From The President's Corner

First of all, huge thanks to Fred, K4LQ for out-doing himself once again to produce this mega-issue of the Gazette! For once in this world, you get both quantity and quality!

Several of us wrote extensively on WRTC-2014 (see articles later in this issue), but let me again heartily thank all of the FCG members for your support in so many ways. The FCG supplied funding, competitors, referees, site team volunteers, on-the-air contacts for the competitors, the most number of tent sponsorships of any club in the world and even a director. Four long years of planning culminated in a pretty darned great event. Thanks!

The 2014 FQP in late April did not experience the conditions that we had hoped for based on the 27-day cycle that produced a phenomenal WPX SSB weekend in late March, but there were some remarkable on-the-air achievements nonetheless. The K4OJ mobile team operating 4 simultaneous stations was really amazing as they almost cracked the 4000-QSO barrier. OM2VL made no less than 700 QSOs from the middle of Europe, using the OM8A super-station. 10 Meters produced more QSOs than in any year in a very long time. With all the great pictures submitted for this issue of the Gazette, it’s almost part one of the FQP-2014 results.

Thanks again to Bill, K4XS and Holly, WH7YL for hosting the FCG for the XS-travaganza in June. Lots of folks attended this perfectly-timed event in June which gives us a big event every 4 months.

Speaking of Bills, HR-4969 – the Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2014 – would extend amateur radio rights to private subdivisions, etc. Consider writing your Representative and urge them to support this bill.

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forgotten. On a lighter scale, the hex beam market is taking off. Dave, N2NL sure proved their value with his unbelievable DX totals from Guam.

W1AW/4 will be back in Florida the week of November 19-25, so please plan to operate as much as you can in this unique event. Pete, N8PR led us to over 50,000 QSOs the first time around in February and Chris, WF3C will work with 3 mode captains to keep us organized for the 2nd week. Keeping 3 modes active on all the bands is nearly impossible, so there will always be an available slot. We managed to slip in there and not conflict with SS SSB, Thanksgiving or CQ WW CW. The steady incline in activity continues, so our week in November has the potential to produce a lot of contacts.

Please reserve the dates on your calendar for the Melbourne Hamfest which is now less than 2 months away. Thanks in advance to Sylvia and Eric, K9ES who will again host us for a BBQ in the afternoon on Saturday, October 11th. Earlier that day, the FCG will again host the Contest Forum for 2 hours from 11 to 1. This is the 2nd largest FCG gathering of the year behind only the Orlando festivities each February. (Speaking of which, be sure not to miss the Contest Dinner on Friday, February 13, 2015 at which our guest speaker will be retired Admiral Scott Redd, K0DQ.)

From The ARRL Contest Update:

The ARRL Contest Branch is pleased to report that all results data items for 2013 contests have been created and posted through the 10 Meter and 160 Meter contests. Line Scores for the ARRL DX CW Contest are now online with the searchable databases close behind. RTTY Roundup line scores are also in the works as new Contest Branch Manager Matt W1MSW.

Contributors to this issue

EY8MM, K1RQ, K1TO, K1XX, K4EJ, K4LQ, K5KG, K9VV, KM4HI, KN4Y, KT4Q, KX9X, N4BP, N4UU, N6TV, N6XN, VE7ZO, W4MY, WA4OAB, WB4OMM, WC4E, The ARRL Letter, ARRL Contest Update

Ed Note: Coverage of FCG participation in WRTC-2014 begins on Page 22. Thanks to Fred K9VV and George K5KG for their articles about their experiences there. And to Chris NX5N for the pictures. To round out FCG’s activity there I relied on Picture Galleries from N6TV and EY8MM on the net. Thanks to both Bob and Nodir for granting me permission to use their photos in the Gazette.

In researching the WRTC coverage, it became evident just how complex this effort was and how much credit Doug K1DG and his team deserve for the superb organization and execution of the entire activity. Well done!

73/Fred K4LQ
Amateur Radio in the 21st Century – Mainstream or Backwater?
An Initiative by Art Goddard, W6XD

By George Wagner, K5KG

I first became aware of this topic at Pacificon 2013, when I heard Art Goddard’s, W6XD presentation: “Amateur Radio in the 21st Century – Mainstream or Backwater?” I came away from the presentation with an overwhelming sense that every licensed ham in America should hear Art’s message. As a follow up, Art then came to the Orlando Hamcation®, where he made the presentation. A few of the key points that Art makes in his compelling presentation are:

♦ There is no mention of Amateur Radio in the FCC’s 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, yet the FCC is responsible for issuing Amateur Radio licenses as Federal Grants. Art makes the point that the FCC’s Strategic Plan “is all about Wireless Broadband”.
♦ Many Federal, State, and Local Government decision makers are substantially unaware of Amateur Radio’s public value.
♦ Government and public perception will continue to influence how Amateur Radio fares in the 21st Century.
♦ Amateur Radio is being marginalized by the use of Amateur Radio frequencies by other services. Spectrum sharing is a growing concern.
♦ The ARRL, as the principal representative of Amateur Radio should take the lead in preparing and issuing a Report to America.

Art’s presentation goes on to discuss the many benefits that Amateur Radio affords to our society, and further it addresses numerous points that should be included in a periodic report card. Art points out that other organizations report periodically on their achievements, opportunities, benefits, challenges, and future plans to their constituents — an “Amateur Radio Report to America” could be the League’s opportunity to do the same.

An obvious benefit of presenting a Report to America is to make the public and public policy makers aware of the importance of Amateur Radio as an asset to our country. A comprehensive Report to America will drive home the importance of considering the consequences of policy decisions on Amateur Radio Services, especially those dealing with RF-related technologies, and antenna/tower regulations at all levels of government.

I have written to Kay Craigie, N3KN, President of the ARRL, and other ARRL officials asking them to give this initiative their full support. We all know that there are endless competing priorities and limited budgets for everything that the League has on its plate, but I think that we can all agree that keeping the importance of Amateur Radio in the forefront of the public, and especially policy makers at all levels is of prime importance. Personally, I certainly don’t relish the thought of having a valuable section of our priceless spectrum auctioned off to the next “wireless” technology that wishes to commercialize it.

I encourage each of you to let your ARRL Section Manager and Division Director know if you believe the League should support an initiative to develop and publish a Report to America. You can learn more by watching Art’s presentation at: http://w6xd.com/Future/AmateurRadio
Hello FQP Fanatics!
Wow, what a super time we had! One Suburban, 4 cw stations and antennas and 5 crazy ops/drivers - it was a wild ride with both pleasant surprises and 'learning experiences'.

For now this preliminary, raw score report will have to suffice:

*QSO's = 3943*

*Mults = 91*
*Total Score = 1.43M*

Our team members would like to sincerely thank the many dedicated ops both in and out of state who traveled along by making QSO's with us along the way - your participation made the ride so fun!

Much more to follow but it will likely be a couple of weeks before I can get out a more complete report.

We're numb- going to be! Hope everyone enjoyed the party as much as we did!

vy 73/OJ,
Chris, NX4N
More K4OJ Pictures

2 KW power plant

DC power rack, parts and tool Storage

15 M & 20M BPFs and stubs

20 Meter Station

40 Meter and 15 Meter Stations

10 Meter Station

NX4N tests County change system

Pre-FQP picnic lunch on the veranda

And We’re Off!

K4OJ Team in action from the third row

L-R: K4OJ Team NX4N, N4LT, N4KM, N4BP and K0LUZ celebrate their success.
Pat and I had a great time. I have never experienced pile ups like I had this weekend. Sunday the rate meter went over 220 several times and the hourly rate was over 140 for over 7 hours. She had the truck radio playing rock so here I am running stations fast and furious with rock music playing in the background. It just does not get any better than that!!

We missed some q's at the end due to poor route planning on my part. Spent too much time in Bradford and Marion. At 4:30 we were still in Marion and Pat decided we were going to get Volusia, Flagler and St Johns done so we could fill the whole north end of the state. I told her it was not possible. I was wrong we hit St Johns at 5:50.

We will be back next year!!

Pat & Martin
N4TUU N4UU
K4KG

This was our 10th FQP together in the M/S mobile category. George does an excellent job of storing, categorizing and optimizing our mobile operating platform so it just takes about half a day to assemble. The U-Haul dealer down the road even saves the small motorcycle trailer for us each year simplifying set up. (There is a hole in the center of the trailer bed for a large bolt to mount the Sigma antenna; we drilled it years ago!) Once again we used a K3 with ham sticks on the Toyota Highlander roof for 20 and 15/40 and the 5-band Sigma-5 antenna mounted in the trailer. There is not a great deal of gain when using the Sigma but the set up provides for instant band switching covering SSB and CW.

We found that conditions overall were excellent compared with previous years with solid openings on 15m and 10m. Credit goes to the K4OJ team for maintaining a beacon on both of these bands and showing their potential. A quick look at K4OJ/m in the RBN network shows that 10m was open most all of the daylight hours to the west coast and South America with extended openings into Europe. We called CQ and had some good results into Europe on 15m, but there were few takers on 10m even though the band was open.

Our operating strategy in the mixed mode remains the same. We try moving new multipliers from CW to SSB from CW on Day 1 as much as possible. Then, as the contest progresses, the need to break from the CW pile-ups diminishes throughout the weekend. Regardless though, we still will break from a CW pile-up to work those mixed ops outside of Florida on SSB for hopefully a quick QSY. This can be a questionable strategy from a point perspective for us as a FL station, but it’s a lot of fun and helps the out-of-state stations who find the SSB mults a little harder to come by. As a result, we are able to work many skilled operators like K9HC, K9NW, VE3KZ, K3WW, K8MR (in New Jersey) and others multiple times in each county. This year though, the champion was Laci, OM2VL whom we would switch bands in many counties, making the Q on 20, 15 and 10 sometimes on both modes. The instant band change capability of the station made it easy and enjoyable.

Congratulations to the K1XX/m, aka the “Flying Cucarachas Group (FCG)”, for setting a new county activation record. Our 2014 route increased the K4KG 2013 record to 53 from 52 but that was demolished by the 55 counties that Charlie and Marty achieved. Charlie called us on the cell immediately after the end of the event on Sunday to proudly announce their accomplishment. Apparently, due to their lightning-fast driving, their whip became permanently horizontal.

Saturday was beset with laptop problems half way through the contest as communications was lost between the F-keys and keyboard multiple times. Not only did we lose hours operating sitting by the roadside trying to correct the problem, the number of QSOs dropped off precipitously in some counties as we waited for the laptop to reboot. We almost didn’t work anyone in Union county due to this problem, and our apologies to those stations that were waiting for that mult on Saturday night, OM2VL being one of them. Fortunately, George was able to run diagnostic software on the laptop after the Saturday run, and that seemingly cured the computer problems, as they did not plague us on Sunday. None of the PC problems were attributable to WinTest, which performed without a hitch.

With 15m and 10m open we ended up working more Europeans than normal. The W8/9/0 were not audible on the high bands with only the occasionally Q’ with a weak W9 or VE3. With 20m fully open on Sunday morning and late Saturday night, our 40m totals are the lowest ever. This explains our lack of Q’s with SC and GA on SSB. Two Asians made the log on both modes and thanks to JI3MK and UZ0AF for the Q5ys to SSB. This was a first for us for both of these countries in the FQP. From Europe, good activity from DL, SP, I and even SM were active. OH6NIO was the only Finnish station we worked, and he was loud and active. RGSA and UA3AGW were consistent operations on CW but we missed their SSB mult.

Thanks to all the out of state operators who make this a fun event and a highlight of the contest calendar. Look for you all next year.

Vy 73,
Jim VE7ZO and George K5KG.

L-R George K5KG, Jim VE7ZO with K4KG/M
K1RQ

Been awhile since I used my IC 706 mobile rig on CW. Took me an hour into the contest to figure out I had to turn the built in electronic keyer OFF so the Winkeyer would work!! I operated as a single op and don’t have the ability to drive, send CW and log simultaneously, so I drove to the 12 counties and operated when I got to a suitable place to park. Saturday evening I was in Polk county on CR 37 in the middle of nowhere. It got dark and dropped something on the floor. Opened the door for a minute to turn on the over head light. OMG..Big mistake!! In that brief time, I let in a couple dozen huge mosquitoes the size of quarters! !!!! After about 10 minutes they were biting and driving me crazy so I cut the evening short by and hour and a half and went home. By the time I got home, about 50 miles, my windshield was so covered with love bugs, I could hardly see. Had to wash window in the morning and get rid of the remaining mosquitoes!! Sunday was a long drive with operating for about half hour in each county. I didn’t make very many QSO’s on 40 because , where I was there were high voltage lines and the noise level was 20 db over s9. I listened on 10 several time in the windows and only heard DX. Called CQ on 10 several times and no takers. If I do this next year, it will be with a driver and some time spent setting up an operating position in the vehicle beforehand. Spent more time driving than operating. Dana K1RQ

PS: At least I wasn’t questioned by the police this year as to my “intentions” . . .
K1XX

Marty W1MD at the controls.

K1XX/M

Tracking The Route

Roof Ground Plane

Spotted along the way
“Taco Mobile” ready to roll. He's equipped with a 2.4L 2RZ-FE 142hp power plant providing 160 lb-ft torque to the 5-Speed manual transmission. The SR5 extended cab body provides ample room for radio operations and equipment in all conditions.

High Sierra HS-1800pro multi band vertical with it's variable center loading coil is supported on a specially modified Reese Class IV trailer hitch at the left/rear quarter panel position. (don't call it a "screwdriver", per Jim at High Sierra)

73/Marty W4MY

"Taco Mobile" (W4MY) resting during the 2014 FQP at the Okeechobee Turnpike Travel Plaza at dusk. Taken by W4MY.
The N4DAB team (WB4OMM, KB4T, WB4MNK, and KK4FBN) experienced somewhat disappointing results.

In Palatka (Putnam), we had S9 noise on 40M, S7 noise on 20M; accompanied by some "sweeping" type noise. We also had a "local" (not a mobile) operating in the CW mobile window, that Frank KB4T swears was running 10,000 watts, and operating somewhere in the same park! On SSB, we called CQ, scoured 40M, 20M, 15M and 10M,...and pretty much heard nothing (I actually checked my antenna, coax, and rig a few times thinking something was seriously wrong - when I walked over to the CW location, they were having very similar results, although there were some (not many!) CW signals. We made some 38 CW Qs and 14 (yes, FOURTEEN) SSB Qs here in 1 hour and 30 minutes. Not a rate with bragging rights!

At Salt Springs (Marion), the bands were a bit quieter (S3 noise), but again we could not really find much activity. Many of the same folks we worked here were worked earlier in Putnam, and signals were, "OK". We made a few more CW Qs and SSB Qs, but again, not much in numbers.

We moved to Astor (Lake) and just like last year, did our best work. 40M and 20M were pretty quiet and both stations got some minor "runs", but nothing like last year. Our total numbers for this year? We drove 163 miles with 4 hours of drive time. 101 SSB Qs and 230 CW for a total of 341 in a little over 4.5 hours of operating time; last year we made 181 SSB and 241 CW, a total of 422 - 20% more contacts, in a little over 3.5 hours (an hour less) of operating time.

It seemed we worked much harder for the Qs we netted; band noise, deep QSB, not many signals. But our "mobile operation" was greatly improved in setting up, taking down, and travelling....we all agreed our operation was much more efficient and we really improved our "rapid deployment" and "rapid takedown". We encountered no surprises and the weather was great.

We finished our day with an excellent dinner at the Blackwater Inn Astor as planned. And more than anything, the camaraderie, fellowship, and "team building" was top notch! We "won", no matter what the score. A great day!

As soon as Frank gets me the final CW file, I'll submit our results as the Multi-Multi-Mixed-Mobile entry!
Hope to see some of you in Dayton (I'll be there!!)
73 and OJ!!
Steve WB4OMM

Above: The N4DAB Team at Goodwin Park in Palatka. L-R: Frank KB4T, Art WB4MNK, Kevin KK4BFN and Steve WB4OMM

Above: Kevin KK4BFN and Steve WB4OMM on SSB

Above: Frank KB4T and Art WB4MNK on CW
I took my driver to a lunch of Italian shells known worldwide as a precursor to the Florida QSO party. At the appointed hour I started calling FQP in Jefferson county. After awhile of no signals we stopped and I checked the antenna and it was functional. We started moving again and lo and behold a contact was made and slowly the log entries increased. I got to Dixie County I seemed to be working the same stations and the trend continued until Putnam County when I made a DX contact. In Bradford county it was time to refuel the driver and the van. We arrived in Madison County just as the FQP ended. I made a note to shorten my route next year.

Sunday If anyone wants to make a change to the FQP, suggest a 10:00am starting time. But I digress. I picked up my son who is today’s driver with my wife as co-pilot we headed into Liberty County. I went to 40-meters and called to dead air. Again I stopped to check if maybe my 40-meter resonator hit one too many trees. All was well and I was faced with the decision to quit or hope 20-meters is open. Sure enough it was and slowly my totals increased. But no pileups. The highlight came in Holmes County when I gave a clean sweep to someone. I finished up the FQP in Wakulla County. This was a 20-meter FQP.

I did however keep my track record intact for having run mobile in all the FQP’s since 1980. God willing I will be back next year.

Here's a couple pics from my FQP2014 Adventure. Being Single Op, it's difficult to get Operator Pics on the road but I managed to snap a few scenes. Thanks for all your hard work on The Gazette!

73
Jeff WC4E - N4AO/m
**KT4Q**

I ran the contest solo this year from my home (fixed) QTH. My focus was on SSB but was able to catch a few mobile cw rovers while passing through or near my QTH. My results should be evaluated as SSB not mixed.

Like most the other band condition reports, they were significantly down from the last few years. Saturday was fairly good from noon to 8:00 pm. When 20m dropped out I went of course to 40m which was fairly poor. Sunday was pretty poor on all bands.Very difficult to maintain a run on 20m on Sunday but since I was running LP, that did not help. I tried to make a go at 15m and 10m. Had some luck on 15m on Saturday but 10m was really a waste of time.

Like always, I look forward to this weekend even though I am not on top of the competition.

Operating Station Details: Yaesu FT-1000MP MV @ 150w, Cushcraft X7 Yagi @ 65' on a Telescoping Tubular Tower and Yaesu Rotor, Carolina Windom 80 @ 35', MFJ-434 Voice Keyer, Vectronics HFT1500 Tuner, WriteLog 11.18c Logging/CW Generator

73 de Steve KT4Q

**Below -WA4OAB**

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73 de Steve KT4Q

**Below-N4MFC**

Here’s a pic of the N4MFC team that worked during the FQP. Left to right Rick N4FY, Jim KM4HI, Dave KK4DZP.

73
Jim KM4HI
The N4GI Story

By Chris Plumblee, WF3C

I’ve been pleased and honored to have operated FQP 2013 and 2014 as one of many multi-county mobiles, signing N4GI/m alongside Blake, the real N4GI. We made a big leap in sophistication and planning from 2013 to 2014, and were rewarded with more counties and an increase in raw QSOs of slightly less than 500, or 28% (from ~1,800 to ~2,300).

Our experience (granted, over only two years) says that simpler is better as far as physical setup is concerned. We operate from Blake’s Toyota pickup truck. The operator sits in the passenger seat with a cheap Amazon.com lap desk on his lap. The lap desk holds the logging computer and paddle. Between the front seats, Blake has permanently mounted the control head for his IC7000. The main body of the radio is mounted behind the driver’s seat. The antenna is a simple Hamstick mounted on the truck toolbox. After debating several logging programs, we settled on CQ/x by NO5W, which interfaces with GPS to automatically update the sent exchange information as we change counties throughout the weekend.

We improved our setup from 2013 to 2014 in a few critical ways. We eliminated an unnecessarily complex backup battery arrangement that was supposed to charge extra batteries from the truck’s electrical system through a solar charging diode. It was much simpler to just connect extra batteries to the truck’s electrical system, provided they’re charged up beforehand. We also eliminated the navigator’s laptop and purchased a more reliable logging laptop.

The biggest thing that improved our score was better route planning. I was a little too aggressive in 2014, which caused us to miss the counties at the end of our route both Saturday and Sunday. However, the planning for the bulk of Saturday and Sunday was sound. We had a 200 hour on Sunday afternoon in the northeast corner of the state, as we went through UNI, BRA, BAK, NAS, DUV, and able to cover more counties and see some of the country.

Mostly what bears repeating from FQP is the amazing out of state activity. It was the consensus of most with whom I’ve discussed FQP that activity was a little down from both in-state and out of state. However, the faithful few were still chasing the CW sweep, and we had a consistent pileup. As you can see, we averaged nearly 120/hr for the entire contest. As is typical, Sunday was better than Saturday, which makes for a nice change from other two day contests. We had a number of hours on Sunday above 150, including a 200 hour from the northeast corner of the state (BRA, UNI, BAK).

Blake and I had a really good time handing out QSOs and mults in FQP this year, and we look forward to refining our operating and planning to continue to improve for a number of years to come. If you haven’t gone mobile in FQP yet, and you’re thinking about it, I can’t endorse it strongly enough. It can be as difficult and complex as you want to make it, but if you can get everything working, even imperfectly, you can make a ton of qso’s and have a lot of fun. It’s the quickest way to emulate a Caribbean-style pileup without leaving the state.

Congrats Steve!

The 2014 inductees to the CQ Contest Hall of Fame are:

**J. Scott Redd, K0DQ,** is already a member of the CQ Amateur Radio Hall of Fame for his service to our nation as a US Navy Vice Admiral, Deputy Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, and the first Director of the National Counterterrorism Center. Scott has always found time within his professional duties for Amateur Radio and his first love, contesting. He is one of only two people to have won the Single-Operator category of all of the world’s major contests.

**Ed Muns, W0YK,** is a noted RTTY contest with nine Single-Op all-band and one multi-two championships and six world records. Ed is also Director of the CQ World Wide RTTY DX and RTTY WPX Contests, and manager of the North American Sprint RTTY event. He is also very active in the Northern California Contest Club and is a past club officer and director.

**Joe Reisert, W1JR,** a DXer and DXpeditioner since the 1950s, Joe has DXCC Mixed, Phone, CW, Digital and QRP with over 300 entities confirmed for each, along with 13-band Worked All States, 13-band Worked All Continents and CQ’s USA-CA All Counties award. Joe is also a pioneer in 432-MHz EME (Earth-Moon-Earth) communications, ran his own antenna manufacturing company (Antennaco), and is a prolific writer and public speaker.

**David Collingham, K3LP,** a leading DXer and DXpeditioner who is also focused on using Amateur Radio as an educational tool, at home and around the world. He has equipped a complete station at his hometown’s elementary school and has taught Amateur Radio to young people in Iraq, Ethiopia, and Rotuma.
FCGers seen at Dayton included: K1CC, K1KNQ, K1MM, K1PT, K1RQ, K1TO, K1XX, K3USC, K4FO, K4FU, K4GRD, K4MM, K4XS & WH7YL, K7JA & KL7MF, K8NZ, KB4T, KE1F, KR4X, KV4QS, NF4A, VO1MP, W2CQ, W3AZD & WB3ANE, W4DTA, W4GV, W4LT, W9KB and WB4OMM. Not a single Dayton photo was received from an FCG Member. Fortunately Tom K8CX caught quite a few FCGers in his Dayton Photo Gallery as shown on this page:

Above : New Member Ziv 4Z4OQ

Above: Charlie NF4A

Above: Dan K1TO

Above: Palmer K4FO

Above L-R Fred KH7Y, Randy K5SL, Bill K4XS. Hard to say what Bill is trying to describe there.

Left - Ron K8NZ

Right - Lou KE1F

Left:
Don W3AZD and Hope WB3ANE

Above L-R Tony W4OI, Rich K1CC
W1YL Organizes Welcome Dinner for Ward N0AX

Special thanks to all of you who showed up for the Smokey Bones welcome dinner for Ward, N0AX ....... WF3C, NX4N, K5KG and xyl, K4LQ and xyl, K5KG and xyl, N4GD and xyl, K1CC, WA5POK, K2EUH, K1TO and W1YL all enjoyed some good food and great talk!

A lot of nostalgia for your writer was apparent with K1CC producing the very first issue of the "Murphy's Marauders" newsletter, produced by the then W1YYM! (I even recognized my handwriting!)

From those early Murphy Marauders contest seeds sprung the YCCC, a very prominent New England Contest group. My family started Murphy's Marauders in Connecticut and after relocating to Florida we renewed the fun with the inception of our great dynamic group, The Florida Contest Group, FCG!

I remain I very proud of FCG, their support of the contest community and involvement in the coming WRTC!

73 --- OJ!

Ellen, W1YL/4

---

N8PR wins QST Cover Plaque Award

The winner of the June QST Cover Plaque award is Pete Rimmel, N8PR, for his article "A Portable Two-Element 6 Meter Quad Antenna" [http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/arrl/qst_201406/index.php?startid=30].”

The QST Cover Plaque Award -- given to the author or authors of the most popular article in each issue -- is determined by a vote of ARRL members on the [http://www.arrl.org/cover-plaque-poll] QST [http://www.arrl.org/cover-plaque-poll] Cover Plaque Poll web page. Cast a ballot for your favorite article in the June issue today.

Thanks and 73 Doug Rehmen K4AC

Director, Southeastern Division ARRL

---

W1MSW New ARRL Contest Branch Manager

Matt Wilhelm, W1MSW, of Williamsburg, Massachusetts, will be the new ARRL Contest Branch Manager. He will start work at ARRL Headquarters on July 3.

An active contester and a member of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club and the Hampden County Amateur Radio Association, Wilhelm has been licensed since 2009 and holds a General ticket. He became hooked on contesting after the first ARRL Rookie Roundup in April 2010. His expertise - and contest scores - have been rising ever since.

"I cannot tell you how happy I am to be the next ARRL Contest Branch Manager," Wilhelm said. "I'll be working hard to provide the high-quality support that contest participants have come to expect from the Contest Branch."

A native of Dallas, Texas, Wilhelm has an IT background in help desk operations and network security systems management. When not making contest contacts, Wilhelm enjoys mountain biking, home projects, and spending time with his family - his wife, Elizabeth, and his 2-year-old daughter Ruby.

Sean Kutzko, KX9X
Media and Public Relations Manager
XStravaganza 2014

By Frank Brewer K4EJ

On Sunday, July 22, 2014, Bill (K4XS) and Holly (WH7YL) hosted the 2nd annual XStravaganza at their home and * super station * in Hernando County. In all, about 40-45 attendees made the drive to enjoy the comradeship and delicious culinary delights. As promised, doors opened at noon and bar-b-que plus many delights brought by those attending began filling our plates at 2PM. Although we didn’t maintain a sign-in sheet, a multitude of call signs were recognized along with XYLs, including: AB4GO, K1KNQ, K1PT, K2EUH, K3SV, K4CC, K4EJ, K4XS, K5KG, K44SFd, K1DBG, KK4DZP, KK4VOA, KM4HI, KR4X, N2ESP, N4DXI, N4EK, N4FP, N4LZ, N4WO, N2P2 and N2P2C, NY4I, W1YL, W4LT, WA4OAB, WA5POK, WB2YYK, WC4E, EF3C, WH7YL, W04O. There were a notable number of amateur radio auto license plates in the parking area and quite a few of the St. Petersburg ARC (SPARC) were present, along with a surprise to see Group members from HI-land. There certainly was no lack of interpersonal action among those present … at one time hearing the person I was talking with was tough … the ambient noise level of conversation inside the house was at least a pile-up level of “20 over 9”!

As we drove north toward the K4XS QTH, the towers and aluminum were visible about 1 mile from the site, along with the frequent Hernando rain clouds. Bill lamented, as a result, “no one got a chance to operate AGAIN”, thanks to thunderstorms. But when the tops of your towers are about 500 feet ASL, your antenna farm IS part of the weather! Bill and Holly seemed to be everywhere all the time, consumed in conversation and as seen last year, the consummate party hosts.

Bill gave a tour of his current toys, and he later commented “at one point we set a record for how many people can squeeze into an 11 by 11 room (the ham shack). There must have been almost 20 people crammed in there”. Before we left for the trip back home, Bill also commented “some of the guys and W1YL had a chance to play with my new toy …. A *touch key* that operates by body capacitance by just touching the paddle. At first glance of the radio room, it appears amazingly simplistic with a pair of K3s for SO2R and a well-organized stack of rotor controllers, but that’s really the payoff, considering the phenomenal amount of unseen engineering that has been invested in this world-class station.

The gathering was a huge success, and the FCG spirit was felt by all … OJ buttons complimented call sign caps and nametags, and we all recounted what this is really all about … a remembrance of our FCG founding family, past friends and a continuation of the tradition of the both the Vic-Nic and Vic-Vic nic. Bill and Holly, we all thank you for your gracious hospitality and a wonderful afternoon.
K4XS Antenna Pictures

Left: Wayne KK4VOA and XYL

Right: Bill K3SV and XYL

Left: Frank K4EJ

Right: Lu W4LT and XYL

Left: L-R
Wayne N4FP
Marty WB2VYK
Jeanette NP2C
John NP2B
Contest Gazette

Left: L-R
Gary K4CC
John N4DX1

Right:
Ric W04O

Left: L-R
Bill K4XS
Jack K1KNQ

Above: L-R Tom K4MM, Pidge KD1BG, Trish KD4BRJ, Ed N4EK

Right:
Harley KK4SIB
Pat

Left L-R:
George K5KG
Jeff WC4E
Jack K1KNQ
Bill K4XS

Chowing down on the Porch
K8XS Towers & Antennas

It turns out that FCGer K4XS is not the only suffix XS station in Florida with an impressive set of towers and antennas.

Tim Taylor, K8XS in Sarasota - who operates primarily on a 40 meter net on 7163 Khz has a 170 Ft. Luso tower with 4 over 4 over 4 elements on 40 meters as well as 6 over 6 on 20. Coming soon, 2 elements on 80 M. A second 90 ft tower will hold antennas for 10 and 15 meters.

Dan K1TO was part of the installation team.
Initial Comments from K1TO

From the FCG Reflector -

Fun, rewarding, exhilarating, exhausting, satisfying...

The FCG presence was very apparent, between the physical presence of so many of us and the signs indicating the Tent sponsorships. And the FCG on-the-air presence was really terrific, boosting the QSO counts of the competitors significantly.

After 4 years of prep, the actual one week of WRTC was quite a culmination of that effort. It was wonderful to greet each and every one of the 118 competitors and 59 referees (plus alternates) that I had spent so much time certifying as Director of Team and Referee Selection. I did try to concentrate on getting quality face time with the DX folks since I rarely see them and on several nights, I was the last Director standing by several hours.

My role in all of this was unique, since I was also part of the Judging Committee. Our job became doubly difficult with the razor-thin margin that separated 3rd and 4th places. Being a Judge led to two other very late nights (after 3 AM).

Our FCG competitors really enjoyed the experience. I think Julio, AD4Z/HI3A took more pictures and video than anyone there! Dan, W4UH has already stated that he is hooked and coming back for the next one. Dave, N2NL finished real high again, barely missing the top ten. And Fred, K9VV's top 5 finish was tremendous!

Charlie, NF4A magically got assigned as a Ref to the OM team that finished second -- what a hoot! And Tom, CX7TT was a big help while we sorted out the problems that resulted from his OE team causing QRM to nearby teams.

Rich, K1CC was an unsung hero with an amazing amount of time spent on finding and evaluating operating sites.

George, K5KG and Walt, W7SE provided a first-class site experience for their team (NR5M & W2GD) and also helped to track down some QRM from a neighboring station. Chris, NX4N, his son Doug and Pete, N8PR also did great on a site that I wasn't able to reach (I personally visited more than half of the 64 sites over the course of Fri & Sat). Al, KJ3Q was also at a site that I missed. Bob, N4BP and Paul, K1PT with Pidge, KD1BG were also enjoying themselves as part of the festivities. Doc, N4WW rented a large van and was ready to transport a team, but wasn't needed. Never did see Marty, W1MD or Jim, K5AUP. Dennis, K7BV provided on-site Yaesu presence (and is a past competitor, by the way!).

Another lifetime highlight for me was getting so much quality time with Joe Rudi, NK7U. I've been a lifelong baseball nut and got to tour Fenway Park on Thursday with a small group that included Joe. He drove with his wife all the way from OR with all of the equipment for the winning team (KL9A operates primarily at Joe's).

Thanks again to the members of the FCG for being so supportive of this once-in-a-lifetime event!

vy 73, Dan

Ed. Note: Two of our Members Dana K1RQ and Marty W1MD actually bought WRTC stations, tents, antennas etc. (less the transceivers) after the WRTC activities were complete. A great Field Day setup!

Below is the sign that went on the tent at WRTC-14 sponsored by Ellen W1YL and the FCG. Thanks for sharing the picture Ellen. Newer members may not know that Jim K4OJ was the founder of the Florida Contest Group.
21 or More FCGers Attended the WRTC-2014 Activities in New England

From the FCG Reflector -

FCGers who attended WRTC in New England.
AD4Z Julio- Competitor, teamed with W4UH
CX7TT Tom - Referee
K1CC Rich - HQ Staff and comm center
K1PT Paul and XYL KD1BG
K1TO Dan - WRTC Team Selection
K5AUP Jim
K5KG George - Site Manager - Davao Circle
K7BV Dennis
K9VV/KP2 Fred - Competitor, teamed with VE3EJ
KH6/N2NL Dave - Competitor, teamed with W2SC
KJ3Q Al - Volunteer
N3ND Dan
N4BP Bob - Volunteer
N4WW Doc - Volunteer
N8PR Pete - Volunteer
NF4A- Referee
NX4N Chris - Volunteer
OM6MN Norbert - Referee
W1MD Marty - Volunteer
W4UH Dan—Competitor - teamed with AD4Z

Ed Note - To summarize - FCG provided two officials, four competitors, three referees, and at least nine volunteers to the WRTC-14 operation in New England.

Tents Sponsored by FCG and /or FCG Members with their WRTC Callsigns

K1T
In Memory of Bob White
W1CW
Jim White
K4OJ

K1F
Florida Contest Group

K1D
Florida Contest Group
Silent Keys

K1V
In Memory of Vic Dubois N4TO

K1U
In Memory of John Beck W4AI
Officials:

Dan Street - K1TO, Director of Team and Referee Selection, Member Judging Committee

Rich Assarabowski - K1CC. Member of the Site Acquisition and Testing Committee.

Competitors:

Julio Henriquez - AD4Z
Team Leader
North America Team 4 West.

Dan Thompson - W4UH
North America Team 4 West

Their tent was sponsored by the Alabama Contest Group

Referees:

L-R FCGer Tom CX7TT, with countryman Jorge CX6VM

L-R Jozef OM3GI, FCGer Charlie NF4A, Ras OM3BH

L-R Toni OH2UA, Kim OH6KZP and FCGer Norbert OM6NM

Fred Kleber - K9VV
Team Leader
North America 13 Caribbean
Country: Virgin Islands
Fred’s teammate was John Sluymer, VE3EJ

Their tent was sponsored by Grupo DXXE

N1M

L-R John VE3EJ
Referee Tom ES5RY
Fred K9VV

N6TV Photo

Dave Mueller - N2NL
Team Latitude 13 - Sponsored Team
Dave’s teammate was Tom Georgens W2SC

Their tent was sponsored by The Yankee Clipper Contest Club
WRTC—The N1M Story

By Fred Kleber K9VV

What an honor to be selected as a WRTC team leader! Having known, and operated with, teammate VE3EJ for years, he was a logical choice. Oh yes, his previous experience in 5 WRTCs, including a gold medal, didn’t hurt either. In preparation John and I ran a couple WPX CW contests, including a ‘dry run’ with the actual equipment we’d be using. It was important to exercise all equipment and eliminate any failure points.

As we pulled up to the site, we were warmly greeted by the owner KT3Y!! It so happens our site was in an apple orchard that had been converted to a local nature preserve. As we approached the site, the terrain kept climbing, up, and up, and up. A nearby tower with 2-way antennas on it was also a good sign. Once we hit the dirt road portion, we turned the AM radio on 530 tower with 2-way antennas on it was also a good sign. Once

It so happens our site was in an apple orchard that had been converted to a local nature preserve. As we approached the site, the terrain kept climbing, up, and up, and up. A nearby tower with 2-way antennas on it was also a good sign. Once we hit the dirt road portion, we turned the AM radio on 530 tower with 2-way antennas on it was also a good sign. Once

It was great to meet so many fellow contest addicts at the competitor orientation meeting. Team “Maple-Rum” (our team) was the last to draw its location & call sign, so we wished all of our competitors luck as they left for their sites. At last we were united with our judge Tom, ES5RY. Being last to leave, anxiously we departed for our site. Driving to our site, someone asked what would be the perfect call would be. I said that I was partial to “M”, so K1M would be a good call. Might also be due to the fact that many of my qualifying scores were from Radio Reef, KP2M. (Thanks to owner KT3Y!!)

As we pulled up to the site, we were warmly greeted by the “Beam Team” and “Site Team”. It was obvious from the outset that this team was very proud of their work. We had pre-labeled everything with colored labels, so assembly was textbook. We checked antenna orientation and SWR. The beam had very flat curves. The 80m dipole was resonant a little low on SSB, so we made some minor tweaks on it. We exercised the stations a bit to be sure everything was working as it should. Our referee enjoyed speaking with his friends back home in Estonia. His fellow countrymen (at another site) weren’t too happy about the report from the mother country that our site was consistently 1 s-unit louder than they were.

There were times when we busted pile-ups in one call, and other times when our competition would smoke us. We kept a close eye on 10 meters and made sure not to sit in one place too long. Our only exception was holding a frequency on 40m CW for 4½ hours! Following the advice of others, we made sure that we got to 80m early to ‘beat the rush’ and work easy HQ multipliers. We kept reminding each other to frequently sweep the bands for mults. The competition was fierce, and each time we worked other 1x1 WRTC calls, we were compelled to drive harder.

The contest ended Sunday morning and although it was a 24-hour contest, in many ways it felt like a 48-hour contest. Due to a software glitch, our multiplier count wasn’t being reported by the remote score reporting software. When we returned to the hotel, everyone was abuzz as our QSO total indicated a possible podium finish. Our heads were more into sleep, but that concept was short lived… For claimed scores, we were in 4th place, however extremely accurate (best of all teams) logging by a German team bumped us down to 5th place.

The human aspect of the competition was by far the most memorable. FCG had a FB showing, so it was like old home week. The added thrill of watching the world cup soccer finals on a big-screen TV was splendid. We made many new friends from near & far corners of the globe. The Russians, 9As and E7’s easily win for the most ‘multipliers’ at the bar!

The entire WRTC event must have exceed ISO-9000 quality control standards! I commented that the WRTC organizers must have taken “happy pills” because they were all walking smiling in the midst of the execution of their plan of many thousand man-hours. The experience of meeting such a wonderful group of fellow amateurs will forever be etched in our minds. We are deeply indebted to all of Team WRTC for making such a life-long memory a reality.

Just before the start of the contest we opened the envelope to learn our call sign. It was N1M, so we renamed our team to the N1MRODS. As the clock clicked over 12z it was off to the races. We averaged over 200/hour for the first 1/3 of the contest, and near that for the majority of the contest. Our plan was to work about ¼ phone and ¾ CW.

We had pre-labeled everything with colored labels, so assembly was textbook. We checked antenna orientation and SWR. The beam had very flat curves. The 80m dipole was resonant a little low on SSB, so we made some minor tweaks on it. We exercised the stations a bit to be sure everything was working as it should. Our referee enjoyed speaking with his friends back home in Estonia. His fellow countrymen (at another site) weren’t too happy about the report from the mother country that our site was consistently 1 s-unit louder than they were.

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L-R
John VE3EJ
Fred K9VV
Tom ES5RY
Site Support for WRTC Station N1D

By George Wagner K5KG

Site support for N1D was provided by the FCG team of George, K5KG, Bob, N4BP, Marty, W1MD, and Walt, W7SE. We were required to be on site for the entire duration of the WRTC activities from Thursday through Sunday, and our duties were to provide site security, make sure that the needs of the competitors and referee were met, meet and greet site visitors, including WRTC officials, the public and press, and keep the generator fueled and running.

Our team was dispatched to the site early Thursday morning. The site was located in an old military housing area on Ft. Devens, MA. The site was a beautiful flat, grassy area ringed by large oak trees. Shortly after we arrived, the WRTC “Beam Team” arrived to install the 40’ tower and antennas. They completed their job in about three hours, after which we erected the competitor’s tent, latrine, and fueled and tested the generator. That afternoon, Walt erected his elaborate field kitchen next to his camper van.

On Friday morning, all of the competitors and referees met at WRTC HQ, where a random drawing took place to determine their site location and who their referee would be. The competitors who drew our site were John, W2GD and George, NR5M, and their/ref was, Igor, UT7QF. After arriving at our site, we acquainted them with the antenna layout, tent, generator, latrine, etc. In addition, Chef Walt discussed with John, George and Igor what their food and drink preferences were so he could stock up on grub for the weekend.

John and George immediately went to work assembling their extensive station. They worked until late Friday evening checking and perfecting their two stations – K3 and IC7700 – voice processors, keyers, tuners, etc. On Friday afternoon, our site was visited by WRTC officials, other hams, and photographers and news reporters. We were kept busy handling the pile up of visitors and being interviewed by the reporters. This was definitely one of the highlights of the event.

John, George and Igor were then back early Saturday morning to get settled in before the 8 am start of the IARU contest. As planned, 15 minutes before the start, Igor presented John and George with the sealed envelope containing their call sign. N1D it was and, as soon as they knew the call, they programmed their CW and voice keyers. At 8 am they were off and running without a delay. Over the next 24 hours of the contest, things were pretty quiet. Chef Walt kept the meals going, John and George remained focused on the contest, Igor diligently monitored their operation, we kept the generator topped off, and caught naps as we could. Additionally, Marty helped us follow the live scoring to track the progress of each of the WRTC stations.

At 8 am Sunday the contest was over. John and George packed up their station in short order, and returned, along with Igor to WRTC HQ. The Beam Team arrived and took down the tower and antennas in much less time than it took to put them up. Marty, W1MD, purchased the site equipment, and Craig, K1QX, arrived with his pick up to help Marty haul it off. Once everything was cleared from the site, including a final run to a dumpster, our site duties were complete. On Monday evening the Celebration banquet was held and all of the winners were given their awards. All in all, WRTC was an outstanding experience for our team, not the least of which was having the opportunity to mix and mingle with all of the many contesters we met from all over the world.
N1S - Myles Standish State Park

Chris NX4N was Site Support Manager for this site. He was assisted by Pete N8PR and Chris’ son Doug. The competitors at this site were Andy YO3JR and Philippe LX3A/LX7I. The Referee was Mike KC7V. Photos by NX4N.

L-R
Andy YO3JR, Mike KC7V
Philippe LX2A/LX7I

20/15/10 m Cycle 24 TX-38 Tribander on a 40 ft tower was standard equipment at all sites. This one was at N1S.

Also standard was a 10 X 13 ft Tent This one was at N1S.

A 2 KW Power Generator was provided at each site.

More FCG Competitor Pictures

L-R Dan W4UH, Julio AD4Z/HI3A

The N1M Team in Action - Right Foreground John VE3EJ, Center Fred K9VV, Left Referee Tom ES5RY.

N1M Equipment Lineup

N1M - Rear of the Wireless Table

The N1M “Whole Enchalada” The Beam Team, The Site Support Team, The Referee and the Competitors.

L-R Tom W2SC, Dave N2NL
N6TV Photo

More FCG Member Referee Pictures

Above: FCGer Norbert OM6NM

Above: L-R FCGer Charlie NF4A with Robert S53R
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SARTG WW RTTY Contest 0000-0800Z Aug 16 and 0800-1600Z Aug 17

All Asian DX Contest, Phone 0000Z, Sep 6 to 2400Z, Sep 7

WAE DX Contest, SSB 0000Z, Sep 13 to 2359Z, Sep 14

ARRL September VHF Contest 1800Z, Sep 13 to 0300Z, Sep 15

CQ WW DX Contest, RTTY 0000Z, Sep 27 to 2400Z, Sep 28

CQ WW DX Contest, SSB 0000Z Oct 25 to 2400Z Oct 26

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW 2100Z, Nov 1 to 0300Z, Nov 3

WAE DX Contest, RTTY 0000Z, Nov 8 to 2359Z, Nov 9

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB 2100Z, Nov 15 to 0300Z, Nov 17

W1AW/4 Nov 19-25

CQ WW DX Contest, CW 0000Z, Nov 29 to 2400Z, Nov 30

ARRL 160-Meter Contest 2200Z, Dec 5 to 1600Z, Dec 7

ARRL 10-Meter Contest 0000Z, Dec 13 to 2359Z, Dec 14

**Ed Note:** All photos in this column are from the N6TV galleries. Thanks Bob.

To close out this newsletter - a few pictures of our President Dan K1TO in action at WRTC-2014

Above R-L Fred K9VV, Lisa W4LIS on their way to a Fenway Park Tour for WRTC Attendees.

Above: L-R George K5KG and Walt W7SE.

A fine photo from the EY8MM Picture Gallery - Thanks Nodir