



DIGITAL DISPATCH

A publication of the West River Radio Club



May—2014

Volume IX—#III

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

member right, there may be pictures in this month's DD)!

Okay, it's that season now. Are your radios ready? Do you have a "go" kit ready? Don't wait till a disaster happens. Preparation is everything when it comes to ECOMM. I hope we won't need the latter, but as an Amateur Radio Operator, it is our duty to be ready, are you ready? Hope to see you at our next get together.

Till then, 73
KA1ZQX/Tim

.....-/- ..

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass - It's about learning to Dance in the Rain. - Vivian Greene



THE PRESIDENT'S KORNER

Here it is the month of May already. Have you been out raking the lawn, digging in the flower garden, or inspecting your antenna systems yet? It's amazing how fast the month of April went by. Last month we talked about getting your equipment ready before the grass turned green. Have you met that goal yet? It is now Ham Fest season. Do you have equipment for sale or are you looking for a new trinket for your shack? Well, there are a lot of opportunities just waiting for you out there.

Field Day is only two months away. Plans are in full swing now. This last weekend at our monthly Board meeting, we finalized quite a few things. We need all hands on deck as we cannot make Field Day a success without you. We need operators, cooks, set-up and tear-down crews, and making sure the word gets out! We will be updating our progress at our next monthly meeting on May 13th, 2014. Hope you can make it.

Last month we had a lot of fun making receivers out of things found just around the house. Personally, if you weren't there, you missed a lot of fun and realizing how little you need to receive the smallest signal! Even in the room we were in (with florescent lights and tons of electrical devices around) we were able to hear signals from each kit that was built. Thanks to Darrel, Chas and others who provided supplies etc. so all could take part (if I re-



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

LIFE IN A FOXHOLE

I was never in one, but it couldn't have been too much fun during either WWI or WWII. I'm a big fan of the author, Stephen Ambrose. He does a great job is describing the life of foot soldier as they marched on to Germany after D-day. The book is named Citizen Soldier and comes highly recommended by your editor.

As the book reveals, these guys were an ingenious lot. They did find a way to pass the time - when they were-

UPCOMING EVENTS & LOOKING AHEAD

Ongoing: WRRC ARES net...Every Monday at 19:30L, 147.015, positive offset and 100 Hz PL tone.

Ongoing: All sorts of Ham Radio celebratory activities for the 100th anniversary of the ARRL. Go to <http://www.arri.org/centennial-gso-party#QSLs> or <http://www.arri.org/centennial>

May 14: Come out and enjoy a regularly scheduled meeting of the WRRC. We start at 19:00L in the EMT room of Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend, VT. The program will be all about operating techniques.

There is always a wealth of information at www.westriverradio.org—Also check out WRRC events on the club calendar at http://www.westriverradio.org/WRRC/WRRC_Pages/prgmplan.html

May 17: Once again RACES and CERT members will be assisting with the Girls on the Run (GOTR) 5K event in Brattleboro. Sign up to participate by contacting N1TOX, John Borichevsky—n1tox@comcast.net

May 31: Monthly meeting of the WRRC Board of Directors at the PanAsian restaurant in Brattleboro, VT by Staples. All are welcome. Bring your ideas for what club activities or suggestions to make your club even better than it is. Everyone present always enjoy themselves.

May 23-25: CQWW WPX CW contest. This is a world wide event that brings out a lot of stations from a lot of unusual places, I.e., DX. You can get all the low down at <http://www.cqwpw.com/>

built one of their CW keyers in an evening. You might see something there.



KB1YCD—ND1Q



**KA1ZQX—
Tim**



**WK1L—Bro
Frank**



KB1J—Rich

AN OUTSIDER'S VIEW

KA1ZQX, Tim, sent along a link to - <http://americanprofile.com/articles/radio-active/#>

If you go there you'll encounter a well written and truthful article on Ham radio. It's often nice to see what non Hams have to say about us.

While there I took a short look around the site and must say that it was refreshing to see a place on the web with wholesome content and uplifting themes. I say Hurrah to that!

A MODERN DAY HERO

(Ed: Taken from Wikipedia)

Jeremiah Andrew Denton, Jr. (July 15, 1924 - March 28, 2014) was a Rear Admiral and Naval Aviator in the United States Navy and, following his retirement from naval service, was a United States Senator from the state of Alabama.

He spent almost eight years as a prisoner of war (POW) in North Vietnam and later wrote a book that became a film about those experiences. Denton is best known from this period of his life for the 1966 televised press conference in which he was forced to participate as an American POW by his North Vietnamese captors. He used the opportunity to communicate successfully and to confirm for the first time to the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence and Americans that American POWs were being tortured in North Vietnam. He repeatedly blinked his eyes in Morse code during the interview, spelling out the word, "T-O-R-T-U-R-E".

n't being hammered by enemy artillery or advancing through machine gun and rifle fire, that is.

They especially missed listening to radio and so they started making their own. They couldn't run out to the local Rat Shack for parts, so they used what they had at hand; things like razor blades, some wire, pencils, and that was about it. What evolved was the "foxhole radio"

At their monthly meeting on April 8 some members of the WRRC experienced the thrill of making their own foxhole radios. You know what? They worked. Six were built and 100% of them passed muster. Thanks to Chas for bringing along lots of parts as well as some grounding wire and multipurpose antenna cut to just the right length.

If you couldn't attend this meeting we feel sorry that you missed out on some great fun. If you were there and didn't think that it was fun, well, let us know that, too.

Whether you were there or not, your Board is always interested in projects or programs for future meetings. If you know of another building project that would be fun to do, give a shout. There are some great sources on the web for electrical/Ham type projects. One such business is www.hamgadgets.com - Chas, W1CWB,

Thinking they'd broken him, Denton's captors allowed a Japanese TV reporter to interview him on May 2, 1966.

"The blinding floodlights made me blink and suddenly I realized that they were playing right into my hands," he wrote. "I looked directly into the camera and blinked my eyes once, slowly, then three more times, slowly. A dash and three more dashes. A quick blink, slow blink, quick blink"

While his impromptu blinks silently told the world that prisoners were being tortured, he was unabashed in the interview, which was later broadcast around the world, in his denial of American wrongdoing. You can see that interview today at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgelmcOdS38>

And now, speaking for myself. For those of you who think that this is a sneaky way to bring up the subject of the Morse code, well you're partially correct. I happen to love the code and offer thanks that Sam "Fine Business" Morse, along with his assistant Alfred Vale, invented it. It also intrigues me that the code was something that at one time was required learning in the military. The above story is but one of many examples of how knowing the code paid off. Below you'll find another, more important reason for printing this narrative.

Almost all forms of media these days, print, radio, and TV have a tendency to give many people celebrity status by putting them on front and center stage to reveal their disgusting antics and ideas. Need examples? The rapper who not only condones rape, the killing of police and other despicable behavior, but encourages the performance of these activities. So be it. Media producers no doubt feel that this is the best way to increase their viewership. Sadly, they're probably right.

That's why, in my own small way, I feel moved to introduce you to man who truly deserves celebrity status. Rear Admiral Denton is not the only one, either. This world is full of "small" heroes whose actions day in and day out reveal what real humanity is all about. Do you know of any heroes that never get attention? If so, give me a shout and they'll get some recognition in these pages.

SPEAKING OF VETERANS

Now was that a great segue or what? Do you know what Saturday in May is always set aside to celebrate veterans? Why, the third one, of course; and it's named Armed Forces Day.

It all started on August 31, 1949 when Louis Johnson, the United States' Secretary of Defense, announced the creation of an Armed Forces Day to replace separate Army, Navy and Air Force Days.



The event stemmed from the armed forces' unification under one department – the Department of Defense. The Army, Navy and Air Force leagues adopted the newly formed day. The Marine Corps League declined to drop

support for Marine Corps Day but supports Armed Forces Day too.

The first Armed Forces Day was celebrated on Saturday, May 20, 1950. The theme for that day was "Teamed for Defense", which expressed the unification of all military forces under one government department. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, the day was designed to expand public understanding of what type of job was performed and the role of the military in civilian life.

Armed Forces Day was a day for the military to show "state-of-the-art" equipment to Americans. It was also a day to honor and acknowledge Americans in the armed forces. Parades, open houses, receptions and air shows were held at the inaugural Armed Forces Day. Armed Forces Day is still celebrated nationwide today and is part of Armed Forces Week.

RUNNIN' ON EMPTY

QRZ?

QRZ? Know what in the blazes is he talking about? Now in the olden days 99% of Hams saw a question about Q signals on their test. When the code requirement was removed that eliminated quite a few questions that were normally considered standard.



Well, fear not; below you'll find a short lesson on Q signals. I know that they're not needed in this day and age of digital communications, no code Extras, and cranked up mic gains. Nevertheless, they are such a large part of our Ham radio heritage that they are still used by many Hams, even in the phone bands. I'm sure that they'll be around for a long time to come.

But first, some history. Hams did not invent Q signals. Their use originated in England in 1909 for use by British ships and coastal stations licensed by the Postmaster General. They went a long way towards eliminating confusion amongst maritime operators speaking different languages. (See next paragraph) A list of 45 Q signals was adopted at a convention of the Third International Radiotelegraph Convention in London in 1912.

One reason that I enjoy CW, as well as RTTY or PSK operations is that there is no language or accent barrier. Want proof? Have you ever called tech support on some item and ended up talking to someone in India? When I meet my Japanese Ham friends it's always a struggle communicating. They readily know what I mean, though, if I said, "Dah dah dit dah - Dah - Di di di dit - Di dit dah dah di dit

By 1915 the ARRL got on the bandwagon and listed several Q codes for use by Amateurs in their magazine named QST. QST is a general call to all Amateurs. Many of the Q codes were only applicable to certain communication's services, such as maritime operations, Western Union, and, of course, Hams.

Another value of Q signals is their ability to shorten the length of a QSO (A conversation with another Ham on the air) A statement or question is more easily and quickly expressed with only three characters than many. Above, I had asked my Japanese friend where he lived (QTH?) To do so I used a LOT less dits and dahs than if I had asked him in a completed sentence spelled out in dits and dahs.

Another advantage of Q signals is that the addition of a question mark at the end turns a statement into a question. Take the Q signal for where I am - QTH is Putney, VT. If I want to find out where the other Ham lives I say (in Morse) QTH?.

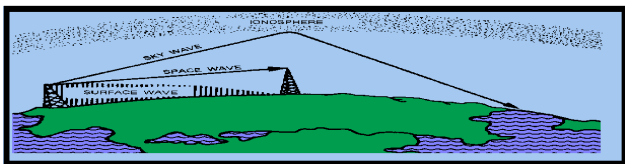
Enough elucidation for this month. I'll close with just a few examples of what you might hear in a typical QSO.

- QRS or QRS? - send slower, or, will you send slower?
- QRX or QRX? - I'll call you later, or, will you call me later? Basically, "stand by a minute or two"
- QRZ or QRZ? - I'm calling you, or, who is calling me?
- QSY, or QSY? - I'm going to change frequency, or, can you change frequency?
- QSB, or QSB? - Your signals are fading, or, are my signals fading?
- QRM, or, QRM? - Your signals are being interfered, or, are my signals being interfered with? This refers to man made noise, like the LID who starts operating too close to the frequency you're on.
- QRN, or, QRN? - Same as QRM, but it refers to natural noises; static crashes, thunder, power line hum, etc

K1ZK – THE WINNER

For several years now the WRRRC has sponsored a plaque in the New England QSO Party (NEQP) <http://neqp.org/> We're proud to be a small part of this annual Ham radio get-together that puts Hams from all six New England states on the air to hand out contacts to the deserving world wide. You can see the WRRRC recognized at <http://neqp.org/awards.html> We feel a bit of extra pride knowing that we are the only Vermont club that donates a plaque.

The 2013 Vermont winner in the low power category is K1ZK, Zachary Manganello in Charlotte, VT. You might want to check out Zach's bio on QRZ. He is quite an accomplished young man. Congratulations, Zach. We're happy for your win and glad that you have something to hang on the shack wall that represents the hard work you put into being the top scorer in Vermont. We hope to hear you in the 2014 party.



#10 IS CLOSE

In 2005 the WRRRC held its first ever Field Day event. On June 27-29 we'll do all the work necessary to celebrate #10. And all that work will be well worth it because the payoff is always a weekend of fun. That fun comes from:

- Launching and erecting antennas
- Setting up screen houses
- Making all kinds of QSOs using only batteries or generators for power sources.
- Eating a lot of great food
- Enjoying the company of a lot of other like minded Hams. I think that it's called camaraderie.

If you've never attended a Field Day event now is the year to see what all the hoopla is about.

I'm attaching a short primer with this newsletter that explains what it's all about. There will be activities on June 27, Friday, in the PM, all day Saturday, the 28th and half of the day on Sunday, June 29.

If being involved in the whole thing is a bit too much, then maybe you can drop by for a visit when your schedule allows. Details on the location and time is given in the attached primer.

The old timers present always enjoy seeing some new faces. You might even get the urge to do some operating at one of the three stations we have set up. And the beauty of it is that you don't even have to be a Ham to make a contact.

SNEAK PREVIEW

Tune in next month to find out where this luxurious ham shack is located and what Ham lives there. You'll even learn how your humble editor worked him. We're talking REAL DX here



Believe me, you won't want to miss it.

CUL es 73 de K1KU SK

