

Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

President's Corner

(No President's Message this month)

Board of Directors Meeting November 10, 2008

The board meeting was called to order at 6:33 by President Darlene Lake, N2XQG. Present were BoD members Peter – W2BEW, Byron – K2BD, Dennis – WA2JWO, Al—KA1IEG, Dave—NR2J and a number of club members.

- Treasurer's report: Al reported an opening balance (Sept) of \$7349.20. After Hamfest revenues, new dues and assorted expenses, the current balance is \$10,445.08. Yes!
- Byron reported that he received an email from George, W2SFD, announcing a drill this coming weekend—11/16 from 9 am until noon on the 145.170 repeater and 3,925 kHz.
- Peter reported that paid club membership is holding at about 100, and there are 15 new names to be added who successfully passed their VE exams on September 13.
- Peter also reported that he needs help completing the antenna project planned for Wilton EMS. Several people offered to help and will gather at the site after Thanksgiving.
- Dar reminded the board that a nominating committee is needed to select candidates for board and officers.
- A discussion was held regarding upcoming program topics. December meeting is our holiday party. January will be devoted to Emergency Communications (EmComm). Other suggestions included antennas that work, legal requirements for tower erection, digital TV and hospital communication by Amateur Radio.

- The March meeting is really our annual SwapFest at the Cooperative Extension (Solar) Building in Ballston Spa on Saturday, March 14. The April topic is tentatively slated as a discussion of "SWR Myths."

General Meeting

The General Meeting convened at 7:37 pm. A portion of the meeting was devoted to remembrances of Ed Whitaker, K2DLL, a founder of RACES and the club repeaters, who passed away in November.

- Mike—KC2SWF, reported that Warren County RACES is now active and seeking cooperative training opportunities with Saratoga and other RACES organizations. All are encouraged to check in to the weekly training net on Tuesday evenings at 7 pm local time on the Lake George repeater—146.730 MHz (PL=100 Hz) and Gore Mountain repeater—147.135 MHz (PL=123.0 Hz)..
- Dave—N2FEP, announced his availability again to serve as Emergency Coordinator for the club. (See Dave's message in this newsletter.) He encouraged members to take advantage of the free online courses offered by FEMA, as well as those offered by ARRL for \$40.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

HOLIDAY PARTY

at the next meeting—
at Wilton EMS Bldg.

Please bring a dish
to pass, and a New,
Unwrapped Toy

for a child of any age
to be distributed
through the Catholic
Families organization.



Message from Dave, N2FEP

I want to thank each and everyone of you who have helped out in the past few months to get our repeater system moved at Spruce Mt. Without dedicated hams to get the jobs done nothing would be accomplished. I know that there are several other things that will change as the county radio system continues its build out for 2009 and beyond.

I attended the last club meeting and discussed my retirement from a lot of things I was doing. I really needed a break to reassess my time. I also spoke to the Emergency services Director Mr. Lent. He and I had discussed my retirement from the position of Radio Officer. He never asked and I never provided a written resignation to him. We have both been busy and even though we see each other many times a month that was not our focus. I met with him on the 28th of November. I told him that as no one had taken up the position I would continue. He said that he figured I was still in the position. I did tender him a letter of resignation from the radio officer position as was discussed with K2LM in a recent email as Jim had indicated others were interested but as no formal letter existed they were waiting. Mr. Lent will be looking at candidates for the position. I will continue as the Emergency Coordinator for A.R.E.S., as well as the Skywarn coordinator for Saratoga County.

I intend to provide training to all who will participate and this will start in January 2009 as I am in the process of the schedule now. I would like to provide on air, class room, and actual event training for all. I am looking for others to assist with this endeavor as it takes many people to put together programs.

At our January meeting Mr. Lent will be in attendance to discuss how we can fit into the county system. He looks forward to meeting with us and to our input as to what we can provide to the county and how they can assist us.

There will be forthcoming Skywarn training from the National Weather Service for our group. I have spoken to Mr. Quinlivan and he is establishing a revised program for us. I will let you know asap when that is available.

See everyone at the holiday gathering with the new toys we provide to children of Saratoga County. Please bring a new unwrapped toy and some food to share with all.

Dave N2FEP

New Licensees—New Members

The following folks passed their ham exams at the HamFest VE session on September 13. SCARA welcomes them as new members for the next calendar year. Congratulations!

NEW LICENSES

KC2TYF (TECH)

Whitney Anderson - Glenville, NY 12302

KC2TYL (TECH)

Sarah Antonacci—Rensselaer, NY 12144

KC2TYH (TECH)

Dick Brady—Clifton Park, NY 12065

KC2TYK (TECH)

Stephanie Miller—Porters Corners, NY 12859

KC2TYJ (TECH)

Jim Pertell—Northville, NY 12134

KC2TYN (GEN)

Larry Tyrrell—Burnt Hills, NY 12027

KC2TYE (TECH)

(Upgr. to Gen. 10-15-08)

Les Valastro—Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

KC2TYI (TECH)

Amburlin Wilhoite—Saratoga springs, NY 12866

KC2TYG (TECH)

Jim Williams—Niskayuna, NY 12309

UPGRADED LICENSES

KC2TSY (TO EXTRA)

Tom Bulla—Schenectady, NY 12303

KC2TAV (TO GENERAL)

John Pertell—Northville, NY 12134

KC2RYI (TO GENERAL)

Nick Maneely—Ballston Spa, NY 12202

AB2ZS (TO EXTRA)

Cliff Conklin—Glenville, NY 12302

W2AKS (TO GENERAL)

Don Castor—Galway, NY 12074

KC2RUV (TO EXTRA)

Alan Hall—Stillwater, NY 12170

News from ARRL

Compiled from ARRL Letter and www.arrl.org

SOLAR UPDATE

We had our last glimpse of sunspot group 1008 as it was about to slip over our Sun's western horizon on November 18. No sunspots have emerged since then, but it seems a reasonable assumption that we will see more Solar Cycle 24 spots, but we do not know when. There is a prediction from USAF/NOAA that shows solar flux rising to 70 on December 8-9. This is just tracking a possible reappearance of the region that birthed sunspot group 1007 that we saw in the Sun's southern hemisphere from October 30 through November 6.

ARRL Continuing Education Course Registration: Registration remains open through Sunday, December 7, 2008, for these online course sessions beginning on Friday, December 19, 2008: Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level 2; Antenna Modeling; HF Digital Communications; and Radio Frequency Propagation.

Courses are interactive, and some include direct communications with a Mentor/Instructor. Students register for a particular session that may be 8, 12 or 16 weeks (depending on the course) and they may access the course at any time of day at times convenient for their personal schedule. Mentors assist students by answering questions, reviewing assignments and activities, as well as providing helpful feedback. Interaction with mentors is conducted through e-mail; there is no appointed time the student must be present -- allowing complete flexibility for the student to work when and where it is convenient.

To learn more, visit the CCE Course Listing page www.arrl.org/cep/student or contact the Continuing Education Program Coordinator cep@arrl.org.



From ARRL, cont.

NEW BASIC ANTENNA BOOK AVAILABLE

For something that is often so simple to make, an antenna is remarkably difficult for many people to understand. The antenna is one of your shack's most important elements and can make your radio system a success. Now available from ARRL, "Basic Antennas: Understanding Practical Antennas and Design" is a comprehensive introduction to antennas -- basic concepts, practical designs and details of easy-to-build antennas. You'll learn how to make antennas that really work.

Written by ARRL Technical Editor Joel Hallas, W1ZR, this new book includes an introduction to antennas, as well as sections on dipole antennas, antenna impedance, transmission lines, practical two element arrays, wideband and multiband antennas, monopole antennas, reflector antennas, Yagis for HF and VHF loop antennas, antennas for microwave applications, vehicle antennas, antenna measurements and an introduction to antenna modeling

Weekly Radio Net

Please join us on the air each Sunday evening at 7 PM for our weekly net. This regular gathering offers on-air practice in net operation in preparation for emergency situations. It also provides timely information to area amateurs, and serves as a forum for selling/swapping gear and discussing topics in a formally directed net environment.

The 147.00 and 147.24 repeaters are linked by the 448.225 MHz machine during this net, so feel free to check in on any of these repeaters. PL tone is 91.5 Hz.

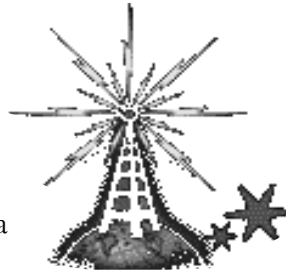
We are looking for volunteer Net Control Stations for the Sunday evening net. It's easy. Just keep track of the check-ins and give everyone a chance to talk.



WA2UMX ON THE INTERNET

The club has a website at:
<http://www.wa2umx.net>.
Here you will find the latest club news and events.

The club operates two 2-meter repeaters. The 147.24 repeater is located 15 miles west of Saratoga Springs at Lake Nancy. This repeater has a members-only phone patch. The 147.00 repeater is located 10 miles north of Saratoga Springs on Spruce Mountain, near Corinth, NY. This repeater offers an "emergency" phone patch. These two machines, in combination, offer excellent North to South and East to West communications far beyond Saratoga County. These repeaters are linked together at various times by the club's third repeater on 448.225 MHz.
PL Tone for all club repeaters is now 91.5 Hz.



OFFICERS

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