

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.

September 2012

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American Radio Relay League's Illinois State convention and Peoria Superfest combine to form down state's largest ham radio convention.

Thousands will come to Peoria SEPTEMBER 22-23, 2012

(Peoria, IL September 1, 2012) Ham Radio and computer and electronics enthusiasts from several Midwestern states will converge on Exposition Gardens Fairgrounds in Peoria for downstate Illinois' largest "HAMFEST" on September 22-23, 2012. Called "Peoria SUPERFEST" and sponsored by the Peoria-Area Amateur Radio Club, the Annual "SUPERFEST" has an outdoor open-air Flea Market that begins at 6 AM Saturday, September 22, and runs through 2 PM Sunday, September 23. The flea market will host private sellers with a wide assortment of almost anything electronic. The "SUPERFEST" attracts not only FCC licensed "hams" (Amateur Radio Operators) but also hundreds of others interested in electronics and communications.

This year, the Peoria Superfest will host the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Illinois State convention. Speakers from the ARRL national headquarters in Newington, CT as well as Dick Isely, W9GIG and Kermit Carlson W9XA, ARRL Central Division will be on hand to discuss the state of Amateur Radio today and answer questions pertaining to a variety of related topics.

On Saturday, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM there will be a variety of radio related informational forums including speakers from the ARRL on emergency communications and electromagnetic interference. Additionally, weather forecasting technology, severe weather spotting technology, scanner listening and D-Star Digital transmissions will also be discussed. Also, author, Lisa Spahr, will discuss her book entitled "World War II Radio Heroes: Letters of Compassion".

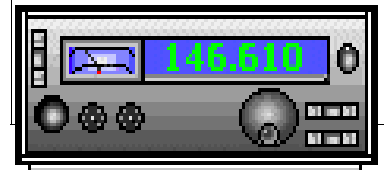
On Sunday, September 23 a high altitude balloon will be launched from Exposition Gardens at approximately 10:00AM. The balloon will contain a variety of ham radio equipment, including a high altitude GPS, Automatic Packet Reporting System (APRS) for tracking the balloon, a UHF simplex repeater and a 40 meter CW beacon. High definition still and video cameras will be part of the payload.

Examinations for FCC ham licenses will be conducted on Saturday, September 22, from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM. Information on how to become a Ham Radio Operator and on the next Ham Radio class will also be available.

Additionally, at 8 AM on Saturday and Sunday, dozens of commercial indoor exhibits will open and offer new and used radio, computer equipment, peripherals, software and electronic components.

All events are open to the public. Children under 12 will be admitted free when accompanied by an adult. Advance tickets, good for the weekend, at \$6 each are available from local radio club members, and at Electronics Diversified at 100 Walnut Street, Peoria; Stewart Radio at 905 East Washington, East Peoria and East Peoria Jewelry and Trade at 213 East Washington, East Peoria. Tickets at the gate will be \$8.

For more information contact: John Coker (309) 369-7428 or Fritz Bock (309) 256-2297



NEXT MEETING

**FRIDAY
September 14, 2012**

**Location:
Foundation Room**

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

**Program: Video
ARRL History
Alvin Alexander
KC9GIO**

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

From the Treasurer

RARA Treasurer's Report issued 28 August 2012

Covers the period 30 JUN 2012 to 28 AUG 2012

BEGINNING ENDING BALANCES

BALANCES

General Checking Acct: \$1445.13 \$1233.13 (per check register 28 AUG 2012)

Repeater Checking Acct: \$300.00 \$300.00 (per 31 JUL 2012 Statement)

Savings Acct: \$3,222.07 \$3222.07 (per 29 JUN 2012 Statement)***

Total of account balances \$ 4967.20 \$4755.20 (Net decline of \$212.00)

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

Our Income for the period:

\$40.00 Dues

Our Expenses for the period :

\$252.00 On The Waterfront – Tickets for booth volunteers

Respectfully submitted by John G. Olson RARA 2012 Treasurer 28 August, 2012

Midway Museum Club Service Project Update

Rich Range, WB9SFG and Jim Holich, AB9SX have donated keys and sounders for the Midway village project. Excessive equipment will be used for display purposes at the Museum.

As a way of practically being able to copy the Morse Code, we would like to use a pair of code oscillators in parallel with the sounders. That way we can actually communicate by using an ear piece to interpret the code without having to struggle with understanding the sounder.

We need several hundred feet of copper wire and a power supply. In the Spring, we will need labor to assemble all of this. Of course, all will be tested before installation.

This is an opportunity to make a permanent mark on the local history in Rockford with permanent recognition for the club.

This is a totally fun project.

Thank You OTW Volunteers

Because of the efforts of members participating in the ticket sales at OTW, we will be financially solvent for the next year. However, if you have volunteered for years, you will notice that the concessions are fewer, and more expensive. We need to be thinking about how we remain solvent. It is possible that if the trend continues, there may not be an OTW celebration one year.

Below is a summary of annual expenses. It may give you some idea of our financial viability. We need to increase membership or consider increasing dues. Another option is to find another source of income. We praise the efforts of the volunteers! We need to have more members arise to the challenge and become active. We all appreciate the benefits of the club, but the club only exists because we share a common interest in the hobby. Yes, we can use our privileges without any club affiliation. Yes, we can meet socially at Friday morning breakfast. The question is "Are we willing to put forth an effort to sustain the club?"

Elections will be here soon, and we would like to see multiple candidates for offices. This year we have had several positions vacant, and some members have had to "double in brass". We need to prevent "burn-out" of the STP (Same Twenty People). Please consider nominating several people for office (Their approval beforehand).

All of this is open to discussion.

Jim Holich—AB9SX
Ham Rag Editor

2013 Budget From the Treasurer

2012 dues income year to date (Aug, 30, 2012)-----	\$653.00
2012 necessary expenses Y.T.D.-----	\$677.00
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2012 shortfall-----	\$ 24.00
Expenses include Illinois Repeater Association dues-----	\$12.00
Post Office Box annual rent-----	\$48.00
Liability, etc and Repeater equipt.insurance-----	\$410.00
Donation to OSF for our meeting and VE testing facility useage-----	\$100.00
Web Site hosting-----	\$107.00
2011 Dues income for full year-----	\$597.00
2011 necessary expenses for full year-----	\$690.40
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2011 shortfall-----	\$113.40

Here are the figures from the checking account spreadsheet. Obviously we cannot stay in business with only dues income at the current rates. The expenses include nothing for the repeater(s)... A repeater repair expense would put us further into the red. We do have an antenna installation we have committed to pay for. Without digging back through board meeting minutes, I believe it is either \$150 or \$200 ("firm estimate") Makes that \$24 in the red into \$174 or \$224 ???

An additional \$5 per member per year will bring in an additional \$205.00, an additional \$10 per member would bring in an additional \$410.00 Perhaps a bit more realistic...

Remember, this is with NO BREAKFAST IN THE PARK, FIELD DAY OR FAMILY PICNIC.....NO NEW REPEATER GEAR. NO EXPENSES FOR POSTAGE or paper (I have donated the necessary stamps and paper for the past two years. The next treasurer is under no obligation to do so...)

Big Thunder ARC Fox Hunt

October 6th 2012

Fox Hunt

10:00 am

Spencer Park, Belvidere

Fox will be transmitting on Vhf FM. Frequency will be announced at the hunt. Hunters are to meet in Belvidere Park near the Mill. Talk in will be on the 147.375 repeater.

All hams are welcome to participate

AMATEUR RADIO EXAM NOTICE

August 18th there was 1 upgrade and 7 new licensees. Congratulations to:

Upgrade:

MILES, STEVEN L KC9WBH, General

New:

CASSIDY, PAUL J, General

DYSON, MICHELLE M, Technician

HASKELL, DENISE N, Technician

HOOD, MATTHEW L, Technician

PAULSEN, ROBERTA L, Technician

WARDZALA, ROBERT W, Technician

Thanks to Alvin Alexander KC9GIO and Steve Twigg W9SWT for volunteering their time. They both did a great job with the large turnout. And thanks to Jim Holich AB9SX for conducting such a successful Technician class.

Amateur Radio exams are held the 3rd Saturday of every month in Rockford IL. The next session is 9AM September 15, 2012. Walk-ins welcome. Check-in is from 9AM-10:30AM. We require two signature ID's (one with a 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

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 - Tom Shouler, N9VJU, 815-877-9129

Vice President - Open

Secretary - Jim Holich AB9SX 779-552-8796

Treasurer - John Olson W9JGO 815-399-4368

Directors:

Doug Abrahamson, KC9SDO 815-979-0329

Kurt Eversole, KE9N 815-222-8017

Dave Larsen, N9ZXL 815-399-8205

Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX 815-234-5034

Web Master - Robert Larson, KC9ICH, 815-226-1875

Ham Rag Editor - Jim Holich, AB9SX, 779-552-8796

Repeater Chairman - Chuck Ingle, AB9KA, 815-979-1049

The K7RA Solar Report

A surprising jump in solar activity occurred this week. Average daily sunspot numbers rose nearly 55 points (about 74%) to 128.7. Average daily solar flux values were up over 28 points to 136.9. A pair of coronal mass ejections on September 3 and 4 excited Earth's geomagnetic field, causing A index values to jump. Middle latitude A index on September 2-5 was 14, 23, 14 and 24. The planetary A index on those dates was 12, 32, 13 and 28, while high-latitude college A index (Fairbanks, Alaska) was 48, 52, 39 and 49.

Solar flux predictions show flux values peaking today (September 7) at 130, then on September 8-12 solar flux of 125, 120, 115, 110 and 105. Solar flux on September 13-16 is predicted at 100, then 95 on September 17-22, then 100, 110, 115, 120 and 125 on September 23-27, and peaking at 130 on September 28. From September 29 through October 2 solar flux is predicted to be 120, then 115 on October 3-5, and 110 on October 6-7.

The planetary A index is predicted at 8 on September 7, the 7 on September 8-10, 5 on September 11-13, 10 on September 14-16, 5 on September 17-19, 10 on September 20, 8 on September 21-23, and 5 on September 24-28.

F.K. Janda, OK1HH predicts our Earth's geomagnetic field will be quiet on September 7, mostly quiet September 8, quiet to unsettled September 9, quiet to active September 10, mostly quiet September 11, quiet to unsettled September 12, quiet to active September 13, mostly quiet September 14, quiet to active September 15, quiet to unsettled September 16, quiet September 17, quiet to unsettled September 18, mostly quiet September 19-20, quiet to unsettled September 21, quiet to active September 22, quiet September 23-28, and active to disturbed September 29.

Our 3 month moving average has an update, now that August is done, and the average daily sunspot number for the trailing three months, June 1 through August 31 was 91.9. The three month moving averages centered on July 2011 through July 2012 were 63, 79.6, 98.6, 118.8, 118.6, 110, 83.3, 73.7, 71.2, 87.3, 91.5, 96.5 and 91.9. The monthly averages of daily sunspot numbers, May through August 2012 were 99.4, 90.1, 99.6 and 85.8.

NASA has a revised forecast for the peak of Cycle 24, and it looks very interesting. Instead of a peak in Spring 2013 with a smoothed international sunspot number of 60, the peak is now predicted for Fall 2013, with the smoothed sunspot number prediction revised to 76, about 27% higher. Perhaps Cycle 24 will have a double peak, the first being in Fall 2011 and the second in Fall 2013.

The revised forecast is at <http://solarscience.msfc.nasa.gov/predict.shtml>.

For VHF propagation, Ken Tata, K1KT tells us to check <http://aprs.mountainlake.k12.mn.us/> which he says is "great for live, real time propagation as they are derived from global APRS reports. Unfortunately, most of the rest of the world has no APRS Stations. If there are Es paths the red plumes can be huge!"

For tropo predictions, check the Hepburn maps at <http://www.dxinfocentre.com/tropo.html>. These maps are updated daily at 1PM EST, I believe. By using weather maps and this site you can sometimes do your own tropo forecasts."

Ken says, for the last hour or so of reported contacts, check <http://www.dxmaps.com/spots/map.php?Lan=E&Frec=50&ML=M&Map=NA&DXC=N&HF=N&GL=N>.

I checked conditions in Europe on 10 meters at 1200 UTC on September 7, and saw lots of tropo and sporadic-E propagation indicated.

Back on August 31, Jeff, N8II reported: "The bands have gone from pretty punk to exciting in just a couple of days, no wonder with SFI currently 135 and K1, lots of over the pole DX worked yesterday including RI1FJ (Franz Josef land) for a new band country at 0045Z on 12M CW, 1 hour after my sunset and about 03 hrs in FJL! More details to follow. 15 was open 1/2 hr after sunrise to EX8MLE and UK8 this AM."

Roland Anders, K3RA of Elkridge, Maryland reports, also from August 31: "That jump in the SSN really seemed to liven things up to Asia on the bands here in MD-especially on 10 and 12. Wednesday night was a precursor of things to come. 15 was open to JT, HL, YB, and several JAs as late as 0225Z.

"Thursday morning I worked a few Asians on 20 at 1200Z or so, and at 1220Z I happened to see a huge number of spots on 10 meters by Europeans. The 10 meter band map is usually pretty blank at that hour. 12 was open, too, but that was not nearly so unusual as the 10 meter spots. So I tuned up to 10 and immediately started working EUs, and ran 15 of them in about 30 minutes. Then I moved to 15 CW at 1320Z and worked a couple of Chinese stations that were new stations for me. After some more EUs, I moved to 15 SSB and worked HS, two YBs and finished with 9N1AA at 1452Z.

"Friday morning, I got on 15 at 1200Z and worked some JAs, EX, a couple of HS stations, China, VU, a couple of YBs and A7. I moved to 10 at 1310Z to work 5H3ME on CW, then to 12 for a good run of EUs. Back to 10 at 1500Z to pick up YB4IR, then to 15 to work YB, JY, and VU. At 1525Z I moved to 12 SSB and snagged XU7AAJ. That's several hours after his sunset, a new band country for me. 12m was also good for OD5ARMY on SSB and an Israeli mobile.

"Friday night at midnight on 15 I heard a strong JA working RX9 and could hear both sides of QSO. So I called CQ and worked some JAs.

"Here on the east coast, I often find that when I tune 20 at 1200Z and later, I find very little if any activity, but CQing over the pole often produces JA and other Asians. So, if all you do is listen and look for spots, you may be missing some good opportunities. Same can be said for 17 meters, which is usually open to EU at that hour, but Asians can be enticed to answer CQs. And look for those openings over the pole on 10 and 12 mid-morning East Coast time--it's that time of year."

Bob Foster, N9BGC of Waverly, Iowa wrote on September 2, "This past week saw several solid DX openings from NE Iowa to Eastern Europe, the Pacific and South America on 15 meters SSB. The band stayed open well past sunset. My station is very basic - 100 watts into a ground mounted Gap vertical. Legitimate 5-7 to 5-9 signals were sent to Poland, Croatia, Hawaii, Brazil and Spain. Not exotic DX, but quite consistent 4,000 to 5,000 miles. It was quite satisfying considering my modest station. Normally, I have to rely on 20 M and 40 M CW for such contacts."

Fred Laun, K3ZO sent comments about this year's All Asia Phone contest. "Given that this contest is possibly the most affected by solar effects since the beam headings from here to the area where the maximum number of possible QSOs is located go right through the north magnetic polar area, I thought it would be interesting to compare my score this year to the score in last year's contest."

In 2011 with solar flux at 119, he had 96 contacts on 40, 93 on 20, and 196 on 15, with a total of 385 QSOs and 70,455 points. In 2012 with solar flux at 145 he had 19 QSOs on 40, 81 on 20, 298 on 15 and 4 on 10 meters, total 402 QSOs, and a score of 81,606.

"The 15 meter numbers this year would have been even more lopsided if I hadn't had to break off great runs twice on Friday night due to equipment problems, and if I hadn't had to shut down almost completely during the best hours to Japan Saturday night because of thunderstorms. My 140 foot tower took a direct lightning hit at 9:45 Saturday night.

"The main difference between the two years was the existence of a great opening to Japan on 15 Saturday morning between 1200 and 1400 UTC. This opening did not exist during last year's contest, when the furthest east that 15 opened in the same time frame was to Thailand. Unfortunately, the great Saturday opening this year did not repeat itself Sunday morning because of a solar proton event which had the effect of lowering the MUF over the pole in that direction. However propagation to that area on 20 on Sunday morning was much better than it had been on Saturday morning which gave me a chance to fatten up my 20 meter numbers. RU0AI registered a mind-boggling 45 dB over 9 on my S-meter during the Sunday morning run.

"The other difference of note was that I was able to make Asian QSOs on 10 this year; not many -- one UA9, two HZs and an A6, but last year I didn't have any. As always, I had no packet in the shack on purpose so I missed some 10 meter stuff I'm sure. K3TW in Florida reported hearing HS0ZJU on 10. Ken, KE3X piloted the N3HBX station to much better numbers than mine. Congrats to Ken for a job well done."

For a peek at the K3ZO antenna farm, go to <http://www.bing.com/maps/default.aspx?cp=38.81|-76.934&style=h&lvl=16&v=1>, and zoom in, then click on Aerial and Bird's Eye. You can drag the image around, and also select views from four different images in four directions on the compass rose in the upper right. Quite impressive.

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

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



Hamfest Information



Presents
RADIO EXPO 2012
 Saturday September 15th One Day Only

BOONE CO FAIRGROUNDS - US Rt 20 & IL 76 BELVEDERE, IL

42° 16' 54" N / 88° 51' 7" W



Radios ~Antennas~ Computers ~ Electronics for everyone!
 Grounds Open For Set Up Friday At Noon ~ Flea Market Opens - 6 AM
 Exhibit Buildings Open - 8 AM To 4 PM

* Newest Amateur Equipment From Major Manufacturers And Surplus Electronics *

Advanced Tickets \$ 8 with 4 stubs - At The Gate Tickets \$ 10 with 2 stubs (Kids Under 12 Free)
FREE PARKING - Outdoor Electrical Hookups Available - VEC Testing 9 - 12 Noon
 On Grounds Breakfast And Lunch Available **RVs/ Motor Homes - Water - Electric \$25.00 - No Waste Service**

Talk-in On The CFMC Repeater 146.76 (107.2 Hz PL) Linked To WX9MCS 147.255 (114.8PL) & 444.725 (107.2 Hz PL)
 (Grounds/ Local Area Talk In 146.550)

Got Expo Questions ??? Email Us Today cfmc.radioexpo@yahoo.com Or Call us 630-847-5317

Name _____ Call _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Table Reservations for both buildings-\$20.00 per table (8ft long) _____ x \$20.00 = _____
 4 or more tables - \$15.00 each _____ x \$15.00 = _____
 Advanced sale tickets 4 Stubs - \$ 8.00 - REQUIRED with tables _____ x \$ 8.00 = _____
 Inside ____/Outside electric ____ - Flea market - \$ 10.00 = _____
 Total = _____

**** Building assignment at discretion of CFMC / Do not mail table or ticket requests after Aug 27, 2012 ****
 Make check out to: CHICAGO FM CLUB 6348 N Milwaukee Ave #103 Chicago, IL 60646
 Remember to send a #10 (4 in by 9.5 in) self-addressed stamped envelope with your request.

ANNOUNCING
The 60th Anniversary of the
Midwest's Premier DX event!



60th Annual W9DXCC Convention & Banquet
Saturday, September 15, 2012
Holiday Inn - Elk Grove Village, Illinois
Sponsored by the Northern Illinois DX Association

PRESENTATIONS

HKONA Malpelo Island – Glenn Johnson W0GJ
T32C Island of Kiritimati (Christmas Island) – Chris Duckling G3SVL
FCC Activities/ARRL Lobbying (PRB-1 Update) – Chris Imlay W3KD
Propagation Update – Cycle 24 Predictions – Carl Luetzelschwab K9LA
Rare Telegraph Keys from the collection of Dave Newman NE9H
Tales from the Latest IOTA Expedition – Mike McGirr K9AJ
Northern California DX Foundation Update
And much, more – See website for details

ARRL FORUM

Central Division Director Dick Isely W9GIG, Central Division Vice Director Kermit Carlson W9XA, and DXAC Advisory Committee Jim O’Connell W9WU

GRAND BANQUET AND PRIZES

Noted DX’er and Contester Fred Laun K3ZO—Banquet Speaker
Master of Ceremonies: Jim O’Connell W9WU

Special 60th Anniversary Activities

Major Prizes from Leading Vendors
ARRL and CQ awards card checking

COME EARLY: Register for the course “DXing from the Black Hole” from 1-5 pm Friday
Friday Welcome Reception

FOLLOWED BY: Late Friday Hospitality Suite Hosted by Northern Illinois DX Association

STAY LATE: Saturday Night Hospitality Suite Hosted by Greater Milwaukee DX Association

For further convention information, contact Paula Uscian, K9IR pmuscian@sbcglobal.net

For information about taking the course “DX’ing From the Black Hole,” contact Jack Hudson, W9MU jhud-



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
Monday 9 PM	10M SSB Net	28.375 +/- USB
Daily 6 PM	Illinois Traffic Net	3.905 LSB

place address label here

September 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