

FEEDBACK

AUGUST 2016

WW1USA Completes its Tenth Event

In spite the water problems that cost six hours of prime operating time on Saturday afternoon, WW1USA reached 515 hams from the US, Canada, Mexico and Cuba over the weekend. Operators also talked to many visitors to the Museum about amateur radio including some visitors from amateur radio clubs in St. Joseph, MO and Idaho.

This was WW1USA's tenth operation June 2014. Organizer, JCRAC member Herb Fiddick, NZØF, used the occasion to review WW1USA's mission. The mission, Fiddick said, was three-fold. First, to bring awareness to significant events from World War 1 during this centennial commemoration of the Great War. Second, to help make people aware of The National WW1 Museum and Memorial so that they may visit the Museum or participate in any of its outreach efforts to help the Museum fulfill its mission of helping people remember, interpret and understand the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community. Third, to provide a positive image of amateur radio to the public.

Over the course of ten operations, WW1USA has contacted over 12,000 other hams around the world, been looked up almost 33,000 times on its QRZ page, and visited with 100's of folks inside and outside the Museum. Fiddick reported that the feedback he had received was overwhelmingly positive, thanking the operators for helping to commemorate the battles and sacrifices of WW1.

Also, while not a stated part of our mission, Fiddick observed that the station offered unique operating opportunities to around 200 hams in and around Kansas City. As does Field Day, WW1USA provides people an opportunity to use new equipment, to sit side-by-side with experienced HF operators, and to experience new modes. WW1USA, Fiddick noted, does about 4 times a year with a wide variety of equipment and people.

The KC area is blessed with a lot of good HF operators that love to share their experience with others. WW1USA events are low key and not fast-paced, so there's time to talk and to learn. We hope many more operators in the area take advantage of these opportunities in the coming years.

WW1USA has scheduled one more event for October 8-9, 2016 and hopes to schedule three or four more for 2017.

AUGUST MEETINGS

August 12 -- DMR, Chuck Kraly, KØXM

August 26 -- UHF Shootout, Lon Martin, KØWJ.

The Johnson County Radio Amateurs Club normally meets on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month at 7:30 PM at the Overland Park Christian Church (north entrance), 7600 West 75th Street (75th and Conser), west of the Fire Station.

Much of the membership travels to the Pizza Shoppe at 8915 Santa Fe Drive for pizza buffet and an informal continuation/criticism/clarification of the topics raised at the meeting ... or anything else.

LEAVE THE CHURCH, TURN RIGHT (WEST) ON 75TH. TURN LEFT (SOUTH) ON ANTIOCH. TURN RIGHT (WEST) ON SANTA FE. PIZZA SHOPPE IS JUST PAST THE SONIC ON YOUR LEFT.

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Johnson County Radio Amateur Club, Inc.*

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All email addresses are available at w0erh.org

July meeting minutes were not available at the time of publication.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

In a great example of Ham helping Ham we need



to point out **Eddy Paul, KYØF**. Eddy

gathered a team to help Harry with remove

antenna for his house. Eddy has been helping Harry with his equipment as well.

Unfortunately I do not have the names of the others that help Harry. We will find out who you are as you deserved big thank you for supporting Harry.

Mark you calendar for the annual Ensor Auction. The events will start Friday evening October 28th with the campfire and camp out. The auction will be Saturday October 29th starting at 11 am. Now is the time to look through your shack and select the item that needs a new home.

- Bill Gery - WA2FNK

A Fox Hunt Goes to Pot

A Hambone Story by Jaimie Charlton, ADØAB

“This on-foot fox hunt will be a lot of fun, you said. The arboretum is a perfect place to hold it because it’s big and sort of woodsy, you said.”

“Dude, shut up and keep looking!” snarled Hambone as he and his younger brother worked their way through the off-trail brush of the Johnson County Arboretum searching for their ammo can/radio transmitter in the failing July evening light.

“I put that portable fox in the crotch of this tree, or was it that tree?” asked Hambone of nobody in particular. “I’m pretty sure it was right on this main trail through the park. It’s gotta be here someplace.”

“In case you haven’t noticed, Hammy, we haven’t been on a trail for a long time. We’ve been feeding the mosquitoes and who knows what else in these weeds for over an hour, all because you wanted to be the big guy.”

“Shut up, Dude.”

“You said you had a really good hiding place. But everybody found it in less than 45 minutes. Even your camouflage paint didn’t fool them.”

“Shut up, Dude.”

“Denny, the last guy, offered to bring it back. But you said oh, no, go on to the pizza party, you’ll bring it in. Now, he’s having fun and we’re out here hungry and lost!”

“Shut up, Dude.”

“You made that transmitter so it shut itself off after an hour and a half so now we can’t even use a HT to find it. And, the batteries in your flashlight are almost gone and it’s

getting dark and I think we’re lost in this jungle.”

“Stop whining, Dude, and search! Oh, and I designed that fox right.”

“Sure you did, Hammy. That automatic turn-off was genius.”

“Be still and learn, Dude. The heart of that fox is my little Fusion HT. I added a Raspberry Pi that I got from Baaron, you know, that college kid in the club? The Pi generates all the hunt signals, sends station ID and controls the HT. I also added some extra batteries so the thing could run for at least a week if left on. That’s why there’s a separate shut-off timer. We don’t want the thing running by itself.”

“So, how do you turn it on?” asked Dude, taking a little bit of interest in the fox.

“Simple, just press that little red button on the top of the box.”

“Does that start the Pi and the HT?”

“It doesn’t,” explained Hambone, happy to get away from the problem at hand. “I didn’t have time to finish the software. It just turns on the transmitter and sends whatever the mic picks up. The default freq is the Fusion repeater.”

“That sounds like a bug to me.”

“Yeah, it is. But, I didn’t have time to fix it.”

“Speaking of bugs,” hollered Dude, “Look at the size of that spider!”

“Dude, that’s no spider, that’s the fox!” Those legs hanging down are the antenna’s ground radials.” Shouted Hambone as he ran to retrieve his toy from high up in a tree crotch.

“I told you we would find it, no problem. It was up in a tree right on the main trail. Just like I said,” admonished Hambone, caressing his fox-in-a-box. “This baby really worked great.”

“I don’t know where we are, Hammy, but this is no main trail. I don’t think this is a trail at all. We’re lost!”

“We are not lost! We could follow this trail back to the car, but I’m hungry for some pizza. Let’s take a shortcut through these weeds.” Said Hambone pushing into the tall growth and indicating the way with his flashlight now struggling to maintain the faintest orange glow.

“Hambone, I can’t see anything! Where are you?”

Hey, these weeds aren’t weeds, they’re weed. A whole lot of weed!”

“Stop right there!” shouted a voice so loud and close to Hambone’s ear that he could smell its smokey breath.

“You, too, boy, don’t move!” shouted a second voice equally close to Dude.

Frozen in their tracks, both boys chorused, “Who, who are you?”

“No, who are you guys and what are you doing here?” demanded First Voice, as Second Voice tied the boys’ arms tightly behind their backs, causing Hambone to drop his beloved fox.

“What’s this thing?” asked Second Voice picking up the radio transmitter.

“We’re radio hams,” quivered Dude. “We’re on a fox hunt and that’s the fox.”

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"I don't believe you, you're coming with us." With that, the voices put bags over the boys' heads and started pushing them, stumbling, through tall weeds, or should I say, weed?

Hambone, true to form, 'marked his territory' in his usual way.

"Damn, watch your step! This guy just peed," said First Voice as all four of them pushed and tripped their way through the field.

The boys tried to stall and shuffle along as slowly as they could, but the cold steel pressed against their backs encouraged them to move faster.

After some minutes of tripping, prodding, and tripping again, the boys were shoved through a door and sensed light through their head bags. Their captors pushed the boys into chairs and re-tied their hands to the chairs.

Meanwhile, at the Ham Club pizza party

"I don't know how you guys do it," commented Denny over a large plate of pepperoni pizza slices. "You always seem to beat us to the fox."

"It's easy," added Dom. "Experience. After a little practice you learn how to keep shortening your HT antenna and going in the direction of a stronger and stronger signal. You know you are really close when you don't have any antenna on at all. That's when you get out of the car and walk."

"This one was tough," added Tim. "My Doppler system led us right to the arboretum, but we couldn't drive past the parking lot. We had to go back to Dom's low-

tech method of walking around with a HT.

"Has anybody heard Hambone or Dude? I called them both a while ago, but got no answer," asked Denny.

"I'm sure they're on their way," opined Dom. "Hambone gets lost easy. He needs his GPS just to get out of his garage.

Look! They've put out some more pizza," added Dom as he picked up his plate and headed towards the counter.

Meanwhile, back in the park, Hambone and dude are not on their way.

A third voice joined the first two, "Who are these guys?"

First Voice responded, "We found them snooping around the field. No light, just this thing they call a fox. They claim to be radio hams, but they look like DEA agents to me."

"We *are* radio hams and we weren't snooping!" shouted Dude, never one to be intimidated.

"Yeah, yeah," sneered First Voice. "You stupid DEA guys have been looking for us for a long time. We know you're out there and we know how to hide. You just got lucky tonight."

You're wrong! I haven't gotten lucky in months!" added Hambone.

"Shut up, pee pants!"

"Hammy, when *did* you get lucky? whispered Dude."

"Not now, Dude."

"Knock off the chatter, you guys!"

I don't believe them," stated Second Voice. "I think they are DEA agents pretending to be radio whatever? We can't just let them go."

"Yes you can," said Dude. "We're just kids, nobody believes anything we say."

"Shut up!"

Their car's in the parking lot. There's a big stone abutment just down the road. They could accidentally run into it. It's hard to see at night especially after a few drinks," suggested Third Voice.

"We are amateur radio operators!" shouted Dude. If you don't let us go right now, the FCC will track you down and electrocute you. My license is in my wallet. Look for yourself."

"Me, too," said Hambone. "If you untie my hands, I'll get it for you and I'll even show you how that toy fox works."

"Nice try, boy," said Third voice. "I can get both your wallets myself. Oh, and you can tell me how to work your toy. I'd kinda like to see that before you have your accident."

"We'll make a deal," said Dude. "You can keep the fox, give it to your kids, if you let us go."

"Well, maybe," said Third Voice. "Tell me how to make it work."

"First," said hambone, "Open the top."

"What the... This is just an old ammo box painted camouflage."

"Yes!" continued Hambone.

"But the best part is inside."

"If this thing explodes, you're both dead."

"It's not going to explode. It's a toy. See that red button inside, push it."

"Okay, now what?" said Third Voice with a puzzled look. "It's not doing anything."

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“That’s funny, it should make sounds and wiggle around like a fox. Let me have a look,” said Hambone. “It might be broken.”

“That’s why we couldn’t find it,” cheered Dude. It’s broken! I can fix it. Untie me.”

“It’s not as broken as you’re gonna be after your little meeting with that abutment,” added Third Voice.

“I think these boys need a few drinks and a little partying before going for their joy ride. Hand me that bottle of Old Snowshoe vodka. Let’s get ‘em started.”

“Give me that cup, I could use some, too,” said First voice.

Meanwhile, back at the pizza party

“Hey guys, quiet down for a sec, I hear something funny on the Fusion repeater,” shouted Denny as he turned up the volume on one of his many radios that seem to live with him.

“I can barely hear it, but it sounds like Hambone and Dude shouting something in the background.”

“It sounds like something’s happening to them,” added Hal, an unusual but very useful combination of both a doc and a cop. “Let’s find them and have a look.”

“That won’t be hard,” said Denny. “The compass/distance feature of Fusion tells how far away they are and in what direction. It looks to me like they are still at the arboretum.”

The guys jumped up from their tables, each tossing a ten-dollar bill on the counter to pay for their

pizza, and headed for their cars.

As Hal drove, he called the dispatcher at his PD and asked for backup. Meanwhile, Denny was using his Fusion HT to follow the fox’s signal. Soon, the light of several cruisers could be seen heading towards the park.

Meanwhile, back in the park

“I think that’s enough vodka for them. Let’s put them in their car,” said First Voice.

“This ish fun, I relly like yur vodka. Give me shom more please,” slurred Hambone.

“Me, too,” slurred Dude catching on that Hammy was stalling for time. “Let’s shav another round.”

“Be nice boys and don’t make us drag you to your car and you can have some more.”

“I want you to carry me, that would be sho fun,” said Dude.

Second Voice, apparently not being in a partying mood, pulled the boys out of their chairs, retied their hands, bagged their heads and pushed them out the door.

“Easy, easy,” said First Voice. “We want them to be in good shape when they get in their car. Makes the accident look more real.

Oh, and grab that toy fox, or whatever it is, we’ll put it in the car with them.

Come on boys. We’re going for a little ride.”

“I wants t’drive,” said Dude to Hambone as Second Voice tucked his floppy body into the driver’s seat. “You always drive and now ish my turn.

Hammy, you can ride shotgun. Ha ha, that’s funny, that guy over there has a shotgun.”

Second Voice slid in beside Dude and drove the car to the

highway. Using the still transmitting fox, he wedged it against the accelerator, pointed the car at the abutment half a mile or so away, dropped the car in gear and jumped out. The car started with a lurch and accelerated straight down the highway.

“Look Hammy, I’m driving! And I’m goin’ relly fast, too,” shouted Dude as Second Voice jumped out letting the car go on its own.

Sirens screaming and lights flashing, the three patrol cars screeched into the parking lot just in time to see the three captors running away. Unaware that the boys were in the car heading down the highway, the officers, guns drawn, chased the captors into the woods.

“You guys really got here just in a nick of time!” exclaimed Hal to one of the officers. “Those boys will be safe now.”

“I’m not so sure,” said Denny still operating his HT. The Fusion compass is now pointing at the highway and we can still hear the boys laughing. I don’t think they’re in the park.”

“Oh my God, you’re right! I bet they’re in that car! We’ve got to stop it!” Exclaimed Hal jumping back into his car, making a screeching U-turn and accelerating down the highway as fast as his big Merc could go. “I’m gonna try to do a PIT maneuver to send them into that field. It’s gonna be close, hang on, Denny!”

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Hal's mighty Merc, its eight giant cylinders burning gas into torque, roared down the highway and quickly closed the gap between it and the boys' Corolla. Nearly matching speeds, Hal brought his right front bumper up to the Corolla's left rear bumper giving it a slight nudge.

The effect was instantaneous. The Corolla spun ninety degrees, lunged across the road and clawed its way into a field stopping only when its engine stalled.

"Hal, that was the best PIT maneuver I've ever seen!" exclaimed Denny. "Your feather-like tap was just perfect. And just in time, too."

"We've got the suspects in custody, they were hiding under an old trailer in what is the biggest marijuana patch I've ever seen," barked the patrol car's radio. "We're bringing them out now. But there's no sign of the boys."

The officers took the three suspects to jail where they spent the night.

An ambulance took the boys to a hospital where they spent the night. The boys were released the next day, their only injuries were near-terminal hangovers. Old Snowshoe really kicked their asses.

The three captors, later identified by Hal as members of the Schnitzel, an international drug cartel, were not released the next day. But, they too, had hangovers courtesy of Old Snowshoe.

"I guess we really weeded out some bad guys," said Hambone to no one in particular.

>> *JCRAC FEEDBACK* <<

The Amateur in Amateur Radio -- Chip Buckner, ACØYF

What I Did on my Summer Vacation

Choirs at English cathedrals typically take a break in July and August, which creates a need for visiting musicians. Every few years, the choir at my church, the Episcopal cathedral in downtown Kansas City, heads off to England to take advantage of this opportunity. This was such a year.

Preparing to go to England

-- Licensing

I hold an FCC license to operate a radio station, but FCC authority doesn't do me any good in the United Kingdom. A visit to the ARRL website, however, tells me that the United States has reciprocal operating privileges with a number of countries through the "European Conference of Postal & Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT).

Per the website, a traveler has to carry his original license, proof of US citizenship (a passport), credentials in English, French and German (an FCC Public Notice available on the website) and operate within the permissions granted by the particular country. Extra and Advanced licensees have full operating privileges in the UK. General class licensees have more limited privileges. There is no equivalent CEPT category for Technicians and Novices.

-- Hardware/settings

The plan is to travel with my 2m/70cm HT and chat with locals over the repeaters. I know about setting on US repeaters. Do the English do things the same way? It turns out that, just as many Americans have published websites to help American beginners, the English have done the same for

theirs. The "Essex Ham", for example, has a page called "Using Repeaters - The Basics". The page tells me many things that I know, but I pick up the tip that UK repeaters are configured for "narrow" bandwidth, rather than the "wide" bandwidth more common in the United States.

-- Repeaters

A Google search for the terms "Exeter amateur radio" and "Norwich amateur radio" leads me to resources in the two towns in we'll be visiting. Exeter has the main club net on our first night in town. Norwich has a "beginner" net on a convenient evening. Whether or not I qualify as a beginner in the US, I'm sure I can qualify in England. I check repeater settings, program the HT and am ready to pack.

Packing and Unpacking

Experience has taught me that the TSA gets nervous about unusual electronics. The HT and a copy of my license go in my carry-on luggage. I remove the antenna and put the HT on top so that it will be readily accessible. I'm not terribly worried about packing and padding because I am the only person who will be handling this bag on the way over and back.

Except that, on the first leg of our journey, we're in a small plane that is booked solid. The gate agent takes my carry-on bag and "as a courtesy" checks it for me.

Oh, dear. This wasn't part of the plan.

When reunited with my bag in the UK, I pull out the HT. The

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volume/channel knobs on my ICOM T70A are now leaning 10 degrees off of vertical, fused together (one knob sits inside the other) and immobile.

This is not good.

Tom Wheeler, NØGSG, would--of course--have the requisite tools in his luggage to fix anything. The only tools at my disposal are "ignorance" and "force". I apply both. Now both knobs turn freely. Channel select allows me to move among my presets. Output volume control does nothing.

Well, I'm in England. It's our first night. The Exeter Amateur Radio Society net it tonight. My HT might work. I tune in at the appointed hour and ... Nothing. Not a peep. I announce myself. "This is M/ACØYF. Is there a net tonight?" The repeater makes a happy sound and resumes its silence.

What have--or haven't--I done?

More Wireless Microphones

The original cathedral at Exeter dates from 1050. The current building was completed in about 1400. I know that the original clergy didn't use microphones, but their twenty-first century successors do.

The cathedral's needs differ somewhat from the theater. Whereas the theater may be miking dozens of performers on dozens of UHF frequencies, Exeter cathedral limits wireless microphones to four celbrants. Polarity isn't an issue. Clergy, as opposed to actors, may be relied upon to be standing vertically. Thus, although a wide-band, circularly-polarized, helical antenna was a good fit for outdoor theater in Shawnee Mission Park, a

narrow-band vertically-polarized antenna--or "aerial", as they call them in England--ought be a better fit for Exeter. I decided to hunt for it.

The vertical wires of the pair of dipoles don't show terribly well in the photograph (on the next page)

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The nave at Exeter Cathedral, facing the organ. Follow the center strip on the floor to the white structure under the organ, which appears to be the far wall. Look at the top right of the white arch ... and on the next page.

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but you may be able to see the two white supporting center pieces in the columns to the left of the arch. To give you a point of reference, you can see the top right corner of the center arch at the bottom left of the photograph below.



Rooftop Aerials

Yagi-and to a lesser extent, small dishes--sprouted from many English rooftops. This photograph (above and right), from Norwich, was typical. On the left is a satellite dish pointed south. Above it is a horizontally-polarized Yagi pointing sort-of easterly. To the right is a vertically-polarized Yagi pointing northerly. Television is typically horizontally polarized. What and why is the vertical yagi?

I asked the "tech guy" at our hotel about a similar set of aerials on his roof. The answer was such gibberish that I have blotted in from my memory.

Another Night, Another Net

We spent our second week in Norwich, on England's east coast, somewhat north of London. Once



An apparently-typical set of English roof-top aerials.

again the Cathedral used a small number of wireless microphones. Instead of the dipoles, however, the tech people had set up a short vertical. It worked, but I was more impressed with the dipoles in Exeter.

Norwich gave me another chance to check to see whether I had a usable HT. It was time for the "beginner" net. At the appointed hour I turned the still-functioning(?) channel selector to the pre-programmed setting.

Voices! The net was in progress.

"Are there any others who want to check in to the net tonight?"

"M stroke Alpha Charlie Zero Yankee Foxtrot." (The "M stroke" signalled that I was operating in England on a foreign license.)

The seconds of silence felt like an eternity. "Uhh, Yankee Foxtrot?"

"M stroke Alpha Charlie Zero Yankee Foxtrot."

"M Zero ... Alpha ... Yankee Fox ... What?"

"M stroke Alpha Charlie Zero Yankee Foxtrot."

"Ahh! M stroke Alpha Charlie Zero Yankee Foxtrot. Go ahead."

I introduced myself, explained why I was in town and answered a

variety of questions. Kansas City, they learned, was not sufficiently close to either Salt Lake City or New York that I was likely to know people they knew. No, I didn't think that 28 degree (Celsius, which is 82 degrees Fahrenheit) temperature was all that outrageous. My claim to having escaped 102F/39C in Kansas City literally elicited howls from the net.

I was quite the celebrity.

But I had a question, too. What ARE those things on the rooftops?

It turns out that the dishes are television coming from a satellite hovering "over the Congo". The horizontal Yagi is the older UHF television system, pointing to a main transmitter outside of town. The vertical Yagi is another, newer television system pointing to a sub-station in downtown Norwich.

And next ...

I'm back in the States, all sung out, with a semi-functioning HT and in need of a replacement. Fortunately, the next club meeting has a speaker to tell us about DMR. I'll be all ears.

>> ***JCRAC FEEDBACK*** <<