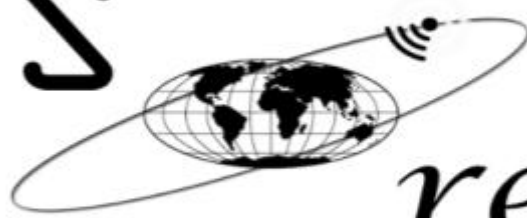


RAGS



review

PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER THRU JUNE BY THE RADIO AMATEURS OF GREATER SYRACUSE

APRIL 2026

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- May 14, 2026
A U.S. ISLANDS POTA ROVE
Presentation by Matt Brown, K2EAG
- May 23, 2026
PORTABLE OPERATIONS PARTY
Clark Reservation State Park, Jamesville, NY
8A – 3P, Coffee, Donuts, Burgers & Dogs
- June 11, 2026
ANNUAL INSTALLATION DINNER
Scholarship Presentation, Great Fellowship
- June 27-28, 2026
ARRL FIELD DAY
Camillus Ski Association Facility
Operation, Fellowship, Food...FUN!
- July 11, 2026
ROGER'S RAGS HAMFEST!!!

RAGS ANNUAL AUCTION

*Start gathering Your
Treasures and Your \$\$*

*You Never Know What
You Desperately Need!!*

Bring your gear at 6P – coffee will be on!

PLEASE JOIN US!!

NEXT MEETING – Thursday, April 9, 2026

IN PERSON AT 7:00P

Coffee is always on!

CHECK THE 31/91 REPEATER AFTER 3P FOR WEATHER CONCERNS



**Dewitt Community Room
148 Sanders Creek Parkway
East Syracuse, NY 13057**





John Perkins
K2VTT
Jp96166@gmail.com
315-399-8175

**FROM OUR
PRESIDENT**

Spring is here, but someone forget to tell Mother Nature.

Thank you to all who participated in the St. Patrick's Parade and the Hospital Exercise.

We have had some good activity at the MOST, but can still use more help. In addition to some great radio equipment to use, we have talked with several folks and recruited a few new RAGS members. Thank you all for helping.

Check out the RAGS Web Site that has been expanded and updated. If you have suggestions for improvements please forward them to me.

April brings our annual RAGS Auction. This year it is Thursday April 9, bring your used equipment and cash. The HAMFEST season is upon us.

Don't forget the next RAGS POTA DAY May 23 at Clark Reservation in Jamesville. Various radios, antennas, and power setups will be in use. I will be bringing a satellite antenna and radio as well.

Get involved and have fun.

73, John K2VTT

DUES ARE DUE FOR THE 2026 -2027 YEAR
Pay online, at a meeting, or by mail. \$10/Year or \$20 by mail

NEWS FROM LAST MONTH'S MEETING

We had a really interesting and well received talk by Ian, KE2CHJ. He shared many experiences from his life as a starting ham. Many of us could identify with his travels as we had been there ourselves. There was a lot of fellowship and conversation, donuts eaten, and coffee consumed.

John, K2VTT listed the many upcoming RAGS activities and solicited all members to get involved.

ARES Field Deployment “Go Kits” Checklist

VHF/UHF/Basics Kit

- 2-meter/dual band handheld radio and speaker/mic
- 2-meter/dual band mobile radio
- 2-meter/dual band magnetic mount antenna and/or base antenna with support
- Earphone or headset
- RF and audio connectors and adaptors
- Extra coaxial cables
- Alkaline battery pack for hand-held radio
- Tool kit with multi-meter and gas or DC soldering iron, solder
- Electrical and duct tape
- Power supplies
- Extension cords, plug strips
- Deep cycle or gel-cell (sealed lead-acid) battery
- Battery charger(s)
- SWR meter, (VHF, HF)
- Standard power connectors and adapters (30 amp PowerPole and the older Molex 1545)
- Alkaline and rechargeable batteries
- Flashlights, spare batteries and bulb
- ARES ID card, driver’s license, other relevant IDs

HF Kit

- HF radio
- Tuner
- Antennas and supports
- Feed lines

Operating Supplies Kit

- Paper and pencil, sharpener
- ARRL-ICS-213, Radiogram forms
- Message forms
- Logbook
- Phone lists, contact information, ARES plan info

Winlink/Digital Kit

- Laptop computer, DC power cable
- Patch cords
- Packet modem and/or sound card mode interface, other gear for specialized modes

Personal Needs Kit (24 Hours)

- Appropriate clothing for the season
- Foul weather gear
- Food and water for 24 hours
- Toilet kit (including toilet paper!)
- Shelter (tent)
- Sleeping bag, foam pad, and a real pillow
- Portable stove, mess kit and cleaning supplies
- Waterproof matches
- First aid kit and pain relievers
- Throat lozenges
- Prescription medicines, eyeglass prescription copy, spare eyeglasses
- Money, change for tolls and vending machines
- Alarm clock (portable wind up or battery type)

Add-on Kit for Extended Deployment (72 Hours)

- 3 day change of clothes
- 3 day supply of water, food, snacks
- Additional batteries
- Generator, lighting, extension cords, fuel can



LET'S KEEP K2MST ON THE AIR!

As part of RAGS outreach to the youth and potential new hams of the CNY area, RAGS is trying to keep the M.O.S.T. ham station (K2MST) in operation each week during its Thursday to Sunday hours of operation. K2MST is a very nice station with HF and VHF/UHF capabilities. It is easily seen and heard by visitors and is a great way to expose youth and their parents to the excitement of Amateur Radio.

Operators must complete a volunteer applicant form and several RAGS members are capable of familiarizing new operators with the equipment.

Contact John, K2VTT or Jerry, NK2C for more info and an application form.



So far RAGS has a small team of volunteer operators who have committed some time each month to station operation. The station currently has HF capabilities utilizing an Icom IC-7300 (donated by RAGS) and a 40/20 dipole and a large Loop antenna. Operation on 10 thru 80M, (CW, SSB, and Data) is possible and the antennas are quite high. There also is VHF/UHF repeater capability and the MOST 443.15 is regularly tied to the East Coast Reflector. This is fun because stations check in from all over the world. Coming, pending rotor repair, is VHF/UHF utilizing an ICOM IC-9700.

RAGS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

2026-2027



As in past years, RAGS is offering a Scholarship to a selected qualified applicant. This year, the scholarship award will be in the amount of \$500. The applicant requirements are as follows:

- Must be a current member of RAGS
- A high school level graduate holding a valid amateur radio license.
- Accepted at an accredited university, college, or technical school for the application year
- Or enrolled in a continuing education program for advanced study.

Request an application form by sending a written request to RAGS, P.O. Box 88, Liverpool, NY 13088. The deadline for Completed Applications is May 29, 2026.

How to Set Up a Portable Ham Radio Station: A Comprehensive Guide

Kevin Fairbanks, KD2DFQ

Introduction to Portable Ham Radio Stations

Portable ham radio operation allows you to take your communication skills and equipment beyond the walls of your home or fixed shack. With a portable station, you can participate in field events, provide emergency communications, or simply enjoy the thrill of making contacts from remote locations. The growing popularity of portable ham radio is evident among the community, especially as new equipment becomes lighter, more efficient, and easier to deploy.

Many ham operators enjoy experimenting with portable setups, which can range from simple handheld radios to sophisticated stations capable of worldwide communication. Portable stations are also essential during emergencies, when grid power and infrastructure may be unavailable. By understanding the basics of portable operation, you'll be ready to join events like Field Day, Summits on the Air (SOTA), or provide critical support during crisis situations.

Essential Equipment for Your Portable Station

Building a successful portable ham radio station requires careful selection of equipment that balances performance, portability, and reliability. The right gear ensures you can communicate effectively while on the go, without being weighed down by unnecessary bulk. Here's a breakdown of the core components you'll need:

Transceiver: Choose a compact, multi-band radio that fits your operating needs. Many operators prefer QRP (low-power) radios for portability, while others opt for full-power models if weight isn't a primary concern.

Antenna: The antenna is crucial for successful portable operation. Portable antennas come in many forms, including verticals, dipoles, end-fed wires, and magnetic loops. Select one that is easy to deploy and suits the bands you plan to operate on.

Power Supply: Since AC power is rarely available in the field, portable stations rely on batteries, solar panels, or generators. Lightweight lithium iron phosphate (LiFePO4) batteries are popular for their durability and energy density.

Support Accessories: Don't forget about coaxial cable, antenna supports (like fiberglass mast poles), a power distribution panel, and basic tools for setup and repair.

Logging Device: Whether you use a paper logbook or a tablet with logging software, keeping track of your contacts is important, especially for contesting and award programs.

It's also wise to pack weather-appropriate gear, a first-aid kit, and any documentation required for your

operating location. The Technician Class license is the most popular among ham radio operators, making entry into portable operation accessible for many in the hobby. With the right setup, your portable station will be ready for both fun and function, whether you're chasing DX or providing emergency communications support.

Power Sources and Management

Reliable power is the lifeblood of any portable ham radio station. When you're operating away from the grid, choosing the right power source is critical for successful, uninterrupted operation. Let's look at the most common options and best practices for managing your portable power needs.

Batteries: Lithium iron phosphate (LiFePO4) batteries are favored for their lightweight construction, long life, and stable voltage output. They're a top choice for extended outings and can be paired with solar chargers for even greater autonomy.

Solar Panels: Portable solar panels provide renewable energy, especially useful for longer deployments. They can recharge your batteries during daylight hours and are silent, unlike generators.

Generators: Small, quiet inverter generators offer higher power for longer operations, but they add weight and require fuel. Use them when operating in groups or during emergencies where battery power alone isn't sufficient.

To maximize operating time, monitor your power consumption closely. Many modern transceivers have built-in battery-saving features, such as adjustable output power and standby modes. Always carry extra fuses and connectors, and consider a power distribution panel with built-in meters for real-time monitoring. ["In a crisis, 80,000 amateur radio operators in the US are vital in providing reliable communication during natural disasters and crises."](#) This reliability depends largely on effective power management, so take the time to plan your setup accordingly.

Antenna Selection and Setup

The antenna is often the most critical component in any ham radio station, and this is especially true for portable operations. The right antenna can mean the difference between making a handful of local contacts and reaching operators across the globe.

When selecting an antenna for portable use, consider the following:

Portability: Lightweight antennas like end-fed wires, telescoping verticals, or collapsible dipoles are ideal for quick deployment and transport.

Frequency Coverage: Choose an antenna that covers the bands you plan to operate. Multi-band antennas add versatility and save setup time.

Ease of Setup: Look for designs that require minimal

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Public Service & Emergency

Preparedness News



Our next Event is the Workforce Run on June 9 followed by the Y-Triathlon on June 13. We need volunteers for each event. Please email Walt, n2ikwkb@gmail.com or Andriy, kd2kub@proton.me or sign-up on the website, www.ragsclub.org.

To join the P/S gang, you can sign-up online on the Rags website, www.ragsclub.org or you can give Walt, n2ikwkb@gmail.com, or Andriy, kd2kub@gmail.com a shout and volunteer!

73, Walt, N2IK
Public Service Chair

The ARES/RACES Group is beginning a new monthly repeater net for all to learn net control protocols. It is planned for the 3rd Thursday of every month at 7P. The next net will be April 16 on the 146.775 repeater. Please check-in and join in the learning process!

FCC Warns Licensee on Out-of-Band Transmissions

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has responded to a complaint involving a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, amateur for operating outside the privileges of his Technician Class license and causing interference to local emergency service communications by transmitting on a public service frequency, 470.4375 MHz.

According to a letter released by the FCC's Enforcement Bureau, agents investigating an interference complaint from Allegheny County Emergency Services determined that the interfering signal originated from the residence of David Knudtson, KD3ASC, who also holds a General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) license, WSDQ885. The letter states that Knudtson gave the agents a B-Tech UV-Pro handheld which had been programmed to monitor the county emergency services frequency. Agents determined that its "Audio Relay" feature had been activated, turning the HT "into a simplex repeater that was retransmitting the Allegheny County channel."

Knudtson surrendered the radio to the agents, who then "verified that the interference to the Allegheny County system had ceased." The letter also notes that Knudtson's B-Tech radio was certified as a Part 90 (private land mobile radio) device and that he was not licensed to transmit on the emergency services frequency.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CLUBS

LARC

Liverpool Amateur Repeater Club

4th Thursday of each month – 7P
N. Syracuse Community Center
700 South Bay Rd, N. Syracuse

QCWA

Quarter Century Wireless Assoc.

Last Friday of each month – 10A
Denny's Restaurant, 6591 Thompson Rd,
Syracuse, NY 13206
ALL ARE WELCOME

Yay!!! - Upcoming Hamfests –

- Bull Thistle – 04/11
- Drumlins – 04/18
- Thousand Islands – 5/16
- Cortland – 6/13
- RAGS – 07/11/26



Nets Of Note

OCTEN Traffic Net - Nightly at 8:00P
Oneida 145.17- MHz, Auburn 147.00, Syracuse 147.30

CNY Amateur Radio Swap and Information Net
Weekly, Wednesdays at 7:00PM
Auburn 147.00 +, 71.9 tone Cortland 147.225 +, 71.9 tone
Remsen 145.33 -, 71.9 tone Ithaca 146.97 -, 103.5 tone
Lafayette 145.15 -, 123.0 tone Syracuse 53.67 -, 103.5 tone

Rock City Net - Weekly, Wednesdays @ 8P
3.986, SSB

RAGS Chat Net – Sunday Nights at 7:00PM
75 Meters - 3.986 MHz – LSB

CNY Fireside Chat Net
Weekly, Monday, 7P 146.670 -, 103.5 tone

CNY Information Net
Weekly, Monday, 8P 146.670-, 103.5 tone

QCWA Social Net
Weekly, Tuesday, 7:00P, 53.050-, 71.9 tone
(linked to 53.67 -, tone 103.5)

220 VHF Net
Weekly, Friday, 7P 224.12-, 103.5 tone

Easy-Pal Digital Slow Scan
Weekly - Saturday Nites 146.67-, 103.5 tone
Daily – 3.857 HF
Note that 147.390 is an ECHOLINK Repeater

General Ham Info
www.upstateham.com and www.kd2sl.com

Yum! Yum!

Chicken Spaghetti Casserole with Mushrooms

1 lb spaghetti, cooked
and drained

1 ½ to 2 c chopped cooked
chicken

¼ c each chopped red and green peppers

½ c chopped onion

½ tsp salt

1/8 tsp pepper

1 (8oz) sliced fresh mushrooms

1 can cream of chicken mushroom soup

½ c chicken broth

Saute red & green peppers, onions and mushrooms. Add the rest of the ingredients; mix. Place in greased casserole. Cover and bake at 350° for 45 mins.



Apple Carrot Slaw

½ c sweetened dried cranberries

½ c orange juice, divided

2 granny smith apples, cored and cut into
matchsticks

¼ c red onion, thinly sliced

½ c pumpkin roasted pumpkin seeds

¼ c chopped pecans

3 Tbl olive oil, pepper to taste

Combine cranberries and ¼ c orange juice in small bowl; set aside. In separate bowl, toss apples with remaining orange juice; add carrots, onion, pumpkin seeds and pecans. Drain cranberries, reserving juice; add cranberries to apple mixture. Whisk reserved orange juice with olive oil; pour over salad. Seaso with pepper; toss to coat well. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Coconut Layer Cake

3 large eggs

1 (8oz) carton sour cream

¾ c veg oil

¾ c cream of coconut

½ tsp vanilla extract

1 pkg white cake mix with pudding
coconut cream cheese frosting

Preheat oven to 325°. Grease & flour 3 8inch cake pans. Set aside. Beat eggs. Add sour cream and next three ingredients, beating well after each addition. Add cake mix, beat until blended. Pour into pans. Bake at 325° for 25 to 27 mins or until toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pans 10 mins; remove from pans and let cook completely on wire racks. Spread frosting between layers and on top & sides of cake. Sprinkle with coconut.

Coconut Cream Frosting

1 (8oz) pkg cream cheese, softened

½ c butter, softened

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 (16oz) pkg powdered sugar, sifted

1 (7oz) pkg coconut, divided

Beat cream cheese and butter until creamy; add vanilla, beating well. Gradually add sugar beating until smooth. Stir in all but ½ of coconut.

tools and can be erected by a single person if needed.

Performance: Even portable antennas can offer impressive range. "[Ham radio signals can reach about 4,000 miles using more bandwidth and power.](#)"

Set up your antenna in an open area, as high and as clear of obstructions as possible. Use non-conductive masts or trees for support, and always check for safety hazards like overhead power lines. Experimenting with different antenna types and configurations is part of the fun—don't be afraid to try new setups to see what works best for your location and conditions. The versatility of portable antennas also makes them valuable for emergency deployments and special events.

Deployment Strategies and Best Practices

Deploying your portable ham radio station efficiently can make a big difference in your operating experience. Whether you're contesting, activating a summit, or supporting an event, following a few key strategies will help you get on the air quickly and effectively.

Scout Your Location: Visit your operating site in advance if possible. Check for radio interference, available shade, and safe areas to set up your antenna.

Plan for Weather: Bring protective gear for yourself and your equipment. Use waterproof cases, tarps, and sturdy guy lines to secure your setup in changing conditions.

Organize Your Gear: Pack your equipment in modular containers or backpacks. Group items by function—antenna, power, radio, accessories—for faster setup and teardown.

Practice Setup: Before heading into the field, practice assembling your station at home. This helps catch missing parts and streamlines your deployment process.

Follow Safety Protocols: Be mindful of antenna placement, tripping hazards, and electrical safety. If operating with others, establish clear communication and roles.

Engage with the Community: Portable operations are a great way to meet other hams and share knowledge. Participate in group events or local clubs to learn new techniques. Remember, the first amateur radio satellite, OSCAR 1, was launched in 1961. This spirit of innovation and exploration continues to this day, with portable operators pushing the boundaries of what's possible in amateur radio. For more tips and resources, check out <https://hamradioplayground.com>, where you'll find guides, product reviews, and community stories to inspire your next adventure.

Conclusion

Setting up a portable ham radio station is a rewarding way to combine technical skills, adventure, and public service. With the right equipment, power management, and deployment strategies, you'll be ready to operate from almost anywhere the hobby takes you. Get out there, experiment, and enjoy the freedom and flexibility of portable operations.

CLUB INFORMATION

CLUB CALL SIGN: W2AE

Website:

www.ragsclub.org

Mailing Address:

Box 88, Liverpool, NY 13088

President >> John Perkins
 Vice President >> Mark Sloan
 Vice President >> Doug Falcon
 Secretary >> Jeff Plumb
 Treasurer >> Jerry Wright
 Hamfest Contact >> Jerry Wright
 Public Service >> Walt Bordett
 Health and Welfare >> Jerry Wright
 Field Day >> Dave Rice
 Membership >> Jerry Wright
 Newsletter Editor >> Jerry Wright
 Webmaster >> OPEN
 Historian >> OPEN
 Nominating Chairman >> Mark Eckert

>> k2VTT
 >> KD2YVB
 >> N2JOM
 >> KD2CPT
 >> NK2C
 >> NK2C
 >> N2IK
 >> NK2C
 >> KC2HO
 >> NK2C
 >> NK2C
 >>
 >>
 >> K2MTE

Meetings:

2nd Thursday of month from Sept. to June

>> 315-399-8175 >>
 >> 315-415-7789 >>
 >> 315- 677-5124 >>
 >> 315-755-8964 >>
 >> 315-488-5383 >>
 >> 315-727-2762 >>
 >> 315-445-8161 >>
 >> 315-488-5383 >>
 >> 315-469-6009 >>
 >> 315-488-5383 >>
 >> 315-488-5383 >>
 >>
 >>
 >> 315-672-5605 >>

Common email for all
 is auto forwarded to each
 Officer and Committee Head
w2aerags@gmail.com

REV. 09.05.2020

About Us

RAGS Review is our official newsletter.
 We are a non-profit organization incorporated
 by NYS in 1975.
 Dues are payable yearly on April 1st
 To join or renew, membership applications are available
 at meetings and online.

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NEXT MEETING:
APR 9, 2026 @ 7P

RAGS
PO Box 88
Liverpool, NY
13088