Rochester DX Association

Rochester DX Association Newsletter ***Sept 2000***

Meeting
Tuesday
Sept 19th
7:30 p.m.

Field Day will again take center stage as we revisit what worked, what needs to work, and ideas for the future. Also, if you have any pictures snapped at Field Day, bring them along to share!

President's Soapbox

Mike Rundle, N1OKL

Labor Day has come and gone. Vacations are over. The kids are back in school—at last! And contesting season is about to begin. Is your station ready?

Now is a good time to attend to all those little chores around the shack that you have been putting off all summer. Remember how you swore you would replace that intermittent PL-259 last Spring? Is your logging software up to date? Are the most recent DXCC prefix changes in your database? What about the League Section additions? Is the shack ground system in good shape…it might be a good idea to clean up and tighten the connections on the outside rods. If you use ladder line for any of your antennas, now might be a good time to lower it and apply a coat of auto wax or silicone to prevent ice and water build-up. The point is, a little bit of maintenance now could save you a lot of frustration later.

Jeff, W2FU, certainly knows that now is the time for getting all these chores

complete. He has been busy this summer getting his new "super station" ready for operation. This issue of the Bulletin includes some dramatic photos of Jeff's recent tower raising. Check it out.

As for me, I'm nearly ready to haul up the new 40m folded dipole. The balun is built, all the spacers for the antenna itself are cut and drilled, the 300Ω ladder line is on hand. All that remains is to put the antenna together…and of course, the tree climbing!

But before all that, I'm off to Canada for a week of vacation. The XYL and I have rented a cabin on Georgian Bay. The K2 and my trusty 6-band trap vertical are packed and ready to go. Look for N1OKL/VE3 on the high CW sub-bands…chasing DX and generally having some last-of-summer radio fun.

Speaking of summer, if you didn't get a chance to come out for the International Lighthouse Weekend, you missed a good time. Thanks to those who worked us on the bands. And thanks especially to BARK and **Al, W2AES** for inviting RDXA to participate in the event. **K2MP**, **K1PY** and **N1OKL** were the RDXAers behind the mic. **W2TZ** and **N2CK** helped with the antennas, tents and other support activities. In two days of operation, K2BRK netted nearly 900 QSOs. Most contacts were Stateside on 40m SSB and VHF. We did work some DX, mainly on 20 and 15m.

September also marks the resumption of our monthly RDXA meetings. W2TZ is looking for program ideas—so if you have a topic of interest, let him know. And how about volunteering to do a program yourself? There is a lot of expertise in our club. Why not share what you know with other members by putting together a 15-20 minute talk on your favorite subject? We're an easy audience!

See you at the September meeting…

Editor's Corner

Dave Wright, N2CK

Hello all. Where did the summer go? Did we have a summer? I would like to thank **Mike, N1OKL**, **Fred, K2FR** for putting together the summer editions of the newsletter. It was nice to take a break, and and even nicer to receive a newsletter. I haven't heard what Raj's reaction was in response to getting caught nodding out in the chair. Perhaps he needed more of Cliff's coffee.

Lots of results are available at the ARRL web site. Specific contests with results available are the RTTY, 10M and DX contests. I wish there was more room in this edition of the newsletter so I could recognize RDXA folks appearing in the write-ups.

ARRL DX CW Scoring Error

Dan Henderson, N1ND

We have discovered there is a problem with the counting of multipliers in the software used to check logs for the ARRL International DX CW contest.

For Domestic Logs:

The scoring algorithm has not counted the final multiplier on each different band, resulting in every checked log being docked one multiplier per band. The software is being changed to correct this problem, which caused all stations to be docked one multiplier per band reported.

Once the recalculated results are available, the results article from QST will be re-posted in Adobe pdf format on the ARRL Web. The recalculated scores will

be used to determine all awards and any new records established by any participants. Any change in overall category winners will also be listed in QST.

On behalf of the volunteers in the log checking process and the ARRL Contest Branch, I apologize for this error. If you have any questions regarding your results once the recalculated results are posted, please contact me at N1ND@arrl.org or by phone at (860) 594-0232. Thanks for your participation and understanding.

Ham Recall

Fudy Dudy

Keeping you informed is our mission. We have recently learned that the great automotive tire recall has touched our hobby. It seems that a famous maker of CW paddles (B------ is the rumor) may be recalling all paddles made in the past 15 years. Apparently the ***rubber pads*** on bottom of the paddles are failing and in the process causing great anguish and despair among CW operators.

The U.S. Government has reported that there have been cases where the "pad failure" has caused injuries to hams when the paddles fell off the table and hit their toes. There have even been several cases where this has caused an injury to a pet or a child.

Worst of all, there are several lawsuits being filed by contesters who claim that the pad failure has cost them Q's in a contest; sometimes even the loss of a multiplier! How would you feel if your paddle suddenly started sliding all over the operating desk?

Will there actually be a recall? Who can foretell the future? Is the failure the result of shoddy manufacturing, low-cost suppliers or disgruntled employees? Hopefully we will be able to bring you the breaking news in this shocking tale of injured (physical and mental) hams.

An Interesting Story

Fred Gern, K2FR

This tale came to me in an e-mail with some conflicting detail. I will present it here in my words and would like to know if anyone can confirm it.

The Cavemen

One of the e-mail messages I received after sending the DX Reflector the notice of the death of **Sax, W2SAW** contained some interesting statements. The gentleman told a short tale with some mixed up names that supposedly involved Sax, the original XE1L and at least one other ham on a DXpedition to some unknown destination. He states: *While they were there they explored some of the local caves and decided that they were* ***"Cavemen"*** *of sorts.*

It would be interesting to verify this locally and see if this is where the Cavemen Logo originated for RDXA.

Overheard at Field Day

Fred Groner, W2TZ

The evaluation of the performance of an antenna is a difficult thing to accomplish, especially at Field Day. It seemed that the 40 meter two-element wire beam used by the SSB station was working fairly well. While listening to one of the SSB operators who had been running stations for a period of time, another Field Day

station tried to edge its way onto the W2RDX frequency. Our operator said, "Will the station trying to take over the frequency please QSY because it can't be done. No way can anyone take over this frequency." Now that is what I call confidence in antenna performance.

Ed note: Wonder who the operator was?

DX 40 Years Ago – September 1960

Ed Gable, K2MP

DX, you bet, two hundred and thirty eight thousand miles to the moon and back! This month we commemorate the first successful two-way Amateur Radio communication via the moon. The feat was performed using 1296 Mc by groups on both the East and West coasts. On the West was the Eimac Gang Radio club (W6HB) and on the East coast the Rhododendron Swamp VHF Society (W1BU) with well-known VHF'er Sam **Harris, W1FZJ**, leading the way. Helpful was the Eimac facility, which made special transmitting Klystrons modified to tune in the 1296 Mc ham band. A new company, Microwave Associates, also helped with preamps achieving a 2 dB noise figure.

In the QSL's received department, happy hams got their VU2ANI Andamans paste boards as well as the much-awaited KS4 cards from the then DXCC entity of Swan Island. OK, now keep this straight; the country Malagasy Republic is gone as is Ubangi-Shari, to become the Union of Central African Republics, but only until June 20th when portions become the Mali Republic. Don't update your DXCC list yet as eight days later Madagascar became the Malagasy Republic (remember them). It took several years to straighten that mess out.

The DXpedition of the summer was KG6ICD of Marcus Island, which netted 2,000 QSO's in 85 countries. Surprise of the summer was MP4MAB/4W1 who delighted about 200 20-meter phone guys with a Yemen QSO followed by a valid QSL. Weird one of the summer was scientific group on Galapagos signing HCCC8.

In a full page QST ad, Tube maker Eimac announced that Bill Orr, W6SAI, becomes the head of the Amateur department. Bill, a DX'er, for the next 20 years designed high power tubes much loved by amateur operators world-wide.

Do you like high power mobile DX? Well, not enough of you did as a one time, full-page ad by Yuba Industries displayed their 1 kW mobile linear amplifier built into the base of a mobile whip. The power supply delivered 2500 volts at .4 amps and operated from 6 to 60 Mc into a 96-inch whip. Oh, yes, it was also water-cooled. They were never heard from again.

DXCC Info

Fred Gern, K2FR

Need the latest scoop on your DXCC status? Well the answer is easy if you have E-Mail and are an ARRL member.

Send a request to: DXCC@ARRL.ORG

In a very short time you will receive an Adobe Acrobat file containing ALL your data. Old timers NOT in the computer need to go snail mail. If you do NOT have Adobe Acrobat it is available FREE at the ARRL Web site

Ask Fudy Dudy

Fudy Dudy

Dear Fudy,

I've been told that in some Third World Countries most if not all hams are very wealthy and that bribes are often used to obtain a ham license. This, my friends say, is the reason that there are some DX countries that have little or no CW operation from them. The local hams have obtained licenses by bribing civil servants and probably have never taken any tests!

Is this true? Do you think such a system would work in the United States? I have several friends who have lots of money but absolutely no talent, skill, desire or motivation. They want to be hams! I think they should be able to bribe someone and get a license too. After all, if it's good enough in Third World Countries it should be good enough here: we're the next potential Third World Country! I'm very disillusioned!

Dear Disillusioned,

You're right, in some parts of the world money will buy you anything, even a ham ticket. Because of the low standard of living in these places and the accompanying low wage levels it is very common for civil service and elected officials to take bribes.

Luckily for us these types of things CANNOT happen in the United States. Most public officials and civil employees here are paid VERY well, and will not accept bribes at a level that would get your friends a license.

But don't despair! This is an election year and while civil service employees may not take the bribes you can rest assured that those **running for election will!** All your friends have to do is make well-placed "**soft money**" donations to key political figures in **both** parties and they will be able to get anything: a ham license with no test, a pilots license for a blind person; whatever! Why, if they have enough cash they can probably even get the rules changed.

Ed note: Fudy Dudy can be reached at askfudydudy@hotmail.com

HF Demo at the RMSC

Peter Fournia, W2SKY

A request has been made from RARA to set up and operate an HF station at the Rochester Museum and Science Center. This would take place during the Holiday Science and Technology program. This is a standing technology show at RMSC during 3 days between Christmas and New Year. This year's show is December 27, 28 and 29 (Wednesday through Friday).

The focus in on youth although many parents attend to accompany their children. Interesting demonstrations are provided by amateur and professional organizations. Amateur radio has been present for the past 3 years thanks to hams from several clubs. RARA is planning to participate again this year.

An HF demo has not been possible in the past because we could not bring a transmission line into the building. We tried an antenna in the building but the signal did not propagate. I am working with RMSC to resolve this problem and expect we will have a G5RV antenna on the roof with the transmission line entering through a window near the HF transceiver.

Here is what RARA is asking for:

RDXA organize and operate the HF station

Operate 1, 2 or all 3 days - whatever you can support.

Expect some help from the other hams that will be at the exhibit (radio coaches, RARA, XARC)

Make lots of contacts; keep a log, even a pin map showing our contacts

Invite youth and RMSC passersby to participate as much as possible.

Preferable to have a Laptop to demo the TR control and the logging

Also, it would be preferable to have a block diagram of the station.

RFI Exposure Rules

Fred Gern, K2FR

This is important reading!

ARLB037 RF safety rules now in force for all amateurs Newington CT September 1, 2000 To all radio amateurs

Starting September 1, every US amateur is required to fully comply with the FCC's RF exposure guidelines.

The regulations, which went into effect January 1, 1998, require US Amateur Radio operators to read and understand the rules and, where necessary, perform technical evaluations to determine that their stations are compliant with the new regulations. Up until now, only hams that have had to file an Amateur Radio application with the FCC have had to certify compliance with the RF exposure rules. As of September 1, all amateurs must comply.

Under the regulations, an amateur station must not exceed the maximum permissible exposure limits for transmitter operation.

"These regulations are not a major burden on the Amateur Radio Service," said ARRL Lab Supervisor Ed Hare, W1RFI. "Most hams are already in compliance with the MPE requirements; some hams will need to conduct a simple station evaluation."

A complete description of the rules is available on the ARRL Web site at http://www.arrl.org/news/rfsafety/.
The site also contains resources to make your station evaluation quite painless.

Address questions about RF safety and the FCC exposure guidelines to ARRL Lab Supervisor Ed Hare, W1RFI, ehare@arrl.org

How's DX?

Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

Sorry about the delay… had to break away to work the KH5 on 17m.

Hope you've enjoyed the summer and are looking forward to contest season.

I'll have some "season" ending numbers for the October meeting but I'm sure you'll agree, participation and propagation played a key role in our outstanding totals.

Let's hope this fall proves to be as rewarding (even though, where is 10m STILL??).

6m was a blast this season with GM, G, CT, VP2V, C6, EA8, CU7 all finding their way in the logs here this summer (and all but one are confirmed (direct) already!).

Look for a comment by **Fred, K2FR** elsewhere in this issue but I'd suggest you all get an up-to-date listing from the league on where you stand with country counts. Bill Moore sent mine within hours and lo and behold, 15m is the place I

should be. Only about 25 shy (of 100) but since 10m has been so bad, I've been amazed at how open 15m has been. Take a look at what I've gotten there recently and I'm sure you'll agree.

As I write this I'm watching the Cluster for the reappearance of ZD9. He was workable on 17m this morning at about 5am and weakened there about 7am. Big pileup on 15m about 6pm and was spotted throughout the day on 10m. He should be there `till September 20th so no excuses.

I'm still accepting logs from last "season" so get em in!

IN THE LOG (non-contest, only the good stuff)

E4/G3WQU (20M CW)
5H3RK (20M CW)
KH6ND/KH5 (20M, 15M CW)
G0RUZ (6M SSB)
G4RQI (6M SSB)
MM0AMW (6M SSB)
F0MOT (15M CW)
FR5FD (17M CW)
J28EW (17M CW)
CU7BC (6M SSB)
AP2JZB (20M CW… MAYBE LID)
1A0KM (20M SSB)
SV9CVY (20M SSB)
FO0CLA (17M CW)
ZK1AXU (17M CW)
FR/F6KDF/T (20M CW, SSB, 17M CW)
D2EB (15M SSB)
CT4NH (6M SSB)
YB0ECT (15M CW)
FO0/F6DRO (12M CW)
VU2TS (20M CW)
AP2JZB (17M SSB… THE REAL ONE)
4W/ON6TT (15M SSB)
DU3NXE (17M CW)
XF1/F6BUM (17M, 20M, 40M CW)
S92SV (20M, 10M SSB)
HL1CG (15M CW)
A45XR (20M CW)
E41/OK1DTP(15M CW)
9V1JA (15M CW)
VK0MM (20M CW)
ZK1FGV (15M CW)
TA3DD (20M CW)
KH6ND/KH5 (17M CW)

IN THE MAIL (non_buro pack)

Lots, I'll list em next month…

Thanks once again to the 59(9) DXReport, my main source of weekly DX information.

Morse No Longer Required??

From the ARRL web site

NEWINGTON, CT, Sep 5, 2000--The 11th International Amateur Radio Union Region III Conference ended September 1 by resolving to seek the ***ultimate removal*** of Morse code proficiency as an International Telecommunication Union licensing requirement for HF operation. As "an interim measure," the conference agreed to support the reduction of all Morse code testing speeds to 5 WPM.

"IARU Region III strongly supports Morse code as an effective and efficient mode of communication," the resolution said in its preamble. "However, it believes that the position of Morse as a qualifying criterion for an HF amateur license is not relevant to the healthy future of amateur radio."

The resolution urged IARU Region III member societies to seek an interim 5 WPM Morse code testing requirement while looking toward eventually eliminating the Morse requirement altogether. "We recommend that, setting aside any previous relevant decisions of earlier Conferences, a policy of the removal of Morse code testing as an ITU

requirement for an amateur license to operate on frequencies below 30 MHz be adopted by IARU Region 3," the Conference resolution declared.

Voting in accordance with ARRL Board policy, International Affairs Vice President **Rod Stafford, W6ROD**, cast the lone dissenting vote on the League's behalf. The Hong Kong Amateur Radio Transmitting Society, whose members have previously supported retaining the Morse requirement, abstained. The Asian and Pacific region's other member societies favored the resolution.

Amateur Radio on the Space Station

From the ARRL web site

The space shuttle Atlantis blasted off on schedule September 8, bringing Amateur Radio operation from the International Space Station a giant leap closer to reality. On board Atlantis is the initial Amateur Radio on the International Space Station equipment as well as other supplies needed by the Expedition 1 ISS crew members.

As part of the multinational ARISS project, the gear will be stowed aboard the ISS until the Expedition 1 crew comes aboard in late October. The Expedition 1 crew will consist of US astronaut **Bill Shepherd, KD5GSL**, and Russian Cosmonauts **Sergei Krikalev, U5MIR**, and **Yuri Gaidzenko**, whose call sign was not available.

Although astronaut **Dan Burbank, KC5ZSX**, is aboard Atlantis, there will be no Amateur Radio operation from the shuttle or the ISS during this mission, STS-106. Atlantis will deliver the ARISS VHF and UHF hand-held transceivers as well as a TNC for packet, a specially developed headset and signal adapter module plus power adapters and interconnecting cables.

The ARISS initial station gear will be installed temporarily aboard the Functional Cargo Block module and use an existing antenna that's being adapted to support FM voice and packet on 2 meters but not on 70 cm. The ARISS gear will get a more-permanent home aboard the Service Module next year, once VHF and UHF antennas can be installed.

NASA and the Russian space organization Energia have signed agreements that spell out the place of Amateur Radio aboard the ISS. A technical team, called ISS Ham, has been officially set up to serve as the interface to support hardware development, crew training and operations from space.

A Russian call sign, RZ3DZR, has been issued for the ISS ham radio station. A German call sign, DL0ISS, also has been issued, and a US call sign will be applied for.

Ed note: While not “DX” as we’re used to, the thought of working astronauts on board the Space Station using VHF sounds quite intriguing.

2 Meter-isms

Fred Gern, K2FR

Heard on a nearby machine recently:

"I'll call when I'm a bit higher"

What's he smokin'?

The Myths of Low Band DXing

Gerry, VE6LB

"VE6LB, you're 58 on Norfolk Island, over" "VK9NS, thanks Jim you're 59 here in Calgary, 73s". Sounds like a typical 20 meter exchange doesn't it? The exchange is typical, the DX is semi-rare, but the band is 80 meters.

I was surprised at the number of amateurs who have commented that they have never heard DX on 80 meters, much less worked any. The purpose of this article is to dispel some of the myths of working DX on the low bands.

As the sunspot cycle declines and propagation on the higher frequencies diminishes, there will be more of an operating focus on the less solar affected low bands (40, 80 and 160 meters). The prospects for working DX on these bands will increase due to the increased activity, as the higher bands will be closed more often, and the lower atmospheric noise because of lower levels of solar activity. My examples will refer to 80 meters although the same basics apply to the other low bands.

There are a number of common myths about low band DXing that I hope to dispel. These are:

1. There is no (or little) DX on the low bands!
2. You need a big antenna and high power (it's only for the big guns) to work DX on the low bands!
3. DX is so scarce that you need to spend many hours (mostly late at night) to find DX on the low bands!
4. Any DX to be found on the low bands is on CW!
5. There is no low band DX during the summer!
6. The low bands are too noisy to work DX!

Before attacking these myths, I'd like to relate my success in working DX on 80 meters with modest means.

Over the last three years, I've worked over 100 80 meter countries over all continents - split about 40% SSB and 60% CW. The first 50 countries were worked with a garage-roof-mounted GAP DX VI and 100 watts.

The balance were worked using an inverted "L" wire antenna stapled to our two-story wood frame house with a wooden pole twelve feet long above the roof to get the antenna apex up to 35 feet. The balance of the antenna length, 30 feet, was tied back to the far end of the house at a slight downward angle. The power was also increased to 500 watts for the second (and tougher) 50 countries.

Now, to dispel the myths, point by point, and then provide some tips on low band DXing, then to get on with successful low band DXing.

1. There is a surprising amount of DX on the low bands, the secret is to know when and where to listen for it (this also applies to the high bands). During the hour of darkness the low bands are often open to various parts of the world depending on the time and season. More on this in the following tips.

2. Simple vertically polarized wire or tubing antennas, with a good ground, will do a surprisingly good job. The vertical polarization will provide a low angle of radiation and minimize the path losses to the DX station. These types of antennas will not be star performers for short hop work.

3. You don't have spend your life in front of the rig to work low band DX (this applies equally to high band DXing). The secret is to make effective use of your

time by being in front of your rig when there is a high probability of the DX also being there. By understanding propagation characteristics and the operating habits of your target DX you can be in the shack at the time when you have the best chance to work DX. It is true that to be wildly successful at low band DXing you will have to give up some sleep late at night and early in the morning to be at the rig. I had the good fortune to have a dog who understood my need to catch a few new ones and scratched at the door to go out in the wee hour. She became known locally as "the DX dog" as more often than not there was a new one on the air during her nocturnal trips.

4. There is lots of DX on both SSB and CW but you have to know where on the band to find them. On the low bands the DX frequents specific areas of the bands, sometimes by convention and in some countries, by regulation. More on this in the following tips.

5. There is considerable and unique DX on the low bands during the summer. Although the low bands are noisier due to summer static and electrical storms, there are still excellent openings especially in the morning hours when the bands quiet down. Also, there is a different selection of DX opportunities in the summer due to the unique alignment of the Gray Line, and therefore the Global darkness pattern, compared to winter propagation patterns. Don't forget, Summer in North America is Winter in Australia.

6. Yes, the low bands are generally noisier than the higher bands but that noise comes from two sources. One being atmospheric noise, storms, static, etc. and the other being local man-made noise. The good news is you can often reduce the man-made noise with a bit of detective and corrective work. Much of the "noise" is man-made and is likely within or near your home. In my case the major source of "noise" was a couple of older light dimmers that put out significant (S9 on 80) interference.

Ed note: This article will be continued next month.

For Sale

Dave Wright, N2CK

Bargain priced antennas and system. Cushcraft X7, seven element HF tribander, 13 months new, Ham-IV rotator, 40 foot EZ Way Crank up, fold over tower, 2 meter 6 dB gain vertical, 2 meter and 435 MHz circularly polarized satellite antennas, 10 element 2 meter, 15 element 432 MHz yagis, 160 meter dipole with 450 ohm ladder line. U100 elevation rotors. X7 and tower need to be removed, others stored in barn. Package offers around $250 considered. You take down in Pittsford. W2GV estate. Contact **Ed, K2MP** at 392-3088 or k2mp@eznet.net.

FT-920, 6 months old and low hours. It has the FM filter. Price on this rig new was $1400. Asking $1100. Page **Dave, N2LJR** at 528-2721.

Home Brew 5 el. 2 meter beam, new $50.00

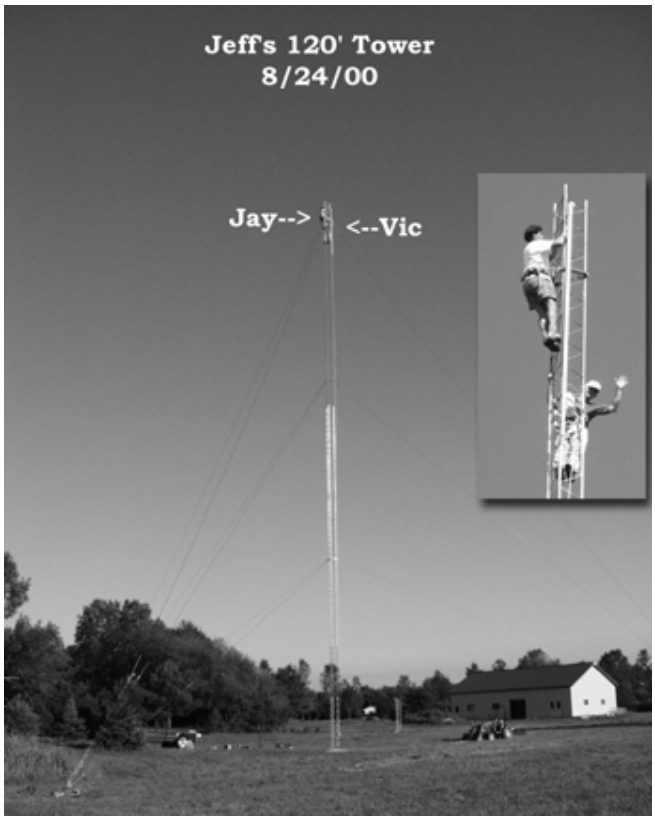
Mosley TA 31 M, 10/15/20m, full size, full power, rotating dipole. $125.00

Mosley TW31 M, 12/17/30m, full size, full power, rotating dipole. $125.00

All antennas in NEW condition, assembled, and stored inside.

Whistler, DC to AC Inverter,1500 w. cont., 3000 w. peak., new. $300.00

Len, WA2ZNC , (wa2znc@juno.com) 716-229-5470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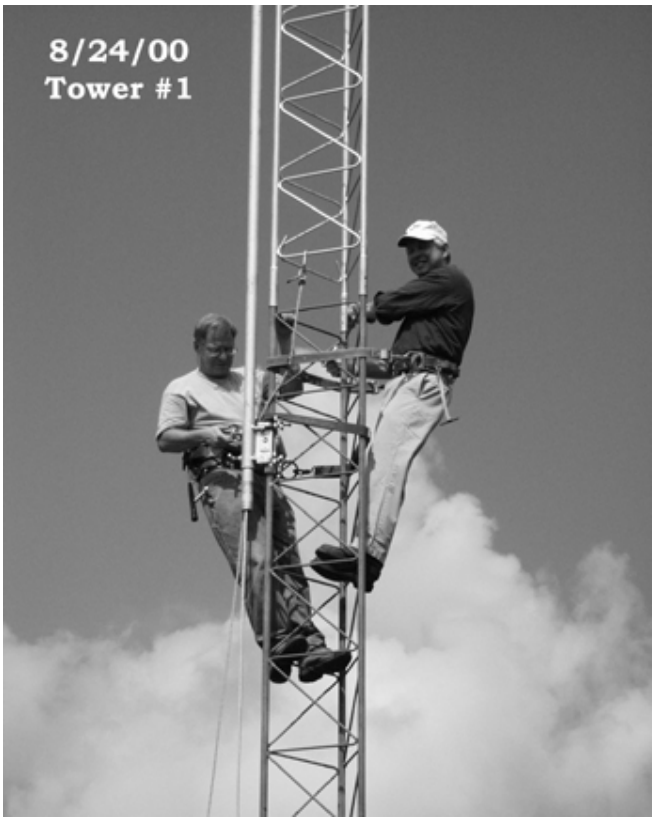
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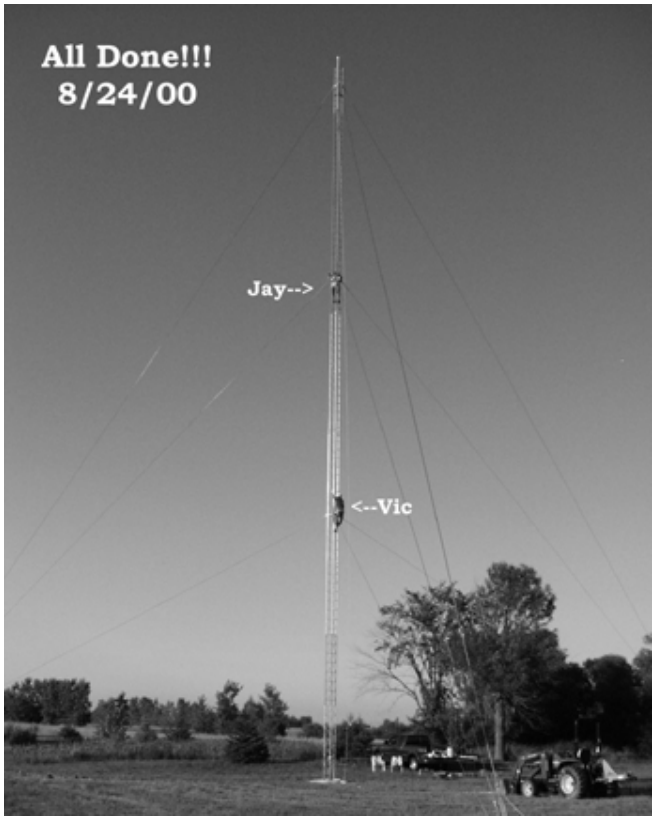
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Rochester DX Association Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the Rochester (NY) DX Association, and is published prior to each monthly meeting for the information of members and others interested in Amateur Radio DX and Contesting.

You are cordially invited to any meeting, held at 7:30 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from September through June. We meet in the "auditorium" of the Social Services Building at 111 Westfall Road in Rochester, New York

Club officers and committees

President	*Mike Rundle, N1OKL*
Vice President	*Fred Groner, W2TZ*
Secretary-Treasurer	*Ed Gable K2MP*
Board of Directors	
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DX Chairman	*Chris Shalvoy K2CS*
Contest Chairman	*Chris Shalvoy, K2CS*
Newsletter Publisher	*Dave Wright N2CK*

Dues and correspondence

Ed Gable K2MP
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Hilton, NY 14468

The RDXA website has moved and is located at: www.qsl.net/rdxa
Check it out.

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