



# DIGITAL DISPATCH

## A publication of the West River Radio Club



September—2013

Volume VIII—#IX

### 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 52 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

K1KU, Darrel Daley; VP

N1TOX, John Borichevsky; Secretary/Treasurer

WK1L, Bro Frank Hagerty ED/VE Liaison

K1KU, Darrel Daley; Digital Dispatch editor

W1CWB, Chas Baker; Technical Advisor

### THE PRESIDENT'S KORNER

It's amazing how each month has been flying by lately. It was good to see a good handful at the Board of Directors Meeting this last month. We have quite a few ideas coming up for our new year coming. We are coming up on the end of our 10<sup>th</sup> year as a club. I am honored to be able to celebrate this milestone with you all. It seems like yesterday that we started up this club. We have made our mark in Windham County as we have all played a part in many activities, whether it was for an emergency or supporting a non-emergency event. A lot has happened over this last 10 years, thank you all for your input.

Hope to see you at our next gathering. Depending on the Government shut down, we may be holding the Fall session of Skywarn in November. See you then.

Till then, 73  
KA1ZQX/Tim

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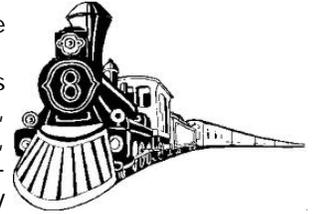
### THE GREAT TRAIN RIDE

On September 21 twenty three jovial members and friends of QCWA Chapter #146 met at the Whetstone Station Restaurant in Brattleboro for food, conversation and LOTS of fun.

For the uninformed QCWA stands for Quarter Century Wireless Association. To become a member you must have been licensed as a Ham for 25 years...Get it? Quarter Century. No wonder you people did so well on the

math parts of your license exams!

Several of the local folks such as KA1TWV, Elaine, K1KU, Darrel and his wife, Marion, welcomed the other 20 fun lovers as they arrived at the Brattleboro train station from as far north as St. Albans.



Who would have guessed it, but Bro Frank, WK1L, had hitched a ride to White River Junction on the 20th and hopped the south bound train when it stopped there. (I hope that he waited for it to stop) He therefore had the thrill of fraternizing for a few miles with the many Hams who had climbed aboard at various points to the north.

We then walked across the street to the Whetstone Station to eat, chat, and just plain have a good time.

How did this all transpire? W1AAT, Allen Tinker, learned that if a trip on Amtrak is taken all within the state of Vermont the cost is only \$24 roundtrip. After exercising some of his exceptional organizational skills a trip was arranged.

I tell you all this in the hopes that the WRRC might sometime consider a train trip for the club. After all, the price is right. I can picture it now—activating repeaters up and down the entire state. We might even find someplace to put a HF vertical and work some DX.

Marion, WK1L, Frank, KA1TWV, Elaine



W1AAT, Allen, marvels at the meager portion served him

See you in Hartford on July 17-19, 2014—train ride anyone?



## PAST PREZ CIRCLE

### Things that go "Flash, Bang, Boom" in the night

**W**ell, it's been a while since I have been on the air. And it has also been a while since I wrote a "Past President's Corner". Who said that? Who just said "it's been good and quiet and that is the way you like it?"

Tough, I'm back; back with a story...It was Labor Day, 2-SEPT-2013 around 0400 hrs. We were at the start of yet another approaching thunderstorm. This was probably storm number 4 or 5 for the night as they were "training" up the Connecticut River Valley. Sound asleep, well as much as I can think I was asleep, I heard this storm approaching. The lightning was flashing and the thunder would roll up the valley. This was not a usual storm as the storms around here come from the west and head off to the east. Many of them go over our house and land smack dab in the middle of Keene. But this time the low pressure center was still in New York State and is was a deep pressure cell. This caused the storms to come from the south and head north.

The lightning got more intense and the thunder got louder. The time between the lightning flash and the rolling thunder became less and less. Then at 0417 hrs., there is was, the biggest flash and the loudest clap of thunder I ever heard, both at the same time. We both jumped out of bed and there were no lights on. Then after exploring the surroundings of the house, there were lights in part of the house. Freaky for sure. Then I was panicking, knowing that something was hit, and something real close. So I reset the circuit breakers and started to explore the house. Checking all of the rooms and smelling the air. Nothing, nothing unusual. So I decided to look out back and turned on the light. I saw my G5RV antenna on the ground. Thinking that a tree branch got hit and took down my antenna for the second time, I just returned to bed and rode out the rest of the storm.

Morning came and needed to take to dogs out for their morning ritual and feeding. Then I saw that there was no tree branch on the ground, I looked as the antenna. Poof! It was the recipient of a couple of million volts of "Mother Nature's Wrath". The center insulator is, well, missing. The twin lead was melted off at the solder joint. The end insulators were still in whole, but the wire is now clean copper. Super-heated wire is now coiled into a knot. So I took care of the dogs and started to worry about the radios. I always unplug them and thought that they would be fine, but no, the shack was damaged.

So in all, 95% of the radio equipment in the shack will not power on! So I started the inventory and the depth of the situation set in. I called the insurance company and started the claim process. They were good, but the loss still was hurting. The issue was really realized when I went to go to work on Tuesday and I could not open the door with my *RFID* card. I hit the pad and the door did not unlock. I repeated the process 3 or 4 times and nothing. Then Chas, W1CWB, asked me



**A sampling of what Mother Nature can do when she gets mad**

where my ID card was and I told him it was in the office and then it really hit me that I was hit by a huge Electro Magnetic Surge that wiped out most of the solid state circuitry in the shack. While most of my equipment is solid state, and momentary touch circuitry, this wiped out my shack in one strong blow.

Erasing every ERPOM in the equipment you could think of.

Keep in mind that the radio equipment was not attached to the electrical grid nor any antenna, and this became the result. Boat anchors! So here come the folks who say, if it was an "old school tube set", you would still be in business. Yup, this was so true.

So last weekend I did some retail therapy at our favorite toy store, [Ham Radio Outlet](#) in Salem, NH. It was a great drive over there. I was luckily able to replace most of my radio equipment in one stop. Most of the equipment is the same but the big rig took the hit. The FT-1000 MP Mark V. So that was upgraded to the latest edition of the Yaesu family, the FTDX3000D. Only 100W output, but it's something to play with. So the rebuilding process is starting to take shape. Still need to buy new cables to connect to my PC and radio because of the new technologies, load software and make the magic happen yet again. While I only just took it out of the box and powered it on, I still need to make a contact once the dipole is placed in the trees and we weather out the fall and winter seasons.

I'll let you know how I like it, maybe next month, when this story continues.

But for now, check your insurance policies and make sure you have "Full Replacement Value" on your personal property in your homeowners insurance.

It is really an inexpensive addition to your policy.

But for now and 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.

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](mailto:ka1zqx@arrl.net)

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

There's nothing wrong or evil about having a bad day. There's everything wrong with making others have to have it with you. - Neil Cavuto

## UPCOMING EVENTS & LOOKING AHEAD

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

**October 8:** Regularly scheduled meeting of the WRRRC in the EMT room of Grace Cottage Hospital at 19:00L.

**October 26:** The monthly Board/luncheon Meeting will be held at the Panasian Restaurant in Brattleboro next to Staples. Gather at 11:30.

Also check out WRRRC events on the club calendar at [http://www.westriverradio.org/WRRRC/WRRRC\\_Pages/prgmplan.html](http://www.westriverradio.org/WRRRC/WRRRC_Pages/prgmplan.html)

## CHAS @ CHATHAM

[Ed: I had a pleasant surprise a few days ago when I received an email from W1CWB, Chas. He and his wife Andi were vacationing on Cape Cod.

Marion and I had visited the place he speaks of below long ago. We made several trips to the Cape, always during the off season (cheap motels and less people). We enjoyed visiting the towns, walking the beaches, and, in my case, activating a lighthouse or two for the Amateur Radio Lighthouse Society (ARLHS).

When we were there there were still remnants of Marconi's station at Wellfleet and some of his gear in the National Historic Site offices.

That gear has been relocated, as you'll learn below. Read on. Chas also has a good suggestion at the end of his write-up.

There is an excellent history at <http://www.stormfax.com/wireless.htm>

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**W**e are on Cape Cod for vacation and decided to take a trip to see the Marconi Maritime Center in Chatham (<http://www.chathammarconi.org/>). There is now a wonderful museum in the building that held the wireless station, WCC, that Guglielmo Marconi built in 1914. WCC was built to be one of 10 wireless stations planned to link America with Europe and Japan. The displays are interactive and chronicle the history of the station through the golden age of ship-to-shore communications including both World Wars. The displays include the fully operational Ham shack of the WCCARA (<http://www.chathammarconi.org/AmateurRadioClub.html>), WA1WCC, which has been used for a number of special events

You can read all about the Chatham Marconi Maritime

Center on their web site. In addition to their information I would like to add that the displays are designed to be interesting and entertaining to Hams and non-Hams alike. This is the only Marconi station of its era with buildings that are unchanged and in their original settings. If you have an interest in the history of wireless radio, the World Wars, code breaking or ship-to-shore radio communications, this museum is for you. (It might make a great Club outing as well



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## RUNNIN' ON EMPTY

### *RTTY – A short discourse*

I can't remember the exact date I made my first RTTY contact, BUT that's why I have my entire log on DX4WIN. By the way, it's great software. I say that even though I get no kickback when anyone I've recommended it to buys it.

The first RTTY contact that DX4WIN remembers took place on October 20, 1987. The wonderful lady on the other end was Sandy Gosselin, KY1U, of Springfield, VT. How do I know that she was wonderful? My wife and I were friends of Sandy for many years and attended social events at her Springfield QTH as well as CVFMA (Connecticut Valley FM Association) meetings and events.

The QSO was on the 80 meter band at 00:50Z. We did exchange QSL cards. Can you imagine having to look up all that information in paper logs? I can, but don't want to.

Since that original QSO I've accumulated 4,764 RTTY QSOs and have 1,576 confirmed via paper cards or LotW.

Back to the subject at hand, namely RTTY. It goes back a long way, like even before Ham radio. Land-line teleprinter services began in 1849 when a circuit was established between Philadelphia and New York City.

That system used the 5 bit code that we still use today. It was invented by Emile Baudot in 1874.

As Hams you've all be introduced to the technical side of RTTY, so we can skip that, but I'll list some of the landmark events in the history of RTTY.

- In August of 1922 the Navy successfully tested printing teletype between and airplane and a ground radio station.
- Also in 1922 the Radio Corporation of America effectively tested printing telegraphy from their Chatham, MA radio station to the R.M.S. Majestic.

*(Note: On January 18, 1903 he sent the first trans-Atlantic telegraph from President Teddy Roosevelt to*

King Edward VII. It was the first transatlantic telegram between America and Europe.

- By April 1932 active commercial teletype systems were working between San Francisco and Honolulu.
- Systems were established between San Francisco and New York City by 1934
- The US Military was using RTTY in the 1930s and its usage was increased during WWII

Hams got involved with RTTY after WWII when surplus equipment became available. They started to get obsolete but usable equipment from commercial firms with the understanding that the gear would not be used for any commercial ventures. These became known as the *Green Machines*.

I had a chance to see them in action as I was studying for my first Novice test in 1978. KL7ITI, Bill Reiter, who is still a friend and still living in Anchorage, had one in his garage. During visits I'd watch him join in on a local 2 meter net. Talk about being big and noisy.

There are no more *Green Machines*, except in museums, but RTTY lives on in the hobby of Amateur Radio. Now our computer sound cards generate the marks and spaces of the Baudot code and shift our rig's frequencies to create that unmistakable sound that RTTY generates. There's probably no more activity on 2 meters, but it's possible by adding a couple of audio tones that shift.

Why do I like RTTY, or, for that matter, any of the digital modes, especially CW? Yes, CW is a digital mode. For starters, there are:

- No accents to deal with
- Signals get through and have a better range than phone
- The ops tend to be more polite
- Your vocal cords get a rest
- Your typing skills get reinforced

Did I keep my word? It's about as short as I can get.



## THE HURRICANE OF 1938

(Note: Gordon sent the following along concerning the BIG ONE.)

Our emergency management people always talk about the hurricane in the 1920's but seldom mention the 1938 storm. That struck 75 years ago on Saturday. It has been listed as the worst storm ever for New England. I can remember four covered bridges between here (Athens) and Grafton that were lost along the Saxton's River. Here's a bit of the comments from our neighboring state. I was seven and we were cut off for several days and went back to gas lights that were in the house my parents had rented. Took more than a week to get electricity back.)

## 75th Anniversary: New England's Greatest Hurricane

By Chris Jensen

That odd color of the sky.

On September 21, 1938 that's what worried Beatrice Dorsey, a 10-year-old living in Plainfield, New Hampshire.



"The sky above my house was green. It was pretty scary, that ominous green," said Dorsey. Dorsey and many other New Englanders didn't know that green sky meant the most damaging hurricane to hit New

England was on its way.

"For most people it was a complete surprise," said Plymouth State associate professor Lourdes Aviles who has written a new book about the hurricane: "Taken By Storm, 1938."

Aviles said hurricanes were rare in New England. Big storms typically came up the East Coast and courteously veered out to sea. That's what forecasters figured this storm would do.

"But this one didn't because of the meteorological patterns at the time," she said.

This storm's power increased. It became a hurricane.

Late in the afternoon it smashed into Long Island and then Southern New England with sustained winds of 120 miles per hour combining with high tide.

"A huge storm surge came in. In some places more than 20 feet," said Aviles. "Specially in Providence, Rhode Island. And this is when most of the deaths occurred. People who were out and about. Beach outings."



It is estimated almost 700 people died in New England.

Then the hurricane began moving inland, covering about 50 miles each hour, says Aviles.

Typically the storm took about three hours – from start to finish - to move through an area, according to a 1938 report by the American Red Cross.

It was a terrifying three hours.

The highest wind measured during the storm was 186 miles per hour at the Blue Hill Observatory in Milton, Massachusetts.

There wasn't much of a chance to warn people, particularly in rural areas like Gilsum where Marjory Trombley lived.

She was 11 years-old, living in a farmhouse with her mother and grandmother, and their house had never

been hooked up for electricity.

"We didn't even know it was a hurricane until it was over. Imagine that," she said. In Northern New England the hurricane arrived with rain and wind.

But it had been raining for several days so that wasn't alarming to Beverly Shaw who lived with her family on a bluff overlooking Woodsville.

Then the wind increased and windows began blowing out. The wind was so strong it carried small stones into the house where they landed, making a pile on a table. "My mother would say, 'Now children. God is going to take care of us. God loves us,'" Shaw remembered. But then, Shaw said, her mother would scream for her husband who was trying to board up the broken windows.

At one point the family realized the youngest daughter, Betty, was missing.

"She was in the closet, looking for an umbrella in case we had to go out in this crazy storm," Shaw said.

Over in Berlin Cecile DuBois was 18-years-old, working as a hair dresser at her family's home.

She looked out the window and as the winds got worse and worse it was clear this was something special. Something specially bad.

Her last customer of the day was too afraid to leave.

They hunkered down wondering what would happen.

"And it was a very, very frightening night," she said. Aviles said as scary as those winds were New Hampshire didn't get the worst of it.

"Throughout Northern New England fifty or 60 mile per hour winds and gusts were very common. That is quite enough to knock down trees but the true, major hurricane winds happened in the very southern portions of the region," she said.

Tens of millions of trees were downed in New England. They blocked roads, took down electric and telephone lines and damaged buildings.

Marjory Trombley of Gilsum remembers how a friend of hers struggled to get around.

"He had to walk home on top of trees and that used to fascinate me," she said.

And the wind also took an odd toll on a local cemetery, Trombley remembered.

"It rooted up some trees and not a lot but a few caskets came up and were floating around and I never forget that," she said.

A 1938 report by the government's Federal Writers Project said the amount of timber "mowed down" in Grafton and Coos was thought to be about the same as would be cut over six normal years.

The sudden loss of so many trees saddened people, said Aviles. They'd lost a familiar landscape.

It had been raining hard for several days before the hurricane, so rivers and streams were already high. Consequently anyplace close to a river was flooded, says Aviles.

Late in 1938 the Federal Writers Project – which sent reporters and photographers throughout New England - published a 221-page report on the hurricane. Among its findings in New Hampshire:

- North Weare was the scene of what it called "the greatest New Hampshire tragedy." Four women were standing on the bridge sightseeing, when it collapsed throwing them into the "torrent."
- In Petersborough a fire broke out in the business district. Flood waters kept fire fighters from reaching it. Embers floated onto other buildings and some residents thought the only reason the entire town didn't burn was that the buildings were already soaked.
- In Manchester only 10 minutes after a group of women working at the Cohas Factory Building left "more than half the top floor was swept away."
- The night of the hurricane Concord was cut off because roads were either flooded or blocked by downed trees. And there were no lights. At disaster headquarters candles were used.
- In Canaan the storm tore off a church steeple, flipped it over and put it back upside down.
- The Crawford and Franconia Notches were closed.
- Farmers said three-quarters of the McIntosh and almost all the Baldwin apples were lost.
- In the flooded farming areas there were problems trying to rescue sheep and cattle who refused to swim. "Five hundred volunteers mobilized to save poultry from the waters of the Contoocook."
- "Dams burst at Deering and North Weare, carrying away more than a dozen bridges."
- In front of the State House in Concord five 100-year-old elm trees were blown down. But "the famous statue of Daniel Webster, although hit by one of the trees, came through without a scratch."

The storm took a toll in New Hampshire, says professor Aviles.

"There were 12 killed in New Hampshire and the damages were about \$12.3 million in 1938 dollars. That would be about \$200 million right now," she said. That didn't include the timber loss.

According to Aviles' research throughout New England:

- \* Almost 20,000 structures were damaged.
- \* About 26,000 automobiles lost.
- \* About 6,000 boats lost.
- \* Railroads were out for as long as two weeks.
- \* Eighty percent of people with electricity lost it.
- \* There were at least 1,000 railroad or road washouts and 100 bridges gone.
- \* Almost 325,000 sugar maples were lost.

If that hurricane occurred today the loss in New England

would be \$40 billion to \$55 billion, according to a 2008 study by Risk Management Solutions, a consulting group.

"It is still the most devastating and expensive New England hurricane. Any recent weather event that you can think of doesn't even come close," Aviles said.

## Federal "Ham Radio Listening Report" Halted Immediately

Thursday, June 13, 2013 at 9:21AM - By WBØRUR, on the scene

**WASHINGTON, District of Columbia; June 13, 2013** – As news headlines across the country report on the National Security Administration's controversial cellular telephone and email data collection efforts, the United States' top high frequency monitoring service is disbanding a little-known program designed to listen in and record data related to ham radio QSOs.



In a classified filing sent to a Congressional oversight committee, the Secret Commission against Airwaves Terrorism (SCAT) says OPERATION RAGCHEW is being stopped immediately. All federal OPERATION RAGCHEW employees are being reassigned to new duties, all receiving equipment is being sold on eBay, and the office coffee pot is being sent over to Human Resources. All collected data is being shredded and dumped in the Pacific Ocean to form a new coral reef near the Solomon Islands. *(Note: look for this "atoll" to become a new DXCC entity in the near future.)*

An insider (not authorized to speak publicly) tells Ham Hijinks that the whole mess was a disastrous fiasco.

"It seemed like a great idea when it was authorized," says Mr. X, who declines to be identified. "We listened and recorded key details on thousands of amateur radio communications; both domestic and international. But later, after the security specialists analyzed the first quarter data, we discovered it was a huge waste of time. Seriously. Nothing of value."

After hours of investigative reporting, Ham Hijinks has uncovered the top 10 most often recorded conversation topics reported by OPERATION RAGCHEW to the Congressional committee.

- 10) HOW DOES MY SIGNAL SOUND NOW?
- 9) QSL, WE WENT TO THE GRAND CANYON 10 YEARS AGO ON VACATION
- 8) THE WEATHER (GOOD, BAD OR OTHERWISE)
- 7) I THOUGHT I HAD EVERYTHING, BUT HAD TO PURCHASE ONE MORE ITEM
- 6) I WANT A NEW RIG BUT THE XYL SAYS NO/YES/MAYBE
- 5) LOTW IS TOO HARD/EASY/NOT AN ISSUE, I DON'T OWN A COMPUTER
- 4) QRT FOR A BATHROOM BREAK.
- 3) GALL BLADDER/HERNIA/HIP REPLACEMENT SURGERY WAS A SUCCESS
- 2) CHICKENS/GUINEAS/HAMSTERS IN THE YARD HELP CONTROL TICKS
- 1) WHAT FREQUENCY IS THE INTERNET ON AND WHO IS NET CONTROL THIS WEEK?!



<b>WRRC FUNDING SUMMARY</b>	
<b>September 28, 2013</b>	
<b>BALANCE FROM 2012</b>	
	<b>\$ 1,906.94</b>
<b>DEPOSITS</b>	
	<b>\$ 2,759.73</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
	<b>\$ 650.02</b>
<b>CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE</b>	
	<b>\$ 4,016.65</b>
<b>PETTY CASH</b>	
	<b>\$23.57</b>
<b>TOTAL MONEY ON HAND</b>	
	<b>\$ 4,040.22</b>
<b>FULL Members</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>AUXILIARY MEMBERS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ARRL Members</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>ARRL / Memb (SSC)</b>	<b>66.67%</b>
<b>Grant Funding Balances (In Checking)</b>	
<b>Townshend</b>	<b>\$ 34.14</b>
<b>Vernon Fire Assoc Inc</b>	<b>\$ 1,750.00</b>

See the next column for more late breaking news. Our thanks to our friends at Ham Hijinks for keeping us abreast of the latest news on the Ham Radio front.