

Northwest Indiana DX CLUB

Volume 8, Issue 8

August 2020

President's Corner

Hello everyone,

I keep hearing: "Wish we could have Face to Face Meetings." That goes for me too. It will be nice to be back together and listening to what everyone has been up to while we have been confined from the Face to Face meetings.

Please be safe and stay well.

73

John W3ML

Good DXing!

"Working the World from the Black Hole"

NWI DX Club Website

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



Don't forget Steve is our new 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.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 President Speaks
- 2- Member News/DX News

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:

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ARRL **DX LISTINGS FOR AUGUST**

By

Jerry Hess, W9KTP

SB DX ARL ARLD031
ARLD031 DX news

This week's bulletin was made possible with information provided by The Daily DX, the OPDX Bulletin, 425 DX News, DXNL, Contest Corral from QST and the ARRL Contest Calendar and WA7BNM web sites. Thanks to all.

UGANDA, 5X. Shabu, M0KRI is QRV as 5X1RI until mid August. QSL to home call.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, DA. Members of the German section of the International Police Association are QRV with special event station DL70IPA to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the organization. Activity is Sundays and Thursdays during August and September on 40 and 80 meters, respectively. They may be active on 20 meters depending on conditions. QSL via bureau.

FRANCE, F. Members of radio club F4KKE at Saint-Martin-des-Besaces in Normandy are QRV with special callsign TM11AD until August 3 to commemorate the role played by the British 11th Armored Division during Operation Bluecoat in July and August 1944. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes. QSL via F4KKE.

ENGLAND, G. Special event stations GB75PEACE, GB1945PE and GB1945PJ will be QRV during August to mark the end of World War II in the Pacific. QSL via LoTW.

HUNGARY, HA. Members of the Hungarian FIRAC are QRV with special event call sign HA70MAV from Budapest until December 1 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Hungarian Railway. Activity is on various HF bands. QSL via LoTW.

ITALY, I. Simone, IU4HRJ will be QRV as IM0/IU4HRJ from Maddalena Island, IOTA EU-041, from August 4 to 10. Activity will be on the HF bands using SSB and various digital modes. QSL to home call.

FINLAND, OH. Jukka, OH3OJ is QRV as OH3OJ/1 from Kaurissalo Island, IOTA EU-096, until August 5. Activity is on 80 to 6 meters using CW, some SSB, and FT8. QSL to home call.

ARUBA, P4. Thomas, KM4VI will be QRV as P4/KM4VI from August 2 to 7. Activity will be on the HF bands using SSB and QRP power. QSL direct to home call.

NETHERLANDS, PA. Special event station PI75VERON is QRV until the end of 2020 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Dutch National Club VERON. QSL via PA1AW.

MEXICO, XE. Special event station 4A2MAX is QRV during August to honor the memory of Maximilian Kolbe. Activity will be on the HF bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes. QSL via LoTW.

VIET NAM, XV. Jesus, WP4JBG is QRV as XV9G from Ho Chi Minh City. Activity is on the HF bands. QSL via operator's instructions.

LAOS, XW. Mike, XW2DX is QRV as XW2DX from Vientiane and is here for the next five years. Activity is on 20, 15 and 10 meters. QSL via RM0L.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The ARRL 222 MHz and Up Distance Contest, North American CW QSO Party, QRP 20-Meter CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, Batavia FT8 Contest, 10-10 International Summer SSB Contest, European HF Championship, WAB 144 MHz Low Power Phone, RTTYOPS Weekend Sprint and SARL HF Phone Contest will certainly keep contesters busy this upcoming weekend.

The RTTYOPS Weeksprint, ARS Spartan CW Sprint and Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest are scheduled for August 4.

The VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, CWops Mini-CWT Test and Phone Fray are scheduled for August 5.

Please see July 2020 QST, page 74, August 2020 QST, page 69, and ARRL Contest Calendar and WA7BNM Contest Web Sites for details.

Corrections & Amplifications

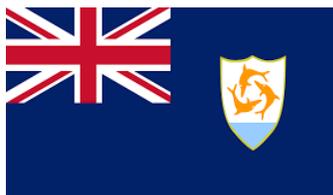
In the July 2020 issue of the Newsletter we listed the totals of our members in the ARRL DXCC Challenge Award. AJ9C-Mike Kasrich's name was spelled wrong. Mike's standing is #4 in the club with a score of 2092 as of June 28, 2020. Our apologies to Mike.

In the same listing the maximum number of points was incorrect. As of June 28, 2020, the maximum number of points was 3400 (10 bands X 340 eligible entities).

Anguilla, St. Kitts and Nevis

A Little History

By Steve Mollman-KD9HL



Flag of Anguilla



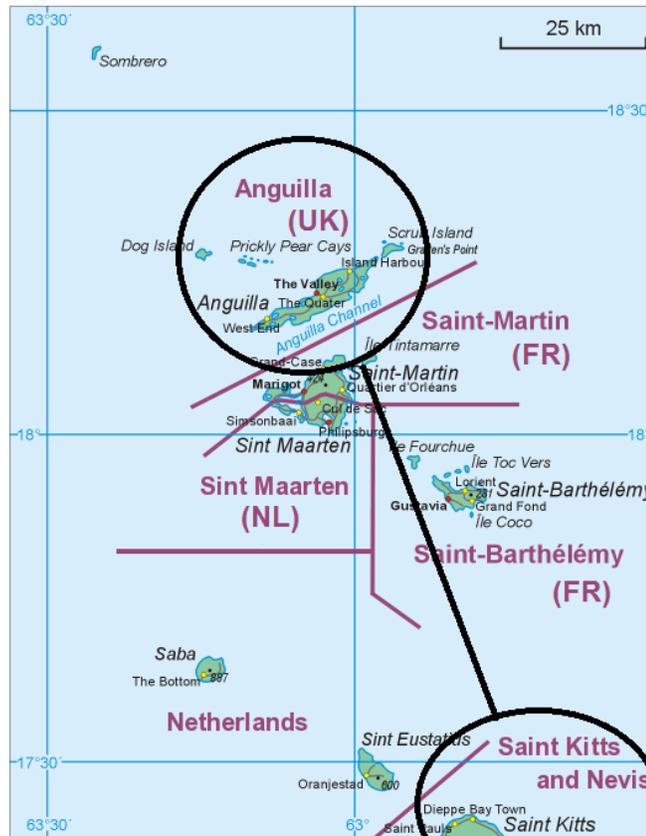
Flag of St. Kitts and Nevis

In the ARRL's DXCC List of Current Entities, VP2E (Anguilla) and V4 (St. Kitts and Nevis) share a common footnote (#37) that establishes a 1958 link. Reading that note doesn't really give a clue as to the unique history between the two entities.

In 1958 the West Indies Federation was established, an internally [self-governing](#), [federal](#) state made up of ten provinces including Anguilla and the St. Kitts and Nevis islands, all [British](#) colonial possessions. By 1962, with the withdrawal of Jamaica, the Federation began to fall apart.

In 1962 the British spun off Anguilla into a federation with St. Kitts and Nevis. The Anguillans disliked this arrangement because of the domination of St. Kitts. In 1967 the Anguillans forcibly ejected the St. Kitts police force from the island and declared their separation from St Kitts. Following a referendum, the island declared its independence-not from Britain but from St. Kitts. The goal was not independence per se, but rather independence from Saint Kitts and Nevis and a return to being a British colony. After much confusion, the British eventually landed 300 soldiers on the island and British authority was restored.

In 1980 Anguilla formally seceded from St. Kitts and reverted to being a British crown colony. Today we have St. Kitts and Nevis as an independent nation and Anguilla as a British crown colony.



Did any of these political maneuvers ever create a new DXCC entity? No. Prior to the 1958 creation of the West Indies Federation both were separate entities. After the Federation was formed DXCC Rule 2 b iii applied (*The island (Anguilla) is separated from its Parent (St. Kitts and Nevis) by intervening land or islands that are part of another DXCC entity*). When Anguilla reverted to being a British crown colony DXCC Rule 2 b i applied (*The island (Anguilla) is separated from its Parent (Britain), and any other islands that make up the DXCC entity that contains the Parent, by 350 kilometers or more*). Sometimes in DX the more things change, the more they stay the same!

V2E-Anguilla is 190 and St. Kitts and Nevis Islands is 200 on Clublog's "DXCC Most Wanted List".



Handy Hint

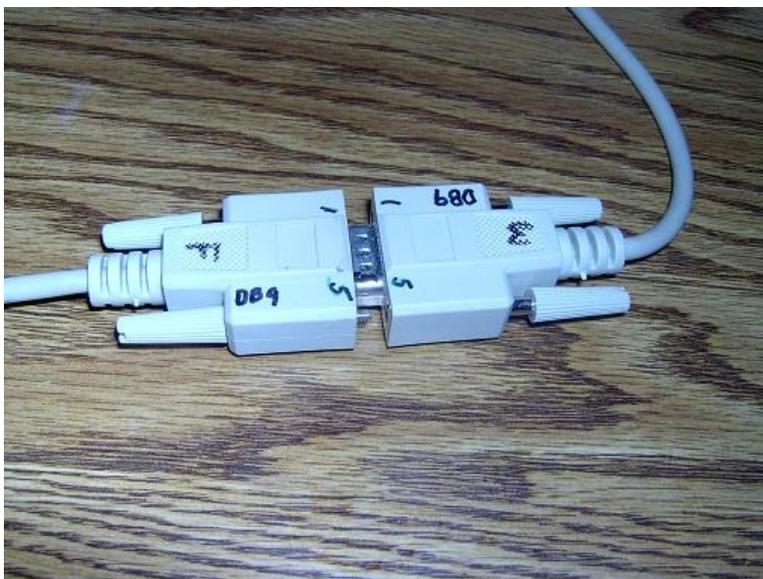
By Steve Mollman-KD9HL

Marking Connector Pins

Today's ham equipment invariably requires the use of a variety of multi-pin connectors. If you have to trouble shoot or make a custom cable it can be confusing to identify the proper corresponding male/female pins. The same problem exists with computers.

A few manufacturers mold the pin numbers onto the shell. While helpful, they can be hard to read. In these cases you can often increase the legibility by rubbing a pencil or a fine felt tip permanent marker (Sharpie® is a popular brand) lightly across the numbers. The permanent marker seems to last longer.

Numbers not molded in. Use that permanent marker to label the pins. This works as long as the case is of a light color.



A pair of Computer DB9 Connectors Labeled with a Felt Tip Marker

Black shells require a little more work and innovation. One solution is to use a label machine such as the Brother P-touch series. Use the smallest font to print out pin number tapes and then affix the tape to the connector.



A Cinch-Jones Eight Pin Connector Marked With Label Tape

We have used these techniques on a variety of connectors including most computer types, Cinch-Jones, and multi-pin microphone connectors.

◀73's and Good DX ▶

Do you have a Handy Hint that you would like to share? Contact Steve Mollman at KD9HL@ARRL.net

Editor Note: Steve needs your help. He is running out of ideas as to what to write on for Handy Hints. If there are items you want to know more about, please email him and let him know what you are thinking about.

NEED HANDY HINT IDEAS

PLEASE EMAIL YOUR IDEAS

uBITX V6 TRANSCEIVER

BY

Jerry Hess, W9KTP

While flipping through some “CQ” magazines, I spotted the uBITX (pronounced micro bits) transceiver manufactured by HF Signals (1). I was amazed at all the features on such an inexpensive QRP rig. Most QRP rigs are CW only and often single band. The uBITX V6 is 80-10 meters including WARC bands, SSB and CW, two VFO’s with split operation, built-in keyer, touch screen and RIT as well. In addition their units are an ingenious hybrid of hardware and “open sourced” software on an Arduino Nano supported by a very large user group. A USB port at the back of the uBITX V6 is provided so anyone can install updates/changes from other users. And all of that for \$209 shipped DHL from India. Wow! I had to have one of those!

It took only a week to receive my unit. Everything was packaged neatly in a well-protected box. Assembly was extremely easy since boards and cables are ready for installation. No soldering required! Took less than an hour to put together. A “YouTUBE” assembly video is available if you need a little help (2). Before assembly you may want to put some type of decals on the front panel since it is blank from the factory. The only thing that wasn’t mentioned is the control nuts on the mike, earphone and key jacks need to be removed before mounting the front panel. Otherwise the board will not fit on the bottom. Replace them once the front panel is mounted.



The assembled unit needs to be calibrated. There is a “YouTUBE” video for that (3). Basically it involves centering the BFO and calibrating the main tuning using an AM station. I used WWV on 10 MHz but instead of trying to zero beat the signal, I tuned for the best voice announcement at each minute. I checked it by switching sidebands until the two sounded the same.

On the air performance was very good. Power out ranged 6-10 watts with a 12.0 Volt supply. The receiver hears very well, however, it doesn’t have automatic gain control, AGC, so be ready to rip the earphones off when a big signal pops up. SSB worked fine in the shipped version but CW was terrible.



On CW the factory unit transmitted 800 hertz below the receiving frequency. Also the keying had what I call a glitch. The first dot/dash when transmitting sounded like an incomplete chirp. If the VOX dropped out during a QSO, I got the same chirp when the transceiver returned to transmit mode. Really messy and annoying.

But wait, there’s a hero out there with a version of the software that works just great. It resolved the 800 hertz problem as well as the chirp. He goes by the name of “Reed” on the user group and obviously knows the software very well. His software is found on a forum web page called “GETHUB” (5). It takes some work to get it working. You first need Version 1.8.9 of Arduino development software, not the latest (6). Furthermore, you need a device driver called “CH340/CH341” which you can get by “Googling” that name. Before you start your compile, you

probably want to edit the second line of "CALLSIGN.CPP" module from "PROGMEM="YOUR CALL"; to your call sign. Your call sign will appear on the touch screen once you upload the compiled software. One additional note, I found I had to connect my USB cable directly to the Arduino Nano, rather than through the supplied extension cable. Reed has just recently published user instructions on upgrading the software and on the air operation (7) which goes into much more detail than presented here.

I had an additional problem which may have been self-inflicted with the CW keying. For years I have installed 0.01 uf disc capacitors across my keying cables for RFI prevention. After reading the review in QST I realized what the problem was and removed the caps. The designer uses a single input with a resistor network to detect dots or dashes. Adding capacitors wasn't a good idea.

For a new ham this would be a great way to get started on HF with this price. How many clunker rigs at ham fests are selling for over \$500 and new ones are up in the thousands? Still, it takes patience, lots of stations just don't hear QRP guys. My hats off to dedicated QRP operators. I'm always amazed what QRPers can do with just a few watts. Frankly I'm spoiled from running 100 or more watts and making a contact in a few calls. It has to be painful to struggle through a big pile-up to work a new one. On the other hand, it's fun to enjoy a casual domestic QSO and an occasional DX contact.

73's & GL,
Jerry

- (1) <https://www.hfsignals.com/>
- (2) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bepSHKKyGx4>
- (3) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6LGXhS4_O8
- (4) See also September 2019 QST page 42 for an interesting Product Review of the previous Version 5.0
- (5) <https://github.com/reedbn/ubitxv6>
- (6) <https://www.arduino.cc/en/Main/OldSoftwareReleases#previous>
- (7) <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jllZbvFMCzO1MJLzJJDGb10HXSehIFNMDPxsGJZtvY/edit>

Links and Tidbits

The <T2> (or <DO>) prosign is used between JA stations to solicit QSOs in Japanese (not Roman) morse codes, for instance, in place of "DX". eg. CQ CQ CQ <T2> DE JA1xxx JA1xxx PSE K

A Lightning Map website.

<https://tinyurl.com/y4g58uop>

<https://spectrum.ieee.org/telecom/wireless/the-uncertain-future-of-ham-radio> Future of Ham Radio

HF propagation prediction software

The HF propagation prediction software VOACAP, Voice of America Coverage Analysis Program is the focus of the independent website [VOACAP.com](https://www.voacap.com). The website has [a section](https://www.voacap.com/dx/) <https://www.voacap.com/dx/> where you can plug in your grid locator, and you'll get a series of charts predicting propagation for current and upcoming DXpeditions.

A lot of good files on this site: <https://www.contestuniversity.com/files/>

[W7PXL] New Hope For Cycle 25! • AmateurRadio.com

<https://tinyurl.com/yxcb7459>

From Carl, K9LA

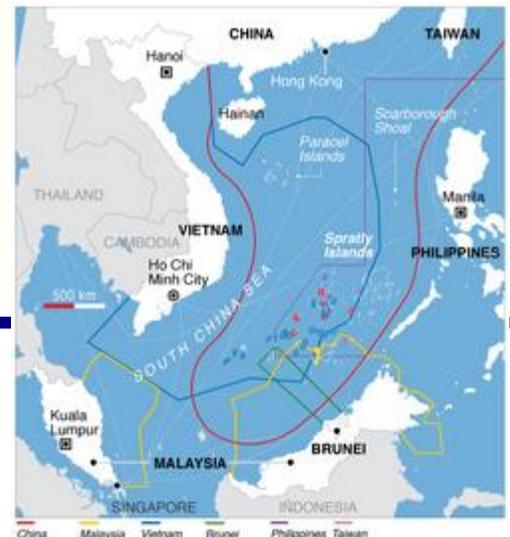
It's a valid prediction from the scientific community - just as valid as the other 26 that I'm aware of. My Monthly Feature for August on my website will talk about predictions for Cycle 25, and it will look at the lowest prediction and the highest prediction (the one you referenced). Which of the 27 predictions will be most accurate? I'll let you know in 2024 or so (or maybe a year earlier).

From: The ARRL Letter for July 16, 2020

DXCC Entities in Play as US Rejects China's Significant South China Sea Claims

To radio amateurs, Scarborough Reef or the Spratly Islands are DX locations, occasionally activated to provide needy DXers with "a new one." The Spratlys are #53 on the Club Log DXCC Most-Wanted List, but Scarborough Reef -- a much more difficult piece of real estate to access -- is #4. These South China Sea Islands are once again in the news, as the US has begun putting heat on China by rejecting nearly all of its significant land claims in the region. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo this week said that the US now regards virtually all Chinese maritime claims outside of its internationally recognized waters to be illegitimate.

"The world will not allow Beijing to treat the South China Sea as its maritime empire," Pompeo said. "America stands with our Southeast Asian allies and partners in protecting their



sovereign rights to offshore resources, consistent with their rights and obligations under international law. We stand with the international community in defense of freedom of the seas and respect for sovereignty and reject any push to impose 'might makes right' in the South China Sea or the wider region."

A 2016 ruling from an international tribunal discounted China's claims with respect to Scarborough Reef -- also known as Scarborough Shoal -- and the Spratlys, but it did not rule on the matter of sovereignty. In addition to China's claim, Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam, and the Philippines have asserted ownership of the Spratlys. Scarborough Reef is claimed by China, the Philippines, and Taiwan. The Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague ruled in favor of the Philippines in a dispute with China over Scarborough Reef. The tribunal said that although navigators and fishermen from China and other states have historically made use of South China Sea Islands, there was no evidence that China had historically exercised exclusive



Bob Vallio, W6RGG, was one of the operators on the 2007 BS7H Scarborough Reef DXpedition.

control over the waters or resources. The tribunal said China had violated the Philippines' sovereign rights and had caused "severe harm to the coral reef environment" by building artificial islands and an air strip.

In 2015, a Chinese naval vessel "harassed a Philippine Air Force patrol flight in the Spratlys," one news account reported, by firing an illumination round. The incident postponed a Philippine Navy flight that was to evacuate an ailing participant of the then-just-ended DX0P DXpedition. The Chinese Navy has also warned off private aircraft. DX0P was issued by the Philippines. Last week, China complained about the US conducting joint exercises with two US aircraft carrier groups in the region.

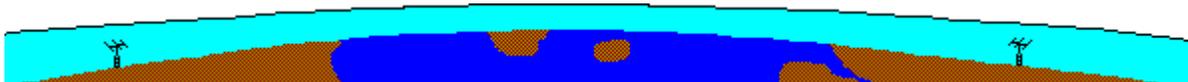
A May 2007 DXpedition to Scarborough Reef used the call sign BS7H, granted by China. DXpedition team members operated from wooden platforms mounted atop each of the reef's four rocks that were exposed during high tide. The ARRL Board of Directors voted in 1996 to add Scarborough Reef to the ARRL DXCC List.

You may have noticed at the top of the newsletter is a new line, suggested by one of our members. It is an old saying about our region.

"Working the World from the Black Hole"

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.

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://nwidclub.weebly.com/>



DX

