

telstar



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF STARS (SOUTH TOWNS AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY)

ISSUE 252 DECEMBER 2002

2003 Club Elections

The 2003 STARS club elections were held at the November club meeting.

The following are the winners of the election:

President	Bob Koster	KA2WYE
Vice President	John Crawford, Sr.	KB2VWC
Secretary	Keith Patterson	KC2DGC
Treasurer	John Cullum, Jr.	KB2ESM
Financial Secretary	Judy Levan	N2TEZ
Director (2 Year Term)	Bruce Settlemyer	KC2GJX

These people plus Scott Barto (a Director in the second year of his two-year term) will make up the 2002 STARS Board of Directors. They will be sworn into their positions at the December meeting.

Meeting Attendance Raffle

At the December Holiday Party, there will be a free raffle for all members that have been to at least one meeting in the last year. Each meeting that was attended resulted in one ticket being placed in the bin with that member's call sign on it. Members must be present to collect a prize. The prizes include two RASCAL Interfaces, two atomic clocks, a watt-meter, and a free one year STARS membership.

December Meeting

This month's club meeting will begin at 7 PM on Thursday, December 5 at the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect Ave. at Hawkins Ave.). All interested in amateur radio are invited to attend; neither an amateur radio license nor club membership are required.



Besides the usual club business, we will be inducting our new club officers for 2003.

Of course, this meeting will also conclude with our traditional Holiday Party. The club will be providing pizza and pop, and members are invited to bring finger foods to share with each other. Members are also invited to set up "for sale" tables.

There will be a drawing for prizes (See below). Also, please remember to bring donations for our Food Drive. See article on page 4.

We look forward to seeing you there!

2003 Membership Renewal

Don't forget to renew your membership for 2003!

You should complete the form included with your November newsletter and bring it along with your dues to the monthly club meeting or mail them to Membership Chairman Judy Levan N2TEZ, 120 University Blvd., Depew, NY 14043.

If you can't find the renewal form, just put your name, call, address, phone number, email address and class of license on a piece of paper. Also, please let us know if you would like to receive your newsletter via email.

STARS & ARRL Memberships

Membership in STARS is open to anyone with an interest in amateur radio. A license is not required. Membership applications may be obtained by sending a SASE to Judy Levan N2TEZ, 120 University Blvd., Depew, NY 14043, from the newsletter editor or from board members.

Annual Dues are payable on January 1 and are \$21 for a single membership, \$27 for family memberships and \$8 for a student membership (through grade 12). The dues are pro-rated on a monthly basis for new members plus there is an initiation fee of \$5 when first applying to the club. For example, a new member joining in July would pay \$10.50 (6 months X \$1.75 per month) plus the \$5 initiation fee for a total of \$15.50.

Applications should be returned to Judy N2TEZ along with the appropriate dues. The applications will be reviewed and voted on by the Board of Directors at the business meeting. The applications are then voted on by the general membership at the next regular club meeting.

Members who are joining ARRL for the first time or who are renewing their membership after a lapse of two years or more should send their ARRL membership forms to Jack Cullum, Jr. KB2ESM, 6871 Webster Rd., Orchard Park, NY 14127 along with a check made out to STARS. No extra cost to you and STARS benefits! STARS no longer benefits from normal yearly renewals, so they should be sent directly to the ARRL.



Club Net

STARS club nets are open to all to exchange information on local amateur radio activities.

STARS WB2EZU Memorial HF net meets at 10 AM local time on Saturdays on 3.925 MHz +/- QRM.

STARS Information Net is held on the second and third Thursdays of the month at 7:30 PM on the STARS 147.090 MHz repeater (107.2 Hz PL tone needed).

From The President

Let me start by wishing a Very Happy Holiday Season to the membership. The election of club officers was held at the November meeting. I would like to take this time to say thank you all for coming out to the meeting, congratulations to all the winners and a thank you all to those who supported the club leadership by voting.

As the year 2002 draws to a close, I look back at the positive accomplishments that we have made this year, and know we must continue to keep moving forward. This year we attracted many new and returning members, set new contest records for the club station, had a outstanding field day and continued to be a leading organization in Western New York amateur radio. We must be doing few things right don't you think?

With the Holidays fast approaching, I must remind you to keep your vacation plans private. Do not mention that you are going to be away or your schedule. There are a lot of listeners with scanners out there and with the call sign databases some ill intended people could make you a victim very easily.

Also remember we are at a state of war with terrorism, so remain alert and ready to provide helpful communications services to the public safety.

STARS will be holding our annual Holiday party on December 5th at the Hamburg Youth Center after a brief business meeting. The Club will provide the soft drinks and pizza but please feel free to bring some finger foods or something special homemade. At the party we will have some extra items to give away including the special meeting attendance raffle. Some very special prizes will be given away. Please try to make it to this very extraordinary event.

Also at this meeting many members in the past have take advantage of a crowd and set up a "for sale" table. If you want to set up a for sale table, please feel free to do so. You may want to bring you own table, and come early to set up.

I will keep this month's column short, but add this personal note. It is with great pleasure to me that the members have elected me once again to be the President of STARS. I am looking forward to another great year with the Club and all the activities that we have throughout the year. Again let me close by wishing A Very Merry and Happy Holiday Season to you from myself and family.

73's
Bob Koster KA2WYE

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Grounding Part 2

When we last talked about watering your ground stake, I forgot to add that you may want to add a few cups of rock salt in the pvc pipe. This will increase your conductivity from your ground stake to the ground itself. Be careful not to use too much salt. I did this at one QTH that I lived in 20 years ago, and it killed the grass around the pipe for a long time. "Wasn't such a bad thing Hi Hi."

When grounding a rooftop tower or a ground-mounted tower, you should also consider installing a heavy duty wire. For the roof-mounted tower, you should use an insulated wire so that any static build up that is discharged to the ground does not set your roof on fire. For the ground-mounted tower, you can use any heavy duty non insulated wire.

You should have one continuous piece of wire from the top of the tower to your ground stake. This way you will not have any impedance bumps in the line. Remember, lightning is looking for the quickest, shortest path to ground, so you will want to keep the bends and angles to a minimum.

I have always found that using 3 eight foot ground stakes tied together is the best way to go. You may also want to bury about 40 to 60 feet of bare wire. This helps to discharge any static build up and any direct hit from the Gods. Make sure that all of your connections are clean and tight.

Last time, I said that you should NEVER ground your radios or antennas to the cold water system in your house. Well, about 2 weeks ago during the bad storms that hit the area, a fire hydrant took a direct lightning strike. As a result, the hydrant was blown out of the ground and 2 houses had every piece of equipment that was plugged into an outlet ruined. So much for it being a good ground.

In closing, having a good solid efficient ground for your ham shack and antenna system is one of the most important projects you will need to do. Not only will you generate a better signal, but your harmonics will go to ground and not elsewhere in your house or neighborhood. I hope that this information will help some of you that are new to the hobby, when you go to install your antenna system or towers.

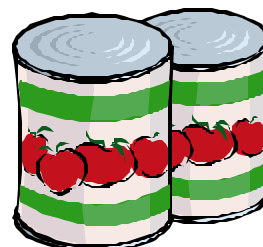
IF you have any questions or comments, please feel free to E Mail me.

Sincerely and 73's
Gary KB2YJ

STARS Food Drive

As we did in 2001, we will have a food drive at our Holiday Party this year. The food collected will be donated who distributes food to the needy of the area.

Here is a partial list of needed items. Cereals, pancake mix, jelly or jam, noodles and cheese, all pastas, tuna fish, bagged rice, dried beans, soup mixes, spaghetti sauce, "canned" or any other non-perishables that you can think of. Please, no exploded cans or out of date items.



This is a great way we can help to give back to the local community. Please bring what you can.

VE Session

The STARS VE Team held a VE exam session on Saturday, November 16 at the Grace Lutheran Church.

Four candidates attended the session. Two qualified for their new Technician class licenses and one qualified for an upgrade to General class.



VE's serving at the session were Judy Levan N2TEZ, Rich Budzynski KI2X, Angela Pessecow KC2IUQ, John Crawford Sr. KB2VWC and Terry Rockhold K2OO.

STARS Board of Directors

President	Bob Koster	KA2WYE
Past President	Gary Zanghi	KB2YJ
Vice President	John Crawford, Sr.	KB2VWC
Treasurer	John Cullum, Jr.	KB2ESM
Finc. Secretary	Judy Levan	N2TEZ
Secretary	Keith Patterson	KC2DGC
Director	Scott Barto	KB2KOL
Director	Terri Karr	KB2TRS

AMATEUR RADIO EXAMINATIONS

STARS will hold test sessions on 1/11, 3/8, 5/10 and 7/12 in 2003 at Grace Lutheran Church (McKinley Pkwy. and Newton Road) in Hamburg. All candidates should report to the church by 9 AM. Walk-ins are allowed, but pre-registering will reduce time at exams. For information or to pre-register for STARS tests, contact Terry Rockhold K2OO at 656-0865.

Lancaster ARC will be holding test sessions on the third Wednesday of each month at the Lancaster ARC Club House, 525 Pavement Road, Lancaster. For information on Lancaster exams, call Peter Orendorf AB2KG 662-0096 or e-mail him at fouroz1@aol.com

ARATS will be holding test sessions on 1/4, 2/1, 3/1, 4/5, 5/3 and 6/7 in 2003 at the North Tonawanda Fire Headquarters at 495 Zimmerman St. For information on ARATS exams, call Vic Gadzik K2YW at 694-9738.

PROS will be holding test sessions at 10 AM on the third Saturday of the month at the Sardinia Historical Society Building, Savage Road off Rte. 39 in Sardinia, NY. For information, contact Pat Murray NW2I at 652-8178.

Some exams do not allow walk-ins, so call ahead and make a reservation.

Technician Class License Course

The 2002 Technician Class License Course sponsored by STARS and ARATS concluded on Friday, November 29. The students had spent 12 weeks studying FCC rules and regulations, radio-wave propagation, basic electronics, feed lines and antennas, RF radiation safety, etc.

The course began at the Julia Boyer Reinstein Library in Cheektowaga, but the last 4 sessions had to be moved to the Greenhaven Library in Tonawanda due to construction work at the Reinstein Library. The final session was a VE exam to allow them to qualify for their amateur radio licenses. Vic Gadzik K2YW headed a team of VE's from ARATS and STARS. When the dust had settled, 14 happy students walked out with their Certificates of Successful Completion of Examination. (CSCEs). A mother and 9 year old daughter from the course had also earned their licenses at an earlier VE session.

Instructors for the course were Terry Rockhold K2OO and Jim Livingston N2SKT.

Gowanda School ARC

The Gowanda Central School ARC is finally on the air. Our station has been fully assembled, which includes a Yaesu FT-847 (160m-70cm xcvr), matching power supply, and an MFJ antenna tuner. Antennas consist of a Cushcraft R-6000 vertical for 20m-6m, and a tri-band yagi for 6m, 2m, and 70cm.

We have about 12 interested students who have been studying the code and operating the equipment each Monday from 2:45-3:45 PM. Each week, we seem to pick up a new member. Several students have already purchased their study manuals and have been doing a lot of studying on their own.

Unfortunately, we are unable to use 70cm because we do not have the necessary duplexer. We hope to do some fund-raising soon to help with that. Any assistance that you could provide would be greatly appreciated. I am not begging for monetary donations. Anything ham related that could be of use to the kids would be great. We have lots of nice equipment, but none of the simple things like soldering irons, solder, and connectors, for example. If you could possibly donate anything, please bring it to the STARS December Holiday Party, or contact Scott, KB2KOL at bart0977@adelphia.net, on the air, or at 648-1435.

Thanks, 73's, and Happy Holidays!
Scott KB2KOL

SKYWARN Informational Nets

Our monthly Winter informational nets run through February. The nets are held on the second Tuesday of the month. The next nets will be Tuesday December 10th. .

On 2-meters, the nets are held at 7PM on the 145.31 Attica and 147.15 Fulton repeaters and at 7:30 PM on the 146.67 Arkwright, 145.11 Bristol and 147.255 Watertown repeaters. Don't forget even if you're not a ham, you can listen in on your scanner!

On HF, the weekly nets are held on Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM at 7.234 Mhz (+/- QRM). The SKYWARN nets are a good opportunity to keep touch with our local reporting procedures. We'd like to thank Greg KE2VW for his dedication to amateur radio and are pleased that the 146.67 is back up and running.

SKYWARN E-NEWSLETTER—December 2002



STARS



CLUB REPEATERS

The club repeater (WB2ELW/R) is located near Colden, NY (147.09/.69 output/input, with a PL of 107.2 Hz). Autopatch privileges are available to club members.

STARS honorary southern repeater (KE2VW/R) is in Arkwright, NY (146.67/.07 out/in, with a PL of 107.2 Hz).

The club UHF repeater is located near Colden, NY (442.325 MHz with a PL access of 107.2 Hz.)

CLUB WEB PAGES

The club has a home site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.wb2elw.com>

CLUB MEETINGS

Club meetings are normally held on the first Thursday of the month at the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect Ave. at Hawkins Ave.) at 7:00 PM. Everyone is welcome.

Board meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Nike Base Club Station at 7:30 PM and are open to all club members.

CLUB HF STATIONS

The club Nike Base HF Station (WB2ELW) is located on Lakeview Road 1.75 miles east of Route 20 next to the Hamburg Town Arena. The station is operated on some Saturdays between 1 and 3 PM local time. A second club HF station is located at the Hamburg Youth Center.

STARS

Terry W. Rockhold K200
4805 Transit Road #1903
Depew, NY 14043
(716) 656-0865
k200@bigfoot.com