



SARA NEWS

Schenectady Amateur Radio Association Inc.
"Service Through Amateur Radio"

Founded 1930

November, 2001

K2AE Repeaters

Meeting Monday, November 5 2001 at 7:30 PM, Olin Hall, Union College

Public Service

SARA members provided communications for the Girl Scouts River Walk on Sunday October 7. It was a cool, blustery day and several showers passed by which probably reduced the attendance. Those who did attend seemed to enjoy the activities.

The event went by without serious incident, however, one four year old child became separated from his father for a short period before the two were happily reunited.

Those providing communication between the two locations at the Schenectady County Community College and Lock 8 and a roving golf cart were: Rudy, W2JVF; Don WB2VJC; Don, W2CJO; Andy, KB2TSA; and Raleigh, K2RI.

de, Raleigh, K2RI

Thanks!

I would like to add my thanks to all who went to NYC, said they were willing to go, and stood by to help in any way possible. From what I have heard the Hams performed in a professional manner and helped in other ways than providing communications. I for one am proud of the way the hams stepped up when needed in this sad time for our state and country.

Thanks again! Raleigh, K2RI Schenectady County RO

Note: See QST, November, page30 for a picture of one of our own, WB2EAR. Ed.

Alert

The terrorism threat is not over! County, state and national agencies are gearing up for an expansion of the biological side of the "war." If we have a major outbreak of anthrax or worse, Ham radio operators may again be called upon to help. Keep those HT batteries charged and keep informed on whatever protective measures that may be made available.

QRP

How to do more with less

Work the world with a milliwatt and 6 inches of wet string? Well, not quite. It still is amazing what can be done with very low power and it can be a lot of fun in the bargain. Howard Friedman, WA2AFD, has agreed to explore the QRP culture for us.

The talk will include a discussion of what QRP is, the frequencies used, the equipment needed, and the contests that feature QRP only stations...also the awards that are available to those who participate in these events. He promises Graphics, too. Things like the ability of low power to get the signal through, showing comparisons with a 100 watt transmitter. And antenna topics will be covered also.

A pretty complete listing of club websites will be provided as a handout, as well as a listing of manufactures of rigs and kits.

Commercial suppliers are offering a number of QRP rigs, in assembled and kit form. Home brewing is also an option with these relatively simple radios. Tim Long will bring a kit he has built for "show and tell." Howard will have a rig there and perhaps, one or two others will bring in a rig to show off. How about yours?

Howard has the unique ability to keep things very simple and not too technical so all can enjoy.

Anyone who has a homebrew or commercial QRP rig is encouraged to bring it along for an informal show-and-tell after Howard's presentation.

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From the Board

Meetings - Thursday preceding the SARA meeting.
All members are welcome!

BOARD MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2001

The Meeting was called to order by President Rob Leiden - KR2L, at 7:00 PM. Those present were: Treasurer George Williams - W2CSN, Paul Siemers - WY2F, Bill Patmos - W2DHT, Secretary, Jay Freud - K2QNU, Bob Raeffaele-W2XM, and Tim Long - W2UI.

A motion to accept the minutes as published in the SARA NEWS was made and seconded. The motion was carried and the minutes accepted.

Treasurer George, W2CSN, gave his report. The association is financially stable.

Members who have not paid their dues will not be sent their SARA News, effective with the October issue.

The 444.2 MHz repeater is not operational. Scott, N2YCA, is aware and will investigate as soon as possible.

Bob, W2XM, reported that the SARA/AARA technician course (starts 7 PM, Tuesday, October 16 at Crossgates and every Tuesday for 7 weeks) preparations are proceeding well.

VE test scheduling has now been taken over by Bill Patmos-W2DHT. Bill will be the contact for people wishing to be scheduled for a VE test. Call him at 346-1382.

SARA has received a request from The Schenectady Chamber of Commerce to support the annual November Christmas parade event. This will be forwarded to Public Service Committee Chair Ken Klikeman, AA2CW.

Programs will include WA2AFD in November - QRP, a holiday party in December and a program on Digital Modes including PSK-31 in the winter.

The old club records, the club archives are to be stored at the Union College Radio Club-W2UC, in the radio room.

The SARA equipment trailer refurbishment is proceeding well.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Jay Freud, K2QNU, SARA Secretary.

The Trading Post

FOR SALE
OR TRADE

FREE - surplus BC-453-B receiver; a home-brew transmatch including swr meter, rf ammeter, etc; a bunch of pretty good variable capacitors, and miscellaneous junk box stuff. Also, for \$10, a very nice roller inductor. With a couple of the variable capacitors this would make a dandy transmatch. Also, for \$30, a 2 meter Mirage amplifier, 10 w. in, 80 w. out, with receive pre-amp and diagram included, and for \$ 5 a ham-m antenna rotor including original manual and direction indicator meter. Dick, W2YB, 372-0323.

For Sale or trade: QST Magazine (& other ARRL periodicals) on CD-Rom for the year 1998. w2zp@arrl.net or 861-6269.

For Sale: 2 meter, 30 Watt HT amplifier. RS, like new. \$35. Phil, KB2HQ, 377-8938.

Wanted: QST Magazine for 1st half of year 2000. That is, January through June, 2000. w2zp@arrl.net or 861-6269.

Wanted: Cheap! 75 meter mobile antenna or two. Phil, KB2HQ, 377-8938

Free: Pole mount repeater cabinet including a Prog Line repeater for parts or rebuild. Phil, KB2HQ, 377-8938

To post an ad write: sara@e-groups.com, or call Phil, KB2HQ, 377-8938 -- *before 9:30 PM, please*. You can also send direct to kb2hq@nycap.RR.com.

A Note of Thanks

The following note was received in response to the article which appeared in the September 21, 2001 issue of the Schenectady Daily Gazette about amateur radio operators aiding in disaster communications in New York City. Marianne Comfort works with the Schenectady Inner City Ministry and helps organize the annual CROP walks put on each spring by that organization. The note shows there are those outside of the amateur community who pay attention to what the amateurs do.

de, K2RI

Sept. 24, 01

Dear Raleigh,

it was wonderful to see you and the ham radio operators credited in the newspaper recently for support in the New York City relief efforts.

You all truly deserve that recognition, and more, for your volunteerism locally and beyond.

Regards,

Marianne Comfort.

ARRL/FCC/NYS

BATTLE LOOMS OVER PART 15 ACCESS TO 425-435 MHZ

The FCC has proposed changes to its Part 15 rules governing unlicensed devices that would allow operation of advanced RF identification devices between 425 and 435 MHz. By going along with a request made earlier this year by SAVI Technology Inc. and fiercely opposed by ARRL, the FCC has set the stage for another battle between amateur and commercial interests.

“The FCC hasn’t thought this through,” said ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ. He contends that the Part 15 RFID proposal—including this week as part of a larger Notice of Proposed Rule Making and Order—is “contrary to the whole philosophy of the Part 15 rules.” Sumner said the RFID devices SAVI proposes more properly belong on frequencies that are also authorized for use by devices regulated by FCC’s Part 18 Industrial, Scientific and Medical (ISM) rules.

The FCC said this week’s NPRM&O would modify the rules for RFID systems “to harmonize our rules with those in other parts of the world and to allow for improved operation.” Sumner said that 433.9 MHz is allocated for ISM devices in 10 European countries but not in the rest of the world, including ITU Region 2.

Last March, the ARRL urged the FCC to deny or dismiss SAVI Technology’s petition. The League argued that the field strengths and duty cycles SAVI proposed for its RFID tags were unreasonable “and would undoubtedly seriously disrupt amateur communications in one of the most popular of the Amateur Service bands.

SAVI, which markets radiolocation and wireless inventory control products, told the FCC it needed the rules changes to satisfy customer demand for increased RFID system capabilities. The FCC this week said it agreed with SAVI that changes to its Part 15 rules to allow more advanced RFID systems in the 433 MHz band “would serve the public interest.” It proposed to create a new section to Part 15 that would allow operation of RFIDs in the 425-435 MHz band and transmissions of up to two minutes at maximum field strengths now only permitted for extremely short-duration, intermittent control signals.

In an apparent about face, the FCC said it believes the proposed levels would offer only minimal interference potential for licensed users. The FCC in the past has acknowledged serious interference potential and has prohibited data transmission, among other things, at the proposed field strengths for that very reason.

As proposed, transmissions of 120 seconds would be permit-

ted with just a 10-second silent period between transmissions. Under Section 15.231(e) periodic radiators are permitted field strengths of less than 5000 uV/m at 433 MHz measured at three meters, with duty cycles of less than one second and a silent period between transmissions that’s at least 30 times the duration of the transmission.

The League pointed out in its earlier comments that the Communications Act of 1934 lacks authority to allow unlicensed devices with substantial interference potential. “Such devices must be licensed,” the ARRL concluded. Unlicensed Part 15 devices must not interfere with licensed services and must tolerate interference received from licensed radio services in the same band.

Another portion of the proceeding involves the 13.56 MHz ISM frequency. Sumner said that proposal “at first glance” might permit increased emissions in the bottom 10 kHz of the 20-meter amateur band. Sumner said the ARRL would take a closer look at this section of the overall before assessing its interference potential.

LOWER VANITY FEE IS EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 10

The FCC says the fee for a new or renewed Amateur Radio vanity call sign will drop to \$12 on September 10. Applications received on or after that date will be subject to the new fee. The current vanity call sign fee is \$14.

The FCC proposed the lower fee last March in a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for the Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for FY 2001 (MD Docket No. 01-76). The FCC has estimated that 8000 applicants will apply for vanity call signs in the current fiscal year.

Earlier this year, the FCC also put paper and electronic vanity call sign applications on an equal footing in terms of processing priority. The FCC used to give priority to electronic applications for vanity call signs.

FCC rules stipulate refunds for applicants who inadvertently overpay a regulatory fee. Applicants who determine that they overpaid a vanity fee may request a refund in writing. Requests seeking a “Vanity Fee Overpayment Refund” go to FCC, 1270 Fairfield Rd, Gettysburg PA 17325-7245. Refund requests should indicate the date of application, the total fee paid, and the total refund owed.

The FCC has posted its FY2001 fee schedule on the Web. For more information, visit the FCC Amateur Radio Web page, <<http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/amateur/Vanity>> *from the ARRL Letter*

Tower Cases

Randy Palmer, N2NVH v. City of Saratoga. The case is to be heard in Northern District Federal Court on October 30.

Fred Fitte, WA2MMX v. Town of Kinderhook. (See Editorial on page 4.)



From the Editor's Shack

Guest Editorial!

by Fred FITTE, WA2MMX

And the Tower issue Continues

My latest zoning hearing was certainly different from the free-for-all that took place last month. It was clear that the “neighbors” who literally verbally attacked me last month realized it was not appropriate behavior and took a much different approach.

The hearing started off with my presentation of my application to the Zoning Board of Appeals. It was then followed by my Attorney, Al Millus (WB2EQR) making a presentation regarding my application and statements explaining PRB-1 to the Board.

Also present was Ed Hare (W1RFI from the ARRL Lab who provided expert testimony regarding RF Safety and my need for a 50 foot tower, which actually showed that to be afforded optimum conditions, a 90 foot tower was more desirable from both operating and safety considerations. Even the Attorney/neighbor understood that! There were many reasonable questions asked of both Al and Ed, which were answered professionally and completely.

Also present was Frank Fallon (N2FF), our Hudson Division Director, who provided much insight and education to those present about ham radio and its public service heritage. Frank, like Ed and Al, was eloquent in his presentation and well received by the Zoning Board. In fact, at the end of this hearing, several board members came up to the team and thanked them for the “education” in explaining amateur radio.

Behind the scene, was Chris Imlay (W3KD) the league’s general counsel in Washington, D.C. and John Hennessy (N1KB), the league’s regulatory specialist, who was the first person I contacted for help. John put me in touch with Chris who has provided immeasurable assistance from Washington. I am truly appreciative of both John and Chris’ efforts on my behalf.

There are several things I learned from this hearing. First, if you believe your application will be met with ejection and hostility, I would highly suggest getting in touch with a reputable attorney.

Secondly, get Fred Hopengarten’s (K1VR) book from

the ARRL, Antenna Zoning. Fred tells it like it is. Third, you will have to educate your audience before you even get into all of the reasons why you should be allowed to construct your tower.

And fourth, DO NOT, I repeat, DO NOT show any hostility towards the Zoning Board or the audience. Luckily, at my first “hearing” I followed that advice, even though there were things I wanted to say. I restrained myself and remained calm and businesslike; it paid off last night.

Only a few of the original “neighbors” attended and clearly they realized and even stated that last month was hostile and should not have happened. I was even recognized as a good guy for my public service, although my next door neighbor did call ham radio a frivolous hobby.

The next hearing is scheduled for November 1st. The board has asked for additional submittals which are being handled by the “Dream Team” of AL, Ed and Frank. Additionally, I want to thank some of my friends who were also present for moral support.

I felt a bit better after last night. It is clear that we got the attention of the zoning board. I truly believe they want to resolve the application in the fairest way possible. Unfortunately, it is the fact that the zoning law is deficient in addressing ham radio towers that will make their job difficult. The next step is to get the zoning law changed to address amateur radio in a positive light.

One last thing, which I believe to be important. Support the ARRL! I, like many hams, used to just send in my dues and get QST and that was it, never thinking that I will be calling upon the league for help. Well, I called upon them and they came. The big guns were there when I needed them. It has changed my whole attitude as a longtime league member. I am not just a member any more, I am an advocate. If you are a ham, whether Novice or Extra, you need to support the ARRL. They are our only voice. They are there for you. They were there for me and I appreciate that. I plan to be there for them, but, them is us. We are the league.

de, Fred, WA2MMX

Fred has been doing it right! It's hard enough to get the governmental bodies to see their way clear to follow the FCC, PRB-1 guidelines without setting up a confrontational scenario at the onset. It's like the old saying: "Never mud wrestle with a pig. You both get dirty, only the pig enjoys it!" Ed.

The End of an Era

The packet bulletin board operated for many years, is no longer. It is now a DX cluster, along with K2TR, in this area. A shame! There is another "full service" BBS, locally, operated by the Troy club, N2TY. Give it a try, it's accessible through the network. I've not had much luck with it—painfully slow. You may have better luck.

First, high praise for great job done by the Saratoga club. Their BBS has always been the best of the bunch. Dick Jenkins, N2AAY (has a new call but I don't remember it), started it off in fine fashion, setting a standard that held through subsequent sysops. Rich, WZ2D, the latest sysop has done a remarkable job herding the board through the various software upgrades and has been quite responsive to the needs and wants of his ham cliental. A big round of applause, as they say.

Why is it gone? For good reason. Very few were using it and it was felt that there should be a better way to use the resources. As in the case of recent and proposed frequency losses, the byword is "use it or lose it!" Other boards have also bitten the dust. What with internet news groups and chat rooms plus e-mail reflectors. it's not as if we are wanting for means to get ham radio oriented information. The general purpose bulletin boards did provide a real service, however. They were the spur for the development of the packet network. We are already seeing a "balkinization" of the network, with NETROM based

nodes being converted to FLEXNET in some areas. There is little compatibility of command structure so the casual user can easily get lost. Without a consistant group of users, the potential benefit of a packet network in emergency situations is seriously degraded.

Where does that leave packet? Alive and well but in a different form. APRS, the new kid on the block, has caught the interest of many that were standard packet stalwarts. Lots of interesting facets, especially with the intergration of GPS, automated weather stations and internet interconnectivity.

Standard packet still does have a strong role with emergency communications, though. We have yet to find an alternative for packet to provide relatively secure data transmission to the hospitals in local mass casualty situations. Guess I won't throw away that TNC yet. de, Phil Bradway, KB2HQ

Winter Weather and Emergency Season is on its Way

It's time to get into the winter mindset. Keep your repeater transmissions short and give a pause, in case someone has an emergency. These procedures are always preferred but as the weather gets nasty they are very important.

Who to Contact in SARA

There are a number of ways to get in touch with the leaders of your club: contact on the air, E-mail (either direct or through sara@egroups.com) or by phone. The important thing is to let them know you want your club to be!

Officers:

Pres.: Rob Leiden, KR2L (bleiden1@nycap.RR.com) 399-9343
 VPres.: Brian Macherone, AB2IU
 Sec.: Jay Freud, K2QNU (SFreud7777@aol.com)
 Treas.: George Williams, W2CSN (williamg@tardis.union.edu) 377-6188
 Dirs: Manny Shulman, AA2TT (eshulman@nycap.RR.com)
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 RFI: Rudy Dehn W2JVF (w2jvf@juno.com)
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 Pub. Ser.: Ken Clikeman AA2CW (kclikema@nycap.RR.com) 861-6825
 VE team: Bill Mischler, KG2AC
VE registration: Bill Patmos, W2DHT 346-1382

Schenectady Amateur Radio Association Inc Membership Application-Renewal Form

Regular Dues	\$20.00	\$ _____
Spouse	\$ 5.00	\$ _____
Student	\$ 5.00	\$ _____
Repeater Fund Donation		\$ _____
Initiation Fee	\$ 5.00*	\$ _____

*New Members Only

Name _____ Call _____

Nickname _____ Class _____

Street _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

e-mail _____

Phone _____ Signature _____

ARRL _____ RACES _____ ARES _____ MARS _____

Send to SARA, P.O. Box 207, Alplaus, N.Y. 12008-0207

June, 2002

On Dissent

Disagreement produces debate but dissent produces dissension. Dissent (which come from the Latin, dis and sentire) means originally to feel apart from others. People who disagree have an argument, but people who dissent have a quarrel. People may disagree and both may count themselves in the majority. But a person who dissents is by definition in a minority. A liberal society thrives on disagreement but is killed by dissension. Disagreement is the life blood of democracy, dissension is its cancer.

Daniel J. Boorstin (b. 1914), U.S. historian.

SARA web site

<http://www.rpi.edu/~brandp/sara/index.html>

Get the latest on SARA activities



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