



The Carolina DX Association

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W3ZL	Cliff Wagoner	Sec.-Treas.
K4MD	Joe Simpkins	Cluster Mgr.
W3OA	Dick Williams	Contest Mgr.
W3GQ	Paul Sturpe	Cluster Mgr.- North Area
WB4BXW	Wayne Setzer	Webmaster
K8YC	John Scott	Editor

The Pileup

Newsletter of the CDXA

North Carolina QSO Party – Going for a Threepat (Sunday, February 25)

By Dick Williams, W3OA

CDXA has won the North Carolina QSO Party in-state club competition the last two years. Both years we scored more than twice the points of the second place club. Will we repeat again this year, winning for the third time? Surely we can if you, the members, decide you want to!

Here are the details. The contest runs from noon to 10 pm. EST on Sunday, February 25. The complete rules are on the Internet at:

<http://www.w4nc.com/2007ncqsoparty.html>. As in our past successes, we will be operating as W4DXA from Discovery Place. Parking will be free if you use the Discovery Place parking building. Our plan is to have two-hour shifts, two operators per shift. We will finalize this when we find out who is available and when.

For those who aren't familiar with the Discovery Place Amateur Radio Education Center, it is an excellent facility with a wide variety of operating positions for different activities. There's also a nifty plaque hanging on the wall acknowledging our first place finish last year. The main HF position has a Ten-Tec Orion running to a Mosley Pro 57B atop a 50 foot tower on the roof with additional dipoles for 40 and 80 meters.

Previous results show that our CW operators were one of the keys to our success. Only one other in-state club has shown a significant number of CW QSOs. So it's important that we have a well-balanced effort between CW and SSB. If you are interested in joining our operation from Discover Place, please contact me, Dick Williams (w3oa@roadrunner.com or 704-658-0915). Let me know what times you can be available and your preferred operating mode. Please do this by February 16 so we can finalize the operating schedule.

And if you can't join us, please work W4DXA on as many band/modes as possible. The suggested frequencies are 3.540, 3.740, 7.040, 7.140, 14.040, 21.040, 21.140, 28.040, 28.140 for CW and 3.860, 7.260, 14.260, 21.360, 28.360 for SSB.

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)	Not Available on 9600 bits/second
NG4DX (Digi near Galax, VA)	144.95 MHz (1200 bits/second) Connect to NG4DX, then type "C W4DXA"	
K4MD (AR Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.no-ip.com	
CDXA Repeater 147.18 MHz (+600)	W4DXA, Near Fort Mill, SC	
World Wide Web Homepage	www.cdxa.org	
Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)	Murphy's Food and Spirits, 131 E. Woodlawn Road, Charlotte, NC	

Shoney's Closes-New Luncheon Location

Call it "progress", but our old luncheon haunt—Shoney's—has been bought by a developer and will be closed. That, after all the fuss and bother of getting to Shoney's over the past 8 months as the intersection where it is located underwent its metamorphoses to modernize it and accommodate the new light rail station nearby.

Our new luncheon location is not far away, however. We've found a new home at Murphy's Food & Spirits, 131 East Woodlawn, about 2 blocks to the west of our familiar Shoney's location. Murphy's is on the north side of Woodlawn (same side as was Shoney's) and is located between Old Pineville and Nations Crossing Roads.

The owner of Murphy's, Chris Murphy, is looking forward to serving our group. They can easily accommodate 24 to 32 in a semi-private dining area. See you there!

Sad but True.....

The note below was sent to the Editor by Bob Burton (N4PQX). Bob found this in the archives of the 160m Band reflector.

Dear friends, colleagues!

Turkmenistan Radio Amateur League regrets to inform that starting from 2006, Turkmenistan Ministry of Communications, without any official explanations, refuses to give radio-amateur sportsmen of Turkmeni-

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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 December. Dues are payable by check to the Secretary/Treasurer:

Cliff Wagoner, W3ZL
P. O. Box 577
Davidson, NC 28036

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

Charlotte Hamfest—March 10-11, 2007

The Charlotte Hamfest is once again on the horizon. Those on the CDXA email reflector no doubt saw Gary Dixon's note of January 23 announcing that Bill Moore (NC1L) from ARRL Headquarters will be at the Hamfest to participate in DXCC QSL card checking.

So, if you don't want to part with those 160m cards by sending them to Newington, plan on letting Bill check them at the Hamfest. Of course, all QSL cards of any band/mode may be checked, too. Since the time on that weekend is limited, Gary asks that you kindly consider the 120 card limit when assembling your submission. Bill and Gary will do their best to get through all cards submitted, but there are no guarantees. Remember, Gary likes to see and hear the forums, too!

Bill Moore will be presenting a DXCC Q&A forum on Sunday morning. He'll also have a PowerPoint "cybertour" presentation of ARRL Headquarters.

In what has become somewhat of a tradition, we hope we find the "Tennessee 8" in attendance again. It always makes for a good time when the gang from near Knoxville is in town.

As expected, CDXA will be having a dinner on Saturday Evening, March 10. More can be found on the dinner in the article below.

Come to Hamfest Dinner!!

Enjoy a good time! Come to the CDXA Hamfest Dinner. Lots of door prizes and good fellowship are in store.

What: Charlotte Hamfest Dinner
When: Saturday, March 10
Social Hour: 6:30 PM
Dinner Time: 7:15 PM
Where: Shanghai Restaurant
8418 Park Road (Quail Corners Shopping Ctr.)
Charlotte, NC (704-556-1688)
Cost: \$18.95 per person, choice of several menu items plus appetizer, coffee, tea, or soft drink, tax, tip included
Libation: "Cash" Bar—credit cards cannot be used!
RSVP to Thomas Wright (N4HN@arrl.net)

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stan permission to use amateur radio stations.

With deep regret, we inform that we have no further opportunity to work on air and to represent our country in different international competitions. We also announce with deep regret that BARKELOV RUDOLF IOSIFOVICH—an honored radio sport instructor, and Turkmenistan Radio Amateur League radiotelegraphy teacher, and GUBENKO ALEKSANDR EFIMOVICH—an active first category radio-amateur, (also ex UH8AS since he had no time to restore under the prefix EZ) both left this world for a better place. Also falling forever silent was ZVONTSOV EVGENIY MIKHAYLOVICH, EZ8BO (ex UH8BO)—one of the oldest and most active radio-amateurs until 2003 and former president of Turkmenistan Radio Amateur League, and SHABALIN VLADIMIR BORISOVICH, EZ8DI (ex UH8DI)—a former chief of the central joint radio station UH8KAA ex UK8HAA, UH9AWA. Memory of all these individuals will live on forever in our hearts!

For information that is more detailed you can contact: “Turkmenistan Radio Amateur League” POB 555, 744020 Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Here’s another entity that will make earning #1 DXCC Honor Roll a real achievement.

“Ether”eal Wedding

Imagine my surprise when I started reading the ARRL North Carolina Section newsletter. A familiar callsign, WB4CAT, jumped out at me. CDXA member Catherine Hage has recently been joined in matrimony with Buck McDaniel, N4PGW. This was no ordinary wedding. It was conducted by Reverend David Roberts (KI4JSQ) of Lenoir and 63 guests “attended” by checking into the Dallas, NC repeater (145.35 MHz) on December 30. The ceremony had an “ether”eal quality about it. (Pun intended!)

Bride and groom are both active in the emergency communications aspects of ham radio, but from the pictures below, we doubt there was an emergency in progress at the time of the wedding.

It is not known what the band conditions were like on December 30 for VHF, but we suspect there were not too many DX attendees at this wedding. Yet, we are sure there were lots of good vibes in the atmosphere that day!!!



Catherine Hage (WB4CAT) and Buck McDaniel (N4PGW) tie the knot while 63 visitors attend “in the distance”.



No emergency at this event—just a lot of bliss!

Lands’ End Apparel Order

Dick Williams, W3OA

One of the reasons we have used group buys to order Lands’ End apparel with the CDXA logo is the minimum order quantities they impose for applying the logo. They now have a special offer, valid until May 4th, which removes the minimum order quantity. I’m working with them to establish a web site to facilitate orders by individual members. It’s almost operational but as of now you can’t order an item with both the logo and your call/name embroidered on it. Hopefully, this will be corrected in time to publish full details in the March Pileup.

World Class Operator in our Midst!

Some of you no doubt noticed the “Three Musketeers” who come to CDXA luncheons together from the north end of Lake Norman. They are Paul Sturpe (W3GQ), Dick Williams (W3OA), and Lou Dietrich (N2TU). All three are renowned operators who have earned their place on the DXCC Honor Roll.

Looking a little further, we find that Lou, N2TU, can claim the title as being tied for #2 in the World for the 425 DX News “TOP MODE” award. This award sets apart those operators who have the highest total active DXCC entity count for SSB, CW, and Digital modes of operation. Lou has 337 entities on SSB, 336 entities on CW, and 333 entities on RTTY for a total of 1006 entities. The two leaders have 1007 entities, and Lou is in a four-way tie for second in the World. So, next time you see Lou, give him some “high fives”.

Surprise Visitor to Charlotte Hamfest

Visiting the Charlotte Hamfest this year will be Mary M. Hobart, K1MMH, Chief Development Officer of the American Radio Relay League.

Let’s let Mary tell you about herself and what she does for us all at the ARRL:

“I was born in Washington DC, attended Northwestern University and did graduate work at LaSalle University in Philadelphia. I’ve spend 25 years in fund raising, mostly in public broadcasting, including time at UNC-TV while living in Durham, NC.

I joined ARRL in October, 2001. I was not a ham when I came to ARRL, but have since achieved my Extra Class License. My home station is an ICOM 746 where I work 40 meters. I passed my code exam but am far from proficient at CW!

At ARRL I lead the efforts to raise funds for programs not funded by member dues, including Spectrum Defense, Education & Technology, W1AW Endowment and the Diamond Club and its new project the Diamond Terrace at ARRL. Since 2001 we have raised more than \$6 million to support ARRL programs. We have also secured federal grants of nearly \$990,000 to support public service and emergency communications training and operations. The Development Office also serves as the administrative hub for the ARRL Foundation, a separate 501(c)(3) organization, that provides Amateur Radio grant projects and

over 50 scholarships to young hams pursuing higher education.”



Expect to see Mary Hobart (K1MMH), ARRL Chief Development Officer, at the Charlotte Hamfest. Mary is the “mover and shaker” at ARRL Headquarters who raises funds for the Spectrum Protection Fund, scholarship funds, and “The Big Project.

We suspect Mary has been really busy drumming up donations for the Spectrum Defense Fund now that ARRL has undertaken litigation with the FCC because of BPL issues. Also, “The Big Project” required funding and helped put amateur radio up front in many schools across the country. We believe Mary will be joining us for the Hamfest Dinner. Be sure to give her a big Charlotte welcome.

BPL Happenings

(The following two items are intended to keep you informed about happenings on the BPL front. The ill-conceived technology of most, but not all, BPL systems makes BPL by far one of the biggest threats to radio spectrum of the Amateur Radio Service in years. –The Editor)

Bill Seeks BPL Interference Study, Report to Congress

(Extracted from The ARRL Letter, Vol 26, No.3)

United States Representative Mike Ross, WD5DVR, (D-AR), has introduced a bill in the 110th Congress calling on the FCC to study the interference potential of broadband over power line (BPL) technology and report

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its findings back to Congress. One of two radio amateurs in the House, Ross submitted the “Emergency Amateur Radio Interference Protection Act of 2007” (HR 462) on January 12. The bill’s official text became available this week. ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, says the League shares Ross’s concern about interference to emergency communication networks.

....The Bill calls for the FCC to conduct “a comprehensive BPL service study leading to improved rules to prevent interference.” If the measure is adopted by both houses of Congress and signed by the President, the FCC would have to undertake a study of BPL’s interference potential within 90 days of enactment and report to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

(The complete text of this news item should be available on the ARRL website. The complete text of the House bill is available at: <<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c110:H.R.462>>

League Criticizes FCC Chairman for Perpetuating BPL Rural Service Myth (Extracted from ARRL website at URL:

<<http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2007/02/01/100/?nc=1>>

“...Newington, CT, February 1, 2007 – The ARRL is taking FCC Chairman Kevin J. Martin to task for telling the US Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation that broadband over power line (BPL) technology is the answer to broadband deployment in rural areas. Martin and the other four FCC commissioners testified today during a committee hearing, ‘Assessing the Communications Marketplace: A View from the FCC.’ In his prepared remarks, the chairman described BPL as a ‘potentially significant player due to power lines’ ubiquitous reach, allowing it to more easily provide broadband to rural areas.’ ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, criticized Martin for repeating “specious BPL industry claims” that suggest BPL has anything to offer rural dwellers.

‘The assertion that BPL can “more easily provide broadband to rural areas” is one of the big lies about BPL,’ Sumner said. ‘It has been debunked time and time again, and it is beyond comprehension to hear it parroted by the Federal Government’s senior telecommunications regulator at this late date.’....

The article goes on to state that in 2003 the National

Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC) and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) cited studies indicating BPL would “not be a viable solution for most Americans in truly rural areas any time soon.” These two organizations state that the economics of rural deployment cannot work because of the related cost of repeaters and backhaul lines in the low density found in rural areas.

(See the full text on the ARRL website for more information.)

Roving Report visits Galax, VA and W4RDX

A while back, your editor had an email exchange with a few of the loyal CDXA members atop the Blue Ridge in Galax, Virginia. They remarked that the Roving Reporter had never roved up their way. Your editor reminded the reporter that he’d better get a move on to justify his 20% salary increase last year. (120% of \$0 is still ZERO, but he’d never notice that!) So, off up I-77 our intrepid reporter went to climb the 7 mile long hill that begins at the Virginia State line. His goal was to visit James Blythe, W4RDX, in Galax so we could get to know James a little better.

Roving Reporter (RR): I’ve got to ask you my “standard” question to get things started. How did you get started in ham radio?

W4RDX: Like a lot of hams, my interest in electronics and radio in particular goes a long way back—even before I was licensed as a ham. In the Citizen’s Band craze of the 70s, I enjoyed using my CB radio, but the thought of working DX legitimately was intriguing. In about 1980, I was licensed as a Novice. By 1982 I had gone through the General and Advanced classes to end up as an Extra Class operator.

RR: Did you gravitate toward DX immediately?

W4RDX: Not really. When I was a novice trying to improve my CW skills, I set as a goal to work at least three CW QSOs each night. I got pretty good at CW, and it has always been my favorite mode. That mode usually ensured me the ability to work rare DX, but I really didn’t get into DXing seriously until a little over 10 years ago. I’d been enjoying the hobby, and a fellow CDXAer here in Galax, Tommy Lineberry (NW4N), put the bug in my ear about collecting some DXCC entities. It didn’t take me long to get “hooked”.

RR: So.....just how “hooked” are you?

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W4RDX: Well, I do have a life besides radio. HI HI! We can talk more about that later. I've chased DX steadily since becoming interested. I now have 329 confirmed DXCC entities plus five deleted entities, so I am finally on the DXCC Honor Roll. Once I had the Honor Roll under my belt, I became interested in the DXCC Challenge. I had to go to my QSL Card Box and when I got done counting, I was surprised. I've submitted and had approved 1425 for the Challenge, and I currently have 75 awaiting the next card check at an upcoming hamfest. I hold the 5BDXCC award and have endorsements for 30m and 17m, but I don't have an antenna for 12m as yet. Tommy needed me again along the way about the WAZ award, so I got started on that, too. I'm eleven short of 5BWAZ, but I already have Zone 23 on 80m. I'm told that is one of the bigger stumbling blocks. I need one zone on 10m, one zone on 40 meters, and 9 zones on 80 to reach the top.

RR: That's steady progress, and we both know there is no fast way to collect all the QSOs needed to arrive at that level of achievement. I didn't hear you mention anything about VUCC in there, did I?

W4RDX: Ah, you found a chink, didn't you? I finally got an ICOM-706. I bought it for my son, but he couldn't use it for technical reasons. It's a long story. I've been working on collecting my grid squares, but I find domestic hams are really bad about returning QSL cards.

RR: You'll get no argument on that from a few of your fellow CDXAers!! With all that success in collecting entities, what rigs and antennas have been in your stable?

W4RDX: I started with a Heathkit HW-16 running 75 watts to an 80m dipole as a novice. Later I moved to a pair of Heathkit Twins. I then moved to an ICOM IC-745. The bulk of my DX chasing was done using a Yaesu FT-1000MP. My current rig is an Orion II, and it "hears" wonderfully well. In A-B testing comparing the Orion II with my FT-1000MP, I find the Orion hears things even the Yaesu doesn't hear, and I always felt the Yaesu was a good piece of gear. As far as antennas, you noticed as you drove up, we live on a city lot, and I have the vacant lot next door. All my antennas are on the two towers you see outside. I have a KT-34XA and 2 element 40m beam on the one tower. The other tower has mostly 6m and VHF/UHF antennas on it except, I use the guys on that tower as a phased vertical for 30m.

RR: It is somewhat hilly here in Galax. Does that affect your takeoff angles?

W4RDX: As you can see from how I'm situated, I have a clear shot with good visibility from nearly North to South swinging through the east, but Northwest to Southwest, my antennas look at the hill behind them. I have a real problem getting into the Pacific for that reason. The only other problems we have with antennas here is the very high winds we experience up here in the mountains. It can really howl some days, and you have to plan your towers on the conservative side.

RR: You mentioned DXing was not your whole life. I note you've got some ARES materials on your radio table. Also, I noticed you and your XYL have some connections with education. Tell us more.

W4RDX: My wife and I have been educators for over 30 years in the local schools. She's a math teacher, and I'm now in guidance counseling. Galax has a population of around 6,000, and in a town this size, you get to know EVERYONE. Somewhere along the way about 20 years ago, when people found out I was a ham, becoming involved in emergency communications was a natural. I've been a member of ARES for many years, and I've been the Emergency Coordinator for Grayson County and now for Galax City. People have cut me a little slack as regards antennas, knowing that I am involved with emergency communications. While DXing is not my whole life, radio has been a big part of it. In addition to my emcomm work, I've been the treasurer for 20 years of the Briarpatch Radio Club and a Volunteer Examiner for the radio license exams.

RR: Wow! I'm getting tired just listening to your activities. With your education ties, and VE skills, has it led to getting any of your students into ham radio?

W4RDX: I can't say it directly has done that. Dave Newman (NA4L)—another CDXAer nearby in Hillville, VA—teaches electronics. He's had a few students get interested in radio from his efforts. I have had former students become hams, so perhaps a little of my hamming rubbed off on them!

RR: One last question, James. With all your experiences in radio, emcomm, and teaching here in Galax, what would you classify as your more notable radio experiences?

W4RDX: Three come to mind. When the World's Fair was in Knoxville, I was a radio operator there dem-

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onstrating amateur radio to the visitors using Ten-Tec equipment. It was fun, interesting, and I met a lot of great people. The radios, it turns out, were beta versions of the Omni-series of Ten-Tec radios. A second noteworthy experience was when the town of Galax was running its Old Time Bluegrass Festival. We had a confirmed lover of Bluegrass from England. I used to have a sked with him in the months leading up to the festival to keep him apprised of all the events. But, the single thing I rate the most satisfying for me was being able to work the NASA Space Shuttle and then getting a QSL card. That rates as something really special for me.

RR: Well, James, this has been a great visit. Thanks for sharing a bit of your radio life with us all.

Propagation Prediction Software

By John Scott, K8YC

The 1A4A (Sovereign Military Order of Malta) and VU7RG teams had some really nice propagation graphs on their websites. An email query to the 1A4A team person responsible for the graphs brought a quick reply, almost before the DXpedition ended.

The software is free, and it shows propagation as a SNR “cloud” of varying intensity over the areas of the earth you’d like to reach. The program is called **Ham Cap**. A quick search using Google led right to the download site. Ham Cap needs a companion program, VOACAP, which is also freeware. Ham Cap provides a human friendly interface to the well known VOACAP program. From what my research shows, VOACAP is a derivative program of IONCAP. Both were developed by the U.S. Government or by contracts with the government and therefore are in the public domain. The “problem” with such programs is that they were generally developed for mainframe computers. As mainframe programs, the output was usually reams of tabular data which, while detailed, did not lend itself to easy interpretation. **Ham Cap** provides a graphical map of the world centered on your location for a particular time and ham band which shows the probable propagation SNR from your location to all points of the world. If you define a specific IARU prefix, a second display shows the “Best Hour” to work that prefix as a function of frequency. All reports and input panels are very intuitive.

To use Ham Cap, one must enter a latitude and longitude from which propagation is to be predicted, and either the K_p index or the smoothed sunspot number. If you think that is too much hassle, you can download the

modestly priced IONPROBE software from the same author which will automatically retrieve the propagation indices and populate Ham Cap so you get near-real-time propagation predictions without lifting a finger. The graphical display for Ham Cap is usable but somewhat small. The same author has a program called DX Atlas which gives you a big map to look at. Each of these products costs a modest \$20, but neither is necessary to enjoy Ham Cap.

Because propagation is sensitive to antenna type, the Ham Cap interface gives you several standard antenna types to choose from, or you can define your own custom elevation patterns for your custom stacked array.

What are some of the things you can do with Ham Cap?

- o Propagation as a function of frequency. You can set a time of day, and click on each of the HF ham bands to see how worldwide propagation changes with frequency.
- o Propagation as a function of daily cycle. You can pick the band of your choice and then look at how propagation will change over a 24 hour period by clicking the clock forward one hour at a time.
- o Propagation as a function of K_p or Smoothed Sunspot Number. Change the K-index and watch how the propagation changes.
- o Examine propagation from the DX perspective. Put the prefix desired in the model and let it tell you the latitude and longitude of the desired DX location. Transfer that latitude and longitude into Ham Cap model as your “home location” and you’ll see what the DX sees as propagation to your QTH!

I have found Ham Cap to be useful in predicting propagation to various parts of the world in the several weeks I’ve been using it. Despite having read a number of passages in the ARRL Antenna Book on propagation and having some great mentoring regarding propagation from fellow CDXAers, Ham Cap offers new insight into how propagation changes with time, solar flux, and frequency. The old adage, “a picture is worth a thousand words” is very true here. Old timers and newbies alike can really benefit from some time spent with the program. Give it a try and let me know if you agree.

ARRL International DX Contest

By Dick Williams, W3OA

The ARRL International DX Contest is just around the corner. The CW contest is the weekend of February 16, phone the weekend of March 2. We are offering a number of prizes to encourage you to participate and contribute to CDXA's Club Score.

Our scores for the last several years are shown below. The last column shows where we ranked among all club entries in the medium category, 50 or fewer entries.

Year	CDXA Score	Number of CDXA Entries	Rank in Medium Club Category
2000	3,547,737	10	24
2001	2,588,943	9	21
2002	3,407,106	13	20
2003	2,014,479	14	19
2004	6,569,034	31	16
2005	7,619,703	32	14
2006	2,747,289	21	18

We made a steady improvement in rank up until last year. Our number of entries fell off last year too. Let's get our participation up in 2007 and continue our progress in the rankings. To this end, we are offering prizes for both serious efforts and more casual operations:

- o **1st place prizes** – Each winner gets a photo printed certificate, a CDXA hat, and a CDXA patch.
 - o Top combined CW plus phone score
 - o Top CW score
 - o Top CW score, low power
 - o Top phone score
 - o Top phone score, low power
 - o Top Multi-op score
- o **1000 or more QSOs** total in the CW and phone contests – Each participant gets a photo printed certificate, a CDXA hat, and a CDXA patch.
- o **500 or more QSOs** total in the CW and phone contests – Each participant gets a CDXA hat and a CDXA patch.
- o **250 or more QSOs** – Each participant gets a CDXA patch.

An individual can win only one prize. Only members whose scores are eligible for the club competition (meet the 175 mile criteria) as defined in the contest rules can win a certificate or a hat. These rules are available at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/rules-all.html>. All CDXA members are eligible for the CDXA patch.

Complete rules for the contest are at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2007/intldx.html>. Remember to show your club as "Carolina DX Assn" (without the quotes) in your log submission to the ARRL.

I need your results, both CW and phone, by March 6 in order to present the prizes at the March 10 Hamfest dinner. Send your entry category, number of QSOs, number of multipliers, and total score to me, w3oa@roadrunner.com. We will also post the results on the CDXA web site as they are received.

Dick Williams, W3OA
w3oa@roadrunner.com
(704) 658-0915

Editorial—More or Less Fun???

By John Scott, K8YC

In the past few months, I've been wondering whether I'm having as much fun on the ham bands as I used to. I've decided that, at least in the short term, I've been having less fun operating and more fun tinkering.

In order to end up on a positive note, let me talk first about where I've experienced less fun in operating. With the arrival in quick succession of DXpeditions to Lakshadweep (VU7LD and VU7RG), Djibouti (J20MM and J20RR), and Sovereign Military Order of Malta (1A4A), I've witnessed some of the worst operating behavior imaginable. Operators trying to get their callsigns in the log have ranged from clueless to just plain rude. On the "clueless" side, I include:

- o Calling on the DX frequency. Everyone makes an error once in a while setting up the rig to operate split, but it is just too frequent to always be an error. It is quite clear that too many don't follow the three cardinal rules of DXing—(1) listen, (2) listen, and then (3) listen before transmitting.
- o Tuning on the DX frequency. Maybe I was lucky that my first rig was the venerable Drake T4XC/R4C combo. I had to learn how to "dip" the plate current and "load" the rig. Early on, I learned that once tuned I could move up or down probably 30 to 50 kHz with no need to re-tune the transmitter. Shortly thereafter, I merely made note of the settings for each band, and I only had to "tweak" the transmitter to have it right on. So, when a poor operator comes right on a DX frequency and tunes his rig, requiring us to watch our S-meters as he "peaks" his transmitter, I wonder if he knows just how uncritical tuning is. Has he ever read the ARRL Operating Manual about the need for a dummy load? Does he realize that he could tune 10 kHz away with the same effect and not screw up the entire pileup?
- o Who dat? Probably top of the clueless pile is the operator who sends a question mark in Morse Code instantaneously after the DX has just sent his callsign followed by "UP 2". So, if our clueless one merely took the time to listen, he'd know all he needs to know, and he wouldn't obliterate the QSO in progress by his inconsiderate deed. This guy probably walks into libraries and shouts at the top of his lungs, "Is there anyone here that can tell me where the reference librarian sits?"

On the "rude" side, I include:

- o Responding Out of turn. We've all heard it. The DX says, "sierra bravo station, please?" Then we hear someone come back, ".....charlie victor!". How someone can think "sierra bravo" is even close to "charlie victor" is way beyond my comprehension. If the guy's hearing is that bad, he should probably hang up his ear-phones. Maybe it's just the case of not listening, yet again. The same scenario is only slightly different when

the DX is working "by the numbers" or by continent and we hear someone calling with a different number or continent than requested by the DX. Why is this rude? Because the caller is telling everyone in the pileup, "I don't care whose feet I'm stepping on, it is ME FIRST." (Yep, we've all seen the "me generation" growing in numbers.)

- o Interfering without regard. I'm leaving the wacko's out of this discussion. (The wacko is the guy who makes body sounds, plays music or whistles on frequency. They never identify themselves, so I put them in a class I call COWARDS—the Confederation Of Weird Anti-social Radio Delinquents.) No, here I'm talking about the person(s) who comes on an active frequency and begins a QSO. Here's a case in point. I was at Discovery Place for my regular turn as a volunteer on a Friday morning. I arrived at 9:20AM and VU7LD was solid copy on 14.260 MHz (an IOTA frequency), operating split. I had been calling in a huge pileup about 10 minutes when two or three fellows "camped" on frequency for a ragchew. They were asked politely a few times to QSY. They couldn't hear the DX (poor antennas, I guess), so they refused to move. Furthermore, in their interfering over the next hour, I did not hear them identify themselves a single time!
- o Senseless "Tailgating". This is another version of the "ME FIRST" condition. The DX is running the pileup simplex and completing a QSO. As the QSO is wrapping up, even if the DX has a well defined pattern of operation, Mr. "Me First" starts sending his callsign, obliterating the last few sentences of a QSO in progress. Yep, perhaps the DX should operate split or control the pileup by laying down some rules, but that doesn't excuse rude behavior. It's getting ugly "out there".

If you know someone who falls into any of the above categories, do us all a favor and explain to them why they may hear "lid" bantered about whenever they enter a pileup. They just may be among the clueless or rude operators out there.

I feel better now that I've got that off my chest. So what is good about ham radio. It's finding that a member of your club will loan you an antenna that you desperately need to work a band for which you have no antenna. Then, when you find an article that offers you an improvement on that antenna, you decide that doing a little "tinkering" is good for the soul. Then you find another member of your club who gladly fabricates a printed circuit board to support your tinkering. After putting that board together in a professional-looking package, you're ecstatic to find it works and you see your contacts on the new band begin soaring. With some success on the new band, you find you just might be able to put up with the lids, because the excitement is back. So, in the long term, I'm expecting the fun to return. I guess the many facets of our hobby give us some relief when the less enjoyable parts emerge. Are you having more or less fun?

The Back Page

Can CDXA win the **North Carolina QSO Party** for the third consecutive time? How about you winning it as a single op or a mobile op? Sunday, February 25 is the date. CDXA club team will operate again from Discovery Place. More on the Front Page.

Charlotte Hamfest is on the horizon once again. Saturday and Sunday, March 10-11 are the dates. Yes, we'll be having a dinner. See Page 2, inside.

Wedding Bells on the air? See Page 3 for a novel way to "get hitched".

We've a **World Class Operator** in our midst. Do you know who it is? See Page 4.

If you've not been following **BPL matters**, an update starts on Page 4.

The **Roving Reporter** was on the prowl again. This time he turned up in Galax, Virginia. See Page 5.

Looking for some **propagation prediction software**? Here's one you ought to consider. Cost: \$0.00 See Page 7.

Upcoming Contests:

<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Feb 9-11	CQWW WPX—RTTY	See CQ Magazine, January 2007, Page 44.
Feb 16-18	ARRL Int'l DX—CW	See Page 8, Inside
Feb 23-25	CQWW 160m Contest—SSB	See CQ Magazine, November 2006, Page 44.
Feb 25	NC QSO Party	See http://www.w4nc.com/2007ncqsoparty.html
Mar 2-4	ARRL Int'l DX—SSB	See Page 8, Inside
Mar 23-25	CQWW WPX—SSB	See CQ Magazine, January 2007, Page 32

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