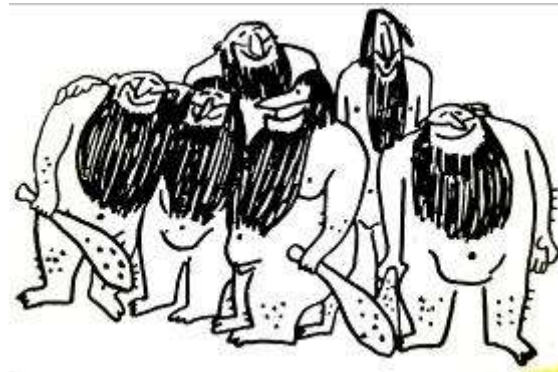


Rochester DX Association



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Deadline for Next Issue:

May 31, 2024

DXing means pushing the limits. DXing requires skill, knowledge, determination, patience, endurance, investment - it's a constant pursuit of excellence and achievement. It is that spirit that makes a DXer, and not the results he or she has achieved.

“DJ” V85NPV, submitted by Jack WA2CHV

President's Letter

Hope you've had some time to contest or just DX over the last few months, bands have been exceptional and the DXpeditions of late have been very well organized and accessible to W2 in most cases.

Winter hasn't really shown up either though unknown to many around here, it's still been snowy and incredibly low temperatures at W2CCC.

During the January VHF contest, we saw temps at -6 and highs below 10 deg. Actually last weekend, it hit - 6 again (during CQWW 160m SSB).

Speak of CQWW 160m CW, a first! I actually worked an AZ station while the antenna was down, totally in the snow. Didn't realize that until Sunday morning (of course), wondered why no one was hearing me. So overall, not a very impressive 160m contest season for me up there.

One positive though, extensive work on the beverages over last summer has paid off for sure, I hear everything – now, just need them to hear me! Hopefully, a focus on that will be one of this summers main projects.

Contest season is winding down with only a few major events remaining. As always, put your score on the club “grid” and submit them for the Rochester (NY) DX Assn for club credit.

Several spring time events are coming up including the combined RDXA/RVHFG Awards Banquet on Sunday 14 April (at Johnny's). This yearly and very well attended event has always been a success and a way to honor accomplishments in each organization. Held on a Sunday (as Johnny's is closed to the public until later in the day), the facility is all ours. See additional information elsewhere in the bulletin. All are welcomed.

Item of note : our brethren at the RVHFG are celebrating their 75th anniversary this year – look for operating events and other activities surrounding this milestone.

Mike (KM2B) has reserved the Dolomite Lodge for the annual IRVfest which will be held on Tuesday 20 August. This popular

picnic was started years ago and hosted by our good friend Irv (AF2K) at his Webster QTH. The tradition continues in his honor and who knows, he actually was able to attend the event last year.

Great to see 16 members at the February meeting, good to catch upon all your projects and outside interests. Hopefully as the weather continues to improve and longer “daylight” will once again appear in a few weeks, we'll see more and more of you “in person”.

Speaking of meetings - there are several outstanding programs that will finish out our calendar “year”. In March, Ron (WB2WGH) will be presenting “Node-RED”. This platform was originally adopted by the Flex radio user community and has recently expanded well beyond. He has a very informative slide deck with specifics on the application.

In May, we'll be educated by Raj (N2RD) by his presentation of “Multiband receive antenna array of verticals with no radials”. Raj has presented many time before and programs have always been informative and well received.

The club will provide Zoom access for both presentations as I'm sure our out of town members will want to see both.

After last year's success, FD is in the planning stages with several improvements in the works. We will once again be setting up in Webster Park and look to repeat and even improve upon last year's effort.

Focus will be on efficiency, with equipment, setup and tear down. We also determined that “bonus” point played a HUGE part of our winning score and will once again be calling on our out of town stations to assist in getting those additional points.

We thank those members who even though have moved out of the immediate area, continue to be active and contribute to the RDXA.

Best DX es 73,

Chris, K2CS

The Rochester DVA Association and Rochester WHF Group

Cordially invites you to our

Annual Awards

Dinner

SUNDAY - 14 April, 2024

Johnny's

1382 Culver Rd

Rochester, NY 14609

Cocktails: ----- 1:00pm

Dinner: ----- 2:00pm

Awards: ----- 3:00pm

Buffet - \$25

Tossed Salad

Chicken Marsala

Meatballs / Pasta

Vegetables / Rolls / Butter

Cash Bar

Reservations PLEASE by 7 April to
RDXABANQUET@RDXA.COM

Gayle – N2TWI

Late Winter Ramblings

N2BEG

Spring is almost upon us. (March 20th if you are keeping track) but first we set the clocks ahead (March 10th) and then Easter, followed by a very special rare treat for our locale, the first total eclipse of the sun in our neck of the woods in 800 years and the next one in the lower 48 won't be until 2044. It looks like it will be a crazy event. I only hope we will be able to see the sun during it. I guess we will just have to wait and see. Many special events are in the works I hear.

Speaking of rare events, have you been on HF lately? Of course, you have. The bands have been on fire, with the highlight for yours truly (so far) being the very limited time participating in the ARRL CW DX contest a couple weeks back. At the last general meeting right after it, many in attendance were in unanimous agreement that they had not witnessed conditions that good in either a very long time or ever. That says a lot since many of us have been around long enough now to have seen a few good solar cycles. Personally, I thought it was the best contest event in terms of world-wide prolonged propagation across multiple HF bands I've ever witnessed. Being able to not only hear but actually work, almost effortlessly, stations at or just above the noise level with one call, one after the other, on multiple continents on multiple bands with 100watts and a low beam, without turning the antenna is just mind numbing. I kept checking myself, did he really copy ME?? I only wish I had more time to spend in the chair. I have been extremely busy with things at home and work and a bunch of rig, computer and antenna issues, so I guess I am thankful I got in at least some of it.

I have been on the HF rig in the truck every chance I get now and have logged some very good DX, even with my small setup. (IC7000 and a Tarheel, 100w) Amazed at who can hear me and that with proper timing, I can even bust a pileup. (since October worked E2,D2, TX5, FK8, ZS6, V31, Z68, CB0, 8R7, A31, VKs, JAs + more)

I had setback after setback on the home station. My 746pro was hit by a nearby lightening strike in the spring which fried the CIV port. Trying to run a contest with manual frequency entries is no fun. All seemed lost on that rig as the damaged was confirmed to be on the main board and not the normal blown coils or caps at the input. I started the search for a new to me rig, which I had already decided would be an Icom 7610. Then my computer OS locked up during a registry edit which bricked it. It was stuck in a windoze boot cycle which would not allow me to do anything with it. Luckily my IT guy likes challenges, so he took it home and after a couple of days, was able to bring it back. I owe him a 12 pack now.

I purchased a nice used 7610 at a decent price and have been slowly learning how to run it. Kudos to Russ who helped me get it talking to N1MM with the correct settings. What a fantastic radio. This will allow me to at least operate even if my neighbor WF2W is on at the same time. My 746pro wouldn't allow that.

I will definitely be fixing a lot of things at home this summer so by fall I will be ready to rock and roll with should be even better conditions.



Sometimes contesting takes its toll—N2BEG

Quick Tip for Better Operating Ergonomics

Rus Healy, K2UA

Most of my operating on a day-to-day basis is HF CW. I also spend at least a few hours operating CW and RTTY contests throughout the year. I have a good chair, operating desk, and monitors at the right height, but something always seems to ache after a while.

Back when I was running a pair of Elecraft K3s in my SO2R setup, I found that the external VFO knobs on either side of the keyboards made for much more comfortable tuning than reaching across the keyboards to tune the VFOs. ICOM also makes these for the IC-7610. They can be used for remote operating with the RS-BA1 software, or for local use plugged into one of the front-panel USB ports. They help a lot with comfort over long-haul operations by keeping the tuning knob in a comfortable location.

However, one thing I've found in the waterfall era is that I spend a lot more time looking at the front panels of the radios than I used to. I could connect the display ports to external monitors, but that would require two more monitors in an already busy shack and it's not something I really want to do. So I've been thinking for a while that it would help to get the rigs up off the desk a bit.



Browsing amazon.com recently, I found what appeared to be just the right solution. It's a Huanuo brand monitor stand, made of thin sheet steel, with screw-on legs. The dimensions are 14.5 x 9.25 x 5.5 inches, with adjustable legs. It's thin and light, but plenty strong to support any modern HF rig, and just a little larger than the footprint of an IC-7610. It runs \$16.99 currently. I ordered two and got a small discount as a result.

When the stands arrived, I found that I could set them side-by-side on my radio table and the radios fit nicely on them, with the front edge of the radio just about flush with the front of the stand and the back feet of the radio just behind the back edge of the stand so the radio is facing just slightly upward toward me—a good viewing angle.

One of the benefits I hadn't foreseen, in addition to better airflow under and behind the radio, is that I can now reach all the connections on the back of the rigs without having to slide them forward on the table. Some of the connections, like the USB ports, DIN connectors, and amplifier keyline, are close to the bottom edge of the rig. They're hard to reach with other cables in the way above them. With this stand, the rig sits up off the table a bit more than 4 inches with the legs in the fully collapsed position, giving me plenty of access to those connections.

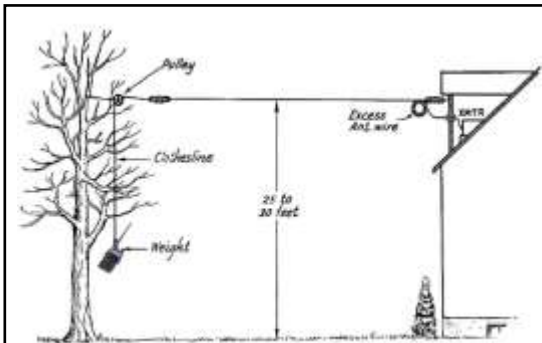
I ran this setup in ARRL DX CW in February with good results (albeit with just one rig, since I operated single-band 10). It was definitely more comfortable than the previous setup, with the rigs on the table.

These particular monitor stands should fit many modern rigs, but if nothing else it's an idea you may want to explore for your own shack.

Odds and Ends

HAM IV ROTOR FOR SALE

Removed from roof this fall and checked out by K2MP on 11/9. Ed noted that the brake sometimes did NOT re-engage when the brake was released. Brake appears to release OK and will re-engage (sluggish). He suggested a rebuild and re-lube. Rated for 15 sq. ft. of windload. Asking \$250 as is. Can text a video of it working. Dave, N2CK 585-260-7854



Proper Use of a Baofeng

Wind speed and direction app

Members of my boating club turned me onto an app they use when determining if the wind direction and speed is suitable for a sail (who knew the **direction** of the wind was important!). As I used it, I realized it might be worthwhile to share with RDXA, so they knew wind direction and could position antenna arrays to optimal position. The app is called Windy. I have the android version installed. When you open the app, use your fingers to expand and zoom in on the area of interest. You will see the relative wind direction and speed (there's a color coded chart on the bottom of the screen to indicate speed). I've used it many times – both at the house and lake, and can confirm the direction is valid – and the speed indicted matches the observed conditions. The app icon is a red background, with 2 white “Vs” that looks kind of like a W. You might find it handy to have. — Dave N2CK



LOOKING TO BUY FIXED MOUNT VHF MARINE BAND RADIO

(and antenna if you have it). Would prefer radios of recent vintage (last 5 years maybe?). Let me know if you have what I'm looking for. My boat club just procured a new (to us) committee boat - and it's in need of communication gear. Best to shoot me an email at dwright9@rochester.rr.com.



When in Need – Call a Tree Guy!

Dave Wright N2CK

Last year I had work done on the main roof, and knowing that the Ham rotor on the roof had been up there for a while, I opted to replace it. The roofing contractor was able to get up there and swap out the old Ham IV with a new Yaesu and Green Heron controller. I figured with the roof recently finished – I wanted to replace the rotor with new – to hopefully prevent future trips up in the future. The new rotor was in place before the first snow came to our area. Note – come hamfest season, I'll be selling the old rotor and controller. It works - but needs some lubrication and TLC. If you're interested, let me know.

In January, I noticed the rope truss that supported the ends of the 40M element seemed to have loosened with both ends drooping noticeably. At this point – it was too cold and dangerous to ask anyone to go on the roof. Even if they did – how could they fix the problem – as the antenna elements are ~7' above the roof line. I was concerned about ice accumulation and possible breakage of the elements if the rope gave way. There had to be a way.



I remembered that a member of my boat club has a tree service. I reached out to see if there was any way he could assist. I sent him a picture of the job, and he confirmed his bucket truck had a reach of 60'. When there was a break in the weather (not below freezing and calm winds) he sent the truck over with 2 guys. I wondered just how they could replace the rope (had to be replaced on both sides) without supporting the end. The operator positioned the elbow of the boom underneath where it was tied to the element. Then, without moving the "elbow", he maneuvered the boom to the top of the truss support. He cut the rope at the top and tied on new line. He then maneuvered the bucket (all while supporting the end!) and tied the new rope to the element. The antenna was pointed east, so I positioned it to the

west – and he replaced the rope on the other side of the element. They were there about an hour.

I don't want to share how much it cost because he's a friend and gave me a break on the price. He's also done tree work for me (though that's come to an end – no more antenna support objects in the yard for him to take care of!) in the past, and he's a member of my boat club. But – what I wanted to share is that IF you have a job that's questionable – think about calling a tree service for a quote. For me – the only way I could see to fix the support truss is IF the antenna was removed and reinstalled. Using the bucket truck was the perfect solution to the problem.



RDXA 2023-24 Calendar

September 2023

TBA — BOD
 9-11 — ~~ARRL September VHF~~
 19 — Meeting — Show Us Your Shack
 23-24 — ~~CQWW RTTY~~

October 2023

3 — BOD
 17 — Meeting — NYQP
 21-22 — ~~NYQP~~
 28-29 — ~~CQWW SSB~~

November 2023

4-5 — ~~ARRL SS CW~~
 7 — BOD
 14 — Meeting — AWA w/ RVHFG
 18-19 — ~~ARRL SS SSB~~
 25-26 — ~~CQWW CW~~
 30 — ~~BULLETIN DEADLINE~~

December 2023

1-3 — ~~ARRL 160m CW~~
 5 — BOD
 9-10 — ~~ARRL 10m~~
 19 — RDXA Holiday Dinner
 23-24 — ~~Stew Perry 160m CW~~

January 2024

2 — BOD
 6-7 — ~~ARRL RTTY Roundup~~
 16 — Meeting — FD Planning
 20-22 — ~~ARRL January VHF~~
 26-28 — ~~CQWW 160m CW~~

February 2024

6 — BOD
 10-11 — ~~CQWW WPX RTTY~~
 17-18 — ~~ARRL DX CW~~
 20 — Meeting — N2ZN, K2UA — NYQP
 23-25 — ~~CQWW 160m SSB~~
 29 — ~~BULLETIN DEADLINE~~

March 2024

2-3 — ~~ARRL DX SSB~~
 5 — BOD
 19 — Meeting — WB2WGH — Node Red
 30-31 — ~~CQWW WPX SSB~~

April 2024

2 — BOD
 14 — RDXA/RVHFG Banquet
 16 — Meeting - TBA

May 2024

7 — BOD
 17-19 — Dayton Hamvention
 21 — Meeting — N2RD — Receive Antennas
 25-26 — ~~CQWW WPX CW~~
 31 — ~~BULLETIN DEADLINE~~

June 2024

4 — BOD
 8-10 — ~~ARRL June VHF~~
 18 — Meeting - FD
 22-23 — ~~ARRL Field Day~~

July 2024

8-9 — IARU
 20-21 — ~~CQWW VHF~~

August 2024

20 — IRVfest
 24 — 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.

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John Hall AC2RL -- newsletter@rdxa.com



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

Regular Membership: \$25.00

Family, Full time Student
or Out of State member: \$10.00

