



# SIGNAL



de N1NC

July 2014 Volume 23 Number 7

## This Month's Meeting

As usual, there will be no club meeting in July or August. We're not inactive though. Don't forget the Monday evening net, WRTC support, and (as soon as we find a host and he or she determines a date) the annual NVARC picnic.

## Last Month's Meeting

June's meeting theme "It's About Time." Our guest speaker was Leon Poirier, of Chelmsford. Leon is a retired scientist with an interest in sundials—what kinds there are, how to make them, how to read them, and what this solar and astronomical time thing is all about.



Leon had many dozens of sundials on display at the meeting.



Above are some examples of sundials

Attendees:

Bruce K1BG, John K1JEB, Leo K1LK, Skip K1NKR, Bill K1NS, Gary K1YTS, Wolf KA1VOU, Ken KB1UVP, Stan KD1LE, Ralph KD1SM, John KK1X, Dan KW2T, Les N1SV, Ed N1YFK, Peter N1ZRG, Dick W1LTN, Bob W1XP, Rod WA1TAC,

Guest:  
Bill N1TC

## President's Corner

de Skip, K1NKR

A lot's going on in the world nowadays that makes us think things are not entirely OK. There's some serious stuff going on in Syria. And the Russians are rushing to bump craniums with the Ukrainians. To say nothing of the issue of Iranian uranium. On the other hand, around here things are going pretty well.

Things are different here in Pepperell. People step forward to help. In the absence of a Field Day Incident Commander volunteer, Stan KD1LE and Bob W1XP declared "FD Lite." Notwithstanding the excellent management and leadership that Roland NR1G and John KK1X provided in years past, FD Lite showed that an ad hoc portable operation can be established in an instant by us Amateurs and the experience we've all accumulated over time. It took just a tent and a screen house, a small generator, the tower trailer, and a TenTec Orion borrowed from Les N1SV and, in less than a Saturday morning's work, N1NC was up and running as a class 1A station.

Leo K1LK (to whom we owe gratitude for years and years of great meals) was relieved of his traditional cook/chef duties and actually got to be a station builder and operator for a change. Les, often considered the consummate DXer and contester (and, dare I say, mike hog), was the consummate mentor as he took the second seat and coached other operators in the fine art of contest/emergency operating. Paula Terrasi, of the Pepperell Conservation Commission, stopped by to be sure everything was going well. Paula's not a ham but she is one of this club's greatest assets. Even without publicity, we had more than a handful of interested visitors—some hams, some not. Anno 2014 was a great Field day. There's a lot more in Stan's FD wrap-up article.

Priorities are well established, too. Here's a picture of our "properly equipped" relief station.



All in all, things came together pretty well. When all else fails, there's Amateur Radio. No, when all else fails there's Amateur Radio operators—and don't you forget it!

And take the NVARC matching program for donations to the ARRL Spectrum Defense Fund. In establishing the program the Board took a reasonable "bound the liability" philosophy of matching club members' donations up to a total of \$250 (after the first \$50 was collected, to be sure there was some incentive to start). Well, we succeeded well. As of the close of the donation period \$490 had been raised, \$40 of which was from a non-member who believed in what we were doing. Over the Fourth of July weekend the Board voted to dip into its \$200 discretionary spending authority to increase the match to \$450.

In today's world of frequency allocation redistributions and spectrum auctions supporting the Spectrum Defense Fund is perhaps the most important thing we each can do to ensure the continued viability of our hobby. It's probably more important even than being shining examples of how to responsibly use and steward the precious frequencies we have.

After all, this is a world more driven by business economics and politics than by good citizenship.

But wait! There's more... And it's not a TV advertisement for Ginsu knives. NEARFest has a matching challenge going on, too. NEARFest management has confirmed in recent correspondence that they will match NVARC's donation. Further, NEARFest's program continues—so if you didn't donate through NVARC by June 29 and, say, you're at the ARRL Centennial Convention in July you can still be matched on a one-for-one basis.

Yep, world crises have gone since time immemorial, and new ones will probably pop up as the current ones are resolved. But around here things are pretty darn good.

### June Treasurers Report

Income for June was \$30 in membership renewals. Expenses were \$19.60 for newsletter postage leaving a net income for April of \$10.40.

Current balances:

General fund	\$2,864.73
Community fund	\$4,836.41

The Spectrum Defense Fund Matching Gift Program has closed with Members exceeding the \$250 matching amount. A proposal has been made to the Board to increase the match using the Board's spending authority.

As of 8 July we have 42 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 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

### NVARC Field Day 2014

With little more than a week to go and no Field Day Chairperson Bob W1XP and Stan KD1LE stepped up as co-chairs and set this year's Field Day (FD) in motion as a FD Lite. Under this plan it was decided that we would enter in the 1A Class running one HF station. Based on the small show of interest no VHF station was planned even though it is the only "free" station option for 1A. The GOTA station was not available because it is only for entries 2A and above.

Final plans were put in place at a meeting the Thursday before FD. At the meeting final assignments and last minute needs were identified and resolved. Ralph KD1SM was to provide power, power distribution and as a plus a coffee station. Stan KD1LE and Bob W1XP provided shelters, floors and antennas, feed lines and antenna supports. Leo K1LX provided seating for the R and R tent and lighting. Les N1SV provided the HF station and accessories. Mowing was to be done Friday.

The test of the completeness of the plan and organization of the participants was that once we arrived at the FD site no trips for missing pieces were made. Food runs were made for Saturday lunch and Sunday breakfast.

Friday during mowing we decided that since there was only going to be one station we would move the station and tower down from the hill to the knoll where there was shade and shelter from any wind. So both tents would be on the knoll and the trailer in the saddle between the knoll and its regular location keeping everything close together. Bob, Leo and Stan did the site preparation along with Rob Rand of the Pepperell Conservation Commission.



Photo courtesy of KD1SM

Saturday morning some of us partook of breakfast at Charlotte's in Pepperell. We then met the rest of the crew at the orchard at approximately 9:30. Set up commenced with the positioning of the tower trailer in its new location. Once we were satisfied everything was going to fit as planned we put down the trailer feet fixing its location. Then most of the crew went off to set up the shelters. Once the operating tent was set up Les N1SV began setting up the HF station.

With everything set up and ready to go by 11 AM everyone sat around talking radio.



Photo courtesy of KD1SM

Above the HF station in operation with Stan and Leo at the controls and Les looking on. A nice feature of Bob's pop up is the screens go on after it is up so when there were no bugs during the day it was nice and airy. The screens were added to the shelter later in the day.

A separate shelter was set up for R and R with a table and chairs.



Photo courtesy of KD1SM

With the 1A class entry the set up was quick and compact. In past years with multiple HF stations sharing antennas we needed remote antenna switching, band pass filters (to prevent intra station interference), and a tri-plexer to share the tri-bander. All of this was eliminated with the 1A configuration.



Photo courtesy of KD1SM

Above Bob W1XP and Leo K1LK running the station in CW mode.



Photo courtesy of KD1SM

Skip K1NKR operating HF SSB with Les looking on.



Photo courtesy of KD1SM

Above the entire Field Day set up fits in one picture. The R and R tent is on the left, the operating tent is left center and the tower with all the antennas on the right.

Photo courtesy of KD1SM  
Les N1SV knocking out some SSB contacts.

With the compact set up takedown was also easy with everything packed and ready to go by 3 PM Sunday afternoon.

Although individual Field Days can take many sizes and shapes the rules and objectives are the same. Operate from a location that is not a regular station, using no permanently installed facilities, operate independent of commercial mains (emergency power), working as many stations a possible. We achieved all these things and our own "have fun" requirement in our 2014 NVARC Field Day Lite.

Participants in set up/operation/takedown  
Skip K1NKR, Jody, Sam, Dan KW2T, Les N1SV, Ralph KD1SM, Leo K1LK, Bob W1XP, Stan KD1LE, Lee N3LEE, Larry W1ESR.

Visitors  
Aimee and Dakota (with N3LEE), Tom KB1ZNI, Karen KA1JVU, Bo Budinger WA1QYM ARRL Affiliated Club Coordinator, John KK1X, Dave KM3T from WRTC.

## From the Editor

I want to thank Les N1SV for his great series of articles on DXing. As always I am looking for good home source articles. We have lots of talented

members. The articles don't need to be strictly Ham Radio but related or technically interesting articles can be of interest to the members.

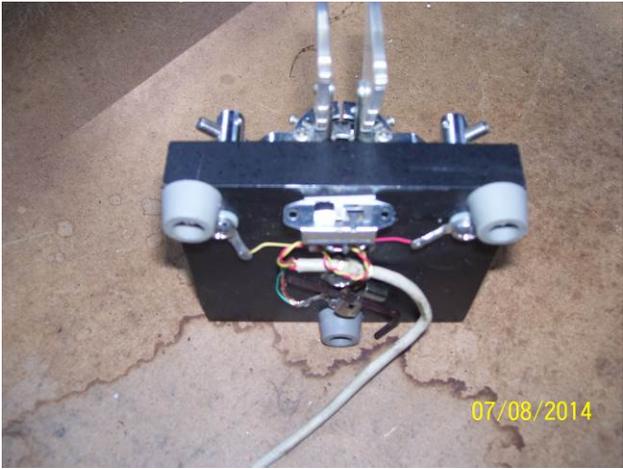
Stan KD1LE

## July Board Meeting Notes

Due to Field Day and WRTC activity there was no formal NVARC Board meeting.

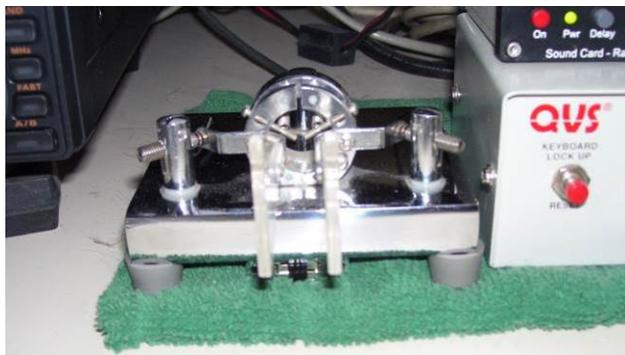
## The Aftermath

After any activity, especially larger ones, things are found to need repair, replacement or improvement. Field Day (FD) was no exception. When the 80 meter dipole was being lowered one entire  $\frac{1}{4}$  wavelength leg dropped off. Good thing it waited until Field Day was over. So some antenna repairs and calibration will be in order. Another issue that probably only arises during something like Field Day, where so many people take turns operating, is that depending on the operator, the position of the paddles may have to be on the left or the right and the function of the paddles dots and dashes reversed. At home you set up your station and forget it. To make the change easy I had built a simple short  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch M-F phone plug cable that reversed the paddle wiring. I wanted to have it available for FD so I looked around before FD and couldn't find it. As it turned out we didn't need it on FD but in anticipation of future need and not wanting to have to keep track of the wayward cable I modified both my Bencher paddles with a reversing switch. I used the smallest slide switch I had and simply used double sided tape to attach it to the bottom. Sliding the switch from one side to the other flips the dots and dashes to the opposite sides.



This option is probably built into some rigs but it is not in mine and if you are out in the field without the 300 page manual on a strange rig you are probably out of luck anyway.

I was going to make a bracket to mount the switch but it turned out to be more work than the rest of the project and as seldom as it gets moved it fell in the diminishing returns category.



Besides when looking at it from the normal position who could tell?

Stan KD1LE

### Meeting Coffee "Bar"

Many thanks to Ed Snapp, N1YFK, for his rejuvenating the coffee "bar" at the last two 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

No Strays this month.

### 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).

Recently participants talked about the upcoming Field Day, WRTC, the search for June meeting location, SDR dongle projects and trouble shooting. Al-

so local interference location and signal identification.

Recent attendees were

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

### Upcoming Contests

Jul  
12-13 IARU HF World Championship & WRTC2014  
Aug  
2-3 UHF Contest  
16-17 10 GHZ & Up Round 1  
17 Rookie Roundup RTTY  
Sep  
13-15 Sep VHF  
20-21 10 GHZ & Up Round 2

### Flea Markets/Hamfests

Jul  
17 ARRL National Convention (Hartford CT)  
20 MIT Flea (Cambridge)  
Aug  
9 Three Rivers Hamfest (Milo ME)  
17 MIT Flea (Cambridge)  
Sep  
12 CT State Convention (Nutmeg Hamfest)  
21 MIT Flea (Cambridge)

### Your Article

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**Nashoba Valley  
Amateur Radio Club**

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Librarian: Peter Nordberg N1ZRG

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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corrections and inquiries should be directed to the

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