



# THE RARA RAG

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## March Meeting: *Make the Contact; Get the QSL*

By Bill Kasperkoski, WB2SXY

"I talked to this guy on my radio in Timbuktu" may get you some sideways glances from family, friends and coworkers. But, "I talked to this guy on my radio in Timbuktu, and here's the postcard he sent me" will be received much more readily. This is part of the ham tradition of swapping verification cards; proof of contacts with other stations.

Whether you operate a lot or a little on the ham bands, eventually you will start receiving QSLs – verifications from the stateside or distant country stations you work. You can collect verifications for display or applying toward awards.

A new ham might ask: "I hear people on the air talking about DXCC, eQSL, PSK, TPA, LoTW and via buro; what does all of this mean?" How do I get my last three states for WAS? How do you work (CW, SSB or Digital) stations? Someone said that I could work a lot of states, countries or grids in a contest -- How do I go about doing that?

How do I find out what states or countries are on the air? How do eQSL, LoTW and GlobalQSL work? What is best for me? What stations do I want to work? How do I get a DX station to want another W2 Card? Do I need my own QSL Card? What can I do with the cards sent to me? What is the best (or fastest, or cheapest, or most efficient) way to verify those stations - or should I? I did not have a goal in mind when stations started sending me cards; I have a bunch, now what?

Bill Kasperkoski, WB2SXY, who holds CW, SSB (awaiting RTTY) DXCC, also holds Digital, CW, SSB, and RTTY WAS plus the recent Triple Play Award, will be presenting "Make the Contact; Get the QSL" at the March RARA General Membership meeting, March 4, 2011. As always, RARA is your platform for finding out the answers to your operating questions.

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### **RARA Meeting** Mar. 4th, 2011 7:30PM

Henrietta Fire Co. #1  
3129 East Henrietta Rd. (15A)



## The Prez Sez

By Frank Schramm, WB2PYD  
President, RaRa

For any of you who didn't attend the cabin party; you missed out on some good eats! It was wall-to-wall chili; eight varieties in all, from "mild" to just this side of "wild". The assortment of desserts was even greater! There were cakes, cookies, puddings, and brownies. We couldn't have asked for better weather or a happier crowd. Congratulations to Trista Hamill, Chris Dele Fave and yours truly for prize winning chili; and Kira DiTucci, Kim Hollingsworth, and moi for the prize winning desserts! Special thanks to everyone who brought a chili or dessert they were all winners to my palette; and an extra special thanks and a shout out to Lisa, KC2VHT, for putting the whole thing together for us - Love ya' babe!

It's that time again... time to fill the "seats of guidance" at RARA. Of course I refer to the Board of Directors and club officers. Elections are just around the corner at our May meeting, and nominees will be announced at the April meeting. There are a lot of professionals among our members and we're looking for some people with an eye to the future. Anyone with marketing or business management skills would be a tremendous asset, as would someone with a good working knowledge of the public education system. Being a Director does not take a large time commitment, but the rewards can be tremendous. Help us take RaRa to new heights in the Amateur Radio and the Western New York community. If you, or someone you know, could help; please contact a current Officer or Director for more information.

A headline from the BBC News flashed across my cell phone this morning: "Sun unleashes huge solar flare". Of course my mind flashed DX. In the article they claim the Sun has been awakening after a period of several years of low activity. "Low"? There's an understatement! But any solar activity is a welcome "ray of sunshine" to DXers eagerly awaiting the revival of the higher bands.

With spring rapidly approaching, that can only herald one thing: Hamfest time! All current RaRa members will once again gain FREE admission and flea market space to the 2011 Rochester Hamfest and ARRL Atlantic Division Convention on Saturday June 4<sup>th</sup>. (Insert applause here) Even though the event only lasts for a few hours, it takes days to setup and many people during the course of the event to pull it all together. This is YOUR event, and we want you to enjoy it to the fullest. But, we also need YOUR help! Please consider volunteering for an hour or so during the day. Besides the gratification of participation, we'll buy your lunch (or breakfast) and you'll earn Membership Rewards Points! How can you turn down that great food the Barnard Firemen cook up for us every year? Contact Peter [WB2SKY@ARRL.net](mailto:WB2SKY@ARRL.net) to volunteer at the Hamfest.

73,  
Frank  
WB2PYD

## Calendar of Events

- Mar 4** RaRa General Meeting – 7:30 PM  
Henrietta Fire Hall,  
3129 E. Henrietta Rd
- Mar 9** RaRa Board of Directors  
5:30 PM, RIT  
Bldg-17, Room 2110
- Mar 19** RaRa VE Testing sessions  
10:00 AM, RIT  
Bldg-9, Room 3139

### Drumlins Hamfest April 16

For more information visit:  
[www.drumlinsarc.org/hamgest.htm](http://www.drumlinsarc.org/hamgest.htm)

## Silent Key

Wilda R. "Billie" Robinson,  
WB2FNF  
February 8, 2011  
(XYL of Ken, WA2ALW-SK)

## Rag-Chew

Editor's Thoughts & Comments  
By Kevin Carey, WB2QMY  
[Editor@RochesterHam.org](mailto:Editor@RochesterHam.org)

Welcome to the March issue of the *RARA Rag*. I don't know about you, but I am certainly looking forward to the arrival of spring, otherwise known as "Antenna Raising" season! Ever since I had a re-roof done a while back, my Butternut HF5B beam and 6-meter beam have been resting on the ground behind my house and out of service. I've been relegated to using only wire antennas during this time. I look forward to getting both beams back up in their rightful places atop my roof.



I was looking through *QST* recently, and noticed an unusually high number of Rochester area silent keys. I'm not certain that we have listed all of these in the *RARA Rag*. We can only list them when they are brought to our attention, so I ask all readers to forward any SK information they have. Just in case we missed some of these recent SKs, I'm listing them here, as found in the March issue of *QST* magazine.

Donald Taylor, KB2BU  
Thomas Walker, N2CPD  
James Bower, K2IAV  
Kenneth Seil, W2KS  
John Tracy, N2MUE  
Walter Glende, ex-K2RGX  
Michael Lavelle, KF2WH  
William Parker, AA2XG  
James Bates, WA2ZKI

I would also like to encourage anyone who would like to write an article on a departed ham from the Rochester area to do so. Especially now that we are in an electronic format, there are fewer restrictions on how long an article can be. So, if you have a favorite elmer that you'd like to honor, or any other local ham that you were acquainted with, feel free to write an article about this person's background and their contributions to the local amateur radio scene. Photos are always welcome. You can send your articles or ideas to me at [Editor@RochesterHam.org](mailto:Editor@RochesterHam.org).

For an interesting story on why ham radio thrives in today's high-tech, "wired" society, check out the article at <http://tinyurl.com/6ax6288>.

## VE News

By Ken Hall, W2KRH  
VE Team Leader

The January VE session held on Saturday the 15<sup>th</sup> saw eleven candidates test for new licenses with three Technician, six General, one of whom passed both the Technician and General, and two upgrades to Extra. Congratulations to all listed below!

We were joined by Bob Rose, AA3RR of the Laurel VEC and his wife Brenda KB2ATI. In addition, Duane K2SI has created a very nice PowerPoint presentation for our sessions.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Callsign</u>	<u>Class</u>
Sarah DeYoung	KC2YSP	Technician
Wesley Rice	KC2ZQS	Technician
Scott Thompson	KC2ZQU	Technician
Wayne Arthurton	KC2ZPO	General
Edward Braiman,	KC2ZLQ	General
Charlton Grant	KZ2VON	General
Gilbert Magee	W5GIL	General
Justin Morse	KD8DYG	General
Ken Scott	KC2ZQT	General
Lawrence Safford	AB2OY	Extra
Freddie Sulyma	WB2GFZ	Extra

The next exam session will be held at RIT on **March 19, 2011** at 10 AM in RIT Building 9, Room 3139.

[\(click for map\)](#)

Registration starts at 10:00AM. Check the [RARA website](#) for additional information.

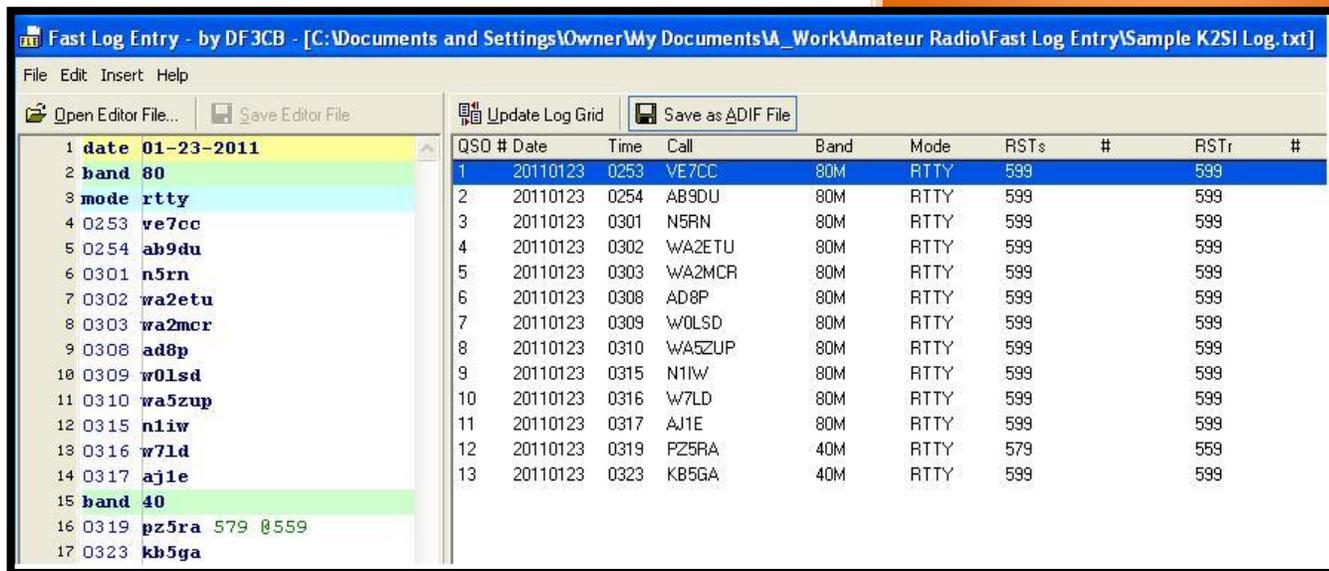


# Ham Tech: GlobalQSL

By Duane Fregoe, K2SI

The previous articles in this column dealt with programs that would be relatively easy to use if your logs were in electronic format. You could use a popular electronic logging program and start typing in all the critical information for each contact. DF3CB must have had a similar problem so he wrote a small freeware program called "Fast Log Entry". The idea behind the program was to make the data entry as easy and fast as possible. In your logbook you may see a string of contacts that all have the same date, band, and mode so all that needs to be entered is the time and call sign. If the exchange was other than 59 or 599 you can enter that info when needed.

The download is less than 1 MB and is available at: <http://www.df3cb.com/file/index.html> . Loading the download file creates two icons. One launches the program and the other is a link to the web for the three page help file which I would recommend you print. I printed a small section of my logbook so that I would have a paper log. In the left side of the window I entered the data from my paper log. Notice that my date, band, and mode for the first eleven contacts did not change. All I needed to enter was the time, hit tab, enter the call sign, hit return, and enter time on the next line for the next contact. Near the end of my example I needed to change to 40M so I entered a band line for 40M and continued to enter times and call signs. After you get some entries into the left side you can click on the "Update Log Grid" and populate the right side. When you finish populating the right side you can save this as an ADIF file. It is this ADIF file that you can upload to your accounts at Logbook of the World and eQSL. You will also want to import this ADIF into your new electronic logbook software that you will be using for all future contacts.



Next month: Vanity Call Signs

## Member Spotlight: Tim Magee, WB2KAO

By Len Crellin, KC2PCD

Welcome to another edition of Member Spotlight. Each month we will try to present a new RARA member to highlight. If you have someone you think would be interesting for us to interview, please send me, Len Crellin (kc2pcd@rochester.rr.com), his or her name with a short introduction that we can include in the interview. Any photos or stories we can use will be appreciated too!

Our ham of the month for March is Tim Magee, WB2KAO. I had the pleasure of spending some time with Tim and really enjoyed learning about his interest in ham radio, his family and his other activities that fill his life.

You may know that Tim is blind and he sits in the front row at our monthly meetings. You may also hear him yelling out dates for meetings or someone's call sign (always exactly right) when a speaker is at a loss for the right information.

If you have had a QSO with Tim, you may remember that he always closes with "health and happiness to you and yours". What a great way to say "73". Here are the highlights of my interview with Tim.

### 1. What got you interested in Ham Radio?

In 1963, my dad saw there were classes at the Rochester Museum and there we met Doc Thompson, WA2EIP (SK). Doc saw how interested I was and came over to the house to give personal instructions to me. In June of 1963 I got my Novice license and I was on my way. Gene Handler, W2LF (SK) was my General elmer and I got that ticket in March of 1964. Joe Hood, K2YA taught the Advanced class in the spring of 1994, and with Rick Wells, W2RW as driver and study partner the Extra class license was earned October 1994.

### 2. What are your favorite activities within the hobby?

Learning the code at age 12, I found I was quite good at it and really enjoyed the challenge of getting faster as time went on. I love the fact that I can meet people from all walks of life. They can be the CEO of a major company, a royal prince, a rock star or a line worker at a manufacturing plant, but ham radio is the great equalizer and forms the common bond that makes them another fellow ham. I also became interested in repeaters in the late 80s. My antenna is located by Edison Tech H.S. and went up in 1988. I borrowed two repeaters to get it up and running at first, but in March of 1991 WB2KAO was on the air as 444.850 pl 110.9 Hz. The current version was first started up on July of 2003.

### 3. How long have you been licensed and involved with RARA?

It has been since 1963, so that makes it 48 years and have enjoyed every moment of it.



*Tim, WB2KAO at home with his family*

#### 4. Did you grow up in Rochester, or are you a “transplant”?

My family lived in Rochester until 1964. In 1965 my father's job took us to Auburn, N.Y. where I attended high school. I chose St. John Fisher college in 1969 and moved back to Rochester at that time. I graduated from there in 1973 with a B.A. in Sociology. I went on to be employed by Delco for 31 years as a line production worker. I retired from there May 28, 2004.

#### 5. What modes/activities haven't you tried yet, which you would like to?

I find that I spend most of the time on my repeater and would like to put more time into HF which seems to take a back seat lately. I have become a net controller for a six-meter net on 53.05 (pl. 71.9) in Auburn and encourage any ham with the capabilities to join in on Tuesdays at 7:00 PM.

#### 6. Other hobbies or activities you care to share with us Tim?

Being with my grandchildren is a high part of each day! I enjoy listening to music, especially the oldies as played on 102.7 by Paul, K2FX. My four dogs keep me company everyday, and I especially like taking my golden retriever out for walks. Part of my daily routine is riding my exercise bike. Making it become something I do each and every day is important and it has really helped me lose a lot of weight.



**Tim, WB2KAO at his modern day shack**

#### 7. Tell us about your family Tim.

My wife Cheryl, WA2DKC and I actually met for the first time on the air over a 2-meter repeater in 1976. We were married in 1991 and this year in June we will be celebrating our 20th wedding anniversary. My son is 25 and my two step-daughters are 29 and 31. My six grandchildren are ages 1,3,5,6,7 and 8. We all reside in Greece, so it makes it easy to be close and see each other on a regular basis.

#### 8. What repeaters do you frequent?

Of course I am mainly on my own machine 444.850 (pl.110.9), but also find myself on 145.11, 146.79 and do some net control on the Auburn 147.00 and six meter 53.05 (both are pl.71.9).

#### 9. Tim, most people know you are blind, do you find ham radio is the great equalizer?

Absolutely Len! Over the air it doesn't matter what kind of job, color, religion or age you are, we are just amateur radio operators looking for our next QSO and maybe getting that rare contact that we need. While my wife is still working with her students in Brockport, I am never alone with ham radio. I encourage everyone to visit my repeater and hope to hear some new calls and voices and make new friends.

*\*\*\* I went down to Tim's shack and can attest to the fact that he needs no help running the equipment and certainly can handle the key with one hand while his other hand glides over the controls making adjustments and not missing a beat It was incredible to watch!-----Len \*\*\**

**10. I see you are quite the CW operator. How did you learn it?**

I started to practice when I was 12 and found quickly that it came very natural to me. Of course back then you needed to pass a higher level of ability to get the next license class. We also had to go down to the nearest FCC office (which was in Buffalo) to take the tests. In addition we were required to also “send” the code as well as receive to pass. This requirement was eliminated sometime in the 1980s when the Volunteer Examiners (VEs) was initiated. Then, the tester would play an audio tape which you copied on paper. I was allowed to speak out the words as they were sent and had no problem with any of the tests.

**11. Is it true that you are a net controller for a net outside of the U.S.?**

Yes, I am part of the ONTARS Net on 3.755. It stands for Ontario Amateur Radio Service (Canada). I simply found them one day and enjoyed the obvious friendship everyone displayed on air. Many of them are located just over Lake Ontario and are an easy reach for 80 meters during the day when the nets are done. They also do a wonderful event just before Christmas each year when “Santa Claus” makes calls from the “North Pole” to many little children over the air. It makes for a special introduction into ham radio!

**12. You mention on your repeater that you have a summer retreat. Care to talk about it?**

We have a 31’ Montana Mountainair trailer at a permanent site located at “Evergreen Trails” which is 5 miles north of Angelica, N.Y. in Alleghany county. We open up in the spring and close up in fall. Many of the people there are regulars and we have made many new friends. We found it after seeing an edition of the “Get-away guy” by Mike O’Brien where he featured this camp. My HT can reach one repeater if needed, but we mostly use it to be away from everything...including Ham Radio!

**13. You’ve been seen at Frontier Stadium attending the Red Wings games. When did that start?**

I have loved baseball all my life and listen to play-by-play over the radio every chance I can. My dad used to take me to Silver Stadium when I was a kid. Regardless of being sighted or not, there is a certain feel to being at the park instead of just listening to it at home. The smells, sounds of the crowd, ball hitting the catcher’s mitt or the crack of the bat all add to that special feeling I get by being there. You will usually find us in a seat behind the screen after my wife was hit by a foul ball once.

**14. What has your involvement with RARA been?**

I remember my first meeting in 1963 at the Rochester Farm & Home Center. I don’t remember where it was. (I believe this would have been on Highland Avenue—ed.) I have been attending meetings ever since at several different



*Tim in an earlier day, straight key in hand!*

locations. In the early 1990s I taught CW classes at Westfall Rd. They were on Monday nights and were 5 wpm working with 5 letters each class and building up to words. The students were very motivated since they still needed to learn the code to pass the tests at that time. I also served on the Board of directors in the early 1990s when Rick, W2RW was President of RARA. In 2005 I served as Vice president. Lately I have chaired the talk-in station for the Hamfest since it has moved to the new site at Barnard.

### 15. Any final remarks Tim?

Ham Radio has been very good to me and I try to be good to it. I suggest that everyone in RARA give something back to the hobby. Whether that means serving on a committee or running for office, or helping out a new ham who needs someone to Elmer them, or getting a non-ham to learn what it is to become one, just find some way to be a good steward to the hobby.

*\*\*\* While in Tim's shack I saw an award for the "A-1 Operator" Club. He, Ed Gable and several local hams are members. On the ARRL site it was described: "First organized in May 1933, the ARRL A-1 Operator Club has a proud history and occupies an important place in Amateur Radio tradition". You can go to this link to learn more about the A-1Club: <http://www.arrl.org/news/honoring-the-best-the-arri-s-a-1-operator-club> \*\*\*\**

## Hamfest Memories...

One of my most memorable Rochester Hamfest experiences occurred back around 1978. A couple of other teenaged hams and I decided to have an impromptu foxhunt. One person was selected to hide and the rest of us were to find him solely by signal strength and carefully listening for background noises when we could coax him to transmit audio. Eventually three of us met up on the second floor of the Dome Arena tracking the elusive fox.

The strongest signal was coming from behind a closed door; we opened the door to reveal a fire escape stairwell with our friend sitting all the way at the bottom. Excited by the premise of actually finding the fox we all ran down the metal stairs yelling "Ah -Ha, Ah -Ha!" It became quite a racket. Within seconds a door burst open with the silhouette of a large framed man filling the doorway - an employee of the Dome Arena. The giant shadow screamed as loud as it could without distorting: "What's going on in here?" Our excitement quickly changed to fright and, simultaneously, we all tried to explain how we were hunting the fox. The massive man would have no part of our explanation and just yelled: "Fox (expletive)! Get out of here NOW!" We fled like the wind and for years afterwards "Fox (expletive)!" was our own personal battle cry. -Frank WB2PYD

*Editor's note: I'd like to invite our readers to share more favorite hamfest memories. Perhaps you recall a favorite rig you bought at the fest, or met a ham friend there for the first time in person. Maybe you passed a license test with flying colors and got on 2 meters for the first time on the way home. Whether recent or many years ago, we welcome your recollections for future articles in the Rag. No experience in writing articles? Don't worry; we're here to help you get it ready for publication!*

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## March Prizes!

By Dan Waterstraat, W2DEW

Our main Raffle prize for the March RARA meeting is the "Big Kahuna" of Ham Radio books, the *2011 ARRL Handbook*. As every year, this is updated with exciting new material including:

### New Topics:

- Schematic capture and Printed Circuit Board layout
- Amplifier tuning and maintenance, using surplus amp parts
- Restoring vintage equipment
- Remote station design

### New Project Material:

- Microprocessor-based SWR Monitor-Meter by Larry Coyle, K1QW
- LTspice simulation files for basic electronic circuits
- Selecting the right battery for mobile operation

### Expanded Content:

- New from Dr. Ulrich Rhode, N1UL: Oscillator and mixer circuit designs, HF mixer testing, VHF down-converter front end design, and RF circuit simulation
- 50% more on RF Interference, including digital TV, power-line noise, and automotive RFI
- Transmitting choke material consolidated for easy reference

The CD-ROM at the back of the book includes all of the fully searchable text and illustrations in the printed book, as well as companion software, PC board templates and other support files.

Being as the weather will starting getting warmer (hopefully), it's time to think about antennas. With the sunspots looking up, we have a W8AMZ 20M Half-Wave Dipole Antenna Kit. Enough wire is supplied for 20 meters but this could be cut for use on 17, 15, 12, 10, or 6 meters.

From W8AMZ: All of my dipole kits are brand new, made with black-jacketed 14 Gauge stranded copper wire required by the national electrical code for permanent residential installation. The center insulator does have a spark gap for lightning protection. They are built very tough to withstand the rough high winds we have here on shores of Lake Michigan and use light weight high quality PVC "dog bone" insulators.

They will handle the full legal power limit. They can be set up in a traditional flat-top dipole configuration or in a space saving Inverted V. Additional leads can be added to turn it from a single band to a multi band antenna. The Dipole kit does require the wires to be cut to your desired resonate frequency. An easy-to-use frequency chart is included with the Kit.

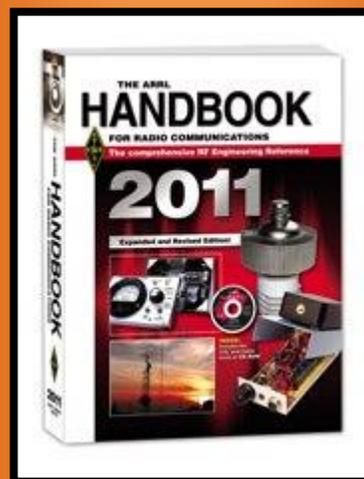
We'll also have the Raffle Grab Bag again with some new items. So come on out, meet your friends, grab a doughnut, and have a good time. Get your Raffle tickets from Sue and myself for 1 for a \$1, 3 for \$2, and 10 for \$5.

## RaRa Club LOGO Items



Don't feel left out- get your RaRa logo items today!

<http://www.rochesterham.org/logo.htm>



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## Picture Puzzler

By Kevin Carey, WB2QMY

My thanks to the correct guessers of last month's *Picture Puzzler*: Dick Kessler (W7SV ex-K2SZE) via Irv Goodman (AF2K), George Masny (KA2GPJ), Tim Barrett (K9VB), Steve Susch (K2PLI), and Charles Bruton (K2VUL) all came in with the correct answer. The intentionally fuzzy photo showed a Korean Conflict-era AN/GRC-9 Radio Set. Quite a few local hams have one of these, myself included. In fact, I made my first contact on one at the home of my elmer, Doug Hoff, KI8KN (ex-WA2IUQ). The nickname for this radio is the "Angry 9" because of its model number string.

This month we have a photo of a fairly common HF transceiver from the 1970s. I am looking for guesses on who made this rig. The company made a number of similar-looking rigs, so the model name/number is not necessary—only the manufacturer's name. Please send your answers to me at [Editor@RochesterHam.org](mailto:Editor@RochesterHam.org). All correct guessers will be recognized in the next issue of the *RARA Rag*.



**Mystery Photo: Be the first to guess what company made this rig, and be recognized in the next RARA Rag!**

## Between the Ham Bands

Jay Golden, KC2YST

For many years utility station DXing was a favorite aspect of the SWLing hobby. Utility stations were excellent verifiers, and monthly radio club bulletins were full of reception reports of utility stations around the world. The advent of satellite communications has reduced the number of stations on HF, but several are still heard nearly every day, and activity can vary on a seasonal basis.

Utility stations include in-flight air traffic controllers, marine message broadcasters, aviation weather stations, and, of course, military stations. Nearly all will QSL as long as you obey the Communications Act prohibition of not reporting details of on-air conversations; the appropriate technique is to report "...you were in contact with..." and indicate the time and frequency of the reception. When listening to one-way aviation weather stations there is no on-air conversation so the caution noted above isn't relevant.

The in-flight air traffic controllers are usually heard in the mornings or evenings (west coast, Asia, Pacific); try 10057 kHz or 11282 kHz around 0000Z, +/- one or two hours. For Atlantic air traffic, Gander, New York, and Keflavik are the controllers you'll hear on 13306 kHz around 2300Z and later into the evening; this is easy reception for us in the Northeast US, and if you stay on frequency long enough you can hear a flight departing JFK and then transition from one controller to another as the plane crosses the ocean until they enter British airspace. Typically you'll hear the flight engineer reporting his identity (*i.e.*,



American 42), position, altitude, speed, remaining fuel on board, and any other information necessary to tell the controller. For more information about enroute air traffic, visit the ASECNA and AIRINC websites.

Military air traffic controllers are active on HF, too. Andrews Air Force Base uses 11175 kHz for comms, and on occasion Puerto Rico (ex-Ramey air force base, now a Coast Guard base) will be heard handling traffic. The "Sky King" broadcasts originating from Offutt Air Force Base are still heard on HF although it has not been reported recently. Navy and Coast Guard ships still use HF for certain traffic and can be heard on 8337 kHz at various times of day. Military traffic can be copied on many frequencies although, understandably, most military comms are encrypted.

The aviation weather network is widespread and consists of stations around the world that broadcast on specific frequencies at specific times. An example of how this system operates is Shannon Volmet, which transmits on 3413 kHz, 5505 kHz, 8957 kHz, and 13264 kHz every hour plus ten minutes. New York Volmet broadcasts aviation weather at the same time, but on 3485 kHz, 6604 kHz, 10051 kHz, and 13270 kHz. Virtually all utility stations use upper sideband,

For many years I enjoyed listening to WOM and WOO, the coastal radio stations owned by AT&T which provided ship-to-shore communications. Cruise ship passengers, radio operators on merchant vessels, and pleasure craft owners could be heard. These transmissions were all duplex and I could hear only one side of their conversation but it was interesting listening, nonetheless. WOM and WOO are gone due to the transition to satellite services, but several coastal stations are still operating. KNN, WLO, WCL, and KLB are owned and operated by a company in Mobile, Alabama, and they provide e-mail, voice, SELCAL, AMTOR and SITOR services as well as fax on paired HF frequencies. Find out more about their activity by Googling Shipcom.com. Reminder: reporting the substance of overheard conversations is unlawful. Happy listening and feel free to write with ideas for future listening topics



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## RARA Academy #2: A Big Success!

By Duane Fregoe, K2SI

On Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup> we held RARA Academy #2 at the RIT campus. 25 people attended this Academy on a snowy morning with less than ideal driving conditions. Those that attended got to see presentations on APRS, 6-meter operating, and Echolink. Along with the presentations we enjoyed pizza and gave away some nice door prizes.

After a short introduction Jon Dickason (N2JAC) got things started with a very good presentation on APRS. Jon has a wide assortment of GPS units, APRS trackers, and APRS-ready HTs that he showed to the group. Next up was Frank Pollino (K2OS) with a wonderful presentation on the 6-meter band. With the small antennas that are required, it is not very hard to get on 6 meters if you have a radio that can handle the "magic band". Last on the agenda was my Echolink presentation. I demonstrated Echolink using a laptop and then using an HT connected to the K2GXT repeater. With the HT, I was able to connect directly to an iPhone that was in the class using Echolink. Additional pictures of the Academy can be viewed at: <http://n2ygg.posterous.com/21211-rara-academy-aprs-6-meters-echolink>

Thank you to the presenters, Jon and Frank, and to all that gave up a piece of their Saturday to attend. I also need to thank the RIT Amateur Radio Club (K2GXT) for the use of their repeater and helping us to secure the use of a classroom. The next Academy will be in October with three new topics. Watch for the Rochester Hamfest seminar schedule as there may be some presentations of interest to the newer hams.



***Jon Dickason, N2JAC, gets things started with an exciting APRS presentation***



***An eager group of students***

# Trunktracking Adventure!

Jim Sutton, N2OPS

Nearly all scanner listeners enter a desired frequency in their programmable scanner, or with earlier models they would simply choose the crystal of the frequency they wanted to hear. Trunking involves multiple talkgroups on a set of frequencies. Almost the opposite of what takes place with conventional scanning.

We will look at the basics of trunktracking for the Genesee County trunked radio system. Genesee County was one of the first in the state to migrate their public safety to a unified countywide radio system shared by all agencies. Before this move, agency frequencies were scattered over low band, high band and UHF bands.

In the early days of the Genesee County trunked system scanner listeners would enter the frequencies of the trunked system into their scanner. Immediately they would need to lock out the control channel which is a continuous signal that conveys data to the system. The remaining channels would randomly contain voice communications.

Unlike conventional scanning the listener had little idea of what agency they were listening to. Manually stopping the scanner of that frequency did little good as the conversation would nearly always go to another frequency.

To make the listener's dilemma even more frustrating the control channel changed frequency each day requiring another channel to be locked out. If the listener didn't reinstate the previous day's control channel soon all of the channels would be locked out. It was frustrating to say the least.

## ENTER THE TRUNKTRACKER

Trunktracker scanners allow the listener to know what talkgroup ID he is listening to and to divide the talkgroup ID's into banks. Lockout of talkgroups or individual talkgroup ID's is possible in the same way conventional channels and banks can be locked out. Scanners with alpha tags bring up the name of the talkgroup when the scanning stops on a transmission. Most allow the listener to manually stay on one talkgroup ID.

A fleetmap contains the frequencies, talkgroups and talkgroup ID's for the entire system.

## GENESEE COUNTY FREQUENCIES

001	853.0375
002	852.9875
003	852.8125
004	852.3625
005	851.9125
006	851.4625
007	851.0125



GENESEE COUNTY TRUNK BANKS AND TALKGROUP ID'S  
 This is how I have divided my Genesee County talkgroup ID's into scanning banks.

**BANK A – BATAVIA CITY**

- 1 272 POLICE DISPATCH
- 2 976 POLICE CAR TO CAR
- 3 1008 POLICE SPECIAL OPERATIONS
- 4 336 POLICE ADMINISTRATION
- 5 304 POLICE INVESTIGATORS
- 6 1072 FIRE
- 7 1079 FIRE

**BANK B – GENESEE SHERIFF**

- 1 48 SHERIFF DISPATCH
- 2 144 SHERIFF ADMINISTRATIVE
- 3 848 SHERIFF BASE TO BASE
- 4 880 SHERIFF BASE TO CAR
- 5 816 SHERIFF CAR TO CAR
- 6 240 COUNTY WIDE SHERIFF/POLICE
- 7 80 SHERIFF INVESTIGATORS
- 8 176 SHERIFF SPECIAL DEPUTIES
- 9 112 SHERIFF SPECIAL OPERATIONS
- 10 1872 STATE POLICE

**BANK C – EMS**

- 1 528 EMS DISPATCH
- 2 2064 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EVENT GROUP 1
- 3 2096 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EVENT GROUP 2
- 4 2128 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EVENT GROUP 3
- 5 2160 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EVENT GROUP 4
- 6 2192 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EVENT GROUP 5
- 7 912 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT
- 8 1776 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WORK GROUP 1
- 9 1808 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WORK GROUP 2
- 10 1840 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WORK GROUP 3 / DSS

**BANK D – FIRE**

- 1 432 FIRE ANNOUNCEMENT GROUP
- 2 1968 EMS HOSPITAL
- 3 471 COUNTY FIRE DISPATCH 1A
- 4 496 COUNTY FIRE COMMAND 1B
- 5 1648 COUNTY FIREGROUND 1C FIRE/AMBULANCE
- 6 1680 COUNTY FIREGROUND 1D SAFETY
- 7 1712 COUNTY FIREGROUND 1E WATER SUPPLY
- 8 560 COUNTYWIDE OPERATIONS 1G
- 9 592 COUNTYWIDE OPERATIONS 1H
- 10 1744 FIRE POLICE

**BANK E – LEROY VILLAGE**

- 1 368 POLICE DISPATCH
- 2 400 POLICE INVESTIGATORS
- 3 1904 POLICE ADMINISTRATION
- 4 2320 LEROY VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE DISPATCH
- 5 1040 LEROY FIRE DISPATCH

**BANK F – BATAVIA CITY DPW**

- 1 752 BATAVIA CITY
- 2 1264 DPW WORK GROUP 1
- 3 1296 DPW WORK GROUP 2
- 4 1328 DPW WORK GROUP 3
- 5 1360 DPW WORK GROUP 4



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**BANK G – GENESEE COUNTY HIGHWAY**

- 1 624 ADMINISTRATION
- 2 656 HIGHWAY ANNOUNCEMENT
- 3 688 COUNTY HIGHWAY
- 4 1488 WORK GROUP 1
- 5 1520 WORK GROUP 2
- 6 1552 WORK GROUP 3
- 7 1584 WORK GROUP 4
- 8 1616 BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS
- 9 1936 COUNTY PARKS
- 10 2224 NURSING HOME

**BANK H – VILLAGE HIGHWAY**

- 1 784 VILLAGE DPW DISPATCH
- 2 1200 WORK GROUP 1
- 3 1232 WORK GROUP 2

**BANK I – LEROY HIGHWAY**

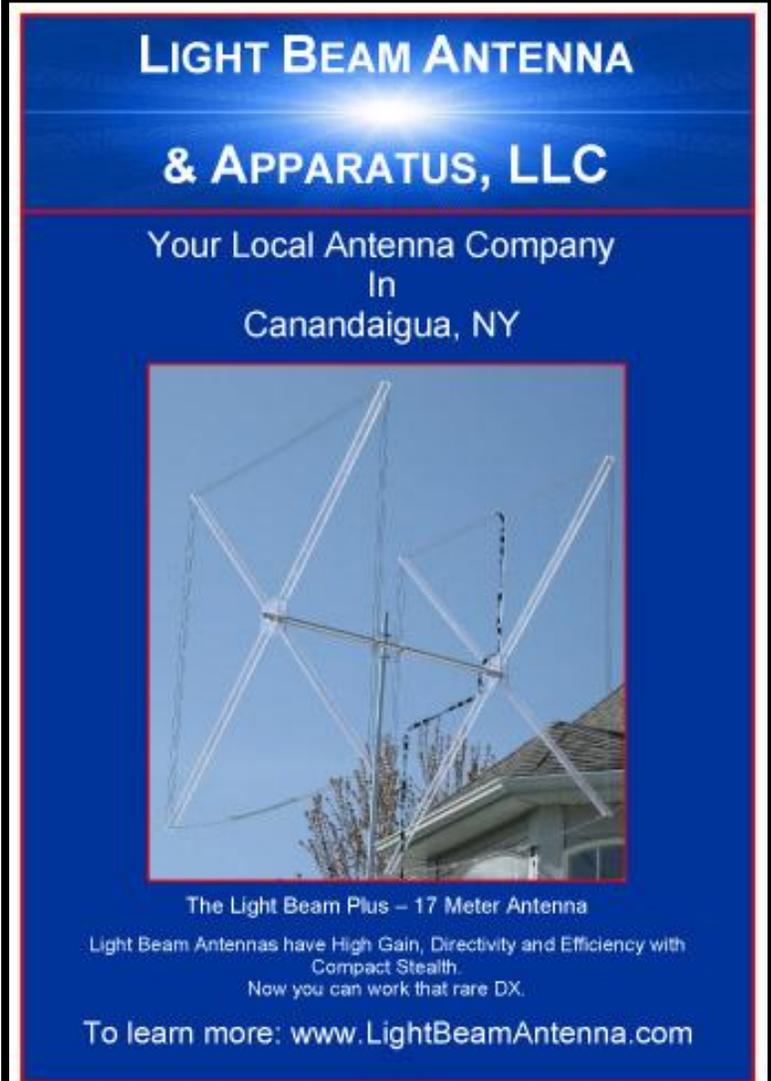
- 1 720 TOWN HIGHWAY
- 2 944 VILLAGE DPW DISPATCH
- 3 1104 DPW WORK GROUP 1
- 4 1136 DPW WORK GROUP 2
- 5 1168 DPW WORK GROUP 3
- 6 1392 TOWN HIGHWAY WORK GROUP 1
- 7 1424 TOWN HIGHWAY WORK GROUP 2
- 8 1456 TOWN HIGHWAY WORK GROUP 3

Genesee County Emergency Dispatch Center 911  
<http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/dpt/sheriff/dispatch.html>

Radio Reference Trunking Wiki  
<http://wiki.radioreference.com/index.php/Trunking>

Thank you all so much for your emails of encouragement and story ideas. Your feedback speaks volumes for the great family the ham radio operator joins when he gets his license.

Until next month, 73 to thee.



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## Monroe County ARES / RACES News

By Jim DiTucci, N2IXD

Monroe County Amateur Radio Emergency Service, Inc. holds its meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month. All ARES / RACES members and non-member Amateur Radio Operators are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The next ARES Meeting will be held on: **Thursday, March 24, 2011, at 7:00 PM.**

Meetings are held at the **Greater Rochester Chapter of the American Red Cross HQ, 50 Prince Street, Rochester, NY 14607.** (Located behind the Rochester Auditorium Theatre, 885 Main St. E.)

**ARES NET:** Monroe County ARES/RACES meets on the air every Thursday of the month at 9:00 pm, on the 146.61 MHz. (-) 110.9 Hz PL repeater. The exception to that are nights when we hold our regular meeting, generally on the 4th Thursday of the month.

**Additional ARES / RACES information can be found at [www.monroecountymcomm.org](http://www.monroecountymcomm.org)**

## Visit the RaRa website

Did you know that your club's website at [www.rochesterham.org](http://www.rochesterham.org) offers these features and more?...

- ✓ Photos of meetings & events (you might be in there!)
- ✓ Info on upcoming meetings/programs
- ✓ Rochester Hamfest information!
- ✓ Online membership & renewal
- ✓ Public service info & sign-up
- ✓ VE testing info
- ✓ Back issues of the *Rag* in PDF
- ✓ Officer contact info
- ✓ List of past presidents (how many do you remember?)
- ✓ Order RARA logo products (hats, shirts, mugs)
- ✓ Useful Internet links
- ✓ Ham Radio 101—tons of tutorial info, plus net & repeater listings



**Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc.**



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<p>RaRa HOME</p> <p>Rochester Hamfest</p> <p>Upcoming Meetings</p> <p>Public Service</p> <p>Licensing Courses</p> <p>License Testing</p> <p>Ham Radio 101</p> <p>Memorial Scholarship</p> <p>Membership</p> <p>Club Officers</p>	<h3>Welcome to RARA</h3> <p>The <b>Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc. (RARA)</b> is a widely diversified, highly active amateur radio club centered in the Rochester, NY area. We were founded in 1930, and incorporated in September of 1960. Currently with over 575 active members, we are one of the largest Amateur Radio clubs in North America, attracting international members from near and far.</p> <p>We are an American Radio Relay League (ARRL) affiliated club since 1931, and a charter Special Service Organization, <b>RARA</b> provides a unifying focal point for much of the amateur radio activity in Western New York.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>New at RARA on the web:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RARA Academy - Download the flyer and RSVP TODAY!</li><li>• New: Updated Rochester area Repeater Listing</li><li>• Fall program listing updated.</li><li>• Fall Licensing courses - Register now!</li><li>• Newest photo gallery posted. Have some fun: Make your own comments and captions!</li></ul>
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## RaRa Rag 20 (and 40!) Years Ago, March 1991 and 1971

By Ed Gable, K2MP  
RaRa Historian



The February meeting brought Dick Holbert, WA2OXJ, and John Bodine from the RG&E as guest speakers. Their program was an interesting one regarding RFI from power lines, something interesting to us all. They spoke on sources of RFI, how to identify and locate these sources, and how to get help from the power company. The Rochester VHF Group and the Rochester Radio Repeater Association combined efforts and announced their joint ham radio auction, wrote Len Gessin, WA2ZNC. The venue was the Police – Fire Training Academy at 1190 Scottsville Road.

The Rochester VHF Group announced that their long term club project to build VHF and UHF Transverters was complete. They designed and built 144 and 432 MHz transverters in a successful effort to get more stations active for the VHF Contest. The RaRa K2JD Club station trustee, Ed Holdsworth, N2EH, wrote telling that K2JD was now complete with brand new equipment. On HF there was a new ICOM 765 and multi-mode TNC, a new ICOM 576 on six meters and finally the Radio Shack TRS-80 computer was replaced with an IBM PC. Rebuilding the station were club members: Dave N2DPF, Dave KA2J, Don KB2BU, Ed K2MP, Pete WB2SUN, Chet WB2MDO, Roger WB2BWQ and Norm KA2JRK.

Code Class Director Ed Gable, K2MP, reported that the staff people pounded out a new lesson plan to accommodate the all new code free licensing classes announced by the FCC. A two tier class routing allowed the applicant to select code or non-code routes to licensing. New instructors were on hand as well, including: Neal WB2EKP, Brad KB2CHY, Dave N2DPF, Bernie KD2CU and Art W2YGW. With regret it was reported that Arles (Al) Crum, W2BWK, became a Silent Key. Al was a long time RaRa and AWA member and a professional photographer who memorialized much early radio history in well made photos. From the Want Ads you could buy two 5 element 6-meter beams from Dan WA2EKN. Vorndran Marine Canvas, of N. Clinton Avenue, city, remained a long term advertiser.

### 40 Years Ago, March, 1971

The regular meeting featured a talk by Al Mumby, WB2MCP, speaking on the art of home brewing ham equipment. Meetings then were held at the popular Monroe County Farm and Home center on Highland Avenue. Bob Lozen, WB2ERE, Hamfest Ticket Chairman, offered ticket sales at \$6.75 a pop. Joe Hood, K2YAH (now K2YA) was introduced as a new member of the RaRa Rag staff.

The Rochester VHF group announced a successful contest season with 311,000 points turned into the ARRL. The RVHFG also reported that their club project to build VHF and UHF receiving converters was progressing well with all 6-meter converters having been delivered to participating members. A full page ad was on the back cover promoting Rochester Radio Supply Company. (Then a full time ham radio dealer with Drake, Hallicrafters, National and other equipment on the shelves happily sold by Vic Lotempio, W2RIS – Ed)

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# THE RARA RAG

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..... Sue Waterstraat, KC2SUE  
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Club Station Trustee ..... Jim DiTucci, N2IXD  
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Webmaster ..... Frank Schramm, WB2PYD

RaRa meets on the first Friday of each month from September through May. Come join us at:

**Henrietta Fire Company No.1**  
**3129 East Henrietta Rd.**  
**Henrietta, NY 14467**

[Get Directions](#)

## Rochester Area Radio Club Contacts

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### **Drumlins Amateur Radio Club Ltd. (DARC)**

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### **Fisherman's Net Amateur Radio Club**

Jim Sutton, N2OPS ..... [jim@otrym.org](mailto:jim@otrym.org)

### **Genesee Valley Amateur Radio Assn**

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### **Rochester Radio Repeater Association (RRRA)**

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### **Rochester VHF Group (RVHFG)**

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### **Squaw Island Amateur Radio Club (SIARC)**

Steve Benton, WB2VMR ..... [sbenton2@rochester.rr.com](mailto:sbenton2@rochester.rr.com)

### **XEROX Amateur Radio Club (XARC)**

Ned Asam, W2NED ..... [w2ned@frontiernet.net](mailto:w2ned@frontiernet.net)

**March Rag Deadline**  
**March 17, 2011**

