

DXer



**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
DX CLUB**

DXer Profile: W6ZKM, Frank Holst



Frank, W6ZKM has 359/330 from this well equipped station.



Inside

President's Comments	2
General Meeting Minutes	3
VEC Exams in Visalia	3
DX is a State of Mind By Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD	3
Ambassadors of DXing	4
ANNUAL PICNIC	4
TX0DX Challenge	4
DXers are Weird by Paul M. Dunphy, VE1DX	5
BIOGRAPHY OF AL GROSS, W8PAL	6
Editor's Choice	6
<i>DXer Profile:</i> W6ZKM, Frank Holst	7
East Timor from Jack, W6ISQ	7
Roster Updates:	7
I'm NOT WA6O!	7

**No April General Meeting
Instead, we will see you
April 14-16, 2000 in Visalia
at the
International DX Convention**

Program

Friday April 14th:

- 8th Annual Golf Tournament
- Famous Attitude Adjustment
- Contest Dinner
- IOTA Dinner

Saturday April 15th:

- DX & Contest Forums
- DX-Pedition Talks
- Borneo - 9M600/V8500/9M6AAC
- XZ0A by K7WX & NA7DB
- R1MVR by K6JL
- P51 ? The Chesterfields ?
- Famous Attitude Adjustment
- Banquet

Sunday April 16th:

- Famous Breakfast
- Convention Ends

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: Dick Letrich, W6KM
 Vice Pres: Chuck Patterson, K6RK
 Secretary: Bill Fontes, W6TEX
 Treasurer: Bill Maurer, WB6JJJ
 Director: Marilyn Bagshaw, N6VAW
 Director: Ron Panton, W6VG
 Director: Don Anastasia, AA6W

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 California Award: Robert Bickel, K6FX
 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: Robert Smithwick, W6CS
 Club simplex: 147.54 MHz (suggested)
 Thurs. Net QTR: 8 pm local time.
 Net Manager: Randy Wright, W6CUA
 DX News: Net Control Operator
 Swap Shop: Ben Deovlet, W6FDU
 QSL Information: Mac McHenry, W6BSY

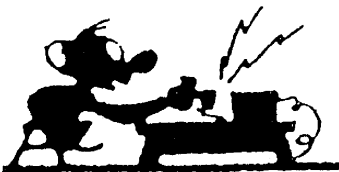
W6TI DX Bulletins:

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

The DXer is published monthly by the Northern California DX Club and sent to all club members. Unless otherwise noted, NCDXC permits re-use of any article in this publication—provided The DXer and the article's author are credited.

President's Comments



A L E R T MR & MRS AMERICA AND ALL THE SHIPS
 AT SEA. THIS IS NCDXC CALLING!

The big news this month is the North-South International DX Convention in Visalia, California. This annual get-together continues to create a brotherly atmosphere, of the masters of the airwaves. To miss this once a year gathering of the deserving can only be conceived as nothing short of a serious error in judgement. Hosting this famous gathering is the Southern California DX Club. Many manufactures of Amateur Radio equipment and accessories will also be on hand to display their wares for your pleasure. Saturday Programs will be sure to entertain you and as those of us who have attended in the past know, the Banquet is sure to be the highlight you will not soon forget.

On the home front the NCDXC continues to move right along. At our monthly meeting (March) we were not annoyed by the moaning coming from the Karaoke setup at the bar. In fact, judging from the very poor turnout they appear to be mustering, they may go the way of the DODO bird pretty soon. The weather for this meeting was also on our side; dry and not so cold! What a change from last months meeting night.

Keep an eye out for next months (May) *DXer*, when our VP Chuck, K6RK will announce the program. I will also remind you at that time about the **June club elections**, so be prepared to attend and take advantage of the **FREE PIZZA AND BEER** which the club will provide for the **June Meeting only....**

Hope to see you in VISALIA.

73 Dick, W6KM.



NCDXC Dues Information

Full and Associate Members;

Date Dues are Paid	Member	Family Rate
1 July thru 30 September	\$24.00	Plus \$15.00
1 October and after	\$24.00	Plus \$15.00 Plus \$5.00*

*Members who have not remitted dues by the 30 September deadline are considered dropped from the membership roles. Those desiring to renew membership must both apply for reinstatement and submit the reinstatement fee of \$5.00. Fee will be waived if paid in person.

Absentee Member Dues are \$16.00 per year.

General Meeting Minutes

President Dick Letrich, W6KM called the meeting to order at 8p which was held at the American Legion Post #105, 651 El Camino Real, Redwood City.

Introductions followed with 23 members in attendance plus or minus a frog leg. Ken, K6DB and Kay, K6KAY presented a very fine program of their visit to W3LPL's (Frank Donovan) super station in Maryland. Ken and Kay were given the "Troster Award" by Dick, W6KM.

February minutes were approved as read in the Dx'er. The nominating committee is still looking for candidates to run for club offices. W6KM will look into having the club picnic at the same spot we had last year. Also discussed was the need for a review of the life membership rates, W6KM will investigate and report back to the membership. There will be no meeting next month due to the Visalia Convention. K6RK solicited input regarding the May meeting. His idea is to have a show and tell with members bringing in old antique or interesting equipment. Rusty, W6OAT pointed out that our new member to the club, N6TQS was on the Clipperton Expedition working RTTY. W6ISQ gave the membership a few words about the Chesterfield Expedition TX0DX. The group plans to have the station on the air about March 23rd with approval as a new entity.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15p

VEC Exams in Visalia

April 15th brings upon us the change of the FCC regulations. At Visalia this year, we will be offering a special paperwork VEC Exam session for those who wish to upgrade under the new rules. Those who have expressed an interest are K6KAY, W6EKR and many others. Also, I expect a good turn out from the SCDXC.

The upgrade session will start at 1000 hours, on Saturday morning, by the indoor pool. What to bring? A copy of your current license, Certificate of written upgrade and a copy of both these documents. We will keep the copies and you may retain the originals.

How much does it cost? Well, if you are on time, the fee is only \$6.50. For late comers, we will raise the fee to \$650.00 payable to my special Swiss retirement savings account! Heck, folks it is April, albeit not the 1st!! The sooner we get started, the sooner we can go to US Towers for a wonderful barbecue lunch!

I am honoured to have K6DB and W6VG helping.

73, John, KG6XF



DX is a State of Mind

By Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD
(Originally Published in the West Coast DX Bulletin)

We had a confused QRPer up the hill last week, this one burdened by a problem. "You know how the DX Club changed the rules so you now can join with just twenty-five countries, don't you?" We had to admit that we were aware of the change. "Well," the QRPer continued, I'm on the Committee to check applications and last week we came across one applicant who has never worked a JA. He has twenty-five countries but never worked a JA. Think of that! We could feel the foundations of DXing trembling and we had to nudge the QRPer onwards.

"How can a W6 be a DXer and never work a JA?", the QRPer demanded. "Not only has he never worked one, he does not even recall having heard one. He wanted to know when JAs are on the air. The Committee is not sure if they should approve his application for membership."

These are times when one hears things that are hard to believe and we finally hauled the QRPer up the hill to the Old Timer. There we had to listen to the whole exposition again, complete with arm waving, table thumping and various expressions of incredulity and indecision. Then it was quiet. After awhile, the old Timer spoke, but rather than giving an answer, he asked a question. "What really makes a DXer?" he asked. "Is it the working of a JA?" We both had to admit it would take more than that. But we could not come up with a satisfactory answer. Then the Old Timer spoke again, perhaps a bit wearily this time. "DXing is a state of mind," he said. "Judge a DXer by what they are and what they think, not what they have worked." And that was all he would say.

We had to think this over for a bit for long we had clung to the cherished belief of most DXers that the more countries you work, the better DXer you are.

(Continued on Pg 5, Column 3)

Ambassadors of DXing

Dick Letrich, W6KM was the featured speaker at the regular meeting of the Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Club (SCCARA). His message was well received by the forty or so members of this general interest club, who were present at their March 13th meeting. His message: Why DXers Love DXing and Why You Might Love It, Too.

Among other things, Dick pointed out that one doesn't have to be a "Big Gun" or even a "Little Pistol" to work DX. Of course, we ALL know, it helps! He also stressed the need for operating skill and being able to hear your call in the pile-ups. He also talked about awards (DXCC, Honor Roll, ..., etc.), QSLing and QSL routes (direct, via QSL Mangers and via the QSL Bureau) and DX Contesting as a means of improving one's country count. The many questions he fielded at the conclusion of his talk were an indicator of the keen interest that was stirred up by it.

Dick is just one of many NCDXC Members who, by giving such talks are becoming ambassadors of DXing. It would be very interesting for the DXer to report on those other Club Members who are giving such talks to general interest clubs. So, if you or anyone you know has given such a talk, please, let the DXer Staff know, so it can be properly reported.



ANNUAL PICNIC

As you know, we had a really fun picnic last year with about 50 people in attendance. We plan to hold it again, this year, in PLEASANTON - hopefully in the same location. It is important that you voice your pleasure as soon as possible, if you are thinking about attending. Please let the VP know right away that you plan to attend and how many will be in your party. This will allow us to purchase the proper amount of food and supplies. If response justifies the event, the actual date will be published in the next DXer.... Sure hope so, as the food was good and the company excellent!

73..... Dick, W6KM

TX0DX Challenge

A protest against counting Chesterfield as a DXCC entity has been filed. The reasons are spelled out at <http://www.media-technica.com/Chesterfield/> and the DXAC has been notified.

The basis for the protest is the possible existence an island, Sable, between the Chesterfield Atoll and the principal island of New Caledonia. The maps at the above url are self-explanatory, and the writer and others have taken the position that the burden of proving that Chesterfield meets DXCC criteria lies with the applicant for entity status. de, Jay/AF2C

And if you look at <http://www.iiynet.or.jp/JA1BK/index2.html>, second item down you can see an explanation dated 12 Jan.

And it looks as if WA2MOE is responsible for the protest. It'll sort itself out in the end. 73, Doug, N6TQS

Well my maps, which are very current, do not show an Island between New Caledonia and the Chesterfields. However, it could exist, but not noted as a valid island. In any case, we have an item to talk about, and hams love to talk. Hi!

de W6TEX sk ..



DXers are Weird by Paul M. Dunphy, VE1DX

DXers are weird. Absolutely. Don't let anyone tell you anything else. We spend more time optimizing our stations than anything else! We have miles of ground wire and ground mats (made from chicken wire) buried all around the yard. Not as 1/4 wave radials for verticals, but because we read somewhere that it will reduce sky noise and ground loss. We have every antenna optimized to get the lowest possible SWR . . . and we fret and worry if the resonance point moves 50 KHz when it rains or snows! We won't use anything but RG-213 or better, even though RG-8U is just as good (but we are not 100% convinced!) And RG-11! Blasphemy . . . unless we can get it to match our antenna better 'cuz it's interacting with something that increases the impedance to a point where 75 ohm gives a better SWR than 52 ohm coax! If we can get our hands on hardline or heliax, we use it. One of us got a good buy on some one inch heliax. We used it to feed the 160 metre vertical. Really cuts down the line loss on 1.8 MHz. We read somewhere that hardline doesn't help much below 50 MHz, but we feel better, anyhow!

We all have \$3000-\$5000 radios. They aren't good enough when they come from the factory. First off, we have to buy all the additional filters at \$250-\$400 a pop. We aren't satisfied with that, we then buy an outboard DSP unit . . . usually good for another \$500. We look for mods that will increase the output power or make the audio more aggressive. Then we discuss endlessly on 2-metres whether the new rigs with built in DSP units at the IF level are worth buying. As soon as one of us caves in and buys one, all the others will have their own in a week! Invest in companies that make HF transceivers with a built in DSP unit. We will be buying them. For sure.

Our transmit audio? Speech processor in all the time, hard over to the right. Of course. Most knobs are meant to be turned all the way to the right. Look at your rig if you don't believe this! Microphones . . . we grudgingly admit one good thing CB OPs brought to HAM radio was the Astatic D-104! Yes sir! And an amplified D-104 too. It picks up all the background noise from the fans, etc. We find we are usually good for 30-40% of maximum output power in background noise alone. If not, we can adjust the mike gain on the base of the D-104 until it is. Make no compromises. Only a D-104 will do the job.

CW proficiency? You bet! We all can recognize our call at 40 WPM when it's 339 in heavy QRN . . . and send "R R TU DE VE1DX 5NN 73 SK" at 50 WPM. However, if someone wants to rag chew at 15 WPM, we suddenly develop deep QSB and heavy QRM. There might be something up the band that we need for a new one. We aren't going to sit here and waste time!

Amplifiers . . . no DXer would be without one! And no little 500 watt weakling, either. We run full legal power. Always. Even if the DX is 30 over! We dream of amps that will put out 5000 or 10000 watts, sketch out designs on scratch pads of prototypes with four or six 8877s. We wonder if the traps on that Yagi are really only good for 2000 watts. Does the local licensing authority really monitor output power? None of us want to find out, but we dream nonetheless! Maybe we could re-wind the traps with bigger wire?

For that matter, why are we using traps at all. We need monobanders! Invest in companies that sell monoband Yagis. If we haven't bought them yet, we will. You can bet on that. The only investment safer than antenna companies is those that build tall towers. High ones designed to carry a lot of weight and wind load. And we all will be buying more than one of these too. Why? Because if it didn't fall over in that big wind storm last winter, we didn't have enough antennas on it. We'll fix that this summer. Don't bother talking this over with your broker, just invest in towers!

73/DX Paul VE1DX

DX is a State of Mind

Continued from Page 3

But we were now coming up with all sorts of wobbly angles when we were looking for the four-square word. "I guess maybe we'd better let the fellow in," the QRPer said, "but it is sure hard to think a fellow is a DXer when he has never worked a JA."

We had to bail out at this point for these high-level dissertations and the intimation that DX may be a thinking man's game were beginning to worry us. If DX is a state of mind, why are so many DXers longing for a big and high antenna and all the power they can ram into it? These are times that test men's belief's. Meanwhile . . . are you a thinker? Or a DXer?



BIOGRAPHY OF AL GROSS, W8PAL

Al Gross is a true pioneer of the wireless personal communications revolution and played a major role in establishing miniaturized portable communications. His efforts led to one of the first walkie-talkies in the early 1940's (just prior to WW II) and to development of the first pager system (in New York's Jewish Hospital) in 1950. He also successfully lobbied the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to create the Personal Radio license spectrum in 1948, which later became citizens band radio.

In 1934 (at age 16) Al obtained his amateur radio license, and it is still current today. At the time, portable wireless communications did not exist, and very little knowledge about radio communications, circuits, designs, and propagation existed above 100 megahertz. Frequencies above 100 MHz is where Al focused his development efforts. He developed circuits and components for miniaturized portable communications that were unheard of for that era. He also succeeded in the design and construction of several battery-operated, portable, hand-held transceivers with corresponding compact antennas.

In the late 1930's, Al discovered a means to cause miniature vacuum tubes to operate in the unexplored portion of the radio frequency spectrum above 200 megahertz. Two of the models operated at 300 megahertz. These two hand-held models were used many times to successfully communicate with other amateur operators over a distance of 30 miles. After the onset of World War II, an amateur radio operator within the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) knew of Al's hand-held walkie-talkies; from this disclosure Al was asked to come to the OSS headquarters in Washington to demonstrate the radios. From this meeting, the "Joan Eleanor" two-way radio system was proposed allowing OSS agents in occupied countries and Germany to communicate with two-way radio equipment in high-flying aircraft. Al headed up this project and developed a

sensitive receiver circuit that could be miniaturized. Al met with Major E.H. Armstrong late in 1943 at his office in Alpine, New Jersey. Armstrong suggested a super regenerative circuit that could be used, and Mr. Gross implemented this concept (with modification) in both the transmitter and receiver. The Joan/Eleanor project, Al Gross's creation, was classified "Top Secret" by the OSS and was made public in 1976.

Late 1944 in a classified meeting with the Chief of the Radio Intelligence Branch (FCC), two of Gross's hand-held transceivers were demonstrated before the FCC Chairman and with the Commissioners. Inspired by the demonstration, FCC Commissioner E. K. Jett published an article "Phone by Air" in the Saturday Evening Post (July 1945) describing personal two way radio communications for the public use. Mr. Gross launched Citizens Radio Corporation to design, develop and manufacture personal wireless transceivers and also started Gross Electronics to design and build other communications products. (Gross Electronics was under contract to test and develop life saving equipment for emergency use for the U.S. Maritime Commission and the War Shipping Administration. In 1948 the company was contracted by the U.S. Coast Guard to design and build a hand-held transceiver operating at 401 megahertz TRC-156.)

On March 23, 1948 at the President's Luncheon of the Institute of Radio Engineers (now IEEE), FCC Chairman announced FCC type approval of the first personal wireless transceiver for the public. It was at this affair that Major Armstrong offered his congratulations to Mr. Gross and his company.

In 1950 Al demonstrated before the FCC the possible use of a hand-held transceiver as a "cordless remote telephone", which became the first paging system of its kind. (Restrictions in place at the time prevented the application of this technology for the public.) In Sep-

tember 1958 Gross Electronics Co. received FCC type approval for mobile and hand-held transceivers for use on the Class D 27 megahertz frequency allocation. In 1959 Gross Electronics Co. designed and manufactured a battery operated unattended weather station used by the U.S. Navy that was parachuted into the Antarctic.

It is clear that Mr. Gross was a true pioneer, and helped lead the way to today's wireless personal communications revolution. Today, Mr. Gross remains an active engineer at age 81 never missing an opportunity to tell a group of engineers or students about the excitement of wireless and about the tenacity required to invent. He is an inspiration to those who meet him, and he carries with him a terrific legacy that is worthy of recognition by the IEEE.

This story was sent to us by Ron Rasmussen, K6OP and is a reprint from the March 2000 issue of *Short Skip*.

Editor's Choice

Well, here we are in April and Visalia is upon us. Spring has sprung and so have East Timor and the Chesterfields. I even had my April Fools Day fun with W6KM! He can tell you about it!

With April, our eyes and cars turn toward that great Mecca of DXing; Visalia and the International DX Convention. I'm looking forward to having my XYL, Sylvia accompany me for the first time. We're looking forward to "eyeball" QSO's with some of our long time friends. Some, I saw last year. For some others, such as W5ASP, Joe it has been far longer.

We hope to see YOU there, too. If not, remember, there's always a Club Meeting. And if not that, we'll see you in the pile ups.

73 & gud DX,

W6YD

DXer Profile: W6ZKM, Frank Holst

Our special member profile for the month of April is Frank Holst, W6ZKM. Frank has held this one call since he first became licensed in 1947. He has always been employed in the electronics field since 1962 when he left the Santa Rosa Area.

His very impressive station starts with a set of FORCE 12 custom antennas. It is quite an array. Mixed in with this, are several wire antennas. All are on a lot that is somewhat smaller than you would expect. Frank's electronics background is obvious with the antenna layouts, but just follow down the coax to his operating setup and again you can see the smooth and very deliberate layout. I can tell you; doing this series of profiles gives me lots of ideas on how I might be able to improve my modest station.

Frank's rig is an ICOM IC-781. And you don't have to look too closely, to see sitting right next to it is a large external "add-on" CRT, which duplicates the much smaller display on the rig. It turns out that the ICOM is fitted with an output just for this very purpose.

With the exception of the P5, Frank "HAS WORKED THEM ALL". His total country count is 359 and 330 are current. He plans to snag the upcoming (as of this date) Chesterfield Islands and the new Timor's.

Thanks for letting me visit, Frank. GUD DX OM. Dick, W6KM

East Timor from Jack, W6ISQ

4W6/VK2QF plans to be active March 29 - April 15 on CW/SSB on 6 thru 40 meters. So, I guess we all should be able to get at least one QSO on some band during that period. 73, Jack, W6ISQ

Dili, East Timor 4W6DX - DXpedition

An International team from Finland, Portugal and the United States has been formed to help celebrate the birth of a new DXCC entity, East Timor. Members of the team will arrive late this week for a 7 to 10 day operation. The group has been invited to stay in the home of Thor Stefansson, 4W6MM. His QTH is a DXers dream, including ten 150-foot towers, which will be utilized by the group.

The team includes Olli Rissanen, OH0XX/4W6xx; Jose de Sa, CT1EEB/4W6EB; and Bernie McClenny, W3UR/4W6DX and Pertti Turunen, OH2RF/4W6RF who will join in the middle of the operation after finishing up at TX0DX. Several UN personnel stationed in East Timor may also join in on the operation depending on their work duties including Ross, 4W6UN; Thor, 4W6MM; and Antonio, CT1EGH.

In order to work as many of the Deserving as possible the group will use the callsign 4W6DX on all bands from 10 - 160 meters on CW, SSB and possibly RTTY. The 4W6DX group will be working closely with the TX0DX team in the Chesterfield Islands in order to minimize interference and confusion. For the first several days of operation concentration will be given to CW and SSB on a few bands that will be open around the clock. Planned operating frequencies are:

CW 1826.5, 3524, 7024, 10107, 14007, 18087, 21007, 24907, 28007

SSB 3799, 7062.5, 14150, 18115, 21200, 24935, 28400

4W6DX QSL via OH2BN

This operation would not be possible with out the cooperation and support of Ross Ballantyne, 4W6UN; Thor Stefansson, 4W6MM; Yaesu Musen Co Ltd, ARRL, Force12, Kan Mizoguchi, JA1BK; Martti Laine, OH2BH; Doug Brandon, N6RT and The Daily DX.

Bernie McClenny, W3UR, Editor of The Daily DX & How's DX?

Roster Updates:

K6DB, Ken Anderson

Change Call to **K6TA**

N6VAW, Marilyn Bagshaw

Change E-mail to:
marilyn@console.net

N6XG, Walter Wilson

Change Address to:
1147 Burna Vista Dr.
Los Altos Hills, CA. 94022
(H) 650-947-3312
(W)
E-Mail

I'm NOT WA6O!

I'm not sure why, but a while back, I decided to exchange my perfectly good call sign (then WA6O) for a new and improved vanity call. I guess my original intent was to get away from the "what's the rest of the call?" inquiries and, I thought, to get the call "W6KT". The mnemonic for it would be "Keep Trucking", which would have been appropriate for the business I was involved in, at that time. How I RUE THE DAY!! The FCC assigned me W6YD

Now don't get me wrong! I'm very happy with the new call sign and the mnemonic, "Yankee Doodle" is kinda cute. But someone ELSE has WA6O now and it's making my life miserable!

WA6O is now, Michael Shapiro, an apparently very active ham and DXer. The PROBLEM IS; I'M GETTING MOST OF HIS QSL CARDS!! I suspect that the deserving are finding WA6O in their old call books and addressing their cards, accordingly. So, for the record; **WA6O is;** Michael Shapiro
1084 Wunderlich Dr.
San Jose, CA 95129-3158

73, George, W6YD

