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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 12 December 1998

WECA Field day Stats!!!

Good Job everyone.

We are 5th out of 139 in 4A.

First in ENY!

(info found by N2DVQ on the [ARRL web page](#))

Mamaroneck Turkey Trot

By Robert Kantor, N2TSE

The annual Turkey trot was run under a cloudless sky. The event consisted of adults running the main race and the young "Gobblers" running a much shorter route. WECA was there manning a dozen posts along the route, as well as the start finish line and shadows, PD, vehicle, among others.

Helping out with this event were: N2OLU, QZB, MEF, OBY, WQG, SF, TWN, UXJ, NAA, AB2BX, K2ZVI, K4ZGE, KA1TKT, KB2SPC, LLV, WAR, WA2NRV, WB2NHC, LNB. Thanks to all the participants.



8th Annual N2OLU Celebrity Ham Roast.

From the Editor

November was a busy month for members of WECA. The beginning of the month brought the New York City Marathon, and ended with another run, the annual Turkey trot. WECA members were out in force for these and other events. I think a big WECA thanks should be going to all members of this club for the hard work and Amateur professionalism that is brought to each and every endeavor.

With December brings the holidays and I just want to wish you and your families Happy Holidays. And while people are thinking about the Holiday season, don't forget the kids at Blythedale.

With that, its on to the news...
Your Acting Editor, Will N2UXJ

Pumpkin Patrol

submitted by Stan Rothman, WA2NRV

Members of the Westchester Emergency Communication Association participated on "Pumpkin Patrol" assisting the State Police in maintaining security on bridges over the NYS Thruway and I-287. There were no Halloween related problems in the areas covered by the mobile units with WECA members. For safety reasons, each vehicle had a minimum of two hams per vehicle.

Upcoming Public Service Events

by Robert Kantor, N2TSE

The last public service event for the year is the annual "Santa comes to Blythedale Children's Hospital" on Wednesday, December 16th. Sign up for this event and be an elf for a day. If you want to bring some joy to a child's heart this is the event for you.

To volunteer please call me at home at 914-949-4231.

October Board Meeting

By Kenneth F. Gross, N2OBY

Oct. 26 1998 In attendance N2NWZ, SF, GGY, QZB, TFC, EJI, FMC, TJE, DHH, DVQ, TSE, UXJ, WB2QJA, NHC, VVS, KB2NBN, KC2COR, WA2NRV.

Meeting called at 8:08 by President Joe Brown, KB2NBN

Taking Minutes of meeting for Secretary Anthony N2NWZ

Motions were made to appoint and have a special election for Will N2UXJ to become Newsletter editor

Bob N2DVQ reports a new tower has been put up for the North West receive site.

Joe WB2VVS reports having Pumpkin Patrol on Oct 30. People who are participating get on radio to give out assignments.

Meeting Adjourned 10:12 PM.

November Meeting Minutes

By Kenneth F. Gross, N2OBY

8:11 p.m. - Meeting called to order by Joe Brown, KB2NBN

Charlie Savilla, KB2LLV: Began the meeting by presenting this month's participation awards.

1st Year: K2BTP, KC2BUV, N2OKD, WA2QEH

2nd Year: KC2AHS, N2AXO, KC2BFW, KC2BFX, KA2BRH, KC2CLZ, KC2COR, K2CSS, N2GGY, KA2KCR

3rd Year: KC2ARX

4th Year: N2EJI, N2OBY

5th Year: N2YYL

President - Joe Brown, KB2NBN: Announced the appointment of Will Austen, N2UXJ, as acting WECAGRAM Editor by the Executive Board at it's October meeting. A Special Election Nominating Committee for the position comprised of WB2VVS, WA2NRV and N2TJE has been appointed. The nominating period will close at the December General Membership Meeting, at which point a vote will be taken.

Public Service - Robert Kantor, N2TSE:

Reviewed upcoming events, which include:

- 1) Mamaroneck Turkey Trot on 11/22.
- 2) Blythedale Christmas visit on 12/16. 12+ volunteers needed. Dinner will be served from 5-6 pm.

Education - Darlana Mayo, N2DB: Announced a No-Code Technician class to be held January 7-10 at the Red Cross in White Plains. The class will be held during the evening on Thursday and Friday, and all day on Saturday and Sunday. The \$40.00 fee will cover materials and lunch. The VE exam afterward will cost an additional

\$6.35. Information regarding the class has been posted on the WECA website. Participants must pre-register and be at least 14 years-old. VE's are needed.

Treasurer - Andy Farber, N4OOX: Announced that 98-99 Budget Requests are due from all Officers and Directors.

Vice-President - Dave Weiss, N2OGK, introduced Bill Continelli, W2XOY, who gave a lecture on Amateur Radio history. W2XOY's column entitled "The Wayback Machine" is featured monthly on the ARRL Hudson Division's website. He also presents his "Ancient Amateur Archives" on the "This Week in Amateur Radio" program.

The next Executive Board Meeting will be held at 8:00 p.m. on 11/23 at the EOC in White Plains. The meeting is open to all members.

9:58 p.m. - Motion to adjourn by Tom, WB2NHC. 2nd by Dave, N2OGK.

Hudson Happenings

By Shirley Dahlgren, N2SKP

VE EXAM

Sun 12/6 Yonkers (YARC) 9am, 1st Precinct, Yonkers Police Station, info AC2V 237-5589

Thurs 12/10 White Plains, WECA, 7pm, contact Sandy Fried N2SF, 914 285-3029

Sat 12/19 Kingston, 9am, contact Frank N2FS 382-2103

Sun 1/3 Yonkers (YARC) 9am, 1st Precinct, Yonkers Police Station, info AC2V 237-5589

Sun 1/17 Yonkers Metro 70 Hamfest at Lincoln HS, 9am, info Otto 969-1053
(no walk-ins)

CONTESTS

Dec 4-6 ARRL 160-Meter Contest

Dec 12-13 ARRL 10-Meter Contest

Jan 2-3 ARRL RTTY Roundup

Jan 23-25 ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes

HAMFESTS

Sun Jan 17 Metro 70 at Lincoln HS, Yonkers. 9-3pm, talk-in 146.91

COMPUTER SHOWS

Sat Dec 5 White Plains, Westchester County Center 9:30-4

Sun Dec 6 Suffern, Rockland Community College, 9:30-4

Sun Dec 13 Middletown, Orange County Fairgrounds, 9:30-3:30

Sat Dec 19 Poughkeepsie, Mid-Hudson Civic Center, 9:30-4

Sat Dec 19 Queens, Queens College 10-3

Sat Jan 2 Middletown, Orange County Fairgrounds, 10-3:30

COMPUTER CLUB MEETINGS

MHCUG: (Mid Hudson Computer Users Group) Thurs Dec 10, (2nd Thurs) 7pm at the Best Western, Rt 9, Poughkeepsie. Topic: Microsoft - Software for the holidays. Visit their Web page: <http://www.idsi.net/mhcug/>

DACS: (Danbury Area Computer Society) Tues, Dec 1, (1st Tues), John Patrick, Vice President of Internet Technology, IBM Corp, Danbury Hospital Auditorium; 7pm Q&A, 8pm program: Visit their Web page: [DACs.org](http://www.dacs.org).

The HUDSON LOOP

is a weekly online newsletter containing information of interest to amateurs in the ARRL Hudson Division. To subscribe, send an Internet e-mail message to: subscribe@hudson-loop.org and type "SUBSCRIBE HUDSON LOOP" on the subject line. You may also read past issues online at: <http://www.hudson-loop.org>

FlexNet

By Richard Benda, WB2QJA

FlexNet is a networking software package for packet radio nodes. It has been used extensively in Europe after being developed in Germany. The present format runs on a PC and uses TNC's as modems. For the past few years, network nodes in our area have been using the X1J software. The problem is the processing power available (Z-80 chip) and memory (typically 32K). One could safely say that we have extracted all we can out of this platform. Using FlexNet, one can make use of the power and memory of a PC. There is no way to compare the processing power of a 486 PC with 8 megs of RAM to the TNC's Z-80. FlexNet has now quickly grown to the point where most Tri-State area networks are using it. This program is running and supporting the WECA nodes. There have been some changes in the user node callsigns as follows:

WECA North Site WECA South Site
WB2ZII-5 145.05 User Node WB2ZII-9 145.09 User Node (formerly ZII-9) (formerly ZII-5)
WB2ZII-6 441.00 User Node

The following is the User Command Summary. Type H after connecting to the node to get a detail explanation of each command.

User Commands:

Statements inside [] are optional.

A - display text LATEST NEWS

B - display beacon-file

C - start conversation mode

/w - list node users

/w n - list convers users on channel n

/c - display convers channel number

/c n - switch to channel n
/s call text - send private msg to user
/q - quit conversation mode
C call [v] [digi] - connect further on
D [*] [call] - display destination table, path to destination
F <call> - FIND-command, look for <call>
H - display text HELP
I - display text INFO
IO - In/Out - status
L - display Interlink information
LO - display text LOCAL
M [?] - connect next BBS
MH [...] - display Heard-list [selectively]
MY - display Mycall and SSID-range
P - display parameters and statistics
Q - quit, end of connection
S - SETSEARCH, display search-paths
T <call> <text> - send text to other users
U [*] [port/"="] - display user table [selectively]

Currently TCPIP support is down but will be restored by the addition of a computer at the south site. The callsign of the TCPIP node will be WB2ZII-1.

Soldering Class

By Stan Rothman, WA2NRV

The WECA soldering course conducted by Bob N2DVQ with the assistance of Fran N2OLU and Dwight N2FMC was held on Sunday November 16th. We had to change the location at the last minute so the South Eastern Group Civil Air Patrol allowed us to utilize their facility for the course.

All that attended not only had a good time, but learned how to solder varies materials, from wires to printed circuit boards to connectors. Bob N2DVQ supplied materials so everyone could practice what we learned. It was an educational afternoon, not only for the newer members but for us old timers as well. We never stop learning new and better techniques.

It was out intention to video tape this course, but due to a fire in Yonkers and the fact that many of our members wear various hats, we lost the video crew and equipment Sunday morning.

The staff has consented to run this course again if the membership is interested.

On behalf of the WECA board, I want to thank the instructors for an excellent presentation.



Under the direction of Bob N2DVQ. Rob N2TSE and Stan WA2NRV, learn some new techniques.



Editors Note: Here is Part 1 and Part 2 of the report. See November 1998 WECAGRAM for part 3 which was printed first.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY ARES/RACES

1998 ARRL SIMULATED EMERGENCY TEST

By Alan Crosswell, N2YGK

1 Introduction

The Westchester County Amateur Radio Emergency Service/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (ARES/RACES) group of volunteer Amateur Radio operators participated in the annual nationwide American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Simulated Emergency Test (SET) during the weekend of October 3-4, 1998. The SET drill locally tested communications between several NDMS-participating hospitals and the Castle Point VA hospital.

Six radio operators participated in the field in the local drill. Thirty-six participated overall in the group call-up and section-wide communications activity.

2 ARES/RACES and the Role of Amateur Radio Communications

2.1 ARES/RACES Organization and Authorization

Westchester County ARES/RACES is a group of about 100 Amateur Radio operators who volunteer their radio communications skills in times of need. ARES/RACES is a single group organized both under the American Radio Relay League's Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and the FCC Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES).

As authorized by FCC rules (Title 47 CFR part 97), Westchester County RACES is managed by a local government civil preparedness agency: the Westchester County Office of Disaster and Emergency Services (ODES), in the Department of Public Safety.

All Amateur Radio operators and organizers are volunteers by choice and by law: the FCC rules prohibit compensation. The ARES organization is a national structure coordinated by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). ARES at the local level in Westchester County is managed by an Emergency Coordinator (EC) and several Assistant Emergency Coordinators (AEC). The EC reports to a District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) for seven counties in the lower Hudson Valley who in turn reports to a Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) for the 15-county Eastern New York Section. The SEC reports to the Section Manager (SM), who is elected to that position by the ARRL Section membership as is the Hudson Division Director and Vice Director. The members of the Board of Directors elect the President and Vice President.

Unlike the ARRL's ARES, RACES is not a separate organization but rather a set of FCC rules that defines when and how Amateurs may provide communications services for state and local government. The RACES group in Westchester is headed by the RACES Radio Officer who is appointed by and reports to the Director, Office of Disaster and Emergency Services. Amateurs may only act in an official RACES capacity when a RACES activation is declared by the RACES Radio Officer upon request of the ODES Director or his designee. During this time, RACES members are considered unpaid employees of Westchester County and are covered by Workmen's Compensation insurance. RACES at the New York State level is managed by the State Emergency Management Office.

2.2 Amateur Radio Groups

Several Amateur Radio groups exist in Westchester County. They are variously organized by location and/or focus on a particular aspect of Amateur Radio. Notable Westchester groups active in public service are the Westchester Emergency Communications Association (WECA), Westchester Amateur Radio Association (WARA), Northern Westchester Amateur Radio Association (NWARA), and the Yonkers Amateur Radio Club (YARC).

WECA, the organization with the greatest focus on the emergency communications aspect of Amateur Radio, has developed special relationships with organizations such as ODES and the American Red Cross. WECA operates three voice repeater systems and a digital communications network using a mixture of county-owned and WECA-owned equipment. For example, the main 147 MHz repeater transmitter and antenna system located at the Grasslands complex were paid for by ODES. This equipment is covered by Westchester County's service contract with Motorola. The rest of the system, including four remote receivers located at various points throughout the County, was purchased with funds raised by WECA through member dues, revenues from Amateur Radio flea markets run by the group, and occasional grants.

All the radio system integration, maintenance and management is performed by members of the WECA Technical Committee. A member of WECA is the FCC licensee legally responsible for the system's operation. WECA Officers and Directors are elected by the membership and include the Directors of Engineering and Repeater Operations.

2.3 Appropriate Roles for Amateurs

There are some misconceptions—both among Amateurs and emergency services officials—about the appropriate roles and abilities of Amateur Radio operators in emergency communications. Amateur Radio operators supplement rather than replace existing public safety and commercial communications facilities. They are volunteers who have jobs, personal lives and varied levels of technical and operating expertise. They are not professional communicators or emergency responders, but they do strive to approach their volunteer service with a high level of professionalism.

Amateurs generally have the skills and personally-owned radio equipment necessary to provide effective backup or supplemental communications at times when normal public safety and commercial communications systems are busy with mission-critical traffic or overloaded. When well-trained, the typical technically-oriented Amateur Radio operator can prove to be a useful asset in filling the gaps in normal communications systems and excels at flexibly responding to changing communications conditions and needs.

An example of such an application of Amateur communicators is to take logistical communications traffic in order to keep emergency radio systems available for actual emergency traffic. Amateurs, having radios that are frequency-agile across a common set of bands, are also able to establish ad-hoc communications links between officials who may not otherwise have a radio system in common.

2.4 Training

The annual ARRL SET is one of many opportunities to train Westchester's local Amateur Radio operators. Thanks to strong support from the Office of Disaster and Emergency Services, many other training opportunities are presented throughout the year.

Probably the greatest opportunity for training Amateurs to operate effectively in the field is provided by the numerous charity events that Westchester's Amateurs volunteer for. These include annual walkathons and public gatherings such as the Multiple Sclerosis Walk in Rye, March of Dimes WalkAmerica in Bedford/Mt. Kisco, Mamaroneck Turkey Trot, Seminary events and walkathons in Yonkers, New York Philharmonic concert at Westchester Community College, American Diabetes Association Tour-de-Cure bike ride and events outside the county in which many from Westchester are key players—most notably the MS Wheel&Rock to Woodstock in the Catskills and the New York City Marathon, which counts many Westchester residents among the 400 Amateurs who participate.

The annual Field Day exercise in June is probably the single largest Amateur exercise each year. At Harbor Island Park in Mamaroneck and other locations throughout the county, Amateurs set up and operate an emergency-powered field camp for a continuous 24-hour period.

Notes from the EMS Council

By Alan Crosswell, N2YGK

WECA is a member of the Westchester County Emergency Medical Services Council, <http://www.wcems.org>.

During the month of November, Adam, N2DHH, and Alan, N2YGK, represented WECA at the Council's Disaster Preparedness Committee, and Ron, N2TJE, and Alan attended the board meeting.

Disaster Preparedness Committee

The Disaster Preparedness Committee is a newly-formed committee of the EMS council and is tasked with dealing with all aspects of preparing for disaster response for EMS. WECA's and ARES/RACES participation is to see how and if amateur radio communications would be used to supplement EMS communications in a disaster response.

NDMS DMAT

At the board meeting, progress on the re-activation of Westchester County's Disaster Medical Assistance Team was reported. A DMAT is a team of volunteer medical specialists who respond to disasters. DMATs are coordinated by the National Disaster Medical System. At this point, the Westchester team is a level two DMAT, which means they come in to replace a rapid deployment level one team. To date, they've been dispatched to Texas in the wake of flooding caused by Hurricane Georges.

The DMAT is actively recruiting new members including physicians, physician assistants, nurses, pharmacists, respiratory therapists, laboratory technicians, paramedics, EMT's and communications specialists. If you have any of these skills and are interested in learning if the DMAT is for you, please register for one of the upcoming orientation sessions:

Where:

Conference Room C, Eastview Hall, Westchester County Medical Center

When:

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm on Thursday 12/3, Monday 12/7, or Wednesday 12/9

10:00 am to 12:00 pm on Wednesday 12/9

Registration is required. Please call or email your choice of dates in preference order (1,2,3): dmatny2@aol.com, (914) 493-8381.

Visit the web site at <http://www.wcems.org/dmat.htm> for more information.

WECA upcoming events...

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

Membership meeting.

Wednesday, December 16

Santa comes to Blythedale Children's Hospital by radio.

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

Board meeting.

No-Code Technician class

By Darlana Mayo, N2DB:

A No-Code Technician class will be held January 7-10 at the Red Cross in White Plains. The class will be held during the evening on Thursday and Friday, and all day on Saturday and Sunday. The \$40.00 fee will cover materials and lunch. The VE exam afterward will cost an additional \$6.35. Information regarding the class has been posted on the WECA website. Participants must pre-register and be at least 14 years-old. VE's are needed.



Southern District Net

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

Check-Ins 339

Traffic 114

Passed 97

Time 468

Sessions 31