



SIGNAL



de NINC

February 2010 Volume 19 Number 2

This Month's Meeting

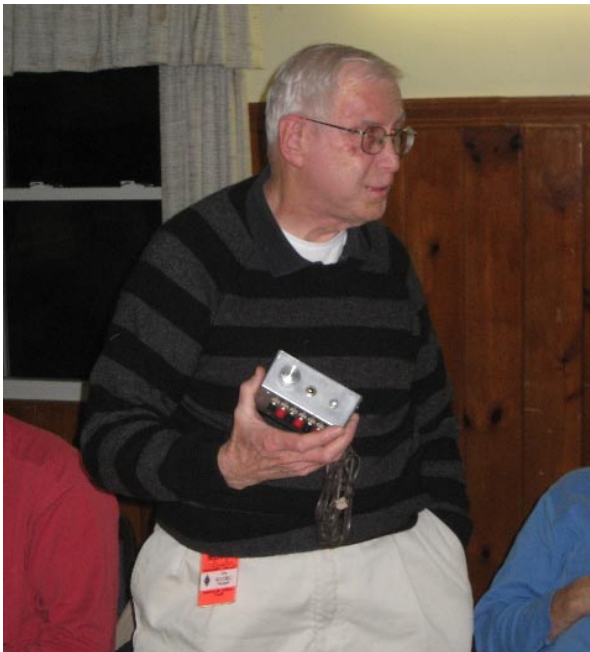
We are working on several options for this month's meeting presentation but nothing is firm as of the newsletter deadline.

Remember the Lantern Battery Challenge logs are due by/at the March meeting.

This month's meeting is Thursday February 18th

Photo credits for the pictures of Homebrew Night in the January Signal belong to Ralph KD1SM

James Hanson W1TRC SK



NVARC member James Hanson W1TRC became a Silent Key February 8, 2010. Jim gave several technical presentations at NVARC meetings and was a contributing author to QST. Jim was an electronics engineer at Raytheon before his retirement.

Last Month's Meeting

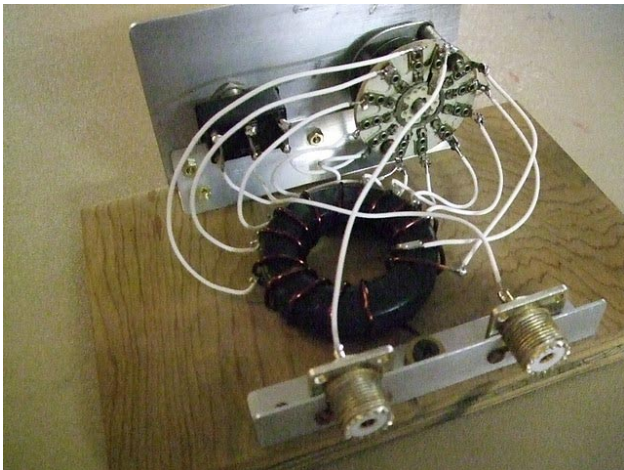
The January program was Members Short Subjects. We had quite a few members who had a presentation or something they brought in to talk about.



Dennis K1LGQ presented a QRP tuner kit he assembled (above), a small CW paddle he built and customized (not shown)



Dennis also showed the tensioning system he uses for his dipoles (above) to protect them from being drawn too tight when the trees sway.



Bob W1XP showed a matching circuit he built using a toroid autotransformer shown above.



Bob also talked about the general form of matching circuits (bottom left).



Rod WA1TAC did a slide show on two trips he took to South Korea thirty years apart (above).

Photos courtesy of KK1X

In attendance were Bruce K1BG, Dennis K1LGQ, Skip, K1NKR, Jim K1PTF, Gary K1YTS, Ed KA1QL, Wolf KA1VOU, Stan KD1LE, Pete KB1LZH, John KK1X, Dave N1MNX, Peter N1ZRG, Jim N8VIM, Joel W1JMM, Dick W1LTN, Roland W1RLG, Bob W1XP, Erik W1ZBT, Rod WA1TAC, Earl WR1Y

December Homebrew Meeting

Additional pictures from the Homebrew meeting.



Dick W1LTN showed his set up for bicycle mobile with the rig on the left, the key switch on the right, and the antenna mounted on the back which you cannot see.



Phil KB1JKL showed the Q meter he built that worked with the MFJ Antenna analyzer and a modification to the MFJ 259 to power it with Li-ion battery.



Bruce K1BG showed (bottom left) the QRP dummy load he built for working with the QRP rigs as he prepared for the NVARC Lantern Battery Challenge.

ARRL N.E. Div Cabinet Meeting

On Saturday, 9 January I attended the ARRL New England Division “cabinet” meeting called by New England Division Director Tom Frenaye K1KI.

All Club Presidents, Section Managers, and Assistant Section Managers in ARRL sections within the New England Division are invited to this twice-yearly meeting.

The meeting is scheduled for a week or two prior to the ARRL Board of Directors meeting. Tom K1KI uses the meeting to share information and listen to input from the ARRL field appointees within the Division.

Topics discussed at this meeting included Amateur Radio licensing statistics (the number of licensed Amateurs in New England is slowly increasing), opportunities for getting some of the new licensees from the public safety and emergency care communities to participate in other aspects of Amateur Radio, regulatory issues, and reports from representatives of the various Advisory Committees (DXCC, VUCC, etc.)

A lengthy discussion at this meeting concerned recent notices the FCC has issued regarding 97.113 -- the regulation concerning the use of Amateur Radio on behalf on one’s employer. The general sense of the discussion was that the FCC is signaling an interest in modifying this rule in some way and would like the Amateur community to discuss what language might better reflect the intent of the rule.

We also heard a report from our Amateur Radio representative to the FEMA New England Regional Emergency Communications Working Group, an update on the status of the Memorandum of Understanding with the American Red Cross, and some discussion of localized malicious interference issues. I hope to be able to share minutes of this meeting in the next newsletter.

Ralph KD1SM

PSLIST

Every event needs communications volunteers

No events currently scheduled.

See www.n1nc.org/Events for the latest information

Board Meeting

Discussion of upcoming meeting presentations. No program firm for February. John, Larry, and Stan are each working on a possible program.

Ralph submitted the Treasurers report for the newsletter and is included below.

The Board has decided to continue in the MassHighways Adopt a Highway program for this year.

Larry reported on new Emergency Management Director in Groton who is the Police Chief. He has held his first meeting to find out where things stand in emergency preparedness. He was interested to hear what people had to say. He is starting monthly meetings to get things rolling again. Seemed interested in continuing our relationship in support of the Groton Road Race.

Ralph received new books for the raffle some of which we used last month.

Chocolate chip cookies hot out of the oven were served.

In attendance were Stan KD1LE, Peter N1ZRG, Larry, Skip K1NKR and John KK1X.

Adopt A Highway

At the Board Meeting there was a discussion about whether we should continue in the MassHighway Adopt A Highway Program. It was felt that we get good publicity and recognition from this activity and though it is not a radio activity it is still a public service and should continue.

Treasurers Report

Income for January was \$50 from membership dues and \$53 from the book raffle. Expenses were \$17.60 for newsletter postage and \$185.20 for books for the raffle leaving a net expense of \$99.80 for the month.

Current balances:

General fund	\$4,135.27
Community fund	\$3,771.41

Welcome to new members George Kavanagh KB1HFT of Chelmsford and Drew W1PCQ and Erica KA1LDP Davenport of Townsend.

As of 3 February we have 47 members who are current with their dues and 21 renewals outstanding. Please check your renewal status on the roster circulated at the monthly meeting or ask Ralph.

If your ARRL membership is ready for renewal, you can let Ralph mail it in for you and the Club will get a commission. If you're interested in joining the ARRL and do so through Ralph the Club will get a bigger commission. ARRL membership checks should be made payable to NVARC so that our commission can be deducted before we forward your membership to Newington.

Ralph KD1SM

MassCon QRP Convention

The Massachusetts QRP Convention is being held at the Westford Regency Inn and Conference Center. March 12-13.

See <http://www.masscon.org/> for more information.

PART is hosting the event.

Upcoming Club Activities

April
First Road Cleanup
25th Groton Road Race
April Club Meeting Elections

May
23rd Parker Road Race

June
Field Day

ARRL Letter

Public Service: MARS Unifies Operation in Support of Haiti Relief Effort

To assist the MARS communications support effort in Haiti, the heads of the Army, Air Force, and Navy-Marine Corps MARS programs have agreed to divvy up responsibilities among the three Service MARS programs. According to Air Force MARS Public Information Officer David Trachtenberg, N4WWL/AFA3TR, this delegation of responsibility will facilitate more efficient utilization of MARS communications assets in the overall relief operation. On January 12, a 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti, killing thousands and wiped out the island nation's communication infrastructure.

FCC News : FCC Notes Amateur Radio Response to Haitian Earthquake

In a posting on January 28 to the FCC's blog, Mindel DeLaTorre -- the Commission's International Bureau Chief -- noted how Amateur Radio operators are assisting with communications support in earthquake ravaged Haiti. "The amateur radio community is also contributing to the relief efforts," she wrote. "In the aftermath of the earthquake, the amateur radio community in Haiti, the Dominican Republic and elsewhere has dedicated equipment and spectrum resources to the relief efforts." DeLaTorre reiterated that those who want to assist in the relief effort must go through the proper channels: "For anyone wanting to help, to protect against harmful interference, it is important to go through the Haitian government before any radio equipment or spectrum resources are used in Haiti."

Public Service: Haitian Agency Announces Contact Information for Amateurs Going to Haiti to Provide Disaster Relief

The offices of CONATEL -- Haiti's national telecommunications regulator -- were destroyed in the January 12 earthquake that devastated the island nation. This office, like the FCC in the US, administers the Amateur Radio Service in Haiti. Hams interested in traveling to Haiti to help provide communications support have been at a loss as to whom to contact. CONATEL has set up temporary offices in a Port-au-Prince suburb and has indicated that those volunteers who wish to operate in Haiti to assist with disaster relief need to contact the agency to get formal reciprocal operating clearance.

Public Service: ARRL Sends Ham Aid Equipment to Haiti

While the communications infrastructure in earthquake-ravaged Haiti is being rebuilt, there is need for Amateur Radio communications. To assist in this effort, the ARRL's Ham Aid program is providing equipment for local amateurs to use. On Friday, January 22, the League sent a programmed Yaesu VHF repeater with a microphone, as well as ICOM handheld transceivers, Yaesu mobile 2 meter rigs with power supplies and Kenwood mobile 2 meter rigs. Comet antennas, Larsen mobile antennas with magnet mounts, coax and batteries were also included in the package. Most items were donated by their manufacturers; the repeater and power supplies were purchased by the ARRL several years ago using post-Hurricane Katrina grant funds.

Doug Lapin, K1OY (in front with tie), presents the 10 Kenwood handheld transceivers to the Radio Club Dominicano, the Dominican Republic's IARU Member Society. The radios were courtesy of the ARRL's Ham Aid program.

On January 25, Doug Lapin, K1OY, the Dominican Republic's Ambassador Accredited to the Secretary of State of Foreign Relations, stopped by ARRL Headquarters on his way back home. When he left, he carried with him 10 Kenwood handheld receivers, courtesy of the League's Ham Aid program. "We're making progress," Lapin told the ARRL on January 27. "The [Ham Aid package you sent] is stuck in customs. I'm working on getting it out. Members of the Radio Club Dominicano were much appreciative of the radios I brought and found it funny that my hand-carried radios arrived before the package. If we get it out, we will go back to Haiti tomorrow with the equipment."

The Doctor Is IN: Tubes and Tube Replacements

Rick Richardson, VE7WF, of New Westminster, British Columbia, recently has acquired some vintage vacuum tube-based equipment. He recalled that years ago, there was a product on the market -- Tubesters -- solid state replacements for vacuum tubes. He asked the ARRL's Doctor if anyone still manufactures such devices.

Here's what the Doctor had to say:

I do remember them, as well. If I recall, these were popular in the 1970s. To my knowledge, they are no longer available. You may find some on Internet auction sites from time to time. But before you go too far in that direction, I would think about what problem you are trying to solve. Old tube gear works very well with tubes, probably with better performance than "force fit" solid state replacements. In those days, many solid state receivers were quite vulnerable to overload and other problems, for example.

The nice thing is that most tubes are still available, often unused in original boxes and generally at similar prices to what they cost 50 years ago. An Internet search will turn up a number of places that sell tubes. I've always had good luck with Antique Electronic Supply. If used within their ratings, tubes can last many years. I have WW2 vintage equipment that still works with some original tubes. I also have Drake tube based equipment from the period still going strong.

ARRL Lab Engineer Bob Allison, WB1GCM -- an amateur with years of dedicated experience with vintage gear -- notes that if the equipment has sat

around for many years, the chances are the tubes are gassy. The glass part of a tube is not a perfect envelope. One molecule of air at a time leaks into the tube and after a few years, the performance degrades. If a tube hasn't been used in 20 or 30 years, it can appear to be totally dead. The trick to solve this is to let the radio run for a day or two. The filaments in the tubes will eventually burn away whatever air is inside and the tubes will often be back in good shape.

The only exception that I often make is to replace power rectifiers with plug-in solid state equivalents. I usually make my own, but they are also commercially available. My rationale is that rectifier tubes generate a lot of heat the old gear doesn't need. In addition, the filaments can draw 15 to 20 W and by removing that load from the power transformer it should stay cool and last longer. Unlike tubes, power transformers are not so easy to find. If needed, the original condition can be restored by unplugging the solid state unit and putting the tube back.

Thanks Doctor! Do you have a question or a problem? Send your questions via e-mail or to "The Doctor," ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111 (no phone calls, please). Look for "The Doctor Is IN" every month in QST, the official journal of the ARRL.

Now You Know!: Phil "Gil" Gildersleeve, W1CJD

By ARRL News Editor S. Khrystyne Keane, K1SFA

Longtime readers of QST will certainly remember the cartoons of Phil Gildersleeve, W1CJD (ex-1ANE). Known affectionately as "Gil," he drew more than 1500 cartoons for the ARRL, many of them appearing on the pages of QST.

Gil's QSL card.

Gil started cartooning for the ARRL back in June 1927. His characters -- such as Jeeves the Butler and the gang at the Podunk Hollow Radio Club -- became old friends to readers of QST. Gil's first Jeeves cartoon was published in February 1940: From the other room comes his master's voice, saying, "Jeeves, come here and help me look for DX!" Jeeves, not really sure what exactly DX is, comes on the run with a road map, a telescope, binoculars, a lantern, a compass and a butterfly net in hand! As a native of the great state of Texas, my favorite Jeeves cartoon shows him trying to push a giant QSL card (from Texas, of course!) through the door -- the card can barely get through. Of course, things are bigger in Texas! If you ever tour ARRL Headquarters, you can see a large version of this cartoon in the second floor hallway.

The mythical Podunk Hollow Radio Club depicted the idiosyncrasies of a group of radio enthusiasts getting together. The cover for the June 1964 issue of QST shows the Podunkers -- hundreds of them -- happily camped out in a forest setting. In the large tent in the rear, several hams are operating their radios. In the foreground, several more are chatting up a couple of attractive girls in a convertible, little cartoon hearts fluttering over one ham's head. And off to the far right, the Department of Conservation is beginning to set up their blasting apparatus with its accompanying signs of "Turn off all two-way radios!"

But Gil also used his cartoons to teach proper on-the-air behavior. In March 1938, he drew an eight panel cartoon of a man calling CQ on CW. Each panel had the man getting older, where by the seventh panel, he was old, bald and with a long beard, spider webs all around. The last panel showed a tombstone that read "Here lies C. Q. McGall. He died without even signing his call." The next month, Gil drew a single panel cartoon with a line separating the panel into two parts. In the first part, he showed a radio amateur "all worn to a frazzle" from handling so much traffic, as well as dealing with QRM. The second half showed two amateurs handling traffic as a team, "all full of vim and vigor." Gil's point was spot-on: "Cooperative operating does a better job with greater efficiency all around. Instead of harassed, inefficient, overworked operators, put key stations on a 6 or 8 hour basis, with relief and second operators for efficiency during intensive operation."

Gil's interests were not limited to ham radio. A native of Portland, Connecticut, he began working for the Middletown (CT) Press as the Portland correspondent in 1940, became county editor in 1943 then city editor in 1945. Sometime later, he was named news editor. His cartoons also decorated the Press and various trade journals. He served in the volunteer fire company and was captain of Fire Company No 2 for nine years, as a member of the Portland Board of Education for eight years, and as a vestryman in his local church.

In 1966, he was chairman of Portland's 125th anniversary celebration. As part of the celebration, he drew the town seal, depicting a number of elements of historical Portland. Foremost is an old-time oxen driver with his team, pulling a large brownstone sling; the greater part of Portland's 19th century wealth came from the brownstone industry. To the left of the oxen is a small building like those visible in old pictures of the quarries. Its tall chimney is smoking, connoting industry. To the right is another such building atop the quarry wall with a pulley for lowering things into the quarry.

Gil passed away on November 4, 1966. "His work became a tradition," wrote former QST Managing Editor Laird Campbell, W1CUT (SK) in the foreword of Gil: A Collection of Classic Cartoons from QST. "His knack for expressing ideas, feelings or situations unique to Amateur Radio was, and still is, unexcelled. [He] could take a rudimentary idea and turn it into a final masterpiece through the uncanny strokes of his pen. Gil's creations will never be forgotten...his conceptions remain alive in the minds of both old-timers and newcomers to Amateur Radio." Now you know!

Haiti Earthquake: Dominican Hams Attempt to Install Repeaters in Haiti

Members of the Radio Club Dominicano (RCD) -- the Dominican Republic's IARU Member-Society -- and Union Dominicana de Radio Aficionados (UDRA) arrived in Haiti late last week to install an emergency radio communications station and a mobile station. Shortly after they arrived, the hams returned to the Dominican Republic for safety reasons.

"Within a few hours though, reports via the RCD Facebook page reported that the HI8RCD team of eight amateurs was back in the [Dominican Republic] border town of Jimani," said IARU Region 1 Emergency Communications Coordinator Greg Mossop, G0DUB. "Their convoy, which included other non related Dominicans, was assaulted. The radio amateurs are uninjured, but they decided to leave the capital for safety [reasons] and return to the border unescorted. They report the situation as 'extremely unsafe.'"

The team was able to install two VHF repeaters: one in the Dominican Republic border town of Juman? and another Port-au-Prince. Mossop said that these repeaters have been used by the Red Cross and Civil Defense since, until quite recently, there has been no other way to communicate. The station at the embassy in Haiti could not be activated.

"The HI8RCD team of amateurs is still in Juman?, where many wounded are arriving," said IARU Region 2 Secretary Ram?n Santoyo, XE1KK. "They are helping Haitians to contact their relatives and friends outside of Haiti, but they can't help the world to find specific individuals in Haiti. They are receiving many e-mails with such requests, but security and road conditions make impossible to look for specific individuals in Haiti at the present."

Public Service: Ham Helps Out in Riverside County Desert Rescue

The injured man was on the Bradshaw Trail (marked in green), 8 miles north of a campground north of Niland, California. [Map courtesy of the US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management]

On the afternoon of Saturday, January 16, Christopher Walsh, KJ6BBS, of Irvine, California, was listening to radio traffic on 446.760 MHz, a channel used by the Los Angeles area-based Pocket Auto-Patch Association (PAPA) system -- an Amateur Radio network of 22 interlinked analog and digital D-STAR repeaters that provides extensive coverage of the Southern California region and beyond -- when he heard an emergency radio call break from Jose Hernandez, K16PCK, of Thousand Oaks, California, reporting an injured male who had broken some ribs from an ATV-type accident.

ARRL Recognizes: ARRL Board Bestows Awards at 2010 Annual Meeting

The ARRL Board of Directors had the pleasure and distinction of bestowing two annual awards at its 2010 Annual Meeting -- the inaugural George Hart Distinguished Service Award and the Bill Leonard, W2SKE, Professional Media Award. The Hart Award -- established by the Board at its 2009 Second Meeting -- is named in honor of George Hart, W1NJM, who served as Communications Manager at ARRL Headquarters and was the chief developer of the National Traffic System (NTS). The award is conferred upon an ARRL member whose service to the League's Field Organization is of the most exemplary nature. Selection criteria include the nominee's operating record with the National Traffic System, participation within the Amateur Radio Emergency Service? (ARES?), or station appointments and/or leadership positions held within the ARRL Field Organization.

The Bill Leonard, W2SKE, Professional Media Award is a national level award given each year to honor three professional journalists whose outstanding coverage in audio, video and print formats best reflect the enjoyment, importance and public service value of the Amateur Radio Service.

Now You Know!: The ARRL Amateur Auxiliary

By ARRL News Editor S. Khrystyne Keane, K1SFA

The Amateur Auxiliary is composed of approximately 700 ARRL volunteer-appointees known as Official Observers (OO). Located across the country, they monitor the bands and notify amateurs of technical and operating discrepancies as a service to their fellow hams. Time and again, the FCC has indicated

the responsibility to keep our operating standards and spectrum in shape rests with the Amateur Service. The Amateur Auxiliary program and its OOs are the League's answer to this challenge.

ARRL Official Observers (OO) send out postcards to other amateurs to alert them to possible equipment factors or operating practices that might have contributed to an apparent departure from a rule or good amateur practice standards.

The OO Program has four main objectives: to foster a wider knowledge of and better compliance with the FCC rules; to extend the concepts of self-regulation and self-administration in the Amateur Service; to enhance the opportunity for individual amateurs to contribute to the public welfare, and to enable the FCC's Enforcement Bureau to efficiently and effectively utilize its limited manpower and resources. The role of the Amateur Auxiliary is to provide an unbiased forum for technical and operational advice and other assistance to amateurs who are receptive. The task is not to find fault or lay blame. It is to identify cause and effect, many of which are not based upon technical, but behavioral or social issues, as well as to find ways to achieve solutions to promote good amateur operating and engineering practice on our bands.

Even though you might consider yourself a good operator (and don't we all consider ourselves to be good operators?), you might receive an OO Notice. If you do get one, don't worry! The OO post card is simply a friendly note to alert you to possible equipment factors or operating practices that might have contributed to an apparent departure from a rule or the good amateur practice standard. Remember, OOs are friendly helper-advisors; their mission is to assist those who are receptive to being assisted. You do not need to reply to the notice, but you may want to take a few minutes to determine what caused the apparent problem and then take steps to fix it. Your corrective actions might even head off an FCC "pink slip" down the road (which, by the way, are not pink!).

Keep in mind that OOs are advised to avoid hair-splitting and to deal only with black-and-white rule discrepancies only. For example, an OO should not send a notice to someone who forgot to identify his station for 10 minutes and 8 seconds! If you feel that the OO sent you a notice that violates the principles of the program, send a copy to your Section Manager or to Headquarters for evaluation and possible action -- quality control is critically important in a program as sensitive as this one.

OOs are encouraged to send out Good Operator Reports to those amateurs they hear exhibiting excellent radio signal and/or quality operating procedures.

To emphasize the positive nature of the Amateur Auxiliary Program, OOs will also send out "Good Operator Reports" to those operators whose radio signals and/or operating practices are consistent with the highest standards and are a model for others to follow. Every amateur should strive to pattern their operating and signals after your example.

Prospective OOs must pass a comprehensive examination based on a set of study materials before they can be certified as members of the Amateur Auxiliary; they must also be an ARRL member and be licensed for at least four years. If you are interested in becoming an OO, contact your Section Manager. Now you now!

Silent Key: CQ Magazine Columnist Dave Ingram, K4TWJ (SK)

Dave Ingram, K4TWJ (SK)

Dave Ingram, K4TWJ, who penned the "World of Ideas" and "How It Works" columns in CQ Magazine, passed away Wednesday, January 20, from complications due to a heart attack late last year. He was 67. A writer and columnist at CQ since 1981, Ingram -- an ARRL member -- began his career at the magazine writing the amateur television "World of Video" column that later morphed into the "World of Ideas," covering code keys, stealth antennas, building "new vintage" tube gear, mobiling and more. Ingram also served as CQ's QRP Editor. "His enthusiasm for whatever caught his interest was contagious and spread widely through his informal, yet educational writing style," recalled CQ Managing Editor Rich Moseson, W2VU. Ingram also wrote for RadCom -- the Radio Society of Great Britain's member journal -- and other international ham magazines. Funeral arrangements are pending. -- Information provided by CQ Magazine

2010 Flea Markets/Conventions

February
13 Algonquin ARC Hamfest, Marlboro, MA, see www.n1em.org
27 Ham-Con Colchester VT

March
6 Mt Tom ARA Flea Market
20 ECARA Pomfret CT

April
11 FARA Flea Framingham
18 MIT
30 NEARfest, Deerfield NH

May
1 NEARfest Deerfield NH
16 MIT

August
27-29 ARRL NE Convention, Boxborough

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Tell them you saw it in the Signal. Advertisers should contact the NVARC Treasurer for information.

Upcoming Operating Events

February

20-21 ARRL International DX Contest (CW)
26 CQ 160 Meter Contest SSB
27 North American QSO Party RTTY

March

6-7 ARRL International DX Contest (Phone)
14 North American Sprint RTTY
27 CQ WW WPX Contest SSB

June

12-14 ARRL June VHF QSO Party
19 Kids Day
26 ARRL Field Day

July

10-11 IARU HF World Championships

For further info on these and other contests refer to;
<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.html>.



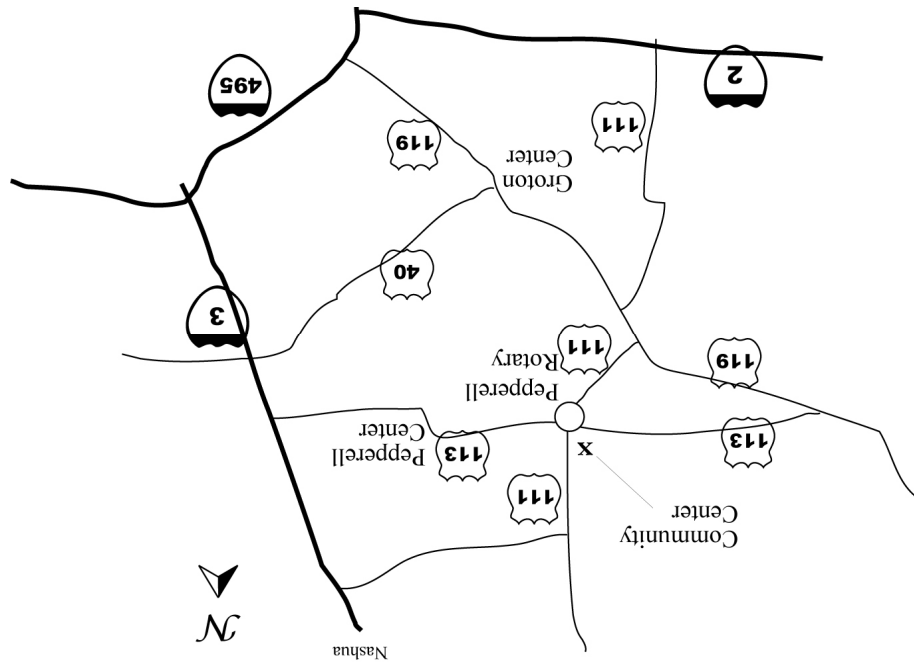
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Skip Youngberg K1NKR 2008-2011
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Meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month
7:30 p.m. - Pepperell Community Ctr.
Talk-in 146.490 simplex
442.900 + 100Hz Repeater battery power
147.345 + 100 Hz Repeater
53.890 - 100Hz Repeater battery power
This newsletter is published monthly. Submissions, corrections and inquiries should be directed to the newsletter editor. Articles and graphics in most IBM-PC formats are OK.
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