

# DXer

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



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## Knock's Knews

### September Meeting

The September meeting will be held on Friday, September 9 at the Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo. The favorable response to the excellent Italian buffet and the meeting facilities in August prompted us to try it again. In fact, due to the many who took advantage of the buffet at \$11.95 (\$9.95 for seniors) and the excellent bar and appetizers, the hotel has reduced the room rental by 1/3! A similar turnout in September may result in an even greater discount for October.

Jack Troster, W6ISQ, who has been through a few sunspot cycles, will discuss "Alternatives to DXCC—What to Do During the Sunspot Minimum." Jack is, among many other things, our DXAC representative.

The Dunfey is at the intersection of Highways 101 and 92 and is easy to reach from any part of the area. From 280, 880, or 101, take Hwy 92 to the Delaware Street exit in San Mateo. From the west, after exiting, turn left at Delaware Street, go one block to the signal at Concar, turn right and continue to the end (about two blocks), where the Dunfey is on your left. From the east, after exiting, turn right on Concar, continue about two blocks to the end and turn left into the Dunfey.

Dinner can start as early as 5:30, so you can really fill up. To give us plenty of time for schmoozing and socializing, the meeting will start at 8:00. Bring another member with you, preferably one who hasn't been able to attend lately, and get reacquainted with your old friends.



"Knock", K6ITL

### Future Planning Task Force

As announced at the last meeting, and on the NCDXC net last Thursday, the Future Planning Task Force has been formed with Ted Algren, KA6W, serving as the "point man," with W6QHS, W6CF, N6AN, K6OZL, K6ANP, N6VAW, WB6UDS and W6DU comprising the balance. The charge to the task force is to explore all the possible functions and activities that the NCDXC could, should, or might, undertake in the next year or so.

Each of the members will serve as a spark plug to brainstorm and generate ideas, and as a lightning rod for your suggestions on how to make the NCDXC more fun and exciting for all. Send your positive suggestions and ideas to any of the members now so they can be included in the Task Force report to be presented at the October meeting.

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## California Award

The NCDXC sponsors an award for radio amateurs in countries outside the continental United States to further DX interest, promote international goodwill and publicize the NCDXC. It is recognized as one of the most prestigious DX awards, and over 500 certificates have been awarded.

Each NCDXC club member should promote this award during QSOs with DX stations and include the requirements—which follow—with each QSL card.

### California Award Requirements

"KH6, KL7, and all hams outside the US are eligible for this free, handsome certificate awarded by the NCDXC. Proof-of-QSO with 220 California hams, of which 20 or more are NCDXC members, is required.

"Make a list in alphabetical order with Universal date/time, accompanied by QSL cards confirming contacts. Have the list certified by an officer of any recognized ham society or club, and send it to NCDXC, Box 608, Menlo Park, CA, 94026-0608. Include sufficient IRCs for return postage. Band/mode endorsements are available. QSO's must be after October 1, 1946 when the NCDXC was formed as the world's first incorporated DX club."

At this time of poor propagation, one way to attract attention is to announce that you count for the California Award. Often

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September 1994

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: Jim Knochenhauer, K6ITL  
 Vice President: George Allan, WA6O  
 Secretary: Eric Edberg, W6DU  
 Treasurer: Bob Wilson, NQ6X  
 Director: Jerry Griffin, W8MEI  
 Director: Al Koblinski, W7XA  
 Director: Stan Goldstein, N6ULU

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 (or via DXPSN)

Roster Manager: Garry Shapiro, NI6T

Club Repeater: W6TI/R, (147.36+)

Trustee: Bob Vallio, W6RGG

Comm. Chairman: Ralph Hunt, AG6Q

Club simplex: 147.54 (suggested)

Thurs. Net QTR: 8 p.m. local time.

Net Manager: Ralph Hunt, AG6Q

DX News: Dave Pughatch, K16WF

Propagation: Al Lotze, W6RQ

Contest Manager: Rich Hudgins, WX6M

Westlink: Craig Smith, N6ITW

Swap Shop: Ben Deoviet, W6FDU

939 Robin Lane

Campbell, CA, 95008

(408) 374-0372

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.

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## Board of Directors Meeting

The August BoD meeting was held on the 17th at W6VG's home, and was called to order by K6ITL at 19:42. Attendees: Jim Knochenhauer, K6ITL; George Allan, WA6O; Bob Wilson, NQ6X; Al Koblinski, W7XA; Eric Edberg, W6DU. Guest: Ron Pantoni, W6VG.

- The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
- NQ6X reported that 180 members have paid their dues, but 130 have not. Possible remedies for this annual problem were discussed, but none were considered feasible.
- The next meeting will be held at the Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo.
- W7XA submitted a sample questionnaire dealing with meeting place preferences, to be included in the next *DXer*. Unanimously approved.
- "Charlie" was discussed at length. Resolved that "Charlie" would be turned on again *pro tem* as originally proposed and that his final disposition would be decided by the membership by means of the same questionnaire. Motion by W7XA, seconded by WA6O. Unanimously approved.
- K6ITL has conducted an inventory of club-owned equipment. Two items were been located: one of the two VHF direction finders and the old amplifier system. Motion by W6DU, second by K6ITL, that the old amplifier be written off. Unanimously approved.
- Paper weight for the *DXer* was discussed. Moved WA6O, second NQ6X, that the lighter-weight paper be used except in those cases where the heavier weight does not require an additional unit of postage. Unanimously approved.
- Dunfey Hotel management, when approached by K6ITL, agreed to a reduced cost for room rental for meetings due to the good turnout at the buffet dinner.

Meeting adjourned at 20:40.

—Eric Edberg, W6DU, Secretary

## General Meeting

The August meeting of NCDXC was held at a new site, the Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo; the meeting was called to order by President Knochenhauer, K6ITL, at 19:45. Many of those in attendance had dined at the hotel's Italian buffet and pronounced it quite good and also reasonable. The upstairs meeting room seemed well-appointed.

- A plaque was presented to George Allan, WA6O, by Jim Knochenhauer in appreciation of his services to the Club as President for the past year.
- The Officers and Directors for the coming year were presented by the President, as were appointees who have agreed to serve. They are:

Convention Co-Chairmen	WA6O, NG6X
Repeater Chairman	AG6Q
Archivist	W6VG
Publications Chairman	W6VG
Records Manager	W6VG
California Award	WA6AHF
<i>DXer</i> Editor	NI6T
Contest Chairman	WX6M
Swap Shop	W6FDU

- AA6G, who created the nine-band DXCC program some years ago and had administered it since, gave up the post some months ago. Chuck did a fine job and deserves a vote of thanks from the membership. A volunteer is sought to replace him. Chuck would be happy to answer any questions about the job.

continued next page

**from previous page**

- Interested members should contact K6ITL.
- Meeting locations and all other meeting parameters were discussed at some length. DX sites such as Marin, the Valley, and Monterey entered the discussion, as did dinner/no dinner. W7XA's questionnaire, in this issue, should provide additional insight re member preferences.
  - Our speaker at the August meeting, Duane Ausherman, W6REC, provided an excellent and interesting account of the summer he spent in Antarctica several years ago. See *An Antarctic Summer* on page 5.
  - Guests introduced were: Ralph, K6ZAN; Elsie, new XYL of W6ZKM; John, KA6LWC; Hazel, XYL of K6MA; Ollie, XYL of W6OM, and W6EMD's granddaughter.
  - W6ISQ, our DXAC representative, posed several questions. Should Scarborough Reef be accepted for DXCC or not? Should there be a minimum size for an island to be recognized as a DXCC country, and, if so, what should that size be? No clear mandates were received.
  - Frank Warwick, AB6MN was voted into membership. The application of Bruce Wade, W6FKD, could not be acted upon: neither of his sponsors attended the meeting. Lisa Scheuplein, KD6BLK, was reinstated.
  - KA6ING moved, seconded by WA6O, that "Charlie" be restored to W6TI/R. WX6P, from Fresno, offered that many Valley club members miss him also. He stated that they cannot often get into the repeater but can usually hear it quite well, and also that many of them do not have packet. K6ITL mentioned that "Charlie's" silence is a sixty-day trial, after which the club will consider his fate. W6WB then moved to table, seconded by KG6AM. It will be brought up again at the next meeting.
  - K6ITL discussed the Future Planning Task Force. Its purpose is to brainstorm and plan future Club projects. See *Knock's News* on page 1.

Meeting adjourned at 22:05. Motion by N6ITW, seconded by KA6ING.

—Eric Edberg, W6DU, Secretary

## Treasurer's Report de NQ6X

	Credits	Debits	Balance
<i>Bank of America Checking Account</i>			
Beginning Balance (July 1, '94)			\$123.13
Receipts			
Dues received & deposited	\$3,319.00		
Account interest	0.55		
Subtotal	\$3,319.55		\$3,442.68
Expenditures			
DXer printing, July		\$335.13	
Moderne Plastic (badge)		9.08	
Monthly service charge		9.00	
Subtotal		\$353.21	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$3,089.47</b>
<i>Eurekabank Savings Account</i>			
Beginning Balance (July 1)			\$18,806.81
Account interest	\$33.62		
Ending Balance*			\$18,840.43
*Includes \$3500 set-aside for 1995 IDXC			
<i>EurekaBank Life Members Fund</i>			
CD value at 4 March '94			\$10,432.73
(matures 4 Nov '94) no activity			

## Howard Myers, W6OL, SK

Howard Myers, W6OL, an NCDXC member for 26 years, is a Silent Key. Howard succumbed to throat cancer at the age of 85.

A Nebraska native, and a ham since 1923, Howard came to California in 1930, enrolling at what is now San Jose State University. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Stanford in 1934, and obtained his Masters at Berkeley and his Ph.D at Stanford, in 1939. He then began a 35-year career teaching mathematics at SJS, chairing the department for 15 years.

In 1945, Stan Kuhl, K6MA, not yet a ham and fresh out of the army, met Howard as an SJS freshman, taking the math entrance exam and a math course from him. He remembers Howard as "a very good teacher, patient and thorough." Stan transferred to Santa Clara, and lost contact with Howard until he joined NCDXC in the early '70's—and found Howard there as a member.

"Howard was a fine gentleman," says K6MA, "a very good CW operator...with a dry wit." Stan recalls that Howard was a "continuous" pipe smoker, and when smoking was banned at club meetings, Howard and his second wife, Adrian, stopped coming to meetings. "He later dropped out of ham radio entirely."

In addition to his wife, Howard is survived by two sons, including Bill Myers, N6OL, of Visalia, a daughter, sister, and grandchildren.

—N16T, from the SJ Mercury News and with thanks to Stan Kuhl, K6MA

## DXCC Annual List Deadline!

The deadline for submissions to the 1994 DXCC Annual List is September 30. Your timely submission will ensure you're on the list to receive the DXCC Yearbook in early 1995. Submissions must be made using 1994 forms only: MSD-505 (594) or MSD-505 (194).

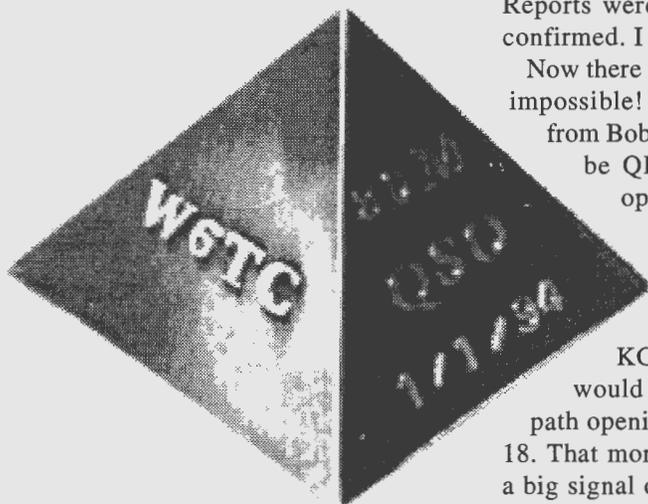
—QST

## Speaking of QSL's

# At the Top of the Pyramid

*W6TC dramatically ascends the 5BWAZ Summit.*

**P**ictured is the wonderful bronze QSL I received from Mohamed, SU2MT, in Alexandria, Egypt. The QSL is for a QSO on 80 meters on January 1, 1994—what a great new year's event! The bronze pyramid represents the culmination of fourteen years' effort to achieve Five Band WAZ, with no lists, and all on CW!



The most difficult 80 meter zones from the west coast are 40, 37 and 34. (*What about zone 22? —de NI6T*) Zone 40 was worked with relative ease, but zone 37 was a problem for me. Several years ago, when Tom Warren, K3TW, was in Tanzania as 5H3TW, I had what I thought was a good QSO, but turned out NIL (not in log)! I was disappointed at the time, but I did have the thrill of working a new one.

My next chance for zone 37 came three years later when John, C9RJJ was active in Mozambique. I heard from Steve, AA6AA, that N6DX had a schedule with C9RJJ early in the 1992 CQWW test. I put a note in my log but promptly forgot about it, since I would be on a family vacation at the time. Fortunately, we came home early.

The remembrance of the sked struck me when I walked into the shack, five minutes before the event. After a quick tune-up, I heard Steve call and heard the exchange, but then the East Coast was all over John. By some miracle, on the fourth call, I heard my own call weakly through the din.

Reports were exchanged, and the QSO confirmed. I was in seventh heaven!

Now there was only zone 34. It seemed impossible! But late last year, I heard from Bob, W6RJ, that SU2MT would be QRV on 80m. Here was my opportunity for the final zone.

From time to time I called Bob to find out what was happening in Egypt.

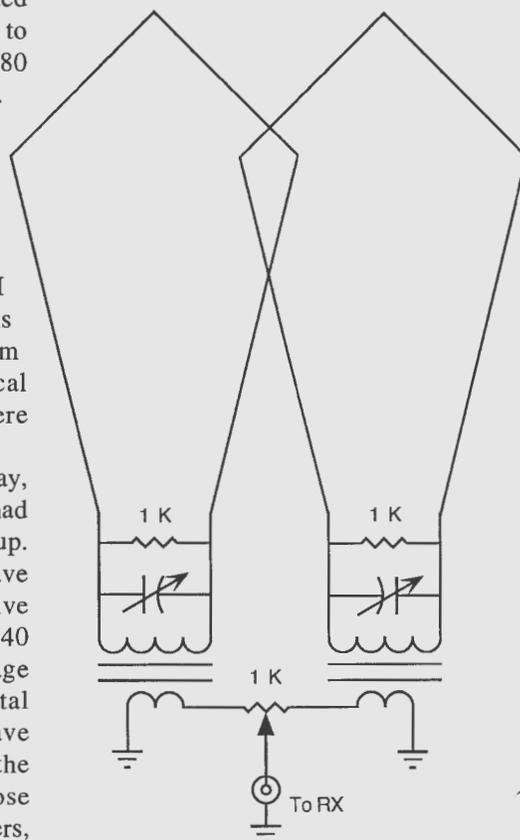
At last, Bob and Larry, KG6GF, told me that the time would be during the morning long path opening on Saturday, December 18. That morning, I heard SU2MT with a big signal on 40, before the appointed time. I threw my call into the pileup to be sure I would be recognized later on 80 but I couldn't get through the bedlam.

I heard SU2MT say that he was QSY to 3799, using CW in the phone band. On 80, I heard the local guns calling, and heard the reports and confirmations exchanged, but I never heard SU2MT. What a disaster! All I could hear on 3799 was noise, clicks from the nearby pileup and splatter from 75 meter rag chewers. A few of the local big guns got through. I know they were as happy as I was sad.

Something had to be done! With Saturday, January 1 to be the next opportunity, I had to do something about my receiving setup. I live on a small suburban lot and have two kite-shaped loops spaced just twelve feet apart, which I use effectively on 40 as a two element quad. On 80, I voltage feed them in parallel. While the total width of the loops is only 25 feet, I have done reasonably well transmitting; the problem had been on receive. I suppose that is the problem for all 80 meter DXers, excepting those few blessed with the space for Beverages or the means for beams.

I had been thinking that the two loops could be phased to make an effective 80 meter receive-only beam. Like so many projects, that one was always put off until the following weekend and so it never had happened. This time would be different: 5BWAZ was hanging upon the success of that idea! Fortunately, I had a few days off at Christmas time, so I could experiment with the phasing.

The diagram pictures the two loops tuned near resonance. The 1K resistors lower the Q. Each loop can be tuned independently to obtain the necessary phase shift. The pot connected between



*W6TC's receive array*

The two loops allows adjustment of the relative signal from the two loops. The right phase shift and relative amplitude should provide an effective two-element receiving array.

A nearby friend, W6JPE, lives on a hill about five degrees above my QTH. He put a signal on 80; I tweaked the tuning controls and the relative-signal pot. After some trial and error, I had 30 dB front-to-back ratio. Over the next few days I used the array, listening to 80 meter DX; performance seemed inconclusive. With January 1 rapidly approaching, I decided to settle for what I had.

On Saturday morning, right on time, SU2MT was on 40 meters, long path. Again, I called in hopes my call would be recognized when he QSYed to 80. Again, I didn't make it through the pile-up. I heard the QSY announced, switched to 80 and there he was! By the time I returned from 40 to 80, he had worked one or two West Coast stations. I heard a contest style QRZ. I called. Miracle of miracles! I heard my call, report and confirmation. 5BWAZ!

After the QSO I listened for a while and heard many W6's confirming contacts. Conditions were exceptional. SU2MT was easy to read. I will never know whether that QSO was the result of luck, good conditions or the hard work on my receiving antenna system. For whatever reason, I was in the log!

*(I heard nothing on December 18 and heard Mohamed perfectly on January 1; I heard Geo's Q and others, but, alas, not my own call—de NI6T.)*

A few days later the beautiful cast-bronze "QSL"—a three-inch pyramid—arrived from SU2MT via Lloyd, AA6T. On successive faces are "73 Mohamed" in Arabic, "SU2MT", "W6TC", and "80M CW January 1, 1994." It is the finest QSL I have ever received and confirms the most exciting QSO since my first, in 1939. I deeply appreciate the QSL and Mohamed's understanding of the importance of these QSO's to those seeking the elusive 5BWAZ. I am sure all who made the grade on those Saturday mornings feel the same way.

—George Badger, W6TC

## Mystery Photo



Pictured are the three intrepid DXpeditioners who provided the world with Bajo Nuevo (HKØAA) in 1976. Who are they? Clue: two are current members of NCDXC; one now sports a different callsign.

Answer on page 10

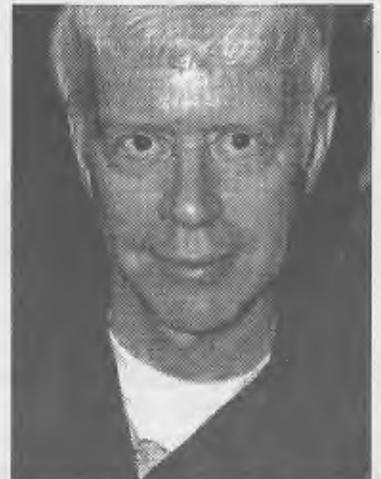
## An Antarctic Summer

At the August meeting, Duane Ausherman, W6REC, presented an informative account of his Antarctic "summer." This was no mere tour or DXpedition, as he was employed at McMurdo Station, the USA research base on Ross Island.

Antarctica is administered under an international Antarctic treaty, which provides significant protection to the continent. Antarctica is desolate, the highest continent and contains more fresh water than the rest of the world combined. There is no precipitation history and the climate cannot sustain human life under normal circumstances. The summer crew at McMurdo is approximately 1500 with a maximum of 160 during the winter months.

Due to long working hours and lack of cooperation from the military stations, there was not a great deal of time spent on the air. The normal McMurdo station, KC4USV, apparently does not QSL, Duane said. Duane worked some 800 QSO's from McMurdo, but found operating circumstances far from friendly. One officer-in-charge was obsessively concerned with the effect of radio frequencies—at any level—on the health of people nearby. He also mentioned that signals were not outstanding. One problem is that we stateside DXers usually beam directions other than Antarctica.

He was highly critical of the navy, derided incompetence in our military administration and, in discussing some of the circumstances, made reference to a "limited-security prison." There were some muttered comments from the floor at this juncture, but I am sure the audience—in applauding his presentation—appreciated his candor and novel point of view.



Duane Ausherman, W6REC

—Eric Edberg, W6DU

*The DXer Interview*

# The Russian Tube Man

*Continuing our conversation with George Badger, W6TC, about power tubes and DXing. Part 2 of 2.*

**O**ne of the things that attracted a lot of attention at Dayton was the new Alpha amplifier. You have been selling into broadcast and other traditional markets. But I know that getting designed into the Alpha amp probably has been your biggest personal success, so far. How did that happen?

For a long time Dick Ehrhorn has been trying to determine the best way to attack the low-cost market and still maintain Alpha performance and Alpha quality. He was looking for low-cost alternatives to expensive power tubes. He personally has close contacts throughout Russia and the CIS countries. Some of this stems from his worldwide contacts as an active tester. Contesting is an international sport. DXers and testers tend to make friends where distance and political boundaries make no difference.

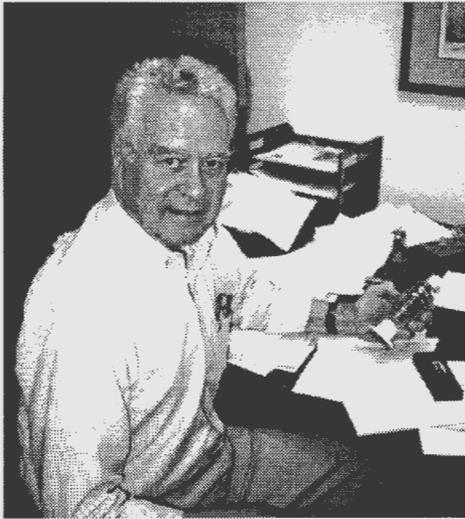
When I joined Svetlana, one of the first things I did was to send Dick some tube samples, specifically the GU-74B which we

now call the 4CX800A. It's a tetrode about the same size as a 3CX800A7. Dick was looking for a triode because of his experience with the various Eimac triodes, including the 3CX800A7. He found some Russian triodes, but the GU74B tetrode has real advantages.

Because our modern transceivers are all solid-state, a triode amplifier now requires tuned input circuits. Not only that, but nine input circuits are required. Count them: nine tuned circuits! We popularized zero bias triodes at Eimac on the basis of simplicity but time has changed all that. For example, now you don't need a 5U4

rectifier, a choke and a capacitor for a screen supply; a simple little diode bridge will do. Times and technology have changed. The simplest and least difficult way to build a linear today is no longer with zero-bias triodes. Tetrodes are back in style, and for good reasons.

Back to Ehrhorn. I must admit if I had a choice among the various OEMs making amateur radio linears, I would have chosen Alpha to pioneer the 4CX800A because of their excellent long-term reputation for quality and ruggedness. Dick Ehrhorn knows enough about the Eastern market to have made the neces-



sary commercial connections to obtain tubes and other accessories, but we are glad to help. His leadership in adopting Svetlana tetrodes has enhanced our credibility and therefore helped me with the other OEMs, amateur and commercial alike.

*The tubes are not the only Eastern-bloc parts that are*

*in that amplifier, are they?*

Oh no! The power transformer, the blower...much of it is from the Eastern countries. In fact, the assembly in large part is done in Bulgaria. The design was mostly from Dick's operation in Colorado.

*You're running the cathode at DC ground, or the screen?*

You can ground the cathode or the screen. Either way is simple because we provide an inexpensive Russian socket with a built-in screen bypass. It can be connected either way. Recently it has become relatively simple to build a power supply so

that the screen can be grounded directly and the cathode run below ground.

I saw a very interesting innovation at Friedrichshafen: an inexpensive way to manufacture high-voltage power supplies. Basically, a toroidal transformer is used with a series of six secondary windings; each one produces about 375 volts. Wires from the windings go to a circuit board on which there are six separate supplies with simple diode bridge rectifiers and six inexpensive 400-volt electrolytics. Basically, they are separate power supplies connected in series at the output end of the circuit board, so that mass-production techniques can be used. I asked the German vendor of these power supply kits to tell me about the advantages. He explained that the advantage is primarily cost, because circuit board techniques can be used rather than open wiring. Also, inexpensive capacitors can be used without undue compensation.

I think this would be an excellent way to build a linear amplifier. The cathode would be run negative by the power supply at the bottom end of the string. *So, essentially, you're just tapping down on a stack of voltage sources?*

That's exactly right. And the next step toward further simplification and cost reduction may be super-cathode drive. I can hardly wait to try it.

*Well, that is interesting. Is Svetlana also selling the sockets for the 4CX800A?*

Yes. Wherever possible, we sell hardware to go with our tubes.

Regarding your comment earlier, we are, in fact, concentrating on the ham market. Not because the market is so large; there are other reasons. I suppose some of this concentration comes from my own personal interest, but most is because, throughout the electronic industry, people responsible for design, building and the business of high power radio equipment are hams. They are often the movers and

*"The simplest and least difficult way to build a linear today is no longer with zero-bias triodes. Tetrodes are back in style, and for good reasons."*

shakers in our industry. The number is astoundingly high. Just to give you a statistic, the magazine most read by people in the RF industry is *RF Design*. Gary Breed, Editor, who is K9AY, told me that 34% of the subscribers to *RF Design* are hams.

*Is he the guy who designed the Gary Special low-frequency vertical?*

Yes. His antenna is a competitor, you might say, to the famous Battle Creek Special. K9AY seems to have won the competition. He's a great guy. He really understands lowband antennas in a very practical way.

*Getting back to the Alpha amplifier, the input circuit is totally passive except for that "active cutoff" feature?*

That's right. The input circuit is a 50 ohm resistor. What could be a better load for your solid state exciter than a 50 ohm resistor?

*But what do you mean by active cutoff? You have published a circuit in which, when there is no signal, the amplifier is cut off.*

Oh, EBS...

*Because the amplifier shuts off when there is no drive, you run a lot cooler and don't have to worry about switching the amplifier.*

That's right. That was mentioned in Rick Littlefield's article in *Communications Quarterly*, Summer, 1993. There is an article coming in the next issue of *Communications Quarterly*, written by Marv Gonsior, W6FR, where he uses the EBS principles in a very interesting new linear using the Svetlana 4CX1600B.

*Sounds like something I might want to try downstream myself. I see a solution to the nine-band problem. Certainly, with all of the HF bands we have now, input circuits and the switching for them are really quite a pain-in-the-neck.*

That's right, and of course the passive grid circuit solves that problem. When you look at the total component count in a linear amplifier using the tetrode vs. the triode, the situation has changed. I can remember in the days when, at Eimac, we

were pushing zero-bias triodes as the least expensive way to build a linear amplifier. We sold on the basis that the component count was down. Now, with nine bands, and with simple solid-state diode bridges, the world has changed. The lowest component count approach is now in favor of tetrodes.

*The tube is running Class AB<sub>1</sub> so it's not really loading that 50 ohm resistor at all?*

Yes. In fact the onset of grid current is the onset of flat-topping, which, of course, we must avoid.

*So this is really a pure AB<sub>1</sub> amplifier. That sounds like Ehrhorn is on the right track.*

*I noted that he is selling that amplifier for \$2300-\$2400, and it was offered for about \$2000 at Dayton as an introductory price. That seems now, in retrospect, to have been quite a bargain.*

Yes and he is sold out for the rest of the year. Of course the reason for the low equipment cost is the low component cost—particularly the tube. The tube always represents a very large percentage of the total cost of a linear amplifier.

*What is the retail price of the 4CX800A?*

\$180.00.

*That is basically an increment over the price of a 3-500Z!*

I guess so. The price of the 3-500 is a crap game with all the French and Chinese versions floating around.

*The Eimac 3-500's typical offering price is about \$145 and it is similar for the Amperex tube. Your 4CX800A is about as cheap a power tube that one is going to find. That is really amazing. That should be very popular in home-brew.*

Yes, there are quite a few people building linears around these tubes. We have had very good publicity for our 4CX800A and 4CX1600B in various magazines. We have been flooded with phone calls, faxes, and letters.

*What's the top frequency for building "simply" before you start running into VHF problems?*

The 4CX800A is rated to 150 MHz and 4CX1600B is rated to 250 MHz, both at full power.

*So we will see some very nice two-meter finals there as well?*

You bet! They are being worked on now by individual hams and there is activity with various OEMs toward that market.

*Well, when I came in here today, you were head and foot into your sales calls and every time I come in here you are busier and busier. This is like a whole new life for you, isn't it?*

Well, in a way it's a new life but in a way it is an old one because the customers with whom I am dealing every day are exactly the same ones I have always dealt with, the industry is the same, the components are the same, the only difference is that I have an infinitely large engineering department and an equally large production department to work with. It's a pleasure, after years of fighting with these two establishments, trying to help the customer. Having a tightly knit team is important and satisfying. Everybody wins.

*I can think of no other part of the electronic industry where things are so comparatively unchanged after forty years. The technology has progressed, but so many of the numbers that you are selling—811's, 813's, 4CX250's—were old when I was a puppy. Elsewhere in electronics, rapid obsolescence is a fact of life. The tube biz seems almost as if it has stood still.*

There is a good reason for what you've observed. The tube is a component that wears out in time. Therefore you buy replacement tubes for equipment that was designed fifty years ago. The equipment is still in operation and so those old original tube types are still required after many years. But an interesting addition is that the engineers who designed equipment ten and twenty years ago wanted to design around a tube which had a good track record and which is readily available. So even new designs tend to be made around

**continued on next page**

from page 7

# The Russian Tube Man

the best of the old tube types. Often, the performance of these classic tubes is adequate because there has not been much investment in new tube development here in the West. So you find new equipment being designed today—by today, I mean right-now today—around tubes which were developed in the ‘fifties.

*How are you doing overall with Svetlana?* At this point we are concentrating, aside from the amateur radio market of course, on the high-power broadcast business. Our next targets are in the industrial heating and audio markets. We are doing well; we are closing orders from all over the world. Our biggest market is, of course, the U.S., but our ratio of foreign to domestic orders is very favorable. We are off to a flying start and look forward to a bright future.

*Great stuff. Well, your excitement is certainly communicated here. Now I would like to go back to your DXing for a bit. You said that you really got back into it around 1970, and of course we know that you are a CW man and only once in a great while do we ever find you on any other mode. Earlier this year you had quite a thrill on 80 meters. Do you want to tell us about that?*

Well, I have achieved the usual DXer’s goal of five-band DXCC, which I found to be fascinating, difficult and very rewarding. It seemed to be a logical progression from that to go for five-band WAZ. I also learned that five-band WAZ is vastly more difficult than five-band DXCC: it took me fourteen years to achieve. The QSO you’re referring to, Garry, was with zone 34 on 80 meters. For me, that was the last—the 200th—band-zone. The thrill was working SU2MT. I don’t think I will ever forget that. It was a thrill at least equal to my very first QSO in 1939.

*You made your five band WAZ all on CW. That’s right.*

*Unfortunately, since some of them go back past that arbitrary start date for CW WAZ,*

*it won’t be a five-band CW certificate but nevertheless you worked all 200 zones on CW. That is quite an achievement, since many rare stations only show up on SSB, particularly on the low bands.*

That’s right...

*How are you doing on 160 meters?*

I live on a relatively small suburban lot, so I did not think I could ever be competitive on 160. Of course, that makes it more of a challenge. I finally figured out



a way to get a good piece of wire working on that band. In just in four hours total operating time, I’ve worked nineteen countries including two V85’s.

*That’s a fine start! So are we going to see you on 160 meters this coming season?*

Well, I hope so. It’s a matter of finding time. I think 160 is a band that requires an extraordinary amount of effort and, frankly, I’m asking myself the question, “George, do you really want to get as carried away with 160 as you did with five-band DXCC and five-band WAZ?”

*Of course you do, George! DX Is! I think you and I will both be on that band this winter...*

*On another tack, I read that you were recently elected a fellow of the Radio Club of America. Congratulations!*

Thank you. I just received this nice note, with a picture, from Stan Kaisel, K6UD. He was also elected a fellow, but did not make it to New York for the awards dinner. The picture was in the RCA Proceedings, in an issue I missed.

*What is the RCA?*

It’s difficult to describe. It’s a cross between a professional society, a trade association and a sort of social good-fellowship club. It has a grand old heritage in Radio history. In about 1910, a group of teenagers regularly met at an old brick armory in the Upper East Side of Manhattan. They were intent on radio control. This interest evolved into ham radio. One of the early members, Edwin Armstrong, invented regeneration. He also eventually invented FM, the superheterodyne receiver, and a host of other brilliant radio concepts still in use today. He did not invent the grid-controlled vacuum tube, but he was the first to understand it and to purposefully use it as an oscillator and amplifier.

The hams in the New York area used to measure the performance of their receivers by listening to a spark station on Cape Cod. If you could hear it, you knew your receiver was working right. Armstrong knew he had something when the headphones on his regenerative Audion receiver could be heard all the way across the room. Other early members made similar contributions to the art in those pioneering days. The Club has a strong heritage from the early work of men such as Beverage, Hazeltine and Dumont. The heritage seems to have carried through to today. Amateur Radio is part of the heritage. I think about half the members are hams or were influenced by ham radio in their youth.

*Thanks, George, and I am sure we all wish we were having as much fun as you are!*



## Letters to The DXer

### More on Miller

I've read with great interest recent material in *The DXer* about the Don Miller era. That was the mid-sixties —my "heyday" in DXing.

You may already know that Don Miller was a licensed and practicing medical doctor. This was the explanation given for his ability to get licenses to operate in all those exotic places where no one else had had any such luck. He claimed he would go into these third-world countries, donate his services to local clinics for an indeterminate time, and grateful local officials would produce his license(s) to operate, forthwith. In the early years of his DX activities, I think there may have been some truth to these stories. Later on, it was extremely doubtful!

The final chapter in the Don Miller saga was perhaps the most ironic. After his credibility and prestige evaporated within the ham community, Miller returned to practicing medicine. It wasn't too long after his retirement from DXing that he apparently got into a serious misunderstandings with his wife and one day she turned up with the "O.J. disease." Miller was charged with her murder and—the last I heard—he was put away in the slammer for a long, long time.

No, Don Miller was not one of those warm, cuddly DXers you used to hear of. Gus Browning (Baker-Peter-Dog)—now there was one of the good old boys! With that syrupy southern modulation of his, Gus could charm the birds out of the trees (read licenses to operate in very exotic places). I hope there may still be some other old-timers out there who may

remember Gus, and even Chuck Swain (can't remember his call), who was strangely lost overboard, ostensibly during a hurricane, on one of Miller's South Pacific expeditions. With some hindsight, a few of us used to wonder out loud whether Chuck was about to blow the whistle on Miller and somehow ended up lost at sea. We'll never know. 73.

—Joel Gambord, KT6J

### KRON was First

The W6TC interview quotes George as saying "We had 420 MHz TV on the air before the first TV broadcast station (KPIX) was on the air in San Francisco." I have a QSL on the wall which proves this to be incorrect.

As a boy, every night I watched my father reach behind the sofa and pull out what nowadays looks like an old oscilloscope, and hang a pair of rabbit-ears over the door. We and the invited neighborhood would then watch the KRON test pattern (with the indian in the middle) and—after an hour or so—would call to report the reception. The big day came later, when they had real shows to watch! I have the letter here confirming that we were among the first 10 TV watchers in Northern California. It was Channel 4, KRON, which we were watching in the late 40's, not KPIX, which was second.

Today, when we have over sixty stations from which to choose, we have less to watch and it is far less interesting! I credit KRON for my first QSL and for sparking my interest in radio.

—Bruce Croskey, AH0U

### "Charlie" Replies

It is not like me to write the editor of a noteworthy publication like *The DXer* to voice my opinion. However, in this case I am directly affected and feel somewhat hurt.

Although I am not a dues-paying member, I contribute to W6TI's goals of helping to work new DX countries and of sharing information with other members. For the most part, I have been treated fairly by most members of the club.

There are a few members that seem to be a bit biased about my operating practices on the repeater and would prefer that I not use the repeater at all. It is true that I tend not to "ragchew" and prefer DX-announcing as a priority in my operating practices. It seems to me that we can coexist in this environment without hostility, for the good of all.

I was hurt when certain members restricted my use of the repeater, without first asking a majority of members at a club meeting. I have been prevented from announcing DX spots for two months! Although I do not pay dues, I have always felt like a member of the DX family. It hurt to be banned from the repeater which I had served to the best of my ability. Sure, I doubled with someone now and then, but I assure you it was unintentional!

If only someone would have polled the membership *before* turning me off! It seems to me that we could find *someone* in the club to fill out an application and pay my dues.

—"Charlie", (anonymously)  
(The member survey on page 11 will decide the fate of "Charlie."—NI6T)

from page 1

## Knock's Knews

### Congratulations:

- To the many NCDXC members who participated in the CQWW DX Contest. A quick glance at the SSB results showed over 20 members listed, many with very good scores.

The same effort in the ARRL DX contest next year will give us a good chance to beat those scoundrels from the south and allow us to retain the perpetual trophy!

- To 9M8R, with Jim Sullivan, W7EJ,

operating, for winning the Dave Baker Memorial Trophy, sponsored by the NCDXC, for the top Oceania score in the 1993 CQWW SSB contest

See you at the Dunfey and don't forget: bring a member, or even two or three!

—73 de "Knock", K6ITL

# In Defense of Lists

Don Newlands, VE3HGN

I'm one of those guys who likes to work DX on a list.

There are many reasons:

- I like someone else to find the DX station.
- I like someone else to pass along my call sign.
- I like someone else to stop other stations' calling while I am making my QSO.
- I like someone to tell me if I guessed my report correctly, and if I didn't, I like them letting me try over and over until I get it right.

I ask you: is there anything more satisfying than to hear the list manager confirm your QSO with "good contact!"? I like things all neat and tidy: no muss, no fuss, no strain, no pain. So what's wrong with that? *Thousands* of guys have gotten on the Honor Roll by doing just that! I should add that I don't have a super-station and, frankly, I find pileups somewhat intimidating, and very noisy.

I am troubled by the on-the-air and published recriminations—usually snide and nasty—made by those purists who insist that, because DXing is a sport, list operations are by their very nature a form of cheating.

Have you ever counted the DX nets on 20 meters? I have, and I can tell you that if you aspire to the DXCC Honor Roll, you had better get on a list, because that is where most of the DX stations hang out. If that is cheating, *everyone* is doing it! Why, just the other night, I heard a list being taken for North Americans to work Venezuela—on 20 meters!

Like most aspiring DXers, I'll line up for hours, silently awaiting my turn to work some DX station, even if he is in my own RF backyard. It's all quite simple: get yourself a Packet monitor and wait for the stuff you need to appear on the screen. Twiddling the knobs belongs to history—let someone else do that!

I'm not very bright—never have been—but that should not prevent me from working DX, right? And whatever I may have accomplished in sports in the past prepared me for modern DXing, because

I take to cheating naturally. For example, in tennis, I would call my opponent's ball "out" when it was actually in, just to gain a point. "What the hell," I would reason, "it's just a game, right?" Like DXing.

What about all the gratuitous rudeness one encounters on the bands when operating freestyle? One day I was calling "where's he listening?" over and over on a DX station's frequency. Some rude chap told me to ask my mother. I would have but she was unavailable. Why are DX-chasers so snarly if, in a pileup, I try politely to elicit some information from the DX station? After I say "please copy," I might ask what kind of microphone he or she is using, or the type of coax, or—if he is perched on a wind-swept rock in mid-Pacific—whether he intends to make any EME contacts on UHF. After all, are we not supposed to be seeking and sharing technical information?

By comparison, list operations are very civilized and for those of us whose elevators do not quite reach the top floor, the list boss is, happily, always there to help and to provide us with that information we could not wait to listen for.

So, for those who might be having second thoughts about using lists to reach their goals, I, for one, say "to hell with the purists," because if things continue the way they are going, we'll all be on lists, sooner or later, using G5RV antennas and 100 watts. Eventually, those relying upon beams, towers, amplifiers and operating skill will be regarded the way we regard dinosaurs today: overweight, clumsy, and not clever enough to cheat.

—extracted from packet by Smitty, W6JZU

from page 5

## Mystery Photo

From left: K6AHV (now W6RJ), SMØAGD, and HKØBKX.

Bajo Nuevo was deleted in September, 1981, becoming part of San Andres & Providencia.

—photo: Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD

# Late QSL's

*I received the following message on a Post-it attached to my QSL to KB7HM/KH3 for a 1990 QSO. Alan had signed the card and sent it back.*

"This is the best I can do. I ran out of QSL's over 2 years ago. It was a one-time journey. You are not the only one! Why did you wait 4 years to QSL? I had 1,000 cards printed—in 6 months 98% were gone. Cards like yours keep dribbling in: why? Someone tell me!..."

*Naturally, a response was called for.*

"Since you asked, there are many reasons why it took four years to QSL:

- I am lazy, and a procrastinator.
- I started seriously DXing again in '89. I felt I should work 'em when the sun was there, and QSL 'em when it wasn't.
- I went through midlife crisis, quit my job, and almost lost my marriage. QSLing did not have a high priority.
- Now the sun is dead, my life is relatively stable, and QSLing has a high priority.
- BTW, I have also been DX (KH6, XE, T32, VK, ZL) and the cards dribble in years later to me, also.

Aren't you glad you asked? The endorsed QSL is FB. I'm happy. TUES 73."

—Garry Shapiro, NI6T

from page 1

## Cal Award

this will create enough interest that DX stations will stand by for California stations and create a mini-pileup. Surprising, but it does work! Calling "CQ California Award" on an apparently dead band or frequency may generate considerable activity. Give it a go—you'll be surprised how fast the band comes to life.

Although no special certificate is available for working 220 members of the NCDXC, some DXers seek that very number. If you get a run going, call it out on W6TI/R and get other members on frequency to add to the total.

Spread the word to all DXers and let's create a little activity on the bands!

—"Knock", K6ITL

## NCDXC MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

The NCDXC by-laws prescribe a monthly meeting without either a specific location or day. Also, there has been considerable discussion concerning the future of "Charlie," our DX robot.

The purposes of this survey are to determine membership attitudes and preferences ré the monthly meeting and "Charlie."

The results of this survey will be tabulated and reported to the membership in the October *DXer*. For your opinion to be counted, please return this survey **before 15 September** to:

Al Koblinski, W7XA  
1082 Pine Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95125

\*\*\*\*\*

1) Your location: \_\_\_\_\_ Your call (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

2) Have you attended any NCDXC meetings in the past 12 months?

\_\_\_ Every meeting    \_\_\_ often    \_\_\_ occasionally    \_\_\_ rarely    \_\_\_ never

### MEETING DAY

3) Do you find the current (2nd Friday evening) meeting day convenient?

\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_ no    \_\_\_ don't care

4) Would you attend more meetings if it they were held on another night?

\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_ no    \_\_\_ no difference

5) If yes on 4, what day would you prefer?

\_\_\_ Monday    \_\_\_ Tuesday    \_\_\_ Wednesday    \_\_\_ Thursday

### LOCATION:

1) Do you find the current (Palo Alto area) meeting location convenient?

\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_ no    \_\_\_ don't care

2) Would you attend more meetings if they were held in another location?

\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_ no    \_\_\_ don't care

3) If yes on 2, what one-way distance would you be willing to travel to a meeting?

\_\_\_ up to 30 minutes    \_\_\_ 30-60 minutes    \_\_\_ more than 60 minutes

### "CHARLIE"

Are you in favor of continuing automatic DX packet announcements ("Charlie") on the NCDXC repeater?

\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_ no    \_\_\_ don't care

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