



# THE WECAGRAM

Newsletter of the  
Westchester Emergency Communications Association, Inc.

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Serving the Public through Amateur Radio and serving Amateurs since 1972

Volume 24, Issue 4

April 2000



## Next Meeting

The next WECA meeting will be Monday April 10th 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 guest speaker will be Telecom Security Specialist and WECA member Charles Patterson, N2AXO

## From The President...

April showers bring May flowers, . . . .and public service opportunities. Look for Robert N2TSE s article with a list of dates and times. Wecafest was an exciting event for our club. We had a good turnout with many members assisting to make it a successful time. Jean and Tom spent a lot of time preparing for the over all operation. Fran N2OLU, Peter N2TFC, and Grant KC2FNU, arranged the schedules and contacted members to fill the time slots. All who helped, and there are to many to name individually, deserve a pat on the back for a JOB WELL DONE. Special thanks go to Emily AC2V, Paul AC2T, and Dan AA2HX, who took the bull by the horns when Richard Sandell WK6R, was unable to take charge of the VE session. It was set up and run with the precision of a well

oiled machine, even though we had more examine takers than before, due to the new restructuring system. Remember that Fran N2OLU is the one to contact if you need help with any aspect of amateur radio. He will set you up with an ELMER who will be glad to help with your questions and / or ham related problems. We have a vast amount of knowledge available from within our membership. Sandy N2SF, and the WECA VE team will be conducting exams on April 13th and 15th at the EOC in White Plains. Remember that after you upgrade at one of the test sessions, we have a limited amount of equipment available in the WECA loan closet. This is equipment we loan to members, who want to gain some experience on additional frequencies, until they can purchase their own equipment. It is short loan and we have members who will help you set up the station and show you how to use it. The only provision is that you return the equipment in good working order, the same as you receive it. Now is the time to volunteer to fill the officer and director positions available for the coming year. You can call one of the members of the nominating committee or see them at a general meeting. The members of the committee are Mal Ochs N2MEF, Fred Stavans KC2COQ, Dana Hickey KC2CLZ. I look forward to seeing all of you at our next meeting April 10th.

Stan WA2NRV

Listen on 147.060 at 7pm Monday-Wednesday-Friday for Amateur Radio related news and Announcements

Write for the WECAGRAM. Send your submissions to [wecagram@weca.org](mailto:wecagram@weca.org)

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## THE WECAGRAM

Editor: Will Austen N2UXJ

The WECAGRAM is the official newsletter of the Westchester Emergency Communications Association, Inc., a Special Service Club affiliated with the ARRL, ARES, the Westchester County Office of Disaster and Emergency Services, RACES, an affiliate of the American Red Cross, and a member of the Westchester County Emergency Medical Services Council.

Any questions, comments, items for Swap and Shop, commercial advertising, suggestions, contributions and letters for inclusion should be sent to the editor at:

58 Ellis Place  
Ossining, NY 10562

Submissions via E-Mail to [wecagram@weca.org](mailto:wecagram@weca.org) would greatly be appreciated. Submissions may be edited for style and space.

The DEADLINE for INCLUSION in the newsletter is the 2nd Monday of the preceding month.

All submissions are expressly the opinion of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of WECA, its officers, directors, or the editor.

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The WECAGRAM would like to exchange newsletters with other clubs. If you are interested in receiving the WECAGRAM through such an exchange, please contact the editor.

### WECA Officers and Directors

#### OFFICERS:

President: Stanley Rothman, WA2NRV  
Executive VP: David J. Weiss, N2OGK  
VP/General Counsel: Michael J. Weitzner, N2EII  
Treasurer: Andrew R. Farber, N4OOK  
Secretary: Ken Gross, N2OBY  
Trustee: Paul S. Vydareny, WB2VUK  
President Emeritus: Joseph Brown, KB2NEN

#### DIRECTORS:

County Liaison: Sanford H. Fried, N2SF  
Digital Modes: Richard L. Benda, WB2QJA  
Director At Large: Fran LaSorsa, N2OLJ  
Education: Rich Anderson, WA2RIA  
Engineering: Robert A. Wilson, N2DQ  
Membership: Peter A. Johnson, N2IFC  
Newsletter Editor: Will Austen, N2UXJ  
Public Relations: Shirley Dahlgren, N2SKP  
Public Service: Robert Kantor, N2TSE  
Repeater Operations: Dwight P. Smith, N2FMC  
Social: Thomas R. Raffaelli, WB2NHC

WECA gladly accepts donations of equipment new or used (such as from estates). Please write, call, or E-mail WECA at the addresses etc.. on the cover

#### WB2ZII/R

WECA operates the following repeaters:

147.060(+)MHz	PL 2A(114.8 Hz)
224.400(-)MHz	PL 2A(114.8 Hz)
447.475(-)MHz	PL 2A(114.8 Hz)

#### WECAGRAM Online:

<http://www.weca.org/wecagram>

## From The EDITOR...

As its been my privilege to be the newsletter editor this last term, I will not be able to continue to serve the club in this capacity after my term expires. There-fore the last WECAGRAM that I will publish will be the June 2000 issue. In the transition to another editor, I will help in any way I can to assist that person who takes on the responsibilities. In the coming months I will thank all the people that have contributed stories to the WECAGRAM. It has always been their efforts that make the WECAGRAM one of the best Ham radio publications available.

With that its on to the news...  
Will N2UXJ/ Newsletter Editor

## Public Service

By Robert Kantor, N2TSE

Mark your calendar for these up-coming events. And if you want to volunteer, you can sign up at the membership meeting or you can contact me on the radio during SDN, or by phone at home. Or you can E-mail me!!!

E-Mail: [n2tse@weca.org](mailto:n2tse@weca.org)

Call: 914 949-4231

### Upcoming events include:

4/9 (Sun.) - Multiple Sclerosis Walk at Rye Playland. 8:30 am.

4/30 (Sun.) - March of Dimes Walk at Mt. Kisco, 7:30 am. Lunch by Outback Restaurant.

6/4 (Sun.) - American Diabetes Assoc. Bike-a-thon at SUNY-Purchase, 6:30 am.

8/5 (Sat.) - NY Philharmonic at WCC, 3:00 p.m.

If you need to laminate your licenses, autopatch cards, etc... for \$.50 each, please contact me for time and place

## Bulletin Announcer Needed!!!

By Stan Rothman, WA2NRV

We need some one to fill Joe, KB2NEN's position of bulletin announcer for at least 4 months or maybe longer. Joe told Stan, I've not been able to do the bulletins for the past two weeks due to work commitment's. However, this weekend my last antenna is coming down and I won't be able to do the bulletins at all. The roof work will take a minimum of four months and when it's finished I'm not sure if I can put my antennas back up. However, we'll see.

So if any one is interested in filling this position, please contact me for details.

## March Membership Meeting

On 3/13/00 at 8:01 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Stan Rothman, WA2NRV.

### Introductions

Stan began the meeting by asking, "What is an Elmer", and then described the new "Elmer Program". Stan then described the club "Loan Closet" program, which provides the short-term loan of HF equipment to members seeking to gain experience in HF operating. Members interested in both these programs should contact Fran, N2OLU.

Guest Speaker was Tom Raffaelli, WB2NHC. Tom gave his annual WECAFEST presentation, which included a slide presentation highlighting previous events and illustrating WECA's technical facilities.

Stan repeated his earlier requests for ideas for club projects. Anyone with an idea should contact Nick, K2ZVI.

### Director's Reports -

Social/WECAFEST - Tom Raffaelli, WB2NHC: Tom announced that at the April Membership Meeting he will be taking new orders for "WECAWEAR", for delivery by Field Day (June).

Sandy Fried, N2SF discussed the increased number of VE sessions and described various scenarios regarding upgrades. A complete description of the upgrade procedures can be found in the (March)WECAGRAM. WECA-sponsored VE sessions are scheduled as follows: 4/13/00 (Thurs.) - Last time for current tests. 4/5/00 (Sat.) - 9:00 am at the EOC. New exams and "make-up" paperwork.

### Announcements -

Stan, WA2NRV: Informed the membership that Bob "Radar" Casino, N2GDY, was recovering from a six-bypass surgery, and encouraged all to send cards, messages, radiograms, etc...

Tom, WB2NHC: Announced that Smith-Cairns Ford has refurbished the Red Cross tower truck. Approximately \$5,000.00 worth of body and paint work was performed "gratis" by the dealership and district office.

50/50 - Winner: Harry, W2JQS. Door Prize Winners: KB2JKC, N2TFC, W2JQS and N2OLU.

## February Board Meeting

On 2/28/00 at 8:15 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Stan Rothman, WA2NRV.

WECAFEST - Tom Raffaelli, WB2NHC: Reported receiving a letter from Ten-Tec announcing a program whereby clubs can purchase and resell the company's kits, and keep 25% of the profits. Additionally, Ten-Tec will buy-back any unsold kits. The plan appears to be a "no-lose" deal for interested clubs. If WECA is interested, the merchandise can be shipped by 3/19.

There was discussion of the light turn out at the LIMARC Hamfest and how that might effect vendor table sales at our upcoming event. Approximately 500 letters go out as the sole source of inviting vendors.

Tom asked for volunteers to help contact WECA members regarding workers for WECAFEST. Ken, N2OBY, and Grant, KC2FNU, will help Fran, N2OLU in making the calls.

Recent donations to the club were sold at the LIMARC hamfest for \$300.00, which will go into the equipment fund. Tom would like to use some of the proceeds to get a power supply for the Field Comm. Van. He would also like to use a previously donated Astron 20-amp power supply for the dual-band operating position at the Red Cross.

Lastly, Tom distributed an updated club "profile", which is used to describe WECA to the public. He passed around copies for review.

Director-at-Large - Fran LaSorsa, N2OLU: Described the proposed WECA "Elmer" program, whereby experienced operators will lend their knowledge and expertise to newcomers to the hobby.

Membership - Peter Johnson, N2TFC: Reported six new members and three renewals. Forty-eight former members still have not renewed. Membership is currently at 229 members. Stan brought up the subject of membership cards. Peter replied that they have not been produced in many years, however he will look into the possibility of issuing them again.

Engineering - Bob Wilson, N2DVQ: Work on the receiver cabinet is complete, to be followed by the controller cabinet. The VHF repeater was down for a full day in January, with the problem being traced to the deviation control pot in the exciter. It was rectified quickly and the unit was back on the air. Lastly, Bob mentioned a forthcoming movie titled "Frequency", in which amateur radio is featured prominently.

### Agenda Items

An incident was reported which took place during the 2/10/00 WECA-sponsored VE session at the EOC, during which an amateur attending the testing session allegedly received "ill treatment" by one of the VE's. After much discussion during the board meeting and after, this incident has not been resolved.

Fran LaSorsa, N2OLU - Discussed a recent incident involving Red Cross personnel who used the VHF repeater during an event. He raised the question regarding what actually defines Red Cross communications and what does not. This raised a larger question of "What defines appropriate communications?" While details of the particular incident in question were addressed, the question of WECA repeater vs. Red Cross frequencies was explained by WB2NHC - that it is a personal choice made by the communicator based upon the situation. 147.060 is given to ARES/Red Cross for use when needed. In the situation initially mentioned by N2OLU, GMRS frequencies were not used due to their inadequate coverage.

### New Business

Stan Rothman, WA2NRV - Stan discussed the ARRL's 2000 Achievement Awards program, stating that "This is something we should get involved in as a club, as it promotes the hobby." Rich, W2RJA, has the specifics and will look into what is required.

Grant Nishanian, KC2FNU - Announced that he is making available discount coupons for amateur radio products, which he has received upon becoming licensed. He will bring them to the next membership meeting.

By Kenneth F. Gross, N2OBY

Dear Friends,

A bill has been introduced in the New York State Assembly which would codify in New York State law the essence of PRB-1. This bill will help amateurs erect legal antennas and antenna support structures in New York. It is VERY important that you, as a leader in the amateur radio community, distribute this law to as many hams as possible and encourage them to write their state assemblyman and state senator. We need their representative to either cosponsor or support this bill!

A list of Frequently-Asked-Questions will follow. Suffice it to say that this bill has been in the works for quite a while, has the support of the ARRL Hudson Division Director, his staff, and the three Section Managers in his division. In addition, support has been obtained from members of other sections throughout New York State. All hams will be positively affected by this bill if it were to become law. Many other states have passed similar legislation. Not only would passage of this law make it easier for you to erect an amateur antenna, but it would codify the benefits of the amateur radio service and bring to the forefront the good things that amateurs do to help in emergency service communication to benefit the public.

The actual text of the bill follows. It is Assembly bill A 9947. What happens next is support for the bill is solicited. Once adequate support is obtained, the committee will vote on the bill and send it to the full Assembly for a vote. Once it is approved there, a similar bill must be introduced and passed in the Senate. Once passed there, it is sent to the Governor for his signature.

Please do all you can to encourage ham clubs, individual members, their friends and families to contact their New York State legislators, assembly and senate, to cosponsor or support the bill - A 9947. Get the word out by any legal means.

If you have any questions, please contact ARRL Hudson Division Director Frank Fallon N2FF at n2ff@arrl.org or phone him at (516) 746-7652 or contact me at my address or phone below.

73 and thanks in advance for your support, George

George Tranos N2GA  
ARRL Section Manager NYC/LI  
n2ga@arrl.org  
631-286-7562

Text of New York State Bill A09947

STATE OF NEW YORK I N A S S E M B L Y

March 7, 2000

Introduced by M. of A. TOCCI -- read once and referred to the Committee on Local Governments AN ACT to amend the general municipal law, in relation to the construction of antenna structures by amateur radio operators

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The general municipal law is amended by adding a new article 13-E to read as follows:

ARTICLE 13-E

ANTENNA STRUCTURES; AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS SECTION 300. DEFINITIONS. 301. PROHIBITIONS.

S 300. DEFINITIONS. AS USED IN THIS ARTICLE:

THE TERM "ANTENNA" MEANS AN ARRAY OF WIRES, TUBING OR THE LIKE USED FOR THE TRANSMISSION AND RECEPTION OF RADIO WAVES.

THE TERM "ANTENNA SUPPORT STRUCTURE" MEANS A STRUCTURE OR FRAMEWORK THAT IS DESIGNED TO ELEVATE AN ANTENNA ABOVE THE GROUND FOR THE PURPOSES OF INCREASING THE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS RANGE AND RELIABILITY OF AN AMATEUR RADIO STATION. AMATEUR RADIO ANTENNA SUPPORT STRUCTURES ARE REMOVABLE BY DESIGN AND THEREFORE ARE A REMOVABLE STRUCTURE FOR TAX ASSESSMENT PURPOSES.

THE TERM "AMATEUR RADIO" MEANS THE USE OF AMATEUR AND AMATEUR-SATELLITE RADIO FREQUENCIES AND SERVICES USED BY LICENSED, QUALIFIED-PERSONS OF ANY AGE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN RADIO TECHNIQUE WITHOUT PECUNIARY INTEREST. THESE SERVICES PRESENT AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC SERVICE, SELF-TRAINING, INTERCOMMUNICATION, AND TECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS.

THE TERM "AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR" MEANS ANY PERSON WHO HAS BEEN DULY EXAMINED AND LICENSED BY THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION OR ITS DESIGNEE FOR THE OPERATION OF TRANSMITTING AND RECEIVING APPARATUS ON RADIO FREQUENCIES INTERNATIONALLY AGREED UPON FOR THE USE OF THE AMATEUR RADIO SERVICE.

S 301. PROHIBITIONS. NO POLITICAL SUBDIVISION ZONING ORDINANCE, BY-LAW, RULE, REGULATION, ORDER OR OTHER LOCAL LAW OR ORDINANCE SHALL PROHIBIT OR EFFECTIVELY PROHIBIT THE CONSTRUCTION OR USE OF AN ANTENNA STRUCTURE BY A FEDERALLY LICENSED AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR. ANY SUCH ORDINANCE IMPACTING THE PLACEMENT, SCREENING OR HEIGHT OF ANTENNAS MUST REASONABLY ACCOMMODATE AMATEUR RADIO ANTENNAS AND SHALL IMPOSE THE MINIMUM REGULATION NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THE POLITICAL SUBDIVISION'S LEGITIMATE PURPOSE. ANY SUCH ORDINANCE SHALL CONFORM TO THE LIMITED PREEMPTION ENTITLED "AMATEUR RADIO PREEMPTION", 101 FCC 2ND 952 (1985) ISSUED BY THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

NO LOCAL ORDINANCE, BY-LAW, RULE OR REGULATION, OR OTHER LOCAL LAW SHALL: (A) RESTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SUPPORT STRUCTURE HEIGHT TO LESS THAN NINETY-FIVE FEET ABOVE GROUND LEVEL; OR (B) RESTRICT THE NUMBER OF ANTENNA SUPPORT STRUCTURES.

This act shall take effect 180 days after it shall have become a law.

Sample letter to Assemblyman

Dear <Mr./Mrs. insert Assemblyman name here>,

I am writing you today about a new piece of legislation introduced into the State Assembly on March 7, 2000, by Assemblyman Tocci of New Rochelle. It was read once and referred to the Committee on Local Governments and is entitled "AN ACT to amend the general municipal law, in relation to the construction of antenna structures by amateur radio operators." It is Assembly bill A-09947.

I would like you to cosponsor this legislation. This legislation would codify the essence of the Federal limited preemption entitled "AMATEUR RADIO PREEMPTION", 101 FCC 2ND 952 (1985) 8 Issued by the Federal Communications Commission, into New York State Law. This bill will help amateurs erect legal antennas and antenna support structures in New York.

The amateur radio service is a "radio communication service for the purpose of self-training, intercommunication and technical investigations carried out by amateurs, that is duly authorized persons interested in radio technique solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary interest." The FCC recognizes "the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary, non-commercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications."

Probably the best-known aspect of Amateur Radio in the public eye is its ability to provide lifesaving emergency communications when normal means of contact are down. In earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, airplane crashes and other accidents and disasters affecting the civil population, Amateur Radio is often the first contact with the outside world available to an affected area. Radio Amateurs provide this service completely at their own expense, with no cost to the public. In fact, amateurs are prohibited from accepting any form of payment for operating their stations. Radio amateurs are trained volunteers with their own equipment, knowledge and skill, who readily help the public in disasters and emergencies.

Lest you think that this is only done on a national scale, on Long Island alone in the last few years, amateur radio has been involved in emergency communications many times.

In the TWA Flight 800 crash on July 17, 1996 and its immediate aftermath, amateur radio helped with communications. In the wildfires in Westhampton August 21 thru 28, 1995, amateurs provided communications assistance. Other emergencies where amateurs provided assistance included the Avianca plane crash in Cove Neck on January 25, 1990. Hurricane Gloria in 1985 and Hurricane Bob in 1992. In the Nor'easter "no-name" storm in October 1996. And in countless lesser disasters such as paralyzing snowstorms, radio amateurs worked with the American Red Cross providing communications for their shelters.

In New York State, amateur radio provided needed communication during the ice storm of 1998. On a national scale, during Hurricane Andrew in Florida in 1992 where 25 billion dollars of damage was done in the costliest hurricane ever, amateurs passed crucial health and welfare traffic to and from the stricken area. In countless other events, amateur radio has proven its worth to the public.

Most importantly, amateurs are constantly training to be prepared for when the next disaster strikes. They do this at no cost to the public, maintaining their skills and equipment at their own expense. Because of this commitment to providing emergency communications, radio amateurs are given broad frequency privileges. These privileges range from medium frequency HF communication close to the AM broadcast band all the way thru VHF, UHF and microwaves. Each range of frequencies has a specific use with the VHF and UHF frequencies serving small local areas and the lower frequencies providing wider coverage, sometimes international. Since radio amateurs have this broad range of frequencies to choose from, they will pick the one suited to their particular need. In an emergency, many frequencies are required to serve both local and far away populations. On Long Island, radio amateurs offer their services to the public and utilize antennas mounted on towers. Since height dictates range on UHF/VHF and takeoff angle on HF, amateurs need high antennas to adequately serve the public.

Cosponsoring and supporting this legislation will help make it easier for amateurs to erect and maintain the antennas necessary to assist in these types of disasters. I ask for your support of this legislation. I would also like to meet with you to discuss this subject in fuller detail. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely yours,

<insert your name here> Amateur Radio Operator <insert your callsign here>

W E C A upcoming events...

Sunday April 9th, MS Walk at Rye Playland

Monday April 10th, Membership meeting

Monday April 23th, Board Meeting

Sunday April 30th, March of Dimes, Mt. Kisco

Membership Tidbits

By Peter Johnson, N2TFC

Please welcome our \*New\* WECA members:

KC2FVU Martin Yonkers, NY

W2SLC Bud Armonk, NY

KC2FYY Will Ossining, NY

WB2DSO Arthur Brookfield, CT

N2PHW Brian Hawthorne, NY

Corrections: KC2DYT Marion Peekskill, NY was incor-  
rectly listed last month as KC2DHT !

Southern District Net

Sandro Sicilia N2TWN, Net manager of the  
Southern District Net, reports for February.  
2000

Stations checked in	323
Traffic Brought	62
Traffic Passed	60
Total Net Time in Minutes in 29 session	406

Write for the WECAGRAM

Send your story by the deadline, which is on  
Monday, .one week before the Board Meeting  
each month, except July and August

BY E-Mail to [wecagram@weca.org](mailto:wecagram@weca.org)

Please include your name and call sign for  
publication. Please put the body of your story  
in the E-mail to prevent cross platform,  
and other layout problems



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