



The Radio Hill Gazette

A publication of the Schaumburg Ham Radio Club (SARC)

March 2018

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From the Editor

Happy Easter to all, Spring is here, though as I write this it's supposed to snow Friday, but Spring should be here soon. So in this edition we have a couple of member profiles to share, a part 2 on Ray Buchicchio's antenna project, and an article on the BITX40 transceiver kit.

Enjoy this months edition of the RHG and please if you have something to share please send it to me, K9KQX@arrl.net

Mike K9KQX

From the President

I am always thoroughly impressed when I hear the attendance numbers for the construction project. Very often above 20. This is great. It's unfortunate that my schedule doesn't allow me to make it to them very often. I also enjoy the photos from the construction project that show up on SARC All from time to time. These certainly help to keep everyone informed of what is going on.

Some of the best things that come out of the construction project, by far, are the working projects. Every now and then there's a great write up of how a project came together complete with instructions. Or, someone will bring a project to a club meeting and show off parts of it (whether it's the night's program or not). I recently got to hear the end of some of the details of the build of a graphical clock featured in the October 2017 QST. This made me quite proud of the number of active members we have in the club.

I mention these projects because they would all make great material for our updated web site. Continue to post your successes, trials and photos to SARC all and we will begin taking some of this information and posting it on the web page. If it's an original work, we will ask for your consent first.

Matt
AC9IG

Miscellaneous activities / updates

Construction Project Gary N9VU

Next CP meeting will be Saturday, April 14th and 28th from 8am till noon.
Location is at the Schaumburg Tennis Plus, 1416 Payne Rd, Schaumburg, IL



EMCOMM Bob Langsfeld WB9TZC

Leo N9NBH reported exercise of the Sunday night Net and the Peoria-based ARES 3.905 MHz test 4:30PM conducted for all districts within the state.

Bob Langsfeld WB9TZC reminded May 20th is the Chicagoland Marathon in Busse Woods. Start 6AM and goes till 1PM

Repeater updates - Kent W9KAO reports audio on the UHF side working well. Kent responded to recent repeater hang as follows: "..... It released when I restarted the system. Most likely you heard the connection between the VHF system and the Link System.

I did hear an Echolink connection earlier in the commute. There has been some talk on the HamVoip group that there may be a lockup interaction going on between Echolink connections and the repeater application. They seem to think it is a stuck Echolink push to talk problem where a user leaves Echolink in transmit mode, but it has been my observation that the USB interface freezes with PTT stuck. The only solution is to restart the PI operating system. One suggestion is to implement Echolink on its own node, which is certainly doable, but I don't think that is the problem, although an active Echolink connection may be involved in some way.

Stuck USB interfaces with this application has been an ongoing issue for years. This is one of the downsides to using USB interface connections. In the past it seemed that the longer the system ran without a reboot, the more likely a lockup would occur. We are restarting the system on a weekly basis, but on the rare occasions, this problem still occurs.

One of the authors of this version of the software was incredulous when I suggested it wasn't if but when a USB interface got stuck, of course it certainly couldn't be his software, but it does happen. There is a reason that at least two vendors provide usb interfaces that now monitor the usb device heartbeat signal and provide a logic signal if it stops flashing. I implemented two of these usb devices on the UHF system, as there is no internet connectivity to do a restart should the system lockup. I use the logic signal as an interrupt to automatically restart the system. We probably should consider doing the same on the VHF system as well".

Kent requests hardware: Board approved \$120 budget for purchase of two new interfaces.

President's Report - Matt AC9IG reports we're in need of avoiding consternation when there are unplanned events that conflict with planned meetings. Several events can occur within our large membership and will sometimes overlap. SARC_All is a public forum for club members so be careful with dialog.

We're in need for Field Day Chair: Rob N9MVO can assist and hopefully others will step forward to help him.

Public Service - Rob N9MVO: Rob N9MVO: All Public Service events are over for the year. Next years public service events start in April and May of 2018

Social: Roger Ryan W9RDR not present; Robert Kocourek W9RKK has stepped forward to become Social Chair.

Education: Leo N9NBH reported plans for a winter General Class with the Library District are in place. September 8th through the end of October at the Hoffman Estates facility, same as last fall's Technician class. Publication will be ready for the August issue. Looking for some text on 'Why do you want to become a General?' as once published.



Net Check-ins_– Leo N9NBH

SARC Net Check In's For Thursday, March 8th, 2017:

The following hams checked in to the net this evening.
N9NBH Leo (Net Control)

Thank you to the following hams that checked in to the net,

1. N9VU Gary
2. KD9HIJ Ken
3. AC9EM Steve
4. W0RI Dirk
5. K9KQX Mike
6. KB9RGU Jim
7. W9RKK Robert
8. KD9IPO Ron
9. W9KAO Kent
10. K9EKL Ron
11. N9LQ Joel
12. N9NBH Leo
13. KD9FMN Paul
14. KB9QVX Kevin
15. KD9HIK Dennis
16. KD9JBU Joe
17. N9AAE JR

VE Testing Results

VE Testing: John Shofield provided the following report: **Results March 3rd, 2018**

Name	Call	Class
Walgenbach, Neil E.	AC9SK	Extra
Chen, Hao	KD9KLX	Technician
Richier, Taylor L.	KD9KLY	Technician



Bizon, Bartlomiej	KD9KLZ	Technician
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Class	
Technician	3
General	0
Extra	1
Total	4

Next examination date: April 7th, 2018

John Schofield
AC9JS

All of us at SARC would like to congratulate all those that received or upgraded their license this month, and we welcome you to the amateur radio community. Hope to hear you on the air. Should you have any questions, come join SARC at our regular monthly meeting on the 3rd Thursday of the month or stop in at one of the Construction Meetings. Check the [SARC website](#) for times and locations.

[SARC Member Q&A](#)
[Raymond Buchicchio, WA9BLP](#)



Name and Call sign: Raymond Buchicchio, WA9BLP

Years in amateur radio: 66 years

What radios and antennas do you frequently use:

FTDX1200

Antennas Cushcraft MA5B, Rotatable Dipole and a fixed dipole

What modes do you operate:

Mostly SSB now, prior CW

What SARC activities do you enjoy:

I was a charter member of SARC in the Bill Sneed era. The SARC 2M Repeater was on my tower for many years.

Describe your favorite aspect of amateur radio:

Talking to old/new friends that share the hobby.

What is the most interesting radio experience that you've had:

In the early days building my own radios. Amps, power supplies and antenna's. Have had National, Drake, Collins, Viking, Lafayette, Heathkit, Collins and now Yaesu Radio's.

What got you started in amateur radio:

My Dad was an AR and showed me the way.

Outside of radio, what other activities do you enjoy:

Enjoy Fishing and Hunting.

Ken Piletic, W9ZMR

Name and Call sign: Ken Piletic – W9ZMR

Years in amateur radio: 65



What radios and antennas do you frequently use: TS-2000 / Alpha 9500,

75 Meter Dipole with Matchbox (works on all bands)

What modes do you operate: SSB, APRS in the car

What SARC activities do you enjoy:

Describe your favorite aspect of amateur radio:

e.g. HF nets, chasing DX, digital modes, construction, troubleshooting, ragchewing, public service

4Ø Meter discussion nets – ORCATS and Variagators

What is the most interesting radio experience that you've had:

The **MOST** interesting radio experience was the tracking of

SPUTNIK ONE in October of 1957. The First ACCURATE tracking

In the United States (five hours earlier than anybody else).

What got you started in amateur radio:

I saw a big tower with a multiband beam (all home brew) in the back yard of a house and didn't know what it was, when I was ten years old. I found out, and five years later joined a radio club.

Outside of radio, what other activities do you enjoy:

Audio recording. Collecting recordings of Old Time Radio Programs.

[Giving a Helping Hand to a HAM in need Part 2](#)

By Dirk W0RI

Ray Buchicchio WA9BLP Antenna Project, Roselle, Illinois , Saturday March 10, 2018



Ray WA9BLP on left sitting with Rob in the shack

Site Profile (Ray Buchicchio):

Ray was born 1927 in Chicago, IL, his Elmer was his Ham Dad. Lives with wife Millie in Roselle, IL. Ray was a charter member of SARC going back his friend Bill Sneed. An interesting fact is that the SARC repeater was on his tower for many years !!! Small world !!!

Ray contacted me end of last summer on 2M, we chatted for a while and informed me that he needed help fixing his station. He has Rotor and antenna problems, in several discover visits it was confirmed something is wrong on the tower. A few days later we cranked the tower over to take a look. Very shortly upon inspection all coax cables were bad-damaged since they have been on the tower for close to 40 years. In the meantime Ron KD9IPO (donated for temp use) helped me install an end feed wire in -20 degrees weather, to get Ray back on the air until we could solve the coax problems etc. The early volunteers were Mike Sorenson, Peter Maziuk, Rob Glowacki, and Dirk Smith. Hence from that point the project was planned and scheduled during warmer weather, which turned out to be Saturday, March 10, 2018.

The project required new coax, which Ray purchased, 250 foot spool of 8U, I had a spare rotor cable and also purchased new PL259 and SO239 connectors.

Weather: Clear Skies, 34 – 45 degrees

Start Time 8:00 AM

End Time: 8:28 PM

Food Provided:

AM Donuts- Coffee, lunch – pizza (donated by Dirk Smith W0RI)

Project Team:

James Richardson AC9PH, Bill McGovern KD9JQM, Ron Delpiere-Smith KD9IPO, Rob Glowacki N9MVO, Kevin Willard KB9QVX, Kevin Chin K9AAB, Peter Maziuk N9POL, Steve Karson AC9EM, John Schofield AC9JS, Chris Brewer AC9GN, Mike Sorenson (plus daughter Katie)K9KQX, Dirk Smith W0RI,

You Tube Link: <https://youtu.be/6WxyP60FYu8> by Kevin Chin K9AAB

Pictures: ALL Volunteers, Steve, James, Kevin W., Chris, Kevin C, Dirk, James at <https://invertedlight.com/>

Project Scope:

- Replace 4 Feedlines with new 8U COAX and a Rotor cable
 - 1x 3 Element Multi band Antenna
 - 1x Rotatable Dipole (Multi Band)
 - 1x 2 Meter antenna
 - 1x Fixed Dipole antenna
 - Rotor cable
- Terminate cable with PL259 outside and solder to connection plate in shack, incl. Rotor cable
 - Replace SO239 connectors in shack

- Replace Matching network on 3 element Multi Band Antenna
- Visual Check of Rotor, replace junction box for rotor cable connection next to Rotor
- Remove and reinstall fixed dipole from tower
- Drape 5x cables on tower, feed cables into attic then down wall into shack, with drip loop, extra in 2 feet in attic
- Verify operation when all ends terminated and tower raised again.
- Check AMP and AMP power supply, both replaced with spare. (see detail write up from Rob, below)
- Clean up yard and putt away ladders and supplies

TBD: (remaining issues can all be done by simply by folding over tower)

- Rotor repair or replacement does not fully rotate skips in some directions.
- Determine is 20 M band was dead, or Antenna issue or FTDX1200 radio/configuration
 - 20 M coils bad?
 - FTDX1200 took a hit on 20M?
- Drop 2M antenna approximately 2-3 feet, interferes with antenna rotate loop.



Work in Shack.....both pictures....Kevin KB9QVX, Rob N9MVO

SHACK WORK: Report from Rob Glowacki N9MVO (Kevin Willard KB9QVX)

Also, he had some rather unusual connections in his shack. The FT 1200 was connected to the 'antenna' connector of the SWR/Power meter, the SWR power meter's 'transmitter' connector was hooked to the 'antenna' connector of the MFJ auto tuner, and the 'transmitter' connector of the MFJ was connected to the input of the amp. At least the amp was connected correctly.

The SWR/Power meter was backwards, which made 'forward' and 'reflected' power readings reversed, but worse than that, the MFJ tuner was connected backwards. That *might* have caused it to try to tune for lowest 'forward' reading, and most 'reflected' reading, as forward and reflected would be reversed with that connection.

When we first got things connected, we heard NO signal on 20 meters at all, we found that the attenuator on the radio was turned on, at -18 dB. That would kinda reduce signals by about 3 S units. You know of the Antenna 1/ Antenna 2 switch

problem. He said the 1200 rig is rather new, so he's not real familiar with it, yet. He may need a little hand holding to help him get things set up right for usual operation.

Of course, he also needs to have the 80 Liter antenna coax connector mounted on the wall, on a plate of some sort, and yet another coax jumper cable made to connect THAT to the antenna switch.

His backup amplifier power supply, the switching supply, smells of burning resistor shortly after getting turned on. Both amplifiers work, at about the same power output level, with the same 45 Watt input. The amp he usually uses indicates on its own meter about 550 Watts, the backup amp on the shelf indicates about 300 W output with 45 W drive.

Both amps show about 300 W on the same external power meter (his meter) and about 500 Watts on my genuine Radio Shack power meter, that MUST be made for CB, because it has a 2000 Watt scale (;^D) Actually, the package for it says it has a Buene bridge, which should be accurate across the HF bands. I know the 20 and 200 Watt scales on it are pretty close. I don't use the 2 KW scale, so I don't know how close that reading is.

The backup amp DID work on the backup power supply before we started smelling smoke, so it apparently was putting out SOMETHING for a while. We shut it down as soon as we smelled something bad..

It was a very worthwhile effort! Now we need to figure out what's wrong with the tribander on 20 Liters, and the rotatable dipole on 10 and 40 Liters.

The WORK: (+12 hours)

In Garage: Mike K9KQX prepped the coax 8U cables and soldered new PL 259 on ends. (Daughter Katie keeping an eye on Dad)

Roof Crew: Kevin C, Bill Cable drape, fixed Dipole remove and install (final tower tilt back work Dirk)

Spotters: John, Steve

Antenna: Ron, Chris, James, Dirk

Rotor: Ron, Peter, James, Dirk

Shack: Kevin W., Rob, Ron (solder cables, solder rotor cable, test power supplies and Amplifier)

Attic: Dirk, Kevin C., James, Kevin W.



What Dirk W0RI brought food to an AR Event?



Rob N9MVO enjoying a jelly powdered donut!!!



Food Break.....Peter N9POL, Chris AC9GN



Planning next steps.....



Tower bolts being removed for crank down...



More Planning



Replacing Match Network and start cabling...
AC9JQM,



The antenna plan...John AC9JS, Ron KD9IPO, Bill
James AC9PH.



Roof crew Kevin K9AAB, Bill KD9JQM Cut the cables three times and still to short.....??
Steve AC9EM, Mike K9KQX, Dirk W0RI....



Where did that screw go???? Peter N9POL
Didn't find the screw, but did find two nuts.

Cable prep !!! Ron KD9IPO.....



Final Touches on antenna's.....

Chris AC9GN, James AC9PH, Ron KD9IPO, Steve AC9EM,..

Tower back up, securing tilt bolt's, Dirk W0RI.....



SAFETY FIRST.....protecting a Donut !!



Feeding cable into attic down to shack.....



The final product.....

PHOTO GALLERY.....





PL259 soldering..... Mike K9KQX







Roof crew putting up Fixed Dipole again...



Ron "They are eating again outside..."



Let me try this !..... Kevin KB9QVX



Although the project is not 100% completed, Ray is back on the air with his Amplifier. Ray and Millie were very impressed with the courtesy and work ethics on this project. He could not get over the fact that so many people showed up to help him repair his issues. What I mentioned to Ray: " You risked your life/ limbs in WW II, for many, it is now our turn to do this small thing for you ,as a token of our appreciation, as a Veteran, fellow Amateur Radio Operator and charter member of SARC." In the next week or so I and Mike K9KQX RHG Editor, will feature Ray's life profile in the RHG.

A personal message from me: Although I was not born in the USA, but did become a citizen, I was proud to have this kind of response and Crew working to help Ray. Looking back I believe we had the right number of volunteers, I actually had to turn people away prior to project start.

Thank You again on behalf of a very grateful Ray and wife Millie.....



BITX40 SSB KIT

Dave Sims K9KBM

(Copied from Ad)

When was the last time you used a radio you had built? The BITX40 board is a two board, 40 meter SSB transceiver module kit with digital control! Inside an evening, you can be on-air with this digital SSB transceiver, chatting with the local gang or chasing DX across the world. Plug in the earphones, the included electret mic, tuning and volume controls, and you are on air! Included are high quality connectors, all the needed sockets and jacks, tuning and volume controls, mounting hardware, etc., all for \$60.

Technicals

The BITX40 is shipped as a set of two boards : The Raduino and the Main Transceiver Board, with connectors and external components. You have to supply your own cabinet, mic, speaker, power supply and Antenna. Soldering is required, but all of the SMD and other components on the Main Transceiver Board and already soldered in place for you. Your kit-building efforts are little more than connecting the off-board controls via the supplied wiring connectors.

The Raduino The new BITX40's Raduino is a small, hackable, board utilizing an Arduino Nano to control a rock-steady Si5351 synthesizer and a clean 16x2 frequency display. The program code is free and Open Source. The Raduino features 6 analog ports, three oscillators and six digital lines.

Receiver Listen to the very clean, crisp, and quiet receiver. The front-end has a triple-tuned circuit that limits out-of-band signals. The diode ring mixer front-end makes this a crisp receiver that doesn't overload easily. The all-analog signal path to your ear provides outstanding signal clarity that must be heard to be believed.

Transmitter 7 watts of low distortion SSB provides you with enough power to have thousands of contacts on 40 meters, daily rag chews, and occasional DX chasing. Any common 2 ampere, 12 linear volts, power supply will provide enough juice for this transceiver. Or you could simply run it from a battery!

Hackable

The BITX40 will inspire you to experiment. Modify it, mount it, tweak it, change it. The Users' Group is filled with plenty of ideas for modifications if you want to experiment.

Raduino uses a standard Arduino Nano that makes it easy to write code in simple C language to work on more modes, bands, utilities. RIT, dual VFOs, more bands, CW/RTTY are just some code away! Who will be the first to add the Raduino keyer?



The main board comes with all analog large-sized SMD components already soldered on the board. The components are laid out on an easy-to-understand manner on a double sided board with broad tracks to encourage experimentation. There are jump-points from where you can add more modules like the DDS, more bands, better audio amplifier, etc. Your imagination is the limit. You can separately increase the power amplifier's supply voltage to 25 volts to be more than 20 watts of power if you want. (You will have to add a larger heat sink.) The mods are on the way!

The boards can be installed inside any box that you like. Make your own station rigs, man-packs, SOTA rigs, trail radio, or mount it in a cigar box and leave it on your bedside table. Watch the instructions video.

Box Contents

We have tried to include all the connector/hardware you might possibly need to build a full radio. However, we also had to balance the shipping weight to keep the overall cost down. You will have to supply your own box, power supply and earphones/headphones/speaker.

- 4-1/2 inches by 5 inches tested SSB transceiver module, covering any 400 KHz segment of the 7 MHz band
- The Raduino board with Si5351, Arduino Nano with code loaded. Fully tested
- High quality BNC connector for the antenna
- Small electret microphone
- Two earphone-style audio jacks for the mic and the earphones/speaker
- A set of DC power socket and plug
- Volume control with on/off switch
- 10k linear pot for tuning
- 8 brass standoffs with mounting nuts and bolts
- Connectors with wires for all connections to the board

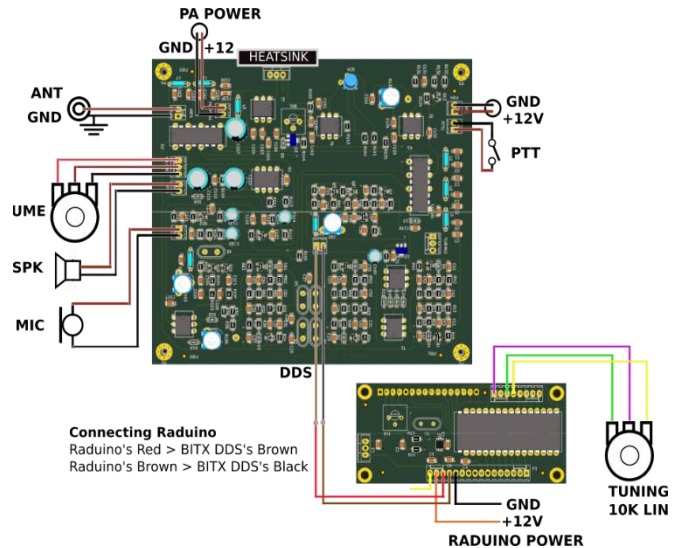
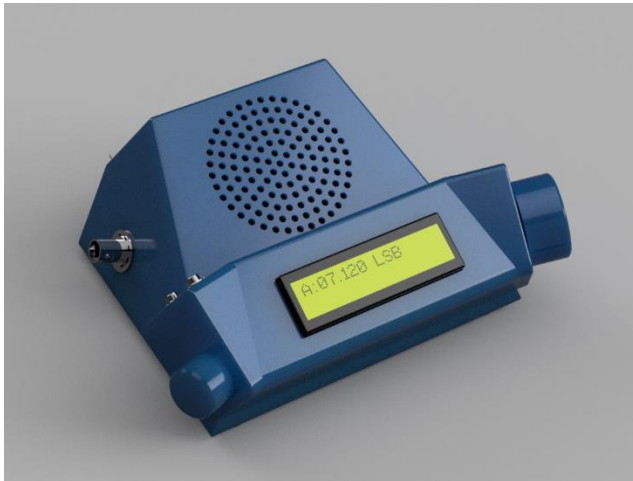
Note : A speaker is not included in the kit as earphones/headphones/speakers are easily available locally. No cabinet is included to save on the postage cost. Almost any box maybe used.

Manufacture

The BITX boards are hand assembled by a collective of women. Each of the toroids is hand wound. This provides these women with a livelihood. The assembled boards are then DC checked and a final RF check is performed to check the receiver's sensitivity as well as transmitter's output before being shipped. Each board is individually numbered.

Builders Comments

The most difficult part of this kit is deciding on a container and the mechanical work. You can find many on line pictures showing how to layout and (also how not to) your chassis /container. A few builders made 3D printed cases and offered a free download of their design, one that I particular like is shown below.



When using a plastic case you should line the case with foil tape, conductive paint or space the assembly off an un-etched PCB blank for best practice. I'll give the instructions an A- and the pictorial an A. Depending on the layout some of the wire leads were long so I took the precaution of twisting the leads with a drill before I cut then to length. If you noticed in the case photo, one knob (the tuning knob) is bigger than the other which provides a better feel for tuning. As mentioned, the mechanical work takes the longest time and effort once completed the electrical portion only takes a few hours. One of the wiring options is to provide the power amp with a higher voltage supply allowing you to double the output.

Firing It Up

As a test, the instructions recommend monitoring the current while hooked to a dummy load and noting that the current jumps from .25A to 1 Amp when loudly speaking. That worked well on the dummy load but poorly (very little current change) on an unturned antenna. The receiver worked well on my long wire and station were not difficult to tune in as a large knob worked as a veneer.

Other Offerings

The same company offers a 40M rig and for \$114 you can buy an 80 thru 10 transceiver.



Local and Regional Nets

In this section of the RHG we'd like to build a list of HF, and VHF/UHF nets that might be of interest to our club members. Please send submissions to Leo N9NBH or Mike K9KQX

SARC	Technet	Tuesday's 7:30 CST	K9IHK	145.230mhz
SARC	Club Net	1 st , 2 nd , 4 th , Thursday 8pm	K9IHK	145.230mhz
TALARC Amer Legion		2 nd Sat, 12 noon		14.275Mhz
TALARC Amer Legion		3 rd Sun 5pm		7.245Mhz
TALARC Amer Legion		Wed		3.862 Mhz
EN52 Net		Wed 7PM		50.130Mhz
SUHFARS Do nothing net		Sun 9:00PM		443.250 +5Mhz 114.8hz PL
OMISS Nets		Daily, check times at www.omiss.net		
Airforcesflyersclub.net		Visit site for times.		

Websites Recommended by Club Members

Each month we present a new list of websites that club members find interesting. We'll share these with you. If you find something of interest that's Ham Radio, or technology related, ie electronics, science, engineering, computers, kit building etc, please feel free to send submission to Mike K9KQX@arrrl.net

Click on any heading to open the URL

[ARRL Repurposes AM Transmitter for HAM Radio Use](#) - Thanks to a joint effort by ARRL and the Vintage Radio and Communications Museum of Connecticut (VRCMCT), a classic Gates BC-1T AM broadcast transmitter will enjoy a second life on the Amateur Radio bands for occasional use under W1AW or under the ARRL Headquarters Operators Club call sign, W1INF

[Stephen Hawking, Who Awed Both Scientist and the Public, Dies](#) - There aren't very many scientists who achieved rock star status. Stephen Hawking, who has died at the age of 76, [family members told British media](#) early Wednesday, was definitely a contender.



SARC March Club Meeting

Schaumburg Amateur Radio Club Business Meeting March 15, 2018

Matt Walsh AC9IG President opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Attendees:

Leo Ribordy	N9NBH	Dennis Calvey	KD9HIK	Cliff Sowka	K9QD
Matt Walsh	AC9IG	Kent Ochs	W9KAO	Frank Giampa	N9QPD
Dirk Smith	W0RI	Chris Brewer	AC9GN	Rob Glowacki	N9MVO
Danny Kafka	KD9HIL	Robert Kocourek	W9RKK	Burt Shultz	AB9CV
Steve Karson	AC9EM	Rick Cook	KC9PLO	Don Smith	K9UD
Jack Walsh		Jim Campbell	KB9RGU	Bob Langsfeld	WB9TZC
Ed Lishka	AC9SD	Bill McGovern	KD9JQM	Dave Sims	K9KBM
Orson Baker	AB9WQ	Dave Bender	KD9JKG	Jim Scott	W9KV

Treasurer's report: Chris Brewer AC9GN reports: beginning balance \$4,992.50. Income was \$0. Expense was \$60.29 for data line and State of Illinois Annual Report. Ending balance \$4,932.21. Paid membership is currently 64.

President's Report: Matt AC9IG reports we're in need of avoiding consternation when there are unplanned events that conflict with planned meetings. Several events can occur within our large membership and will sometimes overlap. SARC_All is a public forum for club members so be careful with dialog.

We're in need for Field Day Chair: Rob N9MVO can assist and hopefully others will step forward to help him.

Construction Project: Gary N9VU not present.

Membership Chair: Bob Benwitz N9JAX not present but provided following report:

The following WEB inquiries were responded to via phone/email during the month of February

2/5 Chuck Patrick (No Call Sign shown)

2/8 Chuck Patrick additional follow-up

2/23 Christian Mahnke No Call Sign/License yet but was provided VE testing and License Exam class information

2/25 Jeremy Peeler New Tech, awaiting call sign as of 2/25, moving to Vernon Hills area in April, will try to come to club meeting.

SARC Repeaters: Kent W9KAO reports audio on the UHF side working well. Kent responded to recent repeater hang as follows: "..... It released when I restarted the system. Most likely you heard the connection between the VHF system and the Link System.

I did hear an Echolink connection earlier in the commute. There has been some talk on the HamVoip group that there may be a lockup interaction going on between Echolink connections and the repeater application. They seem to think it is a stuck Echolink push to talk problem where a user leaves Echolink in transmit mode, but it has been my observation that the USB interface freezes with PTT stuck. The only solution is to restart the PI operating system. One suggestion is to implement Echolink on its own node, which is certainly doable, but I don't think that is the problem, although an active Echolink connection may be involved in some way.

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more likely a lockup would occur. We are restarting the system on a weekly basis, but on the rare occasions, this problem still occurs.

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Kent requests hardware: Board approved \$120 budget for purchase of two new interfaces.

Secretary's Report: Cliff Sowka K9QD: Approval of Meeting Minutes as published in the RHG.

EMCOMM: Leo N9NBH reported exercise of the Sunday night Net and the Peoria-based ARES 3.905 MHz test 4:30PM conducted for all districts within the state.

Bob Langsfeld WB9TZC reminded May 20th is the Chicagoland Marathon in Busse Woods. Start 6AM and goes till 1PM

Social: Roger Ryan W9RDR not present; Robert Kocourek W9RKK has stepped forward to become Social Chair.

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VE Test: John Shofield AC9JS reports the following:

March, 2018

Name	Call	Class
Walgenbach, Neil E.	AC9SK	Extra
Chen, Hao	KD9KLX	Technician
Richier, Taylor L.	KD9KLY	Technician
Bizon, Bartlomiej	KD9KLZ	Technician

Class	
Technician	3
General	0
Extra	1
Total	4

Next examination date: April 7, 2018

RHG: Mike K9KQX not present. Dirk W0RI previously reported on Mike's behalf requesting additional support on a bi-monthly basis. Burt AB9CV had provided links to some public domain articles but there may be some concern of copyright protections.

Public Service: Rob N9MVO reported MS Walk May 6th Sunday at Schaumburg Baseball Stadium. More details as we come nearer to the date. Rob will be sending notice on SARC_ALL in planning manpower. Expecting arrival around 7:30 and conclusion around Noon.



Fourth of July and Schaumburg Triathlon will be later in July.

Programs: Cliff Sowka K9QD: Matt AC9IG presented Skywarn overview and Dirk W0RI will work on materials for overview of Digital Modes for April.

Publicity: Dennis KD9HIK Chairman provides following update:

- 1) I met with the SARC board on March 7th to discuss what the Publicity Chair should be doing to support club activities
- 2) The consensus from the Board is that the primary function is to promote awareness to the general public about Club activities.
- 3) It was agreed that any publicity releases should be provided to the Board for review and comment before publication. The method of submission, review and approval would be by e-mail. An actual vote is not required.
- 4) SARC maintains a web site that has not been refreshed in some time. Some of the limiting factors of the existing site include the time and effort required to get changes implemented. There are a large number of web site hosting services that provide simple methods to change and update web pages, without having to master topics like Cascading Style Sheets or HTML5. Within that group, there are many that are specifically designed for special interest groups or associations. Costs typically start at around \$40.00 / month and go up depending on the level of support required. An example is wildapricot.com, that supports WordPress as well as large number of free or low cost plugins. Before I invest time in researching and preparing a report for the board to review, I'd like to know if there is a consensus to support updating the web site.
- 5) SARC also has a Facebook page that has not been kept current. There was discussion about using social media to promote club activities, including justifiable concern about controlling what can be posted. In 2016 there were over 185 million active social media users in the United States. In 2017, 87 percent of the US population had one or more social media profiles (Source: www.statista.com). I believe social media can be a viable publicity tool for the club and that adequate controls can be put in place. Toward that end I'll be attending a class on Facebook next month to learn more about how it functions, and what controls we can put in place.
- 6) A number of suggestions for landing free publicity exposure were offered, including newspapers like the Daily Herald, Community College Bulletin boards and registering events with the ARRL.
- 7) Recent activities like Construction Project and "Ray Tower Restoration Project" are excellent publicity examples, and I would welcome the opportunity to work with the content providers to get the message out. With respect to publicity, there are no bad suggestions – only time constraints.

Please forward any ideas, suggestions or questions via e-mail to KD9HIK@arrl.net and I'll do my best to use them.



NETS: Matt AC9IG reports 18 check-ins. EMCOMM Bob Langsfeld WB9TZC reminded Monthly login on Fusion machine 7PM first Sunday of the month.

Ebay Sales: Gary N9VU Not present.

Old Business: Field Day Chair is needed. Rob N9MVO has volunteered to become a resource and asked for more members to come forward. The Permit Application with the Village needs to be started soon to secure the legacy Plum Grove water tank location.

New Business: Fusion Repeater Coordination. Kent W9KAO will handle the FCC filing eventually.

Leo N9NBH obtained our Service Monitor equipment and the club already authorized his \$20 expenditure for the operation/service manual.

Dirk Smith W0RI read a statement to the membership regarding recent tower repair activity that unintentionally conflicted with the Construction Project schedule.

Adjourn 7:39 PM

Submitted: March 16, 201

[SARC Board of Directors Meeting](#)

Schaumburg Amateur Radio Club Board of Director March 7, 2018

The Radio Hill Gazette, newsletter of the Schaumburg Amateur Radio Club
Feb 2018



Frank Giampa N9QPD Chairman opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Attendees:

Leo Ribordy	N9NBH	Dennis Calvey	KD9HIK	Cliff Sowka	K9QD
Matt Walsh	AC9IG	Kent Ochs	W9KAO	Russ Schmidt	KC9NUV
Frank Giampa	N9QPD	Dirk Smith	W0RI	Chris Brewer	AC9GN

Treasurer's report: Chris Brewer AC9GN reports: beginning balance \$4,992.50. Income was \$0. Expense was \$60.29 for data line and State of Illinois Annual Report. Ending balance \$4,932.21. Paid membership is currently 64.

President's Report: Matt AC9IG reports we filled some committee vacancies: Dennis Calvey KD9HIK has offered to take the role of Publicity Chair.

Construction Project Chair Vacancy announced beginning this fall: 4 people should be able to take turns in covering the Construction Project vacancy when Gary N9VU retires starting in the fall: Rob Glowacki (can handle closing only), Leo (can fulfill full session starting October), Bill McGovern, Dave Bender are also available to take the duty as needed.

Membership Chair: Bob Benwitz N9JAX not present but provided following report:

The following WEB inquiries were responded to via phone/email during the month of February

2/5 Chuck Patrick (No Call Sign shown)

2/8 Chuck Patrick additional follow-up

2/23 Christian Mahnke No Call Sign/License yet but was provided VE testing and License Exam class information

2/25 Jeremy Peeler New Tech, awaiting call sign as of 2/25, moving to Vernon Hills area in April, will try to come to club meeting

SARC Repeaters: Kent W9KAO reports audio on the UHF side working well. Kent responded to recent repeater hang as follows: "..... It released when I restarted the system. Most likely you heard the connection between the VHF system and the Link System.

I did hear an Echolink connection earlier in the commute. There has been some talk on the HamVoip group that there may be a lockup interaction going on between Echolink connections and the repeater application. They seem to think it is a stuck Echolink push to talk problem where a user leaves Echolink in transmit mode, but it has been my observation that the USB interface freezes with PTT stuck. The only solution is to restart the PI operating system. One suggestion is to implement Echolink on its own node, which is certainly doable, but I don't think that is the problem, although an active Echolink connection may be involved in some way.

Stuck USB interfaces with this application has been an ongoing issue for years. This is one of the downsides to using USB interface connections. In the past it seemed that the longer the system ran without a reboot, the more likely a lockup would occur. We are restarting the system on a weekly basis, but on the rare occasions, this problem still occurs.

One of the authors of this version of the software was incredulous when I suggested it wasn't if but when a USB interface got stuck, of course it certainly couldn't be his software, but it does happen. There is a reason that at least two vendors provide usb interfaces that now monitor the usb device heartbeat signal and provide a logic



signal if it stops flashing. I implemented two of these usb devices on the UHF system, as there is no internet connectivity to do a restart should the system lockup. I use the logic signal as an interrupt to automatically restart the system. We probably should consider doing the same on the VHF system as well".

Kent requests hardware: Board approved \$120 budget for purchase of two new interfaces.

Secretary's Report: Cliff Sowka K9QD: Approval of Meeting Minutes as published in the RHG.

EMCOMM: Leo N9NBH reported exercise of the Sunday night Net and the Peoria-based ARES 3.905 MHz test 4:30PM conducted for all districts within the state. Frank N9QPD mentioned Bob's WB9TZC discussion from the February meeting where a mission statement/definition of the Hoffman Estates venue may be a good action for consideration. Is the Hoffman Estates venue an official SARC event?

Construction Project: Gary N9VU: not present.

Ebay Sales: Gary N9VU not present.

Social: Roger Ryan W9RDR not present.

Education: Leo N9NBH reported plans for a winter General Class with the Library District are in place. September 8th through the end of October at the Hoffman Estates facility, same as last fall's Technician class. Publication will be ready for the August issue. Looking for some text on 'Why do you want to become a General?' as once published.

VE Test: Dirk W0RI reported four students for March. Three Tech and one Extra.

RHG: Mike K9KQX not present. Dirk W0RI reported on Mike's behalf requesting additional support on a bi-monthly basis.

Public Service: Rob N9MVO not present but previously reported MS Walk May 6th Sunday at Schaumburg Baseball Stadium. More details as we come nearer to the date.

Programs: Cliff Sowka K9QD: Matt AC9IG will present a Skywarn overview for March and Dirk W0RI will work on materials to do overview of Digital Modes for April.

Publicity: Dennis KD9HIK will Chair the public communication effort for the club. He has several questions for the new role: Writing Publicity Documents require Board approval? Facebook for SARC is established but traffic appears dormant for several years. Growth can be assisted with an effort toward a targeted audience. Contemplation about where to find new prospects and other general awareness ideas were presented.

NETS: Matt AC9IG reports 15 check-ins. Observed refreshing change to the script as personalities inserted new approach to preamble. Enjoys the diverse dialog and handling of the net.

Ebay Sales: Gary N9VU Not present.

Old Business: Field Day Chair is needed.

Construction Project will need a new Chairman starting next fall as Gary N9VU has requested vacating that role in the future.

Band pass filter needs for Field Day: Kent W9KAO performed biopsy of commercial filters during CP to determine what components would be procured; would not be terribly difficult to duplicate. Prefer the club make the effort to build our own. We will build 20M and 40M and include about \$20 each in the Field Day budget; total of \$200 headroom approved. Chris AC9GN will take the lead in the construction effort.

New Business: Fusion Repeater Coordination. Kent W9KAO will handle the FCC filing eventually.



Leo N9NBH will be receiving our Service Monitor equipment this week and the club already authorized his \$20 expenditure for the operation/service manual.

Adjourn 9:00 PM

Submitted: March 8, 2018. Cliff Sowka K9QD Secretary.