



DIGITAL DISPATCH

A publication of the
West River Radio Club



December—2011

Volume XII—#VIII

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 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

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

THE PRESIDENT'S KORNER

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

As the West River Radio Club wraps up our 8th year of establishment, we have certainly grown. Our growth has not been just in membership, but respect from other clubs, businesses and organizations within the State of Vermont and beyond. This is a reflection on the dedication that you, our members, put forth by providing the means of communications we love to use. Thank you all for your assistance during this past year which was filled with disasters, from the North to the South, and let's not forget the east to the West. No portion of Vermont was spared from any of the disasters this year.

So let's move forward and make more memorable moments happen. On 10-December, we are having our Annual Holiday Luncheon meeting at Grace Cottage Hospital. This is a Pot Luck Luncheon with our annual election of officers. This is another means of meeting some of our members who cannot regularly attend our monthly meetings. We do ask that you email Bro. Frank Hagerty with the plate you wish to bring so we can coordinate the food and avoid duplications. Frank's email address can be found on the Roster page.

As I move on myself and step down as president, I will still be with the club. I'm not leaving, just taking a deserved breather for a while. But as you all know, I'm still wearing many hats in the Emergency Services realm. So our deployments will still happen, our planned events are still scheduled, and our fame will still grow. Again, this is

all thanks to you.

As I am writing this section, I have been informed of the passing of John Gladding, N1HLG on 30-November-2011. John has helped us out at many of our Entergy – Vermont Yankee drills. John was a past President of the Green Mountain Wireless Society, Secretary – Treasurer of the Northeast FM Repeater Association and much more. His expertise and dedication to the art of amateur radio will be missed. But I'm sure his shared knowledge will be used for many years to come. Rest in Peace John, we will miss you and your assistance. There is a Guest Book at the Rutland Herald for John. I hope you take a few minutes and put in some words and thoughts.

So, thank you for selecting me as your leader. It has been a fun appointment and I was glad to do it. I'm sure the individual following me will lead the club and continue to carry the torch as well, and maybe even better. Just think it might be you!! What's that? You don't have the time? You all told me that I had the time so I'm just returning these words to you.... You have the time, you can do it!

As my next writing will be from the Past Presidents Club, I hope to see you at our next meeting, or one of the following meetings soon. My sincere "Thanks" go out to all of you again for your dedication to WRRC.

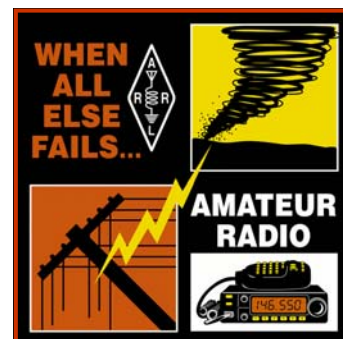
From my family to all of yours, we hope you have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

73

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de N1TOX

John Borichevsky – President WRRC (2005 – 2011)



UPCOMING EVENTS & LOOKING AHEAD

Ongoing: WRRR ARES net...19:30L, 147.015, positive offset and 100 Hz PL tone. Curious as to who the NCS will be? Go to http://www.westriverradio.org/WRRR/WRRR_Pages/ARES_Net.html

December 10: Annual meeting of the WRRR in the EMT room at Grace Cottage Hospital. We gather at 11:30 L for a mini ham fest, rag chewing, pot luck and election of officers for 2012. Your attendance is encouraged as we need a quorum to conduct business.

December 20: Our good wishes for a blessed Hanukkah. This year it begins at sundown on Dec 20 and ends at sundown on Dec 27

December 25: Our good wishes for a blessed Christmas.

December 31: There will be no monthly luncheon meeting at the PanAsian Restaurant because that Saturday falls on New Year's eve day. All behave.

January 10, 2012: First regular meeting of the WRRR in 2012. Come out and help us get off to a rousing new year.

January 28: Monthly luncheon meeting of the WRRR at the PanAsian restaurant in Brattleboro—next to Staples.

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

FINANCES

The data below is valid as of the publication of this issue of the Digital Dispatch

45 Full members—3 Associate members
60% of the full members belong to the ARRL

Checking = \$1,790.11/Cash on hand = \$66.57

(Ed. Note: It is gratifying to have received a contribution to the newsletter from David, N1ESK. David and his family of four Hams have been long time supporters of the WRRR. It is hoped that work and volunteer schedules will allow him and his family take up a chair or two at our Tuesday meetings.)

SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION

By N1ESK, David Andrews

Six degrees of separation refers to the idea that everyone is on average approximately six steps away, by way of introduction, from any other person on Earth, so that a chain of, "a

friend of a friend" statements can be made, on average, to connect any two people in six steps or fewer. While more information on this idea can be gleaned by a quick Google search, I'd like to relate two specific examples.

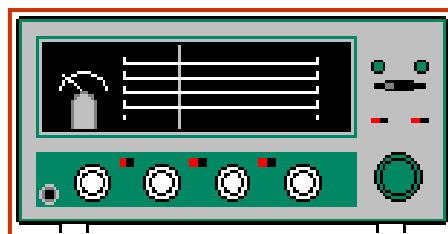
I was excited to be a newly minted technician class ham back in the early eighties, and kept a radio in my cable TV service van during the day. I had a service territory that required extensive driving, and would often call CQ on the local two meter machine in Killingworth CT. Usually I'd get a reply, day or night, followed by an interesting chat, from John Hill, KM1A. John worked in the Middlefield microwave facility for AT&T. This was a secure bunker facility, protected in theory from nuclear attack. Visitors weren't allowed, and he worked alone. He was also a bit of a recluse, only rarely ever venturing to a club event or field day. Yet most days we would chat. If you ever made a long distance phone call in the second half of the twentieth century to or through Connecticut, it was made possible by John and his crews.

I learned a great number of things from John, and considered him a good friend, although we only met face to face a handful of times. So I was shocked and saddened to see his call listed in the Silent Key section of a recent QST. I lost a friend, we lost a brother, but in retrospect part of John lives in me. He taught me that this hobby, while serving a valuable public service, ought to be fun. Just chatting can be a great joy.

Lenny Goodnow, WA1UNN was a radio service tech at Southwestern New Hampshire District Fire Mutual Aid in Keene, better known as Keene Mutual Aid or KMA. Lenny owned and operated Spofford Electronics for many years, and worked for KMA for the past decade. For the past few years he worked to shepherd the conversion of the entire 80+ department radio system to narrow banding. This involved replacing nearly every pager, portable, mobile, base station, repeater, link, and translator in the system. He also was a principal player in converting the dispatch center to computer aided dispatch. Every time you interface with any emergency service in our area, you are being touched by Lenny's work. A gentle soul, he was the kind of guy you wanted to hang around the shop with.

Far less than six degrees separates you from these two people whom I was blessed with knowing. They will both be sorely missed by all. During this holiday season as we pause to give thanks for all we have, I am thankful to have known KM1A and WA1UNN.

David Andrews, N1ESK, Vernon



RUNNIN' ON EMPTY

The QSO to end all QSOs.

This is the story of a very unusual QSO, probably the strangest, and definitely most rewarding, of my 33 year life as a Ham radio operator. Shy types like me always hesitate to put material like this out in the public spotlight. Even people close to me might begin to have their doubts as to the veracity of what is to follow. Some might think that I'm either on the verge of going into *full lip strumming* mode or have actually crossed line at full speed ahead. At any rate, nearly a year has passed and I'm not getting any younger. It's a story that needs telling before I go off into that big ham shack in the sky...no matter what the reaction might be. After all, they scoffed at Galileo, too.

So, here goes with the truth, and nothing but the truth....if for no other reason than that some grouchy old non believer out there might discard their grumpy outlook on life and join in the spirit of the season. And don't smirk – we know who you are!

It happened like this. While taking a break from some late wrapping of Christmas presents on December 24 of 2010, I turned on the rig and tuned to the low end of 40 meters, the place where those high speed CW guys hang out. Listen, if anyone needs to build their listening speed up it's this op.

Now I'm not too much of a rag chewer on CW unless it's in the 20-25 WPM range, but while tuning up and down the band I couldn't help but catch a very clean fist sending out a CQ at around 30-35 WPM. It wasn't exactly a needle pinning signal, more like a 549, but very copyable.

CQ CQ CQ DE NP7SC/AA

Now that's a somewhat unusual call and though I'm usually looking for DX I had a premonition that this is one Dude I should work, or at least make the attempt to. My hand moved to the Bencher and I started pumping out the dits and dahs, but a tad slower than the NP7 was sending...

NP7SC/AA DE K1KU K1KU ES QRS PSE KN

Well Praise the Lord...He came back to me and right over the top of all the QRM and QRN, too. And, gentleman that he was, he had dropped back to a speed that I could live with....well, sort of.

K1KU DE NP7SC/AA

TNX FER THE CALL OM

UR SIGS 559

NAME IS SANTA SANTA ES HOME QTH IS NORTH POLE NORTH POLE

CURRENT LOCATION ABT 3000 FT OVER WATSON LAKE IN YUKON TERRITORY CANADA

SOHWCPY?

K1KU DE NP7SC/AA KN

Very needless to say, when my fingers felt for the Bencher this time around they weren't nearly as steady as before. Am I glad that he slowed down for me. With my

hand as shaky as it was I felt like I should be doing 7-10 WPM. But even my 74 year old grey matter was working well enough to start putting it all together

NP = North Pole

SC = Santa Claus (I wonder what the reaction was in Gettysburg when they got the request for that vanity call?)

And where else would he be on December 24 other than aeronautical mobile? After all, there are a lot of kids out there depending on his safe journey. This is one I've got to check out with the DXCC desk – a new entity??

DE K1KU

RRR

WOW SANTA WHAT A QSO THIS HAS TURNED OUT TO BE/

SO MANY QUESTIONS BUT KNOW U MUST BE 1 BUSY GUY ES IN A HURRY SO WONT HOLD IT/ LOTS OF MILES TO GO FOR SURE/

CANT BELIEVE THAT YOU FOUND RM FOR A KEY/STRAPPED TO YOUR LEG?

SO BTU AND HW? NP7SC DE K1KU KN

Well, I won't bore you with the text of the entire QSO. Besides, I didn't get it all down on paper. I do remember enough, though, to answer many of the questions you probably have and restore hope for those of us who still "keep the faith" and are young at heart.

- * Yes, it's a vanity call and getting it apparently took some "pull" with the folks at the *Friendly Candy Company*.
- * His gear? It varies, as he usually "borrows" one of the rigs that he's delivering to some deserving Ham and only runs low power, in the 100W range.
- * Santa's mode of choice? CW, of course, and for most of the reasons that we who love it prefer it.
- * Those eight reindeer make good time, even under a full load. How about around 100 MPH with a strong tail wind? So that was what was causing that *whooshing* sound.
- * Speaking of reindeer, what do they use for fuel? Well, besides their normal diet of lichens a major supplier of pet food provides an enriched oat based food free of charge – just for the PR value.
- * Another problem used to be the RFI generated by Rudolph's red nose. Fortunately, one of the Elves had spent some time as an Electronics Engineer and came up with some creative filtering schemes that solved that problem.
- * Achieving a good RF ground when you're altitude is 3-4 miles high can also pose

problems.

- * He doesn't always come down chimneys, even when available. It all has to do with his – and I want to be tactful here... girth. He guaranteed me, though, that there's not a lock in the world that he can't pick. Other than a few missing cookies, less cider in the pitcher, and new packages under the tree, no one is ever aware that anyone has been in the house.
- * You might be wondering about *the list*. He does keep one and checks it twice, sometimes even three to four times. He definitely knows who has been naughty and who hasn't. If you're a LID don't get your hopes up for experiencing any examples of Santa's munificence.
- * Santa also strongly recommends keeping an upbeat and positive attitude.
- * Keep on smiling. It's later than you think.
- * Don't let the pessimists get to you. (The Romans probably would have said, "Illegitimus Te non carborundum.")
- * Give some time to promoting worthwhile causes that are bigger than you are.
- * Do your part to promote our great hobby. That might be the best gift you can give others, not just during the holiday season, but throughout the year.

There's a lot more to tell, but a pile up was developing and I wanted to give some other deserving Hams the same thrill I was enjoying. So I signed with the OM and definitely jotted down his closer before he went back to a TF3 with a big signal.

**TNX FER NICE QSO DARREL/73 GUD DX
CUAGN NEXT YR ES GOD BLESS
K1KU DE NP7SC SK**

That's my story, folks, and I'm sticking with it. I'll even take a lie detector test – of course, you pay the fee. To answer what you're probably thinking – NO, I didn't sample the *enriched* egg nog before this QSO.

Any doubts that I ever might have had are gone forever....There is a Santa and he rewards good behavior. Still a doubting Thomas? You have a year before you to get your CW speed up a bit. Then drop down to the low end of 40 and tune around.



The jolly OM and I have a sked set for December 24, 2012 around 7.015 MHz at 22:00Z. If you hear a QSO going on between K1KU and NP7SC feel free to toss your call in. In the true Spirit of Christmas we'll welcome you with open arms. Hey, we'll even QRS.

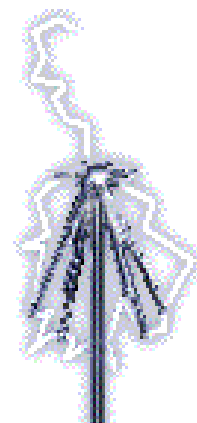
PC CHRISTMAS WISHES

(In this crazy day and age it sometimes becomes well nigh impossible to NOT offend someone with what you say. To help you through those awkward moments allow me to suggest the use of the following holiday greeting. I can almost guarantee that there will be no repercussions.)

Please accept with no obligation, implied or implicit our best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, low stress, non-addictive, gender neutral, celebration of the winter solstice holiday, practiced within the most enjoyable traditions of the religious persuasion of your choice, or secular practices of your choice, with respect for the religious/secular persuasions and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all.

And a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling, and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 2011, but not without due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make America great, (not to imply that America is necessarily greater than any other country or is the only "AMERICA" in the western hemisphere), and without regard to the race, creed, color, age, physical ability, religious faith, choice of computer platform, or sexual preference of the wishee.

(By accepting this greeting, you are accepting these terms. This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal. It is freely transferable with no alteration to the original greeting. It implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the wishes for her/himself or others, and is void where prohibited by law, and is revocable at the sole discretion of the wisher. This wish is warranted to perform as expected within the usual application of good tidings for a period of one year, or until the issuance of a subsequent holiday greeting, whichever comes first, and warranty is limited to replacement of this wish or issuance of a new wish at the sole discretion of the wisher.)



I want to close with what has undoubtedly become the world's most reprinted newspaper editorial.

Eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon wrote a letter to the editor of New York's *Sun*, and the quick response was printed as an unsigned editorial Sept. 21, 1897. The work of veteran newsman Francis Pharcellus Church has since become history's most reprinted newspaper editorial, appearing in part or whole in dozens of languages in books, movies, and other editorials, and on posters and stamps.

"DEAR EDITOR: I am 8 years old.
"Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus.
"Papa says, 'If you see it in THE SUN it's so.'
"Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus?"

"VIRGINIA O'HANLON.
"115 WEST NINETY-FIFTH STREET."

VIRGINIA, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except [what] they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, VIRGINIA, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus. It would be as dreary as if there were no VIRGINIAS. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, VIRGINIA, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

**FROM OUR
HOUSE TO
YOURS—**

**MARION AND
DARREL SEND
THEIR HEART-
FELT WISH
THAT YOU ALL
HAVE A
BLESSED
HOLIDAY
SEASON**