

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, February 11, 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 most likely be our own Jim Selmi and associates with a presentation on "search and rescue".

REDXA President's Report

You Don't Know What You've Got Till It's Gone

During the recent CQ WW 160 Meter contest I worked nine different stations from EU and a couple from AF. During the first night of the contest, I had WAC on 160. This being my first season on 160, I thought "this isn't too hard". After the contest, reading the postings on the Top Band reflector, I realized that I had just participated in one of the best weekends of 160 propagation in many years; maybe the best ever, according to some of the postings.

Fast rewind to 1957. I'm 13 years old and just upgraded from novice to general (after waiting 8 weeks to get the little piece of paper signed by (C.B. Plummer). My station consisted of a Globe Scout (65 watts on a good day) and SX 71. The antenna was an end-fed wire about 80 feet long and maybe 20 feet off the ground. I didn't know that such an antenna should be fed against ground (it wasn't) or that there was such a thing as SWR. The shack—my bedroom—was alive with RF. Touching the microphone with my lips gave me a painful burn. Despite all this, I found that I could work all over the world on 10 meters. I thought "this isn't too hard".

In retrospect, of course, 1957 marked the height of Solar Cycle 19. The smoothed sunspot number peaked at over 200 and solar flux was off the charts. It is only slightly hyperbolic to say that one could work 10 meter DX with 5 watts and a wet noodle out the window (aluminum noodles worked best).

Today we are entering the 13th year of Cycle 23. There have been many months where the sunspot number was zero. Solar flux has varied between 69 and 71 for the past couple of years. There are cobwebs on the 10 meter position of the band switch on my amp. And yet our hobby endures, if not a little more grey at the temples.

At first, I resisted the call to the ARRL's Triple Play Logbook of the World promotion. For those unfamiliar, this is a new award given for achieving WAS on Digital, CW, and SSB during 2009 with all QSOs being confirmed on LOTW. It's actually been fun. I worked all states on RTTY and CW, largely due to participating in the RTTY Roundup and the CW version of the North American QSO Party. Now I'm finishing up SSB, which should be the easiest mode of all. At least two informal Triple Play nets have sprung up on 3.618 and 14.290 MHz. Participants often split off from these frequencies to give RTTY or CW QSOs, if requested. On the first two evenings on 3.618 I logged 37 different states and even caused a mini-pileup of East Coast and Midwest stations calling me for California credit.

As this goes to press, our February meeting program is still not set. Most likely it will be our own Jim Selmi and associates with a presentation on "search and rescue". If they can't make it, I promise instead a lively movie night complete with popcorn. You will not be bored! And, of course, the most important reason for these meetings is the chance to get together and swap stories and exchange useful information.

Again, let me take this opportunity to ask you, the members, to consider giving a presentation. Just about anything of interest to hams makes for a good presentation. Here, follow my suggestions for what makes a good presentation:

Case histories. I learned this from giving talks to doctors. Always start a presentation with a description of a real event--whether it be a case of Dengue Fever or what it was like to work Europe on 6 meters.

Graphics. A good picture is truly worth many words. Laptop computers, digital projectors (our club owns a nice one), Power Point, and the ability to burn our own CDs and DVDs puts professional level audio visual presentations within the reach of us all. As always, I am ready to help any of you with an audio-visual presentation.

Brevity. It's no accident that the typical college lecture class (or session with a psychiatrist) lasts 50

minutes. Going past an hour can lose even the most sympathetic listener. If there's more to be shared, leave it for a question period.

If things had worked out differently, I'd be missing the February meeting while on the Dxpedition to Desecheo (KP5). But I won't be. I'll be home trying to work them as many ways as possible. See you in the pileups...

...and I'll see you all at Mr. McGoo's on February 11.

73, Alan/K6SRZ

Treasurer Report

by Jim, K6JS

REDXA TREASURER'S REPORT

12/31/08 Balance Forward		\$2,354.49
INCOME		
Donations (K6RO)	20.00	
Dues	440.00	
Raffles	70.00	
TOTAL INCOME		530.00
EXPENSES		
TOTAL EXPENSES		(0.00)
1/31/09 Ending Balance		<u>\$2,884.49</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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING JANUARY 2009

by Doug, WW6D

NO MEETING SCHEDULED.

JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

by Doug, WW6D

President Alan K6SRZ called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm, January 14, 2009 at Mr. McGoo's Restaurant, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were 56 members and

guests. Guests included several members of the Northern California Contest Club, and 2 principals from the Elecraft company, Wayne Burdick N6KR and Eric Swartz WA6HHQ.

Old business. Alan K6SRZ opened the business meeting and welcomed all of our guests from the NCCC. He 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. Motion passed.

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

February - P29NI DXpedition by Alan AD6E.
 March - 90% sure that our own Jim K6JS will speak on Search and Rescue operations.

Bill KH6GJV thanked those members who contributed their WorldRadio subscriptions to the George Washington High School Amateur Radio Club in San Francisco - they are sincerely appreciated. These will be applied to a CQ Magazine subscription since WorldRadio is now a free on-line magazine.

Fred N6YEU conducted the REDXA 50/50 Raffle. \$140 was collected; \$70 was won by Ken N6RO and \$70 went to the club.

NCCC then conducted a brief meeting and then the program was started by NCCC President John Miller K6MM. John had requested participants in an on-line survey for the Elecraft K3 transceiver and reported on those results. This was followed as discussion by Ed W0YK regarding IF filter choices. The program ended with a panel discussion with several owners/users of the K3.

Meeting adjourned after 9:30 pm.

Contesting and DX News

by Doug, WW6D

Pre-registration for the 60th Annual International DX Convention held in Visalia, CA has begun. The dates this year are April 17 through 19. There will be vendor exhibits, an incredible raffle (this year expected to be \$25,000 worth of prizes), QSL checking, and the usual line-up of DXpedition programs. Always something new for the DXer! The web site for all Visalia convention material is www.dxconvention.org.

A new offering this year will be an event called "Contest Academy" on Friday afternoon from 1 to 5,

sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club. The curriculum includes an overview of contesting, contest logging software, station layout and design, RTTY contesting, and a panel question & answer period. There is a cost (\$10) associated with the course but is primarily intended to cover the training materials, which include paper copies of the slide presentation, a CD ROM containing many resources for the contester, and an NCCC pen. Register on-line by going to the convention website (see above) and click on "Contest Academy" on the left side of the page.

NCJ North American QSO Party CW

Call	Category	Qs	Mlts	Score
N6IE	SOLP	460	159	73,140
K6LRN	SOLP	460	155	71,300
K6SRZ	SOLP	900	187	168,300
N6ZFO	SOLP	574	143	82,082
K6UM	SOLP	215	111	23,865
K6RIM	SOLP	746	173	129,058
WW6D	SOLP	110	70	7,700

NCJ North American QSO Party SSB

Call	Category	Qs	Mlts	Score
N6ZFO	SOLP	409	98	40,082

CQ WW 160m CW

Call	Category	Qs	DX	S/P	Score
N6IE	SOHP	417	17	55	75,024
K6SRZ	SOHP	?	39	22	48,068
K6ANP	SOHP	121	9	42	?
WW6D	SOHP	52	2	19	2,436


Calendar of Upcoming Events:

Feb 8	NCJ North American Sprint CW
Feb 11	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Feb 14-15	CQ WW RTTY WPX
Feb 15	NCJ North American Sprint SSB
Feb 21-22	ARRL Intl DX CW
Feb 28-Mar 1	NAQP RTTY
Feb 28-Mar 1	CQ WW 160m SSB
Mar 7-8	ARRL Intl DX Phone
Mar 11	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Mar 15	NCJ North American Sprint RTTY
Mar 29-30	CQ WW WPX Phone
Apr 8	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Apr 17-19	Visalia Int'l DX Convention
Jun 13-14	June VHF QSO Party
Jun 20	Kids Day
Jun 27-28	Field Day

Monthly San Francisco Section News Summary

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

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MEETING: FEBRUARY 11, 2009

