

June 2023

The

Volume 4 Issue 2

# Messenger 2.0



Blackstone Valley Amateur Radio Club's Quarterly Newsletter

W1DDD.org

## Bellingham Public Library

### OVERWHELMING SUCCESS

By RONALD R. BLAIS—KB1RYT

Beneath a leaden sky, punctuated by the chill of an early New England spring day, a cadre of BVARC members trekked to the Bellingham Public Library on Saturday, April 29, as part of the club's continuing commitment to community outreach.

At its destination, BVARC joined 23 local businesses and organizations for the library's inaugural Bellingham Business Expo, which culminated the local library's National Library Week activities.

Coordinated by Mickey Callahan, K1WMC, the club employed a two-pronged program of outdoor and indoor displays in promoting its message and club purpose.

The outdoor display featured two operating radio stations. Mickey set up his "QSO a go-go" portable radio trailer, which permitted visitors to operate, if desired. Nearby, Mike Kenney, K1ETA, set up and demonstrated his QRP portable radio station's capabilities.

The indoor display featured some vintage radio equipment, a Morse code station



and assorted written and visual material, featuring the history of ham radio, its purpose, the benefits of the ham radio hobby and the public service hams render

# From our President

## **FIELD DAY - JUNE 23RD, 24TH & 25TH**



**Hello Fellow BVARC Members,**

*In the next few weeks we will once again, as a group, come together for our largest and most detailed planned annual event, Field Day! But the question that I have to ask is simply, what do you plan to do that weekend? How do you plan to participate in this year's event?*

Our shout-out for onsite operators could use a few more names on just about every band and mode. We have SSB, CW, FT4, FT8, Digital etc. for you to operate on. If you have never worked FT8 for example, what better place to try it. There will be experienced operators there just about 24 hours a day so if you can't sleep just let us know and we'll be sure you get on the air.

If you've never seen someone who can operate CW to a very high degree of skill and speed, you haven't seen one of our newest members Randy Thompson, K5ZD, operate. This alone promises to be very exciting and something to watch from a distance.

Randy was inducted into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame in 2008 and as we heard at our May 22 BVARC monthly membership meeting, will be participating in the WRTC (World Radiosport Team Championship Contest) in Italy on July 8 and 9. Don't miss out on this!

As in previous years, we will have demonstrations of varied types of amateur radio communications. From QRP to satellite operations, using BVARC's own tri-band antenna atop a tower and wire antennas strung between trees, we will have something for everyone. I must also say up front, satellite operations may be a bit touch-and-go because it's my understanding this year we are limited to only one functional satellite. Check with Bruce Wood, W1BRU, for more specific detailed information and at what time-of-day the satellite flyover is expected.

This year, digital operations will play a more significant role and will be operated from inside or outside of the trailer of Paul Fontana, KC1IEN, depending on the weather. If you're interested in this growing area of amateur radio, the place to be is here!

There will be demonstrations and talks about various antennas and modes such as QRP and this year I understand there will be a discussion and demonstration regarding Fox Hunting.

Our annual GOTA (Get On The Air) station for the general public will be in full operation. Talk with Mickey Callahan, K1WMC, to determine what help he may need as he once again will be operating this station from his Ham Radio A Go Go trailer. That is the finest looking radio station in a trailer I've ever seen.

So please consider stopping by for the afternoon, or the morning or both. Stay the weekend. But remember, this is your club and the more you become active in our various outings or club events such as Field Day, the more complete you will feel and want to see us succeed. So help us on Friday, June 23, starting at noon or anytime on Saturday, June 24, or Sunday, June 25. We can absolutely use your help.

If everyone does only one thing, there won't be anything left to do but have fun!

Thank you and enjoy your summer!

73, N1RGK

Ken Trudel

President & CEO, BVARC



# SHARING FUN WITH KIDS

By BOB JONES – WB1P

In the late 1970's, a couple of technical high school teachers from the New York city area, who also held amateur radio licenses, developed a plan to bring a contest-like, one-week program featuring amateur radio into our nation's schools.

They called it the School Club Roundup (SCR) and it would allow students to actually operate a radio under the supervision of a licensed operator. This activity would be open at all school levels – elementary, secondary and college. The third week of February was selected for this initial operation because this time period tends to be a somewhat quieter time in schools. Announcements for this first event were placed in ham radio publications.

My recall tells me that my first SCR participation was sometime in the mid 1980's, when I was serving as the principal of Coleman Elementary School in Woonsocket. I ran the idea of operating from the school library by the school librarian since each class visited the library on a weekly basis. She was enthusiastic and offered her support.

Next came antennas. Since ten meters had recently been wide open, my old homebrew ten-meter ground plane seemed to be a decent choice. With the help of the custodian, the antenna was soon in place, resting on the flat roof.

Now I needed operators as I still had administrative duties and could not play radio all day. Fortunately, a number of BVARC members stepped up including Ray St. Onge, one of BVARC's founders and holder of the original W1HW call, as well as father of Dave St. Onge, and Norm Thibault, W1AUT, father of the BVARC's current trustee, Patty Vilnit.

Contacts were made with several European and South American countries that week. One contact that stands out was one with a Polish station. That operator brought his daughter to his microphone and

## Coleman principal and pupils ham it up

By LINDA A. DOHERTY

Some to the call

Matthew R. Dassault, a third-grader at the Kevin K. Coleman Elementary School, made friends the other day with people in England, Russia, Czechoslovakia and the Ukraine. And he didn't even leave his seat, nevermind fly.

Dassault, the son of Richard and Nancy Dassault of 21 Second Ave., and his classmates are taking part in a national ham radio contest this week that challenges schools to talk to as many stations as they can in one week.

Robert E. Jones, principal of the school at 96 Second Ave., set up his own radio equipment in the library, and the pupils just can't get enough.

"It's really cool," Dassault said, "and I talked to a guy named Ivan who lives in Europe. He likes the radio, too. I wish I had this in my house."

The contest is sponsored by Brooklyn Technical High School, Brooklyn, N.Y., and schools throughout the country are participating. Jones, who has held a ham radio license since he was 14, wanted to take part with the hope of encouraging pupils to pursue careers in science and technology.

"The radio is very uncomplicated. All I have to do is speak into the microphone, and I get responses from those frequencies that are listening," he said.

Ham radio sets can only be used for hobby, not business purposes, according to regulations established by the Federal Communications Commission. "They're only available for people who want to make friends," Jones said.

Judging from remarks made by librarian Margaret W. Bierden, that is no problem for the pupils.

about it," she said. "It's great for them because most of them don't have any concept of the radio except for hard rock."

Addressing another FCC regulation, Jones said children can use the radio, as long as there is a licensed operator nearby.

Jones set up the station in the library, and it runs by a simple antenna and electrical outlet.

"The only expense of this project is my own purchase of the equipment, which I did years ago," Jones said.

A wall map is next to the station to show the countries of the people to whom the pupils have spoken.

Because Jones cannot run the radio all day himself, a member of the Blackstone Valley Amateur Radio Council has volunteered to op-

erate the system and keep the contest going. Also, according to Jones, the children hate to see the radio turned off.

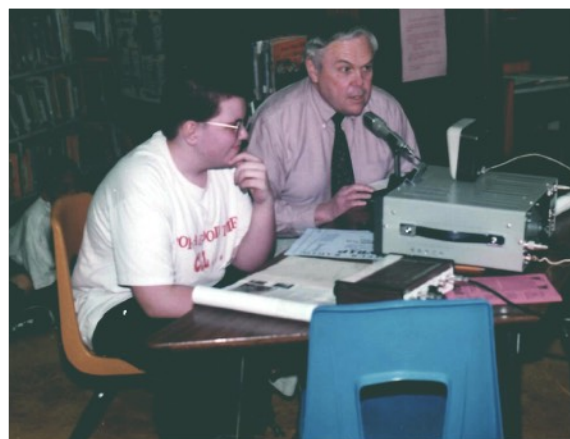
Christopher Lagor, son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Lagor of 20 Cold Spring Place, said, "I talked to someone in England, and we talked about the weather. ... It was pretty awesome."



Call Photo: Francis A. Pelletier

### Future disc jockeys of America?

Pupils at the Kevin K. Coleman Elementary School get a chance to speak to people in other countries as part of a national ham radio contest. Principal Robert E. Jones, seated, set up the station in the school library. At the microphone is Luchana Bari, and standing are her sixth-grade classmates Christopher Lagor and Therese Palladino.



she and one of our more vocal fourth-grade girls carried on a QSO for several minutes. The two became pen pals and this friendship continued for at least a number of years.

Fast forward a few years! I was transferred to the East Woonsocket Elementary School in 1990 (now Leo Savoie Elementary School) and decided to continue participation in the SCR. Unfortunately, the propagation

cycle had bottomed out so operation was limited to 40 meters using a dipole stretched between the second-floor library and the school's flag pole.

On the first day of the SCR I checked into East Coast Amateur Radio Net (ECARS) and briefly explained what I was doing and that I would appreciate any calls up in frequency. To my astonishment, the calls came fast and furious. For the first and only time in my ham radio life, I had a pileup!!

One unique contact on 40 meters was with the father of one of our fifth-grade teachers who lived in Florida. After connecting with him as a scheduled contact, the teacher picked up the microphone and said, "hi dad." The faces of the fifth graders present dropped. Remember, this was long before cell phones and email!

I did make a few contacts from my home QTH during this year's version of the SCR. Unfortunately, in my mind anyway, most of these contacts had morphed into the typical contest-type exchanges, that is, "you are 5-9 in Rhode Island ...73 and QRZ." There seemed to be little interaction with and between students. Just my opinion!



By *MARK HOFSTRA—KW1X*  
*Field Day Committee Chairman*

It's that time of year again for radio amateurs to test their emergency preparedness and operating skills! On June 24 and June 25 the Blackstone Valley Amateur Radio Club will be participating in the 2023 Field Day!

The event is being held at the North Scituate Senior Center, Route 102, in North Scituate, Rhode Island. The club will be operating in class 2A (two transmitters, more than 3 operators) with a GOTA (Get On The Air) station and a VHF station as well. Modes of operation will be CW, Digital, and SSB. The GOTA station is for visitors, new hams or hams that are inactive to "get on the air" and make some contacts.

Field Day operations commence at 2 p.m. Saturday and conclude at 2 p.m. Sunday. We hope to be on the air for the full 24 hours so night owls are welcome! We are still in need of operators so please come out even if it's only for an hour or two to operate and socialize. There is a sign-up sheet available to reserve your time using the following link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1A3LQloSIDnUuzRnZlf93Y17TCBNxQ3SUwPHW4au0N7k/edit?usp=shari>

We will be doing a preliminary set up on Friday, June 22, beginning around noon. We will be

setting up antennas (including a 30' tower with tri-bander to be raised near 4 p.m.) shelters and other miscellaneous things. Saturday morning around 9 a.m. we will be setting up the stations and doing some final testing. We need help on Friday so if you have a little time come down and give us a hand. We will also need help on Sunday afternoon for taking down all the antennas, breaking down the stations, loading the trailer and general cleanup.

Saturday afternoon lunch will be sandwiches provided by Jim, K1GND, and Ann Johnson. A \$5 donation will be requested per sandwich. Drinks will be provided. Saturday evening will be potluck. A signup sheet for the potluck dinner will be announced a couple of weeks before field day. There will be no grill but there will be small camping stoves available for heating things up.

Activities included in field day will be a possible satellite contact by Bruce Wood, W1BRU. Matt Penttila, NA1Q, will be doing a kit building activity. Mike Kenney, K1ETA, will be demonstrating some QRP radios and antennas to highlight the magic of making some contacts with minimal power.

Field Day is the high point of the ham radio calendar! Come out, have some fun, and enjoy the camaraderie with club members, families and friends. The more people we have the more successful we will be! For me, this is my favorite event and I look forward to it every year.

For more information feel free to reach out to me at [mphofstra@comcast.net](mailto:mphofstra@comcast.net) or call me at 508-922-2229. Let's have a safe and successful Field Day!



# BVARC to Visit the Chatham Marconi Maritime Center

By MICKEY CALLAHAN— K1WMC



I'm pleased to announce that BVARC has planned a visit to the Chatham Marconi Maritime Center and

Museum in Chatham, MA, on Cape Cod on Saturday, Oct. 14, 2023.

The executive director of the center, Mary Taylor, has been contacted and she is excited to learn that BVARC will be making the trip to Cape Cod and promises to make our visit a memorable one. The cost for the museum tour is \$9 per person.

For some background and details about the center, please visit their website at [www.chathammarconi.org](http://www.chathammarconi.org).

As most, if not all of you know, Marconi made his first transatlantic wireless communication from a site not too far from the center's location in what is now known as Wellfleet, MA. Our daylong trip will consist of a visit and tour of the museum as well as an opportunity for members to operate (CW only) the station co-located with the center.

Weather permitting, we'll also travel a few miles north to Marconi Beach that is supervised by the US National Seashore Park Service where we can set up one portable station for a short period and make contacts using SSB and CW. Please keep in mind that there are some restrictions to operating at Marconi Beach and as a group we'll need a permit to operate. This will be obtained prior to our trip. For those who wish to familiarize themselves with the

guidelines for amateur radio operations at Marconi Beach, they can find these listed online by searching Cape Cod National Seashore Massachusetts.

Mary has also put me in touch with Ron Farris/WA1RF



who is a member and trustee of W1WCC along with being a member of the local club, WCC Amateur Radio Association, that assists with the operation of the museum. Ron has committed also to helping make our visit an enjoyable one.

As part of our day trip, I'm in the process of finding a nearby restaurant that we can all meet for dinner prior to your departure for home or elsewhere. If anyone wishes to stay overnight, you are basically on your own to find accommodations. The Chatham Chamber of Commerce can assist in your search.

As of now, 16 members have expressed an interest in going based on a poll conducted at the May 22 meeting. If anyone has any further questions, they can contact me at [mickc@comcast.net](mailto:mickc@comcast.net). Further details will be forthcoming at the next scheduled club meeting to be held on Monday, Sept. 25, 2023.



during national emergencies and natural disasters. Bruce Wood, W1BRU, also set up and explained the equipment and strategies he utilizes to make satellite contacts.

At noon, Ken Trudel, N1GRK, club president, incorporated two ARRL videos in making his verbal presentation focusing on the amateur radio hobby.

Club members welcomed visitors and answered questions throughout the session. Bernadette Rivard, library director, reported 187 patrons coursed through the library during the expo.

Another highlight featured Mickey and Bob Beaudet, W1RYC, a BVARC charter member, presenting a set of 2023 ARRL yearbooks, marking ARRL's 100th anniversary, to Rivard in appreciation for the library's invitation to the club.





# THE "CRAPPIE" ANTENNA



By JIM JOHNSON—K1GND

I look at QST magazine and marvel at some of the ingenious ways the average ham operators with modest equipment go to a remote location, set up a radio station and get on the air. Their emphasis is always focused on simple, portable and lightweight gear.

As curious thoughts went through my mind, I wondered if I could put together an antenna that would be lightweight and completely portable using only what I had available in the "junk box".

Sometime ago Mike Kenney, K1ETA, gave me a "crappie" fishing pole that just sat in the corner of my shack. Each day I'd look at it and just forget about it. That was until I saw a recent QST article by K1RO outlining the "Eagle One Vertical Antenna".

Basically, the antenna described was a fiberglass pushup pole being used as an antenna mast. The mast height was 31 feet high when fully extended.

At first, I thought the "crappie" might be a little too short since it measured a little over 23 feet (7.2 meters) but I decided to forge ahead with the plans I had floating in my head. I reasoned if I were able to mount the "crappie" on some kind of a post, I could make up for the lack of height. Mike and I had been trying different configurations of end fed antennas and we put together a 25-foot-long random wire with a 30-foot radial. (See Figure 1 & 1-A).

First, a heads up on what might **not be allowed** inside local or national parks. Generally speaking, **it is not ok** to hang

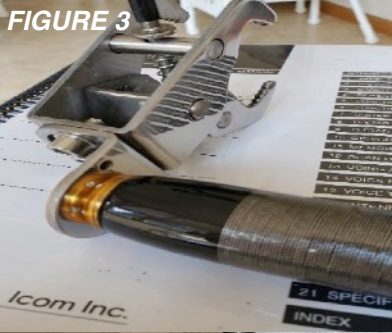
wires in trees, drive stakes into the ground, or spread wires and guy lines that interfere with other visitors.

That being said, my plan had to include a mount system that would accommodate most of the situations I would encounter which required a "junk box" search . . . again. I came up with a clamp type support sold as a CB mount. (See Figure 2). Now I had to figure out a method to connect the clamp to the "crappie pole" without damaging the "crappie pole." (See Figure 3).

I removed the end cap from the bottom of the "crappie pole" and drilled a 3/8-inch hole in the cap. I inserted a 1-inch bolt through the hole in the previously mentioned CB mount (see figure 4). Replace the cap into the pole and you have a mount to attach to a park bench, a fence or to a bumper on your vehicle (See Figure 5). The 25-foot wire and radial can be attached as pictured (Figure 6). The red wire is the 25-foot antenna and the black wire is the radial. These are connected to a BNC connector and attached to the radio.

Good luck and go work some new ones.

73



# Silent Keys



Edward Krajewski, 96, (WA1CIG) of Blackstone, passed away March 19. He was the loving husband of Winifred (Winnie) Krajewski and father of Carol Lancisi, Kathleen Laquerre, Michael Krajewski and his wife, Linda, and Karen Nutter and her husband, John.

Ed joined the U.S. Navy when 17, serving aboard the attack transport USS Lamar for three years during World War II.

Ed worked for 43 years as a machinist and maintenance man for Whitin Machine Works. He was a member of BVARC as well as an accredited volunteer ham radio license examiner.



## FRANK V COSTA, SR W1YIF

Frank was a navy veteran, attaining the rank of radioman second class. His love for communications continued throughout his life in work and recreation. He was a talented ham radio operator in his retirement, getting up all hours of the day to make contacts across the globe looking for that rare DX.

Frank was one of only four DXers in R.I. who had worked and confirmed all the entities that are possible, 340. That put him at the top of the DXCC Honor Roll, which is a major honor among DXers. He did nothing special, just methodically followed DX news and kept records of who was going to what country and when. He quietly did his thing and, usually, before the rest of the world figured out who was on and where, Frank already had the DX station in his log on two or three bands.

He also was a member of the Rhode Island DX secret society, which met on Sundays at McDonalds.

Frank loved CW and was very proficient in it. He later got into JT65, FT8, and FT4. He notched over 2,500 contacts for the DXCC challenge. He also worked PSK31 and RTTY digital modes.

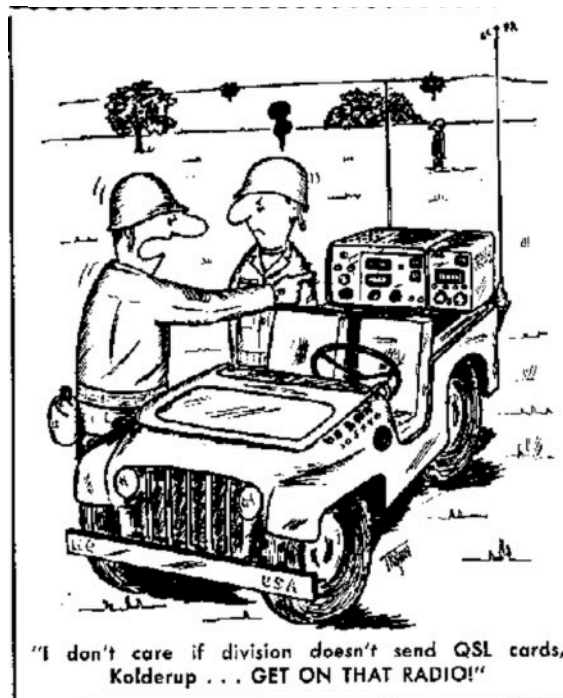


# Estate Sale of W1YIF

Contact info: Russ (KA1ERL) ka1erl@cox.net

All prices are asking, if you think the price is too high, make a reasonable fair offer.

Radio Yaesu FT-1000D	\$850
Yaesu Desk Mic MD-100 a8x	\$85
Yaesu MH-31B8 Hand Mic	\$30
Yaesu DVS-2 Digital Recorder	\$150
Yaesu External Speaker SP-5	\$130
Whole Package	\$1,200
Amp Ameritron AL-80B	\$1,100
MFJ-989C Versa Tuner V	\$200
Ant. Analyzer RigExpert AA-30	\$125
Yaesu FTM-100DR VHF/UHFC4FM Digital Dual-Band Transceiver	\$250
Yaesu FT-2500M	\$80
Yaesu VX-3 hand held	\$75
Yaesu FT-50R hand held w/ manual but no charger	\$75
Icom IC-T90A hand held	\$125
Switching PS 25 Amps Surge, 22 Amps Continuous at 13.8 Vdc MFJ-4225MV	\$85
Daiwa SWR & Power Meter CN-103L	\$75
MFJ Antenna Selector MFJ-1701	\$125
West Mountain Radio RIGblaster pro	\$75
Triplett Model 630 VOM	\$70
Vintage Philmore Model # FS45 Combination S.W.R. Bridge and Field Strength Meter	\$20
Make an offer on the books.	
ARRL Handbooks	
1990 \$ ?	
2010 \$ ?	
ARRL Books	
Small Antennas for Small Spaces 2011 \$ ?	
W1FB's Antenna Notebook 1993 \$ ?	
Antenna Book 22nd Edition 2011 \$ ?	
Amateur Radio Transceiver Performance Testing 2013 \$ ?	
ON4UN's Low-Band DXing 3rd Edition 1999 \$ ?	
Radio Amateurs World Atlas by DARC \$ ?	
Hammond Citation World Atlas \$ ?	
World Atlas Executive Edition 4th 2003 \$ ?	



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Kit fun.

# The Common Birthday Bet

MARSHALL CROSS—W1HK

What are the chances that two people at the next BVARC meeting have the same birthday (day and month, not year)? How many would it take to wager a "safe" bet?

The answer is in William Feller's classic textbook: "Introduction to Probability Theory and its Applications."

He teaches the probability of finding a common birth date (P) in a sample size (X) is:

$$P = 1 - [ (1-1/365) \cdot (1-2/365) \cdot \dots \cdot (1-X-1/365) ]$$

For some representative values of X:

<u>X (Number of Hams)</u>	<u>P (% Chance of Common Birthday)</u>
5	3
10	12
15	25
20	41
25	57
30	71
35	81
40	89
45	94
50	97

I would say that when 30 or more are present it's a worth a try and 40 or more a pretty safe bet.

73, W1HK