



# Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### Time for a Change?

It's that time of year when we elect the officers for our club. The officers of SCARA are elected each year in May and serve a one year term. **Walt, W2ZD and Dave, NR2J have volunteered as our nominating committee this year. If you'd like to serve on the Board, please contact them before the next club meeting on May 14<sup>th</sup>.** We need to elect a new President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasure and four additional board members.

I would like to take a moment to thank the members of the Board who have served this past year. I think we accomplished several key objectives of the club yet, there are many items we were unable to complete. As with any Board we have thoughts and ideas with a direction we think the club should be following but, each and every member of SCARA has a voice in what we do and where we concentrate our efforts. I would encourage all of our members to get involved in the future of, and decisions made by your club.

If we all just paid our yearly dues and nothing else, our club would fail after a very short period of time. **People are the backbone of our club.** We need members that not only pay their dues each year but also help with other club activities such as Public Service events, Field Day, meeting programs, training sessions, attend club meetings, or any of the many other supportive functions necessary to running an effective ham radio club. If you are someone who can't get out, or have other limitations to your ability to help I completely understand. These comments are aimed at the able bodied members that need to understand, many hands make light work. When asked at a club meeting for volunteers, or requested to respond to an e-mail or question in the newsletter please do so. I'm not asking you to volunteer for each and every event we participate in but, if each of us chooses a couple of events to help out at we would have plenty of people to staff all of our events.

Thanks for allowing me to serve as your president for the past year. I hope to see you at the next club meeting.

73 Fred, W2EMS

### Field Day! - 2007 - Field Day!

**When:** June 23-24, 2007

**Where:** Wilton EMS Building, Jones Road

**Why:** Because it's fun!

**Contact:** Byron Wilhoite, K2BD at 518-587-4807; Leave a message, or catch him on 147.00 or 145.39 MHz

The biggest ham radio event of the year is coming, and the club is looking for volunteers to help out with Field Day, and make it a big success and a fun time. All hams are urged to come out and help us to set up and tear down, as well as to make some contacts.

Byron Wilhoite K2BD (ex KC2KOH) has taken over the event and it's his first FD, so all your help and input is greatly appreciated. Field Day is a great opportunity to meet new hams and to get together with old friends, too. It is a team sport! We'll be putting up antennas and masts, running coax, stringing wires and setting up radios. Then -- operate til you've had your fill!

Food and beverages will be provided. On Saturday there will be a real cook barbecuing for all of the amateurs working! So dust off your name tags and come out of the woodwork and pitch in. Let's keep this sport thriving. And let's show what hams can do when they work together, Many hands make light work!

#### WANTED: HELP WITH CLUB FUNCTIONS

- **Public Service Event Coordinator**—With Glenn's departure, we need someone to act as contact with the groups we serve, keep a calendar of events and a list of volunteers
- **Meeting Program Coordinator**—Help arrange interesting speakers and topics
- **Field Day Team Members**—String wires and operate as long as you wish
- **Officers & Directors for 2007-2008**—help the club remain vibrant into the future

## Radio Officer / Emergency Coordinator Report

I want to thank everyone for their diligence during this spring season. We have had some challenges with the weather, and there are probably more to come. We have been fortunate, so far, to not be too busy.



Please keep abreast of the weather conditions. If you need to refresh your Skywarn status, PLEASE check the NWS Albany Weather Site ( <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/aly/> ) and register for a class. There is one coming up at the West

Crescent Fire house on May 14th .

The county will be moving their radio operations at Spruce Mt. very soon. I believe that we will be allowed to move at least the 147.00 repeater with them. I don't know if any of the other radios will be allowed to have antenna systems there or not. This is a very tenuous move for us. Both Jim, K2LM, and I have asked for all of our operations to be allowed to move to the new site. Now, we will have to wait and see.

Nice weather is nearly here and with it the walkathons, bike tours, and all the other public service events we do. Please take a minute to register to assist in one or all of them, as it is a great way to get your feet wet in ecomm.



Stay safe,

Dave—N2FEP

## Hello from your new Editor, W2BEW

Happy Spring! Antenna weather is upon us and I wish you better luck with yours than I've had with mine.

Glenn, KA2DTH, has a brand new job — and that's good. But the bad part is, the new job has him flying all over the country every week. So Glenn no longer has time to compile and edit this newsletter. Next in line, for whatever reason, was me, Peter, W2BEW, club secretary.

I'll do my best to uphold the fine tradition of those who have gone before, and you can help. If you see news happening, or if you have an article or announcement to contribute, please send it to me at [petermil@aol.com](mailto:petermil@aol.com).

Your comments and feedback are also appreciated. Thanks. — Peter.

## Howard Lester, W2ODC . . . SK Pioneer, Elmer, Gentleman, Friend

*Prime Mover in Amateur Radio.*

Amateur Radio Operators near and far lost a great friend in April. Howard Lester, the smiling voice from sunny Alplaus, passed on at age 84 after suffering a stroke.

There's hardly a ham within 100 miles whom Howard hasn't touched in one way or another. Always willing to stop to explain a technical point — and explain it again, if needed — Howard seemed to have infinite knowledge ... and patience.

We always knew what condition 20 meters was in when we heard Howard say, "Well, I had a good sked with son, Eric, in Seattle this morning."

A pioneer in the development of color television, tracking radar and cellular telephones, he was also one of the founders of our present repeater system. And he helped a whole generation of us become better ham operators.

Countless SARA Field Days ... by the flickering light of the generator, Howard would pound brass for half the night — or sometimes all — and rack up dazzling QSO rates.

Never was the term "silent key" more poignant.

73 OM. HPE TO CU AGN  
"— and lots of luck, now." SK

Peter — W2BEW

## Public Service Events

The next Public Service Event (PSE) on the schedule: **4H Walk-a-thon to be held on April 28th** at the 4H Training Center on Middle Line Road. Other events, as follows:

**May 6th**—MS Walk-a-thon at the track in Saratoga.

**June 10**—ADA Tour de Cure from Stillwater HS.

**July 14th**—MS Bike Tour out of Moreau State Park.

Upcoming:

Saratoga Lions—Duathlon

Mohawk Towpath Duathlon

BH-BL Rotary—Apple Run / Walk

**New events will be listed on [www.wa2umx.net](http://www.wa2umx.net) Calendar. We need an events coordinator. Please help.**

## Board of Directors Meeting

April 9, 2007

From Peter—W2BEW

Meeting called to order at 6:35pm. Quorum present with Fred—W2EMS, Darlene—N2XQG, Al—KA1IEG, Peter—W2BEW, Mark—KA2FBZ, Ed—KC2MIH, Dennis—WA2JWO present. Four visitors in attendance. Minutes from previous meeting approved.

### President's Report:

- Announced that Byron, KC2KOH (now K2BD!) has agreed to chair the club's Field Day activities. Looking for volunteers to assist on FD Team.
- Launched discussion of "branding" items for new informal club name—SCARA. Will be securing stationery items, etc.
- Discussion and approval of re-affiliating with ARRL for broader publicity, referrals.
- Announced that election of officers will take place at May 14 meeting. Need nominating committee.
- Led discussion of report/requests from Jim—K2LM regarding club repeater equipment:
  - Approved purchase of new Austin antenna (approx \$1100) in preparation for 147.00 move to new county tower. (\$2,000 cap, incl. feedline)
  - Tabled discussion of purchase of Comet GP9 antenna from KA2QYE for 147.00 temporary use.
  - Approved purchase of four crystals and calibration for new GE MastrII repeaters (\$220)
  - Approved expenditure of \$250 to Brian WA2ZMS for maintenance of 145.39 (Equinox) repeater.

### Vice President's Report:

- Have contract with fairgrounds for Hamfest on Sept 8, 2007
- Hamfest is ARRL sanctioned; will be listed in QST
- Two vendors have accepted; PR distributed.
- Swapfest HT winner passed his amateur exam at VE session. 15 people at test.

### Treasurer's report:

- Al reported a starting balance of \$9104.61 at the beginning of the month, and after dues collection and expenses, a balance of \$9566.82 at end of month. Report accepted.

### Secretary's Report:

- Many members (33) still have not renewed their memberships for 2007. Many reminders have been sent. They will now be dropped from the newsletter mail and email list.

### Radio Officer's report:

Distributed information about Skywarn program and upcoming training sessions

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

**Next Board Meeting: Monday May, 14 @ 18:30 EDST  
Wilton EMS Building; General Meeting to follow.**

## General Club Meeting

The program for the April General Meeting of the Saratoga County Amateur Radio Association was a most interesting talk by Cheryl Murphy, Warren County Red Cross Emergency Services Coordinator. Cheryl is very anxious to form a working relationship with amateurs in our area to provide emergency communications in conjunction with the Red Cross emergency services.

She listed the three critical elements in preparing for an emergency: 1. Get a Kit; 2. Make a Plan; 3. Be Informed. There are two types of kits: the Go Kit; and the Shelter-in-Place Kit.

The Go Kit contains necessary personal items, in case you are displaced — copies of driver's license, birth certificate, and social security card, eyeglasses, list of medications, contact numbers, and a plan for where to meet your family or friends.

The Shelter-in-Place Kit is for survival for at least 5 days, including water, non-perishable foods, flashlights, radio and batteries, corded (not cordless) phone, hatchet, first-aid kit and other hardware items you may need.

Of course, we all know there's another kit — the Ham Radio Go Kit, which contains portable radio equipment, batteries, antennas, meters, etc.

There was a brief discussion of the personal background checks (including credit and lifestyle) that Red Cross now requires of all volunteers. ARRL and Red Cross are working to negotiate a less invasive arrangement for hams to help Red Cross.

Sid, K2LJH, is now following up with Cheryl to determine Red Cross communication needs and to suggest ways in which SCARA members can help.

Walt, W2ZD and Dave, NR2J volunteered for Nominating Committee. Contact them with nominations at god4142@nycap.rr.com, or sardelta@aol.com.

## Weekly Radio Net

Please join us on the air each Sunday evening at 8 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.

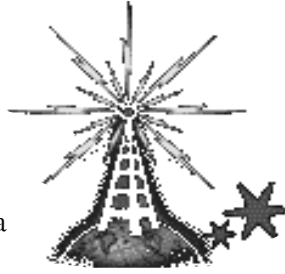
We are looking for volunteer Net Control stations for the Sunday evening net. It's easy. Just keep track of the check-ins and forward them to Fred, W2EMS after the net.



## 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 clubs third repeater on 448.225 MHz.  
**PL Tone for all club repeaters is now 91.5 Hz.**



## OFFICERS

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