

## THE AURORA

On 3/30, there was a MAJOR aurora seen throughout the US. Following are reports from DXers. (\*\* via NRC reflector)

**\*\*Harry Helms** – Ridgecrest CA: What a geomagnetic storm we must be having---a bright red aurora with some green is about 40 degrees above the northern horizon here in southern California at 2230 PST!

**\*\*Russ Edmunds** – Blue Bell PA: According to all of the geomagnetic info sites, we are. Of course here in the east, we've been socked in with clouds and rain and will be into Tuesday....

**\*\*Kevin Redding** – Mesa AZ: It was awfully strange to look out at the sky here in Mesa, Arizona and see the sky light up in the north as red. I have seen it in Rhode Island on rare occasion but to see it in Mesa is testament of how huge this storm must be.

**\*\*Randy Stewart** – Springfield MO: Whatever effect it had on the night sky in certain parts of the continent, conditions were just slightly disturbed when I checked around 8 or 9pm local time last night... just enough to make for overall ho-hum, lousy reception no matter what your target might be. I'll be interested to see what it's like tonight.

**\*\*John Callarman** – Krum TX: My results about the same as Randy's here in north Texas. Did get a sufficient null on WGN to find KSAH alone, with its top-of-the-hour ID in English at 2316 EST. Nothing unusual on the Mexican suspect frequencies. "Radio Habana Cuba" slogan noted in passing on 670.

**Richard Toebe** – Davis CA: Hope everyone had a chance to see the aurora last night; we had a red sky to the north. I went out to look right after I turned on Art Bell at 10pm PLT and he talked about the visuals he was getting near Las Vegas, his exact words were, "get your butt outside and take a look at this, this may be a once in a lifetime event!"

KGA-1510, KOMO-1000, CKNW-730, etc were completely missing from the dial. Too bad I was too tired to stay up to DX, c'est la vie!

**\*\*David Hochfelder** – : Wow, what a fun ride! Came home Friday night, wanted to see what the band looked like. Turned out there was a phenomenal opening to the south. The opening appeared to start around 2330. Checked on WGN 720 and heard it fine, then moved up to 780; WBBM wasn't there at 2355 and Spanish was instead. In the course of the next two hours, it became apparent that all the 50KW regulars, as far south as Charleston, SC, were simply gone. Then, around 0155, all the domestic 50KW's came back in.

Here's what I heard down the dial. Confirmed new logging and highlight of night was Antigua. Also a Colombian and Cuban but unsure of outlets, and great possibilities to try for later. Hopefully tonight.

650 Colombia, Bogota. 0009. WSM very weak and unusually nullable. Spanish, presumed Colombia from logging last week in similar conditions.

720 Jamaica, RJR, Kingston. 0002-0006. Also heard last week, so presumed it. WGN now not present.

750 Venezuela, R. Caracas Radio. 0012. Strong Spanish under a subdued WSB Atlanta. Presumed from logging in Dec. 2000 (on a Superadio 3)

780 UNID.2355-0000. Actually better on 780.2 with sync. Detection because of splash from WABC 770. Strong Spanish signal, fair audio. Checked to see if it paralleled Ecos del Torbes SW outlet on 4980, but nothing there. WWV on 5000 was weak as well. Id appreciate some help on this one. I also heard this one last week but couldn't ID it.

810 UNID.0006. Possibly two Spanish stations here. Bad copy on one, other occasionally topped a subdued WGY Schenectady, but had poor audio. Male announcer, flute music.

850 Cuba. 0015. "RR" in Morse code. Possibly something else in Spanish, but I didn't stick around.

870 LA, New Orleans, WWL. 0020. Great reception.

900 UNID. 0030-0040. Two Spanish stations, one with female announcer. Moved on.

940 Canada, Montreal, CINW. 0106. A non-logging. Just simply not there. Nothing intelligible on channel.

1000 Colombia, UNID. 0108-0113. Better on 999.8 to avoid WINS splash. Frequent mentions of Colombia and Colombianos, but not sure which outlet. Im guessing RCN Cartagena on the basis of WRTH 2000.

1100 Antigua, ZDK, St.Johns. 0040-0104. Light reggae type music with English accented female announcer. At 0104 ID'd as "Radio ZDK St. Johns" with jingle. Possibly Spanish underneath but not sure. WTAM Cleveland and WBT Charleston both gone, so I stuck on this channel for awhile hoping to get this one, based on Rick Kenneally's recent logging. Checking back at 0158-0200 showed that Cleveland was back in with a strong signal and "Coast to Coast" and TOH ID. That's when I decided that the ride was over and it was time to write up the log. And go to bed.

1500 UNID. 0123-0130. Spanish with steel drum music. Strong with great audio. WRTH has a bunch of 1-10KW stations in Central and South America, so this one is a mystery. WTOP Washington, DC not present. Suggestions?

1520 UNID. 0121. Spanish under a much subdued WWKB Buffalo.

1530 OH, Cincinnati, WSAI. 0122. Another non-logging; just simply not there. Nothing intelligible on channel.

1540 Bahamas, Nassau, ZNS1. 0130-0149. Strongly presumed. KXEL Waterloo and WPTR Albany both gone. Soft reggae music with steel drums. At 0149 it faded out and at 0155 WPTR replaced it.

**\*\*Rick Kenneally** - Wilton, CT: Great receptions! I tuned in much later and just had hash everywhere. UNID SS on 1070 and 1090 while the clears were gone, but that was it. Everything else after midnight was noise.

**\*\*Bruce Conti** – Nashua NH: Not much in the way of Latin American reception here last night. In fact, with the midwest signals subdued many of the Canadian Maritime stations were stronger than usual. CBN on 640, CHCM on 740, CFDR on 780, CHRL on 910, and CKBW on 1000 were exceptionally strong all night. (CKBW was playing pop/urban contemporary music, a format change from C&W?) It was definitely auroral though as transatlantic reception was shut down. Auroral conditions became more evident by local sunrise as Mexico was local-like on 900 and 940 kHz, along with good signals from Radio Mil 1000 and Radio Educacion 1060 kHz.

I also had an UNID station on 730 with the Country Oldies Show last night, mostly under CKAC. Any ideas?

A snowstorm Thursday night, rain Friday night, and continued rain and snow through the weekend here mean that I won't get a chance to view the spectacular aurora. WBZ Newsradio 1030 reported today that police and emergency services down south have been flooded with UFO reports from people that saw the weird lights in the night sky.

**\*\*Mike Brooker** – Toronto ON: Conditions were brutal last night. Even the blowtorch Cuban on 890 was knocked out. All I could hear was noise and local groundwave. The extent of my DX was WECK-1230 Cheektowaga (Buffalo), NY after midnight EST on groundwave. I usually only hear WECK during the daytime. After sunset they would be buried in the hundreds of graveyard skywaves.

**Nigel Pimblett** – Medicine Hat AB: Interesting. Up here, of course, the aurora isn't all that rare, but the red color was certainly something out of the ordinary. DX-wise, the biggest effect here seemed to be the complete lack of CA stations. Even KNX and KFI were inaudible. On 1070 KFDI in Kansas was dominating all evening. A couple of Cubans were doing well, especially the one on 890, but the Mexicans weren't as good as I often get them under auroral conditions. The aurora did net me one new one, Pagosa Springs CO on 1400.

**\*\*Bob Carter**: I'm loving this.....finally some night-time coverage without much interference locally! I've noted hearing Norfolk's WTAR AM 850 here at night...which most of the time it is just under the noise floor. The AM band sounds like an early winter afternoon here

tonight....nothing to strong...and a lot of weak stuff. I had to make a run to the station tonight ..not only for the time change, but a little early spring thunder storm knocked me off the air. In my 5 minute ride to the station, the usual hussle from WFIL and the station in Columbia SC that normally bounces in here when I'm down...well 560 sounded very quiet with something way in the background. Can we arrange more of these solar flares?....its nice not to have to deal with the religious bad engineer sounding stuff from the north and red neck talk from the south!

**\*\*John Callarman** – Krum TX: Finally was able to get away from distractions ... Final Four, company, genealogy, and the urge to sound off ... and tuned the dial for a couple of hours. It hadn't been exciting Thursday or Friday nights when I tuned in, but there were some unusual signals tonight ... unfortunately, most went unidentified ... as some of the channels seemed to be Mexican graveyard frequencies.

I was particularly interested in 1100, where there was no sign of Cleveland, and the Arizona station wasn't much of a problem. At least two Spanish speakers were heard, but I couldn't bring anyone up ... did hear one mention something that sounded like "programa fin de la semana" at 0500 UCT, but it went into the mud. There appeared also to be a het that read 1099.5, but by 0601 had disappeared. Local announcer was talking informally about several upcoming events or programs ... at 0603 "La Paranda de Fin de Semana" appeared to be ad for some kind of event ... then short announcement from which call letters XETGO could clearly be picked out, then followed the Mexican National Anthem and station left the air at 0605. Thus, the pipeline from Zacatecas to Krum continues.

There were some weak signals on 1020, including one I was finally able to bring up at 0548 with a female vocal, accompanied simply by guitar and trumpet. Man at 0550:30 mentioned what sounded like "el programa aquaviva" as announcer (or preacher) talked of mail received from several places in Mexico, including Merida, Yucatan, Rio Grande and somewhere in Zacatecas. It appeared the program originated in Guadalajara, Jalisco, and was religious in nature. The announcer/preacher said "Gloria, Gloria, Alleluia" at 0553:50, then vocal group with rancho style accompaniment sang "Gloria, Gloria, Alleluia, Querido Salvador" to the tune of the Battle Hymn of the Republic. The same man continued to talk from 0555 to 0559:40, gave address of Apartado uno something, Guadalajara, Jalisco, just before fading into oblivion. Unidentified, drat.

There was a hashy noise on some of the frequencies, but I was able to pick out a few slogans which led me to believe I had a couple of stations I haven't taped before. At 0514:30, slow nortena style female vocal ended on 1070, heard odd-voiced male announcer (at least, not the typical Mexican station locutor) mention "La Nortena de ..." two and a half minutes of talk of some kind and definitely picked out "La Nortena de Obregon" shortly before a female began to talk. Must have been XEOBS.

Had fairly good signal on 1010, which usually is a jumble, and at 0529:40 there was a quick announcement between songs "Diez Diez AM, La ...." and machine gun sound; I'll have to check tape but I suspect it was La Poderosa, ZEHL, Guadalajara.

Found poetic narrative in Spanish by man with group vocal in background, then in foreground, on 930, well atop and alone, at 0533 ... and I hoped for something different from what has become the only Mexican I can hear on this frequency, the one in Fresnillo, Zacatecas. At 0534, the romantic song ended, a female announcer said simply, merely, clearly and only "XEQS" before the next song began, dashing my hopes for something new on this channel.

**Powell E. Way III** (4/1): It seemed like the AM band was almost dead here last night except for everything south coming in [including lots of static from the severe thunderstorms caused by the front stalled across central Florida..] WCOS 1400 normally is at the maximum night distance at my house. Just less than 1/4 mile down US 1 toward Lexington and they are gone. BUT last night I got them an ADDITIONAL 15 miles down I-20!! WLAC was a whisper and 1500 and 1530 were just totally silent as were most of the stations I hear well that are north of me. WBT was TOTALLY groundwave reception!! I went out to Fairview (the I-20 / US 178 exit) to see if I could see the aurora...nope. I piddled with the radio and came back

and took a pain pill. I had double hernia surgery Monday so I'm still sore and fade out (is that a selective fade) quickly.

**\*\*Mark Connelly** – MA (4/2): I noted rather average MW conditions when I listened Sunday night (1 APR) around 11.30 p.m. EDT. Strong WJR Detroit on 760 with no evidence of Latin Americans, CKLW-800 challenging local WCCM, WLS tangling with local WBPS-890, WMVP/CKBW on 1000, etc. The only domestic channels that seemed sub-par were from 1100 (where Cleveland was weaker than usual) up to 1180 (where WHAM was a bit on the weak side, allowing some Cuba to sneak by). I was unimpressed as I'd thought (given all the talk about auroral activity) that even at my mediocre home QTH, I'd have a few Latin Americans to DX. Maybe I'm just spoiled by the DX sessions I used to have on Cape Cod where some Latin American DX could be had any night whether it was auroral or not.

**\*\*Benjamin Dangerfield** – Wallingford PA: Aurora type reception is better tonight and seems to cover the entire band. The 1000's and 1100's are full of SS stations and the 1500's sound like nulls. ZNS-1540 is going great guns while Bermuda-1280 has been in and out with WADO with religious programs. As usual, the dominant 780 is Radio Coro, Venezuela. Lots of strong Cubans [including 1331] and several Colombians very good. Dominican Rep. atop 860 at times. No TAs except maybe a weak 684.