

The VHF



Journal

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The next regular meeting of the Rochester VHF Group will be Friday, February 8th at 7:30 PM at MacGinny's located at 2246 East River Rd. off Jefferson near RIT

Map and directions on last page

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The Chairman Speaks!
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 Classified

Topic: Informal and social.

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

The Chairman Speaks! John Stevens WB2BYP

Groupers: March is here...and hopefully along with it some improvement in the weather. Got any big projects for the year in antennas? Or like the bulk of us, itching to get out and refurbish what needs to be done from the ravages of winter? Fortunately we missed some of the worst weather, but there's still some clean-up tasks. I'm ready for spring.

Our next meeting will be informal and social, as we are going to gather at MacGinny's Sports Pub, 2246 East River Road in Rochester (14623) and just have a general catch up with the group. We will start at 1930 local for the meeting, but have a RVHFG Board meeting a half hour before that. There is a little planning in the play here too, as we are kicking off a joint club project with the Rochester DX Association, with the construction of a 50 MHz "Skimmer".

...Continued....

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The Chairman Speaks!

Continued... Those of you with some familiarity with the Reverse Beacon Network may know a little about these devices from the HF spectrum. In short, a Skimmer is a receiver connected to a sound card on a computer. The detected baseband, or at least 190 kHz of it is processed by the computer and signals within the baseband are detected and filtered for recognizable pattern like "CQ" and "DE CALLSIGN". This information is stored locally at the computer and application software can forward it to an aggregating site, and display it on a web page format. In this manner, stations worldwide can more or less instantly see an activity snapshot of the segment of the band the receiver is tuned-to. RDXA has successfully deployed one of these receivers for HF bands down at the AWA site, and it works well. Here is a link for more info:

<http://www.reversebeacon.net/>

The subject came up as to how a 6 Meter Skimmer would work, and that started the ball rolling. Many of the RDXA folks enjoy operating on 6 Meters too, and the project seemed like an ideal cooperative venture between the clubs. One of the critical problems just like the beacons present, is where do you put something like this? The location should be a good VHF location, but hopefully not be the same as one with a lot of VHF activity, that would otherwise overload the sensitive receiver. Operations from the AWA were clearly a non-starter as the 6M Beacon would itself overwhelm the 6M Skimmer. To the rescue is Jeff Ach W2FU, who has graciously allowed the two clubs to use one of his towers, which will enable us to site the 6M antenna at 70 ft. We have procured by donation the antenna, a Par Omni-Angle OM-50, and the feed line. The antenna will be placed on the tower as soon as weather permits.

There are a few details to be worked out, such as the need for any pre-selection filtering, power conditioning, set-up of the computer and placement. I'm confident that the task is pretty straight forward, and has the right mix of expertise at hand.

Similarly there are a few items needed that the two clubs are soliciting as potential donations from anyone willing. Paul Mackanos, K2DB has spearheaded the project for the RDXA, and sent around an email with some of the need parts. I'll copy in a portion here:

The RDXA has gone forward and authorized the purchase of a refurbished computer. The computer has been ordered and will be arriving sometime next week; the order included a keyboard and mouse. John, WB2BYP and the VHF Group is in the process of ordering a 192 kHz sound card so that we can cover 192 kHz of the 6 meter band which would be from 50.0 MHz to 50.192 MHz.

John has also informed me that he has purchased the 6 meter receiving antenna and will supply the coaxial cable from the antenna to the receiver. I have already purchased and built a VHF ensemble software defined receiver for 2 meters. I will modify and donate this receiver and put it on the 6 meter band. This receiver has been checked out on 2 meters and it works fine, so it should be no problem putting it on 6 meters.

At this point here is a list of needed equipment to complete the procurement of everything needed for this project.



*RX Enclosure (note this is the enclosure only...not the receiver)
<http://km5h.softrockradio.org/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=52
\$20.00 + \$5.30 shipping from KM5H Store.*

2 each - 6 Foot Value M/M Audio Cable - 3.5mm Stereo male to ¼ male audio cable 3 to 6 feet long. (Depending on sound card)

http://tehnosite.narod.ru/ft.files/USB_konektory.gif each - USB cable to go from computer USB-A to receiver USB-B connector 3 to 6 feet long

12 Volt Sealed Maintenance free Battery, the bigger the better.

13.8 volt DC Power Supply (very low noise floor) or trickle charger for battery or both with a voltage regulator to prevent overcharging?

DC Power cord to go from battery to receiver with spade lug connectors for battery end of cable. (Zip cord is ok.) DC Plug for receiver is included with receiver.

Male BNC connector for connection to coax for the antenna.

Video Monitor & Power Plug

Power plug strip

Let me know what you have if you have anything to donate to this project.

If I think of anything else that is needed, I will update this list, as donations come in, I will add the donor to the equipment donation.

Paul K2DB

There are not many examples of 6 Meter Skimmers at play around the world, so in some ways this project is quite an intriguing experiment. With the preponderances of beacons on the band, and the sporadic nature to the propagation, this tool may prove to be an interesting way to monitor and alert

for band openings. Curious how a 2 Meter Skimmer would work from a good location? Hold that thought...

If you can donate or purchase any of the missing items from Paul's list, please send me or Paul an email with whatever you can provide.

John: [wb2byp "at" arrl.net](mailto:wb2byp@arrl.net)

Paul: [k2db "at" k2db.com](mailto:k2db@k2db.com)

Stay tuned to the website and the Monday and Thursday Night 144.260/50.200 Nets at 2100 local for more info.

Thanks and come to the meeting and share what you have been doing!

John
wb2byp

For reference:

Par Electronics: <http://www.parelectronics.com/index.php>

ASUS Sound Card: http://usa.asus.com/Multimedia/Audio_Cards/Xonar_Essence_ST/

Softrock Receiver: <http://wb5rvz.com/sdr/>

Secretary Report

Tom Jennings, KV2X

Rochester VHF Group Meeting Minutes for February 2013

The meeting was canceled due to the weather.

Rochester VHF Group Treasurer's Report

CHECKING ACCOUNT

Previous Balance (as of 2/14/2013):	\$2038.09
Income:	\$0.00
Expenses:	\$0.00
Current Balance	\$2038.09

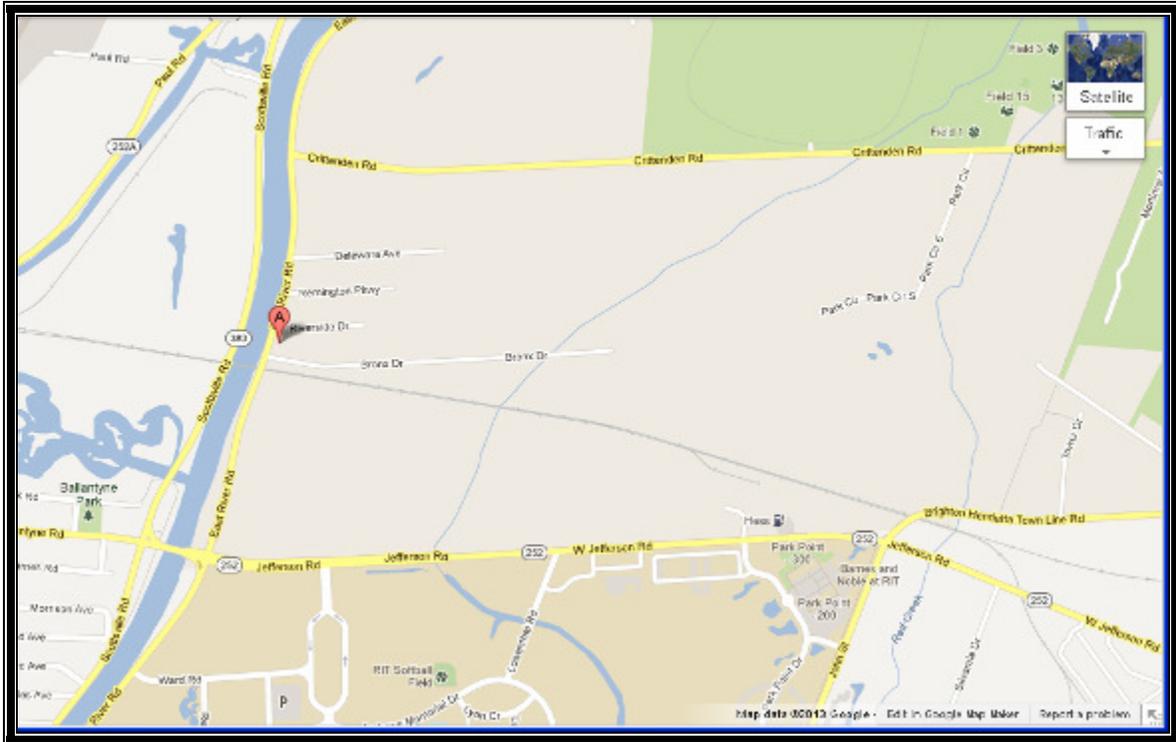
Respectfully submitted,

Tom Jennings, KV2X, Treasurer

Classified Listings

None this month

Meeting Location and Directions



If heading west on Jefferson Rd, turn right just before the river and Macginnny's is on the right just past the railroad tracks. 2246 East River Rd.