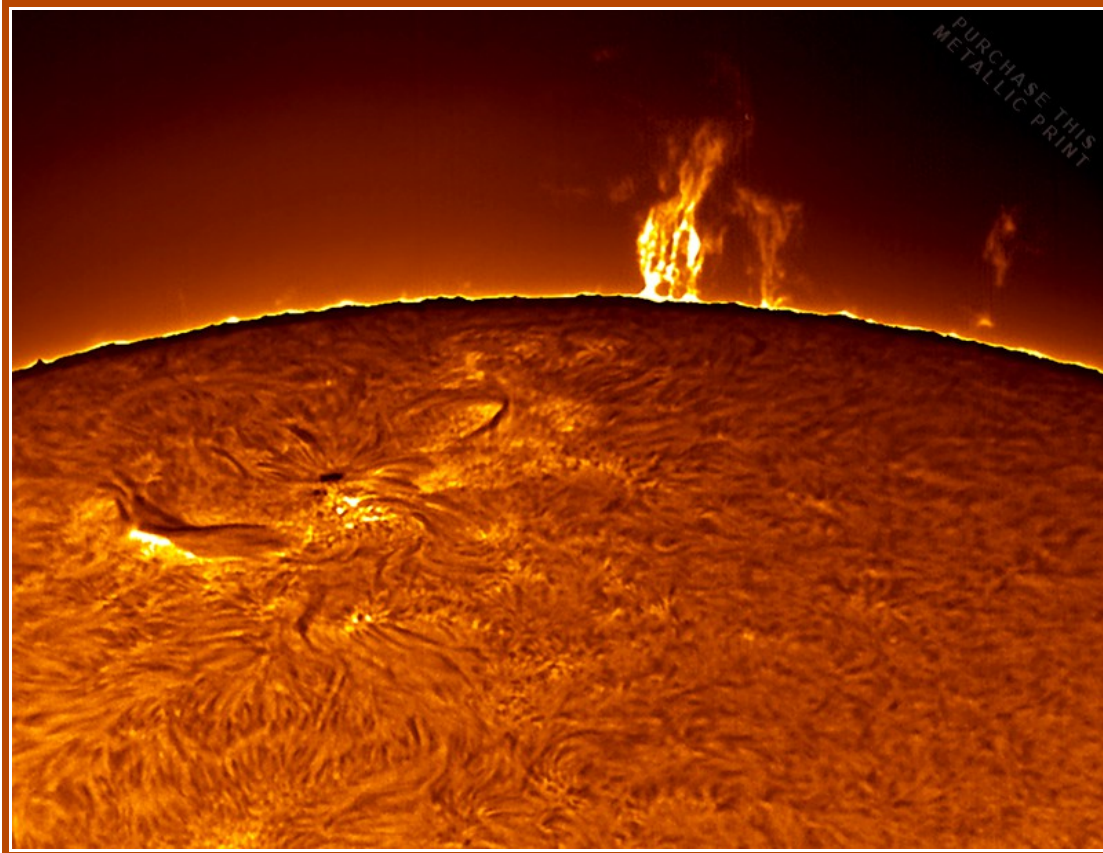


The Eastern Iowa Dyer

April 2013



SUNSPOT CYCLE 24 - what gives?

The current prediction for Sunspot Cycle 24 gives a smoothed sunspot number maximum of about 66 in the Fall of 2013 ...?

There is still a strong chance that Cycle 24 will rebound and peak in 2013 as expected ...?

Predicting the behavior of a sunspot cycle is fairly reliable once the cycle is well underway (about 3 years after the minimum in sunspot number occurs).

Scientists predict a very weak maximum in 2013 with an average of 60 sunspots daily. If this holds true, Cycle 24 would be the least active since Cycle 14 which peaked in February 1906 at 64.



Eastern Iowa DXer



An affiliated club of the American Radio Relay League

April 2013

Official
Newsletter of the
Eastern Iowa DX
Association

NØDX

Established
1975

April 2013

Page 2

Club Officers:

President:	Craig Fastenow	KØCF	Packet Cluster:	WB8ZRL
Vice President:	Jerry Rappel	WWØE	147.51, 144.91, WB8ZRL.no-ip.org:7300	
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		
Web Master Extraordinaire:	Jason Joens	KDØMND		

Next EIDXA meeting:

**Friday April 12th, 2013 7:30 PM room 219C of Linn Hall on the campus of Kirkwood Community College. Cedar Rapids.
Program: Glenn Johnson, WØGJ; "Is 3 dB Worth a Divorce?"**

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www.eidxa.org

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I hope you enjoy this newsletter. The views expressed in the EIDXA newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Eastern Iowa DX Association, or the editor. All newsletter contributions, comments and suggestions are welcome at WWØE@q.com.

Thanks in advance for your newsletter input.

~ WWØE ~

President's Propagation, Pronouncements & Pontification**EIDX President *Craig Fastenow*, KØCF**

My goodness! Where did the last three months go? It doesn't seem possible that it's time for another EIDX newsletter and meeting. But here we are at the end of March, with our April meeting only two weeks away. Glenn Johnson, WØGJ, will present a program titled, "Is 3 dB Worth a Divorce?" This sounds like a great, entertaining program, as all of Glenn's presentations are! Don't you dare miss it!

I have heard so many positive comments about the program at the January meeting by Craig Thompson, K9CT. Craig gave us a great program on the Swains Island DXpedition, followed by a quick overview of his contest station a dozen miles west of Peoria, IL. There was such intense interest in the contest station that I think we should invite Craig back to devote a complete program to it, perhaps in October. What do you all think? (The meeting date would have to be pushed back to November 1st since Craig will be on the Wake Island DXpedition until the third week of October, and October 25th is the first night of the CQ WW SSB contest. The ARRL SS CW starts on Saturday afternoon, November 2nd, but that should be OK.)

The CQ WPX SSB contest will have played out by the time you read this. This contest has always been a favorite of mine, especially the CW section (coming up Memorial Day weekend). Having so many multipliers in the form of callsign prefixes makes it really unique, along with the fact that it has a meaningful exchange (a serial number), unlike the CQ WW's zone, which most logging software fills in for you, or the ARRL DX contest's very simple power exchange which will be auto-filled after the first QSO with a station. If you haven't done the WPX before, why not give it a try? It's a hoot!

The ARRL DX CW contest was fruitful for me, even though I made only 44 QSOs. I did 80 meters only and worked 8 new 80 meter countries in only 3 or 4 hours on the air.

I also worked the Clipperton expedition on 80 SSB and XT2TT on 80 CW, both new on 80 for me. All of that put me at 105 current entities worked on 80m, and I now have 97 of them confirmed. So I am impatiently waiting for the mailman to bring a few QSL cards my way so that I can, at long last, claim my 5-band DXCC award. This has been a very, very long time coming!

What made the 80 meter success possible was my new 80m antenna, a half-sloper. It is at least 10 dB better than my GAP vertical in most directions. This sloper is much less than optimum, since my tower is only 40 feet high, and the beam on top is a hex beam, not a yagi with grounded elements. Only half of each driven element is grounded, and the reflectors float. There are so many variables in making a sloper work, including the vertical angle to the tower and elevation of the lower end. I ended up shortening the wire element by folding about 8 feet of it back on itself with vinyl spacers about a foot long to make a long, skinny "J". That let me decrease the angle to the tower to about 45 degrees. After a lot of fooling around, I got the minimum SWR to only about 1.9:1. I ended up using an LDG 600 W auto-tuner to make my solid-state amplifier happy at that SWR. Even at that, it gets out well enough that I was able to break a modest pile-up or two in the contest.

I seem to have this habit of doing my antenna work in the dead of winter. I simply *must* turn that around and do this work in the summer!

RTTY contesting has a certain charm, and I do a RTTY contest once every year or two. This year it was the North American QSO Party on Saturday, February 23rd local time. This is a 100-watt maximum, 12 hour contest and single-ops are allowed to work only 10 hours. I usually don't do quite that many hours due to family commitments, but have fun nonetheless. I still didn't work North Dakota, the last state I need for RTTY WAS. Oh, well... I have written a lot about contesting this time, but I have an ulterior motive: to try to get a few more of you to try a contest or two. You don't have to be a "big gun", with legal limit amplifiers, multiple transceivers, and 120-foot towers with stacked yagis. I have had surprisingly good success and a lot of fun with 100 watts and an all-band vertical antenna.

Your goal need not be to get high score – you can just get on for whatever time you can spare and make a few, to a few dozen, to a few hundred QSOs. If you are working on increasing your DXCC total past that first hundred, almost any DX contest will help you do that.

It is possible, even for a “little pistol”, to work a hundred countries in one contest weekend without overextending yourself. So how about it? Dust off the radio, flip the “ON” switch and give it a go!

Well, here it is, 11 PM, and I’m out of time, out of space, and out of ideas. That means it’s time to sign off and go QRT. I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the meeting on April 12th!

73,

Craig, KØCF



“Now that's DX”



EIDXA Vice-President *Jerry Rappel*, WWØE



A rather abbreviated issue this time, in late January of this year I was informed by my eye doctor that the endothelial cells that pump fluid out of my right eye, are slowly swelling and I will need a (DSEK), Descemet’s Stripping Endothelial Keratoplasty surgery (donor cornea replacement) performed in the very near future. Some days my vision is fine, other days it appears smudged, causing head aches, and dizziness. Adding this to my 40 plus years of dealing with Advanced Glaucoma, it was not a welcome thing to hear. Putting this issue together has been a very slow process. Bear with me while I work through this situation

Jerry, WWØE





Listen to QSO on WTWW 9480 every Saturday at 1 PM Central

TedRandall.com

So you think your code skills are world-class? Here's a chance to put them to the test: The Bulgarian Federation of Radio Amateurs will host the 11th World High Speed Telegraphy Championship in September. The event will be held in the city of Borovets between September 22 and 26, and that competitors from all over the world are invited to participate. More information is available at www.bfra.org or by e-mail to bfra_hq@hotmail.com. (CQ).

The US Postal Service will also be introducing a "**Global Forever Stamp**" to complement its current domestic version, which will remain valid for one ounce of international postage regardless of future rate increases. The initial cost of the Global Forever Stamp is \$1.10. First-Class Mail International 1-ounce letter to any country in the world, as well as 2-ounce letters to Canada. The stamp is available online, or at post offices in the US or by calling 1-800-782-6724.



A couple of weekends ago the Voice Of America (VOA) Radiogram conducted a digital test sending streams of text (and one image) while inviting listeners to submit reception reports. According to **Radiogram** host Kim Andrew Elliot, KD9XB, (Arlington, VA) the response from the amateur and SWL community was impressive with reception reports from 16 countries and many US States.



Thanks to the successful test, **Radiogram** will air as a regular VOA program with continuing digital transmission experiments.

- Saturday from 1600 to 1630 UTC at 17860 kHz
- Sunday from 0230 to 0300 UTC at 5745 kHz
- Sunday from 1300 to 1330 UTC at 6095 kHz
- Sunday from 1930 to 2000 UTC at 15670 kHz

Reception reports are welcome at radiogram@voanews.com.
More information is available at <http://voaradiogram.net>.

(ARRL)

April 18th is WORLD AMATEUR RADIO DAY.

Each year on the 18th of April, radio amateurs celebrate World Amateur Radio Day. On that day in 1925 the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) was founded.





Secretary/Treasurer *Richard Haendal*, W3ACO

EIDXA minutes of the Minutes of the Jan 11, 2013 meeting

Craig, K0CF called the meeting order at 7:30 PM at Kirkwood CC in Iowa Hall 31 Hams answered the CQ call. Introductions were made all around. Treasurer's report: W3ACO indicated a balance of \$1638.73 in our checking account. Recent expenditures included Iowa repeater association dues and web hosting annual fee.

Web site report: Jason, KDØMND reports the web pages are still being updated; the roster section has not been included. For those interested in the old format please visit www.eidxa.org/oldsite.

There were no new members inducted into the club. There was a discussion of the DX selection criteria. K0CF put up an Excel spreadsheet originally authored by Rick, NØYY. Additional factors were included for review. Added factors were a sliding score for position on the DX list top 100 and time interval between QRV operations. Representative scores were shown for HKØNA, NH8S, PTØS and ZL9HR. All scored high indicating that even though previously, we empirically selected what DXpeditions to contribute to; we did a good job considering all the factors.

Some members wanted to score upcoming DXpeditions. For those interested, please send me an e-mail and I will send a copy of the Excel spreadsheet Rick, NØYY, discussed contest scores and that the club should send in scores collectively as a method to build composite scoring. Society of Midwest Contesters. For more information please visit www.w9smc.com

Some members indicated a desire to develop a want list naming the top five or 10 DX entities. Please indicate your selection and send to W3ACO or NØCF. Formal meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM. Crag Thompson, K9CT provided an excellent presentation on the recent NH8S expedition to Swains Island. He gave us an inside look on the many problems and the incredible support provided by the staff on Swains Island.

Feature Story**Contesting from Iowa - the NRØX Megastation****2012 CQWW CW Contest**

By Rick Heinrich, NØYY and Jason Joens, KDØMND

Ahhh ... the fall weather turns cool, the leaves fall, the low bands start to quiet – It must be contest season! Yeah, I know that contesting is a radio sport that does not capture everyone's interest, but even for a DXer the opportunity to work a new entity or a new band country is often enabled by a contest.

In Martelle, Iowa there is a longstanding installation that is world class. Rotatable towers, high beams, wire antennas for the low bands, and a well-established array of Beverages for receiving. Yes, this is the station built by Heinz and is currently being maintained by Jason and Karin Blankenhagen KØEGQ, to keep it as functional as it was under Heinz tutelage.

So here is a basic rundown of the station:

160M	Inverted Vee at 140 feet
80M	Two Double Extended Zepps (NE/SW and NW/SE)
40M	3 element yagi at 130 feet
20M	Rotating stack of 3 – 5 element yagis
15M	Rotating stack of 3 – 5 element yagis
10M	Rotating stack of 3 – 6 element yagis
20/15/10M	TH7DXX at 50 feet as a multiplier antenna

Inside the station consists of:

Main	FT-2000 w/Commander HF2500 amplifier
Multiplier	FT-2000 w/Yaesu Solid State All Band Amplifier

Computer with multiple displays and a variety of interfaces, switch boxes, and other necessities

Heinz had submitted many entries in past contests and had done well from Eastern Iowa. Certificates adorn the walls of his old shack.

I had always wondered how those antennas played during a contest. What does being “loud” from Iowa mean? And what about those low bands? Operating from that station had been part of my “bucket list” for years.

So when I suggested to Karin and Jason that we might want to operate in the 2012 CQWW CW Contest I had an ulterior motive – I wanted to use those antennas! But I also had a great opportunity to demonstrate contesting to Jason and others and use the station in a way that is part of Karin’s vision. Karin has always supported EIDX and wanted to ensure that the station was part of our “community” in terms of learning and expanding our horizons – especially new and younger hams.



So with that as a plan, Jason started an accelerated clean-up program of antennas, control items, etc. The operating position was arranged to support a two radio approach and things began to take shape. New contest software was installed and configured for the contest. Things took shape quickly with Jason in charge.

At 6 PM on Friday, November 22nd (00Z of the 23rd) the fun started. We worked through the entire weekend chasing multipliers, making contacts, taking brief time-outs to explain how and why things were being done, etc. While we were not “in it to win it” it was fun to initiate someone new to the contesting environment.

For me it was fulfilling to watch Jason start with trepidation until I handed him the controls and went to sleep – he was in charge! I watched as his lack of confidence in CW was overcome by a willingness to apply some of the skills of a more experienced tester. In all it was fun.



So how did we fare? When the dust settled we had 1,600 QSOs and 3.2M points. We completed DXCC on 40-10 M in a single weekend. Some of the highlights included “running JAs” on 80M Sunday morning. It was also fun to watch Jason with the headphones on as we started a JA run on Friday night on 15M – one after another they just filled the log. It was also fun to reconfirm some of the “contester adages” like “... just run, the multipliers will come to you”.

I had been chasing an Iceland station on 15 on and off for an hour. I moved up the band and started to call CQ – during that run I worked 4 TF stations that called me! It was also fun to have XW3, 9M6, 5TØ, and others call during runs.

We had an i-Pad monitoring the Reverse Beacon Network. This was a first for me to watch my reported signal strength from the monitored stations throughout the world while I was calling CQ. I could see the stations calling aligned with peak signal strengths while those with less strong signals were few and far between.

So here is a quick summary of what we experienced:

Band	QSOs	Zones	Countries
160	50	13	32
80	140	23	77
40	311	33	110
20	354	35	115
15	447	34	118
10	287	29	109
	1589	167	561

We worked the following stations on all 6 bands:

8P5A / C5A / CR2X / CR3L / CR6K / D4C / DR1A / EL2A / HK1NA /
KH6LC / KP2M / P4ØW / PJ2T / PJ4A / PZ5T / RI1ANF / TI5A / VP5CW /
YN2CC



We worked 19 stations on 5 bands, 28 on 4 bands, and 62 on 3 bands. In all there were 1096 unique calls worked.

Our highest run rate was 4 QSOs/minute. But the majority of our rate was 2 per minute. What was interesting was that we had several periods when our Search and Pounce rate was 3 per minute – yes that’s right – tune to a new station, call him, work him, and move on and still work 3 in one minute. That is the true test for how the station performs!

We beat the historical high score from the station which was 2.3M points in a CQWW CW contest from the past.

The experience also opened the eyes of Karin and Jason and what they might like to do in the future – so stay tuned... there’s more to follow!

EIDXA NEWS**P5 Info Update AS-197 update #2 Rick Hilding, K6VVA**

This is a new supplement to my initial P5 “CW ONLY” and IOTA AS-197 Activation Project Proposal general information prior to INFO UPDATE #1. If you have not read the general information page and/or INFO UPDATE #1, please do so before continuing. Unfortunately due to Net Criminal activities, the p5changeme and p5deleteme email addresses provided in INFO UPDATE #1 have been disabled. There are also several Psychopathic Deviants who are attempting to thwart this P5 Project in various ways. Now into a year #7 of seeking permission from the D.P.R.K. authorities, one thing I have learned is “patience”. A “No” today does not necessarily mean “No” forever !!!

The new very creative and unique win-win proposal was submitted last July to D.P.R.K. officials (my NGO has ongoing communications with), shortly after the survey results reached 90% of the “Threshold” amount which I personally set. While continuing to assemble various supplemental materials, we anticipated a possible initial “QRX” response. My NGO contact was scheduled to go to the D.P.R.K. in September to monitor the distribution of medicines to various rural hospitals. The plan was for him to also hand-carry the full proposal supplements and to discuss things in-person with his longstanding official contact in Pyongyang before returning to the U.S.

Due to various delays, his trip did not take place until late November, and the official was unfortunately out of the country at the time (an opportunity to learn even more patience). The materials have been routed by other means, and we were hoping for the previously anticipated discussions to take place after the first of the year. Due to the uniqueness of the proposal, there will be multiple D.P.R.K. Governmental approvals required.

But the scope of the extremely win-win nature of the proposal to all parties justifies the additional administrative burden and work which my NGO contact is fortunately willing to do. The proposal is for multiple operators and stations for a longer time frame than the “worst case scenario” previously outlined (which would be just myself for a period of 4 days).

I am fully prepared and always packed ready-to-go if the latter is all that can be approved. As previously set forth, I am also aware of several groups seeking approval from D.P.R.K. authorities for a P5 DX-Pedition. But it could also take 3 to 5 years (or maybe another 7 years) for any of us to obtain approval, due to all of the factors involved. It is what it is. Recent “circumstances” in P5 during the last several months have made this Project even more challenging, for obvious reasons. Yet a new alternative route to potential success has also materialized, and I decided to unleash the full “long term” plan, which has been to activate ALL of the four P5 IOTA Designators (AS-195, AS-196, AS-197 and AS-198) Regardless of what operating venue might result when approval is obtained, I think we all realize any P5 QRV – especially on CW ONLY - will result in “The Mother of all Pileups”.

Reiterating that Amateur Radio is (supposed to be) about “International Goodwill and Friendship”, over the past several years I have been appalled at the pileup operating behaviors by many which are completely the opposite of “International Goodwill and Friendship”. And this “Anti-Social Behavior” continues even today worse than ever.

Especially, all the profanity being spewed forth on a DXpedition’s operating QRG. IMHO, a good Doctoral Thesis Project for a major University Psychiatric Department student would be: A Psychiatric Anatomy of DX Pileup Participants. Fortunately, over the past 18 months, I have been privileged to be part of a very small discussion group with N7NG and G3SXW, (Founders of DX UNIVERSITY), ON4UN and ON4WW (Authors of Ethics and Operating Procedures for the Radio Amateur), W6SJ (Action Promoter of both The DX CODE of CONDUCT for DX Chasers, and The DX CODE of CONDUCT for DXpeditioners), ST2AR (S53R) and several others – all with considerable DXpedition and/or DX QTH operating experience. We have spent considerable time in analyzing and discussing the observed cause and effect relationship between the operating “styles” (and errors) of many Major DXpedition operators, which always result in the same predictable anti-social behaviors and chaos occurring in all pileups.

We also utilized on-air recordings as the basis of our many discussions, to include formulating more effective DXpedition operating techniques to substantially mitigate much of the resulting pileup caller “Anti-Social” behavior.

Each of my last two IOTA Expedition trips have been to also “test” some of the theories and new strategies, which after review, have undergone a few additional refinements. I plan to produce a web viewable video soon, summarizing my perspective of the reality of things, which will also be the basis for any P5 operations and “Pileup Management”.

For DX Chasers *AND* DXpeditioners not familiar with DX UNIVERSITY, I encourage you to visit: <http://www.dxuniversity.com> . You can find the DX CODE of CONDUCT (For DX Chasers) and DX CODE of Conduct (For DXpeditioners) at: <http://www.dx-code.org> .

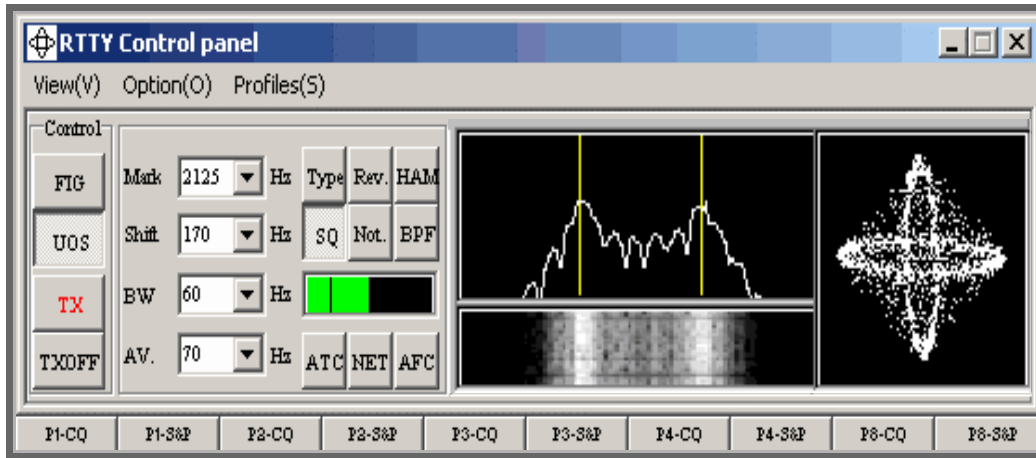
Regarding any future P5 operations, I have not yet made a final decision about whether or not to implement my growing “Blacklist” of the repeat offender “Anti-Social Pileup Bullies” I continually observe in every pileup on the bands these days. They are easy to spot if one listens to the DXpedition operator *and* inside the Pileup at the same time. An additional INFO UPDATE may be forthcoming when and if deemed appropriate.

73 ...

Rick, K6VVA The Locust

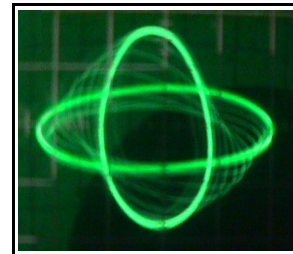
(Courtesy DX Coffee 3/15/2013)

RTTY Corner - Jerry Rappel WWØE



The latest DX digi-doings

The RTTY Corner welcomes EIDX club members Larry Albrecht, KØIS and Gary Huff, KWØJ to the thrilling world of RTTY. (It's about time).
diddle diddle.



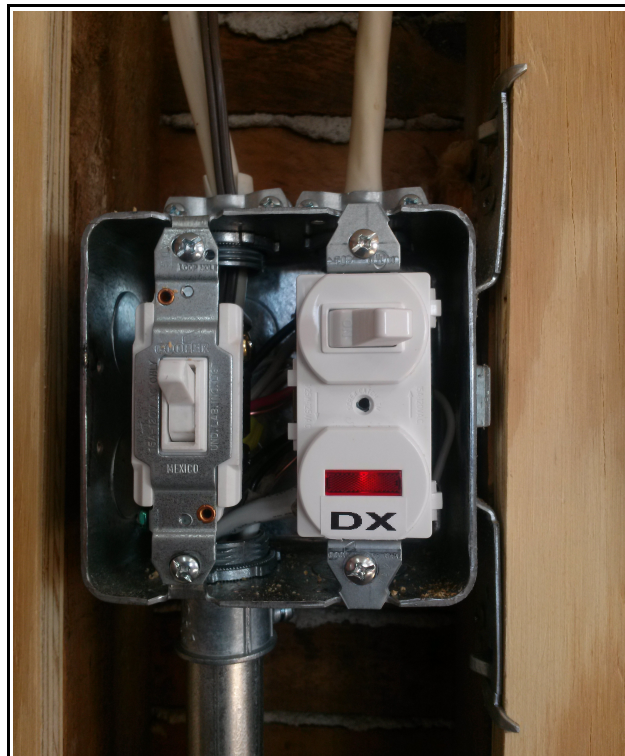
Real-Time RTTY spots on - <http://hamspots.net/rtty>

SO HOW PRINT ?



- x Richard W3ACO: 5N7M, 5U5U, JY4CI, T88UE, 6V7X, VU2NKS, OD5PY, YU1EA, TR8CA, 5U8NK, 5T5BV, CU7MD, VP2MGZ, PT0S, EL2LF, T40C, 5T5SP, E51E, EI6FR, A65BR, VP9/WW3S, J8/W6HGF, 3G3P, ZB3R, XT2TT, 3B9DX, 5V7JD AND 9M4SLL.
- x Larry KØIS: 5R8C, DJ6QT, 9A1A, HB3ØK, ED2C, IQ1RY, YT5W, LX7I, CT3DZ, CE2LS, ZP5CGL, YV1FPT, CW9ØA, PU1MKZ, JA7IC, YV5JGO, W7KPL, ZB3R, CT1FIU, F4BVO, 5V7JD, TX5K, IV3ABA, LA2JKA, PA2P, OM5AB, ON6KE, VU2NKS. (Come up for air Larry, don't you ever sleep?).

- x Glen KØJGH: EA9CD, ZD7VC, EW8CM, J28NC, 5X8C, 9U4U, UK9AA.
- x Tom NYØV: OE2013A, J76A, 5X8C, ZK3T, TX5K, JY4CI.
(Not too many as I was in Myanmar mid December through mid January). I did just receive my Digital DXCC as well as 30, 17, and 12 meters DXCC without sending a single QSL ... all were through LOTW. If we were still in the hard copy QSL days, those awards would have cost me over \$1,200 just in postage!
- x Dave WØVX: DU3/NØQM, 3D2NB, 3D2RX, 5X8C, XT2TT, TX5K, H44C.
- x Jason KDØMND: K7LRA, ZL9HR, CU3EM, TX5K, OK2JNB, FG5LA, JY4CI, FM5WD, LA8ØØM, A4RXR, SQ9HZM, YO9FP, E51E, A65EE, 706T.



Hmm, what does this switch do? (KDØMND)

Member's Spotlight



WB8ZRL



Tom Vavra

Born in Cedar Rapids, I grew up in Ely, a few miles SE of Cedar Rapids. I graduated from Prairie HS, Coe, and Georgia Tech. I was career Air Force, specializing in IBM mainframe computer operating systems. I was first licensed at age 16 with a one year, non-renewable novice license. It expired and it was fifteen years later when I again got a novice license, WN8ZRL, while stationed near Dayton, OH. Less than a year later, in 1977 I upgraded to Advanced, and to Extra in 1984. I was very fortunate as I was getting started in DXing, to be in daily contact on 2M with experienced DXers K8NN, K8NW, and K8RD. They were my Elmers, although they resisted the title.

I have often been asked why I do not have an Extra call. When I upgraded to Advanced, the only vanity program was for Extras. When they started offering two by two calls to Advanced I had orders to Omaha, and thought I would wait and get a zero call. The FCC told me that the two by two was only for upgrades. They offered me a two by three KAØ call which I declined. I was in Denver when I upgraded to Extra. I kept running across friends on HF who recognized my call, and I was not crazy about two by one calls so I just kept my WB8 call.

I retired from the AF in 1987 and returned to Ely hoping to find five acres of farmland someone would be willing to sell me to build on and have room for an antenna farm. Needless to say, the Linn County building codes negated that idea. I finally found my current QTH of 13 acres, mostly timber, but about five acres of relatively flat land with a house. Over the years, there have been a number of towers, wire antennas, and beverages. Today there is a tower with a Wilson System One tribander, a tower with a Cushcraft WARC triband dipole, a 4-square for 80M cw, a 4-square for 40m, and an 160M inverted vee. There is also a K9AY receive array for the low bands.

The shack has a Yaesu FT-1000 MP and AL-82 amp. I also have an FT-2000 that I am trying to figure out how to integrate with existing equipment.

The shack also is home for the WB8ZRL packet cluster node. It has been more than 20 years since I received the local node from WØEJ. It has evolved from DOS software with one 2M packet frequency for the link and local users, to three VHF frequencies and an internet url (wb8zrl.no-ip.org:7300). The software is DXSpider (with source code that lets me change the software to my hearts content) on a Linux host.

My DXCC totals are 352 mixed, 352 phone, and 351 CW, missing only P5 for all cw. I have 300 confirmed on each of 10, 15, 20, 40 and 80, and 150+ on 160. I have been on the top of the honor roll twice, falling off when they accepted Scarborough Reef. I have 5BWAZ, all cCW I have WAE and WPX, but no longer pursue endorsements.

We all have memorable QSOs that we do not forget. A few of mine. BS7H to get back to the top of the honor roll. DXØJP, Spratly, on 80M to finish 5BWAZ. 9N1MM, who called me on 20M long path after I finished a QSO with a South America station. Father Moran just wanted to rag chew. Not a DX contact, but W8ZRL who called me after a schedule. I have only heard three and worked two ZRL suffixes. EY8MM on 80M and then an hour later on 160M. Operators that insert a "Hi Tom" during a contest or dxpedition QSO.

I am not a contester. I am active during many contests, but I am looking for new DX to work. I look for PJ2T when NØYY is operating there. Likewise VP5S when NYØV was there and VP5H when W0GJ was there. When I do get in a contest, multipliers are more important than QSO points.

I am an ARRL QSL card checker. I can check any QSL for DXCC, and also can check VUCC, WAS and WAC applications. I can check cards at any club meeting. I have checked cards mailed to me, and those hand carried to my QTH.

I have been a member of EIDXA since 1988 when I moved back to Iowa and settled in my current QTH. Compared to Dayton, Omaha and Denver, Eastern Iowa is a hotbed of DXers. I truly appreciate being a part of it.

Tom Vavra WB8ZRL

EIDXA Marathon

Folks! It's been another good year from the numbers. We've had a few new players as well as some old! The standings as of this writing show the first 3 places to be pretty close. NYØV leads K8OM by 3 points, while K8OM leads KØJGH by 3 points! With just over 2 weeks to go, it could be a close finish this year.

While we have had some different members participate this year, we haven't had more participation. I've been thinking about how to change this off and on through the year and, I'll have to admit, the posted scores are all quite high. I think the lowest score as far as number of countries may be mine, and I've worked well over 150. Not long ago I would have found that to be quite difficult. I suspect that there may be current members who also feel that way, and, I think trying to break out power or antenna classes really wouldn't improve numbers of participants, so I've come up with another idea.

Glancing at the membership list, we have several Associate members, and, since Full membership only requires 100, I'm not sure how many members are only a little over the DXCC mark. A change I propose for 2013 would add a new category which people could enter manually after uploading their spreadsheets: number of all time new ones. I'll create another column (probably removing the zone columns below that are mostly useless, anyway), and leaders in the New Ones will be posted there. The result is that the grizzled old retired guys won't dominate every column of the leader boards, and maybe some slightly newer DX'ers will have some incentive to work some new ones in 2013!

As most participants this year know, CQ changed the spreadsheet to no longer be free-form in the Modes column. There are now only 3 accepted types: CW, SSB, Digital. The result is that we lose the ability to break-out the digital mode top scores which disappoints some members who are most active on specific modes.

For the moment I plan on maintaining the same process that we've used the past 2 years. My software will accept ODS and XLS spreadsheets from CQ. I will add a method for All Time New entities to be tabulated. If anyone has further input, please drop me an email to kc0vkn-at-arrrl.net and let me know what you think we can do to improve things a bit.

73, and Gud DX. Joe KCØVKN

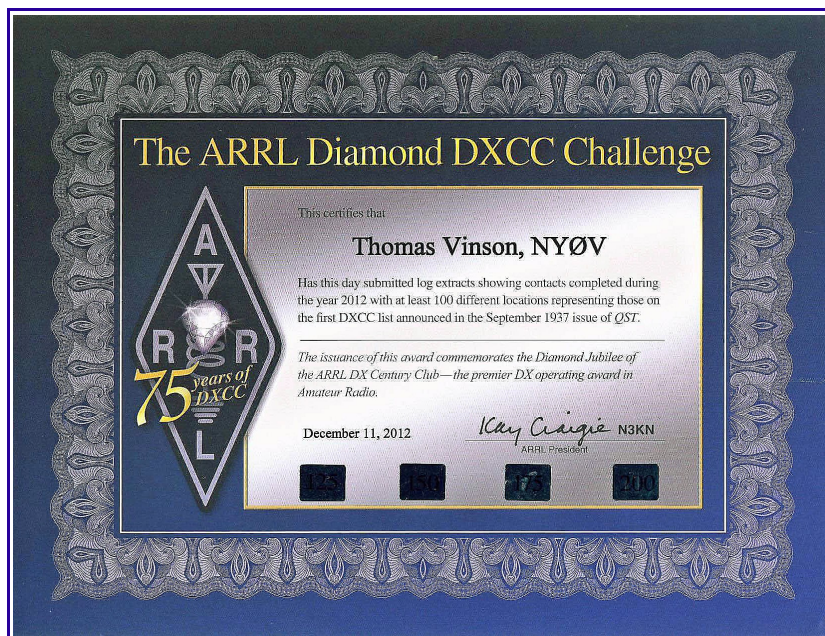
Diamond DXCC Update

Tom Vinson, NYØV

The 75th anniversary year of the DXCC is now over! I am wondering how many of us from the Rochester area participated in the Diamond DXCC. I know that through the year I was challenged to find some of the stations where you had to work a particular station or stations in order to work the old 1937 country! For instance, in 1937 Jeddah on the west coast of what now includes all of Saudi Arabia was a different country. That meant that you had to work one of a few specific HZ/7Z stations to count that one QSO for Jeddah. There were several cases like this. In particular was present day Morocco. For the Diamond DXCC in 1937 there were a couple of small entities as countries, Sidi Ifni and Tangiers. Therefore, you would have to be looking for CN stations that were in those two areas.

The one benefit I found in going after this award is that I gained an appreciation for all of the geo-political changes that have occurred since 1937 at the genesis of the ARRL DXCC program!

If you worked over 100 of the countries from the 1937 list, be sure to get your log submitted to the ARRL. You can find the submittal information on the ARRL website. I just received my Diamond DXCC certificate from the ARRL along with the endorsement stickers for 125, 150, 175, and 200 countries. This is a nice little piece of wallpaper:



Logbook of the World (LOTW)

Before Christmas the ARRL was experiencing a huge slow down on the processing of LOTW QSO's. Some were waiting nearly two weeks for their uploads to register. The ARRL went to work to fix the issues and have been very successful. Reports from some indicate that sometimes the turnaround times are as low as a couple of hours. This won't be the case right after a large contest! If you submit your logs after a large contest weekend, be patient as the backlog will clear in a couple of days.

With the US Post Office set to raise first class rates again, it will pay off if you get set up on LOTW. If you haven't gotten onto LOTW as yet, you are missing out on some easy (and much less costly) DXCC credits with the ARRL. I found that if you just follow the step-by-step process on the ARRL website, you can get set up for LOTW. If you screw it up, there is support from the ARRL too! So, take a shot at it, follow the directions specifically, and you will be ready to go get those awards!

Improving that CW Speed

For all of the debate and nay saying around no-code vs know code, one thing you must admit, CW is NOT dead! All one has to do is go down on the low end of the bands and tune around a bit. This is especially true during a CW contest weekend. CW is still alive and well.

For me, the CW has always been a lot of fun. I guess it's in my blood. My dad was a high-speed code operator in WWII. When I became interested in ham radio, it was my dad who helped me learn the code by sound. That was in 1967 and I have used it ever since. It's not that I don't use phone. But, to me the CW is a skill and a great way to get through some of the roughest propagation conditions. Not only that, a LOT of rare DX is on CW!

In the recent years there have come to the forefront a number of CW improvement programs available off the Internet as freeware. You can use Google and find each one of these little programs. Here are a few:

Morse Runner: Morse Runner allows you to set up your call, the speed you want, and then several levels of QRM, QRN, Flutter, and even LIDS! There are a couple of modes like single call or contest. In contest mode, once you call CQ, watch out! You will get replies. In fact, you would be hard pressed to tell the difference of running them on Morse Runner and the real thing!

Pile Up Runner: PU Runner has just recently been released. In this program you also run the pileup as if you are the DX. But, in this case, it's a "smart" pile up. In other words, if you just stay listening on one frequency, the pileup will come to you and call on that frequency. So, you need to keep moving your RIT.

RUFZXP: Rufz was developed to help improve your copy speed. This diabolic little program will send you 50 calls. Some of the calls are familiar ones you may hear on any given day or contest. The interesting thing about Rufz is that once you copy a call correctly, it will speed up and send the next one! If you miss it, it drops the speed down to where you were. At the end of the program of 50 calls, it will give you a score with your maximum characters per minute (CPM) as well as the list of correct calls and where you made your errors. ie S vs H or U vs V's.

The website has the TopList that displays those who wish to have their call and scores listed. You cannot believe how fast some of these folks are copying. The record is now 1000 CPM! (40 WPM is 200 CPM folks!) How can the human brain do that?

So, if you want to improve your CW skills, typing skills, copying in pileup skills, or speed, check out one or more of these new programs. I have found it fun to take them along on trips where I can just put on the headphones and type away copying CW.

Submitted by Tom, NYØV

Some Winter Station Layout Work

I had been contemplating relaying out my station to make it a bit more ergonomic. This winter I finally got around to doing something about it. The problem was that I was having to lean way over to the right to switch the two SteppIR controllers and even further right to switch the Comtek phase switching on the phased verticals and the DX Engineering remote antenna switch. The layout was not very efficient and was basically a PITA to run when switching antennas and bands.

I have included a picture of the new station layout. I raised the platform about 3/4" so I could place the two SteppIR controllers under it and in directly in front of me. This entailed cutting three 1/2" wide shelving pieces and gluing them to the current three vertical pieces. I then built a small 8" square shelf and put the Comtek phase switch under the Yaesu rotor.



The DX Engineering remote antenna switch is moved to directly under the VL-1000 amplifier RF deck and to the right of the operating position. It had been all the way to the right (out of the picture) and I am now able to reach the knob from my chair.

In this layout I keep the computers, audio, digital interfaces, and key paddle on the left-hand side (I am left handed). The transceiver, keyer control, and antenna switching is centered on my right hand. Finally, on the right is the RF with the amplifier and all of the coax (as well as the control cables) where they exit the shack through the wall and out to the tower.

This was a simple couple of hours of work with minimal cost- a good cold weather project!

Submitted by Tom, NYØV

Thank You.



Thanks to all the club members who contributed to this newsletter. Jerry WØDE

|| DXCC Card Checking Is As Close as EIDXA ||

The club has another QSL card checker WØGJ, Glenn Johnson. If you look on the ARRL web site under searching for a checker, he shows up with a Calmar, IA address, but a MN phone number. If you look in the master list, he is still listed in MN.



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: KØCA@arrl.net or cliff.ahrens@gmail.com.



EIDXA member Tom Vavra WB8ZRL. Tom is able to check any cards for DXCC. In addition he can check cards for WAS, WAC, and VUCC. 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.

2013 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 EIDXA meeting:
Friday April 12th, 2013 7:30 PM
room 219C of Linn Hall on the
campus of Kirkwood
Community College. Cedar
Rapids.
Program: Glenn Johnson,
WØGJ; “Is 3 dB Worth a
Divorce?”**



Established 1975