

Sparks from the Spa



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

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

To paraphrase an auto ad "where would you like to go?"

Now that summer is truly here in force, the time that each of us has to spend on our hobby is limited. There is grass to mow, kids are out of school, vacations to take, friends that want to visit us, just too many things to do in the few short months of warm weather.

During summer I don't have a lot of time to enjoy my hobby, but I do have time to daydream.

Where would I like to go? There are so many aspects of the hobby that I have never explored. Here is a partial list of the aspects of amateur radio that I have never tried with serious intent-- satellite, VLF, AM, SSB nets, ATV, contesting, CW, AMTOR, PACTOR, weak signal on VHF and above, and even doing SWLing by listening to the BBC. Or just taking the time to learn how to use my new handheld to its fullest capability.

My point is that our hobby is a multifaceted hobby. This summer take time to think about where you would like to go in the hobby and what to do next winter.

While you are thinking about your hobby remember that part of the hobby is helping others get into the hobby. The June speaker was John W2QCY who talked about handi-HAMS, whose website is www.handiham.org. We need to remember to be Elmers and to help others to enjoy our hobby.

So "where would you like to go" with your hobby? Hope to see you at Field Day,

Jim K2LM

Saratoga RACES Board Meeting

Date: June 13, 2005

Wilton EMS Building

1. Meeting was called to order by Vice President Darlene N2XQG at 6:32 pm
2. Board members present were: Bill N2OWA , Al KA1IEG, Mark KA2FBZ, Dave N2FEP, Jo N2QFT, Peter KA2DHZ, Darlene N2XQG and Jim K2LM. Visitors included: Art K2JHT, John W2QCY and Glenn KA2DTH.
3. Bill N2OWA gave the secretary's report. MSC to approve the board minutes of May 9, 2005
4. Al KA1IEG gave the treasurer's report. MSC to receive the treasurer's report.
5. Darlene N2XQG reported that the May 14th test session was a success, with all participants passing at least one element.
6. Field Day was discussed. MSC to approve the purchase of Field Day pins. MSC to approve a budget of \$150 for food. Jo will bring a grill and Mark will have Dave NR2J cook. There will not be an exam session due to a lack of VEs.
7. Jo N2QFT gave the report of the nominating committee. The slate for 2005-06 is:
President Jim K2LM
Vice-President Darlene N2XQG
Secretary Bill N2OWA
Treasurer Al KA1IEG
Board Members at Large: Glenn KA2DTH; Jo N2QFT; Peter KA2DHZ; Mark KA2FBZ
MSC to receive the committee's report.
8. Dave N2FEP, Radio Officer, reported on the Sunday night net discontinuation until September. He also said that progress was being made in installing one of the club's rigs in the new mobile communication van.
9. Lee WB2NSC gave a report on Tour de

Cure. 26 members of the club participated this year in an event that saw 1,100 participants.

10. Peter KA2DHZ reported on the upcoming Fox Hunt on July 9th, the MS Bike Tour on July 9-10. He also mentioned the successful 4-H public service event as well as a request for a possible communication need in Half Moon for an event October 11th.
11. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill N2OWA
Secretary

Saratoga RACES Membership Meeting

June 13, 2005

The meeting was attended by: Francis W1LJF, Peter KA2DHZ, Jo N2QFT, Dave N2FEP, John W2QCY, Lee WB2NSC, Fred W2EMS, Art K2JHT, Fran KA2QYE, Ed K2DLL, Darlene N2XQG, Glenn KA2DTH, Jim K2LM, Al KA1IEG, Mark KA2FBZ and Bill N2OWA.

The reports given at the Board meeting were summarized for the general membership meeting. The membership was asked to vote on the proposed slate of officers [see above minutes, item 7] There being no further nominations, it was moved, seconded and carried to have the secretary cast a white ballot for all nominees except for secretary. It was then moved, seconded and carried that the president cast a white ballot for the secretary. The special speaker was former club president John, W2QCY. His topic was handi-hams.

Report on Tour de Cure 2005

Lee WB2NSC

The 2005 American Diabetes Association's Tour du Cure is history for another year but not before over 1,100 bike riders and 26 dedicated amateur radio operators all contributed to the local event.

On 12 June the riders and amateur radio operators converged on the Stillwater High School. The weather even in the early morning was hot, sticky, and thunderstorms were predicted. Before 0700 Dick, W2gwy, was setting up the net control operations. By 0700 Glen, Kc2dth and I arrived followed shortly by Darlene-N2xqg. Net control consisted of a UHF voice station and a VHF APRS digital station. When we started using APRS Dick advised that we use the UHF voice link to 147.000 to keep any intermod from occurring between the APRS and voice operations. It works great!

After the net control station was set up the APRS mobile stations were configured. We use APRS in the bike repair vehicles. A few years ago we tried just using just APRS in

the bike repair vehicles and then having a rest-stop amateur give the bike repair guy information. That didn't work. Now with a ham and APRS in each bike repair vehicle we know where they are and communicate directly with them.

This year the ADA asked us to staff additional SAG and logistics vehicles. There were 4 SAG and 2 logistics rigs. There are 12 rest stops that hams are stationed at also. The net control operation takes 3 during the



busy periods. This year there were four events: 10, 25, 50, and 100-mile routes. A SAG wagon was assigned to each event.

By 0800 the 147.000 repeater was getting busy and by 0900 it was really busy. Radio traffic was heavy with over a thousand

riders out on routes. With the heat and humidity we had thought that there would be a lot of riders dropping out because of the weather but overall that didn't happen.

Nevertheless the SAG wagons made numerous runs bringing riders back and radio traffic to the bike repair vehicles was non-stop. By early afternoon the 10 and 25 mile riders were back and some of the 50 milers were coming back in also. By 1630 the last of the 100-mile riders had returned and we packed up.

The ADA officials can't get over how we do what we do. Whenever something important happens they make a beeline to the net control station to find out what is going on and to communicate with the field.

As every other year we learned some lessons and will try a few new things for next years event. Some of the things we're thinking about for next year are: A pre-event training session, either splitting up the events, net wise, or using a second frequency for direct communications, possibly more APRS, and using tactical call signs.

The ham's who helped this year are: Darlene-N2xqg, Glen-ka2dth, Rebecca-N2lpw, Kick-W2gwy, Hal-Ak2e, Ed-Kb2ukt, Henry-Kb2str, Dave-N2fep, Mark-Ka2fbz, Kim-Kf2lv, Bill-N2kmf, Fred-W2ems, Bill-Kc2hrj, Rich-Kc2mil, Frank-N4zhg, Tom-N2sqo, Joanna-N2qft, Bill-Kc2ifr, Tom-N2sbc, Jim-Kg2h, Rich-Kb2lfz, Candace-Kc2mrz, Stormy-N2vls, Jim-W2aak, Mike-Kc2dnt. We also need to thank Jim-K2lm for keeping the 147.000 repeater in such great shape.

FIELD DAY

IT IS THIS SATURDAY AND SUNDAY June 25 and 26 at the Wilton EMS Building, Jones Road.

Bob Barter KB2TBB

Many of you know Bob was rushed to the hospital last month and had bypass surgery and kidney problems. He is home now and you drop him a line at 1 Garside Road Ext., Saratoga Springs 12866.

Radio Officer's Column

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their participation in the drills and the Sunday evening net. Especially the net control stations W2EMS, KB2TBB, KA2DHz, N2OWA. These hams gave a small amount of time to run the net one week per month. I hope that in the Fall others ask to run the net. With enough others who volunteer to do so everyone can have a month off and you would only have the opportunity to run the net every other month. The weekly net is for EVERYONE to enjoy and learn from. There will be no time when an emergency strikes to train you. I do not know when the next emergency call up will come. I can only hope that people will be available and trained to do the job we need to do. Many organizations, local governments, county governments are counting on our continued training and support when the time comes.

I want to thank N2OWA Bill and N2QFT Joanna for working with the Town of Malta in a recent tabletop drill conducted. Due to my recent injury and other county obligations I could not be there as I had planned and at the last minute I drafted N2QFT to fill in. Both of these people stepped up to the plate and provided the service requested by the local government and they found out that ham radio is an essential part of any emergency.

There will be other drills and events during the summer such as Field Day on June 25 and 26. Please take a moment to participate in this worthwhile event. Even if you only have an hour or so stop by the club station at Wilton EMS on Jones Rd. and see how it is working and maybe operate. I intend during some of that time to reestablish our club radio shack as it has moved to a bigger area. This will be a fun and educational weekend for everyone. Hope to see you there.

The weekly net will be off the air for the summer the last one was June 12th and the next one will be September 11th at 8 pm on the club repeaters. Please mark your calendar for this date to participate in the net.

Keep an ear to the radio during bad weather as a Skywarn net can be activated at anytime. We have had a really quiet spring. But you need not look far to see what can happen such as the road washouts in Warren County just north of us a few miles. It can happen here. A reminder that 147.360 at Lake Nancy provides EMERGENCY weather information 24 hours a day when there is a WARNING ONLY for Montgomery, Fulton, Schenectady, and Saratoga Counties. NWS information is rebroadcast directly.

Let's stay safe this summer and I hope to see and hear everyone soon. Oh by the way the next foxhunt is July 9th at 9 am at the Wilton Mall in front of Ruby Tuesday's. This too is a fun event and good training in radio operations and use and not to mention you could win a few \$\$\$. So come on and try it out.

See everyone at the club meeting in September on the 12th at Wilton EMS.

Be safe , Be prepared ,
Dave N2FEP
Radio Officer E/C

NEXT RACES CLUB MEETING September 12

20th Annual HAMFEST Saturday September 10

****NET on Sunday's—On Vacation ****

The Saratoga County RACES Association **HAS ENDED FOR THE SUMMER**. The net will begin again on Sunday September 11th.

MAY 14 EXAM Day

There were 7 participants taking exams held at the Wilton EMS Building. Harold Thomas received his general (no prior license); Darrow Hanks received his Technician (no prior license); Thomas Whalen, KC2LVJ went from no code tech to general; Mathew Mol passed his technician and general (and will take the code at a later date) Harry Younes, Ivan Grayson and Chris Moen all received their technician license. It was a very successful test session. Thanks to all the VEs for working this exam!

DAYTON HAMFEST

Dayton Hamvention 2005 General Chair Gary Des Combes, N8EMO, told ARRL this week that attendance was up by 542 this year over last. The total "official" attendance was 20,411, compared to 19,869 for 2004. "We heard from many exhibitors who sold out of everything they had and were taking orders as early as Saturday noon," Des Combes said. "In fact I was told by several exhibitors that this was their best show ever." The ARRL 2005 National Convention, which Dayton Hamvention hosted, "pushed the bar way up," he added.

EMAIL ADDRESS

If you have changed your email address recently or just gotten email, please be sure to send that information to Bill N2OWA at n2owa@arrl.net.

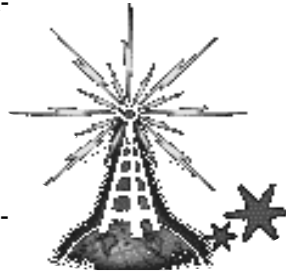


WA2UMX ON THE INTERNET

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 clubs 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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