

# The RARA RAG

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## History of Rochester Hamfests

### Part II - Postwar Years

Bruce Kelley, W2ICE, Club Historian

The first hamfest following the war was held in the main ballroom of the old Powers Hotel. It was a sentimental occasion and brought together many hams who hadn't seen one another for several years. Other locations tried in the late 40's and early 50's included the Leiderskranz Club on West Main.

One hamfest at the club (it may have been the last one in 1952) will always be remembered for the number of prizes. For over two hours the Prize Committee handed out gifts to everyone in attendance -- not once -- but twice! It was nearly midnight before the affair broke up.

The 1953 event was the last hamfest held in the city with the old Elk's Club as the location. Many unfavorable reports filtered back to the Committee including complaints of stolen hubps. A location outside the city was a must.

The Doud Legion Post (Buffalo Road) was the answer in 1954 and was an immediate success. Oliver Read, W1ETI, Editor of "Radio News" was the Guest Speaker and a wire un-tangling contest between phone and CW operators proved a lot of fun.

By the early 60's, the Doud Post was becoming inadequate because attendance was approaching 500. A larger location was necessary and Vince's 50 Acres appeared a logical choice.

1964 was a memorable year for RaRa. We moved into bigtime at the new location on West Henrietta Road and saw attendance approaching 1000. Bill Halligan (W9AC) of Hallicrafters was the Guest Speaker. 1966 found RaRa sponsoring the largest Hamfest in the state and it was only befitting the name be changed to Western New York Hamfest. Soon after (1967) the words "---and VHF Conference" were added.

A change in management and the increasing size of the flea market prompted a move in 1971 to the present location: the Monroe County Fairgrounds. The last significant change occurred in 1975 when "New York State ARRL Convention" was substituted for "Western New York Hamfest and VHF Conference". To most, however, it is still the good old "Rochester Hamfest"! See you May 21.

## WHAT'S NEW WITH OSCAR?

by Eddie Current AKA, W2MPM

Hardly an Amateur today has not at least heard of OSCAR. Fewer may not know that OSCAR stands for Orbiting Satellite Carrying Amateur Radio. These OSCAR satellites have opened up a whole new world to Amateurs all over the globe through the use of OSCARS 6 and 7. At the March meeting we will discover the present status of A-O-6 and A-O-7 as well as what lies ahead with the scheduled launches of OSCARS 8 and 9.

Bob Crumrine, WB2DNN, who is the Area Coordinator for the Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation (AMSAT), along with Fred Becker, W2GV, an early local OSCAR enthusiast, will present this exciting talk and slide presentation. Bob and Fred will explain how easy it is to work through OSCAR, how to determine when the "bird" is workable in our locality, and what frequencies to use. Exotic usages such as radio location and medical information transmissions will be covered.

All this and more will commence at the regular March 4th meeting, 8 p.m., at the Monroe County Farm and Home Center, 249 Highland Avenue.

Through the efforts of Board member Bob Erskine, W2NVZ, we will also have a two or three minute film that was aired on Channel 10 back in January. This short documentary covered local Amateurs in preparation for the ARRL VHF SS Contest and was excellent PR for Ham radio.



Space became so cramped at Doud Post the head table had to be eliminated. Here we see Linc Cundall (W2LC) presenting Rog Dunham (K2EQK) a trophy.

## More Early Hamfest Photos

see page 7

# The RARA RAG

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## Editors Inch: New Radio Challenge

How will amateur radio fare in WARC-79 and after? The answer is based, quite bluntly, on a progression of numbers. You don't always realize it but we amateurs have use of a large percentage of frequencies, in comparison to other services using the spectrum. To keep what we have even now we will have to show growth by an increase in numbers. If our numbers are declining we have little hope of anyone making valid arguments for us, no matter how good and/or useful we are. Therefore to expand our frequency privileges we have to have more hams. Who gets them, when, where, how, it's all strictly up to us.

Will we all be able to enjoy the bands we now have when the newcomers take fist to key, mic., etc.? Yes some modes will become more crowded and it will take a little more expertise to operate. But if the new operator's habits are not quite to our liking are we going to complain to our old cronies - or are you going to make a courteous and honest attempt to show the person how and why to improve his practices? If you and I don't take that first step (and then the following ones too) to assist after the license arrives then we may as well sell off the gear and let the license lapse because we won't like what we hear, and we will share the blame equally.

This is a unique challenge for ham radi are we going to rise to the occasion? Some clubs and groups have set up the buddy system. Yes - that's used to teach swimming in camp. In other words each newcomer get adopted by an experienced ham. Adopted is intended here to mean an on-going relationship that survives various stages of development.

Can you and I pick up the ball and carry it? Can it be carried as a team?

Dwight B. Hill, K2KWK

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Good and bad repeater equipment performs the same, the difference is the users.

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(Thanks H. R. Report) WWV transmitters at 20 and 25 mhz were silenced February 1 as predicted but schedule continues as before at 2.5, 5.0, 10.0, and 15 mhz.

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# Another Lightning Hazard - The Rotor Cable

So you feel safe after you have disconnected or grounded the antenna feed line? Not necessarily! If you have a rotatable beam or quad, there is usually an 8 or 4 wire cable connecting the rotor mechanism with the rotor control box. This cable leads down the mast or tower into the control or operating room. Unless there is some form of disconnect between this cable and the rotor control box, part (usually too much) of the lightning surge at the antenna or tower will find its way into this cable. Very often this cable runs parallel with the coax used as an antenna feed or transmission line. This enhances the chance of capacitive pickup from the braid of the coax, since the rotor cable is usually unshielded.

In a recent case, nature added to a July 4th local fireworks display by lightning which struck the upper tip of a fibreglass quad spreader holding the 20 meter fed element of a quad at K4NE. The last six inches of the spreader disappeared, leaving a "puff-ball" of fibreglass resembling a feather duster or cotton ice cream cone such as one finds at carnivals. The eye-bolt holding the antenna wire was unharmed but dropped down since its support was lost. There was no damage to the antenna or coax transmission line.

All the antenna feeds were disconnected and grounded outside the shack. Yet the lightning surge entered the house thru the rotor cable, burned out the CDR control box, entered the strip-line 120 volt a.c. connection strip thru the control a.c. cord, passed into the receiver and exciter which had their a.c. cords plugged into the stripline, and caused considerable damage to the receiver and exciter. Some of this could have been avoided had the a.c. cords been disconnected. But the best preventive measure would have been to disconnect the rotor cable.

There is an eight-pin Jones plug disconnect in the rotor cable outside the shack now which can be connected to a grounding plug, all eight connections strapped together and wired to a ground rod. Truly a few ounces of prevention are worth a few pounds of replacement parts!

The only thing that can't be duplicated is your personal service.

# New Catalog Available

Hamtronics, Inc. announces publication of a new expanded catalog, which is available on request. This new edition features a new vhf fm receiver kit model, 6 new test probe kits, two new audio oscillators, a PA/Preamp Unit for use with 2M Handietalkies, a new line of ac power supplies, and an expanded section on antennas, cable, and connectors. Other products include vhf and uhf fm receivers and transmitters in kit form and various adapters for use with vhf and uhf equipment, such as scanner adapters, multichannel adapters, and a full line of preamps. This new 24 page catalog is yours in exchange for a self-addressed stamped envelope. HAMTRONICS, INC., 182 BELMONT ROAD, ROCHESTER, NY 14612.

# Repeater Rules Simplification

Federal Communications Commission Docket 21033 will be the subject of an ARRL official response, however the League needs to hear from members interested in repeaters of all types. Repeater councils, frequency coordinators and VRAC members are also being asked to provide their suggestions for consideration by the ARRL executive committee when it meets to write the ARRL response in late March. Any league member inputs should be sent by March 16 at ARRL, 225 Main Street, Newington, Connecticut, 06111, Attention: Mr. L. McCoy, WIICP.

(Thanks H. R. Report)

# Newest Six Meter Award

According to a recent ARRL Bulletin there is a new 6 meter operating award effective January 1, 1977. The "6 Meter 600 Club" award, is for contacts on or after January 1. Its competitive base comes from both ARRL Sections in the U.S.A. and countries outside the U.S.A. If you are now active in the 50 to 54 mhz band (yes thats four megahertz!) or are planning to be this year be sure to get the special application form. Send a separately addressed and stamped (13¢) envelope to the ARRL at 25 Main Street, Newington, Connecticut, 06111. Please make a notation of "New 6 Meter Award" on your return envelope.

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# How to Keep the Mobile Rig Going

by VE3GPR via "The Groundwave"

How do you keep your mobile signal up to par? Mr. Bill Cousins, VE3GPR, has an answer that can be applied not only in the freezing rain season to come but also in our Rochester salt-weather environment.

First, go out to your favorite spot and treat yourself to a hot cup of brew. But get a take-out kind made of styrofoam. When you have enjoyed what was in the cup, dry it out and punch a small hole in the center of the bottom. Place this cup upside down and slide it over the antenna top and on down to the spring or coil. A rubber band or vinyl tape will hold it in place. If your antenna is a quarter wave type you may have to do this inside as well as outside, to hold it in place. This really works! I have driven over 200 miles without problems but with over one quarter inch of ice on the antenna above the cup. Happy winter hamming.

## ROCHESTER VHF GROUP

by Ed Valmore, K2EVJ

At our last meeting, results of the club efforts in the January SS contest were announced, and certificates were awarded to those participants present at the meeting. Our score increased from approximately 370,000 last year to 425,007 points this year. This represents an average score of 2760 points for each of the 154 logs submitted, and a record score for the club. A summary of members' scores appears in this issue of the RAG.

Participation certificates will be given to all members who submitted logs, and for those of you who have not already received them, you will be able to pick up your certificates at the March RaRa meeting.

On March 18th, our group will meet jointly with the RRRRA for the annual auction. Details may be found in the RRRRA column. So get together your surplus gear and bring it along!

The fellow ham who does not make a mistake - does nothing. And that is a mistake.

Allah does not deduct from the allotted time of man those hours spent hamming.

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QSL CARDS

# YOUTH

by Samule Ullman

Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind; it is not a matter of rosy cheeks, red lips and supple knees; it is a matter of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions; it is the freshness of the deep springs of life.

Youth means a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease. This often exists in a man of sixty more than a boy of twenty. Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. We grow old by deserting our ideals.

Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, fear, self-doubt bows the heart and turns the spirit back to dust.

Whether sixty or sixteen, there is in every human being's heart the lure of wonder, the unfailing child-like curiosity of what's next, and the joy of the game of living. In the center of your heart and mine there is a wireless station; so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer and courage, you are young.

When the aerials are down and your spirit is covered with the snows of cynicism and the ice of pessimism, then you have grown old, even at twenty. But so long as your aerials are up, to catch the optimism, there is hope you may die young at eighty.

Thanks Ms. Landers and Democrat & Chronicle

## 1977 ARRL National Convention.

The convention will be held in Toronto at the Sheraton Centre Hotel on June 3, 4 and 5. A full program of events include programs for ladies and children, exhibition of world's leading ham equipment, contests and awards, QCWA Luncheon, Royal Order of Wouff Hong, microprocessor forums, outstanding speakers and forums, CLARA Luncheon plus a memorable Saturday night dinner and dance. For further details write: '77 ARRL National Convention, P.O. Box 1011, Station "C", Scarborough, Ontario, M1H 2Z4.

When you come to the end of a perfect day - better check things over again.

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# In Defense of the Heath HW-17A

by Fred B. Cupp, W2DUC

Long before the great upswing in FM activity on two meters I invested in a Heath HW-17A. Like many of the early Heath equipment they have a fine xmitter, but it seemed that the receiver did not quite have the performance I was looking for. After much inspection, I came to the conclusion that there was insufficient gain in the receiver and therefore the diode detector threshold was acting as a baseline clipper, making the receiver sound very dead at low signal levels.

A very simple change has made a tremendous improvement, which has been applied to a number of HW-17's with equal success. The output of the packaged front end tuner emerges from a double tuned IF can at approximately 26 MHz. (T-1 in the tuner). This is top coupled via a 7.5 PF. capacitor (C-201) to the top of another tuned IF can, (coil L-6). The losses in these three coils are just too much for the marginal gain of the receiver.

By merely removing the top coupling capacitor, C-201, and inserting a dual gate Mosfet amplifier stage, the receiver comes alive. Gate one connects directly to the IF output of the tuner which provides the ground return path. A source resistor and bypass provide operating bias, and a trimmer potentiometer controls of voltage on gate 2 to adjust the gain to a value enough to get the detector working, but not so high as to reduce the dynamic range of the IF.

Since L-6 is connected to ground, the DC for the drain of the Mosfet was shunt fed through an RF choke and capacitively coupled to the top of L-6. The schematic shows the added circuits and values of the parts I used, however there are no critical values since the tuned circuits are already in place.

When the mod has been completed, all that is necessary is to adjust the gain control voltage until a noticeable increase in background

noise is apparent. Then touch up the tuning of both T-1 and L-6 for "maximum smoke and flame". As this is done, reduce the IF gain control voltage to maintain a good sensitivity without overloading the IF strip.

I sincerely hope that this will induce some of you guys who have these rigs languishing in the attic to dust them off and get back on AM where we can have some good old rag chews without offending the hotshots on the repeaters. Let's rediscover the art of having a comfortable chat now and then, and use some of the lower areas of the band lest we lose it by default....

P.S. Some people have wrongly assumed that the solid state antenna switching circuits are responsible for the poor receiver sensitivity. No so, providing the alignment instructions in the manual are followed carefully. I have listened to the early OSCARS from my mobile with a squalo and this rig, so it does work.

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It seems that no one can not know about ARRL materials available for teaching a Novice class. But in case someone doesn't know, and would like to start a class, WRITE! ARRL, Club and Training Manager - Charles Harris, WB2CHO, 225 Main St., Newington, Connecticut 06111.

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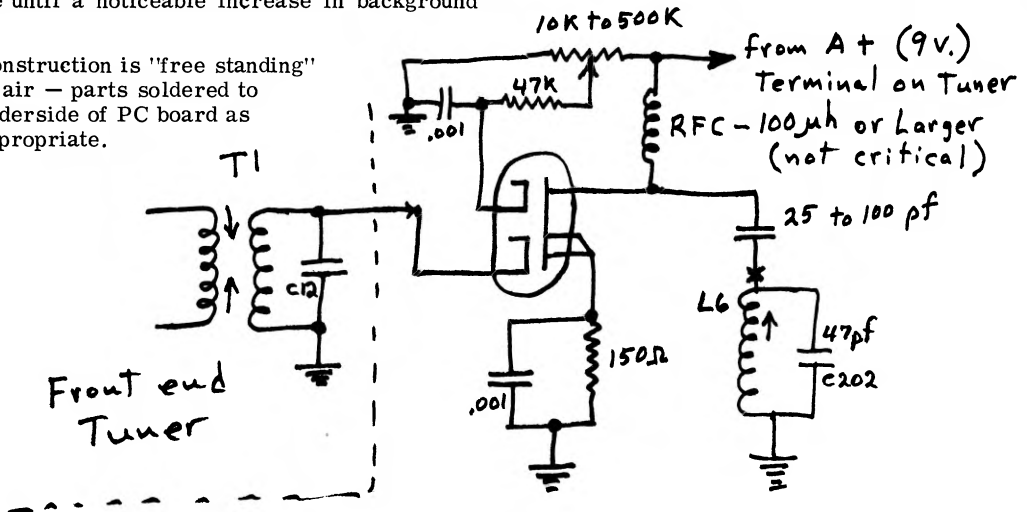
Speaking of upgrading, (werent we?) at a new FCC fee of \$0.00 and with instant upgrade beginning March 1, 1977, it can be a really rewarding way to spend a Friday morning, even in Buffalo, but for those who don't dare "come and get it" at the Rochester Hamfest, Saturday May 21.

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OOp's: one thing that is considered ill manners and poor procedure is to tune up or make any transmission on a frequency which is already occupied.

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Construction is "free standing" in air - parts soldered to underside of PC board as appropriate.



Transistor is a 40673 or equivalent.

# VHF SWEEPSTAKES SCORES

	CALL	CONTACTS	SEC	POINTS					
1.	WA2SEY	268	17	14472	76.	WA2ECD	102	1	2244
2.	K2YCO	278	13	12788	77.	WB2GGM	100	1	2200
3.	WA2ZNC	260	12	11440	78.	K2GMZ	100	1	2200
4.	WB2JFL	234	10	9360	79.	WB2MDO	100	1	2200
5.	K2LDU	233	10	9320	80.	WA2SDK	100	1	2200
6.	WB2KUR	210	11	8820	81.	WB2UTI	100	1	2200
7.	K2RHS	241	7	8194	82.	W2ECM	90	2	2160
8.	WA2YEK	240	7	8160	83.	WA2EKT	95	1	2090
9.	W2UTH	180	12	7920	84.	K2SQI	91	1	2002
10.	W2VVG	225	7	7650	85.	K2JJD	82	2	1968
11.	WA2EKN	180	10	7200	86.	WA2IJE	89	1	1958
12.	WB2RJB	190	5	5580	87.	WB2LJG	88	1	1936
13.	W2MPM	230	2	5520	88.	K2OXT	88	1	1936
14.	W2GV	152	8	5472	89.	WB2QVH	86	1	1892
15.	K2AN	192	4	5376	90.	WA2MST	80	2	1824
16.	WB2YHD	157	6	5024	91.	K2JA	82	1	1804
17.	WA2CER	206	2	4944	92.	W2IUC	81	1	1782
18.	W2ERQW	220	1	4840	93.	WA2GHR	82	1	1782
19.	WA2ALW	150	3	4800	94.	WA2YFT	78	1	1716
20.	WB2WCE	192	2	4608	95.	W2IS	74	1	1628
21.	WA2KND	177	3	4602	96.	W2BLU	73	1	1606
22.	WA2EKR	190	2	4560	97.	WB2LMU	71	1	1562
23.	WA2EJY	190	2	4536	98.	W20TW	71	1	1562
24.	WB2SNA	185	2	4440	99.	WA2UAR	65	2	1560
25.	WA2ABQ	182	2	4368	100.	WB2EHF	70	1	1540
26.	W2OWF	162	3	4212	101.	K2KWK	68	1	1496
27.	W2SNI	175	2	4200	102.	WB2ECK	61	2	1476
28.	WA2JFM	170	2	4080	103.	WB2RVV	67	1	1474
29.	WA2YTK	170	2	4080	104.	WA2LDQ	66	1	1452
30.	WB2AMC	168	2	4032	105.	WA2MBW	62	1	1364
31.	WB2EGH	152	2	3648	106.	W2RBT	62	1	1364
32.	WA2ZPE	152	2	3648	107.	WA2IIJ	60	1	1320
33.	W2ERF	151	2	3624	108.	W2LLS	60	1	1320
34.	WA2TJS	152	2	3624	109.	K2WW	60	1	1320
35.	K2VCZ	150	2	3600	110.	WA2EJU	55	2	1232
36.	WA2ZPL	150	2	3600	111.	WB2FWZ	56	1	1232
37.	WA2SHN	148	2	3552	112.	WA2CTC	50	2	1200
38.	WB2FRG	146	2	3504	113.	WB2TNL	55	1	1199
39.	WA2ILF	146	2	3504	114.	WB2HJN	53	1	1166
40.	WB2MDB	146	1	3504	115.	WA4MTP	53	1	1166
41.	WA2UGE	144	2	3456	116.	WA2GCF	51	1	1122
42.	W2ECH	115	5	3435	117.	LU7BD	50	1	1100
43.	W2HXP	143	2	3432	118.	W2EMX	50	1	1100
44.	WB2WFA	143	2	3432	119.	WA2GIH	50	1	1100
45.	WB2VFK	137	2	3288	120.	W2IBZ	50	1	1100
46.	WB2HYF	135	2	3240	121.	K2MGT	50	1	1100
47.	WA2YYW	132	2	3168	122.	W2YBK	50	1	1100
48.	WB2HTH	130	2	3120	123.	WB2VWV	50	1	1089
49.	WA2UBD	142	1	3102	124.	W2ICE	46	1	1012
50.	K2BCL	130	2	3096	125.	K2LB	43	1	924
51.	WB2DNN	81	9	3078	126.	WA2CME	41	1	891
52.	K2OIU	125	2	3000	127.	WB2FHE	40	1	880
53.	WB2SLM	136	1	2970	128.	W2NVZ	40	1	880
54.	W2DBU	121	2	2904	129.	K2UXF	40	1	880
55.	WA2MJB	132	1	2904	130.	WA2YUO	40	1	880
56.	K2RZI	131	1	2882	131.	WA2IJH	37	1	814
57.	WB2ZFS	131	1	2882	132.	WB2IEJ	36	1	792
58.	W2LC	100	4	2800	133.	W2STM	36	1	781
59.	WB2EDT	126	1	2772	134.	WB2BJE	35	1	770
60.	WB2NOJ	126	1	2761	135.	K2LCS	33	1	726
61.	WB2MCP	125	1	2750	136.	WB2NJE	33	1	726
62.	K2EAW	112	2	2688	137.	W2BOC	23	5	690
63.	WB2JRX	120	1	2640	138.	WB2YRH	31	1	671
64.	WA2NFY	120	1	2640	139.	WA2MKX	29	1	638
65.	W2UAD	110	2	2640	140.	WB2BWQ	28	1	616
66.	WA2WHL	112	2	2640	141.	W2CNS	28	1	616
67.	K2UCI	105	2	2520	142.	K2EUR	27	1	594
68.	K2EVJ	88	5	2460	143.	K2PEY	26	1	572
69.	WA2QFU	102	2	2448	144.	WA2UEB	26	1	572
70.	WA2BQA	111	1	2442	145.	WA2BKV	25	1	550
71.	K2YAH	101	2	2424	146.	WB2GIH	25	1	550
72.	K2OER	110	1	2420	147.	W2ZHB	22	1	484
73.	K2YMM	109	1	2398	148.	WB2LZP	20	1	440
74.	WA2ZQN	109	1	2398	149.	WB2QEV	12	1	264
75.	W2FUI	104	1	2288	150.	WA2ZHV	10	1	220
					151.	WA2VBE	8	1	176
					152.	WB2ZDO	6	1	132
					153.	WA2MXC	5	1	110
					154.	WA2LVP	4	1	88



The first flea market appeared at Doud Post. If we had only known!



Doud Post, a scene of hamfest activities between 1954 and 1963.

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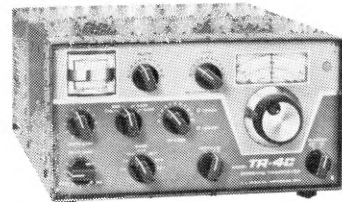
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