

Sidebands

The Newsletter of the EAST GREENBUSH AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION



October 2016

President - Tom Scorson, KC2FCP
Secretary - Russ Greenman, WB2LXC

Vice-President - Ridge Macdonald, KB2HWL
Treasurer & Newsletter Editor - Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ

EGARA Kicks Off Fall with the *Race for Hope*

EGARA members turned out on a beautiful fall morning Saturday, September 24th to provide communications support for the 8th Annual Run for Hope, a fundraiser that offers financial assistance to people living with brain, head and neck cancer in the Capital Region. The Race for Hope was inspired by the late Susan Britain, whose life was cut short by cancer.

EGARA Vice President Ridge MacDonald, KB2HWL, coordinated the club's involvement. Other team members included Russ Greenman, WB2LXC, who managed Net Control, as well as Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ, Peggy Donnelly, KD2LMU, Mike Shanahan, WO2H, Peter Mattice, KD2JKV, and Rich Volk, WA2BUC. The 5K event was held in Slingerlands and the EGARA team communicated via the 145.190mhz repeater located on top of the Helderbergs.

Since 2009, the CRSS Race for Hope events have raised over \$200,000, with all of the underwriting costs underwritten by Capital Region Special Surgery, for which the race is named. In 2012 race organizers established a fund to make grants to not-for-profit organizations/programs serving uninsured and underinsured residents of the region who are experiencing a financial hardship related to a brain, head, or neck cancer diagnosis.

First place at the 2016 event went to 17 year old Jesse Phillips of Glenville who posted a time of 21:49.



EGARA's Ridge MacDonald and Russ Greenman make preparations at Net Control for this year's Race for Hope.

ARRL Asks Hams to Keep Up Pressure for Antenna Parity Act

In This Issue

- Page 1 - Race for Hope / Antenna Parity Act
- Page 2 - Radio Direction Finding
- Page 3 - Meeting Minutes / Upcoming Topics
- Page 5 - VE Session / NY QSO Party
- Page 6 - On The Beam: News & Notes
- Page 7 - Calendar / Pro Tip / Buy, Swap, Sell

The response to ARRL's call to action urging the support of US Senators for the Amateur Radio Parity Act, H.R. 1301, has been gratifying -- although the campaign continues.

More than 50,000 e-mails have been sent to Capitol Hill via Rally Congress, and all 100 US Senate members have been contacted. The League continues to encourage members of the Amateur Radio community who have not yet done so to reach out to their two US Senators seeking their support. Just where things stand with respect to the bill's future in the US Senate is not yet entirely clear.

- continued on page 4 -

Coming Up! Next EGARA Monthly Meeting is October 12th

EGARA Gets an Intro to Amateur Radio Direction Finding

September's monthly EGARA meeting featured a presentation by John Fritze, Jr, K2QY, on radio location finding. It also included a demonstration of several ARDF methods and some of the equipment. As it turns out, the sport of "Foxhunting" actually has its roots in Europe and is a relatively new activity for US hams.

In 1990, Amateur Radio hidden transmitter hunting in the USA was almost exclusively a vehicular activity. A weekend hunt meant hours of driving in a well-equipped vehicle. There might be an on-foot "sniff" at the end to get to a transmitter a few yards off the road, but that was the extent of radio "foxhunting" on foot.

Back then, only a handful of North American hams had experienced the kind of transmitter hunting that was predominant in Europe and Asia. In those regions, hams had combined radio direction finding (RDF) with map-and-compass orienteering to create a sport that challenges both the mind and body. In some places, particularly Russia and former Soviet bloc nations, it was being used in physical education classes in schools and by the military for field training.

This international on-foot-only sport acquired several names including foxtailing, foxteering, radio-orienteering and "ARDF" for Amateur Radio Direction Finding. A standard course had come to include five "fox" transmitters in a large wooded area of at least 500 acres, usually much larger. Participants start near one end and proceed to the other, plotting bearings on a special topographical map, punching in at each "fox" along the way.

Radio-orienteers must pay constant attention to all bearings, because each fox is only on for 60 seconds, one at a time, in sequence. For instance, when #1 goes off, then #2 comes on and #1 won't be back on for four minutes. Usually a continuous transmitter on a separate frequency is near the finish to aid hunters who have lost their place on the map.

The first formal multi-national foxhunt on US soil took place in May 1991. It was put on by the Friendship Amateur Radio Society (FARS) of Portland, Oregon. FARS came into being as the result of a sister cities arrangement between Portland and Khabarovsk, a similar-sized city in Asiatic Russia. Ham operators of Khabarovsk invited a delegation of Portland hams to their home city in 1989 for a series of radio sporting events, including a European/Asian style foxhunt. Everyone had so much fun that it was decided to hold future Friendship Games every two years.

In fall 1997, a small group of hams across the USA and Canada formed the North American ARDF Organizing Task Force to promote the sport. The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) formally recognized this increasing interest at its January 1998 meeting of the Board of Directors. ARRL's President was authorized to appoint an ARDF Coordinator (Joe Moell KØOV) to work with hams here in the USA and abroad to promote the sport and arrange for competitions. More ARDF activity occurred in the USA during 2001, including the First USA ARDF Championships in Albuquerque, New Mexico with over 40 radio-orienteers from the USA, Australia, China and Ukraine taking to the courses. Since then, over a dozen more such events have been held across the nation.



John Fritze, Jr. K2QY demonstrates a commercially available radio direction finding system during the September EGARA membership meeting.

EGARA September Meeting Minutes

- The September 14th meeting of the EGARA was called to order at 7:20 PM by President Tom Scorsone, KC2FCP. The minutes of the previous meeting were not read, but are available in the June SIDEBANDS club newsletter.
- A round robin member introduction preceded the Treasurers report, given by Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ. Announcements by VP Ridge Macdonald included the Run for Hope, the Oktoberfest mini Hamfest, the upcoming November meeting about soldering, the Christmas party at Moscatiello's, and the January antenna building party. A sign-up sheet was circulated for the race.
- Tom Scorsone announced a VE session on October 8 at the East Greenbush Community Library.
- The monthly raffle prizes included: Tie-wraps, LED flashlight, a DVM, tape measure, and screwdriver set.
- After the business meeting was concluded, John Fritze presented an informational program about radio location finding. A live demonstration of a Doppler system illustrated its high level of accuracy and speed. Also, other methods shown were: triangulation, loops, TDA, Adcock RDF antenna, correlative interferometer, and yagi antennas. Internet links for additional information were listed (see related article in this issue of this newsletter). The formal presentation was followed by a brief Q/A session, and close-up inspection of the DF equipment.
- Refreshments were on hand for all in attendance. The meeting was closed at 9:00 PM.

--de Steve VanSickle WB2HPR

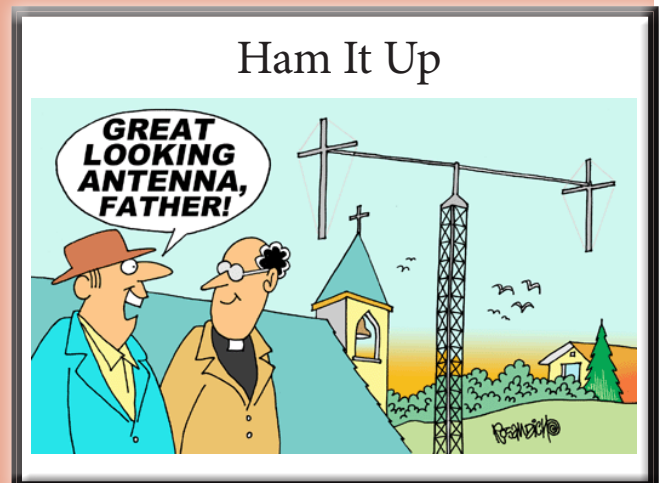
Mini Hamfest Set for EGARA October Meeting

The club's monthly meeting on Wednesday, October 12th is slated to feature a mini Hamfest. Members and non-members alike are welcome to bring along any gear they would like to sell. There is no charge to participate and members are invited to let others in the local ham community know about the event. It's a great opportunity to convert your unused equipment into cash, as well as pick up some great deals on gear you need.

Meanwhile, the club's November meeting will feature a program on soldering. While it may seem like a very basic skill, there are definitely some important do's and don'ts to ensure your solder joints perform as intended. Bad joints can lead to open circuits -- or worse -- circuits that are intermittent and hard to diagnose. Improper soldering can also result in damaged components that are expensive to replace. The November program will seek to address all of these issues.

And, although it's hard to believe, December is right around the corner and that will bring EGARAs annual holiday party. This year's gathering will be held on Wednesday, December 14th at Moscatiello's Restaurant at 99 North Greenbush Road (Route 4) in Troy. Once again, the club will be raffling off a dual band HT radio. Tickets are on sale now at just \$2 each or three for \$5. The winner will be drawn at the party.

Finally, the club will usher in the New Year with its annual antenna building program during its January 2017 membership meeting. Yearly membership dues will also be collected.



Senate Next Target for Antenna Parity Act

(continued from page 1)



As of this moment, we have no date set for action by the Senate," said ARRL Hudson Division Director Mike Lisenco, N2YBB, who has been deeply involved in promoting passage of the legislation. "The Senate will adjourn the September work period soon and members will return home to campaign. If we

do not achieve consideration before they go into hiatus, we will have to wait until they return after Election Day."

On September 12, the US House of Representatives approved H.R. 1301, culminating many years of effort on ARRL's part to gain legislation that would enable radio amateurs living in deed-restricted communities to erect ham antennas. The bill calls on the FCC to amend its Part 97 rules "to prohibit the application to amateur stations of certain private land-use restrictions, and for other purposes."

The overwhelming grassroots support for H.R. 1301 from the Amateur Radio community was credited for getting the bill through the US House, but it faces significant obstacles to passage in the US Senate. The Senate's earlier version of the bill is no longer in play, and the Senate is expected to vote on the version that the House adopted this month. The vote came after ARRL worked with the Community Association Institute -- which represents homeowners associations -- to develop language that both organizations could support.

"So it is critical that ARRL members continue to write their Senators," Lisenco urged. "If you haven't done so already, please do so today. We can only do so much. After that, it becomes the responsibility of the membership to participate."

As the amended bill provides, "Community associations should fairly administer private land-use regulations in the interest of their communities, while nevertheless permitting the installation and maintenance of effective outdoor Amateur Radio antennas. There exist antenna designs and installations that can be consistent with the aesthetics and physical characteristics of land and structures in community associations while accommodating communications in the Amateur Radio services."

More information on The Amateur Radio Parity Act is on the ARRL website.

Amateur Radio Direction Finding

(continued from page 2)

Because it is both a mental and physical challenge, ARDF appeals to both "techies" and "jocks" of all ages. It takes skill to get proper bearings, plot them, set a course and then navigate through the woods and terrain. It also takes physical conditioning to do it faster than fellow competitors.



But, you don't have to be a combination of rocket scientist and marathoner to have fun foxtailing. There is a lot of trotting, walking and pausing on the course, plus a lot of head-scratching when the bearings don't make sense. There is also immense satisfaction for each person who completes the course, no matter how long it takes.

For more information on opportunities for getting involved in local foxhunts, shoot an email to John Fritze Jr at k2qy@arrrl.net. He will do his best to answer your questions and assist in getting you started.

(photos by Steve VanSickle)

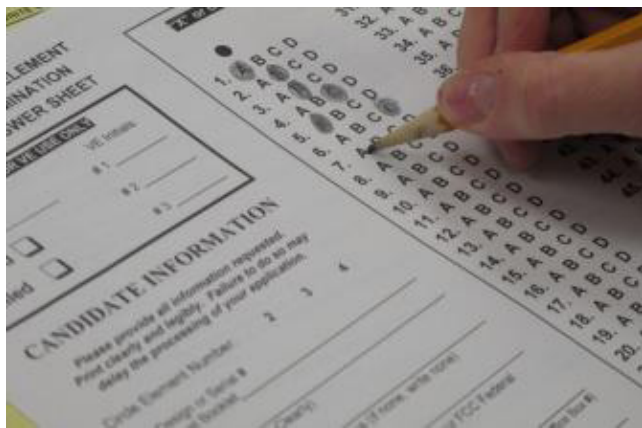
Join the Nightly Ragchew

EGARA members are invited to join the club's 6 meter ragchew every weeknight at 6 pm on 50.125 Mhz.

It's a great way to catch up on club news and events, as well as keeping in touch with other club members. Tune in!

Looking to Upgrade? EGARA to Hold VE Session October 8th

EGARA will hold its fall VE session at 10 am on Saturday, October 8th at the East Greenbush Community Library. Exams for Novice, General and Extra Class licenses will be given.



“We expect a good turn out and already have a number of applicants who have made reservations,” said EGARA President Tom Scorson. “While walk-ins are always welcome, we recommend letting us know ahead of time so we can be prepared.”

To reserve a test spot, applicants are requested to send an email to kc2fcp@nycap.rr.com. Cost of the exam is \$15.

The exam session will be the first given by EGARA that includes the new question pool for the Extra Class license. The new pool includes several new topics and is considered to be more difficult than the previous pool which was replaced by the new group July 1st.

Several websites offer online practice exams, including:

- **eHam** - <http://www.eham.net/exams/>
- **QRZ** - <https://www.qrz.com/hamtest/>
- **HamExam** - <https://hamexam.org/>

FCC Exam Question Pool Totals

Tech = 426
General = 461
Extra = 711

NY QSO Party Get Ready for October 15!

by Dean NW2K

It's all about NY on October 15 as radio amateurs from around the world get on the air to work all 62 NY counties, Chautauqua to Clinton, Niagara to Suffolk. A dozen or more mobile operators will take to the mean streets of NYC or the bucolic surrounds of the Southern Tier and North Country. Brave souls will sneak out to the woodlands to activate a rare county, Field Day style, as temps may dip into the 30's. And good, solid Elmers will open up their shacks to new hams and build excitement as the spotlight is on US!

The NYQP game is easy to play as all operating modes and bands are eligible. The QSO exchange is simple for NY operators: signal report and county. For those eager out-of-state ops wanting to work all 62 counties, they'll send a signal report and their state, province or DX.

There's a category for all operating styles from single-operator-QRP to multi-operator-high-power-mobile! And the 48 plaques, which are awarded to category winners, are simply beautiful and I think they're the best in the business. Serious “furniture” for the discerning ham's shack! The state-wide NYQP Plaque Sponsorship Team and the Rochester DX Association really step up to the plate each year to make all the effort worthwhile.

Please start thinking about your NYQP operations. Mobile or Fixed, SSB, CW or digital, the important thing is to get on the air with friends and make some “noise” and help promote amateur radio spirit in NY. Please consider using this event to introduce new hams into the mix. Elmering has always been an important aspect of our hobby and NYQP is a perfect vehicle from which to teach operating concepts and station engineering. Make a new antenna, try a new digital mode, operate a vintage rig, have fun!

There is a page at the NYQP website (www.nyqp.org) that we've created to announce activity across the state. It's called “2016 Planned Activations” and it's easy to list your plans online to alert others of your activity in that rare or not-so-rare QTH. It helps all of us make informed choices on how to operate to maximize fun.

The event's rules are also listed at the site.

On the Beam

News & Notes

A Record Breaker on 630 Meters!

Although US radio amateurs do not yet have access to 630 meters, Canadian licensees do, and one of them was on the North American end of the first two-way contact on that band between Canada and Australia. Steve McDonald, VE7SL, in British Columbia, and Roger Crofts, VK4YB, in Queensland, completed a contact on September 15 between 1225 and 1319 UTC using JT9 digital mode. The distance covered was on the order of 7000 miles!

"This morning a historic QSO for the Amateur Service was completed!" commented John Langridge, KB5NJD, who also holds an FCC Part 5 Experimental license, WG2XIQ. "This is also the longest two-way QSO on 630 meters ever completed." The contact took place on 474.300 kHz.

McDonald said his antenna is "basically about the size of a 160 meter inverted L, but over extremely poor ground," while Crofts, with what McDonald described as "a monster antenna" was doing the heavy lifting for the contact. McDonald was using a transverter that VK4YB had sent him for beta testing, driving an LF MOSFET amplifier converted for 630 meter use.

Meanwhile. Joe Lowe, NU6O, in California, reports that VK4YB also heard his WI2XBQ Experimental Service beacon on September 14. "I was running 0.5 W ERP, 50 W TPO, into a 43-foot vertical in the backyard," he told ARRL. "Very low power and simple equipment are capable of DX on 630 meters!" Lowe said he was using WSPR mode.

An April 2015 FCC Report and Order, Order, and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (R&O/NPRM) proposed a new secondary 630 meter MF allocation at 472 to 479 kHz to Amateur Radio, implementing decisions made at WRC-12. It also allocated 135.7 to 137.8 kHz to the Amateur Service on a secondary basis. A Report and Order is pending.

Amateur Radio-Military Interoperability Exercise Set for October 31-November 1



An Amateur Radio-military interoperability exercise will take place from October 31 - November 1.

The event will begin at 1200 UTC on October 31 and continue through 2359 UTC on November 1 on 60 meter channels 1-4 --5.3305 MHz, 5.3465 MHz, 5.357 MHz, and 5.3715 MHz, respectively.

During this exercise, military stations will attempt to make radio contact with stations in as many of the 3077 US counties as possible. Radio amateurs providing "county status" information will receive a US Department of Defense "interoperability QSL card."

For more information, contact the Military Auxiliary Radio Service (MARS). The email contact is: mars.exercises@gmail.com

CALENDAR

October 8, 2016 - VE Session sponsored by EGARA at the East Greenbush Public Library. Doors open at 10 am. Test applicants must arrive no later than 10:15 am. Cost is \$15. Novice, General & Extra tests given. Walk-ins welcome but reservations recommended. RSVP to Tom Scorsone: kc2fcp@nycap.rr.com.

October 12, 2016 - EGARA Mini Hamfest and Membership Meeting, East Greenbush Masonic Temple, 7 pm

December 14, 2016 - EGARA Holiday Party, Moscatiello's Restaurant at 99 North Greenbush Road (Route 4) in Troy.

May 13, 2017 - EGARA Hamfest 2017

Pro Tip: Working Digital

Digital modes will operate your radio at 100% key-down, meaning your radio will be transmitting the maximum power for the entire duration of the transmission.



This is different than SSB (suppressed carrier) which produces no output when audio is not present.

Digital should not be operated at more than 50% of the total power output of your radio. It should be operated more in the range of 30% power output or 30 watts whichever is lower.

More than 30 watts doesn't make a difference and considered excessive. Keep an eye on your radio's temperature monitor when operating more than 30% power.



For Sale

- *Yaesu FT 950* -- \$ 800.00;
- *Icom 746* -- \$ 600.00;
- *Heathkit DX 60* -- \$ 75.00;

For above items, contact Tom Scorsone by e-mail at: kc2fcp@nycap.rr.com.

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- *Vibroplex "Original" bug* - ca. 1963 - Like "new" condition - Chrome works over gray wrinkle base - \$170;
 - *Ameritron Model A1-811H* - Linear amplifier uses (4) 811's - with manual - great condition - \$700 obo;
 - *Kenwood Ts-480 Hf Rig* - 200 w PEP output, w/manual, cable, and microphone - like new - \$800 obo;
 - *Used 6146'S* - various brands - tested - \$7 each;

For above items, contact: Steve WB2HPR at 326-0902.

Looking to Buy, Sell or Swap?
Send your info to W2RBJ@outlook.com

The East Greenbush Amateur Radio Association

Organized in 1998, by Bert Bruins, N2FPJ, SK and Chris Linck, N2NEH, the East Greenbush Amateur Radio Association, an ARRL affiliate, is committed to providing emergency services, educational programs, and operating resources to the amateur radio operators and residents of the Capital Region of New York State. The club station is W2EGB. The club also has several VHF and UHF repeaters open to club members and the public.