

Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY R.A.C.E.S. ASSOCIATION, INC.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As I see it there are two immediate threats to our hobby, amateur radio. We all have heard and read about BPL. There has been a lot of "rally around the flag" and "we must stop the infidels before they take over our world." I do not disagree that BPL is a threat and I think that as a group we hams should gather the data before BPL gets to our area so that we have solid evidence to show the FCC that BPL should not be allowed in our neighborhood or any neighborhood.

The other threat is silence.

I believe that silence is a greater threat than BPL. I get to visit a lot of people in their workplaces and only once did I see any evidence that the person I was about to photograph was a ham. He, K2LNG, had his call sign on his desk. Lou is now a silent key. Silent as most of us are about our hobby.

I am as guilty as any other ham in not promoting my hobby in my community. We hams must promote our hobby, we must become Elmers to either those that have let that licenses lapse or better yet find someone that is remotely interested in our hobby and help them to get a license. Why? Demographics show that each year there are fewer licensed amateur radio operators than the year before. With fewer people licensed to use the amateur radio spectrum, the easier it is for commercial interests to show that we don't use the spectrum and that they should have it. Of course they, the commercial users, are willing to "buy" the spectrum from our Federal Government whose deficit is growing each minute.

Be an Elmer, save your hobby.

Jim
K2LM

DECEMBER CLUB MEETING

Saratoga County RACES Association held it December Holiday get together. Everyone had an enjoyable time talking about many subjects. Fred W2EMS told about his successful contact on the satellite AO-27 with KC0RCX of Kansas. He renewed his interest after our last club meeting from frank KA2QYE. Congrats to Fred in his satellite work. We also had great goodies provided by all members who were present and some that at the last minuet could not make it. Our president K2LM was not able to attend as he was up on the 240 repeater site fixing some problems with the digital packet equipment and the voice repeater. Thanks for the great job you do Jim.

Thanks to everyone for bringing the much needed toys to our gathering. They were really needed and will make many children happy this Christmas season.

Upcoming Club Meeting Topics

January 10th:

Tom Valosin, WB2KLD, secretary of the ARRL's Atlantic Division's Northern New York Section. Tom will talk about the history of NNY.

[For more information see: <http://www.arrl.org/sections/NNY.html>]

February 14th:

Steve Pertgen, W2FXJ, Army MARS New York State Director, talking about Army MARS, and what it is and does. Oh yes, Steve is with the National Weather Service and you may have heard him wearing that hat.

Radio Officer's Column

Dave N2FEP

Saratoga County R.A.C.E.S.

I hope everyone has a great Holiday season. I know some of you will have some free time during this busy time. Please take a look at your emergency equipment and make sure things are ready to go should we need to. Winter is the time of year when things in the weather dept change fast and the need for emergency communications can happen fast. Red Cross and others are counting on amateur radio to assist when the need arises so please be ready.

I intend to hold some training classes this winter (weather permitting) at the fire training center in Ballston Spa or possibly at the Wilton EMS building where we hold the club meetings. Please let me know if Saturday afternoons would be good for everyone.

Please don't forget the Sunday evening net at 8 pm each week on the voice repeaters. We need everyone's participation. I want to thank the members that have stepped up to assist with the net control duties. If you would like to assist please let me know and I will schedule you in. The info is on the club website on the ARES page.

American Diabetes Appreciation Event

The ADA has invited the amateur radio operators who helped them with the 2004 Tour Du Cure to their annual holiday celebration and volunteer recognition event. It is Tuesday January 11 from 6 PM to 8 PM at the Holiday Inn Turf Hotel on Wolf Road. The venue is cash bar with Hors d'oeuvres.

Please RSVP me so I can let them know how many of our group will be attending.

Thanks
Lee - WB2NSC

****NET on Sunday's Every Week ****

The Saratoga County RACES Association will meet **EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT at 8:00 pm.** on 147.00 and 147.24. Please note that the link between the two repeaters is working on a timer basis and successfully



allows people to use either repeater to participate. The goal of the net is to involve many, if not most, of the ARES members in Saratoga County in a weekly net to help prepare people for work in an emergency situation.! Please take time this coming Sunday to tune up your rig or HT, land based or mobile, and sign in.

Photos from the Holiday Party



Everyone having a good time!



Some of the gifts donated for Catholic Charities

New Publication from ARRL

The ARRL Emergency Communications Handbook [It covers the Emergency Communications Class I and a lot of additional information] \$19.95

News from ARRL

The FCC in November responded to a complaint from the Holmesburg (Pennsylvania) Amateur Radio Club about interference on 2 meters from a high-powered so-called long-range cordless telephone. FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth forwarded information from the club to the FCC Philadelphia District Office on November 22.

The club claimed that the cordless telephone system was causing interference on its repeater's 146.080 MHz input frequency. On November 27, an agent from the Philadelphia District Office investigated the complaint and determined that a resident of Glassboro, New Jersey, was operating a "Senao High Quality Cordless Telephone," model SN-358. The base unit appeared to operate on 146.080 MHz, while the handset appeared to operate on 228.960 MHz (specifications listed on Senao's Web site indicate the model SN-358 handset operates on 268 MHz and the base on 394 MHz).

During an on-site inspection, the telephone's owner voluntarily surrendered the unit to the FCC agent. The telephone owner asserted that he'd purchased the system, which reportedly did not display an FCC certification notice, from an eBay advertiser. The FCC's Philadelphia District Office is continuing to investigate.

ARRL VEC exam session application fee to change: Starting January 1, the fee charged all applicants at ARRL VEC-coordinated Amateur Radio examination sessions will rise from \$12 to \$14. ARRL Volunteer Examiner (VE) teams may retain up to \$6 of this fee to reimburse the VE team's out-of-pocket test session-related expenses. The fee is charged to anyone applying for a new amateur license or an upgrade. It also applies to ARRL VEC-session applicants retesting on the same element after being unsuccessful (where examiners permit), or applicants seeking grandfather-credit upgrades and not taking an exam. ARRL VEC Manager Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, says that while the number of examinees has dropped in the past year--possibly due in part to the uncertainty regarding pending licensing proposals--the cost of business and expenses incurred by ARRL VEs and

the ARRL VEC continues to rise. "Cost-saving measures already have included staff reduction, reduced printing and distribution charges for VE training material and exam software--both now only available via the Web--and elimination of lesser-used services," he said. The ARRL provides free FCC license renewals, address changes and other license modification services to current members. Nonmembers pay \$14 for those services.

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2005 dues are DUE by December 31st. Check your mailing label. If it has 2004 on it, the December Newsletter is your last newsletter unless you renew by the end of the year. Please use the form below for your dues renewal. And, yes, you can renew for more than one year at a time! Thank you!

[Please cut on the lines below and mail to AI]

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2005 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Annual Dues Rate:

Single \$10.00
Family \$15.00

**SARATOGA COUNTY RACES ASSOC. INC
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
2005**

Name: _____

Call Sign: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Class of License Held: _____

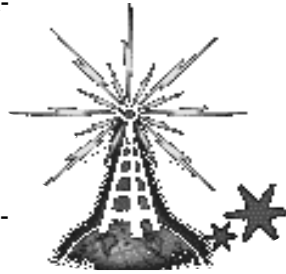
ARRL Member? **Y N**

Please mail your application and check to:
AI Margadonna, KA1IEG
P.O. Box 124
Cambridge, NY 12816

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WA2UMX ON THE INTERNET
 Kim Lake, KF2LV has set up a web page for the club. It is located at: <http://www.wa2umx.net>. The club operates two 2-meter repeaters. The 147.24 re-



peater is located 15 miles West of Saratoga Springs at Lake Nancy, in Barkersville. This repeater has a phone patch, which is restricted to members only. 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.

Saratoga County ARES repeater at lake Nancy 147.360 is also supported by the club. Located in the Town of Providence.

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