



Long Path



Volume 20 Issue 3

SEMDXA NEWSLETTER

November, 2002



Presidents Report

Greetings Everybody; I hope everyone had a good time at our October meeting as I certainly did. Both **WT8S** and **K8JE** had interesting points in there run for ARRL Director and I would like to wish all the candidates well.

I received an e-mail from **WT8S** and he says our club is the best he has ever had the pleasure of doing a presentation at. I also heard a comment regarding the facilities at the club, and the size of our room. We need to thank our past officers for a job well done.

This months presentation will not be quite as impressive as Octobers but will be a good one none the less. I recently purchased the DVD's of the **VP8GEO** and **VP8THU** dxpeditons, and after previewing them I think James Brook, **9V1YC**, has found his forte.

These videos are very well put together and action packed. The theme of both dxpediton is "Micro-Lite", as they did not use large antennas nor did they use amplifiers. Despite that they made impressive counts in both countries. You may want to bring some Dramamine for these two.

This weekend is CQ WW so I hope you all get out there and have some fun. I look forward to seeing you all at the meeting and until then best 73 and good DX.

K8SIX
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## NE8Z Reports

I will be signing **KP4/NE8Z** between October 26 and November 3, 2002. I will also be on a fishing and diving trip to **KP5** (Desecheo Island) but I will only be operating **KP5/NE8Z** only fifty yards off shore (21.260 mHz while /MM). Landing on Desecheo Island without special permission is still prohibited. So close but yet so far!

**NE8Z**  
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CT9L

W8LU along with **PAØRCT**, **DJ2QV**, **DL3PS**, **DL1EKC**, **DL1QW** and **DJ6QT** will be active as **CT9L** in the CQ WW DX CW Contest (November 23, 24) as a Multi-Single or Multi-2 entry. QSL both operations via **DJ6QT**.

W8LU
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## October Minutes

Meting called to order at 8:00 PM by President, **K8SIX**. Thirty-one members and guests present.

**K8SIX** introduced candidates for Great Lakes Division Director (**WT8S**, Paul W. Daley and **K8JE**, James E. Weaver).

**WT8S** is a DXer with several major DXpeditions under his belt. A retired engineer, he seeks to gain more influence on the ARRL Board for DX matters.

**K8JE** is concerned about retaining Hams, recruiting kids and adults, fighting covenants and interlopers. He

## 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**

wants to review League programs and throw out or revise them to meet his goals.

President **K8SIX** is looking for program leads.... let him know if you have seen a good presentation or know of someone he could contact. He has been in touch with **K3ZO** and **VE3XN** and has heard that **DL2HBX** will be in the Detroit area for a year on business. Help will be appreciated.

Treasurer **N8CQA** reports a September 1 balance of \$431.62. He deposited \$300.00 and spent \$10.00 leaving a September 30 balance of \$721.62.

**N8CQA** also reported that he now has a source for the SEMDXA call sign badges and should be able to take orders next month; probable cost \$12.00. Anyone who has already ordered and paid will receive theirs soon.

**K8NA** is looking for an old guitar amplifier that could be used for our programs... maybe someone's kid had a band long ago and you need to clean out the garage or attic?

**W8GF** is trying to trace new member Ron Watkins and learn his call sign. Anyone know him?

**K8GT** wondered who in the club has access to an LCD projector.... **K8ZZU**, **K8NA** and **AC8W** are on the list.... Any others?

**K8SIX** introduced our speakers. **WT8S** (Paul) and **K8PYD** (Leo), both from the Columbus area were together on the **BQ9P** Pratus Island DXpedition in April of 2000. They were invited at the New Orleans DX Convention to be RTTY ops for this rare one.

Lots of gear was loaded on a C-130 transport for an eight day effort on this military fortress. They operated from reinforced concrete bunkers with fifty

caliber machine guns nearby./ Their visit coincided with a heightened alert state that increases tension between mainland China and Taiwan.

Nine operators made over 30,000 QSOs despite old rigs, technical problems, low voltage from the generators and faulty connectors. A very interesting glimpse at a semi-rare DX entity.

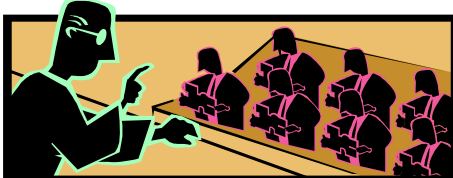
**K8PYD** next showed pictures from his **FOØFRY** operation on Rurutu Island - part of the Austral Island group from December 2001. Leo and **WB8YJF** (John) flew via Tahiti and had a great time with a C3S antenna a TS830. Beautiful slides and a nice show.

**WT8S** finished the evening with slides of his trip to Easter Island with the CE0Z group. Easter Island has the distinction of being the most remote inhabited island in the world and is, of course, home to the famous Rapaneeue (stone heads). Paul had some fascinating shots of the quarry and the statues placed looking out to sea. Lots of facts and a nice look at a place that not a lot of people ever get to.

President **K8SIX** thanked Paul and Leo and closed the meeting with a reminder to be safe when working on towers.... seems **N8GH** had taken down most of his tower and climbed back up the remaining 40' when it buckled at the bottom. He survived the fall but has two broken arms, a broken leg and a ruptured spleen. **Be Careful!!!**

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

**AC8W**, Secretary



## November SEMDXA Meeting

The November meeting will take place on November 8, 2002. Our program will be provided by **9V1YC** videos depicting the recent **VP8GEO** and **VP8THU** DXpeditions. See the **SEMDXA** web-site for additional detail. As in the recent past, the meeting will be held at the Clawson-Troy Elks Club located at 1451 Big Beaver Road (16 Mile Road). Off-menu-dinning will be available beginning at 5:30 PM together with a cash bar serving your favorite beverage.

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Curtis Keyer History

*The following item lifted from The Net News as written by **N8YG** and submitted by George Goldstone, **W8AP**.*

*Modern transceivers incorporate many features that not long ago were considered accessories: CW keyers and SWR meters come to mind. John Curtis, **K6KU**, created an electronic iambic-keyer circuit and subsequently offered an IC chip to do the job. He revolutionized keying as we know it.*

Born in Bradford, Pennsylvania in 1930, John Curtis became the typical boyhood ham. He and several high school friends got licenses at the same time, then built an operated amateur radio equipment. Then other things -- work and college-- came along and John did not attain the Extra Class license until later in life. He decided to get a feel for the requirements of the Extra Class test by undertaking a circuit design project. John built a keyer circuit and learned about digital electronics.

His prototype worked. In fact it worked well, according to his ham radio friends. They convinced him to produce keyers. With prototype in hand he put an ad in *Ham Radio*

Magazine announcing the Curtis Electronic Devices EK-38. The -38 was John's age - a product numbering scheme that would continue. Ham Radio reported there was a slight problem with the ad. The name Curtis Electronic Devices was too long of the small ad. So with a swipe of an eraser, Curtis Electronic Devices became Curtis Electro Devices.

John spent many hours preparing to product the EK-38 and keep his normal day job as well. But eventually he formed his own business. The EK-38 was a great keyer, but it only had a dot memory and lacked weight control. Many hams were interested in weight control because various transmitters had different keying characteristics. In 1969 he introduced the EK-39. It included dash memory as well as weight control.

What else could a ham want from a keyer besides dot and dash memory and weighting. Memory of course. In the late 1960s, memory? Yes, memory. The EK-39 was modified to include a special-order memory feature. But the technology was just emerging for read-only memory (ROM). In fact the first EK-39M keyers were programmed with "SC-ROM". Hams who ordered his keyer might have been surprised to know that Curtis used a pin to scratch their call signs in a ROM chip that was positioned under his microscope - hence the name SC-ROM. A programmable diode matrix and ROM soon replaced this tedious process.

Curtis electronic keyer business soon had a loyal following. Quite a few hams followed Curtis's every move and would order any new keyer he created. More success followed. The EK-42 had a 20-character programmable memory. It sold for \$289.95 in 1971!

Up to this point, Curtis could have

been just another keyer designer but what happened next was truly revolutionary. John had established a lot of contacts while working at Signetics in the 1960s. These paid off for him when he decided that a keyer circuit could be implemented on a chip. He started with not one design, but two. The 8043 and the 8044 were announced at the same time. The 8043 was designed as a completely custom integrated circuit in CMOS. At the same time, International Microcircuits was looking for a chip in which to test their gate array technology. The first chip down the line was the 8044, produced for Curtis. The 8043 worked first try. It was limited to dot memory and sold for \$7.95 in quantities of fifty or more in 1973. The 8044 also worked right off the bat. It offered dash memory in addition and sold for \$24.95 in 1975. The 8044M was introduced in 1980. M stood for meter. A meter could be hooked up to a pin of the 8044M to indicate sending speed.

In 1981 Curtis found that many people liked the mode B keying characteristics of Ten-Tec, Heath, Nye and Accu-keyers. Mode B simply added an extra dot or dash when the operator stopped sending - depending on which was sent last. If a dot was sent last, an extra dash would be sent. If a dash were sent last, a dot followed. John's keyers did not do that, so he added the feature in the 8044B (according John, Mode B was actually a design error by an unnamed company). Curtis introduced several keyers incorporating his new full-featured ICs. The first was the EK430 incorporating the 8043 chip. John also introduced a fully integrated keyboard chip called the 8045.

Finally in June 1982 Curtis Electro Devices produced its last keyer, the Lil' Bugger. Offered as the K5 or K5B, it incorporated the 8044 or the 8044B chip, respectively. It sold for \$39.95 and was quite popular. The company had relatively few manufacturing problems. John tried overseas production of his circuit boards and encountered quality control problems. In England where the keyer

was quite popular, the name Lil' Bugger wasn't acceptable and hams there asked John to ship the unit in unmarked boxes.

The K5/K5B was the last Curtis keyer. But wait, there was another Curtis chip - the one that probably was best know - the 8044ABM. This final keyer chip was introduced in the spring of 1986. It incorporated selectable A or B modes and the speed meter. This truly was a top of the line chip, and became an industry standard. However, microcontrollers debuted in the 1980s and Curtis chips were no longer in demand. John stopped selling them. MFJ purchased the 8044 line and now offers an improved 8045ABM. Curtis ceased operations April 1, 2000.

ARRL member Brad Mitchell, N8YG, lives in Brockport, New York. He and co-inventor Gary Diana, N2JGU, started Embedded Research Company and developed the TiCK keyer-chip line. Mitchell studied the Curtis Electro Devices products to learn as much as possible about their design and the history of iambic modes A and B before creating his own chips. Mitchell is no longer associated with Embedded Research Company. He can be reached at: N8YG@arrl.net

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## DUES ARE DUE

Club dues are the fuel that stoke our monthly meeting programs! If yours are not paid up please do so during the November meeting or direct to our Treasurer's home address as noted on the membership coupon included with this issue of the *Long Path*.

# 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***

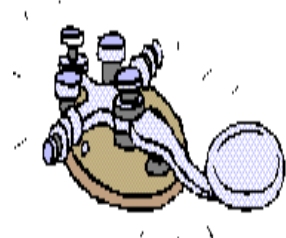
***Make payment at next SEMDXA meeting or mail with remittance to:***

***Leon Switzer, Treasurer***

***427 Jeffrey Avenue***

***Royal Oak, Michigan 48073***

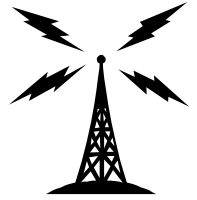
***NOTE: TO RECEIVE THE CLUB NEWSLETTER "THE LONG PATH" YOU MUST PROVIDE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS!***





# November 2002

## SEMDXA Monthly Planner



| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Monday                                                 | Tuesday                      | Wednesday                                              | Thursday                          | Friday                                                                                       | Saturday                                                                                |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |                            |                                                                                                                      |
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| <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin-right: 20px;"> <caption>October</caption> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"> <caption>December</caption> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> |                                                        |                              |                                                        |                                   | S                                                                                            | M                                                                                       | T | W | T | F | S |  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |  |  | S | M | T | W | T | F | S | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |  |  |  |  | <b>1</b><br>All Saints Day | <b>2</b><br><b>ARRL Sweepstakes CW</b><br>DARC 10 Meter Digital Test<br>High Speed Club CW Test<br>Ukrainian DX Test |
| S                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | M                                                      | T                            | W                                                      | T                                 | F                                                                                            | S                                                                                       |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |                            |                                                                                                                      |
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| 22                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 23                                                     | 24                           | 25                                                     | 26                                | 27                                                                                           | 28                                                                                      |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |                            |                                                                                                                      |
| 29                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 30                                                     | 31                           |                                                        |                                   |                                                                                              |                                                                                         |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |                            |                                                                                                                      |
| <b>3</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>4</b><br><br>New Moon<br><b>W1AW Qualifying Run</b> | <b>5</b><br><br>Election Day | <b>6</b>                                               | <b>7</b>                          | <b>8</b><br><b>8:00 PM SEMDXA Meeting</b><br><b>Whitefish Pointe N8F (Edmund Fitzgerald)</b> | <b>9</b><br><b>Japan Intl DX Test SSB</b><br>OK/OM DX Test CW<br><b>WAEDC RTTY Test</b> |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |                            |                                                                                                                      |
| <b>10</b><br>Arkansas QSO Party                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>11</b><br><br>Veterans Day                          | <b>12</b>                    | <b>13</b><br><br><b>West Coast K6YR Qualifying Run</b> | <b>14</b>                         | <b>15</b>                                                                                    | <b>16</b><br><b>ARRL Sweepstakes SSB</b><br>LZ DX Test CW<br><b>RSGB 160 Meter Test</b> |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |                            |                                                                                                                      |
| <b>17</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>18</b><br><br><b>W1AW Qualifying Run</b>            | <b>19</b>                    | <b>20</b><br><br>Full Moon                             | <b>21</b>                         | <b>22</b>                                                                                    | <b>23</b><br>ARRL Intl EME Test<br><b>CQ WW CW DX Test</b>                              |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |                            |                                                                                                                      |
| <b>24</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>25</b>                                              | <b>26</b>                    | <b>27</b>                                              | <b>28</b><br><br>Thanksgiving Day | <b>29</b>                                                                                    | <b>30</b><br><br>Chanukah                                                               |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |                            |                                                                                                                      |