



# Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

## President's Message January 2016 - Tim Kemp N2MBX

The Holiday Gathering in December was well attended. A lot of Ham Radio talk and other subjects of interest to the group. Also a lot of toys collected for needy children. The food was great, but we could have used more eating by the group. Wilton EMS appreciated the leftovers.

Santa brought me some new radio gear and I am looking forward to using it as I travel this Winter.

Once again I will be traveling to Florida during February and March. I have travel trailer and will do it a little different this year. Last year we stayed at 9 different locations with the longest stay of 17 days in one place. This year we will stay in one place for the entire month of February and then a different place for the month of March. I will have my Icom 7000 with me and hope to do some operating portable from Florida. I did not have my radio with me last year. So if I can get Echolink to work, I will try to join in the Sunday night Net.

That also means that I will not be at the February SCARA meeting. Remember last year's February meeting? Of course not, it was canceled due to weather. I will also miss the Swapfest in March. I should be back for the April meeting where the topic will be the Tour de Cure.

January's meeting will feature our own KG2H, Jim, where he will discuss Digital Interfacing. I know I need to know more about this as I have a new radio and a new Rig Blaster and have not got them to work together yet. I hope to see everyone there on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

## Changes happening at ARRL

The ARRL Board of Directors' annual meeting in mid-January will mark the beginning of a changing of the guard for the League. After serving three 2-year terms, ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN, of Blacksburg, Virginia, is stepping aside, and the Board will choose her successor — and the League's 16th president — when it convenes on January 15.

The annual meeting also will be the last for ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, and for ARRL Chief Operating Officer Harold Kramer, WJ1B. Both are retiring this year. Kramer will depart at the end of February. Sumner has targeted May 1 as his last day.

By the time he steps down, Sumner will have been on the ARRL Headquarters full-time staff for 44 years. He was named Secretary and General Manager in 1982, with a change in title to Executive Vice President in 1985, and the additional title of Chief Executive Officer in 2001.

## Thoughts - KG2H

When was the last time you listened to old fashioned AM broadcast radio, either in your vehicle or home? For me, it's when I accidentally hit the band button in my car. Here is an interesting article I found at the ARRL website. Apparently European listeners are not using that mode much either!

### **Medium-Wave Transmitters in Germany and France Shutting Down at Year's End**

Deutschlandradio will close down its medium-wave (MW) transmitters in Germany on December 31. The shut-down of the seven transmitters marks the end of German-language programming transmitted from Germany in that part of the spectrum.

On the same day medium-wave Radio France MW transmitters will go dark. The transmitters shutting down are associated with France Info, France Blue RCFM, and France Blue Elsass.

Radio France and Deutschlandradio both said listener numbers have dwindled significantly, and the affected services will shift to FM, digital, and Internet broadcast outlets.

MW in Europe is approximately analogous to the AM broadcast band in the US.

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When is the expiration date of your CQ magazine? I get so many solitations from CQ about all the wonderful renewal prices, it's a bit confusing., and they never tell you exactly when your subscription expires.

They have the print issue, they have a digital issue (with items not in the print issue), and you have a combo print / digital subscription. What a mess.

I recently went to their web site to see if I can figure out when everything I have expires. I found the following information:

*"Your expiration dates is currently not embedded in your address label. Kindly call (516-681-2922), fax (516-681-2926) or email (circulation@cq-amateur-radio.com) our subscription department for this information. We'll need your full name, address and zip code to process your inquiry. Thank You."*

How is that for service? Why is the information not on the label? Why do you have to individually communicate with a customer service rep? I think I'm just going to wait until the magazine stops coming in the mailbox. Before I decide what I'm going to do.

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### **Ham Radio Video to be used aboard the International Space Station**

I know we have some club members interested in satellite radios, I don't know if we have any using ATV (Amateur Television, not All Terrain Vehicles!!) I found the following information that some of us will find interesting.

European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut Tim Peake, KG5BVI, who just arrived onboard the International Space Station, will be the first ISS crew member to use the HamTV digital Amateur Radio TV (DATV) system during an Amateur Radio on the International Space Station ([ARISS](#)) contact. Peake, NASA astronaut Tim Kopra, KE5UDN, and Russian cosmonaut Yuri Malenchenko, RK3DUP, launched on December 15 from Baikonur, Kazakhstan, and arrived at the ISS about 6 hours later.

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 your call sign in the search box. You do not need to be a member of ARRL to enjoy this capability.

## Help Wanted

The newsletter editor position will be vacant with the publication of this issue. I have been very busy at my office on a major software project which is anticipated to last several years, and I no longer have the energy or desire to devote to this endeavor. I originally took this position several years ago on a temporary basis, because the previous editor also had work commitments.

I have archival copies of the newsletter since I took it over on September of 2011, and I will pass all this data to the new editor. All my work has been done in Microsoft Publisher, and the template will also be available to the incoming editor.

If you are interested, please let me know, and I can arrange for the file transfer.

Jim KG2H



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

## Upcoming program note

We are looking for input from the membership as to what YOU would like to hear. Program suggestions are always welcome. Please let any of the Board Members know of your ideas. Thanks

If you have other topics you would like to hear about please let anyone on the board know. We will see if we can make it happen