

Integrating VE7CC CC User with DX4WIN V1.4

I've been using DX4WIN for many years; I love it! I've reached the point in my ham career where I'm trying seriously to up my DXCC entity count. Though I've had my ticket since 1953, I've been sorta lazy about working all the DXCC entities. I have 295 confirmed.

My hamshack is in the basement and my office is on the first floor; it seemed a good idea to keep an eye on the DX clusters, looking for the entities I still need, but doing it from my office. Then, when a spot comes up matching my needs, I can hustle down to the hamshack and try to work it.

VE7CC CC user is a terrific free program that will do just that -- if you set it up properly. In my case, I wanted the program to show me DX spots that meet these criteria:

DX spots posted by stations in Georgia and certain nearby states; I reason that a spot from say, Montana, won't be very useful to me.

I also work only SSB (now) so I'm not interested in spots on CW or RTTY.

My antenna system doesn't include 160m and I have no interest in VHF, UHF or MW.

And, finally, I don't want to be annoyed by spots from DXCC entities I already have confirmed with a physical card.

If you have requirements like these, this paper will show you how to set up CC User to filter for your wishes and to integrate with DX4WIN.

Ready?

Installing VE7CC CC user

You can get it here: <http://www.bcdxc.org/ve7cc/default.htm>

Complete instructions on its use (and there are a LOT of settings) can be found here: <http://www.bcdxc.org/ve7cc/default.htm - prog>

It would help you to go through those web pages and get an overall feeling for the program before proceeding here. Yeah; I know, you just want to know what to do; here we go:

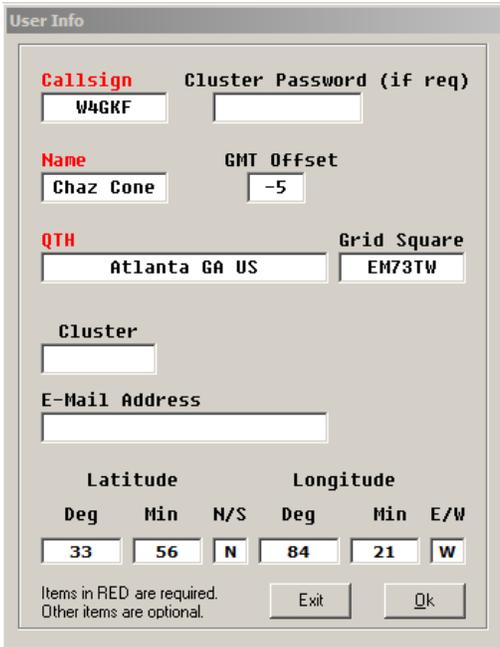
Once you've downloaded the setup file, run it. One thing. Do NOT accept the default location under c:\program files or c:\program files (x86). Instead, change

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the install location to c:\ve7cc; this will make it easier to access the program and its data on a home LAN. Even if you presently don't have a home network, you may one day.

After the install finishes, run the program.

Click the Configuration tab, then "user info"



User Info

Callsign Cluster Password (if req)
W4GKF

Name GMT Offset
Chaz Cone -5

QTH Grid Square
Atlanta GA US EM73TW

Cluster

E-Mail Address

Latitude Longitude
Deg Min N/S Deg Min E/W
33 56 N 84 21 W

Items in RED are required.
Other items are optional.

Exit Ok

While you only have to fill in Callsign, Name and QTH, I suggest the GMT offset, grid square and location info. Note that the latitude and longitude are required to be entered in Degrees and minutes (not decimals). If you don't know your latitude and longitude, QRZ.com can tell you. Just log in with your call and click details. You'll see your latitude and longitude in both formats.

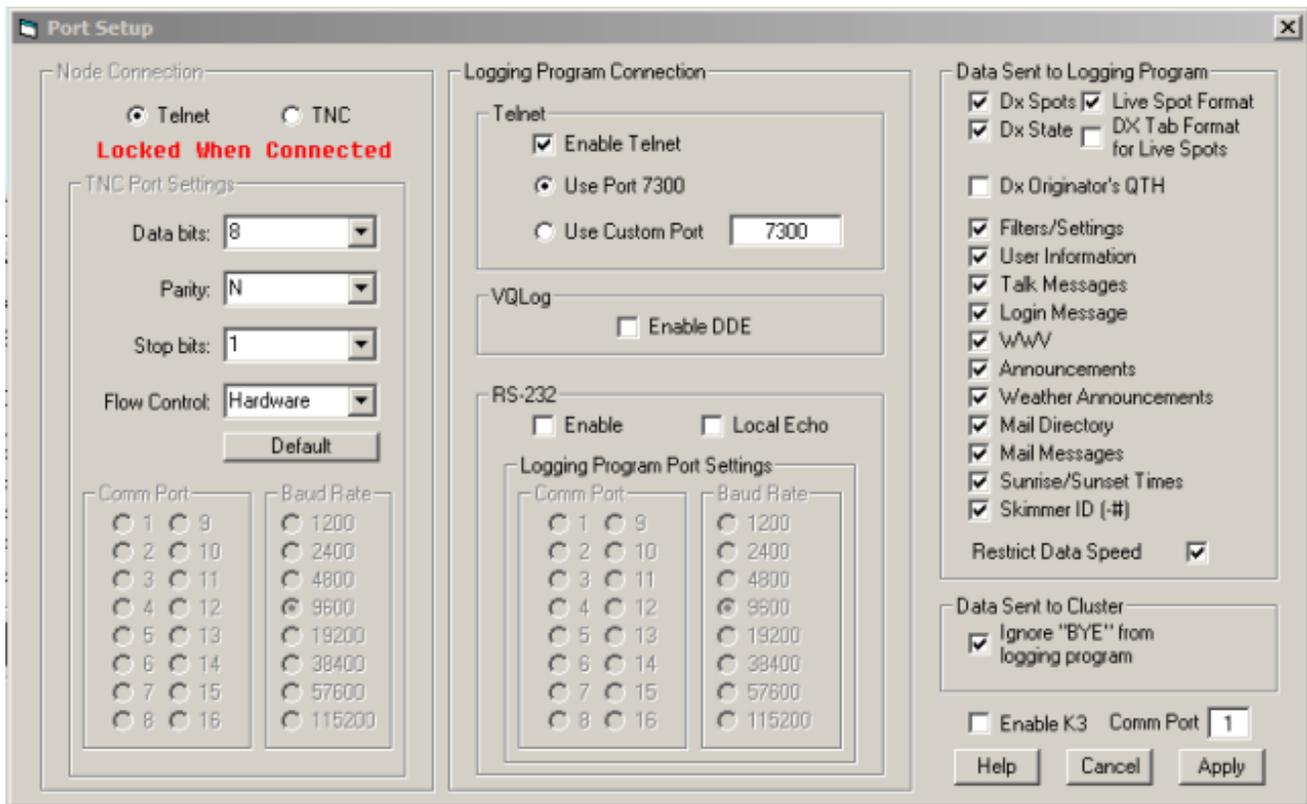
Click OK

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On the configuration menu make sure these items are checked on:



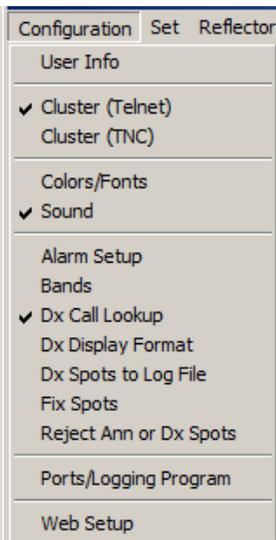
Click on "Ports/Logging program". When you do, you'll get this pane:



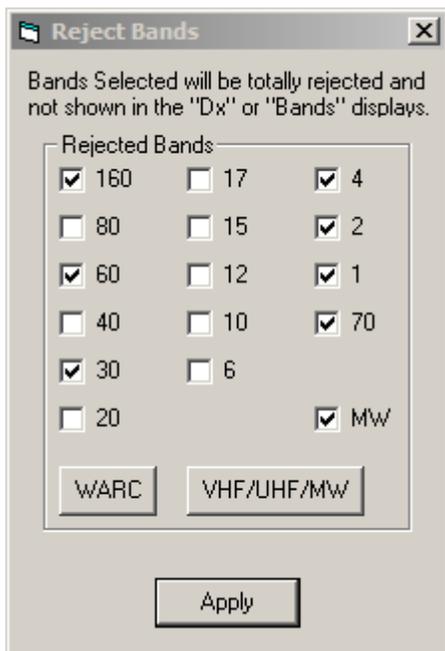
In the "Node Connection" sub-pane, be sure the radio button next to "Telnet" is checked. In the "Logging Program Connection" sub-pane, be sure that "Enable Telnet" is checked and that the radio button next to "Use Port 7300" is on. Click "Apply".

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Back to the Configuration pane:



Click on Bands. When you do, you'll get this pane:



Here you can check any bands you don't use. In my case I don't have antennae for 160m and I don't do UHF/VHF/MW and, being a phone guy, I don't use 30m or 60m. Be sure you click Apply when you've done the setup you wish.

Now we'll turn our attention setting CC User to filter the things that are important to you. I'm using what's important to me; be sure to change the instructions to match what you want!

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Here's the Settings tab:

The screenshot shows the 'Settings' tab of the DX4WIN software. The interface is organized into several functional areas:

- Settings @ VE7CC-1:** A collection of checkboxes for various features. Checked items include 'DX Spots', 'State', 'Grid', and 'WWV'. Other options like 'BoB=Ann', '2 digit', 'Announce', 'Wx Ann', 'CQ', 'Talk', 'ITU', 'Beep/Bell', 'WVCY', 'Logins', 'Beacon', 'Self', 'Skimmer', 'SkDown', and 'Sk Dupe' are currently unchecked.
- Keep Alives in Minutes:** A set of radio buttons ranging from 0 to 14. The '3' minute option is selected.
- Updater:** Displays the 'Program Version' as 2.405, which is highlighted in green to indicate it is the latest version. Below it are fields for 'LoTW' and 'eQSL', and buttons for 'Help', 'Test', and 'Check'.
- Technical Stuff:** A summary of system statistics: 'Connected 0 1:48:13', 'Disconnects = 0', and 'Logging Programs x 0', all with a count of 0.
- User Information @ VE7CC-1:** Fields for 'Name' (Chaz Cone) and 'Grid' (EM73TW). It also includes 'QTH' (Atlanta GA US), 'Usual DX Cluster', and 'Location' (33 56 N 84 21 W).
- Local Information:** Similar fields to the user information, including 'Name', 'Grid', 'QTH', 'Usual DX Cluster', and 'Location'.
- Buttons:** 'Ask Cluster' and 'Tell Cluster' buttons are present in several sections.

Notice the checked boxes; you may wish to check others (as you read the manual :)

Notice the Program Version 2.405 is in green; this means it's the latest version; if it were not, it would be in red and you'd have the opportunity to download the latest version. Cool feature!

Here's the Country tab:

The screenshot shows the 'Country' tab of the DX4WIN software. The interface is organized into several functional areas:

- Filter settings used by node VE7CC-1:** A grid of country codes with checkboxes. Selected countries are highlighted in green: CY0, FJ, NA (2), EU (7), AF (18), AS (18), SA (4), and OC (19).
- Filter Type:** Radio buttons for 'Spotter Country', 'Announce', 'Weather', and 'DX Country'. 'DX Country' is selected.
- Band:** A list of bands with radio buttons: 'All', 'Defined', 80, 40, 20, 17, 15, 12, 10, and 6. 'All' is selected.
- Buttons:** 'Ask Cluster', 'Tell Cluster', 'Set Band to Default', 'Set', 'Clear', and 'Help' buttons are located at the bottom of the main panel.

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There is a lot going on with the Country tab. Notice the series of green fields? In CC User, green means "pass" and red means "reject". You choose which you want by the radio button in the "Filter Type" box. This screen covers four filter types and six continents for spots. Above, we're looking at the "DX country" filter and "NA" for "North America". This screen filters spots in North America to only pass CYØ and FJ. Next, we'll click the radio button for "AS" Asia:

Settings Country State Bands Users DX WwW Login Msg Ann = 1 Wx Plus Mail

Filter settings used by node VE7CC-1

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1S	<input type="checkbox"/> 9M2	<input type="checkbox"/> BV	<input type="checkbox"/> HM	<input type="checkbox"/> UA9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> XZ
<input type="checkbox"/> 3W	<input type="checkbox"/> 9N	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BV9P	<input type="checkbox"/> HS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UK	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4J	<input type="checkbox"/> 9V	<input type="checkbox"/> BY	<input type="checkbox"/> HZ	<input type="checkbox"/> UN	<input type="checkbox"/> YI
<input type="checkbox"/> 4L	<input type="checkbox"/> A4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E4	<input type="checkbox"/> JA	<input type="checkbox"/> VR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YK
<input type="checkbox"/> 4S	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A5	<input type="checkbox"/> EK	<input type="checkbox"/> JD/D	<input type="checkbox"/> VU	<input type="checkbox"/> ZC4
<input type="checkbox"/> 4X	<input type="checkbox"/> A6	<input type="checkbox"/> EP	<input type="checkbox"/> JT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VU4	
<input type="checkbox"/> 5B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A7	<input type="checkbox"/> EX	<input type="checkbox"/> JY	<input type="checkbox"/> VU7	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7D	<input type="checkbox"/> A9	<input type="checkbox"/> EY	<input type="checkbox"/> OD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> XU	
<input type="checkbox"/> 8Q	<input type="checkbox"/> AP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EZ	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> XW	
<input type="checkbox"/> 9K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BS7	<input type="checkbox"/> HL	<input type="checkbox"/> TA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> XX9	

Filter Type

NA 2

EU 7

AF 18

AS 18

SA 4

DC 19

Spotter Country

Announce

Weather

DX Country

Band

All

Defined

80

40

20

17

15

12

10

6

Pass Reject

Ask Cluster Tell Cluster Set Band to Default Set Clear Help

Here you see I need a "ton" of entities in Asia!

Notice that by each Continent button is the count of entities I've marked to pass. If you're good at arithmetic you'll see that I need 68 entities (I've got a ways to go... :)

Notice that all these features can be by Band as well. I'm working on basic DXCC so I have the "All" button clicked in the Band window. If you were working on 5BDXCC and/or the DX Challenge, you can easily tailor different settings for different bands.

Obviously, you'd click the checkboxes next to the entities you need in each continent. When you're done making changes, you MUST click the "Tell Cluster" button in order to tell the cluster what you need; once you do that, you won't have to do it again unless the cluster "forgets" for some reason. As you receive confirmation, you can return to this window, uncheck the confirmed entity and "Tell Cluster" again.

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The whole "Tell Cluster" "Ask Cluster" mechanism is really useful. Suppose you're on a different computer with a different installation of CC User. All you have to do is go through your preference screens (like those above) and click "Ask Cluster" and the cluster will download your prefs for you. Also cool.

This set of screens (discussed above) set my filters to only accept spots for DX entities that I need.

Once you've handled all the entities you want to mark in the "DX Country" section, you can turn your attention to "Spotter Country":

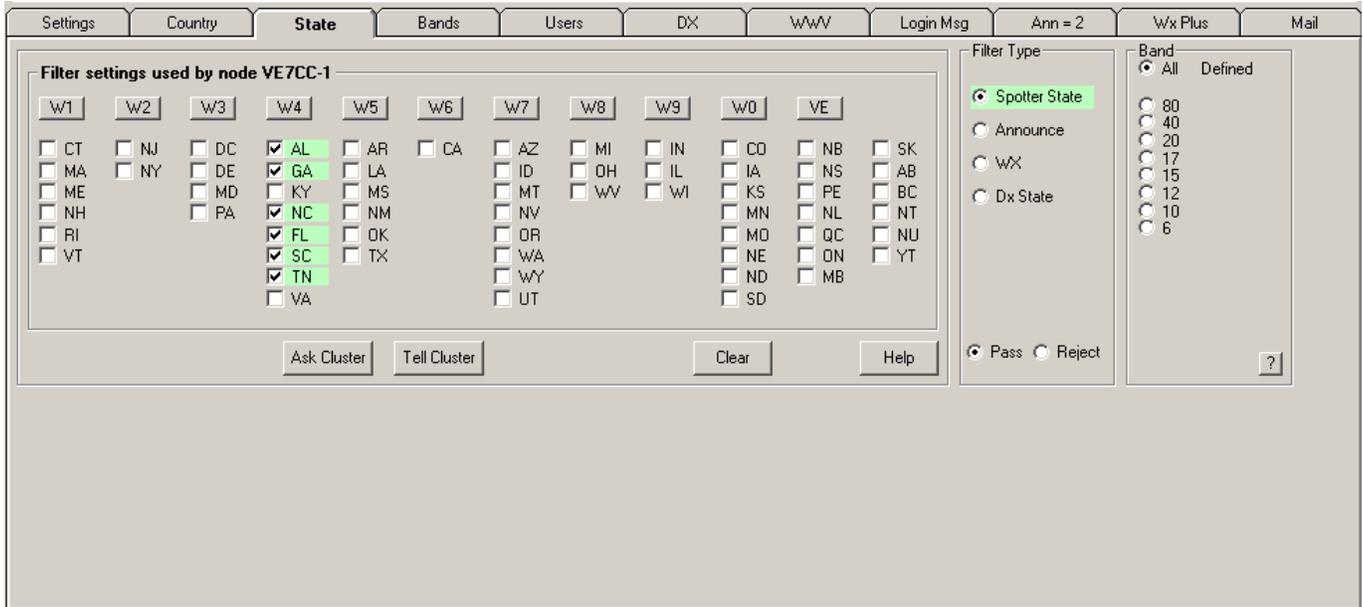
The screenshot shows the "Country" tab in the DX4WIN software. The "Filter settings used by node VE7CC-1" section contains a grid of country call signs with checkboxes. The "NA" radio button is selected under "Filter Type". The "Spotter Country" radio button is selected under "Filter Type". The "Band" dropdown is set to "All".

Country	State	Bands	Users	DX	WwV	Login Msg	Ann = 1	Wx Plus	Mail
<input type="checkbox"/> 4U1U	<input type="checkbox"/> FD/C	<input type="checkbox"/> J7	<input type="checkbox"/> PJ5	<input type="checkbox"/> VP2M	<input checked="" type="radio"/> NA 1	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Spotter Country	<input type="radio"/> All		
<input type="checkbox"/> 6Y	<input type="checkbox"/> FP	<input type="checkbox"/> J8	<input type="checkbox"/> PJ7	<input type="checkbox"/> VP2V	<input type="radio"/> EU	<input type="radio"/> Announce	<input type="radio"/> 80		
<input type="checkbox"/> 8P	<input type="checkbox"/> FS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> K	<input type="checkbox"/> TG	<input type="checkbox"/> VP5	<input type="radio"/> AF	<input type="radio"/> Weather	<input type="radio"/> 40		
<input type="checkbox"/> C6	<input type="checkbox"/> HH	<input type="checkbox"/> KG4	<input type="checkbox"/> T1	<input type="checkbox"/> VP9	<input type="radio"/> AS	<input type="radio"/> DX Country	<input type="radio"/> 20		
<input type="checkbox"/> CM	<input type="checkbox"/> HI	<input type="checkbox"/> KL	<input type="checkbox"/> TI9	<input type="checkbox"/> XE	<input type="radio"/> SA		<input type="radio"/> 17		
<input type="checkbox"/> CY0	<input type="checkbox"/> HK0/A	<input type="checkbox"/> KP1	<input type="checkbox"/> V2	<input type="checkbox"/> XF4	<input type="radio"/> OC		<input type="radio"/> 15		
<input type="checkbox"/> CY9	<input type="checkbox"/> HP	<input type="checkbox"/> KP2	<input type="checkbox"/> V3	<input type="checkbox"/> YN			<input type="radio"/> 12		
<input type="checkbox"/> FG	<input type="checkbox"/> HR	<input type="checkbox"/> KP4	<input type="checkbox"/> V4	<input type="checkbox"/> YS			<input type="radio"/> 10		
<input type="checkbox"/> FJ	<input type="checkbox"/> J3	<input type="checkbox"/> KP5	<input type="checkbox"/> VE	<input type="checkbox"/> YV0			<input type="radio"/> 6		
<input type="checkbox"/> FM	<input type="checkbox"/> J6	<input type="checkbox"/> OX	<input type="checkbox"/> VP2E	<input type="checkbox"/> ZF					

Above I clicked the "Spotter Country" radio button and the "NA" radio button. In my case, I only want spots that are originated from the US. I also just want spots posted by stations in certain states, so picking US here makes that reasonable. Of course, you're free to accept spots posted from anywhere. I reason that spots posted from states far from Georgia are likely to be a waste of time/propagation.

To complete this filter (to specific spotting states) click the "State" tab:

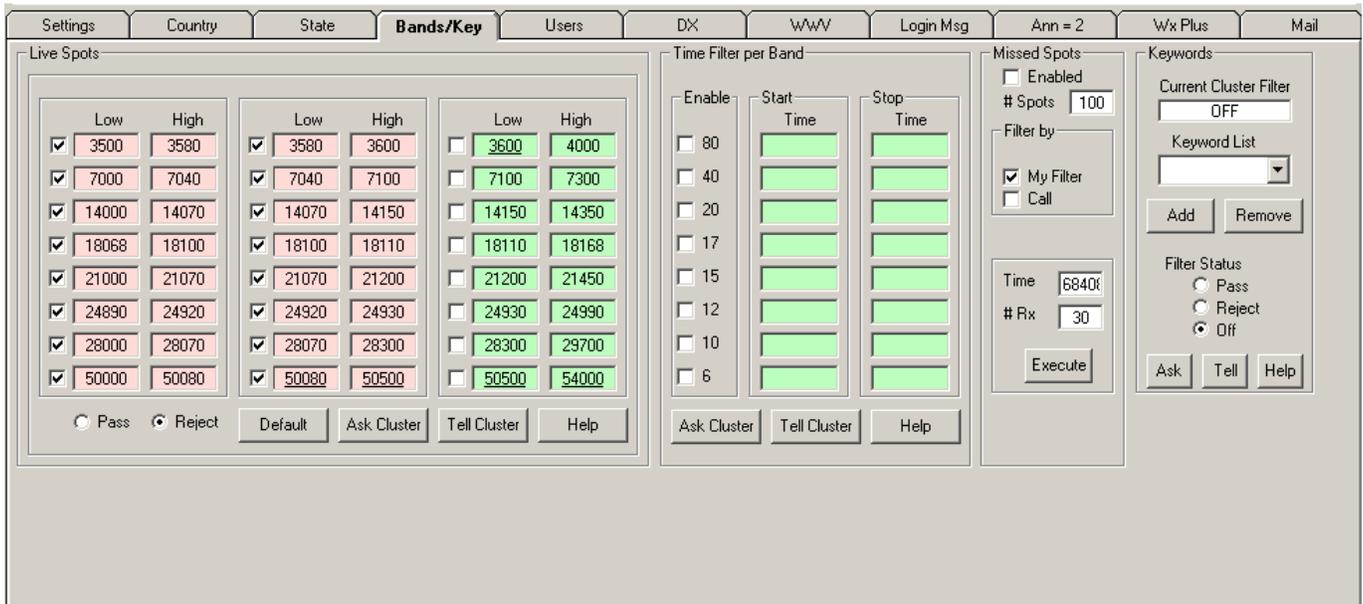
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Notice the Filter Type window has the "Spotter State" radio button clicked. I've selected Georgia (of course) and the five surrounding states.

This set of screens set my filters to only accept spots originating in AL, GA, NC, FL, SC and TN.

Now we'll turn our attention to the "Bands/Key" tab:

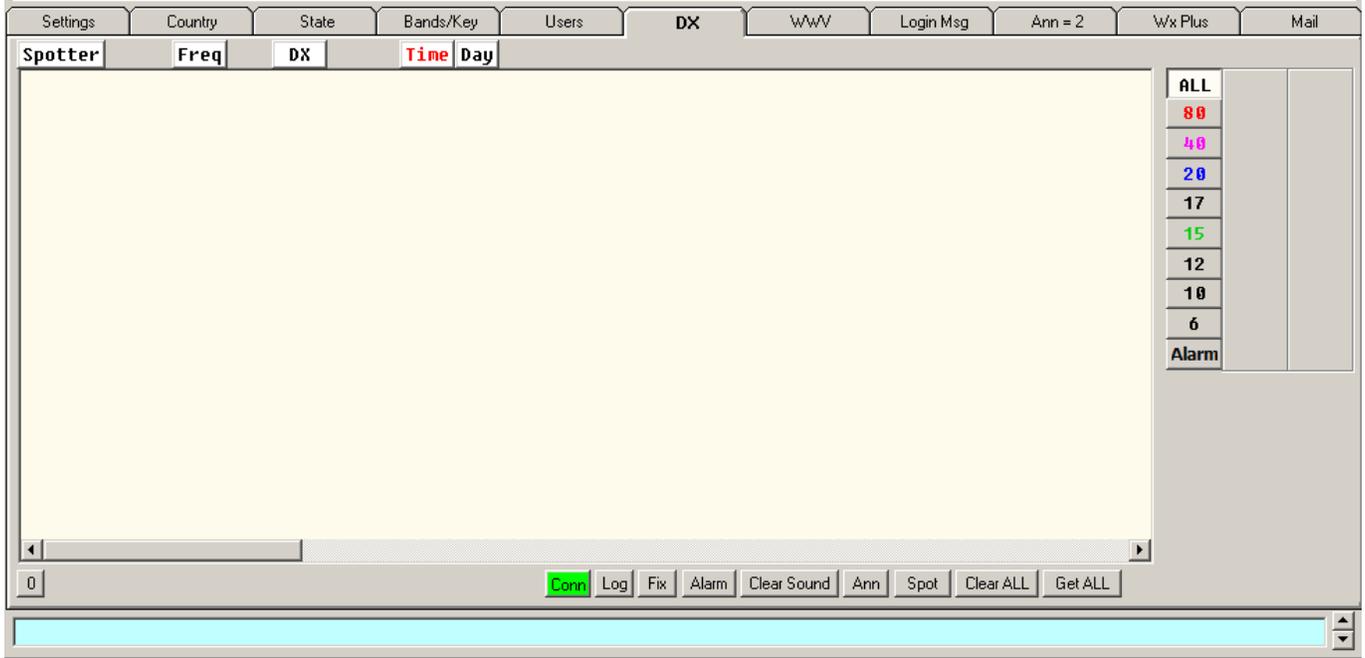


Remember that I'm a "phone only" guy. In this case I only need the frequencies conventionally used by SSB. Remember that no cluster program actually knows the mode, only where the spot is transmitting. You could get a CW spot at 14.275 (it's

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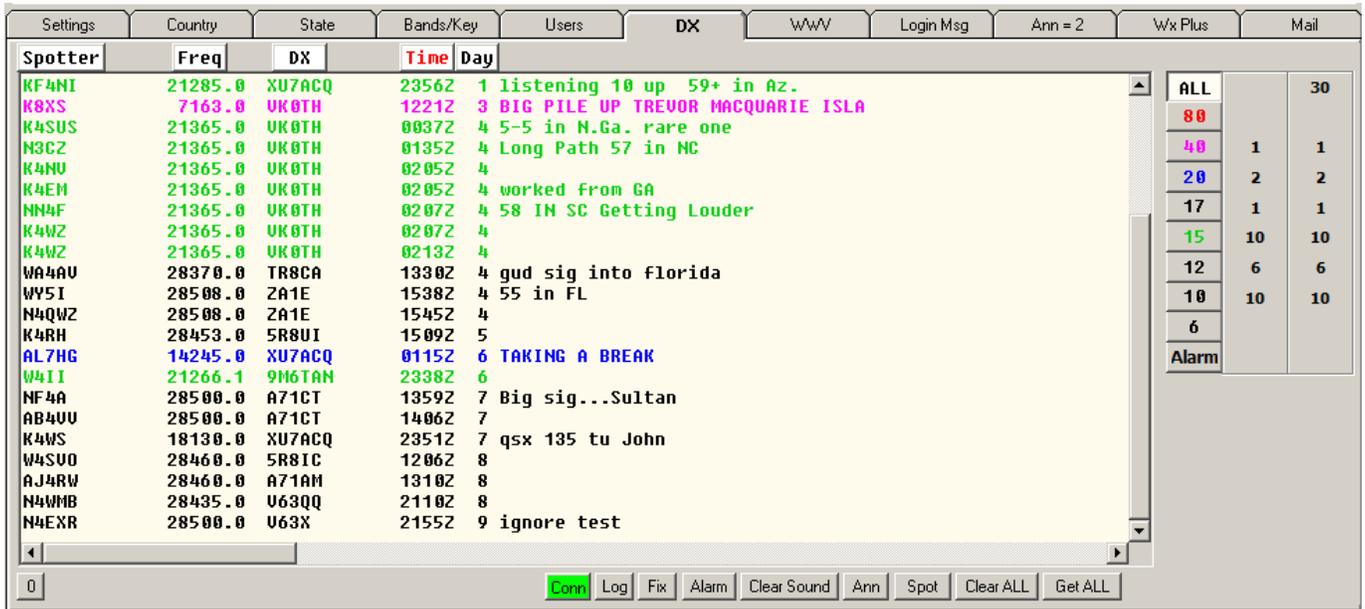
not likely) but if that CW station were spotted on that frequency, it would come through your filter.

Well, we're all done with setup. Now click the "DX" tab:



The green "Conn" shows that we're connected to the internet cluster.

Ready for the magic? In the blue line at the bottom of the screen type: sh/mydx



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Wow! What do these spots have in common? They match my filters exactly. For a spot to be displayed, the entity must be on my needs list, the band and mode must be the ones I want, and the spotter has to live in GA, AL, SC, NC, TN or FL.

I know that some of their callsigns look like they're from somewhere else but I checked on QRZ.com and they're all in one of my selected states. It works!

Notice that the spot lines are color coded by band; very nice. I ran this on December 9, 2011; notice that some of these spots are days old; no way around that.

OK. Now we have CC User running on the office computer to alert me when something I need is on. For this to be really useful it needs to be integrated into DX4WIN down in the hamshack.

Here's how:

Install CC user on the hamshack computer (where DX4WIN is installed and set it up identically to above).

There's one more thing we have to change in the DX4WIN setup to enable it to use internet packet clusters. You've probably already done this but let's make sure.

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Run DX4WIN. Then click File/preferences to get this screen:

Setup Parameters

File

Callsign

Name and Address

User Level: Worked Cutoff: Mailed Cutoff:

Grid locator: Longitude: Latitude:

Date format: Units:

Personal
Station
QSO
Screen
Import
Radio
Control
CW
Packet1
Packet2
Packet3
RTTY
Ext Data
F2 Key
Rep/Lab

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Now click Packet1 in the right-hand menu:

Setup Parameters

File

Cluster interface

Type: **Regular** | COM Port: **TCP/IP** | Message handshake:

Baud Rate: **9600** | Flow Control: **None** | Data / Parity: **8 bits/no parity**

Warning messages: | **Audio / Voice**:

DX Alerts: | **Callsign Alert**:

Age for spots (min)

Spots: | Band map: | **Prefixes/Zones for Spotters**:

Options

Spots to ignore:

Update QSO Window | Backup DX spots

Use bell character | Show spot on taskbar

Show function keys | Alert unconfirmed country

Enable Last Freq

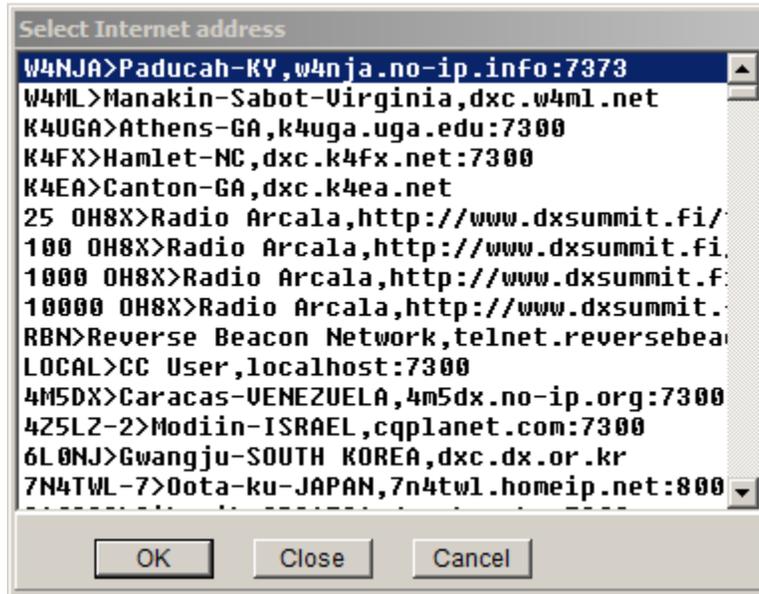
Right-hand menu: Personal, Station, QSO, Screen, Import, Radio, Control, CW, **Packet1**, Packet2, Packet3, RTTY, Ext Data, F2 Key, Rep/Lab

And be sure the Cluster Interface is set to Regular TCP/IP; I don't think the other settings matter but it's probably good to set them the way shown as well.

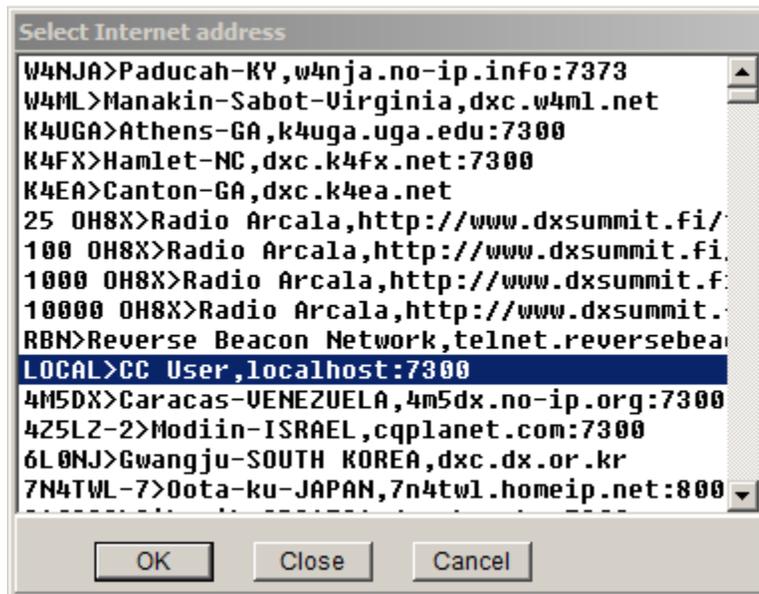
Click "File/write ini" and then "File/save changes and exit". Close DX4WIN and start it up again. This time you'll have an pretty large empty Packet Window pane somewhere on your screen.

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In the Packet Window pane, right-click then click "Internet Connection". You'll see something like this:



Now we're going to choose a different cluster line:



Find the line I highlighted above and click OK.

You'll be asked for your callsign and CC User will load (along with your filters).

Then, in the bottom window type "sh/mydx" -- and you're done!

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You've integrated CC User with DX4WIN. Anytime you'd like to refresh the spots, just right-click in the Spots window, choose "clear all spots" and then in the packet window type "sh/mydx" and you'll see (just) your spots.

Here's an important caveat: In order for the integration to work, CC User must be running BEFORE you start DX4WIN. Otherwise you'll get no connection when you try. Since I'm old and prone to forgetting things, I wrote a batch job to start DX4WIN so I'd be reminded to be sure that CC User is running. You can cut and paste these instructions into Notepad and save them as startdx4win.bat (or some name of your choosing).

```
@echo off
cls
echo.
echo Starting DX4WIN integrated with VE7CC CC User...
echo.
echo Be sure that VE7CC CC User is running and that DX spots
echo have been displayed; then,
pause
echo.
c:\dx4w805\dx4win.exe (or wherever you have DX4WIN installed)
exit
```

Then, instead, of starting DX4win via its icon, navigate to wherever you saved the batch file and type:

```
startdx4win (or whatever you named the batch job you created)
```

If you like, you can put a shortcut to the batch job on your desktop and even change the icon to be one supplied with DX4WIN.

If all this seems baffling or too difficult, no problem. Just remember to start CC User, wait for it to show spots and then start DX4WIN.

If you find anything wrong with these instructions, drop me an email and I'll be able to solve it.

Email me at chaz@w4gkf.com-- and good luck!

Chaz W4GKF
www.w4gkf.com