



M.C.W.A. NEWS

Vol. 15 # 10

October 2015

AMATEUR RADIO

MEETING October 6 , 2015

Socializing - 6:30 PM
Meeting - 7:00 PM

Crystal Lake Bank
5100 Rt, 14
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

PROGRAM:

Tom Cicora, KA9QPN

ARRL Illinois Section Manager

Maybe he'll share secret ARRL info ?

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145.410 Repeater Report

Per FCC records and KK9DX
The following persons are not
allowed to use the KK9DX
repeater with either recent or
future call signs:

Robert Abraham	W9RCM
Andrew Slythe	KC9ONA
Ray Kelly	Ex- K1MBE
Andy's club call	KD9BKM
Rob's club call	N9ROB

Oct. Hamfests

31 Milwaukee

<http://www.mrc91.org>

That's it until January !

Oct Contests

10/11 Makrothen RTTY

10 10-10 Day Sprint

10/11 PODXS Great
Pumpkin PSK31

17/18 10-10 Fall CW

17/18 Stew Perry Top-
band (160m)

17 Iowa QSO Party
18 South Dakota
QSO Party

18/18 IL QSO Party

19/23 ARRL School
Club Roundup

24/25 CQ WW DX
SSB

See: WA7BNM
Calendar (web)

Oct. DX

26-30 3B7 St Brandon

19-31 E5 S. Cook Is.

9-16 KG4 Guantanamo

18-27 PY0F Fernando
de Noronha

October Meeting !

ELECTION NITE !

At the open Board
meeting on Sept. 11 a
slate of possible
Officers for the next
year was scheduled. If
you would like to be
an Officer please
attend the October
meeting and toss
your hat in the ring !

If you're reading this,
you could be a part of
MCWA's future . If
you went to the next
MCWA meeting and
there wasn't one, what
would you do ???

The officers are key
to the continuation of
any club. Many local
clubs are fading
memories like
SWANI, EARS, and
LAMARS, etc. All
were viable clubs and
contributed much to
the Ham Radio
community in this
area. With YOU
MCWA could pass
into history.

ELECTION

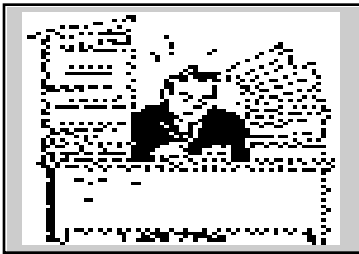
Our present Officers
have done their best
to keep MCWA alive
by having monthly
programs, Field Day,
and plans for growth.
But all these future
plans cannot happen
with YOU the
member ship ! Dave,
KA9OZP has served
as VP for over 10
years. Ken, KB9T
has faithfully been
President several
times over the past 20
years. Many others
have served in various
capacities over
theyears. Our thanks
go out to these
dedicated people. It's
time they get a well-
deserved rest so
others can try their
hand at the helm of
MCWA.

* * * * *

OCT. DX- cont'd

22-28 S0 Western Sahara

23 TA3 Turkey for
2-3 weeks



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Chinese HT's

"I've got a UV-5R; never been 'bitten' by it, and it's not as well made as my Yaesu was, but it was cheaper than the last new set of rechargeable cells I put in my Yaesu. No complaints here about the Baofeng.

Though I played the Chinese voice prompts for a Chinese coworker, and she said, "Your radio doesn't speak very good Chinese." :-) *de eham*

PROPAGATION ?

One question that seems to be on everyone's mind lately is "when will the bands get better ?" As we head into the downward part of Cycle 24, we shouldn't expect things to be as they were a few months ago. No matter what all the propagation experts may say, you may turn on your radio and be surprised. The best advice is to have patience as we move into Winter months.

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VE TESTING

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 # Call for appointment.

Steve, KB9OLD

847/477-3518



IT ISN'T OVER

The other day I received a batch of QSLs from the bureau and was reminded of the good band conditions we have experienced over the last couple of years. Among the QSLs were Z81X (South Sudan) and C91JD (Mozambique). There was also a card from JA9APS confirming a 10m QSO.

In the last article I commented on the bad solar emissions and the fact that it disrupted propagation for about a month. I dared to predict a comeback on the higher HF bands. This happened for a period of approximately 54 hours. But then the solar conditions wiped out the bands again. Was it time to throw in the towel? No way!

During the RTTY contest this weekend, many of you saw a return to very good conditions. The other day during a lunch break I chatted with a station in Spain (EA5CTE) on 15m. It looked promising. Today I had a strong QSO both ways with ZD7FT and IK5ZWU on 17m. As the sun was setting I worked LU8EEM 5/9 on 12m. Right before that, I worked DX on 10m.

As of this writing, the sun spot number is 138 and the solar flux is at 126. But here is the great news--- The A index is 4 and the K index is 1! Finally we have seen a reduction in those noise making index

numbers. Tonight all bands except 6m are open. Will these conditions hold? We are into the fall season and I think the answer is "most likely." At least we have seen a reduction in the lightning static levels. This factor always helps--- especially on bands below 20m.

As we progress into October, E6GG will be soon closing their operation. Be on the lookout for such calls as E51MKW, E51MQT, V63WJ, V63AH, TX3X, S79SP, V73D and 3W2HCM, among many others.

Also remember to tweak those antennas before the cold and snow become deterrents. The weather service is predicting a mild winter with little snow due to a strong El Nino. A mild winter was forecast two winters ago and you remember what happened..... the complete opposite. The solar conditions tell me that we will see some interesting extremes this winter.

Fix those antennas, just in case!

Good DX and 73! Dave KA9OZP

QSL BUREAU The ARRL Incoming QSL Bureau is free to all Amateurs. All that is required is to keep self-addressed, stamped envelopes on file. The address of the W9 bureau is qsl.nidxa.org. There you can check your status and who to contact. It also gives detailed information on rates and postage.

If you have worked DX, you should keep an envelope on file. Even if you use LoTW, you will want to keep current with the bureau.

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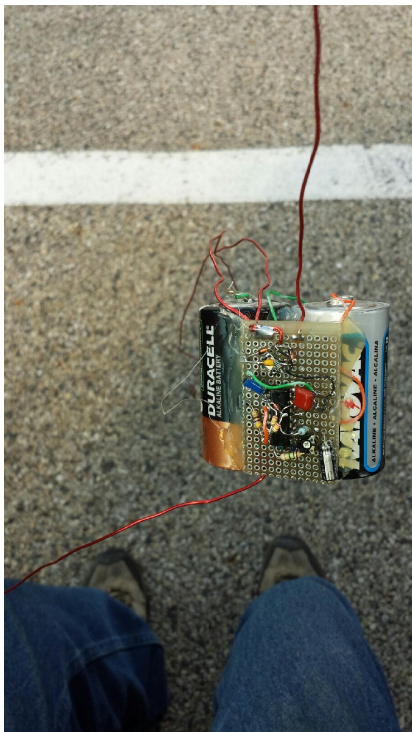


Upper left: poor attempt at camouflaging of jamming transmitter.

Lower left: Poorly constructed transmitter found in September.

These are the latest in a series of jamming devices found around the 145.41 repeater. Why this has been done is still a secret. It's the work of sick minds who get their jollies out of making a hobby out of being a nuisance to others. They do this because they can is all that comes to mind. They are now on the FCC's radar and deserve whatever comes their way.

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STRAY *Why is it that Mister Signal Fade strikes right after 'CQ DE' and right before 'K'?*

AF7EC de eHam

STRAY *Why do hams say "We" when they should be saying "I" in a singular reference?*

K9COX de eHam

STRAY *Take a walk on the wild side; solder while wearing shorts.*

KM4JOJ de eHam



M.C.W.A.

MODEST STATIONS

In September, I had a station disaster when one of the shelves in my 6 foot high radio cabinet collapsed. Thought it was sturdy, but age and gravity won out. Around 4:50 AM one morning the shelf lost the 2 front devices holding it up thus, dumping an Astron 20A power supply, dual band Kenwood, rotor control, antenna switch, antenna analyzer and some miscellaneous stuff with a large "CRASH !". Wakes one up better than alarm clock.

That weekend was spent disassembling the entire station and reinforcing the cheap shelving with sturdy L brackets. After reassembling the station everything worked okay except for the rotor ! Went through all the troubleshooting procedures with no results.

So, the last couple weeks I made due with the Butternut HF-6V vertical in backyard (found it at hamfest in Oak Creek (WI) for \$100 !). Usually it only see service on 40m and occasionally 80m. It's no secret that my favorite mode since 2006 has been PSK31.

Was surprised at how well the vertical performed on 20 meters. Was able to work from coast to coast with only 40 watts ! Also, managed to work St. Kitts in Caribbean with a 599 report. Now conditions during the month of September has been rather poor, but the vertical produced good contacts and was thinking about reducing power.

What was learned here is that one doesn't need big antennas and lots of power; especially on PSK31. Many of the stations worked had similar power (some were 5 -10 watts) and a modest antenna like a vertical or dipole.

One of the comments heard was "I've tried JT65, but it doesn't lend itself well to conversation like PSK31". Many of those worked are newly licensed and recently retired. However, it's not always old retired people on PSK31. There are many younger people who are computer types and enjoy talking around the block or world.

Since PSK31 (like other digital modes) usually requires a computer there are some free programs like Digipan and Fldigi which see a lot of use. There are also programs which commercial like Ham Radio Deluxe (about \$100) or MixW3.1 (about \$50) ; most have their own logging programs built in.

The only hardware you will need to buy is an interface like Tigertronics USB, West Mountain Radio (various models), Donner, and others. One can also build a simple interface.

This looks like a good mode for someone wanting to start out with a modest station and make lots of contacts with a small investment. There seems to be many more PSK31 stations on the air than any other digital modes.

-----> next column