

The Rochester VHF Group

The VHF



Journal

Volume 60, Issue 8

Apr. 2009

The next regular meeting of the Rochester VHF Group will be Friday, April 10, 2009

Spencerport Wesleyan Church
2653 Nichols St., Spencerport

Map and directions in back

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Topics:

Nostalgia Night

The Chairman Speaks! Bill Rogers, K2TER

Fellow Groupers: I would like to thank everyone who brought in a gadget or project to share with the group at last month's meeting, it made for an enjoyable evening of short presentations.

April Meeting - Nostalgia Night

This month we are going to kick off the RVHFG 60th anniversary celebration by having a night of impromptu talks and reminiscence on the club's history. We will be aided by a gallery of photos put together by Judy (N2KXS) and Fred (WO2P). This is sure to be an entertaining look back. You never know what your friends will say about you if you aren't there! Bring your appetite; we will have hamburgers, hot dogs, and soda. See you there!

RVHFG Banquet April 25th

I can't think of a better way to celebrate the 60th anniversary with your fellow groupers than to attend the RVHFG/RDXA banquet on Saturday, April 25th. See below for more details.

Please meet us at Spencerport Wesleyan Church – 2653 Nichols Street (Hwy 31) Directions on last page. **Bring a friend!**

Bill, K2TER

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Secretary Report

Judy Stonehill, N2KXS

Rochester VHF Group Meeting Minutes for March 13, 2009

The general meeting, which was held at the Spencerport Wesleyan Church, was convened at 1945 local by the Chairman, K2TER.

Attendees introduced themselves and told the group what they had brought for "Gadget Night".

Dave, K2DH, moved that the Secretary and Treasurer reports be accepted as printed in the RVHFG Journal. Fred, WO2P, seconded the motion which was passed by the attendees.

In attendance were WO2P, K2DH, W2CNS, K2OS, W3OAB, AF2K, N2VTC, NQ2O, WB2QCJ, K2TER, K2MTH, and N2KXS.

OLD BUSINESS

Bill, K2TER, told the group that \$140 had been collected for the trust fund of the children of Leon Ingerick, N2HLT, Silent Key. Further contributions will be accepted and some will be added to the fund by the Club.

Fred, WO2P, reported that he and Rick Mintz of RDXA went to NapaGino's restaurant to make arrangements with the owner for the upcoming RVHFG / RDXA banquet which will be held on Saturday, April 25th. This year, rather than having a buffet, the group will be able to order off the menu. Tax and gratuity will be included in the checks.

There will be a social hour between 1800 and 1900 hours with dinner from 1900 to 2000 hours. Awards will be presented and further socializing held from 2000 hours.

There will be a slide show of pictures that members of the RVHFG and RDXA have taken over the years. Members were asked to send both hard copy, which will be scanned, and digital formats to include in the show. The pictures will also be considered for inclusion in RVHFG archives that will be developed over time.

Door prizes will be given and a 50/50 drawing held. The proceeds from the 50/50 will help cover the costs of some additional banquet items such as the cheese and fruit trays, as well as the cake.

Fred, WO2P, contacted the ARRL to invite Bill Edgar and to ask if they would like to provide door prizes. He also extended invitations to the head of the National Contest Magazine, CQ Magazine, and Steve Castro of DEMI and asked about the possibility of door prizes. He thanked each one for supporting us in our banquets in past years.

No tickets will be generated this year. Instead, Rick Mintz will send out an email to RVHFG and RDXA, requesting that anyone who will be attending the banquet respond to the email so that the banquet committee can inform NapaGino's about the number of attendees.

Fred requested that anyone who has snapshots, slides, or digital images of past RVHFG activities send them to him or to Judy. Their email addresses are on the RVHFG web site.

This year there will be an hiatus on having members sponsor awards. Instead, the club will sponsor the awards which will consist of certificates and plaques.

Dave, K2DH, gave a report on the status of the beacons. The 1296 beacon has been fixed. A driver between the oscillator and the PA was quitting. Dave replaced it and will put the beacon back on the air soon. Dave has permission to use club funds to obtain omni-angle antennas for the 222 and 432 beacons. Dave will be talking soon to Mark, K2AXX about the radios which will then need to be modified. Dave now has the 2M beacon antenna, obtained from W2DYY. He also got a Kenwood TW-4000 radio from Bill. Part of the TW-4000 signal will drive the 50 MHz beacon which is a transverters. At this time, we don't have a 6 meter antenna. Dave suggested that someone could build a halo or dipole for use with the 6M beacon. A 94.216 crystal is also needed. He hopes to have all of the beacons in operation by the date of the Rochester hamfest.

A proposed amendment related to honorary memberships was published in the March Journal. It will be published again in the April Journal and will be voted on during the annual meeting in May.

A sign-up sheet for coverage of the Rochester Hamfest RVHFG booth was passed around the room. Only eight hours, plus set-up and take-down, need to be covered this year, with two members during each hour.

NEW BUSINESS

The annual elections will take place at the May meeting. The Board selected Fred, WO2P, Tom, KV2X, and Bill, K2TER, for the nominating committee. Members were invited to contact Bill, Fred, or Tom with recommendations of members for nomination. At the April meeting, the nominating committee will present its recommendations and open the floor for additional recommendations. Recommendations will also be accepted at the May meeting. Voting will take place at that meeting.

Bill reported that there were only four or five submissions for the Rochester VHF Challenge. They consisted mostly of 6 meter and 2 meter contacts, mostly FM. He feels that the form completion and submission processes might have been too complex.

As part of our 60th anniversary celebration, our April meeting will be "Nostalgia Night". Meeting attendees were asked to contact previous members such as K2EVJ, W2UAD, W2IOG, WA2WVL, K2LDU/K2LDT, N2WK, KB3PW, NG2P, K2CS, KB3PW, VE3IEY and others to invite them to this year's banquet. John, W3OAB, suggested that we contact some on this list by a phone conference call during the banquet.

RDXA wants to significantly increase their results on the W2RDX station during Field Day. They were contacted by K1DG to present at the Dayton Hamvention. Bill, K2TER, will have his rover at their Field Day station to work 6M through 10 GHz and asked that RVHFG members make contacts with the station during Field Day.

People whose memberships in the RVHFG have expired will have their names removed from the reflector. They are asked to renew their membership soon.

Irv, AF2K, moved that the business meeting be closed. The motion was seconded by Fred, WO2P. The meeting was closed at 2012 hours.

PROGRAM

Attendees talked about and showed VHF/microwave projects they had designed and/or built.

Rochester VHF Group Treasurer's Report – April 2009

CHECKING ACCOUNT

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| <u>Previous Balance</u> (as of 2/1/09): | \$1,172.41 |
| Income: | |
| Donations to N2HLT memorial fund | \$140.00 |
| Expenses: | |
| PAR Electronics: beacon antennas | \$108.00 |
| <u>Current Balance</u> | \$1,204.41 |

SAVINGS ACCOUNT

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| <u>Previous Balance</u> (as of 3/1/09): | \$1,524.33 |
| Income: | \$0.00 |
| Expenses: | \$0.00 |
| <u>Current Balance</u> | \$1,524.33 |

| | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| TOTAL | \$2,696.74 |
|--------------|-------------------|

*Respectfully submitted,
Judy Stonehill, N2KXS, Treasurer*

Amendment to RVHFG Constitution

At February's meeting Walter, NQ2O, made a motion that a complimentary year's RVHFG membership be given to any non-member who speaks at our meetings. The motion was discussed after the meeting to ensure that it meets the constitutional rules of the Rochester VHF Group. It was found that the RVHFG's constitution does not allow for honorary membership so the following amendment is being proposed to implement Walter's idea. The constitution also states that the amendment must be published at least 30 days before the annual meeting which is the May meeting.

AMENDMENT TO BYLAWS OF THE ROCHESTER (NY) VHF GROUP

Amendment No. 2, which amends Article I- MEMBERSHIP, as follows:

Section 2. Honorary Membership. Honorary or Complimentary Memberships in the Group, while not customarily permitted, may, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, be granted under certain circumstances. Examples of such circumstances might be a complimentary membership given to a non-member who makes a presentation to the Group, or a member who has performed some extraordinary service either to the Group or in support of Amateur Radio. An Honorary or Complimentary Membership granted to an individual who is not currently a member WILL NOT grant that person voting rights or the opportunity to serve as a club officer during the period of the Honorary or Complimentary Membership. Generally, such Honorary or Complimentary Memberships shall have a duration of one year; the intent of such memberships is to allow the individual the opportunity to experience what the Group has to offer, and entice that person into becoming a full, dues-paying member entitled to vote on Group matters and to hold office within the Group if they so desire. However, such an Honorary or Complimentary Membership may have its duration extended under special circumstances and by majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Nominations Request

It's that time of year again. May 8th is our annual meeting. This is when we hold elections for the open board positions. The RVHFG nominating committee is seeking candidates to fill the following positions on the board:

Chairman
Vice Chairman
Secretary/Treasurer
Odd Year Director

To nominate someone please contact one of the members of the nominating committee:

Bill Rogers: k2ter@rochester.rr.com

Tom Jennings: tjennin2@rochester.rr.com

Fred Miller: wo2p@aol.com

You can also submit nominations by attending the April 10th, 2009 meeting or the May 8th, 2009 annual meeting.

Please take some time to consider making a nomination. If you are considering serving on the board and would like additional information on what is expected please contact any of the board members or a nominating committee member. I look forward to your active participation in this important club function.

Thanks for your time,
Bill
K2TER
Chairman, RVHFG

RVHFG/RDXA Banquet

I can't think of a better way to celebrate the 60th anniversary with your fellow groupers than to attend the RVHFG/RDXA banquet on Saturday, April 25th. We have changed things a bit this year including the elimination of prepaid tickets. This year you can order off the menu! Also, Napa Gino's has recently updated their restaurant and I've heard it's something to see.

Saturday, April 25th

6:00 PM - Cocktails

7:00 PM - Dinner (ordering off the regular menu)

NapaGino's Restaurant

2200 Penfield Road

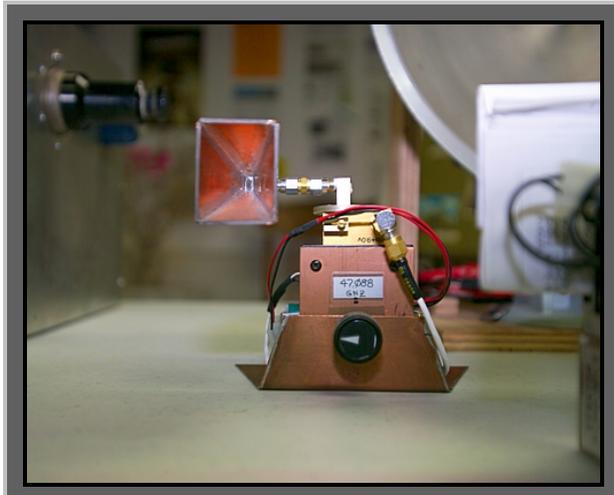
Northeast corner of Routes 441 and 250

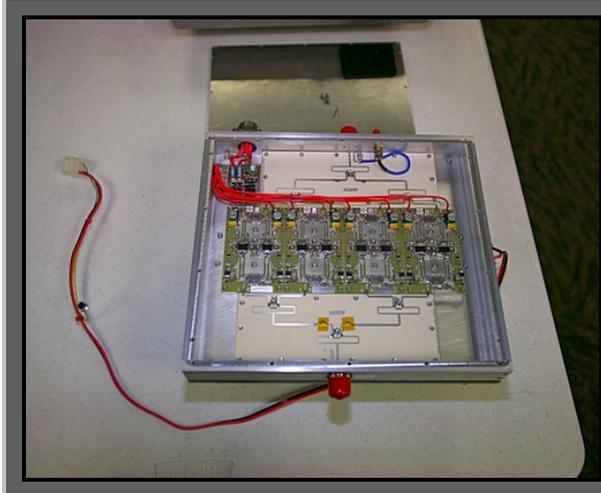
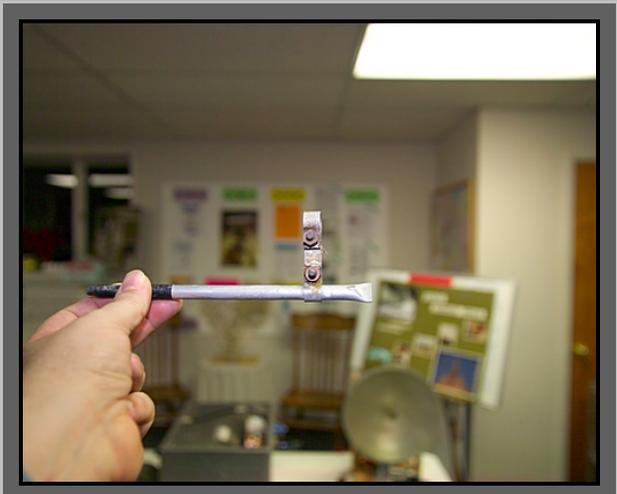
I would like to thank Fred Miller (WO2P) for handling the planning and other banquet considerations this year. He has really worked hard to ensure a great experience for all of us. He and Rick Mintz (W1TY) worked out the new arrangements with the restaurant owners and Rick has volunteered to organize the guest list. Even though there are no tickets this year, it is still important to notify Rick at Rmintz@Rochester.rr.com of your plans to attend. We need an accurate count to aid in restaurant set up and for determining things like appetizers and door prizes - again which are provided at no cost to the individual this year.

I hope you to see you at the banquet this year and urge you to send Rick an email today so we can finalize our pre-banquet plans!

Thanks,
Bill Rogers, K2TER
Chairman, RVHFG

Gaget Night Pictures





Pictures by Mark Hazel K2MTH

Where are the Sunspots?

The sunspot cycle is behaving a little like the stock market. Just when you think it has hit bottom, it goes even lower. 2008 was a bear. There were no sunspots observed on 266 of the year's 366 days (73 percent). To find a year with more blank suns, you have to go all the way back to 1913, which had 311 spotless days. Prompted by these numbers, some observers suggested that the solar cycle had hit bottom in 2008.

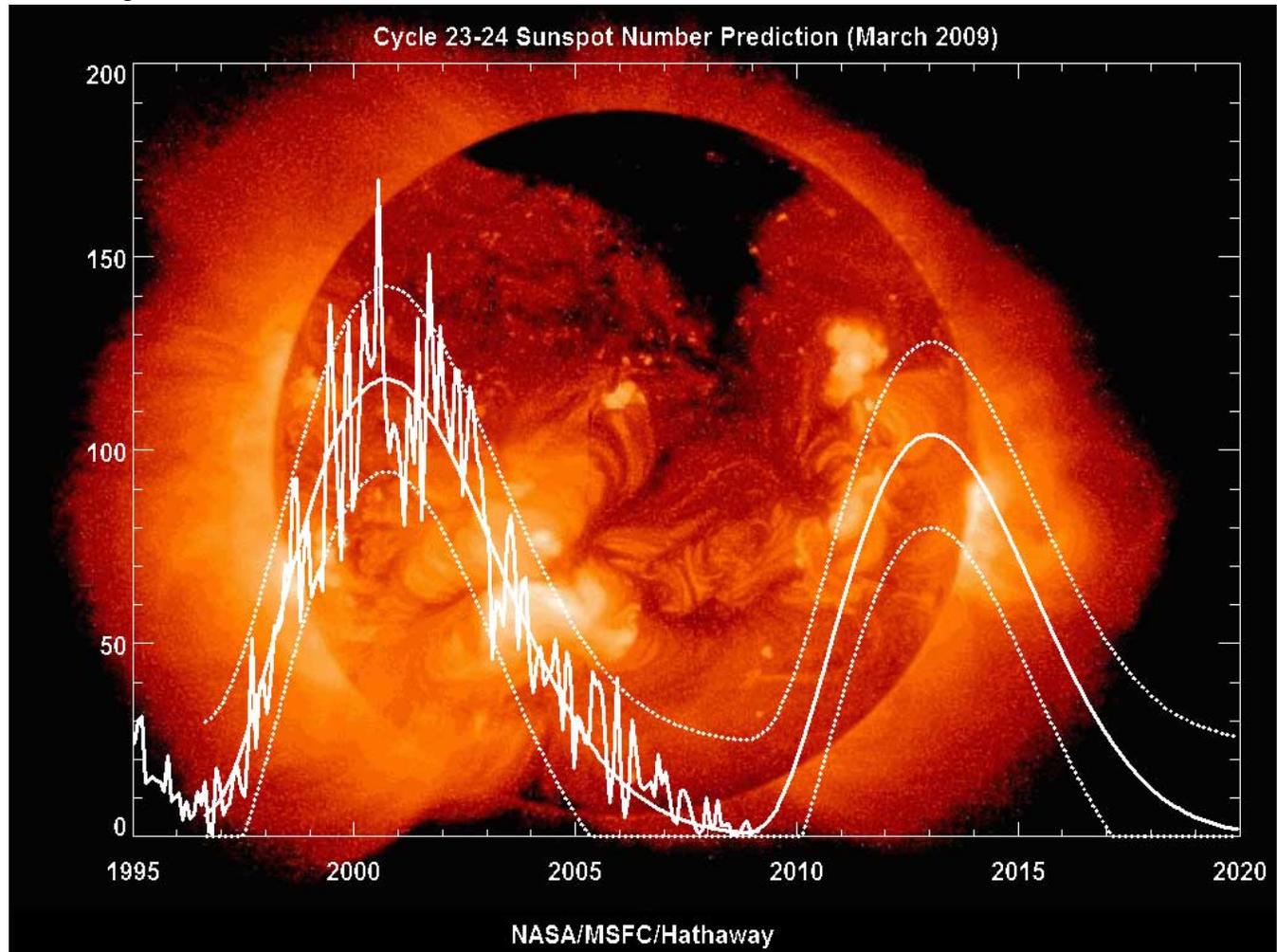
Maybe not. Sunspot counts for 2009 have dropped even lower. As of March 31st, there were no sunspots on 78 of the year's 90 days (87 percent). It adds up to one inescapable conclusion: "We're experiencing a very deep solar minimum," says solar physicist Dean Pesnell of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md. "This is the quietest sun we've seen in almost a century," agrees forecaster David Hathaway of NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala.

Quiet suns come along every 11 years or so. It's a natural part of the sunspot cycle, discovered by German astronomer Heinrich Schwabe in the mid-1800s. Sunspots are planet-sized islands of magnetism on the surface of the sun, and they are sources of solar flares, coronal

mass ejections, and intense UV radiation. Plotting sunspot counts, Schwabe saw that peaks of solar activity were always followed by valleys of relative calm—a clockwork pattern that has held true for more than 200 years.

The current solar minimum is part of that pattern. In fact, it's right on time. But is it supposed to be this quiet? Measurements by the Ulysses spacecraft reveal a 20 percent drop in solar wind pressure since the mid-1990s—the lowest point since such measurements began in the 1960s. Weaker solar wind means fewer geomagnetic storms and auroras on Earth.

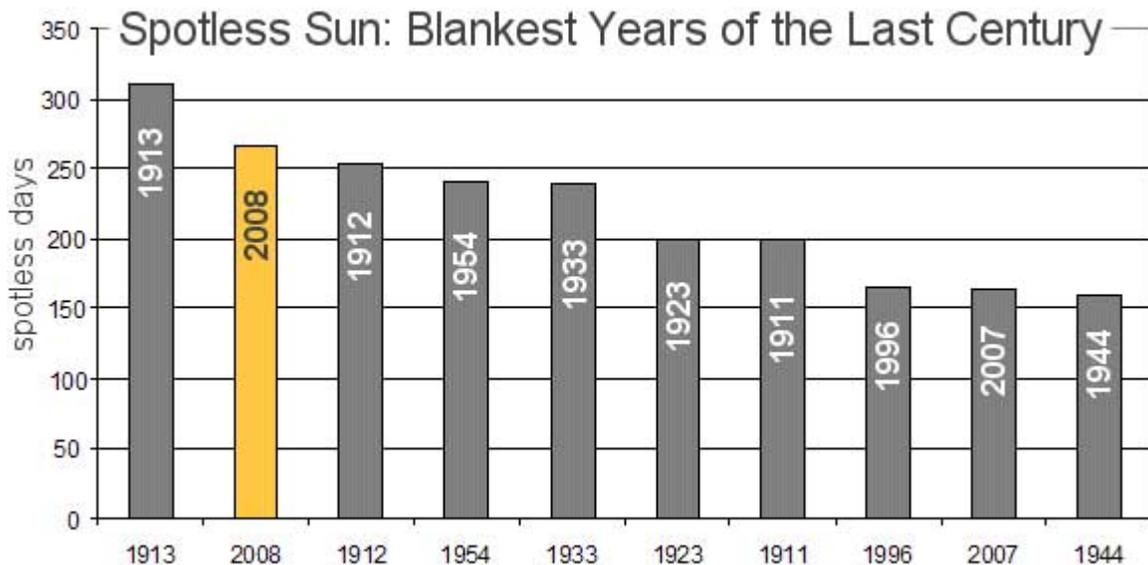
Careful measurements by several NASA spacecraft have also shown that the sun's brightness has dimmed by 0.02 percent at visible wavelengths and a whopping 6 percent at extreme UV wavelengths since the solar minimum of 1996.



The sunspot cycle from 1995 to the present. The jagged curve traces actual sunspot counts. Smooth curves are fits to the data and one forecaster's predictions of future activity. Credit: David Hathaway, NASA/MSFC

Finally, radio telescopes are recording the dimmest "radio sun" since 1955. After World War II, astronomers began keeping records of the sun's brightness at radio wavelengths, particularly 10.7 cm. Some researchers believe that the lessening of radio emissions during this solar minimum is an indication of weakness in the sun's global magnetic field. No one is certain, however, because the source of these long-monitored radio emissions is not fully understood.

All these lows have sparked a debate about whether the ongoing minimum is extreme or just an overdue market correction following a string of unusually intense solar maxima. "Since the Space Age began in the 1950s, solar activity has been generally high," notes Hathaway. "Five of the ten most intense solar cycles on record have occurred in the last 50 years. We're just not used to this kind of deep calm." Deep calm was fairly common a hundred years ago. The solar minima of 1901 and 1913, for instance, were even longer than what we're experiencing now. To match those minima in depth and longevity, the current minimum will have to last at least another year.



The "blankest years" of the past century. Vertical bars in this histogram represent the number of days in each year that the sun was blank--i.e., had no sunspots. **Credit: Tony Phillips**

Modern technology cannot, however, predict what comes next. Competing models by dozens of solar physicists disagree, sometimes sharply, on when this solar minimum will end and how big the next solar maximum will be. The great uncertainty stems from one simple fact: No one fully understands the underlying physics of the sunspot cycle. Pesnell believes sunspot counts should pick up again soon, "possibly by the end of the year," to be followed by a solar maximum of below-average intensity in 2012 or 2013. But like other forecasters, he knows he could be wrong. Bull or bear? Stay tuned for updates.

Adapted from a Nasa News Release by Tony Phillips, PhD NASA Heliophysics News Team

Rochester Hamfest

As you're probably aware, there is contradictory info posted on two different sites, and there's nothing the Hamfest Committee can do about that...yet. It has become rather controversial and I am trying to say as little as possible, although there have been a fair number of incoming inquiries on the RARA Hotline asking if there is really going to be TWO hamfests here this year. Irv, AF2K

Editor's Note: It looks like information is becoming more consistent as I checked two urls: www.rochesterham.org and www.rochesterhamfest.org and both point to RARA's home page. I also did some Googling and found a url for a Rochester Hamfest flyer at: <http://www.rochesterham.org/hamfest.htm>

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.