

# SIGMA

A club since 1992



Since 1993



Since 1996

de N1NC

April 2018

Volume 27 Number 4

## This Month's Meeting

April. Elections!

But if that's not exciting enough, come hear Jim, N8VIM, regale us with the saga of installing backup/alternative power for his station. We might—but just might—have another talk as well. Depends on who shows up...

Everybody knows and appreciates Jim, who really knows his volts and amps. He supplies us with copious power at Field Day. Field Day. Field Day? Did someone mention Field day.

## The President's Corner

Not too much to report or time to write it. Just after the Board meeting we lost water to the house and most of my effort has been toward resolving that issue. Looks like that will be completed this weekend.

I will be attending the MARA club meeting this evening for their annual QSL Card Sort. Sent the NVARC sorting boxes off yesterday for the event.

The April meeting is elections and we need candidates for a Board Member position. The Board members are there to help guide the direction of the Club for the best benefit of the members. Think about this opportunity to serve the Club.

Another upcoming need is for one or more members to help organize Field Day. It is only two months off at this point.

The Public Service season is upon us. A number of members will be supporting the Boston Marathon. I will be operating as one of the many net control operators. If you haven't supported a large public service event the Marathon may be daunting, but the Groton Road Race is coming up in a couple of weeks and it is a great opportunity to get the experience in a smaller event. One that is greatly appreciated by the organizers and the Groton Police. Contact Ralph KD1SM if you are interested.

The Arduino Group is continuing to meet Monday mornings at 10 AM at the Community Center. We have pretty much finished the original Antenna Analyzer project with many improvements added. One interesting addition that George KB1HFT is working is displaying the data in a Smith Chart. We have begun a second-generation Antenna Analyzer based on a different hardware configuration. That has progressed rapidly and will use the same software developed and enhance for the original model.

73, Stan KD1LE

## News and Happenings

### March Madness

Following Nor'easter number two, NW1U experiments with vertical polarization.



*K1NKR photo*

### **DXCC**

The ARRL DXCC Yearbook is available at <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/DXCC/DXCCYearbook/DXCC%20YEARBOOK%202017.pdf>. How many NVARC members can you find in it? (Hint: Start by looking for the thirteen entries for N1SV and the seven entries for K1BG.)  
*via the ARRL website*

### **Not So Tiny's**

A recent Saturday breakfast had the largest attendance in a long time—about half as many people as attend a monthly meeting. Do you attend? Arrive at eight; out at about nine. Be there or be square!



*KK1X (and friends) photo*

### **Field Day Cometh**

(Just a gentle reminder.)

### **Hobby Similarities**



*Credit: North East Weak Signal Group reflector*

### **Editor's Note**

Editors occasionally get to editorialize. Here goes.

The April meeting is coming up. I know what's going to happen. The Board will meet on the first Thursday of the month and agonize over the fact that no one has volunteered and they (the Board) can't identify anyone to take this or that job. (Oft heard: "We needn't ask so-and-so; he wouldn't be interested or he's too busy.") And then the incumbents will say, "Well OK, if nobody's available I'll run again."

All four executive jobs and one directorship are open. Most clubs—like ours—just tap the last person who gets caught trying to run away. There's nothing wrong with that; it's been done that way in local clubs since at least as far back as the 1940s.

Clubs can be more—or less—active in their management and governance. Some solicit potential officers randomly but make the outgoing president vice-president for a year to ensure continuity. Others see officership/directorship as both a service to the organization and a leadership training opportunity. These clubs have progressions something like: member, secretary, vice-president, president, director, member. (Yes, I left out treasurer. In our case, Ralph's been treasurer since, well, since at least forever. He's conscientious and good at it, and has been accountant and money guardian extraordinaire. He deserves our thanks and praise. Besides, he shouldn't be

released until he completes the 2013 annual report. That should be incentive enough to keep him in the job well, forever.)

Don't get me wrong. I am absolutely not calling for a wholesale replacement of the Board, or of anyone currently serving. They're all doing a great job, and have been doing so for a long time. Example, as president: Stan for the past three years, Peter for the year before him, me for the three prior years, and Stan again for the prior ten. But NVARC has had an influx of new members and talent over the past two club-year cycles. Furthermore, we have long had an untapped reservoir of talent, skill, and perspective. It's time for someone (or two, or three) to step up. The work really isn't hard, and is only as time-consuming as you want to make it.

73, Skip K1NKR

## On the Air

### New England QSO Party, May 5th and 6th

The NEQP is a great time to check out antenna systems and offers a moderately paced opportunity to work new states and countries. You'll find a wide variety of participants, from newcomers to experienced contesters, all interested in making contacts with New England stations.

The QSO Party is 20 hours long overall, in two sections with a civilized break for sleep Saturday night.

It goes from 4pm Saturday until 1am Sunday, then 9am Sunday until 8pm Sunday.

Operate on

CW, SSB and digital modes on 80-40-20-15-10 meters. For each QSO give your callsign, a signal report and your county/state. Top scorers can earn a plaque and everyone who makes 25 QSOs and sends in a log will get a certificate.

via Tom Frenaye, K1KI

ARRL New England Division Director

## Hints and Kinks

### Computerese

We all worry about protecting our files and data. There are pieces of software available both free and at some cost to erase your deleted files. Sometimes you would use these applications when you want to give away an old PC. But it can also be wise to "clean out" your working machine just so old data like tax information is removed.

All that being said, Windows has built in tools to accomplish this. The command is called CIPHER. It's primary purpose is related to disk or file encryption. But it can be used to do what we need. I'll say here, be careful when using any of these tools as the results could be catastrophic if misused. The Simplest use would be to "erase" all the unused space on a disk. This would include all your "deleted" files, which most people understand are not actually deleted but simply marked as unused space.

**cipher /w:c** will accomplish this. But here is another warning. Cipher's process is to write "0x00" to all the space, followed by an overwrite of "0xFF," and finally by random numbers to all the space. I recently ran this on small desktop PC and it took four or five hours. It does tell you what it is doing as it goes along. But it is like watching paint dry.

Typing **cipher /w:yourfoldername** will overwrite unused space in the folder named "yourfoldername."

**Last time warning...be careful. But if you have this perfectly fine PC you would like to make available to a friend or relative without deleting the operating system and applications, this might be the best way to go.**

de Stan KD1LE



## In Case You Were Wondering

*...not so Frequently Asked Questions*

### Duties of Officers

*(a summary drawn from the NVARC Constitution.)*

**The President** shall: 1) preside at all meetings of the club and conduct them according to the rules adopted, 2) enforce observance of the Constitution and the By-Laws, 3) decide all questions of order, 4) sign all official documents that are adopted by the club and none other, and 5) perform all customary duties pertaining to the Office of President. (Article III, Section 1)

**The Vice-President** shall: 1) assume all duties of the President in the absence of the latter, 2) [or his appointee] act in the capacity of Activities Manager, and 3) maintain close liaison with the ARRL Emergency Coordinator or SEC to promote the fullest possible club participation in the Amateur Radio Emergency Service. (Article III, Section 2)

**The Secretary** shall: 1) keep a record of the proceedings of all meetings and publish minutes of each in a timely fashion, 2) carry on all correspondence, 3) read communications at meetings as directed by the Board, 4) mail written notices to each member as required in the By-Laws, 5) keep informed by questionnaires or other means of the capabilities and type of operation of such members as possess station equipment to facilitate emergency organization and to help in planning general interest activities, 6) keep the Constitution and By-Laws of the club and have them with him at every general and special meeting, and 7) cause all amendments, changes and additions to be noted [in the Constitution and By Laws] and permit them to be consulted by members upon request. Article III, Section 3

**The Treasurer** shall: 1) receive and receipt (as required) for all moneys paid to the club, 2) keep an accurate account of all moneys received and expended, 3) make disbursements as directed by the club or its officers, 4) publish regular summaries of club accounts for the general membership, 5) sub-

mit an itemized statement of disbursements and receipts to the club directors at the end of each quarter, 6) receive applications for membership and keep the official roll of current NVARC members, and 6) have [the membership] roll with him at each general and special meeting. (Article III, Section 4)

**The Directors** are charged with the responsibility of guiding the club in all its endeavors. They shall: 1) interpret the wishes of the general membership and guide the officers in that direction, 2) decide questions of interpretation of the NVARC constitution when required, 3) [may] elect Honorary members, 4) audit the financial accounts of the club, 5) review and approve agreements prior to submittal to the general membership for approval, and 6) monitor agreements accepted by the club for compliance. (Article III, Section 5)

## Public Service

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.



*The Groton Line, Jim Rhodes photo*

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 par-

ticipate by having these races end earlier. We'll therefore begin our day at 8am with the (optional) police briefing. Most volunteers need to be on station before the 5k and 10 races start at 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.

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 the past years know that the runners sincerely appreciate our presence. 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 Ralph KD1SM, Stan KD1LE, or John KK1X.

de KD1SM



The Eastern Massachusetts ARRL field organization has been requested to provide an Amateur Radio presence at the **IEEE AP-S/URSI Symposium in Boston**, July 8-12, 2018 at the Westin Boston Waterfront, adjacent to the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center in Boston's Seaport District.

Amateurs will outfit and staff a booth in the trade show area of the conference, where "conference attendees can ask questions about how to get involved in ham radio, either as a hobby or as a vehicle for student learning," according to David Michelson, VE7TSX, Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC. Michelson chairs the IEEE's AP-S/URSI Joint Meetings Committee.

In addition to a booth, the IEEE leaders have requested Volunteer Exam sessions be conducted on the Conference site for attendees interested in obtaining their licenses. "The chances of conflicting with Committee meetings, technical sessions, etc. are very high, so we're suggesting two exam sessions on different days might overcome that problem," Michelson adds.

The EMA Section is seeking amateurs to help with:

- coordination
- publicity
- booth setup
- staffing booths
- volunteer exams
- booth tear down

If you, your radio club, or VE team would like to be involved in this high-profile event, please register to volunteer for **HamRadio @ IEEE AP-S 2018** or contact Phil Temples, K9HI, at k9hi@arrl.org.

via Kayla Creamer, W2IRY

EMA Section Public Information Coordinator

## Ham Radio Web Resources

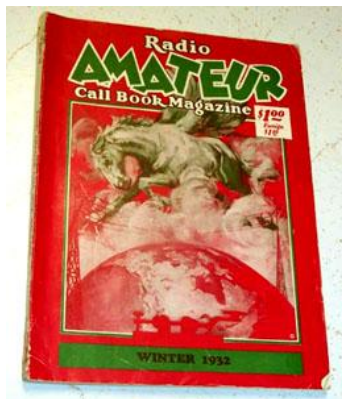
...or, my favorite websites

I'm constantly asked "how do I research an old callsign" or "my uncle who lived in Joplin MO in the 1950's was a ham, but I can't re-

member his callsign. How can I find it?" Well, there is an interesting site that is informally known as "The Wayback Machine", and they have scanned a large number of documents. Among those are many (many) callbooks.

The site is archive.org, and by clicking on <https://archive.org/search.php?query=subject%3A%22callbook%22>. You can search their documents based on the keyword "callbook". The search gives 103 results. That's 103 callbooks that have been individually scanned. The callbooks are fully searchable, and provide you with all of the "matches" it finds. One word of caution – because these books were "scanned," optical character recognition technology is used to match your search. It's not 100% accurate. So if you are looking for all the hams in "Pepperell" in a particular callbook, try a subsequent search for "01463". Between the two searches you should be able to find what you are looking for.

Once you pick on a callbook, there are submenus to help you narrow how much information you are looking through. For instance, you would only want to search through the "1" area for a W1 call or for an address in New England. The sub-menus allow you to select which call area to look at.



Want to know where K9AQP was licensed in the 1950s? Want to know who the hams were who lived in East Providence, RI in the 1960s? This is a great place to research that stuff. If you run into any problems or need some help, just let me know.

Have any interesting internet sites you would like to share? Let me know and I'll include them in future articles. Thanks and 73.

de Bruce, K1BG

## Treasurer's Report

Income for March was \$45 from membership fees. Expenses were \$20.40 for newsletter postage leaving a net income of \$24.60 for the month.

Current balances:

General fund \$3,041.09

Community fund \$5,061.52

As of 5 April, we have 40 members who are current with their dues and 23 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 4/5/2018

Attending: Stan KD1LE, Jim N8VIM, John KK1X, Ralph KD1SM, Rod WA1TAC, Jim AB1WQ. Observing: Skip K1NKR.

- April elections. Board is willing to remain. We need to replace Rod.
- Jim AB1WQ and Skip to check internet connection at the Community Center.
- Jim AB1WQ to poll Bob Jackson to see if he's interested.
- Jim N8VIM has a presentation concept about solar power
- Field Day is coming up - we need a leader
- Potential for Phil Erickson to do a talk
- Need May and June presentations
- GRR 2/3 staffed
- John needs to update ARRL web site information
- Jim AB1WQ attended the ARES Academy last month
- Rod proposes a talk in the fall for FT-8 - will contact K1YOW
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Respectfully submitted,

de John KK1X

## Club Services

**WAMC Award.** NVARC sponsors and administers the Worked All Massachusetts Counties Award. Counties (there are fourteen of them), not cities and towns (there are 351 of them). Aren't you relieved? See <http://www.n1nc.org/WAMC/> for information.

**PowerPole Discounts.** Need PowerPole connectors? Don't want to pay full price (or higher)? They're about a buck a set on the street; fifty cents a set (*i.e.*, one red plus one black, 30 amp) from NVARC stock. See Ralph. He mostly packages on request, preferring multiples of five, but is willing to do other quantities.

**Loaner Equipment.** We're not an "inventory" club, but there's a rig, power supply, and antenna available for newbies or to tide you over when your equipment is on the fritz. Contact John, KK1X.

## Calendar

### April

22 Eastern VHF/UHF Conference, Manchester CT  
29 Groton Road Race

### May

4,5 NEARfest, Deerfield NH  
20 Flea at MIT

### June

2 NEARC antiques flea, Brookline NH  
17 Flea at MIT

### Upcoming Operating Activities

#### 2018

International Grid Chase (all year!)  
Science Milestones event (all year!)

### April

21 International Marconi Day  
28 W1BSA on the USS Massachusetts

### May

5,6 New England QSO Party

### June

1-3 Museum Ships on the Air  
9-11 June VHF Contest

16 Kids Day  
23,24 Field Day

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

## Advertisers



*Via the QCWA Journal*



**Nashoba Valley  
Amateur Radio Club**

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

**President:** Stan Pozerski KD1LE

**Vice President:** Jim Hein N8VIM

**Secretary:** John Griswold KK1X

**Treasurer:** Ralph Swick KD1SM

**Board Members:**

Rod Hersh WA1TAC, 2015-2018

Jim Wilber AB1WQ, 2016-2019

Ed Snapp N1YFK, 2017-2020

Editor: Skip Youngberg K1NKR

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

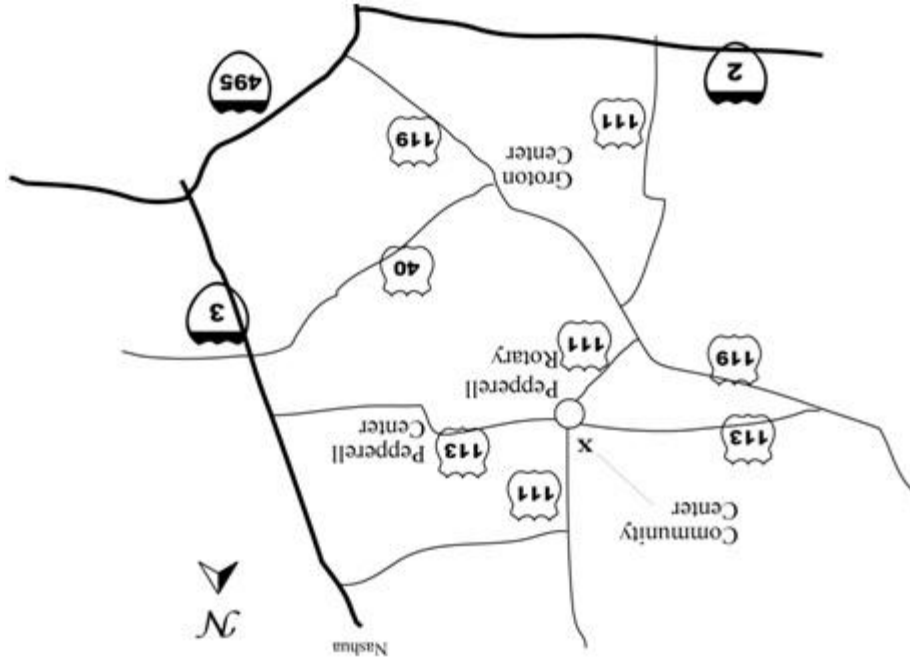
53.890 (-), 100Hz

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sions, corrections and inquiries should be di-  
rected to the newsletter editor. Articles and  
graphics in most PC-compatible formats are OK.

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