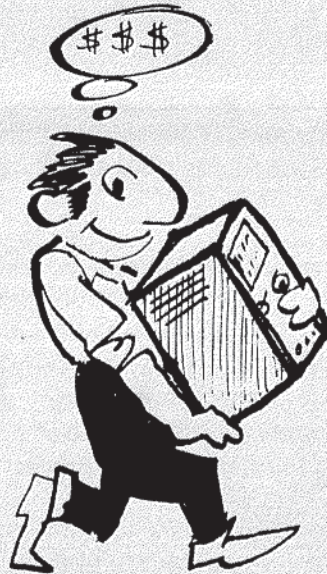


Ham Rag

Rockford Amateur Radio Association

FEBRUARY, 1983

R.A.R.A. AUCTION NIGHT



*Room 222, Classroom Building 1
Rock Valley College
February 11th, 1983 • 7:00 p.m.*

President's Log

Again, we find ourselves thanking the outgoing officers for a job well done. If you didn't attend the January RARA Dinner, you missed one of the year's finest happenings. Unless we hear a lot of feedback from you, we will try for the same place and month again next year. As for the members that I have talked to; they all seemed pleased as to the location and the time. At any rate, it was enjoyed by all who attended.

Total attendance at the banquet was 115, with 71 of those being licensed Hams. As usual, dues for the year were also collected that night; 58 to be exact. So, about half or little more of you are paid up at this time. This is also a reminder that the March issue of the Ham Rag will be the last one you receive unless your dues are in and paid.

Numerous certificates and awards were given out, with the "Ham Of The Year" going to AK9N/Gene. Congratulations to Gene, and thanks for all the time and effort put into this club this year and in the past.

Several nice attendance prizes were also given out. I even won one of them myself—an 83 Foreign Callbook. (What a Surprise!) Someone said that now I will have to turn on my radio. Anyway, getting back to the Grand Prize, it was a TS-1000 Computer and it went to Paul/KR9P. Have fun Paul, and try not to let it cut into too much of your air time.

At the dinner we were also able to get the count of the number of members belonging to the ARRL. That count was 51. We will have some more come in and that will give us the numbers needed to continue our affiliation with the ARRL.

Coming up **February 11 is the Annual Club Auction**. So take a look around the shack or basement and see if you have anything you'd like to try and get rid of. Remember, you'll be helping the club, as it gets 10% of the sale or all of it if you make a donation. Come to the meeting and have some fun with the Hawaiian Auctioneer at Rock Valley College, Building 1, Room 222 at 7:00 P.M.

Again this year, an Awareness Day is being planned for the month of March. Jim/WD9FVF is in charge of this activity and can use your help. If interested, please contact him and help make it a success.

From time to time over the past years I've often thought about trying to write a technical type article for the *Ham Rag*. I still want to get around to that. It's just one of those things that I've always figured that I didn't quite know how to do. If any of you ever get that urge to contribute to this paper, give it a try. We all find a hidden talent.



73, Bob/WA9NTT

Memorable Moments

From the life of Gene, AK9N

Gene's been known to test a circuit using the wet finger principle. The testing procedure resulted in an arc between his eyeballs and his little toe tapping out in morse code *SHORT CIRCUIT! SHORT CIRCUIT!*

AK9N is co-founder with KI9F of the group of idiots known affectionately as the *IRONMEN*. When first getting warmed up, in the much forgettable past, KB9IW challenged them to see who could stay on the air the longest. Finally at 3:30 A.M., AK9N and KI9F informed same that they had the next day off work. HA! HA! to you Steve.

The original idea for KB9PC's recent award, a device that transmits on all frequencies simultaneously, came from a CW team contest at AK9N's QTH. Reports have it that a ham traveling down North Second Street could hear CW on the AM broadcast band. When this was brought to Gene's attention he said, "*We ARE getting out, aren't we?*"

FOXHUNTS — he's gone around in circles so many times that his kids have often asked "Gee Dad, haven't we been here before?"

He's been known to come off second best in the black board jungle. When teaching a general class he was attacked by a runaway piece of chalk and tripped up by the blackboard, causing him great emotional turmoil. The students then wondered aloud, "*HE'S IN CHARGE?*"

We've all heard about putting your tower up in good WX, but a few local Hams remember the near ice storm which occurred the day Gene's went up. All hams involved were wet to their socks in five minutes. It must have been all of 37°F. at least. Gee thanks Gene, great timing!!!

Speaking of towers, when was it you climbed your'a with umbrella in hand???

Then there was the time he put a TV antenna up on his garage roof. We can guess what happened when that first tiny breeze came along.

At the recent banquet, Gene was given the dubious honor of photographing a "red herring" who who the task of photographing him, each believing the other was about to become Ham Of The Year. After much jockeying for position, the announcement was made, flash bulbs went off like a nuclear chain reaction. *SURPRISE!!!*

U. Ben Had

CQ DX

Hi Gang! hope everybody is having a good winter of DXing. Oh yes it is probably not as good as last winter, but we are on the down hill side of the sunspot cycle. When we have openings take advantage of them. There will be good openings and many disturbances as you have heard by now.

At this time I want to thank W9SS, WB9LEF, KS9B (ex 9LUX) for their excellent articles last year. I want to thank everybody for information, K9LJN, AK9N, WB9LEF, KS9B, KC9AP, KB9OW, KI9G, KB9LN, KC9BN and others. The success of this column is greatly helped by your input.

We now operate on 147.465 SIMPLEX. This frequency is used by local DX'ers for information so if you have anything going on DX check in. Also we are forming a DX group. This is a group of area DX'ers or prospective DX'ers. Once a month we plan an informal meeting. It seems most DX'ers like pizza, so we will meet at different locations around the area. Also we will meet on different days, so we can get some of the fellows and gals who are tied up on a particular day. At meetings DX'ers will informally talk about tips on QSL'ing, DX'ing, rigs, antennas, etc. **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT KS9B OR K9IKP.** Everybody is welcome.

Most of the bands are up and down now, so tune around and make calls even if the signals are weak. At Polo back around 1966 I was tuning 10 one night. The band was dead. At one spot I heard a very weak signal. I made a call and it turned out to be 9V10I, SINGAPORE. *NOT TOO SHABBY FOR BAREFOOT TR3 DRAKE AND TH3 HYGAIN AT 50 FEET HIGH.* On 15 the other night the band was poor but I made a few calls. All at once the band opened up and I worked 90 JA's, DU1, HL1, XE1 and VS5 in 50 minutes. It pays to tune a lot, but make a few CQ's once in a while and you could be very surprised at the results.

On another occasion on 20, I heard an FB8 which I needed badly. The pileup was horrible, I knew I did not stand a chance. So I moved up about 15 KHz and called CQ DX and worked a DJ2, I1, CT1. After the CT1 QSO I stood by and there was the FB8 calling me. The pileup got out of hand and he took off and heard me. You should have heard the pileup when we signed!!! So put yourself in the DX operators situation, it may help in working him.

DATE	CALL	COUNTRY	FREQ.	TIME	QSL INFO.
December 28	FC6GSE	Corsica	28.010	15:00	Bureau
December 27	TU2HJ	Ivory Coast	28.620	14:00	W3HNK
December 27	Norfolk Island	21.370	23:30	Direct	
December 27	CE0AE	Easter Island	21.350	24:00	WA3HUP
December 26	PY0TA	Trinidad	21.025	0:200	PY1DOQ
December 26	PY0TA	Trinidad	14.025	0:100	PY1DOQ
December 25	9L1DR	Sierra Leone	14.216	23:00	Direct
December 27	JW5IJ	Svalbard	14.205	01:00	LA5NM
December 29	6C35A	Syria	14.210	14:00	?????
December 29	3B8CF	Mauritius	7.001	02:30	Direct
December 30	9J2BO	Zambia	7.005	24:00	W6ORD
December 30	ON4UN	Belgium	3.503	05:00	Bureau
January 1	4K1D	Antartica	7.005	04:00	UA1AFM
January 3	SV0CT	Greece	7.004	0:300	N4AXT
January 6	FB8ZZ		14.013	0:100	F6AJN
January 5	T30AT	Ckiribati	7.014	06:00	G3XXF

HEARD AND WORKED BY AK9N

December 29	ZS5WT		7.005	03:45
	ZF2FK		7.010	05:30
	DL7PR		3.536	05:45
	DJ1RL		3.505	05:50
Decembr 30	UK2FBR		14.028	01:00
December 31	F8VJ		3.507	06:40
	ON4UN		3.501	06:50
January 2	ZS5MY		7.001	03:45
	IS0OMH		7.004	03:50
	CT1BQH		7.004	04:15
	HC2NYR		7.014	04:20
	ZS6DN	Rhombia	7.022	04:30
	OK3CSC		7.006	04:45
	I0JX		7.013	05:00
January 4	HL1AGS		28.550	23:40
	DU1REX		28.553	23:45
January 9	UJ8BQ		14.038	03:30
	7P8BT		14.013	04:00
	5B4LY		14.002	05:00

WORKED BY KI9G

January 12	P29NSF		28.555	22:30
January 12	DU1REX		28.560	22:50

Look for these DX stations on the bands. Information from W9SS.

FB8ZQ	Amsterdam and St. Paul Islands.	20 Meter CW	
BY8AA	China	15 metr. CW	Daily
TL8CK	Central Africa Rep.	75 mtr.	0300z
9N1OAT	Nepal	40-10 SSB	
LU5ZA	S. Orkney Is. Starting Jan. 15 for 1 month on	14.195, or split operation 21.295-28595	
VK1HI	for six weeks on all bands and all modes		
VK0JS	Heard Is. for two to four weeks.		

Hope everybody is working Heard Island. It may be 10 to 15 years before another operations. It is unusual to have 2 expeditions at a very rare DX country at the same time. VK0 Heard Island has been on the TOP TEN MOST WANTED LIST for years.

Next months article will be written by Gene AK9N, super CW DX op. If you have any DX information let him know. I am very happy to have Gene help us.

73, Gene/K9IKP
(ex KR6KV)





Photos by "KC9AP & KI9G"

Spectrum



Photo by "JIM KC9AP"

February 10, 1948, Murphy struck again in Belvidere, Illinois. Nye and Rachel Melton had just produced a future Ham of the Year. Gene attended the Belvidere School System and graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a BS EE in 1970. He spent his Jr. year (1968-69) as an exchange student in Monterrey, Mexico.

Gene has been employed by Commonwealth Edison since January 1971, as an electrical engineer. He and his YL, Sue, were married October 27, 1973. They have two sons, Todd and Matt, 8 and 5 years old.

His interest in amateur radio began with short wave listening while he was yet in grade school. He was first licensed as WD9CMB in 1977, advanced class, bypassing Novice, Tech and General tickets. He upgraded to Extra in 1979, receiving his present call AK9N. His club activities have been Vice President in 1979, President in 1980, Treasurer in 1981, board member 1982, instructor for novice, general and advanced classes since 1978, and

occasionally NCS for the Black Hawk Valley 10 10 Net. He has also headed the 40 meter team for Field Day for the past two years.

Gene says the things he enjoys most are *"tinkering, late Monday nights at 28.700 MHz, friends made over the years, full envelopes from the QSL Bureau, contesting, computers, chasing DX on CW, and tinkering with audio equipment and photography. Not necessarily in that order."* As for CW DX pileups, he has been heard to say *"I'll never be a big gun, but I'll keep trying!"* Presently he has 105 countries confirmed on CW and those cards are resting on their laurels at the ARRL DXCC desk. Needless to say he's hoping for a speedy return of same.

His current projects include more work on the computer he built up from bare boards and recently started a class in computer programming at Rock Valley College.

Over the years, Gene has always been available to help anyone who would inquire. He's helped raise hundreds of feet of tower, innumerable antennas and miles of coax. He has been an instructor many times, then turns around to help the new novice get on the air.

Upon winning the award, Gene's first comment was, *"I've been had."* It seems the board had the ballots cast by the membership and the majority of them had Gene's name on them. Without him in attendance, they elected him, Ham of the Year. When Gene arrived, they had a second election for is benefit, electing a clay pidgeon. It turned out to be the best kept scam of the year, as he says he was *"very surprised."* When I asked YL Sue's reaction, she said, *"Well, I was very surprised, but I think he deserves it and I'm glad he got it."* So are we Sue, so are we.

73, Carol/KI9G

Novice Corner

Greetings again to all the Novices, Technicians and any others who may be reading this column. It's going to be hard for me to admit this but I have to say that I really blew it in last month's article on QSL'ing. What I should have written about instead of QSL'ing is the Novice Round-Up contest. By the time you are reading this right now, the contest period is already at least half over. But there is still some time left to get in on the fun of Novice Round-Up if you're not already in the contest.

For those who have never been in the Novice Round-Up and may not know what it's all about, I'll give some of the more pertinent details of this fun and challenging contest. The Novice Round-Up is an ARRL sponsored contest in which only Novices and Technicians are eligible to compete for awards. All entrants that submit their results to the ARRL will get their scores listed in OST and any with 200 or more QSO's receive a nice certificate from the ARRL. General class and higher licensed hams may only operate in the sense that they are making themselves available for Novices and Techs to establish contact with, thereby helping the Novices and Techs to increase their scores.

The Novice Round-Up starts (*oops-started!*) at 0001 UTC on January 29 and ends 2359 UTC on February 6th. Converting this to local time, this means the contest started at 6:01 P.M. Friday, January 28 and ends at 5:59 P.M. Saturday, February 5. The idea is to work as many stations as possible in as many different ARRL sections and foreign countries as possible.

In a nutshell, the operating procedure for the Novice Round-Up is as follows. Work each station **only once**. Try to keep your contacts as short as possible. Send your exchange (RST and ARRL section - in our case, IL) only once and repeat it only if requested to do so. Keep your CQ's short, too.

RULES FOR NOVICE ROUND-UP

1. **Object:** For Novices and Technicians to work as many stations as possible on the 3.5-, 7-, 21-, and 28 MHz Novice/Tech bands.
2. **Contest Period:** 0001 UTC January 29 to 2359 UTC February 6. Operate no more than 30 hours. Off periods must be at least 15 minutes long; listening time counts as operating time
3. **Categories:**
 - (A) **Single operator:** One person performs all operating and logging functions.
 - (B) **Multi-Operator:** One transmitter only; a station with another person logging or serving as a relief operator.
4. **Exchange:** Signal report (RST) and ARRL section or country for DX stations.
5. **Scoring:**
 - (A) **QSO Points:** One point for each complete 2-way QSO. Work each station **ONLY ONCE** regardless of frequency band.
 - (B) **Multiplier:** Each ARRL section, each Canadian section plus each foreign country.
 - (C) **Code Proficiency:** Additional points can be obtained if you have qualified for an ARRL code proficiency certificate

Complete details and other contest rules may be found in January 1983 QST magazine, page 87.

Even though you may have not entered the contest yet, there's still time to get in on the fun of the Novice Round-Up. If you need contest forms, contact me and I will either have them or let you know where you can get them. Good luck and have fun in **your** contest! You'll be surprised how much it can help you on increasing your code speed.

73, Brad, KA9LTR

Digital/Micro Corner

THE "APPLE" IN TAIWAN

Boy, what a temptation, an "Apple II" computer for \$200 to \$275. Well not quite... It looks like an Apple, but the name is different (*or it has no name at all*). While in Taiwan in January I visited the electronic stores in Taipei to see many computers for sale that appear to be Apple II computers (*all advertise they are compatible*) and people are lined up by the dozens in front of each machine, waiting to play games or write programs on the display models. It seems that many companies in Taiwan have copied the Apple right down to the appearance of the case. If you look inside there is no apparent difference. The people of Taiwan are very good at copying, especially if they can make a profit. Since these copies are made without paying any copyright fees, the units can be sold very cheap, and they still make good money.

Don't get ready to place your order yet, however. The newspapers try to make it clear in Taiwan that because copyright fees are not being paid, customs in Japan and the U.S. will not only take them away, but fine anyone trying to import one! So much for thoughts of having an Apple II for almost nothing. As a matter of interest, however, some of the people from Taiwan mentioned that there have been problems with some units. Maybe being able to copy the unit is not enough, technical know-how helps! As for our government not allowing them in the states, they are only protecting the rights of the people who put all the work and sweat into the product. With the economy as bad as it is, we should be glad to know our government is trying to look out for us. As much as I would like to have an Apple for a very low price, I feel what they are doing is more important! I'll just have to save a little longer.

THANKS!!! The response over the first DIGITAL/MICRO column really encourages me. Shari had many comments (*in my absence*) and I even had letters waiting for me when I got home. One of the letters had a question. Since others may want the same information (*this will apply to future questions submitted in writing as space permits*) I will repeat it and the answer I found.

QUESTION: IS THERE A DISK DRIVE AVAILABLE FOR THE SINCLAIR ZX81?

Sinclair has plans for making one, but at this time it is not available. The design is specifically for the ZX Spectrum, their new color computer version, but I'd be surprised if it were not compatible. Another company, MEMOTECH Corp., Denver, Colorado, advertises that this product is "coming soon" When I called, however, they stated that although production was to start in March, the project has been put on the back burner due to "lack of interest." I find that hard to believe. Maybe someone should call them toll free--- 800/662-0949.

Thanks again for your interest and offers of assistance. I can use all the help in the form of questions, short programs, ideas, and articles.

Potpourri

Well, what resolution(s) did you make for 1983? Many that are made are soon broken or forgotten entirely during the first few days in the year. I admire a person who promises to do something and then does it. I play it safe and don't make promises then I don't have to live up to it. I promised myself to be considerate to kids and little old ladies. It is better to be polite and to wear a smile than to show displeasure and contempt. Nuff sed!

It's your own fault if you didn't attend the January 15th banquet. Everyone there seemed to enjoy it all, rubbing elbows and eating a nice dinner. I would place this year's party higher on the list of others held in the past. I think everyone knows by this time that the lucky person who won the attendance prize was Paul Johnston, KR9P. A very deserving guy won the "Ham Of The Year Award". It went to Gene Melton, AK9N.

We can all look forward to various club activities during the year. Also *Ham Fests*. The first one in this area is the one at Arlington Heights on February 6th. I hope to go and take a back or two with me just in case I run across something that I can't stand to pass up.

Most of the club activities last year are contemplated for this year. In order for each one to be a success, members should offer their support and assist program chairmen, the more who participate; the easier it is for everyone.

Recent Upgrades — Bill Becker/KA9JSZ, Lindsey Schotte/KA9NSO, David Bond/KA9NYJ, Now N9DRQ, all to tech. Rumor has it Russ Nimacks/N9AUZ, has advanced to Extra. Congratulations!

George 9GH has returned to work following surgery. Ray/W9VTL is home from surgery and Ziggy/W9MOS is recovering from heart surgery in St. Anthony hospital. Our good wishes go out to these fellows and we hope for a speedy recovery.

Amen, Chuck/N9CCH

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P.O. BOX 1744, ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61110

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FEBRUARY 11th, 1983 • 7:00 P.M.

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