



Bulletin



December 2024

Founded In 1958



From the Prez

(de John Tramontanis, N4TOL)

Happy Holidays to all!!

As we approach the close of 2024, and prepare for the New Year, it is a good time to reflect and share our blessings with family and friends.

Our SEDXC Holiday dinner certainly provided an opportunity to celebrate the season, enjoy some holiday cheer and good food with fellow Southeastern DX Club members.

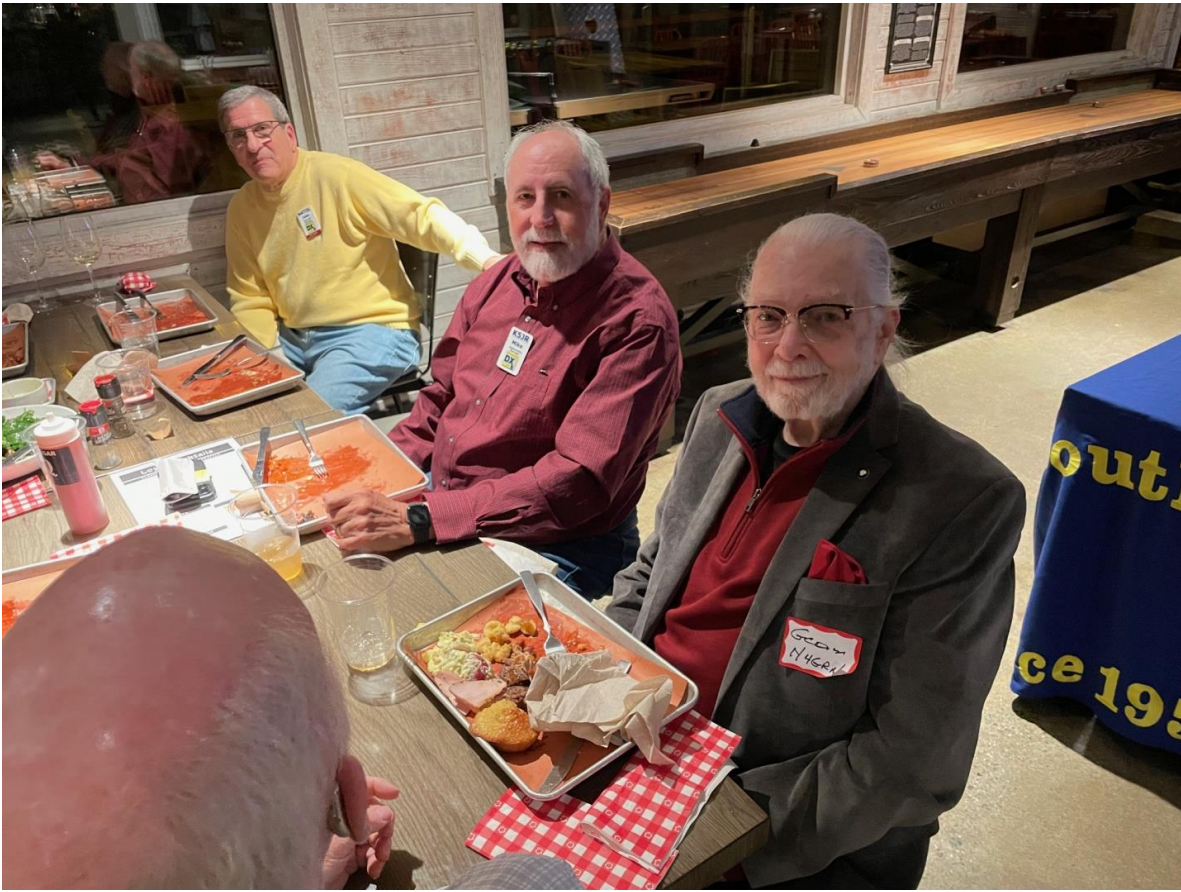
It was a great time to visit in person with friends, both old and new, and a lot of positive feedback was received about the in-person event. On behalf of the club, our appreciation goes out to our Activities Manager Don Deal, KK4E, with help from Verne Fowler, W8BLA, for putting together this wonderful event.











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I look forward to seeing you all at the January Zoom meeting, on Thursday, January 16th at 7:00 PM. Details to come.

Also, be sure to get your logs in order for the submission to the CQ DX Marathon for 2024.

73 John N4TOL

Hi SEDXC friends,

There is still a week of DX left to work for your 2024 DX Marathon submission, but some of you are already beginning to prepare your submission. Others, like myself, will wait until January 1st. Don't forget that the deadline is January 5th (2359Z).

For most, submitting your entry is a two-step process. First you prepare your ADIF file which has your 2024 contacts in it. Second you upload it into the DX marathon website and finalize your entry. I'll cover each separately.

Before beginning, remember some of the base rules. All contacts must be made from the same location, using up to two different calls (so if you changed calls, no problem). You can use a remote station, but all contacts must be made from that same remote station. Remember that all completed contacts are valid, you don't need LoTW or QSL confirmation.

You should also at this time determine your Class, which is based upon power and antennas. The categories are slightly different than last year. They are Unlimited (anyone over 100W is Unlimited), Limited (100W and antennas up to 50ft, including small beams/arrays), Formula (100W and wire

antennas) and QRP. If you aren't sure, consult the rules: <https://dxmarathon.com/rules/2024/>.

There are a number of different ways to prepare your ADIF with 2024 calls. There is no problem if the ADIF file has 2023 contacts or even earlier -- those will simply be ignored. If you are a DX Lab user, it is easy to export your 2024 from DX Keeper (note: I'm not a DX Labs user, but tried it once a few years ago, and thought it was intuitive). Another easy way is to use your ClubLog account, if all your contacts are in there. Login to Clublog, select 'Settings' then hit the 'Callsigns' button. You will get a page that allows you to download your ADIF. Might take a while, but that's no problem.

Some of you will have extra challenges preparing your ADIF file, for example if you operated from more than one location, or if you are entering the 100W category, but used your amp a few times, and so won't count those. If you have just a few ineligible contacts, it may be easier to remove them when you are finalizing your entry, but in other cases, you may need to prepare a clean ADIF with the eligible contacts.

Once you have your ADIF, go to the submission tool: <https://entry.dxmarathon.com/>. Select upload, and choose your correct ADIF file. Now you are ready to prepare and finalize your entry.

First, choose your Mode (most of us will be mixed, but you might want to enter CW only), and select your band, for a single band entry.

Below that are three tabs, for the Entities, Zones and WAE. You can go in there, and edit the QSO you want to use, for each of these.

Now you have to make sure your entry is the strongest it can be, by checking the right QSOs are in there for your DX entities and your zones and WAE. This is also an opportunity to remove a contact that isn't eligible (i.e. you used a club station to work HVO but worked them later from home -- make sure the right call is selected). The software has made some preliminary choices, but those are simply based upon what it found in your ADIF. It doesn't filter out the pirates or iffy contacts or whatnot. You can manipulate it using the edit button for the QSO.

The DX Marathon team does log checking, and they claim to have access to some DXpedition logs, etc. If you are aiming for a top score, take care to really get everything right. If you are like me, and want a good score, but aren't going to get a plaque, then still take some care, but don't worry too much.

One basic principle: if you have only one QSO from a DX entity or Zone, use that one, regardless of how sure you are. The worst that could happen is that the log checking removes it (you don't get an additional penalty). If you have more than one, use the best one--like one you got confirmed on LoTW. Avoid special callsigns (TC100TT or something like that).

There are six additional DX entities, beyond the regular 340 DXCC ones. The easiest three are 4U1A, Sicily, and European Turkey (TA1). The software will probably select those. The other three you may need to help the software find it--Shetland Is (GM), Bear Island, and Italian Africa. I don't think Bear Island was on this year, but the other two were.

Be careful with the zones, especially the US and Russian ones. W6IZT lives in Zone 5, not 3, and there many like that. I usually use Canadian calls, but even that isn't foolproof as Canadians can now use their callsigns in another province (sometimes?) without signing portable. Also be super careful with zones 17, 18, and 19. Don't be tricked by the Russian special calls here.

Once you are satisfied, hit Continue. This page will ask for your personal details. Important: this is where you select your Club. Use the pull-down menu to select "South-eastern DX Club." You are eligible to compete for the club if you operated from Georgia or one of its neighboring states. Or if you are a long time member of the SEDXC

(but operated somewhere else in the continental 48).

If you submit and realized you made a mistake, you can simply resubmit, multiple times (before the deadline of course). Also: it appears there is now a way to add

additional contacts from an ADIF. I haven't tried it, and most of us probably don't need that, but that is available.

If you have questions or need help, let me know. amgoss05@yahoo.com

Andy AA5JF



[SEDXC Elmers Link](#)

Support Youth Participation on DXpeditions and Remember Bob K4UEE

SEDXC has partnered with the International DX Association ([INDEXA](#)) to remember [Bob Alphin, K4UEE](#). Bob wished to promote and support youth in DXing & DXpeditioning. To those ends, INDEXA has made this a goal and SEDXC has partnered with INDEXA through a one-year match of our members' contributions to INDEXA in memory of K4UEE and acknowledgement of his goal.

On July 1st 2025, INDEXA will inform us of the total amount of SEDXC member contributions to the K4UEE fund. In this coming program year's SEDXC budget, we will set a match figure for what we can match up to. If you wish to participate, here is what to do:

Go to: [INDEXA Application](#)

Click the "Donate" checkbox.

Complete the basics, name, address, call, etc.

Under REMARKS, indicate that you are (1) a member of the Southeastern DX Club, & (2) you wish your donation to go to the K4UEE Memorial Fund

Click SUBMIT FORM

Any questions? Click [HERE](#) to email me.

Thank you very much, 73 & GUD DX, Jeff / K1ZN, Treasurer



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

Greetings, Fellow DXers!

TREASURER's Report – December 2024

- Checkbook Balance on December 1st: \$10,775.93
- Payments Made, month of November 2024:
 - Christmas & Cocos-Keeling Island DXPedition - \$350
 - Marquese's Island DXPedition - \$300
 - AU2K DXPedition \$100

To date in the 2024-2025 Budget Year DXPedition line item amount of \$7,303 we have disbursed \$3,850 for DXPeditions.

Next, we welcome new members Jonathan Turner, K4KJT of Powder Springs GA & David Perry, N4QS of Paducah KY.

73s & GUD DX, & Happy New Year,
Jeff / K1ZN, Treasurer

Around The Shack (*de Hal Kennedy N4GG*)



December 2024

Coax and Wire Redux

N4GG has undergone a QTH change. I've moved to a 55+, HOA controlled small-lot neighborhood. As I've done before, I managed to buy a lot on the periphery of the development with woods behind the house. The lot and the woods are small however, presenting a challenge to getting back on the air.

Many of us wind up burying cable, including coax, rotor cable, control cable and/or radials at some point in our ham careers. Burying cable at the new QTH was a necessity to keep the neighbors happy by, largely, keeping them unaware that a ham operator lives next door. Stealth has been the order of the day.

Prior columns have addressed finding inexpensive wire for radials (February, 2018) and carefully selecting coax with one's specific needs in mind (January, 2020). Here are the coax and wire/cable specifications for the new QTH:

- Buryable
- Low loss (coax). It's a 250 ft run from the shack to the back fence. Loss matters – the new station won't be running 1,500 watts.
- Cost. I continue to be frugal - out of habit. That habit began in 1961 when, as a novice, I was station-building with paper-route money, i.e., broke.
- A lifespan of 20 years. I'm in my seventies and this is my “home before the home.” I'd like to avoid digging up and reburying anything. This station needs to be built “once and done.”

After some research here is what I've bought and why:

Coax: The step above RG-213 (Belden 9913) is LMR-400, made by Times Microwave Systems. There are better cables to be sure, but price escalates quickly as performance goes up. LMR-400 is 3/8” diameter cable – it directly accepts a PL-259 and is relatively easy to work with. If you have ever worked with LMR-600 or LMR-1200 you know what “*not*

relatively easy to work with” is all about. LMR is a registered trademark of Times Microwave Systems, which is an Amphenol Company. As I've written before, Amphenol makes great products and “Amphenol or not at all” continues to be a good rule-of-thumb. In specific cases however there are good alternatives to Amphenol. The column of May, 2024, focused on Max-Gain Systems, a provider of excellent UHF connectors at prices below Amphenol's. This month I'll focus on two additional companies that make excellent products yet have flown below the radar of many hams.

The two Times products of interest to me were standard LMR-400, which is buryable but relatively stiff, and UltraFlex (LMR-400-UF) which is NOT buryable, degrades slowly in UV light and is flexible. LMR-400's stiffness makes it less than ideal for rotor loops while UltraFlex is good for rotor loops but may need replacing after about 10 years due to UV light degradation.

At my new station the coax of choice is Davis-RF Bury-FLEX. It's something of a hybrid between standard LMR-400 and UltraFlex. Bury-FLEX can be buried (it has the same jacket as standard LMR-400) and has the flexibility of Times UltraFlex. Davis-RF products are less expensive than equivalent Times products (sometimes A LOT less).

As of this writing (November, 2024) Davis-RF Bury-FLEX costs \$1.10/ft for lengths less than 100 feet, \$1.01/ft for lengths from 100 to 499 feet, and \$0.94/ft for lengths 500 feet and greater, when purchased directly from the company. Their products can be also be purchased from HRO, RF Parts and many others. Davis-RF sells it by the foot and if you call them someone knowledgeable will answer the phone! Davis-RF also sells an identical version of standard LMR-400 – their designation is DRF-400. The price for DRF-400 is within a penny per foot of Bury-FLEX. The MSRP for Times Ultra-Flex (LMR-400-UF) is \$2.48/ft!

The loss specification for Times LMR-400 and Davis-RF DRF-400 are the same: 0.9 dB/100 feet at 50 MHz. The loss specification for Times UltraFlex and Davis-RF Bury-FLEX are also the same: 1.1 dB/100 feet at 50 MHz. The flexible cables achieve their flexibility in part by using stranded center conductors rather than the solid center conductor used in standard LMR-400. This results in the additional 0.2 dB/100 ft loss at 50 MHz but provides cable that is much easier to work with.

Davis-RF also has a full line of amateur products including antenna wire, insulators, ladder line, Dacron support line, coax sealing tape, etc. They can be found on the web: www.davisrf.com.

I've used Bury-FLEX many times over the years with good success. The Davis-RF company is easy to work with and the telephone support is greatly appreciated. Their products are high-quality - they sell to commercial, marine and military customers as well as hams. I'm not mentioning the company as an advertisement and I have no financial interest in suggesting them. This month's column is about what you can find when you go shopping for exactly what you need. The Davis-RF company is somewhat of a sleeper. I've mentioned the company to hams who say they have never heard of it, despite their being in business for over 40 years.

While I am on the subject of lesser-known companies, I should mention CWS ByteMark, www.cswbytemark.com. Like Davis-RF, CWS ByteMark has been in business for over 40 years - quietly serving amateur radio and other markets. CWS ByteMark has been my go-to company for baluns, ununs and ferrite products for many years. Their products are priced below similar products from big-name suppliers and in my experience the performance of their products is as good or better.

I have used many of their 6:1 baluns (model BAL-300). A folded dipole made with 300-ohm ladder-line and fed with 300-ohm ladder-line needs 6:1 balanced-to-unbalanced matching to get back to 50 ohms. Running a ladder-line transmission line from a folded dipole to the ground, terminating it there

with a 6:1 balun and then following the balun with quality 50 ohm coax results in an antenna system with very low loss and near-perfect SWR. I have tortured BAL-300s with 1,500 watts on the wrong band (very high SWR) and never blown one up.

As an aside, I've wound my share of baluns over the years but always drew the line at 6:1s. A high-power 6:1 balun requires three large ferrite cores and some tricky winding interconnections. For 6:1 baluns, my make/buy decision has always come out "buy." In addition to the complexity, the cost of the large cores, a metal box, the output insulators and the input coax connector probably exceed the price of a BAL-300.

Last but not least I'd like to mention buryable control cable. When I buried my Bury-FLEX coax at the new QTH I added control cable into the trench for future use. I expect there will be an antenna relay or two in the backyard before long and perhaps a remote antenna tuner as well. These will need power and control connections. Prior to digging I went shopping for control cable. There are myriad cable choices – but sticking with "buryable" and "inexpensive" as independent variables, I wound up with lawn irrigation (sprinkler system) cable from Amazon.

The type I bought contains seven conductors of #18 stranded copper wire. The number of

conductors and wire gauge choices for irrigation cable are endless. As always, *begin with your requirements*. What makes sense for your present and future needs? The price for irrigation cable is very competitive and hovers just above the price for the copper content. I don't suggest speculating in irrigation cable, but if you stashed some away you might be able to melt it down and sell it at a profit in a few years. Or, maybe not.

Irrigation cable can also be used as rotor cable. What's sold as "Heavy-Duty Rotor Cable" typically has two heavy conductors (#16) for the motor (and the brake in CDR HAM-M style rotors) and six smaller gauge conductors (#18) for the indicator circuitry. The conductors in irrigation cable are all the same gauge, but two conductors can be connected in parallel to create a single conductor of heavier gauge. Here's a useful rule-of-thumb: When two wires of the same gauge

are connected in parallel, their combined cross-sectional area (current handling capability) increases by approximately three wire gauges (the gauge number goes down by three). For example, two #18 conductors in parallel are the equivalent one #15 conductor. I quickly found a 10-conductor irrigation cable on Amazon that's suitable as rotor cable. Six of the #18 conductors would be used for the indicator circuit and the remaining four #18 conductors would yield a pair of #15 equivalent conductors for the motor.

I hope this month's column has been helpful. When planning your next project, first *decide exactly what your requirements are*. Then go shopping. There are bargains to be had. Bargains from lesser-known companies and bargains based on alternate applications such as sprinkler systems!

73,

Hal N4GG

Note: Belden, Times Microwave Systems, Davis-RF, Amphenol, CWS ByteMark, LMR, Ultra-Flex, Bury-FLEX, Dacron, CDR and HAM-M are all registered trademarks. I have no financial interest nor am I sponsored in any way by the companies mentioned.



Greetings from the Editor

Happy Hanukkah and Happy New Year to everyone.

Check SEDXC's website to see the latest club information.

www.sedxc.org

See link below for the SEDXC Bulletin from 25 years ago.

<https://sedxc.org/sedxc/bulletins/sedxc1299.pdf>

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