

How's DX?

Edited by **Bernie McClenny, W3UR**

A Visit to the W9DXCC Convention

My ultimate destination was Rolling Meadows, Illinois, the site of the W9DXCC convention. The flight from Baltimore to Chicago was running late and I feared that I would miss my ride to the Topband (160-meter) BBQ, one of the premier pre-convention events. The plan was to meet Mike, K9AJ, who would be waiting at the Holiday Inn in Rolling Meadows, and then travel by car for 30 minutes to the home of Jim Jorgensen, K9RJ, our BBQ host. Thankfully, Mike waited patiently for me, with a little help from Ken, K4ZW, Phil, W9IXX, and Bob, W7TSQ.

We arrived at Jim's to discover that he and his wife Ramona had prepared a fantastic spread of delicious food. After getting a quick bite I immediately went into Jim's newly built garage, which was full of what looked like vintage radio equipment in mint condition. Gear was stacked from floor to ceiling. After leaving the "Radio Warehouse" I told Jim how impressed I was. He just laughed and said, "That's the junk!"

There were 35 to 40 people present at the party, some I had met before and some I was meeting for the first time. It was a thrill to see all three of the Battle Creek Special (BCS) gang—George, K8GG, George, W8UVZ and Charlie, W0CD. They had set up a BCS antenna for everyone to see.

Two other attendees had traveled half way around the globe to come to the convention. Watt, JA0DAI, came to talk about the recent XW30/XW30A DXpedition to Laos. Ross, 9M2AX, also attended and was on a world tour, visiting Topbanders along the way. He started in Hawaii and worked his way across the US to Chicago. Many more stops on the East Coast were on his itinerary, including a visit with W3LPL/W3UR! After the US he was scheduled to go on to Europe.

A few chats later I strolled into the house and descended to Jim's basement shack. It was extremely clean and full of even more vintage radios and amplifiers including three Collins KW1s. Someone later told me that only 115 KW1s were ever produced.

After the 160 BBQ we headed back to the hotel and visited the hospitality suite sponsored by the Northern Illinois DX Association. At the suite I ran into Bill



Bob Baird, W9NN (ex 8BTI, 8CWR, 9NN, W9JJ) is a charter member of QCWA, member of FOC and founder of W9DXCC.

Moore, NC1L, ARRL DXCC manager, for the first time.

I was up early the next morning, eager for the start of the 46th annual W9DXCC convention. I enjoyed breakfast with Topband author Jeff Briggs, K1ZM, and then made a swift trip to the forum room to set up. I had never used my laptop and Microsoft PowerPoint during a live presentation, so I was more than a little nervous. Fortunately Allan Elstien, N9AT and Greg Lapin, N9GL, were on hand to help. Everything went smoothly.

As the convention got underway, people were lining up to have their DXCC QSL cards checked by Bill Moore, NC1L. I soon joined them. While I was waiting I had an opportunity to see the Battle Creek Special antenna in its packing crate. It was like looking at a piece of low-band history. Signatures and samples were attached to

Bob White, W1CW, Inducted into the CQ DX Hall of Fame



Ellen, W1YL, and Bob White, W1CW, at the Dayton Crowne Plaza.

During this year's Dayton DX Dinner, which is sponsored by the Southwest Ohio DX Association (SWODXA), it was announced that Bob White, W1CW, had been inducted into the CQ DX Hall of Fame. His wife Ellen, W1YL, son Jim, K4OJ, and some 300 DXers were all present for this induction. (The Western Washington DX Club made the nomination.) Bob was the DXCC Award Manager at ARRL Headquarters from September 1952 through 1976. Then in 1977 he managed the ARRL Outgoing QSL bureau at its infancy until his retirement in late 1978. Congratulations, Bob!



The Battle Creek Special Gang: George Guerin, K8GG, Charlie Dewey, W0CD, and George Taft, W8UVZ.

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Topband DXers Watt Watanabe, JA0DAI, and Jeff Briggs, K1ZM.



Ron Gorski, N9AU, recipient of the 1998 W9DXCC "Hog of the Year" award.

WILLIAM B. SMITH/W9VA

the crate from such operations as 3Y0PI, 3Y5X, VP8SGP and others.

Bill McConnell, N9US, officially opened the convention, substituting as Master of Ceremonies for Jim O'Connell, W9WU. Bill did a great job of entertaining everyone between the presentations. The schedule for the day was packed with DX programs and DXers alike. Some of the highlights included presentations on low-band DXing, the Kachina 505DSP transceiver and the XW30 and H40AA operations.

There were discussions on topics of regional interest such as the 9th area QSL bureau and the Midwest PacketCluster system. ARRL Central Division director Ed Metzger, W9PRN, and vice director Howard Huntington, K9KM, spoke as well.

The banquet that evening was well-attended success. Fred Laun, K3ZO, treated us to a motivating speech. The final speaker was Bob Baird, W9NN, who was one of the chairmen of the first W9DXCC Convention in 1953. As the banquet concluded, many of us drifted upstairs to the hospitality suite sponsored by the Greater Milwaukee DX Association.

I have been to Dayton many times, but this was my first DX convention. I recommend it highly! DX conventions are great places to see the slide shows of past DXpeditions, find out the latest DXCC news and meet your fellow DXers. (A special thanks to Bill, W9VA and Watt, JA0DAI, for supplying the W9DXCC photos in this issue.)

QSLING CHINESE NOVICES

By Fred Laun, K3ZO

When I was in Beijing last year for the IARU Region III Conference, I asked officials of the national radio society (CRSA) whether anyone had ever published the equivalent of a Chinese *Callbook*. I was prepared to photocopy the listings in Mandarin script and paste them on envelopes, writing "China" below the addresses before sending them off in the mail. But the answer was that there was no Chinese *Callbook*, even in Mandarin.

While at the conference I learned that there is a Chinese Novice band between 7050 and 7070 kHz where many Chinese newcomers operate CW, even though that segment is generally

a phone band in that part of the world. Determined to see whether I could work any of these Chinese newcomers on 40 meters, I listened faithfully to that portion of the band after I returned home. Finally, 5 December 1997, I caught a strong opening to Asia on the southwest path and was able to work BD8MA and BG7BF. On 23 December I caught an opening over the North Pole and worked BG0BA in Zone 23; on 28 December I caught BG2QAR over the North Pole, and finally, on 30 December I caught another southwest opening and worked BD7QI. Those were all of the Chinese Novices I managed to work, though I heard two or three others. Since 30 December I have not heard any more Chinese stations in that subband, so I guess December is about the only month where such contacts are possible from the East Coast.

How would I QSL the stations I had worked? The CRSA bureau is only effective in the area around Beijing (BA/BD/BG/BY1-land) since few resources are allotted to the bureau. One Sunday in January there was a knock on my door—Paul Shieh, BV7CG, and his wife were making a surprise visit! During the course of a long conversation I happened to ask if there was a listing of hams in mainland China. He promised to look into the matter as soon as he returned to Taiwan.

About three weeks later a fat envelope arrived from Taiwan and in it was a photocopy of a 25-page list of Chinese stations. Some of the pages were not copied very well, but others were quite clear. Of course, the list was in Mandarin script, but the call signs were shown in Roman type. I was able to locate BG7BF, BD8MA and BD7QI. I photocopied each of their addresses, pasted them on envelopes, writing "China" below, and sent them off. Without too much delay I received QSLs from BG7BF and BD8MA.

The entry for BD7QI was not very clear so I worried that my QSL had not reached him. One day while surfing the Web, I ran into the BG7RK Web Page on QSL.NET and noticed that there was a small listing of BD7, BG7 and BY7 stations, including the address for BD7QI. The listing was useless, however, because my browser couldn't handle Chinese fonts!

My tenant, Jirasak, N6CZG, who is originally from Thailand and knows a lot about the Web and about that part of the world, found a Chinese font set and we downloaded it. With my *L-View Pro* graphics/imaging program I "captured" the resulting page and made a JPEG image out of it, which my printer reproduced easily. I sent another card to BD7QI using this method and got his QSL back without much delay. He had also received my first QSL.

That left BG2QAR and BG0BA, neither of which appeared in the list I had received from BV7CG. While looking through the Web pages on QSL.NET I found a very nice site maintained

PERSONAL AMATEUR RADIO STATION OF CHINA										
BG7BF										
EX 181712V Since 1996										
GL: DL 6614V CQ ZONE 24 ITU ZONE 44										
TO RADIO	K ³ ZO	FREQ	CFM	OUR	QSO	UR	REPORT			
DAY	MONTH	YEAR	UTC	MHZ	MODE	RST	QSL			
5	12	1997	1200	7	CW	577	✓			
FIG FT SOC 12W ANT [MDP] 13LE YAGI 25MI WX 20/10/17 5/2 E										
RMKS										
TNX FB QSO 731 091 78-132										
QTH 249 YANFENG ROAD HENGYANG HUNAN 421001 P.R.CHINA										
地址 中國湖南省衡陽市城南區雁峰路 249 號 郵編 421001 TEL: 0734-8227237										

Even Chinese Novice DXers enjoy receiving QSL cards!

by the radio club at BY2HIT. So, since they are in the second call district in China, I asked them if they happened to know the address for BG2QAR. I got a very quick reply with BG2QAR's address in Western script. I sent the QSL and received a response in short order.

Only BG0BA remained. I sent an e-mail message to BA1SS, one of the CRSA officials I had met in Beijing, but all he could give me was the address of BY0AA, which is the regional club for that area. I sent a QSL to BG0BA via BY0AA, but never received a reply. One day, while exchanging e-mail messages with BA4TB, I asked whether he might be able to help me with the address for BG0BA. He replied that he could get me the address of any Chinese station I needed. Within a couple of days he sent an e-mail message with BG0BA's address in Roman script and attached a BMP file with BG0BA's address in Chinese. I printed out the latter, pasted it on an envelope, and sent it. Today I received BG0BA's QSL in reply, with two photos along with a nice letter in both Chinese and English. My QSL was the first he had ever received from a station outside of China. He was running 10 W when we worked. I had put him on the Cluster when I found his signal, and both K2WS and NO2R had worked him right after me.

It just goes to show that where there's a will, there's a way! Now I have to get to work on sending QSLs to BG9BA, BG5WJC and BG6JW, Chinese Novice stations that I've worked on 15 meters (between 21.110 and 21.150 MHz).

WRAP UP

That's it for this month's issue. If you have any DX news or pictures, please feel free to send them to me. Seasons greetings and I hope each of you work lots of new ones in 1999. Until next month, see you in the pileups!—Bernie, W3UR

QST