



Dixie Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

"Amateur Radio...When All Else Fails!"

Dixie Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

May 2007 Edition

May Club Meeting

7:00 P.M. Wednesday, May 16th

The May meeting of the Dixie Amateur Radio Club will be held at 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, May 16, 2007 at the St. George Community Building which is located on the west side of the south parking lot of the Aldred (St. George) Senior Citizens Center at 245 North 200 West, St. George.

The meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. Besides Club members, anyone with an interest in learning more about Amateur Radio is invited to attend.

This month's presentation will be on digital communications. It will be an on the air demonstration by Dan Farwell, W8EQA.

Below is a map to the Community Building:



You may also use an interactive Google Map available on the Club's Web Site to locate the meeting place:

<http://www.dixieham.org/meetings.html>

Volunteer Exam Session

6:00 P.M. Wednesday, May 16, 2007



There will be an ARRL Volunteer Exam Session held at 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday May 16, 2007 at the same location as the Club Meeting described earlier.

If you are a person desiring to take your first Amateur Radio test or a currently licensed ham wanting to upgrade this month, please plan on attending.

If you are a Volunteer Examiner who would like to help out at a session, please contact please contact V.E. Coordinator Ron Sappington, WI7Z, via e-mail: sappin_r@infowest.com or telephone (435) 673-4552; or Board Member Dan Farwell, W8EQA, via e-mail: w8eqa@infowest.com or telephone at (435) 668-1609.

President's Message



Club President Hal Whiting,
K12U

It was an exciting and inspirational event with many gourmet delights. OK, well maybe it was the Dixie Amateur Radio Club BBQ and Clubfest with burgers. Thanks to all of you who helped make this event happen. I don't know

about the gourmet part, but the hamburgers were excellent. There was a lot of time put into the preparation, cooking and cleanup afterwards. Special thanks to Ken KE7DZI, Dick KE7ETP, and Lee KE7DZJ for all their efforts. There were many others who were involved in the process of making this event happen. Thanks also to those who came from other club areas to join with us. It was great getting to see all of you there. Thank you to all.

April tends to be a busy month with all of the events that DARC provides communications support to. Dan Farwell W8EQA is instrumental in coordinating and organizing these service opportunities for us. All of these events (bike tours, marathon, Huntsman games, etc) are our main public visibility opportunities. If you get the chance to participate in one of these events, take advantage to meet the public, be visible and friendly. If you become aware of a possible event we could help with, let us know...preferably a couple of weeks in advance.

Thom KC1EMS and I were in attendance at the Washington County leadership disaster conference held in April. Interestingly, and well deserved was a good deal of recognition of Amateur Radio ability and responsibilities to support community agencies in time of communications loss. They are expecting us to be trained, available, responsive and professional in our support to them. Our job will be to provide emergency communications anywhere we are required to be. Each disaster will determine where we are to be and what we are to do. Being flexible, mobile, and ready will be the top requirements. Are you ready? Are you mobile? Are you flexible?

The www.arrl.org website has a plethora of information on message traffic handling. Much of the information is free and downloadable. Need to know how to fill a message traffic form out? Get the instructions from ARRL online. Have some fun...send a

message to someone over the net. You can send one over the Sunday evening DARC net and it can be entered into the National Traffic System to go anywhere you need it sent. OK, internet and phone calls are quicker, but this is about disaster training. Are you ready?

The new club website looks awesome. Gary Zabriskie, N7ARE, has put a lot of work into improving how it looks and operates. Explore the website and see the resources available there.

The Washington County ARES website www.washingtoncoares.org is also growing and developing. It is a new experience, so bear with us as change and growth occurs.

I was at a training conference in Salt Lake City during the last week of April. It was fun to see when they did a video presentation that referenced a young kid taking some of his home appliances apart and building a ham radio. The doctor diagnosed him as having the "knack". The doctor said he wouldn't be able to lead a normal life. I am sure my wife could think of a lot more normal things for me to spend money on than ham radios. But, she realizes I am not normal. (She probably has recognized that for a long time).

The May DARC meeting will be a presentation on using digital communications. The plan is to have an operating station using the different modes for actual hands on communications. There will also be the planning for the 2007 Field Day. Please jump in and help out. Volunteer to be involved. Have some fun. Be a part!!

73,

Hal Whiting, KI2U
Dixie Amateur Radio Club President, 2007



Hams Helping Hams... What Rig Do I buy?

The Club recently received an e-mail from a member that we shall allow to remain nameless at this time. He asked a great question that in turn sent out to all of the Club members on the e-mail list to help answer. With the great number of new licensees the questioned posed by this ham operator is very appropriate.

His question was:

"I do have an ICOM for a base station that works very well for me. I just need to replace my 12 year-old handy-talky with a new rig. Any suggestions on a rugged, sturdy 2-meter handheld replacement would be greatly appreciated. If I'm to spend the ca\$h for a new machine, I want/need experts' advice on picking a new one."

Here are some of the responses that were received. Remember that each of these are opinions and *your mileage may vary*:

Response #1:

"My suggestion is to purchase what I just did from AES for \$210. I bought a compact duo-band Alinco DJ-V5. I also bought the Alinco EDH-29 dry cell case for 4-AA batteries for \$15., the Alinco EDC-37 power cable for 9.00, the Comet HS-05 antenna to SO-239 adapter cable for 15., then at the "Sportsman's Warehouse" in St. George, Utah I bought a Fieldline double zippered 5" x 7" soft case for 10.00 and paid 2.00 at a shoeshop to sew an X stitching over the velcro belt loop to permanently hold it in place. The above items are for mobile operation to use with my duoband mag mount antenna and for hiking. This I believe is one nice amateur radio setup. I would not waste my money on a 2m [only] HT."

Response #2:

"Don't throw that old unit away- it can be repaired with some real patience. I bought 2 Alinco DJ-191 HT's in 1998. I just replaced the original batteries and they have proven to be a great unit. The DJ-191 is no longer produced but the it's replacement is - Alinco DJ-196T (about \$120 at AES or Ham Radio Outlet) HRO charges no shipping over \$100 and no sales tax! Large display- hearty unit. Yaesu's inexpensive 2 meter rig the VX-150 is cheap but the display is small and much harder to read-the VX-170 is a nice unit (\$140)-one thing I don't like is that it has a menu driven squelch adjustment- the next step up from Yaesu is the FT-60R at \$190 it's a dual band but a VERY nice radio. On Yaesu-their FT-1802M is a top drawer pick for a base unit. Keep asking before you buy. Many hams in the Club are well-experienced (and opinionated) on HTs."

Response #3:

"My suggestion is based upon what you are looking for. I you are doing a lot of out in the field work with it, where you are subject to lots of rain, one of the water resistant (dunkable) radios like the YAE VX170 or the ALINCO DJV17T are great choices. I have used every brand of HT over the years. Only one I would stay away from is Kenwood, due to propriety speaker mic design. Personally I have the Alinco DJ196 HT and bought one for my father in law. I have found them in like new condition on e-bay for \$60 (1/2 of new price). I also have a DJ190 (older model)that I got on e-bay for \$10! As another mentioned, it is easy to fix an older radio but at what point is it worth doing so. Most problems with older HT's is the thing literally starts having mechanical problems from having been packed and bounced around so much. If the radio transmits and receives you could always use it for a packet radio setup in the shack. I think the most important factors to look at are:

1. Can it be connected to externally to 13.8vdc directly and used WHILE charging.

2. Are extra batteries available that are REASONABLY priced? Always have one spare rechargeable.

3. Is an AA alkaline pack available? And what price? An "AA" pack is a MUST have for serious emergency preparedness.

The Yaesu VX150 does have a relatively small display, but who really stares at the display all day. Normally us one or two memory locations and locked on frequency. AES in Las Vegas has the VX150 for \$117.99 and you currently get a FREE Spare Battery (FNB64) with purchase. That is a \$36.99 value FREE. It all comes down to personal preference on how the radio feels in your hand and ease of operating controls, etc. They will all sound good through a repeater and do the same communicating. Hope this helps."

Response #4:

"I am totally amused in the new tech classes as all old timers bring their h/T to class and do some demonstration with them so the students figure that is the best. Which is the best for the application for which the user use it. But perhaps the student would not use it the same manner. So each instructor has his preference which it strongly projected to the new student. I like to take the middle road and point out the good and the bad in all the manufacturers. Alinco has a ant which has a BNC connector for the antenna which makes a easy conversion to a magnet mount or field antenna. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the best for user friendly I would rate it a 8. ICOM also use a BNC connection on the antenna and I think that it a plus. I would rate a 9 on user friendly. Kenwood also uses a BNC but I find is most Kenwood's are not user friendly I would rate them about a 6. Yeasu is probably the most user friendly and I would rate them as 10's. But I think they need to convert their Ant system to a BCN. I think their conversion a little weak converting to the standard so239. He mentioned his enternal battery going bad. AES in Vegas can replace those batteries. One man's opinion."

Join the Club or Renew your Membership!



Club membership dues for 2007 are being solicited. Dues are \$15.00 per member (\$20.00 per family for multiple ham families). As a matter of fact, you do not have to be a licensed Amateur

Operator to join the club. You just need to have an interest in Amateur Radio.

Check the Club's Membership Roster to see that you are shown as current. We will even accept your tardy dues for 2006 if you feel the slightest sense of guilt. If you know you were negligent in 2006, you are on the honor system.

To pay your membership dues, please make a check or money order payable to "DARC" and bring it to the meeting or mail it to the club address:

**Dixie Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 422
Santa Clara, UT 84765**

The most current Membership Roster is found on the Club Web Site.

Join the ARRL!

What is the ARRL?



Founded in 1914, the 150,000-member ARRL - *The National Association for Amateur Radio* - is the national association for Amateur Radio in the USA. Other countries also have their own national associations.

The ARRL not only reflects the commitment and many enthusiasms of American hams, but also provides leadership as the voice of Amateur Radio in the USA, whether in dealings with the Federal Communications Commission, the World Administrative Radio Conference, the International Amateur Radio Union, or with the general public.

The ARRL is the primary source of information about what is going on in the ham radio world. It provides books, news, support and information for individuals and clubs, special operating events, all sorts of continuing education classes and other benefits for its members.

Being a member of the ARRL is important for hams! Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is welcome to join the American Radio Relay League. Please see this link to join the ARRL:

<http://www.arrrl.org/join.html>

Club Member Visits and Operates W1AW Station

by Ric Wayman, K7DLX



It was a cold, gloomy, rainy day when I drove into Newington, CT. Kathy and I were on a three week dream vacation driving around the USA, and we had stopped for a few days in Boston. Just in time for the recent nor'easter.

I parked next to the W1AW building about 1:15 and went to the door. It was locked, so I trekked across the parking lot to the ARRL

building. A ham was waiting at a desk, so I asked him about tours. Apparently you need to take the tour of the ARRL offices before you visit W1AW.



I met several people in the offices I had either spoken with on the phone or had e-mail correspondences with. Also, I

was recruited as a VE. (I have the accreditation papers here, just have to complete and return them.

I was surprised that the ARRL office building has a complete amateur station in a back room. This is for the use of HQ staffers at lunch and break hours. It is also the only station on ARRL property where an operator can use his or her own callsign.

Touring both floors of ARRL, I must say I was getting a little impatient. Finally the tour leader led me out the front door and across the parking lot. It was about time!



We entered the front door. The first thing you notice is the big glass doors with all the transmitters and amplifiers behind it. This is where the bulletins and code practice are sent

- all bands can be transmitted at once. The operator position in front has numerous computer stations, and a microphone. From this position the operator can control any or all of the transmitters behind him or her.

Looking north, there are three studios. One each for code, phone, and digital modes. After showing my license I was ushered into Studio One, and placed behind a Yaesu FT-1000, with a Heil microphone and footswitch. After a quick introduction to the computer logging system, the control op left me on my own.

I hesitantly dialed up an empty frequency, asked if the frequency was in use, and after receiving no response, went into a CQ.



"CQ CQ CQ. CQ Twenty meter band, CQ Twenty meter band, This is W1AW, Whisky One Alpha Whisky. W1AW calling CQ Twenty Meter Band and standing by."

Hiss. Nothing. I wondered if this worked. I felt like the comic. "<<Tap Tap>> Is this thing on?" Didn't anyone want to talk to W1AW?

Two more times and someone answered me. We talked for a few minutes, then he told me there were lots of others that wanted to talk to me. Surprised me, actually. But I politely thanked him for the contact, logged it, and signed with him.

BLAM!

Holy cow! It sounded like a pileup you'd hear if you were the lone station from Burkina Faso on a DX contest day. Turns out I got spotted on several DX spotting nets and everyone tuned over for the chance to contact HQ. It was hard to hear all the stations calling me. My mind went into contest mode and I tried to pick out one station to call back. I finally picked out a call and went back to the operator.

It went on like that for the next hour. I do recall one contact, the operator said he just received his license that day and I was his first contact. What a thrill to have your first contact be W1AW!

About 5 minutes before the hour the control op came in and said it was time to shut down the studio, as he had to send a scheduled code practice on the hour. I acknowledged, turned back to the increasing pileup, and said I only had time for one more contact. I made that contact, apologized to all the operators that were still trying to call me, and signed for the final time. The pileup was still there, and the control op smiled and said it was always like that when a guest operator sat in.

He started the scheduled code practice while I looked over the log. 42 contacts in one hour. Not quite my Field Day record, but not bad at all.



Incidentally, if you ever contact HQ, they will QSL with you if you send them one of your cards first with a self-addressed stamped envelope. All cards from HQ have the same red, black, and white scheme. I know it would occupy a proud place in my collection if I ever get one.

After thanking the control operator, I went outside. The rain has turned to a mist, and the sun was peeking through the clouds. As I turned our little car towards Boston, I reflected on the day. All in all, very fun and quite successful.

When you're in the area, I recommend a trip to Newington. You'll never forget it. I know I won't.

WIMU Ham Radio Convention



The annual W I M U (Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, Utah) ham radio convention will be held in Jackson Hole, Wyoming Aug 3-5, 2007.

Please visit this link for more information:

<http://home.comcast.net/~wimuhamfest/>

The Registration Form is available at the link provided below. You may print and distribute copies of this registration form to whoever you think might like to attend.

Here is the link to the PDF formatted form:

<http://www.dixieham.org/forms/WIMU.pdf>

The Utah Hamfest Committee is sponsoring this year's convention. We are working hard to make this year's WIMU a great event.

This is an enormous task and we need everyone's help in getting the word out. The UHC hopes you can make plans to attend WIMU 2007.

Club Member Bio

C. R. "Nick" Nickle, W7CRN



Nick first became interested in radio in the early 1950's building a crystal set for a Boy Scout project. Attending Jordan High School in Sandy, Utah

he obtained his basic training in electricity, radio and vocational electronics. In June 1954 Nick received his novice license with the call sign WN7WMM. Using a converted war surplus BC-348 receiver and a homebrew single 6L6 transmitter, he soon got his code speed up to 13 wpm and passed the general test in October 1954. Moving up to an old National NC-200 receiver and a homebrew 120 watt AM rig, W7WMM was active on 75 meters until the summer of 1955 when he joined the US Air Force.

During his nine-year tour in the Air Force as a communications specialist he became involved in many aspects of military communications including VHF/UHF ground to air, HF SSB, troposcatter, TACAN, RDF, and aircraft communications, navigation and identification (IFF) systems, serving in the US, Japan, Korea, Philippines, Viet Nam, and many of the pacific islands. In 1960 while stationed in Michigan he obtained the call sign W8HDM. He had the opportunity to manage a number of MARS

stations including HL2AM and HL9KR in Korea and K9FCC in Hanna City, Illinois.

Leaving the Air Force in 1964, Nick went to work for Collins Radio Company and worked as a Field Engineer with the 11th Air Assault Division at Ft. Benning, Ga., training army personnel on Collins HF SSB and air to ground communications equipment. Moving on to the 33rd Fighter Wing at Eglin AFB in Florida, he trained Air Force personnel on the Collins CNI equipment used in the F4 fighter aircraft. In late 1966 he transferred to Collins Computer Systems Division in Dallas, Texas where worked as an engineer in computer system design. In 1967 he obtained the call sign W5QKI and remained active in ham radio until about 1975.

In 1984 Nick left Collins Radio and joined Digital Switch Corporation (later became DSC Communications) working on the development and marketing of long distance telephone switching systems and cellular telephone switching systems. He remained with DSC Communications until his retirement in January 1999.

Nick became a full time resident of the St George area in April 2004 and currently lives in Canyon Cove in Washington City. Becoming interested in emergency communications, in March of 2006 he took the technician and general exams and was issued a technician ticket and the call KE7HEP. With credit for code from his novice ticket in 1954, he took the extra exam in April 2006 and obtained his extra ticket and the vanity call sign W7CRN.

Nick currently serves as a member of the DARC executive board and as president of the Canyon Cove homeowners association.

About the Club

The Dixie Amateur Radio Club (DARC) is a non-profit [IRS 501(c)(3)] association of Amateur Radio operators, also known as "ham

radio" operators, in southwestern Utah. DARC is affiliated with the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the National Association for Amateur Radio. Please use the navigation links below to explore our website. Amateur Radio operators are federally licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to provide a radio service having a fundamental purpose as expressed in the following principles:

- (a) *Recognition and enhancement of the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary noncommercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications.*
- (b) *Continuation and extension of the amateur's proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art.*
- (c) *Encouragement and improvement of the amateur service through rules which provide for advancing skills in both the communications and technical phases of the art.*
- (d) *Expansion of the existing reservoir within the amateur radio service of trained operators, technicians, and electronics experts.*
- (e) *Continuation and extension of the amateur's unique ability to enhance international goodwill.*

Members of the Dixie Amateur Radio Club provide voluntary public service radio communications throughout the area for activities such as the annual St. George Marathon and the Huntsman World Senior Games. Amateur Radio operators also maintain a readiness to provide emergency communications locally, regionally and world-wide in the event of a natural disaster or other calamity.

