

The

Modulator

Newsletter of the Newport County Radio Club, August 2018

Boxboro

The biennial ARRL New England Division Convention will be held next month, September 7-9, in Boxboro, Massachusetts. It's worth a peek at their web site just to see the many opportunities for hams, new and old, that are available over three days:

Boxboro.org

You'll find symposia and other training opportunities as well as other non-ham programs. One of the biggest draws is the vendors hall. Want to see that oo-la-woo radio up close? It likely will be there with company reps dying to tell you all about it. And not just radios, just about anything associated with radio will be on display too.

Then there is my favorite, the flea market! Saturday 9-5 and Sunday 9-1 everyone with something to sell will be set up. This is the ideal way to locate that small gimcrack or doodad that you need so badly, but can't find anywhere. There will be plenty of good used radios for sale, but nowhere else will you find such a broad array of small, inexpensive items than at a ham flea market!

The sad truth is that flea markets are not what they were "back in the day", but Boxboro has been an exception and worth the 1½-2 hour drive for many years.

First Hands-On Night

Billed as a VHF Extravaganza, the first Thursday Hands-On night was well-received by all. Held at All Saints Steam Academy in Middletown, Hands-On night was conceived as an opportunity for NCRC members to work with electronics in an informal mixer environment. The theme of this first night was derived from member feedback and that process will be the model for future Hands-On nights.



Bob Beatty, WB4SON, working with two of our junior members

The event was well attended, maybe 24 visitors, and there were 6 tables setup with various VHF gear. Bob Beatty, WB4SON, reports "I started answering questions about my stuff at 6:15, and didn't even get a chance to look around the room until 8:15. As I was taking stuff down, there were folks that hadn't made it all around the room yet.

So I would think it proved the concept and am anxious to see what the next one will be about.

I had multiple junior members and new hams asking about satellites, and several asking about emergency power (generators, solar, etc.)."

Still in Development

All Saints Steam Academy has graciously agreed to continue to host our Hands-On nights on the third Thursday of the month. There are some details being smoothed out, but that time and day seem to fit well.

Although it appears that there will be a September Hands-On, there may be months when there will not be. If you have a theme that you would like to see included, be sure to pass that along.

Photo Releases

NCRC has a Junior Member population that is not only growing, but is also active. That activity is reflected in the article photo. Unfortunately we do not have a photo release policy in place and hence the unfortunate frisbee faces—so sorry ladies. This is another detail that we need to attend to as we develop our Junior Member Program, perhaps with some form of blanket release that would cover NCRC publications.

Elizabeth Islands 2018

Vineyard Sound

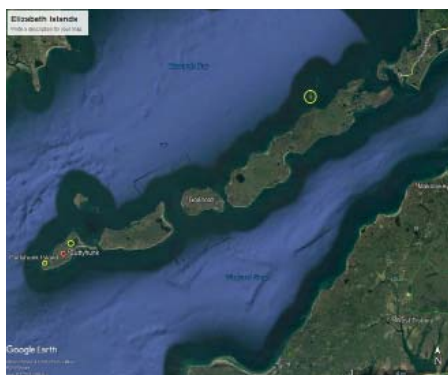
Last year the NCRC Island Activators successfully qualified Penekese, Nashawena, and Naushon Islands.



Left to right, Penekese, Nashawena, and Naushon Islands

Continuing up Vineyard Sound, we headed out to Cuttyhunk on July 22nd for four days of new island qualifications.

Before departure we listed Gosnold, Slates, and Weepecket islands with the US Islands Awards Program. Our challenge was to land, set up a station, and work a minimum of 25 stations including at least one DX station on each of these new islands.



Island qualifications 2108

Our choice of islands is often theme-driven. Islands-within-an-

island is one of those themes and Cuttyhunk Island has two!

Gosnold Island lies within West End Pond at the western end of Cuttyhunk and Slates Island lies in the inner harbor on the eastern end. Getting to Slates Island in the inner harbor was super easy, we could almost leap across from the town wharf. But we paid for such largess getting to Gosnold Island.

The village of Gosnold lies on the eastern end of Cuttyhunk; the western end is minimally developed and wild. The only access is by narrow, rutted, and twisting dirt trails that would give a Himalayan explorer pause.

Fortunately our adventures seem to have captured the imagination of the islanders and they could not have been more supportive.



Rich and his heavy-duty vehicle

George Isabel, Cuttyhunk Wharfinger, assisting us with harbor logistics. Rich Buttine, skipper of M/V Knucklehead provided transportation to West End pond. Seth Garfield, owner of Cuttyhunk Shellfish Farms, carried us over and back to Gosnold Island on his oyster barge. And Rosemary Goettsche was invaluable as our communications link to the Gos-

nold community.

Our evenings were spent at the historic Cuttyhunk Fishing Club, where we were well cared for by Bonnie Veeder and her sister Fran.



The Cuttyhunk Fishing Club

Operating

There is no doubt that we are at the bottom of Solar Cycle 24. Just two years ago a casual day on the air would see more than one hundred contacts in the log including many Europeans. This year we had to work to get our required minimum for all three qualifications. We came right down to the wire on Gosnold Island with only 26 contacts, partly because of band conditions and partly because we had to be packed and ready to leave when Seth's oyster barge arrived to pick us up.

We now stand at 21 first qualifications in the five years since the Island Activators went QRV. Mike Martin, AC1DV, joined us for the first time and had a grand adventure. There are more activations to come this summer and next year too, so don't be shy. Join in or even plan an activation of your own—we'll help.

In the mean time, come see the complete slide show at the August Business Meeting on Tuesday evening, 7:00 PM, August 14th.