



THE WIRELESS HILL BEACON

The monthly newsletter of the
Delaware Valley Radio Association
P.O. Box 7024
West Trenton, NJ, 08628-0024



December 2009

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H. Gold, AB2VG

Public Information

T. Bagdas, NU2I

Training & Examinations

D. Wright, AA2F

Web Service

S. Huston, W2SRH

Hamfests

Unassigned

Publications

M. Bepalko, N2KIV

Programs

G. Wilson, K2GW

Immediate Past Presi- dent

D. Wilmore, W0YMV

DVRA's Next Meeting...

The regular monthly meeting will be held at **6:30 PM** on **Wednesday, December 9th**, at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, on Upper Ferry Road at Wilburtha Road in West Trenton. The site is easy to reach from I-95 or NJ-29. Talk-in is available on the 146.67 (PL 131.8) and 442.65 repeaters.

All are welcome!

This Month:

PARTY TIME!!!!

This is our annual Holiday Party. This is always a fun time for all. And, your significant other is invited too!

Please bring a covered dish to pass. If you can, let Tim Reeg know what you are bringing by emailing him at membership@w2zq.com.

Also, bring a wrapped unmarked gift valued at least at \$15 for the DVRA Gift Exchange.

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Association Calendar

2009 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

| | | | |
|-------------|---------|-------------|-------------|
| January 14 | April 8 | July 8 | October 14 |
| February 11 | May 13 | August 12 | November 11 |
| March 11 | June 10 | September 9 | December 9 |

The Directors Meetings are on the same date as the General Meetings above. However, the Directors Meetings begin at 6:30 pm at the club shack. Talk-in available on the 146.67 (PL 131.8) repeater.

TECHNICIAN LICENSE CLASSES

Don Wright, AA2F, periodically holds Technician classes. Classes are held at various locations. Call Don at 609-737-1723 to register.

VE TESTING SCHEDULE

2009 VE Testing Schedule:

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| January 17 | July 19 |
| March 15 | September 13 |
| May 17 | November 15 |

All exams start at 12:15 PM sharp!
Testing is at the Hopewell Township Branch of the Mercer County Library, 245 Pennington-Titusville Road, Pennington.
Contact Don Wright, AA2F, 609-737-1723 or aa2f@arrl.net for exam information.

2-METER & 70-CM NETS

2-Meter Nets: All of the following are conducted on the club's 146.67 repeater.

The Pepper Net, 10:00 PM Daily,
Mercer Co. Emergency Net, 7:30 PM Tuesdays, KB2EGI, coordinator.

70-cm Nets: All of the following are conducted on the club's 442.65 repeater.

The Pepper Net, 9:00 PM Daily,

2009 FUND RAISER

DVRA Hamfest Sunday, April **TBD**, rain or shine at the Mercer County Ice Rink

The Wireless Hill Beacon is the monthly newsletter of the Delaware Valley Radio Association. P.O. Box 7024, West Trenton, New Jersey 08628-0024.

Internet: <http://www.w2zq.com>

The editor is T. Mark Bepalko, N2KIV (tmbespalko@aol.com). Submissions are welcome from members and others, preferably by e-mail as a text or Word file. The deadline is midnight on the 20th of each month for the next month's issue; publication of items submitted after that date is not guaranteed.

**Minutes of the
General Membership Meeting
November 11, 2009**

Our Lady of Good Council Church,
W. Trenton, NJ

The meeting was opened at 1930 hrs by President Mark, N2KIV, followed by the introduction of members and attendees.

Kudos to The Director of Physical Plant, Hy, AB2VG, for his heading up the tower project. The job went well and took about 2 hrs. Repeater Director Bob, N2HX, reported that the repeater antenna was mounted on spare tower. Some adjustment may be needed.

The UHF repeater is off temporarily.

Director of Training, Don, AA2F, reports classed at Pennington Presbyterian Church.

Roberto presented a slate of officers for 2010: Roberto will be president. The rest of the present officers are on the slate. If anyone else is interested in running they were requested to speak up at meeting.

Mark, N2KIV, reported dues will be raised to \$50.00 per year. Mark presented some info on

club expenses. The cost of the tower project was \$1800. Some discussion and further information was added regarding expenditures.

Gary K2GW, reported BSA radio merit badge will take place in January. Stay tuned for more details.

Historian Dennis Waters is seeking information about the ATT antenna site formerly located in Lawrenceville. This site was otherwise known as the pole farm. The membership provided various ideas and avenues of investigation. If you have any information for Dennis, call him at 609 8951720.

The meeting was adjourned at 2015 hrs.

After the business meeting, Gary, K2GW gave a very interesting presentation on the topic of electronic communication as it pertains to the maritime industry. Some exciting personal experiences were given by the some of maritime people present.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Sundra, W3ZLP
Secretary

**Minutes of the
Director's Meeting
November 11, 2009**

DVRA Shack, W. Trenton, NJ

Meeting was opened at 1835 hrs by President Mark, N2KIV.

Congrats to Hy, AB2VG, for a job well done on tower razing. The old tower will cut up or scrap which may have value. Discussion followed.

Bob, N2HX, reports repeater is operating on stand by tower.

The status of the 80 meter dipole was discussed.

Membership list was discussed -needs updating.

Dues increase to \$50.00 yearly - will be discussed further at regular meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 1913 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Sundra, W3ZLP
Secretary

Balanced Lines November 2009

Bob Schroeder, N2HX ©2009

UPDATE ON CLUB REPEATERS

As was reported last month, the DVRA repeater tower has been taken down. The VHF and UHF repeater antennas have been removed and put into storage pending future use. For the time being, the 146.670 repeater is operating on a dual-band ground plane on another tower which is about half as high. The 442.650 repeater remains temporarily off the air. We hope to have it back on soon.

The DVRA repeater committee is looking for new members to assist with repeater maintenance and administration of the two CAT repeater controllers. Knowledge of DOS and FTP file transfer protocol is a plus.

We are very close to acquiring high speed internet access at the shack. Besides its obvious benefits, having internet access will also enable us to utilize Echolink and some other communications modes. Stay tuned!

REFLECTIONS ON MY EMP ARTICLE

To those who sent me comments about my article on electromagnetic pulse (EMP) protection that appeared in the November issue of **QST**, I would like to say thank you. Several DVRA members also cast their vote for my article as well. That is much appreciated also.

I began receiving reader emails even before my copy arrived in the mail. All of the emails were supportive and several of them asked some interesting and unusual questions such as, "What would happen to my pacemaker?" What I found incredibly fascinating were the stories that the older readers shared with me. I heard from several men who actually worked on atomic weapons in the South Pacific and elsewhere. One ham even sent me some photos of an abandoned nuclear missile silo a few miles from his home. Every one of those personal stories added to my collection of research information. A few hams contacted me to correct some factual errors that appeared in the source literature I used to compose the article. That too was invaluable.

The subject of EMP and its effects on modern day equipment is a "hot button" issue and my article appears to have opened a Pandora's Box. Now

that some of the Amateur Radio community has sprung into action, maybe FEMA/DHS will awaken from its stupor and start up the EMP program again.

If my proposal is accepted, I will be offering a presentation on EMP at the 2010 Trenton Computer Festival – DVRA hamfest – ARRL convention on April 24, 25 at the College of New Jersey.

RESISTORS GOT BURNED

As I write this column, today's Trentonian carried a story about the old meeting place for the 1967 geek group, the R.E.S.I.S.T.O.R.S. The barn/clubhouse burned down at around 4 a.m. on December 3. The group's founder, Claude Kagan, W2UUI, formed the science club because he felt that the Princeton and Hopewell Valley schools did not offer a suitable curriculum or outlet for science and computers in particular. Kagan offered the use of his barn on Pennington Rocky Hill Road to house the caliginous collection of computer equipment. It also served as a clubhouse for the local students to tinker and build and also get hands-on exposure to computer equipment that they would not otherwise get to see, much less tinker with. The club's name is an acronym for Radically Emphatic Students Interested in Science, Technology, and Other Related Subjects.

The barn may be destroyed and the techno club now defunct, however there is a perfectly viable alternative to being a R.E.S.I.S.T.O.R.: simply join and become active in the DVRA. We'll offer no resistance whatsoever.

SO ENDS THE YEAR

This is the point where I wish all DVRA members and my other extraneous readers a Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah. Thank you for your contributions, suggestions, and other forms of moral support. It's been fun writing this column for more than a decade. I also wish the newly elected DVRA officers the best of luck for their ensuing term. We expect great things.

See you all next year!

All for now.
Comments invited.
Bob Schroeder, N2HX

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

T. Mark Bepalko, N2KIV

Well, the time has finally come. My term as DVRA President is over.

I thought that it might be interesting to review where we came from, and where we are heading. The good news is that 2010 should be a year of progress that is in no small part based upon the struggles of the past two years.

WHERE WE CAME FROM

When I came into office in January 2008, I was immediately hit with the resignations of around half of the Board of Directors. Within 6 months, two officers would also resign. The leadership was in shambles. This was highlighted by the failure of the DVRA PO Box rent to be paid resulting in a fair number of dues checks to be returned.

In my initial "President's Corner" column in 2008, I highlighted that there were two areas that had to be focused on: Finances and The Shack. There had been little to no up keep of the shack for better part of at least 5 years. The property was completely overgrown with bushes and small trees. There was poison ivy growing up guy wires and towers as well as the fence. There had been no shack exterior up-keep (painting and the like) and the available internal space was generally consumed with junk.

In March 2008, we adopted the K2GW concept of the "2nd Saturday" series. Since that time, on the second Saturday of each month, we have a work session at the Shack or some other DVRA activity. The results speak for themselves. It took us around 4-6 months to clear the overgrowth off the property. A donation of a riding mower has lead to the lawn being kept mowed. Additionally, we completely cleaned out the shack and discarded a pile of junk, scrap metal and other stuff.

With the previously funded electrical work that also occurred in 2008, the shack is now compliant to code. Hy, AB2VG, and Dan, K2QM, bought and installed a programmable thermostat resulting in a dramatic reduction in our fuel expense. The ceiling tiles in the radio room have also been replaced.

But, we still have had our challenges – financial challenges.

During this two year period, there were no increases in dues, and our membership has declined.

We took our first major financial hit in 2008 with the failure of the 2m repeater. We needed to expend about \$2K to cover that. We also had to deal with a damaged tower this year for which we had to spend around \$1.8K to bring down.

Income from our hamfests plummeted. We did have a hamfest in 2008, but, that only brought in about \$600. As luck would have it, the Trenton Computer Festival offered us a place at the table in March, which we accepted. That brought us in \$1,500 in 2009.

We have also instituted the concept of member auctions. We had the first one in December 2008 with an income to the DVRA of around \$1,000.

WHERE WE ARE - THE DVRA BUSINESS PLAN

The Directors have had a fair amount of discussion as to how the DVRA needs to structure itself financially to provide for the current and future needs of the Association. We finally came to a meeting of the minds at the November 2009 Directors meeting.

The model is simple. The DVRA has effectively two types of sources of income. Each source will be

exclusively targeted for a specific set of expenses as follows:

1. Membership Dues

This is the income that you pay on an annual basis to remain a member. The dues are used to pay the annual operating expenses of the DVRA. This includes the PO Box, shack expenses such as heat, phone and electricity, the mower upkeep etc.

From 2001 through 2009, dues were \$35 per person. This past November, the Directors have authorized an increase in dues to \$50 per year per person. The family maximum will be increased to \$100. This will be voted upon at the January Meeting (as I forgot to send a notice out last month after the meeting so we can't vote on it in December).

One additional change is that the \$10 new member fee will be discontinued. It was the intent of the \$10 is purchase the DVRA name badge. To put it politely, this has been a disaster for the past 5 – 10 years (or longer). It is not fair to charge the money and not deliver the goods. The Directors are setting up a DVRA logo merchandise agreement with a vendor, and you will be able to purchase all sorts of stuff; you simply need to order it yourself. More on that in a future newsletter.

2. Income from Activities such as the Trenton Computer Festival (TCF) and Auctions

This income is viewed as the discretionary funds for the Association (commonly referred to as “capital investment” in industry). It is with these funds that the capital improvements are made. These include all improvements to the shack, purchase and upkeep of new equipment (radios, towers, cable etc) and improvements to the property.

The DVRA has desperately needed this income, but, with the advent of internet flea markets, the customary model of a flea market based hamfest is failing. The TCF remedies that situation. The DVRA has formally been provided the use of the event name “The New Jersey State Conference” by the ARRL. This will provide the DVRA a competitive advantage over the traditional flea market based hamfest model. The TCF through its association with the College of New Jersey provides an outstanding venue for both the flea markets coupled with educational & instructional sessions that a conference provides. Gary, K2GW, has already started the process to attract presentations for the first annual NJ State Conference on Sunday, April 25th.

In my humble opinion, the DVRA's income, which will include the TCF payment coupled with a LEGAL 50-50, should allow the DVRA to net between \$5K - \$10K in 2010. Obviously this comes with a disclaimer: we will need all members of the DVRA to work this event in April!

WHERE WE ARE GOING

With the current position of the Association financially, particularly with the TCF alliance, the DVRA is again in the position to become the preeminent amateur radio association in New Jersey. We have assets in the shack and it's location to provide an unmatched capability for operation. We have the members who are also effect liaisons to other related groups both technology and operationally (for instance ARES, NJ QRP and RACES) related.

Most importantly, we also have the leadership. I have full faith in Norberto, NY8N, the DVRA's new president and his ability to continue the rebuilding process of the DVRA. In my mind we have the worst two years behind us. We have the means to finance the Association and continue an ongoing growth to become a state-of-the-art technology leader. You, the membership of the DVRA, simply need to pull together and make the Association's future happen.

Norberto, NY8N, as the DVRA's next President (to potentially steal from NAVY/Coast Guard lingo):

Congratulations!!! You have the helm!

SCENES FROM 2 YEARS OF SHACK RECOVERY

The first step of the process was to empty out both the electrical room and the generator room. March 08



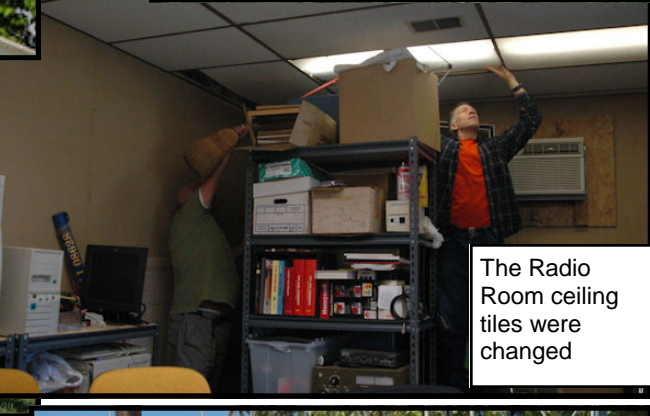
In April 08, The primary effort was mowing the lawn! The first use of the new riding mower was a tough one! But,



Sept. 08 found a higher focus on the building.



Compare with the bottom left corner...



The Radio Room ceiling tiles were changed

The cutting of the guy wires to drop the damaged tower Oct 2009



Even some exterior painting was done.

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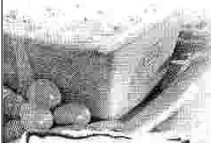


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