

January 25, 2003 - Volume 40, Number 19 - Edition 1276 - ISSN 899-9733

Publishers Note

Welcome to new member **Greg Mattson** of Richmond, British Columbia! -RT

DX Tests

PLEASE NOTE: Even if you don't hear a test, be sure to contact the station, and thank them for going to the trouble to run a test! Please remember, what's listed as being on, say, Monday morning "may" be what you think of as Sunday night! (Test times are in the station's LOCAL time.)

Sunday, February 2, 2003 - WBMJ-1190, San Juan, PR and WIVV-1370, Vieques, PR will conduct a DX test from 12:00-2:00 am AST (11:00pm-1am EST). This test will be run simultaneously on both stations. At 11:59 pm AST, the stations will come out of a youth program - "Life on the Edge" - and then run a minute of DX information, including Morse code IDs. Then the stations will return to their regular programming from the Moody Broadcasting Network. The same procedure will be repeated at 12:59 am AST and 1:59 am AST. WBMJ will be broadcasting at 5 kW; WIVV at 1 kW. Reception reports (with return postage) may be sent to:

Bert Johnson
Operations Manager
WBMJ Radio/WIVV Radio
P.O. Box 367000
San Juan, PR 00936-7000
E-MAIL: bjohnson@cem-wbmj.org
(Arranged for the IRCA CPC)

Sunday, February 2, 2003 - CHWO-740, Toronto, ON, Canada will conduct a DX test from 12:30 - 01:30 am EST [0530 to 0630 UTC]. At 12:30 am EST, the station will have a voice and Morse code ID and will repeat same every 15 minutes until 0130 am EST. The station will have continuous music between each ID. Songs that will be played include:

Colonel Bogey March - Mitch Miller
Beer Barrel Polka - Andrew Sisters
Spin, Spin - Gordon Lightfoot
California Here I Come - Al Jolson

St. Louis Blues March - Glenn Miller
Ricochet Romance - Teresa Brewer
Something To Sing About - The Travellers
The Battle of New Orleans - Jimmy Driftwood

Reception reports and / or tapes may be sent to:

Brian Smith
QSL Manager AM 740
Box 161, Willowdale Stn A
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M2N 5S8
E-MAIL: am740@rogers.com



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(All reports will be passed onto the station engineer.)

If you try for (or hear) any of these tests, PLEASE post a message letting me know, and please, drop the station personnel a note, via e-mail or snail mail, thanking them for running the test!

Lynn (ircamember@ircaonline.org)

Seattle Get-together Presidents Day Weekend

Bruce Portzer sends word: "Hello Everyone-- It's time for my annual DX Get-together. This year it will be on Saturday, February 15, beginning at 2 p.m. Here's a chance to meet other radio listeners and talk about hobby stuff - medium wave, SWBC, utility, TV/FM, or whatever flavor of listening you like to do.

"Feel free to bring stuff like receivers, QSL cards, antennas, and other paraphernalia to show off or demonstrate. Please bring a potluck snack or something to drink. At dinner time, we'll pass the hat around and order some pizzas.

"My address is 6546 19th Avenue N.E. in Seattle. It's not hard to find, since the streets are numbered and parallel around here. But if you need directions, let me know.

"If you have questions or want to RSVP, my phone number is 206-522-2521. See you there.

2003 IRCA Convention Announcement

The **2003 International Radio Club of America convention** will be held on June 27-29 at the *Best Western Merry Manor Inn*, 700 Main Street, South Portland, Maine 04106. Phone number for reservations is 207-774-6151. Mention the IRCA convention rate of \$69 per night. This rate is good for your entire stay during or beyond the convention. The hotel is located near shopping, restaurants, radio stations, tourist attractions, the Portland Jetport, Greyhound bus station, Amtrak, and much more. Registration fee is \$35, payable to host **Mike Sanburn**, KG6LJU. We will be officially welcoming the radio club "Decalomania" as well. Their website is www.anarc.org/decal/. On the agenda are activities including station tours, the official business meeting, prize drawings, a guest speaker, the Saturday night Banquet, with the famous Auction following! The hotel can be viewed at www.seenewengland.com/merrymanor. Tourist info can be found at www.visitportland.com.

If you've been to one of our conventions in the past, or if you are a first-timer, this is an event that is not to be missed. It is the 40th annual IRCA convention, but it is the first time that it has ever been held in New England. Specific questions can be directed to **Mike Sanburn** at mikesanburn@hotmail.com or P.O. Box 1256, Bellflower CA 90707-1256.

A registration form will soon be inserted into *DX Monitor*, but plan now to be there!

WESTERN DX ROUNDUP

Editor: *Nancy Johnson - 265 Waterton Way - Billings, MT 59102 - 7755*
E-mail: NancyJohnson@prodigy.net

WDXR DEADLINES: Each Friday. Please use Eastern Time.

REPORTERS FOR THIS ISSUE:

- (AB) Art Blair-507 Canyon Terrace Lane-Folsom, CA 95630 artngwen@calweb.com
NRD-515 and Kiwa loop
- (GJ) Gary Jackson-7735 Center Parkway-Sacramento, CA 95823
- (DKK) Don Kaskey-San Francisco, CA kaskeyfamily@yahoo.com
Drake R8A, Kiwa loop

- (PM) Patrick Martin-P.O. Box 843-Seaside, OR 97138-0843 mwdxer@webtv.net
Drake R8, 400' NNW wire term.
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Drake R8A
- (DP) Doug Pifer-3410 Marion St. SE-Albany, OR 97321 oregon4wd@attbi.com
Drake R8B, Kiwa loop
- (RW) Robert Wien-801 East Alosta Avenue Apt. G-1000-Azusa, CA 91702-2748
Wienbob@aol.com
GE Superadio 2 and 3, Select-A-Tenna

OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- 710 KMIA AZ, Black Canyon City 1/13 0335 fair under/over KSPN with ID "Radio Mia," Spanish music. Call change, ex-KUET. KSPN's signal is only so-so here, AZ gives them a ride! (RW-CA)
- 1340 KTPI CA, Mojave 1/13 0500 fair on top with C&W, ID "KTPI, Mojave-Tehachapi" into network news. Call change, ex-KAVC for me. (RW-CA)
- 1670 KHPY CA, Moreno Valley 1/16 1956 noted with Glen Campbell's "Wichita Lineman" totally alone in KNRO's null. 1959:30 gave ID and made the announcement that this was their first day of broadcasting. Also noted that they would be dropping power at 2000 and to tune back at 7am PST for return to full power. Went to and ad for "Penny Saver" and at 2001 singing ID "KHPY Moreno Valley 1670," into an oldies song I didn't know. Easily nulled from KNRO. Cut power at 2002 but signal remained good for a few minutes more before lessening, still alone in KNRO null at 2008. Thought it would be harder to dig out from KNRO. (DKK-CA)

- 580 KIDO ID, Nampa-Boise 1/2 1715 "Timesaver Traffic on KIDO" then talk. (BN-CO)
- 630 KF XD ID, Boise 1/1 1718 "Great Country AM 630 KF XD" over KHOW. (BN-CO)
- 680 KKGR MT, Helena 1/17 1605 poor to good, "Good times and great oldies, 68 KGR" into Dusty Springfield song. (DP-OR)
- 710 KSPN CA, Pasadena 1/13 0340 usual fair signal over/under KMIA with sports, ID "Sports Radio 710, KSPN." Frequency change, ex-1110. (RW-CA)
- 750 KFQD AK, Anchorage 1/13 good at S9+ 15DB with talk and net spots, then at 0759:45 "Stay informed, stay tuned to AM 7-50 KFQD Anchorage. When you miss an hour, you've missed a whole lot." network news followed. Best heard in a while, totally on top of KXL-Portland. (PM-OR)
- 830 KUYO WY, Evansville 1/17 1555 poor with religious programming with letters read and phone numbers given. McDonalds ad, ID at 1559, time check and weather. (DP-OR)
- 860 KARS NM, Belen 1/13 0325 strong in XEMO null over unID's with ID "From our radio, to yours, this is AM 860, KARS, from the heart of New Mexico," C&W music. New from Azusa, think they only run 150 watts or so nights! Surprise logging. (RW-CA)
- 920 KPSI CA, Palm Springs 1/15 1945-1958 man doing ads & promos and mention of SoCal phone numbers. At 1958 noted "Here on KPSI" ending one of the ad segments, then went into sports talk about upcoming Raiders-Titans football game. Signal held in well thru KNEW-910 slop and virtually no KLOC until 1657 and was buried by 1658. First time "I've heard this station since Jan. 1982 when it was KDES..." Heard again 1/16 1932 1956+ with talk show mixing with KBAD Las Vegas. After 1945 their signal was in fine until about 1956. Several KPSI mentions and minor KNEW-910 slop. (DKK-CA)
- KBAD NV, Las Vegas 1/16 1932-1945 with ESPN Sports Radio mixing with KPSI CA who had a local talk show. 1941 had ads with many mentions of Las Vegas. Lost at 1945. Last time heard was in June of 1984 as KORK. (DKK-CA)
- 940 KICE OR, Bend 1/2 1700 "KICE is home of OSU sports" into Paul Harvey. (BN-CO)

- 950 KAH1 CA, Auburn 1/2 1755 ID popped up under KKFN for rarely heard one. (BN-CO)
- 1110 KDIS CA, Los Angeles 1/13 0400 good signal with ID hour "Radio Disney AM 1110, KDIS, Los Angeles." Frequency change, ex-710. (RW-CA)
- 1270 KBAM WA, Longview 1/17 1750 fair with ad for Red Lobster followed by ID "Real Country AM 1270 K-BAM." (DP-OR)
- 1310 KNPT OR, Newport 1/17 1810 good with ad about the Coasters and Drifters playing at the Chinook Winds Casino in Newport this weekend. (DP-OR)
- 1390 KLG N UT, Logan 1/16 0908 "Memories 13-90 KLG N" then Frank Sinatra tune "My Way." Huge signal with 1380-KTKZ slop. (AB-CA)
- 1400 KKZZ CA, Santa Paula 1/12 0838 "Blue Bayou" sung by Linda Ronstadt, KKZZ ID at 0840. Good. (AB-CA)
- 1420 KMOG AZ, Payson 1/13 0341 good over XEXX with KMOG weather forecast, ID "That's KMOG weather." (RW-CA)
- KGNB TX, New Braunfels 1/15 0834 gal with KGNB ID, into sports, and gone. New, TX #10. (AB-CA)
- 1460 KIQN CO, Colorado Springs 1/15 0748 CNN news with Robin Meade (sigh), man with ID at 0753. Fair to poor. (AB-CA)
- 1480 KAVA CO, Pueblo now using KBNO programming with frequent "KBueno" IDs and giving KAVA-KXRE-KBNO calls on the hour. 1/5 1657 with football. (BN-CO)
- 1550 KVAN WA, Vancouver now is 10/12kw U2. Compared signal today and it was a hair stronger than 1520-KKSN. KVAN is a bit closer. Not a big change from 10kw, but some difference. The powerhouses from Portland KPAM-860 and KXL-750 are still 6 or 8 DB stronger being lower frequencies. But, with 50kw ND days, KVAN might be a good possibility for the DX'ers in the east. Usual talk format. Noted at 1700 on 1/11. (PM-OR)
- 1640 KPBC OR, Lake Oswego 1/17 0757 man with talk about religious freedom. Fair to poor mixing and under KBJA and KDIA at 0800. (AB-CA)
- 1650 KBJD CO, Denver now using "K-News" slogan with talk. (BN-CO)
- 1670 KNRO CA, Redding 1/8 0300-0400 audio muffled but signal still strong. Must still be having problems with signal. (GJ-CA)

UNID

- 1400 1/13 0350 unID good on top briefly with ID "Fox Sports Radio AM 1400." Visalia? (RW-CA)

Thanks to our reporters this week! Nancy 1/17 2100

2002-2003 IRCA DX CONTEST

Manager: Nancy Johnson -265 Waterton Way- Billings, MT 59102-7755
E-mail: NancyJohnson@prodigy.net

Standings as of January 15, 2003

1. Bill Nittler	313	7. Nigel Pimblett	114
2. Paul Swearingen	279	8. Nancy Johnson*	97
3. Pete Taylor	206	9. John C. Johnson	35
4. David Braun	193	10. Dale Park	14
5. Doug Pifer	186	11. Mike Sanburn	5
6. John Tudenham	150		

* Contest manager is not eligible to win.

You can join this year's contest at any time. The rules are on the IRCA web site, and in *DX Monitor*, Volume 39 Number 35, dated August 31, 2002. Then send your entries in to me at the address above!

CENTRAL DX ROUNDUP

Editor: John C. Johnson

E-mail: John_Johnson@prodigy.net CDXR reports ONLY: cdxr@prodigy.net

RIDING GAIN

[NJ-MT] **Nancy Johnson**, Billings, MT
NancyJohnson@prodigy.net
Drake R8B, Kiwa loop.

[JJR-WI] **John J. Rieger**, South Milwaukee, WI
JohnJRieger@webtv.net
http://DX-midAmerica.com
http://DXMW.com
Icom IC-R75, Kiwa loop, GE Superadio III, Terk AM 1000 loop.

DOWN THE DIAL

- 640 CFOB ON, Fort Frances. 1-12 poor. Noted with a 5 second tape loop telling to tune to "B983FM at 93.1" as 640 is leaving the air. New! [JJR-WI]
- 710 KMIA AZ, Black Canyon City. 1-17 good. 21:58 with SS format. [NJ-MT]
- WNFR VA, Blacksburg. 1-18 poor. 07:43 with Sporting News Radio, spots, calls. Was looking for KXMR who also air SNR. [JJR-WI]
- WTPR TN, Paris. 1-18 poor. 07:46 at fade up with "Oldies 101.5 and 7-10 WTPR" into spots. [JJR-WI]
- WUFF GA, Eastman. 1-13 poor, but steady in WOR null. 18:02 with "FM 97 wolf radio" slogan into spots. Country music. [JJR-WI]
- 750 CKJH SK, Melfort. 1-12 poor in WSB null. 07:06 with Provincial weather, temps, hockey scores, and "Just The Hits CK 7-50" slogan. [JJR-WI]
- 910 WSUI IA, Iowa City. 1-18 poor, alone. 07:00 with legal ID, NPR. [JJR-WI]
- 880 CKLQ MB, Brandon. 1-12 poor in WCBS null. 07:38 with "8-80 CKLQ" and country music. [JJR-WI]
- 1080 KVNI ID, Coeur d'Alene. 1-13 poor with KOTK. 11:47 with ID, promo for basketball games on "AM 10-80 KVNI." [NJ-MT]
- 1160 WKCM KY, Hawesville. 1-18 poor, on top. 07:23 with three spots for Owensboro and western KY weather." [JJR-WI]
- 1180 WZQZ GA, Trion Summerville. 1-13 poor. 21:00 with legal ID, NOS format. Daytimer on late and still on when checked the next morning! [JJR-WI]
- 1210 KNWX WA, Auburn. 1-13 good through KZTS with traffic report. "...radio station 12-10 KNWX." EX-KBSG. [NJ-MT]
- 1320 WPTJ868WI, Milwaukee. 1-18 poor, but this messes up 1320 here. Mitchell International Airport TIS with 4 minute loop. [JJR-WI]
- 1570 WPTW OH, Piqua. 1-12 poor in mess. 20:44 with "15-70 WPTW." [JJR-WI]
- 1600 WZZW WV, Milton. 1-12 poor. 08:00 with dual legal ID with WTCR-1420 into Sunday religious show. [JJR-WI]

25 YEARS AGO

January 21, 1978 issue of IRCA's "DX Monitor" ... **Father Jack Pejza** of Modesto, CA told about his Christmas vacation to Guaymas, Sonora ... **Paul W. Petersky** of Seattle, WA rejoined after absent for 5 years due to college ... **Paul A. LaFreniere** of Grand Marais, MN had PJB coming in like a local with no sign of CKLW ... **Robert Wien** of San Jose, CA logged CFRB-1010 for his first from ON ... **Tom Jasinski** of Shorewood, IL changed his address.

OPEN MIKE

Remember, you can still join this year's DX contest! This column was typed 1-18-03. 73, John

DX WORLDWIDE – WEST / TROPICAL BAND DX

Editor: Patrick Martin – P.O. Box 843 – Seaside OR 97138

E-mail: mwdxer@webtv.net all times UTC

PAN-AMERICAN DX ROUNDUP

- 540 **MEXICO**, Los Mochis, Sin. XEHS 1/18 1353 on top of channel with multiple mentions of "La Nortenita" faded under XESURF, but rebounded on the hour with clear XEHS ID, mention of "Radio Sisema del Noroeste". New, fourth Mexican heard on 540 from this location. (RT-CA) (*good going Rich. PM*)
- 800 **MEXICO**, Tijuana, BCN XEMMM 1/18 1430 in strongly with local ads mentioning San Diego, including Pacific Nissan; "ESPN 800" slogan, back into ESPN programming. No calls heard. New from Davis. (RT-CA) (*Thanks for the update on this. PM*)

THANKS TO THIS REPORTER

(RT-CA) **RICH TOEBE**, Davis CA
<richtoebe@jps.net>
Sony ICF-2010

DX WORLDWIDE - EAST

Editor: Brandon Jordan – 4920 Park Ave. – Memphis, TN 38117

E-mail: bjordan@bcdx.org all times UTC

*** TRANSPACIFIC DX ***

- 1098 **MARSHALL IS** Majuro (p) 10/27 - 1007-1118 instrumental music, 11/5 1125 soft voiced woman, 12/22 1102 big carrier, no audio. This is the most consistent TP carrier month after month. Many times seems to be only open carrier. Tentative ID based on direction finding and program content noted in previous years. [MooreFL]
- 1475 **SABAH** Kota Kinabalu (p) - Great expectations were raised on 8/28 and 8/29 with HUGE carrier. Again on 9/23 1056 and 10/13 1111. No audio due to high noise level. No significant carrier since. Nine direction finding bearings averaged 335 deg vs 330 deg true, typical skewing for signals grazing the edge of the auroral zone. [Moore-FL]
- 1575 **THAILAND** VOA Bangkok - Best reception ever 1/6 with VOA Burmese service 1146-1200 parallel to 9890 kHz (Sri Lanka), 1200-1205 fade out music and woman in unknown language. Finally got tape of top of hour announcement, "This program comes to you from the Voice of America" when station went silent, carrier still on, while 9890 kHz continued with the Yankee Doodle theme and then cut their carrier. 1575 kHz went on to the new program. Also produced audio 1/2 1152-1207, 1/1 1201-1204, 12/25 1142-1154. This station comes in directly over the pole and is reminiscent of the Urumchi, China, station which was often heard in the East around sunset in the 1960's and '70's on 1525 (later 1521) kHz. These stations often come in when the ionosphere is disturbed and nothing else is heard, while signals from the Far East which skirt the auroral zone (Japan, Sabah) usually need prolonged periods of ionospheric quiet. [Moore-FL]
- 1611 **AUSTRALIA** (p) JAN 10 1136-1208 - fair carrier peaked briefly at 1202 with man speaking. Too weak to determine language or accent. This is a frequency to watch as it seems to have the strongest signal of the expanded band Aussies and the noise level is comparatively low. [Moore-FL]

*** CONTRIBUTORS ***

[**Moore-FL**] = Raymond Moore, FL. Equipment: Homebrew receiver, R8, R1000, Comdel preamp, 23" spiral MW loop, 23" SW loop

Thanks for the great loggings Raymond! 73, Brandon

GEOMAGNETIC INDICES

Editor: Phil Bytheway

E-mail: phil_tekno@yahoo.com

Geomagnetic Summary December 31 2002 through January 20 2003
Tabulated from email status daily.

Date	Flux	A	K	Space Wx Today	Space Wx Forecast	Etc.
12/31	115	6	1	no storms	no storms	1
1/ 1	115	8	2	no storms	no storms	6
2	118	8	2	no storms	no storms	6
3	138	15	3	no storms	no storms	7
4	143	12	2	no storms	no storms	5
5	148	6	2	no storms	no storms	6
6	162	6	2	no storms	no storms	7
7	163	8	2	minor	minor	6
8	174	6	1	minor	minor	6
9	183	5	2	minor	minor	6
10	185	12	3	no storms	minor	8
11	189	9	3	no storms	minor	7
12	173	10	3	no storms	minor	7
13	172	8	2	no storms	no storms	7
14	164	9	1	no storms	no storms	6
15	150	6	2	no storms	no storms	6
16	145	5	1	no storms	no storms	7
17	142	9	2	no storms	no storms	5
18	137	13	3	no storms	no storms	7
19	130	17	3	no storms	no storms	6
1/20	138	16	2	minor	no storms	6

NEW 2002 VERSION! The IRCA Mexican Log 8th Edition



lists all AM stations in Mexico by frequency, including call letters, state, city, day/night power, slogans, schedule in UTC/GMT, formats, networks and notes. The call letter index gives call, frequency, city and state. The city index (listed by state, then city) includes frequency, call and day/night power. The log has been completely updated from the 2001 edition and carefully cross-checked by several IRCA members. **This is an indispensable reference for anyone who hears Mexican radio stations.** Size is 8 1/2" x 11" and three hole punched for easy binding. **Prices:** IRCA/NRC members - \$9.50 (US/Canada/Mexico/sea mail), \$10.50 (rest of the Americas airmail), \$11.00 (Europe/Asia airmail), \$11.50 (Australia/New Zealand airmail). Non-members: add \$2.50 to the above prices.



To order the **IRCA Mexican Log** from the **IRCA Bookstore**, send the correct amount (in US funds payable to **Phil Bytheway**) to:

IRCA BOOKSTORE, 9705 MARY NW, SEATTLE WA 98117-2334

Emerging Techniques of High-Tech Dxpeditioning
Part 2

Guy Atkins
Puyallup, WA

John H. Bryant
Eastsound, WA

Nick Hall-Patch
Victoria, BC

Don Nelson
Beaverton, OR

January 2003

(ed. note: this article was first published at : www.dxing.info/articles/hitech_dx and www.hard-core-dx.com/nordicdx/dxlab/hitechdx/hitechdx.html
Possibly better graphic reproduction as well as sound files may be found at those sites. A small portion of this article is repeated from last week in the interests of better continuity.)

SEMI-AUTOMATED RECEPTION LOGGING:

B-LOG, A Logging program for the rest of us!

There have been automated logging programs available for radio hobbyists almost since the inception of the PC. Although many of us had tried such software over the years, none of the Grayland regulars had permanently adopted logging software until about two years ago, when Guy Atkins introduced us to "B-LOG." This oddly named freeware is one of the simplest and yet most flexible logging software that any of us had seen. Besides being quite easy to use, even for two-fingered typists, B-LOG can output loggings to the Windows Clipboard (and thus to other software) in any number of formats. It comes preconfigured to output Shortwave Broadcast loggings by country and then by frequency while, almost simultaneously, outputting MW loggings in "by frequency" format. You can also design any number of customized output formats of your own. Lastly, B-LOG is searchable and sortable in many different ways. Although virtually all of the Grayland regulars now use B-LOG,

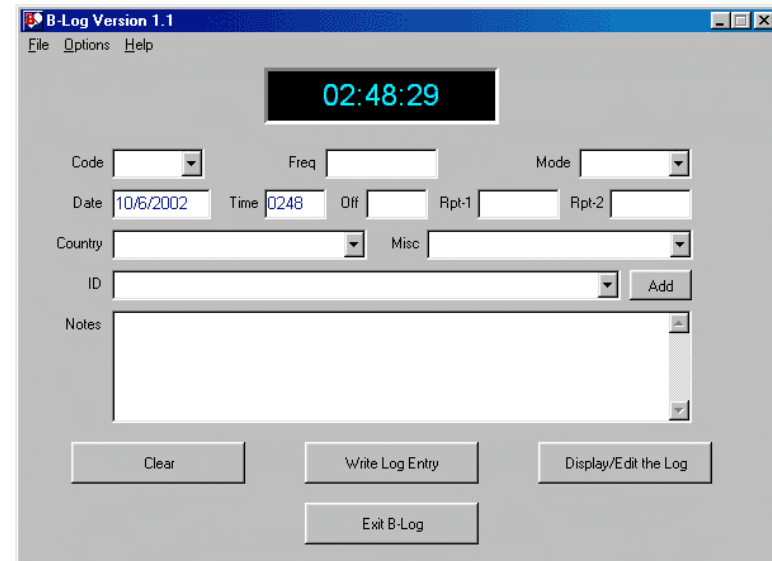


Figure 1. The main window of B-Log is used for station data entry. Some of the more repetitive data may be entered from pull down menus.

again it is used in a wide variety of ways. Several of us have entirely eliminated the spiral notebook and stub pencil that have served us so well for so long. The more conservative of us still keep a rough log (and doodle) while the DX is rolling in but transfer and expand those notes in B-LOG immediately after the close of the DX session. Why? It makes reporting to the clubs and to the 'Net incredibly easy and it creates a VERY searchable long-term record log for future reference.

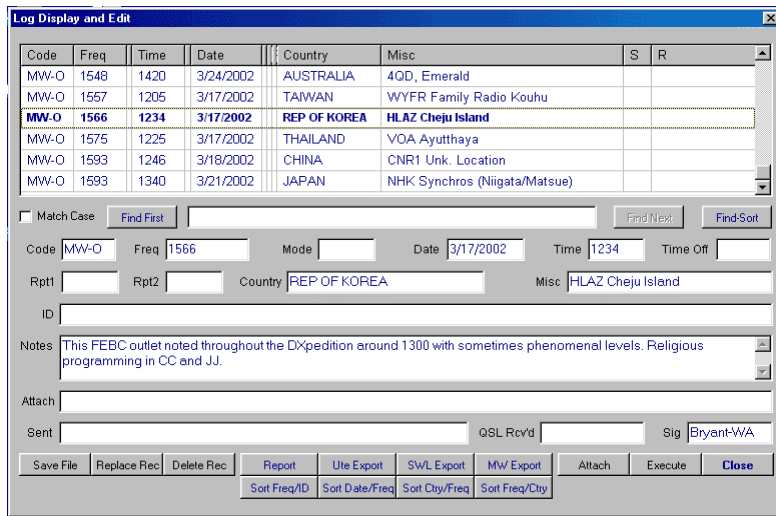


Figure 2. The second B-LOG window is used for editing and output. One can output selected loggings to the Windows Clipboard and thence to other programs (e-mail, etc) in a number of pre-defined formats or in custom formats designed by the individual DXer.

Probably the biggest factor that led many of us to adopt B-LOG was its ease of use. If you, like several of us, must go months between DX sessions, B-LOG is so intuitive that – once set up - it may be used with very little secondary learning curve. We are collectively proud of this software because Guy Atkins assisted the designer in tweaking it for SWBC and MW DXing.

Features

- ?? Freeware for Win95/98, WinME, and Win2000 PC's. Should run on WinNT systems. Requires at least 800 x 600 pixel monitor resolution.
- ?? UTC clock display, with time obtained from your operating system. There is no need to set your time zone with this program.
- ?? Supports either mm/dd/yyyy or dd/mm/yyyy date formats, and automatically adapts to systems configured to display frequencies as either "14313.5" or "14313.5"
- ?? 14 fields plus a service or activity code field let you tailor B-Log to your every logging need. The design supports multiple styles of logging in the same log file.
- ?? You can attach a file, audio recording, or enter a URL for each log entry. One button click either opens the file or connects you to the URL.

- ?? QSL tracking: fields are provided to record reception reports sent and QSL cards received.
- ?? B-Log remembers all your Code, Mode, and Country entries. When creating a new log entry, you can either enter new data into these fields or pick from a list of your previous entries.
- ?? Configurable display grid. You can adjust column widths and column ordering, tailoring your log summary perfectly to your requirements.
- ?? Powerful search features and enhanced sorting make it a snap to find and organize your log data. You can sort on any column or use the four special-purpose sorts.
- ?? B-Log automatically generates publishable listings in the formats preferred by utility monitors, shortwave broadcast DXers, and mediumwave DXers. The listings are generated to file and to a preview screen. You can copy the formatted listings to the clipboard for effortless transfer into an email, a Usenet posting, or into your word processor.
- ?? A report generator lets you export log information in just about any tabular format you prefer or require. You can save report setups.
- ?? The log file is formatted as a tab-delimited text file for simple, solid export into any spreadsheet or database program.

The export controls are arguably the most useful features of B-Log for the attendees of the Grayland DXpeditions. We find it greatly simplifies the process of sorting and formatting loggings for submission to club bulletins, electronic newsletters, and other publications. The UTE Export, SWL Export and MW Export formats are useful right "out of the box". If a special layout or sequence of loggings information is needed, it is a simple matter to rearrange the data and save the format for reuse in the future.

B-LOG is available as freeware from author Tom Lackamp (callsign AB9B, hence the program name). Tom also is author of *Scan 320*, a versatile PC-control package for the Ten-Tec RX-320.: <http://www.qsl.net/ab9b/freeware/B-Log.html>

THE LAPTOP AS A "TAPE RECORDER"

Second only to his primary radio, some form of tape recorder has been the DXers most prized possession throughout the modern era of the hobby. For many of the Graylanders, that began to change about five years ago when Guy Atkins introduced us to the MiniDisc format from Japan. At the time, none of these devices were sold retail in this country and we had to have them imported from Japan. That soon changed and a number of us transitioned to that re-writable digital format in the late 1990s. For the past several years, there have been a wide array of MiniDisc recorders at Grayland... from rack-mounted professional decks to tiny recorders with a footprint that is hardly larger than two commemorative postage stamps. The advantages of MiniDisc over traditional cassettes were numerous... much greater fidelity, much more compact size of both recorders and media, more permanent storage, more flexible editing, etc. Today, about half of the Grayland regulars use MiniDisc recorders.

The MiniDisc format was the state of the art for the all of the Grayland crowd until about 2 years ago. Several of us began independently experimenting with recording directly on our hard drives and eliminating the need for a separate recording device altogether. Looking back on it, it seems that recording directly on hard drives had to await the availability/affordability of two pieces of hardware: relatively high capacity hard drives and on-board CD-R drives for burning CDs. We probably also waited until there was a range of recording software from which to choose.

The advantages of recording directly on your hard drive are numerous, of course. For John Bryant who now travels a lot, eliminating one piece of gear (the tape recorder) to be lugged from place to place was a large motivator, as was the fact that his DXing position at home is quite small. Getting rid of the separate recording device at home gives John much needed desk space. Others of us like the fact that, with the right software, one may edit and enhance a digital DX recording with any one of more than a dozen audio editing programs.

Those of us who send reception reports have, in the past, often sent cassette tapes of the reception along to the station. With our new laptop-based recording techniques, most of the hassle and extra mailing expense of that approach is eliminated by simply burning a CD of the reception and sending that along with the report in an unpadded envelope. We were originally worried that some stations, particularly in the tropical hinterlands, might not yet have CD players. John Bryant's Indonesian students assured him that even the small county stations would at least have home entertainment level CD players. They did suggest, however, that the files be burned on the CD as a "music CD" rather than as mp3 or wav data files. Happily, one of the choices in most CD burning software is "Make a Music CD." If you select that option, the software will convert your sound file to standard music CD format, automatically. Editing sound recordings on your hard drive is so easy that some of us send along two tracks: Track one is a short clip of the most intelligible portion of the reception or the ID or interval signal, etc. Track two is the full recording of the catch.

There are many other advantages to recording DX directly on the hard drive. Many of us now send short clips of catches to each other afterwards via e-mail or we forward clips of unidentified stations to DXers more familiar with the language or geographical region of the probable stations. Others of us have found that assembling collections of sound clips of various catches or even arranging entire archives of DX catches is immeasurably easier when working digitally rather than with analog tapes.

The one issue about using a laptop as a recorder which is still somewhat in flux is just which recording software is "best." Most of us have owned and used either Music Match Jukebox or Media Jukebox, the two recorders/players/media library managers that are the current state of the art among the on-line digital music crowd. Some of us have used one or the other of these recorders when DXing. Several of the rest of us have found those two programs just too complex and all-powerful for our tastes. Each is a wonderful program, but the learning curve (at least for the codgers among us) is quite steep and one that must be relearned after a DXing hiatus.

The current recording software-of-choice amongst the codgers is Total Recorder. Don Nelson showed us this marvelously simple software about 18 months ago. It was perfect for the Old Codgers among us because it did everything that we, as DXers, needed and little that we did not. The main interface (see below) is arranged to emulate the symbols on a cassette tape deck and operation is quite intuitive. I don't think that anyone of us has yet to read the manual about anything except recording parameters (mp3, wav, etc.) We all started out using various iterations of Version 3 of Total Recorder, however, Version 4 has just been released and the authors have maintained its ease of use.

An added benefit of using your computer as a "tape recorder" is that it greatly simplifies "hands off" DXing. Several of the main recording programs have subroutines that support "Timed" or "Scheduled" recordings: the ability to have the computer turn on the recording program and record whatever is present in the sound card at a specified time and then shut down at a second specified time. None of the Schedule functions that we have used is terribly difficult to program. However, again, programming Total Recorder's scheduling function is incredibly simple. Some North American DXers are using Total Recorder on a regular basis at home to record the 10 minutes at the top of the hour, each hour of the night. They then tune their receiver to a frequency of interest and let the machinery do the work. Total Recorder's design as a playback device is also particularly well suited to scanning lengthy recordings quickly.



Figure 3. Main window of Total Recorder. One of the nicest features of TR is the fact that, during playback, one can "grab" the slider bar (lower center) and reposition it to any portion of the recording. A second very nice feature is the ease at which smaller clips may be defined during playback and then saved as separate recordings in any audio format desired.

You should note that neither Total Recorder nor any of the other virtual recorders about which we know does continuous time-stamping like several of the MD recorders do. There are running indications (in minutes and seconds) of how far you are into the recording, as well as its total play-back length. If you allow Total Recorder to save the recording *automatically*, the default title is the time and date of the end of the recording. The lack of absolute date-stamping does not seem to be much of a problem in practice.

(ed. note: upon reading this article on the Web, Guido Schotmans suggested using ReCall-PRO, a piece of recording software available at www.sagebrush.com/, which allows continual time and date stamping of .wav files, as well as the addition of text annotation)

It is possible to record two receivers simultaneously using the Left and Right channels on your sound card. Most mp3 compression standards have surprisingly good isolation of the two channels.

Total Recorder Version 4 Standard Edition is available at <http://www.highcriteria.com/> as a downloadable file for under \$12.00 USD. The more capable 4.0 Professional Version is available at the same site for \$24 as an upgrade to the Standard Edition for about \$24 USD or as a totally new purchase for about \$35.00 USD. Please note that either program may be downloaded as a trial version first. If you are unsure of the usefulness of this simple tool, you might want to begin with the very inexpensive yet powerful Standard Version (it's what cheapskate Bryant uses - and loves - currently.)

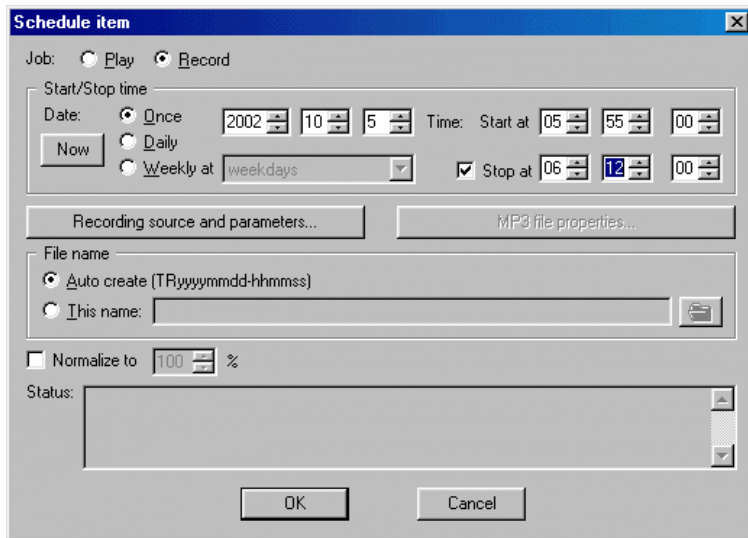


Figure 4. The window which is used to set-up a timed recording operation. Note that very little keyboard input is necessary.

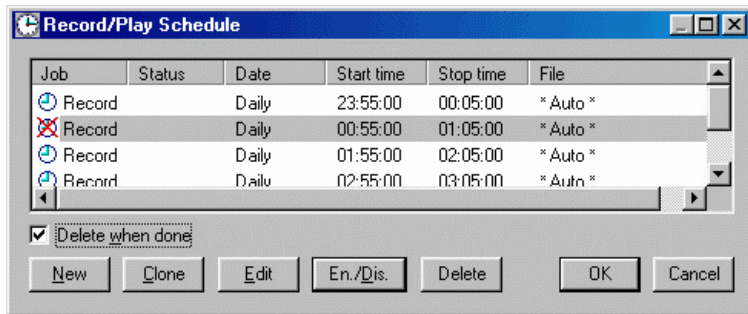


Figure 5. This window is used to manage multiple timed recording operations. No keyboard operations are required to Enable/Disable or Edit various individual timed recording sessions. The Clone function is quite useful when establishing repetitive timed recordings.

THE AMAZING SLOW DOWNER

Why do many announcers adopt either a rapid-fire delivery or seem to be eating marshmallows by the mouthful just in time for station identification? Wouldn't it be great if we could reach through the radio and throttle the poor announcer, telling him sternly: *say that one more time... s-l-o-w-l-y and c-l-e-a-r-l-y!*

An easy-to-use PC & Macintosh program out of Sweden gives us this ability, with no harm done to station personnel. Typically called music transcription software, this sort of program is known to musicians as an aid to learning music by listening to, and practicing at a slower pace. Slowing or "time-stretching" music is nothing new, but keeping the pitch from changing at the same time is a feature easily done in our digital age.

The amusingly titled "Amazing Slow Downer" is a very quick to learn program which allows time-stretching (-50 to +400%) and optionally pitch variation (+/- 12 semi-tones) of any WAV or nearly any MP3 file.

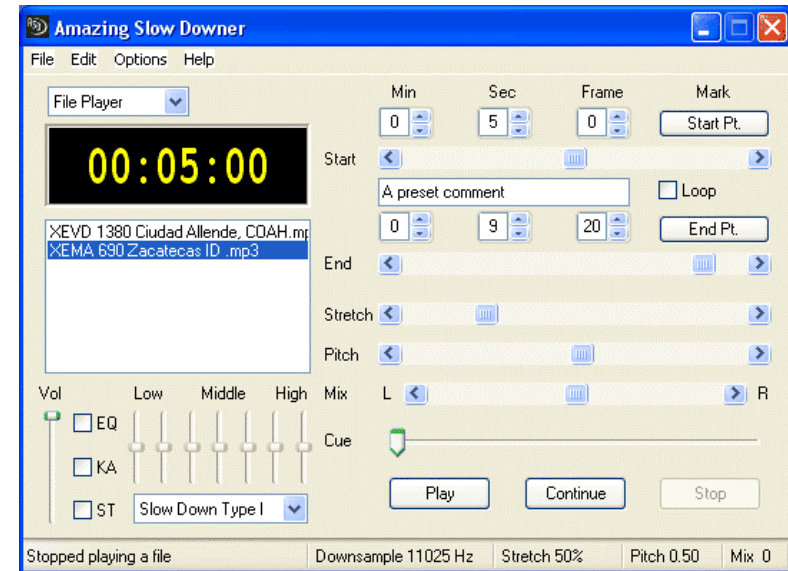


Figure 8. Main Panel of the "Amazing Slow Downer"

Such a wide latitude in time-stretching and pitch change is rarely needed though. The authors found that time-stretch values between 30% and 100% and pitch changes from 0.00 to 0.80 are the most commonly used. Figures in these ranges are normally sufficient to raise a DX recording's intelligibility to a level where an ID or slogan can be comprehended. The benefit to slowing down an audio clip is easily understood, but the ability to adjust pitch is equally useful. Male announcers with deep voices can be "adjusted" to a higher-pitched, "female" sounding level on an as-needed basis. Likewise, those of us who find a deeper tone more intelligible can tweak a squeaky female voice to replicate the sound of a drunken Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Additionally, the Amazing Slow Downer provides simple controls for marking the beginning and end points of important segments of your recording, and the ability to repeatedly loop through that segment. You can even save this marked segment to a new WAV file, complete with the time-stretching and pitch-change effects. (Saving or resaving as a MP3 requires other conversion software.) There is also a builtin 7-band graphic equalizer that's useful for a quick boost or cut of frequencies to aid in voice recognition.

Medium wave DX audio samples from John Bryant's collection illustrating the effect Amazing Slow Downer can have on DX station IDs may be found at: <http://www3.telus.net/7dxr/hitechdx/963cri.mp3> (original clip with Chinese and Russian IDs) and <http://www3.telus.net/7dxr/hitechdx/mod963cri.mp3> (Modified audio with 50% stretch, +0.80 pitch change, equalizer, and isolated IDs ("Zhongguo guoji Guangbo Diantj" and "Govorit Mezhunarodnaya Radio Kitaya") or

<http://www3.telus.net/7dxr/hitechdx/1380xevd.mp3> (Original clip with "XEVD" slightly in background, spoken by a male announcer at the 2-second mark, and concluding by 5 seconds into the recording) and http://www3.telus.net/7dxr/hitechdx/mod_1380xevd.mp3 (Modified audio with 100% stretch, +1.00 pitch change, isolated ID ("EkKeesAy Bay Day"))

The Amazing Slow Downer is priced at \$39.95 US, and the demo version provides a 30day trial period with a limitation of only being able to process the first 25% of a WAV or MP3 file. When used with CD audio, the demo version will process just the first two tracks of a CD. More information is given at the author's web site: <http://www.ronimusic.com>, including MP3/WAV limitations, suggestions for use (musicrelated), and links to other programs including an older version of Amazing Slow Downer which is meant for older, slower computers.

DIRECT RECEIVER CONTROL WITH A LAPTOP

Controlling a communications receiver with a laptop computer is not new. Our collective experience began over a decade ago with the McKay-Dymek DR-333. Simple DOS programs controlled that first "black-box receiver." With one McKay-Dymek software program, the DXer could control the 333 with interactive graphics, though rather awkwardly; or one could control it entirely in an alpha-numeric environment with the keyboard by using the other operating program provided by MD. This latter program also included an auto-logging function that would record all receiver parameters and the time automatically with the operator simply inputting station identification and miscellaneous notes. The log could then be accessed at any time (as a database) and used to retune the receiver. Since the DR 333 and these programs were developed just before the advent of the Windows platform, both DR-333 operating programs leave a lot to be desired by modern standards.

In the past decade, receiver-operating programs have matured tremendously and now fall into two distinct categories. First, there are a number of operating programs that are designed for a single receiver model, by the manufacturer or by interested third parties. Secondly, there are a number of "after-market" receiver control programs that have been developed, usually by computer professionals, for sale to the hobby community. These after-market programs can usually be configured to operate any one of several modern receiver models and are often quite sophisticated, offering the operator many options and capabilities.

Receiver control programs dedicated to a single receiver have been developed for all of the modern receivers which are easily controllable. Naturally, these vary widely in capability and availability. Many are available at web sites which are dedicated to that particular receiver. For instance, John Bryant recently purchased a Ten Tec RX-320 "black box receiver" to use as his second set. Although Ten Tec provides quite adequate control software with the receiver, several hobbyists have also developed their own software and made it available throughout the hobby world. After test driving the freeware programs available, John adopted GNRX320 written by German DXer Gerd Niephaus. The GNRX320 software is runs under Windows 95 and above, is very resource friendly, and allows the user to wring the last ounce of DX out of this marvelous little radio. GNRX320 also allows use of the ILG and Klengenfuss databases to auto-tune the receiver or to provide context-sensitive reference material. John is particularly pleased that the Niephaus software allows the receiver to be tuned using the mouse scroll wheel. The GNRX320 program and most of the other control programs for the RX320 are available on a dedicated RX-320 web-page at: (<http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/Lab/5137/rx320.html>)

There are also quite a number of operating programs that have been developed by computer-literate hobbyists for their own particular receiver and which are not widely available to others. Some of these programs, like the one developed by our own Chuck Hutton for his Drake R-8A, are quite sophisticated.

Publisher's note: this article will continue next week.

Sunrise/Sunset Maps 12 maps showing 15 minute sunset and sunrise times for the US and 12 maps showing hourly sunset and sunrise times for the World. Explanation includes use of the maps and examples of DX made possible by knowledge of SR/SS times. Prices: IRCA/NRC members - \$2.25 (US/Canada/Mexico/sea mail), \$2.75 (rest of the Americas airmail), \$3.00 (Europe/Asia airmail), \$3.50 (Australia/New Zealand airmail). Non-members: add \$1.00 to the above prices.

An Introduction to Broadcast Band DXing

This tri-folded brochure is ideal for explaining the Broadcast Band DXing hobby and the IRCA. It can be included with reception reports and given to other interested folks. Sub topics include: What is DXing?, Broadcasting's early years, The first DXers, Clubs helped listeners share, Our hobby today and DX clubs still unite listeners. It is two color printed on heavystock. Price is \$0.35/brochure (US and Canada), \$1.00 (rest of the world). Minimum order is 10. To order, send the correct amount (in US funds payable to **Phil Bytheway**) to:

IRCA BOOKSTORE, 9705 MARY NW, SEATTLE WA 98117-2334

The IRCA is a non-profit organization devoted to the hobby of hearing distant stations on the Broadcast Band (510-1720 kHz). **DX Monitor**, the official publication of the IRCA, is published in "soft" form 40 times a year (weekly from September to April, twice monthly from May to August) and in printed form 35 times a year (weekly September to April, monthly May to August). **DX Monitor** contains members' loggings, articles on radio stations, receiver reviews, technical articles, DX tips, and other material of interest to Broadcast Band DX hobbyists. IRCA is a member of ANARC, the Association of North American Radio Clubs.



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