



Carolina DX Association

N4PQX	Bob Burton	President
W4WNT	Bill Turner	Vice-Pres.
K4MQG	Gary Dixon	Sec.-Treas.
KA8FSM	John Scott	Editor

The Pileup

Newsletter of the CDXA

Presidential Ponderings

Welcome to a new year and a new millennium. For those wondering where the January issue of the *Pileup* has been, you've had it all along. We did a special December/January/Y2K issue that was mailed in December. This was done as K4ZA's, farewell as editor of the *Pileup*. We now have a new editor, John Scott, KA8FSM, who has volunteered to step up to the challenge. The officers and I welcome John to his new duties and look forward to working with him this year. Thanks for stepping forward, John.

One quick reminder for those procrastinators out there, your Year 2000 CDXA dues are now past due. Gary, K4MQG, has informed me that many of you have taken advantage of the SAE that was provided in the last *Pileup*. We hope everyone will renew their membership to ensure you will receive the 2000 CDXA roster which will appear in the April edition of the *Pileup*. Please contact Gary, K4MQG, if you have any roster updates.

WY2000 operations end as I write this. From those I have talked to on the repeater, at luncheons, and from the comments posted on internet packet clusters, WY2000 was a huge success. I think operators and DX all had a great time with the special event call. We will have more on the special event call from the operators later in the *Pileup*.

The new year is bringing many changes. The FCC has decided that license restructuring will happen on April 15th. The FCC is also promising much more enforcement of the rules and regulations on the Amateur bands this year as well. Time will tell how these changes work—hopefully for the better for everyone and the hobby. Late breaking news from the ARRL is that an updated DXCC QSL card field checking program is nearly ready. The details are not yet available, but early reports are that DXCC card checking should be a faster and better process for all. We hope to have more details in the next edition of the *Pileup*.

The Charlotte Hamfest is fast approaching, so get your wish list ready and do stop by the CDXA booth. Thanks to Ted's (W4VHF) efforts we will be having the CDXA Hamfest dinner social at the famous Open Kitchen Restaurant on Morehead Street. The social will begin around 7:00 PM followed by dinner ordered from the menu around 7:45 PM. More information and a map will be provided in the March Hamfest issue of the *Pileup*. Maps will be available at the CDXA Hamfest booth.

The CDXA web site is under construction right now as our new editor and our new webmaster Jerry Moore, AE4PB, work out how they will format the *Pileup*. During this time we will mail the *Pileup* to everyone, but as Jerry gets the *Pileup* online he will email those with web access asking for feedback on the changes. We expect to be able to make the *Pileup* downloadable in Adobe Acrobat PDF format so anyone can download it from the website and print it in the same format as the hard copy version. Stay tuned for more on this.

That's all for this month, and next month's issue will be out before the Hamfest in early March, so until then.... 73's.

Bob - N4PQX

CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems

W4DXA Young Mountain	144.93 MHz (1200 bits/second)	441.00 MHz (9600 bits/second)
K4MD Charlotte, NC	144.91 MHz (1200 bits/second)	441.075 MHz (9600 bits/second)
Digipeater near Wingate, NC	144.91 MHz (DXWIN)	
CDXA Repeater 147.18 (+600)	Near Fort Mill, SC	
World Wide Web Homepage	www.CDXA .org	
Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)	Shoney's, 355 Woodlawn Road, Charlotte, NC (704-525-4395)	

A Note from the Editor

Starting this month, the editor's duties for The Pileup pass to John Scott, KA8FSM. I guess I asked enough questions of Don Daso about "DX stuff" that he figured I would improve my education by taking on the editor's job for a year. Having been a newsletter editor in another organization, I knew what I was getting into when I volunteered to take the job. But, as "they" say you only get out of something what you put into it. So here goes!



KA8FSM ready to "edit".

I'd like to thank Don Daso for doing the job of editor since before I joined CDXA. I, like most of you, saw Don's periodic pleadings for newsletter information. Unfortunately, as a relative greenhorn in chasing DX I didn't feel I could offer the general membership of CDXA much in the way of new information. When Don did not receive a lot of newsworthy items, he usually provided a thought provoking editorial. I will be looking to you, the Membership, to provide the meat of this publication. With your help and wealth of experience, we should be able to get something of interest to publish each month.

I seek to have the following "departments" in the newsletter each month:

Contest Competition. Anything is fair game related to what experience you have in one of the many contests during the year. Humorous episodes, preparing for the contest, winning an award, and how you managed your best single hour run rate are all fair game.

Construction Corner. Any home-brew or documented construction project you undertake which you deem either a success or something to be avoided will be of interest to the readership. How did your tower construction go? What kinks did you encounter that all others may be able to avoid? The human experiences and pleasure of the activity are deemed at least as important as the technical details.

Slick Software. When you encounter a particularly good piece of software, let us all know. I have prepared one such review for this edition. Have you found a "killer application" you'd like to tell us about?

Product Reviews. Many of us read the product reviews in QST and other publications. Not all products are reviewed, especially the simpler, less costly ones. If you encounter a neat product which makes "hamming" more fun, please offer it to the group. No reasonable review will be rejected!

Whizbang Websites. There are a gazillion World Wide Web sites out there. If you know of a great web site, let us all know. Don't forget to provide the Uniform Resource Locator (URL). I've provided a review of one of my favorite sites for DXing in this newsletter.

Humor. I have included a cartoon to lighten things up a bit. Got a humorous cartoon or tale? Let me have it if it's suitable for a "family publication".

Featured Members. We have a geographically diverse group. Unfortunately, some of our numbers cannot get to Charlotte to enjoy the fellowship of our lunches at Shoney's. I'll be seeking out some of you to learn more about you, your shack, your antenna farm, what modes you enjoy working, what bands you enjoy, etc., etc.

So that's the lineup. Give me the ideas and enough information, and I'll write it. Here's how to find me:

Snail Mail: 16212 Walcot Lane, Cornelius, NC 28031

E-mail: jascott@ix.netcom.com

Telephony: (704) 896-9841 (Remember that mode???)

Looking for a good year in 2000.

--John Scott



Late Breaking News

The Pileup

Second Front Page



“WELCOME YEAR 2000” Operation Creates World-Wide Stir In Amateur Radio Community

Goldthorpe Creativity Continues

Charlotte, North Carolina— Ted Goldthorpe continues to show his creative flair in spearheading the Special Event Callsign, WY2000, standing for “Welcome Year 2000.” Many members of CDXA have had a lot of fun being on the receiving end of pileups working the event. Since conceiving this idea, Ted’s been busy preparing a very nice QSL card with assistance from Wanda Burton, KF4DDP. Featuring a full colored photo of a rising sun on the front side, it now appears that the success of the operation will require a reprint over and above the 5500 cards received on the initial printing.

Who’s Countin’?

Lake Wylie, South Carolina— When asked how many Q’s Joe Blackwell rounded up on 160m and 40m CW, he replied, “Who’s countin’? I’m having too much fun.” The most fun came when he found himself humming along at 25 wpm with Carmen Brand, WR6C. Carmen is 91 years young!

Elwell Eases into Europe

Cleveland, North Carolina— Henry Elwell, Jr. cranked up his rhombic antenna on 12 meters SSB as one of the Special Event Operators for CDXA. As of January 26, Henry had logged over 1300 stations in 57 countries on an antenna which principally radiates into Europe.

When contacted for this early preview edition, Henry said, “Can I let you know my final QSO count after January 31? I’m not done yet.”

Henry usually worked only the hours from 9:00 AM until Noon to run up his total. He noted that he logged a number of “dupes” in his operation. “Lots of operators called back on the second or third day to find out how I was doing. I have over 100 dupes, already.” reports Henry.

Some special event operators reported near chaos in the pileups on other bands. “All the operators on 12 meters seemed to be well behaved. Almost to a person, they patiently awaited their turn.” according to Henry.

Bailey Beats Brass

Shelby, North Carolina— Ron Bailey pounded out over 2500 CW QSOs into 81 countries in the first 25 days of January during CDXA Special Event Station operations. Ron operated on 12 meters using a converted HyGain 3-element beam at 55 feet and an AL-1200 linear amplifier. Casual operations on 30 meters have produced 60 QSOs in 15 countries.

Ron chose to operate at regular times without operating split. He reports, "On the third morning, I called 'CQ WY2000' and I had a pileup in 10 seconds!" His best reported clock hour run rate produced 101 QSOs.

Working close-in stateside stations proved difficult on 12 meters. Yet, 209 JA's found Ron easily. The African Continent produced contacts from the following prefixes as of this writing: 9J, 5N, 7X, 5U, VQ9, C5, FH, FR, J2, and EA8. A few OX and OY stations showed up for the party along with stations in the Philippines and Fiji.

"This has been good practice for handling pileups on the receiving end!", reports Ron.

N4ZC Scales the Wall

Mount Holly, North Carolina— No, Roger has not taken up rock climbing. He has found out what the "rare ones" experience when they come on the air.

Roger turned his "six over six over six" towards Europe, fired up his linear on 10 meters and called, "CQ CQ CQ, Welcome Year 2000, this is Whiskey Yankee Two Oscar Oscar Oscar." Back comes a WALL of RF noise. With some difficulty, Roger picks out a station, works him and calls QRZ. Another WALL of RF. Another station identified. "Only the SIX DELTA WHISKEY NOVEMBER station, please," requests N4ZC. Another WALL of RF. Slide up 5 kHz. Call, CQ again. Roger works two, maybe three, stations successfully. Then the pileup finds him. A WALL of RF. And so it goes.

On one Saturday operation your editor heard Rog say "QRT gentlemen, my XYL has just served me lunch." The RF WALL waned, whimpered, and disappeared.... I called Roger on the land line to tell him he disappointed thousands. "You gotta eat some time," came his reply. And so it goes.

It's a Small World

Cornelius, North Carolina— Bill Parris, AA4R, has handled 800+ RTTY contacts since the beginning of January. Not only does Bill enjoy RTTY, but when stricken by the infamous flu epidemic of Charlotte in the first few days of the month, his voice was not up to the task of repetitive voice contacts. The Lord provides—fingertips for a voice. Amen. (Continued next column)

As many of you know, Bill spends the middle of the year in his Frankfort, Michigan abode overlooking beautiful Crystal Lake. A long anticipated trip this past September took him around Lake Superior. After visiting the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore near Munising, Michigan, Bill and Joey chose to stop at a charming bed and breakfast. Driving up to the place, the large yagi towering over the house suggested there was to be a bonus in staying there. Alas, there was no room at the Inn.

Five months later, along comes W8SAX seeking to work WY2000. A few exchanges about QTHs and Bill's familiarity with Michigan, and bingo, W8SAX realizes Bill's the guy with the North Carolina Amateur Radio Plate who he could not accommodate in his Bed and Breakfast a while back. It IS a small world.

Mountaintopping in January

Cornelius, North Carolina— Ted Goldthorpe, W4VHF, planted an idea in your editor's head about doing some 2 meter mountaintopping for the special event. January 8 started as a warm day with sunshine so KA8FSM and his XYL decided to make a real expedition out of the day. A stop at Subway for two subs and then off towards the highest spot east of the Mississippi River—6,684 foot high Mount Mitchell. Climbing up NC Route 80 to the Blue Ridge Parkway was a hoot.

AA4R was standing by to announce the operation on the local Charlotte repeater and was the first QSO worked from atop the summit. K4MQG backed his car out from under the carport in Ft. Mill and was the fourth. Working on 146.52, it wasn't too long before the word got out. Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina were easy pickin's from that height. With about 2-1/4 hours drive each way to Mt. Mitchell and a scheduled dinner in Cornelius at 6:00 PM, the "Everest" conquerors hastened their descent after about 1-1/2 hours of fun. Satisfaction came from knowing hams in five states now knew that CDXA was going to be around on 160 through 10 meters through the month.

Aborted Mission

Ted, W4VHF, and his XYL were off to rove for the VHF contest in late January. Chesapeake Bay Bridge was to be the final destination for this "master rover". Things started well until the reports of snow started being heard. What snow? None here! The park ranger of this first mountaintop stop advised Ted the park was closing. Two and a half hours and forty miles later, it was clear there was to be no roving this contest weekend as the January snowstorm of 2000 roared in. But again, WY2000 was on the air.

Whizbang Websites

A newly coined term for a website to which people return to initiate their surfing is called a “portal” site. One portal site for DXers that AA4R shared with your editor is called the “NG3K Amateur Radio Contest/DX Page”. Its URL is: <http://www.his.com/~wfeidt/> (The URL may be case sensitive, so enter the URL into your browser as given.)

This site provides links to DX bulletins from a variety of sources, propagation forecasts, Internet packet cluster access, call-books to over 20 countries, and a host of links to other sites. It is truly a place at which to initiate your DX information gathering and a place to return to often. Remember to bookmark this one.

Slick Software

When I first became active in CDXA, I asked Roger, N4ZC, if he knew a good logging program. Roger told me he had over 130,000 QSOs logged into a FREE logging program that he got from his Italian friend. Having logged to my ARRL paper log book for 17 years, I wasn't sure I was ready to go fully digital. (I still keep a paper log for sentimental reasons.) Yet, the features I have slowly discovered in the software I describe below make it an outstanding example of free software.

This software runs as a DOS program. Those who cherish their 80286 will be euphoric. It will run in a DOS window in Windows 95/98, however. It logs all the usual required things like callsign, date, UTC, signal report, QSL manager and whether you've sent or received QSLs. It will prepare QSL cards and envelope labels. It tracks your progress towards DXCC, WAZ, and WPX and lets you produce progress reports. For DXCC, I particularly like its summary table showing worked, confirmed, and endorsed entities by band. If you are a contester, your CT “callsign.bin” file can be transformed to a “.res” file and imported directly into the logging program at contest's end with a few keystrokes.

To begin logging, you type in the callsign. If you've worked the station before and logged the operator's name and QTH, it will pop up on the screen. Date and time are inserted from your system clock if you wish. After you enter the callsign, optionally you can hotkey into various windows giving your WAZ, DXCC, or WPX status by band and mode for the QSO. The QSL manager can be logged as part of the entry. The program will allow you to retrieve information on QSL managers and whose callsigns they are managing. It also provides statistics as to which entities provide a high percentage of QSLs in return.

If you want to run the program as a pure DOS application, one of my pleasant discoveries is that the software comes with a terminate and stay resident (TSR) program to allow you to link a PacketCluster to the log. When the spots roll in, the logger supplements the spot by telling you such goodies as, “NEW ONE”, “NEW ONE - BAND”, “NEW ZONE”, “NEW PREFIX” based on all of your previously logged entries. When you finish the QSO, you can use your logged information to put a spot on the cluster using an “ALT-D” key sequence. Since it is free, the features per dollar ratio is infinite! But don't dwell only on cost—this is one feature-rich logger. Yep, it is Y2K compliant, too.

The logger is supposed to “talk” to ICOM, Yaesu, and Kenwood radios to insert frequency information for the spot, but I've not tried to see if it works with my Omni VI+ which supposedly emulates ICOM for digital interconnections. That's next month's project. Where do you get this little gem? It's at an Italian web site, accessible from the NG3K site described elsewhere in this newsletter, or by going directly to: <http://www.425dxn.org/>. Once there you will find the software in the “Ham Software” archive as “log635b.zip”. Once unzipped, there is an English version of user's manual in the installed directory. N4ZC did a lot of the translation of the user manual from Italian to English. I've added to the manual based on my experience and have a copy for the asking.

—John Scott



Happy Valentine's Day!

Miscellany and coming next month....

Those wishing to upgrade before the new rules go into effect might want sit for the exam session being run by Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society on February 12, 2000 at their usual meeting place at 6850 Monroe Road in the East Baptist Church near East Mecklenburg HS. The exam will start promptly at 9:00 AM. It is recommended you arrive about 8:30 AM to complete the FCC 605 and other application forms.

How well did CDXA "Welcome Year 2000?". A synopsis of QSL activity for the special event station, WY2000, is planned for next month's *Pileup*. Please send any anecdotes about your operating experiences in using the special event call to the editor for inclusion in next month's newsletter.

The Charlotte Hamfest and Computer Fair is coming on March 11 & 12, 2000. Get your "bills of material" together for the flea market aisles. The Western Carolinas Amateur Radio Society will be conducting an examination session at the hamfest, so you'll have at least one last chance to go for that upgrade. N5ZC is lined up to lead a forum discussion on remote operation. There will be more details next month. Make sure you leave Saturday evening open for the annual hamfest dinner at Charlotte's **Open Kitchen** restaurant. Maps will be available at the Hamfest. Stop by the CDXA booth.

Congratulations go out from the CDXA membership to John Kanode, N4MM, formerly Roanoke Division Director. John has been elevated by appointment to a position of Vice President of the ARRL. John's position of Roanoke Division Director will be filled by former Roanoke Division Vice-Director, Dennis Bodson, W4PWF.

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First Class Mail

See something wrong with your address label? Notify KA8FSM at once, please.