



SIGNAL



de NINC

September 2009 Volume 18 Number 09

This Month's Meeting

The program for this month's meeting will be a presentation on the Red Cross Emergency Communications Response Vehicle by Ralph KD1SM.

Lantern Battery Challenge rules will be handed out at the September meeting. Applications and payment will be collected.

The next road clean up will be Sunday September 20th. We will meet at the river common on 119 at 8:00 AM.

The vote for funding the Pepperell Community Center was successful so it should be open for our meetings in the fall.

Wear your badge to the meeting so new members can tell your name and you can introduce yourself to them. It may be worth your while.

Den Connors SK

Den Connors became a SK September 3rd. Den was a club member since 1994. He was the Club Emergency Coordinator for a number of years.

Den was the first President of TAPR and was involved in the first TAPR digital work on TNC's. See www.arrl.org/?artid=9159.

Top right: Den at Field Day 2008 demonstrating the Winlink 2000 VHF & HF station. [KD1SM photo]



NVARC Cookout

August 15th we held the annual NVARC cookout. The day was a steamer but sitting in the shade or inside with the air conditioning was quite pleasant. People arrived at Skips around noontime. Everyone cooked their food over the next hour or so and then we sat around and chatted about antennas, towers, radios, and just about anything else.



Bob W1XP, Stan KD1LE and Jim N8VIM eating lunch.



Dennis K1LGQ takes his own picture and Jim's.



(L-R) Gary K1YTS, John KK1X, and Les N1SV enjoying the shade in Skip's yard.

The event wrapped up around 4:30. After a quick clean up everyone departed.

Thanks to Skip K1NKR and Joyce for hosting our cookout.

Thanks to Dennis for the pictures. I encourage people to take pictures of events we or they participate in. You might be the only person who remembered the camera.

In attendance were; Skip K1NKR and Joyce, Gary K1YTS, Stan KD1LE and Lynda N1PBL, Dennis K1LGQ, John KK1X and Peg, Bob W1XP and Karen KA1JVU, Jim N8VIM, and Les N1SV.

PSLIST

Every event needs communications volunteers

September

11-13 MS Challenge Walk, Jim KB1JKJ

13 Hop-Boston Jimmy Fund Walk Steve W3EVE

13 Hopkinton Women's Sprint Triathlon

26 Berkshires MS Bike and Hike, Jim KB1JKJ

27 Westminster 250 Anniversary Parade, Bill N1UZ

October

11 Boston BAA Half Marathon, Bob WA1IDA

See www.n1nc.org/Events for the latest

Board Meeting

Cookout was August 15th at K1NKR. We thank Skip and Joyce for their hospitality. Treasurer settled for payment of cookout costs.

Discussion of upcoming meeting presentations. November and February meetings open.

Ralph submitted the Treasurers report for the newsletter. Starting up the book raffle with some new books.

Discussed the equipment donated to the club by Robert Jack N1OFX. One VHF radio will be going to the repeater digital link. A list of equipment that will be sold will be available in September. Bids will close at the end of the October meeting.

Some award opportunities discussed.

In attendance were Ralph KD1SM, John KK1X, Stan KD1LE, Bob W1XP, Skip K1JKR, Peter N1ZRG, Larry KB1ESR.

Adopt A Highway

Our next Road Cleanup will be September 20th. We canceled the August cleanup since too many people were unavailable. We'd like to see a good turnout for this month's so we can do a complete job. Eight is the right number to make quick work of the entire section we do. We are starting an hour earlier than in the past so the cleanup doesn't bite into the day as much so we are starting at 8:00 AM. Hope to see you there.

Treasurers Report

Income for August was \$11.42 in bank interest. Expenses were \$125 for Field Day pins, \$5.32 for the August picnic, and \$17.60 for newsletter postage leaving a net expense of \$136.50 for the month.

Current balances:

General fund	\$4,129.05
Community fund	\$2,949.41

As of 3 September we have 41 members who are current with their dues and 25 renewals outstanding. If you don't know your renewal date, please check 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

FT8900 Programming

I have updated the "standard" frequency matrix for the FT8900 mobile radio programming software. I added the alphanumeric for all the entries. Six characters can be pretty obscure though. The current frequency matrix is dated 090505. If your radio has been programmed in the last few years it has the date code in the alphanumeric display of memory location number one. If you tune to memory one and press the LOW button for two seconds the numeric frequency display will change to alphanumeric. The date code is year, month, and day. The previous version was 090304. If you cannot select memory number one it means you programmed the radio yourself or it was programmed with the standard matrix before 2007.

I will bring the computer and programming cables to the meeting. If you want to get your rig memory updated bring it and the power cable.

ARRL Letter

FCC TO UTILITIES: DON'T LOOK TO HAMS TO PAY FOR YOUR TESTING

In a case that goes back more than 10 years, the FCC has told a Pennsylvania utility that the utility is responsible for paying for "efforts to locate and correct instances of [power line] noise" <http://www.fcc.gov/eb/AmateurActions/files/Duque09_08_07_5108.pdf>. At least one amateur has been complaining to the FCC since 2000 regarding harmful radio interference possibly caused by power line equipment maintained by Pittsburgh's Duquesne Light Company (DLC) <<http://www.duquesnelight.com/>>.

Bob Thacker, K3GT, of Allison Park, Pennsylvania -- a suburb just northeast of Pittsburgh -- first noticed harmful interference back in 1996. He told the ARRL that DLC would come out and fix things, but that he would soon hear noise again. After a few years of this, he complained to the FCC, and in 2005, the FCC notified DLC of the complaint. A month later, DLC responded to the FCC, detailing their efforts to resolve the matter and indicated that the most recent complaint was the result of changed conditions, not the continuation of an old problem.

According to the FCC, DLC again communicated with the FCC in a letter dated June 2, 2005, explaining the efforts they had taken to repair three lightning arrestors. During the latter half of 2005 and into 2006, Thacker continued to experience interference and continued to report these instances to DLC, requesting that DLC correct the problems. In 2007, he located a specific pole as one source of noise and advised a Mr Luther of DLC of this fact; Mr Luther advised Thacker that he would submit a work order.

In March 2008, DLC contacted Thacker, indicating that it had swept the area where the suspected pole was located and discovered no noise. DLC indicated that the noise source was a neon light. Finally, DLC stated that it had spent "significant amounts of time and money" attempting to address his concerns and that DLC would require him to pay for any additional efforts to locate and correct instances of noise.

Special Counsel for Amateur Enforcement Laura Smith responded to DLC in July of this year, saying "Such a response is not acceptable." She spelled out what she called "the most important rules relating to radio and television interference from incidental radiators," specifically:
47 CFR, Section 15.5: General Conditions of Operation

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2002/octqtr/pdf/47cfr15.5.pdf>; 47 CFR, Section 15.13: Incidental Radiators

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2002/octqtr/pdf/47cfr15.13.pdf>, and 47 CFR Section 15.15: General Technical Requirements

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2002/octqtr/pdf/47cfr15.15.pdf>.

"Given the fact this case has been ongoing for quite some time without resolution and DLC has had ample time to locate the instances of interference and make the necessary repairs," Smith told the utility, "you are directed to respond to [me] within 60 days of receipt of this letter, detailing what steps you have taken to resolve the remaining instances of interference that are reported as being caused by your equipment. Should the remaining interference problems not be resolved within those 60 days, DLC will be required to provide [me] with a status update every two weeks going forward as to what progress, if any, has been made to resolve the matter."

ARRL Lab Engineer and power line noise expert Mike Gruber, W1MG, was pleased with Smith's decision, and said that amateurs should not be made to pay fees to the utilities to test for harmful interference by the same utilities. "It is not the responsibility of an Amateur Radio operator to track down and get rid of power line noise -- that's the utilities' job. I am pleased with the precedent that Laura Smith and the FCC have set here. Now maybe more utilities will take power line noise interference more seriously in the future."

HURRICANE BILL PASSES NEW ENGLAND, FINDS NEWFOUNDLAND

Along Coastal New England and the Canadian Maritimes, residents boarded up windows in preparation for Hurricane Bill. Even though the storm -- eventually downgraded from Category 4 to Category 1 -- was considerably weaker than it had been when it was in the Caribbean earlier last week, those who live and work in the region were not taking any chances. To assist the National Hurricane Center (NHC) <<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>> in tracking the storm, hams with the Hurricane Watch Net and the VoIP Hurricane Net relayed traffic and spotting reports to WX4NHC, the Amateur Radio Station at the NHC <<http://www.wx4nhc.org/>>.

"For the second year in a row -- last year with Hurricane Kyle, and now Hurricane Bill -- the Amateur Radio operators in the Canadian Maritimes proved their skills at supporting the needs of the hurricane centers and in passing information vital to the public's safety," said ARRL Emergency Preparedness and Response

Manager Dennis Dura, K2DCD. "We know that should even more severe tropical events impact that area, the hams will be ready with this increasing experience of late, and we will be ready to support them."

Bill's top-sustained winds fell from 105 MPH on Friday night to just 85 MPH by Sunday morning. But as the storm's wind speed dissipated, its size didn't: The diameter of tropical storm-force winds stretched 550 miles, the distance from Atlanta to Washington, DC. During the early hours of Sunday morning, Bill's center of circulation passed about 160 miles to the east-southeast of Nantucket, Massachusetts, its closest approach to the United States. There were wind gusts ranging from 25-35 MPH along the eastern coast of Massachusetts and a few bands of rain swept northward across Cape Cod, but not enough to cause any flooding.

The VoIP Hurricane Net (VoIP Net) <<http://www.voipwx.net/>> activated at 4 AM EDT on Sunday, August 23, wrapping up at 6 PM that evening. "Nova Scotia amateurs relayed a significant number of reports to WX4NHC via the Net," said Director of Operations for the VoIP Hurricane Net Rob Macedo, KD1CY. "They described tropical storm force conditions and pockets of wind damage, including a few coastal road washouts from storm surge but the region was spared hurricane force winds. This is likely because of Bill's track parallel to the coast, just south of the province. The highest wind gusts were in the 45-55 MPH range over land."

Macedo said that during the weekly VoIP Net on Saturday evening, Net Control conducted a special roll call, lining up Canadian stations from the affected area: "Martin Thomas, VE1AUZ, was the key liaison station monitoring the local VHF/UHF repeaters, feeding the information to the VoIP Hurricane Net. Several other Canadian stations also relayed reports, including Geoff Wilson, VE1GW, and Frank Leslie, VE1FWL. VE1EMX, an official station for the Municipality of the County of Cumberland's Emergency Measures Organization, was also on the air. More than a dozen Canadian stations were connected into the VoIP Hurricane Net during the height of Bill's impact on the Maritimes. This is our second time in two years working with Canadian amateurs and amateurs affiliated with Radio Amateurs Canada and they did a terrific job once again."

RAC Vice President of Field Services Doug Mercer, VO1DTM, told the ARRL that he, Newfoundland Section Emergency Coordinator Rendyl Godwin, VO1RYL, and four District Emergency Coordinators were "actively passing traffic hourly to the Hurricane Watch Net since 1200 UTC [Sunday]."

Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) <<http://www.hwn.org/>> Manager Dave Lefavour, W7GOX, told the ARRL that they received an activation request from WX4NHC, their first activation of the 2009 hurricane season: "We opened the Net at 8 AM EDT on Sunday, August 23 on 14.325 MHz, and operated continuously until 7 PM. We had a successful spring recruiting campaign that brought several new members to the Net, and Hurricane Bill allowed us to introduce them to our Net protocols. It's one thing to read about how we do things, but there is no substitute for experience. Conditions on 20 meters were difficult, but with the additional members added to our roster, we were able to maintain communications with our Canadian reporting stations. Kudos to three hams -- Derek King, VE1AWT, David Myrick, VO1VCE, and Fredrick Snow, VO1FJS -- are in order, as they were stalwarts during this HWN session, providing timely information that we relayed to the National Hurricane Center in Miami. By the end of the day, 22 HWN members had participated in the Net."

Lefavour thanked all amateurs who kept the 20 meter frequency clear so they could support WX4NHC. "With the unpredictable shifts in propagation on the 20 meter band, and considering the conditions under which these folks are operating, the signals of our reporting stations are often weak," he said. "This was certainly the case for Sunday's Net session."

WX4NHC Assistant Coordinator Julio Ripoll, WD4R, thanked the hams who supported the operation: "I would like to echo my thanks to everyone for making the effort to support our friends in Canada during Hurricane Bill. It was truly an international effort with Net Controls from many parts of the US and as far away as Germany. The highest wind reports that I saw come in came from Sable Island with a population of five people and 300 wild horses."

Ripoll singled out five Canadian hams "who truly deserve special mention for their extra efforts and long hours relaying reports: Martin Thomas, VE1AUZ; Joseph Wilson, VE1GW; Frank Leslie, VE1FWL; James Hannon, VE1EMX, and Fredrick Snow, VO1FJS."

"Bill opened the 2009 hurricane season for us," HWN's Lefavour said. "We hope that we are not needed for the rest of the year, but the peak of the hurricane season is yet to come. We're ready."

SUITSAT-2 NOW CALLED ARISSAT-1

The SuitSat-2 project -- an Amateur Radio satellite housed in a Russian spacesuit -- now has a new name to go with a new shape: ARISSat-1. On Wednesday, August 19, Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) <<http://www.rac.ca/ariss/oindex.htm>> Chairman Gas-

ton Bertels, ON4WF, announced the new name for the satellite and project. According to ARRL ARISS Program Manager Rosalie White, K1STO, the project team is moving ahead, using the same hardware that was to fly in the Russian Orlan suit. Russia will continue to call the satellite Radioskaf-2, so ARISS is designating it ARISSat-1/Radioskaf-2.

Plans to launch a second SuitSat-spacesuit-turned-satellite were the subject of discussions and presentations at the November 2006 AMSAT Space Symposium and ARISS International Delegates' meeting. Despite a weaker-than-anticipated 2 meter signal, SuitSat-1 sparked the imagination of students and the general public and turned into a public relations bonanza for Amateur Radio <<http://www.arrl.org/ARISS/Suitsat.pdf>>. ARISS hopes to capitalize on the concept by building an even better SuitSat that will include ham radio transponders. The SuitSat.org Web site <http://www.suitsat.org/> attracted nearly 10 million hits during the SuitSat-1 mission. Designated by AMSAT as AO-54, SuitSat-1 remained in operation for more than two weeks, easily outlasting initial predictions that it would transmit for about a week. SuitSat-1 re-entered and burned up in Earth's atmosphere in September 2006. ARISSat-1/Radioskaf-2 is expected to be live for at least six months.

Due to storage considerations, the two surplus Orlan space suits in storage on the ISS were discarded via the Progress Cargo Vessel earlier this year. One of these suits was to be used to house the electronics for the upcoming SuitSat-2 mission; the batteries were to be mounted inside the suit, solar panels attached to the extremities with the electronics, video cameras and antenna mounted on the helmet by the ISS crew prior to deployment during an extra-vehicular activity (EVA), commonly called a spacewalk. The removal of the Orlan space suits from ISS removes the "Suit" component of the deployment and the new name reflects the change in configuration.

White told the ARRL that the ARISSat-1/Radioskaf-2 team, through Gould Smith, WA4SXM, made the final decision for the satellite to be square, with solar panels on all 6 sides. "The team is mounting a 70 cm quarter-wave whip on the bottom and a 2 meter quarter wave whip on the top," she said. "All of the hardware and software goes inside the square, and cameras go on the outside." The experiment being developed by Russia's Kursk State University is expected to be integrated into the electronics once the US-produced equipment is delivered to Russia this fall.

AMSAT <<http://www.amsat.org/>> and ARISS pointed out that the importance of this project to both organizations is not diminished. "ARISS sees this mission as an

important component of education outreach, as it will provide an opportunity for students around the world to listen for recorded greetings from space, as well as learn about tracking spacecraft in orbit," White said.

The ARISSat-1/Radioskaf-2 transmitter and receiver will be based on a Software Defined Transponder (SDX) system. It will consist of two major components: The RF Module and the Digital Signal Processor (DSP) module. In the RF module, there will be an up converter that receives a signal from the DSP module as a 10.7 MHz intermediate frequency RF signal with a 50 kHz bandwidth, and up converts it to 145 MHz signal of 50 kHz bandwidth centered on 145.9375 MHz. The receiver is a down converter with a 50 kHz bandwidth centered on 437.6125 MHz. The output of the receiver is a 10.7 MHz RF signal with a bandwidth of 50 kHz. The DSP processor receives the 10.7 MHz signal from the receiver down converter and processes it and outputs a 10.7 MHz signal to the transmitter up converter. The DSP can also inject signals such as the CW ID, telemetry, audio and packet signals as determined by the software on the DSP.

AMSAT calls the deployment of the SDX "a critical milestone" for the organization. "This upcoming flight provides an opportunity to flight test the next generation of spacecraft hardware," Bertels said. "Lessons learned from this deployment will be applied to future flight opportunities as AMSAT moves towards a 'modularization approach' to spacecraft development with the expectation the future spacecraft missions will utilize a derivative of SDX and the associated hardware."

The ARISS International Team has been informed that there is still space available for shipment of the ARISSat-1/Radioskaf-2 electronics on the projected cargo flight to the ISS in January 2010, and the extra-vehicular activity scheduled for April 2010 still has a SuitSat-2 deployment on the schedule.

SOUTH AFRICAN HAMS TO PUT ZS10WCS ON THE AIR BEFORE, DURING WORLD CUP

With World Cup soccer coming to South Africa in 2010, hams in that country will commemorate the event starting in September 2009 with a special call sign: ZS10WCS. According to the South African Radio League (SARL) <<http://www.sarl.org.za/>>, that country's IARU Member-Society, the call sign will be used in two ways: In the months leading up to the World Cup, to be held June 11-July 11, 2010, and for times during the event itself. SARL is requiring that clubs selected to use ZS10WCS before the event be on the air on weekends, Friday night through Sunday night. Clubs using the special call sign during the World Cup are expected to be on the air each day.

SARL will supply the special event QSL cards, and requests for direct QSLs will be handled by the SARL QSL bureau. Direct QSLs must include a self-addressed envelope and one IRC or US \$1. Amateurs may also QSL via e-mail <wcs@sarl.org.za>, but those hams sending an e-mail QSL will only receive an e-mail QSL in return, and not the commemorative printed QSL.

When the World Cup was in Germany in 2006, 38 different special event stations were on the air to celebrate the event. From May 13-July 16, 26 special district stations (DQ2006A to DQ2006Z) and 12 special stadium stations (such as DR2006B and DR2006C) at the various venues were on the air. The Deutsche Amateur Radio Club (DARC) offered a gold, silver and bronze award for contacting each station; there is no word if SARL will offer an award in 2010. -- Some information provided by SARL

SANTA CRUZ HAMS PROVIDE SUPPORT DURING WILDFIRES

As wildfires threaten the central California coast near Santa Cruz -- located between San Jose and Monterey -- area radio amateurs have been providing support to law enforcement and fire authorities. According to Santa Cruz County Public Information Officer Bill Conklin, AF6OH, the Santa Cruz County Emergency Operations Center requested support from ARES on Wednesday, August 12: "We activated and established an informal Net to provide fire support resources." Just two days later, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a State of Emergency for Santa Cruz County.

On Thursday, three amateurs staffed the County's Emergency Operations Center for the ARES Net, beginning at 5 AM and going for 16 hours. Monterey County ARES District Emergency Coordinator Dave Burbidge, W6IIQ, also helped to provide coverage.

"Once we were activated, about 30 amateurs signed in to a Resource Net on a local repeater managed by Bob Wolbert, K6XX," Conklin said. "These hams were assigned various duties, including providing support for animal rescue operations. Some were assigned to specific locations in order to support law enforcement and fire authorities. The Santa Cruz Chapter of the American Red Cross initiated staffing and evacuation centers on Wednesday night, and we deployed the ARES Step-Van to support a shelter in Davenport, about 15 miles north of Santa Cruz on Highway 1. Due to the low volume of shelter clients, these facilities did not require further staffing by local ARES team members."

Officials declared a mandatory evacuation in the affected area on Thursday, namely for the towns of

Swanton and Bonny Doon; an estimated 2500 people were evacuated from their homes. On Sunday, officials allowed residents from Bonny Doon who had been evacuated to return to their homes, but warned them to be on a state of alert and to be ready to move as needed.

Dubbed the Lockheed Fire, the blaze was 90 percent contained on Friday, August 21. More than 7500 acres are affected by the blaze; the cause of the fire is under investigation. Approximately 2000 firefighters -- equipped with almost 300 fire engines, 14 helicopters, 30 bulldozers, six air tankers and 21 water tenders -- were trying to get the fires under last weekend. As of August 21, there are 1595 fire personnel on site with 125 engines and five helicopters. To date, no homes have been destroyed by the fire, but 13 outbuildings were burned to the ground. The damage is estimated at \$21.4 million.

Conklin said that the Santa Cruz County Equine Rescue Team was activated in response to the fire, providing large animal rescue support. "In the past year, many members of the team received their Amateur Radio license," he explained. "They were instrumental in organizing and rescuing horses, llamas, alpacas, goats, sheep, chickens and ducks, as well as arranging transport for 100 head of cattle. Working in conjunction with County of Santa Cruz County Animal Services, they were able to transport and relocate the animals to safety at two sites within the county."

Volunteers staged an equine and large animal rescue at the cement plant in Davenport. A shelter for smaller animals was established at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds in Watsonville, about 15 miles south of the City of Santa Cruz.

The weather continues to be a major concern, as do the steep terrain and limited access to the fire's perimeter, Conklin said: "Conditions continue to be very fluid and may change quickly based on weather factors. Firefighters will continue to construct fire line around the perimeter of the fire." Governor Schwarzenegger visited the Fire Operations Center in Watsonville and thanked all of the firefighters for their assistance.

"Once again, Amateur Radio and ARES proved to be an essential resource in times of emergency," Conklin said. "The citizens of Santa Cruz County are fortunate to have this trained, technical resource available to provide these essential communications resources."

HPM/140 BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION EVENT COMING NEXT MONTH

The Hiram Percy Maxim Birthday celebration is back! This year, the ARRL is honoring the 140th anniversary

of the birth of the League's first president and co-founder. Hiram Percy Maxim, W1AW, was born September 2, 1869 and died February 17, 1936, in a Colorado hospital of complications stemming from a throat infection; his widow died just nine days later.

The operating event is open to all amateurs, and the goal is straightforward: Find the stations adding /140 to their call signs, and contact as many as possible during the event period, September 2-9. Who is eligible to sign /140? ARRL members who hold ARRL appointments, ARRL elected volunteers (such as ARRL Directors and Section Managers), ARRL Life Members, ARRL Headquarters staff and VEs, AECs, QSL bureau workers and awards managers (who are ARRL members). The complete list of eligible positions can be found on page 20 of the September 2009 issue of QST. If you work at least 25 /140 stations, an attractive certificate can be yours! The certificate can be endorsed in increments of 25 QSOs, up to 100.

Time Period: 0000 UTC September 2 until 2400 UTC September 9.

Exchange: All stations signing /140 send RS(T), their appointment and their name; others send RS(T) and their name.

Eligibility: All amateur stations may participate. ARRL Life Members, and those persons holding ARRL appointments, elected positions or ARRL HQ staff, may add /140 to their call signs for the duration of the celebration. Volunteer Examiners, Assistant Emergency Coordinators, QSL Bureau workers, Registered Instructors and Awards Managers who are ARRL members are also invited to participate.

Miscellaneous: /140 stations may be contacted on any band or mode for credit. You can work a station once per band and mode. Repeater contacts are valid for credit, but please be considerate of the users during a repeater's busy periods. All /140 stations are encouraged to be as active as possible on local repeaters and nets. The certificate is available for making at least 25 contacts with /140 stations, with endorsement increments of 25, and a maximum endorsement of 100. To receive the award, send in a log extract with the date, time, band, call sign worked and exchange for each /140 contact. Include your name, call sign and address, and tell us how many /140 stations you worked. Mail everything to HPM/140 Celebration, c/o W1AW, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111-1494. You can also send in your entry on a disk or CD in regular text format. All entries must be accompanied by a check or money order for \$5 (US) payable to ARRL. Please make sure your entry is postmarked by October 9, 2009.

THE LOCAL CLUB RESOURCE

Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, shares his views on how clubs play an important role in Amateur Radio. Fusaro is Assistant Manager of the ARRL's Membership and Volunteer Programs Department. He is also the ARRL Affiliated Club/Mentor Program Supervisor.

I am very fortunate to be in a position at ARRL which allows me significant interaction with our members. It is very fulfilling to be able to put a smile on someone's face by helping them find a solution to their problem, regardless of the complexity. Sometimes it is not possible to be as helpful over the telephone or with e-mail, so I will try to direct the individual to a local club where they may be able to get some side-by-side coaching. The local radio club is without a doubt the place where most of us received our ham radio education. The club is where we learned the jargon and techno-speak used on the air and where we met folks to emulate and folks whom we swore we would never be like. Everything that we know about ham radio that didn't come from a book was probably learned at club meetings or late night Field Day chats over burnt coffee. Personally, I have made many longtime friendships from my involvement in local radio clubs and I am sure many others can say this as well.

Clubs, by definition, are groups of like-minded people who share a common interest. In reality a club is an eclectic assembly of individuals, each with a unique perspective of their activity. The dynamic of a club is no different than that of a large family. Think of your last family get-together and then take a look at your radio club. If everybody was the same, life would be very boring. In every club, there is the usual cast of characters who add their distinctive flavors to the stew and make things interesting. It is diversity that makes a club work well. I have seen that no matter how varied the personalities are in a club, most of these personalities are also eager to help. Helping each other is characteristic of radio amateurs.

How often have you experienced something like this? Two hams will be in QSO -- perhaps discussing an antenna installation or radio repair -- when another radio operator will break in with a helpful suggestion. This situation may have happened to you, or you may have even been the breaking station. The same thing happens (or should happen) at club meetings. If you need help with something, the closest resource is your local club. On the surface, the club may appear to be dysfunctional, but once you are involved, you will find that it is actually very productive.

The Pareto principle, commonly known as the 80-20 rule is a simple expression that 80 percent of the effects come from 20 percent of the causes. As applied in the business world, this would be 80 percent of the sales are driven by 20 percent of the customers. In a club, the percentages may be slightly different, but the fact remains that a small percentage of the membership is responsible for making things happen.

This is not to suggest that 80 percent of the members do not participate, but without a "sparkplug," some things would never get started. These people are the doers. The doers don't take no for an answer and are always willing to take on more responsibility. But where is the fun in jump-starting a project without someone telling you it would never work? Of course, it would be much more fun without the negative comments, but that goes against human nature. Ever since man tried to open a coconut with a rock, someone was right beside him offering a thousand excuses why it won't work: "You'll smash your thumb." "The rock will break." "You should invent a wheel and roll it over the coconut." "Let's just eat the bananas." The cynics of the world are an essential part of society -- and of our clubs. They challenge us and make us work harder to prove them wrong. Learn to accept these people but never let them distract you from moving forward.

You only get as much from a club as you put into it. A majority of the club bashers tend to be long time hams with a "been there, done that" attitude, asking what a club has to offer them for them. To borrow from President John F. Kennedy, "ask what you can do for your club." Of course, we took more than we had to offer when we were younger and inexperienced. But over the years, we have gathered knowledge that we can share with the newcomers. Based upon my countless interactions with hams of all levels of experience, the novice has much to offer the old-timer, even if it is just reliving the joy of discovery. The local radio club has something for everybody who is willing to get involved.

Don't know where your local club is? Use the ARRL Affiliated Club search <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/club/clubsearch.html>. You can reach Fusaro by e-mail <w3iz@arrl.org>.

2009 Flea Markets/Conventions

September
12 Augusta ARA, Windsor ME
13 Western CT Hamfest, Newtown CT
13 SEMARA Dartmouth MA

19 76 Auction and Flea Market, Forestdale RI
19 NH Masons Alton NH
19 Alexander ME

20 MIT

October
11 Connecticut State Convention
16-17 NEAR Fest, Deerfield NH
18 MIT

November
FARAFest Falmouth ARA, Bourne MA

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

2009 Contest, DXpeditions and Special Events

The information for a DXpedition can be quite detailed and may include bands, dates, number of stations, and times of day they plan to work certain continents so I can not list it all here. But if a country or prefix is of interest you can get more information at www.425dxn.org.

Sept
12-13 ARRL September VHF QSO Party
19-20 ARRL 10 GHz and Up Contest

October
10-11 ARRL International EMD Competition

November
7-8 ARRL November Sweepstakes CW
21-22 ARRL November Sweepstakes Phone

December
4-6 ARRL 160 Meter Contest
5-6 ARRL International EME Competition
12-13 ARRL 10 Meter Contest



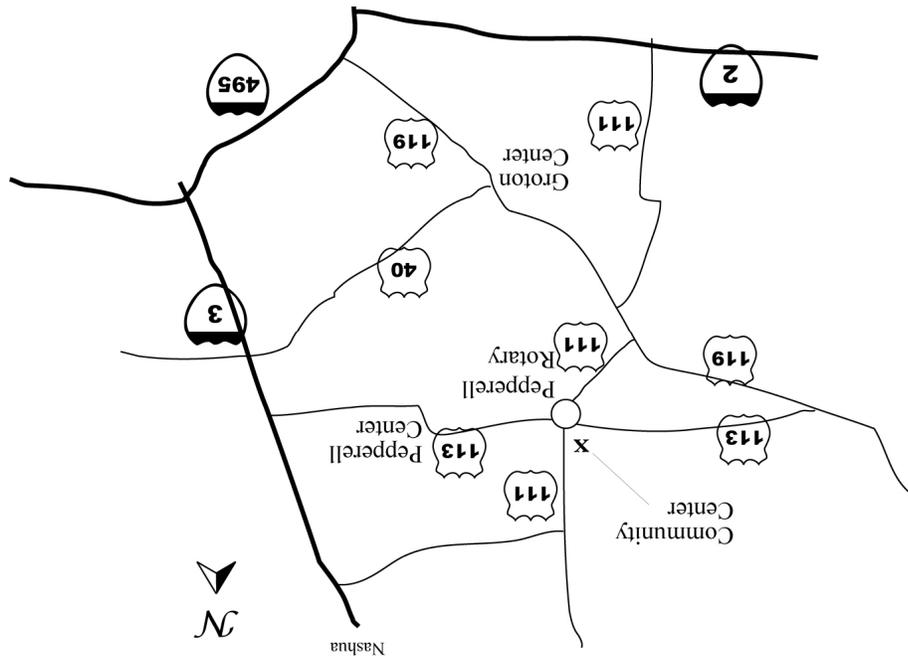
Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club

PO Box # 900
Pepperell Mass 01463-0900

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

President: Stan Pozerski KD1LE
Vice President: Peter Nordberg N1ZRG
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Skip Youngberg K1NKR 2008-2011
Joel Magid W1JMM 2009-2012

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Librarian: Peter Nordberg N1ZRG
Property Master: John Griswold KK1X
N1NC Trustee: Bruce Blain K1BG
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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