WARC Newsletter

The Monthly Newsletter of the Wantagh Amateur Radio Club September 2003

Meeting Notice: General membership meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month at the Wantagh Public Library. On September 12th, due to scheduled library repairs, our monthly meeting of the Wantagh Amateur Radio Club will be cancelled. It will be held instead at 8:00 P.M. on the following Friday, ***September 19th.***

Agenda: Appointment of a nominating committee for election of officers in 2004.

Minutes of the August 8th General Meeting

WARC MEETING MINUTES 8/8/03

Vic K2IY opened the meeting at 8:20 PM.

Officers Present:
- Vic K2IY - Vice President
- Bill N2RRX - Secretary
- Chris KC2FBW - Treasurer
- Jack KI2M - Director
- Arnold W2OEJ - Director

Minutes from July were accepted as read by the secretary, Bill N2RRX.

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Inside This Issue

Sole ARRL Director Race Is In HUDSON DIVISION

The only contested seat in the current election cycle for ARRL directors and vice directors is in the Hudson Division. Incumbent Director Frank Fallon, N2FF, will face a challenge from current Vice Director and former Director Steve Mendelsohn, W2ML. Ballots will go out no later than October 1 to all full League members in the division who are in good standing as of September 10. The current election cycle includes the Central, Hudson, New England, Northwestern and Roanoke divisions.

"The Election Committee has completed its review of nomination petitions and candidates' questionnaires for this year's elections for Director and Vice Director," said ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, in his capacity as ARRL Board secretary. "In all uncontested elections the single eligible

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Editor's Note: Frank Fallon, N2FF, a frequent speaker at our monthly meetings, is a longtime Long Island resident and friend of our ham community. His re-election should be beneficial to all Long Island and downstate hams. N2RSO

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Treasurer's Report: Chris KC2FBW reported $381.31 as the current balance.

Announcements:

The library will be closed for our next meeting due to renovations. Vic will request Friday 9/19/03 as an alternate meeting date.

After a discussion about possible changes to our future monthly meeting dates, it was agreed that we would continue to meet on Fridays. We also opted for an echolink demo to be presented at some future date after we have overcome the lack of available Internet connectivity in the library.

DX Report:
It was given by Sid K2LJH and others (Len KB2HK was absent from this meeting).
The bands are spotty but *some* DX can be found. Sid mentioned doing some 6-meter DX while upstate. Very little tropospheric ducting has been noted this summer.

Broad Band over Power Lines (BPL) was thoroughly discussed. If approved by the FCC, the resulting interference will probably be horrendous. This concept has been tried and discarded in Japan and Europe.

Frank N2RSO used the QRZ.com web site to locate Wantagh hams. He found 65. We discussed using this list in the future to locate hams in the area and invite them to attend our meetings. However, the first thing to do is to have interesting meeting agendas.

Meeting was closed at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bill N2RRX, secretary

Sole ARRL Director Race – Continued from Page 1

candidate has been declared elected or re-elected."

Challenger Mendelsohn--an ARRL Life Member--was elected to his first term as Hudson Division Vice Director in 1982 and became Director in 1987. The ARRL Board of Directors elected him ARRL First Vice President in 1994. Nominated for ARRL President at the Board's January 2000 meeting, Mendelsohn was defeated for the top job by Jim Haynie, W5JBP, on a nine to six vote. Later that year, he outpolled incumbent JP Kleinhaus, W2XX, to return to the Hudson Division's second slot.

Incumbent Fallon has served as director since 1997, when he took over the seat by defeating Richard Sandell, WK6R. A retired high school English teacher and a ham for 41 years, he's an ARRL Life Member. As Hudson Division Director, he's served on all standing committees, has been an elected member of the ARRL Executive Committee for four years and serves on the ARRL Foundation Board and on the Administration and Finance Committee, which oversees the League's programs and budget.

The lone candidate for the vice director's seat that Mendelsohn is vacating--Joyce Birmingham, KA2ANF--has been declared elected. A ham since 1979, Birmingham holds an Extra class ticket. She's

vice president of the 10-70 Repeater Association in New Jersey and enjoys chasing DX. She's also a volunteer examiner.

Ballots in the contested race must be received at ARRL Headquarters by noon Eastern Time on Friday, November 21. The vote will be tallied and the election result announced later that day. Three-year terms of office for successful director and vice director candidates begin at noon on January 1, 2004.

IF YOU'RE AN ARRL MEMBER, PLEASE VOTE!

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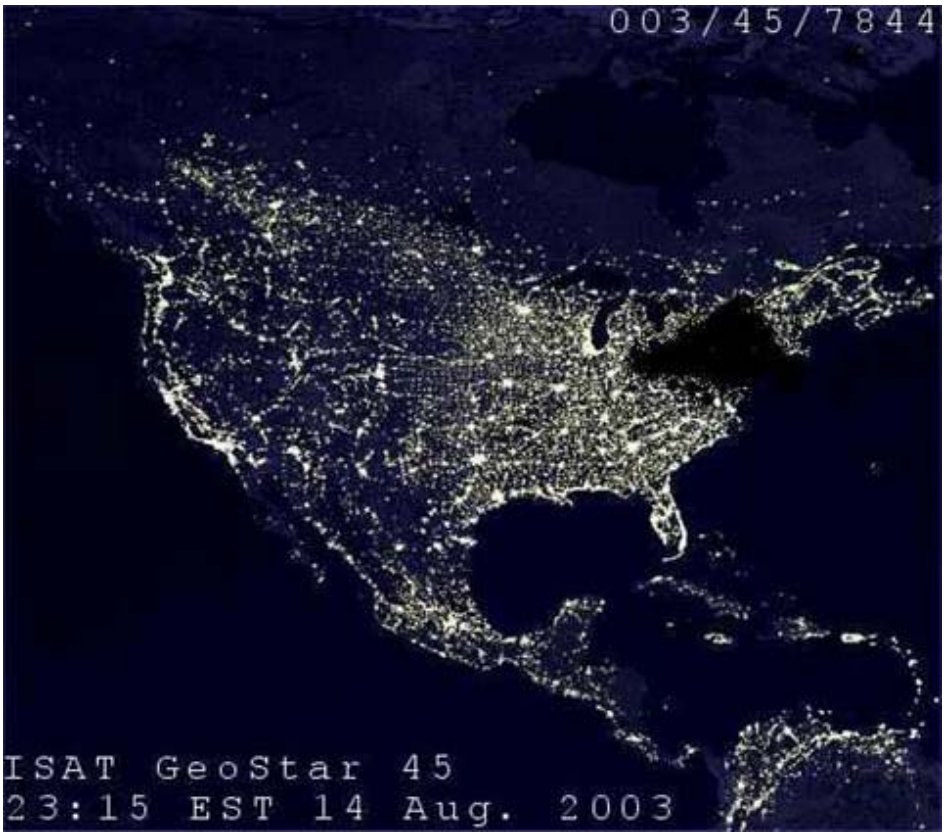
EAST COAST BLACKOUT

This nighttime photo from the International Space Station on August 14th shows the area affected by the temporary loss of power.

Our thanks go to Dan, KB2HTB, for providing this great photo.



Are You Up To Code? - (The National Electrical Code!)

AMATEUR ANTENNA SYSTEM "LEGAL" WORRIES?
By Ron Johnson/WE7H *UBET ARC*

Recently, I had a water damage claim denied by my insurance company for a minor mistake on my part as a homeowner. After worrying about this for endless nights, it has since entered my mind (shallow as it might be at times) a "what if" scenario like this:

What if lightning hit one of my antennas and I did not "meet code" and my insurance company denied any claims? What if not only my equipment was frizzled but my home also burnt to the ground leaving only my chimney standing. What if the resultant fire caused damage to my neighbor's property. I don't want to end-up in jail and my family without a dwelling because of some code or requirement I failed to meet.

What should I do?

I found a current copy of "the national electrical code" which is based upon the new edition of the "NFPA 70 National Electrical Code": the nation's most authoritative and comprehensive document on electrical safety addressing safety from fire and electrocution. Since 1897, the NEC has been the industry standard for electrical safety in the United States.

In offering a summary of the article 810 "amateur transmitting and receiving stations-antenna systems", I want to emphasize that I am not offering any legal requirements or advice...just a quotation of the best code available to hams.
(It sure beats disconnecting your antenna lead-in cables and placing them in a milk bottle to avoid lightning damage as some people actually do.) Most of what I quote is obvious to many, and there are additional measures many hams take to protect their homes and equipment, but a review won't hurt any of us! Most of us use coax for feeding our antennas, but the code addresses non-shielded wire feeders also. Many of us now use or will someday use twin lead, ladder-line or end fed wires. Read on...

Antenna wire size: (or lead-in size)

less than 150 foot span -hard drawn copper 14 awg minimum, copper clad steel 14 awg minimum.

greater than 150 foot span -hard drawn copper 10 awg minimum, copper clad steel 12 awg minimum.

Building clearance: (antennas and lead-in)
Firmly mounted at least 3 inches clear of building surfaces on nonabsorbent supports, such as treated pins or brackets equipped with insulators having not less than 3 inch air gap.

Note: where the lead-in conductors are in a metallic shield (coax) that is permanently and effectively grounded, the requirement is waived. However, lead-ins shall be so located as to make accidental contact with them difficult.

Building entrance:

Except where coax is used (and the shield is permanently and effectively grounded), lead-in conductors for transmitting stations shall enter buildings by one of the following:
1.) through rigid noncombustible, nonabsorbent tube or bushing
2.) through an opening providing firm, secured minimum 2 inch clearance
3.) through a drilled window pane

Antenna discharge units:

Each conductor of a lead-in shall be provided with an antenna discharge unit or other suitable means that will drain static charges from the antenna system.
Note: except where coax is used and is effectively and permanently grounded or where the antenna is permanently and effectively grounded.
Where a discharge unit is not installed, lightning protection may be provided by a switch that connects the lead-in to ground when the station is not in operation.

Grounding conductors:

All grounding conductors shall be of copper, aluminum, copper-clad steel, bronze or corrosion resistant material. Insulation of grounding conductors is not required, but they must be securely fastened and should be protected from physical damage. Grounding conductors for an antenna mast or antenna discharge unit shall be run in as straight a line as practicable to the grounding electrode.

Grounding electrode(s):

The grounding conductor shall be connected to the nearest accessible location on the building grounding electrode, the grounded interior metal water piping system or the power service ground. The grounding conductor can run inside or outside the building and shall not be smaller than no. 10 Copper or no 8 aluminum or no. 17 Copper-clad steel.

Note: a single grounding conductor shall be permitted for both protective and operating purposes. Antenna masts are required to be grounded to the same grounding electrode used for the electrical service used for the electrical system of the building. (This is necessary to assure all exposed dead metal parts are at the same potential). In many cases, masts are (incorrectly) connected to conveniently located vent pipes, metal gutters, and downspouts. This could create potential (VOLTAGE) differences between various metal parts of the building and lead-in conductors, resulting in possible shock and fire hazards. Gas piping systems are not permitted to be used as the required grounding electrode. Where multiple grounding electrodes are used, they must be bonded with jumpers not smaller than no. 6 copper.

Interior installation-transmitting stations:

All conductors inside the building shall be separated at least by 4 inches from the conductors of any electric light, power, or signaling circuit. (Note: this requirement holds true for coax also!)

Equipment grounding:

All metallic parts shall be effectively connected to ground, including all external metal handles and controls accessible to operating personnel.

Supports:

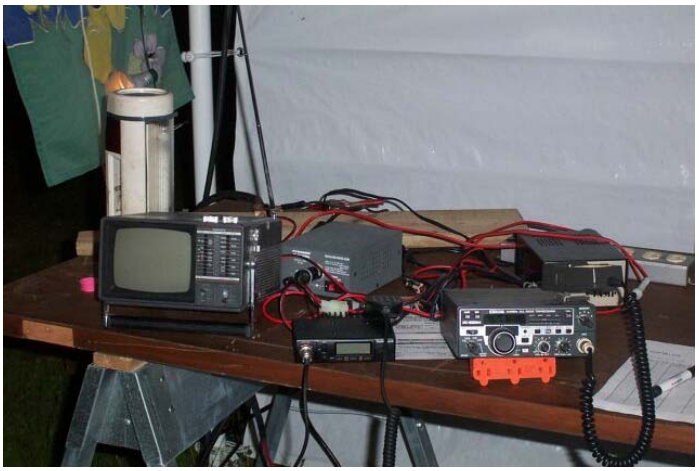
Antennas and lead-ins shall be securely supported and shall not be attached to the electric service mast or to poles carrying open wires of over 250 volts between conductors. Note: antennas or lead in wires shall not cross over open conductors, and side clearance of at least two feet shall be maintained (remember to consider swinging in the wind).

Whew....That's a lot to take-in, but it really is basic and it all makes sense. Much of this material is also outlined in the "ARRL Handbook". Not meaning to cause undue concern, how many of you have reviewed the safety, legality and adequacy of your A.C. main feeder system to and within your shack?

When I was a youth and still living at home, my mom refused to dust, touch or even get near my equipment....I can't blame her now that I remember my maze of wires. One of my worst electrical shocks was a result of simultaneously touching two pieces of ungrounded equipment, which turned out to be at different ground potential - knocking me across the room, making me wonder how I got on the floor laying against the wall!

GOOD SAFETY TO YOU AND 73...
RON JOHNSON, WE7H

. . . And even More F i e l d D a y P h o t o s - Provided by Jack, KI2M



"Did you know that"?

We all know that New York State allows a motor vehicle operator to turn right on a red light, after first coming to a FULL STOP, then yielding to any pedestrians or other traffic; but DID YOU KNOW THAT . . . the NY State Vehicle and Traffic law allows a LEFT turn on a red signal, when certain conditions are met? In § 1111 (d) 2. it states that "Except in a city having a population of one million or more, unless a sign is in place prohibiting such turn: b. Traffic, while on a one-way roadway, facing a steady red signal may cautiously enter the intersection to make a left turn onto a one-way roadway after stopping as required by paragraph one of this subdivision. Such traffic shall yield the right-of-way to pedestrians within a marked or unmarked crosswalk at the intersection and to other traffic lawfully using the intersection.

. . . and DID YOU KNOW THAT all NY State license plates bearing the Statue of Liberty logo are now illegal to display on your vehicle, and can carry a hefty fine up to $200.00, depending on the locality of the municipality issuing the summons?

Also, DID YOU KNOW THAT you may obtain the latest copy of the New York State Vehicle & Traffic Law (VTL) from any NYS Department of Motor Vehicles office for ONLY $1.00? If you plan to plead "Not Guilty" to a traffic infraction, then this is the book to read, since it is the "bible" from which the officer cites his traffic offenses.

The QRZ.com web site indicates that there are: 29894 licensed hams in NY State, of which 4394 are Extra Class, 3953 are Advanced, 6534 are General, 3845 are Tech Plus, 8706 are Techs, and 2462 are Novices.

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Some Happy Thoughts From Our Contributing Members

From Ralph, WP4KO –

You Know You're Living in the Year 2003 when...

1. Your reason for not staying in touch with family is because they do not have e-mail.

2. You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.

3. Your grandmother asks you to send her a JPEG file of your newborn so she can create a screen saver.

4. You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home.

5. Every commercial on television has a web site address at the bottom of the screen.

6. You buy a computer and 3 months later it's out of date and sells for half the price you paid.

7. Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't have the first 20 or 30 (or 60) years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go get it.

8. Using real money, instead of credit or debit, to make a purchase would be a hassle and take planning.

9. You just tried to enter your password on the microwave.

10. You consider second-day air delivery painfully slow.

11. Your dining room table is now your flat filing cabinet.

12. Your idea of being organized is multiple-colored Post-it notes.

13. You hear most of your jokes via e-mail instead of in person.

14. You get an extra phone line so you can get phone calls.

15. You disconnect from the Internet and get this awful feeling, as if you just pulled the plug on a loved one.

16. You get up in the morning and go online before getting your coffee.

17. You wake up at 2 AM to go to the bathroom and check your E-mail on your way back to bed.

18. You start tilting your head sideways to smile. ;)

19. You're reading this and nodding and laughing.

20. Even worse; you know exactly who you are going to forward this to...