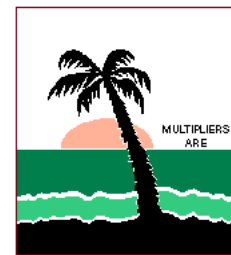


Contest Gazette

Florida Contest Group

www.floridacontestgroup.org



Volume 15 Issue 2

July 2008

From the President's Corner

By Dan Street, K1TO



As this is being written, many groups around the state are preparing for Field Day. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate.

While the ARRL takes the position that FD is not a contest, clearly its format suggests otherwise. And how many of us can attest to our first real exposure to contesting being at FD?! Please send those FD pictures and articles to Fred for the next issue of the Gazette. I know there was discussion last year about the FCG organizing a series of small efforts around the state and having a little internal club competition, but I've not seen a lot of recent commentary on that. Perhaps with the 2008 FD fresh on folks' minds, the thread will re-emerge soon and we can get aligned for next year.

FQP totals for logs and QSOs are again at record levels, with over 800 logs and over 91,000 QSOs being reported. The NEQP (as in W1, not NEbraska) saw an even steeper climb in activity this year and this seems to reflect a general upswing in QSO party activity. FQP conditions were definitely better than in 2007, despite the complete lack of sunspots. Nice to have FCGer KH7XS so active on Saturday, undoubtedly eclipsing any previous FQP efforts from west of CA. Thanks to Ron, WD4AHZ for already keying in all of the 2008 paper logs. Log checking is further along than usual at this date, although I can say with some certainty that we won't soon produce results in a week after the deadline as the 7QP just did! Thanks to the increased activity and better conditions, a number of record scores were set again this year! And most encouraging is the increase in fixed station submissions, more than offsetting a slight decline in mobile entries (can you blame them for reducing their driving with gas prices as they are?).

Also, we still need to complete the idea of offering citrus to top scorers to get us into the same realm as California offering wine, WA Salmon, etc. Noone has yet volunteered to administer the Worked All Florida Counties award.

Skimmer discussions had generated so much traffic that a separate e-mail reflector was created to unclog the CQ-Contest drain. Major contest sponsors are issuing temporary statements about using Skimmer, but I expect that the CQWW Committee will issue a decree before long that should set the tone.

Dayton was once again well attended by FCGers. Check out the pictures in this issue of both FCG members and new equipment releases.

According to the posts from temporary Scoremaster Fred, K9VV, we again did very well as a club in WPX this year, following up on a strong 2007 finish that had us knocking on the doors of the mega-clubs. Thanks to all who made the time to get on and contribute.

I can't state often enough that this is a contest in which the entire FCG is allowed to participate together, one of the very few.

How about 6 Meters? Sheesh! We are in a period of zero, or almost zero, sunspots, right? And stations in this area worked JAPAN on 6 Meters recently??!! That is just stunning. I'm continuing to see reports of W1s working Europe (why should 6 Meters be any different?) Hopefully, the spring Es will enhance FD efforts on 6M.

Upcoming in 2 weeks is my personal favorite summer contest - the IARU HF Championship. Activity levels on both CW and SSB are terrific and like WPX, you can work everyone for point credit. Perhaps the most appealing factor is the duration - just 24 hours. With many around the world chasing WRTC qualifying points, activity levels should prove to be even better than normal.

How many folks are planning to operate the IOTA Contest later in July? FCGers activated most of the IOTA groups off of Florida last year.

Welcome to our new members -- a good mix of returning members, new arrivals in FL, and folks who have been in Florida for quite a while and are just getting around to joining us.

Next month, Dan, W0CN departs the area to relocate to the DC area. Let's wish Dan well with an FCG gathering -- probably at Smokeybones in Brandon -- date TBD.

Speaking of gatherings, any volunteers to host a summer picnic in late July? We had very successful gatherings the past 2 summers at K4PB and K9VV, following on the heels of many years of the world-famous Vicnic at N4TO's.

Inside this Issue

Welcome Aboard, Events Calendar.....2

K5ZD New CQ WPX Contest Director, Mystery FCGer.3

FQP Mobile Pictures.....4,5,6

KJ4G New NFL SM.....7

Scott Spratt KT4PD Member Profile.....8,9

Dayton Hamvention Pictures.....10

FCGers at Visalia, Two 40M Beams go up at N4TO...11

New Equipment shown at Dayton - New DX Summit...12

And speaking of volunteers, another plea reprinted from the last issue:

Many of the large clubs have an appointed individual to track scores towards internal awards of some sort. I like the idea of not just awarding the top scorers, but more importantly recognizing the Rookie of the Year, Most Improved Player, Comeback Player of the Year, etc to steal sports analogies. Several have approached me about this general idea, so let's get the ideas flowing and get something implemented this year, pending a volunteer to do that tracking.

On a personal note, it was neat to work Reidar, YI9PT with strong signals each way on 20 SSB. Thanks to several other FCGers for helping to set up a schedule for Reidar's family to work him from the Tampa ARC clubhouse!

On another personal note, I was able to recently complete the sweep of seeing all 30 MLB teams play at home. I left Yankee Stadium for last, being a Red Sox fan - hi. Is there any interest in an FCG outing to see either the Rays or Marlins at home? Both are unlikely contenders so far this year and tickets for either venue are typically easy to obtain, assuming they aren't playing a big name team.

What are your antenna/tower/indoor projects for this summer in preparation for the fall contests?!

Thanks to all who sent in photos and articles for this Gazette - keep 'em coming!

GO FCG! OJ!

vy 73, Dan, K1TO



FCGers Lisa W4LIS and Fred K9VV operating /LA/ MM on a Norwegian cruise ship off the coast of Norway. No contesting, but they did talk to some Norwegian contesters.

Contributors to this issue: KT4PD, K9ES, N4PJ, KI4RI, W4ZW, K5KG, W1YL, K4VUD, N4KM, N4EEB, KJ4UY, K4JUY, KE1F, W4DT, WC4E, ARRL Contest Update.

Welcome Aboard



The following new members have joined FCG since the last newsletter:

KK3Q - Floyd Larck, 5841 Elon Drive, Orlando FL 32808-1809
e-mail: hamradio@kk3q.net

WB4PAP - Tom Hadoujlis, 1447 D. Jennings Ln, Rockledge FL 32955 e-mail: shadoulias@cfl.rr.com

W4HY - Julio Peralta, 237 Lakeside Drive, Lutz FL 33549 e-mail: w4hy@arrl.net

K4MF - Gary Fowks, 4801 Hidden Ln, St. Cloud FL 34771 e-mail: garymf@aol.com

KI4TG - Tim Madden, 3335 Greenville Street, Cocoa FL 32926 e-mail: ki4tg@arrl.net

N1ZX - Stan Antrobus, 6805 Warwick Ln, Stuart FL 34997 e-mail: n1zx@arrl.net

KI4RLP - John Gerstner, 1220 Pemberton Trail, Malabar FL 32950 e-mail: gerstjo@hotmail.com

K8DSS - Ed Gansen, 7336 Lake Forest Glen, Lakewood Ranch FL 34202 e-mail: edgansen@gmail.com

WW4B - Glenn Biggerstaff, 2 NE 327 Ave, Old Town FL 32680 e-mail: ww4b@ww4b.net

K4MM - Tom Colyard, 2102 SW Wayne St., Port St. Lucie FL 34202 e-mail: ae4ro@bellsouth.net

Events Calendar

IARU HF World Championship 1200Z, Jul 14 to 1200Z, Jul 15

North American QSO Party, RTTY 1800Z, Jul 21 to 0600Z, Jul 22

CQ Worldwide VHF Contest 1800Z, Jul 19 to 2100Z, Jul 20

North American QSO Party, CW 1800Z, Aug 2 to 0600Z, Aug 3

WAE DX Contest, CW 0000Z, Aug 9 to 2359Z, Aug 10

SARTG WW RTTY Contest 0000Z-0800Z, Aug 16 and 1600Z-2400Z, Aug 16 and 0800Z-1600Z, Aug 17

Randy Thompson K5ZD Named Director - CQ WPX Contests

CQ Communications, Inc. / 25 Newbridge Rd. /
Hicksville, NY 11801 / Phone:
(516) 681-2922 / Fax: (516-681-2926) / e-mail:
w2vu@cq-amateur-radio.com

NEWS RELEASE

For more information, contact:
Richard Moseson (W2VU)
Editor, CQ Amateur Radio
(516) 681-2922 / w2vu@cq-amateur-radio.com
Randy Thompson (K5ZD)
k5zd@cqwpix.com

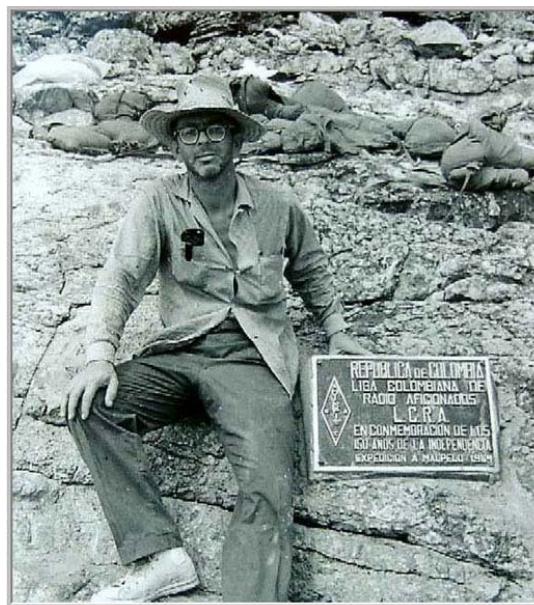
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 8, 2008

Randy Thompson, K5ZD, Named Director of CQ
WPX Contests

(Hicksville, NY) May 8, 2008 -- Contesting luminary Randy Thompson, K5ZD, has been named Director of the CQ World Wide WPX Contests, effective immediately. Randy succeeds Steve Merchant, K6AW, who has been WPX Contest Director since 2002 and who needed to step aside due to business obligations.

Randy has been a contester for more than three decades and has multiple wins to his credit in the single-op, all-band categories of both the CQ World Wide DX Contest and the CQ WPX Contest, in both CW and SSB modes. Randy is also a past editor of the "National Contest Journal" (a post he has held three separate times) and a co-founder of the eHam.net website. He is a long-time member of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club and an instructor at K3LR's Contest University. In the past year, Randy has been working with Steve Merchant behind the scenes on the WPX contests, so he is already familiar with the program from the administrative side.

Any questions regarding the 2008 WPX Contests (SSB weekend was held last March; CW weekend is at the end of May) should be directed to Randy via e-mail to <k5zd@cqwpix.com>. We thank K6AW for his years of dedicated service to the WPX Contests and look forward to a seamless transition to K5ZD's administration of the event.



Mystery FCGer

Who is this rough and ready looking FCGer leaning on a rock on an island off the Pacific coast of South America in 1969? Only his Dxpedition sponsor knows for sure. Wild guesses may be e-mailed to your editor. Answer in the next issue.



This is Ken, WB4ENE, replacing the Force 12 Balun on AA4HP's 30M beam. Ken is standing on a cross arm for the Force 12 Log Periodic, about 6 feet above the top plate of Rohn 55 Tower. Thanks Eric K9ES for the picture.

Pictures from FQP Mobiles Starting with N4PJ



N4PJ began operations from Gold Head Branch State Park NE of Gainesville , home of the Yeti.



Starting the FQP next to the Yeti is reputed to add at least 200 Quos to your FQP score. Art N4PJ cranking out the Quos below.



Above: Kevin Nuke's Nissan Terri which he and Dan KITO used to pilot K4OJ/M through 51 counties in the M/S CW LP mode.



Above: Dan KITO bangs out Quos in Seminole County just after an operator change.



Above: Note the FedEx box behind the antennas. It was a gift from K5KG on Saturday night. In an earlier FQP a box fell off a FedEx truck and wiped out the K4OJ antennas. Team KG was accused by Team OJ of paying the driver to throw the box. Investigations continue!

N4EEB/M



Above: N4EEB's Toyota 4-Runner with 20 meter (fore) and 40 meter(aft) hamsticks.



Above: John N4EEB in action. The custom designed bench supports the computer, remote head, a mouse and Benchner CW key . Below are the deep cycle marine batteries.



Above: pictures of the N4EEB/M mobile equipment deck.

This year's winner of the most unusual mobile spotted is shown below.



Fortunately, these guys didn't send in a log, so we didn't have to classify them as cow-sisted! (KITO suggested cow-sisted with spots ;<) (Can you imagine the debate on their legality on the 3830 reflector by the "I think therefore I write but rarely contest" crowd?)

K4KG/M



Above: At K5KG's house before the FQP began - Angela, Melissa, John W4IX, Winnie, Jim VE7ZO and Ron K8NZ



Above: Jim VE7ZO stands beside the Sigma 5 Vertical trailer, aka The Box Launcher



Kevin N4KM gets nailed by the famous Fedex Box. (See explanatory note at the bottom right on Page 4.)



Above; The assembled multitudes get a look at the Sigma 5 vertical as shown by George K5KG.



Above: Jim VE7ZO operating at the Nassau County Line.



Above: L-R VE7ZO, K1TO, N4KM, K5KG, W4IX, K8NZ at Team KG before the contest.

W4ZW/M



Above: The Cadillac Escalade of W4ZW/M



*Above; Jon W4ZW at the controls.
Below: The support area !*



Above: The N4AO/m (WC4E) mobile early Sunday morning on the South end of the Skyway putting on Manatee County.



Michael, Jeff (WC4E), and Amanda working hard on the FQP2007 Certificates.

KJ4G new ARRL NFL SM

In the only contested Section Manager race this spring, Paul Eakin, KJ4G, was elected as the ARRL Northern Florida Section Manager with 430 votes. Dale Sewell, W4NBF, received 385 votes, and Carl Zelich, AA4MI, received 370 votes. Ballots were counted Tuesday, May 20, 2008, at ARRL HQ.

Eakin's two-year term begins on July 1; he will be stepping into the office that has been held by Rudy Hubbard, WA4PUP, since 1990. Hubbard has served nine continuous terms of office. A Life Member of ARRL, Eakin is from the Tallahassee area and he has been a licensed radio amateur since 1969. He has a strong background in Emergency Communications and many years of emergency service experience.

Member Profile Scott Spratt KT4PD



Ed Note: Publishing Scott's Member Profile coincided with him receiving an award from his employer, so I have included both in this presentation.

First licensed as a Novice in 1977, at age 12. Original call-sign was WB1FPF, from Maynard, Massachusetts. Learned much about ham radio from next door neighbor K1GSK (now K1RY). Eventually upgraded to General class, but became largely inactive during college years at University of Lowell (Massachusetts) and the University of Hawaii. After starting a career with the National Weather Service in Jackson, Mississippi in 1991, became active with SKYWARN operations. Continued SKYWARN operations after transferring to Melbourne, Florida in 1993, upgraded to Advanced class and acquired KT4PD callsign. Have been a senior forecaster/meteorologist since 1998.

Currently serve as station trustee for the East Central Florida SKYWARN Group ARS - WX4MLB. Have organized SKYWARN Recognition Day annual events at National Weather Service Melbourne since 1999 (see http://www.srh.weather.gov/mlb/nwsse_ARCHIVE/nwsse2007.html). Many FCG members assisted with the SKYWARN events over the years, but it was the enthusiasm and encouragement of Eric, K9ES, and Jan, K4QD that finally caused me to join the FCG and return to the air routinely. It didn't take long afterwards for the contest bug to bite again!

In February 2005, finally set-up a station at the home QTH again, and upgraded to Extra class

early in 2007. Main interests are chasing DX and contesting. As of April 2008, I've worked 184 DXCC countries using an Icom 756 Pro II, with only 100 watts and a 20 foot tall aluminum (flagpole with 4 radials from Force 12. Current operations are split about 50-50 between SSB and CW, mainly on 15 and 20 meters, and occasionally on 10 and 40 meters.

As a member of the Florida Contest Group I recently partnered with Tom, WB4PAP, to work several contests from his nearby QTH. Thanks Tom!

Other than ham radio, personal interests include computers/internet, kayaking, and international travel. Have visited 40 countries on 6 continents.

NOAA Honors Scott Spratt KT4PD

(Thanks Eric K9ES for sending the timely add-on to the Member Profile below))

The following is a NOAA Press Release:

NOAA Awards Bronze Medal to NWS Melbourne Meteorologists David Sharp & Scott Spratt

NOAA has awarded its prestigious Bronze Medal to Science and Operations Officer David Sharp and Forecaster Scott Spratt of the National Weather Service forecast office in Melbourne, Fla. They are being recognized for their research and collaboration on severe weather hazards related to land falling hurricanes.

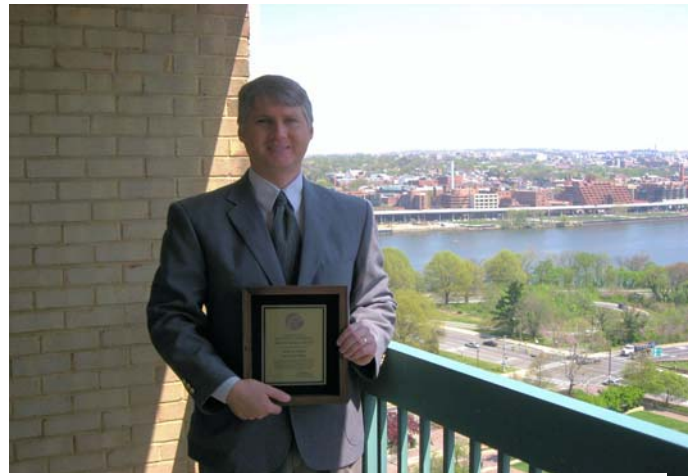
Specifically, their research has focused on developing procedures to increase forecast accuracy and warning lead-times for tornadoes, extreme winds and other hazards associated with the hurricanes. The work has resulted in more than 50 scientific/technical publications, optimization of radar operations and the first Warning Event Simulator training for rain band tornadoes.

"Their impressive body of work has been well-received by our partners in the emergency management community and the media," said Bill Proenza, director of the National Weather Service Southern Region. "It has also helped to invoke the appropriate public response when hurricanes threaten."

Retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph. D, undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator, presented the award on April 18 during a ceremony at the Andrew Mellon Auditorium in Washington, D.C.

The Bronze Medal honors superior performance characterized by outstanding or significant contributions that have increased NOAA's efficiency and effectiveness.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.



Scott holds the gold medal plaque after the award ceremony. The Potomac and Georgetown are in the background.

Scott noted “ All the time spent conducting the research becomes worthwhile after watching the techniques applied directly to forecast and warning process - ultimately achieving what we're all after, a more prepared public and reduced casualties.

Below: Scott on duty at NWS Melbourne FL



Dayton Hamvention Pictures

Thanks Lou Mecseri KE1F and Steve Romagni W4DTA



Above L-R Dana K1RQ, Chuck AD4ES, Charlie NF4A, Eric K9ES, Paul N4PN, Lou KE1F and Charlie K1XX



*Above L-R Dana K1RQ, Brian NJ1F
Below L-R Dave W4DN, Lou KE1F*



Above L-R, W1RG, W4DTA W4UM and W4DN



*Left - L-R
KA9FOX,
W4DTA (and
the YV rum)
and
K9NW*

Below: The indefatigable Steve W4DTA with his friends the ICOM girls, and with the US Tower Girl in the bottom picture. (More W4DTA pix next issue)



FCGers at the Visalia DX Convention



FCGs only member in Asia, Charly HS0ZCW



Above: K7JA, KL7MF AMD W1YL all /6 at Big Bubbas BBQ in Visalia.

Below: The same crew next to the "Ride The Bull wagon, (whatever that is) .



Two 40 Meter Beams back up at N4TO



Dan K1TO, Blake N4GI, Dale W4QM and , Fred K4LQ helped Vic N4TO get his 2 40M beams back on the tower on May 18. Above Dale W4QM on left. Below center Dan K1TO on the tower. Bottom: Vic N4TO and Blake N4GI finish connecting hardware to one of the beams



Ed Note Some of the following items are from the ARRL Contest Update Newsletter, some from pictures taken by FCCGers attending Dayton

New Equipment shown at Dayton



SteppIR's new DB-36 Dream Beam antenna was on display. It covers 40-10 M, is 60% of full size on 40M and 30M but virtually equals the performance of a full sized yagi. It has an 80 M tunable dipole option.

New amplifier models were shown at Dayton by Alpha (the Alpha 8410) and Emtron (the Emtron DX2A). Both amplifiers use 4CX1000A tubes made in China. The DX2A uses one tube and the newer DX3 models will use a pair of tubes. It may be possible to substitute 4CX1500A tubes that offer higher plate dissipation.



The Alpha 8410 Manual Tune Amp - 1500W 1.8-30 Mhz can be yours for \$5195.00 plus shipping and handling. More details at <http://www.alpharadioproducts.com/8410.asp>



The Emtron DX-2 Amp from Australia also puts out 1500 on all bands 1.8 - 30 Mhz. Read all about it at : http://www.emtron.com.au/amplifiers_dx2.php Price was not shown on the website.

If you like red, white, and blue in your shack, Vibroplex has introduced a line of keys and paddles with solid-color bases.

Idiom Press was showing off their new LogiKlipper RF Speech Processor and the Rotor Illuminator - a solid-state LED replacement board for those rotator control box light bulbs that keep burning out. (The burned out bulbs can be made into nice miniature Christmas tree ornaments!) Both of these new products have yet to make an appearance on the Idiom Press Web site, but expect information soon

New DX Summit Web Page

Ed Note: Since this facility is sometimes used by FCCGers, I thought the following might be of interest:

Launched in 1998, the OH2AQ DX Summit has been a reliable tool for DX and contest spotting for a decade. It was based on a concept and the computing power of those bygone days and changed radio forever. Activated on May 23, the new DX Summit, operated by the ham group Arcala Extremes (OH8X) and supported by Yasme Foundation Inc, boasts a 1000-fold increase in computing power with easy access to configure a Microsoft Server 2003 platform with dedicated servers for information handling and data storage. A huge amount of data will be collected for potential future applications. The system has been developed by Admino Technologies Ltd, located in Oulu, Northern Finland. The new URL for DX Summit is www.dxsummit.fi/

Florida Contest Group

Dan Street, K1TO, President
9993 289th Street East
Myakka City, FL 34251
k1to@aol.com

George Wagner
V.P. Operations
5113 Higel Avenue
Sarasota FL 34242
Georgek5kg@aol.com

Ron Wetjen, WD4AHZ
V.P. Florida QSO Party
5362 Castleman Drive
Sarasota, FL 34232
wd4ahz@arrl.net

Fred Perkins, K4LQ
Secretary/Treasurer
Newsletter Editor
3437 Lake Josephine Drive
Lake Placid FL 33852
k4lq@arrl.net