

The Eastern Iowa DXer

The Official Newsletter of the
Eastern Iowa DX Association



An affiliated club of the American Radio Relay League



January 2002

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Club Officers

President: Heinz Blankenhagen, NR0X
Vice President: Rick Heinrich, N0YY
Secretary Treasurer: George Carsner, W0PPF

PacketCluster **WB8ZRL**

147.51, 144.91, 223.40, CRNETROM

Repeater Committee: Al Groff K0VM
Joe Finkstein W0MJN

Repeater: **N0DX/R**

144.59/145.19

Membership Committee: Jim Spencer W0SR
Tom Vavra WB8ZRL

From the President

Heinz Blankenhagen, NR0X

It looks like this is going to be a banner season for DX. It all started with North Korea being activated by P5/4L4FM in mid-November, with only verbal permission. WB8ZRL demonstrated his DX acumen by being the first EIDXA member to work him. Many other members worked him before he went QRT for the holidays. He is expected to be back on again in January. While we were biting our nails hoping that he will get a proper license that is retroactive, YT1AD enters the scene. He visited North Korea without any operation but says he has been issued a license for an operation in early March. Ducie Island has been rescheduled for March as well. South Georgia and South Sandwich are expected to see a major activation in January and February. Niger will be activated by a group of Italians with emphasis on the low bands. There are several others scheduled but these are the ones that interest me and are making

it very difficult to pull the plug and head south for winter vacation. Guess I'm waiting for a big snow storm to kick me into action. I will probably see you all at the January meeting.

Six meters has been going nuts and devotees of the band say these are once in a lifetime conditions. I built a six meter beam last summer but never put it up. I did manage to work Alaska and Hawaii from the mobile but never got anything set up in the shack. Sounds like Ken (KA0Y) and Gary (K0GT) did much better than I.

The program for the January meeting will be a video about Heard Island, produced by James Brooks, 9V1YC. It is a recently released broadcast television documentary titled "Outpost at the Edge". This documentary traces the early nineteenth century American sealing history through the Australian occupation in the 1950's and finally the famous 1997 amateur radio Dxpedition – VK0IR. First distributed by Southern Star (Australia), this film was originally produced

exclusively for worldwide television broadcast in 1998.

73
Heinz

The Editor's Corner

By Rick NØYY

Well another year has come and gone and now we are in the middle of the annual contest season. I hope everyone's antenna projects last summer were successful and that your activities are now meeting the true test.

I was finally able to successfully distribute the newsletter to the club members via e-mail. We still sent a paper copy via US Snail Mail and I guess that based on some of the torn copies I heard about the electronic ones made it better than paper.

I am going out on a limb here and am going to distribute the newsletter this time via e-mail only. If you would like a paper copy I will provide you with a copy upon request. I found that using a universal electronic form (Adobe "pdf") seemed to work best in terms of file size and accessibility by a variety of operating systems.

We had the opportunity to see how fickle Old Sol is during the CQWW contest weekends. I was operating at NØNI again for the CW weekend and spent several hours talking to myself. When the bands tried to recover everything was via a skewed path. (Europe was at about 110 degrees.) If you didn't follow the path you still talked to yourself! After comparing notes with several others we found that our observations were very consistent.

Travel has been tough during the end of the year and I still haven't been able to get the website together yet. I hope to do

that before Spring, otherwise other projects will again consume my time.

I did get my main antenna hardware up this late fall and things seem to work, but other projects have competed with my finishing the interior of my shack. So for the time-being I remain a hired gun for the contest season.

I understand that there may be some big antenna projects being undertaken by club members in 2002. You will all have to stay tuned as I don't want anyone's secret weapon to be divulged too early.

EIDXA Club Badges - Update

For those of you that ordered your badges at the last club meeting, I have great news. I will have the new badges from Rick, NV5A at the January club meeting. Prices are lower than reported in the last newsletter and they look GREAT! Many thanks for NRØX and WØAWL for all their help in getting the improved logos and coordinating with Rick at a variety of hamfests.

Splatter

At the risk of sounding like Captain Obvious, I thought I'd take a couple of minutes to share some observations and to paraphrase some of the tips of contesters worldwide.

It continues to amaze me how simple things come back to bite you when you least expect them.

Here is list of things to think about as you prepare for your participation in the upcoming contest:

- 1) Make sure all of your software updates are installed and working at least a week before the contest. I heard of several stations that found bugs in the first hour of the contest. And then the real scramble starts!
- 2) Make sure all of your clocks are set well before the start of the contest.
- 3) If you are networking multiple computers for a multi-op effort, make sure to create cheat sheets for for the other operators. It's a bit disconcerting for the operator team to have to wake up everyone in a 5 mile radius during the 40 meter run to JA's to get the network unlocked!
- 4) I know we are all tempted to make last minute changes. But think of the impact of a major station layout change on Friday afternoon! Been there, done that – and at midnight during the 80M shot into Europe you find that the beverage switch didn't get hooked up! ARRGGGHHH!!
- 5) Make sure that you have coordinated with your family. I thought I had and found that I had to cash all of my brownie points in because they "forgot" I was busy on Saturday and they had made plans for the family.
- 6) Try all of your antennas before the contest. It can be a challenge to start trying to test a new beverage during the first couple of hours of the contest while others are trying to keep runs going to JA's or Europe or where ever.
- 7) Try to get enough sleep before Friday. It is very hard to push for a 48 hour effort if you start tired.
- 8) If you decide to nap on Sunday morning, make sure that you set two or maybe even three alarm clocks. Keep at least one if not two out of reach while you are laying down. It can really effect your score when you sleep through the 15M opening on Sunday morning!
- 9) Do a little preparation work. Find out what DXpeditions are available. Find out who is a true multi-band or single-band effort. Make a note to yourself of who is out there. It is easy to miss an easy multiplier if you think you have worked a C6 and only later find that you have him on 80, 40, 15 and 10 after the contest and you just passed him up on 20 at the end because you thought you already worked him. (This is even more important if you are working a multi-op effort.)
- 10) When the contest is over and your eyes are like glassy marbles and your brain feels like two day old oatmeal, don't try to dupe your log and get it ready for submittal! Make a duplicate disk of the files and shut everything off.
- 11) Oh yeah... HAVE FUN!

Contest Calendar

We are staring down the barrel of the post-holiday part of the contest season. ARRL DX Contests, CQWW 160, January VHF Contest, just to name a few. Many of us play for real, some play for fun.

We need to spend a few minutes at the January club meeting brushing up on how we should submit scores as a club. We have many players, now we need to get the appropriate credit.

See you in the pileups!

Terry, W0AWL will have the shirt orders available for pick-up at the meeting.

Also Rick, N0YY will have the badges ordered at the last meeting.

Meeting Notice

The next meeting of the Eastern Iowa DX Association will be on Friday, January 11, 2002 at 7:30 in Room 219C Linn Hall on the Kirkwood Community College campus. Doors open at 6:30 pm for eyeball QSOs. Monitor 145.19 for directions if needed. See you there



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