

The Rochester VHF Group

The VHF



Journal

Volume 68, Issue 2

October 2014

The next regular meeting of the Rochester VHF Group will be Friday, October 10th 2014 at 7:30 PM at **Spencerport Wesleyan Church 2653 Nichols St., Spencerport** **Map and directions on last page**

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Topic: KF2MR will talk about his HackRF One SDR project and W2XH, will talk about the XB200 LF/MF/HF/VHF transverter that greatly expands the bladeRF SDR.

| RVHFG's Beacons | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Band | MHz |
| 6m | 50.078 |
| 2m | 144.298 |
| 1.25m | 222.050 |
| 70cm | 432.300 |
| 23cm | 1296.257 |

W2UTH 6 meter Skimmer

The Chairman Speaks! Bob Nezelek W2CNS

Groupers: This October meeting is going to be a very interesting meeting and I look forward to hearing the presentation by two speakers NF2MR and W2XH. Additional details are enclosed.

Preparations for MUD Microwave 2014 continue in high gear. The team is now meeting on a weekly basis resolving last minute details. The meeting should be very interesting and I hope all of you will be able to attend. For additional information go to the WEB site.

If you have a project that you are working on or recently completed consider telling us about it at a future meeting.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting and bring a friend.

73,

W2CNS Bob Nezelek

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Secretary Report

By Tom Jennings KV2X for Freddie Sulyma, WB2GFZ

Rochester VHF Group Meeting Minutes for 12 September 2014

The meeting was called to order at 2009L by Bob (W2CNS) at Rancho Viejo Restaurant as the key to the church was missing. Tom (KV2X) was kind enough to take the minutes. Bob welcomed everybody and we went around the table introducing ourselves and talked about our VHF activities over the summer. Bob asked if there was a motion to accept the minutes from the last meeting as printed in the Journal. Frank (K2OS) noted an error that KB2BYP needs to be changed to WB2BYP. Tom (KV2X) made the motion to accept and John (WB2BYP) seconded. Tom (KV2X) made the motion to accept the Treasurer's report as reported in the September's Journal and Jerry (N2QIP) seconded.

Attending: Dave/Linda (W2CNS), Tom/Betty (KV2X), Dave Malecki (KD2HEV), Dave (KA2OQZ), Bruce (WA2TMC), Jerry (N2QIP), Jarred (KF2MR), Steve (K2STS), Frank (K2OS), John (WB2BYP), Gloria (K2GAB)

OLD Business: Tom (KV2X) made his usual request for Journal input.

New Business: John (WB2BYP) announced he is ordering parts for a 2 meter skimmer and will keep the group updated with his progress.

There was a discussion of our ARRL September VHF Contest plans then we went right into the program of discussing Microwave Update activities led by Frank (K2OS).

Meeting adjourned around 2200L

VHF Group Treasurer's Report (9/30/2014)

CHECKING/CASH ACCOUNT

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Balance (as of 8/31/2014, PayPal =0, Cash = 151.00, Checking = 1819.47) | \$1970.47 |
| Income: | \$44.41 |
| John (N2NEP) Dues \$15 (9/4/14) Check | |
| Steve (K2STF) & Tom (KV2X) Dues (9/12/14) \$20 Cash | |
| Dave (KA2OQZ) Dues (9/12/14) \$9.41 PayPal (Moved to Checking) | |
| Expenses: | \$0.00 |
| Current Balance (PP = \$0.00, Cash = \$171.00Cash, \$1843.88 Checking): | \$2014.88 |

Members paid up for 2014 – 2015 are as follows;

- Tim (WB2KAO)
- Jeff (K2EHF)
- Dave Malecki (KD2HEV)
- Jarred (KF2MR)
- Fred (WO2P)
- Tom (KV2X)
- Elbert (K2ERG)
- Steve (K2STF)
- David (KA2OQZ)
- John (N2NEP)

*Respectfully submitted,
Freddie Sulyma, WB2GFZ, Treasurer*

The Vice Chairman's Report

By Tom Jennings KV2X

Groupers, the NY QSO Party is coming up and it will be a great opportunity for VHF/UHFers to earn some rare VHF/UHF points. In the past NYQPs VHF/UHF band have been rarely used. The year Jarred, KF2MR is planning on activating those bands with a goal of at least 30 QSOs and is trying to win the Rochester VHF Group's sponsored award. I plan to give Jarred some points from Monroe and close by Wayne County. It would be great if all the members of the club make an effort to help Jarred out even turn in some VHF/UHF logs. See Jarred's posting on the RVHFG.ORG/form page. Please send me short note of what you did VHF/UHF-wise for the NYQP including pictures!

Also MUD is only two weeks away! Have you registered yet? Along with many great talks noise figure measurements up to 78 GHz will be made through the generosity of both Keysight Technologies and Al Ward W5LUA, we'll have the equipment (noise figure analyzers and noise sources) to accomplish this! Also Dana Shtun VE3DS has offered to process VUCC applications during the conference. You can register for the conference and sign up for the banquet at the MUD website <http://www.microwaveupdate.org/>. Don't forget to order a long sleeve T-Shirt or extra proceedings.

The next meeting will be an interesting one as Jarred, KF2MR will talk about his HackRF SDR project and Ryan, W2XH, will discuss the XB-200 LF/MF/HF/VHF transverter, a block up-down converter that greatly expands the bladeRF's usable frequency range down, making the platform suitable for HF/VHF applications.

73,

Tom kv2x

VHF Auroral Opening

By Frank Pollino, K2OS

Auroral openings have been sparse this solar cycle. Also, they have been short lived openings. There was a brief opening on September 12 just before the monthly RVHFG meeting. On 222 MHz, the following stations were worked: W1AIM FN34, VE3FN FN25, VE2JWH FN35, VE2DSB FN35 and W9ZIH EN51. Signals were averaging S5 over a 30 minute period.

Frank K2OS

Two Meter Skimmer Update

By John Stevens, WB2BYP

I have the antenna and feed line. We will use the same computer but a high dynamic range sound card is needed because the model we used for the 6 m skimmer receiver had become obsolete. Paul K2DB has the receiver.

John, WB2BYP

KF2MR/R and N2QIP/R 2014 ARRL Sept VHF Contest



N2QIP/R

KF2MR/R

As we traveled west on 490 to Le Roy the sky alternated between sunny and clear to gray and cloudy. After troubleshooting the battery charger in the N2QIP vehicle, we arrived at our first locations with only 10 minutes to setup. I had the first two sections of the mast up when a storm came in with a huge downpour and high winds that made me wonder if the whole mast was going to come down in the road. Rain soaked the driver's seat (forgot to close the window) and water was dripping down the coax into the car. Not the kind of start I was looking for, but the storm quickly passed and the contacts started rolling in. I left FN03 and after working several FM contacts I moved on to a hilltop in FN02. I had a lot of success there so I didn't move onto the next location for quite some time. I was happy to work Maine (FN43) for the first time while I was there. I also didn't want to leave until I found N2QIP since my fuel gauge was near empty and my cell phone was dead (forgot to turn off the navigation app). After about an hour, I finally heard him on the air and let him know my predicament. Knowing I had some backup, I focused again on the contest and made my first 1296 CW contacts and then made much easier SSB contacts with VE3OIL/R on all six bands. N2QIP/R showed up and with his GPS we were able to find a gas station only a few miles away. With the schedule absolutely shot at this point, we went back to Le Roy for a nice dinner and a few more FM contacts during the 8pm activity hour.

Due to exhaustion and more work needed on a bathroom plumbing leak, I didn't leave until 9am on Sunday morning. I really wanted to get the 903 and 1296 contacts with K2LIM from FN13 that I missed on Saturday, so instead of going to FN23 at an unproven location, we opted to spend a couple of hours near the Woodcliff experimenting with different 1296 equipment. But now we were 2 hours behind the original schedule (even skipping FN23). I stumbled on a decent location in FN22 off of Rt. 81 on the way down to Binghamton. From there I was able to pick up new grids in Virginia, West Virginia, and Massachusetts on 144,222, and 432. I am very glad to have the 222 transverter, which added many new grids for me and proved to be a valuable addition. With only 25W of power and a 5 element yagi, the credit probably goes to the stations on the other end. However it goes to show that it doesn't take much if you are in the right location. As we headed closer to Pennsylvania we were able to

make a few more contacts with K2ERQ (with NA2X op.). The station had a good signal on 223 FM, allowing us to use just our mobile antennas for most of these contacts.



KF2MR/R view from the drivers seat

- TH-9800 6m/2m/70cm FM
- IC-7000 10m IF, 6m, 2m, 70cm SSB/CW
- TH-9000 223 MHz FM
- IC-1271A 1296 All Mode
- TK-981 927 MHz FM
- XV222 Transverter
- DJ-G29T 903.1 FM (not shown)

The last stop on the trip was a visit to the K2LIM station north of Corning. We never intended to arrive in the dark, but that is what happened. With a short heads up, KB2YCC/R talked us into the site and met us at the top of the hill after the long climb. With just a few lights on, Rob made his way to the bus and introduced us to the crew. After finishing up a contact, Ken provided a tour of the stations and did his best to show me the antenna arrays with his flashlight. I was impressed by Ken's willingness to walk away from the contest to talk and show me around. He made a point of letting me know that the best way to support the hobby is to talk to people about it. Instead of feeling like a distraction, I felt genuinely welcome. After sampling one of the homebrew beers, we made our way down the dirt road and headed back home. With only 45 minutes left in the contest I remembered that I never worked N2QIP from FN13, my home grid. We finally hit the NY thruway (still in FN12). At the 490 tollbooth, we had 6 minutes left in the contest and logged the final contact at 0257.

The September VHF Contest proved to be the most successful and challenging for me. I have gone from a dual band HT and homemade J-Pole in January to a six band rover in September. I still have a lot to learn (like why 6m didn't work well despite at least two openings), but that is part of the fun. I really appreciate everyone who gets on the air for a contest. Even if only for an hour or two your involvement makes a difference and gives us rovers a reason to put in the effort.

| Band | QSOs | Grids (7 grids visited) |
|------|------|-------------------------|
| 6: | 25 | 8 |
| 2: | 59 | 17 |
| 222: | 31 | 14 |
| 432: | 34 | 13 |
| 903: | 15 | 8 |
| 1.2: | 17 | 9 |

NF2RS/Rover Gang 2014 ARRL Sept VHF Contest Report

By Mark Adams, K2QO

We had a super time out on the road this year activating 7 grids with the K2QO/rover mobile signing our club call, NF2RS/r. K2ZR and I hammered away endlessly while at our hilltops and our claimed score should be a tad better than last year due to more multipliers on 2M. We found some decent tropo at times and worked some grids we usually don't reach. There were a few short 6M openings and working W4IY on 432 SSB from FN092==>FM08 right at the end was GREAT!

Of course there was the usual list of broken stuff and questionable equipment, but after a fashion it all kind of worked. Here is a random list of "things".

1. The old KDK 2M FM radio totally trashed the main 2M SSB/CW rig, an IC746. Both have custom cavity filters so the FM radio is relieved of further duty.
2. The XV432 was fixed a few weeks ago and performed nicely during testing in the shack. During the rover build testing it would NOT work with its filter in line. On SSB it put out very low power while on CW it was fine. More testing needed.
3. A P3 accompanied the K3 and it worked great but I need more time to really grow the operation. It seemed that the signals I saw on the scope I would have worked anyway during the course of the particular grid stop.
4. We used to regularly run 10 bands and due to crazy low activity, now run 4. Even with that, K2ZR in the front seat had trouble passing me contacts because I was moving everyone between 6, 222 and 432. At some point on Sunday, he came up with some hand signals that really helped.
5. At the first grid stop we ran into a problem with the main stack rotor. It would not turn CCW unless the rotor box switch was massaged "just right". This persisted the whole weekend. More to fix!
6. Oh yeah, another dead Diamond Antenna Switch. Good thing we have a spare Alpha Delta.

OTOH, we had 5-star accommodations and food for Friday and Saturday nights. Those visits, wine, beer, and Key West shrimp went a long way to ensuring that we were as energized as possible for the 886 miles through 7 grids in what I stated before the contest would be a "balls to the wall" effort.

Overall, it was a great run. The only way we could increase our score at this point is to find more stations on the air.

Station: Chevy AWD Traverse, K3/P3/XV222 and 432 for the rear and an IC746 for 2M up front. 6M Par Omni, 222 and 432 Cheap Yagis, 2M7, and pairs of KU4AB Omnis for 144 and 432.

73,
Mark K2QO
Dick K2ZR
The NF2RS/Rover Gang from WNY!

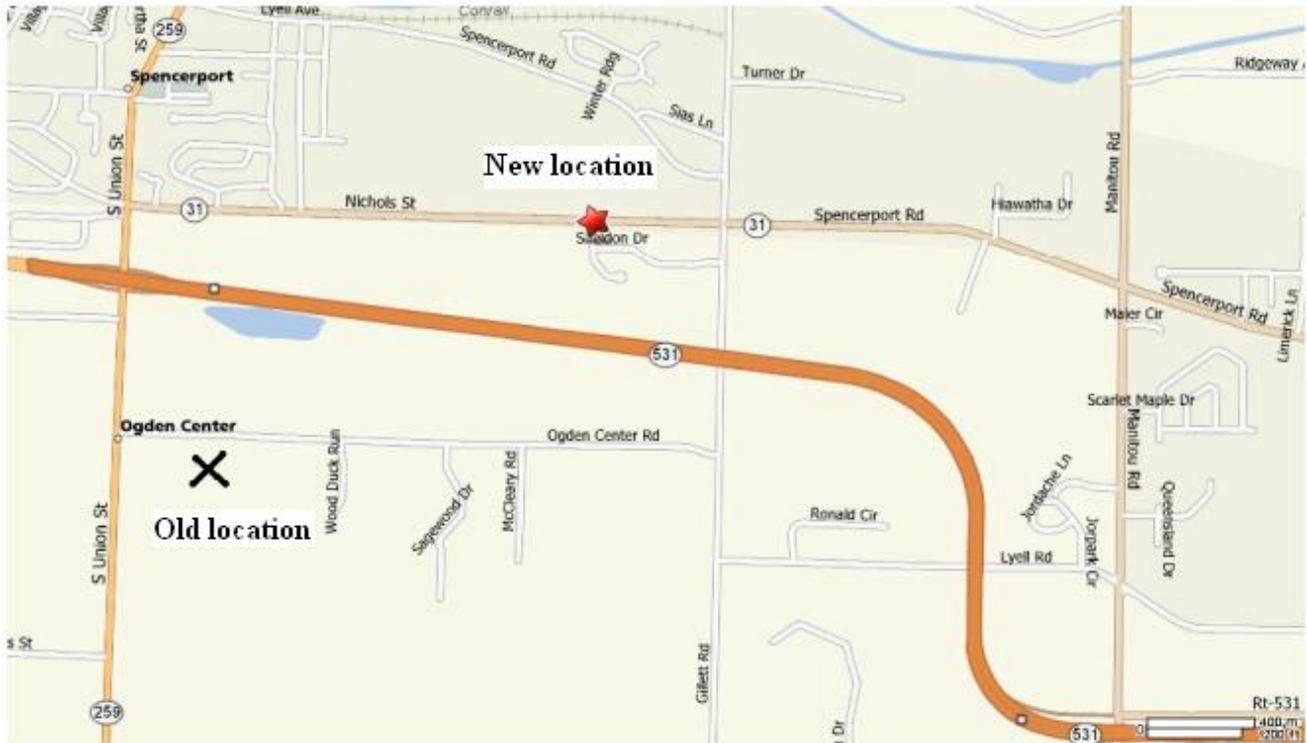
Classified Listings

Wanted: 6 meter mag mount antenna.

I am looking for a 6m mag mount antenna which will cover 50.05 thru 50.250 MHz with low SWR.

Tom, kv2x at arrl dot net

Meeting Location and Directions



Spencerport Wesleyan Church on 2653 Nichols St. (actually Hwy. 31).

Directions from Rochester:

531W exit RT. to 259N

259N turn Rt. on 31E (first Rt. at traffic light)

Look for Spencerport Schools Bus Garage on left

Take first Rt. on Sheldon at A-framed church, park in rear lot.

Enter gray metal door under fire escape.