



Regular Meeting – New Location!
October 21th 19:30

Gander Mountain
Meeting Room
300 Jay Scutti Boulevard
Henrietta, NY 14623

HF Propagation
Tools and Techniques
Software Demo and Giveaway
by Rajiv Dewan, N2RD

The sunspot cycle is headed for its low point and the low bands are becoming ever more important. With marginal antennas on city lots, we have to use all the help we can to make the contact. To this end, this month's feature presentation will help you plan and time your qso attempts to take the maximum advantage of good propagation conditions. Tools and techniques for propagation forecasting will be demonstrated.

President's Soapbox **Fred Groner, W2TZ**

During the Sept. Board of Directors meeting, the issue of how to distribute the RDXA Newsletter to its members was discussed to some detail. The recent postage rate increase, the need to have a zero cost copier available for printing, as well as the fact the many clubs were sending their newsletters via e-mail prompted the discussion. By the way, thanks to our new RDXA Newsletter editor, Raj, N2RD and to Paul, K2DB, who printed and mailed the Sept. Newsletter. The first newsletter of the year is usually very difficult, so thanks guys for a job well done.

In order to gauge the RDXA membership on this issue, the question of the day at the introductions of the Sept. RDXA meeting was: "Do you prefer to receive your RDXA Newsletter via Hard-Copy or E-mail?" I tabulated the comments and the result was surprising but good for RDXA. About 29 people attended the Sept. meeting and 24 members commented.

20 members preferred E-mail, 3 members preferred Hard-copy, and one member preferred E-mail if it meant keeping the membership dues at the present level (\$15/yr).

Let me quickly point out that this was not a vote but an assessment of membership opinion. There are various reasons for choosing E-mail or Hard-copy. It is my opinion that we will eventually accommodate either means of distribution. We don't want to lose any members because of this issue. The BOD at their Oct. meeting will work out some of the details. At present, all members have access to the RDXA Newsletter via the RDXA web site. It would be great if the Newsletter was e-mailed direct for various reasons. It is going to take a few months to work things out, but the Oct. Newsletter will probably be distributed by both modes in an attempt to get the transition started. Let our Secr./Treas., Charlie, WB2HJV know if your preference isn't satisfied with the Oct. issue.

CU at the October RDXA meeting

Renew your RDXA Membership
Today

The membership dues are \$15 for the 2003-04 Season.

Mail your renewal to:

Charles Kuhfuss, WB2HJV
RDXA Secretary & Treasurer
55 Stoney Path Lane,
Rochester, NY 14626.

A New Meeting Place

Paul, K2DB

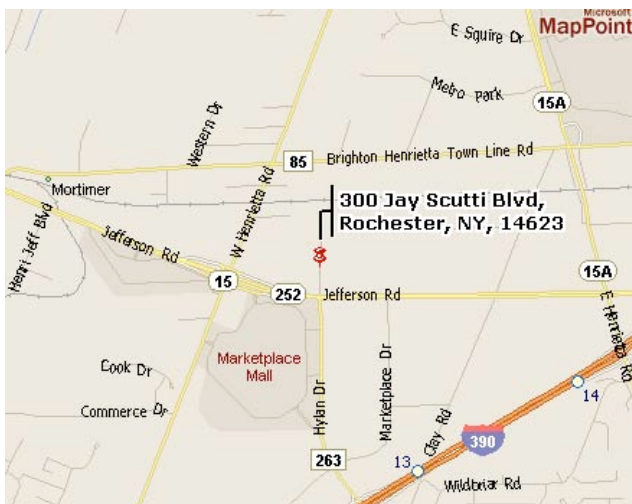
I took my bow to Gander Mountain to have a new string, arrow rest, and buy arrows for bow season. Then I strolled around this huge outdoor store. In the front of the store, is a meeting room, with a sign that it is available for meetings for outdoor related activities. I said, well, Field Day is outdoor related, and asked to talk to the manager. John Causyn met me, and I explained to him the reason I was asking about the meeting room. I explained to him exactly what we are all about, the loss of our meeting place at Westfall, and where we are meeting now. He answered, "We know the lack of facilities for club meetings, and we welcome all club to use our facilities."

So here is the scoop as of now, I made an executive decision and booked the meeting room, starting this month, until the end of next year, 2004. We are booked for the third Tuesday from October thru May of next year and September thru November, next year, from 7:30 till 9:00 PM. I did not book December, because of our usual Holiday get together at a members QTH.

The store closes at 9:00 PM, but we can usually be welcome till around 9:30. The room is quite large, sits, yes I said sits up to 50 comfortably in padded chairs with armrests, has tables for set-ups, etc. The room is totally closed to the public (store), has a 48" flat screen TV, audio PA system, and all needed audio and video equipment plus a pull down movie screen. The manager was not sure, but he thought it hooked up to computers too, we have to check that out. There is plenty of parking in their lot, no restrictions, and the meeting room is in the front of the store, just past the cash registers. There are no stairs to contend with either, it is totally handicapped accessible.

The best part is the cost, now all we have to do is come up with an additional dues increase to cover the cost, which is exactly \$0.00.

The New Meeting Place: Gander Mountain, 300 Jay Scutti Boulevard, , Henrietta, NY 14623



RDXA Finances Charles Kuhfuss WB2HJV

The RDXA financial summary as of October 5, 2003 is as follows:

Current checking balance	\$1279.52
Petty cash	\$206.27
Total available funds	\$1485.79
Less memorial fund	(\$726.89)
Total operating funds	\$758.90

To date this 2003-04 season the RDXA has 28 paid members.

So what did you miss?

Vic Gauvin K1PY

A summary of last month's program for those who missed it –

Well, if you're computer-oriented, this was your program! In fact, to see all the people that attended (nice crowd for our opening meeting!) you had to move your head back and forth to get a view past the four RDXAnet PCs that graced the tabletops. But not to fear, there was also a PC-projector displaying the screen contents theater-style on the end wall. Definitely a high-tech night.

September's program provided a hands-on look-see at our Field Day logging software, **WriteLog** by **W5XD**. But instead of FD, we looked at what a single-op user at home would have on his monitor if they were running ARRL Sweepstakes, which is coming up in November (CW first weekend, PH third weekend).

Vic K1PY, aided by RDXA'ers **Redd WB2DVU**, another WriteLog user who made the trip from Oswego to make the meeting, and **Tim K2CY**, yet another WL user from back when it first came out, went over the main features that you'd use. We say "main" since WL is a very full-featured, mature software application, already at version 10.xx. Which makes it fun to always discover some neat little feature you didn't know about. You can customize the layout any way you want, including your own color preferences for backgrounds and window text. The key to maximizing your enjoyment is to poke around in all the menus and see what happens. Preferably not in the middle of a contest!!

The consensus was that we had a heck of a first meeting, and that this is some pretty darn good contest logging software. There are several members that have it, and likely more that will in the future. So if you decide to hop on board the WL bandwagon, you'll have a lot of support in the club. So give it a try – and you'll be that much farther ahead for the NEXT WriteLog workshop just before Field Day. In that one, we'll really get down to the nitty-gritty of optimizing the networked features specific to Field Day, plus we'll have transceivers attached so you can experience first-hand all the rig control, frequency hopping, spot-grabbing, hot-shot features that we couldn't demo at this meeting. You won't want to miss it!

The RDXA Logbook by RDXA Members

We are starting a new regular column series titled "The RDXA Logbook" which will be composed of input solicited from general members on a particular theme. We will have a different theme each month. Just email your input to the editor at n2rd@arrl.net and it will be in the logbook.

This month's theme is:

What did you do to get ready for the new contest season?

Scott, W2LC:

Most of my work has been maintenance of the existing antennas and tower. I have had to cut down broken branches and damaged trees from the ice storm back in February. I have cleared trees and pricker bushes from around the base of the tower, about a 30 foot circle so far, this just to gain easy access once again. Some of the trees around the tower have grown 25 feet in the last 2-3 years and are getting too close to the tower and the lowest yagi. I have much more "logging" to do, as I call it, with plans to remove several 50-60 foot trees that are just too close to the guys wires. Why? had one 60 foot tree fall on one of the guys wires during the ice storm, damaging a turn-buckle but fortunately no apparent damage to the tower. My compost pile is 10 feet high and about 30 feet in diameter. Wasp nests are also a problem that I have to contend with all summer.

I had to fix the control line for the antenna switch and the antenna switch itself. I believe nearby lightning strikes have been damaging the diodes in the switch box. The mower was responsible for cutting the control cable. I also had to clean out an ant's nest from inside the switch box. I am in the process of fixing my tower's 160m shunt feed network that was damaged in the ice storm.

Pre-contest plans that are unfinished: I am adding more radials for 160 meters, I am going to add about 20 more to get up to 50 total radials for 160m. I have three more ground rods with 1-1/2 inch copper grounding strap ready to install, to add to the three ground rods I already have. This will put six equally spaced ground rods around the tower for connecting radials to the ground system and grounding the tower. I plan to add another shunt feed to the tower for 80 meters.

I have lowered the middle yagi of my three stack, about 6 feet, to make room for a yagi dedicated to South America. This permits me to phase stacked yagis to Europe and Asia and then instantly switch to South America with the fourth single yagi.

For VHF, I put up a new 5 element 6 meter yagi, a 10 element yagi for 432MHz, and a triplexer to feed the 6m, 2m, and the 432MHz yagis from a single coax. It seems to work, but only the contest will tell how well. These antennas were added so that I can use my FT-817 on 3 bands for the VHF contest, compared to 2m only in the past. I recently purchased a used FT-817 to replace my

now defunct all mode 2 meter radio, which decided to quit after 20 years of good use.

I guess this all sounds like a lot of work, but this is about 90 percent maintenance of the existing station and 10 percent trying something new.

Redd, WB2DVU

I bought EZNEC at Dayton so I could start modeling antennas. Cool toy. Using it I designed a radically-shortened 40 meter 2-element yagi. Looks terrible mounted horizontally at 30 feet (no real surprise), but great oriented vertically with the boom at only 16 feet. It's been built, and I may try it this winter. Now if I could only get all these neighbors to move and take their houses with them...

I also designed a compact 75/80 meter ground-mounted inverted-L (43 foot vertical run, 48 radials) to fit my 60' x 60' back yard. I plan to erect it for CQWW SSB and do single band 75 meters, low power (yes, I know....). Maybe the sight of THAT will get the neighbors to move.

I installed an 80/160 meter coaxial loop rx antenna in the garage attic (and a Front End Saver at the rig). Low gain, but VERY directional; impressive. Installed my first-ever 6 meter beam (just in time for propagation to move South for the Winter, or so it seems, lately).

I bought a Heathkit station monitor to check out my SSB signal. Yup, heretofore I've been over-processing.

I booked a vacation trip to Tortola with my XYL in February '04. During the ARRL DX CW 'test. No rig. I gotta keep this wife.

I may not make 1M points this season, but I'll have some fun.

Rus, K2UA

I haven't spent a lot of time on ham radio this summer, but I've done some things that collectively constitute contest preparation. These include, in no particular order, repairing lightning damage that occurred sometime after the IARU HF Championship. It took out both parallel ports in my main shack computer, both band decoders, the Top Ten DX Doubler (just one CMOS part), a RotorEZ (a bunch of parts), and a few other things. It took a lot of time to find and fix all the problems, but it's under control now. Next, I've operated some contests this summer. The best fall break-in event is the September CW Sprint, which was great--as always! The IARU contest conditions in July were stinko, but it was great to get on the air and test everything out between main seasons to identify problems and areas for improvement.

Next, I decided to replace one radio with another. I've concluded that the FT-1000MP is better for my needs than the FT-1000D, so I went back to an FT-1000MP this summer. It's outfitted with a set of Inrad filters, which I chose for my particular contest needs. I'm really looking forward to better performances this coming season than I had last year with the FT-1000D. (My other radio remains a TS-850S.) Finally, I walked the woods and checked out

my antennas in late September. I don't see any major problems, fortunately, but there are a few things that need to be fixed before CQWW CW, which is my first contest of the fall. I will be working on these over the coming weeks.

Charlie, WB2HJV

What did I do over the summer to get ready for this contesting season? Well, since most of my summer was focused on our trip to Scandinavia in August only a few small activities were performed that will hopefully enhance my contesting and DXing efforts for this coming season.

1) As I usually have my back-up FT-100D set up on the WARC bands during contests, just in case some rare DX pops up on one of those three bands that's not in the contest, I purchased a second Vibrokeyer for that rig. This way I won't have to disconnect Vibrokeyer #1 from the TS-850 in the middle of a contest to go chasing a VK9X, XZ7, 7Q7 or some other such entity. If I'm using the amp with the 850, HJV is usually too lazy to retune everything over to the WARC bands and then back again to the contest. I just hate to let a new one slip away just because he's not in the contest. I typically will sacrifice a little contesting time to try and work a new one or two. This extra Vibrokeyer should make the entire effort easier with the 100D.

2) I erected yet another dipole, this time for 20 meters, to be used as a back-up antenna. This extra labor now gives me six single band dipoles in addition to the verticals and longwire; the three WARC bands plus 6, 15 and 20 meters. I've had very good luck with the single band dipoles, especially on the WARC bands, with some help of course from Cycle 23 I'm sure. Just seventeen more QSL's are needed on 30 meters for 8BDXCC.

3) Last week I re-checked the SWR on all eleven of my antennas to be sure that nothing had changed since last spring. I also performed a visual inspection of each antenna, checking for sagging tree limbs, worn halyards or anything else that seemed suspect with the installations. Murphy must be on vacation because everything appeared to be in order

4) After arriving home from our European holiday on Labor Day I discovered that the shack computer hard drive had gone south. (The old Herko died!) Two weeks ago I purchased a used Pentium computer and reloaded it with m Writelog software. I believe that I'm ready to start logging when the contest bell rings in late October.

So my friends, as Bernie W3UR sez..."see you in the pile-ups".

Chris, K2CS

Honestly, the bands were so bad and summer so hectic, I've done nothing to the station. Well, the ts440 is once again afflicted with "phase lock loop unlock for the umpteenth time so it's "resting" on my floor. My only prospect is using the ts-50... just doesn't sound the same. It does have a nice external auto-tuner though.

I hope to get something up for 80m, possibly a vertical.

My focus should be on 80m as i'm just 10 shy of the elusive 5 band and they're all on 80m. If I combed my logs, I'm sure I've worked it but need those cards so that's my focus this time (season).

Wayne, N2WK

I golfed all summer so I didn't do a thing yet. I'm planning on constructing

a new 80 meter antenna. I'm open for suggestions.

Tim, K2CY

What did I do this summer to prepare for the contest season? It's been a couple of years since I have participated in a contest, other than Field Day - oh, I forgot FD is not a contest. Wow, is it contest season already? I'm still waiting for summer to get here. I need to finish up installing the 100 watt option into the K2, but it is still spread over the bench. My wire antenna has survived this years ice storms, wind storms, and blackouts, obviously it is not high enough, maybe I should think of raising it a few more feet.

Gene, W2LU

My summer was full but no great revelations. Biggest event was probably the trip to Ilse de la Madaleine IOTA 038. Spent four days up there with lots of fun operating. "Contesting" projects have included replacing the motor part of my prop pitch motor - in place - on the top of the tower. Learned a lot about prop pitch motors. Just finished up my new 80/160 meter receiving antenna system - two pennant systems (4 antennas each) phased. Also redeployed one of my 160 meter quarterwave sloppers which was taken down by the ice storm in the spring storm.

Jeff, W2FU

In order to get read for this contest season, I had to divide into three categories. Not sure if this is totally inclusive, I'm sure there's stuff I can't remember off the cuff here.

1. Repairs (ice storm damage)
2. Upgrades
3. Deferred

The repairs consisted primarily of redoing the middle 15 meter side arm. This is at 80' of the 120' tower and also has the 222 three yagi array on it. I improved the survivability by adding a second bearing and using two swinging gates on a longer rotor mast. The original single gate system had twisted itself into oblivion in the ice storm.

Also damaged in the ice storm but deferred because the antennas still worked and the difficulty of effecting repairs were the top 2 meter beam 12' above the top of the 140' tower and the top 6 meter beam at 5' above the top of the 120' tower. Both of these antennas have bent booms and a few elements, but they still appear to perform satisfactorily.

One of the 80 meter 4 square's lost 2 of it's elevated radials as well. Repaired this and also buried the phasing line a few inches in the ground so I can mow out there easier. (Last year I had extended the phasing lines an extra 1/2 wave so they could lay on the ground and not be stretched in the air, this spring I cut one with the mower!)

Last January, we melted down the 2 meter power amp using WSJT in the middle of the night. With no HV, we quickly destroyed and 8877. I rebuilt the power supply with a heftier transformer and rebuilt the RF deck control to add the G3SEK board for it's tube protection capability.

Hunted down the ground hog (RIP) that chewed through two of the rotor cables where all the stuff comes out of the ground to enter the house. Spliced the cables.

Upgrades:

1. I buried the AC power feed to the rotating tower so that I don't have to run an extension cord out there anymore. This involved digging a 100' trench and laying appropriate cable to code as well as installing a circuit in the barn for the feed, adding an exit fitting and installing an outdoor covered outlet. After completing this, the remote AC control for the power supplies didn't work! Turned out to be a bad SS relay out there, go figure!

2. Designed, built and installed stronger mast clamping devices for the two sidearm rotors for the pair of 40 meter beams. These antennas consistently would turn on their masts in higher winds. All appear to be holding OK now with the exception of the lower 40 which still tends to turn in the rotor itself. This is a Taitwister that has limited mast clamping power. I will continue to re-aim and tighten or maybe pin this one. Being at only 70', it's not much of a hassle to run up there and re-aim, even in the winter.

3. Installed a ring rotor for the lowest 20 meter beam at 50' on the 140' tower. This now allows full rotation of all three 20 meter antennas as opposed to the bottom one fixed at Europe.

4. Removed the mast mount preamp near the top of the 140' tower for two meters. I had not been able to use this due to interference (overload) from the 6 meter station anyway. continue to experiment with 2 meter preamps and filters but now do it at the base of the tower. What's there now worked pretty well in the Sept VHF contest and I only give up about .2 db of noise figure by not having a pre-amp at the top.

5. Worked extensively with NIMU to improve Roverlog for VHF contest logging for the multi-ops. Since I quit using my old DOS based software due to difficulties maintaining machines that need old hardware and OS to run, I now use Roverlog as the computer requirements are compatible with WriteLog for HF contesting. This is an ongoing effort, but Roverlog is getting pretty good.

6. Added a IC-746PRO to the station. This is a nice radio for the money and has the added advantage of 2 meter 100 watt capability. We used this in September on 2 meters

allowing me to drive the 2 meter power amp directly and eliminate a driver stage. The HF receiver is excellent and seems to perform as well as the 756PRO except for not having all the bells and whistles.

7. Built a new 222 amp and retired the 2 meter deck that I had modified to run 222. This unit also contains the G3SEK board for protection of the 8877.

8. Built a new single band 1.5 KW amp for 80 meters that can sit in the back room with all the VHF amps and use the power supply that runs 222 and 432 but sat idle in HF contests.

9. Rebuilt the power supply for the 222/432 rack and now the new 80 meter amp. This supply was about 30 years old.

10. Took my wife on a cruise, it wasn't enough!

In Process:

1. The 160 meter vertical (top loaded wire with 2 elevated radials) also broke in the ice storm. Finally decided on a more permanent solution of shunt feeding the 120' tower with buried radials. (this after playing with computer models of 2 and 3 element wire arrays using elevated radials. The tower appears to resonate at about 1.5 MHz and should work out OK. I still have to install the feed and get at least 60 120' radials in the ground. I have nearly completed the radial plow from ON4UNs book and should get this completed in the next two weeks.

2. I've designed a 4 element beverage array to improve receive toward EU on 80 and 160. It's a combination broadside end-fire that takes little more room than the single two wire beverage I used last year. Should be at least a 10 db S/R improvement if the models are accurate. All the beverages come down in the spring as they are installed out in the front field, so they all have to go back up. I should get to this after I complete the 160 meter vertical. I'm working on the feed which includes a broadband quadrature hybrid splitter to give me 90 degree phasing over both 80 and 160 meters. Last year the beverage installation took about a day and a half. This year, with the design changes, I expect it to take 3 or 4 days as I have to place new poles, make new wires and termination boxes etc. Plus I have to put a new SW beverage up as the new antenna is not a two wire switchable as the old one was.

Looks like there will be no CQWW phone as I'll still be working on the low band stuff.

Deferred:

1. Repairs to the 6 and 2 meter bent antennas from the ice storm.

2. A higher angle antenna for 80.

3. Rebuild the 432 amp with the G3SEK board for tube protection.

Vic, K1PY

After years of promising myself I'd get to it, I'm finally doing serious preparation for the upcoming CW contests. Yes, that's *CW*.

So I download the RUFZ cw program* by DL4MM and have at it. What it does is send 50 world-wide call signs, DX and U.S., from a 34,000+ call sign file that's included. If you copy correctly, it incrementally increases speed, until you're just beyond your current abilities, then levels off.

So I'm rolling along, night after night, hopefully getting better, and not so easily confused by calls like 6W1/IZ8XPQ. But then this quick little 4-character stateside call TOTALLY blows me away and completely disrupts my session -- I was so surprised I couldn't recover and quit for the night. What was this unexpected call with such power? Your friend and mine, "AF2K"!! Wow, as they say, it's a small world.

(P.S. -- I immediately fired up my e-mail and sent a note off to Irv to let him know how cool this was.)

From the manual: "RUFZ" is the abbreviation of the German word "Rufzeichen-Hoeren" which means "listening of call signs" and is training-software to improve CW-abilities, particularly the listening of usual Amateur radio-calls.

Now onto the hardware side of the story...

You know how you sort of want to make those station improvements, and you sort of would like to upgrade that rig, but things aren't quite right to allow it, and you sort of...? Well, so far, this has been my year to do at least one of those things. Yep, finally rounded up all that equipment sitting around the shack that I wasn't actually using, including an SB-220 amp, an external voice keyer, and a couple others. Plus there were a couple of bigger items that I'd collected in more exuberant times that I was able to find takers for (like a Telrex 20M mono-bander that went to VE3EJ).

All this was a focused effort to upgrade my "2nd radio" so I could really make the effort to experiment with SO2R (Single-Op 2-Radio). The TS-450 that I'd gotten a few years back for portable use just couldn't tolerate a second close-by signal from the main rig, an Icom IC-765. Even though the second-radio antenna is a vertical, it's still too close and I needed a radio with a better front-end. To do that, I needed to sell a lot of stuff, recoup some "radio \$\$," and find something like an Omni-VI or a FT-1000D or MP. (A MarkV or Field would be nice too, but just a little too far out of reach.) Months of following the used market on the Web indicated that if I was patient and lucky, I might be able to do it. But first the \$\$ had to be there.

Well, "Rochester" (Hamfest) was where it all had to happen. With a willingness to cut a deal, I was ready to sacrifice potentially better dollars for several items in exchange for dollars in hand. But sometimes things don't line up exactly in the right order, and I found myself in a quandary: On my one-and-only pass thru the flea market

area on Friday, what do I find, but a **mint** FT-1000MP with 2 installed cw filters! And I mean *mint*! Arrrrghhhhh -- what to do???? Well, I did what any self-respecting ham would do, I crossed my fingers, got it, and hoped I'd be able to sell like crazy during the rest of the 'fest.

Well, nothing much happened sale-wise on Friday, and Saturday was a cloudy, rainy day, which was guaranteed to keep folks away. But wonder of wonders, in between all the showers, *everything sold* and I had enough to cover the new MP!!

Well, it certainly looks super in the shack. And of course, as great as the Icom 765 is, the MP had to become the "main radio." So, wow, what a great situation, with what really are two "main radios" to play with. Now the job is to reconfigure everything and interface it all to the computers.

But, true to form, summer removes all interest in inside pursuits, even with a new radio. So yes, I did at least turn it on, go thru all the menus, work a few people to make sure it wasn't "too good to be true," and overall checked it out. But then it was on to other things until the fall radio season returned.

Around the end of September, with contest season starting in around 6 weeks, is the time that seems about right for me to get back in the shack. (I know, I know -- hey, everybody has a different clock and a different way of enjoying things. I apparently need looming deadlines.)

So, are these two rigs going to wipe each other out? Guess it's time to see. **Fred W2TZ** advised first checking for phase noise, something that might have been a problem between the two 40-meter stations at FD this year. The test was to set the output power to zero on one rig, and just put it into transmit without any modulation, and listen to the fundamental and harmonic frequencies on the other rig. You'll hear a noticeable noise increase if there's phase noise emanating from the transmitting rig. There was indeed nominal noise at the fundamental frequencies, but it quickly diminished off frequency, and there was little or nothing detected on the out-of-band harmonics. Looked like we had a clean setup and a good start.

However, the real question was what would happen at normal operating power, in my case at 100W? I fully expected to have to make up coax stubs for several bands based on the experience I'd had with the TS-450 over the previous year. In fact, I used up one of the last real nice Sundays we had digging out all my spare coax, uncoiling it down the driveway, and marking it at different lengths in preparation for future stubs. I still hadn't determined what I needed, but thought I might as well do this part while the wx was good.

Well, as I write this a couple weeks prior to the club October meeting, things are looking pretty darn good! I've mostly been practicing code getting ready for SS CW and WW CW (see separate story on that elsewhere), but finally ran some mutual interference tests between the stations.

The front-end on that MP is apparently all it's reputed to be, or put it this way: There's barely any impact from the Icom transmitting on the vertical with the MP on the 80-dipole and the KT-34XA tribander. In some cases, even in the *same band* (as long as you're about 20 kHz away). Not that I plan on using both rigs on the same band, it's nice to see so little interaction.

So, time's getting shorter, and now it's time to build the computer interfaces and get things all set up. We'll see if it ends up as usual, with still lots to do the week before the first major contest. But hey, that's when it gets exciting, and isn't getting excited part of what it's all about?!!

See you in the pileups!

Gary, N2UM

We are now spending our summers at our cottage in Cape Vincent NY and our winters in Sebring FL. I have a homebrew vertical here at the Cape that is fed through a SGC 239 Antenna Coupler. I have about a half dozen radials down and it works fairly well for what it is. I did a little operating in the recent RJ/CQWW Rtty contest and had a lot of fun. I'm using an Icom 718 at this location. In Sebring we live in one of those infamous C&CR places that forbids transmitting antennas. Where there's a will there's a way! I have a 150' long loop laying on the roof. The wire is the same color as the roofing and no one has even noticed it so far. It works very well. I'm using an Icom 746 in Sebring. I was able to win the WCF section, low power in a couple contests this past winter. The Florida Contest Group is very active down there and they've got some huge stations. I've been invited to do some multi-op with them and I might give it a try this year.

That's about it from here. I miss you guys and always keep track of the RDXA in the contest results. Good Luck in the upcoming contest season!

Tom, KV2X

I prepared myself for the upcoming contest season by operating 40 m cw mobile as much as possible every day while commuting to work and while running errands in order to keep my cw skills sharp. Operated Field day and made about 4 times more cw than phone contacts. I also am planning on putting up a 160/80 m inverted L if I get the time.

Ed, K2MP

Although my station was pretty capable of sending signals into the ether, it was not set up very well for ease of operation and rapid QSY. To go from 20/15/10 to 80/40, I had to get up, go to another room, change a coax and retune the match box. This summer I fixed all that so I now have instant QSY to any band by selection from the transceiver. I want to tackle my PC set up next as I currently have an old DOS logger and Packet set up that doesn't multi-task well and cannot talk to my 756proII. I also have a brand new, still-in-box, DX4WIN package with the emphasis on RTTY improvement. I'm currently using a PK-232 and need two PC's, one for logging and one for TTY. I'm really looking forward to that installation.

Paul, K2DB

A lot of work has been accomplished at the HLCC (Hickory Lake Contest Club), although not just for the Sweepstakes Contest. I have been rather busy up in NNY getting things in order.

The first thing that is of importance, is that we took care of a few trees that were in the way of the tri-bander. They are gone, (thanks to a new 18" chainsaw) and we no longer have to prune limbs or throw a rope over them and tie them out of the way in order to turn the beam.

I (along with the help of fellow RDXAer NG2P), have installed 32 sheets of drywall on the ceilings and walls of the camp, along with 20 sheets of plywood on the floor. It's beginning to look like a lakeside residence, rather than a dingy looking camp. The addition of 2 side windows in the "operating" room has brightened things up quite a bit. Also started to put some rough cut lumber siding on the outside of the camp, so it looks quite rustic at this point.

Purchased a computer system from Kevin, N2VJB so we have a dedicated Sweepstakes Computer, just like the Field Day computers the RDXA uses. I will be purchasing Writelog to use with the new system. With the trees being removed, and nicely stacked in 16" logs, we now have a little more room to play with wire antlers, so I am looking for some feedback on that.

As things look now, we will be operating with high power, (loud is good, louder is better and the loudest is BEST) a 40 meter loop at about 50 - 60 feet, an 80 meter dipole at about the same height, and a tribander at 32 feet for the higher bands.

There will be a little adjustment in the operating schedule for this year. Normally, we start the contest at 4:00 PM on Saturday and run for 24 straight hours and quit at 4:00 PM on Sunday, so that everyone can get home early. This year, due to my semi - retirement mode, and scheduling my own time, there will be the opportunity to shut down on some of the not so good rate periods, (Chris K2CS is looking into our past hourly rates) and stay on until the contest ends at 10:00 PM on Sunday night. I am sure that some of the stations on the West coast will appreciate that, and we can help everyone out by being on during the FULL CONTEST Period. (I will bet this will increase our score by a point or two also.)

K2NNY is going to be a lot more organized this year (we hope), and looking to put NNY into everyone's Sweepstakes Log. If you have any questions, or are willing to participate with us, be sure to give me a call or an e-mail.

The RDXA Logbook Theme for November

Contest and DX Logging

What do you use?

What do you like about it? Any special features?

What do you think about the *ARRL Logbook of the World*?

Just email your input to n2rd@arrl.net by 11/4

Amateur Radio on the Space Station The Webster Connection

It was old home week via ham radio earlier this month for NASA International Space Station Science Officer Ed Lu, KC5WKJ. Lu spoke September 4 with students at his college alma mater, Cornell University. The following week, he linked up with his old high school, Webster Thomas High School in Webster, New York, from which he graduated in 1980. In late May, Lu chatted with youngsters at Webster's Klem Road South Elementary School, which he'd attended three decades ago. All three contacts were arranged by the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program.

"The whole school was inspired by this event!" said Peter Fournia, W2SKY, who headed up the team of nine hams that set up and operated the station from the Webster Thomas High School library. Video was distributed schoolwide. "Every student was riveted to their classroom monitor," Fournia said.

Ten students got to ask questions of Lu--who was at the controls of NA1SS--about life aboard the ISS, and one of them asked his opinion of civilian "space tourists" who buy a trip into space.

"We don't actually have any plans whatsoever to sell seats on the space shuttle," Lu emphasized. He explained that the Russians have sold seats on their Soyuz spacecraft, "but that's a different thing altogether," he added.

Space tourists who have flown aboard the Soyuz and spent about 10 days aboard the ISS have included businessman Dennis Tito, KG6FZX, in 2001, and South African Mark Shuttleworth in 2002. Pop singer Lance Bass, KG4UYY, of the group 'N Sync had been in line to become the third--and youngest--such space tourist last fall, until arrangements with the Russian space program fell apart.

"I do think that space tourism, in general, is a good thing," Lu went on to say, "and in the future, I think--hopefully--the price will come down a lot, and a lot more people will get a chance to visit space." He said he thinks that in the long run, such space tourism will benefit space exploration by making it more commonplace and easier to do.

Webster students also wanted to know what skills and traits make for a good astronaut.

"One thing that being an astronaut really requires is to be adaptable," Lu said. He said this includes being able to "get by" in different situations, learn new languages and accommodate to staying in other countries.

"Getting to fly, getting to spend time in space, getting to see the earth from space and to feel like your doing something useful, not only for myself but for people around the world," are among the rewards of being an astronaut aboard the ISS, he told the high schoolers.

"It's been a great pleasure talking to everyone down there

in Webster," Lu said as his signal faded.

Fournia said everyone from the principals and teachers to the students were in high spirits after the contact, which attracted media coverage. "Everyone had big smiles," he said. "This was an excellent exposure to ham radio, particularly to the aspects of our hobby that appeal to young people." ARISS <<http://www.rac.ca/ariss/>> is an international project with support from ARRL, NASA and AMSAT.

(Thanks to Vic, K1PY for providing this material. – Ed.)

Most Wanted

DX Magazine Survey

The 2003 DX Magazine "most wanted" survey under way: The 2003 DX Magazine "most wanted" survey http://www.dxpub.com/dx_survey2003.html is under way. The deadline to respond is October 15. The survey helps DXpeditioners decide where to go next. DX Magazine Publisher Carl Smith, N4AA, says not all DXCC entities are listed--just the most likely ones. Respondents are asked to select entities they do not have confirmed for DXCC. There's an opportunity to comment, where respondents may list needed countries not appearing on the list.

The results will be released in early 2004.--The Daily DX <http://www.dailydx.com>.

Hams who do the survey will be emailed a summary of the survey results.

(Thanks to Vic, K1PY for providing this material. – Ed.)

DXAC Accreditation

DXAC Member Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

The following stations have been accepted for DXCC credit: (I hope they ended up in your log!)

Iraq: YI1BGD, YI3DX, YI/9Y4RD, YI/4L4FN, YI/SM4UZM, YI/SM3VRO, YI/SM0URK, YI/SM5WTI, YI/SM5VO, YI/ON6TT, YI/SM7PKK, YI/S53R, YI/S57CQ, YI/F5ORF, YI/ON4WW, YI/VK4KMT, YI/EK6KB, YI/EK6DO, YI/ON5NT

Palestine: E4/DF3EC

Guinea: 3XY1L, 3XD02

Sudan: ST2CF

Guinea-Bissau: J5UCW, J5UDX

Angola: D2CR

Uganda: 5X2A

Timor – Leste: 4W1BK (Effective 22 May 2003), 4W3AN (Effective 19 May 2003), 4W3CW (Effective 16 May 2003), 4W3DX (Effective 22 May 2003).

Western Sahara: S05X

Market Reef: OJ0/OE1ZKC, OJ0/JH1ARJ, OJ0/AH7X, OJ0/JR4PMX

Afghanistan: YA/N4SIX, YA1BV, YA1CQ, YA1JA

Nepal: 9N7DX

DX & Contesting of the Past October 1958

Ed Gable K2MP

The results of the 24th annual ARRL DX contest were reported with the RDXA taking 7th place in the nation for the club competition. Locally there were 27 participants recorded with W2FBA and W2SAW taking top honors in that order. Sadly, none of those 27 hams are QRU today. For only the second time in history the top scorer broke the one million point barrier. That was well known DX'er Katashi Nose, KH6IJ, who cleverly came up on six meters to gather just enough multipliers to do the trick.

Also reported at this time were the results of the ARRL June VHF party. A good sporadic-E opening brought forth the largest single operator score ever recorded. That went to W4GJO who had 366 Q's and 35 sections, for a whopping 13,176 points. You could have been the WNY winner by beating W2ORI's 116 Q's in 14 sections, for a section leading 1624 points.

On the DX side the planned DX'peditions were few but yielded Trinidad as PY0NA and PY0NE. Rare Willis Island was on but for only a few hours as FK8AS operated /FW8. However, the station to log for the most bragging rights was the Republic of Guinea, FF8AC/GN, operating 20 CW.

We often think of rare DX as being anything other than W/K in the U.S. Not so. It was so difficult for foreign DX'ers to work Vermont for the coveted WAS, that three W1's went on a well publicized and armed to the teeth expedition to that state. They operated two stations, 24/7, and on all bands, and filled many a DX'ers log with that illusive state.

It was this month that the FCC finally went on record to indicate how to identify your station when in a round table. Doesn't sound to difficult, but it was a real controversy then as the rules indicated you had to identify your station as well as every other station in the net. The phrase *and the group* was coined and all you had to say was K2UA and the group this is K2MP. By the way, how many knew that the phrase *this is K2MP* was the only FCC acceptable way to sign your call ?

From the ads in QST it is noted that transistors in high power circuits were starting to be seen for the mobile

DX'er. Johnson Electronics, Sunair Electronics and Triad Transformers all announced products for solid state HV power supplies and AM modulators.

A Novice in Hilton, NY, got his General ticket and changed his call from WN2MPM to W2MPM. Years later he would change that callsign to K2MP.

Up coming contests

Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

October

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB
0000Z, Oct 25.— 2400Z, Oct 26

November

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW
2100Z, Nov 1.— 0300Z, Nov 3

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB
2100Z, Nov 15.— 0300Z, Nov 17

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW
0000Z, Nov 29.— 2400Z, Nov 30
(thanksgiving weekend)

December

ARRL 160-Meter Contest
2200Z, Dec 5.— 1600Z, Dec 7

ARRL 10-Meter Contest
0000Z, Dec 13.— 2400Z, Dec 14

January

CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW
0000Z, Jan 24.— 2359Z, Jan 25

February

ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW
0000Z, Feb 21.— 2400Z, Feb 22

CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB
0000Z, Feb 28.— 2359Z, Feb 29

March

ARRL Inter. DX Contest, Phone
0000Z, Mar 6.— 2400Z, Mar 7

May

CQ WW WPX Contest, CW
0000Z, May 29.— 2400Z, May 30
Memorial day weekend

Rochester DX Association
W2RDX **www.rdx.com**

This bulletin is the official organ of the Rochester DX Association. It is published monthly, September through June. Email your articles to the newsletter editor n2rd@arrl.net by the first Tuesday of each month for inclusion in that month's newsletter.

All those interested in Amateur Radio, especially in DXing and contesting, are invited to attend meetings and to join our club. The club meets at 7:30pm local time on the third Tuesday of each month from September to June. The club web site has the latest information on meeting location. It is currently schMany members meet at a local bar Scotch and Sirloin for camaraderie after the regular meeting. Come and join us!

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