

# Sparks from the Spa



A PUBLICATION OF SARATOGA COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

## Board of Directors Meeting January 12, 2009

The board meeting was called to order at 6:31 by President Darlene Lake, N2XQG. Present were BoD members Al – KA1IEG, Peter - W2BEW, Byron – K2BD, Ed – AB2XA, Dennis – WA2JWO, and a number of club members.

- Al presented the treasurer's report: Opening balance- \$ 10,445.08; Closing balance- \$10,525.08. Al subsequently received several dues payments and wrote a check at the meeting, altering the final balance somewhat.
- Peter presented the secretary's report: Out of approximately 100 names on the SCARA membership roster, only 30 have paid their dues for 2009 or beyond. At that point, there was a rush to the front of the room, and several members renewed their memberships.
- Byron recommended that the club make a donation to the Wilton Emergency Squad for use of their facility for meetings and Field Day activities. The board voted to contribute \$100.
- Jim (K2LM) reported that the club had received a certificate of appreciation from NOBARC (Northern Berkshire ARC) thanking SCARA for its donation toward new power supplies for the Mt. Greylock repeaters. The more-efficient supplies have been installed and NOBARC's most recent electric bill shows a dramatic reduction in consumption and cost.
- Jim told the board that tonight's visit by Paul Lent, County Emergency Services Director, would have to be postponed, because Paul had injured his back and could not attend.
- Jim also reported that Alice Whitaker, XYL of silent-key, Edgar – K2DLL, has asked if the club would like to assume Ed's call letters. Ed was a founder of the club and of Saratoga County Civil Defense. There was unanimous agreement and enthusiasm for the

plan, and Jim said he would pursue it. Thank you, Alice!

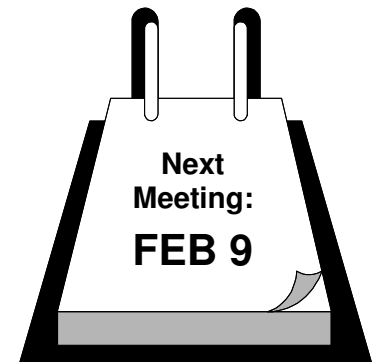
- Jim also brought up the suggestion of turning the club's Kenwood TS-440 over to Coleman Green – WB2GFM (via Frank – KA2QYE), who was active in MARS operations until his own TS-440 expired. After some discussion, the board voted to keep its TS-440 for emergency and Field Day operation, largely because it is so simple to use that it requires only a short learning curve for anyone to put it into service. The club does owe Frank payment for several items he has purchased for the club, and the board asked that he submit an invoice for payment.
- Peter also reported that he had submitted all the items requested by Wilton Emergency Squad with reference to our plan to mount a dipole antenna on their tower. Their executive board was to discuss the matter at their last meeting. No results yet.
- Dates for the club's 2009 events confirmed:  
**Swapfest – March 14; HamFest – September 12.**  
VE Exam sessions held at each event – 12 noon.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

### General Meeting

A record number of members (27) attended the general meeting, which was convened at 7:32 pm.

- Dave, NR2J, reported that the program for the April meeting will be "SWR Myths."
- Jim – K2LM reported that the club's repeater (147.000) on Spruce Mountain has been moved to the National Grid tower, and as most people have noticed, its coverage has been reduced from when it was on top of the



mountain. That is probably all we can expect going forward. The Providence repeater (147.240) will be moved in the spring. It is hoped that coverage of that machine will not be degraded by its new position.

- Peter repeated that Wilton Emergency Squad is considering our request for a dipole antenna on their tower. He has spoken with Techno Metal Post in Ballston Spa, and that appears to be a viable option for supporting the ends of the antenna.
- Joe – KC2RXD proposed a kind of on-air study net to collaborate on a discussion of the question pool for ham exams. If interested, contact Joe (most likely on 145.390).
- Although the program of the meeting was to have been a discussion with Paul Lent, County Director of Emergency Services, Paul injured his back and could not attend.

— We expect Paul Lent to come to our February meeting instead.

- Mike – K2SWF stepped in with a presentation on constructing a 4:1 balun for a dipole antenna – in this case a double Zepp. Mike brought several examples of baluns in various stages of construction to illustrate the details of the project. The unit is made from 12 turns of 2-conductor wire on a short length of plastic tubing. The finished balun is housed in a section of PVC pipe. **Nice job, Mike! Thanks for filling in.**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

*Submitted by Peter – W2BEW*

## 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 the Sunday evening net. It's easy. Just keep track of the check-ins and give everyone a chance to talk.

## Trading Post

*(Your equipment listings For Sale, Trade, or Wanted posted here. Email to [petermil@aol.com](mailto:petermil@aol.com).)*

## News from ARRL

*Compiled from ARRL Letter and [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org)*

### LAURA L. SMITH NAMED TO AMATEUR RADIO ENFORCEMENT ROLE

Laura L. Smith of Pennsylvania has been named by the FCC to fill the vacancy created when Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, retired in 2008 as Special Counsel for the FCC's Enforcement Bureau. Hollingsworth served in that position for more than 10 years as the FCC's enforcement watchdog over the Amateur Radio Service.

Smith began her legal career with the FCC, working in the Mass Media Bureau and Wireless Telecommunications Bureau. In 1998, Smith left the FCC to become Executive Director of Governmental Affairs for the Industrial Telecommunications Association (ITA). In 2001, Smith became ITA's President and Chief Executive Officer.

In an October 2008 letter to then-FCC Chairman Kevin Martin, ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, urged Martin to name a successor to Hollingsworth: "The appointment of a replacement ... is of critical importance to the Amateur Radio Service, as the delay ... stands to undermine in very short order an exceptionally successful and low-cost program of enforcement in the Amateur Service."

Harrison reminded Martin, "The Amateur Service, consisting of some 680,000 licensees of the Commission, is in essence a self-regulating service; however, due to the shared frequency allocations in the Service and the long distance propagation of amateur communications, a very few rule violators can cause severe disruption in the Service. On the other hand, even a minimal Commission presence has a very strong deterrent value."

### MICHAEL J. COPPS NAMED ACTING FCC CHAIRMAN

On Thursday, January 22, President Barack Obama named current FCC Commissioner Michael Copps as Acting Chairman of the Commission.

ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, congratulated Copps on his appointment. "Whenever we have sought a meeting with him or his staff, his door has always been open to us," he said.

## **News from ARRL, cont.**

### **JOHN SCOTT REDD, KØDQ, AWARDED NATION'S TOP INTELLIGENCE AWARD**

Vice Admiral John Scott Redd, USN (ret), **KØDQ**, received the National Security Medal in a White House ceremony last month. In one of his last official duties as President of the United States, George W. Bush recognized Redd for "his more than 40 years of exceptional service to the Nation, and called Redd "an innovator, a strategic thinker, an inspirational leader and a dedicated servant to the Nation, respected for his vision, courage and integrity."

An active ham, contester and DXer for more almost 50 years, Redd -- a native of Sydney, Iowa -- enjoys both CW and phone. In 1971, Redd, then K0DQI, won the CQ World Wide DX Contest (phone) from Mexico as 6D1AA. He also won the ARRL International DX Contest, both phone and CW, in 1972 from Mexico as XE1IIJ; this was the first time a single operator surpassed 10,000 contacts in a contest.

Throughout his ham radio career, Redd has held many DX call signs: P40Q, 3V8DQ, A92Q, XE1IIJ, 4A4AA/1, 6J9AA, 6D1AA, 6G1AA, 6J9AA, 4C5AA and 4C9AA, just to name a few.

### **ARRL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPROVES 21 EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM GRANTS**

In December, the ARRL Executive Committee reviewed grant applications for the ARRL's Education & Technology Program (ETP) awarding nearly \$22,000 to 21 schools. More than 350 schools across the country have received support from the ETP in the form of grants for equipment, curriculum and resources, as well as teacher in-service training through the Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology.

The Executive Committee reviews applications for equipment and resource grants twice each year, in December and May.

### **HAMS HELP OUT WITH HISTORIC DAY**

On Tuesday, January 20, Barack Obama was inaugurated as the 44th President of the United States. Numerous organizations -- federal, state and local agencies, the staff of Presidents Bush and Obama, as well as private agencies -- were involved in the months of planning required to make the event go smoothly. From the very beginning, Amateur Radio operators were involved, making sure that communications support was available by providing backup communications in the event that primary communications were disrupted.

According to ARRL Virginia Section Public Information Coordinator Joe Safranek, K4JJS, the Virginia and Maryland Offices of Emergency Management -- as well as various local jurisdictions in and around the Washington, DC metro area -- requested the assistance of Amateur Radio operators to provide local and short distance communications for the inauguration and the events leading up to it.

### **Solar Update**

Tad Cook, K7RA, this week reports: On Tuesday, January 27, we saw another one of those "almost-a-sunspot" emerge in the Sun's low latitude, so it was probably an old Solar Cycle 23 spot; it was gone the next day.

Sunspot numbers for January 22-28 were 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0 and 0 with a mean of 0. (*That's bad! However, there have been a couple of exceptional late-night worldwide openings of 75 and 40 meters. — Ed.*)

## **Upcoming Events**

**ARRL International DX Contest (CW):**  
- February 21-22

**ARRL International DX Contest (SSB):**  
- March 7-8

**Don't forget SCARA's annual  
SwapFest on Saturday March 14,  
8 am until noon.**

Cooperative Extension (Solar) Bldg.  
50 West High Street (Rt. 67-West)  
in Ballston Spa. VE test session at Noon.  
*BUY-SELL-GIVE-TRADE*

## **Reminder: Dues Are Due**

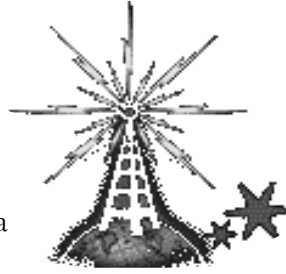
If you don't remember paying your dues lately, you probably didn't. All memberships are up for renewal effective January 1, 2009. If you're not sure, check with secretary Peter—W2BEW, at petermil@aol.com. And thank you for your support.



### 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 club’s third repeater on 448.225 MHz.  
**PL Tone for all club repeaters is now 91.5 Hz.**



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