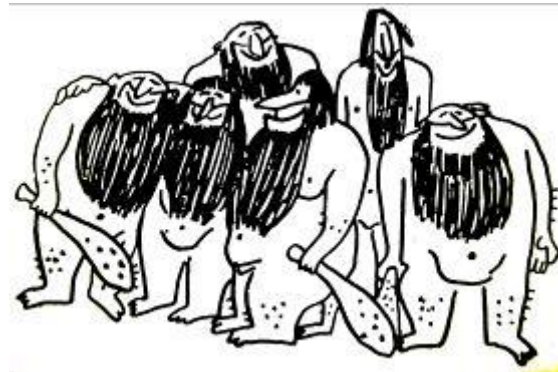


Rochester DX Association



June 2025

President's Letter

by Chris K2CS

Page 2

June VHF Contest

Page 6

RDXA/RVHFG Awards Banquet Invitation

Page 4

QRP-Labs QMX+ 160m to 6m All Mode QRP Rig

A report by Rajiv Dewan, N2RD

Page 5

The Saga of The Butternut HF2V That Stopped Working on 160m

By Dave Hallidy K2DH

Page 7

RDXA Calendar

Page 10

Deadline for Next Issue:

August 31, 2025

President's Letter

"The Times They Are A-Changin'"

Bob Dylan (who wrote everything in my opinion) penned that in 1963, at that time, the RDXA was a mere 16 years old.

Amateur Radio was at the forefront of technology, the 2 & 6m bands were now commercially available (tho allocated many years before) AM folks were now using FM and SSB – the hobby was well represented by many, even some in our club!

So, let's move to today, the hobby is still the best one in my opinion. We're blessed with relatively inexpensive equipment (given what it does), digital modes, smaller and more portable rigs. At Dayton this year, we had over 36k attendees.

The Rochester area in particular is blessed with several very active and world renowned amateur radio clubs. Given the landscape of the hobby overall, we're in a position that many other areas of the USA or even the world hasn't enjoyed for years.

But, it's probably time to reevaluate activities the club has enjoyed throughout our history

We all are aware that organizations like ours are not gaining membership at the clip we did when the no code Tech revolution happened in the 90's. Time marches on for all of us and unfortunately, no one is getting any younger.

In keeping with the times, I'd like to propose a realignment of our yearly club calendar. In this proposal, we meet or have an event ever other month in the RDXA calendar year, try our best to alleviate times of the year that may even be dangerous for some to travel out in yet retain the quality and camaraderie we've enjoyed for the past 78 years.

I'd still like us to get together as "face to face" meetings seem to be the most enjoyable.

So, I'd like the club to consider the following for the remainder of this year and the 2025-26 RDXA Calendar Year

June 17 - **General membership meeting** (FD) at Johnny's

June 21 - RARA hamfest

June 22 - Combined Awards Banquet at Johnny's

June 27-29 - FD at Webster Park

July 22 - Red Wings Game - **PROPOSED**

August 19 - IRVfest

August 23 - ROC City hamfest

August 31 - Bulletin Deadline

October 18 - NYQP

October 21 - **General membership Meeting** - NYQP review, Contest Season at Johnny's

November 30 - Bulletin Deadline

December 16 - Holiday Dinner

2026

February 17 - **ZOOM General Membership Meeting** - Contest review, begin FD discussions

(Those wanting to get together could meet at Johnny's – broadcast the ZOOM meeting from there)

February 28 - Bulletin Deadline

April 19 - Awards Banquet – date suggested

May 31 - Bulletin Deadline

June 16 - **General Membership Meeting** - Social meeting and FD final review at Johnny's

June ? - RARA Hamfest

June 26-28 - FD (at Webster Park?)

August, we would continue to hold IRVfest and support the ROC City hamfest.

August, we would continue to hold IRVfest and support the ROC City hamfest.

It's a club event or meeting every other month...

Now, we can always add "pop-up" a social get together here and there or add a subcommittee meeting when needed.

Could also announce a "dinner" at Merchants and just get together - bet that would be well attended honestly.

Sure, it's a drastic change from years past but we have to realize the 6-8 attendees at our meetings now really isn't effective and understandably so during the winter months.

The BOD would continue to meet, probably not every month but those meetings would be decided by the group.

Hopefully this will allow us to continue to support club activities and provide the best programs possible taking into account what today's club landscape looks like.

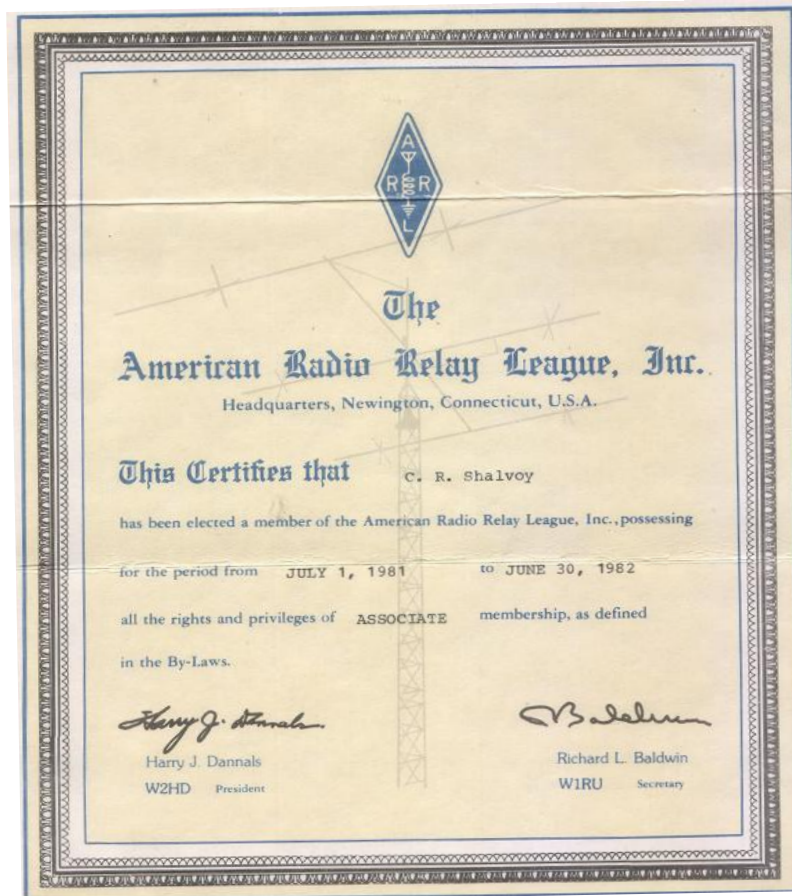
In the mean time, we have a robust schedule of club events throughout June and the summer.

The FD committee has done an exceptional job in defining equipment needs and strategy. As always, we need your support to make the event a success. This may be one of the premier events the club holds each years but without member support, it falls upon a handful of members to provide the experience we've become accustom to.

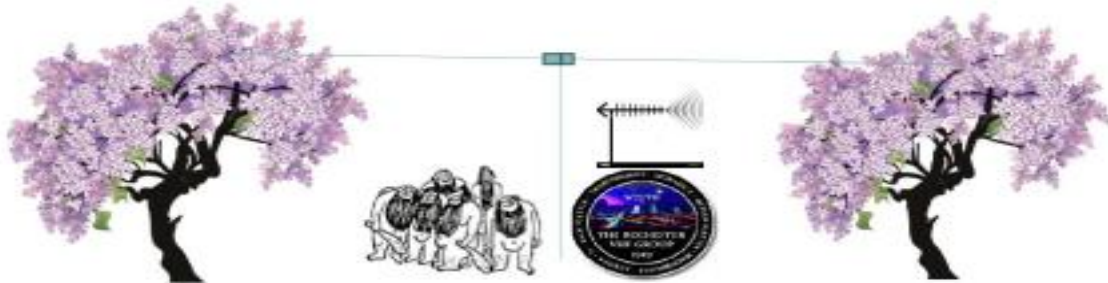
In closing, I'd hope the membership would consider serving on the board. As mentioned previously, I do not plan to run for President and Mike (KM2B) has decided to step down as Treasure after numerous years of service to the club.

It's **your** organization and participation will continue to provide the events that we all (continue) to enjoy and that so many other groups wish they still had.

Best DX es 73,
Chris, K2CS



Was anyone else ever an ARRL Associate Member?



RDXA/RVHFG 2025 AWARDS BANQUET

Sunday - 22 June 2025

COCKTAILS - 1:00PM

DINNER - 2:00PM

AWARDS TO FOLLOW

JOHNNY'S - 1382 CULVER ROAD

SICILIAN BEEF
CHICKEN FRENCH
GREENS & BEANS
MEATBALLS - SAUSAGE
SALT POTATOES
SALAD - ROLLS
DESSERT PROVIDED BY "KRISTEN"!!

Cost per person \$25 (payable at dinner)

Please RSVP to rdxabanquet@rdxa.com by 4/9/2025

Please include number attending

Gayle – N2TWI

QRP-Labs QMX+ 160m to 6m All Mode QRP Rig

A report by Rajiv Dewan, N2RD



One of my great finds at Dayton this year is a company, QRP-Labs, that is producing cutting edge products at qrp prices.

Consider the \$150 QMX+ kit. It has:

- 160m to 6m all mode coverage
- Very clean carefully shaped CW signal, ring-free digital filter, and CW decode
- Cutting edge SSB receive and transmit with extremely efficient Polar Modulation (same as the new \$6,500 Aurora from Flex), CESSB digital processing for 6dB gain over normal SSB modulation (Same as Elecraft K4), pre-distortion for extremely clean SSB signal (same as ICOM 7760 and Flex Radios).
- Compared to linear amplifiers that are typically 30% efficient (17W power consumption by amp to produce 5W of RF), the Class E amps in QMX are 70 to 80% efficient (6.5W power consumption for TX amp to produce 5W of RF power). This means that the batteries last way longer and much smaller heatsinks are enough. The whole radio only consumes 0.7A at 12V when producing full QRP power of 5W.
- Single USB connection for sound and CAT control (just like Elecraft K4).
- I/Q out for using other SDR front ends (which Elecraft K4 and K3 do not have)
- Optional GPS module (\$21 additional) for spot on frequency for all modes, and to allow easy operation of WSPR and other digital modes.
- 12V external power supply. Uses internal switched mode supply for the lower voltages needed for the processors. The switched mode supply is custom built using PWM generated by the main processor. The main processor adjusts the PWM frequency so that you never hear any artifacts in the band you are tuning!! Truly amazing.

I just ordered the kit and will be building it soon. More reports to come.

Is more expensive better?

Dave Wright N2CK

Getting the boat ready for the water this spring, I noticed the coax (a white RG-58 equivalent) was frayed going into the base of the antenna – with no way to fix. I checked the on-line stock at the local marine store and found an 8', 6db Shakespear antenna for \$120 – but only one in stock (on a Friday). We had plans to go to Webster the next day, so I planned to purchase it then after we were done with planned activities. I was somewhat surprised when I looked the next day, and it was gone.

On the way home, I stopped at the ships store of a marina right on the river. To my surprise they had an 8', 6db no-name antenna for a much cheaper price - \$54. It's a Glomex marine VHF antenna and noted that it covered the marine band 156 – 162 Mhz. The PL-259 connector that was supplied was pathetic, and wasn't used. After the purchase, I tried looking it up – and it appears to be made in Italy. Hmm, does it work? I quickly installed a connector, affixed it to a long board so I could get it vertical in free space (thanks again K2MP!), and a quick sweep of the marine band indicated all good. I set the MFJ to 156.8Mhz (calling channel 16) and the SWR was 1.2 and impedance of 42 ohms. Not too shabby, and for half the price.

I installed the antenna, and after reinstalling the connector, I checked the range where the SWR was below 2. I was pleasantly surprised to see the range was 156 – 162. The marine VHF range (for the frequencies I use) is 156.050 – 156.625. In closing, while I really wanted the name brand antenna – it seems a much cheaper, off brand works just as well. Haven't tried it on the water, but initial checks look just fine.

June VHF Contest (and VHF FM Activity Day)

The June VHF Contest is set for June 14 and 15. It is a good time in the solar cycle to pad the log with DX on 6 meters!

To add even more fun, that Sunday, June 15 is "VHF FM (Simplex) Activity Day" in Western NY and Southern Ontario! POTA and SOTA operations are encouraged to take place throughout the day on 2 meters (146.52, .55, and .58), 1.25 meters (223.5), and 70 cm (446.0).

More information will be shared as we get closer to mid-June, but for now simply mark June 14 and 15 on your calendar with an asterisk on the 15th for "VHF FM Activity Day" and be sure that you have the simplex frequencies mentioned above programmed and ready.

Let's Ignite the Airwaves, together!

The Saga of The Butternut HF2V That Stopped Working on 160m

By Dave Hallidy K2DH

As some of you know, I've been using a Butternut HF2V (the 80/40m dual band antenna from Butternut) with the 160m add-on kit for about 8 years. It has worked very well in the past, allowing me to complete DXCC on 160 and participate in the various 160 contests, even though it's an extremely short radiator for that band (1/16wl). To resonate it, Butternut (DX Engineering) sells a coil/capacitor/hardware kit to add to the standard 2-band antenna called the TBR-160. They also sell a top-loading kit called the TLK (see Fig 1) to improve low-band performance. I purchased the two kits when I added 160, and while it worked, the original capacitors weren't up to the task of QRO operation on 160 (DXE recommended no more than 500W CW/SSB, MUCH less FT8). The caps would heat up, change value and cause the match to drift significantly. So, some years back I replaced the 2 small 200pf caps with a giant 400pf 40kVA cap from Russia. This resulted in zero drift with power, for any time period at a kW or higher (DXE has since changed the capacitor configuration for the 160 kit, now using 4ea 100pf 60kVA caps in parallel on a plate that attaches to the coil- I actually was the one who tested this configuration for DXE).



Figure 1- The Butternut TLK Top-Loading Kit

My solution worked well until last Fall, when I was getting ready to head to Florida for the winter and wanted to check out the antenna and ready it for the ARRL and CQ 160 contests. I could not get it to tune! In frustration and with time getting really short, I decided I couldn't operate on 160 this past winter.

When we returned to Rochester a couple of weeks ago, I got to work figuring out what had happened. The first thing I noticed was that one of the top-loading wires had come loose and was flapping against the radiator. That was an easy fix, but didn't improve anything.

Next, I thought the big capacitor had given up due to the ravages of rain, snow and ice. I replaced it with the original small caps just to see if things started working again- again, no change.

At that point I decided maybe 8 years of weathering had corroded the joints of the radiator (there are many), so I cleaned and reapplied SS30 copper joint compound to each joint (this stuff is great, but very messy- it's pure copper in a petroleum jelly base- it gets everywhere, so if you use it, carry plenty of wipes). I put it all back together and again, no change.

Over the course of my efforts, I did discover that I could readjust the length (compression and expansion) of the base loading coil and get it to resonate beautifully. But as soon as I put ANY RF into the antenna (even as low as 5W), it went back to its untuned state, with resonance slightly above 2MHz. I repeated the process numerous times, cleaning and re-cleaning joints at the antenna base (capacitor, coil, feedline connector, base grounding)- all with no change.

I need to say here that since Day One, I had been using a tap on the coil several turns down to get the best match in band. However, adjusting the tap made no difference in the resonance of the antenna during this effort. The only thing that changed anything was adjusting the coil length.

I was then thinking because of the sudden change to tuning when RF was applied, maybe the base insulator was breaking



Figure 2- Base of Butternut HF2V with TBR-160 Kit in Place with Replacement 400pf Cap, Coil Tap Disconnected

down from dirt and possible carbon tracking. So, I dug up the assembly manual to see how much work it would be to remove it and clean or replace it. Turns out, it's always a good idea to RTFM! The manual makes no mention of tapping the base loading coil and states that tuning is accomplished by stretching or compressing the coil (I don't know why I did the tap, but I'm pretty sure I wasn't the originator of that idea, and really, adjusting the coil length or tapping it *SHOULD* have the same effect). But as a last resort, I disconnected the tap from the radiator, retuned by compressing the coil slightly, got a great match (about 30dB Return Loss at the antenna base, which equates to about 1.05:1 SWR). I hooked up the feedline, applied some power and- VOILA! It works again! See Fig 2 for a look at the base of the antenna- you can see my coil tap (green Teflon wire) all curled up and only connected at the tap point.

I have no idea what caused the change in the way the antenna behaves, but suffice to say, I'm pleased with the result, and I'll be back on 160 this Fall and Winter! See you in the 160 contests!

73

Dave K2DH



The NYQP plaque assembly team helps promise the plaques will be in the mail soon!



RDXA 2024-25 Calendar

September 2024

3 — BOD
 14-16 — ~~ARRL September VHF~~
 17 — ~~Meeting - Show Us Your Shack~~
 28-29 — ~~CQWW RTTY~~

October 2024

1 — BOD
 15 — ~~Meeting - NYQP~~
 19-20 — ~~NYQP~~
 26-27 — ~~CQWW SSB~~

November 2024

2-4 — ~~ARRL SS CW~~
 5 — BOD
 19 — ~~Meeting - K2UA NYQP~~
 16-18 — ~~ARRL SS SSB~~
 23-24 — ~~CQWW CW~~
 30 — ~~BULLETIN DEADLINE~~

December 2024

3 — BOD
 6-8 — ~~ARRL 160m CW~~
 14-15 — ~~ARRL 10m~~
 17 — ~~RDXA Holiday Dinner~~
 21-22 — ~~Stew Perry 160m CW~~

January 2025

4-5 — ~~ARRL RTTY Roundup~~
 7 — BOD
 18-20 — ~~ARRL January VHF~~
 21 — ~~Meeting - N2RD LoRa~~
 24-26 — ~~CQWW 160m CW~~



** Tentative

February 2025

4 — BOD
 8-9 — ~~CQWW WPX RTTY~~
 15-16 — ~~ARRL DX CW~~
 18 — ~~Meeting FD~~
 21-23 — ~~CQWW 160m SSB~~
 29 — ~~BULLETIN DEADLINE~~

March 2025

1-2 — ~~ARRL DX SSB~~
 4 — BOD
 18 — ~~Postponed~~
 29-30 — ~~CQWW WPX SSB~~

April 2025

1 — BOD
 15 — ~~Meeting~~

May 2025

6 — BOD
 16-18 — ~~Dayton Hamvention~~
 20 — ~~Meeting~~
 24-25 — ~~CQWW WPX CW~~
 31 — ~~BULLETIN DEADLINE~~

June 2025

3 — BOD
 14-16 — ~~ARRL June VHF~~
 17 — ~~Meeting - FD~~
 21 — ~~RARA Hamfest~~
 22 — ~~RDXA/RVHFG Banquet~~
 28-29 — ~~ARRL Field Day~~

July 2025

12-13 — ~~IARU~~
 19-20 — ~~CQWW VHF~~
 22 — ~~PROPOSED - Red Wings Game~~

August 2025

19 — ~~IRVfest~~
 23 — ~~ROC City Hamfest~~
 31 — ~~Contest season concludes~~
 31 — ~~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. Consult the club website for up to date info.

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Bill Rogers-K2TER
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Lynn Bisha – W2BSN
Dave Hallidy - K2DH
Doug Stewart-N2BEG
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Membership Dues can be sent via:

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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

