

QRA NEWSLETTER

QUANNAPOWITT RADIO ASSOCIATION

6 SAVIN STREET, BURLINGTON, MA 01803-2210

EMAIL: AA1M@ARRL.NET CLUB CALL: W1EKT

ON THE WEB AT: WWW.W1EKT.ORG

JANUARY 2014

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QRA WAS FOUNDED ON NOVEMBER 18, 1948

IN WAKEFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

1948-2014, OUR 65th YEAR

CLUB OFFICERS

President – Jeff Hollis, W1CKH
Vice President – Tim McNulty, K1TIM
Secretary – Bob Reiser, AA1M
Treasurer – Jeff Hollis, W1CKH
Club Webmaster – Brian Gudzevich, WO1VES
Club Call Trustee – Dex Wheeler, W1TUM
QRA Equipment Manager – Dave Libby, N1SJB

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Gudzevich, WO1VES 2012-2014
Bill Watt, W1HN 2012-2014
Barbara Day, KA1EDV 2012-2014
Phil Maguire, WA1HTP 2013-2015
Matt Gelardi, KB1YRQ 2013-2015
Jim Fisk, W1HL 2013-2015
Archives Trustee – Bob Reiser, AA1M

DECEMBER QRA MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

The annual QRA December membership meeting was started at 7:07 pm by club president Jeff Hollis, W1CKH. President Jeff invited all to help themselves to the food provided. Members Stephen Smith, N1YPI and Matt Gerald, KB1YRQ had volunteered to fetch the food for the festivities. They did a great job and we'll keep them in mind for next year. Thank you both, we had a great feast. President Jeff had each member who had brought a wrapped gift for the Yankee Swap draw a number between one and 18. Each person then picked a present in order and opened it in front of the group. Some of the presents were binoculars, metric hand wrenches, a rabbit antenna for TV's, LED flashlights, Merlot wine, Dunkin Donut coffee and gift cards and a soldering iron. Most opted to keep the gift they had picked.

Member Brian Gudzevich, WO1VES invited all to pass by his house on Franklin Street in Stoneham to check out his 30,000 Christmas lights, one string is supposed to be blinking "Massachusetts" in Morse Code. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM. There were 23 members and guests attending. (Respectfully submitted by Bob Reiser, AA1M QRA secretary)

WE ARE ON THE WEB AT: WWW.W1EKT.ORG

PROTECT YOUR GEAR FROM ESD

Electrostatic discharge, or ESD for short, has been a concern for anyone involved in electronics ever since we made the transition from vacuum tubes to transistors. I was schooled about ESD when I worked as a test engineer for a company called Doric Scientific shortly after I got out of engineering school, and I wrote about it when I was an editor for Test&Measurement World magazine back in the 1990s. If anything, it's even more of a concern today as electronic components get ever smaller.

In 1991, Bryan P. Bergeron, NU1N, published a two-part series on ESD

part 1: <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Technology/tis/info/pdf/9104019.pdf>

part 2: <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Technology/tis/info/pdf/9105028.pdf> in QST. His suggestions about

how to prevent ESD damage are as good now as they were 20 years ago:

- Consider using a room humidifier to increase the relative humidity in your shack, or wherever you work on electronic equipment to 65% RH or higher.
- Use grounded wrist straps when handling ESD-sensitive devices.
- Use grounded, anti-ESD work mats when working on electronic equipment.
- Use a grounded soldering iron and anti-static tools.
- Use anti-static bags and containers for storing and transporting electronic equipment.
- Connect the chassis of all your gear to a good earth ground.
- Consider purchasing a desktop ionizer to neutralize static buildup on your workbench.

I might also add consider grounding the chairs that you use in your shack or discharging yourself after getting up from the chair in your shack. I know that the worst electrostatic discharges that I experience are after I get up from my chair. You can even buy ESD-safe chairs

http://www.all-spec.com/products/Benches_and_Chairs%7CChairs_and_Accessories%7CCHR-00/,

but they are kind of expensive.

Personally, I use an anti-static mat that I originally purchased for use with a computer keyboard and a wrist strap that was given to me by an ESD consultant when I worked for the magazine. I use these religiously when building kits or working on any solid-state gear.

It's not hard to find anti-static products. RadioShack sells a wrist strap for only \$1.23

<http://www.radioshack.com/product/index.jsp?productId=2103245> !

You can find a whole range of anti-static products on Amazon, too. Wherever you get them, they're a good investment.

(Dan Romanchik, KB6NU)

KDA Custom Embroidery is owned by QRA member Paul Anderson, KA1GIJ and his wife Kathleen. For 18 years, Paul and Kathleen have been providing customized embroidery and screen-printing from their shop on Pearl Street in Reading. Names, monograms, call signs, logos and designs (stock or customized) can be stitched on hats, shirts, sweatshirts, polo-shirts and more. Purchase garments from them or provide your own.

Visit: www.kdaembroidery.com, email to kdace@aol.com or call Kathleen at (781) 942-0421.

LARRY'S AT IT AGAIN

Here is the latest experiment by Larry Keegan WA1PII, just go to this link:

<http://youtu.be/rO1I3r9pUpq>

SUPERNATURAL?

In a hospital's Intensive Care Unit, patients always died in the same bed, on Sunday morning, at about 11:00 am, regardless of their medical condition. This puzzled the doctors and some even thought it had something to do with the super natural. No one could solve the mystery as to why the deaths occurred around 11:00 AM Sunday, so a worldwide team of experts was assembled to investigate the cause of the incidents. The next Sunday morning, a few minutes before 11:00 AM all of the doctors and nurses nervously waited outside the ward to see for themselves what the terrible phenomenon was all about. Some were holding wooden crosses, prayer books, and other holy objects to ward off the evil spirits. Just when the clock struck 11:00, Pookie Johnson, the part-time Sunday sweeper, entered the ward and unplugged the life support system so he could use the vacuum cleaner. (From a friend in Vegas)

THE

Shameless Wolf

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Brian and the Shameless Wolf know technology. He can help you with your Computers, Networking, Printers, Home Theater, and even gadgets. Whether you're having problems with a virus, need a new hard drive, or just need to figure out which connector to plug your new DVD player into. The Shameless Wolf is here for you. So give the Wolf a call today for quick, affordable, and reliable technology services.

**QRA members get 25% off labor when you mention
this ad, compliments of Brian, WO1VES**

DEAD CROW RESEARCH

Researchers for the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority found over 200 dead crows near greater Boston recently, and there was concern that they may have died from Avian Flu. A Bird Pathologist examined the remains of all the crows, and, to everyone's relief, confirmed the problem was definitely NOT Avian Flu. The cause of death appeared to be vehicular impacts.

However, during the detailed analysis it was noted that varying colors of paints appeared on the bird's beaks and claws. By analyzing these paint residues it was determined that 98% of the crows had been killed by impact with trucks, while only 2% were killed by an impact with a car.

MTA then hired an Ornithological Behaviorist to determine if there was a cause for the disproportionate percentages of truck kills versus car kills.

The Ornithological Behaviorist very quickly concluded the cause: When crows eat road kill, they always have a look-out crow in a nearby tree to warn of impending danger. They discovered that while all the lookout crows could shout "Cah", not a single one could shout "Truck." (Blame Bill Hooper, W1QEC for this one)

WE ARE ON THE WEB AT: WWW.W1EKT.ORG

**NEXT QRA
MEMBERSHIP MEETING
IS THURSDAY
JANUARY 16, 2014**

AND WILL START AT

7:00 PM

OUR SPEAKER FOR THE EVENING WILL BE

PAUL DECKER, KG7HF

PAUL WILL GIVE A TALK AND SMALL DEMONSTRATION ON

MOONBOUNCE (EME)

QRA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The QRA holds its membership meetings at the Reading, MA Senior Citizen Center at 49 Pleasant Street in the old fire house. All are invited and holding an Amateur Radio license is not required. Meetings begin around 7:00 pm on the third Thursday of each month. We have very interesting speakers. Come join us and bring a friend with you.

DUES ARE DUE NOW
STILL ONLY \$15.00

Dues can be paid to the club treasurer at the next meeting or sent to him at:
QRA c/o Jeff Hollis, W1CKH, 46 Bond St., Reading, MA 01867-2432

IS IT WORTH THE EFFORT TO TRY TO SAVE AM BROADCAST RADIO ?

First, let me admit right up front that--even though I worked in broadcasting and was a personality on the AM radio band for many years--I am on record as predicting that the current 550-through-1700 kilohertz portion of the spectrum will be an amateur radio band in less than ten years. Well, now comes news that a current member of the Federal Communications Commission has mounted a crusade to try to save the AM broadcast band. You remember what AM radio is, right? There is probably a button on your car radio that says "AM." The one you never push unless you live in New York, Chicago or Los Angeles.

HERE IS, (<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/09/us/a-quest-to-save-am-radio-before-its-lost-in-the-static.html?pagewanted=1&r=0>) an article in the *New York Times* about Commissioner Pai and his hopes for keeping AM radio viable in the face of rapidly changing technology. And, more importantly, in the face of consumer desires and preferences. The article does a good job of refuting the ideas the commissioner has, so I won't repeat them here.

For many reasons, I hope he is successful. My heart says it is worth the fight.

My head, however, says, "Go find some other windmill to joust."

AM radio is dead. Kaput. Deceased. (Thanks to Don Keith, N4KC-- <http://n4kc.blogspot.com/>)

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