



Publication of the  
Northern California  
Contest Club



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On tap for the October 2020 JUG: Ken Beals, K6MR: "SO2R—Single KPA-1500"

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**NCCC September, 2020 ZOOM Meeting**  
**Tuesday, Sept 22 1800 PDST**

### **"Remote Contesting with Flex Radio"**

*Chris Tate, N6WM*

**Date: Tuesday, Sept 22, 2020**

**Time: Chat at 1800 and after talk**

**Presentation is at 1830 PDST**

**Meeting ends at 2030 PDST**

Chris will show us how to set up and optimize a FlexRadio rig for remote operation in a contesting environment. Hear an update on the upcoming California QSO Party (Oct 3-4).

**Web Access Instructions — see**

<http://nccc.cc/meetings.html>

**QUICK START Guide to Zoom:**

<http://support.zoom.us>

## President's Report - WD6T

### **Contest Season, Special 2020 Edition**

Well, that was not exactly the "welcome to the contest season" we would have asked for. As if Covid-19 were not enough, the freak dry lightning storm that caused sudden massive fires hit several members hard, including board member and past president K6XX. We're thankful that everyone is safe and our thoughts are with all those who have been personally affected by the fires and pandemic.

September is the traditional beginning of the contest season, typically with improved conditions on the lower bands. In addition, we are now officially in Solar Cycle 25 and sunspots are beginning to appear. Perhaps the ionospheric fairy tale we've told ourselves for years will come true after all. The solar prince will kiss 10 m. and awaken it from its slumber, to usher in a new era of peace, prosperity, and worldwide communications from your car.

Traditionally, the first big contest of the season has been CQ Worldwide RTTY at the end of September, though the newcomer, WW Digi in late August, has perhaps usurped that role. (By the way, congratulations, to several NCCC'ers who made the top 10!). If you haven't operated RTTY, or have forgotten how much fun it is, check out this contest where, unlike the CW and SSB versions, everyone works everyone. See [www.cqwwrtty.com](http://www.cqwwrtty.com)). Then, following immediately on its heels, is our very own California QSO Party, also known as "The Best Damn QSO Party in the U S of A." More on that in a bit.

September also marks the official start of the 50th anniversary celebration of the Northern California Contest Club, founded in September, 1970. Special events planned for this season include a "Founders Presentation" on November 15, in which a number of our original members will be educating, entertaining and amazing us with stories of the early days and evolution of the NCCC, and how it came to be the great club it is today. Rumor has it that The Locust may alight. Other original super swarms sightings might include Rusty W6OAT, Ken N6RO, Bob W6RGG, Don K6RV, and Jim N6TJ, among others.

Reading past issues of the JUG and looking at the September

***President's Report Continues on Page 3***



# Northern California Contest Club

*Excellence In Amateur Radio Contesting*

## Officers:

<b>President</b>	<b>David Jaffe</b>	<b>WD6T</b>	<b>k6daj@arrl.net</b>
<b>Vice President /Contest Chair</b>	<b>Bill Fehring</b>	<b>W9KKN</b>	<b>bill+nccc@w9kkn.net</b>
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<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Gary Johnson</b>	<b>NA6O</b>	<b>secretary.nccc@gmail.com</b>
<b>Past President</b>	<b>Jack Brindle</b>	<b>W6FB</b>	<b>jackbrindle@me.com</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Bob Wolbert</b>	<b>K6XX</b>	<b>K6XX@arrl.net</b>
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## Thursday Night Sprint:

The Northern California Contest Club sponsors a Thursday Night Contesting session of thirty minutes duration.

Often, on Fridays prior to a major contest weekend, a special practice session is held.

Generally, on Thursday evenings, a special format is followed, called NS or "NCCC Sprint". The NS began in the summer of 2004 as a snappy, concise contest occurring most Thursday nights, North American time. The power limit is 100 watts. Occasionally multi-week ladder competitions are held. See [www.ncccsprint.com](http://www.ncccsprint.com) for details.

Thursday Night Contesting Director and Founder	Bill, N6ZFO
NCCC CW Sprint	Tom, N3ZZ (initially, Ken N6RO )
NCCC RTTY Sprint	Ken, K6MR
NCCC Sprint Ladder	Bill, N6ZFO
Sprint Web master <a href="http://www.ncccsprint.com">www.ncccsprint.com</a>	John, K6MM
Ladder Scores Manager	Tim N3QE
Thursday night Contesting Advisory Group:	N6ZFO, Bill (Chair)
	Mark K6UFO, (with W4NZ, N4AF, W9RE, K4BAI, N3BB, VE3YT and W0BH).
The Thursday night NCCC Net	Ken, N6RO



column from past Presidents has been both inspiring and humbling for me. The enthusiasm and energy displayed are infectious (if I dare use that word these days) and there are many great ideas that have been the basis of club accomplishments in the past, and suggest possible courses of action for the future.

But things are also different this year, due to the Covid situation. If recent contests are any indication, the 2020-21 season will see fewer DXpeditions, hence multipliers will be down. Counterbalancing this, with social limitations in place, participation in contests has skyrocketed. Many contests are seeing a record number of log submissions. The pandemic has also increased interest in remote operating. As K6UFO pointed out at the August meeting, a remote setup can be as simple as downloading a free remote-desktop application. We are planning additional deep dives into the topic of remote operating in the coming months.

The California QSO Party is just around the corner and presents an excellent opportunity to try some remoting. If you are not planning a full-time solo effort, please consider remotely sharing your station with another operator. There are several benefits to doing so. First, you get to experience the contest with a friend, enjoying the victories and suffering the setbacks collectively. This is something I have enjoyed about Multi contesting. In addition, your score could balloon, as one full log can score much higher than two half logs.

To put it algebraically,  $Q1 * M1 + Q2 * M2 < (Q1 + Q2) * (M1 + M2)$ . As an example, assume you are working WPX and put in ten hours and make 200 Qs and 100 mults. That's a score of 20,000. Your friend puts in the same time and has the same score. That's 40,000 for the club, combined score. If, however, the two of you team up and operate the same station and make 400 Qs and 200 mults, that's a score of 80,000 for the club, twice as much as your combined individual scores.

I am assuming you don't run out of people to work and you *can* make 400 Qs with one call sign. Generally, the smaller the ratio of Qs to multipliers, the greater the benefit you get from teaming up in this manner. But, even in contests with a high Q to multiplier ratio, you can still help the club by allowing another member to operate when you are not on the air. This could be done with your call sign, or with his own call sign, and submit a separate log. In the latter case, be sure to read the rules carefully; ARRL contests prohibit using the same transmitter for two separate entries.

Yet another byproduct of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the suspension of in-person meetings in favor of Zoom. While I, like many of us, miss the in-person meetings, the silver lining is larger attendance and the dissolving of geographical borders and transportation challenges. It's great to see so many bright shining faces, shadowy poorly-lit faces, and black squares with names and callsigns. We're a large club and our members are showing up in force.

At the same time, not everyone on the club roster is able to contest actively. There are all kinds of reasons why this might be the case, but we should make every effort to help our members increase their "radioactivity" if they are interested in doing so. We need to survey their interests and find out if there are surmountable obstacles, including technical problems, antenna restrictions or need of Elmering. If there are, we as a club have a wealth of experience to bring to bear in addressing these issues.

Of course, for some, it's a mere matter of being sufficiently inspired and challenged. Therefore, I hereby inspire and challenge you: Think about how much contesting you plan to do this season, and then multiply that by 1.5. For extra credit, multiply THAT by 1.5. This formula has worked for me... to a fault!

Similarly, we should continue to keep our eyes and ears open for potential new members. The club has grown over the last few years and is continuing to grow. We are welcoming to new members and must do everything we can to help them come up to speed, solve technical problems, and discover the exciting world of radiosport.

It is easier than ever to "drop in" on a meeting, with the current Zoom format. Meetings are open to the public and are announced on the web site. If you know someone who might be interested, please invite him or her. If every existing member could recruit just one new member this year, we would double our ranks! More members means more activity, more logs, more Qs, more fun, and an even more vibrant club.

So ladies and gentlemen, start your engines! (But let them warm up first, to save the tubes.),

**73 Dave WD6T**



## K9YC Receives 2020 ARRL Technical Service Award



The ARRL Board named James W. Brown, K9YC, of Santa Cruz, California as the recipient of the 2020 ARRL Technical Service Award. The Board cited Brown's frequent contributions to, and presentations at, amateur radio forums at conventions including Dayton Hamvention, Pacificon, and the International DX and Contesting Convention in Visalia, California; his collaborations with the ARRL Lab; his work on various ARRL publications, including *The ARRL Handbook*, *The ARRL Antenna Book*, and others; and his sharing of his technical and educational expertise in the fields of audio engineering, RFI, and other aspects of electronics and engineering with the amateur radio community at large, particularly in terms of the informational website he maintains, which is available at no charge. The Board said, "Brown continues to provide his expertise as a means of 'giving back' to the amateur community, in the spirit of the amateurs that worked with him when he was first licensed at the age of 13. **Reference: QST, October 2020, Page 62.**

On arrival at NCCC in the early 2000's Jim immediately established his presence with learned discourses on audio quality, RFI, antenna design, and if you wish, eclectic Chicago Restaurants! Not to mention his recommendations for listening to Jazz. Probably Jim has never met a torroid he didn't like. This K9YC knowledge and much more can be found at <http://www.k9yc.com/publish.htm>, the website of Jim's Audio Systems Group, Inc.

Now one would think that a ham this busy would have no time for actual contesting . . . **NOT**. Jim has contributed no less than 162 million. . . Yes you read that right one hundred sixty two MILLION points to the NCCC coffers. Ok some operations were multi-ops. . . But wait. . . the single op total for Jim is 64,567,199 points — That's 12 5-Meg Awards. Surely Jim is in line for the **NCCC Contester of the Decade** award . OH we don't have such an award? Maybe it's time to create one. I'm betting Jim would stand near or at the head of the nomination line. [n6zfo]

### Here's a small sampling of the many, many congratulations to Jim from his fellow NCCCr's:

- Congratulations! Well deserved award. Thank you for all you do for amateur radio. **Saraj KU6F**
- Congratulations on your award. Thanks for all the technical help you've given us. **Frank W6JTI**
- Congrats Jim! Well deserved! I am proud to know you! **Tom NW6P**
- I was all CHOKED UP to hear of your ARRL Award. ;-) You always deliver presentations which are rich with content for everyone. Well deserved recognition! **Don K6GHA**
- I'm one of those people who gets way more from this hobby than I contribute. This is why I appreciate those who contribute so much to the hobby like Jim. Congratulations. **Ron KH6DV**
- I've been on the road for several days and just catching up with the news. Wow! I see some award stuff that are rather ho hum, but this is perfectly placed. Now on the front page of the ARRL website too. Thanks for all the help over the years Jim - and I expect I'll need more. 73, **Alan AD6E**
- Congratulations Jim! Very well deserved indeed. 73, **Ron N6EE**





## Editor's Column

Bill, N6ZFO 415 209-3084



Fire Under Cassiopeia, taken from N6ZFO in October 2018 during the River-Ranch Fire Complex in Lake County

FIRE has been on our minds as the cascade of fire catastrophe has descended on NCCC territory in the last several years. Two NCCC members have suffered explicit losses, Saraj, KU6F in the 2017 Tubbs fire, and now Bob K6XX in the recent SCU Complex fire in Santa Cruz County. Bob's article on page 10 may be the most dramatic ever published in the JUG's 50 years.

The picture at the left of the River-Ranch fire complex in Lake County, from the N6ZFO QTH is titled "Fire Under Cassiopeia". It received 20,000 hits on the Friends of Taylor Observatory Facebook page two years ago. Above the red smoke you may see the "W" of Cassiopeia, and just below and to the left of center the dual star-clusters in Perseus. The lower red line is the reflection of the clouds in Clear Lake.

The night of August 18, 2020 was frightening across California. Barbara and I were sleeping on our outdoors bed, under the tower, hoping to catch a few late Perseid meteors. A scary, intense wind commenced about 0500. Glancing up at the Innov-Force12-K7NV multi-monobander at 55 feet in the direction of constellation Cepheus, I saw a pulsing bright blue-white star. This was no Cepheid variable: it was a corona discharge at the end of the boom. I raced downstairs to disconnect cables just as the sky began to explode. The blue-white pulsing star was a corona discharge. That morning over 14,000 flashes of lightning occurred over CA, igniting more than 600 fires. Many fires coalesced. The K6XX station, and Bob's stunning house, became a tragic element of the so-called SCU Lightning Complex Fire, a collection of over 20 separate blazes. Lake County, by some miracle, was spared this time.

Take a few minutes to review Saraj, KU6F's article in the December 2017 JUG, page 15. The front panel of her KPA-500 pretty much tells the story. Glen, W6GJB's story of his and his neighbor's defense against fire, p 8 of this JUG, is a riveting account of an ultimately successful battle.



KPA-500 front panel from KU6F after the Tubbs Fire, 2017

73, Bill N6ZFO  
Editor, NCCC JUG  
415 209-3084

# CQP Corner

Dean, N6DE

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## Game Time—CQP 2020

CQP is almost here. **It's game time!**

CQP dates/times: 1600Z October 3 – 2200Z October 4, 2020

In this article, I will cover five points to consider for your CQP game plan.

### 1. Your Home Station Activity

Due to COVID-19 and wildfires, we expect the number of county expeditions to be low this year. To compensate for fewer expeditions, we are striving to maximize the overall participation from home stations inside California. Did you participate in an expedition last year, and your home station was not used? The #1 way you can help CQP is to be active from your home station this year if you are not going on an expedition again.

Your home station participation can be from:

- Your own home station.
- Sharing a better home station through remote operation.
- Sharing a better home station in person through a safe social distancing plan.

There were a lot of outstanding home stations that were unused by NCCC members in CQP 2019. Please consider activating that KB station this year for CQP or let another interested NCCC member operate it.

### 2. Check out All the Great Content on <http://www.cqp.org>

Thanks to K6MM, we have the best [cqp.org](http://www.cqp.org) web page ever. Check out several areas of our web page in preparation for CQP:

- Review our county tracker page. See if there is a rare county you can cover, either with a fixed station or a portable setup.
- Sign up on the Activate Your County page and appear in our Google Sheets list.
- Check out pictures and station descriptions about all the 1x1 SEQUOIA operators and stations.
- Print the 1x1 SEQUOIA QSO tracking sheet.
- Review the 2020 rules, results, records and awards pages. Find a record to break. Determine what you need to do to win a plaque or a bottle of wine. See our new Comeback Plaque and Improvement Plaque, and plan to win them!
- See our new Software page. Download the updated N1MM+ call history file if you are so inclined. Use the utilities listed to analyze your 2019 log and set new goals for 2020.
- Look for a new PDF coming soon about operating strategy.

### 3. High Contest Activity Expected

We are anticipating record activity in CQP this year for several reasons:

- a) CQP publicity. By the time you read this, I will have publicized CQP by emailing over 1,000 stations across the world. We initiated a survey with over 300 stations and received over 100 responses.

CQP was mentioned in the ARRL Contest Update newsletter, thanks to K6MM. We have given a few presentations at club meetings inside California, and we have contacted many clubs.

- b) The State QSO Party Challenge is attracting a lot of participation from stations that previously did not operate in CQP.
- c) Additional motivation for stations to operate more hours: chase our 1x1 SEQUOIA stations for a certificate, calendar and top 10 leaderboard, and new plaques for 2019 and 2018 CQP participants.
- d) COVID-19 considerations: we have been told by many stations that they will be home for CQP instead of traveling or attending family functions.
- e) College football won't be happening in W6, W7, W8, W9 and parts of W0. This means a distraction-free Saturday in CQP.

We can expect:

- Strong activity on CW.
- More SSB activity this year due to casual stations. 20m SSB runs should be fun.
- Several county/state/province records to be broken.

Give some thought to this as you consider your CW vs. SSB operating balance and your operating times per band. CW QSOs are worth 3 points in CQP, while SSB QSOs are worth 2 points.

Take advantage of all the expected activity by calling CQ as much as you can. Your CW macro should be configured in a way that gets you spotted to RBN. That will make your presence seen by S/O-Assisted stations looking for all CA stations on CW.

#### **4. Participate in the Practice**

We will have a CQP practice session that we'll announce on the NCCC email list as we get closer to CQP. It will likely be Friday night. Please use this to test your software and setup.

#### **5. Plan to Participate in the Rallies**

80m Phone, 160m and 10m have been underwhelming during CQP in recent years. We are trying to increase activity on those bands and modes also. We now have specific rally times and improved suggested frequencies.

- 80m SSB and CW
  - Saturday 7:00pm and 11:00pm PDT
  - CW: 3540kHz
  - SSB: 3750kHz-3820kHz and 3610kHz (avoid 3790-3800 DX window)
- 160m CW
  - Saturday 10:00pm PDT: 1815kHz
- 160m SSB
  - Saturday 10:30pm PDT: 1845kHz
- 10m SSB and CW
  - Saturday and Sunday: 12:00pm PDT
  - CW: 28040kHz SSB: 28450kHz

We are encouraging 3610kHz activity to encourage expeditions to be active on 80m Phone without needing to install a resonant 80m Phone antenna. They could just install an antenna resonant on 80CW and still be active on Phone with the same antenna. The impact of this might be less than expected this year due to the decreased numbers of expedition stations, so I expect 3750-3820kHz to be the main activity area.

**See you in CQP! . . Dean, N6DE**

# The CZU Lightning Complex Fire: Learning to Live in Fire Country

Glen Brown, W6GJB

Choosing to live in the Santa Cruz mountains, as with much of rural California, includes the assumption of increased risk – frequent power outages, trees blocking access, and, the big one, wildfire. This is balanced against the natural beauty of living in the redwoods, and having enough space for a decent antenna farm.

The area known as Bonny Doon is, geographically, Ben Lomond Mountain. It rises from the coastline to the South and from the San Lorenzo River to the East. It is a mix of Limestone terraces at lower elevations, and granite outcrops at the summit, where it plunges down into Big Basin park. It is covered with a mix of Redwood, Fir, Oak, Pine and Madrone, standing over chaparral species and a floor thick with accumulated leaves and old branches, known as duff, or, more often now, fuel.

At 3 AM on August 16, we were awakened by the sound of thunder, and walked outside to watch a most unusual show of lightning coming from a low stratus deck. The lightning was nearly continuous for a time, with some bolts scribing vertical lines directly into the ocean, others branching to strike the water in a dozen places, and still others running horizontal for a distance before returning to the cloud deck. This was after nearly a week of hot, dry weather that had us hiding out with curtains drawn during the day, trying to trap the cool night air inside as long as possible. (Very few homes in Bonny Doon have air conditioners for the few really hot days each year – we choose to just ride it out.) The thought of lightning-ignited fire was on our minds as we watched the show, but all of the lightning we could see was offshore, so we crossed our fingers and went back to bed.

Three NCCC members call Bonny Doon home: Bob, K6XX, Jim, K9YC and Glen, W6GJB. K6XX is near the top of the mountain, with great takeoff angles to EU and JA – actually in all directions. Being at the top of a mountain is great for antennas, but not always great when fire shows up. Bob was aware of this and went far beyond the recommended precautions to create a defensible space. K9YC is in a hollow, with slightly compromised angles to EU, but excellent for JA and VK directions. Jim's antenna program uses one 120 ft tower and many tall redwoods to continuously improve performance, particularly on the low bands and 6 meters. W6GJB is only three miles from the coastline at the top of a steep canyon. It's a great location for JA and VK direction, but hearing K6XX and K9YC run stations I can't even hear tends to remind me of its limitations. Recently, my focus has been on low bands. This spring I added antennas for 60 and 630 meters. The canyon location, however, is a constant reminder that a fire coming upslope from the coast would be unstoppable. The forest between us and the coast is all in Wilder Ranch state park, and hasn't burned in a century. The right conditions could turn the canyon into a blowtorch.

The next day brought news of multiple fires to the North, extending into San Mateo county, and in some of the canyons and benchlands along the coast. Not too concerning yet, but we watched closely and started talking about what to pack if we had to evacuate. Not on the news, and still not being reported, was a fire slowly spreading in Big Basin, down the mountain from K6XX. The news was full of fires all over northern California, though, and it was clear that Calfire was already stretched.

We've been fortunate in the past. With both the Martin Fire in 2008 and the Lockheed Fire in 2009, CDF (now known as Calfire) brought massive resources to contain both fires and to protect homes in the area. We were not to be that fortunate in what became the CZU Lightning Complex Fire. Resources were already committed in southern California and what was left had to be spread over dozens of new fires ignited by the lightning storm. Add to this the fact that Covid-19 had swept through the California Youth Authority camps that provide inmate-manned "hand-crews" that are key to fighting fire in difficult terrain. Less than half of the inmate crews were available as the Northern California fires started to spread.

By August 18 the various small fires had started to merge and move toward the populated areas of Santa Cruz county, and we received a reverse 911 call announcing mandatory evacuation in the wee hours. At this point, the fire in Big Basin had a good head of steam (with no attention by Calfire) and was heading up the hill to K6XX. Our volunteer fire department tried to save some structures in that area, but were quickly overwhelmed and had to back off. It was pretty clear that Bob's place was lost, and that has now been confirmed.

Matthew, KA6SQG, has created the incredibly sophisticated WB6ECE voted/simulcast UHF repeater system that gives good coverage of at least seven counties from San Mateo to San Benito and supports many of the emergency



service organizations in Santa Cruz. Matthew is also a volunteer firefighter. The fire took both his home and his main tower early in its progress through Bonny Doon.

By the time Sacramento sent a major incident management team, the fire was spotting down the hill at an alarming rate. The neighborhood of Pineridge, vulnerable because of many dead, dry pines surrounding it, went up in flames. The incident management team extrapolated, using this rate of spread, and decided their priority would be to save the UCSC campus and the city of Santa Cruz. The implication was clear: Let Bonny Doon burn and save the City. Calfire resources also focused on the San Lorenzo Valley, to cut a line above the towns of Boulder Creek, Ben Lomond and Felton. They evacuated all the way to Highway 17, including Scotts Valley. Pineridge is actually farther down the mountain than K9YC, so there were a couple of days when it was assumed lost. But, as news slowly filtered out, it started to look like his home was still standing. Now we know that the fire came within a road-width of Jim's place. Power has just been restored and they have a bit of cleanup but no major losses. Clearly too close for comfort.

In pockets of Bonny Doon, folks started to come together to form ad-hoc fire brigades. In my area, neighbors grabbed chainsaws, and shovels. Pickup trucks with tanks, pump and hose reels appeared. A dozer rolled in. With a combination of slower burning fuel, stagnant winds, and, eventually, a thickening marine layer, the fire slowed as it moved from Pineridge into lower Bonny Doon, and the renegade firefighters were able to build a line and stop it. The televised briefings warned that we should get out immediately because we might get in the way of Calfire units. The fact was there were no Calfire units to be seen – let alone interfere with. What we *were* interfering with was the plan to let our homes burn.

I took a bag full of HTs with me to the renegade fire line. Those cheap Chinese radios are great to hand out during an emergency. The problem I found was that any inadvertent button-push is not reversible by someone unfamiliar with the radio. Still they worked well. There are many folks here who have been licensed through the CERT program, so I thought I might be able to contact them. I called on 146.52 many times, got signal reports from across the bay, but no replies from within Bonny Doon. On the fire, I finally figured out that things were being coordinated by FRS and MURS radios. I had a couple of those in my bag and switched over. I guess the CERT volunteers had followed orders and left the mountain.

Today, there are parts of the burn within ¼ mile of my home. Burned leaves and grey ash are still drifting down from the sky. K9YC, me and our families were lucky. A different weather pattern could have made this fire unstoppable. I am not happy with Calfire's response, but that is with the benefit of hindsight. By several accounts, they had less than one-tenth of the resources a fire of this size would normally have brought. A shift in the wind could have proven their strategy to let us all burn in order to save the UCSC campus to be right.

Wildfire in California is not an IF, it's a WHEN. And the scale of these fires increases every year. KBers living in rural grasslands and forests need to clear a defensible space around their homes and keep it clear. I do not recommend defying evacuation orders, but if you plan on doing so, have a real plan, and a plan B that includes a good escape route. Be ready. It's never too late – until it is.

# K6XX II: 2000–2020

## *The August 2020 Destruction of the K6XX Station*

*Or, You are NOT a First Responder if you do not Respond*

*Bob Wolbert, K6XX*

### Sunday, 16 August

Howling winds and thunder crashes awoke me a bit before 3am. The weather had been unusually hot, so the windows were open and the sounds of outdoor furniture sliding across the deck and crashing into the walls was, well, awakening. Flashes of light identified the source of the thunder: lightning is rare here so it is not the first thing considered when there are loud 'booms' outside.

We watched the lightning for about 45 minutes (remember, it is rare here). All of the visible strikes were cloud-to-cloud. I eventually returned to bed.

After dawn, the various HTs were tuned to the various fire dispatch and tactical frequencies used in the local area. There were many calls and reports of smoke. Many of them were, as usual, UTL (Unable to Locate, i.e., false alarms). But a large number were actual fires. One of the reports, of three columns of smoke rising near China Grade, was the most disturbing. CalFire refused to send anything to this particular fire, citing lack of resources. Boulder Creek fire responded alone.

### Monday, 17 August

Numerous fires continued burning. The China Grade fire was not getting much attention. Only one firefighting helicopter made very occasional passes, several right over my house and uncomfortably low. Low enough that I could easily see this blue aircraft—not a CalFire aircraft—had not been washed or waxed for a very long time. Since the fire was 3+ miles away and apparently not growing, and since there was little evidence of firefighting occurring, I saw no reason to worry.

### Tuesday, 18 August

The lone blue helicopter made a few more passes. I counted only 3 all day, but this is not definitive. This China Grade fire can't be very substantial if that's all of the action it commands, right?! Most of the flight path was well away from me.

By evening, this was getting old. The batteries had died in a couple of the handhelds, so they were off while the cells recharged. Smoke was bad, but this was expected with so many local and regional fires burning. A leisurely dinner was had, until interrupted by a text message from K6GHA warning of fire movement. Indeed, the China Grade fire, which until this point didn't seem to even have a CalFire reference number, was getting bad and threatening houses and Big Basin state park. Fire "5-18" was now on the list, but still not receiving much attention or suppression force. Potential evacuations affecting the China Grade/CA-236 neighborhood were discussed on the radio.

I decided that this was a good time to begin implementing my bug-out plan. My wife had made a Costco run earlier in the day and the car was still stuffed, including 100 pounds of rice and cases of canned goods. The truck bed held a Henry 3K Ultra amplifier console, a donation from a local ham selling his QTH that I had hauled home over the weekend. It was sitting there waiting for lift assist, as I'm generally not capable of hefting its 250 pounds. Eventually, both car and truck were safely emptied. Critical papers were removed from the safe and loaded first. Then some of the camera gear. At this point, we determined this was a good time to install my Truck Bed Tent Deck, [<https://youtu.be/JG-rPL8VMqc>]. Packing continued leisurely until dark, when an ominous orange glow became ap-



parent above the treeline to the north-northwest. This definitely was not a sunset and it seemed to be centered on Big Basin Park. Now the urgency kicked up a couple of notches and packing became more hurried.

An alert was received on my phone about 9:30pm, but it was for a different neighborhood quite a distance away. My street and the smaller side streets were not mentioned. I turned on all of the outside lights and opened the driveway gate.

The orange glow got brighter and moved higher in the sky.

## Wednesday, 18 August

At 1:30 AM the dog began barking, announcing the unseen but imminent arrival of a vehicle. My expectations of a CalFire truck were dashed when the visitor was a Santa Cruz City cop (14 miles out of jurisdiction). Upon seeing me, dressed only in shorts (it was HOT that night), the pair of cops accelerated down the driveway turning on both lights and siren despite my standing still and waving to them.

The pair of geniuses pulled up next to me and demanded "Are you Evacuating or Not?"

I replied "If I have to", and began explaining that I was awaiting the fire crew so I could point out the fire hydrant and show the gravel and clearing all around the house, which allegedly made it very defensible. While these things should already be on the local CalFire neighborhood maps, it was dark thus a lot easier to point out in person than force the firefighters to figure it out on their own.

The cops wouldn't have any of that. "You have to leave immediately. There is a fire burning."

"Yes, I realize that. The vehicles are almost packed."

"You have to leave immediately."

"I want to show CalFire my fire hydrant and encourage them to use all 10,000 gallons of water in the tanks."

At this point, they took pity on me and radioed in to someone (who?) that my address had a "10,000 gallon hydrant". I don't remember hearing any reply. Then they repeated, "You have to leave immediately."

They pointed to the western and southwestern sky. During the preceding 15 minutes, the orange glow had expanded from approximately 40 degrees to now subtending an arc of 160 degrees. Oops. I stopped arguing and said we will pack the dog and run.

They waited in the driveway for a couple more minutes, but then saw that packing the dog was a difficult chore so they finally drove away.

Once the canine was contained, I checked the status of the water pressure pump, which makes the fire sprinkler system work to specification. While in the shack, I grabbed a to-be-repaired K3 transceiver that was alone on a shelf. Then Miki, the dog, and I departed. It was 1:50 am.

I wished the house good luck as it disappeared behind me.

Although the county forced me to have 10,000 gallons of standing storage, a separate fire hydrant line, the red-painted hydrant itself, suppression sprinklers everywhere (including the garage, shack, and the attic AND crawlspace areas of the house), all installed at great expense, they didn't matter. The tons of gravel ringing the house and hours of labor cutting the brush and grass perimeter back 150-500 feet likewise didn't deter the flames. A quick engineering analysis concludes that the fire hydrant itself doesn't scare away flames. Evidently a hose and someone holding that hose is also required.

Paying the extra State wildfire "not-a-tax" tax didn't help either.

We spent the night in a Starbuck's parking lot in Scotts Valley. At dawn, I noticed a new voicemail notification on my phone. It reported a missed call/voicemail from 11:32pm the previous night. As my phone had been glued to me for the preceding 24 hours and it had not rung at that time, this was curious. This call was my emergency evacuation notice. Verizon did not ring it through, instead sending it directly to voice mail. The voice mail notification took six hours to arrive.

At a more decent hour, we accepted the generous offer of hospitality from K6GHA. Hours later, Don's house received an Evacuation Warning worrying his wife, so she departed, leaving Don to deal with the three of us. Thank you for your generosity, Don!





## Thursday, 20 August

We left the area to stay with my sister's family at their grape ranch in Madera County.

## Tuesday, 25 August

After days of calling and writing everyone I could think of that might have some information, including making multiple telephone calls to the direct lines of the CalFire and Corrections facility almost directly across the street from the house, CalFire published a damage map listing my house as "Destroyed". Strangely, their map notes that my address could not be verified, which is curious since there aren't any structures on my side of the street for a mile in either direction.

Looking back, I understand why CalFire has not 'confirmed' my address. Upon its completion in 2002, the CDF final inspector photographed the house's fire resistant implementation and asked permission to promote the design as a fine example of safe mountain building. Since they forgot my house on its night of need, they are likely best served by forgetting it forever.

## Friday, 28 August

I'm dealing with the insurance company. Although they believe the house qualifies as a "Total Loss", they need proof before proceeding any further. Due to the wuhanflu, they will not send anyone to inspect and are awaiting photographic proof from me(!). We have evacuated to San Jose and are staying in a beautiful, nearly-new hotel while awaiting clearance to return and inspect the damage.

## 29 August – 7 September

More dealing with the insurance company. The good news is that with fixed coverage, there isn't much need for negotiating. The bad news is that the payout won't cover rebuilding costs for the original structure. Also attended the



local disaster 'faire' and discussed my situation with a couple of the county permitting departments. They claim to offer an "expedited" permitting process for rebuilding, but that process is surprisingly similar to the drawn out, difficult process endured when initially building the place in 2000-2002. Since I was intimately familiar with that chore, I could ask, "How does this differ from the regular, non-expedited process?" The reply was reflexive: "We normally get 100 applications in a year. You are asking us to handle 900 quickly? That isn't going to happen".

Ahh, our government; here to help.

## 8 September

Working with a contractor (wink), I passed through the roadblocks and returned home. At first, the absolute devastation was startling, and I drive past the homesite without slowing. Starting at the bottom of the hill where wedding preparations (Daughter #2) had been proceeding for 19 months, I got out and looked around. Wisps of smoke were still rising from underground. Looking uphill, the most amazing sight appeared: Lisa Tower on top of the hill is still standing! (My towers are named after my girls). Unfortunately, the other guyed towers are now horizontal.

Walking slowly uphill to the house/shack, the rubble is less than 20 inches high. The only structure visible was foundation and slabs of stucco walls, their studs having completely disappeared. In the shack, amplifier transformers and blower housings provided the most apparent evidence of the former radio station. There was no sign of the K4 or any of the K3s. Boatanchor chassis survived, but it was hard to distinguish between a 75A4 and a Viking Valliant. Certainly no plaque or certificate was spared, although a few blackened metal sheets from JIDX awards remain. Rows of ashes shaped like compressed magazines indicated the previous existence of my technical library, including its 1920-present complete collection of QST. These ashes disintegrated at first touch, although some bits displayed the distinctive page number logo of earlier years.

At my property line separating me from the Ben Lomond CalFire camp (yes, they are right next door), I saw a very stark contrast: my land was blackened horrifically, but the CalFire camp didn't seem to have a single burned leaf. [See photo] The difference between my side of the line and theirs was stark. Apparently they protected their state-owned shacks but did not spare a single truck to protect my place. My dedicated fire hydrant CDF (CalFire's previous name) demanded that I install at significant cost still had an unbroken paint coat over the outlet cover: it had not been touched. No one protected my house. But certainly I'm not bitter...

## 9-11 September

Now that I've actually viewed the dead, it is time to move forward. Unfortunately, the various engineering firms and contractors contacted all come back with the same story: we can't start the rebuilding process yet because the county isn't accepting permit applications! The only emergency accommodation made by the bureaunazis is the suspension of their 3-day limit on living in a self-contained trailer on your own property.

Late Friday afternoon the mandatory forced evacuation was lifted and I no longer had to impersonate a hired hand to access the property. We will live in a travel trailer until an intermediate building is permitted—as in building/septic system permit, not "permission". After that, it is time to redesign a new house/shack. This will take a long time. It was 5 years to design and build K6XX II. Hopefully this time it will be half of that, since no changes are anticipated to the shack or antenna system design. Its performance was operator-limited before the fire.

## 14 September

I was on-site preparing a parking spot for the trailer when a CalFire truck drove down the driveway. I rudely blocked his path and when he stopped, I yelled "You are about a month too late!" He graciously apologized and I noted that his truck was from the Yuba City area, not the cowardly Ben Lomond stay-at-home non-responders. (Remember, I'm not bitter)

The fire has now been "contained" by the normal definition for over a week, with no new structures threatened for even longer, yet it is still listed as only 90-something percent contained. Now that it is no longer necessary, helicopter traffic is triple what it was during the first two critical days of the fire. Makes one wonder why they are wasting an expensive resource to dampen fuel that likely should just burn out, or at most, direct a small hand crew toward any remaining hot spots. They better not be running up the bill just so they may later claim that they "spent \$N Million fighting the fire". Those efforts and resources should have been dedicated at the beginning, not after the fire had already run its course.

## The Complaining Continues

Seems that every time a solar cycle peak approaches, I am without antennas. The only time I was prepared was during the "runt" peak of Cycle 24. There is lot of work required before Cycle 25 reaches maximum.

A couple years ago the house insurance policy doubled. When I questioned this, I was told that this increase could be cut back to "only" 25% if I dropped the full replacement coverage and instead fixing the liability limits. As a thrifty lifelong ham, I accepted that suggestion. Oops.

At least I have some coverage. Several neighbors don't, since most insurance companies no-bid our properties due to the fire risk. (Hummm, I wonder why...) With a little luck we will be able to rebuild a somewhat smaller replacement home on the property. The big house was becoming a liability anyway since the daughters have grown and departed. The hurdles have not stopped: this county is notorious for its agonizing permitting ordeal. Presently, they have obstinately halted accepting any applications (!) for permits.

On the NCCC reflector a couple months ago, I was warned that my youngest, a 2020 graduate, might boomerang back to again live with us. I insisted that wouldn't happen. See how far I go to keep my word?

My confidence in the effectiveness of the fire defenses made me miscalculate the relative risk of evacuating the equipment. I estimated a 100% chance of scratching my precious radios, and a tiny chance that they would be damaged. Thus I did not pack any of them. Only the lone disconnected K3, with a label questioning its performance and suggesting investigation and repair, remains of the six contest-grade seats. First-class test equipment, full power amplifiers and 'classic' radios were also abandoned, along with a lifetime supply of PL-259s, ferrites, coax cable reels, electronic components, etc. I really should have made an inventory of my "junk" collection. Instead, I'm presently mentally walking up to each equipment rack and shelf, pointing to the various spectrum analyzers or variable capacitor bin boxes, while trying to remember everything left behind. Plans for repairing various things that survived are complicated by the realization that the required tools are also vaporized. I had just about everything, just the way I liked it, and had even stopped attending the local electronics flea markets except for their social aspect. Oops again.

The shack was a purpose built, separate building, the size of a two-car garage. Its walls were covered with contest plaques demonstrating the effectiveness of the antenna system. A large binder was stuffed with certificates from lesser achievements. I will miss them.

There must be a moral to this story. Hopefully you can see one that eludes me at this point. I've never authored such negative JUG material before, and have written and re-written this multiple times over the past weeks yet the tone is darker with each re-write. Let me end by stating that hardline and Phillystran are not fire resistant. The foam center dielectric of low-loss cable melts and oozes away under heat. Phillystran melts also. Adding 25' of EHS to the bottom of each run probably helps a lot, but when nearby trees are burning and radiating heat right at the guy lines—and especially when those burning trees fall toward the tower—the tower will not remain vertical.

While K6XX is silenced for the foreseeable future, its operator has been offered guest-op seats for CQP and CQWW (TU N6XI & WC6H for your supreme generosity!). Looking forward to hearing you on the air soon.





# Fire Resistant House Construction at N6ZFO

Bill Haddon, N6ZFO

One should, I suppose never use the term fire proof. But the N6ZFO house in Lake County may be close. Moving here from Marin in 2008, fire danger, always on our mind, was probably a fairly minor consideration. My XYL's interest in gardening, though, guaranteed a sunny rather than forested QTH. We were in disbelief at the house we finally purchased atop Mt. Dali-Dona, an official USGS peak directly bordering on the lands of the Clear Lake State Park. At 1964-foot elevation it has stunning views of the agricultural "Big Valley," Mt. Konocti and Clear Lake itself. We have 27 acres of mostly rocks, but including a 1.6 acre vineyard of Syrah, Petite Sirah, Marsanne and Viognier vines.

The image of Mt. Konocti, a backdrop to our own mountain, always beckons, but sometimes mildly suggests impending disaster. USGS considers Mt. Konocti to be an active volcano. While it's been at least 10,000 years since an eruption, now it's 10,000 and twelve years and we worry just a little. The Rick the Locust, K6VVA, Bob, K6NV, Alan, K6SRZ, Alan, KO7X (sk), Saraj, KU6F and a couple others, including, importantly, Kurt, K7NV, have visited, along with good friend and former neighbor Bill, N0KQ. Bob, K6NV, a former USFS incident commander on some of the, then, largest CA fires, advised us on many fine points, including the important instruction to remove curtains from the windows at times of high fire danger and when absent.

Architecturally our house is modeled after the houses of Provence, France but in reality more closely resembles an Italian Tuscan country villa. We have thoroughly explored the similarities in trips to both locations. Two trips to Italy were required to confirm the similarity. The house dominates the top of Mt. Dali-Dona at 600 feet above Clear Lake. Its mountain, lake and valley views are to die for. It is a first-rate ham radio location as well, with a below zero degrees elevation in many directions, and only a 6 degree horizon centered on Sao Paulo, Brazil, the direction of Konocti. Dali-Dona is a Pomo Indian word meaning inverted basket, obviously appropriate when seen from the west. Our small winery, the Talleyrand Winery, is 180 feet below the house at 1780 feet and has similar construction.



The house and winery construction utilized TriD panels (see <https://tridipanel.com>). The wall and roof panels consist of a 3-D wire matrix containing an insulating polymer and enclosed by a wire grid onto which a thick layer of concrete is blown after the panels are installed. That leaves a thick membrane of structural, fire resistant concrete on both the interior and exterior walls, with heat and cold-resisting insulation in between. The membrane extends even to the soffits. The roof is tile, over plywood, over tri-D panels with concrete, in that case just on the interior surface, given that the tiles themselves are fire resistant. The N6ZFO radio tower somehow required an enclosing garden shed. While it looks the same of the house, it does not have interior concrete, only exterior 3/4-inch masonry. The right-hand side is a concrete block structure, formerly housing the transmitter for Konocti Television in the 1950's. That transmitter relayed SF and Sacramento TV signals to Lake County's several communities.



Pres. Jimmy Carter installing TriD panels on a housing project for Habitat for Humanity

There are two types of indigenous trees around the house, grey pines and oaks. In twelve years we've removed all of the conifers except one, some cut by our tree expert and several falling on their own. Sadly, these trees supported important wire antennas. The oaks are heritage trees and they provide shade and "air conditioning" under daytime temperatures which have reached 123 degrees F. As shown in the photo, we accept some risk by having oak branches, carefully trimmed, over a portion of the roof. Mt. Dali-Dona is within the prescribed distance of the Kelseyville central fire station and thus we have reasonable insurance rates.

We keep 2500-5000 gallons of water on site, pumped from a well in the valley, but water availability is definitely the weak part of our system. Should fire reach the two 2500 gallon plastic tanks we would have no water. We are protected from PG&E



shutoff with battery backed- up solar power however, so we can continue to pump water during a power failure. Probably we should install an in-ground water storage unit, aka swimming pool, and that is under discussion.

The most immediately threatening fire occurred in June 2008, two months after we moved to Lake County, when a person driving an old car dragging a muffler unintentionally set seven fires along Soda Bay Road. That's 1.3 miles from our house at the access point to our own private road, shared with two other land-owners on about 120 acres. The response from Cal-Fire was rapid and total. . helicopters dropped water and small planes delivered fire retardant, judiciously and with great skill, missing our neighbor's 30 acres of grape vines. Since that initial incident, the cascade of almost yearly fires in Lake County, resulting in the loss of over 2,000 structures, have all been located a comfortable distance away. We've never had a mandatory evacuation. Four close friends lost a total of six houses in the Valley Fire five years ago. Amazing, there were no fire-producing lighting strikes here on August 18, 2020

Normally one hopes, perhaps often too optimistically, that their house is fire-proof or at least fire resistant. We have actual proof. Some years ago, in the community of Loch Lommond, the locus of Lake County's destructive Valley Fire, Sean Robinson and his dad Jim Robinson, REDXA member KE6UAR, had built an essentially identically constructed family house in a heavily forested area, much more so than ours, and mostly conifers. In the Valley Fire, five years ago at CQP time, all of the houses around Sean's were completely destroyed. His survived the fire, with the interior of the Tri-D-constructed house only lightly scathed. Jim and Sean used the same Tri-D panels that are used at Dali-Dona, in their case with 300 tons of blown-on concrete. On the week of the Valley fire Sean and his family were travelling. A relative in the house evacuated successfully. The only problem was that the garage door opened, and all of Sean's tools were destroyed. I recommend watching the 8-minute video that Jim and Sean have posted, noting particularly the status of the kitchen.

You-tube version: <https://youtu.be/DwyyoNmhRzg>

High resolution video "The House that Beat the Valley Fire" (same 8 minute length) at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/8op9s08wa38twx6/House%20that%20beat%20the%20Valley%20Fire.avi?dl=0https://www.dropbox.com/s/8op9s08wa38twx6/House%20that%20beat%20the%20Valley%20Fire.avi?dl=0>

When October comes, most of you think CQP. We think FIRE. It is usually the most frightening month of the year.

73, Bill, N6ZFO.

[Note: Sadly, Jim, KE6UAR is a SK, the result of a multi-drug-resistant infection acquired during a Latin American trip several years ago. His son Sean still lives in the house; he is a pilot for the local REACH helicopter service, operating out of Lampson Field in Lake County. Sean regularly flies directly over our house on his way to work at our local airport, Lampson Field.



# Point Generator Profile

## Andy, AE6Y

*Interviewed by Bob, W1RH*

Whenever I see the name, Andy Faber, what comes to mind are: Awesome contester, lawyer, P49Y, and just a really great guy who's loyal to NCCC and the other clubs he belongs to.

With that said, a quick look at 3830 shows some very significant contest scores from AE6Y and P49Y. As a single op, operating from P49Y, Andy did 5.4M in the 2019 ARRL DX SSB Contest, 5.7M in the 2018 ARRL DX CW Contest, 18.3M in the 2019 WPX SSB Contest, and it goes on and on, with even better numbers in the years when we actually had sunspots. P49Y has been really busy over the years in all of the DX contests. At home, you'll see AE6Y's call sign in the Sprints, the NAQP's and CW Ops as well as CQP. Last, but certainly not least, is that treasured memory of operating with the call sign of DR4W in the IARU Contest as a multi-single with N6XI at the 2017 WRTC.

Now, more from AE6Y: . . .

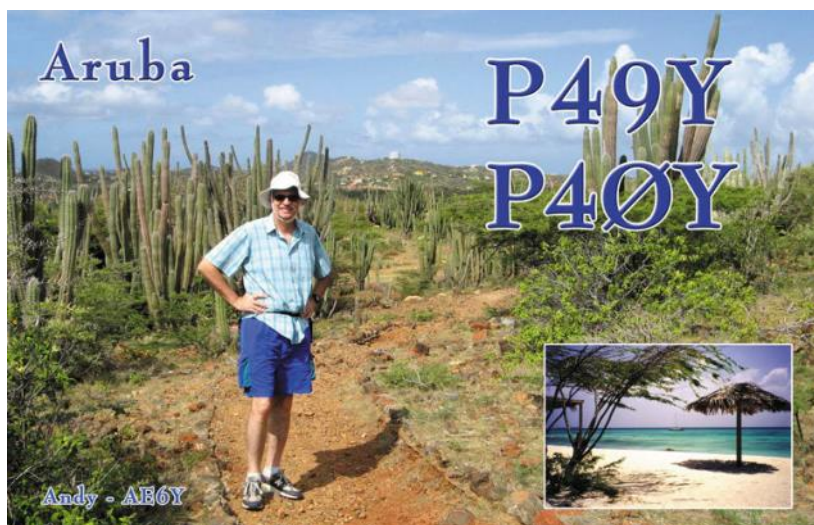
**Name/Call Sign:** Andy Faber, AE6Y

**Past calls:** WV2BWS, WA2BWS (1958)

**Location:** Monte Sereno (next to Los Gatos)

**How much property do you have?** one acre

**Describe your antenna system:** One tower, a 65-foot Rohn 45 that starts about 20 feet below house level (I'm on a side hill). On top are some Force 12 antennas, a 3-el 20/2 el. 40; 80m dipole, and 3 el. 15/3 el. 10. Also a 160 inverted vee. No receiving antennas. The tower was originally put up by Tom Schiller himself, N6BT, in 1992. It briefly became something of a neighborhood cause célèbre, but I had a valid building permit so it survived the local storm.



Of course, the contest station I co-own on Aruba, P40L/P49Y, with John Fore, W6LD, is a completely different story. There we basically have a 100 foot by 100 foot city lot, albeit with lots of open land for beverages behind it. See [www.arubaqth.com](http://www.arubaqth.com) for more details. On Aruba, we just finished a massive antenna and tower rebuild (described in two recent JUG articles), but haven't really been able to use them due to Covid. We need to seriously think about remoting the station; I expect John and I will be able to get a lot of help from Club members in that endeavor.



**What's in your shack?** K3/P3 (ancient, from 2007, but upgraded to "S"); IC 7600, KPA1500 and Titan amps, with various backup radios and amps. .

**What are your previous QTH's?** I was originally licensed on Long Island in 1958 as a kid, starting with a DX20 and SX99. I managed to work DXCC on CW from there with my upgraded radios (DX100B and NC300) before heading off to college and going inactive for a number of years. Never forgot the code, though, and when I happened to be on a plane one day in 1973 while in law school on an interviewing trip to NYC, my seatmate pulled out a copy of QST. Turned out he was W2TUK, then-president of the ARRL; after talking radio for several hours, we were met at the airport by contesting legend W4KFC. That rekindled my interest in radio. I briefly held a WB6 call, and then when incentive licensing came in, I was indeed incentivized to get my extra class ticket and my present call. I was active for several years from Santa Cruz, then moved into our present house in 1985.

**If you're working, what is your career? If not, what was your career?** I've been working at the same law firm, Berliner Cohen, in San Jose, since graduating from Stanford Law School in 1974. I specialize in municipal law—I am the contract City Attorney for the City of Gilroy- and in land use and real estate development. Lately, much of my work has been on both sides of affordable housing issues, working with developers that want to build them and cities that don't want to approve them but whose discretion to turn them down is increasingly circumscribed by new State laws.



**Married? Kids? Grandkids?** I've been married to Sandy Faber for the last 53 years. She is a retired astronomy professor at UCSC (though that seems to mean that she now works about 60 hours a week instead of 80, and doesn't get paid for it) – she was the guest speaker, on cosmology, at the Club's July meeting. We have two kids, both married, and two grandkids. They all live in Oregon. [Ed note: Sandy is into radio as well, but radioastronomy, where her research on the formation and evolution of galaxies led to membership in the prestigious National Academy in 1985, and receipt of the National Medal of Science awarded by Barak Obama in 2013 ,among many, many other awards and honors.]

**How many DXCC entities have you worked?** I had worked all of them, but checking my DXCC credits shows that I stopped keeping up with new additions. Will have to get a confirmation from Z6, Kosovo, someday. I am on the Honor Roll Mixed, CW, and Phone. [*W1RH note - A few days after Andy answered this question, he sent this follow-up: I said I hadn't worked Z6, Kosovo. However, today in going through and printing labels for about 500 bureau cards received over the last year or so (95%) of which are for P49Y, I came across a card for AE6Y from Z60A, which says it was the first official activation of Z6 in 2018, confirming both phone and cw. Glad that I actually do reply to bureau cards and happened not to overlook this one!* ]

**What's your favorite contest?** From Aruba, John and I mainly work the big DX contests, ARRL DX, CQ WPX, and CQWW. Although I only have done phone and CW, Ed (W0YK, P49X) has won many RTTY contests from the station. I'm hoping that the state of world travel will allow me to do one of the CQWW's this fall from there. I've very much enjoyed the Classic category in CQWW: the simplicity of one radio and no internet, the strategy of planning how to manage your 24 hours of allowed operating time, and the feeling of not being exhausted when the contest is over. From home I enjoy domestic contests, including CQP, NAQPs, and Sprints. I sometimes do SS to help out a club (NCCC or PL259 lately), but find it stultifyingly dull on Sundays.

**Any tips for contesters?** People learn in different ways. Obviously, getting on the air during contests is the best way to move forward. The standard advice to hang out at a multi-op is certainly valid. I didn't do that, as I'm pretty much self-taught (including writing my own logging program, which I still use), but I find just talking contesting at meeting with some of the Club members who are among the best contest operators in the world is always enlightening. Also, don't feel that every contest has to be a maximum effort. Just getting on for a few hours can be fun and educational. If you are shy, try a contest like NAQP Phone, which is very friendly because your name is part of the exchange, so after a while, guys start to say hello by name and the contest becomes very social.

**What would you like to see changed in NCCC?** It's encouraging to see a new crop of younger, very technically astute, contesters coming into prominence. I think that bodes well for the future of the Club. But I would like to see more good old contest cheerleading and enthusiasm, particularly for contests like Sprint and NAQP, where we have Club teams. We also used to start meetings by having everyone when they introduced themselves tell about their experience in the last contest, or what they are planning to do in the next one. We seem to have gotten away from that kind of direct contest focus that we used to have.

**Any other hobbies besides ham radio?** Well, I certainly enjoy my family. We have been rebuilding our backyard and pool for the last year, and it was great to inaugurate it during the August heat wave with a visit from grandkids. I enjoy traveling and trying to teach myself foreign languages from books and CDs. It will be nice when (and if) such travel comes back.





## NCCC Membership Information

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

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).

Life Memberships.— \$250.00 Contact [secretary.nccc@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.nccc@gmail.com). The 80/20 Rule: Members who have reached 80 years of age have and been a NCCC Member for 20 years are eligible for Honorary life membership. Contact [secretary.nccc@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.nccc@gmail.com)

## JUG Articles Wanted!

Your help allows us to produce a quality newsletter. Please consider submitting an article!

The editor welcomes any and all relevant articles for inclusion in the JUG.

The preferred format is MS Word (.doc or .docx) Arial 12 point. Pictures should be full resolution. Avoid PDF files if possible. Please contact us if that's your only format. Include pictures or charts in-line with the text, or identify them by file name at the insertion point.

Send material to Bill, N6ZFO at [n6zfo@arrl.net](mailto:n6zfo@arrl.net) 415 209-3084

## Northern California Contest Club Reflector—Guidelines

The NCCC reflector is devoted to the discussion of contesting.

Topics include, for example, contests, station building, dx-peditions, technical questions, contesting questions, amateur radio equipment wants/sales, score posting, amateur radio meetings/conventions, and membership achievements.

Postings may not include personal attacks, politics, or off-subject posts. Such postings will be considered a violation of the Guidelines.



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**KENWOOD**



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**TM-D710G**  
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**TM-V71A**  
2M/440 DualBand



**TM-281A**  
2 Mtr Mobile



**TH-D74A**  
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