

Northwest Indiana DX CLUB

Volume 10, Issue 12

December 2022

President's Corner

Carl, K9LA was the guest speaker. His presentation on Cycle 25, and the Possibility of F2 Propagation on 6m showed a promising outlook.

The new DX contest started on November 12th.

Have a nice holiday season.

Stay warm.

73
John W3ML
Good DXing!

"Working the World from the Black Hole"

NWI DX Club Website

<http://nwidxclub.weebly.com/>



Don't forget Steve Mollman is our QSL Card Checker.

DXCC Card Checking is available by appointment and may be available at meetings. E-Mail kd9hl@arrl.net for an appointment or to make other arrangements.

<i>Northwest Indiana DX Club Officers and Staff</i>			
President	W3ML	John Poindexter	w3ml.ohn@gmail.com
Vice President	W9KTP	Jerry Hess	jerryhess@Frontier.com
Newsletter Editor	W3ML	John Poindexter	w3ml.ohn@gmail.com
W9NWI Trustee	KD9HL	Steve Mollman	kd9hl@ARRL.net
Webmaster	W9YOU	John Reardon	kd9ron@ARRL.net
ARRL Card Checker	KD9HL	Steve Mollman	kd9hl@ARRL.net

Reminder, the NWIDX Club has a club call W9NWI.

The call is available to members for use during contests, special events, Field Day, etc. To schedule dates for its use, contact the trustee, Steve Mollman – KD9HL. kd9hl@arrrl.net

QSL cards are available.

Notice:

Articles in the Northwest Indiana DX Club Newsletter (except for those separately copyrighted) may be reprinted, provided proper credit is given.

Member DXCC Scorecard

A Reminder

We will be listing the membership's ARRL DXCC standings in the January issue of the newsletter. If you have worked any new entities since the last listing and haven't yet submitted them to the ARRL please do so before December 26, 2021.

QSL Cards-Steve Mollman, KD9HL is our Official ARRL DXCC Card Checker. Contact Steve for card checking. You may email him at KD9HL@arrl.net for card checking details, if you desire to go that route.

Logbook of the World-To submit LOTW credits on-line, click the **Awards** tab, and in the "**Your LoTW ARRL DXCC Accounts**" section on the left side of the Logbook Awards page, select the **DXCC Award Account** for which you intend to submit an application. Select the **Award Account Menu** on the left side and then select **Application**.

A NEW CLUB CHALLENGE?

The new contest is to work 5 EU, 5 SA and 5 Canadian Provinces. This should not be difficult with major contests like CQWW, ARRL DX, and Sweepstakes in the coming months.

Contest starts after the meeting on November 12, 2022.

Send your report to w3ml.john@gmail.com

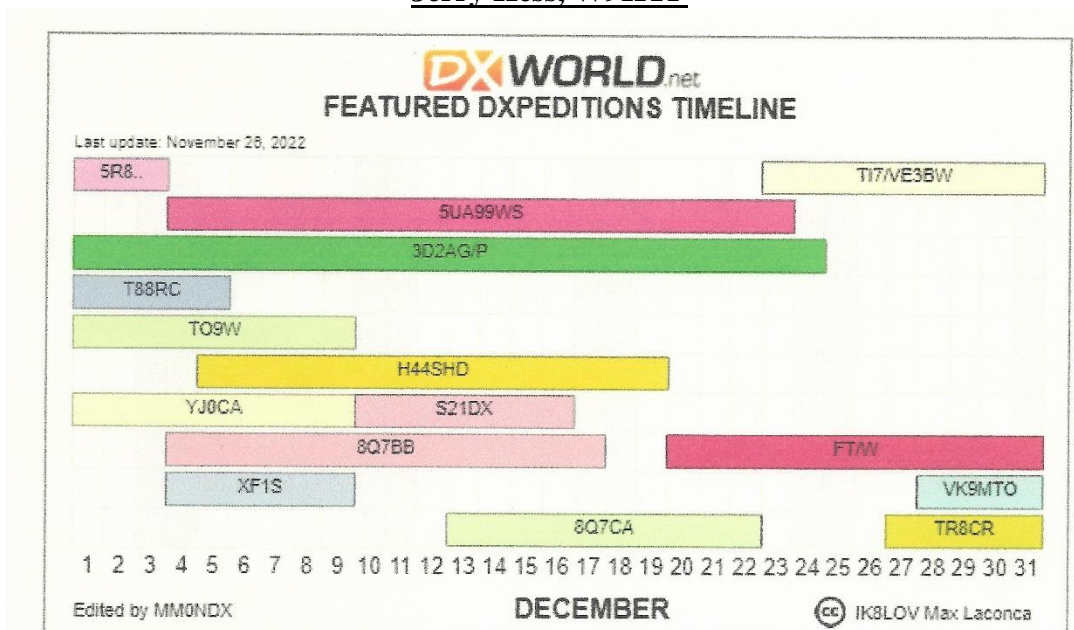
5 EU, 5 SA and 5 Canadian Provinces

Log would be like:

Your Name/Call	Date	Time	Call	Band	Mode	Location
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DX LISTINGS FOR 12/2022

By
Jerry Hess, W9KTP



By Permission of MM0NDX

The Question of the Month

(The correct answer is at the end of the Newsletter)

What DX entity is the farthest from Northwest Indiana?

- A. 3Y/B-Bouvet Island
- B. 9V-Singapore
- C. 4U-United Nations Headquarters
- D. FT/Z-Amsterdam and St. Paul Islands

<Ω>

Future South Sandwich Islands (VPØ, formerly VP8) activation now looks extremely unlikely indeed.

From: Tedd Mirgliotta (KB8NW) <kb8nw@hotmail.com>

The following published recently on the South Georgia Govt. website:

"In 2022, the Government designated the entire landmass of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands as Protected Areas.

The South Georgia Terrestrial Protected Area will conserve, protect and preserve the ecosystem and restore native biodiversity. It will ensure that activities are managed sustainably and those activities, such as research and media operations are assessed for their impact on the ecosystem and managed accordingly. It will help deliver a sustainable tourist industry so that people will have the opportunity to experience these amazing habitats and develop collective knowledge about the biodiversity of the island. In recognition of their pristine nature and absence of introduced species, the South Sandwich Protected Area prohibits all entry without a permit which will only be granted in special circumstances."

Full details can be found

at: <https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.gs%2Fenvironment%2Fsouth-georgia-the-south-sandwich-islands%2F&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cca0bc2f8882f43ba6ba808dac5898c58%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638039491809595470%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdta=SHRAifdSUpUhV4hg%2BUROknUMK3l4tRVDMhL2mTppi0%3D&reserved=0>

Further correspondence received from the South Georgia & South Sandwich Islands Government indicates that DXpeditions to South Georgia are still possible, subject to an initial Expedition Assessment process costing over \$1,000. However, DXpeditions to South Sandwich Islands would not be considered as 'special circumstances'.

Alan Cheshire
VK6CQ VKØLD VP8PJ

PO Box 8 Willetton
Western Australia 6955
AUSTRALIA

Crozet2022

Here is the latest information to date, following the signing of the agreement with the TAAF: (November 19th 2022)

- **December 12:** loading of freight, boarding of passengers (early afternoon) on the Marion Dufresne and departure for Tromelin at the end of the day,
- **December 16:** return to near Reunion, helicopter transport of agents returning from Tromelin and departure for Crozet. I will not be allowed to get off the boat on Tromelin.
- Expected arrival in Crozet around **December 20th.** Beginning of transmissions.
- **January 26,** end of the transmissions. I am authorized to transmit on HF for 3 weeks only between December 20 and January 26. In addition, every day at least 5 hours will be neutralized (no transmissions) to allow the Poles Institute (IPEV) to make a measurement.
- No constraint for QO-100 traffic, possibility of traffic during the whole stay on the base.
- Departure from Crozet around **March 25th.**
- Passage to Kerguelen then Amsterdam for supplying the bases. I will not be allowed to get off the boat so no emissions.
- Return to France in May.

As you can read above, these are unfortunately significant modifications in particular for the HF part and far from the initial authorization given by the Prefect Giusti.

Call sign and frequencies.

Only the information given on the Crozet2022 site, by F6EXV, F8TRT and of course Les Nouvelles DX is reliable. The others (FT1W, etc.) are bogus. Don't waste your time or your money. Given the very short duration of my broadcasts, I intend to favor traffic on 2 or 3 bands maximum for ATNOs. Depending on the best band for the W6 I will choose 14 or 18 MHz and 10 MHz at night.

I did not choose frequencies either, it will be seen with the scientists on site, except for the 10 Mhz FT8 where with the Bouvet team, we agreed that I would use 10.131 Mhz but I noted the subs bands of W (novice) stations on 14 MHz.

The whole team is working to have the largest possible transmission window, which would allow more traffic and perhaps more bandwidth. I am in contact with the IPEV, but to date I have no information going in the direction of an extension.

I am sorry for all those, and I know there are many, who are looking for Crozet. For me too it is a great frustration to stay 3 months on site for only 3 weeks of HF traffic.

Follow-up of the journey and details on the site and on the LNDX bulletin of J Michel.

Thanks and good luck.

Thierry – F6CUK

<http://crozet2022.r-e-f.org/news.html>

Top 10 FT8 Operating Tips

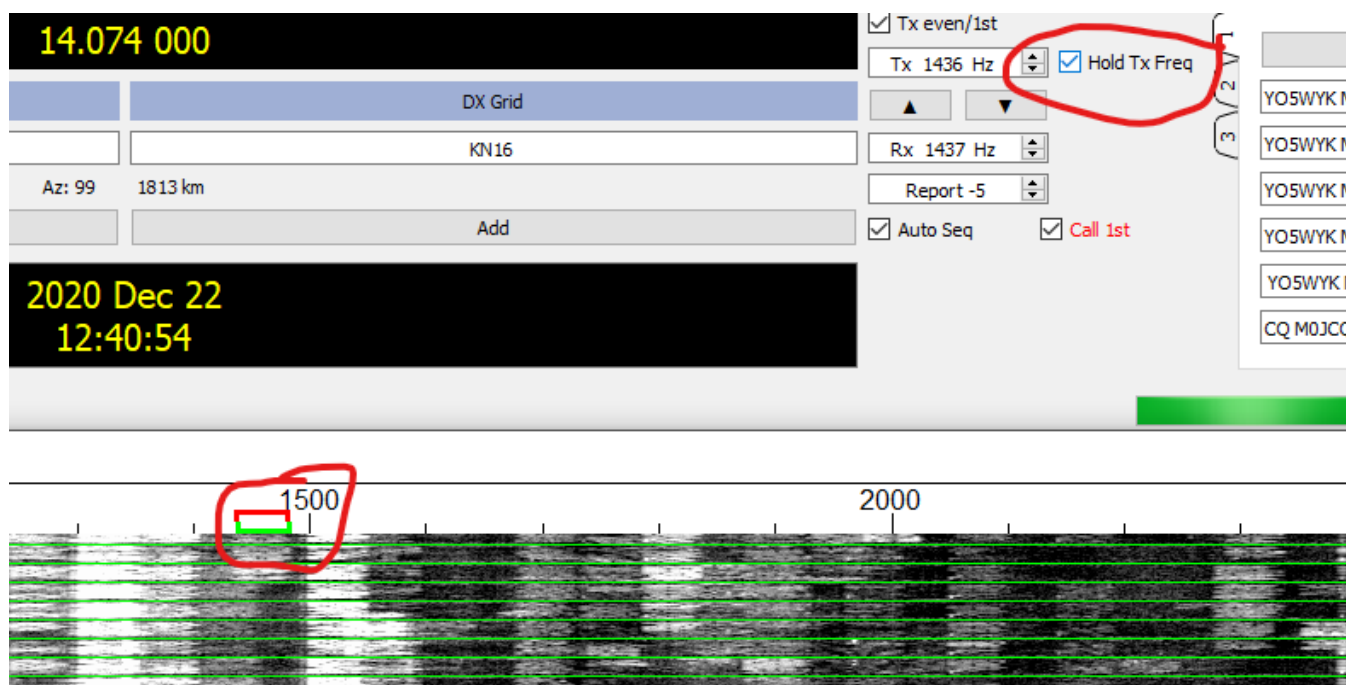
By Jim Stevens-M0JCQ

Over the last few years PSK31 and its variants were replaced by a new data mode... FT8. This data mode has truly come to dominate both the HF and VHF bands, to the extent that it's becoming rarer to find much SSB and CW activity, regardless of any other data modes on a given band!

The following tips are comprised of my experience of using FT8 for a few years, since it was first released back in 2017. I've had 3,000+ FT8 contacts across bands from 160m right through to 70cm.

1. Stick to a Single Frequency

This is probably where a lot of beginners go wrong. Try and find a clear frequency and then stick with it, regardless of whether you call CQ or respond to others. The ***Hold Tx Freq*** option is your friend in WSJT-X:



Hold TX Freq option in WSJT-X

This will ensure that you always transmit in the same place and importantly you don't keep hopping around the band.

Why does this matter? Well, you're more likely to be decoded if you're replying to another station off of his own frequency. If you move to their frequency then you could be competing with other stations.

Also we've all had it, where we're happily running on a frequency, then a station works you and then proceeds to stay there and call CQ on 'your' frequency. It's annoying and typically the other station isn't even aware they're doing it!

2. Time Synchronization is Key

If you've used data modes like RTTY and PSK31 in the past, then you're probably used to random receive and transmit cycles where you click a signal and transmit as soon as the other station has finished.

FT8 (and the other WSJT-X modes) demand perfect timing, so perfect it's beyond most of us to get right! If your computer clock is off by 2 seconds or more, then most likely your signals won't be decoded by others, and no one else will even see your calls!

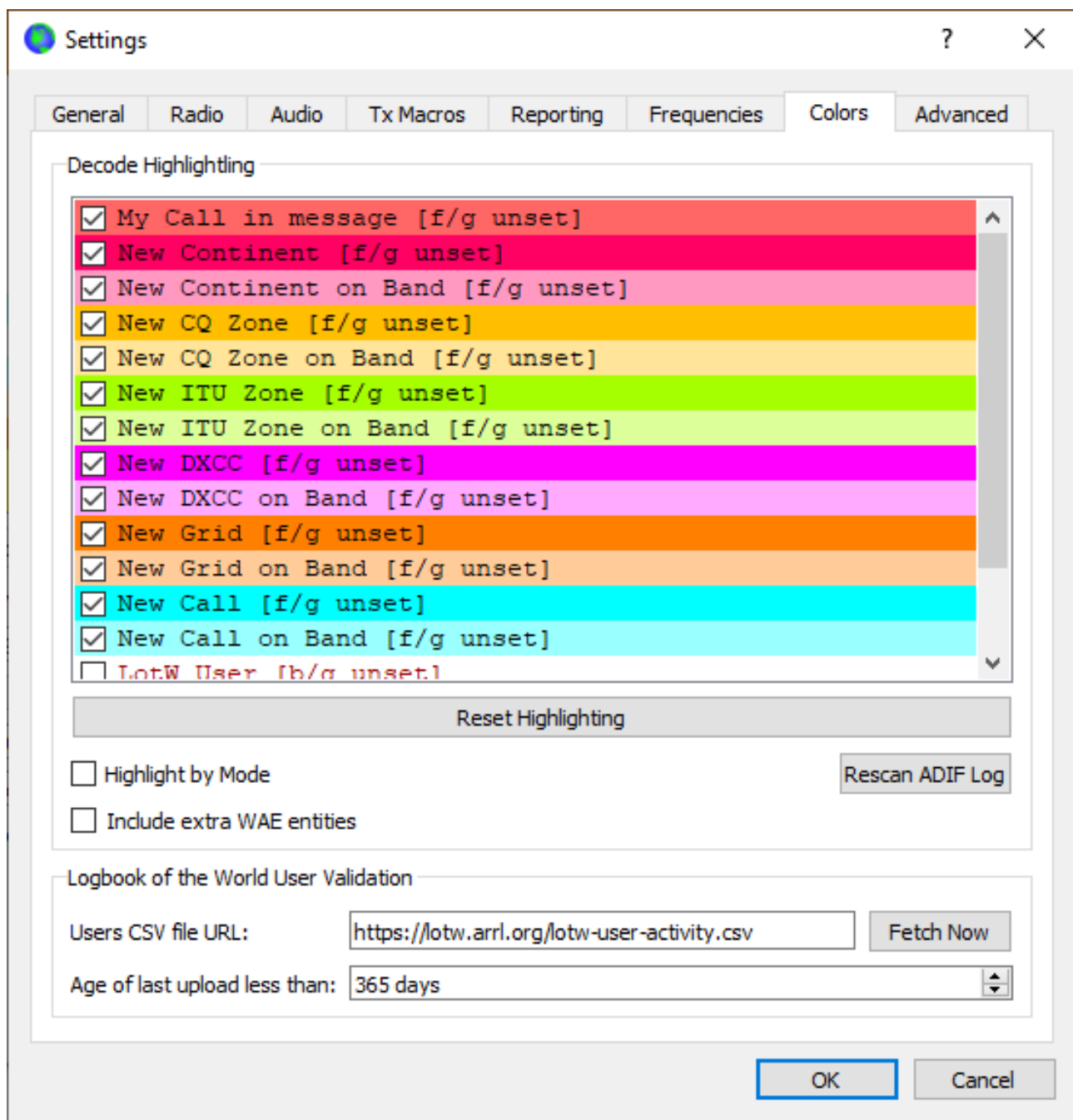
Your native Windows clock is likely to drift very quickly, unless you keep it trained to an accurate clock via the internet. I personally use [Dimension4](#) to do this. It's free and every 30 minutes it automatically synchronises my PC clock with an accurate reference online.

3. Learn the WSJT-X Colour Coding

WSJT-X helpfully colour codes your decoded messages, so you can spot important messages quickly.

If a new DXCC starts calling CQ which you've not seen before then this will be highlighted in dark purple (by default), if it's a new DXCC for you on the band, then it'll be highlighted a lighter shade of purple. Useful!

It's worth taking a look at the 'Colors' tab within the WSJT-X settings and learning these. This will allow you to quickly act on something you may 'need' like that rare DXCC or that rare grid square.

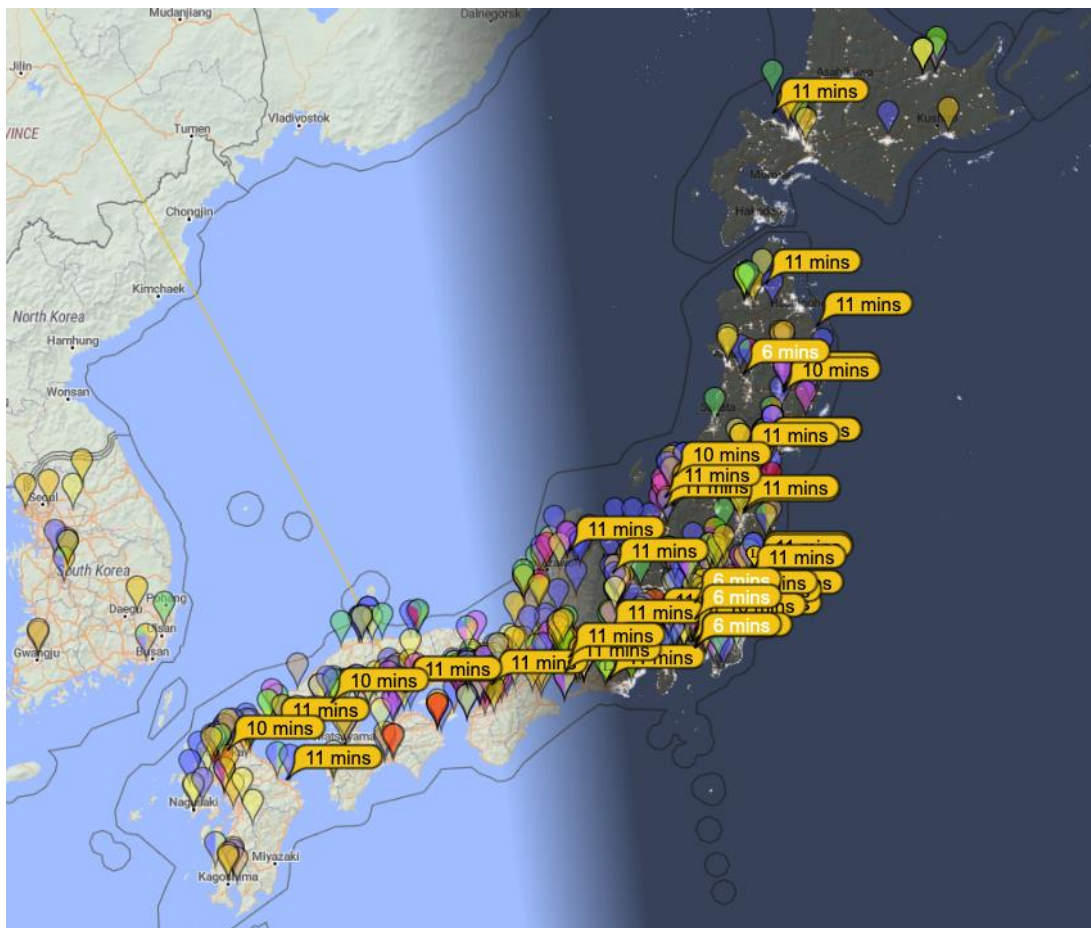


WSJT-X Message Colors

4. See Where You've Been Decoded

The PSKReporter.info website is a very useful tool to find out first of all if you're getting out, and secondly where in the world you are being heard!

This gives you an almost real time summary of the propagation on your chosen band, it's a great way to just understand the possible HF paths which may be open at a certain time of day.



My messages were being received well in Japan on this day (using 20m)

I typically have this running and check it every 20 minutes to see what I might be able to work or how propagation is changing to favour a certain area of the world.

Observing this resource has allowed me to work a lot of DX:

081615	-14	0.3	1483	~	M0JQCQ	BG0BBB	-19
081630	Tx		2516	~	BG0BBB	M0JQCQ	R-14
081700	Tx		2516	~	BG0BBB	M0JQCQ	R-14
081645	-15	-0.0	2516	~	M0JQCQ	JA6VQA	-18
081715	-6	0.3	1483	~	M0JQCQ	BG0BBB	RR73
081715	-12	-0.0	2516	~	M0JQCQ	JA6VQA	-18
081730	Tx		2516	~	BG0BBB	M0JQCQ	73
081745	-12	-0.0	2516	~	M0JQCQ	JA6VQA	-18
081800	Tx		2516	~	JA6VQA	M0JQCQ	R-12
081745	-12	0.0	2314	~	M0JQCQ	JH1EIG	-07
081815	-8	-0.0	2516	~	M0JQCQ	JA6VQA	RR73
081830	Tx		2516	~	JA6VQA	M0JQCQ	73
081845	-19	0.1	1730	~	M0JQCQ	JM1GAW	-09
081845	-12	0.0	2762	~	M0JQCQ	JH1EIG	-07
081915	-11	0.4	2762	~	M0JQCQ	JH1EIG	-07
081930	Tx		2516	~	JM1GAW	M0JQCQ	R-19
081915	-11	-0.1	2488	~	M0JQCQ	JA1DCO	-11

Pileup of JA stations calling me on 20m

5. Persevere

One misconception is that FT8 can be like shooting fish in a barrel, but it's not always easy to "work the world". The vagaries of propagation still come into play. Conditions can change quite quickly with openings appearing and fading out.

If a station doesn't respond to your call straight away, try leaving it calling them for a few cycles.

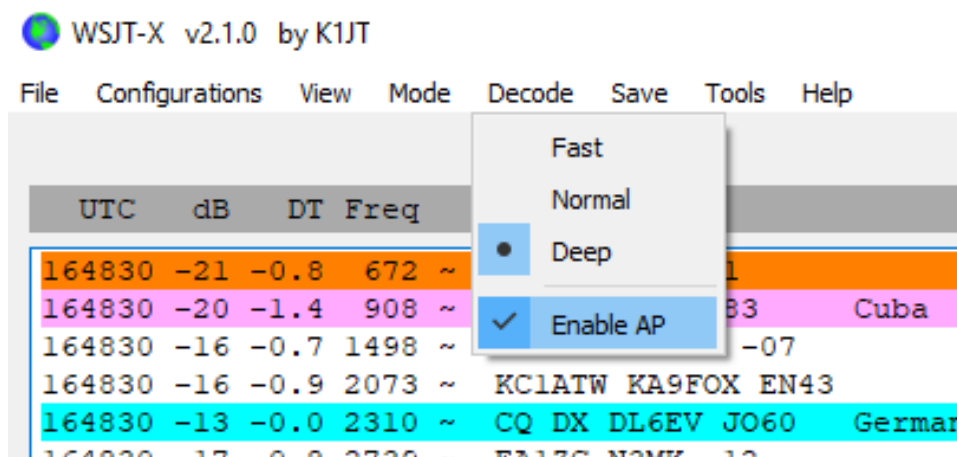
The conditions might just swing in your favour, then they can decode your message.

This is another great reason to operate away from the other station's frequency; you can continue calling them while they're in a QSO, without you interrupting it and you might end up possibly being worked straight after.

I used to give up a bit too quickly, but found that perseverance (especially with DX stations) usually paid off.

6. Enable 'Deep' and 'AP' Decoding

Without going into too much technical detail here, your FT8 decoding will be more sensitive if you set your WSJT-X decoding settings to 'Deep' and 'Enable AP':

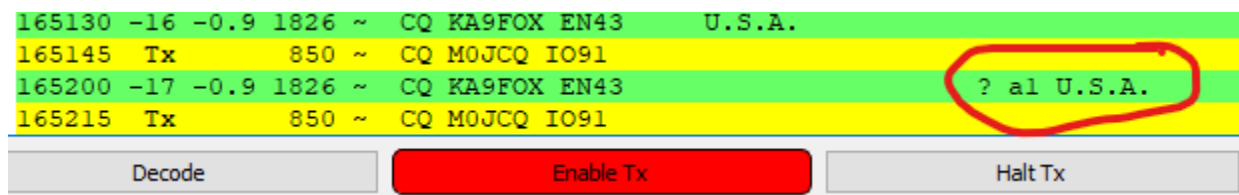


Enable AP in WSJT-X

Deep decoding throws more of your computer power at decoding the signal. While AP (a priori) uses heuristics and known information to decode messages, which otherwise wouldn't be decoded.

Deep decoding comes with a performance penalty, your computer may not decode all received signals before the next time period starts. While using my old shack laptop, I found this to be a problem when decoding a busy 20m band, but after upgrading I use it all the time now. You can always drop back to 'Normal' decoding if you notice this.

Enabling AP on the other hand can introduce some unusual side effects with the decoded message. If the callsign looks funny, then it's probably incorrect. It's easy to see which messages had AP applied to them:



Decoded message using AP

Use your brain here – if it looks funny to you, then it's probably not right!

7. Can't Decode a Strong Signal? Lower your RF Gain

Sometimes you'll see a large signal on the Waterfall, but WSJT-X can only occasionally decode it, but at worst just cannot decode any of the messages at all. The station seems to be transmitting accurately timed signals, but nothing shows up, how strange!

I've noticed this occurring during strong openings, especially during Sporadic-E season on 6m, where strong signals of 10dB+ just won't decode.

I've found that simply turning down your rigs RF Gain will allow the messages to be decoded. A simple fix, but if you've not used other data modes you might not think to do this!

8. Not Getting Many Replies to your CQ Call? Change Frequency

You may find that for whatever reason you are not getting any responses to your CQ calls. This could be down to a number of factors, but it's always worth checking to see if your chosen frequency is clear within your chosen TX timeslot.

If another station is transmitting on your frequency or nearby during your TX timeslot, then other stations may not be able to decode your messages in order to even see your CQ messages.

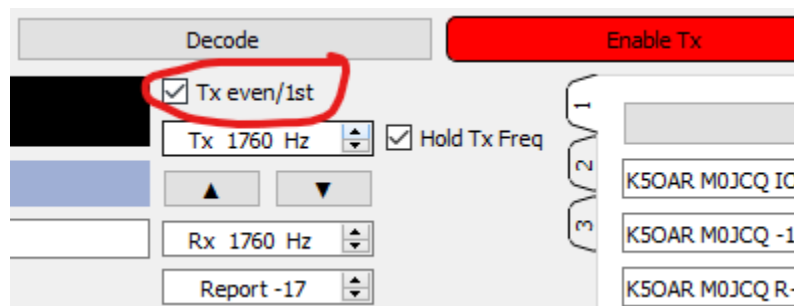
Even if you still can't see anything else when just receiving during your timeslot, there could well be another station on the same frequency which your DX is seeing, but you're not.

I've found it worth while moving frequencies, if you're not getting much luck, it usually works!

9. Change Timeslots

If you've spent a while using one timeslot (say even TX), then why not switch to the other one? This might net you a whole new haul of stations to work.

For me this usually leads to an (initial) increase in contacts and obviously allows you to work stations not worked in your other timeslot. I tend to keep switching between these timeslots every 20 minutes or so.



How to switch TX timeslots in WSJT-X

A word of warning here: make sure there are no timeslot conventions on your chosen band. VHF bands have a convention where your timeslot is chosen based on your location, in order to prevent nearby stations interfering with each other, when you're all trying to receive distant and weak DX. Your RF neighbors won't thank you for breaking this convention.

10. Pay Attention to all Received Messages to Spot DX

WSJT-X will decode all messages across the 3kHz spectrum of the band you're using (or less depending on your radios selected filter). This can result in many decodes on a busy band like 20m.

I've spotted quite a lot of DX and then subsequently worked them, without ever seeing them call CQ! DX stations are often overwhelmed by stations calling them, so don't often need to call CQ.

By monitoring all messages (not just highlighted CQ messages) in the left hand 'Band Activity' pane, then you might just spot some rare DX lurking. You might also notice a number of other stations calling a DX station during your RX timeslot. A simple switch to the other timeslot and you might just be able to decode and then work them.

This has netted me a number of DX stations I would have otherwise missed by just paying attention to CQ messages only!

Summary

These are my top 10 operating tips for FT8 using WSJT-X, these are all learned based on my experience and hopefully there's something of use here.

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Jim Stevens-M0JCQ is an active portable operator and enjoys Summits on the Air and is a frequent activator of hills/mountains/volcanoes around Europe and sometimes beyond. He also co-authors the VHF/UHF column in RadCom (the RSGB monthly Journal and writes about many of his amateur radio activities in his bog: www.hamblog.co.uk

ARRL DIRECTOR 101
Or
WHAT WE DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT
CARL LUETZELSCHWAB, K9LA
By
Jerry Hess, W9KTP

INTRODUCTION

Before getting to the main subject of this article, a little background information is needed. All members of the ARRL are represented by one of 15 volunteer Directors from one of the divisions (#1) for a three year term. These Directors, along with the ARRL officers, meet at ARRL HQ in January and July. In addition to the Board meeting, three standing committees meet on the Thursday before the Board meeting on Friday and Saturday: A&F, EC-FSC and PSC (#2). Committee reports can be found at <http://www.arrl.org/committee-reports> detailing current activities.

DISCUSSION

As members of the Northwest Indiana DX Club, most of us have known Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA, since the Club was formed. Over the years, Carl has made several presentations on propagation, a subject about which he is considered an expert. In addition, he and his wife Vicky, AE9YL, have made presentations on their DX-peditions to Syria (YK9A) and the lighthouse on Market Reef (OJ0/AE9YL and OJ0/K9LA). Does anyone remember Carl's presentation on BOGs (Beverages On Ground)? With all that said, we have grown used to Carl's attendance at our meetings.

In 2017 Carl was appointed as Vice Director by Director Kermit Carlson W9XA and in June 2022 was moved up to Director of the Central Division when Kermit resigned to spend more time with family. Rarely does Carl's official role become a topic of discussion at our meetings. So, at our last meeting, I asked Carl what he does as Director. At the time I was overwhelmed by his answer and wished I had taken notes. I had little concept of the scope of a Director's job. My guess is that most of the members do not either. As a consequence, I decided to write this article and asked Carl to repeat what he told me. His answer was as follows.

As for ARRL Committees, there are 18 total. Here are the ones I'm on:

1) PSC (Programs and Services Committee) - this committee deals mostly with contest issues (CAC), DX issues (DXAC) and Field Day issues. I am also the DXAC Liaison to the ARRL Board.

2) EMC (Electro-Magnetic Compatibility) Committee - this committee deals with noise issues that are a detriment to Amateurs (both ARRL members and ARRL non-members). I am the Chair of this committee - I ride herd over a bunch of technical guys and gals. I also participate in the IARU Region 1 (Europe) EMC Committee, and have an SDR and small active antenna that measures noise every hour at my location from 66 KHz to 31 MHz.

3) Historical Committee - this committee is tasked with developing a history of the ARRL and a history of Amateur Radio. Right now we're discussing the overall plan on how to do this and trying to figure out a way to get volunteers.

4) I'm also a Board member of the ARRL Foundation - this is totally separate from the ARRL Board. The Foundation gives out scholarships to individuals and grants to clubs with worthy projects. I am on the scholarship side, and we are very busy in the first several months of the year interviewing and rating applicants.

Although I'm not a member of any other committees, I try to participate in the Executive Committee meetings (deals with issues in between Board meetings), the Emergency Communications and Field Services Committee meetings (deals with EmComm and club activities), the monthly Section manager meetings and a couple others if they're going to discuss something that I think is important to the Central Division. And of course I go to in-person meetings and give Zoom meetings to talk about the ARRL.

As Carl noted, this is a lot of time in front of a computer with ZOOM meetings.

Most of us know that Carl represents the League at major hamfests. Furthermore, he regularly participates in the National Traffic System, particularly QIN and 9RN. Much, much more about Carl's activities can be found on his website <https://k9la.us/>.

COMMENTS AND CONCLUSION

It should be obvious that Carl and probably the other Directors spend an enormous amount of time supporting us through at ARRL. They deserve a lot credit for their work. I urge all members to take a look at the Committee reports since they represent the major activities of the League.

From the perspective of a DXer and contester, it bothers me that the DX and Contest Committees are only advisory. There is no obvious link between LOTW, DX and Contesting and yet these are big activities throughout the ARRL membership (*comment from K9LA – these two committees have members from each division who are extremely active in contesting and DXing – they may be advisory in nature, but their decisions are usually unanimous and are taken very seriously by the Programs and Services Committee, to whom they report*). Carl recently appointed John Sweeney, K9EL as the Central Division representative to the DX Advisory Committee. John is an experienced DXer and contester. We are likely to have him as a speaker at our club by mid-year and we will hear more about this subject.

73's,
Jerry

REFERENCES

(#1) ARRL Divisions

Atlantic, Central, Dakota, Delta, Great Lakes, Hudson, Midwest, New England,
Northwestern, Pacific, Roanoke, Rocky Mountain, Southeastern, Southwestern, West Gulf



(#2) ARRL Board COMMITTEES

a) Executive Committee

b) Standing Committees

- 1) Administration and Finance
- 2) Emergency Communications and Field Services Committee
- 3) Programs & Services

c) Other Committees

- 1) Ethics & Elections
 - 2) Amateur Radio Legal Defense & Assistance
 - 3) HF Band Planning
 - 4) Historical
 - 5) RF Safety
 - 6) Electromagnetic Compatibility
-

- 7) Public Relations
 - 8) ARDF (Amateur Radio Direction Finding)
 - 9) Logbook of The World Committee
 - 10) Legislative Advocacy Committee
 - 11) ARISS Committee (Satellites)
 - 12) Legal Structure Review Committee
 - 13) DX Advisory Committee
 - 14) Contest Advisory Committee
-

Links that members have sent in for the newsletter.

The Storied History of the Ham Radio Callsign

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su76QvChuEU>

5 Tips to Become an FT8 Advanced Operator!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdlkmAkoEAQ>

Question of the Month Answer:

D. FT/Z-Amsterdam and St. Paul Islands. 11449 miles/18628 kilometers.

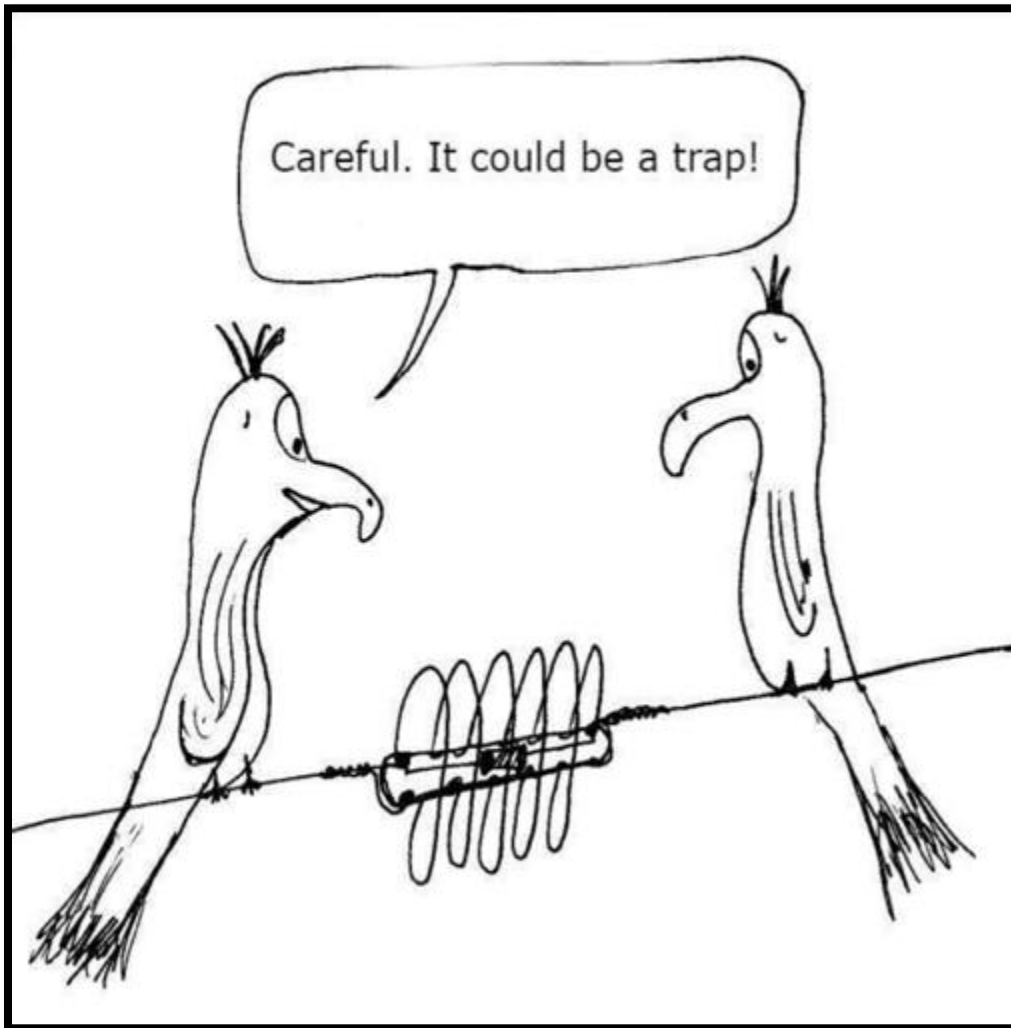
3Y/B-Bouvet Island = 7967miles/13658 kilometers

9V-Singapore = 10049 miles/24910 kilometers

4U-United Nations Headquarters = 740 miles/1090 kilometers

(Distances were calculated from the center of Grid Square en61mn. The distance from your QTH may differ,)

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FOR SALE ITEMS

The following equipment is up for sale. Will accept PayPal, cash, MO, or personal check. Shipping is available for additional cost. For more information on any of the listed items please email Mike at aj9c@indy.rr.com. Prices are listed below the pictures.

Drake R4 series INRAD 2.1 Khz SSB filter \$75

Collins 180L tuner \$125

HD-73 rotor and control box (no lower mast clamp) works \$150

Payment by check, MO or Zelle.

Contact AJ9C at
aj9c@indy.rr.com
or call 765-661-8495. Leave a message
if you call.

If you have ham items for sale, email me a list along with prices and contact information. I will put it in the next newsletter.

Let me know when an item is no longer for sale so I can remove it.

For Sale items will be removed from the newsletter after 3 months.

I want to thank those that have been sending in articles for the newsletter. All items are appreciated.



Until Next Time,

73

John

W3ML

<http://nwidxclub.weebly.com/>



DX

