HAM RAG Rockford Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

Visit our website for more club and area ham information in the Rockford area at http://rara.tripod.com

July 2004

Field Day 2004 is in the book

Thank you, to everyone who participated in Field Day 2004. The 2, 6,15,20,40, and 80 meter bands were worked resulting in 2300 CW QSO points, 1562 SSB QSO points, and 700 in bonus points for a total of 4,562 points. The following people worked the bands- Tim KC9DNN, Colleen KC9EWJ, Gene KA9BOD, Frank KS9X, Steve K9LLI, Dale KT9P, Jim KC9CYR, Paul K9RNR, Chuck W9SAN, Dave W9MG, Sheri N9SH, Nick KB9SKW, Gary K9LJN, John KA9SOG, Dan KC9ATR, Kurt KE9NJ, Chuck WB9UMC, and John K9PZZ. Thanks also to the loggers, Mark N9UVP and Nancy KG9OQ.



We want to thank set-up helpers Ken K9KDP

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The next meeting is at 7:00 PM July 9, 2004

The program for this month's meeting will be:

Andrew Sneed Deputy Chief Winnebago County Sheriff Dept. He is in charge of all communications for the Sheriff Dept.

Saint Anthony Medical Center 5666 E. State Street Rockford, IL.

To get to the meeting room go to the main entrance - turn right at desk - go to the end of hall to the meeting rooms.

August Picnic Update

The August meeting is the picnic at Alpine Park Shelter #1 (*Not the shelter that we have had events*) on August 8th from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The club will provide pop, burgers, and hot dogs. You need to bring your plates and silverware and a dish to pass.

Nicholas Lager, KB9SKW, is planning a fox hunt after the picnic, so plan on bringing your directional antennas to join in on the fun.

We will not have a meeting on the second Friday of August.

Gary Hilker, K9LJN, is asking for volunteers for the August picnic to contact him at 624-7441 if you can help cook and to bring your cooking utensils.

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Presidents Log July 2004

Field Day has come and gone. It sure looked like everyone was having a great time while I was there, and there were people involved that I had not seen for years. That was one of the biggest treats of the weekend. I would like to thank Dick Fleming, KC9BCB, for organizing the weekend and his wonderful wife for assisting. It looked like both of them were having a good time as well.

Alpine Park was a great place to hold Field Day as well. Everyone was spread out and had plenty of room to do their thing. Channel 17 and 23 both gave us good coverage on the evening news. Channel 13 covered the Belvedere Field Day, so all three channels had amateur radio coverage.

One thing I thought was good about this years event was that we had a good mix of ole timers (notice I said ole, not old) and newer hams that had not been involved in Field Day before. So we had people helping people as it should be.

The July meeting is on the second Friday (this Friday) as usual and should be a good meeting.

We need to remind people that the August meeting is the picnic at Alpine Park on August 8th from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The club will provide pop, burgers, and hot dogs. You need to bring your plates and silverware and a dish to pass. Nicholas Lager, KB9SKW, is planning a fox hunt after the picnic, so plan on bringing your directional antennas to join in on the fun. We will not have a meeting on the second Friday of August. Larry Snyder, KOHNM, is willing to teach an Extra Class. Please contact him as soon as possible to find out what the plans may be.

Slots are filling up for the ticket booth at the On-The-Waterfront event. If you want to help and have fun, please contact Scott Allshouse, W9SBA, at 248-3102. Scott and Gary Hilker, K9LJN, will be making phone calls as it gets closer to the event to fill in the open spots.

The nominating committee for this year will be Wendy Owano, KC9BCF, and Shari Harlan, N9SH. Please contact them to volunteer for running for office for 2005. If not, they will be calling you!

Enjoy the summer and don't forget to do your antenna work.



Gene WB9MMM

Please be aware of the many activities this summer that need Amateur Radio operators for event communications. If you can please volunteer for this events.

Go to http://www.angelfire.com/tv2/ skywarn/ **for more information.**



Dates to Remember:

The annual picnic - August 8 On the Riverfront -Labor Day Weekend

UTILITY CUTS SHORT BPL TRIAL THAT WAS TARGET OF AMATEUR COMPLAINTS

Alliant Energy has called an early end to its broadband over power line (BPL) pilot project in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The "evaluation system" went live March 30, and plans called for keeping it active until August or September. Alliant shut it down June 25. Ongoing, unresolved HF interference from the system to retired engineer Jim Spencer, W0SR, and other amateurs prompted the ARRL to file a complaint to the FCC on Spencer's behalf demanding it be shut down and the utility fined.

Alliant Energy's BPL Project Leader Dan Hinz says the ARRL complaint "certainly was a factor" in the utility's decision to pull the plug prematurely but "not the overriding factor." The main reason, he said, was that Alliant accomplished most of its objectives ahead of schedule. The primary purpose of the Cedar Rapids evaluation was to gain an understanding of BPL technology and what issues might be involved in a realworld deployment, Hinz explained. But, he added, regulatory uncertainty and other unspecified technical issues also factored into the choice to end the pilot early.

Hinz said Alliant is "moshing the data" to compile a written evaluation of the Cedar Rapids pilot, but the company has no plans at this point to move forward with BPL. Alliant did not partner with a broadband services provider, and it has no other BPL test systems in operation. The system used Amperion BPL equipment.

According to Spencer, five fixed Amateur Radio stations within proximity of the BPL evaluation system and two mobile stations formally reported BPL interfe rence on HF. "The radio amateurs and Alliant Energy cooperated by sharing interference information," he said. "Alliant Energy tumed the BPL evaluation system off twice to allow collection of extensive BPL frequency and signal level data--with and without BPL." He said Alliant and Amperion tried various notching" schemes to rid amateur frequencies of the BPL interfe rence with only limited success.

The system included both overhead and underground BPL links to feed 2.4 GHz wireless "hot spots" for end user access. Hinz said the area's topography presented some challenges, especially with the wireless links. "I think in the end, we actually over-challenged ourselves with this specific pilot location," he said. And, despite "substantial progress" in mitigating interference, Alliant decided at this point that "it wasn't worth the extra effort" to resolve the thornier technical issues, Hinz added.

As for any broader implications, Hinz says he's always viewed BPL as a "strategic deployment technology," not one a company could roll out just anywhere and expect to be competitive with existing broadband services such as cable and DSL. "At least that's how we were looking at it," he said. "You have to find the right areas with the right topography with the right concentration of certain types of customers," he said.

"It's never been in my mind that BPL has to compete with the speeds of cable today," Hinz added. "It has to compete with the speeds of cable and the next best thing tomorrow as well, if it's going to be usable well into the future." He hinted that Alliant might want to take another look at BPL once the FCC has put BPL rules and regulations into place, and the technology has further evolved.

The ARRL's formal complaint to FCC Enforcement Bureau Chief David H. Solomon called on the Commission not only to close down Alliant's BPL field trial system but to fine the utility \$10,000 for violating the Communications Act of 1934 and FCC Part 15 rules. Commenting on the termination of the Cedar Rapids BPL trial, ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, pointed out that Alliant had tried for more than 12 weeks to fix the interference problem to a station 600 feet from its installation.

"In the end," Sumner said, "the interference was not eliminated except by shutting down the BPL system. Could the case against BPL deployment be any clearer?"

Spencer said he was happy with Alliant's decision, and he was gracious in expressing appreciation to the utility for working with him. "And thanks also to the ARRL and the Cedar Rapids BPL Steering Committee for their knowledge and efforts in making a truly professional evaluation," he added.

Still outstanding are some chronic power line noise problems Spencer has experienced.

For additional information, visit the "Broadband Over Power Line (BPL) and Amateur Radio" page on the ARRL Web site <http://www.arrl.org/bpl>. To support the League's efforts in this area, visit the ARRL's secure BPL Web site <https://www.arrl. org/forms/development/donations/bpl/>.

By K9LJN & W9GD			
CALL- SIGN	QTH	WHEN	QSL VIA
YI9KT	IRAQ	NOW TO ?	SP8HKT
5W0DL/5 W0TR/5W 0XX	WESTERN SAMOA	NOW TO JULY 21	K8AA
ST2DX	SUDAN	NOW TO AUGUST 30	PA7FM
ST2T	SUDAN	NOW TO AUGUST 30	S51DX
YA0Y	AFGHANI- STAN	NOW TO SEPT 1	DL5SE
ZK2DL/ ZK2TR	NIUE	JULY 13 TO 19	K8AA
9H3RH	MALTA	JULY 25 TO AUG 8	OE1ZKC

SCHEDULED DXPEDITIONS

Recently Heard/Worked DX From the Rockford Area By K9LJN & W9GD				
CALLSIGN	QTH	QSL VIA		
4X1FQ	ISRAEL	BURO		
9K2OK	KUWAIT	BURO		
9M2/G4ZFE	W. MALAYSIA	G4ZFE		
A71EM	QATAR	DIRECT		
AP2IA	PAKISTAN	DIRECT		
CU3GD	AZORES	DIRECT		
EW/N6OX	BELARUS	N6OX		
HB0/DL7NS	LIECHTENSTEIN	DL7NS		
HS72B	THAILAND	E20NTS		
S9SS	SAO TOME	N4JR		
ST2DX	SUDAN	PA7FM		
SU9BN	EGYPT	EA7FTR		
TK5XN	CORSICA	F5YT		
TU2/F5PTM	IVORY COAST	F5PTM		
UN7PCZ	KAZAKHSTAN	BURO		
VK9NL	NORFOLK IS.	DIRECT		
VR2UW	HONG KONG	DIRECT		
XV1X	VIETNAM	DIRECT		
ZK1CG	S. COOK IS.	DIRECT		
	SIX METERS IS OPEN!			

Operating Tips

When amateur radio first started, there was only one mode (CW) and eventually abbreviations were developed for the most commonly used words to speed things up rather than sending each individual letter of a word. In addition to this, a system of three letter "Q" signals was developed for common phrases or sentences. CW "Q" signals are still used today and are even being used on SSB even though it probably is not "politically correct" to do so. A complete lis ting of INTERNATIONAL "Q" SIGNALS is shown on the inside back cover of your ARRL logbook. I have listed fourteen of the most popular "Q" signals that you should remember:

INTERNATIONAL "Q" SIGNALS

(A "Q" signal followed by a ? asks a question. A "Q" signal without the ? answers affirmatively, unless otherwise indicated.)

QRL QRM	Are you busy? Is my transmission being interfered with?
QRN	Are you troubled by static?
QRS	Shall I send slower?
QRT	Shall I stop sending?
QRU	Have you anything for me?
QRX	When will you call again?
QRZ	Who is calling me?
QSK	Can you work breakin?
QSL	Can you acknowledge receipt?
QSO	Can you communicate with direct?
QSX	Will you listen for on?
QSY	Shall I change frequency?
QTH	What is your location?

My knowledge of "Q" signals and **careful listening** paid off when I worked HZ1AB (Saudi Arabia) on 12 Meter SSB. He was transmitting on 24.960 MHz, closing out a fast contest style QSO with: "thanks, this is HZ1AB QSX 980". There was a pile-up (of stations calling) from 24.965 to 24.970 MHz, but I knew he had said that he was listening on 24.980 MHz (QSX 980) so I quickly moved my "B" VFO up there and worked him (using 150 watts and a 2 element beam that is only 37 feet in the air). <u>Operating knowledge</u> and <u>careful listening</u> are powerful weapons. Please use them!

73 & DX, Gary - K9LJN

Rockford Amateur Radio Association Monthly meeting of the membership June 12, 2004

Breakfast at Alpine Park

RARA President Gene Harlan, WB9MMM called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

Minutes: Secretary Wendy Owano, KC9BCF read the minutes from the May meeting. Gene Stankiewicz, KA9BOD moved to accept the minutes as read, second by Shari Harlan, N9SH motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Carl Cacciatore, W9TQ reported a club balance of \$6,130.89 as of May 25, 2004. Shari moved to accept the report as presented, second by John Olson, K9PZZ motion carried.

Old Business

A RARA membership list is available at this time. If you would like a copy contact Gene Harlan.

Shari Harlan reported that the application for the International Space Station has been approved. It may be a couple of years before the club is given the opportunity to contact the ISS. Jim Zahrndt, KF9AU has donated his equipment to be used, along with the equipment of Gene and Shari Harlan, at Christian Life Elementary School.

The monthly Board of Directors Meeting are held at Saint Anthony Medical Center 5666 E. State St. Rockford, IL on the last Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM. *Except for December*.

RARA Officers for 2004

President: Gene Harlan WB9MMM Vice President: Scott Allshouse W9SBA Secretary: Wendy Owano KC9BCF Tre asurer: Carl Cacciatore W9TQ Director: Dan Hunt KC9ATR Director: Gary Hilker K9LJN Director: Nicolas Lager KB9SKW Director: Larry Snyder K0HNM Newsletter and Web Site: John Auerswald KA9SOG **Field Day:** Chairman Dick Fleming, KC9BCB reported that a couple of teams will be working the 15m and 20m bands, Gary Hilker, K9LJN and Kurt Eversole, KE9NJ will be on 40m and 80m, and Nicholas Lager, KB9SKW will work 2m and 6m. Contact Dick if you are interested in operating or if you can help with anything that will make the event a success.

Ham Rag: Members are encouraged to receive the monthly email reminder to access the newsletter on the club website instead of receipt by postal mail. Please forward your email address to Carl Cacciatore and suggestions or comments to any board member concerning this matter.

New Business

Scott Knodle, WB9LHU has offered to help anyone with just about anything related to ham radio. Ask Gene Harlan for Scott's contact information.

Gene Harlan reported that he will doing a presentation to staff members at Rockford Memorial Hospital as to how amateur radio and ATV can be a help them at the hospital.

ARES: Dan Hunt, KC9ATR reported for Sue Peters, KA9GNR that a training session to run a net and a CPR class will be offered soon. Contact Sue for details.

OTW: Committee chairman Scott Allshouse, W9SBA reported that Gary Hilker will be assisting him with the event. In the next few weeks they will be calling the members seeking volu nteers for the ticket booth on Saturday and Sunday, September 4 and 5.

Other dates of interest are:

Kankakee Ham Fest—July 4 Fox River Radio League Ham Fest—July 11 at Aurora Central Catholic High School RVC Technician class—September 18 and 25

RVC General class—October 23 and 30

Tim Peterson, KC9DNN moved to adjourn the meeting, second Dan Hunt motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Wendy Owano, RARA Secretary



(Continued from page 1)

and Dan KC9ATR (tents) and Tim KC9DNN and Dan KC9ATR for helping getting antennas up. Dan KC9ATR also fogged for mosquitoes. Steve K9LLI and Chuck WB9UMC furnished campers for the 15 and 20 meter group.

The weather was near perfect. Thanks to my wife, Evelyn, and others who helped with the food.

Thanks to those who helped but may not have been mentioned. I look forward to 2005.

Dick Fleming KC9BCB 2004 Field Day Chairman

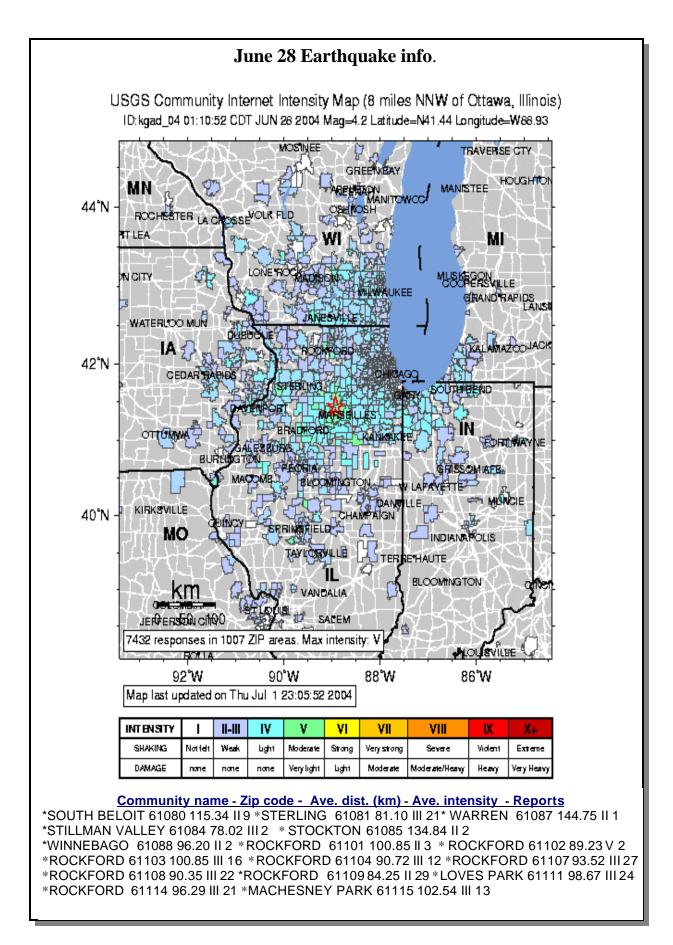












ISS CREW PLEASES FIELD DAY CROWD WITH HAM RADIO "FIRST"

For the first time, an astronaut and a cosmonaut were on the air simultaneously from both Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) operating positions. Astronaut Mike Fincke, KE5AIT, operated during Field Day 2004 as NA1SS, while Expedition 9 Commander Gennady Padalka, RN3DT, was on the air as RS0ISS. Between them, they racked up more than five dozen QSOs.

"Mike Fincke and Gennady Padalka both participated on June 27 by making voice contacts with stations in the United States (including Alaska), Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil," said ISS Ham Radio Project Engineer Kenneth Ransom, N5VHO.

"This was Mike's first time to make general contacts, and he did really well." Fincke was active during five US passes as well as during two over Central and South America.

Fincke snagged some 60 contacts on 2 meters--some of them in Spanish--using the Ericsson handheld transceiver in the Zarya Functional Cargo Block or FGB. Padalka picked up four US contacts on 70 cm using the Kenwood D700E in the ISS Zvezda Service Module. The packet system now is back in operation.

Fincke called the Field Day operation "a great experience!" and suggested he'll be on the air more frequently as a result. "Both Gennady and I were very happy to have 'met' so many different people in North, Central and South America," he said. "I know I will be using the ham radio more often, now that I could feel the warmth of the community."

ARISS mentor Tim Bosma, W6MU (ex-W6ISS) said his Field Day crew worked Fincke on three consecutive passes. "He impressed a lot of scouts and hams here at our Field Day site and made a very positive impression for ARISS and AMSAT," he said on the SAREX reflector.

Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA, was one of the stations fortunate enough to work Padalka. "What an awesome signal on 70 cm!" he exclaimed. "Forty over S9.

Speaking on behalf of the ARISS Team, Scott Stevens, N3ASA, expressed appreciation for the Field Day operation. "Thank you gentlemen for your time and outstanding effort in making the 2004 Field Day an excellent experince.

AMSAT-OSCAR ECHO SATELLITE LAUNCHED!

A Russian Dnepr LV rocket carrying the AMSAT-OSCAR Echo Amateur Radio satellite and several other payloads launched on schedule June 29 at 0630 UTC from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. Ground controllers made their first contact with Echo at 1452 UTC and collected some telemetry for analysis before shutting down the 435.150 MHz digital downlink transmitter.

"This achievement is due to many individuals around the world, who have helped in the design, building, integration, testing and aunching of this satellite," said AMSAT-NA President Robin Haighton, VE3FRH. "Also the members of AMSATs in many countries who have helped us by funding this 'electronic adventure.' Without your financial support the satellite could not have been completed and would never have been launched. Give yourselves a pat on the back for a job well done."

Jim White, WD0E, of the AO-Echo project team reports t hat an initial analysis of Echo's telemetry indicates everything is looking good. "The battery, solar panels and temperatures were all as expected," he said. Housekeeping software now is uploaded and running, and the transmitter was left on at a power level of 1.2 W.

Earth stations should not attempt to transmit on the satellite's uplink until checkout and commissioning are complete and AO-Echo has been made available for general use. White says that won't happen for at least one week. AMSAT will release bulletins when the satellite becomes available.

A telemetry decoding program, TLMEcho, is available for those who would like to view and report data from Echo. It may be downloaded from the "Echo Satellite User Software and Documentation page." AMSAT-NA requests that anyone recording Echo telemetry to send the CSV files to Mike Kingery, KE4AZN. A telemetry database has been established and will be tested over the next few days. When testing is complete it will be made available to directly upload telemetry files and query all data. AO-Echo's sunsynchronous orbit is some 800 km (nearly 500 miles) above Earth. Among other capabilities, the 10-inch-square microsat--equipped with a transmitter capable of up to 7 W output--will allow voice communication using handheld FM transceivers. Echo will feature V/U, L/S and HF/U operational configurations, with V/S, L/U and HF/S also possible. FM voice and various digital modes -- including PSK31 on a 10-meter SSB uplink--also will be available. At last report, the AO-Echo project was still some \$12,500 shy of its \$110,000 fund-raising goal.

AMSAT--a 501(c)(3) organization--welcomes additional donations to bridge the funding gap. Visit the AMSAT AO-Echo Web page for additional details.--AMSAT News Service Northern Illinois Volunteer Examiners will be holding the next Amateur Radio exam session in Rockford, IL on Saturday, July 16, 2004.

> 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 till 10:30 AM. We require two ID's with your signature on them (one must be a photo ID). If you are a licensed amateur radio operator bring your original current license and a copy. If you are using a CSCE for an element credit bring the original and a copy. (We need to see the originals & keep a photocopy of each document used for element credit.) The test fee for 2004 is \$12.00. Walk-ins wel-

come.

Contact Information Randy Scott, W9HL W9HL@arrl.net 815-877-4328

Have anything or would like to summit an article to be put in the Ham Rag or the website? Contact me by e-mail at ka9sog@arrl.net and visit http://rara.tripod.com for any late breaking news and information. Please summit any articles before the 1st of each month.

This issue of the HAMRAG was made possible by their article or photo submissions: Gary Hilker, K9LJN, Gene Duncan, W9GD, Gene Harlan, WB9MMM, Randy Scott, W9HL, NJDXA, 425DXN, ARRL, Wendy Owano, KC9BCF, Bob Davidson, WA9NTT, Dick Fleming, KC9BCB, ARRL, AMSAT,U.S. Geological Survey, Amateur Radio Newsline

VIRGINIA HOSPITALS SAY YES TO HAM RADIO

Hospitals in Roanoke, Virginia, will soon be ham radio equipped. Mike Knight, K4IJ, reports through the Repeater Journal that a budget of twenty-five thousand dollars has been approved for the installation of Amateur stations at between ten and twelve primary healthcare facilities in the Roanoke area.

Knight says that the system will include a dual band base radio, a mobile radio, a power supply, antennas and full lightning protection at each hospital. Also going on-line will be a pair of commercial grade FM voice repeaters with backup generators, and a dedicated digital repeater. The voice systems will have IRLP and Echolink tie-ins to communicate outside the local area.

When completed, the Roanoke system will consist of five to six linked repeaters. The base stations will be connected to each hospitals emergency power system to keep them on the air.

TOO MUCH MORSE CODE

The FCC is asking a Missouri ham why he is running a Morse code training program smack in the middle of the 40 meter band. The target of the inquiry is Paul D. Westcott, KC0OAB of Purdy who apparently has code practice on the air around the clock.

Its June 21st letter to Westcott notes that the agency had previously discussed this matter with KCOOAB and was given assurances that the transmissions he was making were for Morse Code practice. Since that time the agency has received another complaint which alleges that the purported 40 meter code practice transmissions are 24 hours a day, seven days per week. The FCC says that due to the crowded rature of the 40 Meter Band, it is extremely inconsiderate to take up spectrum in that area for transmissions 24 hours a day. This, even if it is purportedly for "code practice" purposes.

The agency has posed several questions to Westcott to explain his operation and was given 20 days from the date of the FCC letter to provide a very detailed response.

Rockford Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

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> Mailing Address Goes Here

July 2004