



# THE HAMSTER

May 2022

*Official Monthly Newsletter of the Rochester Amateur Radio Club*

Editor: G. Mark Kelm (K0GMK) [gmkelm@charter.net](mailto:gmkelm@charter.net)

## EDITOR'S NOTES

***We are now in severe weather season and it is important that all ARES and SkyWarn personnel keep informed during potential forecasted outbreaks by the NWS by keeping your mobile or HT radios tuned to the designated EOC frequency. As of this publication the 146.820 PL tone 100 repeater is the primary SkyWarn repeater until you are notified of any change. The 146.625 PL tone 100 repeater is backup. The 147.255 repeater is down for repair until further notice.***

Be sure to check out page 4 with news regarding **our special presenter: John Portune (W6NBC) from QST Magazine.** He will be answering questions submitted by RARC members from any of the many articles he has written for the magazine.

[Field Day 2022](#) is coming up next month **June 25 & 26, 2022** and **we need more volunteers!**

If you can help with this year's Field Day, *please* contact **Taylor Bauman (WB0RSJ)** RARC Field Day Coordinator on the [RARC groups.io email reflector](#). **Any assistance you can provide for the event will be much appreciated.** Watch the **Hamster** for upcoming information and details on [Field Day 2022](#).

The **May 10th, 6:30 PM RARC meeting** is **planned for in-person at the Rochester EOC** (Fire Station #2) **and also on the optional ZOOM broadcast.** See Page 3 for the optional ZOOM login and connection instructions.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Steve (W0STV) - President [w0stv@yahoo.com](mailto:w0stv@yahoo.com)



**We are glad to accept Melissa Erickson's (KE0WNH) application for Vice President of the RARC.** Her interest in ham radio as a hobby and its science is intriguing. She is supporting the John Marshall High School radio club, has a ham radio in her class room, wants to put a mobile radio in her car, and has recently joined Olmsted ARES.

Melissa and I contacted **Dr. Scott Wright (K0MD)** who made multiple contacts to organize the **RARC program for May**. We have **John Portune (W6NBC)** scheduled. He replied with: "Though I am quite willing to talk on any of my past published QST articles. It is your choice, so pick one and let me know". So get out those QST magazines or do an article search

on [QST Online](#) and contact [Melissa](#) or [Steve](#) and let us know what topic you would like to discuss ASAP. We will pick the most popular ones.

**I would like to thank Bob Dubke (K0SIR)** for his time as our Vice President. He asked to resign due to time and organization conflicts. I am glad to have worked with Bob, and to continue working with him as a member of the ARRL VE testing team.

**Taylor Bauman (WB0RSJ) is the RARC field day coordinator for 2022.** Taylor has been a ham for some time. He was a radio operator with **past EOC director, the late Dave Carr**. Please contact Taylor at meetings and on the nets with your input, and/or to help with field day 2022. I hope we will be able to leave Covid out of the planning for FD-2022.

As your club President I want to ask for input from the members on ideas, questions, or information. Remember you are never smarter than the group you are a part of.





## May 2022 RARC Online Meeting Info

OPTIONAL FOR THOSE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND IN-PERSON



Here is the information for the May 10, 2022, 6:30 PM RARC ZOOM monthly club meeting. ZOOM info is also posted via the [RARC email reflector](#) (which is private to the subscribed 120 Rochester area Hams). The remainder of this newsletter will go on a [the RARC website front page](#) without the passcode. The passcode is available to members on [rarc.groups.io](#) or by contacting [W0STV](#) prior to the meeting.

- ♦ **When:** May 10, 2022 @ 06:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)
- ♦ **Join Zoom Meeting (copy & paste the link below in your browser):**  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/9876548873?pwd=T0JBWEFzSCtBYzhiazA1NTdDb2Rkdz09>
- ♦ **Meeting ID:** 987 654 8873
- ♦ **Passcode:** : #####
  
- ♦ **For audio only from a mobile phone:**  
**Call:** (312) 626-6799 US (Chicago) **Meeting ID:** 987 654 8873 **Passcode:** #####



# MEETING PROGRAMS

Melissa (KE0WNH) - Vice President

## May 2022 RARC Meeting Program

RARC monthly meeting starting at 6:30 PM, Tuesday, May 10, 2022

Rochester EOC (Fire Station #2)

## John Portune (W6NBC) - QST Magazine

John has requested: "Though I am quite willing to talk on any of my past published [QST articles](#) (click to search articles). It is your choice, so pick one and let me know". So get out those QST magazines or click on the QST articles link and contact [Melissa](#) or [Steve](#) and let us know what topic you would like to discuss ASAP. We will pick the most popular ones.





# HAMSTER HINTS

**Bob (KEØEXE)** [gettuit@charter.net](mailto:gettuit@charter.net)

**Near year's end, I began planning an attic antenna**, mainly for 10m (see January's Hamster Hints), and now, after slow but steady progress, it's "almost" ready for service.

Going into the project, I had several ideas. I considered a balanced, wire dipole (unremarkably simulated), but when I finally got a good look around the attic, an OCFD made more sense. This led to a brief time of experimenting with a clothesline antenna (also shown in the picture)--something I've always wanted to do; however, in the end, I decided the mag-loop would be a better choice for the relatively low-elevation and limited space of my attic. So, I switched gears and went about repairing the big hunk of nylon-housing-and-aluminum-conductors, which I had accepted from the Club's "bank account of donated stuff."

It took a great many hours of work, to clean, repair the housing and broken PCB, re-lube the bearings and gears, and test the stepper-motor tuning system (which did work, initially). Mostly, I built an external, box-like "clamp," from plywood, to push-together the nylon housing--which had warped over time. Also, I designed the box to allow setting--and pivoting--the antenna on another plywood project--a cradle of sorts--which holds the loop up off the attic floor and allows both angles (elevation and azimuth) to be easily changed (I wanted more flexibility, in operation). Here's a photo...





# CONTEST CORNER

Fred (K4IU) [k4iu@me.com](mailto:k4iu@me.com)

**With the highest recorded number of sunspots in 7 years** May's contest activities should get a little extra propagation help.

- ♦ **More QSO parties**, including the New England, Arkansas, Delaware and Indiana get togethers.
- ♦ **RTTY DX contests**, [Volta RTTY DX WW](#). This fun event runs from 12:00 GMT Saturday May 14th, 2022, until 12:00 GMT Sunday May 15th, 2022. The goal of the organizers is to increase interest in the RTTY mode as used by hams and to honor the Italian discoverer of electricity, Alessandro Volta.

[CQWW CW WPX](#) **May 28th**, Break out those paddles and keys! In this contest everybody works everybody. In fact, if you have a 2x3 call you may find yourself extremely popular as a multiplier.

Those are the headliners but there's more and you can see them all on the [DL2NBY](#) and [WA7BNM](#) calendars.

[Hamvention 2022](#) is a live event this year with a theme of **Reunion** following 2 years of COVID cancellations. It'll be held in Dayton, Ohio May 20-22.

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If you have done any contesting, you know there are various entrant categories. These often include high/low/qrp power, all band/single band and unassisted/assisted. The first couple make sense but what about assisted/unassisted?

If you do all the operating and logging during the entire official contest period, you have met the definition of UNASSISTED. BUT if you are using call sign alerting help of any kind you will be classified in one of the ASSISTED categories. There are various forms of assistance, and they include a spotting net (VHF/HF), cell phones, land -line calls, "a friend", or a **DX Cluster**.

The purpose of a **DX cluster** is to alert interested hams (contesters) that there's a "multiplier" station on-the-air. Many logging programs can be configured to send spots to a "band map" that you just click on instead of manually tuning your dial up and down the band.

If you are operating using this kind of contest "crowd sourcing" you quickly understand that there's little benefit in seeing a DX spot from the UK in the middle of the afternoon in Rochester, MN telling you that a station from Mount Athos is on 160m. You won't hear it! If you want to hear what others in your area are hearing, then you will want to find a Cluster closer to your QTH. Choosing a DX Cluster is a topic by itself but here's a list you can check out <https://ng3k.com/Misc/cluster.html>. Two of my favorite clusters are [VE7CC](#) and [AE5A](#).



Below is a screen shot from my N1MM+ logger during a contest to illustrate a band map and cluster window. Clicking on any one of the red highlighted calls will move my transceiver to that frequency where I can call. If I exchange a report, then one click logs the QSO. Then I'm off to the next new one or continue searching and pouncing!

**Band MAP**

**Cluster & Telnet selection**

**Available - 43 Mults 43 Qs of 43 total spots**

Call	Freq	Dir	Mode	Mult?	SN	Time v	Spotter	Grid
JN1THL	14032.0	015°	CW	Yes 1	1258Z	094F	---	---
K9ZO	7038.7	113°	CW	Yes 1	1257Z	KVBI	---	---
HB9CBRP	7038.1	177°	CW	Yes 1	1256Z	KVBI	---	---
NG7M	14058.1	048°	CW	Yes 1	1256Z	HB9CBRP	---	---
K5AX	7025.0	177°	CW	Yes 1	1256Z	N04Y	---	---
K4RO	7035.0	210°	CW	Yes 1	1256Z	KVBI	---	---
N0TA	21009.1	014°	CW	Yes 1	1255Z	UA1QV	---	---
JK200K	7027.2	131°	CW	Yes 1	1255Z	KVBI	---	---
AD4EB	20013.1	043°	CW	Yes 1	1255Z	K30CW	---	---
W0UO	7033.1	321°	CW	Yes 1	1255Z	JH6CP	---	---
AA9H	7025.5	131°	CW	Yes 1	1255Z	KVBI	---	---
KR2Q	14037.8	095°	CW	Yes 1	1253Z	KVBI	---	---
N580	14037.3	113°	CW	Yes 1	1253Z	KVBI	---	---
OE0MORSE	21010.1	045°	CW	Yes 1	1252Z	OE6VE	---	---
VK9NT	3515.0	254°	CW	Yes 1	1252Z	V68WZ	---	---
AD4EB	7036.1	177°	CW	Yes 1	1250Z	KVBI	---	---
K4RO	7031.6	177°	CW	Yes 1	1250Z	KVBI	---	---
R9HG	20014.9	001°	CW	Yes 1	1250Z	Q2PME	---	---
NG7M	7028.5	263°	CW	Yes 1	1248Z	KVBI	---	---
K5AX	7030.6	198°	CW	Yes 1	1248Z	KVBI	---	---

**Info - K4IU - Exch: FRED ST7**

W0UO - 7034.97 [KVBI @ -1 min] - CW  
 K: NAUNITED STATES, Zn 4, Hdg 210° LP 30° 438mi 704km  
 Sunrise: 11:42Z Sunset: 01:07Z  
 WWV DE VE7CC <12> - SF=160, A=7, K=2, STRONG WIR3 -> MODERATE WIR2  
 - Qs = 10, 100, 60m, 57m - Goal 70  
 0 0 0 0  
 Next Goal 50  
 12:56:29 - Score Reported Sent Successfully, Result = OK-Full  
 11:01:33 Winkey Version = 30 on COM24  
 Score - 0 Points  
 Band QSOs Pts Hlt Pt/Q  
 1 Mult = 1.0 Q's  
 Rescore

If you'd like more information on the basics of DX Clusters or integrating them into your logging programs let me know.





# ARES

## AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE

Steve (WØSTV) [w0stv@yahoo.com](mailto:w0stv@yahoo.com)  
Olmsted County ARES-EC

Thank you to the people that took the time to attend the virtual, or the Olmsted NWS SkyWarn training last April 13th. The area counties were well represented even though the overall attendance was less than the past pre-covid training sessions. Looks like we will have an active year for spotters with what we have seen so far. Make sure you have those SkyWarn county maps in your vehicles, have that hail comparison guide available, and make sure your mobile radio or HT is programed and operational.

Olmsted ARES/SkyWarn had its monthly training meeting with 14 people attending on April 16th at fire station #2. The agenda was "SkyWarn boots and tires on the ground". This was a training session using videos to showing new science of cold air factors of tornados and the anomalies of tornados that caused injuries and fatalities. It included a power point on team building with the focus on interaction, and the SOP of communications used before, (check ins and staging) during, (deployment and operations) and after (returning and damage assessments) stages of a SkyWarn or ARES activations.





# ARES

## AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE

**Steve (WØSTV)** [w0stv@yahoo.com](mailto:w0stv@yahoo.com)  
**Olmsted County ARES-EC**

I have extra hand outs from the meeting left for active SkyWarn spotters that could not attend. Next months topic is "what's in your go kit"? Why their are so many types, and not the same. We will have information and data to help you decide what your kit needs and why. Members are requested to bring their portable and mobile radio equipment that they would be using for SkyWarn, public service, and Em-Comm deployments for viewing with Q and A session involving each kit.



Olmsted ARES is open to all licensed amateur radio operators that have the interest and want to be active to build a communications network that is available when all else fails or needs to be supplemented. Anyone one may attend these meetings and ARES application forms are available then if you want to join.

The more preparation, the less confusion.

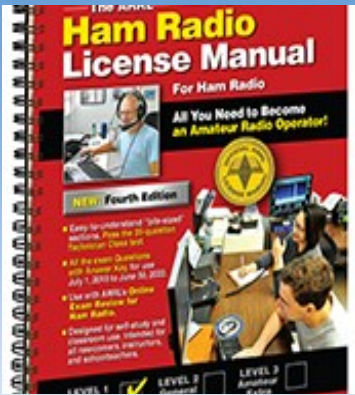
# TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Eric (KF0S) [kf0s@hotmail.com](mailto:kf0s@hotmail.com)



- ♦ **The 147.255 repeater is having some sensitivity issues.** The county knows about it and work order has been submitted. For the time being, we will use the 146.82 repeater as primary.
- ♦ The **Rochester Fire Department** has two sets of cans (6 each) which we believe could be tuned for our repeaters. We will take them and store at the 82 repeater site. One set will likely be used with repeater in the ARES trailer.
- ♦ **Discussion of purchasing bulk supplies for the club.** We will hold off from a club perspective for now. If someone is purchasing something that others in the club may want to join in on, the club can help coordinate.
- ♦ Future item is shelving for the ARES trailer.
- ♦ **Discussion of station at 125 Live.** Start with a simple easy to use station and work on adding remote access later. We want easy onboarding for those who want to join the hobby.
- ♦ Steve is on the 125 Live tech committee. Steve is looking into getting/fabricating a cabinet.
- ♦ We also want to keep in touch with Melisa at JM.





# EDUCATION

**Bill (KØRGR)** [k0rgr@arrl.net](mailto:k0rgr@arrl.net)

**Dave (KØVH)** [dcnaatz@gmail.com](mailto:dcnaatz@gmail.com)

A **RARC Education Committee** has been convened and continues with regular meetings to assist in:

- ♦ Technician student class content development (online and/or in-person).
- ♦ Development of a program for 125 Live
- ♦ Development of High School radio club activities.
- ♦ Assist Melissa (KE0WNH) John Marshall HS educator with the HS program.
- ♦ Assist Bill (KØRGR) with his program if requested.

## Members of the Education Committee are:

- ♦ Melissa (KE0WNH)
- ♦ Dave (KØVH)
- ♦ Steve (WØSTV)
- ♦ Bob (KE0EXE)
- ♦ Ben (KU0HN)
- ♦ Bill (KØRGR)
- ♦ Colin (AA0CN)





# PARKS ON THE AIR ® (POTA)

Mark (K0GMK) [k0gmk@arri.net](mailto:k0gmk@arri.net) Hamster Editor

Perhaps you've heard talk on the repeaters or on one of the Nets about [Parks On The Air \(POTA\)](#). You might be interested and think that it could be **fun to operate your rig and antenna remotely in a beautiful outdoor setting.**

In a nutshell it's all about operating in a state or national park, state trail, national monument, historical location or battlefield and making at least 10 QSOs to "activate" the entity. It's as simple as that, but there are a few [rules](#).

Take a look at the [Parks On The Air](#) website, view the [FAQ page](#), the [Help/Getting Started](#) section and perhaps view some of the getting started [videos](#) by seasoned POTA operators. If you are interested in becoming an Activator fill out the [sign-up](#) to become a member and get started.

**Did you know that there is a [POTA entity in Rochester](#)?**

Take a look at the [map of entities](#) to see the wealth of entities to activate close to Rochester as well.

POTA is a great way to enjoy Ham radio and enjoy the bonus of being outdoors!

**You won't regret the experience.**







# RARC WEEKLY NETS

- ♦ **Monday 8 p.m.** Elmer's Net 146.820 repeater (PL Tone 100)
- ♦ **Tuesday 7 p.m.** (except on Club Meeting Nights) RARC 10 Meter Net meets on 28.325 Mhz. USB. The Net is cancelled without notice if lightning in the area or SkyWarn activation.
- ♦ **Thursday 6:30 p.m.** 146.820 Repeater. The first Net of each month is a voice net, and it's the SE MN District ARES Digital Net. The other weeks, it is an informal digital net, using the digital protocol announced for the week on the Net and NBEMS.

*Most of us use [FLDIGI](#) and the rest of the [NBEMS](#) suite of programs, all of which are free. MT63 is a very forgiving mode. You can do MT63 on VHF without a soundcard modem - 'acoustic coupling' works fine. meaning you can hold your HT up to the mic on your computer and copy it very well and do the reverse to transmit.*

- ♦ **Thursday 8 p.m.** HF Digital Net, 3583.5 kHz, Olivia 8/500
- ♦ **Daily M-F about 11:30 a.m.** - Repeater Of The Week - Very Informal Morning Net - If you show up and there is no net control, become one! The object of this net is to encourage more on-air activity.
- ♦ **Saturday 8:30 p.m.** Iowa D-Star Net on RARC D-Star Reflector XLS632A
- ♦ **Sunday 7:30 p.m.** Minnesota D-Star Net on RARC D-Star Reflector XLS632A
- ♦ **Sunday 8:30 p.m.** Dodge County ARES Net on the 147.255 Repeater at 8:30 p.m.
- ♦ **Sunday 9:00 p.m.** RARC/ARES Net 146.820 Repeater (PL tone 100)

***146.820 Repeater is primary and 146.625 is secondary until further notice***



# CLUB FUNDRAISER

SMILE.AMAZON.COM

**RARC is always in need of funds to operate.** We have insurance costs, we have cost involved with running 3 repeaters and putting on a field day. Dues cover most of it but we need approximately 100 paid members to break even each year.

RARC now has another way to help bring funds to the club and it's painless.

[Smile Amazon](https://smile.amazon.com) is a simple and automatic way to [support the RARC](https://smile.amazon.com) every time you shop at [Amazon.com](https://amazon.com) at **no cost to you**. Tens of millions of products are eligible for donations.

Simply follow the [link](#) below and every time you purchase an eligible item the RARC will receive .5% of your purchase. There is no cost involved for you!

So, please click on the [picture](#) below, share it with others in your family and your friends. It will help out the RARC:





- ♦ Are you a member of the [ARRL](#)?
- ♦ Are you new to Ham Radio?
- ♦ Have you been licensed for a while but not active?
- ♦ Are you active but never explored the [ARRL](#)?

**John (NØHZN)** and **Fred (K4IU)** decided it was time to let other Hams know about the ARRL. Of course, you may think, "it's just another group that wants my money because I'm a Ham." But there is more to it than that, they truly want to grow the hobby.

So here are two links you can explore to see what the [ARRL](#) offers Hams. Take a look:

- ♦ [ARRL Benefits](#)
- ♦ [The Value of ARRL Membership](#)

- If you haven't done so already, **please [register](#) for the RARC groups.io email reflector** so you can keep abreast of club activities, official club notices and of course the monthly **HAMSTER** mailing. Click on [register](#) and you will be taken to the RARC registration page. Once you have [registered](#) go to your account settings and choose how you would like to receive email from the club.*

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