Official Newsletter of the Eastern Iowa DX Association

The Eastern Iowa DXer

An affiliated club of the American Radio Relay League

NØDX

Established 1975

SPECIAL EIDXA-TRA EDITION

Club Officers:

President:	Richard Heinrich	NØYY	**Packet Cluster:**	**WB8ZRL**
Vice President:	Jerry Rappel	WWØE	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		

☆ Next EIDXA meeting: Friday, February 3rd, 2012 7:30 P.M.
Room 219C of Linn Hall on the campus of Kirkwood Community College.
Program - "Maintenance and Preparation of a Contest Station" - PJ2T
by Rick Heinrich NØYY

President's Propagation, Pronouncements & Pontifications.

EIDXA President Richard Heinrich, NØYY

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a great holiday and is enjoying our moderate winter in Iowa.

Our prolific Editor, Jerry WWØE, has collected enough information to prepare this Special Extra Edition of the Newsletter. I have to admit that this caught me a bit by surprise! I am still trying to find my shack after a month of hard travel – West Coast, East Coast, Europe … my body certainly does not know what time it is!

The bands have been active with many different contests and with the high bands jumping there seems to be something for everyone. As I write this, we are preparing for the VP6T and HKØNA DX-peditions. Both hold opportunities for adding new ones on the low bands for me so I hope that the planes stay grounded long enough for me to catch these operations.

I had the opportunity to ready an interesting article by Joe Reisert, W1JR the other day. The article – A DX Review of 2011 – http://www.ae5x.com/blog/2012/01/11/2011-dxcc-year-end-review-by-w1jr highlighted that last year had a total of 287 entities active. (Now we can see how our venerable DX Marathon chasers fared.) Cycle 24 is climbing to its planned peak in 2013 and the high bands are hopping with a roll off of the low bands.

One of the most interesting things to note is the "Save Log Bank" activity by N2OO. Bob is trying to find help for preserving logs from past DX operations so that those that need cards can still find a way once the operator has passed or the operation has closed. IF you would like more info or to offer your help, please contact Bob directly.

Also highlighted is the broader use of the DX Code of Conduct. Many DX-peditions are recommending and following those procedures. It would pay to review those gentlemanly operating codes as we head into the current operations on Malpelo and Pitcairn.

Speaking of Malpelo, do your best to work this one! It seems that access will be challenged in the future so take advantage of this operation.

Of course our own WØGJ will be part of the team and as he noted in a recent e-mail will have his "**Zero Detector**" enabled! Get in there and enjoy the chase.

And while I am citing statistics, Jim noted in his review of 2011 that there appear to be 15 entities that have not been active in the past 7 years. That means that for an avid DXer it may take 7-10 years to make the honor role. The entities not active include: 7O, BV9P, CEØX, E3, FR/T, KH1, KH5K, KP1, P5, VKØ/H, VP8 (South Sandwich), XZ, and ZL9. So there are still opportunities for DX-peditions for those chasing the elusive countries to get to the top of the Honor Roll.

And for those looking for a new challenge (more than our own Marathon pursuit) there is the Diamond DXCC Award from the ARRL commemorating their 75th year in 2012. So there are many reasons to get on and to play radio. So get on and enjoy this wonderful hobby.

Richard Heinrich– NØYY

"Now that's DX"

EIDXA Vice-President
Jerry Rappel, WWØE

EIDXA-TRA

Thanks to the generous club members who have recently submitted their profiles and articles to me. "Occasionally" I will start the presses and publish an **EIDXA -TRA** newsletter between the regular quarterly publications. One of the reasons for doing so is otherwise the April newsletter might be 99 pages, *HI HI.* My goal with this special edition is to encourage more reader-written contributions like we have in this issue. We are pleased to have Dave Jaksa, WØVX - one of the founding members of the EIDXA featured in this month's Member's Spotlight.

Volunteers

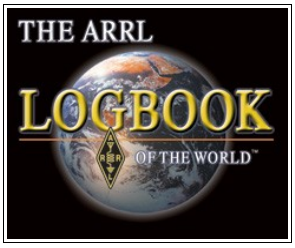
Editing this newsletter has become organized pleasure for me, as has writing articles for it. I "volunteered" to obtain and enhance material for this publication. It is my determination to be informative, educational, straightforward and amuse you. I try not to make it the "typical DX club newsletter"- like some other radio club editions have become. It is "not" meant to be QST magazine. My intention is aimed at all our club members. I'm still new at it, as this activity was my first effort at arranging, revising, and editing. I'm learning as I go. Teaching myself. I try to make it as "professional" looking as possible. Thanks to all those club members who have "volunteered" their time, like I have. Yes I'm still looking for more "volunteers" to send me their "member profiles" and radio related stories for upcoming newsletters. As this is what the majority of club members requested in the recent EIDXA members survey.
Last but not least, the EIDXA needs to thank someone who has "volunteered" a considerable amount of his time over the years … Brad Farrell, K4RT ...

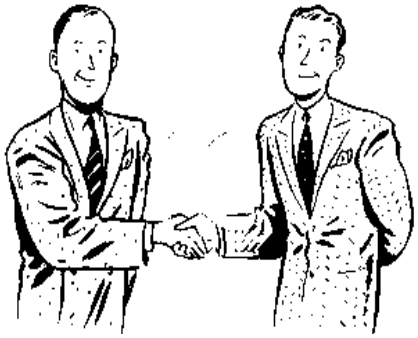
FAREWELL BRAD

Brad Farrell, K4RT is stepping down as the EIDXA web page manager. He recently relocated to Alexandria, Virginia. Brad has been offering his time uploading the newsletters and keeping our web page current, even though he hasn't actually been a club member for awhile. Now he has "volunteered" once again, to transition this job to a new webmaster. About a year ago when he thought someone was going to take over his web duties, he drafted instructions on uploading and maintaining the site. Those are still in his possession and he'll share this with the "new guy". You can contact him for more information about the web page, etc. at k4rt@usa.net.
The EIDXA expresses our feelings of gratitude to Brad for the **"quality job"** he has given us over these many years. **THANK YOU BRAD!**

More time for DX'ing !
2012 will be a day and a second longer

The International Earth Rotation and Reference Systems Service has decided that a "positive leap second" will be added to Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) at the end of June 2012. This will affect all time scales based on UTC. February will have a total of 29 days instead of the usual 28, to make up for our rotation around the Sun. So we all have time to put VP6T and HKØNA in our logs.





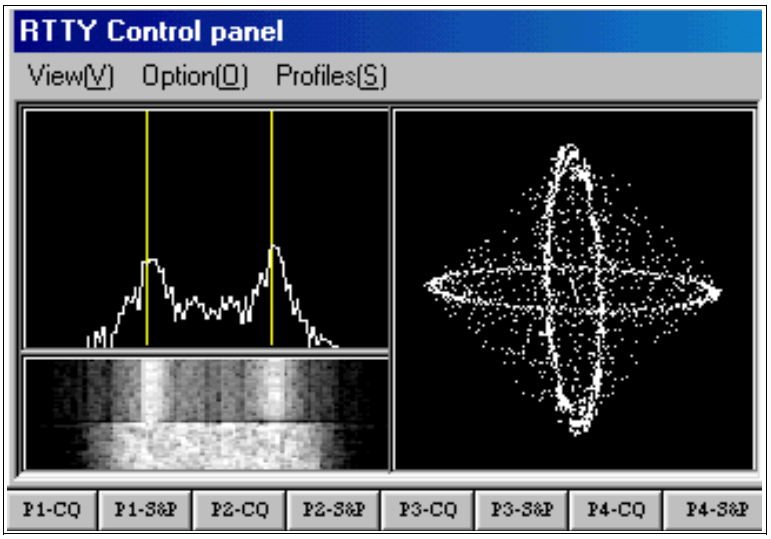
ARRL to permit use of LoTW for CQ Awards !

From the CQ Newsroom - applicants for CQ's WPX award (and others) will soon be able to use the ARRL LoTW credits in their applications, under an agreement between CQ and the ARRL announced January 24, 2012. ARRL had prohibited the use of its LoTW system by any outside organization. The target date for starting WPX support on LoTW is April 1, 2012.

ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, observed that this step gives radio amateurs throughout the world an inexpensive and convenient means of gaining credits toward CQ's popular operating awards: "LoTW has significantly increased interest and participation in the ARRL's DXCC, Worked All States and VUCC awards programs. We anticipate a similarly positive response to the addition of the CQ WPX award. Amateurs will be able to spend more time operating and less time chasing QSL cards."
CQ President Richard Ross, K2MGA, said he is very pleased to be able to move forward with LoTW support for CQ awards. "We have had excellent results with electronic confirmations for several years," he explained. "I am glad that we are now able to begin expanding that convenience to those participants in our award programs who use Logbook of The World. We look forward to a smooth launch for WPX and to the expansion of LoTW support to include the rest of our award programs, as well."

Yaesu is the Principal Sponsor of the LoTW website

RTTY Corner - Jerry Rappel WWØE



The latest DX digi-doings.

"Oodles" of RTTY DX …

- New in my RTTY log, T8CW, JI1LET/JD1, CP1FF, TX6T, 9M6XRO, V51B, 5N6/YL2SW, MMØAMW, MØOXO, PZ5RA, S58N, P4ØYL, PJ4C, YO4RYU/MM, RA2FF, 2EØZRQ, V25RV, VE2CSI (zone 2).
- **Tom Vinson, NYØV** sent some of his recent catches, 4WØVB, 9M6XRO, C21HA, PJ4C.
- Glen Kesselring, K**ØJGH** submits his latest RTTY log**,** V51B, 5N6/YL2SW, T8CW, EW1AK, A45XR, C31CT, 5B4AIF, E74KC.
- **Joe Hungate, K8OM** has been occupied with RTTY activity lately, T32CO, 9M6XRO, TX6T, EU7A, 4X4DX, VU2NKS, MMØAMW, LX8RTTY, 7Z1SJ, OD5NJ, PZ5RA, KH2L, EI7M,VP8NO, DAØTTO, YL7X, MW2I, OH1TN, TF3IG.
- **Dave Jaksa, WØVX** tells us these are "some" of the RTTY stations recorded in his log from the ARRL RTTY DX Roundup, JD1BMH, S53M, 5B4AIF, LZ2PL, LX8RTTY, FG1PP, OL8M, V51B, YL7X, LS1D, P4ØYL, FG1PP, ZP9EH, CN8KD, FS/DL2RUM.

Thanks to these members for sending in their logs.

XE International RTTY Contest - February 4 -5.
CQ WW WPX RTTY Contest - February 11-12.
North American RTTY QSO Party - February 25 -25.

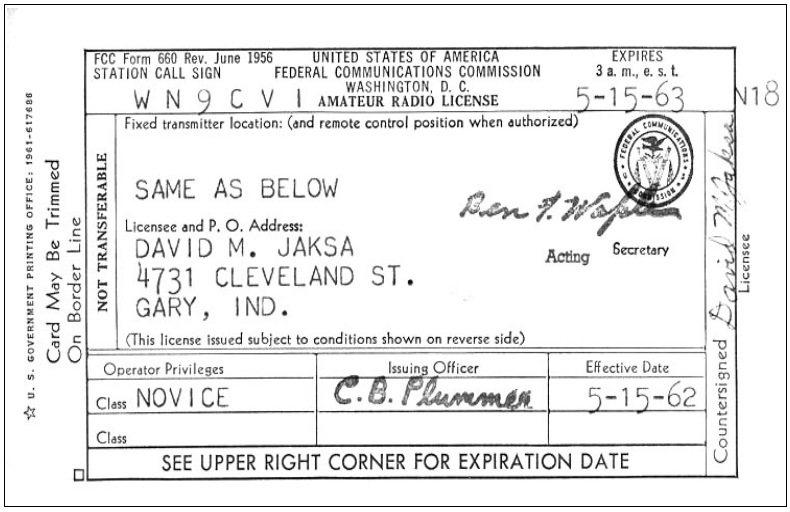
EIDXA MEMBER'S SPOTLIGHT

WØVX

Dave Jaksa, WØVX - one of the founding members of the EIDXA.

The WØVX Story

I was first licensed in May of 1962 at the age of 15 as WN9CVI. At the time I lived in the NW Indiana Chicago suburbs. My rig, all used, was a Knight Kit T-50 transmitter running 50 Watts in-put (about 25 Watts output) and R-100 receiver. My antenna was a Gotham Vertical. I had one crystal for 80 meters and one for 40.



FCC Form 660 Rev. June 1956 — UNITED STATES OF AMERICA — EXPIRES 3 a. m., e. s. t.
STATION CALL SIGN — FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION — WASHINGTON, D. C. — AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE
W N 9 C V I — 5-15-63 — N18

Fixed transmitter location: (and remote control position when authorized)

SAME AS BELOW

Licensee and P. O. Address:
DAVID M. JAKSA
4731 CLEVELAND ST.
GARY, IND.

Ben F. Waple — Acting Secretary

(This license issued subject to conditions shown on reverse side)

NOT TRANSFERABLE

Countersigned David M. Jaksa Licensee

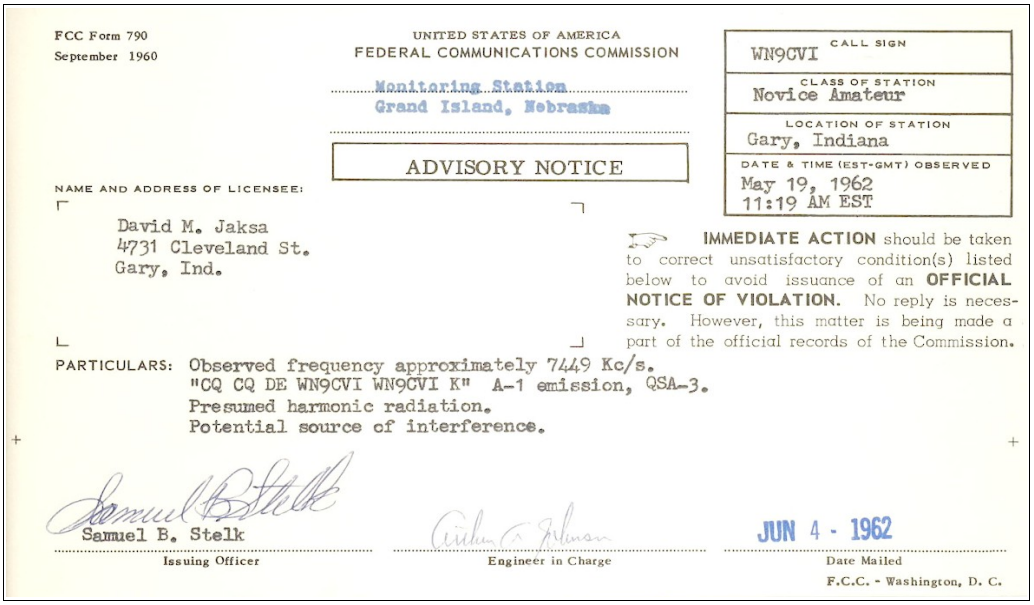
Operator Privileges	Issuing Officer	Effective Date
Class NOVICE	C.B. Plummer	5-15-62
Class		

SEE UPPER RIGHT CORNER FOR EXPIRATION DATE

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1961-617688

Card May Be Trimmed On Border Line

Sadly, my first QSL, dated 4 days after my license effective date, was from the FCC monitoring station in Grand Island, Nebraska.



FCC Form 790
September 1960

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Monitoring Station
Grand Island, Nebraska

ADVISORY NOTICE

CALL SIGN: WN9CVI
CLASS OF STATION: Novice Amateur
LOCATION OF STATION: Gary, Indiana
DATE & TIME (EST-GMT) OBSERVED: May 19, 1962 11:19 AM EST

NAME AND ADDRESS OF LICENSEE:
David M. Jaksa
4731 Cleveland St.
Gary, Ind.

IMMEDIATE ACTION should be taken to correct unsatisfactory condition(s) listed below to avoid issuance of an **OFFICIAL NOTICE OF VIOLATION.** No reply is necessary. However, this matter is being made a part of the official records of the Commission.

PARTICULARS: Observed frequency approximately 7449 Kc/s.
"CQ CQ DE WN9CVI WN9CVI K" A-1 emission, QSA-3.
Presumed harmonic radiation.
Potential source of interference.

Samuel B. Stelk — Issuing Officer
Engineer in Charge
JUN 4 - 1962 — Date Mailed

F.C.C. - Washington, D. C.

My father was not a happy camper when he found out about my advisory notice and my operating privileges were temporarily suspended by my local parental official.

Once I convinced my dad that I now knew how to tune the oscillator to the 80 meter crystal fundamental instead of the second harmonic. I was reinstated and able to make a lot more contacts without any additional QSL's from the FCC.

My first real 2 way QSO and QSL was with Steve, WN9DXQ who lived one town over from me. We quickly became good friends, took the General exam at the same time, and later roomed together in college. Steve is W5HPQ today and we still maintain weekly QSO's. From day one I didn't like crystal control and wanted to upgrade to General privileges which included the use of a VFO and more bands. Eight weeks after receiving my Novice I took the train downtown to the Chicago FCC office in the federal building to sit for the General exam. I was pretty nervous about taking the exam in front of the FCC examiner but somehow managed to pass. Some 50 years later I still remember the code test was a message about the Titanic. I also remember the examiner remarking that I clearly could copy the code but my penmanship left a lot to be desired. It still does!

After what seemed like 4 years, but really was about 4 weeks, my new WA9CVI General Class license came in the mail. So did my new-to-me V-44 VFO that matched my T-50 transmitter. I also had a home brew cathode modulator so off I went to explore the new bands and my new voice privileges on AM. Being on the downhill side of cycle 19, I worked a lot of DX in spite of my low power and marginal antenna.

After graduating High School I headed off to college to pursue an Electrical Engineering degree. The college club station, W9NAA, had a Central Electronics 100V SSB transmitter, 500 Watt PA, 75A4 Receiver, and a tri-band Yagi antenna. I spent a lot of my free time putting W9NAA into many DX and contest logs. Toward the end of my sophomore year I began dating a young lady named Judi who attended Indian State University on the other end of town. By junior year we had a routine of Saturday night dates and study dates on Sunday afternoon. Yes, being an engineering student they really were study dates.

Then came the last full weekend of October and Judi asked what movie I wanted to go see on Saturday night. Uhhh, that's the CQ WW Phone DX contest so I told her if we were going to have a date it would be in the ham shack and she could log for me. Much to my surprise she said OK, sounds like fun. That's when I knew the future WØJJ was a keeper.

After graduation in 1968 I headed off to Iowa to work for Collins Radio. In spite of the fact I wanted to keep my 9 call after the move, back then you had to change calls if you moved to a new district. I filed my form 610 and the FCC gave me WAØVDX. Turns out that call worked just fine too!

Being freshly graduated from college I didn't have much money so I continued to use the T-50/V-44/R-100 rig for several years. For our first 3 years in Iowa we lived on the top floor of an apartment house. And I used a wire out the window clipped to the rain gutters for an antenna. No landlord problems and nobody knew where the TVI was coming from.

Shortly after moving to Iowa the new incentive license rules came into full force. Not wanting to lose the DX segment of the bands I decided it was time to upgrade to Extra. I discovered it was no longer a quick train trip downtown to take an upgrade exam. At that time amateur radio exams were given quarterly in the Quad Cities so off I went on the appointed day to sit for my last FCC exam. I passed it but the examiner commented that my CW copy penmanship was hard to read. I wondered silently if it was the same guy from the Chicago office who tested me in 1962.

With our second child on the way it was time to do some house hunting. I really baffled the real estate agent by insisting any house we looked at had to be on high ground. After moving into our first house, I acquired an HT-32B, R-4 receiver, and Hy-Gain Hy-Tower vertical, all used. My next door neighbor thought I was nuts but he helped me bury 1200 feet of radials under the Hy-Tower anyway. Pretty soon the Yagi bug bit. The same bug bit Jim, WØSR about the same time and together we over researched Yagi antennas.

The conclusion was identical installations consisting of 48' Rohn HDBX towers, TH-6DXX antennas, and Ham-M rotators. As I recall we got a package deal price at Iowa Radio.

During the antenna research and construction process Jim and I began to seriously discuss forming a local DX club. Thus the seeds of the Eastern Iowa DX Association were planted culminated in our first meeting in 1975. Those were exciting times.

The early history of EIDXA is well documented on the website so I won't repeat it here. However, it is worth mentioning that Jim Spencer, WØSR and I also co-conspired to design the EIDXA logo and QSL card which are still in use today.

With our third child on the way in 1976 it was time for a larger house. Moving is never fun especially when towers and antennas are involved. Fortunately, taking down and reinstalling the tower and TH-6DXX was quickly accomplished with the help of the EIDXA gang. The new unfenced back yard wasn't compatible with the Hy-Tower vertical so a new 80/40 meter antenna was needed. Three remotely switched 80/40 ¼ wave slopers were installed pointing roughly at Europe, South America, and the Far East.

By the early late 70's or early 80's many of us EIDXA members were chasing 5BDXCC. Most of us had 10 - 40 meters in the bag but 80 was elusive. The 2 meter simplex spotting frequency was a big help but not much help in the middle of the night. That's when some of EIDXA's brightest minds came up with the one ringer notification system.

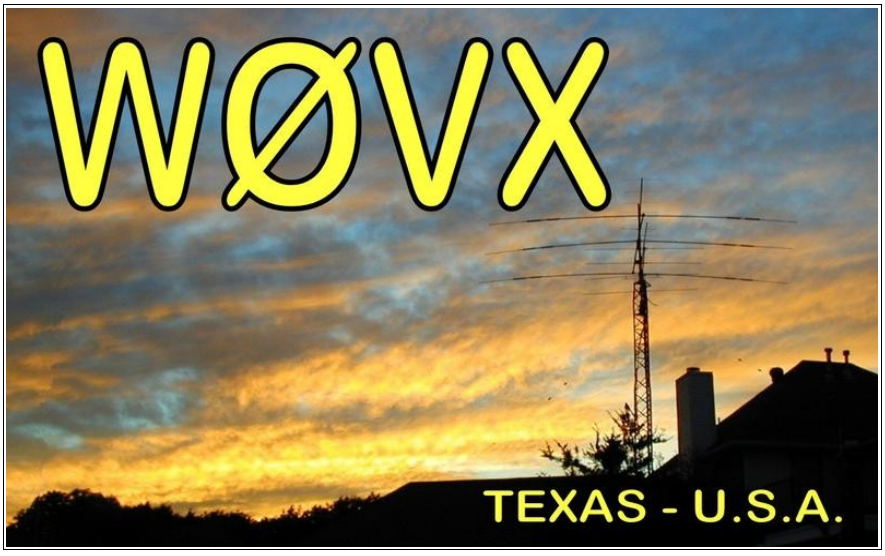
One ring in the middle of the night meant get on 2 meters because something you need was on 80. Needless to say, this was not an XYL endorsed program but it worked! All of us ended up with 100 confirmed on 80 meters and our 5BDXCC plaques.

In the mid 1980's Judi was laid up recovering from knee surgery. She casually mentioned she might as well study for her ham license since she couldn't do much. Within minutes I was in the car headed over to Iowa Radio to buy license manuals. To make a long story short, after being around ham radio for 20 years she managed to pass tests and became KAØZXI, NØDR, and finally WØJJ.

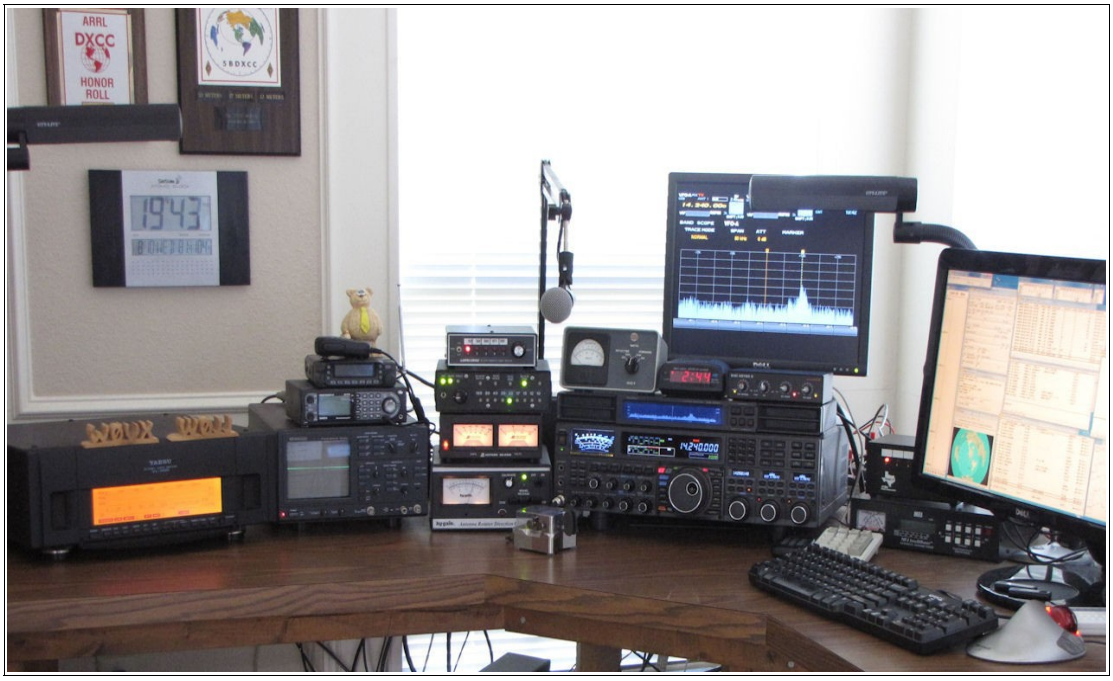
In the spring of 1987 I was offered a very nice promotion to move to California. After 19 years in various aspects of the HF radio business in Iowa, I was a bit reluctant to jump into the satellite communications business but it was too good of an opportunity to pass up. One problem was that I was needed on the new job immediately so there was no time to take down antennas etc. Once again, the EIDXA gang came to the rescue. I was very pleasantly surprised to see the tower and antennas already down and disassembled when I returned home for a weekend. What a club!

Our house in California had some pretty strict CC&Rs. We couldn't have any outside antennas so we had an all band W9INN dipole in the attic. It was a 2 story house with a cedar shake shingle roof so the antenna worked OK. I didn't think it was safe to run a KW right under a wooden roof, not to mention the RF radiation hazard, so I sold the Alpha. For a variety of reasons we decided to move the satellite communications business to Dallas in 1988.

One of Judi's criteria for a Texas house was that we had to be able to put up outside antennas. We found a place we liked with CC&Rs that would allow a 35 foot tower and antennas. Not ideal but we liked the house and neighborhood so in late 1988 I was digging the hole for our new tower. Shortly after moving here Judi and I joined the Lone Star DX Association, www.lsdxa.org. We have both served as officers in LSDXA and I am currently president. LSDXA isn't the close knit group EIDXA is but it is a fairly active club of 135 members. Because of the geographic diversity of the membership we use a reflector and Internet chat group rather than a repeater to stay in touch. We put on the annual W5DXCC programs and DX dinner at Ham-Com every June. One of our charter objectives is to support DXpeditions to the most needed countries in the US Central Time Zone.



Our current station is an FTDX-5000D driving a Quadra PA. Antennas are a 4 element 6 M Yagi, A3S 10/15/20, A3WS 12/17, HF2V 30/40/80 and a 40/80 inverted Vee. The Texas QTH can be seen at http://www.customdigitizer.com/WØVX/.



Yes, Judi and I do miss our good friends in Iowa and the EIDXA. I will admit though, we do miss you less in January and February than the rest of the year. I was very grateful and delighted when EIDXA made me an Honorary Member. Thanks EIDXA for being a good friend over the years.

Dave Jaksa, WØVX

EIDXA MEMBER'S SPOTLIGHT

NCØO

I was first licensed as KN8JWV in 1957. As a novice my first rig was a Johnson Viking Adventurer. This was the era of the one year, non-renewable novice license. Even though I could copy the required 13 wpm at home, every time I went for the upgrade to General at the FCC office I would "clutch" and could never pass the code test.

In 1966 I graduated with a BSEE degree from the University of Michigan. That same year I started work at Collins Radio Co. (later Rockwell International) where I worked until I retired in 1998.

Tom Hise - NCØO

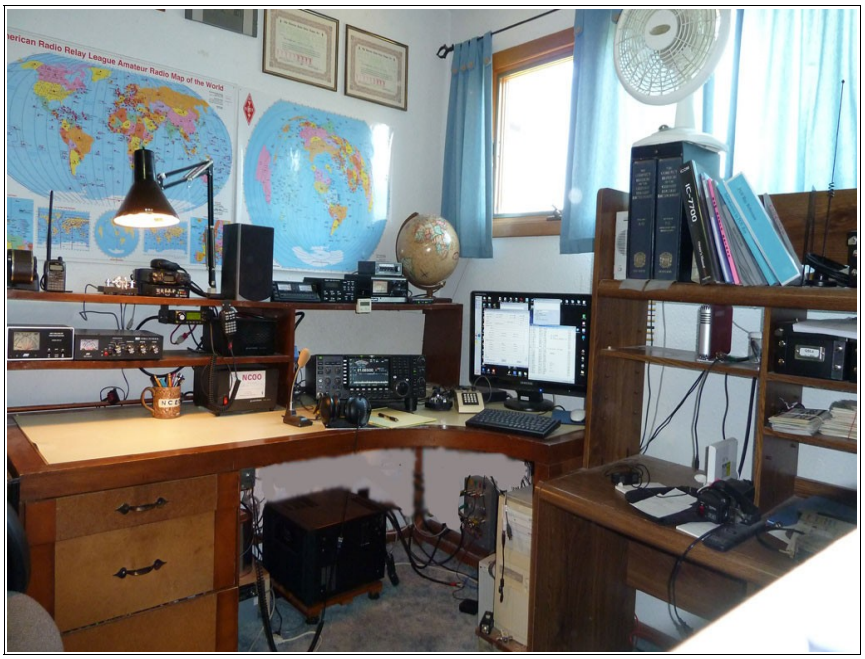
While there, I was involved in a wide variety of areas from automatic test equipment to inertial guidance equipment. The majority of my 32 years there were spent working on GPS software and hardware. My other activities include amateur astronomy, electronics, computers, reading science fiction and travel.

Between going to school, work and getting married, I had little time for radio in the 70's but working at Collins radio and surrounded by hams, I was eventually lured back to the hobby. With the encouragement of WØEJ, KCØQ and others, I began studying code in earnest. Finally, in 1983, I took the exam in Des Moines at the last FCC conducted session held there. I'm rather proud that I went from unlicensed to Extra in one day. After what seemed forever, I received my current call, NCØO.

I immediately began chasing DX and by 1985 I had DXCC and became a full member of the EIDXA. In those days the 145.19 repeater was my main source of up-to-date DX info and a focal point for local DXers. Any time a rare (or even semi-rare) station showed up, the repeater came alive. The "Old Timers" would help by calling out the listening frequency of the DX and generally encouraging the beginners. I learned a lot about DXing from WØIZ, WØSR Jim Spencer, and others who demonstrated, in real-time, many tricks for breaking the pileup.

At approximately the same time I started in at contesting. I found it was exciting and also a good way to work new countries. In the 1990 ARRL International DX CW contest, I placed 1st in the 10th call district, Single OP Assisted category. In 2010 I placed first in Iowa in the same contest. I've never since been able to match that 1990 score but I still enjoy contesting.

My current station consists of an Icom IC-7700, Icom PW-1 amp, Yeasu FT-817 QRP Xcvr, Kansas City Keyer, KPC-3+ TNC and various other accessories.



My antennas are a Mosley Pro-57 beam (20,17,15,12, and 10m) up 60' and a SteppIR BigIR vertical with 80m coil (80-6m). I use XMlog for my general logging and the N1MM program for contest logging. I hold DXCC CW (321/325), Mixed (325/329), and 5BDXCC. I'm an ARRL member and have been since receiving my current call NCØO.

EIDXA MEMBER'S SPOTLIGHT

K8OM

The Beginning of Time

The winter of 1963 found a13 year old boy in the prone position on his family's living room floor in Huntington, WV tentatively tuning a Philco tube radio with utter amazement that stations as far away as St. Louis, Chicago, Nashville and Boston could be picked up by this magical little box plugged into the wall outlet and nothing else connected to it. Were other people aware of this unbelievable magic? What other far off locations would I be able to get tomorrow night?

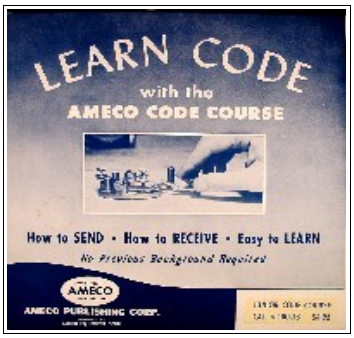
K8OM - Joe Hungate

So began my interest in radio, electronics and physics that would lead to a great career and a lifelong wonder of the world of RF communications. In early 1964 somehow, I don't quite remember anymore.

I heard about "short waves" and how a person could listen to radio stations not only in the United States but also around the world.

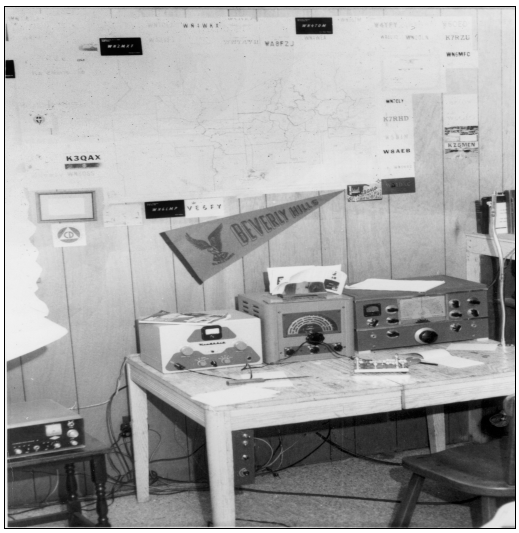
If I remember correctly, my father resurrected the old family RCA console radio that had AM and one shortwave band so I could listen to this magic. I was now totally hooked on trying to find new and exotic distant stations to listen to. Cuba, France, England, Singapore….. these places actually existed and I could prove it to any of my friends that dared to come over to our house for a visit.

After a few weeks of Short Wave Listening (SWL), I heard about ham radio. "Do you mean not only can I listen to far off places but there is a way to actually talk to them?" This is for me I thought! There was an electronics supply store in town that carried ARRL books. A family member took me there one Saturday morning and I used some of my hard earned pennies to buy the ARRL Novice License Manual (which I still have in my library). A few weeks later I bought an Ameco $33^{1/3}$ RPM code practice record so I could start learning Morse code. By September 1964 I was ready to step up to the plate and take the test for the Novice Class license.



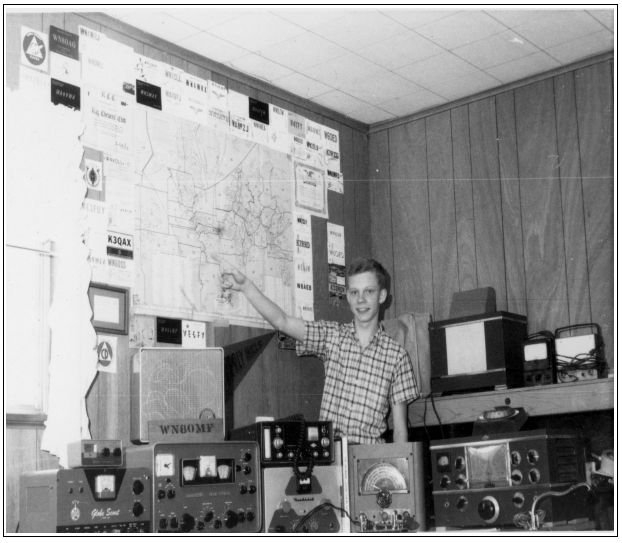
I had met a ham (Jim – W8BKK) that lived a few blocks from me and he was willing to administer the code and theory exam. One afternoon after school we talked for an hour or so in his ham radio room in his basement and when my heart was beating somewhere south of 250 beats per minute we got down to the code test. He used his chrome plated Vibroplex bug to send 5 words per minute to me. He said I copied one minute of code with no mistakes so I passed the receiving portion of the code test (1 minute out of 5 was all that was required back then). I don't know how he could tell since my hand was shaking so badly I could hardly hold the pencil. Luckily penmanship didn't count. We moved on to the sending portion and I used my trusty old Army surplus straight key and pounded out another minute of "perfect code". With the code test now behind me Jim requested the written exam from the FCC. After completing the Novice exam it took 6 to 8 weeks to find out if you had passed or not. Six weeks later and the day before Thanksgiving in 1964 I received an envelope from the Federal Communications Commission…. I just knew this couldn't be good since it only took 6 weeks for them to contact me. I opened the envelope and there was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen! A license with my name on it with the call letters WN8OMF.

My dad gave me a used Hallicrafters SX-99 receiver and a used DX-35 transmitter with 3 crystals. 80, 40 and 15 meters here I come!!! Seems that I shared the frequency on 40 meters with Radio Moscow and they always won. I made a few contacts on 80 meters and then tried my hand at 15 meters (CW of course). After working a few stations around the USA, I called CQ one Saturday morning and a PY5 in Brazil answered my call. Gracious, my very own signal was traveling across the equator! Even now after almost 50 years each and every DX contact is nearly as exciting as hearing that raspy, chirpy, drifting, PY5 signal ringing out my call. Since the Novice Class license was a one year non-renewable deal upgrading to General Class was required. Listening to what the "Generals" were working on AM phone was all of the motivation I needed. Even though there was a lot of bickering within the ham community back then when the FCC adopted "Incentive Licensing", I for one appreciated it. It provided great motivation for me, and thousands of others, to upgrade from General to Advanced to Extra class so I could have more operating frequencies, operate phone and use a VFO.



Fast Forward a Few Decades

My college days at Marshall University saw a slight decline in ham activities. After college came marriage, a family and a career that seemed to cause increasingly longer gaps in ham radio activities. I have always had a station on the air but sometimes it was far from optimal for working DX (or just about anything except neighbor's TV sets). and was always located in an area of the house that was not very conducive to leisurely operating.



Chasing DX has taken a back burner a few times over the 47+ years I've been licensed especially during sunspot minimums but, as you all know, ham radio has so many facets that there is always something new to get into. The OSCAR satellites were one of my favorite activities for several years. Everything from the early Low Earth Orbit birds to the high elliptical orbit OSCAR 40 (AO-40) has provided tremendous learning experiences and fun operating times. Being able to work Japan, Australia, South Africa, Russia, etc using 432 MHz up to AO-40 and listening to the downlink signals on 2.4 GHz was a blast. That 13 year old boy with his Philco radio in 1963 could have never imagined such things were to come and that he would be a part of it. My wife always understood that ham radio was very important in my life so she never complained.

KDØHUB and KDØHUC

I also get a little operating time competition from our 12 year old grandson Tyler – KDØHUB.

KDØHUB

Finally, after being married to her for about 37 years the ham radio bug bit her too. Most of you probably know her … She is Cheryl – KDØHUC. It sure is easier justifying the expenditure for new equipment when husband and wife are active in the same hobby. Now if I could just get her to climb the tower and work on the antennas.

KDØHUC

Cheryl Hungate – KDØHUC will be in the EIDXA Member's Spotlight in the April issue. Thank you Cheryl.

Ain't Retirement Great!

Now that we're "empty nesters" and both of us like to spend as much time as possible chasing DX, the ham station has moved from the confines of the basement up stairs to one of the bedrooms. A few remodeling modifications to the bedroom (like getting rid of the superfluous bed, dresser, etc.) has made this room a very functional ham shack. It's also directly across the hall from the bathroom which can be quite beneficial during long DX contests.
After a great career at Rockwell Collins I retired in the summer of 2010 and now spend way too much time chasing any and all DX that I can find. Completing my 8 band DXCC was one of my first priorities and of course closing in on the DXCC Honor Roll (not there yet) keeps me busy in the ham shack. I'm trying to stay at least a few countries ahead of my wife but a female voice running a KW sure does cut through those big pileups.
The CQ Marathon has been one of the most addictive DX operating activities if been involved with in quite some time. ARRL now has the Diamond DXCC Challenge for 2012 which is an operating activity with the goal to work as many of the countries that were on the first DXCC list in 1937 as possible. Yep, another excuse to spend more time chasing DX.

Finally, Some Functional Wallpaper

When one operates for close to 50 years one seems to collect a few awards (aka wallpaper). I've been fortunate to receive a few:

DXCC 335/320, 8 band DXCC, Worked All States, Worked All Continents, Worked All Zones, Worked All TV's, 6 Meter WAS, 6 Meter WAC, A-1 Operator Club.

Where to Next ?

So what's on my ham radio "bucket list"? Making Top of the List DXCC, going on a DX-pedition and making a moon bounce contact. Well, maybe at least that 13 year old boy can dream about these too. Hope to see you in the pileups!

73, Joe – K8OM

The RCA Radiola 64 - Restoration Project

by Joe Hungate - K8OM

For the past 20-some years in my spare time if I'm not chasing DX I'm restoring and collecting antique radios and phonographs. Just like chasing DX, the hunt for new radios or phonographs to "concur" is just as much fun as actually making the contact. We all have our favorite DX QSO's / QSL's, well the same is true when it comes to the radios that a collector has restored.
So what are my criteria for a radio that I am interested in restoring and adding to my collection? Rather straight forward:

- Must be older than me
- No Frequency Modulation (FM) since that is too modern technology
- Made in the USA
- Preferably it's just one step from going to the landfill due to it's "ruff" condition

Several years ago I was at a large flea market in What Cheer, Iowa and came across a fellow that had several old radios for sell and one radio in particular caught my eye since it meet all of my criteria, especially the "ruff" condition. It was a 1928 RCA Radiola 64. In its day, this radio was top-of-the-line and cost a small fortune…. $608 as a matter of fact. Using an inflation calculator, found on the internet, that $608 equates to $8,050 in 2011 dollars. Can you imagine the home entertainment center you could get today for those kinds of bucks? Obviously, the original owner of this radio was very well off financially. The seller at the flea market told me that if I was interested in the radio he would sell it to me for $25 and help me load it into my truck.
End of negotiations.

Introduction to my Wife

I hurried home to show my wife my fabulous find only to find out her enthusiasm wasn't quite on par with mine. When she said "you paid $25 for that" I soon figured out she thought I got ripped-off. Before she would let me bring any part of it into the basement workshop I had to take the shop-vac to it and get all of the dead, alive or partially in between creatures out of the cabinet.

After following orders I took the RF-deck and power supply chassis to my basement workshop for electrical restoration and left the cabinet in the garage for stripping and refinishing. Someone had painted the cabinet with at least 2 coats of white enamel paint and attempted to paint the decorative wood pieces with some kind of ugly gold colored enamel. Had they painted the cabinet because the wood was in poor condition or were they trying to make the old girl look "art deco"? I would soon find out.

The radio has separate RF and power supply chassis. Both looked as if someone had taken a baseball bat to some of the tubes and other components. It also seemed to be "barn fresh". The wiring harness between the power supply chassis and RF chassis had been disconnect by brute force instead of using a screwdriver to loosen the screws on the terminal strip. Permanent magnet speakers weren't available in 1928 but someone had attempted to replace the blown original speaker with a PM speaker sometime over the last 70+ years.

What is a Radiola 64?

The RCA (Radio Corporation of America) Radiola 64 was built for a few years starting in 1928. Since it sold for an astronomical price of $608 only 7406 were built. It is a super-heterodyne A.M. broadcast band only receiver using 11 tubes and boasted having several new and innovative design features.

- Super Heterodyne
- Tuning meter to help preciously tune in stations
- Automatic Volume Control (AVC)
- 2 rectifier tubes providing full-wave rectification
- A newly developed UX-250 audio amplifier tube providing 5 watts of audio power
- Walnut cabinet with closing front doors
- 51" tall x 29" wide x 19" deep
- (Sensitivity and selectivity no specified)

Cabinet Restoration

If you've ever attempted to strip old finish off of a piece of furniture you know how messy and smelly the job can become. Removing all of that old enamel paint required several gallons of stripper, several packages of 0000 steel wool pads, multiple sets of industrial strength rubber gloves and somewhere around 90 to 100 hours of elbow grease in the garage with as much air moving as possible.

In a way I was thankful for the paint job since it had taken all of the abuse over the latter part of the radios life and the original walnut wood turned out to be dent and scratch free. After a couple of applications of walnut Danish oil and 3 coats of sprayed on urethane it looked as good as the radio in the 1928 Radiola 64 ad.

Now, on to the electrical restoration.

Electrical Restoration

There are several internet sites that have schematic diagrams for antique radios free for downloading. A very good site for schematics and other antique radio data is Nostalgia Air (http://www.nostalgiaair.org/Resources/). Antique Electronic Supply (http://www.tubesandmore.com/) is one source of capacitors, resistors, tubes and other components that may be required for a typical radio restoration. They carry thousands of NOS (New Old Stock) and used vacuum tubes.

Assume that all of the capacitors have dried out, become leaky and have turned into resistors in a radio that is 70+ years old. Plan on replacing ALL of the electrolytic and paper capacitors in any antique radio you are planning on restoring. Replacing the electrolytic capacitors in the power supply is especially important since it is quite easy to burn out the power transformer with the filter capacitors being very leaky. A replacement power transform probably isn't available so it is best to be safe than sorry.

With the schematic in hand I started continuity testing Intermediate Frequency (I.F.) transformers for opens / shorts. All of these were OK in the radio I was restoring (sigh of relief). Next I continuity checked the audio and power transformers and they also appeared to be OK (another sigh of relief). A previous repair by someone to replace the original speaker / power supply filter choke combination with a modern permanent magnet speaker had good intentions but the execution was a miss. A little redesign work and it was in a configuration that should work. My work shop tube tester showed that out of the 11 tubes the radio employed only a couple were usable. Most of them I had in my tube stash and the others could be purchased at a very reasonable price except for the "high powered" audio amplifier tube. A used tube was $125…. Ouch.

So after spending a few evenings measuring the values of the resistors in the radio and making sure they were within 10%-15% of the original design values I was ready to order the required components. These aren't components you can run down to Radio Shack or Iowa Radio and pickup. The resistors are 2 and 5 watts and capacitors are rated at 450 volts or higher. After the little brown man (UPS) delivered the parts I spent the next week or so replacing bad components. With the size of the components a 150 watt or greater soldering iron or gun is required so it's actually easy to work up a sweat.

Radios from that era did not contain fuses, I guess because of reliability issues, but I installed an inline type fuse so if anything went wrong hopefully I wouldn't fry anything critical.

After making numerous resistance checks to make sure I had a fair chance of success the time came to plug the radio in and start making voltage measurements in accordance with the schematic diagram and data sheet. Please remember when working on old tube type radios of this era that lethal high voltages are present so use up most care!!! This radio has over 400 volts on the plate of the audio amplifier tube.

Connect 25 feet of wire to the antenna terminal (yep)….. power on (yep)….. no smoke (Yep!!!)….. all of the tubes are lighting up (yep)….. the fuse didn't blow (yep!!!)…. and after a minute or so I heard the familiar sound of A.M. broadcast band QRN. This was a very good sign!!! Turning the main tuning knob and there were stations coming through this 70+ year old piece of "talking furniture".
After the euphoria wore off I performed the voltage checks and everything was "close enough". Performing the alignment procedure as outlined by the RCA deign engineers 70 years ago greatly improved the sensitivity of the radio.

The Finished Product

My $25 flea market find ended up cost an additional $250+/- to restore but turned out to be one of my favorite radios in my collection. Even my wife thinks that maybe this wasn't such a bad undertaking after all. It is interesting to tune the radio and listen to broadcast stations around the country and think about who may have owned this radio, did they listen to FDR's Fireside Chats with it, did they hear the news about the bombing of Pearl Harbor on it, VE, VJ. If this piece of talking furniture could really talk it would probably have some interesting stories to tell.

Joe Hungate - K8OM

A new antenna & tower for Sam Burell KØAFN

(With a calm day to be thankful for)

Back in the fall of 2010 I found an ad for a TX-455 on Craig's list. The tower was already down and ready to load on a trailer. It was located in Waterloo, IA. After much procrastinating for a few months I emailed the seller and found it was already sold.

In May, 2011 while at the Dayton Hamfest, I went to the US Tower booth and found what I wanted. The price was 4 times that of the tower I had passed up in Waterloo. So, once home I started looking again for a TX-455 or similar tower. I have a Rohn 25 about 40 feet high with a Mosley TA-33 and it has worked well for many years, having been bought new in 1965. The problem has become climbing the tower or borrowing a hydraulic bucket lift.

I found more than I was looking for in Middletown, IL. near Springfield. The package consisted of a motorized TX-455, 20 foot mast, Cushcraft X7 (7 element tri-band Yagi) and X240 (2 element 40 meter beam) along with all the coax, Yaesu G-1000DXA rotor, and "other stuff".

With the help of my Brother-in-law, John Link from LaHarpe, IL we took a Sunday afternoon and went to Middletown, took the tower down, disassembling the antennas, and took it home to Burlington.

John is a contractor and with the specs for the base, he constructed a rebar cage and after an expert backhoe job digging the 4.5 foot square hole 6 foot deep, we poured 5.5 cubic yards of concrete with the help of my two Great Nephews, Travis and Jacob.

I let the concrete cure the recommended 30 days.

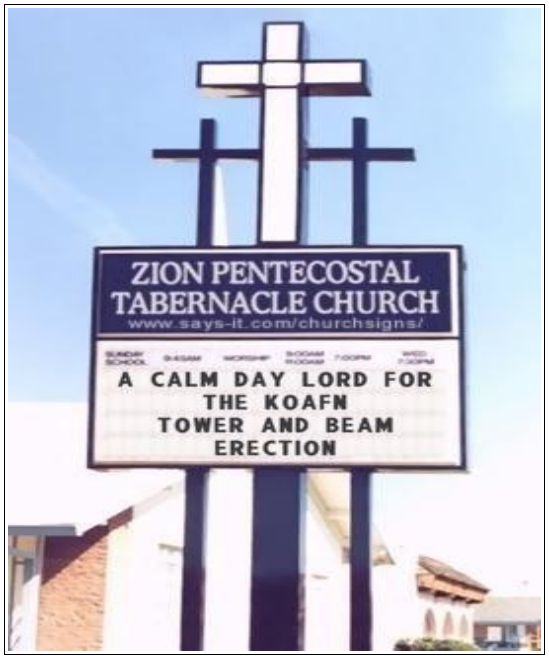
And then recruited help from several local hams (WØNB, KØTJ, and WØLMU) to assemble and raise the antenna and tower.

The crew - Sam Burell KØAFN, Jerry Smith WØLMU, Jim Livengood WØNB, and Jim Sereda KØTJ.

It works well and I have even convinced my wife that it is Beautiful ---- I think?

By the way, I have insured the tower and antenna system through the ARRL insurance program.

Sam Burell KØAFN



"Never Say Die"

Who remembers "73″ Magazine? The Jefferson County Amateur Radio Club has "**73**" magazine (also known as 73 **Amateur Radio Today**) in its archives at: http://www.archive.org/details/73-magazine. This impressive database traces all the years of the magazine from 1960 to 2003, for a total of 511 publications. It has the following formats: PDF, EPUB, and Kindle. The publication is also accompanied by a powerful search engine that allows you to find content of interest to you through thousands of pages. After completing 43 years of publication, 73 Amateur Radio Today magazine ceased publication in October 2003. Publisher Wayne Green cited financial pressure from reduced advertising revenue as the prime reason for shutting down publication of the magazine. "Never Say Die" was a backronym for Green's amateur radio call sign, W2NSD.

From DX Coffee

Barry Goldwater's 1963 Corvette

A Swan antenna installed on the rear of his 1963 Corvette Stingray. (K7UGA - Barry Goldwater). An external speaker for the Swan 400 SSB, 200 watt transceiver radio inside is attached to the overhead behind the drivers seat and can be seen through he rear window.

Swan radio network

DXE - QSL - KIT

The QSL Card Scanning Kit is practical digital solution to help hams and shortwave listeners manage their ever-growing QSL card collections. No more plastic wall holders, multiple photo albums or shoe boxes needed.
DX Engineering has created a practical solution to help hams and shortwave listeners manage their ever-growing QSL card collections. The new DXE QSL Scanning Kit stores your cards and displays them in rotation on an attractive, compact screen. It's great way to prominently display your QSL cards in the ham shack, living room or office. Reminisce about past QSO's or show off your collection to your friends.

Up to 2,000 QSL card images can be stored on the included 2MB SD card, larger capacity memory cards will store even more card images.

The complete kit consists of a compact digital scanner, a seven-inch LCD digital picture frame screen, plug-in power supplies and the SD card.

Operation is simple. Feed the QSL cards individually through the scanner–they are stored on the SD memory card. To view, just plug the scanner into the digital screen to view.

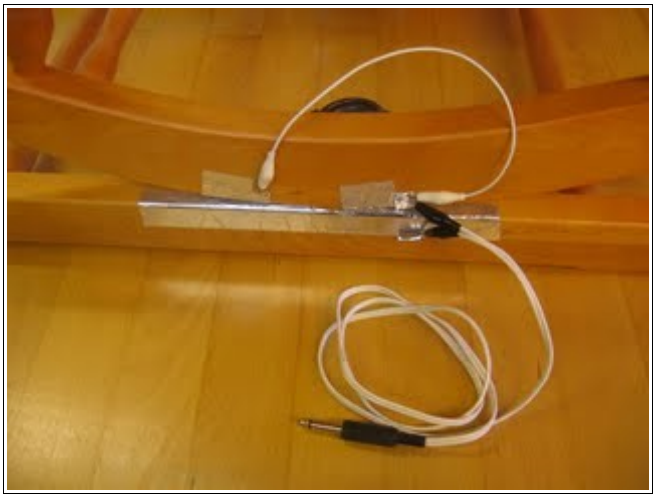
A slider guide adjusts easily to accommodate non-standard QSL sizes. The scanner accepts card sizes from 2 x 2 inches to a maximum of 4 x 6 inches. The images are saved in standard JPEG format, so they can be viewed on other electronic devices as well. Unlike bulky flatbed scanners, a PC is not required for the scanning process.

DX Engineering.com

(PileUp newsletter)

Rock 'n' Roll "Continous Wave"

It is always nice to relax in the rocking chair in my shack. This chair has one useful extra feature: it is a CW key too.



The key contacts are made with aluminum tape. For highest possible CW speed and sending comfort, both directions of chair movement are put to use. I can't wait for the CQWW CW Contest.

N O W L E T ' S R O C K

OH6DC

AS SEEN RECENTLY ON →

DXSUMMIT BY RADIO ARCALA

14087.9 HKØNA ….. (weird operating)
14086.0 HKØNA ….. simplex, SPLIT Switch must be OFF
24902.8 VP6T ….. finally after 3 hours - Pitcairn Island
3516.0 HKØNA ….. WKD simplex … no split
18070.5 HKØNA ….. is your "Zero Detector" on ?

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**.

2012 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, February 3, at 7:30 p.m.

Room 219C, Linn Hall on the campus of Kirkwood Community College.

Program: "Maintenance and Preparation of a Contest Station" - PJ2T

by Rick Heinrich NØYY