



The Pileup

Newsletter of the CDXA

Presidential Ponderings

A word of thanks is due to all the folks who keep our Packet Cluster nodes in operation. As we go to press in the beginning of July, Joe, K4MD, is bringing up his Charlotte node after a power failure that occurred while he was traveling. W3GQ, Paul, has taken on the care and feeding of the Young Mountain node and is keeping it in operation. Thanks to both of them and to the many others in the club who maintain nodes so we can all find those DX spots.

While the recent propagation numbers look like the sun has gone on a diet, the various DX bulletins show upcoming activity from T88, T30, OH0, JW, D6, and 3W, so there should be something for everyone out there to chase.

Field Day saw participation by several of our members in the event. AA4S, Ron, was slated to work in the Shelby ARC outing, and AD4IE, Paul, and W4EJM, Ed, and I worked in the W4BFB activity at Mint Hill, NC.

W4WNT	Bill Turner	President
W4JG	Jack Guion	Vice-Pres.
W4NZC	Ken Cannaday	Sec.-Treas.
K4MD	Joe Simpkins	Sysop
-	Lloyd Burt	Webmaster
K8YC	John Scott	Editor

The AA4ZZ gang continues to make its presence felt in VHF contesting. Inside this issue, Paul Trotter (AA4ZZ) gives a recap of their recent success in the ARRL June VHF Contest where they had a great six meter opening to Europe. While the final score is yet to be determined, a claimed score of over 400,000 points is within their grasp. The same gang now has a confirmed second place in the Limited Multioperator class in the ARRL January 2001 VHF Sweepstakes. Look for the writeup in the August 2001 issue of QST. For those who can't wait, you can preview the results at the ARRL members only website at

<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/qst/contests/results/2001/jan-vhf-sweeps.pdf>

Best of DX to all, —Bill, W4WNT

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)	

Call for DXCC Counts

In the May, 2001 issue of The Pileup, I published a list of DXCC countries confirmed by our members in the upper ranks of DXCC entity counts. This is a dangerous undertaking because I invariably leave out someone. The reasons are at least twofold: (1) if you are not on the honor roll and you did not submit cards for credit in the past year, your name is not on the DXCC annual report and (2) the annual report listing is sorted first on total entities and then by callsign within an entity count grouping. To pull CDXA membership off into a list of our own, I must recognize a call sign as one of ours as I start from the top of the list and work down. I get bleary eyed by the time I get to the second or third page of the yearbook listings.

To have the most up to date count displayed, I'll publish the list again in the September issue. If you were missing from the May list and/or you have a new count, please let me know your information at: jas-cott@ix.netcom.com.

--The Editor, K8YC

Busman's Holiday in Reverse

Ever heard of a "Busman's Holiday"? That's when a bus driver takes a trip around town on a bus on his day off for relaxation. For twenty years Roger Burt, N4ZC has been taking a "reverse busman's holiday".

When Roger retired from the Coast Guard, with a long standing interest in radio as both an amateur operator and as a communications expert, he decided to take a radio broadcasting course at Gaston College using his

VA benefits. This course covered the non-technical aspects of broadcasting including advertising sales, show production, and the like. At the time Gaston College did not have a campus radio station. About the time Roger finished his course work, he lost his father. When home for the funeral, his mother offered him a collection of Reader's Digest records on the big band era. Soon thereafter, Gaston College did get a radio station, designated WSGE, and one of the faculty members asked Roger if he'd like to do a show for the station.

One of Roger's fortes is his ability to remember and recall interesting facts about various artists and bands. His interest in big bands grew as he read more and more about them in his early days of producing his radio shows. And Roger's uncanny ability to bring back these interesting items lent a great amount of interest to his shows. What started as a job to relax from his avocation as a ham radio operator has become a vocation and source of great satisfaction for both Roger and his loyal listeners over the past 20 years. (Although Rog will be the first to tell you his remuneration for the show hardly constitutes it being called a vocation!) His listeners range from folks who lived the big band era all the way to "twenty-somethings" who just enjoy the big band sounds. Roger has continued to collect thousands of artistic works from various list servers where MP3 recording technology has made available some of the original works in near studio quality. With such a large collection to choose from, almost any topic from the thirties to the sixties has a documented musical story.

Roger's show runs from 10:00 AM till 1:00 PM each Tuesday and Thursday. It is at 97.1 on the FM radio dial. Depending on the selectivity of your receiver, the station can be heard as far west as Shelby, as far north as Hickory, as far south as Rock Hill, and at least to central Charlotte on the east. A station in Wingate may pose reception difficulties to the listener east of Charlotte. Listen in some time as Roger takes a break from "hamming". It's no wonder he has a great "on the air" presence.

Correction

In the May 2001 issue of The Pileup, the callsign of Hal Bouton was incorrectly reported as W4QT. Hal's correct callsign is N4QT. He also prefers to be called Hal rather than Harold.

The Pileup

Official Newsletter of the Carolina DX Association
© Copyright 2001

Published monthly 10 times per year, excluding 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

June VHF Contest Gets Heart Pumping

by Paul Trotter, AA4ZZ

June 9 and 10 once again found the AA4ZZ crew at our mountain top site near Boone for the June ARRL VHF Contest. Our crew was: Ron (AA4S), Paul (AA4ZZ), Ken (K4DXA), Scott (K2SD), Bill (W4GRW), Roger (W4MW), and Ted (W4VHF). Each contest results in a flurry of activity on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning as we set up lots of antennas, computers, and radios. Each contest we try to make improvements to our station. This year the biggest improvement was the upgrading of our six meter beam from 6 elements on a 24 foot boom to 9 elements on a 42 foot boom. The antenna had to be carried on a trolley line over a large rhododendron thicket. Ted and Gary did an amazing job on the tower getting this monster up.



Gary (K4MQG) and Ted (W4VHF) listen on the new 6 meter beam they just “wrestled” up for the June 2001 VHF Contest. (See Text)

How well would this big antenna work? It was obvious early in the contest that this antenna worked much better than anything we had ever used before on six meters. Sunday afternoon we had a band opening on six unlike any I’ve seen in 25 years of VHF contesting. I was sitting at the UHF position when I noticed the computer logging network displayed the six meter station had just worked DK2PH. A typo, I thought. That must be KD2PH. Then I saw our six meter operator log G4IGO. This was no typo—this was a rare European opening on six meters! New countries continued to show up on the screen: EH, F, OZ, PA, IK, SM, GW, and ON. Ron assisted by Roger had a real pileup going

on CW. In a span of 2 hours they worked over 60 stations. The signals were weak and had lots of QSB. We were all sure the new beam made a big difference in this opening but I guess we’ll never know just how much.

We also replaced the 9913 feedline we had been using on our FM antennas with hardline. We wanted to have less loss to ensure the best possible reception. We sensed a very significant improvement. Thanks to all the CDXA members who gave us a contact.

The final results are our best score ever—over 400,000 points. This should be one of the top scores in the country. Now we wait to see....

Awards Noticed

While perusing some of the amateur radio magazines this month, I am pleased to report several members who received official recognition for their operating prowess. Earlier this year, we reported that Ron Bailey, AA4S, had earned his 5BWAZ award. The June 2001 issue of CQ made it official, and Ron was then one of only 554 stations worldwide who’ve earned this honor.

Along comes the July, 2001 issue of CQ and our immediate past president, Bob Burton (N4PQX), is awarded the Single Band WAZ for 10 meters SSB. In the same issue Jack Jackson (N4JJ) received the Single Band WAZ award for both the 12 meter CW and 17 meter CW bands.

John Kanode, N4MM, honorary CDXA member and ARRL Vice President, has found some time to operate also. In the June and July issues of CQ, John was awarded Single Band WAZ award for 40 meter CW and Single Band WAZ for 6 meters, respectively.

I’ve probably missed others in our active group of operators. Unfortunately, I just haven’t memorized all of your call signs to have them pop out at me when I scan these lists. If you have earned an honor that you would like recognized, please let me know.

--The Editor, K8YC

Help Needed at Discovery Place

Mac Wood, W4PVT, is in need of some additional volunteer operators for the Discovery Place Radio Room for weekends. If you can spare one Saturday or Sunday morning or afternoon (or both) per month as a volunteer, contact Mac at 704-541-7929.

Postage Up Again???

Someone mentioned at one of our recent CDXA luncheons that the postage rates were going up again, and that naturally led to a discussion of Electronic QSLs, but that is a topic for another time.

After tuning in on the rate issue, I asked about rate changes the next time I was at the post office. Yes, there was an "adjustment" of the rates as of July 1, 2001, but it appears to only be for the second ounce of first class mail and for postcards. The first ounce of domestic first class mail is still \$.34 but the second ounce is now \$.23.

A visit to the USPS web site at www.usps.gov was an eye opener for your Editor. When the rate went from \$.60 for the first half ounce of air mail letter post to \$.80 for most countries outside North America, it appears as though the rate structure also changed to allow the \$.80 fee to cover the first *full ounce*. I called my local post office to confirm this. The person answering the phone held the same belief as mine until I told her I had seen the rate mentioned above at the USPS website. The rate was confirmed. So, ladies and gents, it appears as though you can now send a long, multi-page letter to your QSL buddies for your 80 cent fee! —*The Editor*

QSLs are Coming

In the July issue of *CQ*, Carl Smith (N4AA), contributing editor on DX happenings and one of our very own members, relates that Pedro (HK3JJH/HK0) wrapped up his month long adventure on Malpelo Island (HK0/M) and was able to celebrate his birthday at home on May 10. The DXpedition to Malpelo netted some 15,000 QSOs, and Carl stated that processing of the cards he is handling began in mid-June. Your editor can attest to that, since QSLs for his two contacts with Pedro are now tucked into my DXCC submission pile. If you worked Pedro, you'll probably have your card by the time you read this.

As for the D68C cards, that's a pretty big deal. At 168,000 QSOs, the logistics are somewhat more cumbersome. In mid-May, Bob Burton sent your editor an advisory from the D68C Publicity Manager stating that a high quality four-sided card is in production in Germany and will be well worth the wait. Since even QSL managers have a life, Phil (G3SWH, D68C QSL manager) and his XYL had a planned vacation to 8Q7 in early

June. It would appear that we should not expect to see QSLs until August. Patience, patience, and do not inundate Phil with queries as to where your QSL is!!!

Out-of-this-world Experience

On Friday, June 22, 2001 Discovery Place science center in Charlotte opened its doors on a new traveling exhibit produced at Discovery Place in cooperation with NASA. The exhibit highlights the new International Space Station and includes interesting modules on how daily existence is carried on in a weightless environment. Ever wonder how one eats, sleeps and carries out bodily functions in space?

Animated interactive skill activities on docking maneuvers is a real attraction for youngsters and "oldsters" alike. There are also some well conceived exhibits to show how difficult it is to carry out mechanical assembly activities such as turning a wrench or connecting up a pipe fitting when there is no gravity holding one's feet against the ground to provide a frictional anchoring point. This is a must-see exhibit. It will be at Discovery Place until late this year at which time it will go on tour. Why not take a day to come to Discovery Place to see the exhibit, and while you are at it, stop in the Radio Room over near the entry to the cafe. That part of the museum is free of admission charges, too.

But that's not the only reason your editor is writing this piece. On the opening Friday, your editor was taking a turn as a volunteer operator in the amateur radio room. As part of the opening ceremonies the first Amateur Radio operator in space, Owen Garriott (W5LFL), was invited to speak. Imagine my surprise when Owen and his spouse, between presentations, stopped by the radio room to say hello and see the station. I knew him instantly from seeing his picture on the cover of *QST* in the 1980's. He was pleased to see the Discovery Place station supports satellite communications.

Later in the day, I spoke with Owen again following his presentation. Owen's career as an Astronaut has allowed him to visit many places the world over. We talked about the recent reopening of Bhutan and on waiting for North Korea to open its radio borders. Owen mused that Korea will probably do that if they ever get involved in International Space exploration. Now there's an idea!!!!

Summer 2000 CQ VHF Contest

Did you ever open a magazine, look inside, and say, “Hey, I know that person!”? Your editor opened the June 2001 issue of CQ and right there on page 15 is a picture of our own Ted Goldthorpe, W4VHF, sitting behind the wheel of his “roving” vehicle.

An even better part of the whole thing was that under the heading of “Victors”, the author of the article proclaimed Ted and Itice, K4IRG, as the number one rover in the Summer 2000 CQ VHF contest. While the article did not state who was driving and who was operating, it did make it clear that Ted and Itice had earned 28,634 points—or 12,700 points more than their closest competitor. What are you going to do as an encore on July 14-15 this year, Ted?

Roving Reporter Visits AA4V

The Roving Reporter went far afield to visit Steve Reichlyn, AA4V, at Isle of Palms, SC. Steve recently was awarded the CQ WAZ award for 160 meters.

Roving Reporter: How did you get started in Amateur Radio?

AA4V: My grandfather used to have an old radio in his front room. I used to listen to European broadcast stations and the BBC. I had a high school friend who was a ham, and I used to go to his house to see him operate. I got the bug. While in college in 1963, I became a ham, and I’ve been active ever since.

RR: How did you get interested in 160 meters?

AA4V: I should first state that 160 meters is not my only interest, but it is a band which has always fascinated me. After a stint in the military service, I ended up in Columbia, SC where I lived from 1970 until 1995. Starting in 1972, there was a group of three of us who used to have parties on Saturday nights, and we’d stay up until European daybreak to see if we could work England on 160. In those days, working Europe on 160 meters seemed to be “IT”. If you ever told me I’d work all the zones of the world on 160m, I’d never have believed you. Over the years, I’ve learned a lot about the peculiarities of 160 meters.

RR: Isn’t 160 a nightowl’s band?

AA4V: Somewhat, but once you understand its peculiarities by observation and talking with others, you find you don’t have to stay up all night to work the world.

RR: Tell us a little about your quest for CQ WAZ 160.

AA4V: As I mentioned, 160m has always been a little special for me. In 1979 I took first in the US and second in the world in the CQWW 160 meter contest. Through that interest, I had contacted 36 of the 40 zones on 160 while still in Columbia. I earned 5BWAZ in the 1980’s (Certificate #430) so I had my share of 160 work along the way. When I moved to Isle of Palms in 1995, I found myself surrounded by salt water, and that seemed to make a difference. My final needed zone was Zone 26, and that was a “by the book” grayline contact with Burma that lasted about 15 seconds. We exchanged S8 signal reports and thought we were the only two on the band. Within seconds after that the noise rose, the signals faded, other stations began to be heard, and we were back in the usual 160 meter conditions of weak signals and high noise. I hold Certificate No. 24 for 160m WAZ. I am only the fourth US station to earn the award, and Dave Kennedy (N4SU) is the second US station. Dave is also a CDXA member so two of the four US stations holding CQ WAZ 160m are with CDXA. Today I have 225 DXCC entities confirmed on 160m so I still have some challenges left.

RR: What’s your station configuration?

AA4V: Pretty standard stuff. I have a Yaesu FT1000D and an Alpha 87A. In Columbia I had an 80 foot tower topped by a TH6DXX and a shunt fed antenna on the tower for 160m. I had some Beverages—quite short at 300 feet—in Columbia, but no Beverages here on Isle of Palms. Here, I have an Inverted “L” on a 40 foot mast with elevated radials for 160 and some Force 12 verticals. I’ve found some pennant antennas to be excellent for receiving. I think the saltwater groundplane is my biggest ally here!

RR: How long have you been a CDXA member?

AA4V: I’ve been a member for about 10 years. I’ve always supported the group since I have a lot of acquaintances there. I try to “check in” with the crew at the Charlotte Hamfest when I make it up for that.

RR: Thanks for sharing your experiences with us. It seems like your biggest challenge in 160 Honor Roll may be in finding stations who have 160m capability in the entities you have yet to work. Good luck and thanks for taking the time to meet with the Roving Reporter!

The Back Page

Upcoming contest activity:

July 14-15	IARU HF World Championship	See April QST, Page 111
July 14-15	CQWW VHF Contest 6m and 2m.	1800Z 7/14 until 2100Z 7/15
July 21-22	North American RTTY QSO Party	See July QST, Page 111 also www.ncjweb.com
July 28-29	RSGB Islands-on-the-Air Contest	See July QST, Page 111
August 4-5	North American CW QSO Party	See July CQ, Page 96 - no details
August 18-19	North American SSB QSO Party	See July CQ, Page 96 - no details

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.