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April 2015

NEXT MEETING IS APRIL 14



Curt, WR5J, and Bill, W7KXB, will describe their operation from Patos Island and the Patos Island Lighthouse and the challenges of operating from a State Park and National Monument on a remote, “bring everything you need” island. Lots of great photos!

Rob’s 125th Street Grill, located at 125th and Aurora Avenue North

Dinner at 6:30 p.m., program at 7:30 p.m. Dinner is \$ 20 including tax and tip.

Please RSVP your dinner plans to Adam, K7EDX k7edx@arrl.net

The President Speaks

Adam Blackmer, K7EDX

Thanks to the Mike and Key club for putting on another fine swap meet at the Puyallup Fairgrounds. It was great to see so many of you there. I hope you found some gear you wanted and, better yet, you “bumped” into some old friends.

I have to admit I was entertained reading some of the comments about the Cluster on the club Yahoo Reflector. I am glad I sparked a conversation about the topic. My comments were primarily in response to folks using the Cluster to comment about a DX station. Sometimes they are writing to the stations and other times just making general statements about a DX station. Personally I appreciate knowing if a station is operating RTTY or if they are operating split. It's also nice to know where the spotting station is by a notation such as WWA. There were also some comments about thanking a station on the Cluster. Have you ever been asked to spot a station? You probably have, and this is when I've thanked a station for the contact. I knew he was watching the cluster. We can debate this, but it's not the big issue for me. I think it's really the open ended, whining comments that are the most annoying. Let's be a club that's known for promoting good operator behavior and also practicing it!

Recently, Mike, N7WA, brought up an important topic on the Yahoo reflector. What happens to your station when you become a silent key? Admittedly I hadn't put much thought into the topic. Of course, it's depressing! However, it forced me to have a conversation with my wife. Obviously the bigger your station the bigger the task will be. Since I became president of the club, I've personally been involved with three different estates. These hams donated either all or a portion of their stations to the club. As members we certainly have benefited from their generosity. At a minimum, you should have a ham who has agreed to help and make sure your family has clear instructions of your wishes with the gear. Thankfully the internet has made valuing an estate much easier. One of the estates that gave to the club actually had willed the gear to the club. In return, I had to sign off with the attorney that we had picked up the gear. I realize you're going to live forever, but just in case, do your family a favor and have a plan!

I hope to see you at the Visalia International DX Convention.

Random Comments From the Editor

The PQ0T DXpedition to Trindade has come and gone, quickly. How did you do? I haven't confirmed this but I think it was a 48 hour operation. To my surprise, they were weak everywhere and difficult to work (although, with blind luck, I did

manage QSOs on 12 and 15 CW). Then I checked their website and saw the topographical map showing their operating location and a **very** large volcanic mountain between them and the West Coast. I'm amazed that we even heard them here in Washington. I'm also pretty sure that every PY worked them on all bands and modes.

Lots of work is going on behind the scenes for this year's Pacific Northwest DX Convention, to be held August 7-9 at the Everett Holiday Inn. Rich, W6RS, the Convention Chair, has put in a lot of time establishing and populating the convention website: www.pacificnwdxconvention.com It's still a work-in-progress but you can now register online for the convention and reserve a room at the Holiday Inn. The Saturday evening banquet speaker will be Bob Allphin, K4UEE, co-leader of the K1N Navassa Island DXpedition. And speaking of Navassa, Glenn Johnson, W0GJ, also a co-leader of the DXpedition, has written a detailed report about the trials and tribulations of planning a major project such as Navassa and of executing that plan on the island. Glenn's article appears in the March 2015 Gray Line Report, the newsletter of the Twin City DX Association, and you can find it at <http://www.tcdxa.org/Newsletters/March2015Grayline.pdf>

If you're not attending the International DX Convention at Visalia next week, look for some important DX news immediately following the convention. I know of two announcements that will be made at Visalia and they will add to an already exciting schedule of rare DXpeditions (South Sandwich/South Georgia, Heard Island, Bouvet).

Mike & Key Flea Market—A Post-Mortem

Mike "Dink" Dinkelman, N7WA

Well, it was a long two days and I am tired.

It started out badly the Tuesday before. That's when we found out there would be a FREE Spa sale going on next door using the same gate. You probably saw the heavy ad rotation on TV. Now, how do we control the two groups (free and paying)? Fortunately, that became a non-issue, not too many people going to THAT show. Then, we found out during Friday setup that the building to the south, where we hold VE exams, was also going to be in use Saturday and we couldn't have our usual control of that area. It would be helpful if the fairgrounds were a bit more communicative with a 30+ year customer.

Setup went well, probably done in record time though, with all the other events,

it was sometimes hard to get the attention of facility workers to get all the tables we needed. One boo-boo on setup. We had some table numbers reversed across the back side of each section. No big deal you say? You don't know our customers. Some have had the same locations and neighbors for decades.

It's interesting to compare this event from ones twenty years ago. Back then, sellers came early Friday and stayed until we kicked them out at 8pm. Now, like all of us, they are 20 years older and the place gets pretty quiet after 5pm. Few dicker and chew the fat much into evening. They all go to dinner and head for bed early. They also arrive later on Saturday morning - sleeping in.

We sold out the tables and booths three weeks ago. Usually there are cancellations along the way but few happened this year. Some regulars did not get tables this year - they were simply too late. (BUT I COME EVERY YEAR!) Amazing when you figure we provide preregistration forms with preferred table assignments and an invoice in October that doesn't have to be paid until the end of December.

Lot more people selling stuff through the consignment store this year. Maybe because we sold out of tables so early. Good stuff too. Prices out on the floor seemed a bit high on a bunch of things I looked at. I heard one guy say he was gonna use eBay prices and then his stuff would be priced to sell because there was no shipping.

Advice to those going to get T-shirts from the T-Shirt vendor. Get in early, the XXL and XXXL sizes go first.

We started with a medical emergency just before opening the doors to the public. We had to delay opening the doors about 5 minutes. Our staff was wonderful. We essentially surrounded the table after pulling it out which allowed us to keep everyone away while we opened the doors and the medics worked. Got to see a LifePak 12 Defib/Monitor in action - interesting to me since I wrote software for it.

I had a serious discussion with one of our vendors. He felt we should provide assistance loading and unloading his stuff. I mentioned the liability in such an effort plus the fact that many of us are just as old as him.

Attendance was just about the same as the last several years--we've been flat and running about 1700-1800 through the gate with another 500+ behind the tables. We were out the door by 5:30pm. It helps that a lot of people load themselves out the last couple hours before we close. Still, could you stack 300 tables and 600 chairs

in an hour and a half all the while loading out half the buildings sellers? We got a great bunch of guys and gals in the Mike & Key and it is truly a TEAM effort.

2015 International DX Convention (Visalia)

The 66th International DX Convention, sponsored by the Northern California DX Club, is now open for Registration.

The meeting will be held from April 17-19, 2015 at the beautiful Visalia Convention Center in downtown Visalia, CA.

IDXC, the premier DX Convention in the United States, is attended by more than 800 attendees looking to improve their skills, their stations and their connection with fellow DXers.

Convention Highlights:

- Full day of training on Friday, April 17, 2015: Contesting and DXing Techniques
- Friday Evening Dinner Options: TopBand, IOTA, and Contesting
- Open DX Forum
- 20 DX and Technical Seminars
- 35-40 Exhibitors in large Exhibit Hall
- QSL Card Checking
- Great Raffle Prizes
- Eyeball QSOs with DX Friends
- Excellent Keynote Speakers
- Access to great California destinations for pre- or post-convention Vacations

Please Register Now: <http://dxconvention.com/pages/registration.html>

We intend to make IDXC 2015 the best DX Convention ever, and hope you'll be able to join us.

Sincerely,

John Miller, K6MM
Kevin Rowett, K6TD

Rich Seifert, KE1B
IDX 2015 Co-Chairmen

Reserve Early for the Pacific Northwest DX Convention

As a result of the fine efforts of the Convention Chairman, Rich, W6RS, you can now reserve a room at the Everett Holiday Inn for the 2015 Pacific Northwest DX Convention, to be held August 7-9, 2015 in Everett.

Guests may book into the Pacific NW DX Convention rate by:

- Calling **1-425-339-2000 ext. 1** and requesting rate code **DXC** or asking for Pacific NW DX Convention rate.
- If you have any questions, please contact me directly via email at dhendren@hieverett.com or **425-789-5709**
- Go to the website at www.pacificnwdxconvention.com and book a room online.

WDXC DXCC Ladder

Jim Rockey, WA7SRZ

The WDXC DXCC Ladder is now on the website. You can find it by clicking on “DXCC Ladder” on the homepage or by going to <http://www.wdxc.org/dxcc-ladder-2/> and clicking on “click for dxcc ladder” The Ladder is published in the Totem Tabloid once a year in the January issue. Please send your updates to me at rocco1@frontier.com.

Contest Activity Report April 2015

Mike “Dink” Dinkelman, N7WA

We have entered the final portion of the Northwest Trophy Contest Competition. The only counters left are WPX CW at the end of May and the IARU in July. Next month I hope to have a summary of all entries to this point so we can catch up on those that were missed or lost. Also a request: if you are not going to post on 3830, could you include your class and power in your email to the reflector? Otherwise I’m forced to guess.

Not a NW Trophy counter but a test of interest to the region is the upcoming 7th District QSO party the first weekend in May. I find it a hoot to go out and do this one mobile (practicing for the Salmon Run).

Activity from last month:

ARRL DX SSB

Call	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score
SO Unlimited HP				
K7RL	2647	414	39	3,287,574
K7EG	212	105	11	66,780
SOAB HP				
K7RI	1313	329		1,295,931
N7CGO	273	144		117,072
KD7H	245	108	14	79,380
SOAB LP				
W7QN	1	1		3
SOSB/20 HP				
N5CR	761	102	26	231,336
SOSB/40 HP				
W7WA	1146	94		323,172

SOAPBOX

K7EG: Fri PM and Sat only. Sunday was all day family gathering. Band condx were poor to fair Sat until mid afternoon when 15 & 10 opened. Few EU's, lots of SA & JA. My least favorite contest mode. Participation was much lower than expected. Probably due to conditions plus DX can only work NA stations.

KD7H: With what I would consider very poor conditions, even with high power, I had quite a challenging time making contacts with the old ground-mounted vertical and wire antenna. Although I am not fond of phone contests, I did what I could to help with points for my club (WWDXC). I had some surprises when, for example, I was

able to work two stations from Kuwait on 20m early Sunday morning, and a Sicilian station, also on 20m, when no other European stations were being heard, late Saturday night. I'm certain that those three contacts were thanks to the excellent antenna systems at the DX locations (check out II9P on qrz.com). Seventy-five meters was fun and I got so involved chasing the DX that I stayed up nearly all Saturday night and early Sunday morning (Martti OH2BH as ZF2BH was VERY LOUD on 75m). 73 and good DX, Rob KD7H

K7RL: Truly a roller coaster ride this weekend. The low point was the radio blackout around 22:00Z on Saturday. It took several hours for the bands to bounce back to full strength in what should have been prime running time. 10m was rough. Like N6RO mentioned, all EU was skew path and the window of opportunity to work them was extremely short - I almost missed it. Signals were weak but workable. Thanks to the big gun stations for hearing me! Many thanked me for the new multiplier, and I was just as grateful!

Conditions to Asia were extremely poor on Friday and Saturday. When the usual big gun stations are S3-4, you know it's not going to happen. By Sunday afternoon, conditions improved, but it felt like the damage was done. As a side note, I heard many East Coast stations working Asia and South Pacific Saturday afternoon and not a peep here. I suppose we were being skipped over? Strange conditions.

15m took a couple hours after sunrise to finally open to EU. Even then, it was a struggle to establish any kind of run. With everyone else around the country seemingly enjoying solid propagation, I felt like the tiny ant trying to avoid being stepped on by giants; constantly moving around so my puny S7-9 signal didn't get crushed by the RF wall of +20/30 signals back east. Late morning I finally felt loud enough to hold a frequency for any length of time. The band opened much earlier down south as I heard many stations in W6 and W7 (AZ) working EU. I suppose that's a glimpse of things to come as this solar cycle winds down.

20m was very good to EU in the morning. It's nice to see the band returning to this type of propagation again.

40m was a little disturbed to EU Friday night. Signals were down and I felt like some of the louder stations struggled to hear me. Conditions to Asia, however, were excellent. I took a big chunk of time off Sunday morning, so most of my Qs came from Friday/Saturday night. I don't think conditions were as good Sunday morning, so I'm glad to have slept instead.

80m was unusually good to Asia Friday/Saturday night. Maybe the best I've ever heard. Worked a healthy number of 5, 10, 100 and 200 watt stations that had excellent signals. Even worked a few EU stations.

I have nothing to say about 160m (yawn). Thanks to all for the Qs! 73, Mitch, K7RL
W7WA: In one word the overall band conditions from my location were good. In more detail, as during CW last month the path to Europe was less than ideal, especially Friday evening. Mostly S&P to Europe the first night. Saturday evening I was able to get some brief runs to Europe on simplex and cross band. Two thirds of my QSOs were Japan or Australia (630 JA, 121 VK). Generally excellent propagation and activity from JA except for about two hours of high absorption Sunday morning.

WPX SSB

Call	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score
SO(A)AB HP				
WR5J(K7RI)	2592	859	~30+	4,687,563
KZ1W	1636	678		2,476,734
K7EG	61	59		10,443
SOAB HP				
KW7Y(K7RL)	3259	1107	36	9,588,834
N7RVD	826	425	18:11	734,400
SOAB LP				
W7OM	500	338		420,134
WA7PRC	253	178		118,726

SOAPBOX

K7EG: Family events impacted participation.

KW7Y (K7RL): This felt like two different contests in the same weekend. Day one: "Hey, this is fun!" Day two: "Where the #\$%#@# did everyone go? And why is everyone so damn weak?"

The highly variable conditions made it difficult to pre-plan an effective time off schedule. Consequently, I went by how the bands were producing and took time off when it seemed to make sense. The biggest mistake was having one hour of "off" time

left, and waiting until the end of the contest to take it. I think conditions improved significantly towards the end, so that gamble was a complete fail.

One of the funniest moments in the contest was working NR5M for the first time, when George gave me #2576, only for me to give him the same number in return! What are the odds? Not sure if he thought I was some LID having fun at his expense, but it was a cool and memorable moment. Maybe it's time to buy that lottery ticket?

I couldn't figure out a good way to switch the audio between radios to hand out serial numbers, so this effort was SO1R. I supposed that's what happens when one waits 20 minutes before the contest to start to work out those details.

Congratulations to K1LZ on a monster score in tough conditions. Heard some other big numbers throughout the weekend, so congratulations to those stations too.

Thanks to the real KW7Y for letting me use his call, and thanks to all for the Qs! 73, Mitch, K7RL (KW7Y)

WA7PRC: I got a late start and didn't put in much seat time. 10m and 160m were DEAD. 15m was H-O-T. Fun was had.

WR5J (K7RI): Had planned to make a full-time effort but not to be with Sunday conditions. 40 to Japan was huge disappointment both nights. Saturday daytime was okay but Sunday was a disaster. So much so that I watched the basketball games on Sunday. Thanks to everyone who worked me --- and my apology to those who called but did not make it into my log.

KZ1W: I thought conditions were so-so. The usual EU DX suspects were about and claiming all Hz on 40 and 20. JAs showed on 15 and 40 Friday, not much on Sat pm so the 7 land advantage didn't help as much as I had planned. I missed the 10m opening on Sat, and found only a handful of 10m SA on Sun, but nothing else was happening so I spent some quality time there for 23 Q's. 80m Sat night was fun, slow, quiet, and gentlemanly, and a nice peaceful respite from the 20 and 40 zoo. I hoped I was going to top last year's score but packed it in noon Sunday, 20% below last year with about the same OTA 27 hours. WR5J was everywhere. TNX to all members for the Qs.

W7OM: Low power was kind of fun except running and keeping a frequency. First time to use N1MM+ and recorded audio. Quite a learning experience.

DX Info Sources

John Owens, N7TK (jcowens1@comcast.net)

Discovering what countries (sorry, “entities”) are currently operating on the bands and getting a confirmation (QSL or LOTW) once you work them has become easier in one sense with the flood of electronic information and more difficult in another sense, as the amount of available information is almost overwhelming. Below are some very useful websites that will help solve these problems. If you have other sites that you have found helpful and think should be on this list, please send the info to me at jcowens1@comcast.net and I’ll include them in future issues.

Useful DX Sites

The Daily DX (www.dailydx.com) (subscription service but can’t be beat for timely info)

The DX Zone (www.dxzone.com/catalog/)

Internet Ham Atlas (www.hamatlas.eu)

Announced DX Operations

DX World (<http://dx-world.net>) (look for the “DXW Weekly Bulletin”)

NG3K Amateur Radio Contest/DX Page (www.ng3k.com/Misc.adxo.html)

DXing Info (www.dxing.info/dxpeditions)

Ohio/Penn DX Bulletin (www.payays.com/opdx1044.html)

QSL and Manager Info

Pathfinder (Pathfinder.exe) (<http://www.dxlabsuite.com>) (Click on QSL Info)

QSL Manager Lookup (www.IK3QAR.it/manager)

K3WWP QSL Routes (http://home.windstream.net/johnshan/dx_ss_qsling.html)

HamQTH Callbook (www.hamqth.com/)_

ORCA DX and Contest Club (www.orcadxcc.org/index.html) (Good access to QRZ.com)

Global QSL (Card design and bureau QSL service-print and mail) (www.globalqsl.com/)

Announced DXpeditions

Here are the sites and bulletins I look at to find out what's happening on the bands:

The Daily DX	dailydx.com (subscription and free trial available)
DX World	dx-world.net (free)
NG3K Page	www.ng3k.com and then click on ADXO at the top (free)
DX Summit	www.dxsummit.fi (free)
DXScape	www.dxscape.com (free)
DX Heat	https://dxheat.com (free)

April 2015 Contest Calendar

In case anyone reading this is not aware of it, Bruce Horn, WA7BNM, has a website that is truly a one-stop place for all things related to contesting. The link is <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/> or just Google "WA7BNM" and the first hit is Bruce's site. With just a few clicks, you'll find everything you need to know about every contest, large or small. I find it very useful when I hear a station that I want to work that is obviously exchanging contest reports and I don't know the exchange.

DX Packet Alert Network Frequencies

Bob Nielsen, N7XY (n7xy@clearwire.net)

K7EK-1 - Spanaway (DX Spider Node), K7EK sysop. Telnet to: k7ek.dyndns.org, port 9000

RF: 144.91 MHz - Connect to network node W7DK-5, then type DXC.

145.01 MHz - Connect to network node SEA, then connect to network node K7EK-5, then type DXC.

W7PKT Auburn (DX Spider Node) 145.73 MHz, KA7CSE sysop.
Telnet to w7pkt.net, port 7300

DX Spider user documentation is available at

http://wiki.dxcluster.org/index.php/DXSpider_User_Manual

Lee Sawkins, VE7CC, has written a versatile Windows user program that works with AR Cluster, CC Cluster or DX Spider nodes. It can be downloaded from

<http://www.bcdxc.org/ve7cc/default.html>

Totem Trader

FOR SALE: Have a mint condition **Heathkit SB-221** that is fully modified and on-air checked that I want to sell locally. If interested, I can provide additional information if you contact me at 425-745-0577. John Owens, N7TK

FOR SALE: Bencher Butternut HF-9V Vertical Antenna (10M - 80M) with Counterpoise Kit. In excellent condition, but is surplus to my needs now. It is one of the best vertical antennas made. \$325 for both. John Owens, N7TK—425-745-0577.

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Internet Access

Information on the Western Washington DX Club is also available on the internet at www.wwdxc.org

