

# HAM RAG



## RARA Mission Statement

A member association with common interest of public service to the community through Amateur Radio

## March 2008

### President's Corner

Ah, March..... It's too cold to work on the antenna for a long time but I sure wish I could. This has been one long winter. It feels like it anyway. We had a board meeting! That in itself was a great accomplishment. Success feels good. We accomplished a lot in two hours. I asked the Directors to take an active leadership role within the club. Without exception, they were eager to do it. The Directors and Board Members, will become Chairmen for various club activities this year and they will ask the general membership to assist them as Co-chairs. Our Directors and Board Members are some of the most active members of RARA. Asking them to take on additional responsibilities was risky but I felt it was the right thing to do. If you are asked to Co-chair an activity, say yes.

Dick Fleming – KC9BCB did a great job on securing two park district sites for us this year. Alpine Park, Shelter #1 has been reserved for the Family Picnic. And Martin Park shelter (it's an enclosed shelter by the way), along the river across from Cliff Breakers has been reserved for Breakfast in the Park. Both are great locations. Thanks for all of your efforts Dick. You dun good!

Kurt Eversole - KE9NJ has reserved Aldeen Park for Field Day this year. We will have quite a bit of visibility at that location, drive by as well as TV coverage. Some of our previous locations were a little off the beaten path for either of those to happen. Anyone in the club good at making quality signs for this event? Let's let them know who we are and why we are here and what we are doing! We have to tell them! What an opportunity! Thanks Kurt!

And finally (but not least), Robert Larson – KC9ICH is our first Contest Co-ordinator. Thanks Robert! He will be creating, conducting and scoring a contest a month for RARA. Watch for the announcement in the Ham Rag, on the W9AXD website or at the General Meeting. Dust off the rig, tune up the antennas and set aside some time to play radio for points and the coveted RARA Contest Award Certificate!

73 and good DX, Paul – K9RNR

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### NEXT MEETING:

7 P.M.

Friday, March 14, 2008

### LOCATION:

St. Anthony Hospital

5666 East State Street

### PROGRAM:

Chuck Ingle, AB9KA,  
SWR Meters--What good are they?

# FROM THE DESK OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

## SWR meters - What Good Are They?

When is the last time you used your SWR meter to help install a new antenna?

Chuck, AB9KA, will show and tell us how to use the SWR bridge when you are building a new antenna and how it tells you if your antenna is too long or too short. It is planned that he will show, using a graph on the white board, how to determine what you need to do to the antenna depending on what main frequency range you want to use. Chuck will give a demo on a 1/4 wave vertical and show or explain how you would use on other types of antennas such as a dipole. New hams are always asking how to make an antenna, and knowing this information will help you to perfect your next project.

Future program slated are as follows. If you feel like you would like to help with one of these, please give me a call. If you have other ideas, please share those as well.

April - QSL cards - everything you need to know. Bring yours for show and tell.

May - Generator and battery systems

June - Field Day plus surface mount soldering

July - Fox Hunting

August - Picnic

September - Spark Gap transmitter video. Neat video shows how one was put together and works.

October - ARRL Dick Isely? Have not asked him yet so we will see.

November - Digital communication such as PSK31

December - ATV

Invite someone to come with you to the meeting. Let them see for themselves that we are a good group and worthy of joining. See you at the meeting!

Gene - WB9MMM

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## COMING EVENTS

March 9, Sterling-Rock Falls ARS Hamfest, Challand Middle School, 1700 16th Ave., Sterling, IL. Talk-in 146.85 (PL 114.8).

March 16, Tri-County ARC Hamfest, Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 305 Heyer Drive, Jefferson WI

March 22, SKYWARN training, Basic and advanced, 8:30 a.m till Noon, Rockford Airport Auditorium

March 28-29, AES SUPERFEST 2008. AES Milwaukee, 5710 West Good Hope Road. Talk-in 145.130/144.530 N9LKH (PL 127.3).

April 19, Madison Area Repeater Association Swapfest, Stoughton, WI. Mandt Community Center, 400 Mandt Parkway, Stoughton, WI.

May 4, Dekalb Hamfest, Sandwich Fairgrounds, Sandwich, IL.

June 14, Rockford Amateur Radio Association, Breakfast in the Park, Martin Park

June 28-29, Field Day, Rockford Amateur Radio association, Aldeen Park

August 10, Rockford Amateur Radio Association Family Picnic, Alpine Park, Shelter #1

**Rockford Amateur Radio Assoc.**

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

# RARA MONTHLY CONTESTS

Here are the RARA monthly contests for the remainder of this year.

Each contest will begin the day following the monthly meeting and end the day of the next meeting.

These contests are to promote "getting on the air and having fun" for RARA members. A log sheet for each contest will be available at the Friday meeting. Contests are run on the "honor" system. No QSL card or verification is required. Each contest winner will be awarded a certificate at the RARA Friday night meeting.

March: Most area repeaters worked. 2 meters and 440 MHz FM

April Most stations worked, simplex only. 2 meters and 440 MHz FM and SSB

May Most HF CW contacts. 80 through 10 meters

June Most HF Phone contacts 80 through 10 meters

July Most Packet, Digital, or SSTV contacts. Any band

August Longest distance contact. Any mode, Any band (measured from grid square to grid square)

September Most contacts via HT All modes, all bands

October Most contacts made using any mode that's new to you

November Most states contacted. All modes, all bands

December Contact made closest to the "North Pole". Any mode, any band (by grid square)

Robert A. Larson KC9ICH

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## JUST SURFIN'

Boy, Surfin' Dude, that website you gave me last month sure helped. I read some reviews and bought a mobile 2 meter + HF radio that I really like. But now I want to mount it in my car and make sure I do it the right way so I don't do any damage to anything. Do you have any suggestions?

That's a great question. There is a website [www.k0bg.com](http://www.k0bg.com) that can be a great help. Alan Applegate, K0BG, who has many years of experience in mobile radio operation, has put together his website for exactly the purpose of what you are looking for. His website covers just about everything from radio installation, including proper wiring methods, to antenna types and installation ideas. The great thing about his website is that he explains things in simple ways, so you understand why it should be done a certain way. There are many pictures showing what he is talking about, which helps a lot. He also discusses buying other accessories and products for mobile operation which you may want to do down the road a bit. Before you start with your radio installation, do a little surfin' and go to [www.k0bg.com](http://www.k0bg.com). You might save yourself a headache and a skinned knuckle or two.

73 for now,  
Surfin' Dude

**Rockford Amateur Radio Assoc.**

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# SECRETARY'S REPORT

RARA Club Meeting February 8, 2008

President, Paul Franklin, K9RNR called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with 18 people in attendance.

All in attendance were asked to introduce themselves and state what they have done with Ham Radio recently.

Secretary's report for the December meeting was read by Gene, KA9BOD.

Motion to accept was made by Chuck, AB9KA and seconded by Joe, K9JPP. All approved.

Treasurer's report was read by Rich, K9PK.

Expenses	\$668.33
Ending Checkbook balance	\$1,232.76
Ending Saving Balance	\$5,693.00
Cash on hand	\$6,296.91
Gain/loss from last year	\$1,628.85

Motion to accept was made by Shari, N9SH and seconded by Dave, W9MG. All approved.

## Old Business:

1. The ATV meeting was held with election of officers, President – John Auerswald, KA9SOG, Vice President – Dan Hunt, KC9ATR, Secretary/Treasurer – Gene Harlan, WB9MMM. In addition to election of officers, they updated the 1.2 Ghz transmitter/receiver boards. The ATV repeater is currently broadcasting NASA TV 24 hrs a day and they have a camera pointed at the corner of State St and Mulford during station ID time.
2. Awards from last year were handed out to Kurt Eversole, KE9NJ, on last years board of directors and Joe Perry, K9JPP, field day chairman last year. Neither was able to attend the awards banquet.

## New Buisness:

1. Rich, K9PK received a letter from OSF St. Anthony requesting a \$100.00 donation to the St. Anthony Foundation. This would normally have been handled by the board but the board meeting was canceled due to severe weather. Paul, K9RNR polled the membership and after some discussion, Dave, W9MG made a motion to donate \$100.00 to the OSF St. Anthony Foundation. Seconded by Gene, KA9BOD and all approved.
2. Paul, K9RNR asked the membership what activities they wanted to keep. Each of the following activities was discussed: Breakfast in the Park, Family Picnic, Field Day, On the Waterfront and Awards Banquet. It was decided to keep all of the mentioned activities. Kurt, KE9NJ will pursue getting Roland Olson F.P. for Field Day and Dick, KC9BCB will pursue getting Alpine Park for the breakfast and picnic.
3. Joe Perry, K9JPP suggested that RARA set up a monthly event at Borders in Cherry Vale to help try to get more people to join our group and amateur radio.
4. Kurt Eversole, KE9NJ suggested that RARA organize a group to work on contesting skills by working, for example, the Illinois QSO Party or other event. Or possibly set up a special event station at Midway Village and possibly combine it with the JOTA event.

5. Shari, N9SH suggested that if at all possible to try to get Alpine Park for the breakfast in the park, June 14 and picnic, August 10. Both have multiple electric outlets for needed appliances.
6. Joe, K9JPP suggested that we look into doing a special event at both the breakfast and picnic. (Fox hunt or other activity.)
7. Gene, KA9BOD gave an update on amateur radio helping with the Rockford Marathon, May 18, 2008.
8. Gene, KA9BOD read some info regarding request for help working with the Titanic Special event station, W0S.
9. Chuck, AB9KA reported that the 147.255 repeater has been moved to a tower at North Main and Latham Rd with the antenna at 300 feet. This equipment is owned by Eric, N9MCS and this may become the new ARES frequency.
10. It is now time to renew your RARA dues. There is a grace period until April for renewal.

President Paul Franklin, K9RNR closed the meeting at 8:04 PM

Meeting Program

Gene, WB9MMM presented an ARRL video on antenna characteristic and comparisons.

Submitted by: Gene, KA9BOD

Secretary

**2008 RARA OFFICERS and BOARD**

President--Paul Franklin, K9RNR, 815-298-2251

Vice President--

Gene Harlan, WB9MMM, 815-398-2683

Secretary

Gene Stankiewicz, KA9BOD, 815-226-1806

Treasurer--Rich Ludwig, K9PK, 815-547-6435

Directors:

Robert Larson, KC9ICH, 815-226-1875

Chuck Derwent, K9SAN, 815-519-0848

Mike Oberg, AB9AY, 815-399-0961

Chuck Ingle, AB9KA, 815-623-3623

Repeater Chairman:

Herb Eckstein, K9AMJ, 815-399-6822

Ham Rag Editor:

Shari Harlan, N9SH, 815-398-2683

**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

ATV input 1250 Mhz/434 Mhz W9ATN  
Output 421.25 Mhz-Cable Channel 57

146.805 - ENC/DEC pl 114.8 K9AMJ

224.4400 - ENC/DEC pl 118.8 K9AMJ

147.255 + ENC/DEC pl 114.8 WX9MCS

444.725 + pl 118.8 WX9MCS  
Linked to FISHFAR

# AMATEUR RADIO EXAM NOTICE

February 16th there were 4 applicants resulting in 1 new Technician and 2 upgrades

New Technician  
Charles Daringer Sr.

Upgrades  
Bruce Roe, K9MQG General

Thomas Moore, WB9DFK Extra

Northern Illinois Volunteer Examiners will be holding the next Amateur Radio exam session in Rockford, IL on Saturday, March 15, 2008.

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](mailto:W9HL@arrl.net)  
815-877-4328

## EDITOR'S QRM

Here it is March already. So far we have not been able to do anything other than move snow around. We just don't have a place to put any more snow if it should come. We are looking forward to getting out side and enjoying some nice warm days.

This month the club will be debuting a new feature at the regular meeting. A place to sell your SMALL items. At the back of the meeting room (where we used to have the coffee pot and treats) a table will be reserved for your FOR SALE items. Please no boat anchors. You will need to price the items you wish to sell, and if the item does not sell, you will be responsible for taking the item home. This is just for fun and the club does not expect "a cut" from the selling price.

Also in the Ham Rag is another new club function that is debuting. Robert Larson, KC9ICH, is preparing contests for us to take part in each month. These contests can be found on page three. We are hoping that you can find a contest in the list he has provided for each month that you would like to take part in. Have some fun and operate.

Please notice in the list of coming events the SKYWARN training at the airport on March 22. This is required to be a SKYWARN volunteer. You must attend this at least every other year.

See you at the March meeting,

73,

Shari, N9SH

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## BREAKING DX NEWS: SPRATLY ISLANDS COMING ON THE AIR

If you have waited a ham radio lifetime to work the very elusive Spratly Islands, wait no longer. This with word that Ed Sawyer N1UR and his wife Christine, KB1PQN are expected to be active portable 9M6 from the Layang-Layang Island Resort in the Spratly Islands. This, between 0800 UTC on , March 22<sup>nd</sup> through midnight UTC on March 30th.

The duo have already received their licenses. Once they get permission from the Navy, they will apply for a special 9M0 callsign. Activity will be on 160 through 10 meters, on CW and SSB. 100 watts to omnidirectional verticals will be used from the near-by beach and the operators will be moving bands frequently to take advantage of changing band conditions and openings. Sunset on Spratly is 1040 UTC with sunrise at 2240 by the middle of that week.

QSL cards for either operator go via Bob Tomkovich, Jr., K2RET, 405 Hemlock Dr., Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734 in the USA. More information is on line at [www.n1urspratly.com](http://www.n1urspratly.com). We will have more DX news later on in this weeks Amateur Radio Newline report. (OPDX)

# AES Superfest Forums, Saturday, 3/29

## Superfest Flyer

<http://www.aesham.com/pdf/SF2008.pdf>

### **9:00 A.M. – 9:45 A.M.**

**DIGITAL MODES** (Greg Lengling, W9DHI)

HF Data Modes using Ham Radio Deluxe/DM780, the free software program by Simon Brown, HB9DRV. Covering PSK, CW, DOMINO, MFSK, MT63, OLIVIA, RTTY, SSTV, THROB and all their variants.

### **10:00 A.M. – 10:45 A.M.**

**GETTING STARTED WITH D-STAR** (Mark Thompson, WB9QZB)

Reviewing the basics of this this new Digital Voice and Data Transmission technology and available radios and repeaters.

### **11:00 A.M. – 11:45 A.M.**

**MODULATION** (Jack Hudson, W9MU)

Baseband signals; Carriers and Frequency translation; Time domain and Frequency domain representations; Side Bands; AM, SSB, FM & CW; Power distribution

### **12:00 NOON – 12:45 P.M.**

**LEGAL ISSUES FOR HAMS** (Jim O'Connell, W9WU - ARRL Volunteer Counsel)

How to avoid restrictive covenants, present your case for a tower, info on the latest court rulings on RFI, PRB-1 and towers.

### **1:00 P.M. – 1:45 P.M.**

**YOUR FIRST TELESCOPE** (Jeff Setzer - Northern Cross Astronomical Society)

The basics of telescopes and and what to look for and what to avoid when shopping for your first instrument. Weather permitting, telescopes will be set up for sun viewing.

### **2:00 P.M. – 2:45 P.M.**

**THE GORDON WEST SHOW** (Gordon West WB6NOA)

Year after year he keeps topping his previous presentations. Don't miss it!





P.O. Box 8465, Rockford, IL 61126

Email [shari@hampubs.com](mailto:shari@hampubs.com)

Web: [www.w9axd.org](http://www.w9axd.org)

NETS

Monday 8 PM 2 Meter 146.610 - 114.8

Thursday 7 PM ARES 147.255 + 114.8

Thursday 8 PM SATERN 146.61 - 114.8

# March 2008

## ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Single Adult: \$25.00 Adult w/Family: \$30.00

Single Senior: \$15.00 Senior w/Family: \$20.00

Student: \$15.00

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

Ham Rag Via USPS: \$12.00 extra

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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