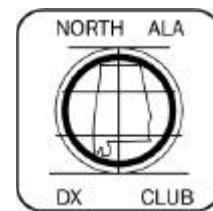


The LongPath



A North Alabama DX Club Publication

Logbook Memories

Dave Sublette, K4TO

I just finished my first scan of the February LongPath and am prompted to write you this note. Thanks for your hard work in seeing that the NADXC has a presence on the web. Those of use who never get to attend a meeting appreciate it. Although I am many years removed from active NADXC participation, I still enjoy reading about the gang and what is going on with the club. A significant portion of my life was experienced in Huntsville, both on and off the air and it is nice to be in touch.

I was especially interested in the article on logbook treasures and it triggered a few thoughts that follow. If you see any merit in putting them in the LongPath, you are welcome to do so.

The article by Tom, KG4CUY has stirred many memories about my logbooks. It is wonderful to be able to use your computer to gather stats like those that were presented. I wish I had a computer log when I was at KX6DS. I spent hours after completing a logbook (every four to six weeks), gathering stats on which continents and modes were worked, trying to make sure I maintained a balance in my operating habits. But there used to be more to logbooks than stats on a computer. This is not a complaint from an "old codger" which bemoans the loss of the good old days. I thought the younger members might be interested in how logbooks were viewed over the years.

To start, a little background information. The year was 1954. I was eleven years old and had discovered amateur radio. I am not sure just how it happened. I had no help. There was no radio club that I could turn to. I learned Morse Code as part of the requirements as I went through the ranks of the Boys Scouts. I somehow got a hold of a license manual and proceeded to memorized it, government language

and all. I had no clue as to what the words meant. I only knew that it was the FCC that held the keys to the kingdom of amateur radio. They made the rules, and the attitude of that day and time was respect for the government and their rules, for the most part. The FCC rules, in my mind, were as important as those ten commandments that Moses brought down from the mountain. If they said it, it was to be done.

For four years, until age fifteen, struggled to bring Morse speed up and to find someone to give me the test. Somehow I got hooked up with a radio club 22 miles south of my hometown and two of their members (both of whom are SK now) gave me the Novice test at the kitchen table of one of the member's homes during a club meeting. Three long months passed before the small envelope with the hallowed return address of "FCC, Washington, D.C." appeared in the mailbox. I had already built my first station, put up the antenna, spent hours listening to hams, and on a light bulb dummy load, had transmitted simulated QSO with imaginary hams by the hour. I am appalled knowing what I know now about how light bulb dummy loads radiate. I would have been terrified if a local had come back to me during one of those simulated QSOs. I would have died on the spot, figur-

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March 9th Program
"Mobile HF DXing"
by Barry Johnson, W4WB
and Don Wolfe, AA4VN

7PM At Ryan's Steak House
1808 University Drive
Huntsville, AL

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"Short Skip" ...

Myron Manker, W4UR

FCC Issues BPL Proposal . . . Most of you probably recall the considerable angst that was created last year when the FCC asked for comments concerning potentially widespread deployment of Broadband over Power Line (or "BPL") technology. This involves high-speed data and voice transmission in the 2-80 MHz frequency spectrum over electric power lines. "Access BPL" is the term applied to BPL transmissions using neighborhood power distribution lines (1 KV to 40 KV), and it's this form of BPL which could potentially produce extremely high levels of HF band interference. Last year's FCC inquiry produced more than 5,000 responses! Those entities which would financially benefit from BPL deployment obviously supported the concept, while many hundreds of amateurs and several significant private and Federal organizations (including FEMA) raised serious concerns about the potential interference that Access BPL could create. On February 23, the FCC issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) that would permit BPL deployment, subject to proposed modifications of regulations and measurements under Part 15 of the FCC Rules that might (emphasis on "might") protect existing radio services from harmful interference. While it acknowledged the need to protect current HF spectrum users from interference, the FCC obviously intends to proceed with deployment of BPL technology. Whether the Commission's proposed regulations and measurement standards would be adequate to prevent harmful interference or not remains an open question. As reaction to the recent NPRM develops, there will likely be much more work all of us as amateurs will have to do to ensure our HF bands are protected from interference. So stay tuned - the significance of this issue cannot be overemphasized.



Seasonal Propagation Improvement? . . . Those of us who have been somewhat exasperated by the generally poor HF propagation conditions that have existed during the past winter months should have some reason to smile as we approach the vernal equinox on March 20. Typically, we see better propagation around this time of year, and hopefully this year's transition to spring will follow that same pattern. I personally thought that 10 and 15 meters were in pretty good shape during the recent ARRL International DX CW contest, and maybe that's a good sign.

Don't Forget To "Advertise" in the LongPath! . . . It might be a good time to remind everyone about the availability of space in the LongPath for members to advertise their equipment wants and needs. If you've got any gear you no longer need and would like to sell, or if you're looking for something you need and just can't do without, why not e-mail Jared Cassidy the particulars. He'll be happy to include them in the newsletter.

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Minutes from the February 10th Meeting

Vic Holland, K4RVH

The February meeting of North Alabama DX Club was called to order at 7:00 PM on February 10, 2004. Twenty-three members were in attendance along with three visitors. The visitors included John Piccirillo W4JXP, Greg Sarrat W4OZK (ARRL Alabama Section Manager), and Dorothy Clark N4SKP (XYL of Ed Clark K4KFH).

Members and visitors were recognized for their participation in various service position in the amateur community. These include Greg Sarrat W4OZK as the Alabama section manager, Tim Wininger KY5R as the Technical Coordinator, Bill Gerth W4RK as the Emergency Coordinator in his home county in Tennessee, and Chris Reed as the Emergency Coordinator for Madison County.

Tom Duncan KG4CUY, announced he had received his DXCC award. Congratulations were extended to Tom.

A few members mentioned some recent DX they had worked including Tom N4KG working AY1ZA, and Barry W4WB breaking a pileup without even making a call.

Tim KU4J reminded everyone of some the upcoming DXpeditions and encouraged everyone to try to work them.

Vic K4RVH gave the treasurer's report stating the account balance was \$2567.26 not including a small amount of cash for change.

An announcement was made regarding NADXC member Jess Lewis KG4OJ upcoming participation in the T33C DXpedition. A motion was carried to provide support from the club of \$50 along with any voluntary donations by members.

The minutes of the January 2004 meeting were approved.

Barry W4WB gave an update of the 3B9FR Materials. Paddles and keyer kit have been delivered for transport. Additional material including an antenna and a PC has been made available. By the way when working 3B9FR, mention Barry W4WB for special treatment!

New business discussions included the following:

The 2004 budget issues and primarily the impact of the hamfest banquet were discussed. Some possible means to cover the potential expenses were discussed. Included was possibly passing the hat to cover any shortfalls. In the spirit of the donations, \$63 dollars were donated. Some discussion related to possibly raising dues were made with no action taken.

The business portion of the meeting was closed and followed by a presentation by Tim Wininger KY5R on the enjoyment and possibilities of 6M DX'ing.

Respectfully submitted,

Vic, **K4RVH**

Keys and Mikes Don't Bite When you Call CQ

Except perhaps for listening to your own signal via EME, most satisfying QSOs involve at least two stations. W4UR's February LongPath article "Is the Band Dead... or is Everybody just Listening?" drove this point home for me.

During daylight hours of the ARRL DX CW contest, I periodically checked 20 MHz WWV, and most of the time received little or no signal. The MUF predictions and the ARRL propagation newsletter from the preceding Thursday were both somewhat bleak. Despite this, the contest had 15 meters hopping, and even 10 meters had some crowded periods, as perceived by my less-than-stellar low dipoles.

Only the preceding week, KY5R's interesting presentation "The Magic of 6 Meters" stressed the point that openings on that band sometimes pop up out of nowhere. These little doses of serendipity may go unexploited in the expanse of a 4 MHz-

wide band if everyone just listens.

We're all taught to listen before we transmit, and to have due regard for the fact that we may be able to receive only one side of an ongoing QSO. Even so, once due diligence is complete, and lacking any response to a few QRLs or "is this frequency in use?", why not go ahead with that CQ?

Reallocation of ham spectrum is always a possibility at UHF and above. While we don't live in fear of this at HF, BPL could lay waste to those bands. In both cases, the best defense may be a good offense: get those bands in use. Even the constant CB encroachment into 10 meters up to around 28.05 MHz was temporarily scared off during the contest!

73,
Tom Duncan **KG4CUY**

ARRL DX Bulletin

This week's bulletin was made possible with information provided by CO2TK, KQ3V, PA3GIO, QRZ DX, the OPDX Bulletin, The Daily DX, 425DXnews, DXNL, WA7BNM and Contest Corral from QST. Thanks to all.

TOGO, 5V. Look for Franck, F5TVG, John, F5VHQ and others to be QRV as 5V7C until March 13. Activity will be on all bands and modes. QSL via F5TVG.

JAMAICA, 6Y. WN9O, WO9Z and W9IU are signing 6Y5/homecalls on all bands until March 14. They will be QRV as 6Y8Z in the ARRL DX SSB contest. QSL contest call via W9IU and others via home calls.

MALDIVES, 8Q. Hardy, DL5SBA is QRV as 8Q7BA from Athuruga Island, IOTA AS-013, until March 20. Activity is on 20 meters using RTTY and PSK modes. He may try 30 and 17 meters as well. QSL to home call.

GUYANA, 8R. Olli, OH0XX will be QRV as 8R1K in the ARRL DX SSB contest. QSL to home call.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, 9Y. Chad, WE9V is QRV as 9Y4/WE9V from Tobago Island, IOTA SA-009, until March 10. He will sign 9Y4ZC during the ARRL DX SSB contest. QSL to home call.

CUBA, CO. Pepin, CO2TK will be a Single Op/Mono Band/Low Power entry in the ARRL DX SSB contest. QSL direct via F6FNU. Meanwhile, Don, VE3ESE and members of the Santiago de Cuba University and City Club will be QRV as T48RAC during the ARRL DX SSB contest. QSL direct via VE3ESE.

MARTINIQUE, FM. Gilbert, FM5FJ will be QRV in the ARRL DX SSB contest as a Single-Op/Single Band/Low Power entry. QSL via KU9C.

FRENCH GUIANA, FY. Didier, FY5FY, Marc, F1HAR, Herve, F5HRY, Olivier, F5MZN and Laurent, F6FVY will be QRV as FY5KE in the ARRL DX SSB contest as a Multi-2 entry. QSL via operators' instructions.

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS, HC8. Alfredo, HC1HC is QRV as HD8A from Santa Cruz Island, IOTA SA-004, until March 9. Activity is on 160 to 10 meters using mostly SSB with some CW. He may also participate in the ARRL DX SSB contest and sign may also sign HC1HC/HC8 before and after the contest. QSL via NE8Z.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, HI. Ted, HI3TEJ will be active in the ARRL DX SSB contest as a Single-Op/All Band/QRP en-

Frank McGonigal, W6DSQ



try, mostly on 80 to 10 meters and possibly 160 meters. QSL via ON4IQ. Meanwhile, Bert, PA3GIO will be QRV as HI9/PA3GIO from Hispaniola Island, IOTA NA-096, from March 11 to 18. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters, including 17 and 12 meters, using SSB. QSL via operator's instructions.

GRENADA, J3. Harry, AC8G is QRV until March 9 and will be active as J37K during the ARRL DX SSB contest as a Single Op entry. QSL to home call.

HAWAII, KH6. Len, K1NU is QRV as K1NU/KH6 from the SeaQMaui resort. This includes being a low-power entry in the ARRL DX SSB contest. QSL to home call.

US VIRGIN ISLANDS, KP2. Glenn, W0GJ and Paul, W0PJ are here until March 9 and will be QRV as KP2A as a Multi/Single entry in the ARRL DX SSB contest. Before and after the contest they are QRV as KP2/homecalls. QSL contest call via W3HNC and others to home calls.

POLAND, SP. Wilhelm, SP8AJC will be active as 3Z8Z in the ARRL DX SSB contest and the upcoming CQ WPX SSB contest as a Single-Op/All Band entry. QSL to home call.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS, VP5. Look for WE3C, N3FTI and KQ3V to be QRV as VQ5A during the ARRL DX SSB contest as a Multi/Multi entry. QSL via KQ3V.

VIETNAM, XV. JP3AZA and JA9BV will be QRV as XV3AZA and XV3BV, respectively, from March 6 to 14. Activity will be on 80 to 15 meters using CW and SSB. QSL both calls via JA3DYU.

Other DX Rumors and News

3DA0, SWAZILAND

Look for a group of four operators to be active starting on March 13th. Activity will be on 160-6 meters. There will be two CW operators and two Phone operators. The Phone guys are Don/W0DM (3DA0DM) and Charles "Frosty"/K5LBU (3DA0CF). The CW guys are Paul/NOAH (3DA0AX) and Chuck/W4GMY (3DA0CG). There will also be activity on RTTY and PSK. They are going to be setting up an "L" antenna and several beverages for 160m along with a 54 foot vertical for 75m. Their antennas also include a 4 element tri-band beam and a 2 element beam for 12/17 meters. They will also have two Butternut HF6V verticals, a 3 element 6m beam, two 160/80/40 meter dipoles and a Tennadyne T6 LogP. Radios will be two Icom 756PROII, one Icom 746 for PSK and a Yaesu FT897 along with two 500 watt amps. QSL to their home call signs.

4L6, GEORGIA

Shota, 4L6AM, will be active in the Russian DX Contest (March 20-21th) as a Single-Op/Single Band (20m) entry. QSL via address on QRZ.com.

5V, TOGO (Update)

Look for 5V7C to be activated this week. The 5V7C team had a meeting last weekend at Franck's, F4AQJ, QTH. All flight tickets, their passports and visas, and the hotel reservations are in hand (for the several weeks). The gear has been collected from each member, F6KOP, friends and especially from some of their sponsors. Franck/F5TVG and John/F5VHQ will fly to Lome, Togo, two days before the rest of the team to pickup the licenses and begin to set up the equipment at the hotel. They will also check to see how the stations operate, so some 5V7C QSOs are possible on March 4th (in the evening) and 5th. The rest of the team will meet in Paris at Charles de Gaulle, Roissy Airport, on March 6th at 0900z; boarding at 1250z. The whole team consists of: Frank/F4AJQ, Dany/F5CW, John/F5VHQ, Romain/F8BUI, Frank/F5YVG and Pascal/F5JSD. Two pilot stations have been confirmed: Bruno/F5AGB for Europe and French speaking countries, Floyd/N5FG for the Americas, an Australian and a Japanese pilot station are expected to be announced before the DXpedition. The team's return flight is scheduled on March 13th, late in the evening (time to be confirmed,) so there will be 5V7C signals on the air up to 1200z and/or possibly later. http://5v7c.free.fr/le_togo.htm

7Q, MALAWI (Update)

Steve, G4JVG, sent out the following press release this past weekend informing OPDX that the planning for the major UK Malawi DXpedition scheduled for April 18th to May 1st is progressing well. Their Web page is at:

<http://www.malawi.digital-crocus.com>

A fifth team member, Steve/G4EDG, has been added to the existing team of Mark/G4AXX, Dick/GU4CHY, Rich/M5RIC and Steve/G4JVG. Steve/G4EDG is a veteran of numerous DXpeditions and has been added to share the CW

Frank McGonigal, W6DSQ

operating with Dick. Mark/G4AXX and Steve/G4JVG will share the SSB responsibilities, while all the team will operate on RTTY and PSK. Steve states, "Following numerous requests, we have decided to add 160m (CW only) to the bands on which we will operate. Initially we had decided against using topband because the cost of shipping a suitable vertical to and from Malawi was prohibitive. We have still received insufficient sponsorship to allow for this. However, we should be able to erect a suitable wire inverted-L antenna and so we will certainly give 160m a try. The 7Q licenses have now been issued and are awaiting our collection in Malawi. The callsign we will be using on the DXpedition will be announced on our website shortly before the operation commences. Our expected operating frequencies and propagation tables to various areas of the world can also be found on the website. In order to be as accurate and up to date as possible, the propagation tables will be fully updated after the start of April. Donations continue to be requested. We are very grateful indeed to the small number of European DX clubs and generous individuals in Europe and Japan who have sent donations, but so far no donation from any of the American DX clubs has been forthcoming. The donations promised so far will cover about 50% of the cost of printing QSL cards for the DXpedition only." If you or your local DX club would like to make a donation, please contact Steve, G4JVG, at:

g4jvg@ntlworld.com

9M2, WEST MALAYSIA

Keith, GM4YXI, informs OPDX that he will be active again this year as 9M2/GM4YXI, March 7-29th. Keith says, "I have no definite plans for which IOTAs I will try this year but hope to be QRV the weekends of the 13-14th and 20-21st, March. I will try for AS-073 and, if I can find some accommodation, get back to AS-097. I will post last minute plans on DX summit." Activity will be on 20/17/15 meters and, if possible, 12/10 meters CW and SSB. As usual, Keith will use a FT900 and vertical antennas. Keith states, "I tend to lurk around the usual IOTA SSB QRGs and on CW higher in the band. As always, I will have the fantastic support of Kim and Steve, N3SL as QSL managers. This year I hope to be QRV from home base in KL, work schedule allowing, mostly on CW. I also plan to be QRV for WPX SSB as 9M2RPN, as a Multi-2 entry with Rich, G4ZFE."

FO0, CLIPPERTON ISLAND

The Clipperton Island DXpedition is back on and has been rescheduled for April. New transportation has been arranged for another boat and the group is now looking for about 5 to 7 more operators to join the original team. This will bring the team up to 12 to 14 operators. The boat is expected to leave on or about April 10th. The license and landing permission are all in hand. There will be five full time stations on the air and the team will place special emphasis on working Europe and the low bands. If you are interested in joining the team,

(continued on page 7)

"Short Skip" ...cont'd

How Do You Feel About LoTW? . . . The ARRL's new Logbook of The World (LoTW) program has now been in effect since last September. It would be interesting to know how many NADXC members have obtained the "digital certificate" required to participate in the LoTW program, and have e-mailed their log files to the ARRL. Looking at the editorial comments that have appeared in the last couple of months, the jury still seems to be out on LoTW's appeal. Some people say they like it, others say they don't. (Hmmm - what else is new?) We'll try to get some member feedback in the next couple of months.

Contest Logging Software Survey . . . Those NADXC members who actively and regularly participate in DX contests probably have some personal preferences for logging software. There are several varieties available, and I'd be interested in getting an idea of what people are using. More about this at the March meeting.

Amateur Radio Towers for the Birds - - - NOT! . . . An item in the March issue of QST that caught my eye might just fall in the "can you believe it" category. It seems as though the FCC issued a Notice of Inquiry seeking information on the effects of communications towers on migratory birds. It apparently drew more than 250 responses. The ARRL argued there is no scientific evidence that amateur radio antennas and support structures less than 400 feet high significantly contribute to the level of migratory fowl mortality (presumably due to in-flight collisions with such structures). Further action on this issue is still pending. Maybe next will be an inquiry about RF energy propagated through the atmosphere, although our feathered friends should be confident that radio waves don't interfere with their flyways!

73 es gud dx . . . W4UR

Last Call for 2004 Dues!

Vic Holland, K4RVH

As of March 1, sixteen members have not yet paid their dues. As a reminder, these memberships are lapsed. These names will be removed from the current roster at the end of March after written notice is given to these members.

Membership can be restored by simply paying your dues. At that time your status will be returned to Good Standing.

We don't want to lose any members so I hope to receive your dues soon!

Vic, **K4RVH**

Other DX Rumors and News...cont'd

please contact Dave, K4SV, for more information at:

k4sv2@charter.net

HB0, LIECHTENSTEIN

A Hungarian DXpedition will be active from Masescha (1350m ASL) between April 1-8th. Activity is planned for 160-10 meters (including the WARC bands), mostly CW with some SSB. Operators HA5AUC/Pista, HA5BWW/Ed, HA5OJ/Pisti and HA7PC/Karcsi will sign HB0/homecall/P. QSL via their home callsigns (bureau is OK). ADDED NOTE: Also, look for them on 144 and 432 MHz, with the callsign HB0/HA5KHC/P, on the CW and SSB modes. QSL via HA5KHC, Bureau is OK.

PACIFIC TOUR 2004

Rolf, DK2ZF, has began his Pacific Tour from Fiji, on February 27th and will end his travels on April 21st in Guam (with 5 or 6 islands/atolls between this time). Rolf provides OPDX with the following schedule: Departure from Frankfurt - February 25th

Arrival in Fiji	- February 27th
Nauru as C21ZF	- March 9-15th (Maybe 3 days if visa given)
Kiribati as T30ZF	- March 15-30th
Marshall/Majuro	- until April 8th
Pohnpei as V63ZF	- until April 17th
Guam as KH2/DK2ZF	- for 3 days and then back to Germany.

He has antennas for 80-10 meters, he prefers 40/30/20 meters CW. Rolf told us he has a kite now and plans to try 80/160 meters. His radio is a FT-847 w/100 watts. QSL direct with 2 USDs for stations outside of Europe.

R1, FRANZ JOSEF ISLAND

Members of the Moscow Contest Club, consisting of Valery/RD3AF, Leo/RN3AZ, Yuri/RU3AV, Leonid/RZ3DU, Nick/UA3DX and Viktor/UA3AKO, have finished plans on their upcoming DXpedition to Franz Josef Land (**EU-019**). They will operate from this abandoned archipelago as R1FJ from the Island of Zemlya Aleksandry, March 17-25th (weather permitting). Their activity will be on all bands CW, SSB and RTTY. They will also participate in the Russian DX Contest (March 20-21st). Their radio equipment is: FT-1000MPs, FT-857, FT-890 with ACOM-2000 and TL-922. Antennas include: TH-3MK4s, A-3WS, DX-77s and Inverted Vs for 80/160m. QSL via DL6ZFG: Rolf Rahne, P.O. Box 15, 39241 Gommern, Germany. For Russia and the CIS countries, QSL via UA3AKO: Victor Slabodchikov, P.O. Box 867, Moscow, 119334, Russia. The team is looking for financial support, and it would be greatly appreciated. For details, contact either: DL6ZFG - dl6zfg@dl6zfg.de UA3AKO - ua3ako@mail.ru

Also, visit the following Web page for updates at: <http://www.dl6zfg.de/exp.htm>

SV9, CRETE

Giannis, SV9FBG, will be active in the CQ WPX SSB Contest (March 27-28th) as a Single-Op/Single Band (no band provided) entry. QSL via SV9FBG.

T93, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Operators Daniel/T93M, Boris/T93Y, Mario/T94DX (DJ2MX) and Edin/T97M will be active as T93M in the CQ WPX CW Contest (May 29-30th) as a Multi-Single entry. QSL via DJ2MX.

V8, BRUNEI

OPDX was asked to remind everyone that Jim/G3RTE, Phil/G3SWH and Ray/HS0ZDZ (aka G3NOM), who are all members of FOC and CDXC, in association with Greg/V85GD, will be mounting a Multi-band, Multi-mode DXpedition to Negara Brunei Darussalam (Brunei) between March 8-15th. The main operation will take place from the QTH of Greg, V85GD, under the special callsign of V8JIM. A single operator entry will also be made in the RSGB's Commonwealth Contest using the special callsign of V8NOM. Brunei is #82 in the 2003 Most Wanted survey by the 425 DX News. The January 2003 ARRL listing shows Brunei at #129. In addition, Brunei counts as **OC-088** for the Islands on the Air (IOTA) award. Activity is planned for all bands from 160-10 meters and will include CW, SSB and digital modes. Propagation permitting, they plan to have three stations on the air for as many hours every day as is possible. Their main objective is to work as many European, North American and ROTW stations on as many bands as possible. They have set an expedition target of 12,000 QSOs, with an approximately equal split between CW, SSB and digital modes. The QSL Manager for V8JIM will be G3SWH and for V8NOM it will be GM4FDM. They are happy to meet the costs of transport to and from Brunei, but will appreciate sponsorship and donations towards their living expenses, printing QSLs and the like. Any surplus will be equally distributed between the operators to offset their personal contributions.

VK9N, NORFOLK ISLANDS

Look for Babs/DL7AFS and Lot/DJ7ZG to be active this week from Norfolk Island now through March 13th. Activity will be on 80-6 meters SSB/RTTY/PSK. QSL via DL7AFS, to the DARC Bureau or direct to: Baerbel Linge, Eichwaldstrasse 86, D-34123 Kassel, Germany.

YI9, IRAQ

Vicente, EA5YN, reports that Ramon Gomez de Salazar, YN1GSR (3C1GS), is active as YI9GS for the next 5 months. As this was being written, no QSNs have been reported. QSL via EA5BYP, direct only.

(continued on page 10)

RV Nomad

I am writing this fourth column from Tucson, Arizona, as we begin our visit to the Desert South West. This installment includes updates on “RV Communication Central” project activities, a new mobile/portable antenna project, a short summary of amateur radio operating activities and brief travel logs including “local color” comments.

RV Communications Central Update: As mentioned in the February column, my station console is working reasonably well with only minor adjustments required. Re-routing wires between the shelves made set-up and equipment stowing easier. An added bonus, I can now close the cabinet door again! I realized that some of the digital interface equipment needed to be housed in an external DX/Contest-grade quick-connect, external equipment cube.



My first project for February focused on finding a way to have better audio with an effective noise/interference reduction capability for more enjoyable rag-chewing and more effective DXing/Contesting. After pondering this dilemma, I decided to keep the GAP Hear-It In-Line DSP unit in the console and feed its output to a Bose MediaMate Computer Speaker system. The compact Bose system also provides an additional, audio input with adjustable A/B and Both Channel modes. I'll use one channel for the HF Rig and the second channel for my VHF/UHF transceiver. Headsets can be plugged into the speakers, radio or DSP unit. For aesthetics, the speakers can be placed behind the cabinet when not in use. (See Fig-1.)

I will have to re-think my Nomad Equipment Cube project for integrating the MFJ-1275M Sound Card Radio Interface unit, a TNC and additional accessories and pursue it in the coming months.

Craig Behrens, NM4T

My second project focus in February was to create a better, easier to use RV antenna capability. I decided to migrate from using the “minimalist” 8-Band Maldol vertical antenna to my remotely-tunable High Sierra Screw-Driver antenna. A Counterpoise Base Plate assembly had to be designed to complement this High Sierra antenna. Keep in mind that the antenna base is up 14-feet (or more) on a motor home which has a fiberglass roof instead of metal. Furthermore, obtaining an acceptable ground, such as the motor home's chassis would take a long, problematic wire run.

I came across a good deal on four nine-foot whip antennas at the local Ham store in Tucson (PACE Engineering). I intend to use these as counterpoise elements. They will go in positions one through four in the hand-sketch I created for this project (See fig-2.) Positions “A” through “D” could use Ham-Stick antennas tuned to the lower frequencies to further improve performance. Elements could be tuned to different, complementary frequencies to improve performance and band coverage, especially on the low bands. For example, a Ham-Stick (or several) could be tuned to 75-Meters and other(s) to 80-Meters. Finally, with insulators, this compact plate could be set-up with dipole configurations without a vertical element or possibly set-up as a hybrid with both vertical and horizontal pattern components. It should also be possible to configure antennas with different take-off angles with this capability.

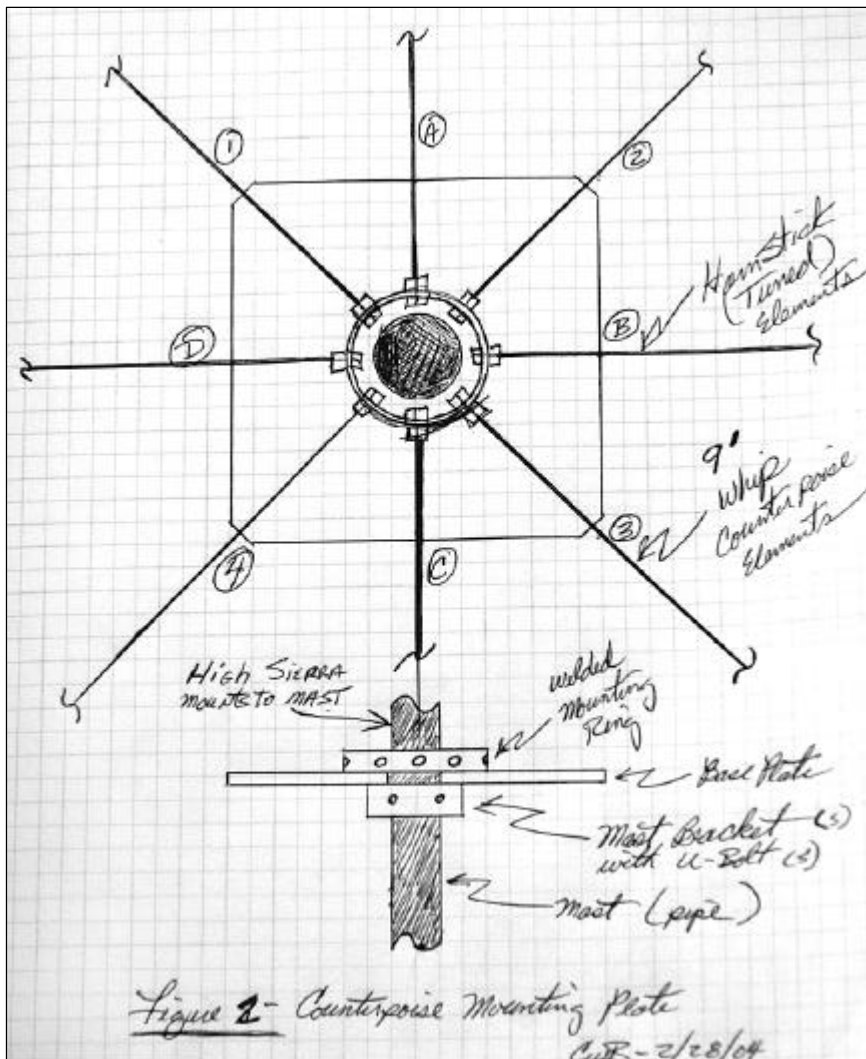
I intend to use this eight-inch square metal plate with an element mounting ring and mast bracket to improve my primary antenna site capability. It will mount on a telescoping mast that is attached to the RV's ladder. It should be possible to extend this mast to a height of 20 feet and still be able to collapse it to where it is no higher than the top of the ladder. Not requiring guy wires is a key design goal for the mast assembly. Another goal is for this mast to be able to support a Screw-Driver Dipole assembly in the future. I plan to implement this at the same time that I build the Counterpoise Base Plate and have pictures for the April “LongPath.”

As a side note, I will use the extendable paint pole that I have been using next to the RV's door with the Madol vertical will instead be used to support my Comet 440-Mhz/144-Mhz/50-Mhz vertical antenna to improve local communications capabilities.

On-the-Air Adventures: So far, I have only been able to do casual operation. My plans to participate in the ARRL DX CW Contest were ruined by weather and having to delay our trip to Tucson. This was a major disappointment. My Worked-All-States count is 35 States, but I'm only up to 20 countries for DXCC. I missed my minimum country goal for

(continued on page 9)

RV Nomad...cont'd



Travel Log (for those interested): We enjoyed our 2-week stay in San Antonio, where tourism is their main business concern. We viewed the city and surrounding areas from the Tower of the Americas, visited the River Walk, and River Center Mall, and of course the Alamo.

We left San Antonio with a record cold front approaching. It was a tough call. We planned to stay at Fort Stockton, half way to El Paso, but decided to break our "RV Time" driving rule and compress traveling 530 miles. Fifteen miles out of Fort Stockton we ran into a snow blizzard. Seen from the RV, the 180-degree panoramic, snow-covered desert view was awesome. When we were one hundred miles from El Paso, we could see the end of the cold front. Our change to Mountain Standard Time helped us arrive just as the sun set. The cold front hit El Paso that night. In the morning I slipped on iced-over RV steps while taking the dog out. Fortunately, neither of us was seriously hurt.

In El Paso we drove through the Franklin Mountain Pass, visited the War Eagles Air Museum, tasted wine at the La Vina Winery, visited four churches on a historical mission tour, and spent a day in Juarez, Mexico. There are approximately 700 thousand people in El Paso and 2 million in Juarez. The smog on the Juarez side of the Rio Grande River was unbelievable! While driving around Juarez, we saw a number of American Companies, such as Delphi and Saturn, as well as a number of large International companies that provide end-products to the U.S.A. (The Mexican communities really like NAFTA down here.)

February, but did manage to transfer my paper and PDA logs into a separate DXBase log book file to better track my RV related QSO's.

Wrap-Up: I hope that my RV projects are of benefit to those who have compromised stations and inspiring to members engaging in projects of their own. Once this antenna and mast project is complete, I will contact the membership and set some schedules to evaluate its performance. It will be great to finally have these improved communication capabilities.

I solicit your ideas/comments on this antenna project, especially from our NADXC antenna-modeling Gurus--Please send E-Mails to craigb44@msn.com.

72/73 & DX,
Craig W. Behrens—NM4T

February, but did manage to transfer my paper and PDA logs into a separate DXBase log book file to better track my RV related QSO's.

We are having a great time in Tucson seeing the Sonoran Desert Museum and the ski lodges/parks in the snow-covered Catalina Mountains (almost 9,000 feet). Although this is Tucson's tourist season, the roads well-planned with little congestion. There are many shopping venues with a major Flea Market, Indian-made goods shops and four indoor malls in close proximity to us—Pam is a happy camper!

We plan to visit Phoenix, Sedona, Flagstaff and Las Vegas in March.

Please contact me via E-Mail if you have any questions and/or want to share information on these travel areas.

Other DX Rumors and News...cont'd

XZ, BURMA

Conny/DL1DA and Abo/DO6ST are now active as XZ1DA and XZ6ST, respectively. The length of their stay is not known at this time. Conny was very active over the past weekend on CW on the WARC bands, as well as 20/15/10 meters. Not much SSB activity. QSL via their home callsigns.

5H, TANZANIA

Hans-Peter, HB9BXE, who states that it has taken a long time to receive a license from here, will be active as 5H1BP from March 1-6th. He received his license on February 19th. Activity will be on 80-10 meters on CW/SSB/PSK31 using a FT-857 with only 100 watts into a wire antenna. On Monday (February 23rd), Hans-Peter will start to climb on Kilimandscharo and hope to arrive on top of the highest mountain of Africa at an altitude of 5896m ASL on Friday, February 27th at 0815z. He plans to be active for about 20 minutes on 21.222 kHz +/- QRM. There will be a list taken beforehand by Sigi, HB9DLE, via E-mail of interested amateurs in order to minimize the pile up and to speed up the traffic. Sigi's E-mail address is: hb9dle@uska.ch. During the second week, Hans-Peter will be active from Zanzibar Island (**AF-032**). QSL via his home callsign HB9BXE.

5U, NIGER

Bull, 5U7JB, hopes to be active during the CQ 160 Meters SSB Contest (February 28-29th). He is currently busy putting up an inverted L antenna. Bull has been active during the past week on 75/40/17/12 meters SSB. Watch around 3793 kHz between 0318-0500z, 7080 kHz around 0530z, 17 meters after 0930z and 12 meters between 1045-1630z. QSL via ON5NT.

8Q, MALDIVES

Hardy, DL5SBA, will be active as 8Q7BA from about March 4-20th from Athuruga Island (**AS-013**). Activity will be on 20 meters, possibly 30 and 17 meters as well, on RTTY/PSK only. He will use a TS-50 with 50 watts into a wire quad antenna for 20 meters - possibly 17/30m with the tuner. Hardy tells OPDX that he will be there on vacation not an expedition, so activity will be sporadic. QSL via bureau (preferred) to DL5SBA.

9U, BURUNDI

Michael, PA5M, has finally received his license and will be active as 9U5M until he leaves on March 17th. He is in Bujumbura for work, so activity will mainly be in the evening hours from his hotel starting around 1600 to 1700z. His activity will be on 40-10 meters CW and SSB, including the WARC bands using 100 watts to a vertical. If it is possible for him to stay longer at the office, he "might" be active on 80 meters, too. However, this is not very likely to happen very often due to the local situation as he has to get back to his hotel. This past week he was active on 30 and 20 meters CW

between 2000-2130z. There is a Web site which will be updated regularly with info and also an online log search is expected soon at: <http://www.pa7fm.nl/9u5m>

QSL requests should go to PA7FM: Dennis Robbmond, Loggerhof 11, 3181NS Rozenburg, The Netherlands (SAE with 2 USDs or 1 IRC outside Europe; inside Europe 1 USD or 1 IRC).

OY, FAROE ISLANDS

Kevin/ON5DRE and Erwin/ON4QJ are expected to be active from here between May 3-13th. Callsign will be announced at a later date. Activity will be on 160-2 meters. However, they will be mostly active on 80, 40, 17 and 2 meters. Also, if AO-40 survives and gets fixed by then, they will also be active on it. For 2 meters, they will be active on phone as well as some digital modes to compromise the somewhat low power.

T33, BANABA (DXpedition Update)

Alan, K6SRZ, sent out the following press release this past week: "The T33C Banaba Dxpediton remains on schedule for starting operations on April 4th or 5th and continuing for at least eleven days. This is a major DXpedition, covering all modes and all bands from 160 through 6 meters. Our container of equipment has arrived in Fiji and will shortly be on its way to Tarawa where we will load it aboard the vessel Te Taobe that will take us to Banaba. The expeditioners extend their thanks to all the sponsors, organizations and individuals who have contributed to the expedition. Banaba is not a tourist destination: everything we need, including food and clean drinking water needs to be shipped to the island. Shipping costs have been very high. We still welcome any and all contributions. You can find details of the trip, including the online logbook and QSL information at our Web site at:

<http://www.dx-pedition.de/banaba2004/>

There is still room for another one or two operators to join the team, though arranging air transport to Tarawa at this late date may be difficult. Please distribute this to all interested radio amateurs. We look forward to hearing you in the pileups...."

Contact: Alan Esheman, K6SRZ, at: doctore@well.com

XF4, REVILLA GIGEDO (Update)

Rafael Antonio ("Tony"), XE1GRR, informs OPDX that next month (in March) a team of eight operators will activate Socorro Island (IOTA NA-030, Grid Locator: DK48), in the Revillagigedo Island Group. They will use the callsign XF4IH between March 3-20th. Operators mentioned are: Jose/XE1J, Enrique/XE1IH, David/XE1XR, Ismael/ XE1AVM, Javier/XE1KOF, Luis/XE1GLL, Martin/XE2ML and Tony/XE1GRR. Activity will be on all the bands and modes HF/VHF/UHF including 50 MHz, CW/SSB/ RTTY/SSTV/PSK31/JT44 and the Satellites: AO-40/AO-7/FO-29/AO-27/SO-50. QSL Manager is XE1IH: Enrique Garcia, P.O. Box 118-481, Mexico, D.F. 07051, MEXICO.

73, Frank, **W6DSQ**

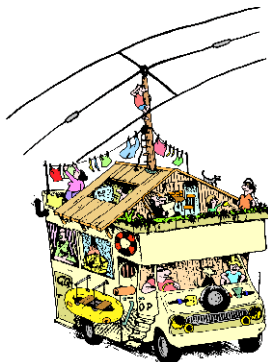
Another Cork From the Pop-Gun

Don Wolfe, AA4VN

Hello again, fellow DXers.

I haven't done much mobile DXing lately, but I did tune down to the CW DX portion of the 20 meter band the other day and got my dose of thrills. It was great jumping into a small pileup and getting through on the FIRST call – two times in a row! Makes me think I still have the timing, coordination, and instinct to be successful as a “pop-gun” DXer, or was it just the “/m” on my call that got the response “/m?” from the DX stations.

Getting ready for this month's club presentation on Mobile DXing, I was doing a little research and discovered that there are now a couple of Kenwood rigs that each have a built-in TNC that enables APRS without a computer, as well as DX cluster monitoring. I would jump



for joy to have these two capabilities in my car. I already have a GPS that is used extensively to alert me of county lines when out making runs for the County Hunters. I've just volunteered with the local ARES, and one of these rigs would add greatly to my mobile capability, not to mention the benefit of having DX spots in the car while I'm out doing my daily errands. It has been quite a while since I have been able to add a new one. Can you guess what my next ham purchase is going to be?

On the County Hunting side of this great hobby, I'm closing in on my goal. I now have confirmed contacts for 3,032 counties and am waiting for 6 more to come in. That only leaves 39 for the whole ball of wax. Nearly all of these are within 500 miles and are hard to get because the primary band for county hunt-

(continued on page 15)

ARRL CW DX Contest

Tom Russell, N4KG

First, a fond farewell to our departed friend and fellow con-tester Jim White, K4OJ, who was tastefully memorialized by the J7OJ team representing the Florida Contest Group which Jim founded.

WOW, what a FUN weekend !

The decline in sunspot activity had mostly positive attributes from my perspective operating QRP from Alabama. Propagation on 160 through 15 Meters was incredibly good over the whole contest. Who would have thought that my lower latitude location actually provided a geographical advantage over some of my competitors to the North and West on 10 Meters? Most of the time, only one or two bands were highly productive at a time making band planning obvious and simple.

10M openings to Europe were from 1430 to 1700Z extending Eastward to SU and 4X on Saturday and Northward into ES, LY, YL, and UA2 on Sunday. One JA was heard as the band was closing Sunday.

15M was the 'money band' with long and strong openings to EU and decent openings to JA both days.

20M provided a good post-sunrise opening to EU and a most pleasant surprise low absorption opening (particularly beneficial to QRPer) for several hours in the early afternoon.

40M was the 'money band' all night long with super strong signals from Europe that have to be heard to be believed, especially after their sunrise. My 'rule of thumb' for predicting 40M propagation is that if 15M is HOT during the day, 40M will be strong all night through EU sunrise based on the observation that daytime to nighttime MUF's vary by a factor of about 3 to 1. Conditions supported this theory. IMHO, 40M is best when the Solar Flux is in the range of 100 to 120 +/- a little.

80M was very good both nights. Would you believe a 30 contact hour extending into CQ Zone 15 (OH0, SP, HA, HB, I, OK, OM, S5, YU, 9A) and CQ Zone 20 (YO) Saturday night with 5 Watts?

160M was simply the BEST EVER HEARD in a contest with lots of strong EU signals. Competition was a bit much for a QRPer but most NA / SA DX was worked plus CS6V in EU. I'm sure more EU could have been worked but I returned to 80M where my high dipole was more competitive. All of the 'Have Radio, Will Travel' Contesters in NA / SA / AF kept things interesting when propagation to Europe (EU) was gone and contributed to a lot of Multi-Band QSO's. 107 stations were worked on 3 or more Bands.

Special THANKS to the countless number of operators who dug down to pull my QRP signal out of their noise floor (sometimes after MANY repeats). I was simply amazed by the number of stations who were not moving my S-meter yet

(continued on page 12)

ARRL CW DX Contest...cont'd

were still able to pull me through!

All but 4 contacts were made Search and Pounce (S&P). I have noticed that Low Power (LP) and even High Power (HP) stations who claim all or mostly S&P type operation tend to 'clean out the bands' around 1000 to 1300 contacts depending on conditions. With QRP, I find that I can work 80 to 90% of their numbers on 10 through 40 Meters. Higher power stations show a noticeable advantage on 80 and 160M. I suppose this indicates that I need a beam for 80M at 180 ft. That's NOT likely to happen :-), but it would be nice.

My sleep schedule called for 3 and 6 hours Friday and Saturday Night. I couldn't resist staying on 80M both nights resulting in only 3 and 4 hours sleep respectively after European Sunrise and before local sunrise. I was afraid to take naps in the afternoon and 20M kept things interesting. 38 hours 'in the chair' is about all this near senior citizen is willing and able to safely endure after two heart surgeries.

Note that the ARRL SSB DX CONTEST is scheduled for March 6 (0000 GMT) through March 7 (2400 GMT), 2004

Statistics and station information follow.

Tom N4KG / QRP SOAB (Single Operator All Band)

Call: N4KG
Operator: N4KG
Station: N4KG

Class: SOAB QRP CW
QTH: ALA
Operating Time: 38 hrs

Summary:

Band QSOs Mults (countries)

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160: 21 17
80: 87 46
40: 174 67
20: 227 74
15: 306 82
10: 132 60
-----
```

Total: 947 346 Total Score = 982,986 points

6 Band QSO's = 11 CS6V (only EU), FS5UQ, J7OJ, KH7X, KP2CW, P40W, PJ2T, VP5M, WP3R, ZF2NT, 8P9JA

5 Band QSO's = 20 CS6T, D4B, DA0BCC, DK3GI, DL5AWI, F5NBX, J6DX, OK2PAY, OM0M, P40Y, PJ4R, TI5N, V26DX, V31DJ, VP5K, VP9/K9CC, VP9/W6PH,

WP2Z, ZD8Z, 9A1A

4 Band QSO's = 35 (mostly EU)

3 Band QSO's = 41 (mostly EU)

Other Rare DX = A61 40,20; TA 40,15; UA0 40,20,15; SU 20,15,10; TU 15; V5 40,15; ZL 40,15,10 but NO VK

ONE RADIO - FT990 reduced to 5 Watts Output

ANTENNAS

160M NEW Tree supported Inverted L at 60 ft over 50 radials / wet land (KILLER)

80M Dipole between 130 ft towers favoring NE / SW (also a KILLER ant)

Wire vertical over same radial field as 160M Inv. L Elevated GP

40M CC 2L40 at 95 ft (GREAT Ant)

Dipole at 80 ft SA / Carib (100 ft Center Fed w/ Ladderline + Matchbox)

20M Telrex 3L20 at 75 ft + TA32, TH3, TH7

15M CC 4L15 at 55 ft + TA32, TH3, TH7

10M HB 5L10 at 62 ft + TA32, TH3, TH7

TA32 at 60 ft fixed South

TH3 at 40 ft fixed SE

TH7 at 40 ft (FINALLY replaced bad rotor & cable :-)

Score Posted using 3830 Score Submittal Forms at:

<http://www.hornucopia.com/3830score/> on
www.Contesting.com

Upcoming Programs

Barry Johnson, W4WB

NADXC Program Preview for March 2004

"Mobile HF DXing"

presented by Barry Johnson, W4WB and Don Wolfe, AA4VN

Barry and Don will discuss a variety of issues that should be considered when constructing a quality mobile HF station. These include such topics as selection of the radio, antenna choices, installation fun and folly, speaker, and noise suppression. Operation of a mobile station safely and efficiently will be covered, including logging and CW. A variety of relevant "stuff" will be shown, some SOA and other nostalgic.

NADXC Program Preview for April 2004

"Modulation Envelopes and Sidebands"

presented by Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

The math is covered in a simple way, and discusses the time domain and frequency domain representations of AM, CW, DSB, SSB, and NBFM. The CW part takes a little side road on keying waveshape.

DX Contests for the Coming Month

Chuck Lewis, N4NM

ARRL International DX Contest (SSB), 80-10 meters

Mar. 6, 0000Z to Mar. 7, 2400Z

Exchange: RST plus State or Province; DX sends RST plus power input

See page 96, Dec. QST

Russian DX Contest (CW/SSB), 160 - 10 Meters

Mar 20, 1200Z to Mar 21, 1200Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus serial No. or Oblast

See page 100, Mar QST

BARTG Spring RTTY Contest,

(RTTY), 80 - 10 Meters

Mar 20, 0200Z to Mar 22, 0200Z

Exchange: 3 digit S.N. plus 4 digit time

CQWW WPX Contest (SSB), 160 - 10 meters

Mar 27, 0000Z to Mar 28, 2400Z

Exchange: RS plus Serial No.

See page 100, Mar. QST

OTHERS:

RSGB 80m Club Championship, (Data) 2000Z-2130Z, Mar 1

DARC 10-Meter (Digital) Contest 1100Z-1700Z, Mar 7

RSGB 80m Club Championship, (CW) 2000Z-2130Z, Mar 10

RSGB Commonwealth Contest, (CW), 1000Z, Mar 13 to 1000Z, Mar 14

UBA Spring Contest, (CW) 0700Z-1100Z, Mar 14

RSGB 80m Club Championship, (SSB) 2000Z-2130Z, Mar 18

9K 15-Meter Contest, 1200Z-1600Z, Mar 21

EA (RTTY) Contest 1600Z, Apr 3 to 1600Z, Apr 4

SP DX Contest 1500Z, Apr 3 to 1500Z, Apr 4



Dates & times often change or are misprinted in the journals; beware.

Chuck, N4NM

Logbook Memories...cont'd

ing the FCC was going to come put me away forever anyway. This is not an exaggeration.

With this as a background, the FCC RULES said that no transmission shall be made without entering the date, time started, time stopped, frequency, callsign used, callsign of the station contacted, power input to the final stage, and location of the transmitting station into the station logbook. There were eight items. I remember it well. Even if you called a CQ and nobody answered, you were required to enter the information. The information was to be kept, available for FCC inspection, for a period of two years, minimum. So then the logbook became my personal diary, as it did for almost every ham who was licensed up through the time when the logbook was no longer required by the FCC. I put everything in it. Every time I bought a new piece of equipment, put up a new antenna, or upgraded my license, the information was faithfully entered into the logbook. Significant family events were noted. The birth of my children, for example, was entered into the logbook. Many of you who knew Bill Christian, K4IKR, now a silent key and founding member of NADXC, may remember him telling the story of holding his newborn son (Chuck), placing his foot on an inkpad, and putting the footprint in his logbook.

To this day I can page back through my old logbooks and often I can hear in my mind's ear, the sound of the signal coming through the QRN and recall the QSOs I see listed there on the page. Unfortunately, I have lost my Novice log, the old ARRL mobile logbook, which was a small, 4" x 6" logbook put together with a spiral wire binding. I do re-

member that there were 400 plus QSOs in there during the 6 months I was a Novice and that I QSOed with 38 states.

Times have changed. Logbooks are no longer required. Neither is CW. But these memories are powerful for most of us who grew up captivated by the magic of sitting down in front of a collection of wires, tubes and assorted other components and projecting a part of ourselves out to the world. We received in return friendships and experiences that have shaped our lives. Personally, my interest in amateur radio led to my profession of electrical engineering. My callsign is not really my callsign. It is one of my names. Amateur radio is not my hobby, it is me. It is a large part of who I am. I would not go back to "the good old days" for anything. The gear we have now is far beyond what we could imagine in those days. The 3" x 6" x 9" mobile rig that I use has capabilities that would have required a room full of equipment in 1957. (No joke!)

Thanks for listening to an old man ramble. The next time you sit at your computer, which records your QSOs and keeps track of your DXCC count and runs your radio, think about using those comment fields for more than the weather and rig info. As for the footprints from your firstborn child...maybe a scanner? Don't try the inkpad routine, I found I had to buy a new monitor after several of my grandchildren's footprints obscured the view on my old one :-).

73,

Dave Sublette, **K4TO**

DX Elmer

Sun and Earth's Magnetic Field

For the next few months DX-Elmer will be covering some of the basic foundations of propagation.

The Earth is like an electric motor. It has an iron core (albeit molten iron) and it spins on it's axis. This produces a magnetic field.

You can think of the Earth as a dipole magnet, magnetic field lines radiate between the Earth's north and south magnetic poles. The magnetic field lines of the earth are not symmetrical like those of a normal magnetic. The impact of solar winds causes the magnetic lines facing towards the sun to be compressed while the lines facing away from the sun are drawn out to a point. The Earth's magnetic field is called the magnetosphere. See the diagram in Figure 1.0 that shows the

Tim Pearson, KU4J

Magnetosphere.

Over the past 150 years scientists have shown that the Earth's magnetic field has reduced in strength by nearly 10%. Recently 'cracks' have also been noticed in the magnetic field. Scientists have also noticed that ancient pottery that has been fired in a kiln is a good indicator of the Earth's magnetic field in the past. The clay in the pottery contains fragments of ferrous material that when fired and cooled give an indication of the magnetic field strength and direction at the time they were fired. The data collected from pottery from around the world indicates that the field is weakening and perhaps could reverse so day!

The hourly propagations reports at 18 minutes past the hour on WWV give the forecast s of the Earth's magnetic field.

(continued on page 15)

DX Elmer...cont'd

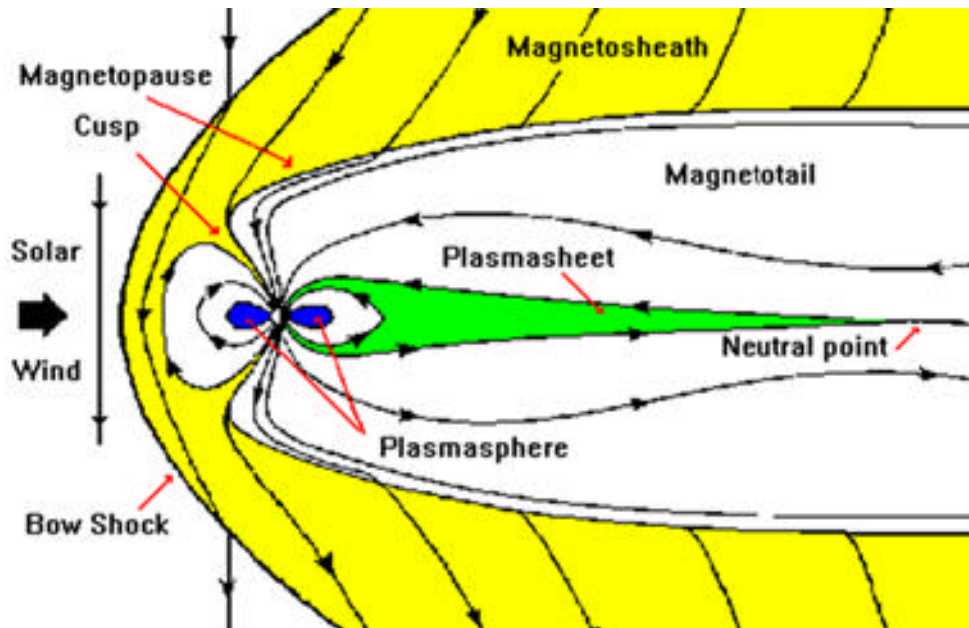


Figure 1. The Earth's Magnetosphere

The numbers are usually given at mid and high latitudes.

The geomagnetic storm probabilities are the estimated chances of at least one 3-hour K index, at the indicated level, for each of the next 3 days.

Active: K = 4.

Minor storm: K = 5.

Major or Severe storm: K > 6.

The "[K index](#)" is a 3-hourly quasi-logarithmic local index of geomagnetic activity relative to an assumed quiet-day curve for the recording site. Range is from 0 to 9. The K index measures the deviation of the most disturbed horizontal component of the magnetic field.

The Sun is also a dipole magnetic and its field is approximately 100 stronger than the Earth's. The Sun's magnetic field is called the Interplanetary Magnetic Field (IMF). Because the Sun rotates every 27 days the IMF has a spiral shape. It's called the Parker spiral after the scientist who first described this effect. During the solar minimum the Sun's magnetic field closely resembles that of an iron bar magnetic, however during solar maximum, sunspots greatly disturb the Sun's magnetic field. We'll cover sunspots in more details in later articles.

For more detailed information see www.spaceweather.com

73's DX-Elmer

Another Cork From the Pop-Gun...cont'd

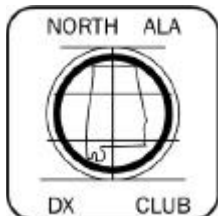
ing is 20 meters and the skip just won't support contacts at these short distances. It is opposite of the problem of DXing – stations are too close, rather than too far away to get a readable signal. I have to catch someone going through these "rare" counties when the conditions are just right or with 40 or 80 meter resonators on their vehicle. Do I have any volunteers to go out and drive around GA, MS, and KY to get 14 of these for me? This has been an 8 year quest, and I hope to finish it this summer.

Until next time...

Don - AA4VN/Mobile

A North Alabama DX Club Publication

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*We're on the
Web:
www.nadxc.org*

***How to Join:** Come to a club meeting; or send in application by mail
(form on www.NADXC.org); or call Vic Holland at (256)721-9106*

Editor's Soapbox

Wow, another LongPath jam-packed with local content. Thanks go out to all our contributors this month!

You may have noticed we have no President's article this month. That is because Tim's wife, Reena, broke her leg and he is playing the role of doctor and Mr. Mom for the family. We hope Reena gets up and about soon!

Well, that's about all I can squeeze in this month. Hope to see everyone at the meeting this month!

73, Jared Cassidy, KQ4VT

Annual NADXC member dues for the year 2004 are payable as of January 1, and we ask everyone's cooperation in getting them in early. There has been no change in the dues for this year . . . \$15.00 for individual memberships and \$20.00 for family memberships (those residing in the same household). That's only \$1.25 per month for individuals, which is a great deal.

If you're able to attend the March 9th meeting, you can pay your dues then. Or, if you prefer, you can mail a check (payable to NADXC) to Vic Holland (K4RVH), Secretary/Treasurer, at the following address:

Vic Holland— K4RVH
219 Cedar Pond Drive
Madison, AL 35757-7633

Thanks to all our members for your continued support. It's what keeps NADXC alive and well!

Your 2004 Board of Directors