



the RARA RAG

Published by

ROCHESTER AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.

VOL. 40

MARCH 1988

NO. 7

REWARDING DX . . .

Most readers know that WAS stands for Worked All States; VHF contesters know about grid square collecting; and then there is the Honor Roll and the County Hunters awards. The March program will bring information about a very intriguing and challenging award which is somewhat of a combination of all of the above.

Our speaker for the evening will be Andy Burns, GW0ECO/K5. Andy is from the Cardiff, Wales area and is temporarily stationed in Texas by his employer, British Petroleum. We are fortunate that he will be traveling in the Rochester area on Friday, March 4 and will be able to present details and answer questions regarding the Worked All Great Britain award. Andy is a member of RSGB and ARRL and uses his education in chemical engineering to support his hobby.

The meeting will be held at the 40 & 8 Club, 933 University Avenue and begins at 8:00 p.m. Come out and have some eyeball DX, learn about a fascinating award, take part in the social hour which follows the meeting!

8TH AREA QSL BUREAU MOVED

Leo Fry, K8PYD, manager of the 8th area QSL Bureau, advises all served by the bureau that effective immediately the new address is:

8th area QSL Bureau

P.O. Box 182165

Columbus, OH 43218-2165

Tnx ARRL Letter

SILENT KEYS

CHARLES PLANERT

W2YPR

February 16, 1988

JOHN E. EVERSON

KA2SCJ

Williamson, NY

HAMFEST WORK PARTY

NEEDED – Several rugged individuals to work for **LOW** pay (*zero*) on Saturday, March 12, 1988, 9:00 a.m. at 111 Westfall Road. This work consists of peeling labels from a label strip and placing said labels on envelopes or a folded brochure. It is very technical and requires at least a Novice license or the assistance of a licensed amateur.

You need only to contact Bud Young, WA2UGE, at the March meeting to apply for this position. You will be able to recognize Bud as he usually presides over the monthly meetings. We look forward to seeing a large group of applicants for this position!

SW BELL TO CHARGE REPEATERS RESIDENTIAL RATES

Gene Demuth, W5FJD, of Fredricksburg, Texas recently obtained a favorable ruling from the Texas Public Utilities Commission (PUC) requiring GTE and Southwestern Bell to downgrade the telephone service charges for ham phone patch lines from commercial to residential rates.

Since the ruling, amateur repeater associations have been requesting rate changes from their telephone companies. Big Spring Amateur Radio Club of Snyder, Texas and Caprock Repeater Club of Lubbock, Texas, were also granted a residential rate and received over \$1000 in refunds for past overcharges.

The rulings mentioned apply only to Texas, but watch for updates as other amateur repeater groups approach their local phone companies with the SW Bell precedent. If your repeater Association is paying commercial rates for your repeater patch lines, you may wish to contact your local telephone company and request residential rates.

Tnx ARRL Letter

the **RaRa Rag**

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Amateur Radio News Service

HAM SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

THE FOUNDATION FOR AMATEUR RADIO, INC., a non-profit organization with headquarters in Washington, D.C., plans to award twenty-eight scholarships for the academic year 1988-89 to assist licensed Radio Amateurs. The foundation, composed of fifty local area Amateur Radio Clubs, fully funds six of these scholarships with the income grants and its annual Hamfest. It administers without cost to the donors, seven (7) scholarships for the Quarter Century Wireless Association, two (2) each for the Dade (FL) Radio Club, the Baltimore (MD) Amateur Radio Club, the Department of State Amateur Radio Club, the Amateur Radio News Service, the 10-10 International Net, the Radio Club of America and one (1) each for the Richard G. Chichester Memorial, the Young Ladies' Radio League, the Columbia (MD) Amateur Radio Association, the Frederick (MD) Amateur Radio Club and the Vienna (VA) Wireless Society.

Licensed Radio Amateurs may compete for these awards if they plan to pursue a full-time course of studies beyond high school and are enrolled or have been accepted for enrollment at an accredited university, college or technical school. Some of the scholarships require the holding of at least an FCC *GENERAL* Class license or equivalent. The awards range from \$500 to \$2000 with preference given in some cases to residents of specified geographical areas or the pursuit of certain study programs.

Additional information and application forms can be requested by letter or QSL card, postmarked prior to May 31, 1988 from:

F A R Scholarships
6903 Rhode Island Avenue
College Park, MD 20740

The Foundation for Amateur Radio, incorporated in the District of Columbia, qualifies as a non-profit organization under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. It is devoted exclusively to promoting the interests of Amateur Radio and those scientific, literary and educational pursuits that advance the purposes of the Amateur Radio Service.

FOR SALE - Yaesu desk mike and stand NEW MD-1B8; Astatic D-104 with stand; Knight P2, remote SWR bridge (1.8 - 432 mhz); Gonset Communicator 3; Finco 6 & 2 meter beam; Mosley D-275 Vertical, 6 meters NEW; Mirage D1010N 440, 100wPA. Contact WA2ZNC, Len, 248-2511.

NOTICE

The Card Key lock at the Club Station (K2JD) has been changed. If you would like a replacement they will be available at the regular club meeting.

Please bring your old pass with you to turn in so we can update our records. If you have any questions – please contact Ed Holdsworth, N2EH, at 624-1929 evenings.

ANOTHER SATISFIED CUSTOMER!

Gentlemen;

As one of the newest members of the confraternity of amateur radio, though far from the youngest, let me tell you of my impressions to date.

First, with a gentle nudge from friend and neighbor Harvey Cohen, I inquired about your classes. This was late last summer. I was contacted by Keith Freeberg, N2BEL, who was most helpful and willing to spend as much time as I needed.

I ended up in last fall's Novice class taught by those two kind and considerate gentlemen, Bob O'Connell, NF2Z, and Joe Phillips, W2DHV. All of us who were in that class are indebted to these gentlemen. They will always be high on my list of people who wear white hats, the Good Guys. Next, I will never forget the way Bud Young, WA2UGE, administered our CW test. He went out of his way to put us at ease, explained everything in detail, used his watch to time himself. That night, I felt that every person involved wanted all of us to pass our exams.

I received my Novice license on January 7, and immediately ran into antenna problems. Harvey Cohen came to my rescue and put me in touch with Warren Ulrich, a man I have yet to meet. First by telephone and 2 meters, then by telephone alone, Warren Ulrich gave me such good counsel that I have an excellent 40 and 80 meter antenna and have spent a great deal of time on the air. My first QSO was with an Extra Class, Stuart Levinson, AG3G, Whitestone, New York.

With further advice from David Hoffman, I believe that all of my problems with my antenna will be solved.

Without exception, every licensed amateur I know or have been in contact with has volunteered to help me. I find this to be amazing.

I hope to take the Technician and General exams in April. In the meantime, I will continue to enjoy my new addiction, if you hear me on the air remember that I am a New Novice.

Very truly yours,
Robert E. Craig, KB2ESX

RaRa MARCH CALENDAR

- 4 - RaRa Meeting - 8:00 p.m.
40/8 Club, 933 University Avenue
- 18 - RRRRA-VHF Group Auction
Police & Fire Academy, Scottsville Road
- 26 - Drumlins ARC Hamfest -
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Marbletown Fire Department,
Silverhill Road, Newark, NY
For more information 315-331-1539

PUBLIC SERVICE 1988

by Ed Holdsworth, N2EH

Meg-A-Clean	Early May Date N/A
Susquehannock Pro Rally	June 3 - 5
Pony Club Cross Country Rally	June 25, 26
Walnut Hill Driving Competition	August 18 - 21
MS Bike Tour	September 17, 18
Canaltown Days (Palmyra)	September 17, 18
Ginna Pre-Drill	September 20
Ginna Drill	October 19
DownTown Celebration	November 25



88 STPR RALLY COMING FAST

In just about three months the mad night in the hills of Pennsylvania will be upon us. Despite what you have heard, this is a fun filled, productive, learning experience, with real life communications problems which can be handled best by Radio Amateurs. It doesn't have to be a work filled night. There is plenty of time to spectate too. A good time to start thinking about becoming a part of this public service event is NOW. If you want more details on any part of the Susquehannock Trail PRO Rally, please call: Roger Harnaart, WB2BWQ, 235-0662.

CONCERN RAISED ABOUT RF ENERGY AND CANCER

An alleged link between Amateur Radio operators and certain forms of cancer has once again found its way into the press. A similar incident occurred in 1985. Reportedly, in an article in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, Dr. Samuel Milham has again related a possible link between hams' exposure to RF energy and incidences of several kinds of cancer.

A similar article by Dr. Milham appeared in the *Lancet*, the British Journal of Medicine, (April 6, 1985), where he studied the deaths of 1691 Silent Keys from Washington state and California. He claimed he found a greater number of deaths among the Silent Keys from certain kinds of leukemias than were reported in the general population of white males in a typical year.

Concern over this is understandable, but before you pull the plug on that ham rig there are a few things to consider. This study also showed that radio amateurs had *fewer* deaths than the general population from certain other kinds of leukemia, and in the earlier article there were, in the opinion of competent professionals, serious flaws in Dr. Milham's methodology. For example, *QST* Silent Key lists include only about one-third of deceased radio amateurs (not all are reported to us) and those who are reported are not representative of the population as a whole. The bottom line is that even the experts have disagreed as to the significance of the study, *and it certainly did not establish a casual link between Amateur Radio operation and certain cancer incidences.*

The ARRL position on the original study was summed up in October 1985 *QST*, where an editorial was presented covering the study, as well as other pertinent data and findings.

HQ has not yet seen the current study, so there is no way to know if the flaws in methodology seen in the original study have been corrected. When the article is received by the ARRL it will be reviewed carefully by the ARRL Committee on Biological Effects of RF Energy.

If you would like to read the October 1985 *QST* editorial, and don't have a copy, we can provide you with one for an SASE. Send inquiries to:

Regulatory Information Branch

ARRL HQ

225 Main Street

Newington, CT 06111

Tnx ARRL Letter

THE RaRa RAG 20 YEARS AGO — MARCH 1968

by Ed Gable, K2MP

The front cover of this issue showed a pix of Doug DeMaw, W1CER/W8HHS, *QST*'s Technical Editor, along with a story of Hank Blodgett, W2UTH/W2FRL, where it was announced that Doug would be present at the East Coast VHF Conference and Rochester Hamfest on May 11. The March RaRa meeting promises a program on new solid state devices such as FET's and IC's. Dick Abrahams, K2YRZ, a Project Engineer for RF Communications will be the speaker. Forty people were reported as the class size for the Advanced and Extra classes conducted by Bob Jeffers, W2ALL, and Dave Russell, WA2GIA. Some 102 new members have joined since September with new members this month including Ed Holdsworth and Elmer Wagner, WN2BNJ. The Rochester VHF Group score was reported as 253,000 points with 122 participants. "Goodies" chairman Joe Marsey, WB2UDV, reported that Rag Editor Harold Smith, WA2KND, along with Bob Gross, WB2RVV, were the big winners at the last meeting. Still advertising after many years is R. A. Larson Press, of Fairport, offering quality QSL cards and printing for Hams.

BERNOULLIS RUNNING LOW SAY PILOTS

GEARVAKf members and other hams who are airplane pilots should take note of a new secret study report by the Federal Aviation Administration that calls flying in congested airspace "*dangerous*". According to the study, too many airplanes are using the sky and sometimes they run into one another. A statement by Alfred Airfoil, president of the Aeroplane Owners and Drivers Association, says the FAA study didn't go far enough and identify the cause of the danger. Airfoil said: "*The real reason it's dangerous to fly around big airports is that all those big planes are using up the Bernoulli supply making our little airplanes hard to handle*". (According to Dr. Phugoid G. Dutchroll, GEARVAKf's Director of Aviation, Bernoullis are as important to airplane wings as Hertzes are to ham radios -- ED.) Mr. Airfoil suggested that the FAA face up to the problem of the Bernoulli shortage and establish Bernoulli use factors for all large airports. He called for "*immediate Bernoulli rationing for all airplanes with wingspans over 40 feet*". When contacted about Airfoil's statement, FAA spokesperson, Jamiee Leigh Gyro, said that "*Mr. Airfoil is obviously one wing short*".

Tnx GEARVAKf

HAMFEST

by Ed Holdsworth, N2EH
(Continued from February)

Last month I touched on the Flea Market, both outdoor and indoor and the indoor commercial vendors. We also have to provide programming for the attendees and for the past several years we have had facilities for license exams.

The person in charge of programming is Jim Mozely, W2BCH. Jim had this responsibility for the past few years and must make arrangements for speakers, decide what rooms to use for each program, schedule times that are satisfactory for each speaker and see that all is in place by a January deadline so that the programs can be ready to mail in March. Jim is assisted in these efforts by Bill Thompson, W2MTA, so that we can have a well rounded program that hopefully will have something for everyone.

The other ingredients for successful programming include making travel arrangements for speakers, whether they will stay overnight etc, making sure they have the necessary equipment to present their program and many other minute details.

The license exam committee has been chaired by John Schooley, K2NC, since it was reactivated in the mid Seventies. The exams at the time were administered by the FCC and John furnished the expertise to coordinate and the people to do the hard labor on the day of the Hamfest. The number of people taking exams in one day peaked at over 700 before the advent of the Volunteer Examiners and exams being given monthly as they are now in Rochester. The sessions held at the Hamfest saved many people a trip to Buffalo, where exams had to be taken before the V.E. program began.

The other details that have to be arranged for long before any of this can start are the negotiations for the fairgrounds. This requires reserving the dates, which are set at least three years in advance, requires getting contracts made up, talk-

ing with the fairgrounds personnel, arriving at a cost and signing the contracts. The next thing that has to be done is the preparation of the floor plan, submission to the Town Fire Marshall and an early mailing to the Commercial vendors.

The mailing to all previous attendees is usually made by mid-March. This sets in motion the one man committee know as the Advance Ticket Sale Chairman. This person at present is Bill Shaw, N2EKR. Bill receives approximately 1500 advance orders and not only has to sort the orders for Gate tickets, Dinner tickets and Flea Market tickets but after sorting and turning in the funds, has to package and mail them to the recipients. This is a busy six to eight weeks for Bill.

I mentioned above the mailing of brochures in mid-March to all previous attendees. This number now exceeds 15,000 stateside and 1500 to Canada. This requires a considerable amount of work for a few people or a lesser amount of work for many people. This leads me to the next words you will hopefully read. The mailing is scheduled to be made on Monday, March 14th. This will require a work party to assemble at 111 Westfall Road on Saturday, March 12th at 0900 hours to make this a reality. If you have a few hours free on March 12th, join the group and enjoy making the Hamfest a club function. Contact Bud Young, WA2UGE, at the March meeting and let him know you will be available.

FOR SALE - Dentron MLA-2500 linear amp. 160 - 10 meters. 2 Extra EIMAC 8875 tubes. Excellent cond. \$675. Also, ICOM IC-751 with desk mic. \$900. Dave Rosen, NI2G, 586-2110.

Rochester HAMFEST

MAY 20-21-22, 1988

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CAN YOU FLIP YOUR FLOPPIES?

Ever since the 5.25 inch floppy disk appeared on the microcomputer scene, there has been a running controversy concerning those elongated elliptical slots on both sides of the disk.

When disks were three to five bucks each, it made good sense to cut a notch on the opposite edge of the jacket and use both sides of the disk to store information. Yes, I did it, and anyone who had a reason to store a large amount of data also did it. The job was made easier with a "notch punch" sold through computer magazine ads.

Soon the computer magazines warned that this procedure could damage disks and possibly the read-write heads in disk drives. Worry, worry! Was it worth it to save a few dollars at the risk of damaging disks or heads?

The Argument Continues Today

The pro and con discussions are still going on. The people who are opposed to using both sides of the disk throw these into the ring:

(1) The "single sided" disks have not been inspected on the back side and could have flaws or rough spots.

(2) Turning the disk over causes it to rotate in the opposite direction. Inside the disk jacket a layer of material that keeps the disk surface clean takes a "set" in one direction. When the disk rotates in the opposite direction this "set" will cause undue wear on the disk.

(3) This wear will make the disk surface rough, which will affect the delicate heads in the disk drive, driving them to an early demise.

(4) Programs on the back side of the disk can be damaged if the disk is laid on a desk without a protective sleeve because it will pick up stray particles of dust, crumbs, cigarette ashes, etc.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

***BACK IN BUSINESS de W2YJ**

MY NEW ADDRESS IS

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Thanks for your patience."

Advertisement

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

RaRa RAG 6

But On the Other Hand

Some of the brave souls who still punch notches and use both sides of the disk defend their actions with these reasons:

(1) No one has yet reported a disk failure when using both sides. Granted, it's a problem that *might* occur, but apparently it hasn't been widespread.

(2) Of all the disks drives in use, some use the front slot and some use the rear slot. For this reason, to make the disks usable in as many computers as possible most manufacturers make sure that both sides of the disk are high quality, even though they are sold as single sided.

(3) The price of good quality disks has plunged to as little as 29 cents each in quantities of 100 or more! There is no longer an economical need to use both sides of the disk, except perhaps to save space in your disk file.

(4) If you've been carefully protecting the front side of your disks, and not paying too much attention to the "unused" back side, you might be surprised! The Apple II and the Commodore disk drives record their data on the BACK side of the disk. Probably many others do, also.

You can check it for yourself, if you wish. Use a disk with a non-important material on it. Cover the slot on the top side with a clean slip of paper and tape it in place with removable cellulose tape. This paper/liner will isolate the magnetic material from the read/write head. Insert the disk in your disk drive and boot it normally. The disk drive won't even know the slot is covered. Do the same thing on the bottom slot. You'll get a message that your disk is defective, or some such thing.

Those Are The Facts - Make Your Own Decision

If you still want to notch-and-flip your disk, be aware that there is still a question regarding the reverse rotation of the disk when it's turned over. Although there is general agreement that there probably is no real wear problem for home computer use, side-flipping several times daily in a commercial situation might not be a good idea.

Another point: Now that you know that the back side of your disk is the working side, you might want to be more careful where you lay it down. I keep the sleeve on top or near the disk drive, and the disk goes from the drive to the sleeve in one motion. I shudder when I see unprotected disk lying loose on desks, no matter which is the working side, collecting assorted dust fallout!

From QCWA News by Herb Lipson, W8FBH via Harmonics

THE QSL CARD

I was reading an article in one of the Ham magazines a little while ago about QSL cards. Seems the author was of the opinion that there was no need in a modern age to send out cards.

His deceptively seductive proposition was that QSL cards are primarily used for collectors of awards, to confirm that a certain country or province has been worked a certain number of times on a certain number of bands and modes. What he wanted to do was to set up a computerized registry of who had worked whom, when and where and on how many bands. The idea was that, for a small fee, you could get a transcript of your score and sent it to whichever association was about to issue your pet award, and they would accept it without the usual necessity to send in the cards.

The corollary to that position is that in the early days each contact was a scientific miracle, and should be commemorated; whereas now the average contact is unmemorable, so why waste the paper and stamps to send QSL cards?

I disagree. Certainly many of my contacts are with people I will promptly forget, and who will promptly forget me. But there are as many, or more, QSO's that I remember for a long time. For example the G-QRP station who was so excited that I had been able to work him through heavy QRN that he sent his cards by airmail special delivery. Or any number of QSO's in the US novice band where I was their first "DX" contact!

When one sees what some people have for a station, maybe to them every QSO is a scientific breakthrough!

There is another side to the QSL card too. It says something, a great deal I think, about the character of the station operator. Some cards are works of art, some come off the shelf. Some are home-made, others are distributed by commercial concerns as advertising. I remember one card that came from a W4 – it said 'See the USA in your wide-tracking 1967 Pontiac', with the station call in miniature letters in a corner. I have another, from Utah, which is a replica of a US dollar bill, with the operator's head where George Washington's used to be.

QSL cards make fine wallpaper, and never fail to attract the attention of visitors, Ham and non-Ham alike. As an aid to interesting the neighborhood youngsters it is hard to imagine anything better.

There is some question about the cost. If you are a DX station, then there is a substantial cost, since you will be making a lot of QSO's. In this case a QSL manager is a great investment. For those of us who live in Canada the mail cost can be negligible if you join one of the national societies with outgoing QSL bureaux, or a DX society such as Canad-X.

One old-timer called the QSL card the "final courtesy". It may not be that any longer, but I for one shall continue to QSL one hundred per cent.

by John Iliffe, VE3CES,
in SPLATTER, the Bulletin of the
York Region Amateur Radio Club
via The Groundwave

FOR SALE – Kenwood TS-530-S mint cond., M-60 microphone. Call WA2MST, 225-4565.



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You must live in the present – on today's deposit. Invest it so as to get the utmost in health, happiness, and service.

Tnx RAGS Review

FASCINATING FACTS

One evening, sometime in June of last year, my XYL suddenly burst into the shack and yelled "Will you shut up!"

Well! To think that the signs on the door of my shack meant nothing to her was, to say the least, appalling. VE3NFP, Frank, spent a lot of time on his C64 to print the signs for me. "SHAH'S SHACK", "Knock before entering", "SONNY'S PLAYROOM" – all ignored and I was told to "Shut up".

My XYL was watching the "HUNK" alias Stacy Keech as Mike Hammer that evening and little old me was causing TVI.

You see, the rig and tuner had been well grounded to a cold water pipe; and I had a low pass filter installed approximately 12 inches from the rig. But our tower-mounted TV antenna is only about 20 feet away from my TH3 MK3 tribander. So I was giving a bit of rippling and other problems to the TV, which also has a high pass filter installed.

What do we do? I just had to talk to my long time friend in Porto Alegre, Brazil, PY3ECO, Edgar. Then I remembered that I had a spare LP filter lying around, and in desperation, I connected the second filter in line with the first one. I didn't know what to expect.

I hurried down to the rec room and informed the XYL that I was going to do a test. To which she replied, "Well, get on with it."

Back in the shack, I keyed up and called several CQ's and spoke the words testing, testing, etc., with my call. SWR was ok, power setting ok, so what now?

I returned to the rec room and the XYL; but before I could say anything, she said, "Well, when are you going to do your test?"

I must admit, I was shocked! My mouth hung open and I managed to whisper, "I will do it tomorrow." Without knowing it, she had given me the information I wanted. There was NO MORE TVI.

On July 19 of this year, I made contact with DK1WT in West Germany who was working QRP due to his TVI problem. I suggested that he use two filters and he decided to try the same.

The next time I spoke to Wolf, DK1WT, he had moved up from 10 watts to 750 watts, caused no TVI at his QTH and was enjoying his hobby. He has also installed a second LP filter in the line.

I am sure I did not invent anything new. Someone may have written about two LP filters before, but I have not read any articles on same. I found out about the two filters in desperation.

Your TVI problem may not be the same as mine WAS, but now I have NO PROBLEMS.

Sonny, VE3NQU
from the Peel ARC Bulletin
via the Bulletin of the London Amateur Radio
Club via The Groundwave

NEW EME RECORD ESTABLISHED

On January 5, 1988, a new record was established for EME contacts on 6 meters.

Ray Rector, WA4NJP in Georgia, and Mike Staal, K6MYC/KH6 in Hawaii, established the new distance record at 0940 UTC on January 5, 1988.

This was the first transoceanic 6-meter EME contact, and the ninth 6-meter EME contact made to date.

Tnx ARRL Letter

MICHAEL G. RICE

(KB2SG)

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