



# Scuttlebutt

No. 89 October 1990

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## Captain's Cabin

Dave Robbins, KY1H

Well, the summer antenna season is over now, the results from last year's CQ WW contests are out, and Boxboro is just around the corner... It must be almost contest season again. With sunspots hanging in there this could be a great year for contests. I hope everyone will get out there and give it their best efforts. To help inspire everyone I am announcing the new 'YCCC President's Awards'. I don't have all the details worked out yet, but there will be something for each entry class and everyone will have a chance for something. Just remember to send your cover sheets to NK1F ASAP after the CQ contests so I can compile the list of winners. And don't forget to mark your club affiliation on the cover sheets.

I would like to take this time to pass a special thanks along to K1EA for his work with the packet network. The sales of CT have been going just super and Ken has been putting the money to good use improving our packet network. Just in the last few weeks we have added at least two new nodes and new backbone links to them. More improvements are coming to help improve service; see Ken at the Boxboro club meeting for more details.

In order to improve the club presence in the New York City and Long Island areas I have appointed a new area manager to cover that area. Jim Metcalk, NQ2D, will take over the area immediately. K2EK will con-

tinue to cover the rest of the state. If anyone is interested I would be happy to appoint them the WMA area manager. Remember, if you are looking for a station to operate or need operators for a station you should contact your area manager for assistance. I know that I will probably need some operators here to replace one that got married and another that is expecting his first kid on one of the SS weekends.

## Next Meeting

Paul Young, K1XM

The next meeting of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club will be at the ARRL New England Division Convention in Boxboro, MA, on Saturday, October 13, 1990, at 1 pm. The New England Division convention is at the Sheraton in Boxboro, MA.

## Directions:

The Sheraton is at the junction of I-495 and Rt 111.

**From the East:** Take Rt 2 to Rt 111. The driveway to the Sheraton is on the left just before I-495.

**From the North or South:** Take I-495 to Rt 111. Go East on Rt 111, the Sheraton is on the right.

**From the West:** Take I-90 (The Mass Turnpike) to I-495. Or take I-90 to I-290 to I-495 and cut off a corner.

You probably won't get to park at the Sheraton. There is plenty of parking and they run shuttle busses. It is

easier to park in the overflow area and take the bus than to park along the road and walk.

The meeting dates for the rest of 1990 are:

DATE	DAY
October 13-14 - Boxboro	
December 2, 1990	Sunday

## Secretary's Report Yankee Clipper Contest Club

The August, 1990, YCCC summer picnic meeting was held at Holland Park State Park in Holland, Massachusetts, on August 5th. Twenty-five members, their families, and many guests attended. A brief business meeting was held to record the Treasurer's Report, which showed a balance of \$2446.51, and to welcome 4 new members:

Bob Lafleur, NQ1C  
Rusty Hack, NM1K  
James B. Burke, K1NCD  
Stewart Wilansky, NU1P

Most of the afternoon was devoted to grilling burgers, playing softball, swimming, and, of course, eyeball QSOs. Allen, N2KW, demonstrated his DXing prowess by catching three fish in five minutes (without a net, of course).

Respectfully submitted,  
Charlotte L. Richardson, KQ1F  
Secretary/Treasurer  
7 August 1990

## Floating Paul Young, K1XM

Congratulations to the Frankford Radio Club. Although club score records are not published by CQ, I'm sure that this is the first time anyone ever broke 300,000,000. If we are going to beat them this year EVERYONE in the club will have to get on the air.

The YCCC Contest Cookbook will be given out, to members only, at the club meeting in Boxboro. We will mail any which are not picked up, but if you will not be at the meeting please try to arrange for someone to pick up your copy for you; postage on the cookbook adds up fast!

## YCCC (Extended) Packet Network Dave Robbins, KY1H

As of September 23, 1990, 2m paths link the following nodes: NK1K and K1OT, K1EA and AK1A, and NE1R and K1NG-6. The following nodes are linked by 220 or 450 MHz paths: W2HPF and Utica (see below), W2HPF and WA2TVE, WA2TVE and KD1R, KD1R and K1EA, K1XX and K1EA, W1BIM and K1EA, K1GQ and K1EA, NK1K and K1EA, NO1A and K1EA, WA1G and K1EA, KB1H and K1EA, NE1R and KB1G, K2TR and KY1H, K5NA

and KY1H, K5NA and W1RM, W1RM and K1EA, N1DVS and K2GX, KE2AY and K2GX, W2JT and K2GX, KB2XL and K2GX, and KB2XL and W1RM. Please send updates and corrections to KY1H on any cluster node.

NODE	CLUSTER NODES	
	FREQ.	LOCATION
AK1A	144.95	Bolton, MA
NO1A	144.99	Groton, MA
W1BIM	145.03.09	Spencer, MA
N1DVS	144.99	Vista, NY
K1EA	144.95	Harvard, MA
WA1G	TBA	Rosilindale, MA
K1GQ	144.97	Hollis, NH
KB1H	144.93	Dayville, CT
KY1H	145.69	Peru, MA
NK1K	144.93	Exeter, NHY
KD1R	145.03?	Westford, VT
NE1R	144.97	N. Scituate, RI
W1RM	144.95	Burlington, CT
K1XX	145.71	Rindge, NH
KE2AY	144.95	Pleasantville, NY
K2GX	145.69	Queens, NYC, NY
W2HPF	144.91	Rochester, NY
W2JT	144.93+	Parsippany, NJ
K2TR	144.97	Altamont, NY
WA2TVE	145.05++	Utica, NY
KB2XL	144.93	Pt. Jeff. Sta., NY
K5NA	145.67	Cottkill, NY

+ W2JT has a user port on 221.030 also.

++ Access via 'UTICA' NET/ROM node on 145.05.

## Results of the OMARC Spring 1990 Midnight Special

Richard L. King, K5NA

The 1990 Spring Overlook Mountain Radio Club (OMARC) Midnight Special was held on May 20, 1990, from 0300Z to 0500Z. The first hour was on 40 SSB, the second hour on 80CW and the exchange was your Elmer's name and callsign.

WB2Q, Steve, won the 1990 Spring OMARC Midnight Special with a mixed mode total of 118 QSOs. Steve used an outstanding CW second hour with a winning 47 QSOs to break open a 3-way race for top spot between himself, KM9P/4 Bill, and K6LL Dave. KM9P/4 won the close race for the SSB top spot with 73 QSOs.

The top 5 finishers in each category were:

	OVERALL	SSB		CW	
WB2Q	118	KM9P/4	73	WB2Q	47
KM9P/4	113	K6LL	72	KM9P (tie)	40
K6LL	112	WB2Q	71	K6LL (tie)	40
W2XL	97	W2XL	59	W2XL	38
W1KKF	80	KD2NE	57	W1KKF	36

## Club Competition

Once again OMARC was the easy winner of the club competition for the Midnight Special. However, a battle developed for second place between the Meriden Amateur Radio Club and the Poughkeepsie Amateur Radio Club. Meriden won it even though they had one fewer entry than Poughkeepsie. No other radio clubs had more than a single member entry and 30% of the received logs listed no club membership at all.

ENTRIES	TOTAL	CLUB NAME
11	611	Overlook Mountain Amateur Radio Club
3	134	Meriden Amateur Radio Club
4	126	Poughkeepsie Amateur Radio Club
1	63	Utah Contest Club
1	36	Frankford Radio Club
1	30	Bluegrass Amateur Radio Society
1	22	Texas DX Society

## Overall Results of the OMARC 1990 Spring Midnight Special

CALL	TOTAL	SSB	CW	CALL	TOTAL	SSB	CW
WB2Q	118	71	47	AB1U	36	20	16
KM9P/4	113	73	40	K5NA/3	35	22	13
K6LL	112	72	40	WD9GGY	34	20	14
W2XL	97	59	38	K2GBH	33	0	33
W1KKF	80	44	36	K2HA	32	15	17
W5XX	79	50	29	KA2TIP	31	31	0
WF5E	79	56	23	KU4A	30	30	0
W2JU	79	46	33	WE7G	28	0	28
KC2QF	65	40	25	KB2EEU	27	27	0
K6XO	63	29	34	W4/TF3KX	25	10	15
KY2J	62	30	32	W5ASP	22	14	8
WA2JQK	61	46	15	WA2KCL	20	20	0
KD2NE	57	57	0	W5NR	20	6	14
WA3AFS	54	39	15	KG5VK	20	20	0
K5MM/7	51	16	35	KC2IW	19	19	0
K3TX	47	18	29	W1FD	13	13	0
WB1GYZ	41	16	25	N2FRZ	12	12	0
KE2PF	36	6	30				

## Announcing the OMARC 25th Anniversary Midnight Special

**SPONSORED BY:** Overlook Mountain Amateur Radio Club (OMARC), Kingston, NY.

**DATE:** October 21, 1990 (UTC).

**TIME:** 0300 to 0500 (UTC).

**BANDS:** 40 m CW (0300 to 0400 UTC); 75m SSB (0400 to 0500 UTC).

**EXCHANGE:** OMARC members past and present send their name and "OMARC". All others send their name and county.

**EXAMPLE:** W2XL would send: "Bob OMARC". K6LL would send: "Dave Yuma".

**VALID QSO:** Any other amateur radio station as long as he gives you the requested information. Only one QSO per station per band/mode is allowed. Please remove your duplicate contacts.

**SUGGESTED FREQUENCIES:** 7030 to 7050 kHz on CW, 7130 to 7150 kHz (novice), 3830 to 3880

kHz on SSB.

**CLUB COMPETITION:** Write the name of the radio club you belong to on the summary sheet for a club total listing. You must actually be a member in good standing of this club.

**SPECIAL AWARDS:** Since this is the 25th anniversary year of OMARC, we will award an OMARC T-shirt to each of the top three mixed mode finishers. A fourth T-shirt will be awarded to a station outside the top three that works the most different OMARC stations. Past and present OMARC members are not eligible to win a T-shirt.

**REPORTING:** Deadline for reporting is December 1, 1990. Send logs, dupe sheets, band/mode totals, and a statement of honorable and fair competition to W2XL, who is OK in any Callbook or:

Bob Schwenk, W2XL

133 Clifton Avenue

Kingston, NY 12401

**RESULTS:** The total results will be published in the National Contest Journal (NCJ).

**FOR MORE INFO CONTACT:** K5NA, PO Box 88, Cottekill, NY 12419, telephone: 914-687-9700 (home number).

## Score Rumors

### WAE CW

Call	Qs	Ms	Score
WE6G/1	?	?	42824

## '89 CQ WW CW Contest:

### KHOAM Story

Tack Kumagai, JE1CKA/KHOAM

This is my operation story in KH0/Saipan during '89 CQ WW CW contest weekend.

I operated KH0/JE1CKA in '88 CQ WW CW contest in single op/multi band. This was very exciting and another experience for me. But the used callsign caused a lots of confusion. KH0 callsign is not familiar yet, so many station could not get it correctly. I had to repeat my callsign several times, too bad. So I decided to pass the FCC Extra class license. I took exam at Dayton, OH during Hamvention but failed. And I tried again on Guam in Sept. Fortunately, I passed the Extra class but I did not change callsign to 2 x 1 series. This KHOAM callsign fits me very much and I decided to keep this until KH0A will be available, HI.

I left for Saipan 22 Nov. (Wed.) but could not touch with the hotel manager until Thursday afternoon. Very unfortunately, my room reservation was canceled and the hotel manager said that the room would not be available from Saturday. Too bad. Contest will start at 10am on Saipan and I need several hours prior to the contest for rig setting, etc. I asked him to have the room before 8am Sat. at latest.

I started the antenna work from 5pm on Thu. on the rooftop of the 10 story hotel. I brought 2m roof tower, coax, LF dipole, IC750 with me. AH0D, Tony, lent me a TA-33, rotator, and Heath SB-1000 amp. I spent a full day of Friday for antenna work. I completed them around 6pm. But no room was still available at that time, so I had to start the operation at a landing of exit to the rooftop [he included a photo of this]. TA-33 worked fair but the LF inverted V did not work at all. Outside was too dark already and I could not any adjustment that day. The manager confirmed that the room just under the antenna would be available at 7am on Saturday. It was not good enough but not too bad.

I arrived at the hotel a bit earlier than 7 am then had a room key. Room was too dirty, very bad smell of whiskey and cigar, etc. Anyhow, I started to set the rig, had several coax from rooftop. Checked antennas and rigs. BIG HAPPENING! When I switched SB-1000 on, flash and big noise "BANG!!" were heard. I checked it and found the fuse was melted. I went to purchase the fuse to the hardware center near the hotel. I replaced to the new fuse and turned on the switch. Same event was happened. It was 9:30, 30 mins. before the contest. I removed the cover and checked around the tube socket (flash was seen around the socket). But, I could not find any irregular parts. Finally I found the origin. It seemed to be P-G touch of 3-500Z. I did not have a spare tube so I must run with IC750 barefoot. The worse thing was that the LF antenna did not work at all even I replaced coax and balun. There was no time for adjusting element length so I gave up the trial. There was only one choice that go single band with IC750 barefoot.

It was rather hard to compete with big guns with 70W output. But condition and KH0 prefix helped me a lots. I ended the contest with 2930 QSOs 32Z and 90C. The claimed score was 994,544. I did not expect such number of QSOs or great score with barefoot. It was tough work but very good experience.

I'm planning to have the M/M operation in '90 CQ WW DX PH contest together with TOP JA CONTESTERS from same hotel. And I expect to make a single effort again in WW CW contest.

73 and see you in the contest pile-ups.

### Spratly-90, 1S0XV/1S1RR

The expedition that almost wasn't, presented from two distinctive points of view.

The authors wish to thank Richard Gelber, K2WR, for his assistance and advice with the writing of this story.

### Part I:

#### Romeo Spepanenko, 3W3RR/UB5JRR, Expedition Organizer

Last year, when my attempts to obtain a license in North Korea failed, I started looking around for an opportunity to get another 'good' country on the air. Through some friends of mine, I found a joint Soviet-Vietnamese company called 'Kiulong' and met Yuri Brazhenko, its Commercial Director. Earlier that year I had graduated from Simferopol University majoring in Math and computer programming, put the diploma on the wall and for some time worked for Mountain Rescue Service - mountain climbing is my second hobby. But I wanted something more, so some-time later in 1989, with the help of Kiulong, I went to Vietnam, where, as it turned out, they were already waiting for me.

The Minister of Telecommunications of that country wanted to create an Amateur Radio society, so after a little thinking I accepted job to conduct courses for new hams, create a club station, produce rules and regulations for the Vietnamese - in one word - make hams out of the locals. The Kiulong company really wasn't getting anything monetarily, but they wanted to spread some goodwill. Since they had to pay my expenses - hotel, food and all - in hard currency - I very soon had to move out of the hotel and into my club station, to save money. Hot and humid atmosphere, no air conditioner, water shortages, frequent electricity shutdowns - these were my accommodations in XV. I didn't mind, though. During the day I taught my hams-to-be, at night - got on the air and operated. For half a year I hadn't seen a Caucasian face. My students soon were accepting me as one of them. This helped tremendously, when the time came for the 'Spratly Affair'.

We had a Japanese group come down in December '89 - XV2A with JH3DPB and others, and got very friendly, even though I don't speak any English, only French, besides Russian. We had a great time operating XV2A. Once they left I put in an effort to get their equipment for our club station. After that I used my own UW3DI transceiver and an amplifier I had brought from Russia to make a showcase for my students, who were now learning how to build things. Vietnam isn't a rich country and no one can buy even the cheapest transceiver, so building is the only way to go. The departments of Telecommunications of Vietnam and especially of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh) were very happy with my work and even paid me twice - 25 and 7 dollars, respectively - I used the money to fix a motorcycle and get around. It wasn't the money, rather an opportunity to do something for Amateur Radio, that guided me.

In January of 1990 we had another Japanese group,

3W5JA, visit, and they also left some antennas. The club station was now fully set up and at the end of the month the exams were held for the first group of Vietnamese. Five people passed, they got licenses XV2AAA-AAD and AYL, (the first woman op), allowed to operate all bands but 20. They could use our club station under my supervision. The youngest - 38, the oldest - 60, smart 'kids', eagerly grasping new knowledge. Then there was a second group, then the third one and then I had to put everything aside to get ready for Spratly. I really wanted them to have home-built equipment but to do that I needed another year. Things were progressing faster than I expected, though.

By February I had established some good connections with the local officials in Saigon and started gathering information about 'The Trip', and even asked my 'boys' to look into the possibility of a Spratly operation. Alex, UL7PCZ, also gave me a 'boost' on the air. It took me about 2 months to collect the necessary permissions - at times I was ready to lose all hope after talking to some 'influential people' here. Finally it was becoming clear that this matter could be resolved only in Hanoi, at the highest level. On March 17th, XV2AAA ran to me at 2 am with a telex - there was a meeting and the Ministers of Defense, Telecommunications, Internal and Foreign Affairs OKed the idea in general. This sounded absolutely unbelievable - in such a short period of time!

Soon after, logistic problems began to settle in - bombarding Hanoi with telexes, obtaining helicopters and boats for the trip - since nobody wanted to fly or sail there, it being too risky. JH3DPB and JE3MAS who were invited couldn't come due to work obligations, RB5IJ, who was supposed to bring equipment, couldn't be found. Good thing INDEXA took on a major chunk of our load of problems! Alex and Yuri tried their best to help, Kiulong had its own worries. At one point we were ready to quit because all we got was a thousand dollars from INDEXA, but not much more, only promissory notes. I'm glad Yuri Brazhenko vouched for the undertaking and they borrowed money for the expedition.

Another meeting was held with the General Director of Kiulong, and the Minister of Telecommunications, Yuri was there, too. Because of this meeting in a matter of days we had a ship and all permits. Food, generators, fuel and supplies were purchased in a terrible rush. We were trying to save money, too. A 3-KW generator in Saigon cost \$1200-1800. Much food was gotten on credit from a local food supplier. Two weeks before departure to the islands Alex, UL7PCZ, arrived from Moscow with INDEXA's equipment. Alex brought his home-made RTTY gear, meanwhile I obtained the XV0SU license for ops to QRV prior to the expedition.

There wasn't a single foreigner on the Vietnamese part of the Spratly Archipelago before we went there. On the larger islands there are military bases, where from time to time Vietnamese have shootouts with the Chinese. Well, at least the place we were going to was deserted! We departed from Cam Ranh Bay by transport vessel, well equipped for sailing in the dangerous waters. Our trip took two full days. The weather was great and the Vietnamese couldn't believe our luck. The landing was worse than the weather - no boat - everything had to be taken ashore by hand in low tide, but the guys were great. The wind was blowing for the first few days, but after that the air didn't move a bit, and all the operators but me got sunburned several times. (I was already conditioned to local climate).

So there we were, in the middle of nowhere:

Romeo Stepanenko, 3W3RR - low/high bands, phone/cw

Yuri Loparev, RL8PY - low bands, WARC, phone/cw

Alex Lebedev, UL7PCZ - high bands, phone/RTTY

Anatoly Lazarev, RL8PZ - high bands, low bands, phone

Yuri Brazhenko, Kiulong Commercial Director - interpreter and video-man

Yuri Meshalkin - interpreter, photographer

Victor Levashev - unbelievable handyman

We also had with us XV2AAB, Trieu, XV2AAC, Hoa, and our cook XV2AAD, Da - these men didn't operator but were of tremendous help.

We got truly lucky for the first few days - great conditions on HF - W1's, 2's, 3's were coming in loud and clear and then as if someone closed the curtain - no more East Coast, only occasional signals from that part of the world. That's why we operated on phone only in the first few days - I felt sure that the propagation was going to end and at that point we were looking for quantity of contacts. At the end we had 40% of all QSOs on CW anyway.

A small observation about HF: if there is ever another expedition to Spratly, it should be done in November-December. On 160/80 we almost couldn't hear the USA from 1S. On the other hand, there is at least a 2-hour North American opening on 80 from Vietnam throughout the winter.

We were very happy with the Mosley antennas - one was up 4 meters, another - even higher: easy to assemble and very effective. Our 160/80/40 dipoles sat on top of bamboo sticks, same for 10 MHz; we made a Quad for 6 meters and used 3W5JA's yagi for 18/24 MHz. There were 2 operating positions with 4 radios total.

The operation was going all the time but those relieved of duties tried their best to find alternative 'entertain-

ment' - RL8PY was fishing off the island in a small inflatable boat, UL7PCZ and RL8PZ swam, I dove for shells and coral, managed to catch moray eels and some octopuses for the dinner table.

Starting at 6 am local time, we would lose all propagation for 5-6 hours. Nothing was coming in, except VK/ZL on 28 MHz, and at first I blamed the equipment. In Vietnam about 4-5 am local time you get W's coming in for a few hours but here we were in a 'black hole' indeed. Sometime on the fifth or sixth day of operation the generators overheated, and we had to get them fixed in a hurry. They continued to misbehave throughout the operation, forcing us off the air. At one point we were running out of fuel - not enough was brought because of the money shortage. Because of an oversight, the vessel that brought us, left with a 60-gallon barrel of our fuel. For the next 8 days we were off the air, waiting for the ship to return.

The ship finally came and brought more fuel, a new generator and we QRVed for 6 more days. The equipment operated under the most demanding conditions and mishaps occurred - inevitably: one of the radios blew the power transformer, the power supply for another failed and RL8PZ's radio gave up three days before the expedition was over. Alex's RTTY unit had its own problems, but he managed over 400 QSOs. When everything was loaded onto the ship and only one operating position remained, I got on with my 1S1RR call and in 6 hours made 1027 contacts. By the time we were leaving - it was a long month indeed, we were exhausted, physically and emotionally, it rained, the only rain we saw there.

Yuri, RL8PY, managed an SSB QSO on 160 with OH1XX! We did our best on all modes and bands, even WARC. Whenever Alex, UL7PCZ, operated, he asked for Stateside, especially the East Coast, mindful of NT2X's requests.

For the next two weeks we were stuck in Vietnam, and couldn't buy a return ticket to Moscow. With no money left, five of us lived at the club station 3W8AA all this time, almost starving. To cheer up the guys, I helped them get their own Vietnamese calls, but these were two very tough weeks. Thanks to the generosity of the PTT Director who gave us some money we got through it.

There is a chance that I will go back to Vietnam soon, to finish the second club station, to fix equipment we left behind and to continue with the teaching project.

My wife is waiting for me at home - I was away for many months. In order to talk to me, she even passed her exams and got a call, UT5JDA. Recently graduated from college and raising our daughter, she is my 'major asset' in life, and I feel sorry at times for being

such a 'hobo'.

This may interest you, too: we had a 'black list' and out of 60 calls - not a single USA station - just 'thank you, W's', for being so disciplined on the air!

With good propagation we managed 4 QSOs per minute on the average, with maximum speed of 6 QSO/minute for the entire hour. A maximum of 11 QSOs per minute rate was achieved.

We want to thank INDEXA, NCDXF, Mosley Electronics, XV2A and 3W5JA gangs, JH3DPB, RW3AH, JA2JPA, XV2AAA, XV2AYL, UA3AB, UA3CT, Vietnamese Telecommunications Ministry, Director of Saigon PTT Bac Ai, for their assistance.

Band	Total QSOs	1S0XV		
		First QSO	First USA	First JA
1.8 CW	23	OH1XX		JA6IEF
1.8 SSB	2	OH1XX		
3.5 CW	252	JA1JRK	KC7EM	
3.8 SSB	149	JG6QZO		
7	1670	JA3MNP	W6KUT	
10	36	JA1IFP	W6GG	
14	11201	DU1KT	W6ENZ	JA1RQD
18	511	RB5FF	WA2SPL/1	JA3MKS
21	17020	JA1VWJ	WC5E	
24	683	SM0AJU	N4MM	JA7FEZ
28	10912	JS6CEU	W6YA	
50	318	JR6HI		
RTTY	488	JA0HHW	K2ENT	

Expedition total: 43,265 QSOs. First QSO 1S0XV with DU1KT. First QSO 1S1RR with NT2X.

Bands	Countries
1.8	7
3.5	27
7	58
10	7
14	123
18	40
21	128
24	44
28	126
50	1

## Part II:

Ed Kritsky, NT2X,  
INDEXA DX Coordinator

My involvement with the Spratly expedition started with a telephone call from an American amateur, who was speaking to Alex, UL7PCZ, at a club station RL8PYL in the city of Temirtau, in the Kazakh Republic of the USSR. Alex wanted me to get on the air, but I wasn't home, so the message was left on my answering machine. Then came another call, and another a few days later and then finally we had the on-air conversation that led to this effort. We had known each other before, since 2 years prior he had been on 3W0A/3W1A expedition. He wasn't a major participant then, but he proved to be an important player in

the whole affair. As it turned out, preparations for this one were no 'stroll on the beach'. Alex had received a letter from his friend Romeo, 3W3RR/UB5JRR, who was in Vietnam and who was asking Alex to get ready for the expedition to Spratly. Among the invitees were RB5IJ (who never went), UL7PCZ, RL8PY, RL8PZ. Romeo was in Vietnam working for the joint Soviet-Vietnamese company 'Cuulong' (Kiulong). The company was going to sponsor the expedition because it would give them exposure in the country it was doing business, but it was Romeo who orchestrated the whole deal, spearheaded the efforts to get permission from the authorities, and consulted with Vietnamese officials and Kiulong management, who were not sure until the last moment whether to approve the project.

In order to make the trip Romeo and his gang needed the money, hard currency to pay for goods and services since Vietnamese weren't going to accept Soviet rubles. The Soviet ops were also going to bring and help set up a club station in Vietnam. But they lacked the equipment and the funds. By the time we started discussing the subject, Romeo was very low on money and had to save on everything he could to continue his preparatory work. And, as it almost invariably happens with anything involving the Soviet Union and Soviet ops, we got the word about a month and a half before the expedition was to begin. With no time to waste, I called Murph Ratterree, W4WMQ, President of the International DX Association, for help with these matters. I worked with INDEXA on the 3W0A affair and they are a logical group to turn to. Being a DX Coordinator gives you freedom to make you own decisions on behalf of INDEXA and an added sense of responsibility for the success of the undertaking. As you are about to learn, I needed both.

Well, to get the wheels turning was no small thing. First of all, you need a written request directly from the operators for the support. Even though Murph may have believed me, it wasn't going to fly with INDEXA, based on the word alone. So the appeal went out: "Romeo, please submit a request for assistance, either by mail or by FAX." The info I had been given on the expedition had to come from either Russia or Vietnam in order to be considered. Since this expedition required a lot of money there was no way that INDEXA could have pulled it all by itself. So it was necessary to ask for the Northern California DX Foundation's assistance. This is how from the very beginning Bruce Butler, W6OSP, got involved in the negotiations. It was important to determine the level of support and the state of preparedness of the Soviet ops. Basically, it boiled down to this: will the expedition happen, if they don't get financial help from the outside, or will they fall on their faces. It is common knowledge that most expeditions finance themselves to a large degree and then, with funds on hand, turn to organizations like INDEXA and NCDXF for help.

This wasn't the case. The Soviets could spend their own money but they didn't have hard currency. Their only hope was to get assistance from the outside. Nobody here really knew Romeo from prior expeditions, Alex had been vaguely associated with the 3W0A effort, but that wasn't carrying much weight anywhere. But somebody had to listen and believe that it was all happening and was true.

That person was Murph. I feel sorry that this man had to put up with so much when the news got out: 'What, INDEXA wants to help the Russians, well they must be crazy! The Russkis are going to take the money and run! Don't given them anything!... And who is NT2X, do you know him well, can he be trusted?... They will never get to Spratly... If they do, it will never count for DXCC...' Turns out, the first reaction is almost always negative; people are more likely to believe in failure than success. Since the Coordinator is always in the middle of the whole thing, I had to answer the questions: who is going, when are they going, how are they getting there, who is in charge, where are they getting their money from, do they have licenses, can I please ask them the following... so I asked. My nightly skeds with RL8PYL were helpful in exchanging valuable information on the views of both sides. I tried to convey as much as possible the existing sentiment and the behind-the-scenes attitude, to give Alex and Romeo something to work with. Without a clear understanding what we wanted it would have been very difficult to keep them going. The same was absolutely imperative in the other direction - I had to convey the minutest details to INDEXA and present them in such way that everyone understood what was involved.

I am very happy Murph was a good listener and could persuade others, once he understood the difficult situation. After the skeds on the air I spent literally hours with him on the telephone. A couple of times I brought Murph on frequency to ask Alex questions himself, and acted as interpreter. Of course, knowing a thing or two about the Soviet Union and its ways helped immensely. I knew my audience was tremendous, both in the USSR and in this country. I would normally get a U-stations' pile-up after I completed a sked with RL8PYL. Many didn't call, but they listened, I knew, for tidbits of information to be had. I understand that a certain amateur affiliated with a DX publication called one of the groups involved in this matter and told them: 'You may not know it, but there is a FAX coming to you from the USSR. Since I'm the one telling you this, would you let me know what is in it???' My including in a Russian-language conversation a name of an organization and the word 'FAX' was enough to prompt such a telephone call. It's incredible how the amateur community is hungry to learn just about anything on a subject of interest, even if the language spoken isn't the one they under-

stand. (The request, by the way, was denied.)

As I said earlier, the negativism persisted. Even the DX publications reported on the developments with a good dose of skepticism. I now had to convince the parties to give the operators a chance. The first step was to provide a copy of a license for the Spratly operation, and Romeo had it. There was one small problem – there are absolutely no telephone ties between Vietnam and this country. Somehow, a FAX transmission was still possible, through a third country, as we got a copy of his licensing documentation from the Vietnamese authorities, allowing the operators to depart from Vietnam and go to an uninhabited island in the Spratly group. It was forwarded to the DXCC desk for consideration. Now came the financial part. We had to have the budget for the expedition to be able to give them the support they needed. I got most of the items and their cost – but these were rounded estimates and it didn't make a good impression. There was a moment when my belief in any positive outcome was almost totally shattered. For the first time I regretted I ever got involved. This was the time to stick to my guns and firmly decide that I wouldn't let anyone ruin this expedition! This attitude was correct, I didn't quit. Additional consultations followed - with INDEXA, NCDXF, Alex and Romeo. We needed precise figures and I had to explain why.

I was pressing the Soviets for the proper information. The biggest item of discussion was the sum of money needed for transportation: Romeo found helicopters to fly to the islands but these were extremely expensive – \$750/hour per helicopter and he needed 2 of these to fly the crew, the supplies and the equipment. The estimated bill was approaching \$30,000. The reason why this mode of transportation had to be used was the danger lurking in the warm waters of the South China Sea. These waterways are infested with pirates who assault passing ships, killing and pillaging. Discussing the money was most difficult. I had to go back to Alex and ask for clarification. Alex was my 'relay' point as Romeo couldn't always be reached directly, he had his own problems to contend with – more official meetings, explaining the expedition to the government of Vietnam, calling Moscow for consultations. Turned out, he was also asking people all over the world for help. Not everyone he talked to was helpful. One man called Murph and told him: 'INDEXA MUST provide 2 stations or the expedition is off'. This sounded like blackmail and it was rightfully turned down as such. In reality, Romeo simply asked this man to get help and this is how he chose to 'assist'.

We came to contend with a question of leadership for the DXpedition – who is really in charge over there, is it Alex or Romeo? When you have many people leading the same thing, then nobody is in charge. And that spells 'f-a-i-l-u-r-e'. After some heated discus-

sion the sponsors decided to pull out – unless Romeo and Alex were ready to clean up their act and start it anew. With a heavy heart I had to tell Alex that neither group could support them because of the disarray. I asked them to please 'cool it for a month or so – we'll have time to get the thing rolling again. There is nothing we can do for you now.'

I was under the impression that it was all over – and for about 2 weeks I actually believed this. Then came a 'distress call' from Romeo in Vietnam – 3 weeks before the expedition was scheduled to begin. 'Ed, we are going no matter what – if your people still want to join the cause, fine – if not, well, we're leaving anyway, even though we're planning to postpone the start a little bit.' We could not allow that to happen. Back to INDEXA and NCDXF – 'Can we help? Romeo found a boat, they are trying to arrange permission extensions from the Vietnamese, if we can get the equipment and some money to help them pay the cost. They will take a promissory note and some money now, the moment is absolutely critical.'

Meanwhile, UL7PCZ had flown to Moscow, where the Kiulong people were not sure whether to give their blessing to the expedition, since they were going to foot the bill for transportation and other things. More discussions with Alex (now at UZ3AZZ) and Andy, RW3AH, who was helping him run errands for the upcoming trip. One morning I was talking to them on 21 MHz, our packet cluster announced that 3W3RR was on the band – a quick QSY, to bring Romeo to our frequency. As luck would have it, the RL8PYL gang was there also, so this was the most important meeting of them all. I gave them my part of the story, Romeo, Alex and other ops discussed their matters. Then Alex made a recording of me speaking, where I explained in great detail what is being done and how we intended to collect the funds for the expedition. Finances were very much on the minds of Kiulong management and Alex wanted to play a tape for them, to help persuade them to give a green light to the expedition. Promissory notes were FAXed to Moscow from INDEXA, NCDXF, and JA1ELY – all of them guaranteeing funds upon successful completion of the expedition and DXCC acceptance.

I found out a little later that all that work paid off – the management believed 'the choir' and went as far as borrowing hard currency at the bank, to pay for this undertaking. The money must be repaid since Romeo and others promised to return the funds after replying to all cards received as a result of the expedition.

But my involvement in this chess game wasn't over. First there was the transfer of funds. INDEXA chose to donate a \$1000 which had to be sent to Moscow. Banks in South Carolina don't often wire money to Russia. I helped Murph locate a bank that didn't

charge an arm and a leg for a wire transfer. Then the monies were wired – and guess what? The Soviet ops couldn't get their funds at the Vneshtorgbank in Moscow (a.k.a. The USSR Bank of Foreign Trade). It took longer than we expected. (Murphy's law: 'If anything can go wrong, it will go wrong', I always remember this saying when I look back at everything involving this expedition and its place of origin – the USSR. Murph, pun intended!)

Now there comes equipment. INDEXA was providing two complete stations for the expedition: 2 TS-520S's with VFO's, 2 SB-200's, 2 Mosley tribanders, courtesy of Mosley Electronics, and assorted accessories. All 127 kilos of this had to be shipped to Moscow – 10 days before the expedition was to begin. John Parrott, W4FRU, in Virginia, had the equipment tested and ready to be shipped. Since Andy Fyodorov, RW3AH, was a resident of Moscow, we decided to have the equipment shipped to him (Alex, UL7PCZ, would have departed for Vietnam already and the other ops from Temirtau were to pick up equipment the following week as they were flying to Moscow to change planes for Vietnam). I called Andy on the phone (no time to waste now – 3 am in Moscow, his 'cheerful' wife answered), gave him serial numbers of all the equipment, so that the Central Radio Club could provide an official request to Customs to let the transmitting equipment into the country without further delay – a familiar procedure. The shipping company got the load on Tuesday and we were expecting the equipment in Moscow by the following Monday, at the earliest. John, W4FRU, had to go away for a few days and I was assigned the task of looking after the equipment as it traveled from the USA to Frankfurt, West Germany, and on to Moscow. Well, the shipping company could track the shipment only as far as Germany, where the boxes were transferred to the Soviet airline 'Aeroflot' to be flown to Moscow. One Saturday Andy told me 'Ed, the boxes have arrived, we are picking them up on Monday.' Sigh of relief.

On Monday, at work my phone rings. An amateur from New Jersey inquires: 'Are you Mr. Kritsky? I got a guy in Moscow who wants to talk to you. Can you get to the radio?' Me? No, I'm at work. 'What is going on? Tell him to speak in Russian, I'm just going to listen.' Andy doesn't understand what I'm doing at the other end but he speaks: 'Ed, we are in very serious trouble here. The people at Moscow airport Customs absolutely refuse to give us the INDEXA equipment. We need a copy of the shipping invoice, also a statement from INDEXA that this is a gift and the list of all prices – or Customs won't know how to assess the duty.' But wait a minute, there should be no duty! The equipment isn't even destined to the USSR, it's only a transit point to Vietnam! 'Help, as they are keeping it at their warehouse and are going to charge a ruble a day per kilo (127 rubles is some-

what below the average monthly salary in the USSR). If we don't get it in a day or so, we won't be able to take the equipment, the government will impound it all as we have no money to pay for this highway robbery!' A frantic call to INDEXA – what are we going to do? Murph sends me a FAX with all the data and I immediately resend it all to Moscow the same night. In addition, my friend Leo, WN2L, who was coincidentally flying to the Soviet Union the next evening, took a copy of all the paperwork requested, to give it to Andy in Moscow, just as a backup. I'm not giving up, no way. That same night Andy is informing me that the forms I sent were received and Customs wasn't impressed. They were invoking some vague Soviet law of 1937 that stated that 'no Soviet citizen can receive parcels and gifts from organizations abroad.' But Andy isn't getting it for himself, he is simply responsible for picking the equipment up! The Central Radio Club calls, the Ministry of Telecommunications of the USSR is involved, but nothing gives.

The whole nightmarish situation was further complicated by the Soviet airline. It appeared the cargo service of Aeroflot (called 'Aeroservice' – should have been renamed 'Aero-Disservice') had removed all the packing slips with Andy's name on them and replaced them with their own paperwork – I still have no idea why. When the equipment arrived in Moscow, they promptly refused any knowledge or responsibility of 'those boxes', but Andy couldn't touch them either, his name was nowhere to be found. And again, INDEXA to the rescue – I found out that they always include a copy of an invoice with recipient's name in the first box, just in case, and this was the case! Back to the microphone, Andy, here's what you do...

The situation was absolutely insane, and I wanted to fight to the end, but was too far away to do anything myself. You can't win over bureaucracy by being nice and polite. I was at my last line of defense now. I didn't care for myself, I just wanted them to release our equipment. So the Soviet Customs wants a scandal, a nice loud international scandal. I'd be very happy to arrange one if this matter can't be resolved reasonably. I tell Andy: 'Do you guys know who is visiting Washington, DC, now? Your Foreign Minister. Do you think it would be embarrassing during his visit to see a letter from a reader in the 'New York Times' or the 'Wall Street Journal' about the escapades of your Customs service in the age of perestroika? You bet it would. Well, I'm prepared to do just that, write several letters, and nothing is going to stop me! If you don't get the equipment in the morning I'm doing it.' Why, why, do I have to fight the Soviet Customs? It's a dream, a terrible nightmare, let me wake up!

The next morning Andy told me that they got the equipment, after some loud arguments and fist pounding. There was also a call from 'Pravda' to the

Sheremetyevo (Moscow airport) Customs, inquiring about the situation. The equipment was in order and working, though the antennas looked like someone walked over them. No problem.

Just before this happened, I talked to Romeo, who wasn't wasting any time in Vietnam. He was now going full steam to get things done for the arrival of the operators. One morning I caught him on 21 signing 3W3RR/MM, from a supply boat that makes runs between the oil rigs in the South China Sea. Romeo was heading in the direction of Spratly, perhaps to find a suitable spot to operate from. I chose to 'exploit' his appearance on the air to give this cause some more publicity. I ran a 'mini-net', let the guys in the USA and in EU work him and then explained what was going on and how much the support was needed for this expedition. John, W4FRU, was designated by INDEXA to collect donations and I tried to tell the world just that - we need your help, please! 'Well spoken, OM, I'll send my bit' said someone Stateside. Oh, thank you! Information was supplied to DX bulletins, posted on packet worldwide and retransmitted as RTTY bulletins, I called people I know in this country and Japan and asked them to spread the word, bang on every door. I don't really know if it made any difference, but I want to think that it did.

I also came up on W2MIG's net on 14.165 every morning to fill the world in on the latest Spratly developments and the information spread with no less than lightning speed. One morning, just as I was on, my radio decided to quit, I could listen, but it wouldn't transmit. Carmelo, WA2SPG, patched me onto the frequency by telephone - a weird feeling to hear my voice on the radio, but listening to the rest of the airwaves as if it wasn't me speaking. I called for help - I needed a spare quick if I was to continue my efforts and Peter, WN2WOW, drove into New York City and brought his TS-940S for me to use, and even left me carfare to take the radio home after work. ('Don't take the subway', he said). Meanwhile, rumors transpired and reverberated in the ionosphere, people who had no real knowledge of events were telling horror stories, causing me to deny the outrageous ones. I finally refused to listen to any rumors. The only things to believe in were the ones I heard myself from Moscow, Temirtau or Vietnam.

The operators were in Vietnam - finally - and they were waiting for the second group to arrive from Moscow. In the meantime, XV0SU was on, giving me hope that they weren't wasting any time down there. Purchased were supplies, gasoline, necessities. Everything was to be transported on a chartered ship, paid for by the Kiulong company, the only safe way to get to the islands. There was much concern over the acceptance of the operation. But since the only operators were the Soviets and the transportation was all paid

for, Spratly operation would be legal. They were also warned not to sign /1S with Vietnamese call sign since this would imply the Vietnamese ownership of the islands and such operation wouldn't be acceptable to the DXCC Desk.

1S0XV was selected for the group call and Romeo got himself 1S1RR. Now I had to wait like everybody else - no one knew anything in Moscow and even stations from the Asiatic Russia weren't telling me much. Then suddenly, the operation was on. First, the Soviets told me they had worked 1S0XV, then they were heard in Europe. But I had to identify them myself - until that moment I was very cautious. Then there was a call from Toshi-san, JA1ELY - 'Ed, it is them, I talked to Romeo'. He even let me listen (on the telephone) to the JA pile-up and Romeo's voice. Hip-Hip-Hurray!

I was exhausted but this still wasn't the end of it. I started to get calls from people who wanted me to tell the ops: 'More phone, CW, low bands, General frequencies, East Coast openings...' On a few occasions I passed the word to the ops - and they listened. Messages were left on our Tri-State PacketCluster System to let the amateurs locally know what is happening on the other side - the facts, not rumors, as I knew them. I later found out that all these messages were picked up by one of the system users and retransmitted worldwide through RTTY bulletins. I made my first QSO with the Spratly's on 21 MHz, worked 1S0XV and then Romeo immediately said 'NT2X, this is 1S1RR, you're 59, QSO number 1.' I was deeply touched and wished them luck.

As you may have guessed, this wasn't the end. A week later, I started getting calls at work. The calls came from people I knew: 'Ed, they are calling for you in the blind. They just stop the pileup on 15 meters and ask for you. Can you come up?' In 2 hours, I said, and left work early. My answering machine had another 10 or so calls from all over the United States, asking the same. Warm the amplifier, get on 21 MHz, call once, twice, three times on their frequency. The squall of upset amateurs who didn't know what I was doing: 'You lid...get off...split operation...what are you doing, you are on top of the DXpedition!!!' Fortunately, Romeo also listens on his transmit frequency or someone tells him that I'm there. 'QRX, QRX everybody, I must speak to NT2X!' 'Ed, we are running low on fuel, we are going to make a run to the mainland for food and water, but we have no more money to buy fuel for the generators. Can you help us to get some funds?' I know I can't let them down and promise to help. Another call to INDEXA - what can we do in this situation? NCDXF can help, they already pledged money, perhaps they can release some funds now. And a few days later Bruce informs me that the funds had been sent to Moscow. In the meantime a representative of Kiulong who went to Vietnam with the operators had

returned to Moscow to collect some money for the fuel and other necessities. Our funds should be arriving shortly.

The expedition wasn't without its problems. The ops disappeared off the air at times instead of staying on until the propagation ran out, they worked people without giving full call signs out (contest style) – and that caused many repeated contacts as amateurs wanted to be in that log for sure. 1S0XV men later told me that there was no propagation towards the USA several days after they started the operation. In the mornings I sat on 20 meters and heard DU, YB, JA – all of them loud and clear, and couldn't understand why the Spratly group didn't use the propagation to get at the East Coast. Then there was not enough CW – or so many amateurs here on the East Coast claimed. Turned out, there was an almost 60-40 split between SSB and Morse. Impressions are often very subjective, they depend on where you live and whom you listen to. I chose to keep my mouth shut – don't criticize, always give the benefit of the doubt to someone who is in that faraway land, you never know what sort of problems may arise – the 3W0A operation taught me that and I kept my thoughts to myself, even though I was upset at times. The frequent disappearances of the 1S-gang caused many comments, one from a friend of mine, who tried to convince me (and himself, perhaps) that the operation wasn't really legal – 'they must be sitting in Vietnam someplace, or better yet – in Siberia – and get on infrequently, to avoid being detected by direction-finding equipment!'

Then there was the question of QSL cards, a big point of discussion for any expedition. Once the expedition is supported by organizations like INDEXA or NCDXF, they want their logos on the cards. For that reason I told Alex that we were going to print the cards here and send them to Moscow, if they insist on having their own manager. They were also insisting on processing the cards in Moscow and nowhere else. No amount of persuasion was helpful. Until the expedition got underway, I was trying to influence people in Moscow to let us do the QSLing here. No luck. Then, we decided to tell people to hold off on sending QSLs to Box 308, Moscow, until the question was resolved, I believed we could do it, that there was something that the Soviets didn't understand about the importance of reliable QSLing that we and the rest of the world had to tell them. Once the Spratly's were on the air, I decided to give it one more try. INDEXA sent a FAX to Moscow asking for clarification – why not? Back came the reply – 'we have it all under control and besides we are going to print the cards ourselves, not to worry.' Seems like Romeo didn't fully inform the Kiulong people on the importance of our printing the cards here. Another acute pain inducer for Murph and INDEXA. We had too much riding on this one to take any chances. There were a couple of angry letters

ready to be FAXed to Moscow – and then we decided to try calling them on the phone first. First try, no luck. Find UA6HZ, my old pal Larry, ask him to do the same. He succeeds, talks to someone in Moscow who knows what the story is. Comes back and tells me 'Ed, this man wants you to give him a land-line'. I spent 10 minutes on the telephone with Kiulong's General Director, patiently explaining why it is important and why we are upset. He assured me that they are a reputable outfit and wouldn't cause any hardship on anyone, so he would hold up their end of the bargain, even though he didn't know about the deal being made in the first place. A frequent problem in the USSR – lack of communication among the people. Misunderstanding cleared, we're doing the cards. Another abyss avoided.

Many managed to work Spratly. They made over 40,000 QSOs with one sick operator, one broken generator, and another malfunctioning. Some were happy with them, others weren't, but that is true with just about any expedition. The expedition cost the Soviets \$36,000, the operators themselves spent about 1000 rubles – roughly the annual salary for some of them, in order to go. Romeo dipped into the family savings for 1500 rubles. The Kiulong company borrowed \$25,000 at the bank, and they now have to repay the sum (as of this writing \$19,000 are still outstanding). Yuri Brashenko, Commercial Director of Cuulong company who was in this country, brought me a great looking seashell from Spratly, which now proudly sits on the shelf above my station.

At the end I didn't mind losing sleep, spending \$350 on phone calls and worrying too much about what else could go wrong. It was an expedition to which I gave my mind and a part of my soul. I wanted to see the people who undertook it and believed in it succeed, despite all the problems. This was an unusual expedition in many ways – how they obtained licenses, sponsorship and transportation. Very likely it won't be repeated, not with a company acting as a sponsor. Even learned a few things about myself – I can do a lot for a good cause. This certainly was one, benefiting the Amateur Radio worldwide and INDEXA. No less importantly, it showed the world that the Soviets, given the opportunity, are as capable as anyone else. I just hope there will be others to take the risks and fight the odds, going to a faraway island or a remote area. You can't blame me for taking this cause. Even though I'm an American now, I was born there, speak their language and at time feel sorry for the good people over in that country where many things – material and otherwise aren't available or not allowed. I sincerely hope to see it change.

The Spratly DXpedition '90 is now part of the history of Amateur Radio and a part of my own life story. Copyright © 1990 by Ed Kritsky, NT2X.

## WRTC - A World-Class Event

Rich Assarabowski, K1CC

I first heard about it in the early spring of this year. Martti Laine, OH2BH, was on 20 meters talking with several guys from the West Coast about rules for a contest to be held "on-site" at the Goodwill Games in Seattle. There was a lot of discussion about what the contest should be and how to select the participants. I listened in for a while, sensing that this was not just idle chatter but a serious planning session for the event. Nevertheless, the incident passed by and I didn't hear anything more about it until a short mention of it in the **National Contest Journal**. Buried among the articles was a request for contesters to submit their resumes as team members for the amateur radio event at the Goodwill Games. I didn't hesitate. The rest, as the popular saying goes, is history.

It's a long flight from Connecticut to Seattle. The flight arrived just about at midnight on a Wednesday night. I was told that someone would be at the airport to meet me, but I had no idea who it was going to be and where I would be staying. As I entered the lobby, I immediately recognized him. He had a QSL card in his hand and we introduced ourselves. Charlie KX7L and his wife Karen were going to be my hosts for the Goodwill Games, actually the "World Radiosport Team Championship", or just "WRTC". Charlie left his XYL at K7SS's house where a party was going on all day for the arriving participants. We loaded my suitcase into his trunk and set off to Danny's house. "Did the Russians arrive?", was my first question. They did, but not without incident. Their plane arrived 24 hours late, as their flight was delayed for 2 hours, then 4, then 2 and so on, for no apparent reason. Their baggage was left out in the cold Moscow rain - leaving the Soviet Union wasn't going to be made too easy for them. But they finally came, to a big sigh of relief from their Seattle hosts. We pulled into some side streets and started climbing a hill. I knew we were close.

The party had started at noon and was winding down at 1 AM when we arrived, but it was far from over. I met Danny K7SS, host and the visionary of this whole event, and introduced myself to the guests. There was Rusty Epps, W6OAT, and Steve Morris, K7LXC, still discussing contest preparations, along with Danny. I shook hands with Julius, HA6NY, who visited New England several years ago, and his teammate Gyozy, HA0MM. I met the comedians and master chefs of late-night Italian pasta dinners, Paolo, I2UIY, and Ivan, IK2DVG. Until now they were just calls that appeared in many contest logs. A whole day and evening of partying was not without its effect on the guests, though. After their own full day of meeting new faces behind the familiar calls, I could have told them I was Ernst Krenkel and they would have believed me! Someone

walked up to me with a black shirt with big silver letters spelling out "KGB". It was Willy, UW9AR, from Chelyabinsk. Who would have thought several years ago I'd be at a party in Seattle with the voice of UK9AAN (now UZ9AYA)? By now the party had progressed from beer and mixed drinks to the serious stuff - Stolichnaya vodka, hand-carried from the Ural mountains. In my sober state I was able to assess the damage. It was starting to look like Chernobyl after the nuclear disaster. It seems Karen, KX7L's XYL, had taken the full effect of the "Stoli" fallout. We finally got her in the car and found Larry, UA6HZ, who was the other guest staying with Charlie and Karen.

Larry is well-known in the States as "UA6 Hot Ziggety", and his English is excellent. He's been to the U.S. several times before. In an interview on the local National Public Radio station, when asked how he felt to be in the States he said "It's nice to be home again". He's not a typical Russian ham. He owns one of the few Western transceivers in the Soviet Union (a TS-930) as well as several VHF radios. In fact, he donated his hand-held to Musa Manarov, U2MIR, the Russian (actually Armenian) cosmonaut on the Soviet space station MIR. Larry is also an Armenian, whose family emigrated to Russia around the time of World War I. I was always reminded of this whenever I referred to Larry as a "Russian". Also unusual about Larry is that he is an entrepreneur in a Soviet system which only recently has accepted a free market economy as a reality. In 1989 he was part of the Malyj Vysotskij Island expedition along with OH2BH, K7JA and others. He was also very actively involved in providing communications during the Armenian earthquake. He brought with him several albums of photographs from Armenia showing the terrible destruction. I learned from him that the most effective mode for traffic in and out of Armenia was CW. I also learned of the scam involving the shipment of packet radio equipment to the Soviet Union by the ARRL. The large shipment of equipment was appropriated by a certain individual in Moscow, and it was only months later that it was located. The two volunteers from the U.S. experienced in packet radio were sent home after only several days in the Soviet Union. The individual has since lost his amateur license, but not before the opportunity to help the Armenian people was lost.

We got to sleep sometime around 3 AM. At 6 AM I was awakened by the sun and that was about as much sleep as I would get for most of the rest of the week there. While I waited for the others to wake up, I studied the information which the WRTC Committee had provided each of the participants. There were about 60-70 participants in this event, including judges, support team members and team alternates (which included myself, N2AA and AH3C from the U.S.). Participants were hosted by various individuals and families in the Seattle area, where they slept and

by whom they were chauffeured to the various planned activities. Many of the hosts took vacations from work in order to spend time with their guests and to participate in the WRTC events. As I flipped through the information packet, I found a spreadsheet listing all of the participants, their hosts and telephone numbers, a schedule of events, a hotline to call for daily updates of activities, repeater frequencies to monitor, a daily tape-recorded activity bulletin on a special telephone number, a tourist guide to Seattle and a list of activities in the Seattle area for hosts and their guests to participate in when there was any spare time (!?). It was going to be a busy week. The WRTC Committee and all of the local radio clubs were determined to make the World Radiosport Team Championship an unforgettable experience for everyone.

After breakfast we took a walk outside. Charlie and Karen live in Bothel, about 30 miles from Seattle, on a 2+ acre wooded lot. It was a perfect day, under a cloudless sky and with low humidity. I was immediately impressed by the height of the evergreen trees, and in my mind I was already stringing wires among the trees. Charlie does not have a tower and I'm sure we would have put one up for him that morning in our enthusiasm. That enthusiasm was somewhat dampened when we turned on his rig and found the bands completely dead, except for a couple of W6 and W7 ragchewers. The solar flux was low and the K-index was rising... At 1 PM we were scheduled to be at Anthony's Home Port, a yacht club on the bay. VE exams were being offered to any of the DX visitors at the yacht club, and Larry was anxious to get a U.S. license. It turns out most of the DX visitors wanted to take VE exams. VE exams were being given at every possible opportunity during our stay - on the bus to Portland, at parties, at the picnic in Portland, in restaurants, in the hotel, etc.. We'd never seen so many Russians become "U.S. generals"! By the end of the week it became a ritual, as the DX visitors progressed from Novice up to Advanced and Extra. For the Russians, it was a unique opportunity to get a U.S. call with a U.S. address. For me, it was an opportunity to add several more callsigns to my QTH (you never know when you might need a spare call...). I also learned a lot of new words in Russian. Although I learned to speak Russian at home and speak it reasonably well, my technical vocabulary was limited. Nevertheless, I was immediately put in the unique position of translating the exam questions for the Russians when they needed help. They did quite well on the technical questions (how do you explain a "Colpitts oscillator" when it's been 25 years since you took the General) but many of the regulatory questions puzzled them (what is the Novice power limit these days anyway?). Everyone who took the tests came back home with some kind of U.S. callsign, which will no doubt raise some eyebrows back in the Soviet Union.

By 4 PM the room was getting full in preparation for the operators' meeting. Team members were still arriving, and new faces were still becoming connected to familiar callsigns. The WRTC Committee members were very busy, running around with beepers and cordless telephones, still making final arrangements for the stations. Even though stations for each of the teams were selected to be as equal as possible in terms of location and antennas, there were differences. Ward, NOAX was managing the station preparation and assignment. Stations were chosen at random for each of the teams. He carried with him a handful of 3 dB and 6 dB attenuators, which were to be used by the better stations in their antenna feedlines in an attempt to make everyone as equal as possible. Some of the teams had more time for station preparation than others, though. Word got out that one of the Russian teams even climbed a neighbor's tree to string a new wire antenna! As 4 PM approached, the room was getting packed. T-shirts were being given out for the team members, ICOM was giving out their own T-shirts and caps and had their banner displayed prominently. A professional camera crew was filming the event for the upcoming WRTC movie coming to a local theatre near you this fall (well, maybe only to a club meeting). By now, all of the teams were there and took positions in the audience. The contest organizers gave their introductory remarks - OH2BH, K7SS, K7LXC and W6OAT. The organizing committee was introduced. We finally saw the faces of the people that worked so hard for 2 years to pull this off. Then came the details of the contest and time for questions and answers. Questions from the teams seemed to arise endlessly: "Can the spotting ICOM 735 use the main antenna?" "No, only the wire listening antenna" "Can voice keyers be used?" "No, only microphones and paper and pencil logging" "Can foreign languages be used on SSB?" came the question from K7JA. Delighted with the answer, it was obvious to everyone what Chip's strategy was going to be in the contest. Little did he know how propagation would change his plans to run JA's during the contest! It was announced that callsigns for the contest would be issued to each station only 45 minutes before the start of the contest, on 14.250 and on 2 meters. Anyone who made skeds with his friends back home was out of luck...

After the welcoming ceremonies and the operator's meeting were adjourned, the room was opened up to a buffet dinner and a bar. The banquet room overlooked the sound and the view out the window was spectacular. The crowd spilled over onto the deck as the sun set over the water and the distant mountains of the Olympic peninsula. I met some of the later arrivals and those whom I missed at Danny's party: the OK1ALW (OK5R) boys (Jiri, OK1RI, and Karel, OK2FD), the two LZ's from LZ1KDP

(Rumen, LZ1MS, and Ogy, LZ2PO), the YU's from YU1EXY (Tine, YT3AA, and Rasa, YU1RL), the JARL team (Yoh, JJ3UHS, and Naoko, JM3JOW) and the Crazy Contesters from Japan (Tak, JE1CKA, and Saty, JE1JKL), the two G's (Dave, G4BUO, and Steve, G3YDV), the French team (Jacky, F2CW, and Claudia, FD1NYQ, from 4U1ITU), the Germans (Stefan, DL5XX, and world-traveler Walter, DJ6QT), the OH's (Hannu, OH1XX, and Jukka, OH8PF), the EA's from EA9EA (Juan, EA5BRA, and Guillermo, EA9EO), the neighboring VE7's (Dale, VE7SV, and Lee, VE7CC) and the many W7's who took this opportunity to finally meet their guests that they had been expecting for so long. And of course Oms, PY5EG, and Talma, PY4OD, who showed an impressive video tape of their huge station in Curitiba. However, this was one night that was not going to be a late one for anyone. Tomorrow was the contest, and everyone was anxious to get at least some sleep before the big one!

Since Larry, UA6HZ, was also an alternate for his team, we decided to pair together for the contest, even though we wouldn't be signing /WG. However, we didn't have a place to operate. After some deliberation, we were assigned to the station at ICOM headquarters. Although initially impressed, I was told not to expect too much as it was judged unacceptable by the organizers when selecting stations for the teams. Nevertheless, we were happy to have a station to operate, and we were told we'd be assigned one of the unused calls from the FCC block of approved callsigns for the Russians. We checked with ICOM and were told we could be there as early as 8 AM to start setting up the station.

The next morning 8 AM came much too early, after late night ragchewing with Larry, Charlie and Karen the night before. I grabbed my trusty keyer paddle and keyer under my arm and we were off to ICOM in the morning rush hour. Upon arriving at ICOM we understood what they told us. The antenna was a TH7 but it was in an industrial park with lots of metal roofs and overhead wires around, and a fairly big hill to the east. We were impressed by a 4el KLM 40 on a separate tower at 50', but that had problems as we later found out. The receptionist in the modern office building was expecting us and showed us to the shack. There were lots of VHF radios and one IC-781. No second radio, no keyers, no headphones, no amplifier. And in true ham fashion, lots of poorly marked coax cables. We were expecting Ron, NV6Z, the ICOM service manager to show up, and he did, which made things a lot easier. We finally figured out which antenna was which and he pulled a new IC-735 from the warehouse. He then connected one of their automatic antenna tuners which made for instant band switching on the second radio, using one of the wires outside. By the time everything was set-up and working, we were very hungry, not having eaten anything yet that day.

I asked Ron for a 2-minute tutorial on the '781 which taught us where the volume control was and how to change bands. After lunch, we tuned on 20 for our call assignment (N0AX) and prepared log sheets.

The contest didn't exactly start with a bang. Bands were quiet and muted, and the few Europeans we heard were weak and very hard to work. Hardly anyone came back to our CQ's. Low-power from Seattle without a /WG suffix was not fun. Interstation interference, as expected, was horrendous. I also had to get used to a BIG paper multiplier sheet, after a couple of years of being spoiled by CT and NA. It was obvious the /WG stations were having a good time, though. We tuned around and listened to them, and it was really exciting to hear the bands full of minipileups. From the operating style, there was no question that these were world-class operators behind those callsigns. Our operating strategy became to work as many of the /WG's as we could find. The loud ones were easy, the weak ones on the other end of Seattle were weak and very difficult to work as we competed against the rest of the world calling them. We started to keep track of QSO totals by the /WG's, who was leading whom, being lucky enough to know the call assignments before the contest.

I took a couple of breaks to talk to Ron, NV6Z, the head of the service department at ICOM USA. Ron was one of the P40V group who set the world record for CQWW (nothing like having the ICOM service department with you on an expedition!). He had to be with us until midnight when the contest ended, so he used this time to catch up on repairs in the shop. ICOM has an excellent reputation for service and it was obvious why. All of the radios used for the teams were ICOM's (IC-765's and 735's) and other than some minor details, received high scores from the team members after the contest. It seems ICOM has taken a very wise approach to advertising by sponsoring operating activities. They donated \$25,000 to the WRTC, so their help really made the event possible.

The bands started to pick up after sunset. Larry took about 20 minutes to talk to Ed, NT2X, in Russian. It was nice not to operate the contest too competitively! Ron went out for several pizzas and we raided the soda machine. All this time we were wondering what happened to the JA's. We only worked 2 JA's during the entire 10 hours, which was on par with what the /WG's worked. Even the locals said that was extremely unusual! I had a chance to look through W7WA's log from the IARU contest just the weekend before, and his log was packed with JA's during the same time period. At midnight the contest was over. We packed up and were picked up by Charlie. Our bus to the Portland DX Convention was departing at 8 AM, which meant we had to be up by 6 AM. We were getting used to minimal sleep by now, after all, you don't sleep

when the DX is starting to come through, do you?

As we boarded the bus the next morning, it was like 3830 in person. Most of the teams had stayed up until 3-4 AM verifying their computer log entries, so everybody looked pretty tired. Willy and George from the Chelyabinsk team were particularly distraught - they started having S9 line noise 5 minutes into the contest. Their hosts and the locals went on a search to find the offending pole, even spraying water from a hose on the utility poles to find the right one. A utility truck rushed to the scene, but it was 6 hours into the contest before the problem was licked. It looked like the AR/DG team had a good lead in the raw QSO total, but the KQ2M/KR0Y team had a big multiplier. And NOBODY worked more than a handful of JA's! As soon as the contestants handed in their disks and their recording of the contest on cassette tapes, the judging started. It wasn't until 5 PM on Monday night, two hours before the final contest announcement, that the final results were FAXed from San Francisco. Until then, the OK's, LZ's, VE's and DL's all had claim to the #3 position at one point or another during the weekend!

The bus ride to the Portland DX Convention was very relaxing. There was a second bus which was leaving from the south part of Seattle and K1AR had announced earlier that we would be having a contest between the two buses using 2m HT's. Somehow that idea never caught on. We played musical chairs on the bus instead, swapping seats to trade stories about the contest, about operating strategy, equipment, and just about everything else that had anything to do with contesting and radio. I had a nice chat with Vassily Bondurenko, UV3BW, the head of the Central Radio Club, who had spent the night before together with the other Russian support team members driving all over Seattle to videotape the Russian team members in action at their host's stations. As he talked, his eyes were constantly looking out at the scenery. He seemed to be awed by the American lifestyle which he had experienced unlike any other Soviet dignitary. Among the many conversations was one with Dave, G4BUO, and Steve, G3YDV, who showed pictures of their various contest expeditions to GJ and GU. The Channel Islands in October and November are a far cry from the Caribbean, with lots of wind and cold temperatures. Steve particularly stood out in our group, with shoulder length blond hair and a beard - it turns out he mixes audio for big-name heavy metal rock groups and spends a lot of time in the States, as evidenced by his FRC name tag. Juan, EA5BRA, and Guillermo, EA9EO, described their CQWW efforts as EA9EA in detail. Juan is an engineer with the Spanish equivalent of Bell Telephone Labs and had lots of interesting ideas regarding contest station setup. They brought a remote digital keyboard with them for the '765 so the spotting operator could punch in the frequency of a

multiplier instead of punching out the main operator. Look for them at the Pantelleria Island (IH9) CQWW operation this fall (Zone 33). As we approached Portland, it was becoming hotter and hotter outside and to our dismay, the air conditioning in the bus wasn't working. It was becoming very steamy inside the bus, most of us probably had no time to take a shower after the contest and it was becoming very obvious and uncomfortable. Although goodwill pervaded, we coined a new phrase to use as an insult: "You smell like a contester". We found out later that we were only 2 degrees from the all-time record temperature in Portland!

As I stepped into the hotel lobby, there was Jack, W1WEF, who had come all the way to Portland on a frequent flier ticket for the convention. I shared the hotel room with Gene, N2AA, and Will, AA4NC. After a quick shower (what else?), we migrated down to the convention. The hotel bar became popular and a couple of cold beers really hit the spot. Scores were still coming in and the bar became the unofficial repository of contest results. I bumped into the LZ's who were running around anxiously looking for a place to eat. Their log file became corrupted and they had 1200+ QSO's which they had to enter into the computer again. W1WEF and I have spent many hours entering log data from Caribbean expeditions and I offered my service as a hired-gun touch typist. We went to an upstairs hotel room, they sat me down in front of a portable PC and we proceeded to enter calls. Others were not as lucky. George, UA1DZ, and Vlad, RB5IM, had someone entering their calls during the contest who wasn't accustomed to Russian handwriting. They sat in another corner of our room reading the calls out loud to N7ZZ who edited their log - at least 1 out of 4 QSO's was entered incorrectly! Meanwhile, Dick Norton, N6AA, would occasionally run up and down the hallway, dashing in and out of hotel rooms as he tried to keep everything running smoothly. We managed to finish in time for the banquet which was just about to start as we walked into the banquet hall.

Martti Laine, OH2BH, was the featured speaker. He recalled how his father had fought the Russians in World War II, about "Finlandization" and the new relations between the West and the Soviet Union. Would his father ever have imagined his son going on a joint expedition to Malyj Vysotskij Island, where the remains of Finnish settlements can still be seen before the Russians "invaded"? Other speakers followed: Vassily Bondurenko, UV3BW, from the Central Radio Club, ably translated by Boris, UW3AX, from Radio magazine, and Chip Margelli, K7JA, who also showed slides of the M-V Island expedition. The organizers of the Pacific Northwest DX Convention, the Willamette Valley DX Club, were introduced. They acknowledged this convention to be the best ever, thanks to the presence of the World Radiosport teams. During din-

ner, I found out that both Rumen, LZ1MS, and Ogy, LZ2PO, are Ph.D.'s; Ogy is a specialist in the chemistry of wine-making (Bulgaria makes excellent wines!) and Rumen is the Vice-Director of the School of Management at the Karl Marx Higher Institute of Economics in Sofia. I was going to ask him why he still had "Karl Marx" on the business card he gave me, but then I remembered I was still using QSL's with my old address from 5 years ago...

After the banquet everybody piled into the hospitality suite which was not unlike Dayton, except there were a lot more W7's there! I finally met Dan, W7WA, who gives us East Coaster's a big run for the money in DX Contests. It was nice to meet the W7's and the VE7's, including the #4 WRTC team: Dale, VE7SV, and Lee, VE7CC, in a very close race. As the crowd started to thin into the night, we migrated into one of the rooms with UW3AX, UZ3AU and UA6HZ. Boris, UW3AX, is deputy editor in chief of **Radio** magazine and speaks English very well. Gene, UZ3AU, is technical editor of **Radio** and is the one who fixed the Yaesu FT-1000 on M-V Island when it broke down. He also went to Chernobyl after the disaster to help with communications and participated in the Armenian relief effort. We talked about the future of the Soviet Union. All three expressed a lot of fear about civil war breaking out. They were worried about ethnic strife in the Soviet Union, which makes even the best intentions at "perestroika" impossible to carry out. Life in the Soviet Union is not easy and the future is not bright. They envied our comfortable positions in the U.S., where we can pursue our own individual goals and ambitions without worrying too much about the future of our country.

The next morning at breakfast there were several hundred people in attendance. Word must have gotten out that the Northwest DX Convention was not to be missed. Jacky, F2CW, presented some very interesting slides of the Bouvet expedition in his French-accented English. The preliminary top-three WRTC positions were officially announced - the Americans took them all! After lunch, we were scheduled to go to a picnic at Camp Bonneville (a military base), sponsored by ICOM. The Russians took a side trip to the only Soviet monument in the U.S., which commemorates the first trans-Polar flight which happened to end in Portland when their fuel ran out. We arrived at the picnic site, which was on the shore of a small lake. A big tent was set up, with lots of food and drink. The weather was beautiful, as we ate and drank to the accompaniment of a band, although the conversations drew the attention away from the musicians. The mandatory VE exam tables were set up between the two buses to provide shade from the hot mid-afternoon sun. The picnic was a big success. It was really a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

The team members were scheduled to return to Seattle the next day, but because there was not enough room on the bus, some of us were asked to leave on the bus departing for Seattle that evening. After a full day in the sun, the bus ride back to Seattle (this time in an air-conditioned bus!) was very comfortable. I sat in the group of some of the CQ Committee members: Bob Cox, K3EST, Ville, OH2MM, and Gene, N2AA, so the conversation naturally turned to log checking and log scoring. I spent a long time talking to Adam, N7MJZ (the real person behind that call!), and we came up with some interesting ideas for creating contest categories and for stimulating contest activity, based on our collective experiences in sailing, bicycling and autocrossing. Based upon the incredible success of this event, in days following the contest there was talk in various circles about the formation of a "World Radiosport Federation". To everybody at WRTC, waiting until 1994 for the next Goodwill Games in order to hold another on-site contest was too long to wait...

It seemed that in no time at all we were back in Seattle. Because our hosts in Seattle were not expecting us until Monday, other arrangements were made for us. I stayed with Bruce, WA7YFJ, a retired engineer/lawyer from Boeing. He was the host of Vassily Bondurenko, UV3BW, and Valeri, UA3AO, the week before and lives on a hilltop overlooking the Sound. The view out the window was so spectacular it was hard to keep my eyes away. It was the first good night's sleep I had in many days. After breakfast we went shopping and then drove downtown to meet the bus arriving from Portland. Tonight was the Awards Banquet at Tillicum Village, an Indian Reservation on Blake Island in Puget Sound. The ferry was scheduled to leave at 6:15 PM. We had an hour to spare after the bus arrived so I joined some of the Russians in walking around downtown. Even though they had spent almost a week in Seattle, they really hadn't had a chance to do much sightseeing or shopping. We made plans to do some shopping the next day.

The ferry ride to Blake Island was a real blast! As soon as we left the port, a live band started playing upstairs with some real R&B music. To everyone's surprise, Gene, UZ3AU, jumped up and started boogying, amazing everyone with his dancing ability. Pretty soon the whole Radiosport team, hosts and guests were all dancing and having a fantastic time! Who said hams were all nerds? Not contesters! The music and the atmosphere really put everyone in motion and as we approached the island it was starting to get dark. After seafood cocktails we helped ourselves to the buffet served by the Indians, which featured salmon, and seated ourselves in the huge dining room. After some Indian folk dancing, the stage was cleared for the awards ceremony. Danny, K7SS, was the master of ceremonies. All of the team members

and alternates were introduced and took positions on the stage. The atmosphere was very congenial and truly in the spirit of goodwill. Plaques were handed out to each of the participants and the gold, silver and bronze medalists accepted their awards on a 3-level podium, in true Olympic fashion. A number of special awards and presentations followed. I had arranged with AR, DG, AA and KQ2M to present the Eastern European and Soviet teams with a special souvenir. I announced that the next World Radiosport Team Championship, wherever and whenever it might take place, would probably use computers for logging instead of paper and pencil. In order for our competitors to begin practicing for the event, we gave each team a box of floppies. Unfortunately, there was no time to put a copy of CT onto the floppies. The ceremony ended in a very happy and uplifting manner, and everyone felt fantastic about being part of this truly unique experience.

The ferry ride back was just as much fun as it was coming out. One of the band members started tapping out some CW on his guitar; he too was a ham! The party was on! The brightly lit ferry pushed its way through the dark waters of Puget Sound against the backdrop of the Seattle skylight by night. We arrived at the port in Seattle and docked next to the Soviet three-mast sailing ship "Pallada" which had sailed from Murmansk for the Goodwill Games. Hundreds of lights outlined the masts and booms of the ship, which looked like a giant stack of 160-meter yagis pointed up into the sky. No one was anxious to leave, as we milled around the dock and tried to find our hosts who would be taking us to their house.

The original plan of the organizers was to have everyone switch hosts after returning from Portland. However, most of the guests had enjoyed staying with their original host so much that they preferred not to change. Somewhere that week was a sign-up sheet that everyone who wanted to remain with their original host was supposed to sign. Unfortunately, I never got a chance to sign it, so I was assigned another home. My new host was Pat, W7VIH, and my new "roommate" was Gene, N2AA. Pat lives in a 6 bedroom house and has 8 children. Most of them are grown-up and have left the house so Gene and I each had a bedroom to ourselves. The next day, Mike, UW0CN, and Gene, UW0CA, the Khabarovsk team (UZ0CWA), arrived with their host Dave, N7MYO, joined by Larry, UA6HZ, to go shopping. We piled into Dave's car and headed out. A Russian salary doesn't go a long way in the U.S. Fortunately, they had received a small sum of spending money from their own organization and from the WRTC Committee, and each had brought something with them from home to barter. Our first stop? To buy a VCR, which are very hard to get in the Soviet Union. We found a small shop downtown, owned by Russian immigrants, who seized the oppor-

tunity to sell PAL/SECAM VCR's to their countrymen. They closed the deal and our Russian friends walked out with smiling faces. But not before the reporters jumped on them...

The press coverage of the WRTC was pretty incessant. Since our Russian guests were the first Soviets to arrive in Seattle for the Goodwill Games, the reporters were everywhere. We were eating breakfast with Bruce, WA7YFJ, the morning before when USA Today called. "What have your guests been doing?", they asked. "What do they eat for breakfast?" "Did they wash their dishes?". Bruce replied, "No, because I have a dishwasher and they were thrilled to use one for the first time". Articles in the local papers appeared almost daily, which went into far more interesting and relevant detail about ham radio and the contest. It's not that Russians are exactly a novelty in Seattle. They have had an exchange program with their sister city Tashkent for a number of years. The Western Washington DX Club invited a group of hams from Kazan last year and the club members have been over there several times. Portland's sister city is Khabarovsk. The Khabarovsk Radiosport Federation together with the Friendship Amateur Radio Society organized the Friendship Radio Games in Khabarovsk last year and are planning a similar event in Portland in 1991. "Glasnost" is alive and well in Seattle and Portland.

Our next stop was to buy a computer. Larry, UA6HZ, wanted to buy an XT and we found the best deal in Seattle. Their eyes lit up when they saw the computers, but their pocketbooks were skinny. Mike, UW0CN, is an electrical engineer and was interested in a computer to use for freelancing, as well as the obvious contest logging application. I tried to talk him into a barebones system and even offered to lend him money, but he hesitated. I tried to convince him that he might use it for a year, sell it at a profit and upgrade again when the prices dropped further. The capitalist concept of "building equity" didn't seem to convince him when he converted the \$\$ into rubles and found that \$350 was almost 2 years salary! Gene, UW0CA, was interested in a music keyboard for his children. He is a musician himself, so we stopped in a high-end music store and their jaws dropped. Pianos are impossible to buy in the Soviet Union, and here was a store full of them. We immediately walked over to the synthesizers and the accommodating salesman spent the next hour showing us some of the capabilities of the synthesizer and the MIDI interface to the Apple computer. Within minutes Gene was composing and editing a multi-instrument haunting Russian ballad with the help of the salesman. They had never seen anything like this before. They walked out of the store speechless.

We made a quick stop at Dave, N7MYO's, contem-

porary house to pick up beer for the party that night at Jerry, WA7BUY's, house in Kirkland that night. There was a house under construction across the street so they had a chance to see how we build our houses from "matchsticks". That a house could be built in 60 days and cost \$300,000 was mind boggling. That materials for the house could be left outside and not get stolen was incomprehensible. Houses with two car garages, swimming pools, decks, riding lawnmowers, workshops, cathedral ceilings, family rooms, hot tubs, and on and on were completely new to them. They were talking less and less. The Soviet Union had a long way to go after "perestroika".

The farewell party that night at WA7BUY's house was an emotional one. We realized we probably wouldn't be seeing most of these testers for a long time, except for the next "599" contest exchange. Jerry and his wife Louise built the beautiful contemporary house only a year ago. They started with the tower whose base was visible in the garage, and then built the house around it. It was on top of a hill and was the host station for the OH's. The house was packed with people - hosts, teams, and hams from all over Seattle. It was hard to leave.

The weather, which up until now had been perfect, started to cloud up on Wednesday. People were leaving Seattle. The Russians were scheduled to leave on Thursday, as was my flight back home. We slept late and for lunch went to the Doghouse. I wasn't prepared for this. A small back room of the greasy spoon was the local hangout for hams as long as anyone could remember. The faded QSL cards on the wall, contributed by the room's visitors over the past decades, would put many DX'ers to shame. My favorite was one from Ed Handy of the ARRL with his old call, 1BDI. Mary Lewis, W7QGP, held her last VE exam for the week. I talked at length with UA1DZ, Radiosport Champion of the USSR, and learned many interesting details about their competition. We had dinner with Pat and his family, and after dinner, not having anything planned in particular, paid a surprise visit to Danny, K7SS's, house.

We weren't the only ones there. Others had the same idea. Danny's Italian guests had already left so he and Diane were happy to see people at their house. Larry broke open a bottle of 10-year old Armenian cognac and we spent a pleasant, low-key evening reminiscing about the past week. It was well into midnight when we left and said goodbye. K7SS's vision of a worldwide goodwill get-together of testers had come to pass.

Pat drove Gene and I to the airport the next morning. As I passed through the X-ray machine, the keyer paddle and HT in my handbag naturally aroused suspicion with the security guard. I started to pull them out and prepared to explain what they were. "Oh, you

were here for the ham radio competition?" she asked. "Never mind, then", she continued. "How did you do in the contest?". I was glad I didn't have to explain ham radio.

## Press Release for YCCC

Jim Cain, K1TN

**WHO?** K1TN (C6AFQ) and KR1S, both of the YCCC.

**WHAT?** Multi-single as C6AFQ in the CQ WW CW Contest.

**WHERE?** From Treasure Cay, Great Abaco, Bahamas (the same location as C6A/K1TN in the 1990 ARRL CW DX Contest).

**WHEN?** Nov. 24/25, 1990, plus a modicum of activity on the WARC bands Nov. 21-27.

**WHY?** Because you only live once.

**HOW?** The antenna has been upgraded to an A-3 at 25 ft. (plus K1TN's Alpha-Delta Twin Sloper for 160-80-40 from last February). We will have an IC751, back-up Yucko 767, K1TN's new laptop (with a hard disk that may be able to keep up with 250/hr.), and the latest version of a contest program by some guy with a beard who lives outside of Boston.

**YOUR MISSION:** To work C6AFQ on all 6 HF bands (special recognition to those who do; special recognition to those who don't work us on ANY band). To send your entire call sign one time and one time only. To pass our presence along to others through the magic of PacketCluster(r). To say we are 599 even if we aren't.

**OUR MISSION:** To break the 5000-QSO barrier running 100 watts, and to give new meaning to the term "Rum punch." And, of course, to help YCCC be the Top Club.

## Other Contest DXpeditioners

K2EK, K1KI, and K2SS will be operating at PJ1B for the CQ WW SSB.

K1XM, KM3T, KQ1F, and K1KP will be operating at ZF8 for the CQ WW CW. Instead of bringing a computer, we will bring an amplifier, and will beat K1TN using pencil and paper logging!

## An Open Letter to the President

Dear Dave,

I have to disagree with your suggestion to table the revised "Alternate Meetings" proposal until December.

The October pre-contest meeting is traditionally the most attended meeting of the year, more so at Boxboro! The members most affected by the decision will be there, and vice versa (the most members).

It is my understanding that the new proposal allows a "regional" meeting, once per year to be counted as half the present attendance requirement of 2 meetings per year at Sturbridge. These "special" meetings allow for no club business to be transacted (including induction of new members). New members must attend a "Regular" meeting to join.

Your point is well taken about Boxboro being a "showcase" for the club, many non-members attend the meeting, and several of them leave as new members. We certainly don't want to give these folks the impression that our meetings aren't fun.

Therefore I suggest a 10 minute intermission at the end of the program, and a quick vote to amend the constitution.

Perhaps the "pro" and "con" factions could meet during the intermission, and pick a spokesperson to present each side of the question in a 2 minute summary... followed immediately by a vote.

The problems with the December meeting are: 1) Weather 2) Pre-Holiday 3) Post-contest. The December meeting is probably the most poorly attended, and the balance of the "local" to "fringe" members is badly skewed.

The dedication of members who travel 3 hours each way to attend a meeting should be recognized, and we should accommodate them by taxing their contribution to club scores at a reduced rate.

After all, a contest score from "Down East" counts the same as from "Central Mass" as long as the summary sheet says YCCC!

It is interesting to note the 2 meetings per year minimum is not a requirement for club membership, but for contribution to aggregate club score!

73, Allen, N2KW

## Movers and Shakers

Please update your club roster to include the following changes:

Art, W2IB, reports that the best mailing address for

him is:

Art Wildblood, W2IB  
204 East Drive  
P. O. Box 1981  
Kingston, NY 12401  
phone: (914)331-2864

Correct address for James, KZ1M, is:  
James Dalterio, KZ1M  
P. O. Box 102  
Manchaug, MA 01526

Ray Ortgiesen, ex-KB1EM, is now WF1B.

New address for Brian, NJ1F, is:  
Brian J. Szewczyk, NJ1F  
Parkwood Village Apts.  
138-B Breyman House / Rt. 9  
Clifton Park, NY 12065  
Home phone: (518)383-9068  
Work phone: (518)785-9061

New work phone number for Doug, K1DG, is (617)937-1481.

Bill, N1CQ, has moved:  
Bill Shaheen, N1CQ  
32 Robin Road  
West Hartford, CT 06119  
Home phone: (203)236-0937  
Work phone: (203)243-4851  
Ham station phone: (413)467-9075

Gary, W1GG, is very pleased to announce that since he is now retired, you should delete his work telephone number!

New phone numbers for Steve, K1ST, are (508)870-8503 at work and (508)435-5178 at home.

## New Crew

Please welcome the following new and returning members who joined at the August picnic meeting:

Bob Laffeur, NQ1C  
45 Ionia St.  
Springfield, MA 01109-2519  
Home phone: (413)737-8503

Rusty Hack, NM1K  
21 Montano Road  
Enfield, CT 06082  
Work phone: (203)520-7586

James B. Burke, K1NCD  
25 Crossroads Lane  
Glastonbury, CT 06033-2057  
Home phone: (203)633-6178  
Work phone: (203)565-7545

Stewart Wilansky, NU1P  
71 Balance Road Road  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
Home phone: (413)499-3696  
Work phone: (413)494-6758

## Excess Cargo

Bill, N1CQ, has the following items for sale: ICOM R71A receiver (like new) \$695, Cushcraft 15-4CD Yagi antenna \$100 each, Cushcraft 10-4CD Yagi antenna \$90 each, Cushcraft Ringo Ranger 2M antenna \$25 each, and a complete home satellite receiver system including a 10 ft fiberglass channelmaster dish and horn, receiver and downconverter, electric actuator and control, and dish mount, for \$975. Contact Bill at his NEW address (see above under **Movers and Shakers**).

TITAN amp, list \$3250, will sell for \$2000 and deliver within 100 miles. Reason: Have a HERCULES II amp which, along with my antenna relays is remotely band-switched by my OMNI V. The convenience and instant warm-up is worth more to me than the extra 3-4 dB, hi. Contact Roger Corey, W1AX, 60 Warwick Dr., Westwood, MA 02090, or see him at Boxboro.

For sale: Ameritron AL-1200 amplifier, excellent condition, \$1150. Call John Kaufman, W1FV, (617)981-4041 (work) or (508)897-5929 (home).

Wanted - 30L-1 or other small amplifier. Cosmetics are not important. Will consider a broken amp. Contact Paul, K1XM, at (508)562-5819.

## **THE CLUB RESOURCES PAGE** **THE Place to Find Club Information**

**DUES** are due at the April election meeting, which begins our club "contest year", with a grace period until the end of June. Membership in the club will lapse at the end of the grace period if dues are not paid up. In order to re-join the club, a lapsed member must attend a meeting, like any new member, and be welcomed back into membership, or may become a subscriber to the **Scuttlebutt** by paying up (see below). Club members who move out of club territory and so are not eligible to contribute to club aggregate scores automatically become subscribers. New members who join at the last meeting of the club's contest year (February) are credited with dues for the following year (that is, the contest year beginning that April). You can tell if you owe dues by checking your **Butt** mailing label. Only paid-up members are eligible to contribute to the the club score in contests.

**FAMILY MEMBERS** Members of the same family living at the same address may elect to receive only one copy of the **Butt**. One member of the family must pay full dues, enabling the rest of the family to join as family members. Being a family member is currently free.

**STUDENT MEMBERS** Full-time students are eligible for dues at half the regular rate.

**SCUTTLEBUTT SUBSCRIBERS** Anyone may subscribe to the club newsletter, the **Scuttlebutt**. A subscription currently costs \$10 per year. At the present time, overseas subscriptions cost the same as domestic (we have very few overseas subscribers). The subscription period begins at the beginning of the club year, in April. New subscribers who begin their subscriptions after the December issue are considered to have paid for the following year (that is, they receive as many issues as new members joining at that time do). You can tell if your subscription is current by checking your **Butt** mailing label. The grace period for late subscriptions is the same as for late memberships.

**SCUTTLEBUTT ARTICLES** should be sent to the **Scuttlebutt** editor, Paul Young, K1XM, 11 Michigan Drive, Hudson, MA 01749, home phone (508)562-5819. The deadline for each issue is usually three weeks before the next meeting.

**CLUB JACKETS** are available through Ed Kritsky, NT2X, 580 East 17th Street, Apt. 2F, Brooklyn, NY 11226, home phone (718)284-4493.

**CLUB QSL CARDS** are ordered through John Dorr, K1AR, 2 Baldwin Street, Windham, NH 03087, home phone (603)434-5661.

**CLUB QSL CARD BADGES** are available from Tom Frenaye, K1KI, PO Box 386, West Suffield, CT 06093, home phone (203)668-5444, by sending him a club QSL card. The cost is \$1 payable to the club treasurer on receipt of your badge.

**PACKET NET** information is available from Dick Newell, AK1A, 8 Golden Run Rd., Bolton, MA 01740, home phone (508)779-5198, or Dave Robbins, KY1H, Baumann Road, Peru, MA 01235, home phone (413)655-2714.

**CONTEST SCORES** are sent to the club scorekeeper, Jeff Detray, NK1F, P. O. Box 524, Troy, NH 03465, home phone (603)242-7995.

**CLUB ROSTER** appears in the summer issue of the **Scuttlebutt** every year. Updates are published when members move or change callsigns. If you want a new copy of the club roster, contact the club secretary/treasurer, Charlotte Richardson, KQ1F, 11 Michigan Drive, Hudson, MA 01749, home phone (508)562-5819.

**CONTRIBUTIONS** The YCCC welcomes your contributions, be it money to help offset the cost of the **Scuttlebutt** and club operations, scores for the club aggregate score, time spent helping other members, articles for the **Scuttlebutt**, or presentations at club meetings.

**DXCC LIST** The club maintains a one-page version of the ARRL DXCC Countries List. To get a copy, send an SASE to the club secretary, Charlotte Richardson, KQ1F, 11 Michigan Drive, Hudson, MA 01749. Complete DXCC rules are only available from the ARRL.

**ARRL LIAISON** For ARRL matters, contact Tom Frenaye, K1KI, PO Box 386, West Suffield, CT 06093, home phone (203)668-5444.

The **Scuttlebutt** is the newsletter of the **Yankee Clipper Contest Club** and is mailed six times per year to all paid up members. Dues are \$15 per year, payable 1 April with a grace period through 30 June. Non-members may subscribe to the **Scuttlebutt** by sending \$10 to the Treasurer: Charlotte Richardson, KQ1F, 11 Michigan Drive, Hudson, MA 01749. Subscribers who subsequently become members will be credited as having paid \$10 towards dues.

The **Scuttlebutt** may be reprinted in whole or in part, except for separately copyrighted articles, provided proper credit is given.

The **Yankee Clipper Contest Club** (an ARRL Affiliated Club) holds six official meetings per year, on the Saturday or Sunday afternoon of the first full weekend of every even month, usually in the Sturbridge, Massachusetts, area. The deadline for article submission to the **Scuttlebutt** is usually three weeks before the next meeting date. The next meeting will be at the ARRL New England Division Convention in Boxboro, MA, on Saturday, October 13. Attendance at an official meeting is required in order to become a member. Club members congregate on 3830 KHz after contests. The packet frequencies are 144.95, 145.69, 144.93, and 144.97 MHz.

Rosters are mailed to all paid members each summer. For more information and/or assistance, contact the area manager nearest you on the following list:

Area	Call	Name	Home	Work
CT/RI	K1RU	Gene Frohman	(203) 393-1772	(203) 386-6137
EMass	N1AU	Bill Santelmann	(617) 862-1753	(508) 692-6000
WMass	KY1H	Dave Robbins	(413) 655-2714	(413) 494-2023
VT/NH	K1GW	Glen Whitehouse	(603) 673-6290	(603) 627-7877
ME	K1SA	Bernie Cohen	(207) 773-6589	(207) 797-3585
NLI	NQ2D	Jim Metcalf	(516) 744-9422	(516) 467-4800
NY/NJ	K2EK	Bill Gioia	(914) 221-1672	(914) 697-3250

YCCC  
11 Michigan Drive  
Hudson MA 01749

**FIRST CLASS**