# THE WECAGRAM

Newsletter of the

Westchester Emergency Communications Association, Inc.

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*Serving the Public through Amateur Radio and serving Amateurs since 1972*

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# Next Meeting

The next WECA meeting will be Monday September 13th at the Westchester County Center in White Plains, beginning at 7:30pm with a social half hour followed by the main presentation at 8pm.
The program for the September meeting will be provided by Con Edison. It will be a training session, requested by ODES, so we can be properly informed to report unusual conditions. Especially those related to weather situations.
Also participation awards will given out. (See Below)

# NEW PARTICIPATION AWARDS

# PROGRAM LAUNCHED

# By: Charlie G. Salvilla, KB2LLV

To further recognize the efforts of WECA members who have consistently volunteered for club or club-sponsored public service events and activities, a new participation awards initiative have been put in place beginning the Fiscal Year, 1999-2000. In addition to the current process of recognizing WECA members for up to 5 (five) years of continuous volunteer services (representing at least one event annually), this new program will now honor volunteers exceeding the five-year threshold.

The Board of Directors approved a recommendation that will give out awards for up to the eleventh (11th) year on WECA members who continuously participated in club-sanctioned activities. The awards will be given retroactively and will be distributed at the September 1999 General Membership Meeting.

The following is a listing of all outstanding awardees and the corresponding awards:

First Year: (WECA Button)K2BTP, KC2BUV, KC2COP, KB2GTD, N2NAA, KD2OG, N2OKD, WA2QEH, A1TKT, KB2UAF, N2UNZ, KB2WAR, N2XRC, and N2YHK

Second Year: (Plaque)KC2AHS, N2AXO, K2CSS, W3EH, KD2IX, N2KBC, N2SBN, and KB2UCN

Third Year: (Mug)KC2ARX, N2IYR, N2VQP, and N2ZRC

Fourth Year: (WECA Folder)ALL GIVEN OUT

Fifth Year: (Flashlight)N2UXJ

Sixth Year: (Mouse Pad)N2TWN and N2YGK

Seventh Year: (Auto Clipboard)N2AMP, AA2HX, N2QZB, N2TFC, N2TJE, and N2TSE

Eighth Year: (Digital Alarm Clock)KB2LLV, N2MEF, KB2NBN, N2NQY, N2NWZ, N2OGK, and N2OLU

Ninth Year: (Fanny Pack)WB2LNB, W2RJA, W2RWR,

Tenth Year: (Hand Tool)N2DB, N3EMF, and KB2GTE

Eleventh Year: (Maglight)KB2APX, WA2ATY, WB2BTJ, N2DHH, N2DVQ, N2FMC, N2GDY, N2GKM, NJ2J, WB2NHC, WA2NRV, N4OOX, WB2QJA, WK6R, K2RRR, N2SF, K4ZGE, K2ZVI

Please direct any questions and/or corrections to the attention of Charlie G. Salvilla, KB2LLV.

# Public Service

# By Robert Kantor, N2TSE

Mark your calendar for these up-coming events.  And if you want to volunteer, you can sign up at the membership meeting or you can contact me on the radio during SDN, or by phone at home.  Or you can E-mail me!!!
E-Mail:  n2tse@weca.org
Call:  914 949-4231

October. 16th, JOTA (Boy Scouts of America) will be at Croton Point. Park from 9 am to 5pm for setup operations, two shifts, and takedown. 20 people are needed for this event.  We will set up and oporate, uhf-vhf, code demo, and H.F.

October 30th, The New York State Police Troop T Headquarters has asked use to help in there Pumpkin Patrol for this year. More info to follow.

Here is a review of events from this summer.

The NY. Philharmonic concert took place on Saturday July 24th.  The participents where; N2tse, twn, dvq, yyl, skp, ogk, amp, fmc, wqg, nqy, mef, sf, nwz, k2dfj, wb2nhc, wa2nrv, kc2esu, clz, coq, kb2nbn, llv,ka2brh, plus 3 non members(wa2pfs,kc2cuo,kb2vby) add a non ham but a member Grant Nishanion.  A total of 26 people helped. Thanks to there hard work, it was a job well done.

# The WECA FAMILY PICNIC

was held at George's Island Park, Montrose NY, on Sunday, August 1st.  A fun time was had by all.  For a look at all the happenings go to http://www.weca.org and follow the link to see the pictures.

# Swap & Shop

All Reasonable Offers considered! FT-1000-D Yeasu HF All Band HF Radio. Yaesu FL-2100B 10-160 Mhz Linear Amp. Icom IC-03-AT 220 Handie Talkie. MFJ- Versa Tuner-II 2KW Antenna Tuner. Kenwood hf-250 compact Ant. Tuner Gonset 2 meter Linear Amp w/ new Ceramic Power Tube. Dell Dimension M200s-200mhz MMX Pentium Computer w/ 64-megs of Ram,  Zip-Drive-100 , 4.2 Gig HD, 3-Com Combo Network Card, Intelimouse, JBLSound

AWE32 Sound Blaster System w/ sub woofer and Dell HF1000 Hi Res 17"
Monitor selectable refresh rate 30bit Color Mustec Scanner Citizen GSX190 DM
printer
Thanx! Vinny Beard    [Vinny@BassGuitar.com](mailto:Vinny@BassGuitar.com)  call 201-333-0266

# And The Winners are:

# Results of the Election

POSITION WINNER CALL SIGN
President Stan Rothman WA2NRV
Exe. Vice President Dave Weiss N2OGK
Secretary Ken Gross N2OBY
Treasurer Andy Farber N4OOX
Repeater Operations Dwight Smith N2FMC
Engineering Bob Wilson N2DVQ
Education Rich Anderson W2RJA
Social Director Tom Raffaelli WB2NHC
Publicity Director Shirley Dahlgren N2SKP
Director at Large Fran Larsorsa N2OLU

# June Member Meeting

# By Kenneth F. Gross, N2OBY

On 6/14/99 at 8:15 p.m.the meeting was called to order by Joe Brown, KB2NBN

Elections:  KB2NBN announced that no elections would be held, as all of the
nominees are running unopposed.(See results above)
 At this point, Joe, KB2NBN, made a few comments regarding his tenure as
President, and then introduced the incoming President, Stan Rothman,
WA2NRV.  Stan addressed the membership, stating that he plans to continue
current club programs, while adding more.  He stressed the need for members to
contribute their cooperation, help, experience and participation.
 Stan took this opportunity to present Joe with a plaque in appreciation of his
service to WECA.

Announcements -

ODES - Ray Albanese, N2FXU, of the County Office of Disaster and Emergency Services, discussed the County's Y2K preparedness and solicited volunteers to help man the EOC this coming New Year's Eve
 Speaker - Tom Raffaelli, WB2NHC: Tom gave his annual pre-Field Day presentation, (See pictures of event)

Director's Reports -

Public Service - Robert Kantor, N2TSE: Reported on the previous day's ADA bike-tour. He also discussed upcoming events.

50/50 - was won by Peter, N2TFC (who turned around and donated it to the Blythedale fund).

Door Prizes - Winners: W2RJA, N2EYX, AA2BQ, N2WQG, N4OOX, Danielle Weiss.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

# New Call Signs

 *** From ARRL Bulletin 37 (ARLB037) June 3: The following is a list of FCC sequentially assigned call signs issued as of June 1, for the second call district:
Group A (Extra) AB2GF
Group B (Advanced) KG2QU
Group D (Novice) KC2FET
Group C (Technician/General) All call signs have been issued.

For more information about the sequential call sign system, see
FCC Fact Sheet PR5000 #206S
or contact the FCC, 1270 Fairfield Rd, Gettysburg, PA 17325-7245.
The e-mail address is fccitd@fcc.gov.

# A Review: RadioShack Weatheradio Model 12-250

# By: Robert G. Schaffrath, N2JTX

## n2jtx@weca.org

In 1997, RadioShackÆ released its first WeatheradioÆ to support NWR-SAME. This radio, the model 12-249, was the first to utilize the Specific Area Message Encoder (SAME) which allows you to selectively choose the geographic areas that you want to receive alerts for. This was an improvement over the earlier radios that relied on the 1050Hz alert tone to trigger an alert. Due to the large geographic area covered by many of the National Weather Service transmitters, you would very often hear alerts for areas that were of no concern to you (the Raritan River flooding comes to mind). With SAME, you can choose those counties that you wish to receive alerts for and ignore all others. With the RadioShackÆ radio, this worked very well except that you could not selectively filter out the various Emergency Alert Service (EAS) events. It was not uncommon to receive a "3:00AM surprise" announcing a Special Marine Warning. This is great if you are a mariner. However, if you are 30 miles inland, you probably do not care (especially at 3:00AM!).

This past spring, RadioShackÆ released an improved version of this radio, the model 12-250. The first noticeable change was the list price of $69.95, which is $10 less than the model 12-249. Additionally, there have been several cosmetic and operational improvements compared to the model 12-249.

Cosmetically, the model 12-250 is dark gray with a heavy black power cord as compared to the model 12-249 which is white with a white "zip cord" power cord. The LCD readout on the model 12-250 is located in the upper right hand corner of the radio and has a green LED backlight compared to a lower left display and yellow LED backlight on the model 12-249. On the model 12-250, sliding and removing a panel cover on the lower right side of the radio accesses the keypad. On the model 12-249, opening a cover door accesses the keypad. On the lower left side of the model 12-250, there are two audio controls. The left control is the combination volume control and on/off switch. The right control is labeled "Tone" and is used to adjust the volume of the audible alert. On the model 12-249, the audible alert audio is adjusted with a screwdriver control on the bottom of the radio. Finally, the model 12-250 is approximately 3 ounces heavier and slightly larger than the model 12-249.

Operationally, the model 12-250 is quite similar to the model 12-249. However, several improvements have been made. First, the model 12-250 supports approximately 23 additional EAS event codes. Many of these codes have not yet been adopted by the FCC but have been proposed by the National Weather

Service for inclusion in the part 11 rules, which cover EAS. In addition, according the user manual, up to five additional event codes can be added by an authorized RadioShackÆ service center. Detailed information on the supported EAS alert codes and how the radio displays them is available at http://www.schaffrath.net/weatheradio-12-250.html. Additionally, the model 12-250 allows you to lockout certain selected event codes so they do not trigger the radio. Notable is the ability to ignore the Special Marine Warning alert. However, many life critical alerts such as Tornado Warning and Severe Thunderstorm Warning cannot be disabled.

Like the model 12-249, the model 12-250 will store up to three active alerts in its memory. You can scan through these alerts by using the keypad arrow keys. However, unlike the model 12-249, the model 12-250 will tell you if two or more alerts are currently in effect by alternating the event count with the alert message. In addition, the model 12-250 will tell you how much time remains before the alert expires. This message, presented in hours and minutes, will alternate with the alert message and event count. For an event that expires in thirty minutes, the display will read "0H 30M".

Programming the model 12-250 is a little more complicated then programming the model 12-249 due to the addition of alert mode, FIPS mode and alert code lockout programming. In its default configuration, the model 12-250 will sound an audible alert continuously until the event ends. To have it sound the audible alarm for approximately eight seconds and then play the audio, you must select the "VOICE" option instead of the default "ALERT" option. When the radio is in "VOICE" mode, the audio will stay on until the conclusion of alert announcement. When the National Weather Service transmits the End of Message (EOM) code (a series of four ASCII N characters sent three times), the audio will be turned off. When programming the FIPS codes on the model 12-250, support for single or multiple FIPS codes is now controlled through a keypad option. On the model 12-249, a switch on the bottom of the radio controls whether or not single or multiple FIPS codes are used. After the FIPS codes have been entered, the radio will prompt you for various alerts to disable. It is not required that any alerts be disable and you can simply exit programming at this point. If you make a mistake in programming, the model 12-250 has an option to reset it to its factory default configuration. This feature is not available on the model 12-249. Finally, the Alert button on the model 12-250 behaves a little differently than on the model 12-249. On the model 12-249, a simple press will turn alert mode on or off. On the model 12-250, you must press and hold the alert button for two seconds before it will turn alert mode on or off. If alert mode is turned on, the radio will beep once. If alert mode is turned off, the radio will beep twice.

In conclusion, the model 12-250 is a worthy upgrade to the model 12-249. If

you do not already own a model 12-249, I would definitely recommend purchasing the model 12-250. At this time, there are only two areas that I would like to see improved. First, the model 12-250 should have the same keypad door as the model 12-249. The sliding door could get easily lost since it is not attached to the radio. After programming, the only reason to access the keypad is to get to the arrow keys in the event of multiple alerts. If the arrow keys were made accessible without opening the keypad cover then the cover could remain as is. The other thing I would like to see is the addition of a three pin RS-232 port (Transmit, Receive and Signal ground) to allow a personal computer to configure the radio and to receive data from the SAME decoder. As the radio becomes more complicated, a Windows? based software package that can communicate with the radio may make sense. This is not to say the radio needs sophisticated programming. Right out the box it can be plugged in and will operate fine. However, for some of the more involved settings, such as disabling events and multiple FIPS codes, this may make sense in a future model.

# WECA upcoming events...

Monday, September 13th, Membership Meeting

Monday, September 27th, Board Meeting

Monday, October 4th, Membership Meeting

Saturday, October. 16th, JOTA at Croton Point

Monday, October 25th, Board Meeting

Saturday, October 30th, Pumpkin Patrol w/NYSP

The Westchester County ODES is looking for members for a Y2K exercise on New Year's Eve, Contact Alan N2YGK or Joe WB2VVS. (Look at all the money you can save and be fed at the same time).

# Southern District Net

Sandro Sicilia N2TWN, Net manager of the Southern District Net, reports

May 1999 SDN stats:

Check-Ins 361
Traffic 124
Passed 121
Time 582
Sessions 31

June 1999 SDN stats:
Check-Ins 375
Traffic 91
Passed 80
Time 473
Sessions 30

July 1999 SDN Stats:
Check-Ins 368
Traffic 82
Passed 63
Time 480
Sessions 31