



DIGITAL DISPATCH

A publication of the
West River Radio Club



March—2008

Volume III—#3

VITAL STATISTICS

The West River Radio Club, an ARRL affiliated club, was founded in 2004 through the efforts of KA1ZQX, Tim Bell, and N1JSG, Richard Pierce.

Our 48 members pride themselves on belonging to an active and productive organization with involvement in many aspects of this great hobby: public service, special events, Field Day, repeaters, emergency communications, contesting and chasing DX.

Current officers are:

N1TOX, John Borichevsky; President
W1CWB, Chas Baker; VP
KD6MPY, Sean Sanderson; ED/VE Liaison
K1KU, Darrel Daley; Secretary/Treasurer
KA1ZQX, Tim Bell; Public Relations/ARES

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Has anybody asked you....

Well this is a loaded question. You could fill in the rest of the question with many answers here. I heard this question come up just the other day and thought that it would be good to share your stories about your goals and reflect back upon the past.

The question we have is this.... Has anybody asked you how, or why, you got interested in amateur radio? Think about it, how did you get engrossed in amateur radio? Who were your instructors? Self paced learning? Who helped you get your first rig? Describe the rig. What about a special interest related to the hobby? Was it because of a friend? Were you scared of learning Morse Code? Maybe

the Electronics theory really scared you. Have you built an antenna?

Now we would like you to get out a piece of paper, or sit down at your computer and make the list. Then create a story behind it. Let's share these memories with one another in the April edition of the "WRRRC Digital Dispatch". We could even have a small prize for the best story.... So how about it, let's hear your story. I have mine posted here on my website at <http://home.comcast.net/~buckhill.vt/>

During the upcoming meetings in 2008, we will be focusing more in our roots, how we got started, how we are growing and more importantly, what our long term goals are. Yes this will be a blast into the past, but to understand how we got to where we are today is the root of our success. Because without your participation and dedication to amateur radio, who knows where we would be today?

In creating this short (did I hear some cheers?!?!?) *President's Corner* for March, I am in the process of packing my bags and heading south for a week in the sun. I hope you will take some time and write a short story about your interest in amateur radio so we can publish them in the upcoming issues of the *Digital Dispatch*. Send your article to Darrel (K1KU) Daley at k17dn@sover.net and share your stories. We would all love to read them.

Until Next month

73

de N1TOX

John Borichevsky – President WRRC



The Presidents new winter office. Office hours by invitation only....



RUNNIN' ON EMPTY

The Greatest Generation

Some of you may have read the book of the same name by Tom Brokaw. If not, I highly recommend that you do so. It consists of short biographies of America's fighting men and women during WWII – some famous but many just regular folks. At any rate, they deserve our utmost gratitude. Because of their sacrifices we're speaking English today and not German or Japanese.



The birth date Providence assigned to me proved a blessing in that I was too young to take part in this monumental effort to strike down tyranny. I do remember my Father driving me into Porterville, CA on either VJ or VE day so that I could see the celebration. As the population of Porterville was only 7000 people then we didn't hold a candle to what was happening in Time's Square. Nevertheless, there was literally dancing in the streets, shotguns being fired off and a considerable amount of adult beverages being imbibed.

I'm reminded of all this because one of the famous heroes of WWII, Paul Tibbets, recently died at the age of 92. Paul happened to be a Ham and had the call sign of K4ZVZ. He stands out in the annals of military history because he piloted the *Enola Gay*, the B-29 Superfortress that dropped the first atomic bomb, nick named "Little Boy" on Hiroshima, Japan on August 6, 1945. This act and the subsequent dropping of another atomic bomb on August 9 on Nagasaki brought WWII to a speedy close. One historian estimates that up to four million lives (Japanese and Allied) were saved when we did not have to invade Japan.

Marion and I were more closely associated with another less well known hero. On January 31 we attended the funeral of a very dear man, one Wayne Austin, who died at age 86. Wayne was a former mail delivery man in Putney and he and his wife, Dottie, were two of the first people we met when we moved here in 1983.

Wayne was also a veteran of WWII. – One who saw more adventure in a couple of years than any of us will probably see in a lifetime.

- Navigator on a Marauder bomber
- Shot down and captured by the Germans
- Taken on a forced march
- Left by the side of the road to die with pneumonia. He spent three days by that road without food or water
- Finally rescued

Unlike many who gave so much in Europe or the Pacific, Wayne returned home to live out the rest of his life in relative ease. In his latter years he held court in the Putney General Store as President of what came to be known as the Viagra Club. One fellow member who was not present for the picture that still hangs on the wall by their table was listed as MIA "missing in action".

Marion and I often stopped by that store on a Saturday AM after retrieving our mail from the post office and sat in on the "business" part of their club meeting. I often offered to forego my exorbitant fees and give any consultation needed for free. It appears that my reputation preceded me, though, and my offer was never taken up.

Now the above has nothing to do with Ham Radio, except indirectly (see below) but that's OK, as I'm the Editor of this rag and write pretty much whatever I want to.



And today I'd like you to join me in thanking Paul Tibbets and Wayne Austin as well as all like them who have put their lives on the line since the 1700s to preserve our freedoms. I'd also like to remind any that need reminding that there are a lot of heroes in our midst, many silent and unsung – heroes that aren't always recognizable at first glance. I'll bet that you know a few yourself.

Whoever and wherever they are, they deserve our unending thanks and gratitude. After all, if it weren't for them we wouldn't be able to enjoy our wonderful hobby or the gazillion other freedoms that I, at least, sometimes tend to take for granted.



YOU AND THE RULES

Or should it be "The Rules and You?" Whatever, as there seems to be a dearth of contributions to this FB publication, your humble editor will continue to try and fill up the holes with matters that he hopes will be of interest and value to our readers.

Part 97 is but a small part of the amassed FCC rules and regulations that pertain to communications. But they're an important part because this is the section that covers the Amateur Radio Service. That would be us.

At any rate we all know (I hope) that Amateurs need to ID once every 10 minutes and at the end of every QSO. But did you know (sure you did) that indicators can be appended to your call sign?

So here's your assignment:

1. What is an indicator?
2. Give an example.

What do the rules say can be used to separate whatever indicator from the call sign?

FYI, there will be no prizes awarded for correct answers, but acknowledgement will be given in print to first person who gets back to me with the correct answers. The best way to reach me is k1ku@arrl.net If no one gets back to me with the correct responses I'll give myself credit. Whatever the case you'll find the answers in next months fabulous edition of the Digital Dispatch.

You can do some research at <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/news/part97/>



(Ed: The below comes to us from the ARRL Club Newsletter, an email publication of the ARRL. I figured that anything written by a Ham with an Alaska call had to be good.)

RECRUITMENT

By Eric P. Nichols, KL7AJ
President, Arctic ARC - kl7aj@arrl.net

At a recent Arctic Amateur Radio Club board meeting, during a rare lull in the oft-heated discussions about how best to increase our membership, I threw out a simple question.

"How did you get into ham radio?" The responses were revealing, to say the least. One by one, our board members, some young, some old, told the story of how they got into this hobby of all hobbies. One gentleman had a father who was a ham, and more or less forced him into the hobby, for which he was unspeakably grateful...years later, of course. One XYL saw a shortwave radio at a friend's house, started twiddling knobs, and got frustrated that she could only listen. For her, the rest was history. A couple of others were exposed to amateur radio in high school, one in Boy Scouts. Another credited me with getting him into ham radio, much to my gratification. One other confessed that he didn't really know; it just seemed to him that ham radio was "always around."

Interestingly enough, not one of the hams entered the hobby because of a concentrated recruitment program. Although occasional

public relations "Blitzkriegs" have their place in Amateur Radio, I'm not sure they produce lasting hams. ***Like many other clubs, we manage to get a lot of hams licensed, but the dropout rate is appalling.***

The vast majority of our newly licensed hams never get on the air. I don't think our message is flawed; I think it's our delivery. Of all the board members I mentioned above, I believe the last fellow, the one who said ham radio was "always around" had the key. We need to get back to the place where amateur radio is a continual, if quiet, presence. ***People who get lured into the hobby, stick with the hobby. People who get coerced and cajoled into the hobby leave as soon as we aren't looking.*** The fact is, most new hams never see a working ham shack, about all they see is a handheld, which isn't all that fascinating.

When a young person sees a ham shack equipped to cover everything from DC to daylight, they take notice...it doesn't matter whether they're a geek or not. I've never seen anyone who wasn't impressed by a Moon bounce (Earth-Moon-Earth contact) array swinging around on its rotators...whether they had a clue what it was or not!

People don't know about ham radio because they don't see ham radio...except, perhaps at Field Day. The best place to cultivate that "always around" feeling is in the schools. We need to infiltrate the middle and high schools again.

Notice, I said, again. There was a time, not too long ago, when it was difficult to find a high school without a club station. Field Day should be a three hundred and sixty five day a year event, and that is easier to achieve in the schools than anywhere else. There is no better way to teach science than with ham radio. We need to remind our public (and private) school teachers and administrators of that. We need to let our students get their hands grubby making things happen, rather than merely watching things happen. We need to get some real

hardware into the schools. We have wonderful new allocations now, and the technology to use them is cheaper and easier than ever. When I was in high school in the late 60s, it was everything one could do, and then some, to do Moon bounce. It was only because we had a lunatic (no pun intended) electronics teacher, that we were able to pull off such a stunt. Now, Moon bounce is practically within reach of any determined high school club station.

Wouldn't it be great if Moon bounce stations proliferated at our high schools the way HF stations once did? Of course, I only use Moon bounce as one radical example. We have exciting things happening down at 500 kHz, as well. What better way to learn weak signal, digital signal processing techniques than with our newly allocated MF experimental spectrum?

This all may be rocket science, but it doesn't take rocket science to get it into the schools! Our teachers want to see us excel in the sciences. Let's give them the tools to do so. Fifty years from now, someone may be asked how they got into ham radio. It would be nice if they could answer, "I don't know...I guess it was always there."

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Eric P. Nichols was born in 1954 in what is now Silicon Valley. As Eric describes it, his exposure to physics research came at an early age, having grown up "down the barrel of the Stanford Linear Accelerator." In 1976 he felt the call of the wild and abandoned a fledgling engineering career to move to Alaska and live life "with the bark still on." As it turned his call to the wild kept him in engineering as he spent a twenty year career as Chief Engineer for KJNP, a 50,000 watt radio station in North Pole, Alaska. Afterwards, Eric became a development engineer for HIPAS observatory, an aurora research facility near Fairbanks operated by UCLA. The experience set the stage for his first novel, Plasma Dreams, published in 2004. ISBN 9781413748260

NATURAL LAWS OF THE UNIVERSE

Law of Mechanical Repair: After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch.

Law of the Workshop: Any tool, when dropped, will roll to the least accessible corner.

Law of the Telephone: When you dial a wrong number, you never get a busy signal.

Law of the Alibi: If you tell the boss you were late for work because you had a flat tire, the very next morning you will have a flat tire.

Variation Law: If you change lines (or traffic lanes), the one you were in will start to move faster than the one you are in now. (Works every time)

Bath Theorem: When the body is fully immersed in water, the telephone rings.

Law of Close Encounters: The probability of meeting someone you know increases when you are with someone you don't want to be seen with.

Law of the Result: When you try to prove to someone that a machine won't work, it will.

Law of Biomechanics: The severity of the itch is inversely proportional to the reach.

Theater Rule: At any event, the people whose seats are furthest from the aisle arrive last.

Law of Coffee: As soon as you sit down to a cup of hot coffee, your boss will ask you to do something which will last until the coffee is cold.

Murphy's Law of Lockers: If there are only two people in a locker room, they will have adjacent lockers.

Law of Dirty Rugs/Carpets: The chances of an open-faced jelly sandwich of landing face down on a floor covering are directly correlated to the newness and cost of the carpet/rug.

Law of Location: No matter where you go, there you are.

Law of Logical Argument: Anything is possible if you don't know what you are talking about.

Brown's Law: If the shoe fits, it's ugly.

Oliver's Law: A closed mouth gathers no feet.

ANOTHER DINE OUT

No matter what you call it, it's still a fun event. It started as a "Welcome Home, Tim" dinner to welcome our resident Warrior, KA1ZQX, home from a year in the Kuwait sand box.

It continued on as an annual event, also becoming known as a "Beat the Cabin Fever Blues" dine out.

Herewith find a potpourri of shots, many contributed by KA1ZQX himself, of our last gathering, held again at the New England House in West Brattleboro. I'm sure that we'll be there again next year. Plan on joining us for a memorable evening.

Members of the Auxiliary:
Carole Kruse,
Marion Daley, Sue Borichevsky,
Lois Phoenix,
Tina Blais

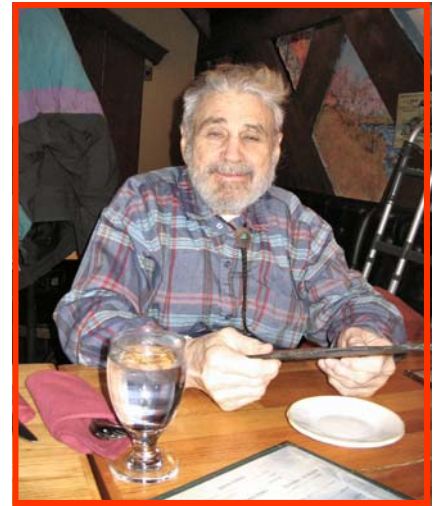


Are these a good looking bunch of Hams or not? No need to answer that loaded question.





**K1KU, Darrel
N1TOX, John
(The good looking one is on the left.)**



W2NH, Gordon



**I told you we had fun. KA1ZQX, Tim-
KB1OQH, Paul-N1TOX, John**



KB1NJA, Walter



**KB1HCG, Mark—
KA1CYZ, Jenifer
Sharing a menu.-.Or is she reading it to him??**



**KB1KSR, Ed—
N1PBX, Conrad**



**W1CWB, Chas—
Looks like some tasty suds from here**



(Ed: Herewith a new feature which we'd sure like to keep going—a little something to help us learn a little bit about each other.)

BIO GUIDELINES

Why not follow Chas, W1CWB's lead and submit a short bio on your Ham radio career? I'm not sure how I'll handle the 40-50 submissions that will be arriving here, but we'll manage.

Here are some guidelines to follow so that your write up doesn't run over 10 pages.

1. When did you become a Ham?
2. What got you interested in Amateur Radio?
3. Name a favorite aspect of our great hobby that you enjoy the most.
4. Is there a memorable event during your stint as a Ham that stands out as a high point?
5. Additional comments.



W1CWB—CHAS BAKER

I started in ham radio only a few years ago. John, N1TOX, asked me if I would be interested in attending a radio club meeting, the club was not named at that time. It was the second meeting of the West River Radio Club. Since I had always been interested in electronics of any sort (I have an Associates degree in electronics from VTC) and had been meaning to check out ham radio for years I said "Why not." I took on the task of studying for my license myself by going over the question pool and looking up anything I did not understand on Google. It took me almost a year and I gained my Technician license in September 2004

My earliest recollection of ham radio is listening to an old RCA radio my sister had given me when I was 12. I ran a wire all the way around my bed room as an antenna and would listen to broadcasts from Europe and to hams talking around the US. One Thanksgiving I heard two hams from the Midwest talking. One was obviously alone for Thanksgiving and the other ham was trying to cheer him up. I thought "That's the kind of thing I would like to be able to do." It just took me a while to get there.

My interests in ham radio are broad. I enjoy trying different antenna designs, Em Comm, volunteerism, rag chewing and some tinkering. Also, being a professional computer geek, the digital

aspect of Ham radio appeals to me. My favorite thing about the hobby is that there is always something new to discover. I also think we have the best radio club members anyone could ask for. Lots of talent, varied knowledge, and a great bunch of people to spend time with.

(Thanks, Chas. Look for another installment in the April issue.)



Have we had snow this season or not? Does a chicken have lips? 8 feet measured at this QTH since November of 2007. I'm astounded that we can still get out of the garage.

The above shot of my 50' tower and 6' 7" snow pile was taken on 27 February. The Force 12 C-4 is just like the mail deliverers - through snow, sleet, hail, you name it....the RF still gets out.

**Until April....
Have some Happy Hamming**



CUL es 73 de K1KU SK