



SIGNAL



de N1NC

November 2014 Volume 23 Number 11

This Month's Meeting

Eric, KV1J is an old friend of the club. You might remember him from his presentation on the W1 QSL Bureau—or from his visits during our annual QSL sorts. Eric has another life. For the past few years he has DXpeditioned to Miquelon Island. Sixteen miles off the coast of Newfoundland and just 800 miles from Boston, the tiny islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon are the last vestiges of the colonial empire of New France. Eric has activated the island eight times and is preparing for his February-March 2015 DXpedition.

Last Month's Meeting

Thanks to all who participated in last month's meeting! The annual QSL Sort for the W1 QSL Bureau has always been one of our most well attended and most enjoyable meetings. This year was no exception.



Photo Courtesy KD1SM

There's never an exact count, but at 3000-3500 cards per box the five boxes we sorted mean that 15,000-17,500 cards are now on their way to recipients. Think of it. Despite Logbook of the World, e-QSL, and various others, somewhere around 200,000 Bureau-delivered QSLs a year

provide "the final courtesy of a QSO" just here within the W1 call area. And we (you) were part of it.



Photo Courtesy KD1SM

47 USC, Vol. 5, Part 97.1(e) Continuation and extension of the amateur's unique ability to enhance international goodwill. Sort of makes you want to go out and work more DX.



Photo Courtesy KD1SM



Photo Courtesy KD1SM

Jean K1AVM working at the card sort

aZ



Photo Courtesy KD1SM

Larry W1ESR and Leo K1LK hard at work sorting



Photo Courtesy KD1SM

Eric KV1J from the QSLBureau with the cards sorted, packed and ready to go.



Photo Courtesy KD1SM

Members present at the meeting were;

Jim AB1WQ, Jean K1AVM, John K1JEB, Dennis K1LGQ, Leo K1LK, Skip K1NKR, Wolf KA1VOU, Phil KB1JKL, Ken KB1UVP, Ralph KD1SM, John KK1X, Dan KW2T, Ed N1YFK, Peter N1ZRG, Larry W1ESR, Rod WA1TAC,

Guests:

Ray KB1LRL, Eric KV1J

New Member

Jim Wilber of Pepperell joined the Club at the September meeting. He's is now licensed and his call is AB1WQ.

Welcome, Jim

President's Corner

Well, the weather sure slammed down on us this past weekend. I guess it's time for those of us who claim to be "four seasons" aficionados to hunker down too. What have you got planned for the winter?

Of course, there's always antenna work. Remember W1XP's definition of "agony gain," the relationship of an antenna's increased performance to the amount of misery that occurs during its installation. Seriously though, there's still time in November to go out in the yard and check connections, seals, guy wires, etc. in preparation for the winter weather. Or to get that last antenna erected before you have to wait for spring.

Tech Night's recent keyer project notwithstanding, those long dark winter nights are traditionally the time for projects around the hamshack. Is it time to finally open up the rig and fix that noisy AF GAIN

control? Is there a new interface or test equipment accessory that would be handy to build? I myself am looking at the possibility of embedding an Arduino in my rotor control box so I can command it from my shack software. At my place Ham Radio Deluxe, the N1MM logger, and the RoverLog VHF contesting software all have this feature currently unused. A bit over thirty-five bucks for an Arduino sure beats buying a multi-hundred dollar commercial rotor controller. And I might learn something, too.

While you're thinking about projects think about the December and January meetings. Both are entirely member driven. Plan on telling us what you've been building (December's Homebrew Night) and what interesting things you've discovered (January's Short Subjects Night).

Finally, there might—just might—be some quiet time for some operating. Whether you signed up for a battery or not, see if you can participate in the club's Lantern Battery Challenge. Get on, pass out points. If you've got a cruel streak, try to engage one of the battery-bound participants in a long ragchew. (I'm on a one-man campaign to return the art of conversation to what has become a contest hobby.) Try joining the NVARC Monday Night Net. If we get enough sign-ins we might even have something to talk about—and your interests will drive that. Whether it's meetings, activities, Tech Nights, breakfasts, public service, picnics, Field Day, mini-DXpeditions, or contests, your interests drive this club.

Repeater Work Party

This summer while mowing the repeater site it became obvious that the repeater building needed some scrapping and painting. But after quickly picking at some of the loose paint it was found that quite a few of the clapboards and some trim pieces would also need to be replaced. Dave N1MNX asked for volunteers and Greg KB1WAQ stepped forward. Once he checked it out he said he would take on the task and could provide the materials. With that part of the job accounted for Dave asked Stan KD1LE to price paint for the project. Since the paint would not be needed for a month or two and paint not being a cheap commodity anymore Stan asked his son Scott who owns Junk King out of Tyngsboro to be on the lookout for a few gallons of exterior paint of one color or capable of being mixed to one color. Within two weeks a text message arrived that there were six gallons of exterior paint waiting at his office. When Stan collected the paint he was surprised and pleased to find six never been opened, gallons of a custom mixed gray exterior paint perfectly suitable

for the job. With that bit of logistics out of the way we waited. In October Greg went back to the repeater site and completed the carpentry work. Once that was completed a painting party was tentatively scheduled for November 15th a couple of weeks off. Knowing the weather can be quite variable temperature wise Stan decided not to wait and called for a snap painting. Monday November 3rd after checking the 7 day forecast it looked like the one day in the next 7 that would be best was Wednesday only two days away. After announcing it on the Monday night net an email was sent out looking for volunteers. Seven people responded positively.



Photo Courtesy KB1HFT

Above L-R Bob W1XP, Stan KD1LE, Skip K1NKR,
Jim AB1WQ, Larry W1ESR



Photo Courtesy KB1HFT

Above L-R Larry W1ESR, Jim AB1WQ (back) and Stan KD1LE

Thanks to Greg KB1WAQ for the carpentry work. Thanks also to the following members who participated in the painting party. Larry W1ESR, Stan KD1LE, Bob W1XP, George KB1HFT, Jim AB1WQ, Skip K1NKR, Dave N1MNX.

2014 Field Day Results

2014 Field Day results are out. With all of the work for WRTC leading up to the July final event our Field Day participation was at a reduced level. Still we attained an excellent position in the standings.

1A 100 Watt Eastern Mass

1 N1NC 1,702 1A 500 2 EMA 12 Nashoba Valley ARC

2 W1MHL 326 1A 31 2 EMA 3 Waltham ARA

1A 100 Watt New England Division

1 W1KX 2,426 1A 547 2 ME 10 Bass Hill Repeater Group

2 W1AQ 1,934 1A 586 2 RI 10 Associated Radio Amateurs of So New England

3 N1NC 1,702 1A 500 2 EMA 12 Nashoba Valley ARC

4 W1KDA 1,488 1A 444 2 RI 20 WA1QCA Repeater Group

5 W1KVI 848 1A 110 2 ME 9 Portland Amateur Wireless Assn

NVARC QSL Bureau

One benefit of membership in NVARC is the free forwarding of QSL cards to the ARRL's outbound DX QSL bureau. In the past Bob, W1XP, has collected and sent cards. At the last NVARC Board of Director's meeting it was decided that Rod, WA1TAC, will assume this task for the future. Rod will be accepting cards at the November meeting. As before, all cards for the outbound bureau should have the recipient's call on the upper right corner, be sorted alphabetically, and include proof of current ARRL membership.

73, Rod

November Board Meeting Notes

Board meeting 11/6/2014

Skip, John, Rod, Bob, Ralph

Status of the radio? Waiting for battery

Lantern Battery Challenge ongoing

What contests are coming up?

Homebrew in December

Short Subjects in January

Jack in Nashua - Hints & Kinks talk?

Doug Grant for February WRTC presentation?

Annual report & potential budget?

Skip and Ralph are reviewing community information pamphlets for Pepperell

John Griswold, KK1X

October Treasurers Report

Income for October was \$65 in membership dues, \$90 in Lantern Battery entry fees, and \$2.55 in bank interest. Expenses were \$140.40 for Lantern Battery Challenge batteries, \$64.40 for outgoing QSL Bureau, and \$64.80 for pizza and soda for the October QSL sort leaving a net expense for the month of \$112.05.

Current balances:

General fund	\$2,949.58
Community fund	\$4,386.41

As of 6 November we have 38 members who are current with their dues and 26 renewals outstanding. Many thank to those of you who hand in your dues

before Ralph comes to you. Please check your renewal status on the roster circulated at the monthly meeting or ask Ralph.

If you are joining ARRL or renewing your membership please consider letting Ralph send in the paperwork for you. The Club will buy the stamp and will get a commission from ARRL. ARRL membership checks should be made payable to NVARC; Ralph deducts the Club commission before forwarding your paperwork to Newington. As an Special Service Club, the ARRL expects a majority of Club members to also be ARRL members.

Ralph KD1SM

Tech Night

Tech Night 10, October 9th, 2014

This Tech Night was the build of the K42 Keyer. We got the kits in several days before the meeting, along with some spare parts donated by K1EL, the seller of the kits. At the meeting, the remainder of the buyers paid up, so all was taken care of.

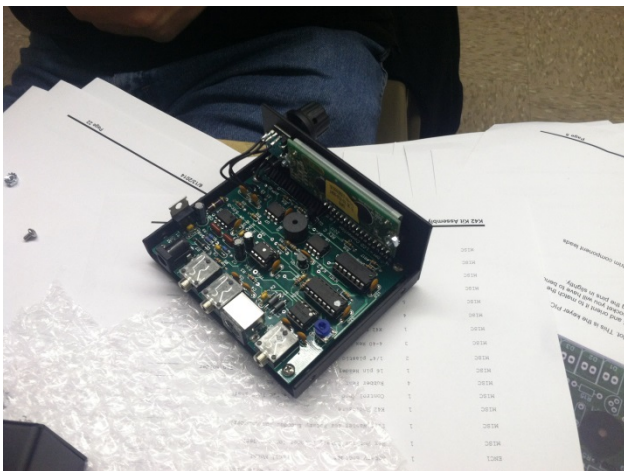


Photo Courtesy KW2T

Above is a completed K1EL Keyer/Decoder

At the meeting, everyone who was expected to show up for a kit showed up. 15 people signed up for kits, and we knew of 2 who weren't coming, so we had 13 kit builders at the meeting, including 3 Jims. 5 others showed up who weren't even building kits, it was a good crowd.



Photo Courtesy KW2T

Tables were set up with soldering equipment, and the instructions were projected on a screen.



Photo Courtesy KW2T

I wasn't sure how we would deal with those who want to ignore the instructions and just built fast, and those with little experience who would slow the rest of the group down, and here's how it went: The main group of us went through the instructions at a relatively steady pace. 2 or 3 just took off on their own and finished the kit completely in about 1 hour (and in fact, even finished a 2nd one), and a few had their own printed instructions they wanted to follow more slowly and just fell behind the main crowd. So it worked out well, no one was forced to work at a pace they weren't comfortable with, and I was able to move around to those who needed help, and still almost keep up with building my own. I believe only 3 of the kits were finished at this meeting, being run through the self-test and looking fully functional. The rest were taken home to be finished later.



Photo Courtesy KW2T

Keyboards and 12V 2.5A wall warts were available at the meeting, though I'm not sure I parted with more than one keyboard. The wall warts were sold for \$5 each.

I'd like to thank my employer, Physical Sciences, Inc. of Andover for the loan of test equipment and 6 soldering stations and some tools, and for donating some solder, though if you asked anyone there they would probably know nothing about this.



Photo CourtesyKW2T

All-in-all I'd say the idea of group building a kit at a Tech Night meeting is a good one, and we could try this again. Though most didn't finish their kits, I think they all were far enough along that the remainder of work was minor. This success is largely due to the well designed kit from K1EL, with very clear instructions, and good interim tests to verify partial completion. The keyers seem to just work if you get them together anywhere near right.

The next Tech Night is expected to be either finishing the kit for those who didn't do it at home between the meetings, or testing and operating the

keyers, and a discussion of other possible kits we could build.

-Dan, KW2T

Attendees:

Dan KW2T, John K1JEB, Jim AB1WQ, Dennis K1LGQ, Wolf KA1VOU, Michael KA1NXH, Harry (Michael's Dad) N1FAM, Peter N1ZRG, Jim H. N8VIM, Skip K1NKR, Jim Francis K1PTF, Ken, KB1UVP, Leo K1LK, Bruce K1BG, Bill K4OZH, Greg KB1WAQ, Larry W1ESR, Stan KD1LE,

Tech Night 11, Nov 13th, 2014

Tech Night 11 was announced as being the "finish the keyer" meeting, and a discussion of possible future projects. What actually happened was one person brought in a keyer, and a few people worked together on it to get it running and tested. A few other people were discussing some computer contesting/logging/digital mode software, some others were discussing lower band antennas, and a few of us were using the test equipment to test a 10GHz transverter that wasn't working. Jim AB1WQ brought in an old crank telephone we could look inside. To me, this is the best kind of tech night, there are lots of discussions going on about various topics that anyone is free to join, with a wide variety of technical topics to choose from. I didn't want to stop all this for a formal discussion about projects, but there was some smaller discussion about it, with a few ideas thrown around.



Photo Courtesy KW2T

(L-R) Harry and Gary look on as George adjusts his 10 GHz transverter, Peter and Dennis work on K42 keyer, Bob and Les look on.

I know of at least 5 keyers that were completed and were working. I know of one that hasn't been touched since the last meeting where we partially built them (mine), and I haven't heard about the others, either way.

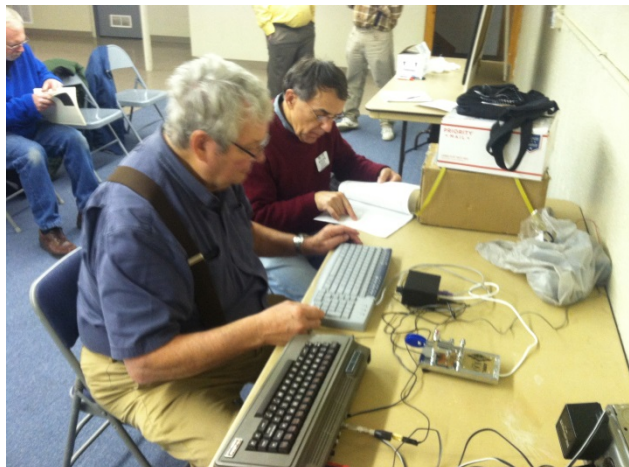


Photo Courtesy KW2T

Dennis and Peter work with Dennis' K42 keyer, testing modes of operation.

I still have several PS2 keyboards available for the keyers if anyone needs one. BTW, if anyone has a real old PS1 keyboard with the big DIN connector on it, it will also work with a cheap adapter cable on Amazon for about \$6.

I think I will put together a short list of possible projects we could do, and perhaps put it in an e-mail to collect responses. That way there can be more involvement from the membership, rather than decide with the small group of people at a Tech Night gathering. If anyone has any project they would like to see for Tech Night, always feel free to send me an e-mail, dpedtk@gmail.com.

Attendees:

Dan, KW2T, Dennis, K1LGQ, George, W1JHR, Gary, K1YTS, Harry, WA1VVH, Bob, W1XP, Stan, KD1LE, Ed, N1YFK, John, K1JEB, Les, N1SV, Jim, AB1WQ, Skip, K1NKR, Peter, N1ZRG,

Next Tech Night is our 1 year anniversary meeting, Dec11, 2014.

-Dan, KW2T

Pictures:

3013 - the label inside the old Western Electric wall telephone, the classic wall mount one.

3015: Another view like 3014, Jim and Skip in the background.

3016: Another view of 3015.

3017: Bob and Les discuss a vacation antenna for 40-80-160, John, Dennis

3019: Spectrum analyzer and 10 GHz transverter (not running so nothing on screen)

Meeting Coffee "Bar"

Many thanks to Ed Snapp, N1YFK, for his rejuvenating the coffee "bar" at the meetings. There's been an incremental increase in socializing, and that's what we meet for.

Don't forget to leave a donation if you partake.

Strays

Found on the Internet, so it has to be true, right?

The Battery Drop Test. If you want to find out if your batteries still have life, just drop them on a table from about six inches. If they give one small bounce and fall right over, the batteries are still good. If they bounce around more than that, the batteries are either already dead or about to die.

Is it true or not? And why might it work? Jack, WB4MDC, demonstrated this at a recent Nashua Area Radio Club meeting. Jack has agreed to bring his "hints and kinks"-style presentation to NVARC sometime this spring.

NVARC Club Net

The NVARC Club Net meet's every Monday evening at 8 PM on the 442.900 Pepperell repeater.

Stop in and bring your input and questions.

The net is in need of a regular Net Control Station (NCS).

Recent attendees were

Jim N8VIM, Stan KD1LE, Skip K1NKR, Larry W1ESR, Les N1SV, Bruce K1BG, George KB1HFT, Dave N1MNX

Upcoming Contests

As we shift our activity from outdoors to indoors with winter setting in several contests that I look forward to each year are coming up. November has the Sweepstakes Phone, the 160 Meter Contest comes up in December as does the 10 Meter Contest. The 160 meter band is a challenge for most of us due to the antenna issues but with many stations on the air many contacts should be possible. Sweepstakes Phone is a good opportunity to wrap up an WAS award in a weekend. The 10 Meter Contest can be a lot of fun because with minimum antennas and decent propagation contacts all over the world are possible. Get on the air and have some fun.

Stan

December

5-7 160 Meter

13-14 10 Meter

21 Rookie Roundup CW

2015

January

3 ARRL RTTY Roundup

10 North American QSO Party CW

17 North American QSO Party SSB

17ARRL January VHF Contest

23 CQ 160 Meter Contest CW

February

7 Vermont QSO Party

7 Minnesota QSO Party

7 Delaware QSO Party

7 Mexico RTTY International Contest

8 North American Sprint CW

14 New Hampshire QSO Party

21 ARRL International DX Contest CW

27 CQ 160 Meter Contest SSB

March

8 ARRL International DX Contest SSB

14 Idaho QSO Party

22 North American Sprint SSB

28 CQ WW WPX Contest SSB

Flea Markets/Hamfests

2015 August

21 ARRL New England Convention Boxboro MA

2015

March

7 Chicopee MA Mt Tom ARA

May

1, 2 Deerfield NH NEARfest

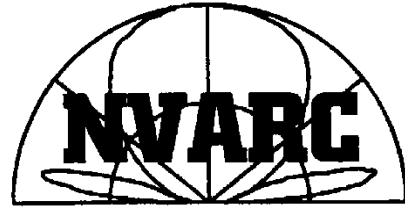
August

21, 23 Boxboro MA FEMARA NE Convention

Your Article

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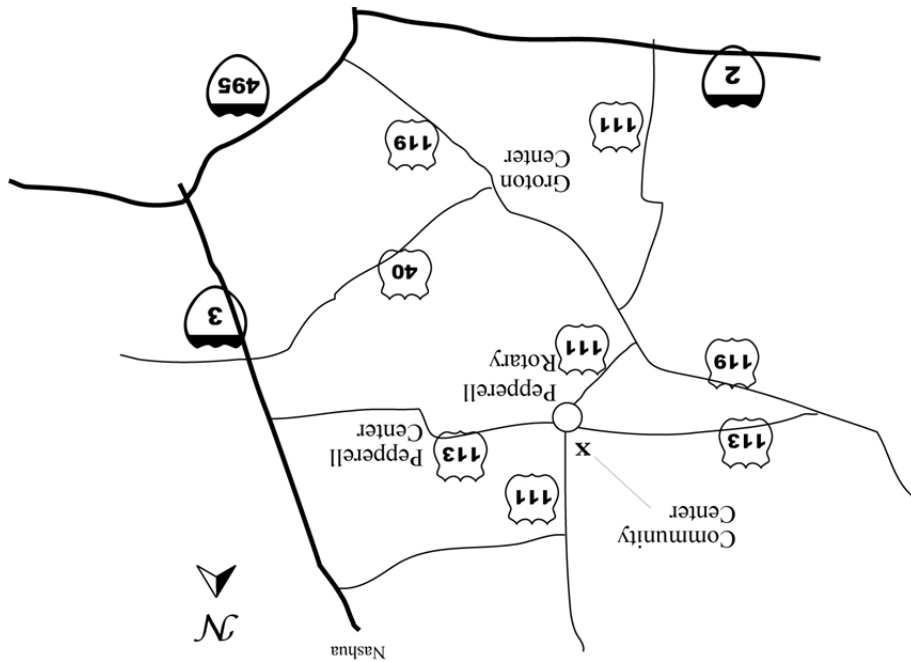
**Nashoba Valley
Amateur Radio Club**

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

President: Skip Youngberg K1NKR
Vice President: Jim Hein N8VIM
Secretary: John Griswold KK1X
Treasurer: Ralph Swick KD1SM
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Rod Hersh WA1TAC 2012-2015
Bob Reif: W1XP 2013-2016
Wolf Seidlich KA1VOU 2014-2017

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Property Master: John Griswold KK1X
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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