



the RARA RAG

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ROCHESTER AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.

VOL. 40

JANUARY 1988

NO. 5

ROCHESTER HAMFEST

by Ed Holdsworth, N2EH

I want to start early in the year to mention the "Hamfest" so that people in this area can mark up their calendars and plan on attending the Rochester Hamfest. This event is sponsored by the Rochester Amateur Radio Association, of which you are a member, to bring to the area the largest gathering of Amateur Radio operators in the northeast and Canada. It brings to this area dealers in amateur gear, representatives from ARRL, representatives from Canada and from several other amateur organizations such as AMSAT and MARS, as well as the largest flea market this side of Dayton.

This event requires many hours by the people that organize and operate it every year as has been done for over forty years. The show has been led by its present chairman for the past twenty-four years, Harold Smith, K2HC. Harold probably spends more time on the Hamfest than most people spend on their full time jobs. He has seen it grow from a small Saturday afternoon event with a few people selling items from the trunks of their cars to the event that it is now.

I will try to keep you informed on the progress of this years Hamfest as things come together. In the meantime, mark the date on your calendar and plan on attending and supporting the dealers that take the time to bring you the best values in amateur gear.

SILENT KEYS

Joe Klusek, WD6BUM
November 21, 1987
x-WB2FDZ

John D. Wolf, K1ESS
February 27, 1987

We are sorry to report the passing of
Craig J. O'Brien, son of Jim O'Brien,
K2UDP, November 28, 1987.

MORE FROM THE OLD TIMER

DID YOU EVER know a ham, who could play a guitar like the best of the tar heels from the Carolinas? I DID!

DID YOU EVER know a ham, who could drive a stock car so fast that he made the Pettys, and others, sweat bullets? I DID!

DID YOU EVER know a ham, whose photography was so impressive that several famous portrait photographers were silently glad that he was busy with all of the above? I DID!

And DID YOU EVER know a ham, who worked for the FCC, who gave his heart and soul to improve the quality of ham radio? I DID!

DID YOU EVER know a ham, and an employee of the FCC, who worked so hard to cool down the apprehensions and fears of the terrified examinees for amateur licenses which he tested? I DID!

And..... DID YOU EVER know a ham, and an accomplished technician for the FCC, who was always delighted, unofficially to pose sophisticated and subtle and mind-bending technical questions to the so-called experts, and quietly watch them struggle? And he had some beauties! I DID! and, I struggled!

And..... DID YOU EVER know a ham, and a loving father and husband and wonderful human being in addition to all this? I DID!

If YOU did not, I am sorry. You missed the best!

Rest in Peace, JAMES E. TAYLOR, JR.
KC2U, who became a Silent Key on November 1, 1987.

GOD BLESS YOU

73 SK de TOT
via RAGS Review

NEXT RaRa MEETING

January 8

the **RaRa Rag**

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VEC PROGRAM UP-DATE

Beginning with the January (16) session the examination fee will be increased to \$4.55. Correct change or a check payable to "W5YI-VEC" is most helpful.

While pre-registration is not required, *except for the Hamfest session*, it does help speed the session along for all examiners. The mandatory paperwork takes 2 - 3 minutes for each of the 12 - 15 applicants we have monthly. If applicants are pre-registered (please no fees until exam day) we avoid an average 30 minute start-up period while the team reviews papers and completes mandatory paperwork. Encourage your friends to register by sending a completed 610 and license copy (cut to exact size) to P.O. Box 15381, Rochester, NY 14615 postmarked by Monday of exam week.

Exam preparation materials seem to have finally caught up with the current elements and are available from ARRL, Newington, CT and W5YI, P.O. Box 10101, Dallas, Texas 75207. The ARRL has a series of manuals available while W5YI provides each element study guide for \$5.25 or a set of all 5 element study guides for \$18.95 (including shipping). The next change will occur in extra class element AB with new question pool issued on March 1, 1988 for implementation on November 1, 1988. Element 2 and 3A will change on November 1, 1989 while element 3B and 4A will be up-dated on November 1, 1990. This information will give you an idea of how long you can expect to use each study guide.

In closing I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Regulars on the "VE Team" who not only work each month, but provide a lot of behind the scenes effort. They are: Len Cataldi, N2HS, Dick Critchell, KY2Y, and Lou Kohnen, K2ANC.

John, K2NC

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THE RaRa RAG 20 YEARS AGO —

JANUARY 1968

by Ed Gable, K2MP

This was indeed a Happy New Year as the final tally for the Eddie Meath Penny-Thon (See Dec 87 *RaRa Rag*) reveals 110,654 pennies collected for this annual Christmas fund drive. This was a major Public Service event with 54 local Amateurs actively participating.

The January meeting was announced with Dr. Arthur Moss and Dr. Bromely Clarke, both of U of R Medical Center, who will talk on Electronics in Medicine. Topics will include the relatively new miracle, the electronic "Pacemaker". In response to the new Advanced License, RaRa told of their two new licensing course for Advance and Extra Class. The classes will be taught by Dave Russell, WA2GIA, and Bob Jeffers, W2ALL. The 7th Annual Valentine Day Dinner Dance was announced for February 10th. Tickets were available from Helen Smith, WA2YRH. Chuck Oneske, K2YCO, announced the coming ARRL January VHF SS Contest. This event is hotly contested by local VHF enthusiast and Chuck is urging good participation. New for 1968 is a computerized mailing list generated from previous entrants. Hamfest Program Committee Chairman Bruce Kelley, W2ICE, is already promoting the 1968 Hamfest. This year's event will be at Vince's Fifty Acres on May 11th. RaRa membership is at 400 with some 89 new members. This was a good growth period for the Association. New members this month included Mel Wilson, W2BOC, and Klaus Gueldenpfennig, DL7KX. Alex Uhimchuk, WA2AQW, is advertising for used Callbooks to send to overseas DX operators.

A REAL COST SAVING

A civilian who works at a National Guard Base in Vermont has created a device that could save the Army more than 6 million dollars a year. John Ledoux, a military technician and Sergeant with the Vermont National Guard has built a hand-held device that detects whether the infra-red lights on a helicopter work. He bought parts from Radio Shack which cost \$8.70 and constructed a device replacing a \$4,500 pair of goggles. The Army says the real savings will come from the fewer hours needed to use the device. Mr. Ledoux has already received a \$10,000 incentive award. He has been recommended for an additional \$25,000 prize, the largest sum given out through the military's incentive program.

New York Times, November 8, 1987

RaRa CALENDAR FOR JANUARY

- 1 - New Years Day
 - 8 - RaRa Meeting - 8:00 p.m.
40/8 Club, 933 University Avenue
 - 15 - VHF Group Meeting
 - 22 - RRRR Meeting - 8:00 p.m.
 - 23-25 - ARRL VHF Contest
 - 30 - Novice Roundup starts
-

WINTER FUN FEST

by John Lloyd, KA2KFV

Envision a nice warm cabin with fireplace ablaze, hot dogs and hamburgers on the grill and all types of desserts. Since the Club has had a good turnout for the last three years another frolic in the snow at Hopkins Point Lodge in Mendon Ponds Park is anticipated. The date has been set to relieve your winter doldrums. The cabin has been reserved for February 13th. Make sure this is one of the first dates you circle on all those new calendars.

Last year we asked each family to bring a log for the fireplace. This worked very well and helped out a lot.

Cross Country skis will again be available for rent across the pond near the swimming area's parking lot. You get the best rate when you rent the skis for the day. So why not get to the park early?

The cabin and dinner should be ready by 2 p.m. and don't forget all that wonderful chili and soup in the meantime from noon on. If you would like to help out with anything give me a call. Look for more particulars here next month.

THE CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS DEPARTMENT

W5YI reports that the September 22 *New York Times* carried a rather amazing article about "Super Q - Long Island's Most powerful pirate". Every evening, Frank Stevens (a fictitious radio name) 28, fires up his home brew 250-watt broadcast station on 91.5 FM from his parent's toolshed after WNYE-FM signs off. He is assisted by four pirate buddies. Stevens, a VCR technician and part time commercial disk jockey, has operated the pirate broadcast station for 10 years without getting caught by the FCC.

Tnx Metroplex

NUCLEAR EXERCISE GOES WELL

By the way of this edition of *PASS THE WORD* I commend the participants in the radiological emergency exercise held the week of October 26. This full-scale exercise, observed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), was designed to test every area of emergency response. The purpose, of course, is to help ensure a timely, well-coordinated and effective response, both on-site and off-site, in the unlikely event of a major accident at the Ginna nuclear power plant.

We have been exercising the emergency plan since early 1982. Our performance has consistently earned passing grades in all of our exercises. It was in 1982, four days after our first observed radiological emergency exercise, that a tube break in a steam generator caused an actual emergency at the plant. Our response in that actual emergency also received praise.

This most recent exercise presented two firsts. The exercise was unannounced and was to begin in hours other than regular work hours. At 1:29 a.m., Tuesday, October 27, the emergency plan was activated in response to a simulated Unusual Event at the Ginna plant where there was a leak in the plant's primary system beyond specified allowances.

The plan involves response by more than 300 RG&E employees. Most reported in less than an hour, and it took only an hour and a half in the middle of the night for the RG&E participants to fully activate all emergency response stations. I consider this a real accomplishment.

This exercise was also the first one in New York State to test response in a simulated 50-mile ingestion pathway. It was simulated that the radioactive plume traveled in the direction of the wind to a distance of 50 miles.

Both the NRC and FEMA in separate critiques of the Ginna exercise said we did well with regard to the technical response and the dissemination of information to the public.

In the exercises we work closely with the emergency response organizations of New York State, Wayne and Monroe Counties. We have an excellent working relationship and it is reflected in the favorable comments from officials at the public critiques. I also commend the many people participating from the state and counties for a job well done.

Last year the Ginna plant was ranked first in the nation with regard to the plant's three-year capacity factor average—the amount of power produced compared with its total capability. That is a re-

markable achievement. Ginna is a fine nuclear plant. It is only fitting then that the plant and the surrounding communities have a very fine emergency response capability.

It is a job well done by all. We in RG&E's senior management thank you for your quick, alert response, professional efforts and continued enthusiasm which keep the Ginna plant an acceptable and respected member of the community.

Paul W. Briggs
Chairman of the Board and
Chief Executive Officer

PUBLIC SERVICE

by Ed Holdsworth, N2EH

I have not written much about our Public Service events for the past year, so I will start out the new year by extending my sincere appreciation to all those dedicated people that worked on our events during 1987. The services performed by the small, but tenacious group have earned the praise and appreciation of all the organizations that they assisted. This exposure to the public is one of, if not the best way, to present the image of amateur radio to the public we are expected to serve.

The past year has seen our involvement in the usual events, marathons, runs, bike rides, pony rallies and the usual larger events like the Susquehannock Pro Road Rally, the Ginna Evacuation drills, Walnut Hill Driving Competition and the RAMS Bike Tour. We worked with groups from other counties such as Wayne County on both Canaltown Days and the Ginna Drills, groups from Ontario, Yates and Steuben Counties on the RAMS Bike Tour, and with groups from Chemung County, New York, as well as Tioga and Potter Counties in Pennsylvania on the Susquehannock Pro Road Rally.

The chemical fire which occurred in August in Brockport saw our services required to furnish communications for the Office of Emergency Preparedness, Red Cross, and Social Services. The amount of time, although short, demonstrated our ability to respond in a timely and professional manner. The Ginna Drills, both the Pre-Drill and the FEMA Observed Drill, were unique this year since they were both unannounced and off hours operation. We were called out at 0350 hours for the pre-drill and 0135 hours for the FEMA observed drill. We reacted in a timely and professional manner and received excellent grades on the quality of our performance.

I mentioned earlier in the article the small, but tenacious groups that work on these events and I would like to point out that these groups represent

approximately 7% of the membership of the club. If you have contacted me or someone else about joining the ARES/RACES group and you have not had a response, please contact us again. Remember that this is not a full time job for any of us, it is a volunteer operation and there are times that other activities require our attention in a more timely manner. Again, if you have tried and have not had a response, please try again. Remember, the organization is open to *all* licensed amateurs and we will try to respond.

I will start in January with the sign up sheets for the 1988 activities and will accept volunteers starting at that time. Remember some events fill up fast, so if you want to be involved with your favorite event, sign up early.

RaRa CODE AND THEORY CLASSES FINISH THE YEAR

by Ed Gable, K2MP

The 1987 Fall Code and Theory Classes finished December 14th. This was another very successful season with some 24 new Novices passing their tests while 15 people completed the Technician and General Class theory portion. Under current rules, the Novices are given their exam by the Instructing Staff. This years Novice classes were very ably instructed by Bob O'Connell, NF2Z, and Joe Phillips, W2DHV. The Tech/General people need to take advantage of the December 19th VE session. RaRa President Bud Young, WA2UGE, interrupted his busy schedule to send the General Class code practice. At the end of the last evening tradition was upheld with the Instructors holding a small Christmas party for the students. Watch the *Rag* for announcements regarding Spring classes.

FOR SALE: Heathkit HW101 Transceiver with SB-600 Speaker, and AC Power Supply, Model HP-23B. \$275.00/BO. Jerry Palermo, NX2E, 334-7533 after 5 p.m.

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FCC LICENSING FIGURES

The FCC has released its licensing figures for the end of September. Because the Federal fiscal year is October 1 - September 30, these are "*year end*" figures for the FCC. These figures show:

Extra Class	43,214
Advanced	98,147
General	114,428
Technician	91,633
Novice	82,779

This totals 430,201, compared to 421,082 for the 1986 fiscal year, a gain of 2.2%. This figure does not include thousands of amateurs whose licenses have expired but are still within the "*grace*" period to renew.

However, the big news from the FCC statistics is the number of new amateurs. In 1987 this number was 24,338, up nearly 40% from 17,848 in 1985, showing that Amateur Radio is attracting newcomers to replace inactive licensees who don't bother to renew their licenses.

Among the other interesting statistics from the FCC is that California continues to be the most populated state for radio amateurs, with some 59,644 within its borders. However, Florida overtakes New York for the number 2 spot, with 26,242 amateurs compared to New York's 26,001. Texas is next with 25,495 amateurs, and may overtake New York next year.

The two smallest states are Wyoming, with 938 amateurs, followed by Delaware, with 991.

The number of amateurs who change their call signs when they upgrade continues to increase slowly. In fiscal 1985, 42.6% changed their calls. In 1987, 46.4% did.

Another interesting statistic regarding call signs is that 54.7% of all amateurs hold 2 x 3 Novice call sign formats, but only 19.2% of all amateurs are Novices, showing that many amateurs upgrading continue to keep their original call sign.

Tnx ARRL Letter

TRI-BAND VERTICAL

A tri-band vertical is here. The Austin Suburban Antenna allows operation on the 144, 220, and 440 MHz repeater bands with a single feedline. The manufacturer claims that the single five foot staff antenna functions as well or better than a half-wave vertical on all bands at a low standing wave ratio (SWR). The price is in the \$70 range and is available from Ed Noll, W3FQJ, Book and Antenna Sales, P.O. Box 75, Chalfont, PA 18914.

Tnx Westlink Report

CONTACT LENS ALERT

Two recent incidents have uncovered an important safety hazard. The first was an electrical worker who threw an uncovered electrical switch into a closed position that produced a short spark. The second involved a welder who flipped open his protective face shield to better position a welding rod. The rod contacted the metal and also produced a spark. Nothing was unusual except that both men were wearing contact lenses.

On returning home, they each removed their contact lenses and the cornea of the eye was removed along with the lens! The result was instant and total blindness in each man's affected eye.

Later investigation showed that in both cases the electric arc generated microwaves that dried up the fluid between the eye tissue and the contact lens and bonded the cornea to the lens. Unfortunately, the trauma is painless, so the individual never knows that an injury has occurred until he tires to remove the contact lenses.

When these incidents were reported, the phenomenon was unknown to federal safety and health agencies. In the interim, don't wear contacts if you are subject to electrical sparking!

Tnx West Coast ARC - Intermod - Westlink Report - WORLDRADIO - Spurious Emissions

VCR EXPLOSION

In the near future nearly every manufacturer will have on the market high resolution VHS video cassette recorders that can make third and fourth generation copies as good as the original. Also coming are dual deck VCR's designed to reproduce pre-recorded tapes with superior quality. Broadcasters say that with 30 cable channels and home video, their audience ratings are suffering badly and that viewing habits are changing. Saturday night is the hardest hit when 10% of all VCR owners are playing back videos. Fifty percent of VCR playback takes place on the weekend - from Friday to Sunday evening. Twenty-three percent of *all* playback occurs during prime time. Average VCR household has its cassette recorder in a "play" mode an average of 5 hours a week; in "record" mode, 3.5 hours per week. These figures all add up to big trouble for broadcasters. Clearly, the broadcast audience is shrinking. The prediction is that home video will replace broadcast TV as the nation's entertainment medium of choice during the next decade.

W5YI Report

HELP NEEDED FOR RaRa CLASSES

Plans are already starting to be formulated for the 1988 RaRa Licensing Classes. Chairman Ed Gable, K2MP, is looking to expand the program to include more "hands-on" and practical training to augment the class room work. Many people are needed for many different tasks. If you would like to be a part of this very rewarding activity please get in touch with Ed at 621-6692.

A BETTER GROUND SYSTEM

Scientists working on Army Grounding Analysis project have shown that grounding with the standard 6 foot metal rod, or even several rods in parallel, is often unsafe and more inadequate for good low noise communications. They have found that a better ground can be established by stapling a 100 foot length of standard 1/8-inch stranded steel wire to the earth every 4 feet with 6-inch pegs. A three pound hammer (in lieu of the 10 pound sledge hammer used with the ground rod) should be sufficient to drive in the pegs. Tests at all sites over the country show the surface wire to be 32 to 95 percent more efficient than the 6-foot grounding rod.

*Tnx CHARRO, San Antonio, Texas
via Metroplex*

FOR SALE - Kenwood TS-830 with Fox Tango SSB Filter, YK88CN 270 HZ and YG455 CN 250 HZ CW Filters also VFO 230 Digital VFO KB-1 Knobson - both units \$875.00. Collins 75 S-3 with 200 HZ CW Filter - \$110.00. Word Processor Wordwriter with spell checker for Commodore 128 by "Timeworks" - \$25.00. C2N Cassette unit for Commodore - \$20.00. N2AUV, 716-467-2360.

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ORION INDUSTRIES FINED \$940,000

Orion Industries, Inc., of Las Vegas, Nevada, and its owners have been fined over \$940,000 for importing and marketing illegal radio frequency devices. In addition, one owner was sentenced to two years imprisonment.

The illegal device the firm imported and marketed is a low powered video transmitter called "TV Genie" designed to retransmit video signals from cameras and VCRs over the air to nearby television receivers. The FCC said that recent complaints of interference to air flight communications in Tennessee and a rural Illinois ambulance service were traced to the device.

According to the FCC public notice, warnings were issued to Orion Industries after the FCC received reports that these devices were being sold. Follow-up investigations revealed that Orion sold over 27,000 of the devices after receiving the warnings.

The penalties assessed were based upon federal law, which allows maximum fines of twice the gross gain from sales of the device.

ARRL VEC TO CHARGE \$4.55 FOR EXAMS

Effective January 1, 1988, the maximum allowable fee for an amateur exam administered by a VEC will be \$4.56. This increase is based upon a 4.3% rise in the Department of Labor Consumer Price Index between September 1986 and September 1987.

The ARRL/VEC will charge \$4.55, effective January 1.

Tnx ARRL Letter

PRB-1 SUIT FILED IN COLORADO

In 1985 Boulder County, Colorado amateurs believed they had won a major victory when the County specified exempted amateur antenna installations from the definition of a "telecommunications element" under the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan. In fact, this plan states that "Amateur antenna installations shall be exempt from height limitations".

Two Boulder County amateurs, NQ0I and N6DIY, applied for building permits to erect 125-foot antenna towers in a rural residential subdivision. The County Zoning Administrator said the antenna towers were considered "structures" which are limited to 35 feet in the County, and treated their application as a variance request.

At the hearing for the variance, the amateurs were represented by attorney Robert Neece, K0KR, with ARRL Rocky Mountain Division Director Marshall Quiat, AG0X, consulting.

Amateurs cited PRB-1, the Comprehensive Plan, and the public service activities of local amateurs. Despite these arguments, the County Board of Adjustments found that amateur antennas should be limited to 35 feet, and that PRB-1 did not apply.

Amateurs have now filed suit in both Federal and State Courts seeking to overturn the decision. Further information concerning this case can be had by contacting Barbara McClune, N0BWS, 5338 Spotted Horse Trail, Boulder, Colorado 80301.

Tnx ARRL Letter

CORDLESS PHONE INTERFACE

Wouldn't it be fun to remotely operate your HF transceiver that's in your ham shack from your living room as you relax, watching the evening news? Or how about remotely operating your HF rig while mowing the grass, raking leaves or shoveling snow? MFJ's new cordless phone interface lets you use your cordless phone to remotely operate your rig. The interface sells for \$39.95 plus \$4 for shipping and handling. The unit is designated *The MFJ-630* and comes with a full one year unconditional warranty. For additional information, contact MFJ Enterprises, Inc., P.O. Box 494, Mississippi State, MS 39762. (800) 647-1800 or (601) 323-5869 or Telex 53-4590 MFJ STKV.

Tnx Metroplex

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DBARA, WB4EWT via Metroplex

THE CONSUMER VS THE TELEPHONE COMPANY

Forget about purchasing those "Phone Wire Maintenance Plans". They aren't worth the money. Telephone companies are allowed to charge whatever the market will bear to repair inside telephone wiring. New York Telephone spent 33 million to service inside wiring in 1985 and received a hefty 244 million dollars in revenues! You can easily add, install or repair your own telephone wiring. There is absolutely nothing to it. All you have to do to check out a telephone problem is to go to where the telephone network enters your house and hook up a telephone across a wire pair. Don't call the phone company until you do this! If you get a dial tone, the trouble is yours. If the phone is dead, its the phone company's problem which must be fixed free. AT&T will even help you track down an inside phone wire problem by dialing (toll free) 800-222-3111.

Tnx W5YI Report

CELLULAR PHONES

The cellular phone business is booming. Telephone hardware prices are nosediving and mobile phone charges and costs per minute are remaining the same. Thats the bottom line of a study by Information Enterprises of St. Louis. There are now more than 800,000 cellular phones in the U.S. That number will rise to 3 million by 1990. Average price today of a cellular car phone is \$1,400 opposed to 1985's \$2,300, and \$2,000 last year. Some car phones can be bought for \$900 or less! The average monthly phone bill remains between \$100 and \$150, about 50¢ a minute... the same as three years ago. Analysts say that by 1990, cellular phones will cost under \$500. Its hard to believe that cellular car phones have been around only since 1983.

Tnx W5YI Report

ANOTHER GREAT HOLIDAY GIFT

Seiko (the clock people) has a world time touch sensor. Touch any city or time zone on the clock face and instantly it displays time, day and date. Comes with call lettered brass plaque for \$85 from M. Bohnhoff Products, P.O. Box 1243, Wheeling, Illinois 60090, (312) 298-LINK.

Tnx Metroplex

HAVING TVI PROBLEMS WHEN ON HF?

Having TVI problems when on HF? - AMECO has introduced two new TV/FM High Pass Filters - one for 75 ohm application, the other for 300 ohm twin lead. The filters, which contain 9 shielded sections (with a total of 25 elements in 5 individually shielded compartments) provide 70 db of attenuation below 50 MHz. Price: \$12.95 from AMECO, 220 E. Jericho Turnpike, Mineola, New York 11501.

tnx W5YI Report - Sept. 15, 1987

FOR SALE: Astron Power Supply RS35A - \$100.00; Vista Power Supply XXXR-30A - \$100.00; New 2 Meter FM Amp, 100w-\$125.00; Kenwood AT230, tuner, pwr/swr - \$200.00; Commodore C-128 and 1571 drive and softwave -\$400.00; Astatic D104 mike and stand-\$25.00; GE, MVP, 4 ch, 35 W, Packet receiver - \$150.00; Ramsey Digital Clock HH MM SS - \$10.00; Knight P2, SWR meter 1.0 to 432 MHz - \$20.00. Len, WA2ZNC, 248-2511.