

ROCHESTER DX ASSOCIATION, INC NEWSLETTER 1947-2010 • 60+ YEARS OF DX IN WNY NOVEMBER 2010

# RDXA General Membership Meeting

November 16th 7:30 PM

This month's program:

Newbie Night - Back to Basics

**Operating Phone Sweepstakes** 

# Media room, right next to the EOC operations center. 1190 Scottsville Road

Exit 17 (Route 383 South) off 390

Media Room

#### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2010 Holiday Science and Technology Fair at Rochester Museum & Science Center Monday - Thursday, Dec. 27-30 W2RDX will be operating for 3 of the 4 days If you have some time available to man the booth, please consider volunteering. It's a great way to share our hobby with youngsters.

# RDXA finishes in top 5 2010 Field Day! ARRL

We finished with 16,510 points - significantly behind our competition W9CA who took first with 19,748 points, but still good enough for a top 5 finish overall and second in a group of 384 entrants in the popular 3A category. Nice job to all who came out and helped make this effort work.



#### The Podium Paul Kolacki, K2FX Can you believe that the November meeting is already upon us? Before you know it, we'll all start to get very busy with the upcoming Holiday Season. RDXA has been doing some planning of our own. First, with regard to the Annual Holiday Banquet, the date and location have been finalized. This year, we will be gathering at Nick's Sea Breeze Inn on Tuesday,

December 14<sup>th</sup>. More information about this event will be forthcoming in next month's Newsletter. Also, watch your email for details, as RSVP's will soon be solicited for Nick's. In the coming month's you'll also hear more talk about our role in the 2011 Field Day Operation, and also some thoughts about the real focus of RDXA as it pertains to Contesting, and DXing.

I want to thank K2ZS, and W2BSN for contributing to last month's program. In case you missed it, the topic of discussion was Portable Antennas. Scott shared his nifty two meter loop, and Lynn brought in the famous Slinky Antenna. I demonstrated an antenna that has been the topic of some recent discussion on the local repeaters, that being the Chameleon V1. It's great to see that many of you are experimenting with portable stations. We can never lose sight of the fact that no matter how much fun this hobby of Ham Radio can be, there is still the serious Public Service role that each of us could be called upon to play. Being asked to operate in adverse and remote locations could happen to anyone of us, and we should all be prepared. Go Kit's and portable antennas, coupled with skilled operators are very important.

With that said, this month's meeting topic will take us back to the basics. We'll have a discussion that should be of interest to the Newbie's who've recently joined our organization, as well as a good refresher for those not so new to the hobby. Basic things you should all be aware of in operating your stations. How to get the most out of the equipment and antenna's you currently utilize. Of course, Safety is paramount in any station. How can we make our stations safer and more efficient?

I look forward to seeing you all at the November meeting, and of course hope that you will also join us for the after meeting gathering at "The Distillery" in Henrietta, as we closely observe the shape of those 807 bottles and sample their contents as well.

# Cold Brook Contest Club W2CCC now an ARRL affiliated club! K2CS

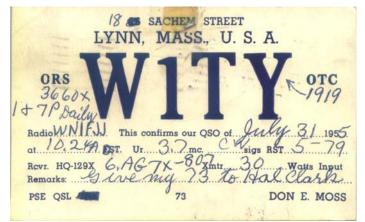
The ARRL Executive Committee met in late October and approved the Cold Brook Contest Club – W2CCC as an ARRL affiliated club.

### What's old is new again

#### W1TY

While operating NAQP Phone in August, W1FJ called me on 40 meters. He told me he was familiar with the W1TY call. I had investigated the original holder of my call some years ago and knew that it was held by Don Moss of Lynn, Massachusetts Turns out the W1FJ had an Elmer: W1TY. The first W1TY was active in traffic nets and an avid CW operator (imagine that!).

A note was enclosed with this QSL card that described W1TY as an "odd little man living in a room near my QTH". (I can imagine what you are thinking now.)



It was nice to receive this bit of personal radio history. What was even nicer was that W1FJ, AI Rousseau, made the effort to locate and send this piece of such interest to me. Thanks AI.

# 2010 NYQP Impressions

#### K2DPC

RDXA'ers are a great group and always willing to share their expertise and friendship. I am always learning something new about contesting whether at a monthly meeting, Friday S&S gatherings, or working on field day. As a newbie contester (my NYQP score was 437) I wanted to share some impressions of the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual running of the NYQP.

Long story short I missed the first half of the contest due to work. After failing to solve my swr and computer problems I decided to operate QRP to get K2DPC on the air and in NYQP. It was a search and pounce operation QRP on 40 meters SSB using a paper log. Not a very sophisticated approach for a contest so it meant I spent more time LISTENING (and learning) than transmitting.

Speaking of listening I was surprised how many stations called "CQ" endlessly. Many ops seemed more interested in calling CQ and giving their call than listening to see who was waiting to QSO. I realize many could not hear my QRP signal but I was still surprised they never let off the

mike long enough to really listen. Not a very efficient way to add contacts to their logs.

Another observation: how quickly you could pick out the contesters. Their crisp sharp exchanges wasted little operating time and yet they were friendly and helpful when stations needed assistance with exchange details. While listening to their exchanges it became evident on how best to attack the contest and increase my chances of QSO's.

Point of contrast: during Sundays Illinois QSO Party, with 120 counties, it took a lot of time to complete exchanges. Unlike NYQP there seemed to be a lot fewer Illinois contesters operating. I listened while many out of state stations struggled to get the four-letter county portion of the exchange. Very few Illinois operators used phonetics to send either their call sign or the county exchange. A number of stations were also sitting on the boundary of up to three counties. Really made for some interesting, lengthy and confusing exchanges. Thanks for a simple three letter county designator system for the NYQP.

Next hats off to the NYQP organizers for a simple yet well crafted website that had ALL the information anyone might need. From maps to county checklists to FAQ's it was all there in one spot and very well organized. It really helped make the contest more fun.

My thanks to all who replied to my contest calls. I heard many RDXA'ers that I could not work QRP due to the noise level. Also heard contacts by other stations working RDXA members. It took a while but I finally got K2NNY in the log. W2RTY sounded great QRP I thought he was using 100W – shows the efficiency of good antennas. Almost had W2CCC in the log but they couldn't dig my exchange out of the airwaves during the waning hours of the event. I enjoyed my QSO's with all.

I realize that for most RDXA members NYQP was just one of many contests they have worked over the years. But take a moment and think back to the very first few contests you worked as a new operator. Do you remember the fun and excitement of calling "CQ" and then having a station respond with YOUR CALL SIGN? For me that's the real wow factor of ham radio – knowing that every time you transmit your call sign it begins a new adventure.

My sincere thanks to the NYQP committee for making the NYS QSO party available after so many years. It takes a lot of hard work before and after the contest to make it a success. Based on the number of stations I heard on the air it was obvious NYQP was a hit and operators were having fun. Thank you for your efforts. RDXA can be proud of its sponsorship of this event.

So now it's on to CQWW SSB where I hope to improve my skills, my score and solve my swr and logging issues. While I realize I will never win a contest I really enjoy seeing how others operate and learning how they solved problems when Murphy showed up. I am already looking forward to having even more fun on Saturday, October 15, 2011 for next years NYQP.

#### **DX News**

K2CS

Contests, contests, contests....

We're smack dab in the middle of the contest season with NYQP, CQWW SSB and Sweeps CW behind us with Sweeps SSB, CQWW CW, ARRL 160m CW and ARRL 10m just ahead.

The newly affiliated Cold Brook Contest Club, W2CCC, operated from Herkimer County for NYQP with 400 watts and the trusted G5RV doubling the points of last year.

Thanks to those who "checked in". We actually ran over a qso a minute for the duration of the contest.

Rick and Paul have done an outstanding job of resurrecting the NYQP. Funny, most club conversations of late revolve around what members are planning for next year.

CQWW SSB is always my favorite even though it's SSB. I guess it brings back memories of almost 20 years ago when I got started in RDXA.

There was always a big buildup "contest week". Repeater roundtables on 79 always related to what stations had done to improve on the prior year's efforts and their plans for that year.

The week before was always an easy way to pick up some new ones as DX stations would test out their setups before "the big day".

Fred Gern, KB2SE (later on K2FR) would rally the troops, offering to look at logs, help those that had no idea what (the hell) was going on (a.k.a., me at the time).

W2HPF (W2FU now) has a 40 column scoring program that ran in DOS and was "free" and easy to use.

The "GO List" was packed ....

What a thrill... from an HT to Argentina!

If you're reading this and have never either been interested in or had the time to contest, if I were you, I'd rearrange my schedule to give it a shot.

The upcoming ARRL DX Contests next year give you a GREAT opportunity to "put a few in the log", DX stations, to gain points, have to work the USA as opposed to the CQWW format where anyone can work anyone.

Sweeps CW is probably the hardest contest of all. With a very lengthy exchange, lots of activity and CW ops who "know their craft", missing 1 character "dings" your score with that qso AND a penalty.

Some say CW is dead, I beg to differ.

So, let's skip ahead to ARRL 10m. This year, Mexican multipliers have been added to spice up what has been (in the low sunspot cycle) somewhat short of spectacular in past years.

It'd be interesting to know how you feel about these changes....

In closing, we now have a new Section Manager as RDXA Past President, Scott Bauer W2LC has stepped down.

Scott ran this organization years ago, just before the big "tech plus" influx and has served as the WNY Section Manager for several years. W2LC is an active station and can be heard in most contests.

Thanks Scott for representing upstate so well and enjoy your new found "free time" accordingly.

In the log W2CCC Aug – Sept, 2010 (non-contest)

(GREAT autumn equinox conditions!!)

ZL4PW VL2GWK LY2J JA1CG VO1AU/BY1RX 5N7M RI1FJ JT1BV HZ1DG GW3YRP 9K2MU A61BK P33W JY6ZZ VP8LP 4X4DZ D2EB JA7BXS ZL3TE E51JD 9H3X TA3AX KH7Y 9M2CNC VK3EGN See you in the pileups. Best DX es 73,	(17m CW) (17m CW) (80m CW) (17m CW) (20m CW) (15m, 17m CW) (17m, 20m CW) (20m SSB) (20m SSB) (20m SSB) (17m CW) (20m SSB) (17m SSB) (17m SSB) (17m CW) (15m CW) (15m CW) (15m SSB) (17m SSB) (20m CW) (20m SSB) (17m SSB) (17m SSB) (17m CW) (15m SSB) (17m CW) (20m SSB) (17m CW) (20m SSB) (17m CW) (20m CW)
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Chris, K2CS: Atlantic Division DXAC

#### Antenna Launcher Mishap

K2RNY

I just want to drop a quick line regarding pneumatic antenna launchers.

Yesterday, I decided it was time to get my OCF dipole up in its spot. Loaded the antenna launcher and filled the tank with 60lb compressed air.

I always carry the device like a loaded gun, which means I hold the gun above the valve with the tank pointing down and away from me. I never use the gun other than with the end of the tank set on the ground.

As I was carrying the gun down to the trees, the tank exploded. It actually separated from the 4" fitting to the valve.

So, please, please understand the following:

These are cannons. They will hurt you. Luckily, nothing happened to me.

NEVER load it past 40 lbs. NEVER.

When you build one, double glue the joints. That means a swath of PVC cement on both the fitting and the end of the pipe. When joining them, twist and push together.

I was amazed at the little amount of PVC cement on the fitting. I thought I had glued it well. No way.

Happy ending. I resorted to a fishing pole and at least got one end up higher than I wanted it.





# Dissolution of Netherlands Antilles Creates Four New DXCC Entities ARRL

The dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles has caused changes to the DXCC List. As per the DXCC rules, the two Netherlands Antilles DXCC entities will be deleted and moved to the Deleted Entities List.

Four new entities will be added to the DXCC List:

Curacao; Sint Maarten; Saba and St Eustatius, and Bonaire.

The event date and time for these changes was 0400 UTC, October 10, 2010.

Confirmations for these new entities will be accepted for credit starting January 1, 2011. Other administrative changes and actions will be announced as they are finalized.

#### **Upcoming DX Operations:**

Nov 3-23, 2010 Gabon: TR8GV Nov 4-18, 2010 Sierra Leone: 9LOW Nov 5-14, 2010 Balearic Is: EA6 Nov 7-30, 2010 Cameroon: TJ3AY Info: Operation expected to continue for 2 years Nov 8-18, 2010 Senegal: 6V7Z Nov 9-19, 2010 Guernsev: MU Nov 14-Dec 1, 2010 Uganda: 5X1XA Nov 15-Dec 18, 2010 Madagascar: 5R8IC Nov 16-19, 2010 Swaziland: 3DA0GF Nov 18-Dec 3, 2010 St Eustatius: PJ5 Nov 19-27, 2010 Seychelles S79AU Nov 19-Dec 3, 2010 Niue: ZK2A Nov 19-Dec 5, 2010 Kermadec Is ZL8X Nov 20-23, 2010 Sint Maarten: PJ7 Nov 20-Dec 3, 2010 Niue: ZK2A Nov 20-Dec 8, 2010 Tristan da Cunha ZD9 Nov 22-24, 2010 Guam KH2 Nov 22-27, 2010 Guam KH2KY Nov 22-Dec 6, 2010 Montserrat: VP2M Nov 26-Dec 6, 2010 Vietnam: XV4SP Nov 30-Dec 7, 2010 Bahamas: C6AKQ Dec 1-7, 2010 Senegal: 6W Dec 2-9, 2010 Chatham Is: ZL7 Dec 3-13, 2010 DR Congo: 9Q50ON Dec 5-13, 2010 St Lucia: J6 Dec 5-19, 2010 Norfolk Is: VK9NN Dec 6-13, 2010 Sable Is: CY0 Dec 16, 2010-Jan 13, 2011 Guatemala: TG9 Dec 19, 2010-Jan 7, 2011 Sierra Leone: 9L Dec 21, 2010-Jan 23, 2011 Temotu: H40 Dec 24, 2010-Jan 3, 2011 Ogasawara JD1BLY Dec 30, 2010-Jan 8, 2011 Ogasawara: JD1BMH

Information courtesy of: http://www.ng3k.com/Misc/adxo.html

#### KC2JXP Makes Eagle Scout! N2BEG

On Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> RDXA member KC2JXP (Ben Stewart) was awarded Scouting's highest rank, that of Eagle Scout in a ceremony in Honeoye Falls. Ben is seen here accepting a certificate from RARA member Bill Kaperkowski, WB2SXY commemorating the event. The portly ham on the right is N2BEG, Ben's OM Doug. Ben is currently attending RIT, majoring in Electrical and Biomedical Engineering.



Ed. note - Great Job Ben! Congratulations. N2CK

# The 2010 W2CCC NYQP Crew

K2CS



Activating Herkimer County in the NYQP at W2CCC is Irv – AF2K, Ken – N2ZN, Gayle – N2TWI, Chris – K2CS and Charlie – WB2HJV. Looks like its time to unwind after another tough (but enjoyable) contest.

# **Bureau Pack Analysis**

#### N2CK

I received a packet from the Bureau recently (yes Virginia – the ARRL 2<sup>nd</sup> district QSL Bureau still sends out packets of cards) and as I looked through them I thought I would analyze the cards and see the history of contacts they represented.

I received 20 cards (well, actually 21 – but one was for K2CK/MM – I'll send it to him). Germany was the leader with 8, followed by Italy and Spain (3 each), and Brazil, Croatia, Netherlands, Portugal, Rwanda, and Slovenia with one each.

For modes, CW was the leader with 11, followed closely by SSB with 10, and RTTY with 5.

The oldest QSO was for a 10M SSB contact with PA3ELD on March  $3^{rd}$  2002. The newest was with DK0EE for a 20M SSB contact on March  $28^{th}$ , 2010. I was disappointed that only 2 had handwritten labels – the rest being either labeled or direct printed on the card (a little background – I always QSL a hand-written card, whether they request mine or not!). This package of history was delivered to my mailbox for the paltry sum of \$0.61.

So, why this detailed breakdown you ask? Well, a couple of reasons. First, I've always wondered about newest/oldest – and as I looked through the cards I saw there was other data to be gleaned from the collection. And, I was intrigued to discover the history they delivered.

But, as I looked at yet more cards from Italy, Germany and Spain, I thought to myself it sure would be nice for something really nice and exotic to bolster the DXCC counts in the collection. It was at that point that it dawned on me - that my fellow ham (for whatever reason) thought it necessary to mark their QSO's for QSLing, generated labels (or printed cards), actually HANDLED them, and sent them on their way to me! Along the way other hams interested in seeing this side of the hobby continued, sorted them and organized them for eventual delivery to my mail box. Yes, it was yet another confirmation of a country/mode I already had - but a human ultimately was at the other end, as validated by the card received. Sure one can upload their post-contest log to LOTW, and search for new country/band/mode contacts in a massive database immediately after a contest - but I submit that's almost artificial. It's just bits and bytes on a computer and one really big matching algorithm. Holding a card in my hand that another ham took the effort to fill out and send me is SO much more appealing than an electronic confirmation!

So, I would like to leave you with one passing thought. Yes, it's yet another (fill in your favorite entity) – but this is your ultimate confirmation of the contact. Take the time to respond when others request your card. You may have that entity confirmed many times over – but perhaps they need your state/county/grid for an award at their end. It's a wonderful part of the hobby I hope never dies. Just my \$0.02. Antenna farm at W2CCC

K<sub>2</sub>CS



Heavy duty hardware at W2CCC, note g5rv in the background (10 element 2m beam and 3 element 6m beam on 10ft roof tripod as well)

# **DX Ethics and Etiquette rules**

#### XW1B

#### LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN!

If I send your call correctly PLEASE don't repeat it back to me. It adds confusion

My openings to certain parts of the worked are very short – please respect that.

I can work Europe/Asia 24 hours a day on some band. Please standby if asked.

If I'm calling someone, or a particular area, please standby.

IF YOU KEEP CALLING ME, YOU ARE QRM – I WILL NOT WORK YOU.

I ALWAYS work SPLIT – I announce my intentions regularly.

Use common sense, be considerate of fellow hams, and listen first

Source XW1B's Bio on QRZ - Dick, K2ZR submitted

# Spotting Cluster Etiquette rules F6EXV

DXing is no longer what it used to be ... thanks to new technologies. When I started Dxing, over 30 years ago, rare country hunters would organize VHF network, or would even telephone each other as soon as an extraordinary DX or a missing one would appear on the air. In Bordeaux, we would monitor 145.450 in those days. So we could sometimes hear brief announcements like "VK9YA is presently on 21.295, split up 5; here is F6BKI".

Today, all internet-connected Dxers share the results of their hunts live, but also the hunt of the whole world, thanks to the world-wide cluster network. A ZL8 appears on 17m, and the whole world knows in a matter of one

minute. Nevertheless, erroneous or useless info occasionally appear, and I thought it would be nice to remind users of basic rules which, in my humble opinion, should rule the use of the cluster.

#### The cluster is not meant to make QSO

It is more and more common to see two connected hams exchange reports on the cluster, sometimes after having taken a sked on 160m for example. Reports should not be passed on the cluster, but only on the air, otherwise why not telephone each other to make QSO?? Giving reports over the cluster may invalidate the QSO for DXCC.

# The cluster is not meant to spot stations you cannot hear

How many times have we seen info like:

DX de F6XYZ 21260.0 FK8ZZ No copy in Paris

Most of the time, the info was given a few minutes before by someone else who copies the DX; Imagine all the connected stations informing the world they are not copying that DX...The clusters would be full of useless info.

#### The cluster is not a chat box

Limit the use of "announce" and "announce/full" to what is really necessary. Before asking for a QSL manager, search the internet or the cluster itself, typing "SH/QSL DX0AA". It is likely the info will be displayed, without you to bother the world. Avoid chatting with your local friends: use the "talk" command rather than "Ann". If you want to inform that you have received a card for a recent Dxpedition and you have been lucky to be one of the first to receive it, use "ann" rather than spot the DX like:

DX 14000.0 KH8SI QSL received today In that case, remember that the spot will be treated like a real one and computer bells will ring all over the world for those with logging programs indicating that entity is still needed on that band. These guys will hate you forever...

Comments should be info useful to others, not to your ego. Give the split rather than say 599 or "yessssssssss first call!"

The cluster is not a parrot

Once you have read the info on the cluster, you are lucky to make the contact yourself. There is no need to spot it again, as the whole world already knows that DX is there, and avoid repeats. How many times do we see the same spot repeated 20 times in 5 minutes? Many info are wrong in terms of callsign. 6W1XX spotted as BW1XX. The cluster is not a bible, and you should LISTEN for the call on the air rather than fully trust the cluster info

# A Dxpedition is not necessarily connected to the cluster network

You hear that rare IOTA expedition to P29 on 15m. You need P29 on 17m. Ask them through the cluster to QSY to that band is unlikely to reach them. On a desert island, the expedition is not connected to the web, and they will not see your request. Not only the expedition did not go there just for you, but you will be seen as an selfish by the whole world-wide community. The cluster is not meant for complaints, at least in terms of spots. Don't criticize a dxpedition for not being on a band you need it on, just listen and they will be there sooner or later. You are not there yourself, and you cannot imagine what circumstances the guys are facing on their side.

#### The cluster is not meant for you to spot yourself

Don't spot yourself as calling on a certain frequency, even if you have a sked. If you are on an IOTA, someone will spot you quickly after you show up on the air, your ego will have to bear with waiting for the spot. Imagine every active station spotting themselves: the cluster would be full of useless info.

Don't spot your next door neighbour, even to say he is calling DX. You hear him CQing DX, but this does not mean he is heard on the other side. Let some DX spot him instead.

#### Not everybody is connected to his local cluster

It is useless to thank the guy you just worked when you spot him. Hopefully you will have thanked him over the air, and he is not necessarily connected to read your thanks. Send him a QSL better! The common "Tnx new one" may be nice, but who cares? Imagine everyone spotting all their new ones...

#### The cluster is not a copy of your log

It is not worth informing the whole world you just worked a common DL on 20m, or a SP on PSK on 17m.

Even a beginner can find this kind of stations by just switching on his rig. It is a wrong excuse to say a beginner needs everything: a beginner must also learn to turn his VFO knob...

If there is no DX today, there is no need to feed the cluster with useless local info.

#### What to spot, what not to spot

Common sense should dictate your choices. The desire to help a beginner is a wrong excuse to spot "anything". There is no general rule or a list of what to spot. What is rare and of interest is not limited to what you need. Nevertheless... To work a Ukrainian on 15m PSK is not a fabulous achievement of which the whole world must be informed. To work Florida on 17m CW may be nice, but should the world know? Any station has a least one reference for a local award (DOK for DL, zip code for Spain, department for F, county for USA, etc). This does not mean you must spot everything you hear. What are these awards worth if you just need to watch your screen to get them?

A special prefix can be spotted, without exaggerating in terms of repeats. A semi rare US state can be spotted (like Wyoming or the Dakotas) but who needs a spot from New York?

As a conclusion, I would like to say this is only a point of view. The cluster system is a fabulous technical achievement, but do not forget that everything that goes through it travels the entire world in a matter of seconds. And it is better to find the DX before it is spotted: less competitors, easier to get though... so get to your VFOs !

# **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 Dave, N2CK at the addresses below by the second Tuesday of the month for inclusion in that month's issue.

Al 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	Paul Kolacki K2FX/
usafpilot@rochester.rr.com	
Vice PresidentScott Hoag	g K2ZS/ scott@k2zs.com

**Treasurer**-----Irv Goodman – AF2K/af2k@juno.com **Secretary** ------Bill Rogers – K2TER/k2ter@rochester.rr.com

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Chris Shalvoy – K2CSK2CS/chris@k2cs.net

#### **Appointed Positions**

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