



January 10, 2009 - Volume 46, Number 17 - Edition 1459 - ISSN 899-9733

Nominations Are Open for the TVA and RHA Awards for 2008-2009

Ted Vasilopoulos Award (TVA)

Ted Vasilopoulos was a charter member of IRCA who died in 1965, and was known for his high DX standards and contributions to the club. This award in his honor is presented to the IRCA member who has contributed the most to IRCA and the DX hobby during the past several years. The following persons have won the TVA in the last five years and are ineligible this year: **Patrick Martin, Nick Hall-Patch, Lee Freshwater, Doug Pifer, and Phil Bytheway.**

Ric Heald Award (RHA)

Ric Heald was an enthusiastic IRCA volunteer and contributor. In 1995, after his passing, the RHA was created to recognize the IRCA member who most benefited the club in a particularly noteworthy way during the previous year. The following persons have won the RHA in the last three years and are ineligible this year: **Dan Riordan, Lynn Holterman, and Les Rayburn.**

All nominations, including a brief statement supporting the nomination, should be sent to the folks listed below:

TVA Nominations: Patrick Martin, PO Box 843, Seaside OR 97138. E-mail: mwdxer@webtv.net
RHA Nominations: Dan Riordan, 23858 SW Warbler Place, Sherwood, OR 97140. E-mail: DanRiordan@verizon.net

All nominations must be received by the above no later than **February 1, 2009.**

Nominations for the IRCA 2009 Elections

IRCA members, it is time to think about who you would like to represent you as the next club President, Secretary-Treasurer and Board of Directors. Their term will start on September 15th, 2009 per the IRCA Constitution, Article II, Section 5, Part 2.

Nominations are now open for President, Secretary-Treasurer, and seven members of the Board of Directors from December 1st, 2008 through **January 15th, 2009.** Only one nomination each for President, Secretary-Treasurer, and only seven nominations for the Board, shall be allowed each IRCA member. An eligible member may nominate his or herself. All nominations must be submitted in written form to the ECC by January 15th.

IRCA's Election Committee Chairman (ECC) is **Nick Hall-Patch**, who can be contacted via email at: nhp@ieee.org or by mail: 1538 Amphion St., Victoria, BC, Canada V8R4Z6 (7zc in stamps for Canada)

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DX TEST - BROADCAST TEST COORDINATOR

Jim Pogue, PO Box 3777, Memphis TN 38173-0777

E-mail: KH2AR@comcast.net (times are Eastern)

<http://www.dxtests.info>

Sun 1/18/09 0200-0300 1240 WOON Woonsocket RI (ABDX/Rogers)

WOON 1240 kHz Woonsocket RI DX Test

ABDX presents the first DX test of the season.

Thank you to Jay Rogers for running a DX test at WOON 1240 kHz in Woonsocket, RI. This test will run Sunday morning January 18 from 0200-0300 ET/0700-0800 UTC. WOON 1240 is mono running 1 kW NDA.

You can send your reports to Dave Richards via e-mail or regular mail. WOON/1240, 985 Park Ave, Woonsocket, RI 02895-6332, USA.

E-mail: dave@onworldwide.com (note: use the station callsign as the subject line so it's not disregarded as spam).

The DX test will consist of: --Morse Code ID, --Voice announcement about it being a test broadcast, --Morse Code ID, --WOON Radio Jingle, (sung) "O-N Radio... in Woonsocket". These four elements will repeat, in that order, for 60 minutes from 2:00-3:00 EST on 1/18/09.

Audio clips sent to the station will not be required but will be appreciated. While supplies last, a bumper sticker will be included with the QSL.

A special thank you to Jay, **Ron Gitschier** and others who made this test possible.

Kevin Redding, ABDX List owner, and all the people at ABDX who made this possible!

CANADIAN RADIO NEWS

Dan Sys- dsysca@yahoo.ca

For December 2008 (January 1 2009 - next update February 1 2009)

NEW STATIONS ON THE AIR

1650 ON Mississauga CINA South Asian (Seena)
 600 BC Vancouver CKBD Simulcast of the new CKPK 100.5 (The Peak) came to an end on December 31 despite the fact they were authorized to do so until mid-February.

AM TO FM CONVERSIONS GRANTED

850 AB Athabasca CKBA Move to 94.1 with 9,000 watts (format will remain Classic Hits)

TECHNICAL CHANGES GRANTED

930 AB Edmonton CJCA Relocate transmitter
 1040 BC Vancouver CKST Relocate transmitter
 1380 ON Brantford CKPC Change authorized contours eastward (no longer required to protect CKLC 1380 Kingston which has flipped to FM)

DENIALS

830 AB Wainwright CKKY Move to 101.9 with 100,000 watts (denied due to common ownership policy; signal would overlap into Lloydminster where Newcap has an existing FM facility)

PROPOSED AM TO FM CONVERSIONS

900 NS Amherst CKDH Move to 101.7 with 18,700 watts (40,000 watts Max. ERP) (amends previous application to move to 107.9)

CALLS FOR APPLICATIONS

The CRTC has received applications for new commercial stations in Cochrane, ON and Iroquois Falls, ON. Other interested parties wishing to obtain a radio license in these cities are invited to submit applications. However the CRTC will also conduct a study during this process to determine whether these two markets are financially viable to support new commercial facilities.

I attempt to be as accurate as possible with this information. I visit many websites and message boards on a daily basis seeking the latest in Canadian radio news to report in this column. I trust this information to be worthy; however I can't be in all these places to confirm everything, if inaccurate information is reported I do apologize, but don't blame me... I'm only the messenger.

WESTERN DX ROUNDUP

Nancy Johnson - 265 Waterton Wy - Billings MT 59102-7755

E-mail: NancyJohnson@prodigy.net

WDXR DEADLINES: Each Friday. Please use Eastern Time.

REPORTERS FOR THIS ISSUE:

- (AB) **Art Blair**-730 SW 3rd St.-Fruitland, ID 83619
 NRD-515, Kiwa loop
 Drake R8, EWE (20x50x20)
- (BB) **Bill Block**-7716 E. Theima Drive-Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 billwblock@msn.com
- (GH) **Glen Hansen**-1925 Tualatin St.-St. Helens, OR skinner@columbia-center.org
 Drake R8B, R-388, TMC GPR-90, Hammarlund SP-600, various wires, amplified Sanserino & Terk Advantage loop
- (CM) **Curtis McMenamin**-153 Calle Tepic-Vacaville, CA 95687-6530 Funkiecurtis@juno.com
 Sony ICF-2010, Kiwa loop, Quantum QX V2.0 loop
- (MS) **Mike Sanburn**-P.O. Box 1256-Bellflower, CA mikesanburn@hotmail.com
 GE Superadio II, Sony M40W
- (DV) **Dennis Vroom**-Salmon Creek, WA vroomski@comcast.net
 JRC 545, u-shaped fence antenna, EWE NW

OF SPECIAL INTEREST

1490 KIST CA, Santa Barbara 12/20 0500 ID "You're listening to Santa Barbara's Progressive Talk, AM 1490 KIST Santa Barbara," ex-1340. (MS-CA)
600 KGEZ MT, Kalispell 1/1 0930 fair with "KGEZ Kalispell" ID by man. New station here. CKDB off the air. (DV-WA)
630 KPLY NV, Reno 12/26 0627 becoming dominant with ESPN program. (MS-CA)
740 KCBS CA, San Francisco 12/19 0005 news & ID in a messy splatler from local 750 KXL. Fair to poor on Hammarlund with E-W wire. (GH-OR)
KVOR CO, Colorado Springs 12/22 0753 KVOR ID, second ID and ABC news at 0800. (AB-ID)
750 KFQD AK, Anchorage 12/22 0802 KFQD ID under KXL. (AB-ID)
KOAL UT, Price 12/22 1700 faint ID out of Michael Medved show. Very rare! KXL my semi-local was off, one other unID in the mix. New! (GH-OR)
860 KTRB CA, San Francisco 12/27 0851 with "KTRB." (BB-AZ)
KPAM OR, Troutdale 12/27 1919 with "KPAM 860." (BB-AZ)
890 KDXU UT, Salt Lake City 1/1 1914 with "Utah's Oldies." (BB-AZ)
910 KRAK CA, Hesperia 12/26 0850 "Stardust 910" slogan, music by Stylistics. (MS-CA)
940 KWBY OR, Woodburn 12/24 0959 KWBY ID followed by Spanish language vocal music. Fair/good. (AB-ID)
KIXZ TX, Amarillo 12/27 0905 with "The Voice of Amarillo." (BB-AZ)
KNDN NM, Farmington 12/29 0900 with "KNDN Farmington, New Mexico." (BB-AZ)
1010 KSIR CO, Brush 12/30 0820 with "Farm News 10-10 KSIR." (BB-AZ)
1020 KWIQ AB, Calgary 12/30 0916 heard with weather. (BB-AZ)
KPNW WA, Moses Lake North 12/21 0100 ESPN sports talk and ID. Fair to poor trading places with unID (maybe KINF) on TMC with N-S wire. New! (GH-OR)
1120 KPNW OR, Eugene 12/15 0405 good with "This is Newsradio 1120 KPNW," using Quantum loop. (CM-CA)
1130 CKWX BC, Vancouver 12/15 0330 in good with "New 1130" slogan, using Quantum loop. (CM-CA)
1140 CHR8 AB, High River 12/27 0855 with ads for High River and "AM 1140." (BB-AZ)
1180 KERI CA, Greenacres 12/26 0648 ID and announcement that KERI will be moving to its new dial position of 1410 (currently KERN) on January first! (MS-CA)
1190 KEX OR, Portland 1/2 at 0840 with "KEX news time 5:40." (BB-AZ)
1200 KYAA CA, Soquel 12/14 0400 in very strong using Kiwa loop, heard they say "Radiohumsafar" which must be their slogan, then "KYAA" ID. (CM-CA)
WOAI TX, San Antonio 12/14 0600 in poor with "This is WOAI San Antonio," using Kiwa loop. (CM-CA)
1210 KPRZ CA, San Marcos 1/2 0856 with "KPRZ San Marcos, San Diego." (BB-AZ)
1220 KLVZ CO, Denver 12/29 1804 with "This is KLVZ on your radio dial." (BB-AZ)
1240 KQEN OR, Roseburg 12/25 2022 fair for a few seconds with KQEN ID. (DV-WA)
1250 KBSZ AZ, Wickenburg 12/28 1931 with "KBSZ 1250." (BB-AZ)
1260 KOIT CA, San Francisco 12/25 1735 good signal with KOIT ID, Christmas music. (DV-WA)
1270 KJUG CA, Tulare 12/25 1935 fair with "Classic Hit Country AM 1270" call letter ID, at 1935 mention of West Coast Broadcasting. New station. (DV-WA)
KBZZ NV, Sparks 12/25 1920 fair with "Tom Leykis Show." (DV-WA)
1300 KKML CO, Colorado Springs 12/23 0932 with "KKML." (BB-AZ)
KCMY NV, Carson City 12/22 0934 with "My Country KCMY." (BB-AZ)
KKOL WA, Seattle 12/17 0000 financial talk, Bloomberg something or other. Fair to poor on R-388 with E-W wire. (GH-OR)
1310 KFKA CO, Greeley 12/26 1846 with "Newstalk 1310 KFKA." (BB-AZ)
1330 KOVE WY, Lander 12/27 2105 with "KOVE." (BB-AZ)
1340 KYLT MT, Missoula 12/21 1052 ad block including local auto dealership, KYLT ID at 1054. (AB-ID)
1370 KSOP UT, South Salt Lake City 12/27 1900 with "Gold Country KSOP." (BB-AZ)
1380 KLPZ AZ, Parker 12/26 0712 strong but fading slowly with C&W song "I Should Have Been a Cowboy." (MS-CA)
1400 KLCK WA, Goldendale 1/1 1830 with KLCK ID and "Classic Oldies" slogan. New station, and could be closest unheard station here. (DV-WA)
1410 KUHL CA, Lompoc 12/26 0800 top of hour ID (also mentioned KINF-1440), ABC news. (MS-CA)
1420 KUJ WA, Walla Walla 12/17 2310 male gave ID, playing country oldies. Weak and trading places with KTTI but 70% on top, on Hammarlund with N-S wire. (GH-OR)

1450 KZNU UT, St. George 12/23 0300 dominant with "1350 KZNU" ID and Fox News Radio slogan. (MS-CA)
1460 KZNT CO, Colorado Springs 12/28 1803 with "Newstalk KZNT." (BB-AZ)
1490 KZZZ AZ, Bullhead City 12/20 0459 ID "KZZZ Bullhead City, the Tri-states Newstalk Leader." (MS-CA)
KFFN AZ, Tucson 12/20 0740 fading up with promo for Mike and Mike Morning Show. (MS-CA)
KCID ID, Caldwell 12/22 0230 call letters given by lady, announcing song by Bing Crosby. Have logged this before. (MS-CA)
1550 KXEX CA, Fresno 12/31 1956 with "KXEX ?? and 96.1." (BB-AZ)
1630 KRMD WY, Fox Farm 12/23 0700 "La Grande" slogan fair over unID station. (DV-WA)
1680 KGED CA, Fresno 12/13 0700 good with "KGED Fresno" ID, then Spanish programming, using Kiwa loop. (CM-CA)

UNID

1280 UNID 12/17 0010 with opera and classical type music very faint in the static on R-388 with E-W wire. Nothing in my log matching this format. (GH-OR)
Happy New Year to everyone! Nancy 1/2 2100

CENTRAL DX ROUNDUP

John C Johnson – 265 Waterton Wy – Billings MT 59102-7755
E-mail: John_Johnson@prodigy.net CDR reports ONLY: cdxr@prodigy.net

RIDING GAIN

Chris Knight, Fort Lupton, CO cgknight63@msn.com
Drake R8, Sony ICF-SW7600GR, various antennas, Quantum Phaser.

DOWN THE DIAL

540 KWMT IA, Fort Dodge. 1-1 poor to fair under CBK. 21:04-08 with country music, legal ID and Fox News. New catch for me. [CK-CO]
560 KMOM MT, Great Falls. 1-1 briefly over KWTO when they were into news, local KLZ phase-nulled. 23:00-02 with legal ID. "Thanks for listening to 5-60 KMOM Great Falls" into ABC news. [CK-CO]
600 KWTO MO, Springfield. 1-1 fair peak with local KLZ phase-nulled. 22:58-23:03 with promo for "Rush Limbaugh Weekend Review." Legal ID into ABC News. [CK-CO]
600 KSJB ND, Jamestown. 1-1 very good with semi-local KCOL phase-nulled. 23:08 with ID. "Classic Country KSJB" into music. [CK-CO]
WMT IA, Cedar Rapids. 1-1 good with semi-local KCOL phase-nulled. 19:59-20:04 with promo for Dave Ramsey and a legal ID into Fox News. [CK-CO]
1630 KKGM TX, Fort Worth. 1-2 poor under KKND. 02:00 with legal ID. "This is 16-30 KKGM Fort Worth, Dallas" into Christian talk program. [CK-CO]

25 YEARS AGO

December 31, 1983 issue of IRCA's "DX Monitor" ... **Gary Larson** of Burbank, CA told about receiving a phone call from Gary Patton ... **Tom Jasiniski** of Shorewood, IL discovered IRC's are only good for one year from date of purchase ... **Ric Heald** of Eureka, CA told about his tour of KRED-1480 and their 1950's fallout shelter.

OPEN MIKE

2009 arrived in an ice crème truck. Only -1 degree this afternoon. This column was typed 1-3-09. 73, John

EASTERN DX ROUNDUP

Lee J Freshwater – 414 SE 3rd St – Ocala FL 34471
E-mail: EDXR at AMLGBOOK dot COM

Deadlines: Saturdays 8 AM!!

STARS OF THE WEEK

(L-F-L) your editor Ocala, FL
Drake R-8B, KIWA Loop, Potomac FIM-41, MFJ Phasor, LF ENG Active ant, MFJ 616 audio enhancer, BSI Auto Logging Software, Vox Pro E-2 editing software
(KK-VA) **Kraig Krist** Manassas, VA
Using NRD-545 rx with homemade 134 foot multiband antenna running NW to SE
(WM-MD) **William McGuire** 2412 59th Place, Cheverly, MD
DX-398

(IEN-GA) **Ira Elbert New** Watkinsville, GA
SONY SRF-M37

LOGGINGS

560 ON CFOS Owen Sound, 12/24 1755-1800, Local News; Ads; weather. ID. (WM-MD)
580 GA WGAC Augusta, 12/25 1805, 'News Talk 580'; ID. (WM-MD)
590 VA WVLA Lynchburg, 12/26 1700, ID into hourly news. (WM-MD)
910 NC WSRP Jacksonville, 12/22 1805, SS mx hrd; EE ID. (WM-MD)
TN WJCV Johnson City, 12/25 1705, ABC News; ID. (WM-MD)
1150 CT WMRD Middletown, 1/1 1645-1735, 1707 "...one of the great we lost this past week. Dr. John on WLIS and WMRD. Happy New Year" into ad with mentions of Middletown. (KK-VA)
NC WBAG Burlington, 1/1 1645-1735, 1651 "The best songs, the best... and the best talk. All on... music radio station AM eleven fifty WBAG". Playing oldies. (KK-VA)
1160 IL WYLL Chicago, 12/31 1645-1735, 1655 Talk about "Dupage County and Chicago areas". Then "...on AM eleven sixty WYLL" into Bible prgm promo. (KK-VA)
1170 WV WWVA Wheeling, 12/30 1645-1735, 1649 "News radio eleven seventy WWVA" into "Nascar Today". 1655 call in show. (KK-VA)
1180 NY WHAM Rochester, 12/29 1645-1735, "Direct from the Reliance Community Credit Union broadcast center this is eleven eighty WHAM" into call in show. (KK-VA)
1190 IN WOWO Fort Wayne, 12/28/2008 1645-1735, EDT OM talking about Fort Wayne Komets American Hockey League team. 1655 OM "Komets hockey on WOWO" and "WOWO Fort Wayne". (KK-VA)
1200 VA WAGE Leesburg, 12/27 1645-1735, 1648 News, sports and life outside the beltway. You're listening to AM twelve hundred WAGE" into "Fox Sports Game Show". (KK-VA)
1210 PA WPHT Philadelphia, 12/26 1645-1735, 1648 "It's the 'Shawn Hannity Show' on the 'Big Talker' twelve ten". 1702 "...on the 'Big Talker' twelve ten WPHT" into "Katie Coric Notebook". (KK-VA)
1230 GA WWGA Waycross, 1-3 0700, Up with TOH ID. "...WWGA Waycross is News Talk 1230 WGA the... (cutout)..." into news. NEW. (LF-FL)
1270 MI WXYT Detroit, 12/25 2005, Local Ads; "Home of the Detroit Lions"; "Sports Radio 1270 SID; Sporting News Radio. (WM-MD)
VA WTJZ Newport News, 12/27 1802, Gospel Music and ID. Weak signal all, but buried in the mix. "...The Light from The Lighthouse, WTJZ". (IEN-GA)
1290 PA WFEG Altoona, 12/24 1900, ID heard. (WM-MD)
1310 KY WTTL Madisonville, 12/26 2000, ID heard. (WM-MD)
1340 NC WSWG Ottawa, 12/22 2000, "Oldies 13-10" heard. (WM-MD)
1410 CT WPOP Wilmington, 12/30 0600, TOH ID "Were WLSG Wilmington". NEW. (LF-FL)
1550 FL WNZF Hartford, 12/23 1900, "ESPN 14-10"; ID. (WM-MD)
Bunnell, 1-03 1200, finally decided to see if I could hear this new station. Mixing with WAMA Tampa. Some fading. Up with ID as "On AM 1550 & 106.3 FM WNZF.... You're listening to AM 1550 & 106.3 FM WNZF Bunnell...? Counties 24 hour News station..." heard both local talk and some Fox sports. The 106.3 reference is for a FM translator they use. TOH ID not required. I assume they use an automatic ID for the translator. Fair signal, but some fading for this mid day logging. NEW. (LF-FL)

UN-IDEN

1150 ?? ??? 1/1 1645-1735, 1713 "...great songs... play all day and night on eleven fifty AM and fourteen... AM WAPO (sounded like. Or, maybe WGPO). 1715 jingle "The best music of all time WAPO (sounded like. Or, maybe WGPO). Can't figure out ID for this one. (KK-CA)

Hope you all had a nice New Years. Forgot what day it was, and almost forgot to do the column... HI.... Been busy adding ALL the Vane Jones log books to the **AMLOGBOOK.COM SITE**. Also did the semi annual update as well.... Lots of computer time this weekend... But now its Gator Basketball time!!! fresh 1-03 1600

DX WORLDWIDE - WEST / TROPICAL BAND DX
Patrick Martin - PO Box 843 - Seaside OR 97138
E-mail: mwdxer@webtv.net all times UTC

PAN AMERICAN DX ROUNDUP

820 CUBA, Radio Reloj, 1/2 0541, poor signal u/WBAP with time ticks, beep and "RR" in Morse code. Heard later (0551) using xylophone "chimes" at top of each minute. (CK-CO)

870 CUBA, Radio Reloj, 1/2 at 0614 Fair signal with time ticks, beep and xylophone "chimes" on top of each minute. (CK-CO)

TRANS PACIFIC DX ROUNDUP

612 AUSTRALIA, Brisbane Qld, 4QR 12/30 1707 UTC Remix of Peter Gabriel's "Games Without Frontiers" man w/liner, woman w/patter and taking phone calls. Poor to very poor, barely audible at 1715. (5P-HI)
648 RUSSIA, VoR 1436 1/4 very weak in KK. (DV-WA)
774 JAPAN, Akita JOUB 1/4 1439 good with man in JJ and EE conversation lessons. (DV-WA)
828 JAPAN, Osaka JOBB 1/4 1441 almost as good at JOUB with same program. (DV-WA)

THANKS TO THESE REPORTES

CK-CO **CHRIS KNIGHT**, Fort Lupton CO **cgknight63@msn.com**
DXing with Drake R8, 17' x 37' SW/NE dual terminated loop, 16' x 34' NW terminated flag antenna with Quantum Phaser
5P-HI **DALE PARK**, PO Box 10640, Honolulu HI 96816 **dxfool@aol.com**
DXing with Sargean ATS-818CS, Terk AM1000 Loop
DV-WA **DENNIS VROOM**, Salmom Creek, WA **vroomski@comcast.net**
DXing with JRC545, NW EWE

Guy Atkins to Grayland

This trip to Grayland Beach State Park was a real challenge with the weather. I encountered high winds and rain, and occasional, nearly-sideways hail that pounded the yurt wall so hard I had to crank up the volume to the headphones considerably. I also had the din of the nearby roaring Pacific Ocean to contend with. At least last week's snow had melted, and I had brief periods of calm and almost no rain while erecting and dismantling the antennas--thankfully! It was also the first time I've been c-c-cold in the Grayland yurts; the wind and chilly temps found their way easily around the door edges, and the yurt's built-in heater couldn't keep up.

I'm still going through the many Perseus SDR files for medium wave DX, and I'll have them posted and on my blog in 2-3 days. Here's the shorthand loggings, though... not bad for a few hours of SW DX "on the side". It's been a while since I've encountered this many interesting signals on 60 meters. A and K indices were low, and I'm sure it helped the India DX audible from over the polar route.

4739.61 **VIETNAM**, 1258-1303, Son La RTV Dec 30 Presumed. Distorted and poorly modulated signal with male announcer in Vietnamese or tribal language (may have been a phone patch); primitive-sounding vocals by woman with screechy stringed instrument at 1259.

4750 **INDONESIA**, 1258-1302, RRI Makassar Dec 30 A real mess on this frequency with two Chinese stations (CNR1 and PBS) dominant, and RRI Makassar in the background. Female and male announcers in Indonesian up to 1300 and into presumed news. None of the stations were exactly on 4750, and it was driving the synchronous AM detector crazy! Best in LSB to avoid CODAR swisher. Fair level. Rechecked WAV file from 1400 UTC and Makassar was much clearer. The WAV for 1500 revealed them in the clear, with Song of the Coconut Islands up to RRI network ID and into Warta Berita. (Atkins-WA)

4775 **INDIA**, 1645-1700, AIR Impahat Dec 30 Slow Hindi singing by woman with percussion accompaniment; brief announcement by man, and into another slow subcontinental music selection with tabla and flute. Various subcont. music styles to 1659:35 ID as 'Akashvani Impahat' with sign-off announcements including mentions of 'kiloherzt'. Plug pulled at 1700:30. Good signal. (Atkins-WA)

4780 **GUATEMALA**, 1259-1303, Radio Cultural Coatan Dec 30 Flute music to 1300 with male announcer in Spanish and mentions of Coatan. Prayer or devotional message voice-over folk music at 1302. Fair signal at half hour post Coatan SR. (Atkins-WA)

4799.8 **GUATEMALA**, 1258-1302, R. Buenas Nuevas Dec 30 Presumed. Romantic song in Spanish beneath strong CNR1 signal, and into a talk or announcement in Spanish. Poor to fair. (Atkins-WA)

4820 **INDIA**, 1730-1735, AIR Kolkata Dec 29 Woman announcer in English, with commentary or talk on Asian politics. Good level but buried beneath a strong Xizang PBS music program. Parallel to 4920 Chennai (also good), but also beneath a different Xizang PBS music program. (Atkins-WA)

4860 **INDIA**, 1659-1701, AIR Delhi Dec 30 Messy, noisy signal with possible Delhi at low level. Language sounded Hindi. (Atkins-WA)

4880 **INDIA**, 1250-1302, AIR Lucknow Dec 30 Continuous subcontinental flute music to female announcer at 1300 with at least two mentions of All India Radio. Weak level. (Atkins-WA)

4880 **SOUTH AFRICA**, 1645-1705, SW Radio Africa Dec 30 Talk in unid. African language by various speakers to 1700, then change to male announcer in English language with mentions of Africa, time pips, and into headline news including israel military action. Fair signal, with some weak co-channel interference from presumed AIR Lucknow prior to 1700. Another African via morning longpath. (Atkins-WA)

4895 **INDIA**, 1635-1644, AIR Kurseong Dec 30 Subcontinental music of singing and tabla, and later Hindi film music. Fair level, but deteriorating towards 1700 sign-off, which was nearly inaudible. Plug pulled at 1700:45. (Atkins-WA)

4905 **CHAD**, 1550-1645, Rdiff. Natl. Tchadienne Dec 30 Surprised and pleased to find this 3rd longpath African signal of the morning of the 30th, thanks to a tip from Walt Salmani on a faint signal in the background of Tibet's English service on 4905. I replayed the Perseus WAV file a number of times and heard drums and Arabic-sounding talk up to a distinctive balofon interval signal at 1630:25. Based on the terminator position, drums music, and Arabic language I suspected it was northern Africa. I checked www.intervalsignals.net found that the IS matched one of the sound files for Rdiff. Natl. Tchadienne! The final nail in the coffin was finding that 4905 is a current domestic frequency for Chad, via the British DX Club's 'Africa on Shortwave' January 2009 guide. The schedule for Chad indicates French, Arabic, and vernaculars 1030-2230 UTC. This makes three longpath Africans heard past sunrise on Dec. 30. Thanks to Walt Salmani for the initial tip. What fun to have both Chad and Tibet dueling it out on the same tropical band frequency! (Atkins-WA)

4905 **TIBET**, 1630-1635, Holy Tibet Dec 30 Thanks to Walt Salmani (whose Dec. 30 logging reminded me that what's listed in some sources as 'PBS Xizang' on 4905/4920 is more accurately Tibet, not China). I was able to log this one 'retroactively'. Having just returned from Grayland I had Perseus recorded files of the 60 meter band that happened to be from the same date and timeframe when Walt was DXing. I had skipped over 4905 //4920 initially, not realizing the frequencies were from Tibet and that English was scheduled for 1630-1700. After I read Walt's logging I checked the portion of my Perseus WAV file for 4905 kHz at 1630, and there it was. At 1630:40 I heard a female announcer say 'Holy Tibet is the means by which you may visit the roof of the world', and she and a male announcer talked briefly about listening to the station to learn more about 'the terrain, the people, and the culture of Tibet'. Good signal, but modulation could be better. (Atkins-WA)

4920 **INDIA**, 1736-1738, AIR Chennai Dec 29 Good level with an Asian politics commentary by woman in English, but co-channel with Xizang PBS music program. Parallel to 4920 AIR Kolkata. (Atkins-WA)

4930 **BOTSWANA**, 1625-1633, VOA Dec 30 Woman announcer with African news highlights and mentions of VOA and Washington DC. 'This is African News Tonight, on the VOA' ID at 1630. Into 'The Sunny Side of Sports' program about Togo soccer team's success. Good to very good signal, via longpath on PA0RDT Mini-whip antenna. (Atkins-WA)

4940 **INDIA**, 1653-1701, AIR Guwahati Dec 30 Male vocalist with Hindi singing, sitar, and tabla. Sign-off announcements and ID by female announcer at 1700, and then carrier off at 1701:20. Good signal. Also heard earlier at 1300, with Guwahati dominating Voice of the Strait (China). (Atkins-WA)

4950 **CHINA**, 1259-1302, Voice of Puijiang - Shanghai Dec 30 5+1 time pips followed by ID in Chinese by woman, and two mentions of Shanghai. Strong signal. (Atkins-WA)

4970 **INDIA**, 1629-1632, AIR Shillong Dec 30 Percussive music selection with gongs and tabla to female announcer in English. ID at 1630 'This is the end of our program tonight. This is All India Radio, broadcasting from Shillong. The same announcer repeated the sign-off in Hindi, and then Shillong's carrier was gone at 1632. Fair signal. (Atkins-WA)

4990 **INDIA**, 1629-1631, AIR Itanagar Dec 30 Hindi film music, then female announcer in Hindi with sign-off announcements. Poor to fair level. (Atkins-WA)

5010 **INDIA**, 1659-1702, AIR Thiruvananthapuram Dec 30 Presumed. Threshold signal of subcontinental music to male announcer at 1700, and into tabla and flute music at 1701. Very weak signal. (Atkins-WA)

6165 **VIETNAM**, 0320-0340, Voice of Vietnam, Xuan Mai Dec 29 Poor to fair signal in English; woman announcer with commentary on terrorism in Mumbai and Iraq. (Atkins-WA)

Guy Atkins, Puyallup, WA DXing at Grayland Beach State Park
Perseus SDR X2 / Wellbrook Phased Array antenna (proto) / PA0RDT Mini-Whip @ 30 ft.
high www.perseus-sdr.blogspot.com

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The Crate Loop

by Kevin Schanilec

Thanks to the efforts of some intrepid NW DXers, the Eton Slider e100 is now the reigning King of the Hill amongst portable AM receivers in terms of sensitivity and selectivity, eclipsing even the venerated Sony ICF-2010. However, despite its advanced antenna and filtering, even the Slider e100 can still benefit from more signal and sharper selectivity.

Why use a passive loop? As discussed in my "Using Passive Loop Antennas" article, published in DX Monitor's October 11, 2008 edition and available on the DXer.ca web site, a passive loop can improve the sensitivity, selectivity, and image/spurious response performance of a receiver, especially with Ultralights such as the Sony SRF-59. With the Slider e100, however, commonly available passive loop antennas such as the Terk Loop, Select-A-Tenna, Quantum Stick and others are simply too small and low-Q to provide any significant benefit.

What follows is a simple passive loop project that will deliver appreciable gain increases to your Slider, or any other receiver with a ferrite or air-core loop antenna. In principle, it is no different from any other passive loop project. What I like about this loop is that the frame is ready-made, and the resulting Crate Loop is very lightweight and easy to maneuver. This is also a travel-friendly design, in that the tuning capacitor, wire and foam tape can be brought on a plane trip, and after a quick trip to the local office supply store for a crate, the loop can be constructed in a matter of minutes.

How well does it work? In daytime testing here in NW Washington State, I compared the Slider e100 with and without the Crate Loop this morning to see what kind of improvement in sensitivity and selectivity could be had with the hottest receiver around. For stations that were already doing well on the "barefoot" Slider, improvements with the Crate Loop were often quite modest. However, with targets that were weak and/or suffering interference from strong locals, the results were often dramatic. Some examples were:

- 530 - The Slider had the airport TIS station with fairly reasonable audio, but nothing else, since it was not that far above the noise floor. With the Crate Loop, the airport TIS came in clear and the more distant TIS station for the mountain pass on I-90 was also intelligible above a much quieter noise floor.
- 560 - In the shadow of a very strong local on 570 (KVI, 5kw about 14 miles away) nulled to the extent possible, the Slider had a semi-local (KPQ) fairly good with mostly-intelligible audio under moderate interference. With the Crate Loop in adjacent orientation, the audio was clearly intelligible and the interference much reduced.
- 670 - The Slider had KBOI (420 miles away) with fairly intelligible audio that occasionally dipped below intelligibility and/or disappeared during fades. The Crate Loop had consistent good audio that remained intelligible during most of the fades.
- 680 - The Slider had a semi-local old-time music station with decent signal but suffering horribly from an image/heterodyne from a strong local on 1590. With the Crate Loop in adjacent orientation to notch out 1590, the image disappeared and the music station was in the clear.
- 1060 - The Slider had nothing but interference from a nulled strong local on 1050 (KBLE, 5kw about 7 miles away). With the Crate Loop in facing orientation, CKMX in Calgary (450 miles away) had reasonable CW music and the interference was noticeably reduced.
- 1110 - The Slider had a 500 watt semi-local (KDWB, about 50 miles away) with mumbbling audio. With the Crate Loop in facing orientation, the audio was clearly intelligible.
- 1140 - The Slider had CHR8 (440 miles away) with mumbbling audio under heavy interference from a nulled strong local on 1150, while the Crate Loop in adjacent orientation brought it in with intelligible audio and almost no interference.
- 1530 - The Slider had KFBK-Sacramento (600 miles away) with somewhat intelligible audio, while the Crate Loop had clear audio.
- 1640 - The Slider had semi-local KDZR with acceptable audio, while the audio with Crate Loop was much better.

In summary, for sensitivity, it consistently yields about 3 additional tuning increment bars on the Slider e100; if each bar is the standard S-meter increment of 6 decibels, this represents about 20db gain! Weak targets will suddenly stand out from the noise on the Slider e100, and the sensitivity gains with stock Ultralights are even more substantial.

As for selectivity, the Q of the Crate Loop is sufficiently high that, when using the selectivity and notching techniques in the "Using Passive Loop Antennas" article, dramatic improvements can be made. Also, if you have the narrow Murata filter on your Slider e100 and normally detune 1 kHz in either direction for intelligibility, detuning the Crate Loop one direction or the other will act as a tone



control, allowing better fidelity and thus comprehension of the target as you vary where you are in the passband.

Building the Crate Loop

Materials needed for this project:

- A plastic (polypropylene) filing/storage crate. My project uses the Sterility #1692 Storage Crate; Staples item #498606 looks like a perfect example, and I recently saw a suitable crate at Office Depot for a little under \$10.00. The make and model is not crucial: what is important is that the vertical sides are parallel to each other in order that the coil of wire is of a constant diameter. The winding area of my crate (and so depth of the coil) was 8 inches wide. Another consideration is that a white or light-colored crate may potentially yield a higher-Q loop, since dark pigments reportedly negatively affect Q. Also, a solid plastic storage container may also work, but the ribs on a storage crate mean that there is minimal contact between the wire and crate, which will likely lead to a higher Q value.
- About 120 feet of single-conductor *stranded* wire. In theory, any gauge will work, but anything thicker than 16-18 gauge probably won't wrap around and sit flat on the crate very well, and very thin wire (smaller than 22-24 gauge) may be too delicate. I built mine with 18 gauge. I also built a Crate Loop with 100 feet of high-count Litz wire, and I really couldn't tell much difference, so simple stranded wire seems to work just fine.
- A 350 pF (or greater) variable tuning capacitor with knob. These can be salvaged from virtually any analog AM radio, or can be purchased. I used item #BC14400 from Ocean State Electronics for this project. I also built a Crate Loop with a miniature "Dual 266pF plastic variable capacitor" from Ebay seller zlowe7; if you go this route, you will need to tie the two sections together in parallel to make 532 pF (and don't forget to order the shaft extension and knobs to go with it). Some capacitors are constructed such that the frequency response is linear, and the stations at the top of the band aren't bunched together – this might be preferable.
- A soldering iron or alligator clips to attach the wire to the tuning capacitor, and a drill if you want to make the holes for the wires in Step 1 and/or the hole for the tuning capacitor in Step 2.
- Double-stick foam tape (Radio Shack 64-2343 or similar) to hold the tuning capacitor in place.



Step 1. On the inside of one side of the crate, drill two holes for the beginning and the end of the coil. The two holes should be just large enough for the wire to pass through. In the picture at left, the two holes (marked by the orange dots) are at the edge of the flat area of the outer side. This makes sure that you will be winding the coil on the flat part of the outsides of the crate, as shown in the right-hand part of the picture in Step 3, the crate may flare out towards the edge. Alternately, rather than drilling a hole, simply pass the wire through the square spaces in the crate. The width of the coil will be a bit less, perhaps by half an inch, but that will not appreciably change the loop's performance. The wire can be held in place with masking tape.

Step 2. If you are using a small tuning capacitor that can be mounted vertically with double-stick foam tape, drill a suitable mounting hole for the tuning capacitor: the center of the crate's face may be the logical place, as it was for mine – see picture at right. Make sure the shaft slides in and out of the hole easily – the hole can be quite a bit bigger than the shaft on the tuning capacitor, since the tuning knob will eventually cover the hole anyway. *Don't actually attach the tuning capacitor to the crate just yet.*

If you are using a larger tuning capacitor that cannot be mounted vertically as above, the capacitor can simply be put on the bottom of the crate (below) with the shaft sticking out the front. This shows the Ocean State Electronics BC14400 capacitor mounted in this way, although it is actually small enough to mount vertically on the face of the Crate Loop as above.



Step 3. Now it's time to wind the coil of wire over the crate. An option here is to cut grooves along 2 sides of the crate, which I did (see picture below) with a table saw. This keeps the wires in place, and also brings the wire below the surface of the crate's exterior "ribs" to protect it.

Start by threading one end of the 120 foot or so wire through the start hole (just pick either one of the holes for this), leaving quite a few inches inside the crate so that it easily can connect with the tuning capacitor. Use a piece of masking tape to hold the wire inside

the crate, or tie a knot so it won't come out. Start winding the wire around the crate, not paying too much attention to how it looks at this point: the thing to watch is that the successive loops don't overlap each other, and that the wire does not kink. With my 15x13.5 inch Sterilite crate, I got 24 turns, spaced about 3/8" apart. When it looks like you won't get another turn onto the crate, feed the end of the wire into the other hole and temporarily tape it in place.



Step 4. Now take the slack out of the coil by pulling successive turns taught, working from one end of the coil to the other end. Pull up on one turn, and then maintain tension on that turn as it goes back down when you pull up on the next one – it reminds me of playing the harp! By keeping tension in this way, slack does not develop which would otherwise allow a given turn of wire to accidentally get out of place and overlap another turn. When you reach the end of the coil, pull the end of the wire further into the inside of the loop to take up the excess, and re-tape that end of the wire to the crate to keep it in place. Twist the loop to make sure none of the turns of wire are overlapping each other.

Step 5. Temporarily attach the ends of the wire to the tuning capacitor, perhaps with alligator clips, and check the tuning range of the Crate Loop by placing it close to a receiver tuned to the bottom of the band. When the plates of the tuning capacitor are fully engaged, this should roughly correspond to a sharp tuning peak at the low end of the MW band. The low end of the tuning range should easily be below 530 kHz: my 24-turn Crate Loop tunes down to about 495 kHz with a 365 pF variable capacitor, so I had to disengage the capacitor's plates a bit. Then check the high end – when the capacitor plates are fully apart from each other, the Crate Loop should tune just past 1700 kHz: if not, remove one turn from the loop and re-check both ends of the tuning range. I initially had 25 turns on, but only could tune up to around 1630 kHz, so taking the one turn off meant I could tune to well above 1700 kHz.

Step 6. Once you've got the proper number of turns, and if you didn't pre-saw the grooves, go through and make the distances between turns about the same, sliding the turns of wire back and forth. Again, with my version, the 24 turns across the 8-inch winding area resulted in a spacing of about 3/8" between turns. It's not terribly critical to get the spacing absolutely perfect, although it may look better.

Step 7. Next solder the wires permanently to the tuning capacitor, or simply use alligator clips on the end of the wires. Then put two pieces of double-stick foam tape on the front face of the tuning capacitor (if mounting vertically) or on the bottom of the capacitor (if placing it on the bottom of the crate), and attach it to the crate. If you like, use masking tape or other to keep the wires inside the crate in place; as can be seen in the picture in Step 1, I used white duct tape for this. Put the tuning knob on, and you're done!

Optional Fine-tuning Capacitor

In tough situations, especially in the upper parts of the band where the stations are so close together, it helps to have a fine-tuning variable capacitor. In the picture below is one that I inserted into the bottom of Crate Loop, and it is connected directly across the main tuning capacitor (i.e., in parallel with it). The white wires are from the main loop coil, and the red and black wires are alligator clip leads to tie the fine-tuning capacitor in.

The small-value variable capacitor I had on hand is a 2-section capacitor with a single section having a range between 12 and 24 pF. As it turns out, adding the additional 12 pF with a single section meant that the loop would no longer tune up to 1700 kHz. Therefore, rather than taking a turn off of the main loop coil, by hooking the two section up in series reduced the capacitance range to 6-12 pF, and the loop continues to tune the entire range of the MW band (i.e., the additional 6 pF is still OK).



To use the fine tuning capacitor, one approach is to center the fine-tuning capacitor and, after tuning to the center of the signal with the main tuning capacitor, make final adjustments with the fine-tuning capacitor capacitance, and you can use your ear to tell when the right spot in the passband is reached. Another approach is to open up its plates all the way for minimum capacitance, and then tune the Crate Loop with the main tuning capacitor. Once you have tuned the main tuning capacitor to about the right place, tune it slightly up-band (open up the plates a little more) so you are slightly detuned. The fine-tuning capacitor can then be used to provide a little more capacitance. I find that at the upper part of the band, after setting the main tuning capacitor at 1700 kHz, I can reach all the way down to 1600 kHz with the fine-tuning capacitor.

Using the Crate Loop with a Communications Receiver

By wrapping two turns of wire around the far end of the crate to make a sense or pick-up coil, you can connect the Crate Loop to a communications receiver. As shown in the pictures below, simply wrap two turns of wire around the far end of the crate. While the impedance of the main coil is probably several hundred thousand ohms, with the sense coil acting as a transformer, the impedance will be much lower. For instance, if the main coil's impedance is 300 kilohms, with one turn for the sense coil, the impedance going to the receiver is now $(300,000 * (1/24)^2) = 520$ ohms, which is typically a good value for the high-Z input to a communications receiver. This can be stepped down further with a matching transformer if desired. To use the Crate Loop in this way, connect the pick-up coil to the receiver antenna input, and simply tune the main (and fine-tuning) capacitor to peak the received signal, just as you do when passively coupling the loop to a receiver.



While some loop designs call for the sense coil to be wrapped in the middle of the main coil, this is too close here, and can be confirmed by holding an Ultralight receiver right up next to the main coil –

you should find the tuning sharpness of the Crate Loop to be degraded and the signal transfer decreased. By pulling the receiver away a couple inches, the tuning sharpness and signal transfer are both improved. Fortunately, my crate had a natural sense winding channel at the far edge, a couple inches away from the coil.

The pictures above show a loosely-wound sense coil off to one side of the main winding and terminated in a RCA jack, which is pretty crude, but works just fine. To permanently accommodate the sense coil, I plan to cut more notches into the crate for the sense coil and terminate it with a 1/8" jack.

How does it work? In side-by-side comparison testing with a Quantum Loop, with both antennas hooked up to a Yaesu FRG-100B, I found that the signal-to-noise on the Crate Loop to be equal to, and in many cases a little better than, that of the Quantum Loop. The Quantum Loop actually had a higher S-meter reading by 5-10 decibels, although that appeared to be the result of the Quantum Loop's internal amplifier. Since the Crate Loop output was generally S-7 and above for moderately weak signals, the additional amplification was not required, since this is already well above the noise floor, and additional signal would simply be attenuated by the AGC in the receiver. Given the size of the main coil of the Crate Loop compared to that of the Quantum Loop, it is not surprising that the signal-to-noise ratio of the Crate Loop is often better.

Making a Longwave version of the Crate Loop

To make a crate Loop that covers the 150-529 kHz band, the only change is that a lot more wire is used. The version I made has 75 turns (some 345 feet of wire) spaced about 1/8" apart, and with a 10-450 pF variable capacitor, it tunes from 150-600 kHz.

If you have any suggestions, or have any questions about the construction of the Crate Loop, drop me a line at [satya\(at\)sounddsi.com](mailto:satya(at)sounddsi.com).

(This article originally appeared at www.dxr.ca and is used by permission of the author)

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 35 times a year (weekly from November through March, twice monthly from April to November) and in printed form 30 times a year (weekly November through March, monthly April to November). **DX Monitor** contains members' logging, articles on radio stations, receiver reviews, technical articles, DX tips, and other material of interest to Broadcast Band DX hobbyists.

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