



# PCARA Update



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## Fit for anything - KB2CQE

Forty-nine **long** hours. That's how long I was without commercial power, heat, and hot water. Compared to many throughout our region, I was fortunate. The Nor'easter / Freak Snowstorm of October 28, 2011 started while I was in Manhattan with my daughter, Sarah, who was attending a class at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT).

It was a lousy cold, wet, and windy morning in the city, and after dropping my daughter off at school, I proceeded to the New York Public Library (the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building – the one with the Lions out front) on Fifth Avenue at 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. There I took up residence in the South Hall of the Rose Reading Room for a couple of hours – reading, what else?

A while later I received a call from my wife on my cell, she asked if I had noticed that it had started snowing. Of course I hadn't and when I looked up to the gorgeous ceiling-high arched windows in the hall, boy was it snowing! How bad could this be? I was in the city and pretty sure that whatever fell probably wouldn't accumulate. It was soon time to pack-up and meet my daughter for the trip home. I walked back to FIT through the heavy wet snow. Don't ask, I have no idea why I just didn't take the subway back downtown

(maybe I thought the exercise would do me some good)!

I met Sarah outside of the school and we headed to the 28<sup>th</sup> Street Subway



station. From there we went up to Times Square and took the Shuttle over to Grand Central. The next train on the Hudson Line was scheduled to leave at 1:45 pm, so we spent some time at one of the bookstores in the Terminal before boarding the train.

As we exited the Park Avenue Tunnel I noticed that streets, cars, and trees were covered with snow.



*As Greg points out on page 2, PCARA's annual holiday dinner will be held December 4 'At The Reef' restaurant on Annsville Circle, Cortlandt Manor.*

This wasn't looking too good. The further North we headed, the more snow seemed to be on the ground and more ominously, on the trees! When we got off the train at the Cortlandt station there was about four inches of snow on the platform and I remember with much incredulous laughter, wishing for the conductor to "Have a Happy Halloween!"

The trip from the station back home was not going to be easy. As soon as I exited the train station and

*continued on page 2 =>*

## PCARA Officers

President:

Greg Appleyard, KB2CQE, kb2cq at arrl.net

Vice President:

Joe Calabrese, WA2MCR; wa2mcr at arrl.net

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turned onto the main road, traffic was backed-up by cars that couldn't make it up a hill in the road. I managed to work my way around the stranded cars and get up the hill (**I love AWD!**) In addition to the snow, I noticed many downed trees and branches littering the roadway. Trees with leaves and heavy wet snow don't seem to get along too well! This made for some interesting driving, weaving my way through downed trees and the occasional low-hanging utility line. On another one of the steep hills I had to negotiate, there were about three-quarters-of-a-dozen vehicles at all sorts of angles both on and off of the roadway. Once again I managed to work my way up the middle of the mess and get over the top of the hill (did I mention that **I love AWD!?**) After a few more white knuckle minutes of slipping, sliding, and slaloming we made it home safely.

The power went out a little after 6:00 pm. I was surprised that I hadn't gone out sooner with all the wind and heavy wet snow. After a few hours of waiting and listening to the news about the severity of the storm on the radio, I concluded that the power wasn't coming back on anytime soon and decided to start up the generator. I managed to keep the refrigerator and freezer running, have some lights on, and the occasional use of a space heater to take the edge off the cold. The rest, as they say is history.

The moral of the story is that I should have written last month's article earlier, as *PCARA Update* Editor-in-Chief Malcolm, NM9J *always* encourages me to do, each and every month!

Now, on to more important things! The Annual PCARA Holiday Dinner is to take place "At the Reef" at Annsville Circle on Sunday, December 4, 2011 at 5:00 pm. The cost will be \$22.90 per person plus any beverages, tax, and gratuity. We need to have a list of our choices of entrées a week before the dinner, so please contact a PCARA officer with your choice(s), or email said choice(s) to: *mail 'at' pcara.org* (Malcolm, NM9J has kindly included a menu in this month's edition of the *Update*). Also at the December meeting (dinner) we will be holding Annual Elections for PCARA Officers. Please consider joining us to enjoy each other's company and revel in the True Spirit of the Holiday Season! All are Welcome!

Looking to the New Year — the PCARA Annual Bring and Buy Auction is scheduled to be held at the January 8, 2012 meeting at Hudson Valley Hospital Center (3:00 pm). "*Start out the new year by clearing out some of your old gear*". As in past years, we expect to have a great time!

To each of you, your families and loved ones, I wish a Very Happy and Healthy Holiday Season, and a most Joyous and Blessed New Year!

- 73 de Greg, KB2CQE

# Adventures in DXing

- N2KZ



## Chicken Little Day

This time, Chicken Little really wasn't kidding! The sky really *was* falling. It was only October 29th - two days before Halloween - and snow was pouring out of the sky. Just barely snow. Thick, heavy, wet slushy snow. The trees bent and bent and bent until they touched the ground. The snow was falling on the trees and the trees were falling *on me!*

Temperatures were dropping below freezing adding an extra crunch to the almost knee-high slop. How could this be happening? It was two days before Halloween, not Christmas! My usually majestic and sturdy maple trees were slumping down low enough to touch my deck! At 3:30pm Saturday afternoon the power snapped off and was not to be seen for another six days.

The trees needed relief from the heavy snow. Leaves had not yet fallen, holding the snow aloft, weighing down limbs and branches until they touched the ground. My family all participated in slapping branches with anything that would suffice as a long stick: tree pole saws, swimming pool skimmers, light bulb swapping sticks and brooms. It was a desperate challenge to help the trees survive. The experience was quite unnerving. Every few seconds you would hear the tree branches crack under the load of the snow.

Branches started to fall everywhere. As it grew dark, we gave up and huddled inside. I was pleased to see how well the house was insulated. Even with no heat at all, one bedroom was about 25 degrees warmer than the outside temperature. The night was eerily quiet.

Our only connection with the outside world was the radio. We listened to Newsradio 88 WCBS and my scanner (now rigged with AA battery power.) Police and fire calls continued constantly. I don't know how they kept up with all the urgent activity! My best source of local news was, without a doubt, ham radio. Listening to and participating in conversations with other local hams on 2 meters and 70 cm brought us more knowledge than anything else. My QRP CW transceivers didn't fail me, either. Also powered by AA batteries, I could still get out on 20 and 30 meters. 40 and 80 meters was another story!

As the morning sun rose, it quickly revealed a whole new world. All our trees resembled enormous mushrooms. Upon inspection, we saw the results of the additional wet snow the night had brought. Huge tree limbs, from our strongest trees, peeled away from their

trunks and dramatically fell and split. Many tops of trees broke off like matchsticks. One pine tree dropped its top felling a piece big enough to be a very good sized



*Heavy snow pulled down tree limbs and wire antennas at N2KZ during the Oct 29 snowstorm.*

Christmas tree.

Dozens and dozens of sizable branches were everywhere. I had to quarter them just to move them away. Two of my wire antennas were also humbled. My 40 meter dipole had been pulled down to my roof now that it had several huge tree limbs weighing it down. My 80 meter dipole was ripped from its roof mooring by huge hickory limbs. I never knew thin dipole antenna wire could hold up so much snow! I was proud to say that neither antenna was damaged or broken. After I cleared the branches, they were tightened up and



*Dipoles hanging low after the snowstorm.*

went back aloft without incident.

Still, the sound of cracking branches overhead continued to be frightening. Every once in a while, a large snap would be heard followed by a huge crash

Yikes. Many large branches, from the tallest tops of the trees, had snapped and fallen onto power lines resembling upside down wishbones. Other large pieces were resting aloft on other branches just waiting for a



*How could such a thin dipole hold up so much snow?*

good excuse to fall. Yes, the sky really was falling!

Many cold nights followed. Overnights brought the temperature inside our

house down into the 40s. Brrr. Now I know why, in days of old, people wore nightcaps to bed! AM radio reports were now claiming this may be recorded as the worst storm in modern history.



*Snow-laden roof antennas.*

My early morning rides to work were sad and discouraging. So many majestic trees had been splintered and broken apart. People were driving around great limbs every few thousand feet. I saw how one huge old legacy tree uplifted, fell over and crushed a car like a child's toy. The car's roof was crushed in. The windshield and side windows were all broken and shattered on the ground. Horrible!

My 2 meter mobile antenna was my connection to the outside world! I compared notes with fellow hams just to keep informed and in touch. I really missed local radio coverage of these events. Very little news was found on the broadcast bands. I made a concerted effort to charge my computer, HT batteries and iPod while at work where I had the luxury of AC power and heat. Survival at home reverted back to all the skills we learned during Hurricane Irene and its aftermath just two months before.

Our pre-filled bathtubs and pool again became the source for water. I took some very, very cold sponge

and the sound of snow plummeting to the ground. baths at 3:30 in the morning! Families were huddling around and sleeping next to fireplaces or at friend's houses that miraculously had power. Eating out became routine. Internet access was only available on smartphones or in libraries. Coleman lanterns, powered by an array of D batteries, quickly came out of storage and became the light source of choice.



*NYSEG placed signs throughout the neighborhood.*

Many houses looked like they had been visited by Godzilla. Trees and shrubs were crushed to the ground. Splintered trees and branches littered yards and yards of land. Driveways and local streets were impossibly blocked. Power lines draped everywhere and were broken into pieces. NYSEG placed signs all through our neighborhood warning repair crews 'Do Not Energize' these power lines! Danger was everywhere.

Five days afterwards, the tree trimming crews began to rescue my area. One crew I spoke to was working 18 to 20 hour shifts and had come all the way from Indiana to join the recovery effort. Outside, the sounds of cracking trees had been replaced by the whirring of distant generators and the screams of power saws. A nearby marsh had transformed from tall grass into a meadow and a newly visible lake. All the vegetation had been crushed to the ground like someone was



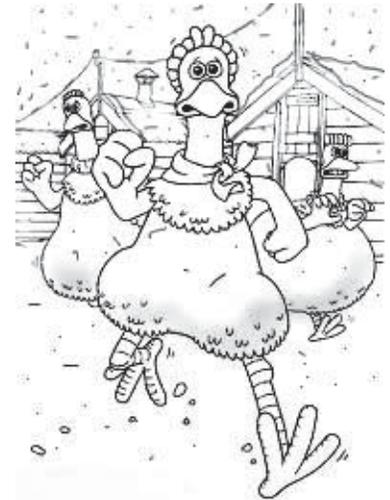
*A welcome sight — NYSEG trucks finally arrive to begin electrical repairs.*

trying to create a crop circle.

Thursday morning, November 3rd, the NYSEG rescue teams finally arrived. A couple of dozen bright

orange utility trucks descended on my neighborhood and quickly rebuilt all that ailed us. Power was back on by late afternoon, six days after the storm had struck. I continued to monitor the progress on my scanner and Icom HT. It would be another couple of weeks before the snow melted away enough allowing me to climb on my roof for dipole antenna repair. It was quite a breakthrough to be, once again, on 40 and 80 meters!

Now my quest, along with thousands of other nearby area residents, is to install generators to get us through the next disasters and winters. Just yesterday, November 23rd, my power went out for several hours due to a faulty line transformer. Interesting thought: With a full-house generator, could I qualify as using emergency power during ARRL Field Day? Just remember: You can never have enough water or D and AA sized batteries! Know where your code key is! How long will it be before the sky falls again? Be prepared!



*"The sky is falling!"*

### **Don't Forget!**

Please join us for the PCARA holiday dinner at 5 pm on Sunday night, December 4th 'At The Reef' in Annsville Circle, Cortlandt Manor (just west of Peekskill and the Bear Mountain Parkway.) Everyone is invited!

The PCARA Old Goats Net continues weekly on Thursday evenings between 8 and 9 pm on the PCARA repeater: 146.67 MHz with a minus 600 kHz offset and a 156.7 PL. No radio? Listen in on-line at: <http://www.radioreference.com/apps/audio/?feedId=3186>. The PCARA's Facebook page brings you the very latest news and reviews at: <http://www.pcara.org/pcarafacebookpage.html>.

The ARRL's annual Straight Key Night will again be on the air from 7pm Saturday night December 31st through 7pm Sunday night January 1, 2012. All you need is a CW transmitter and a straight key. This is a great time to get your feet wet and try sending in code. Everyone will be sending at slow speeds often using vintage gear from long ago. Join in the fun!



Happy holidays and may all your wishes (for new rigs and antennas) come true! 73s and dit dit de N2KZ 'The Old Goat.'

# Field Day results

Full results from Field Day 2011 have appeared in December's *QST* and on the ARRL web site. See [http://www.arrl.org/results-database?event\\_id=27537](http://www.arrl.org/results-database?event_id=27537). PCARA's results were in line with the provisional statistics reported in the July newsletter, confirming our claimed score of 2,602 points.

## Peekskill/Cortlandt ARA, W2NYW

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007	2008	2009	2011
QSOs:	450	718	733	968	853	1019	1109	694	<b>879</b>
Power	2 (<150W)								
Partcpts:	16	15	11	12	10	14	10	10	<b>14</b>
Tot scor:	1,540	2,096	2,328	2,996	2,798	2,906	3,460	2,746	<b>2,602</b>

#	Call	Points	Cat	QSOs	Club
1	K2CT	9592	3A	2961	Albany
2	N2SF	9284	4A	2728	WECA
3	W2YRC	5072	3A	1189	Yonkers
4	K2QS	4824	3A	1309	QSY Society
5	N2TY	4484	4A	1252	Troy
6	K2AE	4422	5A	869	Schenectady
7	WD2K	4386	3A	992	Rip Van Winkle
8	K2DLL	4344	3A	1522	Saratoga RACES
9	K2PUT	3966	3A	1122	PEARL
10	W2HO	3884	5A	1081	Orange County
11	N2LL	3748	3A	729	Overlook Mtn
12	W2EGB	3006	2A	1018	East Greenbush
13	NQ2W	2920	1E	267	(Low pwr mult)
<b>14</b>	<b>W2NYW</b>	<b>2602</b>	<b>2A</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>PCARA</b>
15	W1BAA/2	2390	3A	462	Sthn Berkshire



PCARA's 2011 Field Day location in the grounds of Walter Panas High School, Cortlandt Manor. The 6 meter yagi antenna is visible left, with the light-pole vertical antenna at right.

Not quite as good as some of our top-scoring years, but not at all bad, remembering that we skipped 2010 and were under a presidential command to “keep it simple” this year. (Not to mention the coyotes.) Publication of the complete results allows a comparison of our score with neighboring groups in both the ENY section and Hudson Division.

In Field Day 2011, PCARA was...

- **Second** out of 3 entries in Category 2A, ENY section.
- **Fourteenth** out of 31 entries in the entire ENY section.
- **Seventh** out of 12 in Category 2A, Hudson Division.
- **36th** out of 105 in the entire Hudson Division.
- **158th** out of 387 in category 2A nationwide.
- **716th** out of 2632 listed entries total.

Here's how PCARA fared compared with some of our friends and neighbors in the East New York (ENY) section of the ARRL Hudson Division:



Joe WA2MCR operates the second HF station while Nathan AB2ZU calls CQ on 6 meters during Field Day 2011.

So even though our score was down, PCARA is still holding its end up, in the upper half of the various categories.

ARRL reports a record number of entries — 2666 — for Field Day 2011 and a record number of participants — 39,246. With a little help from sunspots, more overnight help and some more bonus points, maybe we can push our score higher next time.

– NM9J

# ATAS shrugged - w2ch

You might like to hear my recent experiences with the Yaesu ATAS-120A. This is a screwdriver-type mobile HF/VHF/UHF antenna which I purchased a couple of weeks ago from HRO in Delaware.

The Yaesu ATAS-120A (ATAS=Active Tuning Antenna System) is a mobile antenna that uses a motorized tuning system to resonate the radiating element on each band. The ATAS-120A covers the 7, 14, 21, 28, 50, 144 and 440 MHz amateur bands and is compatible with the Yaesu FT-100, FT-847, FT-857 and FT-897D transceivers. An internal motor adjusts the loading coil's effective length for best SWR, using control signals from the transceiver's microprocessor. Depending on the radio, a duplexer or triplexer may be required for all-band coverage. The antenna can be fitted to a standard UHF mobile mount and is only about 5¼ feet high.

I purchased a Diamond K400 mount for the vehicle's trunk lip, plus the 10 foot coax cable for use in the car and a Diamond duplexer to split the HF and VHF/UHF signals for connection to my Yaesu FT-857D transceiver.

This Yaesu mobile antenna is essentially "plug and play" with ATAS-equipped Yaesu HF transceivers, such as my Yaesu FT-857D — because control signals are sent from radio to antenna via the coaxial cable. I



Ray mounted the ATAS-120A multiband antenna on the trunk lip.

looked at some other screwdriver-type mobile antennas such as the Little Tarheel II, which tunes HF and 6 Meters, but no VHF/UHF. The Tarheel comes with a separate manual tuning control, requiring an extra cable, or for extra money one can purchase an automatic tuning control such



as the MFJ/Ameritron SDC-100, which I really did not want to deal with.

The Yaesu ATAS-120A had reviews on eHam.net that varied from 5 out of 5 to 0 out of 5, so the overall score was about 3.7. This did not appear to be too bothersome and figures with my own experiences.

At first the Yaesu ATAS-120A did tune on the car, adjusting itself for resonance at lowest SWR. But then after trying it out on the balcony mount, which required manual tuning for best SWR, I tried again on Marylyn's car, and it would not stop at the best SWR, instead passing that point. Marylyn, KC2NKU, watched the antenna tune for me and it could only be adjusted for resonance with manual tuning. When I tried to use it again on the balcony mount, it would not tune at all, even manually.

I phoned HRO and they suggested contacting Yaesu about the problem. I spoke to Jerry, at Yaesu Technical Support, and he said that sometimes the antenna requires better grounding to work correctly. I installed an extra ground strap from the mount to the trunk lip, but that did not solve the problem. So I returned the antenna to HRO while it was still new. I can only think that the antenna became defective — as some users have reported — and I did not want to bother with a replacement from HRO and be frustrated with a repeat performance.

I have included some photos which I took of the antenna on the car and on the balcony mount.

I still use hamsticks on the balcony, and while it's still a bit awkward to go out and change them for each band, they do work pretty well with the transceiver and LDG tuner. It is harder to carry them around and change bands while mobile.



Diamond K400 mount.



ATAS-120A mounted on Ray's balcony rail.

- Ray, W2CH

# What's in store?

One of the odd things about living in our part of the world is the apparent shortage of amateur radio stores and component suppliers. I know this is the second decade of the 21st century, and you can buy almost anything over the Internet — but every so often, I have the urge to kick the tires and get close up to equipment I'm hoping to purchase.

## School daze

I suppose this desire for up-close shopping must go back to my early days in the electronics hobby. As a schoolboy during the 1960s, I came across a store in my home-town of



Turn into Southport's narrow Nelson Street...

Southport, England. Instructions were simple — go down Lord Street, the magnificent shopping boulevard in the center of town, as far as the Luxury Apartments

next to the Regal Cinema (later the ABC Cinema). Take a turn behind the apartments down narrow Nelson Street and at the back of the cinema was a little shed of a store with war surplus items in the window. A feature of the window was a semi-hidden turntable (it might even be rotating on a good day) with separate sectors displaying interesting electronic components.

This was D.M. Rogers, an electronic wonderland for youngsters with limited pocket money. The establishment had a stylized robot made of electrical components on the shop sign. I can remember visiting the store on Saturday mornings, clutching a parts list for my latest project, and hoping that all the items would be in stock. The store was popular and there was often a long line waiting to be served by the owner. His son, Dave Bigland became an acquaintance through another friend who ran a TV Repair business. Later on, the store moved to Shakespeare Street, Southport and is still there to this day, providing electronic repairs.

Some of my earliest amateur radio projects were built with components from D.M. Rogers, and ferried back



... and behind the Regal Cinema, was a fascinating electronics store.

home through the streets of Southport in the saddle bag of my trusty Raleigh bicycle. It was not unusual to come across other enthusiasts visiting the store, and to find they had similar interests.

I'm sure that retail stores like Rogers played a significant role in getting people started on their electronic hobbies and careers.



D.M. Rogers' Southport store today.

## Magical mystery tour

As I became more interested in amateur radio, the local electronic shop could no longer provide everything I needed. My first visit to an actual amateur radio store took me on a bus ride into the City of Liverpool and the emporium of Stephens-

James in Priory Road, Anfield, near to Liverpool Football Club. This store was run by Jack Stephens, G3LRB and Harry James, G3MCN. My friend Harold, G3LWK, would call G3MCN "Happy Harry" because of the frequency of his

smiles when dealing with customers. I came away from my first visit to Stephens-James with a Shure 201 ceramic PTT microphone for use with my recently-acquired G2DAF SSB transmitter.

Stephens-James moved out of Liverpool in the mid-1970s to a site on Warrington Road, in Leigh. Instead of a bus ride into Liverpool, a visit to Leigh required a drive from Southport along the East Lancashire Road (A580). Later on, the partnership split and Jack Stephens opened his own store.

Another store that I visited occasionally was NW Electrics in Great Ancoats Street, Manchester. This store, run by Fred G3MAX was in the "radio row" section of Manchester, near the *Daily Express* building. I remember being very impressed by this building on visits with my father to Manchester as a youngster. The *Express* building had a huge glass frontage, allowing a view of the mighty



Stephens-James amateur radio store was in Priory Lane, Anfield, Liverpool.



Shure 201 ceramic microphone.

presses which ran overnight to produce northern editions of the famous newspaper. The surrounding area had several electrical and electronic surplus stores and was always worth a visit.



*Glass-fronted Daily Express building in Great Ancoats Street, Manchester was in the city's "radio row" area.*

One notable item I remember picking up from NW Electrics during the early 1970s was a USAF surplus chassis, with four 4X250B vacuum tubes. Apparently this unit was intended for airborne electronic countermeasures and could radiate a jamming signal from an aircraft on a wide range of VHF/UHF frequencies. With four air-cooled tetrodes, I imagine the power output would have been quite impressive! I reused the beautiful teflon-insulated bases and chimneys in a linear amplifier for 144 MHz SSB, capable of around 300 watts pep output.

### Rochdale radio

After I moved from Southport to Rochdale the focus shifted. The radio shops around Manchester went into decline and better stores were now to be found on the other side of the Pennine Hills, in Yorkshire. A popular destination was the Leeds branch of South Midlands Communications (SMC) because they were Yaesu agents. But that was not the only store in Leeds — there was also

Leeds Amateur Radio (LAR) who were Trio agents. At the time, Kenwood equipment was still known as "Trio" in the UK — where the Kenwood name was better known for "Kenwood Chef" food



*Leeds Amateur Radio ad from Radio Communication, Dec 1981 features the Trio TS830S for £694 (UK pounds).*

processors than for communications equipment. Leeds was also home to Datong Electronics, manufacturer of variable audio filters, RF speech clippers, and other innovative amateur radio products. The owner was Dr David Tong, hence the name. Nowadays Datong has left the amateur radio market to concentrate on surveillance systems for the military, police and intelligence agencies.



### Chicago calling

My next stop was a bit of a leap from northwest England to Naperville, Illinois. Naperville is in the western suburbs of Chicago, and the area was well provided with amateur radio and electronics stores. When I moved there

in the mid-80s, the main ham radio venue was Erickson Communications, located on Milwaukee Avenue. I can still remember the instructions for getting there... take I-88 east, then I-294 (Tri-State) north to O'Hare, turn east on I-90 (Kennedy) to Nagle, cross over the bridge to Bryn Mawr then east to Milwaukee. Ah, those Chicago street names!



*Erickson Communications store on Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL.*

Ericksons was an affiliate of AES — Amateur Electronic Supply, Milwaukee. As a result, Ericksons carried



*Erickson Communications has turned into a Dental Office today.*

the most popular items from AES's catalog in the Chicago store. It was very convenient, being able to drive over to the store on a Saturday and pick up almost anything that you might need for amateur radio. See this article for some

interesting information on the store by K9OY: <http://www.aamerican.com/ham/erickson>.

Later on, another amateur radio store opened in Naperville's northern neighbor, Wheaton. This was the Amateur Radio Toy Store in W. Wesley Street, run by Wayne NA9B and Roberto WA9E. Wayne and Roberto were active in local clubs, so the store was a popular venue in the western suburbs.

There were two Heathkit stores in the Chicago area — the one closest to me was in Downers Grove, and if they were out of stock, there was another store in Schaumburg. The stores sold amateur radio and instrument kits, and I still have a Heathkit dual-trace oscilloscope plus a frequency counter from those happy kit-building days. Sadly, the trend for Heath



*Amateur Radio Toy Store's logo.*

was away from complex kits toward computers when I left Naperville in the early 1990s.

### Go east Old Man

With my next move to the northern suburbs of New York, the contrast was dramatic. The one and only main amateur radio store was KJI Electronics, in Cedar Grove NJ, 60 miles away. In the opposite direction was Lentini Communications, located at the time in Newington, CT and over 80 miles away. The only time I saw those vendors was at Hamfests.

But then in the early 1990s, along came Ham Central, located north of the Galleria Mall in



When Ham Central was open in Poughkeepsie...

Poughkeepsie. This store was a mere 30 miles away from the Peekskill/Cortlandt area, and a relatively easy drive north on Route 9. Many a Saturday, I would take a trip to Ham Central where the owners Jack, N2KUO and Eric WA2LSV, usually had a friendly welcome for radio amateurs from our area. I purchased two HF transceivers from Ham Central, and was sorry when the store

had to close in 2003.

A new dealership emerged at local hamfests in 2005 — this was Radio Oasis, owned by George, K2ZZ. Radio Oasis carries Alinco, Wouxun, Jetstream and LDG equipment. George's location is in South Salem, Westchester and he can supply through mail order or at the next hamfest.

### The local factor

The question that still puzzles me is this. With a population of 22 million people, why doesn't the New York metropolitan area have more amateur radio dealers? And — specifically — why is there no storefront open during weekday hours within easy drive of the northern suburbs?

One explanation might be sales tax — a store operating 100% outside New York State does not have to collect state/local sales tax on behalf of New York — though the buyer is still responsible for paying that tax.

Another explanation suggested by N2CBH is the complexity of running a business in New York State — it must be hard enough for an amateur radio dealer to keep the customers happy and stay profitable, without having to worry about all the State's rules and regulations, not to mention the high costs of taxation, insurance, utilities and real estate in our part of the world.

Finally, we return to a major factor in commerce today — the Internet. Why would anyone drive 50-80 miles to an amateur radio store when you can browse the Internet, download fliers, read reviews and check current stock at big box retailers such as AES or Ham Radio Outlet? Just add the item to your shopping cart and have it delivered next day by the fed-up uniformed parcel shovers — that's unless you worry, like I do, that their



Peekskill to KJI Electronics in Caldwell, NJ is 55 miles. Lentini Communications in Berlin, CT is over 80 miles away.

next-day shipping service might not be very gentle with your valuable box of electronics.

And what happens when something goes wrong with your shiny new radio? The local dealer who already knows you is more likely to be sympathetic than a telephone operator at a big box store several states away.

Many of the stores mentioned in this article are **no longer in business**. It's my opinion that we should do our best to support local dealers who provide good service to the hobby through their storefronts and through hamfests. If you don't support their enterprise and devotion, they might not be around next time you need them, and then your *only* choice could be a big box store, thousands of miles away, out in cyberspace.

- NM9J

## Holiday menu

Here is the menu for PCARA's holiday dinner, "At the Reef" 5:00 p.m., Sunday December 4:



*Tossed Green Salad*

*Potato and Vegetable*

### **Choice of Entrée:**

*Boneless Breast of Chicken Marsala*

*Chicken Cordon Bleu*

*Penne ala Vodka with Grilled Breast of Chicken*

*Broiled Stuffed Filet of Sole*

*Broiled Filet of Salmon*

*Prime Ribs of Beef (Add \$2.95 per person)*

*Cake of the Day*

*Coffee or Tea*

Cost will be \$22.90 per person, with beverages extra plus tax and gratuity. If you plan to attend, please inform one of PCARA's officers about your **choice of entrée** as soon as possible.

# Peekskill / Cortlandt Amateur Radio Association

**Mail:** PCARA, PO Box 146, Crompond, NY 10517

**E-Mail:** w2nyw@arrl.net

**Web site:** <http://www.pcara.org>

**PCARA Update Editor:** Malcolm Pritchard, NM9J

E-mail: NM9J @ arrl.net

*Newsletter contributions are always very welcome!*

Archive: <http://home.computer.net/~pcara/newslett.htm>

## PCARA Information

PCARA is a **Non-Profit Community Service Organization**. PCARA meetings take place the first Sunday of each month\* at 3:00 p.m. in Dining Room B of the Hudson Valley Hospital Center, Route 202, Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567. Drive round behind the main hospital building and enter from the rear (look for the oxygen tanks). Talk-in is available on the 146.67 repeater. \*Apart from holidays.

## PCARA Repeaters

**W2NYW:** 146.67 MHz -0.6, PL 156.7Hz

**KB2CQE:** 449.925MHz -5.0, PL 179.9Hz

**N2CBH:** 448.725MHz -5.0, PL 107.2Hz

## PCARA Calendar

**Sun Dec 4:** PCARA annual holiday meal, monthly meeting and elections; "At the Reef", Annsville Circle, 5:00 p.m.

**Sun Jan 8, 2012:** PCARA Annual Bring and Buy Auction, Hudson Valley Hospital Center, 3:00 p.m.

## Hamfests

**Sat Dec 10:** Boy Scout Troop 139/Venture Crew 7373 - Flea Market/Craft Fair/Hamfest, Conlon Hall 19 North William Street, Bergenfield, NJ 8:00 a.m.

**Sun Jan 8, 2012:** NLI Section Convention, Ham Radio University, Briarcliffe College, 1055 Stewart Ave, Bethpage, NY. 7:30 a.m.

## VE Test Sessions

**Dec 4:** Yonkers ARC, Yonkers PD, Grassy Sprain Rd, Yonkers, NY. 8:30 a.m. Contact Daniel Calabrese, 914 667-0587.

**Dec 8:** WECA, Westchester Co Fire Trg Center, 4 Dana Rd., Valhalla, NY. 7:00 p.m. Contact Stanley Rothman, 914 831-3258.

**Dec 19:** Columbia Univ VE Team, 2960 Broadway, 115 Havemeyer Hall, New York NY. 6:30 p.m. Contact Alan Croswell, (212) 854-3754.



Peekskill / Cortlandt Amateur Radio Association Inc.

PO Box 146

Crompond, NY 10517