This month, I have turned over the keyboard to 14-year-old Faith Hannah Lea, AE4FH, to tell us about her Dry Tortugas activation as N4T with her sister and Dad. Last year at the Orlando Hamvention, I learned about this mini DXpedition being planned for these young YLs and their father. I asked Faith Hannah at that time if she would be willing to write a story about their adventure, and she agreed, although I’m not sure if she fully understood at the time. When we saw her again at Dayton, I reminded her that I was serious, and she and dad both reconfirmed! They originally had planned to go in August, but Faith Hannah got an opportunity to participate in the “Youngsters On The Air” (YOTA) South Africa camp which was being held in August. Faith Hannah, who was accompanied by her dad was the only representative from the USA who attended. (See January CQ, p. 20, and <https://tinyurl.com/yr3n5n>) The Dry Tortugas trip was thereby rescheduled for December.

The Lea family is quite “radio” active! Another sister, Grace, KM4TXT, passed her EXTRA at the Orlando Hamcation in February! Dad (James) is WX4TV and Mom (Michelle) is N8ZQZ. The four children are: Zechariah, WX4TVJ; Hope, KM4IPF; Grace, KM4TXT; and Faith Hannah, AE4FH. With Grace passing the Extra license test, now all four of the children hold Extra Class licenses.

James explained to me last year that he wanted his children to experience what it is like to go on a DXpedition somewhere that required them to be self-reliant, and not dependent on the normal infrastructure (electric, cellphone, etc). Dry Tortugas seemed to fit the bill for an introduction to DXpeditioning for 12-year-old Hope and 14-year-old Faith Hannah. I hope you enjoy their story. —N2OO

QRZed November Four Tango – A Mini DXpedition to the Dry Tortugas

BY FAITH HANNAH LEA, # AE4FH

In June 2018, Nathan Wood, K4NHW, and Ryan Kovacs, WG4I, went to the Dry Tortugas (a national park some 70 miles off of Key West) to activate it for all the eager grid, lighthouse, and park chasers out there. My sister Hope, KM4IPF; my dad James, WX4TV, and I were invited to join them on their activation. Although we were unable to participate, this didn’t stop us and we decided to activate the Dry

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Photo A. The TN07 Engineering 20-meter X-Beam and RadioWavz 40-meter double bazooka antennas stand atop the MGS MK4-HD push-up mast with Fort Jefferson in the background. The flag is at half staff in remembrance of President George H. W. Bush. (Photos by James Lee, WX4TV)
Tortugas ourselves as soon as possible. We secured the use of N4T as our callsign and began the process of getting to the island. We had originally planned to activate the small island in mid-August 2018, but plans soon changed to mid-December.

After the permits to operate were taken care of, we had to brainstorm various ways to get all of our equipment to the island and still be within the numerous restrictions the National Park Service had. The biggest one was weight.

The WPX Program

**CW**

| 3886 | A44B |
| 3866 | PYZZW |

**SSB**

| 4187 | K6QJ | 4100 | IW5RGT |
| 4184 | K7ATJ | 4191 | K2KJ |

**Mixed**

| 3797 | K6QJ | 3796 | P2YRKG |
| 3765 | K6KG | 3757 | A44B |
| 3794 | VK6BOX | 3796 | AJCI |
| 3795 | DUG9K |

**Digital**

| 984 | K6QJ | 989 | A44B |
| 985 | WABRIE | 990 | K0JUX |
| 991 | VK6BOX | 991 | K6COM |
| 997 | K1EUL | 992 | K2KJ |
| 998 | N9GO |

**CW:** 456: JO1CIV; 2300: W3LL.

**SSB:** 350: K6QJ, E5HM0; 449: K6GSY; 500: W7TLV; 2500: P2ZMS; 3350: W3LL.

**Mixed:** 450: K6POL, P2YRKG; 500: W7TLV, 600: K2KJ; 700: VE2SYD, A44B; 800: VK6BOX; 1000: W7TLV; JO1CIV; 1200: K6QJ; 2500: P2ZMS; HS9BIN; 2700: DLZANK.

**Digital:** 350: K6COM, K2KJ; 400: KE4KMS, WABRIE: 550: AE6JO, Z1CYY; 600: VK6BOX; 1000: NL9G; 1000: K6QJ; 1390: HS9BIN; 2300: W3LL.

**160 Meters:** K6QJ

**80 Meters:** K6QJ, P2ZMS

**60 Meters:** N9GO, DLZANK

**40 Meters:** K6QJ, VK6BOX, P2ZMS, K2KJ

**30 Meters:** K6QJ

**20 Meters:** K6QJ, P2ZMS, A44B, W7TLV

**17 Meters:** DLZANK

**15 Meters:** K6QJ, P2ZMS, JO1CIV

**12 Meters:** N9GO

**10 Meters:** P2ZMS

**Asia:** K6QJ, VK6BOX

**Europe:** K6QJ, P2YRKG, N9SO, K2KJ

**Oceania:** K6QJ, N9SO, W7TLV

**North America:** K6QJ, VK6BOX, K3JL, P2YRKG, N9SO, A44B, K6COM, K2KJ, AJCI

**South America:** K6QJ

**60M BAR:** N9GO, DLZANK

**12M Bar:** N9GO

Complete rules and application forms may be obtained by sending a business-size, self-addressed, stamped envelope (foreign stations send extra postage for airmail) to "CW WPX Awards," 2000 S. Grandview Ave., Columbus, 43212, USA. Never accept prefixes/calls which have been confirmed by eQSL, or the APRRL Logbook of The World (LW).

*Please Note: The price of the 160, 30, 17, 12, 6, and Digital bars for the Award of Excellence are $6.50 each.*

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Only 65 pounds of equipment were allowed per person. Most of this weight was taken up by radios, antennas, batteries, and solar equipment. These restrictions, combined with the fact that we were not allowed to tie anything down to a natural structure (such as trees), created our next challenge — antennas and how to support them. We experimented with several different kinds of antennas and ultimately decided on 40- and 80-meter double bazzokus from RadioWavz, 17- and 20-meter Crappie pole antennas (a wire strung up a fishing pole with a few radials), and an X-beam by TN07 Engineering. Since only a few pounds per person were left, we had to find food that would last the trip and not get us over our weight limit. Eventually, we found Mountain House freeze-dried food, which is delicious and only takes boiled water. No flammable liquids were allowed on the ferry, and we needed to find a way that didn't take 45 minutes to boil the water. A few weeks before the trip, we found the perfect match — the Kelly Kettle. It was able to boil water in a few minutes with some oak kindling that we got at Lowe's. Finally, having successfully scaled the biggest wall this trip would throw at us, it was time to head south.

We left early Thursday morning with the back of the Suburban loaded to the brim. After traveling for five hours, we made it to the hotel in Key West. Soon after arriving, our long-time friend Val Jacyno, AK4MM, and his wife came to spend some time with us and show us around Key West before we retired to bed for the early morning the next day. While being shown around, we stopped to get a traditional dessert — key lime pie. However, it was not traditional in how it was served — frozen, on a stick, and dipped in chocolate. Having relished our key lime pie-on-a-stick, we decided to get some sleep. The boat for the Dry Tortugas needed to have all our equipment loaded by 6 a.m., so we needed to get everything down there by about 5:30 a.m. With the bags and passengers loaded, it was time to set sail. After two hours on the boat in some rough seas (and after getting a bit green), we docked at Fort Jefferson (the fort on the Dry Tortugas) and unloaded our gear.

When we got off the boat, the winds were steady at about 30 knots. Because of the high wind and the sky looking like it would pour any minute, the first thing we set up was the tent in order to protect any equipment that could be ruined if it got wet. When we found out where we were supposed to set up the radios (which turned out to be on the other side of the island) the process began. During the planning for the trip, we thought that I would get on 20 meters using the 20-meter Crappie pole antenna while Hope and Dad set up the EZup and other antennas. Because it was so windy, this plan didn't work out. Hope and Dad needed a bit of help setting up the EZup so it wouldn't blow away. Once the shelter was erected, we set up the Crappie pole antenna, transmitter, solar panels, and the UPS battery. After everything was in place, we were able to get on the air.

Rules and applications for the WAZ program may be obtained by sending a large SAE with two units of postage or an address label and $1.00 to: WAZ Award Manager, KDZL, 125 Deer Trail, Brandon, MS 39047-9401. The processing fee for all CQ awards is $5.00 for subscribers (please include your most recent CQ mailing label or a copy) and $12.00 for nonsubscribers. Please make all checks payable to John Bergman. Applicants sending QSL cards to a CQ checkpoint or the Award Manager must include return postage. K5SZL may also be reached via e-mail: <k5szl@amateur-radio.com>

Photo B. Hope, KM4IPF, logs a contact on 20 meters while Faith Hannah, AE4FH, waits for breakfast to finish cooking.
and Bioenno Power LiFePO4 batteries and I was able to get on the air and call CQ. While Dad and Hope erected the Fiberglass mast, X-Beam, and 40-meter double bazooka antenna (Photo A), the answers to my CQs started flooding in! After having made a couple hundred QSOs on 20, we decided to move to 40. A few hundred QSOs on 40 led into a cold, horizontal rain, so we adjourned for the day. Thankfully, our sleeping tent was warm and dry.

Photo C. Faith Hannah waits for AO-92 to make an ascending pass over the Dry Tortugas while Hope holds the Elk antenna. The team made a few dozen satellite contacts from the island.

Photo D. Faith Hannah and Hope explore Fort Jefferson and discover some stalagmites that have been forming for years.
The next morning, things got a little more ordered. While breakfast was cooking, one person operated (Photo B). When the next person was ready, he or she would change seats with the operator and the original operator would then get a break. Every hour or so there was a satellite pass which we would work (Photo C). The main satellites we worked were A-9 and 40. During the day, we mostly stayed on 20, but sometimes we would try 17. When evening came, we switched to 40 to get the most out of grayline propagation. After grayline had finished and we weren’t getting any more contacts on 40, we took down the 40-meter double bazooka and put up the 80-meter double bazooka. When we weren’t getting any more contacts on 80, we closed up the station and went to bed just in time for another storm.

During the day, we operated on several different satellites, making the most of satellite contacts we had on any of the other days. To go along with the satellites, we ran pile-ups on 20 meters for most of the day before switching to 40 as we had done the last two days. After 40 had been exhausted, we changed the antenna to the 80-meter double bazooka and worked 80 for a few hours before having to shut down because of more rain.

Early the next morning, we got up to call CQ on 80 for the last hour we had left before we had to take down the station. Unfortunately, we didn’t get very many contacts during this hour, but we did make 1,970 HF contacts over the 36-hour operating time, plus several dozen satellite contacts.

As luck would have it, when it was time to break down the station, the wind picked up. It wasn’t as bad as it was the last time that we were getting up, but it was still going about 20 knots. Once the antennas and operating equipment were down and in their respective carrying cases, we had to get everything to the dock before we took down the tent. Thankfully, one of the park volunteers helped us get all the equipment through the half-mile trek to the boat. After everything was at the dock and ready to be loaded when the boat came, we took down the tent. At 10 a.m. the boat came, and we loaded our equipment before getting something to eat (after all that work, who wouldn’t want to eat?)!

We had about four hours until we had to be on the boat to leave the island, so we decided to take a dip in the beautiful Gulf of Mexico for a while. The staff allowed all the tourists to borrow snorkel gear for the entirety of their visit, so we were able to have one of the moat walls around the fort (which is said to be amazing for snorkeling) to see the fish. Most of the fish we saw were stoplight parrotfish, sergeant majors, and various other fish of all sizes and colors (including some barracuda). Everything around the moat wall was beautiful, including the sand.

After snorkeling and enjoying the fish (which seemed to enjoy human company), we explored the fort. It has three levels, the third one being the roof (with lookout posts and old cannons, plus a gorgeous view of the Gulf of Mexico on all sides). The second level has stalactites and stalagmites almost everywhere, some up to about a foot high (Photo D). It turns out that all the suspects in the assassination of President Lincoln (as well as the people who were suspected to have helped somehow) were sent to the fort as if were a prison, which surprisingly enough, it once was.

When it was time to board the boat back to Key West, we decided that because this activation was so much fun, we would try sometime in the next few years to come and activate this little island again. Two hours later, we arrived in Key West and were greeted by a beautiful sunset. When everything was off the boat, Val came to the dock to help us load our equipment into the Suburban. After everything we went through to go on this mini DXpedition, it turned out to be very successful and lots of fun.

I would like to thank everybody who worked us, tried to work us, or just listened to us when we were on the Dry Tortugas. I would like to thank Val and his wife for everything they did for us when we were in Key West. I would also like to thank everybody that helped us get to the island, with special thanks to the South Jersey DX Association for generously offering to print the QSL cards for the trip.
CONTESTING

BY DAVID SIDDALL,* K3ZJ

Radiosport Provides Common Ground for Young and Old

Plus: Italian and Russian international contests in May; IARU Region 1 Youth Contesting Program expands youth teams and big gun stations; Young Amateurs Radio Club initiates first youth contesting program in the U.S. and Canada; senior hams can enjoy contesting, too, at home or at the right retirement community; WRTC2018 movie available on YouTube.

Some of the smaller and regional contests take center stage during April and May, including the ARI International DX and the Russian CQM contests in early May. These contests are reprised below. Both will feature youth teams operating from “big gun” stations in Europe.

This is the fourth consecutive year that European youth teams will participate in the Italian ARI International DX Contest on the first weekend in May using the callsign ES9C at ES5TV’s station. The following weekend, another youth team is planning to operate from 9A1A. These youth teams and volunteer contest stations continue to build a strong future for competition in Europe.

For young and old alike, radiosport is an activity in which we all can compete on pretty much a level playing field. We can pit a lifetime of experience against youthful vigor. At WRTC2018 in Germany, some of the “older” teams came out ahead of some of the younger ones, and vice versa.

This spring, a group of “kids” picked up on the theme, called themselves “Team Exuberance,” and were to go to K3LR’s superstation to learn and maybe to outpace some of the more experienced operators in the March CQWW WPX Phone contest. As noted last month, the team picked up on the young versus old theme and asked whether it is true that “Old age and treachery will always win over youth and exuberance.” The quote, by the way, is adapted from one penned by David Mamet.

We also look at growth in the European IARU Region 1 Youth Contesting

email: <k3zj@cq-amateur-radio.com>

Photo A. Young Amateurs Radio Club (YARC) logo. YARC, WY4RC, was founded by an online chat room group. It has initiated a youth contesting program (YCP) patterned on that of the IARU Region 1 in Europe.

Photo B. The CQWW SSB crew members at DQSM (@DM9EE) pose with their host. The station is located at the host’s hotel and restaurant. What more could a group of young contestants want? (Courtesy of DM9EE)