



# DIGITAL DISPATCH

A publication of the  
West River Radio Club



April—2011

Volume VIII—#IV

## VITAL STATISTICS

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

Our 45 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

KB1J, Rich Austin; VP

KD6MPY, Sean Sanderson/WK1L, Bro Frank Hagerty ED/  
VE Liaison

K1KU, Darrel Daley; Secretary/Treasurer

KA1ZQX, Tim Bell; Public Relations/ARES

## PREZ KORNER

### *What happens when.....*

With the events that have happened in Japan over the past few weeks, we all know how much good communications can play a vital role when and where there is an emergency. I am personally sure many of you were thinking "what would happen if it happened here?" as you followed the events unfold. While many of our *West River Radio Club* members are VEM-RACES members, we all know what we can expect for most disasters. While watching the events unfold, although very fast at the beginning because of the earthquake and the Tsunami, you can see how long it took for this event to unfold. This is true with almost any event.

So let's take the Tsunami disaster as an example. It devastated the coast line of Japan with a wall of water that traveled deeply inland taking and removing many things in its way. While one would never happen here in Windham County, the closest that we can come to would be a dam breach or a major ice jam. Both have the ability of causing major floods and property damage. As many of us watched the ice stack up along the banks or Rt 30 traveling up the valley, we were watching for the water to overflow the banks as there was 2"+ of rain in the forecast. With the melting snow and heavy rains during this time of year, we all know to watch the river banks and take action when and if the need become evident.

The members of the *West River Radio Club* have bonded to become a team of eyes and ears who, as a solid team, bring the current events to the air. We report our weather

events to the National Weather Service, assist first responders at many events and help them make it a save time for everyone. We continue to work with Vermont Emergency Management with Emergency and All Hazards events, and many towns are glad we are here to assist them as needed.

But wait... there's more! How about our Educational Team? By providing the educational paths to individuals looking to obtain the "Golden Ticket of Operation" and offer many VE sessions to make it happen. Technician, General and Amateur Extra, we got it all. Contest? No, we are not talking about Hot Dog eating, beverage guzzling, dance a-thons, or what have you, WRRRC hosted the VT QSO Party for the past 2 years and did a great job! From Tom Long - KB1NGQ, President of CVARC, in an email to me... *"Thank you! You folks have done a magnificent job and, hopefully, it will be the spark of re-interest as you said."* The intent of this project we proposed to the sponsor, CVARC, was to rekindle the VT QSO Party for the benefit of all Vermont operators to a contest to be proud of. We more than doubled the number of logs this year over last year. So it's moving on well. For the next 2 years, our friends at RANV will be hosting the party. I wish them continued success and may the logs only increase in numbers. As a club, we do much more with experimentations, building antennas, equipment, Field Day, outings and much more.

But wait there's more!! We also have our monthly meetings of fun and excitement. We have covered many topics from old tube rigs and antiques, (remember Rich - KB1J's CW Practice machine?), Gordon - W2NH's Blazing History of the first linked repeater system from New York to Montreal, PC Controlled Rigs both directly connected and operated over the internet, the many QSL cards of Darrel - K1KU, Antenna construction from Frank - WK1L, WinLink 2000 and many more topics. If you have not been to a meeting in a while, stop in again, we have a lot to offer and would love to have you there.

So a **HUGE Thank You** goes out to all of our members for continuing to make WRRRC a club to learn from and follow, obtain support from, and also depend upon. While we cannot predict any national or regional disasters, we all know that we could be there to assist during an emergency. We know how to work around obstacles and make the needed communications work. We know how to make communications mobile via simplex or a repeater, cross

band repeating, transmitting via the internet, base station relays, and portable. Just being there to assist is what we can and will do best when called upon. This is a job well done folks, job well done...

Until next month!

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de N1TOX

John Borichevsky – President WRRC



## THE WRRC ARES NET

**WHEN:** Every Monday evening at 19:30L

**WHERE:** The Marlboro Repeater—147.015 MHz. Positive offset and a 100 Hz PL

**WHAT:** The net varies between rag chewing on some Mondays and a bit of training on others. Often there is a combination of some training and rag chewing.

The NCS lineup through April follows:

April 4 N1TOX, John

April 11 KB1J, Rich

April 18 KA1ZQX, Tim

April 28 N1TOX, John

All are welcome and encouraged to check in.

You'll get in some rag chew time with a little training thrown in now and then.

Want to be a Net Control Station? Contact KA1ZQX, Tim at [ka1zqx@arri.net](mailto:ka1zqx@arri.net)

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## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me, I want people to know "why" I look this way.

I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved. "

Will Rogers (1879-1935); actor, comic, columnist

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## RUNNIN' ON EMPTY

### *How It All Started*

I'll bet that some of you at one time or another have asked yourself, "Self, how did *this* or *that* get started?" I often do, but rarely do anything about finding out. After all, isn't ignorance bliss? It's very difficult to remain ignorant in this day and age, though, especially if you own a computer (I think that even an Apple will work) and have access to the world wide web. I'll remain eternally grateful to our former Vice President for inventing it.



Since I've never known, or once knew and forgot, I decided to find out how April Fool's Day got its start. To do this I turned to Wikipedia. If this offends some of the perfectionists out there who insist on only knowing the pure unadulterated verifiable truth, then all I can say is *picky, picky, picky*. Here's what I

learned.

April Fools Day is sometime also referred to as All Fool's Day. As to origins I came up with the following? In Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (1392), the "Nun's Priest's Tale" is set *Syn March bigan thritty dayes and two* (The preceding makes it obvious that Chaucer did not have a spell checker on his PC). Chaucer probably meant 32 days after March, i.e. May 2, the anniversary of the engagement of King Richard II of England to Anne of Bohemia, which took place in 1381. However, readers apparently misunderstood this line to mean "March 32," i.e. April 1. In Chaucer's tale, the vain cock Chauntecleer is tricked by a fox. (I hope that the excitement isn't getting to be too much for you.)

In 1509, a French poet referred to a *poisson d'avril* (April fool, literally "April fish"), a possible reference to the holiday. In 1539, Flemish poet Eduard de Dene wrote of a nobleman who sent his servants on foolish errands on April 1. In 1686, John Aubrey referred to the holiday as "Fool's holy day", the first British reference. On April 1, 1698, several people were tricked into going to the Tower of London to "see the Lions washed". The name "April Fools" echoes that of the Feast of Fools, a Medieval holiday held on December 28.

As further travel down this "origin" track is apparently a waste of time I turned to searches on pranks of the past. I discovered some doozies, to wit:

**Decimal Time:** Repeated several times in various countries, this hoax involves claiming that the time system will be changed to one in which units of time are based on powers of 10.

**Taco Liberty Bell:** In 1996, Taco Bell took out a full-page advertisement in *The New York Times* announcing that they had purchased the Liberty Bell to "reduce the country's debt and renamed it the "Taco Liberty Bell". When asked about the sale, White House press secretary Mike McCurry replied tongue-in-cheek that the Lincoln Memorial had also been sold and would henceforth be known as the Lincoln Mercury Memorial.

**Left Handed Whoppers:** In 1998, Burger King ran an ad in *USA Today*, saying that people could get a Whopper for left handed people whose condiments were designed to drip out of the right side. Not only did customers order the new burgers, but some specifically requested the "old", right handed burger.

**Apple buys the Beatles:** Bob Lefsetz released an April Fools' Day letter which had rumors circulating around the music industry, which in **2010** turned out to be true.

**Iceberg Towing:** In 1983, Australian millionaire businessman Dick Smith claimed to have towed an iceberg from Antarctica to Sydney Harbor. He used a barge covered with white plastic and fire extinguisher foam to convince witnesses.

And to close off yet another enlightening column from your humble editor, here are a couple of radio/TV pranks from yesteryear.

**Jovian Plutonian gravitational effect :** In 1976, Brit-

ish astronomer Sir Patrick Moore told listeners of BBC Radio 2 that unique alignment of two planets would result in an upward gravitational pull making people lighter at precisely 9:47 a.m. that day. He invited his audience to jump in the air and experience "a strange floating sensation". Dozens of listeners phoned in to say the experiment had worked.

**Space Shuttle lands in San Diego:** In 1993, DJ Dave Rickards told listeners of KGB-FM in San Diego that Space Shuttle Discovery had been diverted from Edwards Air Force Base and would be landing at Montgomery Field, a small municipal airport with a 4,577 foot runway. Thousands of people went to the airport to watch the purported landing, causing traffic jams throughout Kearny Mesa. Moreover, there wasn't even a shuttle in orbit at the time.

**Crude oil on Mars:** In 2004, the Italian television station Rai 2 reported that NASA discovered crude oil on Mars.

**Diet Pill:** In 2006, the same station reported the invention of a miraculous diet pill that should be accompanied by a diet rich in fish.

**#10's door color:** In 2006, the BBC reported that the door to No. 10 Downing Street, the official residence of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, had been painted red. They showed footage of workmen carrying a red door. Red was the official color of the political party which formed the government at the time. The same story was also reported in the British newspaper, The Daily Mail which credited the new design to April Fewell. The door is in fact black.

**Flying Penguins:** In 2008, the BBC reported on a newly discovered colony of flying penguins. An elaborate video segment was even produced, featuring Terry Jones (of Monty Python fame) walking with the penguins in Antarctica, and following their flight to the Amazon rainforest.



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**H**appy birthday wishes for the month of April go out to:

N1XSS, Rob



May April 22 be a great day for you, Rob.



### FINANCES

**T**he data below is valid as of the publication of this issue of the Digital Dispatch

42 Full members—3 Associate members

60% of the full members belong to the ARRL

Checking = \$1,814.31/Cash on hand = \$77.07



## UPCOMING EVENTS & LOOKING AHEAD

**Ongoing:** WRRRC ARES net...19:30L, 147.015, positive offset and 100 Hz PL tone.

**April 5:** RACES drill

**April 12:** Monthly meeting of the WRRRC in the EMT room at Grace Cottage Hospital. The meeting begins at 19:00L

**April 30:** Monthly meeting at the PanAsian Restaurant by Staples in Brattleboro. We meet at 11:30L

**May 3:** RACES Drill

**May 7:** Kurn Hattin Spring Fling. We'll set up the club canopy, hand out literature, operate a special event station, and speak with some of the 400 some plus attendees about Amateur Radio.

Also check out WRRRC events on the club calendar at <http://www.westriverradio.org/> and scroll down the page a bit.

## THE PARTY IS OVER

**H**ave you ever hosted a really fun party and were sorry to see the guests leave, even the uninvited ones? And then it hits you – someone has to clean this mess up.

Well, it happened here at the QTH of Marion and Darrel Daley on March 15. Not only did this small gathering have fun and accomplish something worthwhile, but there was no mess to clean up.

Now every gathering has to have a purpose and ours was no exception. The deadline for receipt of logs and summary sheets was March 5 and someone, make that a group, had to review all the entries and verify the scores. That group consisted of W1CWB, Chas, N1TOX, John, KA1ZQX, Tim, WK1L, Frank, K1KU, Darrel, and Darrel's lovely wife, Marion.

Chef Boyar Hagerty had brought along the makings for two large pizzas and Darrel provided the necessary liquid to wash them down with. Marion whipped up a salad to accompany the pizza. This enabled us to approach the task at hand with full stomachs and clear minds. At least my mind was clear. I cannot, though, vouch for the mental status of the others who were present.

An enjoyable time was spent perusing nearly 50 entries for the 2011 VT QSO Party – Way over twice as many participants as in 2010. We even experienced our first DX entry, SP5SA, Andrez. Three of our Canadian neighbors to the north also submitted logs; VA3GKO, Greg, in Ontario – VE5BF, Bill, in Saskatchewan – VE3EAR, Ed, in Manitoba. By the time you read this certificates will be in the mail to all of the participants. These were designed and printed by John, N1TOX, who, by the way, also created and kept



up to date the excellent web page informing the world about the VT QSO Party and the WRRRC.

The fun is over for awhile, though. CVARC remains as the sponsor of the VT Party and will probably assign hosting duties to another VT club for 2012. Perhaps we'll assume the hosting chores again in the future. We learned a lot in this first time venture and definitely put the WRRRC on the map worldwide.

To see the final results point your browser to <http://vtqsoparty.westriverradio.org/>

No matter who hosts the event next year I want to encourage your participation, either as an individual or a user of one of our club calls. You did know that we have two calls didn't you? They are W1RRC and WR1VT. Don't they just fit us to a Tee?

**WK1L, Bro Frank, and his pizza making apprentice, Marion**



**N1TOX, John, and WK1L, Frank, pondering logs.**

**KA1ZQX, Tim, and W1CWB, Chas doing the same pondering as John and Frank above.**



my walks for the last week or so require less discipline than jaunts prior to then. Translated that means that it's not so cold.

Another good sign is that there are new sounds to enjoy, namely that of song birds. Now don't ask me which ones. My good friend and Ornithologist, Leonard Oakley, never succeeded in cramming much feathered friend knowledge between my ears.

I have also spotted the larger feathered friends, AKA ducks and geese, winging their way overhead. Some of them are actually flying in the right direction.

Other visual delights are sap buckets. The pictures below were taken on one of my favorite jaunts along River Road in Putney. This road follows along the Connecticut River. Were the early settlers original thinkers when it came to naming roads or what?

There's a moral here.....Take heart. Spring is just around the corner. Soon we'll be whining about the heat and humidity while we swat bugs and make contacts at Field Day.



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### SPRING SHE IS A COMIN'

**A**t this point someone is probably saying, "But when?" And I would reply (after urging you to forget the April Fool's snow storm), "Be patient!" As evidence that spring is just around the corner I offer the following evidence.

As some of you may know. Since I had my chest plumbing overhauled in 2009 I've been on a religious regimen of walking six days a week. For those of you who are curious....Yes, it does wonders for adding years to your life and life to your years.

To continue, three of the six days I walk are in the great outdoors. I am ready to attest to the fact that

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