

HAM RAG



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

RARA Mission Statement

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

2012 RARA Awards Banquet

January 12, 2013

The event will be held at the S.M. and S.F. Club Hall
1010 Sandy Hollow Road
Rockford, Illinois

The cost is \$17.50/plate payable to the RARA Treasurer

Open Bar at 6 p.m. and Dinner at 7 p.m.

The dinner will be catered by Penguin Foods.

Menu:

Roast Top Round of Beef with Mushroom Au Jus
Golden Baked Chicken
Green-Bean Casserole
Au Gratin Potatoes
Tossed Salad and Dressings
Bread and Butter

2013 Dues

Dues are payable now to the RARA Treasurer.

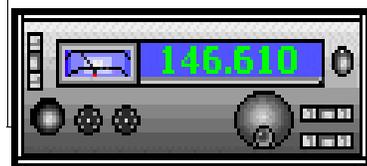
Just a reminder that membership is reviewed annually according to the RARA constitution.
You must be a paid member to vote

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

December 2012

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NEXT MEETING

FRIDAY

December 14, 2012

Location:

Foundation Room

**Saint Anthony OSF
5666 East State Street
Rockford, Illinois**

Program:

**Ham of the Year
Nominations**

'A Ham's Night before Christmas'

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through 2 meters, not a signal was keying up any repeaters.
The antennas reached up from the tower, quite high, To catch the weak signals that bounced from the sky.
The hams, Technicians, took their HT's to bed, and dreamed of the day they'd be Extras instead.
Mom put on her headphones; I plugged in the key, and we tuned 40 meters for that rare ZK3
Then the meter was pegged by a signal with power. It smoked a small diode, and I swear, shook the tower
Mom yanked off her phones, and with all she could muster she logged the spot on the DX Packet Cluster,
While I ran to the window and peered at the sky to see what could generate power that high.
It was way in the distance, but the moon made it gleam, a flying sleigh with an eight element beam.
And a little old driver who looked slightly mean, so I, though for a moment, that it might be a dream.
But, no, it was Santa, the Santa of hams, on a mission this Christmas to clean up the bands.
He circled the tower, and then stopped in his track, slid down the coax right into the shack.
While Mom and I hid behind stacks of CQ, this Santa of hamming knew just what to do.
He cleared off the shack desk of paper and parts and filled out the log with my contacts for starts.
He ran copper braid, took a steel rod and pounded it into the earth till the station was grounded.
He tightened loose fittings, re-soldered connections, cranked down modulation, and installed lightning protection.
He neutralized tubes in my linear amp.. (never worked right before – now works like a champ).
A new low pass filter cleaned up the TV. He corrected the settings in my TNC.
He repaired my computer that wouldn't compute and he backed up my hard drive and got it to boot.
Then he reached really deep in the bag that he brought, and he pulled out a big box. "A new rig?" I thought.
"A new Kenwood? An ICOM? A Yaesu for me? An Elecraft, Ten Tec or Flex, could it be? Please let it not be QRP!"
Yes! The ultimate station! How could I deserve this? Could it be all those weekends, I worked on the nets.
He hooked it all up quickly and in record time quickly worked a hundred countries all down on 160.
I should have been happy. It was my call he sent, but the cards and the postage will cost a month's rent!
He made final adjustments, left a card by the key, "To Dougie from Santa. 73."
Then he grabbed his HT, looked me straight in the eye, punched a code on the pad and was gone – no good bye.
I ran back to the station and the pile up was big, but a card from St. Nick was worth my new rig.
Oh, too late for his final. It came over the air. It was copied all; over, it was heard everywhere.
The ham's Santa exclaimed what an old ham expects: Merry Christmas to all, and to all good DX.

(Copyright Gary Pearce KN4AQ 2010)

From the Secretary

Minutes of October 12th Meeting

President Tom Shouler, N9VJU opened the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Secretary’s Report was read by Jim Holich, AB9SX. A motion to accept the report as read was made by John Olson, W9JGO.and seconded by Jim Curtis, KC9GOL . The motion carried by unanimous vote.

The Treasurers report was then read by John Olson, W9JGO. A motion to accept the report as read was made by Jim Milller, W4JR, and seconded by Jim Curtis , KC9GOL. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

There was no old business to discuss.

Under “new business” a motion was made to have our new Treasurer, Shannon Larson, KC9QBC, to operate “in absentia” because of prior commitments. Her report will be read into the record by Robert Larson, KC9ICH. A motion was put to a vote by Doug Abrahamson KC9SDO, and seconded by Jim Curtis, KC9GOL. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

There was a short period of socialization and fellowship before the presentation.

The presentation was made by Doug Abramson KC9SDO of a video called “Standing up for Standing Waves”.

We then had a motion to adjourn by Jim Curtis, KC9GOL, and seconded by Alvin Alexander, KC9GIO The motion carried by unanimous vote.

The meeting stood adjourned.

Submitted by Jim Holich—AB9SX
Secretary

From the Treasurer

| | BEGINNING BALANCES | ENDING BALANCES |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| General Checking Acct: | \$1244.13 | \$1237.63 (per check register 25 NOV 2012) |
| Repeater Checking Acct: | \$300.00 | \$300.00 (per 31 OCT 2012 Statement) |
| Savings Acct: | <u>\$3,222.57</u> | <u>\$3222.57</u> (per 28 OCT 2012 Statement)*** |
| Total of account balances | \$ 4766.70 | \$4760.20 (A decline of \$6.50) |

***Savings Account Statements are provided quarterly by Alpine Bank

Our Income for the period:

| | |
|--------|------------------------|
| \$3.50 | 50/50 drawing proceeds |
| \$3.50 | Total Income |

Our Expenses for the period :

| | | |
|---------|---|--------|
| \$10.00 | Filing fee for our 2012 RARA Annual not-for-profit corporation report to the IL | Secre- |
| \$10.00 | Total Expense | |

Submitted by John Olson, W9JGO RARA Treasurer

AMATEUR RADIO EXAM NOTICE

November 17th there was 1 new licensee. Congratulations to:

New:

DANIEL J BREY, General

Thanks to Steve Jim Holich AB9SX, Alvin Alexander KC9GIO and Shari Harlan N9SH for volunteering their time.

Amateur Radio exams are held the 3rd Saturday of every month in Rockford IL. The next session is 9AM December 15, 2012. Walk-ins welcome. Check-in is from 9AM-10:30AM. We require two signature ID's and one photo. If you are a licensed Amateur Radio operator bring your 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). No copier on site. The test fee is \$14.00. Bring a non-programmable calculator.

Location:

OSF St Anthony Medical Center
5666 E State St (Bus US20)
Rockford IL

Exams will be held in the St Francis Room (Main Entrance then turn right).

Rusty Cordell WB9QYV

wb9qyv@aol.com

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 - Doug Abrahamson, KC9SDO, 815-979-0329
Vice President - Robert Larson, KC9ICH, 815-540-0309
Secretary - Jim Holich, AB9SX, 779-552-8796
Treasurer - Shannon Larson, KC9QBC, 815-226-1875

Directors:

Kurt Eversole, KE9N 815-389-2784
Dave Larsen, N9ZXL 815-399-8205
Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX 815-234-5034
Tom Shouler, N9VJU, 815-978-6476
Web Master - Robert Larson, KC9ICH, 815-540-0309
Ham Rag Editor - Jim Holich, AB9SX, 779-552-8796
Repeater Chairman - Chuck Ingle, AB9KA, 815-979-1049

The K7RA Solar Report

Propagation Forecast Bulletin 49 ARLP049
From Tad Cook, K7RA
Seattle, WA December 7, 2012
To all radio amateurs

We had some trouble getting the solar flux values this week, but found a work-around. We normally use ftp://ftp.geolab.nrcan.gc.ca/data/solar_flux/daily_flux_values/fluxtable.txt but it didn't seem to work yesterday. But another route was discovered that does work, http://www.spaceweather.ca/data-donnee/sol_flux/sx-5-flux-eng.php.

It has the same data. We could use the NOAA site at <http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/ftpdir/indices/DSD.txt>, but we like getting the data with one more digit of resolution direct from the observatory in British Columbia.

Solar activity declined again this week. Average daily sunspot numbers dropped from 78.9 to 61.1, and average daily solar flux declined from 121 to 101.6.

The latest prediction from NOAA/USAF is for solar flux at 95 on December 7, 100 on December 8-9, 105 on December 10, 110 on December 11-12, 115 on December 13-14, 135 on December 15-17, then 130, 125 and 120 on December 18-20, 115 on December 21-23, 110 on December 24-27, 100 on December 28-29, 105 and 115 on December 30-31, 125 on January 1-2, 130 on January 3-7, and 135 on January 8-13.

The predicted planetary A index is 8 on December 7-8, 5 on December 9, 8 on December 10, 5 on December 11-14, 8 on December 15, 5 on December 16-28, 8 on December 29-30, 5 on December 31 through January 1-6, then 10, 8 and 5 on January 7-9, and 8 on January 10-11.

The above forecast is from Thursday, December 6, and is revised from the one issued a day earlier, which appeared in the ARRL Letter. The latest forecast has lower solar flux over the next few days with slightly more active geomagnetic conditions. We would like to see better conditions than currently forecast for the ARRL 10 Meter Contest this weekend.

Recently I mentioned a spreadsheet I made to track changes in the 45-day solar flux forecast from NOAA/USAF. I am going to try to share the spreadsheet with you, and keep it updated online. To see the spreadsheet, go to <https://sheet.zoho.com/public/tadcook/noaa-usaf-flux-prediction-archive-xls-1>.

Unfortunately, I have not quite figured out how to freeze the column headings across the top and the left column too, but you can look at the spreadsheet, download it and play with it. Note that the last entry is for December 6, 2012.

If you go down the left column to that date, then go to the right to the December 6 column you will see the actual solar flux for that date. As you go up the December 6 column, you see all the past solar flux predictions for December 6, and see how they have varied over time. As you go to the right from Dec 6, you see numbers corresponding to the dates in each column, and those are the flux values as predicted on December 6, from the predictions at <http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/ftpmenu/forecasts/45DF.html>.

Last year on the Friday-Saturday-Sunday of the ARRL 10 Meter Contest weekend (December 9-11, 2011), the solar flux was 143.5, 140 and 134.3, and planetary A index was 1, 6 and 4. This year predicted for the three days of December 7-9 is a solar flux of 95, 100 and 100, and planetary A index of 8, 8 and 5. Note that the contest lasts only two days, but we include the day before also, as activity on that date should affect contest conditions. We prefer to see higher solar flux and a lower A index.

There is also the possibility of enhanced propagation from ionized meteor trails. The Geminid shower this year peaks on December 13, but the Geminid activity runs from December 4-17, so we may see 10 meter propagation enhanced somewhat by the early part of the shower.

Check <http://www.arrl.org/10-meter> for details on the contest.

As usual, we received a geomagnetic forecast from OK1HH. He predicts quiet conditions December 7, mostly quiet December 8, quiet to active December 9, active to disturbed December 10-11, quiet December 12, quiet to unsettled December 13-14, quiet December 15-16, quiet to active December 17, active to disturbed December 18, mostly quiet December 19, quiet to active December 20-21, mostly quiet December 22, quiet to unsettled December 23, quiet December 24-27, quiet to active December 28, and mostly quiet December 29-30.

Let's look at some moving averages for sunspot numbers. We have tracked a three-month moving average for quite some time now. The highest activity in this cycle was during the peak in fall 2011, when the three months centered on October 2011 had an average daily sunspot number of 118.8, and the November 2011 centered average was 118.6.

Now that November has ended, we know the three month moving average for September 1 through November 30. The averages for this year centered on January through October were 83.3, 73.7, 71.2, 87.3, 91.5, 96.5, 91.9, 89.9, 81.2 and 82.3. The monthly averages of daily sunspot numbers for August through November were 85.8, 84, 73.8 and 89.3.

Another thing to look at is the yearly average of sunspot numbers, and 2012 doesn't look bad. The average annual sunspot numbers for 2008 through 2011 were 4.7, 5.1, 25.5 and 29.9, and the average for 2012 to date (through December 6) was 83.8, quite a jump from last year's 29.9. We got 83.8 by summing all the daily sunspot numbers from January 1, 2012 through December 6, which was 28,581, and divided that by the number of days, which is 341.

The K7RA Solar Report

Ken Miller, K6CTW sends us the link to the Australian Government Radio and Space Weather Services site at http://www.ips.gov.au/HF_Systems. We've mentioned this site before, but Ken points out some interesting features. Ken wrote, "One of their features are HAP charts which are designed to indicate the best frequency range, at that hour for communications between a specified base and mobile within a nominated area. "To access these, on the Left side menu bar, under Global HF, click on HAP Charts.

"When the HAP Charts menu appears, click on Hourly HAP Charts, then using the pull-down menu, select the center point nearest to your station. When I'm home, I use Phoenix (even though I'm actually in California). Then click on the Display button.

"The chart is very intuitive and the details of what it is indicating are summarized below the chart. "Lately, in the evenings, I have seen charts indicating RED which show that the best communications for our traffic nets area would be from 1-3 MHz. When that is indicated, signals have usually been very degraded or even a total wash-out. The 'old school' saying is that the band has gone 'long.' These charts have been very accurate and could benefit both NTS and DX operators alike."

Howard Lester, N7SO of Schuylerville, New York wrote on December 1, "At 2145 UT today I worked RO9O in Asiatic Russia on 14.021 MHz CW. He was a true 599 (with flutter - a polar path), and he gave me the same (but of course, who knows, considering my 100 watts and dipole antenna). Current conditions are Flux 102, K=2. The W6EL propagation program, for those conditions, gives a prediction of 32 (signal level) D, D being the '1 - 25% probability' category and with a fairly low signal at that. The moral of the story is that it pays to listen, or at least check <http://www.dxwatch.com!>"

If you would like to make a comment or have a tip for our readers, email the author at, k7ra@arrl.net.

For more information concerning radio propagation, see the ARRL Technical Information Service web page at <http://arrl.org/propagation-of-rf-signals>. For an explanation of the numbers used in this bulletin, see <http://arrl.org/the-sun-the-earth-the-ionosphere>. An archive of past propagation bulletins is at <http://arrl.org/w1aw-bulletins-archive-propagation>. Find more good information and tutorials on propagation at <http://myplace.frontier.com/~k9la/>.

Monthly propagation charts between four USA regions and twelve overseas locations are at <http://arrl.org/propagation>.

Sunspot numbers for November 29 through December 5 were 89, 67, 49, 43, 44, 58, and 78, with a mean of 61.1. 10.7 cm flux was 113.1, 110.6, 101.7, 97.7, 96.6, 96.2, and 95.5, with a mean of 101.6. Estimated planetary A indices were 3, 2, 4, 7, 4, 3, and 2, with a mean of 3.6. Estimated mid-latitude A indices were 2, 1, 3, 8, 3, 5 and 4, with a mean of 3.7.

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



For Sale or Trade

Code Practice Oscillator MiniKits

For sale. \$10 each, includes schematic. All boards are assembled and tested.

Circuit will easily drive headphones or a small speaker.

Each board measures approximately 1.25" square and is great for mounting in a small project box or on a wooden board.

See Dennis K9VMY at the next club meeting, or contact via e-mail k9vmy@arrl.net. Note: shipping is not included.

HamFest Information

West Allis Radio Amateur Club

41st Annual Mid-Winter Ham Radio, Computer, and Electronics Swapfest

Saturday January 5th, 2013

8a.m. to 2 p.m.

Waukesha County Expo Center Forum, Waukesha WI

I-94 to County Highway 3 Exit 294 south to County Highway FT then west to the expo

Phil Gural W9NAW

414-425-3649

www.warc.org

WCRA Mid-Winter Hamfest

Wheaton Community Radio Amateurs

Sunday January 20, 2013

Kane County Fairgrounds

525 South Randall Road

St. Charles, Illinois.

Kurt Rubin KB9RTO

585 Gundersen Drive

Carol Stream, Illinois 60188

630-604-0157

kb9rto@yahoo.com

Capital City Hamfest

Saturday February 9th, 2013

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Memorial U.C.C. Fellowship Hall

5705 Lacy Road

Fitchburg, WI

Steve Johnson, WD8DAS

wd8das@arrl.net

www.w8das.net/hamfest.html

**Ham of the Year
2012 Nomination**

The Ham of the Year is an honor that is presented to the R.A.R.A. member who has contributed the most effort to the club and to amateur radio in general during the year, This year the selection will be made by a committee established to evaluate the nominations of deserving candidates from those submitted by club members.

Your nominee should be chosen using two basic criteria: the nominee must be a R.A.R.A. member and should have performed exemplary service for amateur radio during the year 2012. We encourage you to take a few minutes to fill out the form below, or a facsimile while completing all of the requested information.

Nominations may be mailed to Jim Holich—AB9SX at 315 Beacon Drive, Belvidere, Illinois 61008 or jholich@comcast.net or handed to me at the next meeting. All nominations should be received by the December 12th meeting to allow the time for a decision. All nominations will be confidential.

Your participation and early response is highly appreciated.

Jim Holich—AB9SX
Secretary

Nominee _____
Callsign _____

I nominate the above preson for the R.A.R.A. Ham of the Year 2012 award fot the following reasons:



P.O. Box 8465, Rockford, IL 61126

Website: www.w9axd.org

E-mail: jholich@comcast.net

| <u>Nets</u> | | |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Monday 8 PM | RARA Info. | 146.610 - 114.8 PL |
| | RARA | 147.000—114.8 PL |
| Monday 9 PM | 10M SSB Net | 28.375 +/- USB |
| Daily 6 PM | Illinois Traffic Net | 3.905 LSB |

place address label here

December 2012

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.

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