



The Pileup

Newsletter of the CDXA

Presidential Ponderings

This month promises to be a busy one for all of us. The month starts with the Pratas DXpedition, which will have two of our members, Joe Blackwell, AA4NN, and Ken Cannaday, W4NZC, as operators. The timeframe is March 5-16. The effort is being organized from Taiwan and should give us an opportunity to add this one to our logs.

On March 10-11, the Charlotte Hamfest and Computer Fair takes over the Independence and Liberty Halls of the Charlotte Merchandise Mart. Tim O'Rourke, KG4CHX, promises some great forums. Look for your officers at the CDXA booth in Independence Hall, where the flea market will be set up. If you plan to pay your dues at the Hamfest, please bring a check as this will ensure a record of your payment. A forum lineup is given on page 5 of this *Pileup*.

The Saturday Night Dinner will be held at the Open Kitchen, where it was held last year. The restaurant is off I-77 on Morehead Ave. We will have maps at the CDXA booth, and there are directions elsewhere in the *Pileup* this month. This event is always a great opportunity to get together with our members from outside

the immediate Charlotte area. I arrived late to the lunch last week and found the room almost completely full. I didn't get a count, but we had to have over 25 members there. If anyone doubts that this is a communications hobby, try making yourself heard over that many DXers in one room!!

A serious request comes from Roger Burt, N4ZC. As you probably know, Roger has been the 4th call area single letter prefix QSL bureau manager for 15 years. (Ax4, Kx4, Nx4, and Wx4 QSL cards go to Sterling Park, VA). Roger needs six to ten additional bulk sorters for the bureau so that no bulk sorter need sort more than two or three bulk batches per year. The bulk sorter's responsibility is to sort QSL card shipments from foreign bureaus into piles consisting of the first letter of the callsign suffix. Misdirected cards, such as those for Sterling Park, other call areas, or other countries are placed into a separate, small pile for proper forwarding. That's it! Sorting can be done in your home, and a typical batch might take 6 to 8 hours spread over a week. With the current propagation conditions, QSLs have been rolling in. Roger needs help now. As the principal DX club in the Carolinas, we all know the value the bureau brings to us. Retired, a little extra time to spare, or just want to do your part? Call Roger at (704) 263-1133 or email him at n4zc@juno.com. Many hands make for light work—its a ham tradition.

Look for us at the CDXA booth during the Hamfest, hope to meet lots of CDXA members on March 10 and 11.

73, Bill

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 MHz (+600)	W4DXA, 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)	

Hamfest Happenings

CDXA will once again visit *The Open Kitchen* for its annual Charlotte Hamfest Dinner. It is located at 1318 West Morehead Street, west of I-77 and almost immediately west of Ericsson Stadium across I-77. The appointed hour is 7:00 PM on Saturday, March 10.

From the Hamfest location, the route to The Open Kitchen is as follows:

1. Get on Westbound US-74 (Independence Boulevard) going back towards downtown.
2. As you near downtown you will see a choice between the Brookshire Freeway (I-277 North) or the John Belk Freeway (I-277 South). Take the I-277 South (John Belk Freeway) ramp and merge onto the John Belk Freeway which will take you around downtown, which will be on your right.
4. You will go almost 1/2 way around downtown and pass the Ericsson Stadium on your right, staying on I-277. About the time you pass the stadium, be prepared to watch signs carefully. Position your vehicle in the second lane from the left as I-277 nears I-77 and becomes Wilkinson Blvd.
5. Stay straight on I-277 (Wilkinson) passing by exits for both Northbound and Southbound I-77. Immediately after the Southbound I-77 exit will be the Freedom Drive exit. Exit onto Freedom Drive and proceed to the first major crosstreet which is Morehead Street.
6. Turn right on Morehead Street. The restaurant is about 1 block on the left.

The Pileup

Official Newsletter of the Carolina DX Association
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Published monthly 10 times per year, excepting the months of June and December.

The purpose of the association is to secure for the members the pleasures and benefits of the association of persons having a common interest in Amateur Radio.

Members of the CDXA shall adhere to "The Amateur's Code" as published from time to time in *The ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs*, and shall consist of those valid licensed amateur operators having an interest in promoting amateur radio. Long distance communications (DX) is of special interest to members of the association, but said interest is not a requirement of membership.

Dues are \$30 per year for those using the PacketCluster maintained by the Association, \$15 otherwise, payable each January. Dues are payable by check to the Secretary/Treasurer:

Ken Cannaday, W4NZC
1929 Ewing Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28203

Address, telephone, and email address changes should be directed to the Secretary/Treasurer at the above address or via email to: w4nzc@att.net.

AA4ZZ Crew Just Keeps on Rollin'

Are you prone to just turn through the contest pages of QST in your hurry to get to the advertisements in the back? If so, slow down a bit in the March 2001 issue and check out the results of the September 2000 VHF QSO Party on page 80. Our guys who work AA4ZZ in the VHF contests have made a very respectable showing again by coming in sixth in the nation in the Limited Multioperator Class and second in the Southeast in the same class. This is darn fine work given the population density here compared to the densely populated North-eastern states.

Operators this time around were AA4S, K2SD, K4DXA, W4MW, and of course, AA4ZZ. Not only is this crew good at VHF contesting, they've got the number on publicizing their effort. There's a photograph of AA4ZZ's 4 x 2.5 wavelength 2-Meter array that will give you goosebumps if you're into antennas. If too many "foreigners" see that great view from atop the Blue Ridge, guys, soon you'll find others encroaching on your "turf". Keep up the good work, just don't tell 'em where you are!!

The Fifth Wave By Rich Tennant



"Troubleshooting a little tricky here. The route table to our destination hosts includes a Morse code key, several walkie-talkies and a guy with nine messenger pigeons."

(Here's what happens when you throw a ham radio link into an Internet connection. —The Editor)

Coming to Dinner.....???

The Open Kitchen Restaurant is most accommodating regarding our dinner plans for the Charlotte Hamfest, setting aside a room seating 40 to 45 people without a financial commitment from us. Yet, we do have to give the restaurant an idea of how many will be attending a few days before the event. Please let Jack Guion know whether you are planning on attending the dinner. Jack can be reached at (704) 365-3061 or by emailing him at:

jguion@carolina.rr.com

Ideally Jack should know of your intent to attend the dinner by Wednesday, March 7, so please contact him before then. We can often accommodate last minute arrivals, but there are no guarantees of seating availability in that instance.

AA4NN Puts CDXA Reflector "On the Air"

Joe Blackwell, AA4NN, has used and enjoyed the use of mail reflectors for various organizations. Never bashful, Joe took the bull by the horns and decided that the free email reflector service offered by QTH.NET would be a convenience to the members of CDXA.

If not familiar with email reflectors, here's the scoop. You register your name on the reflector as a subscriber. Any mail sent to the reflector address gets remailed (or "reflected") to the subscriber addresses on file at the reflector. Joe has initiated an early subscriber process for most of the CDXA members who had their email addresses on the roster of CDXA. You probably received a note from "Majordomo" asking you to confirm your subscription.

CDXA members or anyone interested in CDXA activities can subscribe to the CDXA mailing list (reflector) to keep themselves informed of activities amongst the group or to contact the group as a whole. Anyone wanting to share information with the group simply sends email to "cdxa@qth.net". This facility allows anyone to quickly and easily contact all subscribers. Timely news items which can't wait for the *Pileup*, items for sale, swap shop items, DXpedition info, interesting stories, etc., are all fair game. It's probably not a good place to post DX spots, however!! If you haven't subscribed already, send an email to "majordomo@qth.net". The subject line can be blank. In the body of the message place the text, "subscribe cdxa <your email address>". To insure there is no lack of clarity of the syntax of the

above command, if your email address were "jjones@aol.com", you would put "subscribe cdxa jjones@aol.com" in the body of your email. Majordomo will respond with an authorization number to your mailbox to which you must reply in order to confirm the subscription. That's all there is to it. If you have trouble or don't want to fuss with the subscribe procedure, send an email to: aa4nn@juno.com asking Joe to subscribe for you.

Any time you want to leave the list, send an email to "majordomo@qth.net". In the body of the email place the text, "unsubscribe cdxa <your email address>", and you will be removed from the list.

News from the "Far East"

Right after Joe Blackwell enabled the CDXA reflector, I received the following note from Roy Lincoln in Elm City, NC—about 40 miles east of Raleigh.

"Hi All: Today I received my DXCC certificate. It was based on QSO's made between 1963 and 1980. Finally got around to it and besides that, I'd been squeamish about shipping my cards to League Headquarters (or anywhere else for that matter). Now it's time to prepare another application with 120 more. —73 Roy WA4DOU Elm City, N.C."

Your editor, being still somewhat unlearned about North Carolina geography, invited Roy to drop in for lunch some time. Roy suggested that coming from east of Raleigh might be a stretch for him, but he might just be here for the Charlotte Hamfest. I asked Roy how he finds CDXA membership in the "far east" with no PacketCluster and luncheon meetings so far away.

He answered, "I've never been a member of a contest or DX club. They're all much too far away to "identify" with. So, while surfing various amateur radio oriented websites last summer, I stumbled across the CDXA web page. I was glad to see that the Carolinas had developed their own Contest/DX club, even if the bulk of the membership seems to be in Metrolina. I decided to seek membership in support of the club and hope it grows. Although not a "rabid" contester or DXer (I prefer the casual approach and hope the Honor Roll is waiting down the road), I do "identify" with DXing and contesting and still think of them as the essence of "real" ham radio. I will run up to 100 watts to work a

(Continued on page 5)

IN3QBR Speaks of Laos

On February 13, Mauro Tomazzoni, IN3QBR told members of the CDXA about his recent trip to Cambodia and Laos where he operated as XU7AAY and XW3QBR. Members were treated to a slide presentation of the trip following a nice dinner at The Woodshed. The trip was not a classic DXpedition but rather a planned vacation for Mauro and his travelmate combined with some radio operations.

Mauro's career has taken him to a number of countries, several for extended stays as an employee. In the course of those experiences, Mauro has developed an appreciation for different cultures. The entry to Laos was through Cambodia. The stay in Laos consisted of some time spent in both larger cities as well as time spent in areas well off the beaten path. In the smaller towns, electricity for operating their radios was sometimes only available for about 4 hours in the early evenings!

Photographs of the downtown of the largest city in Laos at 3:00 PM local time showed a relatively serene, uncrowded cityscape with few cars and fewer pedestrians. His visit to the "golden triangle", from where much of the world's heroin originates, showed even fewer people. At the northern reaches of the Golden Triangle, the main road to China was particularly stark as an unimproved gravel road leading to some rather beautiful mountains inside China's borders.



Bill Turner, W4WNT, thanks Mauro Tomazzoni, IN3QBR for his informative talk about his trip to Laos.

Travel expenses in Laos are quite low. Sleeping accommodations and meal expenses were only about \$20 during the three days Mauro spent in the Golden Triangle area. Moving across the country was somewhat more expensive, however. There

were few roads, dictating travel by plane over the longer distances. As a communist country, air travel is appar-

ently subsidized for citizens. A 185 mile trip by air costs the locals but \$20 while the visitor is charged \$180. Yet to make the trip overland would have taken almost three days.

Mauro's photos along some of Laos' rivers were very impressive. He indicated that at such sites he felt a great serenity and fulfilled one of the primary purposes of his vacation—that of getting rested and recharged.

Those who had worked Mauro while in Cambodia and Laos were treated to "instant" QSL cards by providing the QSO specifics, since Mauro brought his station logs with him. It was an educational evening for all.

Internal Secrets of "The Kiva"

In last month's *Pileup*, we titillated your interest in the "kiva" of the Winston-Salem Contest Crew. A kiva is ceremonial structure of the Pueblo Indians of the American Southwest. Kivas were originally only open to adult male members of the society. In that sense they were a "guy thing". Below, for the first time anywhere, the *Pileup* can show the modern world the inside of the Winston-Salem Contest Crew's kiva.



The strange ritualistic paraphernalia mounted on the walls is used to ensure total continuity exists in contacting other "spirits" via the ether. The headpieces worn by the occupants of the kiva during times of high ceremony are to provide oneness of the celebrant with far away kindred spirits. The secret password reportedly heard by those within earshot is "five by nine, good luck, cue are zed". The meaning of this incantation is a mystery to all but kiva members.

(Continued from page 3)

News from the "Far East" (Cont'd)

"new one" but I mainly operate QRP and mostly CW. I don't have access to the PacketCluster but do occasionally see where DX has been spotted on eham.net or from the DX Summit via the NG3K Amateur Radio DX/Contest Page. I don't like to use my computer much when on the air, since its pretty filthy RF-wise, so I don't log, DX, or contest using the computer. I have DXCC, WAC, WAS, and will eventually get a QSL for Zone 23 to earn WAZ. I've got a 52 ft. tower, now, and a C3SS on it, so DXing is easier than ever before. Eventually I'll have 160 meters to 2 meters CW/SSB capability, right now I just operate mostly 40 meters to 6 meters.

.....I'm looking forward to the Charlotte Hamfest and possibly some of the forums. Perhaps the CDXA reflector could become a good source of shared info. I "stumbled" across it and was an early subscriber."

(So, when you're at the Charlotte Hamfest and see WA4DOU coming your way, go up to Roy Lincoln and tell him you're a CDXAer!! —Editor)

Solar Cycle Peak is Here!!!

The peak of our current sunspot cycle is upon us. Ted Goldthorpe recently sent me the item which follows:

February 15, 2001 -- You can't tell by looking, but scientists say the Sun has just undergone an important change. Our star's magnetic field, which extends through the distant reaches of interplanetary space, has flipped. The Sun's magnetic north pole, which was in the northern hemisphere just a few months ago, now points south. It's a topsy-turvy situation, but not an unexpected one.

"This always happens around the time of solar maximum," says David Hathaway, a solar



There aren't any sunspots. Your glasses are just dusty...

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physicist at the Marshall Space Flight Center. "The magnetic poles exchange places at the peak of the sunspot cycle. In fact, it's a good indication that Solar Max is really here."

Here is the World Wide Web link for the rest of the article for the interested reader:

http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2001/ast15feb_1.htm?list134139

(In chasing down the above URL after receiving Ted's notice, I learned from the site that the sunspots we see are in reality severe irregularities in magnetic flux tubes within the sun which come to the sun's surface. From studies conducted by satellites put up by NASA years ago and circling the sun in a polar plane, the flux tubes poking out of the sun's surface are analogous to a hernia in the human intestinal tract. These "herniated" magnetic fields lead to the eventual "flipping" of the sun's magnetic field. I suggest visiting this site and some of its related links. —The Editor)

**Hamfest Forum Schedule
Saturday Schedule**

Forum Room "A"	Forum Room "B"
9:30 Operating in the wild Paul Stroud, AA4XX	
11:00 DXpedition to Bhutan Bob Allphin, K4UEE (General Interest)	11:00 Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS)
12:30 Homebrewing, QRPing, DXing Eric Schwartz, WA6HHQ, Elecraft	1:00 ARRL State Convention Meeting
2:00 Clipperton Island and Kingman Reef DXpeditions Bob Allphin, K4UEE (General Interest)	2:00 ARRL Public Service Forum Daryl Sampson (ARES Emergency Coordinator)
Testing Room	Registration Room
10:30-12:00 Bingo	10:30-12:00 Knightlights QRP Meeting
1:30 VE Exams by WCARS/VEC	1:00 Registration for VE Exams

Sunday Schedule

Forum Room "A"	Forum Room "B"
10:00 Q&A Elecraft Founders, Burdick/Schwartz	10:00 Grounding and Lightning Protection, Tim Slay
11:00 Operating PSK31 Bill Miller (KT4YE)	11:00 DXCC Q&A Gary Dixon, Wayne Mills

The Back Page

CDXA will be holding its usual **Charlotte Hamfest Dinner** again this year. The dinner will be at *The Open Kitchen* Restaurant beginning at 7:00 PM on Saturday, March 10. Directions to the restaurant will be found on Page 2, inside.

Charlotte's Hamfest has some good looking forum activity this year, as usual. Representatives from DXpeditions to Bhutan, Clipperton Island, and Kingman Reef will have presentations of general interest. Bring your spouse. Representatives of Elecraft, the hot QRP line of transceivers, will be presenting their products. For those planning on putting up a new tower, plan on attending the session on grounding and lightning protection. There will also be presentations on the new digital mode, PSK31. Something for everyone. Check out the new gear at exhibitor booths, have your DXCC cards endorsed, and catch up with other members of CDXA on what's going on in your neck of the woods. Hope to see you there. Forum Schedule is on Page 5, inside.

Coming March Contests

Dates	Contest	Details Available
March 3-4	ARRL Int'l DX Contest, Phone	December 2000 QST, Page 110
March 11-12	North American RTTY Sprint	March 2001 QST, Page 114
March 11-12	Wisconsin QSO Party	March 2001 QST, Page 114
March 18-20	Virginia QSO Party	March 2001 QST, Page 114
March 25-25	CQWW WPX Contest, Phone	March 2001 QST, Page 114

Ken Cannaday, W4NZC
1929 Ewing Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28203

w4nzc@att.net

First Class Mail

See something wrong with your address label? Notify W4NZC at once, please.