

Scuttlebutt

February 2000

Issue 146

Captain's Cabin

Don Toman - K2KQ

Happy Y2K everyone. We've survived. My laptops, desktops, radios, TNC, car, airplane, houses, appliances, wife, kids, grandkids, cat and I have all emerged from the great transition functioning (as far as I can tell) normally. Some of us had a harder time than others, having had to stand by, contingency plans in hand, awaiting the mushroom cloud signaling the end. Check on NJ1V, among others, for that story.

Y2K notwithstanding, it's time to take stock. YCCC put on an amazing performance in 1999 CQ WW, both modes, and appears in very good position to repeat the feat of the previous year of winning the large club title once again.

Thanks to all of you who participated and turned in so many great scores. A combination of wonderful conditions, a large turnout and a bunch of unprecedented DXpeditions produced a 'phone mode score approximately double that of last year! In the past, our 'phone participation has been larger than that for CW, but the score has been lower. Not this year. For the first time, both participation and score exceeded that for CW. For those who have an image of YCCC as a CW-only club, ponder this...With both modes in hand, we were close to three quarters of a *billion* points (before UBNs, of course).

There's still work to be done. For ARRL DX, we need to have participation by as many of you as possible and we need you to be eligible! You will find a list in this issue of those of you who are delinquent in meeting attendance and dues paying. Get to a meeting or two, pay your dues, participate and help us to win a twofer again!

Now for something completely different:

Things are changing. The FCC has released licensing restructuring, technology marches on, and many aspects of our beloved hobby are evolving along with the changes. A number of things can be seen developing already.

1. With restructuring, some barriers to participation will be lowered. We should see an increased number of newbies entering the hobby. We need to grab hold of them and introduce them to the wonders of contesting. Those of you who are not yet Extras should re-evaluate your situation and get upgraded. We probably need a formal membership chairman to coordinate things.
2. Technology is going to transform contesting. Innovations that are as radical as computer logging, DVPs, DVKs, Packet Clusters and the internet were in the 80s and 90s are going to appear in the coming years, and the pace of innovation will accelerate. As broadband internet technology makes its appearance, we are going to do new things with our web site that you haven't even imagined. If you don't have internet access now, there is no longer a reason not to, as the number of purveyors of FREE internet (not just e-mail,) service increases.
3. The synergism that we saw among radio, computers, the internet, smart hams and the compelling, open-ended pursuit of contesting is going to drive things in new, ever more fascinating directions. Fasten your seat belts for a wonderful ride!

Let's look at some of the possibilities for new stuff.

For many years, certain un-nameable three-letter agencies have been sucking up and recording the entire HF spectrum, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Special hardware has fired off alarms upon the appearance of signals with pre-determined characteristics or content, prompting spooks of various kinds to go back and examine the archives. To do this has required banks of large liquid-cooled computers, acres of digital tape recorders, specialized signal processing hardware and special analog-to-digital converters having very high resolution and conversion rates, to say nothing about fists full of your tax dollars.

(See Captain's Cabin – p. 2)

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(Captain's Cabin from p. 1)

Today, a Pentium III chip has the processing power of a Cray, a TI digital signal processor has the power of banks of specialized hardware read/write CDs store huge amounts of data and an Analog Devices A/D converter chip can handle 24 bits of resolution at megahertz conversion rates for a few bucks.

It is now possible to not only record an entire contest at r-f, making after-action review possible (perhaps done by log checkers working in slightly-delayed time, but within a contest period) but it is also possible to examine the entire HF contest spectrum in real time, bounce it off large data bases and report on the appearance of desired signals. The day of the automated all-seeing spotting robot (at least for CW and RTTY) is not far off. It will only require somebody with the ambition and desire to build it.

It doesn't take much imagination to see that, with the evolution of the internet, the output of such a robot will easily be transported to a web site for all with access rights to see. There's also no reason (even within existing rules) such robots can't be remotely located.

The same data bounced off appropriate data bases in real time will eliminate UBNs for those who want to go through the trouble.

At the moment, Writelog version 10 can record the audio of an entire contest for you. That's just the tip of the iceberg.

YCCC has been in the forefront of many technical innovations in the past. I would like to predict that our people will jump on new technology and move the art of contesting forward with new fervor.

We've done a few things right this past year. As with any organization staffed by volunteers, our progress is often frustratingly slow relative to what we would like to accomplish. Be patient, be forward-looking, be good to yourselves and supportive of your fellow club members and you will be surprised at what we will accomplish.

YCCC-2000 CD Available Now!

YCCC-2000 CD is \$15 and available from Len, K1NU. Get yours at a meeting, or by mail by sending K1NU a check (add \$2 S/H) to Leonard Kay, 32 Bradley Rd, Andover, MA 01810.

December Meeting Minutes

Ric Plummer – KV1W

The meeting was opened with welcoming comments and a full agenda by President Don Toman, K2KQ.

Don commented that the J3A DXpedition went very well, with SSB already filled for next year. He could use the donation of some computer monitors for the site.

Jeff announced the winning teams for ARRL DX 1999 with winning ribbons being presented to:

Team 17, First Place, Team 13, Second Place and Team 12, Third Place.

K1HT reported that in CQWW SSB was at 377.9M with 178 entrants and CW was at 303.2M with 115.

This was way up from last years 217.2 SSB and a final of 313.6 CW. Reminding all that not all CW scores were in to him and be especially mindful to get the logs turned in !! Remember to submit scores to Dave for all contests where club scores are reported. These not only include CQWW and ARRL DX, but also SS and ARRL 10M & 160M. And finally, check your eligibility, we have many who are not yet eligible for ARRL DX !!

Art, W1RZF, presented the team summaries for CQWW and some interesting summary info showing that overall participation was up 30% and some teams were up 70%. Some teams were able to recruit to get the full 20 members and the average was 17.5. Again, GET ELIGIBLE. That's the way to KICK BUTT !! It's all in the numbers, as Jeff would say.

New member applications were presented for KB1EKJ (son of W1ES), KC2FEE, NT2A, N3KCJ, and W2WB. And in true YCCC fashion, they were voted in before they could reach the door.

Rich, K2WR, gave a brief update on CAC. Sweepstakes has added an assisted category and has precedence changes. The VHF rover issue was once again studied with no action taken. The CAC sees the ARRL's log checking efforts as positive.

Ira, K2RD, presented a session on his successful efforts to reduce interference in a limited physical space, multi transmitter environment. The Antennas used were: 2 element quad with separate feedlines per band, delta loop on 40, Windom, 160 M Inv L. The successful solution used ICE 419 filters and coax stubs. Ira commented that you must use good quality coax for stubs, not your left over "junk". There were two stages of stubs used spaced 1/8 and 3/8 wavelengths. Also, use of ferrite chokes as feedlines enter the building, and protection on 2 M radio and beverage lines to prevent damage from RF overload.

Kick Butt Scott, N1CX, presented how to make a difference

on 80 and 160 with a pair of phased Butternut HF2V verticals on a 1/3 acre lot. His solution used the standard verticals with a home brew phasing box using home wound inductors, capacitor made from PCB material and relays found at U-Do-It all in a NEMA box. Worked great. As Scott would say " KICK BUTT on 80 and 160".

Rich, K1CC, presented an excellent slide show on the ZX0F DXpedition. The antenna farm was great and clearly a result of check book engineering. The whole effort took a lot of support and they were especially pleased with the support for the computer systems end of the operation, using an internet link for cluster support. It was a LOT of WORK, but also a lot of fun was had by all.

Don, K2KQ, followed up with some more comments on the J3AQ DXpedition which he calls " DXpedition without anxiety". On SSB the YCCC was credited with 2.67M per op and on CW with 3.74M per op, for a total contribution of 36M to YCCC for both modes.

YSA Web Pages Updated

Charlie Ross - NC1N (YSA Secretary)

The YCCC sysops have worked over the past six months to update and rework the packet resource pages on YCCC's web site.

All packet information can now be found under a top-level page. From there, you can get to:

- Network information: Node lists sorted by call, QTH, frequency, latitude, and longitude to make exploring the network easier. There are also write-ups on a number of the nodes.
- PacketCluster User Manual: A primer for newcomers and a useful reference for everyone.
- Network statistics from recent contests: Spots by hour, spots by spotter, 1999 vs. 1998.
- General information about the YCCC Sysops Association and more.

In the future, we plan to add maps, link plots, and other information. Suggestions are welcome.

To get to the pages, follow the link on the YCCC home page, or go directly to <http://www.yccc.org/ysa>.

YCCC Challenge - ARRL DX '99

Published Scores

Dave Hoaglin – K1HT

Team 17	31,628,137	The Buccaneers
Team 13	15,539,413	Lucky 13
Team 12	14,756,827	The Keystone Breakers
Team 9	13,423,103	Number 9
Team 19	13,097,157	Yankee Clipper Spinnakers
Team 25	12,993,004	The Two-Bit Contesters
Team 5	12,815,686	F Troop
Team 21	12,633,078	The 21 Club
Team 8	12,020,623	Aces & Eights
Team 14	11,578,044	Rainbow Warriors
Team 3	11,370,387	Mainly Lids
Team 23	11,246,825	The 599'ers
Team 2	10,307,959	The Spice Boys
Team 10	9,970,329	Clam Diggers
Team 16	9,430,526	AR's Aces
Team 4	9,367,773	Freddie & the Whizzers
Team 15	9,281,473	The Wire Weirdos
Team 11	8,842,672	The Pi-Squares
Team 20	8,207,341	The Roaring 20's
Team 1	7,853,656	Team One
Team 18	7,628,708	Tom's Tigers
Team 7	6,170,302	Lucky 7
Team 6	5,948,377	Team CT
Team 22	5,430,380	The Crushers
Team 24	5,110,143	The X-Ops
Team 26	3,301,772	The Megawatts

Movers and Shakers:

Correct address for new member Andrew, AB1BX:
Andrew Ferranti, AB1BX
785 Main Street
Warren, RI 02885

New email for Scott, N1SP, is N1SP@arrl.net.

New address for John, NJ1V:
John Guida, NJ1V
5 Peachtree Lane
Chelmsford MA 01824
home phone: (978)455-3701
work phone: (617)646-5570
email: nj1v@arrl.net

Claimed Scores

Art Holmes – W1RZF

Team	CW	SSB	Total
19	22,903,428	25,143,022	48,046,450
17	18,732,762	21,621,193	40,353,955
15	21,230,501	18,239,773	39,470,274
24	23,301,790	15,728,755	39,030,545
6	13,828,730	19,145,971	32,974,701
3	16,915,980	15,935,823	32,851,803
25	17,552,473	14,145,538	31,698,011
9	13,374,408	17,807,724	31,182,132
16	13,130,565	17,626,190	30,756,755
12	13,042,171	16,411,200	29,453,371
5	13,565,383	15,865,045	29,430,428
11	16,935,745	11,887,760	28,823,505
2	13,290,979	14,303,106	27,594,085
22	13,125,623	14,266,761	27,392,384
4	14,557,340	12,118,353	26,675,693
7	7,667,059	18,248,635	25,915,694
14	10,935,928	14,751,640	25,687,568
26	7,400,511	16,848,774	24,249,285
20	11,694,408	12,399,457	24,093,865
10	10,870,374	13,135,461	24,005,835
8	13,738,695	9,261,200	22,999,895
18	9,226,260	13,532,636	22,758,896
1	10,326,196	11,723,151	22,049,347
21	6,448,628	15,248,246	21,696,874
23	9,306,042	11,334,621	20,640,663
13	11,039,249	7,852,564	18,891,813
0	4,391,838	4,686,915	9,078,753
	354,869,943	399,269,514	757,802,580

W1 QSL Bureau

Welcome to the W1 Incoming QSL Bureau, sponsored by the Yankee Clipper Contest Club and staffed by over two dozen dedicated New England radio amateurs who volunteer their time to distribute DX QSL cards to you. General information, which applies to all the ARRL-supported U.S. Incoming QSL Bureaus, is available from the ARRL Web pages. Although the Incoming Bureau system operates under the guidance of ARRL, you are not required to be an ARRL member to use it.

(See W1 QSL – p. 10)

YCCC Challenge - CQWW '99

New Crew

Please welcome the following new members who joined at various General or Area Meetings

CT Area Meeting – 11/13

Ken Weith, KD1DD
8A Hoyt Road
Bethel, CT 06801-1322
home phone: (203)743-9181
email: weithranch@snet.net

Jeffrey A. Cantor, WB3DLG
37 King Street
Danbury, CT 06811
home phone: (203)798-6860
work phone: (203)854-4050
email: wb3dlg@earthlink.net

NH Area Meeting – 11/19

Carol L. Perry, K1FTA
34 Maple Root Road
Coventry, RI 02816
home phone: (401)397-8865
email: carolperry@aol.com

General Meeting – 12/5

Dan Wedge, KB1EKJ
6 Vose Hill Rd.
Westford MA 01886
phone: (978)692-8501
email: kb1ekj@arrl.net

Gennady Moshkov, NT2A
220 Finley Ave.
Staten Island NY 10306
home phone: (718)980-6787
email: rx3qa@email.msn.com
home page: <http://www.qsl.net/nt2a>

Dmitri Jikharev, KC2FEE
1405 Ave. Z Ap 183
Brooklyn NY 11235
home phone: (718)781-6461
email: cyberhooker@hotmail.com
home page: <http://www.qsl.net/ra9usu>

Sergiy Sushko, W1WB

100 Theodore Fremd Ave Apt. A1C
Rye NY 10580
home phone: (914)921-4810
work phone: (914)273-4488 x 229
email: kc2cit@aol.com

Foster Baker, N3KCJ
261 Depot St.
Dennisport MA 02639
home phone: (508)394-0826
email: fosdan@cape.com

CT Area Meeting – 12/18

Alan M. Karenko, N1TXM
14 Evergreen Place
Branford, CT 06405
phone: (203)488-6968
email: karenko@mindspring.com

Flotsam and Jetsam

“Barnacle Jack” Schuster – W1WEF

Thanks for all the ideas to pass along to fellow YCCers.
Keep them coming !

Dave, K1VUT really likes the EZ Hang sling shot/fishing reel that he bought in Dayton for hanging wires in trees . Although this is sold and advertised in QST by EZ HANG, it actually was originally the idea of fellow YCCer Jim Parise, W1UK. Jim had an article in QST a few years ago on it (if you search he was KC1SJ back then). I made my own and can vouch for Dave's remarks that it's a great way to put wires in trees.

W1CSM has his shack in the basement, and reports that his wife's electric footwarmer is a great contest station accessory! Bruce also recently added full break-in to his amp, and feels it significantly helps with timing in pileups by being able to hear what's happening. He also feels it is worthwhile to put in the second CW filter, and found it was a significant improvement in his IC 756.

(See Flotsam – p. 6)

(Flotsam from p. 5)

Lou KS1L passes this along as an improvement in Yaesu FT1000MP or 1000D audio with Heil headphones. Lou drives a Radio Shack 15W mini-stereo amp model SA155 from the headphone jack, and uses the amp to drive the headphones. Keeping the audio level real low on the radio, Lou gets good audio from the Heil head set. An alternate solution to the insufficient drive level at W1WEF which I've found to work pretty well with my Heil headset is to use the rear speaker output or the phone jack on my Yaesu SP5 speaker.

If you haven't already checked out the NG3K website for anything you ever wanted to know about contesting, take a look: <http://cpcug.org/user/wfeidt/contest/>

Bert, N4CW (ex YCCCer) passed this along a while back: "I remember Everett Hudson (AJ1I) saying that the name of the ship on the YCCC QSL cards was Beat FRC. He showed me the original design (magnified many times), and it surely did say that, right on the bow below the gunwales. I bet he's smiling right now..." (Let's keep him smiling! JACK)

I don't recall if I ever passed along this story from W2RKB, a Bell Labs retiree on the Cape. The way that the ideal number of radials being 120 was determined: a farmer was given the task of laying 100 radials around a vertical, and when he was done he asked what to do with the left over wire. "Put more radials down, but count them..."

When using turnbuckles on guys or stays, you should always run a piece of cable or the end of the guy back thru the eyes and the body of the turnbuckle to keep it from loosening like mine did recently on a 40-2CD stay when I forgot to follow my own advice after turning the fixed Eu beam West for SS. By the way, cable works just as well as the rigid supports that Cushcraft supplies.

On an FT1000MP, you can program the front end (menu 8-4) to be tuned or flat. Tuned is a bit hotter on ten, but Flat seems best on 160 and 80. On the other bands it doesn't make much difference. Unfortunately, with all the programming flexibility it has, it can't remember which is best where!

I recently picked up an FT1000D. The only thing I found that I don't like in it so far is the fast tuning rate of 10Khz per revolution. I've gotten used to 1Khz per rev on the 1000MP, and really like that. I've ordered a mod from International Radio service Inc in FL which will give me a 2.5 Khz per rev rate when the dial is turned slowly, 10 Khz if turned faster, and 25 khz if turned faster yet. Several guys have told me they really like this mod (tnx W1AY, K3BU, K2RD). (look at the QTH.COM website for details on the tuning upgrade...available for other radios as well)

A Survey of Packet Cluster Use

Don Toman – K2KQ

In the past few months we have seen discussion regarding the YSA packet cluster network. Some users have reported difficulty getting and staying connected. Others have complained about delays, particularly under contest conditions. Still others have complained about unwanted spots while others have expressed a desire to have international spots from multiple sources outside the local area. A wide variety of DX spotting material is now obtainable via the internet either through the telnet protocol, or via web sites. Access to the YSA network via telnet has been developing too slowly for some and a few have reported difficulty getting and staying connected via telnet. We have seen some re-alignment of the rf network and, courtesy of K1TTT, a new open telnet node has appeared.

Some neat software like DXTelnet has appeared, making it easy to use clusters via telnet through the internet, the web via webclusters such as the OH2 sites, or to monitor rf clusters without actually connecting. DXTelnet has also made it easy to bridge internet sources to the rf network, sometimes causing interesting ring-around problems and other unintended effects.

A controversy has erupted over whether or not to let worldwide spots, acquired via internet sources, into the rf network. Proponents say that the worldwide spots are useful, while opponents say that the presence of such spots is neither useful nor wanted, and besides it overloads the rf network, especially during contests. It appears that DXers like the worldwide spots outside of contests and it's divided as to whether the worldwide spots are actually useful during contests.

In a vacuum, the solution to the problems is simply to let everything in, increase the system throughput and add filtering software at the users. Everyone ends up with whatever they want. Since the current rf system operates at 1200 Baud there's plenty of room for improvement. Just run at 9600 Baud on rf or internet speeds via telnet and everything will work great...right?

Ha! Not so simple! The existing installed base gives the system a great deal of inertia and forces downward compatibility. Lots of users would be dragged kicking and screaming away from their 1200 Baud TNCs and radios if forced to 9600 Baud equipment. Some don't have internet access and others do, but don't want to tie up a telephone line. People sometimes refer to this kind of a situation as a *legacy* problem.

(See Packet Survey – p. 7)

(Packet Survey from p. 6)

Other proposals for increasing throughput involve going to different protocols that create less traffic, combined with compression techniques. These proposals, although they keep the rf links at 1200 Baud, generally require everyone to run new and different software.

As the president of the major users' group (YCCC), it's within my responsibility to take care of the YCCC users and to try to keep things running for contests. Besides that, as an old system engineer, I'm really dangerous.

From a systems engineering perspective, we have a classic problem, requiring a specification and a clear set of constraints leading to some alternative solutions that can be evaluated and traded off. Of course, it hardly ever works out that way because the problem is almost always driven by political considerations, but we can pretend...at least as a start.

In an effort to get at the truth, I've put together a survey, based on my own and some solicited ideas. Keep in mind that the objective here is to zero in on requirements and constraints. Solutions will come from an examination of the requirements and constraints...and I can tell you from experience, it won't be easy. It's going to require dialog, patience and a few iterations.

I've put this form out on the reflector as well as here for people who don't use the reflector. Try to keep to the form, as that makes collation easier. I also would like to reach users who are not YCCC people, but that's not primary.

Call sign:

Location/zip code:

Lat/Long and/or Grid :

RF node(s) you use:

Rate the node(s) (1=awful 5=perfect)

Rate your sysop(s): (1=don't know or rotten, 5=perfect, or it's you):

Telnet node (s) you use:

Rate the node(s) (same scale as RF):

Rate your telnet sysop(s), same scale:

The size of your station (1= QRP and wires, 5=big gun):

How computer literate are you? (1=what's a computer?, 5=Bill Gates):

What's the level of the hottest computer you own (1=old dog, 5=500 MHz zinger):

What level of internet access do you have? (1=none, 5=better than 100 kbit/s):

Your packet radio/TNC capability: (1=2Meters/1200 Baud, 5=multiband, multimode):

Your interest in contesting (1=never 5=K1ZM):

Your contributions to CQ WW '99 (1=less than 1M, 5=more than 5M)

Your interest in DXing (1=hardly ever 5=always chasing something):

Your use of Clusters (1=read spots only 5=use all the features)

Your ability to connect and stay connected via rf (1=rotten, 5=perfect):

Do you experience delays in spots? (1=awful, 5=none)

Your ability to connect and stay connected via telnet (if applicable, same scale):

Do you experience delays in spots? (1=awful 5=none)

Are spots from outside N. England useful?(1=negative use 5=useful):

If outside spots didn't slow the network and you could filter as desired, would it change your opinion? (Y/N):

How much are you willing to spend on packet upgrading ? (1=less than \$100, 5=more than \$500):

Willing to serve on an upgrade working group? (1=hell no! 5=I'm a guru):

Willing to be a sysop on a new node to serve your area? (1=no 5=sure):

Get Cracking!

Jeff Briggs – K1ZM

Art, W1RZF, has just informed us that while we had 455 of our Club members eligible for CQWW this Fall - PRIOR TO THE DEC 5th meeting, we have only 198 members eligible for the ARRL DX Tests coming up in Feb and March.

He notes a lack of meeting the (2) meeting ARRL eligibility requirement (this means you MUST have made 2 meetings during the period from 1 April 1999 to 31 March 2000)

And he also notes dues payment is a problem for many members as well.

While I am sure the Dec 5th meeting may have added to our eligibility count, it is time to ****get on the stick here**** - or FRC is gonna clean our clock in ARRL DX this year.

We need at LEAST 300 eligible members to have any kind of chance of winning again this year.

So, the message is clear:

1) Watch this reflector and either attend the next General meeting in Worcester

OR attend one of the many regional meetings that will be announced in these pages between now and March 31st 2000.

(See Get Cracking – p. 8)

(Get Cracking from p. 7)

2) And, this is the EASY part - write a check TODAY payable to YCCC and mail it to KV1W - Club Treasurer - at

Ric Plummer
PO Box 1158
Berlin, MA 01503-2158

Dues are \$15 if you take your BUTT via email and \$20 dollars if you receive paper copies of the Butt via US Mail.

Remember, our BY-LAW change last February did NOT relieve members of the requirement to pay dues - we effectively installed a 24 month grace period only - and if you have not paid in 24 months come ARRL DX score submission time, then you will not be eligible to submit a score for YCCC.

Besides, our awards programs - and our current activities all need ongoing funding to survive. The YCCC Challenge awards program alone cost about \$800 last year to produce.

While our TREASURY may look pretty hefty today, we need to all get on board and support the Club.

If you have not paid your 1999-2000 dues yet, please do so today!

And get to those (2) meetings if you are deficient.

If you don't know for sure, ask your AREA MANAGER or (sorry Charlotte) KQ1F who maintains meticulous records - and can be called upon for a quick verification if necessary. KQ1F can be reached via email at mermaid@underwater.org or KQ1F@underwater.org

73 and KICK BUTT

Northern Vermont Area Meeting

Paul Gayet - AA1SU

There will once again be a Northern Vermont Area Meeting at the 2000 Milton Hamfest to be held on February 26th in Milton, VT. The hamfest is put on by our local club RANV - Radio Amateurs of Northern Vermont. It is still 'The Best Little Hamfest in America', and it is now an ARRL Vermont State Convention.

Our featured guest speaker this year, will be our club President Don Toman K2KQ. Don will give a talk about a number of interesting contesting and YCCC topics, including the Beacon Project.

The hamfest hours are from 8am to 2 pm and admission is

still a whopping \$3.00 (under 18 free).

The YCCC meeting will probably start at 11am, but watch the YCCC web page for the latest updates on all the FUN!

Other fun things to watch for at the hamfest are:

- The Flea Market, with tons of stuff!
- The Dealers, such as Ham Central, Ham Radio Bookstore, and others.
- The Auction, with great VT bargains.
- The Forums, in Digital Modes, Antennas, ARRL, & others.
- The VE Sessions (2) & Commercial Exam Session.

You'all are invited to attend, and encourage new members to join. Last year, several new members joined at this meeting with K1ZM, including yours truly. We may even need some W5YI VE Examiners, if we have a heavy testing load.

Directions and details are available on the RANV web site www.ranv.together.com.

We hope to see you at the first hamfest of the year, up here in Milton, VT. It promises to be a great YCCC meeting and hamfest!

Internet Packet Cluster Access

Ira Stoler – K2RD

As an active contester and DXer living in Fairfield, Connecticut, I am on the relative fringe of coverage of several YCCC nodes via 2-meter RF connections. Unfortunately, on several of the packet frequencies, local hams have chosen to conduct rag chews on simplex FM, disrupting my coverage. In both cases, as I am on the fringe of coverage for these nodes, the principal users are likely not as impacted as I am. I am running a Ringo Ranger at 70 feet and 150 watts on 2 meters and when un-qrm'ed it's ok.

Mike, N2TX, was so kind several months ago to give me an account on his Internet packet bridge node. I operated in the CQWW SSB and CW contests with no disconnects during the whole weekend. Also use the node for access during casual operating. I have monitored Mike's node simultaneously via RF and internet and clearly the spots arrive earlier via internet, sometimes significantly earlier.

(See Internet – p. 9)

(Internet from p. 8)

During the recent contests I have used CT for logging. On SSB we ran a two-station multi with a computer logging each station in a CT serial network. On a third computer (an old 486 laptop with 11MB of memory) during the SSB contest I ran WIN95 and an Internet connection over a 56k phone line connection to my Internet provider (fortunately an untimed local call). On this third computer, I ran Dave Robbins' WinTelnetX. This program lets you cross connect Telnet connections and Com Ports or Ethernet. I simply piped a serial port on my third computer to a serial port on one of the CT logger computers, effectively simulating a TNC and radio. (see figure 1 below) While Dave's program is freeware, there is a program called DXTELENET, available from an Italian ham that costs about \$40 bucks and works similarly, with a few more whistles and bells.

You can get a demo version of DXTELENET at <http://www.qsl.net/wd4ngb/telnet.htm>

You can get WinTelnetX at <http://www.berkshire.net/~robbins/software.html#wintelnetx>

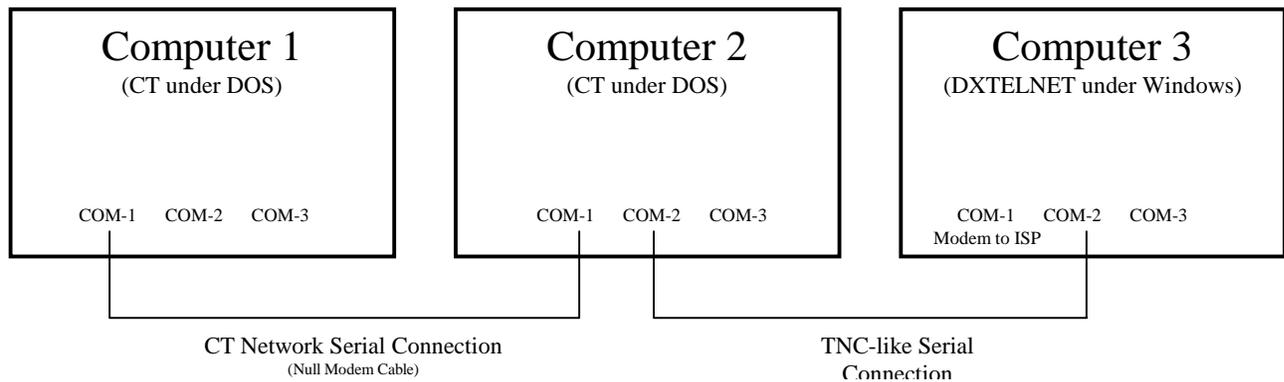


Figure 1.

The connection between the computer running one of these programs and the CT computer is done using a serial cable, including a null modem adapter that crosses the receive and transmit wires between the two computers. An old "Laplink" serial cable would work as well, and is the same cable configuration used to network two computers with CT serial port networking.

Within either of these programs you can write a very short script that will automatically connect you to the packet telnet site and log you in. My script for N2TX adds a few things like SET/HOME N2TX, and SH/DX/30, and SH/WWV to load band maps and assure proper message routing. DXTELENET also does automatic reconnection and transmits "stay alive" messages in case your ISP watches for activity from your end and does automatic disconnections on inactivity.

During the ARRL Ten Meter contest I decided to dabble with Writelog. Since Writelog runs under Windows, it can directly connect to the Internet on the same computer, simplifying the logger/packet arrangement I described above. I'm still getting used to Writelog and will probably use it during the ARRLDX contests coming up, both multi-two on SSB and single op on CW.

So, aside from the logging program issues, in summary, the Internet connection to the packet net has been a lifesaver for me in my location. It solves the low bandwidth / low reliability problems for me. In the 1998CQWW CW contest I lost access to packet because of FM simplex QRM for most of the second day of the test. This approach has eliminated that problem here making for a more reliable and effective station.

(W1 QSL from p. 4)

A few things specific to the W1 Bureau are:

1. The W1 QSL Bureau sells envelope and postage credits, as indicated on the ARRL page. In fact, W1 sorters require that you send money credits rather than SASEs since they are easier to keep track of, postage rate changes are much less of a hassle, and we can use exactly the postage which is needed for your shipment. It is also less expensive for you as no funds are wasted on unnecessary postage. When you send credits, a check payable to W1 QSL BUREAU is fine; send cash at your own risk. The funds are credited to your account, which is then charged 10 cents per envelope used and face value for postage used. **WE DO NOT ACCEPT ENVELOPES OR STAMPS.**

2. Your account is maintained by, and cards shipped from, an individual letter sorter as determined by the first letter following the "1" in your callsign. The individual sorters are literally spread throughout New England. When you send credits or an inquiry, it may be several weeks before your individual letter sorter receives the credits or inquiry. We pick up mail from the Post Office box every 2-4 weeks and distribute sorted cards, credits, inquiries, etc. to the individual sorters every 6-8 weeks. If your mail arrives at the Post Office just after a pickup, it is very likely that it will be 7-8 weeks before your sorter receives it. If he or she sends you a shipment of cards in the meantime, your account status would not show your latest submission; it should appear on the next shipment however.

3. The W1 QSL Bureau sells postage and envelope credits. We charge 10¢ for each envelope and the face value of the actual postage used. There are no fees or profits involved. We are all unpaid volunteers. This charge is made to your account when a shipment is made to you. The small amount made from the sale of the envelopes goes toward defraying the cost of running the bureau. The W1 QSL Bureau also gratefully accepts donations, but these are never required to use the system. If you have any further questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us at the Post Office address given above or by Email to w1qsl@yccc.org.

We hope this information has been helpful!

Prefixes for U.S. Mail

Paul Gayet - AA1SU

I've been doing a little research lately, and I wondered what are the places on this earth where one could send away for a DX QSL card for a mere 33 cents and an SASE? So, I went to the post office and asked them. After obtaining that information, I matched the countries up

with their respective ham radio call sign prefixes, using the RSGB Prefix Guide, and compiled the following list. Included are some earlier prefix call signs. Credit for that goes to AD1C, as I obtained them from his country file for contesting programs. Keep this list handy, because you never know when you might stumble across a country that you need a QSL card for, in a certain band and/or mode.

The term "U.S. Territories and Possessions" comprises the following:

Country	Prefixes
American Samoa:	AH8, KH8, NH8, WH8, some KS6's
Baker & Howland Is:	AH1, KH1, NH1, WH1
Guam:	AH2, KH2, NH2, WH2, KG6ASO
Palmyra & Jarvis Is:	AH5, KH5, NH5, WH5
Johnston Is:	AH3, KH3, NH3, WH3, KJ6BZ
Kingman Reef:	AH5K, KH5K, NH5K, WH5K
Midway Is:	AH4, KH4, NH4, WH4
Navassa Is:	KP1, NP1, WP1
Mariana Is:	AH0, KH0, NH0, WH0, KG6SL
Puerto Rico:	KP3, KP4, NP3, NP4, WP3, WP4
U.S. Virgin Is:	KP2, KV4, NP2, WP2
Wake Is:	AH9, KH9, NH9, WH9

The term "U.S. Freely Associated States" comprises the following:

Country	Prefixes
Marshal Is:	V7, KX6BU
Palau:	KC6, T8
Micronesia:	V6

These are all on the DXCC Countries list and by the way, so is Alaska, Hawaii, and the United States. Here are some other post office rates.

	Canada	Mexico	Other
Post Card	40 cents	35 cents	50 cents
1/2 ounce letter	46 cents	40 cents	60 cents
1 ounce letter	52 cents	46 cents	\$1.00

For most other countries, an IRC is usually needed to get those DXCC QSL cards that you don't want to use the QSL Bureau for. But, for the countries mentioned above, just an SASE will do. Another way to round up cards is to be on the look out for call signs that look like this: VP5/N0AT. VP5 is the Turks & Caicos Islands, but a QSL card could easily be obtained by sending an SASE to the home call of N0AT. Have fun, and I hope that you get to work some of these rare DX Countries before the next postal increase.

YCCC MEMBER ELIGIBILITY

NEED (1) MEETING

NEED (2) MEETINGS

KZ1A	K1KNQ	N1SNB	K2SX	KM1A	W1IX	K1PTF	K1YT
NF1A	KK1L	K1ST	KD2TT	WS1A	WK1J	K1PVT	KA1YTR
			N2TX				
AA1AA	KS1L	AA1SU	N2TX	W1ABC	KA1JJR	N1QMM	WA1ZAM
K1AJ	K1LD	W1SU	N2UN	WA1AES	W1JK	KA1R	K1ZE
N1BB	N1LYA	AB1T	K2VUI	K1AM	N1KB	N1RC	K1ZR
	K1MA						
W1BK	K1MA	K1TEV	K2WE	KB1AWE	KE1KD	W1RE	N1ZRO
W1CC	AA1MY	N1TO	NT2X	W1AZ	K1KP	N1RHY	KE2DX
WC1D	NC1N	W1TO	W2YG	K1BB	N1KRT	K1RU	K2EK
K1EA	N1ND	K1TR	AI3E	W1BHL	K1KRY	K1RWS	KB2HZI
K1EBY	W1NR	K1TTT	KM3T	W1BR	N1KWJ	WB1S	W2II
K1EPJ	K1NU	K1TWF	KU4BP	K1BW	NY1L	K1SM	N2IX
KC1F	K1NYK	WN1V	N8RA	AD1C	W1LRY	N1SMB	K2LUQ
W1FV	K1OA	K1VR	T93M	K1CA	W1LW	N1SOH	NA2M
	W1OJ						
KA1GJ	W1OJ	W1XK	W9WBA	W1CB	KT1M	KA1TAF	K2QNU
K1GQ	N1PGA	WW1Y	N0ICI	N1CC	KZ1M	K1TI	KD2RD
W1GQ	W1QA	K1YR	W0MHK	KA1CI	WS1M	N1TIV	W2RE
N1GS	W1QJ	W1ZK		K1CN	WV1M	W1TJL	K2RPM
K1HI	W1QK	WA1ZYX		W1CWU	K1MD	N1TMG	W2SF
N1HOQ	W1RH	K2AJY		K1DD	N1MD	N1TPY	K2SS
NC1I							
NC1II	N1RJ	AA2DY		N1DS	W1MD	W1TQ	NO2T
K1IK	K1RQ	W2GDJ		K1DX	W1MK	N1TT	WB2UMF
N1IXF	K1RV	WK2H		WW1E	W1MKM	N1TVL	K2UU
WM1K	K1SD	AA2MF		KD1EA	K1MM	K1TXH	N2WR
KD1KI	AA1SI	WT2Q		K1EC	K1MO	N1TZW	KF2XK
				N1EDM	KA1NCN	AB1U	K2YR
				W1EK	W1NG	N1UEQ	N2ZX
				W1EL	W1NHS	N1UJV	K2ZZ
				KE1EO	N1NJ	KA1ULN	W3IQS
				KA1ERF	N1NY	W1UQ	K3UU
				KA1ESR	AK1O	N1UVA	N6BV
				NJ1F	KA1O	WK1V	KI6EZ
				KB1FJ	WK1O	K1VA	AA6PN
				KE1FO	W1OD	KA1VY	K7CTW
				N1GA	W1OG	KB1W	K8LT
				K1GE	AA1ON	KB1WH	N9KAU
				K1GRS	K1OX	W1XF	W0AD
				KB1GW	NU1P	N1XJA	AH0M
				WB1H	WR1P	KC1XX	K0TF
				KD1HN	N1PFC	N1XYU	K0TV
				W1IA	AA1PK	NB1Y	KO0U
				N1IO	W1PL	KA1YED	
				N1IWV	K1PR	K1YL	

Upcoming Area Meetings

Where	When		Contact
Middleboro	Jan 29th	7:30 AM	W1KM
Albany, NY	Jan 29th	6:30 PM	K2XA
Peru, Ma	Jan 30th	12 Noon	K1TTT
Berlin, Ma	Feb 23rd	7:00 PM	KV1W
Milton, VT	Feb 26th	11:00 AM	AA1SU

Upcoming Meetings

Date	Type	Place
Jan 29 (Sat)	Area	Middleboro MA
Jan 29 (Sat)	Area	Albany NY
Jan 30 (Sun)	Area	Peru MA
Feb 6 (Sun)	General	Worcester MA
Feb 23 (Wed)	Area	Berlin MA
Feb 26 (Sat)	Area	Milton VT
Apr 1 (Sat)	General	Worcester MA
Jun 4 (Sun)	General	Worcester MA

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The next general meeting of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club will be held Sunday February 6th,
at 1:00 PM at the Student Union on the campus of Worcester State College in Worcester, MA

The YCCC Scuttlebutt
48 North Avenue
Mendon, MA 01756

FIRST CLASS MAIL