

The 144 MHz EME NewsLetter

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DK5LA supporting Chinese Moon Operation

Though everyone knew about the activities by China it more or less came as a little surprise when the News Agency Xinhua announced on January 3rd that at 0226 UTC the same day the Chang'e 4 project had succeeded in soft landing a probe on the far side of the moon, something that had never been achieved before. Landing on the far side is particularly challenging because no direct radio contact to Earth is possible there. To arrange for such communication in May last year China had positioned the satellite Queqiao in a moon orbit so that it could act as a relay station for the probe's signals. Together with Queqiao two more satellites were sent to moon, DSLWP-A and DSLWP-B, which were also positioned in a moon orbit and of which only DSLWP-B is active.



Beautiful antenna in beautiful North-German scenery: the eight 32 ele xpols of DK5LA (Photo DK5LA)

A small contribution – so he writes – came from Reinhard, DK5LA: Reinhard is QRV on 2 m EME from JO44TR, close the German-Danish border with an array of eight 16/16 ele IOJXX xpol yagis and a BEKO LDMOS amplifier with good power. Back in May 2017 he had already assisted with rescuing a South-African satellite which would not unfold his antennas and consequently could not receive to command to unfold the solar paddles. In close collaboration with the staff from the Dutch Dwingeloo telescope CAMRAS (www.camras.nl) and Jan, PA3FXB, and of course thanks to his powerful station he could manage to gain control over the satellite and transmit the command to unfold the paddles.

The Chinese Chang'e 4 operation ran in cooperation with CAMRAS and the Dutch space agency ASTRON (www.astron.nl). Apparently they remembered DK5LA's support in 2017 when they searched for a way to transmit data to the moon after moonset in in the Far East. So they approached Reinhard and he, being already retired, was happy to help. Mainly Cees Bassa und Jan Dijkeman were DK5LA's partners at ASTRON. Many times a week he now receives emails from China with the data and then transmits it to the satellite. This can become quite stressful as sometimes he is more or less flooded with emails within few hours. The transmitting process takes place on pre-agreed and not disclosed frequencies; always 100 s full duty. DK5LA is very happy that his BEKO amp is working reliably solid though this definitely puts stress on the amp, let alone that the frequencies are off his normal operation between 144 and 145 MHz which means the SWR is up from normal.

Reinhard had also started the camera of DSLWP-B which took photos from the far side of the moon. So the release was virtuelly pushed in a former farm building in Northern Germany. Therefore DK5LA is also the first radio ham having communicated with a satellite in a moon orbit.

However, the real stress began when this all became publicly known. Reinhard's telephone rang permanently, his email inbox quickly filled up. Local and national press reported about his activities, even a reporter from Germany's biggest tabloid visited him. Also on television there were video reports, for example (in German) at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQfVimThZCc>

This and That

Votes for Best DXpedition 2018 open until January 20th

Every year the VHF DX portal MMonVHF conducts their survey to name the "best" DXpedition of the year. On www.mmmonvhf.de/voting.php everyone is invited to name maximum 5 DXpeditions that deserve the title. However, you need to be a registered user of MMonVHF which can be done easily and on the spot. The survey is open until January 20th so time is running up...

TD9 DXpedition Video on Youtube

Chris PA2CHR reports that there is a video about his and Jos' PA3FYC's 2018 Guatemala DXpedition now on youtube: You can view it here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnxVaHpQ8_g Maybe more importantly – Chris informs about his next DXpedition taking place in April 2019. Further details are to follow but it is highly likely that another rare DXCC will be activated.

Upcoming DXpeditions

For more information on current and upcoming DXpeditions please have a look at www.mmmonvhf.de from where most of the information here was gathered unless noted otherwise.

T46EM Cuba DXpedition Again Postponed

Lucio I3LDP reports that the Cuba DXpedition which had been scheduled for start on January 17th has to be postponed once again, due to health issues. The new dates will be July or August. This hopefully final postponement comes in agreement with the Cuban OMs of Santa Clara Radio Club, with the National President of the FRC (Federacion Radioaficionados Cuba) and with the Cuban Ministry of Telecommunications. The call sign T46MB has been confirmed for the only DXpedition authorized for experiments via EME in Cuba, using digital systems, frequencies and powers have been confirmed too. Everything is prepared and we all wish Lucio a speedy and permanent recovery.

Time Table

4 February February issue of the 144 MHz EME NewsLetter ready for download at <http://www.df2zc.de>

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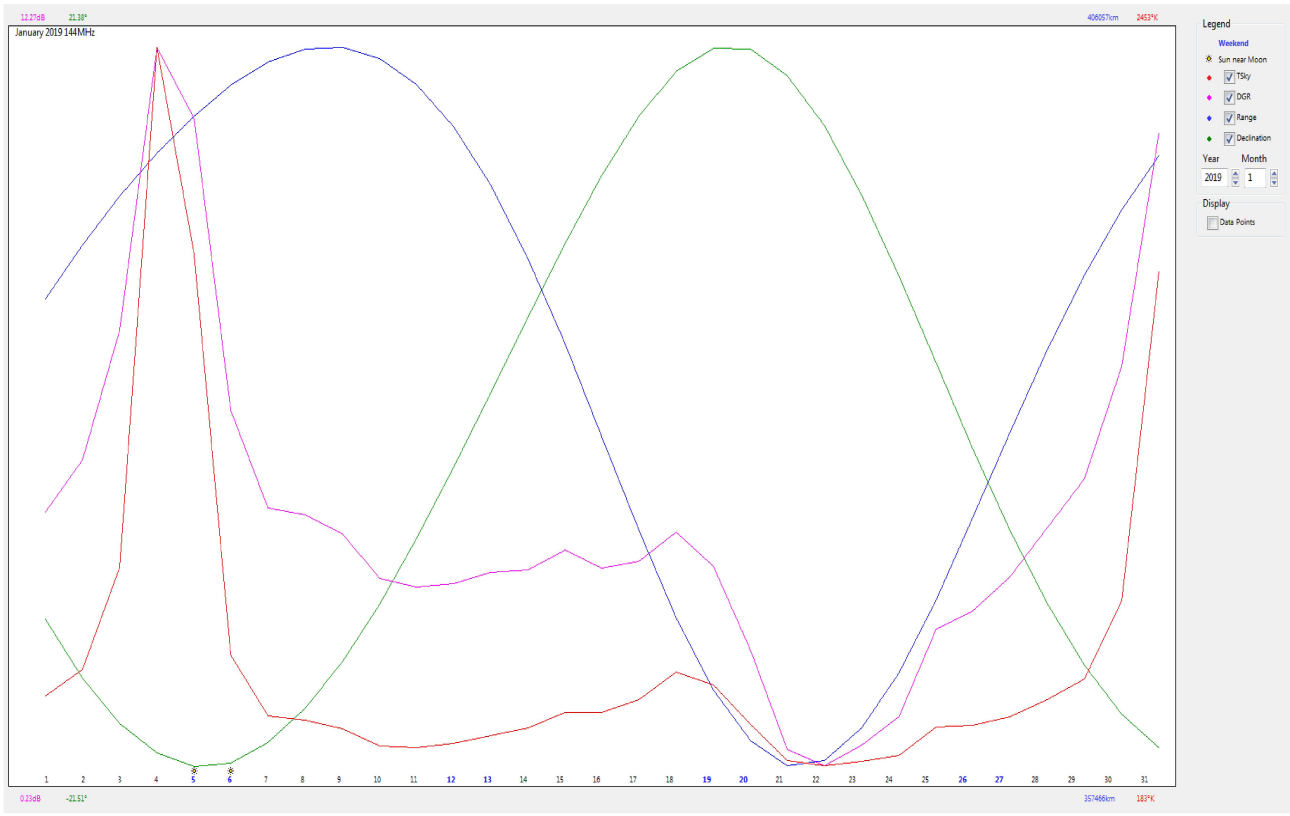
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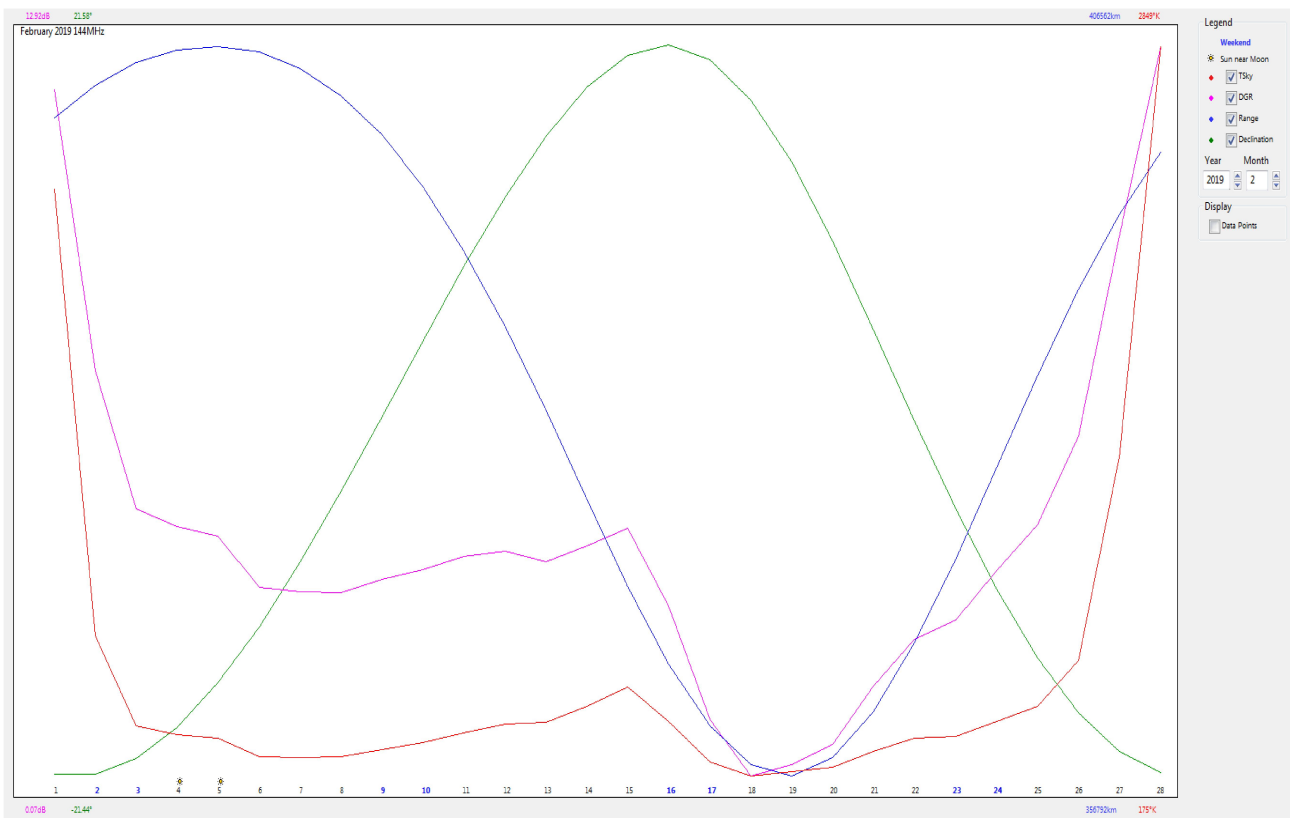
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DXpedition info courtesy
www.mmmonvhf.de and other sources

Moon Conditions



Moon Graph January 2019



Moon Graph February 2019

(Courtesy of David GM4JJJ www.gm4jjj.co.uk/MoonSked/moonsked.htm)