

# Northern California DX Foundation Newsletter



Winter 1989

## You're In Good Hands With .....

by Kip Edwards, W6SZN

It's time for another survey of NCDXF members! The topic this time, hopefully suggested by the title, is "insurance contacts." I suspect there are very few, if any, who have not experienced the ultimate disappointment of getting a QSL back with "Not in log" scrawled across it. How do you avoid this ignoble result? One way that most believe is beyond reproach is to work the station on another band or mode. Beyond this, it appears that different views are being put into practice on the bands. Computer analysis of the 3D2XX Rotuma log for 10 meter CW disclosed a duplicate contact rate of 12.4%! One chap, who out of compassion shall remain anonymous, worked us 11 times! I even had one station on SSB tell me that he had worked us on the same band/mode earlier and that this QSO was an "insurance" contact!

Please take a minute and send me your thoughts and experiences with this phenomenon of DX'ing. How often do you have cards returned "not in log" where you would swear the QSO was "clean"? Does it happen more often on one mode or band than another? Can you safely rely on the DX operator to get it right? Are there things you can do during the QSO to increase the chances that your callsign gets into the log correctly? That the DX station can do? Your responses to these and related questions should make for interesting reading and provide some guidelines for the stations at both ends of the pileup. The results will appear in the next Newsletter. Send your thoughts to me at the following address:

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## TN4NW Congo Expedition

by Tom Gregory, N4NW

In January 1987, I approached the Office National de Posts et Telecommunications (ONPT) of the People's Republic du Congo (PRC) with an application for authorization to operate an amateur radio station in the PRC. Over the following fifteen months I continued to pursue a license. Through the assistance of Joe Wilson, Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), American Embassy Brazzaville, I was granted permission to operate an amateur radio station on May 18, 1988. This is the account of the pursuit and culmination of the initial TN4NW operation.

In January 1987, through a Congolese employee of the American Embassy, I met with the private radio licensing officials of the PRC's ONPT. This meeting was very discouraging because I was flatly told that there were no amateur radio licensees in the Congo. These officials advised me to save my time and application fee, since all past applications had been sent to the Director General for Communication, Director General Securite Etat (DGSE) and had been returned with instructions that no license was to be issued or were still pending--some for more than five years!

Not being one to give up easily, and having a strong desire to operate from this rare location, I insisted that the officials give me the proper forms to apply for a license. No forms existed for an amateur radio license since none had been issued since the early 1980's. Accordingly, the application for a private radio license was used, which asked questions about the intended recipient of the communications as well as hours of operation, information about the operators, and detailed technical information about the equipment and antennas.

After completing the form in as much detail as possible, I returned it with an application fee of 2,500 CFA (about \$8.00 US). The officials told me that the application would be sent on to the DGSE. I then began the wait.

During other matters relating to my duties with the Regional Office of Communications at the Ameri-

N4NW AFRICIAN DX OPERATIONS

**TN4NW**

Republique Populaire du Congo

CONFIRMING QSO WITH: K5YB  
2 July 1988 05:47 UTC

REPORT BAND MODE  
55 20 METERS SSB

THOMAS L.  
GREGORY  
N4NW

 **Cushcraft**

 **ICOM**



THESE QSL'S PROVIDED BY "INSIDE DX"

can Embassy in Kinshasa, I met Joe Wilson. Joe had served as the DCM in Bujumbura, Burundi while the ambassador was Jim Bullington, N4NX/9U5JB. As a result of his relationship with Jim, Joe was very familiar with amateur radio and DX'ing. With the months passing and no word from the ONPT, I asked Joe for his opinion. I told Joe that I thought the application was being held up by the DGSE and he agreed. Joe said that he would speak to the minister in charge of the DGSE at an upcoming diplomatic function. Joe returned to the United States in September and October and, upon his return in November, I again asked him to intercede on my behalf.

In January 1988, a year after starting the process, Joe advised me that an appointment had been arranged with the Secretary for Communications, DGSE. Due to other work requirements throughout central Africa, this meeting did not take place until early March 1988.

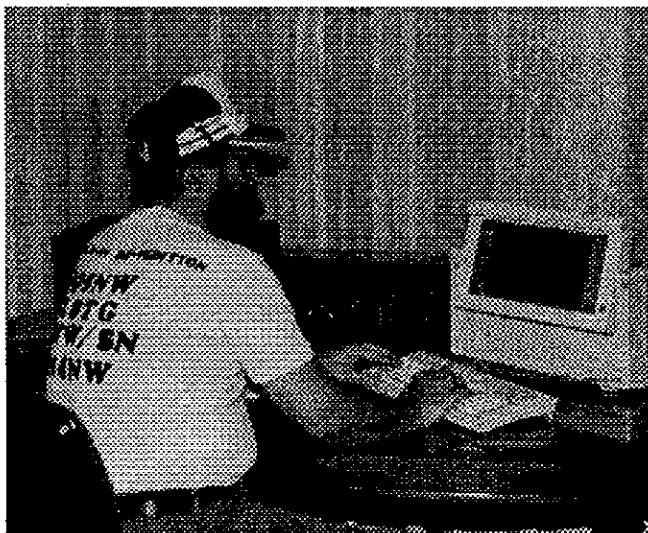
On the day of the meeting, one of the Congolese working at the American Embassy went with me to the headquarters of the DGSE. He was very apprehensive when we drove up to the front gate of the DGSE and reluctantly accompanied me into the offices of the Secretary. I made the statement to him that "they won't bite" but it did little to relieve his concern.

We then met with the Secretary, who had all of the files relating to my application. The Secretary asked me, through the embassy employee, a series of questions about my military service, my education, my family status, and my embassy duties. At the end of the questions, the Secretary assured me that a license would be issued as soon as I paid the license fee. I was willing to pay a fee, of course, but thought it would be no more than a hundred dollars. Imagine my shock when the Secretary told me that the fee was 200,000 CFA! At the current exchange rate (289 CFA=\$1 US), the fee came to \$692 US! Together with the application fee, this meant \$700 US for a license in the PRC. I swallowed, thinking of the comments I would hear from my wife, and told him I would need to go to the embassy cashier and cash a dollar check. I asked if I could return with the fee in an hour. The Secretary agreed, and I was off for the embassy.

On the way back to the embassy, I asked my interpreter why he was reluctant to go into the DGSE offices. He told me that this was the same building where people

were taken when the secret police came and removed them from their homes at night. He also said that the DGSE is Congo's equivalent of the KGB. When we returned with the license fee, he elected to wait in the car.

I returned to the United States in March for spring vacation with my family, sure of returning to Africa and my license. When I returned there was a letter from the DGSE requesting a copy of the schematic of the rig I intended to use. This was provided, and for the month of May I returned to the United States for consultations in Washington on work-related matters. While there I spoke to my wife in Zaire who relayed the news that Joe had called to say that the license was issued on May 18, 1988.



*Tom, N4NW, enters calls as worked into the TN4NW operations computer to provide instant dupe checking.*

Upon my return I received the actual copy of the license and a translation. Not to my surprise was a comment about further taxes to be assessed by

the ONPT for the operation. I have not received these assessments but I won't be surprised if they are expensive too. Parade magazine rates Brazzaville, Congo as the third most expensive city to visit. I must add that it is probably the country with the highest amateur radio licensing fee!

During my visits to the United States in March and May, I had discussed the logistics of an operation from Brazzaville with my QSL manager, Tom Harrell, AL7EL. Although only five miles line of sight from my 9Q5NW QTH, the TN4NW QTH may as well be across the country. First, one must have a valid Congolese visa, issued for three months at a time and requiring a three day processing time. Because of my diplomatic status the difficulties in obtaining a visa are reduced, but other matters come up, such as the transportation of the equipment across the Zaire and Congo borders. What would the border officials at the river crossing think of this radio equipment? From my experience it would be better to have the equipment in place in Brazzaville and leave it there.

To this end I needed a rig and antennas. ICOM America was contacted and its amateur radio division provided the ICOM IC-761 for use at TN4NW. Bill, K1MM arranged for a Cushcraft A-3 with 40 meter element to be donated by Cushcraft. The Southeastern DX Club provided a 10-80 meter Butternut vertical. The Kansas City

DX Club provided financial support to cover the cost of hauling all of the equipment across on the ferry.

Crossing a major river in Africa like the Zaire (referred to as the Congo on the Congolese side) is unlike anything else. Until you have experienced this you are missing a unique treat! The ferry departs hourly...almost. With seating for about a hundred persons and six cars, two hundred or more Africans, their goats, chickens and items to sell in Congo and several cars crowd onto the ferry. It departs more or less late and takes about twenty minutes to reach the Congo. The dock on the Congo side is downstream some from the Zaire side, so the journey over is a little faster than the return trip. On the Congolese side there is much pushing and shoving as everyone tries to get off to get their wares to the buyers and avoid some items being taken by the officials as part of the "way of doing things in Africa"!

It is much the same on the return, but the trip is longer because the ferry must go upstream against the strong current. The people don't have as many wares to bring to Zaire. However, Zaire beer is popular in Brazzaville and cannot be purchased without empty bottles, so there are many burlap bags of empty bottles being returned to Kinshasa on the ferry. Although all of this can be avoided by taking the vedette, a motor launch that costs \$35 each way, the ferry is only \$30 round trip--as long as one returns in two days.

The first trip to operate in Congo was undertaken on June 30, 1988. I took the IC-761, Butternut vertical, a base for the vertical mounted on a table top, a large constant voltage transformer to power the computer and rig, my portable Compac II computer, printer, UPS for the computer, coax, key, other cable accessories and three cases of Coke, Dr Pepper and 7-Up.

Upon arrival at the operating site, the ambassador's secretary offered the use of one of the rooms in her house. She would permit the antennas to be put at her house and left there along with equipment. With the assistance of Tony, one of the embassy Marine security guards, we had the vertical up in two hours. After extending the radials and the coax, I went to the shack and set up the rig.

Hot, sunburned, tired and thirsty, I turned on the IC-761. Tuning to 15 meters, 21.025, I called CQ on CW. I was rewarded with a response from JA3SJB as my first QSO at 1353 UTC. My first US QSO was with WB4RJX at 1400. With mostly Japanese stations being worked on CW, I made my first SSB QSO with OH3ES at 1600. The first US SSB QSO was KA1DE at 1707, 180 QSOs later. By 2200 local time (2100 UTC), I was feeling the rigors of the day's travel, work and operation and with 538 QSOs in the log I stopped operating and went to bed: seven hours of real DX with real DX'ers, many working a new country and several making a contact that would put them on the Honor Roll. I went to bed tired but pleased with the day's activities.

Prior to the actual operation I wrote to all of the major DX bulletins advising of my operation. I was able to begin the operation as scheduled. Through utilization of the WB2DND Amateur Radio Log Database, I eliminated duplicate contacts on the same band and mode. Thus, I was able to eliminate the need for "insurance" contacts by confirming each call sign back to the station from the computer before storage to the hard disk drive. The computer program identifies duplicate contacts within 200 microseconds of striking the "Enter" key after typing in the call. With this speed there is no delay in the operation and full log information is available. When a call is entered into the computer the second and subsequent times, the computer "beeps" and displays all previous entries for that call sign.

After three trips to Brazzaville, operating on fourteen different days for a total of 90 hours, I have made 8,037 QSOs. Of these QSOs, 5,623 different stations were contacted, with the remaining 2,414 QSOs representing contacts made on multiple bands and one or more different modes for the 5,623 stations worked. The complete statistics are as follows:

Band	CW	SSB	Percent of total
10	426	1,002	17.76
15	1,167	3,465	57.63
20	363	1,393	21.84
40	76	141	2.7

Of the 8,037 QSOs, 2035 were on CW (25.32%) and 6,002 were on SSB (74.68%).

[Editor's note: Tom's letter closed with following: "This information is for the exclusive use of the Northern California DX Foundation and may only be reproduced in the NCDXF Bulletin. All rights are reserved. Any other use of this information is withheld without written permission of Tom Gregory, N4NW."]



## BEACONEWS

by  
Jack Troster, W6ISQ

### Replacement of W6WX/B

Shortly after you read this, you should once again be able to copy W6WX/B, the Stanford University beacon. Just in case you didn't know, the Stanford beacon was stolen from its trailer overlooking the campus a few months ago. We cannot imagine what use anyone would have for an eight year old, modified, fixed frequency TS-130 and a control unit...but someone apparently thought it was worth the taking, complete with the NCDXF logo stamped on it.

We did not have any replacement equipment, but we did have an extra board for the control unit. N6EK is rebuilding that old board, thereby becoming familiar with the general control system as originally designed by NCDXF chief engineer and director Dave Leeson, W6QHS and Jack Curtis, K6KU. This control unit will then key the new generation transmitter, which will be a TS-140.

### Multi-Band Beacon

Meanwhile, back at the lab, N6EK is finishing the prototype of the new multi-band beacon control unit based on an updated system created by W6QHS. N6ST will be working on the clock systems and K6LLK will plan and carry out the assembly of all beacon units. The prototype is expected to be operating on 14.100 at W6WX/B in a few months. Fifteen and ten meter operation will follow later.

### Can You "Ring The Bell?"

So, we are hoping that beacon listeners will soon be able to "ring the bell" once again ... that is, copy all nine beacons in sequence in one 10 minute transmitting cycle. During the sunspot lows of last year--or whenever it was--not too many listeners ever heard all the beacons in one pass. We are glad that bell-ringing time with all nine beacons will be back with us again soon. Just to give you something to look forward to: "ringing the bell" on 14 MHz, then 21 MHz and finally 28 MHz in sequence 10 minutes apart. W6QHS and his hard-working crew will try to make that possible in a few months.

### QST Article

We hope you all (y'all as W6OAT would say) enjoyed the fine article by Jerry Stover, W5AE about the NCDXF beacons in the December 1988 issue of QST. Educate your friends. Tell them about it.

## THE IN BOX

### Can Anything Be Done?

In past issues of the Newsletter, we have deplored the mess made by deliberate and malicious QRM on a rare or DXpedition station. Or, equally as bad, the frequent well-meaning policemen pleading with the jammers to QSY which, of course, only adds to the mess. You know what I'm talking about. We have also speculated on the skewed character of a person who would do such jamming and wondered about the contents of his gene box. We have printed comments from irate DXers as well.

But then what? Suppose you identified the malicious jammer, or by mistake he (yes, "he"...no lady would deliberately cause QRM...you're welcome, Josephine) identified himself and kept right on QRMing anyway. "Call the FCC" was the old challenge to battle. Does that do any good any more...even if the station is identified? We are not up on these matters.

Some strange reactions also result when some friendly well-meaning OM tries to indicate a rig problem to someone. In a recent DX contest, a very raunchy "9" signal was spreading rasp all over 10 meters. A "friendly" said "(call) ur sigvy RAC." The miscreant replied, "So what?" Several other disgruntled ops then joined in: "Lid, lid." And the real lid replied, "So are you." A good third grade reaction. So what did this interchange accomplish? True...some ops just don't care if they have a lousy signal or they interfere with other callers. And what can the poor suffering rest of the population do? Don't know. We all make mistakes...and, correctly, get called for it. The real lids don't care. Why? Too bad. Too bad.

--de W6ISQ

### LA DX Group Elects Leaders

Earlier this fall the LA DX Group of Norway elected officers and directors. Congratulations to the following:

President:	Trond Olsen, LA8XM
Vice-President	Erling Johan Wiig, LA6VM
Secretary	Knut Iversen, LA2IG
Treasurer	Yngvar Andreassen, LA2QM
Directors	Tom Victor Segalstad, LA4LN Tore Egeberg, LA7ZO Leif Johansen, LA9ZV

--de LA8CJ

### NCDXF DXpedition Support

The Foundation's Board usually decides what financial assistance should be given to DXpeditions based on one or more lists of the "most wanted" countries. If a country is high on the list from any or all continents, a DXpedition to that country stands a good chance of receiving some help.

However, there are times when rarity alone may not be considered the most important matter. Under particular circumstances, can you think of any other considerations that you feel could be more important than rarity alone? Your opinion, please.

--de W6ISQ

### Coax Fittings Redux

I've always fallen for the old adage that says that UHF coax fittings add losses, and should be kept to a minimum. Recently, I had occasion to clean out my tool box (after ARRL SSB at NR5M) and found five right angles, four barrels, three double-males and several short lengths (1-3 feet) of RG-8X. I decided to test this adage by connecting up this wild assortment of coax fittings into a plumber's delight series arrangement and then checking the loss and SWR problems on several frequencies.

Test set up: I used my TS-930 or 2M rig feeding a dummy load and a Daiwa CN-620 power meter as the indicator. I measured RF power at 14, 28 and 144 MHz using either the rig wired directly to the load, or when fed through the mess of coax fittings.

Hook up of fittings: The connections were random, simply to use up as many fittings as possible. When done, there were 17 male-female coax joints in the line, as opposed to two male-female coax joints when the '930 fed the dummy load directly. The results below show the additional loss due to 15 coax joints.

Frequency (MHz)	Atten (dB)	SWR Change
14	Not detectable	Not detectable
28	0.3	+0.1
144	2.0	Not tested

SWR was 1.1:1 with coax only; this value increased to 1.2:1 when the series of joints was added.

Interpretation: The results show that UHF coax

fittings themselves add negligible loss in the HF spectrum and are surprisingly good even at 144 MHz. Thus, for HF purposes I conclude that the addition of right angles, jumpers, etc. does not add significant attenuation or reactance. Rather, it is certainly the coax length itself which causes the, biggest losses.

Caveats: Coax joints are deleterious for reasons other than their possible RF loss characteristics. These are:

1. The PL-259s are frequently assembled and soldered incorrectly.
2. UHF fittings are not waterproof.
3. The fittings corrode if used exposed outdoors.
4. They come loose.

For all these reasons, keep the number to a minimum.

--de K2TNO and the  
Texas DX Society  
Bullsheet

### Reports

In contests the standard exchange is 59 or 599...even if you can hardly hear the other station and have to ask for three repeats. This "59" both ways syndrome is beginning to slop over into everyday DXing.

Now, we can understand a DXpedition station using a standard 59 or 599 report. First, the DX op can have the report printed on the QSL card, making that chore easier. Second, it eliminates local king-of-the-hill ego trips asking for antenna or signal checks to see who has the biggest signal. Third, it's easy and automatic, a not-inconsiderable factor when you're passing out thousands of QSOs. For convenience, therefore, many DX ops give everyone 59 or 599. Right or wrong, that's how it is.

However, in talking to some local DXpedition ops who give automatic reports, we get the feeling that they would like an honest report from you at home so they will know truly how they are coming through. It helps the DXpedition ops know when to stand by for given areas (before they fade out) if that is their modus operandi. Or the other way around, if they hear a W6, for example, pop through (oh, happy day) and receive a fair, honest report, the DXpedition ops are then aware that W6s are getting in range (hooray!)

To the DXpedition op, a good report is not an ego

trip or an assurance that you will get a QSL. [The logs I have used for the last several DXpeditions are designed to maximize the numbers of QSOs per page and thus don't have anywhere to put the report.--W6SZN] The DXpedition ops would rather know how they are doing into your area. If there were any ego involved at all, it was all used enroute that atoll on the little sail boat, and completely washed away in the surf during landing. And, if any ego survived that, it will soon be eaten away by the land crabs and other creepy crawlies.

No...consensus of DXpedition ops around here is for you home folks to give an honest report. Or don't you agree?

--de W6ISQ

### Newsletter Labels

In the last issue of the Newsletter, I reprinted the Foundation policy on membership donations and, in the course of doing so, stated that the mailing label on your Newsletter would show the year in which you made your most recent donation. Apparently people actually read the Newsletter, inasmuch as I heard from a number of Foundation members, all with a variation of the same complaint: I made a donation long after what is shown on the mailing label ("here's the cancelled check to prove it!"), so your records must be messed up. Well, you were all correct. Our records were (and are) not perfect, and some glitches in the computer (that's it, blame it on the computer) caused the wrong year to be printed. Apologies to all. We are reviewing the records to avoid a repeat of the problem. If the label date continues to be incorrect, please let me know.

--de W6SZN

### News From Zone 2

Chris, VO2AC, writes to report that the station configuration has changed to a TS-430S and a TA-33. Chris is away at the university during the school year, but promises to be active during the Christmas break and again beginning in April when he returns home to VO2 land for the summer. For those looking for Zone 2 on RTTY, Chris reports that he intends to obtain the necessary interface and become active on that mode.

--de VO2AC

## LOOKING AHEAD

by Rusty Epps, W6OAT  
NCDXF President

Recently, I reviewed nearly seventeen years' worth of NCDXF meeting minutes, correspondence and newsletters. An impressive picture of the Foundation's contributions to amateur radio in general and to DXing in particular emerged from these documents. We have a history of which we rightfully can be proud.

As the Foundation's new President, the primary responsibility to ensure that our future is as impressive as our past falls upon me. With that in mind, I'd like to share with you those things which I regard as the priorities and the problems the Foundation will face in the next few years.

The Foundation's major emphasis will continue to be upon supporting DXpeditions to rare locations. In my view, locations are rare for one of two reasons -- either they are politically or militarily inaccessible (such as Albania, Burma, Afghanistan or Spratly) or else they are so remote geographically that the expense of getting to them is beyond most of our individual means (for instance, Bouvet, South Sandwich, South Georgia or Marion Islands).

There is not much the Foundation can do to create access to the first category of rare countries. Rather, we must rely upon the diplomats, the business people and the individuals who have far better personal contacts than we do to open those countries to amateur radio.

Where the Foundation can shine is in assisting DXpeditions to the geographically remote DXCC locations. In this regard, the Board of Trustees has resolved to make larger grants, and to take greater risks, if that is what it takes to get these countries on the air. The classic example of this, of course, is the 1987 DXpedition to Peter I island. For that operation, the Foundation put up US\$30,000, yet we had no assurances that the ship transporting the expedition was going to get through the ice, or that the Norwegian operators were going to be able to land

once they got to the island, or that propagation would be good enough to produce a sufficient number of QSOs even if everything else worked out okay. We agonized over making such a large commitment -- the biggest in the Foundation's history -- but we decided that this is what the NCDXF is all about. Without our support, the expedition to Peter I could not have happened.

We still believe our members would prefer to have the Foundation's resources spent on one credible DXpedition to a really rare place like 3Y rather than on a dozen expeditions to semi-rare spots like 5T, KH4 or C3. I think the Board made the correct decision to support an operation like Peter I. Given an opportunity to assist future DXpeditions to places of sufficient rarity, I am confident the NCDXF is prepared to do so again.

In October, 1988, the NCDXF approved \$2,500 in support of the 3D2XX DXpedition to Rotuma Island. At the time the Board made that commitment, and even now as I write this article, Rotuma has not been approved for DXCC credit. Clearly, the Foundation's support was a gamble. However, if the ARRL accepts the logic of K3NA's petition for DXCC country status for Rotuma, then that same logic dictates that perhaps as many as a dozen or so other islands also have the potential to become "new ones." We know of only two of those islands which have regular commercial transportation available. Those two can be reached with relative ease and safety. All the rest are remote. They are islands, rocks, reefs and shoals in the classic sense of "rare" DXCC countries. Getting to them will be difficult and expensive, but we think operations from those locations will inject sorely needed excitement and interest into the DXCC program. We also know that for those expeditions to occur, the resources of the Foundation will be taxed like never before.

The Board will continue to support the Foundation's unique power-stepping beacon network on 14.1 MHz. In addition to the propagation information it provides, the network has been the subject of numerous magazine articles, scholarly treatises and even a commen-

tion from the United Nations. We believe the network has made a worthwhile contribution to amateur radio during its twelve year lifetime. But it's getting old and technically obsolete. Thus we recently tasked our Beacon Committee, under the leadership of Foundation Trustee W6QHS, to update and expand the network. Now in the design phase is a state of the art, fifteen station network of multi-band, power stepping beacons. We expect to have at least one prototype in operation by early 1989.

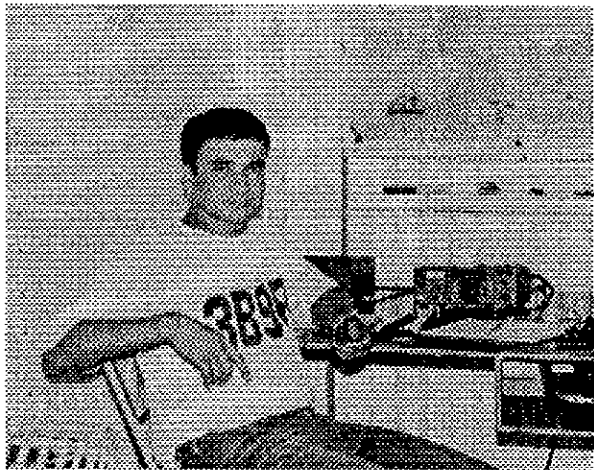
The Foundation is intensifying its efforts to collect DX oriented slide and videotape programs for its archives and lending library. NCDXF Advisor and Librarian WB6ZUC reports that over 160 radio clubs worldwide now avail themselves of the material collected by the Foundation and made available to them free of charge. Interestingly, most users of the library are not DX clubs. Rather, they are general purpose clubs. Thus, our programs often introduce and explain DXing to non-DXers. These are the operators who will be on tomorrow's Honor Roll. We think the library makes an important contribution to promoting our "niche" in amateur radio. It is a worthwhile endeavor which we intend to continue.

The projects the Foundation is undertaking are expensive. We estimate it will cost \$18,000 to upgrade the beacon network. Anyone who has developed a roll of 35mm color film recently knows only too well how costly it is to make three or four copies of a 100-slide DXpedition program for the library (then multiply that by a dozen or so new programs each year). But the largest expense of all easily will be our supporting of DXpeditions. In the next few years, I predict we will see two or three expeditions per year costing \$10,000 or more.

Renewal membership donations and the interest earned on the Foundation's invested capital will not provide enough revenue to support these programs. We've got to find new sources of income. In this regard, I invite -- even urge -- you to send me your suggestions as to what we might do to raise money. One of the ideas we hope to implement is to cultivate a "large

donor" group of individuals who might contribute, say, \$500 to \$1,000 per year (remember, contributions are tax-deductible for most U.S. taxpayers!). Another thought is to try to acquire bequests by convincing our friends to remember us when they draw up wills and plan their estates. We might get some corporate money from companies which make matching grants for their employees' educational or charitable contributions.

Clearly, the NCDXF needs greater visibility. Thus, we are studying how best to present ourselves at gatherings of DXers such as Visalia, Dayton, DXPO and other conventions with the hope of expanding our active membership. Further, the Foundation must be more assertive in publicizing its activities and achievements. For years, we have kept a low profile and simply assumed that "real DXers" knew what services we provided and that they would support us voluntarily with their checks. Unfortunately, we've learned that most will not volunteer more than minimal support absent overt prodding on our part. We know now that we must make a greater outreach ourselves if we are to raise the finances needed to accomplish the ambitious array of projects lying before us.



Robert, 3B9FR, with the NCDXF-supplied TS-730

NCDXF Recently received a note from 3B9FR saying "The TS-730 is in good condition and doing a marvelous job. I've worked nearly 200 DXCC countries. I plan to be QRV on 40 and 80 this year and expect there will be terrible pileups waiting for me!"

## Northern California DX Foundation

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### RODRIGUES ISLAND

WAZ ZONE : 39 ITU ZONE : 53 IOTA : AF17

# 3B9FR

ROBERT FELICITE PORT MATHURIN

QSL VIA FRFMI, P. O. BOX 14, F-91291 ARFAJON Cedex (FRANCE)

BEST 79 FROM ROBERT

RADIO	DATE	UTC	Hz	RST	2 WAY
K6TMB	3988	1705	21	59	358



## Boulder's DX Spotting Node

by  
Gene Spinelli, KE6LT

Packet DX spotting bulletin boards offer amateurs interested in DXing a terrific edge when it comes to knowing what DX was and is being worked by local DXers. As a result, DX BBSs are popping up all over.

As reported in several packet radio publications, members of the Northern California DX and Contest Clubs have already discovered the benefit of DX spotting nodes. Within a short period of time, six spotting nodes have been installed in Northern California. Each node can accommodate up to 26 concurrent users, and the six nodes are connected to each other on 220 MHz. Local users of each node connect on a 2 meter simplex frequency. At any given time, there are 40 to 50 California DXers connected to the system. The statistics for the 90 days of operation ending September 21, 1988 are as follows:

- 6,300 DX stations reported
- 3,050 different DX callsigns reported
- 254 DXCC countries reported
- 157 users reporting
- 110 users reporting 3 or more stations
- 49 concurrent users (maximum)

The first 30 days of a single node operating in Boulder, Colorado achieved the following results:

- 822 DX stations reported
- Over 100 DXCC countries reported
- 15 regular users
- 14 concurrent users (maximum)

After 60 days of operation the Boulder node has logged over 2,000 announcements and 200+ DXCC countries.

The software which provides this function is a product of Pavillion Software. At this writing, Pavillion offers two different programs of interest to DXers and contesters. Described below is the Packet Conference Bulletin System (PCBS). A future article will describe the Packet/Cluster software, as well as another project underway at Pavillion that will provide even more benefits to DX/contest operators.

PCBS is a multi-user packet radio bulletin board. It will not only support 26 concurrently connecting users, but also will support many functions aimed at enhancing the DXer and contesters' operating time. For example, the system allows each user to "log" the DX stations he/she

has worked or heard. All connected users are immediately notified of the DX station once the data is entered into the BBS. All DX announcements are also logged to disk for later review.

Users may search the DX log using many different search formats, allowing to select only those DX listings in which you are interested. There are also functions that tell you the MUF, beam heading, mileage and sunrise/sunset for any DXCC country, all based on your latitude and longitude. Along with all these neat tools, PCBS also supports the traditional PBBS mail/bulletin and file functions. In just 60 days the 15 regular users of the Boulder DX BBS have sent 1,025 mail messages to each other.

There is even more: one user can establish a session with another connected station. A conference function allows multiple users to engage in a roundtable rag chew. A general announce feature allows any user to make an announcement to all connected users. The program also has searchable database support. KE6LT-4 has the Mile-Hi DX Club roster, a needed countries list and a user countries needed list. Other possible data bases include contest calendars and QSL information files.

As you can see, the PCBS is extremely versatile and offers a new and unique series of tools for the DXer or contesters. For more information about Pavillion's products, contact Dick Newell, AK1A at Pavillion Services, Box 803, Hudson, MA 01749 U.S.A. or via CompuServe 73377,1716.

## How This Newsletter Was Done

by  
Steve Thomas, N6ST

As I was putting this issue to bed, it occurred to me that you may want to know how it was done so you can do the same sort of thing if you wish.

First, the text is entered in PC compatible format by several different people. Second, all the text is moved into a single PC (In my case an HP Vectra). Third, the photographs and QSL cards are scanned at 300 dots per inch on a Hewlett Packard ScanJet.

Using Pagemaker 3.0, the graphics are placed where desired from the scanned images. The text is placed next. Pagemaker 3.0 automatically flows the text around the graphics.

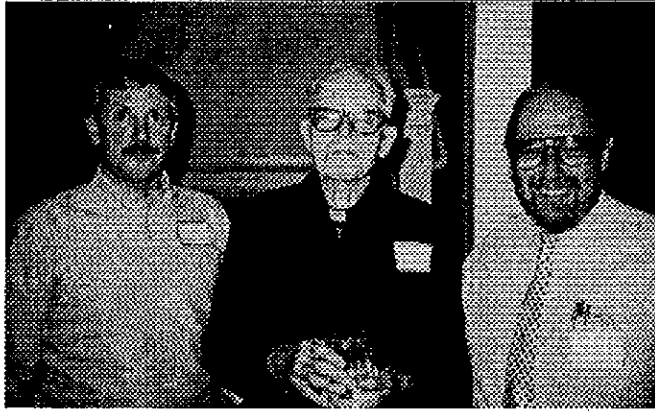
The final step is to print the camera ready copy on a Hewlett Packard LaserJet II. The print fonts used are downloaded into the printer as needed by Pagemaker. The primary text font is ITC Garamond, and the headline font is Bodini Condensed.

## 73 to W6RJ

Last spring, at the Foundation's Board meeting held in conjunction with the Visalia International DX Convention, Bob Ferrero, W6RJ, formally stepped down as President of the NCDXF.

Bob first became a Foundation Trustee way back in 1974 when he held the callsign K6AHV. He was very instrumental that year in helping to organize and operate the Foundation's DXpeditions to Kingman Reef (KP6KR) and Palmyra Island (KP6PA). In later years, Bob also participated in NCDXF-sponsored expeditions to Macau (CR9AK) and Bajo Nuevo Island (HK0AB). As a DXCC Honor Roll member who has "worked 'em all," Bob provided the Foundation with a sense of what DXpeditions and other activities the DX community wanted the Foundation to undertake. Bob assumed the Presidency of NCDXF when W6ISQ "retired." After two years as President, Bob decided he had paid his dues, and that it was time for him to step aside to clear the way for new blood. Like our other NCDXF "retirees," Bob remains in close contact with the present Board, and constitutes a valuable resource. From all of us, Bob, congratulations and our sincere thanks for a job well done.

-- de W6OAT



*Rusty, W6OAT; Father Moran, 9N1MM and Lou, K6TMB at the NCDXF Board meeting in September 1988.*



NCDXF member GW4BLE at his very tidy station. He was the number 1 station in Europe for the ARRL International DX Contest in 1986.

If you would like to see your station here, send in a reproducible photograph and a short bit of information to use as a caption. We will use them as space allows.

## Slide Shows and Videos

The Northern California DX Foundation has a number of slide shows and videos available for loan to organizations wishing to show them at meetings. Clubs borrowing materials are responsible for postage in both directions. The amount involved can be learned from the postage on the package when it comes to you and is usually about \$2.40. Please give the name of your club, the day of the month you meet and more than one choice of program in case there is a great demand for the item. Correspondence should be addressed to Josephine Clarke, WB6ZUC, 207 Evergreen Drive, Kentfield, CA 94904.

### Available Slide Shows:

1. Kingman Reef and Palmyra Island expedition of 1974 (148 slides)
2. K5YY on Africa of 1978 (62 slides)
3. Colvins on Easter, Galapagos, San Andreas, etc. 1984 (140 slides)
4. W6REC & ZL1AMO, Kermadec 1984 (58 slides)
5. AH0C (Saipan) CQWW Contest Operation of 1983 (82 slides)
6. 1985 Clipperton expedition (191 slides)
7. Ponape Island by N6HR, travelogue (81 slides)
8. Pribilof Island operation of 1982 (48 slides)
9. Midway by NA6T & KD7P (120 slides)
10. Antarctica, Arcowski, Palmer, Peter, Macquarie stations (101 slides)
11. VR6, Pitcairn, Mar/Apr 1979 by ZL1AMO & ZL1ADI (51 slides)
12. SM0AGD 1982 Pacific DXpedition (150 slides)
13. 9U5, Burundi by ON5NT (57 slides)
14. TYA11, Benin by ON5NT (61 slides)
15. VK3DXU/2, Lord Howe Island by K2UO (52 slides)
16. 3A, Monaco, by F6EYS & F6HIX of 1984 (43 slides)
17. 5X5, Uganda by DJ6SI of 1985 (115 slides)
18. Market Reef, July 1983 by PA0GAM/OH0/OJ0
19. KX6DS, Marshall Island (34 slides)
20. Andorra, by DL1HBT, DL3HAH, DL5BAD, DLABBO, DL4BAH (50 slides)
21. 1986 Clipperton Dxpediton (176 slides)
22. Peter I Island, 3Y, of 1987 (127 slides)
23. KP2N, 1986, CQWW DX CW contest (55 slides)
24. OF0MA, Market Reef, 1987 (28 slides)
25. Abu Ail, AI5AA, by DJ6SI, 1988 (65 slides)
26. XX9CW by DK7PE, 1986 (16 slides)
27. 1988 Palmyra by K9AJ, KP2A, WA2MOE, WORLX, F6EXV, JA5DQH (93 slides)
28. 1988 Kingman by the above operators (96 slides)

### Available VHS videos:

1. XU1SS (plus BV0YL and BV0JA) (35 minutes)
2. 7J1RL of 1976 and 1978 (includes ZK9ZR, Mellish Reef)
3. VK9ZR DXpedition of 1978 (plus Ogasawara)
4. Frankford Radio Club ARRL phone parody + JH7YFL WWCW
5. JF1IST/7J1 DXpedition to Okino Torishima of 1979 (25 minutes)
6. Australian travelogue - Climbing Big Ben, Heard Island (55 minutes)
7. Ham Radio in the South Cook Islands by ZK1CA & ZK1CT (70 minutes)
8. VR6 by ZL1AMO & ZL1ADI (copy and slide show above)
9. Looking Up in Rio Linda, 1986 by W6GO/K6HHD (45 minutes)
10. Revillagigedo, XF4DX, of 1987 (15 minutes)
11. Northern Texas Contest Club - towers and testers (45 minutes)
12. It Started With A Broken Fence - JH3DPB Tall Tower tale (15 minutes)
13. File Up Busters, Humorous. (10 minutes)
14. FG/W2QM/FS, French St Martin, DXing Senior Style - Another Wrinkle to DXing
15. 1984 Laccadive Island DXpedition, VU7WCY, plus 1983 VK0HI from TV (60 minutes)
16. The K6UA contest station story (25 minutes)
17. HK0TU DXpedition of 1983, Malpelo (25 minutes in Spanish)
18. The Ship That Shouldn't Have - VK0JS Heard Island DXpedition (90 minutes)
19. The New World of Amateur Radio (28 minutes)
20. SORASD 1987 by the Lynx Group, The Western Sahara Story (37 minutes)
21. Auckland Island 1988 by ZL1AMO, ZL1BQD, N7NG (60 minutes)
22. Dr. Owen Garriot's First Talk to hams about the Space Shuttle
23. Russian Ham Radio Tour by WA6WXD, Oct 1986 (45 minutes)

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Address Correction Requested



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