



Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

From the President:

I want to thank everyone for your assistance on the hamfest in September. It was a great success again. We did miss Darlene and everything she does. Now, everyone that took one of her jobs knows how busy she is at the hamfest. We did find the fox for next year and many thanks to N2QFT for taking up that job as the fox. She did an excellent job. Next year is our 25th (can you believe it's been that long) event. I think we should plan something special to commemorate the event — maybe a shirt, hat, pin. Every member's input is requested and no idea too far fetched.

On a club note, I want to thank the chairpersons for all the walkathons, duathlons, bike events we did this year. Again without member participation and organization these important public service events would not be helped and would be much more of a hassle for the organizations as they try to keep track without our equipment and expert assistance.

In December we will be holding our holiday gathering instead of the club meeting. Please bring a NEW UNWRAPPED toy to donate as we have done in the past. There are many children from newborn to teenage that receive our gifts. Thank you in advance for your gracious assistance. As always bring a treat to share with everyone. The club will have coffee, tea, soda for all, so bring cookies, cake, fudge, snack food to share. If you can't or don't have time to make something you can bring something from the store.

73
Dave N2FEP

Board of Directors Meeting Oct. 12, 2009

Meeting called to order at 6:33 by Vice-President, Darlene – N2XQG.

- Previous Minutes accepted
- Al, KA1IEG, presented Treasurer's report: Opening and Closing balance = \$12,171.03
- Al reported that insurance renewal forms have been filed
- Al is awaiting figures from Fairground regarding next year's rental
- Al suggested that we invest in two crock pots to keep food warm at next year's hamfest. Darlene, N2XQG, suggested that members could loan their crock pots for a day or two.
- Dave, NR2J, reported that the program at the general meeting would be Bill Donnelly – K2ROU, speaking about antenna construction
- Jim, K2LM, reported a need for new QSL cards and letterheads with club's new call letters
- Al agreed to manage the next hamfest – our 25th – in September 2010.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 6:55.

General Meeting – Oct. 12, 2009

Meeting convened at 7:30.

- Reviewed proceedings of the board meeting.
- W2EMS issued a request for additional operators for Mohawk Towpath Duathlon on 10/18.



- There was some discussion of the FCC memo reinforcing their ban on any operation on behalf of one's employer – including drills by emergency personnel. A waiver must be secured to allow such operation.
- Bill Donnelly, K2ROU, presented an informative program on construction of inexpensive antennas for a variety of applications
 - He referred anyone interested in more info to www.k7mem.com for an online antenna calculator and other useful data.
 - Bill described construction of a simple 2-meter backpack beam very similar to the Arrow Antenna, which can be seen at www.arrowantennas.com

Meeting adjourned at approx. 8:20.

Radio Officer Report:

We recently held an information meeting and photo session for RACES at the fire training center. I want to thank everyone for your participation. I will be getting the id tags soon and we will distribute them.

Anyone that wishes to participate in RACES must have an application on file with the county where they live. You can participate in drills with out-of-county RACES groups such as the weekly radio drills with Warren Co. RACES. If you are not registered with Saratoga County then you will need to contact me for an application to start the process. This is a state requirement and is plainly spelled out in the RACES information at the NYS SEMO web site.

We will be holding participation drills in the future here in our county so be ready and have your application in before it is too late. Emergencies wait for no one.

73

N2FEP Radio Officer
Saratoga County R.A.C.E.S



**FROM: TOM WOZNACK, N2SQO -
NORTHEAST AMATEUR RADIO (NEAR)**

**TO: ALL HAM RADIO OPERATORS -
NORTHEAST US**

NorthEast Amateur Radio has established a YahooGroup to allow Hams involved in Public Service Events to post their event and solicit volunteers.

All Hams are encouraged to subscribe, even if you only do one public service event a year. Remember, "Many hands make light work." Event coordinators are asked to use the calendar function to list your event. The sooner the better.

It would be a nice thing to list participants here after your event.

— Aaah, the things we do for a tee shirt!

Here's hoping that you make this NEAR Ham Helpers YahooGroup a HUGE success!

Any questions or comments? Email me:
n2sqo@nycap.rr.com

Member Note:

As you know, we haven't heard **Byron, K2BD**, on the air for quite some time. He has been hit hard by Lyme Disease, which he apparently contracted from a tick bite on Field Day weekend, behind Wilton EMS.

It has prevented him from working or doing much of anything else — even enjoying his radio hobby.

He's hoping that aggressive treatment will have him feeling better soon — and we hope so, too!

In the meantime, send him a QSL card at 1 King Arthur Court, SS, NY 12866, and wish him well.

GET WELL SOON, BYRON!

From the ARRL Letter —

FCC Issues *Public Notice* on Amateur Communication During Disaster Drills

On October 20, 2009, the FCC released a *Public Notice* clarifying the Commission's rules relating to the use of Amateur Radio by licensed amateurs participating in drills and exercises on behalf of their employers. The Public Notice -- affirms that the Commission's rules "specifically prohibit amateur stations from transmitting communications 'in which the station licensee or control operator has a pecuniary interest, including communications on behalf of an employer.'" (*This pertains to hospital employees, EMTs, and other workers in disaster-related services — Editor*)

The *Public Notice* states that, in order to facilitate participation by employees who wish to engage in government-sponsored drills and emergency exercises on behalf of their employers, a waiver can be requested from the FCC by the government agency sponsoring the drill or exercise (and not by the individual). The waiver application must include the following information:

- When and where the drill will take place,
- Identification of the amateur licensees expected to transmit amateur communications for their employer,
- Identification of the employer(s) on whose behalf the amateur(s) will be transmitting, and
- A brief description of the drill.

It should be noted that the waiver request must be filed and acted upon *in advance* of the drill. The waiver must be actually granted by the Commission *before* the amateurs participate in the drill. It is not enough to apply -- the waiver must be granted first. The Commission has also emphasized that *only governmental agencies* may apply for a waiver.

(As impractical as this may sound, the FCC has granted its first request for waiver — see article at right — Ed)



From the FCC —

FCC Issues First Waiver for Government-Sponsored Disaster Drill

On October 27, the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) granted the first waiver that allows amateurs who participate in a government-sponsored emergency preparedness and disaster drill to communicate on behalf of their employers during the drill. The waiver request was made on behalf of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

That state conducted a full-scale exercise on Wednesday, October 28, 2009 from 8 AM-5 PM (EDT) to test their emergency response to the possible release of chemical agents at Blue Grass Army Depot, located near Richmond, KY.

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 this net. It's easy. Just keep track of the check-ins and give everyone a chance to speak.

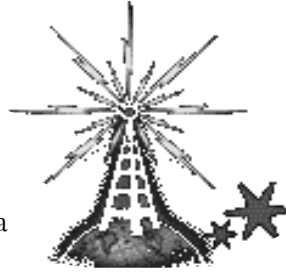


HAPPY THANKSGIVING



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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