

MERCURY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

MARA - NORTH AMERICA - NORTH EAST

JUNE 2008

NEWSLETTER

FINALLY! – SUMMER IS HERE! GET OUT AND ENJOY IT.

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E-mail your comments, ideas, or submissions to marane@mara.net

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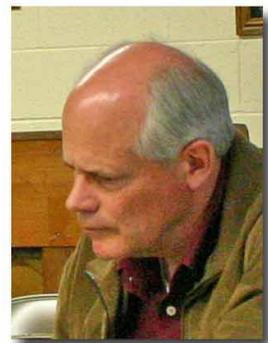
VIEW FROM THE TOP

FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT

First of all, we thank all those who hosted, presented or helped in any way to make this year's annual meeting such a resounding success!

Secondly, thanks to all who had enough confidence in me to participate in my election as President of MARA NE.

As I looked around me at our annual meeting, I think something jelled in my mind that others in the amateur radio community have looked around their own ranks and have already taken as fact: It appears that MARA NE, as in amateur radio at large, is pretty much a 'Grey Hair' sport! I make this observation because my aging has caused me to become more in touch with my own mortality. Simply said, without an influx of new members, MARA NE will be extinct in a reasonably small number of years.



Therefore, I'm hoping that each MARA NE member will accept my challenge to recruit at least one new member before next year's meeting. If anyone has any Ideas or suggestions on how we can achieve this goal, please send them to Dave, VE1VQ, for inclusion in next month's newsletter.

73, Shirrel N3DIX

REPORT

THE 2008 ANNUAL MARA NE MEETING

Angela, my xyl, and I caught the hour and twenty minute long flight from Toronto, Ontario on an Air Canada affiliate twin engine Beech aircraft to the Lehigh Valley International Airport in Allentown/Bethlehem PA, on Thursday the 15th of May. No snacks on this flight, no flight attendants either! The co-pilot told us before we took off that if we had any problems to come up to the cockpit and let him know! The Smiths, Barry N2PCT and Sherry KB2YXI, were at the airport to meet us.

"Experts" tell us that it is important to keep a balance in our lives, so we spent Friday recovering from our various flights with a balance of shopping, eating, and visiting.

Saturday morning following breakfast (some of Sherry's peach pie for me!) and a quick check-in to the MARA NE net, the four of us were on the road heading for Cherry Hill and the annual meeting. After occasional in-vehicle discussions about a possible wrong turn or two, we found the Cherry Hill chapel and joined the group already there.

The meeting started more or less on time but no one really noticed or cared much as these events are largely on the informal side, as they should be. President Barry N2PCT, welcomed everyone, and Laurice (Reese) KB3QLN, gave opening prayer.

Bruce N3IA, gave an excellent presentation on the twin topics of IRLP (Internet Radio Linking Project) and EchoLink using PowerPoint and actual hardware demonstrations.



Figure 1 – N3IA giving his presentation about IRLP and EchoLink. The 2 meter rig and the battery are at the far end of the table. The quarter wave antenna is sitting on the top of the window frame above the latch.

Minutes were read from the last meeting and a couple of items were discussed. The Treasurer's Report was given.



Figure 2 – Seated from L to R – Jack KC2RDZ, Brent KB3QER, Jeff K3DEY, Laurice (Reese) KB3QLN, Steve K3KEL, Shirrel N3DIX, and Barry N2PCT.

Because of his recent surgery and on-going recovery, Barry N2PCT, had announced previous to this meeting that he would not re-offer as President.

We needed a President! You have to have someone to blame things on if they go bad!

Shirrel N3DIX, nominated Bruce N3IA. Bruce nominated Shirrel. Ok, now what do we do? While I was considering this possible stalemate and thinking about looking for paper to make ballots, the two of them amicably worked things out, with Shirrel becoming President and Bruce remaining as Vice President.

The question was then posed as to where and when we would hold next year's meeting. Various locations were mentioned with the final one being the Narareth ward chapel in the Scranton PA Stake. April, May and June dates were tossed around the table. We are somewhat constrained by General Conference on the first weekend in April and by the Dayton Hamfest in mid May. It was finally decided that it should be on Saturday May 2nd.

Steve K2KEL, made a presentation of two plaques to members in attendance of the families of Chic Naylor (WA2USI/W2CAN – SK), and Dick Rostrom (NG2R – SK). Both Chic and Dick were founding members of MARA NorthEast. Bruce N3IA, read the biographies of each. After that, family and MARA members talked about some of the memories they had of the two men.



Figure 3 – L to R – Steve K2KEL, and the Naylor family; Frances Naylor, Michael Watson, Elissa Naylor, and Dave Naylor.

I remember, at one of those early meetings, when it came time for lunch, Dick wanting to go to a nearby place that made [Philly Cheesesteak](#) sandwiches. First time I'd ever had one. Now a favourite!

I always wanted to see Chic's place, especially after he told me he had a hydraulic lift in his back yard. I wondered what kind of junk box the man had when he talked about someone giving him solar panels from a commercial building roof or somebody calling him to see if he wanted a free generator.

A motion was then made to donate \$250 to the Church's [Perpetual Education Fund](#) in memory of

both Dick and Chic. This was seconded and the motion was carried.



Figure 4 – Seated from L to R – Elissa Naylor, Dave Naylor, Mark Rostrom, Brenda Rostrom, Joann Rostrom, and Jeff K3DEY. Standing in the rear is Jack KC2RDZ.

The formal meeting ended with a closing prayer and a blessing on the food by Steve K3KEL. People began to partake of the food provided by the Cherry Hill Stake.



Figure 5 – Seated in the front from L to R – Jeff K3DEY, Laurice (Reese) KB3QLN, and Shirrel N3DIX. Standing at the left rear is Jack KC2RDZ. Seated in the rear L to R - Angela (VE1VQ's xyl), Sherry KB2YXI, and Brent KB3QER.

For the more detailed and formal minutes of the 2008 Annual Meeting, see the MINUTES page at <http://ne.mara.net/minutes>

After everyone had sufficient food, some folks left for their various homes while others left to tour the battleship New Jersey and operate from the radio room.



Figure 6 – Seated from L to R – Shirrel N3DIX, Steve K2KEL, Barry N2PCT, and Dave VE1VQ.

Barry, Sherry, my wife Angela, and I headed back to the Smith home on the north western side of the state, stopping along the way to provide additional balance with some more shopping, and more nourishment at the Cheese Cake Factory in Cherry Hill.



Figure 7 – Natalie the food lady from Natalie & Dave Caterers. You can see that it sure beats peanut butter and jelly sandwiches!

On Sunday we attended the Nazareth (PA) Ward with the Smiths. Several of the ward members, including the Bishop, remembered us from previous visits. I have a theory that you can judge a ward or branch by the number of people who introduce themselves to visitors. If that is true,

then this ward is a good one! Sadly, I've been in a few that were just the opposite. We spent the rest of the day enjoying each other's company, and I managed to finish reading the year or two's worth of QST magazines which Sherry saves for my visits, before she throws them out. I also managed to finish off the last of her pies.



Figure 8 – Angela and Dave VE1VQ, the intrepid travellers. My balancing theory does not seem to be working when it comes to food and weight! Perhaps I need to run between airport gates more often.

At 11:15 on Monday morning, Angela and I boarded flight AC7443 out of the LVI airport for the short hop to Toronto on the twin engine Beech. We managed to find our suitcases, proved to Canada Customs (now known as the Canada Border Services Agency) that we were indeed good Canadians, and were allowed back into Canada. Another trip through security and a race to the gate (arriving only a couple of minutes before the general boarding call!) and we were on our way home.

And so ends another MARA NE annual meeting that seemed to take so long to arrive and now has gone by so quickly. Thanks to all of you for making these meetings interesting and fun. Thank you for coming and sharing a little bit of who you are with the rest of us. Angela and I are already making plans to be in Narazeth, PA for the 2009 meeting. I sure hope to see you there.

73,
Dave VE1VQ

CULTURED CORNER

In an ongoing (and probably futile) attempt to raise the cultural level of this newsletter, following the [VIEW FROM THE TOP of April 2008](#), we are asking for submissions of suitable material. If you or a member of your family writes poetry, short stories, draws cartoons, or some such, as long as it pertains to ham radio, please send it along. If you are shy and don't want others to know you do such things we will be happy to credit it to the person who gets credited (or blamed) for a lot of things – ol' Anonymous.

The following was submitted by e-mail after I promised on the ARRL Handbook never to reveal the source. The ham mentioned in the limerick is strictly fictitious and no one currently living in or from or even close to Connecticut, whether living or dead, should take offence.

There was an old ham from Connecticut
Who loved telling all, about netiquette*
Going on at great length
Mattered not their field strength
Until one day he found his cable cut

By an anonymous MARA member

*The conduct or procedure required by good breeding or prescribed by authority to be observed on amateur radio nets.

SWAP SHOP BUY – SELL – TRADE - GIVE AWAY

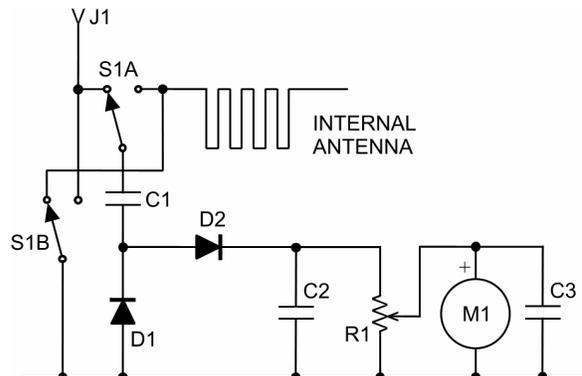
YOUR AD HERE – NO CHARGE!

TUNER – I AM STILL LOOKING FOR A KW VERSION OF THE JOHNSON VIKING MATCHBOX, A TENTEC 238 OR A PALSTAR AT1500CV, IN GOOD CONDITION. E-MAIL ve1vq@eastlink.ca – VE1VQ

TECH STUFF

UPDATE TO VE1VQ's FS METER

The article about building a field strength meter, which appeared in the [November 2007 newsletter](#), used a single pole double throw (SPDT) toggle switch to select between a whip or external antenna, and an internal one. A problem noted was the increase in meter deflection when I moved my hand near the plastic case, even though the external antenna was the one selected. This was from capacitive coupling of RF signal through the switch from the un-connected internal antenna. The same problem existed when the internal antenna was selected and a hand was brought near the whip. Grounding the unused antenna with a short wire jumper at the switch terminals showed the solution.



C1, C2, C3 - Capacitor - .001 μ F
D1, D2 - Diode - 1N34A
J1 - Jack - antenna, BNC
M1 - Meter - 50 μ A
R1 - Resistor, variable - 820K
S1 - Switch - DPDT

Figure 9 – Modification to VE1VQ's field strength meter. Added switch section S1B grounds the unused antenna.

The SPDT toggle switch (S1) in the original was replaced with a double pole double pole (DPDT) unit (S1A/S1B) and the extra section is wired such that the unused antenna was grounded automatically.

----- MARA NE -----

ECHOLINK

W7KBH has an ECHOLINK conference set up under the name of LDSHAMS (catchy title!). Jay makes this available for LDS amateur radio

groups for on-line nets. If your group can see a use for this method of communicating, catch Jay on there or drop him a line at ldshams@cox.net and discuss it with him.

And speaking of ECHOLINK, I hadn't been on for some months ever since a hard drive crash necessitated a replacement and all of the software re-installation that goes along with it. Getting an e-mail from Jay around the end of March inviting people to a drop-in-and-chat net on the evenings of the 4th thru the 6th of April got me searching for the headset/mic down under the desk behind the computer hiding with the dust bunnies. I downloaded the latest version of ECHOLINK at www.echolink.org and followed the simple installation procedure.

The only problem came with a failing fire-wall/router test. ECHOLINK help files led me to believe I needed to set up a static IP address and pointed me to a web site to help me along the way. After an hour of frustration I reset my router and computer back to where I'd started and simply opened up the router port range without all the static IP address stuff. For the IP address on the port range screen I used the PC's IP setting. To get this setting (if you run Windows XP) go to "START", click on "RUN". Type "cmd" in the RUN window, and click on "OK". When the DOS window opens, type in "ipconfig /all" (without quote marks).

If someday I can't connect to ECHOLINK, I'll have to go through the setup once again. I've now been on for several months without a problem.

Happy Echo-Linking!

----- MARA NE -----

TV FERRITES FIGHT TVI AND OTHER RFI PROBLEMS – N3HS

"A number of years ago a friend put me onto something that I have used over the years. That is the ready availability of big ferrites that are free. They are the magnetic material inside the deflection yoke of a TV set. With the [change to digital broadcasting](#) that is rapidly approaching, I would expect to see quite a number of TV sets out for pickup by the trash man. Each contains one of these ferrites. They are on the neck of the picture tube and it is not too hard to remove them and the

wire on them. One application where I was really in need of something I looped the coaxial cable



Figure 10 – Recycling at its best. Stan's use for the deflection yoke off an old TV set.

several times through the ferrite. In my present situation I have used a number of small clip-on ferrites for specific needs and use the larger TV ferrites on the main coax feed into the house and where this feed enters the shack."



Figure 11 – Another of Stan's TV ferrite installations. This one - before entering the house.

W1OND - SK



Figure 12 – Art W1OND, on the steps of the Boston Temple.

W1OND - SK

We have just learned that Arthur (Art) Ayer W1OND (W 1 October November December) died on the 4th of April 2005. Art was one of the founding members of the MARA NE, attending the 1995 meeting in Rockville MD. He was also the first MARA NE net manager, holding that post for several years.

We lost track of Art when he and his wife Billie sold their home in North Windham CT, with plans to move to Florida to live with their daughter.

Ron K1VSC, who lives in the same ward confirmed Art's death, saying that Billie still lives in the area. I've been calling to speak with her but keep getting an answering machine.

VE1VQ

DI-DAH-DI-DAH-DIT

At the local club, and at many others I'm sure, discussion has been ongoing for years as to whether [ECHOLINK](#) and [IRPL](#) are "real ham radio". The dividing line is typically split along age lines. The old timers usually see it as "not real radio", while the younger folks brought up with computers and the internet simply see it as all part of communicating.

Some of you have been around long enough to remember the feuding and general lack of acceptance when single sideband (SSB) started on the HF bands. Comments then were that the new mode sounded like Donald Duck, and that it "wasn't real radio".

AMTOR, PACTOR and PSK31 and other digital formats have been more readily accepted, perhaps because they were seen to be related to, or at least had something in common with, RTTY. Or perhaps, like RTTY, only a relatively few hams ever get involved with these "niche" activities so the mainstream amateurs ignore them.

Whatever your age or opinion, ECHOLINK and IRPL are simply other methods to transmit and receive information, just as CW, AM, and SSB are ways.

Strictly speaking, I suppose that the old farts are right; that it "ain't real radio" if it doesn't use RF to carry the information from one end of the path to the other. But for those who can't get on the air because of location, interference, landlords, etc., it is a way to use technology to contact other hams in other places, and perhaps learn a little bit about another person.

And isn't that what it's about?



Until next month,
VE1VQ

IN JULY'S NEWSLETTER...

**AA3LS IS BACK! - A REPORT ON
WHERE'S HE'S BEEN.**