

DX News

Serving DXers since 1933



Volume 71, No. 9 - December 1, 2003 (ISSN 0737-1659)

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CPC Test Calendar
WILM DE 1450 Dec. 14 0105-0300

From the Publisher ... Our condolences go out to the family of NRC member Paul Quinton, who recently passed away, according to a phone message from his wife.

Cool weather is setting in ... the sun is the key player in radio reception ... and tropical stations send their signals north in late autumn. For once, Mexican stations dominate IDXD listings in this issue.

Let's turn the rest of this space over to next year's NRC convention chairperson, Scott Fybush, who has turned a singular hobby into a profitable venture:

"TOWER SITE 2004 CALENDAR" GOES ON SALE - Fans of radio and television transmitter sites will once again have something to hang on their walls in 2004.

"Now in its third year, the full-color monthly calendar has become a tradition for many radio engineers and a curiosity for those who think all radio towers look alike.

"Even after more than tripling the press run from the inaugural 2002 edition, the 2003 edition sold out within months.

"Like the 2002 and 2003 editions, each month of the 2004 calendar will feature an 8"x11" color photograph of a broadcast transmitter site, taken by Fybush during his travels around the U.S., Canada and beyond. Sites to be pictured on the 2004 calendar include:

- WCBS/WFAN, New York, the only tower in America that radiates 100,000 watts on AM, not to mention both the Yankees and the Mets
- CKLW, Windsor, Ontario, the legendary top-40 station of the Midwest in the 60s and 70s
- KHJ, Los Angeles, the iconic Southern California top-40 AM outlet
- WTEM (formerly WRC), Washington D.C.
- Cedar Hill, Texas, home to Dallas-Fort Worth's FM and TV signals and one of the biggest tower clusters in America
- WBT, Charlotte, N.C., the only site in the world with three diamond-shaped Blaw-Knox guyed radio towers

- A tribute to the broadcast facilities destroyed in a fire on Mount Washington, N.H. in early 2003

In addition to tower photos, the calendar's monthly pages include significant dates in radio and television history as well as civil and religious holidays and major industry trade shows and events.

The high-quality, professionally printed calendar will ship in early December, but orders are being taken immediately.

Like the 2003 edition, the 2004 calendars cost \$16 each, postpaid (\$17.28 including sales tax for New York State residents), and can be purchased by check (payable to "Scott Fybush") or money order to 92 Bonnie Brae Avenue, Rochester NY 14618. Orders can also be placed with major credit cards at HtmlResAnchor www.fybush.com.

DXN Publishing Schedule, Volume 71

Iss.	Deadline	Pub. Date	Iss.	Deadline	Pub. Date
10.	Nov. 28	Dec. 8	21.	Feb. 20	Mar. 1
11.	Dec. 5	Dec. 15	22.	Feb. 27	Mar. 8
12.	Dec. 12	Dec. 22	23.	Mar. 12	Mar. 19
13.	Dec. 26	Jan. 5	24.	April 2	April 12
14.	Jan. 2	Jan. 12	25.	April 16	April 26
15.	Jan 9	Jan. 19	26.	May 7	May 17
16.	Jan. 16	Jan. 26	27.	June 4	June 14
17.	Jan. 23	Feb. 2	28.	July 2	July 12
18.	Jan. 30	Feb. 9	29.	Aug. 6	Aug. 16
19.	Feb. 6	Feb. 16	30.	Sept. 10	Sept. 20
20.	Feb. 13	Feb. 23			

DX Time Machine

From the pages of DX News:

50 years ago ... from the November 28, 1953 DXN: Hank Holbrook, Chevy Chase, MD submitted a list of 12 Australian stations that he recommended as the easiest to hear. He suggested listening from 0400 until 0600, especially on Sunday mornings when U. S. stations signed on late.

25 years ago ... from the December 4, 1978 DXN: John Kromka was NRC Contests manager and reported the following leaders and points: Mike Heppe, 13; Dan Gradin, 10; Paul Mount, 9; Dan Lester and Larry Van Horn, 7; and David Yocis, 5.

10 years ago ... from the November 29, 1993 DXN: Ron Musco, Poquonock, CT reported hitting the 1200 verie mark on October 26.

AM Switch

Bill Hale w_r_hale@sbcglobal.net
6124 Roaring Springs Drive
North Richland Hills, TX 76180-5552

Status changes in AM stations, supplied by the FCC and listeners

CALL LETTER CHANGES

None

GRANTS FOR NEW STATIONS

None

CPs ON THE AIR

- 960 WPRT KY Prestonburg Action covers a site relocation, a lower day power, and added night operation. Is now U1 3800/13 from new location: N37-38-46 W82-47-46.
- 1240 KEJO OR Corvallis Now on from new 195' tower at new site at N44-35-48 W123-13-30. Still U1 1000/1000.
- 1290 WJCV NC Jacksonville Has upgraded the day signal from 1000 to 5000 Watts and added night service to become U1 5000/47.
- 1570 WNSH MA Beverly In operation with U5 500/85 from three new 97' towers at new location: N42-33-22 W70-50-13.

GRANTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES

- 1040 WZNA PR Moca Granted U4 9000/245
- 1080 KYMN MN Northfield Adds nighttime service and will be U1 1000/11.
- 1250 CBGA QC Matane Has received CRTC approval to leave the AM band for 102.1 MHz with 42,930 Watts ERP. Upon activation of the FM station, CBGA-AM will simulcast for three months and then surrender their license. The new station will offer programming from the CBC's La Première Chaîne. The FM will continue to broadcast approximately 40 hours of local programming from Matane each week.
- 1360 CKBC NB Bathurst Has received CRTC approval to leave the AM band for 104.9 MHz with 20kW ERP. The new station will offer an adult contemporary music format. The local programming will include news, weather, sports and community information. There will be no change in the language of the station, its programming and its service to the Bathurst community. Recognizing CKBC's history of serving the bilingual Bathurst market, the applicant will continue to broadcast some French-language programming, up to a weekly maximum of 9 hours.
- 1430 WDJS NC Mount Olive Adds three towers as they raise the day power to become U5 10000/70.
- 1470 WHRD WV Huntington Coordinate adjustment to: N38-24-17 W82-29-21.
- 1620 WBUB AL Atmore Granted application to move to Gulf Breeze, Florida with the usual X-Band U1 10000/1000.

APPLICATIONS FOR NEW STATIONS

- 570 W GA Garden City Requests U4 500/500. Garden City is a suburb of Savannah.
- 750 W NY Lansing Requests U4 2500/720. Lansing is just north of Ithaca. There is a competing application for South Hill (just south of Ithaca) with U4 1000/1000.

APPLICATIONS FROM EXISTING FACILITIES

- 1060 KNLV NE Ord Wants to add nighttime authorization to become U1 1000/23.
- 1180 KYET AZ Williams Application from this Silent station asks to relocate the transmitter site and reduce daytime power to become U1 6300/250.
- 1660 WGIT PR Canovas Requests to put in a booster facility on 1660 at Mayaguez with U1 1000/1000.
- 1660 WGIT PR Canovas Requests to put in a booster facility on 1660 at Ponce with U1 1000/1000.

KLEO

1480

APPLICATIONS DISMISSED

- 1210 WILY IL Centralia Wanted to build two towers at a new site, increase daytime power and add CH service to become D3 10000/0 CH 1100.

ENGINEERING AMENDMENTS TO CONSTRUCTION PERMITS SUBMITTED

- 1150 WHBY WI Kimberly Wants to add 200 Watts to their nighttime proposal to become U4 20000/25000.
- 1320 KSDT CA Hemet Requests to adjust proposed new night pattern for their U4 1000/280 upgrade.
- 1430 WOWW TN Germantown Their CP for U4 2500/2500 at a new location for them is amended to read U2 2500/2500.

APPLICATIONS FOR RENEWAL ACCEPTED

- | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|----|----------------|------|------|----|------------|
| 620 | WTRP | GA | La Grange | 1330 | WZCT | AL | Scottsboro |
| 980 | WKLY | GA | Hartwell | 1380 | WRAB | AL | Arab |
| 1010 | WGUN | GA | Atlanta | 1460 | WRRE | PR | Juncos |
| 1050 | WRFS | AL | Alexander City | 1490 | WRLA | GA | West Point |
| 1160 | WMLB | GA | East Point | 1580 | WVOK | AL | Oxford |
| 1310 | WOKA | GA | Douglas | 1130 | WRRL | WV | Rainelle |
| 1310 | WJUS | IN | Marion | 1470 | WHRD | WV | Huntington |

LICENSE RENEWALS GRANTED

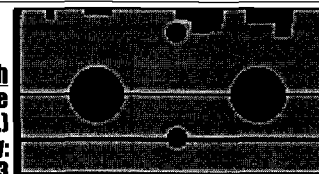
ODDS AND ENDS

- Silent WGZS-700 Dothan, Alabama has returned to the air.
- WWCA-1270 Gary, Indiana is back on the air. Now owned and operated by Starboard Broadcasting, the station is carrying "Relevant Radio" (Catholic format) via the Starboard Network. On December 1st, Starboard will expand its presence on time-brokered WCSN-820 Chicago from their current schedule of two hours a day to fill WCSN's entire sunrise to sunset program day. [Chicago Sun-Times]
- WDCW-1390 Syracuse, New York has been reported as being silent.
- Silent WXLN-1570 New Albany, Indiana is back on the air. New format is blues and jazz.
- WAHI-1580, Knoxville, Tennessee, which had been silent, is back on the air.
- Thanks, and a tip of the old AM Switch beanie go to Shawn Axelrod, John Bowker, Wayne Heinen, Chris Rigas, Jerry Starr, and Dick Truax.

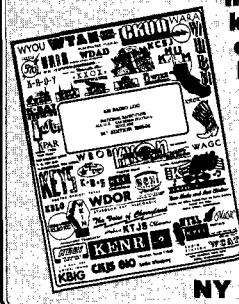
Need more information about AM DX'ing?
Mail a First-Class stamp to NRC Publications - P. O. Box 164 - Mannsville,
NY 13661-0164 and ask for the **NRC Publications Catalog**.

**All activities revealed: the highlights of the
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Nearly 4 hours from the Dallas convention, and much
more on a T-120 VHS tape, taped by Ernie
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Order from Ernie directly:

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The NRC AM Radio Log, 24th Edition,
including cross-referenced listings from 530-1700
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listing of U. S. and Canadian AM stations avail-
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NY 13661 (NY residents, please add sales tax).



Domestic DX Digest

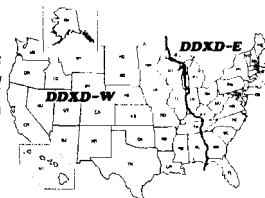
West: Harry Helms ak6c@earthlink.net

1901 Rio Canyon Ct. #205 - Las Vegas, NV 89128-2708

East: Ginnie Lupi ginnie@nrcdxas.org

PO Box 4014 - Clifton Park, NY 12065-0850

(Division line is
between East and
Central time zones)



DX Catches in the U. S. and Canada, with 24-hr. ELT

DDXD-West

RANDOM STUFF

- As if the news last issue that KNX going IBOC wasn't bad enough for Los Angeles-area DXers, KTNQ-1020 is now broadcasting in IBOC. No doubt terrified DXers in the LA basin are fleeing for the safer environs of Delano, Bishop, and El Centro. I plan to make my last stand against IBOC from that heavily fortified compound I'm constructing near Kingman, AZ.
- We all know how much contemporary receivers, loops, and phasing units have transformed DXing, but so have recording techniques. Wayne Heinen writes, "Started using QuickRecord and Windows™ Scheduler to make tapes over (top of hour) ToH and I'm having some success. I put the files on a Zip disk and listen to them the next day at work. About an hour worth of ToH IDs each day." Ah, remember the good old days of struggling to stay awake at 2:00 am to catch those elusive IDs?!?!?
- Some nice loggings and reports this time, but we could use a lot more! Please follow the format you see below, including *all* pertinent information—frequency, call, state, city, date and time of reception, and details of your catch. **And please use ELT for all times**, no matter what your local time zone.

REPORTERS

- BK-CA** Bob Karchevski, Sunnyvale. R8A, two longwires, MFJ-1026 phasing unit.
CR-IL Christos Rigas, Wood Dale. Drake R8, Quantum QX loop.
DG-CA Dave Gleason, Los Angeles. Receiver, antenna.
JJR-WI John J. Rieger, South Milwaukee. Icom R75, Kiwa loop, MFJ-959B tuner/preamp.
JW-CO John Wilkins, Wheat Ridge. Drake R8, 4-foot box loop.
PG-CO Patrick Griffith, Westminster. Drake R8, Kiwa loop.
RA-NV René Auvray, Henderson. General Electric P2900A, 2003 Ford Taurus car radio.
SA-MB Shawn Axelrod, Winnipeg. Drake R8, Icom R70, 4-foot unamplified loop, Quantum loop, 155- and 100-foot wires, MFJ-1026 phasing unit. (*Whew!*)
WH-CO Wayne "Buy the 24th Edition of the NRC AM Log!" Heinen, Aurora. Receiver, antenna.
Ed.-NV Ye Editor, Das Vegas. Drake R8B, Sony ICF-2010 w/Kiwa filters, Quantum loop & phaser.

FREQUENCY CHALLENGE RESULTS—760 kHz

- 760 **KFMB CA** San Diego. 11/14 1945-2004. First I heard unreadable SS in noise at 1922—sunset skip. No sign of KFMB. At 1945, suddenly KFMB is there, presumably a power change. No sign of other stations (except slight KCBC-770 slop and KGO-810 overloading the MFJ if I'm not careful. 11/15 0115-0120, KFMB strong and alone. (**BK-CA**)

STATION NEWS, NOTES, CHANGES, ETC.

- 1020 **KTNQ CA** Los Angeles. Per a post by Dave Gleason to the NRC e-mail list, the station began operations in IBOC November 18. A later message by Dave Gleason said the 11/18 operations were a one-day test to check impedance, etc., and that IBOC broadcasting would resume Thanksgiving week. (**DG-CA**)

UNID/HELP REQUESTED

- 1110 **UNID ??** ??? 11/3 1946. Male and female announcers in possible Vietnamese; heard "Richmond" mentioned in what seemed to be an ad. (**RA-NV, mobile near Barstow, CA**) Maybe KLIB, Roseville, CA? (**Ed.-NV**)
- 1660 **UNID ??** ??? 11/17 1905. ESPN programming with good signal at my local sunset. Only ID heard was "Your sports leader, 16-60, The Ticket." (**PG-CO**)

REGULAR DX LOGGINGS (times in ELT)

- 590 **KUGN OR** Eugene. 11/2 2359. Call ID followed by ad for Blue Moon Limo Service and then CBS news. Fair with QRM; new. (**RA-NV**)
- 650 **KMTI UT** Manti. 11/3 0000. Call ID and then ABC news; weak with Spanish station in background. (**RA-NV**)
- 690 **WOKV FL** Jacksonville. 11/18 0704. Poor but on top w/news, "News Talk 690 WOKV." (**JJR-WI**)
- 820 **WMGG FL** Largo. 11/18 0704. Fair-very good @20/9 w/legal ID "Largo-Tampa" into news. Spanish programming. (**JJR-WI**)
- 1200 **WRTO IL** Chicago. 11/10 0300. Poor to fair signals with Spanish music and talk. Slogan was "La Tremenda." Using these new calls ex-WVIV. NEW! (**SA-MB**)
- 1210 **WDAO OH** Dayton. 11/18 0730. Poor; "we are the rhythm of Dayton, 1210-WDAO" by female announcer. (**JJR-WI**)
- 1230 **KOY AZ** Phoenix. 11/11 0100. "You're listening to America's Best Music on AM 1230 KOY" into ABC News. New here and taped. (**WH-CO**)
- 1320 **KHRT ND** Minot. 11/8 0911. REL song just ending, then a program note for Velva vs Stanley HS football at 1:15 on KHRT; call ID and "K-Heart" slogan, then two Gospel songs. Last heard in 1993. (**JW-CO**)
- 1380 **WKJG IN** Fort Wayne. 11/15 0555. Fair signals with ESPN and Fort Wayne ads. New calls ex-WOWO. NEW! (**SA-MB**)
- 1430 **KLO UT** Ogden. 11/3 1945-49. Promo for upcoming home and decorating show, weather and traffic read by Boyd Harris, call ID and then the Larry Elder show. (**RA-NV, mobile near Barstow, CA**)
- 1450 **KDMN CO** Buena Vista. 11/13 0900. Long Radio Colorado Network ID mentioning this and the remainder of the affiliates, Loud as I was putting the overnight .wav files on disks. (**WH-CO**)
- 1450 **KBBS WY** Buffalo. 11/13 0100. ToH ID to ABC News New here and taped. (**WH-CO**)
- 1470 **KVLH OK** Pauls Valley. 11/15 1859. Legal ID at 1859:52 "KIXO Sulphur-Ada, KVLH Pauls Valley-Purcell..."; CBS news at 1900. Generally poor, but semi-rare here. (**JW-CO**)
- 1470 **WMBD IL** Peoria. 11/15 2105. "...On News Radio 1470 WMBD"; then weather with Michael Palmer; "The best of Coast-to-Coast AM" (I think) followed at 2106. Fair at best; not real common here. (**JW-CO**)
- 1590 **WHLX MI** Marine City. 11/18 0619. Poor, "in downtown Port Huron..." in w/three others. (**JJR-WI**)
- 1640 **KMMZ OK** Enid. 11/14 2341. DJ Chaz with "unforgettable favorites" and "playing the songs you know and remember." Mostly soft rock from the 60s through 80s. Also heard Bose Wave Radio ad. Listened for two hours and no IDs heard, so presumed. Thanks to Glenn Hauser for the tip. (**PG-CO**) 11/15 0134. Fair to good signals fading in and out with adult standards music. Now on testing. NEW! (**SA-MB**) 11/19 2302, fair in WKSH null. "All Comedy Radio" slogan heard several times, but no actual ID, so presumed only. (**CR-IL**) Zowie! Just-before-deadline info from Glenn Hauser via the NRC e-mail list says KMMZ has indeed gone to an all-comedy format. (**Ed.-NV**)

DDXD-East

Tim Hall (Chula Vista, CA) writes: "Karl Jeter's 'Hometown Radio' with oldies on 1490, reported in DDXD-E v71 #6, matches WMOG Brunswick, GA."

Clear Channel Challenge Schedule

- 820 kHz - Listen November 26 - December 2, due December 3
 830 kHz, Listen December 3 - 9, due December 10
 840 kHz, Listen December 10 - 23, due December 24
 880 kHz, Listen December 24 - December 30, due December 31
 890 kHz, Listen December 31 - January 6, due January 7
 1030 kHz, Listen January 7 - 13, Due January 14



REPORTERS

- MB-MD** Marty Bassin, Linthicum - Icom R-75 and Quantum Loop (old model).
WB-FL Walt Breville, Lake Wales - Grundig 700 with Radio Shack loop.

MKB-ON Mike Brooker, Toronto – Grundig YB-400PE, Panasonic RF-2200.
BC-NH Bruce Conti, Nashua - R8B, MWDX-5, 50/75/50-ft east/ west and south Ewe antennas.
MH-NC Mike Hardester, on the road between Jacksonville and Greenville – Toyota Camry Radio.
HJH-PA Harry Hayes, Wilkes-Barre – Zenith Trans Oceanic, Kiwa Pocket Loop.
KVJ-GA Karl Jeter, Lawrenceville - HQ-150, 12-655 TRF, Quantum and Kiwa Loops.
BDM-ON Barry McLarnon, Ottawa - NRD-525, 1 m air-core loop, 40 m inverted-vee, MFJ-1026.
IEN-GA Ira Elbert New, III, Watkinsville - AIWA CSD-FD89.
IEN*GA Ira Elbert New, III, Watkinsville - 1996 Isuzu Rodeo Premium Audio System 8200.
AO-FL Al Ogrizovich, Jacksonville - Crane Radio Plus and Justice loop.
DT-JA Don Trelford, Runaway Bay, Jamaica - Sangean ATS 818.
DT-ON Don Trelford, Courtice – Sangean ATS 818.
NJW-ON Niel Wolfish, Toronto – Honda Accord Car Stereo.
NJW*ON Niel Wolfish, Toronto – DXing in Burnt River, Ontario with AOR-7030+ and two longwire antennas.

CLEAR CHANNEL CHALLENGE – 760 kHz

760 **WEFL FL** Tequesta -11/12 0628 - Briefly on top with local dentist's ad "call 1-876-new-smil". "Palm Beach's sports authority ESPN Radio 760." **(WB-FL)**
WVNE MA Leicester - 11/18 0645 - Good; signed-on in the middle of *Turning Point* Bible teaching program, no sign-on announcement, then at 0700 local weather, "WVNE Leicester, WNEB Worcester" and *SRN* news. **(BC-NH)**
WJR MI Detroit – 11/14 0530 - Fair, fighting Cuba's Radio Reloj with ad for local Harley Davidson dealer: "100 Harleys rumbling down the street". "The official voice of America's Thanksgiving Parade, news talk 760 WJR." **(WB-FL)**
 + 11/14 1830 - Good; Paul Harvey's "The Rest of the Story," *Big 7 Traffic Center* and *Weather Center* updates, "WJR news time" checks, "News/Talk 760 WJR" IDs, after 1900 noted with Sean Hannity talk over RCN Colombia. **(BC-NH)**
 + 11/15 1359 – steady on mid-day groundwave with promo for Michigan football, ID as "this is the great voice of the Great Lakes, news-talk 760 WJR". **(MKB-ON)**
WCIS NC Morganton – 11/16 1716 – Very loud signoff. Mention of maximum daytime power of 3500 watts and invitation to send in comments and suggestions. Gospel programming. No anthem. New. **(HJH-PA)**
WCPS NC Tarboro – 11/16 1655 – Ad for Red Carpet Sports Bar in downtown Rocky Mount, "no kids allowed...". Had an Urban Contemporary format. Good signal but faded at signoff time at 1700, which was barely heard under WCIS. **(HJH-PA)**



UNID/PRESUMED/SUSPECTED/WISHFUL THINKING

560 **WQAMP FL** Miami - 11/12 2205 - local sports talk show, fair. **(DT-JA)**
 810 **UNID** — 11/17 1841 – under WGY with gospel version of "Battle Hymn Of The Republic". Nothing heard afterward aside from bad audio hum, so I assume this was what they signed off with. **(NJW*ON)**
 850 **WYLFp NY** Penn Yan - 11/4 0624 - older popular music, poor. **(DT-ON)**
 940 **UNID** — 11/15 1752 – preacher saying "Amen" every third or fourth word. Strong but disappeared at 1800. Was this WCPC (Houston MS) until their 6 p.m. pattern power change? **(NJW*ON)**
 1020 **UNID** — 11/16 1723 – End of "The Messenger" religious program produced by The Ever Increasing Faith Ministries in Los Angeles. This program doesn't show up on the websites for WPEO-Peoria or WJEM-Ochlocknee GA which both have religious formats. **(NJW*ON)**
 1040 **UNID** — 11/16 1710 – Ranchero music under WYSL. Female announcer. The only decipherable word I caught was "cuarenta" (40). Possibly WSGH in Lewisville, NC before listed 1715 shift to night power? **(NJW*ON)**
 1120 **WDUFp VA** Duffield - 11/12 0721- Sign on in KMOX null with SSB and Pledge of Allegiance, into bluegrass music. **(KVJ-GA)**
WTWZp MS Clinton - 11/13 1751 - noted with bluegrass music; fair with KMOX very weak due to auroral conditions. **(KVJ-GA)**
UNID — 11/13 1741 - UC music, into SSB version by Whitney Houston, then gone. No sign-off announcement; could this be WHOG-AL? **(KVJ-GA)**

1140 **UNID** — 11/17 0639 – under WRVA with "Oldies 11-40" IDs and Beach Boys song. Killed when WCJW (Warsaw NY) signed on at 0645. **(NJW*ON)**
 1170 **WAVSp FL** Davie - 11/10 1730 - Caribbean-accented female announcer noted with "...it's time to say au revoir to some of our listeners as we follow FCC regulations..." then gone. **(KVJ-GA)**
 1490 **WSTP(p) NC** Salisbury - 11/15 1529 – On top for about 10 minutes with UNC Tarheels football and the Winn-Dixie Scoreboard and post-game show. Lots of commercials including Smithfield Chicken, but they sounded like they were all Tarheel network spots. WDUR-Durham and WAZZ-Fayetteville, WSTP-Salisbury are all listed as being on Tarheels network. However, WDUR and WAZZ's websites don't show them as having Tarheels on their schedule, but WSTP does. **(NJW*ON)**
 1500 **UNID** — 11/16 0807 – on top with Music of Your Life for about 10 minutes before WTOP, WBRI and WLQV took over. Possibly WAKE in Valparaiso, IN? **(NJW*ON)**
 1550 **UNID** — 11/16 1639 – Carrying WJFK's Washington Redskins vs. Carolina football. Mixing with a station with a screaming preacher. No 1550 stations are listed on the Redskins list. **(NJW*ON)**
 1570 **UNID** — 11/16 2014 – what sounded like a syndicated big band program. Strong and on top of frequency for a while. **(NJW*ON)**
 1580 **UNID** — 11/16 0743 – Fox Sports programming on top briefly. WXRA? **(NJW*ON)**
 1590 **UNID** — 11/15 1543 - end of "Radio Bible Hour" program. Good signal. **(NJW*ON)**
 1610 **UNID TIS** — 11/18 1840 - TIS with repeating loop tape. ID sounded like WTAN or WPAN, or phonetically similar. Male announcer. Mention of "You have tuned in to WTAN, AM 1610"; "reservoirs and creeks"; "metropolitan"; "emergency broadcast" (station or system?); and ended with "This message will repeat." Break between ending and beginning of tape approximately 5 to 10 seconds. Thought that I also heard the numbers "838" mentioned several times, but not certain (perhaps mixing with another TIS). Signal was mostly poor to rarely fair. The frequency was basically QRN with this station occasionally surfacing. Checked the FCC database, but nothing stands out. **(MH-NC)**
 1680 **UNID TIS** — 11/18 1644 - male announcer, and possibly female. While the format was quite familiar (it sounded like a rebroadcast of a National Weather Service station), the only two clear items were mention of "Prince Georges," and "and forty degrees." **(MH-NC)**
 1690 **WRLLp IL** Berwyn - 11/3 0634 - older popular music, poor. **(DT-ON)**

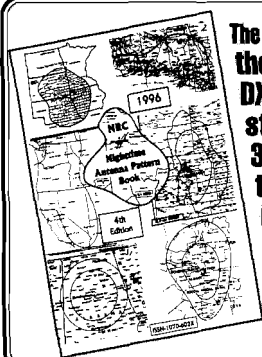
STATION LOGGINGS

540 **WFLA FL** Orlando - 11/15 0530 - Heard for about 40 minutes then faded at sunrise. Poor signal after nulling out slop. Heard highlights from a Florida Gators - South Carolina game, CBS news, and a medical talk show. Also heard "WFLA, Central Florida" ID at TOH. **(MB-MD)**
 + 11/16 1828 - Doctor? call in show with callers discussing various health problems. Local weather at 1830. Steady signal of medium strength. "You've got it tuned to Orlando's place to talk, 540 WFLA." **(IEN*GA)**
 580 **WGAC GA** Augusta - 11/11 0626 - excellent with news talk and host Harley Drew. Plenty of mentions of WGAC and Augusta. **(AO-FL)**
WDBO FL Orlando - 11/12 2214 - news, talk show, ID as "Orlando Magic play-by-play on WDBO." Fair. **(DT-JA)**
CKY MB Winnipeg – 11/15 0234 "All Oldies KY-58" with Canadian oldies by Mashmakhan and Trooper; fair with CKWW. **(NJW*ON)**
 600 **WSJS NC** Winston-Salem – 11/15 1847 On top of CKAT and Cuban with North Carolina Wolfpack football (vs. Florida State). **(NJW*ON)**
 690 **KGGF KS** Coffeyville – 11/15 0630- Over top of CINF with slogan mentioning 4 states and ID as "KGGF Coffeyville-Independence" into Jim Bohannon show. **(NJW*ON)**
 730 **WLIL TN** Lenoir City – 11/16 0633 – fighting WPIT with ID: "The great country classics, WLIL" into C&W music. **(NJW*ON)**
WOHS NC Shelby – 11/15 1903 – over probable WLIL with Wake Forest Deamon Dea

10	WPGM	PA	Danville - 11/15 1615 - On top with female announcer playing Christian music on the "Saturday Celebration" program. (NJW*ON)
1570	WLJ	TN	Shelbyville - 11/15 0740 - On top of frequency with "Bedford Country Outdoor Show", items for sale with male announcer giving phone various phone numbers in 931 area code, and C&W music. (NJW*ON)
	WZKY	NC	Albemarle - 11/15 1457 - all alone with Duke Blue Devils vs. Clemson Tigers football. Local spots heard at 1535. Possibly also heard same game on 1590 - Duke's website lists WCSL in Cherryville, NC as also carrying game, but the 1590 signal didn't last long enough. (NJW*ON)
	WILA	VA	Danville - 11/15 1510 - in mix with WPGC and a station carrying football with "WILA birthday time", weather by woman into a 'spotlight' on Evelyn Champagne King. (NJW*ON)
	WTTN	WI	Watertown - 11/16 0800 - faded up for a "WTTN Watertown-Milwaukee, your all time favorites" ID and then CNN news. (NJW*ON)
1590	WVNA	AL	Tuscumbia - 11/15 0817 - Alabama National Guard PSA, ID as "WVNA news talk". Soon lost to WAKR and others. (NJW*ON)

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International DX Digest

Bruce Conti nrcidx@aol.com
46 Ridgefield Drive
Nashua, NH 03062-1174

Foreign DX Catches. Times are UTC; for ELT, subtract 5 hrs.

Supersized solar activity squelches DX signals again! Upon return from a prime coastal Massachusetts location, even Mark Connelly reported receiving only three transatlantic signals with audio. Perhaps now's as good a time as any to learn Spanish. Take a Spanish course and impress fellow students with recordings of Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela, then get them all to join the NRC! Like John Callarman, you're sure to get straight A's. Next *Frequency of the Week Challenge* deadlines: 780 kHz - Nov 27, 820 kHz - Dec 4.

Frequency of the Week: 760 kHz

- 760 COLOMBIA HJAJ RCN Barranquilla NOV 19 2300 - Good; national anthem, ID, "RCN Barranquilla, HJAJ, 760 kilohertz, Radio Informativa," and "la radio de Colombia" jingle. [Conti-NH]
760 CUBA R.Rejov NOV 19 2312 - Minute markers and RR Morse code IDs fading in over nulls WJR Detroit. [Conti-NH]

Pan-American DX

- 600 unID NOV 14 1700 - Man and woman talking news, Bolivia and La Paz mentioned several times, part of ID a crowing rooster. [Trelford-JMC]
630 VENEZUELA YVKA R.Nacional, Caracas NOV 14 1715 - Man and woman talking, ID as *Radio Nacional*. [Trelford-JMC]
680 MEXICO XELG LG La Grande, León, Gto NOV 15 0146 - Song ended and man with production slogan "LG La Grande" squeezed through the domestic interference that usually makes 680 impenetrable here. Then came woman announcer and again, I was able to hear quick "LG La Grande" on tape. Norteña flavored ballad followed. First partial log from México on 680, though XELG was regularly heard in the Panhandle 40 years ago. [Callarman-TX]
730 COLOMBIA HJCU *Melodia*, Bogotá NOV 14 - Man and woman with talk, pop Latin American music, Bogotá mention. [Trelford-JMC]
830 MEXICO XEIK Piedras Negras, Coah NOV 13 0103 - Caught with tail end of "Las Noticias de Hoy" from "Nucleo Radio Zócola" (the parent company of "La Norteña"), well atop with two other Mexicans noted under XEIK. At 0103:45 began the Mexican national anthem and, expecting legal ID tape following, I kept recorder on. But after the anthem ended, there was only silence from XEIK, an open carrier that later disappeared, so this one is apparently signing off early. [Callarman-TX]
830 MEXICO XEITE R.Capital, México DF NOV 13 0257 - Male personality in conversation on telephone with another, talking of NFL football and the team in Houston. At 0259:30 partial ID heard, contesting with the other Mexican left on the frequency. Carries a variety of programming. At 0402, had a full XEITE complete legal ID. + NOV 14 0431 - Tuned in for part of the full ID, missed complete legal ID, but XEITE atop frequency at this time, giving three telephone numbers 52-02-79-70, 52-02-81-38, and 52-02-81-29 as part of ID. [Callarman-TX]
830 MEXICO XELN La Super Llegadora, Linares NL NOV 14 0359 - Broke through others with full call letter ID, first for the FM, then the AM, to add to my tape collection. Also heard on the frequency several nights with XEIK off early was "La Fabulosa," presumably the New Orleans station. XELN plays norteña/ranchero music, XEITE offers a variety of music and talk programming, and "La Fabulosa" selections are almost tropical in nature. [Callarman-TX]
900 MEXICO XEDT Cd. Cuauhtemoc, CHIH NOV 16 0105 - Older US C&W tunes; full ID (except for call letters) at 0109; an ad or two at 0118. Repertoire included Tanya Tucker, Hank Williams Jr., and George Strait. Interesting to hear this from an XE station. I'm no longer hearing the German that XEDT used to air when they were on 1080, so maybe this is replacing it! Good, as always, with KPOF splatter. [Wilkins-CO]
940 MEXICO XEWV Mexicali, BCN NOV 15 0420 - Cumbias and ranchera tunes, sung "Fiesta Mexicana" slogans, PST time checks. Fair in interference. [Wilkins-CO]
940 MEXICO unID NOV 7 0425 - Looped southwest with "Radio Uno 9-40" slogans. Strong on peaks. I'm hearing this often, morning and evening. No clues as to location. Miscellaneous

vocal selections, slogan after each song. [Wilkins-CO]

- 960 **MEXICO** XEIQ Cd. Obregón, SON NOV 7 1301 - Time check for "6:01," then canned ID: "...desde Radio Felicidad 9-60 AM, XEIQ-AM, mil wats de potencia, transmite desde Sinaloa...[address]...Cd. Obregón, Sonora...9-60...grupo ACIR." Poor in interference - had to listen to tape several times to piece together phrases. I'm 98.3% sure the call letters announced were XEIQ, although the text was a bit garbled at this point. The "Sinaloa" refers to the address, per WRTH. A new slogan, at any rate. [Wilkins-CO]
- 1040 **MEXICO** XEGYS Guaymas, SON NOV 7 0426 - Banda music, "Super Banda" slogans, then more (you guessed it) banda music. Fair with no sign of WHO Des Moines. Only the second time logged here. [Wilkins-CO]
- 1040 **MEXICO** XEGR *La Favorita*, Jalapa, Ver NOV 15 0005 - Right place at right time for surprise, with clearly enunciating, slow-paced male announcer saying "Desde... esta es XEGR, Diez-cuarenta AM, La Favorita... música de la... —era"; then woman announcer, fade, back up with music, fluttery reception, Jalapa mentioned, but XEHES *Radio Luz* Chihuahua, previously the only Mexican heard on 1040, came back atop and I found nothing more from XEGR. Its signoff is listed as 0100. Slogan listed as "La Ke Buena." SCT and MPM list owner as "Radio Favorita, S.A." [Callarman-TX]
- 1160 **MEXICO** unID NOV 15 0115-0126 - Soft-voiced woman announcer playing very slow-paced, dramatic female vocals with full orchestra trying to break through the usual XEVW format of one Mexican pop tune alternating with English R&B or rap selections. I could not bring the unidentified signal up, as the Acámbaro station occasionally neared program listening quality. KSL Salt Lake City almost a no-show. [Callarman-TX]
- 1180 **CUBA** *R.Rebelde*, Villa María / Mayarí Arriba NOV 15 0024 - Are there two *Rebelde* transmitters operating on this frequency? I've heard echo effect before, but tonight, while trying to pull something through the null, I nulled one of the echoes and was left with a single transmitter carrying *Rebelde*. Annoying. [Callarman-TX] According to the 2003 WRTH, there's a *R.Progreso* station from Mayarí Arriba on the frequency. *R.Reloj* has been reported here too, likely from the same site when *Progreso* is off.
- 1180 **MEXICO** XEGN *La Gigante*, Piedras Negras, Ver NOV 14 0442 - Tentative; this one may have been the station that squeezed through sliver of a *R.Rebelde* null. First words after a song were "La Gigante" and in the jumble that followed, there was mention of Vera Cruz. Not enough to claim reception, but enough to whet my appetite. Need something definite on this one and on XEDCN so I can put something from Mexico in my log. [Callarman-TX]
- 1290 **MEXICO** XEDA *R.Trece*, México DF NOV 14 0415 - "Radio Trece, 12-90" after fanfare, with time check and telephone numbers, one of which was 15-22-13-13, followed by an old-style big band tune. At 0502:30, was in newscast; gave time at 0504:30 as 5 after 11 "en la centro de la República de México" and continued with news, including voice cuts. Another time check at 0506 and another correspondent introduced. [Callarman-TX]
- 1319.88 **MEXICO** XECPN Piedras Negras, COAH NOV 6 1359 - Fair with top of the hour ID; usual "La Mexicana" slogan was followed by canned "Esta es La Mexicana XECPN, 1320 kHz, transmitiendo desde Lerdo 1612 Nisperos, Piedras Negras, Coahuila - una emisora más de (sung) *Radiorama Piedras Negras*," then into an ad. The new "Rockola" slogan noted by others still not heard here - strange. [Wilkins-CO]
- 1350 **MEXICO** XETB Torreón, COAH NOV 12 0009 - Romantic music; "Espectacular XETB" ID at 0011. Not very strong but interference-free for a few minutes. [Wilkins-CO]
- 1350 **MEXICO** XELBL San Luis Río Colorado, SON NOV 10 0204 - Finally got the ID down 100%, as the signal peaked at an amazing level at 0204 UTC: "Esta es XELBL Radio Centro, transmitiendo en 1350 kHz de amplitud modulada, 6500 wats de potencia autorizada. Oficinas y estudios en Avenida Francisco Eusebio Quino y Calle Qunita, planta transmisora en Avenida Jalisco y Calle 27 en San Luis Río Colorado, Sonora. Radio emisora del grupo OIR..."; this was followed by the song "Enamorada de Ti." Soon faded under KABQ and KGHF and was up and down after that. Sent them a taped report using this segment. [Wilkins-CO]
- 1370 **MEXICO** XEHG Mexicali, BCN NOV 10 0200 - Canned ID by gal: "XEHG-AM, La Norteña. Estamos ubicados en Pasaje Vallarta Número 1128, Edificio 2(?), Centro Civico, Mexicali, Baja California. Teléfonos de venta 557-4005 y 557-4006. Organizacion Radiofonica del Baja California, una emisora más del grupo Radiorama." The signal faded under KSOP after a spot for Boticas Guadalupana and a time check for "18 horas." [Wilkins-CO]

Más desde México por Sr. Callarman: I continue to try to squeeze out some new Mexican signals, with moderate success. The Querétaro station on 1020 continues to show up here in the evening, Central time. Srs. Niven, Ponder and others in Texas should be able to pull this one in. A

couple of notes from previously reported logs; 870 XEAMO slogan is *Radio Amo*, not *Radio Amor*, hence accent not needed on capital A. (So much for my A's in Spanish classes 40-plus years ago.) The name of the owner of 720 XEDE, mentioned often in promos, that I had phonetically identified as Hubert Tatí is actually "Jaubert Tafich Organización," per station listing in March 2001 MPM.

Contributors

John Callarman KA9SPA, Krum TX; DX-398. <JohnCallarman@msn.com>
Bruce Conti, Nashua NH; R8B, MWDX-5, 15/23/15-m east/west Double Ewe and 15/23/15-m south Ewe.
Don Trelford, St. Anns Bay, Jamaica. <dondorvilla@angel.com>
John Wilkins, Wheat Ridge CO; Drake R-8, 4-ft loop. <peakbagger3@juno.com>

International News

NEW ZEALAND: 1170 1ZW *Classic Hits Radio Waitomo*, Te Kuiti is closing down after 18 and a half years on the air, no longer able to compete with Hamilton FM stations. The station is up for sale and will be closed by Dec 5 if a buyer isn't found, until then relaying ZHFM *Classic Hits*. [Adam Claydon, Nov *New Zealand DX Times*, NZRDXL]

SWEDEN: A one-day only Swedish radio station will be active from Gothenburg, Sweden on January 15, 2004 at 1730 UTC on 981 kHz. It is the radio amateurs in Gothenburg that will be on air, in remembrance of K.G. Eliasson (1884 - 1951) who on that day 80 years ago (January 15, 1924) had his first regular broadcast from the localities on Vallgatan 8 in Gothenburg. Now this old broadcast will be on the air again with the help of GSA and with the signal SMZX. The program starts at 1730 UTC with a presentation, and then at 1800 UTC the historical rebroadcast will start. GSA wants reports of reception of this historical event, and promises to answer them with a special QSL card. More can be found on www.scandiam.com/ (Swedish). [Jan Edh, via Steve Whitt, MWC E-Mail News]

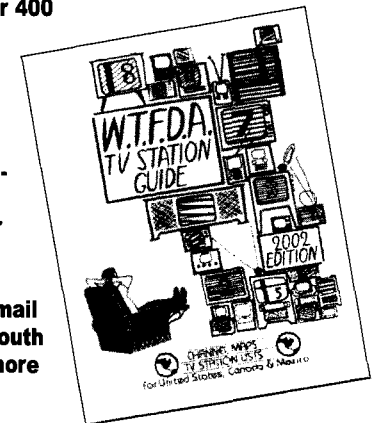
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14 DX'er's Notebook

Shared tips, topics, and Internet info

Dave Braun dcbraun@delanet.com
863 Allabands Mill Rd.
Camden Wyoming DE 19934-2132

I'm going to continue on with the auroral theme this time, starting with some general discussions, and moving into the results some DXers had during the recent disturbed conditions. We also have a special request for those of you who have QSL'd WFOY-1240 at the end of the column.

AURORA

We start with some messages that were posted in anticipation of the auroral conditions.

Charles Hutton <charlesh3@msn.com>

Here's the current data from www.spacew.com. Note that they are saying it may be the strongest auroral storm since 1989! Keep those radios tuned!

Bruce Conti, Nashua, NH <BACONTI@aol.com>

Question: can an intense aurora impact daytime reception? Had unusually strong signals from the Boston French Creole stations in the x-band this afternoon.

Russ Edmunds, Blue Bell, PA <wb2bjh@nrcdxas.org>

Yes. To whatever extent a daytime signal received at a given site is composed of skywave elements, those will be attenuated. The result of this, though is often counter-intuitive, because it is sometimes the interference between the groundwave and skywave components which make the signal appear unstable. Second, to whatever extent a daytime groundwave signal might be subject to interference by another skywave signal, that too would disappear, leaving the groundwave of the local signal.

All of this is variable depending on such things as location relative to the absorption and the relative levels on absorption relative to location.

Neil Kazaross, near Chicago, IL <neilkaz@earthlink.net>

One can only hope! The previous week's supposed super AU was never enough to do what I want it to, and that's totally eliminate any skywave from north of southern TX or southern FL. I've seen that a couple times here and then some remarkable DX can sneak thru from the very deep south and Latin America.

Russ Edmunds <wb2bjh@nrcdxas.org>

Want to see where the auroral zone is now?

Go to <http://www.sec.noaa.gov/pmap/index.html>



McPHERSON BROADCASTING, INC.

Then we move on to a few messages during the storms...

Benjamin Dangerfield, Wallingford, PA <ben-dangerfield@verizon.net>

I'm not sure I understand the difference between the solar flares we've had the past few days and the sun spots we get all the time. It seems to me that sun spots stay on the sun whereas solar flares are ejected into the solar system. And that apparently these flares are more destructive to all radio systems. The sun spots increase or decrease in major and mini cycles, but what about the flares?

Yes, conditions have really been crazy. It is interesting to see the same effect occurring to our list members all over North America. I wonder what has been happening in other parts of the world?

Rick Kenneally <woodlandview@yahoo.com>

There are others who are much more knowledgeable than I am on this, but my understanding is that sun spots are storms in the sun's magnetic field.

The solar weather follows an 11-year cycle of peaks and valleys (we're currently a couple years into the downslope to a valley). When solar storms or sun spots are present, the sun's magnetic field is stirred up, increasing the likelihood of flares.

A flare is like a magnetic bubble that pops with enough strength to eject particles from the sun's gravitational pull and hurl them into space. The term CME means Coronal Mass Ejection - meaning simply a blast of "sun stuff" thrown into space.

When the sun spots are on the side of the sun facing us, it is more likely that the "sun stuff" will be hurled at us. Think of a cannon pointed at us. When the cannon goes off, if the smoke makes a complete halo around the muzzle (from your perspective), you have a pretty good idea that the shot was aimed at you. Similarly, if the blast of solar particles causes a complete halo around the sun (a "full-halo CME") it means the blast is pointed directly at the Earth.

What's happening now is that there is a big mother of a storm on our side of the sun, and it's acting stirring the sun's corona like a Cuisinart. So there is still time for more stuff to get thrown our way.

15
Now, my understanding is that when a flare happens, we first get hit with electromagnetic energy - light, RF, x-rays, etc. These travel at the speed of light and they cause a burst of ionization in the atmosphere. But it's not until the wave of charged particles - the actual coronal matter - hits us that things really get interesting.

Apologies for any errors, over-simplifications or incorrect metaphors. I'm looking forward to reading the posts from members who actually know about this stuff :-)

Russ Edmunds <wb2bjh@nrcdxas.org>

Sunspots are always there. Their size and number vary with the 11-year solar cycles. Sunspots eject radioactive matter into the solar system in various directions, depending on where on the sun's "face" the spots are located at the time. If they're near center, they're more likely to pose a problem because that means they're directed at us. This of course occurs with more severity and frequency during sunspot maxima, so they can occur even during sunspot minima.

And finally on this topic the listserv "Question of the Week" was "Since the solar conditions started last week, what observations have you made on the differences between a normal day, and one impacted by the sun? What about new catches?"

Bruce Conti <BACONTI@aol.com>

Observations: Auroral MW reception conditions can be very localized; one region gets hit hard with daytime-like groundwave reception at night, while another region experiences little or no changes in reception. Auroral conditions can be observed during the day, as experienced here with the reception of low-power unlicensed stations from Boston supposedly enhanced by reduced interference due to the solar activity. I did notice the lack of signals from WWV on all its shortwave frequencies.

New catches? None so far. It's been a dud here. Nice to read about the new catches of others in IDX though.

Randy Stewart, Springfield, MO <jrs555t@smsu.edu>

The biggest difference, at least with the current geo-storm, is that one's usual pests (particularly the 50kW blowtorches) suddenly sound like DX! That, and the fact that regional and semi-local groundwave stations that are normally buried after dark by skywave signals have been much more audible. Overall, as I mentioned in a posting to the list last night, when conditions were really disturbed, signal strengths in general were as much as 20db down or worse. This actually made graveyard frequencies easier to listen to, as it seems there were fewer stations in the mix and it was easier for one or two stations to dominate.

New catches? They can be had, but this solar storm hasn't really been a "classic" aurora ala the late '80s/early '90s, where there actually seemed to be ENHANCEMENT of signals to the south, in addition to the severe attenuation of signals from the east/west/north of my QTH. Everyone has said the same thing—if, for example, you were looking for Caribbean or South American stations to be easily audible on frequencies where stronger North American stations usually dominate, forget it. The "enhancement," such as it was, from my listening location in southern Missouri, didn't extend any farther south than Cuba and Northern Mexico. Then too, there are actually fewer targets to shoot for, particularly in the Caribbean, where so many stations that used to be on 5-kHz split frequencies have left AM for FM, etc. On the other hand, if they HAD any skywave reception, folks to the north of me could have a field day logging Texas, Louisiana etc. stations that they couldn't normally hear...

This storm was actually highly entertaining, though, in that conditions were so UNpredictable from one moment to the next. I mean, I actually had the Toronto 740 station DOMINANT over KRMG Tulsa for about 15 minutes last night! With an A-index in the low 100's? Who woulda thunk it?

Kevin Redding <amfmdx@fastq.com>

I had some TV Es I believe was storm related. Had St. Louis here in AZ and at the very end of October, that was very unusual.

On MW the band was very wiped out but fluctuating wildly from having DX to nothing in a matter of less than 10 minutes. Not even all the Mexicans and Cubans I regularly hear were coming in.

Adam Myrow <amyrow@midsouth.rr.com>

The most interesting thing I noticed especially this week is the drastic increase in noise on the band. It made shortwave sound almost as noisy as longwave at times! It was almost surreal hearing WWV either fluttering rapidly or gone altogether.

As for new catches, I have a few - 1620 WDHP Fredrickstead, US Virgin Islands, 720 KSAH Universal City, TX, WFLF 540 AM Pine Hills, FL, XEFW 810 Tampico, Mexico, 700 KSEV Tomball, TX, and 1110 XEOQ Rio Bravo, Mexico.

Patrick Martin, Seaside, OR <mwdxer@webtv.net>

DX conditions have been very AU with several openings to the Pacific this past week with many DUs. Samoa-540 has been arm chair copy at times. Some of the strongest AU conditions I have seen in years.

Mike Brooker, Toronto, ON <aum108@idirect.com>

When conditions are as brutal as they've been in the past few days, with nothing but local groundwave, TV/computer-generated static as loud as a jet plane, not even any Latinos stomping over the clear channels, and shortwave dead to boot, I reach for the little button on my radio marked "Power". I then ensure that said button is securely in the "off" position.

One new catch last night, on Friday night high school football cheater authority: WHIP-1350 Mooresville, NC. My third new logging of the 2003 high school football season.

Tried for WJNT-1180 test but no luck. I get WHAM on groundwave so I couldn't count on them being killed by the aurora.

Frederick R. Vobbe <fredv@nrcdxas.org>

I would have to agree (that Auroral MW reception conditions can be very localized). While speaking on the phone with several DXers during this event, we noticed that the fades did not occur at the same times, nor affected the same stations.

One interesting thing was noted. We are all used to hearing the "selective fade", (and if you did not hear the explanation of this by Leonard Kahn on AR-#1, you need to), I noticed that some of the fades were quick and abrupt. In one case, WGY-810 sounded like they were physically turning up and down their power in 3-second intervals. I decided to connect a Tec-2710 spectrum analyzer up to the antenna and watch the signals for a while.

The down side of this is that the Q of my antenna system, due to tuners, is somewhat sharp, so accurate measurements of the entire AM band could not be made. However, what I saw was random "sweeps" where signals would disappear, and then reappear. The effect looked like someone was tuning a loop across WBAP, WGY, CKLW, WBBM, WABC, WJR, WSB, CHWO.

The other thing I noticed was that the noise floor was about 4.7 or more less than normal, producing signals that normally are not heard when the sky is clear of the effects of auroral propagation. For example, 1230 is usually a mess with only WCOL popping up from time to time in the mess of noise, (usually benchmarked at around S9). At the peak of this event, WCWA in Toledo was clearly heard with the noise floor being around S5-6. (On 1270) WXYT (Detroit) was very audible, where normally Marysville OH and a host of others make it hard to hear.

Benjamin Dangerfield <ben-dangerfield@verizon.net>

So far I've heard nothing new or of real interest. It would be nice to have the type of auroral conditions that bring in the rare stations like the lower South Americans or maybe lower Africa, or even Central America or perhaps Curacao or Surinam.

And the noise level is awful. Added to the higher noise level is my area noise from the power lines. This wasn't a problem the first day or so of the solar activity as the ground was soaked from two or three days of steady rain and the faulty insulators around here weren't malfunctioning. But when everything dried out later this week the noise returned. Now this noise is worse during the daytime, but when you get mostly ground wave reception at night you also get the noise as on a daytime basis.

Still waiting for the electric company fixers as promised weeks ago.

Russ Edmunds <wb2bjh@nrcdxas.org>

The noise level is also influenced by our having had nearly 6 inches of rain within 72 hours at the beginning of last week. I have places in my yard where the ground is still wet! Wet ground is bad enough for the noise level here, but auroras make it worse.

WFOY-1240

And finally a request for some information about WFOY-1240.

Paul Courson, WA3VJB <—WA3VJB—@amfone.net>

Hi Dave, I wonder if you might be able to float a call for verification letters for reception of WFOY, 1240 Kc, St. Augustine. I am looking for international spans, but also some of the greater distances across North America.

The station in March discontinued its operations from the site next door to the Fountain of Youth, after the owner sold the property to a non-broadcast private party.

If you have access to the ham radio magazine QST, I've been fortunate to have had an article published on the station. Please see the November issue, page 56, for details.

If you can help me acquire some additional materials, I plan some follow up stories..

If you have any information for Paul, you can contact him directly as shown above (delete the dashed from the e-mail address) or let me know and I will get him in touch with you.

That's all for this time...happy DXing.

Expiring? Time to renew? Not sure when? Need to call or e-mail someone? Check the back page - it's all right there!

Fifties Radio: From Golden Age to Rock n' Roll

By Andy Ooms

(Continued from last issue).

WOOD, the call letters based on the Grand Rapids history and tradition of furniture production, was medium powered, 1300 on the dial, NBC. WOOD is still going strong as a news talk station. It had the biggest signal of the GR stations and probably the most esteemed reputation. At 6 a.m. or earlier, it carried a fascinating daily 30 minutes or so of a man describing the early fur-trading, French, and Indian history of the area, interesting to listen to or return to sleep to. Days on WOOD, it was Grand Central Station or Welcome Travelers, and otherwise almost wall to wall soaps until the late '50's. Nights were NBC shows until they expired, including in the early evening One Man's Family until its final broadcast. During the dinner hour, it had a great polka broadcast (back then the Hit Parade had occasional polkas by Wayne King or Fred Waring and his Pennsylvanians - remember Oh Ja, Das Ist Der Lichtensteiner Polka, Mein Schatz?). I remember the sponsor of the polka show as being announced as "Man oh Man oh Manischevitz." Remember sweet wines like Mogen David and Manischevitz before chardonnays and zinfandels were in style? WOOD carried Detroit Red Wings hockey, a team unknown to me until then in a league I had never heard of in South Dakota. WOOD also was the home of Calvin College Knights basketball games. They carried Michigan Wolverines football. WOOD was the station people turned to for weather news and school closings; it was, and is, highly respected. And on weekends, WOOD broadcast a TOP 40 playlist for a short time in 1956 or 1957.



In 1956, an example of innovative radio thinking popped up when NBC initiated Monitor, (carried by WOOD), a well-received program for at least 10 years. Monitor carried a variety of news and information pieces. Comedians with 5-minute segments participated: Fibber McGee and Molly at first, Mike Nichols and Elaine May in later years. Saturday nights had a live from Nashville segment of the Grand Ol Opry. The beauty of the program was the ability of affiliates to move in and out of the Monitor programming all weekend.

Next, WLAV, 1340 kilohertz, ABC affiliate. WLAV programming consisted mainly of recordings. Tom Quain was a local favorite morning personality for a while. Martin Block played records out of New York on one ABC afternoon program, but network radio brought nothing to the disc jockey profession that couldn't be done locally as well. WLAV did have the Breakfast Club with Don McNeill and Aunt Fanny and the daily march around the breakfast table. This was live from a Chicago hotel for several decades, maybe 35 years, ending in the '70's, although I don't know how long it was on WLAV.

Although Mutual in the '30's and ABC in the '40's carried a small number of soap operas, most soaps, up to 20 a day on each network, were on NBC and CBS. These met tight specifications, being 15-minute broadcasts, usually none starting before 9 a.m. or ending after 5 p.m. with very little interruption by other types of programs sponsored almost always by a soap or other cleaning product, stories that never really ended, a daily production, 5X per week, with plots that evolved slowly and were described often so that a busy housewife could miss a day or two but still catch up to the story line when she returned to the radio. They were invariably accompanied by emotive organ music.

Either I love to digress, or I hate to digress, but cannot control myself. In either event, here is a soap opera digression. Without going to the web or a book, the following soap opera titles are in the clutter of my mind: Ma Perkins, Our Gal Sunday, The Romance of Helen Trent, The Second Mrs. Burton, Portia Faces Life, The Search for Happiness, Young Widder Brown, Lorenzo Jones and his wife Bel, the Guiding Light, Life Can be Beautiful, Young Dr. Malone, the Road of Life, Mary Noble, Backstage Wife (or the Bob and Ray version, Mary Backstage, Noble Wife), Stella Dallas, Hilltop House, Wendy Warren and the News (the star read the news for the first third of the program, then segued into drama), One Man's Family, and Pepper Young's Family. I am not sure but Days of Our Lives, The Secret Storm, and As the World Turns may also have been on radio before their TV debuts. If you remember these programs, you probably deserve some kind of prize. If you remember which were on CBS and which were on NBC, you probably should get a life.

In the last half of the '50's, WOOD and WJEF kept the network soapy offerings when they were still available. ABC and Mutual had not competed as soap networks for many years. But in 1957, ABC took a final shot at the genre and I heard it several times on WLAV. It was called something like True Romances and deviated from the standard soap by being 30 minutes in length and by having a complete story in each show. But the effort didn't last long. And yes, WLAV too had its own Top 40 playlist for a time, played nightly for a while without local competition in that time slot.

WLAV, WJEF, and WOOD were full-service community stations, broadcasting from 6 a.m. or earlier until midnight, carrying a variety of programs.

The other 3 Grand Rapids stations (WGRD, WMAX, and WFUR) broadcast daylight hours only, and were unaffiliated with any of the 4 major networks. Although their programming was more varied than many formats of today, they were not quite as full-service as the network affiliates who had

more extensive local and world news.

Next on the dial was WGRD at 1410, the call letters still active in GR on FM. WGRD was a music station only but had an eclectic variety. It had standards, crooners and instrumentals, in the morning daily; a great cowpoke type guy from 11 to 1 doing current western hits (seldom described as country then, but sometimes called hillbilly, Western, or cowboy music). Afternoons each day a Top 40 playlist was played in order, #40 through #1.

Drive time was not a concept or a meaningful time segment yet as mornings were not necessarily the most-listened-to time of day. In fact, the music seemed to get faster and more exuberant as the day wore on. But mornings did tend to some more well-known or well-publicized personalities. And as network offerings were being replaced by music programming, disc jockeys began the evolution to being personalities, and the personalities playing the music became more important. WGRD's star was the Happy Hollander, Big Bud Lindemann.

WGRD had a hugely popular Sunday afternoon show, targeting the large Polish population of the city, with waltzes, polkas, and schottisches hosted by Uncle Yashoo. Yashoo frequently hosted live broadcasts of popular Lake Michigan Sunday afternoon cruises complete with orchestras.

In the fall of 1956, WGRD had a 15-minute soccer program each Saturday morning. It consisted of a man with a heavy Dutch brogue reporting the scores of several amateur adult teams. The teams, many comprised of recent Dutch or Polish arrivals, played in various public parks on weekends. At the time, soccer was basically non-existent in the upper Midwest except for some male college teams and recently arrived European amateurs. High school teams, youth leagues, and pro teams were yet to arrive on the American scene.

WMAX was at 1480. It signed off at sunset but signed on at 6 a.m. year round, with an hour of hard core United Auto Workers rhetoric, condemning most actions of the auto companies, especially Fisher Body, subsidiary of General Motors, the largest auto industry plant in Grand Rapids. Coming from farm country, where except for a strike every 2 or 3 years by the Meatpackers against John Morrell at the Sioux Falls stockyards, we never heard anything about any unions and had only the vaguest concept as to what they were. Growing up in a farm community fostering a strong work ethic for reasons of economic survival and because of parental respect, I was amazed when first hearing such vehement language aimed at an organization providing better-than-average income to its employees who were doing the complaining and criticizing. Because of my lack of labor relations knowledge, I was totally intrigued by the UAW radio program, disagreeing with most of what I understood, understanding little, and wishing I had time to go back to sleep for a few hours. (I have always listened across the dial, so I seldom listened to any programs, including this one, every day. I listened to most available stations many times each month. I did not restlessly tune from station to station all the time like sometimes is done by the person holding the TV remote today. When I tuned to a station, I usually stayed with it a few hours or most of a day or until the next sports broadcast on another station but didn't necessarily go back to the same station the next day).

After its abrasive sign on show, WMAX had standards in the morning, and an 11 to 1 show hosted by Mr. Unknown. He was great, playing Jimmy Durante musical and comedy stuff for example, and other show business material of the '40's and early '50's and talked at length about the show business and music and jazz artists of that era, interspersing his comments with related records. I never had any idea who Mr. Unknown was, and don't remember anyone else ever mentioning having listened to him.

WMAX had perhaps the most popular Top 40 programming, also played in descending order every afternoon. The Top 40 was a major part of their format; I think they played it through mornings and again afternoons for a time, after the morning standards slot ended at 9. It also had a reputation of catering to the black 30% of Grand Rapids' population. WMAX did not have an urban contemporary or rhythm and blues format, but when playing outside the Top 40 lists, their music had a little more African American flavor than any other station in GR. And they carried black gospel music and worship formats on Sunday. On Saturday afternoons however, Purty Patty Boyd played country music, and definitely called it hillbilly. One cold day, Purty Patty read the weather forecast and told us the temperatures were "going way down into the one numbers." This could be more grammatically described as the single digit range.

The last GR station on the dial was WFUR at 1570, still there and still with a religious format. At the time, full-time religious formats were very rare. Most stations had some religious programming, usually a lot on Sunday mornings, plus from 5 minutes to an hour each morning right after sign-on, and maybe singing of the Lord's Prayer or some other hymn at sign-off. WMBI, operated by the Moody Bible Institute, in Chicago was a full-time religious station, but there were none in South Dakota and very few in other states, especially outside of the largest cities. But WFUR, also named after the furniture city concept, was a very professional-sounding Christian station. It did not carry shouters or hucksters or beggars, but a lot of inspirational and academic theology, excellent choir music, a marching band music show daily, news, and quite a bit of secular or religious classical music. It had some Dutch language programming on some Sunday afternoons, in recognition of another major ethnic group in the city.

One of my radio quirks was to be intrigued by programming from 6 to 8 p.m. during the summer months on daytime only stations. The programs seemed kind of mystical, non-existent during the

winter, realities only temporarily as autumn approached, getting ready to disappear as darkness approached and thickened. As an actual matter, they were usually only recorded music programs, maybe with a disc jockey holding over from the afternoon slot, maybe with little or no announcing, maybe introduced as "an interlude of recorded music for your listening pleasure." The magic is gone if it was there at all, especially now that daytimers are very rare. I don't know the schedules of most stations in or near Grand Rapids, but there are a lot more AM stations available for listening there across the dial, including new GR stations, old dial positions with changed call letters, and new stations from suburbs like Ada, Kentwood, Zeeland, and Rockford. I don't believe that many are daytimers.

List A: The Singing Rage Patti Page, Theresa Brewer, Spike Jones, Jo Stafford, the Andrews Sisters, the McGuire Sisters, Giselle McKenzie, Vic Damone, Tony Bennett, Paul Weston, Frank, Bing, Eddie Fisher, Johnny Ray, Woody Herman, Earl Garner, Errol "Fatha" Hines, Nat "King" Cole, Julius LaRosa, Rosemary Clooney, Gale Storm, the Freddy Martin Orchestra, the Ames Brothers, Ella Fitzgerald, Gene Krupa, Dix Beiderbecke, Tex Beneke, Harry James, the Glenn Miller Orchestra, Louis Armstrong, Stan Kenton, Dean Martin, Al Martino, Bob Crosby and the Bobcats, the Three Suns, the Four Aces, Lawrence Welk, Tommy and Sammy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Pete Fountain, Les Paul and Mary Ford, Miss Peggy Lee, Julie London, Paul Whiteman, Lena Horne, Perry Como, Margaret Whiting, Doris Day, Guy Lombardo, Dinah Shore, Percy Faith, Mantovani.

List B: Little Richard, Elvis, Fats, the Everly Brothers, Brenda Lee, the Platters, Jerry Lee Lewis, Wilson Pickett, Paul Anka, Pat Boone, Dion and the Belmonts, Bo Diddley, Jan & Dean, Patience & Prudence, Mickey & Sylvia, Tab Hunter, Ricky Nelson, Richie Valens, Bobby Darin, Buddy Knox, Danny and the Juniors, Sheb Wooley, the Big Bopper, Connie Francis, the Dell Vikings, Johnny Mathis, Harry Belafonte, Sam Cooke, Frankie Avalon, Fabian.

Easy for most of you to figure out where I am leading. The A list is typical of records played on radio in the first half of the Fifties. The B list is typical of the second half. A little country or hillbilly crossover to the A list by Hank Williams; a little crossover to the B list by Jimmy Rodgers, Johnny Cash, or Marty Robbins.

The airplay lists are the best way I know to demonstrate the revolutionary transition to rock n' roll that hit the airwaves. The music itself changed, of course. Your Hit Parade became the Top Forty. But the music consumer demographic profile of music listeners and buyers also changed, from young and middle aged adults primarily to mostly teens and early 20's. And the younger audience had more discretionary income to spend on items like records than young people had ever had before. The importance of music in a radio station's programming profile increased tremendously. Television took the variety, quiz, drama including soaps, and comedy shows away from AM radio, which looked around at what was left and became for a time primarily a recorded music medium. News and community services and sports continued to have a place in radio, but every station on the AM band had at least some music programming. Full time news, sports, talk, celebrity talk, news talk, or sports talk formats were yet to be created. Record libraries, and music playing personalities, not network affiliations, became the most valuable element of a station's essence.

Another opinion digression: not only because Spike Jones is on the A list or because the Big Bopper is on the B list would most agree that the music of both lists was more fun and provided more listening pleasure than much of the music of the '60's and beyond. Pop music may have improved in some ways and as a business it has certainly grown and prospered, but I think it lost a lot of appeal as it began to take itself too seriously and the artists began making statements and selling philosophy instead of having fun while making music. When is the last time you have heard humor in a current hit? I am resisting the temptation to use any song titles in this article to make my point, as the music artist and soap opera lists are already more than enough of lists.

Now did you notice that for a time every Grand Rapids station, except WFUR with its religious format, had a Top 40 playlist? In other words, for a time even stations without a Top 40 format played the top 40 songs daily or at least once a week. Five of six stations had similar but not identical Top 40 playlists, in spite of other significant differences in programming style. And many consumer teenagers tried to listen to, and keep up with, all the lists. The lists changed weekly and were similar to one another, but never identical, often with 3 or 4 Elvis songs in the top 10 for a long time, probably taken from Billboard or Variety magazines. But each station claimed superiority for its version, tweaked a little from the national lists by allegedly tracking record sales at local retail outlets. And except when college or work or young women interfered with my attention level, I actually paid a modest amount of attention to differences and deviations in the lists of WJEF, WOOD, WLAV, WGRD, and WMAX. Without worshipping him, I enjoyed the early Elvis; Pat Boone was okay, and I thoroughly liked the music of Fats Domino.

However, by 1958, the Top 40 concept was de-emphasized at most of these stations; WGRD and WMAX continued playing the Top 40 in order daily as I remember, while the other stations carved out their own niches and created their own programming styles.

In the description of the network programming available in Grand Rapids, note that Mutual was not around. Mutual (MBS, the Mutual Broadcasting System) was quite different from CBS, NBC, and ABC. The other three had bigger budgets and more celebrities and were actually corporations. Mutual started as a loose affiliation of a few big city stations and in a low-budget way evolved into being a network. Originally composed of powerhouses WGN in Chicago, WLW in Cincinnati, and WOR New

York, it became a small city favorite, eventually having more affiliates than any other network. But most of the affiliates were in very small markets, put out 1000 watts or less, and many were daytimers. One reason for its small town popularity, in addition to its low cost, was its baseball. Large cities had their own teams with broadcasts; small town America enjoyed a game every day with different teams every day as its loyalties were more to the sport itself than to a particular team. I don't know anyone in my town that had ever been to a major league stadium or even seen a telecast of a game, but we listened to every pitch of every World Series and knew all about the Dodgers, Yankees, Joe DiMaggio, Stan Musial, and Herb Score. We didn't really have a local favorite team, until WNAX began broadcasting Kansas City Athletics games sporadically (weekends only so they would not pre-empt farm market programs and soap operas) when that team moved to Kansas City from Philadelphia in 1954. They are now the Oakland team.

Mutual was also the home of a large lineup of Sunday afternoon action programs, including various programs with the word "detective" or "adventure" in the title, and the Green Hornet, and the famous, The Shadow. So between detectives and baseball, how could it not help be the favorite network of young males?

After moving to Michigan, my Mutual exposure totally diminished as none of the Chicago, Detroit, Grand Rapids, or Milwaukee regulars that I knew of were affiliated with it. Mutual had the small towns and the Don Lee Mutual branch in the West headquartered in Los Angeles; but they apparently didn't have the sophistication to be a big city network. Each of the cities mentioned above had local or regional major league sports broadcasts, and with the demise of non-music network programming, there was no need for a Mutual. Since the mid-fifties, my only notice of it included some all night Larry King broadcasts heard during the '70's and '80's, and frequently while traveling I heard top of the hour Mutual news. This ended in the late '90's when the network disappeared or was absorbed permanently by Westwood, after having been owned at various times by Chris Craft (power boats) and 3M.

What non-locals did we listen to in Grand Rapids? We listened to WJR, 760 Detroit, flagship station of the Tigers, Lions, and Red Wings. Typical of major big city stations, WJR still had its own musicians on the payroll, its own orchestra for live broadcasts. But surprisingly this major and famous voice of Detroit ("from high atop the golden tower of the Fisher Theater, the Great Voice of the Great Lakes") was of little interest in Grand Rapids, as GR had its own outlets for the Detroit sports teams except for the Pistons.

During the day we could listen also to WTMJ 620 Milwaukee as well as WOKY 920 from that city. And of course, Chicago.

Grand Rapids was slightly influenced by Detroit media and other aspects of its culture. GR was loyal to the Detroit pro sports teams, and shared in most economic aspects of the auto industry. But Detroit radio was not a factor in Grand Rapids as the Lions, Tigers, and Red Wings had GR outlets. Detroit newspapers were not too common as GR had quite a good daily, the Grand Rapids Press, and the Chicago papers were available-Tribune, Daily News, Sun-Times, American.

Because of the newspapers and radio, Chicago was a major pop cultural influence in Grand Rapids. Because radio signals travel well over water, many Chicago stations' signals shone over Lake Michigan and boomed into GR like locals. Therefore Cubs and White Sox fans were abundant. One-day or weekend trips to visit a big city were much more often to Chicago with its many tourist attractions than to the equidistant Detroit.

Chicago radio as heard in GR: WIND with its great call letters and pre-rock pop music and famous personality Howard Miller at 560 was a music-lover's favorite. By now, it has a long-time Spanish tradition, being one of the first Chicago voices to make that language transition.

WMAQ 670 was NBC's famous Chicago voice, carried varied music and other programming, a quality station. It carried the NBC soaps as long as they existed and evolved in the '60's to an all-country music format for a time, before becoming one of the early all-news stations in the Midwest.

The fantastic WGN at 720, quite easily heard at night 900 miles from GR in my hometown in South Dakota, was one of the stations carried over from my childhood. WGN had the wonderful Wally Phillips who played current hits with great patter and chatter, lots of hilarious sound effects and injected voice bites and sound-bits. His listening territory was huge, and he worked at it, playing requests for the girls in the Calvin College coops (student housing) for example, even though there were more than 100 colleges as close or closer to Chicago and for whom he was also willing to play requests, not to mention all the high schools in his broadcasting range. WGN, like other big city stations, had a large number of celebrities, known as well-known personalities then, Franklyn McCormack being another example. WGN had a highly respected farm audience which it earned with good agricultural reporting, and I believe it is still doing well at keeping both city and country audience segments informed.

At 780, the CBS station, WBBM, (why do I like double call letters so much?), billed as the WBBM Air Theater in the days when it carried the old time radio dramas and comedies and really was a theater of the airwaves, had Godfrey and soaps until 1960. In the late fifties, it had a personality, named John Gibson I believe, who was unusual in that he talked live on air for 5 or 6 hours a day without call-in listeners or music. He just talked, kind of like an extended Godfrey show without the music. Even now, although there are all-news and all-talk formats and many AM stations with no music ever, I don't know of any persons doing nothing but talking for several hours each day without call-in participation. Of course, WBBM became a prestigious all-news station, another one of the first to do so.

WGN and WBBM and other big stations had great all night music programming, sponsored by companies like American Airlines or Northwest Orient Airlines. The dulcet and intimate tones of announcers, like Pierre Andre and McCormack, talking deeply and softly about their Broadway, classical, and semi-classical selections kept me awake when driving, and made it sometimes difficult to quit listening when I really should have gone to sleep. Thousands of square miles of the US were blanketed by that kind of programming for decades, subdued late night music programs from America's big cities offering companionship to the graveyard shift workforces and to insomniacs.

WLS 890, ABC for Chicago, interesting until the '50's for time-sharing with WENR, was famous for its farm programming and especially the WLS National Barn Dance, Saturday nights. In the '50's decade, it did a complete reinvention, losing the WENR connection, dropping the farm format, and becoming a famous hot hits station, noted by teens in many states. Dick Biondi was its immensely popular evening personality at a time when evening personalities were more popular than AM or PM drive timers. Dick may have been imitating the style of a predecessor; many definitely imitated him in Top 40 radio.

More Chicago stations heard in or near Grand Rapids ... WAIT 850, not remarkable for me until it became one of the first in the Midwest to have a beautiful music format, kind of a pleasant wall-to-wall instrumental sound, imitating the typical format of many early FM stations.

WAAF 950, more double call letters, was known for quite good jazz programming and had a definite African-American flavor, Chicago style.

WCFL 1000 was a general format music station of the pre-rock variety in the late fifties. They had an extremely talented morning man in Dan Sorokin, famous in radio circles for a long time in Chicago and San Francisco, if not elsewhere. It switched in the sixties to a folk music format, a rare and short-lived format for commercial stations, but hootenannies and jamborees were a really big deal in the early '60's. Later WCFL was one of the famous rockers, heard in many states and covering the hits in the style of WLS, WABC New York, CKLW Windsor, Ontario, and many others throughout America. WCFL and others are still referred to on various music and radio related websites.

WCFL, originally owned by the Chicago Federation of Labor, migrated from general adult pop to folk to Top 40 to religion. Ownership changed; formats changed. Now that ideal dial position, 1000, in Chicago is WMVP, a sports talker and again like 50 years ago, the place that White Sox fans in the region turn to for play-by-play of their team.

Another Chicago station heard by many in GR was WJJD. I don't know why, but this station also seemed unique to me. I don't recall where it was located exactly, but it was near 1160 on the dial. It was another Chicago voice also heard in South Dakota, 700 miles to the northwest. WJJD had the double letters I liked. Its programming seemed to be kind of a Grand Ol' Opry type with a lot of huckstering of health products and long commercials, reminding me of some of the Mexican border stations. The announcers kind of shouted, but in a friendly way. It had pretty good country music, and for a time it even had Top 40 hits. It was not a daytimer as it broadcast after dark, but it had an unusual sign-off time. I remember the sign-off as being around 8 p.m. year around; possibly its sign-off authority was controlled by sunset time in a more western state with a station on the same frequency. The call letters no longer exist in Chicago.

Other GR regular catches were at night and included WHAS Louisville, KMOX Saint Louis, WHO Des Moines, WLW and WCKY Cincinnati, KXEL Waterloo, WSM and WLAC Nashville, WBZ Boston, WCAU Philadelphia, KDKA Pittsburgh, WWVA Wheeling, WRVA Richmond, WHAM Rochester, and the New Yorkers WABC and WCBS. The Kansas City, Denver, Albuquerque, Salt Lake City, and many Texas stations of my prairie youth were basically no longer available to me.

Some words about sportscasting. I love live radio sports broadcasts of almost any kind. TV sportscasts are okay for me but limited to select sports and teams. But on radio, almost any game or race is fine with me. However, I have no respect for, or interest in, sports talk or any sports format stations except for live broadcasts. I want to hear the game itself and I do not want to listen to talk about the game or its athletes. If I am interested in more detail, I can pick up more than enough from a newspaper. The live event is the thing for me; I don't listen to, or watch, delayed broadcasts either.

Where did this sports broadcasts interest come from? Well, I worked hard when young beginning in elementary school, in the garden or the yard or the family grocery store. Games are more fun than work, so although usually working during the broadcasts, hearing a game with people actually playing instead of working and the mental image of people watching and cheering and eating hot dogs gave me a lot of pleasure. A sports broadcast can still reproduce much of that feeling for me. I also inherited an interest in sports from my dad. Sports, as I heard them in South Dakota and as I was aware of them, were high school sports usually not heard on the radio in my town except for the state basketball tournaments, major league baseball with different teams every day on the radio in season, heavy-weight boxing in the era of Joe Louis, and the Indianapolis 500 races. I had some knowledge of college football in that we knew of Notre Dame, Oklahoma's 50-plus game winning streak, the Army-Navy game (I had a favorite in that game when my sister was in the Navy), but South Dakota has no college football powerhouses (in fact has no Division I teams in any sport, which no other state can claim as even North Dakota and Alaska have Division I hockey teams) and so there was not much fan interest in college football, or basketball either. Remember that I grew up surrounded by hard-working farmers who had little leisure time and no television; sports was not a large part of life in that era. Back then

I knew nothing of the NFL, NBA, or the NHL.

And an important part of my high school years: when the World Series was on, always day games back then, instead of going to class, a large radio was brought into the study hall and we listened to every pitch of every game. No wonder I had to do a lot of catch up learning in college.

So moving to Grand Rapids greatly expanded my sports interest range. I found out that the Tigers, with Al Kaline, Virgil Trucks, and Harvey Kuehn were on local radio, every game, day or night. No more Mutual Game of the Day covering all the games. I have a little nostalgia for the old Mutual names of Al Helfer and Van Patrick, but with full time Tiger coverage, I didn't really miss Mutual.

Remember 1956. Only 16 major league baseball teams existed, none west of Saint Louis until Kansas City became the home of the Athletics in 1954. The NFL was getting ready to be a national obsession but wasn't there yet. It alone of the pro sports leagues had west coast teams, Rams and 49ers. The NHL had only 6 teams, only 4 in the US, none west of Chicago. And the NBA was pretty obscure. They were as far west as Minneapolis but had no Chicago or Detroit team. I don't recall how many teams they had, but their team cities included Syracuse, Fort Wayne, and Rochester, not your typical media centers.

Except for the Michigan and Michigan State teams, I didn't listen to much college football because Saturdays were full workdays for me. I didn't follow the NFL much because my Sunday schedule prevented it, although I generally knew how the Lions were faring.

But baseball coverage was more than adequate for me. I could get many stations and in the summer I had more time to spend listening. Tigers on WJEF, or WKZO. Cubs on WGN with Jack Brickhouse announcing, Ernie Banks playing. White Sox on WCFL with Elson Howard calling the White Owl Wallops of Nellie Fox and Larry Doby. When they weren't playing, on to WTMJ to hear if the Braves were on with Hank Aaron, Warren Spahn, Johnny Sain, Joe, Adcock, Del Crandell, and Eddie Matthews. Games over and still had time? Try KMOX for the Cardinals, WBZ for the Red Sox, WHAM for the Yankees, WLW for the Reds, WCAU for the Phillies, or KDKA for the Pirates.

And in 1957, the Giants and the Dodgers moved to California, the beginning of a westward odyssey later supplemented by more moves and more teams. And notable to me, games beginning at 10 p.m. from Candlestick Park or Chavez Ravine, games which sometimes lasted longer than my homework duties.

The major changes in baseball since the '50's in addition to the new teams and the new locations of old teams is the demise of double headers which were scheduled very regularly and not caused only by rainouts, and the shift from 80% day games to less than 10% day games. I kind of miss having more afternoon baseball than we do, and I used to enjoy anticipating the possibility of my favorite team winning two games in one day.

Hockey? WOOD took care of the Red Wings games for me; Gordie Howe, Sid Abel, the Production Line. The Chicago Blackhawks moved around the dial a bit, but I picked them up occasionally. And on Sunday nights when all other sports events were done and it was the slowest part of the week in many ways, it seems that I could always catch the Fort Wayne Comets on the great and unique WOWO, except during the summer.

NBA? As I heard it from a Miss Kautsky of the family of the team's first owner in Indianapolis, in the late '40's the Indianapolis Kautskys moved to Fort Wayne and became the Fort Wayne Zollners. This I know more surely, that Mr. Zollner had a piston ring company (maybe or maybe not Perfect Circle) and changed the name of his team to the Fort Wayne Pistons. In 1957 or 1958, the Pistons moved to Detroit. None of this affected my listening except that after they moved to Detroit, I listened to them on WJR.

Other frequent or occasional sports listening for me included the college Saint Louis Billikins on KMOX, the University of Kentucky or Louisville University on WHAS, and high school girls' basketball on WHO. Of course I listened to the Calvin basketball games WOOD, and also the Western Michigan Broncos basketball and football on WKZO. And at years end, we enjoyed the football bowl games on various network stations. There were fewer bowls and more all-star games: East West, North South, and Blue Gray. And in August every summer as baseball was wearing thin, the College All Star game, Soldiers Field, college all stars played the NFL champs, which sounds good but usually resulted in a huge stomping by the pros.

A great day in my listening memory: Thanksgiving Day, 1956. It was my first Thanksgiving away from our typical morning church service, eating Canada goose shot by my dad for dinner, and pheasant hunting in the afternoon. Instead I was sitting around Grand Rapids after dinner with another out of town classmate. For about the first time since school started, I didn't have to work or study. So naturally we listened to the radio. I remember catching the Lions game, part of the new Top 40 list on WMAX, a Thanksgiving polka special with Uncle Yashoo, and then the last half of a sports broadcast that I have never forgotten.

WCFL carried the then annual Chicago high school football championship, a game between the top public school and Catholic school teams. I don't remember the team names, but the game was played in Soldiers Field on Thanksgiving Day, 1956. The final score was 0 to 0. The championship was awarded to the team that crossed the opponent's 20-yard line the most often, and I don't remember either if the public or Catholic school won. But I have never forgotten the concepts of that match, that playing field, and that tiebreaker.

Another digression: Chicago sports teams and their flagship stations. The Cubs seem to have been on WGN forever and are now owned by The Tribune Company, owners of WGN; so don't look for the Cubs to move soon. But I think I remember that the Cubs were on WIND in the '40's? The Sox have been on WCFL, went to WMAQ for awhile with Harry Caray after he left Saint Louis and before he made a legend of himself with the Cubs. Then for a year or two, the Sox went to WTAQ 1300 La Grange, barely hearable in all of metro Chicago. I don't know the rest of their travels, but they are now back at 1000 WMVP, former dial position of WCFL. The Bears have probably been on WMAQ, WGN, and WBBM; I'm not sure about all of these. I don't know who carried the Cardinals before they moved to Saint Louis around 1960. The Blackhawks may have been on WCFL. I am quite sure that I have heard them on WBBM and on WMAQ.

The NBA in Chicago. Remember the Chicago Zephyrs in the early 1960's? Probably not; who does? The NBA was not much back then. But the Zephyrs actually existed; games were broadcast on a FM station. They kind of failed; at any rate they became the Baltimore Bullets, now the Washington Wizards. I don't know when the Bulls showed up or who carried the games at first, but they are now on WMVP, along with the co-owned White Sox.

Well, that covers Grand Rapids radio for me until I went into the Army in 1958. When I returned in 1960 to finish college, network radio as it had been was really dead except for news and sportscasts.

Current hit music was still interesting for me, but not nearly to the extent that it had been. The tops in pops lists didn't seem to have as much variety or fun as in the past. Actually, I was outgrowing the music, which was normal; I have read that most adults of all ages prefer the music that was in style when they were in high school. But sports casts were still interesting for me, and they hadn't changed as much as the music had either. In fact even today a radio baseball game is remarkable similar to a radio baseball game of the '40's, another reason that I appreciate them.

In the early '70's, a regulatory change required all AM radios sold in the US to also have FM capability. That change was a major factor in the expansion of FM broadcasting and in the number of stations although there were other 60's type influences as well.

FM broadcasting already had a tradition in Chicago by the early '60's, but was just beginning in Grand Rapids. WOOD FM with a then typical beautiful music format was probably the first, starting in 1962. Soon after, WLAV FM began, with quite bit of simulcasting of WLAV. Then WXTO, the very professional and erudite voice of Aquinas College, and WVGR, the Grand Rapids outlet of WUOM, the University of Michigan station in Ann Arbor came along. Naturally I remember WLAV, not for its excellent classical music format, but because of its Wolverine hockey games.

In 1961 and '62, I was the Sunday board operator of WKLW FM. I was alone in its studios at the top of an old almost empty warehouse building on the non-beautified waterfront of the Grand River, from 1 p.m. until midnight signoff. If there were no tornado or other weather emergency or Conelrad alert, the station had no live announcements or any other programming during that time. My job consisted in closely following a script advising me which of several large and small tape machines and which of several turntables to turn on and off and when. Rewinding and clearing the decks for the next recording plus reading the transmitter meters and recording the data twice an hour kept me relatively busy. The format was a religion, easy listening, classical music combo. I don't know how long the station lasted.

I kept my AM listening interest and added some FM listening interest although the small number of similar formats on FM didn't foster much excitement. But my biggest change after my Army hitch came when I bought a Hallicrafters AM and short wave set, covering 530 kilohertz through 30 megahertz. It was the cold war era, I had enjoyed my military station in Europe, I had learned a fair amount of German, and these factors added to my international interest. Stations I remember receiving regularly include VOA and BBC naturally, but also Budapest, Bucharest, Prague, Bonn, Zurich, Paris, Rome, Warsaw Madrid, Stockholm. Radio Habana Cuba, pronounced with the b, was on often and on many frequencies. It is intriguing to hear it in 2003 sounding almost exactly like it did in 1961, still ranting about the Yankee imperialist threat. Many summertime mornings I listened to CFRX, Toronto on the 6-megahertz band, simulcasting AM station CFRB. Unless there has been a recent change, Canada has several short wave stations simulcasting commercial AM stations in several provinces. It has been reported that this situation is on the way out; the short wave transmitters may not be repaired or replaced for cost and market value reasons.

So there you have my version of the radio segment of my life in Grand Rapids. I left for a job in Chicago, 9 years with RCA in Indianapolis beginning in one of the last radio receiver factories in the US, 4 years building the Alaska pipeline, working for Rockwell International in Detroit and Los Angeles, back to Alaska as a retiree consultant for British Petroleum at Prudhoe Bay, followed by kind of living in Arizona but actually teaching English in Viet Nam for a year and a half, and 2 years of training blind adults in the Philippines. Each of those locations plus Germany has some kind of radio interest for me (especially Indy, LA, and Detroit) but few match the enchantment of South Dakota and Grand Rapids radio for this long-winded writer, who may, or may not ever, write a radio article again. Thanks for listening.