



Presidents Message

April showers, the Easter bunny and tax filing are all upon us. Last months' presentation by Greg Jurens, K5GJ, from FlexRadio Systems on Software Defined Radios (SDRs) for amateur radio use was a real hit for the Club and I would like to thank Jim, N2GXJ for making this happen. If you were unable to attend the meeting, you might be interested to know that you can listen to the entire audio portion of the presentation. One of our Club members was kind enough to record the entire audio and has loaded it onto the web for your listening experience. You can click on the audio link which can be found on page 1 of the Club's website www.w2mmd.org April's program includes an interesting presentation by Harry, AA2WN on the Battleship New Jersey's Radio Club.

Al, KB2AYU has agreed to fill the Club Treasurer's position for the balance of 2012 and as a result resigned his position as Club Trustee. The board of directors voted unanimously to approve Martin Wilt, W2ILT to complete Al's unexpired term as Trustee. Martin has extensive experience with both Camden and Gloucester County ARES/RACES, he serves as ARES net manager and is a GCARC member in good standing.

In an effort to explore synergies between our two clubs, Keith, W2ERP President of the Gloucester City ARC www.nj2gc.org has moved his April general membership meeting date to Tuesday, April 3rd to allow his interested members to attend our meeting on the next evening. For those interested in attending their meeting, it will be held at 1930 hrs at the Gloucester City Fire HQ located at 1 North King Street, Gloucester City 08030. All are invited to attend.

Finally, continued progress is being made in the performance of the Club's 147.18 repeater located in Pitman. I encourage all members to give the repeater a try and provide constructive feedback.

73,
Tom, KE2ES

2012 Dues are Due

If you haven't already paid your dues for 2012, you can pay them by check to Gloucester County Amateur Radio Club or GCARC. Please mail the check to the Club address, GCARC, PO Box 370, Pitman, NJ 08071.

Down Jersey DXing

By Bill Grim, W0MHK

It seems that March DX came in like a "lamb" and may be going out for the month with a similar lack of excitement. March propagation left little to be happy about with Sunspot #1429 blasting away at the earth's magnetic fields over and over again while it faced our planet. It made for some great photography for the Northern Lights prone higher latitudes, but without much solar flux in the solar mix many radio propagation paths were "stinko"! You had to work what you could hear and sometimes the dreaded "one way skip" even interfered with that conservative DXing tactic.

The sun seems to be settling down now and more predictable conditions should be coming back. We can still hope for the spring equinox to spice up conditions with the calendar passing of the first day of spring. Keep watching the higher DX bands (especially 10 and 12 Meters) for some interesting seasonal openings. This solar cycle may have an early peak, but we should still be able to take advantage of what increased solar flux it throws our way.

With the winter low band DXing season winding down, the excessive sunspot activity did not seem to help 80 and 160M DX much. If anything, the low bands were particularly poor producers of DX this past season. It seemed to peak a bit early and never gained traction. Big DXpeditions in January sure helped totals, but overall it was slim pickings on the night time bands during the long nights of this past winter.

On the brighter DX side, AB2E, Darrell, our former GCARC Pres., finished 2nd in the World in his category during the CQ World Wide Prefix CW Contest a few weeks ago. He had 4.8 Million tropical points for his VP2E operation in Antigua. Besides the great score, he gave the #1 finisher a run for his Trophy being behind him by a mere 70K points!

There are quite a few DXpeditions taking place in April, but unfortunately, many are from locales that have been commonly listed many times before in this column. May I suggest that you attempt to "clean up" some of these DX goodies while waiting for more of the exotic QTH's to appear. Possibly you never worked one of these DX picks listed below on a particular mode or band before. This would be an excellent time to achieve that goal. They will count toward DXCC Challenge at the very least, and it's a good exercise for your DX skills and equipment while waiting for all-time new ones to appear.

9M0L will be on from Spratly Island with an all-star international cast. This is a very rare one especially with four governments claiming the Spratly area (and its off-shore resources). This controversy has caused some difficult and tragic activation problems for radio amateurs. Distance and propagation also create problems for us in Down Jersey too! Let's hope for some solar assistance on this effort also.

3D2R will be active from Rotuma in mid-April. This is another semi-rare one that could be in your log with some good conditions. Remember that there are 3 DXCC entities with the 3D2 prefix. Don't confuse the Fijis or Conway Reef with this one. All three count for DXCC as separate entities on the current list of 340 possible.

Please see "DX" on Page 3.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Kenny, W2KRD, for getting the Triple Play Award. That is all 50 states on voice, digital and phone logged on Log Book of the World. Not too shabby for operating from a townhouse with a G5RV Jr. up only 8 feet.

“DX” from Page 2.

Here's a look at April's DX Down Jersey picks:

CALL	DATES	HIGHLIGHTS	PRIORITY (5=MOST RARE)	ENTITY
PJ2	4/02-4/09	80-10M/MANY MODES	1	CURACAO
CN2RN	4/02-4/30	HF/CW,SSB	1	MOROCCO
8R1PY	4/05-4/08	80-10M/CW,SSB	1	GUYANA
9M0L	4/10-4/24	MULTIPLE STATIONS	5	SPRATLY IS.
3D2R	4/13-4/20	HF/MULTI MODES	4	ROTUMA IS.
TO3X	4/16-4/30	40-6M/SSB,CW,RTTY	1	ST. BART.
XV4LC	4/19-4/24	20&17M/CW,SSB	4	VIETNAM
YJ0VK	4/21-5/03	160-10M/MANY MODES	3	VANUATU
KH0	4/29-5/03	80-10M/ALL MODES	3	MARIANAS
T88RF	4/30-5/04	FOCUS ON LOW BANDS/PSK63	3	PALAU

CREDITS: NG3K ADXO

April Club Meeting Program

Our guest speaker for the April 4 program is Harry, AA2WN, president of the Battleship New Jersey Amateur Radio Station. Harry is one of the many volunteers that help put NJ2BB on the air. Come on out and hear about the history and ongoing restoration of the radio room on board this museum ship. Then, on Sunday April 15, we have reserved the opportunity for a group from the Club to operate as guests in the radio room on the ship. This date coincides with the ARRL's rookie roundup for this year, which should make QSOs from the battleship even more fun! Signups and more details will be available at the April 4 meeting.

Along with the fine presentation by Harry, you can catch a glimpse of some other maritime history. Cory Sickles will be bringing along a recording of what the spark-gap SOS transmission of the Titanic sounded like, plus you'll get to see a very large straight key, as it still sits in the wireless room of the Titanic while it rests on the ocean floor.

On the Web

By Art Strong, K2AWS

“We’ve lost our lease so everything must go!” How many times have we seen that sign hanging in some store window? Well, in the case of our website, it’s almost true. As many of you may recall, several weeks ago I asked Ken Newman to post my request for someone to take over the Club’s website as I felt it could use some input from a new Administrator. I was actually taken up on my offer by Jeff Garth, KC2WCS. So one fine Sunday afternoon while showing him the ropes about our site I came across a distressing announcement from Microsoft Office Live, our web host. It stated that as of April 30th Microsoft Office Live was going to be no more, along with all of its subscribers, like us. After some considerable thought I told Jeff that I would hold onto my website duties until I could make the proper transfer arrangements and get a new site up and running. I didn’t want to say “Okay, here are the keys to our website, and by the way, you also have to find us a new home.” That just didn’t seem fair.

Please see “Web” on Page 4.

“Web” from Page 3.

I carefully looked into the new offerings that Microsoft had come up with and determined that they were far too involved, complicated, and costly for what we need. With the low yearly cost that we were paying for our site one could easily believe that they were targeting the small website groups such as ours. Apparently they have changed their philosophy and want the larger businesses for the obvious reason of greater profits. The features they are offering are far beyond anything we need or can afford.

After some web research and a fair number of phone calls I found a new web host company that seems like a perfect fit for us. At the Board meeting I presented all the facts and the Board approved my proposal. The initial question I was asked about the new site was, “will we still be W2MMD.ORG?” Absolutely! That concern rode right up alongside cost, and features, where I was concerned. I talked to several places that said transferring our domain name could be a problem and no guarantees. I promptly ended those conversations.

For the next three years our online presence will be hosted by “Web Hosting Hub” which is based in Virginia Beach, Va. Our site is now active, but you will see nothing until I get some content on it and make the “name pointer” changes to direct all visitors to the new host. After that I will initialize the Registrar (domain name holder) transfer to our new host so that everything is under one roof and it saves us from paying an additional yearly fee for our domain name. Despite my behind the scenes activities and shenanigans, the most important part of all this is that we are still WWW.W2MMD.ORG.

This change may be a blessing in disguise as the biggest challenge I had with our present site is the lack of real help if I needed it and at times I could have used it. There were “FAQS” that I could have used but they seemed rather vague to me. With our new host there is a real live person on the other end of the phone to help me out if need be. Though I haven’t gotten started yet I believe there are a great many more possibilities and options available for us to use. I will have more information available at the general meeting and hope to have the new site online at that time.

Buyer Beware

By Harry Bryant, AA2WN

In the last couple days I’ve been contacted by a number of hams trying to confirm if I was selling equipment on QTH.COM (I was not). The supposed seller was identifying themselves as VP5Y, which was a call sign that Dave, W2YC, and I had assigned to our 2005 ARRL CW Dxpediton to North Caicos Island. They also had my name, which of course is in numerous data bases under VP5Y.

So if you see an online deal that seems just too good to be true, it probably is. The equipment they had listed was about one half the typical selling price. Scott KA9FOX, owner of QTH.COM, reacted very quickly after I contacted him and dropped the ads and blocked the suspect e-mail address.

So be very careful out there in cyberspace.

From the Archives

By Art Strong, K2AWS

Your Board of Directors are always kicking around ideas for different activities that the Club members may be interested in participating in. To help in the idea process I put together a master DVD containing Please see “Archives” on Page 5.

“Archives” from Page 4.

every old Crosstalk I have on file from the Club’s very first issue all the way up to December 2011. What better way to develop new ideas than by looking at what we have done in the past? So at the February Board meeting each Board member received a copy to help conjure up some new ideas for Club activities or reintroduce things we’ve done in the past.

Because of my profound interest in the club’s history I have offered to make more DVD’s available for other members to acquire if they so desire. It was decided by the Board that starting at the April meeting that anyone who buys a 50-50 ticket can also have a Club DVD. There is a great deal of history on these discs that will take hours to read and will give the reader a great insight into the roads that the Club has traveled over the years. When I put all of this together over a year ago, I learned things about the Club that I never knew in the 25 years that I’ve been a member. For the newer members it is a treasure trove of information. If we run out of discs I’ll make more.

One aspect of the Club’s history that I haven’t really gotten into yet but would be almost as important as the old newsletters would be the minutes of both the General Membership and Board Meetings. There have been so many members that have taken notes at Club meetings over the years that I’ve lost track of who they are. I have received some meeting minutes and I’m making an appeal to all past Recording Secretaries to dig up your minutes and pass them along to me so I can digitally archive them. If your notes are in digital form, then please e-mail them to me. If they are handwritten then either give them to me at a meeting or mail them to me so I can scan them into the computer. Once I have the notes scanned, and/or archived, then they will be filed in the appropriate binder out at the Club trailer for anyone who wishes to go through them. Now back to dusting out the archives.

A Lack of Imagination – 100 Years Ago

By Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

April 15, 2012 will mark the centennial anniversary of what is still considered the worst maritime disaster – the sinking of the Titanic. A combination of arrogance, design flaws and limited technology all contributed, but the overall lack of imagination is what most significantly cost lives.

Promoting that the ship was “unsinkable” and getting everyone to buy into the idea laid the groundwork for compromise. It enabled designers to justify “watertight barriers” that didn’t seal. It nullified arguments for a sufficient number of lifeboats. It negated the thoroughness of a fully trained and drilled crew. It permitted the foolhardiness of trying to set a speed record while ignoring iceberg warnings.

A lack of standards in communications allowed the closest ship that could have responded – the Californian – to not have a wireless operator (interesting how that term has changed meaning) on duty at all times. They never knew what was going on until it was too late. It also fostered an environment where operators from one company were not allowed to communicate with operators from a competing company – no matter what.

A delay in the order to abandon ship – “unsinkable” begat “unthinkable” – cost additional lives. Locking the steerage passengers in the lower decks further doomed so many.

Since the firing of distress flares also were ignored, thought to be some sort of celebration, the new technology of wireless communication was certainly instrumental in gaining a response from other ships in Please see “Imagination” on Page 6.

“Imagination” from Page 5.

the area. Having a radio operator who continued transmitting reports until power was lost, demonstrated one of the rare acts of heroism that night.

Wireless was a primitive technology in comparison to what we enjoy today. Spark gap transmitters were a crude, awkward way to put a signal on the air. Yet, it worked and provided us with a foundation of the technologies we take for granted, a century later.

After the Titanic, there were high-profile efforts to assign blame and accountabilities. There were also improvements and new regulations in maritime operation. No longer would the communications equipment be unmanned for hours at a time. With the eventual advent of “continuous wave” transmissions, a standard frequency of 500 Kilocycles (we transitioned from cycles to Hertz in the 70’s) for calling and emergencies was brought into use.

Radio alone can’t prevent maritime (or any other) disaster. The Costa Concordia proved that. Wrongly compared by some as a “modern day Titanic”, it - once again - showed what can happen when arrogance, lack of training, delaying the inevitable and a gross lack of leadership have their way. There were examples of rampant stupidity, (It’s an electrical problem? Really?) but mostly it was a tragic example of what happens when the lessons of the past are ignored – in favor of a lack of imagination.

I encourage you to spend a few moments on the Infobahn this month, looking at web sites such as [_ HYPERLINK "http://www.titanic-facts.com"](http://www.titanic-facts.com) [__http://www.titanic-facts.com_](http://www.titanic-facts.com) or [_ HYPERLINK "http://www.exploretitanic.com"](http://www.exploretitanic.com) [__http://www.exploretitanic.com_](http://www.exploretitanic.com) for more information. Using your imagination, reflect on the fact that these were people as real as you and I – just as real as the ones who survived and perished on January 13, 2012.

Bicycle Mobile

By Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

Have you ever thought of operating while riding your bike? VHF/UHF is pretty easy, but have you given any serious thought to HF? Many hams regularly operate this way and there is an organization – Bicycle Mobile Hams of America – that encourage this fun activity. You can learn more at their web site: [_ HYPERLINK "http://www.bmha-hams.org"](http://www.bmha-hams.org) [__http://www.bmha-hams.org_](http://www.bmha-hams.org) plus check out some pictures.

For the past 2 years, I’ve ridden around with my FT-817ND and a variety of antennas on my bikes – with a MFJ-9420 the year before that. You can get better results than you might imagine, plus it’s a good excuse to combine some exercise with your hobby.

If you are interested and would like to learn more about this, please let me know.

Metric Crutches

By Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

When I was in high school, we had a well-worn chart on the wall in the room where Advanced Chemistry and Physics were taught. In fine print, it read that the Metric System had been adopted as the official measurement system of the United States by an act of Congress in 1865.

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“Metric” from Page 6.

I thought, “So what happened?” All my years of education had primarily focused on inches, feet, yards, ounces, pounds, tons (long and short) plus so many other units of measurement that are anything but related in some standard fashion. I guess it’s resistance to change.

Separate pdf files attached to the same email that brings you this issue of Crosstalk will provide you with a Metric Bookmark and a Metric Pyramid (fun to put together) that will provide you with convenient conversion tools that may help you start to think metric. Maybe the next time you have a QSO with a Ham in Halifax and she tells you about how warm it’s been, with a high of 23 degrees, you’ll quickly realize that’s 73 degrees down here in the States. Warm indeed!

Local Hamfest

The Warminster Amateur Radio Club has announced their Hamfest 2012. It will take place May 6th and opens at 7AM. It will be located at the Middletown Grange Fair Grounds, 567 Penns Park Road, Wrightstown, PA. For more information please go to www.k3dn.org/hamfest.htm or contact Stew Leabman at 215-794-1360.

VEC Testing

Regular VEC testing sessions are scheduled for the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM and are held at the Franklin Township Public Library on Coles Mill Road in Franklinville. The cost of the exam is \$15. Candidates are required to have a photo ID and two copies of their current license if they have one. For further information on VEC testing or to sign-up for a session contact Gary Reed at 856-582-4365 or at glreed49@verizon.net.

April Birthdays

Congratulations to these members celebrating birthdays in April.

Irma Colabrese, N2FNF
Milton Frantz, K2MXF
Joseph Hogg, N2ADP
Bob Krukowske, KR2U
Thomas Litle, AB2YG
Ray Metzger, AI2B
Mike Mollet, N2SRO
Whitney Myers, KB2ZTL



Crosstalk Submissions

This is your Club newsletter. Make use of it. Feel free to contribute general interest articles and ideas for articles.

All submissions, queries, comments and editorials should be addressed to Gene Schoeberlein at aa2yo@arrl.net.

Submission deadline for the May issue:
4/24/2012

Club Website

<http://www.w2mmd.org>

President-Tom Gorman, KE2ES
Vice President-Jim Wright, N2GXJ
Treasurer-Al, KB2AYU

Doug Gehring, WA2NPD
Art Strong, K2AWS
Chuck Colabrese, WA2TML

Ray Schnapp, WB2NBJ
Mike Mollet, N2SRO

ARES/RACES-Gary, N2QEE
Awards-Kenny, W2KRD
Budget-Al, KB2AYU
Clubhouse Site-Al, KB2AYU
Club License Trustee-Darrell, AB2E
Constitution-As needed
Contests-Ken, W2KRD
Crosstalk-Gene, AA2YO
Database-Ken, N2CQ
DX-Bill, W0MHK
Field Day-Vinnie/Bill, N4NYY/NJ2S
Hamfest-Vinnie/Bill, N4NYY/NJ2S
Historian-Art, K2AWS

GCARC Officers

Recording Secretary-Sheldon Parker, K2MEN
Corresponding Secretary-Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

Board of Directors

Gene Schoeberlein, AA2YO
Gary Mirkin, WA3SVW
Dave MacDonald, WB3JOY

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Cory Sickles, WA3UVV
Martin Wilt, W2ILT

Committees

Hospitality-Ray, WB2NBJ
Membership-Cory/Ray, WA3UVV/WB2NBJ
Nominations-Tom, KE2ES
Programs-Jim, N2GXJ
Publicity-Cory, WA3UVV
Repeaters-Tom, KE2ES
4H Liaison-Cory, WA3UVV
Special Services, Darrell, AB2E
Sunshine-Ray, W2RM
Technical/TVI-Cory, WA3UVV
VEC Testing-Gary, N2QEE
Website-Art, K2AWS

The W2MMD Repeaters

147.78/18 Mhz-Pitman
(CTCSS 131.8Hz)

223.06/224.66 Mhz-Sewell

447.1/442.1 Mhz-Pitman
(CTCSS 167.9Hz)

1272.4/1284.4 MHz-Pitman

GCARC Meetings

General Membership

7:30 pm 1st Wednesday every month
Pfeiffer Community Center
Williamstown, NJ

Board of Directors

8 pm 3rd Wednesday every month
GCARC Club site
Harrison Twp. 4H Grounds
1 mile south of Mullica Hill on RT77

Nets

GCARC 2 Meter Net
Third Thursday of the Month
8:00PM
147.78/18Mhz (PL131.8Hz)

ARES/RACES
Sunday 20:00 Hrs
(147.78/18 and
223.06/224.66
repeaters)

April Meeting

Battleship NJ Radio Station
Harry Bryant, AA2WN

Gloucester County Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 370
Pitman, NJ 08071

