

WA4IWL NEWSLETTER

www.earsradioclub.org



May, 2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I am very pleased with the recent trend toward increased volunteerism in EARS. An audit committee and a scholarship committee have both served our club in the past few months, and now we have numerous volunteers for a committee to plan for Field Day on June 26-27. John has taken up planning our annual banquet, now to occur in January 2011. Additionally, Mel and Charlie have continued to maintain our contacts with Englewood Community Hospital and ARES/RACES. Tom, who also supplies our refreshments at the meetings, remains our vigilant preparer for the Lighthouse events, including the recent procurement of new QSL cards for EARS. Naturally, all the officers have been a big help; and, our newsletter editor, Vic, has been awesome with his efforts to line up guest speakers and other programs. Furthermore, a few visitors at the

April meeting stated their intentions to join our organization and earn their ham licenses; and, I believe Ken ordered some books to aid in this endeavor. Apparently the membership is taking a more active role in the meetings, as the past two meetings have gone a little longer than usual due to in-depth discussion of numerous topics important to our club. As usual, please read over the minutes to get a better idea of what we have been up to, as a busy month between meetings can be a long time to forget things.

73,
Matthew Henry-KE4VEM

SECRETARY'S REPORT



Gene Reilly – KI4FJJ

Following are the minutes of the 15 April 2010 meeting of the Englewood Amateur Radio Society.

The meeting was opened at 7:35 P.M. by President Matthew Henry, KE4VEM with the pledge of allegiance to our flag. Introductions were made. The following guests introduced themselves; Loretta Henry, Englewood, Andy Yager, Rotunda West, and Mark Mull, UK1NBC, Englewood. There were 19 members and 4 guests in attendance.

Secretary's Report: A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the minutes as recorded in the April newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: Mike Daly, K4MWD presented the treasure's report. Last month's bank statement total closing balance was \$7,066.85 with \$4,276.63 in the checking account. Deposits totaled \$986.00 of which \$695.00 was from the sale of the Drake amplifier. Expenses totaled \$142.13 most of which (\$114) were amplifier parts. A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept to Treasurer's Report as presented.

Correspondence: President Henry received a email from John Cerniglia, W4JAC, indicating a willingness to Chair next year's Christmas Dinner Committee and to explore moving the party to a later date. Additional correspondence, Mathew reported that he received via an email notification that the ECHO/ ILP node would be able to re-broadcast the NASA shuttle audio on 146.590 MHz. He urged members to check it out.

Committee Reports:

Sunshine: Marcia Fowler, KA1GCV, reported that a "get well" card was sent to Mary Lou House on 5 April.

Publicity: None

DX: Tom Hawes, WA3PRC, reported that there has been some activity on the air from Iraq.

Testing: Marty Horowitz, NAFA, stated that four candidates were tested – all were successful (one Tech, two General, and one Extra.) Testing is held on the 2nd of the month at 10:00 AM at the Venice Library, 300 South Nokomis Ave.

Hamfest: The 2010 Charlotte County Hamfest was a success and well attended on Saturday AM, but poorly attended on Sunday. Therefore, the plan for next year will be to reduce it to one day.

Field Day: The dates for 2010 will be 25, 26, 27 June. Site problems were discussed – shade, tent and antenna locations. We need to buy and prepare food for 25 people rather than 40. A Field Day Committee was formed to include Chair Ken Anderson, JR House, Tom Hawes, Keith Kelly and Howard Kuhlman. Mark Mull indicated that

he would offer his property for the Field Day. It was decided that Ken Anderson would visit Mark's home to determine its potential for a Field Day site.

Old Business:

1) **Reminder** that Tom Hawes was kind enough to get us new QSL cards, therefore, we need to use them for Field Day.

2) **The Christmas Party Chair;** this will be discussed further in New Business.

3) **RACES;** Mel Rathbun, W9BSN, reported – the SET (Simulated Emergency Test) took place on 10 April. Mel Rathbun, Vic Emmelkanp, K4VHX, and Charlie Utz, K1QNF, checked in early and began to operate in the SET from the Englewood Community Hospital. At about 1036 the EOC was suddenly shut down. On 14 April we received an email from IT explaining the shut down was due to a pre-programmed lock on the office computer. Apparently the EOC didn't have an appropriate back up system. Evidently, we need to reassess role of computers in the set operations. Hopefully, this problem will be resolved and we'll be able to continue to improve.

4) **The EARS Scholarship Committee;** the Committee reported that an outstanding student has been selected from an excellent array of candidates. Chair Gene Reilly expressed appreciation to the members of the Committee: Mel Rathbun, Marty Horowitz, and Mike Daly for their hard work on behalf of the Committee.

5) **Audit Committee;** Chair Keith Kelly reported that the committee was impressed with the fine organization, professional documentation and the exemplary job performance of our Treasure Mike Daly. A motion was proposed and seconded and passed that Audit Committee report be accepted. The Committee recommended that the Treasure should have receipt book to properly account for the multiple EARS cash transactions. A motion was proposed and seconded and passed to allocate funds to purchase a club receipt book up to \$100.00.

New Business: 1) Christmas Party (Annual Banquet) Chair John Cerniglia, proposed a motion that the date for the Annual Banquet be moved to end of January 2011. The motion was passed.

2) Vic Emmelkamp proposed that the club move \$1,000.00 from the checking account to a CD fund. After discussion, it was decided to table the motion until our next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned - 8:55 PM

Ken Anderson W4JQT and Gene Reilly KI4FJJ
Secretaries for the month of April

Treasurer's Report



Mike Daly - K4MWD

Last months bank statement reports total closing balance of \$7,066.85 with \$4,276.63 in checking.

Deposits totaled \$986. \$695 of which was sale of the Drake amplifier.

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Submitted 4/15/10

Mike Daly K4MWD
Treasurer

EARS OPERATOR PROFILE

A chance to get to know your fellow EARS members better.



Name: **Ken Blackshaw**

Call Sign: **WINQT**

Where Did Ham Radio Go? – Or Waiting for Cycle 24 (Plus a little bit about me)

Okay, I'll tell the truth. I am a "Ham." That is, I am an amateur radio operator. I have been licensed by the FCC since 1956 and other hams know me by my call sign – WINQT. That second figure is a one – not an "L."

Most folks think ham radio is an anachronism, and indeed you are on the right track. Although there are more than 20 licensed hams on Nantucket, I can only think of one that is younger than 40 years old. Most of us are 60 plus.

Ham radio operators are creatures of the sun. Most of us don't have tans, but we live by something called the Solar Cycle. Our sun goes through a cycle every 11 years where sunspots come and go. You are probably only vaguely aware of sunspots but their presence or absence can have quite an affect on our planet.

If there are a lot of sunspots, the upper levels of our atmosphere get quite excited, and so do radio operators. Hams around the world (almost 3 million have licenses) are anticipating sunspot cycle 24. My ham radio history started with Solar Cycle 18.

That was back in the early 1950s when Nantucket was a very different place. Almost no one had a TV set. I remember going to a friend's home to see a Red Sox game – shadowy figures on the screen and we could never actually see the ball. Radios were the little box we clustered

around to keep in touch with America and the world.

We lived on Chestnut Street. My family owned the Inquirer and Mirror newspaper. My grandmother, Grace Turner, would come down the hallway every morning to wake up my uncle Gordon. Gordon was a ham radio operator, W1QWI. "Nana Grace" would turn on Gordon's radio and then continue on down the back stairs to start things going in the kitchen. Soon I would hear strange accented voices calling "CQ," as well as smell good aromas of breakfast. These same stimulants would reach Gordon's sleepy head and he would rouse and move over to his operating position in his radio "shack" and start answering those voices from around the world. Although we lived on an island, miles from anywhere it seemed, this little side-room off his bedroom became like a nerve center connected to everywhere.

In the morning, it was Europe coming in. Later in the day it was Africa. I learned about Mozambique and South Africa before I learned about New Jersey. Around dinnertime we would hear Argentina and then into the dusk the skip would work westward and the charming accents of New Zealand and Australia were there with us.

After Gordon made a contact, he would write out a special card called a QSL card that he would send through the mail to confirm he had talked to that other person. In return, postcards came to Nantucket from exotic places and would get taped up like wallpaper on the walls of the radio shack around the special map that we would use to aim our antenna across the great circle path to anywhere on the planet.

I learned that radio was more than turning dials and talking into microphones. No, it also involved getting up on our roof and assembling great metal structures called beams with electric rotors attached. As I walked up Chestnut Street I'd look to the roof and know whether Gordon had been talking to Europe or Texas by the way the beam was pointed.

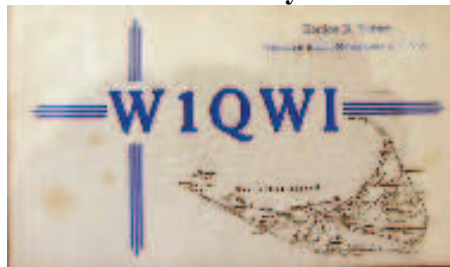
I also learned inadvertently about the dangers of electricity one day when a piece of gear Gordon was working on set the carpet on fire in his bedroom. I ran down the stairs screaming, "The house is on fire!" thoroughly alarming Nana

Grace, and upsetting Gordon, who had quickly smothered the little flames with a blanket and was dismayed I'd gotten everyone excited.

In 1956, at age 15, I got my own ham license. I haven't been continuously active on the ham bands but have kept renewing my "ticket" over the years, so I've kept my original call sign – W1NQT.

Hams use phonetics to get these call signs across, helping to distinguish 'n's from 'm's, 't's from 'd's, for instance. Officially I would be "whiskey one November, Quebec, tango." In reality hams like to have fun with these spelling aids. NQT proved a challenge for me. For 30 years I was stuck with "New Quarts of Tomatoes" – kind of nerdy. But in the mid-80s I ran into W8NQT in Ohio, and he rattled off "W 8 Never Quits Talking," and I've been "W 1 Never Quits Talking" ever since. Some will tell you it's quite appropriate.

So why do we care if the upper layers of



earth's atmosphere are excited or not? It's the difference between radio waves skipping back to reach a spot on the other side of the earth, or having them just vanish out

into space. It means that ham frequencies that are silent right now will become crowded with signals, voices from far away places.

When cycle 24 hits, hams with low powered radios and simple wire antennas will have the world, literally, at their fingertips. This is the way it was for me as a teenager in 1958. As a high school student I had received QSL cards from almost 100 different countries. I had them from all continents, including Antarctica. There were still some states that were eluding me. I was almost convinced that the states Utah and Montana had no one living in them. But ironically, Hawaii and Alaska were easy (although still not states themselves).

Here in the early 21st Century, hams still finds ways to be radio pioneers. Fifty years ago it was Morse Code or AM radio. Now we have many more ways of communicating. Some hams transmit television pictures. Others are into digital

modes. If you listen it sounds like the old “pssst” we used to do to attract someone’s attention, but with a computer connection, text prints out. We relay signals with passing ham satellites and even talk to other hams living on the International Space Station.

On Nantucket, local hams talk to each other using a repeater station that rebroadcasts our signals from a high spot, extending our line of sight to the whole island and the Cape. Hams developed repeater technology in the late 60s and it is the basis that everyone’s cell phones use today.

These days it’s not so tough to get your own license and callsign. You no longer have to learn to send and receive Morse Code, just some basic electronic theory and the FCC rules governing how you must operate. But with your license you will acquire a huge group of international friends, all waiting to talk to you.

If you like to fish, think of casting your line out into Nantucket’s waters. Some days you catch nothing, but you keep on casting. When you get a bite, you don’t know what’s on the end of your line until it reaches the beach.

If you love this, broadcasting your “CQ” into the ether from your radio provides the same thrill and mystery. You are casting your signal out, but how far? Who is out there waiting to hear your voice? Hearing a voice from afar repeating your callsign and then giving his (or hers) provides an unimaginable thrill. Your circle of friends will be almost infinite.

As I type these words into my computer, two ham radio transceivers glow beside me, one with at least three Morse Code signals from hams chatting with each other, their pitch separating one from the other. The other radio monitors the Nantucket Repeater to see if any local hams are out and about. Clicking onto the “DX Cluster” on the web, I can get a quick snapshot of what’s happening across the bands. I can see the top frequencies being used are in the 21 Megahertz range so I know Solar Cycle 24 is still in the future. I can also see that today is the day for the Bulgarian Radio contest. The bands are busy with hams from eastern Europe competing to see who can make the most contacts. By the time you read

this you will have missed the contest. But – perhaps next year?

Local Happenings:

VE Exam Sessions: The exams are given at 10:00 A.M. the 2nd Saturday of each month in the conference room of the Venice public library, 300 South Nokomis Avenue, Venice, FL. The exam cost is \$15.00. Contact Jack Sproat-W4JS, w4js@juno.com, 475-1929.

RACES: Communications Training Nets are held on the last Wednesday and Thursday of each month. The Wednesday night Emergency Communications Information Net begins at 8 PM on 146.745(-)MHZ with a PL of 136.5

On Thursday the Englewood EOC will conduct their Tactical Net beginning at 9:30 a.m. on 146.865(-) MHZ. The countywide tactical net begins at 10:00AM on 146.745(-) PL 136.5

QCWA Chapter 53 Meeting: 11:30 A.M., 1st Wednesday of each month at Denny’s on Bee Ridge Rd., Sarasota, October through May, and the Panda Pavilion in Venice June through September.

Snowbird Net: Net is twice daily; first on 14.293 MHz at 10:00AM and on 7.233+- MHz at 7:00 P.M.

Connecticut Connection Net: Net is twice daily at 8:00 A.M. on 14.343+- MHz and at 6:40 P.M. on 7.184+- MHz.

Two Meter Nets

EARS	146.550 -	Wednesday	7:30 p.m.
NPARC	147.120	Tuesday	8:00 p.m.
CARS	146.745 -	Daily	8:30 a.m.
TARC	146.580 -	Tuesday	7:30 p.m.
TARC	146.805 -	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
PRRA	146.255 -	Sunday	8:00 p.m.
NICE	146.430 -	Daily	8:30 p.m.

LOCAL AREA HAMFESTS- MAY & JUNE

None Scheduled until October in WCF

You can go to the ARRL web site below for details regarding all hamfests.

<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests.html#listing>

Check out these sites on the Internet:

<http://home.flash.net/~av8tor/radios/shuttle.htm>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE55R07120090628>

Weekly Area Amateur Breakfasts:

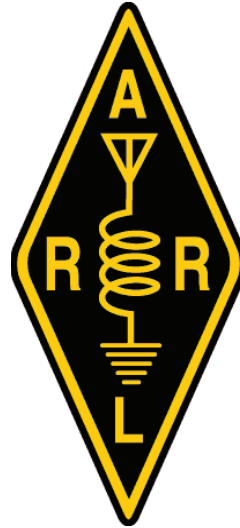
- Tuesday, 7 A.M. at Denny's in Englewood
- Tuesday, 8 A.M. at Good Times in Englewood
- Tuesday, 7:45 A.M. at Peach's in Venice
- Friday, 7:45 A.M. at Peach's in Venice

Pictures of the Denny's Breakfast Club 2010





If you are not yet an ARRL member add your support and join **now**.



Editor/Publisher:

Vic Emmelkmp-K4VHX

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www.earsradioclub.org