Northwest Indiana DX CLUB

Volume 6, Issue 7 July 2018

President's Corner

Baker Island KH1/KH7Z is now on the air. If you need them, I hope you are successful. I have not heard them on the FT-8 mode and it seems a lot of others have not heard them too.

We need more DXpeditions so hams can get Honor Roll, or better yet, the ARRL needs to delete some islands that will never be allowed to host a Dxpedition.

73
John W3ML

Good DXing!

Inside This Issue

1 President Speaks
2- Member News/DX News

Don't Forget

DXCC CARD CHECKING

Doctor Richard Lochner, K9QA is our Official ARRL DXCC Card Checker. Contact Rich to schedule an appointment for card checking.

You may email him at mailto:k9qa@arrl.net for details on how to mail your cards to him, if you desire to go that route.

NWI DX Club Website

http://nwidxclub.weebly.com/

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.

We support the LoTW.

NWIDX Club Logo

Handy Hint

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

By Steve Mollman-KD9HL

For some unknown reason the manufacturer of my amplifier put the master on-off switch on the back of the chassis. This is an inconvenient location because while not particularly difficult to access, is hard to see. Is it on or is it off? That is the question! I am guessing that the master switch placement had more to do with packaging and manufacturing ease rather than operator convenience and ergonomics.

To easily see the switch position, using double sided tape, I mounted an old mirror on the wall behind the amplifier. With the mirror in place I can now tell at glance whether it is on or off.

Don't have an old mirror around? Cheap ones are available at places like Big Lots, Dollar General, Dollar Tree, etc.

◄73's and good DX►

What Do You Think?

By Paul S. Ewing-N6PSE

Product Review- Elecraft KPA1500

I have owned many different Linear Amplifiers. Some were great and some were terrible. I owned an early production Alpha 9500 (Serial #26) and it was a terrible amplifier. Later, I owned a much later Alpha 9500 and it was pretty solid. One aspect of the tube amp was the 3 minute warm up time required. I can't tell you how many times I heard a DX station "go QRT" while I was waiting for the tube amp to warm up.

I replaced my Alpha 9500 with an Expert 1.3K-FA amplifier. The Expert is a rock solid amplifier (solid state) and travels well as it is very light. We used these amplifiers on the VP8STI/VP8SGI DXpeditions and they performed very well. I will keep my Expert 1.3K-FA as a travelling/DXpedition amplifier which is where it really shines.

I was one of the first owners of an Elecraft solid state KPA1500. Normally, after my early adopter experience with the Alpha 9500, I would shy away from being an early adopter of such a complex piece of gear, however I know first hand how Elecraft supports and builds their gear and I knew that they would take care of me and "make it right" if needed.

I'm glad to report that Elecraft KPA1500 Serial #12 is a fantastic linear amplifier. It will do 1,500 watts all day long and the tuner is quite robust and able to handle my mix of antennas just fine.

I have had a few minor issues and questions about the amplifier and Elecraft has supported me extremely well. This amplifier is quite automatic and operates much like a "magic box". It does everything they said it would and does it quite well.

I am driving the KPA1500 with my Flex 6500 transceiver. The KPA1500 has a built in frequency counter and it easily follows the Flex 6500 whenever I change bands. There is no need for complex or special cables. The KPA1500 utility works extremely well and enables the user to upload firmware updates as well as make minor tweaks and configuration edits. I use the utility to tune my tuner across all bands/segments so that it is "dialed in" and ready whenever I need it.

The Elecraft KPA1500 is a spectacular solid state amplifier/tuner and I highly recommend it!

What do you think?

Others Comment:

KJ4Z- Three years ago, my KPA-500 took a direct hit from a lightning strike. When I tried to power it up, a little puff of smoke came out from behind the button, and that was all. A couple years later, I decided to take it down to Watsonville for a death certificate. To my delight, they called a week or two later and said it was ready to pick up for $200 or so. Great support.

N2RJ -I'm a bit wary of using frequency counters with solid state amplifiers when CAT is available. There is just too much potential for hot switching. That's not to say it isn't a good feature – it absolutely is. But it's for older transceivers without CAT capability, in my opinion.

I would recommend a CAT cable. With Flex you can use a FTDI USB to serial cable and connect it just like you would connect a Kenwood CAT cable. IF it's anything like the SPE 1.3K-FA, as you tune, the ATU will be ready for action before you key. Nice to meet you at Dayton, btw!

NG0G - Above you said: "The Expert is a rock solid amplifier (solid state) and travels well as it is very light. The tuner however is of minimal capability and was not ideal for my home station." I am curious how well did the tuner work. What were its limits? Would it handle say 3 to 1.

N6PSE replies-I have recently learned that there is a firmware update that greatly improves the internal tuner. I intend to update my firmware soon.

Thank you to Paul Ewing-N6PSE for his kind permission to print this item. Paul is a noted DXpeditioner having operated from many rare and semi rare spots, including the South Sandwich Islands, Yemen, Myanmar, Eritrea and the South Georgia Islands. He can be reached at pauln6pse@gmail.com

Indiana QSO Party-2018

NWIDX Club Top Dog in "Club Category"

Members Win Several Categories

The 2018 Indiana QSO Party was a rousing success for the NWIDX Club. Thanks to the heavy hitting by Dave Chasey-N9FN and Scott Stembaugh-N9LJX and the additional participation by K9FN, K9LA, W3ML, W9DZ, KD9HL and AJ9C the club score totaled 421259 points! This handily beat the runner up, the Kokomo Amateur Radio Club who had 135965 points.

Operating portable from the La Porte/Porter County line, N9FN on SSB and N9LJX on CW, a huge total of 318136 points was amassed to win the Portable plaque. This score was also the unofficial overall high score of the competition (there is no award for overall high score).

The N9FN Van operating portable on the La Porte/Porter County Line with 40 and 80 meter inverted vee antennas and an Elecraft K3 Station

Several club members were also successful in winning category certificates for top performances for their respective counties.

Allen Jones, W9DZ	-La Porte County	Single Operator Low Power
John Poindexter, W3ML	- Starke County	Single Operator Low Power
Dave Bunte, W9FN	-Tippecanoe County	Single Operator Low Power
Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA	-Allen County	Single Operator Low Power
Steve Mollman, KD9HL	-Porter County	Single Operator QRP

Taking into account that we are in a low propagation cycle, band conditions were generally good during the twelve hour contest even with the occasional interference from thunderstorms that crossed central and southern Indiana. Best operations were on 20, 40 and 80 meters. Of course 80 meters didn't open up until after sunset.

The Indiana QSO Party is an annual event sponsored by the Hoosier DX and Contest Club.

A big thanks goes to those who participated, from the smallest station to the big performance by the N9FN/N9LJX team. The effort put forth made a success for the club.

◄Ω►

Note: Two of our members participated in the QSO party for their local club instead of ours.

Linda Metz, KC8PKY & David KC8OBH	-Starke County	Multi Operator

Next year we will need to have more operators if we want to win again, as Dave will most likely not give us his points.

Subject: from the ARRL Letter - story related to the two towers in Wanatah

-------- Original Message --------
> From: "Carl Luetzelschwab"
> Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2018 6:50 PM

>
> Experiments Look to Leverage Low-Latency HF to Shave Microseconds off
> Trade Times
>
> Experimental operations now under way on HF appear aimed at leveraging
> low-latency HF propagation to shave microseconds from futures market
trades
> and gain a competitive edge in a field where millionths of a second can
> mean winning or losing. On June 18, *Bloomberg* reported
>
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-06-18/hft-traders-dust-off-19t
h-century-tool-in-search-of-market-edge>
> on a secretive antenna facility near Maple Park, in Kane County,
Illinois,
> and speculated that futures traders might be looking to take advantage
of
> lower-latency HF propagation over state-of-the-art microwave links and
> undersea cables, where even the slightest path delay could compromise a
> transaction. The facility is not far from a major futures data center.
>
> As the Bloomberg article explained, "Rapidly sending data from there to
> other important market centers can help the speediest traders profit
from
> price differences for related assets. Those money-making opportunities
> often last only tiny fractions of a second."
>
> Radio amateur Bob Van Valzah, KE9YQ, said in a May blog post
>
<https://sniperinmahwah.wordpress.com/2018/05/07/shortwave-trading-part-i-th
e-west-chicago-tower-mystery/>that
> he recently stumbled onto the first evidence of HF radio futures trading
at
> a site in West Chicago, Illinois. There, he spotted HF log-period dipole
> arrays on a pole, and a microwave dish he determined was aimed at a
Chicago
> Mercantile Exchange (CME) data center. Additional research led him to
the
> antenna facility in Maple Park, which also sported a microwave dish
> apparently aimed at the CME data center. Two approximately 170-foot
towers
> on the site support a directional wire array for HF. Van Valzah is a
> performance engineer on leave from the high-frequency -- no pun intended
--

> trading field.
>
> *Bloomberg* said the company behind the Kane County project is New Line
> Networks, LLC, a joint venture of Chicago-based Jump Trading, LLC, and
New
> York-based Virtu Financial, Inc. While no FCC Part 5 Experimental
license
> appears to have been assigned to New Line Networks, WH2XVO is assigned
to
> partner Virtu Financial, which assumed the license from Services
> Development Company LLC.
>
> Sites listed on the license are Aurora and Chicago, Illinois, in
addition
> to Homer, Alaska, and Secaucus, New Jersey -- home to several financial
> firms and right across the Hudson River from many more in New York City.
> Part 5 Experimental license WI2XAJ has been assigned to Toggle
> Communications, which is using the West Chicago site and appears to be
> experimenting with a similar system from other sites. Other entities may
> also be conducting similar experiments.
>
> The Experimental-licensed systems use a variety of frequency
shift-keying
> modes, including FSK, AFSK, QPSK, and 8-PSK, on frequencies ranging from
> about 6 MHz to 24 MHz and power levels from 20 kW ERP to nearly 50 kW
ERP,
> depending on the Experimental license in question. Van Valzah pointed
out
> in his blog post that, while HF is low bandwidth, unreliable, and
> expensive, "you can't beat it for [low] latency."
>
> ARRL reached out to the point of contact listed on the WH2XVO
application
> but has not heard back.

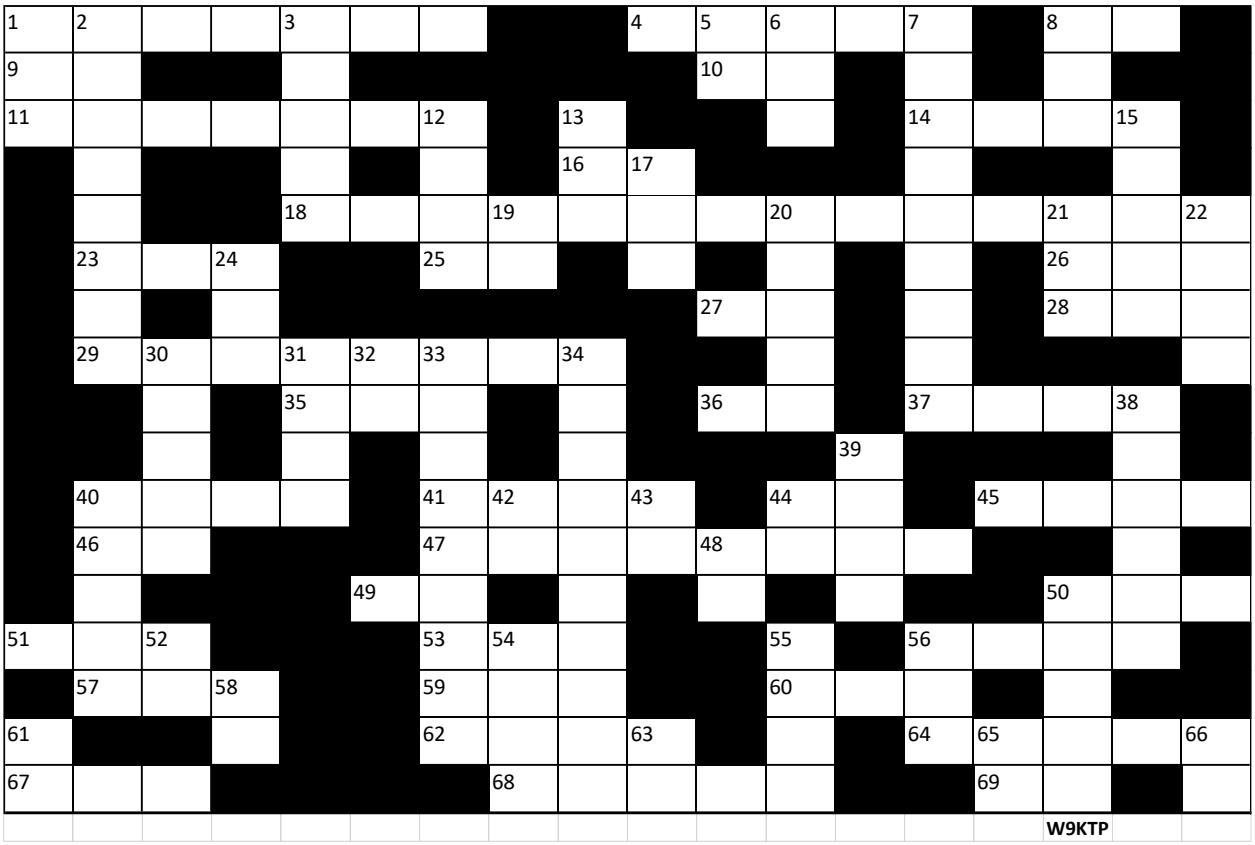
From Jurgen N9RD

Here is part two of the document Carl listed above in his message.

Part 2) https://sniperinmahwah.wordpress.com/2018/06/07/shortwave-trading-part-ii-faq-and-other-chicago-area-sites/

NWIDXC PUZZLE

Just for a change, let's try a ham radio crossword puzzle. I did have to use a few non-radio clues to make things fit. **Bring you completed puzzle to the next meeting for a chance to win a door prize.** Thanks to KD9HL for his editing help.



ACROSS		
1. Digital Mode	51. Pest	21. Doc. Org.
4. 6AG7, 6L6, etc.	53. Hams in space at _____	22. Award
8. Chile	56. Ten meter _____	24. Chips
9. Dots and dashes	57. 24 Hours	30. Helper guy
10. Shiny Metal	59. Refuel	31. Resistance values
11. _____cable	60. Not on	32. Canada, Mexico and US
14. "G"	62. Angry group	33. Power increaser
16. Expired	64. Rotate around Earth	34. Has collector, emitter & base
18. No carrier, one sideband	67. Guy from W5 area	38. Donut inductor
23. Cause a RF problem	68. What a leaky canteen does.	39. Need for log
25. Ireland	69. Sardinia	40. _____ day
26. Tune for _____		42. Not off
27. Spain	**DOWN**	43. Guernsey
28. Limits output	1. .GOV Org. for licenses	44. German for 'Yes'
29. Has match on frequency	2. _____ _____ FM Repeater	48. Argentina
35. He is a licensed _____.	3. Control, screen & suppressor	50. Things to turn
36. China	5. Russian	52. Afghanistan
37. Your unique sound on CW.	6. Made by Vibroplex	54. He _____ 73's.
40. Have a source, gate & drain	7. Ended QSO	55. Not Dashes
41. _____ wave	8. Western St.	56. Beat Freq. Osc.
44. Japan	12. Feed_____	58. Young woman
45. Our League	13. _____card	61. Mongolia
46. E = _____	15. Last stage	63. Costa Rica
47. _____ with glass	17. Brasspounder's tool	65. NE St.
49. Some Germans	19. N. Ireland	66. Guatemala
50. Unassembled	20. "I" location	**W9KTP**

Since this is a contest, answers will be given at the August meeting.
Watch your emails for the date of the next meeting.

HOMEBREW SDR HAM RADIO IN 9 PARTS

https://hackaday.com/2018/06/06/homebrew-sdr-ham-radio-in-9-parts/

NWIDX Club Members
DXCC Challenge Award Scorecard
(as of June 30, 2018)

1	AG9S	JIM SJOBERG, JR	2955
2	N9FN	DAVE CHASEY	2326
3	K9FN	DAVID BUNTE	2150
4	W8FIB	TOM RUGGLES	1679
5	K9SUH	KENNETH REISING	1356
6	W9UM	NICHOLAS COMINOS	1321
7	N9RD	JUERGEN NITTNER	1302
8	W3ML	JOHN POINDEXTER	1283
9	KD9HL	STEVE MOLLMAN	1252
10	ND9A	JOHN SIKORA	1149
11	K9QA	RICH LOCHNER	1145
12	N9DD	THOMAS FRISZ	1084

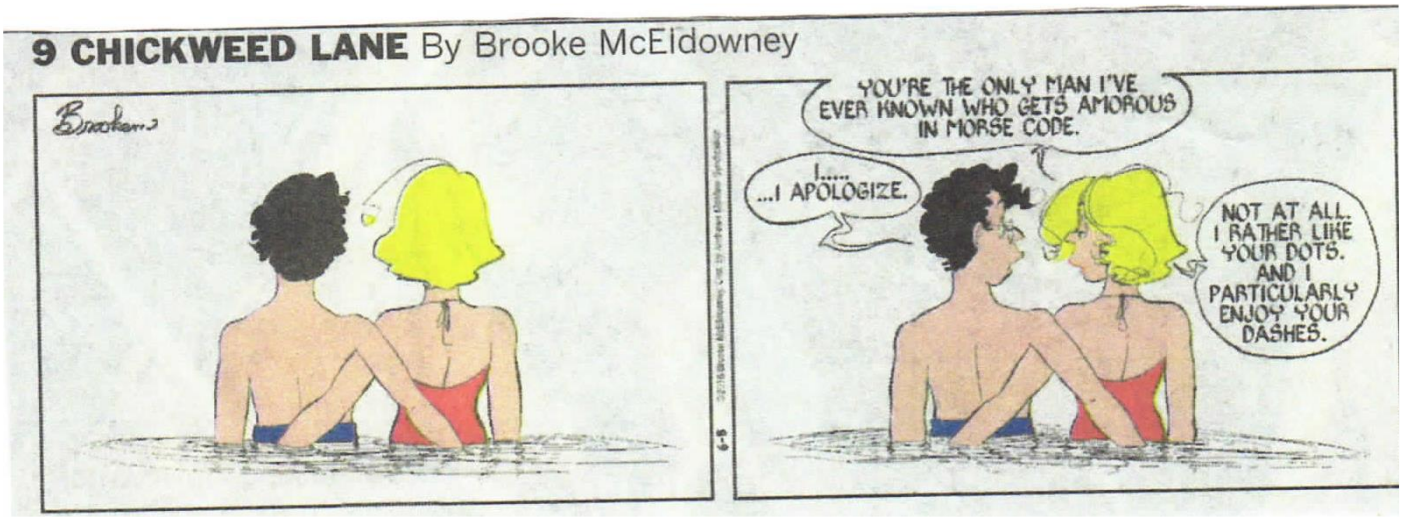
The above totals were abstracted from the ARRL DXCC Standings lists:
http://www.arrl.org/dxcc-standings

The ARRL DXCC Challenge award is available to applicants who reach 1,000 confirmed and credited band points on the bands of 160 through 6-Meters (except 60 Meters). This includes only current entities. Deleted entities do not count towards this award. All contacts must be made after November 15, 1945. Once you reach the 1,000 point level with the ARRL, you are entered into the Challenge listing automatically. An application to request the DXCC Challenge listing is not required. This award is endorsable in levels of 500. There is no certificate for this award but a special plaque is available from the ARRL for the DXCC Challenge award.

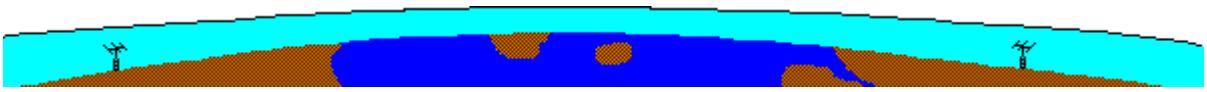
Members with less than 1000 points are NOT listed in the ARRL DXCC Standings.

The maximum possible points as of June 30, 2018 was 3400 points (10 bands X 340 eligible entities). The current World high point holder is EA8AK with 3256 points. The current USA high point holder is W4DR with 3181 points.

◄Ω►



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/

THANKS
Thanks for visiting !

NWiDXC
W9NWI