



Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

2009 HAMFEST: Another Success!

The 24th Annual Saratoga County Hamfest is now in the books, and by all accounts it was a big success. At 413 hams through the gate, we are holding our own, despite declines at other fests. The food booth was a complete sell-out!

(Pictures on page 3—email version)

Door Prize Winner (FT-897D) -
WA2JAE—John Hackert, Schenectady
50/50 Raffle Prize Winner (\$81) -
WA2CW—Barry Leet, Niskayuna

Fox-Hunt Winners
#1—KC2QEJ—Wm Corps, Jr,
#2—W2MRD—Matt Delaney
#3—W2WC—William Corps., Sr.

Thanks to all who helped and all who attended. Thanks to our vendors for your continued support and prize donations. Watch for our 25th in 2010.

Thanks to the following Volunteer Examiners:
Jim-KG2H, Frank-KA2QYE, Bill-KC2NXC,
Byron-K2BD, Dave-AA2PS, Walt-W2ZD,
Larry-NT2B

VE Test Session A Smash Hit!

22 Tests given; 17 Passed

Results:

New Licensees

Vicky Majewski—KC2VUK (Tech)
Katie Catucci—KC2VUL (Tech)
James Retersdorf—AC2BL (Extra)**
Dan Hackel—KC2VUJ (Tech)
Joe Lavigne—KC2VUH (Tech)
Grant Sussey—KC2VUI (Tech)
Ken Fuchs—KC2VUG (Tech)
Ryan Kramer - KC2VOJ (General)
Bill McCrea III—KC2VUF (Tech)

Upgrades

Brian Kosiba—KC2ILT (Extra)
Chris Catucci—W2CJC (General)
Dave Colliton—KC2QPP (General)
Jim Pertell—KC2TYJ (General)
John Snyder—KB1SRF (General)
Dave Collier—KC2ILU (Extra)
David Mungo—KB1SVG (General)
Steve Hans—KC2VUE (Tech)

** From no license to Extra in one day!

**CONGRATULA-
TIONS TO ALL!**



Board of Directors Meeting

May 14, 2009

The board meeting was called to order by President Dave Atwell—N2FEP. Present were BoD members Al – KA1IEG, Byron – K2BD, Dave – NR2J, Dennis – WA2JWO, and Jim—K2LM.

- Al – KA1IEG presented the treasurer's report: Opening balance - \$ 9,995.42 (before hamfest); Closing balance \$ 12,171.03. The hamfest is our annual shot-in-the-arm.

- Hamfest Report: (highlights)

Gross Receipts \$ 3,860

Net Profit \$ 1,853

Ticket Sales \$2,065

Food Sales (Net) \$ 330

Extra Door Prize Tickets \$ 228

50/50 Raffle Income \$ 81

Table Rentals \$ 425

Fairground Rental still only \$375

- Board voted to award \$20 gift cards to all non-ham personnel who helped out in kitchen

The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 pm.

General Meeting

As this was our first meeting after the hamfest, that was what our program was about. The hamfest was another success even if the weather was not stellar. We did miss Darlene N2XQG's input, but she had left us with plenty of notes to follow so things went smoothly. Early cooking and preparing the grill was done by Jim K2LM, Dave NR2J, and others. The veggies were cut up. K2LM didn't even cut himself on all those onions. Everyone helped out on getting the sausage precooked and things were ready for the next day. Thanks to Jim KF2K staying all night once again and keeping us safe.

In the morning, we opened the gates, and Dave-N2FEP went to the club shack at Wilton EMS to attempt to find the Fox for the foxhunt. But the Fox was too well hidden, and we had to run the hunt without it. So Dave borrowed N2QFT (a real fox) from her duties at the food booth, and she became the fox for the hunt. We had 6 participants and everyone had a great time (winners on Page 1). Of course, the VOICE of the Hamfest, John-W2QCY and Kathy handled the talk-in station duties.

General Meeting, Cont.

Seventeen out of 22 people passed their ham exams at the VE session. One, John Retersdorf-AC2BL, even went from no license to Extra in one sitting.

John Hackart of Schenectady WA2JAE, came to our meeting to pick up his door prize (FT-897D), and stayed to enjoy our meeting.

Then we discussed RACES of Saratoga County. In order to participate in RACES, you must be registered in the county you live in. Then you can take part in statewide and local nets anywhere. The Tuesday night net on the Prospect and Gore Mountain repeaters is now a joint RACES training net for Warren, Saratoga and other counties. Mike-K2SWF and Dave-N2FEP invite your participation. If you wish to be a member of RACES, contact Dave-N2FEP for an application and an ID badge.

Submitted by Dave—N2FEP

Hamfest 2009 in Pictures



Talk-In station operator, John—W2QCY . . . listening!

HAMFEST PHOTOS, Cont.



Public Service Events

RECENT—

Rosie's Walk for Diabetes; Sept 19.

We set up the net control station at 09:30. The walkers left at 10:00 and the runners at 10:35. There were two routes—a long and a short one. Operators were Dennis Kagel - WA2JWO, Bob Hoefinger—N2WDY, and Larry Eaton—NT2B. My son Dan was posted along the long route, using his two way Nextel and monitoring. I would like to thank all of the operators and ask that everyone mark the same weekend for the walk next year. Rick—N2WDZ

THANKS to all who participated in the Hospital Interoperability Drill on July 10. We showed that hams can get their communications through when all else fails.

THANKS to all who participated in Saratoga County Fair communications July 14-19. Your help was really appreciated by Dick Rowland and staff — and it helps keep our Fairground rental \$\$ low for our hamfest!

UPCOMING—

Mohawk Towpath Byway Duathlon Sunday, October 18, 2009.

CONTACT: Fred-W2EMS (fhalley@hanys.org)

Time: Begins 0900 hrs, Radio Ops 0800 hrs.

Event length: About 3 hours.

Location: Meet at Krause's restaurant

Agency: Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway

Equipment: 2-Mtr HT (5 watt recommended)

Website: <http://www.mohawktowpath.org/Duathlon.html>

Krause's is on Halfmoon Beach Rd in Crescent
(N 42° 48.174'; W 73° 45.255')



HEY FCC—WHAT'S THE FUSS?

About First Responders, Hospital Workers and Public Service/Emergency Communication?

Hams have known for years that we cannot use our hobby for commercial interests. Among other things, FCC Part 97.113 states: *"No amateur shall transmit ... any communications in which the operator has a pecuniary interest, including communications on behalf of his employer."*

And we've also known that in a life-threatening emergency, even unlicensed persons can use the ham bands to call for help. But there's always been a gray area around those people who get paid to provide disaster relief or to maintain health and welfare. What can they legally do with ham radio?

Now, in a move that seems like it's from Alice in Wonderland, FCC General Counsel Louise Smith offered her interpretation: *They can do nothing with ham radio except in a real emergency. Not even on their lunch hour or day off.* Ham radio operators who work at hospitals, etc. cannot participate in drills or operate the station equipment.

Heated online discussion now show that people who work in the field are beginning to say "Nuts to this!" and they are walking away from emergency communications (www.qrz.com). Talk about unintended consequences!

Mike, K2SWF, forwarded this statement from a RACES official: *What this boils down to is that anyone in the employ or being paid by a hospital, EOC, Emergency services etc. can not operate an amateur radio as part of a drill whether on duty or off duty but can during a real emergency. So until the FCC gets this straightened out let's make sure we do this and stay legal with our drills.....Kerry*

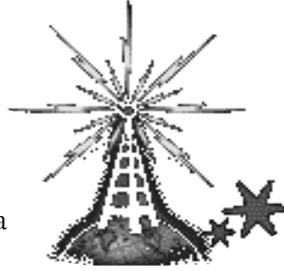
On QRZ.com October 2, KE4SKY writes that his RACES officer just spoke with a media relations rep at FCC's Public Safety & Homeland Security Bureau, who said PSHSB has met with FCC General Counsel and reports the current rules do allow use of ham radios by these people during drills and exercises, on or off the clock.

This is a third-party report of a phone call. It's not in writing. Only the FCC can clear this up. Please stand by — Peter A. Miller, editor



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 now linked together full-time by the club’s third repeater on 448.225 MHz.

PL Tone for all club repeaters is now 91.5 Hz.

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