

Northwest Indiana DX CLUB

Volume 13, Issue 2

February 2025

President's Corner

The club meeting was quite interesting as Carl spoke on the Science of Propagation.

Pictures near the bottom of the newsletter.

73
John W3ML
Good DXing!

Meeting Feb. 9th
12:00 Noon
Sugar Bowl Michigan City

"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.

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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@arrl.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.

Question of the Month

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

When was the Northwest Indiana DX Club founded?

- A. **October 26, 2005**
- B. **January 26, 1986**
- C. **November 2 2016**
- D. **November 12, 2012**

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ARRL Reports DXCC Processing “Back to Normal”

DXCC® application processing is back to typical processing times. In October, we reported that the ARRL DXCC® System had been returned to service following work that was completed to ensure the security and integrity of the system following the [cyber-attack in May](#). Over 4,000 DXCC applications have been logged into the system for processing since returning the system to service. We are currently processing applications submitted in December, and we continue to mail orders for paper DXCC certificates and endorsement stickers. There were 315 certificates mailed between December 27, 2024, and January 13, 2025.

(From the ARRL Letter-January 16, 2025)

ARRL Funding for QSL Bureaus to End in 2025

The ARRL has decided that Incoming QSL Bureaus would have to recoup “their full expenses from shared charges to the participants themselves” thus ending decades of financial support by the ARRL for the Incoming QSL Bureaus.

According to the [June 2024 Standard Operating Guidelines for Incoming QSL bureaus](#), the funding for many expenses, including PO box rental and other postal expenses, office supplies, printing, and mileage, was to have ended on July 31, 2024, but that date has been pushed back to a certain extent for some bureaus until the end of 2025.

The decision to cut funding was apparently made with little or no input from the bureau managers, and they were quite caught off guard by this decision. Not only that, the ARRL is putting the entire burden of how to recoup expenses on the bureau managers makes the bureau

The ARRL is expected to continue to tout the Incoming QSL Bureaus as a member benefit, when in reality, it's the sponsoring DX clubs, volunteers and the DX'ers that will be footing the bill.



Rose-Anne Lawrence, KBIDMW - ARRL Out Going QSL Bureau Associate

The Ninth District Incoming QSL Bureau is sponsored by the Northern Illinois DX Association,

ARRL Planning New DX Award

From the ARRL Member Bulletin-January 22, 2025:

“The Programs & Services Committee and headquarters staff from the Radiosport Department are moving ahead with the creation of a new DXCC award -- **DXCC Trident** -- which will recognize those who achieve DXCC using CW, phone, and digital modes. Higher achievement endorsements can be earned at the 200, 300, and Honor Roll levels. The DXCC Trident award is intended to spur greater on-air operating and to inspire those using digital modes to also develop their skills in, and practice, CW and SSB.”

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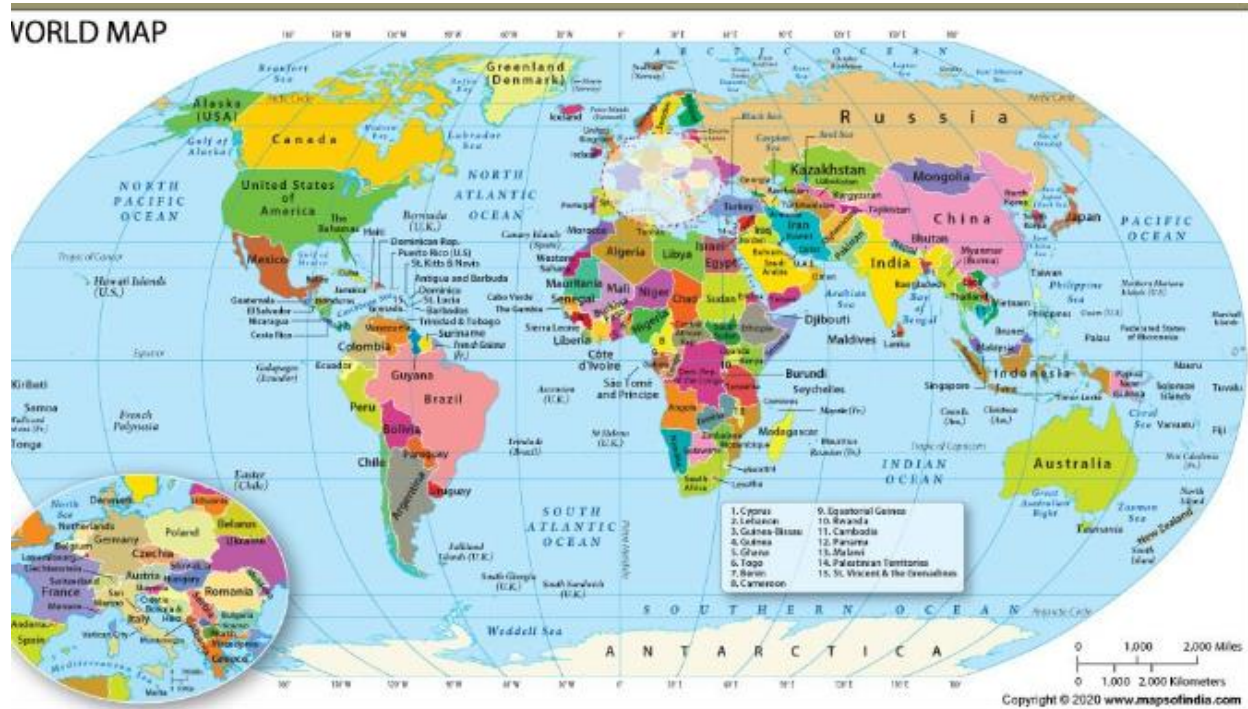
DXer's Trivia Game

By Mike Cisek- W0VTT

Many people are familiar with the popular New York Times “Wordle” game. It’s a nice brain teaser that my wife Susan and I use to decide which spouse is smarter than the other each day.

Recently, with a group of friends we were discussing Wordle, and a friend asked if I was familiar with a geography game called Worldle? She thought that would be good for us “ham radio guys”. Naturally, I had to check it out.

The game displays the outline of a country and gives six chances to guess what it is. Incorrect answers get hints; distance in kilometers and direction (eight compass points) to the correct country. After guessing the country, the next round shows the outline of all of its neighboring countries, giving several chances to guess them. Subsequent rounds are to guess the capitol city, population, and currency.



Worldle does not use the ARRL DXCC country list, so not all of their “countries” align with our “entities”. For example, England, Scotland and Wales are all bundled into the United Kingdom; but they do list Guernsey, Jersey, and the Isle of Man separately. Worldle uses the ISO 3166-1 country list.

Considering myself a serious DXer, I thought this game would be fairly easy. (Spoiler alert: it’s NOT!). Those little island countries all look alike, and how many of us really know or care about the geographic outline of every little island? We just need to know which direction to point the beam. Naming the neighboring countries is easy for EU, AS, NA, and SA, and not too hard for AF, but those island countries are tough. Most of us probably know all of the Caribbean countries, and the South Pacific island nations, but not their exact arrangement or location. Just point the beam in the right direction and start calling.

Being a lifelong map geek (even before discovering ham radio), I really enjoy this little game and play it every morning. I hope it amuses some of you as well. <https://worldle.teuteuf.fr/>

Mike Cizek-W0VTT, has been a ham operator since 1975. He presently serves on the ARRL DX Advisory Committee and as a DXCC Card Checker. Mike retired from the US Navy in 2011 as a Master Chief Petty Officer.

Bill Introduced in the Indiana Senate that may outlaw deliberate QRM

Three Indiana State Senators have introduced a bill (SB-26) that outlaws possessing and/or using a device that interferes with radio communications. Violating the law would be considered, depending upon the circumstances, a Class 5 or Class 6 felony. Substantial fines are also authorized.

Although the bill, as proposed, doesn't specifically name amateur radio, the wording is sufficiently broad to include those activities.

SECTION 3. IC 35-31.5-2-265.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025]:

Sec. 265.5. "Radio frequency jamming device", for purposes of IC 35-45-2-6, has the meaning set forth in IC 35-45-2-6(b).

SECTION 4. IC 35-45-2-6 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025]

- : Sec. 6. (a) "Artificial electromagnetic pulse" means an artificially created electromagnetic disturbance that interferes with a wireless communication and damages electronic equipment.
- (b) "Radio frequency jamming device" means a device designed to block, interfere with, or overpower wireless communication.
- (c) A person who knowingly or intentionally owns, operates, uses, manufactures, possesses, buys, sells, or provides to another person a radio frequency jamming device commits unlawful radio frequency jamming, a Level 6 felony.
- (d) However, the offense is a Level 5 felony if:
- (1) a radio frequency jamming device is used to disrupt a component of a critical infrastructure facility (as defined in C 35-46-10-1);
 - 2) a radio frequency jamming device is used to disrupt the communications of a public safety agency (as defined in IC 10-10.5-1-5); or
 - (3) the offense was committed using an artificial electromagnetic pulse.
- (e) Criminal fines for a person convicted of an offense described in subsection (d) shall be assessable in an amount of not more than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000).
- (f) Subsection (c) does not apply to a governmental entity.

The DXpedition to Jarvis Island

By Don Greenbaum, N1DG



I am writing this on the way to Pago Pago from Jarvis Island. What a ride! And, no, I'm not talking about the storm we just went through, which had hurricane-strength winds peaking at 68 knots.

An idea is born

The trip to Jarvis really began eight years ago, right after the successful Baker Island DXpedition where we tried to keep a few operators on the ship and remote to the radios on the island. The remote idea was a total failure, yet the DXpedition was a great success, though it left the team totally exhausted.

On the way back to Fiji, George Wallner, AA7JV, said to me: "There has to be a better way." And so began a three-year process where the end result was a fully remote system, including a custom-made landing craft, software control systems, and custom-designed antennas made to work with reduced height and minimal guying. George's Radio-in-a-Box (RiB) system design DX Foundation (NCDXF) and tested successfully in the Bahamas. (See the Spring 2021 and Winter 2023 NCDXF newsletters for articles on the evolution of the RiB concept and design.)

In December 2021, we started the long process of approaching the superintendent of the Pacific Remote Island National Monument for a Special Use Permit allowing amateur radio on either Johnston or Jarvis Islands. We were quickly told that the U.S. Air Force was not in favor of visitors to Johnston, so we proceeded with Jarvis, where the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was eager to send a biologist.

First, a Compatibility Determination (CD) was needed. In September 2022, I met in person with USFWS personnel in Honolulu to describe the RiB system and the minimally invasive methods we could employ. We emphasized that, instead of 15 operators, 10 tents, 12 antennas, a toilet and seven generators as we used on Baker, we could replace that with a pontoon amphibious boat containing all the radios and generators, six or seven vertical antennas of reduced height and no need to stay on the island. I brought along videos of the RiB in action in the Bahamas and detailed PowerPoint presentations explaining the system. And, we could offer needed transportation to their biologists.

After that meeting, the USFWS began the process of approving a CD based on a reduced footprint RiB activation. Finally, in January 2024, we received the good news of a positive determination. It was only then that we could formally apply for a special use permit (SUP). The CD empowered the superintendent (now a different person) to

issue the terms and dates of a SUP for us and issue the actual permit. The date offered was August 2024 based on available USFWS personnel. While not an optimal date, DX-wise, it was what was offered and we accepted it.

Jarvis Island history

The uninhabited 4.5 sq. km (1.7 sq. mile) coral island is located about halfway between Hawaii and the Cook Islands in the South Pacific, and the U.S. territory is administered by the USFWS as part of the National Wildlife Refuge system. One of three Central Line Islands (Palmyra is one of the Northern Line Islands), Jarvis is the largest; the other two are Baker and Howland Islands. Jarvis, in addition to being part of a different island group than Palmyra, is also separated by the division of territory created by a treaty between the U.S. and Kiribati, signed in 2013. It deserves its own country status!

Discovered in 1821 by Captain Brown on the British ship Eliza Francis, Jarvis was mined for guano in the late 1800s under the Guano Act of 1856 when it became a U.S. possession. It was placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior on May 13, 1936 (Executive Order 7368).

Jarvis truly is a long distance from everywhere. The American Equatorial Islands Colonization Project was initiated in 1935 by the United States Department of Commerce to place U.S. citizens on the uninhabited islands of Howland, Baker and Jarvis so weather stations and landing could be built for military and use on Pan Am air routes between Australia and California. Additionally, the U.S. government wanted to claim these remote islands to provide a check on eastern territorial expansion by Japan.

The colonists, who became known as “Hui Panala au”, were primarily young native Hawaiian men and other male students recruited from schools in Hawaii. In 1937, the project was expanded to include Canton and Enderbury in the Phoenix Islands. The project ended in early 1942 when the colonists were evacuated from the islands at the start of the war in the Pacific.



Jarvis Island— 1936
(N1DG on the left and W8GEX on the right)

Getting ready

After securing the SUP in early 2024, we had little time to organize the DXpedition, raise funding for fuel and boat personnel and recruit remote operators. In 2023, the MV Magnet, owned by AA7JV, had already entered the Pacific and by June 2024 we had successfully trained a core of remote operators with operations from FO, E5, VP6D, KH8S and KH8. The island team would be George, AA7JV; Tomi Pekarik, HA7RY; Adrian Ciuperca, KO8SCA, Mike Snow, KN4EEI, and myself, Don Greenbaum, N1DG.

N5J QSOs with any of these ops would also count for IOTA and POTA credit, a big change from previous program rules. That is how rare Jarvis was, and the award programs knew the restrictive USFWS rules prevented on-island operators. Since we were operating in the island refuge, exceptions were made. Remote operators not in the refuge wouldn't count.

The NCDXF stepped up with funding to cover the fuel costs — the largest part of the funding. Many other foundations and clubs provided additional funding to cover permit fees and other costs associated with an endeavor of this size. Our friends at DX Engineering and Flex were our main equipment suppliers, and individuals, as always, tossed in funds needed to activate this rare island.

We organized the two remote teams under Ned Stearns, AA7A (FT8), and Gerry Hull, W1VE (CW). Pilots were Donald Mikes, AA1V; Eiki Satomi, JH8JWF, and Manny Fonseca Jr., CT1FPQ

In July, the team operated as K8R from American Samoa as a thorough equipment test and warm-up, making 37,000 QSOs. Just like the 2018 Baker Island DXpedition with the very first Fox/Hound activation, the Dateline DX Association was working with the WSJT-X developers to introduce another major advance in digital mode FT8 technology, the “SuperFox.” We even had a special logo courtesy of MMØNDX and DX-World.net.

Underway

On 31 July, the day arrived with the five-man team (already assembled from the K8R DXpedition) joined by the arrival of the three USFWS biologists. While we waited for optimal sailing weather, the USFWS personnel briefed us of the on-island rules, and we practiced safety drills aboard the Magnet, including jumping off the boat and climbing into a life raft.

The RiB amphibious boat (built by George and Mike out of a lake pontoon boat) was fully loaded and ready for fast deployment. This vital piece of the kit contained radios, amplifiers, generators, the 900 MHz link and most of the antennas.

On 2 August, we left the port of Pago Pago and dropped anchor on the northern side of American Samoa, positioned to leave before first light, and, the next morning we did just that, and started our nearly 1,900 km (1,180 mile) journey. Yes, Jarvis is a long distance away! Enroute we set up all the notebooks and checked out the data network. After an uneventful 3-day journey, we arrived at Jarvis at around 0600 local time on 6 August, and by 0700, the first tender was loaded with Beth and Meagan (two of our USFWS monitors), George, and some supplies and headed to the island. George set the on-shore anchor for winching up the RiB boat and the USFWS approved the planned antenna locations.

Setup

The RiB boat was lowered and began to make its way to Jarvis piloted by Mike. Shortly afterwards, Adrian, Tomi, and I were on our way. By 0750 we were all on the island helping to position the RiB boat.



First Trip to the Island



*Left: The RiB amphibious boat loaded on the deck of Magnet.
Right: Underway to Jarvis Island.*

The RiB, using the anchor set ashore, was winched up on the beach in a few minutes. After positioning the RiB boat, Mike started the generators and set up the 900 MHz, 34Mbps link to the Magnet. George started up the radios and RiB-based notebooks; Tomi started laying out coax while Adrian and I started assembling antennas. The beach temperature was approaching 40°C (104°F). Meanwhile, the USFWS contingent moved down the beach and started setting up their camp by the day beacon.

On the air

Within four hours of landing on the beach, five radios were up and running, the link was established, and three antennas were guyed and tuned. The ship's crew had delivered all the USFWS gear and fuel and other antennas that weren't on the RiB boat. It was time for a break, and we returned to the Magnet for lunch.

George quickly made sure all the ship's PCs were connected to the radios in the RiBs and let loose the first team of remote operators on three radios. Within four hours of the first landing on Jarvis, QSOs were appearing in the log. By the time we returned to Jarvis after lunch almost 1,000 QSOs were already in the log!

In the afternoon, while the remote teams had stations on the air, the five of us returned to the beach and set up the remaining verticals and the 15-20 Meter dual-band VDA antenna. By sunset we were exhausted, but the basic DXpedition was on the air with six radios (three with amplifiers), six antennas, and good connectivity over the internet. George was ready to operate 160!

The antenna work was never finished. On day three, our low-band RX DHDL went up and the 6-Meter beam (vertically polarized) was installed.

USFWS monitors were concerned about the interaction of the tern bird colony (the largest in the world) and our guy wires. First, we added more flags and streamers to the antennas and guys. Then we reduced the height of the

verticals and moved them from the berm to the sealine. By the end of the DXpedition, our 45-foot verticals were down to 23 feet, reducing the need for the high guy wires. Reports indicated few could tell the difference. The DXpedition quickly took on a routine similar to other remote island adventures — checking antennas, refueling generators, fixing wires affected by salt corrosion, etc. One aspect of a RiB remote site is the need to maintain the link to the island while having a vessel that was not allowed to drop anchor in a coral reef. It required staffing the bridge 24/7, and constantly repositioning the boat so that the link didn't drop.

During our DXpedition we even made time to do two live interviews, one for the DX Engineering podcast and one live at the Pacific Northwest DX Convention during which KJ7KOJ and KK7EXT were operating N5J remotely at the event in Everett, Washington.

Daily, we were adding 8,000 to 10,000 QSOs to our log. That was until the sun decided to send a bunch of CMEs our way, and our daily rate dropped by half. We started to doubt we would reach our goal of 100,000 QSOs, including 25% with Europe and 20,000 unique calls. We were pleased then when those goals were met, as the last few days saw some of the best conditions of the DXpedition and this solar cycle. Imagine, 2,000 160 Meter QSOs in the middle of the summer, reaching as far as southern and eastern Europe and the Middle East. FT8 QSOs were less than half the total. We were on the air 94% of the time at Jarvis. None of our homebrew solid-state amplifiers failed; no Flex radios failed, and other than one night when a generator shut down (one of three paralleled together), our uptime was impressive.

The three USFWS biologists were able to spend close to two weeks doing science on a remote island courtesy of the Amateur Radio community.

SuperFox

As previously mentioned, N5J was the first SuperFox DXpedition and our results were nothing short of fantastic. We had rates consistently around 200 QSOs per hour, per radio for most of the first week. Gradually the completion rate fell off and some stations just could not copy their R reports. For some, it was having their radios set with too sharp a bandwidth; others had wrong AGC settings, and some had the wrong version of WSJT-X. Many sent us screen shots and those showed they were running JTDX and MHSV (not sure how they copied anything).

After a week, we accommodated these Hounds by switching some stations to the normal F/H mode to give everyone a chance at a Jarvis QSO on digital.

Teamwork

The local team made a quarter of the total QSOs while the remote operators accounted for over 80,000 QSOs. Unlike many large DXpeditions today, every QSO on FT8 was handcrafted. There were NO automated QSOs.

Each of the five local ops played a different part in making this a success. The RiB technology (including homebrew amplifiers) required the engineering genius of George. Mike was instrumental in fabricating the RiB boat ensuring a 4-hour landing-to-first- QSO feat. I obtained the Special Use Permit through my volunteer work with USFWS and managed the finances. Tomi is an absolute QSO machine and our QSL manager. Adrian worked on the networking and PC issues that a highly advanced remote operation like this throws at a DXpedition.

We had two dedicated remote team leaders (W1VE and AA7A) who ironed out scheduling and mode technical issues. W7YED was our Flex Radio guru. In conclusion, the RiB concept of the Jarvis DXpedition overcame permitting issues.

As the largest sooty tern colony in the world, the USFWS has been very protective of large-scale visits to the island — the last amateur radio activity there was 34 years ago. We overcame that. Jarvis successfully introduced

SuperFox to the world. All FT8 QSOs were handcrafted. No automated FT8 for us. Time at the island was 13 days, 7 hours — and 13 days were spent operating. A team of five local operators set up six radios, eight antennas, and even made 25,300 QSOs. An incredible group of 46 remote operators worked to make this a team success.

Club Log shows that over 14% of our QSOs resulted in a new country and over 43% of those QSOs handed out a new band counter to those in its database. We feel that is the measure of a successful DXpedition.

The 2024 Jarvis Island DXpedition thanks the staff of the USFWS in Hawaii for their hard work in approving this minimally invasive operation on Jarvis Island NWR. Jarvis is part of the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (MNM). The MNM encompasses approximately 495,189 square miles of open ocean, coral reef and island habitats, making the total area of the MNM nearly five times larger than all the U.S. National Parks combined, and nearly twice the size of Texas. Within the boundaries of the MNM rest seven national wildlife refuges: Howland, Baker, Jarvis, Johnston, Wake, Palmyra and Kingman. Since 1871, the USFWS has been the only federal government agency whose primary responsibility is to manage fish and wildlife resources in the public trust for people today and future generations.

Now we can all sit, relax, rejoice in our success and plan the next adventure using new technology we are now dreaming about.



This article is courtesy of the Northern California DX Foundation. The NCDXF relies heavily upon the generosity of its contributors to fund various projects, including this DXpedition. We ask you to consider making an annual contribution of US-\$50 or its equivalent in foreign currency. If \$50 is not within your budget, then please give what other amount you can. Naturally, they welcome contributions in excess of \$50! NCDXF is an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and all contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law for U.S. taxpayers. Send your contribution to: NCDXF, P.O. Box 2012, Cupertino, CA 95015-2012, USA. You may also contribute and order supplies online via their secure server, visit www.ncdxf.org/donate

Question of the Month Answer:

When was the Northwest Indiana DX Club founded?

Answer: D. November 12, 2012

The Northwest Indiana DX Club was formed when the club president, John Poindexter-W3ML, then ARRL Indiana Section Manager, decided that a DXCC Card Checker was badly needed in the Northwestern part of the State. The only practical way to qualify for a Card Checker was to form a new DX Club.

The ARRL provided the names of the Indiana DXCC Members and these Amateurs were contacted, explaining the

need for a new Club and requested their support by joining the club. The Club was officially established on November 12, 2012. The ARRL club affiliation certificate was issued on November 13, 2012.



Editor Note: We now have 55 members.

Picture from the January Meeting.

Club Luncheon Meeting – January 25, 2025



FOR SELL ITEMS

FREE Astron LS-10A 28 VOLT DC POWER

SUPPLY. No shipping. Power Supply Weight: 18.00 lbs. Contact John, W3ML



For Sale, Cushcraft A3S tri-band HF Yagi, 10, 15 and 20 meters, with the 30/40 meter add-on.

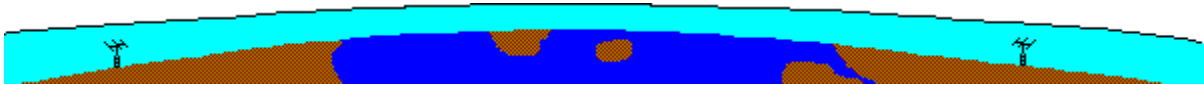
This antenna is just over 2 years old. It worked fine for me, but I soon realized I needed coverage for more bands (WARC) so I replaced it with a new 5 band Yagi. This A3S is in great shape and the price is very good. Look up this antenna now and it is \$799 at DX Engineering for the basic tri-band antenna only, add the A-743 30/40 meter add on and that's an additional \$349, that's \$1200 today, plus you have to pay for shipping and tax, likely \$1400 or more when all is said and done. My price to you, at almost 1/3 the cost of a new one is \$500, or make me an offer. I'll deliver no charge within the NWI region, or you can pick up in La Porte, IN. Its a great tri-band, or 5 band when you add the 30/40 meter add-on.

**Contact me if interested,
Bill, N4SV,
wbs099@yahoo.com**

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

President, Northwest Indiana DX Club

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



DX

THANKS

Thanks for visiting!

