

Announcing the February 13 Valentine's Day Eve Joint Meeting  
of REDXA and NCCC



The February edition of Sunspots follows on the  
next page

# 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

Volume XXI

Number II

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

Announcing our February 13, 2019 joint meeting with the Northern California Contest Club.



We're meeting at the Boulevard Café in Petaluma.  
1096 Petaluma Blvd. North, Meeting starts at 6:00 p.m. with dinner and program to follow. See the last page for a map and directions

## REDXA President's Commentary

REDXA President's Report

It's hard to believe it's already February!

We had a great presentation at our January meeting by Dr. Leif Svaalgard (photos page 8 )

Ham radio operators have always been on the forefront of new technology, evolving from tubes to solid state many years ago. Over the years we've developed packet, PC logging, station automation, SDR's, band scopes, skimmers and remote control stations. Most of these technologies were introduced in the past 15 years. The computer has become an integral part of the modern ham shack. Come on out and see what FT8 is all about.

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We will also going to try to Skype with our own Fred, PJ5/N6YEU in St. Eustatius at the meeting. He will be at PJ5 from 2/11 through 2/19. He arrives late on the 11<sup>th</sup> and probably won't get on the air until the 12<sup>th</sup>, QRV with 100W, 40 through 15 CW/SSB. I believe he also has an antenna for 80 as well. He will be operating in the ARRL DX CW contest February 16-17.

I've been trying out SO2R (Single Operator 2 Radios) lately. There is a big learning curve, but I am starting to get the feel of it. It gets confusing listening to a radio in each ear and trying to get the calls in the correct entry window and making sure the correct radio has the focus for the QSO. To Improve my SO2R skills I've started joining the CW-Ops Tests(CWT), they are mini contests every Wednesday. CWT has three 1-hour mini contests every Wednesday, times are 1300 – 1400z (favoring Asia/Pacific); 1900 – 2000z (favoring Europe/Africa); and 0300 – 0400z –Thursday (Wednesday evening in US/Canada). There is very good U.S. participation in all 3.

Please consider contributing information for publication in Sunspots. We welcome your voice.

I hope to see you all at the meeting.

73,

Jim, K6JS

This month brings our joint meeting with the Northern California Contest Club. Our presentation is on FT8: Digital Modes and Contesting by Jack Brindle, W6FB.

The computer has become an integral part of the modern ham shack. Come on out and see what FT8 is all about.

### **Sweepstakes Final results**

The November Sweepstakes CW final results are in and taking a look at REDXA members in the Pacific Division Unlimited HP class, K6SRZ is 3<sup>rd</sup> and K6RIM 13<sup>th</sup>. In the Unlimited LP class, K6JS is 2<sup>nd</sup>. Narrowing it down to the San Francisco division, Unlimited HP class, K6SRZ #1 and K6RIM #2. In the Unlimited LP

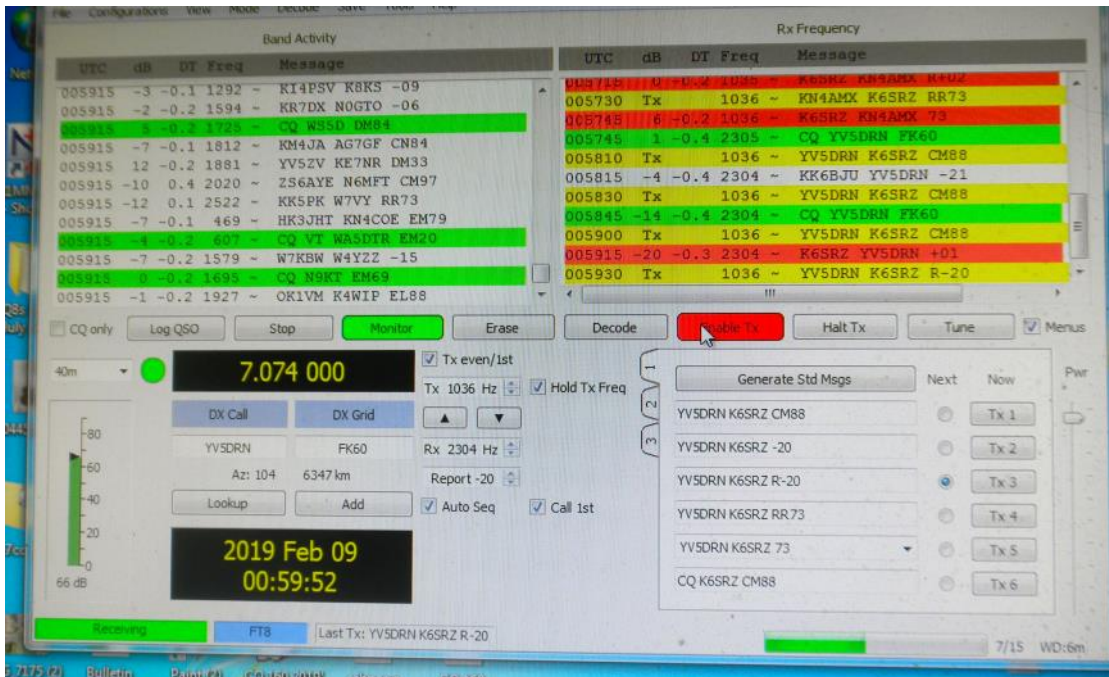
class K6JS #1. The A LP class has N6YEU #1 and WW6D #3.



We're not sure of the entire program for the joint meeting. Both NCCC and REDXA will have short business meetings. Current NCCC President, Jack Brindle, W6FB will give a presentation on FT8 and on digital modes for contesting and for DXing in general.

The use of FT8 as a contest mode is in its early stages, but one thing is clear: FT8 is widely popular. When the traditional CW and SSB spectra appear dead all you need to do is tune to one of the established FT8 frequencies to hear a cacophony of signals.

If you haven't tried FT8 and you'd like to see what it looks like, you can download the WSJT-X suite of applications from <https://physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/k1jt/wsjt.html>



This is a screen shot that shows two QSOs between K6SRZ (using the WSJT-X V. 2 version of FT8) and KN4AMX and YV5DRN.

The green stripes represent stations calling CQ. The red stripes are stations replying to K6SRZ. Yellow stripes are my own transmissions.

Numbers on the far left side of each stripe are times. For example, the bottom yellow stripe number 005930 is 0059Z +30 seconds.





**Alan Young, K6KLL, SK**

Sad news.

Alan Young, K6KLL, became a silent key on January 30. He had his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 16, for which we had a wonderful party, but he had a fall on Dec. 20 and was being treated at Sonoma Community Hospital and then Queen of the Valley in Napa. He succumbed to complications from Parkinson's.

There will be no services now but we do intend to have a celebration of his life perhaps six months from now. I convinced Alan to get back his original license and callsign when I first met him in the mid-nineties, and he in turn convinced his godson, Steve Wilson, to become licensed now as K6WW.

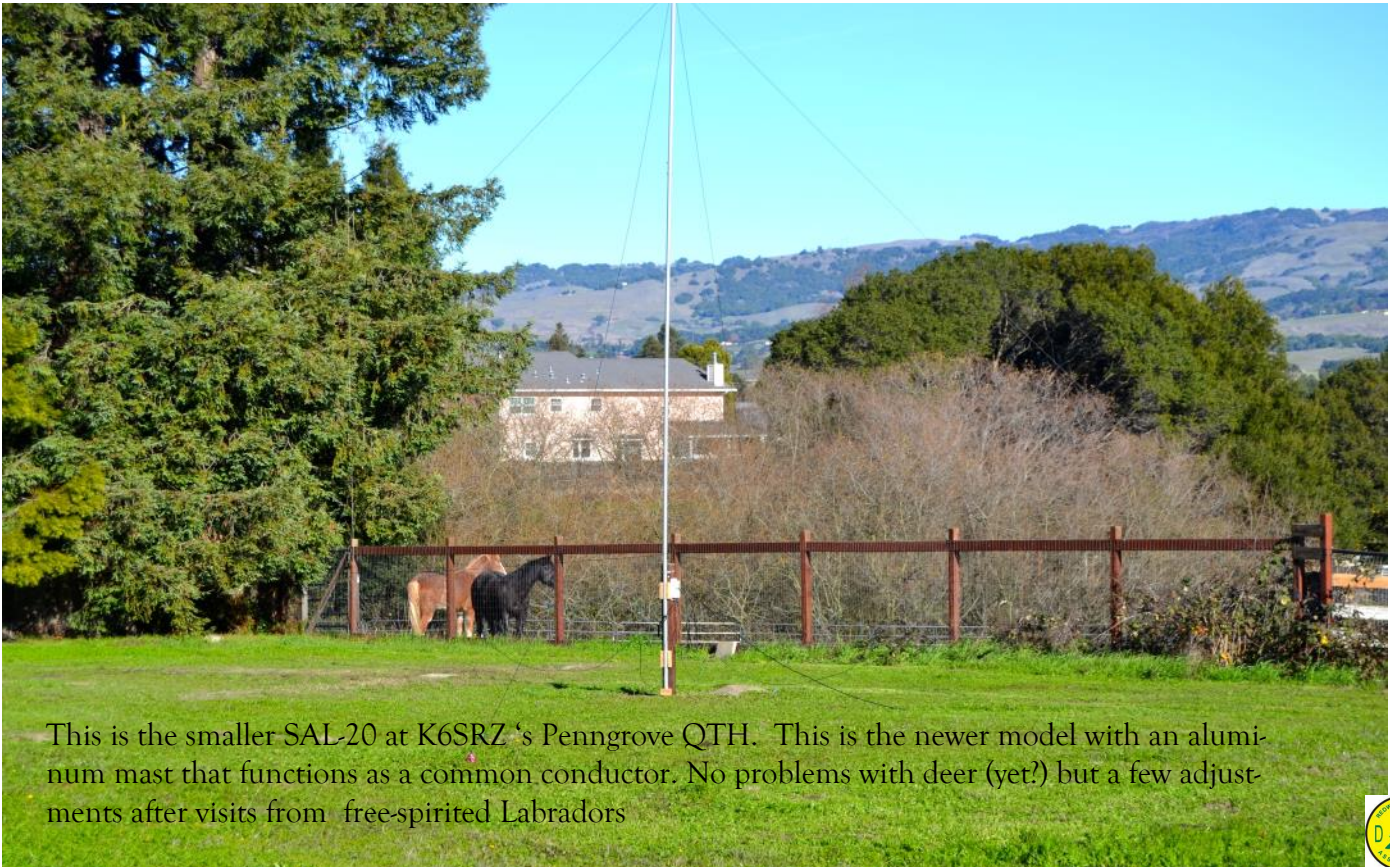
Alan was a VE for 130 sessions and a member at various times of the Silverado ARC, San Francisco ARC, Valley of the Moon ARC, Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Comm., and the ARRL as well as REDXA.

San, N7PIB.

Photo credit Steve Wilson, K6WW



This is Mark, K6UFO's, SAL-30 at his Washington State QTH. Mark notes "Refurb needed every spring after weather, snow, wind, deer running through the field." This is the older Array Solutions model with fiberglass mast.



This is the smaller SAL-20 at K6SRZ 's Penngrove QTH. This is the newer model with an aluminum mast that functions as a common conductor. No problems with deer (yet?) but a few adjustments after visits from free-spirited Labradors

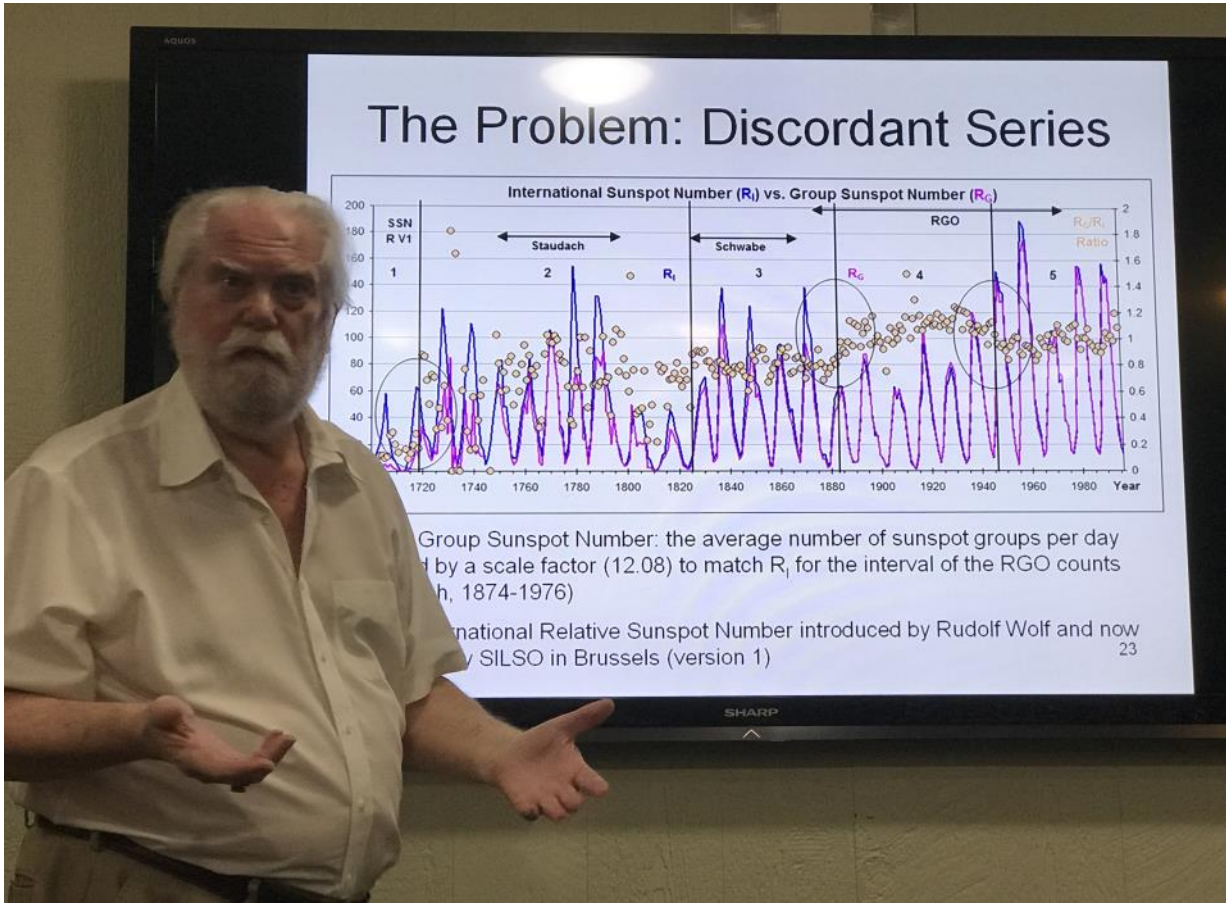


K3RC adjusts his UHF antennas in the shadow of his MonstIR yagi



Who knew? The QRS company is a major supplier of piano rolls and they're not always slow





Our January presentation by Dr. Leif Svalgaard: Solar Observations and the Importance to Radio. Thanks so much to Dr. Svalgaard. To learn more, about his work, please visit his Web site <https://leif.org/research/>





From Jim, K6UUW:

This is a picture of a communication system (a transceiver?) designed by Frank Jones, W6AJF for the army during WWII.

Frank was a prolific radio designer and publisher. I have articles written by him going back to the 1920's.

Our club, VOMARC [Valley of the Moon ARC] was fortunate to be given his callsign, W6AJF, by his wife after Frank died.

*Editor's note: There are several hams who belong to both VOMARC and REDXA. VOMARC sponsors an annual swap meet in Sonoma*

Len Gerardi, K6ANP at home in Penngrove. As time permits, I'll try to feature other members' stations



This month marks the 59th (!!!) anniversary of Len's achieving DXCC.

Len plans to celebrate it by running a half-marathon. That's more than 13 miles!



## JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

by Doug WW6D, Secretary

President Jim, K6JS, called the meeting to order at 7:45 pm, January 9, 2019 at the Boulevard Cafe, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were 27 members and guests.

Guests included long time ex-member Mike, K6PUD who introduced his son Bryce, KM6VRX.

The Secretary's minutes were approved as published in Dec. Sunpots. Treasurer's report was presented by Terry, K6TERO and approved by the membership.

**Old Business.** None.

**New Business.** Jim, K6JS reported that REDXA won the Small Club category in the California QSO Party. He also led a discussion about contributing to a CQP plaque. The decision to do so will be decided at a later meeting.

Ron, N6IE, as Field Day Chairman, reported that this year's FD will again be held at the Marin Rod and Gun Club. More details to follow over the next few months.

Fred, N6YEU, announced that he will be going on a DXpedition to St. Eustatius (PJ5) to coincide with the ARRL DX Contest next month. He expects to be there from Feb 11-19.

The raffle proceeds of \$136 was split into \$68 for the club and \$68 to Rick, N6GY which he donated back to the club! Thank you, Rick!



## REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events

by Doug WW6D

Feb 13 \* *REDXA Monthly Meeting*

**Feb 16-17 ARRL Intl DX Contest CW**

**Feb 23-24 North American QSO Party RTTY**

**Mar 2-3 ARRL Intl DX Contest SSB**

Mar 13 \* *REDXA Monthly Meeting*

**Mar 30-31 CQ WW WPX SSB**

Apr 10 \* *REDXA Monthly Meeting*

**Apr 12-14 Visalia Int'l DX Convention**

**Apr 27 Int'l Marconi Day (observed)**

**May 4-5 7<sup>th</sup> Call Area QSO Party**

May 8 \* *REDXA Monthly Meeting*

**May 25-26 CQ WW WPX CW**

**Jun 8-10 ARRL VHF Contest**

**Jun 15-16 All Asian DX Contest CW**

Jun 12 \* *REDXA Monthly Meeting*

**Jun 22-23 ARRL Field Day**

Refer to <https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html> for more contest information.

### Treasurer's Report for January 2019

Start of month.    \$3957.07

Bills paid:    Field day.    \$118.    Final pay for food  
                  Speaker.    \$25.    January speaker

Deposits:    Raffle and dues.    324.00

Ending balance.    \$4138.07

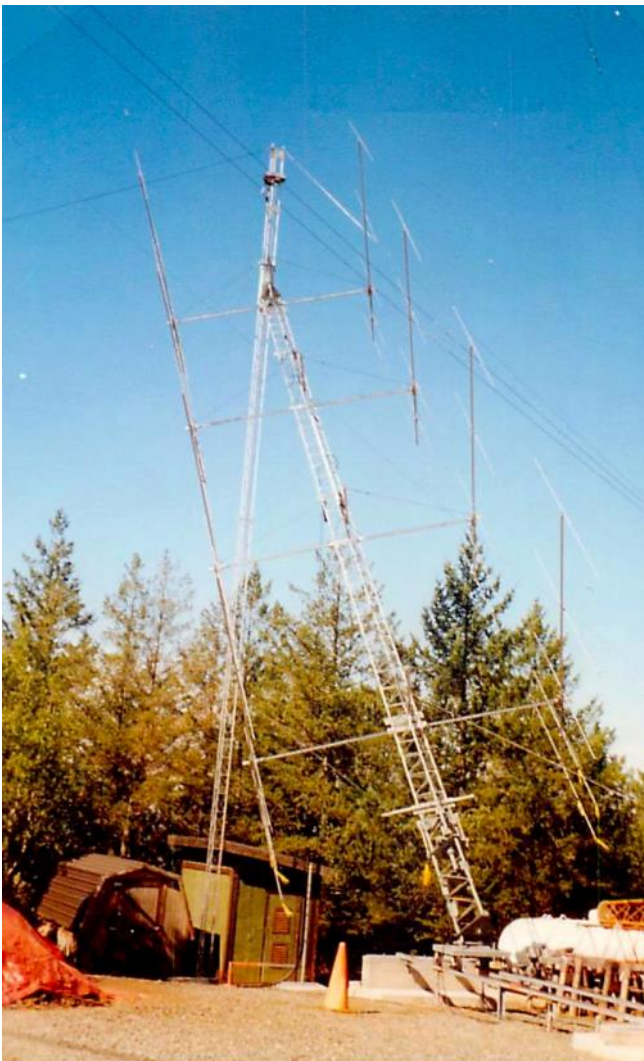
Terry Tinagero  
K6TER  
Semper Fi





Here's more of the K6QXY EME antenna installation.

The loops of coax make it look like Bob is riding one of those ET flying bicycles.



#### Results and conclusions per Bob, K6QXY

This array has proven to be a real winner! Mounting the antenna for vertical polarization has been rewarding in the following aspects:

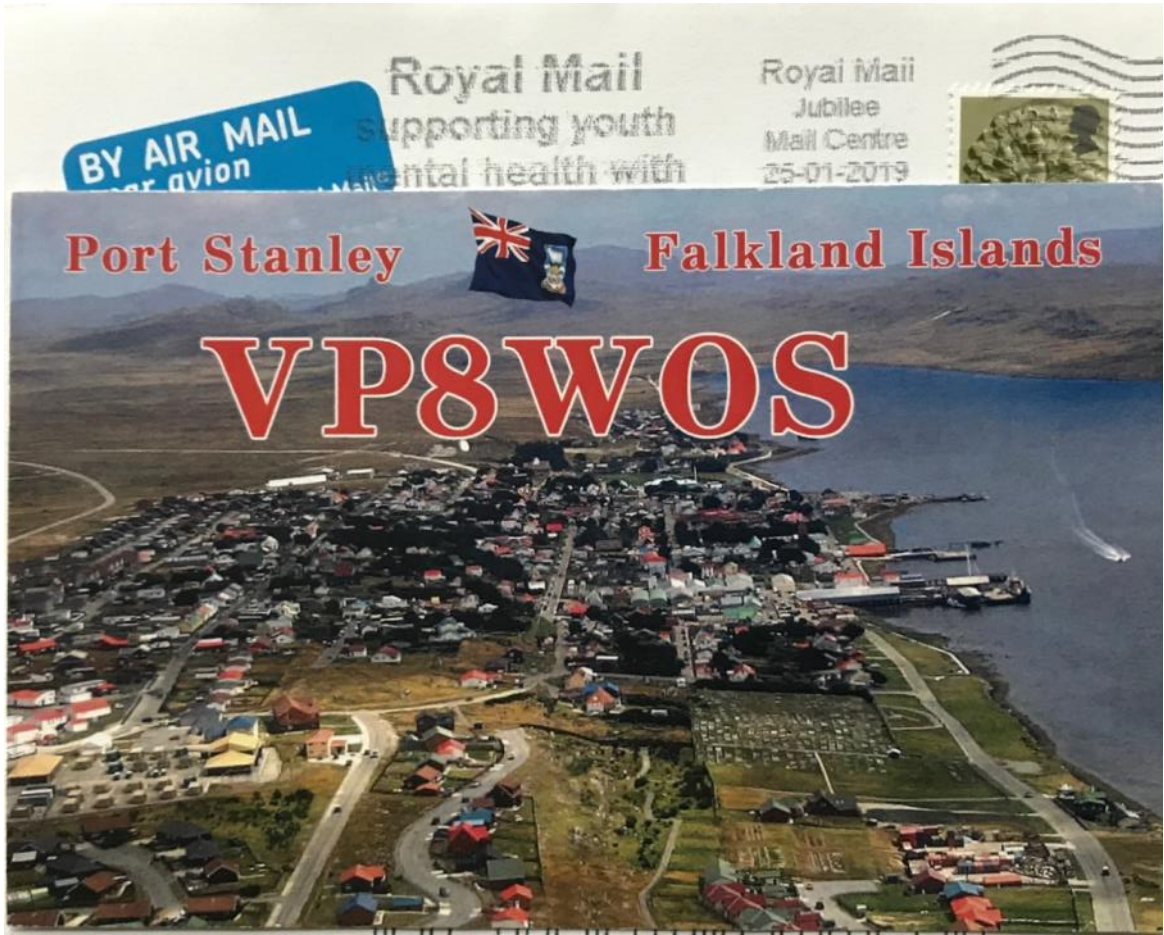
Man made noise, especially power line noise, seems to peak in the horizontal plane.

Spacial polarity offsets with Europe favor one end of the circuit having vertical polarization

The overall wind loading of the structure is drastically reduced. With 18.6 dBd of gain, working stations with single Yagis on moon rise and moon set is quite simple. The array can be preset for each one-hour operating window. For the "universal EME Window", array elevations are between 35 and 65 degrees. This allows operation in quieter portions of the sky.

The use of LMR 400, air power dividers, and 1 3/8 heliax keeps total system losses to less than 1.8 dB.





If you're going to get mail, it might as well be ROYAL MAIL. This QSL confirms a moonbounce QSO by Josh, W6XU.

REDXA is fortunate to count Bob, K6QXY, among its members. Bob is among the top moonbounce DXers in the world.

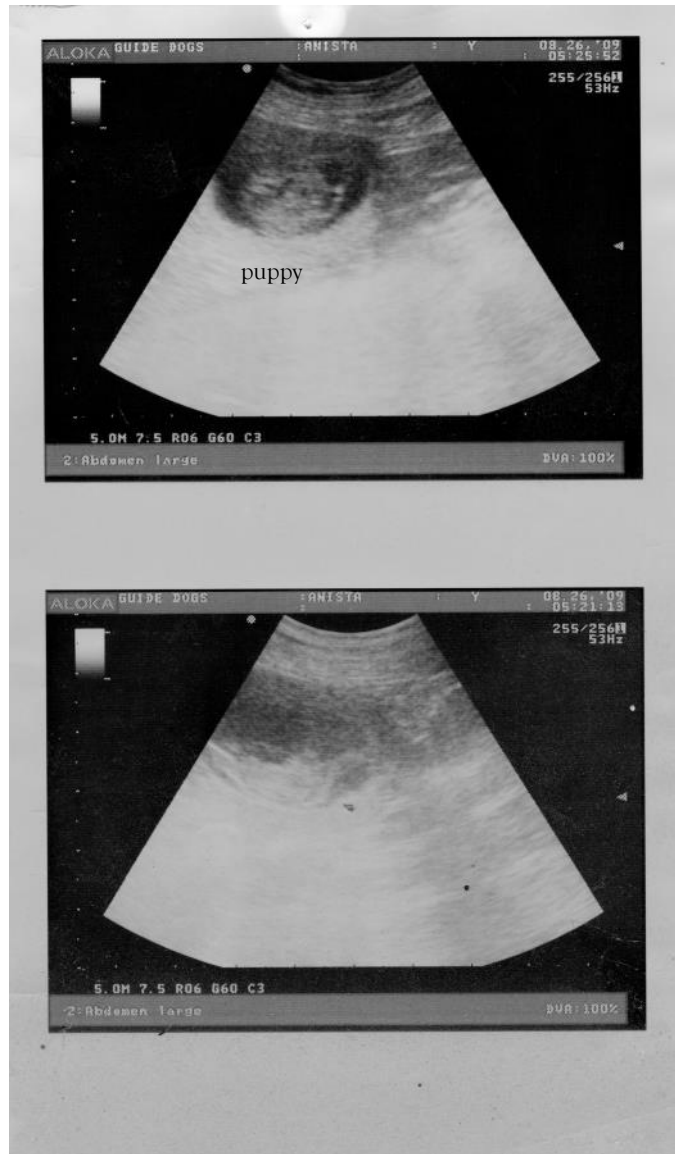
Josh counts himself as fortunate to have Bob as his moonbounce Elmer and this card is proof that he's learned a lot.





## Dog Xray

Note the indwelling i.v. catheter in the left foreleg .



## Dog Ultrasound

Can't figure out how you could use this expression on SSB. The rounded area in the upper slice is a puppy. Your editor's dog, Anista (Annie) was the proud mother. Anista was a Guide Dog breeder. She got better prenatal care than most humans.

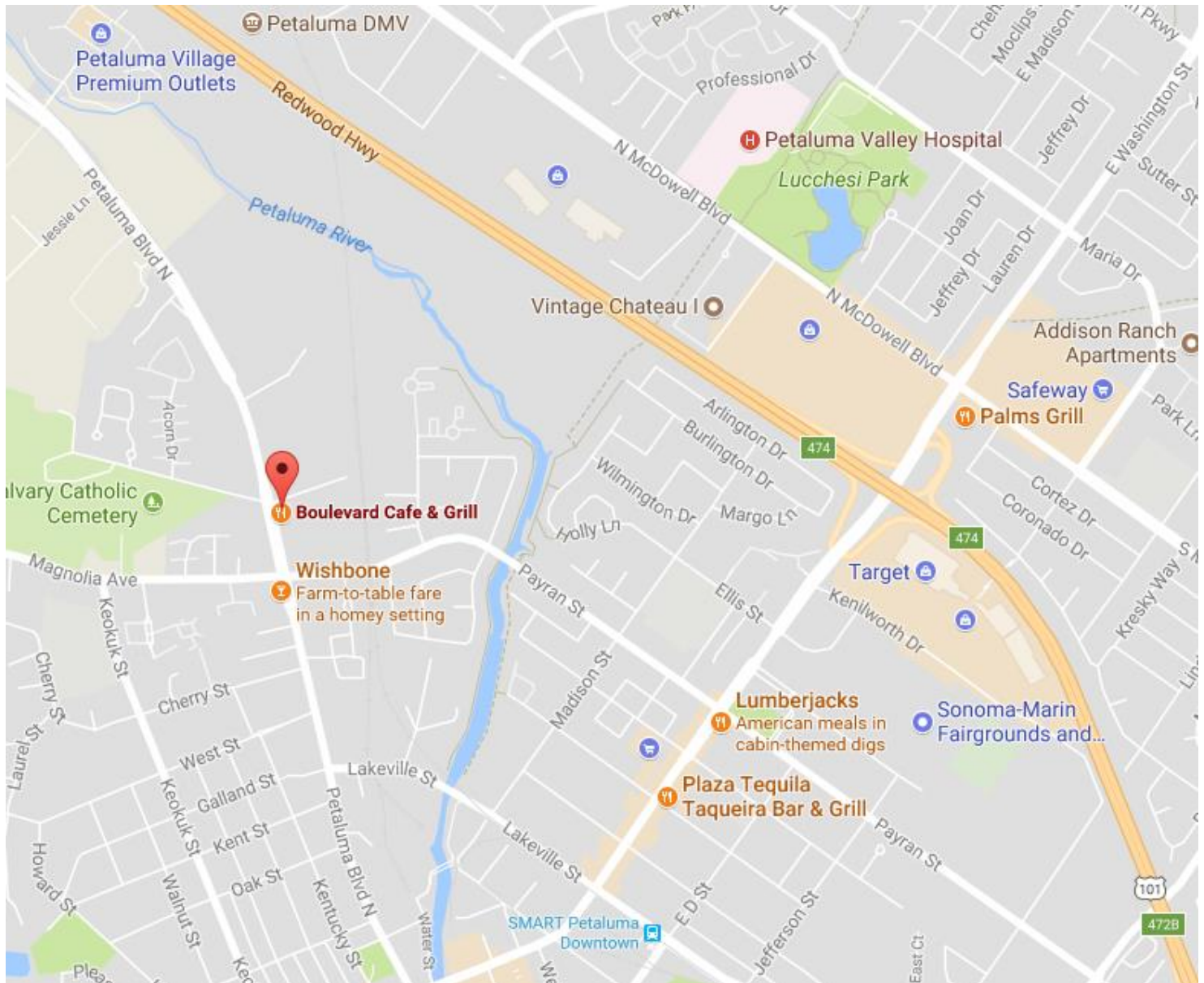


Anista(Annie)  
helping with  
the SteppIR



## Boulevard Café & Grill

1096 Petaluma Blvd. North,  
Petaluma, CA



Redwood Empire DX Association meets the second Wednesday of each months at the Boulevard Café and Grill at 1096 Petaluma Blvd. North. Petaluma, CA.

