While this works, the end of the wire gets a bit ugly after two or three tries at adjusting the length. This time I tried an alternative method using electrical wire splice devices available from the hardware store or big-box home center.



KD1LE photo

The splices come in several designs. The one on the left above is called a split bolt splice. The wires go through the split bolt then the nut and its captive metal piece is tightened down to squeeze the two wires together. I like this device because it is copper (no dissimilar metals) but it is harder to use as far as tightening goes and it is a bit pricey. Each costs almost as much as a two pack of the type on the right.

The right device is called a splicer/reducer. Like the first type, it can be used to join wires of different sizes. Besides the price difference, the right device is aluminum and has two pressure points. It is very easy to slide along the wire and tighten. These devices come in a range of sizes up into the 00's.



KD1LE photo

Using either device, what you end up with is a loop of wire through the insulator that can easily be adjusted without the ugly twisted ends. To make adjustments just loosen the device and slide it in or out on the element two inches for every inch of adjustment needed and re-tighten. Though either device would probably be fine for a longer term installation I'm inclined to use them to adjust while tuning and then twist, trim, and solder the final product.

Having had all the parts on hand, the result was a ten-meter antenna in about ten minutes of construction time. It took much longer, of course, just running in and out taking pictures and writing this article.

de Stan KD1LE

Strays

Going Full Circle.

Heard on the street, "I don't have to carry a radio like you hams do. I've got a cell phone."

Heard on the radio the other day: "Get the WGBH Listen App and turn your cell phone into a radio."

Yes, technology marches on—but it might be leaving humanity in the dust.



The grass may be greener on the other side. But you don't have to mow it.



You could have contributed something here. What are you waiting for?

Treasurer's Report

We recorded no income for July. Expenses were \$19.60 for newsletter postage, \$52.90 for Arduino kits for the meeting raffle, and \$125 for the Field Day porta-john, leaving a net expense of \$197.50 for the month.

Current balances:

General fund	\$2,658.45
Community fund	\$5,051.52

As of 6 July we have 42 members who are current with their dues and 20 renewals outstanding. Thank you to those of you who hand in your dues before I come to you. Please check your renewal status on the roster circulated at the monthly meeting or ask me.

de Ralph KD1SM

Board Meeting Notes

Board meeting 8/3/2017

Attending: Stan KD1LE, Jim N8VIM, John KK1X, Ralph KD1SM, Rod WA1TAC, Jim AB1WQ, Ed N1YFK.

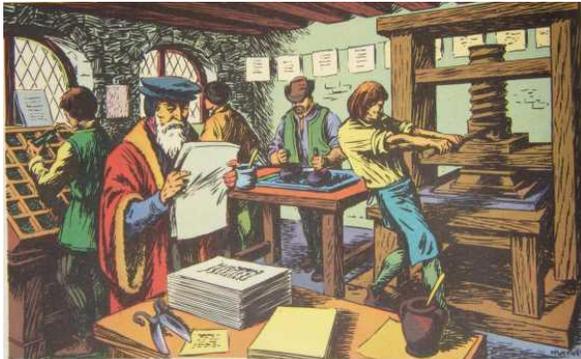
- Tech night has gone by the wayside.
- In September bring up Homebrew and Short Subjects.
- Field Day bills are not completely submitted yet - no other Field Day issues.

Respectfully submitted,
de John KK1X

Club Services

Saturday Breakfast. Not officially a club function, but a consistent part of club life. A dozen or so members (and some wives who are members, and some wives who are not, and some non-members who aren't wives or husbands) rendezvous at Tiny's in Ayer for breakfast at 8am on the dot. Somehow, no matter what food is ordered, no matter how fast the service is, no matter what the conversation topics are, we pull out at 9am. Odd...

Newsletter.



Source: Google Images

Newsletters get published once a month. Input for newsletters gets received less than once a month.

Calendar

Upcoming Events

August

- 20 Flea at MIT
- 27 NoBARC Hamfest, Adams MA

September

- 8-10 N E Division Convention, Boxboro MA
- 17 Flea at MIT
- 21 First NVARC meeting of the new "program year"

October

- 13/14 NEARfest, Deerfield NH
- 15 Flea at MIT, Cambridge
- 21 NEARC Antiques, Brookline NH

Upcoming Operating Activities

August

- 19/20 10 GHz & Up (Round 1)
- 20 Rookie Roundup RTTY

21 Solar Eclipse QSO Party!!!!

September

- 9/10 EME 2.3 GHz & Up
- 9-11 September VHF Contest
- 16/17 10 GHz & Up (Round 2)

October

- 7/8 EME 50-1296
- 16-20 School Club Roundup

November

- 4/5 EME 50-1296
- 4-6 CW Sweepstakes
- 18-20 Phone Sweepstakes

December

- 1-3 160 Meter Contest
- 9/10 10 Meter Contest
- 17 Rookie Roundup CW

Are you a "contest nut?" See <http://www.arrrl.org/contest-calendar> (Contest Corral) for month-by-month listings of both ARRL and non-ARRL contests.

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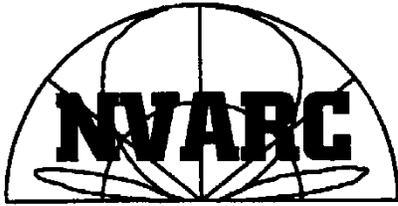
Apologies

Dear Mr Printer,

I put in as many extra carriage returns as I could but it still came up short.

Sorry. Things will get better next month when we get back in the swing of things

73,
Editor



**Nashoba Valley
Amateur Radio Club**

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<http://www.n1nc.org/>

President: Stan Pozerski KD1LE

Vice President: Jim Hein N8VIM

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Jim Wilber AB1WQ, 2016-2019

Ed Snapp N1YFK, 2017-2020

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Emergency Coordinator:

Photographer: Ralph Swick KD1SM

PIO:

Librarian: Peter Nordberg N1ZRG

Property Master: John Griswold KK1X

N1NC Trustee: Bruce Blain K1BG

Join NVARC! Annual membership dues are \$15;
\$20 for a family.

Meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the
month at 7:30 p.m. in the Pepperell Community
Center.

Contact us on the N1MNX repeater.

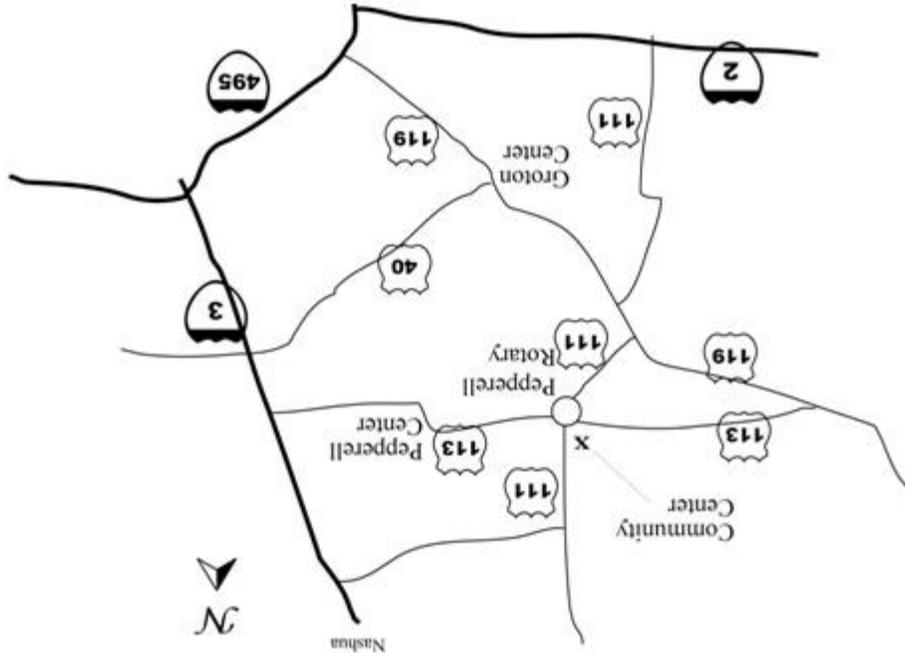
442.900 (+), 100Hz

147.345 (+), 100 Hz

53.890 (-), 100Hz

This newsletter is published monthly. Submis-
sions, corrections and inquiries should be di-
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