

## Spring Amateur Radio Classes to be Offered: Starts March 4: All License Levels Covered!

Marty Miller N2LDR, has again volunteered to do the Ham classes this spring at the Club House.

The first class will be March 4th (Wednesday), from 7 to 9 PM, with John, W2JSN, offering CW practice and some other skills the hour before (6 to 7). There will be 10 classes as before, with the 10th one being the Ham License tests.

We will offer Technician, General, and Extra classes at each session, so Marty wants Club members to help out, according to their skills. Members mentioned, who we would like to help teach specific parts, included Bob, Jules, Wayne, Dana, Carl, Len, Steve. I'm sure I have unintentionally left out others who can be a big help, as doing all 3 licenses at the same sessions would be too much for Marty to handle all by himself.

"I picture it being something like the old-fashioned one-room school houses, where several grades were taught each day, with the general and extra students helping teach the technician students, and the technician students hearing and being exposed to the general and extra instructions."

You will remember when code was a part of the licenses, it took 30 minutes out of the 2 hour classes, so the actual classes in the past were only 1 1/2 hours.

With John having an hour for CW and crafts (soldering, multimeter usage, kit building, antenna making, etc, BEFORE the 2 hour instructional time, we will have TWICE the instructional time, so teaching Technician, General, and Extra all at the same classes is a can-do. We will NOT do hands-on projects during the 7 to 9 time slot.

We anticipate most of the active club members will want to up-grade their licenses to Extra . . . or at least, to General.

### We need your help!

Please pass along any comments and suggestions. We will need to decide how to publicize. John said what he tried last year wasn't very effective. He said he will put a large sign in the show room window, that a lot of drive-by people will see: "Ham Radio License Classes Start March 4th at 6PM." But much more will be needed.

This sounds like a new challenge and a lot of fun. Marty totally agrees that all the instructional time needs to be focused in test questions, test questions, test questions.

We NEED your thoughts and your physical help to get through another successful class.

*Stan, WA2UET*

## Annual Auction On March 16<sup>th</sup>

The RVWARS club auction will be held during the regular meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Club members from our club as well as neighboring clubs are



urged to attend to both buy and sell good working ham radio equipment. Students from the current Tech. Class are also invited to attend the auction as they will soon be needing HF rigs as well as VHF/UHF rigs.

The 7:00 p.m. meeting and auction will be held at the RVWARS "Clubhouse," Noecker's auto dealership, at the corner of Rt. 66 and Graham Avenue, Hudson.

As in past years, Shelly AA2Y and Wayne K2WG will be the auctioneers. Both have requested that the "junk box" be left at home in the garage or attic and only actual Ham radio rigs and accessories be brought to the auction. In years' past, many "boxes o' stuff" unrelated to ham radio have been offered without any takers.

Stop at the head table and register with Stan WA2UET who will issue identification tags for auction items.

The club gets 10%, up to a maximum of \$25, per item sold at the auction. Remember, this is a major funding event for the Club.



## Upcoming Events

**Monday, March 2 — 7:00 p.m.**  
ARES/RACES Meeting  
Noecker Clubhouse. Rt. 66 &  
Graham Ave. Hudson

**Monday, March 16 — 7:00 p.m.**  
RVWARS Meeting **AUCTION**  
Noecker Clubhouse. Rt. 66 &  
Graham Ave. Hudson

**Wednesdays, — 6:30 p.m.**  
March 4 — May 6  
Amateur Radio License Classes  
Noecker Clubhouse. Rt. 66 &  
Graham Ave. Hudson

### RVWARS Weekly Nets

**Tuesday — 7:00 p.m.**  
Informal Roundtable Net. 147.21  
Repeater

**Thursday — 7:00 p.m.**  
ARES/RACES Emergency  
Training Net: 147.21 Repeater



#### Rip Van Winkle Amateur Radio Society VITAL STATISTICS

President — Tom Gutierrez N2NZD  
Vice President — Steve Walsh W2SXX  
Secretary — Shelly Evans AA2Y  
Treasurer — Stan Engel WA2UET  
Historian — Stan Engel WA2UET  
Safety Officer — Stan Engel WA2UET  
Newsletter — David Clapper WA2FTI  
E-mail — [dclapper@mhicable.com](mailto:dclapper@mhicable.com)  
Repeaters — 147.21 224.280 449.925  
Club Call — Kilo 2 Rip Van Winkle  
Web Page — <http://www.rvwars.com>  
RVWARS E-mail — [wa2fti@yahoo.com](mailto:wa2fti@yahoo.com)  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RVWARS/>

# Telephone Line to Repeater Replaced After December's Ice Storm Damage

Bob Turner, WB2DUW — Repeater Chairman

As a result of the December ice storm, not only the power line was torn down by the ice on the trees, but the telephone line that provides our "autopatch" and some control functions, was also ripped down and out of service until the first weeks of February 2009.



The road was a sheet of ice and water!

I contacted VERIZON our service supplier, and explained that the telephone line had been out of service since December, and the road was open enough to allow them to make the necessary repairs. I followed up with a trip to the local telco garage in Hudson, and met with several of my old crew. After the usual handshakes and introductions to the "new" guys in the group, it was decided that the following day we would make the trip up the hill to the repeater site to repair the damaged line.

As it turned out the six-pair cable that they had run up the hill a year before, was torn up so badly that they decided to replace the whole run of the six-pair cable and cut-in new terminals.

The last 700 feet of the line that was run in the trees had to be replaced by laying it on the

ground until we could get up there to rehang it in the trees after the 6 to 8 inches of snow that was on the ground had melted.

The work was completed the next day when the cable was re-connected to the terminal at the bottom of the hill, on route 23, and at the building at the repeater site.

When the line was finally re-connected I tested the line and it worked just fine, no noise or any faults were evident.

After I returned home from our two-day trip to the site, I contacted Stan, our repeater trustee, and let him know that the telephone line was back in service.

The last 700 feet to the building is still laying on the ground awaiting warmer weather when we can get up there and pull it back up in the trees, and finish cleaning up the mess from the downed tree branches.



Verizon Line Truck stuck on the ice

#### Hudson Valley Towers

Tower Installation — Antennas  
New Installations  
Repairs

**Ray Higgins W2RE**  
**Lee Imber WW2DX**

[www.hudsonvalleytowers.com](http://www.hudsonvalleytowers.com)

[service@hudsonvalleytowers.com](mailto:service@hudsonvalleytowers.com)

# It Feels Pretty Good Being an Elmer

## *or, the Wonder of Radio*

by John Wendt WA6BFH

If there is any single element that I have seen that reflects upon the nature of Ham Radio it's, the "Wonder Factor" and its relative ratio amongst the Ham populace. Hams that I have known that got licensed with a "No-Code Tech" license, and have not upgraded, seem to be in sort of a rut. They don't seem to see much "Wonder". They tend to use the radio mostly as an intercom, or a distraction from everyday tedium. They will use it only to keep from becoming bored on the daily commute etc. Hams who have upgraded either by license class, or even better by a diverse exploration of license privileges, are much more upbeat. **Being an "Elmer."**

Some Hams may simply not want to go to the trouble. There isn't much I can say in answer of that! Other Hams may simply not know what to do to help, or how to go about it. Here are some tips that individual "elmers" can do on their own, or maybe better yet through the benefit of their local clubs.

1) Form a "technical tutoring committee" within your club. When problems such as TVI or Audio Rectification crop up, use the opportunity to demonstrate the physics of what is going on. If a Ham asks a question such as "why is Single Sideband superior to Frequency Modulation", use it as an opportunity to investigate this and come up with some good scientific answers. I myself could make a pretty strong argument that FM is actually better, dependent of course on occupied bandwidth and receiver design!

2) Try offering to help Hams build

some desirable kits. This could be done to help out or tutor a single Ham, or it could be done for a slightly larger group. There are lots of kits out there! It wouldn't matter too much if say amongst 6 or 8 "student builders", 3 or 4 different kinds of kit devices were being built within the same classroom environment. You will really see "the wonder", when you see that Ham that you helped to understand the radio he or she just built, make their first "contact" with it!

3) Sponsor some "technical talks". A Ham club might even be able to bolster its treasury by asking a modest fee for attendance at such a lecture discussion. A guaranteed topic is "How Antennas Work"! Everybody wants to know this but, it is seldom explained in a scientific manner!

What say ye guys and gals? Try these ideas out, and even tell me of some others that you come up with? For anyone who does this, you will find it's really rewarding when someone picks up and builds upon the knowledge you helped impart. Besides, it's an old Ham tradition!



Below are the dates/times for AT-VET for 2009 exam sessions held at RPI.

#### DATES/TIMES:

April 25 - Saturday- 10:00 am  
 July 22 - Wednesday- 7:00 pm  
 October 17 - Saturday- 10:00 am  
 November 14 - Saturday-10:00am

Doors open 45 minutes prior to each exam date above



The Annual  
**RVWARS**  
 March

# Auction

March 16,  
 2009

at the  
**CLUBHOUSE**

(Noecker's)

Corner of Graham & Route 66  
 Hudson

7:00 pm

Bring your Good Used Ham  
 Gear

for Auction!

(NO JUNK PLEASE!)

Buy a Rig

or Antenna

for your Ham Shack!

Good Opportunity for  
**NEW HAMS**

to find Equipment!

Refreshments Served!

50/50

SEE  
 YOU  
 THERE!



## Ham Radio Antenna Selection Tips

Claude Jollet VE2DPE

Every ham radio antenna is full of inevitable compromises. When choosing or building a ham antenna (amateur radio antenna), the most common compromises you have to make will fall in the following categories:

- ◆ Cost (for a commercially made antenna or cost of parts if homemade).
- ◆ Available space (both horizontal and vertical).
- ◆ Durability.
- ◆ Performance (of course!).
- ◆ City bylaws (increasingly. . . sigh!).

The above are by no means the only types of compromises. But dealing (playing) with them constitute the kind of challenge I like to take up.

In Search Of The "Perfect" Antenna:

If perfect antennas were possible I would make them and become a millionaire!

The bad news is that the perfect antenna does not exist, even in theory! The theoretically perfect antenna can never be built ... because theory itself is not perfect!

However, the good news is that experimenting with homemade antennas is one of the most accessible and enjoyable aspects of amateur radio. Experimenting Is Rewarding

There is nothing more satisfying than building a few prototypes and getting better results with (almost) each new one.

Trust me. I know because experimenting with homemade antennas is the part of ham radio that I love the most.



**Wire, Coax, Feedline and Tools for building your antenna.**

The parts I love best are . . .

- ◆ Studying (learning) basic antenna theory.
- ◆ Researching and studying experiments made by other hams.
- ◆ Designing my own antenna with its own compromises.
- ◆ Erecting and testing it on the air.

. . . then starting all over again!

I especially love playing with wire antennas and stealth antennas. In fact, when you hear me on the bands its likely because I am testing the performance of my latest "baby."

Building wire antennas is easy and a fun thing to do. There is a lot of information on the internet, or you can find a book in the library, order an antenna book from the ARRL, or ask a ham club member. Also, there's that formula for a half wave in space. . . Now, how did that go again????

## Nearby Ham Fests this Spring

Dates	Type	Event and Contact	Location
28 Mar 2009	+	Spring Hamfest Orange County Amateur Radio Club <a href="http://www.ocarc-nv.org">http://www.ocarc-nv.org</a> <b>Talk-In:</b> 146.76 (PL 100) <b>Contact:</b> Donald Sayre, AA2DS 38 Karen Drive Middletown, NY 10940-6605 Phone: 845-342-2056 Email: <a href="mailto:AA2DS@hvc.rr.com">AA2DS@hvc.rr.com</a>	Middletown, NY Town of Wallkill Community Center <a href="http://www.w2abb.org">2 Wes Warren Drive</a> Div: Hudson Sect: Eastern New York
26 Apr 2009	+	Mount Beacon ARC <a href="http://www.wr2abb.org">http://www.wr2abb.org</a> <b>Talk-In:</b> 146.970 (PL 100) <b>Contact:</b> James Capicotto, K2JIM 813 Heard Avenue Maybrook, NY 12543 Phone: 845-427-2702 Fax: 845-999-9999 Email: <a href="mailto:k2jim@frontiernet.net">k2jim@frontiernet.net</a>	Lagrangeville, NY Tymor Park <a href="http://www.w2abb.org">249 Duncan Road</a> Div: Hudson Sect: Eastern New York
9 May 2009	+	6th Annual Hamfest East Greenbush Amateur Radio Association (W2EGB) <a href="http://www.w2egb.org">http://www.w2egb.org</a> <b>Talk-In:</b> 147.27 (PL 94.8) <b>Contact:</b> Thomas Scorsone, KC2FCP 1310 10th Avenue Watervliet, NY 12189 Phone: 518-272-1494 Email: <a href="mailto:kc2fcp@nycap.rr.com">kc2fcp@nycap.rr.com</a>	Rensselaer, NY East Greenbush Fire Company <a href="http://www.w2egb.org">68 Phillips Road</a> Div: Hudson Sect: Eastern New York



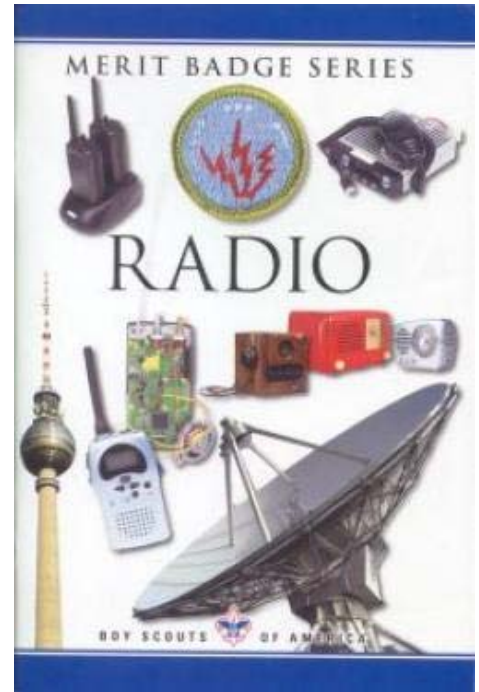
# New BSA Radio Merit Badge Pamphlet Available Now

The new BSA Radio Merit Badge Pamphlet includes color pictures and updated charts and text. The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) has updated the requirements needed to earn the Radio merit badge. The new requirements became effective with the publication of Boy Scout Requirements 2009. While no new content has been added to the program, the new merit badge pamphlet features lots of new information — including color pictures and updated charts and text — that reflects the changes in the Amateur Radio Service since the last pamphlet update in 2002. Approximately 4000 Radio merit badges are earned each year.

According to ARRL ad hoc Scouting Committee member Larry Wolfgang, WR1B, the new Radio Merit Badge pamphlet had been in the works for some time. "BSA has been replacing all merit badge pamphlets with new booklets using color graphics and more modern presentations," he said. "With attractive color photos and clear text explanations of the requirements, the new merit badge pamphlet is a pleasure for the Scouts to read. The new text is due in large part to the efforts of longtime Radio Merit Badge Counselor and K2BSA National Jamboree Staff member Mike Brown, WB2JWD. I am looking forward to using the new pamphlet to teach Radio merit badge at our Council's Merit-Badge-O-Ree this spring, and to having a supply of the new books available for Scouts during the 2009 summer camp season."

Wolfgang said that the requirements for the badge have been shifted around: "The old Part 4 of Requirement 7(b) Broadcast Radio was pulled out and placed in the main body of the requirements as Requirement 8. In addition, the old Requirement 8 (to visit a radio installation and discuss what types of equipment, how it was used, what types of licenses are required to operate and maintain the equipment, and the purpose of the station) was moved up to Requirement 7, so that now the three options appear as Requirement 9. The main result is one additional full requirement."

ARRL Rocky Mountain Division Director and Chairman of the League's ad hoc Scouting Committee Brian Milesosky, N5ZGT, called the Radio Merit Badge "a perfect avenue to introduce Scouts and Scouters to the wonderful world of ham radio. Ham clubs across the nation should locate a local Boy Scout Troop, secure permission from their Scoutmaster and/or committee to teach the merit badge and deliver an exceptional Radio merit badge class. What the boys — and their leaders and parents — will learn in the process is a fair amount of what is part of the Technician license exam, so the next logical step after a merit badge class is an all-out recruiting effort to get that Troop involved in Amateur Radio. They'll meet new friends and have a great way of communicating while in transit to and from the field, as well as



**The new BSA Radio Merit Badge Pamphlet includes color pictures and updated charts and text.**

additional peace of mind through an effective means of emergency communications while in the backcountry."

Additional information, which includes the new 2009 requirements, can be found on the web at:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/02/24/10667/?nc=1>



**The 2008 JOTA Patch**