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# Bulletin



August 2023

Founded In 1958

## Our Next Meeting & Speaker

**Date & Time:** August 17, 2023, 7:00 PM  
**Location:** Via Zoom  
**Speaker:** Valerie Hotzfeld  
**Topic:** "What's a girl like you doing in a place like this?"

Please join us for an interesting and entertaining presentation.

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## From the Prez *(de John Tramontanis, N4TOL)*



### August President's Column

This is certainly an exciting time for DXers. Based on trends for Solar Cycle 25, sunspot numbers are rising much more quickly and sharply than in Cycle 24, and are way ahead of most early predictions. There should be plenty of opportunities for those new to DXing to snag some ATNOs (ALL Time New Ones), and for the more seasoned DXers to score some band fills or to have hope for the appearance of that "rare one" along with

conditions that will be conducive to work them this time around!

We were entertained by a fascinating presentation at last month's meeting by our club member Gregg Marco, W6IZT, on the recent activation of Ducie Island, VP6A. The DXpedition made over 60,000 QSOs utilizing the "Rig In a Box"; (RIB) system. Perhaps the use of this new technology will allow for activations of rare DX entities that have not been feasible for quite some time.

The recent challenging DXpedition to Bouvet, 3YØJ, along with the advent of the RIB technology for DXing, has stirred up some commentary both in QST and CQ magazines. In the May QST issue, ARRL CEO David Minster, NA2AA, addressed these topics. Likewise, in the June CQ issue, Editor Rich Moseson, W2VU, weighed in as well on the situation. Both essentially suggested that it may be time to discuss these issues and consider some changes to DXCC criteria. In the coming months, we will have club member Dick Baxter, K5TF, a member of the DX Advisory Committee (DXAC) as our guest speaker. This will be an excellent time to learn about how the DXAC functions and also provide an opportunity to ask questions and weigh in on the

aforementioned DX issues that seem to be in the forefront today. Exciting times indeed!!

Our program for the August meeting will be presented by club member Val Hotzfeld, NV9L. Val will be sharing her experiences in the various aspects of amateur radio that she is involved with. As an active contester and DXer, and her prominence in the amateur radio community, her story should be of great interest to all.

Please check out the club home page at [sedxc.org](http://sedxc.org) for info on Val's presentation for August, and also, a look at Gregg's program from last month.

73 John N4TOL



<http://t-rexsoftware.com/sedxc/dxelmers/>

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## VP's Corner *(de Nathan Wood, K4NHW)*

### A Few Word From Our Vice President

#### VP Corner

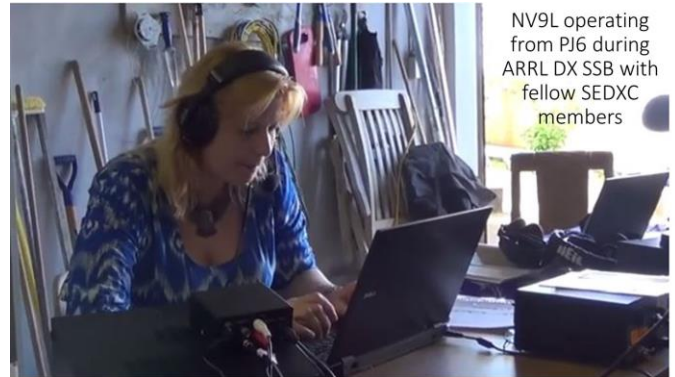
#### This Month



I hope that you enjoyed last month's presentation as much as I did! Gregg, W6IZT, gave us an in-depth look at what it was like to activate Ducie Island

and deploy the groundbreaking RIB (Rig in a Box). This revolutionary DXpedition utilizing remote operators is sure to set the bar for future DXpeditions to come. If you missed the presentation, you can find it at <http://sedxc.com/zoom/>

For this month's speaker we are pleased to have Valerie Hotzfeld, NV9L, joining us. Valerie is very involved in several aspects of amateur radio. She's been a co-host on Ham Nation for eight years, a pilot on several high profile DXpeditions, a ham radio "how-to" video creator for her



YouTube channel, and a volunteer for the "Force of 50" team that responded to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. Valerie was also honored to have been chosen as DARA's 2018 Hamvention "Amateur of the Year." She may have only been DXing since 2011 but is already just shy of 2800 band countries worked. She's also an avid contester with her husband Jerry, WB9Z.

Join us August 17 to find out "What's a girl like you doing in a place like this?"

Nathan H. Wood, K4NHW

## Treasurer's Journal *(de Jeff Cantor, K1ZN)*



Greetings, Fellow DXers!

This month we welcome two new members.

Kathy Austin, N8JLJ,  
president of the Sun City  
Radio Club in Griffin. She

is also a member of the Fayette County  
Amateur Radio Club. She is active in a  
number of ham radio areas including public  
service, volunteer license testing and DX.  
Welcome, Kathy.

Fredrick Brock, W4FVB, returns to the ham  
radio airwaves after being QRT for five  
decades. He describes himself as being a  
100w and a wire guy, active across all HF  
bands and modes. His YL Marianne is also  
on the air as W8MSB.

Welcome Marianne & Fredrick.

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Disbursements to report for July 2023:

This month our checkbook balance (as of August 1, 2023) is \$14,942.96.

### July Disbursements

Purpose	Amount
<b>Treasurer's Report</b>	
<b>Disbursements</b>	
Donation to Clublog	\$400.00
Donation to Northern California DX Foundation	300.00
DXpedition donation to E6AM (Niue)	300.00
Table at Stone Mountain Hamfest	83.00
Postage	10.90
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$1,093</b>

August 1, 2023 Account Balance is \$14,942.96

73 & GUD DX,  
Jeff / K1ZN

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## Activities (de Verne Fowler W8BLA)



Starting off in a new role, I want to reach out to the membership and ask for input on events or activities you miss and would like to try again. Also are there any suggestions for those two or three times a year member events that take place like picnics, holiday parties and such. Due to the widespread locations of the members, it is obviously very hard for those two hours or more away to attend some of them and maybe a small event in multiple locations is more favorable. Need to know if this is of interest. As a life member of INDEXA, there was recently an event announced that takes place in September 2023. A QSO Party and points for Nonmembers, Members and Officials. It looks to be a fun event and it happens to be week long. No reason that I can see that an activity similar to that would be something to consider. Participation in the 13 Colonies was

fun this year as in the past and would be welcomed information on how many participated, what modes and earning the clean sweep with the bonus stations. Club as also will be attending hamfests around the southeast and looking to update the video presentation and focus more on membership and doing a few club presentations. Stopping by the booth and chatting up with visitors is always a great idea. Volunteers are always welcomed and so are opinions and suggestions.

Next upcoming activity is the fall picnic, and several locations might be in order. What are your thoughts. Drop me an email or call.

Verne W8BLA  
770-364-9500  
[w8bla@arrl.net](mailto:w8bla@arrl.net)

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## Around The Shack (de Hal Kennedy N4GG)



As I've moved along in my 62-year ham career, my interest in shack design has grown. Just as with the "best rig" and the "best antenna," there is no "best shack design." The best layout for your shack

### Shack Design Notes

depends on how you plan to operate and how you address the tradeoff between performance and appearance. When you get down to the details, no two shacks are alike.

Will you be head-down for 24 hours trying to win a contest? Or do you resonant with the impression made by lights, meters, monitors and accessories? I call those “display shacks” and they’re just fine if it’s what you like. Most shacks fall somewhere between hard-core highly efficient contest shacks and beautiful-to-look-at display shacks. It’s possible to design a shack that can be both efficient and visually appealing.

There is more to say on this subject than can be covered in one of these columns. Presented here are a few suggestions to help with shack design, or redesign. If this were QST, what follows would be under “Hints and Kinks,” except “Hints and Kinks” is now “Hints and Hacks.” I’ll not comment on that change.

Here are some ideas in no particular order:

Power supplies: Perusing station pictures on the internet I see power supplies on many operating desks and sometimes they are front-and-center. Desk space is valuable real estate. When looking at a power supply there is nothing to see and nothing to adjust. Put the power supplies on the floor or somewhere out of the way.

Elbows: Your forearms and if possible your elbows need a place to rest. That place is not your lap. I see pictures of rigs set to CW frequencies with nice paddles on the desk. Those stations are obviously used on CW - at least part of the time. The space between the front of the radio(s) and the edge of the desk is three inches, or two inches, or one.

How can anyone send that way? How long can you send CW with your arm in mid-air?

Even if you are just a casual SSB or FT-8 operator, some depth between the front of the rig(s) and the edge of the desk is desirable. If nothing else, there needs to be a place for coffee.

Legs: As with your arms and elbows, you need a place for your legs. Look at shack pictures on the internet. Some of the stations where the rigs come to the front edge of the table (it’s not a desk at this point) have no opening for a person’s legs. My guess is such stations are only to look at.

In complicated stations, keeping wires away from one’s feet becomes an issue. Wire bundling is discussed below.

Chairs: They come in three distinct types: 1) good, 2) okay, and 3) terrible. If you like to operate, you owe yourself a good chair. The best chair I’m aware of is the Herman Miller Aeron. If you’re unfamiliar with these you can Google “Aeron” and see what a great chair looks like. Scanning the specs of an Aeron, you will notice the myriad available adjustments and for sure you will notice the price. I have seen prices over \$1,000, but as I scan the internet tonight I see new ones advertised for under \$400. I have bought two over the years. One I bought “new” on eBay for \$300. That was in 2003. I am sitting in it as I write this - 20 years later. I got my money’s worth. Like many things on eBay, the chair was advertised as “mint” or “like

new in the original packing.” It was new - it just couldn’t be advertised that way. My second Aeron I bought from K4JA as his shack was dismantled. Look for bargains if you want one.

At my last QTH I had an office and a ham shack. Each had an Aeron. Once you know what they look like you will see them on TV. Cable- news newscasters sit for four hours at a time – in Aerons. They are worth the money and are indestructible. There are, of course, plenty of other good chairs to choose from. Aerons have nice padded armrests.

If you have one of those 3-inch deep operating desks, you will need a chair with good armrests. Aerons come in three sizes – A, B, and C. It’s important to get the correct size.

Built-in Equipment: I’ve seen stations where fancy woodworking surrounds each piece of gear. These stations are impressive. The drawbacks should be obvious. You can’t get to the back of any of the gear for repairs or experiments. You can’t upgrade gear without a carpenter.

I was a guest op at HP1XX once for the ARRL DX contest. Everything at that station was built-in. We had an intermittent connector on the back of an unnecessary wattmeter - it took two hours to take the operating desk apart to get to it. There are approaches that mitigate the problem somewhat. I’ve seen entire built-in shacks on casters. Those can be rolled away from a wall to get to the

back of things. I’ve seen built-in shacks built against a wall where there is an opening behind the gear to allow access from a room or chase behind the wall. But even with rear access, changing a rig or accessory requires a scroll saw and woodworking skills.

If your operating desk is not of the built-in variety, try to place it far enough away from a wall so you can walk behind it.

Bundled Cables: Complex stations usually benefit from cable bundling. If bundling, wire markers can be a big help. Bread wrapper tags make good clip-on markers. I wrote an *Around the Shack* column some years ago about noise generated by in-line power supplies (computers, monitors, SteppIR power supplies, etc.) magnetically coupling into coax. This can seriously raise a station’s noise floor. NEVER bundle an in-line power supply (or its leads) together with coax runs. If you need to bundle, then it’s one bundle for the signals (coax) and another for power. Keep them separated by at least six inches.

Lighting: Poor lighting is a significant contributor to operator fatigue and radio manufacturers aren’t helping. TenTec Orions and many Yaesu rigs use black letters on black panels. Good grief.

Shack lighting is part common sense and part aesthetics. I prefer downward illumination onto my operating desk with no light directly in my eyes. Set up properly, enough light bounces off the desktop to illuminate the equipment front panels. This

can be accomplished with lamp shades that are opaque – they only allow light to shine down. LED bulbs often have the bottom third (the socket end) made of opaque white plastic – these send all the light up and none of it down. Avoid those.

Dimmable lighting can be helpful. Some people prefer dim red light if they are doing serious operating at night.

Here a few examples that illustrate some of the above suggestions.

Figure 1 shows the Florida condominium station at N4GG/4. This station is for one thing – operating. The power supply is on the floor. There is ample room for forearms, elbows and legs. There are no unneeded boxes (wattmeters, computers beyond one, external monitors, antenna tuners, etc.). The table lamp is small and shines down – no light is directed toward the operator. This station has worked the world on CW, SSB and FT8 on 80 through 6 meters. It's as ready for contesting as it is for a rag chew. Experiments and equipment changes are a breeze. It is not impressive. It is minimalist. It is eminently functional. It's an object lesson of what you don't need in order to have fun on the air.

Figure 2 is an example of a shack with the gear built-in. I cropped the photo to hide the owner. The rear of the gear is not accessible. Nothing is easily changed or tested. There is no room for forearms or elbows. The operator sits sideways to the equipment! This station is impressive and dysfunctional. This station does not use the

LOTW, has negligible QRZ inquiries and has not been seen by the RBN, which means it's seldom operated. This station is primarily for show. I have to admit, it is pretty.

Figure 3 is the only known photograph of the Marconi wireless room aboard the HMS Titanic, circa 1912. The quality of the image is poor - it's a double exposure. The photo is, however, sufficient to see that Marconi had station layout figured out way back then. This is a serious commercial station. Telegrams (then called Marconigrams) streamed through here every night until April 14-15, 1912 when the traffic was all SOS and CQD (CQ-Distress). Marconigrams were paid for by the word. The radio room was a profit center for the steamship lines and for the Marconi Company. The two operators were expected to work long, hard shifts. The station *had to be* efficiently arranged to make this possible.

What do we see aboard the Titanic? The power supplies are in another room – there is no need to have them in front of the operator. The operator faces the receivers. There is space for forearms and elbows, a necessity for long stints on CW. There is no extra gear. This is 100% an operator's station. This room saved 705 lives on the night of April 14-15, 1912. It also ushered in radio regulations for the first time.

I hope this has been helpful. Is it time to reevaluate your shack design?

73,  
Hal N4GG

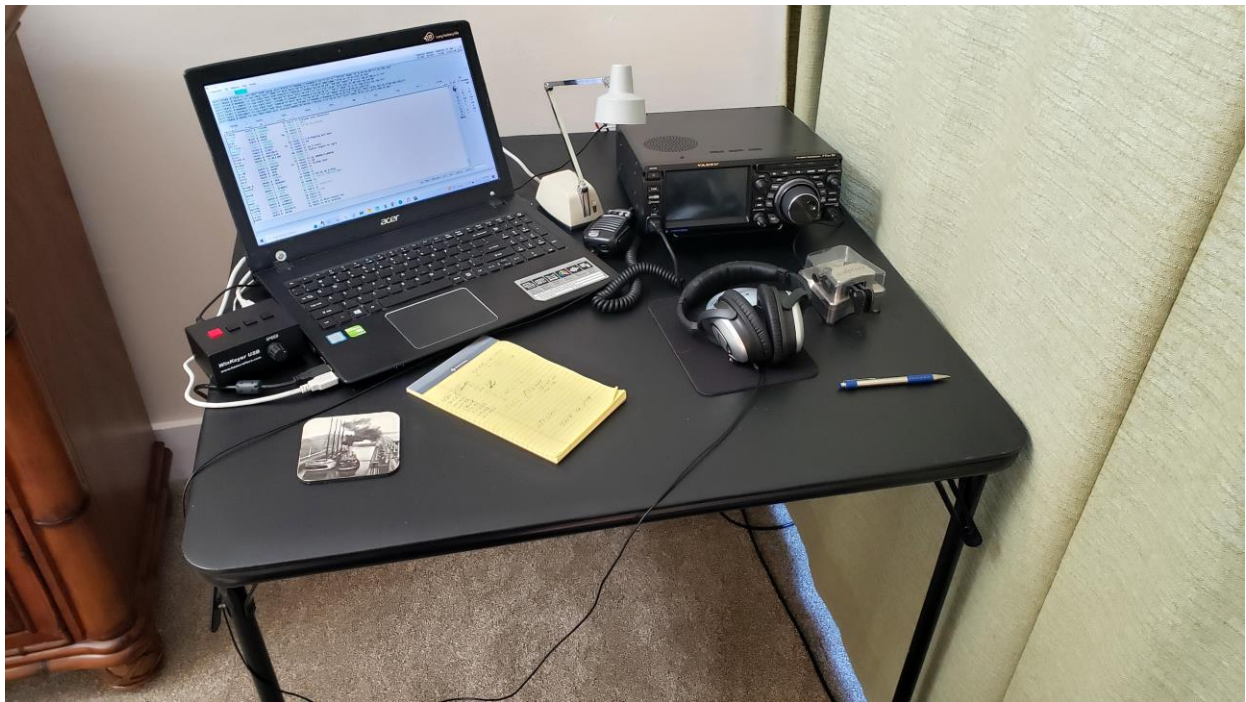
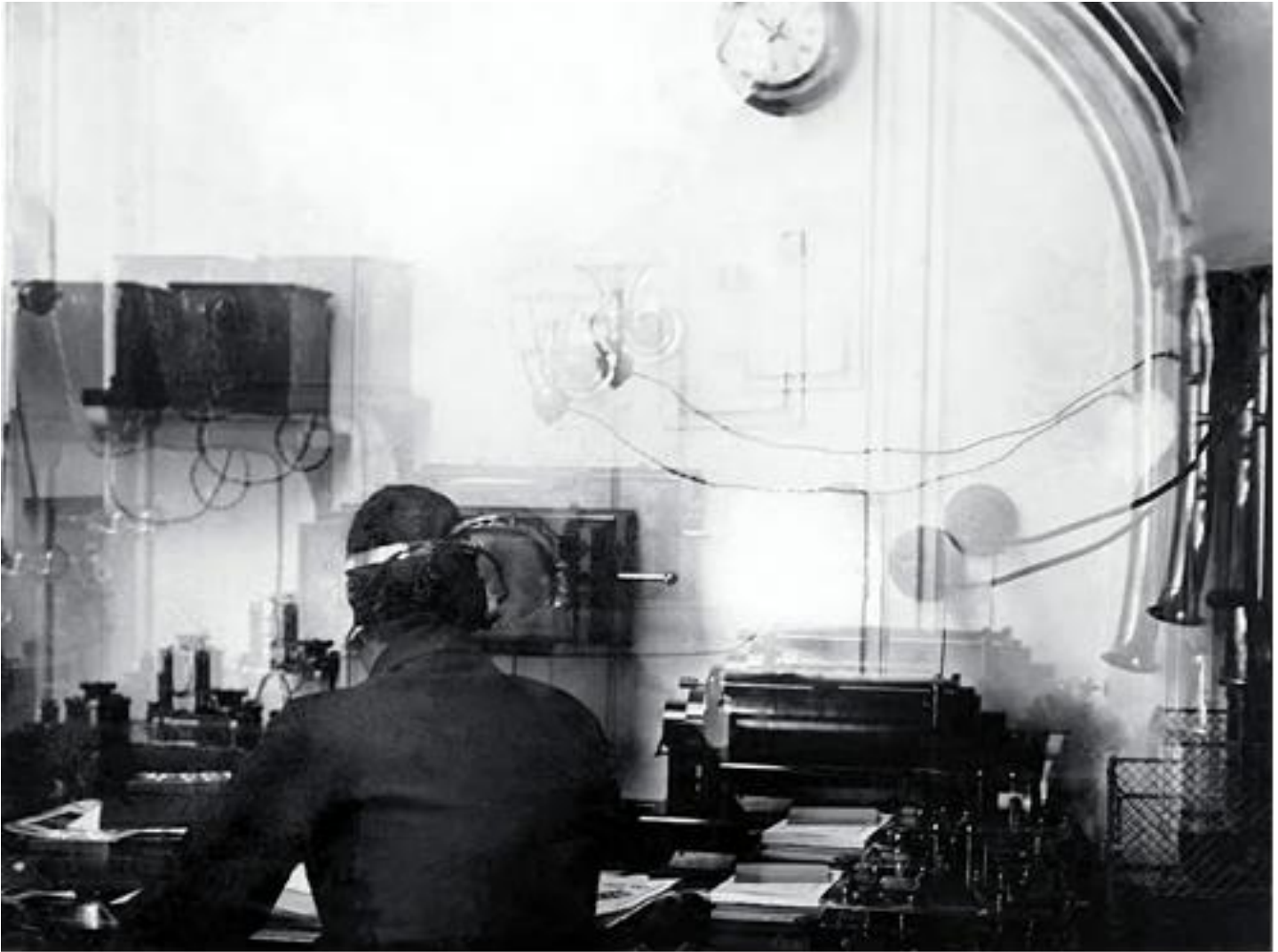


Figure 1. N4GG/4. A no-frills station for DXing, contesting and fun.

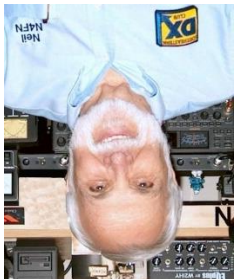


Figure 2. A station where everything is built-in. There is no room for the operator's arms. This station would not be fun to operate.

Figure 3. The Marconi room aboard HMS Titanic, Circa 1912.



## July Humor



De Neil Foster – N4FN



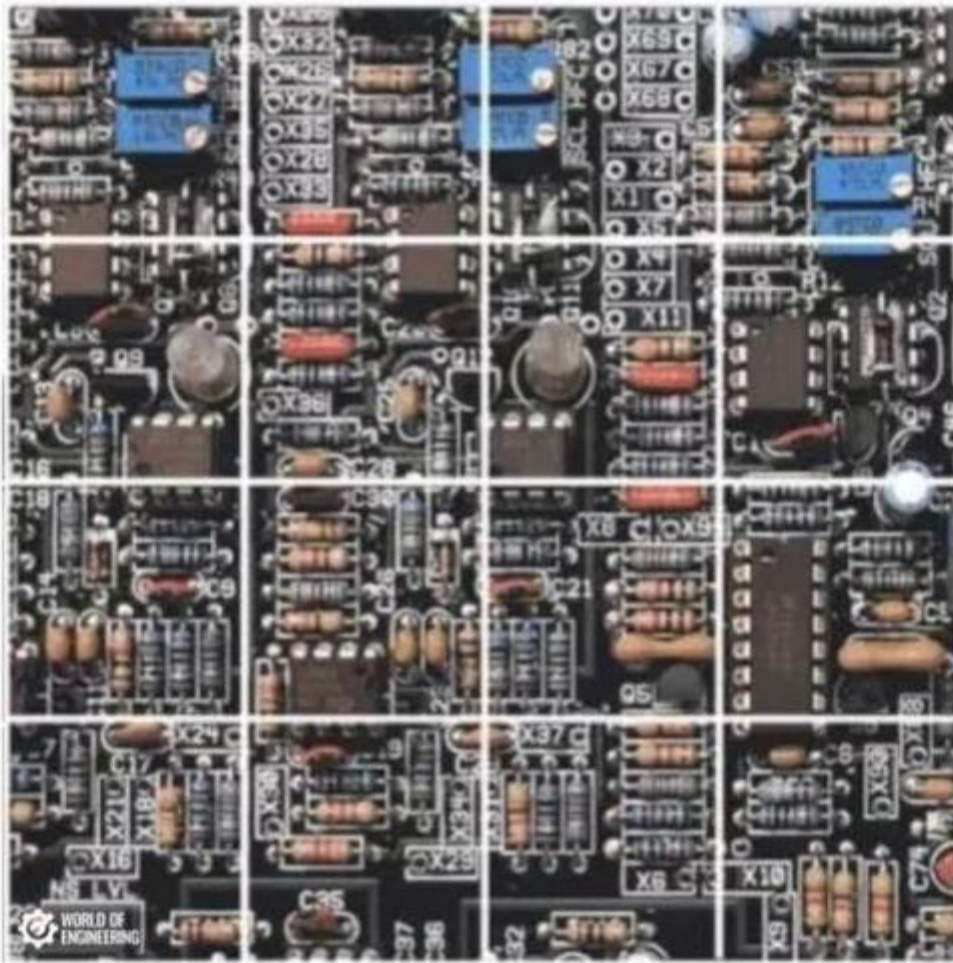
When someone first  
sees my shack:



And one last image

Select all squares with  
**220Ω resistors**

If there are none, click skip



WORLD OF  
ENGINEERING

SKIP

## 25 Years Ago... (de Van Herridge, N4VGE, Bulletin Editor)



The August 1998 Bulletin link is attached below for your enlightenment and enjoyment. Don't forget to check SEDXC's website to get the latest club information, [www.scdxc.org](http://www.scdxc.org)

<https://t-rexsoftware.com/sedxc/bulletins/sedxc0898.pdf>

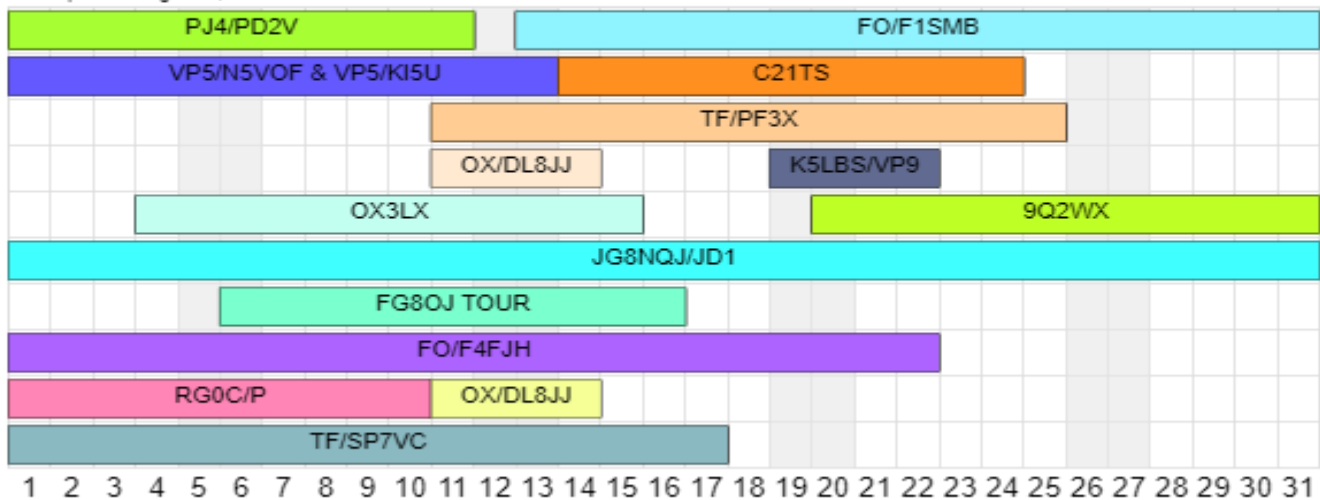


The *DX World* Calendar features a timeline of all DXpeditions anticipated for the current month and is a great way to plan your chase for the next, All-Time New One (ATNO). The Calendar is updated regularly; use this link to see the latest version:

[http://www.hamradiotimeline.com/timeline/dxw\\_timeline\\_1\\_1.php](http://www.hamradiotimeline.com/timeline/dxw_timeline_1_1.php)

### DX WORLD.net FEATURED DXPEDITIONS TIMELINE

Last update: August 4, 2023



Edited by MM0NDX

AUGUST

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## SEDXC Officers & Positions

John Tramontanis, N4TOL – President – [iam4rb@gmail.com](mailto:iam4rb@gmail.com)  
Nathan Wood, K4NHW – Vice President -- [nathan.wood23@gmail.com](mailto:nathan.wood23@gmail.com)  
Joel Levine, WA4HNL – Secretary -- [jlevine@bellsouth.net](mailto:jlevine@bellsouth.net)  
Jeff Cantor, K1ZN – Treasurer -- [jacantor9@gmail.com](mailto:jacantor9@gmail.com)  
Verne Fowler, W8BLA – Activities Manager -- [w8bla@arrl.net](mailto:w8bla@arrl.net)

## SEDXC Appointed Positions

Chaz Cone, W4GKF – Webmaster – [w4gkf@chazcone.com](mailto:w4gkf@chazcone.com)  
Van Herridge, N4VGE – *SEDXC Bulletin* Editor – [vanherridge@gmail.com](mailto:vanherridge@gmail.com)

### From the mailbag:

Dear SEDXC,

Thank you for making a donation to Club Log!

Your donation ensures Club Log is free of charge and free from advertising - that's one of the founding principles of the site, and it's only possible to do with your help. It is entirely thanks to the kindness of people like you that the running costs are covered and Club Log can continue to grow and take on more users.

As mark of appreciation, each time a user performs an upload or uses the expedition search tools, a donor's name is displayed. Additionally, you will see a star next to your name which signifies that you've made a donation. You'll also see your name in the list of donors for the next 12 months.

On behalf of the Club Log team, thank you again, and good DX!

v73,  
Michael G7VJR