

# THE HAMSTER

### April 2024

### Official Monthly Newsletter of the Rochester Amateur Radio Club

Founded In 1932 - 50+ Years Of ARRL Affiliation



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## **President's Message**

### Pat (KEOWWG) - President



### Join RARC at 125Live Ham Radio Club and the Solar Eclipse

### 1:30-3:30pm, Monday, April 8

Social members come and watch our Ham radio operators as they have their first exposure to operating station radio during the solar eclipse.

Social members free | fitness & nonmembers \$10 No registration required

**REMINDER: 2024 RARC dues were due to the club treasurer by March 1, 2024.** 

Members who have not paid dues by that date will be dropped from the RARC roster. Please see the RARC website by clicking this <u>LINK</u> to pay your dues by credit card or PayPal. Dues can also be paid by mail at: Rochester Amateur Radio Club Inc., PO Box 1, Rochester, MN 55903



## **RARC** Training

#### Dan Stroh (NOSPN) - Vice-President



Do you live in a place that restricts outside antennas? Have you ever considered combining Ham radio with getting out of the house? Would you like to do Ham radio while traveling? How about SOTA or POTA? **Niel (WOVLZ)**, has been doing **"Picnic Table QRP"** for over 30 years. For the **April program** he will talk about what it takes to experience Ham radio outside your shack and also show some of the solutions he's come up with.



## **RARC** Field Day

Taylor (WB0RSJ) Steve (W0STV) - Co-Chairs

### Field Day 2024 is fast approaching!

### Volunteers Needed:

- Safety Officer
- Public Relations
- Lead-CW station
- Lead-SSB Station

*I would like to spread the workload out amongst the club members. It's a great learning experience! If we can get a group together, we can meet and starting planning for a great 2024 Field Day!* 

#### **Please contact:**

- Taylor (507) 923-3387 <u>tbbauman@gmail.com</u>)
- Steve (507) 254-3993 <u>W0STV@yahoo.com</u>)

if you have any questions, concerns or ideas!











### April 2024 RARC ZOOM Online Login Info

**Optional for those not able to attend in-person** 



Below is the ZOOM login information for the April 9, 2024, 6:30 PM CDT RARC meeting . The ZOOM login info is also posted via the <u>RARC email reflector</u> prior to the meeting.

• When: April 9, 2024 @ 06:30 PM CDT (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting (click on the link below):

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/9876548873?pwd=T0JBWEFzSCtBYzhiazA1NTdDb2Rkdz09

- Meeting ID: 987 654 8873
- **Passcode**: : 738852
- For audio only from a mobile phone:

Call: (312) 626-6799 US (Chicago) Meeting ID: 987 654 8873 Passcode: 738852





### **Amateur Radio Emergency Service**

The Olmsted ARES meeting will be on April 20th and not on April 13. Normally the date after the RARC meeting for this month. Plan to attend with your call out equipment. We will check that every ones equipment has simplex and repeater frequencies. Bring your programing cable if you have one, to install frequencies. the RARC have some cables too. We will team up to make it so everyone learns. We will separate into groups at different locations in the EOC to isolate and replicate areas of Rochester. This will be a a mix mode drill with the Rochester EOC radio room operating as in a real event. There will learn as we go. The more you know.

Olmsted ARES and the Rochester Red Cross will be trying a pilot program that could be an effective joint venture for both of us. Olmsted ARES would join with the American Red Cross Rochester to form a damage assessment strike force for South East Minnesota. We have had issues with Red Cross requiring ARES members to become Red Cross volunteers in the past. The background checks and training requirements did not fit well with ARES members. Through discussions with Red Cross we may have a work around. First we have to see who in Olmsted ARES would be willing to do damage assessment training and be willing to travel in the SE Minnesota area after a disaster with the Red Cross for damage assessments. We will explain the proposed details and discuss this further at the April 20th ARES meeting.

Mark your calendar for April 23rd 2024 for the National Weather Service SkyWarn training at the Rochester Best Western Apache conference room on 16th St and Hwy 52 SW at 6:30PM. This will be a combination basic and advanced courser session. If you have not taken this training in the last two years you will need to attend a session this year to stay active. This year Olmsted SkyWarn REQUESTsstorm spotters operate APRS by radio or an APRS app on your phone for net control to monitor the field units. If you have your email available on your cell phones. You will be able to send pictures and videos to the Olmsted ARES emergency email w0mxw@yahoo.com. For faster information and support materials we plan to have this email running during SkyWarn and ARES activation's. This will also allow us to forward these to the national weather service La Crosse when needed.

**Olmsted ARES Mission Statement:** 

To be so effective that you are able to help others.





### **Amateur Radio Emergency Service**

The public service events in the Olmsted/Rochester area will be posted soon on the RARC reflector and the Hamster. Please go to <u>http://WWW.RARCHAMS.ORG.</u>

Click on the Events and activities header. In the drop down box click on public service. Apply if you will be available to help with that event.

I am working on other area events that we may be able to help with their communications.

73

### Steve-W0STV

**Olmsted ARES-EC** *The more preparation, the less confusion.* 

> Olmsted ARES Mission Statement: To be so effective that you are able to help others.



## **Hamster Hints**

#### Bob (KEØEXE)

Here's a way to organize "parts" or supplies, in your closets, cabinets, shops, Ham shack, garages, hobby areas, etc. It's not my idea. I got it from my new friend, Dave S., who is not a ham, but who likes to save various types of "building-material," to use in projects.

Dave also saves clear-plastic, 2-liter pop bottles, complete with their screw-on tops. He removes the label from the bottle, leaving at least one side of the bottle nicely "see-through." (If the opposite side still has some glue-goo or label stuck to it, it doesn't really matter, because, when used for a storage container, that side will be facing the "back" anyway, so it doesn't need to be transparent.) After rinsing and drying, and with the cap screwed on tight, he uses a band-saw to cut a triangular piece out of the conical part of the bottle, just below the small, straight "throat," where the cap is. (I call this conical region the "shoulder" of the bottle, and I just used a box-cutter when I made my sample.) The triangle is pointed upward, towards the throat/cap, and widens towards the bottom, to about 2.5 to 3 inches along its base. This base is horizontal when the bottle is sitting upright like it normally would sit on a table. That completes the bottle.



A razor-knife was used to make this cut-out, in the "shoulder" area of the bottle.



## **Hamster Hints**

#### Bob (KEØEXE)

**Next, Dave installs an upward-bending hook of some type, on a board.** This board typically has many such hooks, side-by-side, and the hooks are spaced a little bit more than a bottle-diameter apart. He mounts the board to a wall, "horizontally" (or to the inside of a cabinet). Then he fills the bottle with "stuff," and "hangs" it on the hook! Done. Simple. See-through. Big enough to hold quite a few "like-things." The only downside I see is that there is no protection from dust eventually settling-in, onto the bottle's contents, through the access hole, but maybe that doesn't matter too much, for some applications or environments. Anyway, it certainly is an inexpensive, modular, and convenient storage solution!

This week I made one from a clear, 2-liter water-bottle, so I could show "all y'all"...



Storage-bottle hanging on a peg-board



### **Contest Corner**

Fred (K4IU)

We're just a week away from a major celestial event! A total solar eclipse will be seen across North America and will happen on Monday, April 8th. It will be the last of its kind in the United States for the next 20 years. As a ham you're able to participate in a "crowd sourced" research project. That's right! It's called the <u>Solar Eclipse QSO</u> party, SEQP. You can help scientists learn how the ionosphere functions during this experiment.



8 April <u>SEQP:</u> 1400-2400 UTC is the official 2024 SEQP event period. More information can be found here.

**6 & 7 April** <u>EA RTTY</u>: RTTY aficionados like this one because of the broad participation from our URE friends. You can even announce your plans to operate <u>here</u>. The <u>SP DX</u> contest and Florida Parks on the air are also this weekend if you don't do RTTY. But don't get too worn out or you will miss the SEQP!

**13 April** Japan <u>International DX Contest</u>, JIDX, CW: Conditions have been great on both long and short paths on the higher bands

20 & 21 April Texas, Michigan Nebraska, North Dakota QSO parties.

**27 April** Florida QSO party: This one rivals the California QSO party in size and participants. Entrants can choose

These are just the highlights but there is much more going on in April. Check the <u>WA7BNM calendar</u> website for more details.



## **Contest Corner**

#### Fred (K4IU)

The results of the September 2023 VHF contest were published in this month's QST, April 2024 p 78. One of our locals **Mel (KCØP/R)** topped the list. Congratulations!

One of the things hams should try to do after a contest besides submitting their cabrillo files to the contest sponsor is to report their results to the 3830 website, (https://

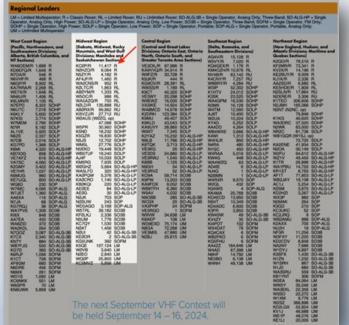
www.3830scores.com/). Here is how it works and some good reasons for doing it.

### Send your score from either the N1MM or N3FJP logging program:

After participating in a contest, you go to the 3830 Contest Reporting website and submit your scores. This includes details such as the number of contacts made, the bands and modes used, and any additional information required by the specific contest. This is all set up in tabular form. The N3FJP program has some helpful FAQs and <u>after the contest is over, sub-</u> mitting your score to 3830 will be a breeze.

**Verification and Compilation**: Once submitted, your scores are typically verified by the contest organizers to ensure accuracy. These scores are then compiled and made available for comparison with other contest scores.

**Analysis and Ranking**: Contest participants sometimes use the 3830 Contest Reporting website to evaluate their performance compared to others. They can see where they stand in terms of total score, number of contacts, or other metrics depending on the contest.



**Overall**, the <u>3830 Contest Reporting</u> website plays an important role in the ham radio contesting community by facilitating score submission, comparison, and interaction among participants. It will archive your scores for every contest you've been in going back to 2002. Also, in the form you can e-mail your results to yourself and then cut and paste them to submit your efforts to the <u>MWA</u> for recognition. This tip will save you time by not having to tediously edit your results to look nice when reporting.

Finally, If you would like a more detailed <u>review of the 3830.com and WA7BNM contest oriented websites</u> you can learn from the webmaster himself, Bruce Horn. It's an hour-long U Tube video.



# **Technical Committee**

Eric (KF0S)

### Tech Committee - 3/11/24

Attendees: Eric, Dan, George, Dave N, Mark, Pat, Steve W, John D, Taylor

Post meeting and RARC meeting comments in italics

#### 146.625 Fusion repeater:

• Working.

#### 443.85 D-Star repeater:

- We still haven't gotten the Gateway Server back to Mayo. Waiting on software.
- 2 Analog contacts in 2 years. Keep advertising.
- Try using it after a Sunday ARES net. Also include the Fusion repeater (might have a scheduling concern, there is an 8:30 net which goes past 9:00).

#### 146.82 repeater:

• Lock box with building access. John Scott has code.

#### 147.255 repeater:

No problems



# **Technical Committee**

Eric (KF0S)

#### **County EOC facility and computers:**

- Moving to new site this fall.
- LMR-400 and Cat 6 runs. Will check on rotor cable.

#### **Donation of W0IBM equipment:**

- Nothing new.
- Will see if there is some resolution on getting antennas off the tower.

#### **Control Operators:**

- Validate that we can control repeaters.
- Work on getting together docs for all repeaters.
- Collect more info from John Scott.

#### Website:

• OS update email to be forwarded to the website committee. Check on host.



# **Technical Committee**

Eric (KF0S)

#### **Education:**

#### 125 Live:

• Meetings on 3rd Tuesdays of the month from 2:00-3:00pm. 125 Live member or \$10 (may be waived) for non-members.

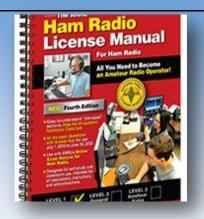
• 125 Live will donate a desktop computer. Put links on desktop for users to easily get information.

• Operational during Eclipse on April 8th. 10 hour window. Mike, KA0MGY has donated some wire and will work with Steve on trying to lower the SWR.

#### St. James Coffee house:

• Tia. Taking the Maple Grove Zoom Tech class.

Had some questions.



## Education

Dave (KØVH) Bill (KORGR)

One of the first steps needed to really get into Amateur Radio is to get your Amateur Radio License. This license is required in order to transmit on any of the Amateur Radio frequencies – however, listening does not. Listening is only part of the fun, so we encourage you to get your license so you can get the full experience!

- If you plan to get your extra class license this year, you have until June 30 before the question pool changes. The next Olmsted VE test is on May 16th before the changes take place.
- We'd appreciate knowing any of you who are using ARRL books, the new to ARRL Gordon West training methods, or Dave Casler videos: how effective are they? Would you like some mentoring from the club? A good spot would be the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 125Live.
- We'd also like to know if you are taking the current Maple Grove Technician Zoom class.



# **JM Rocket Radio Club**

### Elmers Needed To Help with the



# JM Rocket Radio Club

- Kit Building
  - Soldering
- Antenna Building
- Radio Operation
  - QSOs
  - Mentoring

*Contact <u>Melissa</u> (KEOWNH) for more information or how to volunteer.* 



# 125Live Ham Radio Club



#### Steve Wiebke (W0STV)

#### The new 125Live ham radio group met with 8 people attending on March 19th at 2:00 PM in the TLC room for our third meeting.

125 members have purchased the ARRL book and are preparing for their technician license.

125Live ham radio will be part of the April 8th eclipse HF radio experiment by operating FT-8 from the station. This will be an opportunity for 125Live members to operate a digital radio for the experience with a license ham next to them. We will use the call WOMXW for the day.

I thank the RARC members that are also 125Live members for attending these meetings and supporting the group. We will be updating the HF antenna on the roof with ground radials to improve the SWR on the lower bands.



**The next meeting of the 125Live Ham Radio Club sponsored by RARC will be April 16th at 125Live at 2:00 PM.** Attendance is free to 125Live members and the general public. For more information please contact(W0STV) at: w0stv@yahoo.com



# RARC buy - sell - trade



**ST-5000 Step Up Step Down Transformer** 110V 220V Step Up Voltage Converter Transformer, 5kw rating, used once / no longer need, like-new condition, **\$100 firm** (\$129.99 on Amazon). See Bob, (KE0EXE), <u>gettuit@charter.net</u>

**Yaesu FT-950** 160 thru 6 meter transceiver Includes MH-31 microphone Original box **\$500** Lynn (WB0U) (507) 358-8459



**Astron RS-35M 13.8 volt power supply** 35 amp peak, 25 amp continuous with volt and amp meters uses the circa 1960's 723 voltage regulator keeps your shack warm in the winter **\$150** Lynn (WB0U) (507) 358-8459



Icom IC-735 HF transceiver - Dan Stroh (N0SPN) you can call or text me at my cell# 507-273-0734 **\$175** 

*If you have any Ham related items that you want to sell or are looking for locally, email the Hamster at* <u>*RARC Buy or Sell*</u> or Trade.



# Parks On The Air ® (POTA)

#### Mark (K0GMK) gmkelm@charter.net Hamster Editor

### It's Winter POTA Time!

**Perhaps you've heard talk on the repeaters** or on one of the Nets about <u>Parks On The Air (POTA)</u> 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 <u>rules</u>.

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

Do you know that there is a POTA entity in Rochester?

Take a look at the <u>map of entities</u> to see the wealth of places to activate close to Rochester as well.

**POTA** is a great way to enjoy Ham radio and enjoy the bonus of operating remotely or out of your vehicle!





## **Weekly Nets**

- Monday 8 p.m. Elmers' 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 2 Meter 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 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. ARES 80 Meter 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 onair activity.
- Saturday 8:30 p.m. Iowa D-Star Net on D-Star Reflector XLS632A
- Sunday 7:30 p.m. Minnesota D-Star Net on D-Star Reflector XLS632A
- Sunday 8:30 p.m. Dodge County ARES Net on the 146.820 (PL Tone 100) Repeater at 8:30 p.m.
- Sunday 9:00 p.m. RARC/ARES Net: 147.255 repeater (PL Tone 100) Odd numbered Sundays

146.820 repeater (PL Tone 100) Even Numbered Sundays



- Are you a member of the <u>ARRL</u>?
  - Are you new to Ham Radio?
- Have you been licensed for a while but not active?
  - Are you active but never explored the <u>ARRL</u>?

RARC has been an ARRL affiliated club for the past 50+ years. RARC wants all members to know about the benefit of being a member of the ARRL and how the ARRL promotes amateur radio and represents and supports Hams throughout the year.

Here are two links you can explore to see what the <u>ARRL</u> offers Hams. Take a look:

- ARRL Benefits
- The Value of ARRL Membership





RARC meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM in the lower level of Rochester Fire Station #2 in the EOC at 2185 Wheelock Drive NE, Rochester, MN

٠	Online:	http://www.rarchams.org/
٠	Mail:	RARC , P.O. Box 1, Rochester, MN 55903
٠	Groups.io:	Register and a Moderator will respond shortly
٠	Weekly Net:	Sundays at 9:00 PM: 147.255 repeater (PL Tone 100) Odd numbered Sun- days
		146.820 repeater (PL Tone 100) Even Numbered Sun- days
٠	Facebook:	Rochester Amateur Radio Club

If you haven't done so already, please <u>register</u> for the RARC groups.io email reflector so you can keep abreast of club activities, official club notices and of course the monthly Hamster emailing. Click on <u>register</u> and you will be taken to the RARC registration page. Once you have <u>registered</u> go to your account settings and choose how you would like to receive email from RARC.

Newsletter articles or questions: Mark (KØGMK) - Editor gmkelm@charter.net