

This month's speaker

Dave Potter, K1MBO

Dave will be giving a talk on antenna design software. This is a subject near and dear to the heart of many a ham, and it should be an interesting presentation. Plan on attending.

The New Constitution

This month we will be voting on the new NVARC Constitution. At the last meeting we passed out copies of the proposed text along with some new By-Laws.

Some people have asked why we need a constitution and why make a fuss about changing it? Clubs have constitutions for the same reason governments have laws: it provides an amicable way to settle differences. If we never have any disagreements in the club, we might not need a Constitution or By-Laws. We'd all just "Do The Right Thing" because we're all pals.

People who study government say that all power flows from the people. Constitutions are the documents by which the people authorize this power and specify how it may be exercised. It sounds a little grand for a simple radio club, but the NVARC Constitution is just that kind of a document, albeit in miniature.

Constitutions and laws exist for times of conflict -- when we're not pals. The first time someone asks "Who put *you* in charge?" or "Why should *I* do *that*?" then we need a common set of rules that show where authority comes from and gives the mechanism for change.

A quick overview of the differences between the current constitution and the proposed new one follows:

Preamble

The Preamble was changed to include a non-discrimination statement. This seemed especially important because the constitution itself follows the English rule of using masculine pronouns and in this day and age it's important to underline that this is just a language convention and not an attempt to exclude women.

Membership

The rules of membership were changed. The original rules required new members to be accepted by vote. This has never been done. Consequently, NVARC only has 13 legal members at this time. The new rules grant membership upon application and payment of dues.

The new rules also allow voting members to relinquish their voting privileges. This may seem to be an odd rule, but it's in there to because many hams will join clubs as an act of fellowship, but don't want to be involved in the running of the club. These people inadvertently hinder the operation of the club when we have situations where we have to get some percentage of the voting members to respond. Under this provision such members can remove themselves from the voting list and thus allow the active members to operate the club. Voluntary removal from the voting list can be reversed at any time by notification, so the member in question isn't "locked out" of the voting process.

The new constitution allows the Board of Directors to appoint Honorary Members. Honorary Membership lasts one year, carries no dues or assessments and give no voting privileges.

Officers

Directors are now officers of the club. (They weren't before.) A provision was put in to automatically remove officers who fail to attend three consecutive general meetings without explanation to the Board of Directors.

The duties of officers were changed to allow freedom to delegate responsibilities. Directors were given the duties of auditing accounts, monitoring terms and performance of agreements the club enters into and election of Honorary Members.

Meetings

Although the Board of Directors' meetings have always been open to the membership, it has never been required. Now it is.

Amendments

Under the old rules, both the Constitution and the By-Laws could only be changed by a 2/3 majority of the voting members. The proposed new rules allow the By-Laws to be changed by a simple majority of a quorum at a general meeting. This is more in line with common practice -- By-Laws are for day-to-day operation and need to be amended frequently over the life of a club.

Notification for changes to the Constitution and the By-Laws are now slightly different. To amend the constitution, the actual text of the amendment must be submitted at a meeting and voted on at the next meeting. To amend the By-Laws, intent to change is announced at one meeting and then the text of the law is hammered out and passed/rejected at the next meeting.

By-Laws

Along with the new constitution a set of four By-Laws was proposed. The By-Laws are (1) a rule allowing voting by proxy. (2) the dues schedule that was "passed" a few months back. (3) authorization for General and Special

meetings which recognizes that we meet on the third Thursday of the month and (4) a list of committees to be appointed.

Public Service Log



Groton Road Race on April 4th

Don't forget we're still looking for volunteers to work the Second Annual Groton Road Race on April 4th. It's a 10K race (6.2 miles to the rest of us) sponsored by Groton Recreation/Squannacook River Runners. There is also a 2K event for walkers, skaters, duffers, etc. Contact Eric Piip, KA1RV to volunteer or get more info.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, 20 March

Minuteman Repeater Assn. Flea Market.

At Westboro High School on Rte. 30 off Rte. 9. Doors open at 8:00 for sellers, 10:00 for buyers. Admission \$2.00

Sunday 28 March

Framingham ARA Flea Market and exams.

At high school off Concord St. (Rte. 126). Early admission (9:00 am) \$5.00, Regular admission (10:00 am) \$2.00. Code exams at 11:00. Theory at 12:00. Preregistration encouraged.

Saturday 24 July

ARRL New England Division Convention.

At Center of New Hampshire Convention Center in Manchester, NH. Flea market, license exams, DXCC and WAS field QSL checking, forums for Contesting, DX, Packet and ARRL. 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Admission \$4.00 in advance \$5.00 at the door.