



# SARA NEWS

Schenectady Amateur Radio Association Inc.  
"Service Through Amateur Radio"



Founded 1930

April, 2003

K2AE Repeaters

Meeting Monday, April 7, 2003 at 7:30 PM, Niskayuna High School New Cafeteria

## Public Service

May 4: Annual Crop Walk: SARA will provide communication services for this event. Sign up with Ken Clikeman at 861-6825.

May 17: Niska-Day: Hopefully we wont get snowed out this year! Sign up with Ken.

May 21: Annual Scotia Parade: Sign up with Ken.

## River Watch

The Schenectady County ARES/RACES river watch was activated during the period of March 18 -21 to monitor ice jam and flood conditions in the Mohawk river. We were lucky, no serious flooding occured, although it was close at times. A full report of this major activation is presented on page 3 of the news.

A large number of Amateurs participated in the activation, too many to be listed here. The EOC and the Weather Service have expressed great appreciation to all those who parcipitated during the long hours of the event

There is still a possibility of river flooding due to heavy rain and the considerable snowpack in the higher elevations. Flood watchers may still be needed. If you think a problem may exist and are able to help, please monitor the SARA repeater, 147.06 MHz, for any emergency activity...

The National Weather Service puts out bulletins for weather watch and weather warning which can be heard on their NOAA weather radio, 162.55 MHz. They also will send bulletins as E-Mail to those interested. For more details and to sign up, use the Internet URL below.

<http://www.EmergencyEmail.org/>

## Are Our Records Up To Date?

SARA is planning to publish a new membership list. (See the minutes on page 2 for details.) We are asking all members to update our records for Name, Call, Address, Phone Number, and E-Mail Address, and **tell us how much, if any, of this information you want published in such a list.** Contact Tim Long, W2UI, at 399-7454, or E-Mail him at [longt@empireone.net](mailto:longt@empireone.net).

## April Meeting

### "Weather Forensics"

Speaker: Phil Falconer

To most, the meteorologist is the 'weatherman', seen on television or heard on the radio, who provides daily weather forecasts. However, the field of meteorology is quite broad, and many scientific specializations and sub-disciplines have emerged. One such field is that of Forensic Meteorology, where the qualified practitioner applies specialized knowledge of how the weather is observed, how the atmosphere behaves, and how atmospheric processes affect people and structures to issues being litigated, or under investigation by risk insurers and claims acjusters.

Mr. Falconer has been involved in forensic meteorological investigation for more than twenty years, and will share his thoughts on some of the more interesting cases he's handled, including those where the use of observer reports from the Capital District weather network was important. The presentation will include brief video clips of a few of those cases, which were covered by news media.

(Phil is the son of our famous weatherman Ray Falconer.)

The meeting will be held at the Niskayuna High School New Cafeteria, April 7, 2003 at 7:30PM. Directions are on Page 2. Talk-in will be provided on the SARA repeater, 147.06 MHz.

## May Meeting Preview:

Dick Frey, WA2AAU, willll present a talk on the subject of VHF - UHF - Microwave Contesting. He should know, since he is a major player in the award winning W2SZ effort on Mt. Greylock. The meeting will be at Niskayuna High School.

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## From the Board

Meetings - Thursday preceding the SARA meeting. All members are welcome!

Schenectady Amateur Radio Association  
Board of Directors Meeting February 27, 2003  
Minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Paul Siemers, WY2F, at 7:14 PM in the Union College "College Center"

Attendees:

President Paul Siemers, WY2F  
Vice President Millie Gittinger, KB2SWR  
Secretary Tim Long, W2UI  
Director Rob Leiden, KR2L  
Director Ramsey Seielstad, KC2GMW  
Director Dan Whelan, N2UD  
Director Gerry Crawmer, KE2JJ  
News Editor Clark Gittinger, KG2AO

Minutes: Rob Leiden, KR2L, made a motion to accept the minutes of the Board Meeting held on January 30, 2003 as published in SARA News. Millie Gittinger, KB2SWR, seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Paul Siemers, WY2F, presented the Treasurer's report to the Board. Millie Gittinger, KB2SWR, made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Rob Leiden, KR2L, and it passed unanimously.

Correspondence: Tim Long, W2UI, reported that we had received several membership renewals, several repeater fund drive contributions, a bank statement, a Verizon statement, a request from the ARRL to continue to sponsor a plaque, and area club newsletters since the last Board Meeting.

Public Service: No Report, no events scheduled.

VE Sessions: Bill Mischler, KG2AC, reported via Paul Siemers, WY2F, that no requests for exams had been received.

Newsletter: Clark Gittinger, KG2AO, reported that duplication was done at Leonard Communications.

Membership: Tim Long, W2UI, reported that we had approximately 140 members at this time.

Public Relations: Rob Leiden, KR2L, reported that meeting notices have been published in the Gazette.

Repeater Committee: Paul, WY2F, reported that he had talked to Howard, W2ODC, and that Howard would reply to the Board with a single consistent voice.

RFI: No Report

Programs: Millie Gittinger, KB2SWR, reported that Bob Saltzman, WB2ARK, is ready and that the meeting would be held at Olin Hall on the Union College campus.

Old Business:

Raffle – Dan Whelan, N2UD, reported that tickets would be ready for sale at Monday's meeting. Dan also proposed amending his original proposal that we raffle a VX-7 and a VX-1 in lieu of the originally proposed VX-5 and VX-1 at a cost of \$400 in lieu of the original cost of \$350. The motion was made by Dan Whelan, N2UD, seconded by Millie Gittinger, KB2SWR, and it passed unanimously.

Repeater Fund Drive – Tim Long, W2UI, reported that the FCC database has been obtained and that work is in progress to manipulate the data into a form that is useable as the Repeater Fund Drive mailing list.

Membership List – Tim Long, W2UI, reported that we had received a few updates, a few requests for information to be withheld, and that work was in progress to filter and format the SARA database into a concise form that could be published as an attachment to the SARA News. We will target the June issue of SARA News.

Special Event / Message Fair at Rotterdam Square Mall – Dan Whelan, N2UD, reported that he had received an information packet from mall officials. Dan stated that videos, audio, and display materials are all available and that we could hold the event at any time. Dan also stated that we could deliberately schedule our event to coincide with the EMS show. Dan agreed to chair this event and Rob Leiden, KR2L, agreed to help.

Nominating Committee - Paul Siemers, WY2F, reported that the Nominating Committee would consist of Ray Wemple, KA2DVM, as Chairman assisted by Raleigh Keeter, K2RI, and Paul Siemers, WY2F.

Field Day - Paul Siemers, WY2F, reported that an announcement had been made in SARA News looking for a Field Day Chairman.

Insurance Coverage - Paul Siemers, WY2F, reported that we are still waiting for the results of our inquiries.

New Business:

New Members – Tom Scorone, KC2FCP, was presented to the Board for consideration. After a short discussion, Dan Whelan, N2UD, made a motion to accept Tom as a new member. The motion was seconded by Ramsey Seielstad, KC2GMW, and it passed unanimously.

ARRL Plaque - Dan Whelan, N2UD, made a motion that we continue to sponsor the ARRL June VHF, MultiOp, 6<sup>th</sup> Place Plaque at a cost of \$60. Dan added that we have historically sponsored this award and that if we gave up the opportunity to sponsor this award, that another sponsor would be found and that we would not get the opportunity again. The motion was seconded by Millie Gittinger, KB2SWR, and it passed unanimously.

501C3 Tax Status - Paul Siemers, WY2F, reported that Howard Friedman, WA2AFD, had volunteered to investigate the issue and complete the 40 page application. Paul stated that the application fee was \$500. The Board agreed to let Howard proceed with the investigation and to report the results of the investigation to the Board. Paul will talk to other area clubs that have already achieved this tax status and determine the pro's and con's

Field Day Site - Tim Long, W2UI, reported that for approximately the last 10 years, we had not been making the customary donation to the Glenville Hills Fire Department for use of their property for our Field Day operation. Tim said that the customary donation had been \$50 each year in appreciation for their cooperation. Dan Whelan, N2UD, made a motion that we give the Glenville Hills Fire Department a donation in the amount of \$100. Tim stated that the donation would be presented at a Fire Department meeting by representatives of SARA. Howard, W2ODC, will advise us of when the next meeting will be held. The motion was seconded by Tim Long, W2UI, and it passed unanimously

Millie Gittinger, KB2SWR, made a motion to adjourn at 8:44 PM and Paul Siemers, WY2F, concurred.

Respectfully submitted, Tim Long, W2UI, Secretary

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### Important Notice: Antenna Bill

Please check the **ARRL** members only web site for important information regarding the Antenna Bill. We have been asked to write to those representatives on the Local Government Committee to get the bill out of committee and onto the floor for a vote. The senate passed the bill last year and will likely pass it again very soon this year but we need to also get it passed by the Assembly. If you don't have access to the internet, call Millie Gittinger, KB2SWR for details.

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### Morse Code Test

There will be a Morse-code test offered by the SARA VE team on Thursday, April 10 at 7 pm in Room A-215 of Niskayuna High School, 1626 Balltown Road, Niskayuna, NY 12309. Preregistration is required. To register, contact Bill Mischler, KG2AC, at 370-1350, or Bob Raffaele, W2XM, at 459-8435 (before 9:30. please).

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### Directions for Niskayuna High School New Cafeteria

Enter the school grounds at the traffic light just north of the Nott Street major intersection on Balltown Road. Drive to the road intersection in front of the main school entrance, and turn right at this intersection. Drive around to the back of the school, past a narrow point where the school and the adjacent shopping center are close together. Park in the first area of the rear parking lot that you come to. Enter the school at the entrance near a large circular fan mounted on the side of the wall of the nearby building extension. (This extension has some fenced in electrical boxes at its end.) The New Cafeteria is directly across the hall from the entrance..

For those of us who want to play with GPS units, the entrance doorway is at N 42deg. 49.070min., W 73deg. 53.325min.

## The River Watch Activation Event

Schenectady County ARES/RACES members and other amateur radio operators were activated recently to watch the Mohawk River for flooding due to ice jams, melting of heavy snow cover and rain. The Emergency Operations Center was manned Tuesday morning March 18, 2003 at the request of Dan Fiorillo, Director of the Schenectady County Office of Emergency Management and was manned off and on until the threat of flooding subsided on Friday March 21.

The problem began early Tuesday morning when the rising water flushed the ice from the Schoharie Creek, a significant tributary of the Mohawk, and the ice had jammed in the Mohawk between Schenectady and Amsterdam, New York. Hydrologists at the National Weather Service, Albany Office notified the Schenectady OEM and the ham members of Skywarn. Amateur operators were assigned to monitor the water levels on the Mohawk as well as ice conditions. An operator was also assigned to amateur station WX2ALY at the Weather Service so that the hydrologist would be informed immediately of the River conditions and questions could be relayed to the operators in the field.

The situation remained static until about noon on Wednesday, March 19, when the ice jam moved to Freeman's Bridge just down stream of the Stockade section of the City of Schenectady and the River level in the Stockade rose to flood stage or 223 feet above sea level.

An interesting attempt was made, by the Office of Emergency Management on Wednesday evening, to break the ice jam by using a three ton wrecking ball suspended by a crane placed on the bridge. The results were not spectacular but enough ice was freed to permit an increase in water flow so the level of water dropped about two feet in the Stockade over the next eight hours.

The ice jam remained in place and rain began to fall on Thursday afternoon. Shortly after midnight, on Friday morning, the jam broke loose and moved downstream. It was thought the ice would again jam at a point just downstream of the Rexford Bridge where there is a narrow spot in the river. At daylight on Friday morning, there was a heavy fog cover, and the position of the ice could not be seen from any of the vantage points because of the poor visibility. By the time the fog lifted about 10:00 AM it became clear that the ice had continued downstream and over the dam at Lock 7. The immediate threat to Schenectady had ended.

The number of call signs appearing in the log maintained at the EOC has not been counted but it is estimated that between 20 and 30 amateur operators participated during the three and one half day period. The flooding threat was extensively covered by local TV stations on Wednesday evening and an article appeared in the Friday March 21, 2003 issue of the Albany Times Union which covered the part played by amateur radio operators.

A meeting was held on Thursday March 27 to critique the event of the week before. In general, the part played by the amateur radio operators in the event went very well. The on the air operations were controlled in an efficient and professional manner by those operating from the EOC. The operators in the field were familiar with the vantage points along the river where it can be observed and with the locations of the gauges. Some of the gauges need repair or replacement and a few new gauges at new locations added. There is hope that this can be done this summer.

Thanks and expressions of appreciation are included in a separate item in the News but we again express our thanks to all who helped.

Raleigh Keeter, K2RI, RO, Schenectady County RACES

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**Come Join the Sunday ARES-RACES nets. All are welcome.**

1:00 PM - K2AE 444.200 repeater

1:15 PM - K2AE 224.060 repeater (Off air temporarily)

1:30 PM - K2AE 147.060 repeater

2:00 PM - 3953 KHz, 75 Meter HF Band

## The Trading Post



**FOR SALE  
OR TRADE**

**For sale** - Kenwood TS820 HF transceiver with MC 30 mike –  
Call Rudy 372-6139 or E-mail W2JVF@juno.com

### Special: Vintage Converters for Sale!

Two Genuine Multi-Banded A-Bradley High Value Power Converters, never used, nint condition. Extremely wide bandwidth capability. Genuine axial C<sub>6</sub> construction, 2W continuous power rating, high reliability. Good ventilation reccomended at higher power levels. A steal at \$100 each. Will exhibit at meeting if not sold by April First. See Kilroy - um, he was around here somewhere.

For any items to trade or sell or if you are looking for some item, contact the editor or post email to the adress below.

To post an ad in the SARA News, email:

**sara@e-groups.com.**

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## Announcing the SARA Field Day "Double Header" TWO HT Give Away!

SARA will be giving away TWO Handie Talkies at this year's Field Day. The 1st grand prize will be a Yaesu VX-7 five watt four band (50, 144, 222 and 440 Mhz) HT. The 2nd grand prize will be a Yaesu VX-1 one watt dual band (144 and 440 Mhz). There will be several other station accessories and publications as door prizes. The winners will be drawn at the SARA Field Day site in June. Those winning the HT grand prizes need not be at field day to win.

Tickets went on sale at the March SARA Meeting at \$3 per ticket The total number of tickets available will be limited and there will be some special "early bird bundles" available at reduced rates of 2 tickets for \$5 and 5 tickets for \$10 so get yours early! All proceeds from the tickets go to fund SARA's many activities like Field Day. For tickets see Dan Whelan N2UD or other SARA club officers for tickets.

So this is your chance to support SARA, Field Day and maybe be able to bring a brand new HT on vacation this summer!

Dan N2UD

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## Repeater Fund Drive

The K2AE/W2GBO repeater fund drive is well underway, and contributions are starting to come in. Send yours now to SARA, George Williams W2CSN – treasurer, PO Box 207, Alplaus, NY 12008. Make out the checks to Schenectady Amateur Radio Association, and mark them "Repeater Fund". Also indicate if you wish other than 50/50 allocation to the 146.94 W2GBO and 147.06 K2AE repeater. Letters are being sent to those who are friends of the repeaters, but may not be a member of SARA.

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## Get SARA News by E-Mail

You can arrange to have SARA News delivered direct to your E-Mail address in PDF format, readable by a free download of the Adobe Acrobat Reader. You will get a color version of the newsletter sooner than by mail, which you can print if you desire. E-Mail delivery also saves the club time, volunteer effort, and money. If interested, contact Tim Long, W2UI at 399-7454 or longt@empireone.net.

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## SARA web site

<http://www.rpi.edu/~brandp/sara/index.html>

Get the latest on SARA activities

## Who to Contact in SARA

There are a number of ways to get in touch with the leaders of your club: contact on the air, E-mail (either direct or through sara@egroups.com) or by phone. The important thing is to let them know what you want your club to be!

### Officers:

Pres: Paul Siemers, WY2F, (siemers@crd.ge.com) 371-0215  
 VPres: Millie Gittinger, KB2SWR, (gittingn@crisny.org) 377-0671  
 Sec: Tim Long, W2UI, (longt@empireone.net) 399-7454  
 Treas: George Williams, W2CSN (williamg@tardis.union.edu) 377-6188  
 Dir: Rob Leiden, KR2L, (bleiden1@nycap.rr.com) 399-9343  
 Ramsey Seielstad, KC2GMW, 377-2263  
 Daniel Whelan, N2UD. 895-2754  
 Gerry Crawmer, KE2JJ, 371-1797

### Committees:

SARA News: Clark Gittinger, KG2AO, (gittingn@crisny.org) 377-0671  
 PIO: Rob Leiden, KR2L (bleiden1@nycap.rr.com)  
 Rept./K2AE: Howard Lester W2ODC (hlester@nycap.rr.com)  
 RFI: Rudy Dehn W2JVF (w2jvf@juno.com)  
 Membership: Ramsey Seielstad, KC2GMW 377-2263  
 Pub. Ser.: Ken Klikeman AA2CW (klikema@nycap.rr.com) 861-6825  
 VE team: Bill Mischler, KG2AC

**VE registration: (518) 370-1350**

## Schenectady Amateur Radio Association Inc

### Membership Application-Renewal Form

Regular Dues	\$20.00	\$_____
Spouse	\$ 5.00	\$_____
Student	\$ 5.00	\$_____
Repeater Fund Donation		\$_____
Initiation Fee	\$ 5.00*	\$_____

\*New Members Only

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Call \_\_\_\_\_

Nickname \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

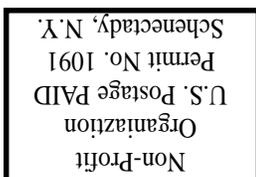
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

ARRL \_\_\_\_\_ RACES \_\_\_\_\_ ARES \_\_\_\_\_ MARS \_\_\_\_\_

Send to SARA, P.O. Box 207, Alplaus, N.Y. 12008-0207

January, 2003

April, 2003



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 Schenectady Amateur Radio Association Inc.  
 P.O. Box 207  
 Alplaus, N.Y. 12008