



Dixie Amateur Radio Club, INC.

Dixie Amateur Radio Club

March 2012

March 2012 Newsletter

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Rhino Rally Photos

Bob Vosper



Gary Zabriskie, N7ARE Biography



I was born in Salt Lake City, Utah in December of 1959 and grew up in the unincorporated community of Granger on the west side of the Salt Lake Valley. At that time that area was still very rural and we were surrounded by many acres of sugar beet fields. That area has changed completely since then. Most people today do not even know what a sugar beet is. About 30 years ago Granger, along with the area to the west known as Hunter, were both incorporated into West Valley City, now the second most populous city in Utah.

I graduated from Granger High School in 1978 and later attended and graduated from the University of Utah with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Urban Planning in 1991. In July of 1986 I married my sweetheart, the former MaryAnn Partridge, of West Jordan, Utah. We met while we were both working at Harmon's Grocery in West Valley. I was working there to attend the U of U. MaryAnn had started there to earn money to come down to Dixie College. So later I guess I was obligated to bring her down here to Utah's Dixie after all. This July we will have been married for 26 years. MaryAnn and I reside in Santa Clara with our two cats, Oscar and Jordy.

We moved to St. George in 1993 when I started my employment with the Five County Association of Governments. I started here as a community planner and through the years was promoted to Associate Planner, Senior Planner, and Planning Manager. I am now the Director of Community and Economic Development at the Association. One of my principal tasks over the years has been assisting communities with planning for and implementing community development projects. I have been personally involved in helping to secure over \$115 million in loans and grants, leveraging those funds with local community participation, to implement over \$175 million of community development projects during my 18 year tenure with the Association. This has enabled communities to improve water and sewer systems, construct fire stations, and develop affordable housing projects. I have assisted communities in updating their general plans, zoning ordinances and subdivision ordinances. I have also been involved in developing management plans for two state scenic byways, one of which "*Utah's Patchwork Parkway*" (Utah State Route 143) was recently designated as Utah's newest National Scenic Byway.



I am still very much involved in land use planning and community planning document preparation. I have always remembered that planning is a process. I have a great staff of 18 dedicated and quality employees in my Division at the Association and it is a pleasure working with all of them. They are all public servants in the truest sense of the word.

In my ham radio "career" I was first licensed as a Novice Amateur Radio operator during my senior year of high school (1978). My math teacher at Granger High School, Mr. (Gordon) Anderson, K7ERN, introduced me to the intricacies of this fascinating hobby. Mr. Anderson passed away in 2001.

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Gary's Biography (Continued)



I was somewhat familiar with ham operators as both my older brother and I used to listen to shortwave broadcasts and would use the BFO to tune in hams talking to one another. I participated in a Ham Radio Novice Class taught in the Salt Lake area by John Moellmer, WB7SUB. I took my Novice exam at the home of Richard (Rick) Williams, W7HBL. My first callsign issued was WB7WRE. I got on the air that spring with a Heathkit HW-16 and HG10B VFO (yes, they do have vacuum tubes in them!)

I upgraded later in 1978 to General Class. That fall I bought a brand new Ten Tec Argonaut 509 HF QRP transceiver and installed a tower with a Wilson System 3 tri-band yagi at 35'. I added the 40mtr driven element extension on the yagi and began working the world with 5 watts QRP. QRP is an addiction. The picture in the funky striped shirt is me in my "shack" in 1979. To this day I still operate a lot of QRP contacts with my modern Icom IC-703. The other picture is me at a "solo" effort in Field Day 2010 up in the Tushar Mountains east of Beaver, Utah.

As a side note, when I took my General test back in 1978 it was in November in Pocatello, Idaho and was freezing cold. They had a blizzard and the heat was not working in the National Guard armory where the FCC examiner out of the Portland, Oregon Field Office was sent to administer the exams. My hand was shaking as I took the 13 WPM code test and it was not because of nerves. After passing the exam I decided to request a sequential change in my callsign and received the callsign N7ARE (The 1x3 "N" calls were new brand back then).



In 1980, while on vacation, I upgraded to Advanced Class on the fifth floor of the Atlanta, Georgia FCC Field Office (my only time I have been inside a Field Office of the FCC) and then in 1981 upgraded to Extra Class, passing the coveted 20WPM code test in much better temperature conditions at the FCC exam session held at Fort Douglas Utah (This time in front of an examiner from the San Francisco field office.) Times have definitely changed from the days when you either had to go to the FCC or they came (in the case of SLC twice a year) to where Volunteers have regular, accessible sessions as we do now. I decided to keep my N7ARE callsign since on CW it tends to roll off of the morse key quite nicely. It doesn't have any difficult to send or receive letters and I liked it. When I lived up north I was quite active with the Utah Amateur Radio Club and the Utah VHF Society. I also had fun participating in Fox Hunts held quite regularly.

I am glad we have a great club down here in Dixie and I see only good things for the future. I guess I need to crack down and apply for Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA) membership. Then I guess I can really use the term "Old Man" in relation to ham radio. Geesh, it seems like yesterday when I was first licensed and was still a kid! I have enjoyed over the years operating HF, both CW and SSB (mainly QRP). My Worked All States award is endorsed for all contacts confirmed on 40 meters, all on SSB, and all while running QRP power (5 watts input). That was a real challenge.

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Gary's Biography (Continued)

If you don't think so, try working Maine, New Hampshire or Florida on 40 with 5 watts. It takes patience and someone willing to really listen for you. Before moving to St. George I also dabbled in weak signal VHF SSB/CW along with several good friends in the area who did likewise. In all, I have worked 15 states on 2 meters.



My most memorable VHF experience in my ham radio hobby came in December of 1983 when I completed a two-way QSO with Owen Garriott, W5LFL, aboard the Shuttle Columbia. Garriott was the first astronaut to take a ham radio into space, pioneering the way for an increasingly well-developed amateur radio space program.

"It was my good fortune to take the first amateur radio into space on STS-9 in November 1983," Garriott said. "In my spare time only, I managed to hold up an antenna to the window and to talk to amateurs on Earth."

The W5LFL Columbia contacts were the first communications between an astronaut and people on the ground outside of "official" channels, which are usually reserved for presidents and heads of state. Only about 250 hams were privileged to have managed a 2-way contact with Owen. Many more heard his transmission and received a reception report confirmation. Garriott had originally proposed the idea of taking a ham radio into space on his first space mission, Skylab 3, but was unable to due to timing and other complications. Ultimately, though, he persisted and was able to obtain permission to fly a small hand-held transmitter/receiver aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia.

"When in orbit over land, I could make a CQ, which is a general call, and see who responded," Garriott said. "I used a well-designed, hand-held antenna, known as a 'cavity antenna', which could be velcroed to the window. It was about 24 inches in diameter and looked somewhat like a large aluminum cake pan. The transceiver then connected to the antenna."

In addition to the general calls, Garriott had made a few plans to send out a call to specific Earth-bound hams at prearranged times and dates.

"I had specified particular times and frequencies beforehand," Garriott said. "Among others, I was able to speak with the Amateur Radio Club in my hometown of Enid, Oklahoma, with my mom, with Senator Goldwater, K7UGA, and with King Hussein, JY1, who was an avid ham."

Since that first voyage into space, NASA has continued to see the usefulness of bringing ham radios into space, and astronauts have been able to speak to hams on earth on dozens of shuttle flights, as well as on the International Space Station. That contact in late 1983 made me the 1st Utah ham to work an astronaut in orbit. Incidentally, one of our very own fellow Dixie Amateur Radio Club members, Stephen Peterson, KI7L, was one of the other two hams in Utah who made one of those historic first 2-way contacts with W5LFL.

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Gary's Biography (Continued)



Currently I enjoy serving as ARRL-VEC Volunteer Examination Liaison for the test sessions we hold each and every month. I look forward to the 4 additional sessions we will hold each year on Saturday to enable some applicants who cannot ever make the 3rd Wednesday sessions.

I was happy that I was able to assist the club this past year serving as Vice-President (although I think that position is only to jump in upon the untimely demise of the President (which fortunately did not occur!). Unfortunately, my work and travel schedule kept me from several Board meetings.

I also really enjoy maintaining and improving the Club web site. I developed it from scratch and love to play with HTML. I am still primarily old school, but have recently started using WordPress Blogs for several new sites for my work related projects. If you have any concerns or questions regarding web site, or can offer some suggestions, please e-mail me at: n7are@arrrl.net

Finally, I am excited about the future of the Dixie Amateur Radio Club and appreciative of those early pioneers here in this area that saw fit to establish this great Club. I hope that we can all continue to improve on the legacy that was set out for us.

73,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to be "A03".

Gary O. Zabriskie, N7ARE



CLUB MEETING

March 21, 2012 7:00 P.M.

245 North 200 West; St. George



The next General Meeting of the Dixie Amateur Radio will be on Wednesday, March 21, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the St. George Community Building located behind the Gayle M. and Mary Aldred Senior Citizens Center Building at 245 North 200 West in downtown St. George.

There will be two ARRL-V.E. conducted test sessions held in March 2012. The first will be held on Saturday, March 17th at 1:00 p.m. at the Hurricane City Library and the other on March 21st at 5:30 p.m. at the same location as the Club meeting.

Check the *Club Meeting Info* page of the Club's web site for details on the next meeting when they are available.

Please e-mail Newsletter stories, personal bio's and photographs for publication in a future edition to the Club's Newsletter Editor Jaden Taylor at ke7zpd@gmail.com