

# HAM RAG



Visit our website for more club and area ham information  
In the Rockford area at <http://www.w9axd.org>

## March 2009

### RARA Mission Statement

A member association with common interest of public service to the community through the use of amateur radio.

## President's Column

Here it is March already, and many events are already in the planning stages for this year. The first one coming up is the (Breakfast in the Park) which will be held Saturday, June 13, and will be located at Alpine Park shelter #1. At this time we are in need of a chairperson to coordinate this event, so if you would like to become more involved in the club just let myself or any other board member know.

The second and biggest event is the (Field Day) event which spans two days and will be held Saturday and Sunday, June 27 and 28<sup>th</sup>. This event will be located at Roland Olson Forest Preserve, and Kurt Eversole, KE9N, is the event chairperson. If you are planning to operate a station, or would just like to help please contact Kurt and let him what you would like to do or just see what he needs.

The third event is the RARA Picnic, which is August 16, and will be located at Alpine Park shelter # 1. At this time, we are also in need of a picnic chairperson to help coordinate this event.

The fourth event sponsored by the club is the JOTA event. This stands for Jamboree On The Air and is a major event for scouts. The board discussed this event and we feel we should still hold this event but we need someone to be a chairperson for this event also.

Please do not forget about the Labor Day weekend, and (On The Waterfront). This is our only moneymaking event of the year and we need every ones help for this to succeed. Last year we had many non-members and spouses, help fill spots and made it a very profitable event for the club. We need everyone's help to make this a success again this year.

Gene Stankiewicz, KA9BOD, also informed me that he would be unable to continue in the position of Public Information Officer (PIO). For those of you who did not know, Gene was the person responsible who made sure our announcements about events and functions the club was participating in made it into the newspapers and radio spots. I would like to thank Gene for the fine job he has done in this position, and ask if anyone would like to take on this duty. There is a whole section on the ARRL web site giving ideas and providing information for anyone interested in this position.

I know this is getting long so the final thing I have is for you members who like to do public service work, such as races, marathons and walking events. I just received an updated list of events from John Cotner, KC9IED, for 2009. There are many such events this year and they are always in need of radio operators to help make the events safer for everyone. The list can be found on the Winnebago County ARES web site, which is located at [www.angelfire.com/tv2/skywarn](http://www.angelfire.com/tv2/skywarn). If you can make the time, please come out and join those of us who do like to volunteer for these events. They are fun, you get to use your radio skills to help make events safer for others, and you get to talk about the hobby too.

73,  
Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX

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### NEXT MEETING

**Friday**  
**March 13, 2009**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Program:**  
**TBD**

LOCATION  
St. Anthony  
Medical Center  
Room #1041  
5666 E. State Street  
Rockford, IL



Latest news and events on our web page: <http://www.w9axd.org>

## Secretary's Report



### **RARA Club Meeting February 13, 2009**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM by President, Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX, with 26 Hams in attendance.

Gordy asked everyone to introduce themselves and give a brief summary as to how they got started in Ham Radio.

#### Secretary Report:

The minutes for the annual banquet were published in the February Ham Rag. Gene, KA9BOD, made a motion to accept the report as published and John, N9OTC, seconded the motion. All approved.

#### Treasurer Report:

Rich, K9PK, reported for the period November 25<sup>th</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> 2008.

Income:	\$275.00
Expenses	\$432.92
Net income/ (Loss)	\$(157.92)
Ending Checking Balance	\$254.35
Ending Savings Balance	\$7008.87
Ending total cash on hand	\$7263.22
Gain/ (Loss)	\$283.15

Rich also read the January 1<sup>st</sup> through January 26th report.

Income	\$629.00
Expenses	\$777.09
Net income/ (Loss)	\$(148.09)
Ending checking balance	\$706.26
Ending Savings Balance	\$6410.29
Ending total cash on hand	\$7116.55
Gain/ (Loss)	\$190.79

Chuck, AB9KA, Made a motion to accept the reports and Gene KA9BOD seconded. All approved.

#### Old Business:

Gordy KC9NEX did not have any items on his list under old business.

John N9OTC asked how we were doing on membership renewals. Rich K9PK said we were ahead with membership renewals as compared to this time last year.

Gene, KA9BOD, congratulated Rich, K9PK, and Chuck, AB9KA, on both being named Ham of the Year.

#### New Business:

Gordy, KC9NEX, presented Bob Rose, KC9OQG, with an award certificate for his first contact.

Gordy announced the dates for Breakfast in the Park, June 13<sup>th</sup>, and the Family Picnic, August 16<sup>th</sup>. Both will be at Alpine Park Shelter #1. He also announced that Field Day will be held at Roland Olson Park.

Bob, KC9ICH, was asked if there was anything new to report on the Web site. Bob reported that he had added some new feeds.

Chuck, AB9KA, reported that there would be a test of the Winnebago county emergency alert system with the new sirens on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

*(continued on next page)*

## Secretary's Report *(continued)*

John, N9OTC, wanted everyone to know that the Basic Weather Spotter training class would be given at the Airport Public Safety Building on February 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. He also reported that an advanced course will be held at Wheaton College in March. Further information can be found at [dupagesevereweather.com](http://dupagesevereweather.com)

Kurt, KE9N, asked that anyone wanting to list "For Sale" items in the Ham Rag should send him an e-mail by the end of the month. Only items pertaining to Ham Radio should be listed.

Kurt reported that Chuck's call was incorrect on page 2 of the Ham Rag; Chuck's call sign is AB9KA.

A motion to close the meeting was made at 7:45PM by Shari, N9SH, and seconded by Kurt, KE9N.

An excellent presentation was then given by Don, W9DRR, on Amateur Radio using VOIP

### Congratulations to John W9JGO

The August 2008 issue of QST has an article on page 71 titled "Counting turns on very small toroids made easy!" Many of you may have read this article but, did you know that our member John, W9JGO, is the author.

Submitted by:

Al, KD9CA

RARA Secretary

## Mutterings from the Vice President-

It seems to me that whenever two or more hams gather there is always talk of a linear. That is to say talk of an amplifier to boost someone's RF signal upwards of anywhere from 500 watts to something up in the range of multiple kilowatts.

Often times when I adjourn to the porcelain library for a moment of meditation, I take along an old issue of CQ, QST, or maybe even 73 magazine. I find one of the positive factors of growing older is that one can re-read a story and enjoy it as if it had been encountered for the first time.

Such an event recently occurred to me. I was reading an article out of a dog-eared copy of CQ authored by W9KNI. I vaguely recall having seen the story once before but apparently the writer's call sign didn't register. This time, however, I did recognize it as belonging to the ham who runs Bencher, Butternut, and Idiom Press. The latter company is the manufacturer of the SCAF-1 audio filters and the CMOS-4 keyers.

The theme of his article was to share with the reader what pleasant experiences he had after down sizing to a mere 100 watt station comprised of a kit transceiver and a single, vertical antenna after running with the "big guns" (multi-element yagis, Henry 5K amps, 100 foot plus towers, etc.) for so many years. For those of us who do not have the good fortune to run with the "big guns", or do not have mountain top locations from which to operate, I heartily recommend you take a moment to peruse the encouraging words of W9KNI.

I think I'm on his wavelength.

See the October, 2006 issue of CQ magazine. The article starts on page 22.

See you on the air.

73,

Steve - K9ILLI

# EAGLE FEATHERS

I was introduced to ham radio in the early '60s by my first scout master, Dave Joslin. I just couldn't get the hang of Morse code. And with me being a preteen, it wasn't a priority. However I never completely lost interest. It was a case of "Life is what happens while you're making other plans."

I passed my Amateur Extra exam this last Saturday. And it got me to thinking: philosophizing, if you will. The attitude I developed can be conveyed in the following story.

There once was a fairly wise Indian sachem (chief) who knew the value of service. Whenever a warrior or any member of his village would perform an exceptional deed, whether heroic or of great service, he would present that person with an eagle feather. That act in itself was an exceptional deed. The sachem would undertake a journey into the mountains to pluck a tail feather from an eagle. It was a grueling experience being exposed to the mountainous elements. Upon returning, he would present the award during a ceremonial court of honor and the warrior was duly recognized by the entire clan.

As the years passed it became more and more of a hardship on the aging chief. It hurt the villagers to see his strain and exhaustion after the undertaking. A few well meaning young braves had a plan to aid their sachem. They went up into the mountains, captured the eagle and bring it back to the village. It seemed like the perfect solution.

As time went on, however, the deeds performed to earn an eagle feather shrank in stature. The award became a shadow of what it had once been.

Many hams have gone on before me. For many of them it took a lot of hard work and expense to qualify for their Amateur Extra class licenses: their "eagle feathers." For me it wasn't *really* hard. I did have to study. I did have an advantage though. I have a degree in electronics. And I've always had that bit of interest. The dropping of the Morse code requirement is what it took for me finally go for it. But I don't want my "eagle feather" to diminish the stature of the Amateur Extras who have paved the in radio communications.

So I'm giving myself a challenge. I dare myself to pass a five words per minute code test within six months. I'm sure there're hams out there that will gladly administer it.

Steve - W9SWT

## RARA Information Net

The purpose of the net will be to disseminate RARA related information as well as other Amateur Radio related information. As a club sponsored activity, please check in with Net Control and help make this net a success. The Net Control will be rotated between the club members, with all amateur radio operators encouraged to check in. (RARA members as well as non-members)

The net is a new project for the club, your input as to what to include is needed and appreciated. Let any of the officers and board know you thoughts and ideas. If you wish to be a net control operator, let any of the officers know. All are encouraged and welcome to participate.

146.610 (pl 114.8) repeater at 8:00 pm, every Monday, except on holidays.

## The ham classes scheduled for this Spring 2009

General -- April 4 & 18, 2008  
(Register for April classes by mid-March)

(Registration for class via RVC.  
Class meets on Saturdays from 8:00 am  
to 4:00 pm. Class will be held at RVC.  
Carl W9TQ

VE examiners will be available at last session of all classes

## AMATEUR RADIO EXAM NOTICE

February 21st there were 4 applicants resulting in 2 new licenses and 1 upgrade

New Technicians

Kenneth Jaeger

Dean Schoff

Upgrade

Steve Twigg W9SWT, Extra

Northern Illinois Volunteer Examiners will be holding the next Amateur Radio exam session in Rockford, IL on Saturday, March 21, 2009.

Location:

St. Anthony Hospital

5666 E. State Street

Rockford, IL

Exams will be held in the St Francis Room (just right of the front entrance after you enter).

Check-in is from 9:00 AM til 10:30 AM.

What You Need To Bring To A W5YI-VEC Session

1. Your original Amateur License (unexpired or within the 2 year grace period) and a copy to attach to the paperwork.
2. Any valid CSCE that you are using for credit. Again the VE's have to see the original and have a copy to attach to the paperwork.
3. Two forms of Identification with your signature on them. One must be a picture ID (drivers license, passport, school ID, library card, credit card, etc.)
4. Test Fee \$14.00 cash or check. (please make checks payable to W5YI-VEC)

Contact Information

Randy Scott, W9HL

W9HL@arrl.net

815-877-4328

## **FRIDAY MORNING BREAKFAST**

Meets every Friday morning from 8 am until about 9:30 am. An informal gathering of ham folks, no affiliations necessary, good food and good company. Everyone is welcome to attend.

*“The Undecided Restaurant” 915 S. Alpine Rd  
Across from Alpine Park*

# DX NEWS AND CONTESTS

## SCHEDULED DXPEDITIONS

CALLSIGN	QTH	WHEN	QSL VIA
<b>H4</b>	TEMOTU	MAR 2 TO MAR 16	HA8FW
<b>FP</b>	ST. PIERRE & MIQUELON	MAR 4 TO MAR 9	LotW
<b>ZL7T</b>	CHATHAM ISLAND	MAR 6 TO MAR 11	ZL2AL
<b>S2</b>	BANGLADESH	MAR 7 TO MAR 12	HL5FUA
<b>VK9LA</b>	LORD HOWE IS.	MAR 24 TO APR 3	?
<b>YJ0AAC</b>	VANUATU	MAR 25 TO APR 1	VK4HAM
<b>J6/W5JON</b>	ST. LUCIA	MAR 25 TO APR 2	W5JON
<b>GT4BRS</b>	ISLE OF MAN	MAR 28 TO APRIL 4	GW0ANA
<b>PJ2</b>	NETHERLANDS ANTILLES	APRIL 1 TO APRIL 11	PA4JJ
<b>VK9XGO</b>	CHRISTMAS ISLAND	APRIL 4 TO APRIL 11	JA1XGI
<b>C91FC</b>	MOZAMBIQUE	APRIL 9 TO APRIL 13	ON4CJK
<b>SO4R</b>	WESTERN SAHARA	APRIL 12 TO APRIL 17	EA5RM
<b>JW</b>	SVALBARD	APRIL 19 TO APRIL 25	F8DVD
<b>JD1BLK</b>	OGASAWARA	APRIL 29 TO MAY 12	JM1LJS
<b>C21TI</b>	NAURU	MAY 1 TO MAY 30	EA4ATI

## UPCOMING CONTESTS

ARRL International DX Contest, SSB, March 7-8, 2009

CQWW WPX Contest, SSB, March 28-29, 2009

CQ WW WPX Contest, CW, May 30-31, 2009

**Note:** Source for this column include the NG3K website.  
Information submitted by Kurt - KE9N

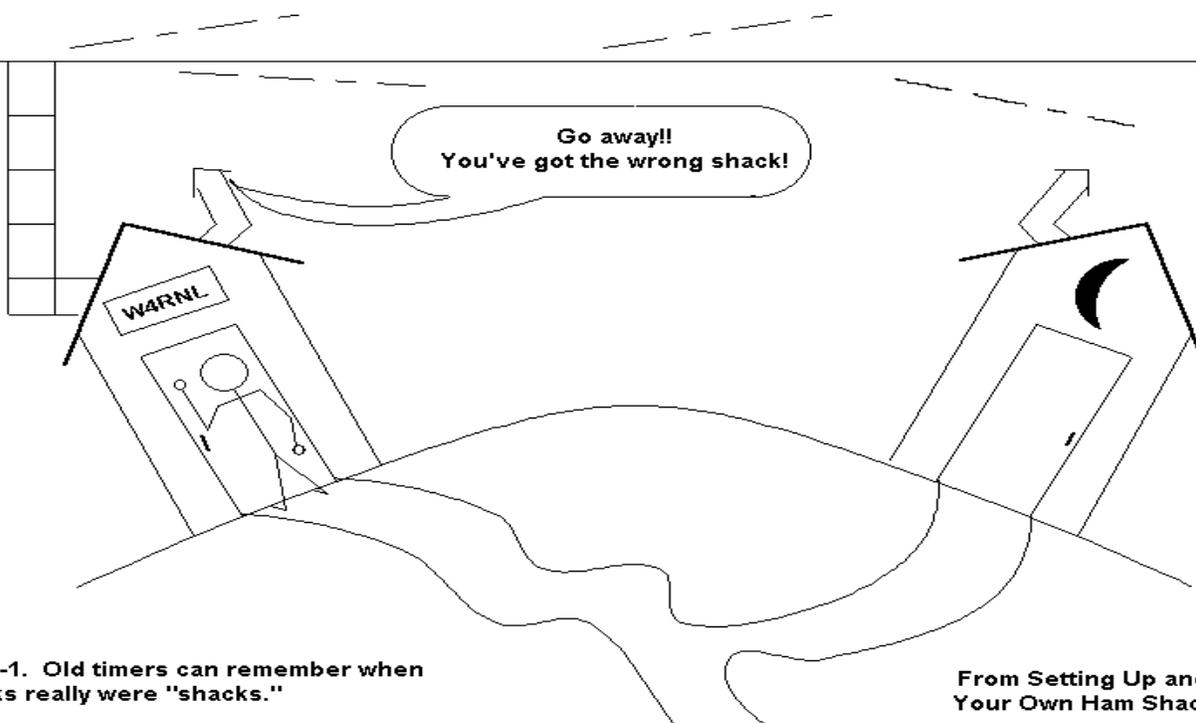


Fig. 1-1. Old timers can remember when shacks really were "shacks."

From *Setting Up and Using Your Own Ham Shack*, p. 10

## ITEMS FOR SALE / WANTED

### **FOR SALE**

Hy-Gain AV-640 8 Band Vertical Antenna, very good condition with manual. Currently disassembled into major subassemblies. \$200.00 firm. Might consider trades. For more information contact Greg, W9VOX, email - gik1406@verizon.net

Icom 735 + Mic + Matching Power Supply --- \$415.00  
includes 500 cycle CW filter  
Kenwood TS-120S + Matching Power Supply - \$295.00  
MFJ 9420X 20 M XCVR w/mic + CW ----- \$190.00  
Autek QF-1A Audio Filter AC Version ----- \$55.00  
Shure Mobile Mic #404 w/PJ068 ----- \$30.00  
Curtis EK-430 CMOS Keyer ----- \$75.00  
Swan SWR-3 Meter ----- \$50.00  
MFJ 207 Antenna Analyzer ----- \$75.00  
Hy-Gain 14AVQ Vertical Antenna 40-6 Meters- \$65.00  
Drake WV-4 VHF Wattmeter ----- \$75.00  
B & W Protax Radial Antenna Switch 376 ----- \$40.00  
Super Antennas MP-1 Port. 80-6 Meters ----- \$110.00  
Bird QRP Wattmeter ----- \$75.00  
Vibroplex Code Warrior Jr. Paddle ----- \$90.00  
Heil HM-IC Mobile Mic. ----- \$65.00

For more information contact Steve Thorn, K9LLI at 815-399-9161 or email: steve.thorn@att.biz

*If you wish to post a ham radio item for sale on the RARA website,  
send the information in an email to: robert@kc9ich.com*

**RARA BOARD MEETING MEETS ON THE LAST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7 PM  
St. Anthony Medical Center 5666 E. State St. Rockford, IL**

### **AREA Repeaters**

146.610 -	ENC/DEC pl 114.8	W9AXD
147.000 +	ENC/DEC pl 114.8	W9AXD
223.880 -	ENC/DEC pl 118.8	W9AXD
<b>ATV</b> input 1250 Mhz/ 434 Mhz		W9ATN
	output 421.25 Mhz	
146.805 -	ENC/DEC pl 114.8	K9AMJ
224.440 -	ENC/DEC pl 118.8	K9AMJ
147.255 +	ENC/DEC pl 114.8	WX9MCS
444.725 +	ENC/DEC pl 107.2	WX9MCS
	Linked to FISHFAR	

### **2009 RARA Officers and Board**

President - Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX, 815-234-5034  
Vice President - Steve Thorne, K9LLI, 815-399-9161  
Secretary - Al Fischer, KD9CA, 815-885-3926  
Treasurer - Rich Ludwig, K9PK, 815-547-6435  
Directors:  
Chuck Derwent, K9SAN, 815-519-0848  
Carl Cacciatore, W9TQ, 815-332-2479  
Robert Larson, KC9ICH, 815-226-1875  
Mike Oberg, AB9AY, 815-399-0961  
Web Master - Robert Larson, KC9ICH  
Ham Rag Editor - Kurt Eversole, KE9N, 815-389-2784  
Repeater Chairman - Herb Eckstein, K9AMJ, 815-399-6822

### **Editors Note**

If you would like to have something published , please call me or email me at ke9n@arrl.net.

**Cut-off for the April 2009 issue will be Saturday, March 28, 2009.**

Kurt - KE9N, Editor



P.O. Box 8465, Rockford, IL 61126

Website: www.w9axd.org

E-mail: ke9n@arrl.net

Nets

Monday 8PM	RARA Info.	146.610 - 114.8
Thursday 7 PM	ARES	147.195 + 114.8
Thursday 8 PM	SATURN	146.610 - 114.8

place address label here

**March 2009**

**ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO  
ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Single Adult: \$25.00 Adult w/Family: \$30.00  
Single Senior: \$15.00 Senior w/Family: \$20  
Student: \$15.00

Above rate includes the RARA monthly newsletter, Ham Rag, via email.

Ham Rag Via U.S. Postal Service: \$12.00 extra

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Call Sign \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Retired \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Interests \_\_\_\_\_

Other Interests \_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:

ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION  
P.O. BOX 8465  
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61126