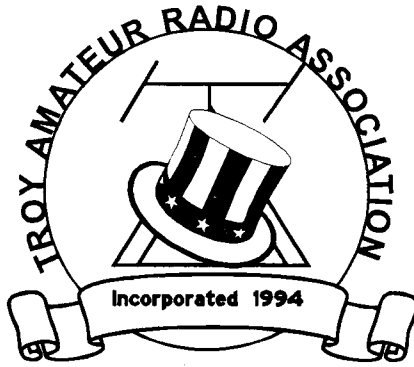


copy

TARA

"Home of the
FULL SERVICE
Repeaters"



Troy, New York - Home of Uncle Sam

147.27/R

145.17/R

444.225/R

NEWS

Volume V NO. 4

An Award Winning Publication of the Troy Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

April 1995

At the April meeting a Skywarn recertification training session will be held for all members and interested amateurs. Skywarn is sponsored by the National Weather Service and is used by forecasters to help track severe weather. The training is given by meteorologist from the Albany Weather Service located at the Albany Airport.

The information from Skywarn Spotters, coupled with radar, satellite and other data has enabled the National Weather Service to issue more timely and accurate warnings for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and flash floods.



What is needed to become a Skywarn Spotter, certification from the National Weather Service and a good set of observation skills.

With any sign of threatening weather, an informal Weather Net can usually be found on the TARA Repeater systems. Also, as heard recently on the repeaters, the radio weather link is now active and can be accessed by using the star (*) key to open the link and the pound (#) key to drop the link. Please

identify prior to opening the link and also upon dropping the link.

de N2LBZ

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A Peek at the Past.... Perhaps a Potion for the Present

Written By: David M. Pascale, WB2HKR

The Troy Amateur Radio Association is now four years old and certainly flexing its muscles in local amateur radio circles. Counted among our accomplishments are successful Field Day efforts, a two meter and 440 MHz repeater system, thousands of dollars worth of amateur radio equipment (the repeater equipment and peripheral accessories alone would cost a fortune to replace) and of course our most valuable asset, a growing membership that will hopefully reach 100 members by the end of 1995.

With the success we have enjoyed in mind I looked back at some of my old records. I saw scribbled on a piece of paper some targets for bank balances and membership quotas. I only ask that you believe me when I say that we have exceeded any of the expectations we had in April of 1991. We are literally an idea that exploded out of a garage in Troy and has continued to explode ever since. What we created in that garage and let's make no mistake about it, was not a loose collection of malcontents from other clubs but effective participants in a new organization devoted to the principles outlined in the preamble of the Association's Constitution and By-laws. I ask that each amateur revisit those principles, whenever disagreement, which is not only normal but needed by any organization if it is to grow, leads to division which is not necessary and never leads to anything but hard feelings and infighting.

I have talked to many members of the club, old and new alike, and never cease to be amazed at the fervor with

which they espouse a "cause". While other constituent groups worry about wars, famine, the AIDS epidemic and unemployment, just to name a few, we argue violently over issues the rest of the world doesn't understand, much less care about. For example, how many passionate speeches have been given on the steps of the State Capitol on the merits of linked versus unlinked repeaters? How many voices have been raised in anger on Capitol Hill in Washington about the virtues of the no-code Technician license? How many televised hearings have you seen on C-SPAN regarding multiple choice versus fill-in-the-blanks code tests? Does CNN carry the latest in Amateur Radio controversy? Maybe they sandwich it in between national news and sports, but I've never seen it.

I can remember the first year of the Club's existence how we "winged it" with no equipment, no money, no repeaters, no Field Day and no insurance. I guess these were the "good old days." If you think the club has serious issues now, ponder that nostalgic past. And yet, what we didn't have was what we have now: an active, concerned, committed (no, not that kind of committed!) membership. What makes that membership work though, and here comes the word we all hate, is STRUCTURE. We hate it. We claim that "good" clubs don't have it. It just ain't so folks. Look at the Dayton Hamvention, it's a well organized, well oiled, professionally managed nationwide event run by volunteers just like us. Well, why can't we do something like Dayton? The answer is

simple and it's the same reason why a lot of clubs can't, we just can't tolerate the structure. We can't handle structure because we don't have discipline. Sometimes I think we don't want one club but seventy-five individual operating entities doing whatever they want. I happily include myself here, as a matter of fact. I can't stand structure myself, but I'm working on it.

I guess the message here is simple. I don't think, with all due respect to the club members I know who feel otherwise, and valuing their opinion and their friendship, that we have any real issues within the club. I just think we don't like any organization "telling us what we can do." Face it, most of us have structure where we work, we have the structure imposed on us by our families and communities, and we just can't handle structure imposed on us by any other organization. It's almost as if our organization has reached its structural limit. The membership, however opaquely, is raising its hands, palms forward and saying: No more! We have our repeater, our Field Day, our social organization and we don't want any more, and that's okay.

It's okay as long as we realize that the dynamic at work here was not created by any truly divisive issues which need to be addressed, but by the fact that we're human beings. If we keep this in mind we'll last a long time.

Note: The author of the article was TARA's first Treasurer. TARA held its first meeting on April 17, 1991.

● Happy 4th Anniversary T.A.R.A. ●

Electronic Filing

The ARRL/VEC was recently given FCC approval to electronically forward Form 610 applications data (via e-mail). FCC processing time can now be as short as 5 days. Applicants (prospective new licensees and upgraders) can also call the FCC (1-800-322-1117) to determine whether their new license has been granted. If the license has been granted, the applicant can immediately begin using the new privileges with their FCC issued call sign. That means turnaround time, from test-taking to operating, can be a week!

TARA UHF/VHF CONTEST CORNER

Reported By: Jerry, N2QIP

I wish to thank all who came out for the January VHF Sweepstakes.

The Club total might have been a little down from last year, but the fun outgunned it by far.

The next vhf event will be the ARRL QSO Party June 10-12. And then our UHF/VHF station at Field Day. Unofficial tallies have John "Tute", WM2Y, leading the way.

- WM2Y, John, 4902
- WA2IWW, Jerry, 1540
- N2USN, Dennis, 1269
- N2PEN & N2POS, Paul - Betty, 1260
- N2PEO, Ed, 990
- N2QIP, Quippy, 854
- KB2KFV, Ken, 632
- KB2JZJ, Art, 549
- KB2KDY, Barnie, 280

Also contributing were: WB2HKR Dave, WB2FOB, Glen, and NY2U, Bill.

Assistant Editor Note: I would like to apologize to Jerry, N2QIP, for not having this article posted on time. This article was originally forwarded very early last month but due to error on my part, it never made publication.

Sorrry!

Mr. Bill, NY2U

VHF/UHF Contesters Needed

TARA is always in need of amateurs that would like to participate on the TARA Contest Team. If you would like to become a member of this team or find out more info please contact Jerry, N2QIP at 272-5274. Leave a message.

TARA Applies for Club Call

On Monday, March 27, 1995 TARA officially filed for their own club call sign. Our club has been in pursuit of a call sign since rumors began several years ago. The FCC began accepting application Form 610B for club and military recreation station licenses, on March 24, 1995, making this all possible.

The new call will be from the new allotted block of calls never before issued. The so-called Group "X" (2-by-3) call sign prefixes which were reserved on March 24, 1978 (but never implemented) for certain types of amateur stations will be available under the vanity call sign system as Group "D" call signs. These are:

RACES	WC1AAA to WC0ZZZ
Club	WK1AAA to WK0ZZZ
Military Recreation	WM1AAA to WM0ZZZ
Repeaters	WR1AAA to WR0ZZZ
Temporary Licenses	WT1AAA to WT0ZZZ

After TARA is granted one of these new call signs they then can apply for a new shorter club vanity call sign from a different call sign block.

Club ID Badges

The official TARA club badge is available to all members of our club. They are bright yellow with black lettering and are very distinctive.

If anyone would like to purchase one of these badges, they are asked to contact Gerald Murray, WA2IWW, at the next monthly meeting. Group orders are put in regularly to keep the expense down for all.

Club Certificates

Our secretary has advised us that she is still holding a number of membership certificates that have never been picked up. Any current or past TARA member is entitled to one of these very handsome certificates.

Any new 1995 member that has never received the certificate, is asked to please contact our secretary immediately.

Also if you have received your certificate but there is some kind of error please inform us. Anyone with questions should contact June Smith, KA2VEK, at (518)664-4521, evenings please.

THE BUBBA REPORT - APRIL 1995

Written By: Thomas "Bubba" Remmert, N2TTA

Well, the past month, or so, has seen a few TARA members pop up in the Sumter area. First to make contact on 2 meters was George, N2YXC, on his way to sunny Florida. We almost missed him, but thanks to the range of the Sumter repeater, we caught him before he got past us. The next contact was from Mark, N2XLC. Unfortunately, we only made land line contact. Mark came to Sumter and passed his 13 WPM code test, but wouldn't you know it, I was out of town the day he was here. Last, but not least, was Dennis, N2USN, passing through on I-95 on his way to Parris Island USMC boot camp for his son's graduation. We burned up the 147.015 repeater for about an hour. Our thanks to the gang in Sumter for letting us tie up the repeater for a great rag chew. Note that we did leave breaks and several times asked if anyone needed the repeater - maybe we talked too fast! Dennis timed things perfectly as I was able to contact his dad Don, WB2VJC on the South Carolina SSB net on 3915

while Dennis was still in range on 2 meters. Thanks to the "good ole boys" on 3915 for letting me pass informal traffic right at the beginning of the net. Two days later, as I was putting the finishing touches on this month's Bubba Report, I again made contact with N2USN and N2WUB on the way home. Wouldn't you know we timed it right again!! George N2YXC gave me a shout on the repeater and right away I said, "Hang on George!! Dennis may still be in range!!" Sure enough, we got a good roundtable going with N2TTA, N2YXC and N2USN with visits from Dave-KD4HTU, Tom-KC4ZTC and Steve-KC4HNS. We talked for about a half-hour and Dennis and George made arrangements to go simplex after they got out of range.

I had a lot of fun working the ARRL DX contest and the CQ WPX contest, both of which were held recently. I've already received some DX QSL cards directly. This made me think that I better get set up with the incoming QSL bureau. I checked the

ARRL operating manual and found out that the information is a little out of date. The correct information for the incoming bureau follows. For all those with "2" calls, no matter where you actually live, the incoming bureau is handled by the North Jersey DX Association, P.O. Box 599, Morris Plains, NJ 07950. You should send a SASE to them for information and a sign-up form. They prefer that you do NOT send envelopes. You can purchase 10 postage credits for \$5.00 (they supply the envelopes). I strongly urge everyone to sign up. You would hate to miss a QSL card from a DX contact. Even if you're only operating 2 meters, sign up now. You never know when a DX contact might happen. Some day 10 meters will be open again (at least that's what I'm told). Until then, if you're new to TARA, you'll probably catch "upgrade fever" this coming Field Day. TN

Until next month, 73 y'all, de Bubba,
N2TTA.

REPEATER OFFSETS

"Radio Tips for the Beginner"

By: Newt O'Radio

How come when I hear the old timers talk repeaters, they never have to ask what the offset is? Even if it's a new repeater! Is there a magical knowledge that comes with experience? I was led to believe that once you had been on the air for a number of years, all this knowledge just came to your brain from all that exposure to R.F. Ha!! Those old timers have been found out!!! I read the ARRL repeater directory. It seems that offsets work like this: On 2 meters, repeaters below 147.000 MHz have a negative offset. Repeaters above 147.000 MHz have a positive offset. Then I said, wait a minute, what about a repeater ON 147.000 MHz? A little more research turned up the fact that repeaters on 147.00, 147.03 or 147.06 can have a negative or positive offset.

When it comes to the 440 band, repeaters below 446 MHz have a positive offset and those above have a negative offset. Actually, there are no repeater inputs or outputs from 445.000 to 446.975. On 220 MHz it's easy because they all have negative inputs. The national simplex frequencies are 146.52, 223.50 and 446.00. We won't mention which ham (with a 2-land call) asked for the offset for 146.52 while operating on a VERY wide coverage repeater in 4-land.

Oh yeah, one last thing: Some repeaters have non-standard offsets or more than one input. For example, 147.21 in Columbia County has a positive offset plus an additional input on 27.185 MHz, AM mode only. TN

Weekend Antenna Project

Are you looking for a simple, yet interesting weekend antenna project? Well here is one that might not win a beauty award but it sure will perform. In fact W6AAQ, Don Johnson, designer of this antenna reports his antenna even outperforms a 5/8-wave vertical. A combination of top and center loading offers improved efficiency over continuously loaded antennas. The only materials you'll need are a length of stiff wire and a scrap of circuit-board material, in addition to the BNC connector.

CONSTRUCTION:

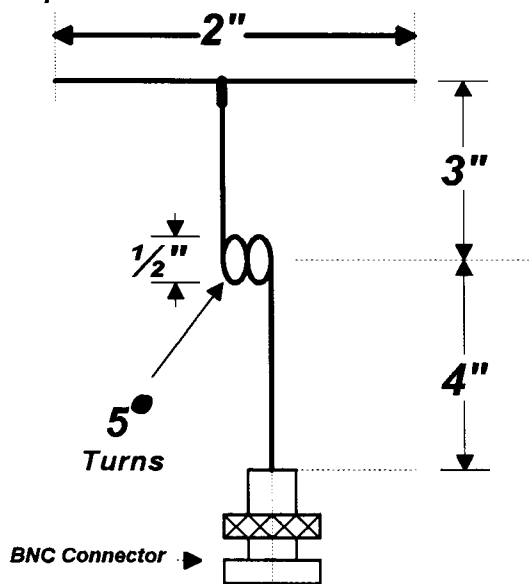
The entire whip section with above center loading coil is made of one continuous length of material. An 18-inch length of brazing rod or no.14 Copperweld wire is suitable.

The top loading disk may be made from a scrap circuit board, copper flashing, or sheet brass stock. Aluminum is not recommended.

The dimensions for this antenna are given in the diagram above. First wind the center loading coil. Use a 1/2-inch bolt, wooden dowel, or other cylindrical object for a coil form. Begin winding at a point 3 inches from one end of the wire, and wrap the wire tightly around the coil form. Wind 5 1/2 turns, with just enough space between turns so they don't touch.

Remove the coil from the form. Next, determine the length necessary to insert the wire into the connector you'll be using. Cut the long end of the wire to this length plus 4 inches, measure from the center of the coil. Solder the wire to the center pin and assemble the connector. A tight-fitting sleeve made of Teflon or Plexiglas rod may be used to support and insulate the antenna wire inside the shell. An alternative is to fill the shell with epoxy cement, and allow the cement to set while the wire is held centered in the shell. The top loading disk may be be circular, cut with a hole saw. A circular disk is not required, however—it may be of any shape. Just remember that with a larger disk, less coil inductance will be required, and vice versa. Drill a hole at the center of the disk for mounting it to the wire. For a more rugged antenna, reinforce the hole with a brass eyelet. Solder the disk in place at the top of the antenna, and construction is complete.

Top Loaded 144 MHz Mobile Antenna



Designed By: W6AAQ

Tune-up:

Now if you've followed the directions up until now you're ready to tune your new antenna.

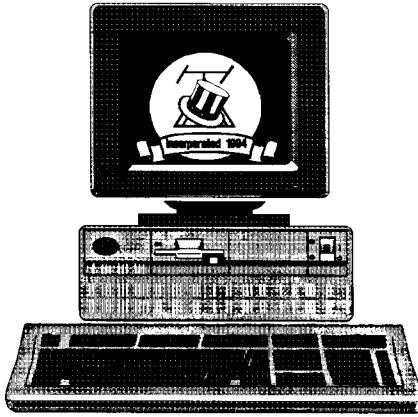
Adjustment consists of spreading the coil turns for the correct amount of inductance. Do this at the center frequency of the range you'll normally be using. Optimum inductance is determined with the aid of a field-strength meter at a distance of 10 or 15 feet.

Attach the antenna to a handheld transceiver operating on low power, and take a field strength reading. With the transmitter turned off, spread the coil turns slightly, and then take another reading. By experiment, spread or compress the coil turns for the maximum field strength reading. Please take your time while making these measurements and be as precise as possible. Very little adjustment should be required! There is one precaution, however. you must keep your body, arms, legs, and head in the same relative position for each field strength measurement. It is suggested that the transceiver be placed on a nonmetal table and operated at arm's length for these checks.

Once the maximum field strength reading is obtained, adjustments are complete. With this antenna in operation, you'll likely find it possible to access repeaters that are difficult to reach with other shortened antennas.

ARRL Antenna Book - 17th Edition

If you're one of the many that enjoy designing and building your own antenna systems then you'll want the ARRL Antenna Book. This publication is chock filled with state-of-the-art antenna and transmission line projects. The 17th Edition presents the best and most highly regarded coverage of antenna fundamentals, propagation, transmission lines, Yagis and quads, as well as all popular wire antenna designs. See TARA's Bookstore Manager, Kenny, KB2KFV, for your personal copy.



TARA COMPUTER CORNER

Featuring computer tips and advice for IBM users.

Written By: Tom Remmert, N2TTA

I saw something very interesting in the March 13, 1995 issue of PC Week. I was reading Peter Coffee's column about DSP chips. He talked about dedicated DSP chips versus using general purpose chips. He then went on to describe a "13MHZ RISC device with a push button user interface and plug-and-play hardware. This under-\$200 box is not a PC, a Macintosh, or even a PDA: It's a Timewave DSP-9..." Looks like another ham masquerading as a computer geek. He goes on to explain how well it worked in the ARRL DX contest on 40 meters. It

seems he was operating CW with a 40 watt Ten-Tec rig. I didn't think anyone in 6-land ran under a "California Kilowatt." It just goes to show how hams are out in front with technology.

Another PC publication talked about wireless connections to computer networks via cellular and other methods yet to be deployed. It mentioned how analog cellular modems just don't cut it and how the future is in "digital packet communications." Now where have I heard that term before?

Rumor has it that Window 95 will be renamed Win-Whenever. Some rumors have the ship date slipping from August to November but bets are it will make it by August so it can be on computers sold during the Christmas rush. My suggestion is to wait at least 2 weeks after release before installing it. Check the various BBS (computer and packet) to see what problems people are having before you jump in feet first. Will the next version be Win95.1 or Win96?

It seems many businesses are still buying 486's instead of Pentium processors due to the price difference. Supposedly the price difference isn't all that great when comparing new computers, but upgrades are a different animal. If you want to upgrade your motherboard to a Pentium, you may find that you need all new RAM. If your thinking about this, now might be a good time while there is still a good market for used 486's and 1MB SIMMS.

Anyway, that's a brief recap of what's going on in the industry publications. If you have any hot tips, questions or suggestions for future topics, send them via packet to N2TTA@KD4HTU.#SUM.SC.USA.NA. Hopefully, we'll be on the Internet soon. The local phone cooperative (Farmers' Telephone Cooperative, can you believe it!?) is putting in some type of access, but I hear there are only 4 local lines to start. America On Line, CompuServe, Prodigy, etc. don't have local phone numbers here, so we're out of luck. Maybe when the Microsoft net comes on-line, we'll get a number.

TARA ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CALL FOR VOTES

TARA will be presenting the Thomas M. Remmert Achievement Award at this year's Field Day. This is the second year for this annual award. We want the entire club to participate in selecting the winner. After much discussion, your Board of Directors has decided that the following procedures will be followed. At the April membership meeting, each member may submit a piece of paper with up to three names of people he/she feels deserve the award. Ballots will be secret. You can vote for

1, 2 or 3 people. If you can't make it to the meeting, put your votes on a single piece of paper (don't write your name or call sign on the ballot), put the ballot in a sealed envelope with your name and get it to any member of the board of directors. These ballots will be opened at the meeting and dropped into the ballot box in such a manner that the votes will remain secret.

Two members will be asked to count the ballots, keep the results secret and obtain the plaque to be presented at Field

Day. The person receiving the most votes will be the winner. The identity of the winner will not be revealed to anyone until the award is presented at Field Day. Should one of the ballot counters leak the winner's name before hand, the jail at the Green Island police station will receive a top to bottom scrubbing with a tooth brush.

The inscription on the plaque reads "For your positive accomplishments and attitude towards our club." This should guide you in your voting. TV

February	March
11	11
April	May
15	13
June	July
28	26
August	September
23	20
October	November
14	11

A.T.V.E.T. Begins 11th Year

ATVET (Albany/Troy Volunteer Examiner Team) is celebrating their 11th year of administering FCC amateur exams in the Capital District. ATVET still remains the largest volunteer examiner team found in the Northeast.

The next exam date will be Saturday, May 13, 1995. ATVET exams are held in the C.I.I. Building (Center for Industrial Innovations), Room 3051, on the Campus of R.P.I. in Troy. The doors open at 8:20 AM, with exams starting at 9:00 AM. NOBODY will be admitted into the exam room after the 9:00 AM starting time. No pre registration is required for any of ATVET's exams. A test fee of \$5.90 either cash or check is required for those taking any elements above Element -2 or Element -1A. Make sure you bring two proofs of identification, with one being a picture ID. Also bring any of your original documentation (current license, CSCEs...etc.) along with photo copies, calculators, pens and pencils to the exam session. Anyone needing special handicap arrangements are asked to call in advance. The CII Building is handicapped accessible.

The following exam dates are the complete schedule for 1995. Cancellations if needed will be announced on both the Capital District Repeater Net (Nightly on 146.94MHz at 6:30 PM) or WGY - 810 AM.

AMATEUR RADIO CALL SIGNS

March 1, 1995

Radio District	Group "A" Extra	Group "B" Advanced	Group "C" Tech/Gen	Group "D" Novice
0	AA0WM	KG0UD		KB0RFW
1	AA1MK	KD1ZZ	N1UKU	KB1BOC
2	AA2WK	KG2BJ		KB2TTD
3	AA3KJ	KE3RS	N3UPB	KB3BGN
4	AE4EC	KS4QB		KE4WEV
5	AC5AZ	KK5LJ		KC5MXP
6	AC6KX	KO6QY		KE6RKO
7	AB7IK	KJ7KR		KC7JFS
8	AA8SN	KG8PM		KB8YBA
9	AA9OA	KG9AS		KB9JFS
N.Mariana Is.	KH0Q	AH0AN	KH0DT	WH0AAX
Guam	WH2L	AH2CZ	KH2NC	WH2ANG
Hawaii		AH6NY		WH6CSX
Amer.Samoa	AH8M	AH8AH	KH8CG	WH8ABB
Alaska		AL7PY		WL7CLA
Virgin Is.	WP2Q	KP2CD	NP2IA	WP2AHV
Puerto Rico		KP4YW		WP4MWU

ATVET Liasion Report

Written By: W.J.Eddy, NY2U

The March 11, 1995 exam session held on the campus of RPI served a total of 18 candidates, with 14 volunteer examiners that administered a total of 29 exam elements. Out of this group there were 5 candidates that earned their Technician Class, 1 Tech/Plus, 0 General, 1 Advance, and 1 Extra Class. The following VEs were on hand for this session:

NY2U, WB2FOB, K2BUF, WF2B, WA1KKM, N2AIF, WM2U, WA2IWW, WB2HKR, N2LBR, WB2SBO, N2LBZ, N2USK and KF2WA.

The names listed below earned either their first ticket, or credit towards a license upgrade:

- Roske, Timothy P. (KB2TGG) EXTRA
- Braswell, Sylvester W. (WA2EZL) ADVANCED
- Graham, Richard W. (KB2TRZ) TECH/HF
- Dorato, Victor W., Jr (NONE) TECHNICIAN
- Ferguson, Mike (NONE) TECHNICIAN
- Hines, Wayne L. (NONE) TECHNICIAN
- Joyce, Michael F. (NONE) TECHNICIAN
- Taylor, Cha-Ron F. (NONE) TECHNICIAN



The All New

Hooray for Hollywood

Written By: Bill "Hollywood" St. Jean, N2YNP

BIRTHDAYS:

George Smith, N2YXC & Jane Smith, 4/7
Ricky Graham, KB2TRZ, 4/8 - Maureen Mouso, 4/12
Margaret Warner, N2PEK 4/16 - David Collis, 4/20

CORRECTION:

Paul Robideau, N2PEN, 3/4 not 2/4

Just like John Denver's song "Rocky Mountain High" says, Colorado is now being enjoyed by our very own Cathy, N2XLD. Her employer has relocated her to LaVets, Colorado so that she can "Clean House," so to speak. We have a sneaky suspicion that she really went out there to be with all those ski bums. All joking aside Cathy, CONGRATULATIONS, and enjoy. Hope to see you soon.

It has been said that Steve, N2PZP, and Rita, N2TTD, have a new member of their family. Upon inquiring, it was verified. They told this reporter that it was red headed and very, very noisy. You'll have to ask them about it.

2 Meter Packet DX Champion: We are proud to announce that Dennis, N2USN, is now the undisputed 2 meter Packeteer champion of the world! His

newly constructed packet station is so good, that he is able to receive DX stations. By the way Dennis, how do you spell Mississippi? The gremlins did it.

The Wells Communications garage sale was a total success. We would like to thank John, WA1YXQ, and Wells Communications for the invitation to all. It was well appreciated. Everyone seemed to come away very happy. Well maybe not everyone. Hey Chief, did you find your antennas?

It's a boy! Kim, N2ZLA, and his wife also named Kim, proudly announce the birth of Jeremy John 3lbs. 11oz. It is said that mother and son are doing fine, but dad is another story. Congratulations to the both of you.

The saga of the dueling antennas, UHF vs. VHF. Reports from both the UHF and VHF teams are very bitter. The UHF team are referring to

themselves as "The Ultra Hallowed Fellows", they are calling the VHF team "The Very Harried Fiends". Likewise, the VHF team are calling themselves "The Very Honest Force", and they are calling the UHF team "The Ultimately Hopeless Farce". Whew, these are strong and bitter name calling. We better keep a watchful eye on these teams before any violence starts. Both team captains will make a report to all, at the monthly meeting, so please be there.

Those of you that haven't filled out a questionnaire yet or if you have an upcoming event, please do so via TARA or at the regular monthly meeting. Remember always that this is a family oriented club. In order to hear the very best news/gossip...oops! Shhhh, you must be very, very quiet!

Public Service Events

TARA's Public Service Chairman has announced the following dates that we'll need volunteers. If you would like to volunteer your services please contact Ken, N2RXO, as soon as possible.

- APRIL 30 Troy - Walk America
- MAY 26 Cohoes - Memorial Day Parade
- JUNE 19 Troy - Samaritan Hospital

Welcome New Members

TARA is proud to announce their newest members. Please welcome these new amateurs and their families to our organization.

- Debbie & Rick Graham, KB2TRZ
- Ray Szlasa, N2VLY
- Kim Fan, N2ZLA
- Eric Unright, N2UQB
- Karen & McDonald Smith, KB2SPM

Congratulation!

Working the World Using QRP Power

This month we thought it would be fun to explore the fascinating world of QRP operating. Some of you new to the hobby might be asking yourself "What is QRP?" Others might be asking the big question, where do I find other hams using QRP? Can QRP only be used on HF- CW? Are there any groups dedicated to QRPers? Hopefully we'll have the answer to these questions and a few more in the article.

Ok, just what is QRP? The ARRL defines QRP operation as any mode of operation (ex. CW, SSB, RTTY or SSTV) running 10 watts input or 5 watts output power. The first few things any good QRP'er will tell you when you're first flirting with the idea of QRPing, is to bone up on your knowledge of radio-wave propagation, learn to be patient and dispel any thoughts that you must run high power (QRO). Always listen, listen, listen!

A few rules of thumb to remember while QRPing are:

1. Listen, listen, listen.
2. Call other station; don't just call CQ.
3. Expect less-than-optimum signal reports.
4. Be persistent and patient.
5. Know when to quit.

Remember that many of us like to answer the stronger stations while passing by the weaker ones. You'll have better luck answering a CQ than initiating one. When operating CW make sure that you add "/QRP" (Ex. NY2U/QRP) to your call, so the amateur on the other end doesn't go on with a long winded dissertation about how you're weak, or might have the wrong antenna on. Once again be patient, and get him in the log.

The following list of frequencies will assist you while you're tuning the HF bands:

CW QRP activity centers around 1810, 3560, 7040, (7030 for QRP DX), 10.106, 14.060, 21.060 and 28.060kHz.

PHONE QRP 3985, 7285, 14.285, 21.385 and 18.885kHz.

(WARC bands 12/17/30 are also hotbeds for QRP activity)

NOVICE QRP 3710, 7110, 21.110 and 28.110kHz.

For those of you that enjoy paper chasing, QRPing has its share of awards and endorsements. There are thousands of amateurs that have earned their WAS (Worked All States) and WAC (Worked All Continents) while using only 2 watts!

There have even been a few that have achieved DXCC using just 5 watts or less.

There are several clubs/organizations catering especially to the QRPers. A number of these clubs offer newsletters to their members. Joining one (or all) of these clubs can give the interested amateur a much more rounded view of the QRP game.

The QRP ARCI (Amateur Radio Club International) offers membership for US amateurs at \$12.00 per year and publishes the newsletter *QRP Quarterly*. Contact:

Mike Kilgore, KG5F
2046 Ash Hill Road
Carrollton, TX 75007

The Michigan QRP Club dues are \$7.00 for US members. The club prints an informative newsletter, *The Five Watter*. Contact:

Michigan QRP Club
P.O.Box 80804
Lansing, MI 48908-0804

A British-based club is the G-QRP Group. The newsletter *SPRAT* offers a unique view of low power hamming as vigorously enjoyed by our friends in the United Kingdom. Dues are \$12.00 for stateside hams. Write to their "US Agent":

Luke Dodds, W5HKA
2852 Oak Forest
Grapevine, TX 76051

Many QRPers speak of the thrill of communicating using lower power in comparison to making their first contact on amateur radio. Using QRP doesn't mean you're limited to just CW. There are many that try low power operating on RTTY, SSB, VHF, UHF and yes, even SSTV!

Why don't you run your own experiment with a few friends and keep cranking that power down? See just how low you can go while still maintaining communications. Beware, you just might get hooked!

TARA Packeteers Hit the Air

Many of TARA's packet maniacs can now be found on 145.07MHz. Recently the gang moved to this new frequency and now are running PBBS, digi's, nodes and even gateways. This frequency was picked so we wouldn't tie up some of the all ready busy packet frequencies. So come join the fun! Try the all new "Uncle Sam 145.07 Network."

Club Personal Mailboxes: WB2HKR-4, KE2XF-4, N2ZLA-4, NY2U-4, KF2WA-4, N2VLY-4, N2USN-4, KA2HRM-4 WA1YXQ-4, N2OWC-4, KB2JZJ-4, N2NOU-4 and N2UBQ-4 **DIGIpeaters:** WB2HKR-1, KE2XF-1, WFD, TROY, N2OWC-1, KF2WA-1, N2USN-1, KA2HRM-1, KB2JZJ-1, N2NOU-1 and N2UQB-1 **GATEWAY/Nodes:** NY2U-7 and N2USN-7 ** Also you can access the Rippers Club Mailbox: RVW-4

News Of Our Neighbors

R.V.W.A.R.S.

Rip Van Winkle Amateur Radio Society Club Repeater: 147.21MHz/R WB2UEB

RVWARS operates their club packet radio mailbox on 145.07MHz under the call sign "RVW-4". If you can't make it direct from the Albany/Troy area you might try using KA2HRM-1 (DIGIpeater). Once you sign this board you will find postings of all the latest club information and even some satellite information provided by Marty, N2LDR.

RVWARS is gearing up for this year's Field Day '95 held on the weekend of June 24 & 25. The Rippers will be returning to their FD site located on the Chatham Fair Grounds, in Chatham, NY. Look for this group operating under the call sign of WD2K. Also if you're out traveling around feel welcomed to stop in for a visit, and a hot cup of coffee. Take route 203 (east) into Chatham, at the traffic light take a right hand turn onto route 66. Follow 66 until you see the Grand Union on your right and look for the entrance. Talk in of course will be on the 157.21MHz repeater. For information about RVWARS, please call Dave, WD2K, at (518) 732-7532 evenings. TN

Albany County Emergency Services Club Repeater: 147.12MHz/R WB2ZCM

A.C.E.S.

Kathy, N2SQY, report that the 147.12MHz repeater on top of the VA Hospital in Albany is back on the air. Several weeks ago this repeater went down with the problems with the finals. On the weekend of March 4 & 5, Bob, WB2ZCM, and Rollic, WB2CNS, made final repairs and returned the repeater back to regular usage by Albany RACES.

On March 16, RACES and TARA will jointly sponsor a licensing class to be held at Heatley High in Green Island. If you need information about this class please contact Ken Davis, KB2KFV, at 272-0112.

Every Tuesday you may join Albany RACES on their weekly training net starting at 7:00PM. Many topics and skills of emergency communications are covered each week. You do NOT have to be a member to participate.

If you're not quite sure what RACES has to offer or how to join, why don't you take a moment and call Chief Radio Officer Bob, WB2ZCM, at (518) 237-8473. TN

S.C.R.A.

Saratoga County R.A.C.E.S. Association Club Repeater: 147.24MHz/R WA2UMX

RACES didn't have a formal meeting for March but instead held a Swapfest at the County Solar Building. Again this year they had their hands filled with the large crowd that showed up. It looks like there were around 150 plus that attended.

Saratoga will sponsor their next exam session on Saturday, May 13 at 9:00 AM at the County Solar Building, Route 67, Ballston Spa. The contact for this session is Jim, KG2H, and he can be reached at the phone number given below.

RACES has already accumulated a number of public service events which follows: April 29, 4H Walkathon; April 30, March of Dimes; May 28, Tour de Cure Bike Race; and the biggest event of the year, Field Day. If you would like to volunteer your services please contact Jim, KG2H.

If you need to find out more about this organization please contact President - Jim Polewczak, KG2H, at (518) 695-6878. TN

Schenectady Museum Amateur Radio Assoc Club Repeater: 147.375MHz/R KA2QYE

S.M.A.R.C.

SMARA will purchase a new answering machine for the purpose of providing amateurs and potential amateurs with the latest information about SMARA.

Bill, KE2XB, and Steve, WA3RKB, were appointed by the Chairman to develop needed amendments to the SMARA Constitution.

On March 15, Dick Frey, WA2AAU, spoke to the club on the topic of antenna grounding, a subject certainly not new to him. Dick is well known throughout the world for his extraordinary contest efforts with the Mount Greylock Expeditionary Force - W2SZ/1. Dick works for General Electric Research and Development at the Earth Station located on Crawford Hill in Schenectady.

Monthly meetings for SMARA are held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM on the second floor of the Schenectady Museum and Planetarium, Nott Terrace. If you would like additional information regarding SMARA, please contact Peter Harvey, WB2FWK, on the 147.375MHz repeater. TN

News Of Our Neighbors

Rensselaer County ARES/RACES Club Repeater: 147.18MHz/R WS2B

R.C.RACES.

The wheels are starting to turn again within Rensselaer County RACES thanks greatly to John, KA2VBI. In fact over the last three months its been just John and Dave, WB2VXS, checking in each week on the training net as officers.

Recently John has taken on the responsibility of making sure that the county communications van gets used by RACES members for training. On February 21, 1995, John took the van up to Schaghticoke in front of the new Grand Union for

the weekly training net. All of RACES owned equipment aboard the van was thoroughly checked out. More outings like this are planned.

Those of you that belong to RACES are asked to fill out the enclosed database update form in your January RACES newsletter. This is the only way that you can assure your newsletter will continue each month.

To find out more about RACES/ARES call Chief Radio Officer, George Bowen, N2LQS, on the 145.33MHz repeater or John, KA2VBI, at 235-9321. TN

Albany Amateur Radio Association Club Repeater: 145.19MHz/R KM2H

A.A.R.A.

AARA is holding a raffle of a Alinco - DR-600T/B (144/440MHz) dual bander, mobile radio. This radio has such features as remote control operations with an HT, detachable front control panel, 28 memory channels, 3 auto dialer memory channels, DSQ paging feature, 3 output power selections, CTCSS encode and power output 45W on VHF (35W - UHF). Tickets are now available

for just \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00, by contacting Saul Abrams, K2XA, or any AARA member. Albany continues their search for support in this year's FD exercise held in June. Ernie, WM2U, is looking for housing for their FD stations in the form of RVs, trailers, pop-ups or custom vans. Anybody that might be able to help them out is asked to contact Ernie at 877-7499. AARA meets each month September through May at the Colonie Community Center, Central Avenue, Albany. For info call Ernie Popp, KA2HTU, at 477-9581 TN

Schenectady Amateur Radio Association Club Repeater: 147.06MHz/R K2AE

S.A.R.A.

Antennas, particularly wire antennas, was the topic for the April 3rd meeting of SARA. On hand was Dan Whelen, WB2WHD, and the "old pro" himself Howard Lester, W2ODC, speaking to the crowded room about home brewing antennas from wire. Both of these gentlemen explained that hams don't have to spend hundreds of dollars to get a good signal on

the air.

It look like TARA isn't the only club interested in getting club QSL cards. Right now SARA is asking their membership to submit ideas for a new club QSL card. If your design is picked from the many entered you'll receive a brand new $\frac{1}{4}$ wave, 2 meter mag mount antenna, courtesy of Electric City Communications.

TARA salutes the outstanding job that Dick Arthur, WV2F, has done serving as coordinator / Liaison with the SARA VE Team. To find out more, please contact Phil Bradway, KB2HQ or V.Pres. Ray Wemple, KA2DVM.

Southern Vermont Amateur Radio Club Club Repeater: 145.39MHz/R WA1ZMS

So.V.A.R.C.

Get prepared for the Bennington Tour de Cure bike race sponsored by the American Diabetes Association on May 21, 1995. SoVARC reports that they'll be handling all of the communications in conjunction with Bennington County ARES. As of right now it appears that SoVARC will need around 20 amateurs to supply communications along the 62 mile race course. Anyone interested in participating is encouraged to contact Alan Shepard, N1LSZ, on BBSSVT or at (802) 442-7161. You don't suppose that they'll allow "old one track," Walt, AA2KM, to bike ride in this race, do you? Maybe if they could mount a rocking chair and a 2 meter radio on one of those new bicycles, he could lead the pack. If you're in the area of Bennington, please try out the new AA2KM, 146.835MHz repeater system which is sponsored by SoVARC, tell them Mr.Bill sent you!

SoVARC meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month at the Bennington Free Library. You may also call Randy Gates, N1GWL, at (802) 375-1263. TN

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Dennis, N2USN

Art Ceas, KB2JZJ

VE Team Contact Bud Hovey, WF2B

Troy Amateur Radio Association

PO Box 584

Latham, NY 12110

place

label

here

Bill

NEXT MEETING: **SKYWARN**

April 18, 1995

Green Island Municipal Bldg.

7:30 PM