



Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY R.A.C.E.S. ASSOCIATION, INC.

Presidents Column Fred — W2EMS

As I sat at the Club booth during the Hamfest I was amazed at the number of Ham's I knew from past events and the number of voices I was able to finally associate with a face.

Working the Club booth gave me the opportunity to meet almost 500 Hams as they dropped off their door prize ticket in hopes of winning the Yaesu radio. In fact, many people purchased a second or third ticket to increase their chances of winning.

I sat with Peter (W2BEW) and Glenn (KA2DTH) for the entire day and uncovered a few new things about both of these Hams. First, Peter knew every Ham that passed by the table and many by the sound of their voice from across the room. Peter also met a fellow Ham he had a QSO with back in 1957 but this time the gentlemen had his grandson with him.

I found out Glenn is passionate about alternative energy and I watched him repeat his speech many times over the course of the day, each time with the same interest and vigor as the first. Glenn did a great job running the APRS demo throughout the day and I can attest that many people stopped by to ask a few questions or talk about their own setup. Again, Glenn did a great job and with the patience of a saint answered many of the same questions all day. The most unselfish act Glenn did during the day was after his name was announced as the "Big Winner" of the door prize he asked that another name be drawn from the bucket. So what does this all mean, I think that the hobby of Ham Radio is here to stay. I met Ham's young and old numbering in the hundreds, I witnessed the passion of interests and the enjoyment of talking "shop" with fellow Hams, and most of all the pleasure of witnessing our radio association coming together for a common cause and the advancement of Amateur Radio.

I'm proud to be an Amateur Radio operator, I'm happy to serve my community, and most of all I'm happy to be a part of the Saratoga County RACES Association.

Board Minutes 21 August 2006

Meeting was called to order by president Fred W2EMS at 7PM. A quorum was present with Fred-W2EMS, Darlene-N2XQG, Dennis-WA2JWO, Peter-W2BEW, Glenn-KA2DTH, Mark-KA2FBZ, Al-KA1IEG, Ed-KC2MIN in attendance.

The President's Report:

- Meeting program topic suggestions submitted (need program coordinator)
- Constitution & Bylaws review: modest changes to be submitted to membership
- Status of radio room and equipment: Phase I (inventory & readiness) will be conducted by Mark and Fred in the coming weeks
- Sunday night nets: discussed purpose, format, net control, traffic practice, etc.

Vice-President's Report:

- Hamfest (9/9/06) preparations are complete: Door Prize Radio (FT-897D) has been purchased and tickets printed.
- VEC for test session is Lenny, W2WA

Secretary's Report:

- Approx. 120 Names on membership list: 113 newsletters emailed; 17 copies printed and sent via US mail
- Will be at club booth during hamfest to help coordinate renewals, update contact info

Treasurer's Report:

- Report on income, expenses and bank balance
- Treasurer's report approved by board

Radio Officer's Report (via Fred, W2EMS):

- Simulated Emergency Test scheduled for 10/1/06 at 1300 local. Operators need to advise Dave (datwell@nycap.rr.com) if they plan to participate (provide license class and equipment list). Will need operators at Wilton Radio Center
- '36 repeater still awaiting climber; board voted to authorize funding to hire climber

Directors Reports

Mark Hansen: will survey radio room and equipment

and list needs

Glenn Burt:

- First newsletter produced (board appreciation offered)
 - Draft of brochure for prospective members and non-profits submitted – will revise and print
 - Public Service Events (PSE) Coordinator job description drafted and submitted
 - PSE requests should be emailed to ka2dth@arrl.net; Event coordinators to report participation through Glenn
- MSC to adjourn at 8:45PM.

**Ham Radio is a CONTACT sport—
Get on the air & make a CONTACT!**

Board Minutes 11 September 2006

Meeting was called to order at 6:30PM. A quorum was present with Fred-W2EMS, Darlene-N2XQG, Dennis-WA2JWO, Peter-W2BEW, Mark-KA2FBZ, Al-KA1IEG, Ed-KC2MIN and guest Jim-K2LM in attendance.

A moment of silence was observed for all those who were lost in the terrible events of five years ago today; attendance was then taken, and minutes MSC for the last (August) meeting.

The President's Report:

- Soliciting new meeting program topics from members. Any ideas?? Need volunteer(s) for program coordinator. Any members wish to volunteer??
- Constitution & Bylaws review: modest changes to be submitted to membership for vote at October meeting. Among proposed changes:
 - RACES will be known informally as "Saratoga County Amateur Radio Association." Legal name will remain Saratoga County RACES Assn., Inc.
 - Section on quorum (10% of membership) required for voting is removed. (Number of members constantly changes and we often do not have 10% at general meetings). Voting can still be done in person, by written proxy or by absentee ballot.
- Radio Room: Mark and Fred to re-schedule Phase I - inventory and test. Room needs to be usable by October 1 Simulated Emergency Test.
- Sunday night nets: If you don't hear a Net Control, feel free to jump in and take over. The experience is very valuable in time of real emergency.

- In the process of securing Wilton EMS door cards w/ photos for new directors.
- Repeater PL tone change: Jim, K2LM, suggested moving .00 PL tone off 100Hz, because of interference from New Hampshire machine using same tone. He will survey region and recommend an unused tone for future move. Members will be given ample notice.

Vice-President's Report:

- 2006 Hamfest recap:
 - 472 paid admissions; slightly more than last year (468) but slightly less than recent years
 - Total revenue (\$3466.05) less expenses (\$1709.72) = \$ 1716.03 NET, compared to \$1295 last year.
 - Nine candidates took exams; 8 passed; 2 are Extras. Congratulations and thanks to VE's.
 - Next year's event will be Sept 8th OR 15th; Darlene to negotiate.

Secretary's Report:

- Updating membership list and contact information. Do not have working email addresses for the following: KC2APP; NR2J; WA2FOY; KC2FJV; WB2OMA; N2QFT; W2FNP; KC2CKO; KB2TGD; KC2MIF; N2WUF; WA2FJV; N2IPS; N2MIV; KF2QA; WB2YOR; KA2FDK; KA2YUR; K2RRT. Please provide new emails to Peter at petermil@aol.com

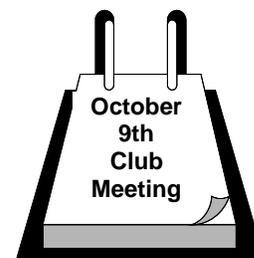
Treasurer's Report:

- Hamfest revenue brings current balance up to \$10,241.68.
- Several new members and many renewals at Hamfest

Radio Officer's Report (via W2EMS)

- Simulated Emergency Test scheduled for 10/1/06 at 1300 local. Operators need to advise Dave (datwell@nycap.rr.com) if they plan to participate (provide contact info, license class and equipment list). Will need operators at Wilton Radio Center
- 147.36 repeater antenna was installed yesterday; .36 is now playing loudly.

MSC to adjourn at 7:25PM.



Public Service Glenn — KA2DTH



Please continue to visit the club website at www.wa2umx.net and watch the calendar. As our assistance is requested, dates and information will be posted there.

Mohawk Towpath Duathlon—October 15. — Contact Fred, W2EMS to volunteer .

Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Rotary Apple Run— October 21. —Contact Don, KF2AB to volunteer.

Hamfest 2006 Darlene — N2XQG



Saratoga County R.A.C.E.S. Association Inc. held its 21st annual hamfest on Saturday, September 9, 2005.

I would like to thank Mother Nature for again pulling through and doing her part to make the day a huge success. We had 472 paid admissions (that is up 4 from last year),

the food booth, club booth and table sales were also very good. We had new members or dues renewed for 3 family, 8 single memberships.

We are a non-profit organization. Our main source or revenue needed for the upkeep of our massive repeater system is our hamfest. I would like to thank all the volunteers that took time out of their weekend to make ensure another successful hamfest:

Friday: vendor set up Dave, N2FEP and Jim, KF2K who also did the overnight security shift. APRS and talk in set up Jim, K2LM and Glenn, KA2DTH. Food booth set up: Dave, NR2J; Terri, KC2MSB; Nicolas, Christopher and Shelbi Merrifield.

Talk in station – John, W2QCY and Cathy N2HSC

Club table Fred, W2EMS; Peter W2BEW; Dennis, WA2JWO

APRS demo Glenn, KA2DTH

Announcements Dave, N2FEP

Gate, Jim, KF2K; Dave, N2FEP; Al, KA1IEG; Mark, KA2FBZ; Dave, AA2PS; Bob, KB2TBB; Ernie, KA2BYD

Food Booth – Faith Grey (our all day cook), Tim, N2BMX; Henry, KB2STR1; Dave, NR2J; Carm, N2RAC; Nicholas Merrifield, Joanna, N2QFT

Fox hunt, Dave, N2FEP winners 1st place Dana Jonos WA2WNI; 2nd place to Eric, KC2IZO

VE test session led by VEC Lenny W2WA; Jim, K2LM; Dave, AA2PS; Jim, KG2H

Quick Silver Radio, Radio Oasis and The Wireman have all reserved tables for next year's hamfest. They all had a good day and it was worth the trip for them to travel to our hamfest.

John, W2QCY, drew the winner for the HF radio. He drew the winning ticket belonging to Glenn, KA2DTH. Glenn asked that another ticket be drawn and declined the radio. The winner of the HF radio for the 2006 Hamfest was Phil, W2PO. Congratulations Phil and thank you Glenn.

Next years date is still tentative at this point, it will either be September 8th or 15th, depending on when we can get the fairgrounds. We should have a date set in a couple of weeks and I will make sure it is on the web page.

The VE test session went well, and here are the numbers: 8 candidates sat for tests, 4 gained Tech, 1 gained General and 2 gained Extra class tickets—congratulations to all who upgraded!

Thank you to all of you, those that worked, and those that attended. Every person there contributed one-way or another.

See you all next year!!!



Radio Officer Dave — N2FEP

Summer has come to a close and the hamfest is history for the 21st time.

October brings cooler temps and the S.E.T. short for Simulated Emergency Test. This year we will run ours on October 1st as previously announced. Please make an attempt to participate. We will be activating our E.O.C. (Emergency Operations Center) at Wilton EMS. There will be a net called up. Listen to the repeaters on that date. There will be information on the weekly Sunday evening net.

I am looking for ideas for drills for the up coming months. They do not have to be elaborate. We can do simple things even contests from the club station is good training. Lets become proactive and ready just in case. This is our club and our hobby, lets get some enjoyment out of it.

I am pleased to announce that the new antenna was installed on 147.360 on Sunday September 10th the day after the hamfest. Many thanks to Rusty KE2PW for climbing and installing the antenna and removing the old one that had died. He was in the air on the tower for 3 hrs. It is tough work at 140ft in the air. I also want to thank the ground crew KC2MSB Terri my XYL, N2WDY Bob , N2QFT Joanna and her OM Dick who without them 36 would be off the air. They provide the property for the tower and the building, the electricity to run the whole thing.

147.360 is the Saratoga County ARES repeater and without the assistance of the club and its members 36 would go silent forever in our area. It now has the coverage it once enjoyed when I first purchased it from KC2IV Bob Phillips in 1995. We have had many trials with it such as 1996 the commercial tower failed and smashed all the antennas and hardline, replace that with a temp antenna and a temp shack at a temp location for 6 months. Then we put it on the air limited from my location but that was not a good coverage area for it. Then with lots of donations of tower (140ft of Rhon 45) and installation of it by N2LUD, KA2QYE and others , donations of new 110 watt repeater deck , a flatbed to move the 10 ton building of steel. The list goes on.

Echolink is running on 36 same as on 00; all controls are the same. Soon a new controller will be installed and

echolink will be at the repeater site.

Internet connection for 36 will be via WiFi from N2QFTs home which I will place a router there for her use and the repeater. It also sports a weather radio direct connect to NWS for emergency weather announcements. That only provides coverage for Saratoga, Montgomery, and Fulton counties and that is so we know when bad weather from the West is on the way. That service is provided via a CAT interface and a vhf receiver directly connected to the repeater.

36 provides many services to the ham community. Take a listen and try it out and let me know how it sounds to you.

Weekly Radio Net

Please join us on the air each Sunday evening at 8PM for our weekly net. With this frequently held event we hope to be able to provide timely information to area amateurs as well as provide a forum for selling/ swapping gear and discussing topics in a formally directed net environment.

The 147.00 and 147.24 repeaters are linked by the 448.225 machine during this net, so feel free to check in on any of the repeaters.

NOTICE:

We are looking for volunteers to run the net—it is a simple job, the text is on the club website and all you need to do is record the calls/names & forward them to Fred, W2EMS. I'm sure he would appreciate the break!

Meetings

The next membership meeting of the Saratoga County R.A.C.E.S. Association, Inc. amateur radio club will be on October 9th at 7:30PM.

NOTICE:

We are looking for someone to be the Meeting Events Coordinator for this year. It is an easy task, create a slate of programs of general radio interest, line up presenters and schedule the presentations. We have many event ideas to aid in this process! If you could help, please contact Fred, W2EMS.

FOR SALE:

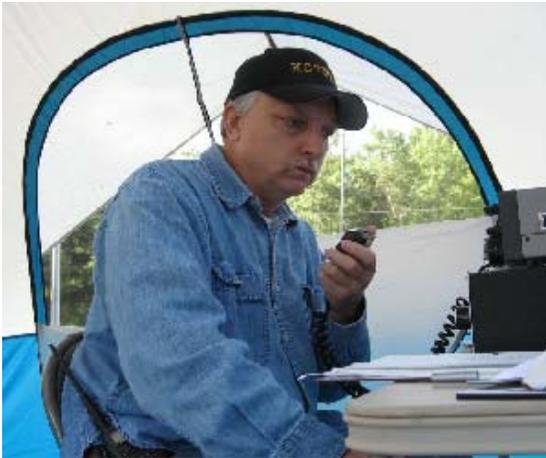
Items from the estate of Dick Jenkins, W2GWY, are listed on the club website. Please look on the 'Ham Ads' page, and contact Jim, K2LM for further details.

If you have any items to list, please contact the editor of this newsletter.

Field Day 2006



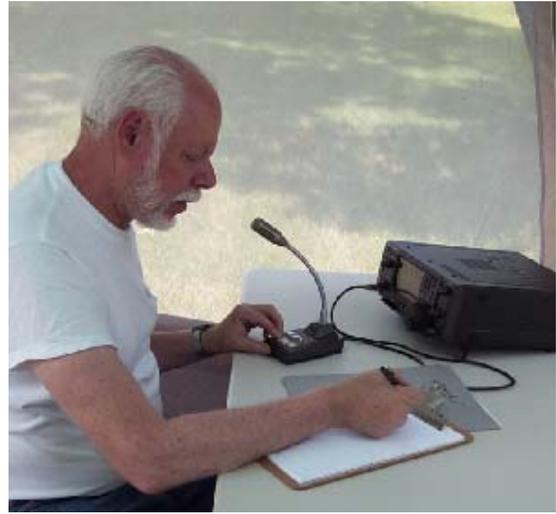
W2EMS, Fred tunes the band



KC7BYD, Ernie works a few



KE7NL, Jack searching for contacts



KA2FBZ, Mark gets 40m going



WB2NSC, Lee and KA1IEG, Al work 6m

Calling all photographers...

We are looking for as many pictures of our ham radio activities as we can find. Please contact Glenn as ka2dth@arrl.net if you have any electronic photos of hams working public service events, hamfest or field days.

Silent Key

On Friday Sept. 15th member Frank Mehal KA2MWZ became a silent key. Frank is Joanna Cummings N2QFT's dad. Frank was an active member for many years and did much to improve our club, He got us the building that originally housed 147.240 and later on still is in use as the house for 147.360.

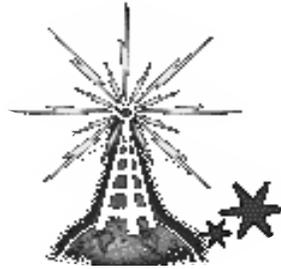
Frank was a participant in all of our walkathons as he used to walk in them with his handheld and kept net control informed. He was active in ARES, RACES, Skywarn and many other activities with our club.





WA2UMX ON THE INTERNET

The club has a website at:
<http://www.wa2umx.net>.
Here you will find the latest club news and events.



The club operates two 2-meter repeaters. The 147.24 repeater is located 15 miles West of Saratoga Springs at Lake Nancy, in Barkersville. This repeater has a phone patch, which is restricted to members only. The 147.00 repeater is located 10 miles North of Saratoga Springs on Spruce Mountain, near Corinth, NY. This repeater offers an "emergency" phone patch. These two machines, in combination, offer excellent North to South and East to West communications far beyond Saratoga County. These repeaters are linked together at various times by the club's third repeater on 448.225 MHz.

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