



Greater Norwalk Amateur Radio Club

Newsletter

"The Voice of GNARC"

June 2009

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

Guess what folks? The final countdown for field day has begun. Plans are being formulated and things are falling into place. Our June meeting is coming up soon, 10th, when everything will be discussed.

I wish to inform everyone that we have vacant operating spots and if you want to operate, please go to the web site and indicate your intent on the signup sheet. Of course! Our cuisine is second to none. For those of you who will be attending for the first time, it is fun, some work is involved to pitch tents, put up the tower and set up stations, it is competitive, and you earn bragging rights for establishing big scores. Most of all, we must not forget that field day is a national drill in preparation for the eventuality of a national disaster or threat to this nation or continent.

On another note, there is an informative note in this newsletter about the establishing of a D-Star repeater in our vicinity with the club's ID 'W1NLK'. At this time, the equipment is in the testing phase and very soon more details will be at hand. Plans are also being made to have a program on D Star at a club meeting ASAP.

In other news, the 'Bloomin metric' bike ride on May 17th was a success despite cold and rainy conditions on race day. Apart from the breakdowns and blown tires which had our radio controlled sag wagons busy throughout the course, there was no major mishap to report. A very big THANK YOU was sent by the organizers, namely, the Sound Cyclists' Club, also, as your public service coordinator, I wish to say many thanks to the radio operators who gave their time for the event. Tee shirts will be available for all the operators.

Our next public service event will be the MS bike tour from Sherwood Island State Park on May 31st. I need operators for this event.

Toy/K1WYQ

This Months Program

The next meeting will be held on June 10, 2009 at 2000 hrs in the community room of the Shop Rite supermarket on Connecticut Avenue in Norwalk. This month's program will be a planning session for Field Day.

Our usual pizza fest will proceed the meeting as is held at John's Best Pizza, New Canaan Avenue, Norwalk, CT beginning at 1800 hrs.

Secretary's Minutes

Minutes of the May 13, 2009 GNARC Meeting

Toy-K1WYQ opened the meeting at 8:04 PM, there were 24 members in attendance including one new member, Terry-KA1BVE (soon to be W1TSM) and two visitors, Jeff-KB1MZL and Ed-WA1DIH. Toy then turned the meeting over to John D'Ausilio-W1RT for his presentation on Software Defined Radio (SDR).

John gave an interesting presentation on SDR, defining it as radio with the primary functionality (Modulation/De-Modulation, Filtering, etc) defined in software. Why SDR? To provide: High Performance, Low Cost and Extreme Flexibility. He said there were two main approaches to SDR: Mixer Style-where the RF is mixed down directly to audio and Direct Sampling-where the RF is directly sampled with A/D and the digital bit stream processed in software. He then presented some of the products available, both hardware and software to employ SDR.

Business Meeting:

Treasurer's Report: We are very solvent. By now everyone should have paid their dues and we still have sweatshirts and T-shirts for sale.

Repeaters: No new issues.

ARES: There were 8 check-ins for the First Monday Net and Jim-KC1FB, acting as net control, had hum on his 300 mW signal until he went close to his kitchen window that faces the repeater tower. Allan-NN1H has done some RDF work and Kurt-W1FSM is running a Fox (hidden transceiver) for us to find on 146.55 MHz, Simplex, PL: 110.9. To activate it, transmit on 146.55, identify, then Touch Tone #1. That should activate the Fox and allow you to take a bearing. For more information see our web page www.GNARC.org.

Minutes: Accepted as published.

Publicity: A donated DX-150A receiver was installed and demonstrated to the Director of the Library. Coax has been run from the roof to the receiver location and the next step is to install a 40m inverted V on the roof. During the visit, Kurt-W1FSM made points by getting all three of the library's TV sets properly hooked up to their cable connection.

Public Service: Toy went over the logistics for the two events we have this month. He asked that all volunteers for the May

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17th Bloomin' Metric be on hand by 7:00 AM. Allan-NN1H agreed to be Net Control. The second event is the MS Bike Race on May 31st.

Don-KA1TZR read a letter from the organizers of the New Canaan Readiness Fair on Saturday April 25th thanking us for our participation.

Marty-KA1WBN asked for volunteers to usher for performances of "A Night at the Oscars" being staged by the Connecticut Choraleers. The performances are on the weekends of June 12,13,14 and June 19,20,21.

New Business:

Four members of the club want to install a D-Star repeater using our club call in the greater Norwalk area. They will purchase and install all the equipment at their expense to provide D-Star coverage between the Hartford and NYC area. They are looking at a number of sites including Norwalk Hospital for the equipment. The CSMA is in favor and has a repeater pair available. Kurt-W1FSM, one of the four, gave the members an overview of the mode and the equipment required. They have been given the go ahead to use a club call and explore locations in the area.

Field Day: Next month's meeting will be on the coordination of our Field Day effort. There will be no program so that ample time can be spent on the topic.

The meeting adjourned at 9:51 PM

Respectfully submitted by Jim Francoeur-KC1FB, Secretary.

Field Day

Field Day Events

Talk-In 146.775 PL 100Hz

Meet at the Volk Central Fire House 8:30 AM for loading the van and hitching the tower.

Tower and Company to proceed to Veterans Park

Set Up People

Notice the distinct lack of call signs here? (ed)

Tear Down People

NN1H, N1iCL, NA1SV, W1AGU, KA1TZR, N1ZZ, K1WYQ, N1ZD, KB1JGL, and more are needed and all are welcome!!!

Logging

An important message from the rules wizard.... Make sure you log into the software with your call sign so we know who made the contacts. This is for the club to announce who did what and where, it will also help us lean on you

more next year.

NE2Q I need you and AA1XV is someone we would like to see at the Key as well. We are short some point makers (K1RFD) and others this year, so if you know a Ham who's inactive or would like to operate lets motivate them to join us.

What we need so far...

A Team Member to be the GOTA station guide, we get extra points for the GOTA Guide

Soldering Iron and solder

Sling Shots and line and weights

Hand tools for stripping wire and making power poles

CW operators

Someone ask Jim WB2TPS to come over the pond and operate CW

Someone ask Dr. Tony N1TKS to stay in CT and operate CW

That is all for now and Thank you all for your support and I will see you at the June meeting!

Zig N1ICL

D-star Comes to Norwalk

A new D-star repeater using the W1NLK call letters will be operational in the very near future. It is to be in the 440 MHz band, exact frequency is pending clearance and approval via the frequency co-ordination committees. We are going to install it at the Norwalk Hospital or at the New Canaan site initially and determine the amount of usage it will have.

Any one interested in using D-star will need to have D-star compatible equipment, which is at present, is only available from ICOM.

I purchased a D-star dual band walkie-talkie with very little usage complete for \$310, so if you look around it can be found. This is virtually the same price as a dual band HT anyway and can still do regular FM too.

GNARC will have a D-star presentation in an upcoming meeting, so stay tuned for a 'show and tell' of this new communications system combining both local coverage with the capability to locate someone anywhere in the world with 'local quality' coverage.

Kurt W1FSM

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Public Service

My personal thanks to the team that worked the 2009 Bloomin Metric Bike Race.

Zig - N1ICL and Rich - K1CYW, for manning the Food Stops.

Jon - KB1QBZ, Hugh - W1HBR, Steve - NA1SV, Bill - WG1HM and Toy - K1WYQ, for manning the Sag Wagons

Marc - KB1JGL, for assisting me at the Net Control Desk
An excellent job by an outstanding group of operators.

Allan, *NN1H* - 2009 Bloomin Metric Net Control

The ARRL's Take on Dayton

From the ARRL Newsletter:

==> THE 2009 ARRL NATIONAL CONVENTION AND DAYTON HAMVENTION: THREE DAYS OF FUN, FELLOWSHIP AND FESTIVITIES

When Hara Arena closed its doors on Sunday, May 17 after three days as the 57th annual Dayton Hamvention <<http://www.hamvention.org>> came to an end, many agreed that this was one of the best Hamventions in recent memory. With so much to do -- including close to 50 hours of forums and the world-renowned flea market, as well as vendor tables that seemed to stretch for miles -- the arena floor was filled with excitement.

Held in conjunction with Hamvention, the 2009 ARRL National Convention was the largest exhibit at the event <<http://www.arrl.org/expo>>. At the ARRL EXPO, hams had the opportunity to do some kit building, pick up the latest League publications and Field Day T shirts, get a little competitive at the IARU table and drop off DXCC cards, as well as meet ARRL Officers, Directors and staff members.

One of the highlights of both the National Convention and the Hamvention was private astronaut Richard Garriott, W5KWQ <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/02/21/10660/?nc=1>>, son of Owen Garriott, W5LFL. In 1983, Owen Garriott was the first ham to make QSOs from space while aboard the space shuttle Columbia. Richard, a guest of the ARRL and AMSAT <<http://www.amsat.org/>> at Dayton, told convention crowds about his journey to the International Space Station (ISS) <http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/main/index.html>. Ever gracious, he spent time with ARRL Youth Editor Duncan MacLachlan, KU0DM <<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/10/21/10395/>>, in addition to speaking and signing autographs at the ARRL EXPO area, the ARRL

Youth Lounge, and ARRL and AMSAT forums. Garriott also spoke at a Saturday afternoon forum, telling how he fulfilled his lifelong dream of experiencing space travel. Combining Amateur Radio and spaceflight, he had QSOs with more than 200 hams while on the ISS.

The busiest place in the ARRL EXPO was definitely the kit building area. Led by ARRL Test Engineer Bob Allison, WB1GCM, with assistance from QEX Editor Larry Wolfgang, WR1B, and ARRL Instructors, hams (and non-hams, too!) sat down in front of a circuit board and soldering iron to build either a 24 hour clock or electronic keyer. "We saw a lot of people of all ages -- including a large number of kids -- coming over to build," Allison said. "A large majority had never built a kit before. They were so excited to be able to build something that they can use immediately." He pointed out that ham parents brought in their non-licensed children to build kits: "The little ones had a blast, and the parents were so proud that their kids are getting interested in Amateur Radio through the kit building projects."

The ARRL National Convention offered an expanded IARU exhibit area this year. Led by new IARU President Tim Ellam, VE6SH, and Vice President Ole Garpestad, LA2RR, the booth was staffed by representatives from the three IARU Regions: The Deutscher Amateur Radio Club (DARC) <<http://www.darc.de/>> from Germany represented Region 1 <<http://www.iaru-r1.org/>>, the ARRL represented Region 2 <<http://www.iaru-r2.org/>> and the Japan Amateur Radio League (JARL) <<http://www.jarl.or.jp/English/0-2.htm>> represented Region 3 <<http://www.iaru-r3.org/>>.

"It was exciting to see how many people came over to visit with us," Ellam said. "With the JARL processing applications for the IARU's Worked All Continent (WAC) <<http://www.iaru.org/wac/>> and 5-Band WAC awards, there was a steady flow of amateurs here." In addition to the WAC awards, the DARC sponsored a world flag identification contest and the ARRL offered a RUFZ <<http://www.rufzxp.net/>> CW copying competition throughout the event.

"It's certainly well known that hams from all over the world come to Dayton for the Hamvention," said ARRL international Vice President Rod Stafford, W6ROD. "We truly had an international flavor in the ARRL EXPO, though, as this was the first time that we had representatives from all three IARU regions in the IARU booth. We were glad to see many hams stop by and visit with IARU representatives from all corners of the globe."

A massive forum schedule was one of the key features of the Dayton Hamvention. In keeping with this year's theme -- DREAM: Digital Radio Enabling Amateurs to do More -- there were numerous forums featuring digital radio. ARRL Publications Manager and QST Editor Steve Ford, WB8IMY, presented a forum on digital contesting. Tying in with this, Shelby Sommerville, K4WW, led a forum on RTTY, both from the operations side and from the contesting side.

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ARRL Southeastern Division Director Greg Sarratt, W4OZK, piloted a multi-level forum on D-STAR.

According to ARRL Technical Editor Joel Hallas, W1ZR, there were close to 35 new products featured at Hamvention. From a 2 meter transverter module for the Elecraft K3 to a traditional hexagonal five band Yagi from DX Engineering to antenna tuners from Ten-Tec and Palstar, there was definitely a wide variety of the latest in ham radio gear to satisfy even the most hard-to-please ham.

For more on the 2009 ARRL National Convention and Dayton Hamvention -- including a look at some of the new and exciting products -- check out the July issue of QST. The 2010 Dayton Hamvention is scheduled for May 14-16.

Editorial - “Dayton 2009, Another Point of View”

Another Dayton has come and gone. Now that I've had some time to recover and ponder on it a bit, here is my take on Dayton 2009.

Don't get me wrong, Hamvention remains the Mecca for hams from all over the world. It just isn't what it used to be. The crowds were down again this year. This has been the trend for the past 10 years now. Whether this is a matter of the ham population aging (as witnessed by the 500 power chairs available for rent) or the recession is up for debate. Reports at the end of the show were that there were 13,000 tickets sold. This was down from 24,000 in 2000.

On the plus side, the manufacturers brought all the glitz and new products you hope for from the premier amateur radio event in the world. Yaesu was there with the hat that everyone wanted. It was so popular you got a hand stamp once you got yours. Elecraft was taking orders for the K3 nonstop. Gordon West was holding court in the North Hall, signing books and congratulating new hams that passed their tests. Most every accessory that a ham could want was available either from a dealer or out in the flea market. Where else could you see a 160' crank up tower on display?

Now here is the down side. There are fewer and fewer ham related vendors in the exhibit areas. The “Silver Arena”, an area formerly populated by smaller manufacturers and dealers, is kept alive primarily by the ARRL's presence. More and more non-ham vendors are showing up inside. Within sight of the West Mountain Radio booth in the East Hall were vendors selling computers, cameras, gel-insoles for shoes, cellular accessories and consumer electronics.

The outside flea market, my favorite area from years past, appears sparsely populated. There seem to be two reasons for this: 1. there are fewer vendors, 2. the vendors that show

up are in the same place they were in previous years. Why is this an issue? The vendors that are there are spread all over the parking lot with huge spaces between them. This makes for a lot of unneeded walking (Maybe that's why all those power chairs are available?).

The Hara Arena is not the same either. The facility is showing its age. The same holes are in the same walls in the same bathrooms. On set up day on Thursday, following a modest rain fall, the arriving vendors were greeted by puddles and buckets throughout the buildings. Thankfully we avoided a heavy rainfall during Hamvention.

The Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA) has been doing an excellent job of organizing and running Hamvention for over 50 years. They have a choice. They can do the same thing, in the same way and expect a different result (a definition of insanity, BTW). They could take the example set by Hamcom in Plano, TX or the NEAR-fest folks.....find a new venue, make significant changes in vendor requirements, and break from tradition.

John N1OLO

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WA7BNM Contest Calendar
June 2009

Contest Name	Time/Date/(Band)
Wake-Up! QRP Sprint	0400Z-0600Z, Jun 6
SEANET Contest	1200Z, Jun 6 to 1200Z, Jun 7
ANARTS WW RTTY Contest	0000Z, Jun 13 to 2400Z, Jun 14
Portugal Day Contest	0000Z-2400Z, Jun 13
Asia-Pacific Sprint, SSB	1100Z-1300Z, Jun 13
GACW WWSA CW DX Contest	1500Z, Jun 13 to 1500Z, Jun 14
REF DDFM 6m Contest	1600Z, Jun 13 to 1600Z, Jun 14
ARRL June VHF QSO Party	1800Z, Jun 13 to 0300Z, Jun 15
SARL Youth Day Sprint	0700Z-1100Z, Jun 16
All Asian DX Contest, CW	0000Z, Jun 20 to 2400Z, Jun 21
Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	0100Z-0300Z, Jun 22
Ukrainian DX DIGI Contest	1200Z, Jun 27 to 1200Z, Jun 28
His Maj. King of Spain Contest, SSB	1200Z, Jun 27 to 1200Z, Jun 28
Marconi Memorial HF Contest	1400Z, Jun 27 to 1400Z, Jun 28
ARRL Field Day	1800Z, Jun 27 to 2100Z, Jun 28

This is an abbreviated list of events for June. As of the publishing date of this newsletter the WA7BNM website (<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/>) was not updated beyond May 2009. Check the website for updates and current contest info. (Ed.)