

**TCDXA**  
TWIN CITY DX ASSOCIATION



**Minnesota**

Newsletter of the  
Twin City DX Association

[www.tcdxa.org](http://www.tcdxa.org)

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**Gray Line Staff**

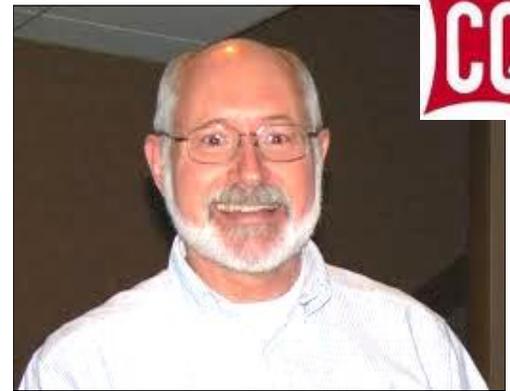
K3WT  
KØAD  
KØIEA  
KØJUH  
WØBV

# The GRAY LINE REPORT

**DXing from Minnesota - Land of 10,000 Lakes**

## CONGRATULATIONS! Dr. Glenn Johnson, WØGJ CQ DX Hall of Fame 2012 Inductee

A special reception was held Friday night, May 16, at the Dayton Marriott Hotel honoring Glenn's induction into the CQ DX Hall of Fame. He was joined by his XYL, Vivien, and a group of TCDXA and MWA friends.



From left to right:  
Fred, K4IU, Judy, KØUH, Ralph, KØIR, Al, KØAD, Pat, NAØN,  
Mark, WAØMHJ, Glenn, WØGJ, Pat, KØPC, Vivien, KL7YL,  
Paul, WØAIH, Dave, WØZF, Tom, NYØV, Scott, KØMD.

## Member News

# Rocky Mountain Retirement

Bob, **WØBV**, and Kate, **KØYV** will soon pull up stakes in Minnesota and head for their newly-constructed retirement home. Their new QTH is located in the Arkansas River Valley of the Central Colorado Rockies, near the town of Buena Vista. This area is known for its mild winters and temperate summers – not to mention its extreme natural beauty.

They purchased their 40-acre property 20 years ago with the great help of Ken, **WØLSD**, who was a real estate broker at the time. Ken owns the ham radio rental on Mt. Princeton that you have seen advertised in the back of every QST (see <http://lostcreekcabin.com/>).

Their retirement home was built over the last 12 months. On May 17th, Ken and Bob installed a 4-element SteppIR Yagi on a 72-ft. crank-up tower.

Best wishes to Bob and Kate for a long, healthy and DX-filled retirement!



# Member News

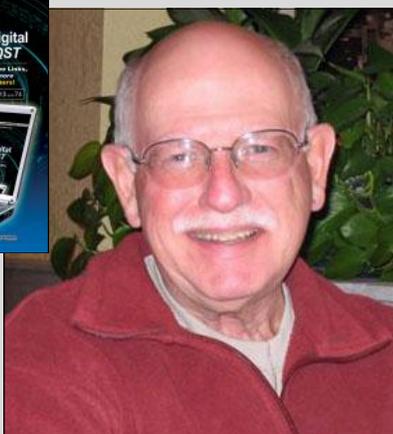
## VP5H is #1 2011 ARRL DX Phone Contest

In the Multi-operator, Single Transmitter, High Power category, **VP5H** scored 7,483,938 points for a 1<sup>st</sup> place finish.

Mark, **WAØMHJ** tells us . . . . .

“There have been many ham radio experiences over the last 40+ years which were an adrenaline rush. But, only two that combined adrenaline and nervousness, that resulted in borderline terror. The first was a novice band QSO in 1968. The second was calling the first ‘*CQ Contest*’ into the microphone that led up to this award.

I give all the credit for this great experience to my fellow team members and mentors, **KØMD**, and **WØGJ**.”



## “A 160 and 75/80 Meter Folded Monopole

Let your tower do double duty by providing a support for effective lower band monopoles”

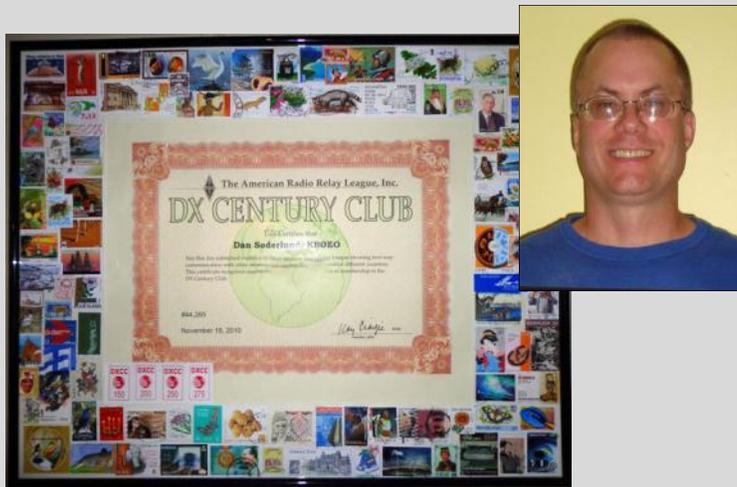
An article written by Dennis Johnson, **KFØQR**, that first ran in the *Gray Line Report* in February, 2011, recently received international prominence when *QST* published it in the June, 2012 issue, pages 44 thru 47.

At the June TCDXA meeting, the Board of Directors will present Dennis the “Well Done” award in recognition of his excellent article.

## KBØEO's Unique Framing Idea

Dan, **KBØEO**, wanted to do something different with the frame for his DXCC Award Certificate, and came up with this clever idea.

Note the unique border surrounding the certificate - Foreign postage stamps!





# Funding DXpeditions Today

by Ralph Fedor, KØIR



## Editor's notes: Heard Island 2014?

Heard Island was last active in 1997, when VKØIR logged 80,676 QSOs in 13 days of operating. A co-leader on that DXpedition, Ralph Fedor, KØIR takes a look at the challenges organizers face today in making plans to go back to the #4 "Most Needed Country" in 2014.

One thing we know is certain. The budget required to transport a team of operators to this rare and remote island for a two week stay will be HUGE! In 1997, it took \$320K to pay the bills. Some predict it will take a 100% increase in the 1997 budget to cover the expenses in 2014.

For an eye-opening look at DXpedition funding, take a look at Don Greenbaum, N1DG's Powerpoint presentation from the 2012 Dayton Hamvention that can be downloaded here:

<http://www.ncdxf.org/pages/dxresources.html>

Financing DXpeditions is getting more and more difficult, as the cost of making these trips continues to rise, especially to remote places in hostile environments. Daily ship charges, diesel fuel prices, helicopter costs, shipping charges, customs and port fees, pilotage charges and incidental costs have all risen dramatically during my DXpedition career. There is always a cash flow problem to meet down payment schedules and cover the developing costs prior to a DXpedition's departure. The amount of money each DXpedition team member must contribute continues to rise with each trip. Without up-front money contributed by individuals, clubs and foundations, DXpeditions as we know them today could no longer exist.

Sources of funding are contracting. Today, if you take contributions from Japan and North America out of the equation, there is very little in the pot. Logbook of the World is a wonderful thing. I use it, and would not want to be without it. But, it has impacted DXpeditions significantly. More and more, we hear, "Post to LoTW and QSL via the bureau." The envelope

with a QSL card and a few bucks in it is becoming less and less common.

It's true that a collection of extremely wealthy individuals might finance a DXpedition completely on their own. The problem here is that a collection of such individuals may have a poor likelihood of being able to get along with each other, and may not choose to do what the majority of the DXpedition audience would like.

It's also true that there is a very real element of financial risk, both to the participants and the contributors of a DXpedition. Like the bumper sticker says, "Stuff Happens," and a planned DXpedition may not take place.

Both the Heard Island DXpedition and the last Peter I DXpedition failed to achieve their goal on their first attempt and after considerable money was invested.

I'm happy to say that when I have been in the leadership role of a DXpedition, and it failed to come off, all contributors were offered a full refund of their money. Both the Heard Island and the Peter I DXpeditions succeeded on subsequent attempts. Failure is not a disgrace, but quitting is.

So, in summary, DXpeditions, now more than ever, need the help *up front*. Is there risk to you the contributors? Absolutely. To minimize it, contributing bodies must do their due diligence in evaluating the applications for funding. Who is involved? How well are they prepared? Are critical issues like transportation, documentation, emergency preparedness, contingency plans, and realistic logistical and financial plans in place? And, of course, what does the team offer to the world of DX?

Good DX & 73!

Ralph, KØIR



# Worldwide Camaraderie Among the Amateur Radio Community



by Tom Vinson, NYØV

I recently had the opportunity to visit several Rockwell Collins (RC) facilities and run the instruction for their “Life Cycle Value Stream Management” course. This is basically a program management course for employees, where we walk them through the RC business process.

It all started when I saw they were scheduling a course in Singapore and Hyderabad. My daughter and son-in-law live in Myanmar, and their first child was due at the end of March. I knew it would be close, so I volunteered to teach the classes in April. In the meantime, I also signed up to teach the RC Toulouse, France course and the RC Heidelberg, Germany course the first two weeks of March.

With all this, I was able to convince RC that I could save them over \$6K in travel costs if I stayed in Bangkok (BKK) in between the EU classes and the AS classes.

Once the plans were in place for the four classes, I decided to see if I could meet with some fellow hams along the way.

In France, we have the Collins ARC, **F6KNZ** that is headed by Fabrice, **F5LCU**. In Thailand, I had worked an expatriate named Charly, **HSØZCW**, in Singapore I had worked James, **9VIYC** and in India, Pai, **VU2PAI**.

As I contacted each by email, it started to fall into place to meet up with them. In the end, I decided to decline Pai’s kind offer to fly over to his QTH.

By the time I got through with the class in Hyderabad, I would have been out of the US for 6 weeks. It was a good decision, as I am writing this from Hyderabad, and I am ready to sleep in my own bed!

In Toulouse, I met up with Fabrice, who drove me over to one of the local radio club rooms. When we arrived, I met a couple of other hams who were helping two guys on the radio theory they needed to obtain a license. The club has a Kenwood transceiver with a vertical on the roof.

- continued on next page -





Fabrice Viate, **F5LCU**

Due to security hours, they can only operate at noon, usually on Thursdays. I listened around for a bit, but the conditions were terrible. I only heard a few Spanish and Italians stations.

After the next week in Heidelberg, I flew over to Bangkok to meet up with my daughter, son-in-law and my XYL, Karen. My daughter had not had the baby as yet, so I set up a time to meet with Charly, HSØZCW.



Charly Harpole, **HSØZCW**

Charly is an expatriate who married a Thai bride. He lives about 30km west of BKK. We met up in BKK and then headed out to his QTH. He has a nice two story house with two towers.

On one tower is a stack of 5 element mono-banders (205BA type) starting at 80 ft. On the other tower is a large, 2 element quad for 40 and the WARC bands.



HSØZCW's QTH

His shack was nice, with an FTDX9000 as his primary rig. He also has a K-3 above it. By the way, he does not like to use the K-3, due to the buried menu set up. He said it's okay if you set it up and stay on one frequency, but terrible if you want to move around; So, he prefers the FTDX9000.

I think he had seven amplifiers in the shack, along with an IC-7800 that needed some repair. We listened on the air for awhile, but in the middle of the afternoon, it was not a good time to be on in SE Asia. The only US station I heard was **KH7Y** calling CQ on 20 CW. There were a few JAs talking in Japanese on the phone band, but that was it!



Yagis at HSØZCW



After two weeks in BKK, it was time to head southeast to Singapore, 9V. I had set up a meeting with well-known DXer, James, **9V1YC**. I met up with James at his QTH, and got the tour of his capable station. His main rig is an IC-7600, with a small Tokyo Hi-Power amplifier. He said anything larger brings TVI issues in the neighborhood. He also has a TS-580 (I think that's the number). He uses a KT-34 and a homemade 12m 3-element Yagi mounted on one tower. There is also an HF-2V vertical for 80 and 40m.



James Brooks, **9V1YC**

I did get on the air, briefly. But, once again, the bands are pretty noisy in the afternoon in the tropics, and the signals are not too great. I heard **4X6DZ** on 12m CW, so I popped in on him and gave him a quick report. There were other eastern EU stations, but they were not too strong.

As it was getting later in the afternoon, James called up Neil, **VA7DX** to see if he wanted to get some dinner. Neil is an on-site contract engineer, currently working in Singapore. You may have worked him as **HKØNA** a month ago!

He gave James and me a rundown on the conditions the team ran into down on Malpelo. It sounded pretty nasty. I have heard that Glenn, **WØGJ** will be at the Eastern Iowa DX Association (EIDXA) in April to fill in the Club on the terrible working conditions that they had to endure.



Neil, **VA7DX** and James, **9V1YC** as we talk Ham radio over dinner in Singapore

During our dinner, we brought up the fact that we were three hams from three countries meeting over Chinese dinner in Singapore.

Is this a great hobby, or what? In all cases, I found that the camaraderie among the amateur community is alive and well.

Tom Vinson, **NYØV**



# DAYTON HAMVENTION 2012

## *Photo Gallery*

The WX was perfect all weekend, which always means brisk sales for vendors in the fleamarket. In Hara Arena, the inside vendors were “all smiles” too.

Hams were doing more then “kicking tires.” They were getting out their billfolds.

*Photos by KØMD, WØAIH, WØBM*



**KØMD, SFØF, NYØV**



**DF2BO, KØIEA**



**KØVH, WØBM, N5WEB**



**WAØMHJ, KØPC, K4IU, KØJU**



**K4IU, KØJU, KL7YL, WØGJ**



**WØEK, KØSQ, KØGX**



# DAYTON HAMVENTION 2012

## *Photo Gallery*

Photos by KØMD, WØAIH, WØBM



KØRPD's Cessna Cardinal is Dayton-bound.



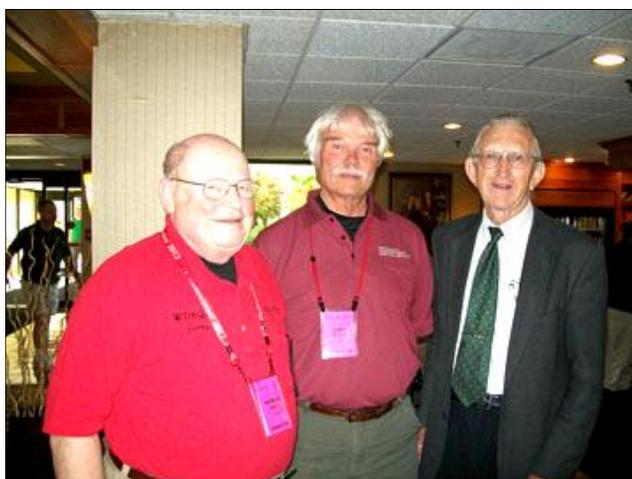
WØFAA, KØVH, KØRPD, WØSTV



The crowds in Hara Arena



For Sale: Triple XXX-size bread slicers.



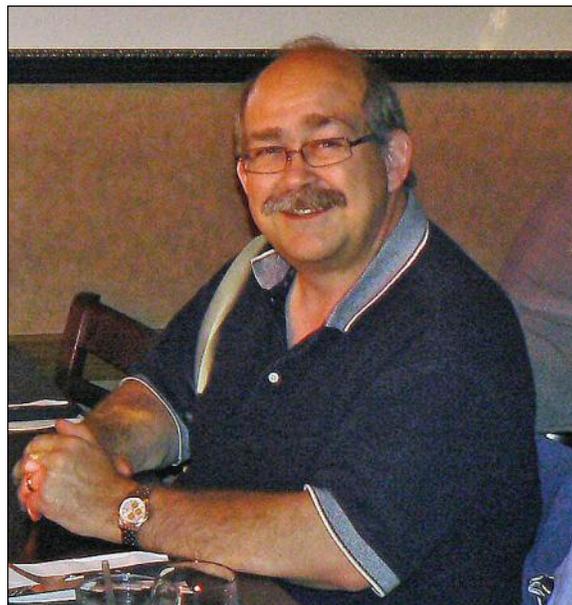
WD8QAI, W8CI, WØAIH



KØAD, WAØMHJ



## Jeff Martin WØJM

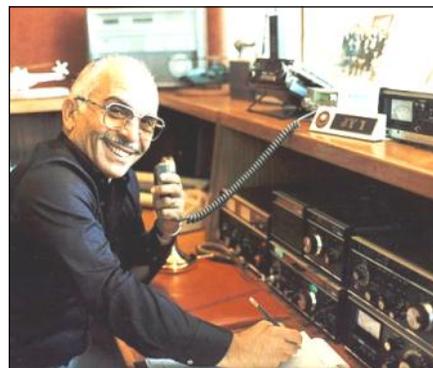


My first introduction to amateur radio was in 1967, when I was a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at Lincoln Junior High School in Beloit, Wisconsin. It happened one day when a buddy and I went to the industrial arts room to pick up our projects. When we arrived, the shop teacher was overseeing a ham radio meeting led by another 7<sup>th</sup> grader, Ed Jones, (E.J.) **WA9ZCP** (now **K5EJ**), who already had his Advance Class license. My friend left with his project, while I stayed for the meeting.

Eventually, E.J. and I became good friends. He had his radio shack in a walk-in closet. And, while I received a pat on the back for good grades, he received a tower, Hy-Gain 204BA, and an SB-220. A memorable event happened when we had a sleep-over at his house. We got up bright and early because E.J. said that's when the DX was active (whatever that meant).

Soon, he was talking to someone and exchanging signal reports and station descriptions. He introduced me to the other ham, shoved the microphone into my hands, and told me to say something. I don't remember what I said, but I do remember E.J. telling me I had just talked to **JY1**, King Hussein of Jordan! I remember thinking that was COOL! I wasn't a licensed ham yet, but the DX hook had been set.

For Christmas that year, I received a used Hallicrafters SX-90 receiver, which I used for listening on the shortwave and ham bands. My early adventures in ham radio continued, when I operated Field Day in 1968 at the Rockford Amateur Radio Association station, **W9AXD/9**. E.J. and I operated the entire 24 hours. I had a great time, but was dead tired the next day.



JY1 (SK)



Field Day, 1968

During the winter of 1968, the company that employed my father transferred him to their St. Paul facility. My folks settled outside of Hudson, Wisconsin. It was there that I met my Elmer, **W9LQC**, Tip Nelson (SK). Tip showed me boxes and boxes of QSL cards he received while operating during sunspot cycle 19 from April, 1954 through October, 1964. Cycle 19 peaked in October 1957, with a sunspot number of 253.8.



I couldn't wait to get on the air! At the time, I made friends with Jeff Iverson, **WB9DAN**, and we studied theory and code together. When we were ready, Tip gave us the Novice license test.

After passing the test, I bought and assembled a Heathkit DX-60B transmitter. The purchase was made with funds I had earned washing dishes and bussing tables at the Hudson Harbor restaurant.

I remember applying power to the DX-60B for the first time with a light bulb dummy load, while smoke billowed out from the back of the transmitter. With the help of my Elmer, I was able to correct my wiring error and eliminate the problem.

With five crystals and a working transmitter, I kicked off my ham radio career on Thanksgiving weekend in 1969 as **WN9CSI**. After nervously calling CQ, I logged my first QSO with **W1GTO**. As the days went by, I had a blast working stations in pursuit of the WAS and WAC awards.

I progressed in the hobby by upgrading to General and Advanced Class, and proudly sported my new **WB9CSI** callsign. With additional funds from doing electronic assembly and testing work at Viking Electronics, I saved enough money for my next rig, a Heathkit SB-102. This was a big step for me.

My operating was divided evenly between CW and SSB, although, I found it easier to snag the DX on CW. I discovered something else. I couldn't compete with the big guns on SSB.

My antennas consisted of trap dipoles and a homemade multiband vertical made with a 20-foot 4 x 4 and aluminum wire passing through TV standoffs. I used a pizza cutter to trim the radials for 10, 15, and 20 meters.

You couldn't have asked for a more challenging location. Our house was located at the very bottom of the Willow River Valley with surrounding hills.

To make matters worse, my father didn't want any towers on his property. However, with a high water table, the vertical seemed to work okay. But, I needed something bigger. After further discussions with my father, and his realization that I liked this hobby, he gave the go-ahead for a rooftop tripod and a Hy-Gain TH3-JR. Now my DXing

picked up and my totals were increasing.

Then there was college, work, marriage, four kids, divorce and another marriage. Ham radio was put on the back burner. Because of my move to Minnesota, I changed my call sign to **KEØFJ**. In 1993, I took my wife to a hamfest in St. Paul, where I got a good deal on a Kenwood TS-940S. Unfortunately, she also shared my father's dislike for towers. In my new QTH, I was an inactive ham just copying code with a small dipole.

We had an agreement that if we ever got a place up north, I would be able to have a ham station with antennas and tower(s). In November, 2004, we bought a lake home outside of Park Rapids, MN.

Then, in 2008, I finally got around to putting up a GAP Titan-DX vertical. For an 80-meter dipole, I used a slingshot and fishing pole to launch a line over a poplar tree. My wife thought this might just be a passing phase, and that this modest setup would satisfy me. She was wrong! I was back to chasing DX again. I upgraded to Extra Class in 2009, and added a Heathkit SB-220.

In 2010, my XYL and I went to Dayton with a shopping list. At Dayton, I purchased a Flex 5000A, Orion 2800, SteppIR DB-36 and a Begali Graciella Key.



My XYL works in research at the University of Minnesota, and helped me make comparisons between the various tower vendors. She didn't go for the 150 foot LUSO tower.

After Dayton, with funds depleted, I started



looking for a tower vendor. Not having done this before, I designed a matrix of five different vendors, and looked for a 70- to 75-foot tower that would support a 160-lb SteppIR DB-36.



In Hubbard county, it's recommended that towers withstand winds of 80 mph. It was a challenge getting the vendors to specify windloads other than what they listed. While a tower may be rated for 23 sq. feet of windload at 70 mph, there's no information for the higher winds.

I finally settled on a Heights CU-66. Both the US Tower HDX 572 MDPL and Tri-Ex LM-70 specs were too close to the 17.5 sq. ft. antenna area at 80 mph. The CU-66 is rated for 34 sq. ft. at 80 mph. The tower was going to be installed at the peak of a 100-foot ridge, so I wanted to make sure I have a built in safety factor.

To install the tower, I worked with a local Park Rapids crew named Backhoe Pete. They dug the hole, put in the preassembled rebar cage that I bought, inserted the 4-ft. diameter by 10-ft. long Sonotube and tower stubs. They poured 4 yards of concrete, and from start to finish, were done with everything in 4 hours. I was amazed at how fast it went.

After the cement had cured, the tower arrived and I had the crew back. They installed the 4-ft. base and the tower. The winch for raising the tower was installed and tested. So far, the progress was good.

But after searching through all the boxes, the bracket to mount the high torque motor used for

tilting the tower was missing. Until that arrived, the XYL and I raised and lowered the tower several times. We realized, *never* buy a tilt-over tower without a motor! What that motor does in 15 minutes took over 2 hours by hand!!!

Due to the manufacturer's delays, the tower wasn't installed until the first week of December. In the meantime, I opened the SteppIR box and did an inventory. I thought I'd pass out. This wasn't an antenna; it was an Erector Set for adults. Many of the parts were similar to each other. With help from the guys at SteppIR, I found that I was missing a boom stabilizer tube. They shipped the missing part along with a clamp upgrade.

The boom was resting outside on saw horses. The tilt-plate was installed and the EHUs (element housing unit) and trombone elements were put together. Final assembly was done, and the tower was tilted over. My XYL asked some good questions, thereby reducing the assembly time.

Now, at this part of the story, I'm supposed to rave about working Indonesia with ½ watt, using this antenna, right? Well, I can say that this antenna has allowed me to work DX that I couldn't even hear before. Yes, I'm a happy camper.

My DXCC count is 193 worked, which includes a "barefoot" contact with A5A on 17 meters. I'm working towards the 5-band DXCC award. I've completed 20 and 15, and have a few left to work on 10, 40 and 80 meters. This winter I'd like to increase my CW speed, along with working DX on RTTY and PSK. One of my goals is to operate from a rare DX location. I'm currently looking for a mentor to tell me what it takes to organize such a trip.

73, Jeff Martin, WØJM

Note: See the next page for photos of my tower project.



# WØJM's Tower Project

A look at Jeff's tower project from start to finish.





# The MWA Contest Corner

## THURSDAY NIGHT CONTESTING

### NS Sprints – The Fastest 30 Minutes in Contesting

by Al Dewey, KØAD

I am an avid contester and a part time DXer. I would say my amateur radio activity breaks down something like this:

- Contesting: 90%
- Chasing DX: 5%
- Drive Time VHF/UHF
- Rag Chewing: 5%



The problem is that most contests typically fall on weekends, with most of the major ones being in the fall and winter. So, what does a guy like me do during the week to get the contest “fix?” Several years ago, as I was tuning around one evening, I discovered some type of high speed CW contest. What I had stumbled across was the NS Sprint contest sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club. Ever since then, Thursday nights have never quite been the same for me.

The NS Sprints run for 30 minutes each Thursday night (Friday am UTC) from 0230 to 0300z. They use the “sprint” format, which is used in the NCJ Sprints twice a year on Saturday evenings. Under the sprint format, you call CQ, and are able to work ONE station before you have to QSY at least 1 kHz. If you call a station (i.e. Search & Pounce), you can work that station and one more before you have to QSY. Sprinters call this a couplet. This means, of course, that you cannot just stay on one frequency and run. You really have to brush up on your search and pounce skills. Many contesters feel the sprints are the ultimate test of contesting skill.

There are several fundamental differences between the NS Sprints and the regular NCJ Sprints. First of all, the NS Sprints run on Thursday nights almost every week, while the NCJ Sprints run on Saturday evenings twice a year. The NS Sprints run for 30 minutes, while the NCJ Sprints run for

four hours. The NS Sprints include 20, 40, 80, and 160. The NCJ Sprints include 20, 40, and 80 but not 160. The maximum power in the NS Sprints is 100 watts, while the NCJ Sprints allow full legal power (I especially like this NS rule, as I feel it kind of levels the playing field). Finally, the NS Sprints allow you to

count multipliers on each band. If you work the same multiplier on four bands, that counts as four multipliers. This final difference is VERY crucial and adds a major strategy factor to the NS Sprint. You only have 30 minutes to work four bands. So, you have to decide whether it’s better to stay on a high rate band, or go to a low rate band to pick up multipliers. Knowing how much time to spend on each band is what separates the winners from the also-rans.



#### NS Sprinters Gather at Dayton - 2011

Left-To-Right:

NR1X, K4BAI, K8MR (in back), W9RE, W1UJ,  
K1GU, KU8E, W4NZ, W1NN

Missing from photo but in attendance:

KØAD, K4RO, K8MM, KW8N, NØAX, N3BB,  
N8EA, NO5W, WØYK, W1FJ, W5ZL, WF7T.

*Photo taken by K3WW*



	NSL VIII (‘10)	NSL IX (‘10)	NSL X (‘10-11)	NSLXI (‘11)	NSLXII (‘11)	NSLXIII (‘11-12)
ATLANTIC	NO3M	NO3M	NO3M	NO3M	NO3M	NO3M
EAST CENTRAL	N4OGW	K8MM	N8EA	K9BGL	KW8N	N8EA
WEST CENTRAL	N3BB	WDØT @KDØS	WDØT @KDØS	WDØT @KDØS	K5OT @K5TR	KØAD
WEST	W7WHY	K7SS	K7SS	K7SS	K7SS	KØEU
NCCC in CA/NV	N6RO	N6RO	N6RO	N6RO	N6RO	N6RO

Figure 1. Winners of Recent NS Sprint

### Climbing the Ladder

Instead of being a standalone contest, the NS Sprints allow you to work your way up a ladder. Each Ladder lasts for 8 weeks. You get to throw out your two low scores during that time. It’s your best 6 weeks out of the 8 that count. The Ladder is broken into 6 Divisions: Atlantic, East Central, West Central, West, and NCCC in California. The NS Sprints are currently in the middle of their fourteenth ladder.

Figure 1 shows the winners of the last six ladder competitions going back to 2010. As you can see, **N6RO** and **NO3M** typically dominate their division. The other regions have some fierce competition, and I was even able to edge out a very gracious **WDØT** in the last ladder competition.

It’s really a kick to try to work yourself up the ladder each week. Besides being a lot of fun, the NS Sprints are great practice for the North American Sprint Contests sponsored twice a year by the National Contest Journal. As mentioned earlier, many feel the NA Sprints (especially the CW Version) are the ultimate test of contester skill.

### Dipping Your Toe in the NS Sprints

If you happen to tune across the NS Sprints some Thursday evening between 9:30 and 10:00pm in the summer (or between 8:30 and 9:00pm in the Winter), you might get scared away by the speed. However, don’t fret.

For the thirty minutes leading up to the Thursday Night Sprints, there is an informal Slow Speed

Sprint (SNS). Code speeds in the SNS range between 20 and 25 wpm, but all other rules apply

Results are not tabulated for SNS, but it gives newcomers a chance to get the feel of NS at a reasonable speed. Many of the regular NSers turn their speed down to mentor the “newbies.”

Another recent development that will give newcomers the “feel” of NS is the newly creat-

ed RTTY version. RTTY NS runs each Thursday one hour prior to the regular CW NS (8:30pm in the summer, and 7:30 in the winter). The rules are the same, but everything is done in RTTY mode.

Although the results are compiled and posted for the RTTY NS, there is no regional or ladder competition for the RTTY version. Sprint NS software templates are available for the N1MM Logger, Win-Test, TRLog and Writelog. The Writelog template was developed by our own Pat Cain, **KØPC**.

### Winning the Wine

Scoring for the NS Sprint is totally on the honor system. At the end of each NS on Thursday evening, total scores are simply posted to 3830. For those who have not used 3830, all you need to do is go to <http://www.hornucopia.com/3830score/>. Select the NCCC Sprint Contest for that week and simply fill out the form telling how many QSOs and multipliers you made on each band, along with your total score and any brief comments you want to make. By the next morning, a summary of scores is posted on the CQ-CONTEST reflector. Periodically, the ladder is updated and the results placed at <http://www.ncccsprint.com/results.html>.

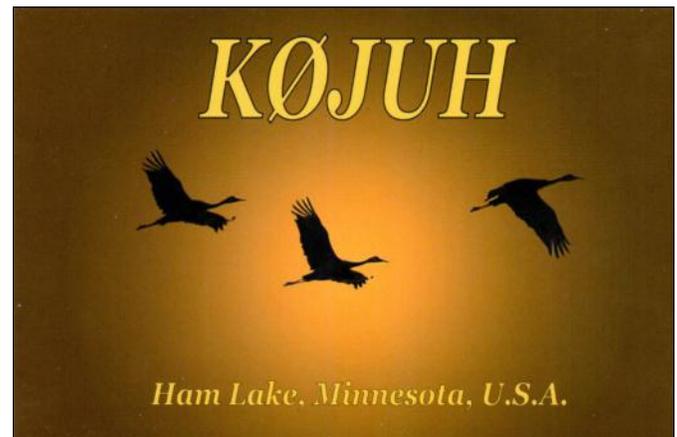
At the end of the 8 week ladder period, the winners in each division are announced. To determine who wins the prize for that ladder, all the division winner names are put in a hat along with a name drawn from the “hat” (It’s really a little more complicated than that, but too difficult to explain here). The winner of each ladder gets a bottle of wine from the **WØYK** Vineyard.



## Final Thoughts

The Thursday Night Sprints many not be for everyone. For me, it's a respite in the middle of the week that I look forward to every Thursday. It keeps my contesting skills honed for the many weekend contests held during the year. Like all aspects of our hobby, a culture has built up around this event and "NSers" like to gather at places like Dayton and Visalia. Besides myself, **KØPC** and **KØTG** are regular participants in NS. Occasionally, **NØKK** and **NØAT** will show up also. Give it a try!

NEXT NS					
THURSDAY NIGHT MADNESS 2012-2013					
Week	Date	Time UTC	Rules	Saturday Event	Comments
<b>NSL XV - August/September 2012</b>					
Week 1	03-August	0230-0300		NAQP CW	
Week 2	10-August	0230-0300			
Week 3	17-August	0230-0300			
Week 4	24-August	0230-0300			
Week 5	31-August	0230-0300			
Week 6	07-September	0230-0300		NAS CW	
Week 7	14-September	0230-0300			
Week 8	21-September	0230-0300			
<b>NSL XVI - January/February 2013</b>					
Week 1	04-January	0230-0300			
Week 2	11-January	0230-0300		NAQP CW	
Week 3	18-January	0230-0300			
Week 4	25-January	0230-0300			
Week 5	01-February	0230-0300		NAS CW	
Week 6	08-February	0230-0300			
Week 7	15-February	0230-0300			
Week 8	22-February	0230-0300			



Gary Meyer, KCØSB, aka Garrick Photography, provided these images. Visit Gary's website to see more of his wildlife photography. QSL by UX5UO.  
<http://www.garrickmeyerwildlifeprints.com/>

Gary Grivna KØGX

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# A Tour of RF Concepts

by Tom Traughber, WØZX

In April of this year, while on a road trip with my XYL Kris - NØJHL, we had the opportunity to visit RF Concepts in Longmont, Colorado. RF Concepts is the manufacturer of the famous Alpha line of HF and VHF amplifiers. My tour guide was Molly Hardman, WØMOM, a vice-president of the organization.



Molly, WØMOM, and Tom, WØZX

The plant shares the second floor of an office building with a firm that manufactures printed circuit boards, many of which find their way into Alpha amplifiers.

I have been a longtime customer of RF Concepts and their predecessor organization, and have always been impressed with the quality of their products, which are as close to “milspec” as you can get. I was truly surprised to see what a small, compact manufacturing operation they have.

These amplifiers appear to be truly handmade from the ground up.

RF Concepts is in the planning stage to offer a 4 KW auto tune HF antenna tuner. It may be in production this summer.

Overall, this was a real treat to see a classic manufacturer of quality American made ham products, a rare quantity these days. Molly Hardman was very generous to spend the time to show me around.



Final assembly of the Alpha 9500

(See more photos on the next page.)





**"ASK THE HAM WHO OWNS ONE"** ETMO



Alpha 9500 amplifiers awaiting final assembly



Tom visiting with RF Concepts technician & Molly.



After a 24-hour key-down burn-in, these former military electronics technicians ensure the amplifiers meet specifications.

## 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. All contributions (including annual dues) may now be paid on our secure site, using PayPal or credit card.



ed - Bernie granted us permission to publish an article he wrote that appeared in the Daily DX Bulletin. He addressed the subject of how to go about working DX - the right way. His many years as a DXer on both ends of the pileup qualify him for "preaching to the choir."



Subscribers of the Daily DX Newsletter,

This is just a friendly reminder, at the request of several subscribers of The Daily DX, for everyone to please listen carefully before transmitting with the goal of trying to work any DX station. I know I am preaching mostly to the choir here. You've all heard "Listen, Listen, Listen." But, what, exactly, is meant by that?

Once you find the frequency that the DX station is transmitting on, take a few minutes to listen. Are you able to copy the full call signs he is working? Where is he mostly working (Europe, W6, ZL, JA, South America)? Put your receiver on his transmit frequency. When he gives a callsign of the next station he is working, take your B VFO and see if you can hear the station he is trying to work. Switch back and forth for a few minutes, until you figure out some key things. What is the frequency range that he listening in; who is he mostly working; how long in between QSOs is it taking him to pick up the next call? These are all clues as to what's going on. Your object is to be the next QSO, and you need to anticipate where he will be listening next. In order to do that, you are going to be much more successful if you don't call in the blind, but rather figure out his operating pattern. Spend a few minutes doing this, and it will save you a lot of minutes (or hours) of just blind calling.

Here are a few other points. Make sure you do not transmit on top of the DX station. If you don't know how to operate split, read the manual or ask someone to show you how to do it. Again, I want to emphasize if you don't hear the DX station, don't call. Wait and LISTEN until you can hear the DX. Again, I realize I am preaching to the choir.

73 and good DX!

**Bernie McClenny, W3UR**



## 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](mailto:bernie@dailydx.com), or at <http://www.dailydx.com/trial.htm>.

## TCDXA Treasury Report

June 15, 2012

Submitted by TCDXA Secretary-Treasurer Mike, KØCOM

### Income:

Carryover from 2011	1921.58
2012 dues collected	3416.34
Misc. donations	426.03
Door prize ticket sales	443.00
Dinner Ticket Sales, Malpelo program	975.00
Bank service fee (reversal)	9.95
<b>Total YTD income</b>	<b>\$ 7191.90</b>

### Expenses YTD:

Bank service fees	(11.90)
Office supplies, guest dinners and misc.	(180.68)
Memorial for Gary Strong to Mayo	(200.00)
MWA Plaque	(75.00)
Food Expense, Malpelo program	(1010.90)
DX Hall of Fame Reception for WØGJ	(261.00)
DXpedition Donation, 3CØE	(250.00)
<b>Total YTD expenses \$</b>	<b>(\$ 1989.48)</b>

Current Checking Balance	5202.42
PayPal balance	0.00
Cash on hand	0.00
<b>Total current funds</b>	<b>\$ 5202.42</b>



VKØIR  
ZL9CI  
A52A  
T33C  
3B9C  
TX9  
CP6CW  
3YØX  
K7C  
5A7A  
VU4AN

K5D  
VK9DWX  
FT5GA  
3D2ØCR  
E4X  
CYØ/NØTG  
VP8ORK  
VU4PB  
STØR  
3D2R



K4M  
TX3A  
KMØO/9M6  
YS4U  
YI9PSE  
ZL8X  
4W6A  
T32C  
HKØNA  
7O6T

XU7MWA  
S21EA  
J2ØRR  
J2ØMM  
BS7H  
N8S  
3B7SP  
3B7C  
5JØA  
VP6DX  
TX5C  
9XØR

## TCDXA DX DONATION POLICY

The mission of TCDXA is to support major DXpeditions by providing funding. Annual contributions from TCDXA members are the major source of funding for this mission.

A funding request from the organizers of a planned DXpedition is directed to the TCDXA Donation Manager, Ron, NØAT, [TCDXA@n0at.net](mailto:TCDXA@n0at.net), who makes an initial evaluation of the request, and discusses the attributes with the TCDXA Board of Directors. The request will be judged by how well DXpedition plans meet several 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 a 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 contributing clubs  
QSLs with logos of contributing clubs  
Online logs/pilot stations  
Up front cost to each operator  
Support by NCDXF & other clubs  
LoTW log submissions  
Success of previous operations by same group  
Valid license and DXCC approval  
Funding mode: USA and/or foreign financial address

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

