

# Ham Rag

**Rockford Amateur Radio Association**



**Field Day**

# President's Log WN9SGF

It is that time again for a few lines for the log.

Our May meeting was attended by 42 members and their guests. Our speaker was Edmund Metzger W9PRN, who is the Vice Director of the Central Division of the A.R.R.L. He brought us up to date on the involvement of the league in the W.A.R.C. It was a very informative presentation and made us realize that a lot of preparation is going into this activity. After the meeting, the members had a chance to talk to Ed Metzger during the coffee and donut hour. Since our meeting, I have heard from some of the members that they were very pleased with the opportunity of talking to Ed Metzger person-to-person. It appears that this type of a meeting with plenty of time for personal visits after the meeting has a certain amount of appeal to the membership.

Our June meeting will be on Friday, the 18<sup>th</sup> of June, and it will involve the subject of Field Day, which is one week later on June 26 and 27. It seems like I make the same plea each month for your participation in our meetings, but we really do need you in the June meeting. At that time, we will finalize the duties to be performed and by whom, and at what time during Field Day. We have an excellent opportunity to have a wonderful Field Day this year because we have a good location and plenty of room.

Our picnic will be July 18<sup>th</sup>. Details as to time and place will be found elsewhere in this issue of the Ham-Rag.

By the time you receive this issue, you should have received your tickets to the Ham-Fest. We are sending 10 (ten) tickets to each member, and we sincerely hope that all of you will do the same fine job with these tickets this year that you have in past years. Paul Dean and the committee are steadily working to make sure that this year's Ham-Fest will be bigger and better than previous ones.

There will be no meetings in July and August. We will resume on a regular schedule in the month of September.

# Editor's QRM K9KTS

If you have ever been the victim of the John Wacker "lost puppy" look, then you will understand how I became the new editor of the Ham Rag. I immediately used the same technique on Jim Michna WB9PBY, and Byron Dale WB9PBZ. It worked, because they have agreed to help me as associate editors. Together we will try to make the Ham Rag informative and interesting.

In this issue, we maybe covering some old ground, but if we have, we hope that it will have a different slant. Of course, suggestions from the membership will be appreciated, and if you have an idea for an article and are not sure how to express it, one of us will be able to offer you assistance in writing it.

The two major events that are coming up in the immediate future are the organizational meeting for Field Day on June 18<sup>th</sup>, and the annual picnic on July 18<sup>th</sup>. A good turnout is needed for both events, besides a good time will be had by all.

From the welcome back department.....Gus Durdin, III, formerly WN9KOO has rejoined the ranks as WN9UJX.

Our cover for this month comes from Marsh Dahlgren and we hope that it isn't a prediction for the upcoming Field Day. Those of you who are past or present employees of the Barber Coleman Company will recognize Marsh's unique brand of insanity.

The new novices will find some sage advice in WB9PBY's article on the assembly of a Heathkit. Although this is not an indictment of the wizards of Benton Harbor, I'm sure that you will find the piece useful.

## ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.

June 1976

P.O. Box 1744, Rockford, Illinois 61110

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Your questions, suggestions, and criticisms are invited. Phone any time.

# Tech-Topics FOR THE NOVICE - WB9PBY

Too inexperienced to build from scratch? Junk box not developed enough to carry out a building project? Have your eye on some commercial gear, but it is too expensive? Any of these situations might cause one to consider building a kit; they did for me, and I have been hooked on kits since. I have done eight kits in the last two years.

As a Novice, you will probably have heard some disparaging remarks about kits. You may have heard, as I did on my first 40 meter phone QSO with a Missouri ham, "An SB 303-401, huh, yeah I know about that piece of junk!" (Funny thing, he gave me a 40 over). I must agree with him, nevertheless, for a kit can be a piece of junk because of the builder and not the kit!

So if you are considering a kit, I would like to encourage you to do so. They are learning experiences, interesting and fun to do. However, they can be diasters if you are not careful. I have picked up some clues from my experience; and if you follow them, I predict success and satisfaction. If you don't, well...you will probably be dissappointed.

1. Buy or build a VTVM. If you cannot do that, be sure you have access to one, for almost all kits use one as the primary alignment tool. In fact, a VTVM could be your first kit-building project, and most do not need a VTVM for alignment--besides, this is a basic tool in any radio shack.

2. Never soldered or put together eletronic components? While anxiously awaiting delivery of your kit, obtain a soldering pencil that is about 27 watts (please not that nifty 100 watt gun - you do not need it, and it is clumsy to use - besides it will burn up your diodes and transistors). Get hold of some terminal strips, old capacitors, resistors, ect., and practice soldering them, Not just once, but numerous times. If you can obtain a used curcuit board, try on that too. Ob-ject? - a clean, neat solder joint, with not too much solder, and no cold solder joints. What is a cold solder joint? Looks crystalline, not shiny and sometimes you can move the stuff around, in or at the joint.

3. Got your kit? Cool it! Find the manual and read it over. Begin by inventorying the parts included against those included in the shipment package. Why? Because you get a chance to eye-ball for defective, broken, or missing parts as well as vheck each resistor, capacitor, diode, ect. Use that VTVM to check resistors, pots, and capacitors of for current flow in diodes and transistors. Check those tubes also; three of mine have been defective. It is better to find out now that you have a defective component than when the rig is completed. You also have the opportunity of replacing a part before you are surprised by the fact it was not sent to you.

4. Start building - but slowly. Place the leads and components neatly as illustrated. Keep all leads as short and as neat as possible. I cannot overemphasize this. It is so Vital!! You are not, I repeat, you are not going to reuse these sometime later on (I hope). This attempt to keep everything short, neat, and clean does lead to many advantages such as the elimination of stray capacitance, the ability to see what you have done and any future repair work.

Any time you put in a diode or transistor, use a heat sink on the leads before you apply soldering heat.

Use good mechanical connections anytime you can. Go ahead, tie them in there. (Here is where the fur flies in amateur ranks by the way. It is the slop-em-in-there boys vs. the wrap-em-up boys. All I can say is why did that linear at RVC lose it's final? It was the lack of a good mechanical joint, I believe!) You will hear all kinds of arguments about this but I believe a good solid mechanical joint is only a hindrance to those in a hurry and who wish to cause other problems.

Work only until you are tired, no further! Never mind the excuses about the fact that you know what you're doing. Two of my failures at kit-dom can be traced to this failing, but I could rationalize about this too and bad-mouth kits.

5. Plug in your kit-- it will most probably work if you paid attention to what I have written.

6. If the kit does not work, what do I do? Do not charge to the schematic or trouble-shooting guide. Get a ham friend to check over what you have done. Most often it is something you have done or have not done that has caused your problem. For example, twice I left one wire unconnected and a ham friend caught it with a minimum of trouble.

What if we do not find anything? Write or call the maker and be as specific as you can be. Check the trouble-shooting guide, schematic and the appropriate voltages. Do not be surprised if you do not solve the problem the first time around. Remember it is long-distance trouble-shooting and not easy for the people at the other end. One of two things will result. First, you will find that you did not do all of above or second, you had a bad component which you could not check; for example a bad coil of IC and that has happened to me --- twice.

7. Enjoy yourself more. Get your YL or XYL to overview all of the above and help you all the way. They are great organizers and can help you a lot. My XYL enjoys helping me inventory and organize all those little pieces as well as hand them to me while I build. She loves to see how they all go together into that complicated mess-- unfortunately, she does not wish to get a license --- but who knows??

COME ONE , COME ALL!!

Sunday July 18, 1976

Eat, Drink, and be Merry!!!

On Sunday, July 18, 12 to 6 p.m. in Area 7 of Alpine Park, R.A.R.A. will hold its Annual Potluck-Picnic. Bring your own table service and a hot or cold dish to pass. The Club will furnish the soft drinks and coffee. Let's all bring our baseball equipment, jarts, and frisbees so everyone will be able to participate in the games.

Reservation cards will be going out soon. When you receive your cards, be sure and fill it out and get it back as soon as possible, so we will be sure to have enough tables. We plan to eat at 1 p.m. , so don't be late!

Let's all turn out and make this year's picnic the best ever!

SEE YOU THERE!!

# Potpourri **WB9HHH**

Shari WN9SFT, the biography you did for the April HAMRAG was very good reading. Bet you got a big kick out of "ODYSSEY" by Linda WB4CTR, page 41 QST June 1976. She surely laid it out in a lot more detail. Vic K9UIY, of Freeport is a well known, top scoring CW contester. His appointment to the ARRL Contest Advisory Committee is well deserved. Vic and I had a 20M. ground wave QSO a short time ago. He had received a card from Gunnar Ohlson W6YellowBanana who was then on a business trip in Ø land. Since the first of the year Gunnar had been in Scandnavia 3 times and has been traveling otherwise considerably. I believe some of his work involves electronics in the large oil fields at sea. He still lives in Southern California. Jack WB9PCA, returned 2 weeks or so ago from a trip to JA land. He says the Japanese hams are most friendly but language differences got in the way of long discussions. IRCs now at 42 cents make DX QSLing direct more than 60% more costly than heretofore. Dick WB9IED, now has a 2M. ground plane on his tower and is being heard with about 2W. of power. Carl WB9PBR, with a new IC230 is mobile and enjoying the Fun Mode. Reg W9GKI. well known on the early morning Breakfast Club Net, has replaced his older equipment with new gear. He included 2M. FM for the first time and is becoming re-aquainted with local hams he thought were not on the air. Jonie WB9SRZ, our only sightless ham is awaiting receipt of an oscillator "gadget" to assist tuning the xmtr of his T4XC. He will soon be on the low bands and in the meantime Jonie is active on 2M.FM. Harold K9ENS, is another OT now on 2M. And Mel K9MGA, put together the HW2021 HT with Touch-tone encoder. Two more new 2M. FMers are Al WB9TPX and WB9TLV, Drew. Another Al WB9UBE, will soon tackle an exam for a higher license class. Frank YB8ACK, in Indonesia has been heard frequently the last 2 or 3 weeks around 1430/1530 at about 14.332. Beam heading is 335. In a QSO on May 21 his signal was 5/8 to 9 here and mine was 5/8 with his pre-amp in the circuit.. Kunle 5N2NAS, Nigeria is on almost daily on the YLISSB System 14.333. The earthquake in Italy and the typhoon which crossed Guam Island stirred up much emergency and health and welfare traffic. The Civil Defense people here were quite disappointed in the lack of participation in the C R A S H and C R O P events about 3 weeks ago. It was reported some members had quite legitimate reasons; some excuses seemed a little thin. Winnebago County Civil Definse emergency radio monitors are being placed in most all schools and many other places such as radio and TV broadcast stations.

de WB9HHH

# Ham Mart

WANTED. . . . INFORMATION

Amateurs of North America are asked to watch for transatlantic propagation on frequencies above 21 MHz during the spring and summer season of 1976. The North Atlantic path was active on 21 and 28 MHz several times in summer, 1974 and 75, but the full potential of the E-layer mode was not realized because of lack of activity in many areas. There is no 50-MHz band in Europe, but crossband work to 21 or 28 MHz may be possible when those frequencies are open. A cw beacon near 50.1 MHz may be operated in France, but official permission has not been given yet.

The chance of 2-meter transatlantic work seems remote, but tests and monitoring are encouraged. The European band is 144 to 146 MHz. Early daylight hours have been most productive on 28 MHz, but evening work has been reported. European beacon stations between 28.16 and 28.195 MHz provide reliable evidence of band conditions, particularly DLØIGI, 28.195, and GB3SX, 28.18 MHz. Please report any reception or two-way work to W1HDQ, ARRL Headquarters.

ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION  
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FIRST CLASS

**Nets:**  
28.7 Mhz. Monday 9:00 P.M.  
50.4 Mhz. Nightly 9:00 P.M.  
146.94 Mhz Monday 8:00 P.M.  
RACES Monday 8:30  
145.65 Mhz In  
147.00 Mhz. Out

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