



## Eastern Iowa DX Association

*An ARRL affiliated club - Established 1975*

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GET ON THE AIR IN  
2021

Part 2

March 26, 2021

In January I tried to encourage you to get on the air. I made a number of suggestions from getting in a contest to trying a new mode and everything in between. Did you try it? What did you do? How did it go? Pass along your reports and I'll be happy to include them in this column.

Winter has passed and I'm thankful. It seemed long and in Cedar Rapids we had more snow than usual and the colder temperatures kept the snow on the ground. It was perfect for

CQ Test

QRM

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**Club Officers:**

President:

Jim Spencer, WØSR

Vice President:

Rick Hadley WØFG

Secretary:

David Christ KØLUM

Treasurer:

Mike Nowack NA9Q

Repeater Committee:

Jason Joens NRØX

Membership Committee:

Jim Spencer WØSR

Tom Vavra WB8ZRL

Nelson Moyer KUØA

**Packet Cluster:**

WB8ZRL.no-ip.org:7300

**Repeater: NØDX/R**

144.59 / 145.19 (tone 192.8)

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

Web Master:

Craig Fastenow KØCF

Newsletter Editor:

Bob Lee WØGXA

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staying inside and getting on the air. But, getting on the air didn't always workout. When I put back up my HF2-V vertical in early January it was snowing. Snowing hard by the time I was ready to hook up the SWR analyzer and adjust all of the coils and I just quit. Years ago that would not have slowed me down and I should have pushed on. We got more and more snow and it didn't melt until into March. The antenna is still resonant at frequencies way outside the ham bands as I wait for "nice" weather. The SteppIR will not load at all and all wire antennas are down all thanks to the Derecho. So I'm off the air for the longest time ever since 1953 and I find that sad. There have been times when I wasn't very active but not having some sort of HF antenna/rig has never happened. My job is to fix this soon.

I'm also moving the station upstairs to have things a lot more accessible and to make way for "old age" when it will not be as easy to get up and down the stairs. Taking the station apart gives me opportunities not only to get rid of some unused equipment but to get smart on how to hook it up to take advantage of computers and all these digital and RF interfaces. I could even automate WØSR if I had any idea of what can be done and how to go about doing it.

Lucky me, and lucky you,





because the many questions we

may have about automating a ham station will be answered by our April speaker, Dave Jaksа WØVX. Dave will present a program on why and how we can automate our stations. We all have implemented some features but how far should we go. When you click on the packet spot and your transceiver tunes to the correct frequency and mode, the amplifier goes to the correct band and tunes, the desired antenna is selected and pointed to your spot, you are starting to get automated. Isn't technology great?

I remember well my early contacts from WN7UZR on 80. I would tune the band for someone calling CQ and select the Xtal closest to his (her) frequency—I had two! When he sent K I would throw the Operate toggle switch on my receiver and at the same time move the ceramic knife switch from down to up. Then reaching for the key I neatly sent my call. I still remember a few RF burns from getting out of sync. This worked for several hundred QSOs but finally I had saved up enough money to order a 110 vac DPDT relay from Allied Radio in Chicago. I thought I had reached heaven with all this automation. If I had only known.

73, Jim WØSR

## Musings from the lunatic fringe

Bob WØGXA

hope /hōp/

*noun*

1. *a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen.*  
*"he looked through her belongings in the hope of coming across some information"*

With the predictions flowing in on how strong or weak cycle 25 will be, it's encouraging none the less that it has started. Combined with vaccines for COVID that appear quite effective we can hope borders will open and effective DXpeditions can be conducted in the coming years.

I, for one, would simply like to go on a business trip again... even to spend four days in a windowless conference room!

It's been four years since I started doing the newsletter. I enjoy the task and I'm happy to continue in the role. My favorite contribution is Tom's Jurassic Journal. It's always interesting to read what I missed when I was inactive all those years!

Thank you all for your contributions. This newsletter is only as good as you make it!

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## Club News and Administrative Items

### Minutes of the EIDXА meeting February 5, 2021

EIDXА met via Zoom

Jim WØSR, President welcomed the 16 attendees.

David KØLUM, Secretary gave a brief recap of the October 9, 2020 meeting

Mike NA9Q was not present but his report was relayed by Jim WØSR. There was very little activity. No requests for funding were received. The only expenditures were for web hosting, website registration, and a donation to Mercy for the meeting room. He reported that only 14 people have paid dues. We will need the money when funding requests start again. \$20/year. Send to Mike Nowack, 3208 US Route 67, Milan, IL 61264

#### **Committees:**

**Nominations:** Rich W3ACO needs two additional members for his committee

**Programs:** NOØB needs two additional members to help find the four programs needed each year. All members can help by providing ideas.

**Contest:** George NG7A is working on this. He commented that the sunspot situation has made low band propagation good. He also pointed out that people who only work a few hours during a contest are most welcome. Their contacts are worth as many points as the big guns. All are needed.

He suggested members check out the True Blue DXers Club.

<<https://www.tbdxc.net>>.

He also suggested that those who are not CW speed demons consider the weekly slow speed CW contests run weekly by the K1USN Radio Club <<http://www.k1usn.com/sst.html>> Speed is limited to 20 WPM maximum and if you can only do 11 WPM you are still welcome. Intent is to grow CW testers.

**DX Funding:** Terry WØAWL will lead this with the assistance of Glenn WØGJ and Mike NA9Q. Swain Island is on hold. Last years postponed DXpedition to Sable Island hopes to go this October. Rumor has it that a major DXpedition is in the works but cannot be announced yet. Perhaps by the April meeting.

**DX Cluster:** Tom WB8ZRL not present but cluster is working

**Repeater:** Steve NUØP and Jason NRØX were not there but repeater working 145.19 negative offset with 192.8 tone.

**Website:** Craig KØCF says it is in good shape. He continues to publish a DX report weekly on the reflector.

**Audit committee:** WB8ZRL will lead the required yearly audit.

**Other Business:** Rod KØDAS has retired from his ARRL Director position and had no lingering news.

Sam KØAFN can still supply custom EIDXА hats. Part of the proceeds go to EIDXА

As a final note Jim WØSR illustrated the havoc wrought by the August 10, 2020 derecho. This is considered the most costly thunderstorm disaster in US history. He lost 80 and 40 meter inverted vees and a 160 meter inverted L. It was not going to be an easy replacement task as three of the trees supporting these antennas were totally gone. His 80/40/30 vertical and tower with Step-IR still stood but would not load on any Ham band.

There are other stories out there of other towers no longer standing.

Jim WØSR closed the meeting at 8:15

## NEXT MEETING

April 30, 2021

Station Automation

Zoom open: 6:30 PM

Meeting & Program 7:30 PM

Program: Automate your station - Dave Jaksa, WØVX

Have you ever considered automating your ham station? Even partial automation will help avoid equipment damage and unnecessary surprises. Don't miss the April 30, 2021 EIDXА meeting when the program will be "Ham Station Automation" presented by Dave Jaksa, WØVX. Topics covered are reasons to automate, what / how to automate, and operating an automated station.

Dave Jaksa, WØVX, was first licensed as a novice while in high school in suburban Chicago in early 1962. Two months later he upgraded to general and began chasing DX and contesting. In 1968, when incentive licensing became effective, he upgraded to extra class.

After finishing college in 1968 he took a job with Collins Radio in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. With the move from W9 land to Iowa the FCC gave him a new zero district call, WAØVDX. In 1976 he dropped a couple of letters to get his current call, WØVX, which he has kept as Collins moved him to California in the mid 80's and to Texas in 1988.

From the beginning of his ham radio "career" Dave has been an active DXer and contester. He was the co-founder of the Eastern Iowa DX Association in 1975 and served several terms as president of that organization. In Texas Dave served several terms as president of the Lone Star DX Association and is a past president of the Collins ARC.

He is on the Mixed, CW, and Phone DXCC honor rolls with 359 Countries confirmed. He holds the 9 Band DXCC, WAZ, and 5 Band WAS awards.

Dave holds a BSEE degree from Rose Polytechnic Institute and an MBA degree from the University of Iowa. He is now retired after 31 years with Collins and lives in Garland with his XYL Judi, WØJJ. They have 3 married daughters and 6 grandchildren. Dave is currently very active on 160 through 6 meters.



## Card Checkers

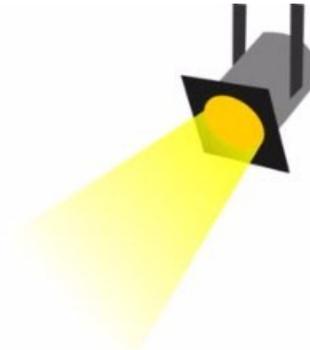
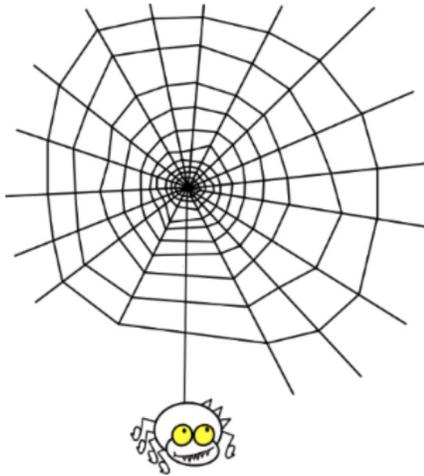
We have three club members who can check your QSL cards

- Tom, WB8ZRL
- Glenn, WØGJ
- Mike, NA9Q

Contact info can be found here:

<http://www.arrl.org/dxcc-card-checker-search>

## Member Spotlight



Nothing to report this month. If you haven't been featured in the newsletter, let me know. We'd love to do a story.

## DX News



## 2020 DXCC Year End Review

## Special Edition – 2020 DXCC Year End Review by Joe Reisert, W1JR – January 5, 2020

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Members of the Perseverance DX Group put on the February 2020 VP8PJ DXpedition to South Orkney.

## 2020 Overview

To say the least 2020 was a DX year like no others. The Orkney Islands DXpedition VP8PJ, one of the top 20 most needed entities came on the air in late February. Then the Covid-19 (CV) pandemic set in worldwide in March. It made travel difficult, especially to rare DXCC entities in Africa and Oceania. Dozens of planned DXpeditions after that date will either be rescheduled to a later date or cancelled altogether. Also most conferences and DX gatherings worldwide were cancelled. All of a sudden call signs with suffixes like StayHome or StaySafe became common.

On top of this, 2020 was also a difficult year for DXers since the solar flux hit rock bottom and band openings especially on 15 meters and above were all but non-existent. Then about mid-year it was announced that the solar scientists determined that solar cycle 24 finally ended statistically in December 2019 and solar cycle 25 began in January 2020. More on this later.

DX wise only about 265 entities were active during this year, far fewer

than the usual 285 or so. January was very poor with only about 185 or so entities active versus a usual 225 in good DX years. For comparison, over the past thirty (30) plus years I try to work every available entity. My average is above 275 but in 2020 I only managed a meager 227! It will be interesting to see the CQ Marathon results this year.

The Bouvet DXpedition was delayed again due to CV. None of the top 10 most needed entities on the Club Log DXCC Most Wanted List were active this year and VP8PJ was the only one of the top 20 most needed. The pandemic caused many DXers to work from home. As a result, DX activity was high all year, especially in DX contests using CW, SSB and FT8 modes. CW was very active all year with many discovering the advantage of this mode under poor conditions. Likewise FT8 was extremely active since it can often get through when propagation is poor.

In November it was sadly announced that John Devoldere, ON4UN, author and one of the top Low Band DXers worldwide had become a silent key at age of 79. John's books on low band DXing were prized by many. His final book "Low-Band DXing-Fifth Edition" is a classic. He told me it would be his last as it takes too much effort to complete another edition. I dedicate the "2020 DXCC Year End Review" to John's memory.

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**Radio Propagation:** As mentioned above, radio propagation was down most of this year. There were over 210 days (and some whole months) with zero sunspots through October. Typical solar flux during the first part of the year was 70-75 with a few small deviations until late October when solar flux abruptly soared to 88. Solar flux moving above 80 is a good indicator of improving DX on the upper HF bands. In late November the solar flux rose to 113. The increase greatly improved radio propagation especially during the CQ DX SSB and CW Contests.

As mentioned in last year's review, there have been dozens and dozens of papers predicting that solar cycle 25 would be a real downer. Now a recent report by Dr. Scott W. McIntosh et al from The National Center for Space Weather Prediction and Data Interpretation put on the February 2020 VP8PJ DXpedition to South Orkney.

Atmospheric Research is predicting solar cycle 25 to be one of the best in history. They used (discrete) Hilbert Transforms on more than 270 years of monthly sunspots. Most experts agree that solar cycle 25 will peak around 2025. Time will tell. Let's fix those broken antennas

and get on the air.



Here is the March 2020 4U1UN crew including (front row L-R) KO8SCA, K2QI, (middle row L-R) N2RJ, W2IRT, OH2BH (back row L-R) K1JT, G6CBR and VE7NY.

Club Log: This website is becoming the main place to check logs especially during DXpeditions. Their “DXCC Most Wanted List” is always up to date. The 10 most wanted DX entities in order of rarity are still P5, 3Y/B, FT5/W, BS7H, CE0X, BV9P, KH7K, KH3, 3Y0/P and FT5/X. Many other features are available such as OQRS (Online QSL Request Service), DXCC Charts, Log Search etc.

Digital Operations: Digital and especially FT8 took on more meaning in 2020. FT8 is known for its ability to copy very weak signals. Furthermore, it allows many smaller and low power stations to participate. During this low sunspot year the higher bands were sometimes open for FT8 contacts when CW or SSB were too marginal. Lately I’m hearing many DXers on FT8. Note that FT8 has a learning curve and users are less likely to spot DX on the DX Clusters. FT4, a higher speed version of FT8 that is slightly less sensitive is now becoming popular.

Thanks to the help from my son Jim, AD1C, I finally got on FT8 late in 2019 hoping to work 3Y/Bouvet and any entities that were active only on FT8. It took only about three weeks to complete DXCC. In six months I had worked 5BDXCC and by now 7BDXCC with DXCC 210 plus.

## Band by Band Activity (Frequencies in MHz)

160 Meters: Activity was low to moderate on CW except during contests when activity filled the band. The cancellation of most of the planned DXpeditions due to CV really hurt 160 DX. FT8 activity is increasing around 1.840. In April, Japan received increased spectrum. Try to avoid frequencies divisible by 5 (e.g., 1.820, 1.825, 1.830 etc.) since broadcast birdies are often there.

75/80 Meters: DX activity was low except during contests and was also hurt by the cancellation of most DXpeditions due to CV. FT8 activity on the other hand is increasing around 3.573.

60 Meters: More entities have now received permission to operate on this band albeit they are often limited to 15 Watts and a dipole antenna. Well over 200 DXCC entities have been active on the band. Most DX activity is now concentrated around the third channel at 5.357 and almost entirely on FT8. The FCC is still looking at non-channelized operation near channel 3 for USA stations. The ARRL DXCC program still does not recognize 60 meter contacts for DXCC credit. Remember that USA stations are limited to 100 Watts output power and a dipole antenna. Use of gain antennas require reduced transmitter power.

40 Meters: This is the workhorse band especially during the night and in the winter local time. SSB activity is especially good during contests and above 7.100. Remember that USA stations cannot operate SSB below 7.125 but best to stay above 7.128 for safety. FT8 activity is now very popular around 7.074.

30 Meters: 30 meters is very popular especially for low power stations. The band is usually open for a few hours before and after sunrise and can be open almost all day during local winter. FT8 can be found 10.136.

Here is the March 2020 4U1UN crew including (front row L-R) KO8SCA, K2QI, (middle row L-R) N2RJ, W2IRT, OH2BH (back row L-R) K1JT, G6CBR and VE7NY.

20 Meters: 20 meters continues to be the go to DX band especially during daylight although some of the activity has moved to the digital modes near 14.074. SSB activity is still high. The CV has cancelled many DXpeditions that usually park on this band.

17 Meters: The lack of sunspots has really hurt the higher bands. 17 meters has been less affected and is often open shortly after 20 meters opens. There is lots of FT8 activity around 18.100. All modes

seem to be doing OK on this band.

10-15 Meters: 15 Meters and especially 12 and 10 Meters have been hit extremely hard by the lack of sunspots. Late in this year the solar flux increased slightly and vigilant DXers took advantage of improved radio propagation and openings on 15 through 10 Meters. There is occasional activity here during the summer months when sporadic E propagation occurs.

6 Meters: This band in recent years seems to have gone almost all digital. MSK144 is popular all year around 50.260 while FT8 is most popular around 50.313 during summer band openings. EME (Earth-Moon-Earth) DX using digital modes such as JT65 is becoming very popular during local moon rise and set.

Frank, W3LPL is now posting in The Daily DX solar updates on the HF bands based on NOAA/SWPC webpages.



S53R, Robert, is working in Kabul for the next few years and QRV as T6AA and T6A in contests.

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## 2020 Month by Month DX Activity Sample:

January: This is always a tough month especially being at the bottom of the solar cycle. This month had only 185-190 active entities, about 30 less than January 2019. Notable rare to semi-rare active stations S01WS, 4U1UN, TR8CA, T6AA, 9G2HO, and 5A0YL were active on and off all year. 3D2AG/P (Rotuma), ZC4UW (26KQ), E44RU (19.6K), 8Q7BS, 9L1YXJ, VK9NK (58K), C21NH, 9Q1C, XZ2B, HU1DL (60K) and JT5DX (mostly 160 meters) were active.

February: Lots of DX contest activity plus TI9A (30K), 5I5TI (47K), 5I4CC (17K), E44CC, TZ1CE, 9N7AM, TN/UA9FGR, TU4PCT (29K), and VP8PJ (S. Orkney-83K) were active.

March: YJ0NC, 9J2LA (35K), T32AZ and VP2VB (18K) were all active.

April: Lots of STAYHOME like HZ1STAYHOME, 9K2STAYHOME, A60SH and STAYSAFE were active due to CV worldwide. Many planned DXpeditions started to cancel due to CV.

May: Lots of odd call signs. SV2RSG/A (Mt. Athos) made a brief appearance on CW.

June: OJ0A, OJ0JR (I love that call sign) plus 6O1OO were active.

July and August: KH9/WW6RG, XW2DX, OJ0s and ZL7DX (FT8) were active. VK9NK was finally allowed to return home due to CV travel restrictions.

September: TO0Z (FJ) and OJ0JR.

October: Activity picked up with VQ9T, 5U4IHM, E51WL (N. Cook), 7Q6M, JX2US, NL7RR/KH9, Z66DX (33K) and TX0T (FO from a New IOTA).

November: Solar flux increased and 15 Meters and up improved. 7Q7RU, JG8NQJ/JD1 (JD/M), TZ1CE, D60AB and 8Q7ZO were all active.

December: This month has been designated YOTA (Youngsters on the Air) month with many stations using call signs with YOTA in same plus several USA stations using 1X1 call signs like K8Y. Give them a call and encourage them to join the DX community. 3DA0AQ, JX2US, VP6MW, 6O1OO and 3D2AG/P (Rotuma) were all active



Figure 1K6ZO, Don, was QRV as D60AB in October and November of last year.

### Unauthorized Operations:

As usual, many fake stations including many DXpeditions (before activation) were active. This is why DXpeditions are reluctant to give out their call signs before commencing operation for fear that their call sign will be pirated. Some of the pirated call signs during this year included many JXs, CE0X, VU4R, VU7AAV, EZ8CQ (EZ operation is illegal since August 2006), D1DX, and ZD9XF to name a few. WFWL (work first, worry later) still applies but if you know it's a pirate, don't waste your time or \$\$ to support that activity. K9EL often lists pirate call signs on the [CQ Magazine Marathon](#) page.

Furthermore, please don't spot rare DX on the DX Cluster unless you know it's legit and surely don't spot rare DX call signs for test purposes. It causes lots of bells to ring worldwide and unnecessary worry. Finally, don't post rare calls to thank someone for receiving a QSL etc. No one who is watching cares or appreciates this type of boasting.

### CTU and CWA:

Let's not forget Contest University under the direction of Tim, K3LR. It is now in its 14th year having had over 7,500 students in 8 DXCC entities so far. CW Academy by CWops, a program to improve CW skills. CWops just celebrated its 11th anniversary. "Improving Your CW" is another Morse Trainer by G4FON. Also K1USN now has weekly slow speed CW activity for beginners.

### IOTA:

Poor propagation and CV really almost shut down many rare and new

IOTA (Islands on the Air) activity worldwide with many DXpeditions cancelled. Ironically, IOTA became the name of one of the North American hurricanes in November. CB0Z (CE0Z) put this new IOTA (SA101) on in January, 6F3A (NA153), RI0B (AS068), R207RRC new (AS207) and TX0T new (OC298) beat the odds. The IOTA program website is [www.iota-world.org](http://www.iota-world.org). It is filled with info on the program Remember that QSLing can now be conducted for some IOTA operations using LOTW.



IT9YRE, Nando, and K9AJ, Mike, activated CB0Z from Alejandro Selkirk Island (SA-101) in February 2020.

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## DX Contesting:

DX contests were everywhere this year using CW, SSB and digital modes. Early reports are that it was a banner year with new record number of entries. Lots of operators worked from home instead of the large DX contest stations and of course lack of DXpeditions. Some larger stations sponsored smaller operations to YOTA operators. The [WA7BNM Contest Calendar](#) is a great source of contest activity. The [ARRL Contest Update](#) is a biweekly newsletter that often has interesting tidbits on operating etc.

## Equipment, Technology and Accessories :

This was a very poor year for Amateur Radio suppliers. At least one closed shop and others consolidated. The lack of DX gatherings due to CV surely took its toll on displaying new gear etc. There are new gadgets, gear and software but you'll likely have to shop around perhaps on the internet.

## Safety:

This can never be stressed enough, especially when towers or antennas are involved. Professional expertise is highly recommended. There were some tower related deaths and at least one experienced

tower specialist was seriously injured this past year.

Safety equipment is very important on tower or antenna work. Better yet, have a professional tower crew do the work. K1IR has a video showing "Tower Safety" and is well worth viewing [www.maarc.ca/news/tower-safety](http://www.maarc.ca/news/tower-safety) video. Also Zero Falls Alliance.

This reminds us that every tower climber injury or death is usually preventable.

## Ham Radio and the Internet:

The internet plays an important part in Ham Radio. Most DX clusters are now on the internet as well as LOTW (more on this shortly) and Club Log to mention a few. Also many contests require logs to be submitted via the internet within a few days after the contest. Please remember to show modes such as SSB, CW, FT8, FT8 F/H when spotting stations near band mode overlaps that can confuse operators.



RA9USU, UA3AB, TI2JV and SM6LRR were the team behind the February 2020 TI9A DXpedition.

## QSLing and DXpedition Costs:

QSLing is now becoming a lost art. Costs are skyrocketing. As a result of the CV, mail services were discontinued to over 50 countries at one time this year, some for long periods of time. As a result, LOTW (Logbook of the World) at ARRL has become very popular (see ARRL below). OQRS on Club Log is helping to obtain QSLs especially from DXpeditions and very active DX stations. See Note 1.

## Operating techniques:

This past year was a tough one worldwide. Needless to say, the RST report on CW is now almost always 599 and 59 on SSB! FT is more complex. Split frequency operation on rare DX stations is almost

always a must. Unfortunately many call right on the DX frequency and hence cause panic! Please don't tune up your transmitter on the common DX frequencies. The old adage still applies: Always Listen Listen Listen before you start to transmit. Since poor operating procedures seem to be repeated over and over and to save space in this report, please refer to note 1.

### Silent Keys (SK):

This is always a tough subject to write about and is even tougher with the CV pandemic. They meant so much to our great hobby. In the past years, they had grown to over 200 in each monthly issue of QST, but the recent lists have decreased below 150. Hopefully this is a good sign and not just under reporting. The following is a partial list of notable DXers, contesters, DXpedition operators, designers or officials in Amateur Radio that I have noted in no particular order who became SKs during 2020.

They include in no particular order: DK5DC, K8LEE, K9HMB, W8ILC, W3AZD, KV4FZ, K2RIW, KB8RQ, K1LPS, PY2NX, W9SR, W3YOZ, F2MA, DK3KR, K1LU, W4QM, HP1AC, W3NQN, 3W2LI, ZP6CW, W5FU, A41KT, OH3VV, N8PR, KN4F, YL2DX, PY0FF, W1AX, ON4UN, G3TEV, IK2DIA, DL9GFB, K2QBV, WF5E, K8CC and K4SSU.

### 2020 DXCC and ARRL Matters:

Rumors in the news media tell us that Bougainville, an autonomous region in Papua New Guinea (P29), has voted to become an independent nation. This could take years to happen before it is added to the active DXCC list.

The DXCC yearbook has been published mid-year for many years but now it only lists those who submitted DXCC updates during the prior year. If you want to see the latest DXCC standings, first go to [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org). Next click "on the air, and then DXCC Standings." Of course, the ARRL runs LOTW and it is constantly being updated. The LOTW now has over 1.280 billion QSOs on file. New publications were published in 2020 which were primarily aimed at assisting newcomers to the hobby. The ARRL QSL bureau is another service for league members.



KO8SCA, VE7NY, OH2GEK and OH2BH were part of the VP2VB Yasme Sails Again DXpedition in March 2020.

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### And now the Drum Roll:

There were approximately 74 entities that are NOT believed to have been active during 2020. DX was severely affected by travel restrictions due to CV.\*

Africa (23): 3B6, 3C, 3C0, 3X, 3Y/B, 5N, 7P, 9U, E3, FH, FT/G, FT/J, FT/T, FT/W, FT/X, FT/Z, J5, S9, TJ, TL, VK0H, ZD9 and ZS8.

Antarctica (1): 3Y0/P

Asia (9): 1S, 7O, A5, BS7H, BV9P, EZ, P5, VU4, and YK.

Europe (2): 1A0 and R1F

North America (7): CY0, CY9, FO/C, KP1, KP5, XF4 and YV0.

Oceania (25): 3D2 (Conway Reef), E6, FK/C, FO/A, FW, H40 (Temotu), KH1, KH3, KH5, KH7K, KH8, KH8/S, T2, T30, T31, T33, VK0M, VK9C, VK9M, VK9W, VK9X, VP6D, ZK3, ZL8 and ZL9.

South America (7): CE0/X, HC8, HK0/M, PY0/S, PY0/T, VP8 (S. Georgia), and VP8 (S. Sandwich).

\*Please note that some rare entities may not be on this list for 2020 because some operations were short, set up schedules or only on VHF, EME (Earth-Moon-Earth) etc.

The DXCC entities that are not believed to have been activated in ten (10) or more years has increased and now includes: 3Y/B, 3Y/P, BV9P, BS7H, CE0X, EZ, FT/G, FT/W, KH7K, KH3, P5 and YV0. This means that an avid DXer working hard at DXCC may take over 13 years to make it to the DXCC Honor Roll. This list also serves as a guide to those planning DXpeditions to rare entities. As for me, the top of my need list for the DX Challenge has not changed in many years and not surprisingly goes to P5, BS7H, FT5/W and BQ9P in that order.

### Upcoming DXpeditions:

There is still a chance for 3Y0I to activate Bouvet Island late in 2021. Due to the CV, many DXpeditions planned for 2020 may be activated late in 2021 but that is very speculative. Unless CV comes more under controlled, it may be a dull DX year with less entities active similar to 2020. Stay tuned and check the [www.ng3k.com/misc/adxo.html](http://www.ng3k.com/misc/adxo.html) and Daily DX calendars at: <http://www.dailydx.com/the-daily-dx-calendar/> for future operations.

### Looking ahead to 2021 and Beyond:

As stated above, solar cycle 25 should be gearing up in 2021. DX has really changed in the last few years with FT8 and CV problems. Some DXers chase the DXCC Honor Roll, the DXCC Challenge or the DX Marathon. 1,625 DXers have confirmed all 340 entities on the present DXCC list including nearly one thousand DXers from outside the U.S. More than 200 DXers have now achieved the very difficult DXCC Challenge 3000 level. Fernando, EA8AK now has an amazing 3264 entities and still leads the DXCC Challenge.

It's time to improve your 10 thru 15 meters as well as keeping your 80 and 160 meter antennas in repair. Then there are the never ending DX Contests, DX Marathon, DXCC Challenge and IOTA chasing. There are lots of things to do. Don't let the airways die for lack of activity. HF radio conditions on the upper HF bands are improving. Try to stay active and join the fun. Also don't forget to support the various DX Foundations around the world that help make DXpeditions possible!

### Finally:

We hope this review has been informative especially for historical purposes. Using DX publications and the Internet are a great way to keeping us up to date on what is happening now and in the future. Once again, I am honored to be asked by Bernie, W3UR to write this review for the 16th year and for his valuable inputs and critique. Thanks also to John, K9EL, Michael, G7VJR and especially Frank, W3LPL for their valuable inputs as well as my son Jim, AD1C for his

computer help! Previous reviews can be read on the K8CX Ham Gallery website.

73, Joe Reisert, W1JR

Note 1. To keep the size of this report under control, some additional information which may be repetitive has been in my 2019 or prior reports on the K8CX website especially on the Colvin QSLs.

NOTE: Obviously all the opinions etc. expressed are solely mine as are any errors that I have made. This End of Year Review is copyrighted. Therefore copies or use of this review MUST first be approved by Bernie, W3UR and then a courtesy copy of the reprint sent to Joe, W1JR.

Best of DX to you in 2021. I'll see you in the pile ups.

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## Feature Articles

### My Yaesu FT-101 Transceiver Story

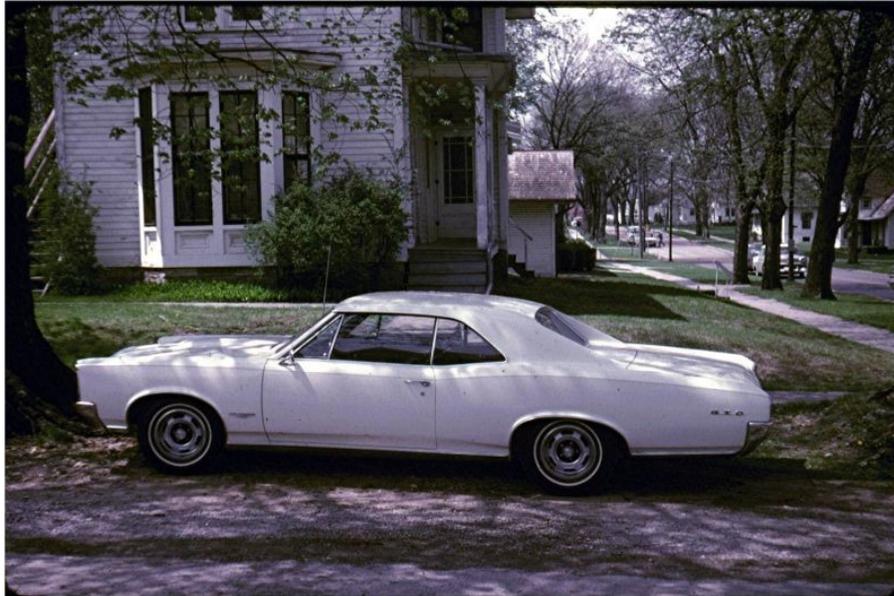
by Rod Blocksome, KØDAS

A few hours before Neil Armstrong stepped onto the surface of the Moon, my wife and I stepped out of an airplane onto the surface of Hawaii – our home for the next 3 ½ years. It was only 5-months earlier that both of us saw an ocean for the first time – when we moved to Biloxi, MS where I went through an accelerated USAF Comm-Electronics course for Electrical Engineers.

In Biloxi, I joined the Keesler ARC and purchased a used SX-101A and HT-37 from a fellow club member. He gave me a very good deal (\$225 for both) as my 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. base pay was only about \$340/month. I was now consistently on SSB for the first time. My “stealth” antenna was the rain gutters around our two story apartment building located only 1 block from the gulf shoreline.

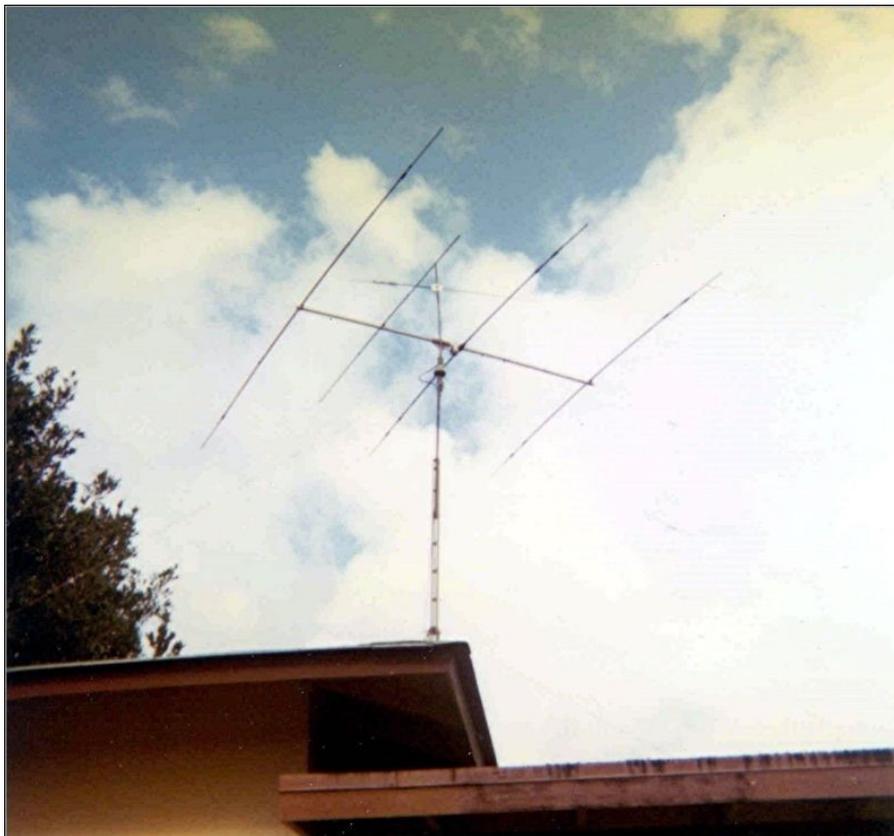
A year and half earlier, I had started at Collins Radio Co. in Cedar Rapids. I had high hopes of realizing a nearly decade long dream of owning a Collins KWM-2 now that I was finally earning a decent salary and entitled to the employee discount. But carrying a large student-loan debt and driving an oil-burning Ford Galaxy with 4 bald tires put a higher priority on buying a good reliable car. After all, I had to be able to get to work. The solution was a 1966 White GTO rather than the

Collins KWM-2.



My "new" work car, April 1968, Marion, Iowa

In Honolulu, we rented a nice house in the Kalihi Valley with permission to put up an antenna. The Air Force supplied furniture while we waited three weeks for the GTO, ham equipment, and other minor things to arrive by ship from California. Elizabeth quickly found employment as an emergency room RN at St. Francis Hospital. DXing from Honolulu was a fantastic experience. The house was high enough that I had an extremely low take-off angle out over much of the Pacific. Europe was over the North Pole where I was looking into the valley wall. European DX was difficult but working Asia was just as easy as working California (almost).



TH-4 beam on crankup tower in 1970



KØDAS/KH6, 1930 Kui Place, Honolulu, Hawaii

August Perry, KH6APS, was my ham neighbor across the valley. We always knew when the other one was on the air as we could see each other's QTH about a mile away so we became good friends.

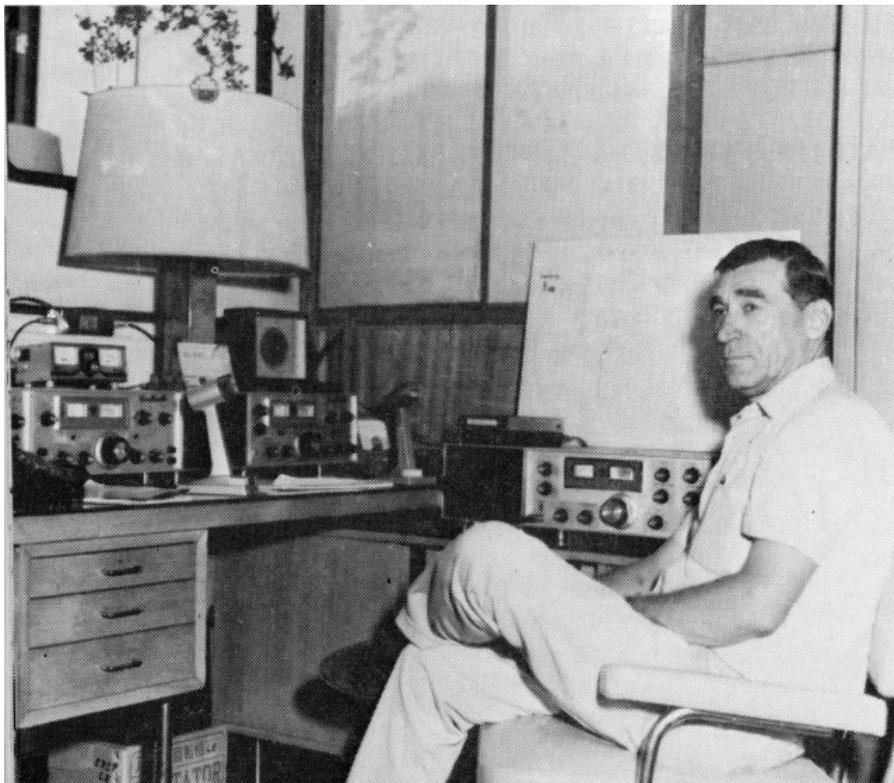
My job in the Air Force required lots of travel around the Pacific, Asia, and Southeast Asia. My first trip was to Seoul, South Korea with another officer for field orientation. From Honolulu we flew to Tokyo and then caught a ride into Korea on a C-47 a few days later.

In Japan, it was an hour train ride to downtown Tokyo and on to nearby Akihabara – the “electronics Mecca”. One of the larger ham stores there was “Toyomura” where every piece of Japanese ham equipment was on demo-display. Prices were very attractive because in those days the exchange rate was fixed at 360 Yen to 1 US Dollar – thanks to the continuing US effort to rebuild the Japanese economy following WWII. On every trip that included a stop in Japan, I would make a bee-line to Akihabara for shopping.

Back home, I was active in the USAF MARS program at Hickam AFB and the Honolulu ARC plus all the activities associated with these great organizations. Sometime in mid-1970, Yaesu-Musen (as it was known then) came out with the revolutionary FT-101 transceiver. I saw one at Toyomura and instantly knew I had to own one. It looked and felt like a transistorized KWM-2 only the price, converted to US dollars, was \$400 compared to \$1200 for a KWM-2 – but still about a month’s pay for a 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Toyomura had only the demo model but expected radios for sale “soon” and anticipated high demand.

I needed a plan.

My ham neighbor, August Perry, told me about his cousin, Bill Boykin, HL9WI, who was a civilian working for the US Army in Seoul. Bill’s wife was a relative of Mr. Sako Hasegawa, JA1MP, founder of Yaesu-Musen in 1959. I had met Bill on one of my earlier trips to Korea and so the plan was laid. Instructions came to Toyomura (Yaesu dealer in Akihabara) to sell me an FT-101 whenever I next arrived.



Bill Boykin, HL9WI/W6HTH in Seoul, Korea  
Photo: from QST Nov. 1970

On my next trip, with cash in hand, I bop into Toyomura and present myself to the manager. My introduction was followed by many apologies in broken English. No FT-101's in stock. I pressed my case and played my ace card – “my friend's wife is relative of Mr. Hasegawa and I was assured .....”. There followed phone calls in excited Japanese which ended by them handing me a note written in Japanese. I was told to take the train from Akihabara station to Omori station. Then hand the taxi driver this note and he will take you to the Yaesu factory to get your FT-101.

I follow the instructions and all goes well until I realize that the taxi just drove through the same intersection – again – after 10 minutes of ripping around various streets. The driver was lost but in this culture, you dare not admit it and “lose face”. So while he is “saving face” and hoping for a miracle, I'm watching the fare meter click up an ever increasing amount of Yen. At the next stop light, there is another taxi in the lane next to us. I tap the driver on the shoulder and point to his neighboring taxi driver. He shows him my paper of directions and they have a very animated discussion in Japanese before the light turns and the other taxi zips away.

My driver goes up, makes a turn, drives about 2 blocks, and pulls up to what looks to me like a very large old estate house. I'm thinking he has given up and just wants to dump me off somewhere. We “converse” in sign language and I go up to the door and sure enough,

a receptionist who speaks English greets me. She shows me to the “guest lounge” with a cold coca cola and the latest issue of the Japanese CQ magazine. I could only admire the pictures and the prices.

Soon a young fellow comes in and tells me that my FT-101 is not quite ready. “Would you like to see our laboratory”? I get a quick tour of their small lab with several people working intently. No visitors are allowed in the factory, so it's back to the lounge. Soon he comes in with a brand new FT-101 – all packaged for travel. I sign some paperwork and I hand him a wad of Yen notes. Then more delay as they figure out how to handle this cash transaction at the factory. More paperwork while the bill of sale is changed to be from Toyomura. Receptionist calls a taxi and I retrace my route back to Tachikawa AB on the outskirts of Tokyo.

Back home in Honolulu I wasted no time in putting my prize on the air. A few weeks later, I was invited to bring the FT-101 to the Honolulu ARC meeting at Ft. Ruger located on the slopes of Diamond Head. It was the first one on the island and everyone drooled over it as they fiddled with the controls.



The new FT-101 at K0DAS/KH6 in 1970

About 2 years later, the CW filter developed an intermittent. So I pulled the card containing the filter and took it with me on another trip to Japan. I knew the drill and went directly to the Yaesu-Musen factory and was installed in the same waiting lounge with a coke and a ham magazine I couldn't read. An engineer comes in and asks how can he help. I gave him the history of the rig and described the problem and acknowledged the warranty had already expired. He takes the board and disappears. 20 minutes later he comes back and formally announces: “Your crystal filter has intermittent connection. That

should not happen. Here is new filter board, no charge, and please accept our apology.”

Since that day, I have always been partial to Yaesu equipment.

The FT-101 was first advertized in the US by Spectronics in Dec. 1970 QST. They had been importing and selling the FTdx-560, a tube-type transceiver so the Yaesu name wasn't an unknown brand. The April 1973 QST contained the first ad from newly formed Yaesu USA and featured the FT-101. The radio went through several changes and upgrades in the following years and was very popular with the CB'ers since it had the 11-meter band and AM modes. 11-meters was still a ham band in many Asian countries back then.

The FT-101 was my main rig for the next 20 years. It had a built-in 12V PS inverter which made for easy transfer between home station and mobile. In later years, I used it extensively with VHF/UHF transverters for Contest Roving. It took a few licks before I realized it should be retired and restored since it was one of the very early units from Yaesu.

So today it rests quietly on the shelf under a dust cover along with the SP-101 external speaker/phone-patch and FV-101 external VFO. My FT-101 is serial number 18008. The “1” is meaningless; the “8000” series denote a production run with a certain configuration, so I believe mine is the 8<sup>th</sup> one produced in the 8000 configuration. I don't know how many were manufactured in other configurations e.g. 1000, 2000, etc. but looking back I have to believe it was not many and with the first few likely going to family, friends, and employees of Yaesu-Musen.

When Spectronics started selling them in the US in 1971, they were priced at about \$500. A few years later, the US and Japan let the Yen “float” on the open market and the exchange rate quickly moved to about 260 Yen to the dollar. This made Japanese goods more expensive for us. But before this happened, I remember buying Japanese parts & equipment for my ham friends and hauling it back to Honolulu in my luggage and sometimes paying import duties.

## The suitcase Yaesu.

Next time you hit the road, take the world with you.

That means taking the FT-101 with you. The solid-state portable rig that fits in a suitcase. 260 W PEP, 180 W CW and 80 W AM maximum input power, 0.3 microvolts receiving sensitivity for 10 db signal-to-noise ratio... in a thirty-pound package that even includes built-in 12 VDC and 117 VAC power supplies.

Whether you're cruising a turnpike or weekending in a mountain cabin, all you need is 12 VDC, or 117 VAC and an antenna to work the world via any band from 80 meters through 10 meters.

10 FET's, 3 IC's, 31 silicon transistors, and 38 silicon diodes and computer-type plug-in modules make it all happen. Add to that a built-in VOX, 25 KHz and 100 KHz calibrators, the WWV 10 MHz band, a high Q permeability tuned RF stage, and a  $\pm 5$  KHz clarifier. These considerations mean home base type operation no matter how far you are away from home.

For in-car operation, there's a built-in noise blanker — to pick out noise spikes, leaving behind only clean signal copy.

About those plug-in modules — if one of them ever should give you trouble, just send it in to us and we'll rush you a new card by return mail. The Yaesu FT-101 is guaranteed fully for one year.

Want to get away from it all? Get away with the FT-101. And keep the world in a suitcase. Only \$499.95.

### SPECTRONICS WEST

1491 E. 28th, Signal Hill, Ca. 90806 / Phone: (213) 426-2191

### SPECTRONICS EAST

Box 1437, Stone, Ohio 44224 / Telephone: (216) 524-4347

Please send new color catalog of all Yaesu products.

Enclosed find \$ \_\_\_\_\_

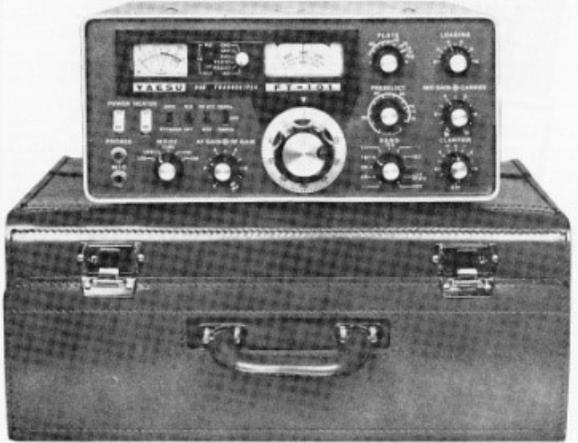
Please send model(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

All prices F.O.B. Signal Hill, Ca.



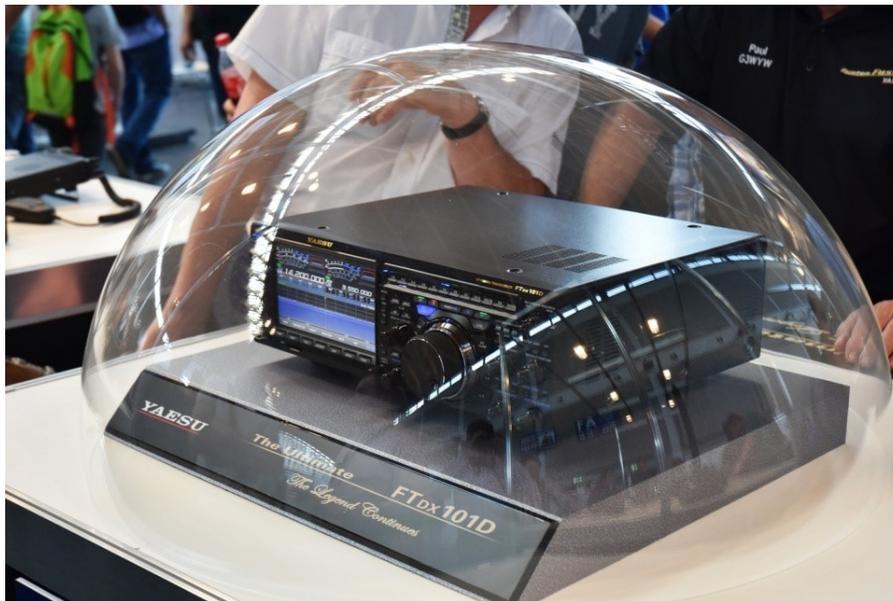
\*Suitcase not included

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First FT-101 ad in Dec. 1970 QST

But wait! There's more to this tale.

Fast forward to 2018 when Steve White, NUØP and I traveled to Europe's largest hamfest in Friedrichshafen, Germany. As we approached the Yaesu booth, out front was this beautiful modern transceiver called an FTDX-101D.



FTDX-101D, under glass, Friedrichshafen, 2018

But it's under a glass dome – you can't touch it – perhaps to keep the drool off the radio.

“How can we buy one if we can't even twiddle the knobs?” we ask the salesman.

“Oh, we don't have any yet”.

When will it be available?”

“I don't know – but soon.”

“How much?”

“I don't know”.

So we strolled over to the Hilberling booth and played with their \$12,000 Transceiver.

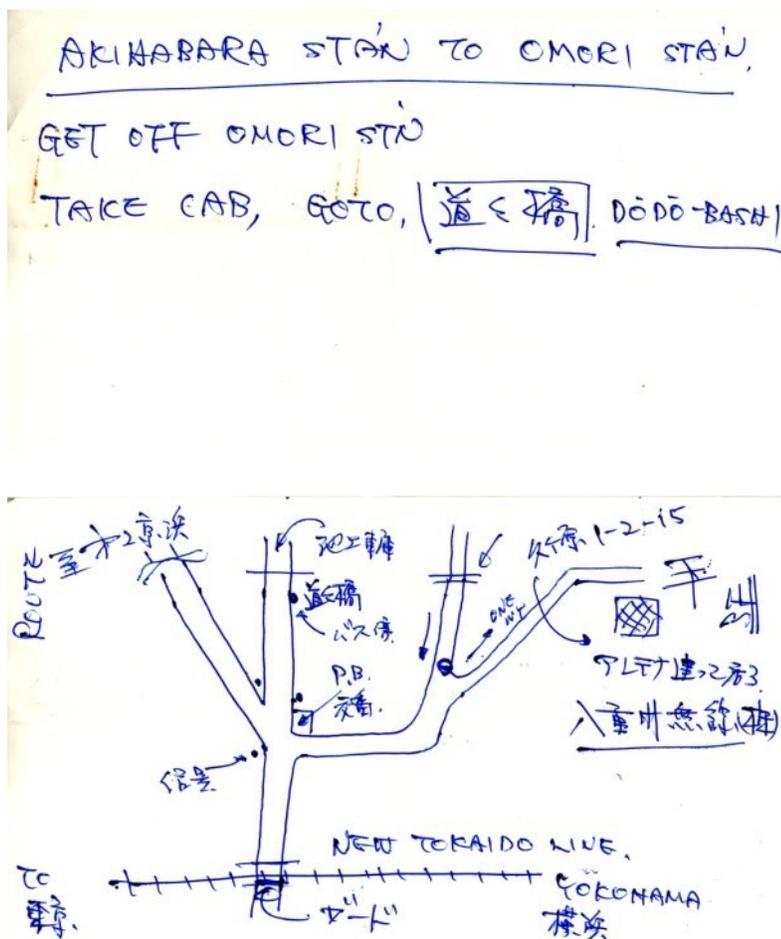
But now, 52 years after the Honolulu hams drooled on my FT-101, long-time friend Barry Buelow, WØIY (ex-WAØRJ & KH6HOY), discovers an FTDX-101D under his Christmas tree and a few weeks later presents a show-and-tell program on the radio at the Cedar Valley ARC meeting. It took place on Zoom, so his new FTDX-101D remained clean.

It's a darn nice radio from Yaesu – again.

I may need another plan.

## EPILOGUE

After writing and editing this story, I decided to dig out the radio and photograph it. In the process I pulled my file of instruction books and out fell some long forgotten miscellaneous notes from 51 years ago. Among them I was surprised to find the factory warranty cards and then shocked to find the two notes, written at Toyomura in 1970 – one giving directions to Omori train station (for me); the other for the taxi driver to take me to the Yaesu-Musen factory (denoted by the yagi antenna).



In the rig photo, you'll note the instruction book is mimeographed. Three hits with the office stapler and you have an instruction book ready for the American patiently waiting for his radio. Never mind that it's all written in Japanese. Oh - and be sure to add, in English, "This warranty is valid only in Japan" because no service exists elsewhere for this radio.



## 保 証 書

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- (1) 本保証書は八重洲無線製品中下記製品番号についてのみ有効です。
- (2) 万一、機器が故障しました場合は、直ちに運用を中止し、故障事項明記の上、お買上店又は当社に返送又は御持参下さい。
- (3) 不良部品交換の場合は機種名、製造 No. 購入年月日を明記の上、不良部品をお送り下さい。折返し代替部品をお送り致します。
- (4) 保証期間中であつても、下記の場合は有料となります。
  - (イ) 電氣的、機械的な改造を加えられたセット
  - (ロ) 使用上、又は操作上の過失、事故に依つて故障を生じた場合
  - (ハ) 天災等に依る故障或は損傷の時
  - (ニ) セットナンバー、購入年月日、使用者名販売店捺印の記入なき場合
  - (ホ) 送信部終段管及びトランジスターの交換を要する場合。
  - (ヘ) その他当社の責に帰せざる故障損傷の場合
- (5) 保証期間はご購入の日より1ヶ年間とします。但し当社発送の日より18ヶ月を越えないものとします。

This warranty policy is valid

八重洲無線株式会社

in Japan only.

46.4.9 機種 FT 101 製造 No. 108008

購入店名	購入年月日
Ⓜ	昭和 年 月 日

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- (3) 不良部品交換の場合は機種名、製造 No. 購入年月日を明記の上、不良部品をお送り下さい。折返し代替部品をお送り致します。
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  - ニ) セットナンバー、購入年月日、使用者名販売店捺印の記入なき場合
  - ホ) 送信部終段管及びトランジスターの交換を要する場合。
  - ヘ) 其の他当社の責に帰せざる故障損傷の場合
- (5) 保証期間はご購入の日より1ケ年間とします。但し当社発送の日より18ヶ月を越えないものとします。

**This warranty policy is valid**

八重洲無線株式会社

in Japan only.      機種      SP-101P      製造 No.      302080

46. 4. 6

購入店名	購入年月日
Ⓜ	昭和      年      月      日

(印)

## Jurassic Journal

- A look back in time -

Tom Vavra WB8ZRL

### Twenty years ago - Spring of 2001

From my logbook:

EY - EY8MM, Nodir, was found on 17M CW. This man is a super operator as we have noted from several excellent DXPeditions.

H4Ø - H4ØRW was aired by ZL1AMO, Ron Wright. Ron was known for island hopping, especially in the Pacific. He made several stops at Temotu.

ZD7 - ZD7K was a mini dxpedition to St. Helena by GW4BVJ, GØWMW and GWØANA. They were active on all bands, mainly on cw.

HKØM - HKØM/HK3JJH, Pedro, logged 15,000+ QSOs during his month long operation from Malpelo. Some ten years later, WØGJ and crew returned for a major dxpedition.

V7 - The operation from Enewetak Atoll using V73E ended with

about 18,000 contacts (4441 with Europe) in the log.

TXØC - The TXØC team (including F5CW/FK8VHY, FK8FS, FK8FU, FO3BM, ZL3CW, F5CW, FK8FS, ZL1GO) were on the Chesterfield Islands for a long week.

J5 - Baldur, DJ6SI, was traveling again and activated Guinea Bissau signing J5X for two weeks. Mostly CW, as it was Baldur's favorite mode.

3B6 - The 3B6RF DXpedition to Agalega had transportation problems getting there but they put 64K entries into the logs.

W4NIM - Bob Hill, formerly from Cedar Rapids, and the host for the EIDX A repeater now lived on his boat. He could sometimes be found sailing the Caribbean. This time conditions were not good, and we traded 52 signal reports.

9G - 9GØARS, the Ghana ARS Club Station was active.

YI9 - OM6TY, Peter, created much interest when he signed YI9OM from Iraq. Especially when he activated top band.

Other activity:

JW - LA5HE signed JW5HE during one of several trips to Svalbard.

VK9C - Nigel G3TXF/VK9CXF, Dennis G3MXJ/VK9CXJ and Roger/VK9CXW visited Cocos (Keeling) Island. They operated for one week, making 21,500 CW QSOs

ZD8 - Jim, N6TJ was active as ZD8Z from Ascension Island for ten days while on a work assignment.

T5 - Baldur/DJ6SI was active as T5X from Somalia on his way home from J5X.

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## Ten years ago - Spring 2011

WWV numbers for the Spring months of 2011:

SFI max 129 min 80

A-Index max 36 min 1

6W - 6W2SC, Peter, HA3AU1 was on one of several trips to Senegal.

TL - TLØA appears to be a frequently assigned call from the Central African Republic. There are a variety of QSL managers.

EL - 5M2TT was rare prefix call given to I2YSB, IK2CIO, IK2CKR, IK2DIA, and IK2HKT for their operation from Liberia.

A2 - ON4AEO was on from Botswana for 5 short days as A25FC. All bands and modes.

Other Spring 2011 activity:

9J - Chris, ZS6RI started signing 9J2RI from Zambia for at least a year, working a "6-week on/6-week off" schedule.

T2 - Haru, JA1XGI, for one week, signed T2XG from Tuvalu. He had 4500 QSOs, mixed modes, on 10-20M.

## Speaking of Jurassic...

Check out this Sears catalog from long ago: <https://tinyurl.com/ygrpsj9o>

## Member News

## Logbook

03:10:46	21 Mar 21	9G5FI	1815.16	CW	599	160M
18:00:30	21 Mar 21	GW3YDX	10107.48	CW	599	30M
00:43:37	22 Mar 21	A25RU	1833.21	CW	599	160M
17:42:33	22 Mar 21	LU4XAP	21009.07	CW	539	15M
00:49:15	23 Mar 21	A25RU	7060.00	FT8	-04	40M
01:18:41	23 Mar 21	JT1CO	14006.11	CW	599	20M
17:47:08	23 Mar 21	A25RU	14026.91	CW	599	20M
23:34:18	23 Mar 21	RI0Q	14021.40	CW	599	20M
01:42:22	24 Mar 21	JT1CO	14081.53	FT4	+06	20M
04:58:53	24 Mar 21	KA6LMS/1	3535.00	CW	599	80M
23:04:31	24 Mar 21	KA6LMS/6	14244.00	SSB	59	20M

From K0JGH: Glen reports 9G5FI and A25RU are news on 160 meters. Also active with JT..

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CQ Test

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QRM

FT-8

Here's an interesting blog post from the chap who runs clublog.

See it [here](#)

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History

### **Wartime Radio The Secret Listeners BBC (1979)**

*I stumbled across this video from the BBC in 1979 - Ed.*



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## **Inside the Summit-Obsessed World of Ham Radio**

It's like a biathlon, but for geeks

Find the article [HERE](#)

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## AM Broadcast Radio - the early days

I ran across this recently. Rather than reproduce it here, I included the link: <http://www.theradiohistorian.org/xer/xer.html>

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Courtesy AAØME

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