

The Pileup

Newsletter of the CDXA

A New and Non-traditional Field Day

ARRL Field Day is one of the biggest events on the amateur radio calendar, with over 36,000 participants in 2019, including entries from 3,113 radio clubs and emergency operations centers. In most years, Field Day is also the largest annual demonstration of ham radio, because many radio clubs organize their participation in public places such as parks and schools.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many radio clubs like CDXA have made decisions to cancel their group participation in ARRL Field Day this year due to public health recommendations and/or requirements, or to significantly modify their participation for safe social distancing practices. The ARRL has implemented temporary rule waivers to allow greater flexibility in recognizing the value of individual and club participation regardless of entry class.

The ARRL Programs and Services Committee (PSC) has adopted two temporary rule waivers for the event:

AA4ZZ	Paul Trotter	President
K4CEB	Eric Sossoman	Vice-Pres.
N4APR	Ray Weeks	Sec./Treas.
K4MD	Joe Simpkins	Cluster Mgr.
W1AJT	Art Tolda	Contest Mgr.
W3GQ	Paul Sturpe	4th Call Area Bureau Mgr.
WB4BXW	Wayne Setzer	Webmaster
K8YC	John Scott	Editor

1) For Field Day 2020 only, Class D stations may work all other Field Day stations, including other Class D stations, for points.

Field Day rule 4.6 defines Class D stations as “Home stations,” including stations operating from permanent or licensed station locations using commercial power. Class D stations ordinarily may only count contacts made with Class A, B, C, E, and F Field Day stations, but the temporary rule waiver for 2020 allows Class D stations to count contacts with other Class D stations for QSO credit.

2) In addition, for 2020 only, an aggregate club score will be published, which will be the sum of all individual entries indicating a specific club (similar to the aggregate score totals used in ARRL affiliated club competitions).

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CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems	
K4MD (AR V.4 Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.no-ip.com:23
K4MD (AR V.6 Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.no-ip.com:7373
W4DXA (AR V.6 Cluster via Telnet)	w4dxa.no-ip.com:23
W3GQ (CC Cluster via Telnet)	w3gq.no-ip.com:7373
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

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Ordinarily, club names are only published in the results for Class A and Class F entries, but the temporary rule waiver for 2020 allows participants from any Class to optionally include a single club name with their submitted results following Field Day.

For example, if CDXA members Becky, W1BXY, and Hiram, W1AW, both participate in 2020 Field Day — Hiram from his Class D home station, and Becky from her Class C mobile station — both can include the radio club's name when reporting their individual results. The published results listing will include individual scores for Hiram and Becky, plus a combined score for all entries identified as CDXA.

The ARRL Field Day web page includes a series of articles with ideas and advice for adapting participation this year. <http://www.arrl.org/field-day> The full text of ARRL's announcement, with additional details is here: <http://www.arrl.org/news/temporary-rule-waivers-announced-for-2020-arrl-field-day>

Some particulars -

As far as I know there is no ARRL circle for Field Day. Field Day is not one of the contests normally included in the ARRL's affiliated club competition. Therefore, all CDXA members are able to contribute to CDXA's total score irrespective of geography.

Including Field Day in the affiliated club competition would require every club entering to send in a list of eligible club members with their grid squares. That would be a big disincentive for the smaller clubs that traditionally take to the field for Field Day, and I doubt whether the ARRL would want to do that. If they decide to require grid squares CDXA is prepared.

I don't know whether the possibility even occurred to the ARRL that regional contest clubs like YCCC, FRC, PVRC, SCCC and so on might be included in this year's Field Day. I am pretty sure what they were actually trying to do is give local clubs motivation to encourage their members to get on the air for Field Day even though the traditional Field Day outing is not possible this year.

I don't see any mention of restrictions about bands and modes. They are not saying conduct a distributed multi-op with separate stations on each band/mode combination. As I read their announcement, they are saying that everyone in CDXA should get on the air as a bunch of separate 1D (or 1E, or 1B in the backyard or whatever) operations, each station using their own personal call sign, and all of them should indicate that they are members of CDXA at the time they submit their logs. Then their individual scores will all be added up together to give an aggregated score for CDXA, basically in a similar way to what the ARRL does for the affiliated club competition in the major ARRL contests.

Operating a distributed virtual multi-op, such as all CDXA members using W4DXA for instance, is still against the rules. They have not changed the 1000-foot rule (all equipment used under a single call sign must be within a circle whose diameter is no more than 1000 feet).

So far N3FJP (Field Day Log 6.3) and N1MM+ will support the temporary rules.

Let's try to get as many CDXA members on the air as possible.

Art – W1AJT / VE3UTT

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The purpose of the Association is to secure for the members the pleasures and benefits of associating with 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.

Yearly dues are \$25.00. A second licensed Amateur family member living in the same household can join for \$5.00 for a total family price of \$30.00 per year. The total price for 3 or more licensed family members living in the same household is only \$35.00 per year. All family members enjoy full member status. Dues are payable annually in December by check to the Secretary/Treasurer:

Ray Weeks, N4APR
3017 Cutchin Drive
Charlotte, NC 28210

Address, telephone, and email address changes should be directed to the Secretary/Treasurer at the above address or via email at: rweeks1@carolina.rr.com.

What to do while “hunkered down”!

If you’re getting tired waiting out the Covid-19 disease and its particular mandates to “mature” adults, here are some things you might consider doing.

1. Find a good book. Read it! It can be fiction, history, art, politics, or whatever.
2. Don’t have any ideas for books you might like? Check out this site: <https://b-ok.cc/s/ARRL?page=1>
3. Check out the grounding system on your antennas and radio shack.
4. If you’re still logging on paper, find a good free logging program and commit all your paper logs to a computerized logging system. Check out Logger32 and DX Labs Suite. Find a logger which meets your needs and which won’t tax your computer skills.
5. Learn all you can about radio propagation. Use the ARRL Handbook, ARRL Antenna Manual and all other sources for your research.
6. Take a virtual tour of the world’s great museums: https://www.christies.com/features/10-of-thebest-virtual-museum-experiences-in-Europe-10389-1.aspx?sc_lang=en&cid=EM_EMLcontent04144B16_Section_A_Story_4_0&cid=DM384337&bid=213063774
7. Repair that damaged antenna that has displayed a high SWR for the past three years.
8. Hone your contesting skills by looking at Contest University videos. See: <https://www.contestuniversity.com/videos/>
9. Learn how to use some antenna modeling software like EZNEC or NEC4WIN. Then design a dipole or an inverted vee and check out the effect of different elevations on the SWR and radiation patterns.
10. Upload your newly created computerized log from Step 3 to LoTW and Club Log.
11. Prepare your 2020 submission for DXCC.
12. Find a kit and build an electronic gadget you’ve always wanted.
13. Learn a computer programming language like Python, C++, or Visual Basic. There are downloadable development tools and a myriad of online tutorials for most of these languages.
14. Gather your QSL cards and make a submission for the CQ Worked All Zones (WAZ) award. If you have the WAZ award already, then go for 5BWAZ. That’s at least as tough as earning DXCC Honor Roll.
15. Repair that favorite headset that needs a new cord from being “kicked” one time too many.
16. Hone your CW skills:
 - On-line course: <https://cwops.org/>
 - Contest practice: <http://www.dxatlas.com/MorseRunner/>
 - Call sign practice: <http://www.rufzxp.net>
17. If you didn’t start the DX King award when 2020 kicked off, go back to your logs and assemble all the entities you’ve worked already this year. Then continue adding entities till year’s end. You don’t need confirmations for this “contest”, and it will fill your time looking for the next new entity.
18. If you’ve never been a tester, become one! You needn’t play to win, and it is a great way to get new entities if you’re still chasing your first 300 DXCC entities.
19. Try a new digital mode: FT8, FT4, MSK144, etc. Need help? Ask a fellow CDXAer!
20. Spend some time in learning how to use N1MM Logger+ for contest use. It is a FREE piece of software written by hams for hams. The time you spend getting it talking to your radio will be informative and well spent, and having it operational will provide you contesting fun that you never dreamed you’d find.

When you’ve exhausted topics on this list, let us know. If you’ve found other topics that interested you, let us know so we can pass them along to other CDXAers. If you need help, ask your fellow CDXA member.



Are We Having Fun Yet?

Art Tolda W1AJT / VE3UTT

Remember back to when you were growing up. Your parents would encourage you to participate in organized activities — be it hockey, baseball or whatever else the kids in the neighborhood were up to. Invariably, there was one or two who always seemed to have “the best” equipment — be it a hockey stick, baseball bat, or whatever was part of the activity. That seemed to go along with their natural ability to do well. It seemed that even if they did not have “their” personal stuff with them, they could almost always be counted on to score the winning run, or stand out in some way.

After the day’s activities were done, it seemed like our parents were not overly concerned with the final score. Yes, it was great if we won, but it seemed far more important that we were able to partake in the activity — win, lose or draw. We could recount tales of how the day went — who scored the “winning run”, and anything else that stood out in our memory of the day’s activities. Winning took a back seat to participating, and having fun with our friends.

I like to consider contesting a grown up version of getting out there and having fun in an organized activity using our radio equipment. Yes, some folks seem to have an “extra” advantage as far as station capabilities go. They have acreage on a hilltop location, overlooking the ocean or whatever else they were able to find to make for a great radio location. They have more, bigger towers with more, bigger antennas. They also seem to have the ability to sit in the chair for hours on end, making contacts as fast as they can go. Combined with the great station they have built, they also seem able to operate for most, or all of the contest be it 24, or even 48 hours. Given all that, how can the rest of us ever hope to post scores that come even close?

When you look at those big scores, there are a few things to keep in mind. First and foremost, some Amateurs have put a tremendous amount of work into building their stations. No, it is not a requirement, more a “labor of love” as it were. Some have a vertical or some wires in the backyard; that is the best they can manage and good results can be achieved, even with a modest setup. It also does not attract the attention of neighbors — sometimes a concern. Some folks have a tower and beam; once again that is what they have available to them and that is what they use. Those who have more property, more towers and more antennas are just making the most of what they have available.

The way things seem to work out is: the more effort some have put into their stations, the better it performs, and the higher scores they can post in the contest results. This is the part of “winning” that few of us see when we submit our scores. Yet look at any huge contest station and the owner has gone through a learning curve of both time and money in order to initially build and then maintain their station. Some locations face heavy winds or the occasional hurricane. In some respects, it seems what makes a great radio location goes hand in hand with other environmental issues that necessitate ongoing maintenance and associated expenses.

When the contest starts, none of this matters. Some may have a radio and a wire outside in order to operate on the bands, while others may have a room full of equipment, connected to more than a few towers in the yard. In the first second of a contest, each of us is equal. We all have a score of zero. No QSOs, no multipliers, and no points. Granted, as the contest period progresses, some Amateurs with the big stations tend to do better and seem to leave others in their dust. Interestingly enough, having a big station does not guarantee the win. If that were the case, there would be no point in competing as the winner would always be the one with the biggest and best station.

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Just as when we were growing up, there is more to this than “winning” even if that is the primary goal. A big part of contesting is simply getting on the air and participating. On the air, we are all equals in pursuit of something called fun! This may seem like an odd statement, but I would like to encourage you to look at the comments section of a website called “S830” at <http://3830scores.com>. After the contest is over, it is a place to post your claimed score and to brag a bit about how things went well. Or not. Or to simply vent (in family friendly language) about how things went during the contest everything from commenting on band conditions (good, bad or otherwise) to interruptions from that perennial mischief maker - Murphy, or whatever issue(s) you wish to comment on.

When looking at the comments from almost any contest, one thing that is frequently mentioned is how much fun they had, and “Can’t wait for the next one!” On the air, we often say “Good Luck” to our competitors. Sure we may want to win, but we also want our competitors to also do well in whatever category they are competing in.

So what happens if we are not able to operate from a big station or put in a full time effort? We get on, enjoy the time we have available, and make the most of the station we have available. Not everyone can “win”, but we can all have fun. Which brings me to a favorite saying “Are We Having Fun Yet?” I sure hope the answer is a resounding “Yes”! I hope to see you on our “playground”.



Welcome New Members

We make it a point to introduce new members to the entire membership in the Pileup. We regret there was a “broken link” in our internal communication routes with the sudden loss of Cliff Wagoner (W3ZL-SK) last fall. It is now believed that all the pieces that Cliff did for the club have been gathered so we can return to business as usual.

CDXA welcomes the following new members to our ranks:

Robert Brockman (W4XG) joins us from North Port, Florida.

Michael Mathis (N4MIK) lives in Knoxville, TN. We’d guess that Michael knows a few of the other DXers in Knoxville that are members of CDXA.

George “Frank” Styron, III (W4CWA) hails from Cary, NC. Frank is an “Old New” member returning from absence of a few years, so ours is a “Welcome back”!

Arthur Parris (N4AWP) makes his home in Rockingham, NC. Maybe Art has met long time CDXA member Bill Parris who spends his winters in Pinehurst???? Hmmmmm. . . .

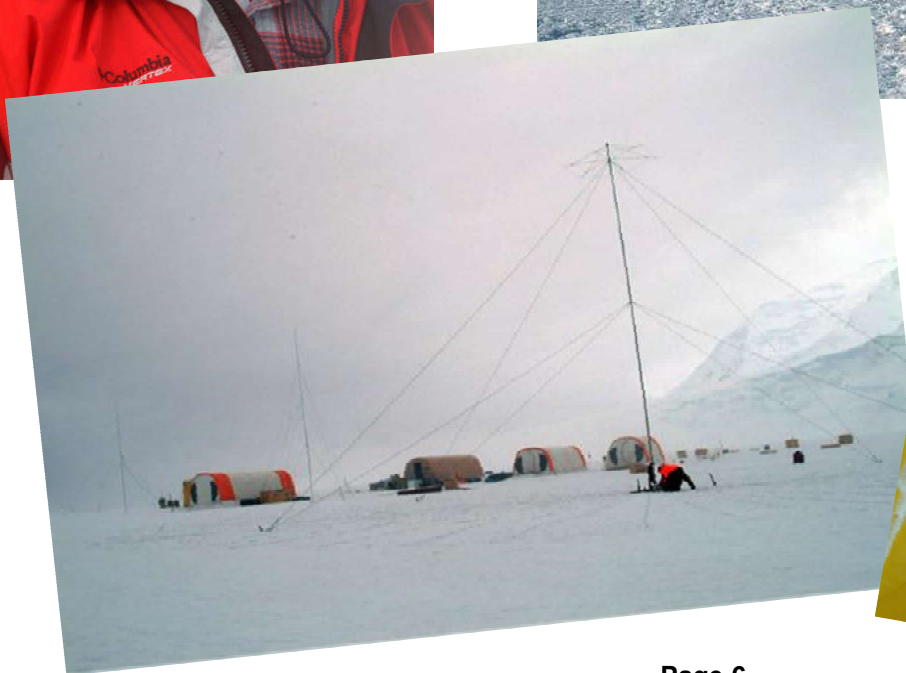
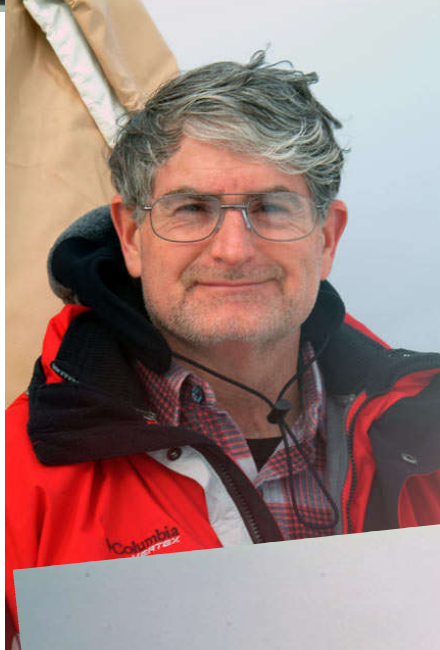
Marty Norris (W4MLN) makes his home in Lansing, NC.

James Shelby (AJ4M) resides in Raleigh, NC. Since this year’s visit to RARSfest didn’t happen because of the corona virus, maybe we’ll catch up with James in 2021.

Happy BELATED welcome to CDXA!

A Look back at the Peter One DXpedition --3Y0X (2006)

See Page 7 for photo details.



Photos from the Peter I Island DXpedition (3Y0X) in 2006

Clockwise from to left:

Internal view of the “Meeting, Eating, and Greeting” (MEG) tent.
This gigantic iceberg “hung around” for several days before blowing out to sea.
When the sun came out, a magnificent view of Peter One’s mountain.
Nobody was on the “hot seat” during this DXpedition!
The campsite as delivered by helicopter from the ship standing offshore.
CDXA Member Wayne Starnes (KU4V) at 3Y0X with a few days beard growth.

The full story of the DXpedition as told by Erling Wiig (LA6VM) can be found on the INDEXA website at:

<https://indexa.org/documents/newsletters/INDEXA%20Newsletter%20-%20Issue%2073-Spring%202006.pdf>

Note: DX King scores will no longer appear in the Pileup. They will be reported in Contest Corner on the CDXA website (www.cdxa.org).

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