



the RARA RAG

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NO. 2

October 1st Meeting "The Four Minute Forecast"

by Keith Freeberg, N2BEL

Join us on October 1st for a presentation sure to help you understand what to expect in the weather department this fall and winter. Glenn Johnson, Meteorologist at WORK-TV 13 will cover, among other topics, the 'Four Minute Forecast' and how it really happens. Perhaps he can even give us a hint of what the weather will be like this winter. Weather is such a big part of our concerns here in Western New York as Winter approaches. So see you at the meeting.

Is This Your Last Issue Of The Rag?

by Alex Piccirilli, NV2Y

The membership period for RARA starts the first of September each year and continues through the end of August the following year. The final membership expiration each year is October 31, which includes 2 month grace period for payment of your dues. Check the address label on your current issue of the *RAG* for your expiration date. If it shows OCT, 98 your dues have not yet been received for the year 1999-2000, and this will be your last issue of the *Rag*. You must be a current member of RARA to participate in the auction at the November meeting so now is a good time to send your check.

RaRa MEETING

October 1, 1999

8:00 P.M.

Henrietta Fire Hall
3129 East Henrietta Road

"The Four Minute Forecast"

By Glenn Johnson

Local Ham on QST Cover

by Ed Gable K2MP



RaRa wishes to acknowledge and congratulate Rochester's own Dr. Jerry Svoboda, KB2QIU, for his excellent article published in the October, 1999, *QST*. Not only did Jerry pen a wonderfully interesting story on his Ham Radio beginnings, but he captured the front cover as well. Jerry's story of how he became interested in Ham Radio, at the tender age of seven years, is told in a story telling, chronological style. Readers, hams and non hams alike, will be inspired by his life long interest and how he rekindled his radio activity after pauses for schooling and rearing a family. Jerry is quick to point out how important certain people were in his life and how important Elmering is to give some folks that little boost needed to make them help themselves. A theme throughout the article involves a mix of old and new. Doctor Svoboda's ham shack features new technology of the ICOM variety but also displays working examples of early equipment including a crystal radio, one tube transmitter and regenerative receivers. Jerry, also a member of the *Antique Wireless Association*, recently received recognition for his art of home brewing at the just complete AWA convention. So if you're just starting in Ham radio, or are a Ham with dwindling activity, read Jerry's article in *QST* and get inspired...and get back into the thrills of Ham Radio. Congratulations, Jerry Svoboda, KB2QIU, for a great job.

the **RARA RAG**

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The Prez Says

by Bob Moore, N2USB

As I sit at my keyboard tonight listening to the rain from the remnants of hurricane Floyd hitting the window. I feel relieved that we in Western New York were spared the damages that many of our fellow Amateurs along the East Coast might have suffered from the ravages of this storm. Yet these are the same Amateurs that support the emergency relief efforts being carried out at this very moment by providing much needed communications for their local civic authorities. We in Rochester and Monroe County have several opportunities to practice our emergency communication skills by participating in the emergency drills and public service events coordinated for RARA by Ed Holdsworth, N2EH. There are several events remaining this year, in which RARA and the community could use your participation, two of which are the Ginna Drill and the Pumpkin Patrol. If you can support us by participating in any Public Service Event please contact Ed and he will be happy to provide to you any information required.

I hope you were able to attend the September meeting, we had a great crowd there. Over 80 people were there at this seasons kick off meeting and were treated to the program "The Secrets of Railroad Communications" presented By Christopher Hauf, an excellent presentation detailing pre-radio communications used by the railroads.

It is really great to see so many members attend the meeting. Come out and enjoy the program and socialize at the October 1st meeting. Hope to see you there.

RaRa Amateur Radio License Testing

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

or

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

Saturday October 16, 1999

Registration - 8:30AM

Testing - 9:00AM

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

Atlantic Division Vice Director Elections

Sometime during the month of October all ARRL members in the Atlantic Division will be receiving a ballot to be used to vote for the Divisions Vice Director. It is important that each of you cast your vote and return this ballot to the League as soon as possible. **Please do not forget to do this!!**

Bernie Fuller, N3EFN, is the current Vice Director for our Division and has been doing an outstanding job representing the interest of all the Division members. He has made it his business to understand what is going on in all Sections of the Atlantic Division and what their needs are. He has come to Western New York many times each year to talk to and **listen** to the members and to participate in activities so that he can be a better representative. This is very important to all ARRL members to have this type of representation. Bernie also maintains a great working relationship with Kay Craigie, WT3P, the Atlantic Division Director. This too is very important for maintaining a smooth running team to lead us and work for us. For more information on what Bernie has been doing visit the website winner@bfdin.com.

Once again don't forget to cast your vote for our the Atlantic Divisions Vice Director as soon as you receive it in the mail and please consider keeping Bernie Fuller, N3EFN, as our Vice Director. We need to continue being represented in the best possible manner at the ARRL and in amateur world.

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RaRa Rag 20 Years Ago

by Ed Gable, K2MP

October 1979: Program Chairman Otto Bluntzer, WB2RJB, brought an interesting local company, Hamco, to speak before RaRa. What sounds like a specialized ham radio company is actually involved with furnaces to grow crystals. George Negus, K2OIU, Monroe county Emergency Coordinator, announced the 1979 Simulated Emergency Test would involve loss of power and communications and would have Red Cross and other medical services as participants. Elections for ARRL Vice-Director is hotly contested locally with Harold Smith, K2HC and Alan Komenski, AC2K, running against Hugh Turnball, W3ABC. They both lost! DX was evidently a hot topic 20 years ago as no less than three articles appeared in this issue written by Rick Berg, WA2RLQ, Bob Roberts, WA2QAU and Irv Goodman, signing ZB2EN. A wonderful article by Police Radio pioneer Duck E. Dengler, W2LK, appeared here. "Ducky" wrote of the first ever unattended repeater operation of 1939, at Mt. Diablo, California, operating on 39 Mcs. With a four megacycle separation. K2KWK reported that he would be sending ARRL bulletins on the local 28/88 and 19/79 repeaters. Ed Holdsworth, N2EH, says you can register for the Fall Novice course for seven bucks. From the Want Ads you could buy a Wilson 2 meter HT from Don Ray, WA2PKS.

Fall License Class Report

by Tim Magee, WB2KAO, License Class Director

Registration was held on Monday September 13th as scheduled. The Novice/Tech class has thirteen students, General class has five students and two candidates have registered for Advanced theory. We anticipate a few additional registrations next Monday. Both instructors and students appear ready to tackle the material and we expect positive results. I will keep you posted on the progress of the classes throughout the Fall and Spring semesters.

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Attorney At Law

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W2KFU Suite #1024

RagChew

by Lloyd R. Caves, WB2EFU

Amateur Of The Year tries for new low altitude sky diving record. That's right folks; our own Ed Gable, K2MP, the 1999 Atlantic Division Amateur Of The Year tried for a new award this past summer. At this time it appears that Ed had no competition in trying this feat (which is a good thing).

Ed's low altitude dive took place off the top of a step ladder (a three legged step ladder at that). Ed describes this feat as saying "for a fraction of a millisecond the feeling of weightlessness is amazing until you see the ground fast approaching at which time all you can think is 'this is going to hurt'". And it did as Ed landed on his feet and quickly went to his knees and then all the way to laying down, bruising some internal organs and his back. This did not get the award that was being sought, but it did get him about three weeks of bed rest. But the worst part is he had to miss Field Day as well as a family reunion due to this little episode.

To bring this whole situation into perspective it should be known that Ed was on the ladder doing some fine tuning on an antenna (or as he calls it an aerial) getting it ready for Field Day. Ed said "three lagged step ladders are very stable until you are more than half way up them, at which time they like to lay on their side instead of standing up". Just think what it takes to get to the top. This is a hard way to learn a lesson on gravity. Also, we are still not sure if the antenna made Field Day or not. Maybe Ed will let us all know sometime in the future.

We are all very thankful that Ed is OK. He knows that there was going to be an article written about him that would make fun of his little adventure. This can only be done as he was not seriously hurt. This is really no laughing matter as the injuries could have been great. But it does go to show that everyone, at times, forgets to stop to think about what they are doing. It is easy to get *entranced in what you are trying to accomplish* and forget some basic safety factors that are required at all times. Lets be sure that this is the only accident that any of us have this year, or anytime for that matter. Safety needs to be the number one thing on our minds at all times. Don't be the one that goes up your tower for a five second job without a safety belt or opens the cover of a radio to work on it without having it disconnected from the power source. Rochester is lucky that none of our club members have become part of the national statistics. Be sure that this never changes!

Rochester DX Association News

By Ed Gable, K2MP

Mid-September brought the first significant DX-pedition of the season with 3C0R showing up from Annobon Island (Pagalu). This spot hasn't been activated for a decade and the early days were filled with frenzied DXCC'ers trying for a new one. The operators deserve a lot of credit as the 36 hour boat trip over was through the worse conditions recorded in recent history. The ops were insanely seasick which lasted some 48 hours. Then, if that wasn't enough, the first night of operation saw a big thunder storm which wiped out the logging computer network. Hard to confirm Tajikistan (EY) has been workable with special event station EY1100, using a German QSL manager, DJ1SKO. The Galapagos Island has more than old turtles with the addition of HC8N. QSL via AA5BT. Finally, semi-rare Aland Island, OH0V, is activated by OH4JLV, who is doing his own QSL chores. Has anything here wet your appetite? The Rochester DX Association has monthly meetings and everyone is invited. Next meeting is October 19, 1999, 7:30 p.m. at 111 Westfall Road. For more information contact Ed Gable, K2MP, at 392-3088 or k2mp@eznet.net.

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Next Rag Deadline
Oct. 8, 1999

Things Of Value???...Depends!!!

By Alex Piccirilli, NV2Y

Just look in any of your radio magazines and you will see a picture of some guy's shack so neat and clean you would think there giving prizes out for neatness. This always reminds me of office desks that I have seen that was so neat that all it had on it was a guys name and title plate, pen and pencil set and a telephone. It would be unthinkable to clutter it by a sheet of paper or pad. I know from experience these guys do nothing, the secretary does all the work. To me it is also a sign of no imagination. So there, I said it.

There must be some people out there who must envy me having all those old magazines and a junk box the size if an Olympic swimming pool. Every thing has a place and everything in its place. Being a old sailor you learn fast and live by that rule. I mean that not in a literal sense either. When you sail at night particularly, you had better know by feel where every nut and bolt, every piece of "string" and the condition they are in. I carry this over into my radio shack. My XYL, kids, friends and relative think I'm a packrat, collector of useless items, etc.

First of all let me describe my radio shack. It is a room about 10X10 foot square and in it I carry out 4 hobbies, really not hobbies but dedications. Amateur radio, to get me to be part of the world. Fly tying (flies are used instead of worms as bait when fishing. Catch less fish but more fun). Sailing which is known as a great sport can be boring 90% of the time and 10% shear terror. It is also my "Cave" where I get away from the world. And remember I get about 2 to 3 different magazines on each one of these hobbies. I have cut back on a couple on each.

I am now in the process in cutting back on the volume of the clutter. You see I have had to expand to the attic, basement and garage and a workshop. I know, I know he who dies with the most toys wins. I like to think I have given up this thought and developed the philosophy he who has fulfilled his dreams and reaching for more, wins. Life is a learning process. Therefore, I have kept the magazines, which I have not reread. Therein lies the ketch.

Sitting here in my rocking chair, scratching my head, looking at this mess, I am wondering what to do first. This heap of stuff looks like a mess but it is very valuable stuff. Magazines from 1974, should I look closer I may find some older, almost first editions, old radio glass tubes 5U4, 6N6,

12SN7 and a bunch of others. Good God! What do I do with this stuff?. You just can't throw it out. The magazines need to be reread. page by page, the tubes for the power supply I never built, the transmatch with the burned out resistor never was fixed. My family threatened to throw the whole bloody lot out. I didn't argue. I just said in a cool matter of fact voice that their inheritance could probably be found in between the pages of the magazine where I use it as book markers. Boy! Did the room suddenly go quite. Yes, the old mags are old but they are new to me. I've learned some in the last few years and a lot of those old articles are as new and refreshing as can be. Antennas, how many ways can you build a J-Pole. How about underground antennas, fascinating. Can you use your marine antenna for 2 meters? Of what use is a field strength meter? It is all there in the old mags. You might say there is a lot of old history in those old mags. How can you part with them? Well at least they have served one purpose all these years. It added a lot of weight to the house and has kept it from being blown away. Lets look at the good side. I thought I'd save them for the day when I should get sick, then I would have something to do. Just the thought of having to read them all has kept me from getting sick. See! There is a good side. I think I have come up with an ingenious idea and by the way if you have any better thoughts I suggest you keep them to yourself. I have already been given more then a few.

Let me tell you a secret I learned long ago. I have taught this secret to all my employees and to anyone who would listen to my secret. The answer to any problem is within the tip of your fingers. You see, all you have to do is stop and look around. You will see something that will do the job or give you inspiration with a string of ideas that will send you to a hamfest looking for stuff. I have an old friend whom I just happened to meet going into the annual auction, holding a box of something. Of course being the curious kind I asked what is in the box? "An antenna rotator," he says. "How much," I say. He says, "\$10" "I'll take it," I say. The next year, same thing. "What's in the box," says I? "An electronic building kit," says he. "How much," says I. "Ten bucks," says he. "I'll take it," says I. And you know they are both sitting underneath my operating table. Next year I hope I don't see my old friend till after the auction. Maybe I can get it cheaper. Hey, He just might give it to me. I know he just wants to clean out his shack and I would be doing him a favor. Oh! How I wish I had some friends like me.

So you want to throw out that old paintbrush, hardened with paint. Well! Let me tell you, with little effort I reclaimed one and it is my best

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ATV Repeater

By Bill McDonnell, KG2F

The Radio Amateur community of Western New York now has an Amateur Fast Scan Television Repeater available for their use. It is located at the Monroe County Social Service Bldg., 111 Westfall Rd.

The repeater was built with funds made available through the Monroe County Office of Emergency Preparedness and Rochester Amateur Radio Association (RARA). Its main purpose is to provide visual and aural communication during a state of emergency, between remote locations and the emergency command center. It has participated in Ginna Nuclear Power plant emergency drills.

During these drills local amateurs take portable equipment into the field and transmit both audio and color television signals back to K2JD, the RARA club station. The received signals are then displayed in the K2JD shack for monitoring, and on two large TV monitors in the Emergency Operations room across the hall, for closeup account of what's happening at the scene. The full duplex capability of the system allows video and audio conferencing with the portable stations in the field.

The repeater is available for all Technician and higher licensee to use. To access the repeater from home, all that is required is a ATV transmitter on 434.00 Mhz and a ATV receive down-converter on 923.25 Mhz. The down-converter is designed to output a video signal on tv channels 3 or 4 allowing use of a regular television receiver. An inexpensive camera or camcorder with a standard video output is attached to the transmitter. Because of the low power and wide bandwidth of the video signal, directional antenna's are used to ensure reliable reception. Both the transmitting and receiving antenna must be vertically polarized for proper operation. Most home stations make use of yagi antenna's for transmit, typically 10 - 15 dbi gain and loop antenna's for receiving the 923.00 Mhz receive signal. A complete low cost station can be assembled for approximately \$500.00.

Anyone interested in setting up a station may feel free to contact me Bill McDonnell, KG2F, at kg2f@frontiernet.net. I have access to topographic maps of the county and based on your location and station plan I will be able to predict your expected station performance.

RARA Auction November 5, 1999

Rochester VHF Group

By Tim Stoffel, NS9E

The October meeting of the Rochester VHF Group will feature something somewhat unusual: A rover forum! This meeting will take place on Friday, October 8th at the Monroe County Social Services Bldg., 111 Westfall Rd., in Rochester. Meeting starts at 7:30 PM and is open to all.

You probably all know a little about VHF rovers and have undoubtedly worked them during VHF contests. Rovers are special mobile VHF stations designed to move from grid square to grid square during a VHF contest. What most people don't know is just how much work goes into building and operating a big VHF rover. Some of these vehicles feature 30 foot towers and high power microwave gear! This month, we will hear from several top rover operators. They will tell us all about building and debugging their complex vehicles. Then, they will share with us some interesting stories about their adventures on the road.

Although VHF rovers are specialized for contest work, there is much knowledge that can be learned from them to aid in public service and emergency field communication.

Paul Meyers, N2OPW, himself a rover owner, will host this forum. This promises to be one of the most interesting programs the Rochester VHF Group has done in a long time. Don't miss it!

To learn more, or for membership information, contact Jeff Luce, KB2VGH at VHFgroupers@greeceny.com. You can also visit the club's website at: <http://vhfgroup.rochesterny.org>, or by mail at: Rochester VHF Group, P.O. Box 92122, Rochester NY 14692.

Rag Submission Guidelines

When submitting articles to the Rag, please try to follow a few simple rules. This will make life much easier for the editor, and will expedite the inclusion of your article in the Rag.

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dusting brush that I use today.

Let me give you one piece of advice. Never buy a big house, especially if it has separate buildings, such as a two car garage, a workshop, a chicken coop or even a barn. One of my kids said in his dry humor, "Dad is not going to leave us any money but are we ever going to have a gigantic garage sale." Hey! Is there any one out there who would like to beat them to the punch?

RRRA

By Tom English, N2YJY

The RRRA met for their first meeting of the season Friday evening Sept. 17. Tim Stoffel NS9E gave a presentation on microwave and Amateur Radio. Also at our inaugural meeting we discussed a problem that not only plagues the RRRA but RARA as well. That problem is how do we as hams draw more interest to amateur radio? What can we as hams do to promote our various clubs? We really can't answer those nagging problems in one session so we left those questions unanswered.

Our next meeting for the RRRA will be October 15, 1999 when amateur satellites will be the topic. I hope that maybe you could join us for what sound like a real great program. Remember we meet at the Pittsford Town Hall on south Main St in the Village of Pittsford at 8:00PM. Hope to see you there.

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:

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

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 sign up sheets at the meetings.

RARA/ARRL Award Checking

By Ed Gable, K2MP

As a service to you, members of RARA, an ARRL Special Service Club, you can have QSL cards verified for ARRL Worked All States, (WAS) and VHF/UHF Century Club (VUCC) Awards. Contact Ed Gable, K2MP, for an appointment at 392-3088 or k2mp@eznet.net.

Henrietta Duathlon

By Dave Payne, KA2J



Dave Payne, KA2J, relaying information during the Henrietta Duathlon Race.

Rochester Amateur Radio Association provided communications for this "3.5 mile Run - 11 mile Bike - 1.5 mile Run" individual and team competition on Sunday morning, September 19, 1999. The friendly competition, that started at the Rush-Henrietta High School, drew all ages of bikers and runners. The event, sponsored by Henrietta Recreation Department and Peddlers Bike Shop, ran smoothly thanks to the efforts of the organizers and our amateur radio communicators Mike McNamara - KB2CHP, Roger Haarnart - WB2BWQ, Ken Haarnart - N2MXB, George Platteter - AA2FO, and Dave Payne - KA2J.

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