



Nashoba Valley  
Amateur Radio Club

# SIGNAL

A club since 1992



Since 1993



Since 1996

de N1NC

September 2016

Volume 25 Number 9

## This Month's Meeting

NVARC's 2016-17 season begins. May the League be with you!

This month we will be joined by Tom Walsh K1TW, the Eastern Massachusetts Section Manager, and Bo Budinger WA1QYM, the section's Affiliated Club Co-ordinator. Tom will have news about current League and FCC happenings and Bo will speak on "Growing an Active Club."

## The President's Corner

Today is the first day of September and that signals that summer is drawing to a close. Whether your key is Labor Day, the kids going back to school, or trees changing color, I hope everyone had a good summer. This month our regular club meetings resume. We have been working on the program schedule and it is pretty solid for the rest of the year.

With the hot summer, I didn't complete much of the antenna work that I had planned. But with the cooler weather maybe I can catch up on some of that...?

The one thing I did accomplish was putting together a mobile/portable station to use activating some of the local National Parks for the National Parks On The Air (NPOTA) activity. Mobile HF operation is a challenge and it was a good learning experience on a range of topics. There are mobile and portable antennas, power sources, tuners, and radio set up. There is also the consideration

of creating a comfortable operating position to spend hours operating.



K1NKR photo

My station is set up to operate from the back (middle) seat of the van. The computer and tuner sit on a shelf between the front seats at a reasonable typing height. The radio is on a shelf below. The batteries (three 35AH sealed type) are under the seat and are paralleled and feed the rig through a battery booster.



KD1LE photo

Most of my operating has been solo, but this is the location Skip K1NKR and I operated together most recently. It's the Lamprey National Wild and Scenic River (WR23) in Epping, New Hampshire.



**K1NKR photo**

Running full power for many hours, with much of it transmitting, the batteries fall to a level where my radio first starts exhibiting what appears to be RF in the audio and eventually actually resets. This is one thing I had planned for by installing a “battery booster. The boosters have different modes of operation in order to save power. When they are “off” the booster is bypassed. In the “on” mode it maintains 13.8 volts on the output. In the third mode it detects RF from the transmitter and only boosts the voltage during transmit since that is when the battery voltage can drop significantly. It would have worked flawlessly and transparently if I had turned it on! In this case, once we identified the problem switching it on was all it took to return to normal operation. As an operational note, I didn't hear any interference that I could associate with this particular battery booster.



**K1NKR photo**

Since mobile antennas are so poor we took advantage of the available antenna

supports (*aka* trees) and raised 20 and 40 meter dipoles, something I couldn't do at the Lowell National Park.

If you have an interesting “My Summer Vacation” story write it up for the Signal and share it with us.

Hope to see you at the September meeting.

73, Stan KD1LE

### Reminder: Outbound QSLs

One of the benefits of NVARC membership is the sending of DX QSL cards to the ARRL Outbound QSL bureau. The club pays all the costs. A shipment is planned for this fall. So if you have cards, bring them to the September meeting and give them to me, WA1TAC. I will assemble a package and sent it to Newington. Be sure to sort the cards alphabetically per the DXCC order and include proof of current ARRL membership.

Thanks and 73, Rod

### News and Happenings

#### Picnic

Definitely a QRO event! QTH: WW4EN, Townsend. QTR: afternoon of 14 August. Check-ins: twenty-one attendees (seven were spouses or guests—most of those were licensed and club members). New attendees like KW2T were treated to a tour of Epcot-North and Townsend's Magic Kingdom.





**N1ZRG takes some time off from ham radio.**



**“John said he didn’t like my earrings, so I knew I had chosen well.” de KC1EIV**



**K1NS revels in the excitement.**



**(left) AB1WQ’s harmonic. Does she have a future in Amateur Radio.?**



**(right) Thanks to our host.**

**All photos de K1NKR**

## Reviewing History



**How things have changed. Not just the beer ad, but the portrayal of family roles and of Amateur Radio as a commonplace social activity in the home.**

**Text:** “Here’s a message from Milwaukee” This thoughtful wife knows that the moment her husband tunes in on Schlitz the reception is good. For Schlitz has a very special *taste* that beer lovers are changing to with ultra high frequency. Taste Schlitz, yourself. You’ll soon know why—Schlitz tastes so good to so many people, it’s first in sales in the U.S.A. **RADIO HEADLINER:** “The Halls of Ivy, with the Ronald Colemans, Wednesday, NBC. **TELEVISION HIT:** “Schlitz Playhouse of Stars”, Fridays, CBS-TV.

## Larry Swezey, W1ESR

We’ve all been following Larry’s illness and recuperation. As of 6 September, he’s back in Tufts Medical Center. Do well, Larry! Our thoughts are with you and your family.

## Tech Night

At the August Tech Night, Bob W1XP led a construction project building Pixie QRP rigs. At the September TN (which occurred after the newsletter deadline but before the regular meeting), he brought in test equipment for those who wanted to check out or troubleshoot their completed projects.

Remember, TN is not a highly-produced affair. It’s member-to-member Elmering and show-and-tell. So it’s a good way to social-

ize on a technical level even if you're not participating in a construction project.

## Editor's Note

### Of Maidenheads and Notches

I did my annual pilgrimage to Lubec ME this summer. As usual, I stopped in Yarmouth to see Eartha, the world's largest self-standing globe. Surprise, the DeLorme Mapping Company isn't there anymore. It was bought out by Garmin and the map shop has been closed. But Eartha's still there and the restrooms are still public so the stop wasn't really in vain.

While I was away I read Ken Jennings' book Mapheads (ISBN: 978-1-4391-6717-5). It's a good book, light reading and full of factoids and anecdotes. Among other things, I learned about folks who collect visits to "integer degree confluences." That's where whole degree lines cross--like 42° 00' 00"N 72° 00' 00' W.

It reminded me of the story of how Larry KA6LDP/KF6ZB/now-K6LLH and I argued over grid squares back when I lived in California. We were both using the state auto association roadmaps to decide whether we were in DM03 or DM13. He said we were both in DM03. I said he was in DM03 and I was in DM13.

So I brought one of the first GPS manpacks home from work, ostensibly to prepare for an upcoming demonstration for a large public group hosted by Fullerton College but really to find out where the heck home was. I set the receiver down in my driveway and turned it on. Pause. "This thing knows where it is; WOW, this thing KNOWS where it is!" It turned out that Larry was right, even though I was closer. (I was at 33.742896N 118.005725W--not on the 117 degree side of the line. I could walk down the street and cross the line, though.)

Larry and I could now accurately hand out grid squares to collectors.

Back to the point. Ken comments in Mapheads that true geographic "discovery" is pretty much over and that we now "collect" things: Geocaches, countries visited, confluences marked. We hams have been pret-

ty much in that mode for a while: WAS, WAC, DXCC, IOTA, SOTA. Hmm, grid squares.

Is life really just a contest? A list extended *ad infinitum*.

Right now, it seems that there are few readily identifiable real accomplishments to attain. The Brendan Trophy for the first trans-Atlantic 2m QSO is one. And the Elser-Mathes Cup, established 1929 for the first Mars QSO, is another.

On a local or personal level, achievement can be a new band, or mode, or you name it. Each of these can be a discovery rather than just another "notch on the belt."

Amateur Radio is a learning hobby. And our mission is to boldly go where [we or no one] has gone before.

Buenos notches.

73, Skip K1NKR

For Brendan Trophy information, see <http://www.irts.ie/cgi/st.cgi?brendan>. For Elser-Mathes information, see QST, for December 2015 (p59) and November 1969 (p98).

## Hints and Kinks

No Public Service. No On the Air. No The Technical Corner. No real Hints and Kinks. No Strays. The newsletter could have been as much as five sheets long (*i.e.*, 9 pages of content plus the mailer side). This one was shorter. Might you have something to contribute next month?

*de* Skip K1NKR

## Treasurer's Report

Income for August was \$45 from membership fees and \$2 from ARRL membership renewals. No expenses were reimbursed this month, leaving a net income of \$47 for the month.

If you have receipts for approved Field Day expenses, please get them to me at or before the September meeting.

Current balances:

General fund \$2,885.47

Community fund \$4,886.41

As of 4 August we are up to 50 members who are current with their dues and have only 9 renewals outstanding. Thank you 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 a Special Service Club, the ARRL expects a majority of Club members to also be ARRL members.

de Ralph KD1SM

## Board Meeting Notes

Board meeting 9/1/2016

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

- November meeting still open?
- September is Bo Budinger and Tom Walsh
- October meeting is card sort
- December is Home Brew
- January is Short Subjects
- Skip is working on a possible show for February
- Need to order more cups (*presentation coffee mugs, also purchasable. Ed*) if we want to have more cups
- Where are we getting our new members?

Respectfully submitted,  
de John KK1X

## Club Services

**ARRL W1-Bureau QSL Sort.** Possibly our premier "service to the Amateur community" event. At each October meeting, NVARC sorts thousands upon thousands of incoming DX QSLs. Often, sorters get to snatch some of their own cards early. Free pizza and soda follows the sort.

**Meetings.** You might not think of meetings as a "service," but they are. Socializing, informative entertainment, a bit of Elmering. Not bad for fifteen bucks a year.

**Meeting Coffee Bar.** September returns us to our regular meeting schedule. As always, many thanks to Ed N1YFK for running the coffee "bar" at the meetings. Don't forget to leave a donation if you partake.

## Calendar

### Upcoming Events

#### **September**

9-11 N E Division Convention, Boxboro MA  
18 Flea at MIT  
24 NE Antique RC Flea Market & Training Session, Brookline NH  
24-25 Nashua ARC Technician class

#### **October**

1 "Yankee Steam Up" at the New England Wireless and Steam Museum, East Greenwich RI  
14-15 NEAR-Fest, Deerfield NH  
16 Flea at MIT  
22-23 Nashua ARC General class

#### **November**

5 Falmouth ARA Hamfest

#### **December**

2-4 Nashua ARC Extra class

### Upcoming Operating Activities

#### **September**

10-12 September VHF Contest  
17-19 10 GHz & Up (Round 2)  
24-25 EME 2.3 GHz & Up

#### **October**

17-21 School Club Roundup  
22-23 EME 50 to 1296 MHz

#### **November**

5-7 Sweepstakes – CW  
19-20 EME 50 to 1296 MHz  
19-21 Sweepstakes – Phone


#### **December**

2-4 160 Meter

10-11 10 Meter  
18 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.

**Advertisers**

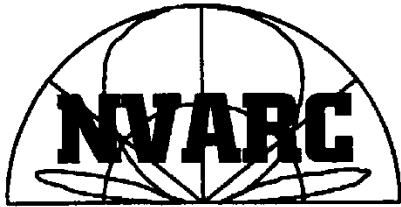
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**Nashoba Valley  
Amateur Radio Club**

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

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Jim Wilber AB1WQ, 2016-2019

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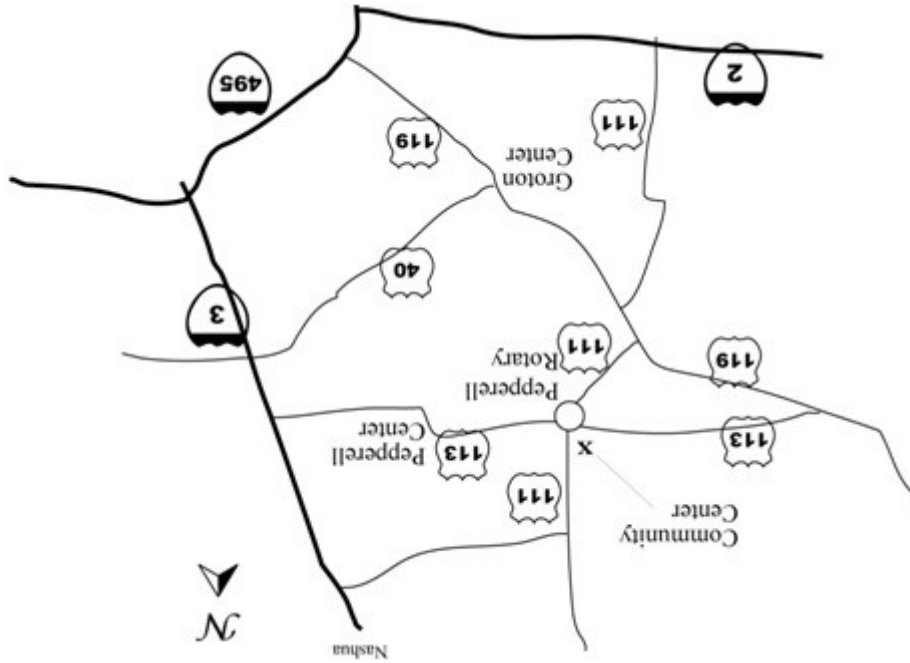
Join NVARC! Annual membership dues are \$15;  
\$20 for a family.  
Meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the  
month at 7:30 p.m. in the Pepperell Community  
Center.

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-  
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