

N O R T H E R N  
 C A L I F O R N I A  
 D X C L U B



## The Editor's Keyboard

### Sam Canter, W6TSQ, SK

As I was assembling this month's *DXer*, I learned that Sam Canter, W6TSQ had died peacefully this afternoon—May 2—at his home in Mill Valley, at the age of 85.

Sam had had medical problems for several years, but had concealed his illnesses from all but a few close friends in the Northern California DX Club. His condition had deteriorated in recent months, and he had had several stays at a local convalescent hospital. As he grew weaker, he appeared less frequently on the air and on the W6TI repeater.

I had only known Sam for a few years, and had finally met him in person during one of his infrequent outings to the weekly lunch gathering of local veteran operators. Sam's failing eyesight prevented him from driving, and he was ferried about by Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD, who enriched Sam's last years with his loyal and caring friendship.

Once, during one of the "pastrami runs" to Brothers Deli in Burlingame, I became so engrossed in a sidewalk conversation with Sam and Cass that my car, only 30 feet away, was ticketed by a meter maid, and I failed to notice until she had mounted her motor bike and left.

Sam was a ham for almost 70 years. He was a shipboard operator in the waning days of spark, and served in the US Marines in World War II. Sharing his New York origins, if not his era, I enjoyed his caustic wit and rambunctious personality, and admired his uncanny ability to bust a pileup. I particularly enjoyed his stories, whether embellished or not, and the late-night repartee on the W6TI repeater. I asked him on several occasions to submit to an interview with a tape recorder running, but—alas— he would have none of it. So his stories—of being mistaken for a bootlegger during Prohibition for having accumulated copper tubing for coils, of being a vendor in Yankee Stadium during the Babe Ruth era, of being a Sparks in the merchant marine—will exist only in the recollections of his friends.

Sam was a helluva CW man. I recall how annoyed he was to have copied a high-speed run on 40 and discovered that his copying ability had "slipped" to 50 wpm. His many friends on the air will miss him.

73, OT.



—NI6T

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## Amplifiers— Old & New

The monthly meeting of the NCDXC will be held Friday, May 9, at the Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo. Socializing and/or dinner commences at 6:30. The meeting is at 8 PM.

The presentation will be "Amplifiers—Old and New," by Ted Algren, KA6W and Alex Rabinovich, KI6EZ. Ted and Alex will compare classic tube technology with state-of-the-art solid state designs.

The Dunfey is located on the northwest side of the junction of Freeways 92 and 101 in San Mateo. Take the Delaware St. exit from 92. Monitor W6TI/R on 147.36 for routing assistance. Guests and interested parties are always welcome.

N O R T H E R N  
C A L I F O R N I A  
D X C L U B

**Club Officers:**

President: Ted Algren, KA6W  
 Vice President: Doug Westover, W6JD  
 Secretary: Peter Gerba, KN6BI  
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 Records Manager: Ron Panton, W6VG  
 Publications Mgr: Ron Panton, W6VG

**Club Repeater, W6TI/R**

Frequency/offset: 147.36 MHz, +  
 Trustee: Bob Vallio, W6RGG  
 Comm. Chairman: Eric Swarz, WA6HHQ  
 Club simplex: 147.54 MHz (suggested)  
 Thurs. Net QTR: 8 pm local time.  
 Net Manager: Randy Wright, W6CUA  
 DX News: Dave Pugatch, KI6WF  
 Propagation: Al Lotze, W6RQ  
 Swap Shop: Ben Deovlet, W6FDU  
 QSL Information: Mac McHenry, W6BSY

**W6TI DX Bulletins:**

W6TI Station Trustee Bob Vallio, W6RGG, transmits DX information at 0200 UT every Monday (Sunday evening local time) on both 7.016 and 14.002 MHz.

**Club address:** Box 608  
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*The Editor's Keyboard, continued*

# After the Convention

Wow! Was that a fun Convention or what?

A new experience or a significant change in a familiar one usually brings both a sense of anticipation and a sense of uncertainty, and this year's International DX Convention had ample quantities of both. Given the controversy surrounding the decision to move from Visalia to Fresno, and the problems inherent in moving a large gathering to a new venue, everyone involved in organizing the Convention has to be quite pleased with the outcome—a whole bunch of happy campers who had a great time around the campfire.

The mood was upbeat from the start. NW6P and I strolled into the Holiday Inn Centre Plaza on Friday afternoon, only to encounter a sea of DXers already well into party mode. We were struck by the spaciousness of the hotel, and, as we encountered them, the friendliness and eagerness-to-please exhibited by the hotel staff. We found the rooms to be clean and quiet.

There were some minor glitches during the weekend, to be sure. There was a mixup over the starting time of the first cocktail party. It turned out to be our error, but the hotel people quickly adapted. Refreshments for those manning the vendor booths somehow were overlooked. Some folks got their banquet meals a bit late. There was a mixup at the DX Forum that might not have occurred had floor microphones been provided. Some attendees were unaware that the large parking structure was available to them. These were annoying, but minor, and already marked for correction next time.

The food, for a convention banquet, was quite acceptable. It was nice to be able to push one's chair back and not be sitting in someone else's lap. It was even nicer not to breathe chlorine.

The programs were fine. I was particularly impressed by Warren Hill's slick presentation of the XZ1N expedition, and it was hard making choices between concurrent presentations during the "sessions." N6TV hosted the Contest Forum with his characteristic wit and verve.

I think it was particularly satisfying to the Two Riches and the Committee to hear our Southern California DX Club counterparts — who a year ago were absolutely committed to a return to Visalia—state that they had not made a decision about 1998 and were keeping their options open. I was gratified to see smiles—however forced—from some pro-Visalia hardliners among them who were at that time not-so-privately questioning the ancestry and sexual proclivities of some of us, your Editor included.

There is now communication between the two clubs at the highest levels, and talk of joint steering committees to head off potential problems. This is a great step forward, and an unspoken acknowledgment of the great job our people did putting on the big show this year.

It takes a lot of hard work by a lot of people to put on a good Convention. As Ted suggests in *Whiskey Shots*, when you meet a member—or a member's spouse—who helped make Fresno '97 a roaring success, offer them your thanks for the good time you had. Make that a double for Rich Carbine, W6UDS, Marilyn Bagshaw, N6VAW, and Rich, K7ZV and Barbara Chatelain.

—NI6T



## Whiskey Shots

### Fresno Convention

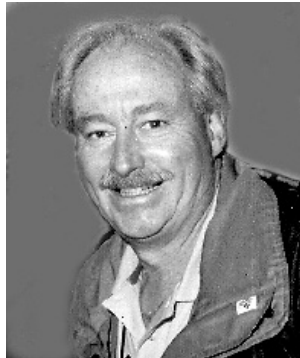
We've returned from Fresno (*a.k.a.* California DXer's Mecca) and I trust/hope you all enjoyed yourselves as much as your BoD and I did. It was especially good to see old friends and renew acquaintances. Of course, I'm a bit prejudiced, as I witnessed the many hours of effort spent facilitating the relocation process and structuring the final event. From the cards, letters and e-mail messages that I have received to date, it is safe to say that all Club members should be proud of what our Co-chairmen and their willing helpers accomplished.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will find a Convention Recap by Rich Carbine, W6UDS. Please read it. The next time you see *any* of the people acknowledged therein, take a few moments to thank them for a job well done! Kudos to the whole "famn family"—it was a great show!

### Elections

June brings the NCDXC elections to elect your Officers and Directors for the coming year. Ted Park, K6XN, and Jack Troster, W6ISQ have volunteered to help select a slate of candidates to manage the affairs of our Club for the year beginning July '97. I have had the privilege to serve this Club in various capacities over many years. Believe me, there have been many, many rewarding experiences! Getting to know most of you so much better has been the best reward of all. If you are called upon (read "asked") to serve as a Club Officer, stand tall and make yourself available.

—Ted Algren, KA6W, President



## Treasurer's Report

April, 1997

### Income:

Badge(s)	<u>\$28.00</u>
Total Income	\$28.00

### Expenses:

DXer	
Copy Cost	\$350.57
Postage	252.00
Repeater telephone	15.42
Fresno Awards	195.28
Badges	<u>50.64</u>
Total Expenses	\$863.91

### CD

Life Membership	\$9825.09
California Federal 5.6%	5067.58
Great Western Bank 6%	\$10974.48

### Checking (B of A):

DX Convention	\$3500.00
Club	<u>6590.01</u>
Total Cash	\$35957.16

### Club Members as of 4/1/97

Charter	3
Honorary	10
Life	32
Family 6x2	12
Associate	6
Absentee	24
Full	<u>233</u>
Total	320

—Gordon Girton, W6NW



## The DXer on Top Again!

For the second consecutive year, *The DXer* has won top honors in the annual amateur radio newsletter contest conducted by ARNS—the Amateur Radio News Service. In the *ARNS Bulletin's* lead story for April, *The DXer* and two other newsletters—*The K6MEP Keyer* and *The Low Down*—were judged "the best of the best" of the 52 submissions. On the evaluation sheets sent to the Editor, Chief Judge Judy Roush, AA7UC commented that *The DXer* was "the very best of the special-interest club newsletters...a pleasure to read."

Your Editor is of course proud of *The DXer's* success among the many fine newsletters crafted by ham editors around the country.

In a separate story, the *Bulletin* also recognized the standard of excellence met by two other editors, including our own Dave Barton, AF6S, my predecessor as



# DXer of the Year—NI6T

Tom McShane, NW6P

I agreed to serve as Chairman of the 1996 DXer of the Year Committee. Pursuant to the Bylaws, the Board of Directors appointed two committee members, and we three chose two more; several were past recipients of the award.

Selection criteria are enumerated in the Bylaws and include work with or participation in DXpeditions, high personal and ethical standards and practices, service to the Club, and DX and other amateur-related achievements.

When the votes were tallied, the unanimous choice for 1996 DXer of the Year was Garry Shapiro, NI6T.

Here are a few of the qualifications cited in the nominating letter.

- Garry was a major planner and participant in the 1995 Conway Reef DXpedition, which was the ARRL DXpedition of the Year.
- He consistently helps others to work DXpeditions and rare lowband stations. "Few among his DX compatriots across the country have not received phone calls from NI6T when 'something good' was on."
- NI6T consistently promotes fair play, sportsmanship and adherence to the rules.
- Garry has been *DXer* Editor for over three years. *The DXer* has twice won the Amateur Radio News Service (ARNS) Club Newsletter Contest.
- Garry has also served as Secretary and Vice President of NCDXC.
- He has over 2300 band countries in the log from a mediocre QTH, including over 140 on 160 meters, is on the Honor Roll and has worked 9BDXCC.



## Being There

NI6T almost missed his big opening.

Garry took his time getting to the Saturday evening banquet at the Fresno Convention. He said later that he was late leaving JH1AJT's second presentation and was diverted by several friends on his way back to his room. When I rose to make the presentation at the banquet I was aware that he was not there, and stalled as long as I could. But with no honoree in sight, I finally had to go ahead and make the presentation with him *in absentia*.

Just as I got to the climactic moment, the doors to the room opened, and in strolled NI6T, beer in hand, just in time to hear his name called as recipient of the NCDXC's highest award, and to receive the applause of the audience.

I have known Garry a long time, but I will always remember the dumb-struck look on his face!

—Tom McShane, NW6P

# That Fresno DX Forum Flap

*The following is excerpted from W6ISQ's DXAC report to K6WR.*

There was an unfortunate occurrence at the DX Forum, which I chaired. I was about to adjourn the meeting when I was told there was someone way in the back of the room with his hand up. I finally saw him but did not immediately know who it was and I did not hear him well. I heard "Yemen" and "70," so I guessed it was Zorro, JH1AJT, who had recently operated from Yemen with Franz, DJ9ZB, a long-time friend of mine.

JH1AJT is a well-known DXpeditioner who has operated from some of the rarest spots in the world. His petition for DXCC approval of his 70 operation was denied by the DXCC desk at ARRL HQ on reasonable grounds that his license was not issued by the proper PT&T authority. So, I presumed he was trying to present his side of the Yemen operation. When I heard him mention P5 (North Korea), I didn't relate the two. He spoke for about 7 or 8 minutes and we were 5 minutes over time for our forum. When he stopped talking, I figured he had finished his Yemen statement, and I adjourned the meeting.

I then hurried to the room where Zorro was to hold a meeting about his Yemen DXpedition. The room was jammed and I couldn't get in.

Later, someone asked me why I had not answered his question. The answer is that I didn't realize he had *asked* a question! I subsequently wrote him a note explaining what had happened.

Although Zorro's Yemen operation was not credited for DXCC, he deserves the opportunity to present his side of the story. He has been successful before and he will be again, in some faraway place that everyone wants to work.

The lesson: in a large auditorium, have a floor mike for floor speakers to use.

—John G. Troster, W6ISQ,  
Pacific Division DXAC Representative



## DXpeditioning on the Cheap

*Editor's note: Jim Henderson, KF7E and I were talking about Pacific DXpeditioning, which led to the following reminiscences of his youthful adventures—DXpeditioning as a penniless student.*

I tried this in July 1972, long after Don Miller, and at about the same time some guy in Sacramento was trying to start a company to dredge Minerva Reef and turn it into a Libertarian Utopia, making money via ship licensing scams like the Liberians.

He and his cronies angered the Tongans, who bought a large, high speed diesel boat, mounted dual .50 calibre machine guns on it, and threatened to shoot anyone setting foot on Minerva without the King's permission. They would, they said, feed the remains to the sharks.

I arrived at the Tonga airport on July 4, 1972, the King's birthday. The Customs guys wanted to impound the gear (for which I had a license and permission) until later, because they were going to be late getting back to town in time for the annual "Big Game"—a rugby match—between Tonga and Fiji. The entire business/government complex shut down for a week for the party—rugby is taken seriously in the South Pacific. Though I had good contacts, I was unable to secure an audience with His Majesty, and thus never got permission to operate. Had I stayed a week longer, I might have succeeded.

I decided to push on, so I went to ZK2, and obtained the first license ever issued under their own local authority. I requested ZK2DX (how strange!) and got some really nice documents touting the historical nature of the event, waiving the fees, and guaranteeing me that call forever. Several years later, however, Darrell, N6DX, had that call issued to him. Forever is a short time on Niue.

So I spent 8 weeks traveling as a poor student—that's pretty poor—with no backing from clubs, etc. But I loved the DX trail, so, when I went back to college, I worked for two years to organize a trip to the Tokelau Islands, which at the time was a top-ten country. Everyone except Cass, WA6AUD scoffed at me—a mere kid—for having the audacity to try pulling off what "real DXers" had tried to do and failed. That really pissed me off!

One member of the NCDXF, who Cass sent me to see regarding possible financial help, had just returned from a big trip to Palmyra or somewhere. Anyway, he was too busy playing Mr. Big, and blew off my calls for a month. Then he told everyone I never called him. Liar! I was beyond pissed: I was now *determined!* It's a long story, but I got there, and then got *stuck* there. I had a great time, and came home at age 22 from a top-ten DXpedition!

I went back to college, impoverished, but richer in experience. That liar SOB in the NCDXF had turned me off the politics of DXing, real fast. But I never forgot Cass' friendship and advice. If you ever see him and can think of it, shake his hand firmly for me, and tell him I remember.

—Jim Henderson,, KF7E

## The QCAO Reorganizes

Danny Eskenazi, K7SS

The Quarter Century Appliance Operators was founded in the early 1950's by a small group of amateur radio operators from the Pacific Northwest. These operators had been active in their hobby for over 25 years, but still lacked basic knowledge of radio electronics and had no idea how their equipment worked.

They banded together in an effort to protect each other's honor and pride. At radio gatherings and club meetings in those days, one was considered unworthy of the title Ham Radio Operator if he or she could not only name components, but know how to solder them together and make a radio work, or fix a broken set.

Encountering insults and derision, those few hardy pioneers banded together and formed the first chapter of the QCAO. This was known as the "Cold Solder" chapter. They even coined the now-famous club motto "*e pluribus ignorami*"—Latin for "We don't have to know how to solder, we just wanna talk on our radios."

No veterans of that first chapter are known to be active on the air today. In the late 50's and early '60's, with increasing worldwide interest in science, space and technology, the QCAO membership went underground.

It is with great pride and dignity that, today, a revived QCAO stands ready to rise from the ashes, and to again assume its mantle of mediocrity. In honor of those first pioneering members, QCAO hereby invites all eligible applicants to step forward and join!

QCAO benefits include more than pride of membership. Think of the warm glow you will experience at club meetings and gatherings, showing off your new all-plastic imprinted QCAO pocket protector! And that's not all! For your minimal membership fee, you will also receive a handsome certificate of honor, suitable-

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## Golf Tourney Results

Here are the results of the DX Convention Golf Tournament.

*Low gross winners (golf balls)*

*Calloway winner (golf bag)*

Larry, KE6CS 75

Spud, K6KH 76

Jim, W6OUL 83

—W6TEX

## Convention Recap

We can count the 1997 DX Convention in Fresno among memorable NCDXC accomplishments!

Overcoming the many obstacles which accompany the move of a convention of this size was a supreme challenge, sometimes seemingly insurmountable, but was, nevertheless, a major success.

- Raffle sales, spearheaded by Lee Williams, K6IME achieved an all-time high. Lee was assisted onsite by John, KJ6XF and Julie Kelly, Doug Bender, WW6D, Dave Pugatch, KI6WF and a host of others.
- Prizes were purchased by Len Gerald, K6ANP and Rich Carbine, W6UDS. The grand prize was a Yaesu FT-1000D.
- In general, meals were well-presented, tasty and served in a timely manner.
- On-site registration could be improved. Some parking hassles would have been avoided had attendees known of the adjoining parking garage.
- The vendor displays were ample and of good quality; there is lots of room for expansion at this hotel. The large lobby outside this area provided an excellent location for selling raffle tickets and for general assembly and visiting. This area also proved more than adequate for the two bar locations on Friday and Saturday nights.
- Dick and Carolyn Wilson, K6LRN and WB6TKD not only shined in assembling pre-registration packets, but were invaluable in organizing and executing seating arrangements.
- The programs (one of the most difficult jobs) came off without a hitch, thanks to chairman Craig Smith, W6WL, who worked many hours to make it all come together.
- Publicity Chairman Len Gerald, K6ANP saw to it that the word got out in a timely manner.
- The convention logo was put together by Fred Leoni, N6EYU.
- Millie Thompson, WY7K, in charge of the Ladies Luncheon, presented a program on the Burma DXpedition, in which she participated.
- Many thanks to: Gordon Girton, W6NW, pre-reg; Bill Fontes, W6TEX, golf game; Steve Thomas, N6ST for the program booklet; Barbara Chatelain, who helped put the booklet together; Jack Troster, W6ISQ, DXAC; Bob Wilson, N6TV, CAC; and Ken and Gilly Lewis, AK6L and KD6NOS.
- One who is often unrecognized for his great contributions is Tom McShane, NW6P. Without Tom's able assistance, this convention might not have happened! He laid the groundwork for successful negotiations with the hotel.
- Thanks to our President, Ted Algren, KA6W, who was always available to lend a hand.
- Congratulations to Tom Schiller, N6BT who did an exemplary job as Master of Ceremonies.
- We also extend our deepest gratitude to Bob Ferrero, W6RJ, who was a pillar of this convention, as he has been for so many years.
- And last, but certainly not least, thanks to Marilyn Bagshaw, N6VAW, for her performance as liaison to the hotel.

To all the others who have helped and have not been mentioned above, we extend our sincere thanks.

—Rich Carbine, W6UDS, Convention Co-chairman

## Beverage Over Prairie Dog Hole

*Here's a tongue-in-cheek comment on clueless questions asked on the Internet DX and Topband Reflectors.*

Help! I was modeling a 2-wire Beverage on my new 300 mhz dual-processor Pentium+, using "Neck Wires" software from the University of Alabama, and noticed that if I changed the pH of the prairie dog excrement under the antenna from 7 to 6, I get about 0.13 dB of gain, but the front-to-back ratio degrades by 0.09 dB. Should I go directly over or around the prairie dog hole?

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## QCAO

for-framing, with your hand-lettered name and Charter Membership number. Other QCAO member memorabilia will soon be available, including T-shirts, caps, and pins. Charter membership numbers are still available.

Membership requires a 25-year (more-or-less) interest in Amateur Radio, coupled with a total ignorance of how radios work and how to repair them. Think of meeting other QCAO members on the air! No more embarrassing pauses when someone in the QSO mentions an RF choke or a parasitic suppressor! Be able to exchange meaningful sharing, to talk about real things unrelated to radio, and, yes, even to swap QCAO numbers. And—perhaps sooner than later—there will be a worldwide QCAO contest!

No longer will you have to skulk to the back of the room at post-meeting bull-sessions at your radio club. Just display your QCAO protector and others will be able to identify you immediately.

Who knows? Perhaps one of the original members of the old QCAO is just waiting for you to find him. Join now! Remember: "We don't have to know how to solder, we just wanna talk on our radios!" Don't let those technoids embarrass you and kick jargon in your face. Stand up for what's

# Fresno!



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FIRST  
CLASS

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P. O. B O X 6 0 8  
M E N L O P A R K, C A  
9 4 0 2 6 - 0 6 0 8 U S A

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**Fresno Pix!**