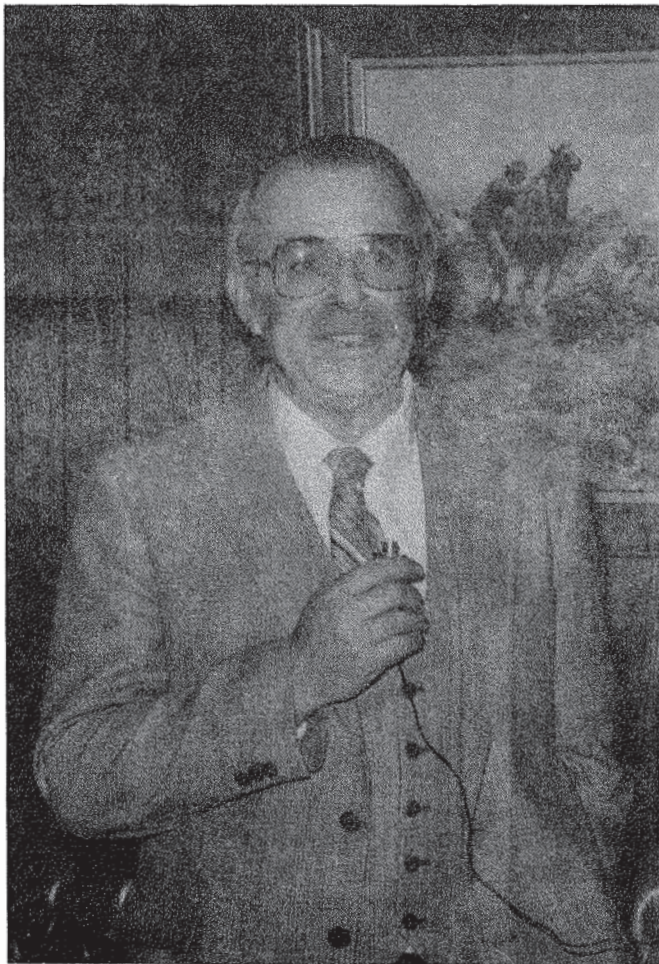


Ham Rag

Rockford Amateur Radio Association
February, 1984



Notice

Novice and General Classes:

Get acquainted night March 13, 1984

Harlem Community Center, 900 Roosevelt Road, Rockford, Illinois

7 to 9 p.m. Classes start the night of March 20, 1984, 6 to 9 p.m. at the Harlem Community Center. Books will be available at Canterbury Books, located at the Edgebrook Shopping Center. Books needed for the Novice class are AMECO NOVICE THEORY, ARRL LICENSE MANUAL; code tapes will be available at class.

Books needed for the General Class are: SHRADER'S AMATEUR RADIO THEORY AND PRACTICE AND THE LICENSE MANUAL.

Cost is \$15.00 plus text books and tape.

If you are (licensed/prospective amateur) interested in a class (upgrade/novice) please fill out the following and send it to either KI9G or AK9N, or call them before the 13th of March.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Call _____ Telephone _____

Interested in: Novice Technician/General

KI9G

Carol Holmes
3010 Lotus Lane
Rockford, Illinois 61111
633-3249

AK9N

Gene Melton
923 Otto Road
Rockford, Illinois 61111
654-0675

R.A.R.A. AUCTION NIGHT



Repeater Tips

DO NOT use CQ or QRZ. These are not considered appropriate for repeater operation. If you wish to contact another station, just call that station. If you wish to notify others that you are listening on the repeater, give your call and so state.

DO NOT key the repeater with your mike button to determine if the repeater is in operation.

DO NOT use the repeater for long "rag chews". Please use simplex frequencies when possible. Short conversations between mobiles and base stations beyond simplex range is certainly permissible. Use common sense about the length of contacts and needs of others for the repeater.

DO NOT abuse auto-patch privileges. Business message of any kind are not permitted, such as calling time and temperature with a commercial type advertisement, or a business that has a music on hold feature on their telephone system.

DO NOT use the word "break" to interrupt a conversation unless you have emergency priority traffic. Instead, give your call and wait for the other parties to acknowledge you and allow you to join in with them. Other parties should show common courtesy and allow other stations to use the repeater. "Break" and "Break-Break" is being used on a nationwide basis as a request for use of a repeater for emergency or priority traffic. We wish to develop this practice locally if all will cooperate.

DO pause between transmissions to let priority traffic or others indicate the need for the repeater.

DO (at the present time) wait for the "squell tail" drop out before transmitting.

DO refrain from using the repeater (other than emergency) if you determine it is starting to malfunction and save the equipment from further damage.

DO follow the directions of control stations (there are six of them and they will identify themselves as such) when restrictions are needed in the operation of the repeater.

DO properly identify yourself by giving your call and if mobile or portable and the zone (normally 9) after your call.

DO attend meetings and voice your recommendations, complaints, praise and help maintain the effective operation of the repeater with your support and financial donations as needed.

THIS IS YOUR LIFE FRANK HIRSCH - KS9X 1983 HAM OF THE YEAR

As a low-profile amateur who is mostly involved with rag chewing with minimal DXing, Frank never imagined he would be chosen as RARA's Ham of the Year for 1983.

It all started for Frank in Bloomington, Illinois, where he was born on March 15, 1933. (so you don't have to do a lot of calculating, Frank said he is 39.)

Frank's education was at St. Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Indiana. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Geology with minors in Chemistry and Economics.

Frank's interest in Amateur Radio really started, but was never achieved, when he was a PFC serving his country in the Army. Frank was stationed in Giessen, Germany, with the 594th Field Artillery. Frank was a radio operator. The years were 1955 through 1957.

Frank met Mary Ann Toohill and on November 15, 1958, Frank and Mary Ann were married. Frank and Mary Ann now have five children: Betty, Jim, Diana, Karen, and Steve. While Diana and Karen were fourth grade students at White Swan School, they had Kathryn Becker as their teacher. Kathryn is now better known as Kay, N9DRL to Frank and Mark Ann.

It was not until Herb Eckstein, K9AMJ, was installing a phone in Frank's company truck that Frank was put in touch with WBPBR, Carl Cacciatore. Carl got Frank into a RARA ham class.

"He made me so mad," Shari, WB9SFT, said of Frank. "He just sat there drinking coffee while I was trying to teach him code." Frank already knew code. HI! HI!

Well, "ole Frank" didn't do so bad with classes. Here are the results: Novice - KA9BQM - 7/07/78, General - KA9BQM - 5/29/79, Advanced - KB9KH - 3/04/80. The big one, Extra - KS9X - 2/04/83.

Frank's achievements in RARA club are many. Frank was Field Day chairman in 1980, 1981, and co-chairman with Russ Murray, WD9FVI, in 1983. Frank was elected President of RARA for 1982 and was director for 1983. Frank was again elected director for the 1984 year. Frank also teaches ham classes for the RARA.

Frank likes the social aspects of Ham Radio. He likes to do things for other hams. He likes to learn more about ham radio by helping others with their projects, like planning towers and antennae. QST, 73, and CQ magazines keep him updated on what's going on in Ham Radio.

Frank told me one thing he would like to see in the RARA is more participation by club members. It's their club, and only they can make it work. I could not agree more with you, Frank.

Well, here's our Ham of the Year for 1983. It sure looks like the RARA board and directors made a goof choice.

This is your life Frank Hirsch/KS9X - Ham of the Year for 1983.

On the occasion of the presentation of the Ham of the Year for 1983, this writer wondered how KS9X managed to pull it off. He is an "Extra", but no one knows quite how he managed that either. It took Frank so many trips to the Federal Building that the examiners usually greeted him with "back again, huh?" Of course it might not have taken so long if he hadn't been so distracted by all the pretty secretaries. Once he never got past the 27th floor where the secretarial pool was having a party. Forty three young girls and one tired old man. That must have been the same week they had the fire drill. We know he didn't provide the spark!!!

Is this the same fellow who appeared wearing an alligator hat at various club functions? He had to be physically restrained from wearing that hat while being interviewed by the video media for Field Day. He was also seen dressed in the fatigues of a common convict at one of the Awareness Day functions. Photographic proof of the above misdemeanors is available.

Some people say that standards of today's Hams have been plummeting, that they're not receiving the training that they did in the past. Could this possibly be the fault of a certain instructor of Rules & Regs? Sometimes known as Hot Wire Hirsch, who's own father couldn't teach him to keep his wet fingers out of the light socket.

Is this the same person who thought that his new multi-tubed \$2,000 linear was for making popcorn? Our Ham of the Year is the same guy who leaves sleeves of his PL259's!!!

He's the only guy we know who makes a living digging holes for gophers, the rest of us make them dig their own. Most people would have the sense to give up a boring job. Speaking of gophers, the new multi-million dollar Coleman Center on Rockford's far east side is being bombarded daily with cross-polarized high frequency RF energy aimed primarily at the little varmints. At least he has not appeared on the big screen over at the Belford, yet! The least of the gopher worries is the RF energy, he has been known to supervise the construction of a big hole in the ground and then drive his company truck right into it!!!

Did you realize Saudi Arabia is trying to have quiet hours imposed on Frank for his Monday Night Net activities? And he says he's only running 7 watts. Rumor has it the foxhunts were originally started for Frank's benefit. His first effort took four hours to cover two blocks. Inside sources have revealed he drop a carrier on the 2 meter band on the way out of the garage in the A.M. and follows it home after work in the P.M. Once he actually arrived in time for supper. He carries the term "Ham Widow" too far, he has two children in college that haven't seen Daddy since grade school.

To celebrate the occasion of his half century mark, his lovely YL Maryanne, put together a surprise party so all his friends, acquaintances, & neighbors could poke fun at him. There was so much material to work with, everyone came up with a different subject. All were riotously funny, but true. By the way Frank, whatever happened to the gallon jug with the yeast floating inside?

Frank's President's Log was always written with a South of the Border flavor. Speedy Gonzalez had nothing on our boy, but he was never delivered in a plain brown wrapper as the 1982 issue of this publication should have been. This author hesitates to bring this up again, but quoting the afore mentioned issue, "hearts turned toward erections in the Spring" was his first thought. Frank has claimed to this day it was a typo/computer glitch. On second thought, I won't mention it again.

U Ben Had





Tech Topics

It's only a couple of weeks away! It's here! There's a hamfest to go to! What should I look for? To answer that how about filling out the test equipment stock now that you've got all the ham gear you want? (Ha!)

I mentioned last month that I felt that a SWR bridge is about the most important piece of test equipment in the shack. The next thing on my list is a decent multimeter. In fact, a multimeter will probably find more use, including non-ham needs. This type of meter has probably changed more over the last few years than the ham gear you can't keep up with. The choice we had in the past was to go to Radio Shack (or J&M or Lafayette, etc.) and buy either a cheap or expensive analog multimeter. Most went and bought the cheaper one, which served us well when used with care. However, we usually left it on ohms, tried to measure volts, and blew it up. The expensive one would have protected itself, but would have cost \$100 instead of \$30. Then the digital meters came out, and the news was good, they could protect themselves from almost anything. But they cost \$200 and what good is a digital meter for adjusting to a minimum and maximum easily anyway? Besides they weren't any good for checking continuity of semiconductors because they didn't apply enough voltage.

Fortunately times have continued to change. How would you like to have an instrument that could check the continuity of the coax in that new antenna system and then help to fix the toaster? After that it might measure any voltage in the rig or the power supply and give you a digital reading so you don't have to figure what those lines mean. I know you have been content with the 2 to 5 percent accuracy of the normal analog meter, but what if this read to better one percent accuracy? Now if it had an analog indicator to watch while making minimum or maximum adjustments (necessary both on ham equipment and garage door openers) this could be paradise. The typical state of the art "pocket" multimeter will do all of the above. Voltage can be measured between 0 and 1000 volts, current between 0 and 10 amps, resistance from a tenth of an ohm to above 10 megohms. This will be done to at least one percent, and perhaps as well as one half of one percent maximum error. Resistance tests can be done as usual, or with enough voltage to check that bad power supply diode. Attempting to use one of these when set to the wrong scale will either give odd ball or blinking readings, or at the worst will blow a fuse. All of this is accomplished by a device selling for less than \$100. In fact, for the \$80 to \$100 area, you can get a meter that will also beep for continuity tests so you don't have to look, runs on battery for 2000 hours, will hold its last reading for us, and has up to a three year warranty. Models 73 and 75 by Fluke are examples of this new breed, other well known manufacturers are B&K, Data Precision, Keithley, Simpson, etc. I need one of these. So do you. Happy hamfests!

Steve

Secretary's Log

On January 14th, 1984, the RARA Awards Banquet was held at Josey Wales. Close to 120 people attended. Everyone seemed to have a good time. It was nice to have an eyeball with people you don't see very often and with those you do.

After an excellent buffet (a person could really "PIG" out), the awards were handed out. Bob, WA9NTT, and Chuck, N9CCH, presented certificates to the following: Carol/KI9G, Frank/KS9X, Gene/AK9N, and Russ/WD9FVI for teaching novice classes, Jim/WD9FVF for Awareness Day, Frank/KS9X and Russ/WD9FVI for Field Day, Paul/KR9P for the Disaster Drill in Roscoe, Bill/KB9UR for the 10K Race, Russ/WD9FVI for the Rock River Clean-Up, JoAnn/KA9DNQ, Dale/KB9WD, and Chuck/N9CCH for the Picnic (remember the pig?), Bill/KB9UR and Shari/WB9SFT for the Marathon, and Paul/K9VJJ for his Public Relations work. Shari/WB9SFT presented certificates to all the "Ham Rag" writers. Good Job! A special certificate was given to Alice/SOON??? for her good work as circulation manager. Thanks, Alice! Bob/WA9NTT presented plaques to: Steve/KB9IW and Bill/KB9UR for being 2 Meter Net Controls, Chuck/N9CCH for the 10-10 Blackhawk Valley Net, and Brad/KA9LTR for the CW net. Bob thanked the outgoing directors for all their help this past year. We'll miss you! Plaques were given to: Dale/KT9P, Frank/KS9X, Moe/N9CCE, and Jim/WD9FVF. The new directors were introduced. They are Gary/K9LJN, Ron/N9DPP, Dave/N9DRQ, and Frank/KS9X. Good luck, guys! (Frank must be a glutton for punishment! Hi! Hi!) Gene/Ka9BOD presented plaques to the officers: Bob/WA9NTT, President, Chuck/N9CCH, Vice President, Kay/N9DRL, Secretary, Brad/KA9LTR, Treasurer, and Shari/WB9SFT, Ham Rag Editor. At last the big one arrived! Gene/AK9N helped with the presentation of the Ham of the Year plaque. Congratulations to Frank, KS9X! He really deserves it!

An Awards Banquet would not be complete without attendance prizes. Many nice and useful things were won by lucky people. Robby, son of Hanne/DK3XJ and Dick/N9UN, helped Bob/WA9NTT, Chuck/N9CCH, and Gene/Ka9BOD with the drawing. I imagine everyone whose ticket was drawn thanks Robby. Among the prizes given were: a 1983 foreign callbook, a 1984 U.S. Callbook, books from the ARRL, outlet strip, soldering kit, telephone, lanterns, etc. The 9" black & white AC/DC TV was won by Alice Davidson. Lucky gal! The top prize was a VIC 20 which was won by Shirley, XYL of Jerry/KU9S. Congratulations!

If you weren't able to make the banquet this year, I hope you can next year. It will be at Josey Wales again. They do an excellent job providing the food and decorations. Also plan to attend our February meeting which will be the auction. Maybe you have some treasures to get rid of.

73, Kay, N9DRL

Tower Erection & Building Permits

I think many of us were under the impression that building permits were not required when putting up a tower for Amateur Radio, CB, or TV. NOT TRUE. It wasn't too long ago that Marv/KC9WF and Kay/N9DRL had an inspector stop by and inform them that it was. Now that we are putting up a tower at our new house we had the same thing happen. It appears that in both cases, someone called in to complain. I decided to meet with the person in charge so I could find out what is necessary, etc. and find out what the attitude of the building department was.

I met with BILL DETTMER of the building department who was very friendly, informative and helpful. He stated that building permits are required as they want to make sure that the towers are installed properly. I guess they have only had a few problems with improper or unsafe installations. Bill stated that he is not an expert on towers or amateur radio but is willing to work with us to accomplish what we need. Basically any antenna/tower installed over 12 feet high needs a permit. Grounding of the tower is one of the main things they will check, as well as wind load, and whether or not the tower is non-combustable. They frown on wooden towers unless it is standing away from building and not more than 100 feet high. They are also concerned where you fasten towers or guys to the roof for structural problems and maintaining water tightness. The depth of the cement seems to be important (probably want to make sure it is deeper than the frost line - 36 inches deep seems to make them happy).

The cost of the permit is \$10.00 as long as the value declared is less than \$1000. I would recommend you declare less than \$1000 as the cost of the permit jumps to \$48.00 if you declare a greater value. The value that you declare does not affect your property valuation as you are not adding living space.

To summarize, I was very happy to see the building department cooperative and helpful. Bill even stated that if the amateurs were not happy with the present regulations that there was nothing saying that they could not be changed. He stated that he is working for us and willing to work with us. What more can we ask for???

de, Gene, WB9MMM

Potpourri

Well, another awards dinner party has come and gone and I didn't hear any complaints. Our group held many fine activities during the year and the one which most of us look forward to is our awards dinner. The ham of the year award went to a guy we all felt deserved it — Frank Hirsch, KS9X. Recognition certificates and plaques were given to hams who had participated in several activities during 1983 and attendance prizes made several people very happy. The top prize went to Shirley Alberts, the pride and joy of Gerry, KU9S. Oh yes, it was a Computer. And guess what, the president's wife won the black & white TV set. I might just as well tell everybody that my wife won a telephone and I won a soldering iron. A big thanks to my young friend Robby Steinhauser who pulled out the winning numbers.

K9RNR, Paul Franklin, surprised everyone and went into Chicago on the QT and upgraded to extra class before the first of the year. That's the way to go Paul. Congratulations...

Remarks made at the end of most contacts seem to me to be a lot of superfluous "chit-chat" and could just as well be left unsaid. Some examples are: I'll let you go — be good — see you again — have a nice day — I'll talk to you later — take care — etc. Perhaps I have been guilty of this too, but doesn't these so called niceties sound a bit ridiculous? Why not simply say 73, and give your call sign. I think 73 covers everything, except maybe an 88.

I would hate to be the only dog that has pulled a boo-boo but do you know that KS9X, our ham of the year for '83 pushed a wrong buttin, turned the wrong knob or done something to his rig because his XMTR went "PFUT". Sorry about that Frank. Sure hope it is easy to correct without too much expense.

73, Chuck, N9CCH

Most of the local hams and many of her DX contacts know her by her first name. I'm talking about our friend Gertrude, KB9PC. For some twenty-eight years she has been a permanent resident but now, as of Tuesday, January 17th, she became a U.S. citizen.

Three Cheers For Gertrude.

ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. BOX 1744, ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61110

OFFICERS		DIRECTORS				
President	Bob Davidson	WA9NTT	877-6274	Frank Hirsch	KS9X	397-6966
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Ham Mart

FOR SALE

Hygain Thunderbird Jr, 10-15-20 meter beam Ham 4 rotor; Kenwood 830S with external speaker; Kenwood MC50 mike.

(Will trade for a video recorder and camera)

Call Jim Ambruoso, WD9FVF at 654-3620 for price.

FOR SALE

WANTED

Sencore VA-48 video Analyzer; TV parts' modules; transistors, etc.

Clarence Wilken, 938-2221 or 938-2564,

Rt 2, Box 3, Forreston, IL 61030

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