

# Rochester DX Association



## President's Letter

Hope all your DX desires have been filled throughout the Fall and Winter season. Sometimes I wonder if not for FT8, would there be any activity?

Many have crowded those frequencies and subsequently, there is little activity (as least in the CW portions of the band). The weeks surrounding ARRL DX CW were fun as many "test" their setups before (and enjoy them after) the contest. Nice to break a few pileups, practice "split" and make sure everything is still working.

I'm still not use to having 20m totally dead before I even get home from work and 30m seemingly being in the same shape. I've worked EU on 40m at 3pm local time – can't remember going "there" that early. That's not to say the "superstations" having been running them there at that time of day, I just can't remember ME being able to work folks at that time w/ my operating situation.

Having put a few hours into ARRL DX CW, you have to adjust "tried and true" operating procedure. In the "good old days" (read – when the SFI was above 70), you'd hit 15m at dusk pad your score with JA's and then head to 20 m and work the "exotic" stuff that would show up just before the band died. I'm not even mentioning when 20m would be open ALL NITE LONG... that seems lifetimes ago.

This time out, 15m was useful for the south and the JA run was on 20, weak and not sustained. The first one I worked was running 10w, no one calling. I was surprised he even heard me as many others did not. Guam was loud and clear, 2 stations calling CQ and not one of them hearing me... trust me, I called.

Gabbing the VK and ZL on 40m at our sunrise, no need – they were there far earlier. The VK's seemed lite but the ZL's were loud, several on actually.

My hope was to finish up my second 5 band DXCC (this time as W2CCC), needing 6 more on 80m to finish it up. Got almost 50 counties there, 40m too. On 160m, had 25 logged in 2 hours, low bands were fantastic. Now to see if the 50 includes any "new ones", as of this writing only one has been added.

Was a "balmy" -9 Saturday nite... lots of time stoking the fire to say the least.

Managed to work HI3/WJ2O on 20m, missed him on 15m though. I was there, didn't hear a peep.

**PIZZA!** RDXA won the Rochester VHF Group pizza party contest in the January VHF Contest. Therefore, our April meeting will have pizza at 7:00 PM followed by the usual meeting at 7:30 featuring a FT8 presentation K2DH. Don't miss it!

I noted in my recent meeting handout, we have absolutely ZERO top 25 DXpeditions planned for the near future, can't ever remembering that happening before.

Hope all enjoyed our “early” focus on the FD 2019. Several members have met and discussed how we can improve our 2018 effort – which by the way was a total success. In seeing what I have written above, the low bands are “where it's at” as well as an all out effort on FT8. This and other improvements are being brought to the membership for your approval but moreover, suggestions for alternatives. The club has done an outstanding job the last few years in “club wide” participation and enthusiasm. I'd expect a similar outcome this year.

Thanks to all who participated in the January VHF contest, it likened it to the “old days” where activity was at it's peak. Many great logs were submitted for our “sister club” the RVHFG. Can't wait to see what goes on in June as so many of you made an effort to dust of your gear and get on in January.

Remember this is the RVHFG 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we look forward in assisting them in a “rebirth” of the TOTAL domination that the Rochester area had in the VHF world for so many years. All great stuff for sure.

One last thing, thanks to John, AC2RL for putting this bulletin together and if you haven't done so already, jot down your particular operating circumstances and let other club members know your “trials and tribulations”.

Best DX es 73,  
Chris, K2CS  
President, Rochester DX Association



*Temps since the January VHF contest at W2CCC (top outside, note that's minus – bottom indoor temp)*



*One of my “neighbors” checking out a beverage support*

## RDXA members present Antenna Workshop to RARA, Feb 23.

*Mike Sanchez*

Three RDXA members, Dean Faklis NW2K, Ken Boasi N2ZN, and Mike Sanchez KM2B presented an antenna workshop to the RARA Antenna Academy organized by Tim Brown of RARA on February 23rd. The event was held at the Ogden Public Library and ran from 10am to 1pm. The event was well attended with 45 local hams and, in some instances, their wives.

Dean presented the importance of arrival and launch angle as a function of propagation conditions, along with a host of antenna types and functionality. Ken presented antenna types, test equipment, fundamentals of receive antenna's and more. Mike presented NEC2 and 4NEC2 simulation introduction.

Among the most frequent questions asked was: "How do I get my wife to agree to a 70 ft tower?" Many solutions to this were proposed by the RDXA members. Exit polling showed that most wives, upon leaving the event, were in favor of a tower install.

All in all, a good event with much laughter, knowledge and conversation shared.

## News Briefs

Here are a bunch of news items provided by Ken Hendrickson N8KH. I encourage all the members to pass along interesting news items. I'd like to make this a regular feature .

### *ARRL Board of Directors Issues Statement on Amateur Radio Parity Act*

At its annual meeting January 18 - 19, the ARRL Board of Directors decided that the organization needs to "review, re-examine, and reappraise ARRL's regulatory and legislative policy with regard to private land use restrictions."

In order to effectively undertake such a review, the Board adopted a resolution to withdraw its December 18 Petition for Rule Making to the FCC, which sought to amend the Part 97 Amateur Service rules to incorporate the provisions of the Amateur Radio Parity Act (ARPA), without prejudice to refiling. The resolution also is asking members of Congress who had refiled legislation to enact the Amateur Radio Parity Act (ARPA) to refrain from seeking to advance that legislation pending further input from ARRL.

Read the whole thing: <http://www.ARRL.org/arrlletter?issue=2019-01-24#toc01>

### *Earth's Magnetic North Pole is Moving, and Faster.*

Nobody knows why.

If this keeps up, there will be less auroral openings for hams in the US north-east and Canada.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-6579515/Scientists-warn-Earths-magnetic-North-Pole-begun-moving-erratically-speeds-50km-year.html>

### *A Month Without Sunspots*

The sun has just passed an entire calendar month with no sunspots. The last time this happened, in August 2008, the sun was in the nadir of a century-class Solar Minimum. The current stretch of blank suns shows that Solar Minimum has returned, and it could be as deep as the last one. Visit [Spaceweather.com](http://Spaceweather.com) for more information and current sunspot counts.

### *East German Spy Transmitter*

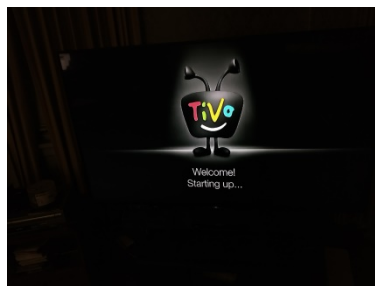
Ken N8KH recommends an interesting website that describes 1960's East German spy radios. See it at <https://www.CryptoMuseum.com/spy/ddr2/>

## RFI vs TiVo

David Pfonner, AC2VE

A few months ago I purchased a TiVo Roamio DVR to replace my aging Channel Master DVR. The new DVR works great with many benefits. However, it has a major weakness. It is very susceptible to stray RF.

My main HF antenna is a 142 foot end fed antenna. I wraps it way around the back yard at varying heights between 20 feet and 12 feet. I have always had RF floating around but have gained control by adjusting the antenna length, ferrite beads and 1:1 baluns (including ugly baluns). The TiVo is especially sensitive at 40 meters.



Whenever I would transmit, the DVR would go into reset mode. It was so sensitive that reset would occur with the 10 watts used when doing antenna tuning.

I tried filtering all the DVR cables with ferrite beads; HDMI, Power and hi pass filters on the TV coax. No improvement.



Next, I got my EMI/faraday cage can and tried filtering the whole unit.



*Picture does not show the can cover that was used to seal the DVR completely but does show the two hi pass filters. (Ancable In-Line High Pass Filter Coupler Barrel Adapter 54-1000MHZ, impedance 75Ω, Bandwidth 54-1000MHz, Return Loss 16dB, Insertion Loss 1.5dB) The insertion loss of the two filters does not seem to affect reception.*

No improvement.

The TV set up is on the wall closest to the back yard antenna. I ended up moving the entire DVR setup to the opposite end of the room with a 25 foot long HDMI cable feeding the television. No improvement. Adding more ferrite beads to the HDMI cable: No improvement.



The next step cost me some money. I replaced the HDMI cable with a wireless connection. I am using the IOGEAR Wireless HDMI TV Connection Kit, GWHDKIT11. This pair of units transmits high Definition video and Audio across the room from the DVR to the television.

This is the set up as of today. The whole DVR set up is tucked away under an end table at the far side of the room. The remote



control is RF (not infrared) so the DVR location can be anywhere.

This solved the problem. Mostly.

Both the receiver and transmitter of the IOGear and the DVR run very warm. Notice in the picture I have added a fan and have retrained the ferrite beads and hi pass coax filters. The box fan was one I removed from an old desk top. (The HDMI receiver at the TV has a fan I pulled from an old laptop.) Of course, like everything else in the house, I have a UPS attached.

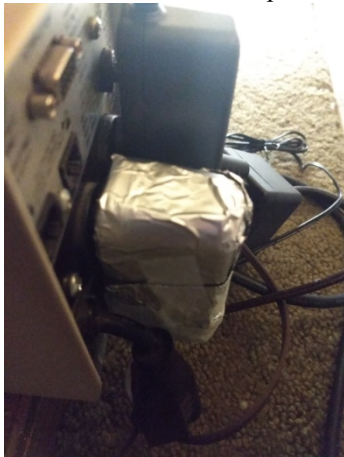
I still have some problems at 100 watts on some parts of the 80 meter band and some problems at any power level on the 60 meter band. The 60 meter band has only been used once before to check out my SWR meter so it is not a priority concern.

I just found out about the 80 meter problem during the ARRL SSB sweepstakes contest. I am hopeful that with some tweaking of my endfed antenna next spring I can clear up the 80 meter problem.

Update:

Problem solved completely: Finally!

After a month of contemplation, I realized that the only part of the set up that was not put in the garbage can was the AC adaptor. I tried shielding the adaptor with tin foil.



Believe it or not, it helped. However, as before, it did not solve the shutdown problem completely.

Final solution: replaced the ac adaptor with an Amazon \$7.99 Amamax Wall Adapter Power Supply .

Problem solved!! All these months of effort could have been avoided if I had only known that the factory supplied wall wart was RF sensitive.

Concluding comment: Be warned, if you want to own a Roamio OTA TiVo DVR make sure you have an antenna setup that has no stray RF, any stray RF you do have is under control first and have a spare AC adaptor. I am going to keep this low cost solution in mind if I have any future problems with equipment in or near my shack. I have always considered the switching power supplies as a source of RFI, this is the first time the switching power supply was the recipient of RFI.



## January Meeting

Dave Farnsworth WJ2O was the featured speaker at our first meeting of the year, January 2019. Dave, a veteran of many dxpeditions told us of his experiences on the 2018 Baker Island dxpedition. The new year also saw us outgrowing our previous meeting room at the Public Safety Training Facility and moving to the impressive Office for Emergency Preparedness room. – picture by David Pfonner

## Mosley Beam Mystery Solved!

*Chuck NN2L*

Last fall I went to operate my Mosley TA-33 beam only to find the SWR had gone haywire. After checking the coax, I lowered the beam to the ground and continued my diagnosis. I've used this beam up for over 35 years and have experienced occasional insect infestations within the traps as well as cracked coil forms which allowed the coils to distort and fall out of spec. Yet after carefully removing each trap cover and examining them carefully, no such issues existed.

I noted that some of the coils utilized rivets to secure the coil to the aluminum element and some used stainless steel screws. Everything looked bright, shiny and mechanically secure. Reattaching the traps to the beam solved nothing however. Same SWR issue! Hmmm.

Only when I took a simple ohmmeter to verify DC continuity on either side of the trap did the "aha" moment strike. There were actually TWO traps that showed no continuity! The culprit in both traps was their pop rivet. . An internet search showed that Mosley had at some point migrated from using stainless screws to rivets in the trap. Drilling it out and replacing it with a stainless screw (and Oxy grease) immediately resolved the issue and the beam was quickly returned to service. “

## Feb Club Meeting – What You Missed

*Vic K1PY*

Topic was what we learned at the 2018 Field Day, and what we do with that info to prepare ourselves for 2019 – with the focus being “**beat K4JJ.**”

Before addressing what we needed to improve upon, we summarized what went well:

- Mil-masts again graced our site – many thanks to **Lynn W2BSN** and the **AWA**



- We also again had the 25 kW generator thanks to Rich DiMarco and **ADMAR**
- **Bill K2TER** again provided the VHF/UHF/SHF Super Rover
- The **KM2B & Team** 40M CW inverted-Vee went up like a dream
- **GOTA** generated interest in potential future hams



- The heavens shone down upon us



- And we had happy operators

### WHAT TO DO FOR THIS YEAR?

During the event, a few things didn't go according to plan. And in addition, we have **K4JJ** to compete with. So, what do we have to do about all those for this year? *Note that these are listed simply as starting points for this year's planning.*

Last year we lost by only 1500 points. Points are not simply derived from contacts, although those are the major contributor. Mode is a factor, where CW and digital contacts are worth twice those of phone. And bonus points can be the tie breakers in an otherwise even Q-point battle. So let's look at the major contributors to scoring and what we have to improve on from 2018 for this year.

### Overall HF contact totals

- **40M CW** -- There was a general feeling that our hopes for the 40M CW Inverted-Vee, which perhaps were more than they should have been, weren't quite met. However, during the meeting we were reminded that the 40M CW antenna is also used for 15 CW, so we can't simply look at 40's numbers in isolation. We'll have to keep this in mind for this year.



That said, we *will* have the 40-2CD 2L 40M Yagi again this year, thanks to **Ken N2ZN**. Also, the club voted to obtain a replacement beam or equivalent for 2020 and beyond should we not determine an alternative.

- **15/10** – K4JJ beat us in contacts on those bands: +272 on CW, + 526 on phone. Their southern location is an advantage, but one thing we can do is pay way much more attention to when those bands are open for us. A band scope is suggested, with **Brian KA2CGB** offering his SDR setup. Any other takers, ideas?
- **DIGITAL** – Neither club made digital contacts in 2018. But a huge option is available in 2019 with **FT8** now supporting FD specifically. This topic elicited the largest discussion at the meeting, and **Dave K2DH** and others are indicating that this will be a major effort for us. *We will need all FT8 ops to team up in a major club effort to turn the tide for us this year.*



## BEVERAGE antennas

- To make a significant overall club score improvement, we'll need all possible help, and Beverages are a known positive. It didn't quite come together last year, and we need to decide how to play it this year – simplify to a single Beverage split to each station, or again try the dual-Beverage (South and West) switched approach from last year. TBD.

## GOTA



GOTA is potentially the largest source of points, mostly in the bonus area, of anything else shy of running 100/hr for 24 hours on each of the main stations. And just about as difficult. That's because the spirit of the station is to provide opportunities for unlicensed people of **all ages** to experience making on-the-air contacts. In addition, it seeks to provide Novice (are there any left?) and Technician class licensees their own FD station, and not be crowded out of the "main" stations. Lastly, there's "generally inactive" -- hams of any class that simply are no longer active may make contacts to perhaps rekindle their interests – but it's abundantly clear that seasoned ops who have not operated in a while cannot just come in and help their club, also known as ringers.

With all that, it's a challenge to find more than a few people meeting the above restrictions capable of making all that many contacts in 24 hours.

The "gold" operators would be Techs, or even unlicensed people, with exposure to and an interest in contesting that could run Q's. **Gayle N2TWI** (Tech)(photo above) both coordinated the GOTA station last year, and after nurturing lots of young guests to the station, made most of our contacts herself. She'll be in EI-land during FD this year, so we really have some work to do! Know any Techs that might be interested? Have any kids or grandkids that might want to make a Q or two? (We also need "Youth" ops for a different bonus.) Or might you be "generally inactive?" Let us know.

- If we think we have enough potential GOTA operator candidates, it might be worth the effort to upgrade the GOTA antennas to enable them to make those contacts. Something we need to work on.

## BONUS POINTS

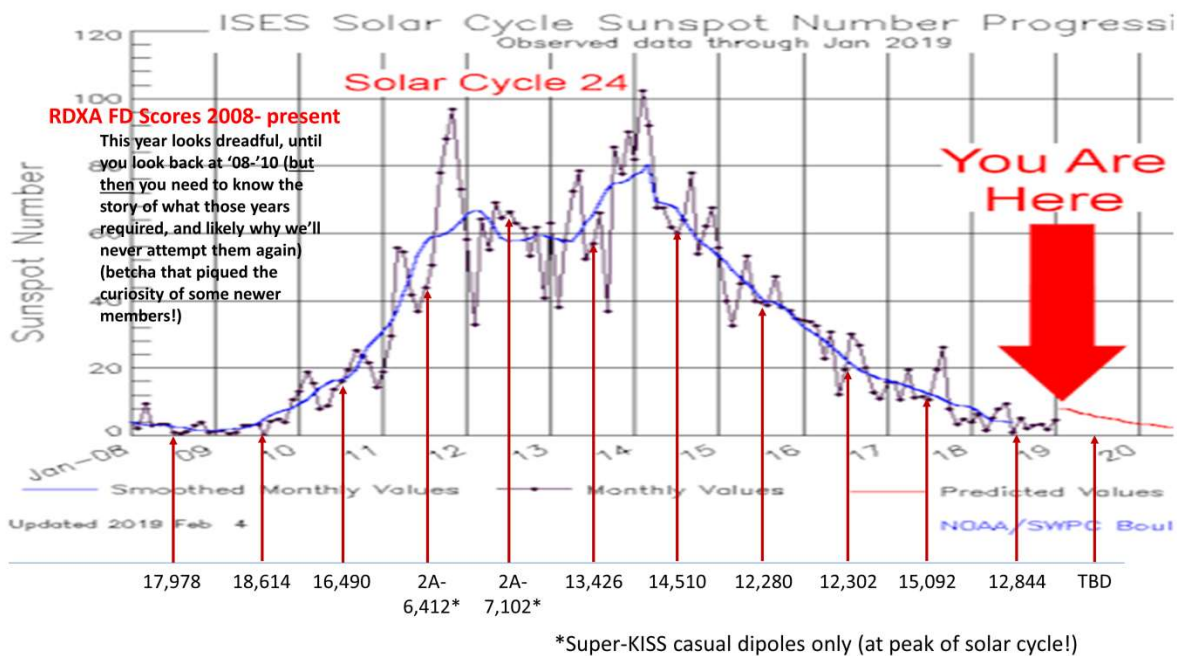
- **Satellite** – This 100-pointer has eluded us over the past three years, but **Dave K2DH**, along with **Bill K2TER** and **Mike K2GC** will be seeking to remedy that trend.
- **WIAW Message** – Missed communication caused the loss of this one last year. We'll make sure copying that is covered in several ways this year.



## PLANNING

Soon we'll be starting our regular FD planning meetings. *You are welcome to contribute at these.* In a few instances, we need members to sign up for a defined team dedicated to making some things happen – Beverage antennas, Digital (FT8) operations, and GOTA coaches and operator solicitors (just made that up!) come to mind. So don't hold back. We need to maintain **RDXA as a Top 3 club**, if not the **#1 3A club**, regardless of what other groups like K4JJ would like to do to circumvent that.

And if we can do that this year, we can put our orders in for another update:



## Who ARE These Kids?



Dave, N2OA writes: This was from a multi-op we did in the June contest, We rented a cabin on a hill down in the Wethersfield area. I have to guess that it around 1984 and I would have been about 17.

Top Left to right is Tom Richmond WB2IEY, Knute Carlson N2DRX, I believe Tom Hodge's Nephew, Jim Sharlow WB2ODH (now W2ODH), Bottom left to right: Myself Dave Carlson KA2OQZ (now N2OA), Tom Hodge WA2YTM, and Irv Goodman AF2K.



For the pictures below, Chris Shalvoy writes :

The white rover is WA2MOP, Charlie. Charlie, (WA2MOP) Bruce (WA2TMC) and I (N2PEB at the time) won January rover overall (Canada, USA) in Charlie's setup - 40w on 10gig, unreal!!

Below that is my Volvo rover.

Bottom picture - Walter's setup (NQ2O - SK) and I are in the bottom shot somewhere in "upper" Canada. I remember working KB2SE (Fred K2FR - SK) on 2m I believe and KD5RO (Dave, K2DH) as well back at "the hill" (the Wayne, N2WK gang).





# RDXA 2018-19 Calendar

## September 2018

4 ————— BOD — KM2B  
8-10 ————— ARRL September VHF  
18 ————— Meeting — Show Us Your Shack  
23-24 ————— CQWW RTTY

## October 2018

2 ————— BOD — AF2K  
16 ————— Meeting — K2TER  
20-21 ————— NYQP  
27-28 ————— CQWW SSB

## November 2018

3-5 ————— ARRL SS CW  
6 ————— BOD — W2BSN  
17-19 ————— ARRL SS SSB  
21 ————— Meeting — WA2CHV  
24-25 ————— CQWW CW

## December 2018

30-2 ————— ARRL 160m CW  
4 ————— BOD — K2TER  
8 ————— RMSC Event  
8-9 ————— ARRL 10m  
18 ————— RDXA Holiday Dinner  
29-30 ————— Stew Perry 160m CW

## January 2019

3 ————— BOD — K2CS (note THUR)  
5-6 ————— ARRL RTTY Roundup  
15 ————— Meeting — WJ2Q  
19-21 ————— ARRL January VHF  
25-27 ————— CQWW 160m CW



## February 2019

5 ————— BOD —  
9-10 ————— CQWW WPX RTTY  
16-17 ————— ARRL DX CW  
19 ————— Meeting — EOC  
22-24 ————— CQWW 160m SSB

## March 2019

2-3 ————— ARRL DX SSB  
5 ————— BOD — EOC  
19 ————— Meeting — EOC  
30-31 ————— CQWW WPX SSB

## April 2019

2 ————— BOD —  
16 ————— Meeting — K2DH — FT-8  
TBD ————— RDXA/RVHFG Annual Awards Banquet

## May 2019

7 ————— BOD — AWA (tentative)  
17-19 ————— Dayton Hamvention  
21 ————— Meeting — EOC  
25-26 ————— CQWW WPX CW

## June 2019

4 ————— BOD —  
TBD ————— Rochester Hamfest  
8-10 ————— ARRL June VHF  
18 ————— Meeting — EOC — FD  
22-23 ————— ARRL Field Day

## July 2019

13-14 ————— IARU  
20-21 ————— CQWW VHF

## August 2019

TBA ————— IRVfest  
24 ————— ROC City Hamfest  
31 ————— Contest season concludes  
Membership year concludes

## Rochester DX Association

### Club Station — W2RDX

### Club Website — <http://www.rdxa.com>

This Bulletin is the official publication of the Rochester DX Association and is published Quarterly.

All those with an interest in amateur radio, 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. Meetings are located at the Monroe County Emergency Operations Center located at 1190 Scottsville Rd. Rochester, NY 14624.

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### Board of Directors

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Mark Hazel-K2MTH  
Irv Goodman-AF2K  
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Dave Hallidy - K2DH

### Appointed Positions

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Regular Membership: \$25.00

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or Out of State member: \$6.25

