

Sparks from the Spa



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

Presidents Column Fred — W2EMS

The world above (or below, depending on how you look at it) 6 Meters.

I have a Paramedic friend I worked with several years ago, John Lennon, (no... not the singer). John and I worked at the same commercial ambulance service in Schenectady for several years and worked together many occasions.

I was saddened to hear that John was leaving the Capital District and head to Bar Harbor, Maine to advance his career as a Paramedic and not soon after continue on as a Paramedic/Fighter in the Village of Bar Harbor. John is doing very well in Maine and he frequently sends me photos and news stories about dramatic news happenings in and around his home.

John has been a Ham since about 1998 holding a Tech Plus license but John's grandfather, Donald Bulger (WB2VJC) pushed and pushed for "little" John to upgrade to General to allow more frequent conversations on HF. Well, to make a long story short, John passed the General written test and aced the code test (he should have since he was a Radioman in the Coast Guard for years).

Don sent John a few boxes of "gear" and before you knew it John was on the air and we were having weekly QSO's between John, (KB1DRS), his grandfather Don, (WB2VJC), John's uncle Dennis, (N2USN), and myself. We have a great time when we can find an open spot on the 80 meters.

Since John received his General license it really opened opportunities to a wide range of bands to choose from and allows us to "work" each other whether we're a few miles apart or 300+ miles away.

Although I've never worked any long distance stations,

I know from talking to other hams that if you want to talk to hams in the next State, across the country, or around the world; HF is the way to go and upgrading to a General class license is the way to do it.

Consider upgrading before the General class (Element 3) test question pool changes take effect in 2007. The new questions will be released December 1, 2006, and become effective July 1, 2007 so you have about eight months to pass the Element 3 exam before the questions change. There are many ways to help you study for the exam to include ARRL question and answer books, interactive CD Rom's, and even Web based training. The entire question pool can even be downloaded free of charge from the ARRL web site.

If you have a radio capable of tuning into the HF bands there are many simple and inexpensive antennas that you can make to get on the air the very same day you pass your test. And don't forget to ask for help from a fellow ham or find an "elmer" to get you started.

Discover the world of HF and talk across town or around the world.....

Board Minutes 9 October 2006

Meeting was called to order by president Fred W2EMS at 6:30PM. Board members present were: Peter W2BEW, Ed KC2MIH, Dennis WA2JWO and Dave N2FEP, as well as guest and past president Jim, K2LM.

President's Report:

- Still no volunteer(s) for monthly program coordinator. Perhaps each board member could take one meeting program
- Constitution & Bylaws review: C & B was emailed to all members for consideration; revisions to be voted on at general meeting to follow
- Radio Room: Still to be setup by Mark & Fred; was

not needed for October SET

- Sunday Night Nets: Except for last night (10/8) nets have been well attended. Perhaps we should schedule rotating net control stations (NCS). If you don't hear a NCS, feel free to jump in and take over and gain some valuable experience. Find preamble and closing announcements on club website: www.wa2umx.net/.

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

Radio Officer's Report:

- Simulated Emergency Test on 10/1/06 was run successfully, and 16 participants have been added to the ARES/RACES Yahoo group. Others may visit this site (www.groups.yahoo.com/group/Saratoga_Co_ARES_RACES/) to register for emails and other plans and protocols to be used in case of emergency.
- Advanced Skyward training is coming up for those interested in fine-tuning their skills. Contact Dave for details (datwell@nycap.rr.com)
- The new DB-224 antenna for the .36 repeater is up and working well. A new controller with PL tone will be installed soon. The repeater has a weather alert that is triggered by threatening weather from the West. Be advised, this alert may trigger at any time – even in the middle of your transmission.

Jim's Report (K2LM)

- Jim has suggested changing the .00 repeater PL tone to 91.5 Hz, because of interference from a NH machine using the current 100Hz tone. The .24 repeater should use same tone for consistency. The board voted to approve these changes at some time in the future. Members will be given ample notice before this occurs .
- Jim also explained that the .00 repeater antenna will have to move soon from its current location on a county tower on Spruce Mountain in Corinth. The county is negotiating with National Grid to move its antennas to the nearby NG tower, and remove its towers from the peak inside the Adirondack Park. This switch will necessitate our buying a new repeater antenna, because the riggers hired by NG will only handle commercial-grade equipment.

Thus, the board voted to authorize the expenditure of up to \$1500 for a new antenna and associated hardware in preparation for the move

- MSC to adjourn at 7:25PM.

General Membership Meeting Minutes(abbreviated)

Meeting called to order at 7:30PM by President.

- Membership was asked to consider and vote on changes to the group's Constitution & Bylaws, proposed by the board. The significant changes include (among minor details):

-Filing of an "assumed name" with the county to simplify and clarify our identity. The name will be *Saratoga County Amateur Radio Association*. This will not change the formal, legal name of the organization.

-Adoption of annual Board of Directors *Directives* report to membership, outlining major goals for each coming year

-Removal of the quorum requirement of 10% of voting membership for actions at the general meeting, since we rarely have that many attendees and membership is a constantly changing figure.

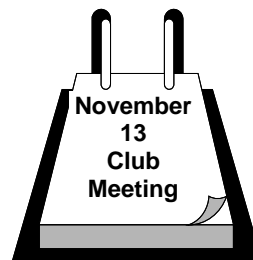
After some discussion, the changes were voted on and passed unanimously by the members in attendance.

- Members are encouraged to pick up net control duty on Sunday evenings at 8pm (.00 and .24 repeaters linked) if you don't hear another operator taking it (preamble on website)

- Reminder: Christmas meeting (December 11) is a social gathering only -- no formal meeting. Please bring a dish (dessert) to pass. Members are encouraged to bring a new, unwrapped toy for a local charity.

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.



Public Service Glenn — KA2DTH



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

On October 15th the Mohawk Towpath Duathlon was held in Halfmoon. Event coordination was performed by Fred-W2EMS and net control was Lee, WB2NSC.

About 60 runners/bikers participated in the event this year that consisted of a 2.2 mile run and 16 mile bicycle element. We were aided by the Northeast Mobile Search & Rescue group (NEMSAR) and their great communications van. Thanks to Matt (president) and that group for helping out again this year. Volunteers included Matt-W2MRD, Steve-WA2TTP, Tim-WA2QAC, Mike-KB2VQS, Bob-KF4UVA, Bob-KB2TBB, Tony-W2BEJ and Lee-WB2NSC.

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.

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.

Meetings

The next membership meeting of the Saratoga County R.A.C.E.S. Association, Inc. amateur radio club will be on November 13th at 7:30PM.

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!



**Radio
Officer
Dave
—
N2FEP**



I want to
t h a n k
everyone for
t h e i r

participation in the (S)imulated (E)mergency (T)est on the 1st of October. It went very well with 16 members participating. We passed 16 pieces of traffic and things went very well. I know the original plan was to go to the Wilton EMS building on Jones Rd. where we hold our meetings. But as with any plan things needed to change.

They had an obligation to another group and unless it was a real problem we opted out. We ran the SET without the use of our base of operation and it worked great. I want to again thank everyone for your help and participation this is a GROUP effort and without a group we would certainly not be able to provide the reliable communications we have in the past.

The NWS in Albany is again hosting Skywarn spotter schools. This school is a bit different as it is geared to our area of the country with the needs in all seasons such as winter and spring with snow, cold, wind, flooding and the like. Please make every effort to attend one of the sessions.

<http://cstar.cestm.albany.edu:7775/skywarn/Talks.htm>

I am again looking to the entire group as to what type of training to run. I can schedule it at the fire training center classroom or at the Wilton EMS building. But I need ideas. WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT TO TRAIN ON???

Please let me know as I want to schedule things soon.

all the best
Dave N2FEP
E/C & R/O

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.

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.

CLUB NEWS

Today (10/16/2006) club members replaced the 2m and 220 beacon antennas on the tower at the Providence radio site. They had been removed a few weeks ago as a high VSWR had been noticed. Steve-WA2TTP found a problem with the connections at the elements, and repaired them. Glenn-KA2DTH and Steve-WA2TTP served as ground crew, and JimK2LM did the climbing.



Editor's Corner

It has been brought to my attention that the FCC has made some important decisions that affect all hams:

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this R&O, we amend the Part 97 Amateur Radio Service rules as follows:

- Revise the operating privileges of amateur radio operators to allow more spectrum in four currently-authorized amateur service HF bands to be used for voice communications;
- Permit auxiliary stations to transmit on additional amateur service bands;
- Permit amateur stations to transmit spread spectrum communications on the 1.25 meter (m) band;
- Permit amateur stations to retransmit communications from the International Space Station;
- Permit amateur service licensees to designate the amateur radio club to receive their call sign in memoriam;
- Prohibit an applicant from filing more than one application for a specific vanity call sign;
- Eliminate certain restrictions on equipment manufacturers that are no longer necessary;
- Permit amateur radio stations operating in Alaska and surrounding waters more flexibility in providing emergency communications; and
- Remove certain restrictions in the amateur service license examination system that are no longer necessary.

Here is a link to the full FCC Report & Order:

http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-06-149A1.pdf

Also a new law formally makes Amateur Radio part of Emergency Communications Community.

A section of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) 2007 Appropriations Act, HR 5441 <<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d109:h.r.05441:>>, formally includes Amateur Radio operators as a part of the emergency communications community. Congress approved the measure before adjourning for its pre-election break. President George W. Bush signed the bill into law October 4.

Amateur Radio is included within the legislation's Subtitle D, Section 671, known as the "21st Century Emergency Communications Act." Radio amateurs are among the entities with which a Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group (RECC

Working Group) must coordinate its activities. Included within the DHS's Office of Emergency Communications -- which the measure also creates -- RECC Working Groups attached to each regional DHS office will advise federal and state homeland security officials. The final version of the legislation incorporated language from both House and Senate bills and was hammered out in a conference committee.

In light of the new legislation, the ARRL plans to follow up to determine how it can interact with the DHS and its Office of Emergency Communications.

This thanks to member Peter, W2BEW!

Photos from the Hudson Mohawk Towpath Duathlon Public Service Event



Left to right: Steve-WA2TTP, Matt-W2MRD, Tim-WA2QAC, Mike-KB2VQS, and Bob-KB2TBB. Not pictured are Tony-W2BEJ, Bob-KB2TBB and Lee-WB2NSC



North East Mobile Search And Rescue Communications van and event personnel



Matt-W2MRD, NEMSAR President, in the radio chair

More Hamfest Photos

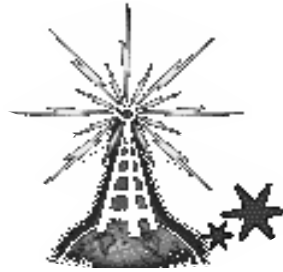


Tim-N2MBX, and volunteer Faith work the concession stand



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.

OFFICERS

President:
Fred Halley Jr.—W2EMS
PO Box 324
Clifton Park, NY 12065
373-3446
W2EMS@arrl.net

Vice President:
Darlene Lake N2XQG
314 Loudon Rd. Lot 84
Saratoga Springs NY 12866
587-2385
Dar@saratogaspringsny.us

Secretary:
Peter Miller—W2BEW
36 East Grove St.
Ballston Spa, NY 12020
885-9639
petermil@aol.com

Treasurer:
Al Margadonna—KA1IEG
P.O. Box 124
Cambridge, NY 12816
677-3316

Radio Officer:
Dave Atwell—N2FEP
P.O. Box 41
Rock City Falls, NY 12863
882-6196
datwell@nycap.rr.com

Sysop WA2UMX DX Cluster:
Rich Casullo—WZ2D
7 Crooked Street
Charlton, NY 12019
384-0836

Directors:
Mark G. Hansen—KA2FBZ
430 Wilton Gansevoort Road
Gansevoort, NY 12831
587-8053
mhansen4@nycap.rr.com

Newsletter Editor & Public Service
Events Coordinator:
Glenn Burt—KA2DTH
4 Glenwood Drive
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
587-7745
KA2DTH@arrl.net

Ed Kear III—KC2MIH
5424 Crane Road
Galway, NY 12074
882-1859
ed@kear.net

Dennis Kagel—WA2JWO
147 Hayes Road
Schuylerville, NY 12871-1836
695-9494
kadell@msn.com

Saratoga County R.A.C.E.S. Association, Inc.
C/O Peter Miller, Secretary
36 East Grove Street
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

