



# Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

## November Meeting

Don't forget our regular monthly meeting, this Monday 11-13. The location is the normal spot at the Wilton EMS building off of Jones Road in Wilton.

The Board of Directors meeting is at 6:30 PM, followed by the general membership meeting at 7:00 PM. Our scheduled speaker for the evening has cancelled unfortunately, and at press time a new speaker has not been confirmed.

## Special Board Meeting 2017-10-25

Present NR2J, WA2TTP, W2YJO, K2ZIP, W5BN, KG2H, K2LM, KA2QYE

Purpose of the meeting was to discuss the moving of antennae from old .24 tower new tower at the .24 site. The time to arrange this is now, as the county really wants to remove the old .24 tower. We also have an opportunity to have an amateur radio repeater at the Fraker mountain site in the northern part of the county, but we need to move quickly, as work is going to be done at that site, and we can have antennae installed as part of that work.

We will move the .24 repeater from the old tower to the new tower, and we can put the repeater in the building that the county uses for their equipment. Our other equipment at the old .24 tower consisting of Beacons, APRS, Winlink and whatever is left over will have to find a new home, which will be determined at a later date, but the .24 repeater is priority 1.

We will be installing new antennae,  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch hardline, and mounts at both sites. Frank (KA2QYE), and Jim (K2LM) presented the technical side of the discussion, and recommended the equipment need to be purchased. As a result, the board approved expenditures of \$3,000 at Providence, \$4,000 at Fraker, and a contingency amount of \$1,000.

The Fraker site will provide us with the ability to provide full coverage to the northern part of the county, especially around the Sacandaga reservoir where coverage for our repeaters is spotty.

Frank has been working with Carl Czeilman (the Saratoga County Emergency Coordinator) on planning for the new public works building anticipated to be built at the county farm complex in Ballston Spa Which will house the county's EOC. Frank is going to ask if our organization can have a space in the new building near the EOC so that we can provide service to the county when needed. We need to wait to see what will happen.

## Tour De Cure update

Tour de Cure is next June, but an event of this size starts planning the next one as soon as the last bicyclist is across the finish line. Lee Palmer, WB2NSC has been the communications coordinator for many years now, and is ready to pass on the baton to his successor. The following communication has been received from Lee:

“Got a notice for the first planning meeting for the 2018 Tour. Since this will be my last as communications coordinator it would be good if my replacement could ease into the job by assisting with this years event.

So who and how does the club want to proceed? To help with the transition I'm working on a time line/job description. This isn't a call up a few guys 2 days before type of event. I have mentioned my intent to phase out at a previous club meeting - the phone didn't ring but Fred (EMS) and Phil have followed up with wondering if any one volunteered. “

We need one or maybe two people to step in and fill Lee's rather large shoes. Please contact Lee at: [lpalmer@capital.net](mailto:lpalmer@capital.net) Please also the club know your availability by contacting one of the officers. Thanks for considering this opportunity.

## The Fall and Winter HF Radio Sport season Brian Szewczyk N1JF

Fall is upon us in Saratoga county which means one thing, The start of the second half of the 2017 HF Radio Sport or Contest season. In the coming months several of the most popular worldwide Radio sport operating events will take place.

Radio Sport or Contesting on the radio can be described as a timed event, during which the participants make contact with and exchange information with as many other stations as possible. While every contest does have its set of rules to become a participant, you can join in the fun and make a few contacts without having to send in a log or enter the contest. However, if you do get on and work a station during the contest I highly recommend that you make a few other contacts so that your call appears in other participant's logs, because those stations that are doing the contest will send it their logs to have cross checked for accuracy by the contest sponsor.

While many Amateurs have never taken part in a Radio Sport event outside of Field Day which is very much like a contest but not officially a contest. No matter wither you are new to the Amateur Radio Hobby, or have several decades of activity, getting on the air during a contest weekend can offer you some rewards. Not to mention whenever we get on the air we always learn a new technique, understand a band opening or just sharpen operating skills. I would encourage you to get on the air during a contest and give it a try.

One other reasons to get on during a contest is to try out a new mode, new band, compare your antennas or station with others or finish an award. Would you like to achieve DXCC or WAS in a single weekend? Well I can tell you that even with wire antennas and 100 watts during the upcoming contests weekends this is very possible.

A look of the upcoming contest dates, times, bands, object of the contest and what the exchanges follows.

Continued on Page 3

**CQWW (CQ Worldwide)** is the largest Amateur Radio competition in the world. Over 35,000 participants take to the airwaves on the last weekend of October (SSB) and November (CW) with the goal of making as many contacts with as many different DXCC entities and CQ Zones as possible. The SSB contest begins at 00:00 GMT (8 pm local) on October 28 thru 23:59 GMT (8 pm local) on October 29. The CW contest starts at 00:00 GMT (7pm local) November 25 thru 23:59 (7 PM local) November 26 This contest covers all HF band 160 thru 10 meters excluding WARC bands. The exchange is a signal report and CQ zone which in the case of Saratoga County is Zone 5.

A typical exchange in CQWW would go as follows  
DX Station: CQ contest Papa Japan 7 Papa Lima PJ7PL  
NJ1F: November Juliet 1 Foxtrot  
DX Station NJ1F 59 8  
NJ1F: PJ7PL 59 5  
PJ7PL: QRZ

**ARRL November Sweepstakes, CW:** First full weekend in November 4-6, Phone: Third full weekend in November 18-20. Begins 2100 UTC Saturday and runs through 0259 UTC Monday. Contest Object: For stations in the United States and Canada (including territories and possessions) to exchange QSO information with as many other US and Canadian stations as possible on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter bands.

The required exchange consists of:

**A consecutive serial number;**

**Precedence;** "Q" for Single Op QRP (5 Watts output or less) "A" for Single Op Low Power (up to 150 W output); "B" for Single Op High Power (greater than 150 W output); "U" for Single Op Unlimited Single-Op Unlimited High Power and Single-Op Unlimited Low Power both send "U") "M" for Multi-Op (Multiop High Power and Multiop Low Power both send "M") "S" for School Club;

**Your Callsign**

**Check** The last 2 digits of the year of first license for either the operator or the station. An entry must send the same Check throughout the entire contest.

**ARRL/RAC Section** (Eastern New York if you operate from Saratoga County)

Exchange Example: NU1AW would respond to W1AW's call by sending: W1AW 123 B NU1AW 71 CT, which indicates QSO number 123, B for Single Op High Power, NU1AW, first licensed in 1971, and in the Connecticut section.)

**ARRL 160 Meter CW** Object: For Amateurs worldwide to exchange information with W/VE amateurs on the 160-meter band CW only. DX-to-DX QSOs do not count for contest credit. Starts 2200 UTC Friday, ends 1600 UTC Sunday (December 1-3, 2017). This is a forty-two-hour period with no time limitation.

The Exchange is pretty simple a signal report and ARRL Section (Saratoga County is in ENY)

Continued on page 4

**ARRL 10 Meter Contest CW and SSB : Object:** For Amateurs worldwide to exchange QSO information with as many stations as possible on the 10 meter band. Second full weekend of December. Starts 0000 UTC Saturday; runs through 2359 UTC Sunday (**December 9-10, 2017**). The Exchange for W / VE stations is RS(T) and State / Providence, DX stations send a serial number starting at 001 and Mexican stations RS(T) and their State  
For complete rules for these contests are available at:

<http://www.cqww.com/>  
<http://www.arrl.org/sweepstakes>  
<http://www.arrl.org/160-meter>  
<http://www.arrl.org/10-meter>

If I wanted to finish up my DXCC or 5 or 6 band DXCC award I would get on for the CQWW contests. These contests will offer the largest number of countries on the air. One thing to remember is that in this contest everyone can work everyone so during the first few hours can be hard for low power stations. The CQWW CW is a great contest to really increase your CW speed. Because it is largely a callsign contest the average speed is 30 WPM. There is no better way to learn high speed CW than listening to good ops send it. However, don't let this speed discourage you from getting on as most stations are using computers for sending so CW decoders and skimmers will generally be able to assist you.  
A few propagation tips:

#### **Low Bands: 1.8 MHZ thru 7 MHZ :**

Peak times to work Europe and African Stations 3 GMT to 7 GMT (their sunrise) another good time is our local sunset 20 GMT thru 00 GMT. During our sunset we have a huge advantage and benefit from gray line enhancement, because the rest of the US is still in daylight!

Peak times to work the Pacific, UA9, VK, ZL and JA is around our local sunrise 10 GMT to 13 GMT, Station in JA peak right at our sunrise plus or minus 5 minutes.

#### **High Bands 14 MHZ thru 28 MHZ:**

Peak times to Europe, Middle East, Far East and Africa 11 GMT to 18 GMT. Our local Sunrise gives us an advantage over the rest of the US to Europe because the bands are closed to stations west of us.

Peak times to Caribbean, South and Central America 16 GMT until 01 GMT

Peak Times to VK, ZL KH6, KL7 and JA 19 GMT until 01 GMT

A great way to work WAS in a single weekend is the ARRL Sweepstakes contests during which all 50 states will be on along with the Canadian providences. I can tell you from personal experience that it is possible to work all 50 states and all the Canadian providences in just under 4 hours. While the exchange is long Sweepstakes is a gentleman's contest. If you need help with the exchange the operator will assist you. The CW version the average speed is 20 to 25 WPM because of the long exchange.

Continued on page 5

ARRL 160 CW is another great way to explore a new band, fill in missing states for WAS or round out your DXCC. It is a CW only contest however the speeds tend to be around 15 to 25 wpm. 160 meters goes from a very groundwave local band to a DX band during the darkness with spectacular DX contacts during periods of gray line. Don't have a 160-meter antenna? Try loading up a 80 meter antenna, you might be surprised what you are able to work. Reference Low Bands for peak times earlier in for best times to work DX.

ARRL 10 Meter Contest this is a both SSB and CW contest and another opportunity to finish out WAS or DXCC. 10 Meters is typically open during daylight hours with some enhancement happening at sunrise and sunset. If you have a beam you might notice that the band opens skew path, you beam Africa to work Europe.

I hope that encouraged you to get on during these contests and experience one of my favorite aspects of our hobby.

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### American Red Cross Hails "New Partnership" with ARRL Following Puerto Rico Deployment From ARRL

The American Red Cross (ARC) this week thanked ARRL and its "Force of 50" hurricane recovery volunteers who deployed to Puerto Rico earlier this month, and it suggested a new level of partnership now exists between the two organizations. ARC Senior Vice President, Disaster Cycle Services Harvey Johnson this week wrote ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, and ARRL CEO Tom Gallagher, NY2RF, to express his organization's gratitude for "all your amazing volunteers for the unwavering commitment demonstrated during the response to this unprecedented disaster in Puerto Rico." Johnson said the team's actions "made a significant difference" in the lives of those affected.

"This mission marked an exciting new path for our two organizations with it being the first time we deployed ARRL volunteers to a Red Cross relief operation," Johnson wrote. "I continue to hear incredible stories about how the ARRL volunteers supported individuals, communities, and partner organizations during their time in Puerto Rico." ARRL and the American Red Cross have a long-standing memorandum of understanding ([MOU](#)) to cooperate in emergencies and disasters.

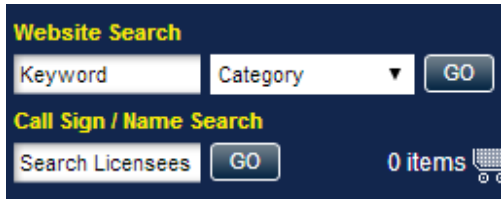
"It was a complex cooperation in an austere environment, and the mission certainly had its challenges," Johnson continued. "While we have much to learn from this new experience and areas to improve upon, we remain committed to working with you, ARRL, and your cadre of talented volunteers."

Johnson singled out for special praise ARRL Emergency Response Manager Mike Corey, KI1U, "for his leadership in planning and managing the mission."

"Mike was fast acting and thoughtful, constantly working to make the mission effective through transparency and collaboration," Johnson said. "We simply could not have achieved the outcomes without him."

Johnson said the ARC looks forward to working together with ARRL to "serve those impacted by disasters."

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

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 :

[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 you ideas.

Thanks