

September-October 2012

"Ohio's First DXCC Field Checking Club"



The NODXA RAG



Poolside (Closed for the Season) Chat With KB8NW

Fellow DXers,

I would like to remind everyone that NODXA now has a Facebook page that is growing as well as be viewed by many. It is a good place to see/view press releases of announcements of DXpeditions, DXCC news, Contest Info.... etc. You do not have to sign up for Facebook.



Give it a look at: <https://www.facebook.com/NorthernOhioDxAssociation>

I recently updated the club's brochure and was really surprised to see how many DXpeditions NODXA has contributed to in 2012. As of October, the club has donated to 8 DXpeditions. They are:

E51M North Cook Islands	V84SMD Brunei
A35YZ Tonga	3D2C Conway Reef
HKONA Malpelo Island	ZL9HR Campbell Island
NH8S Swains Island	PTOS St. Peter and St. Paul Rocks

NODXA has donated about \$1400 so far this year to DXpeditions. I think that is pretty good for the size of our club. Like I always state, "The main purpose of NODXA is to help 'promote DX and fund DXpeditions'. The members should be proud of this accomplishment.

As I am writing this, three of the above DXpeditions have not yet taken place: V84SMD Brunei (November 11-23rd), PTOS St. Peter & St. Paul Rocks (November 12-24th) and ZL9HR Campbell Island (November 28th- December 9th). Looks like November and early December should be a big month for DX. Do not forget that the CQWW DX CW Contest also takes place between November 24-25th. I might as well mention that the CQWW DX SSB Contest takes place between October 27-28th). As you can see contest season and the winter season is approaching fast. Are you prepared for them?

Lastly, I would like to say I am sorry for missing the Cleveland Hamfest, but family commitments had to take precedence. It was my first and only grandchild's 1st birthday. It was well worth the trip to Tennessee. His first year went by so quickly and he has grown so fast; it hard to believe I was there for his birth a year ago. Anyway, I hope to see you at the next NODXA 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 August 6th, 2012 NODXA Meeting

The meeting opened at 7:38 p.m. by Dave, WD8IOU making a decision to start. Both Tedd, KB8NW, and Dwaine, K8ME, were absent. There were 15 members and guests present. After the usual round of introductions the minutes for the meeting of July 2 were read by Glenn, AF8C. Gary, NI8Z, moved to accept the minutes as read, and this was seconded by Vicki, K8VGM. The motion passed on a vote. Mary, N8DMM listed the treasury balance as \$Ka-Ching! Mary got some renewals today. There was a nice note from Sister Miriam Erb at Sisters of Charity thanking the club for their care of the grounds during Field Day weekend.

Discussion: Dave, WD8IOU, announced that the next newsletter is in progress, and he thanked everyone for their contributions of articles for the newsletter. The repeater is in good shape.



Old/New Business:

Brian, K3USC has set up a new Facebook page for the club. A "good view" would be 18-19 people seeing the page. Facebook policy requires a minimum of 30 people to "like" the page before it starts getting real attention. On the topic of handheld GMRS radios, the terrain affects the signal on the low power 5 watt radios.

Pete, N8TR, reported on visiting Rick, K8ZH, who cannot drive after his recent operations. Rick seems to be doing well, and is walking a mile a day. Rick is also a member of FOC. The Bletchley Park trip group are in "thinking mode" regarding going or not. Pete borrowed a capstan winch for work on K8AZ's antennas. Dave WD8IOU and Brian K3USC discussed whether the NOARSfest is getting noticeably smaller. Pete said that the NOARSfest was at the same time and day as the Estes Auction (www.estesauctions.com) in Burbank, Ohio, off I-71. Could this event have stolen attendance from NOARSfest? In the DX world, Comoros will soon be up as D64K. The St. Peter and Paul rocks group did a reconnaissance, taking a K3 along to test the propagation. This may be the last Dxpedition to that location, due to all the scientific facilities being built there on the flats.

Ron, K8DZO, moved to adjourn the meeting and Joe, K8YN, seconded. The raffle was for half of \$46.00 and the \$23.00 half was won by Steve, K8QXB. The meeting closed at about 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, by the Secretary, Glenn, AF8C.

Minutes of the September 10th, 2012 NODXA Meeting

The meeting opened at 7:30 p.m. by Tedd, KB8NW. There were 18 members and guests present. After the usual round of introductions the minutes for the meeting of August 6 were read by Glenn, AF8C. Jim, KE8G, moved to accept the minutes as read, and this was seconded by Ron, K8VJG. The motion passed on a vote. Mary, N8DMM reported the treasury balance as \$Ka-Ching! Major expenses recorded since August included paying the fee for the Field Day site. No renewals came in. Bruce N8DJX moved to accept the treasurer's report and Ron seconded. On a vote the motion passed. The repeater was reported as working fine.

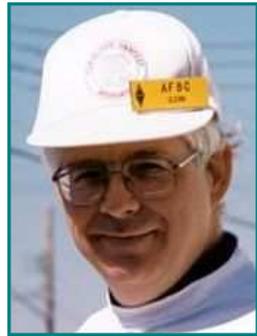
Discussion: Dave, WD8IOU, announced that the newsletter was out a couple of weeks ago and he thanked everyone who sent articles for the newsletter. Dave always needs more articles. Tedd explained why he and Dwaine were both absent at the August meeting. Next month there will be a program: the HKONA video.

Tedd reported the new club Facebook page is gaining popularity. Tedd is putting press releases there. Mark NB8I says we now have 34 "friends" on Facebook.

The Cleveland Hamfest is on September 23. Dwaine will run the club table at the hamfest because Tedd will be absent. Al, N8CX, reported that all clubs will have tables in the main hamfest building this year. CARS and NODXA will be situated next to each other.

Old/New Business:

Jim, KE8G, asked if the club had ever been a QSL manager for any Dxpediton. If there ever is a request to do that, would we go for it? Jim would need help. He also has been invited by Paul, N6PSE, to help the 3D2C Conway Reef operation but Jim can't do it this year.



Tedd said that the Conway Reef group, operating September 24 through October 5 as 3D2C, has requested contributions. Bruce N8DJX moved we send them \$150.00, and Jim KE8G seconded that. On a vote the motion passed unanimously.

Campbell Island ZL9HR will run November 28 through December 9. Bruce N8DJX moved that we fund ZL9HR for \$100, and this was seconded by Dave, WD8IOU. The motion passed on a voice vote.

For PTOS, St. Peter and Paul Rock, Bruce moved for a \$100 contribution and Karl K8BCK seconded. That motion also passed on when voted. Tedd said he likes to send these contributions via PayPal.

Dwaine, K8ME, discussed Walid, OD5ZZ, who no longer has any radio equipment. Dwaine was the OD5ZZ manager at one time. Dave, WD8IOU, asked how was the Findlay Hamfest? The report was that the flea market was small, but there were lots of vendors. Bruce gave an extremely short report on his tower. George, K8KR, announced he will be going to Seattle to visit some radio amateurs. As a result of that he will have visited all 50 states.

Ron, K8DZO, moved to adjourn, and Dwaine seconded. The raffle was for half of \$30.00. Nelson, K8DJC, won the \$15.00. The meeting closed at about 8:20 p.m. The next meeting will be on October 1, with the HKONA video as the program.

Respectfully submitted, by the Secretary, Glenn, AF8C.

ANTENNA FOR SALE

Cushcraft-X-9

Frequency Coverage - 40, 20, 15,10 & 6 meters

Total Number of Elements -9

Boom Length -28 feet

Wind Surface -9.9 ft

Wind Load -----255 at 80mph

Excellent Shape

Total Elements per Band- 4

Turning Radius - 21.7 feet

Wind Survival ---100 mph

Total Weight ----85 lbs.

Asking \$300.00

Contact Dwaine K8ME

K8me@sbcglobal.net

Venus Comes to Earth at Dayton by Sid Lipkowitz, VE3ZSX

I have been going to the Dayton Hamvention without a miss for 26 years now. It is always an enjoyable experience and through the years I have found wonderful treasures. It turned out that 2010 was no exception.

I am somewhat of a Morse-code-key collector and I keep an eye out for the unusual. While casually strolling through the aisles I came upon a gentleman selling two chrome iambic keys. One was the Vibro-



The rare, chrome plated Venus Key discovered at Dayton 2010 by Sid, VE3ZSX

plex dual lever version we are all familiar with and the other was one I had never seen before. It was round had a heavy bright-chrome base with two bright red paddles on long levers, which I knew right away were of Vibroplex manufacture. I picked it up and looked underneath and it said Vibroplex Venus serial number 0009 (see Figure 2). I had never seen or heard of this model before.

The vendor Ray, K9RS, said he purchased it from Vibroplex about 9 years ago and had used it little. He mentioned that it was a discontinued model. Having recently browsed Vibroplex's website I knew there was nothing like this in their current product line. Negotiation over the price was polite; as I walked away I knew I had found something great.

Excited, I told my friends over lunch about my discovery. They suggested I go to the Vibroplex booth and ask someone there about it. I arrived at the busy Vibroplex booth and asked someone for assistance. I was introduced to the former Vibroplex owner "Mitch" Mitchell, W4OA, and found him to be very friendly.

Mr Vibroplex

"Hello sir," I said "I kind of found a Vibroplex key I have never seen before. Would you know what it is?" He looked in amazement and said "You have a Venus key. You have one of the rarest Vibroplex keys ever made. Less than 20, maybe less than 15 of these keys exist in the world."

He explained that about 10 years ago Vibroplex began to manufacture the Venus key. Due to manufacturing problems in the chroming process exacting tolerances required for the long levers of this iambic key could not be attained with regularity and the project was discontinued.



Ray, K9RS, sold Sid the Venus key at the 2010 Dayton Hamvention

"You sir have a rare Vibroplex treasure. It's even rarer than the upright Vibroplex key made 100 years ago! By the way, the original designer of the Venus key, Wayne Smith, K8FF, is over in the next building. Show it to him and see what he says."

Mitch kindly signed the bottom of the Venus key for me and as I left I was dumbfounded. I couldn't believe only 15 or 20 Venus keys existed in the world. From Vibroplex no less.



Sid meets Mitch, W4OA, who explains the history of the Venus key and autographs it to boot

Venus and Mercury

I walked over to Wayne, K8FF, a friendly fellow who, upon seeing the Venus key, was also amazed. "You found one," he said and proceeded to tell me the history of this unusual key. The design was influenced by the original N2DAN Mercury key and hence the name Venus. Using magnets to attain tight and smooth control over key tension, this was Vibroplex's entry into the magnetic iambic-key market. I have owned a N2DAN Mercury key, also rare to find now, it set the standard for magnetic-iambic keys made today. Wayne still has the original drawings and specifications. He personally owns a gold-plated Venus key and even sold the only painted Venus key made — talk about rare!



Sid meets NODXA club member, Wayne, K8FF, who designed the Venus key

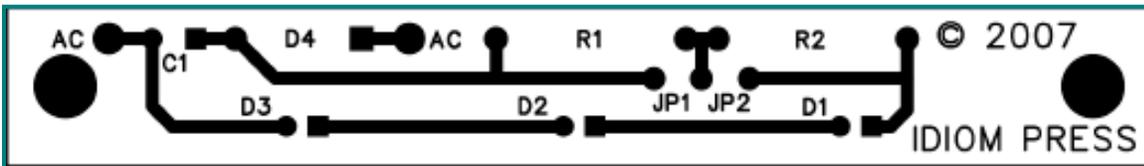
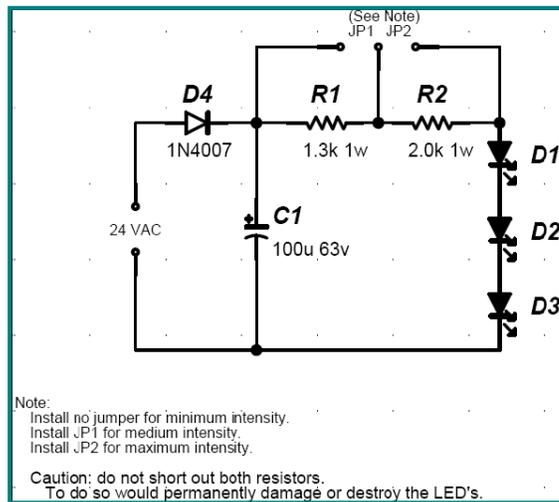
Using the Vibroplex Venus key is a pleasure. The smooth function of the levers is controlled by a strong magnet on a central post allowing easy adjustment from the side. Construction is of the highest quality and the heavy round base with rubber gasket gives solid nonslip support on any surface. This unusual Vibroplex key is generally unknown due to its brief life, but it shows the passion of the designer and the Vibroplex Company to bring it to the ham market regardless of the difficulties involved. For me it just all came together this one day at the Dayton 2010 Hamvention.



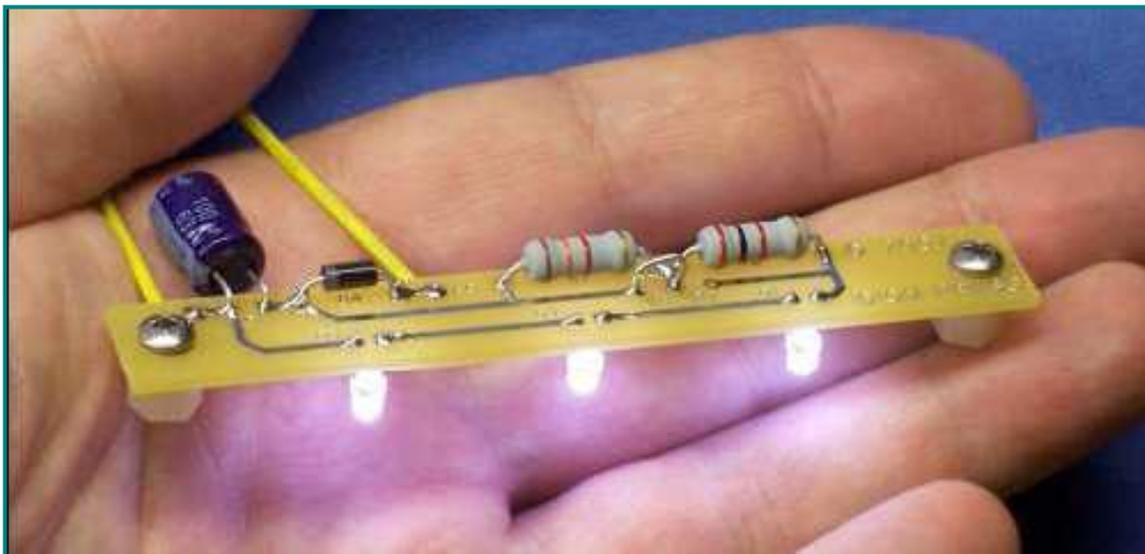
Editor's note: All photographs courtesy of Sid Lipkowitz. Reprint permission granted by ARRL.

Close up of the magnetic post of the Venus key

Idiom Press Rotator Illuminator by Jim Blanca, KE8G



Please note the instructions for Rotator Illuminator appearing in this document are for the newer model of the Hy-Gain Direction Controller Plus that contains a black plastic enclosure for the meter. The meter will NOT have to be taken apart to make these modifications!



Qty	Part No	Description
1	ZRIL001	Printed Circuit Board, Rotator Illuminator
3	ZRIL002	LED, white 140 mcd 140 deg STATIC SENSITIVE
1	ZCOM0060	Capacitor, 100 μ F 63V 20% electrolytic
1	ZCOM0025	Diode, 1N4007
1	ZRIL003	Resistor, 1.3 k Ω , 1 W
1	ZRIL004	Resistor, 2.0 k Ω , 1 W
2	ZRIL005	Adhesive dot, double-sided
2	ZRIL006	Spacer, nylon hexagonal 4-40 threaded 0.25 in
1	ZRIL007	Bag, 3"x5"x2 mil, anti-static reclosable
2	ZCOM0059	Screw, 4-40 X 1/4", SS, ph pan hd MS
1	ZCOM0043	Wire, UL 1007, stranded and tinned, 24 AWG

Installation Instructions

1. Unplug the rotator control box from the mains power supply.
2. Hold the Rotator Illuminator circuit board with the printed wiring side up. The printed wiring side is the top of the board. All the components will be installed on the top of the board, except for the LEDs.

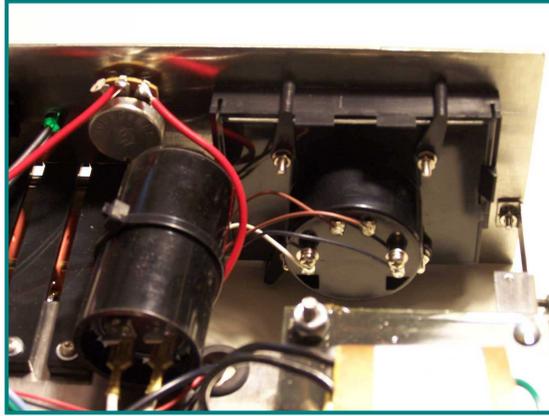
The LEDs are sensitive to electrostatic discharge (ESD). Please take the necessary precautions against static electricity to avoid damaging the LEDs. It is possible to install the LEDs touching the Rotator Illuminator circuit board, up high and away from the meter, or down low and touching the meter. If the LEDs are mounted up high, then the light will be more even but will not be as bright. If the LEDs are mounted down low, then the light will be brighter but not as even. We recommend that you try mounting the LEDs up high at first. If the light is then not bright enough, then you can lower the LEDs later.

3. Elevate the circuit board so from the table surface to make assembly easier.
4. Install the 1N4007 diode in D4 on top of the board. The banded end goes towards C1. Save the trimmed leads for later.
5. Solder the 100 μ F electrolytic capacitor C1 on top of the board. The long lead goes into the hole with the square pad. Do not install C1 flush with the board; instead leave enough room so that the leads can be bent 90°, because there is not room in the control box if the capacitor stands up. When the solder connections have cooled, bend the capacitor leads 90°.
6. Install resistors R1 and R2 on top of the board. R1, 1.3 k Ω , is brown-orange-red-gold. R2, 2 k Ω , is red-black-red-gold.
7. Cut the 24-gauge wire into two equal lengths. Strip the ends of the wires. Install a wire in each hole labeled AC. Install the wires from below and solder on top of the board.

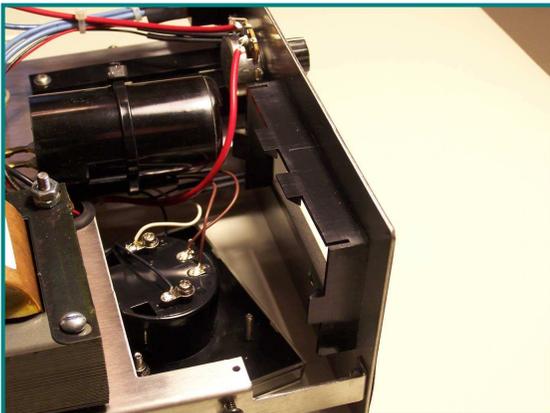
Set the newly assembled circuit box in a safe place until needed in later steps.

8. Remove the upper and lower covers from the controller box.

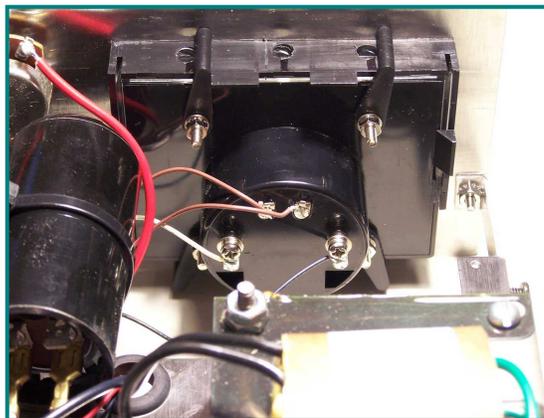
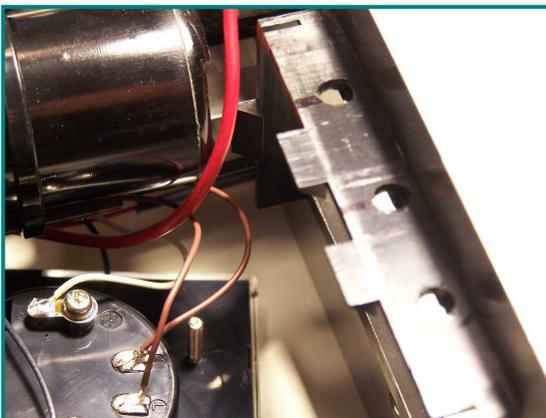
9. Place the control box on its side and remove the meter for the black plastic enclosure. This is accomplished by removing the two black plastic prongs from the top of the meter.



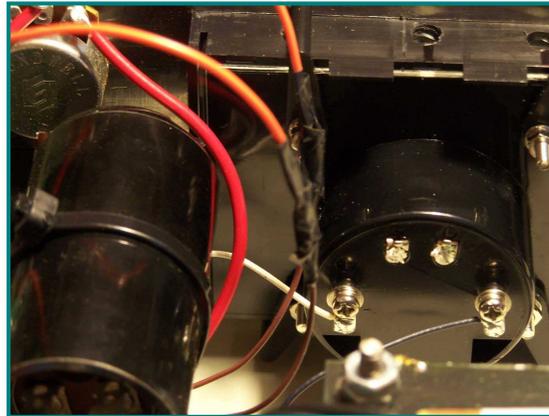
10. Set the controller on its base and place the meter under the bottom of the controller unit and remove the black plastic enclosure that held the meter.



11. You have several options of removing the top part of the enclosure to allow the LEDs to shine through onto the top of the meter. Example: drilling 3 holes with the proper spacing. Then re-insert the enclosure back into the front panel and reinstall the meter.



12. Hook up the power by cutting the brown wires (the two at the top) and connecting them with the two wires on the assembled circuit board, by soldering and then taping. The wire on the left goes to AC1 of the circuit board & the one on the right goes to AC2.



13. Attach the nylon spacers and insert the LEDs into the holes for D1, D2, and D3 from beneath. The long lead goes into the hole with the square pad. Place the circuit board over the drilled holes and allow them to touch the top of the meter, and solder them in place.

14. Connect power, and turn on the control box and the LEDs should light.

15. Hold the Rotator Illuminator on top of the meter so that the LEDs illuminate the meter face, as they will when the board is permanently installed. Using a test lead with alligator clips on the ends, try bypassing one resistor or the other, and see what level of brightness you prefer.

DO NOT BYPASS BOTH RESISTORS AT THE SAME TIME; doing so would permanently damage the LEDs. If you prefer the brightness with R2 bypassed (brightest), then solder the diode lead you saved earlier as a jumper at JP2. If you prefer the brightness level with R1 bypassed (medium brightness), then solder the jumper at JP1. If you prefer the brightness with no resistor bypassed (least bright), then install no jumper.

You may wish to test the Rotator Illuminator, with temporary jumper installed, in the shack under various lighting conditions before soldering the jumper.

16. Experiment with the exact placement of the Rotator Illuminator over the meter. The light changes quite a bit depending upon how far the Rotator Illuminator is from the front panel of the control box. You may need to unsolder and adjust the height of the LEDs to get the lighting exactly as you want it.

17. Stick the glue dots to the bottom of the spacers. Peel the opaque paper off first, stick the dot on the spacer, and then peel off the clear backing.

18. Stick the Rotator Illuminator down onto the meter lightly. Verify that the placement is exactly how you like it, and then press down firmly so that the glue dots take hold.

Pictures of the finished project is on the next page.



Other Sources of Ham Radio Related Information by Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Whether you're a newcomer or an old-timer, the Internet is possibly the best way to learn as much as you can about amateur radio. On the Internet, you'll find many, many ham radio mailing lists, podcasts, and videos. In essence, these resources give you access to hundreds, if not thousands, of Elmers.

One mailing list that I always suggest to new hams is the HamRadioHelpGroup (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HamRadioHelpGroup>). The purpose of this group is to help "those who are interested in getting started in Amateur Radio or upgrading their license." This mailing list has a good mix of beginners and experts, and most questions are answered quickly and correctly. One thing that I really like about this group is that the moderators do a good job of keeping the discussions on track, and will squelch them when they stray off topic or threaten to turn into flame wars.



In addition to the HamRadioHelpGroup, you might also want to join a more targeted mailing list. For example, if you're interested in learning Morse Code (hint, hint), you might join the SolidCpyCW list (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SolidCpyCW/>). If you just bought a Yaesu FT-60 hand-held transceiver, you might want to join the FT-60 list (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FT-60/>). Chances are that no matter what your interest, there's probably a mailing list to discuss that interest.

I'm subscribed to a lot of amateur radio mailing lists and could probably spend most of my day just reading and replying to them. In order to get the most out of them, without them taking away from my on-air time, I only read those threads that I am really interested in, and even then, I quit reading them once they have started to drift off-topic. I also unsubscribe myself from lists that cover topics that I'm no longer interested in.

In addition to getting on a few mailing lists, you might want to read a few blogs and subscribe to podcasts. These are also great sources of information about amateur radio. I blog about amateur radio at www.kb6nu.com, and lots of hams find it a good source of information. You can find a list of other ham radio blogs that I'd recommend on my home page.

Podcasts are also a good source of information. One podcast that you might want to check out is the Practical Amateur Radio Podcast (<http://www.myamateurradio.com>). Since 2008, Jerry, KDOBIK, has been producing PARP, and currently has more than 50 different episodes online. For other podcasts, consult the list on Jerry's home page.

Finally, there are literally thousands of amateur radio videos on the net. On YouTube alone, there are approximately 32,000 of them. The American Radio Relay League has its own channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/ARRLHQ>), but perhaps the most popular amateur radio video channel is the K7AGE channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/K7AGE>). K7AGE has more than 6,200 subscribers and

his videos have garnered more than 2.1 million views!

Another interesting site is the *73 Magazine* archive. 511 issues of *73 Magazine* are now online at <http://archive.org/search.php?query=collection%3A73-magazine&sort=-publicdate>. Wayne Green started *73* in 1960 after serving as editor of *CQ Magazine* for several years. It ceased publication in 2003.

Wayne Green is one of the true characters in ham radio, and indeed, in technical publishing in general. Not only did he publish *73 Magazine*, but also started *Byte* and a slew of other computer hobbyist magazines. These days, he seems to be interested in a variety of what some might call "off the wall" topics, including [cold fusion and alternative health care](#).

The issues of *73* that are in the archives are listed in a seemingly random order. I suspect that this is the order in which they were uploaded to the archive. Even so, just scanning the article titles is fascinating. Here's a sample:

- Eager for Meager - Try an 11m vertical on 160 (Dec 2002)
- How to Build A Great Ham Club (Dec 1997)
- The Schizophrenic Triangle - a split-personality radiator (Dec 1978)
- RF Sniffer - Snooper sensitive RF detector which you will build (Dec 1960)

When I first went to download an issue—the December 2002 issue—I was excited to see that a Kindle-compatible .mobi file was available. I was quickly disappointed, however. After downloading and copying the file over to my Kindle, I found that it was nearly unreadable. Whoever converted the file must have used some kind of OCR program, and didn't do any checking before uploading it. So, stick with the PDF version.

Whatever source or sources of information you select, remember to not let them take up too much of your time. Ham radio is about more than just reading, listening, or watching. It's about doing!



Part of the 2012 Field Day night crew: Tedd/KB8NW, John/K8YSE, Dennis/WB8LBT, and "Little Dave"/WD8IOU. Photo courtesy Brian Hemmis/K3USC



Meeting Information

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 Information

NO8DX: Special Event Callsign
 W8DXA: NODXA Repeater 147.360

Web-site: <http://www.papays.com/nodxa.html>
 Newsletter Submission: wd8iou@adelphia.net

NODXA Club Officials for 2012-2013

President:	Tedd Mirgliotta, KB8NW	(440-237-2816)
V. President:	Dwaine Modock, K8ME	(440-582-3462)
Secretary:	Glenn Williams, AF8C	(216-221-3682)
Treasurer:	Mary Michaelis, N8DMM	(440-236-5426)
Newsletter:	David Autry, WD8IOU	(440-238-0417)



DXCC Info

As of July 2011, the current DXCC Entities total is: **341.**

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. and DX) \$20.00

Name _____ Callsign _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State/Prov. _____
 Country _____ ZIP _____
 E-mail _____
 Telephone _____
 ARRL Member? _____ Exp. Date _____ DXCC Member? _____
 Special Interest _____

Newsletter Contributors

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this months edition: N8TR, N8DMM, KB8NW, K8YSE, AF8C, VE3ZSX, K8FF, KE8G, K3USC, K8ME, KB6NU and the ARRL.