



# Scuttlebutt

April 2014

Issue 225

**Next Meeting-  
Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> - 1pm till 5pm  
Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center  
Sturbridge, Massachusetts**

## Captain's Cabin

Tony Brock-Fisher, K1KP

### Competition Drives Performance

Well, the recent FT5ZM DXpedition was sure to bring out the worst on the bands, and it has not disappointed us! Although I was too distracted by other things to get into every pileup on every band, I did work them on the high bands. Of course, I noted that there was the usual crowd of policemen, as well as the attendant psychos on frequency who are using the apparent large number of listeners as an audience to display their deviant personality disorders. Carl, N4AA, wrote about it in his editorial in the DX Magazine this month, and just this morning there appeared a post on eHam.net titled "Is Courtesy DXtinct"? By W6SDM.

This topic is as old as my time on HF. I first noted this kind of behavior during the 3Y5X Dxpediton to Bouvet in 1990. I analyzed the behavior then, and really, nothing has changed since then, except perhaps the cost of radios and DXpeditions, and the number of deviants on frequency.

There's a really very simple explanation of the downward spiral of behaviors on frequency. Let's assume the DX is operating split and running a large well behaved pile. Being rare DX, he brings out every type of DXer. For example, the only reason I developed any proficiency on CW at all was to work that Bouvet operation. I realized, that Bouvet had not been activated in decades before, and might not be activated for decades after, so this was my one chance to work them on CW. The same motivation exists for anyone who has the least interest in DX – if a really rare one shows up, better get on and work them. So what this means is that the customer base for a DXpedition includes operators of every skill level, including those that mostly just ragchew with their friends, using a nice fancy radio which they bought for themselves but have not really learned how to use, past it's most basic simplex mode.

These inexperienced appliance users, not wishing to miss the rare DX, come onto the frequency and start calling in the mode they understand – simplex. So at this point, a friendly policeman comes by, and gives them the head's up – "They're operating split"... or 'SPLEEEET SPLEEEET', or simply dididah didahdahdit.

The naive DXer now attempts to put his sophisticated radio in split mode, but gets things upside down. He's now transmitting on the DX frequency, and listening to the pileup callers on receive. He thinks he's got it right. Maybe he started out this way in the first place. In any case, he's now oblivious, because he can't hear the policemen! He keeps on calling.

Now the cops get a bit more emphatic. The miscreants are not responding to the their helpful corrections! So the cops keep on with their 'helpful corrective transmissions'. Juices start flowing, tempers start to raise. It soon becomes obvious that the whole world is listening to 14.195.

*\(Continued on page 5)*

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	<b>April 2014</b>	<b>Issue 225</b>
<b>Ship's Log</b>		
<b>Captain's Cabin</b>	Tony Brock Fisher - K1KP	1,5
<b>Directions to Meeting</b>		2
<b>April Meeting Agenda</b>		3
<b>W1HIS to Give Propagation Talk</b>		3
<b>February Meeting Minutes</b>		4
<b>Crew News – New &amp; Returning Crew</b>		4
<b>K1XM Keyer Selector for RTTY</b>	Barry Whittemore-NF1O	7
<b>NYC/LI &amp; WMA Area Meeting Minutes</b>		8

## Directions to Sturbridge Host Hotel

Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center is located on Route 20.

- From the North, East and West, take the Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) to Exit 9, Route 20 West.

- From the South, take either Interstate 84 or Route 131 to Route 20 West.

Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center is located on the shore of Cedar Lake, just past the first set of traffic lights.



## Area Managers

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The editorial deadline for the Scuttlebutt is the 10<sup>th</sup> of every odd month.

## April 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting Program

We HOPE to be able to hold the drawing for the YCCC Scholarship Raffle at the April Meeting! The Grand Prize is an Elecraft K3/100 kit. That being said, we are running a bit behind where we were at this time last year on the ticket sales and donations to the fund, and if we have not sold enough tickets to cover the cost of the prize and the commitment to the ARRL at the April meeting, we will have to delay the drawing to a later date. There will be a WRTC training session on May 31, and, if needed, we will sell additional tickets there and hold the drawing at that venue.

So bring cash or your checkbook to the next meeting -and buy lots of tickets so we can hold the drawing then!

(If we do have to delay, a LOT more tickets than needed may get sold and your chances of winning will go down!)

"Design and Construction of a Two Operator Station for Contesting and DX'ing"  
Fred & Anita Kemmerer, AB1OC & AB1QB

"How to be a better single operator" by Randy Thompson K5ZD

"Field Day from a Sailboat" by Chet Slabinski, N8RA

Scores Update by YCCC Scorekeeper Alec Berman, W2JU

Annual Election of Officers

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## YCCC's Chuck Counselman, W1HIS to give Basic Propagation Talk Andover Safety Center, Andover, MA. May 7, 2014 – 7pm

MIT Professor Chuck Counselman, W1HIS, will give a presentation on HF Propagation on May 7<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm, at the Andover Safety Center in Andover, MA. Hosted by the Andover Emergency Management Group (AEMG) this talk is a general primer on HF propagation.

The talk will be oriented towards the ham who has a 100-W HF transceiver, no amp, and no tower, just a trapped multiband vertical on the ground or a wire 25 ft above ground, and who rarely (if ever) works CW or any of the so-called digital modes. The goal is to enable this ham to choose the best combination of time and frequency to work, say, parts of the USA 50, 150, 1500, and 3000 miles away, the Caribbean, and Europe, by SSB on HF.

The level of the presentation assumes that the intended audience has heard of ionospheric propagation but is fuzzy about how the maximum and minimum usable frequencies (MUF & LUF) vary with time of day, time of year, and solar activity; and what happens around the times of local sunrise & sunset.

The practical, how-to, mechanical aspects of HF ionospheric propagation will be emphasized while the theoretical aspects are minimized. Just enough of the science will be discussed to help the ham remember why and when things happen. Covered will be daytime D-region absorption; critical frequencies, such as foF2; NVIS; normal daytime E and F, and normal night-time F2 propagation; single and multiple F-hops. Little will be said about paths longer than about 5000 miles (8000 km).

Web sites will be listed where ready-made propagation predictions can be found, and where customized propagation predictions can be generated for the individual's TX power, antenna, and mode (e.g., CW or SSB voice).

The Andover Safety Center is located at 32 North Main Street, Andover, MA 01810

# Yankee Clipper Contest Club Meeting Minutes

## Enfield, CT – February 2, 2014

The Meeting was called to order at 1:00pm by President Tony K1KP.

Tony K1KP started a roll call of the 48 members present asking each to tell the group about their ARRL DX contest plans

The Secretary's and Treasure's reports were given, a motion was made by K1XM to accept them, seconded by W1HIS.

There was no old or unfinished business.

Tony then made the following announcements:

Tony had several YCCC badges for pickup.

There is an opening for an area manager for Northern VT. If you are interested please contact Tony.

Tom K1KI gave an update on WRTC 2014. There are still plenty of ways that you can become involved in this event. Check out [www.WRTC2014.org](http://www.WRTC2014.org) under the volunteer tab.

Tony K1KP announced that there would be a Winter Contest University to be held on February 12<sup>th</sup> at the ARRL HQ in Newington, CT.

Tony K1KP announced that there would be a local NYC/LI YCCC meeting on February 18<sup>th</sup> and raffle tickets would be available.

Brian NJ1F announced the upcoming W1AW/1 operation at the K1TTT superstation. More information on the planned operation as well as a sign up form is available at [www.k1ttt.net](http://www.k1ttt.net)

Tony K1KP read a thank you letter from WRTC2014 for the sponsorships of three team villages.

Eric KV1J then gave a presentation on the incoming W1 QSL Bureau which the YCCC sponsors. There are a lot of people who spend countless hours sorting our incoming cards. There was a big round of applause and standing ovation for all the volunteers at the conclusion of his presentation.

Paul K1XM gave a very lively demo of his MOS switch. This project is like a Swiss army knife which opens up the possibility of automating even the simplest of tasks like locking out another transceiver in a multi single. Another application is selecting one antenna to transmit on and another for listening.

Next K1KP announced a 15 minute break so that members could buy raffle tickets and socialize.

Tony K1KP then resumed the meeting asking if there were any new members, which there was one returning member John KE1IH who was welcomed aboard.

Mark K1RX gave a presentation on operating at D4C during CQWW. He said that he experienced runs that he never had anywhere else he had operated from. Mark also noted that there are two direct flights from Boston weekly.

Chuck W1HIS gave a propagation presentation for ARRL DX. He said that "It is going to be very good"

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Paul K1XM and seconded by Jerry K0TV

Submitted  
Brian NJ1F  
YCCC Secretary

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## CREW NEWS

**Returning Crew @ General Meeting:** John Corini, KE1IH

**New Crew @ NYC/LI Meeting:** Sam Musitano, KD2EZL –family member of N2GC  
Leo Musitano, KC2FIX – family member of N2GC

**New Crew @ WMA Meeting:** Bob Dickerman, WA1QKT                      Christopher Dickerman, K1SMY  
Cynthia Dickerman, W1CAD                      Jenna Dickerman, KB1SMZ

*(Captain's Cabin, Continued from page 1)*

Why do people paint graffiti?

A large audience, in an emotionally charged atmosphere, are exactly the conditions that bring out the sociopathic deviants. Now they start up, with all sorts of bad language, name calling, music, replaying of other's callsigns, etc. This adds the fifth ingredient of today's pileup. So to summarize:

1. DX station appears on frequency
2. DXers appear to work him
3. Innocent or ignorant, some operators make mistakes
4. Policemen feel compelled to correct them
5. Sociopaths, drawn by the emotions and potential audience, begin to perform.

It was this way back in 1990 with Bouvet. And it's still this way in 2014 with FT5ZM. We have made no progress!

### **What does this have to do with Contesting?**

Now, What REALLY got my juices flowing on this subject was not the well-written post by W6SDM, but the very first one-line response, posted by G6NJR which reads:

“And the culture that is causing it is the contesting clan who have zero manners just crashing about as if they OWN the spectrum “...

My first reaction was “THAT'S RACIST!!!”, but then I realized 'Contester' was not a race (or is it)? In any case, G6NJR's comment constituted bogus, needless stereotyping of Contesters. I would challenge him to correlate the callsigns (of those who gave them) of the bad behaviors in the FT5ZM pileup, against any database of known contesters. It really frosted my clams that this comment totally hijacked the thread from bad behavior in DX pileups to Trashing Contesters.

*We need to change this perception. We need to find a way to show how:*

- Contesters build the most efficient and sophisticated stations of any sub-class of Amateurs.
- Contesters learn to operate those stations with an equally sophisticated level of skill.
- Contesters drive technology in hardware and software which reaches far outside of Amateur Radio.
- Contesters have the same Rights and Privileges to use the frequencies allocated to them as everyone else – and on the whole, do so with more class than other sub-species of Hams.

Competition drives Performance! W.O. Bentley used this principle in the 1920s to develop an automobile that had such high performance it dominated LeMans; and Bentley's startup company became appealing for the takeover by Rolls Royce. That principle continues today in NASCAR racing, supported by auto manufacturers competing to find the last ounce of performance. Today you can buy a 500HP street car from Ford or GM – would that have happened without competition?

If there's a disaster, the first communications out of the affected area will be by Amateur Radio. Assuming the disaster takes out the power grid, and perhaps knocks down towers and antennas, the first hams on the air from the area will be contesters who have practiced setting up makeshift stations in Field Day. And the stations that pass traffic to these makeshift emergency communicators will need to be large and powerful to compensate for the small, low antennas. Yup, contesters again.

If there's a disaster and my life or the lives of my loved ones depend on a piece of critical communications, I want *contesters* on both ends to get it through and get it right!

Amateur Radio exists for various reasons. In the US, it exists:

#### ***To recognize the value of emergency communications***

- How many contesters were on duty at the Boston Marathon Bombing?
- What do US contesters do on the last full weekend of June?

#### ***To advance the radio art***

- Who drove the improvement in receiver dynamic range?
- What branch of Amateur Radio was responsible for PacketCluster, which has been developed into a data communications system found in most police cruisers?

#### ***To improve communication and technical skills***

- What Ham activity places an emphasis on speed and accuracy of communications?

#### ***To increase the number of trained radio operators and electronics experts***

- What is the fastest growing sub-group of Amateur Radio?

***To improve international goodwill***

What subgroup of Ham radio is hosting an international competition from all countries and continents of the world, like the Olympics?

'Nuff Said. This column just about wrote itself!

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## **The Video Station Tour (VST)**

If you are interested in doing a 'Show and Tell' of your station, grab a video camera and make a 10 minute or less narrated video tour of your station. We'll 'air' a few of these at an upcoming meeting!

Your tour should be similar to what you would do for a guest ham visiting your station:

**Do Include:**

- An outside tour, showing antennas, towers, low band receive antennas, cable entrance, lightning protection.
- An inside tour of the shack, showing operating positions, main and secondary rigs, amps, computers, antenna switching, rotator controls.
- An explanation of the overall strategy of your station design, i.e. is it designed for single op, multi single or two, multi-multi? What unique problems did you need to solve and how did you solve them?

**Don't Include**

- Excessive discussion of common problems with a known solution
- Non-ham features of low common interest

The point of this is not to produce a polished, commercial quality video. The point is to communicate features of station design that might be useful for others – the "Gee, that's a neat way to solve that problem"!! kind of stuff.

As long as the video is of reasonable quality don't be too concerned about technical issues.

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The Yankee Clipper Contest Club is a proud sponsor of  
World Radiosport Team Championship 2014

## Using the K1XM Keyer Selector for RTTY

When I first saw info about Paul's Keyer Selector, I was interested, even though I will likely never be in a situation where it would be needed. After looking at the schematic, I could see that it was simply taking highs and lows in and sending them out.

NE1F and I have a somewhat unique situation where we do tag team ops where we both operate in the same contest and pass off operation of the radio. We have added Headphone and Mic mixers so we can both do SSB with no switching but we have had to manually switch the serial ports for RTTY ops.

On seeing Paul's keyer selector ([www.k1xm.org/Keyer\\_Selector/keyer\\_selector.html](http://www.k1xm.org/Keyer_Selector/keyer_selector.html)) I thought, why not send FSK through the switch? Paul saw no reason that it could not be done. To do this, I had to make a level converter for each computer as opposed to the level converter at the radio (K3). That was no problem, 2N2222s are cheap and cables were built cheaply and quickly.

I ordered the parts for the Keyer Selector. I opted to build it as designed rather than just the features I needed. That way if plans and op style change I will be ready.

When the Box was completed and the new custom cables were completed it was found that Mary's side was working fine but my side did not key the Keyer box as expected. After exhausting all of the possible hardware issues, there were none. I figured out that the SO2R box and software were causing my immediate issue. I have the YCCC SO2R box setup with my computer but not with Mary's.



I found that if I turned off the SO2R software it all reverted back to the N1MM/MMTTY running everything. This made a useful, though not perfect workaround. If we are doing a RTTY contest it will work fine but if I happen to see a CW spot that I would like to work I must put the SO2R software back on. After a little more experimenting I found that I could set the PTT back to the serial port with MMTTY and it would actually key both with the SO2R PTT and the switched PTT, so I can now run with SO2R software running.

Now, with this arrangement Mary and I can do all mode comms with very little switching. We used to have a mic switch and an FSK switch and Computer RS232

switch. With the Keyer Selector we only have the RS232 to do manual switching and that is only needed occasionally. The switch is modified to tie the RS232 TX from the radio to go to the RX lines in both PCs. That allows control to be switched to either while both can get data from the radio. Frequency and mode tracking is useable on both. Now we can have auto switching with RTTY where first one will win.

In Pauls design, the paddles are connected and the losing station gets a dit to the keyer to turn it off. This will not work for the FSK but it will be not routed through to the radio. A quick esc by the op will stop it.

The manual switches we have used served a purpose and have been helpful but do require us to remember to switch them. This little piece of automation has been a welcome addition, we now have no routine switching to do manually. Thanks for the design Paul, it is a great tool.

The SO2R box and the Keyer selector box are, by design, not things normally used together but even though I really use them both for other than what they were designed for, they do help out our station.

73 de Barry, NF1O

## NYC/LI Area Meeting Bethpage, NY – February 18, 2014

New York City / Long Island area YCCC meeting was held in conjunction with Long Island DX Assoc. (LIDXA), February 18, 2014 in Bethpage, NY.

Meeting was opened at 8 PM by LIDXA president John W2GW with introductions, club business, DX info followed by a discussion of DX activity.. At the conclusion of the LIDXA meeting, the floor was turned over to YCCC with Tom KA2D moderating.

Brian NJ1F, YCCC Secretary, talked about YCCC Youth Scholarship Fund and the YCCC raffle to be drawn in April. Raffle tickets were available. Tom KA2D, YCCC NYC-LI manager, talked about YCCC, its origin, goals and invitation to join. George N2GA and Diane K2DO did a presentation about their experiences in WRTC followed by a short video about WRTC2014.

A Discussion and Q&A followed the presentations.

Several YCCC members present renewed their annual dues along with two new family members. The young sons of Mike N2GC.

I want to thank John W2GW and LIDXA for their hospitality and the use of their meeting facility. 19 attended, with 12 YCCC members. Attached is a list of those present. Some are members of LIDXA and YCCC.

<b>Renewals:</b>	W2GW to 12/14	KS2G to 12/14	N2KA to 12/14
	N2MUN to 12/14	K2MFY to 12/14	W2FX to 12/14
	W2II, did not attend meeting, but he reported he renewed		N2GC reported is submitted dues

**New Members:** Sam Musitano KD2EZL –family member of N2GC  
Leo Musitano KC2FIX – family member of N2GC  
These two young lads are recently licensed and are on their way to become extra class.

Submitted by  
Tom Carrubba KA2D  
NYC/LI area manager  
YCCC

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## Western Massachusetts Area Meeting Peru, MA – March 2, 2014

The Western Massachusetts Area of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club held a regional meeting as part of an open house at K1TTT on March 2, 2014. The Open House's purpose was to allow anyone interested in learning more about contesting to see a multi-multi SSB contest in operation, ask operating or hardware questions, try out multi-multi operating, or other general questions.

A local Yankee Clipper Contest Club meeting was held at 3 pm to consider applications from anyone interested in joining, rejoining, paying dues, etc. New members were voted in, the Dickerman family, WA1QKT, K1SMY, W1CAD and KB1SMZ. Sixteen year old Chris, K1SMY, made 62 contacts.

The group was operating using the club call W2PV.

The club secretary NJ1F sold YCCC Scholarship Raffle tickets for the K3 Prize.

Attendees: K1TTT, K1MK, K1MAZ, K1XM, N1AW, NJ1F, NT2X, W1EQO, W1MSW, W1TO and WA1QKT

DX Hound: Pablo

Tom Homewood  
Western Mass. Area Manager

# YCCC CLUB RESOURCE INFORMATION

**DUES AND MEMBERSHIP STUFF** Dues for the year are payable as of January 1<sup>st</sup>. The YCCC has adopted a multi-tiered membership format as follows: Please note that payment of dues IS NOT a prerequisite for contributing scores to the Club aggregate, but IS for the various YCCC Awards Programs

**Full Member** - \$15/yr (Eligible for YCCC member benefits and electronic "Ebutt" delivery of Club newsletter)

**Full Member** - \$30/yr (Eligible for YCCC member benefits and paper delivery of Club newsletter)

**Family Member** - \$0 (Grants full membership to all amateurs residing at one domicile on payment of one member's "Full Member" annual dues and entitlement to one Club Newsletter sent to one domicile or email address. All members of said family are eligible for YCCC member benefits.)

**Student Member** - \$10 (Grants full membership to students at a reduced level. Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper or electronic delivery of the Club Newsletter.)

**Subscription** - \$\*\* (A "supportive friend of YCCC" - not a member but a possible candidate for future membership. Only receives club newsletter in paper or electronic form. \$10 for electronic "Ebutt" delivery domestically or overseas or \$25 for domestic paper delivery.)

**Club members** who move out of club territory and so are not eligible to contribute to club aggregate scores can continue to participate in the Club's e-mail reflector and receive the electronic "Ebutt" delivery of newsletter at no cost.

You can tell if you owe dues by checking your 'Butt mailing label or the Club roster in the Members Only section of the website.

**NOTE:** If your dues are paid to a March 31 date, then you now need to synchronize to the calendar year. Please see the "Dues" area on the Members Only section of the website for the pro-rated dues amount for a partial year.

**Mail your dues to the club treasurer, Chet Slabinski, N8RA, 462 W. Hill Rd, New Hartford, CT 06057.**

**SCUTTLEBUTT ARTICLES** should be sent to the Scuttlebutt editor, Steve Rodowicz N1SR, by E-mail at [n1sr@arri.net](mailto:n1sr@arri.net) The deadline for each issue is the 10th of the preceding month..

**Scuttlebutt Advertising:** Nominal Business Card sized ad, \$50 per year (6 appearances)

**CONTEST SCORES** should be sent to the club scorekeeper, Alec Berman, W2JU, preferably by E-mail at [scores@yccc.org](mailto:scores@yccc.org). Please include details such as numbers of QSOs, QSO points (if appropriate), and multipliers (all types); entry category; and power.

## CLUB GOODIES

**BADGES** YCCC badges are available from Tony, K1KP. Send \$3, name and call desired on the badge, and your mailing address to Tony.

**APPAREL** Contact Richie, W1STT. Email: [richd1313@aol.com](mailto:richd1313@aol.com)

**YCCC LOGO ITEMS** <http://www.cafepress.com/nlik>

**QSL CARDS** are ordered through Dennis Egan, W1UE. To order, send Dennis an email at [egan.dennis88@gmail.com](mailto:egan.dennis88@gmail.com), detailing card information per "QSL Request" form available at [http://www.yccc.org/members/yccc\\_qsl.htm](http://www.yccc.org/members/yccc_qsl.htm). You will receive a proof by email. Approve the proof, making any corrections, and return to Dennis *with payment* (make checks out to Dennis, not YCCC). Current price is \$50 (delivered) for 1,000 cards. Also available is the glossy version for \$70/1000.

**MEMBERSHIP ROSTER** is posed on the YCCC website. Updates are published in 'Movers and Shakers' when members move or change call signs.

**COMPUTER STUFF INTERNET REFLECTOR** There is an Internet mailing list for YCCC members. To subscribe, send mail to [yccc-REQUEST@yccc.org](mailto:yccc-REQUEST@yccc.org). Insert only the word "subscribe" in the subject of the mail message. (Do not send messages to the reflector that have file attachments, HTML formatting, use boldface or other fancy fonts, etc.)

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