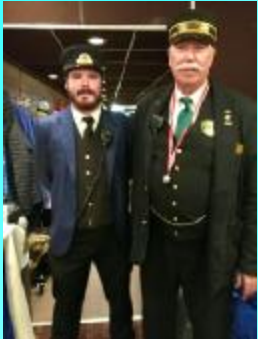


CHRISTMAS 2023

Wrap Up

I believe that 2023 will go down in the books as one of the great Christmas holiday seasons. From what was heard on the Chew, family gatherings and outings filled the air with holiday cheer.

My friend, K2LAG-Larry seems to have



one of the best jobs anywhere. Living in upstate New York, he is both an engineer and conductor on the Adirondack Railways Polar Express. He is qualified to run their steam engines as well as diesel units. The photo shows

Larry with the prominent white moustache, decked out in the full Christmas conductor's uniform, while Jared DeFayette is the brakeman on the train. This year they hosted 44 Polar Express trips averaging 500 passengers per trip, and as of today, had over 20,000 very happy passengers rolling over hill and dale to Santa's northern workshop.



Eager passengers gathered at the 110 year old NY Utica Union Station. This station keeps everyone warm as there are steam radiators under every main waiting room

The "Chew"

SEVENTY-TWO



"Where
Choosy
People

Choose
to
CHEW!

NEWSLETTER **January 2024**



72chew.net

Passengers, on the bridge, cross over the main line CSX tracks to the waiting Polar Express train. An old NY Central steam engine #6721 is on display.



There are a few special Polar Express runs across the country.

Larry's is beautiful as it winds around snow covered trails of the Adirondacks. K2LAG-Larry can

be found at times on the Chew as well as the daily "North Country" Rooster Roster net on Echolink. 7:30 am EST on the WA2NAN-R or AC2GE-R links.

*The Loby-WA2AXZ clan
is seen below.*

The Vero Beach, Florida contingent with Big Brother Bob and Riley (in red) along with two friends, Nate and another Riley, see how much Christmas they can stuff into a living room.



Riley Nate / Riley Bobby

The Wisconsin side of the family with my third grandson, Kilian, is busy with the two new puppies, as the boxes, bows and presents are squirreled away on the other side of the living room. And now on to a most happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!



Rocky's Towering Achievement

Rocky-K4EZY has been a ham for 23 years, and for 20 of them, has used a Cushcraft MA5B Yagi mounted on a metal mast 30' in the air.



It worked well enough to obtain a DXCC certificate covering

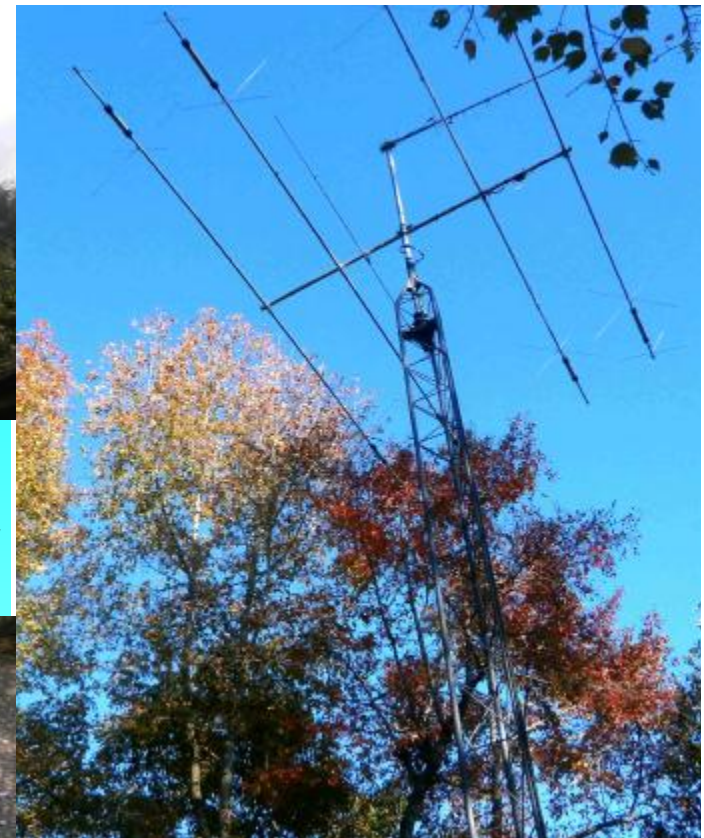
10 and 20 meters. He always wanted a tower and a better antenna. This year his wish came true. Rocky's friend and fellow ham, KG4GRB-Chris, had spare tower sections that made their way to Rocky's QTH.



Rocky agreed to pay him \$1,100 to install the tower and antennas. Rocky also bought the cement for the base and other parts necessary for the tower installation.



He picked up a new Cushcraft MA6B with elements enabling HF coverage, 6 meters through 20 meters. This antenna was placed 40' over the ground. To top off the array, Rocky modified his old Cushcraft 50-144-440 MHz beam by removing the 6 meter portion and installing the remaining 144-440 elements at 45' over the ground. Additional wire dipoles are planned to enable him to operate on 40 and 160 meters.



Rocky is well pleased with the new antenna installation and has easily worked Botswana, Vanuatu, the North Cook Islands, Cameroon, Yemen, the Marquesas Islands and good friends on the Chew, to name a few.



Chad-KB1HPV's Guitar Proficiency

In 2023 I wrote a few notes about Chad building and learning to play guitars. Between Chad and Rocky-K4EZY, great QSOs were held on the Chew about building and playing them. Rocky stumbled on this humorous Chord Chart that many of us who had fun learning to tame the beast, will appreciate.



Beginnings: A young ham's story, from one of our Chew founders WA2ISC-Kevin...

I had just gotten my General Class license, after struggling with getting the code to 13 WPM. As my voice had not yet changed, I had a hard time working my AM station, because many old timers had no interest in talking to a young "lid, kid, or space cadet." I wanted to get my CW speed up.

During September of 1960, one of the local hams K2VKP (now a sk), had a Hy-Gain vertical for sale, and I made the purchase. Here it is, installed on my roof. I was freshman in high school at the time, with the summer months all to myself. Since my station had only 90 watts input (about 45 watts out) I didn't have much of a signal. CW seemed to be my only real option.



I would set my alarm clock for 2:00 AM, and try my luck on 40. My first day (morning?) I heard some guys ripping along at about 40 WPM signing/MM. I broke in with my call at about 15 WPM (my limit at the time), and one of the guys came back to me at 15 WPM.

I thanked him, and told him of my age (13) and my new antenna. He welcomed me, and said he was a radio operator on a freighter headed for Madagascar. His buddy worked for the same company, was headed for India. They talked with each other each night after work. He invited me to stop by any night at this time. I met up with him and his buddy about 3 or 4 times per week all summer, 1961. They slowed down to my speed (15 WPM) each night. However, as we chatted, they started to speed up as we got close to shutting down for the night. By the end of the summer, I was up to about 45 WPM! That is why, to this day, I continue to be a CW enthusiast. In the ensuing years, my voice changed, SSB came along, and I started operating both modes. I'm no longer a 45 WPM operator, having settled for about 30, but I will always remember these two guys (their calls are lost to my memory) and how they taught me that CW was a language of communications!



A note from your editor ...

Our monthly newsletter "THE CHEW", contains information about the activities and participants in the 7.272 Ragchew Net. We rely on contributions of stories and pictures from the members to keep all of us up to date, impart information we can all use and, of course, to raise a smile and a chuckle or two. If you find a new "Taz" photo that can be used for future certificates and QSLs, that too is



greatly appreciated. Without you, there is no Chew! Please, e-mail your stories, tech info and photos to Loby at wa2axz@arrl.net
Many Thanks!

<< Our Mascot, The TAZ!



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Volunteers Wanted!

If you would like to be one of our Net Control Stations on a regular schedule or as an occasional fill-in, please contact our net scheduler, Walt-KB3LGO.

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