



# Long Path



Volume 20 Issue 6

SEMDXA NEWSLETTER

March, 2003

## February Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:55 PM by President **K8SIX**. Fourteen members present. Included was our newest member **LZ4GU**. The Treasurer's report was unavailable. January minutes as published in the February issue of the Long Path.

No old business noted. New business included a brief discussion about **K8SIX**'s new low frequency Flag-antenna. Several members indicated and interest about construction. **K8SIX** provided details including a cost estimate of about \$150.00 not including the rotating mechanism. **K8SIX** stated that it worked extremely well on the 160 meter band and showed excellent directivity with little response to noise.

For those interested, check out the **W7IUUV** website and **K6SE**'s article in QST magazine. Many details and constructional hints are provided.

Several members inquired about a Packet Cluster user identifying themselves as **DXER1** and/or **DXER2**. **K8NA** indicated that he was located in Lincoln Park and had a K8 callsign prefix. **K8NA** stated this amateur was afflicted with an emotional disorder. **K8NA** further indicated that it is not completely possible to lock him out of the Packet Cluster.

**LZ4GU** provided club members with a real treat, genuine Bulgarian beer! The label indicated a 5% alcohol content and participating members agreed this is a fine product. A far cry from the

3.2% beer served in US military installations.

A brief discussion followed on Software suppliers including protectional algorithms embedded in their products. This apparently is done to minimize pirating and illegal use. Also, this tactic is being used by more and more vendors in recent times.

On this note, the business meeting was concluded at 8:20 PM. The program was a one hour long video detailing the recent **VP8GEO** DX-pedition to the South Georgia Islands located in the South Atlantic Ocean near the 57th parallel! The video was produced and edited by James Brooks **9V1YC** and was of extremely high quality.

The team included twelve members from Europe, Canada, Singapore and the USA. They departed the South Sandwich Islands after an 80 hour stint operating **VP8THU** aboard the 134', diesel-powered vessel Braveheart skippered by Nigel Jolly and a crew of four. Built in the 1980s in Japan for North Pacific oceanographic research, the Braveheart was ideal for this charter. A three day voyage brought the team to South Georgia Island where they set up shop at Husvik Bay. For the next seven days they operated round the clock from six station sites and eventually accumulated over 45,000 QSOs. All this using 100 watt transceivers and simple vertical antennas. 80 and 160 meter operation was included which was not possible from their previous stint at the South Sandwich Islands. No wonder they referred to this DX-pedition as the "Micro-Lite DX-pedition!"

Highlights of the video were scenes from the Sir Ernest Shackleton exploration team and the former Norwegian whaling stations located near Grythviken. These clips made in the first quarter of the last century were apparently 16 mm films and expertly edited into the Video theme. Exceptionally well done!

Another highlight, depicted a group of the team members rescuing a seal from legacy fish-net material which is pre-

## SEMDXA CLUB OFFICERS

*President:* Al Bailey, **K8SIX**

*Vice-president:* John Millet, **K8JM**

*Treasurer:* Buck Switzer, **N8CQA**

*Secretary:* Stan Arnett, **AC8W**

*Director:* Ted Pauck, **K8NA**

*Web Site Editor:* Ken Schang, **W8LU**

*DXCC Checker:* Bill Jones, **N8KF**

*DXCC Checker:* S.Arnett, **AC8W**

*VUCC Checker:* Al Bailey, **K8SIX**

*CQ Checker:* Mike Rudzki, **N8MR**

*CQ Checker:* Al Bailey, **K8SIX**

*Program Chairman:* Vacant

*LP Publisher:* Gerry Fasse, **W8GF**

sent in large quantities in the South Atlantic Ocean. If the net were allowed to remain, the seal would eventually strangle and die. After a remarkable struggle, the seal was freed from this lethal bind. Without looking back, the seal headed for the beach and safety of the nearby ocean.

The team left South Georgia Island safely aboard the Braveheart and set course for the Falklands and eventually home via an RAF flight and in the case of **9V1YC** and **K5NO**, a commercial flight to Punta Arenas, Chile. As a footnote, the Braveheart would later participate in the more recent Ducie Island caper. No doubt, we will hear from the Braveheart and her hearty crew soon again.

**W8GF**, Acting Secretary



### Greetings Fellow Members

We have found out at last months meeting that it is best to not have our meeting the same day as St. Valentine's Day. The club was filled to the brim and consequently we were forced to use the storage room behind the bowling alley to hold our meeting! All in all though it turned out to be a very good meeting.

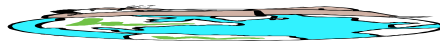
Our new member George, **LZ4GU**, used some of his military expertise and brought us a case of Bulgarian Brew to enjoy! Too bad **K8DD** wasn't there to

try a couple. Thanks George and we hope you can make the March meeting.

At this time I am not sure what the March meeting will entail. I got in touch with **NE8Z** but he will be in South America. I sent an e-Mail to **AC8W** in hopes he can put on a presentation on the **VC2C** DX-pedition but have not heard anything yet. If he is not prepared, I plan on showing a video of the recent **A52A** operation. Hope it's not a re-run!

'Till then, I wish you all the best and 73

**K8SIX**



### DX PROSPECTS

What a difference a year makes! At this time last year solar flux was over 200 most days and the HF bands were open until late in the evening. Six meter openings were numerous and many times 20 meters was open through the night. Solar flux is now stalled in the 120 neighborhood, 10 and 15 meters close early and 20 meters not much later. Six meter openings are virtually nil here in North America. Couple this with K Indices locked in the 3 to 5 area and you have marginal propagation on the low bands as well.

Glenn, **WØGJ** operating from **A51B** has had terrific signals on 20 meters, both regular and long path. However, signals on 40 and 80 are marginal at best. The Southwest 80 meter path seems best during mornings hours and Southeast during the evening hours on 40 meters. This operator, has made many trips between the ham shack and pennant receiving antenna where it must be manually oriented to search for the best propagational paths! As one K6 DXer noted, " he's about two months too late." Referring of course to the timing of his DXpedition.

One further note about low-band DXing; you hear from many, many DXers that the sunrise period is best for low band propagation. Often I have heard the term "Sunrise Enhancement". This may or may not be true. Observed here is more like noise reduction due to diminished propagation from the East as the sun moves above the horizon. In other words, signal strengths are less enhanced but noise is considerably reduced!

Many of us have heard about the legendary DX-exploits of Dr Don Miller, **W9WNV** of yore. Don served many years in a penal institution and was recently released. He is now relicensed as **AE6IY** and is somewhat active again. Check out this website: [www.qsl.at/common/miller.html](http://www.qsl.at/common/miller.html). Here you will find a long list of operations associated with this fabled personality. Other DX legends noted included call signs such as **K7LMU** (Chuck Swain), **JA1AEA** (Jim Suzuki), **K1JMP** (Herb) and **ZL2AWJ** (Ted Thorpe).

Together with DX-pedition notes, there are photographs of Don and his companions. Also there are some interesting legacy audio clips which are tantalizingly short in duration. Don was an outstanding CW operator but there are many, many today that are equally competent. The DX pileups in those days were just as fierce as present but with fewer participants. Just a quick check thru my files produced QSLs from **VQ8CB/A** (Aldabra) , **W9WNV/Blenheim Reef**, **W9WNV/HKØ** (Serrana Bank), **VQ8CB/A** (Aldabra) , **W9WNV/HKØ** (Baja Nuevo), **1G5A** (Geyser Reef), **VK2ADY/VK9** (Cocos-Keeling Islands), **VU2WNV** (Loccadvives), **VQ8CBB** (St. Brandon), **VQ9AA** (Seychelles) and **HL9KH**. Check your own QSL files for comparison

**W8GF**

# SEMDXA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

## South Eastern Michigan DX Association (SEMDXA)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Application for new membership \_\_\_\_\_ or Application for renewal \_\_\_\_\_ (check one)

Full membership \_\_\_\_\_ or Associate membership \_\_\_\_\_ (check one) Dues: \$15.00 annually

(See SEMDXA website for membership requirements)

Present Call Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Previous Call Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

***MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO SEMDXA***

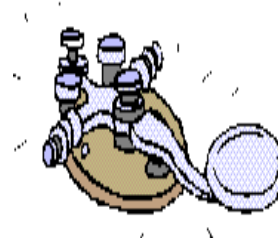
***Make payment at next SEMDXA meeting or mail with remittance to:***

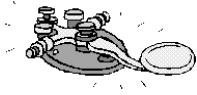
***Leon Switzer, Treasurer***

***427 Jeffrey Avenue***

***Royal Oak, Michigan 48073***

***NOTE: TO RECEIVE THE CLUB NEWSLETTER "THE LONG PATH" YOU MUST PROVIDE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS!***

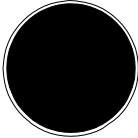

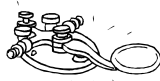



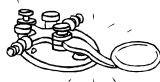





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## SEMDXA Monthly Planner



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