



Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

General Membership Meeting—January 13

Bob Raffael W2XM treated a good size crowd to his flavor of Ham Radio Jepperdee. Two separate groups of contestants showed their in depth knowledge of ham radio history, operating prowess, and technical savvy. The audience got a few good laughs out of the lighthearted guesses. Here are some photos of the night.



In lieu of the general membership meeting in March we will hold our annual Swapfest on Saturday March 8, 2014 starting at 8 AM at the Co-operative Extension building, 50 West High Street in Ballston Spa. A VE test session will be held at noon in the same location.



Prior the fun and games of Jepperdee, President Tim Kemp handed out field day pins to some of the members who participated last June.



President's Message February 2014 - Tim Kemp N2MBX

We had a lot of fun at last month's meeting playing the Jepperdee game with Bob W2XM. This month we get to show and share our favorite Ham Radio project with the rest of the group. Even if you don't have one to share, be sure to come to the meeting to see what will be presented. I will have something to share and at least 2 others have advised/warned me that they have something to talk about. We had a good crowd last month, so get rid of that cabin fever and come to the meeting on 2/10 at 7:30.

A few weeks ago I set up an appointment with NYS Assemblyman Jim Tedisco to discuss issues that interest me. Of course Ham Radio was on the list. When I got to the subject of Ham Radio, I was very surprised to hear that the Assemblyman did not know of or had heard much about Amateur Radio and what it has to offer for the community. He was very interested in what I saying and made an entry into to his calendar to attend Field Day. The meeting that I thought was going to take 15 minutes took 60 minutes, I was very pleased with the time and attention he gave me.

So if you have the time, call your elected officials and set up an appointment for a face to face meeting. Be sure to tell them about your Ham Radio involvement and how the Government can help with our important resource. My hope is that involvement such as this will end up getting our Club some Grant money to keep our Repeaters and other infrastructure going. My next stop is to meet with NYS Senator Kathy Marchino to essentially do the same thing. It would be nice if they heard from all of us about Amateur Radio. Be sure and invite them to Field Day.

Time to renew your membership

The club dues run from January to December. That means that it is time to renew. Many of you have already paid up some several years in advance. If you are unsure if you are past due, you can drop Jim, KG2H, and email, and I will let you know what our records indicate. You can contact me at KG2H@ARRL.NET.

Dues are STILL only \$10 per year. If you prefer to mail your dues, my address is:
Jim Polewczak - 231 Northline Rd. - Ballston Spa - zip 12020

Please give me the following information: your name, call sign license class, your email address you want your news letters sent to and also if you are an ARRL member. The ARRL membership status is important to us. We are an ARRL affiliated club, and we need to file a report on a fairly regular basis. Affiliation is important to us, because we get our liability insurance thru the affiliated club program. Also we have the ability to get an ARRL speaker to come to a meeting. It also helps us with our hamfest advertising.

Whether you are a member or not, we still want to see all of you at our monthly meeting. I will look forward to seeing you there.

BOD Meeting - Jan. 13, 2014

Mtg convened at 6:33 by Pres. N2MBX - Tim

Treasurer's report accepted (+ \$0.63 @ EOM)

Repeaters: All club repeaters now require 91.5 Hz PL tones

State Police commun. bldg. in Scotia awaiting transport to county radio site

Bldg at .36 repeater is leaning; needs straightening, Statewide link currently off

Echolink still in process of being moved to Wilton EMS bldg

Hamfest scheduled for Sunday September 7 (now confirmed with Darlene)

Swapfest scheduled for March 8; VEC at noon. Promote everywhere!

Board approved expenditure of \$150 for drawing prize

Field Day 2013 pins distributed by N2MBX

ADA Tour de Cure to run on Sunday, June 1; Kathy from ADA will attend future mtg.

Meeting Programs:

✦ February - My Favorite Ham Project

✦ April - ???

✦ May - Mesh Networks

June - Club radio review - operating basics for Field Day

Club Newsletter needs an editor; Volunteer, please

Open Positions still exist - Vice President and Secretary vacant

Boy Scout Summer Camp in Poestenkill Aug 10-15; Tim leading merit badge class; could use assistance

Peter confirmed that the club is currently affiliated with ARRL

Meeting adjourned at 7:35

What is the National Traffic System?

The National Traffic System (NTS) consists of [American Radio Relay League \(ARRL\)](#) affiliated and independent amateur radio networks ("nets") which pass non-commercial messages on behalf of third parties as a public service. A variety of communications modes are used. CW and other digital modes are most often used for "long-haul" interstate traffic. Regional traffic is handled using both CW and SSB, while local (city or county) nets most often use FM repeaters.

The NTS has been in operation since 1949, established by the ARRL in response to membership demand. It carries on a proud tradition of message relaying, established by Hiram Percy Maxim when he founded the ARRL for the purpose of handling message traffic in 1914. The NTS is the tightest, and solidest organization within the ARRL framework.

The goals of the NTS are to provide two things:

1. Timely and reliable movement of formal written message traffic from origin to destination as a free public service to the amateur community and the general public.
2. Training of amateur operators in handling of written traffic and participating in directed nets.

Amateur Radio Showing Steady Growth in the US

Amateur Radio population in the US has continued to show steady growth. As of the end of 2013, the FCC database showed 717,201 licenses in its Universal Licensing System That's the greatest number of US hams ever and up from 709,575 in December 2012. The volume of Amateur Radio applications slowed somewhat to 141,943 from its zenith of 176,826 in 2007, the year the FCC dropped the Morse code requirement.

You can find further details on the ARRL website under the news section. (<http://www.arrl.org/news/amateur-radio-showing-steady-growth-in-the-us>) If you are interested in taking a test to either earn a new license or upgrade you existing license, see the article on the last page with the test session opportunities coming up in the region.

New Hudson Valley Net Web Page

(From Ed Rubin N2JBA - HVN Net Manager)

HVN has a nicely developing web page which can be accessed at:

<http://www.hvnet.org>

There is a great deal of information on this site to include the net structure, pre and post-amble, net history, net control stations and net liaisons. There are hyperlinks to the PSCM, (Public Service Communications Manual) - Appendix B, which has all the guidelines for the ARRL National Traffic System.

Thanks to Andrew W2BOS, and Finn WB2UWU, who technically make this site possible.

Please peruse the website, make suggestions, present ideas and provide feedback.

News from PeteCecere N2YJA Eastern New York Section Manager

Attention all Elmers!

"I am in the process of forming an Elmer Support Group. This will entail offering loaned supplies such as video tapes, books and other supplies to Elmers to help you teach and make your "job" easier. I would like to start an Eastern New York Elmer reflector so you can communicate ideas, thoughts and arrange to join in teaching activities. This might also be integral with Amateur Radio licensing classes. Please contact me with your thoughts on this and how you might want to participate.

'Elmering' is certainly one of the most important rolls a person could undertake. It is the future of the hobby."

Upcoming exam sessions:

Don't say that you want to upgrade, but don't know when the exams are given. Here's some of the local ones:

Feb 19 at 5:30 PM - Johnstown- location Fulton County EOC - Contact Don Gifford 752-9226 or WA2EZ@live.com

March 2 at 11 AM- Troy - location RPI - Contact Glen Cooper 482-5584 or gcooper1@nycap.rr.com

March 8 at noon - Ballston Spa - location 50 West High Street - Contact Jim Polewczak 703-9558 or KG2H@arrl.net (come to the swapfest starting at 8 AM prior to the test session)

March at 5:30 PM - Johnstown- location Fulton County EOC - Contact Don Gifford 752-9226 or WA2EZ@live.com

Upcoming program note

March is the Swapfest on Saturday March 8, instead of our usual Monday evening session. We will be opening the doors and getting set up between 8 and 8:30 AM.

If you have a particular interest (or know someone who does) and would like to share it with the group, please let me or any of the board members know. Thanks.



Officers

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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 email address :

SparksFromTheSpa@gmail.com

UPCOMING PUBLIC SERVICE

Winter is usually slow, so needless to say, we have nothing scheduled at this time.