



# Greater Norwalk Amateur Radio Club

## Newsletter

### *"The Voice of GNARC"*

### *February/March 2010*

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#### THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

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The winter season is almost over, and while temperatures are a bit milder, the snowfall has not completely disappeared. ARES was elevated to level 2 on two occasions because of bad weather, but we never did go past that level, as weather conditions improved rather than deteriorated.

A reminder that this newsletter is not the exclusive domain of the President and Vice President. As noted, before, we have among our membership, a wide variety of expertise and quite frequently, we hear members articulating their thoughts and ideas. So! Why not make an occasional contribution to this newsletter?

In an effort to update you as quickly as possible and on a timely basis, I would like to bring you up to date about what has been happening: The Board of Management has had two meetings for the year and we are going to meet as often as possible to brain storm new and progressive ideas for our organization. Of course, all of this will be brought to you as quickly as possible for approval or otherwise.

Along these lines, here is what has been done to date. We have successfully installed Echolink on our two meter repeater with the club's call letters (W1NLK). Thanks to Dan (N1ZZ) at West Mountain Radio (WMR) for allowing us to use his workplace for the site and to Ned (KA1CVV) for setting up and maintaining Echolink. Many thanks to Jonathan (K1RFD) creator and owner of Echolink for allowing this to happen. We are proud to have him as a member of this organization. The feedback has been positive.

Other areas we are looking into: Getting a webmaster to assist in maintaining the website and also recruiting an assistant repeater trustee. ...More information to be had at our next meeting on March 10<sup>th</sup> at the Shop Rite community room on CT Ave at 8pm. Do not forget to join the gang for pizza at John's Best Pizza in Norwalk at 6pm on meeting day.

K1WYQ

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#### Next Meeting

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Our next meeting is scheduled for Wed March 10th in the Community room of the Shop Rite supermarket on CT Ave at 8pm. Do not forget our gathering for pizza at John's Best at 6pm before meeting time.

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#### Secretary's Minutes

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Minutes of the January 13, 2010 GNARC Meeting

Toy-K1WYQ opened the meeting at 8:00 PM; there were 18 members in attendance along with Betsy Doane-K1EIC our ARRL Section Manager. Betsy presented Paul Danzer-N1II with the Cover Plaque for his cover article in the September 2009 QST.

Toy turned the meeting over to Dan-N1ZZ who gave a very interesting slide presentation on the contest station and contest group, PJ2T operating on the island of Curacao. Dan gave a history of the station, how it has been developed since 2000 and described some of it's activities.

Business Meeting:

Treasurer's Report: We have 95 dues paying members. 2009 expenses for repeaters, antennas, Field Day and the Holiday Party were offset by dues, party ticket sales, AWA sales and equipment/cable sales.

2010 DUES ARE DUE.

Repeaters: All are working and stable. We are getting the old Motorola repeaters up and working as replacements, since they have better audio quality.

ARES: Our total for Region One Nets and ECs is 1015. That represents a little less than 20 percent of the total of 4300 for the Section, but it represents 23.5 % of the total from the Regions. For the geographically smallest Region to provide almost one forth of the points for a Section with five Regions speaks very highly of our Regions efforts.

Minutes: Approved

New Business:

Next VE session will be in March.

West Mountain Radio has a number of large CRT monitors available for any takers.

Election of Officers for 2010:

Tim-W1GIG presented the nominations for the four offices. There were no nominations from the floor, and the slate was approved unanimously. The officers for 2010 are:

President: Toy Alladin-K1WYQ

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Vice President: Vlad Spitzer-W1ZP  
Treasurer: Ed Ashway-K3EIN  
Secretary: Jim Francoeur-KC1FB

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Jim Francoeur-KC1FB, Secretary.

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## **ARRL Seeks Input for New IARU Region 2 Band Plan**

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From the March 4 ARRL Letter

The International Amateur Radio Region 2 (IARU R2) conference -- held later this year in El Salvador -- brings together delegations from the national Amateur Radio Societies in the Western Hemisphere. One of the topics on the agenda will be the Region 2 HF band plan. This band plan is "harmonized with" -- spectrum management-speak for "very similar to" -- the IARU Region 1 and Region 3 band plans.

According to ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN, many hams in the USA probably did not know there was such as thing as a Region 2 band plan until recently. Now, however, many more American hams have heard of it, but may not know how -- if at all -- this band plan affects them. Here are important facts for American hams to keep in mind:

- IARU band plans are voluntary guidelines. They do not have the force of FCC regulations.
- It would be inappropriate to incorporate Region 2 band plans into the FCC rules, and the ARRL has no plan to petition the FCC to do so.
- Most other countries do not have the detailed sub-band regulations that are in Part 97 of the FCC Rules; for amateurs in those countries, IARU band plans offer the only guidance on frequency use.
- The recognition of a calling frequency or band segment for a particular purpose or mode in the IARU band plan does not convey any special rights or exclusivity of use.

A new, more transparent procedure will be followed this year for considering possible changes to the Region 2 band plan. The ARRL is cooperating with this procedure by inviting input to be sent to the ARRL Board of Directors' Band Planning Committee. The committee will review the existing Region 2 band plan, consider input from the amateur community and make recommendations to the ARRL Board for submission to IARU Region 2.

The inadvertent omission of the AM center of activity frequency (calling frequency) -- 3.885 MHz on 80 meters -- has already been noted, and this will be one of the recommended revisions.

The deadline line set by Region 2 for gathering input and formulating recommendations is rather short. Amateurs who would like to submit input should take the following steps:

- First, study the existing IARU Region 2 band plan posted on the Region 2 Web site. The Region 1 and Region 3 band plans are also posted there, so be sure you are looking at the band plan for Region 2.
- Next, formulate a clear statement of any change you propose. Include a brief explanation of why you think the change would be beneficial. Please include your name and call sign in your input.
- Finally, send your input via e-mail no later than April 5, 2010. Messages will be automatically acknowledged.

If you live in another country in Region 2, please contact your national Amateur Radio Society for information on how to submit input for the band plan process.

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## **Radio Club de Chile Active after Earthquake**

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On Monday, March 1, IARU Region 2 President Reinaldo Leandro, YV5AMH, spoke via telephone with Radio Club de Chile (RCCH) President Dr Galdino Besomi, CE3PG, regarding the 8.8 magnitude earthquake that struck the South American nation on Saturday, February 27. "He informed me that soon after the earthquake, an Emergency Net was activated in the whole country -- first on VHF and then on HF. All the RCCH Board and club members are actively working in close coordination with civil and military authorities," Leandro posted to the IARU Region 2 e-mail reflector. "Three days after the earthquake, the requests for news about people in the affected areas is one of the main activities occupying the Chilean radio amateurs."

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## **EchoLink**

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Some Good News for GNARC Members!!!

We now have an Echolink node on the Club's 2 meter Repeater VHF 146.475 (+ 1 MHz Split). The node number

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is 501635

In case some of you don't know how to use Echolink here are the basics:

1. When you are connected to the repeater, on your radio DTMF keypad type \* and the node number you want to connect to.
2. Echolink will tell you that you are connected to the node you typed.
3. When you have finished your QSO type 73 on your radio and Echolink will tell you that you are disconnected.

A hearty thanks to the folks at West Mountain Radio for hosting the node and getting it up and running.

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## **A Letter From Your VP**

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Dear Members,

At the last meeting of the Greater Norwalk Amateur Radio Club I was elected to be your new Vice-President. As I sat comfortably in the back of the room having listened to Dan's (N1ZZ) wonderful presentation about PJ2T, a contesting station on the island of Curacao, our President politely asked me if I had anything to say after ascending to this lofty position. Though not usually at a loss for words, all I could do was thank my friends and fellow club members for electing me and sit right back down. Later, as I walked out into the parking lot after the meeting, a bit of self-doubt crept over me. I asked myself what if anything I had to offer that might make a difference to the club and the membership. As I pondered, I decided to share my thoughts with you.

Much like our hobby, GNARC is ripe with history and tradition. The club goes back for decades and like a cat with nine lives has on more than one occasion teetered from the brink of extinction only to see its membership roster and bank account wax and wane like the tides. With obvious pride our President likes to point out occasionally while scoping out his next unwitting victim of multiple ticket raffle sales, the club is presently in "good shape". What he means by that is that we have a large membership list and a few dollars in the bank.

Indeed, as one looks onto the landscape of amateur radio clubs, it's not hard to realize that GNARC is in a somewhat of an enviable position. Many amateur radio clubs just don't make it these days. They have too few members and even fewer dollars to stay afloat. I asked myself: What can be done to make sure that GNARC remains viable in the

future? One answer seemed obvious: We need more members which among other things, means more dollars for the club. It also means a lot more including continuity of our activities and the hobby. What isn't quite so obvious is where those members are going to come from or how we can get them. So are we doing all we can to get the word out about GNARC? What do we need to do to attract more new members?

I then thought about our membership and the incredible range and depth of interest and knowledge that each of our members bring to the club. We have em-com fanatics, contesters, rag-chewers, antenna buffs, repeater junkies, tech geeks, digital gurus, DX chasers, rovers, tube collectors, programmers, gadget makers and that only begins to scratch the surface of the range and interests of our members. We even have a cook or two. At no time do all these different talents come together better than at Field Day, our premiere yearly operating event. But I've heard some of you say that we should have more operating events. What more should we do, when and how? With all these wide-ranging interests, we share a lot in common not the least of which is a trust that is given by the FCC only to licensed amateurs, the right to properly use the amateur bands for communication only with other licensed amateurs. All of which brought me to consider the proper role of our club repeaters and how they can be better utilized for our membership and the ham world at-large.

Our mission is to cater to the interests of our members and to support and inspire those interests for the benefit of the club and the hobby. How should we do that? How can we make our meetings interesting and diverse enough want to make people attend and walk away having actually learned something new and interesting? How should we expand the scope of our activities? What should we be doing that hasn't been done or if it has been done that should be repeated?

So at this time I ask that you please accept an invitation to join me in finding some answers to these questions. Talk to me, email me, join me on the repeaters and please communicate with me any way you want but please make your voice known. Tell me what would make the club better, more interesting or more fun for you. Tell me how we can grow and make the hobby better. If you're happy with the club as it is tell me. If you're unhappy with the club tell me why. Oh and one more thing: after we've considered some of these issues together let's all put words into action and make GNARC the very best it can possibly be.

Thank you and 73,

Vlad G. Spitzer, W1ZP