

# Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

## Hamfest update 07/16/2020 Jim KG2H

On Thursday July 16, the Board of Directors met to discuss our hamfest. In light of the worsening Corona Virus situation in the country, and the recent uptick in the immediate Capital District area the board decided to cancel this year's event. The fairgrounds committee would not give us any guidance on their policy, because quite frankly they had no policy, nor guidance from either the Department of Health or their own legal counsel. The fairgrounds will hold our deposit and apply it to the date for our hamfest next year.

Although we are cancelling the physical hamfest, the board is considering other options to give the local hams some interesting things to do. The discussion centered something along the lines of our own virtual hamfest. There are a lot of things to consider and brainstorm along that route. If we go that route, the timing will not be the same as the existing date we had for the physical hamfest. We will keep you informed as things develop.

One other thing the board approved was the establishment of a groups.IO discussion group for the club. KG2H will get that set up and send out invitations for people to join. More information will be provided in the near future.

The final issue discussed was our WinLink connection issue. As you may know, the WinLink connection to our repeaters was disrupted due to a change in the ISP provider at the Wilton EMS. We resolved to have the new ISP provider give the Wilton EMS building a dedicated IP address for us to use exclusively for WinLink, and we would reimburse the WEMS for the \$120 annual cost.

## Next Club Meeting Jim KG2H

Just a reminder, we do not have a regular monthly meeting in either July or August.

Our next meeting will be Monday Sept 14. Will it be person? Will it be via Zoom? What will be the subject of the meeting? Time will tell, and so will I. I will be sure to sent out an email shortly before the next meeting to let you know the details.

## Corona Challenge is complete ! Jim KG2H

As all the readers should know, the club sponsored a challenge to see who could accumulate the most QSOs at the beginning of the Corona Virus pandemic. The challenge was scheduled from March 22 to May 31, with entries due no later than June 15.

I'm not quite sure what most of you did to pass the time in quarantine at home, but this was an effort to encourage you to get on the air and see what you could do. In the end we received only 3 entries. Congratulations to the winner W5BN. There was only 8 QSO difference between him and runner up NJ1F. Here are the summaries:

call	CW	FM	SSB	digital	Total
W5BN	5	1	10	2,123	2,139
NJ1F	970		179	982	2,131
KG2H				943	943
totals	975	1	189	4,048	5,213

Band	CW	FM	SSB	digital	Totals
2		1		6	7
6			2	226	230
10	10			13	21
12				15	15
15	39		7	41	87
17				326	326
20	160		26	967	1,153
30	3			989	992
40	422		70	628	1,120
60				285	285
80	341		67	507	915
160			17	45	62
Grand Total	975	1	189	4,048	5,213

One note, the digital category is a combination of FT8, FT4, and MFSK 16. What is MFSK 16 you ask? The answer is Meteor Scatter, and the single MS QSO was made by KG2H.

## Virtual Hamfest QSO Today update

### QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo Confirms Packed Lineup Of 70+ Speakers

Los Angeles, CA: QSO Today host Eric Guth, 4Z1UG, announced that the first QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo taking place on August 8-9, 2020 has now confirmed a packed lineup of over 70 great speakers for the event. For more information about the speakers and to register, go to [www.qsotodayhamexpo.com](http://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com). Attendance is free and there are early bird prize incentives (donated by sponsors) for registering by July 24, 2020.

There will be speaker tracks on a variety of topics to ensure plenty of great content for everyone. For those new to the hobby, there will two tracks focused entirely on providing hands-on, simple practical advice for getting started in amateur radio. For example, Steve Johnson, WD8DAS, will be showing basic soldering techniques for repair of equipment and new construction projects. Marcel Steiber, AI6MS, will provide an overview on common battery types and will discuss the pros/cons of each chemistry, common uses/misuses, and everyday application tips for your latest amateur radio project.

For the experienced operator, there will be speakers on topics ranging from new techniques, equipment upgrading, 3D printing, and more. For example, Glenn Johnson, W0GJ, talk is entitled "Is 3 dB Worth a Divorce?" and covers everything you need to know about antennas. Jim Veatch, WA2EIJ, discusses how to build a home brew QRP radio. John Portune, W6NBC, in "The Slot Antenna -- Undiscovered Country for Most Hams", presents how an ordinary satellite TV dish, accepted by most HOAs can be "slotted" to make an effective 2 meter or UHF outside antenna.

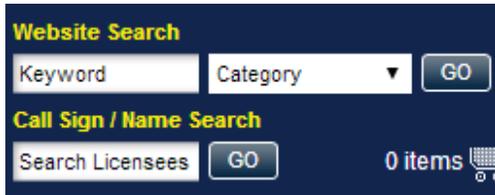
The Expo also features a fantastic youth track, led by Carole Perry, WB2MGP, that will feature amateur radio's future leaders. For example, Audrey McElroy, KM4BUN, is speaking on "Getting Girls Involved in STEM, Specifically Amateur Radio!" while Jack McElroy, KM4ZIA, is talking on "Highly Flying Kids With HAB".

"One big challenge with a ham convention, whether in-person or virtual, is that the speaking content can easily become complicated and overwhelming. For our inaugural virtual Expo, we've made sure that there are great speakers for both beginners and experienced hams. We've asked all of our speakers to be laser focused on their topics while providing hands-on, practical advice. In addition, after each speaker finishes their talk, there will be a virtual live Q&A so participants can get immediate answers to their questions" said Eric, 4Z1UG.

Icom is the Expo's Platinum Sponsor, along with Gold Sponsors GigaParts, RT Systems, FlexRadio, RFinder, DX Engineering, Elecraft, RigExpert, and NCG Company (Comet Antenna).

For more information and to register, go to [www.qsotodayhamexpo.com](http://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com). Attendance is free and there are early bird prize incentives for registering by July 24, 2020.

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 on their home page. You do not need to be a member of ARRL to use this service.



K2DLL repeater system:

Corinth NY  
147.000 MHz +600KHz 91.5 Hz CTCSS encode/decode  
448.225 MHz -5.00 MHz 91.5 CTCSS encode/decode

Providence NY  
147.240 MHz +600 Hz 91.5 Hz CTCSS encode/decode.  
147.360 MHz +600 Hz (add 91.5 Hz CTCSS to connect to the NYS Network

Sacandaga Reservoir  
147.03 MHz +600 KHz 91.5 Hz CTCSS encode/decode

Middleburgh NY  
448.925 PL 107.2 WA2TTP-R Steve's Repeater is linked to ours via UHF



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Please be sure to visit our webpage for any late breaking news or newsletter archives.

[WWW.K2DLL.ORG](http://WWW.K2DLL.ORG)

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 :

[KG2H@ARRL.NET](mailto:KG2H@ARRL.NET)

### 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 you ideas.  
Thanks