



THE RARA RAG

Newsletter of The Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc.
Founded in 1931

VOL. 66

December 2013

NO. 4

More Power to You

By Gary Skuse, KA1NJL - Vice President, RaRa

At the December RARA meeting Dave Hallidy, K2DH, is going to talk about the state of the art in solid state amplifiers. Dave has been a ham since 1966 and has a long history of public service and serving the ham radio community. For example, he provided an SSTV link during the Hike for Hope (remember those 25 mile treks around Rochester?) in the early 1970's. His efforts allowed the hikers to see the patients on the actual hospital ship for which they were raising money. Having proven his skills with HF, and logging 325 confirmed entities, he began experimenting with weak signals in the VHF/UHF and SHF spectra. Pursuant to that interest, and consistent with his record of service to the hobby, he became a founding officer of the North Texas Microwave Society.



Dave earned VUCC on all bands between 40MHz and 47GHZ; that is not a typo; it is 47 thousand megahertz or 47 million kilohertz. He still holds one end of the US overland DX record on 1296 MHz for a contact he made from Texas to Pennsylvania in 1986. He was the original trustee of "UHF of Rochester" and put the first 440MHz repeater on the air in this area. As you can see, Dave not only talks the talk, he walks the walk. Currently he works at L3 Communications as Manager of Test Engineering. In his words he gets to "play with

SHF radio gear every day" and evaluate solid state power amplifiers. I think I want his job - playing with radios and getting paid for it. It doesn't get much better than that!

There is no question that Dave has some interesting and valuable experience to share with us. Please join us for the RARA meeting scheduled for Friday, December 6th at 7:00pm, at the Henrietta Fire Company #1, located at 3129 East Henrietta Road.



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RARA Meeting December 6th, 7PM

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

The Prez Sez



By Bill Marinucci, WB2GHC
President, RaRa

Happy Holidays! December is usually a very busy month for all of us: shopping, decorating, Christmas cards, gift wrapping, preparing the house, baking cookies, travelling, and perhaps dealing with not-so-pleasant weather. Putting up with crowded malls and finding a parking space only adds to the stress of the holidays. It seems like we just got over last year's holidays, and once again, they are already here. Certainly, these holidays can be stressful and will wear you out. Despite all of the stress, I very much enjoy this time of year! There's a song that says "it's the most wonderful time of the year". I have learned one thing over the years... it is what you make it! When I was young, it was all about 'getting', and then came a transition, it is all about 'giving'. I guess that it comes with age!

December is also a great month for hamming it up. Atmospheric noise is very low; the winter propagation on 160 and 80/75 meters goes very long at night and offers some good DX capabilities. The 40, 30, and 20 meter bands are also a pleasure to work in the winter months. Sometimes there is Aurora activity on 6 meters to enjoy. It is also a great time for Broadcast band DXing; remember the AM band?? A simple long wire antenna does a good job hunting down the far reaching stations. You may also consider putting up a Beverage antenna if you are really serious about the AM band! Hopefully you have completed your antenna work during the nicer weather, but there are times you have to face the winter elements head on to get the antenna performance you so desperately want. Enjoy the solar cycle related openings on the higher frequencies. There have been some great openings on 10 meters over the last couple of weeks, providing good DX contacts even when using simple antennas and low power. So take time to get on the air; this month is a great time to do so.

Enjoy the holidays, stay safe, and be sure to 'ham it up'!

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Calendar of Events

- Dec 6** **RaRa General Meeting**
7:00 PM - Henrietta FD #1
3129 E. Henrietta Rd
- Dec 11** **RaRa Board of Directors**
5:30 PM, RIT Engineering
Hall, Room 2110
- Dec 21** **RaRa VE Testing** sessions
10:00 AM, RIT Gleason
Hall, Room 3139

RaRa LOGO Items



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

[\(Click here to shop now!\)](#)

RARA Winterfest 2014

By Gary R. Skuse, KA1NJL



With the wind blowing outside and the calendar moving forward, my thoughts inexorably turn to the upcoming winter. As a lifelong Rochester resident I have become inured to the cold, snowy, windy and cold (repeated for emphasis) weather that is ahead of us. However, for the past three years there is a source of warmth on the horizon, the RARA Winterfest. It has always been a fun gathering of our fellow hams which includes some amazing food and a touch of operating. Unlike the summer RARA picnic, the food for this event is provided by the attendees and it is typically varied and wonderful.

This year the Winterfest is scheduled for Saturday February 1, 2014 at the Stewart Lodge in Mendon Ponds Park. We have had such great success with the RARA summer picnic there that it seemed fitting to move the Winterfest there as well. The lodge is large and warm and there are ample opportunities for outdoor activities if you wish to take advantage of them.

For the past two years we have held a crock pot cook off at the Winterfest. While the creativity and culinary skills of our attendees has been remarkable, and delicious, this year we are going back to our roots. At the first ever RARA winter picnic we held a chili cook-off and we are going to do that again this year. Bring out your favorite chili recipes, whether their origins are in Cincinnati, Ohio or San Antonio, Texas, they will certainly be welcomed and enjoyed by all. There will again be prizes for the top three chili recipes and for the top three desserts. RARA membership points, redeemable toward your membership renewal, the annual banquet or some fashionable RARA apparel, will be awarded for the best chili and desserts.

For the past two years we also made this culinary extravaganza an operating event. Several hams brought radios, erected antennas and had a blast enjoying our hobby together. Last year several prospective hams came and witnessed firsthand how much fun we have with our radios. Several of them went on to obtain their tickets. In this light we encourage you to invite non-hams who may be interested in learning more about radio while enjoying the delectable treats that routinely accompany us at this event. Of course, if you would like to bring a radio, please do. If you need any help with antennas or any other aspect of your station please let me know.

As always, the fun we will have is directly related to the number of people who attend. I encourage you to plan on joining us to enjoy each other's company, eat some great food and share our radio hobby.



Very Basic Electronics

By Forest Shick, WA2MZG

You know the story of the 3 bears – the bed is too hard, the bed is too soft, the porridge is too hot, the porridge is too cold. Well, Very Basic Electronics will be Just Right!

The electronics you studied for your license was too little. A book on electronics theory is too much. All you really want is just enough information to answer the question – Do I Want To Know More?

Very Basic Electronics will help you answer that question. The sessions will present electronics with a practical approach. After attending the sessions you will be ready to approach the basic theory of electronics with the Just Right bowl of porridge to make sense of the gobbly gook of electronics.

Sample topics include:

- Power Supplies
- DVM's
- Resistors
- Audio Signal Generators
- Oscilloscopes
- Capacitors and more

Enjoy the Just Right bed of information and not be overwhelmed.

If you are interested please provide your name, call and email address to Pam Kasperkoski – pamelakasper@frontiernet.net. Pam is the education coordinator.

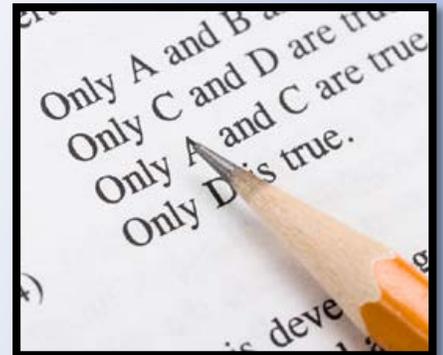
If you have questions about the sessions you may contact Forest Shick, WA2MZG at the RARA meeting or by email – fshick@atriatechnologies.com

VE Team Input

The following 17 new Hams received their license or upgraded at the October RARA VE session. Among these seventeen were 11 Technicians, 2 Generals and 4 who received their Extra. In addition Mike N2UJN has volunteered to become a VE, his application was approved and I've sent him his certificate, thank you very much Mike.

The December session will be on Saturday the 21st, be part of the gang and give yourself a great seasonal gift.

Julienne	KD2EVS	T	Dawn	KC2VJU	G
Jolana	KD2EVT	T	Betsy	KD2DYU	G
Eugene	KD2EVU	T	Charles	K2IWQ	E
Justin	KD2EVV	T	JAMES	KB6DZC	E
Linnea	KD2EVW	T	RICHARD	N2UNM	E
Stephen	KD2EVX	T	Michael	N2UJN	E
Kennedy	KD2EVY	T			
Sean	KD2EVZ	T			
Gregory	KD2EWA	T			
William	KD2EWE	T			
Benjamin	KD2EWB	T			



Ham Tech: Computer CW

By Duane Fregoe K2SI

About 3 years ago I was signed into my Logbook of the World account and reviewing my confirmed contacts and status with various awards. While looking at my status for the Triple Play Award I saw that I had worked and confirmed 50 states on digital, was 1 state short of 50 for voice, and had confirmed 4 states for CW. The Triple Play Award requires you to work 50 states in voice, digital, and CW with all confirmations coming via Logbook of the World. I had dabbled in a CW contest prior to this using some CW decoding and sending software which got me the 4 confirmed states. I decided I wanted to complete the Triple Play via the computer and after seeing how many certificates had been issued to date I thought it might be nice to be one of the first 1,000.

My software of choice was the CW mode built into DM780 which is part of the Ham Radio Deluxe suite. Setup was easy since I had previously used the program for RTTY and PSK-31. I used the CW software only in North American or United States contests since I only needed to confirm 50 states. I also only worked stations where I had good 100% copy as I did not want to be left guessing if it was a good contact or not. Many CW contesters send the exchange with software generated CW using preset macros which makes it easy on my end to decode with software. It has the makings of a RTTY contest. A trained human ear is still the best for decoding CW.

In the April 2013 QST magazine ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, wrote an article titled "Tech on Ten". In the article was one paragraph that caught my attention and it reads; "And while Morse code is no longer a licensing requirement, don't count out CW as worth a try. With CW you're not limited to 10 meters – you can explore 15, 40 and 80 meters as well! Purist may cringe, but Morse code readers and keyboards will get you on CW and let you make contacts."

As for my Triple Play quest, KO7X of Wyoming was kind enough to confirm our ARRL CW Sweep stakes contact and on 11/5/13 I was award #921.

DM780 is not the only software available for sending and decoding CW. Here is a short list of what is available:

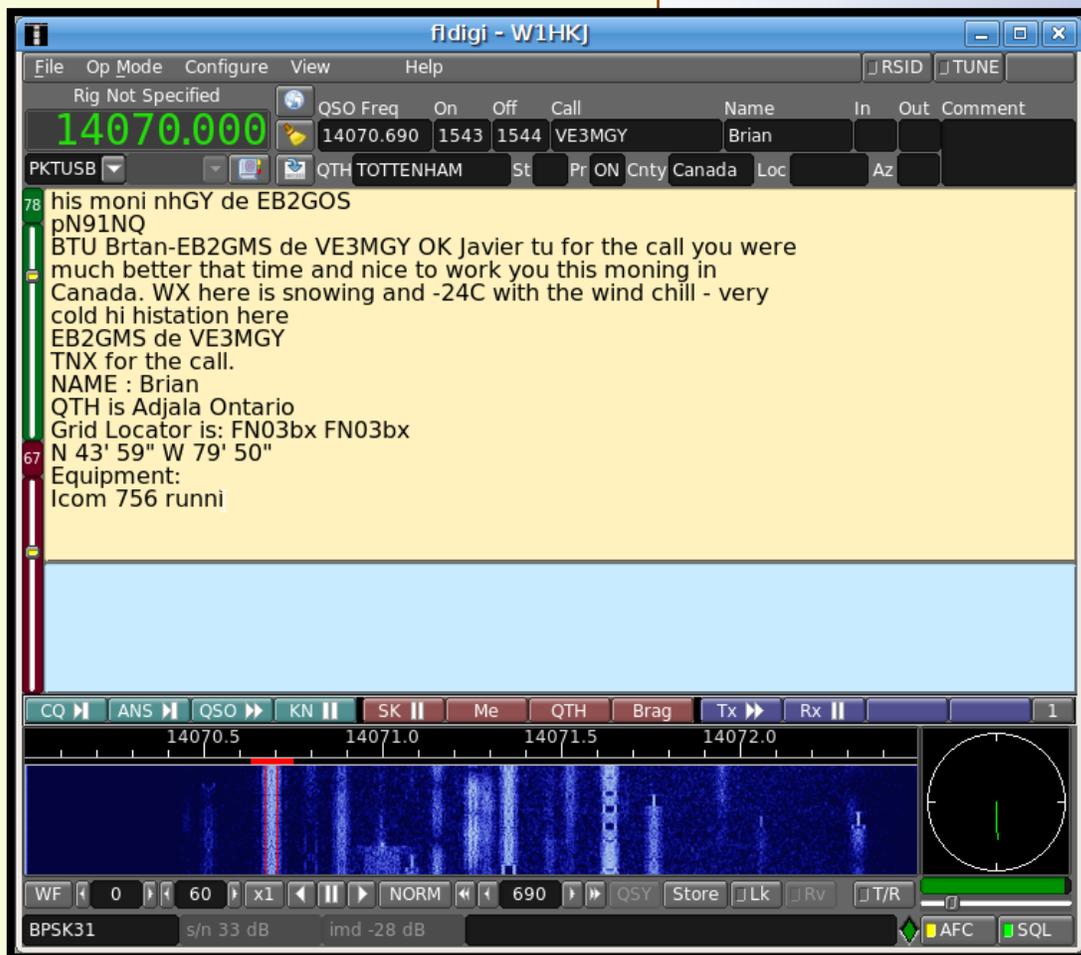
DM780:
<http://www.hrdsoftwarellc.com/>

CwGet and CwType:
<http://www.dxsoft.com/en/products/>

MRP40:
<http://www.polar-electric.com/Morse/MRP40-EN/>

Fldigi:
<http://www.w1hky.com/index.htm>

EhoCW:
<http://www.f8eho.net/>



Fldigi

SKYWARN Recognition Day 2013

By Duane Fregoe K2SI

SKYWARN Recognition Day will be December 7, 2013 (0000 – 2400 UTC). In local terms it is Friday December 6th, 7:00 PM till Saturday December 7th, 7:00 PM. National Weather Service offices across the country will be on the air for 24 hours. The goal is to contact as many weather service offices as possible using repeaters, IRLP, Echolink, and HF. This is a fun event for new hams that may only have a technician license. Many of the weather service offices will be on Echolink and IRLP. The National Weather Service office in Buffalo will be participating again this year. Look for WX2BUF on Echolink and you can also check in on the 145.110 repeater. Submit you total number of weather service office contacts for a certificate from the National Weather Service. More information is available from: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/hamradio/>



Pittsford Mendon HS Balloon Launch

By Jon Dickason, N2JAC

Scott Banister's Engineering Design and Development class at Pittsford Mendon High School is preparing to launch two high altitude balloons. Matt Jones is leading the team of student engineers. Last year they used cellphones for tracking. This year they plan to add APRS. Cazenovia High School is doing a similar project with teacher Chris Hurd, and will also launch their balloon in Pittsford.

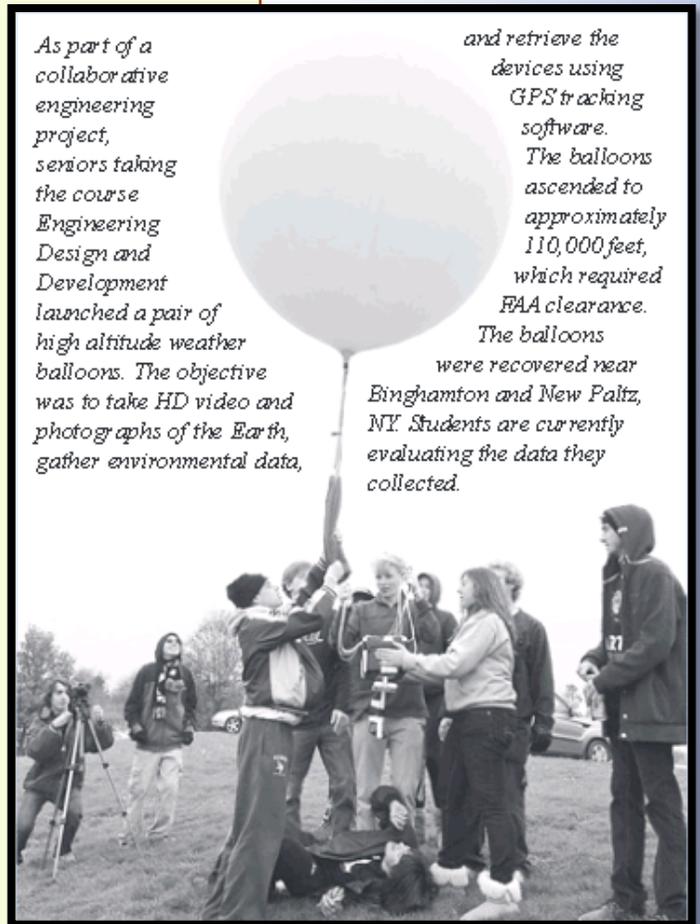
Scott, Chris and some students hope to get their ham license soon, but for now I am supervising their APRS operation. They are funding their project by selling tickets to send a bobble-head of their school superintendent into near-space. They hope to achieve an altitude of 90,000 feet. The payload will have a digital still camera, a Canon point-and-shoot modified to snap at regular intervals, and a GoPro high definition video camera, the type that is mounted to athlete's helmets. The trackers are various versions of Byonics Tiny Traks, two with integrated transmitters, and one with a Baofeng UV-3R HT. They will test the payload in a freezer to simulate the temperature at high altitude, although it won't approach the -50F it will see at 90,000 feet. Most of the payload will be in an insulated box.

The students could use some more chase teams for their balloon, especially with mobile APRS capability. If you are interested, please let me know. They will try using mobile internet devices to view aprs.fi, but they'd also like to be able to receive APRS directly from their payload, especially if the transmitter is unable to reach an APRS-Internet gateway. They could also use help at mission control, where they hope to display the APRS track on a big screen for other students to see.

Because the launch depends on the weather they can't set a hard date for the launch, but they're hoping for a school day. It will start early in the morning. I'll try to get announcements out on the email list so you can follow along from home.

As part of a collaborative engineering project, seniors taking the course Engineering Design and Development launched a pair of high altitude weather balloons. The objective was to take HD video and photographs of the Earth, gather environmental data,

and retrieve the devices using GPS tracking software. The balloons ascended to approximately 110,000 feet, which required FAA clearance. The balloons were recovered near Binghamton and New Paltz, NY. Students are currently evaluating the data they collected.



Scanning the New Ontario County System

By Jim Sutton N2OPS jim@otrym.org

It was there for decades, the powerhouse, heard for miles outside Ontario County 154.815 sheriff is now silent. And 46.42 fire is also silent. They weren't broke. Where did they go? Why did they go?

The squeeze was on. We were running out of spectrum space so digital TV allowed the upper UHF channels to be moved down the band freeing up the 700 MHz frequencies that are now making their debut across the US.

Being a new slice of the spectrum earlier 800 MHz scanners aren't capable of this range. Check for online upgrades for your model.

FREQUENCIES:

<u>North Simulcast</u>	<u>South Simulcast</u>	<u>Canadice Simulcast</u>
769.28125	769.25625	(control signal but not linked to the system)
769.55625	769.78125	854.0375
769.85625	770.08125	854.2875
770.10625	773.93125	854.5625
773.70625		855.2375
773.90625		
774.15625		
774.40625		

TALKGROUPS:

7001	Ontario Sheriff Dispatch
7002	Ontario Sheriff Secondary
7501	Canandaigua Police
7505	Geneva Police
8001	Fire Dispatch
8004	Fire Operations 4
8005	Fire Operations 5
8006	Fire Operations 6
8034	Geneva Fire Ops

FIRE PAGING:

453.3125 131.8
Patched to talkgroup 8001
Fire paging tones heard only on UHF side.
EMS and Fire which were on separate sides are now combined.

PATCHING:

At the time of writing this story Geneva PD is still using 159.345 179.9 TG7505 and EMS is still using 155.355 131.8 TG8001 relaying only EMS calls. Some Ontario County transmissions are coming thru the new Monroe County system.

MULTIPATH:

With multiple transmitters there is a "beat" between the signals resulting in terrible reception as the scanner doesn't know what to do with the multiple signals on digital trunking. It may take much patience and even directional or smaller antennas to resolve the issue.

LINKS:

- ✚ Radio Reference
<http://www.radioreference.com/apps/db/?sid=7308>
- ✚ News Story
<http://www.mpnow.com/article/20131004/NEWS/131009786/10054/NEWS>
- ✚ Simulcast Digital Distortion
http://wiki.radioreference.com/index.php/Simulcast_digital_distortion
- ✚ Trunking Basics
http://home.comcast.net/~bref0x/trunking/what_is_trunking.html



RaRa Rags of the Past

By Ed Gable, K2MP
RaRa Historian

20 Years Ago, December, 1993

RaRa VP and program manager Roger Harnaart, WB2BWQ, had a special evening planned for members. RaRa was pleased to be invited for another joint RaRa/Kodak event, but this time by a new club, the Kodak Elmgrove Amateur Radio Club, and a new location at Bldg 5 in the huge Elmgrove Kodak complex. RaRa was invited by Kodak ARC President Jim Saniewski, WB2TRC, who also arranged a plant tour after the meeting. We saw *Kodak Instamatics* going through final assembly and packaging, all untouched by human hands. Unfortunately, there were no samples. Roger went on to introduce the speaker for the evening claiming he had "gifted gabber" and his talk titled "*From Earth to Ether*," details how to plan and implement the construction of a ham radio tower. Some of you may remember the excellent presentation, by Ed Gable, K2MP. Ed took you through the many steps of planning, buying hardware, successfully applying for building permits, and contracting with various trades.

Tim Stoffel, NS9E, wrote a long article for the RAG thoroughly describing and announcing the new Rochester Cup contest. This was a contest between all of the various Rochester Amateur Radio Clubs to see which one could accumulate the highest score in the January ARRL VHF Contest. Along the same lines, RaRa Secretary Jim Hood, N2HHV, wrote seeking volunteers to operate K2JD during the upcoming VHF Contest.

Dick Goslee, K2VCZ, editor of the popular RaRa Directory, asked all members to check their mailing label and report any errors before the Directory is printed in January. The 1994 Directory will contain over 3,000 listings.

With regret, it was announced that Robert M. Decker, K2HLH, was listed as a Silent Key. There were no want ads in this issue, but Ramsey Electronics, of Canning Parkway in Victor, remains a valued commercial advertiser.

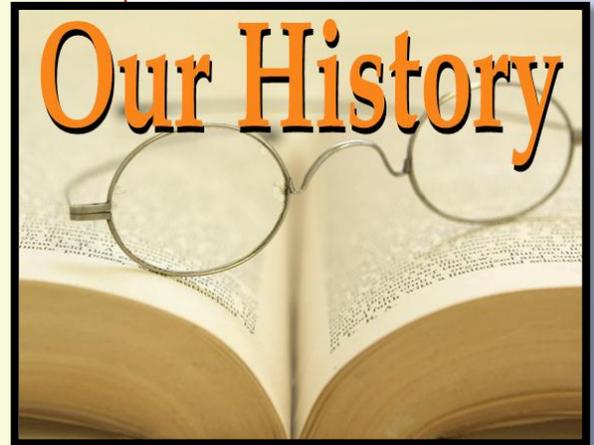
40 Years Ago, December, 1973

On the cover of this issue was found a photo of the then technical marvel of the day, amateur radio satellite *OSCAR 6*. This satellite, carrying a 2 to 10 meter transponder, was truly a technical breakthrough and mystery to most hams. Solving the mystery was local satellite pioneer Fred Becker, W2GV (sk), who told of what equipment was needed as well as how to determine where in orbit the bird was located at any given time.

Bill DeWitt, W2DD, (sk) wrote an interesting article on the then few local hams that held two-letter calls (this was in the days before vanity calls). Bill closed his article wondering how the AWA Museum got W2AN, that didn't fit the FCC rules. Only two people know, Bruce Kelley, W2ICE (SK) and K2MP, but he's not talking.

This issue published a joint letter from RaRa, RRRRA and the Rochester VHF Group, stating opposition to Docket 19759, which took the bottom two megacycles of the 220 Mcs band. (A good reason to support your local radio clubs, as they support you.)

Rick Booth, WA2GCX, reported on the first meeting of the Sunday night Monroe County FM net, held alternately between the WA2UWQ 28/88, and the WR2ABF 19/79, repeaters.



News from our friends at other area clubs...

K2GXT Repeater Net

By Marisa Ashour, KC2VMM

President, Rochester Institute of Technology Amateur Radio Club

The RIT Amateur Radio Club, K2GXT, is going to begin hosting a monthly net on the club's 2 meter repeater. While this net is mostly going to be a round-table to help loosen up some of our mic-shy new members, we'd love for some locals to join us on frequency on Sunday, December 8th at 9PM. We're especially looking to hear from alumni that participated in K2GXT while they were studying at RIT! For more information about K2GXT, either visit our website at:

www.rit.edu/k2gxt, or contact us at k2gxt@g.rit.edu.

Repeater Info:

147.075 MHz

+600 kHz

110.9 PL Tone



Monroe County ARES / RACES News

NOTE: We do not meet in the month of December.

The Monroe County Amateur Radio Emergency Service, Inc. holds its meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month. Anyone interested, members and non-members, are welcome to attend. The next ARES Meeting will be held on:

Thursday, January 23, 2014, 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 only exception to that are nights when we hold our regular meeting, generally on the 4th Thursday of the month.

WEB: www.monroecountyemcomm.org

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 2013.

Editor's Note:

Free press is available for your club! We welcome brief updates and meeting notices from all area ham clubs. Just send your input to editor@rochesterham.org. When preparing your article, please remember to keep it short, and assume that readers know nothing about your club. The article should be focused toward non-members, and not your own current members... that's what your newsletter is for! We hope all area clubs will take advantage of this opportunity to interest new members in joining their ranks.



XARC's Annual Fall Foxhunt

XARC's Annual Fall Foxhunt took place on Saturday, November 2nd.

Four teams started at the new Antique Wireless museum in Bloomfield and got a hunting lesson from Ned, W2NED, with a practice fox placed outside the museum. Then the real hunt was on and with a new wrinkle this time, clues given in the form of a wifi access point name. The teams were told before the hunt to bring their smartphones and to watch for wifi clues.

The first clue was the frequency of the first fox, and the teams were off and hunting. After a rainy night and a threatening forecast, we had some sun for the first half of the hunt.

Fox 1 was just one mile away up the road at a school, and all teams found it fairly quickly. Two rookie teams, Tim WB2PAY and Dave KD2DYX (3rd place), and Duane K2SI and Alex (4th place) had tape measure beams for their first hunt. The low power of the 300mW transmitter helped them to zero in, even up close.

The next fox was much more powerful at 6 watts and therefore much harder to find up close by the rookies. The signal was so strong all over Lima they had trouble getting close to the fox.

The veteran teams of Brian K2AS and Bob K2OID (1st place), and Ned W2NED, Vince W2VAB and Gregory (2nd place) have years of experience and were able to find the 2nd fox in Mark Tubbs Park after persistent hunting. I was giving clues to the rookies over the repeater, but the rain was increasing and it was getting close to lunch time, so I finally had to show them where fox 2 was. Tim and Dave had walked right by it during their search. When I told them that the other teams had found all four foxes, they were shocked that they were only able to find one.

When we're hiding these transmitters we try to accommodate all skill levels so everyone can enjoy the hunt. Fox 3 was in Honeoye Falls and Fox 4 was in Mendon. We met at Flaherty's in Honeoye Falls for lunch, awards, and tales of the fox that got away.

XARC's Spring foxhunt is usually the day before Mother's Day. See you in the spring!



The Amateur's Code

Originally written by Paul M. Segal, W9EEA (1928)

The Radio Amateur is:

- CONSIDERATE** Never knowingly operating in such a way as to lessen the pleasure of others.
- LOYAL** Offering loyalty, encouragement and support to other amateurs, local clubs and the American Radio Relay League, through which Amateur Radio in the United States is represented nationally and internationally.
- PROGRESSIVE** With knowledge abreast of science, a well built and efficient station and operation beyond reproach.
- FRIENDLY** With slow and patient operation when requested, friendly advice and counsel to the beginner, kindly assistance, cooperation and consideration for the interests of others. These are the hallmarks of the amateur spirit.
- BALANCED** Radio is an avocation, never interfering with duties owed to family, job, school or community.
- PATRIOTIC** With station and skill always ready for service to country and community

Visit the RARA Website!

Did you know that your club's website (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



Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc.



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Rochester Hamfest

Upcoming Meetings

Public Service

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License Testing

Ham Radio 101

Memorial Scholarship

Membership

Club Officers

Welcome to RARA

The **Rochester Amateur Radio Association, Inc. (RARA)** 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.

We are an American Radio Relay League (ARRL) affiliated club since 1931, and a charter Special Service Organization. **RARA** provides a unifying focal point for much of the amateur radio activity in Western New York.

New at RARA on the web:

- RARA Academy - Download the flyer and RSVP TODAY!
- New: Updated Rochester area Repeater Listing
- Fall program listing updated.
- Fall Licensing courses - Register now!
- Newest photo gallery posted. Have some fun: Make your own comments and captions!

THE RARA MARKET PLACE

Your commercial ad could be here! The RARA Rag can help spread the word on your business at very reasonable rates. Contact us for details at editor@rochesterham.org.



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THE RARA RAG

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RaRa meets at 7pm on the first Friday of each month;
come join us at:

Henrietta Fire Company No.1
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January Rag Deadline
December 15, 2013

