

Northwest Indiana DX CLUB

Volume 11, Issue 5

May 2023

President's Corner

Hello,

Our next meeting is on June 16th at Noon. The new meeting place is Sugar Bowl restaurant 402 US 20 in Michigan City. Yes, this is a Friday. But we do get a private room for our meeting.

John Sweeney will be our speaker. See more about John below in the articles area.

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	w3mljohn@gmail.com
Vice President	W9KTP	Jerry Hess	jerryhess@Frontier.com
Newsletter Editor	W3ML	John Poindexter	w3mljohn@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

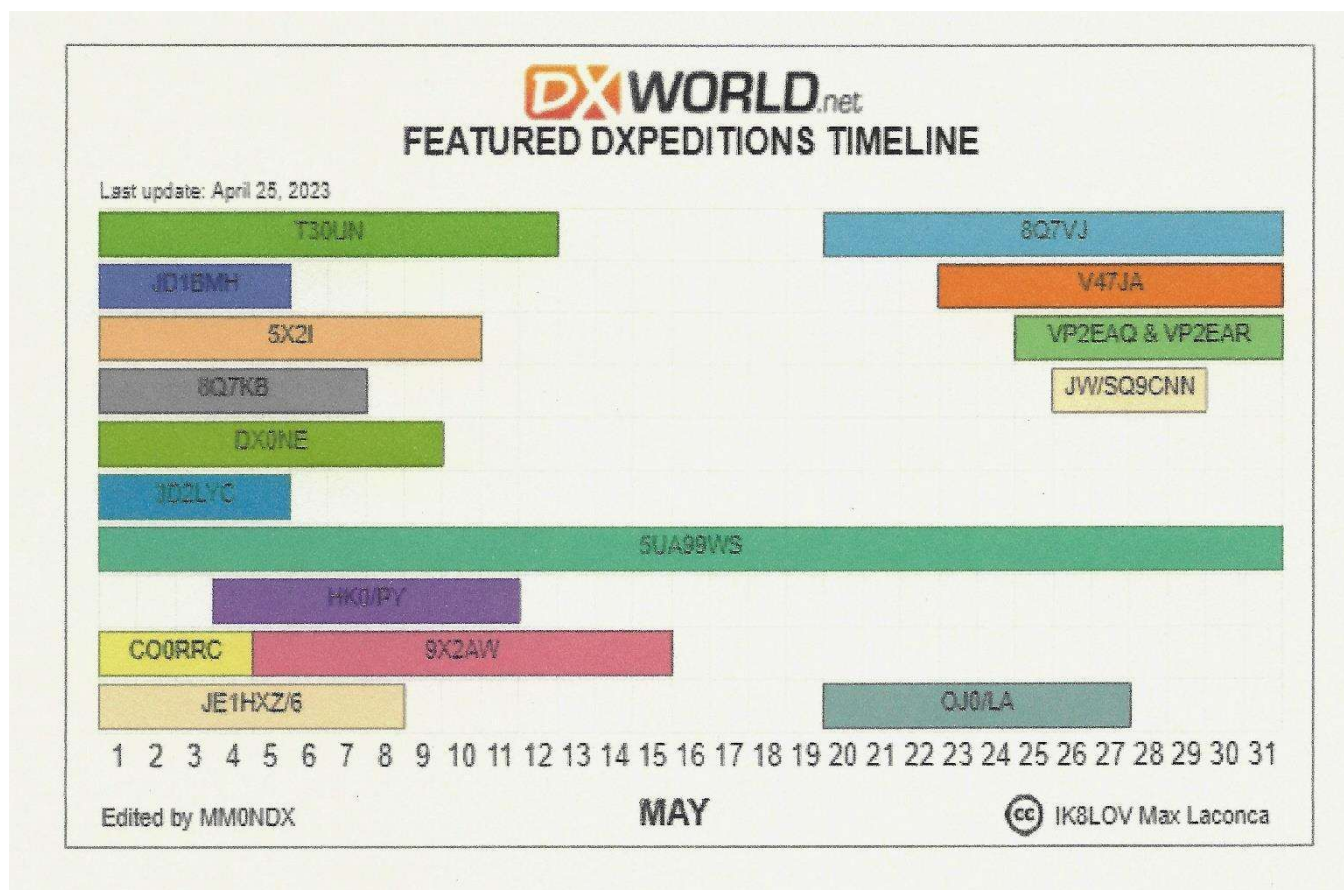
Reminder, the NWIDX Club has a club call W9NWI.

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.



DXCC Challenge Member Scorecard

A Reminder



Get Your Latest Contacts to the ARRL by June 26 as we plan on publishing the annual listing of our members standings in the ARRL DX Challenge Award in the July newsletter.

Members are urged to submit to the ARRL's DX Desk any contacts that they may have that have not yet been accepted by the ARRL. This can be done either through the Log Book of The World (LoTW) process or via a formal QSL Card submission via our card checker Steve Mollman-KD9HL (email: KD9HL@arrl.net).

NOTE: Just because you have confirmations listed in your LOTW account does not mean that the DX Desk has accepted them for award credit. In the words of the ARRL, those contacts are "pending". You must make formal application for the award credit. Members are urged to have their applications in the ARRL's hands before June 26, 2021 to ensure that there is time to process the application for the June 30, 2021 Scorecard cut-off.

The DXCC Challenge Award is earned by working and confirming at least 1,000 DXCC band-points on any Amateur bands, 160 through 6 meters (except 60 meters). A band point is earned by working and confirming a current DX entity in any mode on a single band. (You only get one point per entity per band regardless of the mode. Working a DX entity multiple times via different modes on the same band does not give you more points-you only get one. Deleted entities do not count for this award. Only stations with over 1000 DXCC band-points are listed by the ARRL and the NWIDX Club Scorecard.

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The Question of the Month

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

When was Log Book of the World introduced?

- A. 1983
 - B. 1993
 - C. 2003
 - D. 2013
-

June Meeting Program

At the June Meeting we expect to have as speaker, John Sweeney-K9EL. John is our ARRL Central Division representative to the DXCC Advisory Committee.

The ARRL DX Advisory Committee, or DXAC, consists of representatives from each ARRL division. One appointment is available in each division and appointments are made by the respective division director. The DXAC's job is to advise the ARRL Board of Directors on the functioning of the DXCC Program and act as a sounding board with the membership.



John is an experienced DX'er having attained the "Top of the Honor Roll" and has operated from many places around the world, including 9V, HS, FS, VE, 6Y, VR, VS JA, F, DL, KH6, G, and XE. He is retired from the telecommunications industry and is a resident of Schaumburg, Illinois.

This will be a unique opportunity to learn how the DXAC functions and about the inner workings of the DXCC program. He is looking for your thoughts on how the DXCC program can be enhanced. The good, the bad and the ugly!

All DX'ers should attend as this is a rare opportunity to learn about and influence the DXCC program.

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Editor's note: This article was written prior to the decision of using Zoom.

Radio In a Box Update

George Wallner, AA7JV

THE RIB (RADIO IN A BOX) CONCEPT is simple. The RIB is a complete station — including transceiver, amplifier, power supplies, cooling systems, and electronic controls — all in a weathertight box. A DXpedition takes the RIB ashore, hooks it up to a generator and an antenna, sets up a 900 MHz link to the boat and it is ready to operate. Operators stay on the boat, eliminating the need for building a camp and any life support infrastructure. The RIB enables an environmentally friendly, minimum footprint DXpedition.

Real world testing

We have built several RIBs and we have tested them extensively in the Bahamas at C6AGU. Now for the real thing! I am on board the power catamaran *Magnet* with Mike, KN4EEI. We are heading to the South Pacific where we intend to activate a



The RIB is a complete station — including transceiver, amplifier, power supplies, cooling systems, and electronic controls — all in a weathertight box.

number of semi-rare DXCC entities.

We made a brief stop at Cocos Island, but were unable to place a RIB on the island to operate because we could not get a license. Regardless, Cocos Island

is spectacular with great diving (if you don't mind a lot of sharks).

Our next stop will be the Marquesas (FO/M) around the third week of March. For French Polynesia, obtaining

The RIB landing craft carries two RIBs, a generator and antenna masts for the 900 MHz IP bridge, and allows the RIBs to be deployed on a sandy beach in minutes.



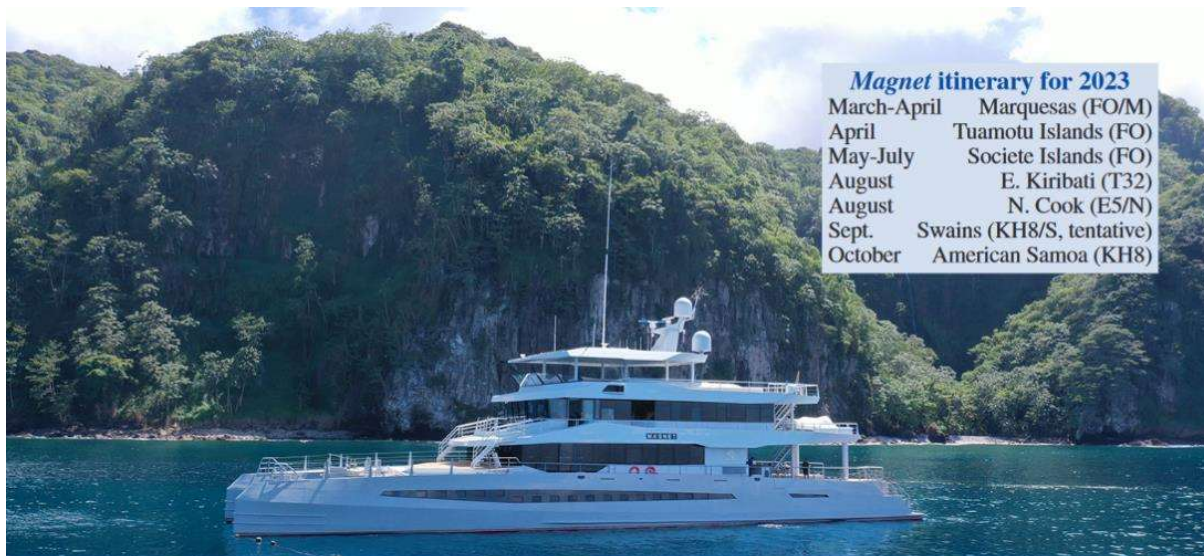
a license was straightforward and quick. If we find a suitable location, we will set up a number of RIBs and antennas. We will focus on 160 Meters (CW) and 6 Meters FT8. In between, we will operate CW, SSB and FT8 on 80 to 10 Meters.

After the Marquesas, we will be in the Tuamotu Islands (FO) from the end of March until early April. Again, we will deploy the RIBs and work DX. Later, we will be around Tahiti. By August we plan to be in the Cook Islands.

RIB advantages

Wherever we are at a suitable island, we will deploy the RIBs. And that is where the RIBs should make the difference. For a two-man operation, setting up for a short time on a semi-rare entity, short set-up time is critical. We hope that with the RIBs we can have three stations on the air — including 160 Meters — within two hours of landing. Teardown should take less than an hour.

A traditional DXpedition spends too much time, energy and money on the



Magnet itinerary for 2023

March-April	Marquesas (FO/M)
April	Tuamotu Islands (FO)
May-July	Societe Islands (FO)
August	E. Kiribati (T32)
August	N. Cook (E5/N)
Sept.	Swains (KH8/S, tentative)
October	American Samoa (KH8)

Someone has to do the heavy lifting! The proving grounds for the RIB takes place aboard the power catamaran Magnet.

life support infrastructure (tents, etc.) where they set up radios just like at home (tables, chairs, radios, amplifiers, power supplies, cables, switches and computers) for one or more stations that require being wired up and made to work. Each RIB station is already fully wired and takes only about five minutes to start up. Of course, antennas still have to be raised, coax cables laid, generators hooked up and started, but no tents or latrines need to be built.

The RIBs use the Flex 6700 radios. We have two versions: a high-power RIB that has a single radio with a 1 kW amplifier and a dual RIB that has two radios and no amplifier. We intend to use the two-radio RIBs on FT8. On the boat, where we will be operating from, we use a Flex Maestro or SmartSDR, as well as a computer that does logging and runs the remote control and monitoring software. Generally, we will put two RIBs ashore; one high-power RIB and one dual-radio RIB. The high-power RIB will be used for CW and SSB with a single 55-foot carbon fiber mast that carries a top-loaded vertical covering from 160 to 10 Meters using an automatic antenna tuner. The dual RIBs will have two antennas, one push-up mast with an antenna tuner that will work from 80 to 20 Meters and one N6BT V8 antenna with a tuner that will cover 20 to 6 Meters.


The dual RIB will be used in a pioneering experiment: remote operators on a DXpedition. The dual RIB will be connected to a Starlink RV terminal (as well as the boat). We hope that most of the time the two FT8 radios will be remotely operated by operators working from home! Imagine, participating in a rare one from the comfort of your home! Preliminary tests conducted by NCDXF directors Ned Stearns, AA7A, and Don Greenbaum, N1DG, have been promising. They have been remotely operating one of the RIB radios that we hooked up on the *Magnet* with its own Starlink RV satellite terminal. They have made many FT8 contacts on 6 Meters "gridding across the Pacific."

We have also built a small landing craft that carries two RIBs, a generator and antenna masts for the 900 MHz IP

bridge. This RIB landing craft allows the RIBs to be deployed on a sandy beach in minutes. Wherever possible, we will use the RIB boat. For more information see www.qrz.com/db/AA7JV

NCDXF support

The RIBs were developed with NCDXF financial support. Their goal is to help DXpeditions overcome the reluctance of environmental protection agencies to allow Amateur Radio because of their concern over camping.

RIBs can make DXpeditions more effective by reducing the set up and tear down times and, by eliminating the need to procure and transport camping gear, DXpeditions can reduce costs and leave more room for equipment that makes QSOs. 

RIB Demonstration in Visalia

Come by the NCDXF booth at the 74th International DX Convention on April 21-23 in Visalia, California, and operate from French Polynesia!

The NCDXF booth will have a RIB on display as well as a notebook connected to the RIB on the *Magnet* allowing visitors to our booth to operate remotely from French Polynesia. This will give you a first-hand experience on what the remote operators from the Marquesas DXpedition experienced in mid-March.

The RIB on display will be a real working unit, recently used at C6AGU. We expect that seeing it operating in person will interest DXpeditioners going to rare and hard-to-reach destinations to consider implementing it in their operating plans. Come see it for yourself.

This article was provided with the permission of the Northern California DX Foundation. The Foundation's basic mission is to help well-organized and needy DXpeditions operate from rare places, mostly in the form of financial aid. Since 1997, NCDXF has funded 265 DXpeditions, totaling \$1.4 million in grants. Prior to 1997, The Foundation operation is funded by donations. To donate, please visit their website: www.ncdxf.org/pages/join_renew.html

Are you aware of this site? I just ran across it. May come in handy for spotting 6 Meter openings.

[QSO/SWL real time maps and lists](#)

QSO/SWL real time maps and lists

QSO/SWL real time maps and lists

Steve KD9HL

From Tom, W8FIB:

Select Amateur Radio Box for most commonly found on Ham Bands

https://www.sigidwiki.com/wiki/Signal_Identification_Guide

You guys are probably already aware of this site but thought I'd mention it, and maybe it can be submitted in the newsletter if not already done. I find I often am looking for a more precise Grid Square location for a station and <https://www.iota-world.org/iotamaps/> provides that. Primarily for IOTA use, the world Grid Square mapping feature is pretty great and very accurate. I use it often.

73, Bill, N4SV

The latest DX newsletter: https://www.dx-world.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/DX_506.pdf

The INQP is next week end, May 6 EST. Please encourage all ops who might be planning to participate in the party this year to post their intent on the [Activity Map](#). It is important to get as many ops as possible to use the map so that others can also plan. And we encourage everyone who makes any contacts at all in the party to submit their log. Instructions covering log submission are in the [Rules](#). It will be a very active INQP next week end.

73,

Len Litvan AE9LL INQP Committee Member, Hoosier DX and Contest Club

MY PROPOSALS FOR DXCC 2025

**By
Jerry Hess, W9KTP**

In 2025 the ARRL is scheduled to review the current DXCC rules and regulations and possibly make changes to them. Assuming changes are made, how do you improve DXCC without destroying the purity of the award? It may be difficult to do.

My proposal is not to change DXCC but instead encourage more hams to be more involved in DXCC. I often encounter hams that have achieved the initial 100 countries for DXCC and decided not to go further up the precipitous climb to the 331 countries for Honor Roll. I'm proposing two additions to DXCC. The first is a longer range approach to Honor Roll by making DXCC a ladder award. Still, it will take years to work through the individual steps. Therefore, my second proposal is a shorter range feature to encourage DXer's to get on the air frequently and work DX. To do this I am suggesting an additional rating system to DXCC individual countries. Every time a ham works a new country, his score increases. The more challenging the country is to work, the more points he gains.

LADDERED AWARD

Suppose the intermediate goals are denoted arbitrarily as Red(155), Blue(203), Green(243), Bronze(276), Silver(302) and Gold(320). That's six steps to the Honor Roll or 231 additional countries. Notice that the rungs on the ladder are spaced closer as they approach Honor Roll. As a ham approaches the Honor Roll, the number of countries available are smaller and probably more difficult to work. I arbitrarily used a quadratic equation to arrive at the numbers shown. No doubt there are numerous approaches to setting these values.

COUNTRY RATING SYSTEM

Also, I think a further enhancement would be a rating for each country. As each country is worked and confirmed, a ham's country ratings total would increase. As a consequence, a DXer would have a more immediate reward while working toward the next rung of the ladder. Hopefully this will encourage hams to watch propagation predictions and weekly DX listings for countries they don't have and be more likely to be on the air, watching spotting networks and "spinning the knob".

My concept of a Country Rating is another arbitrary number and could be arrived at by several means. Without getting too complicated, my thought was a number from 1 to 4 with 4 representing the most difficult. Assigning each country a number is a challenging job. There are reasons why some countries are not worked often, as follows.

1. Politics – Some countries resist the presence of foreigners in their country and put tight restrictions on what and where the hams are allowed to do.
2. Environment – Some locations are either brutally cold like Bouvet, 3Y or brutally hot like Kingman Reef, KH5. It takes a tough individual to withstand these conditions and few hams are able to do so without endangering their health.
3. Ham Population – Some countries like Germany and Japan have large ham population and are reasonably easy to work. On the other hand, countries like

Nepal or many Australian islands do not. Some even have no hams or population at all.

4. Location – The geographic location of DXCC countries are difficult to reach and require special modes of transportation to get there.
5. Expense – We have been blessed with a small group of hams that have been willing to pay tens of thousands of dollars to participate in DX-Peditions. Would we have more DX-Peditions if there was a large fund that would offset some this cost? What I'm suggesting is something even much larger than INDEXA and others currently provide. Can we legally utilize some of the commercials like those on TV? Would a ham holding a jar of Skippy peanut butter or a cold remedy be so bad?

The extreme ratings 1 and 4 are probably easy to assign but determining the 2 and 3's are more complex. An easy solution is to do it by ham population.

When yearly DXCC listing are published in the future they would show three numbers after each call, "TOTAL WORKED"/"TOTAL ACTIVE"/"TOTAL DIFFICULTY FACTORS".

CALL—WORKED—ACTIVE-- DIF FACTOR

KD6ONE /175 /163 /352

WX2TWO /298 /303 /611

In no case does this harm existing totals or degrade DXCC.

OTHER THOUGHTS

DX-PEDITIONS

It's difficult to be critical about DX-Peditions. The people that make them possible work very hard to activate rare countries for all of us. Since the focus of my proposal is to get more hams working DX, perhaps operators on DX-peditions could slow down for predetermined short periods of time and only work stations that are **not in the logs on any band**.

URBAN REMOTE STATIONS

Since the majority of US population is located in large urban areas, ham radio is generally out of the question with the possible exception of repeaters for most urban hams. Most have no place to put HF antennas. Furthermore, the high cost of living leaves little income for even a modest station.

On the other hand, since the League has permitted remote stations to be acceptable for DXCC, why couldn't urban radio clubs create remote HF stations for their members. Certainly a club could find a roof top for at least a small Yagi or vertical antenna. As a group a modest station with remote capability would open opportunities for hundreds of pent-up hams. Clubs would have to develop rules to insure all members share in the station.

I hope that these suggestions might provide an enhancement to one of the premier activities of ham radio, DXCC.

***FOOTNOTE:** This proposal was reviewed by our Director, Carl Leutzelschwab, K9LA, and he forwarded it to Chris Shalvoy, K2CS, Chairman of the DX Advisory Committee. Carl was very pleased to support the proposal's aim of getting more newcomers and youth into the DXCC program.*

73's,
Jerry

Question of the Month Answer:

When was Log Book of the World (LoTW) introduced?

Answer: October 2003

The popular on-line logging program was introduced to the general ham public in the October 2003 issue of QST magazine.

Logbook of the World (LoTW) is a web-accessed database provided by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) to implement a contact verification service among amateur radio operators. Using LoTW, radio amateurs (hams) can claim and verify contacts (QSOs) made with other amateurs, generally for claiming credit for operating awards, such as DXCC. This kind of verification formerly required exchange of paper QSL cards and submission to ARRL, a slow and somewhat expensive process.

Log records in the LoTW database are automatically compared so that when a contact at a particular time, operating mode, and frequency band is claimed by both participating amateurs (who both must have submitted their logs), a "QSL" (confirmation) is declared for a later award claim,



From ARRL email:

Dear member,

For only the second time in 22 years, we are considering a dues increase. Promoting and protecting amateur radio requires a strong and vibrant ARRL. Paying our dues (and some of you go above and beyond) is one way each of us does our part.

In my column in the April issue of QST ([read now](#)), I introduced the following question:

How does ARRL handle an increase in dues?

On May 1, we will launch an online survey, inviting all ARRL members to participate. The survey will include some short questions about raising dues and modifying the way some membership benefits are bundled. The survey will also include an opportunity to share your feedback. The participation of every member is important.

Do this before May 1: Review your ARRL website account

Before you can take the survey in May, you'll need to make sure you have a working ARRL website account that is associated with your membership.

Follow these steps:

1. Go to www.arrl.org/take-dues-survey. This is a member-only page.
2. If you are already logged in to your account, you'll see **CONGRATULATIONS!** on the members-only page that will host the survey in May.
3. If you are NOT already logged in to your account, follow the instructions on the page to log in. Or, select the Login button at the top of the web page, and you will be prompted to enter your ARRL website username (usually your call sign) and password. If you have not logged in since April 2022, please use these [Login Instructions](#).
4. **The survey will open on May 1.** Return to this web page to take the survey on, or after, May 1: www.arrl.org/take-dues-survey.

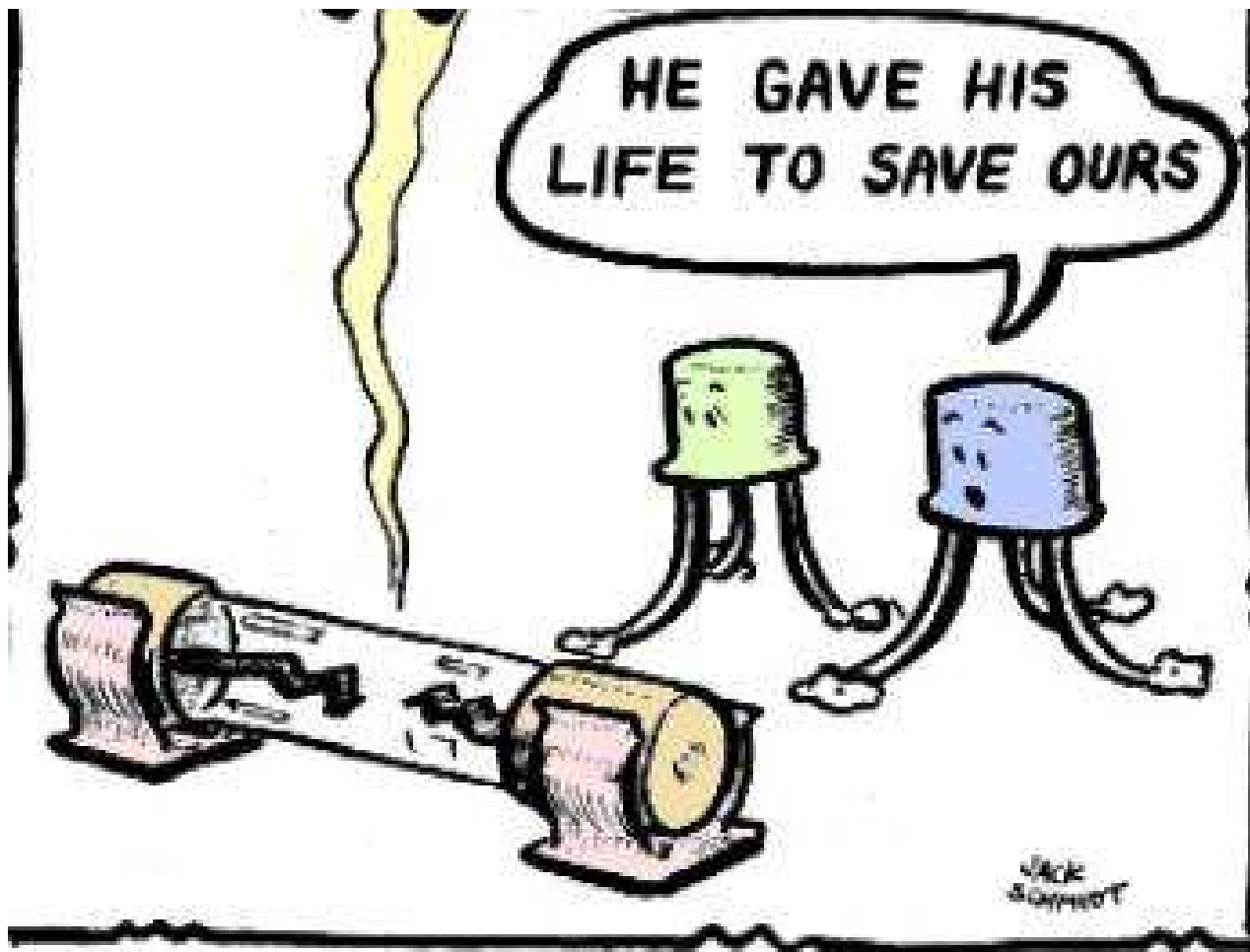
If you need additional help with your login, call us Monday - Thursday from 8 AM to 7 PM ET, and Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM ET at 860-594-0200 or email us at membership@arrl.org.

We'll send an update on May 1 once the survey is live.

Thank you for being a member and collaborating on this big decision.

73

David A. Minster, NA2AA
Chief Executive Officer



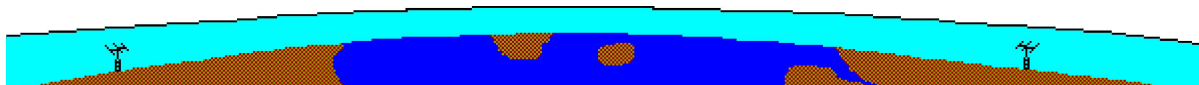
FOR SALE ITEMS

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

