

Eastern Iowa DXer

Official Newsletter of the Eastern Iowa DX Association

NØDX



An affiliated club of the American Radio Relay League

EIDXA 1975 - 2010 · 35TH Anniversary

October 2011

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Club Officers President: Vice President: Secretary Treasurer:	Steve Miller Jerry Rappel Richard Haende	NØSM WWØE I W3ACO	Packet Cluster WB8ZRL 147.51, 144.91, 223.40, CRNETROM
Repeater Committee:	Al Groff Joe Finkstein	KØVM WØMJN	Repeater: NØDX/R 144.59 / 145.19 (tone 192.8)
Membership Committee:	Jim Spencer Tom Vavra Nelson Moyer	WØSR WB8ZRL K UØA	

EIDXA Meeting – Friday, October 21, 2011, 7:30 p.m. Room 219C of Linn Hall on the campus of Kirkwood Comm. College. Program: GUINEA 3X5A VIDEO

President's Propagation, Pronouncements & Pontifications.

EIDXA President – Steve Miller NØSM

At times the dxing spirit tends to wain a bit but the thoughts and the memories of those rare qsos when the impossible happened would never let me get away from it for long. I recall the morning when I dragged my body out of bed before dawn to make my way to the



shack. Bleary eyed I listened as the rig came to life. Turning across the band a weak signal was heard at a level close to mental telepathy. Up 2 was a significant pile up so I continued listening. Little by little as daylight approached it began to grow in strength and finally I could read the call...

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C21XX- wow, that would be a new one on 160 and for once the signal kept building. Quickly, I turned on the amplifier, double checked to be sure I was on the right antenna then waited.....and waited.....and waited for the warm up period to end. Knowing there would be a long wait, I listened to the stations make their contacts. What was his operating pattern? Where was the last station he worked. Finally the timer let go and I jumped into the frey. Working him wasn't too difficult but what followed was the interesting part. As the sun came up, stations started disappearing, contacts were becoming sparse, and farther apart yet his signal kept growing. A noted big time DXer in Kansas City "worked" him but it was obviously ESP and timing. Eventually, it trickled down to no one. I then called to ask what antenna he was using and he replied, "Inverted-V." We had a solid pipeline.....truly strange but never-the-less fascinating. The awards are nice but pale by comparison to those special times we've all had. What's your most memorable QSO?

At this writing the 4W6A is on and hopefully the fall equinox will provide a boost in propagation though we have had some excellent days. I hope you've had a chance to work them. If not, there's still lots of time.

We haven't had a video at the meeting for quite a while and it was suggested a good contest or DX video would be great. I'm sure some of you have seen this but we'll have the Guinea 3X5A Contest Video. There are some dxpeditions that have asked for funding for you to consider, and we'll hope to have a report on the DX Marathon. We'll also be electing officers for the 2011-2012 year.

I would like to thank you for your support during my year as president. It's a fantastic club and what makes it great are the fine quality members we have. Special thanks to Joe Hetrick **KCØVKN** for his guidance during the year and for managing the software for the DX Marathon. Jim Spencer **WØSR** has made the arrangements for the meetings and has made numerous suggestions for providing direction to the club and the meetings - thanks Jim! Jerry Rappel **WWØE** has done an outstanding job of creating superb newsletters and Rich Haendel **W3ACO** keeps excellent minutes and financial records. Special thanks go to Rick Heinrichs **NØYY** and Rich Haendel for their great programs, and to Tom Vavra **WB8ZRL** for developing the programs for the convention, and to Brad Farrell **K4RT** who has managed the webpages. If I have overlooked your contributions, please forgive me. I do appreciate all you have done. I'll be looking forward to seeing you at the meeting on October 21st. **Steve Miller NØSM**

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"Now that's DX"

EIDXA Vice President - Jerry Rappel WWØE



The high amount of water vapor that was in the air from this past June, July and August is gone, whew! October is here already.



Beginning with this issue, the EIDXA newsletter will now be in *"High Definition"* format - substantially more resolution per page than your regularly scheduled conventional analog DX type newsletter. Enjoy the difference! At no extra cost to you.

My blood pressure went up back in late July when I worked VK9HR Lord Howe Island, and STØR S. Sudan, for countries #303, and #304. *Now that's DX*.

"The Top DX'er in the WORLD" - (sorry KØJGH, it's not you Glen). That title belongs to W7KH. As of this month there are 341 countries on the DXCC list. (Counting S. Sudan). And 60 deleted ones. 90 year old John Dack – W7KH has 397 confirmed. Accomplished with a Hy-Gain 203B at 50', which he purchased back in 1964. An Icom 746 and a solid state amp. There are <u>no</u> computers in his shack. All logs are kept with pencil and paper. See the September 2011 issue of QST for the full story. Hats off to John!

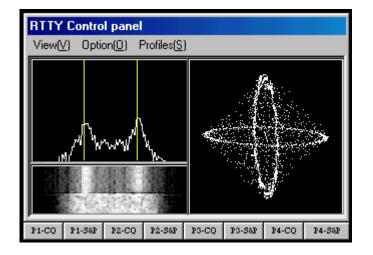
KWØJ's tower project Part II \rightarrow Read all about it – as told by Gary Huff beginning on page 7. The main highlight in this newsletter. He hopes to have 5BWAZ by the end of 2012 ... right Gary? Thanks for submitting a fantastic story !



With this column I begin my 2^{nd} year as editor of the EIDXA newsletter. It's been a pleasureable experience. I always try to have it contain various articles of interest for everyone's taste. And I thank you all for the positive feedback concerning the previous newsletters, and your articles.

I appreciate your time!! So here we go again ... *a-wop-bop-a-loo-bop-a-lop-bop-bop*"... enjoy.





RTTY Corner. Jerry Rappel WWØE

The latest DX digi-doings.

Like it or Not, (and I don't like it !) ...

Bill Moore, NC1L (ARRL Awards Branch) <u>nc1l@arrl.org</u> In accordance with Minute 29 of the July 2011 ARRL Board of Directors meeting, the DXCC award for RTTY is now changed to Digital. *Digital* will now replace *RTTY* on these certificates effective July 25, 2011. I guess mine is some what of a collectors item now. Why did the ARRL change it to a generic title? So now no one can tell if you did it via RTTY, PSK31, Roumanian-FEC 164.5, Rolling Coquelet Inversion, or some other weird digital mode. I wonder what they are going to name the next ARRL RTTY Roundup? (My opinion, diddlediddle). BTW - this column will still be called "**RTTY Corner**".

When it comes to soundcard based modes on the HF bands, you have a virtual smorgasbord of them. Around 24 last count. Only RTTY and PSK31 are dominant, in that order. PSK31 is definitely the most popular for rag chewing. RTTY is the mode of choice for contesters and DXpeditions. RTTY fulfills this need very well so the incentive to switch is a weak one.

STØR has set a new world record for **RTTY** contacts during a new DX country activation. **18,132 QSO's** ...



RTTY reception has been rather quiet in EIDXA land recently. New in my log from the past couple months: MD/DJ4AK, CEØY/I2DML. From the RTTY log book of **Glen Kesselring KØJGH**:, TY1KS, CEØY/I2DML, STØR **Dave Jaksa, WØVX,** has a few new ones: CEØY/I2DML, STØR. **Sam Burrell KØAFN** has worked CEØY/I2DML, STØR, ZD7VC. Thanks once again for the RTTY logs guys.

2011 ARRL RTTY Roundup Results The OH2HAN RTTY Story (ARRL on line 2011)

The question posed in last year's results article was whether anyone could derail P49X's quest for his sixth straight Roundup Title. Ed, WØYK who operates in Aruba was the favorite going into the contest. Ed brought along another secret weapon into the event in 2011 going SO3R. I'm not sure how that worked out as 10 meters didn't seem to generate all that much activity. 20 meters was his money band with 15 meters a close second. His 2009 record still stands but Ed certainly wasn't challenged in 2011. A tip of the hat to Ed – now a six-time champion! The featured DX participant this time is Simo, OH2HAN. It seems that my friend Tapani, OH2LU is his mentor and encouraged Simo to write this account for us to get a feel for the DX end of the RTTY Roundup:

Simo OH2HAN with two beauties: Siberian cat Olga and Tandberg Hurdle 5 receiver from the 1950's .

Another milestone was the DXpedition in 2007 with Tapani, OH2LU and Pasi, OH2MZB to Market Reef where we participated in the SARTG WW RTTY contest as OJØMI and gained first place in the World in the Multioperator, All-Band category. That was my wakeup for fascination of contesting RTTY!



After that I have participated [in] numerous RTTY contests, of which ARRL RTTY RU is one of the most important. It offers a lot of other competitors so you need not to be alone on the bands, which makes it real fun!

This year I operated ARRL RU in Single-Operator, High Power category and my preliminary result is 952 QSOs and about 93.000 points. Conditions on Saturday were poor here in Finland, but on Sunday it changed. Openings

on 21 MHz have been rare here in the Northern Hemisphere during recent years but on that Sunday it was nicely open -Igot about 120 QSOs there among others with VK, E21,



EA8, ZS, VU, VE, CO, P49, HI and some North American stations, too. Sunday evening was very nice with numerous North American stations on 14 MHz. My contest strategy is to first seek good multipliers and secondly to seek volume which usually happens during afternoon/evening time, when European stations appear in quantities on the bands and it is possible to build fine pile-ups. Quick band changes are my favorites and a must, too, because high bands are open very limited time here. One important part of my contest strategy is my wife Sari who eagerly takes care of my catering! Actually she is so keen on radio that she made her amateur examination a couple of months ago and got the call sign OH2FVI.

As to hardware I have a tower of 100 feet equipped with a 2-element 7 MHz beam and a 10-element tri-band beam for 14-21-28 MHz. Both are made by Finnish Antenna Ltd. Newest antenna is a quarter-wave GP for 3.5 MHz, which seems to work quite well. My rig is Yaesu FT-1000MP Mk V with linears Acom 2000A and Tokyo Hy-Power 1.5. Signal decoding is made in two ways: by KAM XL hardware modem and MMTTY software modem. Of those I choose the one which gives more likely result. Operation software is an old DOS-based program developed and continuously updated by Jukka OH2GI. The operating system is WinXP. Simo Sorvari OH2HAN. KWØJ's Tower Project - Part II

It has been a long time coming and finally there's a 55' tower (US Tower) installed out back! I rebuilt a TH7DXX 7 - element 10, 15, 20 meter yagi I acquired from EIDXA member Bill, N9CDX to use on top and additionally installed a 80-10 meter offcenter fed Windom at 55', hanging off the side of the tower on a modified Rohn house bracket.



Gary Huff - KWØJ

The hole was dug nice and box like.





The rebar cage was placed in the hole.





The concrete contractor was very good with the mini back-hoe.

And covered it with about 8 cubic yards of 5000 lb. mix concrete.





Walah! 30 days to set up, and later we have a very nice base.

With the help of Dave Kamp, KWØD the tower was moved off the driveway. I thought it would be there forever, while jumping through all the hoops of the city regulations. Dave trailered the tower around back nicely with a tractor, and then positioned it right over the base bracket and we bolted it up. The TH7DXX tuning was done at the 10' level on a temporary pole I had been using for the Titan DX Vertical being replaced. SWR's were reasonable for being so close to the ground.



EIDXA members Larry, KØIS and N9CDX were a lot of help with the questions I had on antenna raising day.

They even had a question for me ...



"Is the pizza here yet Gary ?

October 2011

Everything went pretty well except for a delay, for the purchase of a new thrust bearing, at the last minute.



Also I was embarrassed when Bill noticed I had inserted two of the elements in the boom with the drain holes up!! Sure glad he did, as that would have been the cause of heart burn later. I had to modify the beta tube feed straps down to the Balun to accommodate the DX Engineering balun I used. The connections were required to be 90 degrees from the original Hygain balun. I kept the lengths on the straps the same and added about 1-1/4" of aluminum to each one. Performance is looking good so far.

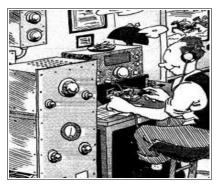
With the vertical I had very poor radiation to the NW/North/NE on 20-10m and now I'm hearing very well. Next year I would like to do a bit more antenna work up on top and get a rotor that can handle more square footage, but for now I'm really excited to just get on the air with this equipment.



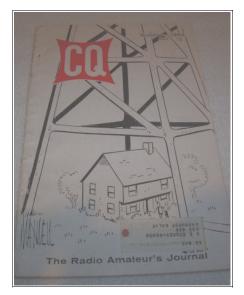
(not shown actual size)

I'll be listening for you all on the bands.





Gary Huff - KWØJ



Gary's tower made the cover of CQ magazine.

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FIELD CHECKING - Tom Vavra WB8ZRL

I have been field checking QSL cards for about 18 months and have some observations and hints to sh are. I am not limited to DXCC QSL checking. I can check WAC, WAS and VUCC applications too. I can envision only one thing that will cause me to reject an application. The DXCC desk requires that the DXCC Record Sheet be properly ordered. By band, and then within band, by mode. They will allow a very



small number of exceptions, but that small number is my decision. If in doubt, ask me. I am allowed to, and usually do, make changes to the QSO data to conform to what I find on the QSL card. The error is usually in the date, but sometimes in the call sign. I will provide feedback indicating changes that I made, but it really is not a big deal. Only a small percentage of the applications have been error free.

The ARRL instructions indicate that if a card has multiple QSOs on it, and you only wish to use a subset of them, you need to indicate which of them you want to use, with a post-it note. I do not require that. I can dig out the QSO you want to use from the card. If you actually send the cards to the HQ, then you will need to do the post-it. I recommend that you use a credit card to pay for the submission. If you are also submitting through LoTW, the credit card information will be submitted there. If that is the case, you do not need to include it on the application form.

To avoid the appearance of tampering with the application, I am the one that must place it in the mail to the DXCC desk. Surprisingly, most applicants do not give me an addressed business size stamped envelope The number of cards to be checked is negotiable. I once checked almost 350 but I took them home with me to check. I probably would not do that many at a club meeting. If you have more than 100 cards, you should contact me before we meet. It would never hurt, and would help me, if you would let me know before hand that you will have cards to check. These are my ways of providing the service. The club has two other members (KØCA and NA9Q) who are checkers. They may do things differently.

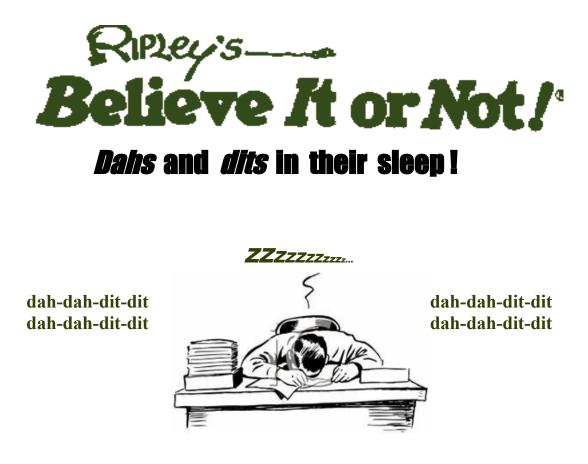
GOOD NEWS - BAD NEWS - Tom Vavra WB8ZRL

This past winter I worked a new one on 80 meters. Good News: There was a stateside QSL manager. Bad News: I was not in the log. N4RZL was. N4RZL is a Technician in VA, where it would have been more than an hour after sunrise. Good News: The manager decided that just in case, he would give me a QSL card. Bad News: The card was made out to WB2ZRL. Good News: I did not have to make a conscience decision to use the card even though I had not been in the log. Bad News: I still need to work that rare one.

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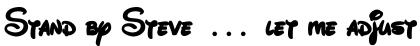
Flight students learning Morse Code at the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Florida back in 1923 ... were asleep ... Radio Chief Mate Phil Phinney had suggested that they learn code in their sleep, as he once did. So students slept in the class room wearing helmets with a headset while operators sent messages at 10-15 wpm. It was confirmed in the next few days that the students could receive messages at the speed they were sent. (The Nook Newsletter).



It's believed that Richard -W3ACO attended that class ... Believe it or not.









The Eastern Iowa DXer

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SODA POP CAN VERTICAL

The original 2 meter Soda Pop Can Vertical dipole was constructed for the Strange Antenna Challenge. After measuring a number of different can type types, it was determined that



a stack of four aluminium soda pop cans was within 2" of the calculated value for a 1/4 wavelength element. Each can is fastened to the can below with hex head self-drilling $\#6 \ge 1/2$ inch sheet metal screws. A 1/4-inch

magnetic tipped nut setter is used with a 4-1/2inch shaft extension to reach through the wide mouth opening of the can to drive the screws. Each element consists of four cans. After the two elements are completed, the tops of the two elements are removed with a set of circular cutting aviation snips. The two



elements are joined together with a short piece of 1-1/2 inch schedule-40 PVC pipe. The connection points to the feed line are sanded to remove the can's outer coating. The coaxial feed line is joined to the cans, with sheet metal



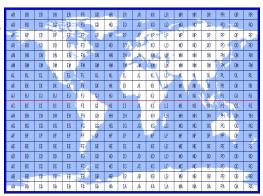
screws tapped into the PVC pipe. Before installing the completed antenna, it should be tested for SWR. This antenna was designed for temporary use. (Courtesy: KØS, Strange Antenna Challenge)



"My comments" - Now that's what I call a "beverage" antenna. I heard him on the air, he told me he was listening 7 UP. I was sorry to hear that he got "**canned**" from his job.

What attracts hams to this unusual band? Summer E-skip and the magic band Jerry Rappel WWØE

This Spring/Summer has been my first 6 meter season. I snagged a handful of new states, (ND, SD, DE, etc.), grids, and some DX from the surrounding coasts of the Carribbean. The "searchlight effect" was definitely noticed, a perfectly readable signal fading into the noise, then returning a few minutes later. Nothing logged from "across the pond" yet. I've become a bit obsessed with this band.



You see, 6 meters is an acquired taste, a few hams work the band regularly, but many hams never work it at all. Once you acquire the taste, you'll be

hooked. My Yaesu FT1000MP doesn't cover 50Mhz, so I've been using my **Icom 706**. Periodically monitoring the band for sporatic signals. Being use to the HF bands, 6 meters is intriguing. It is fascinating because just about all types of propagation pop up on 6 meters at one time or another, Sporadic E (Es),



(E-clouds are usually found at an altitude of about 60 miles). Tropospheric Ducting, Aurora, Meteors, even F2 skip. Kind of like the HF band ... they're all there. With more and more newer radios including 6 meters, and the higher bands, many hams are attracted to this unusual band.

TF/DL3GCS was worked by N3SL – Souix City, IA. **CT1HZE** had a great Summer, he worked 175 W/VE's. (*From September 2011 QST*).

These EIDXA members sent DX logs from 50 MHz during June/July this past Summer: **Ron Blocksome, KØDAS** has logged: PJ6D, V25DR, XE2OR, XE1GZU, VE6SV, 9Y4D, WP4U, XE2YHR, XE2OR, T15KD, P43A, VE5UA. P4A and KP4EIT. **Nelson Moyer, KUØA** has these stations in his log: HI3TE, PJ2/K8LE – (CW). Thanks to these members for their contributions.

"Now that's 6 meters"

Come on baby - let's do the *Twist* $\approx \approx \approx \approx \approx \approx \approx \approx \approx \pi$ *Twisted* Radio Waves

As portions of the RF Spectrum are becoming crowded, scientists and engineers are looking for ways to improve this situation. Physicist Thomas Leyser,(Sweden), thinks he has discovered a method of transmission to carry more digital signal information. than is currently possible. This involves the creation of twisted radio beams. Leyser and his co-workers created their first twisted beams for the **HAARP** facility in Alaska.

They needed to use an array of 360 seperate antennas.

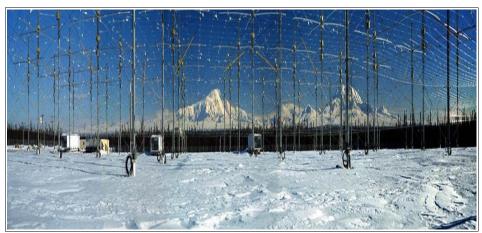
They created a twisted signal by firing up the **HAARP** facility in a staggered sequence in a circular pattern instead of having all of them transmit the same signal.



HAARP facility in Alaska.

The delay rippled around the array so that the beam emerged as a helical

wave front. So the twist remained coherent across vast distances and could store digital information encoded into the pitch of



the twist. In theory, said Leyser, large amounts of data could be sent this way. It is a feature of radio waves that has not been utilised before.

(New Scientist Tech Journal)

EIDXA CQ Marathon Challenge! - Joe Hetrick KCØVKN

The year is waning, but, there is still time! Currently I see 11 participants in the EIDXA CQ Marathon Challenge, and, as has been the case almost the entire year, recent retiree Tom, NYØV has been dominating the leaderboards, though, concerted efforts by several stations have seen him need to pick and choose contacts to remain at the top of only one of the mode boards!

Folks who have worked STØR can use another row (P5?) in their Spreadsheets until CQ have released a new one, and at that time, I should have the scores page (<u>http://host.bitjanitor.net/~jhetrick/eidxa.php</u>) handling that additional country.

Anyone and everyone in EIDXA who has worked some DX, please consider adding your log to the list! Instructions for doing so and a description of the program should be in the Spring of 2011 EIDXA newsletter. We'd love to see what mebers are doing. Joe KCØVKN

Leaders by Total

Leaders by Zone

Leaders by Country

Station	Total
NYØV	268
W3ACO	256
KØJGH	250
K8OM	246
NCØO	240
KØAFN	210
WØVX	203
KØCA	195
WWØE	166
KCØVKN	154
KØCF	140

Total
40
40
40
40
40
40
40
40
40
37
34

Station	Total
NYØV	270
W3ACO	261
KØJGH	250
K8OM	249
NCØO	240
KØAFN	210
WØVX	218
KØCA	195
WWØE	169
KCØVKN	154
KØCF	140

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Jerry,

Tom - WB8ZRL brought a book of the Kansas City DX club's newsletters and spoofs. I thought you could use some for the newsletter. Terry - WØAWL.

New CW Technique developed by WDØSRI

Take note all "non-CW" type radio operators

The S9VCT split frequency operation allowed me to refine a new CW operating technique. The method is pratical and should be quite helpful for some of our "non-CW" type operators. The technique is relatively simple and easy to use. The first step is to program your call in the first memory of your keyer, and a signal report in the second memory. When the desired DX station comes on, make sure an experienced "CW Jock" is on 146.49 (The KC DX spotting fequency). If no one is around, make a couple of quick phone calls and get RWL, VBU, AEØK, or ABØX to come on to help you. After the "CW Jock" is on and listening to the pileup with you, begin sending your call non stop on the appropriate split frequency. Probably the easiest way is to flip the repeat switch and punch memory #1 on your keyer. All you have to do now is turn up the volume on your 2 meter transceiver and sit back and wait. The next step in the technique is to listen carefully to your "CW Jock" who will tell you on 2 meters "Hey Elmer he came back to you"! Then you punch on your keyer memory #2 for the report and it's done. You have successfully worked a high speed CW station and a new country! If there's any comment or question on 146.49 about your delayed response simply say that the "QRM" was bad and you weren't sure he came back to you, and of course you didn't want to call out of turn. See how simple the technique is! With a little practice you can master the new technique easily. See you on the bottom of 20 meters.

Thanks to Tom Varva - WB8ZRL, and Terry Cellman - WØAWL. More next issue.

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 Vice 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 via e-mail for more information and/or to make arrangements to check your cards: cahrens@mywdo.com.

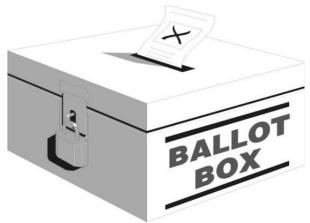
• EIDXA member Tom Vavra WB8ZRL. Please note that Tom is unable to check cards from deleted entities or cards for 160 meters. Contact Tom via e-mail for more information and/or to make arrangements to check your cards: **wb8zrl@arrl.net**.



• EIDXA member Mike Nowack NA9Q. Mike attends EIDXA meetings as his schedule permits. Contact Mike via e-mail for more information and/or to make arrangements to check your cards: na9q@arrl.net.



Election of officers October 21st



Thank you Steve !!

Watch for a special **EIDXA CHRISTMAS** 2011 newsletter.

