



# the RARRA RAG

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NO. 8

## PROJECT PROPNET CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY

By Bob Moore, N2USB

The Program for the April meeting will feature one of the leaders in Amateur Radio in the Rochester Area. Ev Tupis, W2EV (ex- WB2ELB) a noted Educator, VHF, UHF & SHF operator and 10 Gig distance record setter will be sharing with us one of his latest projects combining the use of amateur radio and computer technology in Project: PropNET-Perpetual Propagation Plotting. PropNET, a new and cutting-edge method of plotting band openings in near-real-time, is being developed right here in Rochester, NY! Ev will take us on a tour of the software, the frequency and the equipment necessary to participate in this historic development. All it takes is a transceiver, antenna, computer and TNC! The software is freely available as shareware.

If the band opens, but there is no one there to take advantage of it, of what good is it? PropNET promises to keep us informed of band openings; with the potential of notifying us of the event by pager! This is no need to rely on the good nature of DX Cluster spotters, because the PropNET system is fully automated. There is no need for operator or spotter intervention. Intrigued? Come to the next RaRa meeting and learn all about it. You will truly be amazed at what our "local talent" is contributing to the Amateur Radio Hobby.

### **RaRa MEETING**

**April 2, 1999**

**8:00 P.M.**

Henrietta Fire Hall  
3129 East Henrietta Road

**Project Propnet**

Ev Tupis, W2EV

## EX BOARD MEMBER, VE BECOMES SILENT KEY

**John Schooley, K2NC**

By Ed Gable, K2MP

I first met John Schooley, W2BLU, at what else but a RaRa public service event some thirty years ago. Since that time John has spent half his life time in quiet service to our organization and to Amateur Radio. The list of offices held and committees chaired would be lengthy if chronicled here, but I think we remember John most for his dedication and perseverance in bringing FCC testing sessions to the Rochester Hamfest. New people to our hobby may not think that as having much impact. However, many of us do remember the need for a difficult trek to Buffalo for a once a month Amateur testing session. John was able to work with the FCC and convince them to come out of their office and to perform testing at Rochester. The rest, as they say, is history. John was always ready to help out at OEP and RACES when needed and enjoyed the trips to Pennsylvania for the SCCA Road Rallies.

Few people know that John was a cancer survivor. His fight with that terrible illness could be an inspiration to all and he was just beginning to enjoy a post cancer second chance at life. He just put up a new multi-band antenna and was getting his station back to peak performance. I was delighted to have a wonderful visit with John just a few weeks ago as he had several items to donate the AWA museum. We had a long chat that included a wonderful discussion on our mutual interest of Corvettes. He recently purchased a beautiful C4 and we promised to bring our Vette's out for a drive in the Spring.

We will all miss John. His endless smile, the way he kind of chuckled and talked at the same time, his distinctive voice, his kindness and his thoughtful deeds. Rest in Peace, my friend.

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## The Prez Sez...

By Rick Wells, W2RW, President RARA

Let's hope by now the only snow that's left are the remnants of the mountains in the work and Wegman's lots. I started to get worried when the first section of tower started to disappear under the white stuff. The first thing to get covered was the feedline riser conduit followed by the hand winch. The tool shed near by disappeared about 9 PM. Since I had broken a trap on my 160/80/40 CW dipole a while back, I figured this would be a good opportunity to get it repaired without climbing and letting the thing down. After getting the snowshoes on, working my way out to the antenna farm I stepped on top of the all band ground mounted vertical. Well, I don't know about you but I didn't get home from work after the storm until midnight, and that's no April fool!

Now it's time to do some spring planning. For some reason I always get the urge to get started on some antenna work when the WX gets good and it finally starts to feel warm outside. (I am definitely not one that believes that an antenna will perform better if it was constructed or repaired during sub-zero, blizzard conditions.) It's always a busy time of year, what with some yard, garden and house projects all starting up, as well as the hamfest. Before you know it, it's the club picnic followed by Field Day.

What's on your list? If you've satisfied the XYL's or OM's list, whichever the case, and can find some additional time let me make a couple of suggestions.

First, since the antennas and feedlines at K2JD suffered damage this season, I'd like to see some people come out, assuming that Ed, N2EH, is getting a work party together. The work will go a lot faster with several people. The view is pretty nice too from the top of 111 Westfall.

Second, how about "doing" the (Rochester) Hamfest this year instead of just going. That is to say, give Harold or anyone on the hamfest committee (check the web site) a call and see what you can do. It'll be even more fun if you actually get involved. You can even get a free meal out of it! It takes a lot of effort to put this show on and the more help the better. I'll need some volunteers to work at the club booth too, so if you're interested, please give me a call. A couple of other aspects about the hamfest need discussing. A large part of the show is the many commercial vendors that are displaying and selling. Vendors are here not because they like weekends in Rochester, but because they want to sell. They will come back again, if they sell. I know that 800 numbers and

UPS are a pretty unbeatable combination but consider patronizing our hamfest vendors. It's good business for our hamfest and you get to take it home and plug it in right away.

OK, buying new radios isn't the only thing about the 'fest. Don't forget the excellent programs that Lloyd gets together. You will be addressed by some extremely knowledgeable speakers. And on a final note, how 'bout coming out to the Friday night banquet? Yea, it's a couple of bucks but hey, it's our hamfest and it's your opportunity to talk to visitors and League officials. You probably have been wanting to take the XYL out for a nice dinner anyway. See you there...

The next item on your spring planning list should be the club picnic on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Since I will be doing the cooking I can guarantee a great "Ball Park" hot dog! We'll have the same great salads from Davies market. See picnic details elsewhere but remember we will be at a different shelter in the same park.

The weekend following the picnic is Field Day weekend. The bands are never as jammed with signals as they are on this weekend. You can almost feel the RF hitting you when the contest starts on Saturday afternoon. You don't have to make a major effort, if you don't want to. I've done everything from just take out the mobile (HF of course) rig to a full blown radios in the tent with a tribander on a temporary mount. Also consider the possibility of simply running class E, your station in its normal configuration but on emergency power. What ever you do, get on the air, have fun and submit your entry to the League.

And the last item on your list, in between everything summer has to offer, is to keep informed about the various public service events happening, sign up and come out. Put your communications skills to work for the community and the club.

Happy antenna farming & 73,  
Rick, W2RW

## RaRa Hotline

(716) 442-0587

24 hours a day

**Plan Now, Mark your calendar.....  
The Annual RARA Spring picnic  
will be held on June 19, 1999 at  
Ellison Park. Creekside Lodge**

## DX Happenings

By Ed Gable, K2MP/W2AN

The actual pursuit of the rare and illusive DX stations took a back seat for several weekends just recently. The events were the ARRL DX contests. These highly competitive affairs bring out a very high degree of activity for both the CW and SSB weekends.

The first weekend, CW, brought good conditions for both days and even ten meters yielded good results way into the local evening hours. There were few real hot DX locations put on the air for this one but there was plenty of activity to keep entries coming into the log all weekend long.

The following SSB weekend saw the first day with again very good conditions but on Sunday, it was as if someone threw a switch and turned the bands off. The morning was especially dismal where a kilowatt and big yagi still wasn't enough to complete exchanges without repeats.

To find out more about DX'ing and Contesting, feel free to drop in on a meeting of the Rochester DX Association. Their meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month, 7:30 p.m. at the Monroe County Social Services building, 111 Westfall Road.

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### RaRa Amateur Radio License Testing

**Novice - Tech - Tech Plus  
General - Advanced - Extra  
or**

**Whatever Elements you need  
to complete a license class.**

**Saturday April 17, 1999**

**Registration - 8:30AM**

**Testing - 9:00AM**

**Social Services Building  
111 Westfall Rd., Rochester  
Inquires (716) 334-4488**

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**Next Rag Deadline**

**April 7, 1999**

# Public Service-1999

By Ed Holdsworth, N2EH

The time has come to get out your calendar and record the dates for all the public service events. The following dates have been set:

Susquehannock Trail Pro Rally Fri-Sun June 4-6

Tour de Cure Sat. June 5

Stuart Horse Trials Sat. July 31

Walnut Hill Driving Comp. Wed-Sun  
Aug. 18-22

R. E. Ginna Nuclear Exercise

    Predrill Wed. Oct. 6

    Observed Drill Wed. Nov 17

ADA Walk-A-Thon Sun. Oct. 3

Pumpkin Patrol Sat. Oct. 30

The following are scheduled, however no date have been determined:

Lilac 10K run

Corporate Challenge

Henrietta Dualathon

Geneseo Hunt Club

These are the events as of April '99. Additional dates will be published as they become available. If you are interested in working an event or more, contact Ed Holdsworth, at (716) 624-1929, or use signup sheets at the meetings.

## Rochester VHF Group, Gala Event

### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Awards Banquet

Mario's Via Abruzzi, April 10, 7:00PM

Call Len, WA2ZNC, 229-5470 for details.

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## SILENT KEYS

**John Schooley, K2NC,**

Feb. 28, 1999

**William Buchan, W2OMV,**

Mar. 6, 1999

**David Crumline, N2NVE,**

Mar. 7, 1999

# Rag Chew

By Lloyd R. Caves, WB2EFU

The last couple of years have not been good for many of our members, as the silent key list is growing way too fast. This month we lost two of our members; John Schooley, K2NC and William Buchan, W2OMV. Lets, at this time, take a moment of silence in our own home and mind for these two gentleman and for all the silent keys that we have had recently.

Both of these gentlemen have added a lot to ham radio and RARA in their own way. Both have been great friends to many of us over the years. To others they were just acquaintances or were not known at all and that was a shame. John was very active in RARA over the years by being a board member and a club officer. He was also very active in a lot of the activities that RARA had over the years. This would be in both social events and events to help others and the community. For years he was an active ARES/RACES member.

Bill was very active in different ways. He made almost every RARA meeting and social event just to be around others and his friends. He liked people as much as he liked Ham Radio. You would always see him proudly wearing his gray RARA jacket, even at non ham events. He was also very active in the RDXA and will be remembered by every member of that organization. He wouldn't miss an RDXA meeting if he could help it and was active in all of their events also such as contests and field days. Even at the age of 80 Bill was working the field day event last year and helped out as best he could. He really enjoyed the on the air contacts and points that he was able to accumulate for the club. About four years ago Bill was nominated for the Atlantic Divisions Ham Of The Year. Even though he did not receive it it is still an honor to know that people around you think enough about you to put the nomination in.

Bill's love of Ham Radio was known well by his family even though they were located all over the country. Enough so that they have requested that any donations made in his name will be donated to RARA and the RDXA. To this the two organizations would like to publicly thank them and Bill! You will definitely be missed by both clubs.

John and Bill, you will be in the memory and hearts of all your friends forever. Our hats are off to you both for all that you gave to the hobby and to your friends. So folks, if you have not yet done so, take that moment of silence now for John and Bill as well as all our other silent keys.

# QRZed With Alex, NV2Y

## Take Things as They Come.

Take things as they come and go from there. No one can accuse me of setting goals. Why set goals? If you like the idea, do it, period. Why think and stew about it. Correct your mistakes as you go along. Once I get the idea into my head then I plan the details. Generally my planning does not occur no sooner than 24 hours before the idea is to be put into action.. Yep! It doesn't pay to be a poor judge of time. There is nothing like panic to get your mind and butt moving. I have been accused of being compulsive. Not so. You know what you like so you do it. Hey! When I decided to become a ham I jumped right in. When I decided to upgrade it took no planning. You just do it. Work! What's that? When you want to do something, it is fun. A challenge, can I do it?

Some new hams have become aware of their inheriting the annoying gene known as mike fright. Try this with the radio off, holding the mike in front of your face and talk. What about? Who cares, just talk. Chances are your more scared of your own voice then you are of the other guy's. It may take 5 minutes or 5 weeks to settle down. Just do it. Take things as them come. On the radio call CQ and if you get a reply after iding, you just pass the buck and say back to you OM. Let the other person set the stage. See how easy it is. The rest you take as it comes. So you stutter, hem and haw. I bet my pay, for writing this article, within the next two sentences you'll be talking and won't know when to say back to you OM.

I know there are a number of young people out there who are afraid of talking on the air even with their parents coaxing, pleading, and coaching. I see these young people at the meetings and ask them if they have been on the radio. All I get is a very shy shrug. What can we do to get them on the air? How do we get past that shyness and fright? Hey! I don't blame them. It is not natural for young people to talk to their elders. In my generation young people talked only when spoken to. As a thought, should we set up a special time on the repeaters for young hams only? Then invite adults to come in on a controlled limited time so the young ham gets some exposure to talking to adults. Let things happen. YLs, if you will permit me, what a wonderful time to organize such a project. Call it Young People's Net or what ever you decide. I instinctively know the young folks will respond. They will not feel threatened and hopefully come right in. Talk time I think should be right after they get home from school and just before they get on their computers on Chat Room.

All we need is a YL, a mother, OK, OM who is willing to have some fun with the young people. Let things happen. Be ready to catch the ball when it is thrown your way. Why not give it a try and take things as they come and go on from there. All we need is a leader.

Look! If you want to set goals you must be organized. I can just see those who know me and reading this are snickering. As for me, I do things now, while I am not cluttered with goal orientation. If I waited to set goals I may never get anything done. Just ask my xyl..

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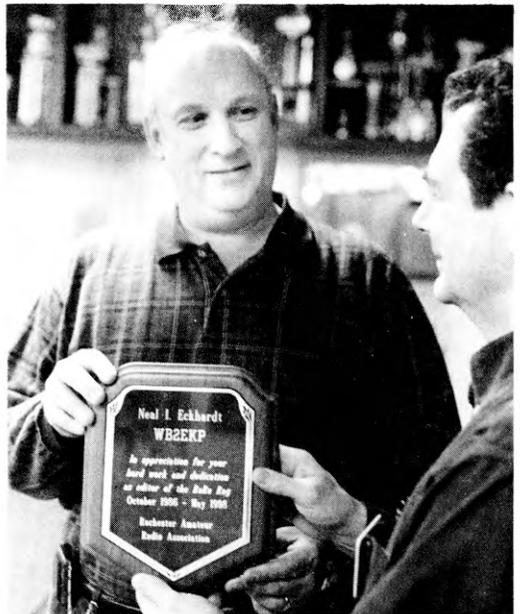
## Spring 1999 License Class Report

By Tim Magee, WB2KAO,  
License Class Director

Spring license classes are in full swing. And boy are they ever taking to the CW, with Rick doing a bang up job on the theory.

We have sixteen in the Novice/Tech class, six students in the General and three in the Extra class. All classes are proceeding on schedule working toward a testing date on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

The instructors are encouraged with the progress and enthusiasm of the students. I will be updating you in the subsequent Rag issues to come.



**IN APPRECIATION:** Neal Eckhardt, WB2EKP, receiving plaque from Rick Wells, W2RW, RaRa President, in appreciation of the fine work and dedication while editor of the RaRa Rag – 1986-1998.

## EDITORIALS:

### As I See It—

By Bill McDonnell, KG2F

I would like to call attention to references in the March RaRa Rag article—"RagChew" concerning the operation of the Amateur Television (ATV) Repeater.

The installation of the repeater has been a giant step forward in communicating visually as well as aurally in the Greater Rochester Area, and an incentive to anyone contemplating ATV as a hobby.

The ATV repeater was installed on a location where electronic equipment of other services is also located (somewhat resembling Baker Hill reduced to a rooftop). Although the ATV equipment was designed well within the standards established by the FCC, as with most installations, measures had to be taken to make everything compatible. This, of course, took some time and resulted in a sort of stigma with respect to the ATV equipment. Consequently, every time a problem developed with one of the other nearby services the ATV repeater was suspect, which may have been the reason the ATV repeater was found *.....unplugged many times. Unfortunately this condition continues long after problems have been corrected.*

Other observations on the use of the ATV repeater is field stations not being properly adjusted and overdriving the repeater, resulting in both video and audio distortion. Remember the old adage—garbage in/garbage out.

To minimize the problems of input, special filters were designed to make best use of the ATV repeater capabilities. These filters are applied between the antenna and the repeater receiver.

There are still some minor problems involving interfacing with the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) which still have to be worked out.

To summarize, I believe we have the best compromise in performance for use in the congested band we are operating in, and when finished the repeater will be capable of 2 way video conferencing.

Designing, building and maintaining the repeater has been a large undertaking and not without the usual developmental problems. I would be happy to accept offers of assistance.

*Ed- Bill McDonnell, KG2F, is the designer, builder, installer, and "Chief Engineer" of the RaRa ATV repeater.*

## 1999 Hamfest Programs- Part IV

By Lloyd R. Caves, WB2EFU

I know that there is a lot of talk right now about the Dayton Hamvention that is coming up in May. Many of you are planning on taking a trip to Dayton to be a part of this Hamfest in one way or another. This is great as it is one Hamfest that every ham should attend at least once. Once you have done that you can make up your own mind as to whether you want to make that trip again and I bet most of you will go a second, third or more times. The next best thing to the Dayton Hamvention, however, takes place right in your own back yard in June. That is the Rochester Hamfest; so mark your calendars for June 4, 5, and 6 to be sure that you don't miss this show.

The Rochester Hamfest is also the ARRL Atlantic Division Conference. For that reason on Saturday there will be an **ARRL Forum** held along with other programs of interest. This years Forum will be hosted by Kay Craigie, WT3P, Atlantic Division Director and Bernie Fuller, N3EFN, Atlantic Division Vice Director along with other ARRL officials and officers. This gives everyone an outstanding opportunity to confer with your ARRL leaders. Find out first hand what is taking place in your organization as well as Ham Radio in general. Questions from the floor are encouraged.

As was mentioned in past months Bill Moore, NC1L, ARRL DXCC Supervisor will be attending this years Hamfest. Along with the programs that Bill be putting on for you (see January-March issues of the *Rag*) he will also be checking QSL cards for DXCC and other awards. This will give you a chance to get that next endorsement for DXCC that you wanted without having to mail your precious QSL cards to the ARRL Headquarters. This is an opportunity that does not happen every year so get all your QSL cards together and in order for Bill to Check.

Are there some questions that you may have on antennas and feed lines? If so, plan on attending the **Antenna** program that will be hosted by Tim Duffy, K3LR. Tim is some what of an expert in this field and will be speaking about some antenna installations and feed line ideas that can be used by every amateur. He will also show some slides of large antenna installations that will be of interest to all.

Don't forget the awards banquet to be held Friday evening at the Marriott Hotel. You should plan on attending this great event as well as the Hamfest. The food is excellent and the company of

those around you is terrific, not to mention being there in the excitement of those receiving the awards. Tickets for both are available by contacting Jack Tripp, N2SNL. You will be receiving, or already have received, the *Rochester Hamfest Times* in the mail that contains the advance ticket sale form and information.

## RaRa Rag 20 Years Ago

By Ed Gable K2MP

April 1979: This meeting was one of the popular "RaRa on the Road" affairs with the gang being hosted by the Gleason Works on University Avenue. The popular Old Timer's night featured Bruce Kelley, W2ICE, with a program on Thomas Alva Edison. RaRa's man with the FCC, John Schooley, K2NC, wrote to urge everyone to get ready for the FCC's visit to the Rochester Hamfest where Radio Amateur Exams will take place. This popular venue was in lieu of the then requirement to drive to Buffalo in order to take written exams. President Len Gessin wrote of the very successful Valentines Day Dinner dance. This event was again chaired by the always cheerful Cappy Capauldy, K2UXF, and his wife, Skippy. Writing for the Rochester VHF Group was Mike McHugh, W2AV, who reports that there were 229 logs turned in for the just completed VHF contest. Top honors went to Chuck Oneske, K2YCO, as Single Operator entry and to W2UTH and the *Squaw Island ARA* for top multi-operator honors. Harold Smith, K2HC, wrote to describe a group tour he is organizing for Dayton. He supplies plane tickets and rooms, you supply money... Easy. Otto Bluntzer, WB2RJB, reported that 32 people signed up for the Novice class while 31 were there to sign up for General. A long time friend of RaRa and the Amateur operators everywhere passed away. He was Ivan Loucks, W3GD, Chief of the Amateur Bureau of the FCC ARRL's Bill Tynan, W3XO, editor for QST's VHF Column, wrote a very laudatory anniversary greeting to the Rochester VHF group on their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. And it had to end! The six month full page advertising war between *JR's* and *AR of Rochester* ended with a **two page centerfold** announcing the two companies had merged and formed *JR's Amateur Radio of Rochester*, to be located at 1185 Scottsville Road.

## REFLECTIONS

By Tim Magee, WB2KAO

### Ham Radio Has Been Good to Me

I first experienced amateur radio in the fall of 1962 when my father found out about license classes at the Rochester museum. He took me down there and we were told that they were just about at the end of the course; however, one of the instructors Doc Thompson WA2EIP offered to tutor me privately at his home. I earned my Novice license in June of '63 at age 12 and my General in March of '64.

Moving to Auburn in September of 1965 my father allowed me to put a TA-33 Jr. on the roof and my Heathkit Marauder and Mosley CM-1 brought me much happiness. I also became interested in 6 and 2 meter AM during my high school years in the 60s and the summer of 68 I experienced 2 m FM at the Radio Amateurs of Greater Syracuse booth at the state fair. VHF and UHF repeaters became a prime interest of mine from that point on.

My main enjoyment in the hobby is CW rag chewing, as well as my 440 MHz repeater. I have been very pleased to teach the Novice CW for license classes on several occasions and plan on continuing that in the future. Ham radio has been a hobby that I could be independent at, and able to adapt the equipment so that being blind has no bearing on operation. I can credit ham radio for meeting my wife. We met on the air in 1976, had a chance to get together in 1990, and were married in June of '91.

You will not find a more diverse hobby than amateur radio. Truly there is something in it for everyone.

*Reflections" is a new column created to give members a chance to share with others an interesting experience in their pursuit of ham radio. Each of us has had, no doubt such an experienced, either in the distant or recent past. Be it something which happened to you or someone else. Please let us know about it. You don't have to be a writer.*

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