

THE Monitor

Voice of the Twin State Radio Club

July 2010



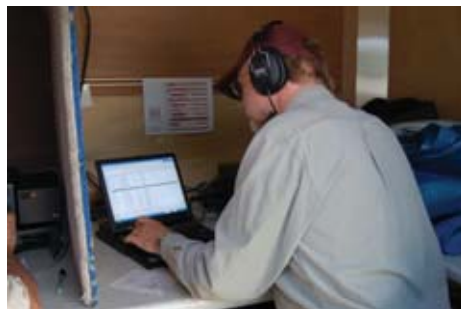
From The President

William Daugherty KX1Y

Even though there has been an extra week since our last club meeting, it seems like it's been several months since we last met. Between Field Day, the Prouty and my carpal tunnel surgery I have been overwhelmed. This isn't really a bad problem to have. Field day was very successful, the Prouty came off without a hitch and my recovery is going smoothly.

Field Day did have a few wrinkles. When we arrived to set up on Storrs Hill Friday we found workers haying the field. They were gracious enough to alter their plans so that we could get our towers up without much delay. Thanks to the efforts of Alan, N1YMQ, and Matt, W1SKE, we had our first GOTA station in several years. Alan also masterminded the cookout Saturday evening which was outstanding. My

favorite part of the weekend was when a fellow named Ed showed up after finding us on the ARRL web site. Ed had been a ham for five years but had never made a contact. After some encouragement he got on the 20m station and made quite a few contacts. This was very gratifying to me. A close second was when Dave,



N1HAC, made a 6m contact in Utah! This was only one of many 6m contacts made by Dave and others.

One area in which we could improve would be the number of contacts made. We went from over

1000 last year while operating 1A to only 320 this year operating 2A plus the VHF station. I realize Field Day is not a contest per se but one of the stated goals is to "make as many contacts as possible within 24 hours." I am not interested in returning to the bad old days of hyper-competitive activity but I think setting a goal of 1000 contacts would not be a bad thing. It is true that a number of our regulars were not in attendance this year and frankly I have no interest in being competitive with other clubs, but I think having a target number could be fun. In any event we certainly demonstrated that we can perform well under field conditions. A bonus was the terrific article in the Sunday



Twin State Radio Club, Inc.
PO Box 5078
Hanover, NH 03755

Don't forget to check out the TSRC Home Page!
<http://www.W1FN.org>

Valley News. It was interesting, well written and cast us in a very good light.

In this newsletter Alan shares his experience while acting as a course rover during the Prouty. My time was divided between the computerized registration and the incident command post. I am very pleased to report that for the first time we had fairly comprehensive asset tracking via APRS. Thanks to Joe, KB1FDA, Bob, K9UDX, Bill, KB1MOV, Bill, N1EMF, Glen, N1NKC, and Bill, WB1BRE, we had digipeaters, trackers and iGates spread throughout most of the course. This was no mean feat but we pulled it off and I couldn't be happier. I anticipate this system will grow even better for next year.

Of course the primary contribution we as hams made to the Prouty was the voice communications net utilizing area 2m repeaters. Dave, WA1ZCN, worked diligently as usual to coordinate this effort. It would be hard to overstate how much he contributed in this effort. Congratulations to all the hams who participated in this year's Prouty event. It is certainly a great example of what amateur radio can do

So while I recuperate it is nice to reflect on the successes the summer has given us so far. Now if we could just get some darned sunspots...

See you at the meeting!



Extra! Extra!

WMUR's New Hampshire Chronicle aired a segment on amateur radio and field day Thursday the 15th. The piece featured hams from the Contoocook Valley Radio club as they operated during field day in Henniker. W1FN was also graced by the presence of the press. Bob Hookway and Jason Johns from the Valley News spent a few hours hamming it up for an article in the Sunday paper. We had no problem giving them an earful!

PROUTY FROM THE TRENCHES

Alan Bradford N1YMQ



N1YMQ and Orca

We have all heard from the organizers about the Prouty and what a good cause it is (and it really is).

Here are some of my experiences 'From the Trenches'. That is away from the 'Main Command Center' where this year it looked like 'NASA Mission

Control'.

This year we had Vehicles reminiscent of the 3 R's; Rovers, Recovery, and Restocking

The 3 R vehicles cruise between SAG Stations (Stop And Go). They are the rest stops placed around the course. "Usually too close together at the start of the Ride and too far apart the closer you get to the finish line" one rider told me a few years ago. They also serve the world's best gourmet 'Peanut Butter N Jelly and Sliced Banana' sandwiches on the planet!

The Rovers help out any riders in distress. I have been a Rover mostly so this report will be obviously biased towards the Rovers.

The usual malady is a flat tire.

I think over the years most of the riders have heard my 'But it is only flat on the Bottom' joke at least once, and I get fewer and fewer smiles from it. I'll have to write some new material for next year.

Anyway, we carry spare tubes, a pump, and some warm water bottles. The best part is when we have the right size tube, the pump actually works, and the rider has his/her own warm water to drink.

When we stumble across a really broken bike (Too many spokes broken to tape up, rear wheel bent at a 90 degree angle from a guard rail attack, or "Ouch" the guy who lost his seat a few miles back), we call the Recovery Vehicle, or just put the bike in the Rover, and take them to the next SAG Station for repairs. (Please don't tell the Recovery guys we did that. We don't want them to think we are trying to steal their commissions!) This year I used my own vehicle, a black Ford Excursion, dubbed 'Orca' by members of the club. We can stuff a whole herd of riders in and still have plenty of room to toss some bikes in the back with the popped inner tubes and warmer water.

Other chores include the 'I lost my wallet somewhere back there' or I took off my favorite Prouty shirt off from 1985 at SAG 3, and cant find it now that

I'm at SAG 8' Relay. This is important stuff folks.

The last chore is to pick up all the road signs at the end of the Ride. We don't want the Prouty to be remembered week after week, month after month like 2 year old Hillary or Obama 08 signs.

It is very important to the riders to finish the course. We are glad to help. The smiles we get are worth the work, and we have a new 'Best Buddy' for the next 10 miles or so.

I am not making fun of any of this because it is a good cause (reason enough to do it), but we also have some fun along the way.

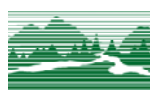
Come and join us if you haven't already.

HAPPENING AT THIS MONTH'S MEETING...

Carl Brandon of Vermont Technical College will be giving a talk at the next TSRC meeting on his CubeSat project that will be carrying amateur radio on board to the Moon. Please join us this Saturday, July 17, 9 am at Everything But Anchovies on Allen St. in Hanover.

CLUB OFFICERS

President: William Daugherty, KX1Y (603) 359-3745
william@will-do.com
VP: David McGaw, N1HAC david@endor.com
Secretary: Bill Brown, KB1MOV
bill.brown.tu78@alum.dartmouth.org
Treasurer: Chuck Sherman N3WTO (802) 765-9630
chuck.sherman@mac.com
Trustee: Dave Landry KA1CRP (603) 448-5788
daveka1crp@myfairpoint.net
Editor: Matt Bradford, W1SKE
matt.bradford@plasmatechnologies.com



Twin State Radio Club, Inc.
PO Box 5078
Hanover, NH 03755

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*ARRL Website <http://www.arrl.org/>
*NH ARRL Home Page: <http://www.arrl-nh.org/>
*Tom Frenaye K1KI-NE Div. Dir. k1ki@arrl.org
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