



THE HAMSTER

May 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 (KE0WWG) - President

Spring is now technically here and along with it warmer weather! With that means more traveling and outdoor activities.

How often do you take an HT along with you on outdoor activities? Do you take one with you on vacation? Especially when doing outdoor activities in the summer, having another set of communications is helpful for impending weather and another means of communication available when you may be out of reach of cell phone signal.

Besides voice communication, APRS is also a versatile utility - not only for sharing location, but also getting information. Using APRS messaging, there are other things you can do such as WxBot for weather information, e-mail via Winlink, SMS texting (see <https://aprs.wiki> for an SMSGTE alternative that is working), among others.

With this nice weather, it is also makes getting outside to operate much more enjoyable, whether POTA, SOTA, or anywhere else.

If anyone is interested in getting out and doing some activities that aren't on the schedule – such as a POTA activation during the week or weekend, let the club know on our [Groups.IO reflector](#). Let's share our knowledge and excitement for this fun hobby of ours!

Next Month! Field Day 2024 - June 22-24

RARC Field Day 2024 will be held at the Rochester EOC located at Rochester Fire Station #2:

2185 Wheelock Drive NE, Rochester, MN

Volunteers Needed! See Page 5 For Details



RARC May Training

Dan Stroh (N0SPN) - Vice-President



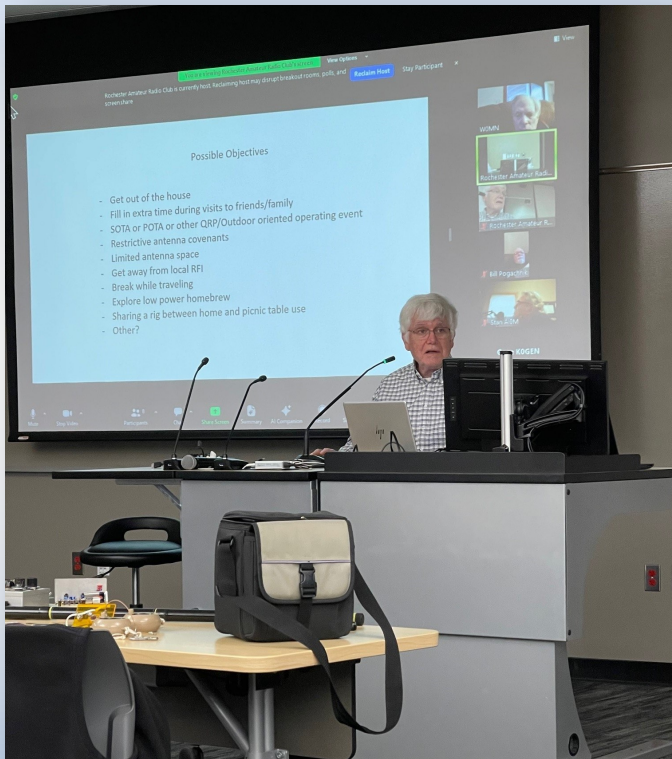
The **May 2024 program** will be presented by **Pat Cahill (W0BM)** presenting **hints, tricks and set-up info for those who have never operated CW** but would like to.

Perhaps you are not sure how to connect a key or paddle to your transceiver or not sure how to best send out a CQ or reply to someone else's CQ. Pat will be available to answer your questions to help you get started in or more proficient in CW.



RARC Training Recap

Dan Stroh (N0SPN) - Vice-President



Photos from the **April 2024** program:
“Picnic Table QRP”
Thank you Niel (W0VLZ) for an excellent and informative presentation!



RARC Field Day

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

Field Day 2024 is Next Month - June 22-23!

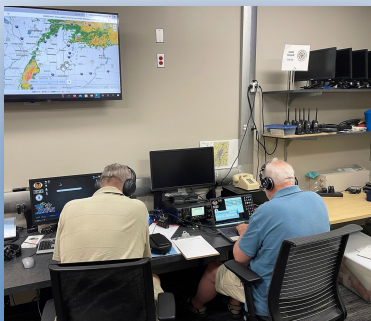
Volunteers Needed:

- **Food Coordinator**
- **Lead-CW station**
- **Lead-SSB Station**
- **Safety Officer - Dennis (K0AKM)**
- **Public Relations - George (N0UM)**

***RARC Field Day 2024 will be held at the Rochester EOC located at Rochester Fire Station #2:
2185 Wheelock Drive NE, Rochester, MN***

Please contact:

- **Taylor (507) 923-3387 tbbauman@gmail.com**
 - **Steve (507) 254-3993 W0STV@yahoo.com**
- if you have any questions, concerns or ideas!**





May 2024 RARC ZOOM Online Login Info

Optional for those not able to attend in-person



Below is the ZOOM login information for the **May 14, 2024, 6:30 PM CDT RARC meeting** . The ZOOM login info is also posted via the [RARC email reflector](#) prior to the meeting.

- ◆ **When:** May 14, 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:** : #####

- **For audio only from a mobile phone:**

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



ARES

Amateur Radio Emergency Service

The ARES meeting on April 20th included updates for Olmsted SkyWarn training and operations, the latest information on the Med City Marathon, and the status of the new Red Cross/FEMA damage assessment ARES strike team for SE Minnesota. ARES members that needed repeater and simplex frequencies installed or updated on their radios had their radio memories updated. ARES members that attended the meeting and did not have their own Winlink account were added to the W0MXW Winlink emergency account white page. They will now be able to send Winlink messages (by telnet only) to our emergency "w0mxw" Winlink RF email account for the next 6 months.

The program was how to use a radio carry chest pack. We discussed the pros and cons of the different types and styles, the price spread, and where you may purchase them.

To keep the Olmsted ARES call up roster current for trained and active members. We are requiring all ARES applications be filled out again for 2024. You can complete one when attending our training meetings. This will eliminate contact members for status and updates. People that fill out this new registration will be the first called when the Olmsted and/or Rochester EOC's are activated and request ARES assistance. This does not apply to anyone that is SkyWarn trained and activated.

(Continued on next page)

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



ARES

Amateur Radio Emergency Service

If you have not registered with Olmsted County SkyWarn, in Olmsted, or from an area county reporting to the Olmsted SkyWarn net, please send an email to "w0stv@yahoo.com" with your call sign, Your name, phone number, and Email. This contact information will be kept at the the SkyWarn weather radio room.

Emails will be sent out to the rarchams@groups.io email reflector to inform you when a SkyWarn activation may happen that day. Cut and paste this into your browser, to fill out and send to be added to this Ham radio membership. <https://groups.io/login?r=https%3A%2F%2Fgroups.io%2Fg%2Frarchams> This is open to all licensed Ham radio operators.

Remember that the **primary repeater for Olmsted SkyWarn is the 147.255**. The **alternate repeater is the 146.820**. The **contingency mode is Echolink node 420993 that is linked to the 147.255 repeater**. The **emergency contact is 507-254-3993**. If you SkyWarn report to another county here are the repeaters they use as listed by the La Crosse NWS: <https://www.weather.gov/arx/hamradio>. Keep a copy of this handy or program these into your SkyWarn radio.

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.



ARES

Amateur Radio Emergency Service



SkyWarn Appreciation Dinner - April 24, 2024



ARES

Amateur Radio Emergency Service



Rochester SkyWarn Training - April 24, 2024



Hamster Hints

Bob (KEØEXE)

A few years ago, I bought a couple of chargers for my HT's battery-packs. One of these chargers always seemed defective, in that the plug on the end of the wall-wart's cable would never insert completely into the charger. The cause was hidden and baffled me. This winter, "Detective Bob" decided to dismantle the charger "as far as needed," to get to the bottom of this mystery. I did find the problem (hidden deep inside the charger's power-input jack), and I was able to repair the charger...

As it turned out, I had to dismantle even the jack, to find and remove a small, black-plastic ring that had broken off from the tip of the cable-plug and had gotten lodged in the jack.

*The ring is shown in the photo, at the tip of the **yellow arrow**; a "good" plug-end is **circled in yellow**, showing its similar ring, still intact. Also shown are the jack's internal, metal contacts, which I had to carefully remove from the jack's housing, to extract the ring, after making a few special cuts and holes in the housing itself. (I've never performed brain surgery (!)--and I'm sure it's a lot harder than this!--but, well, this gave me just the beginnings of an appreciation for it.*

After extraction, I had to reassemble the jack, which included application of black, plastic-bonder epoxy, to fill-in the cuts and holes I had made during disassembly. Applying the epoxy required some care, to avoid getting it in critical areas inside the jack; a pointy, round toothpick worked very well for that. It all turned out quite nice, so I recovered a completely functional charger from what otherwise would have been trash. (Unfortunately, I neglected to take photos of the repaired jack, before re-soldering it to the PCB and reassembling the charger.)

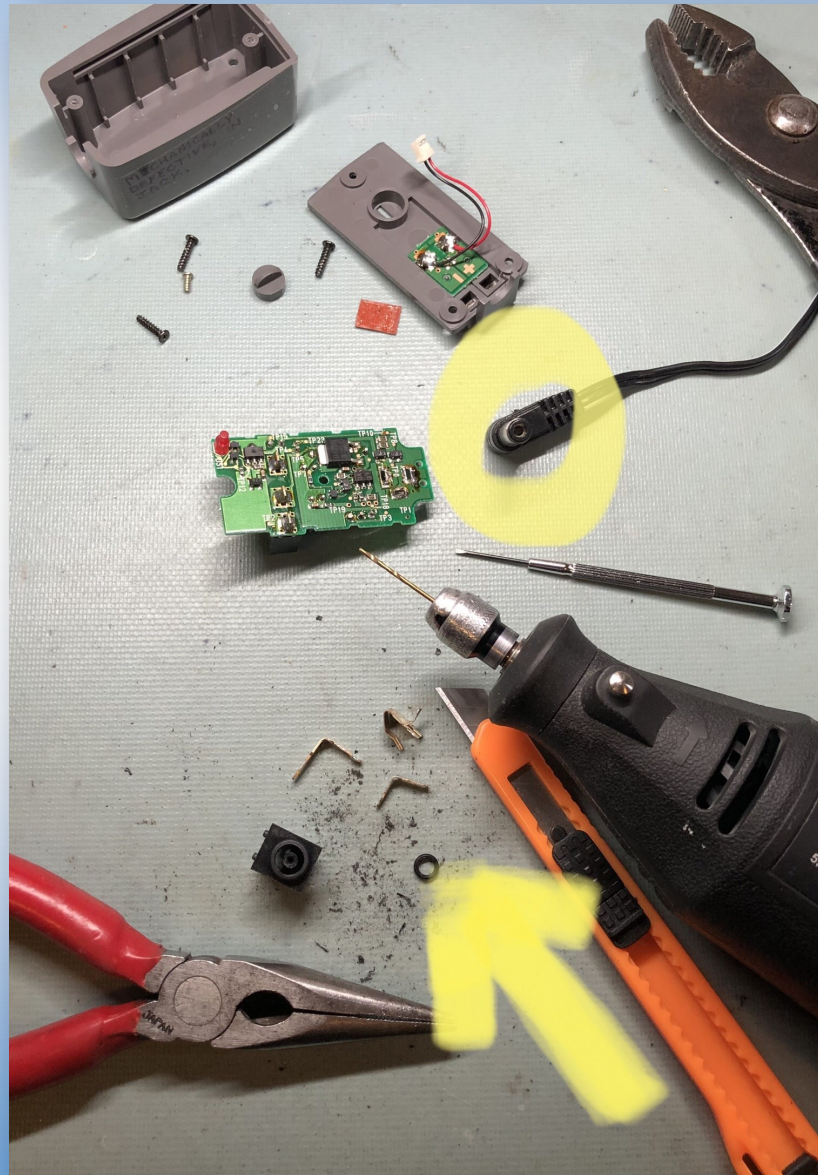
I've said it before: *I like plastic-bonder epoxy!*

- Project photo on next page -



Hamster Hints

Bob (KEØEXE)



Contest Corner

Fred (K4IU)



I always think of May activities in terms of live events such as the annual [Dayton Hamvention](#) May 17, 18, and 19th. Many locals make this 9-hour drive every year! This “pilgrimage” to Dayton (Xenia) is about all things Ham radio. It’s the largest gathering of Hams on the planet. In addition to the Dayton Ham Convention there are several other May activities to look forward to.

4 May: QSO parties galore! [7th Call Area](#), [Delaware](#), [Indiana](#), [New England](#) are all going this weekend

11 May: [VOLTA WW RTTY](#): This is the 58th running of one of the oldest RTTY Contests sponsored by our Italian friends

11 May: CQ-M International DX contest: SSB and CW with RS(T) and serial number exchange

18 May: [EU PSK DX Contest](#): You’ll find lots of activity for this contest especially on the European side

25 May: [CQWW WPX CW](#): This is the CW version and always popular with everyone working everyone! Just break out those keyers

There is a lot in May to keep you busy. Also, I hope we’ll get some reports back from those lucky RARC Hams going to Dayton. Check the [WA7BNM calendar](#) website for more May contests or try [Eric Guth’s QSO Today comprehensive calendar](#) of ham related activities to include Hamfests and expos.

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Contest Corner

Fred (K4IU)



Last month I was fortunate to attend the 75th International DX Convention held in Visalia, California from April 12th to April 14th. Historically this has been an international, as well as domestic gathering of hams from around the world. One of the highlights of the convention is the opportunity for attendees to meet and network with fellow hams, promoting camaraderie, exchanging ideas and sharing experience. This event showcased the latest news in DXing, contesting, and amateur radio technology.

Teams and recent leaders of the DX-peditions many of you have worked presented their expedition highlights. They included W8S, CYØS, CBØZ, TX5S and H4ØWA to name a few. Other well-known speakers from the amateur radio community shared thoughts and debated topics ranging from low power Dxing, station automation, FT8 contesting to some basic contest pearls. There were topics for both seasoned operators and newcomers alike.

Scott, KØMD and local ham, hosted the popular contest forum on Saturday morning.



Contest forum: Left to Right panelists Doug Grant K1DG, Bob Wilson N6TV, Scott Wright KØMD (moderator), Mike Ritz W7VO, Craig Thompson K9CT, Bill Fehring W9KKN

Contest Corner

Fred (K4IU)



Friday's DX and Contest academy forums, and Saturday's awards ceremonies added excitement to the event, celebrating the achievements of top operators, DX-pedition teams and fostering friendly competition among participants.

The convention served as an opportunity for industry leaders to showcase cutting-edge equipment and software, offering attendees a glimpse into the future of amateur radio technology. Overall, the 75th International DX Convention at Visalia, California is a fantastic experience and testament to the passion and innovation driving the amateur radio hobby forward.

That's it for this month. CU on the bands!

73

Fred K4IU



Technical Committee

Eric (KF0S)

Tech Committee - 4/8/24

Attendees: Eric, George, Mark, Pat, Dave N.

Post meeting and RARC meeting comments in italics

146.625 Fusion repeater:

- Applied WiresX software update.
- Firmware on HRI-200 interface is current.
- *Since meeting there is an issue with internet connectivity. Taylor was working to get someone up there, or provide us access, to look at internet/router/PC.*

443.85 D-Star repeater:

- Gateway Server - Looking at new code for replacing soon to be EOL Linux code as recommended by Icom.

Donation of W0IBM equipment:

- IBM has said no to getting antennas off the tower. Says the site now owns them.
- *Site owners also say no as things are still being determined with IBM. Told them we would like to get the antennas down and left my name as a contact.*

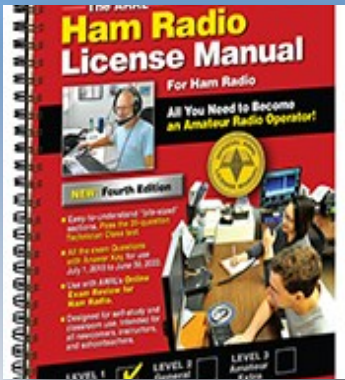
Control Operators:

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

John Scott has code to lock box with building access for 146.82.

Education

Dave (KØVH) - Bill (KØRGR)



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 any 2024 Maple Grove radio club Zoom classes or remote exams <https://k0ltc.org/training/>



125Live Ham Radio Club



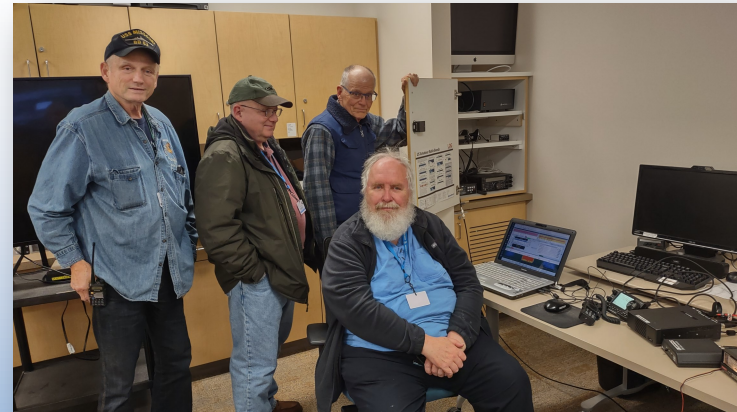
Steve Wiebke (W0STV)

Due to possible SkyWarn activity, the April 16th 125live radio club meeting was not held. We will hold the next 125 club meeting on May 21st at 2:00 PM in the TLC radio room in the lower section of the 125live facility. We have several 125live social members studying to take their technician test. Some have been attending our RARC meetings too. The computer, radio and antenna tuner are talking to each other, and FT8 is functioning well. Still not sure what is happening with our propagation. Will work on it.

If you are a 125live social member or know someone that would like to get into or back into Ham radio let them know about the next 125live radio club meeting.

The photo is of a few of the 125live Ham Radio Club members during the eclipse FT8 operations.
The more you know/

**Steve-W0STV
Olmsted ARES-EC**
The more preparation, the less confusion.



The next meeting of the 125Live Ham Radio Club sponsored by RARC will be May 21st at 125Live at 2:00 PM.

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), gettuit@charter.net



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 (NOSPN) 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 [RARC Buy or Sell](#) or Trade.



Parks On The Air ® (POTA)

It's Spring POTA Time!

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.

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

Take a look at the [map of entities](#) 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!



Niel (W0VLZ)



JM **Rocket** Radio Club

Elmers Needed To Help with the

JM **Rocket** Radio Club

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



Contact [Melissa](#) (KE0WNH) for more information or how to volunteer.



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 on-air 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 [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](#)?

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 [ARRL](#) offers Hams. Take a look:

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



Contact RARC

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

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

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 emailing. 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 RARC.

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