



# Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

## General Meeting October 8, 2012

There was no formal speaker for this meeting, but we had a general discussion of all the events we had going on. The Apple Run, and the Duathlon were to be held later in the month of October. There was a Pumpkin Patrol to be run on the Halloween weekend. It is organized by the Fulton-Montgomery radio club. The contact was Tom Tranz, N2SBC. As of our meeting date, all the necessary posts were filled.

Fred Halley W2EMS spoke about the recent ARES meeting. He announced that he is always looking for a stronger participation in the meeting and the Sunday night net.

Sid Wolin K2LJH announced that KJI Electronics, in New Jersey, is having a Thanksgiving party on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday after Thanksgiving. Representatives from several major ham radio manufacturers will be on hand. Everyone is invited to attend. Contact Sid for further details.

Tim Kemp N2MBX spoke on opportunities for hams to participate with the boy scouts for as counselors for merit badge. See Tim's article in this issue of the newsletter.

## Board of Directors October 8, 2012

The board meeting was held at 6:30, preceding the General Meeting at 7:30. We discussed the impending move of our .24 repeater to the new tower. As of this date, we have not heard any firm news from the county about the cutover date for moving our equipment from the old tower to the new one. Sid mentioned that Time Warner sometimes has spool ends of hardline which can't be used for their purposes because they are too short. Sid says that it is perfectly acceptable for our use on the ham bands. He will contact the local office to see if we can get some of these "spool ends". It should save us a considerable amount of money in our moving project.

It also has been announced that Sid Wolin was anointed as the "Grand Old Ham" of the year for the ARRL Hudson Division.

Sid told us the Gene of KJI Electronics was pleased with the results of our hamfest this year. Gene told him that he has already put our hamfest on his calendar for Sept 7, 2013.



## Amateur Radio and Boy Scouts by Tim Kemp N2MBX

There is a long history of interaction between Amateur Radio and Boy Scouting. My first exposure to Ham Radio was at a Boy Scout meeting, circa 1964. I learned Morse code from Gus Hazen, I do not remember his call sign, but he lived in East Springfield, Pa. I finally received my license in 1982, but I will always remember my introduction to the hobby.

And so it goes, the alliance of Ham Radio and Boy Scouts is still strong, just not here in Saratoga County or elsewhere in the Capital District region. We are missing out on a very important recruitment opportunity for Amateur Radio. Just as my first experience to Ham Radio in 1964, we can provide that experience to Scouts today. The best introduction we can provide is by being a Radio Merit Badge Counselor. I am one of 2 Radio Merit Badge Counselors (MBC) in the Boy Scouts (BSA) Saratoga District of the Twin Rivers Council. The Saratoga District is Saratoga County, and the Twin Rivers Council has 8 Districts encompassing the New York Capital District and Counties up to the Canadian border.

I have not been very busy as a Radio MBC, but I want to be busy. I think what it takes is providing a Ham Radio introduction at Scout meetings, and then Scouts will start talking about the Radio Merit Badge. Once that occurs, a Radio MBC can work the interested Scouts through the material. When the Scouts earn the badge, they will know if they want to go further into Ham Radio.

I am trying to recruit new Radio MBCs. From there we can discuss how to contact Troops and set introductions/demonstrations at Scout meetings. As always, it is more fun when more than one Ham is involved. I know the process in becoming a MBC because I am actually the person that approves all MBCs in the Saratoga District due to my role as Saratoga District Advancement Chairman. The next step is up to you. Contact me and we will get started introducing more youth to the magic of Ham Radio. [N2MBX@arrl.net](mailto:N2MBX@arrl.net) or 583-9859

## Interesting Tidbit from the November 7 issue of the ARRL contest newsletter:

How many contests are there throughout the year? Well, there are rather a lot! In 2012, the Contest Corral database tracks 440 different contests. The online WA7BNM and SM3CER contest calendars have even more, especially sprint and regional contests in Europe. Of the 440 tracked in Contest Corral, 326 (74%) are HF-only and 35 (8%) only use the VHF+ bands. 73% feature CW - the most popular contest mode by nearly 2-to-1 over Phone (46%) and Digital (37%). Even though there are 22 more contests this year, the proportion of CW:Phone:Digital remains almost exactly the same.

## Take a Break

Here are some upcoming contests which caught my eye. For more details see the sponsor link in the Contest Corral. For a more comprehensive list see the Contest Corral on the ARRL website.

Nov 17 -Feld-Hell Turkey Shoot Sprint

Nov17–19 ARRL November Sweepstakes Phone

Nov 24–26 CQ World Wide CW Contest

## Upcoming Programs

### Anticipated Upcoming Programs

On November 12 we will have Kathy Hayes from ADA speaking about the organizational tasks for the Tour de Cure.

On December 10, we will have our annual social Christmas get together. Please bring a new toy to be donated to a needy child.

If you have any suggestions for the monthly programs, please contact a member of the board, or the editor at SparksFrom-theSpa@gmail.com



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Got News or information you would like to get published? How about your own projects or other things you think would be of interest to Club Members? How about (GASP), a letter to the editor? Contact us at our new email address :

**[SparksFromTheSpa@gmail.com](mailto:SparksFromTheSpa@gmail.com)**

## UPCOMING PUBLIC SERVICE

Nothing is on our schedule. This is a chance to stay warm and "snug as a bug" at home.