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THE WECAGRAM



Newsletter of the

Westchester Emergency Communications Association, Inc.

Post Office Box 831

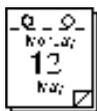
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Serving the Public through Amateur Radio and serving Amateurs since 1972

Volume 21, Issue 5 May 1997



Next Meeting

The next WECA meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, 1997 at the Westchester County Center in White Plains, beginning at 7:30 p.m. with a social half-hour followed by the main program at 8 p.m.

This month's program includes a presentation on ATV by Anthony Licata, N2NWZ.



And the Nominees Are:

Alan, N2YGK, gave the nominating committee's report to the membership at the April meeting. Here is the proposed slate of candidates:

[Gilfer Shortwave
Out of Business](#)

[Radio Amateur
Callbook Goes CD-
ROM Only](#)

[FCC Offers Beta-
Testing Access to
Ham Database](#)

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[Next Board Meeting](#)

President	Joe Brown, KB2NBN
Exec. VP	Richard Anderson, KB2MGM
	Dave Weiss, N2OGK
Counsel	Mike Weitzner, N2EJI
Secretary	Anthony Licata, N2NWZ
Treasurer	Andy Farber, N4OOX
Dir. at Large	Ron Devenuti, N2TJE
	Dick O'Brien, NJ2J
Education	Darlana Mayo, N2DB
Engineering	Bob Wilson, N2DVQ
Repeater Ops.	Dwight Smith, N2FMC
Social	Will Austen, N2UXJ
	Russ Stevenson, N2AMP

All nominations close at the May meeting.

An election committee was appointed at the April membership meeting consisting of Joe Bruno, WB2VVS (Chair), Bill Hertwig, N2QZB, and one person to be determined.

Elections will be held at the June membership meeting.

WECAFEST Photos



Inside this year's WECAFEST venue. More photos inside.

Photo: N2TFC

From the Editor

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, write for the WECAGRAM! This is *your* newsletter. It will flourish only if you support it. I am especially looking forward to campaign statements next month (hint, hint). If possible, submit early next month (I have a feeling I'm going to be very busy). And to the regular submitters, thank you very much for your support.

73,

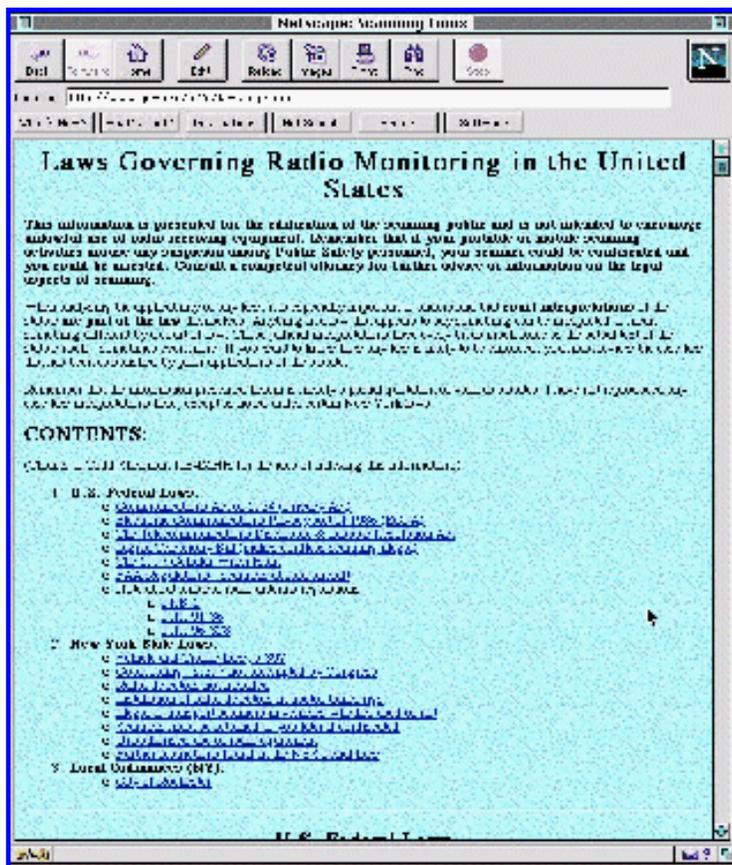
Radio in Your Car?

by **Fuat Baran, N2YGN**

In the past month, I've run into two separate ham newsletters (OMARC's *Harmonics* , YARC's *YARC Link*) that quoted New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law, Article 12, Section 397. This section prohibits the installation of radios capable of receiving signals on frequencies allocated for police use in motor vehicles. It also explicitly excludes ham gear operated by holders of a valid amateur radio operator's license from this prohibition. Figuring that the text of this law might be of interest to WECA members as well, I am quoting it here.

"S 397. Equipping motor vehicles with radio receiving sets capable of receiving signals on the frequencies allocated for police use. A person, not a police officer or peace officer, acting pursuant to his special duties, who equips a motor vehicle with a radio receiving set capable of receiving signals on the frequencies allocated for police use or knowingly uses a motor vehicle so equipped or who in any way knowingly interferes with the transmission of radio messages by the police without having first secured a permit so to do from the person authorized to issue such a permit by the local governing body or board of the city, town or village in which such person resides, or where such person resides outside of a city or village in a county having a county police department by the board of supervisors of such county, is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, or imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both. Nothing in this section contained shall be construed to apply to any person who holds a valid amateur radio operator's license issued by the Federal Communications Commission and who operates a duly licensed portable mobile transmitter and in connection therewith a receiver or receiving set on frequencies exclusively allocated by the Federal Communications Commission to duly licensed radio amateurs."

Rather than type in the above quote from the other newsletters I saw it in, I figured I would search the web for the actual text. While searching via AltaVista (see last month's Web Sites of the Month column), I ran into an interesting page (http://www.ggw.org/nf2g/laws_ny.shtml) that has an in-depth review of



radio monitoring legislation in the United States, as well as a link to the NYS Consolidated Laws search engine at the State Assembly's web site.

David Stark, NF2G, author of the page says, "this section provides for obtaining a mobile monitoring permit from the police, but the average citizen is not likely to be granted such a permit. They have been issued to newsgathering organizations and to companies that serve the public and can demonstrate a need for mobile monitoring.

"There has been a ruling in the Appellate Court of New York State with respect to Section 397. In *People v McGee* (1978) 97 Misc 2d 360, 411 NYS2d 514, the Court ruled that Section 397 was not preempted by Congress because it only restricted vehicular use of a particular kind of radio (police receiver) and did not affect licensed amateur radio operators. The Court held that the law's purpose was to prevent criminals from monitoring the police from their getaway cars."

P.S. I'm not a lawyer, don't play one on TV, and the above should not be construed to be legal advice of any sort.

SWL

by Bob Schore, KB2WQB

Reprinted with permission from the October 1996 issue of *Crystal Log*.

One of the less heralded side products of the Amateur Radio hobby is shortwave listening. When propagation is poor and little is heard on the amateur bands, international shortwave stations with their booming megawatts still come through, often registering S9+. All that is needed is an

HF amateur transceiver that also functions as a general receiver, and even a simple random wire antenna.

Unlike standard broadcast radio to which we are accustomed, international shortwave stations do not always adhere to the same frequency. They will move around to take advantage of the bands offering the best propagation on any day or hour. So, the frequencies mentioned below may or may not hold true by the time you read this. Also, the fact that you may be listening to a station one or more continents away, does not always mean their signal is that powerful. Some countries retransmit their signals from transmitters closer to our shores.

During the daytime, many stations can be heard between 15 MHz and 7 MHz, some in foreign languages. As the day progresses, the lower bands become more active and English is one of the most common languages used, with programs particularly addressed to United States listeners. The 40 meter band presents an interesting problem. In some parts of the world, this band is not amateur-exclusive, and amateurs looking for space to transmit compete with those more powerful shortwave stations.

During evening hours, I have heard the news and discussions from Radio Cologne (9.640), Radio Espana (9.540), Radio Nederlands (9.845), Radio Budapest (9.840), China (9.690), Cuba (9.820), BBC (9.915), Canada (9.535 and 9.755), Vietnam (7.250), Russia (also 7.250), and the Ukraine (7.150). As would be expected from the waltz and symphonic capital, Radio Austria has had good concert music from Vienna (9.655) in less than high fidelity conditions. The Voice of Israel has come through (7.465) during the afternoon.

While most of these stations are government sponsored and meant to offer their country's point of view to the rest of the world, I have heard little in the way of propaganda. They tend to offer straightforward news and show interest in maintaining good relations with the United States while presenting their own countries in a favorable light. They sometimes present news not heard on the regular media, harvest and agricultural forecasts for one, but just a few weeks ago I heard on two stations of a plane crash in the Nether

lands that did not make our news stations.

Even our own Voice of America (try 7.375, 7.405, or 13.740), gives a bland report of the news with a high degree of Americana folklore. However, it was through VOA that I heard concerns about a mosquito in Connecticut carrying equine virus, something I had missed from NewsRadio 88. Very intelligent news analysis from our point of view is presented on the Christian Science Monitor (7.535 or 9.430), sometimes rebroadcasting features from regular radio. However a group identifying itself with Texas patriots let me know that the government is poisoning our food supply (9.400), and offered an 800 number to order survival kits by credit card. If religious programming is your interest, try WWCN from Oklahoma (9.475) or WRNO (7.355). One frequency offers a weekly program on Amateur Radio, which I have yet to find. A program, "World of Radio," gave a guide to other SWL (7.425).

Finally, if what you really want is only the time and weather (make that propagation reports), try WWV at 2.5, 5.0, 10.0, 15.0, and 20.0. You can check their report against time in Canada with CHU at 7.335. Actually, I found programming each of these frequencies into memory, lets me readily know in general terms which bands are currently offering the most favorable conditions.

So, when DXing seems impossible, try some SWLing and see what you can hear.

73, Bob.

KE2BF, SK

It is with sorrow that we report that Tom McVey, KE2BF, passed away early Sunday morning, April 6, 1997. Tom was 86 years old. He was a long time WECA member and a daily check-in of the Southern District Net.



Southern District Net

Darlana Mayo, N2DB, net manager of the Southern District Net, reports March SDN stats as follows:

Sessions	31
Total checkins	525
Traffic brought to the net	145
Traffic passed on the net	123
Percent passed	85
Total time	687 minutes



Volunteers Assist During Massive Power Outages

by Alan Crosswell, N2YGK

The extremely heavy wet snow that fell during the early morning hours of Tuesday, April 1, 1997 caused extensive damage to trees and power lines throughout Westchester County and the lower Hudson Valley. Many highways and roads were blocked and electrical power was knocked out for 45,000 utility customers. As utility crews struggled to restore power to 15,000

customers, 30,000 more were still without power Tuesday evening with predictions that it would take until Friday for all power to be restored.

Volunteer amateur radio operators provided communications assistance to the Westchester County Office of Disaster and Emergency Services and the local American Red Cross chapter which had opened shelters at Camp Smith near Peekskill, Roosevelt Teen Center in Ossining, and Copper Beach Middle School in Yorktown Heights. Amateur communicators began work around 5:00 p.m. and stayed until they were released around 11:30 p.m. Hams who were on standby for shifts starting at midnight, and the next morning were thankfully able to stay in bed but remained ready to be called out again if necessary.

In addition to volunteering as communicators in support of served agencies, these hams and many others participated in National Weather Service SKYWARN local weather condition reporting "nets" during the storm and used their two-way mobile radios to report accidents and hazardous road conditions.

Special thanks to the following local hams who volunteered their time in support of county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Red Cross shelter operations:

Mike Aiello, N2HTT, of Croton (standby for 0000-0400)

Will Austen, N2UXJ, of Ossining (Roosevelt Teen Center)

Arte Booten, N2ZRC, of the Bronx (standby for 0400-0800)

Robert Kantor, N2TSE, of White Plains (EOC)

Anthony Licata, N2NWZ, of Yonkers (EOC)

Darlana Mayo, N2DB, of Mt. Vernon (ARC vehicle)

Charles Patterson, N2AXO, of Irvington (standby for 0000-0400)

Tom Raffaelli, WB2NHC, of Thornwood (ARC chapter headquarters)

Stan Rothman, WA2NRV, of White Plains (standby for 0900-1200)

Alessandro Sicilia, N2TWN, of Yonkers (Copper Beach Middle School)

Dwight P. Smith, N2FMC, of Chappaqua (Camp Smith)

Radio Shack Takes HTX-204 Dual-Band HT Off the Market

Reprinted with permission from the *ARRL Letter*, April 18, 1997.

Radio Shack notified its stores April 17 that it's immediately recalling unsold stocks of its new HTX-204 dual-band handheld transceiver because of what a source at Radio Shack headquarters called "a regulatory compliance issue" involving the transceiver. Radio Shack said it plans to take the HTX-204 off the market and has no immediate plans to offer another dual-band HT. The HTX-204 started showing up in the chain's 7000 retail stores about six weeks ago.

A Radio Shack official at the company's Ft Worth, Texas, headquarters said the company was concerned about the "potential for illegal use" of the HTX-204. He declined to be specific, but he did emphasize that the HTX-204 is perfectly legal for use on Amateur Radio frequencies.

Radio Shack expressed disappointment with the turn of events surrounding the HTX-204 and directed any questions to local Radio Shack retail stores.

April Meeting Notes

by **Anthony Licata, N2NWZ**

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 p.m. on April 14 by President Joe Brown, KB2NBN.

An election committee was appointed consisting of Joe Bruno, WB2VVS (Chair) and Bill Hertwig, N2QZB. One other member remains to be appointed.

Alan, N2YGK, gave the nominating committee report. (See article on nominations in this issue.)

The Willard Smith Public Service award was presented to Fran Lasorsa, N2OLU, and Alessandro Sicilia, N2TWN.

Exec. VP Dave, N2OGK, introduced Bill Henneberry, KN2X, who in turn introduced Lou Leonard, WA2UIJ. They described their experience visiting the ham station of Joseph Hoffman, W2DST. This station last operated on Dec. 7 1941, and hasn't been touched since. Lou gave a slide presentation of the equipment they found. All the equipment was home-brewed; most of it was made in the 1920's and 30's. All the equipment was in very good shape even after 56 years of not being touched. The equipment has been packed up and some of it is going to two museums: The Antique Wireless Museum in Providence, Rhode Island and the Bergen Amateur Radio Museum. Lou also showed headphone and spark gap equipment dating back to the early 1900's.

Mike, N2EJI, is this year's Field Day coordinator and wants people to get in touch with him about helping out.

There were 45 attendees at the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

March Board Meeting Minutes

by **Anthony Licata, N2NWZ**

In attendance were N2s NWZ, OGK, SF, QZB, FMC, TSE, TFC, TJE, DHH, KB2NBN, WA2NRV, WB2NHC, and WB2QJA.

The Meeting was called to order at 8:12 p.m. on March 24 by President Joe Brown, KB2NBN.

Joe thanked Tom, WB2NHC, for a job well done for WECAFEST.

Tom reported that while we had no official numbers yet, early counts indicate a WECAFEST attendance of about 1600 to 1700 people. A start time change was considered. Questions about the club table operation were raised. A motion that a director or officer of the club supervise the club table at all times for accounting, record keeping and financial actions was made by Dave, N2OGK, seconded by Sandy, N2SF. Motion passed.

Bill, N2QZB, reports that the Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA) wants to honor

WECA on its 25th anniversary at an official club event and that it is being looked into. Members of the board were invited to attend the next QCWA meeting on April 26.

Rich, WB2QJA, reports that he presented the Bill Knott Memorial Award to John Moody, K2ZM, at his home. An invitation has been extended to John to present him the award in front of the membership when he is able.

Sandy, N2SF, reports there will be a Skywarn training session on May 1 at the Rockland County fire training center.

Peter, N2TFC, reports that the WECA Operations Manual is now available on disk in PDF format. Peter was also thanked for the ID cards he made for WECAFEST.

Tom, WB2NHC, reports that he is now the Red Cross Communications Coordinator for the Westchester Chapter and District. Tom also reports that a donated computer from NYNEX will be used for the Info Line.

At the end of meeting, Anthony, N2NWZ, showed the newscast that reported on WECAFEST, and Peter, N2TFC, showed pictures he took with a digital camera.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

For Sale

Yaesu 1000D, Dual receive, filters, SN #080216.

Henry 2K-X console.

Triex LM470.

Tailtwister rotor.

KLM 40M dipole, KT-34A.

2 Alpha Delta 4-position switches.

Grandmaster Keyer.

Ameritron Remote Coax Switch (#2).

Daiwa power meter.

Astron RS-20A, RS-20M.

dumb terminal.

PK-88.

Icom 27-H, 28H, 228H, 02-AT.

Yaesu FT-411E (#2), FT-23R, FT-811.

Bencer and Miller Low pass Filters (#2).

Hal PCI-4000M amtor, rtty, & clover board.

IBM personal dictation adapters(#2) with software.

Call: Charles Starke, NX2T. 914-923-4185.

Free QST Back Issues

A whole slew of back issues of QST are available to the first person to cart them away. Contact Fran, N2OLU, if you want them.

WECAFEST Photos

Peter, N2TFC, brought a Konica Q-EZ digital camera to the Spring WECAFEST on March 23 and took the pictures featured in this issue. Additional pictures will be available on the WECA web site (<http://www.weca.org>).



Outside at the tailgate area



KB2JKJ manning the WECA table.



\$350 for N2OGK's son?



A cornerstone of WECAFEST: KJI

Electronics.

Willard Smith Awards

by Joe Brown, KB2NBN

The Westchester Emergency Communications Association's Willard Smith Memorial Public Service Award was presented to Fran Lasorsa, N2OLU, and Alessandro Sicilia, N2TWN, at the membership meeting held on April 14, 1997.

This award is presented in recognition of outstanding Public Service as an amateur radio operator as exemplified by Willard Smith, K2CFX, long- standing former Public Service Director of WECA.

11 Year Old New Ham

by Emily Maytan, AC2V

Eleven-year-old Nicole Mancuso, KC2BHV, earned her Technician license on April 7, 1997. Her proud parents are Karen, WD2AHI, and Ron Mancuso, KA2RAN. Karen (Maytan) was a WECA member for many years. Not only are Nicole's parents proud of her, this also goes for the happy grandparents Emily, AC2V, and Paul Maytan, AC2T. This makes three generations of hams in the family. Nicole is studying the code and hopes to upgrade soon.

Gilfer Shortwave Out of Business

Reprinted with permission from the *ARRL Letter*, April 4, 1997

Gilfer Shortwave of Park Ridge, New Jersey, is the latest casualty in the sagging radio hobby market, according to a reliable industry source. The company, which had been in business for more than four decades, had billed itself as "America's Premier SWL Center." Although primarily a retailer for the SWL and BCL, Gilfer also sold some Amateur Radio equipment, accessories and books.

Paul Lannuier, N2HIE, took over Gilfer a few years ago and served as Gilfer's president and technical director. He formerly worked for Japan Radio Corp., and Gilfer carried much of the JRC line. Lannuier has not been available for comment. Calls to Gilfer's telephones go unanswered, and the company's Web site is now dark.

Radio Amateur Callbook Goes CD-ROM Only

Reprinted with permission from the *ARRL Letter*, March 21, 1997

It's the end of an era for *The Radio Amateur Callbook*. Publisher Bob Hughes announced March 17 in a letter to Callbook distributors that the company is phasing out its telephone-book-size paper North American and international editions in favor of its CD-ROM product. The 1997 *Callbook* --the 75th edition--will be the last hard-copy version available. The letter cited "rising costs and increasing demand for electronic publishing" as the reasons for the company's decision to concentrate on the CD-ROM version, which includes worldwide listings. North American and international editions of the paper Callbook, a staple for years in many active ham shacks, sell for around \$40, while the CD-ROM sells for around \$50. The *Callbook* began publishing in 1920. *Radio Amateur Callbook* is produced by Watson-Guptill Publications.

The spring CD-ROM edition of the *Callbook* will be available at the Dayton Hamfest, Hughes told distributors.

According to Hughes' letter, the company has "a limited supply of the printed edition" and anticipates that demand will be great once the word gets out. The last printed version will carry a label indicating "Last Edition of the Callbook." (For orders, call 800-278-8477; e-mail 103424.2142@compuserve.com.)

FCC Offers Beta-Testing Access to Ham Database

Reprinted with permission from the *ARRL Letter* , April 11, 1997

For a limited time, hams and others will have real-time access to the FCC's amateur database under a beta-testing program begun this week. The FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau has made available to the public three of its database applications--at no charge--for approximately 30 days on a beta-test basis. Among them is the amateur application, which allows real-time query capability of the ham radio database. Users can enter queries based on name, call sign, ZIP Code, state, club name, license issuance or expiration date or date ranges, and the native country of an alien operator living in the US.

The other programs include the frequency search program for the 929 and 931 MHz databases and the database transaction downloads. The frequency search program does a radius search for a given latitude and longitude on 929-MHz or 931-MHz stations. The database transaction download allows users to download from among a choice of seven transactions for each WTB database. Various database tables are extracted into flat files. Documentation may be downloaded, and each day's data are overwritten every seven days. At the end of the beta-test period, a complete offload of the databases will be available on CD-ROM from ITS, the FCC's public access contractor (CD-ROMs are produced quarterly).

The three applications will be available from April 8 until May 12 at <http://gullfoss.fcc.gov/beta.htm> . Comments on the three applications go to betacomm@fcc.gov . After the beta-testing period, the

FCC will make the applications available for a charge of \$2.30/minute (the first two minutes of access will be free). [Via 900 number call. --Fuat] The FCC plans to add additional applications to its beta-testing program as they become available. To enroll as an official beta-tester and receive e-mail notifications about the program, send e-mail to khoutz@fcc.gov . For more information, call the FCC's Consumer Assistance Branch, 800-322-1117 or Technical Support, 202-414-1250.

W1RFI

Reprinted with permission from the *ARRL Letter* , April 4, 1997

Listen up for RFI: ARRL Lab Supervisor Ed Hare, the League's point man and in-house guru on issues dealing with radio frequency interference, recently took advantage of the vanity call sign program to obtain W1RFI. Under his former call sign, KA1CV, Ed has been well-known among the QRP community. He lives in Burlington, Connecticut.

Mark Your Calendars

by Robert Kantor, N2TSE, Public Service Director

For those of you who plan in advance, here are some dates for upcoming public service events that WECA will be participating in:

Sunday, June 8: American Diabetes Association Tour de Cure bike tour at SUNY Purchase.

Saturday, July 26: New York Philharmonic at Westchester Community College.

Note: The June 8 Burke Rehab race has been cancelled.

If you would like further information or would like to put your name on the volunteers list, give me a call on the 2m repeater, or call me at 914-949-4231.

Latest Call Signs

As of April 18, 1997, the following call signs have been allocated in the "2" call district:

Group A (Extra)	AB2DN
Group B (Advanced)	KG2KZ
Group C	(none left)
Group D (General/Tech/Novice)	KC2BKQ

Next Board Meeting

The next WECA board meeting date has not been determined yet. The usual fourth Monday is Memorial Day. Listen for announcements on the 147.060 repeater. Meetings are usually at 8 p.m. at the EOC (148 Martine Avenue) in White Plains, NY. Meetings are open to all WECA members.

May 1997

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	1	2	3 CQ MAJX QSO ARRL IntDX Ten Ten CW
4 YARC CQ MAJX QSO ARRL IntDX Ten Ten CW	5 Cinco de Mayo	6 ● NM	7	8	9	10 OR .NV QSO ARRL V/L 912.1296, 1504 MHz
11 Mother's Day OR .NV QSO ARRL V/L 912.1296, 1504 MHz	12 WJCA Meeting	13	14 ● PQ	15	16	17 Armed Forces Day ARRL V/L 50 MHz
18 ARRL V/L 50 MHz	19	20	21	22 ○ PM	23	24 CQ WW W/PX
25 CQ WW W/PX	26 Memorial Day (Observed)	27	28	29 ● PQ	30 Memorial Day	31