

# SUNSPOTS



## REDWOOD EMPIRE DX ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 750834, Petaluma, CA 94975

A DX and Contest-minded Amateur Radio Club serving the California coast north of the Golden Gate Bridge

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Visit our Web Site at <http://www.redxa.com/>

### MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

**Wednesday, April 8, 2009** at Mister McGoo's  
Restaurant, Petaluma. If you need directions, please call  
one of the club officers.

6 pm — Social Hour in the Lounge  
7 pm — Dinner and Meeting  
8 pm — Program

**PROGRAM: Our Program for the evening will be  
by our own Bill Hillendahl, KH6GJV, who is going  
to tell us what the ARRL has accomplished over the  
past year.**

### REDXA President's Report

#### Spring, glorious spring.

Each month I try to come up with something interesting for this column—something with a ham radio connection—but with the exception of those VK9 expeditions, March has been a slow month.

I've spent more time mowing, tilling, and installing drip lines this month than I've spent on the air. The radials I put down under my 80 and 160 antennas are now tightly bound to the earth. I can drive my mower over them without snagging the wires, a big improvement over last year.

The plant kingdom and ham radio mostly coexist until it's time to put up a new antenna. First come the aesthetic considerations or, to quote my XYL, "you aren't putting that thing [a perfectly nice 40 meter ground plane] in that part of the yard."

Next come the physical parameters, best summarized as "if there's a way to snag a wire, you will snag a wire".

Last week I helped Al, K6RIM, get his 80 meter wire back in the air. Step one, getting a line over a tall pine tree with my trusty WB6ZQZ tennis ball launcher was a piece of cake. Step two, threading the wires over, under and around pine and redwood branches so they might radiate into free space took another 3 hours. I was pleased to get email from Al later in the day telling me that he used the new antenna to work a D44 on 80 meters. The proof of the pudding as they say.

Tonight—April Fools’ morning in UTC—I spent a couple of hours learning to program the timer for my modest irrigation system. After a few false starts, success! The water began bubbling out in all the right places in the garden.

I should add that the battery powered irrigation timer appears to be bulletproof with respect to RFI. That wasn’t the case with the AC powered Rainbird system I had at my old QTH in Berkeley. One day I turned on the amp and started calling another station when I felt the whole house shaking in synch with my CW. Inside the walls, the pipes were jumping. I looked out in the yard and saw the sprinklers spraying a watery “K6SRZ”. Yow! Fortunately, the solution turned out to be easy: a big capacitor across all the control wires plus a few fat toroids for good measure.

To celebrate my irrigation success, I fired up the rig and managed to work HH4/K4QD for #98 on topband. Then I QSYed to 20 meters where, it seemed, a whole lot of my friends had joined the pileup for VK9GMW.

Earlier this year, REDXA had a presentation from Bob Vallio, W6RGG, our ARRL Section Manager, on the general topic of what an ARRL membership can do for you. For this month’s meeting, our own Bill Hillendahl, KH6GJV, is going to tell us what the ARRL has accomplished over the past year.

And, speaking of membership, those of you who haven’t renewed your REDXA membership for 2009 please do so ASAP. Dues are \$20 for the year, or, put another way, 5.48 cents per day, which is certainly a small price to pay for supporting one of the best radio clubs on the planet.

The second Wednesday comes early this month: April 8. Get those tax returns in and come on down to Mr. McGoo’s to celebrate and unwind.

73, Alan

## Treasurer Report

by Jim, K6JS

### REDXA TREASURER’S REPORT

2/28/09 Balance Forward		\$3,162.49
INCOME		
Dues	40.00	
Raffle	<u>28.50</u>	
TOTAL INCOME		68.50
EXPENSES		
	<u>0.00</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES		(0.00)
3/31/09 Ending Balance		<u>\$3,230.99</u>

REDXA membership renewal is due. Please submit your dues ASAP. Dues can be mailed to me via my home address, which is current on QRZ.com or mailed to the REDXA P.O. Box or given to me personally at our regularly scheduled meetings.

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MARCH 2009

by Doug, WW6D

NO MEETING SCHEDULED.

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## MARCH MEETING MINUTES

by Doug, WW6D

President Alan K6SRZ called the meeting to order at 7:43 pm, March 11, 2009 at Mr. McGoo’s Restaurant, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were 22 members and guests. Guests included were Jack KE7HTY from Reno, NV and our speaker Alan AD6E.

Alan K6SRZ requested a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting and treasurer’s report as published in Sunspots. The motion was made by Chuck N6OJ and seconded by Bob K6QXY. Motion passed.

**Old business.** None.

**New business.** Upcoming meeting programs were announced by Alan K6SRZ:

April – Possibly Bill Hillendahl KH6GJV, our ARRL SF Section Manager

May – Remote Control of your Amateur Radio Station by Rick “The Locust” K6VVA

June – Field Day preparation

July – **THE Definitive** Field Day Motion Picture by Alan K6SRZ

August – Giants in the History of Amateur Radio by Gary NI6T

A Field Day “prep talk” was given by Jim KE6UAR. He will be co-chairing the leadership with Ron N6IE this year. They have already lined up coordination with the Marin Amateur Radio Society as well as our site at the Marin Rod & Gun Club. Plans are already in the works for another Public Service demonstration either by REACH or Jim K6JS’s group.

Alan K6SRZ alerted Board members of a possible Director’s meeting at his QTH just prior to the regular meeting on April 8. Details to be announced.

Fred N6YEU apologized for not holding the raffle last month – he had to leave early only to find out that his YL was holding a surprise 60th birthday party for him! And he was further surprised on discovering that his daughter was expecting a new “fishing buddy” for Grandpa! Congratulations, Fred!

Doug WW6D announced that the deadline for early registration at Visalia is March 20.

Raffle was held by Fred N6YEU and brought in a total of \$57.00. The winner for the evening was Frank WA6PXW who took home \$28.50, leaving \$28.50 for the club.

The program for the evening was P29NI Papua New Guinea presented by Alan AD6E. This was an “IOTA” (Islands on the Air) Expedition and the team consisted of Alan as well as G3KHZ, K6MYC and W5GAI. The IOTA program is very popular in Europe and is sponsored by RSGB. This expedition activated two of the “counters” (islands): OC-181 and OC-041. There were also some major DXCC accomplishments as well – P2 was activated on 160 much to the pleasure of the Top Band enthusiasts and, for the first time, EME (Earth-Moon-Earth) from P2.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

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## Contesting and DX News

by Doug, WW6D

Fred N6YEU was tuning around the bands on the weekend of March 7 and worked the Falklands VP8 on 20 meters. He thought “why not try out 15?” -- and found them there as well. Since this was working so well, he tried 10 meters expecting a dead band -- but NO! He worked them there as well. So, even though “everyone” says the bands are dead due to the

lack of sunspots, it sure doesn’t hurt to take a listen once in a while.

Several REDXA members were recently recognized for their contesting accomplishments over the past year at the annual NCCC awards meeting. Dave AA6YX, Bill N6ZFO and Dick K6LRN received the KB 500 award for amassing over 500K points during the 2008 ARRL Sweepstakes (combining both weekends). Fred N6YEU received his KB 1000 plaque. Al K6RIM, Josh W6XU and Alan K6SRZ received KB 2000 certificates. The 400K Club (Operators) welcomes Josh W6XU for a single weekend with over 400K points during SS. And Ron N6IE received the “Back in the Game” award for the year. Congratulations to all!

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## ARRL DX SSB

Call	Category	Qs	Mlts	Score
K6SRZ	SOAB(A)HP	102	55	16,830
K6RIM	SOAB(A)HP	337	161	162,771

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## NA QSO Party RTTY

Call	Category	Qs	Mlts	Score
K6CTA	SOLP	217	67	14,539
K6UM	SOLP	300	104	31,200

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## Calendar of Upcoming Events:

Apr 8	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Apr 17-19	Visalia Int'l DX Convention
May 2-3	7th Call Area QSO Party
May 13	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
May 23-24	CQ WPX CW
Jun 10	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Jun 13-14	June VHF QSO Party
Jun 20	Kids Day
Jun 27-28	Field Day
Jul 8	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
July 11-12	IARU HF World Championships

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## Monthly San Francisco Section News Summary

Here is the link for the News Summary:  
<http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=SF>

**Pacificon 2009 to be hosted by  
EMCOMMWEST, May 1, 2, and 3,  
at the Circus Circus Hotel, Reno, NV**

On February 15, I learned that the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club had decided not to sponsor the Pacificon Convention this year. They have done an outstanding job of running Pacificon every year since 1992, and this decision was made by their Pacificon Committee, based on the current economic downturn, and unsuccessful negotiations with the host hotel. Realizing the difficulty of finding a replacement for the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club, that with an experienced committee spends nearly a year planning this successful event, I decided to contact EMMCOMMWEST, the second largest Amateur Radio Convention in the Pacific Division. They very kindly accepted, knowing the marriage of the two events would require an expansion of program matter, and the addition of Friday presentations. I am truly grateful to the entire EMMCOMMWEST team for their decision. The Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club has been very supportive of this effort, and is making all of their speaker, vendor, and organizational information available to the EMMCOMMWEST team. The keynote speaker will be Steve Ewald, WV1X, Field Organization Supervisor from ARRL HQ; and the banquet speaker will be Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, who was in charge of Amateur Radio rules enforcement at the FCC when

he retired. I hope many of you will be able to attend this year's Pacificon. More information is available at <pacificon.org>.


A special note to all club newsletter editors: Please feature this information in your monthly publications. I will be sending additional mailings as more news becomes available.

See you at EMMCOMMWEST/Pacificon!

Thanks and 73,

Bob Vallio, W6RGG  
Director, Pacific Division  
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**MEETING: APRIL 8, 2009**

