

ROADs REPORT*

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Newsletter of ROADs

JULY 2008

PRESIDENT'S SCREED...

Don't forget our dinner meeting on Thursday. We plan to meet at Speedy's on the west side of the Courthouse Square. Six o'clock and bring someone special.

For those of you who stayed away from the last meeting thinking you could avoid paying dues, we had an election. You can see below how it turned out. I believe it was unanimous. We have some new blood on the board...Doc and ABE volunteered to serve. I believe the board might be working harder this coming year, since things will soon be more interesting with the Fire Department.

I was a bit disappointed in the turnout for Field Day. We got the job done, but could have used some more people showing up. On the upside, has everyone seen the articles in the Statesman Journal? We are "famous". Another article is coming out in the I-O on the ninth with a picture or two.

Always looking for input to the newsletter. Anything you want to see or share with others?

Next ROADs Meeting July 10th, 2008 at 6:00PM at Speedy's

Next VE Session July 12th, 2008 at 9:00AM

We test at the Polk County Court House in Dallas

Check out our web page WWW.W7ORE.COM for details

PRESIDENT	DAVID	KD7VLP
VICE PRESIDENT	BOB	W7LOU
SEC/TREASURER	IRENE	K7IJK
DIRECTOR (1yr)	ABE	K7ABE
DIRECTOR (2yr)	DOC	KX5W

DX COMMENTARY BY KX5W

Considering poor propagation overall we still had some local DXing going on.

Bob, K7QXG reports the following worked in the last month: 3D2A (Fiji); ZM3R (New Zealand); LZ1MS (Bulgaria); UR3HC (Ukraine); SM3NXS (Sweden); DL2DXA (Germany); and V73NS (Micronesia) all on 20 M and New Zealand on

17 M and Japan on 10M.

Bob, W7LOU reported working Japan and Hawaii this month.
Doc, KX5W worked HK1X (Colombia); CU2CR (Portugal); JY9JR (Jordan) on
20M and G4RCG on 30 M.

Announced DX Peditions for July include Micronesia V63WWA; Christmas
Island VK9X; TS1ASC Tunisia--the 28th Arab Scout Jamboree; 7Y46ND
Algeria, celebrating 46 years of independence; and VE2008VQ celebrating the
400th anniversary of the foundation of Quebec City in Canada.

More in next months edition.

QSL, LoTW, Bureau, Direct, Global BY W7QXG

What are these you might ask. If you are a VHF operator and don't stray into the
HF bands, then you have never heard of these. If you spend most of your time on
HF, then you are sure to have encountered one or more of these terms.

All of the above, and more, refer to avenues for confirming a contact with another
station - in other words, a means to QSL the other person. They are properly
called QSL Bureaus, and the first two are electronic centers found on the Internet.

In days gone by, it was a common courtesy to exchange QSL cards
("pasteboards") following a contact with someone, whether in the USA or abroad.
Initially, cards for USA stations and Canada were all sent "Direct". You bought
your postage and then looked up the address of the other station in a big thick
book named a Call Book. It was as thick as a Portland telephone directory.

You would fill in your contact information on the QSL card that you had printed
by a commercial printer, put the stamp on it, and then watched the mail box
everyday for several days to see if you would receive a QSL in return. Most cards
were colorful, and often contained information about the operator or his state.

These cards were extremely important if you planned to apply for the ARRL
Worked All States Award (commonly called WAS), or one of the other prestigious
awards (WAC: Worked All Continents and DXCC for working 100 foreign
countries. It is now issued for working 100 DX entities...(refer to the article by
KX5W for a definition of an entity).

Cards to and from foreign countries usually came through the ARRL DX
Bureau...and reference was often made to this by DX stations when they would
say, "QSL via the bureau" (on CW they would usually spell it "buro" to save time).

The ARRL DX QSL Bureau is alive and well today and is still in use, although not nearly as extensively as eQSL or LoTW (Logbook of the World). More about those two in a moment.

To receive cards from the Bureau, it is necessary to keep some Self-Addressed Stamped-Envelopes (SASE) on file with an organization in your call area that processes the cards arriving from foreign countries. In Oregon that is the Willamette Valley DX Club in Portland. When cards arrive for you, they will be placed in your envelope and mailed to you.

To send cards to foreign countries, you sort them by country, stack them together and hold them in place with a rubber band, and slip them in a 6 x 9 envelope addressed to the ARRL DX Bureau in Newington, CT. Of course you must enclose two important items: Your address label from QST to show you were a member of ARRL and a check for 6 or 7 dollars. It is a darn cheap way to send a big stack of cards to many different foreign countries.

There are better ways to insure that you will receive a card from a good DX catch, and I'll describe them in another article if there is any interest. My return rate was better than 95% once I learned a few tricks of the trade. However, it can get spendy. But, if you want a card from Afghanistan, you will find that it costs a few bucks and you accept that as the cost of getting to your DXCC award.

Today, several organizations have their own mini QSL Bureau... like 10-10 International, the Feld-Hell Club, QRP International, and a few others.

Global is a good QSL service in Israel. You send your QSL data for contacts to them (email or on a disk) and they print up your cards for you and distribute them to various QSL Bureaus around the world. There is a cost involved, but the QSL quality is outstanding.

Electronic "cards" were sure to come along as the computers became prolific and the Internet expanded. The two major competitors are eQSL and LoTW. I could write an entire lengthy article about the two, but will refrain from boring you and confine my remarks to some major points.

LoTW is an ARRL brainchild and is used by many. You must keep a computerized log of all your contacts and every so often you convert that electronic log to a special type file (called a tq8 file). It is uploaded to ARRL's LoTW web site. If the folks you worked, and entered in your log, do the same, the web site will show all these as "confirmations of contact." These are just as valid as a pasteboard QSL when applying for any of ARRL's awards. ARRL DOES NOT recognize confirmations made through eQSL. They want you to use their program.

eQSL is the most popular judging by the statistics. Further, every organization in the world, EXCEPT ARRL, will accept eQSL confirmations when applying for the organization's awards! Again, you must keep a computerized log and upload it to eQSL. You can view your progress on the awards that eQSL issues (similar to ARRL awards), but with some more imaginative ones thrown in to keep your interest piqued, like working 300 or more prefixes.

Significant differences between eQSL and LoTW: It takes 9 steps to upload your log to LoTW. It only takes 3 steps to upload the same log to eQSL. On eQSL you can actually print out the QSL card sent you by the other station. LoTW will not and ARRL has no plans to incorporate that feature in the future.

eQSL is much more user friendly than LoTW, yet many big time contesters and DXers prefer LoTW (perhaps its just an ego thing).

If there were enough interest, a full demonstration of both programs could be made at a future ROADS meeting.

ROADS member KE7JNT began using eQSL and adjusted very quickly. On the first try he found cards waiting for him, including one from Svaalbard Island, a great DX catch!

A bit of radio trivia...

Condenser Peak: In 1947, Lee Port, an employee of the Oregon State Forestry Department was stationed at a lookout tower on Stone Mountain which is located close to Laurel Mountain. He blew a condenser in his radio and Stone Mountain was renamed Condenser Peak to commemorate the event. Sounds a bit improbable to me but then maybe it is so. I saw one note that the lookout tower burned down in 1947. Has anyone been up there?

Until next month (or so)

KD7VLP