



Publication of the
Northern California
Contest Club



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NCCC Net
Thursday 8 PM
3610+/-

Our Next Meeting

Holiday Party

Date: Monday, 10 December 2007

Time: 6:00 pm schmooze, 6:30 pm dinner,
7:00pm program

Location: Michael's @ Shoreline, 2960 North
Shoreline Blvd. Mountain View, California 94043

Dinners – all inclusive - \$30 per person

RSVP: to K6MM, webaron@gmail.com

Directions:

Go to www.nccc.cc, and select "meetings."

NCCC Officers

President: Bob Tellefsen, N6WG, n6wg@comcast.net
Vice-President and Contest Chairman: Alan Eshleman,
K6SRZ, doctore@well.com
Secretary/Treasurer: John Miller, K6MM,
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Directors

Past President: Dean Straw, N6BV
Director: Jeff Stai, WK6I
Director: Fred Jensen, K6DGW
Director: Jack Brindle, W6FB
Director: Jim Brown, K9YC
Honorary Director: Rusty Epps, W6OAT

Webmaster: Ed Muns, W0YK w0yk@msn.com
JUG Editor: Rob Brownstein, k6rb@baymoon.com

Presidential Musings

By: Bob Tellefsen, N6WG

Whew, thank goodness Phone Sweepstakes is behind us. It's kind of grueling for us little guys. But, for the glory of NCCC, we soldier on :-)

From score reports, some of us did very well. Congratulations. It's the rest of us who will carry the day with our combined scores, though.

It's really important to have ALL our logs turned in to ARRL for credit. Even small logs COUNT! It would be monumentally embarrassing to lose the gavel by the amount of one or two small logs.

Our January meeting will be a joint meeting with the Redwood Empire DX Association. Watch our web site for details. We are meeting on their customary night, Wednesday, January 9. Please note this change from our regular meeting night.

By the way, the NCCC reflector is our primary means of getting information to our members in a timely fashion. We assume that you are logged into the reflector, and read it at least periodically. If you don't yet have access to the reflector, contact John K6MM or Ed W0YK to get signed on.

The CQ WW DX CW contest is over now, too. That was a lot more fun. I was impressed by the number of DX stations that came back to my first call. This is a great test of your station, competing to work

stations half way around the world. I heard some prefixes that are new to me. Not sure if they are special event calls, or new official prefixes. Guess it's time to print out a new ARRL DXCC list.

The next two contests coming up are my favorites, ARRL 160m and ARRL 10m. I hope to work many of you on the air.

See you in the contests.
73, Bob N6WG

VP/CC Report

By: Alan Eshleman, K6SRZ

Here's a selection of upcoming contests in December and January. As always, you can find more details, including exchanges and information about log submission on the WA7BNM Contest Calendar <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

ARRL 160-Meter Contest, 2200Z, Nov 30 to 1600Z, Dec 2

NCCC Sprint, CW, 0330Z-0400Z, Dec 7, 14, 21, 28

ARRL 10-Meter Contest, 0000Z, Dec 8 to 2400Z, Dec 9

Stew Perry Topband Challenge, 1500Z, Dec 29 to 1500Z, Dec 30

Run for the Bacon QRP Contest, 0200Z-0400Z, Dec 17

Original QRP Contest, 1500Z, Dec 29 to 1500Z, Dec 30

North American QSO Party, CW 1800Z, Jan 13 to 0600Z, Jan 14

North American QSO Party, SSB 1800Z, Jan 20 to 0600Z, Jan 21

CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW, 0000Z, Jan 27 to 2359Z, Jan 28

The frantic 60 hours of both Sweepstakes weekends are over. Our QSOs are in the log, but the defense of the gavel still requires everyone's active participation. Our

priority now is to be sure that every single log-- no matter how many points it may contain--is received by the ARRL contest robot before the deadline.

The deadline for CW is DECEMBER 5

The deadline for PHONE is DECEMBER 19

Besides getting our logs in to the ARRL, there is substantial post-contest work.

The ARRL is apparently strict as to how our club needs to be identified in Cabrillo log entries. The correct name is NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CONTEST CLUB. Silly as it seems, there is no guarantee that alternate names such as "NCCC" or "N. Calif. Contest Club" will be acceptable.

Marc, W6ZZZ, has identified a few logs received by the ARRL that have non-standard variations on the NCCC theme. We will be contacting those operators and encouraging them to resubmit their logs with the correct designation.

John, K6MM, has identified a potentially enormous post-contest repository of points for NCCC, which we're calling the COA [COA = Calls (heard) On the Air]. John took the logs of high-scoring NCCC members and extracted the calls of non-NCCC members who operated in SS from within our club's 175 mile circle. For the phone portion of SS, there are 58 calls that fit the description. And here's a fascinating fact: only six of those 58 also operated during the CW weekend. John has also generated a large list of CW COAs.

COAs are important because the ARRL's rules allow anyone to join our club and submit his or her score toward the club competition as long as they do it before the deadline for log submission.

We have already recruited new members from the CW weekend COA list.

The early returns—the numbers of logs received by ARRL—are cause for cautious optimism. As I write this (November 25) the combined numbers of logs received for CW and Phone are 201 NCCC, 171 PVRC, and 112 for the Society of Midwest Contesters. Of course, we don't know what the actual number of points these logs represent.

The Unlimited Club Championship is truly a team effort. I want to take the opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed.

- If you got on the air, my thanks.
- If you made an HMO effort or loaned your station to someone without a place to operate, my thanks.
- If you made phone calls to remind friends to get on the air or to submit their logs, my thanks.
- If you helped one of your fellow club members with antenna work or computer logging problems, my thanks.
- If you kept our band maps filled with spots, my thanks.
- Thanks also to K6XX, for the Sweepstakes Handbook and Ken, N6RO, for his butt-in-the-chair advice. Special thanks to Rusty, W6OAT for helping devise our strategies and to John, K6MM, and Marc, W6ZZZ, for their tireless data-mining. All of you have made my job that much easier.

I hope to see many of you during the upcoming 160 meter contests. This is all new territory for me, but since I have been blessed by acquiring some new real estate, I now have room for a Top Band antenna.

KB/KD/73

Alan/K6SRZ

Something good to say? Say it.

(letter to *Dear Abby* from R.C. Smithwick "Smitty," W6CS)

Dear Abby: I am a retired pediatric dentist who frequently treated children other dentists couldn't manage or preferred not to.

One rule in my office was that no child would ever leave without being complimented regardless of how he or she had behaved during the appointment – even if it meant saying, "You're the best spitter we've had all day?" Of course, we were absolutely sincere in our compliments.

One day, a woman called to make an emergency appointment for her 5-year old grandson, Pete. I learned that the boy's 17-year-old mother had run away when he was an infant. His father (the grandparents' son) was in prison serving a 30-year-to-life sentence. That left this elderly couple to raise the child. My staff told her to bring him in immediately.

When they arrived, Pete was understandably nervous and fussy when my assistant brought him back into the operatory, but he soon quieted down. I gave him a hug and began treatment to relieve his infection and pain. When I finished, I complimented him and asked that his grandmother come in so I could explain what I had done. As we chatted, Pete was happily picking out a little toy from the drawer. We scheduled a follow-up appointment for one week later.

The following week, 20 minutes before his appointment, the door burst open and little Pete came running in looking for an operatory chair to sit in. I escorted him back to reception and told him we'd call him in a few minutes.

The second appointment went equally well. I spoke with grandmother again as he once more chose a little gift. Then she said, "I still can't believe it. Every morning this week Pete jumped out of bed and asked if

this was the day he'd come back to see you!
This morning he was so excited when I told him this was the day he was coming in."
Then she continued, "Do you know why he was so eager to come back?"

"No," I replied, "please tell me."

"Because," she answered, "you told him he was a good boy."

Abby, here was a 5-year-old child who had never been told he was good boy! I still tear up when I think about it.

Dear Dr. Smithwick: Thank you for sharing the reminder about how important it is for children to receive positive reinforcement. (Adults need it, too.)

CW Mascot

By: Rob Brownstein, K6RB

I remember exactly when we "got" Floyd. It was the Saturday of the ARRL 10 Meter Contest in 2002. That Wednesday, as I was mentally preparing for my favorite contest, Debra came in and told me we had to drive down to San Luis Obispo to pick him up on Saturday, and we had to bring both kids with us. Like a good husband and father, I sacrificed my chance to do another "megapoint" 10 meter effort and agreed to drive the 200 plus miles.

Three months before, Debra had been searching the Web to find an ideal, hypoallergenic dog for the family. She had a history of allergies around cats and so assumed she would be sneezing her head off around dogs, too. But, it turned out, there were a couple of breeds of dog that were supposed to be hypoallergenic – the Irish Water Spaniel and something called a "Schnoodle" that was a cross between a Schnauser and a Poodle.

In her search she came upon an upsetting photo. The dog had been dragged into an East Los Angeles shelter, on the end of rope. He had no hair because of an advanced case of mange. In addition, he had oozing sores all over his body, and was a prime candidate for euthanasia. He also weighed about 40 pounds; two-thirds his normal body weight.



Odds were high that he would be put down within 24 hours. But that day, the odds were wrong. As luck would have it, a young woman was at the shelter who adopted dogs that were "unplaceable." She evidently saw something in this pathetic creature, and adopted him. Now, eight months later, having received intense care from Niki – his guardian angel – his mange was gone, his coat was full, and he was beautiful. So, she called him "Pretty Boy Floyd."

Debra took one look at Floyd and decided she had to adopt him because Niki could no longer take care of him. Niki and her partner, Rita, however, were reluctant to give him to someone outside of Southern California. They asked us very probing questions, like who would get the dog if we got divorced. I felt like I was adopting a child. Debra persisted, and they finally relented. We would have to meet them both

in San Luis Obispo and bring both boys. I guess they wanted to make sure Liam and Mitch were not like Sid, the sadistic toy-killer in Toy Story.



Well, we won them over, and after an hour of chatting, they left for home, and we headed back to Santa Cruz with the boys and Floyd in the back seat of the car. It took us almost four hours to get home, and Floyd never stopped licking those boys during the entire ride.

As soon as we set foot in the house, Floyd started exploring his new domain. He went in every room (except the bathrooms!) and settled on my radio room as his first-night's sleeping quarters. Since then, whenever I am operating, he sidles by my chair and lays down under the radio desk (see photo). He will stay there just as long as I do. I often like to contest with my shoes off, and randomly during a contest, I'll feel his tongue licking one of my feet. During the course of a long contest, he will fall asleep and begin snoring – loudly – adding to my battle with QRM. But, I have to admit, that

even in the most intense of runs, I am always aware of my mascot under the desk.



Floyd has his preferences. He likes CW better than phone (as do I). In the two contests in which I operate both modes, he will pick himself up and go elsewhere once I start my rapid verbal exchanges. He also prefers semi-QSK to full QSK. I notice he gets more agitated when there's a lot of relay clicks coming from the right-hand radio and amp.

I have worked several hams whose dogs and cats are also their CW mascots. Just this morning, Jim, K9WA, told me Buddy (his cat) was nudging him to be fed and causing his CW errors (uh huh). Mike, ZL1MH, has two dogs that keep him company.

I'm working on a plan to teach Floyd the code. My goal is to have him listen to radio two and jostle me when he hears a new multiplier. But, even if I fail, it sure is a comfort knowing my mascot is by my feet when I'm indulging in my favorite activity.

The Upcoming ARRL 10

By: Rob Brownstein, K6RB

Just like Bob, N6WG, two of my favorite contests each year are the ARRL 160 and 10. It seems like the 160 is the "constant" contest. Regardless of sunspots, there's lots of noise, lots of QSB, lots of signals. Some years may be noisier than others, but there's no predicting what you're going to find.

The ARRL 10 is a completely different beast. During the sunspot peak, the band is jumping 24 hours a day to somewhere, the phone band is wall to wall, and the CW band is "busy."

This band – 10 meters – is the gift that keeps on giving during sunspot peaks. You can pretty much work anywhere with a couple of watts into a wet-noodle antenna. Rolling up a million points or more is not beyond the realm of possibility even for modest stations (100 watts and a triband 30 feet up).

Where things can get really interesting – or terribly boring – are the times during sunspot nulls. Long-distance daytime propagation during sunspot nulls is rare. Without the additional ionization, the ionosphere just absorbs the energy instead of refracting it. Signals, if any, are weak; and QSB is the rule rather than the exception.

But, strange things can happen on this band, even during times when logic would say "it's dead." Take last year, for example. I started the contest at 0000Z, and for the next hour I worked a handful of locals, and a couple of VKs and ZLs. At the end of that hour I had a whopping 21

Qs in the log – ouch! Then, like magic, at 0103Z, I worked my friend, Art, KZ5D, in Louisiana. And, the flood gate opened. Keep in mind that at 0103Z (5 PM PST), it is dark in Lafayette. In fact, it's been dark for at least two hours. That band, during good conditions, is a day-time band. Yet, here I was working Art in Lafayette.

That next hour I worked 90 Qs. The hour after that, I worked another 80! And, it was dark in Santa Cruz, too. I was beaming into darkness and working stations everywhere in Canada and the US. The propagation gods were smiling on us, and giving us a sustained "sporadic E" that lasted over 4 hours over a complete darkness path.

I have to admit that around 0056Z, with 18 Qs in the log, I was ready to hit the switch and throw in the towel until daytime the next morning. If the sporadic E had not materialized for 90 minutes into the contest, I probably would have.

So, as I get ready for ARRL 10 2007, I am burning incense, being especially nice to Floyd (the CW mascot), and hoping for another blessing to wash over me and the 10-meter contest horde.

Like last year, 10 was marginal to useless during CQP, and SS CW and phone. There's a chance, this year, that without the gift of unexpected propagation, the ARRL 10 will be a real bust. But, just like Charlie Brown running to kick that football, I too turn on the rig, fire up the amp, strap on the headset, and prepare to be disappointed.

Last year, I was not. I ended up with nearly 200K points, CW only, and won the division first place wallpaper. In golf, if you play 17 lousy holes but have a really good one on the 18th, you come back to play another day. So, I'll see you in the ARRL 10. May the propagation gods smile upon us.



Bradley the DX Hound at Peter's (W6KW) where K6SRZ set his PR for CW Sweep



The amplifiers at W6KW. Any resemblance to the set of a 1950s sci-fi movie is purely coincidental

*Happy and Healthy
Holidays to Everyone*



K6SRZ's (W6PZ) secret weapon for CQP: the WB6ZQZ tennis ball launcher. This will put an antenna line 150 feet in the air!

