



# THE HAMSTER



**September 2025**

**Official Monthly Publication of the *Rochester Amateur Radio Club***



## ***Meshtastic!***

***The September RARC Training Program***

***by W0STV***



# 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

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# THE HAMSTER



## The Editor Says...

G. Mark Kelm (K0GMK)

Another great month of content in the Hamster for September includes the **ARRL Dakota Division Happenings** by Bill (AC0W), **Contest Corner** by Fred (K4IU) and **Hamster Hints** by Bob (KE0EXE) contributions that anchor each month's issues with locally generated content and don't miss the **ARES** and **Community Service** reports by Steve (W0STV) to keep up to date with the wide range of training and ham related activities available.

Additionally page 5 contains photos of the **Annual August RARC Picnic** submitted by Dave (K0VH).

This month's **RARC Training Program** is brought to you by Steve (W0STV). Steve presents an **introduction to Meshtastic**. We have a number of hams in the club that are actively experimenting and participating in this interesting form of emergency communication. Perhaps you are not familiar with **Meshtastic**, it's equipment and operation - this is your opportunity to learn what **Meshtastic** is all about and how it pertains to RARC, ARES and Skywarn. The bonus perhaps will be that you will find another exciting new addition to your ham radio hobby. As always the RARC Training Programs begins at 1830 CDT kicking off the regular monthly RARC meeting on September 9th, 2025. **RARC monthly meetings take place at the Rochester Fire Station #2 in the EOC located at 2185 Wheelock Dr. NE. The EOC is located behind the fire station on the lower level. There is ample parking adjacent to the entrance.** We look forward to seeing you then!

For you ham radio contesters September kicks off the contest season and Fred's (K4IU) column this month has quite a listing. I particularly enjoy RTTY and September 28-29 is the **CQ World Wide DX Contest - RTTY**. It's a lot of fun and is an excellent way to work your install of **FLDIGI** with lots of potential QSOs. That's all from me this month - enjoy this issue of a feature packed Hamster.



# RARC Training

Dan Stroh (N0SPN) - Vice-President

The September 9th **RARC Training Program** will be an introductory presentation **by Steve (W0STV)** about:

## *Meshtastic*



***Be sure to attend the program starting at 6:30 PM at the Rochester EOC preceding the regular monthly RARC meeting.***



## September 2025 RARC ZOOM Online Login

**- 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 Annual Picnic

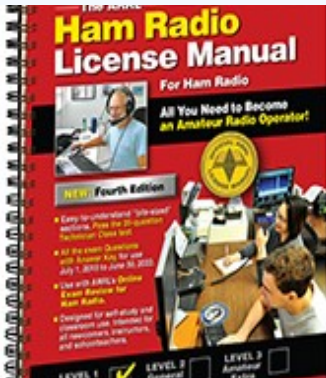
Dave Naatz (K0VH) - RARC Photographer

*Thank You! To the picnic organizers and all of the **RARC** members and guests that attended. See you next year!*



# 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

### **Olmsted ARES Mission Statement:**

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

### **A review of the past ARES/Public service activity:**

The August ARES meeting on August 9th was a continuation of testing the field Winlink stations operations. We found we will need to address this in the future to keep this communication tool effective.

I am looking for updates on what the Rochester/Olmsted ARES members want to do for future ARES meetings. I need to know what you want to learn and/or try. This keeps the team active in fulfilling your training interests. Email me at w0stv@yahoo.com, call or text me at 507-254-3993. I am always interested in trying new things.

I forwarded the thank you email from the Scheels HHR event. I did not highlight the font for about amateur radio. That was their doing. We did a great job in keeping the race director updated with requested and current information. We were asked to come back again next year. Thank you to the hams that invested their time in making this work.

### **The future ARES/Public service activity:**

The next ARES meeting is on September 13th at 9:00 AM at the Rochester EOC. We will review how does cross banding work. How simple it is for the field radio operator to use, and what do you need to know and adjust for when using it. The Minnesota state band plan has this information in their simplex frequency list. [SOG 6-C-001 Simplex Frequencies-2F.pdf - Google Drive](#).

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# ARES

## Amateur Radio Emergency Service

We have been numbering in the 20's for our Sunday ARES station check-ins. You do not need to be an ARES member to check into this net on Sundays at 9:00 PM local time. It switches between two repeaters 147.255 and 146.820 both pl100 depending on the date of the net. You may also check into the net by using the Echolink phone app from anywhere in the world by going to node 420993. We do allow a segment of time for these check ins during the nets.

You may also check in by email to [w0mxw@yahoo.com](mailto:w0mxw@yahoo.com) before and during this net. Include your call, first name and city or town you are in. These will be announced during the Net.

After the September RARC meeting on Meshtastic we may set up a Thursday Mesh net and see how well the network can handle high traffic and to test its other features. We will ask about this after the program to see what the interest is.

If you have any questions, comments, information or have something you want the RARC or ARES to do or know put it on the RARC groups io reflector.

**There is one more public service event this year.** That is to help **Winona ARC with their Ride the Ridges** race on September 20th. This race covers three counties and has a maximum 100+ mile course. We are offering to communicate to their NCS the road sections between Money Creek to Rushford and from Rushford to Houston Minnesota through their communications network. This will require 50-watt mobile radios and your morning hours. There is a signup sheet on the [RARCHAMS.ORG](http://RARCHAMS.ORG) website for this event. Call me if you need more information before you sign up at 507-254-3993.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Remember plan for the worse and react to make it better.

**Steve Wiebke (W0STV) - Olmsted/Rochester ARES EC**

*The more preparation, the less confusion*

# Contest Corner

**Fred (K4IU)**



**September kicks off the Minnesota Wireless Association's, (MWA), 2025-2026 contest season.** The sixteen (16) events for this season and the team assignments can be found on the [MWA website](#). The annual membership meeting will be held September 23, 2025 at Broadway Pizza in Blaine, Minnesota. The social hour starts at 5 pm with a meal and program following at 6 pm. The presentations will be on the online Contest Scoreboard and Real Time Contesting. Here are the highlights for the this month:

## **September 13–15 [ARRL September VHF Contest](#)**

- **Bands:** 50 MHz and above (VHF/UHF)
- **Modes:** CW, SSB, FM, Digital (FT8, MSK144, etc.)
- **Participation:** Very high, especially among U.S. and Canadian operators. It's one of the ten ARRL Affiliated Club Competition events, which boosts club-level participation
- **Objective:** Work as many stations in as many different Maidenhead grid squares as possible.
- **Categories:** Includes Single Operator, Rover, Multioperator, FM Only, and 3-Band categories.
- **Log Submission:** Logs are submitted electronically via Cabrillo format and are publicly listed

## **September 28–29 [CQ World Wide DX Contest – RTTY](#) This is the first of the MWA's list of competitive events.**

- **Mode:** RTTY (Radio Teletype)
- **Bands:** HF (160 through 10 meters)
- **Participation:** Over 15,000 logs submitted annually, making it one of the largest digital mode contests globally
- **Objective:** Work as many DX stations as possible across all continents.

**Continued On Next Page**

# Contest Corner

Fred (K4IU)



**State QSO Parties** These are popular for their friendly nature and localized focus. Notable ones in September include:

- [Texas QSO Party](#)
- [Iowa QSO Party](#)
- [New Jersey QSO Party](#)
- [New Hampshire QSO Party](#)
- [Washington State Salmon Run](#)
- [Maine QSO Party](#)

**Each of these contests typically sees hundreds to thousands of logs submitted**, especially from local operators and rovers.

Check the [WA7BNM calendar website](#) for the dates and times of these niche weekend operating events. The website offers historical and current data on contest schedules, log due dates, and participation trends. It's a go-to resource for contest planning and analysis.

.....

**I often hear about the decline in new contesters as the older hams must move into HOAs or assisted living or just age out!** Well, we shouldn't despair. The hobby isn't doomed because there is bright future of ham radio through youth engagement and technology.

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# Contest Corner



**Fred (K4IU)**

**Youth on the Air (YOTA)** is an international initiative aimed at engaging young people in the ham radio hobby, promoting a new generation of operators through education, mentorship, and hands-on experience. By organizing camps, contests, and outreach events, YOTA empowers youth to explore the technical and social aspects of ham radio. The John Marshal club, mentored by Melissa AA3ME, is a good example.

**In the realm of contesting YOTA plays a crucial role by introducing young operators to contest strategies, teamwork, and high-performance operating practices.** This not only sharpens their skills but also injects fresh energy and innovation into the contesting community. With the rise of digital modes, satellite communication, and global connectivity, the future of ham radio is bright, and YOTA ensures that it remains vibrant and relevant by cultivating passionate, tech-savvy youth who will carry the torch forward.



**Many of you saw this at the RARC FD with the hams on the SSB station.** I hope you will continue “elmering” these bright young people in our hobby. You can learn more about YOTA, Youth On The Air [here](#).

**73**

**Fred K4IU**



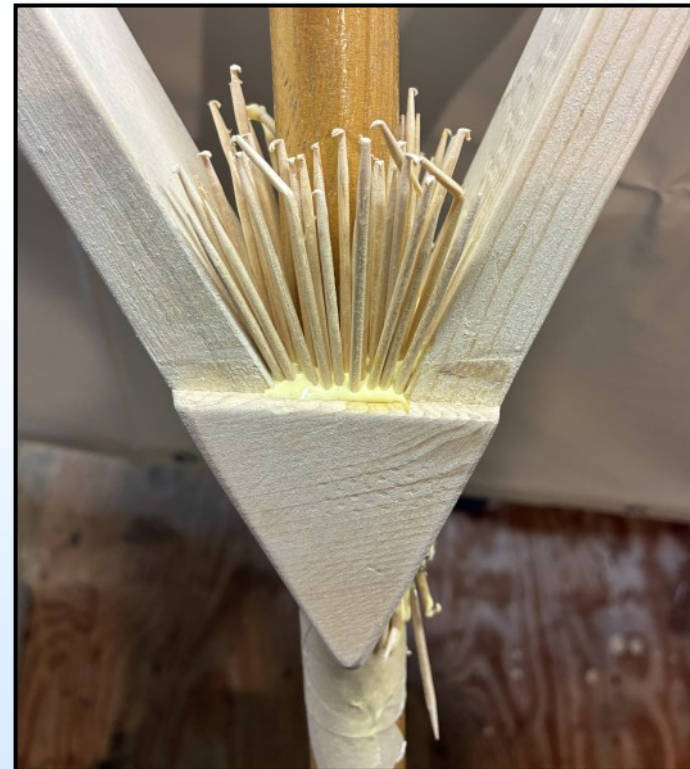


# Hamster Hints

**Bob (KE0EXE)**

**Here is how I stiffened-up the handle on a wide push-broom, which kept breaking when I would use it.**

Note the use of wood-glue and toothpicks, tapped into place using a hammer. I often use this technique to repair knot-holes and other defects in structural wood members. After the glue dries for at least half a day or so, trim off the ends of the toothpicks (and the extra glue), using a low-kerf, flexible, flush-cut saw. Finally, sand the area. I did that to these new braces and the original handle, then I gave it all a couple coats of polyurethane, to protect it, long-term.





# Hamster Hints

**Bob (KE0EXE)**

The red bristles on this broom are very stiff--too stiff for my needs--so, if anyone wants a *good deal* on a broom, please see me!!



# **RARC TECH COMMITTEE**

Eric - KF0S

**There was no Technology Committee meeting in  
August due to the RARC Annual Picnic**

**See You Next Month**



## Weekly Nets

- ♦ **Monday 8 p.m. RARC 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, August 2025

**Due to the annual RARC picnic there was an abbreviated business meeting. The following was discussed:**

- We had a small business meeting which primarily was due to the old business from July's meeting about purchasing antenna equipment from Sharon Cunningham:
- Purchase the JK-C3S antenna + balun for \$600.00, then the Green Heron G-1000 rotator with RT-21 controller for \$450.00. Total purchase being \$1050.00.
- Eric V (KF0S) motioned, Steve W (W0STV) seconded. The motion passed with no objections. Steve will pick it up from Sharon.
- There was also info provided from Barb that the KOA will not be available next year as she and her husband are ending their tenure there after this season. RARC will be investigating a new venue for the picnic in the future.



## Happenings In The Dakota Division

**Bill Lippert (AC0W) ARRL Dakota Division Director**

Fall is fast approaching and with that licensing classes will be starting up. The first class of the fall season is posted below.

With licensing classes starting the availability of license test sessions is also increasing coming out of summer and going into the fall. There is a long list at the end.

The fall hamfest schedule has filled the September weekends with seven different hamfests. One weekend has three different events with one of these being a new event being held in Hot Springs, SD. Several of the hamfests will have a Section Manager or myself staffing the ARRL booth. The ARRL Dakota Division hamfest in Moorhead will have the Section Manager, Vice Director and myself all present.

Then in October there will be only one hamfest, the ARRL Minnesota State Convention. The organizers of the ARRL Minnesota State Convention have decided to add a swap fest as part of the event this year. Details on the website <https://northstarradio.org/> . Finally we will have about a four-month break to rest up for the next round of hamfests in February and March.

That's it for this time. Looks like rough weather for one more day and then some nice weather for the remainder of the week. Enjoy it while you can.

73

Bill Lippert AC0W  
ARRL Director  
Dakota Division  
ac0w@arrl.org



- 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](#)?

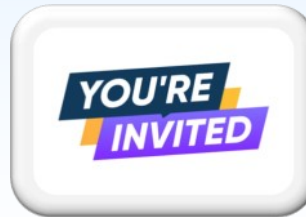
***RARC has been an [ARRL](#) affiliated club for the past 50+ years. RARC wants all members to know about the benefits of being a member of the ARRL and how the [ARRL](#) promotes amateur radio and represents and supports Hams throughout the year.***

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

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



## Wednesday Morning RARC Ham Radio Gathering



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





# Parks On The Air ® (POTA)

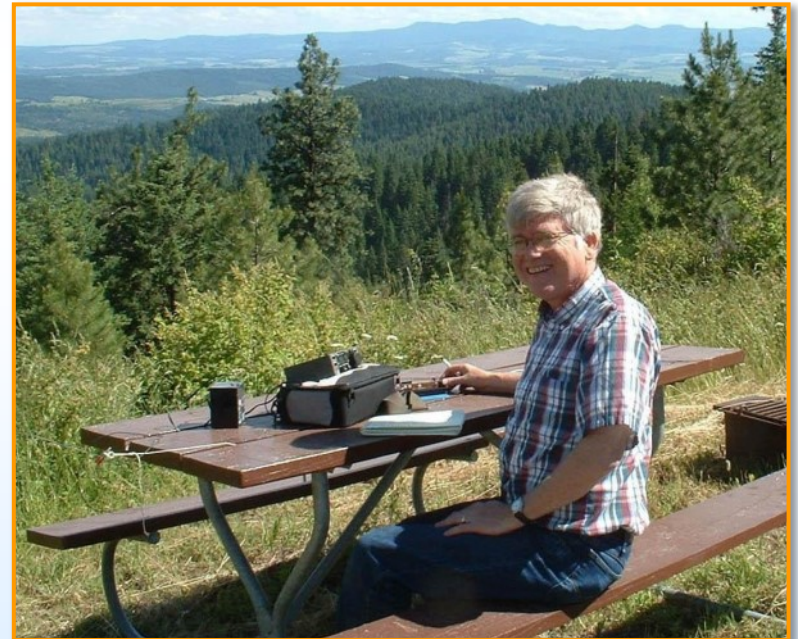
It's **FALL** POTA Time!

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?](#)**



Niel (W0VLZ)



## Contact **RARC**

*RARC meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM (except the August meeting is the Annual RARC 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](mailto:gmkelm@charter.net)