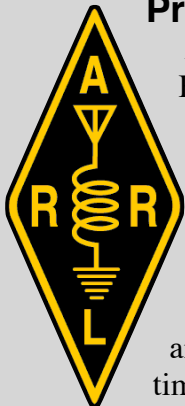


April 2011



### President's Message



Although Hamfest is long since over for this year, your Board of Directors is already busy with Palm Springs Hamfest 2012. Over the last few weeks we have been working with Steve Weed KO4QT, organizer for Quartzfest 2012, to try and work more closely together as our Events are so close together and we did not want to overlap as happened this year. So Steve and his Committee are moving Quartzfest to start one day sooner and ending on the Friday before our Event giving more time to attendees there coming to our event. Watch out for a large convoy of RV's from there this coming year. Not only that, we will be cross promoting both Events together. It sure is nice to have a cooperative group like the Quartzfest Committee to work with. Steve will be going to Dayton Ham Convention in May with one flyer promoting both events together. Evan KI6WNF, our Webmaster, will be designing the joint promotional Flyer that will be handed out in May at Dayton. Also, Gordon West who we have worked with to come up with a compromise by the Quartzfest group, will be promoting both events. He deserves a big Thanks from the Desert RATS. Anyway, Steve and Gordon will be having a presentation promoting our Events at Dayton.

Watch out for June issues of the Ham Magazines for stories about the Desert RATS. Gary might enlighten us more at the next meeting as this has just been announced and I don't have all the details yet to share with you. I'll be up in the Great White North in April at my summer cabin doing some improvements up there. So our VP Glenn will conduct the meeting.

Our next Event is in May. Camping at Joshua Tree did not work out so we will be finding a new location. It will still be held May 13, 14, & 15 with a picnic on Saturday, May 14. Michael Brennan KA6PGN who just put on the Antenna Seminar will be bringing along a portable Military Rhombic Antenna. He describes it like this:

*"The portable rhombic antenna has 4 towers 2 at 380+ ft and 2 at 190 + ft. The antenna is 6 wavelengths each leg (2 legs each side or*



**Peter Reinzuch VE7REZ**

*210ft each leg) at 28 Mhz and 3 wavelengths each leg at 14 Mhz. will work from 14 to 30 Mhz. with a tuner ? I have the 4 towers. 3 can put up a tower in 10 to 15 min each. I have done it in 5 min with 2"*

We hope to do some great DX with such an impressive wire antenna.

You are welcome to come operate the radio and talk to faraway places. Bill K6ACJ will demonstrate QRP using a variety of setups. You might find his varied equipment pretty interesting. He has made some great distant contacts with only 2-5 watts. Oh, and we will have a Horseshoe Tournament so come and join in the fun.

So this event should be a lot of fun. You should put it on your Calendar and we hope to see you all there.

Please RSVP to me at [ve7rez@desertrats.am](mailto:ve7rez@desertrats.am) if you plan on attending the picnic or campout so we can plan the potluck menu (so we all don't bring salads).

More info will be in the next Newsletter. We will need a hand on Friday to put up the Antenna. So if you can volunteer for that let me know.

Bring firewood for the campfire and your guitar or ? for the evenings' entertainment. I'm sure looking forward to another outdoor event, especially the S'mores. I sure hope Steve's wife brings more Tamales and Carne Asada! (hint hint).



**Michael Brennan KA6PGN**

## Home Brew Antennas

On Saturday, April 2nd, Michael KA6PGN and Laura Brennan, KA6VKF, XYL hosted a class on home brew antenna building. After the presentation Michael gave at the March Desert Rats meeting, I wasn't sure what to expect, but I was hoping to get lucky. I had gotten the impression at the meeting that about 10 of us would be getting together and build an antenna under Michael's tutelage.

Then one lucky student would be taking the finished product home. I wanted to be that student.

I showed up a few minutes earlier than the 9am start time and was surprised to be the only one there. VP Glenn had notified me that he was



**We Started with these Raw Materials**

## HYPERLINKS

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[Riverside ARES](#)

[Riverside RACES](#)

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[ARRL Newsletter](#)

[DX Zone](#)

[Ham Radio Links](#)

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## CALENDAR

**April 19<sup>th</sup> 2011**

**Desert RATS Meeting 7pm  
Palm Springs City Yard  
Conference Room - Guest  
Speaker: Gene Swiech  
WB6COY - Subject: D-Star**

**May 17<sup>th</sup> 2011**

**Desert RATS Meeting 7pm  
Palm Springs City Yard  
Conference Room - Guest  
speaker: Dennis Kidder,  
W6DQ from the Microwave  
Society - Subject: A Special  
EME from the Owens Valley**

**June 21st 2011 - Tentative  
Desert RATS Meeting 7pm  
Palm Springs City Yard  
Conference Room  
Guest Speaker from AMTV**



**Final Meeting  
before Field Day**

unable to be in two places at once and he wouldn't be able to attend. Laura said that Steve had had to cancel as well. While we were waiting, Michael asked me what type of antenna I wanted to build. I told him I didn't know, which caught him by surprise. I then explained I'm very much in learning mode on all things Ham related, having only gotten my license in December. Michael then asked what type of radio I have and what my interests were in using it. I explained that I have a borrowed HF rig and I'm trying to get it up and running on the 40 and 80 meter bands, as part of my disaster preparedness interests. When I explained that my yard is only 100 by 100 feet, Michael told me that I didn't have enough room. I must have given him a "I've lost my puppy" look, or he just likes a challenge and he started explaining how we could make antenna that thinks it's longer than it really is and was I interested in building it. Naturally I said yes.

From 9am till noon we put together an inverted "V", 80 meter antenna. I'd like to explain all of the technical details, but I can't, you'll just have to ask Michael. As we were just finished with the antenna and starting to trim it down to the desired resonance, Laura called us in for lunch. As we were eating lunch, Evan KI6WNF showed up, he had been delayed all morning with a customer. He had called to see if it would be OK to show up late, of course the more the merrier, so we told him to come on down. Evan does geek speak much better than I do and started asking questions of an antenna design he was thinking about for his home. This of course had a Pavlovian effect on Michael and he took us back out to the Shack/Shop/Museum and proceeded to elaborate on Evan's ideas while simultaneously giving us a history lesson on antennas and a tour, all at the same time. You could say that Evan and I were like kids in a candy store. Much too soon I had to leave and said goodbye to Michael, Laura and Evan.



Cameron, Evan and Michael with the new antenna



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**Website:**

<http://desertrats.am>

Monday Evening Net

Newsline • 6:30 pm

Regular • 7:00 pm

146.940 PL 107.2

ARES Digital • 7:30 pm

144.435 Simple



It turned out I was the lucky one, a big THANK YOU to Michael for the antenna and another big thanks to Laura for the hospitality. On a final note, this was a great opportunity for me to learn far more than I expected and I can't wait to go back. If you do go, Laura has a request, bring your XYL or someone who can visit with Laura. Michael isn't the only talented one, Laura is an artist and instructor who would love to share her hobby with others as well. She has plenty of activities for those who don't have as much interest in antennas. If you get a chance to go to one of the future classes, you'll have a great time, see you there!

***Cameron Robbins - KJ6LWH***

## Real Radios Glow in the Dark

Let's face it. Sometimes there is a certain amount of grief given to new hams by some of the old timers about being plug and play, cookbook Techs. OK, so it sounds a little like listening to your father talking about walking to school, in the snow, barefoot, up hill – both directions. Well, sometimes there is some truth to the stories. I know where my fathers ranch was and I know the bridge that he would have to dismount and lead his horse across, and the school is still there in Kerby Oregon.

Think about the stable, microprocessor controlled radios we have nowadays. Let's say you have to meet your buddies at 8:00 one morning on 14.330 MHz. The time is now 7:55. You patter out to the shack in your bunny slippers and still in you jammies. You press the ON button, select memory #3 and lo and behold, there they are, already talking about you.

Now this part you have to read in your best Gabby Hayes impersonation (Who?...Google him). It's now 7AM. You need to meet your buddies at 8:00 on 14.330MHz. You patter out to the shack and turn on the receiver and the transmitter. You go back into the house and have some



***Glenn Morrison WB6RLC***

breakfast. With vacuum tube radios you have to let everything get warmed up and get stable, otherwise you will wind up drifting all up and down the band (my Swan 400 is well know for this). Later you come back out, switch the transmitter onto the dummy load and tune it up. Put it in CW. Hit the key, peak the drive, dip the plate current and the load. Give it a rest. Peak the drive, dip the plate. Repeat. Switch it to the antenna and give it a final tweak near the freq you will be using.

It's now almost 8:00. Back in The Day, you would tune in a station you wanted to talk to with on your separate receiver. Then you would put the transmitters VFO (variable frequency oscillator) into Spot. This just runs the just oscillator and the multiplier circuits. You would then zero beat yourself into your own receiver. Now you are receiving and transmitting on the same freq. Or close enough. No one really cared if you were off 100Hz or so. It was a given. Now you can move the mode select switch from CW to AM phone and press the mic button. Enjoy your QSO.

Real radios glow in the dark! Oh the good ol' days. On the other hand, new radios have all of the bells and whistles. They are also light weight. A mobile/portable 100 watt transceiver can weigh less than 20 pounds. My Hallicrafters HT-37 100 watt transmitter weighs in at 80 pounds, add another 25 pounds for the Hammurlund HQ-140X receiver and you ain't going anywhere fast.

And besides, you know, I just happen to like going out to the shack in my jimmies (and no, I don't own any bunny slippers). I can push the ON button and see if the bands are open or if there is just someone, somewhere that I want to talk to. And all before my first cup of coffee cools down. See ya on the bands. Glenn

**The Riverside County Operational Area  
CERT Program Managers are proud to offer the:  
Annual CERT Refresher Day**

**~ Refresher is open to ALL CERT graduates ~  
Space is limited to the first 100 people that register. NO walk-in**

**When: Saturday – May 14, 2011**

**Time: 9am to 1pm**

**Location: Roy Wilson Training Center  
72564 Ramon Road  
Thousand Palms, Ca. 92276**

**To Register: CALL 951-955-4700**

**Closed toed shoes  
and  
long pants are  
MANDATORY**



**Bring your gear:  
i.e. helmet, goggles,  
gloves and water**



**Classroom education sessions:**

- ❖ **Medical Operations**
- ❖ **Search and Rescue**

**Hands on Training to include:**

- ❖ **Fire Suppression**
- ❖ **Search and Rescue**
- ❖ **Triage**
- ❖ **Cribbing**



**Susie Boskovich KD6TVO**

### Tidbits

We would like to welcome 6 new members to the Desert RATS.

They are: Ken Alan, K6PSI; Dallas Baker, KE6BAR; Chris Ellsworth, KD7FKN; Bob Hopkins, K7PE; Bob Klatskin, WM6Q; and Glenda Stults, KJ6MNW. Welcome to the club. We hope you will enjoy the meetings as well as the activities that we have planned for the remainder of the year.

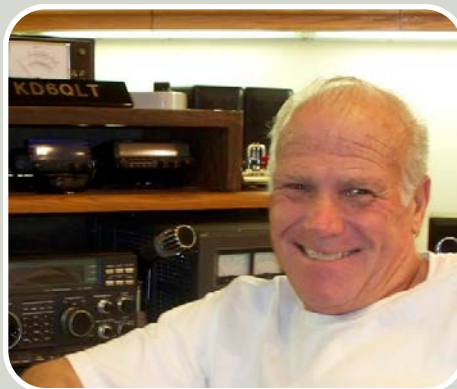
Leo Meyerson, W0GFQ, of the Coachella Valley QCWA, celebrated his 100th birthday on March 7, 2011. A celebration of his birthday with hams in the desert was on February 24, 2011.

Congratulations to Diane Wright, XYL of member Rich Wright, NR6K for receiving her ham license on March 1, 2011. Her call is N6FET. She is very excited to now be a part of the Ham community.

Bob Lo Grasso, WE6L, former member of the club, has become a silent key on March 15, 2011. Our thoughts and prayer go to his XYL Mickey. They had moved to Upland a few years back but did attend the Hamfest in 2010. Also, Don Smith, K6CHS, a lifetime member of the Desert RATS became a silent key.

It has been suggested that we have a buy, sell, and trade section in the newsletter. If others would like to have this, please let me know. It may be space availability but let us know what you think.

Be sure to attend the next Desert RATS meeting. Our guest speaker will be Gene Swiech, WB6COY. He will talk about DStar low speed data port and its use with the DStarChatUSB software program. He will demonstrate how to use this data with a live over the air demo. He will be bringing a slide presentation.



**Gary Boskovich KD6QLT**

### Ham Radio Classes

Now that the Hamfest has concluded, our thoughts are getting

directed to the up and coming classes this next fall. If you know of someone that is interested in taking a Technician Class for Ham Radio, please encourage them to contact us and inquire about how to become a ham. Dates are not set at this time, but will be about October to November. We try to conclude the classes before the holidays. The classes are once a week on the same night for 2 hours from 7:00 to 9:00 PM and testing the first Saturday morning after the conclusion of the classes. They are held at the Palm Springs City Yard Conference Room at 425 N. Civic Drive, Palm Springs.

Please contact me, Gary Boskovich, KD6QLT, 760-328-9662 or sboskovich@dc.rr.com.

Anyone is also welcome to come to a club meeting and see what ham radio is all about. The meetings are held at the same location as the classes. We encourage you to help us promote the class if you know someone who is interested. If you know anyone that has gone through the CERT program and wishes to become a ham please forward this information to them.

[Click here](#) for a link to the Desert RATS Calendar

[Click here](#) for a Desert RATS Membership Application

[Click here](#) to Contact the Desert RATS via Email or Phone

[Click here](#) to View Candids of the 2011 Palm Springs Hamfest

Got this as a forward?

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