

Sparks from the Spa



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

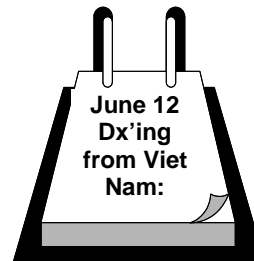
PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

What is Field Day?

The question was asked at the last board meeting and we, the board, had no simple answer. Now if you have ever participated in a Field Day, you will have lots of adjectives, adverbs and nouns to describe your Field Day experiences. Mine are—fun, lightning, exhaustion, and things break. But what is Field Day? The first ARRL Field Day was in 1933. In a June 1933 QST, F.E. Handy, W1BDI, said “The real object of this contest is to test ‘portables’ wherever they may be available.... If successful, we want to make it an annual affair.” So it started and like amateur radio Field Day has evolved. Field Day is always the fourth full weekend in June and its object is “To work as many stations as possible on any and all amateur bands (excluding the 60, 30, 17, and 12-meter bands) and in doing so to learn to operate in abnormal situations in less than optimal conditions. A premium is placed on developing skills to meet the challenges of emergency preparedness as well as to acquaint the general public with the capabilities of Amateur Radio.” For more information about the history of Field Day, I suggest a Dec 1999 QST article “Field Day, A Mirror of Amateur Radio History” by Rol Anders, K3RA, which can be found on the ARRL website. WA2UMX would love to have you participate in any aspect of our Field Day, which will be located at the Wilton Emergency Corp on Jones Road. You can help setup, operate or just log during our 24 hours, or help takedown. If you are interested, please contact Fred Halley, W2EMS, w2ems@arrl.net.

Jim K2LM

NEXT CLUB MEETING JUNE 12



Steve K2WE tells the story about his first opportunity to return to Viet Nam 20 years after he served there to lead a DX trip. He has been back several times since and will have pictures to show as well as an intriguing story to tell.

Saratoga RACES Board Meeting

**Date: May 8, 2006
Wilton EMS Building**

1. The meeting was called to order by President Jim K2LM at 6:30 pm. There was a quorum present.
2. Board members present were: Al KA1IEG; Bill N2OWA; Fred W2EMS; Mark KA2FBZ, Glenn KA2DTH, Darlene N2XQG; Jim K2LM; Guests were Francis W1LJF and Steven K2WE.
3. Al KA1IEG gave the treasurer's report. Checking account balance: \$8,421.27 after expenses and dues collections. Moved, seconded and carried to receive the treasurer's report.
4. Moved, seconded and carried to approve the minutes of the board meeting for April 10, 2006.
5. There was no radio officers report.
6. Moved, seconded and carried to purchase 20 ARRL Field Day pins for distribution to participants.
7. There was a discussion that the club is no longer listed as an ARRL club and so noted on the ARRL webpage. In reviewing the documentation it was noted that our club

would have to have 51% of the voting members also be ARRL members. The officers estimated that only about 25% of the club members were also ARRL members. Thus it is not something we can pursue at this time.

8. The board has appointed Glenn KA2DTH as the acting Public Service Coordinator. He will be responsible to gather the participation of club members in public service events in an Excel spreadsheet.
9. In discussing Field Day it was noted that a general article about what it is would benefit the membership and K2LM will do that. Also Fred W2EMS noted that sign up for operating slots has been slim so far.
10. The schedule for Tour de Cure coverage was reviewed and approved.
11. Officer elections will occur in June. Jim K2LM will be contacting and recruiting people.
12. Moved, seconded and carried to adjourn at 7:15 pm.

Saratoga RACES Club Meeting

Date: May 8, 2006

Wilton EMS Building

1. At 7:30 Jim K2LM opened the meeting.
2. Present: Al KA1IEG; Bill N2OWA; Fred W2EMS; Glen KA2DTH; Bob, KA2TBB; Henry, KB2STR; Darlene N2XQG; Ed KC2MIH; Sandy KC2MID; Mark KA2FBZ; Tim N2MBX; Peter KA2DHz; Steve K2WE; Francis W1LJF
3. The actions of the board were discussed.
4. The speaker for the evening was Jim K2LM and the topic was antennas. Each attendee was given a J-pole antenna kit to complete. Jim spoke about antennas and the importance of grounds for all antennas.
5. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill N2OWA
Secretary

Saratoga RACES, Inc. Service Opportunities

In June three positions on the board will be open. You may be the person who could best serve in one of these positions. The positions are president, secretary and a member at large position. The president chairs the board meetings and helps to coordinate speakers along with other

board members. The secretary takes minutes of the meetings, keeps the membership list and does the monthly newsletter. While that may sound like a lot of work, since almost everything is computerized, it can be done easily. The member at large will have an assigned responsibility such as coordination of public service events as part of the job responsibility.

Radio Officer Report

Dave N2FEP

Thanks for everyone's support over the last years. There was a Skywarn school at the fire training center in Ballston Spa that was well attended. I am glad to see everyone that needs the training do so. The county is moving forward in resolving problems with the Adirondack Park Association and progress is being made towards a new communications system coming soon. I want to thank everyone for picking up the net the last few weeks. My schedule has changed and I cannot be on that time of day any longer. Thanks to everyone for keeping the net operating. It is important that we continue an avenue of communication for all the members of our group.

There are plenty of events upcoming to provide communications training for everyone. Please accept the challenge to assist in the events .

Field Day is at the end of June and will be again at the Wilton EMS building where we hold our meetings. Please participate in this emergency preparedness event. It is one of the most important things we do annually. I also want to remind everyone that the online emergency communications course is available at the ARRL website. It is one of the most worthwhile things you can do to train yourself in ecomm. Please don't let this course pass you by without taking advantage of this I hope to be back in action by the Fall if things go well. I will be around and available via email or from the office on Monday thru Friday daily if you need to contact me directly.



Public Service Events (PSE) by Glenn - KA2DTH

Local ham operators responded to two requests to provide communications for local organizations in April. On the 29th, the Saratoga County 4H held its annual Walk-a-Thon fundraiser, beginning at the 4H Training Center in Ballston Spa. This year, in addition to the usual 4k event they added a shorter walk around the grounds as well. This was the first year we attempted to provide SAG wagon location using APRS equipment. It was very well received, and they were looking for more trackers (I only brought 2), once they realized its potential. The day was sunny & beautiful for the event, and it drew walkers, bicycle riders and horse riders. We used the WA2UMX repeater for communications, and the event ran about 4 hours. At net control, I had an APRS Station running on 144.39 Mhz, and was accessing the repeater on its UHF link. This allowed me to use a dual-band antenna, single feedline and a duplexer at the radios. I used APRSPoint on my laptop to keep tabs on the tracked SAG wagons. A hearty breakfast was enjoyed before the event, and there were hotdogs after it concluded! I would like to thank the following hams for their time and help: Bob KB2TBB, Tom N2SBC and Tim N2MBX

On the 30th, a new event was held by AIM Services, a Dog Walk held in the Saratoga Spa State Park. Another beautiful day was in store for this event which lasted about 2 hours. After some confusion about the locations of the rest stops, this event went quite smoothly. We used a simplex frequency for communications, running a battery powered and solar recharged Icom 706 into a vertical antenna on a push up mast at net control. I would like to thank the following hams for their time and help: Bob KB2TBB, Rich KC2MIL ,Fred W2EMS Jim K2LM, and Dave KC2ODL

Please visit the club website and look at the CALENDAR page to see a list of all the upcoming PSE's, and whom to contact for each one.



Picture: AIM Dog Walk [PSE]

Silent Key

Dick Jenkins, W2GWY, formally N2AYY, died suddenly Wednesday, May 11, at Glens Falls Hospital. Dick, who took his father's call of W2GWY, was a long time member of Saratoga County RACES. He ran the club's original packet bulletin board on an old Xerox computer that used 8" floppy drives and he also designed our club's high speed packet network and APRS system.

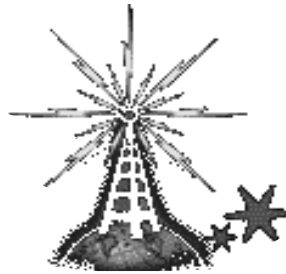
FREE Diamond X300A Dual Band 2 m. - 70 cm. Specifications: Frequency: 144 – 148 Mhz. & 435 – 450 Mhz. Max Power Rating: 200 Watts Max Wind Resistance: 112.5 MPH VSWR: Less than 1.5 to 1 Length: 114.2" Type: 5/8 wave two element (2m) five element (70cm) Accessories: 15' mast, heavy duty mounting brackets (2), 75' of low loss coax cable with PL 259 connectors (2), instruction manual. Call Larry N2YMJ at 518-747-7383 or email at orion22@adelphia.net for more information.



WA2UMX ON THE INTERNET
 Kim Lake, KF2LV has set up a web page for the club. It is located at:
<http://www.wa2umx.net>.

CLUB REPEATERS

The club operates two 2-meter repeaters. The 147.24 repeater 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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