

Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President's Column A LOOK TO 2008

As the final days of 2007 wind down I'm already making plans for 2008. Our Board of Directors have also been working and planning for club activities in 2008. Byron, K2BD has already volunteered to be the Field day chairman again next year. Field Days 2008 will be June 28th & 29th so mark your calendars early to allow you ample time to help out with the daunting tasks of setup, operating for 24 hours, and tear down. Field Day 2007 results were published in the December QST magazine with WA2UMX making 681 contacts.

While you have your calendar out mark June 8th 2008 for the Tour du Cure in Stillwater. This is the largest public service event we staff each year. The planning and coordination has been the fine work of Lee, WB2NSC and takes several meetings and many hours of planning with the Tour team to be sure we have the necessary radio operators and equipment to ensure a successful event. With more than 20 radio volunteers working the 2007 Tour we can only expect the number of participants to increase in 2008.

The 2008 Hamfest is scheduled for September 7th OR 14th at the Ballston Spa Fair grounds. Darlene, N2XQG has coordinated this event for many years but she will be out of town in 2009 so Al, KA1IEG has volunteered to chair the event in 2009 and he will be shadowing Darlene in 2008 to learn the ropes.

There are several other public service events our club participates in each year and we're lucky to have a newly formed team of Ed, AB2XA, Bob, KB2TBB, and Sid, K2LJH to coordinate these events. Most of the events we cover are yearly in nature which allow us to plan for the needed resources of manpower, equipment, and scheduling well before the event.

Have a happy and safe holiday season and I hope to see you at the Holiday Party on December 10th.

Fred, W2EMS

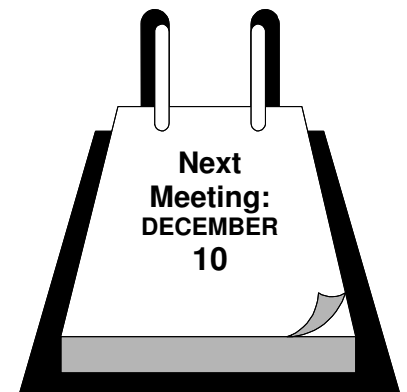
Radio Officer's Report

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving. Time is upon us when bad weather is a normal daily happening. Make sure if you haven't already that you have all of your emergency systems in place for deployment should the need arise. With all the holiday plans going on you may not be exactly ready for personal emergencies such as power outages and the like.

I want to thank Malachi Doane, now residing in the Corinth area, for becoming a representative to the NYS RACES Net on Sunday mornings on HF. This is a great place to train for emergency net operations and learn what is required for interfacing to other organizations within the SEMO system. It also shows SEMO management that we in Saratoga County are ready to respond. Try giving the net a listen at 0900 hrs Sundays on 3993.5 kHz, even if you do not have a general license. It will give you insight on the workings of this important net.

The county is moving forward at long last on its new radio system. Our systems are safe for now at the current locations. There may be some down-time during the move at Spruce Mt. in Corinth, as well as the change to a new tower and facility in Providence at the .24 site.

Again I ask if members would like training???? I will gladly provide it on a weekend day for a couple of hours at a time. Please let me know at datwell@nycap.rr.com what time frame will work best for the majority. Also everyone needs to be NIMS compliant. What is NIMS? It is an acronym for National Incident Management System. Everyone should take the online courses available for Levels 100 and 200 -- the level everyone needs to be trained to. These courses are available online thru the Saratoga Co. Fire Service webpage at <http://www.saratogacofire.com>. Please forward a copy of your certificates to me for these important courses. I know many of you already have taken these and sent in your certificates. Thank you for that. — Dave, N2FEP



Board of Directors Meeting November 12, 2007

Meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm. Board members present: Fred – W2EMS; Al – KA1IEG; Peter – W2BEW; Dennis – WA2JWO; Byron – K2BD.

Minutes of previous meeting were approved.

Discussion/Action Items:

- Fred, W2EMS, announced that the Red Cross is outfitting its trucks with emergency communications equipment and is seeking to get its members licensed. Trucks will be based in Connecticut. (!)
- Fred suggested again that the club get its radio room set up and ready to operate in case of an emergency.
- Fred reported that Wilton EMS is currently preparing new building card-keys for board members who don't yet have one.
- Al, KA1IEG, gave the treasurer's report, which the board voted to accept:
 - Beginning balance - \$ 10,059.18
 - Closing balance - \$ 9,532.44
 - Al reported that the two radios authorized last month at \$400 actually came in at \$300.
- Jim, K2LM, reported that a new replacement antenna was recently installed at Gore Mountain Ski Area by SCARA members, and it is working well on 147.135 (linked with the Prospect Mt. repeater on 146.73).
- Peter reported that the club membership has now reached 107 members.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.

General Meeting

Meeting called to order at 7:31 pm. Roll call taken and minutes approved.

Discussion/Action Items (not noted above):

- Bob, KB2TBB reported that SCARA communications contributed to a successful Pumpkin Patrol along the Thruway at Halloween, and to a successful Apple Run event.
- Fred reminded everyone that the December meeting will be a holiday mixer with refreshments and treats. Please bring something to share
- December mixer will also serve as a collection point for NEW, UNWRAPPED TOYS for Toys for Tots Program.

- The SCARA Sunday evening net will be run with a rotating Net Control Station. Fred, W2EMS will take the first week of every month, and Bob, KB2TBB volunteered to take the second Sunday. We need NCS volunteers for the remaining weeks of each month. Who'll step up?

Formal meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

The evening's program was Steve and Kathy Barton (KC2SMB/KC2DOG) speaking about Northeast Mobile Search & Rescue (NEMSAR), its activities and its capabilities. Formed in 1988, the local group is headquartered in Mechanicville, and has about 20 members and is growing. It is activated by the Rangers in support of police, rangers, etc, when someone is reported missing. They utilize search dogs, ATVs and their spiffy motor home / mobile support unit, as needed.

The group meets the first Wednesday of each month and drills on the 4th Saturday in Mechanicville. The evening wrapped up with a tour of the mobile support unit, which is equipped with GPS, two-way radios and computers, as well as kitchen, bath and bunk.

Upcoming Public Service Events

(None scheduled. Contact Ed, AB2XA for details)

Upcoming Meeting Programs

(2nd Monday of each month; Wilton EMS)

DECEMBER—Christmas Party & Toys for Tots Collection

JANUARY— FlexNet—Rusty Seastrum, KE2PW

FlexNet is a different networking protocol that incorporates the best features of all existing protocols (NETROM/TheNET/BPQ-ROSE-TCP/IP) plus many improvements. FlexNet rapidly adapts to traffic load, equipment failures, weather induced path degradation and propagation effects, as it continuously adjusts all TNC parameters to path conditions. And it is FAST! A 1200 baud link almost looks like a 9600 link, and 9600 links fly!!!

FEBRUARY— Club Equipment Show 'n Tell

MARCH— Swap Meet, Solar Building, West High St. Ballston Spa.

Weekly Radio Net

Please join us on the air each Sunday evening at 8 PM for our weekly net. This regular gathering offers on-air practice in net operation in preparation for emergency situations. It also provides timely information to area amateurs, and serves as 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 MHz machine during this net, so feel free to check in on any of these repeaters. PL tone is 91.5 Hz.

We are looking for volunteer Net Control Stations for the Sunday evening net. It's easy. Just keep track of the check-ins and forward them to Fred, W2EMS after the net.

TRADING POST

FOR SALE:

1 **Alinco DX70-TH**; 160-6 Meter Radio;
AM-CW-SSB

1 **Alinco EDX-2**; Automatic Wire Antenna Tuner

\$300 — Francis C Lambert
W1LJF@juno.com 581-9676

Field Day Results

Operating in Class 3-A (3 stations on-air simultaneously at <150 watts, using emergency power) with 22 participants, SCARA completed 681 QSOs and scored 2,286 points — about in the middle of the 3A class of 299 stations nationwide. There were 29 entries in all classes from Eastern New York (ENY), and SCARA placed 10th among those stations. Top scorer nationwide was Potomac Valley Radio Club (W3AO) plus Columbia ARA (KE3Q) with 19 transmitters(!) and 27,150 points.



News from ARRL:

Compiled from ARRL Letter and www.arrl.org

Riley Hollingsworth OUT OF RETIREMENT

Last month, the FCC reported that Riley Hollingsworth, Special Counsel to the FCC's enforcement bureau, had submitted his retirement, effective January 2008. Just a few days later, they announced that Riley had changed his mind! Hollingsworth will remain at the helm for the foreseeable future.

ARRL Continuing Education courses

Registration remains open through Sunday, December 9, 2007 for these online courses beginning on Friday, December 21, 2007: *Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level 2* (EC-002); *Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level 3* (EC-003R2); *Antenna Modeling* (EC-004); *HF Digital Communications* (EC-005); *VHF/UHF -- Life Beyond the Repeater* (EC-008), and *Radio Frequency Propagation* (EC-011). Visit the CCE Course Listing page at www.arrl.org/cce/courses, or contact the Continuing Education Program Coordinator at cce@arrl.org.

WRC-07 wraps up in Geneva with mixed results

The final working session of the 2007 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-07) in Geneva drew to a close November 15. According to League CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, the principal achievements and disappointments for the Amateur Services are:

- ◇ Maintenance of all existing amateur allocations, including the 7.2-7.3 MHz allocation in the Americas that had been somewhat at risk due to consideration of additional allocations for HF broadcasting
- ◇ Avoidance of future agenda items that pose serious threats to key amateur allocations
- ◇ No new allocation for the Amateur Service in the vicinity of 5 MHz, and no agenda item to consider such an allocation at a future conference

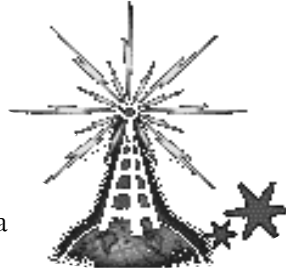
The 2007 conference had little interest in taking up HF issues at the next conference, tentatively set for 2011, having little to show for a great deal of effort expended on HF in preparing for WRC-07.



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. This repeater has a members-only phone patch. 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 clubs third repeater on 448.225 MHz.
PL Tone for all club repeaters is now 91.5 Hz.



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