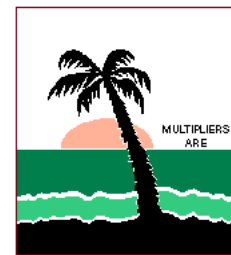


Contest Gazette

Florida Contest Group

www.floridacontestgroup.org



Volume 14 Issue 4

October 2007

From the President's Corner

By Dan Street K1TO



Inside this Issue

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Welcome Aboard, Events Calendar.....</i> | <i>2</i> |
| <i>Recent Antenna work at WIYL QTH.....</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>J70J Pictures ARRL DX CW Feb 07.....</i> | <i>4,5</i> |
| <i>July Meeting Report from K4PB QTH</i> | <i>6,7</i> |
| <i>NAQP Claimed Scores.....</i> | <i>8</i> |
| <i>Miscellaneous Claimed Scores.....</i> | <i>9</i> |
| <i>Final Scores ARRL Jan VHF & RTTY Roundup, N3ISH Pictures... </i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Contest Buddy Program Update - By George K5KG</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>The Best Contest Ever - by Ward N0AX.....</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Dash Cartoon, Tips from Contest Rate Sheet.....</i> | <i>12</i> |

Welcome Aboard



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

KG4TPZ Jane Beattie, 17577 Bridle Lane, Jupiter FL 33478 e-mail janebeat@bellsouth.net

W4TBB Tom Beattie, 17577 Bridle Lane, Jupiter FL 33478 e-mail: tbeattie@bellsouth.net

N3VVF Heather Edwards, 10 River Road, Apt. 3-P, New York NY 10044

K5AUP Jim Kimball, POB 849, Zellwood FL 32978 e-mail: jwkimball@aol.com

N3EA Alan W. Maslin, 8181 Azure Coast Blvd., Lake Worth FL 33467 e-mail: amaslin@earthlink.net

Events Calendar

California QSO Party 1600Z, Oct 6 to 2159Z, Oct 7

Melbourne Hamfest - Oct 13 & 14, FGG Meeting K9ES QTH October 13 - Details on Reflector and on Page 10

North American Sprint, RTTY 0000Z-0400Z, Oct 14

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB 0000Z, Oct 27 to 2400Z, Oct 28

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW 2100Z, Nov 3 to 0300Z, Nov 5

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB 2100Z, Nov 17 to 0300Z, Nov 19

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, CW 0000Z, Nov 24 to 2400Z, Nov 25

ARRL 160-Meter Contest 2200Z, Nov 30 to 1600Z, Dec 2

ARRL 10-Meter Contest 0000Z, Dec 8 to 2400Z, Dec 9

Content Credits

Thanks to the following for the articles and pictures in this edition: K4EJ, K5KG, N4BP, N0AX, NA0ED, ARRL Contest Rate Sheet, QRZ.com

Recent Antenna Work at W1YL's QTH

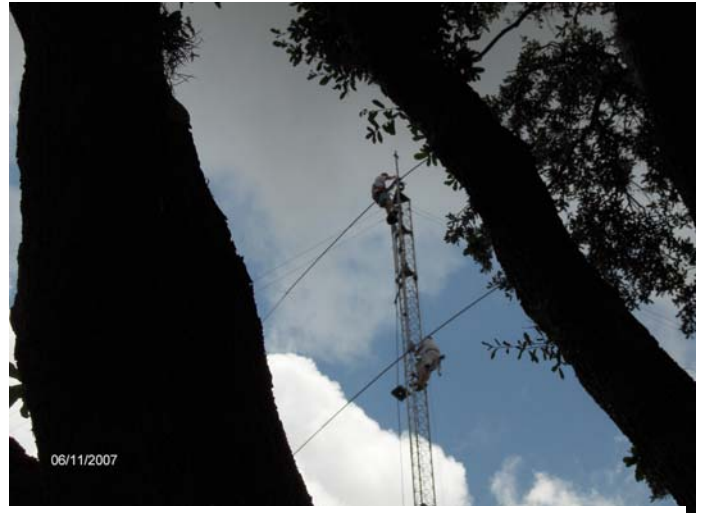
Objective: Remove 40 and 10 meter beams, rotor and mast from the 130 ft. 55G tower next to the house, do prep work for removing 7 sections to reduce tower height to about 60 ft. In later visits, remove antennas from the back 45G tower, take down that tower completely. Repair 40M beam, reinstall it and a tribander on the tower next to the house. Sell all antennas and tower sections that will no longer be used.



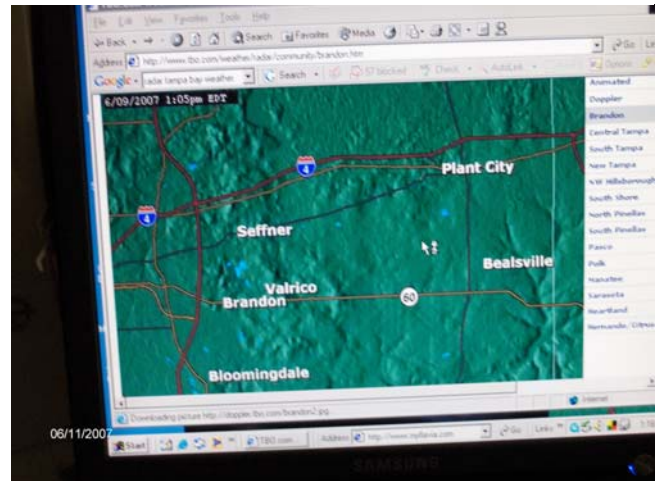
Blake N4GI and Dan K1TO begin the tower work



The Ground Crew Dan W0CN, Fred K4LQ and George K5KG



The first 40 meter element disconnected and getting ready to go down the tower



W1YL pulled the difficult job of monitoring the unstable FL WX front, while in the air conditioned QTH! A realistically important job, however, for antenna workers during Florida's sum-



L-R Fred K4LQ, Dan W0CN, Dan K1TO and Blake N4GI. Not shown, George K5KG who took the pic-

J7OJ Pictures from ARRL DX CW February 2007



George K5KG invited FCGers to his QTH to meet the contest team. Top L-R: W9IU, W19WI, KK9K, K8NZ, W3TB, K9ES. Bottom L-R: W2OX, K1TO, W4JN



K1XX building 2 element 40 meter loops on 50 ft fiberglass masts.



George at K5KG/J75KG Station



Jim at W19WI/J79WI Station



Ron at KK9K/J79RV Station



Don at W9IU/J79IU Station



Charlie at K1XX/J79XX Station



*J70J Contest Operation
L-R Charlie K1XX, Jim W19WI and Don W9IU*



C-3 with 40 Meter Loops in Background



Propagation Discussions



*The verdant jungle nearby the the Sea Cliff Cottages where
the J70J operation took place*



*The J70J Team
L-R Charlie K1XX, Jim W19WI, Ron KK9K, Don W9IU
and George K5KG*

July Meeting Report from K4PB's QTH

Attending were AD4ES, AI4QY and Diane, AI4QZ, K1PT and KD1BG, K1TO, K4LQ and Sheila, K4MM, host K4PB and hostess W4EEQ, K4PG, K9ES, N4BP, N8PR, W4AMS, W4DTA/Elizabeth/harmonic, W4KPG, W4OV and Sandy, W4QN and Carol, W4SAA, W4TBB and KG4TPZ, W4UM and W4SLR, WF3C.

Your secretary spent an enjoyable half hour or so before lunch rag-chewing with a number of old friends from the SFDXA whom I first met in the late '70s - early '80s when I lived in Ft. Lauderdale. Members began the festivities at noon by digging into a sumptuous repast of burgers and hot dogs with all the fixins accompanied by lots of salads and desserts. Jan W4EEQ and helpers did a great job of putting it all together.

Dan started the meeting by thanking Alan K4PB and Jan W4EEQ for their hospitality. The resulting thunderous applause was soon matched by Mother Nature who provided plenty of her own! The ice cream can was passed to collect donations.

Dan then asked members to identify themselves and the contest(s) that they most looked forward to in the upcoming season. It was no surprise to hear our own Florida QSO Party, the recent Field Day and IARU, and the CQ WW DX mentioned most often.

Other interesting comments captured:

- W4SAA intends to operate the Stew Perry 160 test from a QTH with a 140' water tower
- N4BP, K4PG and maybe N8PR intend to return to C6 for the ARRL DX CW
- N4BP is getting his K3 by the end of the month
- K4PG has a tower going up that will hold a Tennadyne T8 log periodic
- With W4OV "chaperoning", W4DTA and others are headed to FCG member NP2B's for CQ WW SSB
- W4DTA also intends to build a contest stn in YV
- W4DTA will operate with a group as YW6R in December from a rare part of Venezuela
- N8PR intends to operate SS CW from a rare VE section
- K4MM has 149 countries confirmed on 6M, including VQ9
- K4MM is also QRV on 60M and maintains the 60meters.info web page
- W4TBB is a new ham this year, won an HF rig at a hamfest, and worked Italy for his first HF QSO
- Perhaps the best news of the day is that newly licensed members of the Jupiter-Tequesta Repeater Group, including hostess Jan, W4EEQ, are challenging each other to use CW on the air
- Dan noted that the FCG streak of winning gavels for the high club score in the ARRL 10 Meter Contest ran out in the contest last December. Florida did not have favorable propagation as we have had in past years, as indicated by 9 of the 10 domestic winners coming from west of the Mississippi. More members participated this year so we competed in the Unlimited category, coming in second to the much-larger Potomac Valley Radio Club.

The PVRC recently made history by forfeiting the 2006 Sweepstakes 1st Place gavel to the NCCC because a number of PVRC members submitting scores turned out to be outside the 175-mile circle competition boundary imposed by the ARRL. The FCG circle is centered just west of Melbourne.

Dan and Fred will take an action item to confirm the precise FCG 175-mile radius ARRL circle (and 275 km CQWW circle) and identify members who are "on the edge".

Secretary/Treasurer Fred K4LQ reported that membership is now at 190. Membership this year has increased by 18 members so far, a higher rate than normal at this time of year compared to past years. The treasury figure is at \$4655.82. The W1CW/K4OJ Memorial fund contains \$1580.00.

Dan and Fred have reviewed the treasury figures in relation to our annual expenses, and concluded that the Club is in a position at this time to reduce dues by five dollars. Consequently, Dan announced that reduction. Effective immediately, new members downloading the newsletter from the website will pay \$5, and those requesting hard copies of the newsletter will pay \$10 annually. Not surprisingly, no opposition to the reduction was voiced by members present! Fred noted that twenty-two members have paid multi-year dues in advance. With the new rates, K4EFZ and K5RQ are paid up through 2016, and KJ4UY and N4WW through 2012. Eight members are paid through 2009 and 10 through 2008.

In the newsletter arena, the picture of Steve W4DTA with the ICOM girl at Dayton received many favorable comments. By popular demand, the next newsletter contains a picture of Steve with two (count 'em two) US Towers girls. The next newsletter template is with Dan K1TO for review (who vehemently denies that the delay has anything remotely to do with the Icom or US Towers girls). We hope to publish in late July or early August.

Mike W4UM was asked to update us on proposed IOTA Contest activity. Mike has taken the lead in rounding up members to work the upcoming IOTA Contest on islands near Florida. Several members who had planned to work the contest have dropped out due to other commitments. Mike will be using special call W4H during the IOTA Contest on Bathtub Beach on Hutchinson Island, along with K1PT and K4MM. The IOTA Contest has no club competition, but Mike is working with Bernie W3UR (publisher of the Daily DX) to contact the contest sponsors in Great Britain to consider adding a club category.

Dan discussed outgoing QSL activities briefly. A show of hands indicated most members present were using ARRL's Logbook of the World, yet nobody uses eqsl.cc except to occasionally answer requests. Fred noted that as QSL manager for K4FCG, a large number of QSLs were received for FQP activity with no SASE, indicating probably the senders (identified as mostly new hams) had not been instructed on best QSL practices.

Dan noted that the NAQP contests, a popular series with many of our members, are coming up shortly. NAQP RTTY is on the same weekend as the meeting (as is the CQ VHF Contest -- 6M was a hot topic among those attending, a pretty amazing feat for the bottom of the sunspot cycle!). Ad-hoc teams will be recruited via the e-mail reflector.

Dan announced that he will join a team of AD4Z, N4TO, N4GI and K8NZ in a M/2 operation in the upcoming CQWW CW at the superstation at Loma Del Toro in the Dominican Republic. They will make an assault on the NA record from there. Loma Del Toro is one of the best contest sites in the Caribbean. Julio AD4Z operates HI3A from Loma Del Toro on You Tube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=76fHWapX53k&mode=related&search=

The meeting concluded with a proposal that the host for this meeting let the Secretary know later how much was collected in donations at the meeting and if it was below what the host spent, then the treasurer would reimburse the host from club funds.

Thanks to Dan K1TO for his usual FB edit of this report.

73/Fred K4LQ
Secretary, FCG



L-R Fred K4LQ, Paul K1PT and Tom K4MM



Butch W4AMS



L-R Eric W4KPG, Bruce W4OV



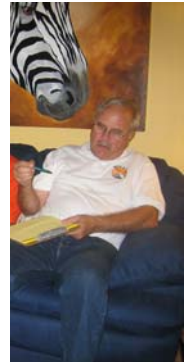
Above: Pete N8PR



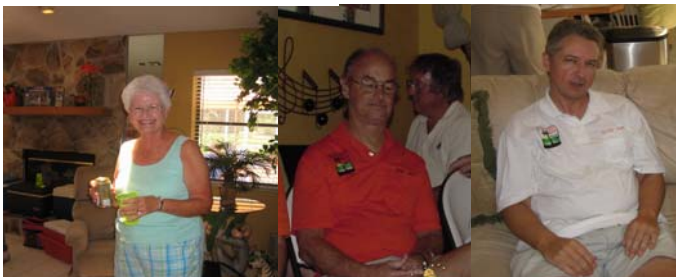
Host Alan, K4PB



L-R Norm W4QN, Steve W4DTA,



Joe W4SAA



Above L-R Sandy, XYL W4OV, Bob N4BP, Dan K1TO



Above: K4PB Shack

Below Left - L-R Eric K9ES, Chuck AD4ES

Below Right - Chow line in action



NAQP CW Claimed Scores

| Station | Score | QSOs | MULTS | Class | Section | HRS | OPERATOR(S) |
|---------|-------|------|-------|-------|---------|-----|-------------|
|---------|-------|------|-------|-------|---------|-----|-------------|

Team: Florida Contest Group #1

| | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|-----|-----|---------------|-----|------|-------------------|
| N2NL | 208,335 | 969 | 215 | Single-Op | SFL | 10.0 | N2NL at K1PT SO2R |
| N4OX | 107,016 | 637 | 168 | Single-Op | NFL | 10.0 | |
| WJ9B | 104,364 | 669 | 156 | Single-Op | NFL | 10.0 | SO2R |
| K4PV | 78,820 | 563 | 140 | Single-Op -HP | NFL | 9.9 | |
| K8NZ | 60,450 | 465 | 130 | Single-Op | SFL | | |

Team: Florida Contest Group #2

| | | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|-----|-----|-----------|-----|-----|--------------|
| WD4AHZ | 39,100 | 340 | 115 | Single-Op | WCF | 7.0 | |
| N4WO | 13,277 | 187 | 71 | Single-Op | NFL | 9.7 | |
| KE1F | 9,009 | 143 | 63 | Single-Op | NFL | | |
| WF3C | 3,450 | 75 | 46 | Single-Op | SFL | 3.5 | WF3C @ W4MLB |
| W4ZW | 1,674 | 54 | 31 | Single-Op | WCF | 0.9 | |

Team: Florida Contest Group #3

| | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|-----|-----|-----------|-----|------|------------------|
| AD4TR | 55,180 | 445 | 124 | Single-Op | NFL | | |
| N4EEB | 50,304 | 384 | 131 | Single-Op | NFL | 10.0 | First NAQP |
| KN4Y | 1,144 | 44 | 26 | Single-Op | WCF | | mobile operation |
| AF4Z | | | | SFL | | | |

FCG - NO TEAM INDICATED

| | | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|-----|-----|-----------|-----|------|------------|
| WK2G | 91,184 | 656 | 139 | Single-Op | WCF | 10.0 | |
| N4PJ | 34,026 | 321 | 106 | Single-Op | NFL | 6.0 | |
| W4CU | 30,318 | 326 | 93 | Single-Op | WCF | | |
| W4PTS | 12,410 | 146 | 85 | Single-Op | WCF | 6.0 | |
| W4LT | 7,224 | 129 | 56 | Single-Op | WCF | 4.0 | |
| KT4PD | 5,400 | 108 | 50 | Single-Op | SFL | 5.3 | |
| WB4FSF | 2926 | 77 | 38 | Single-Op | NFL | | |
| N4LF/3 | 1,920 | 60 | 32 | Single-Op | DE | 1.5 | |
| W4UM | | 46 | | Single-Op | SFL | | first NAQP |

NAQP SSB Claimed Scores

| Station | Score | QSOs | MULTS | Class | Section | HRS | RATE/HR | OPERATOR(S) |
|---------|--------|------|-------|----------------------|---------|-----|---------|----------------------------|
| K4CC/0 | 1,127 | 49 | 23 | Single Op - 20m | MT | 6.0 | 8.2 | Tarheel on motorhome |
| N4PJ | 21,760 | 272 | 80 | Single Op - All band | NFL | 5.0 | 54.4 | |
| KI4RDM | 5,883 | 111 | 53 | Single Op - All band | WCF | 4.8 | 23.4 | |
| W4TBB | 646 | 38 | 17 | Single Op - All band | SFL | | | first official FCG contest |
| WF3C | 4,290 | 110 | 39 | Single Op - All band | SFL | 3.0 | 36.7 | at W4MLB |
| K1RQ/7 | 2,280 | 60 | 38 | Multi-Two ID | | | | K1RQ/7 and NJ1F |

Miscellaneous Scores

| Station | Score | QSOs | MULTS | Class | Section | OPERATOR(S) | HRS |
|---------|-------|------|-------|-------|---------|-------------|-----|
|---------|-------|------|-------|-------|---------|-------------|-----|

IOTA CONTEST

| | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|-----|-----|--------------------|-------|--|------|
| N6AR | 439,206 | 307 | 142 | SINGLE-OP HIGH-ALL | NFL | | 12.0 |
| KN4Y | 13,806 | 65 | 26 | SINGLE-OP LOW-ALL | NFL-P | | 5.5 |
| N4WO | 4,578 | 49 | 14 | SINGLE-OP LOW-ALL | NFL | | 3.6 |

TEN - TEN CONTEST

| | | | | | | | |
|------|----|----|--|------------------|-----|---------------------|--|
| N4LZ | 78 | 43 | | SINGLE-OP LOW CW | NFL | 10-10 Number: 30439 | |
|------|----|----|--|------------------|-----|---------------------|--|

WORKED ALL EUROPE (WAE) - CW

| | | | | | | | |
|------|--------|-----|-----|------------------------------|-----|--|-----|
| W4CU | 25,894 | 242 | 107 | SINGLE-OP HIGH-ALL | WCF | | 6.9 |
| W4LT | 3,431 | 73 | 47 | SINGLE-OP LOW-ALL - TB WIRES | WCF | | 4.2 |

Russian RTTY WW Contest

| | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|-----|----|--------------------|-----|--|------|
| W4ZE | 237,975 | 355 | 95 | SINGLE-OP HIGH-ALL | SFL | | 10.0 |
| W4CU | 171,700 | 292 | 85 | SINGLE-OP HIGH-ALL | WCF | | |

SARTG WW RTTY Contest

| | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|-----|-----|--------------------|-----|--|------|
| W4ZE | 915,420 | 562 | 132 | SINGLE-OP HIGH-ALL | SFL | | 16.0 |
|------|---------|-----|-----|--------------------|-----|--|------|

SCC RTTY Championship

| | | | | | | | |
|------|--------|-----|-----|--------------------|-----|--|-----|
| W4CU | 63,420 | 251 | 105 | SINGLE-OP HIGH-ALL | WCF | | |
| W4ZE | 58,685 | 253 | 97 | SINGLE-OP HIGH-ALL | SFL | | 6.5 |

OHIO QSO PARTY

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|----|----|----------------------|-------|--|-----|
| KN4Y | 2,240 | 40 | 28 | SINGLE-OP LOW-ALL CW | NFL-P | | 3.0 |
|------|-------|----|----|----------------------|-------|--|-----|

NA SPRINT CW CONTEST

| | | | | | | | |
|------|--------|-----|----|--------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| K1TO | 17,664 | 368 | 48 | SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH | WCF | Top Ten - S01R | 4.0 |
| K1PT | 11,730 | 255 | 46 | SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH | SFL | First CW SPRINT ever ! | 4.0 |
| NF4A | 9,768 | 222 | 43 | SINGLE-OP ALL LOW | NFL | | 4.0 |

SEPT VHF QSO PARTY

| | | | | | | | |
|------|----|---|---|-------------------------|-----|------------------------------|--|
| K9ES | 66 | 9 | 6 | SINGLE-OP LOW (6-2-432) | NFL | First contest from new QTH ! | |
|------|----|---|---|-------------------------|-----|------------------------------|--|

NA SPRINT SSB CONTEST

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|-----|----|--------------------|-----|--|--|
| NF4A | 4,356 | 121 | 35 | SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH | NFL | | |
|------|-------|-----|----|--------------------|-----|--|--|

2.0

SAC CW CONTEST

| | | | | | | | |
|------|--------|-----|----|--------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| WX4G | 40,000 | 247 | | SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH | | LOG LOST - NOT SUBMITTED | |
| N6AR | 24,276 | 155 | 68 | SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH | NFL | | |
| N4BP | 24,190 | 187 | 82 | SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH | SFL | | |
| K5KG | 19,120 | 189 | 80 | SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH | SFL | | 8.0 |
| K4LQ | 8,016 | 81 | 48 | SINGLE-OP ALL HIGH | WCF | | 3.9 |
| K9ES | 621 | 34 | 27 | SINGLE-OP ALL LOW | SFL | | 2.0 |

WASHINGTON STATE QSO PARTY

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|----|----|-------------------|-----|--|--|
| KN4Y | 7,940 | 93 | 20 | SINGLE-OP ALL LOW | NFL | | |
|------|-------|----|----|-------------------|-----|--|--|

Final Scores ARRL RTTY Roundup

| | | | | | | |
|--------|-------|---------|-------|-------|---|---|
| 1 | K4QD | 169,476 | 1,461 | 116 | M | B SFL (+AF4Z, WF3C, K3VN, AK4R, K9ES, KI4BUE, KI4GHK) |
| 2 | N4BP | 162,030 | 1,473 | 110 | S | B SFL |
| 3 | W4QG | 77,280 | 736 | 105 | M | A NFL |
| 4 | N6AR | 26,928 | 306 | 88 | S | B NFL |
| 5 | N4PSE | 26,040 | 372 | 70 | S | A SFL |
| 6 | K4LQ | 23,392 | 272 | 86 | M | B WCF |
| 7 | KE1F | 21,000 | 300 | 70 | S | A NFL |
| 8 | W7QF | 16,936 | 232 | 73 | S | B NFL |
| 9 | N9JRZ | 13,620 | 227 | 60 | S | A NFL |
| 10 | K8NZ | 13,320 | 222 | 60 | S | A SFL |
| 11 | WX4G | 11,696 | 172 | 68 | S | B WCF |
| 12 | K4ADR | 10,738 | 182 | 59 | S | A SFL |
| 13 | K8OSF | 3,066 | 73 | 42 | S | A WCF |
| 14 | N4WO | 2,964 | 76 | 39 | S | A NFL |
| 15 | N4OK | 1,0664 | 1 | 26 | S | A NFL |
| Totals | | 579,552 | 6,145 | 1,072 | | |

Final Scores ARRL Jan VHF Test

| | | | | | | |
|--------|-----------|--------|-----|-----|---|-----|
| 1 | WJ9B | 16,896 | 166 | 64 | B | NFL |
| 2 | W4TAA/VE3 | 13,728 | 175 | 66 | A | ON |
| 3 | NJ2F | 5,940 | 120 | 36 | B | SFL |
| 4 | K4ADR | 3,321 | 104 | 27 | B | SFL |
| 5 | WX4G | 55 | 11 | 5 | A | WCF |
| Totals | | 39,940 | 576 | 198 | | |



FCGer George N3ISH operates this flagpole antenna with good results on 60, 40, 30 and 20 meters from his Naples QTH. Switching in the formidable looking coil at the lower right puts it on 160 Meters.



From QRZ.com - George N3ISH and his XYL Mary NV4Z. On July 12th of this year George passed his Extra Class Exam.



Contest Buddy Program Reminder

By George Wagner, K5KG



This is a reminder about the Contest Buddy Program that is available on the FCG.net web site. Currently about 40 FCG members are registered in the program. Since FCG membership numbers nearly 200, I would like to encourage others to register. The program provides an excellent way for everyone to share their skills and knowledge about all aspects of contesting, station design, station control, computer logging, antennas, towers, etc. The program provides an easy way to find an FCG member who has expertise in a particular topic related to contesting.

The purpose of the Contest Buddy Program is to foster camaraderie among club members, share technical knowledge and expertise about contesting and encourage contest participation. Anyone in the club can participate - as a mentor (Elmer), a student (Elmo) or both! Elmers are club members who have lots of experience in contesting, and Elmos are those who want to more about contesting. Elmers especially know lots about contest operating, station design, logging software, rig control, antennas, towers, etc. Elmos can be anyone in the club who wants to learn more about contesting from an experienced buddy.

As a Florida Contest Group member, all you have to do to be in the Contest Buddy Program is enter your information on the FCG.net web site.

(<http://www.letchforddesign.com/elmer/index.htm>)

And, if you are currently registered in the program, I encourage you to make sure that all of your info is up-to-date and correct.

73/George K5KG

The Best Contest Ever

By Ward Silver N0AX

(From the ARRL Contest Rate Sheet)

Which contest was the best one ever?

Why it's obvious - the best one was the one that ran the year before *you* started

contesting! I can't tell you how many times I've seen grown men misting up over the famed 1959 sunspot peak or the 1960-something ARRL DX or the 1970-



something CQ WW. Always prior to *my* start on the bands in 1972. This past week, the VHF+ reflector has been full of reminiscing about the famed 1987 June QSO Party with the big openings on all bands, for example. Of course, I can't claim not to have been guilty of the very same thing!

Having just put the final coat of paint on this year's ARRL DX Phone results and put in some time during the IARU HF Championship, my sensitivity to the hohum (some might use stronger language) conditions on the HF bands is acute. For those of us that have been around through the peak conditions such as 2002's exciting weekends, it's hard to get excited about the lower scores and sparser activity.

Well, so what? I believe we could perhaps recalibrate a bit and not be so negative about conditions. After all, they're bad all over and not just at our location. There is no point in getting all sentimental over weekends of contesting that will literally never return. Certainly enjoy the good memories, but don't be such a wet blanket about the fun that can be had right now.

Try to adopt the attitude of the newcomer to contesting. When that starting bell goes off and the stampede begins, it's the same excitement every time! I can recall being tremendously excited to operate in a big DX contest back in the mid-1970's when I was just getting started. I had no idea conditions at the solar minimum were stink-o, I just got on and operated. Every station that went in the log was an exciting QSO. Wow, Africa!

After a couple of years, things started getting better. Higher bands opened and lower bands opened earlier and longer. I learned more about where to tune and when. One snowed-in Thanksgiving CQ WW CW as N1EUZ and I got a taste of a deep, over-the-pole run of stations from Central Asia, it was as if the heavens had parted! Little did I know how much better things could be and I didn't care. Luckily, I didn't have some old grouch telling me how rotten conditions were.

We have a bunch of new HF operators headed down the bands to try their hand at operating below 30 MHz. They are excited to make contacts way beyond their usual radio horizons and having a good time. It's our job to show them how to find the open bands, taking advantage of the shorter, weaker openings characteristics of low sunspot numbers. Educate them as to history and expectations, of course, but try to show a little enthusiasm, would ya? After all, for many of those new folks, this is, in fact, the best contest ever!



1. I WANTED TO SPEND MORE TIME WITH MY FAMILY.
2. MY SECTION HAS TRICKY LETTERS.
3. NOBODY EVER HEARD OF THE YEAR I WAS FIRST LICENSED.
4. I LOST MY LUCKY HAM RADIO BADGE.
5. THE ICE CREAM MAN KEPT DRIVING BY.
6. ONLY LOST SOULS ARE GOOD AT THIS.
7. MY CALLSIGN MEANS SOMETHING BAD IN JAPANESE.
8. I WASTED ALL MY TESTOSTERONE PILLS ON THE TOUR DE FRANCE.



George K5KG/0 caught in the act of operating a 2 meter handheld on IRLP while visiting ex FCger Ed NA0ED in CO. Ed asks "Can degradation of his contesting skills be far behind?"

Tips from The ARRL Contester's Rate Sheet

It's time to update your CTY files because Bosnia and Herzegovina have just been granted the prefix block E7A-E7Z by the ITU. This replaces the T9A-T9Z block in current use. (Thanks, Jim AD1C)

URL of the Week - Pat N0HR has written a very useful piece of software called HamLinks. It's a browser toolbar focused on ham radio that works with both popular 'net browsers running in the Windows environment. It's downloadable for free (http://www.n0hr.com/Ham_Radio_Toolbar.htm), installs and uninstalls easily, and gives hams quick access to ham content on the Web, such as product reviews and for sale sites. It also links to RSS blog feeds, a UTC clock, WWV propagation info, ham radio podcasts and more.

Tom Hogerty KC1J has resigned as ARRL Contest Manager and is pursuing other opportunities. The Contester's Rate Sheet editorial staff wishes Tom 73, the best of luck, and thanks him for his service to our favorite activities over the past couple of years. Until a new person is hired, previous Contest Manager Dan Henderson N1ND is helping out as are the volunteers that help keep the department running. (Ed Note - Sean Kutzko KX9X will be replacing Tom shortly - Tnx K4EJ)

Bill N1HWC found an attractively-priced source (<http://www.wescodirect.com>) for brightly-colored guy marker tubes that slide over guy wires. You've seen them on utility pole guys -they help keep folks from running into the wires. No need to buy a case of 25 as this company sells in unit quantities.

Florida Contest Group

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

George Wagner
V.P. Operations
5113 Higley 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