



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

# An Open-Loop Election

As announced all over this issue, the June 13 meeting is the annual election of officers and directors of the NCDXC.

In 1996, controversy over the site for the 1997 International DX Convention and associate membership stimulated a lively contest for control of the Board of Directors, with an opposition slate challenging the Board's slate. Even so, it was no easy task for the Board to come up with a slate of candidates—I know because I chaired the Nominating Committee.

Alas, this past year has been as peaceful as a slumbering infant, and that appears to have induced in our membership an even deeper torpor than usual. Nominating Committee co-chairmen Jack Troster, W6ISQ and Ted Park, K6XN have all but run around with butterfly nets in their efforts to capture a group of candidates.

What is *with* this club, anyway? In organizations like this, the same folks keep picking up the baton, while everyone else has too much else to do, or just wants to watch, as if the DX club were just another monthly program on TV. Here's the news: most of those who serve have the same busy lives as those who do not.

So, as we go to press, Jack and Ted—like the Marines—are still seeking a few good men and women.

Are you a recent new (full) member, willing to stand up and do your bit? Are you a long-time member who—for a plethora of “good” reasons—has never given back anything to the Club? Are you retired, with the kids gone, looking for worthwhile things to do? Are you concerned about the direction of NCDXC—indeed, about whether there will continue to *be* an NCDXC? You can bet on this—no leaders, no Club.

Please get your Roster and call K6XN or W6ISQ this evening. You need not wait to be called—*volunteer!* You do need to be a voting member. You can also be nominated from the floor at the meeting—and you can nominate yourself.

Serving the Club and the hobby you love is a rewarding experience—give it a try!  
 —NI6T

# Hail and Farewell!

“The time has come, the walrus said, to speak of many things...”

The time has indeed come—this is the final issue of *The DXer* under my editorship.

It's been a helluva ride since my first issue in November, 1993, and I have enjoyed *almost* every minute of it. Preparing an issue of *The DXer* is not unlike stir-frying Chinese food—which I also enjoy. In both activities, one spends a great deal of time

to page 8

## Inside

Minutes	—KN6BI	2
Whiskey Shots	—KA6W	3
Roster Changes		3
Treasurer's Report	—W6NW	3
HB9AW SK		3
Sam in the Evening		
	—WA6AUD	4
CQ Hall of Famers	—NI6T	5
W1BB Lives!	—K1VV	5
VKØIR Book & Video	—NI6T6	
Ladder Update	—AA6YQ	Insert
Dayton!	—NI6T	7
K7JJ—Your New Editor		
	—NI6T	8
Kachina 505DSP	—NI6T	8
Disappearing Reef DXpedition		
	—KF7E	9
Dues are Due		9
Photo of the Month!	—NI6T	9

## Election Time!

The monthly meeting of the NCDXC will be held Friday, June 13 at the Palo Alto Hofbrau at the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course.

*This is the annual Election meeting, at which officers and directors for 1997-98 will be chosen.*

Palo Alto Hofbrau was previously known as Harry's and was the site of many meetings, pre-Dunphey. Under new ownership, the food format has changed: expect a buffet-style meal with at least three hot entrees. *Attendees need to sign up for this one!* Contact Peter, KN6BI or Gordon, W6NW as soon as possible. We need a good turnout for this meeting, so please pencil it in on your dayminders.

To reach the restaurant, take Freeway 101 to Embarcadero Road in Palo Alto. Head east toward the bay, and turn left immediately after passing the golf course. Dinner is at 6:30 and the meeting commences at 8:00. Friends and guests are always welcome. Monitor W6TI/R on 147.36+ for assistance.

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  
 Treasurer: Gordon Girton, W6NW  
 Director: Eric Swarz, WA6HHQ  
 Director: Lloyd Cabral, AA6T  
 Director: Al Burnham, K6RIM

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 9-Band Award: John Brand, K6WC  
 California Award: Rubin Hughes, WA6AHF  
 Historian/archivist: Ron Panton, W6VG  
 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  
 Menlo Park, CA  
 94026-0608

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## *Board of Directors Meeting*

A Board of Directors meeting was held on April 30 at Ted, KA6W's offices in Los Altos Hills. Ted opened the meeting at 6:30 PM. Also present were Doug, W6JD; Gordon, W6NW; Eric, WA6HHQ; Lloyd, AA6T; Al, K6RIM; Peter, KN6BI and Garry, NI6T.

*Old Business*

- The Board reviewed the accounting of income from our successful Convention (ref. Treasurer's Report, page 3).
- Gordon, W6NW is converting the Convention checking account to its new use as the Club Repeater account.

*New Business*

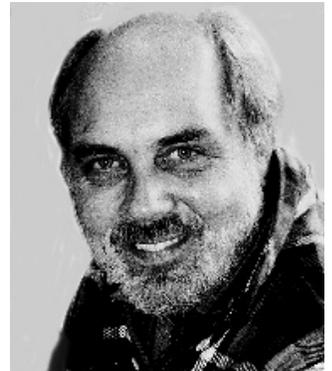
- The Board thanked Rich, W6UDS and Rich, K7ZV for their leadership efforts in making the Convention a success.

Review of convention issues:

- BoD read a letter of commendation sent to the Holiday Inn staff by W6UDS—a nice touch, and well-deserved.
- The Board considered a possible increase in club fees but voted to take no action.
- Ted, KA6W announced that Ted, K6XM and Jack, W6ISQ will chair the Nominating Committee. The BoD will present its slate for the June elections.
- The June Election meeting will be held at the Palo Alto Hofbrau—formerly Harry's.
- The Board voted to fund an additional \$1,200 for 50th Anniversary awards.
- The Board also voted to provide \$500 to establish a permit NCDXC home page. Chuck, AA6G has assumed this task, and will convert the 50th Anniversary page. The Board again thanks Chuck for his efforts on both projects.
- The Board also authorized up to \$150 for miscellaneous Club awards.
- George, KM6RR, a graphic design professional, has agreed to redesign the NCDXC QSL card, as his work schedule permits.

The meeting ended at 9:00 PM.

—Peter Gerba, KN6BI, Secretary



## *General Meeting*

Taylor, K7GT and Chris Calhoun, N6MAW.

Grant, K7GT, is 49, lives in Pleasanton, works in Computer Science at Lawrence Livermore Lab, holds an Extra Class license and has 109 worked. His sponsors were Ray, K6VX and Tom, K6TS.

Chris, N6MAW holds a General Class ticket. He works at Tandem Computer and lives in Los Gatos. Chris was sponsored by Ted, K6XN and Gordon, W6NW. Welcome to both!

- Ted, KA6W spoke with Larry Shapiro, K6RO, President of SCDXC and learned that SCDXC will return to Visalia for the 1998 International DX Convention.
- The annual election of officers and directors will be held at the June meeting, at the Palo Alto Hofbrau (formerly Harry's) on June 13.

Ted closed the meeting at 9:45 PM.

—Peter Gerba, KN6BI, Secretary  
 to next page

The May meeting was held at The Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo. Ted, KA6W called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM.

- A moment of silence was observed in memory of Sam Canter, W6TSQ who passed away on May 2 at his home in Mill Valley. We will all miss Sam!
- Gordon, W6NW presented the Treasurer's report, which was accepted.
- Two new Associate Members were welcomed to membership—Allen "Grant"

## Whiskey Shots

June is a big month for our Club—it's election time and the Marathon clock starts running—or did you forget? *Election*

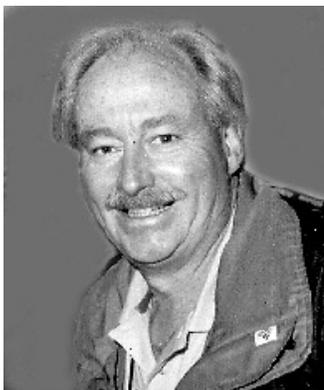
Ted Park, K6XN, and Jack Troster, W6ISQ, are looking for a few good people to handle our Club's operations for the next twelve months. Please contact them or willingly accept their request that you serve the "World's Greatest DX Club." To paraphrase Smokey—that famous forest-dwelling DXer—"Only you can prevent Club Fires." Come on out to the Palo Alto Hofbrau on 13 June and help determine our Club's direction as we close our 50th Anniversary Year.

### Marathon

By the time you read this missive, the Club Marathon will have begun. Last year's Marathon activity was less than sterling—in fact, it was more like rusty steel. Nonetheless, several of you were able to walk away with plaques and certificates. With the Club's 50th Anniversary year ending in October, our Marathon Contest offers a great opportunity to work those 50 countries you need to win an Anniversary Award.

Go get 'em! Let's all make some noise on the HF bands and take advantage of recent improvements in propagation—the Solar Flux Index has been improving these past few weeks.

—Ted Algren, KA6W, President



## Roster Changes

### New Associate Members

- Allan "Grant" Taylor, K7GT (E)  
 4531 Sandalwood Drive  
 Pleasanton, CA 94588  
 H (510) 846-8703  
 W (510) 422-1572  
 E-mail k7gt@qsl.net
- William "Cris" Calhoun N6MAW (G)  
 16298 Robie Lane  
 Los Gatos, CA 95032-4630  
 H (408) 356-8874  
 W (408) 285-4664  
 FAX (408) 285-2719  
 E-mail calhoun\_cris@tandem.com



## HB9AW, SK

Honorary Member Gerard de Buren, HB9AW is a Silent Key. The information reached *The DXer* via the Internet DX Reflector.

Gerard lived for a time in the United States, and at one time held the callsign WB6QAU. A very active DXer, Gerard was closely associated with the operation of 4U1ITU in Geneva.

The DXer would appreciate receiving more information about Gerard, and the DX achievements which led to his being named an Honorary Member

—NI6T.

## Treasurer's Report

May, 1997

### Income

Fresno Convention	\$6837.54
Dues	49.00
Badge(s)	42.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$6928.54</b>

### Expenses

DXer	
Copy Cost	\$246.36
Postage	160.44
Meeting	100.00
CA Award	81.00
W6VG	24.13
Repeater telephone	15.42
Internet	100.00
AA6T	125.93
Badges	47.46
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$900.74</b>

### CD

Life Membership	\$9825.09
California Federal 5.6%	5067.58
Great Western Bank 6%	\$11075.14

### Checking (B of A)

Repeater	\$1280.84
Club	14812.15
<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>\$42060.80</b>

### Club Members as of 5/1/97

Charter	3
Honorary	10
Life	31
Family 6x2	12
Associate	8
Absentee	24
Full	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>

—Gordon Girton, W6NW



# Sam in the Evening

Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD

Sam Canter, W6TSQ, died in early May. He had been in declining health for some months—possibly for several years. There had been more than one problem, but he had not wished the specifics to be known and had offered a number of explanations during those last several months. He handled things his own way. Sam was private to the end about his personal matters. He always had been—he never changed.

Sam was born in New York City in 1911. In his early years he acquired some radio training at the New York YMCA and later went to sea on small cargo ships as a radio officer. One of his early jobs was on a banana boat shuttling between New York and Puerto Rico. Later on, he sailed to foreign waters—to Europe and the Far East. Sam spent eleven years on ships as a radio officer.

He sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge into San Francisco in 1937 on the day the bridge was first opened to traffic. He saw the celebration going on overhead and decided to stick around a while.

In the remaining years preceding WWII he worked at a number of jobs, including one with the Oakland Police Department—then in the early, pioneering days of mobile radio communication. It was a system that in comparison to these days would perhaps be considered primitive technology but even back then it did sometimes work.

When the war came along, Sam joined the Marine Corps, serving from 1942 to 1946. He became a sergeant, assigned to duties where his already-acquired skills in radio and communications were most needed. He spent some time on Treasure Island, and was discharged there and given enough travel money to get home to San Francisco. If you were to ask Sam what he remembered of his service years, the story you most likely would get would be about being in the same barracks with Tyrone Power during boot camp.

After the war, he stayed close to the military, working for Army Supply at 6th Army headquarters in San Francisco, until his retirement.

He lived in Mill Valley for forty years, nestled in a canyon on the east side of Mt Tamalpais, in a grove of tall redwoods on a steep hillside. He thought redwoods the most beautiful trees ever created and would not tolerate the suggestion that a

little thinning would benefit the grove of trees on his property. No way would he ever consider cutting a single tree!

Sam lived in a house built to utilize available space in every possible way. The house was neither deep nor broad. From the main deck, a steep set of stairs descended to the lower level. Alongside the staircase, there was no upper floor, but rather a wide opening over the kitchen on the lower floor. Limited in floor space, the house still contained two bedrooms, living room, kitchen and utilities. It matched Sam—short and stout.

In his later years, Sam was a bachelor; he had been married twice but neither stuck. Nonetheless, to the end he was a charmer. Even when last hospitalized he missed no chance to compliment the female attendants who took care of him. Sam could be brusque at times, but—when he thought it necessary—he was honey-tongued to the core.

Though Sam lived in a wooded area, he was not one for hiking through the woods or on up the mountainside. Each year the Dipsea Race sent a horde of runners thundering through his neighborhood on the race from Mill Valley to the Pacific Ocean. Sam never took note of their passing. His time was devoted to amateur radio. Outside of following the sports scene, he had no other interests.

Some would say that Sam never slept. You could find him on the air day or night. In recent years you could find him from around 11 pm, working friends on CW. Then he would be up at 4 AM to keep a schedule with a Japanese pediatrician. Then, later in the morning, he would join a regular group on 40 meters. In between, he tuned the bands, looking for DX but also looking for just DX QSOs. If you asked him when he slept, he would tell you he slept between his daily schedules. Some thought that he had schedules across the

entire 24-hour day.

Sam worked a lot of DX over the years. He would sometimes mention that he had confirmed enough countries to put him on the Honor Roll and that he had also worked enough on five bands to earn 5BDXCC. And he had the QSLs, but he would not apply for the awards. His rationale was that he knew he had the contacts and the credits and that was all that was needed.

Sam liked attention, even though at times he might appear to reject it, and he swelled up a bit when he got some. A couple of years back, the *DXer* Editor asked for an article about Sam. One was written, this including a good review of Sam's life, even to the number of the Manhattan public school from which he had graduated. It was based upon information acquired over years of listening to Sam talk about the still-remembered and important happenings of his life. Was Sam pleased with the article? You bet he was! He swelled up with repressed pleasure. But his reaction to first reading the article was pure Sam. "You left out all the good parts," he advised the writer. "But," he added after a bit of contemplation, "you can put them in the sequel."

Sam's eyesight started to fail five or six years back. He did have cataracts, but surgery corrected that problem. The problem which did not respond to treatment was palsy in the sixth optic nerve, this affecting the lateral movement of the eye. His eyesight deteriorated in his later years to the point where he had little vision left. He could still see, but not especially clearly.

Sam was 85 years old on October 15th last year. Just before, Garry Shapiro passed the word and the date on to the Internet DX Reflector. On Sam's birthday, he was lured to the phone segment of twenty meters. The one in charge told Sam just to be still and listen. Nothing else.

On signal, hundreds of DXers from

*He was quite touched by the birthday greeting from DXers around the world. Sam did like people remembering him.*

around the work shouted in concert: "Happy Birthday, Sam!" Every continent had its well-wishers, every continent had calls that Sam recognized and every continent had friends that Sam knew. He was quite touched by the birthday greeting from DXers around the world. Sam did like people remembering him.

Sam's long physical decline seemed to start on SuperBowl Sunday in 1995 with a visit to a local Emergency Room. At the time it seemed that the problem was corrected and Sam did indicate just that. In retrospect, it was more serious than he wanted to admit and late last year his health was obviously declining. In late November and again in December, he was taken to Emergency for treatment of internal bleeding.

On December 16th, a Kaiser family nurse living near Sam stopped by to see how he was feeling. She found him lying half the dinner just to reel off the list of Carl's major DX contest victories and contest records. (John Dorr, K1AR's nomination took most of the rest of the dinner.) Carl is best known for his efforts from P40V, but he wins wherever he is at the time. Carl was recently President of the Northern California Contest Club.

We heartily congratulate all three men for their awards!

—N16T

## **W6RJ, W6RGG, AI6V Tapped for Hall(s) of Fame**

Bob Ferrero, W6RJ and Bob Vallio, W6RGG were inducted into the *CQ* DX Hall of Fame at the Dayton DX Dinner on May 16th. The following evening, at the Contest Dinner, Carl Cook, AI6V was inducted into the *CQ* Contest Hall of Fame.

W6RJ and W6RGG were nominated by NCDXC's Board of Directors for their honor, which recognizes decades of contributions to the art and science of DXing.

Each man has advanced DXing from both sides of the QSO, from participation in multiple major DXpeditions to serving DX organizations like NCDXC, NCDXF and ARRL. Each is a superb operator who has contributed a great deal to our sport.

on the floor, bruised, he saying that he had fallen off the lower steps on the stairway. The doctors kept Sam at the hospital and examined him closely. Cancer of the esophagus was found.

Sam wanted no one to know of his condition. His orders were to tell anyone calling he had a bleeding ulcer. But he was weakening. He spent some time in nursing homes, and some at home. By early April, though he often listened to the bands, he would not operate much. Sam was tired, with little strength or energy. In late April, Sam, then in the nursing home, wanted to go home, insistently so, and the doctors said he could if that was his wish.

Sam went home on April 30th, so weak he could not sit up or stand. 24-hour help was brought in. He rested in a hospital bed in his front room with his treasured grove of redwood trees visible through the large windows. On May 2nd, he gradually

The Board is pleased that *CQ*'s selection committee agreed.

W6RGG said "It was a very gratifying experience, and I was really not able to say very much at the podium due to my emotions. I am honored to have been inducted into *CQ*'s DX Hall of Fame, and further honored to have been nominated by the NCDXC."

"I have other plaques which I have received over the years," he added, "all of which are stored in a cabinet. This one will find a home on my shack wall, very soon."

Bob Ferrero, among other DX firsts, was one of the pioneers of modern 80 m long-path DXing. Still a major presence on the band, with over 300 confirmed, Bob still racks up record West Coast scores in the contests on both CW and SSB. He is also, of course, a major benefactor of DXpeditions and the International DX Convention, as well as *The DXer*, through his company, Ham Radio Outlet. W6RJ was not at Dayton to receive his honor and W6RGG accepted for him.

slipped away. He went peacefully, eyes closed, just lying there quietly and leaving DXing and his multitude of radio friends around the world.

Services were held for Sam on May 7th, and he is buried at the National Cemetery in Gustine. You live as long as you are remembered—you are dead when you are forgotten. Sam will live a long time. And always, somewhere, there will be a band playing "Roses of Picardy." They play for Sam Canter, W6TSQ.

Carl Cook, AI6V was among several outstanding contesters inducted into the *CQ* Contest Hall of Fame. It took about

## **W1BB Lives!**

The legendary Stew Perry, W1BB was inarguably the most famous 160 meter operator of all time. Recently, the W1BB callsign was reissued under the Vanity Callsign program to the Stew Perry Memorial Radio Club in Massachusetts. The club's intent is to perpetuate the memory of Stew Perry and his accomplishments on the Top Band.

W1BB will be active in the upcoming 1997-98 160 meter contest season. We look forward to providing all amateurs with another opportunity to work the W1BB callsign again on 160.

—Whitey Doherty, K1VV, President  
Stew Perry Memorial Radio Club

# VKØIR—The Book and the Video

Garry Shapiro, NI6T

Reading *VKØIR*, Bob Schmieder, KK6EK's engrossing book about the Heard Island DXpedition, I was struck by the similarities to and differences from the Peter I Island DXpedition chronicled in Bob's 1994 book, *3YØPI*. Both DXpeditions were minutely planned and logistically complex. Both set records —for QSO's and expense, among other things—and were grueling, involving travel to incredibly isolated places. And—after both trips—Bob published a book within six weeks of his return home.

But while the Peter I team had perched by necessity on a barren glacier, the *VKØIR* crew lived adjacent to glaciers, but on the ground—such as it was—and in close proximity to Heard's in the log abundance the DXpedition was in progress. *VKØIR* was published in time for Dayton, and sold out there. Like *3YØPI*, it was written in a very short time, and a few typos and errors have escaped the abbreviated editing. No matter—the book is rich in narrative, lavishly illustrated and includes copious amounts of expedition data and anecdotes, and even the comments, sometimes interactive, of members of the audience and the pilots. Of particular interest to me was KK6EK's Retrospection piece, tucked into the back of the book, wherein Schmieder reflects on what went right, what went wrong, and why.

Following up on the technology orgy of Easter Island/Salas y Gomez, Heard was the most *participatory* remote DXpedition ever, and the book carries that theme forward. There are many lessons to be learned from this book, and *VKØIR* should be required reading for anyone planning anything more complex than a "suitcase" trip to the Caribbean for a contest weekend.

The video, too, is exceptional. Unlike most DXpedition videos, this one was shot by a professional, with professional equipment—and it shows. Team member James Brooks, 9V1YC owns a commercial post-production business in Singapore, and the *VKØIR* video captures the DXpedition in crisp, vivid detail. This is one you will want to show to all your DX buddies—even those who saw the Belvedere, Fresno and Dayton presentations.



of wildlife. And the geographic realities spelled hard times for different propagationally-challenged audiences. Where JA DXers had struggled to log only 1/16 of the total Peter I QSO's (North America had 3/4 of the pie), it was now antipodal Central and Western North America's turn to scramble and worry, while JA and Europe feasted. One JA worked VKØIR on every possible band and mode, including SSB and CW satellite QSO's! In contrast, many North Americans were happy to make a single contact.

Faced with this physical reality, VKØIR's employment of the latest satellite and Internet technology, pioneered earlier at XRØY, enabled the volunteer pilots to provide feedback and critique to the team in almost real time. Utilizing this information, openings to the most difficult regions were consistently found and exploited. The web pages and pilot system offered the audience more personal involvement in the experience, not to mention the thrill

of seeing themselves in the log abundance the DXpedition was in progress.

But the most remarkable hallmark of this most amazing DXpedition was the virtual absence of personal disagreement or animosity among the team. When I had heard this from KK6EK at Fresno, I was skeptical, but Bob's assertion that long and close cooperation via the Internet had formed close bonds before the group ever assembled, and the corroborative testimony of the rest of the team at Dayton, convinced me it was true.

Heard Island was more than a DXpedition and a grand adventure. It fulfilled the team's vision of utilizing new technology, exciting greater participation by the audience, and integrating scientific activity with the radio operation.

It also taught a lesson about perseverance—the essential trait of all successful DXers and contesters. The initial attempt at Heard had failed, when the shipowner absconded with the money. Many had predicted that this "unlucky" DXpedition could not succeed, and some asked that the team step aside and allow another group to try. The second plan required even more money than the first. It was still the bottom of the sunspot cycle.

At Fresno, KK6EK told me that the trip had been "difficult, but not hard." When I pressed for a definition of "hard," he had replied "'hard' is when I am not sure of the outcome. I was sure we would succeed." He had been planning expeditions for twenty years, he said. "I knew what to do to get us there and back—my job—and we had a great team which could and would accept a lot of responsibility." Schmieder employed the "czar" system, delegating large tasks—like antennas, radio operations, power, food, shelter—to teams headed by leaders with total responsibility.



# Dayton!

The Dayton Hamvention is like no other gathering of hams—part convention, part circus, and part enormous schmooze-fest. There are hawkers, sideshows with barkers—the 2700 stalls of the humongous flea market—and even clowns. Well, what else do you call someone walking around with a tower and beam on his head?

The crowds were somewhat smaller this year. Old hands still argue whether this is due to the sunspot bottom or the still-recent change from April to May. But no one argues that the weather is better in May! It may have still been trying to snow in Minnesota, and the Red River may have been over its banks in North Dakota, but it was just fine in Ohio—at least until rain finally chased the fleamarket diehards in the last hour.

There were some interesting new products. Kachina Communications had a computer-controlled HF transceiver (no knobs at all), and there was a new solid-state amp from Yaesu—which I failed to see.

The big story at the DX Dinner, the 160 Dinner and the DX Forum was, of course, VKØIR. Nearly the entire team attended the convention, basking in the warm afterglow of its amazing DXpedition and signing copies of KK6EK's just-published book.

I noted a substantial NCDXC contingent, including, of course, both EK-Bobs (KK6EK and N6EK), W6CF, W6RGG, KI6WF, W6OSP, K6KR, N6TV, AI6V and N6NT. Other famous DXers and contesters were present in good numbers. Jay, VY1JA, was down from the Yukon, and received a warm greeting from contesters whose November SS logs he has graced for the past several years.

W6RJ and W6RGG were inducted into the CQ DX Hall of Fame and AI6V into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame (story elsewhere in this issue).

The after-dinner hospitality suites at the Crowne Plaza are, of course, the heart of Dayton for DXers and contesters. One recent Dayton tradition is the Kansas City DX Club's pileup contest: a five-minute taped maelstrom of callsigns. I had tried it last year for the first time and—half-drunk—I had scored higher than I had expected. This year, sober but sleep-deprived, I placed about the same—well down in the pack. Oh, and the next time you see him, be sure to ask Bruce, N6NT about his score!

There were several exceptional moments



opportunity to hang out with some of the VKØIR team after the convention, and to ride back to Minneapolis with Ralph, KØIR.

Another nice surprise was to wind up rooming with Dick Dievendorff, K6KR. Dick has moved to Washington to toil for Microsoft and has thus become an Absentee member. Dick says his new house has a great location but a small yard, and his antenna system will be less than what he had in San Jose.

I had a bit of fun with Bill Kennamer, K5FUV. I was chatting with Georg, JY9QJ just outside the DX Forum, where Bill was checking DX cards and I was awaiting my turn. Georg wrote his email address on his QSL and gave it to me. Bill eventually picked up my small card packet and asked if that was all of them. "No, not quite," I said, ostentatiously scribbling on the back of George's card while displaying the front to Bill. "I have one more here, JY9QJ, for 160 meters." Bill chuckled at the obvious, absurd lie.

—N16T



for me. One was the opportunity to hear K1ZM's tape of memorable moments on 160 meters, including recordings of Stew Perry, W1BB and of K1ZM's unbelievable 160 QSO with XZ1N through the European pileup. Another was Bob Allphin, K4UEE's VKØIR lowband presentation to the 160 meter dinner. A third was the

from page 1

## Hail and Farewell!

accumulating and preparing ingredients, and then runs flat out with the burners turned up to create the final product. But, whereas cranking out *ma po dofu* requires ten minutes, *The DXer* often meant pulling an all-nighter, grabbing some sleep, then proofreading the manuscript over and over. (One must *not* proofread when exhausted!) No matter what, some mistakes always seemed to get through, but—to mix metaphors—at least the dish did not get burned very often.

The hardest part of this job has always been to obtain original material. I asked, cajoled, wheedled and *begged* for submissions from the membership, so I could maximize internal contributions and minimize my own. Some members responded, some of the time—I thank them for their contributions. One member—Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD—was a stalwart, producing his unique stories every few months for the duration of my tenure. Thank you, Cass—and I hope you are as generous to my successor, Dave Earnest.

In the end, I usually wound up writing a

goodly part of the issue myself. That was OK—I like to write—but I cannot help but observe that, with a membership that grew up in the television era, too many of us are too willing just to sit and wait to be entertained. Too bad—amateur radio is a participation sport, and one gets out of it what one puts into it. I dare say that those who step forward to contribute to *The DXer*, hold a Club or ARRL office, serve on a DX Convention committee or participate in the VE program get a helluva lot more out of this hobby than those who do not.

Amateur radio has been very, very good to me. As much as anyone, I enjoy the thrill of the chase, and the camaraderie of my fellow DXers. Conway Reef was an adventure I will never forget, and I can't wait for my next DXpedition. But my tenure as your Editor has been a very special experience—thanks again to all who contributed.

—NI6T

## Kachina 505DSP

One of the more interesting products demonstrated at Dayton was the Kachina 505DSP, a completely computer-controlled HF transceiver—with no knobs.

The transceiver itself is a standalone box about the size of a typical transceiver. The box has a card cage, power supply, and a PCMCIA slot for future firmware updates. There is also a control head which mounts in a drive slot on a standard PC. The software runs under Windows, and includes a logger, a Smith Chart display of antenna impedance, and a spectral display!

The unit has a 1 Hz DDS, QSK, internal keyer, an auto-ATU and all the other goodies one expects in a modern radio, plus such niceties as continuously-variable AGC response time. Claimed sensitivity with the preamp on is .18 uV, 10 dB SINAD. They claim a 3rd order intercept of +15 dBm (typ). and 70 dB of image rejection. The S-meter readings are in Volts, dB or S-units and ALC; forward and reflected powers are displayed. The output power is 100 Watts and there is RF speech processing and monitoring and an SWR alarm. There is also something called BITE—built-in test equipment.

Kachina says it has been in the commercial/military communications field since 1975 and that this product is derived from its commercial units.

The rig costs \$2000. The company address is:

Kachina Communications, Inc.  
PO Box 1949  
Cottonwood, AZ 86326

Phone numbers are (520) 634-7828 and (520) 634-8053 (FAX). They also have a WEB site at <http://www.kachina-az.com>

I did spend some time playing with the 505DSP at Dayton but it is difficult to draw conclusions given the environment there!

One of the most promising applications for a radio like this would be remote operation. Kachina says it will have a DSVD modem interface available early next year! For those fortunate enough to have a vacation home or other alternate

to next page

## K7JJ—Your New *DXer* Editor!

Dave Earnest, K7JJ will take over as Editor of *The DXer*, commencing with the July issue. Dave was first licensed in 1954, and his main radio interests are chasing DX—he has 311 confirmed—and contesting. His long Air Force career and succeeding civilian career have enabled him to operate at many DX QTH's, including stints at HZ1AB (several tours) and KA2RB, and a 1960 DXpedition to Marcus Island (now Minami Torishima). His personal calls have included KX6MX, KS6DY and ZL1BBA.

Dave is now at NASA Ames and nearing retirement. He and his wife Sue live in a fifth-wheel trailer in Morgan Hill, have been married for 40 years and have 4 children and 9 grandchildren.

While new to NCDXC, Dave has previously been a member of the Western Washington and Willamette Valley DX Clubs.

A new era is beginning for *The DXer*. Welcome and honor Dave by sending him articles and news for *The DXer*! You can reach him on email at [k7jj@garlic.com](mailto:k7jj@garlic.com).

—NI6T

## Disappearing Reef DXpedition

### VKØU-Unheard Island to be Heard?

The Patagonian chapter of S.Q.U.A.T (Society of QRPers' Unheard Amateur Transmitters) will once again try to activate a challenging all-time new country.

This coming weekend, coinciding with the lowest tides of the lowest part of the sunspot cycle, S.Q.U.A.T. members will once again attempt to land on the treacherous shores of Disappearing Reef, to hand out the least number of Q5 contacts ever to be barely copied, while using the lowest possible power. The (fool) hardy band of DXpeditioners intends to operate from this previously unactivated spot—formerly known as Unheard Island—for the entire six hours the island is forecast to be above sea level.

Unable to obtain the backing of Icom, Yaesu, Kenwood, Ten-Tec, or any other legitimate manufacturer, the group plans to supply its own 2N2222A solid-state transmitter, a spare set of AA cells, and a highly inefficient antenna for 160m for this daytime operation. Should tidal constraints require nighttime operation, the team will, of course, be prepared to operate on the usual 10m QRP frequencies, which are unpublished. This will ensure an operation that is “truly sporting, unlike those by-the-numbers QRO expeditions,” according to the DXpedition leader, who refused to divulge his identity. “Savvy operators should have no trouble locating these secret QRP frequencies,” he said. “They are the frequencies where you hear absolutely nothing at any time.”

The anonymous group, whose membership is limited in number, has announced there will be no commemorative QSLs issued for this historic operation, because it doubts anyone will complete a valid QSO. In fact, S.Q.U.A.T.—whose motto is “The Glory is in the Challenge!”—publicly decries the use of these time-tested acknowledgments as “the embodiment of the rampant decay in today’s Amateur Radio operating practices.” Off the record, the team’s spokesman told *The DXer* that “Those damned QSLs are just a bloody nuisance! I don’t need to spend all that money to get a card from some Lid who can’t copy the code and which I already know will say on it either ‘Sorry OM but better luck next time’ or ‘Connect your antenna, dummy!’”

In the event the band *does* open, bringing the possibility of logging actual QSO’s, the operators promise to jump into the middle of as many real DX pileups as possible, sending “QRP! QRP!” while carefully calling out of turn as often as they can get away with it.

If you are a QRPer, and have not yet heard of this intrepid group, rest assured

from previous page

## Kachina 505DSP

site superior to the home QTH, this could be a real breakthrough.

As it is, the rig can be separated from the computer as far as an RS232 serial link will allow—they say 75 feet, but that is conservative, in my opinion.

All that is missing here is the classic tactile feedback of the tuning knob and its flywheel. For those of us with terminal

nostalgia, a remote knob can certainly be configured. Meanwhile the computer interface “feel” needs a bit more work.

It will probably be the newer, younger computer-generation guys who embrace this first, and the rest of us will eventually come along, grumbling. It’s a 21st-century thing, I guess.

—NI6T

## Dues are Due

The NCDXC fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. Dues for 1997-98 are now due!

Regular Membership	\$24
Family Membership	\$39
Absentee Membership	\$16
(Absentee Members reside out-of-State or south of Pismo Beach.)	

Send your dues payments to NCDXC, Box 608, Menlo Park, CA 94026-0608.

## Photo of the Month!



What’s this, a trick photo of a guy at Dayton who looks like he has a tower and beam on top of his head?

No, this guy actually *did* have a tower and beam on top of his head. OK, so it was a miniature tower and beam. So sue me!

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