



the RARA RAG

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MARCH, 2006

NO. 7

Hamfest & Weather

By Bill Kasperkoski, WB2SXY
Vice-President, RARA

Caught in too many storms at the Hamfest ??

Hamfest: Mr. Harold Smith K2HC, the Rochester Hamfest General Manager will present a short discussion on this year's Hamfest features and opportunities. The long range weather forecast may not include the Monroe County Fairgrounds this year, but RARA predicts a successful Hamfest event.

Weather: It's not too early to prepare yourself and your station for the upcoming nasty weather season. Part of preparation is having the right tools and training at hand for the task. The Buffalo National Weather Service Team of Judy N2TEZ and Bob N3QOT will provide an entertaining and official SKYWARN training session. These training sessions are required every three years to remain on the active SKYWARN Spotter rosters maintained at the NWS in Buffalo. Judy and Bob will be registering ham and non-ham weather spotters and mailing the training certificates.

Come to the RARA General Membership Meeting March 3, 2006. The meeting will be held at Henrietta Fire Company #1 located at the Lehigh Station and East Henrietta Roads. The meeting begins at 7:30 PM. SHARP.

RaRa MEETING

March 3, 2006

7:30 P.M.

Henrietta Fire Hall #1
3129 East Henrietta Road

**2006 Hamfest Info
& Skywarn**

Scholarship Deadline is April 15th

By George Masny, KA2GPJ
Treasurer, RARA

It is not too early to start filling out an application for this year's Memorial Scholarship. Thanks to a generous donation to the Memorial Scholarship Fund by the Rochester Amateur Packet Society, (RAPS), the Board of Directors has voted to increase the value of the Scholarship to **\$500.00**. The Scholarship is available to a student attending College. The scholarship is available to any licensed Amateur Radio operator who is or will be pursuing any degree of Associate level or higher in any accredited school beyond high school. The individual must be a member of RARA and a resident of New York State.

Applications are due no later than April 15th. The RaRa Board of Directors and Scholarship Committee will make a final decision by May 15th. The actual award will be presented at the annual RARA Hamfest Banquet held June 2, 2006.

Applications for the scholarship may be obtained at RaRa general meetings, by mail at P.O. Box 93333, Rochester, NY 14692-8333 or by calling the RaRa phone at 585-442-0587. Additional information and a copy of the application is available on the Rochester Amateur Radio Association web site at:
<http://www.rochesterham.org/scholarship.htm>, or from one of the officers.

Donations may be made to the Scholarship Fund and should be sent to: Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc., Memorial Scholarship, P.O. Box 93333, Rochester, NY 14692-8333. All donations are "Tax Deductible".

SILENT KEYS

William S. Kintz, WA2SWY

January 20, 2006

Harriet F. Blodgett, K2KLP

February 4, 2006

the RARA RAG

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The Prez Sez

By Dick Goslee, KG2I
President, RARA

I would like to apologize for the RAG not getting mailed as early this month as it usually is. February is a short month and your Editor/President was out of town on business for a week. I was in Atlanta for a trade show and you would have thought I was still here in Rochester. The temperature in Atlanta was about the same as it was here and we had snow in the air on two different days. At least I didn't have to shovel any of it. That was nice.

You will notice an article from the Nominating Committee in this issue. We are looking for candidates for officers and directors for the 2006-2007 season. If you are interested in working for RARA in either of these areas please contact one of the members of the committee and they can give you all the details. I have found it to be a lot of fun working for the organization for many years and you may also find it fun to give something back to the group.

I am looking for someone with some time on their hands for a special project. We need someone to take on the task of being the leader of the "K2JD Engraving Team". For many years the team made badges and hats at various Hamfests around the area and the organization benefited with the profits from the sales. There are a number of members who are willing to work on the "Team" but we need a leader to formulate the plans and be the contact person. If you think you might be interested in this rewarding task please give me a call and we can discuss the details.

Don't forget that the Scholarship application deadline is coming up on April 15th. As mentioned last month the value of the Scholarship has been increased to \$500.00 per year so it should generate more interest this year. If you are interested please contact me and I will be happy to send you an application, or you can download one from the web site at www.rochesterham.org.

Remember, Spring is just around the corner and with it the start of the Hamfest season. See the March calendar for the date of the first one and come to the March general meeting for details about the Rochester Hamfest from our own Harold Smith, K2HC.

**April Rag Deadline
March 10, 2006**

RaRa Rag 20 Years Ago, March 1986

By Ed Gable, K2MP
RARA Historian

Looking at this issue 20 years later the cover is really confusing. I trust it wasn't back then. It seems that there is a large, half-page illustration of an auctioneer who is obviously conducting a Ham radio auction, and the word *Auction* in 1 inch letters with a date of March 14th. Then in small letters, below, is the headline "RaRa Meeting March 7th, Program on Packet radio." In position three on the paper, the last thing the eye sees, are words announcing the RRRR/VHF Group Auction to be held on March 14th, at the Police and Fire Academy, now the home of Monroe County OEP. A good lesson for Editors, as pictures ARE worth 1k of words. The author of the article on packet radio is unidentified. It does read in part "...not since the advent of Single-Sideband has a new mode of operation been developing as fast as packet radio...." Clearly a true statement, but interesting due to the announcement of the Packet Group dissolution last month with monies generously donated to the RaRa Scholarship fund. Times do change.

Last month we announced the RaRa Home Brew night as the February, 1986, meeting. Actually there was no meeting at all. In an unprecedented move, RaRa officers cancelled the meeting due to a rush-hour snow storm. Larry Fischbach, KA2NME, wrote reporting on the K2JD Club station entry into the VHF Contest. The operators, mainly new licensees from the RaRa classes, mentored by Vic, K1JUL, made 149 QSO's in 6 grids using VHF FM.

An unknown author, writing for the Kodak Park ARC, (Editors... ID your contributors !) wrote about Rochester's first and only Digi-peater built by Ray Williams, WA2RYT. Ray modified a GLB PK-1 packet controller to perform in Digi-peater mode and connected that to a KDK Xcvr and Mirage 80 watt amplifier, operating on 145.010 from Kodak's Building 28. That historic digital controller is now in the AWA Museum. There was only one advertiser in this issue, Heath/Zenith on Jefferson Road. From the Want Ads you could rent a house, complete with antennas, from Dwight, K2KWK.

**Rochester Hamfest
June 2-3-4, 2006**

Sidebands – Amateur Radio in the News

By Larry Wallnau, W2ZEY
RARA Media Coordinator

A Russian ham radio operator had a novel idea – stuff a used spacesuit with old clothes, throw in a few batteries, and include a ham radio transmitter to boot. And thus, Suitsat-1 was born and it was tossed out the hatch of the International Space Station. The spacesuit also was supplied with internal sensors to monitor the batteries and temperature. Those on earth could pick up the signal, only 500 mW in strength, on 145.990 MHz. Detection was difficult and NASA prematurely reported that the batteries had died. But on CNN February 5, Allen Pitts, W1AGP and ARRL Public Information Officer, noted that the Suitsat-1 was still alive and sending signals Earthbound.

International Space Station Commander Bill McArthur, KC5ACR, reached his personal goal of working all states from NA1SS. He completed his quest by working Alaska. McArthur also has worked all continents, including Antarctica. The WAS and WAC awards from the International Space Station are honorary because the rules have no provisions or category for QSOs made from space. It is worth noting that McArthur has been active in the ARISS program with 20 school contacts. The current record holder in that department is Leroy Chiao, KE5BRW, with 23 contacts, but Commander McArthur is closing in.

Still in the space theme, the next International Space Station crew will have two ham radio operators for the entire mission. Astronaut Jeff Williams, KD5TVQ, and cosmonaut Pavel Vinogradov, RV3BS, will be the Expedition 13 ISS crew. Vinogradov will be the ISS commander for the mission. Williams will serve as flight engineer and science officer. They will spend six months aboard the International Space Station. During this time, Brazilian Astronaut Marcos Pontes will spend eight days on board the ISS to conduct a research project. His call sign is PY0AEB, so for a brief period, three hams will be on the ISS for Expedition 13.

Octatron Inc. and Chang Industry Inc. have sought waivers of several sections of FCC Part 15 for use of unlicensed analog video and audio surveillance systems. They are developing products for the 902 – 928 MHz band which is an amateur radio allocation. The FCC has opened the proceeding, ET Docket 05-356, for comments. The crux of the issue is not only encroachment on the ham allocation but the allowable level of emission as well.

(Sidebands continued on page 4)

Rather than use digital, the companies chose analog at a level of 1 W to ensure reliable transmission. There is concern this waiver would result in interference on the amateur band.

There is an antenna bill under consideration in Vermont. The bill calls for communities to make "reasonable accommodations" for amateur radio communication. The bill even has a schedule for permissible antenna structure heights based on lot size. For example, for lots smaller than one acre, municipalities would not be allowed to restrict the overall height of an amateur radio antenna and its support structure to less than 75 feet above ground level. Furthermore, there would be no restriction on the number of support structures. Historic districts? Well, in these situations the law would permit height restriction less than 75 feet, but ham antennas could not be prohibited nor could their height be less than the tallest permitted structure in the district. If you must, live in a historic district where there is a 75-foot flag pole!

Western Union has stopped sending telegrams. According to the company, the telegram decline goes back to the 1980s when long-distance telephone calls became inexpensive. And now there are cell phones and text messaging as competition. As you probably know already, the world's first telegram was sent on May 24, 1844 by its inventor, Samuel Morse. His message "What hath God wrought" was sent from Washington to Baltimore. Other Western Union milestones: 1866, introduced first stock ticker; 1871, introduced money transfers; 1884, became one of the original 11 stocks tracked by the Dow Jones Average; 1914, introduced the first consumer charge card; 1964, began using a transcontinental microwave beam to replace land lines; 1974, launched Westar I, the first U.S. dedicated communications satellite.

The ARRL Board of Directors has named Marilu Lozada winner of the 2005 Bill Leonard, W2SKE, Professional Media Award. Lozada is the coordinating producer of WPBT [Channel 2], South Florida Public Broadcasting in Miami. She produced a segment about the 2004 ARRL Holiday Toy Drive for a weekly TV magazine "New Florida." The award honors the late Bill Leonard, a former president of CBS News and an active ham radio enthusiast, and it is awarded for activities completed in the previous calendar year.

RDXA MARCH PROGRAM

By Vic Gauvin, K1PY

A live demo of popular DX4WIN DX logging and tracking program. You heard Chris K2CS explain

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how to find and work some new DX at the February RARA meeting. Now come to RDXA's March meeting to see how to keep track of all your new "entities."

The popular DX4WIN logging and DX tracking software will be demonstrated "live" so you can see first-hand all it can do. A real-time internet connection will show how it can check your log by band/mode to alert you to a "new one!" Info on other similar programs is also planned. Use this stuff, and pretty soon you'll have a DXCC package for Ed, K2MP to check!

From the DESK of RRRR VP

By Brad Allen, KB2CHY
Vice-President, RRRR

January's meeting with Gadget night went well so I am told. I had a previous engagement that evening and could not attend. Things are heating up already for the empire state games and RRRR's role as "Main Repeater System". We now have the new duplexors ready to go on site and needing to be tuned to the existing system. This will be first on the agenda. We will also be doing some tweaking and hopefully will have the 4-pole put back in place soon. The "Hill" has said they will look into this for me. We will also be adding a "portable" voting receiver to the system. This means this unit can be placed anywhere and will be built to be moved and setup easily. This will be built from parts acquired from the equipment provided by Frontier's old paging radio systems.

The month of february on the 17th at 8:00PM, RRRR will hold a meeting at Pittsford Town Hall. This month's meeting will feature Keith Freeberg talking about Public Service, Emergency communications and the Empire State Games. Get ready for this very important event Rochester hams, because we will need nearly 100 hams at any one time per day for 5 days. It is going to be a busy week people and we have Keith to tell us all about it.

To help out, the month of March, also on the 17th of the month RRRR will hold it's annual auction. I have the rest of Ray Pickens estate to disperse among the community. The family will appreciate our generosity so lets make this our best auction ever. We also have another stash of Ham Gear being donated as well, but do not have the particulars just yet. So I hope to see more participation in our meetings as this is a very important "Ham Radio" year. See you there!

Another Bumper Crop

By Raj Dewan, N2RD
RARA VE Team Leader

RARA testing has produced another bumper crop. Five new hams have been added to our service. Len Crellin KC2PCD, Carey Magee KC2PCE, William White KC2PCF, Duane Fregoe KC2PCG, and Russel Norton KC2PCH all have newly minted Technician licenses which gives them all privileges above 50Mhz. Congratulate them if you hear them on the air. In addition to these fine new hams, Thomas Kosicka WD8CQB upgraded from General to Extra. Congratulations to him too.

Dick Goslee KG2I, Stan Avery WM3D, Stan Zack KA2U, Alex Piccirelli NV2Y, William Gibson KB2CHD, and Bob Horner KB2YEM ably administered the tests. Special thanks to them for making this test session possible.

If you or some one you know wants to take the test, then all they have to is show up at 10:00AM at RIT Building 9 Room 3139 on the third Saturday of each month through May. The next testing date is Feb 18. They will need to bring two forms of ID, pencil, copy of license and/or original CSCE from previous examination session. There is no charge for the taking tests at RARA sponsored test sessions done through the Laurel VEC.

Randal McCloy - Update

Randy McCloy, KC8VKZ, the sole survivor of the January 2 Upshur County, West Virginia, coal mine tragedy, has been transferred from the hospital to a rehabilitation center. McCloy, 26, was moved to HealthSouth Mountainview Regional Rehabilitation Hospital in Morgantown on January 26.

McCloy's condition remains fair. He is no longer in a coma, although he remains unable to speak, according to his physician, Dr Larry Roberts. McCloy's fever has dropped and he has not needed kidney dialysis in the past few days. The explosion at Sago Mine killed 12 other miners and left the mine filled with deadly carbon monoxide. McCloy has been hospitalized for the past three weeks at West Virginia University's Ruby Memorial Hospital.

Well-wishers have been sending cards and QSLs to McCloy at PO Box 223, Philippi, WV 26435. A fund has been set up to accept donations for McCloy's benefit: The Randal McCloy Jr Fund, c/o Clear Mountain Bank, 1889 Earl Core Rd, Morgantown, WV 26505

From ARRL Letter, Vol 25, No. 05

Digital Update

By Mark Harloff, K2CAN

I have been working with John N2YDF to help get the Buffalo FlexDigi up and running. The computer for that site is now setup and ready to be put into service. We ran into some problems with the MFJ tncs that were to be used for backbone and user port services. Those tncs are presently being worked on by Rusty KE2PW. In the mean time, I have lent John a Tiny2 for use as a 1.2Kb User port. John hopes to have that online within the next week.

Once the MFJ's are operational, John and I will work on a backbone link between Buffalo and Bristol.

Given the excellent path to the south, the Buffalo Digi will have the possibility of providing backbone links to Dayton and points south into the Erie/Jamestown areas in the future.

It is my hope that the WNY digital backbone structure will be rebuilt and in operation by early summer.

I want to personally thank All the folks that have worked hard over the past couple of years to keep Ham digital alive in the Western and Central NY regions. Despite the lack of interest, it is my feeling that the digital mode of Amateur Radio is valuable asset that we should not let fade away.

March Calendar – Events In The WNY Area

- 3 - RaRa Meeting – 7:30 PM - Henrietta Fire Hall, 3129 East Henrietta Road
- 5 – Greater Buffalo Winter Hamfest at Main Transit Fireman's Grnds, 6777 Main St, Williamsville
- 9 - RaRa Board of Directors – 8:00PM-RIT Bldg-9, Room 3119
- 9 - BARK – 7:00 PM monthly meeting at Bob Rachow, N2WY, 1140 Peck Rd., Hilton
- 10 - RVHFG – 7:30 PM, monthly meeting at Ogden Town Hall, 269 Ogden Center Rd.
- 17 - RRRRA – 8:00PM Monthly Meeting at Pittsford Town Hall, basement meeting room
- 18 - RaRa VE Testing session – 10:00AM Bldg-9 Room-3139 RIT Campus, Henrietta
- 21 - RDXA – 7:30 PM, monthly meeting at Gander Mountain, Jay Scutti Blvd, Henrietta

LEAGUE URGES NEW YORK MEMBERS TO PROTEST STATE GRANT TO TROUBLESOME BPL TRIAL

ARRL Directors Frank Fallon, N2FF, of the Hudson Division and Bill Edgar, N3LLR, of the Atlantic Division have called on the League's New York membership to protest a state grant to help fund a problematic BPL pilot project. ARRL learned this week that the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) has contracted with electric utility Consolidated Edison (ConEd) and BPL manufacturer Ambient to provide up to \$200,000 in funding for a BPL pilot in the Westchester County community of Briarcliff Manor.

"If you share our dismay that NYSEDA's funds are being used to support a known source of radio spectrum pollution, write to Gov Pataki and NYSEDA President Peter Smith to demand that the State of New York use its influence to ensure that the Briarcliff Manor BPL project is either brought into compliance with the FCC rules immediately or shut down," Fallon and Edgar said in a joint statement to New York ARRL members.

The Briarcliff Manor project has been the subject of a string of complaints to the FCC, including several requests from the ARRL--the last filed just last month--to shut down the project until it complies with FCC rules. Fallon and Edgar called on ARRL members in the Empire State to write Gov George E. Pataki, State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224 and Peter R. Smith, President, NYSEDA, 17 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203-6399. Pataki is a former Amateur Radio licensee, K2ZCZ (since reissued).

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, points out that the League's concerns regarding the public grant have been on record with NYSEDA since June 2004, when Ambient prematurely announced a funding grant. Sumner said John Love, the NYSEDA project manager for the BPL grant, this week confirmed that a contract had been signed.

"I shared with him our disappointment at Ambient's involvement, given their miserable track record in Briarcliff Manor," Sumner said. In his conversation with Love, Sumner said he explained that Ambient was violating FCC rules in Briarcliff Manor by exceeding Part 15 emission limits, causing harmful interference in the amateur bands and failing to post required information in the public BPL system database.

Love "clearly didn't know much about the interference issue," Sumner said, adding that the

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official indicated NYSEDA's interest in BPL was as a means to improve the quality of electric power delivery. "However, he said the contract requires the parties to monitor and report on interference and its mitigation," Sumner noted. "I offered ARRL's technical resources to educate him."

On January 5, citing FCC inaction in response to previous complaints, the ARRL renewed its complaint to the Commission about the Ambient Corporation BPL project in Briarcliff Manor. The BPL system uses power lines owned and operated by ConEd under a Part 5 Experimental FCC authorization. The League requested that the FCC instruct the BPL facility's operators to shut it down immediately and not resume operation until it can demonstrate full compliance with all applicable FCC rules.

From ARRL Letter, Vol 25, No. 05

Greater Buffalo Winter Hamfest

Sunday - March 5, 2006

Hamfest web site: <http://gbhamfest.hamgate.net/>

Table Reservations.

Reserve by email <mailto:kc2blh@aol.com>

Reserve tables on Line:

http://gbhamfest.hamgate.net/gbwhf_table_info.htm

Location: Main Transit Fireman's Grounds 6777 Main St., Williamsville, NY. Only 1 mile from NY State Thruway I 90 exit 49

Sponsored by: the Lancaster Amateur Radio Club

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3rd Saturday each Month, Sept - May

Registration - 10:00AM
Testing - 10:15AM

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(Park in Lot J)

Rochester Institute of Technology
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Contact Raj Dewan, N2RD to reserve space. Call 585) 703-4003 or e-mail n2rd@arrl.net

RARA Memorial Scholarship

**Application Deadline
April 15, 2006**

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June 2-3-4, 2006

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