

The VHF Journal

Official Newsletter of
**The Rochester VHF
Group**



**ARE YOU READY for
VHFSS 22-23 JAN 2000?**

* Club call W2UTH *

Club website @

<http://vhfgroup.rochesterny.org>

Mailing list

Rvhfg@vhfgroup.rochesterny.org

JANUARY 2000

This Month's Saying:

"Go Hard or Go Home!"

New Zealand extreme sports moniker

MEETING: 7:30pm Friday 14JAN00
Monroe Co. Social Services Building
111 Westfall Road, Rochester, NY
Program: January contest

rev-up

To subscribe: Send your address, call, and \$10 US funds (or \$15 CDN funds), to: The Rochester VHF Group, PO Box 92122, Rochester, NY, 14692.

Commentary and articles via e-mail to editor VE3IEY: tantonr@kingston.net (Please note the change of ISP address!). Use standard ASCII text, Corel's Word Perfect or send as a regular e-mail message.

Post editing, Data Magic, Printing & Distribution are courtesy of Judy, N2KXS.

Schedule for the rest of 1999-2000

Feb / Mar <who knows?>

April < Jan VHF SS Awards banquet.

May <see Feb / Mar>

A beer that smells skunky is said to be **lightstruck**. If you think you've actually seen a skunk in the refrigerator, you are said to be **dumbstruck**; no more beer for you!



Ve-land de-icing method in action- January 1998

Notice a change in the newsletter this month?
Editorial and Production offices of the RVHFG
Journal have now standardized on Corel's Word
Perfect software. *I think you will agree, as you thumb*
through this issue, that the Journal has entered the next
century with a bang! Enjoy the fireworks!

•"Hold the wheel, hold my beer while I reload"

courtesy of John Stevens, WB2BYP

The Buffalo Theory

Forwarded by N2GKM

A herd of buffalo can move only as fast as the slowest buffalo. When the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular culling of the weakest members.

In much the same way the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, we all know, kills brain cells, but naturally it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. That's why you always feel smarter after a few beers.

The Rochester VHF Group "Who's Who":

Officers:

Chairman: NS9E

Vice Chairman: KA2RDO

Secretary: K2OS

Treasurer: N2OPW

Director (Even year): KB2VGH

Director (Odd year): K2DH

Past Chairman: N2ULL



Appointees:

Contest Chairman: N2YB

Assistant: KA2RDO

Assistant: N2JMH

Awards manager: N2JMH

Banquet Chairman: WA2ZNC

Picnic Chairman: <open, has been for several years>

Newsletter Editor: VE3IEY

Newsletter Publishing: N2KXS



Membership Manager: N2KXS

Internet Webmaster: N2KXS

How to contact them:

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K2AXX (ex KA2RDO) Mark Hoffman

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KB2VGH Jeff Luce

(716)-424-8406 kb2vgh@amsat.org

N2KXS Judy Stonehill

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N2OPW Paul Meyers

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N2ULL Steve Obenhofer

(716)-392-7870 N2ULL@aol.com

N2YB Mark Wasserbauer

(716)-242-4574 mwasserb@harris.com

NS9E Tim Stoffel

(716)-247-4798 lionlamb@servtech.com

VE3IEY Tom Richmond

(613)-634-1855 tantonr@kingston.net

• Jeff, KB2VGH sez:

"There is only *one* mailing list

[you'll ever need...]"

Rvhfg@vhfgroup.rochesterny.org

It is setup to broadcast to all RVHFG members.

CONGRATS TO W2EV Forwarded by K2AXX

Text from 12/17/99 ARRL Letter:

QST Cover Plaque Award winner for November was Evhen Tupis, W2EV, for his article, "An Automated Meteor-Scatter Station."

Congratulations, Ev! This is quite an honor to receive! Well done!

For Sale

Kenwood TS711A 2 meter all mode. Small area paint missing top cover otherwise excellent appearance and operating condition. k2an@wycol.com 716 237 2563



73, Howard Happy 2000!

N2JMH Rover team- June 1999

The FCC Commissioners have signed of on the review which includes that business called "license restructuring".

We in amateur radio should be seeing the public announcement next week, just in time for Y2K. (They did say that this should be completed this year.) So hang on to your hats. Look for the good features which are to be adopted for Part 97, and search for good in the other features

Editors note: Late breaking news on 29DEC99 : Yup, it happened. Yup, it's big. Yup, people are going to yell. Get over it, eh!. :^)

Ramsey update



I ...de WA2YTM

We have started a discussion group on the Ramsey website and added an e-mail address to send comments. In the first day we received 180 e-mails all favorable to Ramsey. To get to

the discussion group go to www.ramseykits.com and select Federal Restrictions. At the bottom of the page is the link to the discussion group and the e-mail address, itswrong@ramseyelectronics.com. We have gotten a lot of response so far.

John has been called by several magazines to get the story, and if called he has talked to them. But he is not pushing to get the story out because he was basically told that if he plays along and settles for a conviction of the company the feds will settle for that and won't go after him personally. If he makes a big stink and tries to fight it they can file felony charges against him and shut down the company while they investigate.

He was told that the word has come down to crack down on bugging devices and the feds are going to get convictions on this to justify their investigations. That's why the 12 companies that were raided when Ramsey was were all small companies that don't have the resources for an expensive court battle. They will all plea bargain for convictions against their companies and pay the fines. The feds can write their reports and point to all the success they have had. If they ever get around to going after Radio Shack it will probably go to court and RS stands a good chance of winning but that won't effect the companies already convicted.

Coincidentally Linda Tripp is being tried this week for bugging her own phone and collecting evidence against the President.

Websites referenced in the DEC '99 RVHFG

Program: "Internet Resources for the VHF

Operator"

by KA2RDO and KB2VGH

- <http://vhfgroup.rochesterny.org/>
- <http://www.downeastmicrowave.com>
- <http://www.sbusa.com>
- <http://www.cshore.com/lunarlink/>
- <http://www.m2inc.com>
- <http://www.rohnnet.com/CommPro/Towers.htm>
- <http://championradio.com>
- <http://www.randl.com>
- <http://www.ARRL.org>
- <http://www.eHAM.net>
- <http://www.qsl.net>
- <http://www.nitehawk.com/rasmit/em70cm.html>
- <http://nitehawk.com/rasmit/>
- <http://www.ij.net/packrats/>
- <http://www.ntms.org>
- <http://www.clarc.org/rmg/>
- <http://www.kb2ah.com>
- <http://www.qsl.net/k3pgp/opening.htm>
- <http://www.kwarc.on.ca/10ghz/>
- http://www.tiac.net/users/wade/10g_home.htm
- <http://www.qsl.net/kb2vgh/>
- <http://mark.greeceny.com/>

V/UHF Pioneer Paul M. Wilson, W4HHK, SK

W4HHK, of Collierville, Tennessee, died November 29. He was 75. A stalwart in the 144-MHz and Microwave Standings, Wilson remained active right up until his health deteriorated earlier this year. In early July, he completed his VUCC on 10 GHz. He celebrated his 75th birthday in September by making his first contact on 24 GHz.

"Paul's life should inspire every amateur to strive to always try something new in Amateur Radio, regardless of age or health," said ARRL Vice President Joel Harrison, W5ZN--a friend of Wilson's. "He has definitely been an example for me." Wilson got his ham ticket in 1941 at the age of 16. While still in high school, he began experimenting on the old 2-1/2 meter band (112 MHz). After World War II, he rekindled his interest in VHF and UHF, becoming a major figure on the then-new 2-meter band. During the 1950s, he got involved in meteor scatter propagation. In 1954, W4HHK and Tommy Thomas, W2UK in New Jersey sent and received reports via 2-meter meteor scatter over a 950-mile (1520 km) path--a first! W4HHK and W2UK won the ARRL Technical Merit Award for 1955.

Wilson took on the challenge of Earth-Moon-Earth propagation as well, and in 1961 he began work on an 18-foot dish. He was among those making their first 70-cm EME contacts in July 1965. From that frontier, he moved on to attempt 2304 MHz

moonbounce, and he won the ARRL Technical Merit Award for 1969 for his work on that band. In 1970, W4HHK and W3GKP claimed a new record-- the first 2304-MHz EME contact.

In 1972, Wilson used his 18-foot dish to monitor the Apollo X command module on 2.2 GHz as the astronauts orbited the moon. He received a NASA confirmation of his reports in the form of a photograph signed by all the astronauts on the mission. Noted VHF-UHFer Al Ward, W5LUA, called Wilson "a true VHF pioneer and said he would be missed. "Paul's signal on 2304 EME was like a beacon station, and his presence will be missed by all who have worked him in the last 29 years off the moon," Ward said.

Wilson retired in 1980 after 30 years as an engineer for TV station WMC in Memphis. His wife "DB"--to whom he was married for 54 years--is W4UDQ. His son, Steven, is N4HHK.

The Central States VHF Society awarded Wilson its Chambers Award in 1986 for "his continuing technical contributions to UHF, especially EME on 13cm."

RVHFG December meeting minutes.

The December meeting of the RVHFG was held on December 10 at 7:30 PM. After introductions and activity reports, the minutes from the November meeting were read and approved. The treasurer's report was given by Paul N2OPW. Paul reported that membership now totaled 83.

The Contest Committee report included a request by Jim N2JMH for plaque award sponsors for the January VHF SS. Tim NS9E briefed the members on the new Cabrillo format which will be the standard for computer logs submitted to the ARRL. Mark N2YB discussed the upcoming January VHF SS contest. Tim NS9E is compiling the logs for the RVHFG All Band Sprint which was held in November.

Under old business, it was reported that 15 members had placed orders for the DEM 10 Ghz Transverter kit. The deadline to order is by the end of the December meeting. It was decided by a show of hands that the April Awards Banquet would be held on a Saturday.

The Journal Editor Tom VE3IEY requests articles for publication. His e-mail address is tantonr@kingston.net. Dave K2DH sadly reported the passing of Paul Wilson W4HHK. Mark K2AXX reported that the Microwave Update 2000 would be held in the Philadelphia area on 28 September. The

Pack Rats Hamorama Swapfest will be held that same weekend. It is a 5.5 hour drive from the Rochester area.

After the business meeting was adjourned, Mark K2AXX presented the latest version of VHF Test software for computer logging. He delved into the many useful functions that this package provides for both home and rover operators. The second portion of the program was Internet Resources presented by Jeff KB2VGH. Members learned about numerous web sites of interest to VHF and above operators.

Frank Pollino - Secretary

10 Ghz Project UPDATE By Mark, K2AXX

DISCLAIMER:

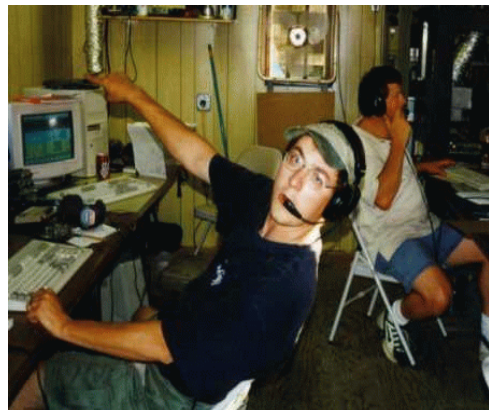
Most of the technical information is more than likely correct. However – it is late, and I'm really whacking this together to beat deadline. If you need to pick nits with it, feel free. Correct me. Hurt me. Slander my already bad name. Just SEND IT TO VE3IEY FOR PUBLICATION. We don't pay him the big bux to slack off, and read crap from me every month. Nor will I listen to a direct complaint. La la la . . . doo de doo . . . see – I'm ignoring it. . .did you say something? Hmmm?

Well, the deed has been done! The RVHFG 1999-2000 Club project is well under way! The order placed, and the kits have already arrived! Shortly, we're going to get together with the following folks and begin building these puppies together!

W2DYY, N2OPW, KB2VGH, N1EKV, N2JMH, NS9E, K2AXX, WB2BYP, AA2WV, N2EZX, WO2P, N2KG, N2YB, N2KXS, NQ2O, N2ULL, W2FE, WB2QCJ.

Well, what does this mean to the RVHFG ?

-There is a definite interest in microwave experimentation alive in our group.



- Folks who are interested in building microwave stuff.
- Fellow group members interested in exploring a REALLY cool band.
- People are willing to help others out.

As most of you know from the previous efforts on 10GHz, using Wide-Band FM units, these transceivers are quite common, and easy to build. In simple terms, these are FULL-DUPLEX units, requiring hundreds of megahertz of spectrum to operate – hence

WBFM! The inherent problem with WBFM, is making contacts over a really long distance. If my memory serves me right, the best DX is just over 100km from our area. The transverters we are building are “narrow band” units. They take a standard 2m All-Mode radio and mix the 144MHz input with a Local Oscillator at 10.224GHz to reach 10.368Ghz. Since far less bandwidth is required here (just a normal SSB/CW signal!) – contacts of greater distance are possible. K2DH has used his SSB/CW gear to work over 500km, as has N2WK. With better conditions (Tropo CAN duct 10GHz!) – who knows what could be worked!

I plan on building my unit into a weatherproof enclosure, and mounting a 2' dish right to the door of the box. This will allow me to keep the feedline from the Transverter to the antenna quite short. This is an ideal setup for portable AND base station work. Take the entire enclosure, mount it on a sturdy tripod and you go portable. Remove it, clamp it to your mast on your tower – and you're a base station. If you like, once the construction is complete and the thing assembled, I'll take some snaps of it and make it available for the asking – along with a complete parts list.

Dat's all for now.

From the Treasurer:

Paul N2OPW 26 DEC 1999

CHECKING ACCOUNT

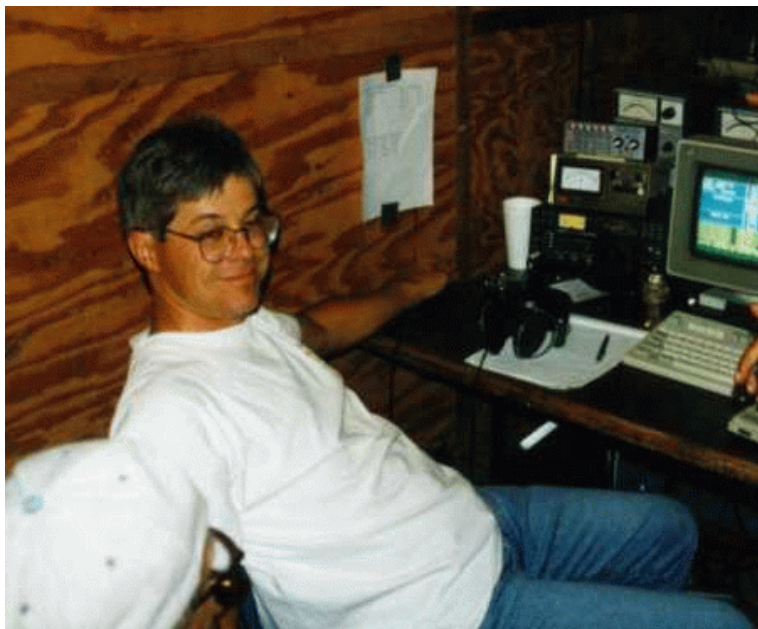
Previous Balance.....	\$580.17
Income:	
Dues collected.....	40.00
50/50 profits.....	19.00
Awards collected.....	120.00
10GHz project deposits.	1650.00
Expenses:	
Newsletter Supplies.....	-37.75
DEMI Deposit 10GHz ...	-1290.00
Current Balance.....	\$1,081.42



SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Previous Balance.....	\$1248.65
Income:	
Interest:..	0.00
Expenses:.....	0.00
Current Balance.....	\$1248.65
Balance on Hand:	
Checking.....	1,081.42
Savings.....	1,248.65
Total.....	\$ 2,330.07

IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BIG JANUARY CONTEST!!!!



K2DH hard at it on the microwave setup- W2UTH, June 1999

ARRL LOG SUBMISSION INFO!!!!

by K2AXX

Log Submission for the January Contest is a painless thing to do electronically! Here's how one would do just that!

Use W2FU's VHFTEST software package. You can get it from the RVHFG internet URL <http://vhfgroup.rochesterny.org> or possibly the January meeting (in VERY limited quantities) on diskette. Bring your own disk and I'll make copies of it. Use the software for the contest. It REALLY has some neat features, and contesting a bit easier. It also helps ME out in the following step. . . CHECK OUT YOUR LOG! Busted calls, grids (like K2AAX, not K2AXX, FM13 not FN13 – you get the point) are often just typos. How do you do this?

In VHFTEST, finish the contest, press F8 to save, and quit to the main menu. (NOTE – make a backup copy of ALL the files in c:\vhftest before doing this)

```
20001211,"0203",  
902","SSB","FN12","K2DH","FN12","*","4"  
20001211,"0203","1296","SSB","FN12","K2BH","FN  
12","*","4"
```

See above, the last line has a busted call, K2BH. Just EDIT that character, taking pains NOT to move the line. So – the fixed line should look exactly the same length as it presently does, only with the correct info.

NOW – you've cleaned the log. Excellent! SO – in order to do anything more with this file – what does one do? Simple! You RE-IMPORT it into VHFTEST. Selecting option I (Import ASCII file into QSO.DAT) will allow you to make the changed log your main log. Once this process is complete – then you can finish the log, print copies if you like, then send it electronically to me.

HOW TO SEND THE LOG ELECTRONICALLY?

Easy. Once you are satisfied that the log can be no better – nor any later than January 31st, 2000 – just fire up the old e-mail monster and do the following:



```
VHFTEST  
  
          U H F      C O N T E S T  
  
B -- Begin New Contest  
R -- Re-Start Existing Contest  
  
P -- Print Results - Log and Summary  
C -- Checklist - Print Checklists for Each Band  
L -- List - List QSO File to Screen or Printer  
A -- ASCII - Convert QSO.DAT info into an ASCII File  
I -- IMPORT - Import ASCII File into QSO.DAT  
M -- Monochrome Mode  
S -- Summary Sheet Print Only  
G -- Get and Print QSL Label  
O -- Options for CW/Voice Memory Keyer  
U -- Multi-Op Log Utility  
  
Q -- Quit  
  
Please enter selection _
```

-Send a standard e-mail message to January@vhfgroup.rochesterny.org.

-Attach your final log file in ASCII format (not the DBASE file log.txt) using

Select option A – then option B (DBASE file) to convert QSO.DAT to an editable file. It will be named log.txt.

Open this file with ANY text viewer (like Notepad, EDIT and so on). Check the calls, etc. Just MAKE CERTAIN you don't alter the field formatting. Here's a quick sample of what a text file looks like:

```
20001211,"0154",  
144","SSB","FN12","WO2P/R","FN02","*","1"  
20001211,"0157",  
222","SSB","FN12","K2DH","FN12","*","2"  
20001211,"0203",  
432","SSB","FN12","K2DH","FN12","*","2"
```

<callsign>.log as the filename (like k2axx.log).

-Click SEND.

If the log is received by the Contest Committee, you will receive an automatic notification that it made it through.

If you DON'T get the response, then send

ME (mhoffman@greece.k12.ny.us) an e-mail note directly telling me that. I need to ensure that the system is functional. I will also have access to the server incoming and outgoing logs – so I can REALLY know what's going on. Also – if I can't read your log file, I will contact you via e-mail directly and we can figure out what's the matter.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE try to get the logs in BEFORE January 31st. If you can't, chances are it won't be counted for the Club aggregate, but will be sent separately. Good luck, see ya in the 'test.

Mark, K2AXX (the AXX man!)

"What'll you have, Normie?"

"Well, I'm in a gambling mood, Sammy. I'll take a glass of whatever comes out of the tap."

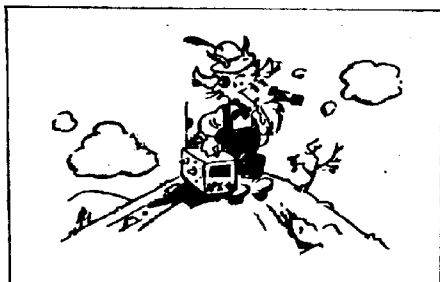
"Looks like beer, Norm."

"Call me Mister Lucky."

Cheers, TV series

The last one in captivity? A copy of the May 1983 Rochester VHF Group Newsletter, from the first year of the modern era for the VHF Journal.

THE ROCHESTER VHF GROUP



Summer is the time that a ham's fancy turns toward hilltopping! Happy hunting to all our members thru the sunny vacation months that lie ahead!

KW2T, WA2ZNC, WB2IEY, WB2KIW.

VHF GROUP HAMFEST BOOTH !!!!!

For the first time in years, the club will be manning a booth at our Rochester Hamfest. New and old officers will be there at one time or another, and members are being asked to volunteer to take a short shift in our area. There are some good displays planned, among them...
A setup of all 4 different club xvtrs, A tentative UHF slide show (continuous), Contest awards (for 83 VHF SS), Handouts, extra newsletters, & info on club projects & problems.

Postage for next year has been set at \$2, same as this year. You can drop it off at the booth or send it to the club at the NEW address (see KA2QHF in next article over), for the next 9 issues (sept-may) & a January SS mailing. Industrial contributors and supporters will again have the opportunity of having their business card printed all year for a \$10 or more contribution.

See you at the booth!!!

VHF GROUP FAMILY PICNIC!
MAY 14, Starting about 1 PM
Mendon Ponds Park, (see map)
Talk-in on 146.52 FM (& 10.150 GHz CW)

....Our final get together for the year will be reviving an old VHF Group tradition, the family picnic. Bring your spouse & the kids, and prepare for all the afternoons activities. The club will be providing Hots & buns, & members are being asked to bring a dish to pass. Rules on alcohol in county parks are as follows- no kegs in shelters, 1-6pack per adult, carried in. There is no limit on lemonade, kool-aid, or soda pop, so bring as much as you like! (the club will NOT be providing beverages) Bring any lawn games you may have for fun!
A C T I V I T I E S...

1:45 (approx)- WALKING FOX HUNT... bring your 2 meter handheld & some ingenuity with you. KW2T will be the hidden xmtr somewhere within walking distance of the shelter.
2:30 or 3:00...Hots on the grill & get set to eat.

At the commencement of eating, the awards "cerimony" will begin. Presentations will be made to the winners of the hidden transmitter hunt, and the coveted (!) GISMO award will be, once again, brought out of the dusty history of the club, to be given to the member who won last months balloting at the meeting.

The rest of the afternoon will no doubt be taken up by a gabfest, and more fun & games. See you there!

Tom...WB2IEY
N E W O F F I C E R S... 83-84

The following members wer elected at the April meeting & will begin their duties in August, 1 month before the first meeting of the 83-84 season.

Chairman... WB2ZJY, Ed Maher
V. Chmn... WA2UBD, Ed Kohl
Secty/Treas.KA2QHF, Joan Place
Newsletter..WA2TMC, Bruce Sidari

The address for any postage or other correspondence... KA2QHF
Joan Place,
4216 Wal-Ont Rd,
Walworth, NY, 14568

--Mail Newsletter info to WA2TMC--

Before September 1982, if you got a postcard mailing notice, you were lucky. The new newsletter had some great articles, including such wonders as a 1296 dxpedition to Vermont by WB2BYP to QSO K2EVJ back in Rochester!. I also remember a particularly interesting April Fools issue...

So here's the pitch:

WANTED: Copies of the other issues of 1982/1983 RVHFG NEWSLETTER

Finders fee \$20US per issue, all months from September to April. These issues can be identified easily: they are the only issues printed on 8½ by 14 (legal size) paper, folded to make four pages from each sheet (nearly full size at left). A *high-quality photocopy will suffice for the reward.* CONTACT: VE3IEY at tantonr@kingston.net

Do-It Yourself Electric : Generator tips for the months ahead. By Tom Richmond, VE3IEY (with help from Amherst Island residents Clinton Kilpatrick, our local tractor mechanic & Keith Miller, dairy farmer extraordinaire).



Since the ice storm in January 1998, many folks have purchased electric generators to run in case of another serious power outage. I know one that is still in the box, ten months after its purchase, in a garage: There may be many more generators like it out there. ***Here is a list of things you should do to prepare your new or used generator for the next power outage.***

1) SPARE PARTS! Right now, find out what type of *spark plug* and *gas-line filter* the engine of your generator takes. Go out THIS WEEK and purchase TWO spares of each. ***During a major outage (like last January) these will be SOLD OUT, as they are the items everyone needs to keep their generator running.*** If you don't have a *spark-plug gap tool*, buy one. All these supplies will probably cost you a total of \$15. If you know how to order *new points and a condenser* for your engine, do it now while you have the time. Clinton says that a good place for parts is *your local NAPA store*.

2) Check the manual to see what kind of oil your engine takes and get ***a large 4 quart jug of oil***. Next, poke around in your garage and find an empty oil jug or Clorox container (to put your used oil into), and a funnel with a long neck for putting new oil into the engine. NEW Generators are shipped with NO OIL in them, so they won't run "right out of the box". No matter what, ***check and change the oil regularly if you are running the engine during an outage***, per the manufacturers specifications. Most of these small engines will use up some of their oil while running, and you will need to add a few teaspoons or so each time you shut down to refuel. Some engines have a sensor that will shut the engine off if the oil is low- others won't start if it is low. Don't count on this to save your engine- check the level yourself!

3) Buy a small container of *gasoline stabilizer* (such as "STA-BIL"). Read the instructions and use it. Keith uses this in all his small engines and swears by the stuff.

4) When you get home, ***put all your spare parts in a marked box*** that you can store with your generator. If you scavenge from the box, replace the part ASAP for future use! The guys at Harris/ RFC call this an SSK (Site Spares Kit). If you go roving, don't leave this at home!

5) ***You should operate your generator once per month***, for about 20-30 minutes. After it has been running for about 5 minutes, plug in a hair dryer or small electric heater to test the capability of the unit under load. When it comes time to finish the test, unplug the load about 3 to 5 minutes before shutting off the generator to allow it to cool down. If you don't run the generator regularly, nasty things will happen to the carburetor in the engine, and it won't run reliably for you when you DO need it. If it doesn't work because you didn't run it, basically, you will have a \$1000 boat anchor.

6) DON'T overload your generator! Most basic household needs can be served with a ***5000 watt*** generator. How do you figure out how much you can hook up to your generator? Remember that light bulbs are numbered in watts- the brighter the bulb, the greater the number of watts. So, you ***could*** run 50 bulbs if each used 100 watts and you have a 5000 watt generator ($50 \times 100 = 5000$), but the generator would be working pretty hard all the time (and who has that many light bulbs anyway?). Most appliances have a sticker next to where the cord is attached to it that will tell you how many watts it uses (or it lists amps- call me and I will help you convert it to watts). The total calculated load on a 5000 watt generator shouldn't be over 4000 watts if you want your generator to last long, and have the reserve power needed for starting your shore well pump. (Forget running your electric hot water tank or electric kitchen range unless you have a separate generator for each of them.) Tom says get a new propane range at home if you are thinking of replacing your old electric stove- it will still work with the power off!

7) Unless you have a VERY expensive generator (and we are talking over \$3500 here) ***you shouldn't plug your computer or really sensitive electronic equipment into it***. Power from a common low-cost generator just isn't as clean and stable as the stuff R.G. & E. or your local utility is selling us (when it works!).

8) Don't do silly things with your generator.

a) Improper hookups to your house wiring can be a hazard to you, your family, your property, and the Hydro crews outside trying to fix the lines on the poles along the road. Your little generator can produce voltages 30 to 60 times that used in your household once it feeds back through the transformer outside, easily enough to kill an unsuspecting lineman. Use extension cords and keep the generator separate from the household wiring, or get an approved permanent ***generator transfer switch*** installed.

b) Shut your generator off when refueling (get one with a big tank that will last 4-6 hours).

c) Run your generator ***outside***, not in the back kitchen or garage. Clinton wants to remind us that exhaust vapors are odorless and ***WILL*** kill you.

Best wishes for the winter season- I really hope you won't need to use your generator except for roving!

Sorry it's been so long since I had a column in the newsletter. The November newsletter article never got written in time due to work. The December newsletter got lost in time when an unknown problem with my system clock backdated all my sent email by 2 weeks. Thus, Tom got it, but it was so 'old' that he never saw it. Moral of the story: check your computer clock from time to time. In this case, it was a blessing in disguise. It gave me ample warning that my CMOS battery was weak, instead of leaving me with a crippled machine at boot-up.

I hope everyone had a good holiday season and that some radio-related goodies showed up under their tree. (I can see the confusion that someone reading a VHFer's Christmas wish list would have: What is waveguide? The clerk at Kaufman's didn't have a clue what a TWTA is. Neither did the clerk at Radio Shack or Circuit City. My husband is so hard to shop for! I guess I'll just have to get him a tie and some socks!)

The main subject of this month's article will be the January Contest. Or, winning the January Contest, that is. It wasn't too many years ago when the Rochester VHF Group was one of the movers and shakers in the VHF contest world. That is no longer the case. Although still a force to be reckoned with, it seems the sun has gone down on our time as leaders. Or, has it? Let's look at some reasons why we suddenly find ourselves solidly in the middle of the pack and not out in front.

True, there are some internal causes, and they are significant. We have lost a lot of members. (But, I am happy to report that your board has managed to reverse this trend of several years in a significant manner! Thanks is also due to individual members recruiting other members!) We have lost a couple of 'big gun' stations. (But, more are slowly but surely under construction!) Interest in roving was down for a while, but this trend has also been reversed. Many members are busy with their families (Nothing wrong with that!) or their jobs, and have less time to spend on radio. The result of this all has been lackluster performance in the last few January contests.

But, just how lackluster is lackluster? Not as much as you might think. Our scores are down, but they have only fallen 20 to 33 percent on average. They would still be competitive (but not winning) scores five years ago. Where the real lies is with external factors, mainly **COMPETITION!** A good example of this is the W2UTH RVHFG June Contest club effort. Everyone involved with this operation gave 110 percent. We did have some equipment problems, but these were overcome. We did not have favorable propagation, but this usually favors us. With an effort that was certainly unmatched in the history of team competition in our club, we managed to break the million point mark!

It wasn't too long ago that a million points in the June contest was unthinkable. Then, W2SZ did it in the early 90's. Then, N2WK did it soon thereafter in 1993. Even today, the million point club is a pretty exclusive club, with only a handful of teams achieving such a lofty score. In any case, we got a million points in June. This should be good enough for at least second place. But it wasn't. We placed third! Although things here in this area have not changed much, **VHF COMPETITION IN THE REST**

OF THE COUNTRY HAS GROWN MUCH MORE!

The point is, if we want an unlimited gavel this year, we need a 125 percent effort from every single member of this club. Everyone needs to get every band they have on the air. Everyone should try to maximize their operating time as much as circumstances will allow. And most importantly, **TURN IN A LOG!!**

One last note about logging. Starting with the January Contest, the ARRL is going to be scrutinizing each and every log. Take the necessary steps to make sure your log is accurate. Remember that half of our club score is made up of small logs. Point deductions there will hurt as much as point deductions in a 500K log.

I hope that reading this has excited your sense of contest fever a bit. If you want to get revved up even more, don't miss the January meeting.

I'm sure that the contest committee will have you whipped into a **FEEDING FRENZY** by the end of the meeting!



As I used to end my articles when I was contest chairman many moons ago, I will end this one: **THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR STATION IS YOU!**

Good luck in January!

Tim, NS9E

A HAM'S GUIDE TO PATENT PROTECTION

By Howard Greenwald, KC2ERG,
Patent Attorney.

Attending the meetings of the Rochester VHF Group has made me acutely aware of how little I know about ham radio. I appreciate the information I have learned and, as partial thanks, I would like to share some information with hams which might be of interest to them

There is a substantial amount of technical information regarding ham radio, and virtually every other technical subject, available through the Internet, in particular, by using the United States Patent and Trademark Office's database. One can study virtually every United States Patent which exists regarding any technical secret.

The Patent Offices internet address is "<http://iwww.uspto.gov>" By going to the "home page" at this address and using the "search" link, one can access the "PATENT FULL TEXT AND IMAGE database". From this one can access a "help page" and thereafter access the "Help on the Manual Search Page". The "Help on the Manual Search Page" will tell you how to formulate a proper "manual search" in the full-text database. Thereafter, you can conduct a search in this database and identify several relevant patents.

Once you have picked out the most relevant patent uncovered by this initial search, you can then go to the "PATENT BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASE" to determine the "current classification" of the most relevant patent. The "current classification" of the patent might be different than the classification the patent had when it was first issued.

Armed with the "current classification" (i.e., the current class and subclass in which the patent is classified) of the most relevant patent, you can then go to the "PATENT BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASE" and print out a list of all of the United States patents in the relevant class and subclass.

With the listing of patents in the relevant class and subclass, you can then go back to the "full-text database" and study the full text of each of the patents on this list. This study will often lead to other relevant patents and, from there, other relevant classes and subclasses.

When you find a second relevant parent, you can copy it, then determine its current classification, and then determine what patents are classified in the "current classification" of the second relevant patent. This will lead to a listing of another set of patents whose full-text can be studied in the full-text database. Thereafter, you might find a third relevant patent, a fourth relevant patent. etc.

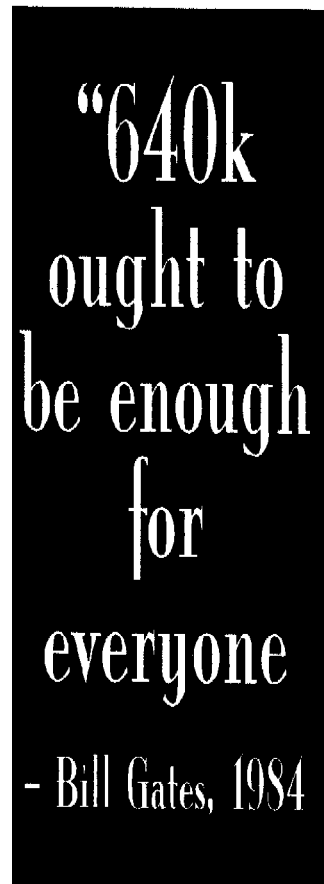
By following this process wherever it logically leads, one should eventually find every United States patent relevant to a certain technology. You will know when the search is substantially complete, when you start coming across the same patents again and again in different classes and subclasses.

Within the next few weeks, my associate and I will be

publishing a brochure entitled "THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PRIMER: an innovators guide to protecting inventions". This brochure discusses the search process and other items of interest to inventors in excruciating detail. Any ham radio operator who would like a free copy of this brochure can make arrangements to obtain one by calling (716) 387-0280

Editors note: Any inaccuracies in this article are solely my responsibility, as it was the first application of the new OCR (optical character recognition) software I just HAD to try out... Abciey

.. And, in the
"Famous Last Words" department...



"640k
ought to
be enough
for
everyone
- Bill Gates, 1984

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER for reference during the January VHF SS- folks will need it at least for The Rochester Cup competition!

Submitted by Judy, N2KXS, "Membership Czarina"

Call	Last Name	First Name
AA2WV	Ballou	Scott
AF2K	Goodman	Irv
K2AN	Clark	Howard
K2AXX	Hoffman	Mark
K2DB	Mackanos	Paul
K2DH	Hallidy	Dave
K2GAL	Kasper	Henry
K2OEQ	Brown	Duncan
K2OS	Pollino	Frank J
K2RJ	Jakubowski	Ron
K2TER	Rogers	William
K2UA	Healy	Rus
K2UW	Koehn	Rich
K2YCO	Oneske	Charles
K4MIN	Gresham	Julius
K4RF	Adams	Steven
KA2ENE	Hoffman	Harry
KA2JRK	Adams	Norman
KA2TYT	Litsche	Norman
KA2WMH	Manicone	Tony
KB2HVL	Buch	James
KB2KJV	Gessin	Marian
KB2NFS	Molz	David
KB2SOX	Wells	Charles
KB2VGH	Luce	Jeffrey
KB2VVB	Abbott	Rich
KB2WEV	Sansone	David
KC2ERG	Greenwald	Howard
KE2T	Parker	Gene
KV2X	Jennings	Tom
N1EKV	Blanchard	Byron
N2CEI	Kostro	Steve
N2EZS	Rickett	Barry
N2HKD	Braun	Curtis
N2IQU	Gummer	Mark
N2JMH	Howard	Jim
N2JQR	Tewksbury	Jeffery
N2KG	Steenhoff	Russell
N2KTU	Jackson	Richard
N2KXS	Stonehill	Judy
N2LIV	Wood	Bruce
N2MXD	Kessler	Max
N2OPW	Meyers	Paul
N2RD	Dewan	Rajiv
N2ULL	Obenhofer	Steven
N2USB	Moore	Robert
N2VTC	Fleming	Steve
N2WK	King	Wayne
N2WVK	Donath	Todd

N2YB	Wasserbauer	Mark
N3ZSS	Ananko	Jaime Allyn
NG2P	Hunter	Bob
NQ2O	Obenhofer	Walter
NS9E	Stoffel	Tim
VA3ST	Thimm	Stan
VE3AV	Parks	Dave
VE3BFM	Morton	Bob
VE3IEY	Richmond	Tom
W2DYY	Schroder, II	Russell G.
W2EQW	Kessler	Ed
W2EV	Tupis	Evhen
W2FE	Oliver	Mark
W2FU	Ach	Jeff
W2NES	Williams	Roger
W2ONP	Hoffman	Dave
W2OWF	Fish	Dick
W2UAD	Evans	Ken
W2VVG	Minges	Chet
W2WGL	Pankiewicz	Charles
W2ZHB	Remsen	John
W8OUD	Davin	Vince
WA2AAU	Frey	Richard L.
WA2ALV	Hagen	Walt
WA2BPE	Cook	Tom
WA2MYG	Pickens	Raymond R.
WA2RZG	White	Jack
WA2URE	Kessler	Marcy
WA2YTM	Hodge	Tom
WA2ZNC	Gessin	Leonard
WA8RJF	Emanuele	Anthony
WA8WZG	Whitted	Tom
WB2BYP	Stevens	John
WB2QCJ	Keyser	Dean
WB2QHH	Manthey	Harold
WB2TPN	Hereth	John
WB2YJH	Reilich	Jim
WD2AKA	Blodgett	Karyn
WO2P	Miller	Fred
WY2Z	Roworth	Wallace H.

Test ACTIVITY HOURS: LOCAL EST

6m: 12Noon, 6PM,12midnite, 6AM:

2m: 1PM, 7PM,1AM,7PM

220: 2PM,8PM,2AM,8AM

432: 3PM,9PM,3AM,9AM

903/1296/uW:4PM,10PM,4AM,10AM

Contest Corner ...de N2YB

Now that we are past the Y2K stuff, the time has come to make the final push to ready ones' self and station for the January Sweepstakes. With precious little time left, efficient time management is very important. For the benefit of those who may be unaware, the contest period is: 1900 Z 1/23/00 to 0400 Z 1/25/00 Or: 2:00PM Saturday 1/23/00 to 11:00PM Sunday 1/24/00 Eastern Time. Contest activity includes all bands above 50MHz regardless of mode.

Rules

In any competitive event you can do yourself a favor by knowing the rules of play. If you have any question about the rules I suggest you go directly to the source: arrl.org search under contest rules. There are three sets of rules that cover a number of different contests so make sure you read them all.

Awards

The award structure is the same as it was last year. The Contest Committee has and will continue to make adjustments to the structure based on sponsorship and to recognize significant contest effort. As always, the awards manager (N2JMH) is looking for awards sponsors. If you would like to sponsor an award, please contact Jim. The available awards will be made available on a first come first served. After the Rochester VHF Group core awards have been covered, additional awards will be considered.

1 st	Unlimited Multiop
2 nd	Unlimited Multiop
1 st	Limited Multiop
1 st	Unlimited Singleop
2 nd	Unlimited Singleop
3 rd	Unlimited Singleop
4 th	Unlimited Singleop
5 th	Unlimited Singleop
1 st	Medium Singleop
2 nd	Medium Singleop
3 rd	Medium Singleop
4 th	Medium Singleop
5 th	Medium Singleop
1 st	QRP Singleop
1 st	Rover
2 nd	Rover
3 rd	Rover
4 th	Rover
5 th	Rover
1 st	FM Only

Most Improved Score

Single Band

50 MHz

144 MHz

222 MHz

432 MHz

903/1296 MHz

2304 – 5760 MHz

Your Efforts

It really cannot be overstated how important your individual effort is. The Rochester VHF Group needs every member to put forth a solid effort in order to be competitive. I have put together an outline of things you may help you to prepare your station and yourself for your best effort.

Pre-contest

Make an operating plan and make your best effort to meet it.

- post it where you can see it while operating.
- it's OK to be optimistic, but be realistic.
- Based on your target Q and grid count, determine your target score.
- 50% of the score the first night.
- Set miles stones during the contest and reward yourself with breaks.
- Know your station and weaknesses and develop some work-arounds.

Budget your remaining time.

- Identify what you would like to have up and running for the contest, write it down.
- Identify a realistic date and time to abandon work on all new projects.
- Work to completion on each, it is better to have one improvement completed and working than three half finished and not working.

Clear the weekend if possible.

Operating ergonomics.

- Completely controlled at an arm reach.
- A 24 hour clock set to WWV right in front of your face at the operating point.
- Think about what you need or want at your control point and set it up.

Rest the body and mind.

- Get plenty of rest the night before the contest especially if you intend to operate aggressively.
- Do not under estimate the value of a good nights rest.
- Eat nutritiously, fruit, vegetables, you know. Feed you body with the correct fuel. Skip the alcohol until after the contest.
- The day of the contest should be free of stressful activities prior to the contest.

On Saturday morning

- Fire up the station and make a final check of all your equipment, including rotors.

- Start your logging program, set your clocks and go and enjoy the morning doing something other than radios.

The contest

30 minutes before the start.

- Check for any unusual propagation.
- 2 meters is probably the most popular band for single ops to start the contest. 6m is also a good choice.
- I think the best frame of mind to be in at the start of the contest is being relaxed and focused on the operating plan you have made for yourself.

Operating more than one band.

- Sometime during every single QSO, "any other bands?"
- The point is to try to tap every single Q, from every single station, the first time you make contact.
- If you are active into the microwaves, keeping a 'need on' list is inevitable.

Stay alert!

- Probably the single most important factor, take advantage of sudden propagation.
- Simply work as many as you can, as fast as you can, on as many bands as you can!

*There will come a time to make Choices between working a one station or another.

- its is better to work one than neither.

Operate as much of the contest as you can

- * Get creative, mobile, what ever you can do.
- * Try to peak you efforts during the times of high activity. I can identify four blocks of time.

1: The first four hours - local operating frenzy.

2: 1/24 0000 Z to about 0400 Z - Many stations settled in starting to look for distant grids, many stations just coming on the air after the dinner hour.

3: Sunday morning - Good time to work FM, good number of FM ROVERS on the air.

4: Last four hours: 1/25 0000 Z to 0400 Z.

Don't give up.

- * When equipment fails, use planned work-arounds.
- * Dig, scratch and claw.

Post Contest

Now is a good time to get used to submitting your score electronically. Next year an electronic format will be mandatory.

Submission:

- All RVHFG logs should be mark as 'Rochester VHF Group' as affiliate.
- Try to submit you log package to the League yourself either electronically or hardcopy. Send only a summary sheet to the Contest Committee. Mark on the summary sheet that you have handled your log.
- If you send your log package to the Contest Committee, submit a second summary sheet (copy of the first).
- If you send your entire log package to the Contest Committee electronically, you should expect a short acknowledgment message.
- Your call should appear on every single sheet you send to the Contest Committee.
- Clearly mark on the summary sheet turned into the Contest committee the POWER LEVEL and/or OPERATING CLASS you are entering! The default category is the UNLIMITED.
- Compute you Rochester Cup score if your are participating. The Rochester VHF Group is not eligible for the award so do not enter on behalf of the RVHFG.

- Complete a submission sheet that includes all you contest activities from a single grid. If you operated in more than one grid and are not entering as a ROVER, complete a entire package for each grid you activated.

- Clearly mark any other information that you think makes sense on your submission sheet. Remember, if you send a copy of your summary sheet to the contest committee, you can put down anything you want as long as we can read it. When tallying the scores, more information is better that less and we are always looking for ways to improve the contest results. Give us your ideas.

- Don't delay EVERYONE IS BUSY!!

Hardcopy deadline will be the night of the February meeting.

Conclusion

I am looking forward to immersing myself in the VHF bands by putting on the headphones, and digging through the noise to find the next DX in some distant new grid. I hope everyone enjoys the contest as much, or more than I do. Good Luck, and good DX.

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The Rochester VHF Group

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