



No sunspots? Here we go again.

The North Florida DX Association

# PileUp

The NFDXA Newsletter



Volume 1, Number 7

July 2009

<http://nfdxa.com/>

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## Clark's Fish Camp Location for July NFDXA Meeting

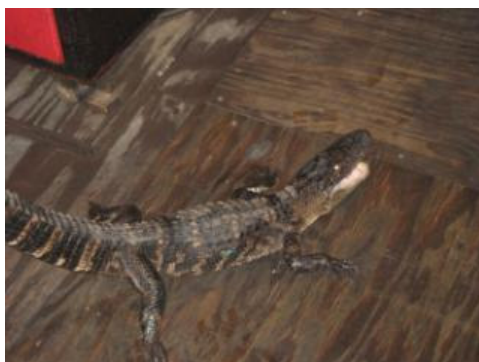
This **Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup>**, the North Florida DX Association will hold its monthly meeting at **4:30 p.m.** in the well-known **Clark's Fish Camp** at 12903 Hood Landing Road in Mandarin. Clark's has been a Julington Creek waterfront fixture for over 32 years.



For a while back in May Clark's became part of Julington Creek. A week of torrential rains in north Florida backed the creek into the restaurant proper causing the facility to be closed for a week at the height of the 'summer season'.



During the seven-day flood one of the creek's numerous alligators managed to get inside the restaurant and take up residence in a bathroom which had been under several feet of water. The three-foot long alligator was discovered by manager Erin McGough during the cleanup and it was quickly shoed back into the creek.



To some it seems this intrusion by an alligator into a 'seafood and wildlife' restaurant would be something of a high-risk venture because Gator Tail and Gator Sausage are prominently featured items on Clark's lengthy menu! Maybe the three-footer just wasn't considered 'big' enough.

The original host for the July NFDXA gathering was **Joe Barnes, N4JBK**, but **Joe** had to withdraw suddenly when business intervened. Club treasurer **Jim Hughes, KC4FWS** has stepped in for **Joe** and has made the final arrangements. **Jim** reminds everyone to be sure they are checked off on the NFDXA RSVP page so he can make reservations.

## Glorioso Now Scheduled for Aug 31

The latest dates for the several-times-postponed Glorioso operation are August 31 to Sept 21. The multi-mode, 160-10 meter operation will feature three 800-watt stations expected to operate with the call sign **FT5GA**. Present plans call for **FT5GA** to be active 24 hours a day.



### August 2009 DX Calendar from NG3K's *Announced DX Operations*

<b>Begin</b> 2009 Aug01	<b>End</b> 2009 Aug02	<b>Entity</b> Brazil	<b>Call</b> <a href="#">PX8W</a>	<b>QSL</b> PY2WAS	<b>PY2WAS</b> 20080629	80-10m; CW SSB; QSL OK via Buro or direct
2009 Aug01	2009 Aug02	Market Reef	OJ0	CTIBWW	CTIBWW 20080525	80-10m; CW SSB RTTY; QSL OK via CT Buro or direct; operation tenta- tive
2009 Aug01	2009 Aug09	Egypt	<a href="#">SU8LH</a>	SUISK	<a href="#">OPDX</a> 20090511	By SUISK + others HF + 6m; SSB CW; QRV for ILLW
2009 Aug01	2009 Aug14	Swaziland	3DA0SS		GI4FUM 20090323	By GI4FUM, G4LDL, M0MVV, NC4MM, UT5EL; also w/ personal call signs
2009 Aug09	2009 Aug14	Ogasawara	JD/o	Home Call	<a href="#">OPDX</a> 20090629	By JI5RPT and JO1LVZ 160- 6m; CW SSB + Digital + 2m WSJT EME
2009 Aug10	2009 Aug16	Faroe Is	OY	Home Call	F5NQL 20090616	By SP6IXF as OY/SP6IXF and SP7VC as OY/ SP7VC; 160-2m
2009 Aug10	2009 Aug30	Agalega & St Brandon	3B7FQ	K5XK	K5XK 20090630	40-10m; SSB CW; may be last trip to St Brandon for 5 years
2009 Aug17	2009 Aug23	Nauru	<a href="#">C2ITI</a>		EA3RKR 20090202	By EA4ATI + team; 160-6m; CW SSB RTTY
2009 Aug21	2009 Aug31	Azores	CT8	Home Call	DL7JAN 20090618	By DL7JAN and DL2IX 80-6m; CW SSB RTTY; QSL via DARC Buro or direct
2009 Aug21	2009 Oct05	Crete	SV9	WB2GAI Buro	<a href="#">425DXN</a> 20090613	By WB2GAI as SV9/WB2GAI/ p; 80-17m
2009 Aug31	2009 Sep21	Glorioso Is	<a href="#">FT5GA</a>	F5OGL	F6AJA 20090514	By F5PRU et al; 160-6m; multi- mode; 3 stns; ; call sign re- quested

## New 40 and 160 M Segments for Belarus Hams



Additional segments of the 40 meter band have been opened to Amateur Radio operators in Belarus (EV). Hams in that nation will now be able to use SSB and CW with 500 watts output under 'normal' operating conditions in the 7.1 to 7.2 MHz frequency range. Additionally, with special authorization from the Belarus State Commission for radio Frequencies, its national telecommunications authority, EV ops can use up to a full kilowatt in contests.

Also, in the same ruling the 160 meter band was opened a bit more for EV hams. They now can access 1.810 to 2.000 kHz in the 160 meter band.

The effective date of the decision was this past May but only now have been made public.

—Amateur Radio Newsline



## France to Expand 40 Meter segment



7.1 to 7.2 MHz will soon be available to Amateur Radio operators in France. The announcement was made by a spokesman for ARCEP, the French telecommunications regulator. The date of the availability was not announced but is expected soon as only one more signature is needed before official publications and implementation.

—GB2RS via Amateur radio Newsline

## PVRC Antenna and Tower Webinair Monday July 20



Noted contestor Frank Donovan, W3LPL will conduct a Webinair on Monday, July 20 from 9:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. on the **Design, Construction and Maintenance of Antennas and Towers for Storm Survival and Long Term Reliability**. Included will be a practical checklist of best practices.

Space is limited. To reserve your Webinair seat register now at:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/254400843>

After registering you will receive a confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the Webinair.

### System Requirements

Part of legendary W3LPL Antenna Farm  
**PC-based attendees:** Windows 2000, XP Home, XP Pro, 2003 Server, Vista  
**Macintosh-based attendees:** Mac OS X 10.4 (Tiger) or newer



## Tropo Ducting Forecasts

If you are into 2 and 6 meter DX you may find the following information helpful. Check out William Hepburn's **Worldwide Tropospheric Ducting Forecasts** at

<http://www.dxinfocentre.com/tropo.html>

The information is updated daily at 1745 UTC. The page displays a 6-day preview and a 42-hour forecast for VHF/UHF and Microwave radio and television signal strength and interference.

Just one more tool to improve your personal propagation possibility predictions . . .





About 20 minutes after its Wednesday, July 15th early evening launch the space shuttle Endeavor and its external fuel tank streaked in formation over County Mayo, Ireland where alert photographer James Adamson snapped this spectacular picture using a Nikon D40..

"It was the most memorable thing I've ever seen", says Adamson. "The two bright star-like objects were almost as bright as the ISS—one bright white and the other deep orange."

Friday and Saturday the ISS and Endeavor will appear side by side in the night sky. (*SpaceWeather.com*)

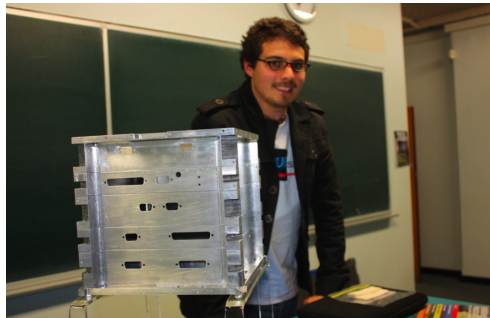
## Heads Up in Ireland



— James Adamson photo



## HAM RADIO IN SPACE: VK TO LAUNCH A DIGITAL HAM SATELLITE



UNSW engineering student poses with BLUESat chassis frame

A new ham radio digital satellite is being designed and built by students at Australia's University of New South Wales. The satellite, which will be known as BLUEsat, is a small cube measuring approximately 260mm on each side, excluding antennae, and weighs around 14kg.

Powered by fixed solar panels on each face, it will carry a flight computer, radio transmitters and receivers, a power-control system, battery packs for when its orbit places it in the Earth's shadow, magnets to

passively stabilize the satellite and align it with the Earth's magnetic field, and will be controlled via a dedicated communications ground station at UNSW.

BLUEsat will be placed in an approximately circular orbit at an altitude of around 750km that will take it over the poles. At this altitude, the satellite will travel around the Earth at a rate of around once every 90 minutes.

Once in orbit BLUEsat will be a digital amateur radio satellite, which means that voice and data files can be uploaded to it by any amateur radio operator in the world over which the satellite passes. These same files can be retrieved by other operators in either real time, provided that the sender and receiver both have line-of-sight contact with the satellite, or at some other time when the satellite has travelled around to a different part of the world. This allows voice and data communication to and from remote areas without internet access.

— WIA via Amateur Radio Newline



## Getting the ICOM 706 to talk with a Computer 2009 Field day setup for IC-706 and WL



**NU4Y** who put me onto the fix that finally solved the communication problem between my IC-706 and my ASUS net book computer.

To review, the setup is a USB to 2 port serial adapter, which sets up as COM3 and COM4, a Rigblaster Plus, a CT-17 level converter, WL V10.71C, and a ASUS I000HA. Repeated attempts to get communication between WL and the net book crashed and burned.

**Jim** felt that I should slow down my baud rate from 19200 to 4800 as some level converters do not like the 19200 speed. I felt the baud rate was ok for the CT-17 as I have used that device in my base station at 19200 for years without a hitch. What is different though is the computer the CT-17 is trying to communicate with.

So today I went back out to the RV hooked everything up again only this time I dropped the baud rate in the IC-706MKII from 19200 to 9600. When I started WL I went to Setup/Ports and set COM3 for CW and COM4 for rig control on the IC-706 to 9600. When I exited the Ports setup, nothing seemed to happen.



I then did what **Kelly, N6KJ** reported doing a few days ago. I went to Bands/Set frequency & mode and manually set it to CW 14000 MHz. When I exited the screen blinked a bit and Tah Dah! Schazaam, the radio and the computer were suddenly talking together! My best guess is that the Intel Atom processor in the ASUS computer or something in its BIOS cannot handle the 19200 baud rate. Slowing down the baud rate on the radio and in WL got everything going. Of course it's a week AFTER Field Day, but man I'm ready for next year now!

— 73, Gary AL9A

## How Many Is Enough?

You want to see a LOT of radios? I mean a whole lot of radios? The next time the XYL says you have enough already, go to QRZ.com and look up **W9EVT** in the call sign search window and show her what "enough" could mean. . . <http://www.qrz.com>

Be sure YOU are one of those in the know.  
Check into the NFDXA Net  
Wednesdays, 0000z on 3625 MHz





## DX Quiz—The Indian Ocean

*For most of us in the United States the Indian Ocean is the both exotic and home to the most difficult-to-work countries. With top 5 Glorioso scheduled to be activated shortly, the beams and hopes of many DXers are pointed that direction, sunspots or no. And since we are already looking that way, why not a DX quiz focused on that part of the world? It comes from the May-June 2005 issue of "The DX Magazine" and was authored by Ward Silver, N0AX.*

1. Which Indian Ocean zone does NOT touch continental land?
  - a. 37
  - b. 28
  - c. 29
  - d. 39
2. Juan de Nova FR/J is between what island and the African mainland?
  - a. Mauritius
  - b. Madagascar
  - c. Mayotte
  - d. Maldives
3. Through which of the two gulfs straddling Saudi Arabia runs the boundary between . Africa and Asia?
  - a.. Gulf of Bothnia
  - b. Persian Gulf
  - c. Gulf of Suez
  - d. Gulf of Aden
4. The equator forms all or part of the northern boundary of which zones?
  - a. 29
  - b. 38
  - c. 37
  - d. 39
5. Which country lies at the north end of the Bay of Bengal?
  - a. India VU
  - b. Bangladesh S2
  - c. Myanmar XZ
  - d. Thailand HS
6. The earthquakes that caused so much damage (in 2005) originated off what country?
  - a. Malaysia 9M2
  - b. Singapore 9V
  - c. Indonesia YB
  - d. Thailand HS
7. Which two countries separate Saudi Arabia from the Indian Ocean?
  - a. Yeman 7O
  - b. Djibouti J2
  - c. Oman A4
  - d. Somolia 6O
8. Organize the following countries from south to north.
  - a. Tanzania 5H
  - b. Kenya 5Z
  - c. Mozambique C9
  - d. Somoloa 6O
9. Which province of Australia forms the eastern boundary of the Indian Ocean?
  - a. VK6
  - b. VK7
  - c. VK8
  - d. VKI
10. What type of animal was the famous "living fossil" captured off the coast of Africa?
  - a. Frog
  - b. Fish
  - c. Bird
  - d. Whale



## Times Remembered

### WEST COAST DX BULLETIN

During the June NFDXA meeting, **AB4UF** remarked on how much he missed reading the old *West Coast DX Bulletin* from back in the '70s, and in particular, the philosophic commentaries of its legendary editor, Hugh "Cass" Cassidy, WA6AUD.

Well, **Steve**, the WCDXB lives on, or at least some of the highlights do from its 11-year run. They can be found in a book titled *DX IS! The Best of the West Coast DX Bulletin*,

edited and published by Charles Allen, W5DV and James Allen, W6OGC. Throughout its 188 pages you can reminisce to your heart's content. All the characters are there from Red-Eyed Louie to the 'world famous' Palos Verde Sunspot Dancers.

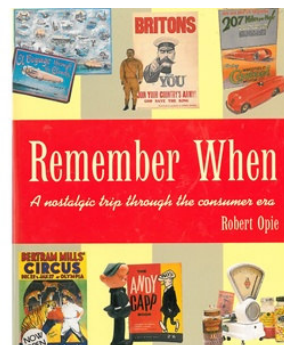
**Steve's** favorites in the Bulletin were the stories involving the Old Timer, a grizzled veteran of the DX wars who had worked them all and had an answer for any question. But sometimes the Old Timer's answer required a bit of thought before its meaning became clear. As the editors noted, "In this way we were introduced to the Eternal Enigmas, the Mysteries of the Ages, and the knowledge that comes only to True Believers.

The following vignette is one example. Enjoy.



"Some of the local QRPers were sitting around recently, doing what they excel at...talking. Some worked over the subject as to what is the biggest danger to DXers...mentioning falling off towers, putting one's arm across a hot power supply and other tricks which guarantee instant publicity. Finally they put the question to the Old Timer. He looked out at the rain clouds on the ridge across the valley, thought a bit and finally said: "I think the 300 country-worked sticker cleans out more DXers than anything else." One QRPer instantly jumped to his feet, questioning: "How can that be? That hardly makes sense." The Old Timer would say no more, but, Son of a Gun! The more we thought about it, the more we wondered. How many DXers have faded away after grasping that 300 country-worked sticker? All we could get out of the Old Timer was that when you have the moistest, you can expect the leastest."

...from *DX IS!, The Best of the West Coast DX Bulletin*, page 74



## More DX Quiz...and the Quiz Answers

11. What type of ships are common in the western reaches of the Indian Ocean?

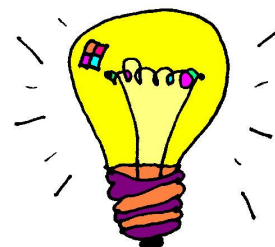
- Junk
- Outrigger
- Balsa raft
- Dhow

### BONUS QUESTION:

What famous author who died in 2008 lived on the island of Shri Lanka?

### QUIZ ANSWERS:

- 1) d 2) b 3) c 4) a and d 5) b 6) c 7) a and c 8) c, a, b, d 9) a 10) b, the Coelacanth 11) d 12) Arthur C. Clarke, author and the person credited as the inventor of the geosynchro-nous satellite.





## A Treatise on the Importance of Smoke — Joseph Lucas

(Ed. Note — The following humor piece was supposedly written by British industrialist and entrepreneur Joseph Lucas, the founder of Lucas Electronics. It comes to us via W4GJ and the AA0MZ home page (<http://www.mikezulu.com/>). Although Lucas (1842-1903) died more than a century ago, his contention that "smoke is the key to all things electrical" lives on. One example would be the expression 'Give it a 'Smoke Test''. If you've ever owned a Lucas automotive or electrical product you will relate to the paragraphs that follow. Hopefully you will also gain an appreciation for dry British humor and their ability to laugh at themselves—especially when it's true! Enjoy.)

- . . . -

All electrical components and wiring harnesses depend on proper circuit functioning, which is the transmission of charged ions by retention of the visible spectral manifestation known as "smoke." Smoke is the thing that makes electrical circuits work. Don't be fooled by scientists and engineers talking about excited electrons and the like. Smoke is the key to all things electrical.

We know this to be true because every time one lets the smoke out of an electrical circuit, it stops working. This can be verified repeatedly through empirical testing. For example, if one places a large copper bar across the terminals of a battery, prodigious quantities of smoke are liberated and the battery shortly ceases to function. In addition, if one observes smoke escaping from an electrical component such as a Lucas voltage regulator, it will also be observed that the component no longer functions.



The logic is elementary and inescapable! The function of the wiring harness is to conduct smoke from one device to another. When the wiring harness springs a leak and lets all the smoke out of the system, nothing works right afterward.

Starter motors were considered unsuitable for British motorcycles for some time largely because they regularly released large quantities of smoke from the electrical system.

It has been reported that Lucas electrical components are possibly more prone to electrical leakage than their Bosch, Japanese or American counterparts. Experts point out that this is because Lucas is British, and all things British leak. British engines leak oil, British shock absorbers, hydraulic forks, and disk brake systems leak fluid, British tires leak air and British Intelligence leaks national defense secrets.

Therefore, it follows that British electrical systems must leak smoke. Once again, the logic is clear and inescapable.

Sometimes you may miss the component releasing the smoke that makes your electrical system function correctly, but if you sniff around you can often find the faulty component by the undeniable and telltale smoke smell. Sometimes this is a better indicator than standard electrical tests performed with a volt-ohm meter.

In conclusion, the basic concept of transmission of electrical energy in the form of smoke provides a clear and logical explanation of the mysteries of electrical components and why they fail.

---

Other 'Lucasisms' from Lucas product users 'lifted' from *Brit Scooter Humor* (<http://xlforum.net>)

The Lucas motto: "Get home before dark."

Lucas denies having invented darkness. But they still claim "sudden, unexpected darkness"

Lucas--inventor of the first intermittent wiper.

Lucas--inventor of the self-dimming headlamp.

The three-position Lucas switch--DIM, FLICKER and OFF. The other three switch settings--SMOKE, SMOLDER and IGNITE.

- . . . -



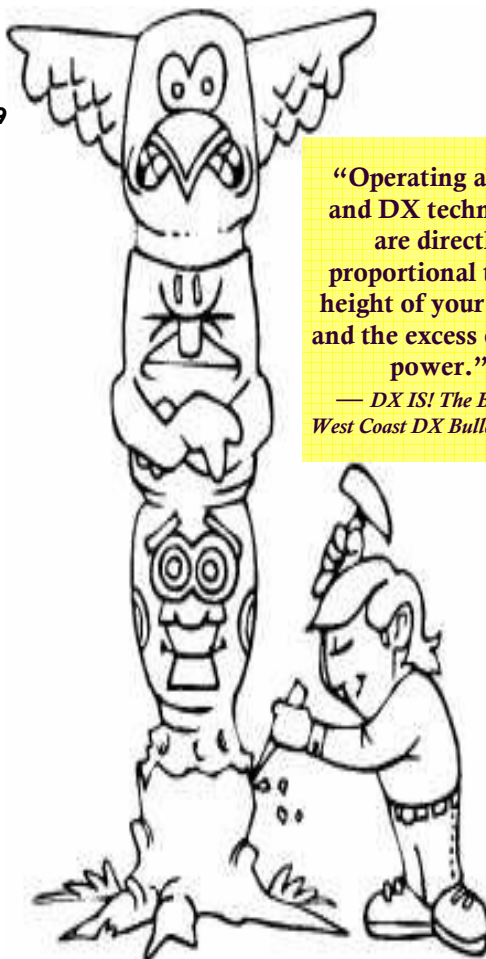


## Totem Pole—July 17, 2009

Between January 1 and December 31, 2009 work as many stations as you can, any band, any mode. Work each country only once, unless it spans zones. To add a new zone for the same country just type in the new call and zone over the old one and click the “Log It” button. To delete a call, erase the zone from your log page and click the “Log It” button.

### The Top 12

N4NN	249	40	289
K4UTE	245	40	285
N4KE	218	40	258
K4EB	216	40	256
NF4L	169	35	205
NIWON	122	32	154
NW4C	100	28	128
WR4K	87	28	115
NU4Y	71	19	90
KC4FWS	39	15	54
AB4UF	1	1	2
W4FDA	1	1	2
All Others	0	0	0



“Operating ability and DX techniques are directly proportional to the height of your tower and the excess of your power.”

— *DX IS! The Best of the West Coast DX Bulletin* p-41



DX Marathon



## Stuff left out, Dumb mistakes, FUBARs and SNAFU's

The **DxDevil** story on page 1 of the June issue was continued on page 6—but you had to hunt through the newsletter to find it since I didn't tell you where to go . . . No hidden meaning intended.

For some reason even I can't fathom why there was a **blank 'promo box'** at the bottom of page 2. I apparently forgot all about the box once I pasted it in . . . and now I can't even remember what I had intended to put in the box . . . A mind is such a terrible thing to waste.

On page 7 the **LORAN-C** article failed to mention that the Coasties were going to shut down the existing old-tech LORAN-C chains before installing the newer eLORAN systems, and perhaps more to the point, why hams should even care. LORAN A, an earlier version of LORAN, transmitted on frequencies in and around the Amateur 160-meter band. This resulted in the FCC placing frequency and power restrictions on all Amateur Radio operation in and around 160 meters. LORAN-C operates on 100 kHz which enabled the 160 meter operating restrictions to be dropped.

Finally (thank goodness!) there was no excuse other than brain flatulence for the Thursday premature posting of the **PileUp** when it was missing most of its back page!. As the old saying goes: “Thursday's child has far to go.” I guess I didn't realize how far . . . **NW4C**



# PileUp

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## The Monthly Journal of The North Florida DX Association



The latest in fashionable CB headgear for that person who's truly radioactive . . .

### As I See It...

There's no doubt about it. The Summer Doldrums have set in both on the local DX scene as well as overseas.

No major HF operations are underway. The nearest in terms of time being the long-awaited-and-often-postponed French DXpedition to top-five **Glorioso** with now has a start date of August 31. I suspect most of us will believe it's finally happening when we hear it on the air.

As further proof of a DX doldrum off sorts one has only to look at the latest tally on the **NFDXA DX Challenge**. **N4NN** has worked only two new ones in the past month and **K4UTE** has advanced his total by just one. (gasp!). How many months has it been since that happened around here?

Keep in mind, however, Richard was sidelined by a couple of unexpected hospital visits, and that slowed him down a bit ...which probably served to give Dale an unexpected breather.

But if that monthly activity summary with the top dogs only working one or two isn't an indicator things have slowed down nothing is.

However, all is not all doom and gloom. With the overall slowdown of club HF activity comes evidence of some ether electrifying by others in our group up on 6 meters (or down,

depending on one's point of view).

When you hear voices expressing excitement over working a station in the Caribbean or, for that matter, just *hearing* California, then you know (or hope) they must be talking about an opening somewhere on the so-called Magic Band.

Things *are* getting better, although at a much slower pace than any of us would like. During the recent IARU Contest around 0000Z on 20 m I was hearing three stations in Hawaii booming in, each an honest 20 over 9! At the same time just a few kilohertz down the band Europe was coming in, too, not quite as strong but still very workable. How long has it been since we've heard Europe and Oceania on the same band at the same time. And this was happening *after* sunspot 1024 had gone 'round the sun's western limb and was no longer visible.

If there's a message here I guess it's we've gone through the worst of the sunspot low points and were still able to pull some DX goodies from the pile. Now everything DXwise should only get better.

As for the summer doldrums, well, we're still working on that one. — **NW4C**