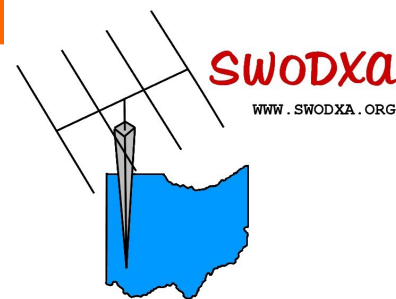




Volume 4, Issue 2

11/2020

the exchange



SouthWest Ohio DX Association

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The Prez says....Tom, NR8Z

Another newsletter and we're still dealing with COVID restrictions. I'm starting to read about COVID fatigue in the popular press. Bill, AJ8B, has included diverse topics for this newsletter that will stave off your COVID fatigue. Be sure to check out news of SWODXA member's activities, how other hams are using their time during COVID and ways to improve your DX totals. Enjoy!

We will hold the November 12th SWODXA meeting virtually via Zoom. Members should look for an invite via the email reflector. If you're reading this as a non-member and would like to join one of our meetings check the SWODXA website at www.swodxa.org for information on how to connect with us. Members should stay tuned for updates about our Holiday party in December. The officers are working through our options in this time of COVID.

I recently pulled together my Mixed CQ WAZ application and was surprised at the how the contacts fell among the bands. Zone contacts more than about 10 years old were on the bands above 20 meters and those in the last decade or so tended to be on 80 and 40 meters. Proof that the last solar cycle wasn't much to write home about. But the bands seem to be improving as the sunspot numbers start their climb for Cycle 25. September brought some good FT8 contacts for me on the upper bands. I didn't operate during the CQWW DX SSB weekend but it looks like the solar flux climbed all the way into the 80s and 10 meters opened for some. So, go work 'em!

73,
Tom—NR8Z





Social Distancing by the Hawks on K4ZLE's antenna



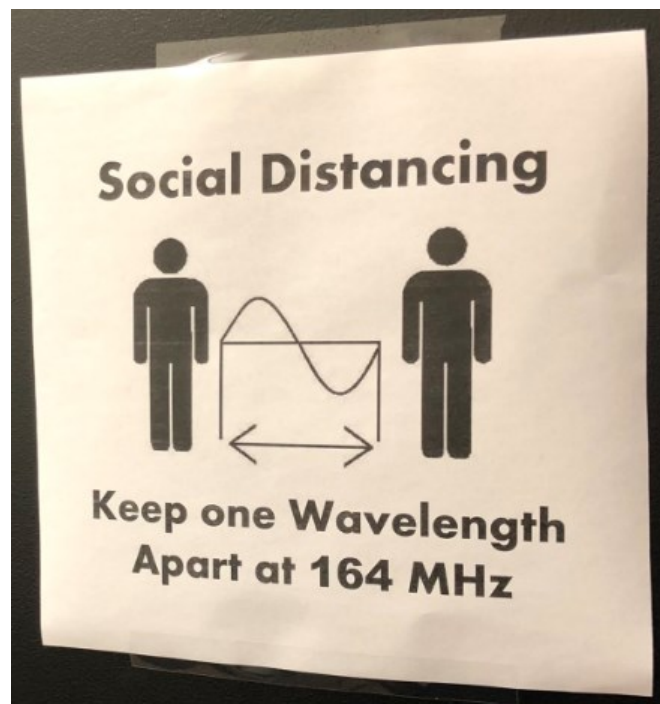
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60 Meters—The Channel Band

By Joe, W8GEX

Good and bad news to report this edition.
Here you go....

Hello Joe,

With the feeling of a little boy who lost his newly received bicycle I hear that the experimental license from ZL expires.

If had the pleasure to speak with our friends for two years on 60m almost each day. A fun and useful experience with quite some scientific work done by many. Our daily activity turned into a good personal friendship separated only by 20.000Km (LP)

Hoping there will be a future option somehow. A sad day for the entire 60m Community.

73 Henry PG0DX

5 MHZ TRIAL ALLOCATION CEASES

Unfortunately the New Zealand Defense Force (NZDF) has advised us that they are not willing to approve another renewal of our 5 MHz trial allocation/license.

AS A RESULT, ALL USE BY NZ AMATEURS OF THE TWO 5 MHZ TRIAL FREQUENCIES, 5353.0 KHZ OR 5362.0 KHZ MUST CEASE FROM MIDNIGHT (11:59 PM) ON THIS SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER 2020.

This decision was not made lightly by NZDF - having access to the highest quality HF spectrum is very important to support their new platforms, tactical radio equipment and refreshed HF site equipment, all soon to be delivered. Additionally, access to HF is a key part of their communications plans both in NZ and to support our forces overseas.



While this is a disappointing outcome, NZART would like to thank NZDF for allowing us to take part in the trial and we look forward to working with them in the future on matters of common interest.

Note: Although the trial is over (and all transmissions on the trial frequencies must cease), NZART will continue to work with RSM to see if there are other ways of providing New Zealand Amateurs with access to 5 MHz frequencies.

Don Wallace ZL2TLL

NZART Administration Liaison Officer

Email: alo@nzart.org.nz

As you can see by my Recent Activity below there is still a lot of DX on the band. One was 4U1UN who handed out a new one to many. QSL via HB9BOU.

From Paul G4MWOThe The 5 MHz Newsletter—I've revised the Wiki 60 Meter Band page's 'External Links' section to give more prominence to Newsletters/Blogs (see attached screenshot). You can find the latest edition freely available at any time at <https://www.dropbox.com/s/koz6msf74mtk76t/5%20MHz%20Newsletter.pdf?dl=0>

(cont. on next page)

60 Meters (Cont.)

3X – Guinea - F4AJQ, Frank, says the F6KOP team, noting their successful E44CC Palestine operation in February, is now planning another operation, this one for next January. Assuming the borders open after COVID-19 and they can travel safely, they plan to be on Guinea's Kassa Island, IOTA AF-051, QRV on 160-10 "with maybe 60M," CW, SSB, RTTY and FT8, with five stations on simultaneously. They will have three beams, several verticals and receiving antennas too. The call sign, operators and other details will be forthcoming soon.

Latest email from Frank:

For the moment we are still ok for our XP in 3X. I am currently preparing the file for the license with the authorizations to be on the air on 60 meters.

I hope that we will not have another big problem with COVID 19 so that the f6kop team will be on the island of KASSA in January 2021.

73 thanks, Frank f4ajq

E6 – Niue & A3 – Tonga: The team of E6AM & A35GC DXPedition were ready to travel, but unfortunately there is a bad and sad news about our DXPedition!

I would like to inform the amateur radio community through DX Bulletin that due to the restrictive measures related to Covid - 19, our expedition - E6AM & A35GC DXPedition is POSTPONED and will take place in October and November 2021!

A week ago, we were informed by Air New Zealand that all our flights from Australia and New Zealand to the islands of Tonga and Niue have been cancelled!!!

(cont. on next page)

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60 Meters (Cont.)

In fact, the borders of Australia, New Zealand, Niue and Tonga are currently and for long time closed to foreigners!

As the organizer of this expedition, I want to assure you that our team is in good health condition and this expedition will take place with certainty, after the lifting of restrictive measures due to the COVID - 19 pandemic. The life goes on!

Until next October & November (2021) - on the air, during the E6AM and A35GC activities.

73! Stan, LZ1GC (E6AM & A35GC).

FP/KV1J Miquelon islands: By Eric KV1J FP – St. Pierre and Miquelon Islands

Due to travel restrictions KV1J, Eric, had to cancel his September 22 to October 6 trip to Miquelon Island. He is now planning to go to FP in the June/July 2021 time frame. Eric will be returning to Miquelon operating as FP/KV1J from June 29 through July 13, 2021.

With the new French 60 meter allocation he will be concentrating on that band with a 1/4 wave vertical antenna.

Logs will be loaded each night to LoTW and Club Log.

QSL via KV1J direct, buro or LoTW. <http://www.kv1j.com/fp/July21.html>

Swains Island W8S: Postponed until next year.

Dear friends,

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic it is still impossible to travel to Swains Island. This means that we have to postpone our DXpedition until spring 2021 at the earliest.

Alex Jennings and the team will start planning

again as soon as we are allowed to travel to American Samoa without restrictions.

All equipment is waiting id in Pago Pago. We are very disappointed with this postponement, but if we look at it from a positive angle, propagation will be better next year!

We continue our Swains DXpedition project and keep you informed via our mailing list, website and the social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter.

The Swains DXpedition Team, <https://swains2020.1ldxt.eu/>

G5MHZ – Remembering Gordon

In the UK, the 5 MHz, or 60 m band has been available to Full UK licensees since August 2002. This we owe to the initiative of Gordon Adams, G3LEQ, at the time Spectrum Director of the Radio Society of Great Britain, who was central to negotiations with the Regulator and the UK Ministry of Defense, the primary user of the band.

Sadly, Gordon became a Silent Key in February 2018 and the GB2RS 5 MHz news reading team looked for a way to actively remember Gordon's vital contribution. The opportunity arose when "Ofcom" recently released the G5 + 3 Letter call series. The 5 MHz Newsreaders, as 'The 5 MHz Pioneers Group' applied for and received the call G5MHZ.

The call G5MHZ is in recognition and remembrance of the work done by Gordon in obtaining a band at 5 Megahertz for UK Radio Amateurs. The callsign? '5 MHz' is obvious and the 'G'? Well what else could it stand for but Gordon!

Look out for G5MHZ on 60 m.

Ohio State Parks on the Air at Tar Hollow State Park

K4YJ, Dwight has been very busy. Here is a summary of the Parks on the Air event.

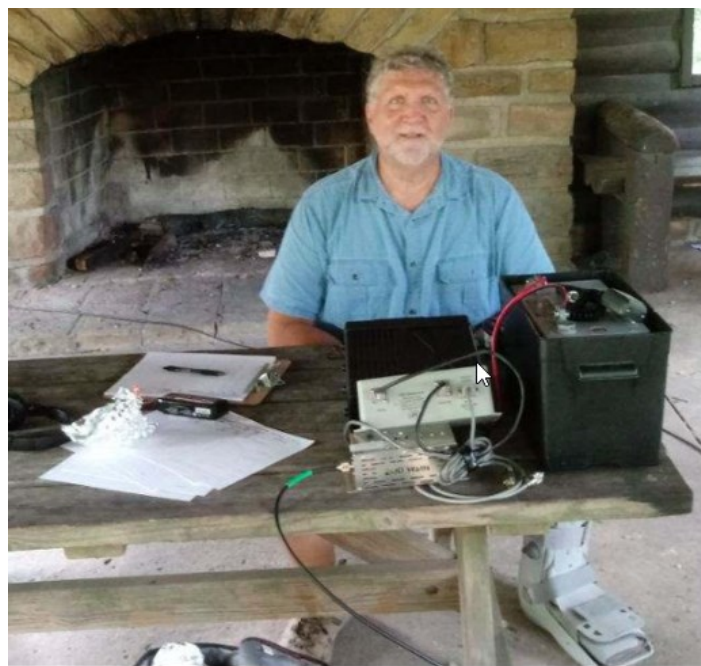
(You might notice I had a boot on my left foot, I had to have my plate and screws removed. I broke one of my screws and the doc said I didn't need the plate anymore anyway so he just removed the plate and one screw. He left the broken screw in the bone. No need to take it out.)

This year Steve N8TUW and myself decided to operate multi-transmitter during the Ohio State Parks on the Air. We set up at Tar Hollow just northeast of Chillicothe. Steve arrived before I did and had most of his antennas and station set up before I got there. I only had one antenna to put up and it was an off center fed dipole for 40m on a 20' telescopic pole. So it went up very quickly. We set up the rigs in one of the shelters not knowing how the weather was going to turn out as rain was due in later that day. We did have a very nice day to operate. It was cool and a nice breeze and the rain did hold off.

This contest consisted of SSB only. When I tried to set up my rig, for some reason it would not transmit when I hit the PTT. I made sure it was not in digital mode and checked all other menu settings and just could not get it to transmit. This rig is my field day rig, Icom IC-7200, and was set up for CW as most of my contest modes are. Well I decided to just do a hard reset on the rig and that would be fine. Now what was that button sequence again? Well I pulled out the cellphone to download the manual and guess what .5 bar! Well it took about 20 min. to finally get the manual and the reset sequence. After the reset, all was good. Steve operated 80m only and I was on 40m only. He was able to work most of the state and the parks for multipliers, where the 40m band was long and I was working all over the United States.

As far as setting up a portable operation, this was my first Parks on the air, but I have only missed a few ARRL field days in as long as I can remember. We had a good time and we are already looking forward to doing it again next year.

(More pics on next page)





DX Engineering—We're All Elmers Here!

EMAIL our team of active Elmers at Elmers@DXEngineering.com for technical advice and assistance on finding the right gear for your shack.

Seven Habits for Chasing DX

By Jay, K4ZLE

This originally appeared in the DX Magazine, July/August of 2009. It is as applicable now as it was then. Thanks to Jay for letting me reprint this.

As a previously certified Stephen Covey 7 Habits instructor, I can attest to how important these steps are. If you know it, great to review. If not, take it to heart!



If you are into the self help scene, you have undoubtedly heard of the book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey. It was very popular back in the 1990s. Would you believe there are two parallel sets of 7 habits for the DXer related to pileup effectiveness? There is a set for the hound and a set for the fox. This time we will survey the hound's habits, next time it will be the fox's.

According to Mr. Covey the 7 generic habits are: 1) Be proactive. 2) Begin with the end in mind. 3) Put first things first. 4) Think win/win. 5) Seek first to understand, then to be understood. 6) Synergize. 7) Sharpen the saw (learn-renew).

The hunter's 7 effective habits are: 1) Listen. 2) Follow instructions. 3) Ignore unsociable behavior. 4) Think before you key. 5) Use best operating techniques. 6) Listen some more. 7) Get in and get out. His order and mine differ slightly and sometimes I take editorial license in interpreting how the habits are manifested; however, as we compare his 7 to mine, I hope you see the similarity. Are they universal and are they valid? You tell me!

#1 Listen (be proactive).

A recurrent theme from seasoned DXers is to listen, listen, listen. We have two ears and

one mouth for a reason. You have to listen to learn the modus operandi of the station you are trying to work; to understand the fox's instructions and to see what your competition is doing. You can elect not to listen, call blindly and maybe work him¹ OR you can listen, call with insight and greatly increase your chances making the kill, so to speak.

#2 Follow instructions² (seek first to understand, then to be understood).

Remember, the operator on the small side of the pileup is in charge. You need to work him; he probably does not need to work you. Otherwise, everyone would be calling you; would they not? The better operators normally do as instructed. If he says, "up 5" or "listening 200 to 210", why should you be transmitting anywhere other than up 5 or between 200 and 210, as instructed? If he says, "Europe (EU) only" or he is working 8's and you have a 4 in your call, then don't call him --- unless you are a 4 living in 8 land. Heh, heh, heh

#3 Ignore unsociable behavior (put first things first).

The easiest way to get rid of the belchers, burpers, jammers, and self-deputized FCC frequency Marshals is to ignore them.

(cont. on next page)

Seven Habits for Chasing DX (cont.)

Usually they are such poor operators, themselves, that they get frustrated when they can not figure out how beat the pileup. Since they can't work them, they don't want anyone else to. Can't you just picture their pitiful puss when they are ignored! It must drive them utterly mad! I love it! In the grand scheme of things, why let someone who acts like a two-bit punk cash in on spoiling your fun!

#4 Think before you key (win/win).

Before you tap that paddle, press the PTT button or utter that first VOX-breaking syllable, think – especially if the intended transmission is not directed at the DX station you are chasing. Will this transmission help or hinder? The way we all win is to eliminate QRM. It is OK to tell someone that they are on the wrong VFO or that the station is listening up, provided it is done with class and insight. However, it adds nothing to identify the offender with a part of the human anatomy or invite him to do something generally thought to be physically impossible. Once you point out his transgression, he will probably feel bad enough. Don't you? I do!

#5 Use best operating techniques (synergize).

Synergy is when the result is greater than the sum of the independent inputs. It is when $1 + 1$ equals something greater than 2. Apply all the tricks you know, such as: slide a little off the last frequency he was listening on so your tones are distinctive, tail end (when appropriate), delay your transmission half a heartbeat, press the pause, use some form of diversity reception, bribe, cheat or steal! If you listen, you will pick up the best techniques. Which brings us to..

#6 Listen some more (sharpen the saw [learn – renew]).

The best way to improve your operating skills is the same way you improve any skills: practice, study and train. Listen to the pileups. It is not

always the one with the most power who gets through. Ask yourself why those stations making it through are doing so. What are they doing that makes the difference? Is it technique, speed, power, location or luck? If you don't need the entity or you have managed to bag him already, spend some time studying the pileup as a living organism. You might begin to understand what makes it live!

#7 Get in and get out (begin with the end in mind).

When it comes to pileups you want to spend as little time in the fray as you can. Do not dawdle. Crank up the power, work the station and get out of the way so others can work him too. This is an unpopular position with some and flies in the face of what some pundits preach about minimum power to establish and maintain contact per current FCC regulations. Balderdash! We don't know how much power it takes, until we have made the contact. In a DX pileup, by then you do not have time to turn it down and see how little it takes to maintain the contact. Why spend life's precious moments starting at low power and working your way up until you barely can be heard? My method causes less pandemonium and better meets the intent of the regulation. Let the QRP diehards flounder in sanctimonious piety while you rest in the knowledge that the Q is in your log.³

Some pileups run smoothly and orderly; some are case studies in anarchy. You now have the 7 basic habits for effectively working pileups from the big end. Try them. See if your effectiveness does not improve. Mine did (and does). Next time we will examine them from the little end.

¹I use of the term "him" in a neuter gender rather than resort to some convoluted usage of "them", "him/her", "(s)he" or other perversion of the English language.

²You also must learn to interpret his instructions. For instance, up 5 does not always mean literally that he is listening only 5 kHz up. It means he is listening from 5 kHz to wherever he stops listening

³Do not think that I am anti-QRP. I am not. I run QRP, at times, but we read in Ecclesiastes, "For everything there is a season..."

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Interview with Norman, VK7AC

I have worked Norman several times and every time it was a great QSO. He immediately agreed to answer my questions. He can be reached at vk7ac@telstra.com

AJ8B: How did you first get interested in amateur radio?

VK7AC: in the early 1950's after school hours I worked in my Uncles Army Disposals business which gave me access to ex-military communications equipment my first radio was an AR7 receiver followed by Hallicrafters then the Command series radios always excited to hear W1BCR on 20m with such a booming voice and signal. Locally in my street a few houses down lived 2 well known hams VK2ABO AND VK2AVI after visiting their shack I was inspired to obtain my own callsign. At the end of my college course in 1958 I sat for the Limited Amateur radio certificate and obtained the callsign VK2ZXC .

Moving to the south coast of NSW I built a 150 ft self-support tower mainly for commercial reasons and left the top clear for my 11el M2 Yagi for 6m. which was a great success over 1500 USA QSO's and 98 countries .All no SSB sadly in those days CW had no interest for me which I later regreted. In 2004 I obtained the callsign

VK2XC on moving to Tasmania later on that year I obtained the callsign VK7AC.

AJ8B: Do you have a favorite band or mode?

VK7AC: 160,80,40,30m lately mostly digital modes SSB or CW

AJ8B: What time of day and days do you like to operate?

VK7AC: 1700 to 2200 0600to 1000 UTC 7 days a week

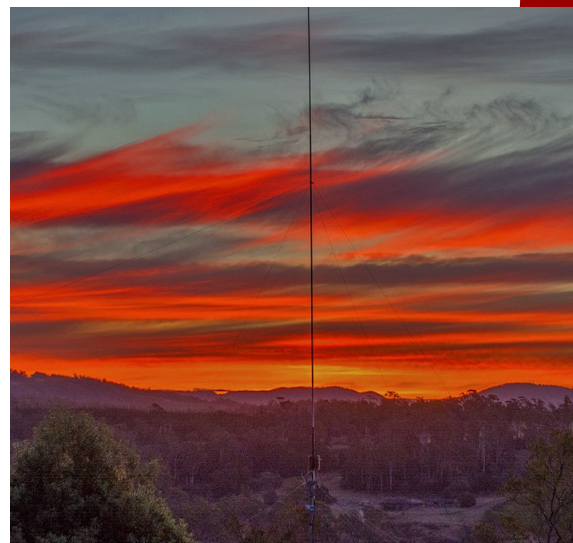
AJ8B: Any secrets to your success?

VK7AC: Vertical aerials and a great location 850ft above the Tamar Valley in Tasmania Isl. 20deg south of the mainland. VHF the larger the better.

AJ8B: Any tips that you can share?

VK7AC: On VHF watch the Hepburn tropo charts for your area , watch for solar events, watch cluster information the larger aerial the better.

(cont. on next page)



Interview with Norman, VK7AC (cont.)

AJ8B: Describe what you are currently using:

VK7AC: HF IC7800 1?2w Vertical 8m above ground base Matched tuned radials 3el Steppir 15mh.

VHF IC910 6m 9el M2 2m. 18El M2 432 40EL M2 1296 40El M2 15mh

AJ8B: What advice do you have for those of us trying to break pileups to work DX?

VK7AC: Listen for operators instructions on Digital suggest you use Duplex

AJ8B: You are a veteran of many DXPeditions. Is there one that really stands out and why?

VK7AC: I always support dx -perditions who go to a lot of trouble to make available new entities.

AJ8B: Any QSLing hints?

VK7AC: QSL Bureau is ok but slow Direct received go back same day

AJ8B: What coaching/advice would you give new amateurs?

VK7AC: Great hobby but keep it as a hobby

AJ8B: What it is like in Tasmania?

VK7AC: Cold in Winter down to -6c at my QTH more in other areas, summer time average 20c during day a Great DX location

AJ8B: What licensing levels do you have in Tasmania ?

VK7AC: Novice , limited, advanced

AJ8B: If I were to stop by for a visit, what site(s) would you want us to visit?

VK7AC: Lots to see but depends on your interests

AJ8B: What local food would you want me to try?

VK7AC: Very wide variety of food local whisky and beer to die for

AJ8B: It would seem that you love the outdoors with your hunting and fishing pictures. Have you ever combined ham radio and your hobby?

VK7AC: Always too tired at end of day for anything else



Congratulations to Ernie, W8EH

Below is what I submitted about my VUCC Satellite award to our Dial Radio Club newsletter a few months ago. To the right is a picture of me with my certificate sitting in my upstairs shack.

Last week I received a confirmation letter that my WAZ mixed award (first time) has been approved and waiting for printing.



Ernie W8EH

Ernie W8EH has been a long time satellite operator. The first satellite contact was in 1978. That was before computers calculated orbits for us. Back then we had to get orbital information from the ARRL bulletins and use a paper and plastic "Oscar Locator" to plot the orbits. Things have changed for the better. Now the W8EH station has steerable beam antennas controlled by computer. And the radio frequency adjustments are also controlled by the computer. The longest contact was with a station in New Zealand using the high orbit Oscar 40. That satellite had a 2.4 GHz downlink and required a good dish and down converter to hear it.



Ernie has been gathering grid squares and finally was able to get 100 confirmations for VUCC Satellite by using the ARRL Logbook of the World online QSL system. The 100th satellite grid contact was with a station in Scotland using the new Russian linear satellite RS-44.

W8EH's other satellite awards include the Oscar Satellite Communications Achievement Award, and the 51 on AO-51 award.



Fun COVID-19 Activity

Thanks to Joe, W8JBL, for sending this along.

With all of us endeavoring to stay Covid-19 safe but still trying to find fun things to do, here is something you might consider. Several of the SWODXA members lately, with varying degrees of success, have been attempting to make QSO's through the newly activated FM repeater aboard the International Space Station. Trying to hit a sometimes invisible moving target going in excess of 17,000 MPH and approximately 260 miles above the Earth is in itself challenging.



Then there's the momma of all pileups. Many hams are attempting contacts in the brief few minutes the ISS is in range. Some of the loud stations seem to be running ultra max power. Yet it really is possible to have a completed QSO with 5 watts and a HT using the Arrow handheld antenna.

In fact as of this writing I have two ISS Q's with fellow member Bob Stothfang W8RES who lives just 4 miles away - yet our signals traveled round trip over 500 miles bouncing off the ISS as it passed over. Who says a ham radio challenge can't be fun? The ISS repeater is a split operation... using an Uplink frequency of 145.990 and a CTCSS tone of 67 Hz, and a Downlink frequency of 437.800. Even an HT with a rubber duck antenna can often pick up downlink chatter. QSO's are usually very quick, with each ham exchanging their grid square location. With so much activity and so little time that's about all there is time for. If you haven't tried making a Q through the ISS give it a try. PATIENCE is paramount but if successful it's something to tell the grandkids - who will probably still give you the same "you did what" look as before - but you'll know it really is cooler than their HT which highly resembles a cell phone.

There are several good websites that will tell you when the ISS will be in the area. One is <https://www.heavens-above.com> Click on ISS and enter your location.

For more information on the ISS repeater click on this link: <https://amsat-uk.org/2020/09/02/iss-fm-repeater-activated/>

Hope you have good luck making that Q through the ISS repeater.

73,

Joe Luebbe—W8JBL

Congratulations to Dwight, K4YJ!!

This has been a fairly active year for me and contesting. I truly enjoy setting up and getting ready for a contest to start and then jump in just to see how I can do. I don't start a contest wanting to be the #1 finisher, I just start out to get a minimum of 100 contacts and be happy with that. As each contest goes on, I either have a lot of fun and don't want to stop or I can't wait for contact 100 to get here and call it quits. One tool that can help me decide on stopping at 100 or not is the Contest Online Scoreboard (contestonlinescore.com). I can see how others are doing and if I see that I am not doing so poorly compared to all the others I may decide to just hang in there and continue on.

I have a few tools that help make contesting easier and more fun. First of all, my contesting software is the tool that makes the entire effort easy. If you have to struggle with logging the fun can go away quickly. I use the N3FJP software Suite for my main logging and also for all my contests. The contest software easily interfaces with the radio for rig control so there is no worrying about logging the wrong band and mode. It interfaces with my WinKey for my CW sending so this part of CW is easy and all I need to do is copy the code and type the information in. Over a contest you will find that you aren't nearly as exhausted as you would be if you manually did it all. Lastly, when the contest is over, it is so easy to go to the menu and create your submittal file(s) and within a few minutes you are finished.

Some of the contests that I have participated in this year that I have gotten the results back from already are as follows:

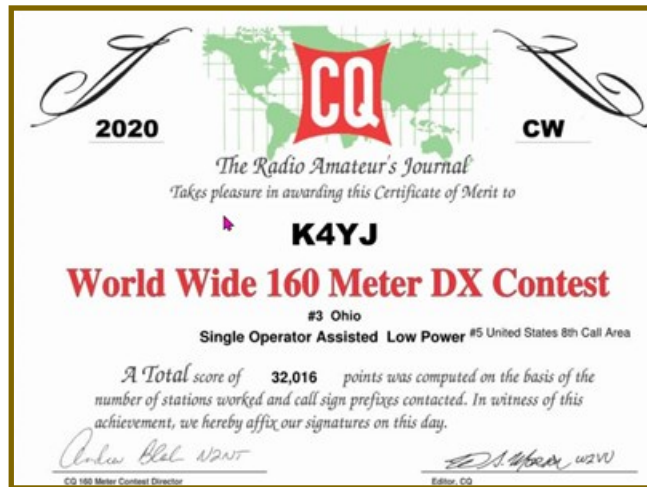


- CQ WW 160M DX SSB, #2 OH, #2 US, #9 North America
- CQ WW 160M DX CW, #3 OH, #5 US 8th Call Area
- CQ WW WPX CW, #2 in 8th Call Area
- CQ WW WPX SSB, #3 in 8th Call Area
- ARRL DX CONTEST, 8th Place Ohio Section
- 2020 WORLD WIDE DIGI DX CONTEST, #7 US 8th Call Area

My favorite contest is the ARRL 10m contest that runs early December. Over the years I have taken first place in my section 5 times. My best streak was three straight years, two years in GA and then my first year in OH. I have worked many State QSO parties, one of which is the Ohio QSO Party that we won't get this year's results back until 2021.

For my radio, I have an Icom IC-7610. Most contests I enter as low power. I tried the high-power category and really got blown away. But of course, my high power is only 500W. My antennas are a Cushcraft MA6B up at 40' and for 80m and 160m I have a 160m OCF dipole with the center just below 40'. I truly enjoy working all the stations and the DX and am patiently waiting for a new DX entity to show up and am keeping my skills tuned!

(Pictures on the next page)



N3FJP

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The Future of Propagation Predictions

Carl Luetzelschwab K9LA

Thanks to Carl for allowing me to reprint this excellent article!

I've been working on a project that got me thinking about what's in the future for propagation predictions. I've broken my thoughts into two issues: the ionospheric model in our propagation predictions and how propagation predictions will be used.

Model Issues

The F2 region model

Much effort is currently underway to better understand the day-to-day variability of the F2 region. Our present understanding of this short-term variability is statistical in nature, and that's why our propagation predictions give us monthly median values (usually MUF and signal strength) versus a smoothed solar index (either smoothed sunspot number or smoothed 10.7 cm solar flux).

The problem is that this short-term variability depends on more than just solar radiation. Yes, solar radiation instigates ionization, but geomagnetic field activity can modify the amount of ionization at any given point on Earth. But that's still not the whole story. The third variable is events at ground level and in the lower atmosphere that can couple up to the ionosphere to possibly further modify the amount of ionization at a given location.

As research into this third variable continues, parameters to define these events need to be defined. Then a model relating these parameters to the effects on the ionosphere needs to be developed. Eventually this

will lead to daily propagation predictions – in other words, what is the ionosphere really doing right now.

Assimilation of ionosonde/TEC data

Until events at ground level and in the lower atmosphere are well understood and characterized, assimilative models of the ionosphere will be further developed. Real-time ionosonde data and/or real-time TEC (total electron content) data will be used to make our monthly median predictions closer to real-time conditions.

The Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the International Union of Radio Science (URSI) is working towards this goal with the International Reference Ionosphere (IRI). It is called the IRI Real-Time model. For more information on this, see [reference 1](#).

The D region model

The part of the ionosphere that we know the least about with respect to short-term variability is the D region. The model of it in our prediction programs is based on a limited number of rocket flights, a limited amount of incoherent scatter radar data and theoretical considerations. The model assumes a smooth electron density profile versus D region height.

(Continued on Page 19)



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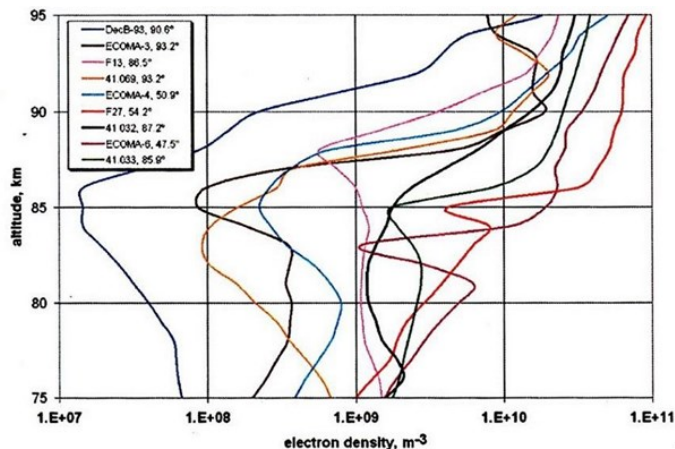
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The Future of Propagation Predictions (cont.)

In the following figure, compare that smooth model to what the D region can look like in the real world from actual measurements.

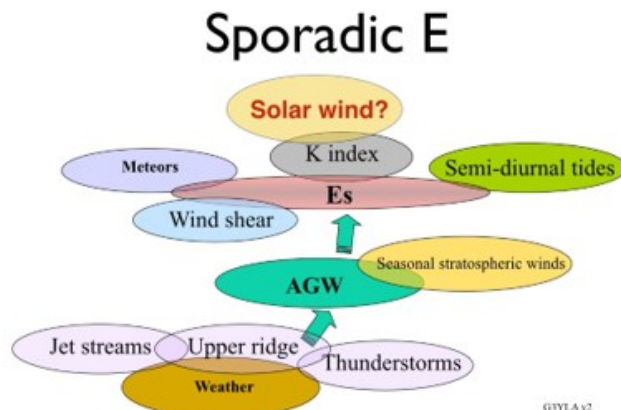


Experimental and theoretical research into the lower atmosphere and lower ionosphere is needed to give us a better understanding of the region that is most important on our lower HF bands (due to ionospheric absorption).

Sporadic E

Our understanding of sporadic E still isn't complete. We know the basic drivers of sporadic E, and experimental data (most recently from occultation data from GPS frequencies) has given us the most likely times and locations for sporadic E. But we can't predict exactly when and where it will occur. It would be nice to have this in our propagation predictions.

Jim Bacon, G3YLA, a professional meteorologist in the United Kingdom, is investigating the tie between sporadic E and underlying "weather" phenomena per the following sketch [reference 2].



How propagation predictions will be used

The current SDR radios, and even some analog radios (like my Ten-Tec OMNI 7), have screens that could be used to display propagation predictions and related information.

The particulars of your station could be input to the prediction software. This could include antenna gains (from antenna modeling software such as EZNEC or 4nec2), your man-made noise environment, transmit powers and even receiver MDS (minimum discernible signal) for analysis on the higher HF bands and 6-Meters where man-made noise may not be the limiting factor.

(Continued on Next Page)



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The Future of Propagation Predictions (cont.)

With assimilative ionospheric models, turning on the radio could display a worldwide MUF (maximum usable frequency) map that represents near real-time conditions. With a full model that includes the three variables, current space weather data and current terrestrial “weather” data could be downloaded to give the same information. Sporadic E predictions could also be included.

For DX chasers, your DXCC status could be input to the software. Propagation predictions to your needed entities (by band and even by mode) could be displayed – not only predictions for right now, but also when the best time might be. And if the time is right now to work a new entity on one of our bands, the prediction software could change your radio to the right band, turn on the amplifier and turn your antenna to the DXCC entity.

For contesters, the predictions could display the best band to be on right now to maximize your score per the contest rules. These predictions would include your station specifics so you’re not getting predictions for

legal limit power when you’re QRP.

I’m sure there are other innovations coming. We’ll just have to wait to see what happens.

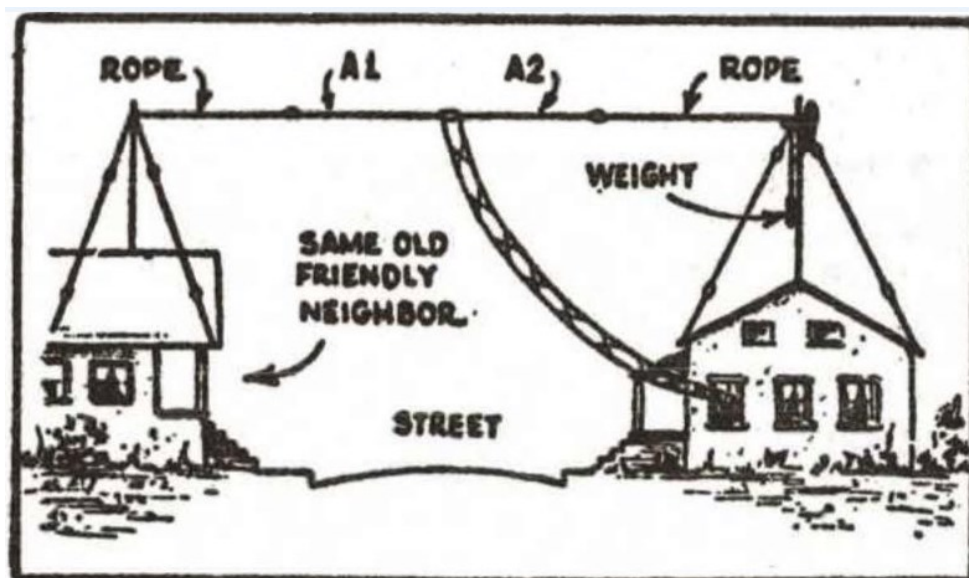
Summary

One thing I haven’t discussed is a fully -automated station. That can be done now with the digital modes, and advancing technology will allow it to happen with the other modes (if it already hasn’t!).

References

Bilitza, D., D. Altadill, V. Truhlik, V. Shubin, I. Galkin, B. Reinisch, and X. Huang (2017), International Reference Ionosphere 2016: From ionospheric climate to real-time weather predictions, *SpaceWeather*, 15, 418-429, doi:10.1002/2016SW001593.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wn5as91ndG4>



COVID-19 Activities

I sent an email to all of those hams who have graciously allowed me to interview them over the past 4 years asking them "What have you changed in your amateur radio "life" as a result of COVID? " I was absolutely thrilled with the response. Hope you enjoy!



Hello Bill,

- 1/ Improved my morse
- 2/ Gained DXCC, WAS, WAC Plus other awards
- 3/ Took the plunge and embraced data modes excellent ft4/8, JS8, PSK31
- 4/ Given me more time in helping those just entering the hobby

Doug G0LUH

Good evening sir.

I want to answering your questions— "What has changed since COVID 19?"

I have not changed as a keen DXer and contester but band condition and solar numbers have changed drastically. That is why I am more into digital modes at this time and a little SSB because of band conditions. Hopefully solar figures will improve in the near future for everyone to enjoy all facets of ham radio.

Even with a small HF station and VHF/UHF station I want to enjoy every mode possible. Thanks for listening

73 de Zs2ec Theunis from Port Elizabeth Eastern Cape of South Africa

Hi Bill,

You'll be always welcome to contact me and I will reply to your questions as sincerely as I can.

Concerning COVID, it, of course, changed our lifestyle, being obliged to take drastic precautions to keep safe. The only change in my Radio Ham life is that I am more active than before being stuck at home most of the time having plenty of time to be on the air.

We are still in a semi-lockdown situation, but we can go to work and move around to visit the family and friends but still have to wear a mask in public.

The airport was opened on the 1st of October all passengers have to stay in quarantine for a 14 days period. I hope things are going well your side, stay safe and healthy.

73,

Pat—3B8FA

(Continued on Next Page)

COVID-19 Activities (cont.)

Hello dear Bill!

Hope that you are doing well and you are all healthy! It would be my pleasure and please feel free to write!

I think that we all saw that during the lockdown in the quarantine, it was an opportunity to spend more time on the radio! Suddenly all the bands were busy and full! There were some early contests where the participation was much more than the expected. Yes, at first it was great! But then you realized that there could be no DX-peditions, and that you couldn't run a contest with your team from the contest stations! At J42L we are lucky to have a Flex 6600, so we could work remotely, but still, not the same! We missed all the fun! So there was more operating from our QTH. 73 de **SV2ESW**.....

Hey, Bill! No problem, I hope my answers will satisfy you.

What have you changed in your amateur radio "life" as a result of COVID?

I was always very active on the bands. For more than 30 years I run the station on daily basis. That also means that I didn't change my life because Corona. Especially not HAM life. I'm lucky that our location is close to my home, even the spring restriction on traveling to other municipality doesn't hit me. On the other hand I'm retired from 2019, I have even some more time to be on the radio. I'm close to 50 000 QSO this year - I can say that I'm even more active than before.

Regards from Slovenia, de **Janez S51DX**

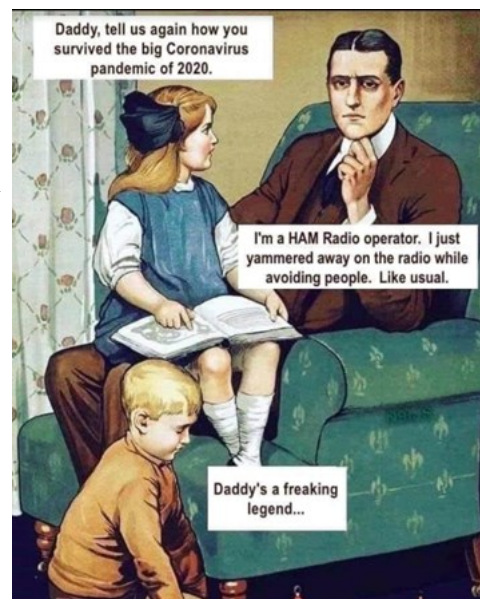


Hi Bill,

Nothing has changed in my amateur radio life as a result of Covid 19. Although so far about 15,000 cases have been recorded in Zambia with 333 deaths life has changed very little. Few people are taking any preventative measures at all, schools have reopened, bars and restaurants have reopened but infection figures have dropped.

As I am retired I rarely leave home at all so the poor propagation is more of a hindrance to my operating than the virus. For much of the day the bands are dead or signals just too weak for me to copy underneath my local power line noise. Bands begin to open around 16hrs local time. I get in a couple of hours of operating before they close again.

73 Brian , 9J2BO



COVID-19 Activities (cont.)

Hi Bill ,

The answer to your question (What have you changed in your amateur radio "life" as a result of COVID?) Not really much but I have gotten into 2m EME and a bit of 70 CM EME , really my work has me very busy of late and not much time for radio at this time.

Regards,

Chris 9Y4D.



Bill,

Because of Covid-19 it has become really hard to travel outside the borders of Denmark. Although it is not forbidden there are plenty of rules for the different countries that influence travelers like me. So instead of traveling to other countries I travel in Denmark and have been active from more places here.

We do have our Danish Headquarters Station placed in Odense, the town of Hans Christian Andersen. This is a central place in Denmark and I use about 1½ hour to get there with my radio equipment. There is a 25 meter tower with a tri-bander and wire antennas for low bands. A nice shack and good surroundings. I have used this place for WPX CW, SAC CW, CW-open and more.

South of where I live there is a local club with the same antenna arrangement. It is in Aabenraa, about 20km north of the German border. I have done more CW contests from this place.

I am a member of Danish Contest Academy who have a great station in the middle of Jutland. You may know the call sign OZ5E, doing many multi operator contests. I am doing more LO-Band contests from here where I can use an excellent Beverage antenna system together with a self supporting 26m vertical doing a splendid job on Top-Band. I am planning to be there in the CQ WW CW Contest late November. <http://oz5e.dk>

I had plans for travelling to Albania and Greenland this year but the Covid-19 stopped my plans so far. In February this year I was on Madeira participating in the ARRL DX CW Contest with my call sign CR3EE and it seems to be the only travelling out of Denmark for me this year. I look forward to come back to the "good old times" ;o)

OZ2I Henning Andresen

Hi Bill—An interesting question...

I'm no psychiatrist, however, it's interesting to observe human behavior during this pandemic. Drivers here have become increasingly impatient, erratic, discourteous, and downright dangerous, so much so, Rosie and I avoid leaving the safety and security of our home (in a gated community) unless absolutely necessary. The same is generally true in other aspects of everyday life here — folks are under tremendous and increasing stress - everyone needs to be more aware and sensitive, and increasingly prudent in order to avoid trouble.

(Continued on Next Page)

COVID-19 Activities (cont.)

I'm sure Colombia is not unique in this regard, Bill.

This is in response to your question: **"What have you changed in your amateur radio "life" as a result of COVID?"**. I hope my thoughts are not too far off topic.

1) As you probably know, I only operate on 20 thru 10 meters (no antennas for 160, 80 or 40 meters), however, and it could be attributable to propagation, I've noticed a decline (especially in the last 3 months) in the amount of SSB and CW activity. On the other hand, the level of FT-8 activity seems to have remained the same. Perhaps, it's a reflection of people's general mood and/or willingness to engage with others (in a personal way) during the pandemic – I'm not sure.

As a consequence, I've found myself less active than usual (fewer folks to speak with on SSB and CW). On the other hand, there has been no shortage of possible FT-8 contacts – worldwide.

2) I like to share with others, e.g., Internet links to interesting YouTube videos, PDF copies of various magazines I receive, technical articles, white papers, etc. As the pandemic has progressed, I've noticed a steady decline in the level, and/or the timeliness of responses from friends with whom I normally share. Some friends just "*slowly-faded-away*" over time, while others suddenly "*disappeared*" overnight.

Less than 25% of those with whom I regularly share have maintained the usual "back-and-forth" communication. As a consequence, and in an effort to be more "*sensitive*" to others, I have tailored (reduced) the quantity of what I usually share. I'm also being more selective with whom I attempt to share.

Bill, this may not be what you were expecting; it is nonetheless what has changed in my amateur radio life as a result of COVID.

BTW, my wife has been a practicing physician (GP) here for more than 25 years – Rosie is one of the most empathetic, sensitive, and "*life-aware*" people you could ever hope to meet. She and I regularly discuss everything from my continuing cultural adaptation to Colombia, to the vagaries and realities of poverty in Bogota. My response above is somewhat influenced by this.

73, stay safe and keep well, Bill.

John HK3C—www.hk3c.ca

Hi Bill,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to collaborate with one of the most important Clubs that I know. Of course I will be happy to help as much as possible.

As for the question, COVID19 has greatly modified Amateur Radio

Negative:

- No DXpeditions
- Contests or special activations cannot be carried out like friends.

Positive:

- A handful of old Radio Hams are active again due to lockdown.
- We have had time at home to make more radio and to improve our Shacks.

Best 73 **Jose EC6DX**

(Continued on Next Page)

COVID-19 Activities (cont.)

Hi Bill,

Thank you for your email.

Fortunately the terrible impact Corvid virus has had worldwide has not had the same impact here in Tasmania to date with only a few cases reported some time ago. The local government took very swift action to outside travelers closing the border to all but essential people. It certainly changed the way of normal life with numbers limited in shops, sanitizing hands, and shopping trollies.

One thing I have noticed is the normal flu season here is almost non-existent. Amateur radio wise I have noticed a big increase in digital operators to the point I have had to limit the number of QSO's to one per mode/band in my log to give a fair chance to operators to have OC006 TASMANIA Isl. in their log. Tasmania Island only has a limited number of active digital Amateur radio operators and the pile ups were causing long periods of no decodes.

New operators receiving a B4 report relates to being in my log already on same band and mode this being clearly stated on my qrz.com-vk7ac page a useful site to find operators general information.

— Norman VK7AC

Hello Bill,

In Germany most of the licensed or SWL radio amateurs are organized in 1 of over 1,000 DOKs, the smallest unit of amateurs in DARC (German amateur Radio club) and each DOK has its own QSL manager.

Usually the members of a DOK have a meeting at monthly basis, but as meetings were not allowed, we had a virtual meeting by video conferencing.

Now we have a greater meeting room where the social distance of 2 meters to each other is guaranteed and we can meet us personally, so the situation now has normalized.

The bidirectional QSL exchange with my QSL Mgr. was and is no problem, but there is a problem sending QSL cards directly to some countries that do not accept mails from Germany. As a result, I got my QSL cards back from Barbados #62, Brunei #345, French Polynesia #175, Mongolia #363 and Trinidad and Tobago #90.

73 es gud DX

Walter (DE0WAF @qsl.net)

First of all, people aged 60 and over are a huge loss for the world. It is a great loss for future generations that they will not be able to transfer their experiences to the world. I am very sorry for all the American people and world humanity.

Returning to the amateur radio activity, we continue on our way by saying that life is beautiful at home.

Health comes first then the hobby.

"What have you changed in your amateur radio "life" as a result of covid?"

I usually work with CW Morse. **The number of operators around the world using CW has decreased significantly due to covid.** This is because teens often work with Digi mods like FT8. However, there are quite a few using CW over the age of 60.

(Continued on Next Page)

COVID-19 Activities (cont.)

******You asked what changed in my life. HF doesn't taste as good as old anymore. Here I am very sorry for this situation.

I hope this curse ends before more people die and hopefully future generations will put a little more emphasis on cw.

God bless you and all your loved ones.

73 de TA4LYL -Yigit KAYNAK (ADAM)

Hello Bill,

Thanks for your honorable mail. Yes, I remember the previous report couple years ago. I can cooperate with you now of course. So, my answer to your question is:

The covid craziness did not change my HAM radio life at all. Although I have more free time, due staying at home more, I did not spend more time on radio hobby. I have a daily routine, DXing on low bands early in the morning, it is independent of covid. Maybe more activities, I could meet more partners on low bands.

The reason of this might be the "stay home" in USA and other part of the world, or the bad propagation on higher bands.

Fortunately I feel quite healthy myself, everyday do some sports, activities (swimming, biking, running) and try to eat healthy foods (more vegetables and fruits).

I live in the suburban part of Kecskemet city, in house of garden, the "stay home" did not take difficulties in my life.

Have a nice day!

Peter—HA8RM

I am too ornery to let Covid-19 dampen my enjoyment of life, itself, let alone my hobby. However, limited foreign travel has delayed at least one DXpedition. So, when we are able to effect the trip, it will make the experience that much sweeter. While on the subject of 'sweet', this staying at home thing has provided more opportunities to have quality time with my wife. That is a positive. Even going to the grocery is an opportunity for a date.

Radio wise, I have been Beta testing paddle input CW options with the developer of the MFJ RigPi product. Early on in the pandemic, I spent a bit of time on whistle mode (FT8/FT4). My computer will get with your computer to let you know my thoughts on the experience!

Jay – K4ZLE

(cont. on next page)

COVID-19 Activities (cont.)

Hello Bill and Hello friends from SWODXA !

I hope that all members of SWODXA are OK and in a good health condition!

Bill,

Yes, I am agree to reply of your questions. It's a pleasure for me to contact with you and with members of SWODXA.

About your first question - What have you changed in your amateur radio "life" as a result of COVID?

As you already know - every year I organize expeditions to different countries in the Pacific Ocean.

In 2020 I had also planned an expedition to Niue and Tonga. Preparations for this expedition began in March 2020. Tickets for the trip were purchased, accommodation was also arranged. The antenna and technical equipment for the expedition was provided and tested.

We, the team of E6AM & A35GC, hoped until the end that this expedition would be realized! Unfortunately for our great regret and disappointment at the end of August 2020, we were informed by Air New Zealand that all our flights were canceled due to COVID - 19 restrictive measures! In this situation - our expedition to E6 and A35 was postponed to October and November 2021.

The short answer to your question is: COVID - 19 caused my expedition, planned for October and early November 2020, to fail.

Personally - I live as before the appearance of COVID -19. Since the beginning of this "Pandemic", I have been working without stopping and living without paying any attention to this virus! All that I do is maintain good personal hygiene and a strong immune system. I don't wear a mask and I don't use gloves. I know that the only thing that can save me from this virus is a strong immune system!

Bill—So, for now!

My best wishes to you and all members of SWODXA !

Kind Regards!

73! Stan, LZ1GC (E6AM & A35GC).

Hi Bill

Many thanks indeed for your email and the question and I do apologize for the delay in replying.

So far, St Helena has been COVID free due to the restrictions imposed by the St Helena Government and the island's Health Directorate. We aim to keep it that way until a vaccine can be found to eradicate it once and for all. Our biggest fear is that we only have a population of just about 4,000 and if it were to reach our island then it is possible that it will wipe us all out!

I am sorry I can't contribute anything else and good luck with the newsletter, I really enjoy reading it.

Take care, stay safe and 73

**De John ZD7JC
St Helena Island**

Interview with Kevin, ZB2GI

ZB2R and I had an excellent QSO. I requested that Stephen answer a few questions for us. He deferred me to Kevin, ZB2GI who graciously agreed. Kevin has also sent along some follow up information that I know you will enjoy.

AJ8B: How did you first get interested in amateur radio?

ZB2GI: My interest in radio began before I reached double digits. When I would listen to stations on the MW and LW broadcast bands. A few years later I acquired a R107 Reception Set covering 1.2-17.5 MHz with a BFO and began monitoring HF amateur radio transmissions. I also used a Realistic scanner to monitor VHF/UHF amateur radio transmissions and a 286 PC with a homemade Hamcomm interface to decode data transmissions.

AJ8B: Do you have a favorite band or mode?

ZB2GI: 10m & 6m SSB. I tend to operate FT8 initially and switch to SSB when signal levels increase.

AJ8B: What time of day and days do you like to operate?

ZB2GI: I usually operate FT8 from my home station during the day and SSB from the club station or portable in the evening.

AJ8B: Any secrets to your success?

ZB2GI: Operating at 420m (1378 feet) ASL and being surrounded by water on three sides.

AJ8B: Any tips that you can share?

ZB2GI: Call cq before deciding the bands are closed, many operators monitor the cluster and only respond once a station has been spotted. Call cq dx during a pile up ie. "Outside of Europe".

AJ8B: Describe what you are currently using:

ZB2GI: Icom IC-7300 - Home station.
Yaesu FT897 - VHF & UHF.
Icom IC-703 - Portable.

Yaesu FT817 - Satellite.

AJ8B: What advice do you have for those of us trying to break pileups to work DX?

ZB2GI: Slightly delay replying to a dx station, most stations will call immediately and your call will be lost in the pile up. Respect directional calls ie. "Outside of Europe" only. Always give your full call.

AJ8B: Any QSLing hints?

ZB2GI: Ensure you follow the qsl directions set out by the station you are requesting a qsl from.

AJ8B: What coaching/advice would you give new amateurs?

ZB2GI: Reply to stations calling cq initially until you feel comfortable to call cq yourself. Try Data modes, you can make contacts using low power and compromise antennas, even when band conditions are poor.



(cont. on next page)

Interview with Kevin, ZB2GI (cont.)

AJ8B: I reviewed your QRZ.com page and noticed how scenic Gibraltar is. What is it like there?

ZB2GI: Great views. I never tire of the views from the top of the Rock and seeing the Rock from the air or by sea.

AJ8B: Although I know nothing about Gibraltar, I was surprised to see the pictures of the monkeys. Any other surprised on Gibraltar?

ZB2GI: Barbary Macaque monkeys, roam freely on the Rock. The "Rock Apes" as they are known locally, sometimes venture into the city to raid dustbins and enter houses in search of food. The Rock of Gibraltar has around 34 miles of tunnels, nearly twice the length of its entire road network. Gibraltar International airport has a 4 lane road crossing the runway. Traffic lights and barriers control motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians crossing the runway during aircraft movements.

AJ8B: I LOVED the Beach Chair Antenna. My OM used to say if it radiates, you can use it. What gave you that idea?

ZB2GI: Using the Beach Chair Antenna was a John King ZB2JK idea. We went up the Rock to



operate portable and the chair was in the car boot. 10 minutes later it was connected to a 9:1 BALUN, we started calling CQ and made contacts into Europe and across the pond.

I use an aluminum window frame

connected to a 9:1 BALUN to operate FT8 from my home station.

Follow Up Info

Meteor Scatter—I walked up the Rock early in the morning from the 11th - 14th August to operate Meteor Scatter at the top of the Rock during the Perseid meteor shower. My 2 meter station comprised of a FT897 running 50 watts into a Cushcraft 5 2m/70cm (10db) Yagi mounted on a Clansman 6m pneumatic mast and a 0-20db preamplifier. I also used a Win7 Notebook PC running WSJT-X 10 with the radio connected via a data interface and an external USB soundcard. I coordinated my activities in the ON4KST chat room. The "Rock Apes" tended to their young within a meter of my operating position.



6 Meters—I walked up the Rock early in the morning on the 2, 3, 4 & 6th July to operate 6M FT8. The log included 300+ 6M FT8 QSOs working into the UK, E6m FT8. The log included 300+ 6m FT8 QSO's working into the UK, Europe, Kuwait, Dominican Republic, Bahrain, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, UAE, and Japan on July 3rd. Later the same day I made 60+ 6M SSB QSOs working into the UK and Europe.

(Pictures on next page)

Interview with Kevin, ZB2GI (cont.)



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ARRL DX CW and Live Contest Scores

The recent development of live contest score websites is shaping contesting strategy. And, some would argue, it also makes ham radio contesting more attractive to younger hams. These newer hams have grown up with the near-instant gratification of the internet and cell phones and they don't understand the need to wait months for contest result to be published. Live contest scores provide minute-by-minute feedback on how you are doing compared to your competitors. And that's a good thing because ham radio contests are, after all, contests.

Since most of us are tech minded, I thought this would be an interesting article for club members. Reprinted with the permission of the CWOPs organization. This first appeared in "Solid Copy", May of 2020.

One of the major live contest score websites, [The Contest Online Scoreboard](#), is managed by CWops members Victor VA2WA and Randy K5ZD along with K2BB. If you are new to live contest scores, see page 19 for getting started information.

Two CWops members (Craig K9CT and Ward N0AX) with very capable multi-operator stations located in the central USA (and who thus may experience similar propagation) have provided accounts of how live contest scores played a role in their M/2 efforts during the February ARRL DX CW contest. And Anthony AB9YC, president of the [Society of Midwest Contesters](#), provides an account from the single operator perspective. You can view all the data at the [Contest Online Scoreboard archive](#). Click on an individual callsign to see expanded data along with filtering capabilities for that call. (Note: the raw data available on the website has been adapted for this story to reflect the limitations of *Solid Copy*'s page size. See pages 20 and 21 for actual screenshots from the website.)

Craig Thompson K9CT

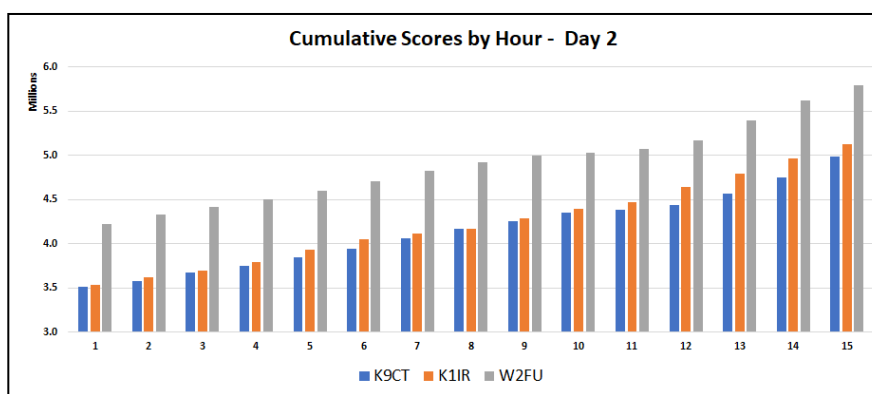
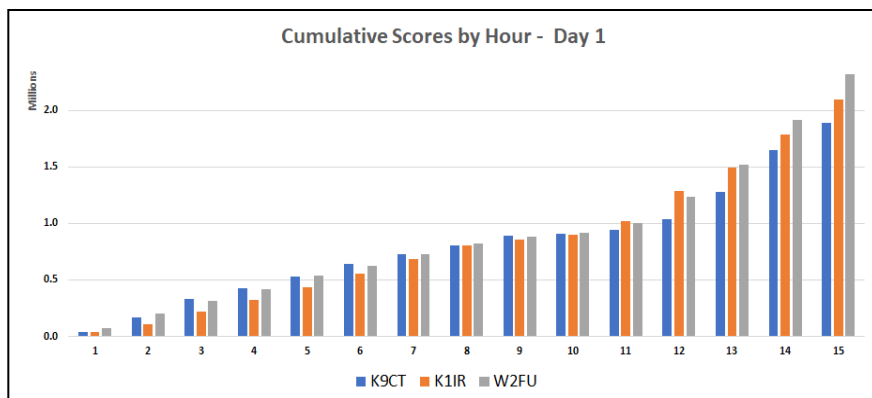
We really enjoy this CW contest. I always invite several very good CW operators (including some CWops members) to be on the team. Many have been on the team several times and this continuity amplifies efficient and effective teamwork. Teamwork is needed as you interleave QSOs between the Run and S&P stations on the same or different bands.

Live contest scores have added a new, important dimension to these events. There is nothing like competition to motivate your team. What does motivate mean? More time in the chair, higher run rates, more multiplier chasing and obvious cheerleading are apparent to the team. Nothing needs to be said as the scoreboard shows you overtaking competitors or having someone nipping at your heels.

Let me show you, in the following two column charts, how we went up against K1IR and W2FU who were in front of us most of the way.

(cont. on next page)

ARRL DX CW and Live Contest Scores (cont.)



As you study these charts, you can see that in the early hours of Day 1, K9CT was able to mount a charge and pass both. However, the first sunlight on the east coast swamped our boat. They both had at least an hour of 20 m running before we could do the same. They both surged ahead, and we were playing catch up the rest of the contest. You can see that differentiation at both sunrises.... 1000 to 1400

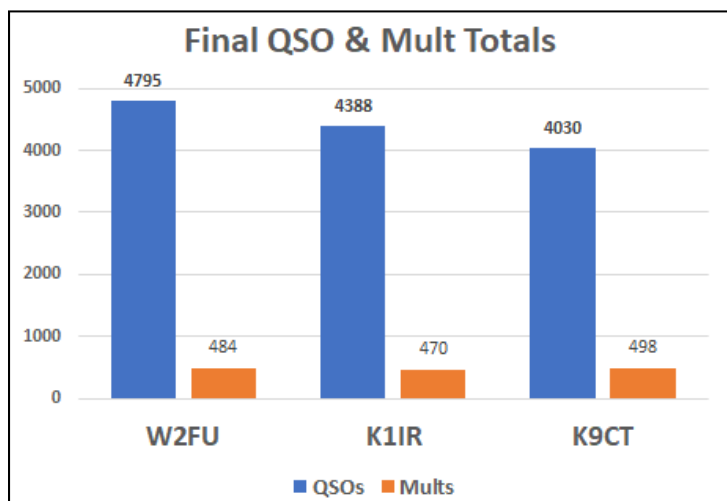
Zulu.

You can also see (right) that we were able to hang with both K1IR and W2FU on multipliers. It was just sheer volume of contacts that kept us in check. We've become very skilled at searching out multipliers at each station during M/2 contests. Each station has a "Run" transmitter and also a "Mult" transmitter. Since only one of these transmitters can be on the air at any time, the operators use hand signals to communicate when they have found a multiplier and interleave the working of that mult so that the run station never misses a beat. [Watch this YouTube video](#) of CWops

members CJWT2P and Steve N9CK as Steve, on the right, works a Mult during the contest.

Hour for hour, W2FU won 31 hours vs. only 17 hours where K9CT posted the better hourly score. We were much closer with K1IR, who had the top score for 25 of the 48 hours while K9CT had the top score 23 of the 48 hours.

No matter the outcome, we had a fantastic time and no regrets on effort. Live contest scores add another element of fun to an already exhilarating CW experience.



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ARRL DX CW and Live Contest Scores (cont.)

Ward Silver N0AX

This was probably the biggest and most focused team I'd had for a CW contest at the station. We often use the E-layer Contest Club call, WØECC, but decided the leading dit in the suffix would be a problem and stayed with my call, N0AX. Two operators came from relatively far away (KX9X and W1PY) while the rest were relatively local, so we were going to push and find out what we could do – conditions looked reasonably good due to the quiet geomagnetic field, even with low flux.

Live contest scores were going to be part of the effort and I set up a laptop in the kitchen for everyone to check. The website was also available on the station PCs but wasn't on-screen all the time. Ops could look at it but were primarily focused on making contacts – imagine that! We used the score distributor from WA7BNM and monitored the [Contest Online Scoreboard](#).

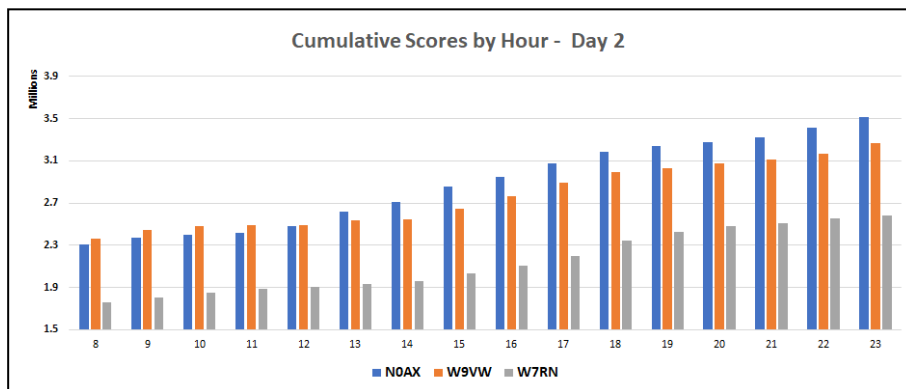
Right off the bat, we could see that we were going to be running well behind K9CT's big station and the rest of the "usual suspects" on the USA East Coast. This could have been a demotivator, but we discovered "peer" stations also in the M/2 but not way far ahead or far behind: W9VW (Indiana) and W7RN (Nevada) which is managed by CWops member Tom K5RC. I have operated from Tom's superb station south of Reno, but I knew that despite his antenna farm, the western location would be a challenge in low-flux conditions. I wasn't familiar with W9VW but a QRZ.com visit confirmed a very capable station, probably being operated remotely – not that it mattered – somewhat

farther east. After a lag in reporting, they jumped ahead of us at the 3-hour mark and it was Game On!

We did not watch the scoreboard much through Friday night thinking that we needed to focus on just making QSOs and finding multipliers. By Saturday morning, though, we started paying more attention. We were about 200 QSOs behind W9VW and somewhat ahead of W7RN. Our multiplier count was a bit ahead of W9VW, so that was encouraging, but we were still about 200k behind in score. This margin held pretty much throughout the day.

Both W9VW and N0AX had EU Saturday morning runs on 20 meters and picked up quite a few multipliers. Here's where the live scoreboard began to affect our strategy – being behind in QSOs meant that we had to keep CQing on 20 meters and avoid the temptation to S&P when a frequency had a dip in rate. We used the show-multiplier features of N1MM+ and worked on picking off new multipliers without losing the run frequency. The second station picked up everything spotted on 15 and kept an ear on 10. This kept us within shooting distance of W9VW and still leading W7RN all day Saturday. At halftime, the order hadn't changed: VW, AX, RN (see column chart below).

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ARRL DX CW and Live Contest Scores (cont.)

Having the scoreboard was motivating through the long night hours. Friday night was a bit of a slog through the 2AM – 6AM period. Knowing that we had to keep working stuff to stay in the race was definitely a help in keeping focused. Saturday night turned out a lot better on 80 and 160 with a big run of multipliers. This moved us farther ahead of RN but VW worked just as many – we were still ahead on the multiplier count but not by much anymore.

Sunday morning, though, we got another chance to run on 20 and we closed the QSO gap over a few hours. We were definitely watching the scoreboard at this point. Knowing you are in the last quarter is exciting no matter what the sport! Finally, we pulled ahead of VW during the 1300 hour by 100k, then 150k, and finally by 200k which is about where things wound up – a dead heat in QSOs and ahead by 30 multipliers (out of 400 and change). With VW so close behind – they caught up slowly in QSOs all day long – we kept at the radios until the very, very end. (I was calling 9V1YC on 20 without success as the clock rolled over – dang!) See column chart below.

In summary, did the online scoreboard affect our strategy? Yes! It helped keep us focused on CQing when 40 or 20 was full of stations, knowing that we were behind the closest station ahead of us and not so far ahead of the station just behind that we could “go DXing.” We CQed more on 15 than we otherwise would have, with a slow-but-steady stream of South Americans calling in.

Seeing the score and QSO/Mult breakdown also provided a reward for bagging multipliers. This was probably key to our maximizing the short 10 m opening on Sunday. We

knew multipliers were important to maintaining our lead, so the second station spent more time tuning on 10 m. 10 was never runnable but short openings to the south and west kept popping up for us.

Finally, in those tired last hours, knowing where you are in the pack is important to maintaining focus when a nap or a walk outside might seem more attractive! It really didn't even matter that other stations were probably in the M/2 hunt (in particular, N0NI's big Iowa station) because we had our own little contest peloton of W7RN and W9VW challenging and pushing us.

Don't want to see a list of all the stations active in the contest? The scoreboard has a "Chase the Rabbit" view that limits the scoreboard to the five scores immediately above and five scores immediately below your score. We didn't use that view, but it might be a more focused way to use the scoreboard.

Getting Started If you are new to online scoring, the first thing you need to do is setup your contest logger to report your scores in real time. [Contest Online Scoreboard](#) provides detailed instructions for setting up eleven different contest loggers. You will need to create an account in order to post your scores. Once you log in, your score is highlighted in red, helping you zero in on your data.

Contests are more fun when there is more activity and following live contest scores is more fun when more contest participants upload their scores during a contest. If you have not tried live scoring in the past, give it a shot in your next contest to see if it works for you.

Elevator “Pitch”

I had the honor of following in the tracks of Jay, K4ZLE, (<https://www.qsotoday.com/podcasts/k4zle>) and I conducted an interview with 4Z1UG.Eric Guth. One of the questions that Eric asked was “You have just gotten on an elevator and you have something in your hands that has to do with Ham Radio. A person in their mid twenties gets on the elevator.You are both going to the top floor.

The person asks you "So, you are involved in Ham Radio? I have not heard about that in years. I am looking for a hobby.Why would I want to get involved in ham radio?"

You have 30 seconds until you hit the top floor.What do you say to them?"I posed the same question to club members. Below are a few responses.

I would talk about... all the different modes we can use and experiment with: Satellites, moon bounce, meteor scatter, communicate any where in the world... all from your own home and your equipment.. no internet. Meeting different people all over the world and making new local friends and and experiencing new activities.

--Ron .. N9RC

It's exciting talking to people around the world either from your home, in your car, or from a mountain top. You can help in disaster situations, or in parades or marathons. It can be educational as you learn about electronics as well as geography. If so inclined, you can travel and meet wonderful people all over the world.

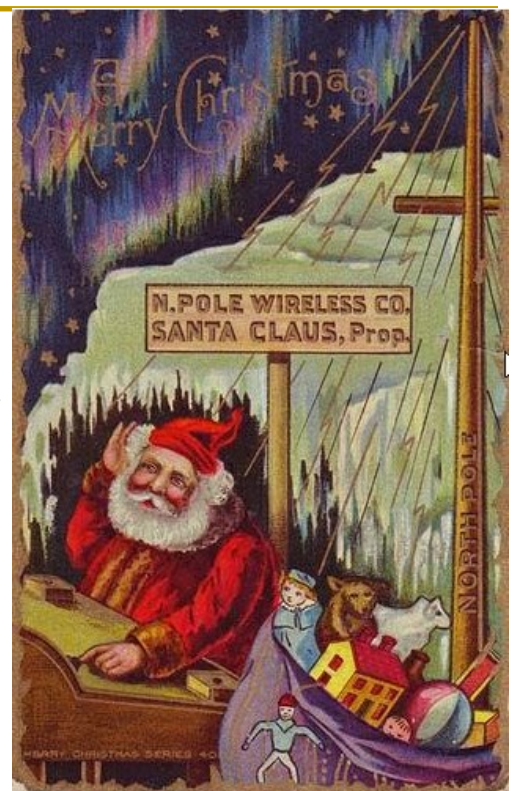
— Joe W8GEX

I'm so excited you asked. From talking to other hams all around the world, sending messages thru satellites, building your own equipment, to using this handheld to support sporting events, natural or man made disasters, amateur radio will have many things you will find fascinating.

All the things I've mentioned and more, can be done without the need for internet, power grid, or a large investment to get started. Google ARRL, and join us at our next local club get together. We will be happy to help get you started.

— Kevin W8KJ

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Elevator “Pitch” (cont.)

You tell me what you are interested in and I can probably connect that interest to some aspect of ham radio that will help you enjoy that specific interest even more."

— Jay K4ZLE

Ham radio encompasses a wide variety of activities; connecting with other hams locally, across the US or around the world, competing against others or just your own scores in various contests as well as experimenting with the latest software derived radios or digital transmission methods. The one thing it all has in common is a radio signal. My personal passions are contacting hams in far flung parts of the world and using low power and temporary antennas to make contacts anywhere. Ham radio is not just a bunch of old guys in dark basements.

— Tom NR8Z

"Ham Radio is a tough hobby... To do it well, you to spend plenty of enough time on the air in front of a radio and then spend time continue learning about the multitude of aspects new ways of doing things...

Did you know, 80% of new newly licensed hams drop-out after a year... With ham radio, at first, you really need to work very hard to find-out what is interesting to you, otherwise you will loose interest fast...

Be prepared to spend big bucks too..."

— Robert Pusch, WD8NVN



The Exchange—11/1/2020—SouthWest Ohio DX Association

SouthWest Ohio DX Association (SWODXA)

Club Fact Sheet

Who We Are: *SWODXA* is comprised of active DX'ers and contesters with a deep passion for all aspects of Amateur Radio. We welcome everyone who is interested in joining our club to please contact us. *SWODXA* members are active in all facets of DX and Contesting. We also travel to, and fund various DXpeditions all over the world. *SWODXA* sponsors the annual DX Dinner held on the Friday evening of Hamvention weekend in Dayton, Ohio. In addition, *SWODXA* members moderate the Hamvention DX Forum. *SWODXA* is proud sponsor of the prestigious *DXpedition of the Year Award*.

DX Donation Policy: The policy supports major DXpeditions that meet our requirements for financial sponsorship. Details are available on the website at: <https://www.swodxa.org/dxgrant-application/> and elsewhere in this newsletter

Club History: The Southwest Ohio DX Association (SWODXA) is one of the country's premier amateur radio clubs. Though loosely formed in mid-1977, the club had its first formal organizational meeting in August of 1981 where Frank Schwob, W8OK (sk), was elected our first President. While organized primarily as a DX club, SWODXA members are active in all aspects of our hobby.

Requirements for Membership: We welcome all hams who have an interest in DXing. It doesn't matter whether you're a newcomer, or an old-timer to DXing; everyone is welcome! Visit <http://swodxa.org/member.htm>

Meetings: The club meets on the second Thursday of each month alternating locations between at Marions Piazza on Kingsridge Dr. in Dayton, OH or Marions Piazza in West Chester. (Check the website) Members gather early in the private room for dinner and then a short business agenda at 6:30 PM, followed by a program. If you enjoy a night out on the town with friends, you'll enjoy this get together. Meeting attendance is NOT a requirement for membership.

Club Officers: Four presiding officers and the past president (or past VP) make up the Board of Directors. The current roster of officers are: President Tom Inglin, NR8Z; Vice President Kevin Jones, W8KJ; Secretary Mindi Jones, KC8CKW, and Treasurer Mike Suhar, W8RKO.

Website: We maintain websites at www.swodxa.org and www.swodxaevents.org managed by Bill, AJ8B. These sites provide information about a variety of subjects related to the club and DXing.

SouthWest Ohio DX Association (SWODXA)

DX Donation Policy

The mission of SWODXA is to support DXing and major DXpeditions by providing funding. A funding request from the organizers of a planned DXpedition should be directed to the DX committee by filling out an online funding request.

(<https://www.swodxa.org/dx-grant-application/>)

The DX Grant committee will determine how well the DXpedition plans meet key considerations (see below). If the DX Grant committee recommends supporting the DXpedition in question, a recommended funding amount is determined based on the criteria below. The chairman of the committee will make a recommendation at the general meeting on the donation.

Factors Affecting a DXpedition Funding Request Approval

| | |
|---|--|
| DXpedition destination | Website with logos of club sponsors |
| Ranking on the Clublog Most Wanted Survey | QSLs with logos of club sponsors |
| Online logs and pilot stations | Logistics and transportation costs |
| Number of operators and their credentials | Number of stations on the air |
| LoTW log submissions | Bands, modes and duration of operation |

| | | | | | |
|----------|-----------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| H40GC | H44GC | ZL9HR | XX9D | HK0NA | FT4TA |
| KH1/KH7Z | EP2A | FT5ZM | C21GC | VK9WA | NH8S |
| K4M | CY9C | VK9MA | PT0S | FT4JA | YJ0X |
| 6O6O | VP6D | TO4E | XR0ZR | VP8STI | SP8SGI |
| W1AW/KH8 | K1N | 3D2C | VK0EK | S21ZBB | E30FB |
| ST0RY | TI9/3Z9DX | VK9MT | K5P | 9U4M | TX3X |
| VU7AB | 3Y0Z | 3C0L | TX7EU | CE0Z | 3C1L |
| TI9A | 3D2CR | 3B7A | K9W | VU7RI | 6O7O |
| C21WW | CE0Z | T30GC | T30L | D68CCC | |