

Newsletter of the
Twin City DX Association
www.tcdxa.org

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Inside this issue:

<i>Amsterdam Island DXpedition Announcement</i>	1
<i>Member News</i>	4
<i>Kenwood TS-990S KØMD</i>	5
<i>MWA Contest Corner KØAD</i>	7
<i>QRV Again WØZX</i>	11
<i>Member Profile KBØEO</i>	12
<i>VP5S KØMD</i>	17

Gray Line Staff

KØAD
KØIEA
KØJUH
WØBV



Amsterdam Island DXpedition January - February, 2014

Have Permit --- Will Travel!

TCDXA member Ralph Fedor, **KØIR** just informed the *GrayLine* that he has a permit, team and transportation in place to conduct a DXpedition to Amsterdam Island during January and February of 2014.

Ralph has been working on a Southern Indian Ocean DXpedition for over four years. Heard Island, Crozet, and Amsterdam-St. Paul have all been in his sights. When another group made a commitment to the DX community to put Heard Island on the air early next year, Ralph decided to focus on Amsterdam Island.



Amsterdam Island is under the administration of TAAF, the Terres Australes et Antarctiques Francaises, which controls access to the islands in the French Antarctic Territories. Access is strictly controlled, and permission to land on the island is subject to the use of an environmentally-acceptable vessel, the ability to land in difficult sea conditions, self-sufficiency and a sound environmental plan. After reviewing Ralph's team credentials and planning documents, TAAF issued a permit to land and conduct a DXpedition from Amsterdam Island for up to 18 days between the dates of **January 15 and February 20 of 2014**. Landing, setup and take down are included in those 18 days.

The Braveheart, a well-known and experienced DXpedition vessel, will board the team in Fremantle, Australia in early January of 2014. It will be a 3,800 nautical mile round trip in the rough "roaring 40s" of the southern hemisphere. The total time at sea will likely be 16 to 18 days in the 128-foot Braveheart.

When asked about his team, Ralph related that they represent the best of all the team members he has worked within his 20+ years of DXpeditioning. They are first of all good people, who stay calm in stressful situations, are team players who watch each other's backs, are tolerant of others and who put the team and the outcome of the DXpedition above their own ambitions and self-promotion. Secondly, they also happen



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to be good operators. KØIR's team members are: James – **9V1YC**; Nodir – **EY8MM**; Michel – **FM5CD**; Jorge – **HK1R**; Bob – **K4UEE**; Craig – **K9CT**; Erling – **LA6VM**; George – **N4GRN**; Arnie – **N6HC**; John – **VE3EJ**; Steve – **VE7CT**; Gregg – **W6IZT**; and Jerry – **WB9Z**.

TAAF has assigned the group two operating sites on Amsterdam Island, just over a mile apart. While this insures good separation, it does complicate things somewhat, since travel between the two sites is too hazardous to attempt at night. There should be ample room for a full complement of antennas at each site.

When we asked Ralph about costs, he told us the budget for this project is just over \$400,000. Transportation makes up the majority of those costs, followed by per diem anchorage and usage fees imposed by TAAF. Surprisingly, the costs of doing Heard, Crozet, and Amsterdam are all very similar. Heard is the least expensive, followed by Amsterdam, and then Crozet.

The trip requires a large financial commitment from each team member. The minimum team member contribution is \$10,000. Travel to and from Fremantle, Australia will cost each team member another \$2,000 to \$3,000. In addition, there are the six weeks away from home and family, a very long boat ride and the physical and financial risks inherent to a DXpedition of this magnitude.

Ralph said he was heartened by an extremely generous grant from **INDEXA**. Within hours of receiving the group's request for funds, **INDEXA** offered their support, and shortly thereafter, **NCDXF** followed up with a large grant.

He stated that the completion of this project will depend upon the support of clubs and foundations worldwide; but even more on the support of individual DXers. Ralph stated, "We simply cannot do this without help from the DX community. We need to raise about a quarter of a million dollars. And, it has to be international financial support – we need our DX friends from Europe, Asia, Africa, South America and Oceania to help us on this one. We have down payments to make and equipment to purchase before setting sail. So, we need the help right away." The group's website will assist you in supporting them. The Amsterdam DXpedition website will be announced and go live, shortly.

The group plans to have eight stations on the air from 160 through 10m, with SSB and CW/RTTY running concurrently on all open bands. Elecraft K3s, DX Engineering antennas and components and 500- to 1500-watt amplifiers will make up the backbone of the stations. There will be low band receive antennas, and every attention will be given to propagation on all bands and to all population areas.

We asked Ralph about his dreams and objectives for this DXpedition. He responded, "We have a lot of work to do in the next nine months. Everyone can follow that progress on our website. What I most want is to give the DX world as much fun and enjoyment as I possibly can. I want every DXer to feel that he or she is a part owner of this adventure. Whether it is a new country for you, a new band-mode, or the thrill of a rare DX contact, I think I have a team with the talent and dedication to make that happen for you."



Meet the Amsterdam Island DXpedition Team



James, 9V1YC

DXpeditions:

9M4SLL, 2013
VP8ORK, 2011
K4M, 2009
N1YV/VK9X, 2008
BS7H, 2007
ZL8R, 2006
FT5XO, 2005
VP8THU, 2002
VP8GEO, 2002

FO0AAA, 2000
A52A, 2000
ZL9CI, 1999
H40AA, 1998
H44YC, 1998
VK0IR, 1997
TO0R, 1997
XU0AA, 1990
5W1FR, 1986

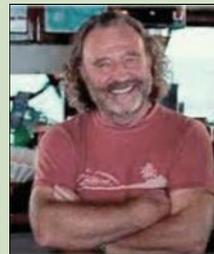


Nodir, EY8MM

DXpeditions:

VP8ORK, 2011

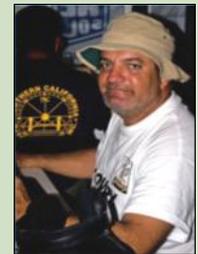
Other operations:
EK8R, RJ6K, RJ0J,
YA5MM, UN7/EY8MM,
HS0/EY8MM, EY1ARP,
EY90MT, EY2ARP,
D44TT, D4B, N0DIR/AM,
TA4/N0DIR, KH6/N0DIR,
MU/N0DIR,
WRTC-2006, 2010



Michel, FM5CD

DXpeditions:

5X8C, 2013
VP6T, 2012
T32C, 2011
TJ9PF, 2011
YI9PSE, 2010
TS7C, 2009
TX5C, 2008
J5C, 2008
3B7C, 2007
3Y0X, 2006
FB8YC, 1975



Jorge, HK1R

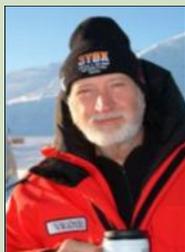
DXpeditions:

HK0NA, 2012



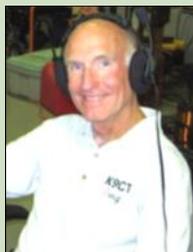
Meet the Amsterdam Island DXpedition Team

Team Leader



Bob, K4UEE

DXpeditions:
 HKØNA, 2012
 PJ6A, 2010
 K5D, 2009
 VU7RG, 2007
 3YØX, 2006
 VP8THU, 2002
 VP8GEO, 2002
 T32R, 2000
 K5K, 2000
 A52A, 2000
 FOØAAA, 2000
 VKØIR, 1997
 CEØZ, 1996
 XRØY, 1995
 AH1A, 1994
 XF4DX, 1987



Craig, K9CT

DXpeditions:
 NH8S, 2012
 3D2C, 2012
 PJ7E, 2010
 TI9KK, 2008
 K4M, 2009



Ralph, KØIR

DXpeditions:
 HKØNA, 2012
 A52IR, 2011
 VP8ORK, 2011
 PJ6A, 2010
 K5D, 2009
 3YØX, 2006
 VP8THU, 2002
 VP8GEO, 2002
 XRØY, 2005
 VKØIR, 1997
 3YØPI, 1994
 VP8CBA, 1994
 VP8SSI, 1992



Erling, LA6VM

DXpeditions:
 3YØX, 2006
 E35X 1993
 3Y5X, 1989/1990
 Other operations:
 JW6VM, JW5X
 3D2WE,
 VS6/LA6VM,
 5H3/LA6VM,
 CEØY/LA6VM,
 OA/LA6VM,
 OX/LA6VM,
 ZK1VMM,
 FOØWII,
 ZS6/LA6VM,
 9M6/LA6VM (Spratly),
 6W/LA6VM,
 A52VM and 8S6VM.



George, N4GRN

DXpeditions:
 HKØNA, 2012
 VP8ORK, 2011
 K5D, 2009
 3YØX, 2006
 Other operations:
 TI5, PJ2, XR9, PJ6,
 HK, and LU8



Arnie, N6HC

DXpeditions:
 NH8S, 2012
 T32C, 2011
 T31A, 2011
 K4M, 2009
 TX5C, 2008
 3B7C, 2007
 K7C, 2005



John, VE3EJ

DXpeditions:
 VP8ORK, 2011
 FT5XO, 2005
 VP2EEJ, 2004
 VP8THU, 2002
 VP8GEO, 2002
 Other operations:
 PA9YI,
 8P9EJ,
 VE3EJ/HC8,
 VE3EJ/HC1,
 VE3EJ/OH,
 VE3EJ/S5,
 VE3EJ/PP5,
 VE3EJ/ZS5,
 VP8DEJ



Steve, VE7CT

DXpeditions:
 HKØNA, 2012
 PJ6A, 2010
 K5D, 2009
 VU7RG, 2007
 K7C, 2005
 K5K, 2000
 3D2AM, 1990



Gregg, W6IZT

DXpeditions:
 HKØNA, 2012
 PJ6A, 2011
 PJ6A, 2010
 K5D, 2009
 Other operations:
 TI5ØDX, 2008
 KH6/W6IZT, 2007
 FS/W6IZT, 2000/2011
 BV/W6IZT, 1994



Jerry, WB9Z

DXpeditions:
 HKØNA, 2012
 NH8S, 2012
 VP8ORK, 2011
 K5D, 2009
 9MØM, 2001
 VK9XX, 1999
 VK9YY, 1999
 Other operations:
 Numerous contest
 expeditions to the
 Caribbean,
 including many
 times at PJ2T



Meet Your 2013 TCDXA Board of Directors



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telutz@earthlink.net



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THE DX CODE OF MISCONDUCT

Words of satirical inspiration from Uncle Jim, KØJUH

The following guidelines will explain how to ignore the DX Code of Conduct, and assure yourself a place on the list of incredible jerks, who delight in making our lives miserable by constantly calling out of turn.



Life in the Pileups

- ◆ Whenever possible, avoid good timing and call out of turn.
- ◆ Important: be sure to keep calling when the DX is attempting to work someone else.
- ◆ Hint: Be a real jerk and call on top of the station the DX is attempting to work.
- ◆ Standard excuses for calling out of turn include: QSB, QRM, QRN, thought he came back to me, he sends too fast, dog barking and numerous others.
- ◆ Use the 8th Air Force WWII saturation bombing technique by repeatedly dropping your call (seldom listening), hoping the DX will eventually stumble across your signal and work you.
- ◆ Bad timing promotes excessive QRM in the pileup, making it more difficult for the DX station to copy a signal. Congratulations! You've helped slow the Q rate.

Fact: When you listen to the pileups, you may notice that poor operating is on the increase!

What's the Answer?



Bon Voyage

TO A GOOD FRIEND

Mike Warren, **WØWG**, 32-year resident of Eden Prairie, MN, is leaving the “black hole” and moving to the East Coast, where he’ll be trying out propagation from the Chesapeake, Virginia area.

After his XYL Margaret passed away in August of last year, Mike decided to make this move. His daughter, Debbie, lives in Virginia.

Good luck Mike, you’ll be greatly missed!



A Peek at the New Kenwood TS-990S

by Dr. Scott Wright, KØMD

I had the privilege of previewing the Kenwood TS-990S at HRO Sunnyvale recently, while in San Francisco for work. Dean Straw, **N6BV**, joined me. We had a nice time driving down and reminiscing about the recent WØDXCC meetings in Rochester. He asked if we were going to do another one. I wonder as well??

The store manager invited me to come before the store opened, and provided a tri-bander and a Bencher paddle to test drive it.

The rig is large – yes bigger than my Icom 7800. It is well-designed, and its appearance is striking. Some may describe it as a 7800 on steroids. It also sports a hefty price tag - \$7,999.00, with free shipping, of course.

The rig has two LCD monitors, dual VFOs and a complex set of digital filter options. It sports a new main receiver: the latest top of the line receiver by Kenwood. Their testing suggests a DR-3 of > 95 dB and a third order intercept of at least 40 dB. This should compete well in the Sherwood testing against the top competitors: the K3, the FT-DX5000 and the venerable Icom 7800.



The second receiver is the Kenwood TS-590S receiver. It was hard to tell any differences between the two by listening to the bands that morning. I was able to hear 9M4SLL well, and the pileup even better. There was a Minneapolis station on 15m USB chatting with a string of UK stations. I did not have a microphone and, thus, did not test it on SSB.

The receiver has two DSP-based noise reduction



options – NR 1 and NR 2. NR 1 did not make any noticeable impact on noise. NR 2, when cranked up, created an artificial sound to the CW, but it did reduce the noise. I am not a traditional Kenwood user, so I don't know how this differs from their modern rigs.

The IF DSP filtering was very smooth, and when the CW pass band was narrowed, the DSP was not needed. Kenwood has found a way to enhance S/N ratio with narrow passbands that greatly enhances the signal quality. The adjustments of the IF DSP filters are intuitive and easy to manipulate. They will serve contesters well.

The radio comes with multiple roofing filters, and they engage automatically as one narrows the IF bandwidth or makes a new mode choice. They appear to work as advertised.

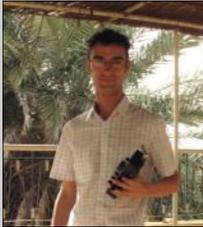
The scopes or panadapters are very nice. The smaller, band panadapter looks and functions like the P-3 from Elecraft. The waterfall display on the large panadapter is very nice, and will work well for those who like PSK-31 activity. The audio was great; typical Kenwood.

The biggest challenge I found was the complexity of the front panel knob layout. The knobs are plentiful, and are not arranged in a manner that I could easily master. I have found the Icom line to be more ergonomic for contesting.

The TS-990S is a worthy successor to the Kenwood TS-950SDX lineup. Individual operators will have to determine if it is worth spending five fold more for it than the new and equally impressive TS-590S.



TCDXA Welcomes our Newest Members!

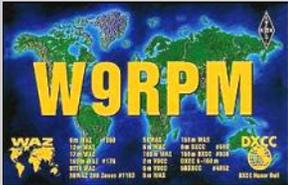


Samuel Frantz
KØYAK
Rochester, MN





Bob Krogstad
KEØRR
Winger, MN



John Kjos
W9RPM
LaCrosse, WI

Dave Salzer
K3DAS
Minneapolis, MN


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The MWA Contest Corner

My Top Ten Favorite Contest List

by Al Dewey, KØAD



Intro

Like many members of TCDXA and MWA, I have been contesting since the 1960s. Over the decades, I have operated many, many different types of contests. For this month's column, I thought it would be an interesting exercise to talk about what my very favorite radiosport events are, and why. To establish such a list, it was necessary for me to give some serious thought to what really makes a contest fun for me. I like contests where a modest station (50-foot tower with Yagi and wires) stands a chance of competing from the black hole. That makes me tend to favor domestic, rather than DX contests. I like the contests where there is at least the possibility of ranking, nationally. I prefer shorter contests over ones that burn a whole weekend. I much prefer CW contests over phone events. I like contests that move fast, where there are plenty of stations and multipliers to work. I like high QSO rates. Finally, a contest on my top ten list is one in which I will make a concerted effort to adjust my schedule to allow a full effort. Except for the two DX contests at the bottom of the list, all of these contests are ones in which I make an effort to do full-time. Unlike David Letterman, I will list my favorite first and work down to the tenth favorite contest.

#1 NCJ North American QSO Party – CW – (January and August)

NCJ's North American QSO Party tops my list of favorite contests. If you look at my criteria, it meets just about every one of them. It's relatively short (just 10 hours) and fast-moving. Because you can work each station on up to six bands, there are plenty of stations to work. Unlike many domestic contests, multipliers count once per band in this contest. So, while maintaining a rate of 100 plus for the whole contest is very achievable in this event, you also have to be concerned with multipliers on all six bands. One's ability to effectively do SO2R operation (which I really enjoy) pays a premium in NAQP. Moving multipliers to a different band, while still maintaining a run, also requires some dexterity, which is challenging and fun. The only downside of this contest is that it is very difficult to rank nationally from Minnesota. Not only are there a lot of good ops in this event, but 10 and 15 meters really favor the stations in the lower latitudes. If 10 and 15 are open to W4 and W5, but closed to upper WØ, it is almost impossible to rank nationally. Still I get a kick out of competing with locals like NØAT, NAØN and KØSR. Finally, this is a family-friendly contest. You can do your Saturday chores in the morning, start the contest at noon, take an hour off for dinner with the family, and finish off before midnight Saturday night.



#2 NCJ North American Sprint – CW (February and September)

Many contesters believe the Sprints are the ultimate test of operator skill. Rather than just stay on one frequency and run stations (which is not that difficult if you have a good signal), the Sprint requires that you continually S&P to find stations to work. Specifically, you can find a station, work him, work one more and then you must QSY. If you call CQ, you can work only one station and then must QSY. I remember when I entered my first Sprint. I was flabbergasted. Stations were moving along a 36 to 38 WPM and QSYing all over the place. Once I got the hang of it, I was hooked. The Sprints only use 20, 40, and 80 meters, and run four hours. Typi-



cally, stations spend 1 ½ hours on 20, 1 ½ hours on 40 and an hour or so on 80. But with SO2R, that's not so much the case anymore. I have yet to master SO2R in this event. It just moves too fast. I find that my adrenalin is running for four hours during this contest. Although I have placed in the Top Ten in the Low Power category, I never came close to the Top Ten in the high power category when I used to have an amp. My only complaint about this contest is that I wish it were a Low Power only event. Because of the QSY rule, you sometimes get only one shot to work a station that is a new multiplier so it can be a bummer to lose out to a guy with an amp.

#3 NCCC Sprint Ladder (most Thursdays)

Several years ago, I was tuning across 40 meters one evening, and noticed what sounded like a contest. I jumped in, and later discovered that this was the Thursday



Night Sprint sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club. It lasts only 30 minutes, and covers 20, 40, 80, and 160. It is essentially a 30-minute version of the NA Sprint I just described, with two big differences. Multipliers count once per band! That means you have to figure out what strategy of QSOs and multipliers will allow you to cover four bands in 30 minutes and get the maximum score. The second difference is that you actually operate this contest over a period of eight weeks, and move up and down a scoring ladder, based on your results. I actually wrote about this contest in a previous issue of the *GrayLine*, so I won't go into much more detail. This event scores high on my list, because of the fast pace and the comradeship of the participants. Many call it "the fastest 30 minutes in contesting." Whenever possible, I try to be home on Thursday nights for this one.

#4 IARU HF Championship (July)

I like this contest for a lot of reasons. First of all, everyone can work everyone, so there are a lot of domestics and DX QSOs to be made. It has a mixed mode category, meaning that it is the only

contest on my Top Ten list in which I operate SSB. Typically,



I start on CW, and when the rate starts to drop, I move up to phone. After I have done that for a while, I go back to CW. And, so on. Sometimes, I will operate SO2R doing CW on one radio and SSB on the other. I love the timing of this contest. It starts at 7:00 am Saturday and runs for 24 hours. So, it's all over by Sunday morning in time for church. I usually try to operate at least 20 hours, if I can. Every four years, this contest is used for the **WRTC** competition, which means there are even more stations to work. This contest also is one in which it is possible to make the Top Ten from this area of the country. I have managed to do it several times.

#5 ARRL Field Day (June)

Although technically not a contest, ARRL Field Day occupies a warm spot in my heart. As a Novice (**KN9DHN**) back in Indiana in 1961, I fondly remember operating Field Day from the shores of Lake Michigan in Whiting, Indiana. Over the years, I have operated Field Day at a lot of different locations. For years, I headed up the Twin City FM Club Field Day effort, before turning it over to the very able hands of Bert, **WB0N**. For the last few years, I have operated with a small group of MWAers headed up by Ron, **NOAT** at a location on Blue Lake near Dorsett, Minnesota.



In my opinion, Field Day is what you want it to be. For many, it is just a fun time to get together outside in the summer and make some QSOs with friends. There's nothing wrong with that. Yet, if you want to treat it somewhat seriously as a contest (like I do), that's a blast, too. Half the fun is the planning and camaraderie before, during and after Field Day with your Field Day Team. On Field Day, there are lots of stations to work on all bands and modes. With relatively modest wire antennas, one can still feel strong on Field Day. One of the things I really like about Field Day is the opportunity to try out different types of antennas and modes that I wouldn't normally use from my home station. Field Day also meets my objective of being an event in which it's possible to finish in the Top Ten from Minnesota. Our **W0AA** group has done that several time over the last few years.



#6 ARRL CW Sweepstakes (November)



Although I have operated ARRL CW Sweepstakes almost every year I have been licensed, it has recently slipped down my list. I like the fact that it is an event where Minnesota stations have a chance of making the

Top Ten. I also like the fact that copying the contest exchange requires a little more skill than most contests. It's a nice contest to say hello to old friends. Also, I enjoy some spirited competition in SS with a number of MWA members. The thing that I don't like about ARRL Sweepstakes is that you run out of stations to work well before the end of the contest. Because the rules state you can only work a station once during the whole contest, things really get slow on Sunday. Sunday afternoon in ARRL SS can be downright boring! Operating SO2R helps overcome the boredom to some extent. The only possible thrill left on Sunday is to finish off a clean sweep of all sections. Still, the ARRL Sweepstakes has a rich history and the plaques and clean sweep mugs in my shack are on proud display.

#7 Minnesota QSO Party (February)

Normally, a QSO Party would not make my top-ten list; even our own state's event. But, that was before I learned what it was like to be an HF Rover. The Minnesota QSO Party was "reactivated" by the MWA about 15 years ago. Since then, it has grown to one of the premier QSO parties in the country. The number of logs submitted has grown each year since the beginning to over 250 participants.



About 8 years ago, a friend of mine at work (Dan, **NØPI**) asked if I might be interested in being a rover in the Minnesota QSO party. He had a very well equipped truck (with cover on the back) with multiple HF and VHF antennas. He said that he would take care of getting all the equipment ready and do all the driving. All I had to do was sit in the back seat and work CW. That sounded like a good deal. At the time, I did not realize how fun it would be.

Our first route covered about 20 counties in southern Minnesota. I had no idea how well we would get out. I didn't need to worry. Each time we entered a new county, there would be a HUGE pile up of stations that were working the event and sort of following us around. The rates are fantastic. Over the years, we have improved our setup and dealt with Murphy's Law. We now have a dedicated driver, so Dan can work SSB. He used to work SSB, while driving, but that was a little difficult. This year, the MNQP had 15 rovers travelling all over the state. The top rovers are making well over 1,000 QSOs during the ten hours of the event. All I can say is that it is a blast that I look forward to every year.

#8 ARRL RTTY Roundup (January)

I first tried RTTY contesting about 7 years ago. Somehow, I thought this would be a slow moving event. Boy, was I wrong! A few hours into the event, the rate meter was above 100 per hour.



As I recall, I had tons of questions for **NØAT** about how to build some interfaces and set up WRITE-LOG. Like many things, once I got over the original learning curve, I found out that RTTY contesting was a blast.

I like the timing of this event (first weekend of January). The holiday break is over, and I am ready to start contesting again. I like the noon start time on Saturday, as well as the 24-hour length (which is about my limit). It's also a contest in which low power works fine.

I love operating SO2R in this event. Many feel RTTY contesting can be used to build SO2R skills, which can then be adapted to CW and SSB. Recently, in Minnesota, the two tough guys to beat in the low power single operator category are **NØAT** and **KØTI**. I have often lost out to these guys, but still ended up in the top ten. In 2010, **NØAT** was out of town for the RTTY RU and **KØTI** did not do a full time effort. As a result, I ended up winning the Dakota Division plaque. It's one of the spiffier looking plaques on my wall right now. It also has additional meaning for me as a TXDXA guy in that it is sponsored by **AA5AU** in memory of **W2JGR**. Many will remember Jules as a long time TCDXA member and RTTY guy.



#9 ARRL International DX Competition – CW (February)

Running low power with average antennas from



the black hole means that DX contests typically do not appear high on my list. Still, of the two major DX Contests (ARRL and CQ), I prefer this one and it comes in at #9 on my list. Because DX must work the U.S., it gives W/VE stations

a small edge. When conditions are decent, I have found it possible to run in this contest for short periods of time. This is the first contest in my Top Ten list in which I typically use assistance (i.e. the spotting network). I have, yet, to place in the top ten in my category in this contest. Although this contest runs for 48 hours, I usually operate for about half of this period.

#10 CQ World Wide DX Contest – CW (November)



WW DX Contest

The final contest on my Top Ten list is the CQ WW DX Contest. Like the ARRL DX Contest, this event runs 48 hours – 0000z Saturday to 2359z Sunday. Unlike the ARRL DX contest, anyone can work anyone in this event.

That means, of course, that W/VE stations are in less demand than in the ARRL contest. Operating with low power from

my home station, I can still work a lot of DX in this contest, but find it more difficult to run. More often than not, I operate this contest as part of a Multi-Op team from either **WØAIH** or **KØIR**. For a number of years, Saturday (and sometimes Sunday) of Thanksgiving has been spent at the ‘Farm’ in Eau Claire, operating this contest from Paul’s super contest station. I have a lot of fond memories of operating this event from WØAIH. Recently, I operated with a smaller team at KØIR’s station. That was enjoyable, too. On a worldwide basis, the CQWW contest is probably the most popular contest. For me, however, I prefer the domestic contests higher up on my list.

KØAD’s Top Ten Contest List

1. NCJ North American QSO Party - CW
2. NCJ North American Sprint – CW
3. NCCC Sprint Ladder
4. IARU HF Championship - Mixed
5. ARRL Field Day
6. ARRL Sweepstakes - CW
7. Minnesota QSO Party
8. ARRL RTTY Round Up
9. ARRL International DX Contest – CW
10. CQ World Wide DX Contest - CW

So that’s my list. I found it a fun exercise to sit down and think about what are my favorite contests and put them in priority order. There are a number of contests which I still enjoy such as CQ WPX, Russian DX, NAQP RTTY, California QSO Party, etc., but they didn’t quite make my list.

What is your list of favorite contests?

73 de AI, KØAD



Greg, **NØGEF** recently installed two new Tennadyne LPDAs at his Annandale, MN QTH. He reports having problems with unstable SWR readings.



TWO YEARS OFF THE AIR IS LONG ENOUGH!

by Tom Traugher, WØZX

After burning up my 27-year old TH11 and taking a two year hiatus from the bands, I decided it was time for a new antenna. Here are some of the project details:

Tower:

The tower is made by Universal out of Michigan. It's aluminum and 60-feet high. It sits in a 5 ft x 5 ft x 5 ft concrete base. The tower is free-standing. Twelve tons of concrete keeps it up. Interestingly, the aluminum tower is four feet taller than my old Rohn-Spaulding 56-ft tower, weighs significantly less and has a greater wind loading rating. The tower went up in the fall of 1998.

I swapped out my Yaesu rotator for a new M2 rotator with a digital control and readout. The M2 rotator is painted "battleship gray" for good reason. It's incredibly heavy-duty, and designed to rotate an entire tower-antenna assembly.

Antennas:

- (1) The top vertical is a Diamond dual-band VHF-UHF antenna.
- (2) Under the vertical is an M2 five-element Yagi for six meters model 6M5XHP.
- (3) The main antenna is an M2 eight-element HF-LPA model 7&10-30LP8-125. This is the commercial-military version, weighing 130 pounds with a 30-ft boom.
- (4) A low band wire sloper using the tower as part of the antenna.

Feedline:

The feedline is Times-Microwave LMR600, using Type-N connectors. I used DX Engineering mounting brackets to ground coax bulkhead connectors to the top of the tower and attached the HF feedlines to an antenna switch about half way up the tower.

The feedlines are again grounded at the base of the tower, using the bracket-bulkhead connector assembly, and enters the shack through a Poly-



phaser grounded copper panel passing through lightning arrestors.

I have full power Alpha amps for HF and six meters, and I plan on heating up the ionosphere! It's great to be back on the air!



Sincerely and 73,

Tom, WØZX



I grew up in Isanti, MN, and always enjoyed building things, especially electronic gadgets. My dad fostered my curiosity, and kept me busy with electronic kits to build. I was soldering fearlessly by about age 10. One day, he mentioned that I should become a ham radio operator. I had absolutely no idea what that was, but proceeded to find every book in the library about the subject. I poured through countless books on how to become a ham, but the technical aspects were way over the head of a 13-year old. There were no hams or clubs in the area to assist, so I was on my own.

I dabbled around with building short-wave receivers, and was able to listen in on some ham conversations, but still had no idea what I was getting into. My dad suggested that we head down to the Heathkit store in Hopkins to ask for help. We picked up a new Heathkit solid-state ham radio receiver, the HR-1680, along with the Farnsworth long playing records to learn Morse code. I asked the helpful staff all kinds of questions, which they graciously and patiently answered.

I took the kit home and “attacked” the construction. I think the instructions said it should take two weeks to build. I remember working around the clock and had it finished and fired up in three days. That relentless drive to complete tasks would come back later in my ham career, and manifest itself when I became an avid DXer.

I immediately started listening to the Farnsworth code records. It didn’t take long to find out I had an ear for Morse code. It came quite quickly, but my constant practice around the house started to drive everyone crazy. My folks had to tell me constantly to stop tapping out code characters with my silverware at the dinner table. Incessant whistling of words in code while I was doing the dishes or homework were a constant reminder to my family that I was about to become a ham.

I was 15 years old, when I finally felt I was ready to take the Novice exam. It took me a while to find a ham radio operator in the local area to administer the test. I had heard somewhere that the owner of Red’s TV and Appliance in Cambridge was a ham, so I called him up. My dad still gives me a bad time to this day at my opening line on the phone to a man I’d never met...”Are you a ham?” Just cut right to the chase, I thought. Sure enough, Red was a ham, and he agreed to give me the Novice test. I went over to his house in August of 1977, just before starting my sophomore year of high school. The code test and the written test were a piece of cake, as I had studied hard for both.

While waiting for the license to arrive, my dad and I headed down to Acme Electronics in Minneapolis to try to locate some used equipment. I had helped paint the farm buildings that summer, and had saved up a whopping \$400. A ham at Acme pointed me to Hammarlund HQ-170 receiver and a Hallicrafters HT-37 transmitter, both of which were almost too heavy to carry. I bought both, and still had a little money to spare for some coax, connectors, and a code key. I set them both up and starting listening on the ham bands every chance I could.

Dan Soderlund KBØEO



I remember, vividly, the day I got off the school bus on November 4, 1977. My parents had hung up a huge banner on the garage that said “Daniel is a ham!” I was so excited I almost tripped getting off the bus. I opened the FCC letter addressed to me and found my new call sign **WDØFGA**. I ran upstairs to my bedroom where my ham shack was located, and nervously fired up the transmitter and receiver. Since both pieces of equipment were tube radios, it took what seemed an eternity for them to warm up. I listened on 10 meters and then 15 meters for signals in the Novice part of the bands. Nothing on 10, but 15 had some activity. I found an open spot and courageously called CQ. To my surprise, I got an immediate response from **WB7SKL** in Nevada. It’s amazing that to this day, some 35 years later, I can still remember his call. The QSO lasted about 10 minutes. He was very patient with me, and congratulated me on my first contact. I called CQ again, and a Minnesota station came back to me, who turned out to be **WCCO** personality Chuck Lilligren just down the road in Ham Lake, MN. Both of them sent me QSL cards within a couple of days – I was hooked.

Every waking moment I was on the air. What I hadn’t learned in books, I quickly picked up while operating. I spent most of my time on 10 and 15 meters, as both bands were always hopping in 1977. I loved Morse code, but couldn’t wait to start working SSB. I started hitting the books for the General test immediately, and within two months, I had passed the 13 WPM and written tests, and was issued my General license. I was 15 years old.

In the early spring of 1978, I got my first taste of DXing. I called CQ on 10 meters and a weak but readable signal came in: **GM3CMV** from Scotland. I was so excited, I got up from the desk and ran to tell my dad to come and listen. Meanwhile, the guy on the other end was calling over and over for me, but I was nowhere to be found. I sat back down, composed myself, and got him in the log. The next DX station was from Sweden, where my dad’s family is from. He was sitting there listening with me and he started to share my excitement. This went on for the next several months, trying to work stations from all over the world. Word got out in the local community about the kid who was talking all over the world, so the Isanti News came to do a story on the young ham operator. After the article came out the next week, everyone at the high school read it and knew who I

was. There were people I had never met coming up to me to ask how to become a ham. It wasn’t long before Cambridge High School had a small but ambitious ham radio club and station.

Along with DXing, I got interested in handling traffic and found myself checking in regularly to the PICO net all day watch and Minnesota Section Phone Net. There were a number of other teenagers also hanging out there, so we decided to break off and start our own net: the Teenage Traffic Net. We met pretty much every weekday afternoon and chewed the fat. It was a great outlet to meet other hams my own age. I got a chance to meet a couple of them in person. It’s always funny to see what someone looks like after only hearing their voice. One of my pals from Grand Rapids, MN came down in October of 1978 to go with me to the FCC office to take our Advanced tests. We both passed, and I decided to upgrade my call sign to my current **KBØEO**.



During high school, I operated as much as I could, while going to school and working almost everyday to earn money for college. 10 meters was really hopping then, so I spent a good deal of time working DX. I made a full-wave delta loop for 10 meters, which really improved my signal over a dipole. I wasn’t very interested in chasing DXCC; I just wanted to travel the world from the comfort of my house.

After graduating from Cambridge High School in 1980, I headed off to St. Thomas College in St. Paul to pursue a biology degree, and hopefully head off to medical school. I got involved with the Air Force ROTC program, and was fortunate to get a full ride scholarship, including through medical school. I pretty much set the radio aside during my first two years of college, as it was just too busy. I met my future wife Lynne during my second year; that was also a big distraction from getting on the air. She lived in Orono, MN, and my family had moved to Northfield, MN. So, during the summers, it was very expensive to talk long distance on the phone between the two area codes. I convinced Lynne to get her ham radio license so we could talk on the air free of charge. She is a very smart lady, so she blew through the code and theory in record time. She picked up



her Novice license within two months. We tried a couple of QSOs on code, but it was too cumbersome to express ourselves, so I convinced her to upgrade to the General license. While she was working on that, I pounded through the license preparation for my Extra class license. We headed down to the FCC and both passed our tests. I set up her modest station to work mainly on 75 meters, as it was only about 40 miles between our homes.

We got on 75 meters almost every day during the summers, and spent hours just talking. To Lynne's surprise, a lot of other people were also listening to us, and would often break in to add commentary to our conversations. At one point, there was an audience of probably 20 other people. I guess they didn't get out much, so the young "love birds" on 80 meters were pretty good entertainment.

By the time I got to my last semester of college, I decided I couldn't go on anymore to handle all the additional schooling required of medical school. I will never forget going down to the ROTC office to tell the commander that I was going to drop my medical school scholarship and go into the general pool of officers, taking my chances with an assignment. He was quite upset, since the military is very short of doctors, but what could we do? I got commissioned as a second lieutenant in May of 1984, and went on active duty later that year. Since I had high grades in science, the Air Force gave me a dream assignment. I headed down to NASA Johnson Space Center to become a space shuttle systems instructor. I taught all the astronauts various space shuttle systems (non-flying), including the electrical power systems, environmental control and life support systems, auxiliary power units, mechanical systems and the caution and warning systems. I was at NASA when the space shuttle Challenger exploded. It was a very difficult period of time for the space agency.



I wasn't able to operate much while on active duty – there just wasn't the time or space. I became interested in orbital mechanics and satellites while at my second assignment at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, CO. I purchased an all-mode VHF rig, and worked the low earth orbit satellites with an uplink on 2 meters and downlink on 10 meters. I worked with the top orbital analysts in the Air Force, who also took a great interest in ham satellites.

I separated from the military in the summer of 1990, and moved back to Minnesota. We landed in Waterville, MN, and by sheer coincidence the home we purchased had a lightweight television tower with a height of about 50 feet. That was the signal to jump back into the hobby. I was still operating with the Kenwood TS-520S that I had from my teen years, and proceeded to put up a web of wires. Once again, timing is everything. It was around the peak of the solar cycle, and my favorite band, 10 meters, was wide open. I still enjoyed talking around the world with a modest setup. By this time, my wife and I had three small kids, and I started to feel that ham radio was competing too much with my family time. Consequently, I went QRT in the summer of 1992.

Flash forward to late summer 2009; we now had six kids and were living in Northfield, MN. The kids were all in school, and things seemed to be settling down. I decided to fire up my station, once again. I had previously donated all my equipment to Handi-hams, so I had to start over. Not knowing if I would enjoy the hobby as much as I did when I was a teenager, I started out cheap and low tech. I purchased a used Kenwood TS-530S on eBay, and threw up some quick and dirty dipoles. I made a few contacts, but didn't really feel the energy I had previously felt. I set it aside for a couple of months, and fired it back up the weekend of CQWW CW in November, 2009. I wasn't a contester before, but I knew I could work DX during the contest. I didn't even recognize the DX prefixes at that point, with the exception of the more common ones. I remember working Tonga, but didn't have a clue what or where it was. I dabbled around for a couple more weeks, when I finally got bitten by the DX bug.

I came home from work one day, and fired up on 40 meter CW – I heard a Wales station calling CQ, so I called him. He came right back to me. At that point, I really didn't know you could work DX on



any bands other than 10, 15, and 20 meters. I started doing some reading online, and discovered that while I was away from the hobby, a great leap in internet technology had occurred. I discovered QRZ.com, DX clusters and all the award information on the ARRL website. I decided to rejoin ARRL, after being off the rolls for almost 30 years. At that point, I decided I was going to go after my DXCC award. Running a small station with 100 watts and simple wires does okay, but I found I wasn't getting out as well as I wanted. I constructed a full-wave 40 meter loop antenna, and put it up in the backyard. It was rickety, but it greatly improved my receiving and transmitting. The neighbors thought I was communicating with aliens.

I pieced together 100 countries, and found out I could now have cards checked in the field. To my great surprise, a card checker was right up the road a couple of miles away – Larry **WØPR**. I sent him an email, and we got together in late spring. Larry was a great local resource, and he really wet my DX whistle by pulling out all of his Honor Role cards. He asked “Do you have this one?” “Nope,” I said. “What about this one?” Again, I said “Nope.” This went on, until I realized I had a long ways to go. I told Larry I was just restarting the hobby, but I would quickly try to catch him. I also told him I was thinking of upgrading my station and erecting a tower with some decent Yagis. We talked a lot about how to approach the project.

I started really doing some heavy research about putting up a tower. There really aren't any companies around that do it, so I had to figure it out myself. I asked everyone I spoke with as many questions as possible. I wanted an antenna that would give me solid operation on 10-20 meters, as well as something for 40 meters. Once again, I went over to see Larry, **WØPR** to discuss the tower project. An 80-foot Rohn 45G seemed like the ticket. I told Larry I was leaning toward a Hy-Gain TH-11DX for the high bands. He immediately stopped, pulled out his cell phone and made a call. “Do you still have that used TH-11 sitting in the shed? How much do you want for it? I have a guy here who might want it.” The deal was done just that fast. I went and picked it up a couple of days later.

Many Europeans were raving about Optibeams, so I decided to check them out for 40 meters. After a

little haggling, I ordered the Optibeam OB2-40, a two element Yagi for 40 meters. Everything started to come together, quickly. I lined up a guy to dig the holes, and was soon pouring concrete. I started putting together the beams on our basketball court – a great place to spread out and make sure everything went together smoothly.

One of the things Larry had mentioned was building the top section with all the antennas and control boxes on the ground and having a local guy with a crane come out to lift it into place. That turned out to be the best decision I made. I started putting everything together



Building the top section.

by roping the top section to a commercial swing set I put up years ago in the backyard. The Yagis went on quickly, and soon I was testing everything – perfect. I immediately started making QSOs on all the bands to make sure everything worked. Even at only 10 to 20 feet off the ground, this setup was substantially better than what I was running before. (See photo.)

I lined up the crane, and he came out and lifted the top section into place. Everything was bolted and connected within about an hour. (See photo, next page.) I had pre-run all the cables, so it was literally plug and play. The new tower was operational the first weekend in October, 2010. The difference was night and day. I couldn't believe all the stuff I could now hear and work. I spent most of the weekend on the radio having the time of my life. At that point, I figured I might as well upgrade the radio and get an amplifier. I picked up the brand new Kenwood TS-590S and an Acom 2000A; what a great combination. I downloaded Ham Radio Deluxe, and integrated everything, quickly. I signed up for Logbook of the World, and starting enjoying some quick QSLs.

It was at this point that I started setting some big goals. With LoTW operational, I decided I would set three major DX goals to be completed within 24



months: 5 Band DXCC, 300 DX countries confirmed, and 2000 band countries on the DX Challenge. Now, I had a reason to turn the radio on every day. I religiously tracked all the DXpeditions, and had the DX cluster running on at least two computers in the house. I kept very close tabs on which countries I needed, and on what bands. If there was a pileup, I was in it with the new upgraded station. I was pounding through and picking countries up right and left, as well as DX Challenge band slots.



Lifting top tower section.

The quest for 5BDXCC fell quickly. I had all my slots filled within just a couple of months. Once again, I went over to Larry to have the cards checked that I couldn't confirm on LoTW. The other two pursuits were a little more difficult. To contact 300 countries in two years while working full time was a little more daunting. Also, in order to hit the 2000 mark on the DX Challenge, I had to open up my sights on 160 meters and 6 meters. The first 160 meter DX of note I worked was ZL8X from Kermadec Island – this might work.

The country totals went up quickly, and through a couple of miraculous occurrences (including working SV2ASP/A), I hit the 300 mark of confirmed coun-



JAs at sunset.

tries in early December, 2012. The DX Challenge was coming along well, and with only one week to go, I reached the 2000 mark at the end of December. Mission accomplished!

What to work on next was the question. I still have 35 countries to get to the 340 mark – that will take some time. As Larry WØPR says, I might be in the ground before P5 gets reactivated. I am also working towards the next plateau on the DX Challenge of 2500. I have to say that talking with some of the DX warriors of TCDXA, I am greatly encouraged that these goals can be reached. I have a great deal of respect and admiration for some of the big hitters: Larry WØPR, Dave KØIEA, Ron NØAT, Jim KØJUH, Scott KØMD, Tom NYØV, Ralph KØIR and many others. In addition, with the encouragement of the 160 meter gurus, I am only a couple away from reaching the 100 confirmed country mark. I am also close to eclipsing the 200 confirmed country mark on 80 meters. I have also been working on 5BWAZ, and am only 4 short, all on 80 meters. I hope the propagation picks up to SE Asia to complete this endeavor.

Along with DXing, I enjoy ragchewing, especially with people around the world. I have been trying to teach myself Spanish and German, and I practice regularly on the air. I am especially thankful to my wife of 28 years, who allows me the indulgence of getting on the air as much as I want. As she says, at least I'm not out at the bars, and she knows where I am. It has been a great journey the last couple of years. I look forward to one day reaching the top of the DX ladder, and continuing to associate with all the exceptional operators we have in the upper Midwest.

73 & good DX!

Dan, KBØEO



VP5S - TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS

Local contesters escape the Minnesota winter and head to the Caribbean for the 2013 ARRL DX CW Contest February 16 & 17

by Dr Scott Wright, KØMD

Four MWA Team South members went to Turks and Caicos on February 14, 2013 to operate in the ARRL DX CW contest as a multi-single team. They were assigned **VP5S** for the contest. The team was organized by Scott, **KØMD**, and included Fred, **K4IU**, Bill **ACØW** and Tom, **NYØV**, who is relatively new to MWA contesting, but an accomplished DXer in his own right. For the ARRL DX SSB event March 2nd & 3rd, the MWA team used **VP5H**.

We arrived in Providenciales in the early afternoon, and were greeted by the typical sunny and hot Caribbean weather – the perfect antidote for the midwinter blahs we suffer in the upper Midwest. We were met by Jody Millspaugh, **VP5JM** and her groundskeeper Frandy, who loaded our heavy luggage into two cars for the 15 minute drive to the Hamlet.

We brought an Icom 7600 and an Acom 1010 from the QTH of **KØMD**, along with an Icom 756 Pro II from the QTH of **K4IU**. This combination of equipment has been the mainstay of the MWA team for the ARRL DX SSB contest.

The pre-contest set up went smoothly, and we were on the air quickly with our personal calls **VP5/KØMD**, **VP5/K4IU**, **VP5/NYØV**, and **VP5/ACØW**. I was first up and worked over 100 stations the first afternoon and evening. There seemed to be a big interest in working VP5 by the JAs. A run of JAs the hour before the contest on 15 CW proved they were eager to work and confirm Turks and Caicos. We experienced a cacophony of CW that sounds like a hornet's nest.



I to r: **VP5JM**, **K4IU** and **KØMD**.



Tom, **NYØV** points to our contesting QTH.

Fred spent Friday on the air getting familiar with N1MM logging software. Bill and Tom each worked QSOs, and enjoyed their time as Caribbean DX! Jody's exclusive Force 12 antenna array is simply amazing. The US signals, especially from Minnesota, were very loud. As usual, Jody was a great host. We enjoyed several meals with Jody and her Jack Russell Terrier, Lizzy.



Jody, **VP5JM** and Lizzy.





Antennas we used at the VP5JM Hamlet.



Jody's house and antennas - just up the hill from the Hamlet.



The VP5JM Hamlet - our contest QTH.

The propagation for the ARRL CW contest was amazing – perhaps the best I've encountered in five years or so of contesting from VP5. Ten meters was incredibly hot on Sunday afternoon of the contest, and we worked over 700 stations in three to four hours. The low bands were great the first night – quiet, active, and the entire USA was open on 80 meters after 8 pm local time. It was a lot of fun to hear W6s competing with WØs and W3s for us. 160 meters was unusually productive, as well. I cannot remember working more multipliers on a Friday night.

It's always fun to have an endless pileup. The rates were very good, but slowed on my watch when the pileups grew intense. The roar of 100+ stations calling on one's spotted frequency leads to one loud RTTY-like tone. I learned to use the RIT to vary 0.15 kHz above and below my transmitting fre-

quency. This was the only way I could find a station to reply to. Those in the USA who continue to call right on the DX spot frequency should learn from this to vary your frequency a bit. Once I sent a partial call, the US stations would stop transmitting, nearly all of the time. I remain impressed at the civility of 95% of our fellow hams during intense contests. I found us lacking a few mults on ten meters during the last afternoon. Several times, I stopped the runs and called only for certain states. It was a bit humorous when a station would call from outside the needed state multipliers only to discover that I would not log them. We picked up KY and one other state doing that. We still never found West Virginia on 10 meters – who would have thought? I also enjoyed working all of our fellow MWA members and friends from around the USA. The contesting community is a nice group of hams.

Rig: The 7600 is an incredibly quiet receiver. I think it's better on the low bands than my 7800. I really like using this small rig: it's like a sleek sports car, and handles like one as well.

Amp: The Acom 1010 amp is durable and quiet. It's perfect for this type of contest. 700 watts is enough in a CW contest to the USA.

40 meters: The band was incredible this year, and we worked 57 multipliers during the contest. I wish we could have reached 60. Forty meters had our second highest total QSO count, and it was a band we did not spend a lot of time on.

15 meters: This band remains the workhorse. We started the contest on 15, and had to pry ourselves



away Sunday afternoon to try 10 again. Our highest QSO count was on 15 meters.

10 meters: Saturday's experience suggested this band might not open on Sunday, but I reassured my teammates that we would get an opening. And, an opening we got. Sunday after 3 pm, the USA opened, and it was like magic. We initially experienced E-skip, and then it was open to everywhere. I have learned two facts about contesting from overseas. Glenn Johnson taught me that contacts and mults on 10 meters separate the first place teams from the second place teams. Frank Donovan, **W3LPL** taught at Contest U that no two weekend days are identical during a 48-hour contest weekend. Don't let a good opening go un-worked, for it might not be there tomorrow. His advice was spot on for us.



Scott, KØMD enjoying the pileups.

Comparison with SSB contest: I found the CW contest to be much quieter. When I was not operating, the shack was quiet, except for the faint sound of the Acom amplifier relay doing QSK. It was much easier to sleep at night time with the Hamlet quiet! I was worried about my CW skills with regard to handling pileups, but all of my on the air work paid off. My code speed improved dramatically; 30 WPM seemed slow by the end of the contest.

I want to thank Fred, Bill and Tom for having the courage to try VP5 with me for this contest. I have come to the conclusion that MWA members are some of the finest hams, operators and people in the USA. These members are great examples and ambassadors for amateur radio. It appears we have the same week-

end booked for 2014, so MWA can field teams again for CW and SSB.

Tom Vinson has posted a video of Fred operating on the MWA Facebook page. Neither Fred nor I are Facebook members, so we cannot see it but perhaps you can. I plan on posting two brief videos to YouTube. The four-operator schedule gave each of us roughly 12 hours of operating and 7 or more hours of sleep per night.

Following are comments from the other members of the team.

Fred's comments:

"Our team had great propagation. 160 was quiet, and we had great runs on Friday night. The second night was not as good, and the band was noisier. Everyone agreed that 10 meters was a huge gift from the solar gods. Sunday was a better day than Saturday for 10. It exploded Sunday afternoon. Murphy stayed away the entire contest (except during customs with Scott at the Miami airport). The radios worked flawlessly. For the most part, the pileups treated us cordially. I think everyone on the planet enjoyed this one. 73, Fred"

Bill's comments:

"While I have operated from DX locations before, this is the first time I've encountered the high rates and pileups for hours. In general, pileups were civil, and people followed along pretty good, until the last hour, when all manners went out the window. At the end, people were constantly calling, making it impossible to work anyone. So, I pulled the plug early (less



Bill, ACØW at the controls.



than 5 minutes before the contest ended). It was a good learning experience to be on the other side of the pileup. 73, Bill”

Tom’s comments:

“I have not been to the DX side of a CW contest before. So, I had some apprehension, and wondered if I had the skills to do the job. I wanted to be able to hold up my side of the bargain. Before I left MN, I practiced my CW using Morse Runner, PileUp Runner, and RUFZ. What I found was that these programs do help bring your code speed up, and prepare you for a contest.

We were running around 28 to 30 wpm, and that was adequate. The first time at the operating position, I was shocked to hear a total wall of signals coming back through the headset! There were times when I could not pick out a single letter, much less a call! I found the RIT does help, and that the smart testers also offset their transmission to keep off our exact frequency. Those who clicked a mouse to QSY and then called on top of us were not the first in the log.

The second thing I noticed that really surprised me was the extremely low noise on the low bands. 160m sounded more like 20m to me. I am sure if there had been storms in the area, this would not have been the case. With quiet conditions, I found 160 to be enjoyable and a lot of fun.

Ten meters was interesting. For most of Sunday, the band was just not producing the rates or mults we needed. We had some close-in states that we were skipping over us, like KY, TN, LA, MS. I even asked Scott to turn the beam to the Atlantic so that maybe we could hear them backscatter. Nope. We could work solidly into the Midwest and some Western states, and we skipped over the ones we needed, until about 3:15 pm EST. Then, it turned into mayhem, as the band opened up, and we were stockpiled with callers for nearly the entire rest of the contest. And, yes, we got those close-in mults.”

In closing.....

Thanks for all of the QSOs, and especially for those who worked us on all 6 bands. You are halfway to your special momento.

There you have it in a nutshell: *the VP5S story.*

Scott, KØMD/ VP5

**Box Score for VP5S
2013 ARRL DX CW Contest**

Call: VP5S
Operator(s): KØMD, K4IU, ACØW, NYØV
Class: M/S HP
Operating Time: 48 hours
Club: Minnesota Wireless Assn.
Total Score = 5,172,420

Summary

Band	QSOs	Points	Sections
160	293	879	53
80	822	2466	57
40	936	2805	57
20	874	2622	57
15	1226	3678	58
10	<u>921</u>	<u>2763</u>	<u>58</u>
Totals	5072	15,213	340



The 2013 VP5S Team
l - r: Tom, NYØV, Fred, K4IU;
Scott, KØMD and Bill, ACØW



(Add your own caption)





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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.*

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TCDXA Treasury Report

March 28, 2013

Submitted by TCDXA Secretary-Treasurer Pat, KØPC

Income:

Carryover from 2012	3,925.33
2013 dues and donations	3,612.41
Door prize ticket sales	451.00
Refunds and reversals	0.00
Total YTD income	\$ 7,988.74

Expenses YTD:

Bank service fees	(0.00)
Website	(0.00)
Office supplies, guest dinners and misc.	(110.62)
2012 Christmas party	(474.14)
ARRL Spectrum Defense Fund	(100.00)
NCDXF Donation	(250.00)
MWA Plaque	(75.00)
DXpedition Donation, 3D2C	(250.00)
DXpedition Donation, TT8TT	(251.25)
DXpedition Donation, AHØ/NØAT	(149.00)
DXpedition Donation, 5X8C	(250.00)
DXpedition Donation, 9U4U	(250.00)
DXpedition Donation, 9M4SLL	(500.00)
Total YTD expenses \$	(\$ 2,660.01)

Current Checking Balance (11/13/12)	5,280.43
PayPal balance	48.30
Cash on hand	0.00
Total current funds	\$ 5,328.73

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.



VKØIR
ZL9CI
A52A
T33C
3B9C
TX9
CP6CW
3YØX
K7C
5A7A
VU4AN
VU7RG

K5D
VK9DWX
FT5GA
3D2ØCR
E4X
CYØ/NØTG
VP8ORK
VU4PB
STØR
3D2C
3CØE
TT8TT



Minnesota

AHØ/NØAT
5X8C
9U4U
9M4SLL

K4M
TX3A
KMØO/9M6
YS4U
YI9PSE
ZL8X
4W6A
T32C
HKØNA
7O6T
NH8S
PTØS

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

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, Ron, NØAT, TCDXA@n0at.net. 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/>.

