

# The Pileup

## Newsletter of the CDXA

### 2009 CWAC Wrap UP

By Dick Williams, W3OA

The total of our claimed 2009 CQWW scores was 29.2 million points. This is a great improvement over the 2008 total of 23.8 million points. We can thank our members who went on DXpeditions for this improvement. AA4V and N4SF were the two operators at AA4V/VP9 in the phone contest so CDXA claimed credit for their entire score of 3.9 million points. And K2SX was one of the eight operators at HC8GR in the CW contest so we claimed credit for one eighth of that operation's 35.5 million points, or 4.4 million points.

CDXA again fielded entries in both the CW and phone five-man team competitions.

- o Our phone team – KI4TZ, KZ2I, N4PQX, W3GQ, and W3OA scored 5,518,000 points.
- o Our CW team – IS0/K7QB, N2TU, N4ZC, W3GQ, and W3OA scored 9,910,000 points.

CDXA members competed for first place Contest Within A Contest

|        |                |                             |
|--------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| W4VHF  | Ted Goldthorpe | President                   |
| AD4IE  | Paul Ponak     | Vice-Pres.                  |
| W3ZL   | Cliff Wagoner  | Sec.-Treas.                 |
| K4MD   | Joe Simpkins   | Cluster Mgr.                |
| W3OA   | Dick Williams  | Contest Mgr.                |
| W3GQ   | Paul Sturpe    | Cluster Mgr.-<br>North Area |
| WB4BXW | Wayne Setzer   | Webmaster                   |
| K8YC   | John Scott     | Editor                      |

(CWAC) awards in seven categories. Each winner got his choice of a trophy or a fifty-dollar gift card for Outback Steak House. The winners were:

- Top Combined Score – W3GQ, 3,532,000 points
- Top Phone Score - N4PQX, 1,230,000 points
- Top Phone Score, Low Power – K4LY, 419,000 points
- Top CW Score – N4ZC, 2,200,000 points
- Top CW Score, Low Power – K2SD, 148,000 points
- Top DXpedition Score – K2SX, 4,437,000 points

*(Continued on page 2)*

| 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 |
| K4MD (AR Cluster via Telnet)                     | k4md.no-ip.com   |                                   |
| NA4L (Near Hillsville, VA)                       | 144.95 MHz (1200 bits/second) Connect to NA4L ("C NA4L")       |                                   |
| NA4L (AR Cluster via Telnet)                     | cdxa.no-ip.org   |                                   |
| CDXA Repeater 147.18 MHz (+600 )                 | W4DXA, Near Fort Mill, SC                                      |                                   |
| World Wide Web Homepage                          | www.cdxa.org   |                                   |
| Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)                    | Skyland Family Restaurant, 4544 South Boulevard, Charlotte, NC |                                   |

(Continued from page 1)

Members who completed 1000 or more QSOs combined in the phone and CW contests each received a trophy or a twenty-five-dollar gift card for Outback Steak House. These winners were:

|      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| AA4V | KZ2I | N2TU |
| W4SF | W3OA |      |

IS0/K7QB (not eligible for a gift card or trophy, did receive a certificate)

Members who completed 500 or more QSOs combined in the phone and CW contests each received a certificate and a CDXA patch. There were five winners:

|       |       |      |
|-------|-------|------|
| AD4IE | K4DXA | K4YR |
| K5EK  | KI4TZ |      |

Members who completed 250 or more QSOs combined in the phone and CW contests each received a CDXA patch. There were seven winners here:

|       |      |      |
|-------|------|------|
| K1MIJ | K8YC | KU4V |
| KY4P  | NV4A | W3ZL |
| WW4CP |      |      |

Below are soapbox comments I received from CDXA members after the CW contest:

AD4IE: A fine Saturday afternoon... Great contest and college football on the shack TV with no TVI.

IS0/K7QB: My operations have been good, especially on the low bands. The high bands closed early but 40m was a good substitute, also I did few QSOs with US on 10m. 80/160m were great but too many EU stations called me, and a big pileup did not allow me to run more than one QSO per minute. The weather was fantastic for

this season; it usually is stormy at this time. So the antenna setup was not hard as in the past. I found the TH6 broken—here the wind is very strong, I replaced it with a vertical wire tuned with ATU, the yagi is better but I did many QSOs also with this wire.

K2SX (at HC8GR): Condx were generally pretty good although I was disappointed that 10m never opened to EU. I did do pretty well into Africa and the Pacific although nil with VKs. We had trouble getting steady spots info down there. We had a link on 10142 with K5KR but that went down pretty often. No skimmer but W6NL is working on it for the future.

K4LY: Wish I had a real HF beam, but I don't have the strength to put my TH7 up on a 65' tower. I have two 65' towers with all VHF/UHF/microwave on one until I bought an old TH3-Jr locally for \$60 and got it up for the CQWWs. I have one of the driven elements from the TH7 up on the other tower, a 40M dipole hung between the two towers at about 60', a Hygain Hytower I used mainly for 80M, and a 160M sloping inverted L (fed in parallel with the Hytower) for 160M.

K4YR: Only entered CW test - my rotator stopped Sat afternoon, no start capacitor handy so missed some good ones

N4PQX: Just a few hours on 15m here and there due to the in-laws being in town and runs back and forth to the airport etc. Propagation on 15m seemed about the same as the phone contest to me but I wasn't on much, 4hrs 15mins of S&P looking mostly for mults.

N2TU: It was a lot of fun...1. Nothing broke or blew up....2. I worked a few new band/countries...and best of all, 3. After all these years, I am able to finally pick my call out of a pile-up!....(just kiddin'!). By the way, the P5TU station wasn't active in this year's test...so check your logs...(smile!)....

N4ZC: Better condx brought out the DXer in me and I went for the DX over the Qs. At one point Friday night there were over 100 countries being spotted on 40m at one time. I'm pretty sure this is the first time I ever got more zones on 40m than 20m. EU dropped out much more early on 20 on Sunday. I had hoped to make up for less Qs over DX by hitting Sunday extra hard for garden EU but the band closed too early and left for some slower time. The score hit 1 million just one minute before the end of the first 24 hrs. 39 hours in this contest, 20 more than I had time for on SSB. I think this may be my best score for CW CQWW as a single op in NC. As a DXer, I was very pleased with the number of zones/countries.

### The Pileup

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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 \$35 per year for those using the PacketCluster maintained by the Association, \$20 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: jcw53@cornell.edu.



**DX King News**  
By Dick Williams



The 2009 competition is over. Don't forget to submit your entry to CQ no later than January 31. Instructions on how to do that are at:

<http://dxmarathon.com/Submissioninfo2009/index.htm>.

You must submit your entry to CQ to be eligible for DX King prizes. We will award the prizes, including the TV, after CQ publishes the official results, probably in June.

The 2010 competition has started. See the announcement in this issue of the *Pileup* (Page 10).

The results published in CQ last June showed 191 entries for 2008. Our top three entries for 2009 would have been in the top ten percent of the 2008 scores. Our top eight would have been in the top twenty percent. N4ZC would have been ninth in the world. Our top Formula entry, W3ZL, would have been seventh in the world in his category.

The scores I have as of December 31 are listed below. These are claimed scores.

| Call   | Category  | Countries | Zones | Total |
|--------|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|
| N4ZC   | Unlimited | 276       | 40    | 316   |
| K4MQG  | Unlimited | 273       | 40    | 313   |
| AA4SC  | Unlimited | 263       | 40    | 303   |
| W3GQ   | Unlimited | 258       | 40    | 298   |
| K4YR   | Unlimited | 255       | 40    | 295   |
| W3OA   | Unlimited | 251       | 40    | 291   |
| N2HV*  | Unlimited | 256       | 34    | 290   |
| N4PQX  | Unlimited | 250       | 40    | 290   |
| W4HG   | Unlimited | 241       | 40    | 281   |
| N1GC   | Unlimited | 237       | 40    | 277   |
| K4GHS  | Unlimited | 227       | 40    | 267   |
| KZ2I   | Unlimited | 221       | 40    | 261   |
| WB4ROA | Unlimited | 220       | 39    | 259   |
| W7DO   | Unlimited | 217       | 38    | 255   |
| N2TU   | Unlimited | 202       | 39    | 241   |
| K4DGJ  | Unlimited | 195       | 39    | 234   |
| W3ZL   | Formula   | 191       | 37    | 228   |
| K4ESE  | Unlimited | 189       | 37    | 226   |
| K1MIJ  | Unlimited | 185       | 36    | 221   |
| K8YC   | Unlimited | 184       | 36    | 220   |
| KI4TZ  | Unlimited | 165       | 35    | 200   |
| W4UFO  | Unlimited | 165       | 34    | 199   |
| N4QVM  | Unlimited | 141       | 34    | 175   |
| K4DXA  | Unlimited | 139       | 35    | 174   |
| WA3GNW | Formula   | 126       | 30    | 156   |

| Call   | Category  | Countries | Zones | Total |
|--------|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|
| NK0S   | Unlimited | 121       | 34    | 155   |
| N4TL*  | Unlimited | 116       | 30    | 146   |
| W4WNT  | Formula   | 112       | 27    | 139   |
| N4UFP  | Unlimited | 108       | 29    | 137   |
| KU4V   | Unlimited | 102       | 27    | 129   |
| AF1E   | Formula   | 98        | 25    | 123   |
| WB2RHM | Unlimited | 81        | 24    | 105   |

\* New addition to the list this month.

I hope you had fun with this new challenge to compete with DXers around the world—especially with the propagation challenges of 2009. If you didn't get in on the fun in 2009, why not give it a go in 2010?

**Welcome New Members**

We are pleased to be able to report that membership in the Carolina DX Association continues to grow with five new members since the last issue of the *Pileup* was published.

We're always happy to see a former member reestablish a relation with the Association and we are happy to welcome **Larry Jones (KN4NO)** of Concord, NC and **Douglass Allen (K4LY)** of Inman, SC back in our midst. Doug has some comments for us on Page 7 of this issue. Be sure to read them.

A new name on the membership roster you'll recognize is that of **Dennis Motschenbacher (K7BV)** of Santa Ana, CA. Dennis has been at the past few Charlotte Hamfests in his role as Executive Vice President of Yaesu, and many of us have met him at our Hamfest Banquet. Dennis is in the process of purchasing a home in Turkey, NC in anticipation of his retirement in several years. It's great that Dennis will be making his home with his XYL in NC in the future.

From Spartanburg, SC we've had **Keith Lewis (K4XP)** come on board as a new CDXAer. We expect to get to know Keith better as opportunities permit in coming months.

Finally, **Art Tolda (W1AJT/VE3UTT)** of Terrill, North Carolina hooked up with Paul Sturpe and Dick Williams and found out there was really a DX club in North Carolina. Art came to a few luncheons and now is a member. Art also splits his time with a radio station he owns up in the hinterlands north of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

To all five, welcome to the Carolina DX Association.

## Vibroplex Gets New Owner

Knoxville, TN – Scott Robbins, W4PA, of Knoxville, TN, representing Cemorse LLC has signed an agreement to purchase the assets of The Vibroplex Company, Inc. from present owner Mitch Mitchell, W4OA. The agreement will become effective as of December 21, 2009.

Mr. Robbins has been an employee of Ten-Tec, Inc. of Sevierville, TN since 1995 and has held the title of Product Manager for Ten-Tec's amateur radio equipment line since 1997. He will be leaving employment of Ten-Tec in mid-December to take over full-time management and ownership of Vibroplex. The company will be moved from its present location in Mobile, AL to a new facility in Knoxville, TN during the last two weeks of December. Business at the new location is expected to be open by January 5, 2010 at 2906 Tazewell Pike, Suite A2B, Knoxville, TN 37918. The company toll free sales line (800) 840-8873, website [www.vibroplex.com](http://www.vibroplex.com) and email contact addresses will remain in continuous operation under the new ownership.

“It’s a great opportunity to continue the more than 100 years of tradition that the Vibroplex name represents,” Robbins stated. “I’ve known Mitch for quite a few years and it was an important consideration for both of us that Vibroplex continue operation building quality products for amateur radio long into the future. Mitch’s experience owning the company will be valuable as we proceed with a seamless ownership transition over the next few weeks.”

Vibroplex is the oldest operating business in the amateur radio industry and has been in continuous service to the hobby since founder Horace Martin invented the “bug” semiautomatic Morse code key in 1904. Mr. Mitchell purchased Vibroplex in 1994, and has operated it from Mobile, AL for the past 15 years.

## Dues are Due

One LAST reminder. . . . YOUR DUES ARE DUE to Treasurer Cliff Wagoner. Our membership year runs from January to December, and our fiscal planning is keyed to dues receipts, so please don’t wait until the Charlotte Hamfest to make a “personal” delivery of your dues check—it really makes things harder for Cliff.

## Afraid of Heights?

In the December 23, 2009 issue of ARRL's Contest Update, Ward Silver shared the two video clip links below showing chaps bouncing around some high-tension electrical towers like they were on a schoolyard jungle gym. The clips look to be 40+ years old or more. We wonder if the European version of OSHA has altered some of these working habits since then.

<http://www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=46258>

<http://www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=85>

## Ten and Twenty Years Ago. . . .

*(Take a stroll back in time yourself. The items below are taken from the newsletter archives of CDXA, available on the website under the “Newsletters” tab.—The Editor)*

### Ten Years Ago:

A new editor, KA8FSM, took over the reins of the Pileup from K4ZA. The inaugural issue promised contest reviews, construction topics, humor, software reviews, featured website reviews, and periodic member profiles. (How’d we do?) . . . President Bob Burton cajoled members to pay their dues which are payable by January 1 each year (some things NEVER change) . . . . CDXA had a special callsign to welcome in the new millennium WY2000 (Welcome Year 2000). Each member could sign up to use the callsign for a specific time slot to ensure only one signal was on a band at a time. Over 5,000 QSLs (an image is in the February 2000 issue of the Pileup) were sent out over the next five years by QSL Manager Gary Dixon . . . . Preparations for the Charlotte Hamfest were underway and a banquet was planned for the Open Kitchen restaurant.

### Twenty Years Ago:

Editor Bill Taylor could “crow” that CDXA’s Packet-Cluster had gone through an entire year without any major problems with this relatively new technology . . . . A great tongue-in-cheek article by “Saint” Thurgood graced the pages of the Pileup proving that the same failings that we see in 2010 were present in 1990 . . . . a big gang of CDXAers were making plans to climb the mountains for the January VHF contest to see if they could improve on the excellent results of 1989 and 1979 . . . . over a half dozen members were still licking their wounds from Hurricane Hugo which hammered Charlotte in September. At least six towers fell and many antennas were damaged beyond repair.

## Low Noise, Coaxial Link Antennas for HF Receiving

By Dick Genaille, W4UW

*(After a call for papers in the November PILEUP Dick Genaille offered several papers that he has written over the years. This abridged article was published in the December 1987 issue of CQ Magazine and is reprinted with permission of CQ and the author.—The Editor)*

I undertook the challenge of developing a new low-noise receiving antenna for the 160-meter band. But the results I obtained, on 160 meters through 10 meters were surprising enough to warrant a description of the antenna. Others might be stimulated into further experimental work along similar lines and perhaps come up with the “better mousetrap”! The possibilities of this type of antenna are interesting since it is extremely simple to construct and certainly economical.

Avid amateurs have always been interested in low-noise receiving antennas. Many low-band DXers have been plagued by having to use antennas having relatively poor signal-to-noise ratios. My 60 foot vertical, folded unipole, which works reasonably well for transmitting is quite unsatisfactory for weak signal reception especially on 80 and 160 meters.

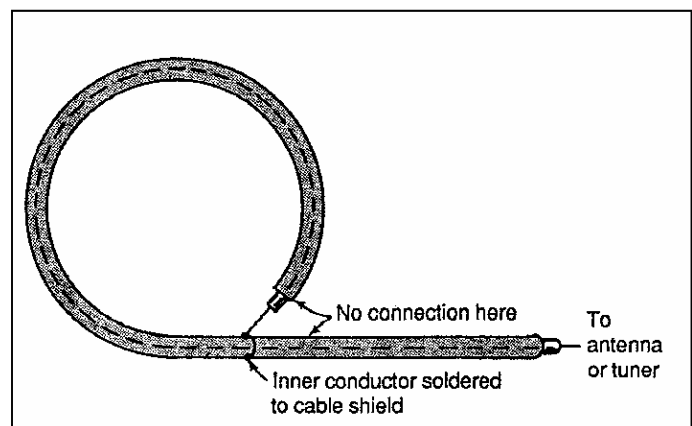
I’ve had to resort to reasonable alternatives. One of those alternatives is the shielded and balanced loop antenna which, when properly constructed and used with sufficient preamplification, performs about as well as any antenna that can be erected on an average sized lot. I have constructed and used receiving loops for some years now with great success.<sup>1,2</sup>

Loop antennas were originally designed for direction finding purposes, but the sharp null of a properly designed loop gets distorted by surrounding metallic objects, thus causing errors.

Shielding and balancing the loop eliminated the undesirable effects and also resulted in an improved signal-to-noise ratio. While the loop antenna is an excellent antenna for low noise reception, I believe that there must be other ways of obtaining low noise reception without the mechanical difficulties encountered in loop construction. It was with this premise that I developed the Coaxial Link Antenna. While decidedly simple, it just might surprise you if you build one similar to it!

Some thirty years ago shielded coupling coils, constructed of coaxial cable were used as a means of inductively coupling electromagnetic energy from a tank coil. This link-coupling method was recommended to reduce

the transfer of harmonic energy to the antenna system. A typical arrangement is shown in Figure 1.<sup>3</sup> This link-coupling scheme is the basis for the low noise, coaxial antenna. I asked myself if a small diameter coaxial link can couple energy from a tank circuit, can a larger link couple energy to and from free space? I constructed a 20 foot diameter link of RG-58/U coaxial cable and laid it on the ground in my front yard. I was extremely surprised when it performed as good, and in some instances better, than my 160 meter balanced, shielded and rotatable loop. It also received higher frequency signals! Needless to say, the results obtained with the hastily constructed link stimulated further interest and experimentation with two larger links.



**Figure 1 — A shielded coupling link constructed from coaxial cable.**

Details of construction of two experimental coaxial cable link antennas are provided herein. Some interesting test results established the links as being low noise receiving antennas as well as effective transmitting antennas.

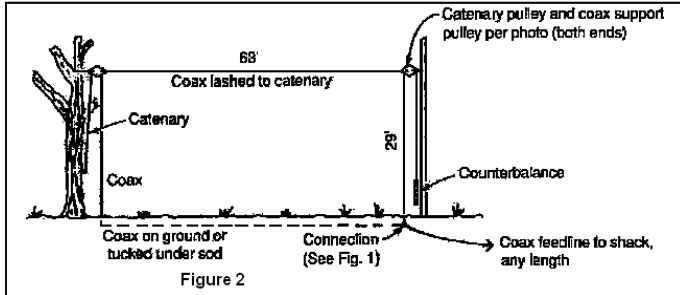
I made comparisons against my present antenna system which consists of a 60-foot flagpole type steel mast with a TH6DXX mounted on top. The steel mast is used in a folded unipole configuration on 160, 80, and 40 meters and operates against a ground radial system consisting of some 6,000 feet of wire. The TH6DXX has an average gain of 8.7 db over the 20, 15, and 10 meter bands. I used a TS-820 and SB-220 linear during the tests. The linear was previously modified to include operation on 160 meters.

The dimensions of the first link/loop constructed are shown in Figure 2, next page. The link shown is rectangular in shape and installed in the vertical plane. I lashed RG-58/U cable to a support catenary made of

*(Continued on page 6)*

(Continued from page 5)

5/16 inch polypropylene rope, which is available in most hardware stores at a reasonable price. The catenary eliminates any stretching of the coaxial cable due to strain. An inexpensive plastic clothesline pulley, 5 inches in diameter, provides a gentle bend for the coax at each end as it heads downward.

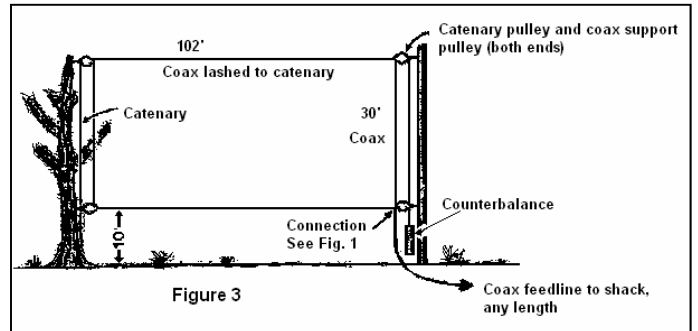


I ran the catenary through pulleys anchored in two oak trees so that I can raise and lower the catenary and the coax for convenience during installation and testing. This appears to be a good way to install the system so that you can access both ends of the catenary at a convenient height. I anchored one downlead end of the catenary to one tree and the other end, at the opposite tree, fastens to a counterbalance to avoid snapping the

catenary when the trees sway in the wind. (Doesn't everyone do that with their big horizontal antennas?) With this method of installation, the coaxial cable is protected from strain or breakage.

I constructed a second, and larger, coaxial link antenna and tested it along with the smaller one. The dimensions of the larger antenna are provided in Figure 3. This antenna was installed with the lower horizontal element about 10 feet above the ground to allow for vehicle clearance. With limited space available, I could not space the antennas so as to reduce mutual coupling between the small coaxial link antenna (front

yard), and the large coaxial link antenna (back yard) and the rather permanent vertical antenna (back yard). Not much of an antenna test range but perhaps you can do better.



As they say about the insurance industry, "The large print gives it to you and the fine print takes it away." Now is the time to give you the large print! What I'll attempt to do is to show you, in tabular form, the results of the tests conducted on the various bands. Table 1 lists the various frequencies at which tests were made. Bear in mind that on 10m through 20m, both coaxial link antennas were compared against a beam with an average gain of 8.7 db. An Ameco PT-2 preamplifier

(Continued on page 7)

| *****Small Coaxial Link*****  |                                  |                                      |                                 | *****Large Coaxial Link*****  |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Performance   | SWR                              | Freq.                                | SWR                             | Performance   |
| Received well with low noise. Pre-amp helps. Not for transmitting                     | 4<br>4<br>4                      | 1.8<br>1.85<br>1.9                   | 5<br>5.1<br>6                   | Doesn't receive as well as small-link antenna. Not for transmitting                   |
| Received better than vertical with pre-amp. TX report S5<br>Vertical report S9.       | 2.9<br>2.4<br>2.1<br>1.8<br>1.7  | 3.5<br>3.7<br>3.8<br>3.9<br>4.0      | 1.1<br>2.6<br>3.2<br>3.5<br>4.1 | Received better than vertical with pre-amp. TX report S6<br>Vertical report S9.       |
| Received better than vertical. No pre-amp req'd. TX report S9+5, Vertical report S9.  | 2.5<br>2.2<br>1.7                | 7.0<br>7.15<br>7.3                   | 1.8<br>1.6<br>1.8               | Received better than vertical. No pre-amp req'd. TX report S9+10, Vertical report S9. |
| Sometimes better than beam in QSB. Very low noise. TX report S9<br>Beam: S9+10        | 2.2<br>2.0<br>1.5                | 14.0<br>14.15<br>14.3                | 1.5<br>1.5<br>1.5               | Sometimes better than beam in QSB. Very low noise. TX report S9<br>Beam: S9+10        |
| FB low-noise receive with pre-amp. TX report S8<br>Beam S9+10                         | 1.7<br>2.0<br>2.0                | 21.0<br>21.2<br>21.3                 | 1.5<br>1.3<br>1.3               | FB low-noise receive with pre-amp. TX report S6<br>Beam S9+10                         |
| Not particularly good on receive or transmit. Smaller dimension link may work better. | 1.7<br>2.3<br>2.25<br>1.8<br>1.5 | 28.0<br>28.3<br>28.5<br>28.7<br>28.9 | 1.1<br>1.4<br>1.6<br>1.6<br>1.3 | Not particularly good on receive or transmit. Smaller dimension link may work better. |

Table 1 — Comparison of Antennas

*(Continued from page 6)*

was used for all receiving tests. Due to the close proximity of a high power broadcast station operating on 600 kHz, a high-pass filter was used before the preamplifier to eliminate “birdies” in the 160m band.

*(In the original article, here the author provided a detailed discussion, band by band, of performance of the antenna. For brevity, that discussion is eliminated in this reprint. A copy of the full article is available for the asking.—The Editor)*

**General Comments:**

1. The antenna and transmission line is all one piece of RG-58/U coaxial cable.
2. Virtually all band coverage. May even work well on WARC bands.
3. No tuner is necessary except if you want to try transmitting on 160m.
4. Low noise receiving on all bands.
5. Easy to construct and install.
6. Is not worked against ground so no extensive ground system is needed except for a lightning ground rod.

**Suggestions:**

1. Use a good grade of RG-58/U with maximum shielding. My cable was from “The Wireman” and had a solid center conductor with over 90% shielding.
2. Try building one of these with your own dimensions to suit your particular location. Yours might work better than mine! (How about a multi-turn link?)
3. Try two identical size links at right angles to one another with the same central pivot point, goniometer style, with transmission line phasing for directivity.
4. Build one out of 3 inch conductor centered with spacers to reduce dielectric loss. It might work well on the higher frequencies.
5. Build one from some surplus hardline from your friendly CATV company.

The results of the tests made using the two experimental coaxial link antennas were surprising considering the simplicity of design of these antennas. I hope that others will be stimulated into constructing similar antennas and that someone will come up with a “better mouse-trap”. A special “thank you” to the fellows who were patient enough to help out with the on-the-air tests especially those who took the time out during contesting to

make comparisons.

**References:**

1. Genaille, Richard A., “VLF Loop Antenna,” *Electronics World*, January 1963.
2. Genaille, Richard A., “A Top-Band Loop Antenna,” *CQ Magazine*, January 1969.
3. *The Radio Amateur’s Handbook*, American Radio Relay League, Newington Connecticut, 1953.

**5BDXCC without a Single QSL Card**

*(This note showed up in my email inbox a few weeks ago. If you’ve not established an account on Logbook of the World as yet, perhaps Doug Allen’s experience will move you to do so. Doug recently rejoined CDXA.—The Editor)*

Hi John,

I want to pass on some unexpected news. I’m Doug, K4LY, a CDXA member who lives over 70 miles from Charlotte and seldom gets to the Wednesday luncheons or other events. I’m not really a DXer and never imagined I’d qualify or apply for any ARRL awards. I have a vague memory that I did qualify and receive a DXCC certificate back around 1960, but the certificate and memory are long lost. I’m primarily a weak signal VHF enthusiast and contester, an HF QRPer, and occasional HF contester. I love antenna experimentation and have operated many of the autumn HF contests over the years including CQWW, SS, and the 160 meter contest, usually QRP or low power with the exception of the 160 meter contest where I sometimes run high power.

About three weeks ago, I decided to upload my HF contest contacts to LoTW. After uploading some 45,000 contest QSOs, I found I was within a few countries of 5BDXCC. Digging through my non-contest paper logs, I uploaded a few more contacts and find I qualify for 5BDXCC, and am applying for same. Since I have almost never sent an unsolicited QSL (I do answer QSLs with SASEs), the thought of applying for 5BDXCC never crossed my mind. The expense alone—I figure 5BDXCC to cost over \$3000 at a 20% QSL return rate—for collecting the necessary QSLs was prohibitive. Ham radio is just one of many hobbies, and I have never bought a new radio or a new antenna so my ham radio expenses are fairly low. I guess you could say I’m cheap! Anyway, I plan to splurge and order the 5BDXCC plaque. I also easily qualify for 8 band WAS (including 2M WAS from Colorado) so maybe I’ll up-

*(Continued on page 8)*

load my VHF contest logs (and the other non-contest VHF and HF band states needed) and order an additional plaque later in the year.

I encourage anyone, like me, jaded by the hassle of physical QSLs and QSLing, to join LoTW. LoTW keeps records of every kind of band and mode confirmation imaginable (except QRP, unfortunately, and I'm close to QRP 5BDXCC). It's the paperless and less expensive way to qualify for awards and has given this old dog renewed enthusiasm to work a few new countries! Bye. I need to go upload my 6M contacts and see where I stand on 6M LoTW DXCC confirmations!

Doug Allen K4LY ex-W0AH, W2CRS (and W3IFA way back in 1960 when I think applied for DXCC with those paper cards)

### 2010 Calendar

Here are some dates of important activities for CDXA members in 2010. I suggest you put these on your personal calendar now to minimize the chance of scheduling conflicts arising as we go through the year. If you, like me, don't keep your own calendar, please give the dates to your "calendar keeper".—Dick Williams

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| CQ World Wide 160 Meter, CW    | Jan 29-31  |
| ARRL DX Contest, CW            | Feb 19-21  |
| CQ World Wide 160 Meter, Phone | Feb 26-28  |
| North Carolina QSO Party       | Feb 28     |
| ARRL DX Contest, Phone         | Mar 5-7    |
| Charlotte Hamfest              | Mar 13-14  |
| CDXA Annual Hamfest Banquet    | Mar 13     |
| Dayton Hamvention              | May 14-16  |
| ARRL June VHF QSO Party        | June 12-13 |
| Field Day                      | June 26-27 |
| CQ World Wide, VHF             | July 17-18 |
| Shelby Hamfest                 | Sept 4-5   |
| ARRL September VHF QSO Party   | Sept 11-12 |
| CQ World Wide, RTTY            | Sept 24-26 |
| SEDCO/Ten-Tec Hamfest          | Sept 25    |
| CQ World Wide, Phone           | Oct 29-31  |
| CQ World Wide, CW              | Nov 26-28  |
| ARRL 160 Meter Contest         | Dec 3-5    |
| ARRL 10 Meter Contest          | Dec 10-12  |

### One Man's Quest

*(Below is a note recently received from Lynn Lamb, W4NL. Several years ago at a Charlotte Hamfest Forum, Lynn suggested to the attendees that with the coming nadir of the solar cycle a fun activity would be to try QRP with the relatively "quiet" conditions expected. Little did I know that Lynn was taking his own advice at that time.—The Editor)*

To DXing friends: December 16, 2009

To my friends, may I brag a little? I'm not much for bragging, but I feel it's okay if credit is given to the cluster, the Elecraft K2 and its super receiver, fair antennas, retirement, a charming and devoted Rosie KA4S, not knowing when I should quit which sent me once to ER with a broken clot to my lungs—and the challenge I'll never forget. That challenge was to make it to the DXCC Honor Roll with 10 watts (my QRP) no matter how long it took.

My first QSO with the K2 at 10 watts (built by my friend Taylor, N4TD) was with my adopted brother, Doyle N4VV on 8 April 2000.

Today 16 Dec 2009; 9 years, 9 months and 8 days later I had my 3,345th DX QSO with JD1BMM and made my goal of 329 and the bottom rung of the DXCC Honor Roll—glory be! I did miss BS7H and FT5GA during this period.

I owe many of you for your encouragement and many of these countries in the log. I don't collect cards anymore, but I did on a few questionable QSOs send cards to make sure. Only one came back negative, hence had to work that one again. I made sure W4NL was in the logs.

The rig goes to a museum someday as a testament that life is not too short for QRP although it can be dangerous to one's health vis a vis, one should not sit in one chair without getting up for 8 hours calling BS7H.

Why do it? A "challenge" is the one word answer. Would I do it again? Don't ask!

To many of you I offer my humble thanks for putting up with my talking about QRP during this period since I know it was a bore at times and for those of you who struggled to hear me on DXpeditions.

Try it, you may like it. ---- I'm done now!

73, Lynn W4NL/QRP

## Win Outback Gift Cards and Trophies in ARRL DX Contest

By Dick Williams, W3OA

The ARRL International DX Contest is just around the corner. The CW contest starts February 19; the phone contest starts March 5. We are again offering great 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                           |
| 2007 | 7,910,718  | 30                     | 9                            |
| 2008 | 11,293,344 | 43                     | 3                            |
| 2009 | 10,157,613 | 36                     | 7                            |

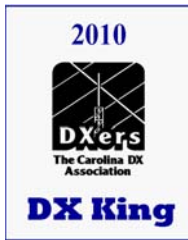
You can see 2008 was a great year for us but we fell off a bit in 2009. We need more participants to move back into the top five! To this end, we are offering the following prizes:

- o 1st place prizes – Each winner can choose a trophy or a \$50 Outback Steak House Gift Card.
  - Top combined CW plus phone score
  - Top CW score
  - Top CW score, low power
  - Top phone score
  - Top phone score, low power
  - Top Multi-op score
  - Top DXpedition Score
- o 1000 or more QSOs total in the CW and phone contests – Each participant can choose a trophy or a \$25 Outback Steak House Gift Card.
- o 500 or more QSOs total in the CW and phone contests – Each participant gets a photo printed CDXA certificate and patch.
- o 250 or more QSOs – Each participant gets a CDXA patch.

An individual can only win one prize. Only members whose scores are eligible for the club competition (meet the 175 mile radius criteria) as defined in the contest rules can win a Gift Card or a trophy. These rules are available at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2010/intldx.html>. All CDXA members are eligible for the CDXA certificate and patch.

### Puns to Ponder

- A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
- A backward poet writes inverse.



## Announcing CDXA's 2010 "DX King" Competition

Dick Williams, W3OA

CDXA will run its "DX King" Competition again this year. The DX King Competition is an in-house version of CQ Magazine's DX Marathon. The main difference from last year will be in the prizes raffled off among the participants. There will be three prizewinners and each will have a choice of 1) a Squal Jacket from Lands' End embroidered with the CDXA logo and the winner's callsign, or 2) a one hundred dollar gift certificate from Amateur Electronic Supply.

The goal of DX Marathon is to "work as many countries and zones as possible at least once during the calendar year." This can be inside or outside other contests. Here are some of the main features of the DX Marathon rules:

- o Your score is number of CQ countries worked plus number of zones worked during the year, e.g. 345 countries (see <http://dxmarathon.com/countrieslist/cqwwlist.doc>); 40 zones.
- o There are two entry categories (the full rules are much more specific in defining these categories):
  - Unlimited – anything legal.
  - Formula - 10 watts and single tower or 100 watts with verticals and/or wires.
- o QSLs are not needed.
- o The use of Packet Cluster spots is permitted. No other assistance is allowed in the Formula category.
- o CQ provides an Excel spreadsheet for score submission at <http://dxmarathon.com/>
- o Submit your scores to CQ by January 31, 2011; the results will be in the June CQ.
- o The full rules are at <http://dxmarathon.com/Contestrules2010/DX Marathon Rules Dec09.pdf>. You should study these before you start making contacts as there are many important points not mentioned here.

Here are the rules specific to our DX King Competition:

- o There are two traveling first place plaques, one for the Unlimited category and one for the Formula category.
  - A member cannot win the same plaque two years in a row.
- o Certificates will be awarded for the top five scores in the Unlimited and Formula categories.
- o For 2010, there will be three prizes awarded by a raffle among entrants scoring 150 or more points.
- o Final standings will be determined by the DX Marathon scores published in CQ.
- o Any tie score will be resolved in favor of the member who first submitted that score to the Contest Manager.
- o Members must score 150 points or greater to win a plaque.
- o After reaching a score of 100, members are expected to report their current score monthly to the Contest Manager.
- o Scores will be published throughout the year in the *Pileup*.

There are many tools available to help you keep track of your Marathon Progress. Several were discussed in previous issues of the Pileup. See <http://cdxa.org/pileup/Archives/cdxa0810.pdf>, <http://cdxa.org/pileup/Archives/cdxa0901.pdf>, and <http://cdxa.org/pileup/Archives/cdxa0902.pdf>.

A lot of our members enjoyed this competition in 2009 and we are hoping more will participate in 2010. Score keeping is relatively simple and can be almost automatic. And it's another reason to get a large number of QSOs in this year's ARRL DX and CQWW contests in addition to working a lot of DX throughout 2010.

### 2009 Holiday Party Scenes

Over 75 guests arrived at the Carolina Prime Steakhouse on December 10 to elect CDXA officers for 2010, to find out who did what in the “Contest Within a Contest”, and to just have a grand time meeting old friends.



## The Back Page

A full issue this month—lots of catching up to do to start the second decade of the millennium.

**CWAC 2009 Wrap Up**—learn who the “champs” are! Page 1.

**DX King 2009 Wrap Up**—A good performance for CDXA. Page 3.

Welcome **new members**—five more over the holidays. Page 3.

**Do heights bother you?** A video clip awaits you to test your acrophobia. See Page 4.

What **was going on 10 years ago?** How about **20 years ago?** See page 4.

**Low Noise Antennas for HF Receiving.** Just what you needed for your low band effort from a small lot. Dick Genaille, W4UW, answers the call for technical papers. See Page 5.

**5BDXCC without a single QSL card?** It can be done. See page 7.

**2010 Amateur’s Calendar** so you don’t miss a thing! Page 8.

One man’s **QUEST** realized—no small feat. Page 8.

**ARRL 2010 DX Contest** and awards await you. Get ready now! Page 9

**DX King competition for 2010** is off and running! New prizes, just for competing. See Page 10.

If you missed the **2009 Annual Meeting and Holiday Party**, here’s a way you can enjoy the experience. Page 11.

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## First Class Mail

*See something wrong with your address label? Notify W3ZL at once, please.*