NVARC
Nashoba Valley
Amateur Radio Club

SIGNAL

SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB
ARRL

de N1NC

August 2015 Volume 24 Number 8

This Month's Program

No regular meeting in July or August

President's Corner

Good Day Folks,
The technical night, initiated by Dan, was very successful and enjoyed by a goodly number of the members. Dan has decided to focus on his son's activities and is dropping out of Tech Night on a regular basis. I will be making sure the facility at the Community Center is available for a continuation of Tech Night, the 'second Thursday' of each month, starting at 7:30 pm. The next Tech Night is scheduled for September 10. I will not be the focal point for the activities but will help as best I can. Each member attending is encouraged to bring projects and to suggest interests that could be addressed as a Tech Night subject.
Hoping to see a lot of you and wishing a continuation of this activity.

Peter N1ZRG

NVARC Cookout

Photo Courtesy of KK1X

Above CW from center Jim N8VIM, Gene WW8EN, Dan, Lynda N1PBL

Gene WW8EN generously hosted the NVARC Cookout again this year at the 'Barn". The weather was perfect with a nice breeze and the barn provided plenty of shade.

Photo Courtesy of KK1X

Above CW from back XXXXX (AB1WQ XYL), Jim AB1WQ, Peter N1ZRG, Gary K1YTS, Stan KD1LE, Jim N8VIM, Gene WW8EN, Dan, Lynda N1PBL

Photo Courtesy of WW8EN

Photo Courtesy of WW8EN

Above CW from back John KK1X, Peggy (KK1X XYL), XXXXX (AB1WQ XYL), Jim AB1WQ, Peter N1ZRG, Lynda N1PBL

Last Month's Meeting

There was no July meeting.

Ride to End Alzheimer's

On July 18 nineteen Amateur Radio operators provided logistics, health, and safety communications for the 2015 Ride to End Alzheimer's.

This event is run by the Massachusetts/New Hampshire chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. For the seventh consecutive year the event has been run in north central Massachusetts, Central Massachusetts, and a short distance into southern New Hampshire.

The operators who volunteered this year were Bob AB1CV, Tom AB1GF, Jim AB1WQ, Tom K1JHC, Mark K1MGY, Gary K1YTS, Carsten KB1KTP, Ray KB1LRL, Tim KB1ZVR, Tim KC1AJJ, Stan KD1LE, Ralph KD1SM, Dan KD2T, John KK1X,Tim KQ1Y, Joseph N1QDZ, Ken N3BGN, Jim N8VIM, and Tim W0TJP. Many of the volunteers have worked this event more than once and several have worked it since the event moved to our area.

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

Net Control had a good view of the rider assembly area.

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

Stan KD1LE and John KK1X at Net Control. NCS had four transceivers on four separate two-meter repeaters.

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

Stan KD1LE receives a positive status report from one of the course stations.

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

Above: The 100-mile riders receive their safety briefing just prior to getting underway.

NCS set up in the rain at 05:30. The rain slowly let up leaving only a brief rain delay for the start of the 100-mile group at 06:30. For the remainder of the day the weather cooperated nicely; not too hot, not too cold, not too wet, not too dry.

Several riders stopped by Net Control at the Start/Finish to thank the Amateur Radio operators for our service.

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

Mark K1MGY volunteered as a SAG vehicle driver as well as communicator.

The Ride has four routes, the longest being a 100-mile bicycle ride through the towns of Ayer, Harvard, Bolton, Berlin, Boylston, West Boylston, Clinton, Lancaster, Sterling, Leominster, Shirley, Groton, Townsend, Pepperell, Dunstable, Hollis NH, Amherst NH, and Nashua NH.

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

John KK1X installed his mobile radio in a SAG vehicle driven by another volunteer.

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

John KK1X mounted the remote head of his Yaesu 8900 on a piece of wood that fit snugly into the cup holder of the vehicle, making a very stable yet temporary mount.

Amateur Radio provides communications to six pit stops, several SAG (Support And Gear) vehicles, and shadows to the event directors.

Photo Courtesy N8VIM

Pit Stop crew with Jim N8VIM right end standing.

Photo Courtesy KW2T

West Groton Pit Stop staffed by Dan KW2T and Bob AB1CV. Dan's van is in the distance with antenna on a mast to support communications back to net control at Devens.

Thanks to Central Massachusetts Amateur Radio Association, Paul Andrews WB1EWS, Dave Peabody N1MNX, and Bernie Peabody N1IMO for the use of their repeaters for this event.

Further information about the ride itself can be found on http://www.alzmass.org/ride/

Details of the Amateur Radio operation are posted on http://n1nc.org/Events/2015/Alz/

-Ralph KD1SM

NVARC Field Day 2015

Photo Courtesy KW2T

The participants meet in Pepperell for breakfast the morning of Field Day.

Photo Courtesy KW2T

Before heading for the Field Day site Saturday morning started with breakfast at Charlotte's Cozy Kitchen. L-R CCW Bob W1XP, Wolf KA1VOU, Stan KD1LE, Ralph KD1SM, Jim N8VIM, Karen KA1JVU

Photo Courtesy KD1SM

Photo Courtesy KW2T

Photo Courtesy KW2T

Photo Courtesy KW2T

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

Jim doing pre-flight inspections prior to Field Day overflight with Ralph KD1SM to take FD pictures.

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

Photo Courtesy of KD1SM

Field Day Participants. Stan KD1LE, George KB1HFT, Larry W1ESR, Jim N8VIM, John KK1X, Rod WA1TAC, Ed N1YFK, Bob AB1CV, Skip K1NKR, Sam K1NKR harmonic, Gabe K1NKR harmonic, Zack (Groton), Peter N1ZRG, Pete (Groton), Jim AB1WQ, Alexia (AB1WQ XYL), Bruce K1BG, Dan KW2T, Ralph KD1SM, Mike KA1NXH, Kent KD1TX, Teresa (Groton), John WA1TLX, Lee 7J1AMJ, Jeanine N1QIT, Chuck WA1RCH, Greg KB1WAQ and Tam, Bob W1XP, Karen KA1JVU.

August Board Meeting Notes

Board Meeting 8/8/2015

Discussed having Special Event station to celebrate 25th anniversary.

Tech night to continue.

Email to announce September meeting.

Newsletter article to solicit a Tech Night leader.

John KK1X

July Treasurers Report

Income for July was $75 from membership dues. Expenses were $19.60 for newsletter postage and $125 in Field Day expenses leaving a net expense for the month of $69.60. $25 in budgeted Field Day costs were donated to the Club and not submitted for reimbursement.

Current balances:

General fund	$3,079.09
Community fund	$4,636.41

As of 6 July we have 43 members who are current with their dues and 18 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 an Special Service Club, the ARRL expects a majority of Club members to also be ARRL members.

Ralph KD1SM

Microphone Extension Cord

So you mounted your mobile rig in the car or the shack and the coiled microphone cable is no longer long enough for comfortable use. That is the problem I had. It can also be a problem in public service events when multiple people are using the same radio.

Many of these rigs use a phone type RJ12 or RJ45 for the microphone connector. The Yaesu radio's I have use the RJ12.

Photo Courtesy KD1LE

So I set up with a microphone (L) and a cable (R) to work out the wiring. In the vise (C) is a cable connector block described later.

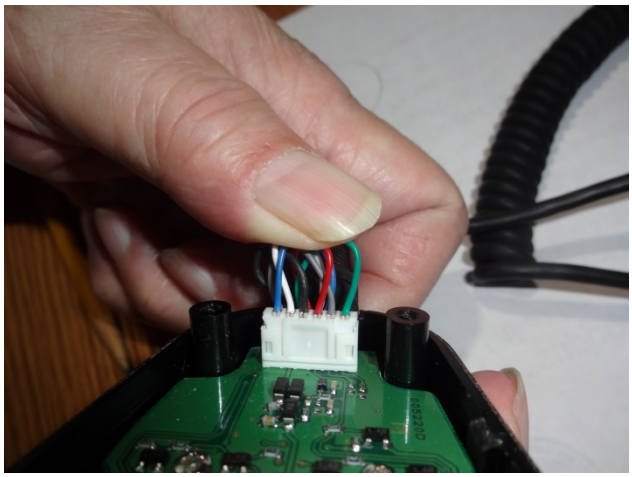

Photo Courtesy KD1LE

Inside the microphone is a connector with the six wires that go to the coiled cord.

Telephone cable and connectors come in a few styles and configurations. The cable comes flat or round and with a range of conductors. The connectors have similar choices. The RJ11 and RJ12 are the same form factor with six possible conductor positons. The connectors are characterized by the type of cable they are used with (flat or round) and the number of conductors. The RJ11 has six positions and four conductors and is identified as 6P4C. The RJ12 has six positions and six conductors and is identified as 6P6C. The Yaesu radios use a six wire cable with the RJ12 connector.

The cable connector blocks also come in several configurations. They have four and six conductors for the RJ11 and RJ12 connectors and eight conductors for RJ45 connectors. They also come in straight through and a reversing arrangement.

For the microphone extension the six conductor straight through cable connector and a straight through RJ12 to RJ12 cable can extend your microphones cable length.

You can probably find six conductor cable in your junk bin. The connector blocks are less than a buck a piece in quantity and the connectors are probably $0.30 or $0.40 or less in quantity.

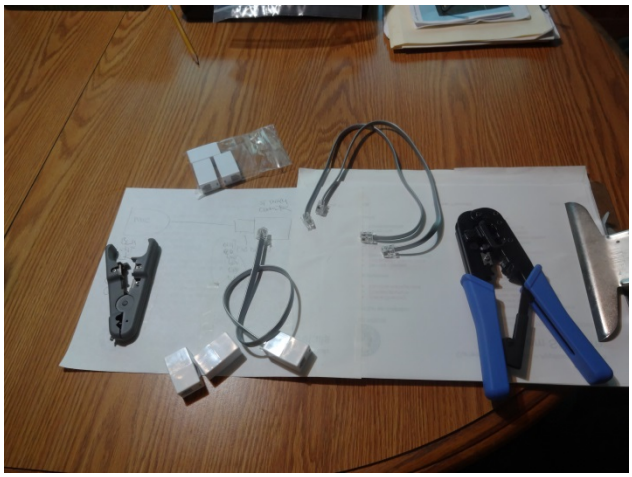

Photo Courtesy KD1LE

What I made up was a bunch of 15 inch straight through cables. That doesn't seem like much but in the spots I have wanted extended it made a huge difference. I did make some longer cables just in case the need arose. A side benefit is the radio connector is on the side of the rig and that stresses the regular microphone cable in a sharp right angle. Microphones cost $60. Adding the extension cable puts that stress on the extension cable which costs about $2.

Stan KD1LE

Windows 10

The Windows 10 upgrade has been pretty much a non-event for me. I had seven machines that were possible candidate for the free upgrade. They were Windows 7 and Windows 8.1 machines. All but one successfully upgraded with no know problems. Basically if the system upgrade check it does before it schedules the download and install passes the upgrade went without a hitch.

There are things you should think about before you upgrade.

A back up of critical files is always a good idea though I haven't heard of or had any problems.

Windows 8.0 machines need to have the Windows 8.1 update before they can be upgraded to Windows 10. So you want to make sure Windows Update is working and processed all the updates.

Older machines might fail for an unsupported BIOS, so updating the BIOS beforehand could save you a problem. I had one machine that failed for this and even after I updated to the current or latest BIOS it still failed. I have heard there are some bugs in the upgrade check program so I'm not sure that it even checked again after I updated the

BIOS. That is not fatal as you can force the upgrade.

I always try to do a clean up before such an upgrade. There is no sense in carrying baggage forward you don't need or use that could only cause problems. So those old programs should be uninstalled and files deleted if you really don't need them. Don't forget to empty the recycle bin. This does have an added benefit. The upgrade saves all the old installation in a "windows.old" folder in case it needs roll back or in case you need something it didn't save in the new install. The folder can be quite large. On the six machines I have processed it has been between 12 and 40 GB. Windows deletes most of this folder after 28 days which gives you some time if something is missed or lost. But why complicate things.

Do you have enough disk space? The upgrade file(s) itself is more than 3 GB. But the bigger need is the above mentioned file which effectively means you have doubled the used space. The .old file includes your files. My laptop's windows folder is 22.9 GB and the windows.old is 38.4 GB.

The first thing I missed after the update was opening the new browser, called Edge, my Bookmarks were missing. To recover your Bookmark click on the menu (three bars) in the upper right. That will show Favorites. On the right edge is an Import link. When you select that it will show possible sources to import from. One should be Internet Explorer. It will sort the entries alphabetically.

Some people have missed the "recent" list in the Start Menu. It still exists under File Explorer. When you go into File Explorer at the top left of the windows is Quick Access. That will display Frequent Folders and Recent Files.

Stan KD1LE

Strays

None this month.

Meeting Coffee Bar

Many thanks to Ken KB1UVP for picking up 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.

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. Recent nets have been run by George KB1HFT. Attendees; Stan KD1LE, Skip K1NKR, Larry W1ESR, George KB1HFT/NCS, Leo K1LK, Jim N8VIM, Bob W1XP, Peter N1ZRG.

Upcoming Contests

September
5-6 EME 2.3 GHz and Up
5 Russian RTTY WW Contest
5 All Asian DX Contest Phone
12-14 September VHF
15 North American QSO Party SSB
19-29 EME 50 to 1296 MHz
22 Hawaii QSO Party
27 Peanut Power QRP Sprint
29-30 W/VE Islands QSO Party

October
10 Arizona QSO Party
17 Worked All Germany Contest
17 South Dakota QSO Party
19-23 School Club Roundup
31-Nov 1 EME 50 to 1296 MHz
November
7-9 November Sweeps CW
21-23 November Sweeps Phone
28 CQ WW DX Contest CW
28-29 EME 50-1296 MHz

December
4-6 160 Meter
12-13 10 Meter
20 Rookie Roundup CW
26 Stew Perry Topband Challenge

2016
January
2 ARRL RTT Roundup
9 North American QSO Party CW
16 North American QSO Party SSB
29 CQ 160 Meter Contest CW

Flea Markets/Hamfests

August
21-23 ARRL New England Convention Boxboro MA
30 NoBARC Hamfest Adams MA

September
12 Windsor Hamfest Windsor ME
13 Western CT Hamfest Newtown CT
19 St Croix Valley ARC Hamfest Alexander ME
20 Flea at MIT

October
16 NEAR-Fest Deerfield NH
18 Connecticut State Convention Meriden CT
18 Flea at MIT
31 Tri City ARC Gales Ferry CT

Your Article

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Advertisers

NVARC

Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club

PO Box # 900
Pepperell Mass 01463-0900

http://www.n1nc.org/

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Editor: Stan Pozerski KD1LE
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Photographer: Ralph Swick KD1SM
PIO: Roland Guilmet NR1G
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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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Nashoba Valley Amateur Radio Club
PO Box 900
Pepperell, MA 01463-0900