



Presidents Message

May is just around the corner and with it comes Mothers Day, the Dayton Hamvention and Memorial Day. That said, if you know a veteran, an active member of the military, or recall someone who fought for this country but has passed on, please take a moment to consider their service. Suffice it to say that we are all better off for their sacrifice.

The Dayton Hamvention 2012 is scheduled for May 18-20. For many years it has been the world's largest amateur radio gathering, attracting hams from around the globe. For more information, please visit <http://www.hamvention.org>. For those that cannot travel there, Hamvention will broadcast to the world via the Special Event Station W8BI in the Ball Arena. The station will be operating during the hours of the inside exhibit area. Frequencies (+/- QRM) will be: 40M - 7.227/7.050, 20M - 14.270/14.050, 10M - 28.470/28.050 and 443.775/448.775 ILRP Node 4267. Times will be 0900-1800 EDT Friday & Saturday and 0900-1100 EDT Sunday. CW will be tried on the hour as conditions permit. The special event station will be utilizing ICOM radios this year. For QSLs and certificates, please provide self-addressed and stamped 8x11 envelope:

DARA/W8BI
PO Box 44
Dayton, OH 4540

On another subject, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Harry, AA2WN for his most interesting and informative presentation on the Battleship New Jersey Radio Club. Having taken the tour three years ago, I had no idea of all the work that was involved in restoring the station equipment, especially in the absence of any ships' elevators onboard, Hi! May's Club meeting will also prove to be both interesting and informative. Ken, N2CQ and Jim, N2GXJ will give a presentation on HF digital modes.

The GCARC has again been requested to march in Monroe Township's Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 28th. All are invited to participate. Additional details will be forthcoming.

Finally, several hams from our Club volunteered their services at last Sunday's (April 22nd) MS Walk at Washington Lake Park. Despite the much needed rain, the turnout was very good. We've also been asked to provide communications at the upcoming MS Walk at Parvin State Park on Sunday, May 6th. In addition, the Philadelphia Chapter of the MS Society is looking for over 30 ham radio operators to support both the MuckRuckus MS Philly June 9 and 10 in Newtown Square, PA and the Bike MS City to Shore Ride September 29 and 30. If you wish additional information and occasional updates about the event(s), please visit <http://groups.google.com/group/n3mss> or contact Carmen DeCicco, KE3QB at my3gumbas@verizon.net

Down Jersey DXing

By Bill Grim, W0MHK

I guess we can just chalk it up to Mother Nature, but DX propagation to Down Jersey has been disappointing the last few weeks. We have had an inordinate streak of solar CME (Coronal Mass Ejections) which did their job in disturbing the earth's geomagnetic fields and over the pole DX was rare and watery. Our sunspot supply took a major dip resulting in Solar Flux readings below 100. That was a reminder of the poor conditions of recent past years. The one-two punch resulted in not many good openings on the higher bands in the last month.

At this writing, the sun is producing a nice new "crop" of sunspots and our flux is over 140. Keep listening and watching your favorite DX cluster for some better DX times before summer propagation takes hold with its lessened potential.

All the DX "madness" of DXpeditions brings forth a sobering account of the cost of a rare effort that was recently published in your April 2012 QST on page 86 written by Don Greenbaum, N1DG, in the "How's DX" monthly DX column. Don is no stranger to DXpeditions and used the recent VP8ORK DXpedition to the South Orkneys as an example of how the costs can become frighteningly high! We love to work the Priority 4's and 5's when it comes to DXCC entities, but do we realize the time and money involved in making it possible to work and confirm that rare one? VP8ORK not being the case, but the stories told of what bribes alone it takes to get equipment through customs for the DX effort are mind boggling! Also worrisome is the potential for many exotic locales to be locked out from amateur radio operation because of environmental issues.

Groups like the Northern California DX Association often grant money to these super rare DXpeditions to help make them possible. Their role in DX is another facet of the hobby and membership in such an organization is something we, as DXers, should all at least consider.

The rare 9M0L Spratly Islands DXpedition will be history when you read this article. It has to get mixed "reviews" with propagation not being very user-friendly for Down Jersey or East Coast USA. The usual terse comments about not enough attention being given to a particular area of the world, band or mode were an increasing drumbeat toward the end of the activation. The best chance of working them from my station were weak openings on the 17M and 15M bands. The pile-ups were amazingly huge and intense. W2YC made it through on 2 bands for a 300+ addition to his DX RTTY count! Nothing heard from any other GCARC members on this one.

Let's see what the final 9M0L continental totals are and give their operators a chance to express their experiences. I must be getting pretty old (I am!), but I at least enjoy being able to hear them even if I don't work them! I guess some of you can relate to that "thrill" from your old SWLing days like myself!

Looking ahead for the next two months, DXpeditions will be a bit sparse with only a few call signs being very rare. Possibly the world economy, after taking the big hit in recent years, is being reflected in a lack of DXpeditions! Could it be another negative delayed reaction to the global "belt-tightening" going on? Despite some of these negative factors, I know for a fact that two GCARC members worked Uruguay already on 6 Meter phone on April 15th! Possibly Six Meters will arrive on the scene to take up the DX slack from the usual high bands?

Please see "DX" on Page 3.

“DX” continued from Page 2.

I offer the following May DX possibilities for your RF pleasure:

CALL	DATES	HIGHLIGHTS	PRIORITY	ENTITY
KH2	5/5-5/6	CW, SSB, RTTY	3	GUAM
ZQ3M	5/5-6/10	QUEEN ELIZ. JUBILEE STN	1	GIBRALTAR
VP9/OHIVR	5/7-5/13	HF & 6 MTRS	1	BERMUDA
P40	5/8-5/14	2 JA OPS/HF	1	ARUBA
V31	5/11-5/31	HF/IOTA NA-073	1	BELIZE
GU	5/12-5/19	80-6M/FOCUS ON WARC	1	GUERNSEY
S79RR	5/15-5/23	40-10M/CW,RTTY	3	SEYCHELLES
XX9	5/17-5/23	160-6M/3+STNS/ALL MODES	4	MACAO
6O3	5/25-5/30	HF+6M/CW,SSB,RTTY	4	SOMALIA
-----	5/26-5/27	CQ WW CW WPX CONTEST	?	ASSORTED GOODIES!

CREDITS: NG3K ADXO

May Club Meeting Program (May 2, 2012)

By Jim Wright, N2GXJ

WAS and DXCC with just an attic antenna and low power? You bet! Find out why the digital modes are making radio fun and exciting again for both new and old hams alike! Have a laptop with a built-in microphone? Bring it to the meeting this night to get some hands-on experience with the most popular modes; Fldigi, HDR/DM780, MixW, Multipsk, JT65HF, EasyPal and more! We'll have latest versions of the most popular digital mode software packages and specialty programs available to load.

Think you're already a digital expert? Put your skill to the test while helping to mentor others! Using your laptop, we'll pair up in teams to play a few rounds of "decode that signal!" Sample RTTY, PSK31, MFSK16, analog and digital SSTV, the "unusual" Hellschreiber, the "magical" Olivia, and the "DX-crazy" JT65a – learn to recognize them all! Bragging rights to the victors? You bet.

Our guest speakers for the evening are Ken N2CQ and Jim N2GXJ, both digital enthusiasts and members of the European Phase Shift Keying club. They'll introduce and demonstrate the basic hardware and software you'll need to add digital modes to your existing arsenal of DX tools. Also featured will be the exclusive world-premiere showing of Jim's submission to this year's ARRL's video contest. It should be an interesting, informative, and fun night! Hope to see you there!

May Operating Calendar

Kenny Denson, W2KRD

We have quite a few State QSO Parties this month, especially the first weekend in May. The 7th Call Area QSO Party, Indiana QSO Party, and New England QSO party are all being held on May 5-6th. If you are working toward your WAS, Triple Play, or are a county hunter, this is a great weekend to get some new ones. The Nevada Mustang Roundup is being held May 12-13th and the CQ WW WPX CW Contest is being held May 26-27th.

A great website for further contest information can be found on the ARRL website, or the WA7BNM website at: <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.html>.

Contest Results

Kenny Denson, W2KRD, our Club's Contest Chair, sent along the results for a number of recent contests. He hopes that seeing the results and how well some of our members did will inspire more of our Club members to get more involved in contesting.

2011 Nov Sweepstakes CW (Official)
AB2E - 67,308
W2KRD - 7,138

2011 Nov Sweepstakes SSB (Official)
AB2E - 115,200
W2KRD - 31,416
WA2LET - 7,138 (multi op + AB2YG, KC2THO, N2CQ,
N2GXJ, N4NYY, NJ2S, WA2NPD)

2011 ARRL 10 Meter Contest (Claimed)
N2CQ - 110,400
W2RM - 62,620
AB2E - 61,344
N2GXJ - 41,168
K2MEN - 41,080
W2KRD - 12,314

2012 ARRL RTTY Roundup (Claimed)
W2YC - 69,625
N2CQ - 16,900
N2GXJ - 11,397
W2KRD - 4,042

2012 ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes
(Claimed)
W2RM - 594

2012 ARRL International DX CW (Claimed)
W2YC - 5,195,022
AB2E - 721,710
K2MEN - 67,689

2012 ARRL International DX SSB (Claimed)
W2YC - 2,009,460
AB2E - 202,554
W2KRD - 26,973

MS-Walk in Washington Township Park

By Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

It was a dark and stormy night – well, OK – it was an overcast, wet and chilly Sunday morning when the local MS-Walk took place on April 22nd. A handful of us, including Bret, KB2YJE; Dave, WB3JOY; Jim, N2GXJ; Tom, KE2ES, and Wayne, WA2VOY, volunteered to assist with communications and help the MS Society of Philadelphia to keep the event running as smooth as possible. The exercise was routine, with the “highlights” being a need for more drinks and cutlery at the rest stop, plus a short search for a misplaced 7-year old.

Such events like this allow us to give back to our communities and let us know how prepared we are in times of need. (One ham, not from our group, showed up without charged or disposable batteries for his portable – hopefully a lesson learned.) There’s another walk coming up in May at Parvin State Park, if you are interested in helping out. June brings us the Tour de Pitman Bike Race and of course, there’s “The Mother of All Bike Events” in this area, the MS-150 later this year.

Thanks again to all who participated and continue to support our communities and put Ham Radio and the GCARC in a positive light!

Weathering the Storms

By Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

Already this year, we've seen incredibly tragic displays of severe weather. The Midwest states, especially, have had more than their fair share of tornados. As I write this, a Canadian cold air mass has pushed deep into the south and has forced a Nor'easter (or is that Sou'easter?) with heavy rains, winds and an additional wave to come.

In my native Western Pennsylvania, there's snow and lots of it. Power is out in many places, some shore communities have flooding and all the fun that goes with that. Whether you subscribe to the science of Global Warming or not, you have to admit, the weather has demanded attention.

Here in South Jersey, we're fairly immune to the ravages of things like tornadoes and hurricanes, plus we don't get nearly as many lightning strikes as the folks in Florida. That having been said, we do see the occasional EF1 tornado and we did get brushed by a hurricane last year. Remember the earthquake, too?

Back to the Midwest, one of the recurring themes that emerged from survivor accounts was the importance of Weather Alert radios. As some of these twisters touched down at night, most people were asleep. Some community sirens, designed to provide some advance warning, were inoperable, because power lines had already been severed. But folks with Weather Alert receivers had the advance warning, sometimes just minutes, needed to escape the carnage with their lives. For those not familiar, there are basically 3 kinds of weather radios.

Decades ago, the National Weather Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration created the beginnings of a nationwide network of transmitters which broadcast weather conditions on a constant basis. They started with 2 frequencies, then eventually expanded to the 7 of today - 162.400, 162.425, 162.450, 162.475, 162.500, 162.525 and 162.550 MHz. Given the amount of memories available in today's 2M rigs, you should have all of these programmed.

As the network expanded, the Weather Alert feature was added. With this improvement, you didn't have to check your receiver or leave it constantly on in order to hear about severe weather situations. Much like a tone burst system, the transmitter produces a long tone, designed to "open" the receiver prior to such advisories. Many of the 2M rigs on the market today, have decoders for this and will scan the weather channels during normal use.

The alert tone was designed as an analog system and still works well today. Improvements in technology allowed for a digital, more targeted alert control known as Specific Area Message Encoding or "SAME". Such receivers can be programmed with specific area codes, typically based on counties. As an example, Gloucester County's code is 034015, Camden is 034007, Cumberland is 034011 and Salem is 034033. Each message has a code as well, with TOR for tornado, SVR for severe thunderstorm warning, etc. More details on all this can be seen at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/nwrbro.htm>.

Many of us involved in the SKYWARN program have such radios (and make sure the batteries in them are in good condition) somewhere in the house. It's actually a good idea to have these at business locations, too, since that's where many of us spend most of our waking hours.

SAME Weather Alert radios can be purchased for about \$40 and up. Places like Radio Shack and other such retailers have them, plus there are always deals to be had online. Please see "Weather" on Page 6.

“Weather” from Page 5.

In addition, Gloucester County has an alert system for weather, road closings, missing people, etc. that can send text messages directly to your mobile phone. That system is not perfect, as sometimes alerts come late or not at all. You can find out more about them and the RSAN system at <https://private.gloucesteralert.com/faq.php>.

Now matter how you get such alerts, the advantage of such things can be important to you and your family some day , whether you are here in South Jersey or traveling elsewhere.

Let's Build Something Together

By Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

So goes the tagline for one of the humongous home improvement stores, as they try to entice viewers to tackle some residential upgrades and repairs, while sourcing all the needed items at their stores, of course.

As I discussed at our January meeting, home brewing, kit building and the whole DIY movement is alive and well. While many bemoan the loss of Heathkits some time ago, the fact of the matter is that there are now more kits available from more companies than ever before. One of them is QRP-ME, owned by Rex Harper, W1REX. Rex has become famous for his updated line of Tuna Tin kits and last year announced a simple to build and fun to use kit named the Lil' Squall.

This is a CW transceiver that goes together in less than an hour. It has band modules available for 80, 40, 30 20 and 10 meters. Rex can also make boards available for other bands, too. While it is a simple design, it works. Plus, it's fun to see how many QSOs you can have with less than a watt. Price? How about \$35!

If you want extra band modules, they're \$10 each and come with a QRP “watering hole” crystal. There's also a 5 watt amplifier available, if you're feeling the need for more power, plus a tuner and other accessories, all built by you and sitting on a “tuna can”.

In talking with Keith Waltman, W2ERP, he advised me that the Gloucester City ARC is looking for a project to have as a “group build” effort. I suggested the Lil Squal, as I've been having a ball with mine. This also led me to think about using it as the focus of a building effort for our Club. How long has it been since you've built your own gear or even heated up a soldering iron?

At the April meeting of the South Jersey Radio Association I'll be speaking (or will already have, depending on when you read this) about DIY, home brewing and some other subjects. I'm going to propose the idea to them, as well. As leaders in the Amateur Radio community, it would be nice if we could promote this sort of activity. It's not unrealistic to envision 50 Lil Squals being built by Hams in SNJ. If I let my imagination run wild, I could see 100. What a positive message that would be for the future of Ham Radio community in our area! Plus, I'm sure that we can get a quantity discount and/or save shipping costs, depending on how many we order. Are you in? Does this sound like a worthwhile way to invest \$35 (or less) into some FUN? Even if you haven't built anything before, this is an easy kit to build and use. In fact, the 40M version (most popular) doesn't require any coil winding! All the components are through-hole, too – no SMD! You can even get help, if needed. Please see “Build” on Page 7.

Build” from Page 6.

At the May 2nd meeting, I’ll have a signup sheet for a limited selection of items. If you want to be a part of the fun, take a look at Rex’s web site – www.QRPme.com and learn more about the Lil Squall, band module specials and crystals. (I’ll bring one of mine back to the May meeting, for you to see up close and personal) Then, bring a check (or cash) for what you want. As a quick guide:

Lil Squall Transceiver Kit (40M)	\$35
Lil Squall Transceiver Kit (40M & 10M)	\$45
Additional Band Module Special (80M, 30M, 20M)	\$25
40 Meter Crystal Pack (7015, 7028, 7030, 7040, 7047.5, 7114, 7122)	\$15

If you can’t make the meeting, but still want to take advantage of this opportunity, just send the appropriate amount directly to me. I plan to place the order on May 10th, with expected delivery in June. Any discounts we get will be rebated when you get your kit(s).

I do hope we have a high level of participation for this. That, of course, is up to each of you...

My Road Trip to Newington

By Cory Sickles, WA3UVV

Taking a trip to visit ARRL Headquarters and W1AW is something I’ve wanted to do for many years. I’ve been to Connecticut many times, but was usually driving through on my way to other points in New England and never had the opportunity to stop by. Making the trip alone, just for fun, was difficult to justify.

As many of you are aware, the April and May issues of QST are now available (in limited distribution) in a digital form. The June issue will announce the launch of this format for all League members. As they wanted to update the head shots of columnists and features writers, plus get some new shots of W1AW, the lab and the “stuff” of Amateur Radio, they started looking for someone to shoot stills. Well, the stars aligned and I finally found that “special reason” to head up to Newington for 2 days. Some of my work has already appeared on the web site and still more will be used as backgrounds for upcoming QSL cards.

More importantly, I had an incredible time! More than just being a service provider or member, I truly felt like a guest. Everyone I met was a fantastic ambassador. As I knew I would kick myself if I didn’t operate W1AW before I left, I spend about a half-hour on 17M in Studio One before I left for home. Each of the studios is set up with a different theme & offers a mix of equipment provided by some of the manufacturers that are household names to us all. Studio One is the “contest” studio. Studio Three is the most photographed, as it has the iconic “porthole” window.

I had the pleasure of flying an ICOM IC-7700, coupled to a PW-1 amplifier and yagi pointed east. After a few minutes of getting used to it, I found myself trying to justify purchasing the 7700, or at least a 7600. (Well played, ICOM, well played)

Anyone who knows me is aware that I’m not much of a contester or DX’er. I certainly like working DX stations, but I’m more interested in having a conversation, than simply exchanging reports and getting a card. I’m absolutely not used to being on the business end of a pileup. One learns to quickly adapt to such situations

Please see “Road Trip” on Page 8.

“Road Trip” from Page 7.

While the first couple of QSO's were nice and casual, by the time the third one ended, I had obviously been spotted on the DX Cluster and the hunt was on. It's fun to be popular! As I gave the “5 minute warning” and then said “just 2 more”, my final – letting everyone know I had to head home – resulted in a dog pile of calls, thinking I would work “just 1 more”. I remained steady, took off the cans and turned off the rig – thanking station manager Joe Carcia for his wonderful hospitality.

After getting back, I ran some numbers, thinking about putting together a GCARC pilgrimage in the future. Whether we take a car and share the costs across 4 people or rent a large van and take 15, the cost per person works out to well under \$100, including lunch at one of the nearby restaurants. Whatever you may want to pick up in the gift shop would be extra.

While we could leave here around 04:00, spend a full day at the station and taking tours - then head back that night – we could also budget for an overnight stay at a nearby motel and still have the following morning to operate, for a more leisurely trip. Whether you've been there years ago or not at all, it's a thrill to see the updated lab, museum, station and match up many of the names you see each month with the actual people. If there's any interest in doing this, please let me know.

While I'm on the subject, if you aren't a League member, you should be. From what I saw, your membership dues are put to good use, in a lean-running operation. There are no “Junior Assistant to the Vice Director” positions. Everyone I encountered seems very driven toward providing all of us with the best service possible. In my opinion, we should all return the favor by supporting them – and in turn, each other.

Warminster Amateur Radio Club Hamfest

The Warminster Amateur Radio Club Hamfest 2012 will take place May 6th (rain or shine) 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 or via email at hamfest12@k3dn.org.

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 greed49@verizon.net.

Wanted

Used base station transceiver, preferably one of the big three! It can be up to say ten years old. Must be solid state and cover hf, and possibly 6 and maybe 2m. Rig must have two VFOs (for split operation), power supply and microphone. Would prefer DSP, CW narrow filter, internal antenna tuner and must be in good working condition. Price is negotiable. Desired for new Ham GOTA experience. Email or call Doug, WA2NPD, at 856-468-2255.

May Birthdays

Congratulations to these members celebrating birthdays in May.

Walt Ashton, WB2OYQ
In Su Chon, AB2IT
Carmen Inverso, WA2TRS
Darrell Neron, AB2E
Timothy Repas, AG2GK
Joseph Shevlin, KC2PHM
Virginia Wallace, KB2JCQ



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 June issue:
5/23/2012

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

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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-Jeff, KC2WCS

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)

May Meeting

Digital Modes
Ken, N2CQ, and Jim, N2GXJ

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

