



Newsletter of the
Twin City DX Association

Volume 4, Issue 1
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WØGJ PRESENTS THE VU7RG STORY



TCDXA's well traveled DXer Dr. Glenn Johnson, **WØGJ**, took time from his busy personal schedule to head up one of the teams that operated from the Lakshadweep Islands - the #2 country on the Most Wanted List.

As Glenn tells us with a smile, you can hardly get there from Bemidji, Minnesota. It's a long, long, airplane ride. After leaving home on January 5th, he finally arrived in Cochin, India, on January 9th, where he joined the rest of the Agatti Island team. After months of planning and hard work, **VU7RG** hit the air waves on January 15th.

Glenn's story, beginning on the next page, reveals the extensive planning that went into making the **VU7RG** operation possible. And, his photos bring to life this exciting DXperience.

For those of you who missed the March 19th membership meeting, Tony, **KMØO** recounts *his* DXperience of operating the CQWW DX CW contest last November from Cambodia, signing **XU7MWA**. Tony's story begins on page 10.

VU7RG Agatti Summary

by Dr. Glenn Johnson, WØGJ



l-r: Paul **W8AEF**, Neil **VA7DX**, Bob **K4UEE**, Steve **VE7CT**, Madison **W5MJ**, Glenn **WØGJ**, Joe **DK5WL**, Franz **DL9GFB**, Darwish **A61M**, Jun **JH4RHF**, Arno **OE9AMJ**

After a successful Andaman Island (VU4) Hamfest and DXpedition, NIAR (National Institute of Amateur Radio), began organizing for Lakshadweep Islands, the #2 Most Wanted.

After a lot of effort, permission was finally obtained for activation. Just like on the Andamans, a venue had to be developed to allow foreign hams to get landing permission in the Lakshadweeps, as entry permission is tightly controlled. A Hamfest was this venue. In mid-2006, things were arranged for operation on three islands with three groups of foreign operators. Later, permission was granted for a group of Indian hams to activate Minicoy Island, the #1 Most Wanted IOTA. No foreigners are allowed access to Minicoy.

I was part of the International Advisory Committee, working with NIAR and Bharathi, **VU2RBI** to obtain permissions. I was assigned to lead the Agatti Island group.

After several months of intensive planning for January 2007, rescheduling for December 2006 and

then rescheduling again for January 2007, we lost 3 of our originally scheduled 15 operators. One operator couldn't make his connections to India at the last minute.



Agatti Island as seen from Google Earth.

Eleven of us from seven countries arrived almost simultaneously in Cochin, India, on January 9. Our original ferry to the Lakshadweep Islands was scheduled for January 11. Just before our departures from home, the ferry was rescheduled to January 12 with arrival on Agatti in the afternoon of January 13, giving us exactly one day to set up all of our antennas and stations.



Waiting for baggage to clear customs.

The way things worked out, we needed these extra days to get our unaccompanied baggage cleared through the red tape of customs. We had been told and promised that our 1000 pounds of antennas, coax, wires and radios could be just picked up and we'd be on our way. Nothing could have been farther from the truth. Even at the 11th hour, we didn't know if we would be getting our equipment. To make a long story short, the title of the shipping manifest had a typo and the technicalities of customs in India demanded everything to match. We ended up paying several hundred dollars for duty and handling fees, getting our equipment literally hours before our departure to the islands.



Our Agatti baggage awaiting transfer to the ferry.

After transferring all of our luggage and equipment to the ferry boat, 24 hours later we found ourselves transferring by a couple small boats to the most gorgeous of tropical islands with pure white coral sand and beautiful palm trees. Robinson Crusoe would have been jealous!



Main Street, Agatti Island.

While on the ferry, we reviewed our Operations Manual and made assignments for a quick deployment and erection of our antennas. We did not know exactly what our room situation would be. As it turned out, it would be ideal.

We stayed at the Agatti Island Beach Resort, a very nice resort on the south end of the 7-mile long island. There was perfect white sand everywhere! We were on the west side of the island, but where we were, the island is only 200-300 yards wide. We had perfect unobstructed shots to Europe and North America. To Asia and Japan, we only had a few palm trees obstructing the path.



The Agatti Island Beach Resort.
Ham shack on the left, rooms on the right.

Our “hotel” rooms were nice and cool. Our rooms were located adjacent to one another; located just feet from a meeting hall, which became our operation headquarters.

We scheduled 3-hour operating shifts, some back to back. Our resort restaurant changed their meal times to match our shift changes. Our food was wonderful! We all gained weight!



Inside the Agatti ham shack.

Agatti Island has a population of about 8000, 100% Muslim.



Agatti kids with a kid.



Agatti’s 100 KW solar electrical system.



We want to thank ICOM for lending us ICOM 756 Pro IIIs for our five stations. MicroHAM provided microKEYER interfaces that mated our radios to the computers, and also did the CW and RTTY interfacing. We used WriteLog on our laptops. Basically, each station was the same, with I.C.E. 419B bandpass filters. The five stations were dedicated to 160 & 17m, 80 & 12m, 40 & 10m, 30m and 20m. SteppIR provided two 2-element beams.

Our antennas were as follows:

160m: a top-loaded vertical at the water’s edge. This antenna netted 2152 Qs with 133 North Americans in the log! Nothing like a salt-water based vertical at the grayline!!!



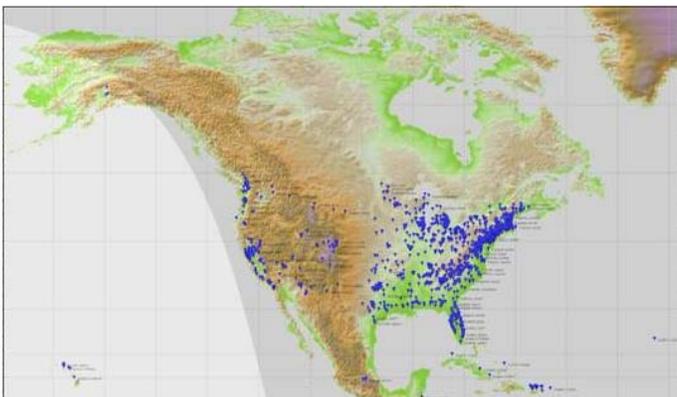
160m top-loaded vertical at water’s edge.

80m: a pair of phased top-loaded verticals right at the high tide mark with a combination of elevated radials and radials in the salt water. Most of our evenings (NA mornings) we would find it best to beam long path, and most of our mornings (NA evenings) we would find it best short path. We netted 4425 Q's with an incredible 1015 North Americans in the log!



Our pair of 80m phased verticals at the high-tide mark.

40m: Arno brought a 4-Square Array from Austria. The directivity of this antenna was incredible! We netted 5992 Qs with 1240 North Americans in the log.



Our North American lowband (160 to 40m) contacts.

30m: We had a single vertical out on the jetty over salt water. We had a station dedicated to this band which was open about 20 hours a day. We netted 6494 Qs with 898 North Americans in the log.

For 20, 17 and 15m, we had a pair of SVDA (Switchable Vertical Dipole Arrays) for each of these bands that could be switched to long path or short path. Planted right at the high tide mark, these antennas were killers!



Pairs of SVDAs (Switchable Vertical Dipole Arrays) for 20, 17, & 15m.

For 20, 17, 15, 12 & 10m, we had two SteppIR 2-element beams, each about 10 meters high. We used these in all directions, usually beaming perpendicular to the fixed SVDA's.



One of the 2 element SteppIRs.

Our Agatti Island Q count for the upper bands were:

- 20m - 7156
- 17m - 7397
- 15m - 4523
- 12m - 2001
- 10m - 710.

Our total number of (dupes-removed) contacts was 40,851, with 5759 North Americans in the log. (14% North Americans.) 78% of our contacts were CW, 5% RTTY and 17% SSB.

Our emphasis was on the hard to get North and South America stations, and to fill the need for CW contacts from VU7. Many times a day, we would leave high rate European runs to ask for North/South America stations. We would often leave the high run rates to go to slower lower bands as the grayline passed.

Our pilots Dr. Bill **K6GNX** in California, Don **N1DG** in Massachusetts, Bill **W4ZV** in North Carolina and Klaus **DL1XX** in Germany were sending us SMS messages on our cell phone many times a day, alerting us to band openings to our hard to reach areas. Without their help, we wouldn't have had as much success with North America.

Our team was the most compatible, hard working and fun team I've ever had the privilege of working with on a DXpedition! We were as follows:

Austria:	Arno Metzler	OE9AMJ
Canada:	Neil King	VA7DX
	Steve Wright	VE7CT
Germany:	Joe Pick	DK5WL
	Franz Berndt	DL9GFB
Japan:	Jun Tanaka	JH4RHF
United Arab Emirates:		
	Mohammed Darwish	A61M
United States:		
	Bob Allphin	K4UEE
	Madison Jones	W5MJ
	Paul Playford	W8AEF
	Glenn Johnson	WØGJ

The total number of contacts made by the four island teams: 110,000.

Bangaram Island Team:

- WA6UVF Ellen Parker
- JA3NHL Tak Yokouchi
- JR3MVF Mio Myoshi
- JA3UB Jiro Myoshi

Kadmat Island Team:

- AA4NN Joe Blackwell
- N6TQS Doug Faunt
- WA9QJH Adolph Kryger
- SP3DOI Les Fabjanski
- SP3CYY Jan Ambrozy
- DF2IC Greg Fisser
- DL4KQ Frank Rosenkranz
- DL5OAB Bernd Willeke
- DL7DF Siegfried Presch
- F4EGD Sylvain Lefevre
- F5CWU Florent Moudar
- F6IIT Pat Vermote
- PA2R Rob Snieder
- PA3EWP Ron Stuy
- VU2NIS Nisha Mohan

Minicoy Island Team: (VU7MY)

- VU2BL Bhanu
- VU2JOS Jose Jacob
- VU2UWZ Madhu Mohan
- VU2RBI Bharathi Prasad
- VU3DSM Mahathi

Yes, Agatti Island is beautiful. The Agatti Island people are very proud of their island. Literally once a week, the ENTIRE island is raked and swept to keep them neat & clean.....all 8 miles of the island!



Lightning Protection System at KØIEA



After being hit by lightning, I decided to employ a system to reduce the chances of the lightning's energy entering the house and damaging the equipment. Interestingly enough, it was my 2 meter verticals on the tower closest to the house that took the hits. In collaboration

with Dave, **KIØZ**, we chose the DX Engineering devices. (ICE also makes good protection devices). Numerous articles have been written about the dangers of lightning and how to protect our equipment. A few of the web sites I went to are: www.w8ji.com/lightning, www.dxengineering.com and www.polyphaser.com. There are many other sites and a wealth of information out there. If you go to these web sites, you will read that "It's best to have the tower located at least 50 feet from the house."

I'm not going to repeat all the information from these articles. In short, as I understand it, we want to make everything at the same potential. To accomplish this we must employ a "low-impedance Single Point Ground (SPG) for our home and equipment." In other words, we want to connect everything together. I measured the distances from the well to the house (service entrance), and from the service entrance to the towers. The total distance was 300 ft. We then went to Thompson Lightning Protection, Inc. in South Saint Paul, (www.tlpinc.com) and purchased 300 ft. of braided cable, together with various cable clamps and a surge protector for the electrical service entrance. Copper strapping is recommended by some of the articles, but Thompson uses the braided cable. This copper cable consists of 36 strands of #16 wire and is ½ inch diameter.

So, to recap, everything is at the same potential. The shack equipment, bulkhead devices, towers, rotator control cable, coax from the antennas, electrical service entrance, 80/40 meter vertical

and the 130ft well casing are all tied together. The braided cable is buried, as are the rotator and coax cables.

Admittedly, I haven't put the time, effort, money and energy into the ultimate lightning protection system. However, what I have done is a far cry from what I had before, which was nothing more than a few 8 foot ground rods. Many other TCDXA members have installed their own system. Not surprisingly, everyone seems to have their own thoughts on this subject. Good luck during this upcoming thunderstorm season!

73 de Dave, KØIEA



Bulkhead and remote coax switch are mounted to two ground rods. Lower detail shows PolyPhaser coax surge suppressors.



PolyPhaser rotor cable shunt protector mounted under a plastic rain hat.

**DXING and FLYING - two great pastimes!
WØKW just happens to enjoy them both.**



When Ken, WØKW, isn't chasing DX or gabbing with the boys on 3768, you may find him checking out the view from the wild blue yonder.



T-28 Trojan

This post WWII trainer develops 1425 hp and cruises at 235 mph. This aircraft feels and sounds like a WWII fighter.

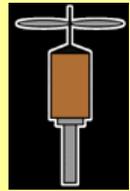


**American Champion
Citabria Adventure 7GCAA**

Two seat, tandem 160 hp at 2700 rpm.
Cruise speed: 135 mph.

THE SUITCASE HF MOBILE STATION

Jim, KØJUH, designed his mobile station so it could be easily moved from one location to another. He wanted a system he could use in his truck, at home, on Field Day, or haul on a DXpedition.



Hy-Q logo

Mounted on a cedar board is an ICOM 706, speaker, Bencher paddle, and a W4RT Auto Antenna resonator. The cedar board is cut to size, and rests on top of the console. The rear of the board fits into a storage recess in the dash that holds everything firmly in place. The station resides in a Pelican hard case, when not in use. The antenna (*not shown*) is a screw-driver vertical from Hy-Q Antennas, mounted on a receiver hitch for easy, quick mounting and removal.



A LOOK BACK

JANUARY 1974 TCDXA MEETING JENNING'S RED COACH INN - ST LOUIS PARK



Front Row, L to R: Wayne Holzer, **WØNAR** sk; Glen Bartoo, **WØNG** sk; Larry Shima, **WØPAN**; Dick Sanner, **WAØVBV** (now **W9NG**); John Pembroke, **WØNUH**.

Middle Row, L to R: Johnny Doremus, **WØAW** sk; Dennis Luther, **KØWWX**; Bill Higgins, **WØYDB**; Fred Deziel, **WØHP**; Jack Chapman, **WØHZ**; Pat Sanner, **WAØKVL**; Nick Laub, **WØHC** (now **WØCA**).

Back Row, L to R: Doc Holzapfel, **WØUUE** sk; Bob Parlin, **WØSFU** sk; Ed Hardt, **WØJS**; Bill Davies, **WØYCR** sk; Clyde Norton, **WØELA** sk; Bill Cuniff, **KØVW**, sk; Dick George, **WØTRF**.

Can you remember the last time you saw a “suit & tie” at a meeting?

no knowledge of it's actual condition, but I knew I could depend on the 900, and I like it for traveling. It is built like a tank, and has a huge heat sink. I didn't think I would have to deal with a lot of strong adjacent signals, so I figured the 900's single stage of 400-Hz filtration should be adequate.

What accessory items would I take? I had to consider all possibilities. I wouldn't have the option of ordering overnight from Ham Radio Outlet, or even of running down to the local Radio Shack for components or cables. Of course, I would bring a computer, my older, reliable Dell laptop running Windows 98SE and Writelog contest software, with CT, NA, and SD along for backup. Interfaces for parallel port keying and serial port radio control. The FL-2100's T/R relay would be very slow to change over. The CW sending delay feature in Writelog would prevent hot-switching and first-character truncation on CW sent from the computer, but how would I deal with CW sent from the paddle? I would take a K1EL WinKeyer, but it would be used in standalone mode, as my laptop lacked a second serial port for WinKeyer control. My own paddle, of course. And, all of the interconnecting cables and adapters that I could imagine possibly needing.

I decided to take the gear as carry-on luggage, and not risk checking it. When I was finally ready to go, everything fit into a medium-sized gym bag with a reinforced bottom and plastic bubble-pack cushioning the individual items. It was heavy, but I was able to keep my gear with me at all times.



My carry-on bag.

IN PHNOM PENH

Airport Security at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport is very curious about my carry-on. Everything passes after tests for (I think) explosives residue. Security checks in LA and Taipei are casual in comparison.

In Phnom Penh, Deb has been renting a place in a Cambodian neighborhood, hidden away down a narrow alley in the center of a commercial block near the river. Her home is a traditional wooden house, supported 12 feet above the ground on poles. Around a small courtyard live our neighbors, including five dressmakers in the enclosed space below, a jeweler across the alley, and a couple of teachers. Deb pays a “western” price of \$250 a month for the house, which is large with a spacious outdoor balcony. Cambodians go more for the modern concrete and tile style. They look down their noses at the traditional wood homes, but we love ours.



Deb on the balcony of our traditional wood house in Phnom Penh - built on poles, 12 feet above the ground.

Phnom Penh is different from what I had expected. I had imagined something closer to the Cambodia of ten years ago than the country of today. Yes, it is crowded, and, while there is certainly a lot of poverty and corruption and some very poor housing, in many ways it is surprisingly modern. Although it is, by most measures, the poorest country in SE Asia (even after Laos), Cambodia has come a long way since the days of Khmer Rouge rule and the constitutional crisis of 1996, and to most people, small improvements appear to seem large.

The middle class is small but growing. There is a huge variety of excellent, cheap restaurants, and more expensive western ones, too. There are modern, western-style supermarkets and also traditional markets, where just about any food item you want (or don't want) can be found. As a westerner accustomed to certain comforts, with a little persistence, Deb has usually been able find most consumer items she wants.



A traditional market scene.



Cycle Vendor: Items are sold from carts, bicycles and street-side stands all over town.

Ten years ago, almost none of the streets were paved, and practically no one made unnecessary trips out of their homes. Parks were deserted, and violence and gunshots ruled the streets after dark. Now, the streets and parks are filled with activity. Hundreds of people rise early for Tai Chi or aero-

bics, or just a walk in the park. We enjoy walking to the riverfront just before sunrise, and meeting the dozens of monks out gathering early-morning offerings. Various festivals, held throughout the year, draw huge crowds to the city's parks.



The Water Festival (biggest festival of the year) brings many to the riverside for boat races.

In the evenings, the sidewalks along the parks become restaurants. A family will lay out two large mats: one is the kitchen, the other is the dining room. From a traditional charcoal grill, they offer family specialties for eat-in or take-out. Eating “off the street” is an adventure. The food is delicious and safe and unbelievably inexpensive.



Chicken-On-A-Stick: Typical grilled street food. (That’s me indulging.) Inset: Grilled Eels-On-A-Stick; for a different palate.

The population of Phnom Penh is about 1.2 million. There are relatively few cars, at least compared to the number of motor scooters, estimated to be 400,000 to 500,000. Scooters are the standard transportation here, and routinely carry loads that would be handled by larger vehicles just about anywhere else. On the streets of Phnom Penh you'll find cars, SUVs, trucks, scooters, bicycles, push-carts, and even the occasional elephant, not to mention the tuk-tuks (taxi carts pulled by motor scooters) and cyclos (bicycle taxis). One thing you won't find is many stoplights. This makes for absolute chaos on the streets, which, as I can testify, is very disconcerting to newcomers. Traffic situations that are routine in Phnom Penh would probably result in violent confrontations in the USA. As confusing as it seems, there are rules that we learn through careful observation. But often we see newly arrived westerners, standing paralyzed at the curb, afraid to step off.



Big loads are carried all over town on scooters. This is not a particularly extreme example.

After a few days with Deb and her friends in Phnom Penh, it is time for me to leave for Sihanoukville. Deb lets me go without complaint. She has got to be the world's best ham radio YL!

IN SIHANOUKVILLE

I arrive in Sihanoukville on Thursday. I'm met at the bus station by Wim, **XU7TZG**, and Champ, **E21EIC**, who deposit me at the DX Shack station.



l-r: Champ, **E21EIC**; Wim, **ON6TZ/XU7TZG**; and Bruce, **AA4XR/XU7ADF**.

I discover that Champ and a team of Thai hams will work the contest with low power and small antennas from Wim's place. Bruce, **AA4XR**, will do a beachfront low-power-and-wire single-band 80-meter entry. The three stations are within a mile of each other. I wonder how we will co-exist. I am the only one planning to use an amplifier.

The antennas at DX Shack seem to be in good condition. At least the SWRs check out. I climb the tower with my camera and thoroughly enjoy the view, anticipating what is to come. Back in the shack, the amplifier is one of the most used pieces of equipment I've ever seen that still works. Stuck to it, on masking tape, are cryptic and somewhat worrying comments from previous users. Likewise the rotor control box. I add the FT-900 to the station and connect everything to a voltage stabilizer



DX Shack guest house. Typical stone & tile construction. Much classier on the outside than in.



20m tall steel tower with Create Design triband yagi and wire lowband antennas.

(necessary). I discover that the FL-2100Z's plate current/forward power meter does not work. I tune for maximum forward power as indicated on the external SWR meter, and work about 500 QSOs over the next couple of days to warm up.



View from top of the tower to JA and NA.



View from top of the tower to Europe.

I think about how to handle the pileups, which could be large. I'll definitely be the loudest signal out of Cambodia, and probably the only one that most contest participants have a chance of working. I'll be a double-multiplier for many. How will I maintain control? I decide to send "R XU7MWA" after every QSO. This will give everyone a chance to "return to the starting gate," and hopefully prevent the "CL"s and "?"s that plague the guys who don't sign often enough. When the pile is small, say two or three callers or less, I may use a simple "TU" to speed things up.

I think about the need to train my brain and ears to "lock in" on one particular signal in the pile, and to not be distracted by anything. I know from experience that this will allow me to pick a weaker signal out of a pileup, even in the presence of several stronger callers. I decide that, once I reply to a station, I will always complete the QSO, and not allow others to "muscle in." And, I won't respond to anyone calling out of turn, including tail-enders. I mostly follow these rules.

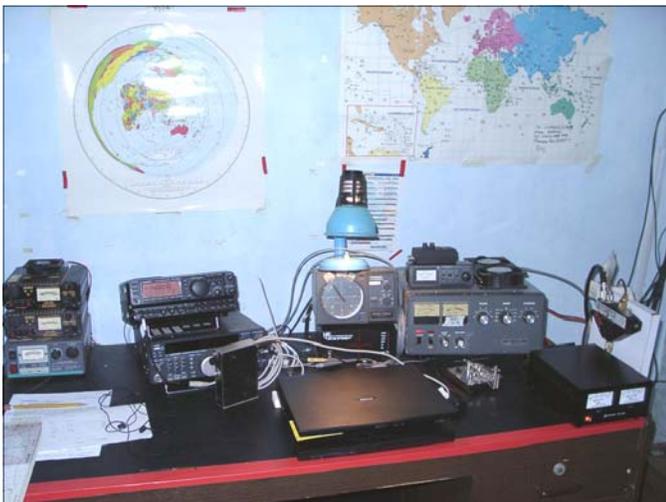
THE CONTEST

Zero-hour is 7am local time on Saturday morning. I like the start time; I'm still jet-lagged, so the daylight should help keep me as alert and awake as is possible. Five minutes to go. Forty meters sounded promising earlier, but is now filled with illegal SSB signals, mostly from Chinese fishing boats. A very discouraging, snarly mess. But, there are lots of signals on both 15 and 20. Pointing the beam straight north covers NA, EU, and Japan. I lean towards starting on 15; there will be time later for 20. But, I find Chuck, **KØRF**, on 14.010, and I call him. He wants me to be his first contest QSO. I decide to have a little fun. I tell him I really want to start on 15. I let him plead and I give in. So, 20 meters it is. Five kHz up I add **YBØECT** to the log, then call my first CQ. Japan, Europe, and Asiatic Russia are all there, and soon some good multipliers like 9N7, VU2, 8Q7, 5Z, XU, 8Q7, and 4S7 are in the log. So many rare multipliers were never so easy from the Black Hole of MN! Then, more JAs pile on, and the pace really picks up. Just one point each, but they're loud and they keep coming. I try to clear them as quickly as possible, hoping to get to the weaker, second-tier signals underneath.

Not knowing what to expect in the way of propagation, I bounce between 10, 15, and 20, changing bands whenever the rate slows.

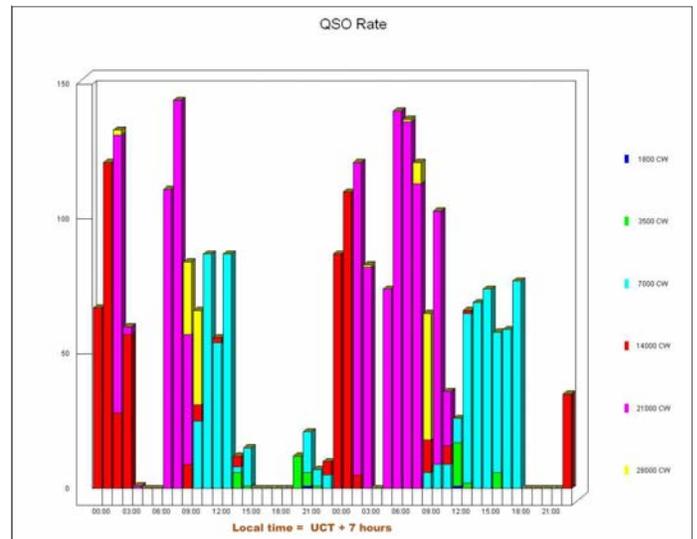
At 0700Z, I move to 15, for what proves to be my wildest and most challenging ride ever in the radio world. After cruising along rather smoothly, I am suddenly spotted, and all hell breaks loose. Ten-minute rates close to 200/hr. Mostly European Russia and eastern Europe to start; an hour or so later western Europe is there. 5H and 5A call in. The depth of the pile definitely limits me from finding out how fast I can really run. Signals become very difficult to sort out. Tail-enders call, but needing to maintain order and rhythm, I don't immediately respond. Instead, I remember the call signs and call them a few QSOs later, if I'm having trouble picking out a call. The smartest ops call a bit off-frequency or off-speed and make it into the log quickly. In the heavy QRM, I'm frequently forced to respond to partial calls that I quickly fill in, but it slows me down some. Some signals are in and out of the noise. Supercheck partial is really helpful here. So is Writelog's feature that allows me to finish typing in a station's call, even as I begin sending it.

I move to 10 meters at 0930, late afternoon local time. Europe is there, but not in great numbers. I work a few, but really can't get anything going. I find **TZ5A**, run EU for about 90 minutes, then think about going to 40. Between QRN and the fishing boats, it's a mess. I return to 20 and pick up a couple of mults, but it's slow-going. I have to go to 40, for better or worse.



My operating position inside the DX Shack.

I switch on the receiver attenuation and IPO, and tighten down the passband a bit. There - that helps. The pounding in my ears is minimized, and now I can copy plenty of signals. JA, USA, Asia, and Europe are all there. I work more USA here than at any other time in the contest, but I still haven't found any of my friends back in MN. I work the pile down. Is that a WØ? Weak, but there. W9? WØ? NØ? Yes, it's Ron, **NØAT**. A few Qs later, on the verge of being ESP, is Steve, **KØSR**. Forty is tough with only an inverted vee. In four hours on the band I've had to QSY six times, and added only 300 QSOs.



QSO rates by hour. Color indicates band. (Zoom in to read.)

By 1530Z, the rate has slowed to around 60/hr. The higher bands are done for. Hungry, and too tired to deal with 40 and 80, I take a break. I have dinner at a local guest house with Bruce, Wim, and the Thai group. I catch a couple hours sleep, then I try 80 again.

With the fishing boats, QRN, and now the added problem of Chinese radar interference, 80 is difficult going. Repeated CQs snag only a few JAs. I quickly search for multipliers and work several new ones, but the grinding low-band conditions are disappointing.

I go to 160 briefly, and pick up **9M2AX**. I hear a few JAs, but they can't seem to hear me. Maybe they're having some bad weather up there, or maybe it's the radar. It is 0700 local time. I decide to check 20 meters, but first I sweep 80, finding **VK9AA**.

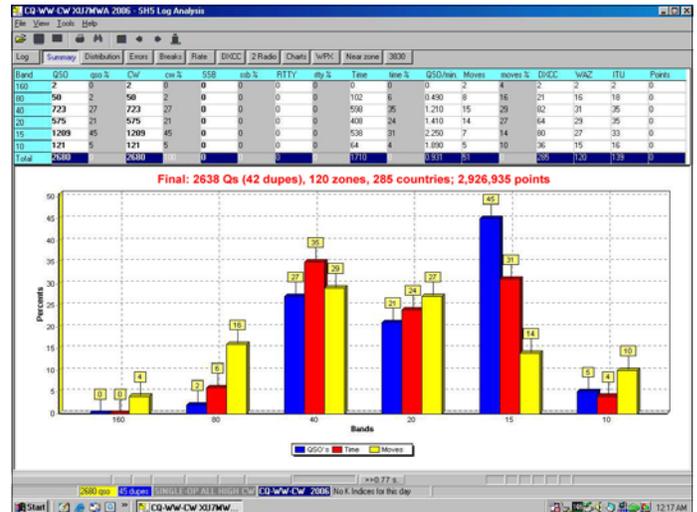
Twenty is waking up. I find John, **NØIJ**, surprisingly strong, and go back to his CQ. I work Asia and NA for two hours at 110 an hour. The rate slows around 0200Z, so I go to 15. A few good multipliers call in, and I work 450 Qs, mostly JAs, in under four hours. Only one point each, but the rate keeps me awake. When the contest is over, I'll discover that 25% of my contacts have been with Japan.

I take a short nap, pick up 9M8 on 10 meters, and return to 15. The band is wide open! I run the band for several hours. It is nothing short of spectacular. Mostly Russian stations until 0700Z, when I begin to hear western Europe. The steady, comfortable rate puts 250 more Qs in the log in 2 hours. I will eventually finish the contest with 1200 Qs on 15 meters alone. The rate is holding around 140/hr at 0900Z, when I decide to give some needed time to 10 meters. Ninety stations in 30 minutes, mostly Europe, and **5A7A** calls in. Then, the rate begins to slow. I hit 40 for a short run, but 15 is still hot. I ought to build my 20 and 40 stats, but I can't resist the lure of 15. Lots of rate there, and I'm feeling very tired. Again, maybe rate will keep me awake. I run 15 for another hour (140 Qs). I need more Qs on 40, but first I sweep 80, picking up a few Asian multipliers, then call CQ. I work **W6OAT**; I think Rusty spots me, because I get several west coast callers in quick succession. Finally, I get noticed on 80 meters! For 20 minutes I work a mix of Asia and west coast US, then **8Q7DV** for a needed multiplier.

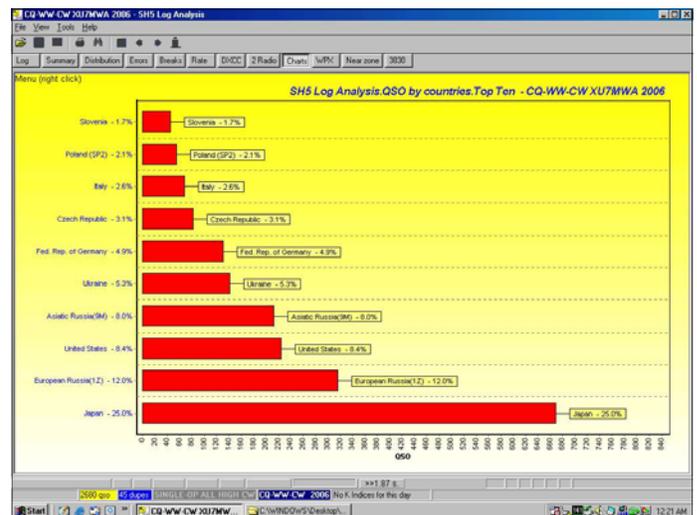
Eighty slows, so at I move to 40. For the next six hours it is slow but steady. Four hundred more Qs in the log. **TZ5A**, **VK9AA**, and **3W9JR** call in.

It is 1900Z (2am local time), and I am very tired. I know I won't be able to be around at the end of the contest if I don't get some sleep. I get up from the rig and stumble to the bed. I sleep longer than I want to, and wake up at 2315Z. Just 45 minutes to go in the contest. I go to 20. Not much there. I call CQ and work **N6RO**, who, I believe, spots me. Then the roof falls in. It's actually a sort of slow collapse at first. The pileup slowly builds, but I'm keeping up. Then the deluge. Fifteen minutes to go, with dozens of stations calling, all wanting that XU/zone 26 multiplier. They are very anxious, and it definitely shows. Listen guys, I can work you all

if you'll just cooperate. A few do. The Bencher paddle supplied with the station suddenly goes out of adjustment. I plug in another, and it's not much better. It's me. I'm so tired and shaky that I can barely send coherently. I manage only 40 Qs over a very difficult final 30 minutes. **WØAIH** and **KØTG** are in the log, just before the end.



Contest Summary - final. (Zoom in to read.)



Top ten countries worked. (Zoom in to read.)

THOUGHTS ON THE CONTEST

This was the ham radio experience of a lifetime! I finished with 2638 Qs and 2.9 million points in about 28 hours of operating. Next time, I'll allow more time to recover from jet lag; it takes me at least a week. I'll take what I've learned about propagation, and try to apply it to a more strategic plan of operation. I'll pay better attention to nutrition; that means finding a way to keep food cool.

The station had no refrigerator and no way to heat food, and I avoided high-fat or high-sugar snack food, so my choices were very limited: raisins, bread, fresh fruit, and soft drinks kept me going.

If you have any desire at all to operate from a rare location, don't pass up the opportunity. If you can't find a shack to rent, take a small rig and a vertical and a wire or two and rent a place on the beach. Plant the vertical in the water. You don't need to compete in the top tier of stations to have the time of your life. And, it's easier than you might think. Local people are very resourceful and almost always willing to help you in return for a few dollars. Remember the three rules of successful travel: be humble, be patient, and have a sense of humor. Just do it!

Thanks to all who made this adventure possible: Wim, Bruce, and Champ and the Thai group for their hospitality and for the great conversations over beers and tasty Cambodian meals; to Pete (NO2R), Pete (SM5GMZ), and Dick (N6FF) for their advice and suggestions; and especially to my friends in the Twin Cities DX Association (TCDXA) for their generous contribution.

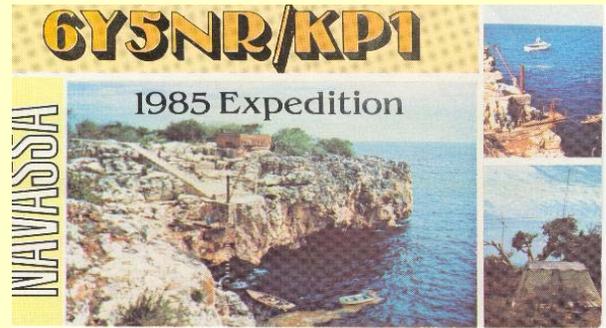
And, many thanks to Deb, who actually encourages me in my contesting adventures. The world's best ham radio YL became the world's best ham radio wife when we were married in Phnom Penh on January 28.

Tony, KMØØ



An old Q comes through!

WØZT confirms Navassa 21 years after his QSO!



Here's a good story for you. The only QSL that **WØZT** had for Navassa was **K1ICP/KC4**. That was a Don Miller operation that didn't count.

He asked me for dates and callsigns of guys I worked on Navassa, so he could search through his old paper logs. Sure enough, he discovered he had worked **6Y5NR/KP1** back in April of 1985.

Bob did a Google search on "6Y5NR/KP1 QSL Route" and the first hit was a message posted by **K8WK**, asking if anyone knew the route. Bob found K8WK's e-mail address, and asked him if he ever found anything out. K8WK replied that same day, and told Bob the manager was **K2SG**. Bob then sent K2SG an e-mail asking if he still had the logs from that 1985 operation. K2SG replied a day later, and said "yes" he had the logs, that Bob was in the log, and that he had 5 *** that's FIVE *** blank cards left. K2SG said that he'd fill one out and send it to Bob, right away! How cool is that?!

With this one finally confirmed (after 21 years) Bob now needs only BS7 to have them all.

73, Steve, KØSR

Coming soon to a transceiver near you!



Scenes From the March 2007 Membership Meeting



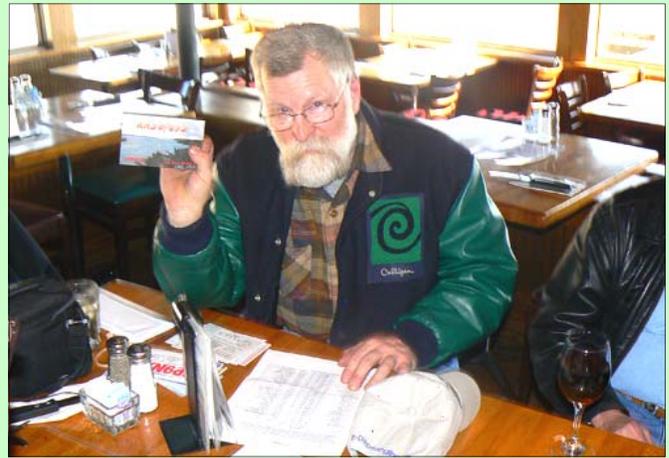
l - r: Vlad, **NØSTL**; Ron, **NØAT**;
John, **KØTG** and John, **WØJAR**.



Greg, **KCØRET** and Don, **NDØM**.



l - r: Gary, **WØAW**; Eric, **KØEF** and Donn,
KØQC. Gary was just back from his
J8/WØAW trip, hence his rich, Corinthian tan.



Steve, **KØSR** was the guest of Tony, **KMØO**. Steve
is an ARRL DXCC QSL Field Checker, and checked
some QSLs before the meeting. Steve currently ranks
#1 on the TCDXA Most Wanted Member list.



Tony, **KMØO** narrated a PowerPoint program of
his **XU7MWA** contest DXpedition. He made an
excellent recount of his trip, complete with audio
files of QSOs with TCDXA members. (See pg. 10.)



Bob, **WØEK** auctions a beautiful Cambodian
souvenir jewelry box, which was donated to the
club by Tony. It raised \$22 for the Club treasury.

As the saying goes.....One picture is worth a thousand words!



Send us your shots!

Grab your camera and become a contributing photographer for the Gray Line Report. It's easy.....and we want to hear from you!

If your wondering what to send us, here are a few suggestions: Any photo related to Amateur Radio is welcome. Also, send us shots of your "other pas-times." We will devote a page in each issue to our member's other interests.... Sports, Fishing & Hunting, Pets, Travel, Humor, etc.

Please include a short caption with each photo. Shown, below, are a few examples of what we're looking for.

Send your photos, questions or comments to k0juh@comcast.net .

Thank you!

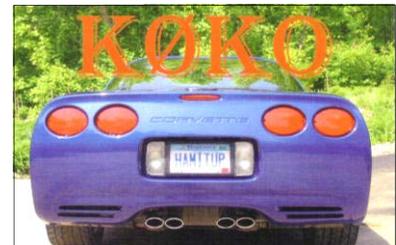
The Gray Line Staff



If you want to catch big trout, do what Tom, **WØZR**, did - head north to Alaska!



No folks, this shot wasn't taken back in the 50s. It's a current photo of Dennis, **KØEEO**, with his fabulous collection of boat anchors.



Bill's Purple Vet. This **KØKO** QSL card illustrates one of Bill's "other interests."



- end -