



DIGITAL DISPATCH

A publication of the
West River Radio Club



June—2012

Volume VII—#VI

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:

KA1ZQX, Tim Bell; President

KB1J, Rich Austin; VP

N1TOX, John Borichevsky; Secretary/Treasurer

WK1L, Bro Frank Hagerty ED/VE Liaison

K1KU, Darrel Daley; Newsletter Editor

W1CWB, Chas Baker; Technical Advisor

THE PRESIDENT'S KORNER

Good day all, I hope this new month finds you all well and ready to get out and make contacts! June is here already and field day is around the corner. Will you consider participating this year? The West River Radio Club is holding their Field Day at Ed & Lois Phoenix's homestead again this year. We plan to mostly keep the same set up plans as last year. All we need is operators. . .

Friday the day before the big day will commence the set up process in the afternoon. The next day will be putting final touches on the stations and at 1400L, the gates open and the fun begins. We will also need some help on Sunday to help tear down the stations. Saturday night we will be holding a pot luck get together. Please let Bro. Frank know what you can bring or touch base with him for ideas. It's all a lot of fun and a good time to operate on frequencies you might not normally operate on.

Okay, now that we are all trained up on Skywarn, etc., there are a lot of opportunities to take your talent and help out with communications event. Last month RACES/CERT participated in Girls on the Run and a Yankee Drill. There are many opportunities still to come, consider helping out in an event this year!

Remember our next meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month @ 7pm, Grace Cottage Hospital. Hope to see you all soon, take care and be safe as always!

Till then, 73
KA1ZQX/Tim

PAST PREZ CIRCLE
June, 2012

Summer is here!

Here we are in the month of June and the official start of summer is coming soon! According to the *Old Farmer's Almanac* "Summer begins in the Northern Hemisphere on June 20, 2012, at 7:09 P.M. (EDT)". So why should we bring this up? Well, time does not stand still in the real world for no one. Plus the summer projects, parties and family gatherings will all blend into a fast paced summer and zoom past faster than you can blink your eyes.

Vacations are also a great time to relax. Get away from the internet, cell phones, and tethering equipment that keep you tied down to your real life job and taking away the function of having fun. Now I have said in many of my "Presidents Corner" articles that you could have fun and sit on a beach and operate your HT or QRP station. Go mountain topping, rent a camp site to pitch a tent, maybe a cabin in the woods, or whatever and put up some temporary antennas to operate your radio.

Whatever your summer activity is, I hope you allow amateur radio to be a part of it. Explore new areas of the world and meet new friends on the air. But most of all, I hope all of your summertime activities are filled with fun and safety. Drive safe and be prepared.

Until next month!

73

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de N1TOX

John Borichevsky - Past 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 June/July follows:

11 June, KB1J, Rich
18 June, N1TOX, John
25 June, WK1L, Frank
2 July, N1TOX, John
9 July, KA1ZQX, Tim
16 July, KB1J, Rich
23 July, W1CWB, Chas
30 July—???

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@arrl.net

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose." Helen Keller (1880-1968); author, lecturer, activist

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy birthday wishes for the month of June go out to:

14—KK4ADQ, Andy
22—KB1NUF, Peter
24—K1KU, Darrel
28—W1IRA, Ira



BRING ON #8

It's time again....

Time for what? C'mon Gang, the month is June and time for things to be bustin' out all over, AKA Field Day. Do you realize that, as a Ham you're obligated to have the last full weekend of every June seared into your consciousness. This year that last full weekend comprises June 22 - 24. OK, the 22nd doesn't really count because it's a Friday. I've included it, though, because that's the day we begin hoisting wire into the air, and erecting screen houses and tents.

It's also a time, between shooting antenna lines, of course, to discuss strategy. For those who are serious about FD a serious component of strategy is, why not, prayer:

- ◆ Will 10 be open? We're at the beginning of cycle #24. Check it out at <http://www.solarham.net/>
- ◆ If 10 is dead, then maybe 15 will be hot
- ◆ Guidance is needed on what direction to orient the phone, digital, and CW antennas to minimize interference
- ◆ May our resident chef, WK1L, Bro Frank, find enough ingredients for our annual elephant stew.
- ◆ And yes, we'd tale it as a kindly gesture if the flying critter population disappeared over the weekend.
- ◆ Help the overnight ops to stay alert and not despair when they don't get through on the first call.
- ◆ And may our presence not be too much of an annoyance to our gracious hosts, Ed, KB1KSR, and Lois Phoenix
- ◆ May the PCs, rigs, and antennas, and don't forget the ops, hum along at peak performance levels.
- ◆ For those who show up for the Saturday potluck without notifying Frank, WK1L (hagertysse@myfairpoint.net) - may the fleas of a thousand camels infest, etc. etc.
- ◆ Could a few souls in our club who have never experienced the thrill of operating be persuaded to show up and be Elmered by our patient and kindly Old Timers on the *ins & outs* of making FD QSOs.

If this has whetted your appetite for FD give me a shout and I'll take you by the hand—K1ku@arrl.net

FEATURED GUEST WRITER

Believe it or not, I was all set with another fun and fact filled *Runnin' on Empty* column. Then I read something that changed my mind. Keep reading to discover what has the power to change the thinking of this septuagenarian.

I was browsing through some old issues of Dots & Dashes. Now Dots & Dashes is a publication of the Morse Telegraph Club. And what does the Morse Telegraph Club do? Let me paste in their statement of purpose from the home page of their web site - <http://www.morsetelegraphclub.org/>

The Morse Telegraph Club is an international non-profit organization dedicated to the perpetuation of the knowledge and traditions of telegraphy. Our membership includes not only those from the craft of telegraphy, using Morse Code (American or International) either wire or wireless, but also includes those who are actively involved in the goals and initiatives of our organization. These goals are, but not limited to, preserving the heritage of telegraphy and educating the public on the history of Morse telegraph communications.

I'm a member of the MTC and have been so for several years now. I belong because I believe in their goals. When I became a Ham in 1978 at the tender age of 43 there was no option with respect to learning the code. Back then I can't say that I exactly loved it, but I wanted to become a Ham badly enough so I learned it. Come to think of it, I didn't exactly love Smith charts either, but I

wanted to become an Extra badly enough, so I learned about them.

Over the years of my Ham life I've come to love the code and use it often, for a lot of reasons that I won't go into right now. (Did anyone record that sigh of relief?) And because I want to preserve the heritage of our great hobby, even going back to when there was no Amateur Radio. But there was Morse code.

What I read in the December, 2011 issue of Dots & Dashes was a great piece of writing by the MTC's current President, Jim Wades, WB8SIW. In case you'd like to see and hear Jim in action demonstrating *land* line telegraphy, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKBVdS3f4xQ>

It was great because every line captured my thoughts perfectly. Jim, though, knows how to put those thoughts down on paper so that they move and inspire. I'm glad that he gave me his kind permission to let the members and friends of the WRRRC read his reflections on the things that really matter in life.

President's Line

By Jim Wades, KB8SIW – President
Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.

"The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Watch television or listen to the modern pundits of popular culture, and one hears much talk of "happiness." More often than not, our modern culture defines happiness within the context of hedonism and self-indulgence. Those that would define happiness as a sense of deep spiritual satisfaction attained through a life well lived are likely to be labeled as "old fashioned" or "out of touch."

As International President of MTC, it is common for me to occasionally receive a letter from a spouse or a copy of an obituary when a member passes on. Few of these men or women attained positions of public prominence. Few became wealthy on a railroad or Western Union salary. Yet, every one of them accomplished something far more important. They earned an honest living, engaged in an honorable profession. raised families, and contributed to their communities. In other words, they lived and lived well.

Call me "old fashioned," but I find our modern, media addled culture discomfiting. I am uncomfortable with a society in which the content of a man's character is of little interest in the broader cultural discussion. I am uncomfortable with a media-centric culture which, at times, seems bent on deconstructing traditional values with little regard for the potential consequences of doing so.

Fortunately, despite the sense of loss represented by each of the obituaries published in our journal, there is something very uplifting contained within each of them that reaffirms one's faith in mankind. There is

UPCOMING EVENTS & LOOKING AHEAD

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

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

June 22–24: Field Day. Our 8th. There will be NO monthly Board meeting at the Parnasian Restaurant. We will instead meet informally at our FD potluck on Saturday eve.

June 20: Healthcare Network Drill

July 4: Have fun, but also allow time for a bit of reverence and thanks for those who sacrificed, going all the way back to the 18th century, so that we can have fun.

something within each of them from which one can draw strength and inspiration. They represent the very real fruits of a life built around honest labor, family and faith. They speak to the value of that inner strength, which the common man must often summon each day to build a family, a community and a nation.

In a modern society in which so-called "celebrities" are admired for their third trip through rehab or politicians make a career out of telling people what they want to hear as opposed to what they believe, we are fortunate to be reminded of the many common men and women, who, it turns out, are not really all that common. In my humble opinion, we can all be proud to be associated with a fraternity of individuals who have lived a decent and honorable life.

Next time you read an obituary in *Dots & Dashes*, take a moment to contemplate the true measure of a man's life. If you do, you'll undoubtedly be reminded of a very basic, immutable fact; It is not notoriety, fame, or money that is the measure of a man. It's the quiet strength of a life well lived.

73,
Jim Wades



(Ed: Welcome the return of Bro. Frank, WK1L, this time with some thoughts on Field Day propagation. We'll have a variety of antennas in the air to get our signals from point A to B. You'll see OFC Windoms, verticals, NVIS, and who knows what else.)

Field Day Antennas and Propagation Bro. Frank Hagerty, S.S.E. WK1L

As we approach Field Day once again, I'd like to reflect on propagation—where are we trying to hit with our signals, and what antennas might best make that happen most efficiently. When many hams think of contests, they usually think "the far-

ther, the better.” But that is not the case for Field Day. We are trying to work mostly stations in the U.S. and Canada—not Europe, Africa, Asia, or Central and So. America. Reaching the west coast of the U.S. from Vermont is only around 3,000 miles. So we do not want antennas with very low angles of radiation that skim the horizon, such as verticals; we are better off with horizontal wire antennas or beams that have higher angles of radiation.

Let’s say we have a 40 meter dipole. If it is a half wavelength (≈ 20 m.) or higher above ground, it will have a lower angle of radiation—better for working DX. Most of the signal strength will be broadside to the antenna, so the orientation of the antenna wire is very important. But if this antenna is lowered to less than a half wavelength high—say, 15 m.— it will have a higher angle of incidence. There will be skip zones, but there will be many more places where our signals come down to earth within the U.S. and Canada. So our Field Day antennas will perform better if they are not too high. Antenna orientation is still important—if you want to work to the west and east, hang the antenna wire north-south; if you want to work toward the southwest, hang the wire northwest to southeast.

For regional communications on 7 MHz (40 m.) and lower, an NVIS antenna is ideal. This is a dipole that is less than 1/8 wavelength high with a reflector wire directly below the antenna. The angle of radiation is almost straight up into the ionosphere. (That’s why it is called “near-vertical-incidence skywave.”) This results in your signal coming back to earth in an umbrella pattern that has NO skip zones and can reach out to 600 miles or so in ALL directions. At our Field Day site a few years ago in Halifax, the 40 meter phone station could hear a strong station in Massachusetts, but that station could not hear us. We switched to the NVIS antenna and worked that station on the first try.

Here is a link to a website about Field Day antennas you might find interesting:

<http://k9jy.com/blog/2008/05/14/field-day-antennas-5-considerations/>

I hope to see you on Field Day!



PUBLIC SERVICE

Some of our WRRRC members did their share of it on Wednesday, May 16 and Saturday, May 19. Two events in one week. If this keeps up we just might get better at Emcomm procedures.

On May 16 the following members who also belong to RACES took part in a VY drill. Our main purpose is to replicate the traffic coming out of VEM at Waterbury. This is done in case the state radio system breaks down (It actually did once). We man stations in all of the towns in the EPZ (Emergency Preparedness Zone) and receive traffic out of Waterbury. A small RACES team at the Dummerston Agency of Transportation

relays this traffic to all of the local EOCs (Emergency Operation Centers). Don’t you just love acronyms?

Those above mentioned members were:

- * W2NH, Gordon
- * KB1HCG, Mark
- * N1TOX, John
- * W1CWB, Chas
- * KA1ZQX, Tim
- * K1KU, Darrel
- * WK1L, Bro Frank
- * K1GEL, Chuck
- * KB1OQH, Paul
- * KB1SPC, PJ
- * N1HWI, Allan

WK1L, Frank
N1TOX, John
AA1XU, Dick



GOTR



We were pleased to be joined by some “out of area” Hams:

- N1WWW, Robin Conway from Shoreham, VT
- KB1ME, Mary Elkins from MA ARES
- K1WAL, Kathi Walbridge from Shelburne, VT

Both did a bang up job at the Staging Area in Dummerston

Again, on May 19 some of us took part for the ??? straight year in assisting with the annual Girls on the Run 5K event in Brattleboro. Unlike last year, this year’s participants enjoyed clear skies and warm weather.

Lending a hand were:

- ◆ N1TOX, John
- ◆ AA1XU, Dick
- ◆ WK1L, Frank
- ◆ KB1OQH, Paul
- ◆ KB1SPC, PJ
- ◆ N1SJJ, Richard
- ◆ W1ZS, Burt
- ◆ W1CWB, Chas
- ◆ KB1HCG, Mark
- ◆ KA1CYZ, Jenifer



KB1HCG, Mark
N1TOX, John
KB1OQH, Paul

So, why public service?

Remember Part 97.1, subpart a? It states that the rules and regulations are designed to provide an amateur radio service having a fundamental purpose as expressed in the following principles: Notice what’s at the top of the list.

- (a) Recognition and enhancement of the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary noncommercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications.
- (b) Continuation and extension of the amateur’s proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art.
- (c) Encouragement and improvement of the amateur service through rules which provide for advancing skills in both the communications and technical phases of the art.
- (d) Expansion of the existing reservoir within the amateur radio service of trained operators, technicians,

and electronics experts.

(e) Continuation and extension of the amateur's unique ability to enhance international goodwill.

There are other reasons, too. How about:

- ◇ Have a good feeling knowing that you're doing something good for your fellow man
- ◇ Gathering with other like-minded Hams
- ◇ Improving your communication's skills
- ◇ Improving your people skills in dealing with the public

Maybe you can think of other reasons.

I've saved the "pitch" until the end. If you're not involved in public service now is as good a day as any to change that. Let someone on our Board know of your desires and we'll steer you in the right direction.

If you've been involved in the past, but have sort of been taking some time off, now is a good time to renew your enthusiasm. Why not sign up to assist in an upcoming event.



RACES CONFERENCE

Some of our members ventured up to Waterbury on June 2 to attend the 8th annual Races Conference. Though usually held in Pittsford, VT there was a change of venue this year to allow the attendees to check out the re-designed and re-built facilities at the Vermont Department of Public Safety. What can your humble correspondent say, other than, "Impressive, very impressive."

In attendance were:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| KA1CYZ, Jen | W2NH, Gordon |
| KA1ZQX, Tim | N1XSS, Rob |
| WK1L, Frank | K1KU, Darrel |
| N1TOX, John (VEM-RACES Program Coordinator) | |
| KB1HCG, Mark | W1WOL, Bill |
| KB1NWT, John | N1JSG, Richard |
| | N1HWI, Allan |

W1RVT, Rob
Chief of Field Operations
W/group



N1HWI, Allan
N1TOX, John



Plasma Screen—
New radio room

KA1ZQX, Tim
W2NH, Gordon
N1TOX, John
N6PQI, Patrick



FLdigi demo by
Larry, KA1VGM

N1XSS, Rob



Control Head—FNARS Radio

MAXIMS FOR THE INTERNET AGE

Home is where you hang your @

- The E-mail of the species is more deadly than the mail
- A journey of a thousand sites begins with a single click
- You can't teach a new mouse old clicks
- Great groups from little icons grow
- Speak softly and carry a cellular phone
- C\ is the root of all directories
- Don't put all your hypes in one home page
- Pentium wise; pen and paper foolish
- The modem is the message
- Too many clicks spoil the browse
- The geek shall inherit the earth
- A chat has nine lives
- Don't byte off more than you can view
- Fax is stranger than fiction
- What boots up must come down
- Windows will never cease
- In Gates we trust
- Virtual reality is its own reward
- Modulation in all things
- A user and his leisure time are soon parted
- There's no place like <http://www.home.com>
- Know what to expect before you connect
- Oh, what a tangled website we weave when first we practice
- Speed thrills
- Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to use the Net and he won't bother you for weeks



Let us depart with a real Ham dilemma contributed by W2NH, Gordon.

"I actually heard you come out of a radio in my car yesterday but I wasn't sure which one. I called back on Framingham 6. Waltham 2 and 440 and Boston 900 with no response. I just wasn't sure which radio I heard you on" (K1BOS)