

## Aid to Faraway Paraguay

# L. L. 'Ham' Develops A Spanish Savor

By W. G. GILVE, JR. K6K

Highly successful DXpeditions are not infrequently held in aid of some worthy cause. In the case of L. L. 'Ham' Gilve, Jr., the cause is to help the people of Paraguay, a country in South America which has been almost totally destroyed by the ravages of the Paraguayan War.

## Doll Gal Says Her Guy Took The Stuffing

By GUY STEPHENSON

When you think of the Christmas season, you think of the stuffing. It's the stuffing that makes the turkey so delicious. It's the stuffing that makes the turkey so special. It's the stuffing that makes the turkey so... well, you know.

It's the stuffing that makes the turkey so special. It's the stuffing that makes the turkey so... well, you know. It's the stuffing that makes the turkey so special. It's the stuffing that makes the turkey so... well, you know.

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## KK6EK in January

Bob Schmieder, KK6EK will be the speaker at the January meeting of the NCDXC. Bob, widely-known for his participation in and book about Peter I Island, will speak on his recent high-tech DXpedition to Easter and Salas y Gomez Islands. We hope he will also comment on the status of the Heard Island DXpedition, of which he is now Team Leader.

This meeting is in Petaluma, but plans have not yet been firmed up. Watch PacketCluster and W6TI/R for further details. You won't want to miss this one!

### Vote Tally

Here are the voting results for the recent mail ballot, as of December 6.

*Associate membership*

Favor	175	84.5%
Oppose	32	15.5%
Abstain	0	0.0%

*Editor to be ex-officio*

Favor	185	89.4%
Opposed	18	8.7%
Abstain	4	1.9%

those who had contributed to Romeo Stepanenko's P5RS7 scam. Noble, yes—but is it necessary or just? Must DXpeditioners be samurai? DXpeditions to places like Heard Island are not vacation trips. The operators go for the adventure and challenge, for the adrenalin rush that accompanies overcoming adversity and tackling huge pileups. But the other side of the coin is risk of injury or death, extreme discomfort—and failure. Failure to reach the objective, failure to log the anticipated thousands. Or even failure to embark. But are these really failures? Great deeds imply great risks—but the risk of failure is what sweetens the wine of victory. Are DXpeditioners only entitled to our dollars and our admiration after they have reached their objective, logged the thousands of the "Deserving," brought back the logs, and printed the QSL's? I say *no!* I say they are entitled for having made the commitment and the sacrifices, for having made their plans and committed to their execution—in short, for having *dared* to go. In my view, those who would expect or accept the return of their early donations—who would hold them back until the DXpedition is successfully completed—have no faith, fail to understand the essence of DXing, and are not among the Deserving at all. **to page 7**

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: Al Burnham, W4RIM  
 Vice President: Glenn Vinson, W6OTC  
 Secretary: Lloyd Cabral, AA6T  
 Treasurer: Stan Goldstein, N6ULU  
 Director: Eric Swarz, WA6HHQ  
 Director: Rich Chatelain, AB6ZV  
 Director: Jim Knochenhauer, K6ITL

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DX Ladder: Larry Bloom, KD6XY  
 Contest Manager: Ed Schuller, WA6CTA  
 9-Band Award: John Brand, K6WC  
 California Award: Ruben Hughes, WA6AHF  
 Historian/archivist: Ron Panton, W6VG

Records Manager: Ron Panton, W6VG  
 Publications Mgr: Ron Panton, W6VG

**Club Repeater, W6TI/R**

Frequency/offset: 147.36 MHz, +  
 Trustee: Bob Vallio, W6RGG  
 Comm. Chairman: Eric Swarz, WA6HHQ  
 Club simplex: 147.54 MHz (suggested)  
 Thurs. Net QTR: 8 pm local time.  
 Net Manager: Randy Wright, WB6CUA  
 DX News: Dave Pugatch, KI6WF  
 Propagation: Al Lotze, W6RQ  
 Westlink: Craig Smith, N6ITW  
 Swap Shop: Ben Deovlet, W6FDU  
 QSL Information: Mac McHenry, W6BSY

**W6TI DX Bulletins:**

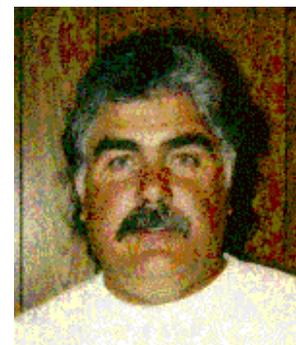
W6TI Station Trustee Bob Vallio, W6RGG, transmits DX information at 0200 UT every Monday (Sunday evening local time) on both 7.016 and 14.002 MHz.

**Club address:** Box 608  
 Menlo Park, CA  
 94026-0608

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## Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors met on October 26, 1995 at the Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Al Burnham, W4RIM. Directors present were W6OTC, AA6T, N6ULU, WA6HHQ, AB6ZV and K6ITL. Also present were NI6T, WA6CTA and N6OJ.



- The September minutes were approved as printed in the October *DXer*.
- The Board acknowledged the passing of Charter Member Bud Walton, W6AED. A card will be sent to the family on behalf of the NCDXC.
- Treasurer N6ULU stated that we were well under budget; a full report will appear in the December *DXer*.
- W4RIM stated that he has not yet heard from the SCDXC regarding proposed changes to the annual North/South Club Competition and matters relating to the '96 DX Convention. Our Convention Committee is currently considering options.
- N6OJ suggested a joint NCDXC-REDXC meeting to be held in Petaluma. Unanimously approved to hold the January meeting there on a date to be determined.
- WA6CTA suggested that the Marathon be shelved, due to diminished participation and high award costs. In its place, he suggested we expand our award program for the ARRL DX Test.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM.

—Lloyd Cabral, AA6T, Secretary

## General Meeting

The monthly meeting of the NCDXC was held on November 10, 1995 at the Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo and called to order at 8:05 PM by President Al Burnham, W4RIM. Guests present included Tom, N6BT, Tracy, WB6TMY, Mark, AB6WD, Frank, KO6EC and Loren, AE6P.

- The December Dinner Meeting will be held on Friday, the 15th at the Dunfey Hotel. Cocktails at 6 PM. The evening's program will feature our own NI6T and his Conway Reef presentation.
- Al, W4RIM reminded all to vote on the two issues currently before the membership.
- The reinstatement of WA6OEY was approved.
- W4RIM presented W6BIP and AA6KX with certificates for achieving the high Club scores in the '95 ARRL DX Contest.
- The evening's program featured presentations by Tom Schiller, N6BT, of Force 12 and Loren Pleet, AE6P, of Kenwood.  
 Tom opened with questions from the floor, then described the negative gain of a typical trapped tribander. He also announced a new product, an adjustable torque/shock coupler, to be mounted between the mast and rotator.  
 Loren described the new Kenwood TS-870, then provided both video and slide presentations on the radio. He announced that HRO would be having a sale on the TS-870.
- The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 PM.

—Lloyd Cabral, AA6T, Secretary

***RIMshots***

## Banquet, Bylaws and More...

### Christmas banquet December 15th; spouses/guests welcome!

The NCDXC's Annual Christmas Banquet will be held in the Juniper Room at the Dunfey Hotel in San Mateo on Friday, December 15, 1995. Liquid cheer at 6, Dinner at 7.

The program at 8 PM will feature our own Garry Shapiro, NI6T, presenting the Conway Reef DXepedition. Garry will offer an animated and fascinating perspective of the ups and downs of being the hunted instead of the hunter.

Dinner will include Caesar Salad, oven-roasted Tom Turkey with sage dressing, julienne vegetables and all the trimmings. Dessert is pumpkin pie. Price, beverage included, is \$20.95, plus tax and tip. The Juniper Room will be festively decorated, including a Christmas tree. Spouses and guests are welcome! Don't miss this end-of-the-year gathering of The Deserving!



### Voting results

*Bylaw revisions, ex-officio DXer Editor win easily!*

The ballot results were swift and decisive: the NCDXC membership has overwhelmingly approved the bylaw revisions sought by the officers and board. (See page 1 for presstime tallies). I am heartened and encouraged by the results. You have sent a clear message that you want the NCDXC to survive and flourish. Now we must work together to assure the future of the Club.

We need to recruit quality members who will carry the NCDXC forward into the next fifty years of its existence. The next major work of your Board will be to formulate and implement a recruiting plan. Your help and continued support is essential. I anticipate that we will ask some of our members to venture out to other radio clubs and gatherings to share the excitement and challenges of DXing with folks who presently may communicate only on VHF.

We need a prepared audio/video presentation—something that any of us can easily present—in addition to the enthusiasm and support that we can personally provide. In short, we will be DX ambassadors and, yes, *Elmers*. I would like to thank each of you, not only for voting, but for your support of the current leadership. These are dedicated amateurs who care greatly about the NCDXC, and who are willing to try new and different things. With your help, we *shall* succeed!

### International DX Convention

The Southern California DX Club is the 1996 host. SCDXC President Harvey Shore, K6EXO advises that the 1996 International DX Convention will be at the Visalia Holiday Inn on April 19, 20 and 21, 1996.

### North vs. South: ARRL DX Contest Competition

Some months ago, our Board voted unanimously to support changes to the annual North/South ARRL DX Contest competition as outlined in the March *DXer*. However, the matter is still being discussed by the Southern California folks. Stay tuned!

## Contest Corner

# Another month, another contest!

Speaking of contests, what is going on out there in radioland? Surely, many of you participated in the CQWW DX Contest: did you all turn your scores in for another club? I have received only *one* log for CQWW!

When the results are published in CQ, it will be pretty embarrassing to see the NCDXC score near the bottom of the page. Perhaps you all belong to NCCC, or to another club for which you submit your scores. If you participated—and did not enter for another club—*please* send me your summary sheet.

There is another possible conclusion: our membership doesn't care about contests! Several questions then come to mind:

- Should NCDXC be represented in the major contests?
- Are we but a single-contest club (ARRL International DX Contest)?  
Do you even want to do that one?

I am willing to be the contest conductor for NCDXC—but I need to hear from you! So far, the response has been underwhelming, to say the least. The Board of Directors is trying to invigorate the club, and I would like to see contesting be a part of that energy. But the only way we can do it is by getting on the air and operating!

If all the membership wants is to work DX, that's fine with me. Just make your voice heard, one way or the other!

There is going to be a new format for our competition with the SCDXC in the 1996 ARRL DX Contest. Although it has not yet been cast in concrete, I am sure it will be *lots* of fun!

I hope you all have a happy holiday season. Best wishes for the New Year and may you



# The Tagus Tantalizer

Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD

I do not know if you knew Don Riebhof, once a dazzling star in SE Asia. He worked for the government back in those other years. Later he was at a post in Lisbon and, being a dedicated DXer and contester, he announced that he would operate from one of the islands in the lesser Antilles that year. He was bringing a crew with him—and they intended to be heard!

Having always had difficulty in telling a story straight, I wrote that Don was coming to the Caribbean for the contest, and with a crew and the crew would almost die.

On the possibility that some may never have heard of the Tagus Tantalizer, we have to explain. Not only was she a dazzling beauty, but she had a voice that would make strong men weak. Old, young, tough and tender DXers who had heard her calling “CQ DX” could not control themselves, often throwing themselves to the floor of the shack and drumming their heels on the floor in wild and uncontrollable ecstasy.

Don planned to put the Tagus Tantalizer on one rig, driving all those who heard her out of their normal senses, while he and the rest of the crew scouted the bands for DX counters. A bait-and-switch routine. They expected that there would be no equal of the event, not in the time of those

then living—and they were almost right. It was not until Bouvet that something almost equivalent was heard.

And all you need do to arouse again any who heard then the tantalizing and mesmerizing voice is to mention the happening. Some even today will slip back into a semi-conscious daze just thinking of it. The Tagus Tantalizer!

Don Riebhoff was killed a few years later on the freeway from Madrid to Lisbon, in a head-on collision. But he sure was fun! He was a DXer that many remember!

## Mystery Pho-



to

This farmer and Collins enthusiast has a custom antenna rotator named after him. He is a Yasme director

Editor:

We once had here in the county, and elsewhere, an amateur who considered himself the prize catch for writing on amateur radio matters, the absolute nonpareil! And one of the hoary cliches always among his bombast was “...your humble editor.” We finally had a falling-out, I frankly advising that he had made a career of talking through his hat. His call was W6KZF, and among his many avocations was that of denigrating SSB at every opportunity.

It also was he who thought that the DMV proposal to charge a fee for call-sign license plates “...was only our fair share.” Should you not remember, there was initially no extra charge for call-sign plates. But that was in the age of six-digit license plates. The DMV wanted to go to a seven-digit plate such as we now

frosting. So his mother baked him a cake, put it in a cake box with an isinglass top (so the cake could be viewed) and bought it down to the Kentfield Post Office for mailing. The clerk behind the counter, a retired Navy chief, looked at the cake and advised that it was hardly suitable for mailing in its fragile wrapping and did she know how the military handled the mail after the dutiful Post Office turned it over to them at the Port of Embarkation? Jimmy’s mother—my mother’s cousin—thought for a moment and then forcefully pushed the cake across the counter. “I did my part,” she declared. “I baked the cake. Now it is up to you to get it there!” And that was the way it was and the way it had to be. Absolutely.

In short, do with it as you wish. I’ve done my part: I have gotten it there.

—Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD

have. The cost of the dies for stamping out the plates was a matter of concern. So they got the amateurs to pay for the new dies—our “fair share”—then, now and forevermore. Thus, you will now realize why I come to address our humble editor.

I typed this out a week back, thinking that I was way ahead of things, but I never got around to mailing it. One has so many things to do during the golden years—such as conversing with other Golden DXers. But today I remembered! Do with these as you wish.

A cousin of mine was in Korea in the Marine Corps during the troubles there. His mother asked him what he might like and he immediately told her that he often dreamt of her banana cream layer cakes—the ones with the thick

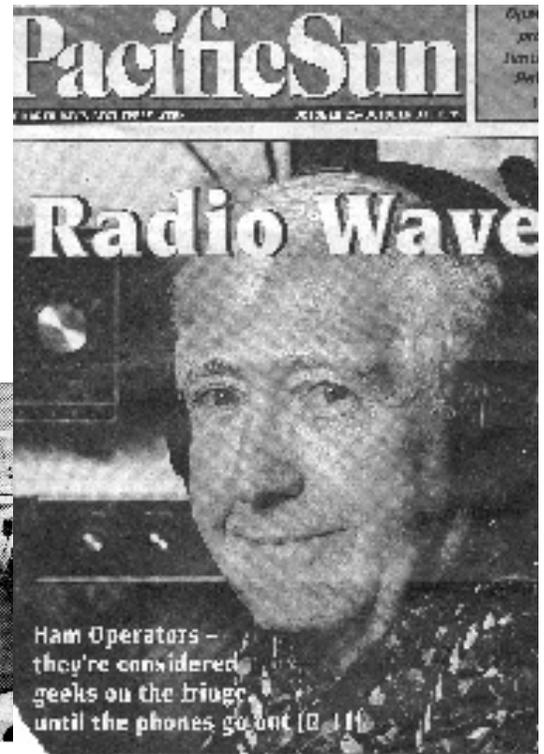
# Club Pair Garners Mag Cover!

*WB6UDS & N6VAW featured; amateur radio and DXing boosted*  
 Rich Carbine, WB6UDS and Marilyn Bagshaw, N6VAW, were recently featured in a cover story in the *Pacific Sun*—a North Bay tabloid weekly—on Amateur Radio and DXing. The popular and active NCDXC couple were interviewed in a story by Rick Sine.

Rich's smiling face graces the cover, while a monochrome shot of both illustrates the article itself. Also prominently displayed is their station, including an Alpha 77 centerpiece.

The article covers a broad range of radio topics, from DXing, DXpeditioning, their station and QSLing to disaster communications, YL operators and CW, as well as Marilyn's operation aboard the USS *Pampanito*—a WWII submarine.

Kudos to Rich and Marilyn and to writer Rick, for a solid piece on our hobby—except for the geek reference!



# Bad Dollars: the Certificate

In the October DXer, I wrote about the “bad dollars” that Mats, SM7PKK had received for Conway Reef QSLs—less-than-perfect US currency refused for deposit in Swedish banks. I mentioned that several bills had been enshrined in commemorative certificates.

Here is a scan of the certificate received by those fortunate and perceptive enough to have obtained them.

The latin legend “Barnum correctus fuit” means: “Barnum was right.”

## 1995 Conway Reef DXpedition

Garry Shapiro, NI6T  
 Jun-ichi Tanaka, JH4RHF  
 Pekka Kalehmainen, OH1RY  
 Nils-Görling Persson, SM6CAS  
 Mats Persson, SM7PKK



This is to certify that the attached United States currency has been declared to be among those units of said currency deemed by Mats Persson, SM7PKK, to be

\$ Official Conway Reef Bad Dollars \$

conveying upon the bearer no consideration or benefit whatsoever, and besides, whoever heard of such a thing?

Certified by my hand on this 30th day of July, 1995

*Garry Shapiro*  
 Garry Shapiro, NI6T

*Barnum correctus fuit!*

# More Bumps on the Information Superhighway

I started my Internet “career” with MCI mail, which seemed at the time to be good value for the dollar. It wasn’t. I had a helluva time getting my account established and then it bled me until I bailed out—a saga related in “The Information Superhighway is Still Under Construction” in the October, 1994 *DXer*.

Exit MCI mail; enter Netcom and its snazzy *NetCruiser* interface. A great deal—or so I thought. I have since come to believe that “NetLoser” stinks: as its own tech support people admit, it is a “general purpose” package—and not very good at any one thing. It is sadly lacking for e-mail—you cannot directly access your outbox (copies of your sent messages); it will neither sort nor order your address book (extremely annoying when the address book grows large), and it does not measure up to *Netscape* as a Web browser. Downloading new versions is an exercise in futility—one might do better to play the lottery. It is best to wait for that version to be posted to the company’s Web page.

A good strategy with most such software is to use it to connect to the ISP (Internet Service Provider), then open other, specialized software from the Program Manager (if Windows is used). Among the popular combinations is Eudora for e-mail and Netscape for Web browsing. Shareware or tryware versions are available for downloading. But these packages cannot function correctly if the Service Provider is not providing service.

Although Netcom boasts of 200,000 subscribers, and its stock has soared, I cannot reliably log on or stay logged on, much less reliably send or receive mail, browse the Net, etc. Of course, it *could* be a problem in my own computer—although a year would seem to be plenty of time

for shaking out bugs, and the company’s techies have acknowledged their system’s chronic problems. It *could* just be the San Jose POP (access port)—surely one of their busiest—but I cannot be expected to run up a long-distance bill to connect.

My suspicion (which I cannot prove) is that the Company’s sales/marketing weenies have oversold the service relative to their hardware/software capabilities in fear that the explosive market would be mined without them. Why else has service deteriorated with time, rather than improved?

Meanwhile, it has become an adventure just to log on. Once logged on, it is a race to complete a session without being disconnected or otherwise left in limbo. Forget prime time! Forget also the wee hours of the morning—that is when they perform maintenance. Life with Netcom has become Sent messages that don’t go anywhere, frequent interruptions that hang the computer and require rebooting, and incomprehensible techno-babble diagnostics.

Tech support is not much help. I have universally encountered nice people sincerely trying to help—but they are swamped and their burnout and turnover must be horrendous. Mail messages to these beleaguered support troops are

answered in two to three *weeks*. Phone support begins with a recorded voice apologizing in general for the “inconvenience” being experienced—the same message all the time!

It is hard to believe, but Netcom is a booming success, its stock having quadrupled or more in a short time! What a world!

So why have I persisted? Two reasons: sheer obstinacy and the latent fear that another provider is likely to be no better. How else does one explain Netcom’s obvious success in spite of all?

Well, I’m mad as hell and I’m not going to take it anymore! Can anyone out there recommend an ISP (Internet Service Provider) in Silicon Valley that actually provides reliable, seamless service?

(signed) Desperate in Los Gatos  
—Garry Shapiro, NI6T

and a good friend of club member W6BSY. Who is he?  
See Answer on page 6

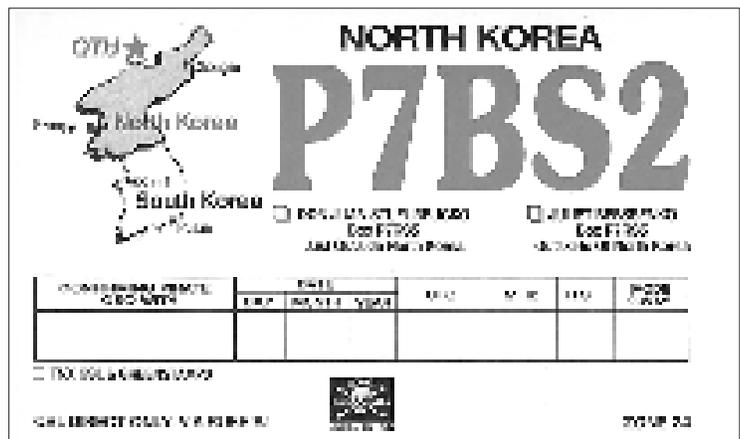
from page 4

## Mystery Pho-

## Speaking of QSL’s

The recent revelations about P5RS7—which turns out to have been the Russian DXpedition to Russia—have spawned considerable comment, much of it speculation on the ancestry of Romeo Stepanenko, chief operator/conspirator. Among the most pithy is this QSL card, widely circulated at the recent W9DXCC—and probably other venues as well.

—NI6T



from page 1

## The Editor's Keyboard

DXpeditions and DXpeditioners are the heart and soul of DXing. Not to support them in their moments of adversity is to miss the point, to demonstrate a selfish cynicism—and to break the Covenant.

## 160m Explodes!

Lowband DXers plying their trade in the CQWW CW Contest were treated to an event not unlike a supernova combined with a solar eclipse—an awesome 160m opening. Let me qualify that: it was awesome for the east coast, outstanding for the plains and midwest, but still extraordinary for those of us on the Left Coast.

An opening like that on 160m is unusual enough, but its occurrence during CQWW—with an extraordinary number of stations active, including numerous contest DXpeditions—is just unheard of. Lance Johnson, KØCS, Editor of *The Lowband Monitor*, proclaimed it the “greatest single day of 160m DXing, ever.” Six stations—all east of the Rockies, of course—more than doubled the US 160m record for CQWW. One—K1ZM—tripled it, working over 400 Europeans and almost working DXCC. Your Editor worked 27 countries—five were New Ones—and heard but missed a dozen more.

The opening was only experienced in the Northern Hemisphere. Almost no Pacific stations (other than JA) were heard; VK/ZL stations thought all of North America was asleep—they heard no one! Interestingly, although excellent conditions were also experienced on 40m, 80m operators—including our own W6RJ and AB6ZV—reported disappointing propagation.

—NI6T

## Treasurer's Report

*Stan Goldstein, N6ULU*

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements  
July 1-October 31, 1995

*Receipts*

Club dues	\$3,976.00	
Donations Received	600.00	
Interest Income	238.58	
Visalia	8,216.80	
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>\$13,031.38</b>

*Disbursements*

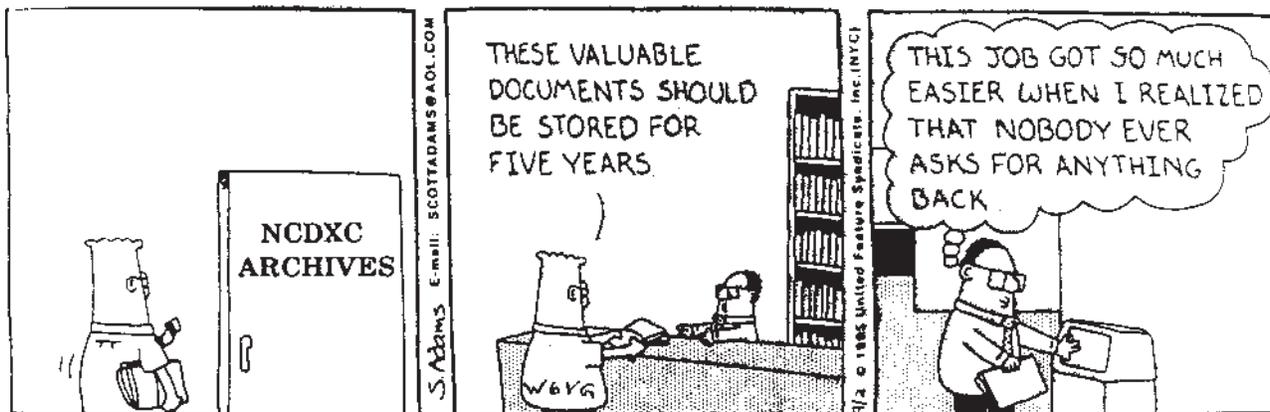
Awards	\$23.70	
Badges	18.00	
Bank Charges	22.00	
DXer	1,333.00	
Meetings	300.00	
Postage	17.34	
Repairs	42.47	
Roster	588.35	
Storage	297.00	
Supplies	61.68	
<b>Total Disbursements</b>		<b>\$2,703.54</b>

*Excess of Receipts over Disbursements* **\$10,327.84**

Northern California DX Club  
Assets, as of October 31, 1995

Checking	\$4,028.28	
Life members fund	9,621.86	
Savings	28,340.87	
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>\$41,991.01</b>

### DILBERT • Scott Adams



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FIRST CLASS

