

The Eastern IowaDXer



April 2014

"Faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, able to leap tall towers in a single bound." (a crowd of EIDX members pointing towards the sky, deliver these lines): "Look, up in the sky!"

"It's a bird." "It's a plane". "It's NRØX!"

Yes, it's Jason-man! Welcome visitor from La Porte City with powers and abilities far beyond those of mortal hams. Who can change the course of sporadic E propagation, bend Rohn 25G with his bare hands, and who, disguised as Jason Joens, mild-mannered DX'er from a great eastern Iowa metropolitan DX club, fights a never-ending battle for truth, listening up 5, and Yaesu radio owners.



Eastern IowaDXer

An affiliated club of the American Radio Relay League

Annual April issue

April 2014

Official
Newsletter of the
Eastern Iowa DX
Association

NØDX

Established
1975

Our 39th year



Club Officers:

President:	Craig Fastenow	KØCF	Packet Cluster:	WB8ZRL
Vice President:	Jerry Rappel	WWØE	147.51, 144.91, WB8ZRL.no-ip.org:7300	
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	Joe Finkstein	WØMJN	144.59 / 145.19 (tone 192.8)	
Membership Committee:	Jim Spencer	WØSR		
	Tom Vavra	WB8ZRL		
	Nelson Moyer	KUØA		
Web Master Extraordinaire:	Jason L. Joens	NRØX		

Next EIDXA meeting:
Friday, April 18 at 7:30 PM.
Campus of Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids.
in the Amana Room in Iowa Hall.
Program: Craig Thompson, K9CT, "Top-Band DXing from Wake and Amsterdam".

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I hope you enjoy this newsletter. The views expressed in the EIDXA newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Eastern Iowa DX Association, or the editor. All newsletter contributions, comments and suggestions are welcome at WWØE@q.com.

Thanks in advance for your newsletter input.

~ WWØE ~

President's Propagation, Pronouncements & Pontification**EIDXA President *Craig Fastenow*, KØCF**

Welcome to the April 2014 edition of the Eastern Iowa Dixer!

I certainly hope that all of you have been on the air recently, because all I can say about the propagation conditions over the past few weeks is, “WOW!!!” I think conditions have been about as good as I have ever seen in my 55 years on the air. During daylight hours (and even well past dark!) ten meters has been wide open and twenty has provided good DX late into the night. There have been good openings to Southeast Asia on many bands. The great propagation has brought some rare DX out of hiding, resulting in really exciting operating opportunities. And the timing couldn't have been better for a number of DXpeditions including 9J2T, XZ1Z, 4S7DFG & 4S7FRG, VU4K, TX6G, and ZL7/OE2SNL. I am sure there were others that I have neglected to mention as well.

In one six day period of casual operating (using the DX cluster feature of DX4Win to spot new modes, new bands or even new band-mode combinations), I made 128 QSOs in 77 DX countries, including 20 new ones on 12M and 18 new ones on RTTY. Outside of a contest, I don't know when I have made that many contacts in such a short period of time. I even worked a new one (#318) on CW, 9V1YC. Then a couple of days ago, I worked XZ1Z for a new one on SSB, my 330th on that mode. Oh, happy day!

Simply great conditions!

The most recent issue of the National Contest Journal (NCJ) has an article by EIDX member Glenn Johnson, WØGJ, describing his move to Iowa and the building of his dream antenna farm. It's a great read! This was the magazine's cover story, with a nice color photo of Glenn and Craig Thompson, K9CT, right on the cover. Congratulations, Glenn!

The same issue of NCJ also features two more EIDX members (NRØX and NØYY) in an article about the problems in keeping PJ2T on the air. Jason Joens, NRØX, appears twice in photos. The first is quite spectacular – he is dangling from a rope in mid-air while freeing a line from a tribander! In the second, he is assembling a Bencher Skyhawk beam (safely on the ground!). Rick Heinrich, NØYY, appears in a group photo of the PJ2T CQ WW CW team on page 8, and is also given credit for building their new AC power console. Nice work, guys!

In addition to all that, the most recent issue of QEX has an article, again a cover story, by another local ham, ACØHB, Michael Dzado – unfortunately not a member of EIDX. Mike's article describes a remote control, high-isolation, eight channel antenna switch.

Finally, I can't sign off without mentioning *CQ* magazine. For those of you who are subscribers, you are no doubt aware that they are having problems. The good news is that they have apparently solved them (for now) and *CQ* will continue. It would be a real shame to lose *CQ*, since it is *the* prime contester's resource. They sponsor a lot of top-notch and very popular contests, and unlike *QST*, publish the results in the pages of the magazine. They also publish other communications magazines and those are apparently the source of the difficulties. *Popular Communications*, *CQ VHF* and *WorldRadio* will cease to exist as separate publications, and will instead be folded into the digital edition of *CQ* as "*CQ Plus*". *Popular Communications* serves the scanning community, which is in a state of decline, primarily because public service communications are increasingly becoming encrypted, making them unavailable to scanners. Some scanner manufacturers have gone out of business, notably the company that supplied Radio Shack with their store-branded scanners. This has all created an unhealthy environment for "*Pop'Com*", with simultaneously declining advertising revenue and subscribers. Let us hope they succeed in isolating *CQ* magazine from the problems with their other publications. I should note (happily) that I received the January 2014 issue of *CQ* in today's mail.

Our next meeting will be on **Friday, April 18th at 7:30 PM in the Amana Room in Iowa Hall on the Kirkwood Community College campus.** (The Amana Room is the same room that we used at our last meeting.) **Craig Thompson, K9CT, will present a program titled “Top-Band DXing from Wake and Amsterdam”.** This will be a great program. I, for one, will be very interested to learn more about 160M operation, having never made a single QSO on that band in my 55 years of ham radio!

I will send out an email reminder a few days before the meeting, with detailed instructions on finding the meeting room, complete with links to a couple of maps.

Hoping to see you all at the April meeting!

73 and good DX!

Craig, KØCF



Special thanks to all the club members who helped put W1AW/Ø on the air! Last count was 33,428 QSO's.

NØYY speaks for us all - Jason, Stand up ... TAKE A BOW!! You pulled it off! You took a rag tag bunch of midwestern ops and gave them an opportunity to look good. And you made it happen. Congrats to all the ops! You put forth a showing that will rank with the best. Be proud!!

“Now that's DX”



EIDXA Vice-President *Jerry Rappel, WWØE*
(Beginning with this issue - it's gluten free!).

Digging out.

Can I come out now - is it Spring yet? I don't know about you, but I'm happy April is here. I've had my fill of snow and ice for a few years. As the temperatures begin to warm, this old man's fancy turns to ... Dayton, baseball, BBQ, and 6 meters. Once again this newsletter is bursting at it's spline. Thanks to all who contributed.

Larry, KØIS invited me to attend a couple auctions with him a few weeks ago and we added to our All American - 5 radio collections, info and pictures on page 42.

So off we go.



Dayton Hamvention 2014
Makers... The Future of Ham Radio

May 16-18 2014

“Now that's DX”



mail box: Tom Lindgren, WØWP

Hi Jerry!

Another outstanding newsletter you have done. I can't say enough how good a job you are doing. Thanks so much.

ZS1AFS/ZT1T, my good friend Tom Morgan from Robertson South Africa came up with a challenging quiz for a newsletter in his native UK. He offered to pass it along to us for use in the EIDX newsletter. If you could use it next time, it is yours to publish. I told Tom that his name would be credited with the authorship. Again tu Jerry,

73, de Tom Lindgren, WØWP

Quiz for communication buffs & others

1. What is the correct name for the company known as EIMAC?
b) What are they famous for?
2. Bill Orr died in 2001. What is the I. in William I. Orr?
b) He is best known as W6SAI but what other 2 calls did he hold?
3. In amateur radio, what does OSCAR stand for?
b) Bill Orr was involved in the 1st OSCAR. When was it operational and for how long?
4. W3DZZ is best known for his work on multi-band antennas. What was his name?
b) On the air he was not know by his first name. What was his radio name?

5. For the computer enthusiasts, who invented the 555 timer? The 556 later superseded it.

b) What are his contributions to frequency stabilisation and amplification?

6. This could be a giveaway but when did the public first hear, “We have lock!”?

b) Who was the operational commander?

7. In which year did the population have to be evacuated from Tristan da Cunha?

b) Which amateur radio station kept the UK informed, and who was the operator?

8. How many ham radio prefixes are there?

b) Who holds the record for prefixes worked?

9. Despite the ‘Most Wanted list’, which dx entities are the two most rare?

b) Which country is the commonest, or as one ham cruelly remarked, the ‘least needed’?

10. One from the Southern Hemisphere to finish. Which ham radio station is in the most CQ zones? (Clue: It is in ITU Zone 74.)

b) For a bonus of 10 points can you say how many?

c) For another 10 bonus points, can you list them?

Bonus Question for US Hams

11. Usually questions are about what is, who is, where is. This one’s about who isn’t!

Q: Which major contributor to amateur radio is not included in the ARRL Handbook and ARRL Antenna Book?

Answers are where the editor puts them.

Answers:

1. The full title was Eitel-McCollogh. Probably best known for their valves, although they are probably manufactured in China, nowadays. Another bit of trivia is that Eitel was friendly with Bill Orr.

2. William ITTNER Orr was born 1919 and passed away 2001.

b) His first call was W2HCE and he held KH6ADR when he operated on Maui, Hawaii.

3. OSCAR stands for Orbiting Satellite Carrying Amateur Radio. The first OSCAR, launched in 1962, only weighed about 3 pounds and was the first privately owned satellite. It pre-dates the more famous TELSTAR by 9 months! Sadly, it orbited for only 3 weeks.

4. Chester L Buchanan's design for a multi-band antenna was a big step towards the common tribander of today.

b) As you can see from the above he had a middle name, Le Roy. On the air he was known as 'Roy'.

5. On 15 August 2013, Hans Camenzind passed away. He was not only a scientist but also an entrepreneur. This ubiquitous 555 chip was the foundation of many applications.

b) He is credited with the idea of using phase lock loop in design, and invented the first Class D amplifier. He held many patents.

6. There is some dispute about WHO said it, in July 1962, but the technician in Houston never got any credit.

It was overshadowed by the 'rehearsed' Small step for Man and a Large Step for Mankind! Conspiracy theorists attribute this to an adaptation of dialogue from a Tolkien book.

b) The operational commander of Apollo 13 was Neil A Armstrong.

7. The lava flow from the volcano on 10th October 1961 necessitated total evacuation of the island.

b) The now dismantled GB2SM was the sole contact in the UK with the nautical operation and the subsequent return of most of the people. The operator was a young Geoff Voller, G3JUL

8. Well, I'm not certain if anyone knows for sure. However, when I came on air with ZT1T (a unique prefix) I worked several operators who were high up on WPX contacts. I've worked 9A2AA a few times and he held the record of 6469 last year. So, I suppose there must be about 6500.

9. The 2 countries that are not on air, and will not be for the foreseeable future are North Korea P5 and Myanmar XY and XZ. Since writing this it's changed!

b) The most common entity for log entry is Italy.

10. KC4AAA is 'centrally placed'. This is the easy bit. I talk regularly to K1IDE (who used to be the link call operator in days gone by). According to the qsl card contacts qualify for seven CQ Zones! They are 12-13-29-30-32-38-39. No wonder it's very popular when operating.

11. William I Orr, W6SAI. I always use the Bill Orr Method for putting plugs onto coax. In the Antenna book, the step of removing a very short piece of the outer braid to ensure no short is not included.

I hope you enjoyed having a go. If requested If you want to submit it for your newsletter, minus question 11 (which was added later) please let me know.

Brgds from the valley of Wine & Roses – Tom, ZS1AFS, ZT1T, GØCAJ.

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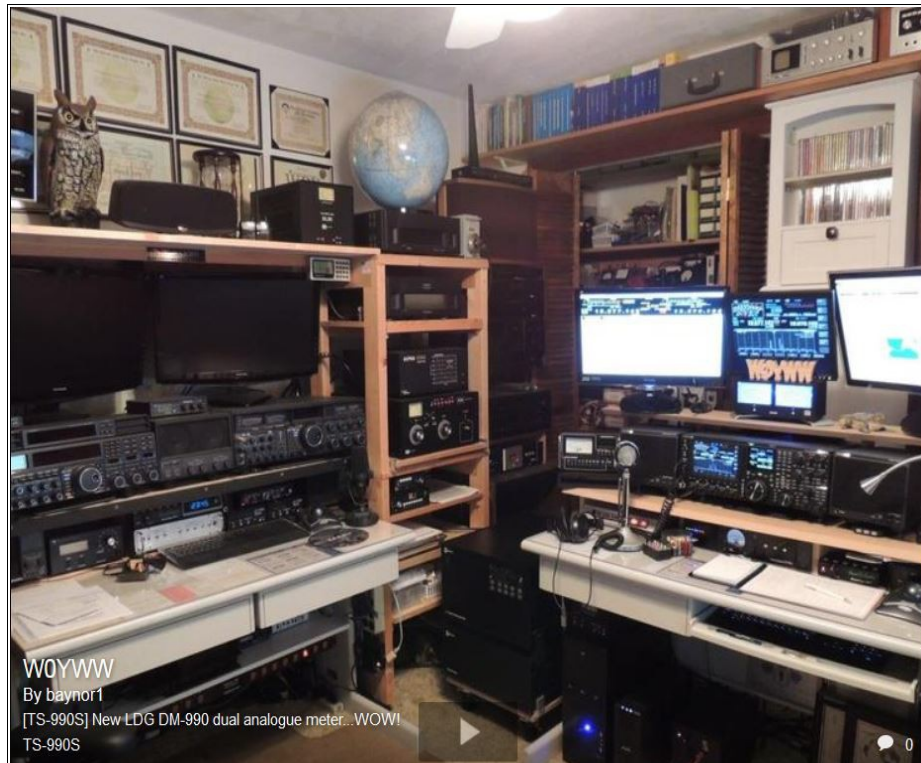
It's not everyday I talk to the President ...



Kay Craigie, N3KN, Wins Third Term As ARRL President:

The ARRL Board of Directors has elected League President Kay Craigie, N3KN, to a third two-year term. The Board met January 17 and 18 in the Hartford, Connecticut, area for its annual meeting, and election of officers was at the top of the business agenda. The League's 15th president, Craigie lives in Blacksburg, Virginia, and has been in office since 2010, succeeding Joel Harrison, W5ZN.

Dewey Treanor, WØYWW, formerly KØSVX, was a “founding member” of the EIDXA as I remember.



He has lived in Florida for many years where he still works for Collins. Dewey has always taken amateur radio seriously and this current photo shows his good taste. The black box on the floor is not a cooler! It is a Prometheus, a very well built solid-state HF power amplifier.

Jim Spencer, WØSR

ARRL Audio News

ARRL Audio News is a summary of the week's top news stories in the world of Amateur Radio, hosted by Sean Kutzko, KX9X. Compiled from the ARRL Letter, ARRL Audio News condenses the major Amateur Radio news highlights of the week into a fifteen-minute audio report. Enjoy ARRL Audio News anywhere: on your smart phone or tablet, your local repeater, or stream it on the go! Each edition of ARRL Audio News runs about 15 minutes. <http://www.arrl.org/arrl-audio-news>



In 1859, during a solar maximum about the same size as the one we're entering, according to NASA.

That storm has been dubbed the Carrington Event, after British astronomer Richard Carrington, who witnessed the megaf flare and was the first to realize the link between activity on the sun and geomagnetic disturbances on Earth.

During the Carrington Event, northern lights were reported as far south as Cuba and Honolulu, while southern lights were seen as far north as Santiago, Chile.

The flares were so powerful that "people in the northeastern U.S. could read newspaper print just from the light of the aurora,"

In addition, the geomagnetic disturbances were strong enough that U.S. telegraph operators reported sparks leaping from their equipment—some bad enough to set fires, said Ed Cliver, a space physicist in Bedford, Massachusetts reports. restructuring finances in an effort to turn the company around.

According to the *ARRL Letter*, ARRL-VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, says the number of new licensees in 2013 increased by 7 percent over 2012, and that the number of club licenses in the FCC database is also at an all-time high.

The International Amateur Radio Union's Region 1 Monitoring System is reporting the return of over-the-horizon radar signals originating from Russia on the 20, 15 and 10-meter bands. Similar signals disrupted the ham bands during the Cold War and at the time were dubbed the Russian "woodpecker" because of the rat-a-tat-tat sound the signals make. According to *Newsline*, the report also cites ongoing interference from Russian taxicab drivers using FM on the low end of 10 meters.

A few dozen special event stations will take to the air April 26, 0000 UTC to 2359 UTC, to commemorate **International Marconi Day (IMD)**. Among them will be GB4IMD, in Cornwall, England, OE14M, in Vienna, Austria, IY0IMD in Italy, VO1AA, on Signal Hill in St Johns, Newfoundland, VK2IMD in Australia, and WA1WCC on Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

We don't stop playing radio because we grow old. We grow old because we stop playing radio.

Now that's DX till next time, *Jerry*, WWØE

Now back to my radio...

ALL THOSE YEARS AGO:

Craig Fastenow, KØCF



Hi Jerry,

I believe it was suggested that EIDX members send you old photographs showing our first or early ham stations. Here is one for your consideration. It is of me at my station around 1965 in Huntington, WV. I was WN8OMF (Novice class) at that time awaiting my General class license which came shortly after this picture was taken.



The receiver on the far right was a National NC-240D. It was specified to have less than 1 microvolt sensitivity and weighed 60 pounds. The transmitter on the far left was a Heathkit DX-35 crystal controlled.

The box in the middle was an RME VHF-152 converter that covered 6 and 2 meters.

The transceiver on top of the DX-35 was a 6 meter Gonset Communicator IV issued by the local Civil Defense (CD) to area hams for emergency preparedness (couldn't use it until my General Class license came in the mail). The CW key was a Vibroplex "Bug" that I still have. I used a straight key for most of my Novice year but started learning to use the Bug sometime before this picture was taken.

Best 73, Joe – K8OM

Hi Jerry

Hope the picture didn't cause any equipment failure!!!!

Terry Cellman. WØAWL



KØGT, Gary Toomsen




Here is WA9YZN, Champaign, IL, (now NYØV) in 1968 or 1969 at 16 or 17 yrs old. Im running an HW100 to a 2 element triband quad up 40'.



WAØWCR with his brother WAØYMU in 1968.





KARIN'S KOLUMN

Here we are again with a few lines to relay the ladies' angle in ham radio.

The XYLs and YLs who spend club meeting time in their own little group enjoy themselves as much as the rest of us.

Jack had quite a turnout for his last novice class. There were about 50 in attendance, and 6 of the lucky grads were gals. Let's hope they join us in DMRAA activities. Two of these are XYLs of ambitious hams and knew what they were

getting into. The others had no previous connections with radio and had to start from scratch like I did.

We're glad that PRF brought his girl friend, Ann, to our last club meeting and dinner. She should make a fine ham. Wonder if we can talk her into it.

By the way, if any of you have any news on YL-XYL activities, drop me a postal card and give me all the details. The address is:

Karin Sue Karlson
1012 East 8th Street
Des Moines 16, Iowa

Your help and interest in the column will be greatly appreciated.

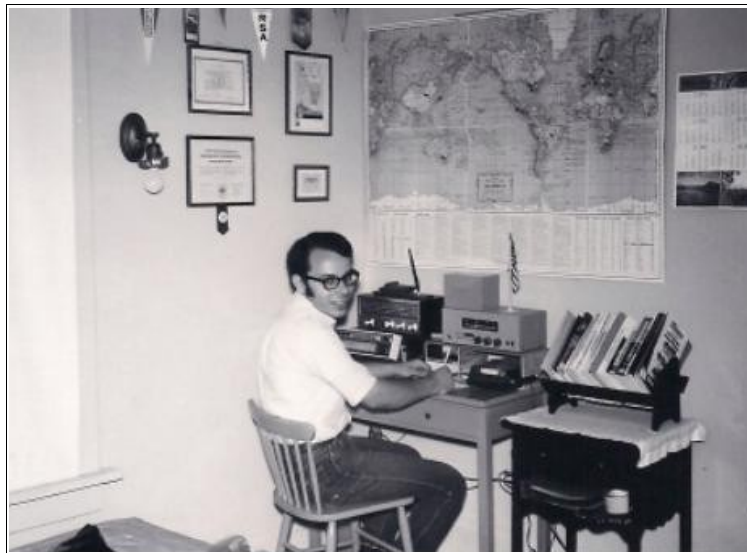
73's, Karin, KØEGQ



This is my first shack in 1956, taken at my home in Des Moines shortly after I met Heinz. Karin KØEGQ.

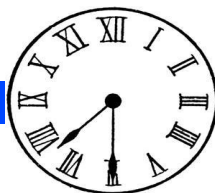


This one taken just before I got my novice license (KNØAFN) in 1955.
Sam Burrell, KØAFN.



Before I was a ham, I DX'ed the Shortwave bands in 1972. On the left sets my Midland 4 band radio. Next to that my analog Realistic Police monitor. (I was registered DX monitor station WDXØJKR). WWØE.

Thanks for all the pictures everyone.



Minutes

Secretary/Treasurer *Richard Haendal*, W3ACO

Minutes of the EIDX meeting Jan 17, 2014

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by our President Craig, KØCF.

34 hams answered the CQ call.

Rich, W3ACO read minutes of the Nov 1, 2013 meeting and provided a treasurers report. Both reports were approved by the club.

Jason, NRØX discussed W1AW/Ø operation for the Iowa contingent beginning March 26. Period of operation will be for one week, 168 hours. Operators can sign up with Jason. Modes will be either CW or SSB. Operations can be from the NRØX station or your own station. Jason encourages others to notify their local clubs that they can participate as well. Contact Jason at jason@kd0mnd.com for more information.

Jason also reported on the status of whether we should change our web service provider. After review, he determined that after the introductory discounts, the yearly costs would be about the same. He suggested that we keep Iowa Solutions as the web service provider.

Jim, WØSR talked about the progress of the Tom Hise DX fund and how it should work. There was an earlier suggestion that the club turn over the DX funds to a non profit foundation. Jim brought up several issues. Jim found out that the foundation would distribute only the income and retain the principal. That means the fund would have only 200-300 dollars available each year at best to distribute. The foundation would distribute funds only to 501(c)3 charities. DX expeditions would be required to qualify as charities under Internal Revenue Service laws. There was no mechanism for distributing funds to international operations without spending thousands of dollars in fees.

The conclusion is that we will continue our effort by managing the funds

within EIDXA.

The Tom Hise funds are held in the clubs checking account. Rich, W3ACO, showed the modified financial spreadsheet to track separately the balance in the Tom Hise fund.

Craig, KØCF, presented proposed logos for the Tom Hise DX fund. One logo was selected with recommendations to remove the word "memorial". The revised logo will be presented our next meeting for club approval.

Tom, WB8ZRL provided an update of the by-law changes needed to accommodate management of the Tom Hise fund. Status : work in progress.

Jerry, WWØE, our Vice President requested that any and all members who have early pictures of themselves in their ham shacks to forward these pictures to him for inclusion in our next newsletter.

There was a discussion of upcoming Dxpedition to Tromelin. Tromelin is #10 on the DX most wanted list. Craig, KØCF put up our DX evaluation spreadsheet comparing Tromelin to HKØNA. Tromelin scored 115 points. Terry, WØAWL, made a motion to donate \$300 to this effort. The motion was approved by voice vote. Rich, W3ACO will make the transfer via his Paypal account.

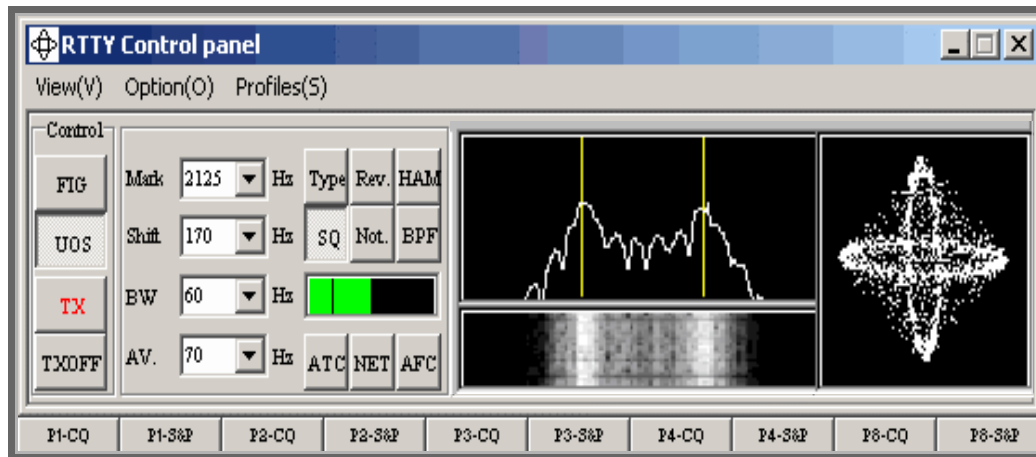
On Jan 18, W3ACO sent a contribution of 220 ? (\$305.78) to Tromelin. Note that Paypal now charges a 2.5% fee for donations requiring currency conversion.

Craig, KØCF asked for suggestions regarding future programs. He noted that K9CT may be available for presentation of one of the DXpeditions he recently was on, Midway, but he is now an op in the FT5ZM expedition. Craig will send e-mails as needed to find out K9CTs status.

Rick NØYY provided a program about the PJ2 station. Rick gave strategies for planning, setting goals and increasing operator skills using several software programs. He provided comparison of PJ2T to two other contest stations, and described ongoing improvements to the station. Thank you Rick, for a very interesting program.

Rich W3ACO

RTTY Corner - Jerry Rappel WWØE



The latest DX digi-doings

SO HOW PRINT ?



Lots of logs and lots of DX

- x WWØE: DS5USH, GI4SNA, ZD7VC, ZL1BYZ, 9A9A, 5IØDX, RN7W, CEØZ/UA4WHX, ZZ8ØPE, TX6G, LX7I, LY2FN, WWØWWW (contest club station), ZR9C, SZ1A, V5/DJ9KM, FP/W6HGF.
- x Sam Burrell, KØAFN: 3DAØET, 5R8IC, GIØBQX, TT8ES.
- x From Chatfield, MN: EP3SMH, ZS9MADIBA, TT8ES, 3B8CF, OSØS, J28NC, KG4SS, PYØ/PP1CZ, ZL1BYZ, ZZ8ØPB, W1AW/3, DS3HWS, CN8KD. Tom, NYØV.

- x Latest logs from Calmar Iowa - WØGJ: JA2FJP V5/DL9NDS EA5/YO9KXD VYØ/VE3VID YUØT, UX1BZ LZ1QV G2F 7L2MDI ZL4AS FG1PP, TY1TT, TO7CC, 9J2T, T88XG, S9TF, 5IØDX
- x From Radio Joe, K8OM: V5/DL9NDSTY1TT.
- x W3ACO: V5/DL9NDS, CE8/UA4WHX, LX8RTTY, 4L8A, TY1TT, FT5ZM, E21YDP, JY4CI, E2ØQVD, HKØ/UA4WHX, VU2NKS, ZL7/OE2SNL.
- x KØJGH Glen's RTTY log: FT5ZM, TO7CC, T88XG, 9J2T, LX1DA, RI1ANT, 4S7FRG.

Thanks for the RTTY logs guys.

DAYTON HAMVENTION NEWS (Dayton RTTY Contest Dinner). Fred, WW4LL, reports - I am pleased to announce the 2014 Dayton RTTY Contest Dinner on Thursday, May 15, 2014, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Dayton, Ohio.

EIDXA NEWS

NH9/N7XR - Wake Island (Also, WH9/W1AW - ARRL Centennial). Bob states, "Sometime during 2014, I'll operate from Wake Island on all bands 160 through 6m. Operation will include Phone, CW and RTTY. The dates are currently unknown because of scheduling; however, the trip will average approximately 3 weeks in duration. During the trip, the call WH9/W1AW will be used to commemorate the 100th year of the ARRL. WH9/W1AW will be used for only 1 week on the trip. Information will be posted at the ARRL website."

NORTH KOREA ---> Rick, N6VVA has posted Info Update #3 to the "P5 CW Only & IOTA AS-197 Project" [425DXN 1141]. "As behind-the-scenes efforts for P5 license approval by my NGO contact continue along with 5 competing groups in the quest", he says, "I have made a final decision about implementing a 'Blacklist' should P5/K6VVA become a reality at some point in time". Read the complete release at <http://www.k6vva.com/p5/p5infoupdates.html>, and the "Blacklist Clarification" at <http://www.k6vva.com/dnq2>.

The VK9MT Mellish Reef DXpedition is scheduled to arrive on March 28th and be active between March 29th - April 9th. The VK9MT Web page is: <http://www.vk9mt.com>

Member's Spotlight**KNØGT****GARY TOOMSEN**

I first learned about ham radio when my cousin and some of my classmates got interested in getting licensed. I became KNØUPV in the spring of 1959. My first rig was a Heathkit AR-3 receiver and a surplus Navy shipboard Collins TCS-5 transmitter. My first home brew project was a power supply for the TCS-5. An old TV yielded most of the needed parts. The AR-3 drifted so bad that it was necessary to tune to find the signal back of the station being worked. When I passed my conditional test in 1960, I got a SX-99 and that was an improvement, but it wasn't until I moved up to a Drake 1-A that I could hear signals above 40m. I had been operating AM with the TCS-5, but was interested in SSB. My next transmitter was a Central Electronics 20-A. It was 20 watts pep, so it would need help. I home brewed an amp using 4 6AG7's in grounded grid with 1000 volts on the plates. That would blister the paint off the outer metal tube covers. The old joke was to invert the amp in a pan of water for cooling. Keep in mind I was a high school student at this time with a paper route as my income source to fund my hobby. During the summer there were occasional farm jobs and a couple of months work at a local lumber yard.



Transition from Kenwood to Icom

My operation was primarily on 80m. Mostly working for WAS, with one two VEs. I thought I arrived in Feb. of 1960, when I worked KH6DHI on 80m with about 100 watts. SSB was not totally accepted early on. I was on 160m one night with my classmate, KØULN. We were doing our Algebra assignment. He was using a Heathkit DX-100B on AM. I left for a bathroom break and when I returned, he was in QSO with a 5. I broke in to let him know I had returned. The 5 was astonished to hear SSB on 160m, as that was pretty much the last hold out for AM. The 20-A was about the only transmitter of the time useable on 160m SSB.

Growing up in the small town of Dumont, Iowa, I did not have a very large range of role models for reference in a career choice. I had sort of settled early on to become a carpenter. When I graduated from high school, there didn't seem to be anyone willing to take on an apprentice that was draft age. I had been taking a home study course in electronics, but was only about half way done. This was giving me insight to another career field. At 18 and not yet educated, I enlisted in the Air Force. With the "promise" from the recruiter of electronics school, I saw a way to fulfill my military obligation and advance my training. Well, I didn't pass the induction physical. Now that I was classified 4F, I had a new plan. I started completing a lesson a day and by Christmas I had completed the course. I knew some hams that were test technicians at Collins Radio. They helped me get in to be interviewed. After a second visit, I was given the test and passed. At 18, I was probably one of the youngest technicians there. That was 1962.

Those first years away from home, I expanded my horizons. I became interested in drag racing and Corvettes. Then came girls and the next thing I know, I'm married and starting a family. After a couple of starter homes, I moved to a country place with 4 acres. Here I could have my first tower and beam. It was a Mosely CL-33 at 40 feet. When an ice storm took it down, the insurance company came to the rescue with 55 feet of Rohn 25 and a new CL-33. My rig was a Heathkit HW101A. I had a 75S-1 for split and an SB-200 for power. About this time I became acquainted with some hams at work that had become interested in contesting. I got sucked in and got more interested in the DXCC program.

Soon I became aware of the Eastern Iowa DX Association. As a new member I got in a little deeper and tried to compete. My skills never did quite match up, but I was having fun.

At work, I was getting bored with the repetitive production testing process. After 15 1/2 years, I left then Rockwell and went into the motel business. I moved my family to Mason City, Iowa and operated the Maple Crest Motel and mobile home park in 1977. I had passed the extra class test just before and became eligible to apply for a two letter call. KØGT had never been issued, so it was a natural choice. I put up a 4 element quad at 65 feet at this QTH and felt like I went to a new level. I bought a Kenwood 820-S and SB-220. With free moments during the day my DXCC totals started to climb. One night when W7PHO had taken a list of ten calls for JT1AN, he started down the list. The first three or four were not able to copy. Bill asked if anyone on the list could hear JT1AN. No one responded. Then Bill asked if anyone on frequency could copy. I said I thought I could. Bill said "call him". That night Bill and I were the only ones to work JT1AN. Bill was the QSL manager. That quad worked well except when ice coated. It would reverse direction. Very strange.

It only took about 2 1/2 years to know we did not belong in the motel business. I went to work for the Motorola shop in Mason City and bought a house on a city lot, 40 feet wide. I put up 85 feet of Rohn 25 with stacked mono-banders for 10, 15, and 20m. Talk about steep guy angles and overloading. We only lived there 1 year, when W0SR told me about an opportunity to come back to Rockwell. My wife, being a Cedar Rapids girl, helped me make my decision. We rented a home in Marion for a year and saw limited operation. I had a TH-3 on a large TV tripod on the roof. I tried the 204BA but it was too much.

Our next home was in Hiawatha. I put my new KT-34XA up at 85 feet and shunt fed the tower for 160m. Four years of TVI complaints, I decided it was back to the country for me.

1986 we moved to our present home on Tower Dr. I have an acre and a half, which works out to good minimum. I have a 90 foot Rohn 25 tower with the KT-36XA, inverted V for 60m and a vertical ground plane for 80m cw. Next to the house is 100 feet of Rohn 25 with a Mosely 2 element 40m with a Cushcraft WARC 3 element yagi interlaced on the same boom. It has the 30m extensions on the driven element as a rotary dipole. Also inverted Vs for 80m and 160m. Before the trees grew to be such a space problem, I had a 3 element wire beam on 80m mounted between the towers. I stretched a length of Phylistran between the towers about 85 feet above ground to support the 3 wire inverted V elements. By using tuned stubs, that I remote switched from the shack, at the element center, I could switch directions. Typical front to back was about 20 db. There should be some gain also. It was fun listening to VK- ZL working Europe and hear both sides of the QSO by switching directions. In the time I have been in this QTH I have switched from Kenwood to Icom. I have used IC745, IC736, and IC756 ProII and now have a 756 ProIII. Until recently I have continued to use the trusty SB220. I even had a second SB220 that I converted for 6m only. I say recently because I sold both amps this past fall. It seems I was rarely turning them on. I guess there is less to chase. I have all the DXCC entities on phone. I have DXCC on CW, but am not inclined to chase the QSLs for end total. I have 5BDXCC and 5BWAZ, which I am probably most proud of. That didn't happen until after I retired and could devote the hours required to work the difficult parts of the world.

The next chapter and challenge is the decision to stay where I am and down size, or down size in another location. In any case I will be removing one tower and shortening the other with a fold-over section to reduce the necessity for climbing. It's been a great hobby and I have only scratched the surface of the many facets that exist to be explored. It opened a career field that that I would have never been exposed to otherwise. I have had the opportunity to meet many wonderful and fascinating people. It has allowed me to travel both vicariously in QSO and on my job at Rockwell Collins.

The final 21 years before retirement, were spent in engineering. First as a lab tech on the ARC190 HF airborne system. After years of becoming familiar

with the whole system product line, I became the integrated product engineer for the entire system product line.

Every US Air Force plane that carries an HF system is equipped with the ARC190. Most have dual systems. Each airborne platform had specific mounting, cooling air, antenna types etc. That means that there were many types of mounts, antenna couplers and controls. In addition there were automatic communication processors and voice privacy speech scramblers included in some installs. There also was a commercial version of the system available for use on corporate type aircraft. It kept me busy. I am thankful for the retirement benefits that my career provides. It's been a good ride, and the ride goes on.

I guess I never outgrew the car thing. I have a 1995 Corvette coup for when the bands are quiet.

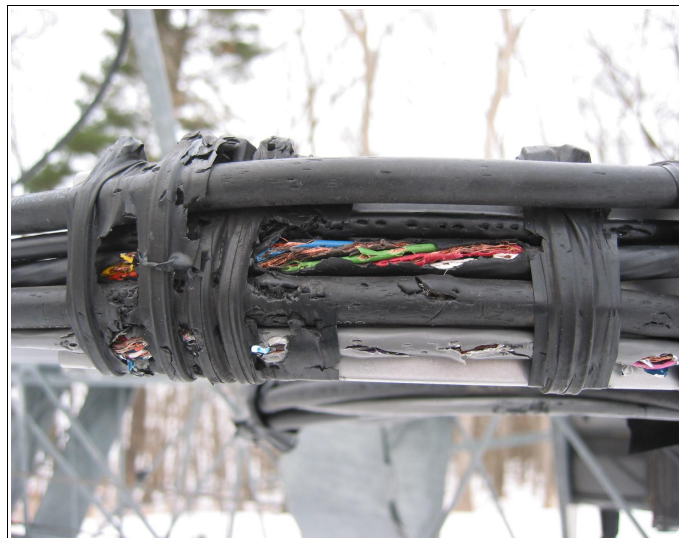
73,
Gary KØGT

See Gary's QSL/picture on page 41.

Woodpecker Damage Control by Tom, NYØV.

Shortly after Christmas I went into the shack to see how the bands were holding up. I turned on the FT2000 and then hit the ON button on the SteppIR. Immediately the SDA 100 controller had a “Driver Chip Error” showing up on the display. It was tuned to 40m, so I decided to hit the 30m button to see if the elements moved. The display changed, then blinked once and the entire controller shut itself off. I thought gadzooks, what can this be? I pulled the DB25 connector and began measuring the pin to pin resistance on the stepper motors as well as the pin-to-pin and pin-to-ground continuity. What I found disturbed me. While the motor winding readings looked good, I had 12 of 16 pins shorted to the case! My first thought was maybe the Array Solutions surge protectors had shorted.

Outside at the surge protectors I opened the box and bugged it out. No problems were found there. Next I disconnected the ground line on the controller cable at the box. Viola, the shorts went away. This meant the shorts where on the control line downstream towards the antenna. At least it wasn't on the cable that runs from the shack underground to the surge protectors at the base of the tower! That would have been a pain to pull a new cable through that pipe. I pulled the tower down. It didn't take long to figure out the problem. See the picture below.



Woodpecker damage to control line, rotor cable, and coax jackets near top of tower.

When I posted this picture to the Minnesota Wireless Association and the Radio Farm, NØMA guys I got several recommendations for remedying the situation. Two of these included shooting the SOB's and electrocuting them. In Minnesota woodpeckers are protected by the DNR. (No, I don't know why as there are 1000's of them!) Also, my XYL vetoed that solution. The electrocution idea would involve disconnecting the ground and running 500vdc down the cable. Not wanting HV on the cables, I decided I needed another solution set.

After wandering Fleet Farm and Menard's for a while, I decided to bring home a compressed 4' long tin duct conduit and 72 feet of sump pump flexible plastic drain tubing. I was fortunate enough to have warm 32 degree weather to repair the rotor cable and coax jackets. This was 56 degrees warmer than it had been three days earlier due to the Polar Vortex, so it seemed like T shirt weather! Once that was repaired, I ran a new control cable from the antenna down the other cables and bundled it together. Next I took the tubes and used tin snips to cut them axially so I could sheath the cable bundle. I ran the compressed tube over the top of the most damaged area and taped it together with electrical tape. From the antenna to the rotor bundle, I sheathed the rotor turn loop with the sump pump flex tubing. And then from the top of the tower down, I sheathed the entire cable bundle length with the sump pump tubing. See picture below:



Sheathing over repaired cable bundle. Red Green would be proud.

I am not finished as yet. When it gets a bit warmer, I plan to spray the cable with insecticide to kill the bugs the woodpeckers were finding. I had notice last summer that there were a lot of spiders around and on the antenna. The spiders especially like it where the black Scotch 33 tape is around the cabling. That forms little pockets of V's where the cables touch, perfect for spiders and other bugs to nest. I also plan to spray the sheathing with a mixture of the animal repellent, Ropel, and Cayenne Red Pepper! If that doesn't make them stay away, it may make their red heads a bit brighter!

I am putting off hanging CD's and shiny strips off the tower! But, if anyone in the Club has had success with other techniques for getting woodpeckers off your cable harnesses, shoot me an email!

Tom, NYØV

STAY TUNED!

Woodpecker Damage Follow-Up in the July newsletter.

Just a Simple Piece of Wire...

By Rick, NØYY

I have always been enamored by low band DX-ing. I fondly remember the days when a warm radio and the smell of dust on the tubes burning off and the hum and thump of the transmitter following the rhythm of the CW. I cut my teeth on 160M in Detroit back in the 1960s when I lived on a city lot 35X105 feet in dimension. I had an 80M dipole that was bent in so many ways to fit that I never thought I would work anyone.

Back then I was amazed working Arizona on 160. I contested with guys that had loaded mobile whips and 500W and celebrated when we worked a G or KV4. W1BB invested a lifetime to work DXCC on 160M.

Technology has matured and the quality of receivers, the availability of high performance low band capabilities, and the general availability of 160M in most amplifiers have all contributed to the changes we find today. But knowledge of propagation, getting up at all hours to work a DX station when they follow their sunrise, are still necessary to put those entities in the log.

But I digress... Operating on 160M requires 130 feet of wire or less if you choose to load that wire. There are different ways of loading that wire – coils, folds, top hats, etc. – but you need a way to couple that wire to your transmitter. One of the most common approaches is a classic Inverted L antenna. But what intimidates most individuals is the ground system that really defines how that wire will work. Yes you can labor and bury 130 radials and work that wire against that ground plane – but that is beyond realistic for most.

I took a minimalist approach. I did some research on raised radials. There has been some “research” done as well as modeling, but it becomes an emotional discussion as to whether or not raised radials “work” or are they a placebo that makes the wire radiator load, but that they do not support efficient operations.

So I have 3 raised radials under my 130 foot piece of wire. They are 10 feet above ground – why? – well I needed to drive a tractor under the wires!

Have I modeled my system? No – I did not want to be depressed when I found I was 200dB below a reference wet noodle. But does it work???

And to my embarrassment my receive antennas have never been installed. I have the rolls of wire in my barn gathering dust. My low band operations are limited by what my simple wire antenna can hear.

I had a recent experience that is somewhat the culmination of many years of learning, being challenged, and developing operating techniques. Enter the FT5ZM DX-pedition. From Cedar Rapids, Amsterdam Island is more than 11,000 miles away – half way around the world. The DX-pedition team is amazing in their skill and pile-up management. But that only tells half of the story.

When that DX-pedition launched I took a mental position that this was such a rare location that I would be satisfied to work them once, check the box in my Mixed DXCC and be happy. But unlike other DX-peditions they did not ask for limited contacts to ensure that everyone got at least one QSO. They were soliciting multi-band, multi-mode contacts. So with that in mind, I started checking them off – one at a time.

The first time I heard them was on 40M CW at 9am local where they were 20dB over S9 long path!!! Wow – should be easy. But the masses made the chase interesting. It raised my interest as how would they perform on the low bands. Tom, WB8ZRL worked them on 80M and indicated that they were quite strong. Hmmmm.....

I listened on 160M and could not hear them – didn't expect to as they were a world away. But I was intrigued – was it possible? What one minute would they pop out of the noise and be workable?

So there is an advantage to our Siberian weather – we become home bodies. On Saturday, February 1st I went downstairs at 2300 and started to listen. There was no precipitation static from falling snow – so it was unusually quiet. At 2315Z they were an honest S9 on 80M. Two calls and bang they were in the log! If they were that strong on 80M was there a chance I could hear them on 160M???

So I went to 160M. I heard nothing. I went to DX Summit and did a search on FT5ZM to see what their operating splits were likely to be. Went back to the radio and could hear the east coast calling. And then slowly – out of the noise they started to build. ESP at first. I heard the W1s working them, then the W4s. Then W8AV one of the PJ2T guys worked them. The signal continued to build – they worked more 8s and started with the 9s – and then – they built further – a good S3 signal. This is on 160M!

So I picked a spot in the pile and called. Three calls and at 2331Z they were in the log! 11,000 miles on 160M with a pile of wire hanging off the tower! Amazing. And the opening held long enough for Tom to work them about 15 minutes later.

So how could this happen? Was it an alignment of the stars? Well yes – there was an “enhanced” mode. This is real “grayline” communications. Sunrise at FT5ZM was 00001Z while our sunset was 2250Z. This was a real world example where the signals fit the enhanced track. Yes they had an overwater take off path. But we live in the traditional “black hole” of the Midwest.

For me, this is what brings a smile to my face in this hobby. A bit of understanding of how things work, mixed with some operating skill, and a concept of how to make a simple piece of wire radiate enough signal to reach half way around the world.

Amazing – just amazing...

Musings from the DX Farm – NØMA, by Bob Lee WØGXA

First, a big thanks to the small but loyal team of CW ops who put the Farm on the air this weekend for the ARRL DX CW contest. W7II, KØPE, and WØEA. Much fun was had by all.

When I left this afternoon, Bill W7II was still hunting mults and we were well over 1.8M points. (Update: final score 2.01M on 2000+ Qs)

Tip of the hat to Chris KØPE for driving 3 hours in snow from Maxwell on Saturday to run 40/80 through the night. I reminded him before I left for the evening that rates would be low but every multi was 3000 points. He put us close to 1M because it took me and TJ less than an hour to hit that milestone. I think he got us over 60 new mults.

TJ WØEA and Bill started things off Friday night. We had another op scheduled to work both nights but we waved him off. He offered to bring his own keyboard and wear a face mask, but we didn't want to risk getting the flu.

Saturday morning started before 7AM. I thought I'd finish up on 40m before the sun got too high but by then everyone was on 10m, so I went there.



Bob and TJ.

About 3 calls and we were off. I didn't come up for air for 3 hours. Big pileups. TJ had the same on 15m. Rates were consistently 130-150/hour. It was a repeat Sunday morning on 10m and 15m. Three hours of constant pileups. Hardly had time to take a drink from my water bottle. Mental note: Next contest I'll bring my Camelbak and just suck on the hose. No hands required. This was a far cry from the crappy conditions during WPX CW last year in May.

I was 9 hours operating yesterday and the middle 3 hour session was a blur. The third 3 hour session I worked toward AS/Pac on 15m. I started a bit soon as rates were low but after 45 min it started to open pretty good and rates were over 100. My compliments to the Japanese. They're such polite operators. I had a few Qs off the back of the beam into SA but there didn't seem to be much activity.

By the time 5PM came, I was falling asleep while running. It's been said you can copy code while sleepy but you'd have difficulty answering a question asked of you. I think I was there. By 6PM I was upstairs eating some of Bill's chili (quite tasty) as Chris arrived and I departed.

I was only 6 hours operating today. Second 3 hour session was choppy. I still ache from my surgery and had trouble sitting still. I had good rates on 20m as 10m was drying up by 11:30. Towards the end I thought it more productive to hunt multisis on 10m. There was quite a bit of activity from SA so there were many to be had.

Random thoughts:

What is it with QRPers in a contest? Rates sure drop trying to pull a 2W (yes TWO watt) signal out of the noise just to give some dweeb a thrill. I was heard yelling once Damn QRPers. Maybe more than once.

The Italians didn't disappoint. I've never seen such crappy operators. I did NOT work them just to get them out of the way as that sets a bad example. I stuck with the station I was trying to work until I had his call and exchange down. I was heard yelling once Damn Italians. Maybe more than once. Incidentally, I worked on Italian QRP operator (500W).

I spent a fair amount of time with our very own NØYY to put together a contest strategy/band plan and it worked. Times for openings varied, but overall it was helpful.

I really enjoy the K3 receiver. I can't stand to look at the radio, but it sure puts out.

Bob Lee, WØGXA
"CW forever"

K3 - Like it. Don't love it. Bob Lee WØGXA

I'm shopping for a new HF rig, so I took the opportunity to borrow a K3 from the Collins ARC club station for use during the CQ WW CW contest and to chase some DX. I've also used K3's at another station during contests. As the title says, I like it but I don't love it.



First, a few points to keep in mind. I'm comparing the performance against my Kenwood TS-50S. Obviously significant improvements have been made in receiver performance in the past 20 years. I only operate CW, so can't comment on SSB operation. I focused on the basic features of the radio, so I didn't use the internal keyer, diversity receive, etc. This particular K3 is fully loaded with 2nd receiver and full filter complement.

As expected the receiver performance is very good. I really liked the filters because they made working on a crowded band very comfortable. I could adjust them so working next to a strong station was a breeze. Filters are independent between the main and sub receivers.

It's a rather homely looking radio and won't win any awards for design. Overall size is relatively small for what you get in the radio, explaining why it's popular with DXpeditions. The radio has a "cheap" feeling about it probably because the knobs are plastic. I'd certainly add a heavier aftermarket main tuning knob. Some have complained about the small size of the sub receiver VFO knob but it wasn't a problem for me. The display is a very basic segmented LCD. "Serviceable" is the best I can say about it.

I was worried about the menus/buttons and how difficult they would be to figure out. After some help from an Elecraft fan, I had enough knowledge to do some basic operations. There are many features in the radio I didn't explore. Once I got the radio set to my liking, everything I needed was a push or push-and-hold action. I would need to create a cheat sheet for some of the features not used in day to day operation as I found the manual to be difficult to use. I didn't attempt to evaluate what may change when you switch modes. I like the AFX feature. This seems to be designed to produce a Haas effect to give you a fuller sound.

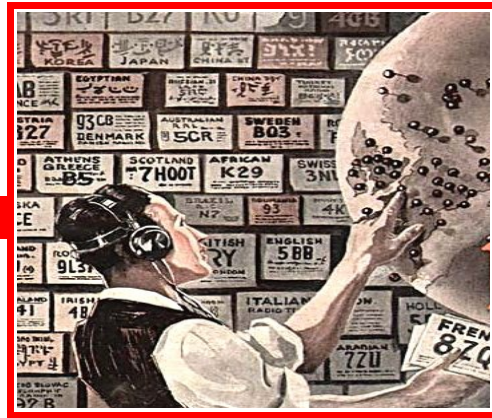
When listening with stereo headphones, one ear gets a slightly delayed signal. You may notice a slight favoring of the ear getting the non-delayed signal. I didn't really notice but I have diminished hearing in one ear anyway. Overall, performance is good. It does what it's designed to do. Looks, ergonomics and the "feel" of the radio are my primary complaints.

Bottom line: At just north of \$5K, I'm not convinced the K3 is a good value for my needs. I'm leaning towards the IC-7600 but I need to operate one first to confirm it's the right choice. Bob WØGXA

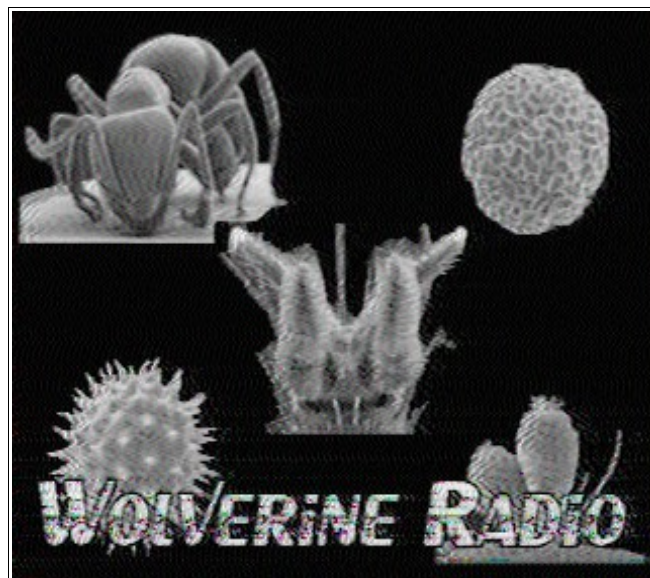
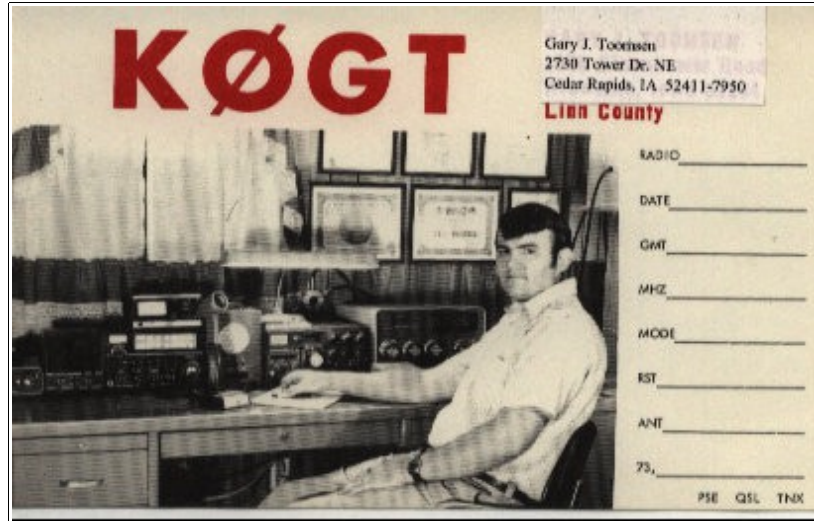
STAY TUNED!

See which radio Bob picks in the next issue.

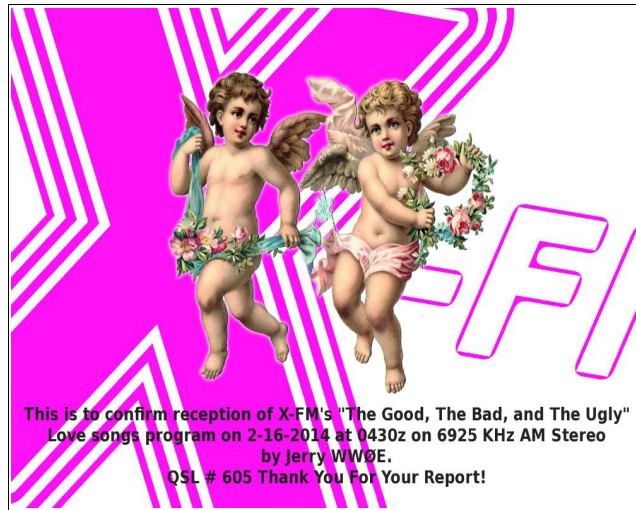
PSE QSL



Pirate Radio station QSL. X-FM, 6870Khz.



Received this SSTV picture in Scottie 1 mode from pirate radio station - Wolverine Radio, 6950 Khz. WWØE



QSL card from pirate radio station – Radio Free Whatever. WWØE

Feature Story

THE LISTENING



SIDE OF RADIO

Webster defines listening as: to give attention with the ear, attend closely for the purpose of hearing.

Larry Albrecht, KØIS with our purchase or radios “to listen to”- from the Milan Auction the last part of February.



Larry's Stromberg Carlson from 1951.



And his art deco 1946 Farnsworth.

My 1949 Silvertone that looks like it just rolled off the assembly line at Sears and Roebuck, in Chicago. Looks and sounds great. \$25.00.



This 1939 Zenith, also found it's way home with me from the Milan auction.



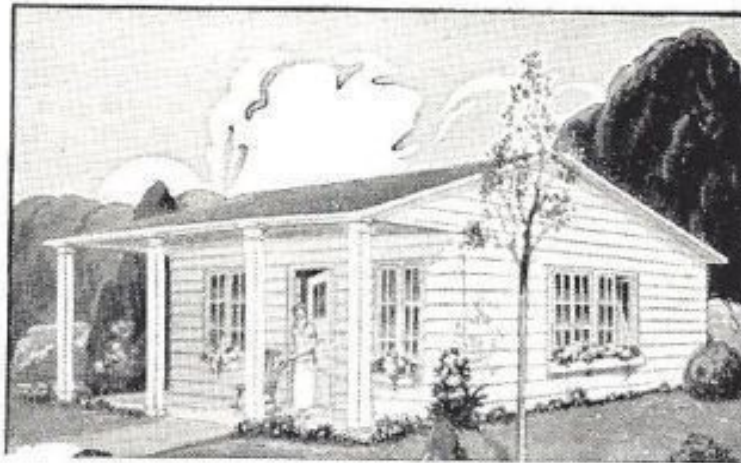
The following week, I purchased a 1948 Farnsworth, and a 1946 Delco.



This 1951 Majestic "Rudolph" radio went for \$525.00 !

SOMETIMES IT'S JUST FUN TO LISTEN TO THE RADIO.





Bossert "Radio" Bungalow

You Can Take It Anywhere Because It Is Thoroughly Portable

\$615

F. O. B. BROOKLYN

This is the greatest value in Vacation Bungalows ever offered. Delivered to you complete, can be easily erected by two men within a day and a half. No skilled help necessary. Can be taken down quickly, transported and put up again without trouble. Sturdily built, will last for years.

Living room, 12 ft. x 12 ft.; 2 bedrooms, 9 ft. x 9 ft.; kitchen, 6 ft. x 9 ft., and bath. Perfect room arrangement, light and airy.

RIGHT NOW send for order form and free folder completely describing this greatest of bungalow values. **Houses in stock, ready for immediate shipment.**

LOUIS BOSSERT & SONS, Inc.

"Largest Lumber Plant in the East"

1313 Grand St.

(House Dept.)

Brooklyn, N. Y.

galgbrv image text not on original vintage ad

Thank You. 

Mamy thanks all the EIDXA members who made this newsletter bulge. Jerry WØDE

|| DXCC Card Checking Is As Close as EIDXA ||

The club has another QSL card checker WØGJ, Glenn Johnson. If you look on the ARRL web site under searching for a checker, he shows up with a Calmar, IA address, but a MN phone number. If you look in the master list, he is still listed in MN.



EIDXA members can get their DX QSL cards checked for DXCC credit from the following club members:

- ARRL Midwest Division Vice Director, and EIDXA member, Cliff Ahrens KØCA attends EIDXA meetings as his

schedule permits. You may also send your cards to him by surface mail. Contact Cliff via e-mail for more information and/or to make arrangements to check your cards: KØCA@arrl.net or cliff.ahrens@gmail.com.



EIDXA member Tom Vavra WB8ZRL. Tom is able to check any cards for DXCC. In addition he can check cards for WAS, WAC, and VUCC. Contact Tom via e-mail for more information and/or to make arrangements to check your cards: wb8zrl@arrl.net.

EIDXA member Mike Nowack NA9Q. Mike attends EIDXA meetings as his schedule permits. Contact Mike via e-mail for more information and/or to make arrangements to check your cards: na9q@arrl.net.

2014 EIDXA Meeting & Events Schedule

Look for this information on the club web-page www.eidxa.org. Meeting information on the web site is up to date to ensure everyone has timely access to the information between newsletters.

**Next EIDXA meeting:
Friday, April 18 at 7:30 PM,
Campus of Kirkwood Community
College, Cedar Rapids.
In the Amana Room in Iowa Hall .
Program: Craig Thompson, K9CT,
“Top-Band DXing from Wake and
Amsterdam”.**



Established 1975