Contest Gazette

Florida Contest Group

www.floridacontestgroup.org

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From the President's Corner

By Dan Street, K1TO

RIP N6ZZ. A real pioneer in getting around, Phil operated from all 40 CQ Zones during the CQWW DX contest. His approach was to join a Multi-Multi for SSB and do a SOAB for CW. He holds all-time records in several of those zones and no doubt an incredible wealth of memories. Phil is a wonderful example of joie de vivre and a terrific role model for all of us. That Phil is smiling in the picture in this issue of the Gazette is no accident. For those who knew him, his sense of humor was constantly at work. Wonder if anyone ever busted his call as P5IL in an attempt to work a DXCC needed country. CU in Zone 41 some day, Phil...

FCG members have been busy since the last issue of the Gazette went out at year end. Entries in the Stew Perry 160 Test, RTTY Roundup, NAQPs, Sprints, ARRL DX, CQ 160s, WPX RTTY and SSB and many others were numerous. Check out the various score listings throughout this issue. Sure, the sunspots are minimal, but that just shifts the fun to lower bands. 160 especially has been a lot of fun this season.

The FCG is now sponsoring WPX plaques for the top Multi-2 USA entry on both SSB and CW. Maybe a few groups within the club would like to gun for that plaque on CW at the end of May?! And what do you think about sponsoring a yearly plaque for the New England QSO Party? That one is usually just a week after our FQP and one of their co-sponsors, the YCCC, sponsors a plaque in the FQP.

The long task of completing the FQP results for 2006 is almost complete. The results and accompanying article and statistics are posted. Thanks to WD4AHZ for taking my raw Word doc and adding pix and making a nice looking .PDF out of it. Plaques are shipped, thanks to K9ES. Many thanks to WC4E for stepping back in to do the lion's share of the certificate work again this year!

While we had a record total log count and a record number of QSOs in the 2006 FQP, there are still plenty of areas for expansion. Without K4OJ banging the drum on CQ-Contest and other reflectors, the publicity campaign is ripe for some assistance. Even though our in-state numbers have been going up, we aren't attracting as much out-of-state activity. Anyone want to help?

Our plaque program is very strong. Yet, there is persistent support for the idea of Florida citrus for some of the out-of-state winners to compete with the California wine and Washington Salmon. KK4TA sent a letter to the FL Citrus Commission with no response. I would think that we might get an local grower/grove to exchange oranges for ad space. Anyone?

K4QD and team are headed to Hardee County for a County expedition. That is very popular in CA where the counties are larger and mobile activity is not as prevalent. I've had this dream of FCGers finding fixed stations in *all* the rare counties, then going to one or several of them to operate along side the local op as a sort of training mission. After a while, each county has a competent operator from a fixed station. We might have to find "volunteers" and erect a tribander for them. What a neat long term club project!

Please also recruit operators at your local club meeting. Many of us also belong to a club in our area of FL and they would likely welcome the opportunity to get on 20 or 40 and be fresh meat! With the Techs having 10M privileges now, it's a shame that 10 will likely only be a local band. But with a little luck, there might be some e-skip or a bona fide 10M opening, likely to the S.

The FQP web site map is already fully orange, meaning that every county is covered at least once again in 2007. But please don't become complacent. We had one county that only had one mobile pass through in 2006. Finding a sweep is a popular goal for our out-of-state friends, so please do what you can to make Florida radio-active in the 2007 FQP!

If you notice a lot of Georgia, Michigan, Ontario, Indiana, W1 and W7 QSOs in your FQP log, you might thank those participants by reciprocating with QSOs in their upcoming QSO parties in April and May.

Several years ago, we announced the Worked All Florida Counties award. K4XS and K4XSS were the administrators, so we'll need a

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volunteer to pick this up. It would be good to have this in place prior to this year's FQP so that we can attract a few more award hunters.

K1DG came to FL this week and we pulled together a very last minute visit with 9 FCGers in Orlando! Doug is another well-traveled, interesting guy and a very solid op who has had some WRTC success. His tales of operating from EE5E last month were fascinating.

K9ES' article about the assisted category in this issue is meant to challenge the thinking that it really is a separate category. What do you think?

A few add-on comments to Lu's article:
- Putting a time limit on your calling is a good move. Many programs show rolling statistics of QSOs/mult and/or minutes/mult. Be careful of those because your log will be artificially skewed towards mults early on. Experience (or reading last year's results) will give you a better metric to gauge this against. For example, in SS, you might expect to work 800 QSOs with a sweep. Thus each section mult is worth 10 QSOs. If your current rate is 60/hr, then you only gain if you can work the mult in less than 10 minutes. In WPX or CQWW, the ratio is going to be lower, because there are so many multipliers to work. This is an area that packet-assisted stations especially need to understand. If you spend all your time waiting in pileups for multipliers, your multiplier doesn't have much to multiply by! Also, try to gauge the pileup. Are the big multis in there? If so, you are likely to wait longer, so come back later.
- When working spots, Lu mentions sorting them by beam heading. This is smart unless you have nearly instantaneous direction switching such as slopers or a Stepp-IR. One trick to remember is to try and swap VFOs constantly between two pileups, almost doubling your chances of working *something* instead of listening on the same frequency to another full QSO while you wait.
- While a band map is a neat thing, with automation, there really is no need to "tune" from end to end if you are pointing and clicking instead of actually touching your radio.
- For those who actually still touch their radio, a reminder that it is more efficient to tune "with the sideband". So on USB, tune from the bottom of the band up, and vice versa on the low bands. The same comment applies to CW. Different rigs allow CW to be on different sidebands, so just go with that flow.

Thanks to K4VUD for his nostalgic look at ham radio in general and how deep an impact it can have on so many of our lives.

We had a really good meeting in Orlando at the Golden Corral near the hamfest, with 45 attendees. A full summary was posted to the reflector and is reprinted in this issue.

Last call for dues. We're pretty patient, but if you've not paid, please decide and let Fred know your decision.

Hope to see many of you at the BBQ meeting in Okeechobee County on April 14! Details and directions on the reflector. That will be just 2 weeks prior to the FQP!

It's not too early to be thinking about the Huntsville hamfest in August which is the ARRL National Convention this year. The FCG will likely participate in the Contest Forum along with the clubs from AL, GA and TN. http://www.arrl.org/announce/nc/2007/huntsville.html

GO FCG! OJ!

vy 73, Dan, K1TO

Welcome Aboard

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

WC4H Carl Herrera, P. O. Box 16115, Miami FL 33116-1155 e-mail: wc4h@it is.net Welcome back Carl!

WP2C Scott Neary, 7175 46th Avenue Circle East, Bradenton FL 34203 e-mail: scott@sarasotasun.net

K2PT Reidar Larsen, 6 Varone Dr., Stafford VA 22554 e-mail: k2pt@arrl.net

N4DMD Douglas M Dunfee, 3561 3rd Ave. SW, Naples FL 34117 e-mail: n4dmd@arrl.net

KI4EEQ Jeanette R Harp, 12396 158th St N, Jupiter FL 33478. Jan is the xyl of long time member Alan K4PB

Events Calendar

2nd Annual FCG Spring Barbeque and Meeting at Camp Grace in Basinger FL April 14 12:30

Missouri QSO Party 1800Z, Apr 7 to 0500Z, Apr 8 and 1800Z-2400Z, Apr 8

Georgia QSO Party 1800Z, Apr 14 to 0359Z, Apr 15 and 1400Z-2359Z, Apr 15

Montana QSO Party 2300Z, Apr 13 to 2300Z, Apr 15

Ontario QSO Party 1800Z, Apr 21 to 1800Z, Apr 22

Florida QSO Party 1600Z, Apr 28 to 0159Z, Apr 29 and 1200Z-2159Z, Apr 29

New England QSO Party 2000Z, May 5 to 2400Z, May 6

Indiana QSO Party 1600Z, May 5 to 0400Z, May 6

CQ WW WPX Contest, CW 0000Z, May 26 to 2400Z, May 27

ARRL June VHF QSO Party 1800Z, Jun 9 to 0300Z, Jun 11

ARRL Field Day 1800Z, Jun 23 to 2100Z, Jun 24

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

Claimed Scores ARRL 10 Meter Contest

Station	Claimed	QSOs	US / VE MULTs	DX MULTs	MULTS TOTAL	Class	Section	HRS	OP(S)
K0LUZ	298,480	775			130	M-ONE	NFL	22.0	
K5KG	230,622	615	81	38	119	M-ONE	WCF	17.5	
K4DDR	129,168	418			117	M-ONE	WCF	24.0	
K1PT	96,832	312			89	M-ONE	SFL	10.0	
N4KK	86,040	277			90	M-ONE	SFL		K9VV
W4ZW	76,200	283			75	M-ONE	WCF	8.5	
K4PB	69,762	242			77	M-ONE	SFL		
N4CJ	54,208	242	36	20	56	M-ONE	WCF		
W4CU	47,616	217			62	M-ONE	SFL	10.0	PA3GVR
K4EJ	44	72			36	M-ONE	WCF	16.0	
N4OK	648	14			12	M-ONE	NFL		
N4WW	239, 372	721			83	SOHP CW	NFL		K8NZ
K1TO	337,792	929	57	35	92	SOHP CW	WCF	32.0	
N4BP	185,652	573	56	25	81	SOHP CW	SFL		
WJ9B	129,780	515			63	SOHP CW	NFL	18.0	
N4TB	127,576	431			74	SOHP CW	WCF	15.1	
W4QM	71,264	263	46	22	68	SOHP CW	SFL	12.0	
W4YA	14,820					SOHP CW	NFL		
W1MO	2,856	42	15	2	17	SOHP CW	NFL	1.6	
N4PJ	156,780	456			90	SOHP MIXED	NFL	14.0	
N8PR	144,640	422	71	42	113	SOHP MIXED	SFL		
K4LQ	122,740	381			95	SOHP MIXED	WCF	19.6	
AD4TR	118,320	380	61	24	85	SOHP MIXED	NFL		
WX4G	88,704	355	51	37	88	SOHP MIXED	WCF	8.0	
W4OV	55,522	228			71	SOHP MIXED	SFL		
K4QD	55,352	315	46	23	69	SOHP MIXED	SFL	9.5	
N6AR	50,400	191	52	23	75	SOHP MIXED	NFL	5.0	
W7QF	29,052	156			54	SOHP MIXED	NFL	4.0	
KE1F	25,648	125			56	SOHP MIXED	NFL		
W4CEO	18,972	118			62	SOHP MIXED	NFL	12.0	
NJ2F	55,614	403			69	SOHP SSB	SFL		
K4ADR	30,160	260	39	19	58	SOHP SSB	SFL		
WA4ASJ	11,592	138			42	SOHP SSB	SFL	14.0	
K4OJ	158,688	551	50	22	72	SOLP CW	WCF		N4KM at W1YL
WK2G	115,656	474	47	14	61	SOLP CW	WCF		
WD4AHZ	97,648	359			68	SOLP CW	WCF	32.0	
W4FDA	78,246	276			81	SOLP CW	NFL	9.0	
WB4TDH	69,216	309				SOLP CW	WCF	18.0	
K4MM	33,660	154	36	19	55	SOLP CW	SFL		
K4PG	14,000	100			35	SOLP CW	SFL		
W4KPG	7,192	58			31	SOLP CW	SFL	5.0	
N4WO	1,710	27			19	SOLP CW	NFL	2.6	
WB4FSF	1,012	23	8	3	11	SOLP CW	NFL		
N4GI	48	6	1	1	2	SOLP CW	WCF		
W4UM	4	1	1	0	1	SOLP CW	SFL		
AD4ES		10				SOLP CW	SFL		at K9ES
N4EK	30,504	146			62	SOLP MIXED	NFL		
K4GKD	28,700	165			50	SOLP MIXED	WCF	4.0	
K9ES/wc	10,320	74	21	23	44	SOLP MIXED	SFL		WheelChair Op
N9JRZ	9,780	86			30	SOLP MIXED	NFL		
AD4Z	8,580	81	17	16	33	SOLP MIXED	SFL		
W3VR	7,772	117				SOLP MIXED	WCF	5.4	
W3TB	7,700	92			25	SOLP MIXED	WCF		
W4EBA	5,832	61	23	4	27	SOLP MIXED	NFL		
NA4CW	2,640	44			17	SOLP MIXED	SFL	1.4	
WA4EEZ	3,960	60			33	SOLP SSB	WCF		
KK3Q	484	22				SOLP SSB	NFL	4.0	

TOTAL 3,635,388

FCG PANHANDLE SCORES

N4OX	138,060	887			78	SOHP SSB	NFL-P	16.2
KN4Y	38,356	223	33	10	43	SOLP CW	NFL-P	16.0
K4JAF	12,330	124	26	19	45	SOLP MIXED	NFL-P	4.0
KB4ET	8,118	99	24	17	41	SOLP SSB	NFL-P	4.5
NF4A	6,670	69			29	SOHP MIXED	NFL-P	2.4

P/H TOTAL 203,534

OTHER FCG SCORES

CX5BW 1,611,630 2154 235 M-ONE DX

N2NL/6 145,748 503 83 SOHP MIXEDSF.

W4TAA/VE3 96,432 343 98 SOLP MIXED

Orlando Hamcation Meeting Report

Attendees: AC5ZS, AD4Z, Frank Brewer Jr., HI3CCP, HI3LFE, K0LUZ, K1TO, K4EJ, K4LQ, K4PB, K4QD, K8NZ, KC4HW, KD4BRJ, KE1F, KE4XP, KI4HCM, KL7MF, N4DL, N4EK, N4KM, N4OK, N4OO, N4PJ, N4WW, N6AR, N9JRZ, NA4CW, W0CN, W1YL, W3VR, W4CEO, W4DKB, W4EIP, W4JN, W4KPG, W4QM, W4STB, W4TV, W4YA, WB4FSF, WC4H, WD4AHZ, WF3C and WO4D. Forty-five attendees!

Also spotted at the Hamcation were K1PT, K9ES, KD1BG, KP2N, KR4U N4CJ, N4KW, N4TO, W3AZD, W4DTA, W4IR,W4SAA, W4SLR, W4UM, WA4EEZ, and WB3ANE.

Dan began the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves with their funniest phonetic!

Fred K4LQ then gave his Treasurer/Newsletter/Secretary Report:

- Going into the meeting, 2007 dues have been paid for 110 Members. That leaves us with 83 members yet to be paid for from our 2006 base. Our membership has settled into the 180-200 range in the past few years. We have been losing and signing on new members in about equal amounts each year. The FCG Treasury contains $4983.47 and the W1CW/K4OJ Memorial Fund $1957.00.

- Ellen W1YL and I were at another club meeting in Orlando in December, where Bob K4UEE was selling DVDs of the 3Y0X DXpedition for $20. Ellen suggested we take $20 from the memorial fund to purchase a copy. I did so with the intent of showing it at a future FCG meeting.

- Paul K1PT and I are working on an article for the newsletter on power line noise. We hope to obtain an interview with the FP&L employee responsible for curing Paul's power line problem, as well as results of a member survey on their experiences in this area.

- Thanks to a lot of member inputs, we produced 122 newsletter pages with 198 pictures in 2006. This makes us larger and more colorful than our major contest club newsletter competitors. It is a real pleasure to work with a group that allows me to make this happen,

- My continuing thanks to Frank K4EJ for his help in collecting scores and building spreadsheets with the data. Relieving me of that chore gives me more time to spend on other club support activities.

Dan thanked Frank K4EJ, Fred K4LQ, Ron WD4AHZ and George K5KG for their support of the club, and Jim W4YA for arranging for the meeting facility again this year. Each received hefty amounts of applause, waking up the otherwise sleepy Golden Corral crowd outside our private room.

Dan asked for those attending their first FCG meeting to introduce themselves...

W0CN - Dan
Active duty Air Force, transferred recently from Hawaii. Has served in Iraq and on Air Force One. Is mainly a SSB operator. Did a DXpedition to KH9/Wake Island while serving in HI. Will do CQWW SSB from Bonaire with the PJ4E team.

WB4FSF - Bonnie
Has operated the FQP several times and prefers CW. Using an ICOM 718 and a ground mounted vertical. Born in Sanford and still lives there.

W3VR - Lu
Rebuilding his station. Using a TS-850 and tribander on a 50 ft tower. Favorite contest - WAE, because of the challenge that QTCs presents! Just got into RTTY 3 wks ago.

K4QD - Jan
Favorite mode RTTY. Works a lot from the Melbourne club station (W4MLB) from which AF4Z is currently working CQ WPX RTTY contest (note the EXCELLENT score that this team produced!). Will be heading to ZD8 soon for the 160 Meter SSB contest, then to HH4 for WPX SSB.

N4PJ - Art
Favorite contest CQ-M. Told a humorous story about working this contest many years ago single band 15M, and winning 1st place North America and 3rd place World in this limited category, resulting in a Russian medallion arriving many months later!!

N4OK - Steve
Proud father of N9JRZ. First operated CW in 1961 and became active again in contests in 1990.

N9JRZ - Palmer
As N4OK's son, enjoying their friendly competition with suboptimal antennas. Planned to go home and operate the WPX RTTY contest.

AC5ZS - Bob
Reactivated his station in 2000 in Merritt Island. Enjoys the IOTA contest.

Tatino HI3CCP/HI3C and Lorenzo HI3LFE were introduced by AD4Z and WC4H. HI3CCP reiterated his invitation for FCG members to visit the Dominican Republic to contest from his super station at Loma del Toro. Also, some of the team will have an IOTA expedition to NA-122 with maybe an HI0 callsign on June 9-17.

Dan asked whether others were signed up for the IOTA contest in July (dubbed Inmates On The Air since Sheriff N4OX is operating!)

Jim KC4HW briefed us on the status of the Alabama Contest Group which he formed recently, also invited all to participate in the Alabama QSO Party which is scheduled for 12 hours on the first Saturday of June. The ARRL National Convention will be held in Huntsville in August and the FCG will be invited to assist with the Contest Forum.

Dan did a survey with a show of hands as to who planned to work the upcoming contests.
- The most popular was of course our Florida QSO Party on April 28-29.
- Not far behind was next weekend's ARRL DX CW contest, during which the J7OJ team will be active as a Multi-Multi entry and K8NZ will be at PJ2T as part of a M/2.
- The currently running WPX RTTY, ARRL DX SSB and WPX SSB contests all had 12 arms raised for them.
- Tonight's NA Sprint had 6 arms go up (although only one of them was confirmed to be on - hi).

Dan noted the upcoming ARRL elections for Director and Vice Director in September. Sherri W4STB is running for SE Div Director and spoke briefly about her qualifications and campaign plans.

Dan mentioned that the NCCC sent him a DVD on the subject of SO2R contesting. Lu W3VR will look into the mechanics of making and distributing copies.

Dan said that Jeff WC4E would be unable to make up the FQP packages and certificates this year. Dan thanked Jeff for his many years of service in this area. Dan asked if there were any volunteers to take on this task this year, but there were none present. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT TOPIC AND WE STILL NEED A VOLUNTEER ASAP.

Lu W3VR gave a presentation on "Multi-Distributed Contest Operation Technology". This type of operation ties in several remotely located stations using the internet to work under one call in a contest operation. Other than the W1AW and NU1AW operations, this is illegal under present contesting rules. Lu suggested the club could experiment with it to check out its feasibility and perhaps be on the leading edge of a getting a new contest category recognized in the future and if the FCG could host NU1AW/4 -- perhaps for IARU in July 2008. Red K0LUZ volunteered to work with Lu to do some testing.

One kind attendee is considering hosting the summer picnic previously held at N4TO's for years (and known as the Vicnic), then at K9VV/W4LIS last year (and became the VVnic). Stay tuned for details.

Thanks to Dan K1TO for editing this report.

Fred K4LQ,
Secretary, FCG

K1TO Conducts Meeting ***Ron WD4AHZ***

Julio AD4Z ***Eric K9ES***

L-***R Jan K4QD , Arnie W4EIP Jim KC4HW and Joe W4TV (obscured) Orrin WO4D***

Foreground L-R K4EJ's Father and Frank K4EJ , Background Eric W4KPG (obscured) Sherri W4STB and David W4DKB

Assisted Versus Non-Assisted

By Eric Smitt K9ES

Over the past few years, there has been considerable dialog concerning the difference between the Single Operator and the Single Operator – Assisted distinction. By those compiling the "basic rules of contesting", the term "Assisted" refers to any single operator who receives spotting assistance either via a spotting network or cluster input. It is evident that "Search and Pounce" operation is enhanced by assistance. But what exactly is assistance. I believe that assistance is the use of evolving technologies to enhance the ability to operate a radio (during a contest).

When I began operating contests in the early 1960's with the Germantown Radio Club, operating involved writing down the calls worked, the time worked, and other pertinent data (required per the contest format). A second massive sheet was often involved to eliminate duplicate contests. This sheet was called "the dupe sheet" and consisted of a large grid broken down by prefix entry across the horizontal axis, and numbers (0-9) across the vertical. Different prefix entries for the same country were further delimited by underlining, circling, or boxing the suffix portion entered. So in a "quick" search, you could see whether you had worked the station, or it was a new one to be worked. Duplicate contacts were reduced. But the logs had to then be compiled and submitted.

As personal computers entered the mass marketplace, amateurs soon started working on logging programs that would perform data entry such as time and date, as well as canned responses such as signal report, and other data. K1EA devised a package that was delivered to the YCCC. This package was CT and was tailored for specific contests. Technology entered amateur radio, and contest performance improved. But the ARRL (or other organizations) did not differentiate between computer logs and paper logs. In fact, computer logs were readily accepted because they allowed direct transfer of the station's performance into a contest database, without manual intervention.

AK1A (also YCCC) who worked for Digital Equipment Corporation saw that packet radio was an emerging technology, and using his professional experience, developed a packet network software package that almost eliminated the "voice spotting on 2M" that often resulted in home battles because the 2M radio would blast out at the most inappropriate time "YA1SQ on 14204". I think wives appreciated packet spotting as much as the avid DX'er did. But YCCC saw that isolated packet networks could share data, and the cluster software was added. Technology entered amateur radio again, and Search & Pounce scores improved. The contest "guru's" immediately differentiated those single operator stations from those using packet and made a new class of entry called "Assisted".

But radios are improving. Radios such as the IC7800 and the Yaesu FT9000 have dual receivers built in. Other stations use multiple radios. In my first operation at a massive Multi / Multi (W2PV), Jim used duplicate radios per band, with one operator working a "Run" frequency, and the second operator searching for new multiples ("S & P"). Lets see the implication of software technology enhancements in amateur radio.

We already have software that decodes RTTY, PSK-32, and even CW signals into English. Now take this a step further, and parse the data for specific information such as "Callsign". And go one step further and control a 2nd radio (or 2nd receiver in a radio) to scan a band segment for this data. It is easy to see that the "band map" from Writelog or N1MM can be loaded from this scanning / decoding / parsing, without the need for packet input. With improvements in speech recognition software, this technique could be applied to SSB as well. The government has used this technology for years, and I am certain that in the not to distant future, technology will bring these enhancements to amateur radio contesting (and even DXing). So what do we call this type of operation? Is it assisted or single operator? And who should care?

Amateur radio has always sought the most technological advancements to improve our hobby. This automatic scanning / decoding / parsing is far better than just using the cluster. The only stations that would be listed are those that can be heard by the station, not the YB listing from a JA at 1 PM in the afternoon. Contest scores will improve, and those who have the means will take advantage of the advancing technologies. But with even the best technology, skill will always be required. The operator will still have the final decision as to who to work, and what band to spend time. And the operator will have to bust the pile-ups.

So is the "Assisted" category a valid class of operation, or is it an extension of technology enhancing our hobby. Your guess is as good as mine

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Ed. Note: If you have any comments on Eric's article, I'm sure he would like to hear from you on or off the reflector!

Note from our most Western Member

The call KH7XS has been officially granted to The Big Island Contest Club. I am keeping the old K4XS, but will use KH7XS for contests. Holly has been granted WH7YL.

I hope to activate KH7XS for a few QSOs in FQP

KH7 Xraaaaaaaay Shuga

Forgive me but I have to send this...

By Charles Harpole HS0ZCW

From the reflector…..

I started ham radio at age thirteen, the time when young people are seeking simultaneously two opposing goals-adult independence versus group belonging and bonding. Ironically for a medium devoted to communication, ham radio blends these two goals uniquely. Ham radio fulfills my need to belong while definitely keeping my desired isolation: radios have an on and off knob and, during contacts, the flavor is, at once, both intimate and distant, friendly like a brotherhood and yet mostly transitory and ephemeral. It perfectly fits my personality. Ham radio, for me, has outlived my parents, my first marriage, my youth and my middle age. It is a constant in a turbulent world.

And, yet, like me, it is nearing the end of its life. It appears that there is just no way to pass on to today's teenagers the wonder of radio, the adventure, the shared fraternity of instant friends, the code of honor, or the simple delights of "getting on the air." Everything changes and acceptance of that lets one live happier, but I still want to record a little part of this amazing phenomenon, ham radio, while it is still vibrant.
The wonder and adventure part of ham radio is like that arising from looking at maps that still had "unknown territories" marked on them. Now, GPS will tell you to the square meter about any place on earth. But, turning on a ham radio transports the operator back to that sense of unpredictable adventure, blending "wanting to know" with anticipation and appreciation of what may come by chance and skill. There are times, when I am deep into the "zone," totally concentrating on hearing and tuning, that "the band" becomes, for me, an actual place that is alive, a location, a space inhabited, from one turn of the knob to the next, by living signals from somewhere beyond me. The "not knowing what will happen next" is so much a part of the adventure of ham radio. Remember that time when the rare DX actually called you?

The shared fraternity of friends likely had its origins with early radio when the sparks shack kept ship passengers alive and when the operators were sworn to secrecy. Do we remember the old dictate that ham radio operators never divulge the content of messages heard? That code of honor to both keep secrets and to be a very real lifeline bonded radio operators to each other.

That, and shared difficulties-learning the code and electronics, making and keeping a station, helping each other. The bonding comes as the older ham patiently taps out CW for your struggling brain. Brotherhood comes, too, from holding the end of a rope that secures a yagi at one-hundred feet, knowing that if you slip, your ham buddy above will suffer. And, doing it all purely for the love of the activity; that is, truly being an amateur in the fullest sense of the word. Ham radio is leaving Florida and arriving half way around the world in the airport in Nepal and having a smiling face there holding a placard with K4VUD on it. Or, again in the Delhi airport with three hams to greet me, drive me to a Pizza Hut, and then to my hotel. Or, there and in Thailand, have local hams deliver the impossible-to-get operator license for me, and in three days!

Ham radio is, at a Field Day, worrying as the operator spills an 807 down onto a 6146 in a Johnson Ranger-and delighting that I know what all that means! And then there is the joy of knowing you can actually help people. Ham radio is, as a teen, being saluted by a uniformed soldier because you-young you-just gave him a ham radio message noting his buddy was ok coming out of flood waters. Or the mother who, because of you and your radio, now knows her son survived the tornado. Or the world knows conditions following a massive tsunami.

And, then, there are the rag chews. The simple joy of indulging in ordinary-or is it extraordinary?-talk. The surprise when the other guy also shares your exact health symptoms-gives helpful coping hints. Or, the detailed description of an operator's sheep ranch in New Zealand when you yourself have just ventured to the next State. Or the man who recounts his having actually talked with both Barry Goldwater and the King of Jordan. Or the operator proclaiming himself in "radio free Lithuania" following the fall of the Soviet Union and then telling all about his feelings.

The combined intimacy and isolation imparts the phenomena of "a stranger on a train" which brings out the delightful personality and memorable stories from the ham in all of us. And at those times when we open up and talk, we know our little confidences will be kept even while the whole world could be listening. And what about ham radio's instant friends? That phrase seems improbable but, remember the eye balls-"I finally meet the guy I have talked to for years" "I have never heard of you before, but sit down and let me get you a coffee and tell you about the Texas shack that has twelve towers." "You need a new 3-500Z? One is in the mail to you!"

Ham radio is all of this and, as we on the inside know, it is much, much more. What a fine ride it has been-and, defiantly, still is!

73
Charles Harpole, HS0ZCW

Ed Note: Well said OM, I think a lot of us would agree.

Claimed Scores ARRL DX CW

Station	Claimed	QSOs	MULTs	Class	Section	HRS	OPS	RATE/HR
N4OK	162,096	307	176	MULTI-MULTI DISTRIBUTED	NFL	13.0	N9JRZ, N4OK - CHECKLOG	24
K9OM	158,400	600	88	SINGLE-OP 40m HIGH	NFL	12.0		50
WJ9B	1,001,052	1,215	276	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	NFL	37.0		33
N6AR	373,965	535	233	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	NFL	11.0		49
N4CC	309,810	451	230	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	NFL			
W4YA	270,048	464	194	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	NFL			
W1MO	14,964	86	58	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	NFL	2.0		43
K0LUZ	809,208	908	297	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	NFL	22.0		41
N4PJ	526,932	714	246	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	NFL			
KE1F	428,544	576	248	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	NFL			
N4WW	313,608	358	292	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	NFL			
W4CEO	69,723	183	127	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	NFL	13.0	500 watts/HamSticks/Comet	14
W4AA	675,441	753	299	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	NFL			
N4EK	71,400	200	119	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	NFL			
N4WO	54,126	186	97	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	NFL	14.1		13

FCG : NORTH FLORIDA - NFL
TOTAL 5,077,221

K9ES	119,616	448	89	SINGLE-OP 80m HIGH	SFL	14.0		32
W4QM	782,100	859	300	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	SFL			
WX4G	105,120	240	146	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	SFL	7.0		34
W4OV	5,922	47	42	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	SFL			
K1PT	1,707,810	1,510	377	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	SFL	30.0		50
K4PB	535,149	613	291	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	SFL			
K4MM	278,628	436	214	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	SFL			
KT4PD	118,854	279	142	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	SFL	21.5		13
W4KPG	10,692	68	54	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	SFL	2.5		27
W4UM	27	3	3	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	SFL	0.1		30
AD4Z	187,110	330	189	SINGLE-OP ALL QRP	SFL		1st QRP effort from USA	

FCG : SOUTH FLORIDA - SFL
TOTAL 3,851,028

WB4TDH	46,716	229	68	SINGLE-OP 15m LOW	WCF			
K1TO	1,545,108	1,556	331	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	WCF	19.0	SO2R	82
W4IR	177,174	307	193	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	WCF	7.9		39
K5RQ	81,420	236	115	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH				
N4GI	54,108	167	108	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH	WCF			
N4TB	1,016,532	1,128	302	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	WCF	28.4		40
W4CU	494,592	644	256	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	WCF			
K4LQ	461,700	570	270	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	WCF	23.0		25
W4ZW	308,430	451	230	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	WCF	9.2		49
WK2G	847,656	1,158	244	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	WCF	35.0		33
N4IG	407,790	591	230	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	WCF			
K4GKD	350,238	538	217	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	WCF			
W3TB	170,172	348	163	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	WCF	14.0		25
W3VR	156,813	318	167	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	WCF	12.0		27
WD4AHZ	108,420	278	130	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	WCF	8.0		35
N4TO	22,152	104	71	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	WCF	2.0		52
K4EJ	11,970	70	57	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	WCF	2.0		35
N4CJ	710,026	726	326	SINGLE-OP ALLLOW (A)	WCF	28.6	G4BUE	25

FCG : WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA - WCF
TOTAL 6,971,017

FCG - DX OPERATIONS

C6AHR	143,028	823	58	SINGLE-OP 160m HIGH	C6		N8PR	
C6AKQ	375,240	2,170	59	SINGLE-OP 40m HIGH	C6	34.0	N4BP	64
C6APG	215,064	1,236	58	SINGLE-OP 80m LOW	C6	25.0	K4PG	49

TOTAL 733,332

FCG
TOTAL 16,794,694

NF4A	234,972	428	183	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)	NFL-P	9.0	NF4A	48
KN4Y	104,682	240	146	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	NFL-P	16.0		15

FCG : NFL - PANHANDLE
TOTAL 339,654

OTHER FCG : OUT-OF-STATE

KH7XS/m		360		SINGLE-OP ALL LOW	KH6	5.5	IC706/TarHeel from the truck !	65

OTHER FCG - HONORABLE MENTION

J7OJ	7,490,343	7,589	329	MULTI-MULTI HP	J7	48.0	K5KG, KK9K, WI9WI, K1XX, W9IU	158
PJ2T	7,961,610	7,992		MULTI-TWO HP	PJ2	48.0	K8NZ + other CCC members	167

Misc. Claimed Scores - Smaller Contests

Call	Score	QSOs	MULTS	Class	Section	OPERATOR(S)	HRS
OK/OM DX Contest, CW							
WJ9B	27,234	105	89	SOAB-H	NFL		5.0
W4CU	26,414	254	47	SOAB-H	WCF		
Makrothen RTTY Contest							
W4GAC	2,165,150	456		M/S High	WCF	AA1IK, N2ESP, KP2N, KR4U, KB9XLH, N4RI, W4CU, WA4EEZ	
RAC Winter Contest							
WX4G	75,528	263	36	SOAB-H MXD	WCF		4.0
N6AR	8,988	642	14	SOAB-H MXD	NFL		
K9ES	21,750	111	25	SOAB-L MXD	SFL		2.0
STEW PERRY Top Band Challenge							
WJ9B	804	238		SO-H	NFL		6.0
N4TB	161			SO-H	WCF		
K9OM	1,200	236		SO-L	IL		
KN4Y	874	102		SO-L	NFL		
ARRL RTTY RoundUp							
K4QD	175,968	1504	117	MULTI-1 H	SFL	K4QD,AF4Z,WF3C,AK4R, K3VN,K9ES,KI4BUE,KI4GHK	24.0
K4LQ	26,026	286	91	MULTI-1 H	WCF		18.0
N4BP	166,167	1497	111	SOAB-H	SFL		23.0
N6AR	28,350	315	90	SOAB-H	NFL		7.0
WX4G	12,880	184	70	SOAB-H	WCF		
W4QG	82,818	774	107	SOAB-L	NFL		
KE1F	22,176	308	72	SOAB-L	NFL		
N9JRZ	14,570	235	62	SOAB-L	NFL		9.0
K8NZ	14,040	234	60	SOAB-L	WCF		7.0
K4ADR	12,383	203	61	SOAB-L	SFL		
N4WO	3,200	80	40	S0AB-L	NFL		3.8
N4OK	1,170	46	26	SOAB-L	NFL		7.5
HA DX CONTEST							
N6AR	17,244	105	36	SOAB-H	NFL		
UK DX RTTY							
W4CU	22,724	261	52	SOAB-H	WCF		13.6
WX4G	7,812	116	36	SOAB-H	WCF		
ARRL VHF - JANUARY 2007							
W4TAA/VE3	19,374	176	66	SOAB-L VE3	6-2-432		22.0
WX4G	60	11	6	SOAB-LIMITED - EL87	WCF	6 METERS CW and SSB	
BARTG RTTY							
WX4G	133,956	366	67	SOAB-H	WCF		
W4CU	96,615	339	62	SOAB=H	WCF		
W3VR	3,234	49	25	SOAB-L	WCF	FIRST RTTY CONTEST!	2.1

From the ARRL Letter March 2,. 2007

NOTED CONTESTER PHIL GOETZ, N6ZZ, SK

World-class Amateur Radio contester Phil Goetz, N6ZZ, of Alto, New Mexico, died unexpectedly February 27. He was 64. Goetz reportedly suffered a cerebral hemorrhage while playing racquetball. Past ARRL Southwestern Division Director Art Goddard, W6XD, called Goetz, who competed on phone and
CW, HF and VHF/UHF, "a consummate contester."

"The contest community has lost one of its most outstanding practitioners and Amateur Radio has lost a fine gentleman," he said this week.

Goddard said, "Phil always kept his composure on the air, even when dealing with unruly pileups after 40+ hours of nonstop contest operation. He was most thoughtful of other members of his contest team and was ready to apply his quick wit and sense of humor to any situation."

ARRL Southwestern Division Director Dick Norton, N6AA -- himself an active contester and DXer -- said he and Goetz were best friends and had operated contests together since 1965. Norton said he'd miss Goetz's assistance with CQ World Wide DX Contest log checking and as a good friend.

An ARRL member, Goetz had the distinction of being one of only two radio amateurs to operate the CQ World Wide DX Contest from all 40 CQ zones. ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, said Goetz operated Zone 5 -- saving the easiest zone for last -- from his station in 2004.

"He did a great job, placing in the US top 10 from an unfamiliar station, and he taught me a thing or two about SO2R [single operator/two radio] and staying in the chair," Sumner recounted.

Goetz was a key member of the judging committee at the World Radiosport Team Championship (WRTC 2006) in Brazil last July. He was a member of the Sierra Blanca Amateur Radio Club and the A-1 Operator Club.

I crossed paths with Phil at the PJ2T station this past November. He had operated with the PJ2T CQWW SSB team a month before, and was doing a layover on Curacao on his way to Surinam for his PZ5ZY CQWW CW operation.

He spent a bit of time operating, and a lot of time relaxing with us and discussing his travel to exotic locales in every CQ zone and the completion of his new house.

The photo to the left is of Phil sitting on our pavilion overlooking the Caribbean,

73,

Jeff Maass K8ND

ARRL Announces HQ Reorganization

NEWINGTON, CT, Jan 22, 2007 -- ARRL Chief Operating Officer Harold Kramer, WJ1B, has announced several organizational changes at ARRL Headquarters. The changes, which were shared with the ARRL Board of Directors when it met January 19 and 20, became effective today. Under the modified organization, most functions of the former Membership Services Department and Field and Educational Services will be combined into a single unit, tentatively called the Programs and Services Department.

"The new department will focus on providing first-class service to members and volunteers, and it ultimately will combine common functional areas like awards and certificates and mailings," Kramer explained, citing some of the advantages of the reorganization. "It will also permit better management and integration of programs and services as well as cross-training of staff members to improve efficiency."

Dave Patton, NN1N, has been named manager of the combined department. "This will allow us to take advantage of Dave's expertise in DXCC, contesting and Logbook of the World (LOTW)," Kramer said. Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, will become assistant manager of the combined units, bringing along his expertise in F&ES while continuing his responsibilities as ARRL club and mentoring coordinator.

Sharon Taratula will provide administrative support for both departments while continuing to oversee the data entry staff and the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service.

Kathy Allison, KA1RWY, will shift to full-time support of LoTW.

ARRL Regulatory Information Specialist Dan Henderson, N1ND, now reports directly to ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, and will continue to address regulatory issues.

Claimed Scores - ARRL DX SSB Contest

Station	Claimed	QSOs	MULTs	Class	Section	HRS	RATE/HR		OPS
AD4TR	670,617	832	269	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH		NFL			
N6AR	236,400	394	200	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH		NFL	9.0	44	
N4LZ	76,494	209	122	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH		NFL	14.5	14	Ex-W4CEO
N4EK	110,160	272	135	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		NFL			
N4WO	34,362	138	83	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		NFL	34.1	4	
KE1F	5,100	50	34	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		NFL	1.0	50	
WJ9B	3,510	40	30	SINGLE-OP 160m HIGH		NFL	7.0	6	
K9OM	15,000	100	50	SINGLE-OP 40m HIGH		NFL			
N4PJ	85,932	341	84	SINGLE-OP 20m HIGH (A)		NFL			

FCG : NORTH FLORIDA - NFL
TOTAL 1,237,575

NJ2F	160,254	307	174	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH		SFL			
W4STB	12,312	72	57	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH		SFL	10.3	7	
N8PR	503,304	626	268	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)		SFL	16.5	38	
K1PT	482,514	587	274	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)		SFL	18.0	33	
K4ADR	206,340	363	190	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)		SFL			
WA4ASJ	75,210	218	115	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)		SFL	13.2	17	
AC5ZS	52,920	180	98	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		SFL			
KT4PD	28,782	117	82	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		SFL	11.4	10	(Force 12 Flagpole Vertical)
W4KPG	1,800	25	24	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		SFL			
K9ES	86,400	360	80	SINGLE-OP 80m HIGH (A)		SFL			

FCG : SOUTH FLORIDA - SFL
TOTAL 1,609,836

K1TO	2,373,000	2260	350	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH		WCF	34.0	66	
K5RQ	767,844	1108	231	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH		WCF			
W4CU	108,204	254	142	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH		WCF			
N4GI	9,954			SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH		WCF	2.4		
W4ZW	13,860	84	55	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)		WCF			
W4TAA	433,242	678	210	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		WCF	30.0	23	
N4IG	154,656	358	144	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		WCF			
W3TB	136,710	310	147	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		WCF	11.0	28	
W3VR	191,160	354	180	SINGLE-OP ALL LOW (A)		WCF	12.9	27	

FCG : WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA - WCF
TOTAL 4,188,630

FCG
TOTAL 7,036,041

NF4A	333,720	515	216	SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH (A)		NFL-P	14.1	37	

FCG : NFL - PANHANDLE
TOTAL 333,720

OTHER FCG - HONORABLE MENTION

W7RN	210,726	510	138	MULTI-ONE ALL HIGH		NV	10.5	49	K5RC, K5KG
KH7XS/m		76		SINGLE-OP ALL LOW		KH6			K4XS/m

Data Analysis In Contesting
The Numbers Tell The Tale

By Luis V Romero, W4LT

When I started contesting back in the late '70's, Multi-Multi band positions were always manned by two people, the operator and the logger. I was relegated to duping and logging for my more experienced "Elmers". It was there I learned "the trade".

We passed contacts between band positions with notes on paper and managed needed mults with a blackboard. When I graduated from being a logger, I was assigned to the mult hunting radio, scouring the bands with an ear to the speaker and an eye to the blackboard. After some indentured servitude in these roles, was I deemed worthy of being the operator on the main run radios, but only on 15 and 10, because the elite ops were on 20, 40 and 80. These were the guys that taught me a lot of tricks that I still use today.

Manual logs on paper and the dreaded dupe sheets were the technology of the day. That, along with having to adjust the exciter and final loading plus tweak the transmatch when you moved frequency and calculate beam headings with the map on the wall, added to the complexity of making QSO's. It also added to the pile of melted exciter and amp tubes when you forgot to tune after a QSY. Splits? Lots of fun on Heath 303/401 twins!

Now, in the "modern" computer integrated days, we have connected clusters that give us spots and set the rig up for the splits, SO2R setups, auto tuners and solid-state finals. The computer tunes the VFO, turns the antenna to the right bearing, logs your frequency, checks your QSO for dupes and alerts you if you have a possible entry error. Then the information gets saved to a database.

Forget the past! These are the good old days!

With all this technology comes the opportunity to evaluate the data gathered in exacting detail. All that data is in the computer, so it's a simple matter to look at it, organize it and see how you are doing and how and where you might be able to improve. The numbers tell a tale of the hardware and methods used. It gives clues as to how you can improve your performance and where the strong and weak points of your station or technique are.

At W3VR, I currently participate in Phone, RTTY and CW contests, in that order. I have a modest station consisting of a Hy-Gain TH3JRS triband beam at a maximum of 37 feet and a dual band trap dipole at a maximum of 35 feet on a small 40-foot telescoping tower. I don't currently own an amplifier so, until the kids are out of college, I make do with my existing main transceiver alone, a InRad filtered Kenwood TS-850S/AT at 100 watts maximum.

W4LT Operating Position:
AEA Contest Keyer, Behringer 1000 Headset modified with Heil DX4 Boom Mic, Alliance HD73 rotor controller, MFJ 993 Intellituner, Behringer HA400 headphone/speaker interface, Behringer UB802 Audio Mixer, Kenwood TS850S/AT, Yamaha powered speakers Nye SSK-1 \paddles,

My antennas are optimized for the phone portion of the band, since this mode is less RF efficient than CW or RTTY and I need every watt I can get. My antennas are not very broadband, so I fool the rig into loading them on the lower parts of the bands by using a MFJ 993 auto tuner external to the rig. I find that it tunes faster than the internal rig tuner, plus, it has instant bypass and an antenna switch to select the two main feedlines at the push of a button (my other rig, a TS-430S, doesn't have a built in tuner, so I keep it for this reason too). All of these antennas are fed with coax, in my case, Times Microwave LMR-400 (I told you I am serious about getting every last bit of RF to the antennas I can, didn't I?)

W4LT Antenna and Tower: EZ-Way HDX-40 tilt over telescoping tower, Alliance HD73 rotor, HyGain Thunderbird 3 Junior, Dual band 40/80 dipole with Reyco Traps. W2DU Current Baluns, 30 meter mobile whip dipole mounted above

While this station is not world class by any means, its what I have and fits my current needs. I have found that it is not that much of a slouch when it comes to stateside contests, however, I know I won't be in the top layer of the callers to a big gun. I am mostly relegated to search and pounce in international contests, especially on SSB, but since my roots are in Mult Hunting, I have found that this is my lot and have learned to like it.

The advantages to this setup are few, but if you look with an optimistic eye, they are there. The tiny tower and little tribander's decent performance, along with a very good radio and serious attention to effective audio processing in SSB plus good software and filtering on RTTY/CW make me quite competitive on 20. In contests such as Sweepstakes and NAQP, I can hold a frequency and run for extended periods of time.

When 15 is open, much the same is true, and I am able to compete in pileups for Oceania and Far East stations as well as Australia and South America. As propagation improves, 10 meters will be useful to me as well to these areas of the world.

Since the antenna is low, the angle of radiation is higher than I would like for DX work, but acceptable for stateside contacts. I have difficulty with Asia unless conditions are good. Any QSO's requiring beaming over the poles is very difficult for me under the low sunspot and high auroral absorption conditions such as that which we are currently experiencing. But since I'm near the tropics Transequatorial propagation on 15 and 10 are very helpful, as is my new short callsign and Spanish fluency, the "secret weapon" for South American QSO rate with a low power search and pounce station.

The low bands are the biggest challenge in my station's performance, however. Because of the layout of my lot, my 80/40m antenna is oriented in a somewhat slanted inverted vee fashion. The orientation of the wire is broadside northwest by southeast, with a somewhat skewed angle of mounting creating a slight vee with the smaller angle pointing directly north-northeast. I have found that I have a very good signal into the Northeast and Midwest and have been successful in working the West Coast and Hawaii consistently. I find that I have difficulty with Africa and deep Middle East, but I can hold my own into Europe, especially when the Europeans are working split. Being so low is also helpful for Caribbean coverage, but anything past Brazil is a struggle on 40.

On 80, the issue is similar to 40, with coverage into the ConUS being good but I am sure that the angle of radiation of this wire on 80 is almost straight up at its height, not the ideal situation for DX work. Trap loss doesn't help either.

So these are the technical cards I have been dealt. What I have to do is play the hand well, knowing the limitations of my deal. The nice thing about Ham Radio is that you often know the other player's hand!

For me, the game is Search and Pounce. So the key is maximizing my ability to turn over stations. The spotting network is a godsend for me, but it puts me in a different class. So I often deal with no Telnet and do it the old fashioned way.

I use N1MM as my contest logger. It is well designed for my style of operation. One of the best things about this software is its ability to populate a bandmap with self-spotted stations. One of the keys to my search and pounce strategy is to start at the top or the bottom of a given band and spend no more than 30 seconds to a minute working the stations I find. When I hear a calling station, I immediately copy their call into the Callsign window. If I cant work them in that time period, I move on. N1MM then spots this station on the bandmap for me when I move the VFO more than 300 Hertz (this is the default setting and can be changed in the software configuration) This then allows me to return to this frequency by just clicking on the callsign in the bandmap at a later time.

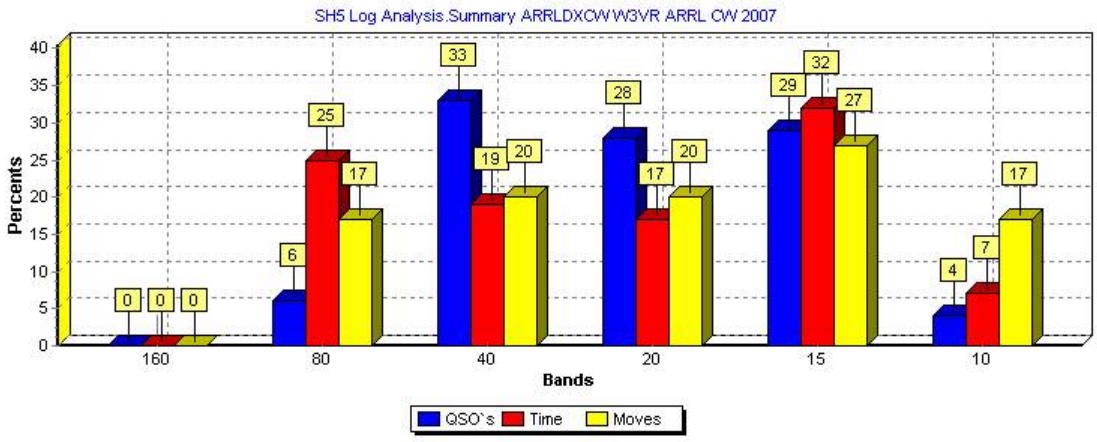
I have found a very useful program called Xnote Stopwatch (www.xnotestopwatch.com) that allows me to set a repeating count-down counter with transparency over the N1MM logger screens. I set the stopwatch to count down and when the time is up the computer emits a beep, then I move on. This software also has an external reset trigger, and I have plans to set it up to sense a contact closure from a footswitch someday. Right now I can manually reset it by hitting the Windows Logo key that I have re-mapped for this purpose using KeyTweak (http://webpages.charter.net/krumsick/).

After I get to the end of the band, or anytime I like, I can return to any of the spotted calls by clicking on them. I can also use control-up arrow or control-down arrow to cycle through the calls. In the Available Mults window, these spots can be sorted by various parameters. I tend to sort them by beam heading since my Alliance HD-73 rotor turns slowly, so I try to work as many as I can at fixed beam headings and then move to the next beam heading and repeat the process.

I make extensive use of the N1MM memory keyer system in all modes. It is a blessing in SSB and allows me the luxury of being able to talk when I go to work on Monday. I will never do a phone contest without DVK if I can help it.

Now that you know my setup and strategy, I can show you how my station performs in the heat of battle. I have found a fabulous analysis tool called SH5 by Dimitry Gulayev UA4WLI (www.rescab.nm.ru) that manages and displays a myriad of interesting data after ingesting my log.

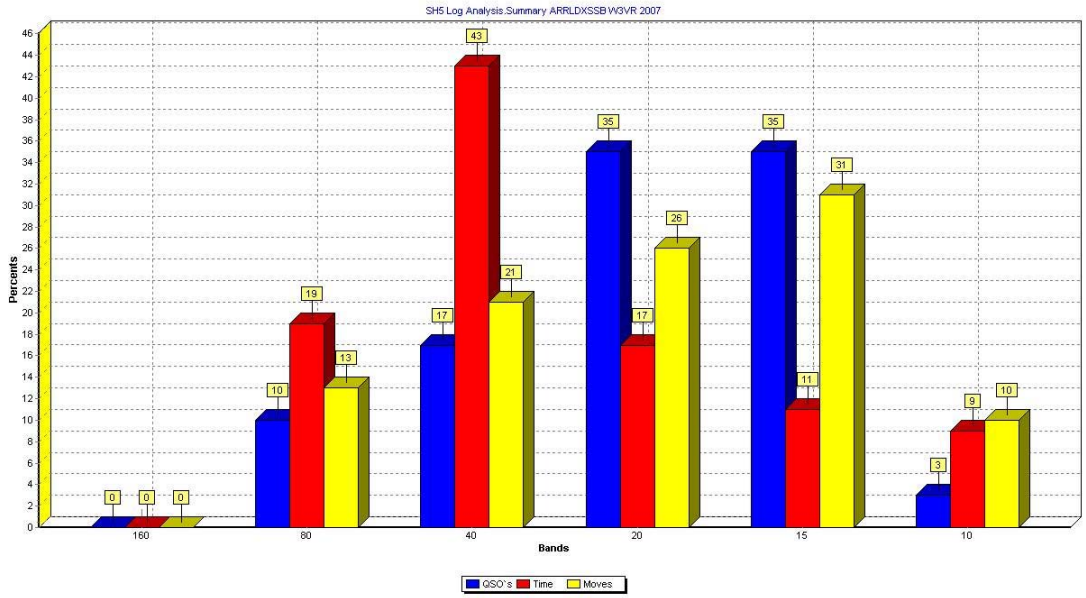
For example, lets compare my performance in ARRL International DX CW vs. the same contest on Phone. My scores were similar in these contest segments as was my operating time.



This is a graphical example of my performance on CW. In this contest, I was 100% search and pounce. So my "moves" percentage is similar on all bands. Now note the percentage of time vs. the percentage of QSO's on the 80 meter and 15 meter band in relation to the same statistics on 40 and 20 meters. Note that the amount of time that I spent calling vs. the amount of QSO's worked was much worse on 80 and 15 than on 40 and 20.

Why? Conditions on 15 were quite poor this weekend relative to the SSB weekend, so I spent much more time looking for people and calling people. It was different on 40, where my count was good. On the CW weekend, all Q's were simplex as opposed to almost exclusively split on the SSB weekend. Also, on 20, where my signal is decent and I usually can get a station without too long of a wait, I was much more efficient.

Now, here are the statistics for the SSB portion of this contest:



Note the difference in the ratio of calls vs. QSO's on 40 meters. I spent nearly 40 minutes trying to work a ZL2 when I ran out of red call signs on the spotting network on 40 in the last hour of the contest. This showed up in my time vs. call ratio.

SSB was all split operation with Euros, Caribbeans and South Americans on 40 and it also shows in the stats. Even though the logging software makes it easier to set up split, and sometimes automatically sets it, it does take longer to do, especially when you cant trust the cluster to have the correct callsign or split frequency spotted. I did a lot of work for those Q's on 40 meters. The ratio is not good, though.

Also notice that my move percentage in this contest resembles the move percentage in the CW contest. On SSB, I was 99% search and pounce in this contest and had a small run of a few stations on 15 vs. the CW contest. Also notice my productivity on 20 and 15 in comparison to the CW contest. This shows me that I am was quite competitive and efficient on 20 and that my 15 meter work was very productive, as the band was in decent shape for the SSB weekend. It didn't take me much time to find stations to work, hence the time differential.

You can see the search and pounce ratio in both contests is reasonably similar. Run stations would have low yellow columns, as they do not move much.

See the high call to stations worked ratio on 80? This is due to feeding 100 watts to a dipole on this band. This doesn't go very far. But look at 20 and 15. My station's strengths show there, as my ratio is quite respectable for a search and pounce operation.

You can see that the 10-meter band was not very productive in either contest. Both graphs show similar ratios.

So what does this all tell me? It tells me that I could improve my score by doing the following:

- Improving my signal on 40 and 80
- Reducing the time I spend trying to work stations on 40 and 80
- Resist the temptation bust a pileup with a station by hanging on too long.
- Hope that the higher bands are open
- Get an amp for 80 and 40 to even the playing field.
- Stay on the higher bands as long as possible where I have the best signal.

With computerized logging, all this data is available to you to learn how to maximize your operating style and equipment systems. For me it's a lot of fun to analyze the data after a contest and see how my station and operating style fit in to the contest. The key in all of this is that every year, my scores should get better.

The old Elmers in my distant past would be jealous of our ability to do performance analysis. I often wonder how they would stack up in today's environment.

K5KG, K5RC operate W7RN

After many years, the dynamic duo of K5RC and K5KG were together again for a DX contest. We only managed 10.5 hours on the air, but that was plenty in a phone contest. Quite a difference for George after 8,000 Q's last month in the CW test from J7OJ.

George K5KG operating W7RN

Note the three stack of Alpha 77s!

L-R: Paul PA0GMW and Eric K9ES

Paul PA0GMW and his XYL Janet visited the QTH this AM. My XYL and Chuck AD4ES joined us for lunch. Paul runs a full size 80M 4-Square from NW Netherlands, and is easily worked on SSB after 4:30 PM in Florida. He has 320 radials, and the site is located on flat farm land, formerly covered by the sea, about 5 miles from the North Sea.
Eric K9ES

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