



# Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

## General Club meeting 9-8-2014

Talked about upcoming public service events (see Board of Directors meeting notes).

Discussion of the Hamfest results presented by Darlene Lake, committee chairperson. Attendance was 341 at the gate, down 31 from last year. Grand prize winner of a \$400 gift cert to KJI Electronics was Tom AC2IE, congrats to him. Fox hunt winners were: 1<sup>st</sup> Matt, W2MRD, 2<sup>nd</sup> Gary, N2ANL, and 3<sup>rd</sup> was KC2MSB. For all the efforts, the club netted about \$3,000.

We were terribly short of volunteers. Especially in the Food Booth. There were only 3 volunteers running the booth for the entire event. It is very tiring and this has to be addressed next year, or there won't be a food booth. The club netted about \$300 from the food booth. Is it worth it? From the lack of volunteers, it doesn't seem so. More volunteers are needed or the show won't go on in the future.

Speaking of the future, we have our date for next year. It will be Sunday Sept 13. It will be our 30<sup>th</sup> hamfest. The fairgrounds will cost us \$300, and the food booth will cost \$100.

## Board of Directors - Sept 8

Approved Treasurers report as sent out by KG2H

KG2H reports that he is unable to find replacement parts for our club's portable tower. He has searched the internet and has only found other people who are likewise looking for parts for the same model of tower. In it is unsafe to operate, we need to find an alternative. Jim reports that he was able to fix the club's rotator by installing a new starter capacitor in the control box.

Discussion of Hamfest

Discussion of Field Day

Discussion of .24 repeater site. Possibility of having a repeater shelter delivered to the site in anticipation of our having to move from the old tower to the new.

Swapfest date - March 14, 2015 (Saturday) included regular VE session afterwards.

Hamfest date - Sunday Sept 13, 2015. Yes, we got bumped again from our regular Saturday.

Rosie's Walk 9-13-2014

Apple Run 10-4-2014

Tow Path 10-19-2014 (see Fred W2EMS)

ARES SET 10-11-2014

ENY ARES meeting 10-18-2014 in Goshen 9:30 to 12:30

Request from W2XM for 2 copies of "Ham Radio for Dummies" book for his talk to a non ham group of people. Board approved 3 copies. Bob will purchase, and we will reimburse.

## October meeting speaker

The SCARA October Meeting will be as follows: Monday October 13<sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm at the Wilton EMS station on Jones Rd

Topic: NBEMS (Narrow Band Emergency Messaging Software) Presenter : John Fritze K2QY

## Test Session Results for Sept 7, 2014

As usual we had our test session at the hamfest, on Sunday Sept 7. We had a nice turnout of 7 candidates. Our ratio of examiners to examiners was outstanding, as we had 7 examiners also.

Our candidates were 100% successful, as everyone got either a new license or an upgrade. Congratulations to new Technician Class licensees, Carl Lanfear- KD2HDC, Bill Passineau - KD2HDD, Ed Marchand - KD2HDE, and Ed Cleavland- HD2HDF. Upgrading to General Class were Lee Heoflich - KB1OOZ, Mike Long - KC2IIJ, and Jim Murdico - N2SQS.

Naturally, none of this would have been possible without the crack examination team of KA2QYE, NT2B, K2ZIP, N2MOM, KD2BVA, and KG2H.

One item of interest on the efficiency of the ARRL and FCC. In the past, usually we have seen the new calls being listed on the FCC website Friday after the exam (which usually was on Saturday).

In the case of this test session, we held the exam on Sunday morning at 9 AM. I had the paperwork completely done, and in the mailbox at the Ballston Spa Post Office at 12:30 PM (before I went up to the hamfest).

What really is amazing is that the FCC had issued the new call signs on Wednesday Sept 10. Remember that includes the mailing time from Ballston Spa to Newington. Then Newington has to process them.

Our next exam session will be at the swapfest on Saturday March 14, 2015.

## Information Pertaining to FCC Element Credit Rule Changes

The FCC has revised the Amateur Service Part 97 rules to grant written examination element credit to holders of expired General, Advanced and Extra licenses. The new rules became effective 30 days after their publication in The Federal Register, which was Monday July 21, 2014.

Expired license holders will not automatically receive credit on that day and may not operate as a new licensee.

The FCC requires former licensees — those falling outside the 2-year grace period — to pass Element 2 (Technician) in order to be relicensed.

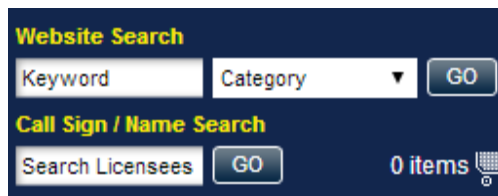
To take advantage of the new rule, holders of expired licenses must attend an exam session. There they would present a photo ID and their expired license proof, pay the \$15 exam session processing fee and take the Technician exam.

If an applicant held a General or Advanced license, and has proof, the FCC will afford credit for the General (Element 3) written exam only. If an applicant held an Extra license, and has proof, the FCC will afford credit for the General (Element 3) and Extra (Element 4) written exams. At VE exam sessions it is the applicant (not the VEs or coordinating VEC) who is responsible for supplying the evidence of holding valid expired license credit. Acceptable forms of proof can be found on the Exam Element Credit web page at [www.arrl.org/exam-element-credit](http://www.arrl.org/exam-element-credit).

If sufficient proof is not presented, the candidate has the option of taking the Tech exam and earning just a new Tech license and then attending an exam session at a later date when they have the proper documentation. As always, the candidate will have to show a photo ID, present the proof, pay the \$15 exam session processing fee and fill out all forms to receive the paper upgrade. The upgrade is not automatic and may NOT be sent directly to the FCC or to the VEC by the candidate.

Expired licensees will not automatically get their old call sign back. FCC will issue a new sequentially issued call sign. If they desire to obtain their old call sign they may try to do so through the FCC vanity call sign program. However, someone else may have already obtained their old call sign as a vanity call sign and therefore it would not be available.

Have you checked the expiration date on your license? It's very easy to do. One way to do it is to go to [WWW.ARRL.ORG](http://WWW.ARRL.ORG), and just fill in you call sign in the search box. You do not need to be a member.



## Contests Oct—Nov

### Oct 11-12

ARRL EME Contest  
North American RTTY Sprint--Digital  
Great Pumpkin Sprint--Digital  
Makrothen RTTY Contest  
Oceania DX CW Contest  
Scandinavian Activity Contest--Phone  
QRP ARCI Fall QSO Party--CW  
FISTS/SKCC QSO Party--CW  
Arizona QSO Party  
Pennsylvania QSO Party  
EU Autumn CW Sprint

### Oct 18-19

*School Club Roundup (Oct 20-24)*  
902+ MHz Fall VHF Sprint  
JARTS WW RTTY Contest  
Asia-Pacific Sprint--CW  
10-10 Fall CW QSO Party  
Iowa QSO Party  
New York QSO Party  
Worked All Germany  
Stew Perry Warmup Contest--CW  
W/VE Islands QSO Party  
South Dakota QSO Party  
Telephone Pioneer QSO Party  
Spooky Feld-Hell Sprint  
Illinois QSO Party

### October 25-26

CQ WW SSB Contest  
Haunted Lighthouse QSO Party

### November 1-2

IPA Contest  
Ukranian DX Contest  
Himalayan Contest  
Radio Club of America QSO Party  
ARRL November Sweepstakes (CW)  
Collegiate ARC Championship  
DARC 10-Meter Digital "Corona"

### November 8-9

Worked All Europe DX Contest  
ARRL EME Contest  
10-10 Fall Digital QSO Party  
Japan International DX Contest  
OK-OM DX Contest  
Straight Key Weekend Sprintathon  
Kentucky QSO Party  
CQ WE (Western Electric)

## Contest Fever

As you can see from the listing to the left, it's the beginning of contest season. If you have been in ham radio any length of time, you know that autumn / winter / early spring is contest time. Its too cold to go out and mow your lawn, what else are you going to do? You can nip in and out of the shack for a few hours at a time during the weekend to hand out a few points. You can test out your antennae you worked so hard to improve during the summer. You did antenna work this summer, right? OOPS, if not then you know, antennae really work best if they are put up in freezing rain and snow, I think that's a proven fact!!

## Items for sale

Do you have any items around the shack you want to depart with? Did your significant other manage to pry it from your fingers before they were dead and cold? (your fingers that is)

If it is ham radio related, let the editor know, and we will see what we can do about getting them listed here in the newsletter. Only ham radio related items, and listings can be refused by the editor at his / her discretion. We will favor club members' listing, and we will not be a commercial service.

Be sure you include a description of what you have, and how the interested party can contact you.

This is a trial balloon to see if there is any interest in this feature and is not guaranteed to continue in the future.

If you have something you want listed, send an email to: SparksFromTheSpa@gmail.com At least 2 weeks before the next upcoming club meeting..

The club disavows any interest in, guarantee for, or involvement with your items. ( In other words, if either party gets burned, don't come whining to us! )

## UPCOMING PUBLIC SERVICE

These are Firm:

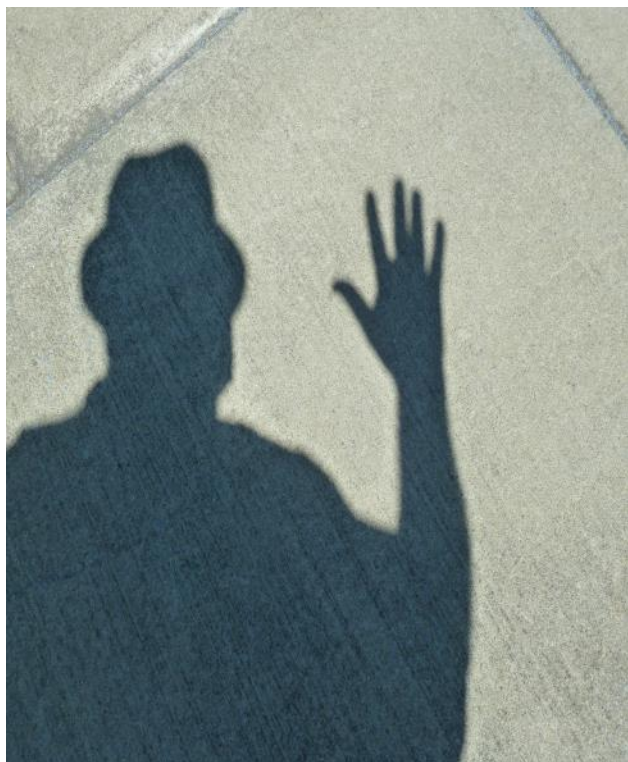
Sunday October 19th - Tow Path Duathlon -  
Town of Halfmoon - Fred W2EMS for details

ARES SET October 14. Fred W2EMS, or Tim  
N2MBX or Phil KC2YLM

ENY ARES meeting 10-18-2014 in Goshen 9:30 to  
12:30. Fred W2EMS, or Tim N2MBX or Phil  
KC2YLM

December 8 is our club's annual holiday get  
together in lieu of the regular monthly meet-  
ing. We ask for a donation of an unwrapped  
toy to be given to a needy child.

That's about the end of the Public Service for  
the year, not a lot of running, walking or bike  
riding going on in the SNOW !!!



## Officers

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Got News or information you would like to  
get published? How about your own pro-  
jects 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 program note

Monday October 13<sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm at the Wilton EMS  
station on Jones Rd

Topic: NBEMS (Narrow Band Emergency Messaging  
Software)

Presenter : John Fritze K2QY  
Albany County RACES Radio Officer - ARES ENY  
DEC Northern District - Hudson Div. Asst. Director  
Hope to see you there.