



PROSPECT HILL INTERMOD

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WALTHAM AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

WWW.WALTHAMARA.ORG

Summer 2025

TENUOUS FUTURE OF WALTHAM ARA

Eliot Mayer, W1MJ

Alarmist? Perhaps, but I think realistically so. To survive, let alone thrive, organizations need active members. The Waltham Amateur Radio Association has been short of active members for several years. The most glaring evidence is that nobody is presently willing to serve as president. The de facto leader in recent years has been our treasurer, Rich Comer, K1RBC.

We have been very lucky up until now to have had Rich holding us together, especially considering that he now lives in northern NH and has a new local radio club. But now Rich is scaling back his involvement with WARA for health reasons and looking to train a replacement.

So now we need both a president and a treasurer. We also need new volunteers for our technical committee. The guys presently taking excellent care of our repeaters are senior citizens and would start training their future replacements if anyone volunteers.

WARA membership is fairly large, but that is because users of our excellent repeaters want to chip in to help pay for their upkeep. Because of the wide repeater coverage, membership is geographically widespread. This was evident when we tried moving from Zoom to hybrid meetings after the pandemic and almost everyone chose to continue attending via Zoom. So, while the financial support is both welcome and necessary, it is not enough to keep WARA alive.

Having been a member of WARA for over 50 years, I hope that a few members step up and keep it running. As a past president and past treasurer, I will be glad to mentor (but not to return to my previous posts).

Alternatively, we could end up on K9HI's web site, [Eastern MA Radio Clubs of Yesteryear](#).

Northeast HamXposition 2025

Eliot Mayer, W1MJ

The 2025 Northeast HamXposition and ARRL New England Division Convention (AKA HamX) took place on August 21-24 at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center in Marlborough, MA. Last year I just went on the Saturday, but this year I went for Saturday and Sunday, staying in the hotel overnight.

For me, conventions and hamfests are mostly social. I catch up with old ham friends and sometimes make some new ones. This time, I spent a lot of time catching up with old friend Carl WA1ZCQ and Bruce K1BG. Carl is a QRP fanatic and generally a very colorful character. For example, he still

insists on referring to me as WA1MYK, even though I change my callsign in 1977! Bruce and I have known each other since we were teenagers. Lately, he has been doing a great job of interesting people in amateur radio, and teaching licensing classes to help them get there.

For some years when it was in Boxboro, I was a volunteer at the New England ARRL convention. This year, I just helped out in a small way. The program announced that the Minuteman Repeater Association (MMRA) was deploying a “fox” on the hotel grounds for a hidden transmitter hunt, but their fox got sick. I stepped in and deployed my fox on the announced frequency. I put a log sheet with the fox, and it showed that 8 people found it over the weekend.

I also attended some forums that I found very interesting. Here my forum highlights.

Antennas for Backyard, Balcony, Attic, or Wherever

Bob Glorioso, W1IS, and Bob Rose, KC1DSQ

Even though I have been a ham for over 50 years, there are always more things to learn. Some are obvious – I could not have learned about FT8 way back when it didn’t exist. But at this forum, I learned about a possible way to reduce the local HF background noise in my urban-like environment using an RF choke. I hope to get a Round Tuit soon and try their idea.

Bob W1IS was an Electrical Engineering professor at UMass Amherst when I was an EE student there. I never had a class with him, but thanks to the fraternal nature of ham radio, he was always available to mentor me when needed.

The Journey from the Polar Explorer to Aurora

Tony Brock-Fisher, K1KP

I have been doing some contesting from Tony’s station in Andover, MA for a few years. When Tony “retired”, he invented a transmitter that vastly improved efficiency – more output power and less heat. We operators of Team K1KP got to try his prototype, called the Polar Explorer. Then, a couple of years ago, Tony told us that we had to return to remotely operating his station, as we did during COVID. This time, it was due to a secret project under NDA (non-disclosure agreement).

This past spring, Tony let the proverbial cat out of the bag. Tony’s invention is now designed into the new [Flex Radio Aurora](#) series of 500-watt transceivers. They are about the same size and weight as today’s 100-watt rigs.

1DegreeOutside: Their Digital-First Weather Approach One Year Later & Vital Partnership with the WX1BOX Amateur Radio SKYWARN Team

Matt Noyes & Danielle Noyes

When I saw Rob Macedo KD1CY of Skywarn fame in the hallway at Marlborough, I thanked him for inviting Matt Noyes to speak at the convention. It may seem strange to have a meteorologist as one’s hero, but Matt Noyes is a hero to me. This is because of the enthusiasm with which he presented the weather during his years on cable TV station NECN. Accurate forecasting too. Rob said, “If you think Matt Noyes was enthusiastic on the TV, wait until you see him live!”. And this was totally true!

Meteorologists Danielle Noyes and Matt Noyes presenting at HamX 2025



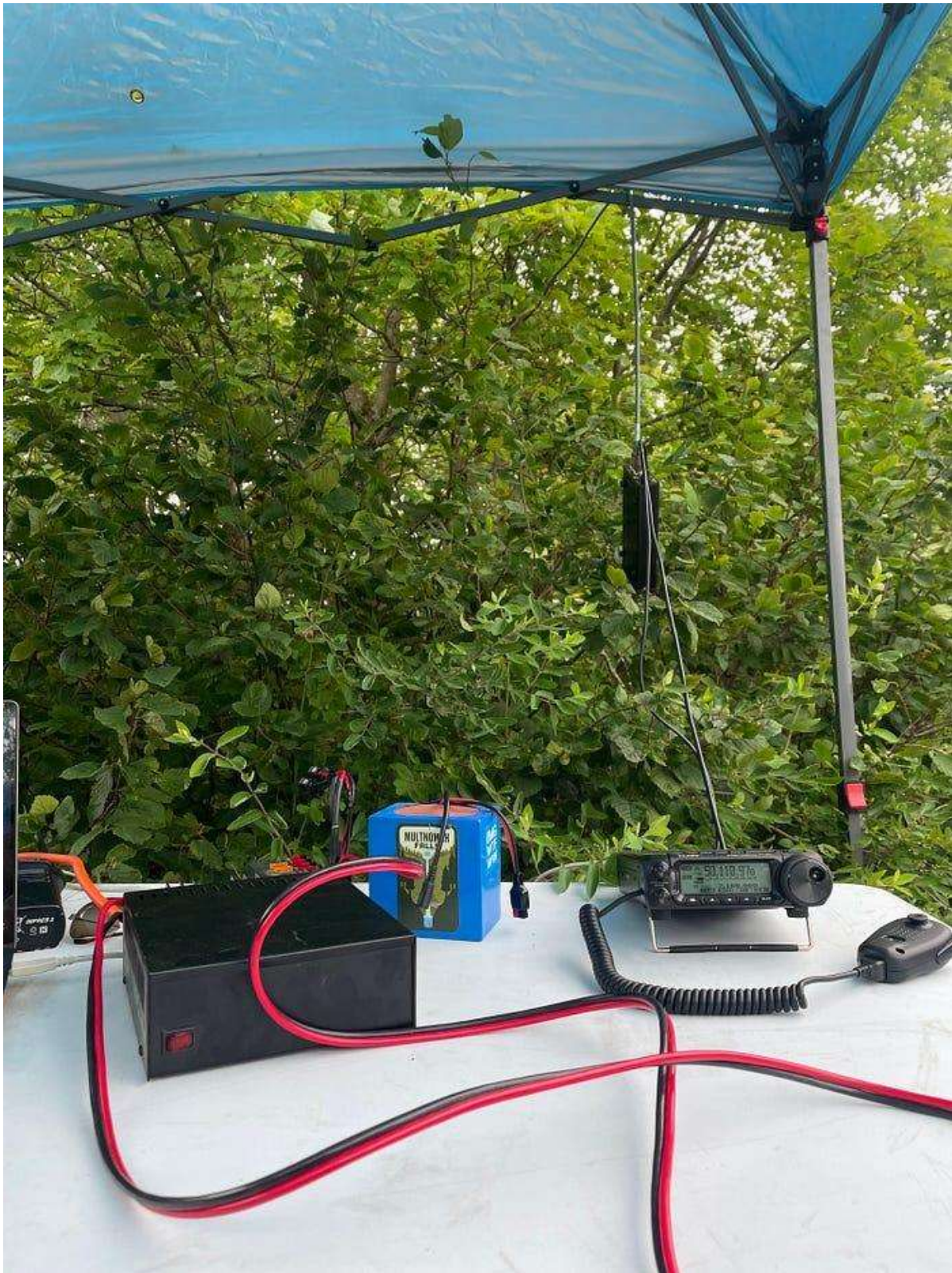
Just over a year ago, Matt and his wife, fellow meteorologist Danielle Noyes, started a new company meteorology business called [1DegreeOutside](#). I use their weather app on my smartphone. While I couldn't quite ask my hero to autograph an app, I did ask him if we could take a selfie, and he obliged:



Matt Wagner's (N1ZYY) Summer Field Day Experience

Christine (N1AUP) and I joined Fitchburg's [Montachusett ARA](#) for a joint effort atop Mt. Wachusett.

I brought an FT-891 and [a short end-fed random wire from Reliance Antennas](#), along with a tuner. In all my planning, I neglected to bring much in the way of coax, leaving the tuner hanging from the antenna in the tree. The poor planning also included bringing a desktop power supply rated for 12A, which soon tripped offline due to overcurrent. A BioEnno LiFePo battery I brought as backup ended up filling in nicely, periodically recharging from AC.



Overnight

While it had been foggy all day, it got thicker and thicker as the night went on. A red beacon (curiously located on one of the shorter towers up there) came on at dusk, and with the fog turned the sky an eerie red. Though I hadn't planned on staying overnight, around 1am I realized I was too exhausted to drive home and spent the night in my truck.



Morning

The sun came up after a few short hours of sleep, and I heard people talking in the distance. I learned that, hours before the gates to the summit open, a surprising number of people walk, bike, or even jog to the summit to watch the sun rise.

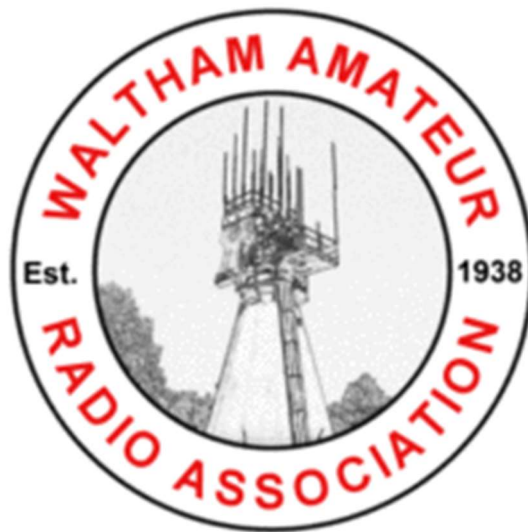
This was the view from the summit around 6:



Experiencing the opposite side of grayline from what I'm used to, I made a few contacts and enjoyed a hearty breakfast cooked by Paul from the Montachusett club before packing up. On the way home, I stopped by the pharmacy to pick up a prescription, but between the minimal sleep and having spent so many hours talking radio, the only words I could muster were "Whiskey One Golf Zulu," but I knew that wasn't quite right. Thankfully, the pharmacist asked, "Picking up?" and I snapped to it.

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 – OPEN

Vice President – Christine Shustak (N1AUP)

Secretary – Matt Wagner (N1ZYY)

Treasurer – Rich Comer (K1RBC) - ***retiring***

Assistant Treasurer – Eliot Mayer (W1MJ)