



EIDXA 1975 - 2010 • 35TH Anniversary

March 2010

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Club Officers

President:	Joe Hetrick	KCØVKN	Packet Cluster	WB8ZRL
Vice President:	Tom Vinson	NYØV	147.51, 144.91, 223.40, CRNETROM	
Secretary Treasurer:	Richard Haendel	W3ACO		
Repeater Committee:	Al Groff	KØVM	Repeater:	NØDX/R
	Joe Finkstein	WØMJN	144.59 / 145.19 (tone 192.8)	
Membership Committee:	Jim Spencer	WØSR		
	Tom Vavra	WB8ZRL		
	Nelson Moyer	KUØA		

EIDXA Meeting – Friday, April 23, 2010, 7:30 p.m.
Room 219C of Linn Hall on the campus of Kirkwood Comm. College.
Program on station building and propagation at PJ2 by NØYY.

President's Propagation, Pronouncements & Pontifications

- Joe Hetrick KCØVKN



Hello again everyone,

The WX in WØ is slowly breaking. I've only just returned from the quagmire that is my back yard while I fuss with some vertical antenna projects.

I've got plans to replace my 80M L with a 55' hatted vertical, and try to load it for 160. I know I've missed a couple of really good 160 seasons if any of the numbers from the 160 contests, and the discussion on the TopBand reflector are any indication, but, better late than never.

The K3 has found a happy home in the shack, and I've gotten quite used to some of the luxuries that it provides over my K2. Being about 99.9% CW, I opted for the 1khz and 250hz roofing filters, but I think I'll be adding the 400hz 5-pole as well as the subRx at some point before fall. The few contests I've operated in, I've found that it does a pretty fine job, but it has a lot of config options that I've yet to work through. I haven't had time

to get the K2 and K3 side-by-side, but, since completing the construction of the K3, I haven't turned on the K2...

The K3 has several "features" that I'd missed on the K2; per-vfo/subRX filters (which I find nice for working DX that is split; keep the TX filter very wide, and the RX filter very narrow). The DSP is very nice, as I didn't have the DSP installed in my K2. Elecraft have also done a FB job of pulling out a nice set of isolated IO ports for audio. I've been recording a few of my more interesting QSO's (finally worked a 4x4 station in January-on 80M) and doing some recoding of different NR and filter settings on my weekly skeds with KØKK and W5FH. There are other large differences, but, overall, the rig is nice to use, and, I've done some playing with remoting it so that I can monitor the NCDXF beacons while I'm at work.

Doubtless everyone has noticed the uptick in the high bands. For a child of a darkened sun (I was licensed in 2005), actually hearing stations on 10M that are DX is a new thing for me. The ARRL-DX-CW test was quite a surprise on 15M, and I had a lot of fun working into EU and Asia with a FD style vertical with 4 elevated radials, about 20' off the ground.

This months newsletter is chock full of excellent stuff; a shack rebuilding saga by WWØE, a bio by NYØV, and a short look at N7OU, Bill, by W3ACO. I'll be hoping someone else would like to contribute a bio for the next newsletter! I think with all of the new members we've had in the last year and a half, it'd be helpful if they got to know some of us (I don't even know most of us!).

Also remember that 2010 marks the 35th anniversary of EIDX. If someone would like to do a retrospective or write a bit about the founding of the club, that'd be wonderful as well.

Enjoy the newsletter, track me down if you have some ideas, and, see you at the next meeting.

Dit Dit, Joe KCØVKN

Veep Ramblings – Tom Vinson NYØV

After two years of being on contract with Rockwell Collins, I am required to re-retire for at least 3 months! I am really enjoying this as it means that I can be on the radio when the grey line passes across Iowa each morning. I worked V63MY and ZK3YA on 80m in the last couple of weeks. I'm still looking for a grey line opening LP or SP into YA/T6. There are some guys that have been on, but just not very strong to get over the EU pileups.



The bands are definitely getting better with a few sunspots coming around now and then. When the numbers are back to zero, then the high bands are in the toilet. But, when they come back around, you can find signals on 17, 12, and even 10 meters that tantalizes us with a hint of the propagation to come. Woo Hoo! With the spots there has been some good DX on too. 17 meters has been interesting with ST2AR in Sudan showing up fairly regularly during the day and then the Asia-Pacific comes in later with the likes of E51JD,

ZK3OU and ZK3YA, DU, XU, 9V, and of course all the JA's you would care to work...and more. This is one fun band. I don't exactly have a super-duper antenna for this band. I use my 2 ele 40m beam. The tuner can match it to satisfy the amplifier and I take what I get.

I read with interest that Hrane, YT1AD is taking a team to Canton Isd, T31 next October. Then out of the blue another group from Russia/Ukraine has come in publicizing that they will be there in May! Now I know that T31 is pretty rare in EU, but to have two groups headed to T31 within 6 months of each other seems to be a waste of DXpedition funds. It will be interesting to see if Hrane decides to stay the course.

BTW if you want to get the latest on what DXpeditions are announced this URL from the ng3k site is pretty good: <http://www.ng3k.com/Misc/adxo.html> For you newcomers to DXing, there are several other e-newsletters available with DX tidbits. I subscribe through Bernie, W3UR, for his Weekly DX bulletin. The next DXpeditions I have an interest in are the 3CØ Annobon Isd and the 3W Vietnam DXpeditions as I could use them both on 40m. Of course, ZS8M on Marion Isd will be on everyone's list to work over the next year. By the time this comes out we'll be a month from Dayton! We have stuck a reminder in this newsletter about the Pre-Dayton Swapfest in the Rockwell Collins Main plant (35th St NE) the Saturday prior to Dayton. It has turned out to be a fun couple of hours to catch up with the guys that have just come out of winter hibernation! So plan to come on down as its well worth the admission fee! HI

73, Gud DX – Tom, NYØV

Congratulations EIDXA Members

Our own Rod, KØDAS, was appointed to ARRL Vice Director for the Midwest Division. Al, KØAL and Jim, WØSR have agreed to serve as ARRL Assistant Directors for the Midwest Division. Thanks, and congratulations!

The Travels of N7OU – Rich Haendel, W3ACO

In addition to what Rich has written here, there was a nice article in QSTS about Bill and his trips. –VKN

I've been following the travels of Bill, N7OU for a couple of years now. Bill lives in an apartment building in the heart of Portland, Oregon. Downtown Portland is not the best place to mount an effort to get DX entities, so he does the next best thing. He becomes the DX. He makes his own DXpeditions, mostly by himself. He travels light using a K3/100 W and wire antennas for the most part. Almost all the time he operates CW. He has operated at ZK1NOU, E51NOU, E51PEN, 3D2OU, 3D2RO, T32OU, T27OU, ZL7/N7OU, at present is at 5W0OU. He picks his bands and times to favor North America, which is very nice. For me Chatham Island, ZL7 was a great catch. There are less than 800 people there and no resident hams. Bill is now on an extended DXpedition, who knows where he will be next. Today Feb 26 he was LOUD on 21002. Keep listening.

Rich W3ACO

Craig Thompson, K9CT Enlightens EIDXA at January Meeting – Tom Vinson, NYØV

If you could not attend the January club meeting at Kirkwood, you missed a real treat. Craig Thompson, K9CT was one of the 19 operators at K4M last October. Craig brought over his latest Powerpoint slides and walked us through from how he got on the K4M team, what the experience was like operating in a large DXpedition, and some about the history of Midway Island. After the presentation we adjourned to Godfathers to eyeball QSO a bit more into the night.



Craig Thompson, K9CT Presenting K4M

To help defray the costs of bringing Craig over we passed the hat and collected \$182. So the net impact to the club treasury was minimal and everyone had a great time. Thanks to all who contributed in making the meeting a success!

EIDXA Member Highlight – Tom Vinson, NYØV

Two years ago I had the pleasure of riding to Dayton with Tom. We talked a bit about every thing, but mostly about what brought us into radio. Tom had much more to say than I, and I'm glad he was able to write a bit about his adventures. I hope that when he moves deeper into the black hole of Ø-land, he manages to make it down to visit! –VKN

In the last newsletter Jim Spencer, WØSR provided a very nice biography on his history in amateur radio. We found a lot of interest from the readership to do more of this kind of article. In that light, here is my meager attempt at a biography for NYØV.

My journey started in what we called Industrial Arts class in junior high school. One of the subjects that year was basic electronics. The materials were excellent in that we had breadboards with resistors, capacitors, diodes etc on plug-in mounts. With these basic building blocks, we were able to “see” the schematic of a simple single transistor radio come together in front of us. I took every electronics course I could all the way through high school.

As soon as I was able I signed onto a corn detasseling crew so I could make some money. I worked my butt off detasseling in those hot and humid central Illinois cornfields. But, it paid off, as I was able to buy my first shortwave radio kit: A Knightkit Star Roamer receiver. This little receiver had all of four tubes in it. I built that kit and with the aid of my then Elmer, Don Thomas, W9HSD, to align it, I



was soon listening to DX stations from all over the world. It was really fun to lay on my bed at night listening to Radio Nederlands, Radio Moscow etc. That is when it hit me that this radio stuff was really “magic.” To this day, I still think its magic!

With the encouragement of Don and my dad, I was soon learning CW and the theory for my Novice ticket. My dad was a high-speed code operator in WWII stationed in Panama. Fortunately, he knew the best way to learn CW was by sound, not dots and dashes. He would tell me to just write down whatever letter he told me was coming over the code oscillator. This process eliminated a mental translating of sounds into dots/dashes and then onto paper. I really didn't realize this until when I had kids of my own. One of the girls had a coloring book that had a “secret message” written in Morse code. To my surprise, it was hard for me to read it! What I had to do was to sound out the letters as a CW tone so I could interpret it for her!

Needless to say, the 5 WPM test was no big deal and I was soon licensed as WN9YZN at the age of 16 in 1967. My first rig was a Heathkit Apache with a Lafayette HA-350 receiver. That receiver was funny in that it was calibrated in 5 kHz markings and when you rotated the tuning knob clockwise, the dial spun counterclockwise. It wasn't long before I was hooked on working DX. If you recall, back then we were required to be crystal controlled and run no more than 75watts. I pulled one 6146 out of the Apache and bought a bunch of crystals on 15 meters, put up a dipole and I was in business. The search for new countries ran from 21.100 MHz to 21.250 MHz. I found that I could run CW and work DX that were on SSB up high in the novice bands. My DX opportunities were too limited so I was motivated to get my General and Advanced shortly thereafter! By 1970 I had earned #11,093 DXCC.



With the Advanced privileges I was soon back in the cornfields so I could buy a new rig! That rig turned out to be a Heathkit HW-100. Once that kit arrived, it was into the bedroom as soon as I hit the door after school! Of course, a necessity was to upgrade that antenna. I ended up making a 2-element tri-band quad out of bamboo, fiberglass, and wire. Wow, did that ever work out great! With full wave loops on 20, 15, and 10m even with my 100watts, I was able to work the world. My parents were a little chagrined when I put up the 40' tower. But, I think they thought that this radio stuff would keep me out of trouble...and it did.

My other high school ham-friends would come over to the QTH and we would run multi-multi for the Illinois QSO party. We used a dipole for 40m and the quad for the other bands. We also had a borrowed SB-220 amplifier to give us the full gallon. The rigs got so warm in the room that we had to take their covers off and run fans. Talk about RFI in the shack!

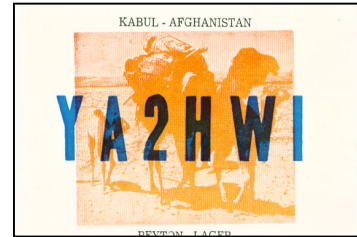


The picture below shows the bedroom/shack and how we ran the Illinois QSO party. Notice the HW-100, SB-220, and the SB-401...all with the covers off.



One of my most memorable QSO(s) was working YA2HWI (K9HWI), Peyton Lager. I first met Peyton on 20m CW *after* he had signed. The pile up on him was huge but after he signed the other guys stopped calling him. So, I decided to call him anyway. Sure enough, he came back to me! I soon found that his daughter lived in Champaign and that she was expecting. As her due date approached we made a sked to meet after he signed each night and I would relay how she was doing. It was my radio that brought the news to him

that he was a grandpa. I eventually met Peyton when he was back in the States. He drove to Champaign in a VW bus painted with a mural of an Afghan city scene on the side of it.



My elmer, Don, W9HSD also encouraged me to get into the “service” part of the amateur service. I joined RACES and became the weekly net control operator at K9CLW at the Civil Defense center in Urbana, IL. The center was fully a cold war facility. Most of it was located underground with large generators, bunks, and food. If the Russians were going to nuke us, I knew where I was headed! This was also a time where I was running phone patches for missionaries in South America and for servicemen in Panama (KZ5). I still remember enjoying a Christmas T-ring from one appreciative mom from Indiana. I actually met Bill, KZ5NC whom I had run patches for on the Illinois Central railroad. Neither of us knew we would be on that train. But, that is another story.



While in college at Southern Illinois University my radio time was limited. But, we had WA9FGX (now W9UIH) with a full Drake line available. My roommate was Jim, WA9YLB (now W9BM). We had the HW-100 in our dorm room, which by no coincidence was on the 17th floor! We ran a dipole up on the roof so effectively that dipole was up at about 200 feet. That worked out really well! But, by senior year and all the busyness of graduating and finding a job, amateur radio slid by the wayside for a while.

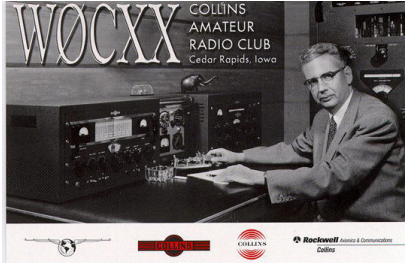
Ever since high school I knew I wanted to work for Collins. In 1974 I applied to companies all over the U.S. and of course, Collins (which had just become Rockwell International at that time.) And when I received two offers from Jim Boyer at Collins, I cancelled my other interviews. Working for Collins for \$235/week! WOW! And what was my first job assignment?



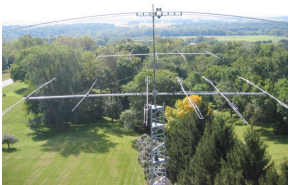
Working on the Collins S Line and KWM-2A! I was in heaven! It was great to work with Arnie Verdow, Jerry Vonderheide, Paul Trantor and others to make the S Line even better. Arnie was in Marketing and so he would send me the letters he received from amateurs and I would see if we could improve or change the production such as to fix their complaint. There are a lot of “round emblem” and “winged emblem” Collins fans out there, but I am convinced that the best quality radios were those we made from 1975-1977 and some of

those said “Rockwell International” on the plates. Unfortunately, the word came out that we were going to move the line to Dallas and so we packed it up and shipped it south.

In 1982 I got the idea that we should set up special event station for the 50th anniversary of Collins. The 50th Anniversary Steering Committee thought this was a good idea and invited me to submit a proposal and a budget, which I did. That turned out to be a KWM-380, PA-381 station set up outside on the northwest corner of building 120. Over 25,000 people attended the celebration that had C Avenue completely closed off. From that small beginning a constitution was drafted, an informational meeting held of all interested amateurs, and the Collins Amateur Radio Club became a reality. I believe we had 78 initial members that year. Today it's more like 170 or so. The Club has two club stations, one on the north campus (NØCXX) and the other on the south campus. Two years after Art passed away, we petitioned the FCC, with Mary Collins' written blessing (thanks to assistance from Warren Bruene in Dallas) and obtained Art's call, WØCXX.



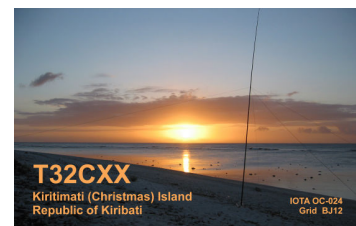
In 1984 I joined EIDXA with the certificate signed by “Red”, KØLUZ. It was in the mid 80s that I was working on the ARC-190 HF transceiver under Dave Jaksa's, WØVX (A charter member of EIDXA) organization. Dave encouraged me to get my Extra class license as in his words, “there was a helluva lot of DX in the lower 25kHz.” I knew he was right and so I started copying W1AW during code practice and banged out my Extra Class within 6 weeks. That is when I received my current call, NYØV.



It was being able to troll those bottom 25kHz that enabled me to pick off 5BDXCC in 1992 and Honor Roll in 1993. But it took until 2006 when Scarborough Reef, BS7H was activated that I finally picked off the last one for #1 Honor Roll. That culminated a 40 year pursuit with perhaps 7 years of down or low operating years. My country total is now 350 including the deleted geopolitical entities.

I still enjoy those “lower 25kHz”. With the 2 element 40m beam, its fun to lay in the weeds at sunrise and watch how the grey line weaves its magic into the band. I have 325 on 40m now and get a thrill for every “new one” I find down there.

For the last 10 years I have been working on the radio signal analysis for the Amelia Earhart project with a fellow EIDXA member, Rod Blocksome, KØDAS. My involvement in that project has provided two unexpected DXpeditions to T30 as well as sixteen weeks at sea as WØCXX/MM. In our most recent exploits, Rod and I traveled to T32 to run the CQWW contest in 2008. We are thinking about another trip out to the Pacific in the future both with the Earhart search team and maybe another DXpedition to the likes of C2, T2, E5 or ZK3.



As many of you know I will be moving to Chatfield, Minnesota in June. I already have the LM-470 tower in the ground and a 4 element SteppIR procured for the top spot. So the magic and the adventure will continue up in EN33. I do plan to try to get down to Kirkwood for club meetings once in a while so you won't get rid of me that easily! But, I can honestly say that I will miss the camaraderie we share here in Cedar Rapids. 73's, GDX

Tom, NYØV

WWØE Shack Rebuild: A Story in Pictures – Jerry Rappel, WWØE



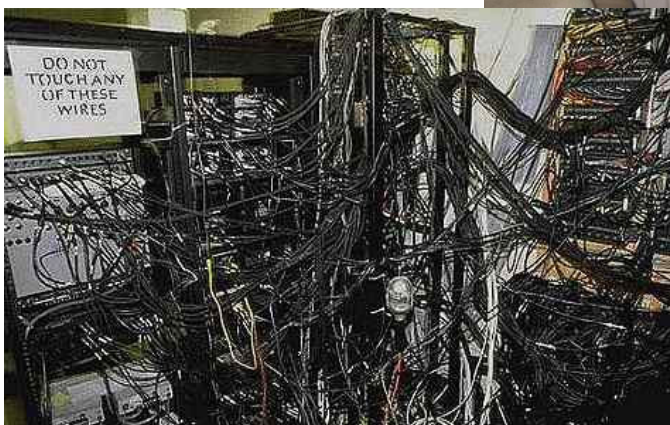
← *Scene 1: Wherein the author does the unthinkable: He goes QRT.*

We had our basement waterproofed back in October 2009. This meant removing items from the ham shack. The Rig, amp, tuner, etc. etc, were all stored upstairs.

I started the makeover after Christmas.

Scene 2: Wherein the author constructs the ultimate operating platform. →

I decided to rebuild the old desk. I used Luan 1/4" plywood to give the built-in desk a new look.



← *Scene 3: Wherein the author does battle with the dreaded Wire Medusa.*

I never realized that there were so many cables behind the desk.

Scene 4: Wherein the author takes the Scarborough approach to operating. →

My temporary shack while the work I did on the old radio room was in progress.



← Scenes 5&6: Wherein the author sees the light at the end of the tunnel. ↓

February 2010 – the finished room. Also had a new ceiling installed, 2 new walls, new carpet, paint, etc. I hung new drywall on 2 walls and painted.

Used fruitwood stain on the desk with 3 coats of lacquer. Glad it's finally finished!!

First new country worked in the new shack: T6AG – Afghanistan. (Country #288).



Jerry, WWØE

Welcome New EIDXA Member

EIDXA congratulates Bill Halse N9CDX, our newest member!

DXCC Card Checking Is As Close as EIDXA

EIDXA members can get their DX QSL cards checked for DXCC credit from the following club members:

- ARRL Midwest Division Director, and EIDXA member, Cliff Ahrens KØCA attends EIDXA meetings as his schedule permits. You may also send your cards to him by surface mail. Contact Cliff at: cahrens@mywdo.com.

- EIDXA member Tom Vavra WB8ZRL. Please note that Tom is unable to check cards from deleted entities or cards for 160 meters. Contact Tom at: wb8zrl@arrl.net.

- EIDXA member Mike Nowack NA9Q. Mike attends EIDXA meetings as his schedule permits. Contact Mike at: na9q@arrl.net.



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Collins Amateur Radio Club • 400 Collins Rd. NE • Cedar Rapids, IA • 52498

Pre-Dayton Impromptu Swapfest!

Where: Collins Main Plant- 137 Parking Lot

- East of the cement island, between the cafeteria and the 137-1 Guard Entrance

When: Sat, May 8th at 8:00am 'til 10:00am

Who: Any Radio Amateur (CARC, CVARC, EIDXA, etc.)

Admission Cost: None!

Prizes: None!

Talk-in: None!

Refreshments: None!

Facilities: None! (Well, the Cafeteria Restroom is available...)

Commercial Vendors: None!

Rain Date: None! This is it!

CVARC Conducting VE Session in the Cafeteria at 0900.

This is a time to just pull up your pick-up or car and open the trunk to buy/sell/trade the things you'd rather not haul to Dayton. If you don't have anything, come over anyway and have a few eyeball QSOs with some old friends. You can always get a cup of coffee afterwards.

2010 EIDXA Meeting & Events Schedule

Look for this information on the club web-page www.eidxa.org. Meeting information on the web site is up to date to ensure everyone has timely access to the information between newsletters.

Next Meeting

Friday April 23, 2010 at 7:30 PM, Room 219C,
Linn Hall on KCC Campus.

Program

PJ2 Propagation and StationBuilding by NØYY



EIDXA 1975-2010 • 35TH Anniversary

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A bit of humor for your day.



Instinctively, Craig knew he had captured a classic moment. But then, this was Field Day and *not* Iwo Jima ..and nobody cared.