Southeastern Massachusetts Amateur Radio Association

ZERO BEAT

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SEMARA, W1AEC
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Meeting Highlights

Here are the highlights from the March 3rd SEMARA business meeting: After the pledge and roll call, the secretary's and treasurer's reports were read and accepted.

It was reported that Norman Robitaille, N1DNI, had passed away. It was also reported that Louis Macedo, W1WAY, is in the hospital. (It has since been reported that W1WAY has also passed away-ed.)

Bill, K1IBR, reported that the "*" command on the repeater, to turn on the lights, is not working, but would be fixed soon. Pete mentioned that some of the autodials are not working.

Pete, KA1WOJ, noted that that locks would be changed soon, and to see either him or Pat, KA1YUH, to exchanges keys, or you can get a new one for $1.00. (As of 3-28-94, the locks had been changed-ed.)

A motion was made and accepted to invite the Wareham Club to our HamFest and offer them free tables.

Funding the newsletter was discussed. The discussion revolved around finding a way to afford to send all the members the newsletter. It was noted that one club, with around 200 members, has a newsletter budget in excess of $3500.

After voting in some new members, the meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting

The next SEMARA business meeting is April 7, 1994, 7:30 pm. The club meets Thursdays, with business meetings on the first Thursday of the month. Note that there will be nominations and an election held to fill the vacant trustee position.

Field Day

It's never too early to start thinking about field day. Here's some ideas to get you started.

Antennas: A wide range of antennas can be used for field day, from simple wire antennas to full sized yagis. Some points to consider:

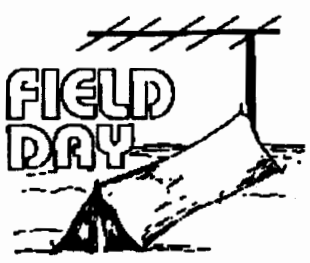
- Portability: How easily can it be transported by vehicle and/or hand carried to the site.
- Set-up: Once at the site, how easy is it to set-up and tune.
- Performance: Does it transmit and receive well? Does the antenna need a tuner?
- Survivability: How does it hold up to the weather. Does the SWR change when it gets wet? Can it take a crash and be set right back up again? Can it handle a strong lighning storm with high gusty winds and rain?
- Multi-band use: How well does it work on more than two bands with or without a tuner?

Kits: Field kits come in a wide range of flavors. A kit is a prepared package consisting of at least the following items:

- An antenna that can be assembled and installed in under 30 minutes.
- Coax with connectors at least 50-ft in length that can handle at least 100w continuous.
- A small tool pouch including spare connectors and adaptors.
- A small first aid kit.
- A flashlight with spare batteries.
- A cheap rain poncho.
- A 3-ft coax jumper.
- An inexpensive but fairly accurate SWR/PWR meter.
- Three #2 pencils and small note book.
- 50-ft extension cord.
- Rope or cord to hang the antenna.
- Cheap plastic tarp.
- A low wattage 12vdc lamp.

All this should be in a bag or in a foot locker ready to go. A footlocker can double as a table and also leaves room for your rig, mic, a 12vdc deep cycle battery and small power supply.

There is always the possibility that you will be located near a command center which will most likely have a generator. Or there maybe a generator near you which will allow you to plug in the power supply. Placing the battery between the rig and the power supply will let it act as an UPS. Run the minimum power needed to make the contact to conserve your power.



Kits may be larger and have many more antennas. You can have standby kits for emergency use and/or field day. A four inch diameter PVC pipe, 10 feet long with screw on caps can serve to hold a pushup mast and beam antenna. This can also hold two supports. Where there is no cover for a station, the PVC pipe and supports can be set up with a tarp covering them. Handles can be placed on the PVC pipe for easy carrying.

Post-Elmering

By George Wilson, W1OLP

The amateur community does a pretty good job of teaching newcomers and helping them get licenses. True, license examinations are not what they used to be. Most of my contemporaries were driven to get the General Class licenses (the lowest grade in those days) and went on the air immediately when their license arrived. In fact, some of us had tasted the fun by doing a little bootlegging (getting on the air without a license) or operating a friend's station before the license arrived. Bootlegging was very limited, however: Those were the days when hams would turn in their own mothers for transgressing any Part 97 rules.

Today, on the other hand, many of our new licensees are slow to get on the air, and some never do! Young people's programs given in schools have a particularly poor yield of active amateurs. This is understandable because of the lack of parental involvement and, perhaps more importantly, the cost of equipment. Parents are all too aware of the limited interest span of their offspring.

Adults are another case entirely. Equipment cost is not generally a problem. This is particularly true if they are members of a club where second-hand equipment is often readily available at used equipment prices. Their particular problem seems to be their lack of hands-on experience.

In the days before single sideband (SSB), most of us built much of our equipment, and antennas were simple wire affairs that were erected long before our licenses were issued. Today's newcomers are on a rapid learning curve with very little exposure to what it takes to get on the air and how to operate an amateur station. They are afraid of embarrassing themselves or, worse yet, inadvertently doing something illegal.

Many of us remember establishing the VHF band limits (typically the 5 and 2-1/2 meter bands) using Lecher wires, a most inaccurate method by today's standards. Locally, the band edges were marked by where you heard the highest and lowest frequency signals. Today, our equipment allows precise frequency control, and with one of the many band allocation charts available, even the beginner need have little fear of out-of-band operation. However, this very precision can be very intimidating.

It appears that we amateurs are dropping the ball when the newcomer gets his license. Our helpers/Elmers are doing the job quite well, but there is a definite need for "Post-Elmers", those who help get a newcomer comfortably on the air.

The Barnstable Amateur Radio Club (BARC) has pioneered a post-Elmering activity under the guidance of club president Jim Kessler, KQ3S. He recently contacted 20 newly-licensed amateurs and invited them to a meeting prior to the scheduled November meeting, and more than 15 attended.

As follow-up to this initial meeting, many Cape Cod amateurs have volunteered to be Post-Elmers. They visit with newcomers and help them to decide what to purchase for equipment, instruct them in the use of the equipment, and help in installing the equipment and the associated antennas and grounding systems. These are all formidable steps for a newcomer acting alone.

Perhaps most importantly, Post-Elmers get the station on the air, and demonstrate what it will do and how to use it properly. One special trick is to demonstrate what can be done with the privileges offered by the next higher grade of license. In one typical case, a newly fired-up Technician's station was used by his Post-Elmer to make a phone contact with an amateur in Texas. The owner of the station was duly impressed, and hopefully, this will stimulate an upgrade.

The Post-Elmering approach used by BARC is strongly recommended to other clubs. We were pleasantly surprised at how many of our members are ready and willing to help out the newcomers.

This article first appeared in the Oscillator, the Barnstable, MA ARC's newsletter.

New Threat to Spectrum

Bill Burden WB1BRE,
New England Division Director, ARRL

Added to the recent 902-928Mhz alert, we are now faced with a threat to Amateur spectrum in the 2300-2450Mhz band. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has released it's plan for reallocating 200Mhz of government spectrum to commercial use. It appears that, in spite of Congressional instructions, 25 of the 50Mhz available for reallocation by Aug 1994 will be 2390-2400 and 2402-2417Mhz, with 2300-2310Mhz to made available later. Only the Amateur Satellite portion of the spectrum and a portion we share with microwave ovens are protected.

We may not lose this spectrum, but may be required to share with commercial services. While we have an excellent record in sharing with government, the sharing situation with commercial interests on the 902-928 band as an indicator is not encouraging. This situation is yet another increase in the level of pressure on spectrum and the constant need for reporting and documenting useage of our bands -- if we don't use it, we lose it!

Packet Directory

144.990	N1KBT	145.090	KC1CE
144.990	NS1N	145.090	KD1NU
145.010	Fara Digi	145.570	WA1QAJ
145.010	N1CSI	145.530	KQ1K
145.050	WA1ZUF	145.710	KA1THM
145.070	WQ1O	145.710	KC1KM
145.090	AA1FS	145.710	N1LDY
145.090	K1UGM	145.730	KC1UA

Amateurs Needed

Radio Amateurs are needed to provide communications to support the "New England Classic", a 500 mile bicycle tour which raises funds for the American Diabetes Association. This event will be held during the week of July 10 to July 16, 1994. We are soliciting help for individual days or for the entire event. Radio operators who can assist with the entire event will be provided with food, lodging, and transportation. We may be able to provide a radio for use by a ham who needs one to assist us.

2-Meter communications, using both simplex and repeaters, are used to tie all the support operations together. Although there usually are a few hams among the riders, we depend upon motor vehicles to transport the support staff. We don't expect hams or any other support person to need to ride a bike.

The daily route has been planned in advance. Each rider is given detailed directions for where to turn, etc. As is typical for planned bicycle rides, there are also arrows painted on the road to indicate the route.

The Glossary

Balun

A device used to couple an unbalanced source and load, such as an antenna and coax.

Chirp

A slight shift in transmitter frequency when you key the transmitter.

Repeater

A station that receives a signal and retransmits it for better range.

There will be approximately 75 riders and 6 support vehicles. Each rider is assigned a number. These numbers are checked off at four fixed locations, each morning when the riders start out, at the two daily rest stops, and at the final destination of the day. In this way we can always account for the approximate position of each rider. Communications are needed from these four fixed positions and from the vehicles.

In addition to transporting the gear for all involved in the ride, the vehicles are for medical staff and bike mechanics who patrol the portion the day's route that is currently being ridden. In 1993 we were fortunate to have two bicycle mechanics who are licensed radio amateurs. Their vehicles were always tied into the safety net we run during the time that riders are on the road.

It is quite challenging and satisfying to be a radio operator supporting this type of event. With the hills, sparse repeater coverage over parts of the route and a need to maintain communications over a continuous 50 or more miles of road, you learn to use the terrain to your advantage. Both bicycles and radio waves go farther when starting out from a hilltop. Last year when we had riders on both sides of a mountain pass and no repeater coverage, I even became a human repeater for a short time, sitting at the top of the pass and relaying messages among the other operators.

By the end of the week riders and support staff all develop a tremendous sense of accomplishment, and many wonderful friendships are started. We welcome you to join our support team!

For more information, please contact Robert Evans, KC1WC at 22 Wildwood Rd, Stow, MA 01775, or (508)-562-4733

Avery Fisher

Avery Fisher, an electronics pioneer, recently died of complications from a stroke. Fisher founded the Philharmomic Radio Company in 1937. He later sold it, and started Fisher Radio, and hired techinicains away from European companies. Fisher Radio sold hi-fi components at premium prices.

'94 SEMARA OFFICERS

President
Pete Carreiro, KA1WOJ, 993-6262

Vice-President
Robert Peckham, KA1YDG, 995-9137

Secretary
Karen Peckham, N1LIE, 995-9137

Treasurer
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Morris Fogaren, WB1GJO
Joe Midurski, W1EKW
Edward Blouin, KA1AW

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Bill Field, WA1FYF, Chairman

Technical Committee
William M. Miller, Jr., K1IBR, Chairman

Ways & Means Committee
Pat Carreiro, KA1YUH, Chairman

Spanish Net

Maurice Castro, KB1ATD, is calling a Spanish Net each Monday night at 7 pm.

Repeater Directory

145.150 -	WA1DGW, Fall River
145.490 -	KA1WBF, Fairhaven
146.700 -	WA1RBT, Cranston
146.655 -	WA1GPO, Falmouth
146.685 -	N1OEG, Plymouth
147.000 +	W1AEC, South Dartmouth
147.045 +	WA1AIC, Yarmouth
147.135 +	ND1N, Taunton
147.180 +	WB1FLD, Bridgewater
147.315 +	N1BBT, Wareham
442.200 +	NY1D, Fall River
443.450 +	K1MYL, Westport
443.600 +	NS1N, Norwell
444.250 +	WA1GPO, Falmouth
444.350 +	W1ACT, Fall River
444.550 +	WA1ZUF, Bridgewater
446.325 -	KA1CLX, Plymouth
446.625 -	NC1K, Plymouth
448.675 -	N1FPH, West Greenwich

Know of any local repeater frequencies not listed here? Send them in to the editor!

CALENDAR

April

6: 7:30p, Ham Fest, Barnstable, MA
7: 7:30p, SEMARA Business Meeting
10: Ham Fest, Framingham, MA
17: Computer Show, Cranston, RI
17: MIT Flea Market
17: Ham Fest, Agawam, MA
24: Ham Fest, Pittsfield, MA
29,30: Dayton

May

1: Dayton
1: Ham Fest, Buzzards Bay, MA
1: Computer Show, Taunton, MA
5: 7:30p, SEMARA Business Meeting
6, 7: Hoss Traders, Rochester, NH
10-12: Electronics Show, Hynes, Boston
14: National Exam Day
15: MIT Flea Market
21: Flea/Auction, Forestdale, RI
30: Ham Fest, Whitman, MA

June

2: 7:30p, SEMARA Business Meeting
5: Flea, Newington, CT
19: MIT Flea Market

July

7: 7:30p, SEMARA Business Meeting
17: MIT Flea Market

August

4: 7:30p, SEMARA Business Meeting
21: MIT Flea Market
27: Ham Fest, Gardner, MA
28: Ham Fest, Fall River, MA

VE EXAMS

April

2: Middletown, RI — Jack, 401-683-2250
3: Shirley, MA — Tom, 508-425-6672*
4: Cambridge, MA — Bob, 617-593-1955
5: Lexington, MA — William, 617-862-4880
6: Acton, MA — Dave, 508-263-3712*
9: Brewster, MA — Henry, 508-255-2818
9: Falmouth, MA — Geoffrey, 508-548-0969
9: Marlboro, MA — Bob, 508-485-7006*
10: Athol, MA — John, 508-249-5905
10: Framingham, MA — Dick, 508-877-0563
10: Gloucester, MA — Rick, 508-283-2278
13: Billerica, MA — Bruce, 508-851-2886
14: Providence, RI — Judy, 401-231-9156*
16: Marion, MA — Dave, 508-991-4291*
16: Melrose, MA — Scott, 617-322-7654
17: Shirley, MA — Tom, 508-425-6672*
17: Southwick, MA — Yorke, 413-566-3010
20: Cambridge, MA — Nick, 617-253-3776
22: Holyoke, MA — Jim, 413-245-3228
23: Taunton, MA — Robert, 508-821-3047
27: Lunenburg, MA — Tom, 508-534-9377
30: Slatersville, RI — Bob, 401-333-2129

May

1: Shirley, MA — Tom, 508-425-6672*
2: Cambridge, MA — Bob, 617-593-1955
4: Acton, MA — Dave, 508-263-3712*
8: Gloucester, MA — Rick, 508-283-2278
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18: Lunenburg, MA — Tom, 508-534-9377
21: Melrose, MA — Scott, 617-322-7654
27: Holyoke, MA — Jim, 413-245-3228
28: Slatersville, RI — Bob, 401-333-2129

*Some sessions require preregistration and do not allow walk-ins. Please check with the contact listed for each session to verify the exam date, time, and location.

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The net meets on 145.23-, and is for anyone interested in coducting QSOs in Spanish, whether you can speak it fluently or not.

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