

ROCHESTER

DX

ASSOCIATION

rdxa.com



## Regular Meeting

May 17<sup>th</sup> 19:30 local

300 Jay Scutti Boulevard  
Gander Mountain  
Meeting Room

May Program

Field Day 2005 Planning



Vic, K1PY will review our Field Day 2005 plans. After many years at the Webster Park site, we are changing our Field day location to Mendon Ponds Park. This will require new antenna layouts, new station locations, etc. Join us for a discussion of the plans and possibilities and help make Field Day 2005 a fun and successful outing for all.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Social after the Meeting

Scotch & Sirloin  
Winton Plaza

### President's Soapbox

By Rick Mintz - W1TY



Imagine planning a weekend for 35 people to operate Field Day. Imagine the work involved to plan for every radio, antenna, coax, power line, connector, cup and bagel? It's tremendous job even with an army of helpers. Add to that every person having their own opinion of what and how everything should be done. It is the Honor Roll of headaches.

If K1PY had not upgraded to Extra years ago I would be tempted to call him General Vic. Ask Vic. Ask Vic. How many times is that heard in the span of two days? We are

fortunate indeed to have the "go to" guy to go to! Make sure to say "Thanks."

Attending the May meeting is particularly important. It is the last chance for RDXA as a group to finalize Field Day plans. The June meeting is just days before the big event and we have arranged a *very* special RDXA road trip. Keep the date open.

Contest season has now wound down on the HF bands and we can enjoy the summer weekends. QRN strengthens on 80 & 160 meters and the excuses to avoid the "honey do" list are harder to come by. My radio plans include the addition of a second HF2V vertical (described below).

With any luck the W2RTY crew will have a new tower installed soon at K2NNY. We are targeting NAQP RTTY as a Multi-2 in July to light it up. Power will be provided by Icom and the Amish pies that we purchase every trip upstate! The signals will climb the hill for 300' thanks to a cable company donation of hardline.

### Nominations for RDXA Officers and Directors

The Nominating Committee submits the following slate of candidates for RDXA Officers and Directors for the 2005-06 Club year for your consideration. The election will be held at the June regular meeting, prior to the AWA Museum tour.

**President** - Dave Wright - N2CK

**Vice President** - Kevin Poppelwell - N2VJB

**Sec/ Treas** - Charlie Kuhfuss - WB2HJV

**Board of Directors:** Paul Mackanos - K2DB, candidate  
Paul Meyers - N2OPW, candidate  
Gene Fuller - W2LU, candidate

Rick Mintz - W1TY, automatic BOD member as ex-President

### Spring 2005 BOD Meetings

RDXA Board of Directors meetings for Spring 2005 will be held at the following locations. Meetings typically start at 19:30 local time and are **open to all RDXA members**. Contact a Club officer or BOD member for further information. The upcoming May BOD meeting will focus on Field Day planning. Decisions are made by those who show up. Be there!

**May 2005** W2LU

**June 2005** K1PY

## RDXA / RVHFG Combined Awards Banquet a Success



Mark Wasserbauer, N2YB, RVHFG Contest Chairman (left), and Chris Shalvoy, K2CS, RDXA DX Chairman, jointly hosted the awards presentations at last month's RVHFG and RDXA banquet.

## Upcoming RDXA Programs

**June 21** Antique Wireless Museum tour, K2MP

## May Contests

ARI Int'l. DX CW, SSB, RTTY-----7, 8 May  
Alessandro Volta RTTY DX-----14, 15 May  
EU PSK DX, PSK31-----21, 22 May  
CQ WW WPX CW-----28, 29 May  
QRP ARCI Hootowl Sprint; CW-----29 May

**More Contest Info** <http://www.sk3bg.se/contest/index.htm>

## June Contests

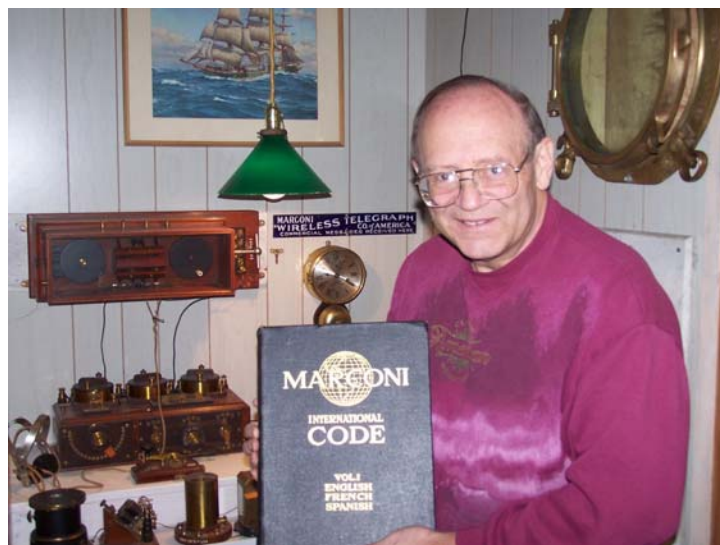
Wake-UP! QRP Sprint, CW -----4 June  
IARU Region 1 Field Day, CW -----4, 5 June  
ANARTS WW RTTY -----11, 12 June  
All Asian DX, CW -----18, 19 June  
Kid's Day, SSB -----18 June  
ARRL Field Day, All modes-----25, 26 June

## Letter to the Editor

**Ed Gable - K2MP**

On page three of the last Bulletin you published a note, yea even a challenge, by W1TY regarding the origin of the callsign for the Titanic. I am pleased to clarify. Prior to 1912, the Marconi Company assigned their own callsigns and for whatever reason selected MUC for the ill-fated passenger liner. (M was for Marconi.) Shortly thereafter world-wide prefixes for maritime use were issued with England gaining "M" and "G" prefixes. As such, the Titanic was officially assigned MGY, previously used by the ship Yale. To further answer as to why the U.S. owned Titanic had an English callsign, you only have to realize that the ship was registered in Great Britain. Although I'm sure Mr. Mintz had a great time researching such data on the internet, and a wonderful resource it is, I am quick to point out that my research was through

original 1910 Marconi documents in the Bruce Kelley research library at the AWA Museum. See accompanying photo.



Ed Gable, K2MP/W2AN, Curator of the AWA Museum, holds the original 1910 Marconi document used in his research on the origin of the callsign for Titanic. Seen also in this photo, on the wall, an original Marconi Magnetic detector and below that, a Marconi Multiple Tuner, the first such device to add tuning, or selectivity, to the receiver. Both pieces pre-date 1910 and were the type used on the Titanic. See this and other electronic communication marvels at the AWA Museum, opening May 7<sup>th</sup>. Visit <http://www.antiquewireless.org> for hours and directions.

## And Now for Something Completely Different

*Our Topic of the Month column this month provides an opportunity for RDXA members to share their radio goals and station plans.*

**Rick, W1TY** – Since wind and gravity combined to de-erect my tower, I have concentrated on single band contesting on 40 meters. My current Butternut HF2V 40/80 vertical with 32 radials has performed very well but I want more.

The plan for this summer is the addition of a second HF2V and with the guidance of W2LU, my 'tenna guru, to complete a phased array on 40 meters. I am amazed at his knowledge of antennas and antenna theory. I don't have the noodle for it.

The plan will allow a directional pattern with gain to favor West, East or North-South. Producing three distinct patterns will require coax phasing lines and remote coax switches to determine the correct signal paths thru the feed lines. An option that is also under consideration is a fourth configuration having both verticals product an omnidirectional pattern. If that addition makes for a wiring nightmare, I will install a dipole sloping from 80 to 30 feet.

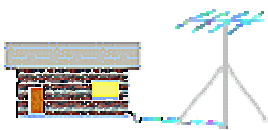
40 meters is a good choice for single op contesting. It allows the daytime free for other projects (i.e., sleep) and the rates can be very good to Europe and W6/W7 in the evenings. The issue is to overcome QRN and the crowded band conditions found during a contest. Since the array will have a reasonable front-to-back value, I hope to be able to print stations more quickly and also have the gain to grab the Europeans that don't hear very well.

**Redd, WB2DVU** – I tried a 70' loaded beverage pointed toward EU last winter but was disappointed. I plan to fiddle with flags/pennants next.

The ham project this year is to get it right the second time. In anticipation of my inevitable wrongness, I assembled my shack

walls with screws so I could change my mind more easily. So, in goes some rx/noise antenna coax to free up the good stuff, some shielded twisted pairs (switching) to the garage and to the new, larger outdoor terminal box, some cat 6 wire for networking and improved grounding/lightning protection. I'll generally bend things around so I can try SO2R someday. I also plan to play with pennant antennas and noise antennas (for ANC-4) come fall. Now, if only the IC-7000 proves NOT to be a hoax...

**Charlie, WB2HJV** – The rabbit and the chase for the carrot. Why is there always one more carrot on the string to try and catch? Why are there those mountains to be climbed? Why is there always a quest for yet one more certificate, endorsement or plaque? I'll never know and it seems the best thing to do here is not give any of these queries much thought. One would think that DXCC in a dozen different flavors would be satisfying enough. But, because the mountain is there it must be climbed, right?



*First project:* After 42 years of living with verticals and dipoles it seems as though the day has come for yours truly to see what all of this HF yagi excitement is about. “Time

to chart a new course and erect some hardware”, sez I. Working DX to date without a directional HF antenna kinda’ relates to my lifetime travel experiences: 18 countries and 28 states, but I was 55 years old before I ever visited New York City (2003). One wonders how such things happen, or don’t happen. It’s been many moons, actually four sunspot peaks and five minimums, of ham radio bliss without ever experiencing the operation of an HF yagi from the home QTH. What have I missed? Back in the mid sixties the old timers of that era told us “lids, kids, phonies, space cadets and school bus riders” that we would never experience a solar cycle max like the one previous in 1959. Since we were headed for a solar minimum in 1965 I built a 2 element 15 meter beam from QST using bamboo, twin lead, friction tape and 2 x 2 scraps, and attempted to mount it (nailed) onto Dad’s wooden sawhorses straddling the peak of the garage roof. Dad was easy going with the antenna scene...but not that easy. That’s the closest I ever came to loading up an HF antenna with some directivity, until now. Moving ahead, three permits are currently in hand; one for the tower, um sorry, “antenna support structure” from the Town, one for the shed to which the Rohn 45 will be bracketed, and most important the one obtained from the “Home Government.” So my friends, as soon as the yard dries up construction will commence, hopefully by June at the latest. I’ve selected the TA-53 Mosley Five Band Yagi with some advertised gain on all five bands, 10 through 20 meters. I’m limited a bit on real estate, and property setback, so 38 feet is legally it for the height and 15 feet about the limit for a turning radius due to existing trees. So it’s full steam ahead. I just can’t wait for the CQWW contests this fall. And too, there’s DX to chase. My goal is Honor Roll. There’s that carrot again.

*Second project:* Now that I’ve lost the opportunity to erect antennas on the neighbor’s property due to a proposed housing development, it’s time to get antennas up for the remaining 4 HF bands from 160 - 30 meters in an 80’ by 80’ back yard. Of course 30 and 40 meter antennas will be easy as they already exist, leaving 80 and 160 meters as the two challenges. After months of studying the yard and climbing the two maple trees and house roof, common sense tells me the best and safest route would be to extend the height of my 35 foot black iron pipe standing at the west end of my lot. The “window of opportunity” is open this summer, since the senior housing is not yet underway and there’s

no Homeowner’s Association today to watch my every move. Next summer will be different. Currently my 40 meter inverted vee hangs from this structure at 35 feet. Going to 50 feet unguyed appears like a viable solution, since the pipe is 2.375" OD with a 10' reinforcement section of 2.0" OD black iron inside, both set in 5' of concrete. Shortened inverted vees using Spiro Mfg. shorteners will fit for these two bands across the back of my 80 foot wide lot. The apex on 160m will be at the 50 foot level and the apex on 80m will be at 43 feet. Both will be fed separately as I have plenty of coax in stock. The apex angles calculate to be about 95 to 100 degrees. Hopefully interaction will be minimal. I’m going to install a balun on each one, although I’ve gone with and without these gadgets over the years and quite honestly can’t see where they make a noticeable difference one way or the other. But with an army of folks to be moving in as neighbors, keeping common mode currents that may exist on the outside of the RG-213 braid to a minimum seems like a good thing to attempt. I actually used the shortened 160m wire inverted vee last winter with the apex at 30' and picked up a half dozen new ones with it, including just recently RA6AX. Although the ends on 160m in this new configuration will only be at 15' I’ll do the best I can with it in search of DX. It is what it is. So bring on CQ160 CW. Isn’t it January yet? DX-wise my goal is Top Band DXCC, and to accomplish it quickly before the future Homeowner’s Association questions the 50 foot pipe next to their property.

So, is it worth it my friends; the 2.7 cubic yards of concrete, getting the permits, burying the coax, spending the \$\$\$, and in the end slipping more green stamps to the QSL managers? You betcha!

Charlie WB2HJV...climbing that mountain one more time.

**Mike, N1OKL** – My goal for the upcoming winter DX and constesting season is to get both transmit and receive antennas up for 80 and 160 meters.

My new QTH in Danbury came well-equipped with tall (70 ft. and up) maple and hickory trees surrounding about an acre of cleared ground. Thus, wire antennas have been my main focus since moving. I have had good results with the Palstar balanced tuner and ladder line feed to an extended lazy-H array for 40-10 meters. As we near the bottom of the cycle though, I really want to get on 160m, so I’ve been eyeing the tall timber and researching plans for a lowband antenna.

With the help of Susan, my XYL, and a 200 ft. tape, I determined that I could almost fit a horizontal, full-size  $\frac{1}{2} \lambda$  dipole for 160 meters from one side of the house clearing to the other. Almost. I’ll have to bend the last 20 ft. or so of each element vertically, but according to the literature, this should affect the gain by less than 0.5 dB.

A few weekends ago, I got the support lines up for the antenna, just before the trees were beginning to leaf out. Another week and I expect I wouldn’t have been able to see the topmost branches. I would estimate that the lines are up at least 60’, maybe even 70’. Now all I have to do is to pull the antenna itself up. I did have to acquire a more powerful bow as the kids model I bought several years ago at Dick’s in Rochester just couldn’t fling the arrow with the attached fishing line high enough. Luckily, I found an archery outfitter nearby and the guys there were very helpful...even though they were a bit amused by my application. They sold me a used recurve bow—adult size this time—fitted it with a new string, and gave me a couple of pointers on shooting and aiming at their indoor range; all for \$20. The new bow did the trick. Maybe I



should bring it to Field Day and W2TZ and I could have a line shooting contest. Hi.

Anyway, putting the antenna itself up should now be relatively straightforward. After that, I'll turn my attention to the Beverage for receiving. I'll need to make a few visits to the neighbors first, to get their permission to string the requisite 600 ft. of wire through their woods. Hopefully, there will be no issues on this front as long as I keep the wire up high enough to avoid decapitating both humans and deer walking through the woods.

I think the real trick with the Beverage is going to be deciding what sort of design to use. There are many and each has its own advantages and disadvantages. So I expect I'll be experimenting with various transformer designs, etc. off and on this summer.

CU on Topband this fall.

### Cut Numbers

Here's a handy reference for common "cut numbers" used by many CW operators to shorten the numeric portion of a contest exchange. Those most commonly used are A=1, N=9, and T=0.

1 = A	6 = B
2 = U	7 = G
3 = W	8 = D
4 = V	9 = N
5 = S	0 = T (long dash)

### Rochester Hamfest

Rick Mintz - W1TY

Can summer be far off? The buds have bloomed. The motorcycle is prepped. The Rochester Hamfest is closing in.

Last year the Grassy Knoll was more than a place to bargain and browse. It was a major social event. As the Saturday swap segment wound down the party heated up. A group of about 15 RDXAers had pizza delivered to the Knoll. With the addition of Charlie's Cabana and music by Frank Sinatra we partied past dark. It was spontaneous, and wonderful. Will there be a repeat?

June 3-4-5 are the dates this year. Get up early. Tell your job it is a mandatory mental health day. Top off the coffee mug; mornings can be chilly. Join the fun. It's all at the Grassy Knoll.

#### Rochester Hamfest Tickets Now Available

**Last chance for advance, discount Rochester Hamfest tickets!** Irv Goodman, AF2K will have advance registration hamfest and flea market tickets available at the May RDXA meeting. Get your tickets early and save a few bucks on the door price.

**Hamfest dates: June 3, 4, 5.**

### Telnet Packet Cluster Software

Rick Mintz - W1TY

If you are a Packet Cluster user, this program deserves your attention. Each band is color coded and individually displayed, at your option. Filters can be set to pass spots down to a tiny spectrum slice. Add WWV, local users, auto-reconnect and more, you will scrap your use of a generic Telnet connection. To top it off, it's free! Remember, the NG2P Cluster is at 66.67.220.251 port 7300. Here is a partial screen shot. Check it out at:

<http://www.ve7cc.net/>

The screenshot shows the Spider User W1TY interface. At the top, it says "Connected to NG2P". Below that, there are fields for DX de, Freq, and DX. A list of spots is displayed with columns: Spotted, Freq, DX, St, Time, Date, and Comments. On the right side, there is a summary table with columns for ALL, 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10. A red box on the right says "Strong Radio Blackouts".

Screen shot from VE7CC AR Cluster / DX Spider User Program. You can assign custom colors to bands and modes, filter in a variety of ways and have solar flux info posted prominently on screen. Best of all, it's freeware!

### RITTY

RTTY Rick, W1TY

Ya think that this Ritty box is just another RTTY decoder with an integral UTC clock? Think again. Here is a Ritty machine circa 1904. What does it do? Answer at the end of this issue.



Could this be the world's first RTTY decoder?

### Propagation

AD5Q's notes from Cycle 22, May 1994

Solar Flux Range-----69 - 95

**General** - April was disappointing. For the first half of the month we had a recurrence of the disturbed conditions from March. The bands opened up later in the month as these disturbances moved to

the other side of the sun. The first half of May will likely bring yet another two weeks of poor conditions. Aside from this, late spring is an excellent season for DXing, especially on 20m.

**10 and 15 Meters** – During the two weeks of quiet conditions in late April, fluxes were mostly down in the 70s. We should still expect periods where they are higher, and hope that they range from the 70s to the 90s. The most affected band in this range is 15 meters. When in the low end of the range (as in late April), we get a taste of what 15m will sound like for the next few years. The band was mostly dead. Openings were marginal, with only a few European signals coming through. Without higher fluxes in May, there will be little DX on this band until the fall. East/west paths will be OK, so the band should be watched for openings to Africa and the Pacific. The same can be said of 10 meters.

**20 meters** has opened up nicely, but still closes down completely after midnight. With flux levels in the 70s, the high latitude night path to Europe will not open (but check 30m). After dark, a pipeline opens over the pole to Siberia, Turkistan (UI, UL, UM, UH, UJ), parts of Russia, and points further south. As we progress toward summer, these openings should expand westward to the more heavily populated portions of Russia and Ukraine, but not Europe. The best European openings seem to be in late afternoon and in the morning. Morning is also a good time for the polar paths, and this opening includes paths to eastern Asia. Signals from the S.E. quarter of Asia come through until noon. Careful tuning of 20 meters in the morning can pay off nicely when the fluxes are too low to open Europe on 15m. Contacts with 9V, BY, JT, 9M, V8, HS, S2, & BV can be made routinely nowadays, with rarer DX always a possibility. Long path is usually open for a couple hours after sunrise, mostly to the Indian Ocean and southern Africa.

**17 meters** is another alternative for day path contacts into Europe, and recently has had more DX activity than 15m. May should be an excellent month for this band. 40 meters also remains in good shape, with many nice long path and Asian contacts being made (mostly from the west coast). As I write this (May 3), the A index is back up to 30, and so that mess on the other side of the sun is returning for another go-round. This forecast is not valid until things clear up again.

73, de Roy - AD5Q / Houston  
<http://www.qth.com/ad5q/>

### Ritty Answer

The object pictured earlier in this issue is not, unfortunately, the world's first RTTY decoder. It is the world's first cash register.

In 1879, the brothers John and James Ritty of Dayton, OH, built a model of a machine to keep track of the money received in a store. They patented their invention and began to manufacture "Ritty's Incorruptible Cashier." Eventually, the brothers sold their firm to one of their few customers, John Henry Patterson, who renamed the company National Cash Register (NCR). Patterson and his associates modified the machine into a successful product. The Ritty's original model does not survive, but NCR exhibited the replica pictured previously at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.

### The Smith Chart Quilt

Mike Rundle - N1OKL

I was Googling the web the other day looking for an antenna-related image I could use for the cover of a document I was writing. Imagine my surprise when I came across this image of a Smith Chart sewn into a quilt. Amazing!



Smith Chart quilt by Dr. Cynthia Furse, Associate Professor, University of Utah. Check it out at: <http://www.ece.utah.edu/~cfurse/>

### Twenty-seven Day Space Weather Outlook Table

Issued 2005 May 03

US Dept. of Commerce NOAA

UT Date	10.7cm Radio Flux	Planetary A Index	Largest Kp Index
2005 May 04	110	8	3
2005 May 05	110	5	2
2005 May 06	105	5	2
2005 May 07	100	5	2
2005 May 08	95	10	3
2005 May 09	95	20	4
2005 May 10	95	25	5
2005 May 11	95	18	4
2005 May 12	95	12	3
2005 May 13	90	8	3
2005 May 14	90	8	3
2005 May 15	85	5	2
2005 May 16	85	5	2
2005 May 17	85	20	4
2005 May 18	80	5	2
2005 May 19	80	10	3
2005 May 20	85	5	2
2005 May 21	90	10	3
2005 May 22	95	10	3
2005 May 23	100	5	2
2005 May 24	100	5	2
2005 May 25	100	5	2
2005 May 26	100	10	3
2005 May 27	100	20	4
2005 May 28	105	25	5
2005 May 29	105	10	3
2005 May 30	105	10	3

### Wanted: Passenger for Dayton Hamvention

Irv, AF2K is seeking a passenger for travel to Dayton Hamvention. Departing early 19 May, returning 22 May. Transportation only, Advance ticket also available. Join Irv in his fully-equipped Subaru wagon for a pleasant trip to and from Dayton: HF & VHF rigs for mobile QSOs to pass the time; plenty of room for flea market purchases! Call Irv at (585) 671-4430.

---

## ROCHESTER DX ASSOCIATION

W2RDX

rdxa.com

This Bulletin is the official organ of the Rochester DX Association and is published monthly, September through June. Email your articles, tidbits, ham ads, etc. to Mike, N1OKL at the addresses below by the first Tuesday of the month for inclusion in that month's issue.

All those with an interest in amateur radio and DXing and contesting are cordially invited to any meeting and to join RDXA. Meetings are held at 19:30 local time on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, September through June.

**President**----- Rick Mintz – W1TY  
w1ty@arrl.net

**Vice President**----- Paul Mackanos, Jr. – K2DB  
paul@prohomeinspector.net

**Sec/Treasurer**----- Charles Kuhfuss – WB2HJV  
wb2hjbv@frontiernet.net

### Board Of Directors

Paul Meyers – N2OPW----- n2opw@qsl.net

Gene Fuller – W2LU----- w2lu@worldnet.att.net

Fred Groner – W2TZ----- w2tz@aol.com

Dave Wright – N2CK----- n2ck@arrl.net

### Appointed Positions

DX Chairman ----- Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

Packet Cluster Sys Op ----- Bob Hunter, NG2P

Webmaster ----- Scott Hoag, K2ZS

NG2P Packet Cluster----- 144.910 MHz  
Telnet: 66.67.220.251 / Port 7300

### Newsletter Editor

Mike Rundle, N1OKL ----- rundlem@kpgraphics.com  
Alternate email: n1okl@pcilearn.com

### Dues (\$15 / year) and Correspondence to:

Charles Kuhfuss, WB2HJV

55 Stoney Path Lane

Rochester, NY 14626

### Professional Home Inspection



Paul Mackanos - K2DB  
20 Sumac Way  
Fairport, NY 14450



Paul - K2DB

www.paulmackanos.com

800.822.7579  
585.223.4230