



SIGNAL



de NINC

January 2011 Volume 20 Number 01

This Month's Meeting

This month's meeting is Thursday January 20th at 7:30 at the Pepperell Community Center.

The January Short Subjects program depends on local content. We need your participation to make it a success.

From The President

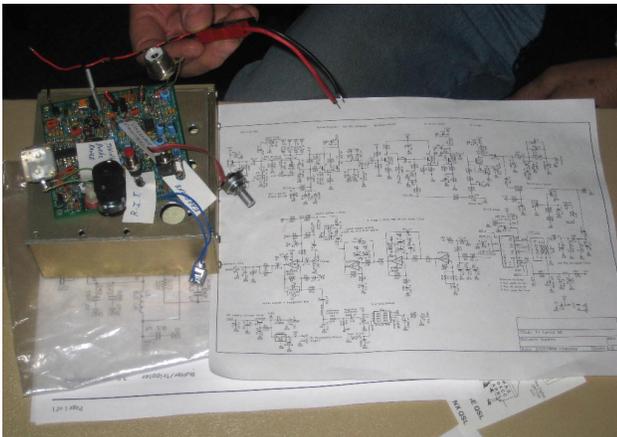
I hope everyone had a good holiday season and welcome back for 2011.

We have a slate of regular activities for the year as well as some new ones we hope to try like Lighthouses on the Air. The success of all of these events depends on your support. So I hope to see some new members lead or support our activities.

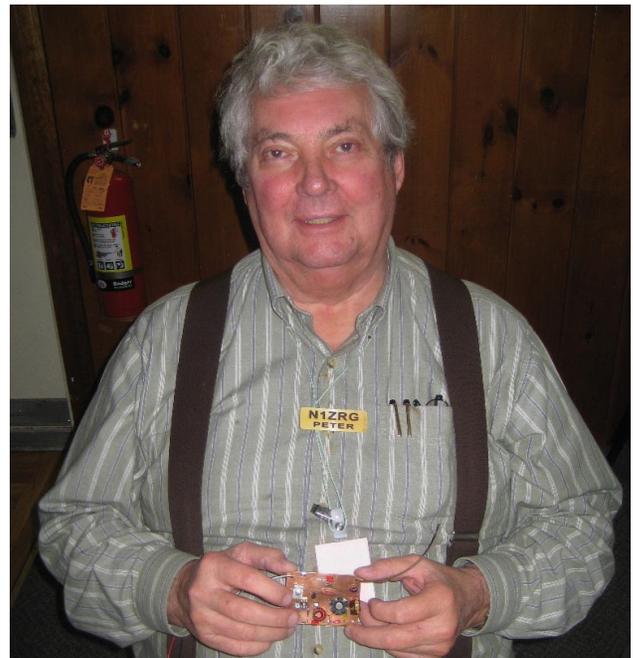
Stan KD1LE

Last Month's Meeting

Last month's meeting program was Homebrew. There were a large number of members who had something to show making the evening a success.



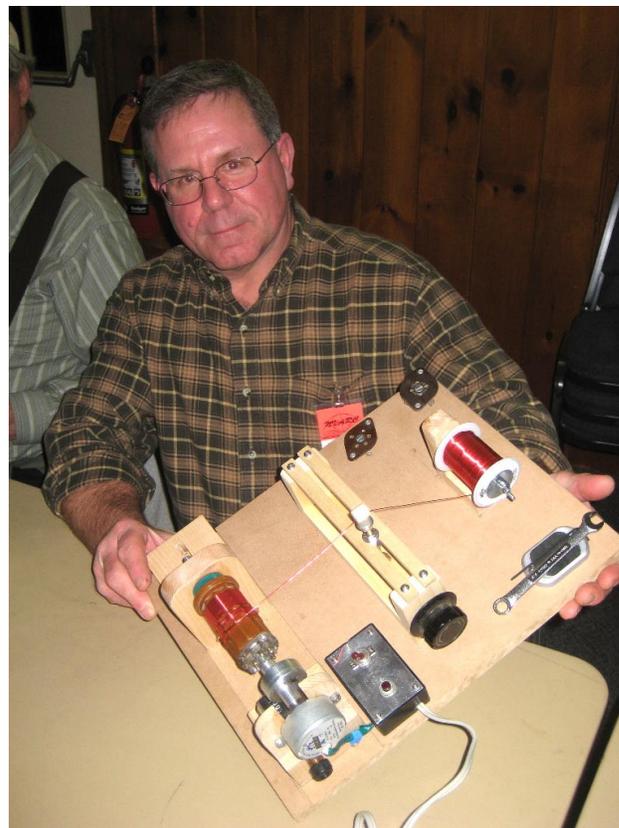
Dennis K1LGQ showed a QRP transceiver and a QRP antenna tuner.



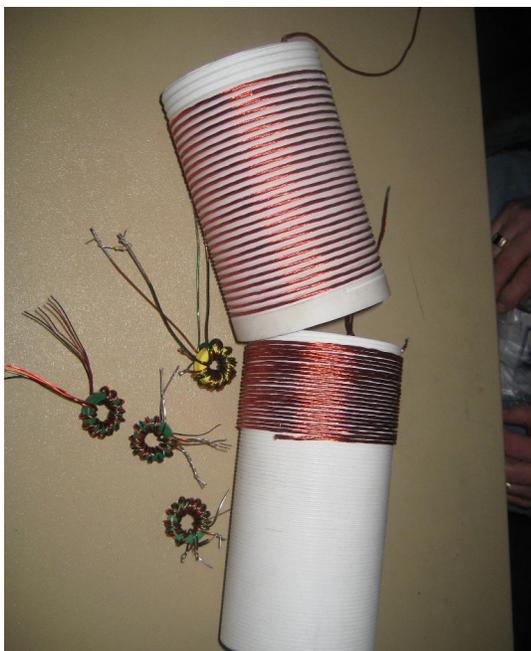
Peter N1ZRB showed a QRP rig (W1XP design) he built.



Rod WA1TAC showed an HF amplifier he was storing.



Leo K1LK showed a coil winder he built for plug in coils used to change bands in a tube radio he built.



Phil KB1JKL showed coil cores that were machined to make winding them easier and to maintain spacing.

Skip K1NKR showed his shack grounding system which was a short Powerpoint presentation.

Thanks to everyone who participated and made this meeting a success.

NVARC Net

The NVARC net meets on 442.900 N1MNX repeater Mondays at 8:00 PM. The net is for sharing information and asking questions. Recent topics were meeting programs, antenna suggestions for new hams

Bring your questions and topics for discussion so that we can all learn something.

Recent checkins Jim N8VIM, N1MNX, Stan KD1LE/NCS, Gary K1YTS, Skip K1NKR, Dick W1LTN, Bob W1XP and Roland NR1G, KB1ESR .Larry.

PSLIST

No events currently listed.

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

Board Meeting

Reminder that if you have a homebrew item let us know.

Ralph gave the treasurers report which is reported in its own section.

There was a discussion on ways to improve the Monday night net in terms of content. Encourage participants to bring questions, quizzes based on a topic of interest, etc.

Meeting programs were discussed. Skip K1NKR is working to schedule programs. We are always looking for a short subject or show-and-tell to add to each meeting. Skip discussed the calendar of programs as far as it was known.

Possible participation in Groton's Octoberfest for public awareness.

The December program will be Homebrew Night. January is Members Short Subjects. Please contact one of the officers if you have a presentation for January so that the meeting can be planned.

In attendance were Stan KD1LE, Skip K1NKR, John KK1X.

Adopt A Highway

Next clean up will be in April 2011.

Treasurers Report

Income for December was \$30 in membership renewals and \$10.96 in bank interest. We had no expenses to be paid.

Current balances:

General fund	\$3,855.46
Community fund	\$4,336.41

As of 6 January we have 43 members who are current with their dues and 24 renewals outstanding. Please check your renewal status on the roster circulated at the monthly meeting or ask Ralph.

If you are not yet an ARRL member and are interested in joining, please consider letting Ralph send in the paperwork for you. The Club will buy the stamp and will get a commission from ARRL.

If your ARRL membership is ready for renewal, you can let Ralph mail it in for you and the Club will still get a (smaller) commission. ARRL membership checks should be made payable to NVARC; we deduct our commission before we forward your paperwork to Newington.

Ralph KD1SM

Web Hits

de Skip, K1NKR

One of the reflectors I get recently highlighted lin-Smith: a Smith charting program for Linux (<http://jcoppens.com/soft/linsmith/index.en.php>).

But one reviewer wrote, "I tried Linsmith for about 1 minute and could not figure out how to edit a list of components, so obviously the program sucks (or I have way too little attention span!)." You've heard of YMMV (your mileage may vary). Well, this guy's probably driving a Hummer but I know he's an accomplished engineer so I took his subsequent recommendations seriously.

For interactive smith chart work, that reviewer preferred Lance Lascari's (WS2B's) program on Windows:

(http://tools.rfdude.com/RFdude_Smith_Chart_Program/RFdude_smith_chart_program.html) ...and for Linux, the GTK Smith Chart Calculator on the IK5NAX website: (<http://www.qsl.net/ik5nax/>).

Another program the reviewer found recently is a much more powerful free circuit simulator, Qucs, which includes active and passive components, component and frequency sweeps, S-parameters, and Smith charts: (<http://qucs.sourceforge.net/screenshots.html>).

Try 'em out and let me and the club know what you think—maybe during short subjects night.

Another submission by Les N1SV

There was a thread on one of the other reflectors about online tunable receivers so I started looking into some the other day and found these. There are a number of these sites where you can monitor your signal (or anyone else's for that matter).

<http://www.websdr.org/>
<http://hb9fx-websdr.dyndns.org/>
<http://www.qsl.net/oe3mzrc/receivers.html>
<http://www.smeter.net/receive/receive.php>

http://www.dxzone.com/catalog/Internet_and_Radio/WebSDR/
<http://www.ralabs.com/webradio/>

ARRL Letter

The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Enhancement Act, which died at the end of the 111th Congress, has been reintroduced in the 112th Congress as HR 81. The sponsor is Representative Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18). The new bill -- which was introduced on January 5 -- has been referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. "We are hopeful that this early start will lead to success in the new Congress," commented ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ.

Rep Jackson Lee first introduced the bill -- HR 2160 -- in the 111th Congress in April 2009. It gained an additional 41 cosponsors but did not progress out of the committee of jurisdiction. A similar bill introduced in the Senate -- S 1755 -- made it all the way through that body in December 2009, but likewise was not taken up by the House. The objective of the bill -- which is supported by the ARRL -- is for the Secretary of Homeland Security to study the uses and capabilities of Amateur Radio communications in emergencies and disaster relief and to identify and make recommendations regarding impediments to Amateur Radio communications, such as the effects of private land use regulations on residential antenna installations.

Public Service: Midwestern Hams Spot, Track Tornadoes As 2011 Begins

In the final hours of 2010, tornadoes swept across Missouri, Illinois and Arkansas, leaving at least seven people dead. Hams in Missouri -- one of the hardest hit areas -- activated nets and provided real-time weather observations to the National Weather Service. According to a timeline of events in the St Louis Post-Dispatch, hams in the towns of Pacific, Ballwin and Sunset Hills in Missouri, as well as a ham in O'Fallon, Illinois, were among the many who spotted and reported twisters and severe weather to their local NWS offices.

Steve Runnels, KD4OPZ -- the Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the NWS office in Springfield, Missouri -- said that he was impressed by "the amount of Amateur Radio support we received during the overnight and into the early morning hours. This proves that the Amateur Radio community is always ready. It also shows the strength of their commitment to the communities they live in and the

National Weather Service's mission to protect life and property.

On the Air: Aim High in the ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes

Gerald Celmer, K9PY, of Midlothian, Illinois, hiked to the top of Wasson Peak (4687 feet elevation near Tucson, Arizona) to operate in the 2010 ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes.

VHF operators will be on the bands in force the weekend of January 22-24 as the ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes hits the airwaves. This contest gives the VHFer in all of us a chance to do some contesting during the winter months. According to ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X, January may not seem like the ideal time to hold a VHF+ contest, but sometimes he said, the propagation gods like to surprise and confound. "There have been plenty of QSOs made via sporadic-E in the colder months this winter, including a surprise opening from the Midwest and Western US to Australia and New Zealand just this week! QSOs on other forms of enhancement exist as well, thanks to tropospheric ducting and auroral propagation. Because of the advent of WSJT software, making QSOs via meteor scatter in the wee hours of the morning on 6 and 2 meters has never been easier. There are plenty of opportunities to make long-haul QSOs on the VHF+ bands in January.

On-the Air: ARRL Outgoing QSL Service Announces New Rate Structure

Effective January 17, 2011, a new pricing structure will go into effect for the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service. With the new rate structure, amateurs will no longer need to count outgoing cards and then guess as to what to pay based upon a half-pound rate; a simple weighing of the cards is all that is necessary to determine what amount to send to the Bureau. This new structure also accommodates a small rate increase in response to recent postage, shipping and handling costs.

Amateur Radio in the Classroom: ARRL Executive Committee Approves Grants for Five Schools

In December 2010, the ARRL Executive Committee reviewed grant applications for the ARRL's Education & Technology Program (ETP), awarding equipment valued at nearly \$5000 to five schools. More than 525 schools across the country have received support from the ETP in the form of grants for equipment, curriculum and resources, as well as

teacher in-service training through the Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology. Applications for equipment and resource grants are accepted twice each year; application deadlines are May 1 and November 1. Applications for 2011 summer sessions of the Teachers Institute are currently being accepted.

ARRL Board of Directors to Meet Next Week

The ARRL Board of Directors will hold its 2011 Annual Meeting on January 21-22 in Windsor, Connecticut. Directors, Vice Directors and ARRL Board Officers will be in attendance, including two new Vice Directors who will be at their first Board meeting: Southeastern Division Vice Director Andrea Hartlage, KG4IUM, and West Gulf Division Vice Director John Robert Stratton, N5AUS. The Board will also welcome IARU Secretary Rod Stafford, W6ROD, and Radio Amateurs of Canada President Geoff Bawden, VE4BAW. The meeting will be preceded on Thursday, January 20 with meetings of the Board's Administration and Finance Committee and the Programs and Services Committee. At its January 2010 meeting, the ARRL Board of Directors decided to make the agendas of Board and Executive Committee meetings available on the ARRL website. The agenda for the 2011 Annual Meeting is available here. Per the Articles of Association the ARRL Board of Directors meets twice a year, in January and July.

Silent Key: Former Western Massachusetts Section Manager Bill Voedisch, W1UD (SK)

William Voedisch, W1UD, of Leominster, Massachusetts, became a Silent Key on January 1. He was 78. Voedisch was an avid CW operator who especially enjoyed operating in the CW National Traffic System nets. In recent years, he was the Manager of the NTS First Region CW net and almost nightly represented the First Region in the Eastern Area Net. He was also active in the Transcontinental Corps, relaying messages to other regional nets around the country.

This Week on the Radio

This week:

- * January 14 -- NCCC Sprint Ladder
- * January 15 -- LZ Open Contest, Feld Hell Sprint
- * January 15-16 -- North American QSO Party (SSB), Hungarian DX Contest, UK DX Contest (RTTY)
- * January 17 -- Run for the Bacon QRP Contest
- * January 20 -- NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint

Next week:

- * January 21 -- NCCC Sprint Ladder
- * January 22-23 -- BARTG RTTY Sprint
- * January 22-24 -- ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes
- * January 26 -- SKCC Sprint
- * January 27 -- NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint

All dates, unless otherwise stated, are UTC. See the ARRL Contest Branch page, the ARRL Contest Update and the WA7BNM Contest Calendar for more info. Looking for a Special Event station? Be sure to check out the ARRL Special Event Stations Web page.

BPL: ARRL Shows IBEC BPL Systems Are Interfering, Violating FCC Rules

Late last month, the ARRL filed a complaint with the FCC, documenting ongoing harmful interference and egregious rules violations by Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) systems installed by IBEC, Inc. in Virginia, Pennsylvania and Indiana. In its filing, the ARRL requested that the FCC "initiate immediately an enforcement proceeding regarding these BPL systems, and cause them to cease operation until such time as they are each in full compliance with the Commission's Rules."

Contrary to earlier representations -- both to the ARRL and in statements in the online BPL database -- IBEC's systems in these locations are not universally notching the amateur bands as is necessary in order to avoid emissions at levels that are likely to cause harmful interference to licensed Amateur Radio stations. In fact, measurements by ARRL staff that were independently confirmed show that IBEC systems are not even notching the aeronautical bands. The FCC rules require BPL systems to avoid these bands, but IBEC is operating at power levels that cause radiation well in excess of the FCC limits.

On-the Air: The King of Digital Contesting Is Here!

MMTTY, a popular RTTY program for Windows, marries nicely with N1MM Logger. Both are available for download at no cost. Click here for a larger image.

Start 2011 with one of the most enjoyable contests on the calendar -- the ARRL RTTY Roundup, January 8 and 9. The goal is simple: make as many contacts -- and multipliers -- as possible! While any digital mode can be used in during the Roundup (including PSK31), radio teletype -- better known as RTTY -

- is the undisputed king of this event. You won't need to shout into a microphone or master high-speed CW to participate. If you can type -- even slowly -- on a computer keyboard, you're more than qualified to try the RTTY Roundup. Read more here.

+ Amateur Radio in Washington: US Rep Greg Walden, W7EQI, Tweets News of New Subcommittee Chairmanship

US Representative Greg Walden, W7EQI (R-OR), tweeted news of his appointment in Morse code. When US Representative Greg Walden, W7EQI (R-OR), learned December 16 that he would be chairing the House Subcommittee on Communications, Technology and the Internet when the 112th Congress convened in January, he let the world know about it by tweeting the news in Morse code. "Just the ham radio operator in me having fun," he posted to his official Web page. The subcommittee has jurisdiction over "interstate and foreign telecommunications including, but not limited to all telecommunication and information transmission by broadcast, radio, wire, microwave, satellite or other mode."

ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, was pleased to hear the news: "We're delighted that the subcommittee is in the hands of such a well-qualified chairman. Greg was an early cosponsor of HR2160, and while he may not always be able to agree with every ARRL position, we know his door will always be open to us."

After years of planning, the next generation of satellites to be launched from the International Space Station is getting ready to be sent off into space. Go behind the scenes -- and discover how you, too, can get in on the fun -- as AMSAT and the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program team up in "Get Ready for ARISSat-1." And if space is indeed the "final frontier," a Mid-Eastern desert is probably a close second. Join David Collingham, K3LP, and Paul Ewing, N6PSE, as they recount their DXpedition to Kurdistan in Northern Iraq in "YI9PSE Iraq 2010 -- An Extreme Venture."

Lou Burke, W7JI, wanted to add a receiver on to the QRP transmitter project he had built. He wanted the receiver to be housed in the same enclosure and to work with the transmitter in a transceiver-like mode, but still have the ability to stand alone as a separate receiver. In his article "A Compact 40 Meter Receiver," Burke says that there is nothing like the feeling you get from making a QSO with a rig that you built yourself.

Take a look at the Ten-Tec R4020 two band CW QRP transceiver, featured in the February 2011 QST product review. Click here to go to the QST Multime-

dia page and scroll down to the Product Review video. Click the "Play" button to watch the video.

ARRL Field and Regulatory Correspondent Chuck Skolaut, K0BOG, takes a look at the Ten-Tec R4020 two band CW QRP transceiver in this month's Product Review. He calls it a "transceiver with a variety of convenience features. It can operate from internal batteries, so add a paddle, headphones and antenna and head for your favorite trail location." QST Contributing Editor Phil Salas, AD5X, checks out the Mini-Circuits PWR-6GHS+ USB power sensor. He says that it is "a reasonably priced, highly accurate, very broad range power meter that is equally useful in a commercial lab or home experimenter's workshop." QST Technical Editor Joel Hallas, W1ZR, reviews the Array Solutions AS-43A digital upgrade kit for the Bird 43 wattmeter. He says this kit "provides a three digit digital readout for your tired old Bird wattmeter. While the accuracy is limited by the wattmeter slugs, a calibration adjustment is described that can improve accuracy."

Of course, there are the usual columns you know and expect in the February QST: Happenings, Hints & Kinks, The Doctor Is IN, How's DX, Vintage Radio and more. Look for your February issue in your mailbox. QST is the official journal of ARRL, the national association for Amateur Radio. QST is just one of the many benefits of ARRL membership. To join or renew your ARRL membership, please see the ARRL Web page.

ARRL in Action: What Have We Been Up to Lately?

General Motors Turns to Ham to Solve Antenna Problem

The 2011 Chevrolet Camaro convertible -- available February 2011 -- features its AM/FM radio antenna inside the spoiler, thanks to some ham ingenuity. The "shark fin" antenna is for satellite radio, OnStar and cellular signals. Click here to watch a video about the design of this new antenna. [Photo courtesy of General Motors]

When General Motors -- the world's second largest auto maker -- encountered a problem with the AM/FM antenna on its 2011 Chevrolet Camaro convertible, it was at a loss as to what to do. Spy photographs showed a pre-production version of the car with a long whip-style antenna on its rear fender. After what GM called "an outcry among Camaro enthusiasts," the company decided to rethink the antenna. But how?

On hardtop Camaros, the antenna is integrated into the rear windshield, but given the disappearing nature of this car's roof, that wasn't possible on the

convertible. So GM turned to two antenna engineers -- Don Hibbard, W8DBH, and Gregg Kittinger -- who were tasked with doing what some thought was impossible: concealing the AM/FM antenna without sacrificing radio reception, while not putting it inside the Camaro's windows.

Yasme Foundation Announces 2010 Yasme Excellence Award Recipients

The Yasme Excellence Awards are given to individuals who through their own service, creativity, effort and dedication, have made a significant contribution to Amateur Radio. Their contribution may be in recognition of technical, operating or organizational achievement. The Yasme Foundation has recognized the following individuals "in order to inspire them and others on behalf of Amateur Radio now and in the future." Read more here.

+ New Section Manager Appointed in Alabama

David Drummond, W4MD, of Northport, Alabama has been appointed Alabama Section Manager effective January 1, 2011. In December, Jay Isbell, KA4KUN, -- who had served as Section Manager since January 2008 -- resigned due to health related reasons. ARRL Membership and Volunteer Programs Manager Dave Patton, NN1N, made the appointment in consultation with Southeastern Division Director Greg Sarratt, W4OZK. Drummond has served as Alabama Assistant Section Manager since January 2008. He will complete the current Section Manager term that continues through December 31, 2011.

2011 Flea Markets/Conventions

None listed9

Advertisements

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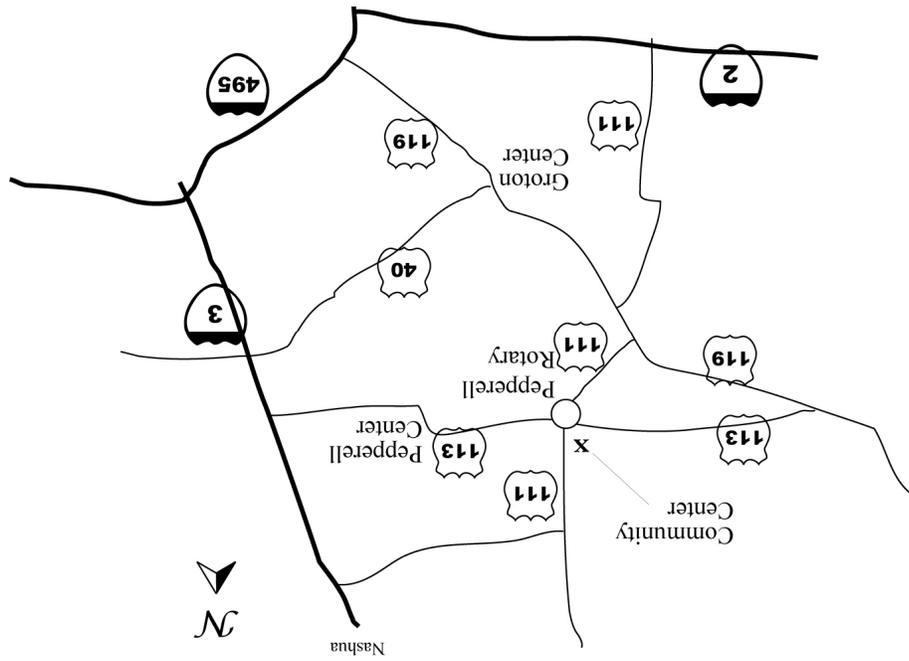
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N1NC Trustee: Bruce Blain K1BG
Annual membership dues are \$15; \$20 for a family
Meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month
7:30 p.m. - Pepperell Community Ctr.
Talk-in 146.490 simplex
442.900 + 100Hz Repeater battery power
147.345 + 100 Hz Repeater
53.890 - 100Hz Repeater battery power
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