



KARS KEY KLICKS



JOURNAL OF THE KANKAKEE AREA RADIO SOCIETY

Volume 81 Issue 6

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Contributors: K9CS, KC9DEP

JUNE 2006

June Featured Program: "DX-PEDITION TO MONTSERRAT"

The next KARS meeting will be Tuesday, June 6th, 7PM at St. Mary's Hospital. As usual, enter from the main south entrance. After a short business meeting, Carl K9CS will present an interesting program on his participation in the ARRL International CW DX Contest from the Island of Montserrat. It is sure to be a fascinating program, so plan to attend. See article and pictures on page 3.



Brian KC9FAV (R) presenting his fine program on CW at the May KARS meeting.

EXAM SESSION

An exam session will be held at 6PM, Wednesday, June 14th. At St. John's Church on W. River St. in Kankakee.

Exams for all classes of license may be taken. Be sure to bring a photo ID. If you are upgrading, bring your present original license and a copy thereof.

If you are a certified examiner, please attend and help out. It will help keep your certification current.

NEWS FROM W9VQC

In May, past KARS president Bill Williams W9VQC sent your editors a letter detailing current events in his life. He was a very active, long time KARS member who held virtually every office and post in the club. Bill, currently 80 and in pretty good health, lives in Mary Esther, Florida and guys from the local radio club are going to help him put up an antenna. He says hi and hopes to work KARS members soon. Bill also sent typed notes of KARS meetings dating back to 1942. These notes are fascinating and will be incorporated in a new monthly column called: KARS HISTORY BYTES

KARS KALENDAR

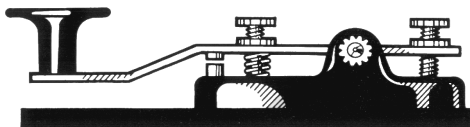
June 6.....KARS General Meeting
June 10-11.....ARRL VHF QSO Party
June 14.....Exam Session
June 20.....KARS Board Meeting
June 24-25.....ARRL Field Day
July (TBA)..... KARS General Meeting
July 16.....KARSFEST

The Kankakee Area Radio Society operates repeaters on:

*146.34/.94 107.2 PL Access
449.8/444.8 114.8 PL Access*

*Also, co-sponsors:
145.130 107.2 PL Access*

*Additionally, KARS sponsors:
144.39 Wide Area APRS digi-peater
145.53 KARS DX Cluster*



W9AZ

Field Day Is Coming!!!

By Jamie KC9DEP

Can you feel it? It's about time! Field Day preparations are now underway. This year may be a little different, though...

If you work HF, you know that propagation is on a low swing lately. I have heard some encouraging reports lately though, and we may be able to squeeze some activity out of 10m and 15m that we might not normally expect. In any case, we need to be prepared to work consistent 6m/VHF/UHF contacts throughout the contest. This is a great chance for any Technician-class ops to come out and operate solo! We're expecting some good contacts from other clubs taking the same approach, so we'd love to have a steady stream of operators on the V/U station.

For HF, we'll plan to repeat our previous layout, with a few minor changes in station location. This will be discussed at the next meeting. Concerning the GOTA (Get On The Air) station, we would like to have some Extra class operators volunteer to take control throughout the event. Jim, K9BIG, has done an awesome job coordinating the GOTA effort in the past few years, and would love to have some assistance this year and let some others share in the fun that comes from watching and assisting newer hams and non-ticketed folks have their first string of cross-country QSOs. Please contact Jim K9BIG or Jamie KC9DEP if you have any interest in helping out with the GOTA station this year.

Also, we're planning to again use N3FJP's Field Day logging software over the network, to include a couple of 802.11 WiFi links between campers/operating stations. We're looking forward to another "eventful" network setup operation, hopefully with a few less bumps than the last couple of years. Have a new 802.11 pop can reflector or coat hanger yagi you'd like to try out? This might be just the place... :)

If you have any ideas for Field Day or would like to see something special take place, please contact myself, Bob N9MBR, or Jim K9BIG.

Hope to see everyone out at the site!
- KC9DEP

SEE YOU AT FIELD DAY!!!

KARS HOMEPAGE— WWW.W9AZ.COM —KARS HOMEPAGE

INDIANA QSO PARTY - 2006 DEFENDING THE TITLE

Once again Howard AK9F and Don K9NR journeyed down to the land of deer, turkeys and exploding bumblebees to operate the Indiana QSO Party.

Sponsored by the Hoosier DX and Contest Club, the INQP is a 12 hour contest that was held on Saturday, May 6th. Go to <http://www.hdxcc.org> for rules, scores of previous years, etc.

Actually, Howard's Hunting Lodge" is in reality 80 acres of beautifully timbered land adjacent to the Hoosier National Forest near the Ohio River.

We were the only station in sparsely populated Perry County, except for one mobile passing through, which enabled us to work our own county. There are 92 counties in Indiana, and at some point in the contest there was a station on the air in every county.

Howard's potato cannon was put to good use to hoist antennas up into the tall trees (as well as other interesting uses). Apparently they were working... Carl, K9CS said we had one of the strongest signals of the Indiana stations.

Our goal was to beat our last years score. We hoped to make 500 Q's and we made the 500th in the very last minute! Results:

QSO: 260 CW, 240 Phone = 500
Multipliers = 136, total points 103,360

Last year we were top multi-op station with 432 contacts and 97,133 points, so we increased our score this year by 6%.

Howard claims we were able to do this by keeping Don out of the caves and focused on contesting. Actually, Don and Howard both managed to work in time for some target shooting and four-wheeling fun around the beautiful, hilly terrain.

There is a new Worked All Indiana award available for working Indiana counties and a write-up about it in the latest CQ magazine.

The story of the exploding bumblebees is difficult to express in written words...you need to ask Howard about them and his giant red birdhouse!



Howard AK9F, demonstrates that necessity is indeed the mother of invention as he points to the "spatula" standoff insulator



Howard AK9F captured this shot of Don K9NR at the operating position...the leg manacles are not visible in this photo

KARSFEST 2006

KARSFEST needs you! It's hard to believe it's less than 2 months away. Contact John WD9AYI today and say: "I want to do my part to help KARSFEST!"

ATTENTION! If you do not have internet access, contact the editors ASAP and let them know you need to continue receiving the newsletter via U.S. mail. Please do it today!

NCS FOR JUNE

June 5	KC9FAV
June 12	K9BYT
June 19	KE9MG
June 26	K9NR

Don't forget the net!
Mondays at 2100 hrs. local time

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

June 10	N9OQC
June 26	KF9DM
June 26	W9IOU
June 30	K9BAK

Let the newsletter editors know if we miss your birthday or get it wrong.

KARS HISTORY BYTES

April 8, 1942

"Ed Drolet W9IBU, President of the Kankakee Area Radio Society from 1942 to 1944...Raising money was of prime importance. Local hams were interested in 2½ meters and plans were being made to get back on the air after the war. Meetings were held twice a month. A letter was received from the US Naval Air Station in Norfolk, Virginia asking for 100 experienced radio mechanics at \$1.06/hr... helpers at \$.59/hr."

(Good money if you can get it!)



KARS ARISS photo at the ARRL EXPO welcome booth at the 2006 Dayton Hamvention.

DAYTON HAMVENTION 2006

Outstanding!

Perhaps the largest contingent of KARS members to attend the big event enjoyed beautiful weather in Dayton.

Attendance was up and it ended all too soon! New attendees included Ken W9YNI and XYL Judie. Ken's opinion of Hamvention...they should have that two or three times a year! Other KARS members that have not attended in years included Dan WA9WAQ and Pete NI9H and his XYL Sandy.

Advice...Get your 2007 reservations in early!

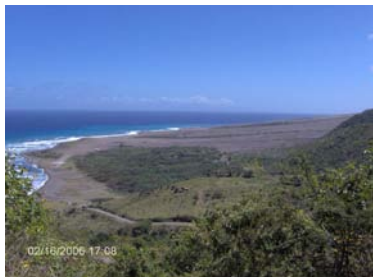
KARS BOARD MEETING

The next KARS board meeting will be held on June 20th in the banquet room of El Campesino Mexican restaurant. As always, all KARS members and spouses are welcome to attend. Of course, only board members may vote on issues and conduct official organization business.

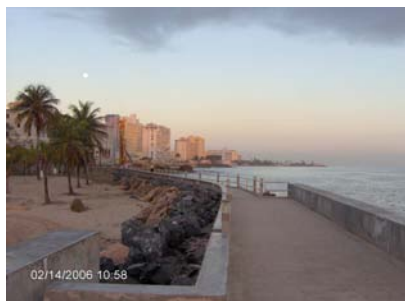
Eat at 6:00. Meet at 7:00.

2006 DXpedition to Montserrat

As a DXer, I often thought it might be fun to be the DX and have people calling me rather than being one of many stations calling the DX. It was something I would do "someday." Well, someday came in February 2006.

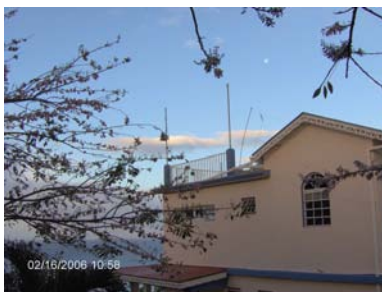


Early in 2005, I received a phone call from a long-time ham friend, Bill, W3WH, asking if I would like to join a small group for an expedition to the island of Montserrat. After carefully considering the idea for at least a millisecond, I agreed. By midsummer the group consisted of Bill, Larry, K3VX, Lee, K7NM, Jack, W9UK, and me.



Montserrat is a tiny tropical island of volcanic origin in the British West Indies, located about 1300 miles south-east of Miami. In 1995 one of the dormant volcanoes "woke up" and started to burp ash, steam, red hot rocks, and finally, lava. In June 1997, a catastrophic explosion sent ash, boulders, and superheated 1300 degree gas down the volcano's slopes at more than 60 miles per hour and inundated Plymouth, the capital city. Anything that was not instantly incinerated was buried under many feet of rock and ash, including the island's only airport. Later, rainwater mixing with ash caused massive mudflows which further buried Plymouth and the surrounding area. The southern half of the island is presently considered unsafe due to the possibility of more eruptions. The inhabitable area is about 1½ times the City of Kankakee.

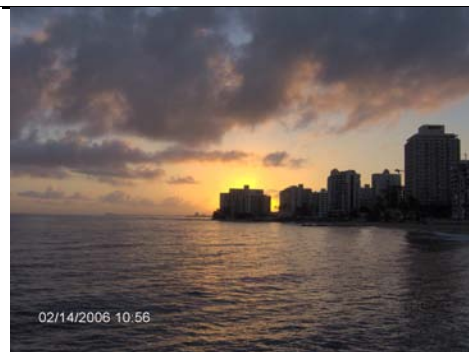
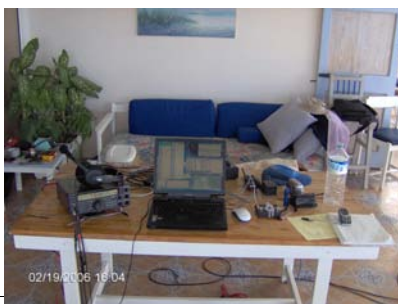
A new airport with a 2000 foot runway opened in July 2005. The only transportation on and off the island is on Twin Otter aircraft flying between Antigua and Montserrat, which carry 19 passengers packed in like sardines. Only one checked bag weighing no more than 44 pounds is allowed. Only one carry-on item is permitted and it must fit under the seat as there are no overhead compartments. Overweight or excess baggage is transported on a space-available basis at extra cost.



Arriving on Montserrat on the last flight of the day, we found three of our bags (containing most of the radio equipment and antennas) had been left on Antigua due to being overweight. Fortunately, they arrived on the second flight the next morning.



After a hectic 4-5 hours of setting up the radios and hanging antennas between palm trees and the roof of our rented villa, we were on the air. What an experience to operate from a semi-rare DX entity. At times the pileups were overwhelming. We made about 6000 contacts on CW, SSB, and RTTY, including 3655 in the ARRL CW DX Contest.



Planning the expedition required phone calls, countless emails and meant dealing with numerous problems both before and during the trip, including working around airline schedules that seemed to change constantly. It was necessary to bring all radios, antennas, computers, accessories, tools, etc. with us. Three separate flights each way made for long days of travel and dealing with customs and immigration personnel in three different countries was even more fun.

Would I do it again? We are already planning the next trip!

Carl, K9CS/VP2MSC



LINEUP
(L-R) K7NM W9UK K3VX K9CS W3WH

Don't miss Carl K9CS's presentation on the Montserrat DXpedition at the June KARS meeting!

Thanks for the super article Carl!