



Greater Norwalk Amateur Radio Club

Newsletter

"The Voice of GNARC"

October 2009

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

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Congratulations go out to Jay Kolinsky/NE2Q and his helpers for successfully installing a vintage transceiver at the Norwalk Public Library. This transceiver was donated by the club. He also engaged the library staff, in a training session, about, how to operate the transceiver. The library released a newsworthy piece about this project in consultation with Jay. Jay has been a consummate advocate for public exposure regarding the uses of ham radio in the area of communication. He has since been dubbed the MEDIA DIRECTOR for GNARC.

We are nearing completion in the final phase with the installation of the D Star repeater atop the Norwalk Hospital. The exact date of completion is still up in the air. All we can say is, soon.

In other news around the club, there is talk about resurrecting another club station. For those of you who remember, we had a club station that was up and running for several years, back in the 90's. Added to this, there was a fully equipped test bench. Neither of these was ever used.

We had a permanent site at the old Red Cross building in Norwalk. The tower and antenna are still on the site. We might go along with this idea again, if the interested parties can locate a permanent site.

The nationwide Simulated Emergency Test (SET) has been pushed back to Nov 14th and the guidelines have been circulated. Good luck to all with this drill, we need to be prepared to tackle any emergency that might present itself.

Next Meeting

The October meeting of GNARC will be held in the Community Room of the Shop Rite Supermarket on Connecticut Avenue in Norwalk, CT. The meeting begins at 8pm

This month's program will be "The Current Status of ARES Region 1" and will be presented by Allan Valeo.

Pizza is at the usual spot, John's Best Pizza, New Canaan Ave. in Norwalk beginning at 6pm

Secretary's Minutes

Minutes of the September 9, 2009 GNARC Meeting

Toy-K1WYQ opened the meeting at 8:20 PM. It was delayed to watch a pass of the International Space Station with the Space Shuttle in tandem cross over head. There were 18 in attendance including one guest, Mary and a new member Chris-KB1QXR.

Toy turned the meeting over to Curt-W1FSM who gave a presentation on Repeaters.

Curt traced the history of amateur repeaters from their beginning in the 60's and early 70's when they began to replace 75 M mobile rigs for local communications to the present with EchoLink and D-Star. Curt indicated that the use of repeaters has gone through a number of peaks and valleys in the 40 years of their use, and challenged us to develop the next application that can produce another peak.

Business Meeting:

Treasurer's Report: Very good, with AWA proceeds generated by Tim-W1GIG, Don-KA1TZR and Jim-KC1FB and sale of hard-line by Curt-W1FSM.

Repeaters: All repeaters are working well and we are awaiting final approval to switch call signs. It was stated that the 2M and 440 machines can be linked, but if they are linked you must drop carrier completely to allow them to reset. It was reported that some people locally are using 147.48 for simplex and causing some interference. We were asked to listen on the input when it occurs to see if we can locate them.

ARES: Allan-NN1H announced that the Simulated Emergency Test (SET) is scheduled for Oct 3 at 9:00 AM, and asked that all ARES members attempt to check into all the active nets with all their radios, antennas and emergency power sources to verify their emergency readiness. He asked them to test their equipment before the SET to be prepared.

Our new Simplex frequency is 146.540.

Minutes: The minutes were accepted with the correction that the D-Star frequency is 441.600 not 431.600.

New Business:

Elections 2010: The nominating committee for next year's

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officers will be chaired by Tim-W1GIG who will co-opt two others to complete the committee.

Annual Picnic: Everything was great and those who did the bulk of the work, Toy, Ned, Dan, Ziggy and others were applauded.

Publicity: A 40 M dipole has been installed on the roof of the Norwalk Library and everything is working. Jay-NE2Q has received good feedback from the library staff and is planning an orientation for them. There are still some t-shirts and sweat shirts available in very large sizes.

Meeting Venue: Our next two meetings will be back at the Shop-Rite community room.

Holiday Party: We have reservations again this year at the Laurel Athletic Club for December 9.

Marty-KA1WBN announced that there will be a drill on September 26th and they are looking for volunteers to be "victims" in the drill.

Jim-KC1FB announced that a Westport ham had contacted him with a list of equipment he has for sale. He has A Drake TR4, Console and C4 power supply w/ manuals. Also, a High Gain TH3, antenna relay and remote control CDE rotor. Anyone interested please contact Jim for more info.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Jim Francoeur-KC1FB, Secretary.

QST Honors Local Writer

Paul Danzer, N1II, Wins September QST Cover Plaque Award

The winner of the QST Cover Plaque Award for September is Paul Danzer, N1II, for his article "A Simple Transformer to Measure Your Antenna Current." Congratulations, Paul! The winner of the QST Cover Plaque award -- given to the author or authors of the best article in each issue -- is determined by a vote of ARRL members on the QST Cover Plaque Poll Web page. Cast a ballot for your favorite article in the October issue by Saturday, October 31.

Hamfests

October 16 & 17

The New England Amateur Radio Festival - NEAR-Fest

This is a truly New England happening continuing a 30+ year tradition. The 2 day event is located at the fairgrounds in South Deerfield, NH 30 minutes northeast of Manchester, NH.

For full details visit the website:
<http://www.near-fest.com/>

Sen. Lieberman Co-sponsors Ham Bill

October 6, Senator Joe Lieberman (D-CT), along with Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), introduced Senate Bill 1755, The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Enhancement Act of 2009. Similar to HR 2160 -- also called The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Enhancement Act of 2009 -- that was introduced this past April by Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee (D-TX-18), the bill, if passed, would direct the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to undertake a study on emergency communications. S 1755 points out that "There is a strong Federal interest in the effective performance of Amateur Radio Service stations, and that performance must be given -- (A) support at all levels of government; and (B) protection against unreasonable regulation and impediments to the provision of the valuable communications provided by such stations."

"We are delighted to have the sponsorship of both the Chairman and the Ranking Member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and especially to have the support of Senator Lieberman from the ARRL's home state," said ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ. "The bill could not have a better pedigree." Lieberman is the Chairman of the committee, while Collins is the Ranking Member.

Like HR 2160, S 1755 calls on DHS to undertake a study on the uses and capabilities of Amateur Radio Service communications in emergencies and disaster relief and then to submit a report to Congress no more than 180 days after the bill becomes law. The study shall: Include a review of the importance of Amateur Radio emergency communications in furtherance of homeland security missions relating to disasters, severe weather and other threats to lives and property in the United States, as well as recommendations for enhancements in the voluntary deployment of Amateur Radio licensees in disaster and emergency communications and disaster relief efforts and improved integration of Amateur Radio operators in planning and furtherance of the Department of Homeland Security initiatives. Identify impediments to enhanced Amateur Radio Service communications, such as the effects of unreasonable or unnecessary private land use regulations on residential antenna installations; and make

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recommendations regarding such impediments for consideration by other federal departments, agencies and Congress.

In conducting the study, S 1755 directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to "utilize the expertise of stakeholder entities and organizations, including the Amateur Radio, emergency response and disaster communications communities."

S 1755 makes note of the fact that Section 1 of the Joint Resolution entitled Joint Resolution to Recognize the Achievements of Radio Amateurs, and To Establish Support for Such Amateurs as National Policy -- approved October 22, 1994 (Public Law 103-408) -- included a finding that stated: "Reasonable accommodation should be made for the effective operation of Amateur Radio from residences, private vehicles and public areas, and the regulation at all levels of government should facilitate and encourage amateur radio operations as a public benefit." The bill also pointed out that Section 1805© of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 757(c)) directs the Regional Emergency Communications Coordinating Working Group of the Department of Homeland Security to coordinate their activities with ham and Amateur Radio operators among the 11 other emergency organizations, such as ambulance services, law enforcement and others.

ARRL New England Division Director Tom Frenaye, K1KI said that Amateur Radio operators in the State of Maine have "an outstanding relationship" with their Congressional representatives -- plus Governor John Baldacci is KB1NXP!" Both Connecticut and Maine are part of the League's New England Division

Frenaye said that Maine Section Manager Bill Woodhead, N1KAT, dropped off a letter at Senator Collins' office in Lewiston two weeks ago, asking for her support. "After that, we had amateurs in Maine write the Senator," he said; more than 40 Maine hams wrote Senator Collins.

The Senate bill points out many positive things that Amateur Radio operators do, including "provid[ing] on a volunteer basis, a valuable public sector service to their communities, their States, and to the Nation, especially in the area of national and international disaster communications."

It mentions that amateurs provided emergency and disaster relief communications services during both natural and manmade disasters. "The Amateur Radio Service has formal agreements for the provision of volunteer emergency communications activities with the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Weather Service, the National Communications System, and the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, as well as with disaster relief agencies, including the American National Red Cross and the Salvation Army," the bill reads.

Right now, S 1755 has been read twice in the Senate chamber and referred to that body's Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. HR 2160 -- now with 27 sponsors -- is in the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

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8-6:30 m-f 9-3 sat