

# The Digital Communicator Quarterly



The newsletter of the New England Fusion  
Group  
Summer 2021

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Welcome!

Howdy, and thanks again for being part of the New England Fusion Group! I hope you like the new logo, the Board worked long and hard on it, and thinks it captures the essence of the club while having clean lines. We are trying a new format for the newsletter this quarter, it may make quick reads easier. Let me know what you think!

## NEFG Quarterly Business

Additional language had been proposed at the meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021, and unanimously passed in subsequent meetings to specify how the Board would handle any financial conflicts of interest. I am pleased to report the Constitution now has a black and white codification on how to handle any possible conflicts of interest. With that revised Constitution, we were able to finalize our filing with the State of New Hampshire Department of Justice, since the NHDOJ requires “charitable trusts” like our non-profit corporation to register. We have since heard back from the NHDOJ that we are not considered a “charity,” and there fore no need to register. One less bit of government bureaucracy, and I for one am OK with that!

## Current Projects

We have begun a document of “possible activities” so we can start prioritizing club activities and initiatives.

For example, the following topics are up for discussion at the next membership meeting: (in no particular order);

1. Prepare some in-house video tutorials
2. Create a collection of white-papers (case studies, FAQ’s, Quick-Helps, etc)
3. Fundraising
4. Create a new Contest for over the air and or Wires-X operating.
5. Start a weekly net

If you would like to weigh-in on any of these great ideas, or have any further ideas for the “comments box,” do send an email.

We decided to start at line Number 5, and we’ve been holding a weekly “Tech Net,” more on that later in this newsletter.

## Fusion Operators’ Bio

Each month we’d like to spotlight one of our members and learn a little about them. I think it’s fitting that we learn not only about each other, but what about the Wolf Den and Wolf Pack? So, for our first installment of member’s bios... lets learn about that most important aspect of all our Fusion activities: the Wolf Den:

## The origin story of the Wolf Pack

### Network - Part 1 of 3

(A classic story of “if you build it... they will come! ) (ed.)

By Brian, WO1VES

Most repeater networks happen intentionally. Someone decides one day, they want to start a network of repeaters, so they start laying the groundwork for such a system, creating the hub, building links. That’s not how the Wolf Pack network came to be, however. When I started out, I never planned to build a network. I just wanted a Fusion repeater I could play with.

It all started when I bought my first Fusion radio, the Yaesu FT-1DR. I don’t remember the exact date I bought it, but it was around late 2014 or Early 2015, I was in HRO, and saw it there for less than \$300. I had been reading about System Fusion and decided that was the way to go for me. I had the money in my pocket and decided to buy it.

It was months after this, before I ever got to hear what Fusion sounded like. Yes, I had the radio, but I didn’t know anyone else with a Fusion radio, and there were no repeaters. Finally, in late 2015 I think it was, Harry, WA1VVH, who bought an FTM-100. I connected my handheld to an outdoor antenna, and Harry and I made contact. I got to use Fusion for the first time.

After talking to Harry about his FTM-100, in early 2016, I also bought one to install in my Escort wagon. This was what I consider to be the spark that ignited the Wolf Pack Network. Being able to make a simplex contact with Harry was nice, but we needed a repeater to play with. And I knew just where to find one.

On May 26th, 2016, I contacted my friend John - WA1RHN, who owned a 2 meter analog repeater in Wakefield, MA on 147.075. It was a

very quiet repeater, no one really used it, and it wasn’t working all that well. Yaesu was running the program to buy a brand new DR-1X for \$600, so I asked him if I could put a group together to buy a Fusion repeater, and replace his repeater with it. Though he was not, himself, interested in digital, he loved the idea anyway, because his repeater was going to get some use.

I started reaching out to friends on the Nightly Nut Net, a group of hams on the Danvers, Mass repeater that still meets there every night about the group purchase. I got a few people on board. John - WA1RHN, Steve - W1KV, and myself all contributed to the purchase of a repeater. Harry - WA1VVH, contributed through his technical knowledge. On June 7th, 2016, I submitted the application to purchase the repeater.

The existing repeater was being hosted at the home of Jim, K1UGM, who is now a silent key. There was a bit of a miscommunication somewhere, when John talked to Jim about my group coming in and replacing the repeater. He thought we were coming in to remove the repeater, so he did the work for us and removed everything. We basically lost the repeater site!

At this point, I reached out to my Uncle, who lived up on a hill in Stoneham, MA. about hosting the repeater at his house. He was okay with that, so planning began on what turned out to be a much bigger project than we originally planned. I bought a brand new Hustler G7 antenna, and all the necessary stuff to make the repeater work. Thankfully, we could reuse a lot of the old repeater, including the duplexers. John basically donated all the equipment to make this work.

I got a notification from Yaesu that the repeater was going to be delivered on June 22nd, 2016. I, of course, was going to be camping. So I had

Fedex redirect it to the nearby Fedex store. When I finally got the repeater home, Harry had the duplexers at his QTH for tuning, and I really wanted to try the repeater.

So I dug out an extra antenna I had (Diamond Tri-band antenna) and installed it on the roof of my house. Then I took a mag-mount antenna and stuck it on a metal shed on the other side of my yard. The antenna on the roof was the receive, and the mag-mount was the transmit. On June 24th, 2016, the repeater was on the air from my house on split antennas!

It took most of the summer to build up the parts of the repeater. In fact, it wasn't until November of 2016 before we installed the antenna at my Uncle's house, and moved the repeater up there, but it all happened. So you are probably asking yourself now, what does this have to do with the Wolf Pack Network? Everything! Without the adventures of building this repeater, there wouldn't be a network. I will be back in the next edition of this Newsletter with how the network itself started on the Stoneham, MA repeater.

Brian - WO1VES

### Schedule

Part of the attraction of a virtual club like ours is the limited amount of business meetings that we need to participate in, so we're focusing on quarterly meetings. Our apologies for missing the deadline to post the summer quarterly meeting through the newsletter.

We had a brief summer quarterly meeting in the beginning of July, we had some Board changes to talk about, and we also decided on our first action activity: the weekly Tech Net. We are scheduling the fall quarterly to occur on the week of the equinox; Friday night, September 24<sup>th</sup> 2021, Please logon to our next quarterly meeting: the zoom meeting number is [926 3856 3585](#), and the password is 28941.

This meeting number will stay static for as long as possible.

### Weekly Tech Net

We have started a weekly TechNet on Sunday mornings at 11 am Eastern, and the net is carried by Wires-X Room #28941.

On Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup> 2021 we held the first weekly New England Fusion Group TechNet. We had a great turnout of stations, and we sorted out the format and the basic concept of the net. A very big thank you goes out to Brian WO1VES of the Wolf Den, and the other operators and trustees of the Wolf Pack Repeater Network for carrying the net over the air and of course on the Wires-X Room # 28941 Wolf Den, and the YSF Reflector US-WolfDen.

By the next Sunday we had formalized the format, and although a bit strange at first... I think people kinda liked the format. In a nutshell, we start the net looking for checkins in a traditional manner. Then we begin the "first round" where checkins say hello and make their introductory remarks... and they hand it off to the **next station in line!** That's right; with the excellent resource of *Net Logger*, a free piece of software that let people follow along with a net, stations can easily hand-off directly to the next station on the list. Of course, Net Control will be able to assist if a station doesn't have the list up – for example if they are mobile or pedestrian-mobile.

The next section of the net is a "round-robin" style net, where a deep-dive technical topic is posed to the net, and folks are able to listen in or interject comments at any time simply by calling out "Net Comment."

By utilizing a less-traditional, but still net control directed approach, we can spend a little more time discussing tech topics and actually get to some meat and potatoes.

Our second and third weeks we talked about the basics of PDN with an FT-3, and then we were able to continue the discussion into some intermediate topics surrounding the use and operation of the Wires-X software.

We are excited about the ability to hold both a breadth-and-depth approach to Wires-X and Fusion topics. Members of NEFG have been functioning as both Net Control and the “guest speaker,” but we will be looking outward for other hams’ who have expertise in areas. Also, if you’ve ever had any desire to try your hand at Net Control, this could be a great opportunity. We can easily pair a guest speaker AND a net control station, so there is no need to wear both hats if you don’t want to!

### Near-Fest Eyeball?

As we look forward to the fall, there is a possibility of having an eyeball gathering at Near Fest. Near Fest is New England’s premiere hamfest, which is held at the Deerfield Fairgrounds, this year the dates of the hamfest are October 15 & 16.

If you have any desire to lend a hand, the NEFG Board of Directors will absolutely appreciate any help offered! Send an email to [n1efg-BOD@groups.io](mailto:n1efg-BOD@groups.io) to make your voice heard.

A Near-Fest eyeball is only in the very early stages of planning, so please contact us soon if you can help out. The official near-fest website is [Home - NEAR-Fest.com](http://Home-NEAR-Fest.com)

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### Communicating with the Club

Club email reflector: [n1efg@groups.io](mailto:n1efg@groups.io)

Board of Directors: [n1efg-BOD@groups.io](mailto:n1efg-BOD@groups.io)



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