



the RARRA RAG

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NO. 1

September 11th Meeting "The Secrets of Railroad Communications" Or "Communicating on the Iron Road: Then & Now"

by Keith Freeberg, N2BNL

This family oriented fun night is for people of all ages whether you're interested in the nostalgia of times gone by when travel was stately and elegant or interested in the technologies behind the travel. We'll learn more about the industry that still is responsible for getting much of our nation's goods to our table and even automobiles in our driveways. You will have the opportunity to glimpse at the daily routine of railroad behind the scenes and even experience a little bit of it first-hand. Bring your entire family! Bring your friends!

Our Presenter, Christopher Hauf, will share many areas where signaling methods and communications systems are nearly unknown outside of railway systems, some of these early systems are still in use today because of their effectiveness. Chris' talk will include many unique demonstrations and illustrations rarely seen outside the railroad museum and some that have not been seen even there. Come and experience "Communicating on the Iron Road: Then & Now".

RaRa MEETING

September 10, 1999

8:00 P.M.

Henrietta Fire Hall

3129 East Henrietta Road

Railroad Communications

By Christopher Hauf

1990-2000 Amateur Radio License Testing Season

By George Platteter, AA2FO

Get Licensed, upgrade The fall season is fast approaching and it's the advent of the official 1999-2000 RaRa Testing Season.

The sessions are held monthly from September through May on the 3rd Saturday of each month, with the exception of September (4th Saturday), and May (Hamfest). In addition we will be conducting a testing session at the Buffalo Hamfest on September 18th, and at the conclusion of both the Fall and Spring License classes.

The exams are conducted at the Monroe County Social Services Building, 111 Wesfall Rd. in the cafeteria. Registration normally takes place at 8:30 AM and exams start at 9:00 AM.

Exam dates are as follows:

September 25

October 16

November 20

December 18

January 15

February 15

March 18

April 15

May - Hamfest

Walk In or Mail/Call reservations to:

George Platteter, AA2FO, 716 334-4488

82 Colonnade Dr.

Rochester, NY 14623

In addition to a pen and pencil, all applicants should bring with them two forms of identification, your original Fcc License, and also a copy of any current Certificates of Completion for exam elements passed at another test session.

A fee will be charged for the exam (currently \$6.35). Handicapped applicants are welcome. Please make arrangements in advance so we may best meet your needs.

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The Prez Says....

By Bob Moore, N2USB, President RARA

Once again it's that time of the year when the days are beginning to get shorter, the children or grandchildren are getting ready to go back to school and the number of days left to complete that antenna work in nice weather are getting fewer. With all the down side of summer passing into fall, there is at least one good thing to anticipate: the resumption to the RARA meetings and the gathering of friends that you may not have seen for awhile. This year, as in the past, the RARA meetings will be held at the Henrietta Fire Hall located at 3129 East Henrietta Road and will provide you an evening of entertainment, socializing, along with refreshments and a chance to win one of the prizes in the monthly raffle.

The RARA picnic in June was a great time this year and was better attended than in the past. I must offer my thanks to Tim Magee, WB2KAO, and Rick Wells, W2RW, for the excellent job of organizing the picnic and preparing the food. This year we also had a new treat, a Foxhunt, this was Jon Dickason, N2JAC inspiration and was a total success. Jon provided the fox and almost everyone that had a two-meter hand held was involved in the hunt. And our thanks to Irv Goodman, AF2K, for setting up his HF mobile to provide the kids at the picnic an opportunity to get on the air and participate in the national KID'S DAY event to expose young people to amateur radio. Start planning now to attend the June 2000 picnic; all you have to do is to come out and join us to have fun.

September is also the start of our fall license class organized by Tim Magee, WB2KAO. Classes will be offered for Novice, Technician, Technician Plus, General, and Advanced class licenses. Registration for the classes will be on September 13th in the first floor auditorium at the Monroe County Social Services Building located at 111 Westfall Road. If you or a family member or friend has been thinking of upgrading or getting that first license now would be a great time to do it. The quality of our instructors cannot be beat.

Also, starting in September is the fall session of the Radio Coaches Program. This year the program will be conducted at the Jefferson Middle School, and the first session will run for ten weeks. This program has been proven successful here in Rochester and is in great demand. Our problem is that we do not have enough volunteers to staff the teams to meet the demand to conduct Radio Coaches Programs in the other locations desiring to participate in the program. If you would like to

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help and would like to reach out to the young people in the Rochester and Monroe County area, please contact me or Keith Freeberg, N2BEL, or any Radio Coach, we would welcome your help.

There are many other opportunities for you to increase your involvement in our hobby. Ed Holdsworth, N2EH, our Public Service Coordinator, has many opportunities for participation, and I sure he has an event that will fill your needs and fit into your schedule. Ed makes all of these opportunities known at every monthly meeting and is more than willing to share the fun and satisfaction of participating in these events with you. Support RARA and the community by participating in public service events.

I know that there are many of you who are experts in the many facets of amateur radio: restoring of amateur equipment, DX'ing, working QRP, logging IOTA, collecting 10-10 numbers, pounding brass, participating in field days, packet, APRS, weak signal VHF, or any one of other unnamed aspects of this hobby. If you do any of these things, that makes you explicitly qualified to make a contribution to the RARA Rag. That's right, write a short article about your experiences in amateur radio. You would be surprised how easy it is and how the other members will enjoy reading about your experiences. Pound one out and send it to George Platteter, AA2FO, Editor of the RARA RAG.

If the above opportunities are not just what want for your participation, try one of the committee positions we have available. See any Officer or Board of Directors member and they will be more than happy to take your name to the next Board of Directors meeting.

Our first membership meeting this year is at 8:00 p.m. on September 10th, and I hope to see a record turn out. Come out and join us and enjoy a great program and the camaraderie of your fellow amateurs. See you there.

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RaRa Rag 20 Years Ago

Ed Gable K2MP

September 1979: New VP Otto Bluntzer, WB2RJB, announced the September meeting, held at the Farm and Home Center on Highland Avenue, will be on the new 911 system. With membership at 800, the incoming president, Alan Komenski, AC2K, urged all to volunteer to do their part. Volunteering at *RaRa* means public service. Ed Holdsworth, N2EH, wrote that this Summer local hams helped out at the STPR rally, the Genesee Valley Airshow and at the Special Olympics. Irv Goodman, AF2K reported that Webster passed a favorable Tower Law thanks to the help of local Hams; Gene Fuller, W2LU, Ash Palmer, K2EAW, Don Drenon, W2EBF and Dick Critchell, KB2BN. John Plumeri, W2KZD, wrote to inform that a new 2 meter repeater is up and running. Look for WR2AFV on 146.715 Mhz. Writing for the RARRA was Rich Koehn, K2UW, where he is this year's Chairman along with Dave Coleman, N2AOB, as VP, Gil Chapin, WB2UTI and Secretary/Treasurer and Roger Williams, W2NES and Program Chairman. Ray Leigh, W2SNI, writing for *The Rochester DX Association* announced that their meetings will be at the Colonial hotel on Empire Boulevard. Bob Roberts, WA2QAU, also wrote a nice article on DX QSL'ing. *JR Amateur Radio* took out two full page ads advertising Icom, Drake, Swan, TenTec, Atlas, Dentron and others.

Fall License Class

Announcement

by Tim Magee, WB2KAO, License Class
Director

Registration for September licensing classes will be held on Monday September 13, 1999, at 7:00 PM, 111 Westfall Rd., County Social Services building in the auditorium. We will be offering 5 and 13 word per minute CW, Novice/Technician and General theory. Advanced theory class will be offered depending on interest. I would ask that all persons who are interested in any class come to the registration on Monday the 13th. All classes will be held on Monday evenings. Tim Stoffel, NS9E, will teach Advanced theory from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. Novice and General CW will be taught from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. Novice/Tech and General theory will be taught from 8:00 to 9:00 PM. Those not able to attend registration should leave a message on the RARA hotline 716-442-0587. Tim Magee, WB2KAO, and Art Debruycker, W2YGW, will be teaching the 5 and 13 WPM respectively. Rick Wells, W2RW, will be teaching Novice/Tech

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Rag Chew

By Lloyd R. Caves, WB2EFU

Are you reading the RARA Rag for the first time or are you reading the one issue a year that you receive? If so that is because you are not a member of RARA and maybe you should be. Why you ask? Well there are two good reasons. One is that you have a lot to give to amateur radio and a club. The second is that clubs can have a lot to give to their members.

No matter what your interest is in radio there is always something new to learn and enjoy. RARA is a general interest club that has all aspects of amateur radio at heart. There are members that use only repeaters on VHF and UHF, some only operate HF, others work only DX or are into contesting, while others are into digital communications or TV (fast or slow scan), not to mention those that work satellites and space stations. Not only that but there are a lot of folks that are experimenters or antique collectors. Just from this you see that you can meet some one at a meeting that you can learn something from other than just the speakers or will have the same interests as you. So why not join now or at least try out some of the meetings and have fun with your friends.

As a Special Service Club RARA always has something going on besides meetings to attend. Things like public service events, license classes, and license exam sessions as well as social events such as a picnic. The club supports a complete amateur radio station from HF to UHF for its members to operate. Not only that but it has the only ATV repeater in the area and is home to a packet node station. Once again, no matter what your interest or needs are RARA has it for you.

Now for what you can give to a club. Well your interest in this great hobby of ours is a good start. The fun of being with others is another plus. Join in the fun at public service events and learn how to put your radio skills to work to help others while at the same time having some laughs and a good time with friends (old or new). These events are used for learning whether it is your first time out or you are an old time at it. They are fun to attend and not something to be afraid of. Also, you can always help in the license classes, testing sessions or in maintaining the club station. Being active at the meetings by talking to others and sharing your experiences is another way to give something to the club.

Remember that a club is only as good as its members. The more you enjoy being a part of an organization the more the organization will grow and be able to give you what you want in return.

One fourth of the Board of Directors of RARA are new to their office this year. This means that this would be another good time to join or come to meetings and bring your ideas with you. Make the board respond to your needs and requirements by trying some new things. With these new directors there will always be someone who will listen to you and bring your ideas to the officers to implement. Clubs are only good for when they are fun. You can bring fun and laughs with you to meetings or other functions as well as make suggestions to your board that will start them doing things that are enjoyable for all.

Buffalo Hamfest '99

By Lloyd R. Caves, WB2EFU

On September 19, 1999 the same folks who present the Rochester Hamfest in May will be bringing you the tenth Buffalo Hamfest and Computer Show, combined with the ARRL Western New York Section Convention at the Erie County Fairgrounds. The Fairgrounds is located on Route 62-South Park Ave. in Hamburg.

There will be a large number of amateur radio and computer equipment dealers and manufacturers at the Hamfest this year. Expect to find all the new amateur equipment, computer equipment and associated supplies at bargain prices. Now is the time to buy the new supplies of gear you have been dreaming about so you can enjoy it all winter long.

Come, have a great time, and enjoy one of the last Hamfests left this year.

RARA Amateur Radio License Testing

Saturday September 25, 1999

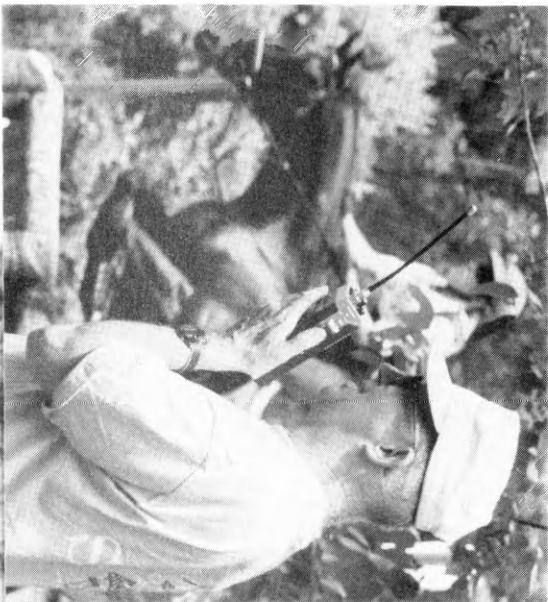
Registration-8:30 AM Testing-9:00 AM

Social Services Building

111 Westfall Road, Rochester

Inquires (716) 334-4488

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Roger Harnaart, WB2BWQ

*... join in the fun
at public service events
and learn how to put
your radio skills to work.*

Rag Chew, Lloyd Caves, WB2EFU



Judy Stonehill, N2XXF



Robert Moore, N2USB



Kenneth Harnaart, N2MXB

Volunteers Needed for a Walk in the Park

By Keith Freeberg, N2BEL

Rochester, New York – A Walk in the Park, starting and finishing in Cobb's Hill Park will be held on September 18, 1999 by the American Diabetes Association as a fund raiser. Six hundred or more walkers are expected to do the 6.4 mile loop. Volunteers are needed to act as communications for rest stops, 'TOE' trucks and liaisons to the Rochester Police Special Events Unit on behalf of the walkers and staff.

To volunteer simply call Beverly Gaines at the American Diabetes Association (ADA) at (716) 458-3040. Beverly will take your information and pass it along to Keith, N2BEL, so everyone will have the details they need such as: reporting time, route markings and the ever important where the coffee is located.

Your time is appreciated and the ADA is providing breakfast and lunch for all the volunteers. Your day as a volunteer can actually be over by lunch time, if you choose, for lunch and music usually culminate the event.

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RAPS

By Jack Tripp, N2SNL

The members of the RAPS organization promote the use of packet radio and are willing to help anyone interested in getting started in this great part of amateur radio. The club has built an inexpensive modem to help get you started in packet radio which can be purchased for \$30.00. This includes a copy of Baycom software and instructions for connecting the modem to your computer and radio.

RAPS is the Rochester Amateur Packet Society. Membership is open to anyone in the amateur radio community who has an interest in packet radio. Experienced packeteers, as well as newcomers, are welcome to join. We meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month from September through May, at 7:30 P.M. in the first floor auditorium of the Monroe County Social Services Building at 111 Westfall Road. Dues are \$5.00 per year. Our first meeting for the coming year is Thursday, September 9th.

Why should you use packet you ask. . How about doing something different than repeaters, DX. There are many satellites orbiting the earth that have ham radio links. Think of the thrill of connecting to MIR, the Russian space station or ISS, the International Space Station soon to be occupied and will have a ham station. You can send messages all over the world, hook up to Bulletin Boards to see what radio bargains are out there. You already have most of what you need to get into packet. All you need is a computer, which you probably have; a 2 meter radio, and who doesn't have one of those and a modem or TNC (Terminal Node Controller).

Come on out to our first meeting of the year. Visit our web site at www.ggw.org/raps.

For further information contact Jack Tripp, N2SNL, e-mail: n2snl@arrl.net or by phone at 381-7757.

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theory with Bill Kasperkoski, WB2SXY, teaching General theory. The Monday classes will be for a period of approximately 12 weeks with the final class being a W5YI/VEC testing session on Monday December 13th. I would encourage my fellow amateurs to spread the word and let's have a good showing in the Fall classes. I'm looking forward to teaching and working with the rest of my staff. The cost for a non-licensed Novice/Tech student will be \$30 (book \$18, class instruction \$4, RARA associate membership \$8). All other classes will be \$31 (book \$12, class instruction \$4, RARA full membership \$15).

Rochester DX Association

News

By Ed Gable, K2MP

Summer time DX'ing seems always slower. Low frequency static, propagation anomalies and just the desire to be out in the summer sun all take their bite out of adding lots of DX in the Log. Some good catches were available with a reliable QSL'ing Iranian station, EP2FM, hitting the bands. EP2 cards had at least two RDXA members nudging Honor Role status. Other interesting calls on the bands were HK0 on Malpelo, FW8ZZ on Wallis & Fortuna Islands and earlier the emergence of E4 calls from Palestine. Six meter "E" openings were disappointing this summer with Europe only workable on a few occasions. RDXA members were very busy and successful at this year's Field Day event. Your local DX Club took 2nd or 3rd in the nation this year in 3A category, and had a great time doing it. Scores will not be known for certain until December. The Fall contest season will soon be upon us. Use this opportunity to work and log plenty of DX on your way to DXCC and other exciting DX challenges. If you are interested in DX and want to know more about the Rochester DX Association and how they can help you become a better DX'er, just ask for their new informational brochure. The RDXA, formed in 1949, actively supports DX'ing and contesting, holds monthly meetings and publishes a great Newsletter. Call Ed Gable, K2MP, at 392-3088, or e-mail to k2mp@eznet.net to have a Brochure sent to you.

RRRA

by Tom English, N2YJY

The RRRA is, as its name implies, a repeater group. More to the point, the club owns, operates and maintains two repeaters; the 146.28/88 and the 442.7(+). The club also affiliates with several other repeater owners in this area that run the gamut from 10 meters all the way up to 70 cm's. Our repeaters offer telephone patch, signal strength meter among other things. We have a voting receiver on the Cobbs Hill Radio tower and are presently looking to place another voting receiver in the Greece area. This will help with handheld coverage that is somewhat spotty in that area. Our group meets at the Pittsford Town Hall on S. Main St. in the village of Pittsford (in the basement meeting room) at 8:00PM on the third Friday of every month except for June, July, and August (we do have times when we meet elsewhere but they are known in advance). We encourage you to join us. Our dues are still only \$10.00 and the friendships are forever.

Rochester VHF Group

By Tim Stoffel, NS9E

The oldest club of it's type in the country, the Rochester VHF Group seeks to increase activity on our VHF allocations 50 MHz and above. Although the emphasis is on VHF weak signal operating (CW/SSB), all aspects of VHF operating are explored. The Rochester VHF Group promotes VHF activity with sponsorship of contest events and awards. They offer an annual tune-up clinic for high performance VHF radio equipment. Club construction projects are also sponsored, and this years' project looks to be an inexpensive, very high performance 10 GHz microwave transverter. The group also includes many technical experts and specialists that share their vast knowledge with the membership.

The Rochester VHF Group meets on the second Friday of each month at the Monroe County Social Services Building, 111 Westfall Road in Rochester. Meetings start at 7:30 PM.

The September meeting features a talk by Frank Pollino, K2OS on general weak signal operating. This program will explain how to 'get your feet wet' on the VHF bands. Many new HF radios also feature CW/SSB on one or more VHF bands, and Frank will show you how to make the most of it! The many unusual VHF propagation modes will also be explained. (Just to whet your appetite, I worked Springfield, Ill. with 10 watts on 2 meters a few nights back by taking advantage of unusual propagation!) For membership information, contact Jeff Luce, KB2VGH at Hfgroupers@greeceny.com, or visit the club's website at: <http://vhfgroup.rochesterny.org>, or by mail at: Rochester VHF Group, PO Box 92112, Rochester, NY 14692.

SILENT KEYS

Louis M. Minsk, N2LM---May 7, 1999

William R. Bedette, KF2NL-0---June 12, 1999

John McMullin, N2MXG---July 5, 1999

Manuel F. Beltran, KB2QAM---July 30, 1999

Colen C. Corke, WB2RNS---August 19, 1999

FOR SALE: 1- 5el 2 meter beam, new, HB \$50.00, 2- Mosley TA31M (10/15/20/ full size, full power, rotating dipole , \$125.00. 1 Mosley TW31M (12/17/30) full size, full power, rotating dipole, \$150.00. 1 Mosley S-401M 40 meter, full size, full power, rotating dipole \$150.00. All antennas in NEW condition, assembled, and stored inside. WA2ZNC' LEN 716- 229-5470.

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