



"Ohio First DXCC Field Checking Club"

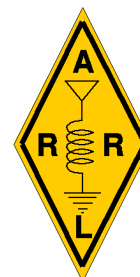
The NODXA RAG

NO8DX - Special Event Callsign
W8DXA - NODXA Repeater 147.360
K8MR - PacketCluster 144.91 & 145.57

Web-site: <http://www.papays.com/nodxa.html>

Newsletter: wd8iou@adelphia.net

Northern Ohio DX Association
P.O. Box 361624
Strongsville, Ohio
44136 U.S.A.



September-October 2007

Fireside Chat With KB8NW

Fellow DX'ers,



As we head into the winter months band conditions should be getting better (we hope!). However, conditions still seem pretty poor, and the debate continues on whether or not we have actually hit the bottom of the sunspot cycle 23. During the summer there were some reports stating that we hit the bottom, but now it seems that it has now been delayed until 2008. All I can say is hang in there, it has to get better.

The upcoming new year is starting to look good for DXpeditions to take place during the first three months of 2008. The operations that were announced are: Chatham/Auckland Island (ZL7/ZL9), Ducie (VP6/D), Cocos Island (TI9) and Clipperton Island (FO/C).

Last time I wrote something it was back in September. Since then the 2007 ARRL Great Lakes Division Convention (GLDC) and the Cleveland Hamfest have taken place. I would have to say that both events were great, especially the 2007 GLDC. The feedback on the GLDC was very good, and everyone I talked to said they would attend again. The seminars, prizes, dinner banquet and the hospitality room were well worth the price. The only disappointing thing was the poor attendances by local area hams. I was glad to be part of and involved in this major event. Hope it comes to Cleveland again.

Lastly, can you believe this great weather we are having, and did you get all your antenna work done before the snow flies? Hope to see you at the next meeting.

73 and Good DX de Tedd KB8NW

"The Mission of the Northern Ohio DX Association is to promote and support Amateur Radio and the DX Community around the world."

Minutes of the July 2nd, 2007 NODXA Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7:35pm by the President, Tedd, KB8NW.

There were 19 members and 2 guest present. Our guest this evening was Ron, K8DZO.

After a round of introductions, the Secretary, Al, N8CX, read the minutes of the June 4th meeting. The minutes, taken by Glenn, AF8C, were approved as read.

The Treasurer, Mary, N8DMM reported a balance of \$Ka-Ching! in the account.

Pete, N8TR, reported that the repeater was running and that the cluster was now working after K8AZ or K8MR had made some corrections. Pete also reported that the cluster is still running a 486 micro and DOS. Tedd, KB8NW, reported that there was some interference coming from the 146.76 repeater.

Dave, WD8IOU, reported that the electronic newsletter had been sent out and that the paper version was going to the printer.

Old-New Business:

Tedd, KB8NW, reported that the Summer NOARSfest would be held on Saturday, July 14th. This is one week earlier than last year.

John, K8YSE, gave a Field Day report. The phone station made 1148 contacts and the CW station made 606 contacts.

Other contacts were made on satellite and other modes. A total of 1250 bonus points were also earned. The total claimed score was 5970.

Tedd, KB8NW, thanked John, K8YSE's, son-in-law W8EDB and John's son KD8CAO for bringing satellite equipment from Michigan.

Pete, N8TR, wants to make another long power cable, but cited the very high cost of copper as a detriment.

Dwaine, K8ME's, generator needs a new muffler.

Mary, N8DMM, echoed the feelings of all that the food was excellent!

Tedd, KB8NW, reported that he had received a donation request from DL7DF for the Burundi, 9U0A DXpedition scheduled for Sep 26th to Oct 9th. Burundi is ranked 48th on the most-wanted

DX list. Karl, K8BCK moved, seconded by Ron, K8VJG, that the club donate \$100. The motion passed.

Tedd also reported that he had received information concerning a request for nominations for three awards to be awarded at the Great Lakes Division Convention on September 22nd here in Cleveland. They are for 1) Lifetime Achievement Award, 2) Technical Achievement Award and 3) Amateur of the Year Award.

Mary, N8DMM, moved, seconded by Ron, K8VJG, that the club donate \$100 to the Great Lakes Division Convention. The motion passed.

The program this evening will be a video of the big contest station of OH0Z in Finland.

The 50-50 raffle of \$18.50 was won by Dwaine, K8ME.

The next meeting will be Monday, August 6th.

The meeting was closed by the President, Tedd, KB8NW at 8:09pm.

Respectfully submitted, Al, N8CX, Secretary

Minutes of the August 6th, 2007 NODXA Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7:30pm by the President, Tedd, KB8NW.

There were 23 members and 1 guest present.

After a round of introductions, Tedd, KB8NW introduced Keith, N8KOL, the DXCC card checker. He will be at the Great Lakes Division Convention on Saturday, September 22nd to check cards.

The Secretary, Al, N8CX, then read the minutes of the July 2nd meeting. After a few minor corrections, the minutes were approved.

The Treasurer, Mary, N8DMM reported a balance of \$Ka-Ching! in the account.

Ron, K8VJG's brother, Jack, of Professional Electrical Products Co., donated 300 feet of 10-4 electrical cable to the club. This cable will be used on Field Day to reach the furthest most tent. Also, a muffler adaptor and baffle will be installed on Dwain, K8ME's generator to direct sound away from tents.

Minutes of the September 10th, 2007 NODXA Meeting

Pete, N8TR, reported that the cluster and repeater are running fine.

Dave, WD8IOU, reported that the newsletter will be completed this weekend.

Linda, N8LRS, reported that the Field Day video was not finished yet.

Old-New Business:

Glenn, AF8C, reported that Chris, DL5NAM, who runs logsearch.de and where the N8S logs were listed in April, needed someone to write a program that would convert ADIF files to "comma-separated values (CSV) files which he can read into his SQL database. Chris had more than one million records to convert. Glenn volunteered to write the program in the C language. He submitted the program to Chris. Glenn reports that he now has a program that will convert ADIF files into CSV files for entry into EXCEL, Access or other programs.

Tedd, KB8NW, asked if anyone had received their BS7H card. Four cards were reported as having been received. Tedd also displayed his #1 DXCC Honor Roll plaque.

Tedd then introduced Steve, N8IS, who had made a vinyl sign for NODXA that will be used at the Great Lakes Division Convention. Steve is also making a new NODXA banner (2' x 4') and a rigid NODXA sign (2' x 3') for use at Field Day and other events. Mike, W8HB moved, seconded by Ron, K8VJG, to spend \$100 for the new signs and banners. The motion passed unanimously.

Tedd wants help at the Great Lakes Division Convention to man the NODXA table. Tedd also reported that the Convention was shaping up nicely. There will be many excellent speakers at the forums. If attendance is good, then there is a possibility of a DX Convention being held next year. This is only a possibility at this time.

The next meeting will be held on the 2nd Monday of September, as the 1st Monday is Labor Day.

Karl, K8BCK, won \$22 in the 50-50 raffle.

The meeting was closed at 9:06pm by the 3 President, Tedd, KB8NW.

Respectfully submitted, Al, N8CX, Secretary

The meeting was opened at 7:30pm by the President, Tedd, KB8NW.

There were 18 members and 1 guest present. Our guest was Joe Mizik, N8QXC

After a round of introductions, the Secretary, Al, N8CX, then read the minutes of the August 6th meeting. The minutes were approved as read.

The Treasurer, Mary, N8DMM reported a balance of \$Ka-Ching! in the account. Mary also reported a new member, Chuck, K8CMP of Middlefield.

Pete, N8TR, reported that the cluster is okay, but the link to K8AZ is intermittent. Pete also reported that the repeater is running fine.

Dave, WD8IOU, reported that the newsletter is online and that the paper version is at Office-Max being printed. A short discussion was held concerning how many newsletters to have as handouts at the Great Lakes Division Convention.

Tedd, KB8NW, put out the call for help at the club table in the hospitality room at the convention. Tedd also showed the new club banner. Everyone in attendance was very impressed.

John, K8YSE, reported that the club has a new website. www.nodxa.org

Tedd, KB8NW, showed paper copies of what the new Field Day signs will look like. A discussion was held concerning which way a direction arrow should point. The matter was resolved. The other sign will have back-to-back arrows (one pointing each way on opposite sides) for use at the driveway entrance.

John, K8YSE, moved, seconded by Ron, K8VJG, that the club donate four (4) DXCC and four (4) DXCC Honor Role patches to the W9DXCC convention.

Tedd, KB8NW, suggested that anyone who gets their DXCC certificate dated between 9-22-07 and 9-22-08 would get one (1) year free membership and a DXCC patch. Dwaine, K8ME, moved, seconded by John, K8YSE, that this suggestion by adopted. The motion passed unanimously.

Mary, N8DMM, reported that the \$100 donation to the 9U0A, Burundi DXpedition was mailed.

Tedd, KB8NW, reported that he had received a donation request from EA5BYP for the group going to 3C7Y, Equatorial Guinea, from October 5, 2007 to October 14, 2007. The request was tabled.

Tedd also confirmed with Al, N8CX, that the club would have its usual wall table at the Cleveland Hamfest. Al reported that the table was reserved. Tedd also said that only one (1) table would be required.

Tedd also reported that he had received a letter from Dee Logan, W1HEO, thanking him for the OH-Penn DX Bulletin and commented about the amount of time that it must take. Dee also included a check for \$50. to be used for anything. Tedd sent the book Tips-to-the-Top to Dee in return.

Old-New Business:

Dwaine, K8ME, is working on the Field Day generator. He reported that the muffling of sound was not as good as expected and that he is still working on it. The generator is working fine though.

Dave, WD8IOU, reported that Stan, K8VI, was in the hospital and receiving treatment after suffering a heart attack.

John, K8YSE, reported that the Route 66 event is this week. The stations will be W6A through W6Q. The order of the stations with respect to their location is reversed this year from last year. John also reported that AO-7 was operating this past week. Up on 2m and down of 10m. See www.amsat.org for details.

The 50-50 raffle of \$17. was won by Ron, W8WH. Ron donated the money back to the club.

Respectfully submitted, Al, N8CX, Secretary

What? You only have ONE antenna?

By Don Keith, N4KC, via eHam.net

First let me try to deflect potential flames

with a quartet of caveats:

- If you only operate on a single amateur band and have multiple wide-spaced elements at 120 feet for that band, then this article is probably not for you (though I believe you could benefit from having access to other radiators in addition to that one big beauty).

- If you operate several amateur bands and have multiple wide-spaced elements at 120 feet for each of those bands, you may already agree with my thought process here, if not the scale of its execution, but it wouldn't hurt you, either, to have some simpler alternatives at times.

- If you live in a condo, town home, garden home or have to answer to covenant Nazis before you can even paint your mailbox or mow your lawn in a different direction, much less put up multiple ham radio antennas, then you probably won't be able to follow my suggestion, even if you wanted to.

- If it's all you can do to get one hank of wire in the air for whatever reason—space, money, physical ability, desire, technical knowledge, allergy to copper and aluminum—and are resolved to make do with it, then you may or may not go along with my idea here.

So here's my contention: to get the most satisfying experience from operating on the high frequency amateur radio bands, you need more than one antenna that works on the bands on which you operate—and ideally at least THREE.

Let me quickly add that I am not suggesting that you put up THIRTY antennas—three aerials for each of the ten HF bands. What I am saying is that, if possible, it is a big advantage to have a choice of antennas—and, if possible, antenna types—for each band. I'm an advocate of multi-band antennas, whether you achieve it with tuner/ladder line, traps, fan-type arrangement, or black magic. With a little ingenuity and lots of poison-ivy lotion and liniment, it's possible to have several antennas that work fine on that vast array of spectrum we have at our disposal. There

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this months edition: N8TR, N8DMM, KB8NW, N8CX, K8YSE, WB8LFO, K8AV, N4KC, N3JBH, NOUJR, eHam.net, and the *ARRL Letter*.

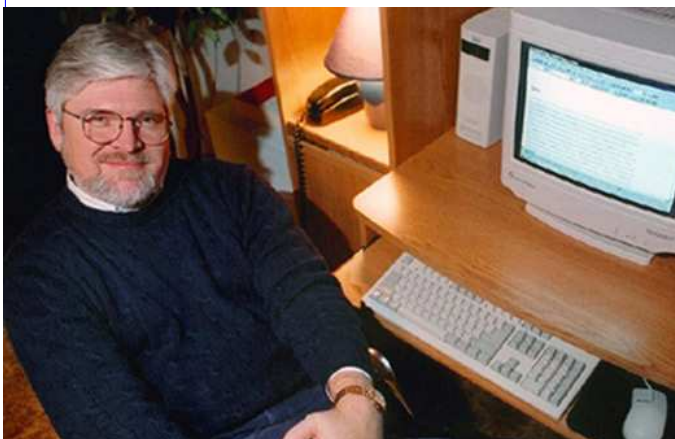
are a dizzying number of sites on the Internet that give good advice on some multi-band alternatives. I even have some thoughts at www.n4kc.com.

Let me give you an example of how having simple options can make a difference in euphoria and "Dang it!"

The other night, I was trying to work the 5L2 in Liberia on 20 CW. The DX cluster said he was on a certain frequency but I could not hear a thing on my big skywire loop...just the chaos of the pileup a few kilohertz above and a few dimwits calling him on his frequency. I quickly switched to my 130-foot ladder line-fed doublet. Yep, there he was, but just barely audible above the noise. But I had one more option—the 4BTV vertical out there in the backyard. Click! And he was suddenly 579 (though I, of course, gave him "599" when I worked him a few minutes later). Side benefit: on the vertical, the dimwits calling on the DX station's frequency practically disappeared.

But there is more. An hour later, I dialed back across, just to see how the 5L2 was coming in by then. He was way, way down in the crud. Jeez, propagation was gone. Glad I got him when I could. But then, on a whim, I flipped the antenna switch back to the doublet. 589! He was loud!

Now how could this be? Those of you who have been around the hobby for a while know that the layers of the upper atmosphere that reflect radio waves back to earth are constantly moving, shifting, and changing. It can offer a variety of heights with different angles of re-



flection (picture a basketball shot, bouncing off the backboard). Holes develop, too, allowing signals to zoom right past, through other layers who have interest in deflecting radio signals, allowing them to travel all the way out into deep space where amused aliens hear them, shake their heads, and make fun of us silly Earthlings. The angles at which our emitted signals strike those obliging layers can determine whether we bag that rare one or just waste lots of kilowatt hours trying.

And different types of antennas at different heights above ground, and varying ground systems they may be working against, can have a big influence on not only how much energy gets to the station you covet, but how much of his emitted RF energy finds its way to the front end of your receiver. Both things have to happen, you see, to make a contact!

To belabor the point, here's another recent example of success through multiple antennas. We have a Sunday night group who solve all the world's problems near the middle of the 75-meter band. Last night, the band was unusually long, and even groundwave signals from twenty miles or more away were lost in the static. One of our group was operating from an RV with a quickie antenna over on the South Carolina coast and the rest of us are in Central Alabama—about 500 miles apart. I was using the doublet, which usually does beautifully on 75, but I could copy very little of what our vacationing friend was saying.

The big loop is usually very good out to about 300 miles on 75 but mediocre any farther away (it's only 20 to 35 feet off the ground) but I decided to try it anyway. And there our RV guy was, bragging about his view of the beach from the campground, his signal suddenly well clear of the noise on the band.

Seems to me that the ideal complement of antennas—again assuming a bunch of big, honkin' beams way up in the sky is not possible—might include one multiband wire with some height above ground, some kind of wire closer to the ground so it radiates almost straight up, and a vertical. I feel rather strongly that a vertical or some kind

of vertically polarized wire (inverted L, maybe) should definitely be in the mix.

Bottom line is, I think most newcomers would be surprised how often an antenna you don't think will work will actually do a better job than something far more elaborate. No matter your license class, your knowledge of things electronic, or how many kilo-dollars you have invested in your station, you have no control over the ionosphere and how it decides to treat your signal.

Yes, a lot of metal high in the air will work best most times. Too many laws of physics dictate that it is so. But it very often pays dividends to have more than one way to aim some RF at the sky and see what kind of lucky bounce you get.

My Famous Three-Step Water Proofing Process

Jeff, N3JBH. via eHam.net

It has appeared to me that there are some folks that simply just don't know how to water proof their PL-259 connections. I have developed my three-step process, as I like to call it. -- Although there is well maybe more than three steps.

But first for the shopping list of items we shall need:

We will need- 1 roll of Scotch super 33+™ + Scotch Rubber Mastic Tape 2228™ And Scotch brand splicing Tape 2155 (tm) Bottle of rubbing alcohol

Now that we have the necessary hardware we first make sure that are PL-259 is securely attached to its opposing connector. And then take a towel and clean all outer surfaces with the rubbing alcohol. We just want to remove any oil and dirt; we don't need to make it surgically clean. Now wrap a layer of the scotch mastic tape starting one inch behind the PL-259 on the coax and continue wrapping over the connector And it's opposing surface. Being sure to overlap

each turn by half.

The second step we will repeat the same wrapping style only using the splicing compound and beginning where we left off with the mastic tape and going towards the coax. Make this go one-inch further down the coax from where you started with the mastic tape.

The final step is over wrap every thing you all ready done with the Scotch super 33+ Tape again starting inch below where you ended with the splicing compound and over lapping each turn by half a wrap.

Okay, I admit this is over doing it a bit. But I never had this method fail. And while I will freely admit I have not done thousands of these on antennas. I used this same exact method in weather proofing electrical connections that was exposed to some really harsh conditions. And that's where I discovered just how great it worked. After removing the covering I made on them some 15 years latter they looked as great as the day I made them.

So there it is fellows. No reason now for not knowing how to water proof the PL-259!



NODXA Club Officials for 2007-2008

President - Tedd Mirgliotta, KB8NW (440-237-2816)
V. President - Dwaine Modock, K8ME (440-582-3462)
Secretary - Al Moriarty, N8CX (216-221-3682)
Treasurer - Mary Michaelis, N8DMM (440-236-5426)
Newsletter Editor - David Autry, WD8IOU (440-238-0417)

As of July 2006

Current DXCC Entities Total is:

337

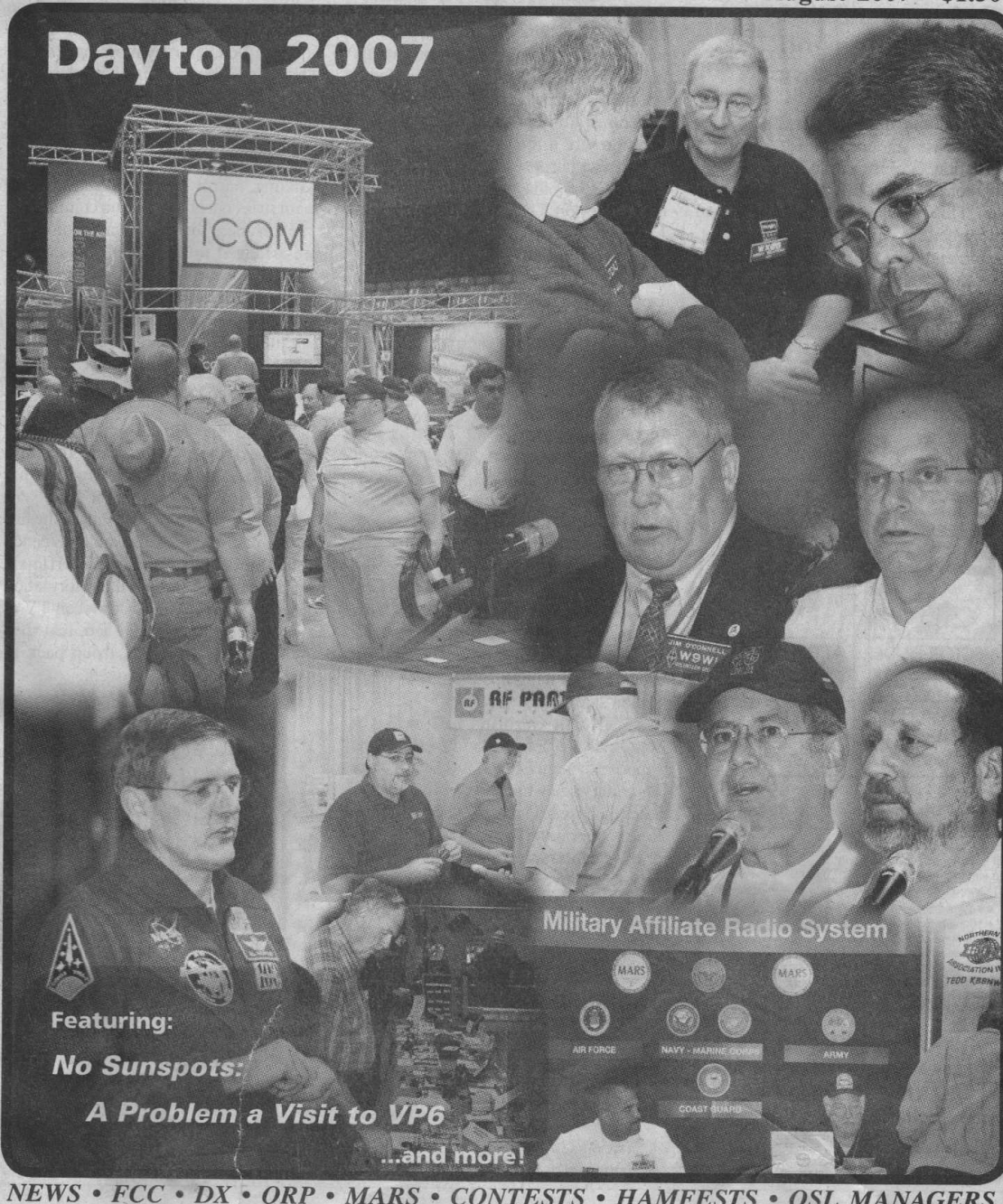
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NODXA Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at the **Gourme Family Restaurant** at 15315 Pearl Road (Rt. 42) just west of Interstate 71 and south of Rt. 82 in Strongsville at 7:30 PM. Come early and have dinner and meet your fellow DXers and enter the 50/50 raffle.

NODXA Application and Renewal Form

The Northern Ohio DX Association is a non-profit organization with a primary interest in DXing. We encourage all DXers to join our group and share the interest and fun of DXing. Please complete the application below and send along your appropriate dues or renewal to:

NODXA, P.O. Box 361624 , Strongsville, Ohio 44136

First Time Membership/Renewal (U.S.) \$12.00

Foreign Membership (outside U.S.) \$22.00

*Foreign Membership (no printed newsletter) (but w/Web access for newsletter) \$12.00

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Special Interest _____

Newsletter circulation: Pete Michaelis **N8TR**, and Mary Michaelis **N8DMM**

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