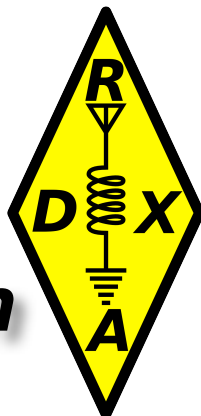


Rochester DX Association



Field Day June 23 - 24th

The contest “year” ends with the ARRL readiness exercise.

Join the RDXA at Webster Park where we will be operating.

Set up begins Friday, June 22

Contact John Gilley, W3OAB for more information.

Volunteers always welcome!

Rochester Hamfest June 30, 2012 at the RIT Field House

<http://www.rochesterhamfest.org/Hamfest.htm>

Annual Meeting Elections — June, 2012

Nominate and vote for next year's Board of Directors

List of Candidates to Date:

Lynn Bisha – W2BSN

Larry Brightenfield – W2LB

Dan Guyer – N2DD

Mark Hazel – K2MTH

Brent Hungate – KC2QLJ

Max Kelly – KC2SPY

Andrew Lesny – N3LZG

Bill Rogers – K2TER

Doug Stewart – N2BEG

N2BEG Radio Activity Update

I hope everyone is getting ready for Field day! The radio has been hoping lately with the solar flux up above 120 and activity on the higher bands is picking up. My son (Ben, KC2JXP) and I are planning on camping at the park for field day for the duration. We plan on getting the Milmast for deployment based on responses so if you have never come out to Webster park to see this mechanical marvel go up and down, then plan on showing up Friday or Sunday. It is quite a sight to see if you have never witnessed and it's fun to watch it all come together.

I hope everyone had a chance to make some Q's during the June ARRL VHF contest, it sure started out slow but then it came alive with at least 2 major openings on 6 (and 2meters) enabling the band to sound like 20meters! I heard several locals tell of exotic grids heard or worked, or being called by DX! How cool is that? I worked several EU stations, west coast and the Canadian Maritimes in addition to a lone C6 and the multitude of midwest/west stations that were there for the picking. 110 q's and 69 grids in a very casual effort. I think 6 is going to great this summer! Check it out often and if you hear beacons and no activity, CALL CQ! you never know who is out there.

My main HF activity is still mainly mobile. I try to guess which bands will be the most active during my commute and put that hamstick in the mount. I'm

currently running 17m which has really been active with all kinds of choice DX during the morning and evening commute. Last week between Thursday and Friday I worked OM3LK, EA9IE,OV1CDX, 4Z4DX, ER3ZZ and JA1OJJ. Yoshi was running his homebrew 5 element quad and was booming in to WNY. Coincidentally the next 2 stations I heard or worked were also running quads, W3FF in CA and G0TSH in York, both had impressive signals. I am still working on my own design...starting with a 6 meter version and scaling up to HF. (I know, I know, the ice...) more on that later. Hope everyone had a great Fathers Day, get on the bands!

— Doug, N2BEG



Yoshi's HB quad, copyright JA1OJJ

ARRL VHF — W2CCC FN23

After roving for years with W2HPF, WA2MOP and as N2PEB/r (with N2TWI) I've recently been reacquainted with VHF contesting. I had participated in the N2WK efforts years ago so have an excellent background in this aspect of the hobby. Owning 10 acres in FN23 (at 1400') has provided an excellent location, rare grid and a virtually interference free environment. Slowly but surely I've been putting up bands, 6m was first, 2m was added last year and now through some generous time and equipment loans, 222 and 432 have been operational. K2QO/r has stopped by the last several years for some rest and relaxation between their hectic grid schedule



(this weekend was no exception as Mark and Paul pulled just after midnight on Saturday). When there, I've been checking into the 144.205 "net" to test equipment and Saturday provided another opportunity. After the net, my biggest dilemma was CW. Not that I don't know it but have only 1 keyer for 4 radios! I had fashioned a switch to provide keying between the 6m & 2m rigs but not 222 and 432. Back in the 70's, I purchased a Ten Tec single paddle keyer which I had brought up north for a spare so I decided to press that into service. The single paddle is not a bencher... I'll tell you that! It's was also a bit sticky due to age so I hooked it up to the 6m rig for testing. As I began to send with it, the key was just starting to work properly when my power supply blows up! Not a good time... We're 40 minutes from the nearest Radio Shack and just hours from the contest start. I tore the entire station apart to get the supply out, not fun (see photo,



upper left hand side on shelf, under light). After finding a blown, internal (glass 20a) fuse, now I have to fix it. Of course, I have none there and not wanting to just "short" it out. I was not looking forward to an hour and a half drive for a dollar part either. I begin to drive down the road feeling this was my only option and remembered one thing, the car has fuses! Not glass ones but I have the

connectors to convert it to a spade type. I turned around and repaired the supply with only an hour to spare. Now, to reconnect everything and update the logging software.

All set so, now to the good stuff. After the minor setback, all played very well.

6m never really opened until the HUGE Sunday "surprise". Absolutely stunned to work S57RR on SSB as well as many EI stations. G, GW, GM, CT, IK were in there as well. Heard a ON station and a JA way down the band (worked a JA from W2CCC last July, he sent me the card!). As for 2m, it performed excellently, I doubled my grid total from September. 222 (with the help of WB2BYP and a conversion article written years ago by club member NJ2L) worked great. The transverter that I used way back in the W2HPF/r days worked as it did 10 or more years ago. 9 grids there was great in my opinion. 432 was flat, not the setup but band. Many on various reports have commented that the band was in very rough shape. All I did work gave me an excellent signal report even with only 5 elements (bought a long boom at Dayton, no time to get it situated before the contest though).

All in all, an outstanding contest. Seemed to me, there was an uptick in activity. I'm well aware the hobby isn't what it use to be 20 or more years ago but it was refreshing to hear so many on the air.

I'd like to thank everyone for their assistance throughout the years and hopefully I've provided a mult or two from FN23mh (to those who point their beam my way!).

See you all in September!!



Chris, K2CS (W2CCC FN23)

** Next up, work W2RDX in the (annual) IARU contest, July 14-15, 2012

Contest Column — June - September, 2012

Here are the upcoming contests of interest for the summer (June-September):

ARRL Field Day, 1800Z, Jun 23 to 2100Z, Jun 24 (Yes, it's a contest!)

RAC Canada Day Contest, 0000Z-2359Z, Jul 1

DL-DX RTTY Contest, 1100Z, Jul 7 to 1059Z, Jul 8

IARU HF World Championship, 1200Z, Jul 14 to 1200Z, Jul 15

North American QSO Party, RTTY, 1800Z, Jul 21 to 0600Z, Jul 22

RSGB IOTA Contest, 1200Z, Jul 28 to 1200Z, Jul 29

New Jersey QSO Party, 1600Z, Jul 28 to 2000Z, Jul 29

North American QSO Party, CW, 1800Z, Aug 4 to 0600Z, Aug 5

WAE DX Contest, CW, 0000Z, Aug 11 to 2359Z, Aug 12

North American QSO Party, SSB, 1800Z, Aug 18 to 0600Z, Aug 19

YO DX HF Contest, 1200Z, Aug 25 to 1200Z, Aug 26

SCC RTTY Championship, 1200Z, Aug 25 to 1159Z, Aug 26

Ohio QSO Party, 1600Z, Aug 25 to 0400Z, Aug 26

All Asian DX Contest, Phone, 0000Z, Sep 1 to 2400Z, Sep 2

Colorado QSO Party, 1200Z, Sep 1 to 0400Z, Sep 2

WAE DX Contest, SSB, 0000Z, Sep 8 to 2359Z, Sep 9

ARRL September VHF QSO Party, 1800Z, Sep 8 to 0300Z, Sep 10

North American Sprint, CW, 0000Z-0400Z, Sep 9

Scandinavian Activity Contest, CW, 1200Z, Sep 15 to 1200Z, Sep 16

I've highlighted the major DX contests above, since those weekends will be very active, and a good opportunity to work lots of DX. Also of interest is the NJ QSO Party, which is being relaunched this year after several years of little or no activity. Similar to how RDXA relaunched the NYQP a few years ago, it would probably be real helpful to the NJ boys to get on and give them some QSO's that weekend.

A few years ago, I wrote a guide to operating the WAE contests that was published on the reflector. It mainly covers how to send the QTC messages during the contest. I've asked Andrew to reprint that email in this edition of the newsletter, just as a refresher. Try the WAE-it is lots of fun!

Contest Column — Cont'd.

Also, since Dayton recently came and went, I'd like to give a bit of a recap on some of the things that happened there. I wasn't able to make it last year, so being able to go this year was excellent.

I left the house Thursday morning around 8, and made it into town around 3:30. The drive was more or less uneventful, but I did have a few local ham sightings on the way down, most notably AK2D/AK2X somewhere in Ohio, and WO2P/N2KXS at the toll plazas in Buffalo. Also, when I was getting close to Dayton, I was approaching a car with the NY license plate "K2ZR", and a plate frame from a dealership in Medina. Well, I know Dick, like many of you do, so I prepared to get up next to him and bust his chops a bit. As I got right behind him, I looked closely at the license plate and saw that it actually said "KZ2R", and I was surprised to see a much older gentleman than Dick driving the car. I guess you never know who you are going to run into on the way to Dayton.

After arriving and checking in at the Crowne, I was bringing in my luggage from the garage, and as I was opening the door to go from the garage to the hotel, I ran into N2PP, who had just finished up Contest University. Vic said it was great; maybe I should sign up and get there a day earlier next year. About a half hour later, I met up with AI2N, WJ2O, AK2X, and AK2D in the bar on the top floor; K1PY joined us shortly afterward. Vic had come a day early to attend Contest University like the other Vic did. Now, I've really got it in my mind to go next year!

Of course, it would be hard to notice that the bar was full of hams from all over; in addition to the Rochester table, a few feet away from us was the Hudson Valley group, led by W2RE and WW2DX. Ray and Lee were working this year on promoting their newest venture, RemoteHamRadio.com. In short, the way it works is they provide you with remote access to their stations at different sites, and you control it with an Elecraft K3/0 (basically a K3 with no RF deck), a Rigremote interface, and Green Heron Everywhere software to control the rotators and controllers at the remote site. Pretty neat. They had a demo of it going at the hospitality suite in the Crowne all three nights, and guys were getting on and working DX from right in the hotel. (W2RE, of course, is the new competition for us in the NNY section, from their location in southern

Northern New York. Ask K2DB about that one when you see him.)

After the party at the pub broke up, it was off to the Pine Club for dinner with W2FU, N2PP, and a few others. Great food and conversation as always, and then after dinner, back to the Crowne for the usual events at the suites. If you have never been to Dayton, all of the action at night (at least for DXers and testers) is at the Crowne. The Super Suite was busy as usual, and the Society of Midwest Testers suite on the 4th floor was cranking well before I got there. It was great to spend time throughout the night with K2CS, N2OPW, N2TWI, AI2N, WJ2O, W2FU, N2PP, AK2X, AK2D (Sarah is always a big hit at the suites), in addition to some of the testers we work throughout the year with recognizable calls, like W9RE, W2RE, WW2DX, KA9FOX, K3LR, W3LPL, K1RX, K8AZ, K8CX, K9CT, NR5M, VE3DZ, K7NV, K9PG, N0QM (VQ9LA), W1VE, N4RR, N0AX and many, many others. It's really amazing to see who comes out to Dayton just to do the things that we do.

The next day (Friday), it was out to the flea market, and to check out the goods. Lots and lots of walking around and some socializing at the RDXA tent, which included K2CS, N2TWI, WB2KAO, N2CK (a few pounds lighter in the wallet after buying a new amplifier), WB2HJV, K2SI, AF2K, and other guys from our area who come and go throughout the day. K2CS rounded out his VHF + setup with new beams for 220 and 432, and Dave bought the aforementioned amplifier; add that to the new tribander bought by AK2X/AK2D, and it looks like some happy hams headed back to WNY with new toys. I also attended some of the Antenna forum, and saw the first presentation about arrays of phased K9AY loops. Interesting, but is it as good as a single Beverage?

(For the record, I bought nothing but four BNC bulkhead connectors for Beverage boxes, and two RCA-PL-259 adapters, also for receive antennas. Total cost, maybe \$15, but an 800 mile round trip to get them. Maybe I should have grabbed that Alpha 77DX I saw, in addition to some of the hardline that Jeff and Vic carted off??)

After the flea market, it was back to the bar at the Crowne for basically a repeat of what happened the day before (with the same crowd, no less!). Then on to the Hickory Barbecue, where about a

Contest Column — Cont'd.

dozen of us enjoyed Dayton's finest ribs and chicken. This was a more varied group, with N2ZN, W2FU, N2PP, K1VR, W9RE, N4RR, K7NV, K0XG, PJ4LS, and a few others. It was a great time, and I got to swap some DXpedition stories with N4RR, who frequently operates the major RTTY contests from PJ4 and P40.

After dinner, back to the Crowne (see a pattern here?) for more drinks, pizza, and stories with contesting's finest. Really, can you beat the hours of socializing and mayhem that goes on in the suites? Strangely, a few of the regulars at the suites were conspicuous by their absences, like UA3AGW, NC2N/EW1AR, N2AA, and W6AE. It's really no party without the Russians, but VU2PAI tried to make up for it with some authentic Indian rum, flown specially to Dayton. He also had a bottle of something else; I can't remember what it was, but it smelled like pure gasoline.

Saturday morning looked a lot like Friday morning-get to the arena, walk around all day, have a good time. I did happen to see the new Kenwood radio; it is large and has lots of knobs. It will probably also have a hefty price tag; somewhere in the neighborhood of \$7-9000. I didn't see the specs on the receiver, but if they don't beat those of the K3, then why bother? Yaesu also showed off a new HF radio, of which I can't remember the model, but it looks like a mid-grade HF rig. Nothing new from Elecraft that I noticed, but their booth was completely packed all day long.

Saturday is also the Contest Forum, and that had some interesting topics. First was N6TV talking about Skimmer and the RBN. Since it has been around for a while, this was kind of an "update" to what's going on with the RBN. More access to Skimmer spots looks to be available for the assisted and multiop guys. One interesting tidbit: if you want to get spotted more, make sure you don't speed "burst" your CQ messages, something I frequently do. This means, don't set up your logging program to send "CQ" or "TEST" at 10 wpm faster than your call. Apparently this messes up the skimmers and you won't get spotted as often. A nice consistent "TEST N2ZN N2ZN TEST" is better. I will have to rethink my ways...

The next presentation was by K9GY (a good friend of K2CS) about his contest activities from Afghanistan as T6MO. Real interesting stories, and let's just say that operating/living in Afghanistan isn't for the weak of heart, to put it mildly.

After that, there was a presentation by SMOW on building the SK0UX contest station in Sweden. It was a real nice presentation, especially since those guys have to deal with much worse weather than even we are used to. They presented their station as the "non megabuck" approach to station building, as most of their antennas and station accessories are all homebrew (some of the antenna switching boards are real works of art), the towers are scrounged or donated, and even their hilltop site was donated by the local communications authority when they abandoned the site years ago. Pretty good deal! We could all learn something from their approach.

Finally, it was time to leave the arena and head back to the Crowne, but Saturday nights are the Contest Dinner and the Kansas City DX Club pileup contests, and those are must-attend events. The Contest Dinner saw AD1C inducted into the Contest Hall of Fame, and N6TR did a very good speech on the history and current state of computerized log checking. It was real interesting stuff; "keep those logs as clean as possible" should be the real lesson there. The dinner (prime rib) was up to its usual quality, for those who have enjoyed it before. I sat with N2PP, W2FU, a few VE7's, and some 9's from the midwest. Jeff, Vic, and I spent most of the dinner explaining to them what it was like to run Europeans during a DX contest, especially on bands below 21 MHz.

After dinner, it was time for even MORE socializing, drinking, and the pileup contest. If you have never done this, the way it works is that you get taken into a room with five other contestants. Each one gets a computer, and your job is to copy as many calls from a recording as possible. The recording usually has 100 calls, and contains all sorts of QRN, QRM, stations calling on top of each other, and so on. All you have to do is type in as many of the calls as you can within the 5 minute period. Now, a new feature of the pileup contest is the realtime scoreboard and "horse race" display that is in the adjoining suite, where everyone waits to go into the test. Since the logging computers are all networked, the results are output to a display that shows the scores (in real time, as the test is going on), and how the people taking the test compare to the rate of the current top 5 scorers. Believe me, everyone in the main suite was glued to the TV watching this thing all night. The tradition of writing the scores on a board in the main suite

Contest Column — Cont'd.

has almost been replaced. When the smoke cleared, K5GN was the winner with 77 calls, followed by W9WI and VE3DZ, who are also two perennial winners in the competition.

I took the test with N2PP, W1VE, K2RD, and a few others who I don't remember now, but at the beginning of the test, Vic's computer died and he got up and left. I didn't realize what happened until later; I just saw him get up and leave, which looked really strange in the middle of the test! He went back in with the next group and successfully took the test on the second try.

After the pileup competition, it was back to the SMC suite for more fun and games, and then finally to wind down the night. Strangely, this year there was no suite hosted by the North Jersey DX Association, something they have been doing for years...hopefully they will be back next year.

The next day, it was get up, pack, and check out. All too soon, Dayton was over, and I grabbed a quick lunch at Skyline Chili (who knew they didn't open until 11?) and was out on the road. One stop for gas, and I was home by 7 PM, which is pretty good time, since I probably didn't hit the interstate until about 11:45.

Unfortunately, I didn't take a whole lot of pictures this year (hardly any, in fact), but I'm sure some will show up at some point. If you have never gone to Dayton, I've just given a brief "contesters summary" of what goes on there (and I'm sure I left a ton of stuff out as well). Consider coming out next year, if just for the food and drink and camaraderie. I'm sure Irv will be thrilled to put your call on the HAPPY HOUR WEST roster in 2013.

— Ken Boasi, N2ZN



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Rochester DX Association

W2RDX rdx.com

This Bulletin is the official publication of the Rochester DX Association and is published monthly, September through June. Email your articles, tidbits, ham ads, etc. to Andrew, N3LZG at alesny@rochester.rr.com by the second 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 3rd Tuesday of each month, September through June.

PresidentPaul Kolacki – K2FX K2FX@arri.net

Vice President Mark Hazel – K2MTH mthazel2151@yahoo.com

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Larry Brightenfield – W2LBbrighten@rochester.rr.com

Doug Stewart – N2BEGdoug.stewart@itcmems.com

Lynn Bisha – W2BSNlbisha@rochester.rr.com

Chris Shalvoy – K2CSchris@k2cs.net

Andrew Lesny – N3LZGalesny@rochester.rr.com

Bill Rogers – K2TERk2ter@rochester.rr.com

Paul Mackanos – K2DBk2db@k2db.com

Brent Hungate – KC2QLJbrenthungate@yahoo.com

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