



# the **RARA RAG**

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NO. 5

## VHF Contesting, the Old Fashioned Way

by Rick Wells, W2RW

It's January and that means VHF contesting time. The ARRL VHF Sweepstakes will be the third weekend this month. Get ready and get psyched! Come to the January meeting and learn about VHF contesting and awards chasing from the master, Bob Nezelek, W2CNS. Anyone remember what it was like before grid squares? Bob is going to discuss VHF contesting, the way it used to be and talk about some of the early VHF "dx"-peditions. I think he's going to tell us a bit about his big-gun station too. Just for starters, he's got two Rohn 45G towers at a fairly high elevation in the town of Victor. And to really wet your whistle, his 6 meter yagi boom is longer than some of our towers are high, not to mention the KW+ amplifier and two foot diameter bundle of hardline leaving the shack! Maybe if we're lucky, we can talk Bob into sharing some of his experience in achieving the many VHF/UHF awards decorating his walls.

This is for real. Bob is an accomplished VHF/UHF operator and DXer. He has VUCC on 50, 144, 432 and 1296 MHz, 6 and 2 meter WAS, and also has done 2 m and 70 cm moonbounce. Guess that 6 meter WAS was pretty easy compared to the 6 m DXCC that I've seen on his wall! If anyone has questions about VHF and UHF operating, Bob will be the guy to ask.

Please join us at the January 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Don't forget the location change to 111 Westfall. What a great way to start the 1998 season. See you there.

## GLENWOOD AD PRINTED WITH ERROR

The Glenwood ad printed on the back page of the December 1997 Rag incorrectly stated that Glenwood had Saturday hours. The staff of the Rag was notified to change the ad, but the wrong one was printed. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused Glenwoods customers.

## RaRa MEETING

January 2, 1998

8:00 P.M.

Monroe County Office Building

111 Westfall Road

*VHF Contesting the Old Fashioned Way*

## RAPS

The Rochester Amateur Packet Society (RAPS) January meeting has been designated as beginners night. There will be several packet stations set up so that anyone attending the meeting will have an opportunity for "hands on" operation. The purpose of this meeting is to show anyone interested in packet just what it is all about. Even if you do not know anything about packet, come and find out exactly what is needed to get on packet. Most hams already have 75% of the equipment required. The meeting will be in the main floor auditorium of the Monroe County Social Services Building, 111 Westfall Rd., Thursday, January 8th, starting at 7:30 P.M. Hope to see lots of you there.

*Jack Tripp, N2SNL*

## Next Rag Deadline

January 9, 1998

## SILENT KEY

Donald H. Drennan

W2EBF

December 13, 1997

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## 1998 Hamfest Programs

by Lloyd R. Caves, WB2EFU

Hamfest? Who is thinking about a Hamfest now? Maybe you are, if you plan on attending Miami's or Orlando's conventions. Since these are held in February, maybe they are good ones to plan on (ah, summer sun and warm weather in the middle of the winter). Unfortunately most of us will not be attending those. Therefore we must think about those closer to home like Newark in March or maybe Rochester in May. I know that with Rochester being one of the largest ones in our area that it will be on your mind, just not yet. There are still 144 days til Hamfest time. But then who is counting? Not only is the Rochester Hamfest one of the largest in the area but is also sponsored by and organized by your club. All the more reason to attend!!!

There are a lot of events that go on at Hamfests to draw your attention, but one of them that often gets overlooked are the forums and talks. There is a lot of good information that comes out of these talks every year. If you haven't attended any of the programs in the past this maybe the year you should consider some of them. If you watch this column over the next few months you will learn what programs will be held at the Rochester Hamfest in 1998. Only a few will be given to you each month so you have to read your *Rag* all spring.

For the past five years there has been an **Atlantic Division Conference of Affiliated Clubs** held on Friday afternoon. This year is no exception. This meeting is hosted by Bernie Fuller, N3EFN the Atlantic Division Vice Director. Bernie will have many of the ARRL officers and he invites all Atlantic Division affiliated club presidents and delegates to attend. This is an informative meeting and is a great time for two way dialog to take place between the league and your club. Be sure that your local club is represented.

Friday will also bring something new to the programs this year. There will be a three hour training session on **Skywarn**. I am sure many of you have heard about Skywarn and some of you may have even participated in it in some form or other. Also, I am sure that many of you new hams are not sure what this is all about (public service in itself maybe new to you). Well now is a good time refresh your training or to learn from scratch what you can do to get involved in this form of public service. This training will be hosted by Judy Levan, N2TEZ of the National Weather Service out of Buffalo. She will have others with her from Buffalo as well as from the Binghamton office.

**Application of RF Safety Standards** will be presented by Jim Mcherron, K2ZI. Jim is an electrical engineering graduate from Syracuse

University and is the trustee for the Syracuse University Amateur Radio Club. His talk will be on actual applications of the OET 95 B (just made available). He has already had experience with his six different transmitters, one with multiple antennas as well as three different repeaters. If you are (and should be) interested in the new safety standards and how they effect you this is a must see program. We all have to be sure our stations are in compliance.

Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF of Newline will be with us this year from sunny California. Many of you listen to his Newline show each week on the local repeaters. This has been a great way to keep informed on everything from around the country that is going on in radio. **The Newline Story** will be presented by Bill and is a slide/sound show on what Newline is, how they do the news and the story on their Young Ham of the Year Award.

The February *Rag* will bring more information on what programs will be going on at the Rochester Hamfest in May. Plan on attending!!!

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## GATE 4 ATTRACTS HUNDREDS

The FCC does not expect to begin processing Gate 4 applications until after the first of the year. A spokesperson at the FCC's Gettysburg office said the current plan is to run the first-day applications on or about January 7, 1997, but emphasized that this is not a firm date.

The FCC has processed earlier vanity receipts through mid-November, including all work in process (WIPs) applications. In November, the FCC reports it got 517 electronic applications and 149 paper applications.

The FCC reports it got more than 800 electronic applications on December 2, the first day of Gate 4. Another 120 electronic applications showed up on December 3. A count of paper applications is not yet available. *Tnx ARRL Letter*

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## Amateur TV Meeting At K2JD

Belated Seasons Greetings to you. Since this is the holiday cancelled. Obviously season, the December meeting of our ATV club was, some could not attend due to other commitments. However, the next ATV meeting will be on January 15, 1998. We will meet in the K2JD club station at 111 Westfall Road at 7:30 PM. I hope to See all you ATVer's then.

## January Calendar

- 2 - RaRa Meeting - 8:00PM -, 111 Westfall Rd  
VHF Contesting.
- 8 - Rochester Area Packet Society - 7:30PM -  
111 Westfall Road
- 15- ATV Group - 111 Westfall Road
- 20- RDXA Testing & Meeting - 111 Westfall  
Road,.

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## RARA Unwrapped

RARA Unwrapped? Well to turn a phrase, we are going to be unwrapped and presenting amateur radio to the public on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 1998 at the Rochester Museum and Science Center (RMSC). This is all a part of the display in the Kodak Gallery at RMSC called 'RMSC Unwrapped.'

When we were approached by the museum to present it was a great opportunity to show the general public just a little of what amateur radio is all about. The two day presentation on ham radio will feature a live HF station, a Packet station, a look a the Rochester Amateur Radio Association Internet site and some of its links as well as some of the finest professionally produced video segments to help attendees learn more about just a few of the many facets of this avocation.

The interactive display will operate during normal museum hours, Saturday - 9:00 to 5:00 and Sunday - Noon to 5:00 P.M. The 'RMSC Unwrapped' exhibit is included with RMSC general admissions. Please call the Rochester Museum and Science Center at 271-4320 during normal business hours or call 271-1880 their 24 hour information line.

Please spread the word to your friends and neighbors, bundle up the family and come out to support amateur radio. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Do you know of another venue to present amateur radio to the public, especially young people? Do you ever wish there was a way to show others just how rewarding and fun your ham radio can be? Are you willing to help? If you answered Yes! To any of the above, please call or email me. My contact information is in the front of this edition of the RARA Rag.

Seasons Greetings

Keith Freeberg, N2BEL

RARA public Relations

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FOR SALE: Heath SB-220 Linear Amplifier, \$400.  
Call W2RSU, 872-4684

# The Prez Says

By, George F. Lloyd, N2UIO  
President, RaRa

Happy New Year to everybody. 1998 is here and another year is behind us. I hope that everyone had an enjoyable and safe holiday season. I also hope that Everyone got all that radio equipment they asked Santa for. Ho-Ho-Ho! At the time I wrote this article, we hadn't had our December Board meeting due to bad weather. So I will do my best to report to you some of the club's concerns. Coming up soon is the demonstration of amateur radio we will be doing for the Rochester Museum and Science Center. We will be needing help with this event and your participation will be greatly appreciated. Anyone that is interested in helping out can contact Ed Holdsworth, N2EH or Keith Freeberg, N2BEL. I sincerely hope that there will be a good turn out of our members to help us with this event.

At this time I'd like to report to you the progress we've had with the Hamfest Review Committee. We have now had 2 meetings and we have accomplished quite a bit. Thanks to Irv and Ed, we now have a basic outline. Keep in mind the outline is basic and is in it's infancy. This project will take some time to gather all the information and details in order to be complete and through. We have a very good start and I hope the cooperation of all will continue in order for this project to be successful. Each time we meet, there are always new and innovative ideas exchanged. For the most part, we are merely trying to document how it is currently done for future use. Let's face it, if it's not broken, don't try to fix it. However, we need a record so that we may continue into the next century, should we need the information. Finally, I am reaching out to the membership once again for your help. We will be needing an instructor to teach the General Theory class at the upcoming amateur radio classes in February. I will be discussing this matter at our January meeting and ask for volunteers. Our License Class Director Lynn Rosenberg, N2IZX and I would appreciate your help and support. This is not a real difficult job and wouldn't take much time out of anyone's schedule. Anyone who might be interested in teaching this class, please contact Lynn N2IZX or see me at the next meeting in January. As for our next meeting, remember that it is going to be held at 111 Westfall Rd. We will be meeting in the auditorium on the first floor, starting at 8:00 PM. I hope to see you all there and have a happy and safe new year!

# Bogus bulbs?

Merit Arnold, W6NQ, of RF Parts in San Marcos, California, asks in an Internet posting if anyone has encountered counterfeit high-power transmitting tubes (eg, 3-500Z, 3-500ZG, 4-400 series) at flea markets or through overseas suppliers. He says that since Eimac left the glass tube business, he's learned of instances where Eimac and Amperex logos and cleverly copied markings or labels have been applied to tubes manufactured in China which are then packaged in yellow Eimac-style or Amperex boxes. Arnold says that recent-issue Eimac 3-500Z/ZG tubes will have the Eimac logo imprinted on the grid shroud. Also, he says, Eimac will usually have the serial number engraved with vibrating pencil on the shroud. On the other hand, the counterfeit overseas tubes will have the date code and serial number stamped along the edge or on top of shroud (first two digits indicating year of manufacture). Counterfeit 4-400 series "Amperex" tubes use a "slip-on" anode terminal with a set screw. Genuine Amperex tubes have the terminal fused through the glass. W6NQ would like to hear from anyone who has run into these bogus tubes. E-mail him at [rfp@rfparts.com](mailto:rfp@rfparts.com).--thanks to Marv Gonsior, W6FR

*Tnx ARRL Letter*

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## WASHINGTON POST: HAM RADIO REFUSES TO DIE

A recent Washington Post article lumped ham radio with mah-jongg, model rocketry, and something called squished penny (technically "elongated" coins) as "The Hobbies That Refused to Die." The feature, in the paper's Sunday edition, appeared November 14. The gist of the report was that there's still room for ham radio and other "diehard" avocations in the age of "extreme sports and the Internet."

The section on ham radio focuses on the reporter's visit to Hamfest '97 in Gaithersburg, Maryland, sponsored by the Foundation for Amateur Radio, and mentions the article on ham radio that appeared earlier this year in Forbes magazine. The reporter, Dave Nuttycombe, touches on such ham activities as traffic handling, using H-Ts, and restoring older tube-type equipment. He also quotes several hams, including Jim Parsons, WA4LTO, and Geoff Adams, N3QFX, and there's a picture of Parsons at a ham station. Parsons told the reporter that part of ham radio's appeal to him is the challenge that's lacking on the Internet.

Some hams would balk at the article's overall premise that ham radio (he calls it simply "ham") is among the hobbies that have fallen out of fashion and are "now carried on by a valiant few." But Parsons--a graduate of Virginia Tech and an alumnus of its K4KDJ club station--said this week that the article sparked a bit of interest in the DC area. "Reaction has been great. We've gotten a few calls," he said.

The article mentions The Vienna Wireless Society, the Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club and the Columbia Amateur Radio Association as contact points and gives a plug to Auto Call, the official journal of the Foundation for Amateur Radio. The circulation of the Washington Post Sunday edition is more than 1.1 million.

## ARRL/VEC TEST FEE TO RISE:

The ARRL/VEC test fee will be \$6.35 in 1998--up from \$6.25 in 1997. The announcement follows this week's FCC Public Notice announcing a 2.2% increase in the maximum fee reimbursement, to \$6.39. Volunteer Examiners (VEs) and Volunteer Examiner coordinators (VECs) may charge examinees for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in preparing, processing, administering, or coordinating examinations for amateur operator licenses. The amount of any such reimbursement fee from any one examinee for any one examination session, regardless of the number of elements administered, must not exceed the maximum allowable fee.--Bart Jahnke, W9JJ/FCC

## N4XKG PLUGS HAM RADIO ON THE TODAY SHOW

Persistence paid off for Jackie Forbes, N4XKG, of Punta Gorda, Florida, who wanted to top off her visit to New York City by getting a chance to plug ham radio, the ARRL, and--not incidentally--her 70th birthday on NBC Television's The Today Show. She succeeded. Forbes wrote to the show's director and even pulled a trump card, sending along a photo of herself and Bill Miller, who worked on Today in the early days, when Dave Garroway was the host.

Still not knowing if she'd be granted a few fleeting seconds of fame on national TV, Forbes arrived outside NBC on the morning of her birthday, August 4. Only then did she learn that Today personality Al Roker would give her a live shot at 7:35 AM. During her interview, Forbes greeted ham radio operators. The Tech Plus licensee also told a Punta Gorda newspaper that she wanted to be on The Today Show to draw attention to the ARRL's efforts to protect ham radio frequencies from incursions by commercial interests.--thanks to Larry Brown, KD4KVE

*Tnx ARRL Letter*

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**Happy New Year !!!**

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