

# DXer



**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA  
DX CLUB**

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## **DXer Profile: W6KM, Dick Letrich**



*Clockwise from above:*

1. The Hy-Tower Vertical
2. The KT34 Tri-Bander
3. Dick Letrich at the Controls of W6KM
4. & 5. Two Views of the Main Operating Postion



### **General Meeting**

**No Meeting in December**

*Instead, we hold our*

**Annual Gala Christmas  
Party Luncheon  
on  
Saturday, December 13th  
at the**

**Wyndham Hotel  
in San Jose**

**See Page 6 for Details**

**DXer Deadline  
for  
January 2004 Issue  
is  
December 24, 2003**

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: Doug Westover, W6JD  
 Vice Pres: Chuck Patterson, K6RK  
 Secretary: Mike Gavin, W6WZ  
 Treasurer: Dewey Churchill, KG6AM  
 Director: Mitch Cipriano, AE6AI  
 Director: Keith Butts, KN6K  
 Director: Ron Panton, W6VG

**The DXer:**

Editor: George Allan, W6YD  
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Web Page: Chuck Vaughn, AA6G  
<http://www.ncdxc.org>

DX Ladder: John Kelly, KG6XF

9-Band Award: John Brand, K6WC

Contests: Dick Courtway, N7RC

California Award: Robert Bickel, K6FX

Historian/archivist:

Records Manager: Ron Panton, W6VG

Publications Mgr: Ron Panton, W6VG

**Club Repeater, W6TI/R**

Frequency/offset: 147.36 MHz, +

Trustee: Bob Vallio, W6RGG

Control Operator: Robert Smithwick, W6CS

Club simplex: 147.54 MHz (suggested)

Thurs. Net OTR: 8 pm local time.

Net Manager: Randy Wright, W6CUA

DX News: Net Control Operator

Swap Shop: Mitch Cipriano, AE6AI

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



Well, its December and Christmas Party time again. Rolph has done the usual bang up job of organizing the party so if you haven't sent in your check for \$15, do it today, or pay \$20 at the door. See you all at the party on the 13.

Band conditions seem to be looking up with lots of EU coming through on 15 and 20 this CQWW contest weekend.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and hope to see you at the party.

73,  
 Doug, W6JD

## DXer Distribution

There was general agreement at our last Club meeting that we should move ahead with plans to distribute the DXer electronically. So here's the schedule and our plans for making it happen.

In January we will distribute the DXer both electronically and via paper copies in the mail. Given there are no glitches, we will cease mail delivery in February. In other words; February will be first month for exclusive electronic delivery. So how's that gonna work? The plan is to generate a PDF file each month that will be forwarded to Chuck, AA6G for "blind posting" on the Club web site.

Once Chuck notifies me that the file is in place, I will send an email containing the link (URL address) to all club members who have sent me their current email addresses. Depending upon their browser's capabilities, members can either click on the link or cut and paste it into their browser's access window. It's that simple. But, **if your email address in the roster is incorrect, you need to send me a corrected one.**

If any changes or adjustments to this schedule are necessary, we will advise everyone via the club reflector. In the meantime, if you have questions about it, please either send me an e-mail or a give me a phone call. My e-mail address is W6YD@aol.com and my telephone number is in the roster.

I'm looking forward to this change. I hope you will find your DXer to be more enjoyable this way.

George, W6YD

### 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

\*Members who have not remitted dues by the 30 September deadline are considered dropped from the membership roles. Those desiring to renew membership may do so anytime, but will not be included in the new issue of the NCDXC Roster.

**Absentee Member Dues are \$16.00 per year.**

## General Meeting

Minutes of regular meeting held at Harry's Hofbrau, Redwood City, Thursday, November 13, 2003.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 P.M. Officers present were: President, Doug Westover, W6JD; Vice-President, Chuck Patterson, K6RK; Treasurer Dewey Churchill, KG6AM; George Allan, Director/DXer Editor, W6YD and; Secretary, Mike Gavin, W6WZ.

Treasurer Dewey, KG6AM reported that his balance sheet and the bank's are the same. George, W6YD, Convention Chairman, stated that there was a \$3200.00 profit made at the DX convention. David Meacham, W6EMD, was voted unanimously to be reinstated as a member. Rolph Stoddard, W6TWO, announced that the Christmas Party plans are well under way and that those planning to attend should send their \$15.00 per person to him. Be sure to bring one of your QSL cards with you to the party for prize purposes!!! A question was brought up as to the location of General Gerald Griffin, K6MD, and no one present at the meeting knew. There was a discussion as to how the B.P.L issue is going to affect public safety radio. It was agreed that the *DXer* would be sent by Email and regular mail on a trial basis for the next two months with the intention of eventually using only Email delivery. The program for the evening was DXers' stories and the event was enjoyed by all. Meeting adjourned at 9:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Mike Gavin, W6WZ, Secretary.

## Peter I Postponed

The following comes to us from Bernie McClenny, W3UR  
Editor of The Daily DX, The Weekly DX and How's DX

*I suppose everyone has already heard about this, but it don't hurt to be sure. - Ed.*

### PRESS RELEASE

Peter I DXpedition Team  
Nov. 7, 2003

The Peter I DXpedition team has decided to postpone their DXpedition to Peter I Island, Antarctica until January 2005. A last minute glitch developed in the transportation plan, even as the team was preparing to meet in Atlanta to train and to pack the sea container for shipment.

Weather windows precluded a rescheduling for 2004. No one is more disappointed than we are, but the 2005 expedition will be bigger and better! Our team is intact, our permissions are not a problem, and the expedition equipment, including 6 Arctic shelters, flooring, antennas, masts, kitchen equipment, power cables and generators, coax, etc. Are all in storage in Atlanta. We wish to thank all of our sponsors for their support; look for additional updates in the spring.

For the team,  
Bob, K4UEE and Ralph, K0IR



## Who Needs Charlie?

I read a lot of e-mails this weekend containing dialogue about "Charlie" and why he was turned off during the weekend of the CQWW CW Contest. To this, I could add that neither the club repeater nor "Charlie" were intended to be inundated with contest announcements. But, that aside, I'm not sure I agree with the statement that the "majority of the members want 'Charlie' ". I belong to the set of members who live outside of W6TI's coverage area, so I (and I suspect, many others) don't give a rip about "Charlie"!

Instead, I use DX-Telnet, which is PC based and takes announcements from the internet. It's a great program that allows me to filter out announcements by band and DX entities. This allows me to filter out the mundane DX announcements that drive "Charlie's" critics to distraction. It (like "Charlie") has a voice synthesizer, which can be turned off on contest weekends. It does, however, have a couple of drawbacks. First, to avoid tying up the main phone line, one needs to have either a second phone line or DSL. Secondly, while I can filter originating announcements from DX locations, those originating from specific areas in the U.S. can't be filtered. So I'm stuck with that. But, keep in mind that I'm not listening to call outs of XE, KP4, VP5 and the like, that I don't need.

I guess that would explain why I'm not too eager to go to the trouble of installing the 11 element, two-meter beam I have here on the ground. I get along very nicely without "Charlie". And with DX-Telnet, who needs him?

73,

George, W6YD



## Future IDXC Leadership

The NCDXC is scheduled to host the International DX Convention 2005 and 2007. In fact, the dates for those conventions have already been tentatively agreed upon: April 15-17 for 2005 and; April 27-29 for 2007.

The dates are so far in the future that one would tend to forget we need to do some early planning — at least, for the 2005 event. If we want to do things right, we need to have a Convention Chairman in place by the date of the 2004 Convention, if for no other reason, than to stand up at the 2004 Convention and announce the dates of the 2005 event. I CAN do that. But, I've already announced that **I will not be Convention Chairman for any future conventions.**

I am, however, committed to both serving in an advisory capacity and chairing at least one of the major committees — maybe two. We already have commitments from other members to either chair or serve on some of the major committees. So the future Chairperson — whoever that turns out to be — is already “a leg up” in the planning department. But someone needs to step up to the bar soon! The job isn't all that difficult. It's simply a matter of recruiting (staffing) the committees and then coordinating their activities. It becomes difficult if the various committees are not staffed and their work has to be done by the chairman. That's where early planning pays off. It pays off in terms of better promotion, better programs, better attendance and, eventually, better revenue for our Club.

Proceeds from past Convention have been a major source of revenue for the Club. In 2001 we made \$6,200 and this year, we made nearly \$3,300. With proper planning and full participation from our members, those numbers could show a dramatic increase. The lack of such participation has caused us to turn to support from other organizations. And this costs us \$\$ since we're forced to share revenue with them for their support. For example; this year, we paid out over \$1,200 for support from other Clubs. In 2001, that number was nearly \$2,000! In my opinion, this is a trend that threatens the autonomy of Convention Management by the NCDXC. As other organizations are brought on board, it follows that they would want to be included in the decision making process, if for no other reason than to maximize their income.

So, it's entirely up to you, the members of NCDXC. You can either let the trend continue and eventually lose control of the Convention entirely. Or, you can get involved now, staff all of the committees and reap all of the benefits? But, to get the ball rolling, someone needs to step forward now. Will it be you? I hope so!

73,

George, W6YD



W6WZ & W6JD

## Meeting Pictures



W6WZ, N6SJ, K6YP, KG6AM & WB6ABC.



WB6JJJ



WB6ABC

## Record Solar Flare Last Month

QST de W1AW; Propagation Forecast  
Bulletin 45; From Tad Cook, K7RA Seattle, WA; November 7, 2003  
To all radio amateurs

The opening line to last week's propagation bulletin read, "Solar excitement continued this week". Last week's events caused excitement, but this week was positively historic. **The largest explosion ever recorded in our solar system** occurred Tuesday, November 4 when an X28 class flare exploded from sunspot 486. See data for this on [http://sohowww.nascom.nasa.gov/hotshots/2003\\_11\\_04/](http://sohowww.nascom.nasa.gov/hotshots/2003_11_04/), from the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory. The flare erupted as the giant sunspot 486 was about to rotate from the visible disk. This means the blast wasn't aimed at earth, but was in a great position for taking images. The eruption saturated X-ray detectors on NOAA's GOES (Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites, see <http://goes.gsfc.nasa.gov/>), and was so strong that the X28 measurement had to be estimated, as did the solar flux for November 4. The solar flux for that day (taken from the daily 2000 UTC reading) was measured at the observatory in British Columbia at 560.9, which is way off the scale. It was adjusted downward to an estimated 168 by NOAA's Space Environment Center. The flare saturated observing satellites for about 13 minutes during the peak of the event, according to Christopher Balch of NOAA SEC, who spoke with Tomas Hood, NW7US (Tomas' web site is <http://prop.hfradio.org/>). The measurements stopped at X17.4. The level of the flare was estimated by analyzing data from HESSI, the High Energy Solar Spectroscopic Imager (see <http://hessi.ssl.berkeley.edu/>). An explanation of the X classes for rating solar flares is at <http://spaceweather.com/glossary/flareclasses.html>. Also, see <http://hesperia.gsfc.nasa.gov/sftheory/flare.htm>. The last time a huge flare saturated X-ray detectors was in April, 2001, and that one was X-20, the biggest recorded at that time. Keep in mind that there aren't any accurate records of flare intensity before about 30 years ago. Roger Bonuchi, WB9JXE of Plainfield, Illinois wrote to say that his astronomy calendar for November 5 noted that on that day in 2001 there was a "huge red aurora visible for hours over North America". Looking back to our bulletin that covered that time at <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/prop/2001-arlp046.html> we see that indeed there was a large geomagnetic storm. The bulletin reported that frightened Midwest residents, unfamiliar with aurora borealis, called 9-1-1 to report a "nuclear death cloud". Roger also said he picked up the N9RET CW beacon, which runs 2 watts on 28.2335 MHz. He found it odd that N9RET is about 25-30 miles from him and he was copying it for the first time at around S6. He called Tim Lanners, N9RET who told him he rarely gets reports from Illinois. Tim is in Broadview, Illinois in the Chicagoland area.

For more information about propagation and an explanation of the numbers used in this bulletin see the Propagation page on the ARRL Web site at <http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/propagation.html>.



Man! I must be getting sick!  
I keep getting these spots on my face!

Peace on  
Earth

On behalf of the entire DXer Staff I want to extend our best wishes to you and yours for a Happy Holiday Season. May you enjoy Peace, prosperity and good health in the New Year.

With warmest regards,

George, W6YD

Joy to  
the  
World

...and an HDX-572MDPL  
from U.S. Tower



**NCDXC  
GALA CHRISTMAS PARTY**

**12:30 - 3:30 PM  
Main Floor**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13th  
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***But, You Can Still Attend!***

**Call Rolph Stoddard, W6TWO at 408-356-7084**

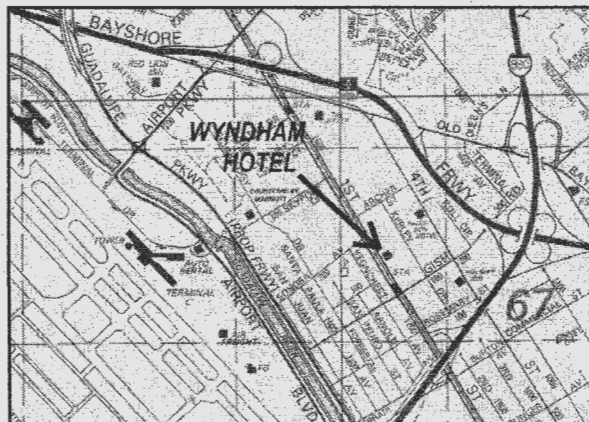
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TO STAY THE NIGHT  
AT THE WYNDHAM!  
(LET US KNOW IF YOU  
NEED A RESERVATION)**



## **DXer Profile: W6KM, Dick Letrich**

This month we profile Dick Letrich, W6KM -- my best friend and the man who has provided the "leg work", pictures and copy for all of the other *DXer profiles*, for these past 3 years.

Dick is an avid DXer, having confirmed 341 countries (he needs only Palestine and Glorioso to have them all) from a rather modest station on a city lot. He uses a Kenwood TS-940SAT to push his signals thru a Henry 2KD-5 amplifier and into a KLM KT34 tribander at 35 feet. He uses either a Hy-Gain HY-TOWER Vertical or a dipole for 40 and 80. His back-up HF rig is a Kenwood TS-130S with an external VFO. When necessary, he uses a Murch UT-2000B tuner to match the transmitting equipment to the antennas. Dick's country count bears witness to the fact that he uses this combination very effectively. He has attained DXCC Honor Roll status and has achieved 5 Band WAS from it.

Rounding out his well appointed shack for two meters are a KLM-Multi 2000A base unit and a small ICOM HT. You might also notice the very nice Geochron World Clock mounted on the wall above his operating position.

Dick is a life member of both the ARRL and the NCDXC. He is a regular contributor of both pictures and articles to the *DXer* and has been both the Official Photographer and "mailman" for the *DXer* for the past 3 years. He served on the (Visalia) Convention Committee as Registration Chairman for the last two times we sponsored it, but his service to Club doesn't end there. He has served the Club as Treasurer, Secretary, Director and as President for 2 years. His most recent honor (and a well deserved one, at that) was being named the "2002 NCDXC Club Member of the Year".

Dick is a Ham Radio "evangelist", who spreads the "gospel" of our hobby wherever he goes. He goes out of his way to kindle the fire under potential hams and it was Dick, who re-kindled my enthusiasm for the hobby. Later, in 1978, it was he, who administered the novice exam that brought me back into the hobby. For this, I will be eternally grateful.

Thank you, Dick, for all you've done for our hobby in general and for the NCDXC in particular.

73,

George, W6YD

## **Bio of Jim ("Buc Butane") Giovanni**

Actor-Comedian-Impressionist-Singer-Songwriter: A veteran entertainer, Jim has performed with major stars such as Frank Sinatra, Robin Williams, Ray Charles, James Brown, Merle Haggard, Reba McEntire, Kris Kristoffersen, Conway Twitty, Wayne Newton, Loretta Lynn, Willie Nelson, Kenny Rogers, Crystal Gayle, Neil Sedaka, Buddy Rich, Earl Scruggs, Whoopi Goldberg, Eddie Arnold, Harry James, and Jeff Bridges. In his many years in the business, Jim has appeared on "Laugh In", in movies such as "Tucker: A Man and His Dream," and performed in the main room at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas. This versatile comedian with an ever-changing show is now taking the accordion world by storm. Guaranteed to warm the heart, bring down the house, and plaster a smile on your face!



## **Editor's Choice**

Once again, the Holiday Season is upon us and before we know, it will be 2004. I simply can't believe the year has flown so fast.

It seems that only yesterday we were preparing for and then hosting the Convention in Visalia. Then came the Club picnic in September this year. CQWW has come and gone. And, finally, we're eagerly anticipating another wonderful Christmas Luncheon at the Wyndham Hotel in San Jose.

Meanwhile, as the Holidays approach, we look forward to being with our loved ones and enjoying the company of good friends - both in and out of the hobby. So, also, I look forward to visiting with many of you at the Christmas Party. Sylvia and I plan to be there. We hope you can make it, too.

May you have good propagation, a clean signal and may you work all of the "rare ones" on the first call!

73,

George, W6YD



## **Kudos 'n Kredits**

This month's issue of *The DXer* was made possible by articles and input from the following sources:

**W6JD, Doug Westover**  
**W6KM, Dick Letrich**  
**K7RA, Tad cook**  
**W6TWO, Rolph Stoddard**  
**W3UR, Bernie McClenny**

Thank you, one and all!

George, W6YD

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(Near Disneyland)  
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- 4-4m Memory
- Fully Subscribable to I.R.
- Built-in CTCSS/DCS
- Largest of VHF/UHF compatible

Great Price!



**FT-1000 HF/VHF/UHF Trans.**

- Compact Transceiver w/removable front panel
- Full Subscribable to I.R.
- Built-in CTCSS/DCS
- Largest of VHF/UHF compatible
- 360 Memories

Low Pricing!



**FT-1000MP MKV HF Trans.**

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- Dual RX
- Collins SSB filter built-in
- 200W, External power supply

Low Pricing!

**ICOM**



**IC-706MKIIB HF/VHF Transceiver**

- All mode HF 80M/70M/20M
- 100W HF/20W VHF/20W UHF
- 4F DSP • Plug-in 2-Pole Filters • 100 Memories
- Easy-to-configure features

Low Pricing!



**IC-756 PRO II All mode Transceiver**

- 100W HF • 100W VHF • 100W UHF
- 22 W/1F DSP • SDR-CF Synthesizer/Processing
- 100 Memories • 100 Presets • 100 Channels
- Selectable 1F/2F/3F/4F/5F/6F/7F/8F/9F/10F
- Multiple DSP controlled AGC loops
- 42 Channels of memories
- 100 channels to memories

The Ultimate Radio!

**ALINCO**



**DJ-196T 2M/440**

- 5 Watt out
- 40 memories
- Alpha numeric display
- CTCSS • DCS built in
- "S" meter
- Auto Dialer

Low Pricing!



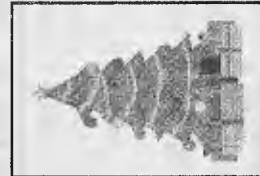
**DR-135TP 2M mobile**

- 50 Watt out • Alpha numeric display
- 100 memos • Built-in TNC 1200 & 9600 Band
- Front Panel GPS in • Scan 100.5 part
- CTCSS/DCS Encode/Decode built in

Low Pricing!

FIRST  
CLASS

**DEXER**  
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



Happy Holidays!