

# HAM RAG



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

## March 2010

### RARA Mission Statement

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

### March Program Highlights

Duane is a retired professor and has been affiliated with the University of Iowa as a scientist with the Heavy Ion High Energy Physics Group. He has worked on projects at Fermi National Accelerator and Argonne National Laboratory. He has also been to the new Large Hadron Accelerator (CERN) on the French/Swiss border many times.

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### UPCOMING RARA EVENTS

**March 30th** - RARA Board Meeting 7:00 pm at OSF

**April 9th** - General RARA Meeting 7:00 pm at OSF  
"ARRL Update" by Kermit Carlson, W9XA,  
Central Division Vice Director for the ARRL

**April 27th** - RARA Board Meeting 7:00 pm at OSF

**May 14th** - General RARA Meeting 7:00 at OSF  
"Geocaching" by Dave Yanke, N9SSG, from Sycamore, IL

### NEXT MEETING

**FRIDAY**

**March 12, 2010**

**7:00 pm**

**Presentation:**  
**"The Quiet Sun"**

**by:**  
**Duane Ingram,**  
**N9ZKR**

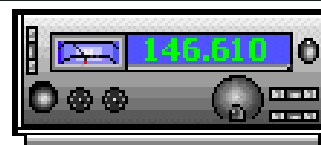
**Location:**  
**St. Anthony**  
**Medical Center**

**Foundation Room**  
**5666 E. State Street**  
**Rockford, IL**

### \$\$\$ Membership Dues Are Due \$\$\$

It's time once again to renew your membership.  
See Paul Franklin, K9RNR, to pay for your dues.  
Starting in April, the Hamrag notice will only be sent to those who have renewed their membership for 2010.

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



# Secretary's Report



## RARA Club Meeting February 12, 2010

The meeting was called to order by President Gordon Seaman at 7:13 PM. There were 23 hams in attendance.

### Secretary's Report:

The minutes were published in the January *Ham Rag*. Al, KD9CA, said that he had printed copies available for anyone who wanted one. Jimmy, KC9GOL, made a motion to accept the minutes as published and Gene, KA9BOD, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### Treasurer's Report:

Paul, K9RNR, read the report for the period November 24<sup>th</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> 2009 and the period January 1<sup>st</sup> through January 24<sup>th</sup> 2010.

	11-24-09 to 12-31-09	1-1-10 to 1-24-2010
Income:	\$1873.00	\$613.00
Expenses:	\$1891.86	\$736.44
Net income/loss:	\$(18.86)	\$(123.44)
Ending Checking Balance:	\$2052.68	\$1929.24
Repeater Ending Checking Balance	\$382.95	\$382.95
Ending Savings Balance:	\$3214.02	\$3214.02
Ending total Cash on Hand:	\$5649.65	\$5526.21

Dave, W9MG, made a motion to accept the minutes as read and Chuck, K9SAN, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### Old Business:

- Gordy presented award certificates to members in attendance at the meeting. These were: Tom, N9VJU, Net Control Operator and member of the Repeater Committee; Steve, K9LLI, Vice President and NCO; Dick Fleming, KC9BCB, Repeater Committee and Chuck, AB9KA, Repeater Committee Chairman and Ham of the Year Committee. He also said that the following members who were not at the meeting had certificates waiting for them. These were: Don W9DRR, Repeater committee, Shari, N9SH, Awards Banquet Chair; and Mike, AB9AY, Board Member.
- Gordy reported that he had received a Thank You letter from OSF for the \$100.00 dollar donation that the Club gave to them.
- Gordy announced he had received a ticket to the Starved Rock Hamfest on June 6<sup>th</sup> and asked if any member would like it. A drawing was held and Chuck, K9SAN, won the ticket. Gordy confirmed the dates for the following:

Breakfast in the Park, Saturday June 12<sup>th</sup>.

Field Day, Saturday June 26<sup>th</sup> and Sunday June 27<sup>th</sup>.

Family Picnic, Sunday August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

(continued on next page)

## Secretary's Report *(continued)*

### New Business:

- Steve, W9SWT, reported there would be *SkyWarn* training at the Rockford Airport international building on Tuesday, February 23rd, at 6 pm. He said it is being conducted by the Weather Service.
- Gene, KA9BOD, said that Herb, WR9H, volunteered to be the Club Historian and asks for historical information, pictures, and help from the membership.
- Gene reminded all present that there is always help needed for club events. PLEASE HELP.
- Gene said he is developing a list of Hams of the Year and needs any information you may have. He especially needs 1989 through 1998 Ham of the Year information.
- Gene also reminds everyone that your dues are due.
- Gordy said we will be having our first 50-50 drawing tonight. Each ticket is one dollar.
- At this point we had a short break and upon returning, Jack Hudson was introduced as the presenter for this evening.

Jimmy, KC9GOL, won the 50/50 drawing.

Jack did an excellent presentation on Antennas, Tuners and Transmission lines, including a PowerPoint presentation.

Submitted by,  
Al, KD9CA  
RARA Secretary

## RARA Information Net

The purpose of the net is 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 is rotated between the club members, with all amateur radio operators encouraged to check in. (RARA members as well as non-members)

Let any of the officers and board know your 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.**

## 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 Stockholm Inn”***  
***2420 Charles Street***  
***Rockford, IL 61108***



## March 2010 – VP Comments

I am pleased to report that our February speaker, Jack Hudson, W9MU provided a well received presentation on antennas, antenna tuners and transmission lines. There were several questions from the floor covering many aspects of the topic.

Back in December and early January, the offer was made to send to me any questions you had on the topic for Jack to answer as part of his presentation. Jim, AB9SX took me up with a question about stacking HF and VHF antennas which I forwarded on to Jack. Jack said he did not have any experience in this area and to contact Kermit Carlson, W9XA (ARRL Central Division Vice Director). Kermit was able to provide some input and also suggested that Jim contact the ARRL technical department. Jim also got a considerable amount of help from Zack Lau, W1VT of the ARRL.

Our March program topic is “The Quiet Sun” presented by Duane Ingram, N9ZKR. In this program we will learn how the sun affects radio propagation. Duane is a retired physics professor and physicist with connections to University of Iowa, Fermi Labs, Argonne Labs and CERN in Europe. (Duane has promised to bring this topic down to a common persons’ level.)

It is a good time to start thinking about coming out to Field Day, June 26th & 27th. This is a 24 hour operation, which will be held at Hononegah Forest Preserve. This is a wonderful time to experience getting on the air because you will have the opportunity to help set up a station, watch contacts being made and logged and be invited to participate under the guidance of an experience ham. As we did last year, a first contact certificate will be awarded to all those making their first HF contact, licensed or non-licensed persons. (The stations will be under the control of a higher class licensed ham.)

We still need some help with the other club activities. Please offer your time and talent in some way. Anything you can do will be appreciated.

73,  
Gene, KA9BOD  
2010 RARA VP



### ARRL DX Phone Contest Brings DX in Full Force to the HF Bands!

With the 2010 ARRL International DX CW Contest now history, the first weekend in March brings the next round of competition: the [2010 ARRL International DX Phone Contest](#). Like its CW predecessor, this event focuses on DX stations working all US states and Canadian provinces, while US and Canadian amateurs try to work as many DX countries as possible over the 48 hour contest period.

"Conditions during last weekend's CW contest were, by all accounts, very good indeed," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X. "Fifteen Meters was open for extended periods of time, allowing excellent QSOs to be made from the US and Canada to all corners of the globe. Even 10 meters decided to show up for the party, with openings both Saturday and Sunday to South America and Africa, with a sprinkling of Europe thrown in for good measure."



Quote taken from the **June, 1936** issue of "Electronics" magazine, published by McGraw-Hill...

**"THUNDER WORSE THAN LIGHTNING"**..Like the dog whose bark is worse than his bite, thunder and not lightning proved to be the disturbing factor in radio reception in the first storm of the season May 3 - to those listening to Major Armstrong's frequency modulation system. Signals coming from W2AG (Armstrong's FM station - b.a.) on 2.5 meters, 11 miles away, 300 watts, were clear from noise while it was impossible to listen to the big stations on broadcast wavelengths. So strong was the local static that on a broadcast set with insulated tuning knobs held to the condenser shaft with a steel screw, each crash of static would make itself known to the listener by a sharp pinge of electric shock. On the strong crashes, only a slight "tick" was heard in the Major's receiver. Short waves and frequency modulation seems to be the answer."

RARA members, for those of you unfamiliar with Major Edwin H. Armstrong's radio inventions, it is suggested that you obtain the PBS documentary "Empire Of The Air - The Men Who Made Radio" on DVD. It was aired a few years ago on PBS television and documents the beginnings of radio in the United States. It highlights three individuals: Lee DeForest, who invented the Audion, which was the first triode tube (who had NO idea of how it worked); Major Edwin H. Armstrong (who invented the regenerative, super-regenerative, superheterodyne and the Frequency Modulation system) and David Sarnoff, who began his career as a telegrapher and went on to head the world's largest Electronics corporation, the Radio Corporation of America.

Major Armstrong's inventions made it possible for us to enjoy our hobby of ham radio. His superheterodyne principles are still in use, in every HF transceiver that we use. And, of course, his Frequency Modulation system is what makes our 2 meter communications possible. Major Edwin H. Armstrong was truly the "Father of Radio."

*Contributed by Brad Anbro, N9EN*



## WHICH WAY DO I POINT MY ANTENNA?

An easy way to determine the direction to point your antenna is to download a beam heading chart that can be generated specifically for your location. The North Jersey DX Association, NJDXA, has such an item on their website, [www.njdx.org](http://www.njdx.org). Highlighting the left side "DX Tools" icon will then display a additional icon listing "Beam Headings". Click on the "Beam Headings" icon and then you will see the entry information page for your location. You may enter either your latitude and longitude, or your zip code, (along with other options) and then click on the "Generate Beam Headings" at the bottom. A printable chart will be produced listing the short and long path beam heading for all countries, as well as miles from your location, and other associated information. *Contributed by Dave Bond, W9MG*



## NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

**FCC Allows Robotic Device in Amateur Band** (Feb 25, 2010) -- In January 2008, a company called ReconRobotics filed a request with the FCC for a waiver of Part 90 of the Commission's Rules with respect to the Recon Scout -- a remote-controlled, maneuverable surveillance robot designed for use in areas that may be too hazardous for human entry. A waiver is required to permit licensing of the Recon Scout because the device operates in the 430-448 MHz band, which is allocated to the Federal Government Radiolocation service on a primary basis, as well as the Amateur Radio Service and certain non-federal radiolocation systems on a secondary basis. More than two years later, the FCC granted the waiver request in the form of an *Order* (WP Docket No 08-63), subject to certain conditions.



**The K7RA Solar Update** (Feb 26, 2010) -- Two new sunspot groups -- 1050 and 1051 -- appeared on February 23 and 24. We've now seen 38 continuous days with sunspots (including today); the last time there were no sunspots for two or more days in a row was back on November 23-December 8 when we saw 16 days with no sunspots. If sunspots continue through Sunday (they will!), February will be the first calendar month since January 2007 with sunspots every day. Sunspot numbers for February 18-24 were 17, 23, 19, 17, 14, 31 and 40, with a mean of 23. The 10.7 cm flux was 85, 83.7, 83.8, 83.5, 83.7, 84.2 and 82.6, with a mean of 83.8. The estimated planetary A indices were 4, 3, 1, 1, 4, 2 and 3, with a mean of 2.6. The estimated mid-latitude A indices were 2, 3, 0, 3, 3, 2 and 2, with a mean of 2.1.



### ARRL Continuing Education Online Course Registration



Registration remains open through **Sunday, March 21, 2010**, for these [online course sessions](#) beginning on **Friday, April 2, 2010**: Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level 1; Antenna Modeling; Radio Frequency Interference; Antenna Design and Construction; Ham Radio (Technician) License Course; Propagation; Analog Electronics, and Digital Electronics.

Each online course has been developed in segments -- learning units with objectives, informative text, student activities and quizzes. Courses are interactive, and some include direct communications with a Mentor/Instructor. Students register for a particular session that may be 8, 12 or 16 weeks (depending on the course) and they may access the course at any time of day during the course period, completing lessons and activities at times convenient for their personal schedule. Mentors assist students by answering questions, reviewing assignments and activities, as well as providing helpful feedback. Interaction with mentors is conducted through e-mail; there is no appointed time the student must be present -- allowing complete flexibility for the student to work when and where it is convenient.

For more information or to register for any of these courses, visit the Continuing Education Program page on the ARRL website. ([www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org))

## **DX SUMMIT SOON READY FOR 2-WAY COMMUNICATION WITH OVER 110.000 MONTHLY USERS**

[www.dxsummit.fi/dxspots.aspx](http://www.dxsummit.fi/dxspots.aspx)

The Radio Arcala DX Summit portal is celebrating the milestone of one million monthly hits over a course of several months and more than 110.000 people spending an average of 35 minutes on the site daily. The top five nations using the service are as follows: USA (28.5%) followed by Germany, United Kingdom, Italy and Japan. In total, users from 170 DXCC countries have entered the service portal. With new visits approaching 19% during the month of May, an increase of users is quite evident. In the process of making the DX Summit service more focused on younger user segments and non-amateur radio population, two features have been added recently.

Each spotting and spotted callsign is automatically linked to QRZ.COM, providing a more human link to the personal profiles of people and to their pictures. Just click the callsigns and you will automatically enter the relevant QRZ.COM page. Additionally, each line carries the name of the DXCC country spotted. In a few months time, custom selected filters will be provided to the public allowing users to receive personalized spots that they would like to receive. While initially the selected spots will be sent to your personal email address, the ultimate aim is to offer an SMS (short message service) option to DX Summit users. This service is a non-profit exercise for Radio Arcala, OH8X but we are pleased to recognize Yasme Foundation and Nokia Corporation for their support of further development and defrayment of operating expenses of the portal. As the servers are in the hands of a professional service provider in the United States, some interruptions are recorded and changing the service provider is in process. *Contributed by Dave Bond, W9MG*

### **AMATEUR RADIO EXAM NOTICE**

February 20th there were 10 applicants resulting in 6 new license and 3 upgrade

New License

Wayne Snell, Technician  
James Colbert, Technician  
Keith Tracey, Technician  
Robert Englert, Technician  
Erik Cavasos Jr, General  
Jerry Horn, General

Upgrades

Robert Abramson, KC9RJZ, Extra  
David Bailey, KC9QYY, Extra

Northern Illinois Volunteer Examiners will be holding the next Amateur Radio exam session in Rockford, IL on Saturday, March 20, 2010.

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

## ITEMS FOR SALE

### Cleaning the shack – Items need to go...

**Belden 8214 Coax** with PL-259 connectors soldered on the ends, approximately 100 feet. Good condition used only at field day a few times. Price \$40.00

**LMR-400 Times Microwave Coax**, About 90 feet. Like new condition. Price \$60.00

**Coax**, R & L Electronics P/N 2213 (RG-213/U) Mil-C-17G, approximately 100 feet, like new condition. Price \$30.00

**Belden 8484**, Gray 4 conductor 20AWG stranded unpaired cable, commonly used for rotor control cable, approximately 100 feet. Like new condition, Price \$20.00

**Belden 8448**, 6 - 22 AWG stranded (7x30) and 2 - 18 AWG stranded (16x30) tinned copper conductors, conductors cabled, PVC insulation, PVC jacket. Commonly used for rotor control cable and antenna selection control, like new condition, approximately 100 feet. Price \$25.00

**Book**, "The Radio Amateurs Satellite Handbook", Copyright 1998 Price \$10.00

**Book**, "The Satellite Experimenter Handbook", Copyright 1990 Price \$10.00

**Book**, "The ARRL Antenna Book", Copyright 1991, Price \$10.00

**Book**, "The ARRL Antenna Compendium - Vol 1", Copyright 1985, Price \$5.00

**Book**, "The ARRL Antenna Compendium - Vol 2", Copyright 1989 Price \$6.00

**Book**, "The ARRL Handbook – 1992", Hard Cover, Price \$10.00

**Book**, "The ARRL Handbook – 2001", Hard Cover, Price \$15.00

If your interested in any of the above items, please contact Chuck Gooden N9QBT via email at [n9qbt@amsat.org](mailto:n9qbt@amsat.org) include the item or items your interested in, your name and your phone number and I will call you. No phone calls please!!

### Editors Note

If you would like to have something published , please call me or email me at [ke9n@arrl.net](mailto:ke9n@arrl.net).

**Cut-off for the April 2010 Hamrag will be Saturday, March 27, 2010**

Kurt - KE9N, Editor



# DX NEWS AND CONTESTS

## SCHEDULED DXPEDITIONS

CALLSIGN	QTH	WHEN	QSL VIA
<b>C56KR</b>	GAMBIA	MARCH 5 TO MARCH 24	OZ8KR
<b>7P8AO</b>	LESOTHO	MARCH 8 TO MARCH 22	HA5AO
<b>V25WY</b>	ANTIGUA	MARCH 9 TO MARCH 18	LotW
<b>TO5SM</b>	ST. MARTIN	MARCH 11 TO MARCH 24	F6BFH
<b>A3</b>	TONGA	MARCH 12 TO APRIL 2	K6HFA
<b>CE0Z</b>	JUAN FERNANDEZ	MARCH 16 TO MARCH 26	TBA
<b>E51COF</b>	SOUTH COOK IS.	MARCH 20 TO MARCH 30	K8NA
<b>JD1BNN</b>	OGASAWARA	MARCH 28 TO MARCH 31	JARL BURO
<b>3CO</b>	ANNOBON ISLAND	APRIL 1 TO APRIL 30	EA7FTR
<b>YI9PSE</b>	IRAQ	APRIL 3 TO APRIL 11	N6NKT
<b>FW</b>	WALLIS & FUTUNA	APRIL 6 TO APRIL 12	K6HFA
<b>3W6C</b>	VIETNAM	APRIL 10 TO APRIL 18	TBA
<b>ZS8M</b>	MARION ISLAND	APRIL 30 TO APRIL 29, 2011	ZS1X

## UPCOMING CONTESTS

**ARRL International DX Contest**, Phone, 0000 UTC March 6 to 2259 UTC March 7, 2010  
**Wisconsin QSO Party**, Mixed, 1800 UTC March 14 to 0100 UTC March 15, 2010  
**North American Sprint Contest**, RTTY, 0000 - 0400 UTC March 11, 2010  
**CQ WW WPX Contest**, Phone, 0000 UTC March 27 to 2359 UTC March 28, 2010

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

### 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

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

### 2010 RARA Officers and Board

#### **Officers:**

President - Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX, 815-234-5034  
 Vice President - Gene Stankiewicz, KA9BOD, 815-226-1806  
 Secretary - Al Fischer, KD9CA, 815-885-3926  
 Treasurer - Paul Franklin, K9RNR, 815-298-2251

#### **Directors:**

Shari Harlan, N9SH, 815-398-2683  
 John Lawrence, N9OTC, 815-397-4624  
 Tom Shouler, N9VJU, 815-877-9129  
 Steve Thorne, K9LLI, 815-399-9161  
 Web Master - Robert Larson, KC9ICH, 815-226-1875  
 Ham Rag Editor - Kurt Eversole, KE9N, 815-389-2784  
 Repeater Chairman - Chuck Ingle, AB9KA, 815-979-1049

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



P.O. Box 8465, Rockford, IL 61126

Website: www.w9axd.org

E-mail: ke9n@arrl.net

Nets

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

place address label here

# March 2010

## 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