



The DXer

July 2010

The Official Publication Of The Northern California DX Club



NCDXC SUMMER PICNIC!

Saturday, July 24

10:30 AM - 2:00 PM

At the Patriots Corner Group

Picnic Area in Shoup Park

400 University Ave in Los Altos

Food & Drinks

DXCC Card Checking

Wear Your Best Hawaiian Shirt!

More Information on Page 6

*** NO MEETING IN JULY ***

President's Message

By Richard Crouch, N6RC

Greetings to my fellow DXers,

This, my first issue of the DXer as President, is one that I will always keep in my scrapbook! First, let me say that it is an honor for me to have been elected your President for 2010-2011. I have been a ham since 1961 and a member of the NCDXC since 1978 and have always wanted to serve the club in some capacity. My Presidency comes at a time when we are enjoying growth as a hobby and as a club. We are finally witnessing the uptick of cycle twenty four, albeit at a slower pace than in cycles past. We are enjoying a multitude of great DXpeditions. And, the club is doing very well financially due to our successful conventions in Visalia and due to growth in membership of the club.

My job, therefore, is to not let the club become complacent, but rather strive to further build the club, its membership, its image, and its infrastructure while at the same time not forgetting that our most important goal is to have a lot of fun!

Participation and leadership from so many talented and enthusiastic hams has never been greater in the history of the club. Your officers will deliver a great DX experience every month. Your Board of Directors will

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President's Message, continued:

continue to formulate the strategic direction of the club, how we are viewed in the greater DX community, and will insure that we are true to our charter.

Between now and the September meeting, your club officers and board of directors will define our agenda and goals for the coming year. Between now and then **we ask all members of the club to give us your ideas and suggestions** as to how we can continue to improve your club experience.

That agenda and associated goals will most certainly include (but are not limited to)

1) Planning for a great 2011 DX Convention in Visalia, **2)** Growing our support for the NCDXF and DX related endeavors, **3)** Replacement of hardware and software for our beloved repeater, **4)** Rejuvenation of membership use of the repeater (how about a raffle ticket and drawing for those who check into the weekly net?), **5)** Looking at ways to challenge our membership technically by 'pushing the envelope' in terms of how we can employ new technologies to find new and exciting ways to reach out to the world of DX'ing, **6)** Continuation of exciting monthly programs that will encourage growing attendance of existing members and significant growth in new membership (**Phil, K6TT**, I don't know how you could do a better job than what you did over the past year, but I'll do everything I can to help you, especially when that little one comes along!), and **7)** Above all, meetings that offer great fellowship with great food and opportunities to rekindle old friendships and to make new friends!

I am excited about our new club officers and the fantastic board of directors that were

elected last month. I want to highlight three individuals who will be putting in the most man hours and effort of anyone, including me by a long shot, in the year ahead. How fortunate we are to have **John, K6MM**, and **Kevin, K6TD**, to lead the club's effort for Visalia in 2011!

And, in addition to **Pete, W6OOL**, becoming a new Director of the club, he has agreed to lead the charge for goals 3) and 5) above. In that role you can think of him as a sort of CTO of the club! We are very lucky to have him in this club. He's our hardware guy and in his words, a communicator. He will be looking to all of you software gurus in the club to help him forge the technical direction of our club.

There are many more people that I am thankful to have the opportunity to work with and one person who I won't be working with, but hopefully we will see him at all our meetings anyway. That be **Jose, WT6X**, who was a great treasurer, loaned us his offices for board meetings, always offered sage advice, and who without a doubt is truly a 'class act.'

Speaking of the treasurer, **Bob, W6OPO**, as treasurer is a welcome addition as an officer of the club. He and I worked together on Visalia 2009, and he even helped me debug an audio problem on my Pro2. He's the kinda guy that's great to have around!

Now let me introduce **Jim, W6EB**, **Risto, W6RK**, and **Phil, W6TQG**. Jim is the club's guardian angel, the one who will always keep us on true course, and won't allow us to lose sight of the honorable legacy of this great club. Risto gets my vote for being the club's conscience! His spoken words are always

(continues)

wise and timely and besides, like me, he's a computer guy. And, of course, he will play another important role for me – how could I possibly get along so well with all those Finn's at Radio Arcala without having Risto to call on for advice and guidance?

Phil and I have just recently met and become better acquainted and I know he will be a delight to work with. He and I will be working very closely together each month as he continues to do such an awesome job with the DXer (wow, wish I could have one of those cool NCDXC shirts, too)! We discovered that we live very close to each other in Willow Glen so you can bet that we will take advantage of that when the computer networks are down and the President's monthly letter is overdue!

John, K6YP, could just as easily fade into the mist with years of service to the club already under his belt but, instead he volunteered to be secretary this year. He will thus provide great continuity and leadership from past years as we transition to 2010 - 2011.

I also want to mention how exciting it is that **we now have a card checker** who will accept your applications for DXCC credit at each meeting. That is due to another Board Member who will be doing double duty in this capacity. **Russ, K6KLY**, thank you for taking this on. I can't wait until the picnic when I will bring #'s 323, 324, 325, 326, and, if I am lucky this week, #327 on my current DXCC list – that leaves 2 more to go for #329! I have committed to myself that I will make the honor roll before my term ends, and I can think of no one else who I would rather have checking those cards, at least 32 years since we first met at Watkins Johnson! Thanks, my friend!

In closing this part of my letter I want to say a BIG thank you to **Craig, AE6RR**, and the current officers of the club. You guys did an awesome job which made my NCDXC experience in 2009-2010 one of the best ever! Craig, I know I will need your help and advice especially, so I look forward to many conversations and a beer or two in the days and months ahead!

And, **Mike, W6WZ**, and **Carolyn, WB6ABC**, for your enthusiasm and hard work for this club over the past 5 years or so – I have said it before and I'll say it again, I'm not sure where the NCDXC would be right now if it hadn't been for your contributions which have been immeasurable (not to mention being our beloved **"raffle king and queen"**).

And finally, I want to thank **John, K6YP**, and **Steve, N6SJ**, for convincing me to take on the authoring and printing of the convention guide and tickets for Visalia in 2009. Had I said 'no' to that request I know I would not be your new president for 2010-2011. Thank you for your encouragement, support, and friendship, but most importantly - for getting me **OFF OF MY BUTT** to finally make a contribution to this great club!

OK, enough is enough, you say, and I agree. So, how is the world of DX?



Stay tuned for CR2A/CR2X in the August DXer
(continues) Page 4

In 2009 ARRL's DXCC program received 7,859 applications totaling 866,405 cards. This represented an 8% increase over 2008! Increases in new awards were even more impressive:

DXCC Award	2008	2009	% Increase
Mixed	719	797	10.8%
Phone	376	476	26.5%
CW	384	449	16.9%
RTTY	222	277	24.7%

In December 2009, **Logbook of the World (LoTW)** exceeded the 261,000,000 QSO mark resulting in over 26,000,000 QSL records. LoTW surpassed 31,000 users resulting in over 47,000 certificates issued.

This growth in DX'ing is all great news, but..... Of course, all that growth has been coming from the legions of new hams in their 30's and 40's. Many came our way initially via emergency services and CERT like programs, a very important part of ham radio. We are grateful to have them in our midst. But, it does bring to mind a word of caution. Young people in today's society are not flocking to ham radio. We aren't giving up on them, but there are many ideas in the minds of all of us who are team members of Radio Arcala. A white paper will be forthcoming later this year that will communicate ideas which will lay the foundation for continued growth of amateur radio in the years ahead. **The ARRL, IARU, and many other member societies around the world are looking forward to this WHITE PAPER becoming a BLUE PRINT for amateur radio's future.** I will keep you posted as things progress.

2009 was the year when **online logs for DXpeditions** came into their own. The excitement of seeing your call having been

worked in the band/mode matrix on the DXpedition website almost in real time is a welcome new aspect of DXing! That plus personalization of DXing via photos and journals posted in real time enrich the DX experience. And, what a wonderful job is being done in re-creating DXpeditions via professional videos. I am sure that if you have seen one or more of these, you know how they make it possible for you to feel like you were really there!

How fun it is that we are now seeing the ability to get a rare QSL for a new one very quickly by preparation of your own online QSL **including green stamps** all in one sweeping action! If you are a computer buff like me, it couldn't be easier! Of course, to stave off any naysayers, that doesn't mean I am suggesting we no longer send out QSL cards. I will always send out QSL cards to many stations I work and will always respond to cards coming in. That keeps me motivated to always have nice N6RC QSL's ready to fill out and mail.

Just as we want to reinvigorate our club repeater, I also want to encourage everyone in the club to **customize your own QRZ.com page**. Being able to look up those stations/hams we have worked or want to work and finding wonderful photos, bios, and QTH info including Google Earth maps, adds another layer of enjoyment to the DX experience and to the experience of ham radio as a whole.

Finally, each month in the meeting intro, in addition to all the wonderful tidbits that Craig has been giving us (like sunspot and propagation data, DX updates, events, announcements, etc. I will present a few slides that will highlight one specific, somewhat rare DX entity. I have to admit that

President's Message, continued:

I often know very little about some of the 'rare ones' we strive to make contact with. **I read a fascinating story about Kermadec (ZL8) in the Journal of the American Philatelic Society (APS).** The APS Journal regularly features articles which research the history of postage and mail services throughout the world. That gave me the idea to do something similar at our monthly meetings.

If you didn't see my presentation at Visalia in April, **I hope you will enjoy my article and many photos from my trip to the Azores in March** for WPX SSB in the August DXer.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the club picnic on the 24th of this month. That's when Craig will toss the gavel to me, and another exciting year of DX will begin!

**73's,
Richard (Dick)
N6RC
Ex-WA4END
N6RC@N6RC.com**

P.S. In my professional life and with many hams in the USA and internationally I am Richard. With close friends, long time acquaintances, and family members I am 'Dick,' and, of course, always 'Dick' on CW! Please feel free to address me by either – **I answer to both!**

DXCC Award

Terry, N7TW in 2009:
Honor Roll 339/333; he just worked E4X so the total will go up by one so far this year.

Please notify the editor, dxer (at ncdxc.org) if you received DXCC awards or endorsements during 2009 or 2010.

2009-2010 NCDXC Officers:

President: Richard Crouch, N6RC
Vice President: Phil Steffora, K6TT
Secretary: John Eisenberg, K6YP
Treasurer: Bob Lanning, W6OPO
Directors:
Craig Bradley, AE6RR (Past President)
Russ Bentson, K6KLY
Steve Jones, N6SJ
Pete Grabosky, W6OOL
Risto Kotalampi, W6RK
DXer Editor Phil Verinsky, W6TQG, dxer (at ncdxc.org)
Webmaster Phil Steffora, K6TT
Web Hosting &
Database Admin Risto Kotalampi, W6RK
Club Repeater: W6TI/R
Frequency/offset: 147.360 Mhz +, pl 110.9
Trustee: Bob Vallio, W6RGG
Control Operator: Jim Abraham, W6EB
Maintenance: Peter Grabosky, W6OOL
Club simplex: 147.54 MHz (suggested)
Thurs. Net OTR: 8 pm local time.
Net Manager: Don Anastasia, AA6W
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:
NCDXC
Box 608
Menlo Park, CA 94026-0608
Club URL: <http://www.ncdxc.org>

The DXer is published monthly by the Northern California DX Club and sent to all club members via the web. Please obtain permission from the author to re-publish any article in this publication.

Operation Approved for DXCC Credit

Bill Moore, NC1L, Awards Branch Manager, ARRL, announced the following operation is approved for DXCC credit:

FT5WO - Crozet Island for the period from December 1, 2008 - through November 30, 2009.

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2010 NCDXC Summer Picnic - Hawaiian Theme

The 2010 NCDXC Summer Picnic will take place Saturday July 24th from 10:30am to 2:00pm at: the Patriots Corner Group Picnic Area in Shoup Park (on the left side of Garden House Building), 400 University Ave, Los Altos, CA.

Just bring yourself and enjoy the free BBQ lunch featuring hamburgers, grilled chicken sandwiches, salads, chips, drinks, dessert and drinks (you are encouraged to bring a dessert or salad to share). Along with the official handoff to the new board of directors, we are planning to have a GOTA station (K6SSJ) so we can work a little DX while the food is cooking and a best Hawaiian shirt contest. There will be first and second place prizes, so wear your best Hawaiian shirt and whatever island wear you might have! Can't wait to see everyone at the event!

We will be having DXCC card checking by Russ, K6KLY. Please contact Russ if you plan to have cards checked. You must include proof

of ARRL membership (copy of ARRL membership card or QST label), fill out the DXCC form, sort the cards properly and include DXCC payment. You can also put your credit card number on the form, and HQ will figure out how much to charge you. Mailing fees very depending on what you want. No 160m or deleted country cards. More information is available at <http://www.arrl.org/dxcc-faq>. **If you have an LoTW account, you must login, go the the Awards tab, and prepare and print the application on the LoTW web page and bring it to the picnic with your cards.**

Amateur Radio Technology Day

Saturday, July 24 - 8am to 9pm

At the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory

<http://www.fars.k6ya.org/amtechday>

WRTC-2010 is July 10-11

WRTC competition in Moscow begins Saturday 10 July 2010 at 1200 UTC and ends Sunday 11 July 2010 1200 UTC. Live scores will be posted online.

For more information go to www.wrtc2010.ru. NCDXC's logo can be seen by selecting the DX/Contest Club Sponsors link. A listing of the various awards available to folks who work the special WRTC stations, and a link to a "score sheet" to help keep track of the band/modes on which you work each station can be found by selecting

the Special Prizes ... link under Contest Rules.

Special callsigns used during WRTC:

R31A R31D R31N R31U R31X
R32C R32F R32K R32O R32R R32W R32Z
R33A R33G R33L R33M R33Q R33U
R34C R34D R34O R34P R34W R34X R34Y
R34Z
R36C R36F R36K R36O R36W R36Y R36Z
R37A R37G R37L R37M R37P R37Q R37U
R38F R38K R38N R38O R38W R38X
R39A R39D R39M R39R

WRTC and Sporadic-E, by Dean Straw, N6BV

Several of my friends back East have reported good European openings in the last few days on 15, and even 10 meters. The VOACAP propagation predictions for a Very Low level of solar activity in July show no possibility for such direct-path openings. (Even Very High levels of solar activity don't show such direct paths between Moscow and the U.S. East Coast.)

Although predictions for a Very Low SSN do hint

there is a possibility of weak long-path openings to Moscow, I wouldn't bet real money that will happen either.

So, then, why are East Coast stations running S7 to S8-level Europeans in the afternoon on 10 meters? The answer is Sporadic-E, otherwise known as "E-skip." June and July are the months when Sporadic-E can suddenly pop up and provide openings on the higher bands -- including

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6 meters, where Sporadic-E dominates long-distance propagation.

I looked back at my IARU log for 1996 at N6BV/1 in New Hampshire. July 1996 was the low point of Cycle 22, with an SSN (smoothed sunspot number) of 8, just about what we are experiencing in July 2010 due to Cycle 24 being notoriously late in ramping up. On Saturday morning of IARU CW only, from 1900 UTC until 2200 UTC, I worked 193 stations on 10 meters -- and the band was not supposed to be open at all. More than half of these stations on 10 meters were in Europe!

The rate sheet for that contest is shown below. During the 1900 to 2200 UTC time period there was an hour-long power outage. Sigh...

So, the moral of this story is to keep listening on 15 and 10 meters for long-haul Sporadic-E into Europe from the East Coast, and into the whole U.S. and Canada for those of us lucky enough to live on the West Coast. We left-coasters might even be able to pick off a European or two if E-skip is hot enough... !

73,
Dean Straw, N6BV

BREAKDOWN QSO/mults N6BV 1996 IARU HF Championship Single Operator, CW								
HOUR	160	80	40	20	15	10	HR TOT	CUM TOT
12	67/7	51/11	.....	118/18	118/18
13	.	.	.	33/3	71/4	12/3	116/10	234/28
14	.	.	.	14/2	66/3	11/0	91/5	325/33
15	.	.	.	16/3	44/1	17/1	77/5	402/38
16	.	.	.	64/5	17/0	2/0	83/5	485/43
17	.	.	.	67/1	7/2	.	74/3	559/46
18	.	.	.	81/3	1/0	.	82/3	641/49
19	.	.	.	13/2	8/1	105/11	126/14	767/63
20	1/1	6/0	7/1	774/64
21	14/0	14/0	788/64
22	.	.	.	1/0	36/3	26/3	63/6	851/70
23	.	.	5/5	32/1	.	.	37/6	888/76
0	.	.	71/9	52/4	.	.	123/13	1011/89
1	.	.	120/8	4/1	.	.	124/9	1135/98
2	.	8/8	85/4	.	.	.	93/12	1228/110
3	.	1/1	65/3	15/2	.	.	81/6	1309/116
4	4/3	64/1	4/1	.....	.....	72/5	1381/121
5	.	28/3	33/1	1/1	.	.	62/5	1443/126
6	3/3	30/1	22/1	2/0	.	.	57/5	1500/131
7	.	11/0	30/1	.	.	.	41/1	1541/132
8	.	.	5/0	82/4	.	.	87/4	1628/136
9	.	.	.	64/2	.	.	64/2	1692/138
10	.	.	.	14/1	94/1	.	108/2	1800/140
11	81/2	.	81/2	1881/142
12	1881/142
13	1881/142
14	1881/142
15	1881/142
16	1881/142
17	1881/142
18	1881/142

19	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1881/142
20	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1881/142
21	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1881/142
22	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1881/142
23	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1881/142
DAY1	3/3	82/16	500/33	626/43	477/29	193/18	.	
1881/142								
DAY2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
TOT	3/3	82/16	500/33	626/43	477/29	193/18	.	.
1881/142								

See you at the picnic - happy DXing!