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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 11 November 1998**

## Next Meeting

The next WECA meeting will be on Monday, November 9th, 1998 at the Westchester County Center in White Plains, beginning at 7:30pm with a social half hour followed by the main presentation at 8pm.

This months speaker is Bill Continelli W2XOY, who will discuss his series called the "wayback reports" about radio's role in history.

## Westchester County License Exam Sessions

NOV. 1 9am YARC

NOV. 17 7:30pm W5YI

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DEC. 6 9am YARC  
DEC. 10 7pm WECA

WECA

2nd Thursday every other month starting February 12, 1998. Emergency Operations Center (Sub Basement) Westchester County Office Building 148 Martine Ave., White Plains, N.Y. Contact: Sandy Fried N2SF - (914) 285-3029

YARC

First Sunday each month at Yonkers 1st precinct on Grassy Sprain Road between Jackson Ave. and Tuckahoe Rd. Yonkers, N.Y. Contact: Emily AC2V (914) 237-5589 or Dan AA2HX (914) 667-0587

Call in 146.865

W5YI

3rd Tuesday every other Month Starting with January 20, 7:30 pm Pelham Doronco Town House 20 5th Avenue, Pelham, N.Y. Contact: Mike W2MAC (914) 738-5775 or Dan AA2HX (914) 667-0587

Call in 145.495

The ARRL/VEC maintains a list of exams scheduled nationwide.

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## From the Editor

I would like to start by thanking my predisesor Fuat Baran N2YGN for the fantastic job he has done over the last two years as editor. If it were not for his well thought out newsletter, I wouldn't have been able to create

this one as quickly as I did.

I would also like to thank the membership for there words of support and encoragement and I look forward to being able to serve as editor.

I hope to start a regular colum of letter to the editor. I would hope that the membership would be intrested in expressing there views or what ever concerns they might have about Amauter Radio today.

With that, its on to the news...

Your Actting Editor, Will N2UXJ

## **Upcoming Public Service Events**

### **by Robert Kantor, N2TSE**

Mark your calenders for these fall and winter events:

Sunday, November 22, 9 a.m.

Mamaroneck Turkey Trot at Harbor Island Park. Contact Robert Kantor, N2TSE, 949-4231, to sign up.

Wednesday, December 16

Santa comes to Blythedale Children's Hospital by radio.

## **Soldering Class**

### **by Bob Wilson, N2DVQ**

A class on basic soldering techniques will be held on Sunday Novmber 15th at 1pm. The class will be at the EOC. A soldering iron(pencil type) and needle-nose pliers are all that you will need. Bob will provide cardboard, power strips and solder. Hope to see you all there.

## **WECA Meetings**

### **September Board Meeting Minutes**

### **By Kenneth F. Gross, N2OBY**

9/28/98 at 8:14 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Joe Brown, KB2NBN

#### Committee and Directors Reports

Digital Modes - Rich Benda, WB2QJA: Began by thanking Bob, N2DVQ; Dwight, N2FMC and Adam, N2DHH, for their help with emergency repairs to the facilities at the old site.

WECA Digital Modes are now running the FlexNet network operating system. Operating instructions will be distributed at the next General Membership Meeting.

Engineering - Bob Wilson, N2DVQ: stated that he's completed the installation of equipment at the old site.

Next on the Engineering agenda is tower maintenance on a site shared with another group.

Membership - Peter Johnson, N2TFC: Peter discussed the results of the questionnaire on the membership renewal forms. These ranged from critical to high praise.

Also discussed was Peter's progress on updating the WECA Operations Manual. He hopes to have the project completed by December.

Public Relations - Stan Rothman, WA2NRV: Began by soliciting requests for ideas regarding a possible club project. Bob Wilson, N2DVQ, announced that he would teach a class on basic soldering techniques. (See page 2)

Public Service - Robert Kantor, N2TSE: Reported on the MS Bike Tour held that weekend in the area around Woodstock, NY. A good time was had by all that participated.

Robert announced upcoming events (see page 2)

#### Announcements

Stan, WA2NRV, mentioned the need for more club members to act as "elmers" for new hams who have joined the club. Many of the comments on the latest membership renewals expressed that sentiment.

Joe, KB2NBN, suggested that it's time for Bob, N2DVQ, to give his "This Old Repeater" presentation again.

9:40 p.m. - Motion to adjourn by Andy, N4OOX. 2nd by Joe, KB2NBN.

## October Meeting Minutes

## **By Kenneth F. Gross, N2OBY**

8:12 p.m. - Meeting called to order by Joe Brown, KB2NBN

George Manning, K2RRR: Announced that this year's visit by WECA (as Santa's helpers) will take place on Wednesday, 12/16. This will be the 18th year that WECA has helped George brighten the holiday season for the approx. 60 children at Blythedale who undergo long-term therapy for severe diseases and injuries. Members should soon be expecting a letter from George with details

Vice-President - Dave Weiss, N2OGK, introduced this evenings guest speaker Steve Mendelsohn, W2ML Communications Director for the NYC Marathon.

Steve's topic was the NYC marathon and ARRL issues. Highlights include: that there will be 32,000 runners this year taking part, 12,000 volunteers; 2,500 city workers and 428 hams will support the event. The marathon organizers specifically designate amateur radio as their primary means of communication.

Steve also solicited comments from the membership regarding the ARRL's proposed license restructuring.

After the presentation, Digital Modes - Rich Benda, WB2QJA: Announced that effective 10/24, the WECA digital nodes will join the Huntington, LI and Northern NJ nodes in switching to the FLEXNET network operating system.

### **Announcements**

Tom, WB2NHC, described needed repairs to both of the communications vans. Any ideas or contributions towards the repairs would be appreciated.

9:47 p.m. - Motion to adjourn by Ken, N2OBY. 2nd by Dave, N2OGK.

## **A Big Thank You!!!**

## **By Brenda Lee (N2TTO)**

On behalf of Ian Varley (N2XUB) and his family, a big thank you from the

bottom of their hearts to all the Amateur Radio Operators who donated money toward the Ian Varley Fund. On October 17th, Zimba Ian's new disabilities dog will be arriving at his home in Hyde Park NY. Ian is very eager to meet Zimba and Zimba's trainer who will be teaching Ian over 20 commands that Zimba has already learned to help Ian cope with his epilepsy.

Ian is already looking forward to doing Pumpkin Patrol for Dutchess County at the end of the month and rejoining his fellow club members at other public services events in the future.

Thank you all for your support,  
Brenda Lee (N2TTO)

## **FOOD/FUND DRIVE AT MT BEACON HAMFEST**

**By Joe Antonelli, N2ZRI**

### **From The Hudson Loop**

The Mount Beacon Amateur Radio Club will hold its next hamfest on Sunday, November 22. And once again, Kevin Barry, KB2WGC, and Brenda Lee Spagna, N2TTO, will be at the parking lot entrance to accept donations of canned food or money for the Mount Beacon Amateur Radio Club Food Drive. All food and money collected will be donated to the Fishkill Food Pantry for distribution to needy persons in neighboring towns, villages, and counties. At the last hamfest, 130 items of food and \$45.00 were collected and gratefully accepted by the Fishkill Food Pantry.

With the hamfest taking place one week before Thanksgiving Day, we have an opportunity to give added meaning to those words of thanks most of us offer before our holiday dinner, knowing that we have shared our blessings with others and helped to place food on the tables of those far less fortunate. Please reach into your hearts and remember to bring a few cans of food with you to the Mount Beacon Hamfest on Sunday, November 22.

-- submitted by Brenda Lee Spagna, N2TTO

## **LAMINATE IT!**

## by Robert Kantor, N2TSE

I am once again reviving the lamination project. If you would like to have a copy of your wallet size FCC license, or anything else that measures a maximum of 2.25" by 3.375" laminated for 50 cents per card, please bring it to me at a membership meeting and I'll return the laminated card to you at the next meeting. I also have wallet size WECA Repeater Emergency Access Code cards available at the meetings. Advance payment and exact change please...

## Busy Weekend of Public Service

### Jamboree at Croton Point Park

## By Robert Kantor N2TSE

On Saturday October 17th, the Cub scouts had their annual Jamboree at Croton Point Park, Croton on Hudson. WECA was there with the Red Cross van. Two stations were set up. One out side running 20 meters. And one inside operating on 2 meters. Hundreds of scouts came to the station and with the help of WECA members N2TSE (2 meters), WB2NHC (20 meters), and, K2ZVI (code) made contact with many stations near and far. Helping with the set up was; N2-AXO, GGY, NWZ, KC2COR, and WB2BTJ. Stations visiting were; N2-NQY, AMP, TJE, DVQ & son, WB2IAE & son, and other hams. There was as much intrest by the visiting parents as there was by the scouts. Thanks to all the stations that checked in, and any others who where involved.



# MS Bike Tour

**By Robert Kantor N2TSE**

The Great TZ bike tour for Multiple Sclerosis was held for the first time this year, on October 18th. The starting point for 20 mile and the 50 mile was at Kraft Foods in Tarrytown. With both courses heading west over the Tappan Zee Bridge, and North through Rockland county to the first rest stop. That was the turn around for the 20 mile leg. The 50 mile continued North to the Bear Mountain Bridge and East through the winding road with hair pin turns called Goat trail. And South through Westchester county for the return trip to Tarrytown.

WECA was there in force for this event. WECA members maned; Tappan Zee Bridge headquarters, Bear Montian Bridge headquarters, all municipalities along the route, NY State Police 20 mile tail vehical, 2 trucks, 2 buses, shadows for 6 people, and three rest stops.

WECA utilized Simplex, WECA repeter and Rocklands repeter for this event. The coverage was good with no dead spots reported. WECA thanks all particapting stations; N2-TSE, YGK, YYL, AMP, TJE, MEF, OKD, KC2-ARX, BFX, BFW, CLZ, KA2-BRH, KCR, K2BTP, WA2QEH, W2RWR, WB2NHC.

Special thanks goes to; N2FMC, N2DHH, and N2TWN for helping the net with technical problems. WECA also thanks N2LKV for the use of the Rockland repeter. Thanks also goes to Joe Rende and Tom Gizzo of the Westchester EOC for use of the communications van.



**WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY  
ARES/RACES**



# 1998 ARRL SIMULATED EMERGENCY TEST

**By Alan Crosswell, N2YGK**

(Editors Note: This is part three of a three part document. The first two parts contain background on what a SET drill is about and ARES/RACES training. I will print those parts in the next WECAGRAM. I printed part three while it is still fresh in our minds)

## **The Local Drill**

This year's local drill was driven primarily by the Dutchess/Putnam SET drill. As such we are indebted to LLOYD Frink, Dutchess County Emergency Coordinator, and Mel Penner, Putnam County EC. Westchester ARES/RACES acted solely in a supporting role, responding to drill stimuli from Dutchess/Putnam. The Westchester portion of the drill started Thursday night with an "all hands" callout using the WECA 147.06 MHz repeater, Motorola Spirit dual-tone pagers that monitor that repeater, and a telephone callup tree. During the callup, members were asked to volunteer for one of four four-hour shifts to take place Saturday and Sunday, with the majority of the activity anticipated for Saturday morning. About eighteen people made themselves available for one of the shifts. For the first shift on Saturday, communicators were dispatched to six hospitals. Two operators acted as net control stations, two made contact on 80 meter HF (3.9 MHz), and one made a digital radio teletype (RTTY) contact on 10 meters (28 MHz). Traffic was passed between the hospitals and the Castle Point VA hospital, location of the regional NDMS Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The traffic consisted of bed availability inquiries and simulated "patient enroute" notifications and confirmation of their arrival. The remaining shifts consisted primarily of operators checking in to various National Traffic System nets, including New York Public Operations (NYPON), New York Phone (NYP), New York State Phone Traffic and Emergency (NYSPTEN), New York State CW (NYS), and Second Region (2RN). Traffic from the Dutchess American Red Cross Chapter was received, relayed, and replied to by the Westchester Chapter.

## **Participating Organizations**

The Office of Disaster and Emergency Services coordinated notification of participating hospitals of the drill. The following hospitals graciously hosted our communicators and in most cases had staff available to participate in the drill by responding to simulated traffic originated from

the NDMS Emergency Operations Center at Castle Point: Hudson Valley Hospital Center, Peekskill Lawrence Hospital, Bronxville Northern Westchester Hospital Center, Mt. Kisco Phelps Memorial Hospital Center, Sleepy Hollow Saint Joseph's Medical Center, Yonkers Sound Shore Medical Center, New Rochelle The American Red Cross Westchester County Chapter provided the tower truck and accepted simulated traffic request-ing supplies from Dutchess. This request caused use of Red Cross emergency communications callup list since the traffic arrived outside of normal business hours. Had we been able to recruit more volunteers, we would have dispatched them to the other dozen Westchester hospitals.

### **What Went Wrong**

#### **Call-up List**

The call-up list had been recently updated and had only a small number of errors. One member reported not having received the latest list in the mail.

#### **NDMS Terminology**

Several of the hospital staff were not familiar with the NDMS two-letter codes used to describe the nature of the simulated patients's "GPMRC Categories" such as MM (Medicine) and SO (Orthopedic), but this information was available to the net control operator who translated as needed. A sample piece of NDMS patient tracking traffic follows: traffic for Sound Shore: Patient 32824 category MM priority green enroute via ground transport 1400Z. Hospital operating position locations All but one of the six hospitals visited had pre-installed amateur antennas as part of a Northern Metropolitan Hospital Association (NORMET) program, the "Hudson Valley Disaster Communications Network." There are no pre-installed radios attached to the antennas; they are to be connected to by amateur operators bringing their own equipment. Some hospitals had the locations of the feed lines clearly marked, while others were difficult to find. Several were not labeled. Much of the documentation of the equipment locations is in a draft ARES/RACES reference manual that has not yet been completed. After some searching, all the antenna lines were found and worked well.

### **What Went Right**

#### **Call-up List**

Members were generally comfortable with the phone tree procedure and it is believed that very few members missed being notified.

#### **Radios Worked**

The personal radio systems brought to the hospitals by ARES/RACES operators all worked well. Everybody remembered to bring the necessary adaptors (if needed) for the PL-259 antenna line plugs. Handheld radios used in urban settings such as Yonkers experienced severe "intermod" interference from other radio services such as paging.

The rooftop antennas and tower truck enabled several of the hospitals to communicate directly with a temporary and permanent Dutchess County repeaters. However, since not all hospitals were able to make contact with Castle Point in this manner, a Dutchess ARES operator was assigned as liaison to the Westchester repeater. We also confirmed that HF communication from a home station in Westchester to Castle Point was possible.

### **Lessons Learned**

Some of the lessons learned this year include:

#### **Intermod Filters**

Since most hospitals have a forest of radio antennas on the roof, interference is a concern that has been demonstrated especially in White Plains and Yonkers. Recommendations for affected hospitals to install filters in the antenna lines should be developed.

#### **NCS Preparedness**

The Net Control Station needs to be prepared with a set of tools including up to date roster, reference materials such as maps, the ARES/RACES reference manual, NDMS terminology and so on. Key information identified such as the NDMS information will be added to the reference manual.

#### **Getting Volunteers**

Out of over 100 members, 36 responded to the callup and six were available for field operations. Experience from past actual events shows that perhaps 20 people will turn out for a "real" emergency. These numbers are low and we need to explore ways to get more people involved.

#### **Collateral Benefits**

There are several collateral benefits to running a SET drill each year:

#### **Roster Updates**

The SET deadline forced me to get out a new roster. The previous one was six months old. The telephone callup turned up half a dozen corrections.

#### **Facilities Database Updates**

A facilities information database has started growing to document the locations and characteristics of the hospital antenna and operating positions. The SET deadline helps push along the process a little more each year. Field experience at the hospitals turns up changes that have been made and documentation corrections that are needed.

#### **Inspection of Hospitals**

The drill afforded us the opportunity to inspect the hospital installations and confirm that they are still functional. In addition, we discovered that one installation had been relocated and that some damage to the feedline had occurred during the move.

#### **Recruiting New ARES/RACES Members**

"Talking up" the forthcoming drill resulted in several new applications for ARES/RACES membership, both from new licensees and old-timers.

### **Acknowledgments**

I wish to thank the following Amateurs for volunteering their time and skills to make this year's SET a success. I would especially like to thank RACES RO and DEC Joe Bruno, WB2VVS; AECs Adam Epstein, N2DHH; Anthony Licata, N2NWZ; Tom Raffaelli, WB2NHC; and Dwight Smith, N2FMC.

Thanks also to ODES staff members Sandy Fried, N2SF; Ray Albanese, N2FXU; and Liam Murphy, Director, for helping plan this drill. James Burke of Consolidated Edison provided several suggestions for the storm scenario that were very useful. If you participated in the drill and do not see your name below, please accept my apologies and let me know so I can set the record straight.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Callsign</b>	<b>Residence</b>	<b>On-air Activities Participated In</b>
William Austen	N2UXJ	Ossining callup, NCS	
Hilmar Braun	N2XRC	Yorktown Hts	callup
Joe Bruno	WB2VVS	Pleasantville	N. Westchester hospital
Daniel Calabrese	AA2HX	Mt. Vernon	callup
Alan Crosswell	N2YGK	Briarcliff Manor	NCS, SET/NTS HF
Shirley Dahlgren	N2SKP	Buchanan	callup
Ron Devenuti	N2TJE	Scarsdale	callup, Sound Shore hospital
Michael DiFabio	N2YYL	Cortlandt Manor	callup, shifts 3/4
Robert Eber	N2KIM	Chappaqua	callup
Marc Eidelberg	WR2I	Ossining	callup
Adam Epstein	N2DHH	Ardsley	callup, Phelps hospital
Andy Farber	N4OOX	Tarrytown	callup
William Hertwig	N2QZB	Yonkers	callup
Steve Hunt	N2IYR	Hastings	callup, shift 2
Robert Kantor	N2TSE	White Plains	callup, St. Joseph's hospital
Glen Lalli	N2INJ	White Plains	callup
Anthony Licata	N2NWZ	Yonkers	callup
Leonard Levin	N2KQP	Scarsdale	callup
Frank Lauri	KD2IX	Carmel	shift 4
Joseph Mancini	N2GCZ	Hawthorne	callup

Peter Mann	N2OKJ	Yonkers	callup, Lawrence hospital
Peter Marrero	W2XMT	Eastchester	callup
Darlana Mayo	N2DB	Mt. Vernon	callup, SET/NTS HF
Paul Novotny	N2XKA	Mahopac	callup
Philip Petrus	W2RWR	White Plains	callup
Ronald Porcelli	KC2BQM	Millwood	callup, SET/NTS HF
Tom Raffaelli	WB2NHC	Thornwood	callup, shifts 3/4
Daniel Reilly, Jr.	N2OR	Ossining	callup
Stan Rothman	WA2NRV	White Plains	callup, shifts 2/3
Charles Salvilla	KB2LLV	Yonkers	callup
Alessandro Sicilia	N2TWN	Yonkers	callup, shifts 3/4
Eugene Skopal	AE2F	Ossining	HF digital
Dwight Smith	N2FMC	Chappaqua	callup, Hudson Valley hospital (w/tower truck)
Allan Sniffen	WB2IXR	Yorktown Hts	callup
David Weiss	N2OGK	White Plains	callup, shift 4
Bob Wilson	N2DVQ	Yorktown Hts	callup
Sarah Wilson	N2EYX	Yorktown Hts	callup

**Key**

**callup** Checked into and participated in group callup net, including making/receiving phone calls.

**shifts** Shift 1: Saturday 9am-1pm, 2: 1pm-5pm 3: Sunday 9am-1pm, 4: 1pm-5pm

**hospital** Operated from hospital RACES communications post. tower

**truck** Westchester Emergency Communications Association/American Red Cross field communications truck ("Engineering").

**HF** Liaison from Local Drill to/from section-wide, National Traffic System (NTS), and other SET activities.

**NCS** Net Control Station.

**WECA upcoming events...**

Sunday, November 1  
NYC Marathon

Monday, November 9, 7:30 p.m.  
Membership meeting.

Sunday, November 15  
Soldering class at EOC.

Sunday, November 22, 9 a.m.  
Mamaroneck Turkey Trot at Harbor Island Park.

Monday, November 23, 8:00 p.m.  
Board meeting.

Monday, December 14, 7:30 p.m.  
Membership meeting.

Wednesday, December 16  
Santa comes to Blythedale Children's Hospital

Monday, December 28, 8:00 p.m.  
Board meeting.



## **Southern District Net**

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

Check-ins 333  
Traffic Listed 75  
Traffic Passed 70  
Total time 430minutes  
Sessions 30