

# 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 Column

### Greetings:

I want to apologize for the lack of a Presidents column for the month of September. The On the Waterfront Festival, an infection, and a funeral the same weekend, along with a vacation a week later threw my timing off and I was not able to get an article to the editor in a timely fashion. I know it's no excuse but I ask for forgiveness anyway.

Since I did not get a column out last month, the main thing I wanted to report on was the clubs family picnic. All who attended had a great time; the food was plentiful, and delicious. For those in attendance, a long time member and friend too many members, Gene Duncan, (W9GD) made a trip up from Oregon to join in the celebration. I have talked to Gene on many occasions but this was my first time to meet him in person and finally put a face to the name and call.

I want to thank all those who answered the call this year for helping at On the Waterfront. Without these people's hard work and commitment to the club whether they were members, spouses, relatives, or just friends, the club would lose our only major funding source. Again, I want to thank those people for their help.

The monthly meeting for October is our election month. If you would like to be on the cutting edge and help lead the club in the future, please come out and volunteer for a position or ask to be on a committee. The club is only as good as our members who are willing to help make a difference.

The repeater committee has been diligently working on both of the repeaters. At this time, the 146.610 repeater appears working with a few glitches now and again that we are trying to understand and correct. A new backup battery arrangement for the 147.000 repeater is in the works, and when it is installed it may correct some problems. If anyone has any problems with the repeaters or questions about their operation, please contact Chuck Ingle, AB9KA. He is the club's repeater chair and his telephone number can be found in the Ham Rag and on the webpage.

I hope to see you at the next membership meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October at 7:00PM at St. Anthony Hospital.

73,

Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX

## October 2009

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### NEXT MEETING

**Friday  
October 9, 2009  
7:00 PM**

**PRESENTATION:  
WINLINK 2000**

**By  
Don Russell, W9DRR**

**Location  
St Anthony  
Medical Center  
Room # 1041  
5666 E. State Street  
Rockford, IL**



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

## Secretary's Report



### RARA Club Meeting

September 11, 2009

The meeting was called to order by President Gordon Seaman at 7:05 PM. There were 18 hams and guests in attendance.

#### Secretary's Report:

Al, KD9CA, reported that the minutes were published in the August Ham Rag and stated that there were a few copies available for anyone who wanted one. W9MG made a motion to accept the minutes as published and John, N9OTC, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

#### Treasurer's Report:

Al, KD9CA, read the report for the period July 28<sup>th</sup> through August 24<sup>th</sup> since Rich, K9PK, did not think he would make the meeting.

Income:	\$20.00
Expenses:	\$563.98
Net Income/Loss:	\$(543.98)
Ending Checking Balance:	\$1436.27
Ending Savings Balance:	\$4312.09
Ending Total Cash on Hand:	\$5748.36
Gain/Loss compared to last year:	\$112.14

Dave, W9MG, made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as read and Gene, KA9BOD, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

#### Old Business:

Gordy thanked all who attended the family picnic.

He also announced that Steve, W9SWT, made his first HF contact during Field Day. Steve was presented with a certificate.

Shari, N9SH, reported the menu for the Awards Banquet would be the same as last year but the prices have gone up two dollars for each menu item.

Gordy announced that the Repeater committee members are: Chuck, AB9KA, as Chairman, Don, W9DRR, Tom, N9VJU, Dick, KC9BCB and Gordy, KC9NEX. Don, W9DRR reported most of the issues with the 146.61 repeater were due to cold solder joints. He also reported the controller appears to be the main problem with the 147.000 repeater but said it will require some further investigation. He stated a new repeater controller is in the area of \$1200.00 dollars.

Gordy thanked all who helped with On the Waterfront.

Gordy stated that a committee was needed for the election of officers.

#### New Business:

Gordy stated that the Club would not have a JOTA event this year.

Dave W9MG suggested each Ham bring a copy of his/her log for the last 30 days to the Club meetings in an effort to show that amateurs are indeed making contacts. Dave suggested we could call this the *LogPile*.

Don W9DRR reported on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> that there would be an Illinois simulated emergency test and all Amateurs are welcome to participate.

*(continued on next page)*

## Secretary's Report *(continued)*

Jim, W4JR, reminded us of the Belvidere hamfest on Saturday and Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.

Shari, N9SH, said the Peoria ham fest was next weekend, September 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

It was mentioned that a former member of RARA, Paul Klein, was a silent key.

Fred, W9WOQ, brought refreshments to the July Club meeting and suggested we continue this as a tradition. Al, KD9CA, brought the refreshments to the September meeting.

At 7:43 PM, Jim, W4JR, made a motion to close the meeting. Chuck, K9SAN, seconded the motion.

Gene, KA9BOD, then gave an excellent presentation of his rafting trip down the Grand Canyon.

Submitted by:

Al, KD9CA

RARA Secretary

## RARA Information Net

The purpose of the net will be to disseminate RARA related information as well as other Amateur Radio re-lated information. As a club sponsored activity, please check in with Net Control and help make this net a success. The Net Control will be 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.

### New Location

### 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*

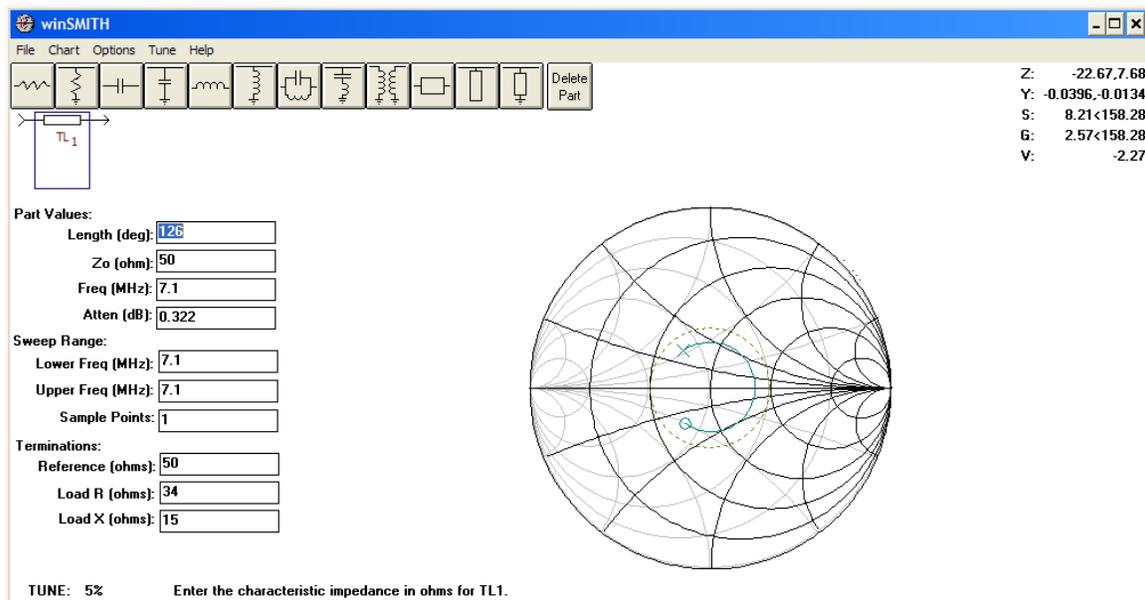


### Editors Note

If you would like to have something published , please call me or email me at ke9n@arrl.net.

**Cut-off for the November 2009 issue will be Saturday, October 31, 2009.**

Kurt - KE9N, Editor



## The Transmission Line Transformer

If you have a TMS LMR-400 coax feed line 100 feet long feeding your yagi, and at the shack end of the line  $35 - j15$  ohms is measured (at 7.1 MHz), what is the  $R + jX$  of the antenna? (Assume you are using a Smith Chart with a 50 ohm center so you do not have to normalize.)

First, plot  $35 - j15$  ohms on the Smith Chart. Place your compass pin on the 50 ohm center and draw a circle which passes through the  $35 - j15$  point. This establishes a VSWR circle (centered on 50 ohms) of approximately 1.64:1. You know that all the impedances within this transmission line lie on the VSWR circle, and repeat every 0.5 wavelengths, beginning at  $35 - j15$ .

A 100 foot length of this coax ( $VF=0.85$ ) represents 306 degrees, or 0.849 of a full wavelength, at this frequency.

Next, subtract 0.5 wavelength and determine you have 0.349 wavelength (or 126 degrees) of equivalent transmission line length.

Moving from  $35 - j15$  along the VSWR circle for 0.349 wavelengths away from the generator (toward the antenna or load) puts you at  $34 + j15$ , which is the value your antenna analyzer should read at the antenna terminals. The VSWR is actually a little higher but line losses reduce the true VSWR from 1.71:1 to 1.64:1.

Knowing the  $R + jX$  allows you to build a proper matching network at the antenna terminals. This note demonstrates how  $R + jX$  changes with the length of a coax feedline.

*Short Circuit*  
November 2009

## Computer Thoughts

[www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com) - Check out this site to stimulate your brain and give you something to think about. The site consists of lectures given at the TED conferences. Read about the conference on the site and watch two or three of the lectures. You will be glad you did. You may even go back for more. I do, quite often. Great stuff!!

[www.opendns.com](http://www.opendns.com) - If you are an advanced computer user and you are not using OpenDNS yet, read the information about what DNS is and why OpenDNS may be better option than your ISP provided DNS. Then determine if it is something you should be using. I have been using it on my system for a year or two now. I have not had any problems from using OpenDNS and maybe missed a few because I did. Check it out. You may see a little speed improvement as well as the advertised security improvements in your net surfing.

73, Paul - K9RNR

# OPERATING TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

## NEW HF OPERATORS - THINGS TO DO

October is the busiest contest month, so there is no shortage of exciting action on the HF bands - the activity is thick and fall propagation has kicked in. Two of the biggest QSO parties (CA and PA) go back to back over the next week and the Oceania DX Contest gives you two weekends to try for some of that exotic Pacific DX. You can rake leaves through the week!

**OPERATING TIP:** Turn it down! By turning down your receiver's gain, you'll accomplish three things. First, your ears will love you for it. Excessive audio levels leads to hearing loss, eventually. (What?) Second, your receiver will be far less susceptible to overload that creates distortion and spurious products all over the band. Third, by reducing gain, band noise will be amplified less, making the band sound quieter. All three of these things reduce operator fatigue and improve copy of signals on a crowded band. The result? Bigger scores!

ARRL Sweepstakes is coming and what better fall activity for a collegiate radio club? To encourage more entries from our secondary institutions, ARRL Contest Branch Manager, Sean KX9X has written a short article on [collegearc.com](http://collegearc.com) to help clubs get on the air for SS. If you're an alumnus of such a club, you might point them in the direction of this article to help answer questions and fan the competitive flame.



Plotting strategy, no doubt, are ARRL Sweepstakes Contest Manager, Ken K5KA (left) and ARRL Membership and Volunteer Programs Manager, Dave NN1N, poolside at Ken's Bartlesville, OK QTH. (Photo - NN1N)

## ARRL November Sweepstakes Calendar

November 7-9, 2009 CW

November 21-23, 2009 SSB

See the ARRL website for more details

<http://www.arrrl.org>

**WORD TO THE WISE:** Cloudburner - You've heard the term "NVIS" probably, referring to the use of high-angle signals to provide regional coverage on the lower HF bands. Before it got a snazzy FLA (four-letter acronym), an NVIS antenna was called a "cloudburner" and is still part of every domestic contester's aluminum arsenal. High-angle signals from low dipoles on 14 MHz and lower frequencies allow you to maximize short-skip QSOs. When sunspots are low and 40 and 80 meters hot, putting up a cloudburner to complement your low-angle DXing antenna is a good strategy.

## ITEMS FOR SALE

Hallicrafters SX-62 - Contact Mike Callihan via e-mail. [mcpolack@yahoo.com](mailto:mcpolack@yahoo.com)

## The ham classes scheduled for this Fall 2009

The Technician class radio class will be offered at Rock Valley College on October 17 and October 31, 2009. Class times are from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on both dates. This two session class is being taught by RARA instructors registered with the Amateur Radio Relay League. Encourage your friends or anyone you know interested in becoming a ham radio operator to attend these classes. Registration is through Rock Valley College. Tuition is \$49.00 which includes the Technician Class study book. Signup for classes by October 10, 2009. Testing will be on October 31, 2009.

For more information contact Carl Cacciatore, W9TQ, at 815-332-2479



## AMATEUR RADIO EXAM NOTICE

September 19th there were 3 applicants resulting in 1 new licenses and 1 upgrades

New Licenses  
Raymond Fields

Upgrades  
Elmer Schipper, KA9ULJ, Extra

Northern Illinois Volunteer Examiners will be holding the next Amateur Radio exam session in Rockford, IL on Saturday, October 17, 2009.

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 until 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

# DX NEWS AND CONTESTS

## SCHEDULED DXPEDITIONS

CALLSIGN	QTH	WHEN	QSL VIA
<b>3D20CR</b>	CONWAY REEF	OCT. 1 TO OCT. 10	DJ8NK
<b>ZK2DL</b>	NUIE	OCT. 8 TO NOV. 17	DL2FAG
<b>K4M</b>	MIDWAY ISLAND	OCT. 9 TO OCT. 19	TBA
<b>8Q7AK</b>	MALDIVES	OCT. 12 TO OCT. 25	G7COD
<b>TX5SPM</b>	MARQUESAS ISLAND	OCT. 16 TO OCT. 22	SP9PT
<b>P29VCX</b>	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	OCT. 22 TO OCT. 26	SM6CVX
<b>XV4</b>	VIETNAM	NOV. 4 TO NOV. 17	DL7DF
<b>9G5TT</b>	GHANA	NOV. 13 TO NOV. 27	I2YSB
<b>5R8IC</b>	MADAGASCAR	NOV. 17 TO DEC. 15	F6ICX
<b>5W0KH</b>	WESTERN SAMOA	NOV. 18 TO NOV. 30	DL2FAG
<b>VK9XX</b>	CHRISTMAS ISLAND	NOV. 21 TO DEC. 5	LotW
<b>TX3A</b>	CHESTERFIELD ISLAND	NOV. 23 TO DEC. 6	LotW

## UPCOMING CONTESTS

10-10 Sprint, 0001Z to 2359Z October 10, 2009  
 North American RTTY Sprint, 0000Z to 0400Z October 11, 2009  
 Illinois QSO Party, 1700Z Oct. 18 to 0100Z Oct. 19, 2009  
 CQWW DX Contest, SSB, October 24-25, 2009  
 CQWW DX Contest, CW, November 28-29, 2009

**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

### 2009 RARA Officers and Board

President - Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX, 815-234-5034  
 Vice President - Steve Thorne, K9LLI, 815-399-9161  
 Secretary - Al Fischer, KD9CA, 815-885-3926  
 Treasurer - Rich Ludwig, K9PK, 815-547-6435

Directors:

Chuck Derwent, K9SAN, 815-519-0848  
 Carl Cacciatore, W9TQ, 815-332-2479  
 Robert Larson, KC9ICH, 815-226-1875  
 Mike Oberg, AB9AY, 815-399-0961  
 Web Master - Robert Larson, KC9ICH  
 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

# October 2009

## 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