



**Meeting
Tuesday
Apr 17th
7:30 p.m.**

**IOTA DXpedition
by Mike, N1OKL**

Mike will describe his recent experience at the receiving end of a DX pileup.

ROCHESTER HAMFEST

June 1st, 2nd, 3rd Save \$2.00.
General Registration and Flea Market space tickets available from **Irv Goodman, AF2K**, at April and May meetings.

President's Soapbox

Mike Rundle, N1OKL

Well folks, last night's thunderstorm is proof positive that spring has finally come to WNY! For the first time since last fall, I unplugged my antennas and shorted them to ground. The coming of spring naturally brings thoughts of antenna work or repairs, hamfests, and of course, Field Day.

In a little more than two months, RDXA will make its annual pilgrimage to Webster Park Campground for a weekend of radio fun. It is time to think about what you want Field Day to be this year. The past several years have seen our Club mount a concerted FD scoring effort. Several have suggested that this year it is time for a different approach. Among the proposals have been: a QRP focus, a QRO outing, antenna experimentation, etc. Along with some changes in the FD rules, it seems that indeed something different could add interest and increase member participation. Your BOD is open to any and all suggestions. Let's hear 'em!

Another spring event at RDXA is our annual awards banquet. This year we are combining our event with that of the Rochester VHF Group. It promises to be a fun and interesting evening as we share recognition of our members' achievements with those of the VHFers. If you haven't yet contacted **Ed, K2MP**, to purchase your ticket, now is the time to do so. Remember, advance purchase is required, so get in touch with Ed and get your tickets.

Finally, spring also brings the annual nomination and election of RDXA Club officers and BOD members for the coming year. **Fred Groner, W2TZ**, is chairman of our nominating committee. **Ed Gable, K2MP**, has announced his intention to retire after serving for many years as Club Secretary/Treasurer. Ed has done a **super** job over the years as our Sec/Treas, but now we are in need of nominations for this position. It's not a difficult post and Ed will always be available to show a new officer the ropes. If you are interested yourself, or know someone who might be, contact Fred. QRU. CU at the meeting.

Editor's Corner

Dave Wright, N2CK

It looks like spring has finally arrived! With spring, comes hamfests, lightning (disconnect that coax when you're done), and Field Day! It's time to start building that list of must-find item(s) that need to be procured at Rochester. Also, start thinking about how you can help support your club at Field Day.

Speaking of Field Day, we'll be better prepared shelter-wise this year. I invested some of the club's funds into additional end and side tarps to close in the shelters. Now we can completely enclose

both shelters. Additionally I purchased a dozen screw-in anchors. I figure that with 4-5 (per shelter) of these anchors cranked down into the ground will keep the shelters attached to the ground, plus, as an added benefit, safer than hanging on to the frame - especially with a thunder-boomer fast approaching!

I caught a smile while reading the Sunday paper last weekend. I was reading an article where the Vatican was being blamed for recent cases of leukemia in children. It seems that the Vatican maintains quite an array of transmitters for sharing the word of the church. These transmitters are located in northern Rome. A Roman prosecutor is pressing a case against 3 Vatican Radio Officials. I wonder how many 300-watt Italian Amateur stations will sound more like 300 watts in the future.

I'm going to second **Mike, N1OKL's** plea for someone to step up and run for Sec/Tres. **Ed, K2MP** has done a fine job and is more than willing to train a replacement.

I need to make my usual request for articles. Tried a new mode recently? Work something rare (anybody _BUT_ Chris)? Try something unusual to break a pileup? Did it work? I encourage you to share these stories in a submission.

I was smitten by an unusual computer problem over WPX phone weekend. As usual, the date/time was verified as correct with WWV. The time zone was set to GMT, London England. As I enjoyed a nice little mini-pileup on Sunday (mostly stateside stations with low qso counts - I even had 3 stations come back to me with an exchange of 1!), I noticed as I logged my 430th Q, that the logged time was an hour behind the pc clock AND UTC! Scrambling to understand what happened, I excused myself from the frequency to determine what happened.

In the heat of the contest, I determined that if I bumped the time ahead by one hour, the logged time would be correct. I made a note of the QSO where the problem occurred so I could (hopefully) be able to trace when the time went awry. **Vic, K1PY** pointed me to a site that discussed setting up a computer for writelog. One of the things it mentioned was to use the time zone for Monrovia, Casablanca instead of Greenwich Mean Time. The reasoning being that Monrovia DID NOT use daylight savings time. So, even though my clock and time zone were set, the auto-adjust for daylight savings time turned off, windows caused an adjustment to my time stamps! Thank you Bill Gates! As an aside, I was able to exchange email with various stateside stations and determine where my times were altered. I corrected the log, and submitted my entries (with a note added to the soapbox area noting a possible time-stamp problem).

K2MP Works LDE!

Ed Gable, K2MP

The Amateur Community is well aware of Long Delayed Echoes (LDE's) and they have been reported both in the Amateur and Professional radio communication fields for over fifty years. Scientist the world-over agree that they exist, but even today cannot explain why and how. It was a Thursday evening last week on the 29th and I was checking **K2FR's** ICOM 751A on the bench to make sure it was all in order prior to putting it on the market. I tuned around 10 meter CW and heard lots of nice southern and Asian DX. "Working pretty good," I said to myself. I tapped the key and the Bird kicked up a nice 110 watts into my 4-element yagi. "Seems OK," I thought, as I absentmindedly sent dah dit ditditdit dah

in the usual test manner. I was quite surprised to hear a weak signal coming back, about RST 339, and at first missed the call, but easily copied the "PSE QSY QRM." Oops! Gee, I hate that when somebody QRM's me, so I sent back a quick "sri nw qsy de k2mp." The other station replied "tu de VP8S__ QRZ na." "Oh, just another Falkland," I murmured "but wait, he just signed again...got it this time, VP8SSI." VP8SSI was the famed DX-pedition to South Sandwich Islands and, despite hours of calling but not being able to work them with my 100 watts and a vertical in 1993, I now need them like blood. "Funny," I mused "I can't hear any of the stations he's working simplex. Not wanting to miss him this time I reached over and threw the filament switch on the Amp. The bright yellow glow from the 3-1000 gave a nice feeling of confidence. "Dahditdah ditditdahdahdah MP" I pounded out, the 3-1000 this time glowing a dull red... more confidence. Then "K2MP 5nn" YESSSS! "R R 5nn tu" and it was all over, in the log.

The next day I was flush with success but still had that nagging feeling that something was not quite right. Why had not a second visit to SSI been widely announced in DX bulletins and on the DX web sites, and why could I not hear any of the stations he was working? So, being more than mildly curious, I sent an e-mail to Tony, WA4JQS, who was on the SSI team and I now know through vintage radio collecting. Tony is always on the Boatanchor nets and websites. I asked Tony who was operating VP8SSI. His somewhat confused reply said that nobody has operated SSI since 1993. "Check the log," I asked of Tony. His reply, I need to say, raises more questions than answers... "Ed, the VP8SSI team was proud to be one of the first modern era DX-peditions with outstanding planning and execution. I remember proudly our 43,330 qso's, a

major accomplishment for the time.”
“Today, as you requested, I checked the log and you are there for a 10 meter CW QSO at 2337Z on 3/29/93, and by-the-way, you never requested a QSL.” “Even more incredible,” Tony went on to say, “is that for some reason the log now shows a QSO count of 43,331.” “I can’t figure it out.” Can you ?

March VE Test Session Results

Rajiv Dewan, N2RD

Two candidates took advantage of testing sessions offered by VEs of the RDXA. They both were successful. **Curtis Braun, N2HKD**, an active VHFer, avid contester and rover operator successfully upgraded to General. Will we see him on the low bands? Will he bring his talents to HF contesting? We hope so. The other candidate, Akira Uotami upgraded to Extra. He had just taken the general written element three days before at the Xerox ARC test session. What lies behind this rapid advance? Akira has been a ham for over 35 years, starting at the age of 15 -- in Japan. In addition to the CSCE for element 3, he brought along his Japanese license for us to see.

Once again, the number of RDXA VEs exceeded the number of candidates - by a ration of 3:1 this time. Thanks for the successful session go to:

Scott Blystone, NY2A
Brian Ceroky, AC4W
Ed Gable, K2MP
Mike Rundle, N1OKL
Rick Wells, W2RW

Our next testing session will precede our May meeting. Please contact me if you would like to help

DX of the past - April 1962

Ed Gable, K2MP

The DX-peditions of the month then included a weeklong operation by VU’s operating as VU2US/AC5 in Bhutan. Unlike today’s mega-plex operations, these chaps gave considerable excitement running 100 watts of AM and army surplus BC-348 receivers. Also just activated was the only Eritrea station, ET2US. There was a lot of confusion on the bands as CR10AB (CR one-zero AB) showed up on the very bottom of twenty, actually 13.997 kc. He worked a few surprised DX’ers from six land and the qrt’d. Those proud of logging the prize Portuguese Timor catch found themselves writing April 1, 1962, in the log. You need to be a really, really new DX’er not to have heard of world-wandering Gus Browning, W4BPD. This month Gus operated from Aldabra Islands as VQ9AA. He had 210 gallons of gas for the generator and the same amount of Coca-Cola for himself, consuming both at a gallon an hour. Hot in them there Seychelles! Finally, you could easily work W1MV/KP6 any evening on 14.011 . KP6 then was the now much needed KP5 on Palmyra. On the contest scene, the highest ARRL DX Contest CW score, single operator, was HC1AGI with 826,667 points and the highest USA operator was Vic Clark, W4KFC with 729k. Phone scores were much lower with the number one position going to W1ONK with 374,730 single operator points. From the pages of QST we see Hallicrafters announcing their new SX-115 receiver. Another new advertiser of commercial SSB equipment is a company called RF Communications, Inc. of 13 Canal Street in Rochester.

Historical Bits from K2MP:

1923: First Amateur two-way Transatlantic QSO between F8AB and W1MO. U.S. Patent office issues patent for SSB. U.S. Bureau of Standards changes measuring technique from wavelength to frequency.

DX World

Lee Jennings, ZL2AL

The D68C DXpedition to the Comoros is over and our bands have returned to normal, whatever "normal" is when one thinks of DX. D68C was everywhere at once and broke every record for a major DXpedition. One day totals of over 15,000 and a final tally when they closed the log of 168,000 QSOs attests to the fact that they did their homework and planning well. I asked **Neville Cheadle, G3NUG** for some thoughts on his fine effort as team leader when he returned. Here are Neville's comments on this epic adventure.

SOME FIRST REACTIONS ON RETURN FROM D68C

Having just returned from the D68C Comoros DXpedition I thought I'd jot down a few points of interest to DXers and DXpeditioners. There will be plenty of time in due course to write up the complete story of the DXpedition.

When we returned from the Spratly 9M0C DXpedition in February 1998, we were very disappointed when we visited many UK clubs that most members did not hear us and, if they did, they felt that they would not be able to break the pile-ups. This was despite the fact that 9M0C at that time was the fourth largest DXpedition ever based on the QSO count.

We decided that next time we must do much better. After several false starts we identified the Comoros as a potential location with good paths to Asia, Europe and North America. It was semi-rare, particularly in Asia and North America. The reaction from some of the UK's Big Guns was interesting, "Why the Comoros? – Most DXers have that on most bands". 168,000 QSOs later, we can demonstrate the fallacy of that argument!

In order to get to the Little Pistols, we decided on the following strategy:

- We would be loud everywhere. This meant having mono-banders on every band and getting them up high. Many were at 40 feet, very close to the sea, but on top of a small cliff giving an effective height of around 60 feet ASL. We had four elements on most bands and six elements on 10m.
- We would operate for nearly three weeks covering three full weekends.
- We would have at least six high power stations. This would enable us to allocate a station to a specific band for most parts of the day.
- We would examine the propagation charts very carefully and exploit every potential opening.

Having decided on a strategy we promoted the DXpedition in several ways:

- Through very comprehensive web pages
- Through a well produced brochure to DX clubs worldwide
- Through marketing bulletins
- We also wrote an article for the "Down to Earth" section of the RSGB's RadCom magazine entitled "Working D68C – a 'How To' Guide."

All these initiatives had a tremendous impact resulting in over 13,000 contacts with UK stations and possibly around 4,000 UK uniques. Our article had explained some of the basics for working a DXpedition – best times and bands, working split frequency, suitable aerials etc., and it really seemed to catch the imagination of many UK amateurs. I personally spoke to around 40 who commented along the following lines “We read the article and decided to have a go, I’m using the sloper just as you described it”. Some Gs said that D68C was their first DX contact; others dusted off their rigs and had a go. This gave a tremendous kick to the team and generated a feeling of real confidence in the future of amateur radio in the UK.

There is a message in all this for potential DXpeditioners. Your destination does not need to be very rare but you do need to put out strong signals and to be on the right bands at the right time. If you are only on the air for a single weekend and achieve around 20/30,000 QSOs you will not be giving many stations an all-time new one although hopefully some will gain some new band-slots.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

All team members were briefed to identify themselves at least every 2 to 3 QSOs. This seemed to work well and was particularly important, as there were 12 other DXpeditions active at the same time. ‘Persistence’ was another key message. Keep on trying to get that station into the log that you heard with a partial or full call and ignore other callers until you have done so.

But most important of all was the way we worked split frequency. Even at the start with huge pile-ups we never used more than 15 kHz on SSB and much less on CW. Yet we heard other DXpeditions using 50-100 kHz and wiping out much of

the band. This is poor operating, unnecessary and selfish and is to be deplored. Most of our splits were 5 to 10 kHz and if we found we were clashing with another DXpedition we simply moved frequency and got on with it. With loud signals and the DX clusters this was not a problem.

After a week or so, we sometimes listened on a single frequency and achieved rates well in excess of 200 QSOs per hour. We then started working simplex; it was interesting to note how the pile-ups then re-emerged. Many operators do not like working split frequency even if they have the kit to do so. We never worked by numbers. With good kit and good ears this is completely unnecessary and causes great frustration amongst the DX community. If you use radios designed for mobile working with poor selectivity then you will have problems dealing with a major pile-up. It really is worth investing in a decent radio. With the launch of the MP MkV, second-hand MPs will be becoming increasingly available at reasonable prices. And of course there are other brands.

Another technique we used was to call for “the M5”. This is the new low power British license. Sure enough because we were loud, the pile-up would stand by and often there would be an M5 calling. This worked again and again. In fact, we used to work strings of five Gs at a time – the pile-up allowing us to do this. There were other interesting aspects of the operation – PSK31, FM on 10m, working the UK and US Novices and the US Generals. We tried to accommodate everyone.”

There is much more to tell about the D68C operation. A huge amount of planning and logistics was involved together with some fascinating technology and lots more. More about this later. For the time being if you are planning a DXpedition the message is:

- Be loud, with the best antennas possible.
- Be on the right bands at the right time.
- Take decent transceivers.
- Work split using no more than 10/15 kHz on SSB and less on CW
- Don't work by numbers.

Neville Cheadle G3NUG, D68C Team Leader

Flea Market Talk

Rick Mintz, W1TY

Ed note: As Flea Market season is upon us, this is a very timely submission!

Found at "www.wireless-prd.com". The site is for one of Rick's friends he grew up with.

This rig puts out a big signal... It's 50khz wide!

This is a really good CW rig... It doesn't work on SSB!

It seems to be a vintage regenerative type...It oscillates!

I just re-tubed it... Got 'em from a questionable USED tube stock!

I just aligned it... The slugs on the transformers are jammed!

I don't know if it works... It doesn't work and probably never has!

It doesn't CHIRP... Probably cause it doesn't transmit!

The audio sounds great... The 120hz buzz is faithfully reproduced!

It just was serviced... I sprayed WD-40 all over the wiring!

It comes with the original box... Just scoop the kitty litter out!

Better buy it cause it won't last... No translation needed!

Sure, it works at full power... It sucks all it can from the wall!

Frequency stability is great... VFO doesn't work; you'll have to use crystals!

This rig has wide band coverage..... It drifts up and down and right out of band!

This rig was popular in its day.... They had many HF nets on repairing it!

QST gave this rig a great review.... The language broke new ground for profanity!

It might need a bit of tweaking... Marconi himself couldn't align it, let alone fix it!

It was used in government service... Stored outside on wooden pallets!

The dial drive may need lubricating... The gears are stripped and set screws locked!

I plugged the rig in to see if it lights up... The light came from the 2 ft flames!

I'm selling it cause I have 2 of them... I'm selling the parts radio!

It came from an estate sale... Any problems, take it up with the owner!

I'll help you carry it your car... I'll do anything to get rid of this boat anchor!

This is the rig of my dreams, I really wanted one as a kid, but now (sniff) I've got to let it go... As I've gotten older I've realized what a hunk of junk it is!

I'd keep this baby, but my wife is making me clean everything out... I finally got around to giving this rig the proverbial heave-ho!

Contest Calendar

Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

May, 2001

12-13 50 MHz Sprint

26-27 CQWW WPX CW

June, 2001

9-10 ARRL June VHF QSO Party

23-24 ARRL Field Day

July, 2001

14-15 IARU World Championship

2001 DX Contest Odyssey

Fred Laun, K3ZO

The date is October 23, 2001, and OM Bixby is busily preparing for the 56th annual CQWW Phone Contest. The new category allowing credit for QSOs with outposts on the Moon and Mars and space-ship mobiles above 1296 MHz has necessitated the reprogramming of the station computer to take advantage of these new categories. Bixby is looking forward to the QSO with Mars, as the Mars MARS station has been granted special authority to work amateur stations for the duration of the contest.

One programming problem has been to arrange to allow the computer to continue to QSO stations on the HF bands while at the same time participating in the Mars pileup on 1296. To QRX for the time it takes a signal to get to Mars and back would be extremely wasteful, especially since the pileup will undoubtedly be horrendous and one cannot plan on getting Mars on the first call. After all, with 900,000 JAs, 400,000 Ws, 300,000 BYs and 100,000 Gs, not to mention the others, pileups are something for a computer to behold in this day and age! Why just last night in the X22AA pileup

Bixby's computer was dumbfounded by the tactics of that DX-hogging computer at JA23FLQO.

Bixby is pleased that the single-operator category has finally been eliminated in this year's rules. After all, with almost every station now computer-equipped, the single-operator category had long since become a relic of an anachronistic age.

Bixby has a secret weapon this year which should confound the competition. It cost a lot of money, but all of Bixby's computer's contest voice tapes this year will feature the voice of the actress Tay Kitt Hoff. Those other sex-starved computers will go wild when sensing this voice coming through the pile-ups first, but Prof. Schultz of the Computer Institute assures Bixby that after the QSO there will be a temporary recovery period during which the computer contacted will operate at less than 50% efficiency. Naturally Bixby has programmed his computer to sense the signals of the principal competition first so that they can be worked right at the beginning of the contest, allowing Bixby to get off to a big lead while the competing computers struggle to fight off the effects of the actress' voice.

The multi-nation agreement on standardizing propagation by laser bombardment of the ionosphere should make this year's contest very interesting. Imagine, all bands open to all parts of the globe around the clock! No geographic area will have the advantage on propagation. Now everything will hinge on who has the better station, the better computer and the best command of programming skills.

Yes, this year's contest should be the greatest ever. If Bixby can successfully avoid last year's equipment breakdown by programming the computer to sense

impending transmitter difficulties, he may even be able to take the XYL and the kiddies to the beach and let the computer operate the contest all alone! Maybe the single operator category should have been retained, after all.

73, Fred

New York State PRB1 Bill Revisited

From the ARRL

True to their word, supporters of an Amateur Radio antenna bill in the State of New York are back this year with new bills introduced in both houses of the legislature. ARRL Hudson Division Director **Frank Fallon, N2FF**, says measures to incorporate the essence of the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1 into state law have been filed in the Senate as S.2893, with four sponsors, and in the Assembly as A.1565.

If approved, the companion measures would require localities to "reasonably accommodate" Amateur Radio antennas and would prevent localities from restricting antenna structures to less than 95 feet above ground level or from restricting the number of support structures. The bills have been referred to the Local Government Committee.

An effort to get an antenna law on the books in the Empire State last year failed to make it through the legislative process despite gaining significant support. This year's bills are identical to last year's.

Fallon said he's hoping that support for last year's campaign will carry over to this

year's effort, and he's calling on New York amateurs to "help make ham radio history in New York" by getting behind the bills.

In addition to contacting their Assembly representatives and state senators, Fallon said, hams should contact the two chairs of the Local Government Committee, Assemblyman Thomas P. DiNapoli, Senator Mary Lou Rath, as well as Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Senate Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno.

The Hudson Division Web page <http://www.arrl-hudson.org> has a copy of the bill, links to find names and addresses of state representatives, and copies of sample letters.

"As one of the ARRL Directors who has been dealing with this issue for a number of years I am very happy about all the efforts in the other states and now again in New York," Fallon said.

Ed note: Everybody should make the effort to follow up on this one!

Web Sites

From various postings to reflectors

The new Windows version of MiniProp, W6ELProp is now available from Shel W6EL. The web site is:
<http://www.qsl.net/w6elprop/>

The program is free for non-commercial use!

Catch the latest solar update from SpaceWeather.com

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

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