

# The Pileup

## Newsletter of the CDXA

### CDXA Supports Major DXpeditions

By John Scott, K8YC

There are two upcoming DXpeditions that have generated interest all around the world. One is the 3B9C DXpedition to Rodriguez Island. The Five Star DX Association, a British group running this operation, is the same one which brought you Comoros Island (D68C) back in February, 2001. A large freight container filled with radio gear has already been delivered to Rodriguez, and they have enlisted the participation of the island's only ham, Robert (3B9FR). Operation will begin Friday, March 19. Their website URL is: <http://www.fsdxa.com/3b9c>.

The second operation is the one going to Banaba Island to operate as T33C. The operation is scheduled to start April 4 or 5 and continue on the air for two weeks. Our own Joe Blackwell (AA4NN) will be pounding out some CW on that one. The website URL is: <http://www.dx-pedition.de/banaba2004/>. The history of Banaba is quite interesting. If you go to the site, take a look at the link off the home page entitled "Jane's Banaba Homepage". It has some very interesting history of Banaba in the first 60 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

W4VHF	Ted Goldthorpe	President
N4HN	Tom Wright	Vice-Pres.
K4SQR	Jim Miller	Sec.-Treas.
K4MD	Joe Simpkins	Cluster Mgr.
W3GQ	Paul Sturpe	Assoc. Cluster Mgr.
WB4BXW	Wayne Setzer	Webmaster
K8YC	John Scott	Editor

As a CDXA member, you can be proud that your association is supporting both of these DXpeditions. Our logotype is displayed on both websites and will also be on the QSL card when it becomes available. How have we managed this? A little bit of initiative and your help, of course, have made all the difference. The Cluster guys have made telnet sessions available via the Internet to make our cluster both faster and highly scalable without the need to add a lot of RF gear to accommodate more users. The Pileup is being delivered mostly via email as a PDF file which saves both printing and postage costs. And, last year we had a very successful raffle of a gemstone globe at the Charlotte Hamfest which provided several hundreds of dollars. The entire proceeds of the gemstone globe raffle done at this year's hamfest will be used to support DXpeditions, once again. Your dues to CDXA which partially supports this activity have not increased in at least the last 8 years, and perhaps longer.

CDXA also supported the Annobon Island DXpedition (3C0V). Our logo appeared on their QSL card also. All told, CDXA has been able to provide \$1000 of support to DXpeditions in the past year while holding the line on dues expense. We hope you share the officer's vision that as a DX club we should be supporting worthy DXpeditions. See you in the pileups for Rodriguez and Banaba!! (Psst, Joe, keep an ear out for me in the pileup, I still need Banaba.)

CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems		
W4DXA (11 mi. NE of Mooresville)	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)	

### Field Day 2004

CDXA is preparing to mount a Field Day effort in 2004. This year's event will be conducted on June 26-27, 2004. The goal of Field Day as taken directly from the ARRL 2004 Rules is "to work as many stations as possible on any and all amateur bands (excluding the 60, 30, 17 and 12-meter bands) and in so doing learn to operate in abnormal situations in less than optimal conditions." Current planning calls for CDXA's effort to emphasize the competitive aspects of Field Day.

Initial planning proposes a multi-operator, multi-band operation with emphasis on CW since each CW QSO is awarded two points compared to a single point for SSB QSOs. Final choice will be determined by operator availability. Operating as a Class A station (field emergency setup) poses both antenna and logistical problems regarding sleeping, feeding, and personal hygiene, so a Class E station (base station on emergency power) may make more sense in this renewal of CDXA Field Day activity. The club's callsign, W4DXA, will be used for the event.

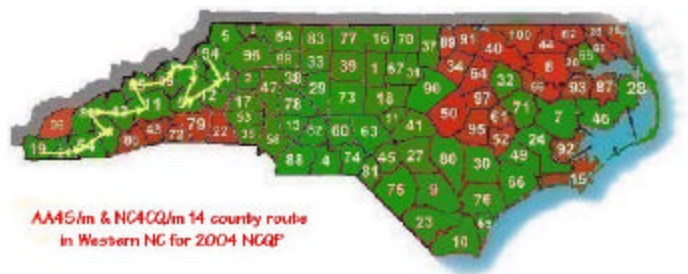
It is anticipated four to seven operators will be needed for each band operated if we are to ensure we are on the air for the entire event. This will permit suitable rest time and provide flexible scheduling for those not able to dedicate the entire weekend to the event. One scenario has emphasis on CW early in the event, then as CW QSOs become scarce placing emphasis on SSB operation. Accordingly, at this juncture, operation in the 2E or 3E category might be our target class.

If you'd like to participate, please signify your intent to Ted Goldthorpe or John Scott. There still is a lot of plan-

ning and preparation to be done. You can be helpful in many ways, and we're starting a little later than we'd like. Let us know today of your interest in becoming a part of Field Day 2004.

### Bailey Bops the Blue Ridge

The recent North Carolina QSO Party found Ron Bailey (AA4S) out "Boppin down the Blue Ridge" again in 2004. Ron really takes this event seriously. He plans his route to get to as many of the western NC counties as he can in the operating period. Then, he actually drives the route before the contest to ensure the timings



Ron operates mostly CW during the contest. He's had more than 110 QSOs per hour in some good runs—and that's while driving! How does he do it? No time for logging by hand. Just keep a tape cassette recorder running for the whole contest and painstakingly transcribe the log entries at event's conclusion. Below is a picture of the "cockpit":



After this year's event, we asked Ron how he did in the contest. He felt he did pretty good, but must await the reported results from a few other top-notch competitors.

#### The Pileup

Official Newsletter of the Carolina DX Association  
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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:

Jim Miller, K4SQR  
11600 Hilda Court  
Charlotte, NC 28226

## Roving Reporter Visits K4SI

The Roving Reporter found his way to Lincolnton, NC this month to chat with Bob Cranford, K4SI—a Charter Member of CDXA.

**Roving Reporter:** You've enjoyed a long association with CDXA, Bob. How did it get started?

**K4SI:** I liked DXing and wanted to associate with a DX group. I knew a number of the other Charter members from my DX work. The club was founded in 1979 or 1980—it's been so long, I can't remember—and in those days there was no PacketCluster. Two meter radios were used to pass spots. Unfortunately, I lived too far east of here to receive spots via two meters, but I still wanted an association with my fellow DXers.

**RR:** How long had you been in amateur radio when you became a member of CDXA?

**K4SI:** I actually became a ham in November 1954. I was 14 years old at the time. You'll recall that in those days, you were issued a callsign with the letter "N" for Novice following your initial letter of "K" or "W". You had one year to upgrade to the next license class or you had to retest and start all over. I lived in eastern North Carolina, and I didn't get over to Norfolk, VA where the FCC testing station was located in time to upgrade. It wasn't until 1963 when I decided to reapply for a license. I've been pretty active ever since.

**RR:** How did you get the DXing "bug"?

**K4SI:** I used to ragchew with mostly domestic hams. One evening in about 1964, I was having a ragchew with a buddy in Virginia and a ZL broke in to our QSO and mentioned he was able to hear us both well. You can imagine my surprise. Here I am having a casual conversation with a ham not 200 miles away, and I get a call from someone in New Zealand on my simple dipole antenna. I guess that's the magic of this hobby, isn't it?

**RR:** Did you jump into chasing DX with both feet after that?

**K4SI:** Well not exactly. I finished college in 1966 and moved near Wilmington, NC. There I put up a fifty foot tower of Rohn 25G topped with a Mosely TA-33jr. As is typical of our hobby, the more antennas the better. Soon thereafter I added 20 more feet to the tower and topped it with a Hy-Gain 20 meter monoband yagi. I

earned DXCC in 1967 and 5BDXCC in 1994.

**RR:** I guess you kept up with tower building. As I drove in, I noted you have quite an antenna farm. What all do you have up there?

**K4SI:** Well, the three towers you saw are 140 feet high, 120 feet high, and 100 feet high. On the 140 footer, I have a 2 meter vertical topping the tower above a 5 element, 10 meter monoband yagi on a 10 foot mast. Down the mast at the tower top, I have a 3 element, 40 meter yagi. Fitted to that tower, I also have an 80 meter "Four Square" with a matching box built by Jim Miller, K4SQR. On the 120 foot tower, I also have another 2 meter vertical topping a 5 element, 20 meter monobander. On the 100 foot tower, I have 6 element, 15 meter monobander at the top with a fixed 4 element, 15 meter monobander at 30 feet pointed toward the Caribbean.

**RR:** With all the metal up in the air, you should be able to talk almost anywhere.

**K4SI:** I hope you're using the word "talk" in the generic sense, because I am mostly a CW operator. I really only have microphones for my FM rigs.

**RR:** Well, I know you didn't get into CW as a Korean War or WWII radio man, so how did you get so hooked on CW?

**K4SI:** When I went to school or work, I talked using verbal skills each and every day. I felt that I'd get no "kicks" out of coming home to ham radio and talking some more. Therefore, I just found "talking" using Morse Code was a relaxing change from a day's work.

**RR:** Do you have any interesting tales about QSOs using CW?

**K4SI:** Yes, but I'm not sure you'd call it a QSO. Very early in my marriage, my wife thought she'd be cute and send me a little note written in Morse code. She carefully copied the characters as dits and dahs on a piece of paper to tell me to "Bring in the sheets" from the laundry line. But, she really didn't have a sense of Morse Code rhythm and she ran the two "e's" together in her written text, and you probably can understand my disbelief that I would get such a directive from my XYL, a devout Sunday School teacher. We've had a lot of laughs about that over the year's together.

*(Continued on page 6)*

### Hamfest 2004 Images



Our "traditional" booth snapshot with Tom Wright (N4HN), Ken Boyd (K4DXA), Carl Smith (N4AA), and Larry Sosso-man (K4CEB) holding forth.



Left to right, Bev Boyd, Itice Goldthorpe, and Joey Parris—all radio amateurs, too—enjoy "catching up." Joey and Husband Bill Parris paid a surprise visit to Charlotte from Frankfort, MI. Itice will work this summer at getting her last two entities needed for DXCC on 6 meters!



Left, Marc Tarplee (N4UFP), author of last month's Pileup article on "DXing on Mars", and right, William Culpepper (W4BZ), one of this year's forum speakers joined in the dinner festivities.



Left to right, L C Kingsbury (NW6S), Dave Anderson (K4SV), one of the forum presenters, Wayne Setzer (WB4BXW), CDXA webmeister, and Wayne Mills (N7NG) ARRL Director of Member Services await their knock-wurst at the Rheinland Haus.



Gary Pearce (KN4AQ), current editor of the SERA Journal and Bill Parris (AA4R), one of the first editors of SERA's beginnings and Ted Goldthorpe enjoy reliving a little history.



Rich Moseson (W2VU), Editor of CQ Magazine and forum speaker, Harry Saunders (W4KJ) up from Atlanta, GA, and your editor share a few moments before dinner. Look for a synopsis of Rich's forum comments elsewhere in this issue.

### Hamfest Epilogue

*(Ted Goldthorpe shared this with me following the Hamfest. I guess our raffle is a hit. —Editor)*

The GLOBE raffle was a huge success in that we sold about \$600 in tickets. A lady from Monroe, NC—non-ham—won the GLOBE, and believe it or not she was standing 20 feet from me when I called her name at 11:45AM on Sunday. That was a stroke. We put it in a box and gave it to her. On the human interest side, I must tell you about a little 8 year old boy who bought 52 tickets for that globe and, of course didn't win. His grandmother came up later and asked, "Where did you get that GLOBE, I have to buy one for my grandson. His heart was broken that he didn't win it."



Left to right, Carl Smith (N4AA), Editor of QRZ DX and DX Magazine, George Dominick (W4UWC) and Lynn Lamb (W4NL), two of the "Tennessee 8", and Steve Reichlyn (AA4V) relive some DX experiences.

### ARRL Int'l DX Contest Draws Out CDXAers

Offer a guy a free hat, and it is amazing what he'll do for it! A number of CDXAers turned out for the ARRL International DX Contest on the weekends of February 21-22 (CW) and March 6-7 (SSB). Those with 250 QSOs in this event receive a hat with the CDXA logo on the crown. Many picked up their hats at the Charlotte Hamfest. In callsign alphabetical order, here are the "winners":

- AD4IE Paul Ponak
- K0COP David Walker
- K2SD Scott Douglass
- K4GHS Ben Wasilaskas
- K4SQR Jim Miller
- K8YC John Scott
- N1GC Gary Colborne
- N4AA Carl Smith
- N4PQX Bob Burton
- N4UH "Uncle" Henry Elwell
- N8WRL Brian Smithson
- W3GQ Paul Sturpe
- W3NC Bill Riffle
- W3OA Dick Williams
- W4WNT Bill Turner
- W4ZE Ted Huf
- WA4DOU Roy Lincoln
- WB2RHM Ben Antanaitis



A Charlotte Hamfest wouldn't be the same without some of the "Tennessee 8" who've become "regulars". Here are, Don Prater (W4TO), Pat Richmond (W4PV), Steve Hart (K8EJ) and Larry Rockfield (W6UB).



Joe (AA4NN) and XYL Margaret enjoy a cool German beer before Joe heads off to Banaba!

If you had 250 QSOs, submitted your score on behalf of CDXA, and didn't get a hat, let us know.

*(Continued from page 3)*

**RR:** (Laughing) That's a great one that only a CW operator can appreciate! To wrap things up, let me ask you about your Bureau work. How long have you been active in the W4 bureau?

**K4SI:** I was the letter manager for the letter "E" for 18 years. I recently switched over to managing the letter "S". The big plus for me is that I can get my own cards as soon as they arrive at the W4 bureau.

**RR:** Any advice for any of us on using the bureau system?

**K4SI:** Knowing how hard it is to make distant contacts, I could never understand why some amateurs don't keep envelopes at the bureau. One of the most trying things for me to do as a letter manager is to throw away unclaimed QSL cards. We should acknowledge that another amateur radio operator somewhere wants a confirmation of our QSO with him. I'll keep unclaimed cards until I am out of space, but eventually I simply must discard them. So, tell our ham brothers and sisters to always keep some envelopes at the bureau.

**RR:** Well that's good advice, and it really doesn't cost that much to keep a few envelopes at the bureau. Thanks, Bob for sharing a little of your history with us.

### Hamfest 2004 Worth Remembering

It is Sunday evening, March 14, as this is being written and the Charlotte Hamfest is over for another year. As usual, the event had some memorable forums and an enjoyable DX dinner. Event pictures on Pages 4 and 5.

As usual, many CDXAers gathered around the CDXA booth in its usual spot next to the W4 Bureau and the ARRL booths. Gary Dixon and Wayne Mills (N7NG) did their usual routine to check QSL cards for DXCC credit, and Joe and Margaret Blackwell made it easy for "4-landers" to ensure they had envelopes at the bureau. We had another gemstone globe available as a raffle item again this year and it garnered lots of interest. In the final analysis, the raffle generated a nice sum to be used to support DXpeditions. Your editor attended as many forums as time permitted. A recap follows.

**Internet Security and Web Design.** Pat Patterson and Rob Rochelle from CDXA led this forum. Both Pat and Rob are employed in fields related to securing users

from the "dark side" of the Internet. Some "takeaway's" from their presentation were:

- ❑ Always use an antivirus program, maybe more than one, and keep the antivirus definitions updated regularly.
- ❑ Check Microsoft's website regularly for "updates" and apply security updates. Generally it may be best to give new updates 8 to 10 days to "mature" in the event bugs are reported in newer updates.
- ❑ In general, full-time online Internet connections should have a router or suitable firewall, and generally be served by an Ethernet card rather than a USB port, since USB ports often leave various operating system "services" accessible from the network unless the ports are closed down.
- ❑ A product called "Pest Patrol" is a good adjunct to McAfee and Norton Antivirus products to ensure a second antivirus filter is present.

**DXing in 2004.** Carl Smith (N4AA) led a forum to give us ideas to maintain interest in amateur radio for the downside of the solar cycle. Carl introduced Lynn Lamb (W4NL) who encouraged all to take up the challenge of QRP operation. Lynn defined his version of QRP as being 10 watts or less. While Lynn has "done it all" without using QRP, he reported that in the past four years, he has enjoyed the challenge of working 314 countries with his Elecraft K2 and over 200 countries on all HF ham bands with the same radio. To tweak interest even more, Carl called on Jack Jackson (N4JJ) from the audience to show his tiny radio—smaller than an Alkoid's tin—rated at 280 mw with which he has worked 33 states and 14 countries. (Now that's QRP-ing!).

As the solar cycle declines, interest in the low bands picks up. Carl called on Dave Anderson (K4SV) to give us all hints on producing some easily made antennas for 160 and 80 meters. Dave showed us his favorite listening antenna for 160m—a flag—made from about 86 feet of wire, a 900 ohm load resistor, a hand wrapped toroid, and some convenient trees from which to hang it. Dave also showed us his neatly engineered 80/160 meter vertical made from some Rohn 25G and a telescoping 160m "stinger" made from 2" OD Aluminum tubing.

Moral—don't give up on amateur radio until the next solar peak, there is still plenty of fun to be enjoyed now.

*(Continued on page 7)*

(Continued from page 6)

**Ham Radio—Looking Forward.** CQ Magazine Editor Rich Moseson, W2VU, provided some thoughtful ideas about the supposed “demise” of Amateur Radio. I only wish I had recorded his remarks because they were very thought provoking. Some of the highlights were:

- ❑ While doomsayers say Amateur Radio is on the decline, the number of licensees in 2004 is more than double that of 40 years ago.
- ❑ Doomsayers said that Citizen’s Band radio would kill Amateur Radio when in fact Citizen’s Band has not continued to attract newcomers.
- ❑ With the onslaught of the modern, fast internet many wonder why hams would continue to enjoy Amateur Radio. The answer: No “level of attainment” is required to get on the internet. Using billions of dollars of equipment to talk to the other side of the world doesn’t have the magic of hanging a wire over a tree and talking through the ether. When you go onto the Internet and call CQ, there is nobody there to answer you. (*Well, perhaps there may be in some chat rooms, but I guess we know about chat rooms. –Editor*). While radio can’t match the speed of the internet in moving information, in amateur radio, as in sailing to a destination, the joy is not merely in achieving the destination but in how you made the trip.

Rich addressed the concerns of an aging amateur population by applying a little logic. The number of older *new* licensees is on the rise. Yet, young licensees still are coming in at a normal historical levels. Rich did not feel it bodes badly for the hobby that adults with money to spend and now living longer are entering the hobby. The most important aspect is to welcome and help all newcomers rather than turn a cold shoulder to them.

The percentage of renewals from those who joined the hobby in the early 1990s in a era of restructuring did not renew at historical levels on their recent renewal anniversary. Some reported being disenchanted with what they felt was “unfriendly” treatment by “old timers” who just wouldn’t accept someone licensed under different guidelines. The easy solution is to “pay forward”. Be an Elmer to everybody. Don’t expect any payback, but encourage them to “pay forward” and become an Elmer to others so all can enjoy the hobby. We’ll never stop growing if we do this, despite the doomsayers prognostications.

**Proper Station Grounding.** William Culpepper gave all something to think about in his talk on station grounding for lightning protection. With North Carolina being the 2<sup>nd</sup> most active state in the USA for lightning strikes, everybody listened. Some things to remember are:

- ❑ Lightning is a short-pulsed phenomenon giving rise to frequencies of upwards of a megahertz present in the pulse.
- ❑ Straight wire has some inductance and even more inductance is developed when any curve is placed in a wire—sharper curve, higher inductance.
- ❑ High frequency current passing through inductive reactance results in high voltages—easily on the order of 100 kilovolts— even if only a few feet above earth ground.
- ❑ Ground rods need a “protection radius” around them as large as the rod is deep, meaning 16 feet needs to separate a pair of 8 foot ground rods.
- ❑ Protect your house and radio gear by ensuring all your services—electricity, phone, and radio feedlines—are well grounded to a common ground nearest to where they enter your premises thus ensuring minimum electrical potential between them.

**DX Forum—DXing from Israel During CQWW.**

Following an update by Wayne Mills (N7NG) on Logbook of the World, Steve Reichlyn (AA4V) gave us a look at Israel during CQWW SSB in Fall, 2003 during his part of the DX Forum. Steve and his XYL went to Israel at the encouragement of some of his Israeli ham friends, despite a high level of terrorist activity in Fall 2003. Steve stayed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> floor of a 22 story Five-Star hotel in Tel Aviv. He was given regal treatment as the only tenant on the floor and only one of 17 in this 500 room hotel for which tourism been decimated by terrorist activities.

The views of the Mediterranean Sea were outstanding from Steve’s Room. His Cushcraft R-5 vertical and 40 and 80 meter dipoles on the roof gave him a great shot at Europe during the contest. Steve reported a lot of Qs from Asia, but few heard from USA leading to his score of over 3.9 million points. The highlight for Steve beyond the contesting was the fellowship he enjoyed with his Israeli ham hosts. Then we recall that one of the founding tenets of the Amateur Radio Service stated in the preamble to Part 97 of the FCC Rules is the fostering of international goodwill. Steve saw to that.

## The Back Page

Do you want to give **Field Day** a try in 2004. CDXA is working toward that end. Things are still fluid, and we'd like your ideas and your participation if you're a Field Day Pro. See Page 2, inside.

CDXA provides support for major **DXpeditions**. See front page.

Highlights of **Charlotte Hamfest 2004** are inside on pages 4, 5, and 7.

**ARRL International DX** Contest winners inside on page 5.

Upcoming **Contest** Activity:

<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Details</u>
Mar 20-21	Russian DX CW/SSB	See QST, Mar 2004, pg. 100 or <a href="http://www.rdx.com">www.rdx.com</a>
Mar 20-22	Virginia QSO Party	See QST, Mar 2004, pg. 100 or <a href="http://www.qsl.net/sterling">www.qsl.net/sterling</a>
Mar 22	Spring QRP Homebrew Spring	See QST, Mar 2004, pg. 100 or <a href="http://www.njqrp.org">www.njqrp.org</a>
Mar 27-28	CQWW SSB WPX	See QST, Mar 2004, pg. 100 or <a href="http://www.cqwp.com">www.cqwp.com</a>
Apr 3-4	QCWA QSO Party	See QST, Apr 2004, pg. 106 or <a href="http://qcwa.org">qcwa.org</a>
Apr 10-18	Lighthouse Spring Lites QSO	Am. Radio Lighthouse Society See <a href="http://arlhs.com">arlhs.com</a>
April 10-11	QRP ARCI Spring QSO Party	See QST, Apr 2004, pg. 106 or <a href="http://2hams.net/ARCI/index.htm">2hams.net/ARCI/index.htm</a>
April 10-11	Japan Intl DX Contest	See QST, Apr 2004, pg. 106 or <a href="http://je1cka.jzap.com/jidx">je1cka.jzap.com/jidx</a>
May 29-30	CQWW CW WPX	See <a href="http://www.cqwp.com">www.cqwp.com</a>

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