MARA W1 GaZette

January 2025 MONTACHUSETT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION Vol 65 No. 5

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, January 8 at 7:00PM
Lunenburg Public Library

Meeting subject:
Presentation on the 2024 Simulated emergency test, by WS1l

The President's Corner

Hi everyone,

I want to apologize for being absent over the past couple months. Some of you may have heard that I had gotten a new job, moved houses, and got married all in the last 90 days. Needless to say, I have been overwhelmed!!!! Finally getting settled in the new QTH and have began setting up my station. I'm excited to have made it through the holidays and into what I hope to be a slower season. I have invited our Western Massachusetts Section Emergency Coordinator, Chuck Chandler-WS1L to share a short presentation about the 2025 simulated Emergency Test. I look forward to swing you all at the next meeting.

73
Tyler-KC1RVS

Watt's Happening

Sundays, 0830 local 3944

Western Mass Emergency Net. Alternate frequency is 3942 in case of QRN, QRM, or frequency in-use.
Montachusett Emergency Net, 0900 Local Fitchburg & Gardner repeaters with Echolink Node 688832

Mondays, 2000 local 147.525 simplex Worcester Emergency Simplex Net

Wednesdays, 1900 local 145.37- Gardner/Templeton Get-togather Net

Nightly, 2100 local 146.97- Central Mass Traffic Net

Nightly, 2145 local 145.45- Heavy Hitters Traffic Net
First Wednesday, 11:30 Old timers luncheon, Westminster Cafe

First Monday, 1900 local 3944, 7245 RACES Net
George's Old Timers Net 1930 hours 146.970 Paxton Repeater

4PMers net 3922 16:00Monday-Saturday

Granite State Traffic net 9:00 PM PAC Monadnock repeater 449.375- PK 88.5

Treasurer's Report

Montachusett Amateur Radio Association
Treasurer's report December 2024

Starting balance	$1696.31
Income	$45.00 Dues
Expenses	$
Ending Balance	$1741.31

Signed: Gordon LaPoint, N1MGO Treasurer

W1GZ 2Mtr Repeater

Repeater is working fine! The IRLP link for the Gardner repeater is up!

Secretary's Report

Minutes of the Montachusset Amateur Radio Association

11 December 2024

The meeting was preceded with a pizza party arranged by our president Tyler-KC1RVS. He then called it to order at 1900. Those in attendance were; N1MGO, KD1YH, W1HFN, KC1RVS, KK1X, AA1SE, K1FEE and KC1TUV. Guests were Mark-W1MYP, Tal-KC1VVP and Erez.

There was no treasurer's report.

Tyler mentioned the necessity of getting interesting topics to discuss at the meeting. There are members with various interests who could present interesting content.

Gordon did a POTA equipment demo and also one of his remote station, at the same time doing a Q&A prompted by Tyler so as to inform the members of what was transpiring.

Meeting adjourned at 2000

Respectfully submitted, Barry - W1HFN
Secretary Pro Tem

Upcoming Contests

Contests coming up for the next month:

UBA PSK63 Prefix Contest: 1200Z Jan 11 to 1200Z Jan 12

North American QSO Party, CW: 1800Z Jan 11 to 0559Z Jan 12

Nort American QSO Party, SSB: 1800Z Jan 18 to 0559Z Jan 19

CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW: 2200Z Jan 24 to 2200Z Jan 26

BARTG RTTY Sprint: 1200Z Jan 25 to 1200Z Jan 26

Vermont QSO Party, All modes: 0000Z Feb 1 to

2400Z Feb 2

Mexico RTTY International Contest, RTTY: 1200Z Feb 1 to 2359Z Feb 2

CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest: 000Z Feb 8 to 2359Z Feb 9

There are many other contests going on in this time frame.

For more info see:
https://www.contestcalendar.com/index.html

To see the scores reported by your local hams visit:
https://www.3830scores.com/

If you do a contest please put your results up on the 3830 score board for the rest of us to see.

The **MARA W1/GaZette**

is published by the Montachusett Amateur Radio Association just prior to the monthly meeting. The newsletter is distributed free to members and friends of Amateur Radio.

W1HFN Annual Dues:

Regular	$25
Family	$30
Fixed income	$15

Meetings: 2nd Wednesday, 7:00pm September to June

Mailing address: MARA
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OFFICERS:

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Trustee - Erik Tkal W1QED
etkal@me.com

MARA owns and operates the W1GZ repeater

145.45 (CTCSS 74.4) in Fitchburg.

The deadline for materials to appear in the W1/GaZette is noon on the Sunday before the first Wednesday of the month.

NEWSLETTER STAFF:

Editor:Gordon LaPoint N1MGO n1mgo@arrl.net

Webmaster:Paul Upham KD1YH

VE Team Report

The December VE session resulted in 3 new Technician licenses being issued.

Section and League Sssstuff By Ray AA1SE, WMA Section Manager

Section SSSStuff

Well, another new year! I hope 2025 will bring all of us peace, happiness, coax, antennas, etc. One resolution is to go to the wma.arrg.org website and see what's going on.

I have been mentioning at a couple of meetings about getting traffic handling going within the clubs and section-wide. The Montachusett Emergency net each week mentions that on the preamble and check in's respond with no traffic. How many of you know how to pass traffic and get it out beyond the net, or state? I'm not talking about the net report I get from the NCS. A

birthday greeting, I am ok message, congratulations, your license is expiring. Sure, it may be baloney to some, but this is the root of radio, it is operating practice, it is handling yourself for those messages that could mean something critical in a time of need. There are some that are familiar with the Heavy Hitters net and the Central Ma 2-meter net. It would be good training to receive a message during our net and pass it to the other 2 nets. Maybe the Mohawk or other clubs get involved. Not only could it get more activity on the nets, but an increased level of participation. My challenge to you is send traffic to someone, 1 or 2 to start would be great. Need assistance? There are things out there to help, just ask.

This is one of my projects for 2025, license classes will continue and my efforts to bring mentoring and new ham development and outreach also. These are what I am doing, what are you actively doing for ham radio?
73 Ray AA1SE

For sale, Wanted and Free stuff

W1QED has for sale:
Yaesu FTdx3000 in original packaging, lightly used, non-smoking home.

Yaesu FTdx3000 HF transceiver - $1300
Matching speaker SP-2000 - $120
MFJ-993B tuner - $150
MFJ-5124Y interface - $50
Total - $1620
Will take $1500 for the entire package

For Sale
Yaesu FT 991 A 160m-70cm transceiver Barely used. $1000

MFJ 259 Antenna analyzer, never used. $300

MFJ 1026 noise canceling signal enhancer BNIB $225

Astron SS18 Power supply New cond. $140

Samlex SEC1235M Power Sup. New cond. $150

Contact Ray, AA1SE at ray.aa1se@gmail.com

W1HFN - For sale
Doing some shack cleaning, For Sale:

Hy-Gain VB-64DX 6 Meter 4 element beam with instruction manual. Recent MFJ price $239.95 (sold out). $80.00

One Collins 51J-3 general coverage communications receiver in excellent working condition. See specs here: https://www.radiomuseum.org/r/collins_51j_3_r_388.html With operating and service documentation. $350.00

One Hallicrafters SX-111 ham bands only communications receiver in excellent working condition. See specs here: https://www.radiomuseum.org/r/hallicraft_sx_111_sx111.html With operating and service documentation. $125.00

Two Heathkit Cheyenne MT-1 AM/CW transmitters, one in excellent working condition, the other for parts. See specs here: https://www.heathkit-museum.com/ham/hkMT-1.html with original Heathkit construction and operating manual.

One Heathkit Commanche MR-1 AM/CW receiver unknown condition. See specs here: https://www.heathkit-museum.com/ham/hkMR-1.html with original Heathkit construction and operating manual.

For the Heathkits, $30.00 each or all three for $75.00.

One Alinco DX-R8T/E communications receiver. State of the art a few years ago. See specs here;

https://www.dxengineering.com/parts/alo-dx-r8t with copy of instruction manual. $90.00

One military surplus AN/PRM-10 grid dip meter in excellent working condition. If you know what it is and what it does, you want one. $50.00

Contact Barry - W1HFN at w1hfnham@gmail.com happy to demo any of the above.

Ham related Trivia questions

Answers to last Months trivia:

1 Yes

2 Automatic Level Control

3 Upper Sideband

New Trivia:

1. Which component do you need to make a resonant circuit?
    A. Resistor
    B. Zener Diode
    C. Potentiometer
    D. Capacitor

2. How do you become a VE (Volunteer Examiner)?

3.Which of the following devices can be used for impedance matching at radio frequencies?
    A. Transformer
    B. Pi-Network
    C. A length of transmission line
    D. All of the above

Answers in next months newsletter!

Homebrewing For Beginners By Paul, W1SEX

This article is from Paul, W1SEX, Thanks Paul! If you want to home brew something, or refurbish an old radio and need help, contact Paul at w1sex@arrl.net

The Backstory

A little history to set the background. In the earliest days of hamdom, all gear was homebrewed, and a budding ham had to make his own radios. Even as commercially made equipment appeared on the sceen, the art and passion of homebrewing remained strong.

Back in the day, there were two tracks a ham could take in building his station. The most difficult method was to acquire the knowledge to design circuits and come up with your own schematic or acquire a schematic from a fellow ham or magazine. Once a design was in hand, the ham would design a layout, acquire parts, and start building.

Eventually, companies like Heath, Allied Radio, Ademco, EICO, and others supplied complete kits that when finished looked like commercially manufactured products.

Most hams today buy their gear because the costs are significantly lower and rig features and capabilities are exceedingly difficult to duplicate by the homebrewer. Even the art of homebrewing an antenna is becoming rarer.

Today, homebrewing from scratch design and discrete components is a very niche activity in the hobby. However, even a Technician Class licensed operator, with that level of rudimentary electronics knowledge and a basic ability to use hand tools, can experience the satisfaction of building a project using readily available cases, manufactured modules, and subassemblies. Amazon and Ali Express are full of useful electronics modules, many of which are kits themselves, that can be used for projects. That is the path I took to make this power supply.

A gathering of old-timers.

At the monthly Old Timers Luncheon, I was informed of a deal too-good-to-refuse. A fellow ham had acquired some factory fresh 25 Amp hour LiFePO4 batteries for $40 each. Not that I needed a battery, at that price I quickly scooped one up.

After the acquisition, I needed to figure out how to best put the battery to use. Simply equipping the battery with power pole connectors would work for an emergency backup or portable work. However, having numerous pieces and parts for previously planned projects that never found their 'roud-to-its, I thought a portable 20-amp capable supply with an integrated variable voltage, current limited, regulated supply would be a good idea.

I already had on hand an analog 25-amp ammeter, Samlex battery isolator/charger, a bunch of Powerwerx modules including a digital voltmeter, digital voltmeter/ammeter, dual power pole, cigarette lighter socket, dual USB power ports, and some stick-on rubber feet. Also on hand were three five-way binding posts, and a variable voltage/current limited power supply module. To make the project come to fruition I needed to procure a case, power switch, fuse holder, thirty pound Velcro, and luggage handle.

Capabilities

The battery will supply up to 20-amps at 12.8 volts and the regulator module will supply battery voltage at a maximum of 15-amps. An analog ammeter was chosen because a digital meter is useless when the current varies rapidly, such as when operating SSB. The left most voltmeter monitors the battery output voltage, and the right most volt/amp meter monitors the input charging voltage and current. Supplying an external source will also allow the unit to act as a DC uninterruptable supply source. The second round module is a dual power pole paralleled with the left binding post and center module cigarette lighter socket. The last module is a dual USB power port. Finally, the upper right binding post is the variable regulated supply output and the lower one is the external supply input.

The total cost of the project was $350 with $239 of parts I had on hand, and $111 recently purchased from Amazon. Similar commercially available products cost upwards of $490 and I have not yet seen one equipped with a variable regulated supply.


LiFePO4
12.8V
25Ah
Caution