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# THE WECAGRAM



Newsletter of the

Westchester Emergency Communications Association, Inc.

Post Office Box 831

Sleepy Hollow, New York 10591-0831

WECA Information Hotline: 914-741-6606

Web site: <http://www.weca.org>

*Serving the Public through Amateur Radio and serving Amateurs since 1972*

**Volume 22, Issue 1 January 1998**



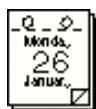
## Next Meeting

The next WECA meeting will be held on Monday, January 5, 1998 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. Note that this meeting is on the first Monday of the month, rather than our usual second Monday schedule.

This month's guest speaker is a noted author, teacher and lecturer on the subject of amateur radio, Mr. Gordon West, WB6NOA. Gordon has been a ham for over 30 years and holds an Extra Class license. He is well known in the communications field and holds the highest FCC commercial radio telephone license. He has also received the American Radio Relay League's "Instructor of the Year" award.

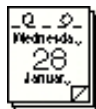
Gordon will be conducting an interactive presentation covering a variety of amateur radio topics.

Meetings are open to all--bring a friend! If you need directions, the WECA repeater is on 147.060 MHz, PL 114.8. The WECA information hotline is 914-741-6606.



## Next Board Meeting

The next WECA board meeting will be on Monday, January 26, at 8 p.m. at the EOC (148 Martine Avenue) in White Plains, NY. Meetings are open to all WECA members.



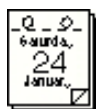
## Greenburgh Recognizes WECA

by **Bill Hertwig, N2QZB**

Paul Feiner, Town Supervisor, Town of Greenburgh, would like to officially recognize WECA and its members for their community service efforts at the January 28, 1998 Greenburgh Town Board meeting, 7:15 p.m. at Greenburgh Town Hall, at the intersection of Tarrytown Road (RT 119) and Knollwood Road.

All WECA members are invited to attend; in particular, Mr. Feiner would like to personally give a certificate of appreciation to each WECA member who lives in Greenburgh (Ardsley, Hartsdale, Irvington, Tarrytown, Sleepy Hollow, Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, Edgemont, Greenburgh, and partial areas of Scarsdale and White Plains, which are part of Greenburgh). I will provide Mr. Feiner with a list of members that live in Greenburgh with zip codes: 10591, 10523, 10603, 10533, 10522, 10706, 10530, 10535 ( except for P.O. Boxes).

In addition, all WECA Board Members will receive a certificate of appreciation from Mr. Feiner. Please come to Greenburgh Town Hall and be recognized for your participation in WECA.



## WECAFEST Mailing Party

The WECAFEST mailing party will be held on Saturday, January 24 at 10 a.m. at the Red Cross Building in White Plains (106 N. Broadway). To volunteer, please call Tom, WB2NHC, at 914-769-1486

## From the Editor

I hope you all had a great holiday season and I wish you all a Happy New Year.

This month, District Emergency Coordinator Joe Bruno, WB2VVS, writes about the ARES activation for communications support at the Dobbs Ferry fire that occurred on December 15.

I hope more of you will choose to submit articles to the *WECAGRAM* . Without your input, this newsletter can't be produced.

73,

## Club Project

by Stan Rothman, WA2NRV

We will be sending our order in for the "CW keyer w/ memory" club project after the January membership meeting.

I have been in contact with the designers of this unit and we may be upgrading to their new version, the TiCK-2B (Tiny CMOS Keyer 2B), at the same cost if we have enough members participating in the club project. The upgrade will make it easier to send the memory message with a separate push button and can be used for a beacon message.

The original unit was written up in the October issue of *QST* and costs \$25.00 per kit. This includes the programmed chip and all parts except a case. This is because some hams install it directly into their rigs. It is really tiny.

If you're interested, you can send a check, made out to WECA, to Stan, WA2NRV, or to the WECA post office box before the January meeting. The meeting will be the cutoff date. Construction will be on a Sunday in middle to late January.

## Public Service

by Robert Kantor, N2TSE

I'd like to thank and recognize everyone who participated in recent public service events.

### Turkey Trot

N2s TSE, SF, YYL, OBY, QZB, MEF, INJ, AMP, OLU, TWN, TFC, SBN, DVQ; KB2s LLV, SPC, NBN, WTN; WB2s LNB, NHC; W2RWR; WA2NRV; K4ZGE; W2/DL9GAV; KC2s BFZ, ARX, and CPU.

Special thanks to Bob, N2DVQ, for bringing the remote repeater package and to Tom, WB2NHC, for bringing the Red Cross van.

### Blythedale

N2s TSE, QZB, OBY, SKP, TFC, MEF, TJE, NQY, YGK; KG2NB; WB2NHC; KB2s JKC, WTN (+wife); KC2s BFW (+wife), BFX; and K2RRR (Santa).

Forty-six presents (mostly sweatshirts, walkmen, remote control cars, and dolls--batteries included where appropriate) were handed out to the children.



## Dobbs Ferry Fire

by Joe Bruno, WB2VVS

During WECA's Blythedale event, Tom, WB2NHC, got a call from the Red Cross asking ARES to provide them with communications assistance at a fire in Mt. Vernon. After conferring with Alan, N2YGK, Tom phoned to ask me to start making a few calls to get volunteers for the Red Cross headquarters in White Plains, and for the fire scene. People were to "check in" on the 440 machine, due to the event on the 2-meter repeater.

After reaching a lot of answering machines, getting some no answers, and several people who were unable to respond, I got through to Fran, N2OLU, who volunteered, and also volunteered to help make some phone calls. I really appreciated the assistance!

Adam, N2DHH, stepped in and started acting as Net Control while driving to the staging area. He did an outstanding job while driving!

The fire scene turned out to be in Dobbs Ferry. (We will make sure to have better communications during that first phone call in the future!) At almost the same time as the Blythedale event ended, we had enough volunteers for the slightly expanded amount needed by then. We also had "extra volunteers" now freed up. Fortunately, they weren't all needed. We were also told of a location to use as a staging area. Dwight, N2FMC, drove down the Red Cross communications van, and met with the assigned people at the staging area. Bob, N2DVQ, brought over the portable remote package, allowing HT communications from inside the Dobbs Ferry town hall, which was where the Red Cross had set up.

The hams who helped that evening stayed till about 2 in the morning! By the way, a couple of hams who were assigned near the fire found that storing their clothes in their bedrooms caused their spouses to be unhappy the next day. I suggested storing them next to cold cuts, to get smoked meats. <chuckle>

Things started up again at 8 a.m. the next day, and more volunteers were rounded up. We provided coverage until about 5:30 p.m. Many of the volunteers were seasoned public service volunteers, thus needing little direction. During some of the slow times, we brainstormed about what we'd like to see in the van. It's a little easier to visualize what's useful when you see the vehicle in use like this.

By the way, as in all disasters, those who just show up unassigned often cause more trouble by congesting roads, etc. Being available for assignment, with supplies ready to go but staying home near the telephone, is usually more of a help than just showing up.

Offering to help with the calls is also a great way to assist. There were numerous people throughout the two days who called and asked if they could help. They also played a key role in emergency

preparedness. As the hams didn't know what requirements there would be in the future, if any, those who volunteered were just told to monitor later on to see if there was a call for additional assistance. Incidentally, if you didn't get a call, it was because there was not a need for a large number of hams. Initial calls went to the Mt. Vernon and White Plains areas only, then to the Dobbs Ferry area. One of our members, Bob, N2GDY, is a volunteer fireman in Dobbs Ferry, and gave us some very up to date information. You may recognize him as the guy who drives the bucket truck to WECA's Field Day. It was nice to be able to return a favor to Dobbs Ferry.

Another thing to be aware of in disasters: You may be assigned to a post where you do nothing for long periods of time. I find it useful to bring a pad and paper to jot down notes for future ideas, and maybe bring along a QST to read. If you're not busy, it doesn't mean you are not helping. Having someone at an assigned post makes someone feel better about their emergency preparedness, should things take an unexpected turn for the worse. Fortunately, in this case, things worked out fairly well.

In most emergency situations, people make some blunders. I strongly suggest that we act like successful baseball teams, and rather than deride those who err, we should come together as a team and encourage each other to do the best we can. Alan, N2YGK, has solicited feedback about the event. If you have any suggestions, email them to him, and he will advise the rest of us.

On a seasonal note, when I went into the town hall to speak with Russ, N2AMP, I saw several people offering clothes and food to any needy victims. It was touching to hear the offers of assistance from young and old alike! (Not that we weren't assisting too, but it warmed my heart to see and hear this from the non-hams too.)

Thanks to N2s AMP, AXO, DHH, DVQ, FMC, GDY, MEF, NWZ, OBY, OLU, TJE, TSE, TWN, YGK; W2RWR; WB2s BTJ, NHC, and VVS.



## Southern District Net

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

Sessions 30  
Total checkins 393  
Traffic brought to the net 98  
Traffic passed on the net 91  
Percent passed 93

Total time 467 minutes

## Latest Call Signs

As of December 19, 1997, the following call signs have been allocated in the "2" call district:

Group A (Extra) AB2EP  
Group B (Advanced) KG2NI  
Group C (none left)

Group D (General/Tech/Novice) KC2CVE

# January 1998

| Sunday   | Monday   | Tuesday | Wednesday  | Thursday   | Friday  | Saturday                                       |
|--|--|---------|--|--|---|--|
| 28   | 29   | 30      | 31   | 1<br>ARRL<br>Straight Key<br>Night<br>New Year's Day | 2   | 3<br><br>ARRL RTTY                             |
| 4<br>YARC<br>VE Session<br>ARRL RTTY           | 5 ● FQ<br><br>WECA<br>Meeting                                | 6       | 7  | 8  | 9<br><br>Japan Intl.<br>DX<br>N. Amer.<br>QSO | 10<br><br>Japan Intl.<br>DX<br>N. Amer.<br>QSO |
| 11<br><br>Japan Intl.<br>DX<br>N. Amer.<br>QSO | 12 ○ FM  | 13      | 14   | 15<br><br>MLK Jr.'s<br>Birthday                      | 16  | 17<br><br>ARRL<br>VHF SS                       |
| 18<br><br>ARRL<br>VHF SS                       | 19 ARRL<br>VHF SS<br><br>MLK Jr.'s<br>Birthday<br>(Observed) | 20 ● LQ | 21   | 22   | 23  | 24<br><br>WECAFEST<br>Mailing<br>Party         |
| 25   | 26<br><br>WECA<br>Board<br>Meeting                           | 27      | 28 ● NM<br><br>Greenburgh<br>Town Board<br>Meeting | 29   | 30  | 31<br><br>YL Intl. SSB<br>QSO                  |

## Happy New Year!