



ZERO BEAT

Southeastern Massachusetts
Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
54 Donald Street
South Dartmouth, MA 02748



OUR 65TH YEAR

Volume 35, Issue 3

SEMARA

March 1999

TOWER REPORT

Preliminary site preparation work is underway for the new 180 foot tower. The old willow tree stumps in front of the clubhouse are gone, along with all the vines and bramble.

One of the decayed old tree stumps was home to a skunk who didn't take kindly to the stumps removal. The stench drove the backhoe operator off the rig in short order! One has to wonder how skunks can live with themselves. Phew!



A four-inch PVC conduit was installed through the cellar wall of the club. This conduit will carry the control cable linking the club with the tower site thereby allowing the inter-connect of phone lines, flood light control, furnace control, and alarms.

An access road was cut into the woods and the tower site cleared. This step permits test borings to be made to assure that the tower base is properly designed. The site

itself is 60 foot square and will accommodate the 180 foot tower and a 10 X 20 foot cement block equipment building. One half of the building will be for club use, the other half for use by the site developer, NETCOM Wireless Facilities. A chain link fence will divide the buildings interior.

On February 16th the Com-Electric planner met with NETCOM at the tower site to plan the electrical power feed to the equipment building.

The following day several thirty foot deep test borings were made to determine the soil characteristics at the site, which in turn determines the size of the tower base. By the way, a typical communications tower base contains 9 tons of rebar and 400 tons of concrete.



Major construction work at the site will begin around March 1st when excavation for the tower base and building foundation commences.



MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The February business meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by President Chris Smith. Thirty-two members were present. Following the salute to the flag and roll call, the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were read and accepted.

Committee reports followed: *Technical* - It is anticipated that the repeater will be off the air for no more than one week. The backup repeater will be pressed into service during the change-over. *Buildings and Grounds* - Use caution when parking in the yard during the tower construction in progress. Several areas are quite muddy. *Scholarship* - None. *Code Class* - Progressing well! 27 students are in the class. *Tower* - See report on this page for details. *Communications* - None.

Ratifications - Janice G. Smith was voted a conditional member and Paul Augustine, W1BMQ (ex WB1ATP), was reinstated as a full member of the association.

Old Business - The following motions were passed:
1) A sympathy card will be

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54 Donald Street,
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EDITOR

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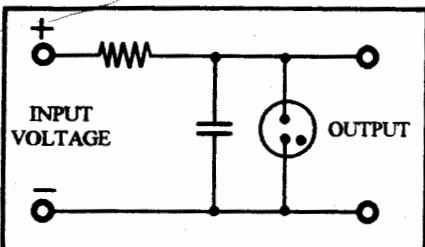
ADVERTISING

Commercial ads the size of a business card will be accepted. Rates are \$5.00 for one insertion, \$20.00 for six insertions, and \$35.00 for twelve insertions.

Non-commercial ads up to forty words in length will be accepted. Rate is \$3.00 for one or \$12.00 for six insertions. Club members have one free non-commercial ad per month.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION IS THE 15TH OF THE PRECEDING MONTH.

NAME THAT CIRCUIT



- 1.) Synchronous Detector
- 2.) Phantastron
- 3.) Pin Diode Oscillator
- 4.) Noise Filter
- 5.) Relaxation Oscillator

ANSWER - See Page 8

MEETING - continued from page one
sent upon the death of a member.

- 2) New hams shall pay only \$5 for first year dues.
- 3) Hams joining the club at the Fleamarket will be paid through the year 2000.

New Business - The following motions were made and passed:

- 1) Club to pay \$10.03 for the 1998 Officer's wall plaque.
- 2) Old generator to be given away as scrap.
- 3) Replacement cost for lost keys (or cards) to be \$5.00

President Smith appointed the following chairmen:
Nominating Committee - **Andy Reuter, WA1FNM**
Fleamarket Chairman - **Ed Blouin, KA1AW**.

Anyone wishing to be a member on either committee should contact the appropriate chairman.

It was suggested that Field Day be held at the New Bedford Vocational High School in conjunction with the annual "Relay for Life" event. This suggestion will be discussed at the next business meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8 pm and many members headed off to the "Second Meeting" at Friendly's Restaurant.

NEXT SEMARA VE SESSION

March 6, 1999

10:30 am

SEMARA Clubhouse

LOCAL VE SESSIONS IN MARCH

08 Brookline, MA
Bob Wondolowski
508-865-5822

11 Providence, RI
Judy Nelson
401-231-9156

13 Falmouth, MA
Ben Fleck
508-540-2583

20 Marlborough, MA
William Wade
781-891-9079

24 Cambridge, MA
Nick Alterndburnd
617-253-3776

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MEETING

A club assemblage where minutes are kept, and hours are lost!



CLUB NOTES

The windy month of March is here! Saint Patrick's Day arrives on the 17th with the usual fanfare and shenanigans! Finishing out the month are Palm Sunday on the 28th, and Passover on the 31st.

Two appointments were made during the February business meeting. **Andy Reuter, WA1FNM**, was appointed Chairman of the Nominating Committee. **Ed Blouin, KA1AW**, was appointed Chairman of the Fleamarket Committee.

Janice Smith, wife of our club President Chris Smith, is the newest member of the club. Janice is in the No-Code Tech Class now in session and hopes to become a "ham" real soon. "WELCOME" to the club, Janice.

Paul Augustine, W1BMQ, recently rejoined the club. Paul's old call was WB1ATP. Old timer's will recognize Paul's new call, W1BMQ, as formerly belonging to Ed Lopes. Ed was Paul's great uncle, and Paul is Armand Augustine's, WB1BUG, son. *Welcome back, Paul!*



W1BMQ
ex
WB1ATP

SEMARA

1999 DUES DEADLINE IS MARCH 15th

Don't miss a single issue of ZERO BEAT! Please pay your dues ASAP if not already paid. Only members paid in full by March 15th will receive the April issue of ZERO BEAT. Mail your dues to SEMARA 54 Donald Street, South Dartmouth, MA 02748 or pay at the March business meeting.
Associate - \$15 Conditional/Full - \$25 Family - \$30

Got a spare computer no longer in use? The club is looking for one to implement a swipe card lock system at the club. Most any computer from a 386 up will do the trick. Call **Bill Miller, K1IBR**, for more information and/or pickup of a donation.



Access to old call books before 1950, as well as any within the 1966 to 1977 time-frame is sought to help identify amateurs associated with the history of our club. If you wouldn't mind looking up some calls, contact **Bill Miller, K1IBR**.

HISTORY Of SEMARA

Tim Smith, N1BTQ, had to cancel his Tech-Talk on networking computers due to an unexpected business emergency. The talk will be rescheduled at a later date.

TECH-TALK



CANCELED

The porch light at the club has been replaced with a dual floodlight unit. This permits better illumination of the stairs, as well as the yard. A great big "THANKS" goes out to **Chris Smith, K1CJS**,

Thank You

CORRECTION



ZERO BEAT EDITOR
SCREWS UP AGAIN!

Boy did I blow this one. Not only did I get a fellow ham's call wrong (a cardinal sin), but I also named the wrong ham in the article to boot!

The errors occurred in last month's report titled "Amateur Radio to the Rescue". First, **Sonny Mello** was listed as **WB1ESG**. Big mistake! His call is actually **KA1ESG**. Next, it wasn't Sonny that made the call for assistance as reported. The amateur that should have been credited is **Larry Lygren, WB1DBX**. Sonny, however, was also involved in the event.

It was **Larry Lygren, WB1DBX**, who exemplified the true spirit of amateur radio by assisting his fellow man in need of help. *Thanks, Larry.*

Larry and Sonny, I apologize for the above errors. By way of amends, the least I can do is offer both of you FREE coffee and donuts if you drop by the clubhouse on a Sunday morning for a bit of ragchewing, or any time you drop by the clubhouse for that matter!



CLUB BUSINESS MEETINGS
HELD THE FIRST THURSDAY
OF EACH MONTH AT 7 PM
IN THE CLUBHOUSE

REMEMBER WHEN? By Art Marshall, W1FJI

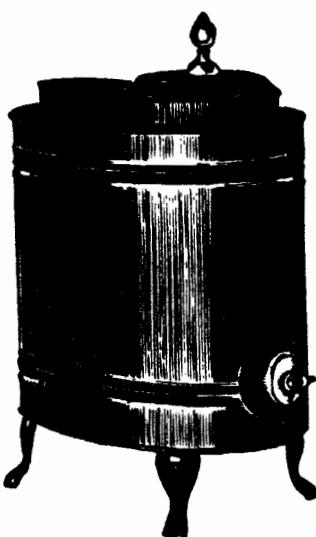
A memory from the past, really? I think some of you will remember.

After going through the list of past president's names, I was reminded of those VERY COLD NIGHTS in the hut, when some of us younger guys (you know who you are) would brave the cold and snow and meet at the radio club. Upon arriving, we would have to walk through sometimes very deep snow to get to the door of the hut. By the way, this was pre oil heating days. Once inside, we found the temperature inside was colder than it was outside.

The next order of the day was to find paper, wood, and matches. In the middle of the hut, was a wood burning stove, and it needed to be fed.

Once lit, we would pull the chairs up around the stove, sit back and prop our feet up on it. We would almost pray for heat, and it was always slow in coming. As we sat there, teeth chattering, hats down over our ears, hands in our pockets or gloves, we wondered what we were doing here and why we had left our nice warm homes to come to the club and freeze.

As the night wore on, the hungry hut stove was fed and we would keep moving back away from the now lukewarm semi radiating hunk of metal. As I remember, some of us didn't pull back from the stove as soon as others. There were a few charred soles



on shoes from time to time. By the way, these were not meeting nights. We just would meet at the club and tell war stories of who we had worked, on what bands, and the antennas we wanted to put up - only if the weather would get just a little warmer.

All the while, feeding the stove was a chore - if our parents had asked us to do this at home, we obviously would have many excuses as to why we

thought we shouldn't, or couldn't, or something. But this was for our own savage amusement and I guess we didn't mind at all. After a few hours of telling stories, the hut would be nice and warm and it would be almost time to head home. Somehow that was always the case, and of course now that the hut was warm,

we might as well stay for awhile, we couldn't leave with a fire in the stove. So there we would sit, telling more stories. This time we would be moving closer and closer to the hut stove as the heat became less and less, until we were back where we started - all sitting around the lukewarm semi radiating hunk of metal.

Once the fire was out we would all leave, knowing that we had spent another night at the club, telling each other how great we all were, having a few laughs and fun at the club.

73 de Art, W1FJI

SkyQuest Balloon Launch Project

Hank Riley, N1LTV, advises SEMARA members of an ongoing balloon project which has already sent two balloons over 50,000 feet high and out over Cape Cod carrying small but wide coverage 2 meter transmitters. SkyQuest is the only ham radio balloon project operating steadily in the northeast US.

Hank is looking for helpers to do at-home tracking of SkyQuest 2-meter signals (as at least one SEMARA ham has already done). Several balloon launch site volunteers are also needed, and everyone is invited to come by and see a launch in person.

SkyQuest received a full page color photo layout with text in the September 1998 CQ VHF of the May 1998 launch (at NWS Taunton), and its web site is mentioned in the February 1999 QST Magazine (in part of the Kansas balloon article that started in January as the QST cover article).

More information will appear in a future issue of Zero Beat, but in the meantime readers can visit the HABLIC and SkyQuest websites, where you can find out about subscribing to the SkyQuest mail list (highly recommended) that carries launch-specific bulletins. Check out:

<http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/3161/hablic.htm>.

You can get more information from Hank at h1riley@umassd.edu. Please email him if you'd like to participate as a tracker or launch site crew member.



THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

With the tower installation, which is now assured, SEMARA has come into an era of prosperity which will allow so much more to be offered by the club to its members. For example, the Board of Directors is in the preliminary stages of planning long awaited improvements to the clubhouse and grounds. We are first planning to ask the membership to vote to install the floor in the clubhouse which is long overdue, then later a handicapped ramp and other projects.

Along with the improvements, we are also going to bring up for consideration field trips to places such as the ARRL headquarters in Connecticut, the Marconi museum in New Hampshire, and other related places in the future.

This brings me to the purpose of my message. An appeal was made at the last business meeting for Chairmen for activities being planned. The SEMARA Hamfest, Field Day in June, and a Christmas Party were the activities announced. A member volunteered for ONLY ONE of the Chairmen positions. And it still always seems to be the same members who volunteer time and again.

Please, come to the meetings and volunteer! It doesn't take a lot of time to organize an event, and there are always other members who have done it before who will be willing to help you along if you don't know how to go about it.

We want to offer more, but without members who are willing to join in and help, we will not be able to, and projects and other things we may like to see happen will just have to be pushed further into the future or canceled altogether. Please consider helping.

Thank you. *Chris J. Smith*

BILL MILLER, K1IBR, FINDS THE FOX!



The scheduled February fox, Ken Howland, N1AVA, was unable to participate in the event, so Ed Blouin, KA1AW, filled in for him. Fifteen minutes into the hunt, Bill Miller, K1IBR, found the fox parked right outside Norman Riley's, W1ATI, house! Second place went to Chris Smith, K1CJS, with the team of Henry Blanchett, W1GYL, and Bob Metivier, N1XZJ, coming in last. The hunt was over by 8:30 pm. After Bill Miller found Ed, he joined him in his car. Bill had his RF sniffer with him. The sniffer outputs a tone that gets higher as transmitters get closer. Ed and Bill listened as time and again hunters got close, then faded away as they went the wrong way! After the hunt, the whole gang went to Me & Ed's Restaurant to compare notes (ragchew!) and plan their strategy for the next hunt.

FOND MEMORIES OF A NOVICE IN THE 1960s by Bill Rovas, WA1APX/8

Dear SEMARA Fellow Hams,

I had a ham friend here in Michigan who purchased or trash picked a bunch of old CQ magazines. While using his valuable time in the reading library, he just about fell into the pot laughing when he saw an article from WNIAPX. The article is from page 82 of the Novice column. For the pure at heart, it is from a 1964 issue of CQ magazine. Front cover has a clunky picture of a Collins 75A-4....

At the suggestion of SK, W1DIY, Ed Connors, my dad, WA1VXY, went out on a limb and purchased a Drake 2B and 2BQ second hand for about \$230 in 1964 money. I had about five months in which to get my code speed from the level of about 5wpm to 13 wpm or start using the 11 meter band! Course he also had to get approval from his lovely wife Helen. As a lemonade entrepreneur selling at 10 cents a cup back then, that money sure came hard. How could I disappoint my mom and dad, and not succeed in getting the General Class license.

To make a long story short, I flunked my first attempt at passing the General class code (FCC Office/Customs House, Boston, Mass.) They didn't give you a crack at the theory after failing the first element. The grouchy examiner said, "Your young! See you in 30 days." The Novice license was only good for a year, and ONLY one time. During the late summer months, my second attempt at passing the General was successful. You sat at home waiting for the new license to arrive. You were not allowed to operate at the higher class privilege. Furthermore, if it

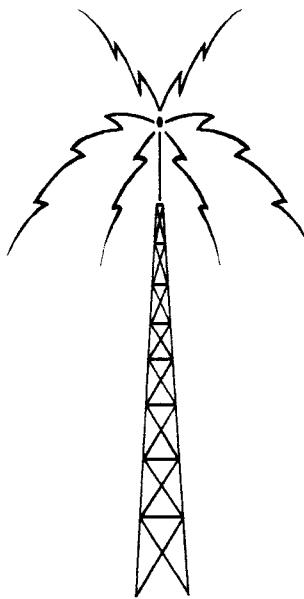
was after the 1 year period, there was no guarantee you would retain your original call sign.

Every day I ran to that mail box. Didn't the FCC realize how important this was to a 14 year old like me? My new General class license arrived on the day my Novice license expired. License arrival would be just as important to me today as a just turned 50 year old.

73's de WA1APX/8

(Letter in CQ magazine, October 1964, page 82)

"Dear Walt: I enjoy reading your column in CQ very much, and believe me, it has brought enjoyment into the hearts of many Novices.



"In the past issues, before I was a Novice, you had talked about using low power for transmitters. I thought the only way a Novice could get out was by using high power, 75 watts. Well, today I am running a borrowed 25 watt Philmore, that is about 13 years old, on 80 and 40 meters and having a ball. In the three mouths I have had my license, I have worked 16 states and three Canadian provinces. For a receiver I am very fortunate to have a Drake 2-B, it's the receiver that counts.

"Gee, with a half wave antenna on 40 I have banged out to New Jersey with a 5-9++, when they with their 75 watts were just getting through the QRM. If the Novices think DXing is bad, I have not tried getting across the pond yet, on 40 meters during the early evening or around breakfast time I have QSOed with Florida, Louisiana, and under heavy QRM Minnesota. So please tell these other Novices before they buy a high power transmitter, to get as good a receiver as they can afford. Believe me, they will make the contacts.

"73, Bill, WN1APX (age 14)"

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TECHNICAL TIPS

Henry Blanchett, W1GYL, has found a neat way to attach radio cables to car batteries with side terminals. He found some studs that replace the small bolts used to attach cables to the side terminals. These replacement studs are the same size as regular top studs on a battery, except that they have a bolt sticking out the same size as the bolt normally used on side-mounted terminals. Once they are installed, you have a stud the same size as one normally found atop a battery. All Henry did then was attach a regular bolt-on cable terminator with the radio cable secured under one of the bolts normally used to secure the large starter cable. He installed large crimp terminals on the radio power leads first. Thanks Henry, for a really clever idea!

1999 FLEAMARKET CALENDAR

March 13 - MARC Gardner, MA

March 21 - SARA Southington, CT

April 18 - MIT Cambridge, MA

**May 7-8 - Ham Traders
Rochester, NH**

May 15 - RIAFMRS Forestdale, RI

May 16 - MIT Cambridge, MA

June 20 - MIT Cambridge, MA

**September 12 - SEMARA
Dartmouth, MA**

Sept 18 - RIAFMRS Forestdale, RI

NET DIRECTORY**—Sunday—**

8am	28.375	SEMARA NET
9:30am	50.225	Yankee SSB
3pm	28.470	UFO
7pm	147.000+	Swap Net

— 4th Sunday —

9pm	449.575	EM-ARRL
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— Daily —

5:30pm	3.915	EM/RI NTS ssb
7&10pm	3.658	EM/RI NTS cw
6:45pm	147.315+	NTS/Trivia
7pm	146.550	SEMARA NET
8pm	145.230-	EM-NTS

— Monday to Friday —

8am	14.262	UFO
8pm	145.490-	Weather

— Saturday & Sunday —

8am	7.237	UFO
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— Thursday —

7pm	14.264	UFO
8pm	147.180+	Trivia

— Saturday —

7:30pm	3.978	UFO
1800G	14.300	Coast Guard

— ARES NET —

1st & 15th of the month
at 7:30 pm

147.000+ on the 1st

145.490- on the 15th

VISIT THE SEMARA WEBSITES

WWW.LRH.NET/SEMARA/SEMARA.HTM

MEMBERSAOLCOM/RICABRAL/HAM/SEMARA

SEMARA OFFICERS 1999



President Chris J. Smith, K1CJS

Vice-President Robert Metivier, NIXZJ

Secretary Henry Blanchett, W1GYL

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Martin Jordan, KA1YFV
Scott Szala, WIEV

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Norman Riley, W1ATI
Frank Fonseca, WB1ASD
Martin F. Jordan, KA1YFV
William Vincent, N1LTV

SEMARA EVENT CALENDAR

MARCH 1999

- 4 - Business Meeting, 7:00 pm
- 6 - VE Session, 10:30 am
- 11 - 2 Meter Foxhunt @ Clubhouse, 7:00 pm
- 18 - Tech-Talk, 7:00 pm - "SkyQuest Balloon Launches"
By Hank Riley,
N1LTV



APRIL 1999

- 1 - Business Meeting, 7:00 pm
- 3 - VE Session, 10:30 am
- 8 - 2 Meter Foxhunt @ clubhouse, 7:00 pm
- 15 - Tech-Talk, 7:00 pm - "555 Timers"
By Bill Miller, K1IBR
- 22 - Board of Director's Meeting, 7:00 pm

SE
M
A
R
A

Coffee Hour at the clubhouse every Sunday at 9:00 am. Drop by and ragchew!

LOCAL REPEATER DIRECTORY

Frequency	CTCSS	Call	Location		Frequency	CTCSS	Call	Location
		144					440	
145.150 -		WA1DGW	Fall River		441.400 +	192.8	WG1U	Assonet
145.490 -		KA1WBF	Fairhaven		442.200 +		N1NRL	Fall River
146.445 +1Mhz	91.5	KB1BWN	Dartmouth		442.350 +	141.3	N1OFD	Acushnet
146.655 -	88.5	WA1GPO	Falmouth		442.600 +	100.0	K1L1Q	Tiverton, RI
146.685 -		N1OEG	Plymouth		443.450 +	88.5	K1MYL	Westport
146.700 -		K1CR	Cranston, RI		443.600 +		NS1N	Norwell
147.000 +		W1AEC	Dartmouth		443.800 +	88.5	N1RFH	Dartmouth
147.045 +		WA1AIC	Yarmouth		443.850 +	131.8	W1ARM	Chatham
147.135 +	67.0	ND1N	Taunton		444.250 +	141.3	WA1GPO	Falmouth
147.180 +	77.0	N1FDX	Bridgewater		444.350 +	88.5	W1ACT	Fall River
147.315 +	156.7	N1BBT	Wareham		444.550 +		N1FDX	Bridgewater
					447.075 -		N1DZD	Kingston
		220						
224.340 -		N1SGK	Dennis					

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FIRST CLASS

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January 2011

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