



Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

There is no President's Column this month

News from ARRL:

Compiled from ARRL Letter and www.arrl.org

SAN DIEGO AREA HAMS ACTIVATED AS WILDFIRES RAVAGE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

As fires raged through parts of the San Diego area and other areas in Southern California, ham radio operators did their part to ensure the safety of residents either affected or threatened by the fires. ARES groups in San Diego were activated on Monday, October 22 and continued to assist their served agencies until early Wednesday morning. Sixty hams were called to service by the County of San Diego's Emergency Medical Service. In addition to these 60, another dozen or so were activated by the Red Cross.

ARRL FACES FCC IN FEDERAL COURT OVER BPL

On Tuesday, October 23, the ARRL faced the Federal Communications Commission in the US Court of Appeals over the continuing debate concerning harmful interference to licensed radio services from unlicensed Broadband over Powerline (BPL) systems. BPL is the delivery of broadband Internet communications using unshielded electrical wiring to conduct high-speed digital signals to homes and businesses. BPL systems are designed to conduct RF energy through unshielded, medium voltage power lines, using some or all of the HF spectrum between 1.7-80 MHz. At those frequencies on unshielded overhead power lines, the electrical wiring not only conducts the signals, it radiates them very efficiently for very substantial distances from the power lines.

FCC'S RILEY HOLLINGSWORTH TO RETIRE IN JANUARY 2008

Riley Hollingsworth, Special Counsel in the FCC's Enforcement Bureau, announced his retirement this week, effective Friday, January 3, 2008. While his successor has not been named, Hollingsworth was quick to point out that the FCC's Amateur Radio enforcement program will continue.



Radio Officer's Report

Thanks to everyone who participated in the much delayed Simulated Emergency Test (SET) on October 20. I apologize to everyone for the need to postpone that event, but my daughter got married out of state on the original weekend, and then the duathlon event was held the following weekend and I didn't want the SET to interfere with that either.

I have been in conversation with Mr. Lent at County O.E. S. (Office of Emergency Services) about our ability to have a county home. He told me that he would look into it and see if there is a way we can again be included in that office, as we should be.

I recently spoke to the captain of Wilton EMS and our home there is safe. We can also continue to use the radio room we have. No, we will not get any more space in there, but we can operate. NOW, we need to consider really setting that space up to be used by us and not just to store our things there. No one at Wilton EMS wants us to leave, and they have no problem with our use of the meeting room. We do need to annually fill out the use request form. NO PAYMENT is expected from us.

A number of years ago we toyed with the idea of setting up a mobile type of trailer for a storage/communications area. The cost of the trailer is about \$3200.00 and would give us a place that we could set up and run from and store our items. Registration of that would not be cost prohibitive. I think we should investigate that possibility, and see if that could enhance our emergency operations. The unit would be a 6ft x 12ft enclosed trailer. We could letter it up for our organization at additional cost.

Let's see if we could form a committee to design the interior if we decide to proceed with this project.

Everyone should check out your antenna systems before the hard winter weather gets here -- and it is coming. Make sure you have all your gear ready to go should we need to.

73, Dave N2FEP
Radio Officer E/C ARES

Board of Directors Meeting October 8, 2007

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm. Board members present: Fred – W2EMS; Darlene – N2XQG; Al – KA1IEG; Peter – W2BEW; Dennis – WA2JWO; Byron – K2BD; Ed – AB2XA; Dave – NR2J.

Minutes of previous meeting were approved.

Discussion/Action Items:

- Fred, W2EMS, reminded members of the Mohawk Towpath Duathlon event coming up on October 14. Begins 9AM at Krause's Restaurant in Halfmoon.
- Fred reported that the club now has a contract with Wilton EMS reserving our meeting room through next year.
- Darlene, N2XQG, reported that the date of the 2008 Hamfest is still uncertain for a few weeks; either 9/7 or 9/14.
 - ◊ Al agreed to "shadow" Darlene at the 2008 Hamfest and then to act as Coordinator in 2009, because Darlene will be out of state at her son's wedding at that time.
- Al, KA1IEG, gave the treasurer's report, which the board voted to accept:
 - Beginning balance - \$ 10,059.38
 - Closing balance - \$ 10,066.18
- ◊ In response to a request that the club prepare a formal annual budget, the board discussed the matter and decided that a formal budget was not required, given the fact that there are only a couple of significant events that produce income or require expenditures. The bulk of the club's balance is held for contingencies, which are specifically approved by the board as they come up.
- Jim, K2LM, reported on recent developments regarding club repeaters and related topics:
 - ◊ Our club repeater will be on the National Grid tower following the County's move, but it might be at the 40-foot level, with some loss of coverage.
 - ◊ The County dispatch facility is scheduled to move asap – perhaps by December 1. The transfer on Spruce Mountain is now scheduled for spring.
 - ◊ Two GE Mastr II base stations have become available and would make a great upgrade to our current repeaters, which use mobile equipment. Jim recommended that the club purchase the equipment, and the board voted to fund the purchase at \$400.
 - ◊ A group of SCARA and Warren County folks teamed up to move the Warren County RACES repeater at Gore Mountain from the old goldola building to the warming hut. Users noted an immediate improvement in coverage. However, within days, the new installation was struck by lightning and put off the air. Now the station needs a new antenna. The board voted to purchase a Telewave single half-wave dipole antenna

for \$243 for the Gore Mountain station.

- A Simulated Emergency test (SET) will be held on October 14, and all club members are urged to participate. (See N2FEP's report). (As it turned out, the SET was held on October 20 – Ed)
- The Board voted to reimburse Byron, K2BD, for mailing of the Field Day pins to participants (approx \$6-7)
- Byron, K2BD, reported that he and Jim, K2LM, will do an equipment assessment of the club's Go Kits and Field Day supplies.
- Dave, NR2J, reported on the programs for upcoming meetings:
 - ◊ Tonight's speaker is Bill Donnolly, K2ROU, who will talk about his satellite communications
 - ◊ November program will be Steve (KC2SMB) & Kathy (KC2DOG) Barton speaking about Northeast Mobile Search and Rescue (NEMSAR) activities and capabilities
 - ◊ December is the annual Christmas Party
 - ◊ January will be a run-down and demonstration of club equipment at the Wilton EMS building.
- Peter reported that the club membership has grown to approximately 100 members again following the Hamfest. (Actually 103 on 10/15/07 – Ed)

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM.

General Meeting October 8, 2007

Meeting called to order at 7:42 pm. Roll call taken and minutes approved.

Discussion/Action Items (not noted above):

- Sid, K2LJH, reported he has been asked to give a talk on amateur radio to Schuylerville village officials. He also noted that the Boy Scout Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) is coming up in October and urged club members to participate and give scouts a taste of radio communication. Sid is also looking for a used tower, 50-60-ft tall, if anyone has one to sell.
- Bill Donnelly, K2ROU, inquired about club promotional efforts, outreach to scout troops, possibly moving the Field Day site to build public awareness. All were discussed; no conclusions reached.
- Kathy, KC2DOG, suggested the club collaborate with the Northeast Search & Rescue Team to promote the capabilities of both organizations
- Bob, KB2TBB inquired about the annual Apple Walk. No one had recent information, but Bob was advised to contact Donn, KF2AB.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

More >>

Meeting, cont.

The evening's program was Bill Donnelly, K2ROU, who gave an interesting talk about his amateur satellite projects and communications. Bill demonstrated his "Panel" antenna, and described how it was constructed. We learned that the most important lesson in satellite work is "Easy Sats are not that easy." And one of the most often heard expression among satellite chasers is, "I've never heard a bird!" But Bill's enthusiasm was contagious, and I'm sure a number of folks will try communicating via satellites sometime in the future.

Thanks, Bill!

Upcoming Public Service Events

(None scheduled. Contact Ed, AB2XA for details)

Upcoming Meeting Programs

NOVEMBER—NEMSAR: Northeast Mobile Search & Rescue Team

DECEMBER—Christmas Party

JANUARY— Club Equipment Show 'n Tell

FEBRUARY— stay tuned

MARCH— Swap Meet

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. PL tone is 91.5 Hz.

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.

(Your FOR SALE or WANTED ad here)

Gore Mountain Adventure, Part II

In late summer, the repeater antenna on Gore Mountain was struck by lightning after a move that had dramatically improved its performance. SCARA then donated a new antenna, which was installed just days ago by these hardy hams!

Here, Steve, WA2TTP, left, and Glenn, KA2DTH, look anything but warm as they prepare the antenna donated by Saratoga County RACES to replace the antenna hit by lightning on the Gore Mountain, KT2M, repeater.



The pipe holds the new Telewave repeater antenna (top), the UHF link Yagi, and an APRS antenna, bottom

[Photos by Jim McKnight, who worked just as hard as the other guys on that COLD Sunday afternoon.]

Left to right, Bob, KC2QDK; Frank, KA2QYE; Glenn, KA2DTH, and Steve, WA2TTP, prepare to install new coax and the antenna, held by WA2TTP for the KT2M repeater on Gore Mountain.

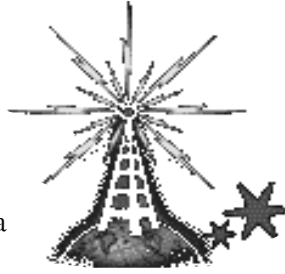




WA2UMX ON THE INTERNET

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.



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