

October 2015-January 2016

"Ohio's First DXCC Field Checking Club"



# The NODXA RAG



## Fireside Chat With KB8NW

Fellow DXers,



December is here and 2015 is almost over. Looking back over the year, 2015 was another banner year for DXers. DXCC entities we got to work were K1N (Navassa Island), EP6T (Iran), TI9/3Z9DX Cocos Island, PQOT Trindade, ZL7E Chatham, DXOP Spratly, plenty of E5 South Cook Islands, VK9L Lord Howe, TX3X Chesterfield Island, VK9WA, Willis Island and S79C Seychelles (Covetiv Island - rare IOTA), just to name a few.

Looking forward to 2016, the new year is shaping up to be another interesting year for DXers. The line-up so far is looking like this:

- January-February 6th -- VP8STI South Sandwich Island (AN-009); Ranked #3  
VP8SGI South Georgia Island (AN-007); Ranked #8
- January 11-26th -- K5P Palmyra Island (OC-085); Ranked #9
- March 6th-April 20th -- VK0EK Heard Island (AN-003); Ranked #5
- March 14th-April 14th -- FT4JA Juan de Nova (AF-012); Ranked #6
- August 19-29th -- CY9C St. Paul Island (NA-094); Ranked #60

\* All rankings are from ClubLog's Most Wanted List (Overall Listing).

<http://www.clublog.org/mostwanted.php>

NODXA has donated funds to all operations except to the CY9C St. Paul Island DXpedition. I am not sure why, but it may be because we have not received a request from the CY9C team. The E44Y Palestine DXpedition (Ranked #100) that was expected to take place in 2016 has now been canceled. The P5/3Z9DX North Korea (Ranked #1) operation is "supposed" to take place January or February 2016. Many seem pretty skeptical about this operation, and I will leave it at that.

Even though we are now on the down side of the sunspot cycle, the first quarter of 2016 should provide us with five (possibly six) of the top ten most wanted. With all this warm weather that we are having, you should have enough time to prepare (antenna work) for these upcoming DXpeditions.

At this time I would like to wish everyone (and their families) a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year". May 2016 bring you an "All Time New One" (ATNO) in the log.

As always, I hope to see you in the coming weeks/months, possibly at a hamfest or NODXA's general membership meetings every first Monday of the month (unless it is a holiday -- it will be the second Monday).

As a reminder, if you have a topic to discuss about DXing or contesting, bring it up at the meeting. Also, if you would like to put on a program of some interest for the club in the coming months, let us know so we can schedule you in for a meeting. We are always looking for a program.

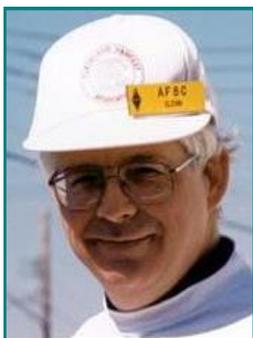
73 and Good DX, de Tedd KB8NW

## Minutes of the August 3rd, 2015 NODXA Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7:30 p.m. by Tedd, KB8NW, with 20 members and guests present. After the round of introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance, the undersigned read the minutes for the meeting of July 6, 2015, followed by approval of the minutes. Mary, N8DMM, reported that the treasury balance was \$Ka-Ching! Bruce, N8DJX, moved and Gary, NI8Z seconded a motion to approve the treasurer's report. The motion passed on the vote. The repeater was reported to be working fine. Our editor, Dave, WD8IOU reported starting on the next newsletter. Now he is working on collecting input for articles for the next issue.

### Old/New Business:

Upon Tedd's question, Glenn, AF8C, reconfirmed that the Cleveland Hamfest organization is still



looking for people from clubs to support the organization by providing volunteer assistance at the Hamfest and perhaps to become active members. Tedd, KB8NW, is pushing our director to appoint a new DXCC card checker to replace Keith, N8KOL, who has resigned that position.

On the topic of requests for donations to groups forming up Dxpeditions, Tedd has six total requests now. The club members selected discussing the requests for Palmyra, Seychelles, Palestine, and Viet Nam. Palmyra, number 10 on the DX Magazine's most wanted list, runs January 11-26. It is the most wanted in Europe. Getting a club logo on their card runs \$500.00 now. The operation will be on 160m through 10m.

The next group discussed is going to Palestine. They are rated 48<sup>th</sup>, operating in March 2016. The members decided to move Palestine to the bottom of the list. For Viet Nam, 22 operators are planning for the event. Some other expeditions were briefly discussed. Comoros will be on during September 14-23 on 40m through 10m on CW and RTTY. An IOTA-rated station for Albania, EU-169, Sazan, will be up. Madagascar will have 5R8UI. Guam during November 12-23 as number 41 in the most wanted list. Seychelles is going to be a rare IOTA which is a prison and is brand new on the list. Pete, N8TR, favored covering Palmyra now. Dave, WD8IOU, moved and Brian, K3USC, seconded to send \$300 to the Palmyra group. Thereupon a member of the club said he would add a personal contribution of \$201 to that amount so that the club will be able to send \$501.00 and exceed the minimum logo cost. The members agreed to hold off on a decision for Seychelles and Palestine on this meeting night.

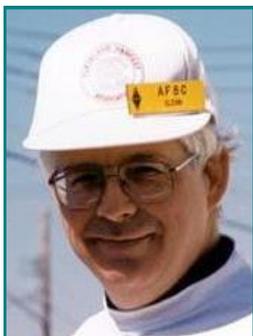
### Wrapup:

The next meeting will occur on September 14. A motion by Jim, KE8G, to close the meeting was seconded by Denny, WB8K and the vote approved that motion. Linda, N8LRS, was the winner of half the raffle basket of \$34.00. All discussion closed at approximately 8:00 p.m. With the early closing of the business meeting, the group reconfigured for the showing of the very interesting FT5ZM Amsterdam Island video.

Respectfully, Glenn, AF8C, Secretary

## Minutes of the September 14th, 2015 NODXA Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7:31 p.m. by Tedd, KB8NW, with 19 members and guests present. After the round of introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance, the undersigned read the minutes for the meeting of August 3, 2015, followed by approval of the minutes. Mary, N8DMM, reported that the treasury balance was \$Ka-Ching! after some recent DXpedition contributions. Ron, K8VJG, moved and Brian, K3USC seconded a motion to approve the treasurer's report. The motion passed on the vote.



The repeater was reported to be working fine. Our editor, Dave, WD8IOU, reported he is working on the next newsletter but doesn't have enough material yet to complete the newsletter. Tedd reported on the back-and-forth email discussions attempting to see if the Director will approve a new DXCC card checker before the Cleveland Hamfest. Upon Tedd's request the secretary even sent a letter to the Director on behalf of the club, supporting the nomination of W8AV for that position. The Director has not yet made a decision.

### Old/New Business:

Tedd, KB8NW, reported sending our approved donation to the Palmyra DXpedition group within 24 hours. However the donation was not acknowledged for three weeks and the logo did not appear on their website for another week after that. The Albania operation has been postponed to 2016. The operator list recently reported for the Seychelles operation is not the same as previously reported. A vote on Seychelles (S79C) was discussed and had no support. We did not vote on support for the Viet Nam last month. The single operator event for Madagascar wanted money for a radio. This did not interest our club members. The Comoros and Equatorial Guinea decision was to not support. Support for the March operation in Palestine has been tabled. A new request from a German group intending to operate on the Marshall Islands was discussed and dropped.

John, K8YSE, mentioned that a French operation on Juan de Nova (FT/J or a TO call) in March per the OPDX Bulletin (#13 on the wanted list) wants a CW card request via PayPal. A decision on that was tabled for the October 5 meeting. Ron, K8VJG, asked if Guantanamo operates any more. Tedd reported that it is commonly appearing in the bulletins. Mt.Athos is on almost every day. Tedd reported that the Route 66 operations are on until September 20. There will be a special event operation for the U.S. visit of Pope Francis. Some semi-rare entities will be up in October.

For \$1.00 from an estate, Joe, N8QXC, bought an equipped metal rod at Findlay (3/8-24 stud mount) and brought it to the meeting to see if anyone could identify what it is for or the manufacturer. Pete, N8TR, thought it might be part of an 80m mobile antenna. Dwaine, K8ME, will be manning the club tables at the Cleveland Hamfest on September 27.

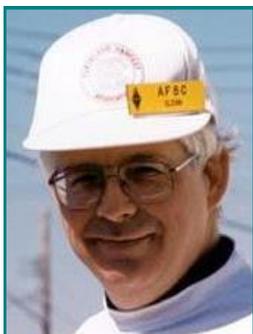
### Wrapup:

The next meeting will occur on October 5. A motion by Ron, K8VJG to close the meeting was seconded by Bruce, N8DJX and the vote approved that motion. Dave, KZ8Y, winner of half the raffle basket of \$36.00, donated his half back to the club. All discussion closed at approximately 8:16 p.m. Respectfully, Glenn, AF8C, Secretary

"The Mission of the Northern Ohio DX Association is to promote and support Amateur Radio and the DX Community around the world."

## Minutes of the October 5th, 2015 NODXA Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7:30 p.m. by Tedd, KB8NW, with 26 members and guests present. After the round of introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance, the undersigned read the minutes for the meeting of September 14, 2015. Gary, NI8Z, moved, and Bruce, N8DJX, seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The motion passed on the vote.



Mary, N8DMM, reported that the treasury balance was \$Ka-Ching! There were no membership renewals in the last period. Ron, K8VJG, moved and Bruce, N8DJX, seconded a motion to approve the treasurer's report. That motion passed on the vote. The repeater was reported to be working fine. Our editor, Dave, WD8IOU, reported he is working on the next newsletter. Dave has enough material, but will accept want ads. Ron, K8VJG, asked if the Woolly Bear Festival will have an amateur station. No one had a definite answer to his question.

### Old/New Business:

Dwaine, K8ME, checked about 100 VUCC cards at the Cleveland Hamfest. Goose, W8AV, checked about 225 DXCC cards as well. Included in those were some 160m cards. Goose said he would like to consider coming to our meeting about three times a year to check cards while here. Per Dennis, K8LBT, Massillon's hamfest in late October may also have card checking. Tedd, KB8NW, said he will invite Goose for the December meeting.

Mary, N8DMM, is requesting everyone to update their email address with her. Use [n8dmm@rr.com](mailto:n8dmm@rr.com) or [n8dmm@arrl.net](mailto:n8dmm@arrl.net). Tedd announced he has been enabled (by Jim, K8MR) to be an administrator on the reflector. You can register there at [nodxa@contesting.com](mailto:nodxa@contesting.com). Tedd said last month's donation to Juan De Nova was sent in two hours after our meeting. The FT4JA expedition will cost about \$130k at the end of March or early April 2016. All operators will be well known French operators.

The TX3X signal strength has been up and down. The propagation path has been very poor. Rick, K8ZH, says the T2GC is workable. North Cook on 15m was about 15 dB. Perhaps not all their antennas are up yet. Bruce, N8DJX, moved that we donate \$200 to Juan de Nova and Ron, K8VJG, seconded. The motion passed unanimously on the vote.

Tedd asked if the members are interested in having another DX Contesters Luncheon at Mulligan's Restaurant before the CQ WW Phone contest this month. The luncheon would be on October 23. There was enough interest for Tedd to start scheduling it with the restaurant and send out an email. Dwaine announced having sold two DXCC patches at the Cleveland Hamfest.

Going back, Juan de Nova is really #19 for EU, and is #9 on the U.S. mixed modes ranking. Ranking world wide by mode: CW 15, SSB 12, Digital 18, 160/80 as 10. For North America it is ranked CW 10, SSB 9, Digital 13, and 160/80 as 12. Rick, K8ZH, says Juan de Nova is going to be up next year.

Ron, K8VJG, wanted a report on the Cleveland Hamfest. Dwaine volunteered that there was a fair amount of people. He sold two items. Gary, NI8Z, was busy also. Tedd commented that the USPS is quite "hungry" because it mangled his QST. Tim, W8TAH, reported that CQ magazine is now out on time.

Tedd discussed how the annual DXCC listing came out full of errors and had to be retracted after a week. At the ARRL, Sharon Taratula is replacing Bill Moore as Awards Manager of the ARRL Radiosport Department. Bruce N8DJX got a QSL card from 3Z (stationed on TI9). Tedd remarked that the 3Z cards are trickling out.

### Wrapup:

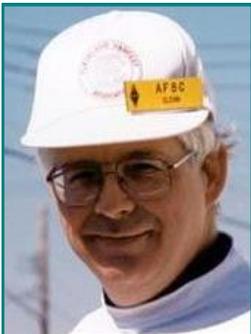
The next meeting will be on November 2, with a possible video. The 50-50 raffle pot is now \$42. Half of that was won by W8CAR and donated back to the club. Joe, N8QXC, donated a door prize. Ron,

K8VJG, won that item. The meeting closed at approximately 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully, Glenn, AF8C, Secretary

## Minutes of the November 2nd, 2015 NODXA Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7:30 p.m. by Tedd, KB8NW, with 19 members and guests present. After the round of introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance, the undersigned read the minutes for the meeting of October 5, 2015. Thereafter, Bruce, N8DJX, moved, and Dwaine, K8ME seconded a motion to approve the minutes. That motion passed on the vote. Mary, N8DMM, reported that the treasury balance was \$Ka-Ching! Mary also thanked those members who have submitted updates to their email addresses and/or other data. Gary, NI8Z, moved, and Dave, WD8IOU, seconded a motion to approve the treasurer's report. That motion passed on the vote.



The repeater was reported to be working fine. Our editor, Dave, WD8IOU, reported having starting on the next newsletter. He is looking for useful material for the newsletter and he will accept photos of QSL cards, DX stories, or other related photos. Tedd announced that Goose, W8AV, will be here in December to check cards. Members have a whole month to get their cards together, but should not bring a large number of cards because of the limited time during the meeting. There was no card checking at the Massillon hamfest after all. According to the Ohio Section Manager, Scott, N8SY, the other DXCC card checker was at the Cleveland

hamfest, but no one knew he was there.

About 20 people attended the October 23 DX luncheon at Mulligan's restaurant. However, Tedd said the next DX luncheon will probably be moved to another venue. There will not be a DX luncheon on Black Friday. However, the Mansfield group has moved their luncheon to December 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Tuesday after the CQWW DX CW Contest.

### Old/New Business:

Tedd, KB8NW, said no new requests for DXexpedition funding have been received. The one outstanding request that is still open is the Palestine operation. Per a press release for South Sandwich and South Georgia, clubs are not donating enough funds as compared to other DXpeditions.

The 2015 ARRL Field Day results have been published. NODXA was number one in Great Lakes Division, number 65 overall, and number 16 in 2A overall.

Dwaine, K8ME, has a TL922 160 through 10 amplifier for \$800. And he's selling a TailTwister rotor for \$500. George, K8KR, has an FTDX1000 Mark 5 and a TS2000 for sale. Tedd said that for sale announcements can be on the reflector as long as they are sent in as plain text files. George, K8KR, said that the final decision on the venue for the 2016 Dayton Hamvention is supposed to be announced on October 31. Tedd announced that the Estes Auction flyer will be out around November 21. Wayne, K8FF, asked if there is any credibility to the announcements of a coming P5 operation. Per Tedd, a guy might take equipment to P5 in December for a possible operation in December or January. Tedd noted that the December Show and Tell program will be postponed to possibly the January or February meeting. Upcoming DX operations of note include T32DX, Viet Nam, Madagascar, South Cook, EP2A during November 10 through 23, and Willis Island VP9WA this month. Look for Jan Mayen and Kerguelen FT4XC also.

### Wrapup:

The next meeting will occur on December 7. A motion by Bruce, N8DJX, to close the meeting was seconded by Brian, K3USC, and the member vote approved that motion. Tedd announced that the January meeting may include a pertinent video as a program. George, K8KR, was the winner of half the raffle basket of \$34.00. Additional raffle tickets were drawn for a pair of door prizes. Mary, N8DMM, won a screwdriver and Brian, K3USC, won a digital voltmeter. All discussion closed at approximately 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully, Glenn, AF8C, Secretary and his laptop's voice recognition software.

## What would Wayne (Green) do? by Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Wayne Green was a crackpot...but he was a great one.

For those of you who aren't as old as I am, Wayne Green, W2NSD, was not only the publisher of 73 Magazine, but also the founder of Byte and other PC magazines in the early days of personal computing. In 73, he would write these long, rambling editorials. Often, he would take the ARRL to task, criticizing what he thought to be some lunk-headed policy or another.



Just as often, he'd be encouraging hams to take up some new technology. He was, for example, one of the guys driving hams to set up repeater systems.

He would often exhort hams to get started in their own technology-related business. I remember one column where he urged hams to get involved in the home-security business. And, of course, when personal computers became popular, he wrote that hams should think about getting into that business. His reasoning was that our knowledge of electronics would stand us in good stead in those businesses.

Today, I think that he would be telling us to get more involved in with technologies like the Internet of Things, WiFi, or whatever other wireless technology is coming down the pike. "Wireless" is the key word here. These networking technologies are based on good, old radio, and who better to push these technologies forward than guys like us who understand radio.

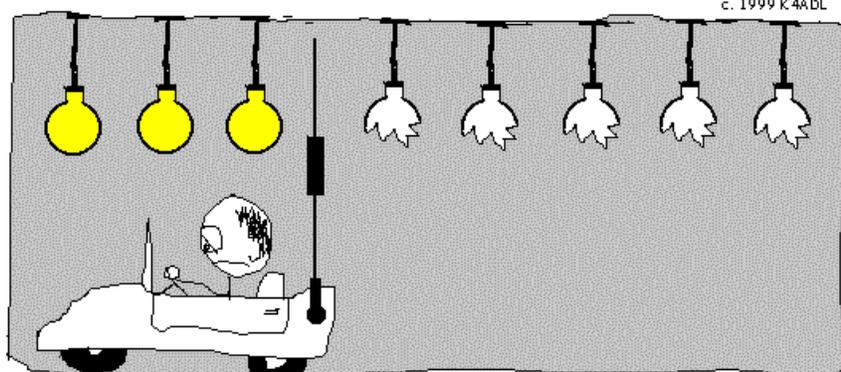
This point was brought home to me last week as I was interviewing an executive of a wireless company for an article that I'm writing. He said to me that many of the companies he works with are taking a software-centric view to their wireless products. They simply use the reference designs provided by the wireless chip makers and expect those designs to work flawlessly in their products.

While they often do, he gave me an example where simply using the reference design was a colossal failure. In one case, he said, the company mounted the board inside a metal enclosure. Since the antenna was part of the printed-circuit board, the enclosure acted like a shield, and of course, the device had little or no range.

He went on to say that he thought that there was a real shortage of experienced RF guys in the wireless industry. Does that sound like an opportunity to you? It does to me. So, I'm going to make like Wayne Green here and exhort all you guys to get out there and take advantage of it.

This is not only a business opportunity, but a way for amateur radio operators to fulfill a couple of the "purposes" of amateur radio, as set forth in Part 97.1 of the amateur radio regulations. Part 97.1 (b) says that one of the purposes of the Amateur Radio Service is "Continuation and extension of the amateur's proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art." According to Part 97.1(d), another purpose of the Amateur Radio Service is "Expansion of the existing reservoir within the amateur radio service of trained operators, technicians, and electronics experts."

Let's do it!



c. 1999 K4ADL

FACED WITH HIGH MAINTENANCE COSTS, ARTHUR'S COMPANY  
REVOKED HIS INDOOR PARKING PRIVILEGES.

## Kids are not the future of ham radio by Bob Witte, KONR (via KB6NU)

You've heard it a million times: our kids are the future. That statement gets applied to almost everything, including amateur radio. How can you argue with an obvious fact like that?

But I am starting to think it is incorrect.

We've had really good success on creating new hams of all ages in our Technician License Class (at the Tri-Lakes Monument Radio Association). We've been doing this for a while now and I think I am seeing a pattern emerge. We've been able to attract middle schoolers to the class and help them get their ham radio license. I've talked to many of them on the air. They've helped out with public service events. They seem to have fun playing with radios.



Then this thing called high school happens. The high school phase in the US is filled with tons of stuff to do: studying, homework, AP classes, science competitions, sports, dating, movies, driving and after school jobs. Way too much stuff. Ham radio starts to take a backseat to these normal high school activities. Then we don't see the kids at the radio club meetings or chatting on the local repeater because they are busy doing other things. Have we lost them forever? Not sure.

High school is often followed by college which has its own set of challenges: a totally new environment, away from home, a new set of people, new studies, etc. There might be a ham radio club on campus but maybe not. If a kid is not off to college they are (hopefully) out doing something to establish themselves in this world. Eventually they emerge on the other side, get a job, get themselves established, sometimes with a spouse and maybe a kid or two. By this time they are 25 to 30 years old, depending on the individual.

I recently posted about the demographics of our students in the Tech License Class (<http://www.k0nr.com/wordpress/2015/10/where-are-the-new-technicians-coming-from/>). The chart below shows the age distribution of our students from our most recent class. Hmmm, clearly most of our students are 30 or older. (Sorry, we have not collected age data with finer resolution.) This particular class is light on the under 18 crowd...sometimes we have a clump of kids in the mix.

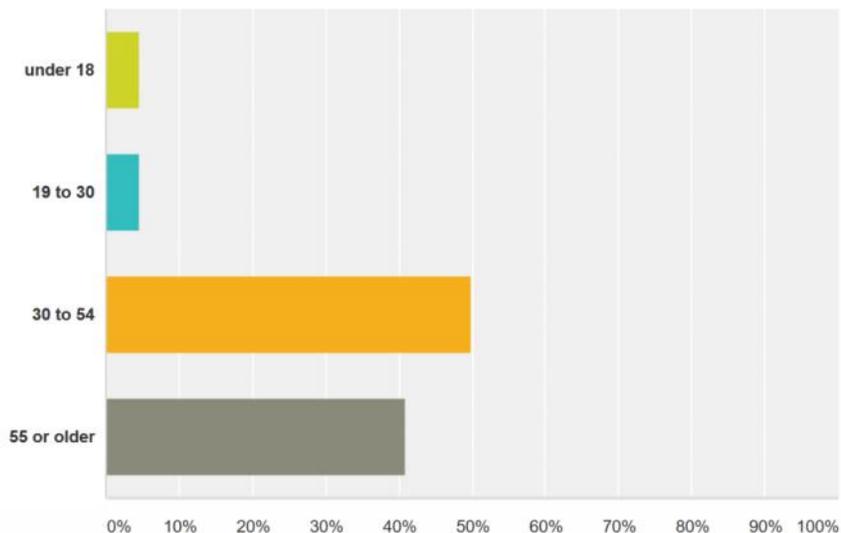
For whatever reason, it seems that most people find themselves in a situation as an adult that causes them to say "I want to get my ham radio license."

When asked why they want to get their ham license, the top response is always emergency/disaster communications, followed by backcountry communications, pursuing electronics as a hobby and learning about radio communications. I suspect that starting to be established in a community and having some disposable income also play a role.

My hypothesis is that the most effective way of growing a vibrant ham radio community is to target adults ages 25 to 40.

What is your age?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



This age range is more equipped and ready to be ham radio operators and are still young enough that they will be around for a while. Of course, we still want to work with all age groups, including kids and retirees. We've all seen very young hams get the bug for ham radio early and carry it throughout their life. And we also see plenty of older folks get interested in the hobby as they approach or enter retirement. We don't want to miss out on either of those groups.

So that's my read on the situation. I've got some data to support my theory but I can't really prove it. What do you think? What are you seeing in your ham radio community?

## TX3X - Chesterfield Islands (October 1 -12, 2015) by Gene Spinelli K5GS

Chesterfield Islands (also known as Chesterfield Reefs) are uninhabited coral atolls in the Coral Sea located approximately 870 kilometers northwest of Noumea, New Caledonia, a French possession. The archipelago is made up of 11 islets and many reefs. The islands are a loose collection of elongated reefs that enclose a deep, semi-sheltered, lagoon. The reefs on the west and northwest are known as the Chesterfield Reefs; those on the east and north being the Bampton Reefs. The Chesterfield Reefs form a structure measuring 120 km in length (northeast to southwest) and 70 km across (east to west).

There are numerous cays occurring amongst the reefs of both the Chesterfield and Bampton Reefs. These include: Loop Islet, Renard Cay, Skeleton Cay, Bennett Island, Passage Islet, Long Island, the Avon Isles, the Anchorage Islets and Bampton Island.

TX3X operated from the Anchorage Inlets, the above-water area named Les Trois Ilots du Mouillage ("the three anchorage islands"), which are less than two meters above sea level at high tide. The surface is composed of crushed coral and pumice stone to a depth of over 36 inches (~1 meter) on a coral base. The reef is home to thousands of nesting seabirds with an active population of hermit crabs and sea turtles. Surrounding the island are submerged coral heads which make navigation hazardous. As seen during previous DX-peditions to the Coral Sea, the beauty of the white sand against the blue water and submerged coral is stunning. The sun reflecting off the water and coral produces the most beautiful colors in the spectrum. The submerged coral heads required our boat to anchor about 500 meters offshore. We used a Zodiac to travel to and from the island, carefully navigating around the submerged obstacles.



Figure 1 - The Coral Sea - Chesterfield Islands

### Why Chesterfield Reef?

The idea to activate Chesterfield surfaced after the VK9MT project. Pista HA5AO, Les W2LK, Gene K5GS met at Friedrichshafen (Germany) to discuss several alternatives. At the time Chesterfield was #24 on Clublog but we knew it would move up the list after the Navassa DX-pedition.

We contacted Remi FK8CP and Sam FK8DD and asked for their assistance with landing formalities and radio licensing. We also contacted the ARRL to verify their requirements for landing permits / permission documentation.

Remi FK8CP contacted the radio licensing agency in Noumea and helped with the process to get

TX3X. Each operator submitted a copy of their amateur radio license and passport. The TX3X license was valid from 30 Sept to 14 Oct, 2015.

### The Team

We formed the team of: Pista HA5AO, Les W2LK, Gene K5GS, Arnie N6HC, Tom ND2T, Ross K6GFJ, David N6HD, Steve W1SRD, Mike WA6O, Walt N6XG, Kevin K6TD, and Alan AD6E.

Many of the team members knew one another and others met for the first time at the International DX Convention in Visalia, California in April 2015. Over the course of the project team members worked well together and helped one another as needed. Their prior DX-pedition experience and creativity was evident. Since all but one of the team had DX-pedition experience, the decisions came easily.

At their own expense, team members were required to have emergency evacuation and medical insurance. Each member provided his medical history to team doctor Arnie N6HC summarizing any serious medical conditions, medications used, where the medications were kept, and emergency contact names / telephone numbers. Physical limitations could preclude a person from joining the team. Boarding or leaving the Zodiac, climbing into a bunk or even using the boat's toilets can be a physically challenging task in rough seas. Each team member had to be self sufficient.



*Figure 2 L-R Ross K6GFJ, Walt N6XG, David N6HD, Gene K5GS, Les W2LK, Kevin K6TD, Tom ND2T, Steve W1SRD, Pista HA5AO, Arnie N6HC, Alan AD6E, Mike WA6O*

Since all of the team members were in the at-risk cardiac age group, we thought it prudent to purchase a portable Automatic Electronic Defibrillator (AED) to add to the medical supply kit.

### The Boat

The expedition yacht Evohe from Dunedin, New Zealand was previously used for the Campbell Island and Mellish Reef DX-peditions. We contacted owner / skipper Steve Kafka and asked if he would be interested in a new project. Evohe is a six sail sailing ketch with two Ford engines. With a top speed of 10 knots we could reach Chesterfield in 3 days from Noumea, New Caledonia.

Evohe is a no frills "working boat" licensed to carry twelve passengers and up to eight crew. A "working boat" means there are few, if any, creature comforts on the boat.

The skipper had a crew of four New Zealanders: Ray, Allison, Tori (ZL1TOR), and Jake. Two of the four had DX-pedition experience: Tori - Campbell Island and Allison - Mellish Reef. We selected Noumea, New Caledonia as our departure point to minimize the number of days at sea.

### The Planning Process

Regularly scheduled Skype and Web-Ex conference calls were conducted to plan every aspect of the project. Budgets were established, responsibilities assigned, fund raising began and soon various documents began to take shape. We contacted equipment manufacturers and dealers for support.

Elecraft supplied 6 complete stations: K3 transceivers, KPA-500 amplifiers and P3 scopes. DX-Engineering donated thousands of dollars in coax, accessories, masts and power supplies. Expert Linears America, LLC loaned us the new SPE 1.3 kw amp. Tom Schiller N6BT supplied six vertical antennas while SteppIR and foldingantennas.com sponsored the beam antennas. Other suppliers of critical equipment included Arlan Communications (Radiosport headsets), MicroHam (interface units), GMOOBX (custom interface cables), Innov Antennas (high power filters), Spiderbeam (accessories), Array Solutions (SAL antenna) and Northern California DX Foundation (low power filters). The USA sourced equipment was consolidated in San Jose, California at the home of Ross K6GFJ.



*Figure 3 - Evohe from Dunedin, New Zealand*

Supplies and consumables were sourced in New Zealand, where we would consolidate with the US shipment. Heavy items such as tents, generators, the electrical grid, fuel drums and miscellaneous items were purchased in New Zealand and stored at Precision Autowerk, Auckland.

### Advance Team Arrives at Auckland, New Zealand

Shopping lists and store names were provided to the advance team comprised of Pista HA5AO, Ross K6GFJ and Gene K5GS, augmented by local volunteers Roly ZL1BQD, wife Gail ZL1FV and Brett Sommerville (not licensed).

We chose Auckland as the consolidation point for several reasons, the most important being economics. We had access to storage facilities, trucks and a loaner car at no cost to the project. Additionally, it was less expensive to ship the equipment to New Zealand.

We loaded the boat on the afternoon of 12 Sept and the morning of 13 Sept, 2015. Everything was trucked to the boat which was a 30 minute drive from the storage site. After our gear was loaded, the skipper took on an initial supply of fresh fruits and vegetables, meats and dry stores. By the end of the day 15 Sept they were ready to sail.

On 16 Sept Evohe took on diesel fuel and 1,200 liters of 91 octane petrol for our generators. After clearing Customs and Immigration on Thursday 17 Sept she sailed for Noumea with Pista HA5AO on board for the 7 day journey, arriving on 24 Sept.



*Figure 4 Pista watching Jake and Tori loading equipment*

### Noumea, New Calendonia

The team began arriving at Noumea on 25 Sept. Most flew via Auckland, New Zealand where several of us met at the airport. Others flew via Australia. Having never been to New Caledonia I didn't know what to expect. The island is mountainous and one of the largest islands in the South Pacific. The airport is a 45 minute drive from the city center. The predominant language is French, yet most everyone we encountered spoke some English. The city is modern, with many shops and a well engineered road infrastructure. We arrived on a holiday weekend and almost all businesses were closed making it easy to navigate the streets that were virtually deserted. There was a restaurant next to the hotel and another restaurant at the marina. We had an ample supply of beer and food from those establishments. There was also a McDonald's near the marina.

### Departure Day

On 28 Sept we set sail for the 3 day passage to Chesterfield Reef. Although the winds were in our favor we used the boat's engines for the journey. The skipper planned our arrival at Chesterfield for the morning of 1 Oct when the sun would be positioned so he could see and navigate around the submerged coral heads.

### Arrival Day

The hard work begins: loading the Zodiac, bringing people and equipment ashore and setting up the camps. The wind was strong and presented a real challenge erecting tents and antennas. It was our constant companion, blowing at a steady twenty knots and regularly gusting upwards of 35 - 40 knots rather than the 15-20 knot trade winds we expected.

The wind made riding in the Zodiac "an adventure in itself". Sea spray showered us as the Zodiac plied the rough sea. The skipper asked us to get under a tarp so we wouldn't get too drenched.

The landing area was, for the most part, a narrow sandbar with patches of low growth vegetation consisting of grass and shrubs. Our

Mellish Reef experience indicated we needed long tent and guying stakes on Chesterfield. To manage cost and minimize weight we used ninety pieces of rebar each three feet long (1 meter), one hundred twenty wooden three foot landscaping stakes and one hundred sandbags each capable of holding fifty pounds (23kg) of sand. Several techniques were used to secure the tents and antennas, including burying a sandbag in a dead man arrangement and/or augmenting the rebar / wood stakes with a sandbag.

We used five heavy duty tents configured as follows: SSB camp, CW camp, data center / break tent and two sleeping tents. In retrospect we needed more sleeping tents since we couldn't get back to the boat often enough due to the heavy winds and unsafe sea conditions.

The New Zealand sourced tents were made of heavy duty poly canvas with steel frames. The tents took a significant beating from the wind. They kept the rain out and remained standing. Except for not reading the instructions, the biggest tent challenge was the poles that held up the awning continually sank in the loose sand. The boat crew helped stabilize the poles and performed daily maintenance on the guys.



*Figure 5 - First sighting of Chesterfield*

Other than the first night when the wind caused some antenna problems we had no other wind related antenna problems except an inability to erect tall antennas. The area was a narrow sandbar, about thirty feet (ten meters) wide, with the sea on both sides. Salt and sand spray was constant, requiring daily maintenance of the lower antennas. The two element rotatable vertical antennas were installed first, giving us 10 - 40m capability. It was too windy (unsafe) to install the SteppIR beams, the Battle Creek Special or the 80 meter antenna.

As the days progressed the wind never subsided and propagation was getting worse. In spite of the dangerous conditions we did get the SteppIR beams erected. On day 5 the 80 meter antenna was

raised. Due to the fierce wind, we couldn't get the 18M Spiderpole up for the 80M vertical but we jury rigged a 30 foot antenna mast with a top loading wire in an inverted L configuration. We tried installing the Battle Creek Special, but the winds were too strong. Towards the end of the project the 80M antenna was reconfigured with a longer piece of wire as a makeshift 160 antenna which we used on the last night.

After the DX-pedition we saw a comment on the Internet that suggested the antennas may not have been the correct distance from the sea. Maybe the writer knew something we didn't? Useable space between high tide marks was only about 30 feet (10 meters).

Due to the unsafe conditions the skipper severely limited our ability to shuttle back and forth to the boat during the day, and not all at night. We created a shift schedule that kept one team on the reef 6PM to 6AM. Sleeping on the island was very difficult because of the wind and tent noise. The revised schedule allowed sleep time on the boat at night for half the team. Propagation was such that we didn't see a significant negative impact from this new schedule since the bands were mostly closed.

### On the Air

Steve W1SRD made the first contact with AK6ZZ on 1 Oct. Propagation was good with energetic pileups around the globe. We became increasingly concerned when propagation

reports predicted strong geomagnetic disturbances. When propagation deteriorated the band openings dwindled. As propagation further diminished, atmospheric noise increased and our rates suffered. Over the Horizon Radar wiped out signals on 40 SSB one night.

For the entire operation the "K" Index was "4" or higher, with the "A" Index peaking at 77 on 7 Oct. Propagation was erratic and unpredictable. We experienced pinpoint (cluster-like) propagation where we



*Figure 6 Typical sandbag usage*



*Figure 7 - Note width of the sandbar at low tide*

could hear a relatively small geographic area extremely well. Suddenly signals disappeared from that area and another area would be heard for a short while. There was no doubt you were hearing us better than we heard you. We received reports that aurora was causing problems in northwestern EU. It was disappointing that we couldn't get on 160 until the last night.

The pilots reported your complaints that we worked Asia at the expense of other regions. Unfortunately, we were not hearing the other geographic areas but had almost full time propagation to Asia. We listened often for NA - SA - EU - AF and OC and directed the pile-up when we could hear them.

Being so close to JA and hearing them almost all the time was challenging. We asked JA to standby many times but it wasn't always effective. We tried several different techniques to reduce the continuous calling - some worked and some didn't.

We used seven Lenovo laptops configured with N1MM+ in a networked environment. Contrary to the usual Internet rumors, we uploaded the logs on a daily basis except for one day when we were distracted by more pressing needs. No logs or Qs were lost.

We uploaded by day not by band as some Internet rumors implied. We had an unexplained logging problem when over 800 QSOs were incorrectly logged as PSK31. The log was corrected from the island.

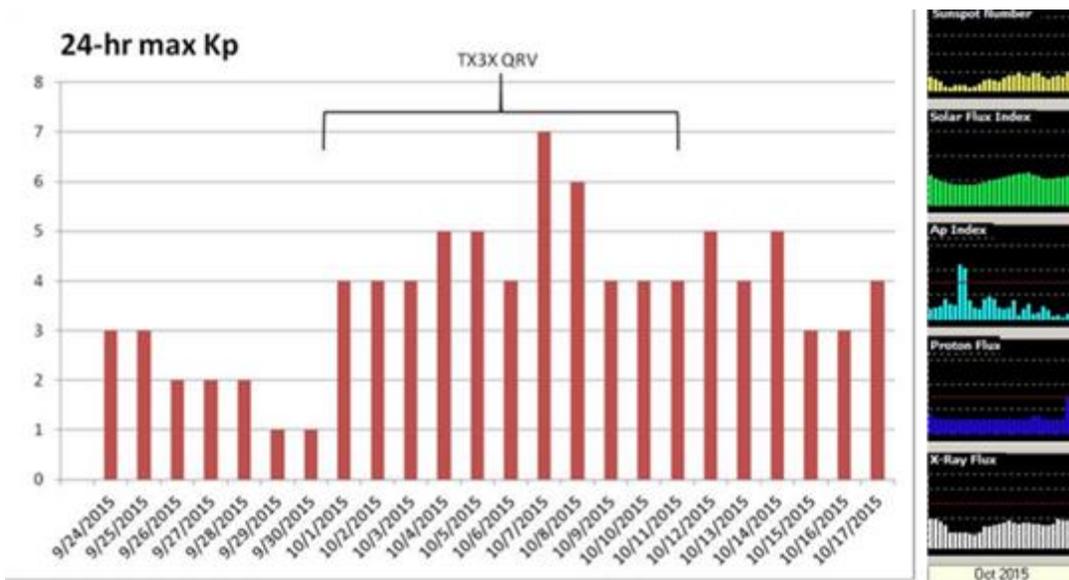


Figure 8 - October Indices "A" - "K"

We had a problem with our website on 6 Oct (GMT date). Our web hosting firm (inmotionhosting.com) suspended our account because we were getting too many hits. Several weeks before the DX-pedition we gave them notice of the expected peaks in usage and offered to pay for additional resources, as required. We called them from the island on the satellite phone. Their system administrator made up a nonsense story about our software being the problem. We then called John Miller K6MM and asked him to intervene with inmotionhosting.com. Within an hour the site was back on-line operating normally and meeting the load. There were no software problems.

QRT and Return to Noumea

On the morning of Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> we went QRT and began the teardown process. Ironically, the wind subsided for a while. We spent about 6 hours in tear down mode staging equipment on the beach and ferrying it back to the boat.

The journey back to Noumea was into the wind and very rough. The skipper described the seas as "confused". While the swells were only about 3 - 5 meters the skipper said the seas were coming at us from different directions. The ride was so rough that team medic Arnie N6HC became concerned that several team members were unable to keep down fluids and food. After three days at sea on the evening of 14 Oct. the skipper dropped anchor at Koumac on the far northern tip of New Caledonia.

The weather forecast indicated continued strong winds and unsettled seas. The skipper gave us the option of riding the boat back to Noumea or taking a 5 hour bus ride. Arrangements were made by the harbor master to transport the team to a local bus stop a few kilometers away. Arnie N6HC rode the boat while the rest of us took the bus to Noumea. Evohe arrived the next day and Arnie survived the journey.

The Evohe departed Noumea on 19 October and arrived back in Auckland on 27 Oct where the Advance Team of Ross K6GFJ, Gene K5GS and volunteer Brett Sommerville, along with the crew, unloaded the boat and trucked the equipment to Precision Autowerk.

### Daily Challenges

The weather and propagation presented the greatest challenges causing operating plans to be changed. We had difficulty sleeping on the island due to the sound of the wind blowing across and through the tents. The RadioSport headphones did a good job of minimizing the external noise, but nothing could be done to stop all the tents and operating desks from shaking constantly.

Antenna and tent guys required constant attention, primarily due to the sand base and lack of a solid footing. We had salt contamination issues with the lower antennas; the elevated SteppIRs had no problem.

On cays like Chesterfield, heat and humidity are important considerations. We brought ashore over four hundred liters of drinking water and twenty pounds (9 kg) of powdered Gatorade to restore electrolytes lost through perspiration. Everyone carried a personal water container. We had a supply of sunscreen and encouraged everyone to protect themselves from the sun with hats, long sleeve shirts and application of sunscreen on exposed areas. The Northern California DX Foundation supplied tropical shirts that were perfect for this protection.

We were careful not to disturb ground nesting birds. Many had eggs on the ground and would become agitated if we got too close. Nightly visits by the hermit crabs were always interesting. Other than a few cut fingers, we had no injuries or accidents on the reef. Neither turtles, birds nor eggs were injured although the birds were just as interested in watching us as we were in their well being. The birds were always hovering close to our heads and watched everything we did.

### Results

Our goal was to work 80,000 QSOs and concentrate on RTTY. Unfortunately, the weather and propagation have a nasty habit of changing the plans. After 10 full operating days, we closed the log with 50,104 QSOs which now shows 50,123 with SWL requests.

In general, the DX community cooperated nicely during the pile-ups. However, being so close to JA at times it was a real challenge to get JA to QRX. We appreciated those operators that followed the DX Code of Conduct and wish those that didn't would recognize the problems they cause for themselves and others.

The erratic propagation required you to spend significant time in the chair to work us. We received many e-mails from people who got in the log with 100 watts and a dipole or vertical. We worked a number of mobile stations. I think these operators know their limitations and leveraged their skill to find an opening rather than rely on the cluster.

There were two other DX-peditions and a Cuban Special Events station on the air at the same time. We know from e-mails received afterwards that some people who thought they worked TX3X found their call sign in another station's log. Maybe this was caused by incorrectly posted call signs on the cluster or overlapping pile-ups on the narrow bands?

Operating time: 10.5 Days												
50,104 Q's		Avg. ~4,772 Q's / day					25,467		CW (50.8 %)			
14,298 Uniques 28.5%							19,502		SSB (38.9 %)			
~2,357 Dupes 4.7%							5,158		RTTY (10.3%)			
CONTINENT/BAND	160 m	80 m	40 m	30 m	20 m	17 m	15 m	12 m	10 m	6 m	TOTAL	TOTAL %
AFRICA	-	5	12	7	43	27	16	3	-	-	113	0.23 %
ANTARCTICA	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0 %
ASIA	145	838	1776	1423	3648	3575	4777	3044	3035	-	22261	44.41 %
EUROPE	-	579	1352	914	4835	1199	740	443	73	-	10135	20.22 %
NORTH AMERICA	47	887	1901	577	1944	1886	4149	2314	1436	-	15141	30.21 %
OCEANIA	17	139	280	87	516	297	310	105	107	-	1858	3.71 %
SOUTH AMERICA	-	26	46	24	122	119	184	58	39	-	618	1.23 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>2474</b>	<b>5368</b>	<b>3032</b>	<b>11108</b>	<b>7103</b>	<b>10176</b>	<b>5967</b>	<b>4690</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50127</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Figure 9—Results

Message in a Bottle

How many times have you walked along a sandy beach, saw a bottle on the sand, and discovered a message in the bottle? The first team to arrive on the island saw a few wine bottles on the sand. Upon further investigation one of them contained a message.

The bottle was dropped in the ocean on March 30, 2014 (18 months before) from the cruise ship "Carnival Spirit" by a family from Australia. The ship was traveling from Noumea to Sydney. We sent an e-mail to the family from the island and later followed up from Noumea with more details and photos.

Wrap Up

While we were disappointed with the weather and propagation conditions, we realize that there are some things we can't control.

We very much appreciate the support from the global DX foundations, clubs, individuals and partners who helped make this project a reality. Our corporate sponsors were equally important to the project.

The global pilot team led by Ralph W4HK, our QSL consultant Tim MOURX and our social media guru Glenn KE4KY did a wonderful job. We met many fine people in New Zealand and New Caledonia who assisted us before and after the project.

The highlights of the project included giving ATNOs, putting people on the Honor Roll, Top of the Honor Roll, and supporting the Auckland, New Zealand North Shore Boy / Girl Scouts with our surplus equipment donation.

I'd be remiss by not mentioning the camaraderie, cooperation and friendship of the TX3X team, the global pilots and all those who helped us throughout the project.

Please visit our website at: [www.tx3x.com](http://www.tx3x.com).



Figure 10 - Pista HA5AO with the bottle

## Wife Installs Pay-As-You-Go Device On Radio by [HamHijinks.com](http://HamHijinks.com)

**BONIFACE, Minnesota** — A local ham radio operator is facing a significant barrier to getting on the air, and it involves his wife.

Wendy Johansson, a self-described entrepreneur, has turned her husband's hobby into an income generator. She drives a new car, wears expensive furs and takes exotic vacations.

Johansson was reached by satellite phone while on a cruise of the River Nile in Egypt. "I had hoped to help moderate his time in his radio room, but instead it became a significant wealth-driver for the family. I've been able to send the kids to college and buy some nice purses," she said.

The source of the wealth? A coin-operated pay-as-you-go device that requires payment before allowing the radio to turn on.

"I didn't realize how much time I was spending on the radio," says Luther Johansson, the amateur radio operator.

"At this point, I've cleaned up all loose change in the couch cushions and under the car seat, and gone through every pair of pants in my closet. It's becoming increasingly difficult to resist my five-year-old's piggy bank," he said.

Johansson plans to start a Kickstarter account to fund his involvement in the phone portion of Sweepstakes.

"But, this weekend is the trader's net! I have no idea how I'm going to pay for that air time," he said.

Mrs. Johansson says she plans to manufacture more of the devices and sell them to other radio wives in nearby clubs.

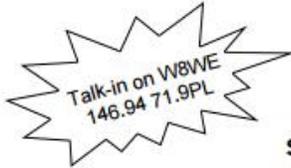
Ham Hijinks interns are looking into FCC rules regarding this matter. So far, it appears the law says nothing about an XYL having pecuniary interest.



# Mid❄️Winter Hamfest & Computer Show Mansfield, Ohio

**NEW DATE!**

Sunday, February 21, 2016  
Richland County Fairgrounds  
750 North Home Road



**Gates Open at 7am**

SPONSORED BY THE INTERCITY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

Visit us at [www.iarc.ws](http://www.iarc.ws)

**Forums and VE Test Session**

9:00 am—Ohio Army MARS Forum  
10:00 am—ARES Forum  
11:00 am—OSSBN Forum  
12:00 noon Digital Forum  
12:00 noon VE Test Session  
*(Pre-registration for test is required, e-mail [steve@n8smb.com](mailto:steve@n8smb.com) to register)*

Volume 1 Issue 1 Published Once A Year by IARC, Inc.



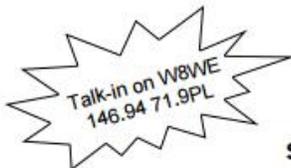
Tickets: Advance \$5  
At the Door \$6  
Tables, *Advance Only*: \$15  
Ticket and Table Deadline- January 22  
Online ordering-<http://hamfest.w8we.org>

Advance orders (**must include SASE**) to:  
Danny Bailey, W8DLB  
70 Euclid Street  
Shiloh, OH 44878  
419-896-2165 (After 3 P.M. Please)  
[kb8stk113@gmail.com](mailto:kb8stk113@gmail.com)

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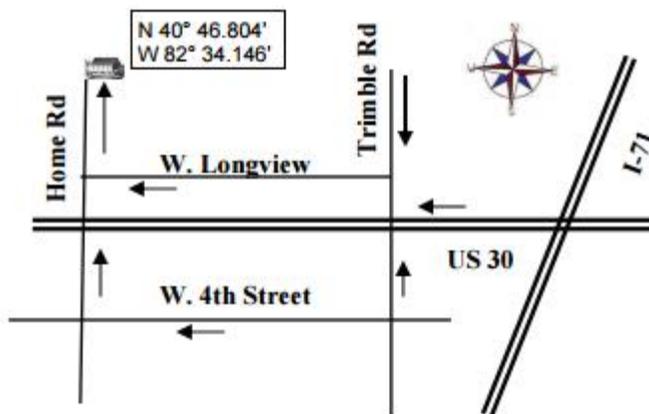
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[kb8stk113@gmail.com](mailto:kb8stk113@gmail.com)



## Items For Sale

Hygain T2X Taitwister Rotor with manual and control box. Has been repaired and updated by CATS Rotor Doctor.

**\$500**

Kenwood TL922 Linear Amplifier with manual and new band switch and updated by Don Kessler, has pair of 3-500Z tubes, 160 through 10 meters.

**\$800**

Contact Dwaine, K8ME @ [k8me@sbcglobal.net](mailto:k8me@sbcglobal.net)

## Antennas For Sale

Cushcraft A3S - Three element beam for 20/15/10 meters - \$200  
(Original manual included)

KD9SV design Two element trapped yagi for 17/12 meters - \$50

Both are partially disassembled.

Contact Denny @ [wb8k@arrl.net](mailto:wb8k@arrl.net)



## Meeting Information

*NODXA* Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at the *Gourme Family Restaurant* at 15315 Pearl Road (Rt. 42) just west of Interstate 71 and south of Rt. 82 in Strongsville at 7:30 PM. Come early and have dinner and meet your fellow DXers and enter the 50/50 raffle.

## NODXA Information

NO8DX: Special Event Callsign  
 W8DXA: NODXA Repeater 147.360

Web-site: <http://www.papays.com/nodxa.html>  
 Newsletter Submission: [wd8iou@adelphia.net](mailto:wd8iou@adelphia.net)

## NODXA Club Officials for 2015-2016

President: Tedd Mirgliotta, KB8NW (440-237-2816)  
 V. President: Dwaine Modock, K8ME (440-582-3462)  
 Secretary: Glenn Williams, AF8C (440-835-4897)  
 Treasurer: Mary Michaelis, N8DMM (440-236-5426)  
 Newsletter: David Autry, WD8IOU (440-238-0417)



## DXCC Info

As of February 2012, the current DXCC Entities total is: 340.

## NODXA Application and Renewal Form

The Northern Ohio DX Association is a non-profit organization with a primary interest in DXing. We encourage all DXers to join our group and share the interest and fun of DXing.

Please complete the application below and send along your appropriate dues or renewal to:

NODXA, P.O. Box 361624 , Strongsville, Ohio 44136

First Time Membership/Renewal (U.S. and DX) \$20.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Callsign \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 ARRL Member? \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ DXCC Member? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Special Interest \_\_\_\_\_

## Newsletter Contributors

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this months edition: N8TR, N8DMM, K8ME, KB8NW, K8YSE, AF8C, KONR, WB8K, KB6NU, K5GS, and [www.hamhijinks.com](http://www.hamhijinks.com),