

Get Filled In On The DX Dentist

What if you could go to the dentist and get on the air while you're there... not with an HT you bring along, but from a fully equipped station set up in the dentist's office?



Nope... not quite N7PG's dental office but a whimsical AI image

Strange as it sounds, that's exactly what LVRAC member Gerry, N7PG had tucked away in the back of his office before he retired from his dentistry career.

"I had a shack in my home, but when I was working in New York, I wanted to be able to talk to the Pacific. From New York, the best time was around 5:30 in the morning. So I thought it would be great if I got on the air before I started to see my patients around 8."

During the morning hours when most Tri-State commuters were crawling in to work, Gerry was working DX from his dental office shack.

"It actually led to some very strong lifelong friendships. I had a QSO with a friend in Australia and every Thursday morning, we spoke to each other for about 30 years until he passed away. However, his son, who was very young at the time, eventually became a dentist. I'm a retired dentist, and to this day, we're dear friends. I'm going in March to go visit him and his family again."

None of Gerry's patients were amateur operators, but that didn't keep the shack in the shadows.

"I would bring patients back into my private office where I had the rig set up, and I would just surprise them and say, how'd you like to talk to somebody in Scotland or Romania or China? They loved it. It was very exciting. I did have a few who actually became hams. It was great. I loved it. Patients, and lot of kids would come over and I would let them monitor in my office."

Gerry's shack featured Kenwood rigs.

"I had a TS 940s. Every couple of years I would change, I had a TS930AT, then I had a 940. Then I went to a TS440S, and then a 450 with the antenna tuner. The antenna was very simple. It was really it was a V-Dipole. It had two elements that were collapsible and on a collapsible mast outside so that I didn't bother the neighbors too much in terms of cosmetics. The neighborhood was a residential area of one family homes, Staten Island, New York. I was the neighborhood dentist.

I earned my DXCC certificate using 1500 watts with my Drake L2B amp, TS930AT, and TS440S. I used my dentist office address on my QSL cards.

Gerald D. Fox

WA2VKS

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NEW YORK
RICHMOND COUNTY

WA2VKS

TS440S/TS930S AL84 AMP V-DIPOLE

CONFIRMING QSO WITH	DATE			UTC	MHz	RST	MODE 2-WAY
	DAY	MONTH	YEAR				
KP2A/J88	26	OCT	91	1734	28	59	SSB

10-X 100W
USE AND
STAY
WITNESS
#53830

Thanks John for 10m
J88!
23 & see you on 14.165!

GERALD D. FOX, D.D.S.
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☒ PSE QSL ☐ TNX QSL ☐ A W4MPY QSL

“When I came in in the morning, I would crank up the mast, get on the air, start doing a few CQs and then time would be there for me to meet my friends.”

And later in the day, patients might easily find themselves behind the mic in Gerry’s shack. “When I had a break and I would put them on the air. It was great. I had a lot of fun. The local newspaper wrote a nice article on it. I was in the office for over 30 years, and the shack was easily in operation for at least 20 of them. I loved it. It was in my blood. I’ve been a ham since I was 12.”

So...

What about the times when there’s an irresistible band opening and an opportunity for a special QSO...

But out in the office there’s a patient in the chair?

We asked Gerry if he ever found himself in a situation where he was enjoying a great QSO and had to keep a patient waiting.

“I’ve done it. I’ve done it, yeah.”