



# Southeastern DX Club

## W4NT

THE SOUTH'S PREMIER DX CLUB

August 2008

From the President:

Can you believe that it is August already and the summer is almost over? Probably not soon enough for those of you that still have children at home! Can you believe there are still NO sunspots? Can you believe we are still working DX, just not on 10m and 12m? That tells me that when the sunspots do return...we will have real some fun!

We have a great program lined up for the August meeting, August 20<sup>th</sup>...with our own N4GG talking about building low band RXing systems. I understand it is a hands-on meeting and we will all go home with an antenna-matching transformer. This will be just in time for us to get a RX antenna up for the upcoming low band season. 160m and 80m should be hot!

We will not have a meeting in September as we have two events scheduled instead. First is the annual summer Bar BQ on Saturday night, beginning at 5:00 pm at the home of Ken and Trish Byers. They are so very generous to open their beautiful home to us year after year. You should have already received an Evite! Please RSVP soon! And remember that guests are welcome. What a great chance for a potential new member to see what a fun club we have!

The second event scheduled for September is HUGE for us! In celebration of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the SEDXC is sponsoring a worldwide contest during the weekend of Sept. 20 and 21st This is a big deal and widely publicized, so plan to do some operating...the world will be looking for you. Rules can be found on

[www.sedxc.org/50thcontest](http://www.sedxc.org/50thcontest).

Rumors that our Dxpedition team to TI50DX for the ARRL International DX contest WON the unlimited transmitter class are TRUE. Can you believe it...a bunch of rookies (average age 65 and licensed 50 years) could win the world in our category. And, we had some fun along the way...remember Thursday night fellas...and then waking up to two broken K-3's with 8 hours to go before the contest. That was fun!

Lastly, please mark you calendar for Sunday night, December 7<sup>th</sup>. We will be concluding our celebration of the SEDXC's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a gala Banquet/Holiday party. We have some fun things planned...do not miss that night. Details coming soon!

73 for now, CU at the meeting Wednesday August 20<sup>th</sup>.  
Bob-K4UEE

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### Vice President's Report—August 2008

We are still in the summer doldrums and the cycle doldrums as captured by SolarCycle24.co which is currently presenting a very appropriate artistic image:



That's pretty much an accurate depiction of the sun these days, though there have been a few features on the surface recently that did not develop into spots. But there is workable DX just about every day, especially early in the morning and in the late afternoon.

I have just returned from a week in Sandestin, Florida, and I took along a trusty old FT900. It's a great cw rig and is also sought by QRPers because you can crank it down to a watt, and it has a very good receiver, with a lot of the front end of a FT-1000D. Despite the gendarmes in Sandestin I was able to string a 20m dipole between a couple of pine trees, perhaps 30' up, and I worked more than 100 DX stations while there, mainly near sunset or sunrise. The antenna was made of black stranded hookup wire from Radio Shack. The center "insulator" was an SO-239 with appropriate strain relief, and the end insulators were the strings I used to hold it up. I took a very small MFJ tuner rated at 100w and committed the heresy of using a coax fed 20m dipole on 40m, 30m, and 20m as well as a little on the higher bands.



The enforcers of feng shui never found the antenna—usually they catch me near the end of a vacation.

Congratulations to W5LE on his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. He consumed enough margaritas at his party to ensure he will be well preserved for many more years.

The DX Pros will be presenting DX101 (Getting Started—W3WL) and DX102 (Building a Tower—K4SSU) at the Huntsville Hamfest on Saturday, August 16. This is always a very nice hamfest, so be sure to drop in to hear Wes and Dave. You can also engage in the mystery of the Royal Order of the Wouff-Hong on Saturday night

We will have a real treat with this month's program as N4GG shows us how to make a great performing K9AY loop and how to improve commercial models. You will take away your own binocular core transformer to use with your loop and learn how to properly count the turns. Don't miss it!

73  
Bob W2WG, SEDXC VP

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From: Mike Weathers  
Treasurer's Report for July, 2008

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Financial position as of month-end July

SEDXC Treasury:	\$6,635.21
Packet Fund:	<u>20.15</u>
Total Balance:	\$6,655.36

The QSL order was a resounding success. It was a break even venture with \$3,725.00 of cards being ordered.

Next years budget has been approved by the officers and is included in the newsletter. Please keep those dues payments rolling in.

As we start this club year, I should abide by the IRS regulations and remind everyone that SEDXC is not a 501 c 3 charitable organization. Your dues and donations are

not tax deductible, but they allow us to support DXpeditions and to meet to swap lies stories about who we heard, who we worked, and who must not have had a working receiver.

See you in Huntsville and at the picnic.

73 es DX  
Mke, ND4V

**SEDXC**  
**Profit & Loss Budget Overview**  
**July 2008 through June 2009**

**Southeastern DX Club**

**Budget for Jul '08 - Jun 09**

<b>Income</b>	
Badges, Patches, Pins	60.00
DONATIONS	100.00
IRC Sales	120.00
Meeting Raffle	394.00
Membership Renewals	3,000.00
New Member Dues	288.00
Packet Donation	60.00
	<hr/>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,022.00</b>
 <b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>	
 <b>International Reply</b>	
Coupons	120.00
	<hr/>
<b>Total COGS</b>	<b>120.00</b>
	<hr/>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>3,902.00</b>

<b>Expense</b>	
Bank/Paypal fees	120.00
Door Prizes	120.00
<b>DXpedition Donations</b>	
1st Quarter	
DXPEDITIONS	200.00
2nd Qtr	
DXPEDITIONS	200.00

3rd Quarter	
DXPEDITIONS	200.00
4th Quarter	
DXPEDITIONS	200.00
BONUS DXPEDITON	250.00

<b>Total DXpedition Donations</b>	<b>1,050.00</b>
 <b>Hamfest Tables and Promotions</b>	 100.00
<b>Insurance</b>	320.00
<b>Meeting Expenses</b>	
Club Outings	
Door Prizes	100.00
Club Outings - Other	700.00
<b>Total Club Outings</b>	<b>800.00</b>
Guest Speaker	500.00
Supplies	200.00
	<hr/>
<b>Total Meeting Expenses</b>	<b>1,500.00</b>
 <b>Mentoring Program</b>	 100.00
<b>Plaques</b>	
100 W & Wire	50.00
CQ 160	250.00
GA QSO Party	50.00
SEDXC Hall of Fame	50.00
	<hr/>
<b>Total Plaques</b>	<b>400.00</b>
 <b>Postage</b>	 12.00
<b>Unplanned Items</b>	130.00
<b>Website related</b>	50.00
	<hr/>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>3,902.00</b>
	<hr/>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>0.00</b>

There were no reports from the Secretary or Activities chairman this month.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER**  
**PLEASE BRING SOMETHING FOR THE**  
**CLUB RAFFLE EACH MONTH.**

**IT'S SUCCESS DEPENDS ON YOU**  
**THE MORE ITEMS, THE BETTER THE**  
**RAFFLE**

For any of you that are interested in getting some empirical data on the effects of adding radials to a vertical antenna go to the following site:

<http://www.rudys.typepad.com/>

Rudy Severns, N6LF, has done an extensive study on how many radials it takes to get good performance from a vertical antenna. He has set up a site and made numerous measurements to determine the increase in signal strength that is obtained with the addition of radials.

Be sure to first read his description of the test setup he used for his measurements and don't overlook the additional information that is available in the archives section on the right side of the page.

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This month we are presenting the biography of one of the longtime members. It is amazing to learn the talents and accomplishments of some of our members.

This month we present :



**Doctor Don, N4HH**

**The Very Abridged Version of My "Story"  
N4HH – Don Nesbitt**

It was a dark and stormy night! It really was! It's summer 1952. Twilight is just coming to an end and all the kids on Linden Street are anticipating being called (or whistled) home any minute – the streetlights have just come on. Nat King Cole is crooning

“Unforgettable” from one of the many open neighborhood windows and my friend Bobby and I are peering into the basement window of Bobby's next door neighbor. Zzzzzzzzap, zzzzzzzzap – a mysterious blue bolt of lightning can be clearly seen and the light casts a large looming shadow of a figure on the wall next to the coal furnace octopus. It was something right out of Frankenstein!

Inside, the room grows dark and we press our noses even closer to the soot covered glass straining to see this monster in action. Nothing. We hunch even closer. Still nothing. Suddenly we both sense something above and behind us. We jump up, heads slamming together, screams locked in our throats! "It's alive! It's alive!" – right out of the 1931 Frankenstein film. Well, actually, he was alive. Mike Rabel is standing over us laughing so hard he is crying!

That was my introduction to “ham radio” and Mike (SK) was W3PPL – “Pennsylvania's Pretty Lad” as he was known on 10 meter AM. I was to learn later that Mike delighted in using a “lead” pencil to draw arcs off the tank coil of his 100 watt AM transmitter. He even let this little bunch of scruffy boys – no girls allowed – to participate.

For those of you who have never experienced drawing an arc off a tank coil with a carbon pencil, you've missed one of ham radio's essential experiences. It seems that I can clearly remember the smell, light and sounds of those magic arcs of so very long ago. Magic indeed!

Later that summer, my Dad dropped the bomb – we would be moving to Illinois - - Illinois? Bloomington to be exact – in the Corn Belt – pretty much in the middle of nothing! I'd have no friends, just my older brother Earl to taunt me – surely life was over – how unfair! Poo!

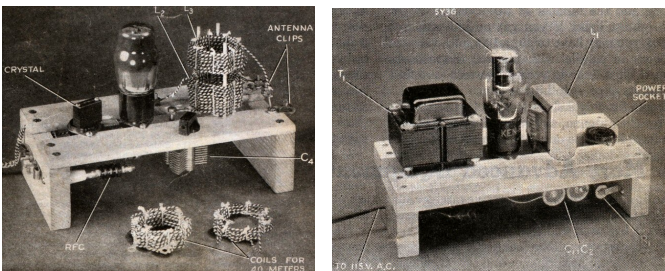
My despair spawned an idea. If Mike could talk with people all over the world – free! – why couldn't I? I could keep in touch with Bobby and Corky, Tom and Spider – surely I could do this – couldn't I? Couldn't we?

So began the amazing journey that culminated (a few years, another move, and after an indeterminable wait for the FCC and the US Postal Service to act) in my being issued my own Federal and legally binding Amateur Radio Novice Operator's and Station License. My station call sign would be WN9VZY! It was dated May 16, 1955 and stamped in blue by "C.B. Plummer." It was official – I was a "ham!"

Bobby, Corky, Tom and Spider never did pursue it. I was on my own!

On the road to learning the code, I "discovered" that when Mom's kitchen radio was tuned through the AM broadcast band, it created toots and whistles on our floor model Philco (with the "magic" eye – oh yeah!) when it was "tuned" to the 80 meter Novice band. The 80 meter Novice band occupied the entire width of the pointer! This was to become my first receiver.

Armed with the 1950 edition of the ARRL's "How to Become a Radio Amateur," I built and tested a single 6V6 crystal controlled oscillator complete with a transformer operated power supply wherein we were admonished that: ". . . it does use about 350 volts. That can easily be lethal, so use the greatest care and respect when working with it." This is scary stuff!



Around Noon on May 23, 1955 the Post Office delivered my "ticket" that had been granted seven (7) days earlier by the FCC and I hooked the link coupled output circuit of my mighty 6V6 oscillator to my "wire." This was it! No turning back now! After hours of calling stations that I could pick out on the Philco, there it was – my call – painstaking coming back to me – and so at 6:10 PM CST I completed my first QSO with Ed Barczuk WN9MRZ in Chicago – a scant 20

miles or so away. My report was an amazing 359 and he was running a "big" rig – an Eldico TR-75-TV-1 at 50 watts and hearing me on an S-38C. So began my official ham radio career and so also began "rig envy!"

Shortly after receiving my "ticket," I received a mailing from Leo Meyerson, W0GFQ, at World Radio Laboratories (WRL). If you are a "veteran" of those days, you will remember that all new novice class licensees received the mailing – of course, at the time I figured that I was the only one and that by some divine stroke, I'd been singled out for this special offer! Yes, my "own" specially designed QSL card! I'd arrived!



OK, so it really wasn't divine intervention after all, but hey, it was "my" QSL card and it had "my" name, address and "official" US Government, FCC issued call sign! It couldn't get any better than that!

No DX was worked as a Novice – zilch! None even heard!

Eventually I "upgraded" to a Hallicrafters S-40 and a Heathkit AT-1. Now armed with a "rock" for 80 and another "rock" for 40, and a "real" receiver I was working lots of stations. My code speed was steadily increasing and I found that I could copy 13 words per minute with relative ease!

On a blustery, very cold morning in February 1956, Dad accompanied me to the FCC Field Office in Chicago where I "sat" for the General Class License. It was very intimidating. A steady hum of coughs and groans filled the room. I was one of about 20 examinees. I was surprised that the majority seemed to be about my age! There were no girls! With a shaky hand I managed to accurately send 13 words per minute to the examiner and got a "good fist" comment!

According to the “Date of Issuance,” on March 12, 1956 I became a General Class Licensee. Again, my official license was stamped in blue by “C.B.Plummer” only now I was W9VZY! Ah ha! Now I’d be on “phone” at last! In those days, Novice Class licensees could operate phone on 2 meters but building such a rig and receiver was way out of my league. Finally I’d be able to put my trusty Heathkit on phone.

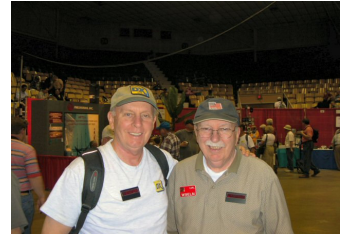
After a number of failed attempts at “cathode” modulation, W9SCN (Carl Swanson) helped me build a plate modulator for the AT-1! It had a “250 watt” modulation transformer on it and used a pair of metal 6L6’s. Of course, 250 watts of audio were not available but oh how I delighted in saying that – “. . . a 250 watt modulation transformer . . .” – wow! Additionally, a VF-1 VFO had been acquired in anticipation of dropping the novice “N” – and – while the temptation was great, it never was used as a novice. Crystal control only – by the book!

Now, I’ve got to tell you that VZY does not really sing on phone or CW but on April 19, 1956 at 6:35 PM CST I had my first QSO as a General with C. Myers W9OKO on 10 meters with a R5 S9 signal report. He was mobile! Amazing!

DX – Finally! October 3rd, 1956 – Sunspot numbers were high, the bands were really hot! At 2325 SAST I made my first DX QSO with Van ZS6OV with 59+ signals both ways on 10 meter AM using my “T2FD” antenna. It was “magic” again!

It took a while for me to discover that Dxing was really my main interest. It wasn’t until the 70’s that I really made a concerted effort increase my totals. My rigs got more sophisticated, the antennas got higher and larger, legal limit amplifiers were added, individual Collins S-Lines for each band were added the shack, QSL cards started to add up to more and more countries. Like most of us, there was about a ten (10) year period in which I was almost completely inactive thus missing a few that were readily available. Hey, that just gives one something to work!

That’s me in about 1973 having fun and me and my brother Earl (W9ELN) – still having fun!



US calls I’ve held include: WN9VZY, W9VZY, K3CCB, K4BGF, WB4JAN, and finally my current call N4HH which is NOT a vanity call! Some of you will remember back in the 70’s (before the vanity call program) when the FCC allowed Amateur Extra Class Licensees with a certain number of years of experience to apply for calls with double letter suffixes. N4HH was the 15<sup>th</sup> call on the list that I submitted and it became my regularly issued call – amazing! My license is AE-7T-30E and it is signed by Angelo Ditty as the Issuing Officer and by Ben F. Waple as the Secretary –and – yes, Ben’s name is in blue!

As the DX totals began to increase, the rig that I enjoyed using the most was a very much modified Signal One CX-7. It was large, heavy, somewhat un-reliable, a bear to work on, fun to modify and had the best RF processor of them all. It was paired with an Alpha 76 CA – 3 tubes with a hypersil transformer. That combination eventually fed a stack of HyGain 204BA’s for 20 meters. If I couldn’t work them with that station, I believed that no one could work them!



Beginning in the mid 70's I started collecting and reconditioning Collins S-Line equipment. There is just something about the S-Line and KWM-2/2A that make them a work of art to me. Aesthetically, they are simply the most pleasing amateur equipment that I've seen. They just "look right" and when properly electronically aligned and mechanically tweaked can still hold their own today.

Here is one of my early Collins stations (Circa 1975) complete with the 30S-1 amplifier.

Below is one of my most recent Collins stations. Most of this equipment was obtained from Don Kasten (N4DK) and was extensively reconditioned over a period of several months. Eventually it went to Carsten Esch (DL6LAU). You might remember Carsten from the VP6DX Dxpedition.



At one point in the process of playing "Merry-Go-Round" radios, the station looked like this:



Right now I'm playing with the Elecraft K3. Here it is on top of my seventh Mark V. This will give you an idea of its relative size. It's a lot of radio in a small box and performed very well on our TI50DX operation as the

"Run 2" station which you can see in the second picture.



Currently my DX Total stands at 351 worked, confirmed and credited. I still need four: Conway Reef (3D2C), North Korea (P5), Eritrea (E3) and Yemen (7O).

Oh yes, somewhere along the line, outside of my ham radio world, I managed to find time to (among other things):

- work in the concession stand at the Harmer Drive-In Theater
- discover girls
- drive the "short" bus for a school system
- participate in the development of atomic fuel for nuclear submarines
- receive a patent or two – and assign the "rights" to the "company"
- run in formula V
- work for the "government"
- complete 23 consecutive Peachtree Road Races
- have fun riding dirt bikes and a BSA 650 with a nice extended fork that took 2 helpers to get upright when you laid it down!
- major in Physics and Mathematics
- find out that I liked to play at electronics more than work at it

- program in Assembly, Fortran, CPM, HTML, etc.
- earn a Doctorate at the University of Florida in 1971 – and - yes, in my work-a-day world I was called Doctor Nesbitt – or sometimes just Doctor Don – but I’m not a “real” doctor like Jim! I just enjoy all the “rights and privileges” appertaining thereto – anyone know just what those are?
- teach every level from elementary to graduate school
- chase the first “manned moon shot” as high as we could in a Piper Comanche 400
- “participate” in the 60’s revolution!
- write a gazillion memos and papers
- organize and conduct a gazillion meetings and “events”
- head a gazillion “committees” and make a gazillion speeches
- appear in and do voiceovers for a number of training videos
- start a consulting firm and make a few bucks
- and a bunch of other stuff that you and I are likely not very interested in!

Probably my best accomplishment is my daughter Laura (my “other” Laura) and my two spectacular grandchildren - Parker and Holden – now that’s the good stuff!

By the way, now I’m back to wires in trees – just like I started - and - after all these years, I still love the “magic” of radio!

I’ll see you in the pile-ups! ‘73 es gud dxing Don N4HH

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Editors note:

Don’s Novice license was issued on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1955 and received on May 23<sup>rd</sup> when he had his first QSO. Mine was issued on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1955 and I had my first QSO on May 24<sup>th</sup>. We were just 1 day apart on the first QSO but, unfortunately we never worked each other.

Jim K4DLI

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This month I am going to give a personal product review. Those of you with fancy, computer controlled or point-and-shoot rotors may not be interested. However, if you have one of the Hy-Gain rotors such as the Ham II, III, IV or Tail Twisters this may be of interest to you.

If you have one of the above rotors you know how it is if you are trying to change the rotor heading, switch the amplifier and set the frequency on the transceiver all at the same time while trying to get everything set to pounce on the new DX that was just put out on the TeleNet. OK--I know--if we had the new fancy everything computer controlled--just click on the spot and everything goes “Whirrr” then it would not be a problem--- BUT, I don’t--so here is something that will help a little. Those of you with the Hy-Gain rotors also know that on occasions the break wedge will stick and you have to do a reverse direction move and then move it in the direction you want to go. This little kit takes care of all of that with the tap of the break release.

For about the past 2-years I have seen the “Idiom Press” Rotor-Ez Kit at Dayton and this last May I picked one up there. They are also available as assembled and ready to install. This kit comes in several versions including one the that will interface with a computer to do automatic rotor position with just a point and click. I did not get this option. It also has several features that can be programmed in such as, the ability to use two beams that are set at 90 degrees to each other on the same mast. This allows you to select either beam and have the meter indicate the correct beam heading without having to do any mental math to determine which way one of the beams is pointed.

This is not a difficult kit to build but, one must be careful as it had some rather small components and you have to drill at least one additional hole in the control case for an additional Red/Green LED. This new LED is pretty neat, when the rotor starts to move the LED is Red, the as it turns it goes Orange, Yellow and as it nears the end of

rotation it turns Green. This give you a visual indication, without looking directly at the meter, of about where it antenna is in it's rotation cycle. One important thing to do is keep an ohm meter handy to check the value of the resistors, these new colors are not as easy to determine as the old IRC resistor colors.

After the kit is completed what does it do for you?

Well , if you remember the original Hy-Gain rotors have a "Calibration Pot" that was used to set the end point of the scale. The kit turns this into a position pot that allows you to simply turn the pot and the meter moves to any heading you choose. When this is set, simply tap the break release once and the program in the microprocessor will release the break, turn the rotor about 5-degrees in the opposite direction, to be sure the break wedge is released, and then turn the rotor until it approaches the heading you set in. About 3-degrees before the target heading the rotor shuts off to allow the beam to coast down and stop. Then 5-seconds later the break is set. This allows the antenna to come to a complete stop before the break wedge is set. No more having to use one hand to hold down the break release with one finger and using another finger to hold the lever for the direction you wish to turn the rotor. Just Turn--Tap--and use that hand to set something else. Another feature is it has electric "End Points" programmed in at 3-degrees before the end of rotation so it never runs the rotor full into the stop. This eliminated the "Stuck Rotor Syndrome" if the break wedge sticks with the rotor against the stop and you can not move it in the opposite direction. I had this happened one or two times and had to wait for the wind to come up and rock the antenna to free the break wedge. It was that or climb the tower and rock the antenna.

A lot of the new rotors out there already have this feature built in. However, if you have one of the older rotors and don't want to spent about a Kilo-Buck to get this feature you may want to look into the "Idiom Press" Rotor-Ez Kit. Prices start at about \$100.00 for the kit

and go to about \$165.00 for the assembled model that includes an RS-232 connection.

Here is a list of features:

- 5 second delay before releasing brake after any operation
- Really slick "Auto-Point" feature
- Full manual override always available
- Algorithms to deal with pot strip "Dead Spots"
- Control Accuracy: Better than 3 degrees
- Programmable Anti-stick routine
- Programmable Electronic End Points
- Programmable Overshoot option for large arrays
- Full 90° Offset support for secondary antennas
- LED's give brake and rotational status
- RS-232 support optional, commands compatible with HyGain DCU-1 control
- Free Windows 9X RS232 pointing program available
- 90 day warranty on parts; repair service and installation service available
- Patent Pending
- Works with Ham-II, Ham III, Ham IV and all TailTwister rotors
- Installs in any unmodified Ham-M series or TailTwister rotor control box with three paddles on the rotor control box

You can get full details at:

<http://www.idiompress.com/rotor-ez.html>

If you have a Hy-Gain rotor give one of these a try.

Jim K4DLI

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**The SEDXC Newsletter is published monthly by the Southeastern DX Club . All opinions expressed by the contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, officers, or club. We welcome your opinion.**

**DX PACKET FREQ. (Corrections, 1/2/04)**

**N4XMX off line(2400) 144.91 (direct, Vinings),  
off line(2400) 145.65 (direct or ATLDX)**

**Note: ATLDX is down right now, direct OK.**

**KS4Q (2400) 144.97 MHz; 'c saw3'**

**(2400) 145.63 MHz; 'c saw4'**

**(1200) 145.69 MHz; 'c saw5'**

**Once you get a connect on any of the three**

**above frequencies, enter 'c saw1'. Once**

**you get a connect to saw1, enter 'c ks4q'**

**or simply 'dx'. or telnet dx.ks4q.net**

**NI4X (9600) 144.93, 145.71, 440.75**

**K4UGA (Athens)(2400) 145.67 (SE Megaclst)**

**(telnet 128.192.52.40 599, must put in port 599)**

**DX COMMUNICATION FREQ.**

**Simplex 147.54**

**K4JPD Repeater (tone 85.4 Hz) 147.195+**

**SEDXC WEBPAGE**

**[www.sedxc.org](http://www.sedxc.org)**

**SEDXC REFLECTOR [sedxc@contesting.com](mailto:sedxc@contesting.com)**