



# PROSPECT HILL INTERMOD

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WALTHAM AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

[WWW.WALTHAMARA.ORG](http://WWW.WALTHAMARA.ORG)

Summer 2024

## NORTHEAST HAMXPOSITION 2024

Our assistant treasurer and roving reporter, Eliot Mayer, W1MJ, checked out the [Northeast HamXPosition](#) which took place on August 22-25 in Marlborough, MA. and here is what he found:

### The MARCONI Program (Not *that* Marconi)

The Meridan Amateur Radio Club in CT has created a program called MARCONI, “Motivating Amateur Radio Clubs to Open New Initiatives.” It is about active radio clubs mentoring other clubs who may be less active. I attended the MARCONI presentation by MARC President Ed Snyder, W1YSM. Frankly, despite having some nice repeaters, I consider the Waltham ARA to be in the “Less Active” category and in need of mentoring. For example, we haven’t had a full slate of officers in many years. I have W1YSM’s contact info in case we want to ask him for guidance at some point.

### W1 QSL Bureau

The [W1 QSL Bureau](#) distributes QSL cards from DX stations to radio amateurs in New England. Eric Williams, KV1J, runs this bureau, and manned the bureau’s booth at HamXPosition.



## The Latest Rigs

FlexRadio and Elecraft had staff on hand to answer questions about their latest software-defined transceivers.



## Amateur Radio in Space

Hams interested in communications via satellite could visit the [AMSAT](#) booth to learn more.





## Free Radio Repair - Aesop Engineering

Some of you may recognize the proprietor of Aesop Engineering. It is Ted Robinson, K1QAR, who can still be heard on the Waltham repeaters from his new QTH on a good day. At his booth, he offered free radio repairs, and displayed a phased array of magnetic loop antennas.



## ARRL Politics

While not getting quite as much press coverage as the US presidential race, campaign signs for ARRL New England Division Director were abundant both inside and outside the hotel. Fred Kemmerer, AB1OC, is the incumbent. Tom Frenay, K1KI, is a past Director trying to make a comeback. This makes me dream of a day when our club has more members willing to serve as officers than the 5 it would take to fill all positions.



## ARRL Eastern Massachusetts Section Meeting

Several Sections in the New England Division of the ARRL had meetings at HamXPosition. Our section is led by Jon McCombie, N1ILZ, from Cape Cod. He led the EMA meeting and introduced section staff members in attendance.

*Section Manager Jon McCombie, N1ILZ (right)*

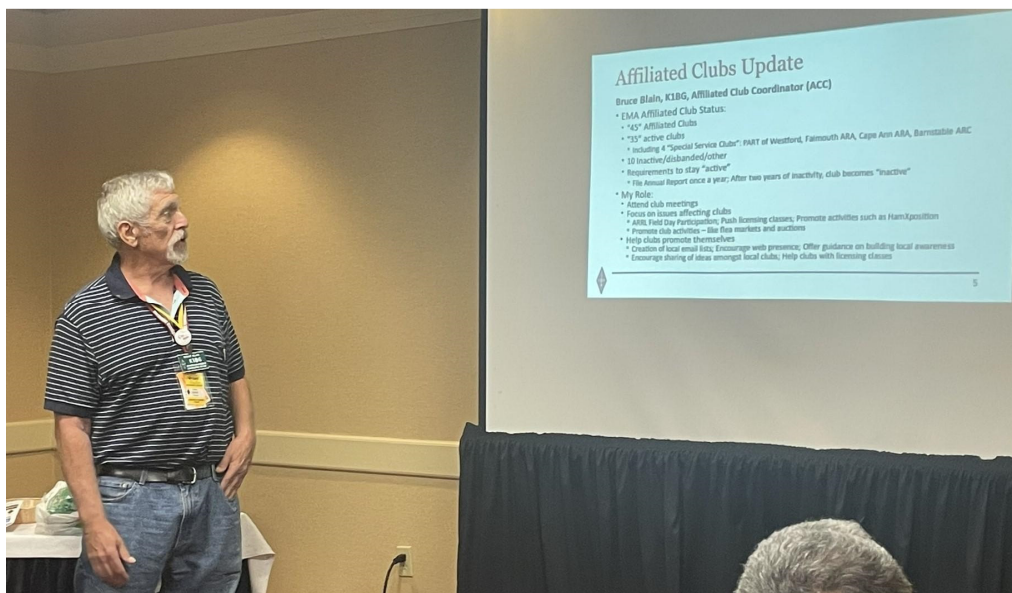


*Rob Macedo, KD1CY, our Section Emergency Coordinator*





## *Bruce Blain, K1BG, Affiliated Club Coordinator*



For more information about our ARRL section, see <https://ema.arrrl.org/>.

## ***NEW NEAR-FEST LOCATION VISIT***

George Hovorka, WA1PDY

No doubt most of you have heard about the move of the NEAR-Fest, New England Amateur Radio Festival (<https://near-fest.com/come-to-near-fest/>) from Deerfield to New Boston but the information on their website about the fairground map is sketchy. Thus your new newsletter editor, George Hovorka WA1PDY, took a ride up to investigate and here is what I found:

From our repeater site up on Prospect Hill to the Hillsborough County 4H Fairgrounds on Hilledale Lane in New Boston, NH is about an hour and a half drive or roughly about the same drive to the old NEAR-Fest location in Deerfield.

Your GPS will direct you up 93, 293, 101 and then on to route 114. At the first set of lights on 114 there is a Market Basket on the right which is a perfect place to pick up a delicious sandwich. Then if you desire a Dunkin or reasonably priced gas, that is your next set of lights, also on the right. From there you will pull into Goffstown where you need to bear left onto route 13 southbound heading to New Boston. This is the second left past the Cumberland Farms which is also on the left side of the road.

As you approach Hilledale Lane off 13 you'll find it simply a paved driveway which immediately leads to a narrow, one lane bridge.



*One lane bridge entrance to the fairground*

While this appears to be a big bottleneck there is also a second way to get onto the fairground which is a somewhat wider dirt road off Depot Street which also connects back to Route 13.

While I did find open lawns for the tailgaters, it is not the wide open space we were used to in the previous version of NEAR-Fest.



*Tailgaters Lawn*



Also of note, there is only one restroom as opposed to the three at the Deerfield fairgrounds.

I did discover a number of buildings including two huge dirt floor barns and three, two floor buildings up a steep rise.



*Fairground Buildings*

Finally, there is one other larger building, which can be seen on the left hand side of the picture, that is screened in and will likely be used as a sit-down food area.

A point of concern is that there is no security fence around the fairground, just the Piscataqua river on the east side with the other three sides, open woods.

### **Extra Features**

**SOTA** The nearest summits on the air (SOTA) peak is just a 15 minute drive away over in Goffstown. This is Mount North Uncanoonuc (MV-003) in which the summit can be reached with a reasonably easy hike up the Blue Trail. If you need details on this hike contact me at [hogs@georgehovorka.com](mailto:hogs@georgehovorka.com).

**POTA** The nearest parks on the air (POTA) location is just a five minute drive away at Lang Station State Forest (K-4919). If you bring along your trail bike, you can get there via a very enjoyable ride along the New Boston Rail Trail which leaves from the rear of the fairgrounds and will take you directly to Lang Station ([www.nbrailtrail.com/](http://www.nbrailtrail.com/)).



## ***ECHOLINK EQUIPMENT UPDATE***

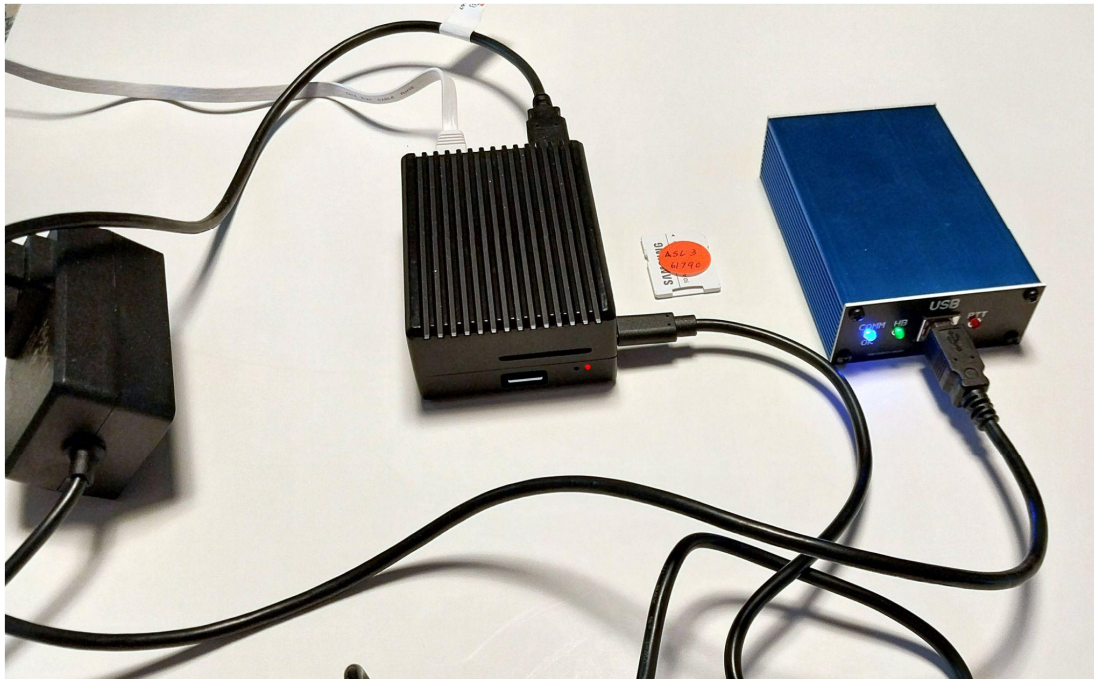
George Hovorka, WA1PDY

As many of you know, Roger WA1NVC has been working on an improved version of Echolink on our 146.64 MHz repeater to take full advantage of our very reliable Comcast Business internet connection up at the repeater site. As the current Echolink PC does not make much sense up on Prospect Hill, he has investigated three possibilities and settled on Allstar Link (ASL) 3.0.

What makes this link different from other Radio-centric VOIP technologies, such as Echolink or IRLP, is that it has been specifically designed to be part of, and to link together, parts of the repeater control system that it implements, as opposed to an end-to-end protocol like Echolink.

In June ASL 3.0 was released with the latest Debian and Asterisk software making for an easy to install and maintain system.

Being all web-based, Roger has found that it is both easy to use and works really well.



*Allstar Link 3.0 installed on a Pi 4 with 4 GB of RAM*

Roger currently has the Allstar hardware & software installed on the W1MHL hardware. This system consists of a Raspberry Pi 4 with 4 GB of RAM in a Geekworm fanless case and a Masters Communications RA42M in a metal case. He has also built the cable to connect to the 146.64 Quantar although he has not enabled the EchoLink feature.

When completed, this will give us both Echolink and Allstar with multiple simultaneous connections available. Also, it will provide a basic repeater controller for the 146.64 machine. When up and running we will be able to connect to Echolink Reflectors and AllStar users along with HUBs yet still allow for P25 local communications.

His next step is to install Echolink on the ASL 3.0 platform and last test the entire system on a Quantar before deployment.

Rogers feels he will be able to demo at the next WARA meeting so this is something for us to look forward both as an interesting demo and more broadly, greatly enhanced capabilities for our repeater system.

Thank you Roger!



*The present '64 Echolink setup, running remotely from W1ENB's QTH.*

## ***WALTHAM A.R.A. REPEATERS***

Input	Output	Tone In	Tone Out	Notes
146.040	146.640	136.5	136.5	NAC 293 for P25 use EchoLink W1MHL-R Node: 490278
223.34	224.94	103.5	103.5	
444.075	449.075	88.5	None	
902.1375	927.1375	131.8	100	Linked to NEAR 900 Network via IRLP





### ***Club Officers***

**President** – Eric Balles (W1ENB)  
**Vice President** – Christine Shustak (N1AUP)  
**Secretary** – OPEN  
**Treasurer** – Rich Comer (K1RBC)  
**Assistant Treasurer** – Eliot Mayer (W1MJ)

### ***Newsletter Staff***

**Editor** – George Hovorka (WA1PDY)  
**Publisher** – Eliot Mayer (W1MJ)