

The Eastern Iowa Dixer

The Official Newsletter of the
Eastern Iowa DX Association



An affiliated club of the American Radio Relay League

APRIL 1998

Club Officers: President: Terry Cellman W0AWL Vice President: Wade Walstrom W0EJ wade@inav.net Secretary/Treasurer: Frank Apple W0GWK fpapple@inav.net	Repeater: W0NX/R 144.59/145.19 PacketCluster: WB8ZRL: 147.51, 144.91, 223.40, CRNETROM
Repeater Committee: Al Groff K0VM al@ia.net Joe Finkstein W0MJN josephf@inav.net	Membership Committee: Jim Spencer W0SR w0sr@aol.com Dale Repp W0IZ

MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of the EIDX will be April 3, 1998, in room 219C of Linn Hall on the Kirkwood Community College campus. Doors open at 7:00 PM for preliminary "eyeball" QSOs with the formal meeting starting at 7:30 PM.

The program will be a presentation by Dr. Glenn Johnson, W0GJ, on the VK0IR Dxpedition. As the local Cedar Rapids television commercial states, "Make no mistake, this is a big one!" Glenn promises an excellent program with slides and various show and tells. Don't miss it!

Short Notes

from W0EJ

This may seem like preaching to the choir, but recall that dues are due at the Fall/September meeting and another notice is given in the newsletter for the January meeting for those who missed the September meeting announcement. This newsletter is being sent only to those members who have paid their dues for the year, i.e. if received your own newsletter, you are in good shape. However, at the time this issue of the newsletter is being prepared, there are nine (9) people who have been dropped from the rolls for non-payment of dues. So, since you obviously got your newsletter, you might talk up this next meeting to other members because a) it promises to be an outstanding one;

(**Short Notes** con't) and b) you might just bump into one of those 9 mentioned above and will have done him (all 9 are male, by the way) a big favor by reminding him of the meeting where, if he attends, he will have an opportunity to give Frank, WØGWK, our award winning Miser of the Year, his overdue dues.

In the last newsletter I included a tower safety article I had prepared at the last minute. It was one of those that seemed to roll off the fingertips. Thanks to Section Manager Jim Lasely, NØJL, for the kind critique on the article in a recent Iowa Section News. Unfortunately, I have nothing like that to offer in this issue.

I still promise an article on the new RF radiation regulations from the FCC. With tax time approaching and other commitments, I have not been able to prepare that one yet. The ARRL has a brand new publication on the subject, RF EXPOSURE and YOU, by Ed Hare, W1RFI, is now available for \$15.00. I plan to pick one of these books. As I understand the new regulation, the immediate pinch comes if you submit a new 610, like for a vanity call. The rest of us have some more time before we can say we are in compliance.

I recently picked up a new "job" as a result of the Linn County tower ordinance activity several of us were involved in a few years ago. Effective the first of this year I am serving a five year term as a member of the Linn County Planning and Zoning Commission. This was a body we had dealt with in the tower committee and on individual tower approval cases. When I informed our Midwest Director, Lew Gordon, K4VX, of this turn of events his comments were something about a fox in the hen house. As of this writing I have attended two meetings of this commission, all of which have been interesting. The first one lasted until 1:20 AM! It should be noted that

with the passage of the county tower ordinance I do not expect to see any ham tower issues come to this group. At the second meeting a conditional use application for a cellular tower was acted upon. The application went very smoothly. I look at this appointment as another indication that the amateur radio community in Linn County made a very favorable impression with Supervisors and staff during the tower committee work.

A number of DXpeditions have already occurred this year with more to come. The 9MØC operation seems to have been very successful. Many of the local faithful were successful in working these operations.

The Dayton Hamvention is coming up in mid-May and there are a number of changes in the Hamvention this year to note. First, there will be forums on Friday morning this year and all forums and the forums part of the Hamvention will start at 8:00 AM on all three days. Second, and of major interest to this group, the DX and Contest forums have moved to the Meadowbrook School (The high school within walking distance of Hara Arena). Supposedly, this change was made to offer a bigger facility for these forums. It will be interesting to see how this new arrangement works out.

My son, Steve, and I attended the storm spotting class presented by the National Weather Service that NØLNO mentioned at the last meeting. I had attended one of these several years ago in Toledo at the invitation of then WBØZKG and learned a lot. The program presented here was also excellent with lots of pictures and videos. I picked up some new information and had much older information refreshed. Like CPR training, it is something you hope you are never called upon to use, but is training I am glad to have taken in case it is necessary. I have to admit, though, that my motives in being a storm watcher have

(**Short Notes** con't) been, for the most part, selfish. The information on the storm watch net (CVARC repeater - 146.745) during severe local weather gets fed to the National Weather Service which eventually sends an alarm on my weather radio. Living outside Cedar Rapids we rely on these weather radio alarms for notice of severe weather. I figured out several years ago that by participating in the storm watch net I can get this information several minutes sooner

than waiting for the weather radio alarm to go off.

I want to thank Glenn, W0GJ, for offering to do the program at this meeting. I had worked Glenn in the November Phone Sweepstakes and he made the offer at that time. I am glad it will work. Thanks, again, Glenn!

73, Wade

Notes from the President ~

Greetings:

I hope by the time our meeting date rolls around, the weather has improved, and a few of us have been up our towers for some early season antenna work.

The program for this meeting sounds exciting. We saw the excellent video on the Heard Island Dxpediton. This time we will get the inside story complete with slides.

There are a couple of important items of business for us to consider at this meeting.

We need to finalize the date for our summer picnic. Heinz has volunteered his farm for the outing. Sounds like he has some new and exciting things for us to gawk at. We also need to appoint an election committee. Remember if you are there and volunteer for this committee chances are you will not be elected for the next year.

Finally, and this just might be the final time, one of our members will be rewarded forwell let's just say its impressive. You should be there to help honor this deserving ham. It might be you!

de W0AWL

ORIGIN OF THE TERM "SLIM"

It seems difficult to trace the exact origin.

The American Heritage Dictionary says "slim" is derived from Dutch (bad, sly) and Old Dutch (slimp, slim meaning bad, crooked). It's been suggested that the term was first used for a ham pirate in the '40s. It may mean that there is a SLIM chance of getting a QSL!

However, it seems really to have come into common usage in the late Sixties. An op calling himself Slim took to the bands from an imaginary volcanic outcrop between Canada, Greenland and Iceland in 1968, signing 8X8AA. Hugh "Cass" Cassidy WA6AUD, then the editor of the West Coast DX Bulletin, started calling all pirates "Slims" and this seems to have caught the popular imagination.

73, AI, GM4BAP (via the Internet)

Minutes of the 10 January 1998 Meeting

The Winter meeting of the EIDXA was held on the Kirkwood Campus.

The meeting began with introductions. This was followed by the approval of the minutes as published for the fall meeting.

A short show and tell followed with members giving brief explanations of their radios, cards, literature, tuners, computers, and lightning suppressers.

Al K0VM gave the repeater report saying that the heater was in place and set for 40 degrees. The repeater is still running low power, 30 to 35 watts.

Glen, K0JGH, is still looking for QSL card orders.

Tom, WB8ZRL, gave the packetcluster report. He reported that there were three new issues.

1. Only subscribers would be able to access the GO list.
2. During the CQWW contest in OCT. there was a 2 hr backlog in sending spots to Des Moines. Tom is trying to bring up another link to relieve the congestion that direction.
3. About a week ago Tom noted that the 147.51 radio was putting out only 6 watts instead of the expected 45 watts.

Terry, W0AWL, is still looking for shirt orders. Either shirts, jackets, polos etc.

It was brought up again that there were two DXpeditions that were requesting support. A Spratly Is. DXpedition in Feb. '98 and a Campbell Is. DXpedition in Jan. '99. It was

voted to pass the hat for the Spratly effort. We collected \$70 to send them.

Frank, W0GWK, was presented with the Miser Of The Year award for his speech on fiscal responsibility at the last meeting.

It was decided that the next meeting would be on 3 April, 1998.

It was brought up that there was an estate sale for the W9PXS.

Al, K0AL, has 1998 ARRL handbooks for \$25.

Bill N0LNO again mentioned a meeting and tour of the National Weather Service at Mt. Joy Sat Jan 31, 1998. The tour starts at 1:30. On Sat Feb 28, 1998 there will be a Storm Watch Training class in the Auditorium at St. Luke's Hospital. Registration is at 1:30. The class runs from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

The meeting was then adjourned. After a brief intermission the president reopened the meeting to discuss some open items.

It was voted to allot up to \$100 to repair the repeater.

The club also voted to accept Tom, K0YA, as an associate member.

Again the meeting was then adjourned.

Jim, W0SR, then presented an excellent program on the DXCC - Past, Present and Future.

Respectfully submitted

Frank Apple W0GWK

Secretary/Treasurer

Think About This:

If the #2 pencil is the most popular, why is it still #2?

If all those psychics know the winning lottery numbers, why are they all still working?

IRIS COLVIN, W6QL, SK

The other half of the world-famous Colvin DXpedition team, Iris Colvin, W6QL, of Richmond, California, died February 18 at her home. She was 83.

Iris Colvin was first licensed in 1945. She and her late husband, Lloyd Colvin, W6KG, traveled the world between the 1960s and the early 1990s, operating from more than 100 DXCC countries. Lloyd Colvin died in 1993. The couple had been married for 55 years. The Colvins racked up more than a million contacts over the years and amassed one of the largest QSL collections in the world—more than a half million cards at last count. The collection is said to have occupied an entire room in the Colvins' home. The ARRL Board of Directors recognized the Colvins' contributions to international goodwill by naming them

Amateur Radio Ambassadors of the Decade 1980-1990. The Colvin Award was established in 1994 from the proceeds of an endowment set up by Lloyd Colvin that named the ARRL as a beneficiary. The Award disburses grants to support ham radio projects that promote international goodwill in the field of DX. Among others, the Colvin Award has helped to fund the second World Radiosport Team Championship in 1996 and the VK0IR Heard Island DXpedition in 1997.

Iris Colvin was a Charter Life Member of the ARRL and a life member and past president of the Northern California DX Club. She also was on the DXCC Honor Roll and was inducted into the CQ DX Hall of Fame in 1976. (From The ARRL Letter, Vol. 17, No. 9)

FCC FORMS CONTRACTOR NOW HAS NEW FORM 610

With just days to spare, the new FCC Form 610 now is available from the FCC's forms contractor. The FCC has ordered the destruction of all previous versions of the form. As of January 1, 1998, the FCC will accept only the new Form 610 for all filings. Forms 610A and 610B also have been amended. The major change in the new Form 610 is a certification that says the applicant has read and will comply with the new RF radiation safety rules that begin phasing in on January 1, 1998.

The FCC Forms Distribution Center accepts orders at 800-418-3676.

That's not to say the new Form 610 simply has not been available until now. ARRL VEC Manager Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, says the ARRL/VEC sent out 43,000 copies of the revised 610 last week to VE teams across

the country. The ARRL had copies printed earlier this fall and has been supplying the new forms to those who have requested them for the past six weeks. In addition, the ARRL now supplies a new handout, Additional Information for Amateurs Completing the New FCC Form 610, that contains a condensed version of how to comply with the new RF safety regulations.

The new Forms 610 also have been available from the FCC's Web site at <http://www.fcc.gov/formpage.html>, at <ftp://ftp.fcc.gov/pub/Forms>, or by fax at 202-418-0177 (request index).

To order a new Form 610 from the ARRL, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to ARRL/VEC, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. Include one unit of first-class postage for each Form you order.

ORIGIN OF THE TERM "HAM"?

There have been many explanations for the origins of the term "ham". We know for certain it originated in the United States (many British 'amateurs' still regard ham as somewhat derogatory) before WW1. The two most plausible and verifiable stories can, in fact, be traced to the same year. In the early days of radio before the Great War, there was no formal licensing or band plans. Amateurs and commercial stations operated wherever they liked, transmitters were wideband and receivers had little selectivity. QRM was already a problem. In 1911, various commercial interests brought legislation before the US Congress to regulate wireless and ban amateur radio. Ranged against them, the many small clubs formed by amateur experimenters to exchange information and share the heavy costs of building equipment. The most active station on the East Coast at that time was the Harvard club, which used the callsign 'HAM'. To complicate matters, the 'HAM' call didn't actually stand for 'Harvard AMateur', but for the initials of the club's three founders! One of its leading lights prepared an extensive thesis on the pending legislation that was submitted to the Congressional committee. He also testified before the committee about the HAM station and about how, if the wireless

regulation bill were passed, the restrictions would shut the station down. The HAM club also prevailed upon its local congressman to represent its position, which he did, at great length and eloquence, on the floor of the House. His representation of the greedy commercial companies ganging up on "the little HAM station" received considerable nationwide coverage in the press for several months. Amateur radio was not banned, and was formalized and protected in the 1912 Communications Act. For public and press alike, the HAM station became synonymous with amateur radio experimenters and the name passed into popular parlance. At the same time, however, as the Harvard HAM club was hitting the headlines, a best-selling magazine called Home Amateur Mechanic or HAM for short, featured regular extensive features on radio assembly and was responsible for introducing many Americans to the wonders of radio communication. There were HAM designs and HAM kits and many hobbyists described themselves as HAM enthusiasts. So which of these two is the real origin of the term ham? It seems both have a genuine claim but, as with all great legends, we'll never really know.

(From the Topband Reflector on the Internet.)

IMPORTANT DATA YOU CAN USE!

Here are some important conversion factors:

10**12 Microphones = 1 Megaphone
10**6 bicycles = 2 megacycles
500 millinaries = 1 seminary
2000 mockingbirds = two kilomockingbirds
10 cards = 1 decacards
1/2 lavatory = 1 demijohn
10**-6 fish = 1 microfiche
453.6 graham crackers = 1 pound cake
10**12 pins = 1 terrapin
10**21 picolos = 1 gigolo

10 rations = 1 decoration
100 rations = 1 C-ration
10 millipedes = 1 centipede
3 1/3 tridents = 1 decadent
5 holocausts = 1 Pentacost
10 monologues = 5 dialogues = 1 decalogue
2 monograms = 1 diagram
8 nickles = 2 paradigms
2 snake eyes = 1 paradise
2 wharves = 1 paradox

OHIO VOA ANTENNAS COME DOWN

Ham visitors to Ohio--perhaps on their way to the Dayton Hamvention--sometimes found it hard to keep their eyes on the highway when passing the Voice of America's Bethany Relay Station. The vast antenna farm off I-75 north of Cincinnati consisting of 14 rhombics and a huge Sterba curtain easily distracted most hams.

At one time among the most powerful short-wave stations in the world, the Bethany Relay Station was shut down a couple of years ago. Earlier this month, the towers supporting the majestic Sterba curtain and other wire arrays came crashing down--to make way for commercial and recreational development and a university campus on the 625-acre site. Among those on hand to watch the spectacle was Tom Rupp, W8TCR, a VOA engineer for 26 years who retired in 1993.

Work will continue to remove the other towers and structures. Most of the towers will be pulled from the ground with a crane. Forty towers, ranging from 90 to 150 feet

tall, will be salvaged. Crews will finish clearing the towers by February.

A report in the Cincinnati Enquirer quoted ham radio operator Joe Goforth, WB8NFJ, who lived less than a mile from the VOA site for two decades. "I used to talk to the engineers all the time," he told the paper, noting that VOA broadcasts sometimes interfered with his ham gear. "But I guess I'm a little disappointed to see it go," he added.

For a look at one of the Sterba curtain support towers coming down, see <http://www.palmtop.net/img/voa.jpg>. For more info on the Bethany Relay Station, visit the Jim Hawkins' (WA2WHV) Radio Room, <http://www.exit109.com/~jimh/voaohio.html>. -thanks to Mitch Hamm, N8XS, and Jim Hawkins, WA2WHV

(from The ARRL Letter, Vol 16, No 50)

SOUTHERN SUDAN, ST0, DELETED

The ARRL DXAC and Awards Committee have voted to delete Southern Sudan, ST0, from the DXCC list. That word this week from the ARRL Membership Services Committee.

While the status in Southern Sudan changed in 1983, QSOs made before January 1, 1995, will count for the deleted entity. There are two reasons for this. First, there have been accredited operations since 1983, thus raising a fairness issue. Second, the DXCC Desk has processed cards from those operations--many of them

onto paper records. The DXCC Desk says that, because each ST0 credit would have to be individually checked, it would be very costly and time-consuming to search and remove post-1983 ST0 QSOs from the records, and a complete and accurate job might not be possible.

The DXAC and Awards committees have agreed to make no change in the status of Fernando de Noronha, PY0F, and Kure Island, KH7K. (from The ARRL Letter, Vol 17, No 11)

FLASH--Temotu Islands--New One!

The South China Sea DX Team (SCSDXT) has extensively studied the new DXCC criteria which will become effective on 31 March, 1998. This research has led to the discovery of several potential new DXCC entities.

The Temotu Islands, located in the South Pacific, collectively form the easternmost province of the Solomon Islands, an independent country since 1978. Because Temotu is separated by more than 350 km from the rest of the Solomon Islands, it should easily qualify as a new DXCC entity. The SCSDXT has teamed with the Solomon Islands' IARU member organization, SIRS (Solomon Islands Radio Society), in organizing a full-scale DXpedition to Temotu, as well as preparing the application for new DXCC status.

The team for this operation includes members from four continents: H44GP, H44GR, JA5DQH, N4GN, N7NG, OH0XX, OH1RY, OH2BC, OH2BE, OH2BH, OH2TA, W6OSP and 9V1YC.

In recognition of its new status, the Solomon telecommunications authorities have agreed to assign the previously unused H40 prefix to Temotu for all future amateur operations. This first Temotu DXpedition has been issued the special call sign H40AA.

Visiting team members will begin arriving on 21 March and may be found on the air using their individual H44 call signs while making final preparations for the main event. These early operations—including all-band activity in the CQ WPX SSB Contest, 27-28 March—will count for DXCC credit as the Solomon Islands, under the current rules. The IOTA number is OC-100.

Think About This:

Before they invented drawing boards, what did they go back to?

At 2359Z on 31 March, the H40AA call sign will be debuted on the air, at which point QSOs will count for Temotu DXCC credit, presuming the application for new DXCC status is eventually approved. The H40AA operation will continue for approximately two weeks.

H40AA operating frequencies:

CW: 1824, 3504, 7004, 10104, 14024, 18074, 21024, 24894, 28024 and 50104 kHz

SSB: 1824, 3775, 7045, 14195, 18135, 21295, 24945, 28495 and 50104 kHz

RTTY: 14083 and 21083 kHz

QSLs for H44 "warm up" QSOs (for Solomon Islands DXCC credit) will be via the home call of the individual operators. The H40AA Temotu QSLs will be handled by OH2BN:

Jarmo J. Jaakola, OH2BN
Kiilletie 5C30
Helsinki 00710
FINLAND

SIRS has kindly requested that DXers NOT send any cards for these operations via the H4 QSL bureau. OH2BN will reply to H40AA requests via the OH bureau after the initial batch of direct requests are serviced.

The team would like to especially recognize the valuable support of Yaesu Musen Co. Ltd., Mikrolog Ltd., FinnFet Ltd., the Northern California DX Foundation and INDEXA.

See you on 160m! 73, Aki JA5DQH

(From W4ZV via Topband Reflector on the Internet)

ARRL INITIATES AUDIO NEWS SERVICE

We have installed telephone call-in service for ARRL Audio News and are testing the system. The telephone number is 860-594-0384. The report for January 9, 1998 (preceded by a countdown) now is available. The feed comprises the entire report with no breaks.

Comments are welcome to me at n1rl@arrl.org. We will be formally inaugurating this service on January 16, 1998.

ARRL Audio News will continue to be available in RealAudio from our Web site.

73, Rick Lindquist, N1RL

ARRL HQ

KENNAMER TAPPED AS MEMBERSHIP SERVICES MANAGER

Current ARRL DXCC Manager Bill Kennamer, K5FUV, will replace Chuck Hutchinson, K8CH, as Membership Services Manager at ARRL Headquarters, effective April 20. Hutchinson is stepping down and into a part-time role for medical reasons.

Hutchinson took over the Membership Services Department in January 1991 after more than nine years in the Technical Department—six of them as department manager. As Membership Services Manager, he completed the computerization of the DXCC records—with more than six million contacts now in the database—and improved DXCC service. Among his other accomplishments, he increased the use of computers to improve service and boost productivity, expanded W1AW's mission to improve bulletin dissemination, rejuvenated the A-1 Operator's Club, and made it easier for overseas amateurs to receive IARU Worked All Continents and DXCC certificates.

Fluent in Spanish, Hutchinson was credited by ARRL Executive Vice President

David Sumner, K1ZZ, with having contributed to a "greatly strengthened relationship" between the ARRL and the URE, the League's sister society in Spain. Sumner also said Hutchinson's efforts at personnel development resulted in "a strengthened staff."

Kennamer is a 1968 graduate of the University of Arkansas. He joined the HQ staff in June 1992 after a career in the insurance and securities industries and as manager of AGL Electronics in Dallas. He has extensive contesting and QSL Bureau experience in addition to DX.

Sumner expressed his regrets at Hutchinson's departure as MSD manager. "I will miss Chuck's valuable assistance and counsel in that role," he said. "I am pleased that he will be able to continue serving the League in a part-time, technical editorial position." (from The ARRL Letter, Vol 17, No 11)

Think About This:

How is it possible to have a civil war?

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Wade Walstrom W0EJ
7431 Macon Drive
Cedar Rapids, IA 52411



W0SR
Jim Spencer
3712 Tanager Dr. NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402