

# EASTERN IOWA DXER

January 2014



**"CELEBRATING"**

**35 Years of**

**EIDXA Newsletters**

*January 1979 - January 2014*

**Happy New Year**

The following is a copy of the (one page) EIDXA NEWSLETTER from January 5, 1979, by KØAT. (spelling corrected). I don't recall who sent me this years ago, (Jim Spencer, KØSR ?) but it's one of the few newsletters saved from those early days of yesteryear.

## EIDXA NEWSLETTER

1/5/79

Flash! There will be an EIDXA club meeting 19 January '79 at KØAT's QTH. A general consensus of the membership seems to indicate the by-laws will receive attention, so please plan to attend this important meeting.

If you haven't heard yet, the EIDXA has four new members. They are:  
ADØF Rick Heinrich, Cedar Rapids, Extra Class, leans towards contesting.  
WBØOYA Ory Duecker, Waterloo, Advanced Class, Dyer.  
WBØPYD Eric Santon, Cedar Rapids, General Class, contest oriented.  
WBØUFL Jim Bohnsack, Waterloo, Advanced Class, another county hunter.  
We would like to welcome each to the club and hope they benefit from the membership.

CQWW is over! As a club record we scored 1,515,617 in phone and 1,347,114 in CW. Contributing to these results were VU, MJN, SVX, IZ, GT, VX, LUZ, SR, SML, UZ, AT, WP, and F. (not a member at this time, but in a multi-op). This was a very good club representation. Our overall score was 2,862,731. This doubled last years effort. Highest phone scores: KØGT – 186,590 (single): KØSVX – 897,666 (multi-op). I think everyone had a good time, but certainly better propagation could have resulted in a great time. Maybe next year.

It is now time to look forward to the next affair which is the ARRL DX Competition in March. Remember both CW and phone are in March and both have been reduced to one weekend. Also keep in mind that as a club we will be entering the 50 or less category of club competition. This is a real chance to move up in the standings if we can hit on all cylinders. If you won't be in this one in a big way, how about mixing bands, multipliers, etc. to achieve as large a club score as possible in your planned operating period.

The contest calendar shows:

January

13 (2100Z) – 14 (2100Z) YU 80 meter only DX  
27-28 CQ 160 meter, French CW

February

24-25 French phone

March

3-4 ARRL DX phone  
17-18 ARRL DX CW

If you're new and need contesting advice, you're in luck. Advice is readily available on 57. Also listen to a few of the contests listed above, such as the French contest, and you'll become familiar with the operating techniques. Remember, even if you're not proficient at first, it is fun, builds countries totals, and contributes to the overall club score. Be sure to get logs and dupe sheets well in advance.

Another newsy item is the planned DX-pedition of WØWP with KØSVW and his associates. In case you haven't heard, at this writing they are planning a trek to Northern Cook Group approximately 10 August '79. Their calls will most likely be port ZK. First stop will be Southern Cook Group ZK1. The whole thing is still in the planning stages, but if things work out we should have some more advanced info in the next issue of the EIDXA newsletter. WØWP is already beginning to practice his CW fist to take on the hoards.

Bulletin! WØSR has been appointed to the ARRL DX Advisory committee. Congratulations Jim.

73,  
KØAT Fred

**Official Newsletter of the Eastern Iowa DX Association**

**NØDX**

**Established 1975**

**Eastern Iowa DXer**

*An affiliated club of the American Radio Relay League*

**January 2014**

January 2014

Page 2

Club Officers:

President:	Craig Fastenow	KØCF	<b>Packet Cluster:</b>	<b>WB8ZRL</b>
Vice President:	Jerry Rappel	WWØE	147.51, 144.91, WB8ZRL.no-ip.org:7300	
Secretary Treasurer:	Richard Haendel	W3ACO		
Repeater Committee:	Al Groff	KØVM	<b>Repeater:</b>	<b>NØDX/R</b>
	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	NRØX		

**Next EIDXA meeting:**  
**Friday, January 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM, room to be announced.**  
**Campus of Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids.**  
**Program: Contesting from PJ2T, with Rick Heinrich, NØYY.**





[www.eidxa.org](http://www.eidxa.org)

## April 2013 - Contents



- ◆ 6 - President's Propagation, Pronouncements & Pontifications
- ◆ 8 - "Now that's DX"
- ◆ 11 - Minutes
- ◆ 13 - RTTY Corner
- ◆ 14 - EIDXA News
- ◆ 16 - Members Spotlight - WØGJ, Glenn Johnson.
- ◆ 23 - WØGXA - Great Antenna Project
- ◆ 30 - Feature Story - Jason in PJ2 land
- ◆ 37 - Speaking of PJ2T
- ◆ 45 - PSE QSL



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](mailto:WWØE@q.com).

Thanks in advance for your newsletter input.

~ WWØE ~

**President's Propagation, Pronouncements & Pontification**

EIDX President *Craig Fastenow*, KØCF

Welcome to the January 2014 edition of the Eastern Iowa DXer! Christmas is almost upon us once again. I hope all of you have a great holiday, and can celebrate with family and friends.

It is often interesting and educational to see what other radio clubs are doing. In that vein, I was browsing the Potomac Valley Radio Club (PVRC) web site, and came across their newsletter for December 2013. Beginning on page 10 is a nice tribute to Vic Clark, W4KFC.

Vic was a legendary contester and CW operator. He had many contest wins, beginning with the 1947 ARRL SS. Vic was a ham for 50 years, and was ARRL President from 1982-until his sudden death from a heart attack in November 1983. Although I never met Vic in person, I remember him well, and found this to be an article well worth reading!

In an earlier edition of the PVRC newsletter (January 2013 to be exact) they had a very interesting feature titled "The Way We Were". It consisted of photographs and narration by many of their members from their early days in ham radio, many from 40 to 50 years ago.

It was really interesting! One thing I noticed was the prevalence of the Pennwood Numechron 24-hour mechanical digital clocks. How many of you remember them?

I think a feature like this would be a really interesting thing for the EIDX to do! So dig out your old photo albums, find a typical shot or two of your early stations (preferably with you in it!), scan them and email them to Jerry, WWØE, for a forthcoming edition of our newsletter.

I'll start the ball rolling with this one of me in my shack circa 1960, with my second-ever receiver, a Hallicrafters SX-111. Note the ubiquitous Pennwood Numechron clock!



It is interesting to note that The Voice of Russia, formerly known as Radio Moscow during the USSR era, will cease shortwave broadcasts as of January 1, 2014. Radio Moscow began broadcasting in the late 1920s and was a stalwart on the HF bands during the 1950s through the 1980s. Radio Moscow was popular among short-wave listeners (SWLs), many of whom became amateur radio operators. I can well remember hearing Radio Moscow on an old Zenith “Chair-side” multi-band radio that my father had. Of course, in tuning around, I discovered the ham bands and was immediately captivated by what I heard. It wasn't too long before I learned that I, too, could be an amateur radio operator. The rest, as they say, is history.

Our next meeting will be on Friday, **January 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM** at one of the Iowa Hall meeting rooms on the Kirkwood Community College campus. I will send out an email with location details after I have arranged the meeting room with Kirkwood. Rick Heinrich, NØYY, will present a program on the CQ Worldwide CW contest from PJ2T. I can't wait – Rick does such great programs! Hoping to see you all at the January meeting! Happy holidays to all, and to all, good DX!

73,

Craig, KØCF - President

“Now that's DX”



EIDXA Vice-President *Jerry Rappel, WWØE*

At the close of this past year and the beginning of this new year, we set forth to better ourselves, to improve upon the past, and work more DX !



Stand by - it's a jam-packed newsletter this time. It is our pleasure to have in the Member's Spotlight this month, “*DX'er extraordinaire*”- WØGJ, Glenn Johnson. And the Feature Story is non other than - NRØX, Jason Joens in PJ2 land.



**35 Years of EIDXA Newsletters**

*January 2014 the Eastern Iowa DX Association celebrates it's 35th newsletter anniversary. I hope you all make it a resolution to submit as many articles as you can for the newsletter this new year.*

## U.S. POSTAL INCREASE FOR 2014.

United States Postal Service prices will increase for a First-Class Mail single-piece letter from 46 cents to 49 cents. The changes, which go into effect January 2014, are intended to generate \$2 billion in incremental annual revenue for the Postal Service. First-Class Mail pricing, effective Jan. 26, 2014, include: Letters (1oz.) - 3 cent increase to 49 cents. Letters additional ounces - 1¢ increase to 21 cents, letters to all international destinations (1 oz.) - \$1.15, Postcards - 1 cent increase to 34 cents.



*Is it just me ... ?*

QRZ the frequency? Have you ever heard a frequency calling anybody?

Twitter tweets like LOL (laugh out loud) are unwanted in amateur radio. Amateur radio is not an on-line experience.

"CQ Dog X-Ray, beaming Asia." Not only does this improve your antenna's directionality, but it lets everyone hearing you think you have a beam, whether you do or not.

It's a scientific fact. Radio waves become sluggish under a variety of common environmental conditions. Besides air pollution, radio waves slow down in noisy environments, and at night ... *WiFi Speed Spray* to the rescue, story on page 46.

### **W100, UNITED STATES (Special Event).**

A special ARRL bulletin (ARLX013) reports: "The FCC has authorized the Maxim Memorial Station W1AW to also use the call sign **W100AW** during 2014, the ARRL's centennial year.

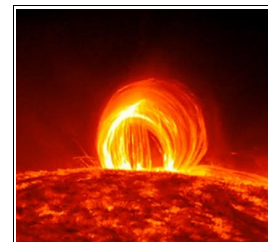
Contacts made from the Maxim Memorial Station in Newington, from regional Centennial conventions, and during the IARU HF Championship will use **W1ØØAW**, with portable designators as appropriate. The "W1AW WAS" operations throughout 2014 from each of the 50 states will use W1AW, not **W1ØØAW**. Bulletins and code practice transmissions during 2014 also will still use W1AW. Contacts with **W1ØØAW** will be worth 100 points in the ARRL Cen-ten-nial QSO Party. To help kick off the ARRL Centennial, special **W1ØØAW** activity will begin at 0500 UTC on January 1, 2014 (midnight in Newington), and will include participation in ARRL's Straight Key Night; one CW station will use Hiram Percy Maxim's straight key. Activity will continue through- out New Year's Day."

75 years ago - January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1939 - the number of licensed amateurs in the United States was 50,000.

**IYØCXII** marks the 112th anniversary of Marconi's first transatlantic transmission between Poldhu in Cornwall and Signal Hill on Newfoundland; QRV until the end of this year. QSL via IQØRM.

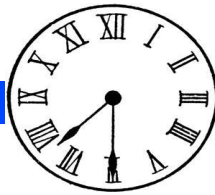


Scientists told journalists attending the American Geophysical Union (AGU) fall conference in San Francisco that current solar **Cycle 24** has demonstrated extremely low sunspot activity and appears to be the weakest cycle of the past 10 cycles.



Now that's DX till next time, *Jerry*, **WWØE**





## Minutes

### Secretary/Treasurer *Richard Haendal*, W3ACO

EIDXА minutes of the Minutes of the EIDXА meeting November 1, 2013. Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by our President Craig, KØCF.

33 hams answered the CQ call.

Jim, WØSR introduced Jan Hise, widow of Tom, NCØØ (SK) about Tom's request for a DX fund and his intentions of supporting DX operations. Tom missed the Honor Roll by three entities. He was keen on getting all time new ones and supporting operations that would give him a chance to increase his totals. Jan gave a very generous donation to the club for the purposes of filling Tom's intent. A group led by WØSR is formulating additions to the by laws of the club to enable future club operations to adhere to Tom's wishes.

W3ACO provided minutes of the July meeting and provided a treasurers report.

Jason, KDØMND discussed service costs for our web site. He says we are paying a lot more than we are getting. Jason will look into alternate service providers. A decision about a new provider will be completed by the January 2014 meeting.

Glenn, WØGJ noted that NCDXF has a plan for matching funds so individuals can join or renew their membership and NCDXF will get double the amount of money.

There was a discussion of upcoming DXpeditions. Two were noted, VK9MT (Mellish Reef) and YWØA, (Aves Island). The club voted to donate \$100.00 to each. Your treasurer, W3ACO made the donations through his Paypal account. On Nov 2, both operations have acknowledged receipt of funds.

There was a discussion of support of hams in “rare” entities that could not get on the air and needed material or equipment support.

WØGJ indicated that NCDXF had abandoned the idea as not practical. Transportation costs, hold-ups in customs offices and other shipping exchange miscues caused the equipment and supplies mostly not to arrive. Successful importation of equipment to rare entities occurred when visiting hams brought equipment with them as baggage to rare places. 5TØJL and ET3AA were two success stories.

Rick NØYY agreed to provide a program about the PJ2 station at the January 2014 meeting. Craig Thompson, K9CT's program will be delayed at least until the April meeting.

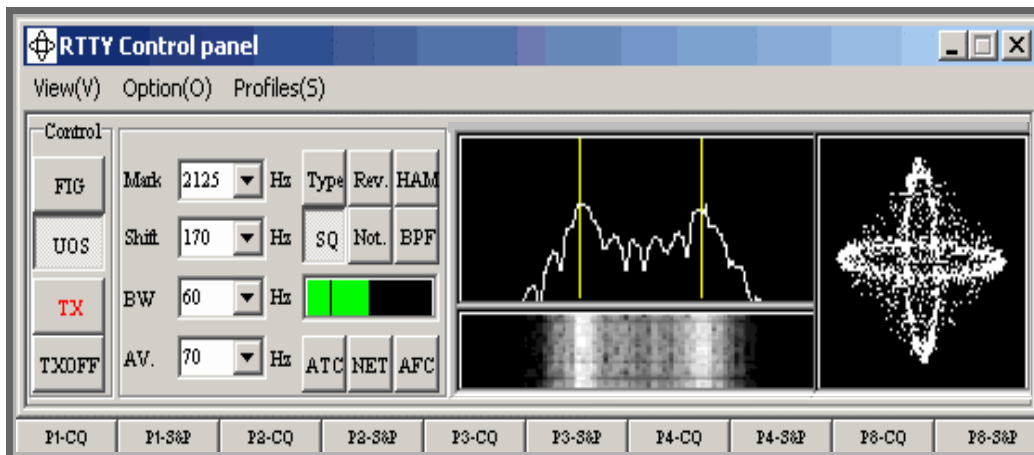
The present slate of officers was re elected. Your President is Craig KØCF, your Vice President is Jerry WWØE and your Secretary/Treasurer is Rich W3ACO. Thanks for volunteering!

Glenn WØGJ made a presentation of his new multi-2 contest station and injected a bit of humor using cheeseburger analogies. WØGJ station score in the recent CQ SSB contest was a resounding 10.9 million points. Well done Glenn and crew !

Rich W3ACO



## RTTY Corner - Jerry Rappel WWØE



## The latest DX digi-doings

### 2014 ARRL RTTY Roundup January 4th- 5th.

SO HOW PRINT ?



- x WWØE: KG4HF, UW4I, YQ6A, EM2G, UTØU, A45XR.
- x Glen KØJGH: K9W, C82DX, TU5AX, VU7AG, LY1R.
- x From Chatfield, MN. NYØV: 5JØR, XRØYY, D44TXT, T33A, K9W, XRØZR, S79WDX, 5X1NH, S21ZBC, TU5AX, J87GU, 3DAØET, W8A, 5V7TH, OD7ØYY, HC1/NØAT, OX3DB, J34J, VU7AG, XWØYJY.
- x From Radio Joe, K8OM: FG8OJ, 3B9EME, TZ6BB, 6V7X, D44TXT, T33A, K9W, XRØZR, 3DAØET, VU7AG, 9XØXM.

Thanks for the RTTY logs guys.

**EIDXA NEWS**



**Mellish Reef**  
**28 Mar - 9 Apr 2014**



**VK9MT**



**RADIO ARCALA LANDSCAPE IS ONE SHORT**

Jarmo, OH2BN, reports: "While driving to the Arctic region north of the city of Oulu at 65degrees North, you will now find the wintry landscape more naked than before. Something is missing from the landscape,

a reflection of the challenges facing the stormy and icy North. Sorrow has descended on the population of the village of Arkala.

It was the recent storm Oskari creating gusts of up to 68 knots (78MPH) that not only knocked down the massive 330ft (100m) 40+ ton 160/80M array but also left 200,000 homes in Finland without electricity. The mammoth structure collapsed peacefully, not hitting any of the other six towers, not hurting people or damaging buildings.

As professional engineering efforts had up to now ensured the survival of this 5-year old structure, inspectors are busy trying to evaluate the cause of the failure. It is suspected that automation designed to enable the array to find its most comfortable position in high winds somehow locked up and caused the structure to corkscrew. Consequently the giant crumbled down on its on base just like the WTC building in those other sad years.

But life goes on at Radio Arcala at OH8X and you may soon hear Santa Claus from the North of Finland bringing you the joy of Christmas in the form of OF9X, beaming over the North Pole on 20 meters and capitalizing on the famous Polar Path during the Holiday Season.

Thank you for your interest in Radio Arcala and many of its unforgettable endeavors. In summary, we would like to share with you this short poem and these consoling words of wisdom from the late Professor Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD: "The grief we feel we cannot tell. A sad day it was as our tower fell." A picture is available in the HTML format version of the OPDX at: <http://www.papays.com/BoyResting2.jpg>. Also, visit the Radio Arcala Web page for possible updates and pictures of the tower before it fell at: <http://www.radioarcala.com>

Ohio/Penn DX Bulletin No. 1140

STORMY WEATHER: SV2ASP/A

The Daily DX reports that also Monk Apollo, the only active station from Mount Athos, has lost all of his antennas, which "fell down in the big wind storm last week". Apollo is currently "in Corinth, Greece for the olive harvest" and "does does not know when he will have the time to get something back up in the air".

**Member's Spotlight****Glenn Johnson,  
WØGJ**

Glenn grew up near Marshalltown, Iowa. After getting a degree in Forestry at Iowa State, he then received his M.D. degree from the University of Iowa. After an internship in Seattle, and residency in Rochester, MN, he spent five years in the Air Force in Anchorage, Alaska. He returned to practice orthopedic surgery in Minnesota and after 30-some years has returned full circle back to Iowa. For the last 5 years Glenn has been working part-time for the Mayo Clinic Health System. In 2012, he and Vivien, KL7YL, made the move permanent to a “perfect” retirement QTH between Decorah and Calmar.

Glenn's interest in amateur radio started as a youngster listening to his grandfather's short-wave radio. He was licensed at age 15 and within three months had worked all 50 states with a homemade crystal transmitter...with three crystals, one for 80M, two for 40M, one of which worked on 15M. He has always been interested in contesting and working DX. He has achieved #1 Honor Roll, 5BDXCC and 5BWAZ awards.

He has four consecutive First Place World scores in the QRP category in the ARRL 160M Contest. He has led three major DXpeditions to #2 Most Wanted areas (Kingdom of Bhutan in the Himalayas (2000), Lakshadweep in the Arabian Sea (2007)), and Desecheo (2009). His first DXpedition was to Heard Island (1997) and the most recent, Malpelo (2012) in the Pacific. All of these DXpeditions were awarded DXpedition of the Year. In 2003, Glenn was inducted into the CQ Magazine Amateur Radio Hall of Fame. In 2012, he was inducted into the DX Hall of Fame. He has been vice president of the Northern California DX Foundation for the past four years.

His wife and four children are all licensed hams and competed in ham radio contesting from their home. They have traveled to many countries, some quite remote, for contest activities. He and his wife have home-schooled their four children, all which have left home. By the time you read this, Melissa, K1MJ, and Rolly, WRØLLY, who live in North Liberty, will have had Glenn & Vivien's first grandchild.

Glenn has been a practicing orthopedic surgeon for over 35 years. He is currently works for the Mayo Clinic Health System in Minnesota and Iowa. His interest is in Minimally Invasive Surgery and he has developed a highly regarded practice specializing in outpatient partial knee replacement surgery and anterior hip replacement surgery.

His other area of interest is teaching orthopedic surgery in third world countries. He is a member of Orthopedics Overseas. He has spent a lot of time at a crippled children's hospital in Bethlehem, Israel, and has had four tours of duty in The Kingdom of Bhutan in the Himalayan Mountains. In addition to teaching medicine he also brought amateur radio into Bhutan. He taught the first group of hams licensed in the country and in later years helped establish club stations in several high schools throughout the country. For this work he received the prestigious 2004 ARRL Humanitarian of the Year Award. The Kingdom of Bhutan recognized Glenn with an honorary citizenship and a lifetime callsign of A51B. He is returning to Bhutan to work in the near future. After retirement at the end of 2015, Glenn plans to return to Bhutan quite often.

Glenn loves working on towers and building antennas. He spent four years of research in designing and building his current contest/DX station and antennas. TCDXA Grayline Newsletter recently featured Glenn's move from Minnesota to Iowa: <http://tcdxa.org/Newsletters/September2013Grayline.pdf>

Glenn has many other interests including beekeeping, wood working and building furniture, draft horses and carriage driving and flying both a float plane in the summer and a ski plane in the winter. He also holds a commercial helicopter rating. He is also very active in local community affairs and in his local church. He is looking forward to getting his new grandson licensed and into DXing!



The main tower: 170' Rotating Rohn 55G with 4-el 40M and three 4-el SteppIR's.

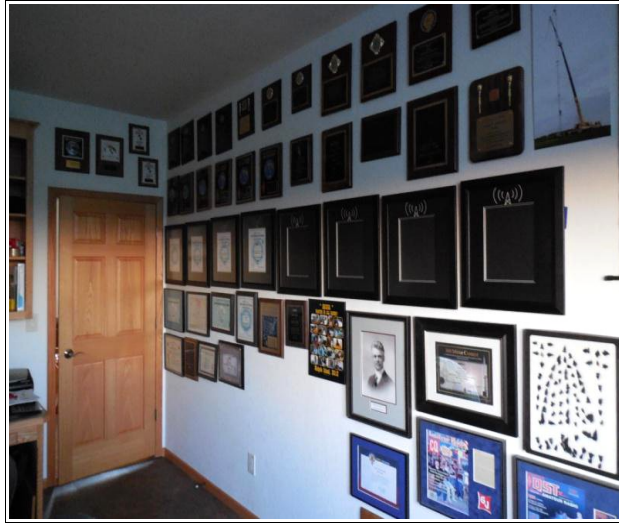


115' rotating Rohn 25G with 40M dipole, 3-el 30M and 4-el SteppIR



WØGJ / KL7YL shack





Wall of awards



Vivien KL7YL & Glenn WØGJ





Having more fun on a tower than anyone should ever be allowed to have!



80M 4-Square



There is real gold on Top Band with full-size phased verticals!

WØGJ

## WØGXA - Great Antenna Project, October 2013 by Bob Lee

When we bought our current home in 1985, I knew someday I would mount an HF beam on the existing windmill tower. I finished installation today (October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013). Before I go any further, I've been asked why I simply didn't put up some Rohn 25. The environmental impact statement I need to file with my XYL (she's very tolerant of my hobby) is judged on two criteria a) is it mounted on the house and b) how many things does she have to mow around. It means free-standing systems are highly favored. Project planning started just over a year ago with research into antennas, rotors, etc... I decided to stick with a tri-band antenna since my focus is on contesting. Long term, I want a crank up/tilt over free standing tower like NYØV and at that time I'll likely spring for a SteppIR. I'm not getting any younger and no clue how long I'll be comfortable climbing. I started looking for a used antenna and quickly found a TH6 for sale in Marion that was already down (Bob WAØVLC). I chose a T2X rotor. Overkill, I know, but I felt this was a good place to overkill it. I upgraded the controller with the Rotor EZ mod.

The antenna needed to be refurbished so I procured all new plastic pieces and hardware. My son and my dad worked over the winter to do the refurb. They disassembled everything, cleaned it, and polished all the aluminum with Mother's aluminum polish. It looks almost like new. As winter began to fade, I started discussing the project with our very own Jason Joens (KDØMND) (aka:NRØX) about converting the tower. We received a lot of invaluable advice from Steve (NAØIA) about how to refurb and modify the tower. The tower mods were straight forward:

- α Straighten all of the cross braces that were bent over the years by kids playing on the windmill. Several different lengths of 2x4's and a 3 ton bottle jack did the trick.
- α Straighten the cross brace at 30' that was bent by my well guy years ago (I have a different well guy now). This required a few whacks with 12lb sledge hammer.
- α Repair one tower leg that was bent slightly by "something". No clue what hit it but... I sistered a new piece of 3" angle over the leg.
- α Replaced all the bolts at the tower leg joints (4 sets of 16). For a tower this old, the bolt cross section was very good.
- α Custom design a rotor plate to sit about 8' below the antenna on an existing set of cross braces. Simple matter for Marion Iron to fab.

- α Custom design a thrust bearing plate for what would become the new “top”. Another Marion Iron product.
- α Fashion shear plates (4) to fasten to each tower face because we’d lose the strength of a triangle after performing the next step. By now I’m getting a frequent customer discount at Marion Iron.
- α Cut off the top 2’ of the tower to give us a flat place to mount the thrust bearing

While this was going on, I researched lightning protection. I installed ground rods at each tower leg and tied them all together with 4ga copper. I have a drain wire from the top directly to one of the ground rods. The rotor control goes through a lightning arrestor at the base as does the coax. Left on the “to-do” list is to tie it into the meter pole ground that feeds the house and garage.

About 8 weeks before the event, I decided to rent a JLG 400S mobile lift to give me and Jason a nice platform to work from given the number of the tower mods we had to perform. I had rented one in ’06 when I put new siding on my house so for me this was an easy decision. Jason said at least 4 times he’d like to own one and was doing some ciphering to determine how long it would take to save the necessary funds.

**Day 1** went relatively well. Jason and I mounted and leveled the rotor plate and mounted the rotor, installed the four shear plates and cut off the top of the tower.

**Day 2** presented us more challenges. We clamped the thrust bearing mounting plate to the top of the tower and set the mast in the rotor. After fussing with it in a vain attempt to remove a couple inches of eccentricity in the rotation at the top, I called Steve (NAØIA). I mumbled something about nearing suicide and he pulled us back from the edge. Fine tuned the installation with a few shims here and there and it was rotating nicely. There is 7’ between the rotor to thrust bearing plates, so any small misalignment is magnified. We drilled another 12 holes and the tower was ready to accept the beam.

Beam installation was easy... Tom WØWP and I rode it up in the lift and Jason bolted it in place. This part took only 30 minutes. We forgot to tune it up on the ground, so I used the lift the next day (Day 3) with Tom’s (WB8ZRL) help. I rode the lift up and he’d turn the beam around so I didn’t have to move the lift.

I spent the rest of the day reinstalling the dipoles, getting the coax and control cable into the shack so that the system would be ready for potentially severe storms due in two days! I've already had nightmares with elements falling off right along with the leaves. I'm too tired today to sit in front of the radio. I'll play with it later.



Tower before



Leg repair



Me in early light



Rotor plate accessories



Lunch break - for those not from Iowa ... this is "gas station" pizza.





Jason's good side.



Antenna in-bound





Finished product.

**Update October 13, 2013 - 3:48 PM**, after one week on the air, I've managed to work these new countries: Reunion Island, Mayotte, Rodriguez Is, Jordan, Qatar, Uganda, Congo, India, Indonesia, Austral Is, Djibouti, Fiji, Sable Is, New Caledonia, and the Philippines. It's really opened up the Indian Ocean basin....

Bob Lee, WØGXA

"CW forever"

**Feature Story**

*On Curacao, towers, and the source of propagation,*  
by Jason Joens, NRØX.



At my first EIDX A meeting, Rick NØYY shook my hand and said "How would you like an all-expense paid trip to the Caribbean?" I didn't really think he was joking, but I'm not sure I took it all at seriously, either. I guess I should have, because the plane is about to land. I wanted to look into the shadows for a palm tree, or some other indication that I wasn't in Kansas anymore, but there wasn't time. I followed the people in front of me off the Tarmac and into the building. Immigration and customs went a lot smoother than I had expected. A procedural stamp on my passport, and no one cared what was in my bags. Just another American tourist, I suppose.

Finally out in front of the airport I met up and shook hands with Wayne and we threw my bags into some Chinese knockoff of a pickup and headed out onto the road. The first lesson I learned about Curaçao is that people drive just a little crazier there! I'm not saying it is an island of maniacs. I'm just saying that there was a dent in the passenger side floorboard, from where I was stomping on the imaginary brake pedal! Not much to see out the windows this time of night. Nothing but road construction, that is. One trip through a road construction site on the island, and you will never again complain about seeing traffic cones. They pretty much just blaze a dirt trail alongside the road, about 2/3 the width it should be, and 2 lanes of traffic squeezes through there at a whopping 2 mph for a mile or so. Outside of the city, it was pretty dark and I couldn't see a thing. We followed a collection of long and winding back country roads, each one more remote than the last. Finally, the motorized gate opened, and the pickup pulled in to the yard. PJ2T, we are here! It was nice of the guys to have reheated some food for me, which I scarfed down before being introduced to my bed for the next couple of weeks. Next morning, I would hit the ground running.

More like stumbling. I'm not a morning person, although waking up to that kind of view has a way of opening your eyes a little quicker than normal. Time to sit down, shut up, listen, and learn something. Most of us were at the club meeting where Rick gave the presentation of the maintenance requirements of this place. I read over that PowerPoint a few times, so I thought I was ready to go. Here I will list my experiences, though not in any particular order.

Rotors. Frozen solid. Each and every one of them. The WARC beam finally broke loose after a few minutes of rocking it back and forth.

The 40 meter beam on the Europe tower wasn't as easy, and it took me standing on the top plate of the tower, throwing my weight into the boom, before it finally started to move. Word is that you have to break rotors loose each time you come here.



Rust. It happens overnight. It happens RIGHT NOW. If you're not going to protect it, don't waste your time. Anything non-stainless steel is covered in multiple layers of epoxy paint, or covered in a massive glob of duct seal putty, and coated in a layer of Scotch 33 electrical tape. That duct seal putty stuff is a pain, but it's cheap, and it seems to work well if you can tape it to keep the UV off.



The ridgeline across the street from the station is a big stone wall between PJ2T and Europe. The solution? The ridge tower! It's only 20 feet tall, but that's all you need up there. The only problem is getting to it. You have to go all the way up that ridge, and it's not a pleasant trip.

Every single species of plant life on that island wants to kill you. ALL of them! They have thorns. Their thorns have thorns on them. And if you look really close at the thorns that stick out of the thorns, guess what you see - More thorns! Some of them are barbed, too. Bring pliers, and watch where you put your hands and feet. IF you stumble, you will reach out and grab something, and that something will have thorns on it. Don't buy cheap gloves. It is a long and tiring climb to the top, even when you're NOT carrying 70 lbs. worth of bencher Skyhawk with you. You have to bring every single thing you could need, because you do NOT want to have to be the guy to go all the way back down there to go get something. Bring water. LOTS of water.



Wiring? Forget about it. It would take me 6 more visits to understand how the place is wired. The other guys tackled most of this, while I helped Wayne by prepping feedline for connectors. We ran about 500 feet of new feedline there.

Stars in Curacao are not like stars here. I don't care if you live out in the country, miles away from town. You are still missing out on about as much as the city slickers are missing out on compared to the country. The stars are bright in Curacao, and "bright" is an understatement.

The view of the whole place is just really nice. You're surrounded by green mountains, and blue sea. The waves crash up against the rocks 30 feet below you, bright colored birds fly around. Iguanas climb up your leg and eat your bowl of mango. I can see why they come here, even as tough as it is to keep this place going.



It's not like you just call and order some aluminum tubing. Trying to get something through customs is a nightmare! You are on an island, and I quickly learned how spoiled we are here in the states, that we can get anything we want to and have it here in a few short days. No, you better hope it fits in your luggage, or it's a gonna cost an arm, a leg, and your first born to get it. There's a pretty good hardware store on the island though, and you can get a lot of small things there.



As for me ... I'm used to being a solo climber. That's just the way it was for me. I'm used to having a small ground crew, and doing most of the work myself. That's OK. I can do that. But I'm starting to think that most climbers don't have the same background. So when I had to take a beam off the US tower, I just went up and took it down. The only problem is that these towers are CROWDED! There are a lot of antennas up there, and room to move a beam around is not something you're going to find. So I just took each element off, and lowered them down, then lowered the boom. Wasn't really hard, and didn't really take all that long. But it seemed to impress the others. My standpoint was that these guys paid a lot to get me here, and I'd better not let them down. There were a couple of rough tower jobs though, the boom for the 80 meter V-beam was a pain, and we had to unbolt and hang other antennas to get that little gem into place. 2 different tribanders had to be assembled in place on the tower. One on the ridge, and another in the dark.





On my last day, I was digging through one of the closets for things, and I found a small trap door, buried under some larger boxes. Overcome by curiosity, I pried the door open and used a small flashlight to peer into the darkness. A concrete walled room, with massive power cables running to this big strange contraption up against the wall. It was obviously some sort of homebrew device, with wires and coils....something from an old science fiction movie. I could only see a few switches on it. Again curiosity overcame me, and I flipped one. All of the sudden, 40 meters opened wide up! Switch another and 20 went dead! I had found the secret of PJ2T's success, hidden in the basement! So THIS is where propagation comes from!

73, Jason





*Speaking of PJ2T ...***CQWW - CW Contest November 23-24, 2013 Contesting at PJ2T.****As told by Rich Heinrich, NØYY**

Any more fun would be illegal! We put together a great team, ate like kings, engaged in the contest and proved again that PJ2T is a magical location.

This year proved to be different from the majority of the scheduled CQWW CW operations. This year the contest was not over the Thanksgiving holiday which afforded some additional flexibility in pulling together a team that might normally be challenged by the holiday and family commitments. This happens very infrequently, but 2013 had been on the radar for several years.

This year's team brought together seasoned contesters including some with unique skills. The team consisted of:

Mike – RWØCN/VE7ACN – those of you who have worked RT0C in a contest or have put Zone 18 in your log on the low bands have enjoyed the high performance station designed by Mike. Mike is also a WRTC contestant who brought that level of skill to the PJ2T team.

Joerg – DF9LJ – a superb contester and station designer. Joerg is a particle physicist by education but is really the General Manager of the Passat Product Link for Volkswagen. Joerg played a key role in analyzing the performance of past efforts and helped develop an operating strategy.

Mike – N7WA – Mike Dinkleman or “Dink” as he preferred to be called is well known for his work on the 3830 reflector. Dink is a major contest figure in the Northwest and brought a huge skillset of running JAs which proved instrumental as the score developed.

Ray – NM2O – Ray is part of the W2FU contesting team from Northern New York. Ray typically is the multiplier chaser on the team but is also a skilled run op. His multiplier chasing skills were instrumental in helping plan band openings and when to look for zones and entities long path.

Gene – KB7Q – a venerable operator many years of contest experience. Gene also brought the experience of many trips to the Caribbean. Gene does a lot of hiking and climbing and was part of the team that climbed up the Ridge to check the European beverage and new tribander.

Andy – W9NJY – the Caribbean Contesting Consortium, President Elect! Andy is an almost retired medical doctor whose career was misplaced. Andy is an outstanding system designer and has a house full of test equipment and knows how to use it. He loves technology and knows how to apply it. Andy was instrumental in designing and integrating some special remote switching. (You'll have to come to the next club meeting to find out what he designed!)

Marty – K2PLF – a long standing Potomac Valley Radio Club member and a CCC member and contester. You will find Marty in just about any of the contests racking up points. Marty was instrumental in helping get the Elecraft K3s coordinated for use during the contest.

Jim – W8WTS – Jim has many years of CQWW CW experience from PJ2T under his belt. He is a consistent operator and the top band partner with Jeff, K8ND. Jim has done a lot of work developing the PJ2T Skimmer that is located at the Verona (local PJ2 radio club) site.

Jeff – K8ND – Jeff needs little introduction. Just look at the who's who of 160M contesting and you will see Jeff's call on top of the list. Jeff is also the PJ2T station manager and oversees the annual work program to make sure that PJ2T is ready to do battle.

Geoff – WØCG – for those of you who don't know, Geoff is the property owner of Signal Point – the home and antennas that support the PJ2T station. While Geoff prefers to be a floater during contests and do the maintenance tasks, he is a crack CW operator and when you can pin his butt to a chair he can perform with the best of them.

NØYY – Rick – that leaves me – your EIDX representative on the team. I served as Contest Director in pulling together the team, setting goals, overall strategy, and keeping the contest logistics going forward.

As the Contest Director I have the difficult task of looking at operator skill, projected conditions, station configuration, and then to take all those nebulous characteristics and describe the operator teaming. This year the Band Captains and Teams were as follows:

160M K8ND (C), W8WTS, N7WA  
80M NØYY (C), W9NJY, WØCG  
40M RW0CN (C), KB7 Q  
20M DF9LJ (C), NM2O, K2PLF  
15M K8ND (C), W8WTS, N7WA

We assembled 5 stations – the normal four and one on the kitchen table for 15 Meters. We know from experience that 15M would be open well after 160M was open to the US – so we thought we’d optimize the band openings.

As is the normal mode – we all take turns cooking and setting up and cleaning up for each of the meals. No one starved and we enjoyed a wide variety of meals from corned beef hash and eggs for breakfast to marinated, grilled chicken for dinner. But let’s keep this in perspective, to keep this team fed and watered cost about \$3000 in groceries for the 7 days of the contest “week”! That included 22 loaves of bread, 12 cases of Diet Coke, 10 cases of beer, miscellaneous pop, ice tea, coffee, etc. not to mention meat, vegetables, fruits, and other necessary items. Yes, an army does travel by its stomach!

So how did we do? Well we fell short of two of our goals, but exceeded two more. We knew that D4C, with their announced goal of world domination – to be clear, they had announced a focus on breaking the 70 Million point record of CN8WW set in 1999 – would make a World #1 finish more than difficult. So we focused on the South American/Zone 9 standing record set by PJ4B also in 1999 as our “attainable” goal.

The other two goals were to exceed any previous PJ2T score and to have fun! Those goals were easily met. When the dust settled our line score was as follows:

42.5M points

15,507 QSO's  
202 Zones  
749 Countries

Here is more of a breakdown.

Format is:

Band QSOs/Zones/Countries

160 648/20/67

80 1349/30/107

40 3291/37/137

20 3651/40/142

15 3494/40/152

10 2724/35/144

I was the 80/10 operator. Not bad – we did 4118 QSOs over the contest.

Right now we are #3 behind D4C and HK1NA. But we are nearly tied with HK1NA - so log errors will tell the story. The 42M points were not enough to capture the South American record – the good news was that HK1NA missed that goal as well!

So this should whet your appetite for the January meeting when I will present things in more detail and offer some insight into what it takes to win a major contest. The presentation is titled: The Technologies of Contest: The Evolution of PJ2T. I look forward to seeing you there.

## Ukrainian National Who Co-Founded Cybercrime Marketplace Sentenced To 18 Years In Prison

December 12, 2013

This is none other than **Romeo Stepanko, ISØRR, P5RS7 etc. (Bogus DX operation by 3W3RR)**. Rumor has it he was in prison in Egypt, but evidently not ... now he'll be in a US prison.

From The DX Bullutin.

Roman Vega Co-Founded CarderPlanet, One of the First Online Marketplaces for Stolen Financial Data.

BROOKLYN, NY – Earlier today, at the federal courthouse in Brooklyn, New York, Roman Vega, one of the world's most prolific cybercriminals, was sentenced to 18 years in prison Vega, a Ukrainian national who co-founded the notorious Internet website CarderPlanet, pled guilty in 2009 to conspiracies to commit money laundering and access device fraud. At the time of his arrest, Vega possessed over half a million stolen credit card numbers.

The sentence was announced today by Loretta E. Lynch, the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Acting Assistant Attorney General Mythili Raman of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice; and Steven G. Hughes, Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service, New York Field Office.

“Roman Vega and his cybercriminal associates emulated the mafia in organizing their criminal operations,” stated United States Attorney Lynch. “Now, he shares the same fate as so many mafia bosses – a long term of imprisonment. This investigation spanned the globe and sends the unmistakable warning that when it comes to dismantling global cybercrime organizations, neither distance nor complexity will deter us and our partners in law enforcement.” Ms. Lynch expressed her grateful appreciation to the United States Postal Inspection Service for its assistance.

“Today’s sentence is a significant milestone in our ongoing effort to aggressively target and dismantle global cybercrime organizations that operate from every corner of the world,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General Raman. “Vega helped create one of the largest and most sophisticated credit card fraud sites in the cybercrime underworld – a distinction that has earned him the substantial sentence he received today.”

“The Secret Service is pleased to have participated in this multi-agency criminal investigation that led to the arrest of Roman Vega also known as ‘Boa’,” said Secret Service Special Agent in Charge Hughes. “This case demonstrates by constricting this criminal enterprise, there is no such thing as anonymity in the cyber world. The Secret Service continues to seek new and innovative ways to combat emerging cyber threats. Our success in this case and other similar investigations is a result of our close work with our network law enforcement partners.”

Vega, who at various times was also known as “Boa,” **“Roman Stepanenko,”** “Randy Riotta,” and “RioRita,” formed two online marketplaces for stolen credit card information. In the late 1990s, he founded the Boa Factory, one of the earliest websites on the Internet to provide a forum for buyers and sellers of stolen credit card information. In the early 2000's, he co-founded and became a high-ranking administrator of a second criminal website, CarderPlanet, which became one of the first and busiest online marketplaces for the sale of stolen financial information, computer hacking services, and money laundering.

At its height, CarderPlanet had more than 6,000 members and had a hierarchical leadership structure that borrowed its leadership titles from La Cosa Nostra. For example, CarderPlanet was headed by a “Godfather.”

Immediately below the Godfather were a number of “Dons,” including Vega, who used the name “Boa” when serving in this role. Two levels below the Dons was the “Consigliere,” who was an advisor. Vega, using the name “RioRita,” also served as the Consigliere.

CarderPlanet quickly became a premier online criminal bazaar in significant part as a result of Vega’s leadership. Most notably, he helped institute a quality control system for sales. If a cyberthief wanted to sell stolen credit card information on CarderPlanet,

the information was subjected to a vetting process overseen by a manager to ensure that buyers obtained usable stolen data.

In addition, the website used e-currencies, such as WebMoney, to provide the participants with security and the cloak of anonymity. As a result, Vega and his co-conspirators created an efficient and reliable online marketplace for the buyers and sellers of stolen financial information not unlike legitimate e-commerce sites.

Vega also sold stolen data on the marketplaces he founded and managed. He directed cells of cybercriminals around the globe who hacked into financial institutions to steal credit card and other financial information that would in turn be sold on online marketplaces, including CarderPlanet.

Vega was arrested in Cyprus in February 2003 and extradited to the Northern District of California for prosecution. In November 2007, Vega was transferred to the Eastern District of New York following his indictment on the instant charges. Vega has been incarcerated continuously since 2003.

The sentencing proceeding was held before Senior United States District Judge Allyne R. Ross. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney William P. Campos of the Eastern District of New York and Senior Counsel Thomas Dukes of the Criminal Division's Computer Crime & Intellectual Property Section.

The Defendant:

ROMAN VEGA

Age: 49

Ukraine



**AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.**

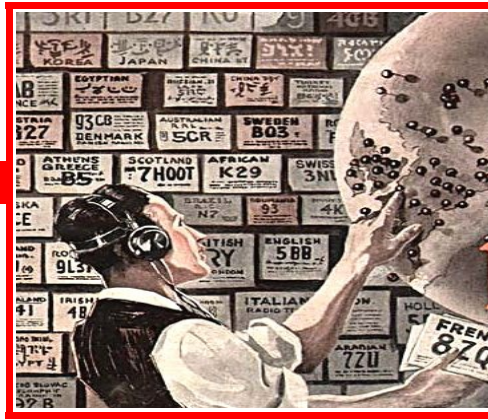
Gerhard, W6XH, who is the IBB engineering supervisor of the VOA Radiogram project, recently purchased a 1938 Philco console radio. He used it to receive and (with the help of a laptop PC) decode MFSK on VOA Radiogram during the weekend of 3-4 August 2013. Meet the latest innovation in digital communications technology: a radio receiver built the year that Disney released *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. It is a 1938 Philco console rigged by shortwave operator Gerhard, W6XH to pick up a Voice of America Radiogram. These radiograms are basically radio propelled text messages transmitted via the MFSK method. The Philco has some help, of course; it is hooked up to a Radiogram software equipped laptop PC. Why is this important? Project supervisor Dr. Kim Andrew Elliott explains:



”We are doing this because shortwave transmitters might be a useful link when the Internet is disrupted by disasters [or] dictators. . . . Sometimes it’s useful to have news and information in text format, and occasionally in poor shortwave reception conditions, when the announcer’s voice is difficult to understand, text might get through with much greater reliability.”

(RadioSurvivor.com).

PSE QSL



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**6925 USB**  
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*Broadcasting from a studio in the woods*






Broadcast Date: November 2, 2013  
 Broadcast Time: 2250-2334 UTC

To: Jerry in Iowa

“Rave On Radio” (Pirate Radio) QSL card. WWØE

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Call 1-800-WIFISPZ now. Operators are standing by! *Ask for Murray.*

[The J-Walk](#)

Thank You..



Multiple thanks to EIDXA members KØSR, W3ACO, NYØV, KØ JGH, K8OM, WØGJ, WØGXA, NRØX, and NØTT who made this newsletter possible. 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](mailto:KØCA@arrl.net) or [cliff.ahrens@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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@arri.net](mailto:na9q@arri.net).

## ***2013 EIDXA Meeting & Events Schedule***

Look for this information on the club web-page [www.eidxa.org](http://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, January 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM,  
room to be announced. Campus  
of Kirkwood Community  
College, Cedar Rapids.**
- ★ **Program: Contesting from PJ2T,  
with Rick Heinrich, NØYY.**



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