

M.C.W.A. NEWS

January 2014
Vol. 14, No. 1

McHenry County Wireless Association

Since 1978
35 Years



Officers & Staff

President Jim, N7US
jim@n7us.net

Vice President Dave, KA9OZP
coopernet@sbcglobal.net

Secretary Kent, K9KMD

Treasurer Bob, NZ1B
boblubecker@gmail.com

Programs Jack, W9MU

Newsletter Jerry, N9AVY
n9avy@arrl.net

VE TESTING



Testing By Appointment Only !

7 PM on 3rd Tuesday of month
(Sept. thru May)

Cost is \$15 one time charge
for session no matter how
many elements are taken.
Must show original license
and/or CSCE if upgrading .
Valid photo ID needed.
SS# or FRN#

Steve, KB9OLD

847/477-3518

JANUARY MEETING

January 7, 2014

Crystal Lake Bank
5100 Rt. 14, Crystal Lake, IL
6:30 PM - Socializing
7:00 PM - Meeting

PROGRAM :

“I Want to Grow Some Steel In My Backyard”

Part 2

Guest Speaker : Ed , K9TX

MCWA Treasurer's Report January 2014

Please remember to pay your 2014 club dues at the next club meeting
or by mail. Feel free to contact me about any Treasurer related issues.
73

Bob Lubecker NZ1B
3812 Monica Trail
Crystal Lake, IL 60014
boblubecker@gmail.com

Bank Balance:
Per. 11-29-13 Statement

Beginning Balance	\$4,597.62
Checks written	.00
Deposits	170.00
Interest	.38
Ending Balance	\$4,768.00



NEW YEAR'S DX

CHECKLIST

After running the snow blower, drinking some coffee and

watching some of the Rose Bowl parade, I looked at the the table next to my chair and was reminded that I have a stack of DX QSL's that were sent during the Christmas Season from our wonderful Incoming Bureau Gang at NIDX. I had not received anything from the Bureau for quite some time. So N9AVY told me to check with K9OR who does the O's. My account had run out of money. That's why the usual steady stream of QSL's were not coming in. Wake up, Dave! I quickly sent a check for \$15. and a package of 64 QSL's was received shortly thereafter. I am glad this package came because it had several more exotic QSL's like 9U4U, E51Z, ST0R, AH0BT and 9M4SLL. I was especially grateful to receive 9M4SLL from the Spratly Layang Island Dxpediton. I had worked them on 15m back on March 3, 2013. So the first item on the checklist is to make sure your account at the Incoming Bureau has some cash in it.

Secondly, two cards were returned. I had sent one to Z36T via manager DJ0LZ but the manager is not a member of DARC! So direct must be used. I also received my QSL to 7Z1RR back with a note from the ARRL Outgoing Bureau that I must go direct; not through the Bureau. I thought I had checked the ARRL list on Bureau recipients but I made a mistake. So the second check on the DX QSL checklist is to make sure you are routing your QSL request correctly or it will be returned.

Thirdly, if you want DX in 2014, check the solar activity at one of many sites. As I write this article, the numbers look good. The SFI = 163 and the SN = 136. The A and K indices are a bit high which could be problematic. Check your numbers but don't always count on these numbers alone. Some of my DX QSO's have come when the numbers were not this good. So check the numbers online, but also check the bands, if you are hunting DX.

Fourthly, have a good DX cluster site set on your smart phone or computer. I must admit that the clusters have helped me work 80% of my more exotic DX catches. Personally I prefer www.dxsummit.fi but many in the club have their favorites. A member of MCWA recently introduced me to a newer cluster site at www.dxfor.me . I use the former or the latter most of the time when I need spots. Between the two, you won't miss too much DX.

Fifth, please be careful during split operations of DX stations. During the smorgasbord of Dxpeditons in November and December, hundreds of operators were calling back on the Dxpeditons' calling frequencies. Sometimes the biggest obstacle in working DX on split is the lack of listening to the stations' directions on their listening frequencies.

Sixth on the list is to be aware of upcoming DX operations and Dxpeditons. I checked a favorite site at www.ng3k.com and was reminded that I should look for some of the following across January 2014: 1A0KM, XU7AEU, V47AJ, E51CDW, FT5ZM, XT2AW and A52JR. Some are especially waiting for FT5ZM. QST and numerous web sites will alert you to upcoming DX.

Seventh on the New Year DX check list is to have fun and foster national and international goodwill. This is what we are really all about! I have to run now. I have lots of QSL's to catch up on..... Happy New Year! *Dave KA9OZP*

* * * * *

QSL BUREAU INFO:

The ARRL Incoming W9 QSL Bureau is open to members and non-members alike. To receive cards everyone needs keep envelopes on file. The bureau is run by Northern Illinois DX Association with volunteers. Keeping envelopes on file is necessary if you want to receive cards. A clean out is done annually in August and if no envelopes are in file, cards may be tossed. This editor tossed hundreds of cards after sending out snail mail & email notices; they have 30 days to respond, but usually don't do anything until 90 days have passed.

Further info is available at: qsl.nidxa.org

This is QSL Bureau site and tells who handles which letters. (N9AVY handles D suffix). Lots of info at the site !



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

GOTA Station The members of my club are mostly senior citizens. We have a club GOTA station: Geezers On The Air!
- K7NSW
(de Eham.net)

Update to Communications Act of 1934

The US House Communications and Technology Subcommittee has announced plans for a multi-year effort to examine and update the Communications Act of 1934, the overarching law under which the FCC functions. The subcommittee, part of the US House Energy and Commerce Committee, is chaired by Oregon Republican Greg Walden, W7EQI. Walden and Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Fred Upton of Michigan made the announcement December 3.

ARRL Centennial QSO Party 2014 is the 100th Anniversary of ARRL. To commemorate this ARRL has created a year long QSO Party, starting Jan. 1, 2014 and running through Dec. 31, 2014. Everyone can participate, but only certain ARRL members are worth points. All modes count. For further details see: December QST page 67 OR:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/the-arrl-centennial-qso-party-starts-january-1-2014>

What You Know "It's what you learn after you know it all that counts."

- WA8GRI

(de eham.net)

LIGHTING TIP Lighting strips (12v LED) are available from Ebay and Amazon.com which are handy in the shack for under shelf lighting. To avoid glare, a small strip of wood should be installed in front of LED strip. Seems like a great idea as well as energy efficient.

Product Reviews ... Product reviews are like 5/9 reports. Most are better than they should be.

-KB4XV

(Eham.net)

Relic, a novel containing amateur radio Description: Mike Polia, AB1AW, writing under the pseudonym of "Jonathan Brookes", has published an action packed thriller in which amateur radio plays a key part in foiling a covert military project. Available at Amazon.com.

RADIO ARCALA LANDSCAPE IS ONE SHORT
(Press Release dated December 6th).

Jarmo, OH2BN, reports: "While driving to the Arctic region north of the city of Oulu at 65 degrees North, you will now find the wintry landscape more naked than before. Something is missing from the landscape, a reflection of the challenges facing the stormy and icy North. Sorrow has descended on the population of the village of Arkala.

It was the recent storm Oskari creating gusts of up to 68 knots (78MPH) that not only knocked down the massive 330ft (100m) 40+ ton 160/80M array but also left 200,000 homes in Finland without electricity. The mammoth structure collapsed peacefully, not hitting any of the other six towers, not hurting people or damaging buildings.

As professional engineering efforts had up to now ensured the survival of this 5-year old structure, inspectors are busy trying to evaluate the cause of the failure. It is suspected that automation designed to enable the array to find its most comfortable position in high winds somehow locked up and caused the structure to corkscrew. Consequently the giant crumbled down on its base just like the WTC building in those other sad years.

But life goes on at Radio Arcala at OH8X and you may soon hear Santa Claus from the North of Finland bringing you the joy of Christmas in the form of OF9X, beaming over the North Pole on 20 meters and capitalizing on the famous Polar Path during the Holiday Season.

Thank you for your interest in Radio Arcala and many of its unforgettable endeavors. In summary, we would like to share with you this short poem and these consoling words of wisdom from the late Professor Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD: "The grief we feel we cannot tell. A sad day it was as our tower fell." A picture is available in the HTML format version of the OPDX at:

<http://www.papays.com/BoyResting2.jpg>

Also, visit the Radio Arcala Web page for possible updates and pictures of the tower before it fell at:

<http://www.radioarcala.com>



To pizza or not to pizza

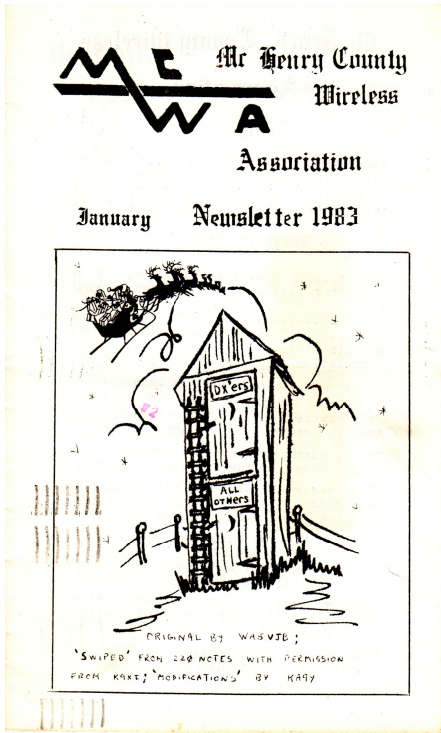
that is the question !

Ken, KB9I , wrote an article “CQ DX” which included a list of worldwide 10m beacon stations.

“No-code” was a hot issue back in 1983. “A person is much less likely to take for granted, or abuse, anything for which we've had to work . That is the essence of the contrast between Citizen's Band and Amateur Radio. ” It was an interesting article which perhaps should be published in these pages at a later date.

There were other items about abuse of new 30m band with comments from FCC... Rockwell-Collins advises they have WARC band crystals for KWM-2 for \$7.00 each ... an item about The Teleconference Radio Net ... items about satellites ... a couple pages of cartoons ...some items for sale by KA9CAR and an membership form with dues at \$6.00 a year (not bad with rate of inflation since then with present dues now at \$10 !

A great little newsletter with 16 total pages including front & back pages ! Consider that it was done in a format 1/2 the size of today's MCWA News .



MCWA Newsletter January 1983

Edited by: Karen Toronyi, KA9Y

In this issue

Congrats to Jim, KA9DMN on his upgrade to General.

Added Art, K9XI, to our list of “old timers” .. 21 years of being licensed !

January 4th meeting with program on Amplifiers by Ken “Boom Boom” Farver, K9XI !

MCWA President Bob Reynolds , KB9MU, received national recognition last month for his article in November' newsletter which was reprinted in ton “Guests”he December issue of Amateur Radio News Service Bulletin.





1922 Call Areas

Look at how big 9-land used to be !

On this page are some gems from yesteryear courtesy of Hamgallerly. We lost a lot, but have also gained a lot.

Wow! A rare DX with no pileup...let me call repeatedly him on frequency! HINT: No pileup = working split!

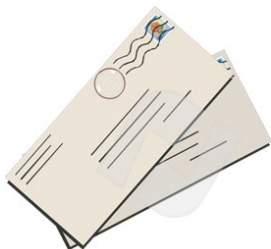
KB7IUV (from eHam)

Postage Increase - Jan. 26, 2014 !

First class letter = 49 cents
 additional oz. = 21 cents

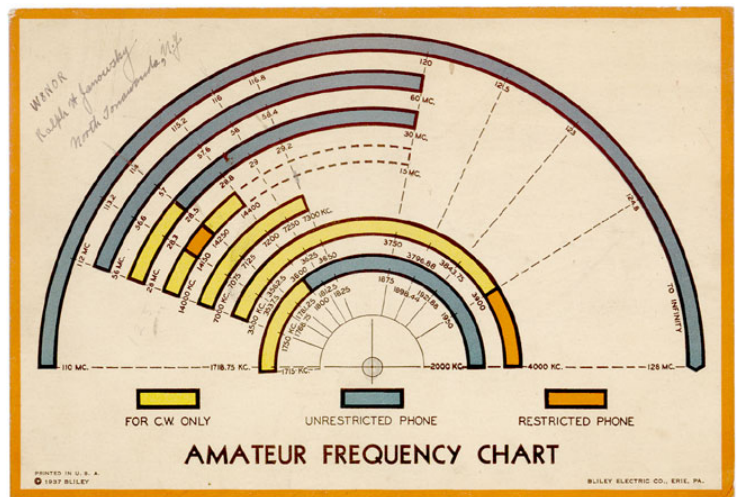
International letter = \$1.15
 Canada, Europe & rest of world

Postcards = 34 cents



Fishing and Ham Radio have something in common. It makes no difference how expensive the rod and reel its what is on the end of the line that catches the fish.

KI7DG (via Eham.net)



1
 9
 3
 7
 F
 requency chart - Hams

HF On A Budget

By Stephen Bevan, KE7WAV

When I first got my license I had to get an HF rig--2 meters was only an after thought. A kind elmer gave me and HW-7 years before I got my ticket in hopes I would get a license. It was given to me on the condition that I learned the code and used it. When I finally got my license I called my Dad several times but he couldn't find the rig in the recesses of his ham shack. So I started saving for my first rig.

Luckily for me another kind Elmer loaned me an old Swan 500C and a Nye SpeedX so I could get on the air and learn how to operate. Those days of 5wpm were sure nerve racking and fun. He helped me build my first HF antenna which cost me \$25 in materials including coax. I made my first key from about \$2 worth of parts (An unused mousetrap with an eyelet and a paperclip to make a side-swiper--seriously high tech homebrew right there!) He also encouraged me to get a 2 meter rig with the money I had saved for an HF rig so I could participate in the local nets. I followed his advice and was very grateful for his kindness. I used his rig for awhile but I wanted my own station.

When the day came I could afford a rig of my own it was a used HW-8 for a grand total of about \$100. I now had my first HF station for a total of about \$127! I used this setup for well over 5 years. (Although I did upgrade away from my mousetrap side-swiper to a whiterook side-swiper). I have made antennas for as cheap as \$2 and still worked some great contacts.

My father even found my HW-7 during that time and when my HW-8 died it became my main rig until I could make repairs and get the HW-8 back on the air. I made lots of contacts, and not just local stuff, with my power house 2 Watts. I even got some good DX! It wasn't all DX and easy contacts; in fact some days it was down right frustrating because I would call people and they wouldn't hear me, but I still had fun and filled my first log book.

I share this because some of us get the idea that HF=Expensive. I never saw that formula in the ARRL handbook! We mistakenly think that a novice station needs to be a starter rig from some company asking for \$600 or more and then we have to buy an antenna for at least another \$60. That is simply untrue! A novice station can be set up for far less than my first station if a ham is willing to try. And especially if the ham is willing to start by learning the code.

If you haven't tried HF don't let the fancy ham magazines convince you that you will need a thousand dollars to get started, start small. My shack has grown over time, I returned the Swan to my Elmer, and I have four HF rigs now (the most expensive of which was \$220 used.) After 7+ years I finally purchased a used rig that gets 100W out last month! Although I haven't turned it over 60W yet.

You CAN get on HF. You CAN enjoy this hobby on a shoestring budget. You DON'T have to have the perfect station just to get started.

There is also another thing you will notice in my story-Elmers. Now that my station setup has grown I am looking for a local young ham to help. I want to become an Elmer to share and teach. It will help a young ham gain access to a new hobby and a new world. If you have three or four rigs--try loaning one out. If you have an old mic or key--maybe that will open the hobby for someone else.

In the end -- get started. And once you have gotten a good start, help someone else along in the hobby. Its even more rewarding than getting that sweet QSL card from a great DX station.

- KE7WAV



TNX: eHam.net