

TCDXA
TWIN CITY DX ASSOCIATION



Minnesota

Newsletter of the
Twin City DX Association

www.tcdxa.org

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The GRAY LINE REPORT

DXing from Minnesota - Land of 10,000 Lakes

Reflections on Paul Bittner, WØAIH – SK

By Al Dewey, KØAD



On November 1, the entire contest and DX community was shocked to learn that Paul Bittner, WØAIH, had been killed the previous day in a tower accident. Paul had been working on the 15 meter stack at the “farm” on Halloween day in preparation for the upcoming contest season when the fatal fall from about 60 feet occurred. Word spread quickly via e-mail and social media. Through amateur radio, as well as his Lutheran ministry, Paul had made friends around the world.

Paul was laid to rest on Saturday, November 10, 2018 in Fall Creek, WI following a funeral at St John’s Lutheran Church which was the church for where he served as pastor from 1977 until his retirement in 2000. Paul’s small church was overflowing that day with family, friends, pastors, and many, many ham radio friends. It was an moving tribute to an awesome man. Much has been already written about how Paul had touched the lives of those around him in such a positive way. One of the things I remember most about Paul was how much he seemed to simply love working on towers and antennas. From the moment he would drive up in his red truck (i.e. big Gulp), layout his tools on the ground on a special blanket, get his rope ready, hook up the winch, and ride up a tower he seemed to truly be enjoying himself!



Paul at his favorite operating position at the farm (160 meters)





Paul's famous "Big Gulp" truck set up for tower project at KØAD

One of the times that this was really driven home to me took place about 15 years ago in KTØR's back yard. It was a cold and raw November afternoon and it looked like it could rain any minute. Paul was up at the top of Dave's tower and Dave and I were on the ground looking up and shivering in the cold. Sure enough, it started to rain and Dave and I found shelter under an eave of Dave's house. Surely Paul would climb down until the rain stopped. However, when Dave and I looked up again, Paul was still at the top of the tower working away and singing at the top of his lungs. As hard as it was to hear of Paul's death, and especially how it happened, there is some comfort in knowing that Paul was doing something he really seemed to enjoy during his last hours with us on earth.

I have asked TCDXA members to share their own memories of Paul and how he affected their lives. What follows is a collection of those memories.

Paul, WØAD

In 1970, Paul offered the students in Virginia Junior High the opportunity to meet during lunch hour and I not only attended his class, I sat for my Novice and later Conditional license in his basement mesmerized by his amazing station, especially in the eyes of a 15 year old! Ham radio was

a dream come true for me, especially with WØAIH as a model. With a Johnson Ranger and HQ-110A that I obtained from him, he was my first QSO with the call of WNØBQA. I met lifelong contesting friends from the Twin Cities through him, developed my own love of low band DXing and was lucky enough to date his daughter Nancy as my first girlfriend. I kept in touch with him for many years after he left Virginia, through Grand Island, NE and finally Eau Claire. I even built my "upside down" prop pitch assembly out of a unique design he had created in 1980 where the prop pitch gear was fixed and the motor itself rotated, connecting to the mast with a splined axle from a Chevy S-10. In many ways, Paul was like a second father to me and I miss him very much.

Scott, KA9FOX

Paul put up my 100 foot Rohn 55 tower about 14 years ago. He came down the





Paul being inducted into CQ Contest Hall of Fame at Dayton in 2009. Pictured here receiving Plaque from K3EST.

night before (in the "Big Gulp" truck) to plan and prepare. I had ground crew lined up for 8am the next morning. Around 6am my wife nudged me awake and said "I think Paul is up" and by the time I wiped the sleep out of my eyes and got moving, Paul was, indeed, out at the base of the tower and already had one section in place, despite the sun barely being up. He asked me to help him get the second one in place. By the time the ground crew showed up at 8am, I think we had 40 or 50 feet in the air. Paul was always moving.

Kirk, NØKK

I have so many recollections of Paul. The first is the sheer joy Paul showed when showing newbies around the farm. He was like a kid in a candy store running around talking and walking 100 mph telling about every tower, antenna, heliax run, coax switch, amplifier,



Paul being laid to rest at cemetery across the street from St John's Lutheran Church where he was the pastor from 1977 through 2000
Pictured with John, NØIJ

beverage, flag by the driveway, people he knew, who else was coming to operate that weekend and that Mary would have an apple desert at the end of the contest! It was awesome to be a part of it all.

The second was when Paul performed my baptism ceremony at the same time as my children. It was all planned that he would perform the ceremony for my kids at his Church in Fall Creek. Upon talking to my mother about it I asked where was I baptized? Her reply was that I had not been baptized. I called Paul and asked if he would be willing to baptize me also. He was ecstatic! And I was equally as thrilled to have AIH as my pastor in baptism. He and Mary made the day a VERY special day in Fall Creek for my family.



Gary, WØAW

Paul was an inspiration to all of us. Few of us are kids, but to watch him work on a tower was something to behold. He came over to help me pull my tower down when we moved up to NW WI, and I learned a lot from him. I also recall him diving into a 30 cubic foot dumpster that we had on hand to get rid of stuff that had been acquired over the years for those projects that I was always going to build, but never got around to. Paul watched me toss some guy wires into the dumpster and had to peek over the side. I recall him saying, "You're not really throwing that away, are you!" Next thing he is up over the top and handing me "stuff" to set near the back of his pick up. Paul hauled 2+ pickups out of the dumpster and back to Eau Claire. His last request was that I send him a set of my WØAW license plates for his collection.



Paul with Big Gulp showing year Paul was first licensed. Photo from WØGJ

Unfortunately they are still sitting on my bench in the pole building. 73 and RIP my friend. You were awesome!

Mike, WØVTT

My favorite WØAIH story is about Mary as much as Paul. The first time I met them, years ago, was either at Dayton or W9DXCC. Paul was wearing a suit, as usual, looking very distinguished. I walked up and introduced myself by saying that I enjoyed looking at his antenna farm as we drove by on I-94 on our way to Duluth. We shook hands and he very properly introduced me to Mary. As I shook hands with her, she said, "Hi, I'm the Winch Wench." Not what one would expect to hear from a preacher's wife.

Bill, AEØEE

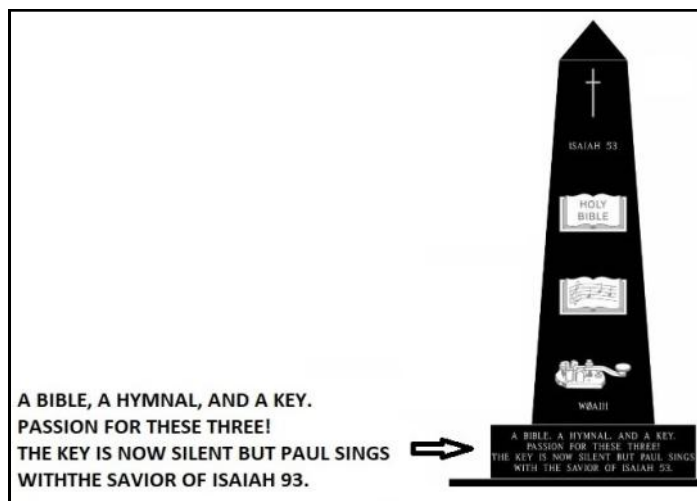
My first trip to The Farm came in March of 2015, less than a year after I had moved back home to Minnesota. Having quickly fallen in with the MWA and TCDXA crowd, it wasn't long before I crossed paths with Paul, WØAIH, and was invited out for a contest. I operated on the higher bands, especially 10 m, and had my



first experience using an amplifier, running legal limit power, and using a stack of Yagis on a rotating tower.

Paul taught me a few lessons in hardware. First, never use U-bolts; use saddle clamps instead, because they won't pinch. Second, sweet potato cans make excellent containers for 10-position coax switches.

At The Farm there were no shortage of interesting stories about salvaging commercial broadcast towers and antennas, the origins of various vacuum tubes and specialty components displayed like trophies over the 160 m



Poem composed by WØGJ on Paul's Tombstone



Hams attending Paul's funeral gathered at "the farm" after the service



operating position, or of little engineering tricks needed to make the station run smoothly.

Paul never hesitated to offer mentorship to newer operators. Each year during the Wisconsin QSO Party, he hosted ops from the Eau Claire radio club, operating as W9EAU. He invited many contesters from the region to his station, especially those with little equipment of their own, and I am pleased to have been among those who benefited from his experience and generosity.

Glenn, WØGJ

I spent a lot of time traveling and rooming with Paul. One time, and I don't even recall how we got on the topic, we were discussing "funny" epitaphs that had been seen on tombstones. Paul's favorite chapter in the Bible was Isaiah 53, and I've lost count of the times he recited the entire chapter to me from memory while we were driving along. He always said he wanted to be buried with his Bible, his hymnal and his original key.

Sometime later I wrote down a little poem and sent it to Paul. He immediately called me on the phone so excited I could hardly understand him. He was going to put that poem on his tombstone! He and Mary got their tombstone finished this past summer and Paul proudly sent me pictures of it.

In 2012, Paul came over to help me put up my big antennas. On the crane truck was "Since 1949." I told him that was the year I was born and he said "That's INTERESTING! I've been a ham for your WHOLE

LIFE! I was first LICENSED in 1949!" I can't count the number of times he brought that to my attention since then. That's 69 years being an ACTIVE ham. If you've known Paul, you can just hear him strongly emphasizing the capital letters!

It was my honor at the Dayton Contest Dinner to say a few words about Paul at his induction into the Contesting Hall of Fame.

As a Lutheran minister, his hero was Martin Luther. He would often quote Luther to me. As Providence would have it, Paul passed away on Reformation Day (October 31, 1517), exactly 501 years TO THE DAY when Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenberg cathedral. He told me it was very special for him to have seen that spot this past summer at WRTC.

Paul is NOT resting in peace. Paul never rested nor will he ever. He is singing praises to his Savior like he's never sung them before!!!

WØAIH Memorial Scholarship Fund

For those of you who would like to help Paul's contribution to Amateur Radio live on, please consider donating to the "The Rev. Paul E. Bittner, WØAIH, Memorial Scholarship", via the ARRL Foundation. This will be a permanent award, with a \$1,000 scholarship awarded each year to a deserving young amateur radio operator, pursuing higher education (to be used for tuition, books, fees and other educational expenses).



By KØJUH

MINNESOTA

MANITOBA
ONTARIO
CANADA
NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
WISCONSIN
IOWA

Lake of the Woods
Upper Red Lake
Lower Red Lake
Lake Superior
Mississippi River
St. Croix

Hallock
Thief River Falls
Crookston
Bemidji
Moorhead
Detroit Lakes
Fergus Falls
Alexandria
Sauk Centre
Ortonville
Montevideo
Marshall
Windom
Worthington
Fairmont
Albert Lea
Minneapolis
St. Paul
Anoka
Bloomington
Red Wing
Faribault
Mankato
Rochester
Duluth
Superior
Two Harbors
Grand Rapids
Hibbing
Chisholm
Virginia
Northome
International Falls
Grand Marais
St. Cloud

WØTVD (SK) & NØIJ
Terry & John Baumgarten on the road operating mobile from some "rare counties" during a recent MNQSO Party. An addendum with additional details on the contest appears at the end of this story.



WØTVD (SK) & NØIJ
Terry & John Baumgarten on
the road operating mobile
from some “rare counties”
during a recent MNQSO Party.
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Before today's world wide internet based DX clusters, there were local DX clusters in the US that relied on VHF radio links to pass along DX spots to stations connected to their nodes.

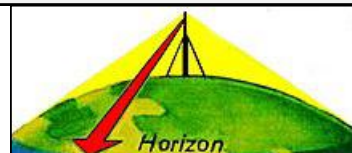
One such network was the NMDXA operation in Duluth. Terry Van Dell, WØTVD (SK), ex-NØBIL, along with Glenn Johnson, WØGJ, ex-WAØPUJ, at Bemidji, and Ron Stordahl, AE5E, ex-KØUXQ, at Thief River Falls, were the chief architects behind organizing the first DX packet cluster network in Minnesota

Because of the distance between nodes, the VHF path was not reliable, particularly from Mille Lacs Lake down to St Cloud. The KØJUH antenna was at 80 ft. and needed to go much higher, and Terry had the solution. He had access to a 500 ft. TV translator tower at Aitkin that became the new home for the KØJUH Node.

Terry came to the rescue again when he and a helper climbed the tower and installed the antenna.

NMDXA DX PACKET CLUSTER NETWORK 1989-

| Node QTH | Call Sign | Frequency | Licensee |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Ontario | VE3 . . . | 10 MHz | VE3 . . . |
| Bemidji (PCBJI) | WAØPUJ | 144.910 MHz 145.010 MHz | WØGJ Glenn Johnson |
| Virginia (PCVIR) | WBØQXM | 144.930 MHz | KØOE Bruce Hegrenes |
| Duluth (PCDLH) | NØBIL | 144.910 MHz 145.070 MHz | WØTVD (SK) Terry Van Dell |
| Aitkin (PCATK) | KØJUH | 145.010 MHz | KØJUH Jim Junkert |
| St Cloud (PCSTC) | KØIR | 144.910 MHz | KØIR Ralph Fedor |
| Plymouth (PCPLY) | NØAT | 144.970 MHz | NØAT Ron Dohmen |
| Minneapolis (PCMSP) | NJØM | 144.950 MHz | KØPW John Hill |
| St Paul (PCSTP) | KØRC | 144.930 MHz | KØRC Bob Chudek |
| Rochester (PCRST) | WØMXW | 144.970 MHz | WØMXW Rochester ARC |



Communications at VHF and UHF are generally "line of sight" communications. The higher the antenna, the better.

Today's DX Cluster Nodes use the Internet to communicate and have eliminated the need for VHF radio links and high antennas.

Two popular Telnet nodes are:

Ron Stordahl, AE5E, Thief River Falls, MN www.ae5e.com

Les Sawkins, VE7CC at Maple

Ridge, BC www.bcdxc.org/ve7cc/



Definition: A DX cluster is a network of computers, each running a software package dedicated to gathering, and disseminating, information on amateur radio DX activities. The computers comprising the network are called nodes, the network itself being termed a cluster of nodes. The nodes may be connected either via radio links or through the internet. Internet nodes generally connect using the telnet protocol. The system acts as an aggregator of information, accepting input from various sources, then making that data available to any user who is connected to the network.



Addendum to the WØTVD (SK) Story

by NØIJ, John Baumgarten

Some years ago, 10-12, Terry came to me and said lets put together a temporary mobile contest station for MN and WI QSO parties. I'll drive and you can operate. Sounded like fun to me so away we went.

Terry had a 2'x2' piece of ¼" steel and I purchased 4 mag mounts for the corners and a new Screwdriver antenna with a 6' whip.

The antenna roof mount looked like a winner right away as my first test contact on 80 meters was with an EA9!

We initially used Terry's venerable 1995 Tahoe, which left us a little high (14' 4"), but we really watched it and never hit anything. We did change to my Outback later, which did lower the clearance about 6".

We worked hard on routes for both contests and figured out how to make 24 counties in MN (10 hour event) and 18 Counties in WI (6 hour event).

Both routes were all north in mostly large counties, and required aggressive fast driving, and that was Terry's forte!

The WI route was largely on secondary roads, rough and hilly, and the ride gave me the urge several times to "toss my cookies". Luckily, it didn't happen!

We always made our target routes and never got a ticket, but had a couple of close calls. Once someone posted an APRS screen shot of us traveling through Lake County on the way to Cook County in far NE MN. Cook County is needed by everyone and was our finish line.

Our speed was listed at 106 MPH! This, of course was not correct, but I won't say by how much! We always had fun and enjoyed a tall 807 (beer) at the end of the county line.

I'm going to miss this guy and the fun we had in this and other endeavors more than can be imagined!



Join TCDXA

Our mission is to raise *Dollars for DX*, used to help fund qualified DXpeditions.

Our funds come from annual member contributions (dues) and other donations.

TCDXA is a non-profit organization, as described in Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All contributions from U.S. residents are tax-deductible.

Becoming a member is easy. Go to <http://tcdxa.org/> and follow the instructions on the home page.

Gary Grivna KØGX



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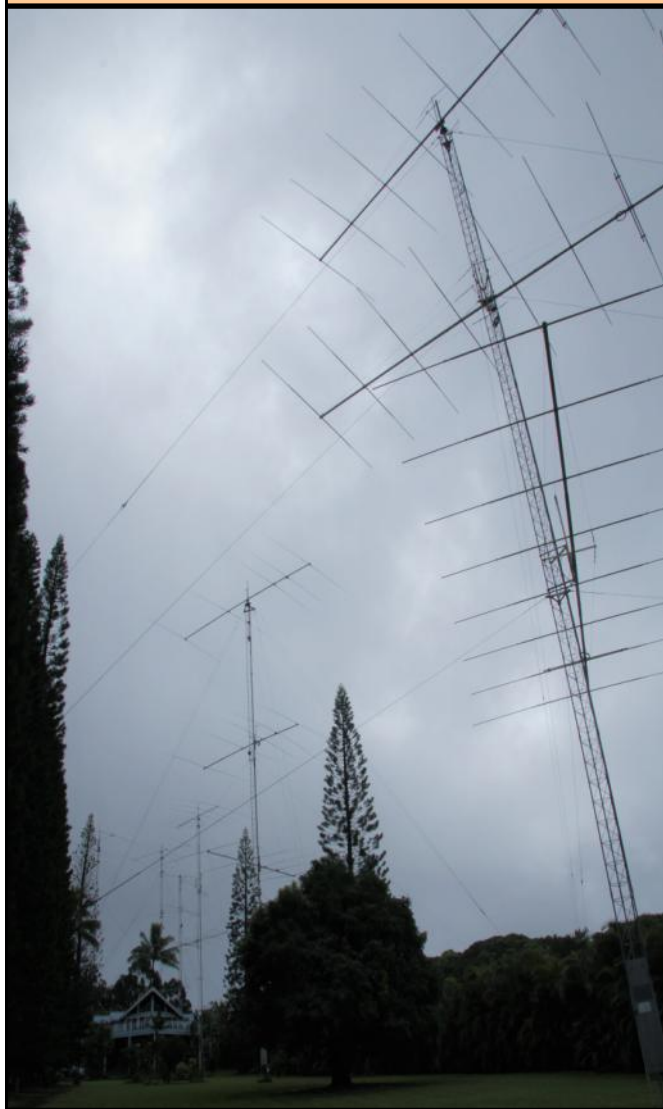
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Brooklyn Park, MN. 55443-2019

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2018 CQWW DX Phone Contest from KH6J

By Rich Westerberg, NØHJZ



The Towers at KH6J

My son is a Sergeant in the Army, stationed in Hawaii. Last year I rented a house while visiting him. Four houses away from me was a beautiful house with six towers and large monoband beams! I found out that the station belonged to KH6YY. As luck would have it, Dan, WØCN, who has operated there several times, attended our Fall MWA meeting. He also extended an invitation to operate during this years CQWW DX Phone Contest.

A chance to operate a world-class station AND see my son (and grandson)?! Count me in!!

Alex, KH6YY, bought the house in 2004 and has upgraded the station over the years. There are now towers for each band. Each band has multiple monobanders, some rotatable and some fixed to JA or the US. The 40M tower sports a killer 4-element yagi that is a real band opener! 80M has a 2-element yagi. The 160M antenna is a wire vertical with raised radials.

Inside the house, the radio room has six operating stations (one for each band). The rigs are FT1000mp with full power amplifiers. All I needed to bring was my headset!

The contest started at 2pm local time. With full sunshine I let the guys concentrate on the high bands. I figured that my time on 40M would be

all night. Around 2:30pm I swung the 4-element 40M beam towards the US and started to hear signals! As the sun moved westward I worked more and more US and Caribbean. By Sunset I had over 250 Q's in the 40M log. Over the next hours the signal built and then the JA's began.

Over the course of the weekend, I experienced some great pile-ups and spent some time picking out mults on the low bands. Some of the highlights were: 1) Working EU long path on 40M with the killer beam, 2) Having 5Z and ET call me and then working A4 long path on 20M (that's three in a row I wouldn't get from home!) & 3) Working and then listening to the WØAIH signal on 160M late at night. Here are the results of our efforts:





The house and the 2-element 80M, 4-element 40M
and 5-element 20M antennas

Call: KH6J

Operator(s): OE6MGB JP1TRJ JA7OHF
NØHJZ WH6R KH7U WØCN

Station: KH6YY

Class: M/M HP

QTH: OAHU/HAWAII

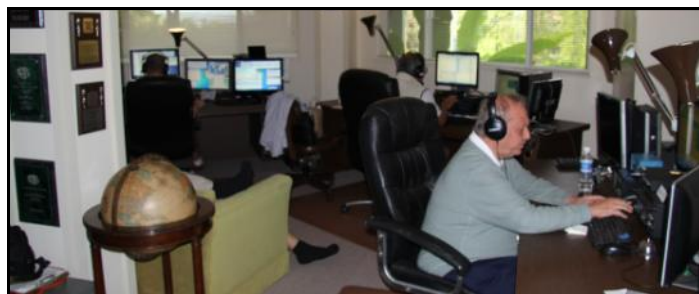
Operating Time (hrs): 48

Band QSOs Zones Countries

| | | | |
|------|------|----|-----|
| 160: | 204 | 15 | 18 |
| 80: | 787 | 36 | 65 |
| 40: | 2604 | 37 | 95 |
| 20: | 2122 | 37 | 113 |
| 15: | 2055 | 32 | 57 |
| 10: | 218 | 14 | 20 |

Total: 7990 171 368 **Total Score =**
12,565,707

We had a great team of operators and I had a blast! We're hoping our score will hold up in Multi-Multi despite being out in the Pacific. My next stop is the CQWW DX CW Contest where I'll be C6ARW.



Three of the six operating
slots at KH6J



WØCN Participates in Massive PVRC / CARA Field Day Effort

By: Dan Hausauer, WØCN (Photos by W3MSH)

{Dan, WØCN originally submitted this article for the September issue of the Gray Line where we featured TCDXA member Field Day experiences. Unfortunately, I totally dropped the ball and inadvertently left it out of that issue. Many of us Field Day regulars have worked W3AO over the years and been impressed with the large number of transmitters they put on the air for the event. Its often will be over 20 operating positions! Anyway, here is Dan's story of his participation in this event last June. Again, I apologize for the delay in publishing Dan's interesting story..... Al, KØAD}



Main W3AO operating tent with HF, digital, & GOTA

.During my Air Force career I've had the opportunity to operate from around the globe and with many great clubs across the USA. I've seen a great variety of Field Day operations including from my home state of Minnesota. Below is my experience with recent Field Day efforts from the Washington, D.C. area.

The Potomac Valley Radio Club (PVRC) and Columbia Amateur Radio Association (CARA) have been holding joint Field Days together since 1998 as W3AO. A great combination of a





W3AO's 20M table -- WØCN (L) & W3LPL (not shown) share SSB duties; K3RA (R) on 20CW

contesting club and general interest club for Field Day. This year we operated as 15A from MDC.

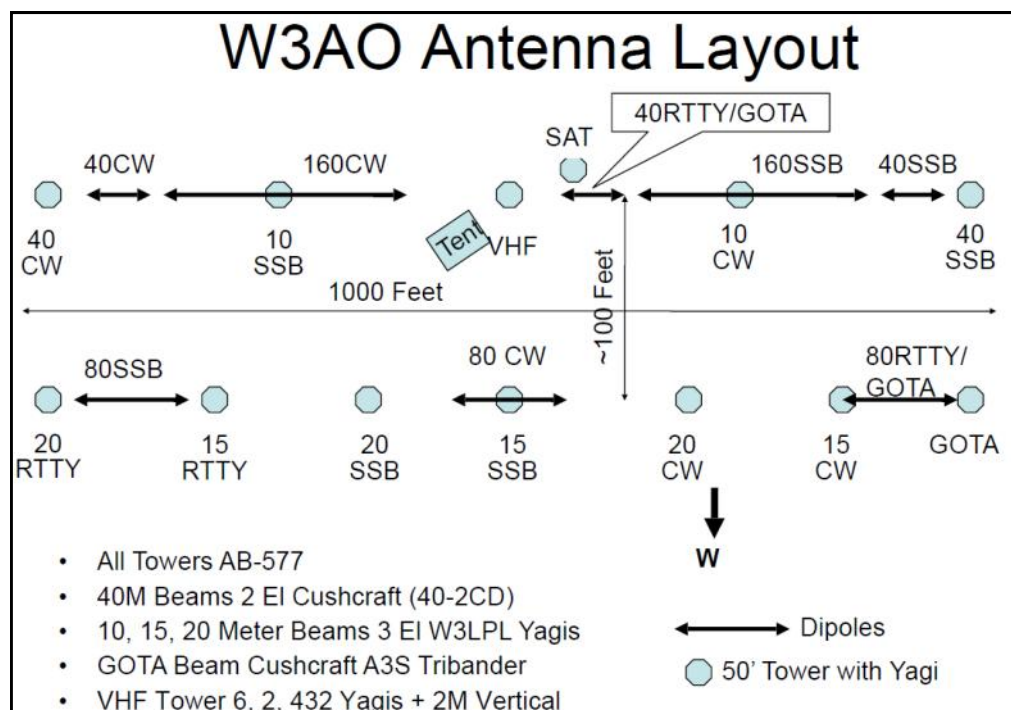
We set-up at a local elementary school in Ellicott City, MD; maximizing the 1,000 foot diameter circle and setting up 12 AB-577 "Rocket Launchers". Each tower has a mono-band antenna except for the tri-band GOTA antenna, and we string dipoles between the towers. Our main operating tent is in the middle of the circle, surrounded by a food tent, VHF/UHF tent, and a satellite tent. All HF stations run on a single generator, and UHF/VHF and satellite each have their own generators.

HF Antennas (all pointed West):

10M: Two 3-el yagis
15M: Three 3-el yagis
20M: Three 3-el yagis
40M: Two 2-el yagis & three dipoles
80M: Three dipoles
160M: Two dipoles
GOTA: One 10-15-20M tri-band and dipoles

Inter-station interference is usually minimal with our antenna direction, use of band-pass filters, and use of good transceivers (K3s, FTD5000s, etc). Occasionally over the

years we have turned one or two of the Yagis towards Europe on Sunday morning and we definitely find it increases our inter-station interference issues. GOTA may cause some interference issues, and we minimize that with placing their antenna at the far south end of our antenna line-up, and also have them operate at the far end of the bands.



Our layout designers separated the two-Yagis-on-the-same-band (CW and SSB) as much as they can. Hence, the two 40M beams are at each end of our 1,000-foot line. Inside those, the 20s, then the 15s, then the 10s -- trying to keep the maximum separation, in wavelengths, between antennas on the same band.

The one mile of RG-213 coax, 12x AB-577 (50 ft towers), and monoband antennas are all used exclusively for Field Day or emergen-



W3AO's 4 of 12 AB-577 "Rocket Launchers" shown with monoband yagis and dipoles

| 2018 CARA and PVRC Field Day | | | | |
|------------------------------|------|---------|-------|-------|
| W3AO QSOs | | | | |
| Band | CW | Digital | Phone | |
| 1.8 | 66 | | 40 | |
| 3.5 | 634 | 114 | 519 | |
| 7 | 1144 | 313 | 1463 | |
| 14 | 1199 | 327 | 1807 | |
| 21 | 479 | 112 | 744 | |
| 28 | 268 | | 538 | |
| 50 | 10 | 10 | 151 | |
| 144 | 3 | | 12 | |
| 420 | | | 1 | |
| Total | 3803 | 876 | 5275 | 9954 |
| K3CUJ (GOTA) QSOs | | | | |
| Band | CW | Digital | Phone | |
| 3.5 | | | 269 | |
| 7 | | | 341 | |
| 21 | | | 31 | |
| Total | | | 641 | 641 |
| Grand Total | | | | 10595 |

cies. Everything is stored after each FD. The computers are also all used exclusively for FD. We use CT as the logging software – old, but very reliable and it runs on older model computers easily.

The full set-up has become a well-oiled machine over the years, with designated leads and band captains. All towers, antennas, and coax are set-up and tested on Friday, and operating positions set-up on Saturday morning. Field Day starts at 1400 local. It is a lot of fun for all levels and areas of interest in our great hobby. We also have a great cadre of GOTA coaches to help visitors and new hams.

Field Day “is not a contest”, but in our competitive spirit, the W3AO team has been #1 in the nation and celebrating their 20th straight win with the ARRL announcing this year’s results in the December issue of QST.



QSL Cards; What Do You Do with Them?

By Dan Dantzler, WØJMP

A few times a year, I sort through my most recent stack of paper QSL cards and file them away. I use three ring binders with transparent poly pages. As I sorted and filed the latest cards, I wondered what other hams do? How do others store their cards. Do they keep all cards or only special ones? Have their card storage methods changed over the years? How many cards do other hams have? Here are some of the responses.

Al Senechal, KØCN:

Al keeps every card he has ever received. If the card was sent direct and the envelope has a stamp, those too are saved. He stores them in a small, two-drawer library file cabinet. He also scans the more interesting cards and links them to his QRZ page. Over the years, his storage methods have changed somewhat. He has added more shoeboxes to the two-drawer file and now uses Flickr to display the scanned cards. It is sort of a slide show so, at least once in a while, they see the light of day. He estimates that he has between three and four thousand cards.

Al goes on to say, “I wish that there was an option where a station using LOTW could scan and store their QSL image, so when confirming a contact, the image would be available to view and/or print on the receiving end.”



KØCN Cards (right)



Dennis Petrich, KØEOO:



Dennis uses words parsimoniously. Card file, keeps all, methods have not changed and he has two to three thousand cards.

Jim Junkert, KØJUH

Jim, on the other hand, has a lot to say about his QSL cards:

“The KØJUH QSL collection resides in several locations: A 3-ring leather binder, six 3x5 card drawers, and one large file cabinet drawer.

The contents of the leather binder represent my DXCC Honor Role #1 Award and hold 340 QSLs in prefix order, the current DXCC Entity count.

I have no idea how many cards are in the drawers. Each one is overflowing so far too many to count.

Many of the QSLs bring back memories of the hours spent in the pileups chasing an ATNO. *‘The thrill of victory and the agony of defeat’*.



Jim Junkert, KØJUH cards above and to the left



Before the U.S.S.R break-up in 1991, Box 88 was their incoming/outgoing QSL bureau. My incoming cards from the Zero bureau always contained a bunch of QSLs from Box 88. I miss those times!

LoTW (it's a good thing) and my lack of activity has reduced my incoming QSLs to a trickle. It was fun while it lasted.

73, Jim, KØJUH"

Mike Paskeuric, NØODK/3W2DK

Mike stores his cards in plastic large shoe boxes with lids. He keeps all of his cards and the best one from each country is stored in picture folders in a notebook. It makes it easy to show them to others. He does not throw cards away and says "Tell others that do to send me their Vietnam or Cambodia cards". He has roughly three or four boxes of cards from his home call and about the same from his DXpeditions.

Mark Endorf, WAØMHJ

"The majority of my cards are in cardboard boxes, except for those I have in the individual 20 card hangers. (See the pictures). The hangers came from Electronic Center, that some of the old timers will remember.

I have somewhere around 11,000 cards, of which about 800 are state-side. These go back to the very first QSO made as a novice. To date I have thrown away SWL cards, cards from my DX operations, and any cards which have WAØMSJ listed. I have them sorted alphabeti-

cally by prefix which was helpful when the DXCC application was made, to quickly find a needed card. With that all behind me, I really don't need to sort or even keep cards anymore. I keep the current stack of cards to be submitted for credit on top the operating desk.

73 Mark WAØMHJ"

Chuck Patellis, W8PT

"I don't communicate often since I am not local to the main part of the group. So thank you for this opportunity.

Here's my response:

1) How do you store your cards?

Sorry I don't have pics. I store my cards in oversized "shoe boxes". I call them shoe boxes but they are really filing boxes with the small brass plate on one end where you can put in a card that tells you what's inside. I've recently bought some that are clear plastic for my sets of cards that I send out. I vary my outgoing cards depending on who and where I am sending them. I have six different card designs. Yes, I said six. Five are with my present call and one is with my previous call because I still get many QSLs from HAMS that I QSOed prior to W8PT.



WAØMHJ hanging cards



2) Do you keep / file every card you receive? Or just new / unique entities?

Well, you can tell I am a QSL card junky so I keep every card I receive and file them.

3) Do you every throw cards away?

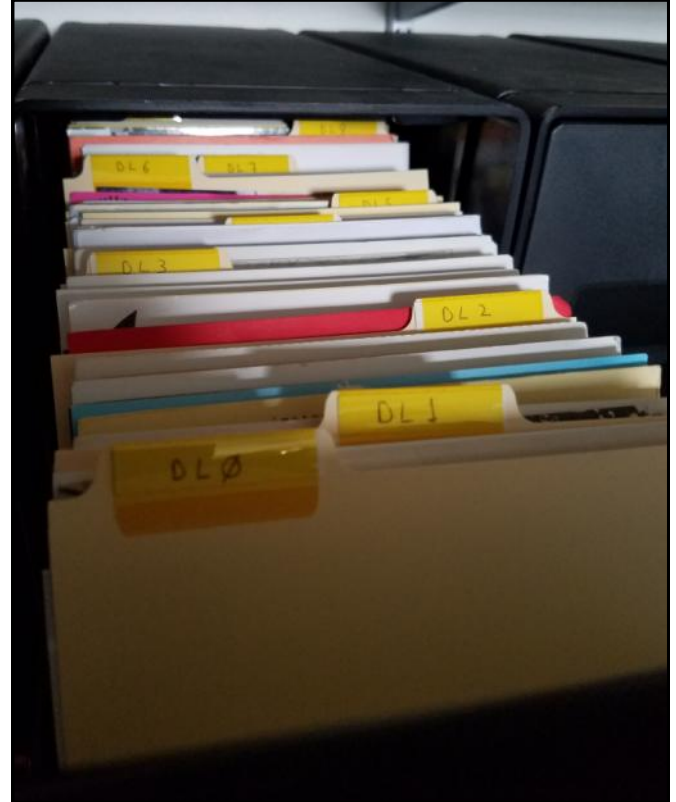
Only mine when I've made a mistake in filling one out.

4) Has your storage method changed over the years?

Yes. I used to have the vinyl carriers that you hang on the wall. But when we moved, I lost wall space in the room that became my shack. It is a library/office that I used as an office when I was working. Now I'm retired but still have several hundred books. So I moved to the box filing system. I do have my Novice cards also back from 1962-63 and I keep them in a couple of photo type albums with the cards in clear vinyl segmented pages. Each page holds 8 cards, 4 one side and 4 on the reverse.

5) Roughly how many cards do you have?

I have a few thousand cards. I let my license lapse in 1974 and didn't get back into Amateur Radio until 2004. So I lost 30 years of QSOs and QSLs. Trying to make up for lost time. My DXCC total so far is 306 confirmed out of 307 worked. I know! That's pretty good in regards to percent worked versus percent confirmed. But I just checked yesterday and that's what it is.



Mike, WØVTT
Rubbermaid File Drawers

I hope I've given you the information you are looking for. I never stop getting excited about receiving a QSL in the mail. And for whatever time I have left, I hope I never do stop getting excited.

73 from Ohio
Chuck Patellis - W8PT"



Mike Cizek, WØVTT

“I’m a real geek, I keep them ALL. I store my cards in a dozen Rubbermaid #2421 file drawers. When I bought them 20 years ago, I didn’t think they’d ever fill up. I need more and they aren’t made any more. If anyone has any to sell....

I keep every single one, filed alphabetically. I even have a separate section for places that don’t count, like Bir Tawil, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Seborga, and a lot of Romeo cards. Do I ever throw cards away? Hell no! I started saving cards in shoe boxes but upgraded to the Rubbermaid file drawers. According to DX4WIN, I have roughly 10,319 cards.”

Roger Roth, KØMPH



“My QSL cards (collected over 61 years) and old logs (before 2000) are stored in a box which will soon be full. There is no particular order and none have ever been thrown away. Cards from friends and some recent cards are either on the wall or in a file cabinet in the shack. As part of the downsizing effort I am thinking that most of the cards should be thrown away and the logs scanned for future reference. All future award hunting will depend on LoTW. “

Hans Brakob, KØHB

“My cards are stored in a home-made card file (see photos to the right) made of maple and walnut. It contains 6 drawers, each 4.5”H, 6”W, 12”L (interior dimensions) I keep every card. All are stored in alphabetical order My card file contains cards for only my current call sign. (I’ve had 6 call signs, KG6AQI, WAØPQF, WB9DLL, WB4GXH, WBØWFF, KØHB) Cards from previous

calls are stored away in shoe boxes. My current card file was built in 1985 or so. Before that I used shoe boxes. Best guess I have about 4,000 cards as KØHB, about 2,000 cards as KG6AQI (my original call) and only a few hundred for intervening calls when I wasn’t very active (US Navy on active duty!)

73, de Hans, KØHB

‘Just a boy and his radio’™”



Glenn Johnson, WØGJ



“I store my cards in an old surplus file card cabinet as shown above. They are filed by DX entity (355 entities confirmed). I keep every WØJG QSL card. I have thrown away QSL cards from DXpeditions and DX contesting operations. I have used this file cabinet for over 45 years. It is getting full. I have 300,000+ contacts in my log. Counting cards per inch, I’m waaaay north of 25,000 QSL cards.

73, Glenn WØGJ, Calmer, IA (Decorah)”

Brian McInerney, NØBM

“I keep every card I receive. I am from the old school where the QSL card is considered the final courtesy of the QSO. I have not thrown and cards away but have lost a few hundred from previous calls (KDØNH, WA3WVH and WA1GCC) during moves. I used to display the cards in clear plastic folders but have changed to a shoe box container marketed by one of the ham accessory folks. I will be adding an additional container soon.”

Donn Taylor, KØQC



“Above is an image of my QSL storage system. I have 5 boxes for DX cards and one small file for deleted countries I printed up the labels from the country list. I also have two more files for domestic cards going back to my novice days. One of the boxes is for my 5 band WAS cards. I have no clue how many cards I have in total nor do I wish to know.



I used to purchase foreign postage to send along with an SAE to the DX stations or managers, but have not done that for some time as QSL methods have changed. The DXpeditions now are often using OQRS (Online QSL Request System) and that certainly makes it easier to request QSLs I still like to get QSL cards to add to the collection, even if it is not a new one. Generally these days it is for a new band-country.

The quality of cards has certainly improved over the years with the photo QSL card being more popular.

I keep all of the cards including SWL cards which are filed in the appropriate country DX file.

73, Donn, KØQC”

Ron Dohlmen, NØAT



“I store my cards in bins as pictured above. I keep only cards for NØAT. I toss other cards (NØAT/xxx). My storage method has not changed over the years. How many cards? If I stacked them up, and they didn’t fall over, the stack would be about 21 feet high.”

Blanchard Krogstad, KEØRR

“I have 3 entities to go (which I will never contact). I did all on SSB(I chose not to go for "mixed for HR") with 100 watts and a yagi at 55 feet. I usually worked an entity on one band and stopped. If they returned to same place in a few years I might work them again on another band. The exception to this was New Zealand, Spain and Norway. In those entities, I had special connections or used a contact to brush up my foreign language skill. So I didn't get an overwhelming number of cards.

1. I store the cards in a 4x6 steel file about 18" deep .It is presently so filled that I have to cram them in. Incidentally, I keep the USA cards in a separate file.

2. & 3. I believe I have kept all the cards I have received.

4. I set up this file when I began doing DX. I may have pulled out the USA cards after I began working DX

5. I estimate that I have about 1300 cards from DX and about 500 USA cards.

I began DXing in 1988, when I got my tower, I did not begin this hobby until after I retired -too involved prior to that. I hope this answers your questions.

73, KEØRR”

Pat Cain, KØPC

“I got rid of all my cards about 18 months ago. I had them all sorted and boxed but finally realized I didn't need them for an award and I never went through them for nostalgic reasons. If I don't hold them pre-



cious then no one else (e.g. my wife) will.

Most of the time when I receive a card from a DXpedition it is already confirmed in LOTW. If not, my logging program tells me to send it to submit it for DXCC. I currently only have a handful from recent DXpeditions (less than ten).

If I ever decide to chase the US Counties award I may regret my decision, but not so far.

Pat, KØPC”

Dave Wester, KØIEA

“Here are photos of my filing system. I have kept all my QSL cards from day one, December 1956. I started keeping them in small cardboard file drawers. But when our company had a sale on old furniture, I purchased this large metal filing cabinet.

I'm able to store all my 18,800 cards in them. I keep them in prefix order and alphabetical within the prefix.

Now the object is to go after nice looking picture QSLs representing each of the DX entities.

Those are kept in a 3 ring binder. The worst card to receive is a mug shot of the operators.



Cards and filing system from Dave, KØIEA (Above and left)



Dan Dantzler, WØJMP

I have kept all of my cards beginning with WNØJMP in 1964. My original filing system was a metal recipe box.

Then I moved on to three-ring binders with transparent holders.

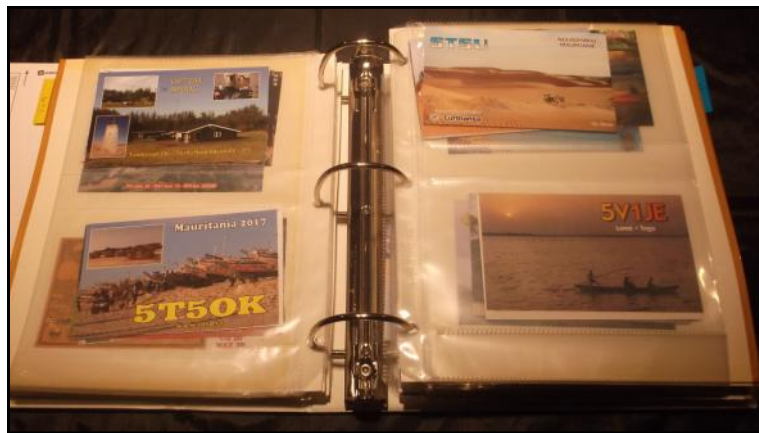


Now I have 12 notebooks containing about 3,300 paper cards. The cards are all in alphanumeric order. After seeing how others have filed them, I should have utilized entities instead

Thanks for everyone's input; I have learned a lot.

The next question is what will happen to these cards someday?

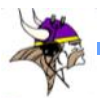
73, de WØJMP



Original metal filing box on left
Inside of one of the notebooks, above



WØJMP QSL Notebooks



TCDXA Members Attend 2018 W9DXCC Convention

By Craig Anderson, W9CLA



The large conference room at the Hyatt accommodates some great presentations

Those known to have attended the annual W9DXCC convention near Chicago this year included WØVTT, AEØEE, KØBBC, WØGJ, WØJM, WØVTT, and W9CLA. There were some great seminars including one by the guys from the Baker Island Expedition. Glenn, WØGJ, did a presentation on the trials and tribulations associated with the failed Bouvet operation. There were live displays in the vendor area by Flex, ICOM, Yaesu, WØVTT was there checking cards for DXCC.

This was a great conference and I definitely plan to attend next year!



Mike, WØVTT, checks cards at W9DXCC



Flex, ICOM, Yaesu, Geochron, and Elecraft all had displays in the vendor area



DX Féile 2018

By Pat Cain, KØPC



(L-R) EI4BZ, EI4GZB, EI9HQ, EI4CF, EI6IB, EI9HX, EI3FW, EI8KN, EI9JF, EI6BT, MOOXO, EI8IU, EI5GM, GM3POI, EI2HI, F5JTV, KØPC, G3XTT, EI5DD, EI5IX, EI2II, LA7THA, F5UFX, G3ZAY, MM0OKG, G4PRJ, KCØURL, EI4GK, EI6FR, EI3HM, EI9FBB, EI3ER & EI9CN

Féile is a word taken from the Irish language (Gaelic) and translates into English as 'Festival'. The EI DX Group sponsored their second annual DX Féile during a weekend in September 2018 on the Aran Islands, off Ireland's west coast.

My wife, Marlyn, and I are celebrating our 40th wedding anniversary this year and decided to include a trip to Ireland in September as part of the festivities. 94% of my great-great-grandparents were born in Ireland (I have one stubborn Englishman from Essex who won't admit he is really Irish). As we planned the trip, Marlyn asked if I wanted to visit the Aran Islands and I said I wasn't really interested. Then about a week later the 7Q7EI DXpedition was on from Malawi. They were all members of the EI DX Group and I followed a link back to the group website. That's when I saw they held a DX convention on the Aran Islands in September.

I went back to Marlyn and said "Maybe I would like to see the Aran Islands". She wasn't

buying it for a minute (forty years makes them very suspicious). I had to come clean and tell her I wanted to go to the DX meeting. We made that part of our plans and ended up on the Aran Islands the weekend of September 15th.

There were about 33 hams in attendance. Most were from Ireland with a few from the UK and some from Europe. There was one other American there, Alan KCØURL. The odd thing is that he lives 15 miles away from me in Plymouth. I had never met him before I got to Ireland. His wife is Irish and they spend a fair amount of time there.

There were presentations all day Saturday and a banquet Saturday night. In addition they had five stations set up for attendees to operate under the EJØDXG call over the full weekend.

The EI DX Group has only been around for a couple of years but it is making waves with its operations:

EIØHQ July 2016 – Operated as a headquarters station in the IARU contest as a dry run for future DXpeditions to test operators and equipment.

9N7EI March 2017 – Twelve members went to Nepal and made over 30,000 QSOs.

7Q7EI March/April 2018 – 14 operators in Malawi made over 37,000 QSOs.

I truly enjoyed my trip to Ireland and the new friends I made. I would go back for DX Féile 2019 but there is another trip calling my name next fall.

73, Pat EI/KØPC



Dollars for DX Report

Mike Cizek WØVTT
DX Grant Manager

Greetings. Since the beginning of our fiscal year in September, we have received six requests for donations from DXpedition teams and funded five of them. Of the five, only TO6OK Mayotte received the amount recommended by our funding guidelines. Others were adjusted for various reasons. A35EU Tonga was not funded.



TT8KO Chad rates a \$250 donation based on its position at #79 on the ClubLog global most needed list. LA7GIA had produced such good results on his previous one-man operations that your board felt he deserved a larger sum and the club approved \$400. Unfortunately, the operation was shut down after two days. Even though the authorities acknowledged that Ken had done nothing wrong and all his permits were in order, he was not allowed back on the air and was detained in country for several days longer than his planned stay. Thanks to efforts of the Norwegian embassy, he was finally able to leave Chad with all of his equipment.

XX9D Macao at #92 on the ClubLog list also rates a \$250 donation, but we felt that its position as #29 most needed in North America was a good reason to give the \$500 we use for top 50 countries. To help us decide on future donations like this, when making the survey, I added the question "Is XX9 an all-time new country (ATNO) for you?" 30% of those responding needed XX9 for a new one. I hope most of you got them.

EP6RRC Iran is only #120 on ClubLog's global list, but is #47 in North America. Once again, your board felt this was sufficient reason to give a donation, and the club agreed with our recommendation of \$250. EP was a new one for 32% of the survey respondents.

Our last request was for **T31EU** Central Kiribati. T31 is #27 on the global list, but only 69 in North America. Based on this, we lowered our recommended donation to \$250. Only 25% needed it for a new one.

That's the news for this time. Once again, I want to encourage ALL club members to vote on DXpedition funding. Out of 150 paying members we only see votes from 60 to 65 people.

73,
Mike WØVTT



**DXers Have
A Choice**



The Daily DX - is a text DX bulletin that can be sent via email to your home or office Monday through Friday, and includes DX news, IOTA news, QSN reports, QSL information, a DX Calendar, propagation forecast and much, much more. With a subscription to The Daily DX, you will also receive DX news flashes and other interesting DX tidbits. *Subscriptions are \$49.00 for one year or \$28.00 for 6 mos.*

The Weekly DX - is a product of The Daily DX that can be sent weekly to your home or office via email in the form of a PDF (portable document format). It includes DX news, IOTA news, QSN reports, QSL information, a DX Calendar, propagation forecast and graphics. *Subscriptions are \$27.00 for one year.*

Get two weeks of The Daily DX or a sample of The Weekly DX free by sending a request to bernie@dailydx.com, or at <http://www.dailydx.com/trial.htm>.



Treasurer's Report *from Pat Cain, KØPC, treasurer*

TOP LINE SUMMARY

TCDXA OPERATING BUDGET FY 2019 (Sep 2018 - Aug 2019)

December 7, 2018



| INCOME | ACTUAL | BUDGET | Actual 2018 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Surplus from FY 2018 (balance | 2945.79 | | 2689.68 |
| Member Dues 2019 by Cash/Checks/ | 2148.69 | 4500.00 | 4578.52 |
| Door Prize Ticket Sales club share | 192.00 | 500.00 | 723.00 |
| Donations (estates, wills, etc.) | 0.00 | | |
| Refunds and Reversals | 0.00 | 2000.00 | |
| TOTAL INCOME | 5286.48 | 7000.00 | 7991.20 |
| | | | |
| EXPENSES | | BUDGET | Actual 2018 |
| Member Recruitment/Retention | 0.00 | (150.00) | 0.00 |
| Website ISP & Domain Name | (19.00) | (70.00) | (65.69) |
| Office Supplies, Miscellaneous expenses | 0.00 | (50.00) | (23.27) |
| Flowers <SK> and Hospital gifts | 0.00 | (200.00) | 0.00 |
| Holiday Party 2018 | 0.00 | (500.00) | (528.64) |
| ARRL Spectrum Defense Fund | 0.00 | (250.00) | (100.00) |
| NCDXF Donation | 0.00 | (250.00) | (250.00) |
| MWA Plaque | 0.00 | (75.00) | (75.00) |
| DXpedition Contri- | (1,650.26) | (3500.00) | (4002.51) |
| #1 Dxpediton - | (400.00) | | |
| #2 Dxpediton - | (250.00) | | |
| #3 DXpedition - | (500.26) | | |
| #4 Dxpediton - | (250.00) | | |
| #5 Dxpediton - | (250.00) | | |
| #6 Dxpediton - | 0.00 | | |
| #7 Dxpediton - | 0.00 | | |
| #8 Dxpediton - | 0.00 | | |
| #9 Dxpediton - | 0.00 | | |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | (1669.26) | (5045.00) | (5045.11) |
| | | | |
| NET | 3617.22 | 1955.00 | |
| | | | |
| Checking balance | 3476.61 | | |
| PayPal balance | 140.61 | | |
| Cash / Checks on Hand | 0.00 | | |
| NET BALANCE | 3617.22 | | |

When required, Wells Fargo & PayPal online statements can provide detail not shown in this report.



Backscatter: Miscellaneous, Assorted and Sundry Items of Note

by Dan Dantzler, WØJMP

Changes in FT-8

For those of you following the Joe Taylor protocols contained in WSJT-X, big changes are coming. By the time you read this, WSJT-X 2.0 should be in general release. The ARRL currently estimates that about 40% of all QSOs submitted on LoTW are FT8. Obviously, the mode has taken amateur radio by storm.

The majority of the new program features involve the FT8 and MSK144 protocols. MSK is the most common protocol used for meteor scatter. Both modes have been upgraded to use 77-bit information payloads rather than the 75 bits of the older FT8 protocol or 72 bits of JT4, JT9, JT65, MSK144, and QRA64. These changes bring many benefits.

What this all means is that FT8 is now usable for contests, especially for field day and RTTY round up. The North American VHF contest handling has been greatly improved. It also means the 2.0 FT8 and some other modes will no longer be able to talk to older versions. This, of course, has some in the amateur radio community up in arms! The new General release should be available on December 10th and Joe Taylor and his group have asked that all previous versions not be used after January 1, 2019.

If you are an FT8 user, please upgrade as soon as the general release is available. There have been 6 release candidates and several “mock” contests using the RTTY RU protocol the new general release should

stable and bug free (or at least as bug free as software usually is).

Pitcairn Island DXpedition

Ralph Fedor, KØIR has another DXpedition planned. Four of our own will be part of the 14 person crew. Besides Ralph, Pat: KØPC, Mike: WØVTT and Glenn: WØGJ will be part of the fourteen person crew. Rumor has it that some of the equipment from the ill-fated Bouvet attempt will be repurposed for Pitcairn. Pitcairn was made famous by Fletcher Christian’s mutiny on the *Bounty*. In 1790 nine of the mutineers from the *Bounty*, along with the native Tahitian men and women who were with them settled on Pitcairn Island. The wreck is still visible underwater in Bounty Bay, discovered in 1957 by *National Geographic* explorer Luis Marden. Although the settlers survived by farming and fishing, the initial period of settlement was marked by serious tensions among them. Alcoholism, murder, disease, and other ills took the lives of most mutineers and Tahitian men.

Today, only about 50 people inhabit the island and most, if not all of them, are decedents of the original mutineers and Tahitians.

Dulcie Island is part of the same island group so we can expect similar propagation as the recent VP6D DXpedition.

Stay tuned for more developments by watching <https://pitcairndx.com/> and the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/580069859103416/>



Radio City, Inc closing

The last amateur radio outlet in the Twin Cities is closing their doors. After 33 years in the business, owners Dan and Maline Fish have decided to retire. As of this writing, they are liquidating the last of their inventory.

<http://www.radioinc.com/index.html>

William J. Plum closing

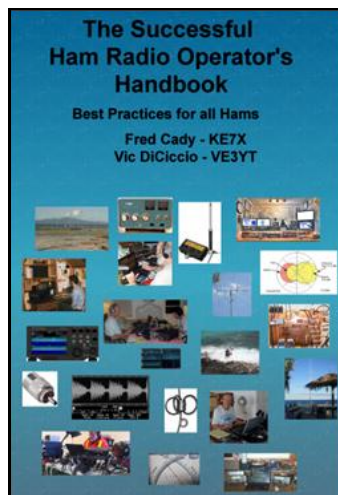
After many years in the business, Bill Plum is closing his doors. I am sure most of us have bought DX supplies and foreign stamp from him over the years. I have purchased his nesting envelopes and QSL storage notebooks and pages. Over the last several years, LoTW, OQRS and other factors have reduced the demand for his wares. That and advancing age have convinced Bill to retire. I have always had pleasant experiences with him and his products.

Member awards

Kirk NØKK earned his 6 meter WAS snagging HI in the June Es season. I (WØJMP) earned my 80 meter DXCC which gives me the 5 band DXCC. Unfortunately, the plaque is being redesigned so I must wait.

New Book: The Successful Ham Radio Operator's Handbook

Vic, VE3YT and Fred, KE7X are pleased to introduce “The Successful Ham Radio Operator’s Handbook”. This book is aimed at new or returning hams, to help them understand the practical aspects of the hobby, how to use their radios, build antennas and



baluns, and get on the air successfully. In it you will find explanations of how the various parts of your ham radio - the transmitter and receiver – work, plus how these are being implemented using software defined radio technology. Operating techniques for

VHF/UHF repeaters, HF radio DXing techniques, and the new digital modes are covered. Radio propagation, antennas, transmission lines, SWR and the mysteries of baluns are explained. Building your HF station, choosing a radio, connecting your radio to a computer, and mobile and portable operation are extensively covered.

Here is a link that describes the book in more detail:

<http://www.ke7x.com/successful>

Follow us on www.facebook.com/KE7XBOOKS to keep up-to-date on book news and to be notified of book discounts at www.lulu.com.

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Future of the Gray Line Report?

Both Keith, K9WAG and I, have announced that we are leaving the Gray Line staff effective with this issue. We have had volunteers willing to help with the proofreading but no one has stepped forward to do the layout work. Once again, I am willing to train and help anyone interested in taking on this task. Without a layout person, we will have to suspend the publication of this fine newsletter.



The MWA Contest Corner

By Al Dewey, KØAD

Mentoring New Contesters



It seems like the topic of where testers of the future are going to come from is something that continues to concern those of us in the gray hair crowd. At this year's MWA meeting, a panel on "Contest Tips" evolved into a discussion of how we can encourage new hams, or not so new hams that are casual operators, to embrace the radio sport aspect of our hobby. As we all just completed the 2018 ARRL Sweepstakes, the checks (i.e. year first licensed) given out are a testament to the fact that the contest community is aging. I've been thinking about this a lot lately. Here are few tips I have come up with. Most of them are just common sense.

1. Be Considerate to non-testers

As second nature as contests are for many of us, many (perhaps most) hams have very little knowledge of how to operate a contest. During a long contest, it is common to be called by stations that are clearly not truly operating the contest. Be nice to these folks. Even if it slows down your rate, welcome them and explain what is needed for the exchange. If a non-tester asks you to QSY, I usually just do it even if I am in the right. Be especially careful on 75 SSB where non-testers are particularly territorial about their frequencies. Also, be sure to slow down for non-testers who call at slow speeds on CW.

2. Reach out to new members

From time to time, new MWA members are introduced on the reflector. Make an effort to reach out to these guys especially if they live near you. If they indicate that they are relatively new to contesting, offer to not only answer their questions but to help them with any technical issues they may have in getting to going (i.e. rig interfaces, logging software, digital modes). Going the extra step with these new guys can only encourage them as they dip their toe into contesting.

3. Host a Multi-Op for new testers

Several MWA members are already doing this and it is an awesome way to give new testers some great experience as well as introduce them to the comradery



of our radio sport passion. If you are set up with two operating positions, that is even better. But even with a single operating position where operators take turns, this is a great way to pique their interest. And, of course, gently give them advice as needed. Contests like the North American QSO Party are particularly good for this because there are a lot of stations to work and less frustrating for them than a DX contest unless you have a super station.

4. Take Advantage of Field Day

ARRL Field Day in June is an excellent way to plant the contesting bug with casual operators. It is common for casual hams to “stop by” a field day site to see what is going on. Do everything that you can do to engage them in the event. Ask if they would like to operate even if you log for them. Sure it’s not a real contest but they don’t know that. I have seen a lot of testers who first caught the contesting bug at Field Day. I was one of them!

5. Formal Training

A number of years ago, Contest University was introduced at the Dayton (Xenia) Hamvention. I had the opportunity to attend CU for two years and it was a great resource for newbies and veteran testers alike. If you know someone going to Dayton who might be showing an interest in contesting, encourage them to sign

up for Contest University which is always held on the Thursday of the Dayton Hamvention. Contest seminars have popped up at other venues in recent years. A half-day local Contest Training event would be a great project for MWA to sponsor if there is sufficient interest.

As a member of the CW Ops organization, I volunteer as a CW instructor with the CW Academy within CW Ops. There are several levels of training. Level 1 is for those starting from scratch with CW. Level 2 is for those that can copy CW at about 10-12 WPM but would like to improve their speed to at least 20 WPM. As a Level 2 instructor, I include lots of simulated CW Contest training in my class. After explaining about the exchange, I’ll call CQ (on Skype or Zoom of course) and have the students answer me and complete a contest exchange. Then I will have them call CQ and “run” a few QSO with me simulating call backs from several stations. I did this before CW Sweepstakes and a couple of my students found me on the air and called me which was really awesome. These guys many not ultimately become testers but, then again, they may!

Contest Call History Files – Be Careful

A common feature in popular logging programs like N1MM Plus and



WriteLog is the use of call history files to prefill part of the contest exchange using data from previous contests. I have always viewed these as “typing aids”. I still need to copy the exchange but I just don’t have to type it in UNLESS the exchange is different than what was pre-filled from the call history file. Then you have to type in the correction. The source for call history files is up to the individual. My method is to use last year’s contest as a starting point. I then update it with any mistakes that were reported in my Log Checking Report (LCR). Others will merge several previous year’s logs together to have a more complete file.

I had a computer problem earlier this year and lost all my previous year N1MM contest logs. I was not able to build my call history file as I usually do for ARRL CW SS from last year’s N1MM file. I went to the N1MM site and noticed that there was a call history file posted there that was compiled by VE2EK. Because I did not have anything better, I decided to use it. I noticed that about 10% of the exchanges in the VE2EK were different than what was actually sent. I thought I had caught all of them and made the appropriate change during the running of the contest. About a week after turning in my log, I received a note from Tree with a question. He noticed that I had copied the check for N9RV as 76 instead of 67. Strangely another 50 people had made the same mistake so he was interested in what Call History data base I had use. When I told him, he checked it out and sure enough the wrong check was in the VE2EK data base. My guess is that I was perhaps in

the middle of an SO2R type exchange and somehow missed the correct check from N9RV. Clearly my fault.

The point of all this is that, although it is perfectly fine to use call history data bases, just be careful. Copy every exchange just like it wasn’t there and make any (and all!) corrections accordingly.

ARRL Adds FT8 to January RTTY Round Up

ARRL will add the hugely popular FT8 mode to the RTTY Round Up beginning with the January, 2019 event. Participants must use WSJT-X Version 2.0 or later to ensure they are able to transmit and receive the messages that the contest requires.

There are a number of other restrictions so it is strongly recommended those planning to use FT8 carefully review Section 7.4 of the RTTY Contest Rules (www.arrl.org/rtty-roundup). Also, because WSJT with FT8 decodes multiple signals at one time, this constitutes “Assistance” which means those using FT8 will be put in the Multioperator category.

It will be interesting to see how much interest there is in FT8 during the RTTY Roundup this year. As for me, I prefer to operate and compete in this event as a Single Operator so I will not be using FT8 this year. However I encourage those interested in FT8, who are not concerned about what category they are competing in, give the new mode a try in the Round Up this year. *(Only WSJT-X 2.0 or later will work in the contest)*





TWIN CITY DX ASSOCIATION (TCDXA)

CLUB FACT SHEET

Who We Are:

The Twin City DX Association (TCDXA) is a 501(c) (3) non-profit amateur radio organization, whose members have an interest in DXing and in supporting the club mission: **Dollars for DX**. Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation govern the club's operation.

Club Mission:

The club mission supports major DXpeditions with financial donations. The source of operating income for this activity is an annual contribution (dues) of \$25 from each member.

DX Donation Policy:

The policy supports major DXpeditions that meet our requirements for financial sponsorship. All requests must be approved by the Board of Directors. Final approval is by vote of the full membership. Over 70 DXpeditions have been sponsored since 1997. Details are available on the website at: <http://www.tcdxa.org/sponsoredexpeditions.html>

Club History:

The club was formed in the early 1970s by a small group of DXers from the Twin City area. Over the years, the club has changed; most notably by opening its doors to anyone interested in DXing - from the casual to the very serious operator. Our membership now resides in numerous states and several countries.

Requirements for Membership

We welcome all hams who have an interest in DXing and hold a valid FCC Amateur Radio License. It doesn't matter whether you're a newcomer, or an old-timer to DXing; everyone is welcome!

Meetings:

The club meets on the third Monday of each month (except July & August) at PUB 42 Restaurant in New Hope, MN. Members gather early in the bar for Happy Hour, and move into a private room at 5:00pm for dinner and a short business agenda, followed by a program. If you enjoy a night out on the town with friends, you'll enjoy this get together. Meeting attendance is NOT a requirement for membership.

Club Officers:

Four officers, plus one additional member make up the Board of Directors; currently: Bill Mitchell, AEØEE, President & Director, wsmitchell3@gmail.com, Bert Benjaminson, WBØN, Vice President & Director, Pat Cain, KØPC, Secretary/Treasurer & Director, k0pc@arrl.net, Mike Cizek, WØVTT, Director & DX Donation Manager and Doug Arnston, KØPX, Director.

Website:

We maintain a website at www.TCDXA.org that provides information about a variety of subjects related to the club and DXing. The site is maintained by our webmaster Pat Cain, KØPC.

Newsletter:

The **Gray Line Report** is the club newsletter, which is published on a quarterly basis. We're proud of the fact that 99% of the content is "homegrown" – written by our members. Past issues are on the website at: <http://www.tcdxa.org/newsletter.html>.

How to Become a Member:

An application for membership can be completed and submitted online, or printed and mailed in. (See <http://www.tcdxa.org/Application.html>) Contributions may be made by check or via the PayPal link on the homepage at www.TCDXA.org.

Visit us at a Meeting:

You are most welcome to attend a meeting, and look us over, before joining. Meetings are held at the PUB 42 Restaurant at 7600 Avenue North in New Hope (<http://pub42.com/>). Join us for happy hour at 4:00pm with dinner at 5:30pm, followed by the meeting at 6:30pm.



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|--------|----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| VKØIR | K5D | AHØ/NØAT | 3W2DK | K4M | XU7MWA |
| ZL9CI | VK9DWX | 5X8C | FT4TA | TX3A | S21EA |
| A52A | FT5GA | K9W | VK9MT | KMØO/9M6 | J2ØRR |
| T33C | 3D2ØCR | XRØZR | VK9DLX | YS4U | J2ØMM |
| 3B9C | E4X | T3ØD | VU4KV | YI9PSE | BS7H |
| TX9 | CYØ/NØTG | 3W3O | EP6T | ZL8X | N8S |
| CP6CW | VP8ORK | 3W2DK | VP8STI | 4W6A | 3B7SP |
| 3YØX | VU4PB | FT4TA | VP8SGI | T32C | 3B7C |
| K7C | STØR | VK9MT | TX3X | HKØNA | 5JØA |
| 5A7A | 3D2C | VK9DLX | VP6DX | 7O6T | K5P |
| VU4AN | 3CØE | VU4KV | TX5C | NH8S | FT4JA |
| VU7RG | TT8TT | EP6T | 9XØR | PTØS | PZ5W |
| VK9DWX | 9M4SLL | 3GØZC | 9U4U | FT5ZM | ZL9A |

TCDXA DX DONATION POLICY

The mission of TCDXA is to support DXing and major DXpeditions by providing funding. Annual contributions (dues) from members are the major source of funding.

A funding request from the organizers of a planned DXpedition should be directed to the DX Donation Manager, Mike Cizek, WØVTT. He and the TCDXA Board of Directors will judge how well the DXpedition plans meet key considerations (see below).

If the Board of Directors deems the DXpedition to be worthy of support, a recommended funding amount is presented to the membership for their vote. If approved, the TCDXA Treasurer will process the funding..

Key Considerations for a DXpedition Funding Request

DXpedition destination
 Ranking on *Most Wanted Survey*
 Most wanted ranking by TCDXA Members
 Logistics and transportation costs
 Number of operators and their credentials
 Number of stations on the air
 Bands, modes and duration of operation
 Equipment: antennas, radios, amps, etc.
 Stateside and/or foreign QSL manager

Website with logos of club sponsors
 QSLs with logos of club sponsors
 Online logs and pilot stations
 Up front cost to each operator
 Support by NCDXF & other clubs
 LoTW log submissions
 Previous operations by same group
 Valid license and DXCC approval
 Donation address: USA and/or foreign

To join TCDXA, go to <http://tcdxa.org/>.

