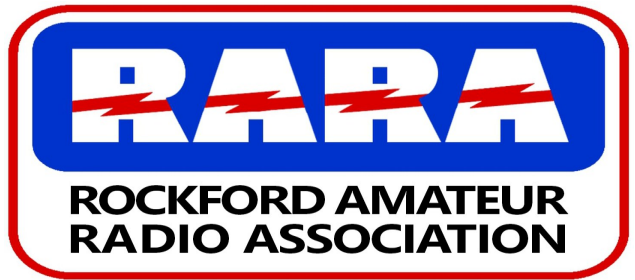


HAMRAG

Visit our website for more club and area ham information at <http://w9axd.org>, or join us on Facebook at this [LINK](#)



RARA Mission Statement

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

RARA is a volunteer run organization of individuals donating their time each month to develop activities, maintain repeaters, nets, and education. There are associated expenses and when you become a club member, your dues are providing a service to your community and furthering the hobby of amateur radio.

Congratulations to:

Alex Harris on his Technician, his new call sign is KE9DXF

Thanks to this month's contributors to the Hamrag

David Gauger W9CJS Larry Lisle K9KZT
and Larry Schubert AC9GO

Editor's Note

If you would like to have something published, please call me at 815-505-8170, or email me at w9yum.vs@gmail.com
Articles are welcome and encouraged from all hams.

Due Date for the October Hamrag is Wed September 24, 2025

73, Verna—W9YUM, Editor

NEXT MEETING

FRIDAY— September 12, 2025 - 7:00pm

OSF St Anthony Med Center
(Foundation Room-ground/cafe/cafeteria level)
5666 East State Street, Rockford

Social Time following meeting at Gerry's Pizza
7403 Argus Drive, Rockford

September 2025



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President's Message— Larry McFall, KD9HKX

Greetings RARA members and Friends,

It's hard to believe it's already September and Labor Day has passed, but the cooler temperatures are sure welcome. September will be a busy month with the RARA picnic at Hononegah Forest Preserve on September 13 and the Belvidere Hamfest on September 28. RARA will have two tables at the hamfest if you have anything to sell.

The October general meeting brings the election of board directors for the year 2026. The Nomination Committee is seeking nominees interested in joining the RARA Board of Directors. The Board promotes RARA, conducts the club's business activities, plans and organizes activities, plans programs for monthly meetings, sets the membership dues, and ensures the repeaters are maintained and functioning.

For those not familiar with this annual process: nominees are required to be licensed amateurs and must have current paid membership. A slate of nominees is presented at the meeting and additional nominations may be presented from the floor with consent of the person being nominated. You may nominate yourself. Election shall consist of a majority vote of those present at the meeting. Newly elected Directors serve one-year terms January-December and may not serve more than four consecutive years.

RARA has thrived over the past couple of years thanks to the dedication of our current board, who have poured their energy into organizing welcoming and fun events, and quality programs for our monthly meetings. Their efforts have resulted in a membership growth of 120% since January 2024.

It's now time for fresh perspectives to keep our momentum going! We're calling on you—especially our newer and younger members—to consider running for a board position. Your ideas and enthusiasm will help shape the future of our club, ensuring it remains a welcoming and thriving space for all. Getting involved is a fantastic way to connect, contribute, and grow our shared passion for amateur radio and fun!

The current board have all been honored to serve the membership and are happy to run again. There are, however, two vacant positions. We invite you to step up and bring your energy to the board! Contact us at w9axdrara@gmail.com to learn more about the nomination process or to express your interest.

73,
Larry McFall, KD9HKX

RARA Board and Local Nets

Tuesday, August 5, 2025 RARA Board Meeting 7:00pm on Google Meet
Friday, August 8, 2025 RARA Membership Meeting 7:00pm OSF St Anthony

2025 RARA Officers and Directors

Officers:

President - Larry McFall, KD9HKX, 815-900-1820, lpmcfall@charter.net
Vice President - Matt Marshall, W3MBX, 815-222-5959, matthew.marshal@gmail.com
Secretary - Jamie Cook, W9JTC, 779-423-9054, W9JTC@yahoo.com
Treasurer – Verna Schubert, W9YUM, 815-505-8170, w9yum.vs@gmail.com

Directors:

Jimmy Curtis, KC9GOL, 779-537-2233, jimheurtis7818@yahoo.com
Dan Larson, KD9SAZ, 312-292-1989, kd9saz@gmail.com
Mike Richardson, KB9SSV, 815-616-0200, kb9ssv@msn.com
Tom Shouler, N9VJU, 815-978-6476, n9vju@comcast.net
Hamrag Editor - Verna Schubert, W9YUM, 815-505-8170, w9yum.vs@gmail.com
Webmaster - Verna Schubert, W9YUM, 815-505-8170, w9yum.vs@gmail.com
Repeater License Trustee - Doug Passmore, 815-979-9229, dgpasmore@att.net
Repeater Chairman - Matt Marshall, W3MBX, 815-222-5959, matthew.marshal@gmail.com

Local Net Information

Mon - 7:00pm - RARA Info. Net & CW Lesson, 147.195 (+0.6) offset, pl 114.8
- 8:00pm - McHenry County RACES Net, 146.835 (-0.6) offset, pl 91.5

Tues - 7:00pm - RARA Tech & Social Net & CW Lesson , 147.195 (+0.6) offset, pl 114.8
- 7:00pm - Rock County Public Service Net, 145.450 (-0.6) offset, pl 123.0

Wed - 7:00pm - RARA Chat Net, 147.195 (+0.6) offset, pl 114.8
- 7:00pm - Stephenson County ARES Net, 147.390(+0.6) offset, pl 114.8
- 7:30pm - Greater Beloit Radio Net, 147.120 (+0.6) offset, pl 123.0

Thu - 7:00pm - Northern Illinois Skywarn Training Net,147.195 (+0.6) offset, pl 114.8

Fri - 8:00pm - Friday Night Fun Net, KC9GCR, 147.195(+0.6) offset, pl 114.8

Sat - 8:00pm - Saturday RARA Ragchew Net, 147.195 (+0.6) offset, pl 114.8
- 8:00pm - Pink Hamsters YL Net, Milw., 146.910 (-0.6) offset, pl 127.3
- 9:00pm - Saturday Night Fun Net Milw., 146.910 (-0.6) offset, pl 127.3

Mon. thru Friday - 8:00am to 9:00am - Senile Net, 14.287 (HF USB)

Key Dates to Save!

Saturday, September 13, 2025, 11am until we are done!

Family Picnic and celebration of RARA 70th Anniversary

Hononegah Forest Preserve, 80 Hononegah Forest Preserve, Indian Rest Shelter

Planning is underway for a week long radio special event celebrating RARA's Anniversary. More details about how it works and how you can participate from home are just around the corner! Several individuals are working hard to make this happen but we will need your help....all from the comfort of your own station or for more fun, take it portable!

September 28, 2025, 8am—noon

Radio Expo 2025 (Belvidere Hamfest) Sponsored by the Chicago FM Club

RARA has two tables available to promote the club and for members wishing to sell items. Those selling items need to be present and will pay a small percentage of their sales to RARA. *Thanks to those that have stepped up to volunteer at the tables!*

October 2025—POTA Hangout with John Alcock, NG9M! Rock Cut State Park

Unfortunately, we were not able to secure a shelter for this event during the month of October and made the decision to reschedule for spring.

Saturday, October 18, 2025—Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) details to come

Saturday, October 12, 2025—2025 Bank of America Marathon is recruiting ham radio volunteers Great opportunity for those interested in radio public service! See page 14.

CQ...CQ...CQ...Special Event Station—plans are underway for a special event station to honor 70 years of RARA. This will most likely be in November and we will be looking for operators. You will be able to work from your home station. Please email your interest to Verna, W9YUM at w9yum.vs@gmail.com

Wow—there's something for everyone! Stay radio active, friends

RARA members—please be sure the email address you provide is one you check regularly to make sure you receive club updates and the monthly Hamrag.

Don't forget to let us know if there are changes to your email or phone number, ARRL membership status, or call sign.

Please email updates to Verna W9YUM at w9yum.vs@gmail.com & add me to your contacts.

Antenna Stories by Dave Gauger W9CJS

TAKE WHAT'S AVAILABLE

So a 12 year old, waiting for his Ham License to arrive wondered if a loop antenna would add to his Hallicrafter S-20R receiver's signal strength. But he had no wire ... what to do? AHA! thought he, the front doorbell button never worked anyway so ... and yes, that door bell wire was attractive being stapled to studs all the way across the basement ceiling. So a ten foot length of #18 gauge of insulated wire suddenly formed a lovely loop antenna. *'Dad will never know'*, and no, he didn't. The loop was rectangular, formed by crossed lath strips nailed together. And it worked, AM radio broadcasting stations could be nulled out or maximized by rotating the loop. Strange, but eventually every foot of that door bell wire was eventually re-purposed.

STRANGE LIGHTS

Our 13 year old by now was licensed and had built a 100 watt, 10 meter AM/CW transmitter. The off center fed wire antenna was hard to load so he searched for a better antenna. He decided that a folded dipole made of 300 ribbon cable might work better but where to mount it? The only place available was from his bedroom window to a tree on the lot line next to Mr. Terry's home. This, Mr. Terry was an engineer of some sort and had the very latest of inventions including a gas powered lawn mower, and he had also installed fluorescent lighting in his upstairs bathroom. Now came a problem. If someone in the Terry household turned on the upstairs bathroom lights and if our teen was transmitting using his 10 meter 100 watt AM rig ... ***The Terry's bathroom lights would not turn off***, ... on ... but not off. Mr. Terry finally came to the conclusion that our boy next door was using that darned Ham transmitter ... and he was right. He and our teen's dad decided that the new antenna should be taken down ... and that solved the problem.

HAM RADIO INTERFERENCE

Our boy, was now a 16 yr. old teenager and quite active in ham radio. This was during the years that Ham interference was a new problem both TVI and other. Mr. Terry lived on the west side and Mr. and Mrs. Gutzlauf on the east side of the Ham property. Mrs. Gutzlauf purchased a Hammond M-3 spinet organ and enjoyed playing it. The problem was that when our 16 year old Ham was transmitting, while Mrs. Gutzlauf was playing the Hammond Organ, our ham's voice came booming through the speaker. Now, Mrs. Gutzlauf was not only upset, but on the warpath. One day she came storming over on the attack, looking for the teenager but instead found the teen's mother. Mrs. Gutzlauf among other things said, ***"Your son has no right to broadcast through my organ"*** I never knew why Mom laughed.

Truth be told, I bet there are a hundred such stories that could be related by our club members. I have more but these are enough.

First Ham Rag—issued in September 1956



Transcription
on the following
two pages



HAM RAG

Vol. 1

September, 1956

Number 1

As you all probably know by now, Rockford has a fine radio club. It is called the Rockford Amateur Radio Association, "RA RA".

Dave Walker, W9NUZ is President, W9GKI is V.P., W9DQV is Secretary and W9LRZ is Treasurer. The membership is 35. New members are invited to forthcoming meetings. Membership is open to all persons interested in becoming radio operators. A training period will be held this fall.

Paul Seider, W9GZ, Rockford, and Jack O'Brien, W9TU, Chicago, conducted a transmitter hunt and demonstration at the last club meeting. It was a very interesting and helpful event. At this time we would like to thank them very much. Oh yes! We found the transmitter in a clump of trees off No. Main Rd. in 45 minutes !!

THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS

Whether you realize it or not, we've got a going club on our hands. It's up to us to keep it going. Maybe you are wondering just why the thing got started. It was this way:

A bunch of the local 10 meter gang was whooping it up (as usual) and talk got around to why Rockford didn't have a rip roaring club. No one seemed to come up with a logical reason for not having one so a group got together and began to yak about what it took to have a club that would interest the average ham. Ideas began to float around, and it seemed to boil down to several basic requirements.

First, in order to keep up one's interest in attending meetings, there must be a real meaty program. Secondly, there must be activities of a type that promote club loyalty. Third, we can be a great help to those who want to get started in this stimulating hobby. We must not overlook the fact that we, as operating amateurs, can provide the community with vital communications in the event of a local or national disaster. All of these are excellent reasons for forming a club and in a nutshell, that is the brief history of the beginning of the Rockford Amateur Radio Association. Can we keep it going and growing??? -- If we can, it will be because everyone pushes; if we can't, it will be because too many of us are riding. Which will it be????

For the first time in 18 years, Chicago will be the scene of an ARRL National Convention. The 1957 Convention will be held during the Labor Day Weekend, 1957 at the Palmer House.

WGIAF drove through town the other day and worked several fellows on 6 meters. His KIL belongs to a YL Club with a membership of 200.--Come on you YLs.

The Harvard, Ill. Club has weekly xaitter hunts with a lot of interest.

HAM RAG

W9KCS, W9BQR, W9DIF, W9TRF and some others are on 6 meters. W9GHN has a new DL 35. W9GIC is getting a new S-89 revr. W9YRI is going mobile again. W9TRU had an operation - also a new harmonic. W9LJ is now on 10. W9NWB won the grand prize for the club name. W9RNU won a 100 multiplier hit at the Hamfesters' Ham Feast.

HELPFUL HAMS

Late report from W9BQO is that the Chirp Mlik and S latter Society is going to fix Frank Donagh, retired Postmaster of Compton, Ill. with a revv. ant., practice oscillator and key, ARRL Handbook and Call Book. Frank is confined to his home with arthritis and hopes to be able to get back on the air. He held the call W9FCA back in 1928. Don also said that if anyone would care to loan a revv. of any kind, he would see that Frank got it. Let's see what our club can come up with !!

WANTED

W9SKU is looking for a 6-foot relay rack and also table size rack. Will swap.

Our next regular club meeting will be Thursday, September 13, 7:30 at the Red Cross. George Ashton, W9FNY of Riverside, Ill. will give a demonstration on Beam Antennas - a program sure to interest all. SEE YOU THEN !!

EDITOR-----J9GKI "Smoke"

First Ham Rag—issued in September 1956—Transcription

Editor's Note: It took a bit of work to transcribe this document exactly as written. I looked up call signs in the older Call Books . There may be a couple of errors but it is much easier to read than the copy of the original document. I found it interesting to read and hope you do as well!

HAM RAG

Vol. 1 September, 1956 Number 1

You all probably know by now, Folks.

We have a fine radio club. It is called the Rockford Amateur Radio Association, "RARA" Dave Walker, W9NJG, is President, W9GRI is V.P., W9BQV is secretary and W9LRZ is Treasurer. The membership is 35. New members are invited to forthcoming meetings. Membership is open to all persons interested in becoming amateur radio operators. A training period will be held this fall. Paul Seider, W9YCG, Rockford and Jack O'Brien, conducted a transmission hunt demonstration. It was a very interesting and helpful event. At this time we would like to thank them very much. Oh yes! We found the transmitter in a clump of trees off No. Main Rd. in 45 minutes!!

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First Ham Rag—issued in September 1956—Transcription

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Ham Gab

W9BQC, W9BQV, W9BIF, W9YRF and some others are on 6 meters. K9OHN has a new DX55. K9OIO is getting a new S085 rcvr. W9YRI is going mobile again. W9SKU had an operation also a new harmonic. K9AMJ is now on 10. W9NWB won the grand prize for the club name. W9RNU won a Heath Q-Multiplier kit at the Hamfesters' Ham Fest.

Helping Hams

Late report from W9BQC is that the Chirp Klik and Splatter Society is going to fix Frank Donagh, retired Postmaster of Compton, Ill., with a rcvg. ant. Practice oscillator and key, ARRL Handbook and Call Book. Frank is confined to his home with arthritis and hopes to be able to get back on the air. He held the call W9FCA back in 1928. Don also said that if anyone would care to loan a rcvr. of any kind, he would see that Frank got it. Let's see what our club can come up with!!

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EDITOR W9GKI "Smokie"

RARA 2025 Family Picnic & 70th Anniversary Celebration

Date: Sat 09/13/25
Time: 11:00 a.m.—4:00pm

Hononegah Forest Preserve
80 Hononegah Rd, Rockton IL 61072
Indian Rest Shelter (has electricity,
if you want to bring a crockpot.
(directional signs will be posted)



FUN SOCIAL EVENT FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!

FOR RARA MEMBERS AND ANYONE INTERESTED IN AMATEUR AND GMRS RADIO AND THEIR FAMILIES!

RARA will provide burgers, dogs, grill supplies, paper goods, condiments, and water. You will bring yourself and your family and one or two dishes to share with others (think salads, desserts, casseroles, baked beans, chips, etc.) Covered shelter, plenty of tables, and electricity!

Please contact W9YUM with the number attending and what your dish to share will be. Most importantly, we don't want anyone to not attend because they are unable to bring an additional dish!

Feel free to bring lawn games!

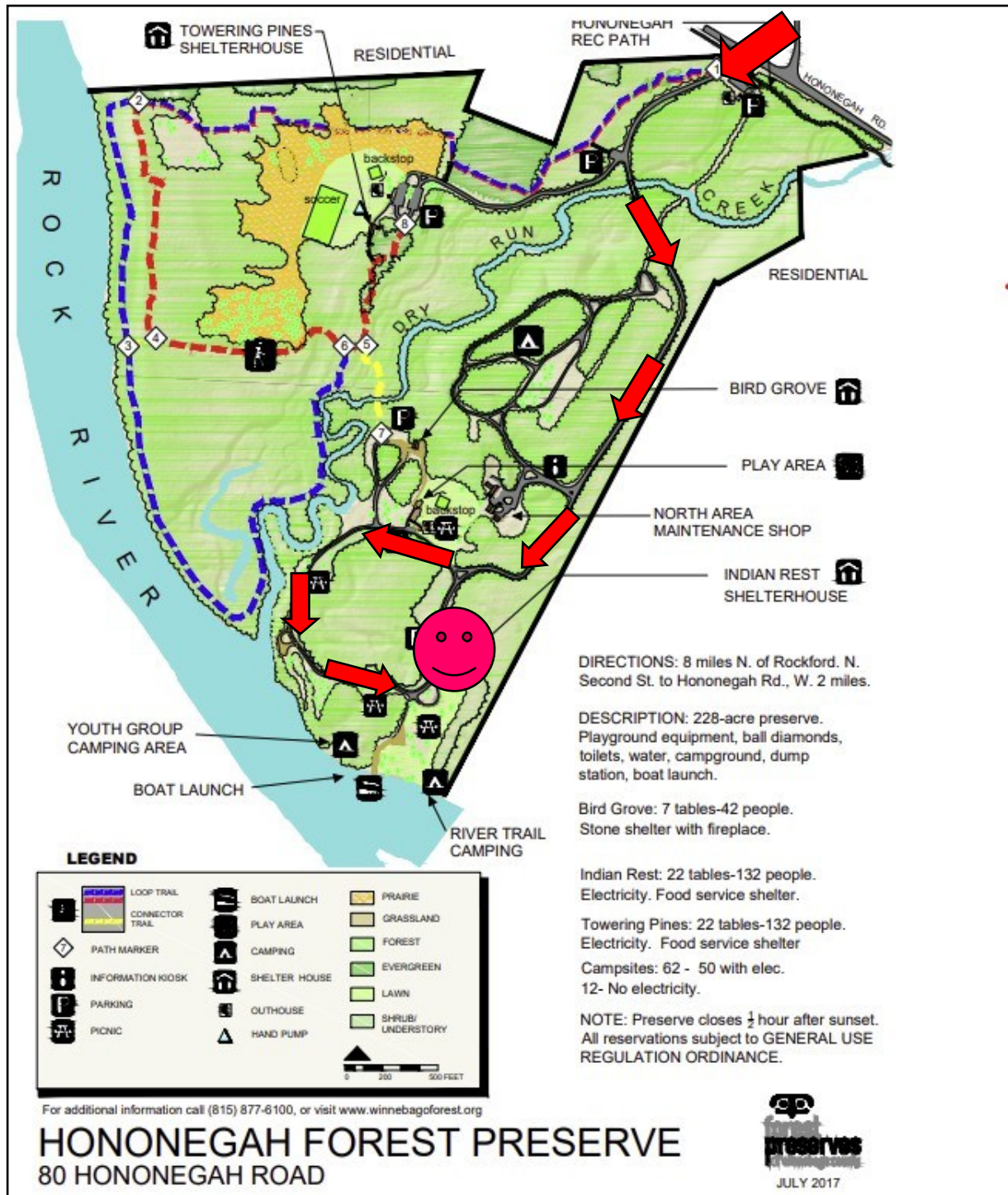
Prize drawing 3:00 p.m.
Must be present to win
Yaesu FT-65-R 5W VHF/UHF FM Dual Band Handheld



Contact person: Verna Schubert, W9YUM
w9yum.vs@gmail.com or 815-505-8170

RARA Family Picnic and Anniversary Celebration

For those of you attending last year's picnic or the May Swapfest this year's picnic will be at the same location and at Hononegah Forest Preserve. You enter off of Hononegah Road and follow the road as shown on the map. You will pass a couple of roads on the right but keep going straight. After passing the campground turn you will go down a hill and enter a one way loop, passing a playground and another road to the right. Just keep going straight (around the loop). You will pass the boat launch and see the shelter on your right, displayed as the big smiley face on the map.



This article written by Larry Lisle, K9KZT is courtesy of the January 1986 QST Magazine and reprinted with permission of the ARRL

Ham Radio—A Class Act in School

Fifth-grade students in Illinois enjoy first-class science studies using Amateur Radio.

By Larry Lisle, K9KZT
3030 Rutgers Pl
Rockford, IL 61109

This past year, we started a ham radio class as part of the 5th grade science curriculum at St. Rita School in Rockford, Illinois. So far, twelve 10- and 11-year-old girls and boys have their tickets, another has passed the code test and is working on the written portion of the exam, and several more have asked to be included in the next session. The kids who have their licenses are making contacts on the classroom station and are building transmitters to use at home until they get their own rigs.

The story really started 12 years ago, when I began teaching electronics as a science unit. We went through the history of electronics, schematic symbols and simple circuits, and built transistor radios, metal detectors and other simple projects. At the end of the course, I always talked about ham radio and told the kids that if anyone was interested I'd be glad to help them get their license.

The results were nil.

This past summer, I decided to try a different approach. I'd like to pass along what I did in case other ham-teachers would like

to try a similar program in their classrooms.

Preparation and a step-by-step approach are the key elements, as they are in the teaching of any subject. During the summer, I toured the hamfests, purchasing parts for transmitters and a number of older receivers. There are fantastic bargains available in tube-type equipment! It may not be state of the art, but it works as well as it ever did—and it's cheap! Most of the receivers needed alignment and a few needed minor repairs; but I enjoy restoring old equipment, so that was no problem.

A Challenging Proposition

When class started in September, I was ready—but I didn't mention ham radio. Instead, I told the kids I was going to give them a real challenge later in the year, but wouldn't tell them what it was. From time to time, I mentioned the challenge; by the time Christmas vacation rolled around, they were really bursting with curiosity.

When they returned from Christmas vacation, they found a couple of shortwave receivers against the wall, with antennas draped out the windows (we're on the second floor).

We then started listening to shortwave broadcast stations, such as the BBC and Radio Canada. I put on the board a simplified HF spectrum showing the various SWBC bands, and explained how they were identified by both frequency and wavelength. I discussed briefly how the various controls on the receivers worked, especially the band switch, tuning dials and antenna trimmer, and why there were two gain controls. After that, the receivers became "learning stations" along with the three computers and other activities. The students had an assigned 10-minute period on the stations every day (a different one each day) and could spend more time if they completed their other work. This phase lasted about two weeks.

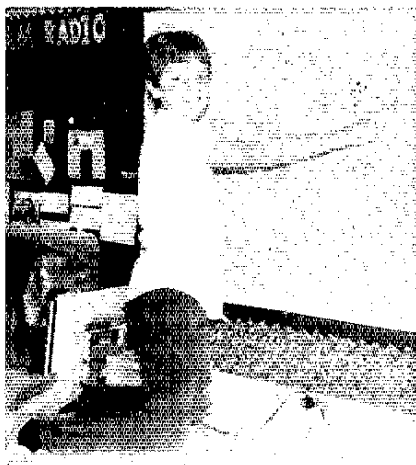
The next step was to bring in a good communications receiver for the ham bands. I added the HF ham bands to the spectrum on the board and let them sample

what was going on. This became another learning station. I also brought in an inexpensive shortwave receiver (\$10 at a hamfest) that they could take home and listen to at night.

This listening period is very important. Most kids don't know what shortwave means, and hardly any have heard a ham radio station.

The next step was the code. (I still wouldn't tell them what the challenge was.) Since the code was suggested as an extra activity in both our Reading and Science texts, I felt justified in exposing the whole class to it. I used the method in *Learning the Radiotelegraph Code*. In about a week, after we had gone through about half the letters at very slow speed, I told them that on Friday I'd tell them what the challenge was. One parent later told me that her boy was sick but begged to go to school to find out what it was! She assured him that I'd probably tell them Monday, too.

We started with the film, *The World of Amateur Radio*. After discussing the film, I showed them QSL cards from people I'd talked to using a simple transmitter they



Brad Pirrello, KA9TFF, puts a star on the map to mark a new contact. The kids have talked to other hams from Alaska to Florida. Look for us on 40!



Jennifer Medernach, KA9THV (left), and Genny Erb, KA9THQ, work on their transmitter. The students built five transmitters to use at home until they get their own rigs.



Kristine Schaefer, KA9TLB, Gary Hopewell, KA9TFG, and Lynn Holliday, KA9TLN (l-r), copy along while John Hernandez, KA9TFJ, operates the classroom station. There are fantastic bargains available in used tube-type equipment.

could build. I then told them I'd lend them some of the receivers, if they got their licenses, and that there would be a station at school from which they could operate. We discussed the Novice license requirements, and I told them I was sure some of them could pass the test. (I had no idea how many!) I then asked who wanted to take up the challenge and try to be hams.

Out of a class of 28, 12 boys and 3 girls decided to try it. In the first week three boys dropped out, but another girl decided to join. By the way, we have four Reading groups at different levels. Representatives of all four groups eventually got their tickets.

On Monday we started. The other members of the class worked on the general electronics program that we'd had for years while the ham group studied things specific to the Novice test. Naturally, there was considerable overlap in subject matter, and I sometimes taught the whole class at once. We obtained a number of old TV sets, and the kids had lots of fun tearing them apart and learning what electronics parts looked like. Some parts went for the transmitters, while others we saved for future projects.

Code practice was held after lunch during "prime time," a quiet reading period. At first, I tried giving the ham group earphones hooked to an oscillator, but we had so much trouble with volume levels and malfunctioning 'phones that I put them on the students who were reading to keep the sound of the code practice out.

When they got far enough along, I added a new twist to the learning stations—

transistor oscillators on the 80-meter band and keys. The student at one learning station could ragchew with one at another—and learn more about operating the receiver and dealing with QRM.

Teaching Tips

I'd like to emphasize a couple of things about teaching code at this level. The person teaching it should *like* CW and be a CW operator. Don't teach the code as a necessary evil to be borne while waiting to use phone or RTTY, etc. It's enough to lay on the kids that they're going to have to work for weeks or months before they can operate. *Don't* make them think they'll have to work months *more* before they enjoy it! CW will be fun for the kids if they are taught that it will be. Note that I didn't demonstrate a QSO in the classroom. A CW QSO wouldn't have meant anything until they could copy the code, and phone would only remind them they'd have longer to work.

Don't set a deadline for the test. People learn at different rates. Everyone who stuck with the code beyond the first week eventually passed the test. Some got it quickly, some took over 10 weeks—but they *all* passed.

Watch for the person who tightens up during tests. Have plenty of practice tests and be sure they're solid at 6 or 7 WPM before trying the test at 5.

Some people learn better when the characters are sent fast with long spaces between them, while others can't handle it. Try different ways of sending to find out.

Don't teach opposites or similar letters

at the same time. They won't remember which is which.

Finally, don't let them get discouraged when they've been stuck with three or four errors a minute for weeks. Tell them about the plateaus and humps on the learning curve. Let them borrow cassette tapes for extra practice at home, slow down the sending or give easy characters, speed it up and show that their error rate doesn't increase—vary the practice, and before they know it they're over the hump. It's a bore sending cipher groups at 5 WPM day after day, but it *will* pay off.

By the way, I prefer requiring solid copy for 1 minute as the code test. Kids make silly mistakes on multiple-choice tests anyway, and this just introduces an extra and unnecessary source of error.

Teaching the subject matter for the written test follows conventional classroom procedures. After they had a basic understanding, letting them tutor each other using *Tune in the World with Ham Radio* worked very well. I don't think it's a good idea to let them take the written test on the same day they pass the code test. Let them relax.

After a month or so, the kids began to pass their tests, and soon I started getting calls at home: "It came!" For most of the new hams their first QSOs were after school so I could help them along. It's *very* important for hams of this age to have someone close at hand for the first few go-arounds. Otherwise, we'll have license holders instead of operators.

I hope I have encouraged some teachers who are hams to give it a try—or maybe other hams who have free time during the day can volunteer to teach "mini-courses."

Finally, I'd like to thank Reggie Wells, W9GKI, who taught me about Amateur Radio when I was 14.



Jason Ackerman, KA9TFI, at his home QTH. Using one of the homebrew rigs until he bought his own equipment from one of the hams at the local club for \$60, Jason has worked stations from coast to coast—proving that ham radio doesn't have to be expensive to be fun!

From the Workbench by Larry AC9GO



THE ESP32 ARDUINO

A few years ago I wrote about a microcomputer, the Arduino, and about a kit that my son bought and was playing with along with the grand kids. It was a kit put together by Elegoo.

Elegoo is an interesting company. They make 3d printers and also make the Arduino boards that power them. Apparently, you can also make the plastic parts for your 3d printer as well.

So apparently if you want a second printer, you can make a number of the parts for it.

Since the time I wrote that first article, in the fall of 2022, I've read a little more and my son has been experimenting with it, and he has found another version of the Arduino that is well worth your consideration. From what I've learned it has gained some things that really increase it's worth to the experimenter. First, there are several different versions of these little boards, and not all of them have everything available. The boards are known as ESP 32. For the most part they will all do more then the older Arduino boards and more. First, the ESP 32 generally uses faster chips with more memory available. Many have WI FI and Blue tooth available which makes remote control much easier. These boards with these enhancements put them more in a category of the Raspberry Pie, but they have been able to do this with out pricing them anywhere close to the pie.

My son was able to put together a program with one of these little boards that could change the color of the led strip that he had put around his sound system, which I thought was good since he had never had any programming. He also had one of the boards with a display reading the temperature and humidity of a room and putting it on the screen.

Amazon as well as some of the other sellers on the internet currently have a little radio that fits in the palm of your hand that handles most of the Ham bands and modes. This SDR radio has an ESP32 type board running it.

Hey, have fun with your radio! 73 Larry AC9GO

Chicago Marathon Ham Radio Call for Volunteers

Time to build our roster for the 2025 Bank of America Chicago Marathon, October 12, 2025. This will be our 17th year supporting the Marathon and we are proud to be part of this world-class running event. The organizers are expecting 55,000 runners, which will put a strain on all aspects of the event. We are hoping to recruit 160 hams (and non-hams). We support the volunteer medical team in multiple ways and locations. Each is a specialty area, requiring a specific set of skills.

Forward Command. The people who work in this environment must be excellent at handling radio traffic and be able to balance a hectic workflow with a calm demeanor. We need loggers, trackers, radio net-controllers and liaisons.

Course Medical Tent. Typically, this is a small team of radio folks who support the medical team and the Aid Station Captain at the 20 on-course medical tents. For the most part, this group forms their own independent unit and is often organized by a club. Laflin is a medical transfer hub and has its own unique personality. The Course Medical Tents teams represent our largest block of volunteers.

Pre-Finish – this is a unique group that works with the medical teams to provide a response for the last mile of the course. Hams are staged in between medical people and serve as communicators. This can be the most challenging part of the course since it is near the finish line. Last year, we had 22 ham radio ops there and we could use even more!

Triage. This is a special team that roams around after the finish line with a small medical unit as a fast response to a distressed runner in Grant Park. Our job is to call for help if the situation requires more support. This group literally runs a great deal and operators need to be prepared to work a couple of long hours without a break. We are also looking for a few people to help set up and takedown. Finally, we will be staging a few people in the post-race party zone to help the medical teams assigned to that part of the event.

Registration starts here. Fill out this Google form. Feel free to pass this along to friends or colleagues who might have an interest.

<https://forms.gle/mCnVjbyrg4x4pSkz7>

Submitted by RARA Member Brad Nicholson, KA9WRZ

Hamfest, Contest and DX Links

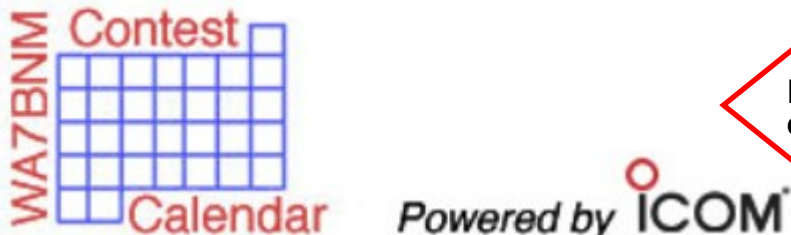
Hamfests and Swapfests in Northern IL, Northwest IN, and Southern WI **Click the link**



Thanks to K9MSG, Kirk Musselman— www.amateurradioevents.com or use link above

No more struggling to find local foxhunts, hamfests, public service/volunteer events and more. **Over 50 events** are all in one place including maps, descriptions, contact links, costs, and more. And, we just added a *Guide for Amateur Radio Volunteers* and a list of worldwide *Amateur Radio History Events* which you can join remotely.

The site will keep updating and expanding to carry more types of events (training, POTA, etc.) so bookmark the site and join us as we bring event organizers and amateur radio operators together to grow the amateur radio community. Please use the contact page to share suggestions, updates, additions, or comments.



Link to the [WA7BNM Contest Calendar](http://www.contestcalendar.com) or go to www.contestcalendar.com

Want to see what's new in the world of DX? Select the link below and make sure you check out the weekly bulletins or go to www.dxworld.net



Upcoming Exams

Looking to upgrade or know someone looking for a testing location?

More information available at ARRL.org

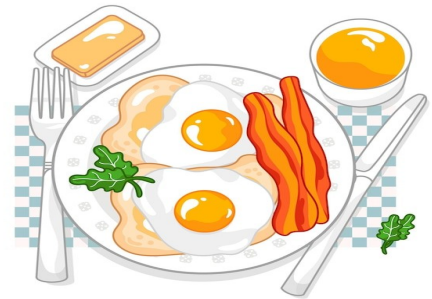
Note: click on the red text to link to more information

[Click here](#) for link to VE Teams offering Online Exam Sessions

MUST HAVE FRN AHEAD OF EXAM

- **09/20/ 2025 | [Milwaukee WI 53223-4736](#)**
Sponsor: MRAC VEC, INC
Location: Ham Radio Outlet
Time: 8:30 AM (Walk-ins allowed) [Learn More](#)
- **09/20/2025 | [Janesville WI 53545-3024](#)**
Sponsor: Wisconsin Area VEs (WAVE)
Location: Saint John Lutheran Church
Time: 1:00 pm (Walk-ins allowed) [Learn More](#)
- **09/28/2025 | [Belvidere IL 61008](#)**
Sponsor: Chicago FM Club & Radio Expo
Location: Boone County Fairgrounds—Hamfest
Time: 9:00 am (Walk-ins allowed) [Learn More](#)
- **10/04/2025 | [Freeport, IL 61032-4116](#)**
Sponsor: Stephenson County Repeater Association
Location: Freeport Public Library
Time: 12:30 pm (Walk-ins allowed) [Learn More](#)

Local Ham Breakfasts



WEEKLY FRIDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

Meets every Friday morning from 7:30 am until about 9:00 am.

We order breakfast at 8:00 am.

An informal gathering of ham folks, no affiliations necessary, good food and good company.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

“The Spring Garden Family Restaurant”

***4820 N. 2nd Street
Loves Park, IL 61111***

MONTHLY SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

**The Greater Beloit Amateur Radio Club (GBARC)
meets monthly on the 2nd Saturday of the month at
8:00 a.m.**

Denny’s Restaurant


Flying J Truck Stop (IL 75 & 190/39)

All are welcome to join the group for food and lot’s of
“ham” talk.



The RARA Store—Time for Fall Items!

The RARA Store has been very well received. Thanks to all of you purchasing shirts, hats, mugs, and more. RARA receives a commission on each purchase made, what better way to promote RARA and your enthusiasm for amateur radio, all while supporting your club and local business!

To access the store, scan the QR-code below or select this link  [SHOP RARA STORE](https://stores.inksoft.com/rara)

[HTTPS://STORES.INKSOFT.COM/RARA](https://stores.inksoft.com/rara)



**ORDER YOUR
ROCKFORD
AMATEUR RADIO
ASSOCIATION
GEAR TODAY!**



**SCAN
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TO SHOP
NOW**

VIEW MORE PRODUCTS ONLINE



website: w9axd.org
email: w9axdrara@gmail.com

RARA Membership* Form

Dues are \$25.00

(This is an editable PDF Form. Fill in the information with your keyboard, then save the PDF, and then attach it to an email to: w9axdrara@gmail.com. See below for mail in information and/or PayPal information)

Date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) New Membership ____ Renewal ____

Name: _____ Callsign: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Phone - Home: _____ Cell: _____

Can we release your e-mail and phone number to members only? Yes _____ NO _____

Are you a member of the ARRL (American Radio Relay League)? Yes _____ NO _____

What things do you like to do with ham radio?

What things do you want to do, but need more information to do so?

Would you be available to make a presentation on some part of our hobby and what?

Do you have any questions that we can help you with presently? If so, explain below.

Mail In: Please fill out all the information on the form and mail it with \$25.00 to the following address:

Rockford Amateur Radio Association
P.O. Box 8465
Rockford, IL 61126

Make your check payable to: Rockford Amateur Radio Association.

For Internet application and payment:

To use PayPal, click on the link below. After clicking "Send" and then logging in, enter \$25.00 in the "Dollar Amount", and click "Send", to complete your payment to RARA. Also, **DON'T** forget to email your completed form to: w9axdrara@gmail.com for your membership application. *Thank you for your support!*

PayPal Link:



*Membership is based on approval of the RARA Board. The membership fee will be returned if you are not approved.