



THE RARA RAG

Published by
ROCHESTER AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.

VOL. 64

November 2011

NO. 3

Going Once, Going Twice...SOLD!!

By Bill Marinucci, WB2GHC

Tradition, it's all about tradition. There's the turkey at Thanksgiving, the Trick or Treating at Halloween, the fireworks on the 4th of July, and the RARA Auction on the first Friday of November! In what seems like a blink of an eye, **the RARA Auction is coming up on Friday, November 4th, 2011.**

It wouldn't be tradition if we didn't have those two wild and crazy guys, our beloved auctioneers, Ed Gable, K2MP, and Dick Goslee, KG2I, swinging the gavel as your ham radio gear is sold. Even if you don't buy or sell anything, they are very entertaining and make our auction a fun night for all!

So look around your shack, in the attic, and in the basement to find those ham radio treasures you no longer need. Now is the perfect time to bring them to the auction and convert them into CASH. Just a reminder, please only bring Amateur Radio related items; leave your junk and computer fodder at home, because chances are, we have way too much of our own already. Once we sell your gear, the club will collect its usual 10% seller's premium, which also has been part of the tradition of the RARA Auction.

If you don't sell your item, don't despair... there is the RARA Hamfest coming up in June and your unsold items might make a great Flea Market find. This year's Hamfest is on June 30th, 2012, so be sure to mark your calendar.

Remember the Auction is a **RaRa members only** event, so make sure your membership is current. You can join/renew right now at the RARA website (www.rochesterham.org), or at the auction. Each member is allowed to bring one guest; additional guests will be converted into members or disposed of appropriately.

Reminder: Sellers must have items clearly labeled with their identification and sale price BEFORE the auction starts.

This month in the RaRa RAG...

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RARA Meeting

Annual Auction!

November 4th, 2011 7:30PM

Doors open at 7pm for sellers

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



The Prez Sez

By Frank Schramm, WB2PYD
President, RaRa

Over the past few years, this Administration has been on a perpetual quest to educate and foster interest in Amateur Radio amongst young people. In that light, the RaRa Board of Directors is pleased to announce the creation of the "RaRa Education Fellowship." This new program is designed to support amateur radio clubs in schools during these trying economic times of budget cutbacks. For every member of a school ARC who successfully attends a RaRa licensing course and becomes licensed, or upgrades, the RaRa Education Fellowship will make a donation to that ARC. Help spread the word... if you are, or know of, a faculty advisor to an amateur radio club in a school, contact me directly for program details!

During the first week of October, the Hamfest Committee began contacting vendors for the 2012 Hamfest and Electronics Expo at RIT. At that time we were only extending invitations to the vendors who were at our Hamfest in 2011; but word quickly spread throughout the hamfest vendor community and we have heard from vendors who haven't been to Rochester in years. At the time of this writing, **we have sold more vendor spaces in the new RIT venue than we even had available at the old location**; and we haven't even begun contacting potential new vendors yet! The excitement and energy about the new Hamfest and Electronics Expo at RIT is just through the roof. I think the best part of it all is that you, as a current member of RaRa, get to experience it all for FREE as a benefit of your membership.

Speaking of membership... we are quickly approaching 700 members! If you are one of the 20 or 30 who have not renewed your membership yet, be aware that your membership expires on 10/31/2011. If you do let your membership lapse, all your Membership Rewards Points will be lost. So renew today! Go to the RaRa website and click [Membership Renewal](#) on the Membership page. There are no forms to fill out, sign, or mail in – just point, click, and renew. You can pay online or mail in a check if you prefer—but do it soon, and remember you'll need a valid membership card to attend the November meeting: The annual RaRa Auction!

73 and prosperous DXing.
Frank
WB2PYD



Rochester Hamfest and Technology Expo Features:

- Weatherproof! – 60,000 square feet of air conditioned indoor flea market & vendors
- Tailgating on pavement
- Close to the Thruway with an on-site hotel
- Indoor setup 7-9 am
- Tailgate setup 6:30 am
- Doors open at 9 am!

Visit the website (www.RochesterHamfest.com) for up-to-date and late breaking news and photos of the new venue!

**Mark your calendars:
Saturday June 30th!**

**FREE Admission for
RaRa Members!**

New home of the Rochester Hamfest – The Gordon Field house at RIT!!!





Rag-Chew

Editor's Thoughts & Comments
By Kevin Carey, WB2QMY
Editor@RochesterHam.org

November is one of my favorite times of the year. Not only is it a kick-off to the holiday season including the huge feast of Thanksgiving (food is very important to me—just ask any friend), but the radio conditions on the low bands are also improving, with lower levels of QRN. We can also generally spend more time in the shack chasing elusive DX targets or just chewing the rag. An Icom ad a few years ago summed it up pretty well for me... A cup of hot cocoa and a tasty snack on the bench, HF rig all warmed up, and a gentle snow falling outside. Does it get any better than this?

Another reason to love November is that it brings the annual RARA Auction! Whether you go back to the days at the Police & Fire Academy on Scottsville Road, or are a more recent attendee at our current location, this is a big night for buying and selling of ham gear of all types. For more years than I can remember, we have received our first significant snowfall on the night of the Auction. If it happens again this year, let's hope it is a light one!

I was saddened to learn of the passing of Elmer Schwittek, K2LAF as we brought this issue to press. Elmer was a founder of RF Communications in 1961, and a well-known ham in the Rochester area. I worked with Elmer's son, Dave, NW2T (SK) at Microwave Data Systems and had the opportunity to meet Elmer once during this time. Is there someone in our readership who could write a brief bio on Elmer and his many accomplishments for a future issue of the *Rag*? Please contact me if you can assist.

73, best DX, and have a great Thanksgiving!

Calendar of Events

- Oct 31** Memberships expire!
Renew **TODAY!**
- Nov 4** RaRa Annual Auction – 7:30
Henrietta Fire Hall,
3129 E. Henrietta Rd
- Nov 9** RaRa Board of Directors
5:30 PM, RIT
Bldg-17, Room 2110
- Nov 19** RaRa VE Testing sessions
10:00 AM, RIT
Bldg-9, Room 3139

It's time to renew!

Memberships expire on October 31st. If you haven't already renewed, now is the time. It's fast and simple: Go online at: <http://www.rochesterham.org/Membership-Data.aspx> three mouse clicks and you're done! Need help? Try: <http://www.rochesterham.org/Membership-FAQ.htm>

Don't let your membership expire or you will lose any points you have accrued!

Benefits of Membership:

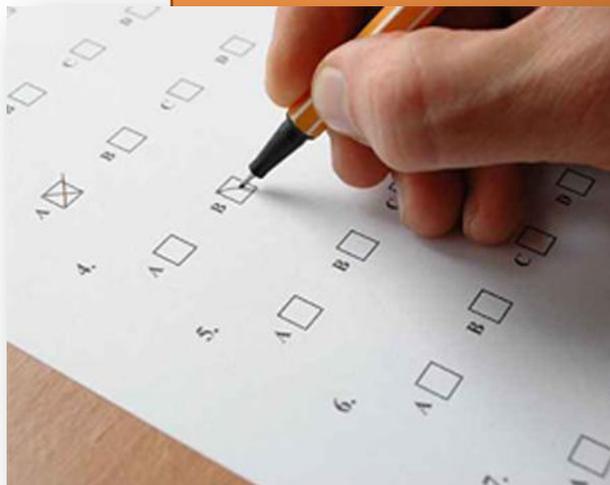
- **Free** admission to the Rochester Hamfest!
- **Free admission to our exclusive *Members Only* Auction in November.**
- **Free** admission, food, and drink at our summer picnic
- **Free** admission, food, and drink at our winter cabin party. - It's fun for your whole family!
- **Free** amateur radio licensing courses.
- **Free** amateur radio license testing.

RaRa VE Sessions

By Ken Hall, W2KRH

We had twelve take tests in September with seven Technician class, three General and two Extra tests taken and passed. Among this group we had one person pass both the Technician and General tests—congratulations to James, KD2AVN.

Name	Call	License Class
Lester	KD2AVL	Technician
Matthew	KD2AVM	Technician
Daniel	KD2AVO	Technician
Bradley	KD2AVP	Technician
Nicholas	KD2AVQ	Technician
Christopher	KD2AVR	Technician
James	KD2AVK	Technician
Timothy	KD2ACW	General
James	KD2AVN	General
Steven	KC2YTC	General
Keith	AC2GZ	Extra
David	KC2YTE	Extra



The next test session will be on November 19th. See you there.

As in past years we are offering sessions on the **third Saturday of each month September to April**, in Room 9-3139 at RIT. The final session will be at the 2012 Hamfest at RIT on June 30th. Should you have any questions on VE testing please contact me at ken@w2krh.com.

Meeting Prizes!

Jay Hamill, KC2TCM
Sabrina Hamill, WD2STK

There's not much to report for November. The RARA Auction is this month, so there will be no raffle... We'd rather have people spend their money on all of the great auction items! But, for December, we're planning a much larger main prize, so stay tuned!

Silent Keys

Elmer W. Schwittek, K2LAF
(Naples, FL)
October 19, 2011

Ham Tech: Using QRZ.COM

By Duane Fregoe, K2SI

QRZ.com is a good place to learn about other hams and let other hams learn a little about you. Most people that have tried to set up their QRZ page know

that you can add pictures and text. When you visit other call signs on QRZ.com you will sometimes see something unique that has been placed on the ham's information

My last 15 QSO								
CALL	DX		TIME	BAND	MODE	RSTs	RSTr	
K2SI	WA3A		2011-10-08 23:57	80m	LSB	59	59	
K2SI	SJ6R		2011-10-08 23:50	40m	LSB	59	59	
K2SI	N3MX		2011-10-08 23:42	10m	LSB	59	59	
K2SI	SG8X		2011-10-08 23:12	40m	LSB	59	59	
K2SI	K4L		2011-10-07 21:39	15m	USB	59	59	
K2SI	MI6XRC/M		2011-10-07 21:36	17m	USB	59	59	
K2SI	K4L		2011-10-07 21:34	17m	USB	59	59	
K2SI	SB6A		2011-10-02 18:48	12m	USB	59	57	

page. I like to find the plug-ins and try them on my QRZ page. The HTML code has already been written and all you need to do is copy and paste to the source code view of your QRZ page. These are some of the creative things that I have found.

If you use Ham Radio Deluxe along with HRDLOG.net you can have a live logbook on your QRZ page showing the last 15 QSO's. Go to <http://www.hrdlog.net/docs/logqrz.aspx> for directions on how to set this up.

If you use eQSL for confirming your contacts you can create a slide show of all the cards that you have received. You can download each card one at a time from eQSL or download Ham Radio Deluxe Utilities from <http://www.wd5eae.org/Software.html>. His program will allow you to download all the cards from eQSL in one click. You will also need Google's Picassa and Picasa Web Albums. Directions are available at <https://picasaweb.google.com/lh/getEmbed>.



You can add a revolving earth image that will record recent visitors to your QRZ page. Go to <http://www.revolvermaps.com/?target=setup> for information on how to set this up.



You can also add a flat world map to your page that will place a dot on the map showing the location of each visitor. Information and the code are available at <http://www.clustrmaps.com/getone.php>.



For those who like flags you can add a flag counter to your QRZ page. Similar to above, it will keep a count of visitors and where they are from, and show the count next to the country's flag. You can get this plug-in at <http://flagcounter.com/>.

Lastly, you can add thumbnail views of your favorite web sites to your QRZ page. The small picture of the web site serves as a hotlink to the actual web site. This is available from <http://www.bitpixels.com>.



You can see all of the plug-ins on my QRZ page at <http://www.qrz.com/db/k2si>. Please let me know if you have found some other interesting plug-ins that I did not mention here.

Who Will Earn DXCC & WAS for RARA?

K2JD Once Again Available for Contest Season!

By Bill Kasperkoski, WB2SXY

Looking over the following LOTW snippet shows that KG2NI was one of the last stations to be worked by K2JD. Thanks for the contest Q's, John! You can sign-out the K2JD Contest call for any mode and any band by contacting our license trustee, Jim (N2IXD@arrl.net) and getting a block of time to put K2JD on the air representing RARA in your favorite contest. Make sure to submit your log in a legible format—with dates and times correct—and you will add to RARA's DXCC and WAS records.

With a *BIG THANKS* to all the people over the many years who worked contest after contest, here are the current K2JD achievements. Who will be the RARA member operator to work and confirm the 100th country or 50th state? It can be *you!*

The following current totals are paper + LOTW QSLs:

DXCC 84

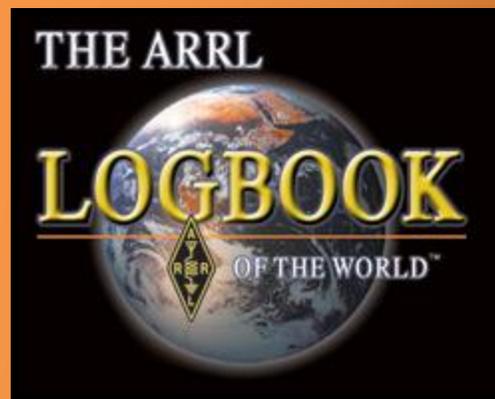
WAS 41

WAC Completed, not yet submitted

Sorted by
QSO Date

Worked	Date/Time	Band	Mode	QSL
KG2NI	1/22/2011 20:59	2M	FM	New York
KG2NI	1/22/2011 20:26	6M	SSB	New York
TF8SM	9/12/2010 23:10	20M	CW	ICELAND
HA5UK	9/12/2010 21:36	20M	SSB	HUNGARY
YO3APJ	9/12/2010 21:09	20M	SSB	ROMANIA
TF3PPN	9/12/2010 16:33	20M	RTTY	ICELAND
TK5EP	9/12/2010 14:58	15M	SSB	CORSICA
SO9Q	9/12/2010 14:52	15M	SSB	POLAND
SO9Q	9/11/2010 21:54	20M	SSB	POLAND
F6KNB	9/11/2010 21:28	20M	SSB	FRANCE
S51F	9/11/2010 21:23	20M	SSB	SLOVENIA
4O50A	9/11/2010 19:02	20M	SSB	MONTENEGRO
UZ0U	9/11/2010 18:51	20M	SSB	UKRAINE
GW4BLE	9/11/2010 18:37	20M	SSB	WALES
RG5A	9/11/2010 18:22	20M	SSB	Eu RUSSIA
DR1A	9/11/2010 17:57	20M	SSB	Germany
FSW6IZT	8/17/2010 13:21	17M	CW	SAINT MARTIN
TA2ZAF	4/16/2010 21:08	20M	RTTY	TURKEY

Let's keep our contest station K2JD on the air and heard often. In addition, members will soon be able sign out the RARA Memorial N2EH station for a specific time slot. Again, please contact Jim, N2IXD, to set up a time.



RaRa Club LOGO Items



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

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

Shirts, hats, and jackets are also available for order at monthly meetings!

Follow RARA on Facebook!

By Duane Fregoe, K2SI

For over a year now RARA has maintained an informational page on Facebook. Items you see on the page are upcoming meetings for all local ham clubs, RARA special events, public service events, hamfests in western New York, and links to free ham radio publications that you can download. If you have a Facebook account you can comment on any of the posts and even add your own post of an event that you know of. Please keep all posts ham radio related. If you do a search for Rochester Amateur Radio Association in Facebook our page should come up in the list where you can "like" the page and join.

If you do not have a Facebook account you can still view all the content of the page by going to the RARA website <http://www.rochesterham.org> and clicking on the Facebook icon in the upper right of the page. You can also go directly to our page with this link: <http://www.facebook.com/rochesterham>. You will not be able to comment on any of the postings or make your own post without an account, but you can still read about the latest local ham radio happenings.

Follow us on facebook 



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What's on your mind?

Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
The next Rochester DX Association Meeting is Tuesday October 18, 2011. See the website for details as the location is changing for this meeting.

 **Welcome to the Rochester DX Association**
www.rdxa.com
For the best DX spotting network in the world check into the NG2P Packet cluster on 144.91 or via telnet at ng2p.ham-radio-op.net and use port 7300

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#) · 4 minutes ago

Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
The next Rochester Radio Repeater Association meeting is Friday October 21, 2011 at 8:00pm. See the website for program details.

 **Rochester Radio Repeater Association, Inc.**
www.rrra.us
The Board of Directors of the Rochester Radio Repeater Association, Inc. cordially invites you to our October meeting. Topic: Tune-UP Clinic moved up a moth to make room for Nick Francesco in November. Location: Pittsford Town Hall (basement meeting room) Refreshments: Yum! Dues: Still just \$10, p...

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#) · 9 minutes ago

176 like this

Likes See All

-  **Drumlines Amateur Radio Club**
-  **EmComm East**
-  **Ham Radio Nation**

RARA Rags of the Past

By Ed Gable, K2MP
RaRa Historian

20 Years Ago, November, 1991

Continuing a long tradition the November meeting, then as it is now, was the popular RaRa Auction. The location was also the same as now, the Henrietta Co. 1 Firehouse, and... so were the auctioneers; Dick Goslee K2VCZ and Ed Gable K2MP, both still going strong with their additional 20 years tacked on. Perhaps even some of the same gear will show up, who knows.

Sharing the same front page news was a ticket order form and information on a very special RaRa 60th Anniversary banquet. Seventeen dollars and fifty cents brought you a prime rib dinner at the Diplomat Party House on Lyell Avenue. Guests of honor were Atlantic Division Director Hugh Turnbull and Vice-Director Kay Craigie (Now ARRL President).

This issue announced the formation of a U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary radio network running on the 146.88 N2JC repeater. The 7:00 p.m., Wednesday night net, had NF2Z and WA2RXE as net control stations and covered such topics as vessel examinations and marine radio rules and operating procedures.

Local amateur Dave Minchella, KE2GE, wrote an article describing his version of the well-known and widely used G5RV antenna. Dave's version put an 80 meter and a 40 meter version at right angles to each other to form an all band antenna system. Irv Goodman, AF2K, wrote offering RaRa jackets if a minimum order of six pieces could be secured. From the Want Ads... was an actual Want Ad! Dave, KA2BOK, was looking to buy a multi-mode 2 meter rig.

40 Years Ago, November 1971

Sounding like a broken record from the 20 Year Article above, this issue had Joe Hood, K2YAH, introducing the program for the evening, the annual RaRa auction. At this time the venue was the Farm and Home Center on Highland Avenue and the auctioneers were not Goslee and Gable, but rather a very entertaining Cappy Capauldy, K2UXF and Tom Ball, WA2THS. The RaRa Code and Theory classes began at McCurdy's downtown store location with Bob Lauzon, WA2NSD, as Chairman. New this year was the Novice Theory instructor, Glenn Lenhard, WA2NFK. A new RaRa service was announced by the Board of Directors to begin immediately. The club has accumulated a large amount of commonly needed test equipment and has started a loan program available to all members. The test equipment, signal generators, Signal Tracer, Capacitor checker, C-R-L comparator bridge, and much more, was stored at the home of Al Mumby, WB2MCP, and available for loan with a simple phone call.

Ed Gable, W2MPM, writing for the Rochester Radio Repeater Assn., reported heavy work involved in planning the move of the WA2UWQ/R 146.88 repeater to Kodak Office on State Street in Rochester. John Lucas, WA2BEH, penned an article for the Rochester VHF Group where it was announced that long time VHF Contest Chairman Chuck Oneske, K2YCO, has decided to retire from that position. The group selected a new contest committee consisting of Tom Moore WA2IXX, Doug Doonan WA2MAB and Chet Owlett K2OPC.

From the Want Ads you could buy a Drake T4X and R4A from Alan Price, K2OEP. A long term advertiser was Rochester Radio Supply Co. at 140 West Main Street. It will be remembered by some that Rochester Radio Supply was a general meeting place for local amateurs. A gang of 8 to 12 hams would meet at RRS each and every Saturday morning, chew the fat for a while and then go off to some local eatery for lunch. The ham radio proprietor at RRS was Vic Lotempio, W2RIS, who was always ready with a joke and proclaim "no use to cry." RRS carried Drake, Hammarlund, Hallicrafters and other lines of amateur gear.



RARA Reflectors

Email reflectors help keep amateur radio members informed of general and specific radio related events in our community. The reflectors are free to use and the general and special interest groups are served by the following Yahoo group lists. Most are low volume, while some have peaks in seasonal usage. All RARA members are invited to sign up as needed for any of these reflectors.

RaRa-General Membership: General RARA announcements, equipment and operating questions.

RochesterSpecialEvents: Announcements of special events stations, operations and contests in the local area.

WNYRadioScouts: Scouting and other youth groups attached to any of area radio organizations.

JOTA: Our local JOTA operations teams, operations, equipment and planning.

Ham-Radio-License-Class: License Course and to-be license course participants.

Visit www.Yahoo.com for information on joining the above groups. Many other yahoo groups, Facebook, and YouTube outlets exist for specialized groups and functions for the ham radio community. If you need help in finding, creating or signing up for them, contact any RARA officer.

Web Tips

Reader Contributions
(Feel free to send your web tips to Editor@RochesterHam.org)

Looking for DX spots? Many excellent sites exist. One to check out is: www.dxwatch.com/.

If shortwave listening is your thing, be sure to check out the website of the Ontario DX Association (ODXA) at www.odxa.on.ca/index.html.

A huge variety of longwave radio direction finders (RDFs) can be seen at: <http://www.angelfire.com/space/proto57/rdf.html>.

For antique radio interest, you needn't look any further than the Rochester-based Antique Wireless Association (AWA) found on the web at: www.antiquewireless.org. Be sure to check out the AWA's free publication, the *AWA Gateway*.

Remember those old Radio Shack catalogs we used to drool over? Many of these can be viewed online at <http://www.radioshackcatalogs.com/index.html>.

The Eight Purposes of RARA

From the Amended RARA Corporate Bylaws, Section 3.5.A:

"The promotion of interest in amateur radio communication and experimentation; The relaying of messages without charge; the furtherance of the public welfare through the use of amateur radio equipment and amateur radio operators; the advancement of the radio art; the fostering and promotion of intercommunication by electronic means for the personal benefit of the members and without pecuniary gain; The fostering of education in the field of electronic communications; The dissemination of knowledge and information by electronic means; And the printing and publishing of documents, books, magazines, newspapers and pamphlets necessary or incidental to any of the above purposes."

Calling all Railfans!

By Jim Sutton, N2OPS

Your VHF/UHF scanner can be a useful tool if you enjoy following train action in the Rochester area. My favorite spot for watching trains is Main Street in Fairport. Here the CSX mainline and the Lake Shore branch come together. Complete with a bench and Main Street shopping for the rest of the family, it's a hard location to beat!

My fellow railfans often come equipped with cameras, camcorders, binoculars and scanners. There are three different ways scanners give railfans an advance warning when a train is approaching.

The first is by listening to basic two-way communications. Nearly all railroad communications are simplex, so the strength of the signal from the train is a good indicator of how close the train is.

The next indicator is the "talking detector." These devices came into the picture when the cabooses became history. They record the train speed and number of axles. If there is more than one track it will indicate the track the train is traveling on. It will also indicate if there are any defects. Then along with the milepost the information is verbally announced via a synthesized voice on the same frequency the two-way communications are taking place on.

It gets even better... The railfan has another bonus, complements of the demise of the caboose; the ETD or end-of-train device. At 60-second intervals telemetry is exchanged between the engine and the ETD. The signal from the front of train on 452.9375 MHz will allow you to hear the train some 2-4 miles away. The companion signal from the rear of the train is 457.9375 MHz.

With the exception of the ETD all area RR communications are in the VHF 160.215-161.565 MHz range. All railroad radios have made the transition to narrow bandwidth. All RR communications are standard CSQ (carrier-operated squelch) so CTCSS will be of no help with intermodulation. Nearly all modern 2-meter rigs will tune this range so we can enhance our railfan activities. Some 70 cm rigs will also tune the ETD frequencies, so once again we can have a head's up when the next train is approaching. Below are some frequencies you can use to follow the action...

Buffalo & Pittsburg	Road	160.230
CSX	Road	160.800
	Maintenance	161.130
	Goodman Yard	160.980
	NG Buffalo Area Dispatcher	160.950
	NF Dispatcher Warners to Lancaster	161.400
Falls Road	Road	160.920
	Dispatcher	161.460
	Input	160.470
Finger Lakes		160.740
		161.520
Livonia Avon & Lakeville		160.830



Norfolk Southern

Road North of Canaseraga 161.070
Road South of Canaseraga 160.800
PBX 161.130
PBX In 160.710

Ontario Midland 161.370

Rochester & Genesee Valley RR Museum

160.440
160.470

Rochester Southern Road 160.770
Input 161.445
Mine 160.500
Yard 161.100

WNY&PA

Road Hornell to Meadville 160.350
Road Olean to Driftwood PA 160.620
160.830
161.175

All Railroads

Front of Train Telemetry 452.9375
End of Train Telemetry 457.9375

Online resources for learning more:

Greater Rochester Railfan Page
<http://www.rochester-railfan.net/>

CSX Rochester Map
http://www.rochester-railfan.net/images/Maps/!CSX_ROUTE/ChicagoLineWestShore.jpg

CSX Rochester to Batavia
http://www.rochester-railfan.net/images/Maps/!CSX_ROUTE/ChicagoLine404373.jpg

CSX Rochester to Newark Map
http://www.rochester-railfan.net/images/Maps/!CSX_ROUTE/ChicagoLine373338.jpg

NY State RR Map
https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/operating/opdm/passenger-rail/passenger-rail-repository/nys_railmap.pdf

Rochester Southern Map
http://www.gwrr.com/operations/railroads/north_america/rochester_southern_railroad

WNY&PA RR Map
<http://www.wnypr.com/>

Until next time, 73 to Thee.



CW “Breakout Box” for Multiple Rigs

By Bill Hopkins, AA2YV
whopkin4@naz.edu

Do you do CW? Keep reading. Here is a rather straightforward breakout box that permits the use of your hand key, bug, keyer paddle and your computer, at will, to send to any rig you have hooked up, all of which will make plugging and unplugging a thing of the past. For years I grumbled to myself: Why hadn't any ham peripherals guru produced such a thing? I asked around and some of my RARA buddies just laughed. “Do you really need all those rigs at the same time?” So, I ducked my head and trundled off. But I like operating rigs I've repaired and nursed. (Right now I have three HF 100 watt rigs and three QRP rigs on line.) I kept coming back to my idea.

Here's what I finally did. Into a Ten-Tec box I built a series of five simple opto-isolator circuits and added a small keyer, all powered by 12 Vdc with reverse polarity protection. I even put in a 5-volt source using a 78L05 semiconductor. All very simple. When I was finished I had my “cat's meow.” Now I simply flip the switch on and have immediate access to one of any eight rigs by using any of the keying options. I can use the on-board keyer or re-route the paddle action back outside to my *deluxe* keyer and then back into the box. From there I can flip one of any eight switches to connect to any particular rig. (You turn on only one at a time.) All outputs except for one are for direct keying through the opto-isolators, and the eighth has reverse polarity output for grid-block keying. You can figure it out. There are two spare outputs available which I use to key rigs I may be testing on my side table.

Other features give me additional control over my CW. First, I have a speed control and push-button menu for the on-board keyer. Then, I have four LED lights. The first indicates 12-volt power. The others tell me: when there is key-down from any keying source (green); when computer keying is switched in (red); and when grid block keying is invoked (red as well). Then three toggles permit me to switch between on-board or outboard iambic keyers, computer or regular modes and direct or grid block keying (permitting up to -400 V).

So, how did I work this out? The end product looks deceptively difficult but the layout was fun. I did a test on my Radio Shack breadboard to determine that I could concatenate opto-isolator circuits. Not a problem. I also made sure the computer input circuit would work, and then it was a matter of block diagramming and wire routing. From there, I sketched out a block diagram and corrected the plan as I went along. The photos give you an idea of the end product. (George Platteter, AA2FO kindly helped me get the many holes drilled straight in the box.) And, it worked the first time.

Shortly after finishing the project I was on the air—40 meters, I believe—talking to Roger, K9VP out in Richmond, Indiana. He got so excited that his CW signal seemed to sing in vibrato. Could he have photos and the block diagram, he asked? Of course, so I emailed them to him.



Inside View of the CW Breakout Box built by AA2YV



CW Breakout Box in service above the Ten-Tec Transceiver at AA2YV

Then, after a few weeks, I received photos of Roger's fabulous work, along with a neat schematic he drew. He also added a circuit for American Morse, *and* he made a really nice PC board and lettered the controls. His enclosure is a different one too. My job is primitive compared to Roger's work. Translation: I did the prototype and Roger got it ready to package and ship, sort of.

Let's wrap it up. I got parts from an on-line supplier and Radio Shack, and scrounged at the RARA and Elmira Hamfests. Finally, I ordered 3, 6 and 9 ft. RCA signal cables and was soon in business. I have labeled all cables on each end so that things don't become a pig's breakfast, whenever I want to remove the breakout box to show-n-tell. And no, there's no ground looping problem or wrong key-down. (Roger's is better. He uses a rotary switch to connect to each rig.) For the record, my computer CW freeware is CW-Type. You can find it on-line. If *you* want to build this handy accessory, go for it! You may want to use Dale's (NOXAS) opto-isolator kits and his great little pico-keyer available at Ham Gadgets to save time. You can stack them on a PC perf board. Build the controller for any number of rigs you want, maybe just three. Last, you may ask, why not simplify everything and use a micro-controller to do all of this? Well, I say, why not? That's for someone else in RARA to do.

For anyone wanting the schematic diagram for this project, please contact me at the e-mail address at the top of this column.



Jazzed up version of the Breakout Box built by Roger Cowan, K9VP

News from our friends at other area clubs...

Editor's Note: Want to see your club mentioned here? We welcome brief updates and meeting notices from all area ham clubs. Simply sent your input to editor@rochesterham.org. When writing your article, here are two simple rules of thumb to follow: Keep it short, and assume that readers know nothing of your club. The piece should be focused toward non-members, and not your own current members... that's what your own newsletter is for! We hope all area clubs will take advantage of this opportunity to interest new members in joining their ranks. 73, -Kevin

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.

NOTE: Because the Thanksgiving Holiday falls on the fourth Thursday, The next ARES Meeting will be held one week earlier on: **Thursday, November 17, 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.)

NBEMS: Want to learn about Narrow Band Emergency Messaging System (NBEMS)? It's the latest and easiest way to "Go Digital!" Bring your laptop computer and 2-M handheld transceiver. We will conduct an NBEMS clinic after every meeting through June.

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 only exception to that are nights when we hold our regular meeting, generally on the 4th Thursday of the month.

As always, stay in touch with Monroe County ARES/RACES ---
www.monroecountiemcomm.org

RRRA News

by Brad Allen, KB2CHY

The October meeting was held and the tune-up clinic was a success. We also had movies (silent ones) for enjoyment of others not getting radios tuned.

November 18, 8:00 PM, Mark your calendars for a night with the Great Nick Francesco, on air personality and home-grown computer GURU. Have your questions ready. It is a well-attended evening of techie talk that we all have fun with. Refreshments will be served. Come join us for a fun evening. Check our website at <http://www.rrra.us>



R DXA News

By Mark Hazel, K2MTH

For our October 18th meeting, the Rochester DX Association Met at Cheap Charlie's restaurant, 8 Elm St., Bloomfield at 6:00 PM for Dinner. Afterward we had a short Meeting. Then the real fun began. The group headed for the Antique Wireless Museum in Bloomfield, where Lynn Bisha (W2BSN), Ed Gable (K2MP), Roy Wildermuth (W2IT), and other AWA members graciously gave the DX Association a wonderful tour of the facility. (See www.antiquewireless.org for more information on the AWA museum—*Editor*)

For the next RDXA meeting on November 15th, we'll be sniffing glue. Well sort of...actually John Gilly (W3OAB) will be giving a class on assembling a pneumatic spud launcher. Well even assemble a couple of them based on the plans from the March issue of *QST* magazine. So stop by the Monroe Emergency Operations Center at 7:00 PM and we'll show you how to throw up that dipole in no time.

The RDXA December Party will be **Tuesday evening, Dec. 20th** at the "Rivers Edge Party House" located at 31 Paul Road, Rochester NY. Cocktail Hour starts at 6:00pm and dinner starts at 7:00. Please RSVP with Paul Kolacki, K2FX (K2FX@arrl.net) by no later than December 13th.

Jamboree on the Air

By Bill Kasperkoski, WB2SXY

With a thousand Scouts, wind, rain but dodging the snow-bullet this year, the JOTA Guys had a great station and setup this year at Seneca County's Camp Babcock-Hovey. Not using the 1x1 call, Steve K2SRF stepped up to the plate and let us use his call this year for the international event. Using Steve's all-band Chameleon antenna, he started off running a 10-meter Russian station, then the band swung through Europe, 15m Caribbean and a long 20m QSO with Maine scouts. I think Steve still has the European contest RTTY and PSK signals buzzing around his head from the digital station next to him.

John, KC2TNO, worked 2-meter voice, contacting scouts while Scout Zach KC2VCM checked in to the JOTA station on simplex while manning the rope bridge a half-mile away. Peter, W2SKY, tried his hand at 40m CW with a high dipole and ended up on the receiving end of a pileup for semi-rare Seneca County in the NY QSO Party, and is still keying "TU de SEN dit dit."

Steve KT2I and Mark KC2UES helped move the visiting scouts through our camp office building, while answering all manner of ham radio questions. Bill WB2SXY helped coordinate this first Camp Babcock-Hovey JOTA in recent memory. Many thanks to all – a great event for the Scouts and the operators!



New Repeater On the Air

Al, K2MPE, in Sodus reports that he is part of a team that just got a new repeater up and running. It is near Sodus on a hill about 825 feet in elevation. Early reports indicate that it can be accessed with only 5 watts from SE Perinton/Eastview mall area and puts in a full quieting signal to this area. The machine is on **444.95 MHz receive** and **449.95 MHz transmit** with a PL tone of **167.9 Hz**.

Many of you may already have this frequency on your rigs with the 110.9 Hz PL for a machine in Avon, which is linked to WR2ROC, 444.25 MHz. If you have room for both, give this new repeater a try—just be sure to use the different PL tone. Enjoy the new machine. *Tnx—Len, KC2PCD.*

Visit the RARA Website!

Did you know that your club's website at 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
- ✓ Track and redeem your Reward points
- ✓ 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?)
- ✓ Online membership directory
- ✓ Order RARA logo products (hats, shirts, and mugs)
- ✓ Useful Internet links
- ✓ Ham Radio 101—tons of tutorial info, plus net & repeater listings



RARA Classifieds

For Sale:

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Contact Kevin Carey at
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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](#)

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November Rag Deadline
November 17, 2011

