



**Publication of the  
Northern California  
Contest Club**



Issue 481

June 2012

Inside this issue:

Dayton Report	5
P49Y WPX CW Contest	9
July JUG Deadline	18

**Guests are always welcome at the NCCC!**

**Please join us.**

**Next Meeting**

**6Y6U Operation During CQP 2011**

**YCCC New Projects**

**WRTC 2014 Update**

Special Guest Speaker—Dennis Egan, W1UE

**Date:**

Monday 11th June.

**Time:**

6:00pm schmooze, 6:30pm dinner

7:00pm program

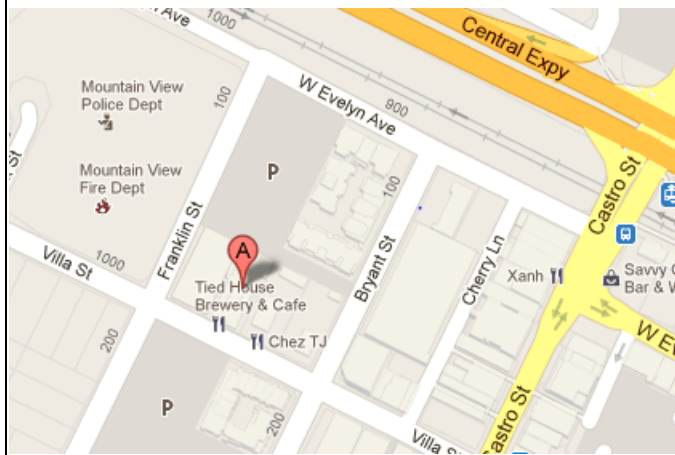
*Tied House, 954 Villa Street, Mountain View, CA  
(650) 965-2739*

Please RSVP to [nccc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:nccc.treasurer@gmail.com)

with your dinner choice :-

1. Half Pound Burger
2. Voodoo Chicken Sandwich
3. Traditional Fish & Chips
4. Pasta Primavera

Each dinner is \$20.00, includes salad, soft beverage of your choice, tax and gratuity.



**From the President...**

Roll out those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer  
Those days of soda and pretzels and beer  
Roll out those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer  
Dust of the antenna, station and get into gear!  
- With apologies to Nat King Cole...

It's hard to believe that it's June; graduations are over and the dog days of summer rapidly approach. One set of major contests lie behind us and a new contest season will soon be underway.

For me, summer is a time of station and antenna upgrades that center around a plan. I dreamt this up several years ago and annually dust it off for revision around this time.

The plan covers hardware (rigs, antennas, computers), software (logging, OS upgrades, etc) and wetware (that's me). An improvement plan doesn't have to be written down—mine isn't but it's a phased set of goals I set myself around getting better for the next contest season.

Some years the emphasis is on the hardware, software seems to be an endless chore but this year my focus is on improving me.

Looking back over my scores and log check reports, I got a couple of takeaways...

- My error rates are low—about 0.5% on RTTY and up to 1.5% in Phone
- My rates have improved
- My time management needs a lot of improvement
- I'm chicken when it comes to CW

My goal for the summer is to focus on these last two areas; go back and look at rate sheets and propagation to



# Northern California Contest Club

Excellence In Amateur Radio Contesting

## Officers:

President	Stu Phillips	K6TU	stu@ridgelif.com
Vice President	Dean Wood	N6DE	cqden6de@gmail.com
Secretary/Treasurer	Dave Ritchie	W6DR	nccc.treasurer@gmail.com
Past President	Chris Tate	N6WM	ctate@ewnetinc.com
Director	Kevin Rowett	K6TD	kevin@rowett.org
Director	John Miller	K6MM	k6mm@arrl.net
Director	Ira Stoler	K2RD	k2rd@arrl.net

## Volunteers:

New Member Mentor	Al Rendon	WT6K	wt6k@arrl.net
Charter Member	Rusty Epps	W6OAT	w6oat@sbcglobal.net
Awards Chairs	Joanna Dilley	K6YL	joanna.k6yl@gmail.com
	Rebar Rebarchik	N6DB	rebar@hamilton.com
CQP Chair	Alan Eshleman	K6SRZ	doctore@well.com
CQP Certificates	Andy Faber	AE6Y	ae6y@arrl.net
K6ZM QSL Manager	George Daughters	K6GT	k6gt@arrl.net
K6CQP,N6CQP,W6CQP QSL Mgr	Ed Muns	W0YK	w0yk@arrl.net
NCCC Email reflector Admin	Phil Verinsky	W6PK	kb-w6tqg@verinsky.com
Webmaster	John Miller	K6MM	k6mm@arrl.net
JUG Editors	Ian Parker	W6TCP	w6tcpian@gmail.com
	Stu Phillips	K6TU	stu@ridgelif.com

## Thursday Night Contesting:

NCCC—Sprint	Ken Keeler	N6RO	kenkeeler@jazznut.com
NS Ladder	Bill Haddon	N6ZFO	haddon.bill@gmail.com
Slow NS (SNS)	Chris Tate	N6WM	ctate@ewnetinc.com

### NCCC Net

Thursday 8 PM  
 Freq: 3.610 +/-

### NCCC

Monthly meetings take place on the second Monday of each month !

Details [here](#)

## NCCC Membership Information

If you wish to join NCCC, you must fill out an [application for membership](#), which will be read and voted upon at the next monthly meeting. ([PDF application form](#))

To join, you must reside within [club territory](#) which is defined as the maximum of:

- Northern California, anything north of the Tehachapi's up to the Oregon border, and
- A part of north-western Nevada (anything within our ARRL 175-mile radius circle centered at 10 miles North of Auburn on Highway 49).

better plan my off times in the upcoming contest year and to improve my CW skills.

Even with the “major” contests behind us for the current season, there are still lots of contests to fine tune the skills without self imposed pressures. I look at some of these summer contests as training runs—sort of like 5K runs in preparation for a longer effort. “Wetware” improves with interval training—whether physical or mental , we improve by pacing ourselves in between periods of exercise at different intensity levels.

For me it’s time to bite the bullet and embrace opportunities for improving my skills. Oh, and it won’t hurt to improve the low band receive antennas either!

Do you have an improvement “plan” - written or otherwise? If you don’t, noodle on it when you are next stuck in traffic, cutting the grass or have a moment of time to yourself. I’ll bet it won’t take more than a moment to go “yeah, I really could be better at X”. For example, if you are a die hard CW op and don’t like Phone... go find some State QSO parties or less frenetic Phone contests and make yourself take part.

If you are really stuck for ideas or better yet, want some encouragement to help you stick with it... ask a friend or the NCCC reflector for input (you KNOW you will get plenty of opinions...) and mentoring.

If you need help with hardware and software issues like antenna work, radio and computer integration or advice/tutoring on different software, the NCCC reflector is the place to look for help. Don’t be shy or think you are imposing—lots of us have areas of expertise that can be brought to bear and it’s a great opportunity to spend time with other NCCC members outside of club meetings.

So, while I’m on that point...

WANTED: A highly experienced CW operator gifted with patience and teaching skills to help me get my CW contest speed up. Must be able to QRS, and able to put a good signal into Woodside on some HF band (160 thru 10 available). Time commitment and schedule flexible to fit your calendar. Please contact K6TU by email.



June also brings the publication of the ARRL RTTY Roundup results from the January 2012 running of the contest. I’m delighted to report that the Gavel for the Unlimited Club competition is coming back to the club with 73 NCCC members contributing a total of 3,715,609 points! We shattered our own record and came close to breaking the 4 million point level.

Not only did NCCC members break the Unlimited record but 2012 saw a number of other records taken by KB’ers... including a new DX SOHP record by Ed W0YK operating P49X, Bob KO6LU a new Pacific Division SOLP record, Ron N6IE SOHP SF Section, Jack KF6T SOHP SV Section, Jeff WK6I @ W7RN SOHP NV Section, Roger N3RC MSHP Montana section, and Stu K6TU SOHP SCV Section. Hope I didn’t miss any...

**THANK YOU NCCC! You truly KB!!!**

## VP/CC Report

### Dean Wood, N6DE

Part of my monthly JUG column will attempt to recognize a couple of outstanding efforts by little gun and big gun NCCC members in recent contests. I will read your scores and comments on the NCCC reflector, so please post your results there. I cannot include everyone, so don't be offended if I don't mention your KB score!

#### WPX CW contest

##### Big Guns

**P49Y (AE6Y op)** – 16.2M points in 36 hours, highest S/O HP score in WPX CW that AE6Y or W6LD have ever scored from their station in Aruba. Top 5 S/O HP DX score in entire contest.

**KR7O (N6TV op)** – 7.3M points and 2764 QSOs in 36 hours S/O HP from a one-tower station on a city lot. This was astonishingly close to the score produced by the W6YI superstation.

##### Little Gun

**W6ONV** – S/O LP, unassisted, 700 QSOs and over 550k points with modest city lot station, all S&P. Personal best in any contest.

Great job to Andy AE6Y, Bob N6TV, and Steve W6ONV!

#### RTTY Roundup

The official results have been published, and major congrats to all the NCCC participants for bringing the Unlimited Club gavel back to the NCCC!

#### June Calendar

**All Asian DX Contest, CW:** June 16 0Z – June 17 24Z

[http://www.jarl.or.jp/English/4\\_Library/A-4-3\\_Contests/2012AA\\_rule.htm](http://www.jarl.or.jp/English/4_Library/A-4-3_Contests/2012AA_rule.htm)

**ARRL Field Day:** June 23 18Z – June 24 18Z

<http://www.arrl.org/field-day>

**Support your local club by joining them for Field Day!**

---

## Dayton Hamvention 2012

by John Miller, K6MM

Why do 25,000 hams flock to Dayton, Ohio every year in mid-May? Surely there must be a better way to spend our time and money. Well, if you're interested in seeing some of the best Boat Anchors in the world's largest ham radio Flea Market -- and if you're anxious to learn something from those who've "been there, done it" -- and if you'd like to put some faces to those familiar callsigns you've been working over the years -- and if you'd like to see the latest toys from the Vendor community -- then Dayton is your destination -- and perhaps destiny.

Last year I was a "first timer". This year was a return trip, and gave me a chance to appreciate this crazy convention again. My primary goals this time were (1) attend Contest University, (2) work two booths (Northern California DX Foundation (NCDXF) & The CW Operators' Club), and (3) socialize with old and new friends. I wasn't disappointed.

### Thursday, May 17, 2012

I spent most of the day attending Contest University at the Crown Plaza. [Tim Duffy \(K3LR\)](#) puts on a very good show: a full day of training and knowledge enhancement. Faculty included:

- Doug Grant, K1DG
- Frank Donovan, W3LPL
- [Ed Muns, WØYK](#)
- Rob Sherwood, NCØB
- Greg Ordy, W8WWV
- Joel Harrison, W5ZN
- Tim Duffy, K3LR
- Tree Tyree, N6TR
- [Kurt Andress, K7NV](#)
- Scott Dickson, W5WZ
- Ramon Santoyo, XE1KK
- [Bob Wilson, N6TV](#)
- [Ira Stoler, K2RD](#)
- Khrystyne Keane, K1SFA



You'll note several NCCC members on this team -- all of whom did a great job with their presentations. In addition to the formal presentations, there is plenty of time to network with some of the best contesters on the planet. After lunch, [Bob \(N6TV\)](#) asked [Chester \(K3LA\)](#) and me to help take up a \$1,000 collection for a CTU-sponsored tent at WRTC-2014. We collected over \$1,300 from this group in 10 minutes. Impressive. CTU is a high-quality training program. With 3 concurrent sessions and a wide selection of topics to choose from, you can customize the program for your personal needs. I highly recommend it for anyone looking to improve his/her contesting skills, station capabilities, and overall knowledge.

Late in the afternoon, [Rob \(K6RB\)](#), [Jim \(N3JT\)](#) and I visited [Joe Pater \(W8GEX\)](#), who invited about 25 folks over to his QTH in Oxford, OH for a relaxing BBQ dinner. Many of those who attended are on the upcoming NH8S Swains Island DXpedition team, but several experienced contesters like [Dave \(K4SV\)](#), [Don \(N1DG\)](#), [Charlie \(NF4A\)](#), [Wild Bill \(N2WB\)](#), [Tom \(N4NW\)](#) and the venerable [Carl Smith \(N4AA\)](#) also showed up.



From 9pm to midnight on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights at the Crowne Plaza, [Tim \(K3LR\)](#) hosts the Contest Super Suite, where pizza is served and friendships are made. The entertainment highlight on Friday evening is, of course, the **Spurious Emissions Band** – populated by [Ward Silver \(NØAX\)](#) on mandolin, [Kirk Pickering \(K4RO\)](#) on electric guitar, [Scott Robbins \(W4PA\)](#) on

acoustic guitar, and [Sean Kutzko \(KX9X\)](#) on drums. The Spurious Emissions Band takes popular songs and “ham-izes” them by changing the words to reflect Amateur Radio topics such as DX’ing, VHF operating and Contesting. You’ll hear some of the most creative and humorous lyrics imaginable from these guys, who enjoy spoofing our great hobby. Really fun time for all. Many of their performances are now on YouTube.

### Friday, May 18, 2012

I spent most of my time Friday in the NCDXF booth at Hara Arena, which is always a great way to meet and greet contributors to the Foundation. The booth became a nice social gathering and meeting location for photo opportunities. [K4UEE](#) stopped by with two of the Malpelo [HKØNA](#) Columbian operators to say thanks. At various times [N6PSE](#), [UA3AB](#) and [K3LP](#) stopped by from [7O6T](#). The same for several other American, Russian, Japanese, and European operators from previous DXpeditions.



In the afternoon I spent a little time looking around. Took a photo of the new Kenwood [TS-990s](#) transceiver. That’s about all you could do, since this 160 to 6M prototype was hermetically sealed in a Plexiglas case. Talking with Kenwood reps, it appears that this 200-watt rig will weigh in at 57 pounds (including the internal PS). Specs are similar to the TS-590 but it includes five roofing filters, three 32-bit DSP processors, dual TFT display, dual receivers, antenna tuner, and multiple ports (serial, USB, Ethernet). Kenwood is positioning the TS-990s to be their top-of-

the-line flagship model. The design is still being finalized, but they expect to ship this November, with a US price tag somewhere between \$5-10K. For loyal Kenwood fans, this will be a welcome addition to their product line.

Also nestled in its Plexiglas case, was the new [FTDX-3000](#), proudly displayed by YAESU. This 100 watt HF/50 MHz transceiver – designed more for the casual DXer and contester – includes an antenna tuner, 3 antenna connectors (one dedicated for RX), crystal roofing filters and a full digital display in a very attractive, compact package. Although it has only one receiver, the [FTDX-3000](#) sports a high-speed Spectrum Scope, allowing you to monitor band activity (up to 1 MHz bandwidth) in real-time. It also has a 9 MHz IF output and USB interface. Price and availability not determined yet, but since it’s positioned as the “little brother” of the FTDX-



5000, which currently retails for \$5-6K, we can assume about a \$3K price tag.

Before the convention I had heard about the “game changer”: FlexRadio’s new **FLEX-6000** series. I must say, it is impressive. To really begin appreciating what Flex has done here, you have to take a deep dive into the technology tools they’re bringing together, to create what many folks believe to be a revolutionary product class never before seen in amateur radio. Flex has moved the “heavy lifting” of SDR from the computer back into the radio box using cost-effective FPGA (Field Programmable Gate Arrays). Put simply, using FPGA is a way to put software on a chip so the code can rip through huge amounts of data, processing it in parallel rather than in series. FlexRadio calls it “SmartSDR”.

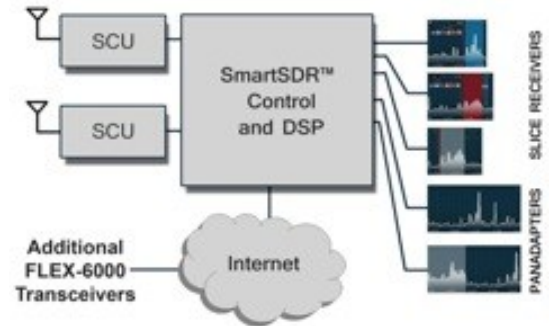
As explained to me, imagine having to park 1,000 cars in a valet parking lot. Before SmartSDR, a few valets would perhaps park 10-12 cars at a time, creating a huge backup. With SmartSDR, you can call up thousands of valets to park the cars at the same time.

The added benefits of this new “SmartSDR” method are huge: no longer does the PC component have massive processing duties. In fact, it should be possible to work with a non-Windows operating system in the future. Can you say “iPad” ?

Because of SmartSDR, now you can have (here’s the new jargon): “Spectral Capture Units (SCU), which act something like extremely broadband receivers. Each SCU can be further divided into four “Slices”, which are SmartSDR “receivers” promising at least 384 kHz bandwidth. Boiling this down to real-world benefits, we will now have new options never before imagined to monitor and work the airwaves: If you want to create an additional Panadapter to watch for possible 10M band openings – or decode all of the CW signals on 40m while working DX on 20m -- just click and SmartSDR performs advanced DSP on the data, splitting it into individual Panadapters and “Slice Receivers” for you. These Panadapters and Slice Receivers can be created and destroyed at will.

There is much more to the FLEX-6000 series that will captivate your imagination – some almost in a major “Gee Whiz” Sci-Fi category. At Dayton, they introduced two transceivers: the **FLEX-6500** (\$4,000) with 1 SCU (Maximum of 4 slice Receivers) and the **FLEX-6700** (\$7,000) with 2 SCUs (Maximum of 8 Slice Receivers). Earliest delivery date: Late this year. You can download their brochure from the Flex website at: <http://www.flex-radio.com/> Stay tuned folks – this looks like a winner.

Stopping by the Elecraft booth – and seeing **Bob, K6XX** effortlessly handling those difficult inquiries – is always a pleasure. They were 10-20 deep in that booth all weekend. I’m sure more than a few new KX3s and K-Lines were sold. They also introduced the new 160-6M **KAT500** auto-tuner, which is rated at 500-600 watts (10:1 SWR) and 1200-1500 watts (3:1 SWR). Probably a little less power on 6M. Three antenna outputs can be selected from the front panel. It’s designed to complement and fully integrate with the K-Line – and will



also interface to any other transceiver. Price is \$650 for the kit and \$700 assembled. They're taking orders now - shipping in August. This company has a loyal customer base and is making great product line decisions. It's especially nice to have them as our neighbors and close friends.



Flying off the shelves at \$60 a pop was the [Baofeng UV-3R](#) – a VHF/UHF HT from China. Specs: Full Dual-Band Amateur Radio Coverage (2M/440). 2 Watts. Dual Display. Receives from 136-174 MHz. Includes separate FM Receiver (87-108 MHz). 99 Channels. Size is similar to YAESU VX3R. Not the highest quality construction but is a good buy for the price. If you need a new or spare HT for 2m or 440, you can actually buy it now online at Amazon for \$42 including shipping!

I didn't have time to investigate much else regarding antennas or other new gear – I'll leave it to the online reviews. That's one of the biggest challenges at the Hamvention: utilizing your time wisely, since there's so much to see, and so little time.

Friday evening, I attended the annual DX Dinner at the Marriott, where the DXpeditioner and DXpedition of the year were announced by SWODXA. This year it was Rudi Klos ([DK7PE](#)) as the DXpeditioner and the [HKØNA Malpelo](#) DXpedition that won the awards. My tablemates from CQ Magazine, [Gail Sheehan \(K2RED\)](#) and [Chip Margelli \(K7JA\)](#) also inducted three new members into the CQ DX Hall of Fame that evening – all very deserving recipients:

[Don Chesser \(W4KVX\)](#) (SK) - Pioneering DXer and DXpeditioner; founder of DX magazine

[Carl Smith \(N4AA\)](#)- Editor and publisher of DX magazine and the weekly "QRZ DX" bulletin. Also CQ's DX Editor and leader of effort to create Southern Appalachian Radio Museum.

[Glenn Johnson \(WØGJ\)](#) - A leading DXpeditioner, leading many teams, often to very rare countries; personally responsible for restoring amateur radio in Bhutan in 2000.

### Saturday, May 19, 2012

During the day I split my time between the NCDXF (90%) and the CW Operators' booths (10%). Again, great opportunities to help promote both organizations.



I did manage to stop by the Begali booth to shake hands with [Pietro \(I2RTF\)](#) himself. He's perhaps the best key designer alive and certainly the most prolific. His designs are as much a work of art as they are functionally perfect. Their booth was one of the most popular all weekend.

That evening, I attended the annual Contest Dinner at the Crowne Plaza, with tablemates [Kip \(W6SZN\)](#), [Garry \(NI6T\)](#), [Jim \(K9YC\)](#), [Glenn \(W6GJB\)](#), [Chet \(W6XK\)](#) and a few others. While the previous evening dinner at the Marriott was a good "salmon" eating experience, the cold roast beef dinner at the Crowne was a complete disaster. Some of us just renegotiated for a veggie plate. Next year they must do better.

After a short speech by [Tree \(N6TR\)](#), highlighting his career, [Bob Cox \(K3EST\)](#) took the podium to induct two new members into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame:



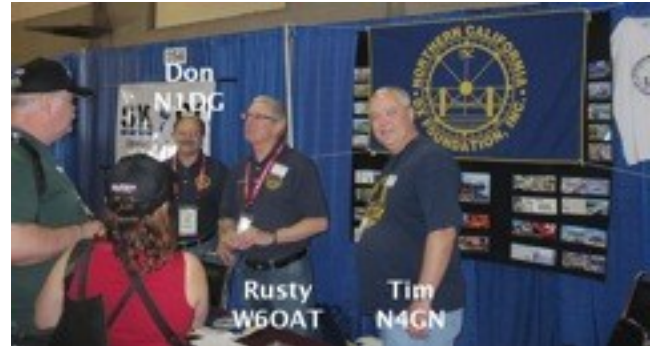
[Lothar Wilke \(DL3TD\)](#) (SK) - Leading contest and promoter of contesting in Germany; under his leadership, DAØHQ won the IARU World Championship 11 times.

[Jim Reisert \(AD1C\)](#) - recognized for maintaining and constantly updating the country and prefix files that are depended upon by virtually all of the major contest and general logging programs, as well as software for the major DX clusters.

### Sunday, May 20, 2012

I was the Lone Ranger at the NCDXF booth Sunday until 12 noon, then packed it up for my trip back to San Jose in the afternoon.

BTW, for breakfast on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday morning, I stopped by the famous **Waffle House** on the way to the Convention. This is THE place to start your day: great food, friendly service, and you can even buy an orange Souvenir Hamvention T-shirt to take home. I didn't, but I think both [Rusty \(W6OAT\)](#) and [Ed \(WØYK\)](#) did. Perhaps they'll model them for us at the next NCCC meeting!



### Summary

The Dayton Hamvention is one of those meetings that represent both the Best and Worst of Ham Radio. As you work your way through the crowded arena or flea market, there are a lot of “WTF” moments as you see outlandish costumes, antennas sticking out from strange body parts, and things for sale that have nothing to do with our cherished hobby. More than balancing all of those moments, however, are the things you learn, the friends you meet, and the good memories of having mingled with 25,000 of the world’s happiest campers. I highly recommend it.

73,

John, K6MM

**AE6Y May 2012 Aruba Trip Notes**  
**WPX CW Contest – (P49Y SOABHP)**  
**Andy Faber, AE6Y/P49Y**

Wednesday, May 23, 2012 - Thursday, May 24, 2012.

I took my usual AA flight 272 from SFO, leaving at 8:45 p.m. and arriving in MIA at about 5 in the morning. Didn't sleep very well, but napped at the Admiral's Club at gate D30, read radio papers, ate breakfast, etc., whiling away time until the Aruba flight left at 11:30. It was completely full, mainly with partygoers for the Aruba Soul Beach Festival this weekend. Picked up my Hertz rental car, a well-trashed Chevy Aveo with some 42k km on the clock (an eternity for a rental car on Aruba). No questions at customs, so the lawnmower that I had brought down partially disassembled after about 2 hours of Procrustian surgery in a large suitcase survived unscathed and untaxed. Now JP will have to reassemble it, but since he is a mechanic by trade, that shouldn't be too difficult.

My plan, since this was such a short trip, had been to drive right up to Ling and Sons north of Oranjestad for grocery shopping, but I got hung up in a large traffic jam on the outskirts of the city, so switched to Plan B – make a U-turn and head back to the house.

Because this was a spur of the moment trip (due to John, W6LD's, having a work conflict that precluded his taking the contest), I was traveling light and didn't bring my usual K3/P3 backpack combo. I did have a small backpack with some radio cables and the rebuilt Alpha 91B capacitor board in it, plus the usual computer bag. Without any extra days to fool around I started setting up the station immediately. I also hooked up the internet connection and telephones, which Ed has organized and greatly improved. The modem is now in the master bedroom. The drill is as follows, following the directions that Ed had left for us: (1) Connect DSL cable in BR to the side of the black connector hanging from the modem (not the end slot). (2) Plug in modem. Four green lights should come on. (3) Plug in router. (4) In dining room, plug in phone, and connect phone cord to the phone jack on the wall. Worked without a hitch all week.

All the antennas seemed fine except, ironically, the 20m monobander, which John had fixed in March with a new balun, and John Crovelli had re-fixed with a new jumper feedline a few weeks later. JP had reported it as having a high SWR, and it measured about 2.4-2.6 to one across the band, without a good resonant dip. This may indicate lossy feedline problems. Fortunately, both the 91B and the 86 would load it up to over 1000 watts before running into excessive reflected power, so it seemed to perform OK. JP had also reported the 80m ant as not working, but that may have been due to his unfamiliarity with the K3, as it actually checked out fine. The 160, OTOH, had its top wire swaying loose in the wind to the North side of the tower. It may have been a victim of our southerly neighbor's expansion of his yard into the cunucu. I ended up doing nothing about it, on the theory that it won't be needed until CQWW in the fall anyway. The four beverages seemed to be fine [and they worked great on 40m during the contest. 40 would have been very difficult without them due to summertime noisy conditions.]

I moved the shack K3/P3 from the right radio slot to the left one, intending to use it as the main run radio with the benefit of the C31 on the Stackmatch. Put a Pro2 in the right slot, and attempted to setup the Bandmaster for the Icom CI-V input, but no amount of setup, changing addresses and baud rates, cajoling, etc., seemed to do the trick. The idea is that the radio switches the Bandmaster, which has its own little network connection to the Filtermax, which switches the W3NQN filters and sends a signal to the Stack-Match to switch antennas. After considerable work, I decided to just switch the antennas and filters manually, rather than attempting to do more troubleshooting on the day of the contest. In this state, it is actually

less convenient than the former system, where the TT decoders had band switches so that manual control would switch both the ICE filters and the antennas. The setup program is on the flash drive that now lives on the base of the monitor.

At a little after 6 I gave up and decided to go for a run at Savaneta, feeling my usual day-of-arrival weakness. Then picked up a foot-long Subway Italian sandwich, half of which was dinner tonight. It was warmer than in March: temp in the high 80s. After a shower and a phone chat with JP, I tackled reinstalling the Alpha 91B filter board. John had thoughtfully photo-documented the removal in detail, so the installation process was pretty straightforward. Hooking it up in place of the 87A on the K3, it appeared to work fine! Successful repair -- thanks John and Ed. I ran a small pileup of EUs (this at 10-11 at night), and kept it on for about two hours with no problems. I then upgraded the K3 and P3 firmware to version 4.51 and 1.16 respectively, to take advantage of the improved K3 AGC software. To bed at about 11 p.m.

Friday, May 25, 2012. A long night's sleep till about 8 in the morning, then switched the "new" Alpha 86 (i.e., the one I bought from Carl on the previous trip) in place of the "old" 86 (i.e., the one we bought from Carl 10 years ago) in the right-hand position, tried it out on all bands, and verified that it worked fine. It has the advantage over the old one that the Tune and Load lights work, making it easier to see the tuning scales. I checked each radio by listening to it in the other one to make sure the PTT timing was working properly and not cutting off any initial CW dots.

At about 10 I drove over to Chris and JP's. No one was home, so I left on their porch the suitcase with the lawnmower inside and some parts I had bought for JP (LEDs and PC board stock), plus the Tailtwister replacement parts. Then went to go shopping, stopping on the way at Carl and Sue's, to say hello to the three Czech operators who were there for the contest, along with one wife and one grandchild. The primary spokesman was OK7MT (Mike), who spoke some English, while the other two (Vit, OK5MM, and Peter, OK2PP) spoke very little. They will be P40H M/S in the contest.

Back to the house for lunch then finished the radio setup. I have the computer hooked up in one of the usual fashions: external monitor attached, external keyboard and mouse to USB dongle, one USB port to the Compaq 4-port USB expander, then to rig control for each radio using the USB-to-2 serial-port converter, USB relay box to Radio1/2 input on DXD, USB to Winkeyer (for keying and PTT). Napped for about 40 minutes after lunch, then ran an EU pileup on 10 meters for a while. It seemed a good omen that 10m was open in the 18Z hour to most of Europe, not just the normal midday Mediterranean and Middle East opening.

At about 3 p.m., I went out for a run, feeling stronger than yesterday, but no faster. Of course, at this hour it was hotter, and today also quite a bit windier. In fact, the whole week is hotter than in March, with a reported high of 88-89 degrees each day. After a shave and shower, I performed my normal pre-contest ritual: napping/dozing for a while, then having dinner (the second half of yesterday's Subway sandwich), putting out contest junk food and drink and waiting nervously for zero hour at 8 p.m. local.

#### WPX CW Contest Saturday, May 26 – Sunday May 27, 2012

A disappointingly slow start on 40: many CQs with not many answers. At 0028Z I'm only on contact number 44. I'm running about 1300 watts on the 91B and it shows zero reflected power on the metering lights. I'm sending at 35 wpm, with the Winkey pot set at 33 [later in the contest, I slow down, as the best strategy on 15 seems to be to send at 33-34 and on 40 on Saturday 31-32, as there is more noise on the low bands and more repeats are requested both by me and by the stations worked.] At 0400Z I'm at 450 by 296 prefixes for 797k points, including 14 second radio Qs on 20. Both 20 and 15 are wide open to EU. Although this rate seems low, and many contacts require repeats, a 112/hour rate on 40 is actually very good with the double

points for low bands, so I stay on 40, even though it would be much easier on 20/15.

Just hit 1M points at 0438Z with NR4M contact at 520 by 334. A brief break at 0555Z I'm at 635 by 389 for 1.423M points. I set the second radio on 15 and start making contacts there while running on 40 (24 in the 06Z hour and 17 each in the next two hours). At 0723Z a weak ZL1ANH calls in, so I turn the beam west and get a few more ZLs and VKs. At 0742Z the first JA calls, JS1NDM, whom I can barely hear. Things are slowing down, so at 0843Z I decide to take some time off, at 837 by 498 for 2.3M points. Band totals are 15:53, 20:23, 40:756. Not bad, but well behind the paces of P40W and PJ4A last year [as I recall, 40 was less noisy last year, and there was more activity also, since the EUs weren't diverted by today's excellent 15m condx.] After a brief sleep, back on at 1017Z. 40 is now open to Japan, and they are now easier to copy than earlier in the evening. At 1113Z, after about an hour of JA's on 40, some of which have been easy QSOs and some of which have required repeats for the call and/or the number, it seems time to go to the high bands. At 898 by 531 for 2.665M points. It sounds like 15 is much stronger than 20, so I set the left radio on 15 to start running.

I have the second radio on 10 waiting for an opening to EU. Of course it starts first in Spain and the Mediterranean; ED3T (Spain) is the first Q at 1355Z, then C4Z (Cyprus) at 1423Z. Running a split US/EU pileup with the C31 aimed at the US and the 10/15 monobanders at EU. At 1630Z I work P40H on 10 on the second radio – literally the only time in the entire contest that I even hear them, let alone work them. 10 is starting to open more, but the rate is good on 15, so I wait until 10 is very solidly open to EU, then move there at 1733Z, hanging out on 28015 for the next four hours. I have been using the K3's AGC SLP=0 and THR=15, but get blasted too often by strong signals, so I lower the threshold setting to 12, and it reduces that effect. I do ride the RF gain, though on 10 (only) I also have the preamp on and generally need full RF gain.

Just before the half-way mark of 18 hours of elapsed operating time, at 1929Z, the totals are: 1913 by 789, with band totals 278, 795, 23, 817 (10-40). The EU soccer matches must have ended recently as I'm getting a lot of EUs with very low contact numbers. I've been sending at 33 wpm for most of the day, including on 10.

I've been on 20 for the last two hours starting at 2201Z on 14050. It's been a very pleasant pileup. Now is the time for one of those weird decisions that must be made in WPX. I just finished my second best clock hour of the contest (140 Qs on 20 in the 23Z hour), but do need to take some time off, having only taken 1 ½ hours off so far out of the required 12, and will predictably do better than half of that rate on 40 in the evening, so, difficult as it is, I QRT from 0004Z to 0116Z. Interestingly, when I left 40m early this morning, my overall average was 96/hour. With the better high band rates, it's now up to 110. I have 22 ½ hours of on time so far, so need to take 10 ½ hours off. Not wanting to take it all off in one block, I'm going to take an hour now, decompress and have some food and get ready for the evening grind on 40 meters. I'm at 2484 by 902 for 8.7M points. I've been using the K3/91B as the run radio. When I started running on 20, I was using the Icom, and it freaked me out. It sounded strange and I didn't have confidence in it; switching to the K3, everything felt normal again [of course, I had done many contests with the Icoms and they do work OK, though they are not nearly as good on a crowded band as the K3.]

Well, I'm running out of guys to work on 40. It's 0506Z, at 2814 by 954 for 11.1M points. Now 1131 Qs on 40, and I've made a few second radio contacts on 80, though 80 is very noisy, and not very busy, so there seems to be no point in trying to run on that band. It's 1:08 local time, and instead of sleeping all night, I'm going to get up at about 5 a.m. to try to get an early morning JA run to get some new prefixes.

OK, I did it: got back on the air at 0919Z and have been on for about an hour and a half working 84 stations including a good number of new JA prefixes. Copy is difficult on the JA's and rarely can I get the full call and exchange without multiple repeats. The signals aren't really distinct, and have some polar distortion that

makes them hard to discern. So I'm going back to sleep, and then planning to work my remaining 8 hours and 15 minutes in a block on the high bands till the end of the contest. I've worked 21 new prefixes in this stint, and the score stands at 11.7M points.

Refreshed after 4 ½ hours of sack time and some food, I'm back on at 1544Z. I try 10, but it's not as good as yesterday, with weaker signals and seemingly less activity, so I go back to still smokin' hot 15 after a half hour. I park on 21033. At 1752Z, W6AEA opens up right on my frequency and ignores repeated requests to QSY, though he is very loud and obviously hears me. He eventually goes away, but another annoyance eventually forces me to QSY to a quieter frequency. UA5A is about 400 Hz below me; normally on the K3 I wouldn't even know he is there, but he has such loud key clicks that they interfere even this far away and cause me to need repeats on weak signals. I've heard a number of clicky stations this weekend, but this is by far the worst. I take an 8-minute break then resume on 21007, which is blissfully quiet. Now at 3260 by 1023 for 13.5M points. Splitting power to US/EU works well now.

With 15 so good, I probably should just stay on it, but the normal protocol would be to go to 20 in the last two or three hours of the contest (particularly since I have relatively few QSOs there), then maybe to 40 near the very end. I completely mishandle this, however, and undoubtedly lose 100k or so points in the process. I do go to 20 at 2228Z but the rate isn't as good as on 15. I try 40 at 2305Z but amazingly have only two contacts in a wasted 10 minutes, so it's back to 20 to run out the contest.

Then, in a brand-new contest experience, the computer goes nuts in the last 10 minutes, and I end up actually logging the last seven contacts on paper and sending the exchanges by hand. This is not easy to do at the end of a long contest, particularly with four-digit contact numbers. This has never happened in any prior contest, including those with many more contacts (such as 6500 in ARRL CW a few months ago). The computer suddenly slows down to a crawl, and reacts slowly to keystrokes and to screen updates. [Rebooting after the contest restored normal operation. It's as though it was demonically possessed and some massive process was underway inside it – much worse than merely running a backup or something like that. The computer was connected to our wireless internet (though I wasn't using it), and maybe it had been hijacked in some massive denial of service attack. I don't think it is a hardware issue at all.] It would send CQs ok but every time I wanted to send an exchange, it would send part of the call, then stop sending and flip out of PTT. It seemed that when the program focus changed from the screen to the keyboard (which happens with every keystroke), there was a delay. A mystery.

After the contest, I entered those last seven contacts manually into the program, took a phone call from Lisandro, then medicated myself with a combination of Tylenol and Frangelica, finishing a bottle that had lasted for several years.

### Monday, May 28, 2012.

I got up around 7 and mostly fiddled with radio stuff indoors in the morning. I did go outside to check on the brush clearing that Chris had done in the cunucu. It's mostly centered on the area from the back gate out into the wild, with our beverage feed lines now exposed. They did a nice job. I thought of trying to rein in the top end of the 160m dipole, but it couldn't be done from the cunucu easily, and would have required climbing the tower, so it seemed the better part of valor to leave it for the fall, since it won't be needed until CQWW anyway.

Spent a few hours fruitlessly trying to diagnose the Bandmaster problem with the Icom radio. I verified that the Icom was putting out band voltage, and that the cables were wired correctly. Even tried the second Pro2

and the second Bandmaster, to no avail. I did lug the old FT1000D out of the closet and verified that it keyed the Bandmaster properly. I even tried using the Icom's CI-V remote jack (as opposed to ACC-2) into the CI-V jack on the Bandmaster using two plugs that I managed to scrounge up in one of the metal cans in the storage area under the operating desk, and two alligator clip leads, but that didn't work either.

This took up most of the morning. At noon I drove over for a brief chat with Lissette and Lisandro. They are sad due to the very sudden and untimely passing of a very close friend. Then off to Savaneta for a run in the midday sun and a swim in my "private" swimming hole near Marina Pirata. Later in the day, I visited Chris and JP to see the kids and discuss finances, then we had a very pleasant dinner at B55. Then final packing, including putting the Titan power supply in my "small" suitcase, buffered with a large beach towel and some dirty clothes. It weighed in at 69 pounds. AA didn't charge any extra, but let's hope it survives the trip home. I left the K3 set up as the left radio, with the right radio slot vacant. I put the "old" 86 on the second table in the radio room, and the 87A in the MBR closet on the shelf under the shelf with the radios. I also hooked up an Elecraft hand mic that I left there and the NOSA paddle and logikit keyer, so that the station is ready for phone and CW. Note that to use the mic, you must go into the Mic Menu item and set it to Fp.H (front panel high) and tap key "2" to turn on bias.

#### Soapbox, as sent to 3830 reflector.

*This was a contest that wasn't meant to be -- for me. My station co-owner John, W6LD, had dibs on this contest since I had done WPX Phone, but work commitments forced him to cancel out, so I decide to do a very quick trip. Arrived in Aruba on Thursday afternoon instead of the usual Wednesday, and traveled light without my usual K3/P3 in the backpack, just intending to rely on the shack K3.*

*Having done this contest LP the past two years, I was looking forward to the fun of going HP this time. Our Alpha 91B had been sidelined by a blown filter capacitor, but John had removed the board, and Ed, W0YK, had replaced all the caps and bleeder resistors on it, so that all I had to do was reinstall it and turn on the power. Worked like a champ all weekend.*

*As others have noted, the conditions were quite amazing, on 15 particularly. It took a lot of discipline to gut it out on 40 Friday night, while 20 and 15 were open to EU all night long! Although it's easier to run on those bands, and the rates are higher, they are never so good as to make up for the double low band points. 40 seemed very slow and noisy, and it was hard work to try to get those numbers correct in the noise. Never thought I'd have twice as many Qs on 40 as on 20! And it's been a long time since I had more EU (48%) in this contest than W/K (38%).*

*Had a very strange computer QLF episode in the last 10 minutes of the contest (thankfully not earlier). Suddenly the computer seemed to become hesitant to send reports but it would send CQ's fine. There was some peculiar interaction with the keyboard and screen display updates, such that there was a time lag between pressing the keys and something happening. Apologies to my last 7 or 8 contacts, but I actually had to log them on paper and send the serial numbers by hand (not easy to do with tired brain/hand at the end of a contest!). It all seems fine now, and it's the same computer and software that worked flawlessly in many previous contests, including ARRL CW a few months ago, so go figure...*

*The usual lively Aruba social calendar was curtailed due to the short trip and to some of the winter regulars (like P40V and P49MR) being back home, not to mention W2GD taking a rain check, but did manage to stop in to see OK7MT and his cohorts at P40H, also Chris and JP (P43C, P43A) and Lisandro (P43L).*

*73, and thanks for all the contacts (and repeats),*

*Andy, AE6Y*

Rig: K3, 756 Pro2, Alpha 91B, 86

Ant: 1 el 80, 2 el 40, 4 el 20, 5 el 15, 2 el 10, C31XR, beverages (really helped on 40)

Software: CQPWIN 12.5

Here are some comparative scores:

Band	P49Y 2012 HP	P49Y 2010 LP	P49Y 2010 LP	P40W 2011 HP
10m	615	294	216	480
15	1495	966	585	1066
20	448	1029	935	704
40	1199	823	935	1333
80	13	85	112	148
Total	3770	3197	2734	3731
Pfxs	1097	949	822	1041
Score	16,233,406	11,582,545	9,074,880	16,045,974



Invites you to the  
**Pacific Northwest DX Convention**  
in beautiful **Portland, Oregon**  
**August 3-5, 2012**

Monarch Hotel  
12566 SE 93rd Ave  
Clackamas, OR 97015  
[www.monarchhotel.cc](http://www.monarchhotel.cc)

**Reservations: 800-492-8700 or 503-652-1515**  
(Ask for DX Convention rates)

**Preliminary Speakers include:**

Dave Patton, NN1N, from ARRL HQ, responsible for DXCC and Contesting  
Bob Locher, W9KNI, from Bencher Paddles, Idiom Press  
Jim Fenstermaker, K9JF, "A DXers Trip through Europe"



**DOOR PRIZES!**  
**Renew old acquaintances and**  
**have a great time**

Registration form is available on the WVDXC website:  
[www.WVDXC.org](http://www.WVDXC.org)

Questions? Contact Al Rovner, K7AR e-mail: [K7AR@arrl.net](mailto:K7AR@arrl.net)





# Contest Calendar—June page 1

NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Jun 1
HA3NS Sprint Memorial Contest	1730Z-1800Z, Jun 1 (80m) and 1800Z-1830Z, Jun 1 (40m)
10-10 Int. Open Season PSK Contest	0000Z, Jun 2 to 2400Z, Jun 3
DigiFest	0400Z-1200Z, Jun 2 and 2000Z, Jun 2 to 0400Z, Jun 3 and 1200Z-2000Z, Jun 3
Wake-Up!QRP Sprint	0600Z-0629Z, Jun 2 and 0630Z-0659Z, Jun 2 and 0700Z-0729Z, Jun 2 and 0730Z-0800Z, Jun 2
SEANET Contest	1200Z, Jun 2 to 1200Z, Jun 3
Maritime QSO Party	1200Z, Jun 2 to 0300Z, Jun 3
UKSMG Summer Contest	1300Z, Jun 2 to 1300Z, Jun 3
RSGB National Field Day	1500Z, Jun 2 to 1500Z, Jun 3
IARU Region 1 Field Day, CW	1500Z, Jun 2 to 1459Z, Jun 3
Alabama QSO Party	1600Z, Jun 2 to 0400Z, Jun 3
UT5EU VHF Memorial Contest	1700Z, Jun 2 to 0500, Jun 3
RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data	1900Z-2030Z, Jun 4
ARS Spartan Sprint	0100Z-0300Z, Jun 5
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Jun 8
Portugal Day Contest	0000Z-2400Z, Jun 9
DRCG Long Distance Contest, RTTY	0000Z-0759Z, Jun 9 and 1600Z-2359Z, Jun 9 and 0800Z-1559Z, Jun 10
VK Shires Contest	0600Z, Jun 9 to 0600Z, Jun 10
Asia-Pacific Sprint, SSB	1100Z-1300Z, Jun 9



# Contest Calendar—June page 2

GACW WWSA CW DX Contest	1500Z, Jun 9 to 1500Z, Jun 10
REF DDFM 6m Contest	1600Z, Jun 9 to 1600Z, Jun 10
ARRL June VHF QSO Party	1800Z, Jun 9 to 0300Z, Jun 11
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0030Z-0230Z, Jun 13
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, Jun 13 and 1900Z-2000Z, Jun 13 and 0300Z-0400Z, Jun 14
NAQCC-EU Monthly Sprint	1800Z-2000Z, Jun 13
RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW	1900Z-2030Z, Jun 13
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Jun 15
All Asian DX Contest, CW	0000Z, Jun 16 to 2400Z, Jun 17
SARL Youth Day Sprint	0700Z-1100Z, Jun 16
AGCW VHF/UHF Contest	1400Z-1659Z, Jun 16 (144) and 1700Z-1759Z, Jun 16 (432)
West Virginia QSO Party	1600Z, Jun 16 to 0200Z, Jun 17
Kid's Day Contest	1800Z-2359Z, Jun 16
Feld Hell Sprint	2000Z-2200Z, Jun 16
WAB 50 MHz Phone	0900Z-1500Z, Jun 17
Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	0100Z-0300Z, Jun 18
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0030Z-0230Z, Jun 21
RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB	1900Z-2030Z, Jun 21
Ukrainian DX DIGI Contest	1200Z, Jun 23 to 1200Z, Jun 24
His Maj. King of Spain Contest, SSB	1200Z, Jun 23 to 1200Z, Jun 24
Marconi Memorial HF Contest	1400Z, Jun 23 to 1400Z, Jun 24
ARRL Field Day	1800Z, Jun 23 to 2100Z, Jun 24
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, Jun 27 and 1900Z-2000Z, Jun 27 and 0300Z-0400Z, Jun 28

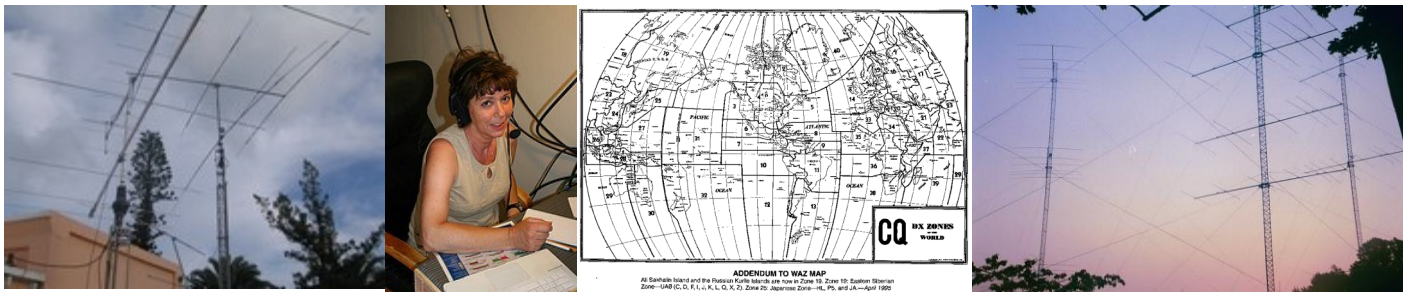


Please consider writing an article for JUG !

July 2012 Newsletter Deadline—June 30th

This is your newsletter so lets make it something we are proud of. I hope you will consider writing an article for the JUG! Whether its about your station, recent contest experience or a technical article we would appreciate hearing from you.

Send your articles to Ian W6TCP [w6tcp@comcast.net](mailto:w6tcp@comcast.net) and Stu K6TU [stu@ridgelift.com](mailto:stu@ridgelift.com)



ADDENDUM TO WAZ MAP  
At Sanhoku Island and the Russian Pacific March use Zone 18. Zone 18: Eastern Siberian  
Zone 14M (C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S); Zone 20: Japanese Zone—14, 15, and 1A—April 1999

12 STORE BUYING POWER



- IC-7000** All Mode Transceiver
- 160-10M/6M/2M/70CM
  - 2x DSP
  - Digital IF filters
  - Digital voice recorder
  - 2.5" color TFT display
  - 503 memory channels
  - Remote control mic



- IC-7700** Transceiver.  
The Contester's Rig
- HF + 6m operation
  - +40dBm ultra high intercept point
  - IF DSP, user defined filters
  - 200W output power full duty cycle
  - Digital voice recorder



- IC-7600** All Mode Transceiver
- 100W HF/6m Transceiver, gen cov. receiver
  - Dual DSP 32 bit
  - Three roofing filters- 3, 6, 15kHz
  - 5.8 in WQVGA TFT display
  - Hi-res real time spectrum scope



- IC-7800** All Mode Transceiver
- 160-6M @ 20W
  - Four 32 bit IF-DSPs
  - + 24 bit AD/DA converters
  - Two completely identical, independent receivers
  - +40dBm 3rd order intercept point
  - And much more!

**ANAHEIM, CA**  
(Near Disneyland)  
933 N. Euclid St., 92901  
(714) 533-7373  
**(800) 854-6046**  
Janet, KL7MF, Mgr.  
[anaheim@hamradio.com](mailto:anaheim@hamradio.com)

**BURBANK, CA**  
1525 W. Magnolia Bl., 91506  
(818) 942-1786  
**(800) 854-6046**  
Eric, K6EJC, Mgr.  
Magnolia between  
S. Victory & Buena Vista  
[burbank@hamradio.com](mailto:burbank@hamradio.com)

**OAKLAND, CA**  
2210 Livingston St., 94606  
(510) 534-5757  
**(800) 854-6046**  
Mark, W1ZYN, Mgr.  
I-890 at 23rd Ave. ramp  
[oakland@hamradio.com](mailto:oakland@hamradio.com)

**SAN DIEGO, CA**  
5375 Kearny Villa Rd., 92123  
(858) 560-4900  
**(800) 854-6046**  
Jose, XE25JB, Mgr.  
Hwy. 163 & Claremont Mesa  
[sandiego@hamradio.com](mailto:sandiego@hamradio.com)

**SUNNYVALE, CA**  
510 Lawrence Exp. #102  
94085  
(408) 736-9496  
**(800) 854-6046**  
Jon, K6WW, Mgr.  
So. from Hwy. 101  
[sunnyvale@hamradio.com](mailto:sunnyvale@hamradio.com)

