



The North Florida DX Association

Pile Up

The NFDXA Newsletter



W4ZR

The next meeting of the NFDXA will be 5 pm Saturday, Dec 12 at the Little Lake Santa Fe QTH of N4KE, 3046 SE 50th Street, Keystone Heights. A video of the K5D Desecheo DXpedition will be shown. Be There!



Volume 1, Number 12

December 2009

<http://nfdxa.com/>

UP SHE GOES....NF4L's NEW ANTENNA ARRAY



The Crew: L-R NU4Y, WA4B, K4UTE, N4KE, WW4US, and AB4UF. — NF4L photo

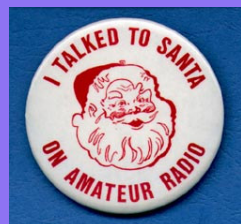
It doesn't get any better than this. Take seven friends willing to brave the early chill of a North Florida December morning, add the services of an experienced tower monkey plus an expert crane operator and the result is a successful antenna party.

Such was the case last Sunday. The goal was to replace NF4L's antenna and rotator which had been blitzed by lightning during a thunderstorm last summer.

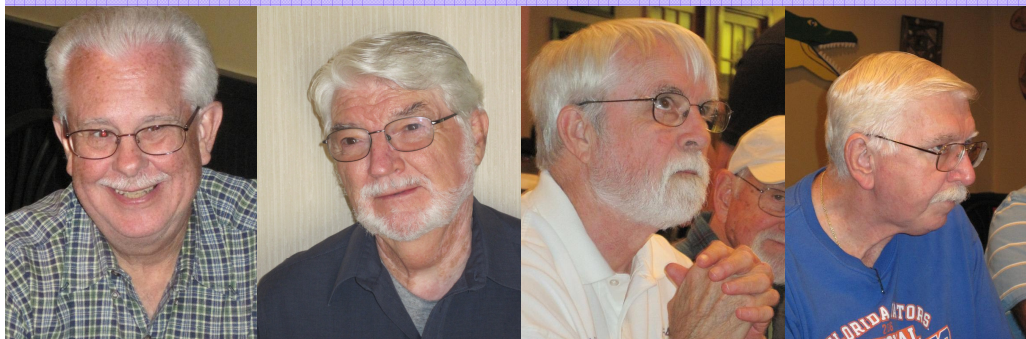
The party started with a 7:30 am breakfast at the Cracker Barrel for the early risers and 10 am assembly at the NF4L's west Jacksonville QTH on Rosetta Road for those who wanted to sleep in. Preparations for the upcoming lift included the final rigging of the antenna array which had been mounted on a ground-mounted tower section that had been lashed to a guy wire deadman in Mikey's front yard. The complete array, which included a 4-element SteppIR with the new 30/40 meter element and the M2 6M7JHV 6-meter beam, was ready...and waiting...for lifting. —Story on page 2

Inside this issue:

Antenna Party	1-2
2010 Officers	1
Postscript	3
New Entities?	3
VU2 and 30M	3
Ham Groaners	3
DX Quiz	4-5
Operating Tip	5
Coax Tool	6
Totem Pole	7
Quiz Answers	7
The All Purpose Card	8
The Last Word (for 2009!)	8



2010 NFDXA OFFICERS



N4EPD
President

NW4C
Vice President

NF4L
Secretary

KC4FWS
Treasurer

North Florida DX Association officers for the coming year were elected during the November 7 meeting at the St. Johns Seafood and Steaks Restaurant. Left to right they are **Mike Parnin**, **Warren Croke**, **Mike Reublin** and **Jim Hughes**. Appearances to the contrary having a moustache or a beard is *not* a requirement to hold an NFDXA office! **N4EPD** and **NW4C** have not held office recently in the club whereas **NF4L** and **KC4FWS** are continuing in the office they held during 2009.

Wish them well. And remember, none of them has anything to do with the current ongoing sunspot minimum.





Raising My New Antennas — Mikey, NF4L



New array set up and waiting for the crane



WW4US prepares for the climb



Up, up and away over house top and trees as Tom sets array in place

The entire array was prepared to be lifted into place as a single unit. While waiting for the crane truck to arrive the team pulled the antenna feed lines and control cables through the attic and into the shack.

The crane arrived at 11:30 and crane operator Tim and his helper set it up, positioning the rig so as to be able to lift the entire antenna array and top section from the front yard over my house to the 80-foot tower out back.

Tom, WW4US, aka the Tower Monkey, assembled his gear and proceeded to climb the tower, an event which always attracts an audience.

Once Tom was in position at the top of the tower, Tim maneuvered the crane so it could lift the entire assembly up to the tower, at the same time clearing the house and backyard trees, and then holding it in place as Tom bolted the new top section to the existing standing tower.

From start to finish the operation went off without a hitch. The crane was on site for a little over an hour, which can be attributed to the teamwork of all concerned plus some prior planning and good crane operation.

The rest of the afternoon was taken by re-attaching the guys, and pulling the final coax into the shack, setting the rotor, and pinning the mast, checking SWR and all the little details no one can ever name.

The occasion wrapped up with a "lupper" sort of a combination lunch and supper back at Cracker Barrel.

All in all a very good day...NF4L



Crane operator Tim gets his instructions



Kibitzing from the ground crew AA4UF, N4KE and N4NN. Not shown: NU4Y, K4UTE



Making final adjustments before releasing the crane attachment

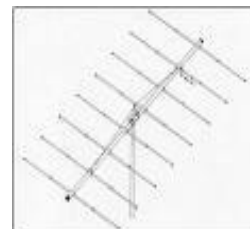
Antenna Party Postscript

Of course, after all this effort the bottom line is how is the new array working.?

According to Mikey, "I'm not too sure about how it plays yet. The 40M element seems to be 1 or 2 S units better than the dipole. With just a little pip of a 6M opening last night, I couldn't really tell if the M2 yagi is going to be better than the SteppIR. 7 elements vs. 6. I'm going to play with it some more now and see . . ."



NF4L,, NU4Y and N4KE agreeing the new array looks pretty good up there



Possible New DX Entities in Fall 2010

Reports continue that there could be as many as five new Caribbean entities in the coming year. According to the [The Daily DX](#) St Maarten (PJ7) and Curacao (PJ2) will become countries within the Dutch Kingdom (similar to the British Commonwealth) by October 2010. If so, this would be just in time for CQ WW SSB. This raises questions as to the status of former Dutch colonies Bonaire (PJ4), St Eustatius (PJ5), and Saba (PJ6). The same report says they could also evolve.

Should this anticipated status change occur there will be changes in both the DXCC and CQ DX status. Also, be prepared for an update in the CTY files your logging software uses.

30 Meters Now OK for VU2 Hams

The Wireless Planning & Communication (WPC) Wing of the Ministry of Communications in India has written to Gopal VU2GMN (President, Amateur Radio Society of India) to inform that 10100 to 10150 has been allocated to Amateur Services on a secondary basis in India.

This means that VU2 hams are free to use this on a non-interference basis with existing users of these frequencies. Earlier, temporary permission was issued from time to time for this WARC band.

It has also been communicated to Gopal that the 50-52 MHz (6M) band cannot be allocated now since it has already been allocated to other services. Hopefully we can still get some spot frequencies there in future.

See you on 10 MHz, finally...

—VU2PTT via *The DX World of Ham Radio*

Ham Groaners

- *He stayed up all night wondering where the sun went. Then it dawned on him.
- * The dead batteries were given out free of charge.
- * If you take the logging computer for a run, you could jog your memory.





DX QUIZ

Certainly, all the excitement (and envy) created recently by the raising of **Mikey, NF4L's** shiny new 4-element SteppIR (complete with a 30-40 meter 'trombone, no less) is deserved. After all, there has to be *some* recompense for taking a direct lightning hit which literally smoked his prior array . . .

All this points toward more and better DX for Mikey...and we all wish him the best. But many of us worked our first DX using some copper wire strung between tree tops and gradually worked ourselves up to bigger and more refined arrays. This month's quiz, created by Ward Silver, N0AX and published in the July/August 2007 **The DX Magazine**, is a deserved nod to the best bang for the buck in all ham radio—the Wire Antenna. Good Luck and the answers (if you need them) are on page__

.

- 1) Which of these is a curtain antenna?
 - A. Windom
 - B. Kraus
 - C. Franklin
 - D. Chu

- 2) What is the spacing of the elements in a Bobtail?
 - A. 1/8 wave
 - B. 1/4 wave
 - C. 1/2 wave
 - D. 5/8 wave

- 3) In what direction does the W8JK have maximum gain?
 - A. Broadside
 - B. End fire
 - C. Overhead
 - D. Parallel to the elements

- 4) What happens to the pattern of a rhombic if the termination resistor opens?
 - A. Nothing
 - B. There is a null in the direction of the open termination
 - C. It becomes bidirectional
 - D. The beam width narrows

- 5) The bi-square antenna is of what shape?
 - A. Diamond
 - B. Oblate spheroid
 - C. Inverted-U
 - D. 1/2-square

- 6) To which antenna is the Zepp most similar?
 - A. Loop
 - B. Dipole
 - C. Vertical
 - D. Inverted-L



— Continued next page

DX QUIZ, continued

- 7) The extra wires in a cage dipole increase what?
- Bandwidth
 - Gain
 - Feed point impedance
 - Power handling
8. As a long wire gets longer, in what direction does its gain increase?
- Towards the feed point
 - Broadside
 - Away from the feed point
 - 45 degrees from the wire
9. How many active elements make up the Lazy-H?
- 1
 - 2
 - 4
 - 8
10. Which is the favored direction of a sloping dipole?
- Broadside
 - In the direction of the slope
 - In the direction of the support
 - Wherever the DX is not

Bonus Question ...

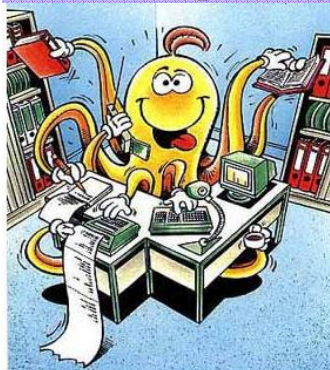
As a dipole is raised from ground level, the elevation of its main lobe gets lower and higher.

At what electrical height does it reach the first point of minimum elevation?

Answers . . .

The answers to the questions in this quiz (that you can use to compare with the answers you came up with) can be found on page ____

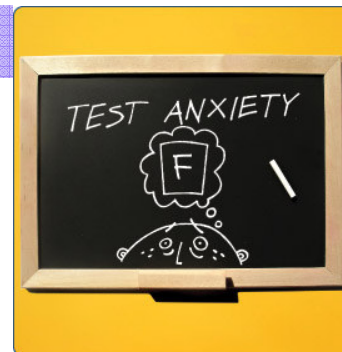
Operating Tip — Learning to Multi-Task



Listen to complex music (all types from Jazz to Classical to Rock, etc.) and try to pick out all the instrumental and vocal parts, one by one. When you get good at that, "dial it up a notch" and then try to "see" the artist actually playing their part of the piece with the actual fingering while you are focusing on them. The focus on the next artist and the next and so on.

The more complexity and detail that you can "see", the more successfully you are training your brain to develop concentration and focus and to multi-task.

— KQ2M





Simple, Inexpensive Coax Connector Tool—K9RFZ

I use a lot of PL-259 connectors to build feed line cables for friends and recent Technician hams that need some help getting on the air. I have streamlined the process by using a coax prep tool similar to the DX Engineering DXE-UT-8213 and the K4AVU crimp tool mounted in a bench vise. The slowest step in the process is attaching the connector to the prepared coax.

Aside from aligning the connector and making certain the center conductor wires all fit into the center pin, I still use a pair of vise grips to grab the connector and thread it onto the coax outer covering. I take special precautions to assure the vise grip is snug enough so the jaws don't grind the connector and yet not too snug that it deforms the connector. With a little creativity and time, I've replaced the vise grips with a simple and inexpensive tool that protects the connector and requires minimal effort to get the connector all the way onto the coax.



I reused a PL-259 barrel and glued it inside a PVC T-connector with the threads pointed outward. I found the 3/4" with threaded 1/2" PVC connector gives a modest fit to the PL-259 barrel. I used Gorilla Glue and coated the PVC threads before inserting the barrel. This glue expands as it dries and some glue wicked up the connector along the knurled edge.

ABOVE—Prep the coax as usual, but then thread the PL-259 connector into the new tool.

RIGHT—Line up the connector on the coax and twist away

BELOW—Unthread the installed connector which is ready to be soldered



The T-connector side openings allow you to see when the center conductor has reached the tip of the connector. Just unthread the tool from the installed connector and I'm ready to crimp the connector and solder the tip for another flawless installation. For the price of a PVC connector, a leftover PL-259 barrel, and some glue, I have a tool that does the job quickly every time.

— K9RFZ

<http://www.eham.net/articles/22841>

The NFDXA Marathon Totem Pole Where Do YOU Stand? <http://nfdxa.com/cq>

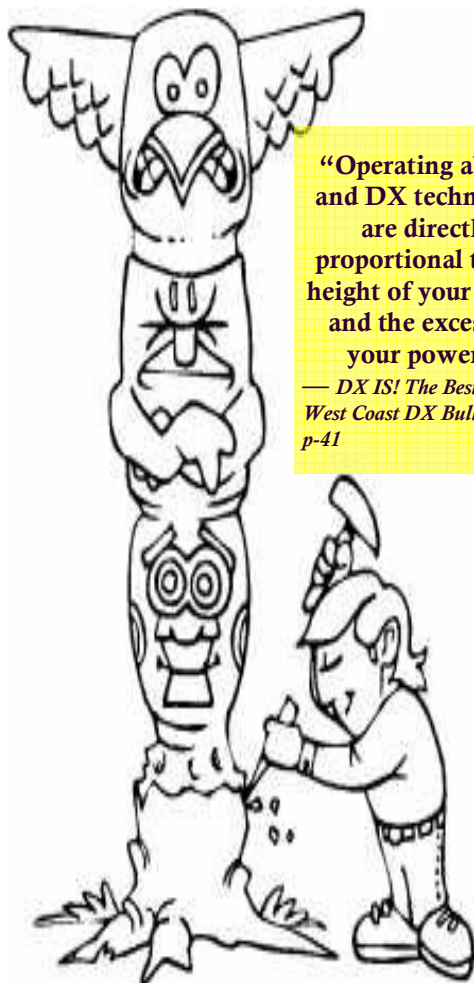
Between January 1 and December 31, 2009, work as many stations as you can, any band, any mode. Work each country only once, unless it spans zones. To add a new zone for the same country just type in the new call and zone over the old one and click the "Log It" button. To delete a call, erase the zone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



The Top 12-12/07

Entities Zones Total

N4NN	274	40	314
K4UTE	268	40	308
N4KE	250	40	290
K4EB	245	40	285
NF4L	189	36	225
NIWON	148	33	182
NW4C	131	28	159
WR4K	112	33	145
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

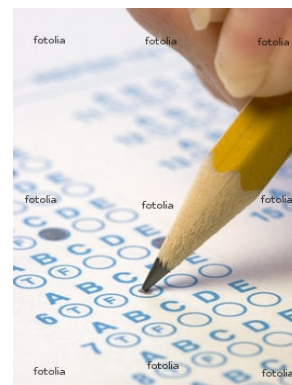


DX Quiz Answers

1) C 2) C 3) B 4) C 5) A 6) B 7) A 8) C 9) C 10) B

Bonus Question Answer

1/2 wavelength



PileUp

Editor
Warren Croke, NW4C
4092 NW 23 Circle
Gainesville, FL 32605
USA

<http://nfdxa.com>



W4ZR

The Monthly Journal of The North Florida DX Association

It would save me a lot
of trouble, if you'd put
this on your frig and
leave it up all year...



The Last Word

With this December issue **PileUp** comes to the end of its first year as the monthly newsletter of the North Florida DX Association. It was the brainchild of N4KE and it's been a good run. I really appreciate all the nice things the membership has had to say.

However, the compliments should be going to you, the membership of our little group of DX and Contest devotees'. You have been the ones providing the material for **PileUp** and its good quality comes directly from you. What's 'good' in each issue is due mainly to you and your many fine contributions, pictures as well as stories. The goofs and screw-ups are mine.

But I also appreciate the critical comments as well...as long as they are constructive and will help make a more interesting, useful and readable newsletter. Please keep them coming as well right along with the 'atta boys'.

So thank you for a good first year and let's 'gitter done' in 2010. —NW4C