



THE HAMSTER



July 2025

Official Monthly Publication of the *Rochester Amateur Radio Club*



RARC Field Day 2025



THE HAMSTER

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The Hamster is the official monthly newsletter publication of the **Rochester (MN) Amateur Radio Club (RARC)**. The Hamster is distributed monthly via the official RARC [groups.io](#) email free to members and non-members and is also available online in the club website: [www.rarchams.org](#).

Rochester (MN) Amateur Radio Club was founded in 1932 and has been an **ARRL** (Amateur Radio Relay League) Affiliated club for 50+ years.

All members are invited to [contact the Hamster](#) with comments and/or questions. Additionally, members are encouraged to suggest or submit story ideas or content to the Hamster via the Editor's email link below.

The Hamster has an *outstanding* staff of regular contributors and you are invited to join the team!

[G. Mark Kelm](#) (K0GMK) - Editor

This Month In The Hamster

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THE HAMSTER



The Editor Says...

G. Mark Kelm (K0GMK)

ARRL Field Day 2025 was held at the **RST EOC** June 28th through 29th.

Thank you to all the **RARC** members that volunteered to assist with setup/takedown and operation this past weekend. As always the members of **RARC** stepped up and make this ham radio event a success. You will find photo pages in this issue from Field Day 2025.

After monitoring this past weeks ARES/Skywarn deployment for the June 26th tornado warning I want to reiterate some *important* pointers to follow when a call for spotter deployment is transmitted on the 147.255 repeater by the EOC:

- During severe weather watches/outlooks please monitor the 147.255 repeater for possible spotter deployment if you are available to deploy. *Time from warnings to deployment may be very short.*
- If you are available for deployment *do not respond* to the call out unless you are *immediately* ready to head out. Thus, do not respond saying I will be ready in 5,10,15, etc. minutes.
- *Do not* deploy outside of RST with a HT. You *might* be able to hear traffic from the EOC but they will not hear your transmissions thus *risking your safety* and wasting valuable time for the EOC staff attempting to reach you to move you to a position of safety.
- Deploy *only* with your mobile 2 meter radio running full power - 50 watts.
- Keep your transmissions as brief as necessary and only report conditions as outlined by the EOC staff. *Listen* to the EOC staff as to what conditions they need to be reported.
- Always call in with your callsign and wait and then to be recognized by the EOC. Avoid doubling.
- Only call in with "*Break*" if you have *emergency conditions* to report.



RARC Field Day 2025 @ RST EOC June 28th - 29th





RARC Field Day 2025 @ RST EOC June 28th - 29th





RARC Field Day 2025 @ RST EOC
June 28th - 29th





RARC Field Day 2025 @ RST EOC June 28th - 29th



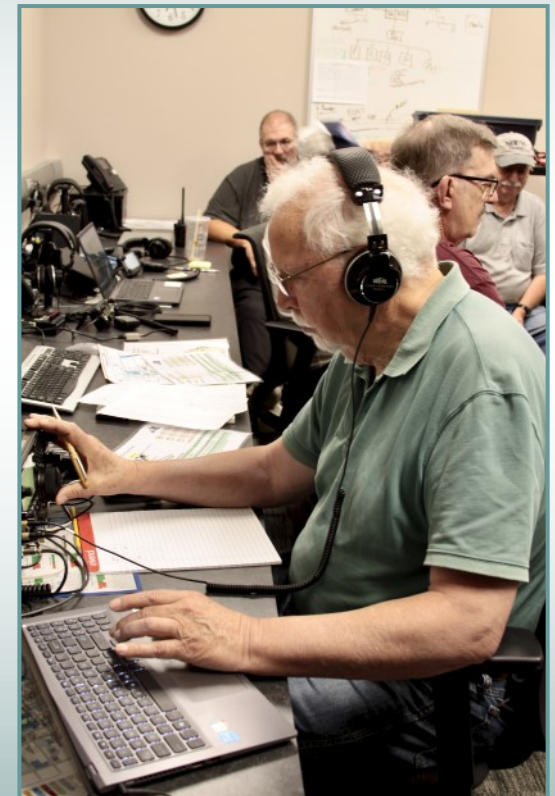


RARC Field Day 2025 @ RST EOC June 28th - 29th





RARC Field Day 2025 @ RST EOC June 28th - 29th





RARC Field Day 2025 @ RST EOC June 28th - 29th





July 2025 RARC **ZOOM** Online Login Info

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



Below is the **ZOOM** login information for the July 8th 2025, 6:30 PM CDT **RARC** Meeting

♦ **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:** #####



RARC Training

Dan Stroh (N0SPN) - Vice-President

***Bring your HT radios to
the July 8th
RARC Meeting
for a bit of
range testing
fun!!***





Wednesday Morning RARC Ham Radio Gathering

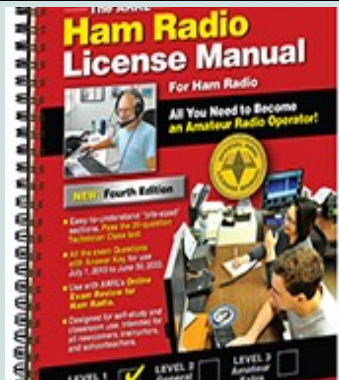
**YOU'RE
INVITED**



- **Wednesdays at 9:00 AM (1400 Zulu)**
- **New! Rooster's (North Location) - 2280 Superior Drive NW**

Education

Dave (KØVH)



The first step 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!

Click on the ARRL link below to get your ham radio hobby started:



[Getting Licensed - Step by Step](#)



ARES

Amateur Radio Emergency Service & Community Service

Olmsted ARES Mission Statement:

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

Finally got the last of the Field Day equipment back to the garage today. This year's field day was the best with people helping setup, operating, and taking care of the equipment. The tower was moved from the top parking lot to the lower lot due to larger equipment at Fire Station #2 needing more lot area to make turns into their garage. Operating in the lower lot caused higher SWR and less propagation. The take aways we are proposing for field day 2026 is selling old and purchasing new equipment. This will be discussed at the July RARC meeting.

Two enthusiastic young, licensed radio operators Alex and Drew were operating as a team on the SSB radio. They both will have general class licenses this summer. We look forward to seeing them at RARC meetings and our events in the future. **David/KE0PBI was Mel's/KC0P/Rover replacement on VHF and satellite contacts.** David included both fast and slow scan TV to our field day and he prevent people from getting into their cars. For those that were not at field day ask someone how he did it. David was the only person to stay on site overnight. Don/KC0QGB operated the SSB until around midnight. Thank you both!

Olmsted skywarn was approached to do a presentation for KTTC to the public on our area storm spotters. Eric/KF0S was talking with them at the time of this Hamster. We will have a report from Eric at the next RARC meeting on July 8th. There will not be an ARES meeting the Saturday after the RARC meeting in July due to a conflict that day. The July ARES meeting will be July 19th instead.

I want to thank George/N0UM, and Don/KC0QGB for helping with the staging reports to KAAL during the parade. There was no need for an NCS since all the announcing stations along the route have been discontinued. Reports I received, they did a great job of keeping KAAL live streaming updated with the staging information.

Continued on next page



ARES

Amateur Radio Emergency Service & Community Service

Dodge and Olmsted have finalized some details with our joint operations. Marvin/EC for Dodge wants to keep their own Sunday night nets. Dodge county skywarn spotters will be supported by the Olmsted EOC. This will expand Olmsted spotters' operations further west into Dodge County. Dodge ARES members will attend our ARES meetings and be a part of our activities and mutual aid to other counties. I have requested that Dodge County storm spotters have APRS operating when they are deployed since we do not have Dodge County maps to work with.

Several items to review for skywarn spotters. Do not check into an "ACTIVE" Skywarn net before you are able to be deployed at that VERY moment. Listen or ask for the reportable conditions required during any skywarn net. When checking in for the first time, give your call, drop the carrier and wait for NCS response. Then give your call phonetically, with your general starting location (IE: NE, SE, SW, NW Rochester) or the town you are near for NCS to effectively deploy you to the nearest spotter location. I am at home or work does not work well for "STATIONARY" positions, give the closest crossing intersections. (IE: 18th Ave and 37th street). Always have your skywarn map with you when you're spotting mobile.

The ARES trailer will be getting an interior remodeling. The two new desks were assembled this weekend and are now staged in the trailer. These electric desks are more ergonomical have more surface area and have compartments that make organizing items easier. Will update when a work date becomes available.

I encourage all Dodge and Olmsted ARES members to get into the habit of sending email information to the Olmsted/Rochester EOC's any time during the week to "w0mxw@yahoo.com". Include your name, call and the city or town you are near or in. You will be announced on our Sunday ARES nets. We also do active APRS reports for Dodge and Olmsted Counties. Look forward to seeing your icon on the APRS map.

Steve Wiebke (W0STV) - Olmsted/Rochester ARES EC

The more preparation, the less confusion



ARES

Community Service

Steve Wiebke (W0STV) - Olmsted/Rochester ARES EC

The more preparation, the less confusion

There are no local public service events for the RARC in July. As surrounding are activities become know they will be posted on the RARC email reflector.

RARC plans to help Winona during Ride the Ridges on September 20th, 2025. More information as it becomes available

This is from the Winona radio club. Contact w0stv@yahoo.com if we can help them with this event:

- *It is almost a month to the next event, Storm the Park, from the same event directors of "The Storm" race series and Trinona. This will be my first time running this event so I appreciate some grace to figure things out on the fly if needed.*
- *The event is scheduled for Saturday, July 19, 2025 at Briggs Outdoors, 27171 County Rd 9, Winona, MN 55987.*
- *The first racers are scheduled to start at 0600, so expecting to meet around 0530 and be operational by 0545.*
- *We will be needing 4 people for sure. There are two, maybe 3 stations we need to cover, plus someone to help with NCS as needed.*
- *If you would like to participate, please email me directly at sam@samresto.dev and please let me know if you can definitely participate, or if you want to be an "in case needed" on the list. I would like to have a name (nickname is fine), callsign, email, contact phone number, and your availability. I will be coordinating and communicating information about the event via email.*
- *More information about the event at <https://www.stormsportingevents.org/event-details/storm-the-farm>*
- *After this event we will have Ride the Ridges (September 20, 2025), Waumandee Time Trials (September 27, 2025), and finally Storm the Bluffs (December 6, 2025) to close the year.*

If you are part of the Mississippi Valley ARA, the Riverland ARC, or the Rochester ARC, please pass this along and let them know!

Contest Corner

Fred (K4IU)



It's hard to believe that 2025 is half over. We're even seeing reports that Solar Cycle 25 is in decline despite some impressive flares in June. But that shouldn't dampen more great contest opportunities. **Popular radio sport contests that take place in July include:**

- **July 5th-6st** [CQ World Wide VHF Contest](#) - This major VHF contest attracts participants operating on the 6-meter and 2-meter bands. Check the rules on this one as there have been changes.
- **July 12-13:** [IARU HF World Championship](#) - This is one of the biggest and most prestigious international amateur radio contests. It is organized by the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) and takes place over a single 24-hour period. Participants from around the world compete to make as many contacts as possible on various HF bands.
- **July 19-20:** [North American QSO Party](#) (NAQP) RTTY - This contest, organized by the National Contest Journal, focuses specifically on RTTY (radioteletype) mode contacts within North America.
- **July 26th-27th:** [RSGB IOTA Contest](#) - The Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) organizes this popular Islands On The Air (IOTA) contest. Participants try to contact as many worldwide island locations as possible.

Contest Corner

Fred (K4IU)



As you can see there is something for everyone in July. Check the [WA7BNM calendar](#) website for more July contests.

Although not typically a contesting topic QSL cards are an important amateur radio tradition. They serve as confirmation of two-way radio communications. Originating in the early 20th century, the term "QSL" comes from the Q code meaning "I confirm receipt of your transmission." Initially QSLs were simple postcards. These cards evolved to include details like call signs, date, time, frequency, and signal reports, often featuring personalized designs reflecting the operator's photo, interests, location, or equipment. In the 60s and 70s new hams would get ads from QSO card printers who often knew your call even before the official FCC "ticket" arrived.



Besides their primary function of verifying contact, QSL cards are/were collected, with hams often adorning their shacks with cards from rare DX (distance) contacts or unique designs. They are also important "proof" of contact for earning various amateur radio awards and certificates, such as "Worked All States" (WAS) or "DX Century Club" (DXCC), where confirmed contacts are required for issuing the award. Despite the advent of digital logging and confirmation sys-

73

Fred K4IU





Hamster Hints

Bob (KE0EXE)

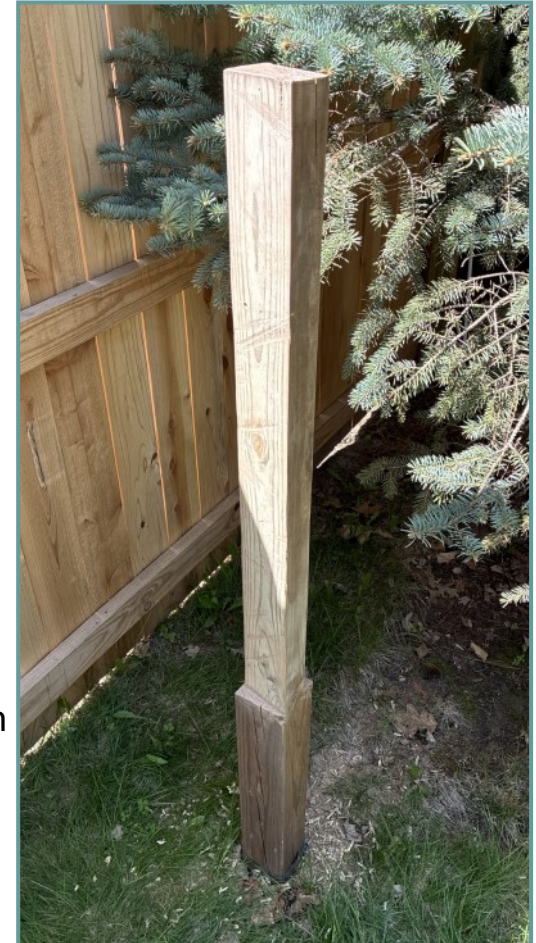
During the last few months, I've made slow progress on a wooden mast, to support one corner of my 80m, Skywire Loop.

This corner lost its main support, when our big Ash tree succumbed to the chainsaws, this winter; however, as the beginnings of a replacement, I was able to make use of a 4x4 post, already in the ground, leftover from a previous fence.

My work began by ripping-down (in the sawing sense) the 4'-tall, in-ground post, to create a thinner section on its top 2-1/2 feet. The resulting tenon had to be properly "angled," with respect to compass bearings, to allow me to add a bottom-hinged mast of total height 27 feet. (I had "fold-down interference" from other trees and another fence, on all four of the "square" sides of the 4x4, so I had to choose an obscure angle of about 11 degrees "off-of-grid," for the rip-cuts, to allow a clear path for the hinging action.)

Once my work with sawzall, hand-plane, and belt sander was finished, a trip to the lumber yard garnered about \$50 of materials. The mating, lower section of the mast was made as a vertical box, with a 30-inch fork (1x4's) that would sandwich the top part of my cut-down post, to create the pivoting joint.

From that bit of glueing and screwing of the lower, columnar box, I continued to build the mast "upward," getting narrower as I went, in two additional sections. Once assembled, several hook-eyes near the top provided places to attach the para-cord guy and the pulleyed line that supports the wire antenna.



Base-post 4x4, after rip-sawing the proper azimuthal "tilt-down" angle.



Hamster Hints

Bob (KE0EXE)

Near the bottom of the mast, at both pin locations, I glued on a total of four, 3.75-inch-diameter disks, made from 1/2" plywood, as insurance, to keep the two tines from splitting due to wind forces on the mast. To protect the top of the *post* from splitting, I employed a steel band, also donated to the cause by Jim, N0OZG. I bought two 1/2 x 6" bolts, to use as the pins, but only the lower one can function as a hinge, due to interference from the nearby fence.

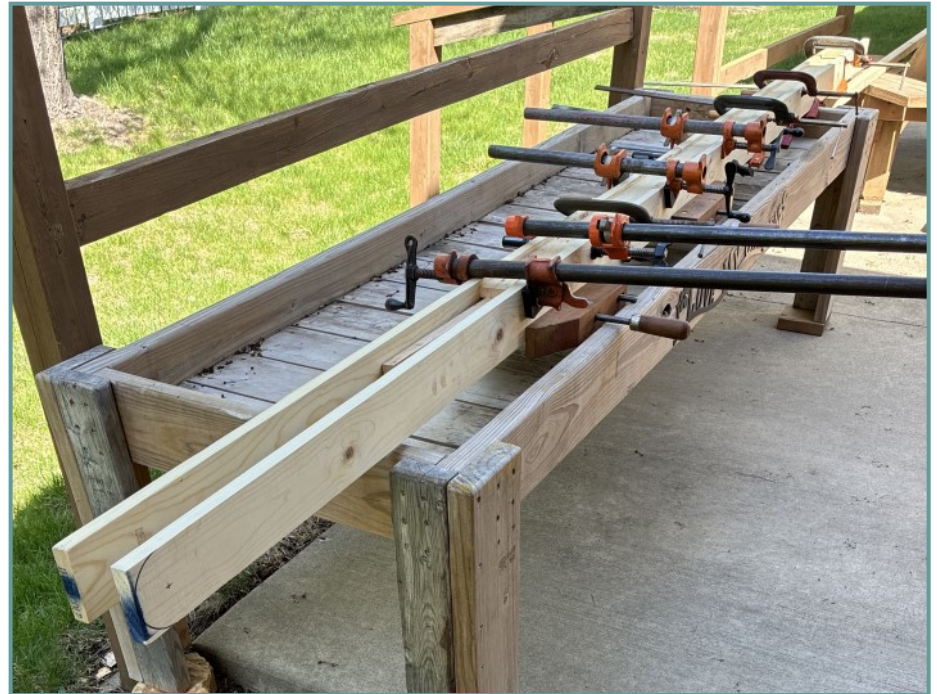


I call this "top-banding"...

Finally, a couple coats of satin polyurethane went on the outside of the assembled mast,

to protect it from the elements. Here I chose a gray-colored poly-stain, to match the eventual, weather-worn color of the wood. This was extra time and expense that will greatly extend the life of the mast.

With the bottom hinge-pin in place, it is relatively easy for one person to "walk the mast up" (or down)--actually, the hardest part is pushing it past the prickly, tree branches! Finally, I decided to add one guy-rope (not shown), to counteract the horizontal pull of the antenna.



Glueing the biggest (bottom) section.

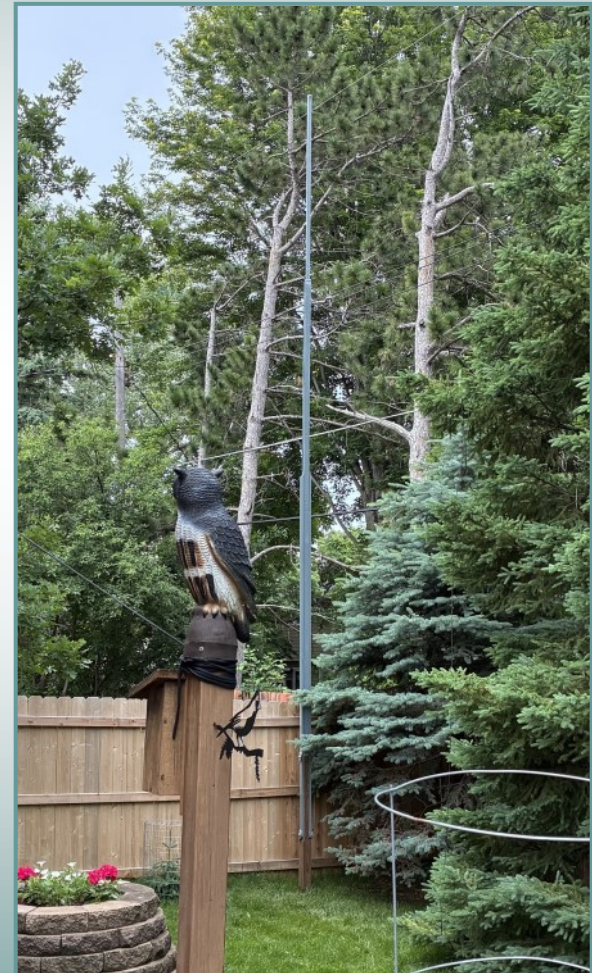


Hamster Hints

Bob (KE0EXE)



Poly-coating the three sections to "weathered gray."



View of first time "tilting it up" (no guys nor antenna wire were connected yet).



Technical Committee

Eric (KFOS)

RARC Tech Committee - 6/9/25 Meeting

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

Post meeting and RARC meeting comments in italics

Mayo

Nothing New.

Control Operator Docs

Taylor started on this.

Nothing New.

Board members

Password sharing process should be developed.

Olmsted EOC

MFA being setup for remote access.

Rochester EOC

Cleaned up.

ARES trailer (black)

Carpenter ants. Steve was working on taking care of them.

Club hardware sales

Repacking of stuff in storage Wednesday morning.

Next sale is *TCFM Onalaska, WI Hamfest*.



Parks On The Air ® (POTA)

It's *Summer* 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?](#)



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.
- ♦ **Wednesday 7 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



RARC MEETING MINUTES

Collin (AA0CN) - RARC Secretary

Meeting Minutes, June 2025

Business meeting started 6:35PM

- ARES meeting this Saturday June 14th
- Twin Cities / Plymouth 8PM-Noon Sat 21st: Swap Meet. No reservations! \$10/sellers, \$5/buyers. Coordinate with Steve W0STV. Tailgate-style event.
- Carol Larson's Note for Club read.

Committee Reports:

- N0SPN Program: Program for July: Bring HTs and extra antennas, and a lawn chair!
- 2M mobile radio w/ Signal Strength meter, N0SPN to drive. Points system for best HT setups! Points-per-watt. 3 categories: Street stock, superstock, modified!
- Meshtastic discussion in September.

Secretary's Report; Approved.

Treasurer's Report

- Checking:
- Opening Balance: \$11,819.86
- Credits:
- Dues:
- PayPal Dues: \$60.00
- Equipment Sold:
- Raffle: \$23.00



RARC MEETING MINUTES

Misc:

Debits:

- RPU \$39.64
- Meeting Food
- PayPal Charges \$2.18
- Field Day:
- Picnic
- Equipment
- Tower Lease
- Insurance
- Web domain
- Postage
- Misc. Moved to savings \$8,000.00
- Misc. License renewal \$35.00

Total: \$3,826.04

Savings:

- Opening Balance \$1,825.99
- Credits: From checking \$8,000.00
- Interest: \$0.15

Closing Balance: \$9,826.14



RARC MEETING MINUTES

Total: \$13,652.18

CD Matures August 2025 \$4,000.00

CD Matures August 2025 \$4,563.42

Technical Committee: Eric KF0S

- Mayo – Nothing new
- 125Live W0STV to cover
- Nothing new on controller operating docs
- Password Sharing (Equipment, etc.)
- Rochester EOC and Field Day prep/cleaning
- Hardware sales upcoming; Hamfests and repack stuff into groups of similar items in each box.
- ARES Trailer (W0STV to address)
- Military Tower: Do we want to sell it, or keep it?

Contesting:

- Check newsletter! MN POTA this weekend. VHF contest also this weekend (Sat 1pm – Sun)

Education:

- Check website and Maple Grove Amateur Radio Club for classes, vec, etc.

John Marshall Radio Club-AA0ME:

- Possibly moving to Thursdays. W0BM planning to come back. Hot air soldering and receiver construction.
- Brian (president) graduated, goal is to get licensed this summer! Looking into permanent antenna installation options.
- Neil AJ have been doing Saturday antenna sessions at Essex Park – listen to repeaters and check Groups.io!



RARC MEETING MINUTES

ARES/Skywarn/125Live

- ARES meeting this Saturday 9AM-11AM. Getting desks put together.
- "Trinona" Winona public service – We are asked to be part of their "Ride the Ridges" event.
- ARES trailer – Taking large plasma TV out. Carpenter ants found. Hopefully nest was in TV.
- ARES Meshtastic node here at the EOC. September presentation with more info.
- N1MM logging on Saturday's ARES meeting as well.

125Live:

- Getting tower done, this months program on Satellites

Old Business:

- Got the repeater site renewals done with FCC, Trustee is still in process.

New Business:

- Jamboree on the Air; Don Borland N0QGB runs it. Club perhaps fund small shack as Eagle project at Gamehaven?
- Consider our radios in storage for that purpose?
- Kirk NT0Z has a mint Icom 7000 with accessories for sale.
- August picnic at KOA

Discussion on Field Day

Business meeting closed



- 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 benefits 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 (except the August meeting is the annual RARC club picnic and January is the annual holiday party) in the lower level of Rochester Fire Station #2 in the EOC at 2185 Wheelock Drive NE, Rochester, MN

- ♦ **Website:** <http://www.rarchams.org/>
- ♦ **Snail Mail:** RARC , P.O. Box 1, Rochester, MN 55903
- ♦ **Groups.io:** [Register](#) to post and receive RARC official email, notices and the Hamster
- ♦ **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

*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 this [register](#) link 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.*

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