

Rochester DX Association



Next meeting:
September 21 2021
NEW TIME AND PLACE
7:00 PM
Johnny's Irish Pub,
1382 Culver Rd
Rochester NY

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Deadline for next issue:
November 30, 2021

President's Letter

Hope everyone's summer went well, you were able to get on the air a bit and possibly complete some station improvement projects too.

It would seem there have been a few "moments of brilliance" regarding propagation. 10m was somewhat open for IARU though mainly stateside. Regardless, a band that hasn't been seriously considered contest wise for years actually produced some QSO's.

6m was spectacular a few months ago with even non FT8 openings to Europe. Hopefully a few indications of things to come.

Outside of propagation, as things hopefully continue to "open", it will be nice to return to somewhat "normal" though I guess we never know what's to come.

IRVfest was a complete success from all indications. Unfortunately, our guest of honor was unable to attend and the wx was less than cooperative. Regardless, those who did attend were overjoyed with the ability to meet "face to face" after over a year and a half.

I'm well aware our hobby is based on communications and our group probably has more opportunities than many to stay in touch. Still, there is nothing like a "real time" conversation. It was great to catch up with so many members.

Mentioned by many, the lack of FD the last two years and how much that particular event means to the membership. I would sincerely hope that things stabilize over the next

year and that we will be able to hold a “normal” FD in 2022.

Discussion should begin well before our normal planning time frame as we’ve been away from it for so long. I’d suggest we seriously look to hold a few planning meetings in the fall or early winter. Several changes were being considered and we should really have things settled earlier than later this time out.

We may have to consider alternative locations (even though normal park activities have been held all season at Webster).

Speaking of getting together, **I’m pleased to announce that we will be meeting IN PERSON** beginning this September. With the lack of fully understanding requirements from the County, the board felt we should look for alternatives and have found one.

That’s not to say that the EOC will no longer be available to us in the future, we just thought it best to plan alternatives and speak to the County when appropriate (they seemingly have enough on their plate with school reopening and whatever mandates may be forthcoming as things seem to be deteriorating once again).

The September 2021 meeting will be held at Johnny’s Irish Pub, 1382 Culver Rd (corner of Merchants). If we feel this arrangement is ok, I’ve reserved the room for the entire RDXA 2021-22 meeting calendar.

There is a separate meeting room (free), plenty of parking along the building or in a public lot behind the bar, free inet, AV monitor for presentations, handicap accessible and obviously the opportunity to meet before or stay after the meeting.

The Merchant Grill is right next door and we do have the ability to bring food in (or have the bar order us a sheet pizza, etc).

Along with the meetings, we could also hold our Holiday Party at the same locations if other alternative are unavailable.

We’ve also decided to start our meetings a bit earlier – 7:00pm – this will still allow for the “dinner crew” to meet but also, since done a bit earlier, you can remain at the pub if you wish.

If there is a continued demand, we can still provide Zoom capability.

I’d like to once again thank all those who presented last year and hope we can continue to provide top notch presentations.

Looking forward to another contest season, seeing everyone “in person” once again a resumption of all the things this club has been known for through the years.

Best DX es 73,

Chris, K2CS

Sometimes My Job Can Be Pretty Cool.

Doug Stewart N2BEG

My day job as some of you know involves equipment engineering and maintenance in a semiconductor fab. I work with a variety of very specialized equipment used in the manufacture of RF filters, resonators, etc. in the 2-6+ Ghz range used in all manner of devices from WiFi routers, radios, radar, cell phones and ancillary equipment among others. We have a variety of equipment that use either RF or high voltage as well as other fun things I get to play with routinely. (you know, vacuum pumps of all shapes and sizes, toxic gasses, hazardous chemicals, pyrophorics, lasers, radioactive sources etc.)

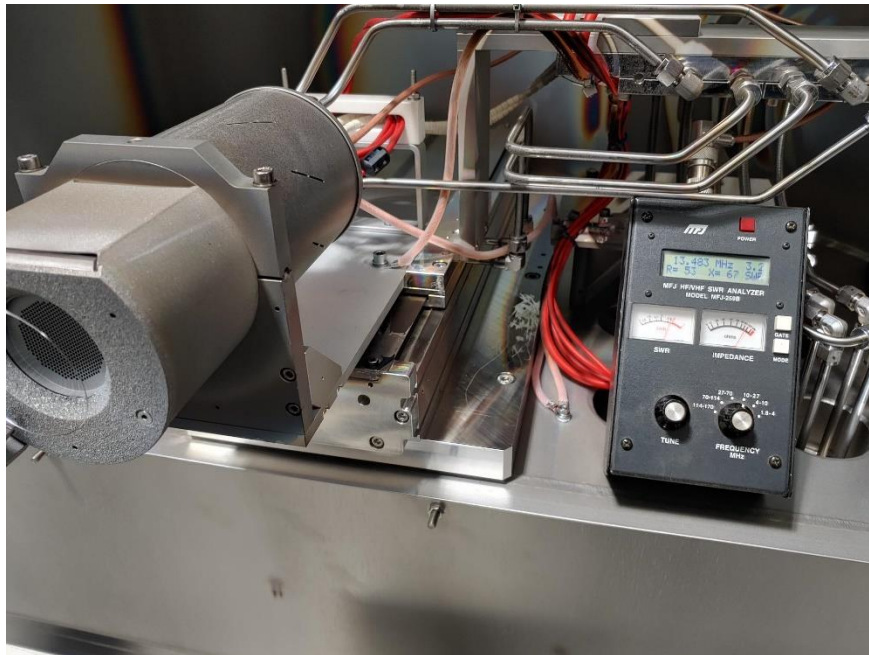
I recently had to help diagnose and repair a tool that uses an ion source to selectively remove material from our wafers. The source was misbehaving and would not ignite and stay on. I won't bore you with the specifics of the hardware, suffice to say that it generates an electron beam that is created by an inductively coupled RF source (@ 13.56Mhz) that creates a plasma (all done under vacuum in a large chamber) which is then directed at a wafer. In working with the manufacturers' field service engineer, we came to the conclusion that the source had issues and needed to be checked and possibly tuned or replaced. Since he is in Texas, he asked if we could perform the procedure and then if necessary, arrangements would be made to come on site for additional service as the tool is under warranty. He sent the procedure and upon reviewing it, I started to laugh. My manager was standing next to me. She asked what was so funny, and I remarked that I had never seen such a procedure call out such "specialized" test equipment and wondered how this was done by their service folks and if they had this equipment available. A quick call to the service engineer indicated they did not have this equipment available and that most customers had purchased it for use on site. I thought this was very interesting and asked where they suggest buying these units, to which he replied "most customers get them on ebay" ... Below is the excerpt from the procedure. You can see why I reacted the way I did. One would have to assume that the person who came up with this procedure was a ham. There simply isn't any other explanation. I actually reached back out to the manufacturer to see if they could put me in contact with its author. They are based in Germany so I will update that part of the story as I find out more.

2. Connect the impedance meter (miniVNA, MFJ259) to the sources RF connector, if necessary use an adaptor. In case an extension cable is necessary, make sure its impedance rating is 50Ω and its length is as short as possible.



3. Set the frequency to 13.48±0.02 MHz on the MFJ (Impedance R&X mode) or put a marker on this frequency on the miniVNA's software. The matching will be done at this frequency.
4. Read the resistance value R (real part of the impedance) and the standing wave ratio (SWR) as a measure of the power reflected by the source.

The saga continued with me asking my manager what the priority was. Purchasing these units and waiting for them to arrive to perform the procedure or I could make arrangements and either bring them in the next day or run home and grab my miniVNA and my trusty MFJ259. (I commented that I would write up a quick lease arrangement and all would be good. You should have seen the look on her face) I proceeded to run home at lunch and grab both units. Upon venting the chamber and hooking up my 259, I confirmed the source was not tuned and also that I was unable to tune it to anything better than a 3.2:1 SWR using the procedure.



My trusty MFJ pressed into industrial service

My story ends with the vendor asking if I felt comfortable installing a new source and tuning it. I remarked that I thought it would be easier than trimming a dipole. He didn't get that. I then proceeded to install the new source assembly (you don't want to know what those cost) It consists of the round cylindrical assembly in the picture. Upon checkout, the new source was out of tune as well and I was able to adjust the tuning cap to bring the SWR to under 1.5:1 I also trained one of our new techs who was just blown away that I had this stuff and knew how this all worked. I showed him how to tune the variable cap in the source and that metallic tools were a no-no, etc. He was still confused on the whole RF part. Seems they didn't cover that in school, hi hi. I have further training sessions planned.

Anyway, the tool was back up and running later that afternoon (and as usual management never acknowledged that I saved them 3 days of downtime and the expense of travel for the service engineer.)

Now I get to buy some ham gear for work... hmmm.

Irvfest



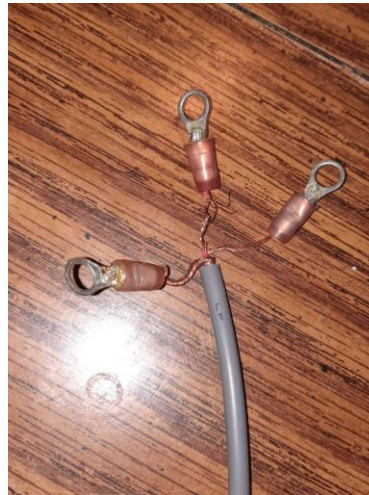
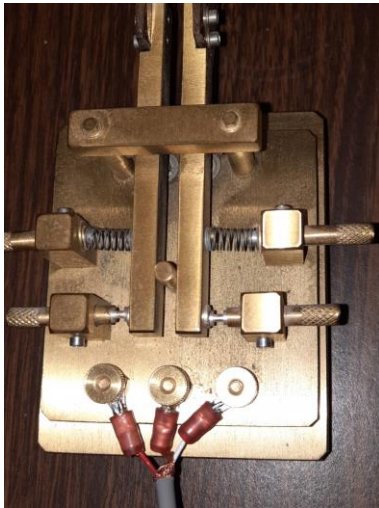
Ooops!

Dave N2CK

When Bob, WA2QAU, was over checking out my station and antenna farm (such as it is), I found the power button on the rig. Upon awakening from a deep sleep – it started sending a series of dits (wow – last mode used was CW, go figure!). I quickly backed the power down and powered off to investigate at a later date.

What I discovered is that the insulation on the wire where it connected to the paddle had shrunk causing bare wires to be exposed. Apparently after years of exposure to sunlight in the west facing window, the insulation on the wires was gone. All one had to do is just move it slightly to cause the problem. I've included a before and after shot for your entertainment.

How often do we really examine connections and solder joints? To put the pictures in perspective, the wire gauge is 24. I'm not sure how old my wire harness is – easily 15+ years.



Field Day 2021

Doug N2BEG

I had a very busy weekend around the house. I managed to get on about 2 hours late. Took 3 tries to get my G5RV in the damn tree. Ran my new generator and was pleased with its performance. It's a Honda knockoff (Wen) that is very quiet. Managed about 5 ½ hours total and had a couple good runs. I ran my



IC-7000 which has some issue with the RF gain and squelch which would prevent the received audio from coming out the speaker regardless of settings. Very annoying when it happens in mid QSO. No issues with CW so stayed there for the most part. Great to see 10 and 6 and even 2 open on field day. Only worked Jack, WA2CHV for club members. I ran my buddy's call, Scott, N2BJW to honor him. My long time friend is almost done battling his cancer.

Drone Antenna Inspection

John AC2RL

I got a drone this year, a DJI Mini-2. It's easy to fly and has a pretty good camera, so I put it to work inspecting my antennas. It sure beat hauling the antennas down or climbing on ladders.



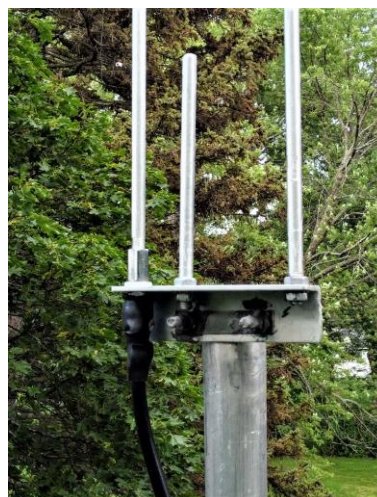
VHF Mast with yagi and Jpole.
Hexbeam in background.



Split hexbeam arm repaired with hose clamps two years ago is still holding well



160m inverted-L end insulator at 60 feet



Jpole mount – coax seal OK

Roc City Net Hamfest

Photos by N2BEG and AC2RL



AF2K Antenna Lowering

Rich W2FBS



The New York State QSO Party (NYQP) is Just Around the Corner!

It's that time of year: the kids are back at school, the days are getting noticeably shorter, mornings are a bit crisper, and leaves are just starting to turn. This can only mean one thing: contest season is starting and the best contest of the year is right around the corner: The New York State QSO Party (NYQP).

When is it?

The NYQP occurs on the third weekend in October. Note that the third weekend in October comes early again this year, October 16-17! It's a 12-hour contest, starting at 14:00 UTC the 16th and running to 02:00 UTC the 17th (10:00 AM to 10 PM EDT on the 16th).

OCTOBER 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 NYQP
17 NYQP	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Who can participate?

Anyone, anywhere in the world, with a valid amateur radio license. It's not just operators in New York State. Last year (2020) over 500 operators from all over the United States, Canada, and, indeed, all over the world, participated.

What is it?

First and foremost, it's an opportunity to have fun on the air. Second, it's a chance to catch up with friends here in New York State. Third it's a challenge to work all 62 of New York State's counties. Fourth, it's a chance to win an impressive award plaque similar to this one:



Plaques are awarded in up to 48 categories. There's a category for you! See <http://nyqp.org/wordpress/categories-and-plaque-sponsors/>.

How do I participate?

Easy. Get on the air on your favorite band/mode (excluding WARC bands) on October 16th and listen for "CQ NYQP <their call>" or call "CQ NYQP <your call>" and make contacts with operators in New York State. Exchange a signal report and three-letter location/county code (see: http://nyqp.org/wordpress/wp-content/nyqp/2015/NY_Counties.pdf, or US state if not in New York. Our Canadian colleagues send their province, and everybody else is "DX." That's it! It just couldn't be easier. If you've never operated in a contest before, this is the one for you.

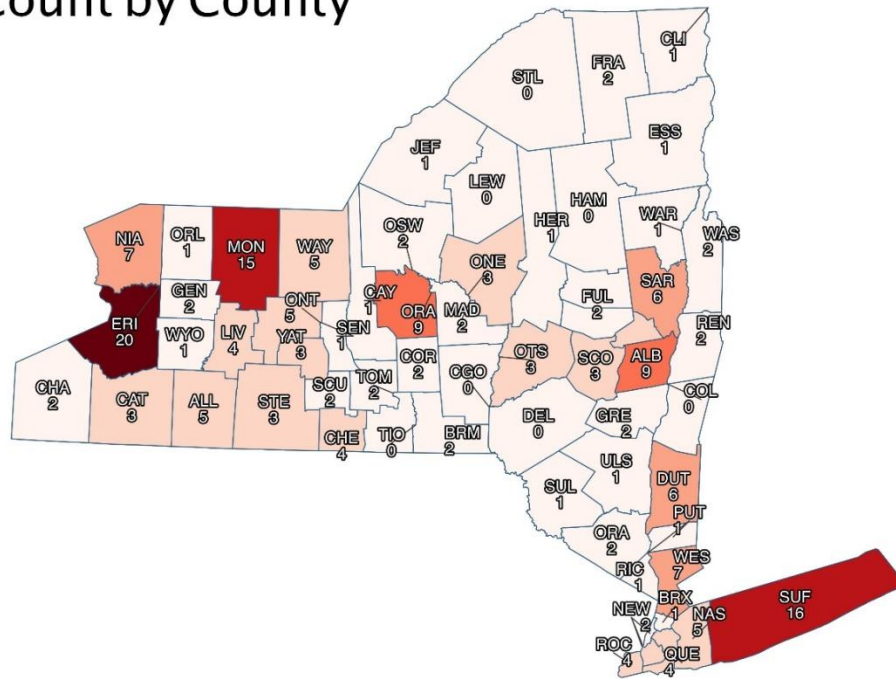
One more item: If you wish to see how you scored, or if you wish to be considered for an award, you've got to keep a log. The preferred medium is digital and the preferred format is Cabrillo V3.0. Some logging programs e.g., N1MM+, have built-in templates for the NYQP. Others will require some setup. Check the "INFO YOU CAN USE" drop-down at <http://nyqp.org/wordpress/>.

Be aware that there are several other contests that run simultaneously with the NYQP. The Boy Scout Jamboree on the Air (<https://www.scouting.org/international/jota-joti/jota/>) is one. The Worked All Germany (<https://www.darc.de/der-club/referate/conteste/wag-contest/en/>) contest is another. Be courteous and reply if called. Remember: the goal is for everyone to have fun!

So, do you want to be popular?

Not all New York State counties are created equal with respect to amateur radio operators. Some are blessed and some are barren. If you really want to be popular during the NYQP, consider becoming a rover or traveling to and activating one of the barren New York State counties. Shown below is a map of the number of log files received from operators in each of the NYS counties in 2020:

Log Count by County



See all those tan counties? YOU could be there and be popular! Or, the same data, just in tabular form:

County	Abbreviation	Logs
Albany	ALB	9
Allegany	ALL	5
Bronx	BRX	1
Broome	BRM	2
Cattaraugus	CAT	3
Cayuga	CAY	1
Chautauqua	CHA	2
Chemung	CHE	4
Chenango	CGO	0
Clinton	CLI	1
Columbia	COL	0
Cortland	COR	2
Delaware	DEL	0
Dutchess	DUT	6
Erie	ERI	20
Essex	ESS	1

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Franklin	FRA	2
Fulton	FUL	2
Genesee	GEN	2
Greene	GRE	2
Hamilton	HAM	0
Herkimer	HER	1
Jefferson	JEF	1
Kings	KIN	3
Lewis	LEW	0
Livingston	LIV	4
Madison	MAD	2
Monroe	MON	15
Montgomery	MTG	0
Nassau	NAS	5
New York	NEW	2
Niagara	NIA	7
Oneida	ONE	3
Onondaga	ONO	9
Ontario	ONT	5
Orange	ORA	2
Orleans	ORL	1
Oswego	OSW	2
Otsego	OTS	3
Putnam	PUT	1
Queens	QUE	4
Rensselaer	REN	2
Richmond	RIC	4
Rockland	ROC	1
Saratoga	SAR	6
Schenectady	SCH	5
Schoharie	SCO	3
Schuyler	SCU	2
Seneca	SEN	1
St. Lawrence	STL	0
Steuben	STE	3
Suffolk	SUF	16
Sullivan	SUL	1
Tioga	TIO	0
Tompkins	TOM	2
Ulster	ULS	1
Warren	WAR	1
Washington	WAS	2
Wayne	WAY	5
Westchester	WES	7
Wyoming	WYO	1
Yates	YAT	3

If you do plan to travel to and activate one of the “barren” counties, be sure to enter your itinerary on the “planned activations” page at <http://nyqp.org/wordpress/describe-your-planned-mobile-activation/> so that other contestants can look for you!

What do I do after the contest?

Simple. If you want to see how you scored or if you're vying for an award, just e-mail a Cabrillo log file (version 3.0 is preferred) to Logs@NYQP.org within fourteen days of the end of the contest with your call sign as the subject line. Only ASCII files containing a Cabrillo-format log can be scored. The NYQP team makes every effort to score every submitted log file, but we can't score your grandmother's Christmas cookie recipe.

Where can I get more information?

Head on over to <http://NYQP.org> with your favorite web browser. The latest and official information will be posted there. Rules and entry categories can be found at: http://nyqp.org/NYQP_Rules.pdf. The FAQ at http://nyqp.org/wordpress/wp-content/nyqp/NYQP_2019_FAQ.pdf is a veritable goldmine of information.

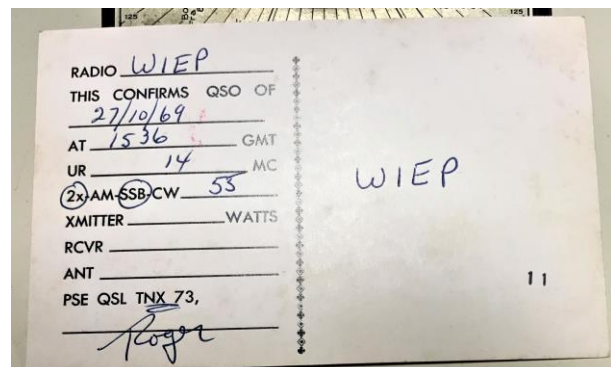
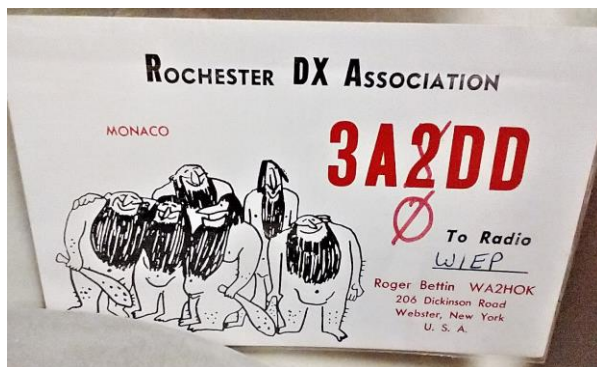
That's it!

Now get on the air, October 16th, and have some fun!

RDXA in Monaco 52 Years Ago

John AC2RL

On a recent visit to the AWA museum in Bloomfield This QSL card caught my eye in their ham radio exhibit.



This raises some questions. What was Roger Bettin WA2HOK doing in Monaco? A club sponsored dxpedition? A holiday with some casual operation? What other RDXA DX operations have there been? Where and when?

Weller “Tip”

Dave, N2CK

At an RDXA Field Day many years ago, Lynn, W2BSN shared a tip on how to fabricate a replacement tip for a dual heat soldering gun out of 10 gauge solid copper wire. He even handed me a chunk that I stored in the case when I put the gun away. I remembered Lynn’s tip recently when I was having some difficulty getting a joint sufficiently warm enough to take solder.

I discovered a poor connection powering one of my downriggers during testing (over 100’ of water) when it struggled to retrieve an 8lb weight from the depths. I had to manually retrieve the cable by turning the spool by hand. Thinking I (potentially) had a bad motor, I brought it home to do some bench testing. With the downrigger held in place using a vice, and connected to a spare (charged) battery – using a rebuilt wiring harness, it showed no problems retrieving the weight (mind you I could only drop and raise it a couple feet) – but after 30+ cycles of up/down/raise – the motor was still cool to the touch. Not exactly what I would expect to experience if the motor was struggling. It was then I realized the problem was with bad connections in the wiring on the boat. Last year, in my haste to get ready, I used some automobile crimp-on connectors for the fuse holder connections on that side. I suspected they wouldn’t be the best option in a marine environment – but in the interest of time, used them anyway. To test, I mounted the unit back on the boat and headed out for a test. My first confirmation the problem was in the wiring was when it didn’t come to life when I powered it on. I opened the hatch and gave the wiring harness a shake. Surprise – the unit came to life and had no problem retrieving the weight from 70’ down! At that moment I knew I found the issue.

The power feed to the downriggers is 14 gauge stranded. I determined that the best approach for a marine environment would be a good mechanical connection that was soldered and then taped. I packed my tools and headed for the dock. I cut the wire so I could fabricate a new, soldered harness at the picnic table. My small pencil iron couldn’t get the joints hot enough so I broke out the dual heat gun (even though that had been giving me problems lately!). Surprisingly – that wasn’t supplying enough heat either. It was then that I saw the 10 gauge piece of wire in the case, and thought – why not? As an aside, I knew I had another tip somewhere at home – but I wanted to finish my task with the tools at my disposal.

I broke out some long nose pliers and started bending in a close approximation of the tip I was replacing. After some comparing I came up with shown in the picture below (replacement tip as a comparison). I plugged the gun back in, and hit the trigger. I was quite pleasantly surprised to see solder melting on my new fabricated tip. With the replacement tip in place, there was NO problem heating up the 14 gauge wires to accept solder.



In closing, I would like to recognize and thank Lynn for his suggestion many years ago at Field Day. Such a simple statement made in passing made my task much easier to complete.

RDXA 2020-21 Calendar

September 2021

7 BOD
11-13 ARRL September VHF
21 Meeting
25-26 CQWW RTTY

October 2021

5 BOD
19 Meeting
16-17 NYQP
30-31 CQWW SSB

November 2021

2 BOD
6-8 ARRL SS CW
16 Meeting
20-22 ARRL SS SSB
27-28 CQWW CW
30 BULLETIN DEADLINE

December 2021

7 BOD
3-5 ARRL 160m CW
11-12 ARRL 10m
21 RDXA Holiday Dinner
27-29 RMSC Event
25-26 Stew Perry 160m CW

January 2022

1-2 ARRL RTTY Roundup
4 BOD
15-17 ARRL January VHF
18 Meeting
28-30 CQWW 160m CW



February 2022

1 BOD
12-13 CQWW WPX RTTY
15 Meeting
19-20 ARRL DX CW
24-27 CQWW 160m SSB
28 BULLETIN DEADLINE

March 2022

1 BOD
5-6 ARRL DX SSB
15 Meeting
26-27 CQWW WPX SSB

April 2022

5 BOD
19 Meeting

May 2022

3 BOD
17 Meeting
20-22 Dayton Hamvention
28-29 CQWW WPX CW
31 BULLETIN DEADLINE

June 2022

7 BOD
18-19 ARRL June VHF
21 Meeting
25-26 ARRL Field Day

July 2022

9-10 IARU
17-18 CQWW VHF

August 2022

16 IRVfest
27 ROC City Hamfest
31 Contest season concludes
Membership year concludes
31 BULLETIN DEADLINE

Rochester DX Association

Club Station — W2RDX

Club Website —<http://www.rdxa.com>

Facebook group —RDXA QTH

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 19:00 Local time on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, September through June. Meetings are located at Johnny's Irish Pub located at 1382 Culver Rd. Rochester, NY.

President,.....Chris Shalvoy – K2CS
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treasurer@rdxa.com

Secretary.....Bill Rogers – K2TER
secretary@rdxa.com

Please send all newsletter submissions, comments, and complaints to the editor:

John Hall AC2RL -- newsletter@rdxa.com



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Mark Hazel – K2MTH
Bill Rogers-K2TER
Mike Sanchez – KM2B
Lynn Bisha – W2BSN
Dave Hallidy - K2DH
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Membership Dues can be sent via:

Paypal: treasurer@rdxa.com

US Mail: Mike Sanchez KM2B
8 Piccadilly Square
Rochester, NY 14625

Regular Membership: \$25.00

Family, Full time Student or Out of State
member: \$6.25

