

# 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 Members,

We will share information and rally for upcoming Field Day at our club's meeting on Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>. So far, we have two teams organized.

The American Radio Relay League's Amateur Radio Field Day exercise June 27-28 will be at Shelter One, Alpine Park, 950 S. Alpine Road. Field Day goal: "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." ARRL.org

We've lined up Saturday, June 27 activities:

- early morning begin set-up
- 9:00 a.m. breakfast-in-the park
- 10:00 a.m. honoring the veterans of our club: Al Abanes-KD9AHZ, Bob Ditzler-KC9LLS, Jim Miller-W4JR, and Mike Oberg- AB9AY
- 11:00 a.m. the boy scouts will arrive to earn their radio merit badge
- 1:00 p.m. Field Day officially begins

You won't want to miss being part this!

73, Robert Larson KC9ICH



**June 2015**

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## NEXT MEETING

**FRIDAY**  
**June 12, 2015**  
**7:00 pm**

**"Field Day"**

**Location:**  
**OSF St. Anthony Medical Center**  
**5666 East State Street**  
**Rockford, IL 61108**  
**Foundation Room**



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

## Secretary's Report



### RARA Club Meeting Minutes for May 8, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 pm and round table introductions given.

The April 10, 2015 Club meeting minutes were not available to be read.

The April 28, 2015 Treasurer's report was read (Jim Holich, AB9SX made the motion for approval, and it was seconded by Tom Shouler, N9VJU). The motion was approved.

#### Old Business:

Kurt Eversole, KE9N – repeater update: the 146.610 repeater is not working very well. It has been determined that the problem is not the controller, repeater, or the cavity filters. He thinks that the isocoupler is the problem. The issue doesn't happen when it's cold but does when warm and humid. The coupler isolates AM energy and is susceptible to lightning damage & it has a dielectric that can break down. Knows the problem dates back five years. It's not the antenna but the hard line cannot be ruled out, but is not likely to be the problem. Ron Callahan, Gordon Seaman and Kurt gave thanks to Dennis Johanson for helping on this.

Tom Shouler said that Herb Eckstein, K9AMJ may have an isocoupler.

#### New Business:

Tom Shouler, N9VJU – reminder that today is VE day.

Kurt Eversole, KE9N – asked if members were receiving his email notice that Hamrag is now available on w9axd.org. He gave history and rationale behind submittal deadline for the Hamrag.

The 50/50 raffle was held - \$18.00 was won & was donated to the club by Tom Shouler, N9VJU.

1<sup>st</sup> program: "RARA Repeater Conduct and Operational Tips" by Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX  
(Amended in 2015, Scott Francis, KG9SF is our repeater trustee)

Jeff Anderson mentioned that there is an article in QST on repeater conduct.

2<sup>nd</sup> program: "J-Pole Antenna Design" by Kurt Eversole, KE9N

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. Len Soderblom, KD9CDC made the motion, seconded by Gordon Seaman, KC9NEX.

#### 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 July 2015 issue will be Sunday, June 28, 2015**

Kurt - KE9N, Editor

## Local Events and Information

### UPCOMING RARA EVENTS

**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

**July 10, 2015** - General RARA Meeting 7:00 pm at OSF

**July 28, 2015** - RARA Board Meeting 7:00 pm at OSF

### AMATEUR RADIO EXAM NOTICE

May 16th there were 2 Upgrades. Congratulations to:

Martin McCardle      General Class  
Robert Mitchell      Extra Class

Thanks to Steve Twigg, W9SWT, Joseph Moore, KA9LMK Mike Proctor, AC9JZ and Jeff Makeever, AC9KX for volunteering their time.

Amateur Radio exams are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month in Rockford IL. The next session is 9 AM June 20, 2015. Walk-ins 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 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.**

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

### China Set to Launch Several Amateur Radio Satellites this summer

CAMSAT has announced that the CAS-3 amateur satellite system is nearing completion, and six Chinese amateur satellites will be launched in mid-July.

"All six satellites are equipped with substantially the same Amateur Radio payloads, a U/V mode linear transponder, a CW telemetry beacon, and an AX.25 19.2k/9.6k baud GMSK telemetry downlink," the CAMSAT announcement said. CAMSAT said that each Amateur Radio complement has the same technical characteristics, but will operate on different 70 centimeter uplink and 2 meter downlink frequencies.

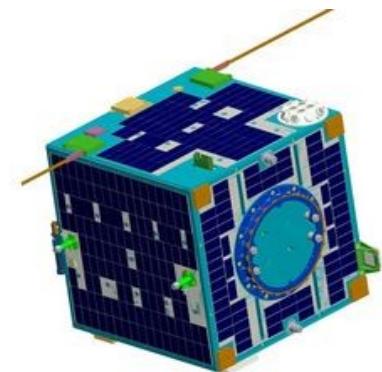
CAMSAT said it has worked closely with DFH Satellite Co Ltd, a Chinese government aerospace contractor, to complete the project. "All the satellites are currently conducting final testing and inspection," CAMSAT added. Four of the satellites are described as "microsatellites," while three are listed as CubeSats.

CAMSAT said a Long March-6 rocket will carry the satellites into orbit. The launch will take place at Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center. CAS-3A will have sun-synchronous orbits of about 450 km, while the other satellites have sun-synchronous orbits of about 530 km.

"The launch will carry total of 20 satellites," CAMSAT said. "Three other satellites named as CAS-3G, CAS-3H, and CAS-3I, involved in Amateur Radio from other agencies of China, will share the same launch."

CAMSAT said it was assisting the Chinese government with frequency allocation and coordination and would announce additional details.

Meanwhile, AMSAT News Service has reported that Beijing will be launching other satellites carrying Amateur Radio payloads in July. According to AMSAT-UK, the CAS-2A1 and CAS-2A2 satellites will be combined into a binary star system for Amateur Radio communication and education. "There will be a radio link between the two satellites when the satellites are in suitable positions in their orbits, so that Amateur Radio communication coverage can be extended," AMSAT-UK reported on its website.

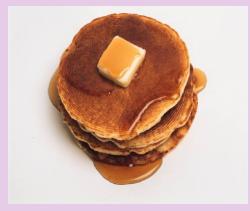


### FRIDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

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***



## FCC Eliminating Vanity Call Sign Fee

The FCC is dropping the regulatory fee to apply for an Amateur Radio vanity call sign. The change will not go into effect, however, until required congressional notice has been given. This will take at least 90 days. As the Commission explained in a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Report and Order, and Order (MD Docket 14-92)* and others), released May 21, it's a matter of simple economics.

"The Commission spends more resources on processing the regulatory fees and issuing refunds than the amount of the regulatory fee payment," the FCC said. "As our costs now exceed the regulatory fee, we are eliminating this regulatory fee category." The current vanity call sign regulatory fee is \$21.40, the highest in several years. The FCC reported there were 11,500 "payment units" in FY 2014 and estimated that it would collect nearly \$246,100.

## Got Grids? June VHF Contest is Just Ahead

Summer is nearly here, and that means it's time for the ARRL June VHF contest, June 13-15! Participants in the US and Canada (and their possessions) work stations in as many different  $2 \times 1^\circ$  Maidenhead grid squares as possible, using the bands above 50 MHz. Stations outside the US and Canada may only work stations in the US and Canada (and their possessions). Stations in KH0-9, KL7, KP1-KP5, CY9, and CY0 count as W/VE stations and may be worked by DX stations for contest credit.

The June VHF Contest occurs at the start of the summer sporadic E season, and intense openings on 6 meters and even 2 meters are possible. It's a whole new world of propagation possibilities that also include tropospheric ducting, aurora, and even meteor scatter and moonbounce. With many HF transceivers on the market equipped for 6 meters and sometimes for other VHF/UHF bands, getting on the air for this event is easier than ever.

### 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<br>Linked to FISHFAR |

## 2015 RARA Officers and Board

### Officers:

President - Robert Larson, KC9ICH, 815-540-0309  
[k9ich@arrl.net](mailto:k9ich@arrl.net)

Vice President - Open

Secretary - Bruce Carlson, N9OHT, 815-218-1764  
[bruce.n9oh@comcast.net](mailto;bruce.n9oh@comcast.net)

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 [gseaman@outlook.com](mailto:gseaman@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**



## THE MAY DX SUMMARY IN A WORD: "YUCK"

I don't mean to sound unduly pessimistic here, but May was definitely not one of those red letter months around this QTH. In watching the weekly ARRL Propagation Reports I see that sunspot numbers have really begun to drop, which isn't a good thing. Along with the sunspot decline is the predictable fall in average daily solar flux. It seems that Cycle 24 isn't going to have a triple peak after all. Enough unpleasant news for now. Courage, everyone.

Highlight of the month: Minami Torishima - JD1

During the last couple weeks in May, a Japanese JG operator has shown up several times from Minami Torishima, one of those elusive Japanese "entity islands". He's been working 20 meter CW around 0200 UTC (9 PM our time). Guess I'd better stop listening to hockey and get back to HF.

DX Contact of the month:

Dave, N9ZXL recently worked a VK station in Australia using his G5RV wire antenna and one watt of power. Dave prefers to call it "1000 milliwatts". Way to go, Dave.

Coming up in early June:

AZERBAIJAN, 4K

Special event station 4K2015EUG will be active for the European Games.

EAST KIRIBATI, T32

T32AZ will be on the air until June 8.

(I wish we could find Central Kiribati, aka British Phoenix Islands).

CAMBODIA, XU

XU7AGA will be active in June. Cambodia is considered to be the toughest country in Southeast Asia to work. The government is "funny" - but not haha funny.

NIGER, 5U

Station 5U5U is expected to be up and running through June 15.

SAUDI ARABIA, HZ

Max, KE5JA, will be on the air for the next 3 or 4 years as 7Z1JA while he's there on work assignment.

Last thought before I QRT this month:

Take time to laugh. When people are laughing they're generally not killing each other.

73,

Scott Francis, KG9SF

# Amateur Radio Roundtable

It's time for Amateur Radio Roundtable, a live weekly amateur radio webcast and simulcasted shortwave program every Tuesday night at 8 PM CDT (0100 UTC Wednesday). The show can viewed at [W5KUB.com](http://W5KUB.com) or heard on shortwave radio station, WTW on 5085 KHz. Tom Medlin, W5KUB is joined by co-host Ted Randall, WB8PUM, from the QSO Radio Show.

The show covers a wide range of topics for ham radio operators, electronic hobbyists, and shortwave listeners; including balloon launches, Satellite, go-kits, emergency communications, SDR, digital modes, DXing, home brewing, and more.

This week's guests include Bob Heil, K9EID. Bob is a sound and radio engineer most well-known for creating the template for modern rock sound systems. He founded the company Heil Sound in 1966, which went on to create unique touring sound systems for bands such as The Grateful Dead and The Who. Heil has been an innovator in the field of amateur radio, manufacturing microphones and satellite dishes for broadcasters and live sound engineers. He has won multiple awards and honors, and in 2007 he became the first manufacturer to be invited to exhibit at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Bob is also the host of Ham Nation, a ham webcast which can be seen live on Wednesday nights on [twit.tv](http://twit.tv).

Announcement: Our new chat room has been installed and our testing has been good! This new chat room fixes the old java security issues.

To watch Amateur Radio Roundtable go to [W5KUB.com](http://W5KUB.com), click on Live Events. To join the chat room, signup for a new account. It only take a couple minutes. If you are listening on 5085 KHz, we would like to hear from you. Please send an email to [tom@w5kub.com](mailto:tom@w5kub.com) and tell us your location and signal report.

We need your help with topics. If you have a specific subject that you would like to present in a future show, send an email to [tom@W5KUB.com](mailto:tom@W5KUB.com).





P.O. Box 8465, Rockford, IL 61126

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

## **June 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