

M.C.W.A. NEWS

February 2015
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McHenry County Wireless Association

Since 1978
36 Years



MEETING: February 3, 2015

Officers & Staff

President Kent , K9KMD
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Socializing = 6:30 PM

Meeting = 7:00 PM

PROGRAM: COHERERS

By Kent, K9KMD

What the heck is a coherer ? Come and find out .

Presidents Message

.We seem to have a good start on the new year with the February meeting just around the corner. Hopefully weather will be more favorable this month. I know in our club we have DXers, Contesters, VHFers, Digital guys (not missing CW) and of course Rag-chewers. I wonder how many use 60 meters (~ 5 MHz). Don't laugh. The US amateur folks have had 60 meters since mid-2003. Five discrete channels with limited spectrum and stringent operating requirements. Only the more resent radios allow direct access to these channels. Others not so resent require slight modification. Older radios – good luck! A couple of weeks ago I worked a guy in Mississippi for the second time on 60. Each time he was using 3.5 Watts and had a 5x7 signal! Don't get me wrong, I'm not pusher of 60

meters. It may expand someday if we use it properly or we may lose it if we don't use it. Maybe I'll catch some of you on 60 one of these days. Think about what you want your radio club to do for you. How about Field Day 2015? Or maybe a radio-active family picnic? We can discuss at our next meeting.

Kent Dulaney, K9KMD

see page 6

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





DX SURPRISES

The world of DX always has surprises. Most of them are positive ones. Recently I received a stack of QSL cards via the Bureau. The majority were from Asia and this was a reminder of the good propagation of Cycle 24 that we have enjoyed over the last couple of years.

I had another unexpected DX surprise on January 20th on 20m. The band sounded dead but I heard a couple signals around 0230UTC. I went back to one station with the call FR5HA. This was about three hours following sunset. This was a pleasant surprise as it was a fairly familiar call from Reunion Island. This QSO indicated that the band was quite good but apparently not too many believed that it was open at that hour.

On January 23, I had a 5/9 QSO both ways with JQ1DPP on 15m near 0008UTC. The following day I worked PH9HB aeronautical mobile over the Atlantic on 12m. The signal strength was 5/9 both ways. A few hours later I worked ZZ461SP on 12m with strong signals both ways. I enjoy working these strange and long special event call signs.

All of these DX experiences were pleasant ones, but another DX expectation has been a bit disappointing. I have been unable to log a SSB contact with EP6T on any band. This Iranian DXpedition has been getting mixed reviews but many hams in the Midwest have noted no signal or a lite signal from this group. The DXpedition is contending with high QRN at their site, poor behavior from operators and up and down band conditions. I sent them an email indicating that I have been working the world on DX but have been

working the world on DX but have been unable to hear their SSB spots. (Their web site is interesting and informative. Go to QRZ and there is a link to their site.) Nevertheless, I thanked them for their efforts. We are grateful for all hams who sacrifice time, finances and endure dangerous conditions to do these DX operations !

Amateurs around the world are waiting for the much anticipated K1N operation. I heard the latest update for Navassa Island this evening. They will be on the air the first week of February. Other calls to look for across February will be H44MS, XW8BM, MJ5RIC and 3Z0GC. A lot of other good DX is scheduled for February. You will likely log something you need.

As the days lengthen, 20m will become even more active in the evening hours. The same will be true for 17m and 15m. By the way, expect some good DX on 12m and 10m a little closer to the sunset hour.

May your DX surprises be good ones!

73 Dave KA9OZP

PSK DX

Warbling away on 10m, there have been transequatorial openings to Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and other South American spots around 1800 UTC.. On 15m there have been openings to JA & HL around 2200 - 0000 UTC. Twenty meters has had some openings to Europe in mornings.

The PODXS 070 Club is a growing club here in the states with membership fast approaching 2000 mark. They offer lots of free endorsements like: working 20 stations in Ukraine, Japan and Brasil - er, that's 60 unique calls. The basic members requirement is 50 PSK31 contacts to get your membership certificate. There are many other endorsements to work on at your leisure. Visit: www.PODXS070.com for more details. It's a lot of fun !



From the Editor's Desk
de N9AVY

MCWA Treasurer's Report – February 2015

Here is the monthly treasurer's report. Due to the January meeting cancellation, we had no new memberships. We have 60 members paid through 2015, and 44 members who paid in 2014, but not yet for the 2015 year. Feel free to contact me if you want confirmation of your status.

Bank Balance

Beginning Balance:	\$4843.24	12-25-14 Balance
Checks written	\$0.00	
Deposits	\$0.00	
Interest	\$0.44	12-31-14
Ending Balance:	4,843.68	As of 1-25-15

Dave Cox – N9ITE, 410 Lake Ave, Woodstock, IL.
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Happy Valentine's Day

ARRL Board Meeting For those who don't get the ARRL Newsletter or see what gets posted to K9RN, there was a short summary of the ARRL Board meeting this January. The part that was highlighted was a short sentence about Amateur Radio still being threatened by the "Spectrum Auctions". There are commercial interests looking at our little chunks of spectrum and trying to figure out applications for them. In 10 years or so there could be a bunch of frequencies that "used to" be ours.

Strays *100 Watts, no matter the cost of the Radio your antenna does not discriminate.*
KI7DG de Eham

73 = "best wishes" - best 73 = "best best wishes"

MM0TWX de Eham

... will keep the Rig that's been serving so well. And it's becoming an old Classic; which I've always wanted.

KB9NGX de Eham

FWIW Dept.

eQSL -- LotW -- a LOG is a LOG is a LOG

Alan Spicer (KA4UDX) on January 8, 2015 (eham)

But a log is a log is a log. An electronic log of contacts is a log. I have been on eQSL for almost a full 5 years. I had 92 confirmed for eDX and having trouble getting past that to the goal of 100.

Because of HRD software eQSL and LotW integration I decided to try again and set up LotW. Got it done.

Exported my 4000 + entries for upload to LotW - HRD log-book was having trouble signing the log. Did it from Tqsl program of LotW.

No one (I don't think) is asking for invalid contacts to be accepted for DXCC. But like I said a log is a log is a log. And mine went in just fine ... and 114 QSL's matched in LotW. So now I can get DXCC Mixed and Phone.

So nanny nanny boo boo to those that say it can't be done. And made all those contacts and earned it.

KA4UDX

[Ed.] With all the ways to send QSLs these days it seems confusing... LoTW, Eqsl, QRZLog, HRDLog, etc.

Back in the day there were only 3 ways to QSL:

Direct, QSL Manager or Bureau. None of these appealed to the "Instant Gratification Crowd".

"Which means of course that a lot more Hams are using LoTW than eQSL. Some of course do upload to both. Using LoTW and Paper QSLs, I now have Mixed, Phone, CW, 15M & 20M DXCC, with most being confirmed with LoTW.

Vy 73 de Bob DJORD/WU5T"

"I have no desire for "Certificates" or "Awards" of any kind. So logging is for me, a complete waste of time. Logging is not required by the FCC.

However, I do QRZ, LoTW and eQSL and paper QSL upon request. No for me but as a common courtesy to the fellow HAM that may want the confirmation.

AF5DN"

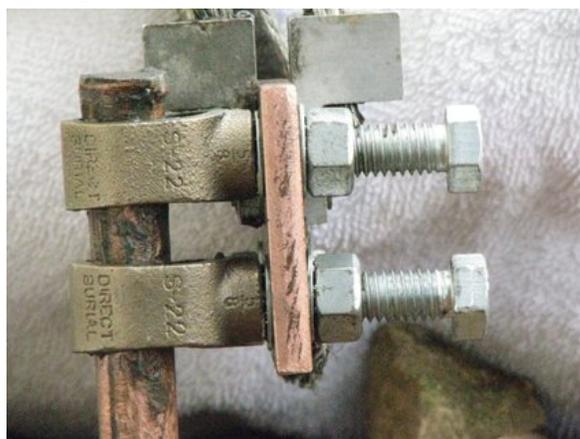
STRAY Do you really need 1.5 kilowatt to rag chew on 40 meters ?

AI6EX (de eham)

Ground Rod Connection

from Jake Jacobsen, K9WN on December 30, 2014 (Eham)

Previously I would "try" to cram several leads under one ground rod clamp. I was always concerned that I wasn't getting good contact. While digging thru the junk box, inspiration hit. I have no idea where I picked up the copper scrap, but with a little modification, this is what I ended up with. Be advised that drilling copper is tough. Go slow and use LOTS of lubricant. Aluminum plate would be easier to drill.



This works for me. Besides one lead from inside the shack, the others go to several other well spaced ground rods, a lead to the tower base (which has it's own ground system), and finally, the power company ground, which is only about a foot away.