

# 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.

## Presidents Message

Dear RARA Members,

Wow, does time fly. In August it will be 10 years since I got an Amateur Radio license.

The FCC has a new Paperless License Policy. You can read about it in the April 2015 QST on page 77.

Thanks to Dennis Johanson, K9VMY for his presentation in April on Dipole Antennas.

The May meeting program will be presented by Kurt Eversole, KE9N, and Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX.

Kurt will discuss "J" Pole Antenna Design and Gordon will be discussing repeater conduct.

This will be a great meeting so I encourage all of you to attend.

See you at the meeting,

**This Month it is in the St. Joseph Room.**

Robert Larson, KC9ICH



*Hurry, Hurry!!!*

**Don't Miss Out on This Year's Field Day**

**June 27 – 28, 2015**

We Need

HF Operators

Photographer / Videographer

If You or Someone You Know Could Fill These Positions

Please Contact

Alvin Alexander – Field Day Coordinator

[KC9GIO@arrl.net](mailto:KC9GIO@arrl.net)

815 505-5013

**May 2015**

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## NEXT MEETING

**FRIDAY**

**May 8, 2015**

**7:00 pm**

**“J-Pole Antennas and Repeater Conduct”**

**Location:**

**OSF St. Anthony**

**Medical Center**

**5666 East State Street**

**Rockford, IL 61108**

**St. Joseph Room**



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



### RARA Club Meeting Minutes for April 10, 2015

The meeting called to order by Robert Larson who welcomed everyone.

The March 13, 2015 minutes were read and approved. (John Olson made the motion, seconded by Larry Schubert). Approved.

#### Old Business:

Field Day 2015 update: Alvin Alexander discussed veteran's roundtable. Suggested that veterans include any veterans...not just those in a communications role. Shannon has agreed to prepare Saturday brunch, as well as other volunteer duties. Kurt (20-40-80m) and Robert (10m+) will be bringing radios to cover several HF bands. No CW station yet. Set-up is 6-9 a.m., and we will begin transmitting at 1 pm. There will be a Boy Scouts merit badge class at the site as well.

#### New Business:

Robert read an email from someone who bought a home that had 100's of QST magazines and is looking for a ham, or hams, that would want them for free. Robert gave out the owner's email address to the club if anyone was interested.

The 50/50 raffle was won by Gordon Seaman, and donated back the proceeds to RARA (\$18)

Program: Dennis Johanson titled: "Guide to Dipole and Antenna Design"

Gordon Seaman made the motion to adjourn meeting, and Larry Schubert seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 pm

Attendance: 17

Submitted by: Bruce Carlson, N9OHT

#### Editors Note

If you would like to have something published, please call me or email me at [kurt.eversole@gmail.com](mailto:kurt.eversole@gmail.com).

**Cut-off for the June 2015 issue will be Saturday, May 30, 2015**

Kurt - KE9N, Editor

## Local Events and Information

### UPCOMING RARA EVENTS

**May 8, 2015** - General RARA Meeting 7:00 pm at OSF

**May 26, 2015** - RARA Board Meeting 7:00 pm at OSF

**June 12, 2015** - General RARA Meeting 7:00 pm at OSF

**June 27-28, 2015** - Field Day at Alpine Park (shelter #1)

**June 30, 2015** - RARA Board Meeting 7:00 pm at OSF

### AMATEUR RADIO EXAM NOTICE

Amateur Radio exams are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month in Rockford IL. The next session is 9AM May 16, 2015 . Walk-ins are welcome. Check-in is from 9AM-10AM, no exams started after 10:30. 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 exam credit, bring the original and a copy (We need to see the originals & keep a photocopy of each). 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 are held in the St Francis Room (Main Entrance then turn right).

Jim Holich AB9SX

[jholich@comcast.net](mailto:jholich@comcast.net)

### 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 you 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.**

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

**Subject:** Spike O'Dell (from WGN radio) now a ham!

If you happen to remember, Spike O'dell, morning (mostly) announcer on WGN Radio 720, retired a number of years ago. He was on this morning on WGN, as a guest, as they were operating "remote" from the CMT music studios in Nashville, due to the visit of Steve Cochran down there watching the Blackhawks game in town.

Spike mentions he recently became a ham radio operator, and expressed his love for the hobby ever since he was a kid growing up, listening to his fathers radios. He was previously licensed (as a Novice), but let his license expire, but was always interested in the hobby. Now enjoying retirement, he says that he has been quite active in the hobby, and often can be found checking into the Kentucky Phone Net, in the mornings, and enjoys working DX. He has a nice bio on QRZ.com, and includes photos of his nice station. His stated his antenna (currently) is a simple wire dipole in the trees. His call is W4WGN  
He says it stands for "worked 4 WGN"  
Look him up on QRZ.com

73,

Jim Miller, W4JR

**From ARRL Headquarters  
Newington, CT April 23, 2015  
To all radio amateurs**

ARLS007 Fox-1C and 1D Satellites to Include L-Band Uplink; Fox-1E to Have Linear Transponder

AMSAT Vice President-Engineering Jerry Buxton, N0JY, has announced plans to incorporate an L-band receiver in the Fox-1C and Fox-1D satellites. This will allow ground controllers to select the normal U/V configuration or the new L/V 1.2 GHz (23 cm) mode. Both bands will operate as FM single channel.

"Rather than adding a complete new receiver, the L band 'Project Downshifter' will convert the received L-band signal down to the Fox-1 uplink frequency and feed it to the UHF receiver on the Fox-1 satellite," Buxton explained. "The design will not require an additional antenna on the satellite, because the existing UHF antenna will work for L band receive as well."

A new group of volunteers is working on a companion uplink station to convert UHF to the L-band uplink frequencies. Team members include Bruce Herrick, WW1M; Dan Hubert, VE9DAN; Elizabeth Schenk, KC1AXX; Dave Smith, W6TE, and Alfred Watts, AF5VH.

The team plans to have an affordable L-band uplink ground station available to amateurs by the time Fox-1C is on orbit.

### 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 Morning Glory"***  
***408 7th Street***  
***Rockford, IL 61104***



# MARK YOUR CALENDARS

## ARRL Field Day is June 27-28, 2015

Field Day is part educational event, part operating event, part public relations event – and ALL about FUN!

To work as many stations as possible on any and all amateur bands (excluding the 60, 30, 17, and 12-meter bands) and to learn to operate in abnormal situations in less than optimal conditions. Field Day is open to all amateurs in the areas covered by the ARRL/RAC Field Organizations and countries within IARU Region 2.



### AREA Repeaters

146.610 -	ENC/DEC pl 114.8	W9AXD
147.000 +	ENC/DEC pl 114.8	W9AXD
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

### 2015 RARA Officers and Board

#### Officers:

President - Robert Larson, KC9ICH, 815-540-0309  
[kc9ich@arrl.net](mailto:kc9ich@arrl.net)  
Vice President - Open  
Secretary - Bruce Carlson, N9OHT, 815-218-1764  
[bruce.n9oht@gmail.com](mailto:bruce.n9oht@gmail.com)  
Treasurer - Shannon Larson, KC9QBC, 815-298-7549  
[shannon1234@sbcglobal.net](mailto:shannon1234@sbcglobal.net)

#### Directors:

Ham Rag Editor and Repeater Chairman - Kurt Eversole, KE9N  
815-389-2784 [kurt.eversole@gmail.com](mailto:kurt.eversole@gmail.com)  
W9AXD License Trustee - Scott Francis, KG9SF,  
815-874-7170 [kg9sf@arrl.net](mailto:kg9sf@arrl.net)  
Jim Holich, AB9SX, 779-552-8796 [jholich@comcast.net](mailto:jholich@comcast.net)  
Dennis Johanson, K9VMY, 815-255-4603 [k9vmy@arrl.net](mailto:k9vmy@arrl.net)  
Dave Larsen, N9ZXL, 815-914-6078 [n9zxl@att.net](mailto:n9zxl@att.net)  
Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX, 815-234-5034 [gleasman@outlook.com](mailto:gleasman@outlook.com)

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



## QRX one.....some random DX thoughts are coming through.....

The much hyped Spratly Islands DX-pedition (yawn) turned out to be the event that never really got off the ground. The operators finally arrived a day or two late. While antennas were being put up one of the operators became ill and it was determined that this condition required serious medical help. A medivac aircraft was dispatched from the Philippines. As it neared the DX-pedition island it was reportedly harassed by a Chinese fighter plane, and it aborted its mission and returned to the Philippines. A second rescue flight the following day picked up the sick operator and one or two others and got them back safely. Because of the uncertain political climate, the Philippine naval vessel which carried the operators to Spratly was ordered to return a day early. QSO claims that I've seen ,range from 3,500 to 5,000. Many of those QSOs were with JA and VK, and very few with North America. Contrast that with the 140,000 QSOs made by the Navassa Island team.

Heard in passing: "Naw, I don't work DX. I only have a little station." Or, "I can't do any DXing. All I have is a wire antenna."

Sound familiar? Well, it's mostly untrue. If you have the desire to talk with people in faraway places, realize that you **CAN** do it. Pull up a good DX Cluster on the Internet, maybe DX Summit or DX Watch. The cluster will show you what DX stations are on the air **RIGHT NOW**, what their frequency is, who they're working, and a lot of other information. Pick out an exotic station that's working North America and see if you can hear him. If so, chances are you can work him. It may take some patience and a lot of calling, but keep on trying. Remember, a juicy DX contact in your log-book is like a tasty fish in your frying pan. Personal note: when I started DXing I worked 179 countries with 100 watts and a vertical. Ask Steve Twigg, W9SWT how many countries he's worked on PORTABLE antennas. See what you can work on one of the major worldwide DX Contests, like the ARRL International, the CQ Worldwide, the CQ World Prefix (WPX). There's a lot of DX OUT THERE just waiting for your call.

### Heard Through the QRN:

MONACO, 3A -a couple of French ops were active from Monaco during the first week of April. This is a tough DX contact

FIJI, 3D2. A New Zealander was active from Fiji early in April

KUWAIT, 9K. The Kuwait ARS was active through mid month with special event call sign 9K90IARU to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the IARU.

CHATHAM ISLAND, VK7. A couple of Aussie operators were active this month.

BHUTAN, A5. A group of four Japanese operators began ops from Bhutan on April 30 and will continue through May 5.

ZIMBABWE, Z2. Saudi operator was active around mid April from Zimbabwe, which is always a great DX contact.

LESOTHO, 7P. A South African op was active from neighboring Lesotho in mid April.

MARIANA ISLANDS, KH0. A Japanese op was active throughout April from Saipan.

CLIPPERTON ISLAND, FO. Alain, F6BFH has been active as Tx5P from CLIPPERTON. He is there on work assignment.

LEBANON, OD. Walid, OD5ZZ has been very active from his home in Tripoli.

73, Scott Francis, KG9SF

## Generally Speaking

One of the Local QRPers came beating his way up the hill the other day, puffing and sweating as the first signs of early summer took their toll. It really wasn't very warm, but the QRPer looked like he'd spent quite a few hours sitting in front of the rig this winter. We'd seen this before, and once the antenna and tower work began in earnest, he'd be back in shape.

He flopped down in the chair beside us, wiped a bit of sweat from his brow, and asked, "What is the best DX rig?" We thought for a moment and then used the old trick of answering a question with a question, "Why do you ask?"

"Because all the Big Guns at the DX club were arguing about it at the meeting last night. One of them has one of those TS-2000 rigs, and he swears nothing can touch it! But another one bought a FT-5000MP over the winter, and he was just as adamant it was the best DX rig. And then this other guy who has 340 or 350 worked said he was happy with his TS-590, and that if you spent any more on a rig, it wouldn't make any difference!"

We nodded and peered over our bifocals at the QRPer with a non-committal look. He took a deep breath and continued on. "Last fall I bought a FT-857. It's a middle-of-the-road rig. And with my 600-watt amp and tri-bander, I worked a lot of DX with it these past six months. Now I'm beginning to wonder. Maybe if I had a \$5000 rig, I'd have worked more DX. And if a lot of DX is good, more must be better. Maybe I should buy an FT-5000MP or an IC-7800. What do you think?"

We thought about our FT-101 that was still grinding away after 25 years, and of all the DX we'd worked with it. Often we'd been tempted by the glossy ads and the new bells and whistles, but we'd stuck to our DX guns. Maybe if we had bought a new rig every few years, we'd have worked more DX. But maybe we wouldn't have, either.

The QRPer was tapping his fingers on the table, waiting for an answer. We took our time, and then replied. "You've heard the Old Timer say that all things are relative, although some more so, right?"

The QRPer nodded and replied impatiently, "Yes, yes, I know! He always says that. It's what Albert always said too. But what's it got to do with buying a new rig? Should I dig into my savings and get one of the new high end rigs or not?"

We weren't about to advise anyone on how much money to spend on a rig, so we decide to hit him with one of the Eternal Enigmas of DXing. "That's the special theory of DXing the Old Timer kept telling you. You obviously haven't heard of the general theory of DXing, have you?"

"What's that?", he said, standing up and staring at us, "and what does it have to do with buying a new rig?"

We looked at him and replied in a knowledgeable tone, "DXers believe that, generally speaking, he who has the best antenna will work more DX. And generally speaking, he who spends more time in front of the rig will work more DX. And generally speaking, he who has the biggest amp will work more DX. So maybe the general theory of DXing implies he who has the most expensive rig will work the most DX too. But it never has been proven. Albert spent years working on a unified DX theory, and he never figured it out."

The QRPer looked confused, and he just stared at us. We stared right back at him, and said, "Generally speaking, however, Albert did prove that he who has the best propagation wins. That is why DX IS!"

He jumped to his feet and bellowed, "What kind of answer is that?" We shrugged as he stomped out the door and down the hill, probably no wiser than he had been a few hours earlier. Someday he would probably understand, but maybe he'd have to go through a half dozen expensive radios before it sunk in.

73/DX Paul VE1DX



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

E-mail: [kurt.eversole@gmail.com](mailto:kurt.eversole@gmail.com)

**Local Area Nets**

Monday 8:00 PM RARA Info. 146.610 - 114.8  
Friday Night Fun Net 8:00 PM 147.255 + 114.8  
Illinois Traffic Net (daily) 6:00 PM 3.905 LSB

place address label here

**May 2015**

**ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

website: [w9axd.org](http://w9axd.org)

Membership Type :  New  Renewal

Annual Fees:  \$10 - Student (up to age 24)

\$25 - Adult  \$15 - Senior (age 62+)

Above rate includes the RARA monthly newsletter, Ham Rag, via email  
Ham Rag via USPS: \$12 extra

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Call Sign : \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Town : \_\_\_\_\_ State : \_\_\_\_\_ Zip : \_\_\_\_\_

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

Cell # \_\_\_\_\_ Ext : \_\_\_\_\_

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

May we make your phone and e-mail available for other RARA members only?

Yes  No

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM TO:  
ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 8465  
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61126