Dixie Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

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

Dixie Amateur Radio Club, Inc. **January-February 2008 Edition**

February Meeting

7:00 P.M. Wednesday, February 20th

The next scheduled meeting of the Dixie Amateur Radio Club will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 20, 2008.

The meeting will be held 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 our Club members, anyone with an interest in learning more about Amateur Radio is invited to attend.

This month's Club meeting agenda includes the completion of the election process and seating of the new board. A entertaining video on ham radio from the 1930's will be shown. A full agenda was not ready at the time of this newsletter publication. Please check the "Club Meeting Info" link on the Club Web Site for more information on the meeting.

Volunteer Exam Session

6:00 P.M. Wednesday, February 20, 2008

There will be an ARRL Volunteer Exam Session held at 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday, February 20, 2008 at the same location as the regular 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 the Club's V.E. Liaison Gary Zabriskie, N7ARE, via e-mail: n7are@arrl.net

Member Profiles

NED STEVENS, K7ELP

I was born and raised in the Salt Lake City area. Obtained novice and technician licenses in the late 1950's. I earned my technician license by the time I graduated from East High School in Salt Lake City. I joined the USCG in late summer of 1959, and spent 26 years on active duty. My whole career in the Coast Guard was in the field of electronics. I started out as a maintenance and repair technician, advanced to an engineer. When I retired from the service in 1985 I was the commanding officer of a electronics repair shop in Muskegon Michigan. After retirement I returned to Salt Lake City and worked in the electronics field as an ITT institute instructor, engineer, sales of electronic parts and equipment, and a project manager until my move to the St. George area in 2007.

In the mid 1960's I was on active duty with the USCG stationed in New York City and I upgraded to Advanced. I was teaching electronics in the USCG training center at Governor's Island, New York. In those days you had to take general class and higher license examinations at the FCC field offices. The

code test was also more difficult as you had to copy exactly 1 minute of code. The code for general and advanced was 13 wpm. During that time you could also hold an additional station license in addition to their home station license. So I applied for, and was given, the additional station license call sign WA2JAT. While stationed at Governor's Island, (near the tip of Manhatten) I was able to put my antennas on the roof of a 6 story apartment building. In the mid and late 1960's 2M FM was just getting started so 6 and 2 meter AM was the way to go. I had 6 and 2 meter beams plus a 40 meter dipole on the roof of that 6 story apartment building. 6 meter operation only lasted a very short time as TVI was a real problem. 2M AM was wonderful; I had 11 confirmed states on 2M AM. They ranged from Maine to North Carolina.

Over the years I have had some periods of inactivity for various reasons, but always kept my license current. Several years ago I decided to upgrade to amateur extra. As an amateur radio operator I have had very Little interest in operating contests and have been mostly interested in the technical aspects of amateur radio. However I have entered a number of contests, mostly the VHF ones sponsored by the ARRL.

I have built numerous antennas and station equipment. In my younger years I learned a lot of electronics on vacuum tubes, I have been envolved with mostly solid state since the early 1980's. My first transmitter was a two tube home brew from one of the ARRL handbooks.

I still enjoy designing and building my own electronic devices and amateur radio equipment. I have written a number of articles for the Microvolt (UARC, Utah Amateur Radio Club newsletter). Wrote a column entitled, "Ask Ned", for the Davis County amateur radio club.

I Presently have 2 ea ICOM 706MKIIG transceivers, and a TENTEC 1222 2M transceiver. One of the 706 tranceivers is used in the mobile and the other one is in the home station. The home station HF antenna is random length of wire fed with a AH-4 Icom auto tuner. On HF mobil I use a short Hustler mast and different band resonators.

I recently moved to the St. George area from Salt Lake City, and I live in the Kayenta section of Ivins. For many years I have been an avid builder of electronic circuits and projects. I also am proficient in the design and fabrication of single sided PC boards. During the period I have accumulated a large quantity of electronic component parts. I also have excess items for construction of amateur antennas. These items include 450 ohm ladder line, coaxial cable (RG8X, RG59,RG58 etc). I am willing to share my parts and items for construction of antennas and share my talents and knowledge with members of the Dixie Amateur Radio Club. I am also looking for some younger persons to elmer in return for their help in my projects, as a senior citizen my eyesight and manual dexterity is failing and I could use some help in my projects. I can be reached by telephone at (435)634-0510.

RIC WAYMAN, K7DLX

Greetings and Salutations from mid-town! I'm Ric Wayman, K7DLX, and I'm very honored to be nominated to be your President for the upcoming year.

I've been asked to write a short biography. If it's not short enough, please bear with me. One of my favorite lines from a song is from the Grateful Dead, who sang, "What a long, strange trip it's been!" This fits my life almost perfectly.

I was born and raised in the Los Angeles area, mostly in a town called Pacific Palisades, near the coast. When I was 7 years old, my parents bought me a set of toy walkie-talkies. These got upgraded and a semi-professional set was procured when I was 13. These had Channel 14 CB crystals in them, and I quickly discovered there were other people on that channel I could talk to.

A great regret is when I was 14, I told my Dad (a non-ham) I wanted a base CB set. He told me that if I studied and got my ham license, he would buy me

a full ham station, a system that would far outdo CB. But I passed on the opportunity and with the money saved from mowing lawns and baby-sitting, I bought my first CB.

In 1977 I got my first job in commercial Radio as a disc jockey. The CB stayed with me, throughout my many jobs, from Irvine, CA, to El Paso, TX, to San Luis Obispo, CA. It was there I met my Elmer.

Cal, KA6DCZ was a blind man that used to call me at the radio station to request songs, and we soon developed a rapport. One night when he called me I heard CW in the background, and asked Cal if he was a ham. He said he was, and was I interested in getting my license? I told him I was a CBer, and he said to stop by his house when I got off the air, and he'd show me a few things that would wean me off CB forever!

Cal's TS-520 and dipole antennas really got me excited about becoming a ham. Cal spent many patient nights teaching me the Code, and he finally said I was ready. He got a friend of his in town to give me the test, and I was the proud owner of a brand spankin' new Novice license (call KB6BKM) in July 1983!

I quickly advanced from Novice to General, and moved to St. George in 1984. When I moved, I asked for a new call and received KA7WWB. I quickly met the locals, including Walt KA7STK, Dean NR7K, George WI7E, Bart K7EDU, the late George Barker WB7SMI, and one of your locals who I have maintained contact with over many years, Jim WI7E. Jim and I put on the first Field Day in St. George in 1985, and have done numerous FD efforts both with the club and as an independent team over the years.

While I was in St. George, I was on the air as a radio announcer. Old-timers will remember me as Ric Stratton from KCLG (now KONY), KDXU (where I was the first voice heard on the new 890 KDXU in 1985), and 1450 KDLX. The last station is responsible for the vanity callsign I hold now, as I chose the callsign for that station and have always been partial to it. When I found K7DLX available as a ham call, I grabbed it.

I moved back to California in 1989, leaving Radio in 1991 while with KDES in Palm Springs. Going through a few jobs, I finally landed a job in the commercial two-way industry, where I spent the next 14 years. My ham license was indirectly responsible for the job, as the sales manager of the company was also a ham, and when he asked me what my qualifications were, I rattled off my callsign, and was invited down immediately. John K6MJB and I have been friends ever since, and you will hear him every now and then on the Sunday evening net, on Echolink from Long Beach, CA.

In 2006 both my Mom and my wife's mother were getting advanced in age and needed help. I quit my job and we moved back here. I got re-acquainted with old friends, and made many new ones in the Ham community. I currently work as an on-site computer repairman.

Back in 1986 I was elected President of the Dixie Amateur Radio Club. So this is my second turn through the Club - with 22 years difference - and quite a difference it is! I'm happy to have been a part of this club in the past, and excited to lead it through to the future.

I enjoy HF SSB work, VHF/UHF simplex, packet, PSK-31, and contesting. I have not missed a Field Day since 1984, and don't plan on missing any more. I also enjoy working the NAQP, the NASprint, and state QSO parties. I contested with Dan Farwell one year in the ARRL DX contest, and have placed first in Utah in the NAQP, and second in the California QSO Party with John K6MJB. And last April I was able to tour the ARRL headquarters, and operate W1AW, an experience I wrote about in the May club newsletter.

However you enjoy Ham Radio, enjoy it with all your heart! Get involved, be a part of the group, enjoy it on your own, but the important part is, get on the air! Let's make the local Ham frequencies sing - both VHF/UHF and the HF bands. The community needs to know what part we play in emergency operations. We need an attitude of "We are amateur radio operators, we are important!"

As a team we can make this happen. Be on our team!

73! K7DLX

Club Announcements

Ron Sappington, WI7Z, is taking a well deserved rest from his labors of Volunteer Exam Liaison for the Dixie Amateur Radio Club. Ron been dedicated to make sure our V.E. sessions have run smoothly and testing and licenses have been processed in an accurate and timely manner. We wish to extend our thanks to Ron for his efforts towards the growth of our members. Gary Zabriskie, N7ARE, will be taking over his duties. Ron has agreed to "substitute" if needed in the future.

Norm Smith, KE7FPG, has agreed to perform duties as an Official Relay Station to support the community during times of disaster when message traffic will increase. He may ask for volunteer operators to assist in getting traffic onto the HF traffic nets as needed. Please give him a hand when needed and get the messages out. Thanks for being willing to help us!!

C.R. Nickle, W7CRN, and Dan Farwell, W8EQA, have been assigned to function as Official Emergency Stations. Their responsibilities will be to provide a hardened communications system that will support emergency and disaster operations.

Gary Zabriskie, N7ARE, has agreed to also serve as the Local Government Liaison to coordinate amateur radio efforts with local agencies.

Casey Lofthose, KD7HUS, is the Technical Specialist for the club with an emphasis on repeater operations.

Scott Nowling, K7LSN, has been appointed as the Public Information Officer for the club. Newsworthy events, activities, photos and accomplishments should be forwarded to him to be fed into the local media.

Official Bulletin Station: Dan Farwell, W8EQA. Other operators are invited to join also.

Local Interference Committee, Hal Whiting –KI2U (Effective January 1, 2008)

There are many other opportunities to be involved in. If you are interested, let your Board Members know.

Join the Club For the First Time or Renew your Membership!

Club membership dues for 2008 are being solicited. Dues are $20.00 per member and $25.00 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. (Licensed hams have "full-membership"). You just need to have an interest in Amateur Radio.

Check the Club's Membership Roster to see that you are shown as a member. If you are not listed, you may have simply procrastinated. Please show support for your club and join. We will even accept your tardy dues for 2007 if you feel the slightest sense of guilt.

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 current "Membership Roster" is found on the Club Web Site.

Join 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.

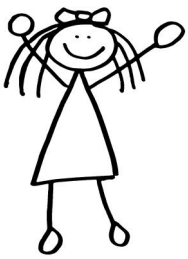
Being a member of the ARRL is important for hams! Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is welcome to join the American Radio Relay League. If you join the ARRL for the first time through the Club, or renew your ARRL membership through the Club, our Club benefits directly financially.

See the "Join the Club" link below for info on joining the ARRL:
http://www.dixieham.org/join.html

Board Meeting following Regular Club Meeting

There will be a Club Board Meeting immediately following the "Refreshments" at the conclusion of the General Club Meeting. Everyone is invited to stay and observe.

Member Profiles Needed!



We still are in need of profiles of Club members to showcase in future Newsletters. As you can see from the two profiles presented in this newsletter, there are interesting people amongst us. Are you willing to be the next "famous" person profiled in these pages? If you are willing to tell us something about yourself, please e-mail your story or at least acknowledge your willingness to be profiled in a future edition of the Newsletter to the Editor at: w7drc@arrl.net.

About Our 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.

Utah Hamfest (ARRL Convention) at Bryce Canyon this Summer!

Utah Hamfest 2008, also designated as the ARRL Rocky Mountain Division Convention, will be held on July 11, 12 and 13 at Ruby's Inn, 1 mile from Bryce Canyon National Park. Features of the hamfest include a BBQ/Eyeball QSO Party (Friday eve. $11), "Hickory Smoked Pulled Pork Dinner" with all the Carolina trimmings (Saturday eve, $16), Sunday Breakfast and Keynote Speaker ($12, under

12, $6), Swap Meet (outside, free, bring your own table), Seminars and Forums, Vendors/Dealers, Children's Activities, Craft Activities, and Home Brew (Boutique), QSL Card Checker, Prize Drawings, Contests (CW, QLF, Mobile Installation, Transformer Toss, Transmitter Hunts), Wouff Hong, & Amateur License Exams.

Adult Pre-registration is $12 including a commemorative Pin, at the door $15, pin not included, Youth (17 and under) Pre-registration is $5, at the door $7. For complete registration information Contact Eugene or Carol McWherter n7ovt@arrl.net or kc7llw@arrl.net.

Be sure to visit www.utahhamfest.org for more information. A big registration drive for the hamfest will begin on February 23rd.

For Sale and Wanted Items

WANTED: Club member Ken Forshee, KE7DZI, is looking to buy a Buddiepole antenna. Must be reasonable price. He is looking for the Buddiepole with a versa tee and mast and tripod. Please contact Ken via e-mail: kf24mf@beyondbb.com if you have one to sell.

FOR SALE: Nic Jacobs, KC6TVS has 2 handheld transceivers he would like to sell together. One is a Icom (model not mentioned), and a Radio Shack HTX-202. He said he has spare batteries and charger for these and is asking $150 for both. He can be reached at (435) 313-3912 or (435) 674-2912.

Upcoming Activities Needing Ham Volunteers

The Club is actively seeking volunteers for Zion Spring Classic cycle tour Feb 23 (Saturday). We need 10 operators and they are planning 600+ riders- includes free chicken or steak dinner. Please contact Dan Farwell, W8EQA via e-mail: w8eqa@infowest.com if you can help out.

Upcoming in April will be the Cactus Hugger 100 mile tour -400+ riders April 26th. We need volunteers for that event.

There will be a Boy Scouts of America Expo special event station in April at Dixie Center that needs volunteers.

We are looking for volunteers for the ARRL Rocky Mountain Convention at Bryce Canyon in July (see earlier story). Our Club is putting on the Friday PM BBQ as well as a Special event station and the CW contest. Are you willing to help out?

More info on these will be presented at the February Club meeting.

Product Review

by Hal Whiting, KI2U

I recently purchased a Ramsey Electronics DDF-1 Radio Direction Finder kit. It was my first "real" kit to put together. After a number of hours of soldering and burned fingers I got the components mounted and the antennas assembled. It is actually quite a well designed piece of hardware. This RDF has the main circuitry, LED direction indicators and four external vehicle roof mount antennas. An FM radio is used for the receiver. Obviously, being my first big kit, I was concerned it would have to go back to the factory to be really fixed after I messed it up. But, after it was all put together, it worked flawlessly. There was one disc capacitor missing from the kit that the junk box supplied. I had read the reviews on eham.net and was concerned about the documentation errors. I emailed with Ramsey's tech support staff who assured me the documentation had been corrected. They were right. Sunday night DARC net came and I was on the Red Hill set up. I calibrated the antennas by using the lights in the distance of Seegmiller Mountain repeater. I was using a scanner for my receiver and programmed it for the

repeater input frequency of 146.31. Each time someone would transmit the LED's would spin around and indicate the direction the signal was coming from. It reads out in 22.5 degree increments using 16 LED's. The antennas are supplied with magnets...barely. Definitely, replacing them with something more than the refrigerator stick-ons they are. The 4 antennas are adjustable to be able to change them to match the frequency or band as needed. Overall, I think this is an awesome kit to build and so far a lot of fun.

73,
HalWhiting,KI2U

Newsletter Editor's note: A source of this and other Ramsey Kits and other interesting ham equipment is Cheapham.com. The link to the Ramsey offerings is: http://www.cheapham.com/ramsey.html
but also explore the rest of their site to see what other goodies can be had for your insatiable hobby.

First Contact Award Available from ARRL

Do you want to recognize someone who just made their first two-way radio communications by Amateur radio? Perhaps you just made your first CW contact or first HF contact and want to have a certificate to remember that exciting time.

Whether you are presenting the award to someone or creating a landmark of your own Amateur Radio journey, use the on-line form to fill in the QSO information and the operator who is being presented with this certificate and ARRL will mail a beautiful First Contact Award.

The award can be mailed directly to the recipient or it can be presented in person or at a club meeting.

To request a certificate (at no cost to you or the receiving ham operator) go to the following ARRL web page:
http://www.arrl.org/FandES/ead/award/certificate/1contact.html

It Was Always There

By Eric P. Nichols, KL7AJ
President, Arctic ARC

(Reproduced in the DARC newsletter with permission. Article was originally published in the ARRL Club News)

At a recent Arctic Amateur Radio Club board meeting, during a rare lull in the oft-heated discussions about how best to increase our membership, I threw out a simple question. "How did you get into ham radio?" The responses were revealing, to say the least. One by one, our board members, some young, some old, told the story of how they got into this hobby of all hobbies. One gentleman had a father who was a ham, and more or less forced him into the hobby, for which he was unspeakably grateful...years later, of course. One XYL saw a shortwave radio at a friend's house, started twiddling knobs, and got frustrated that she could only listen. For her, the rest was history. A couple of others were exposed to amateur radio in high school, one in Boy Scouts. Another credited me with getting him into ham radio, much to my gratification. One other confessed that he didn't really know; it just seemed to him that ham radio was "always around."

Interestingly enough, not one of the hams entered the hobby because of a concentrated recruitment program. Although occasional public relations "Blitzkriegs" have their place in Amateur Radio, I'm not sure they produce lasting hams. Like many other clubs, we manage to get a lot of hams licensed, but the dropout rate is appalling. The vast majority of our newly licensed hams never get on the air. I don't think our message is flawed; I think it's our delivery. Of all the board members I mentioned above, I believe the last fellow, the one who said ham radio was "always around" had the key.

We need to get back to the place where amateur radio is a continual, if quiet, presence. People who get lured into the hobby, stick with the hobby. People who get coerced and cajoled into the hobby leave as soon as we aren't looking. The fact is, most new hams never see a working ham shack, about all they see is a handheld, which isn't all that fascinating. When a young person sees a ham shack equipped to cover everything from DC to daylight, they take notice...it doesn't matter whether they're a geek or not. I've never seen anyone who wasn't impressed by a Moon bounce (Earth-Moon-Earth contact) array swinging around on its rotators...whether they had a clue what it was or not! People don't know about ham radio because they don't see ham radio...except, perhaps at Field Day.

The best place to cultivate that "always around" feeling is in the schools. We need to infiltrate the middle and high schools again. Notice, I said, again. There was a time, not too long ago, when it was difficult to find a high school without a club station. Field Day should be a three hundred and sixty five day a year event, and that is easier to achieve in the schools than anywhere else. There is no better way to teach science than with ham radio. We need to remind our public (and private) school teachers and administrators of that. We need to let our students get their hands grubby making things happen, rather than merely watching things happen. We need to get some real hardware into the schools. We have wonderful new allocations now, and the technology to use them is cheaper and easier than ever. When I was in high school in the late 60s, it was everything one could do, and then some, to do Moon bounce. It was only because we had a lunatic (no pun intended) electronics teacher, that we were able to pull off such a stunt. Now, Moon bounce is practically within reach of any determined high school club station. Wouldn't it be great if Moon bounce stations proliferated at our high schools the way H.F. stations once did? Of course, I only use Moon bounce as one radical example. We have exciting things happening down at 500 kHz, as well. What better way to learn weak signal, digital signal processing techniques than with our newly allocated MF experimental spectrum?

This all may be rocket science, but it doesn't take rocket science to get it into the schools! Our teachers want to see us excel in the sciences. Let's give them the tools to do so. Fifty years from now, someone may be asked how they got into ham radio.It would be nice if they could answer, "I don't know...I guess it was always there."

******

Eric P. Nichols was born in 1954 in what is now Silicon Valley. As Eric describes it, his exposure to physics research came at an early age, having grown up "down the barrel of the Stanford Linear Accelerator." In 1976 he felt the call of the wild and abandoned a fledgling engineering career to move to Alaska and live life "with the bark still on." As it turned his call to the wild kept him in engineering as he spent a twenty year career as Chief Engineer for KJNP, a 50,000 watt radio station in North Pole, Alaska. Afterwards, Eric became a development engineer for HIPAS observatory, an aurora research facility near Fairbanks operated by UCLA. The experience set the stage for his first novel, Plasma Dreams, published in 2004 (ISBN 9781413748260).

The First “Ham” in Space

“Ham”, also known as “Ham the Chimp” and “Ham the Astrochimp” was the first higher primate launched into outer space.

In December 1960 the 44 month old chimpanzee was trained to do simple tasks in response to electric lights and sounds, with response being timed. On January 31, 1961, Ham was secured in a Project Mercury capsule labeled MR-2 and launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida into outer space. The capsule suffered a partial loss of pressure during the flight, but Ham's space suit prevented him from suffering any harm. During the flight Ham had to push a lever within five seconds of seeing a flashing blue light; as per pre-flight training, failure would result in an application of negative reinforcement in the form of an electric shock to the soles of his feet. Ham's performance in space was only a fraction of a second slower than on Earth, demonstrating that tasks could be performed in space. Ham's capsule splashed down in the Atlantic Ocean and was recovered by a rescue ship later that day.