

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 XX

Number VII

July 2019

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

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Wednesday, July 10, 2019 at Boulevard Café & Grill, Petaluma. If you need directions please call one of the club Officers

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

PROGRAM: Jim Tiemstra, K6JAT, ARRL Pacific Division Director will speak on the current state and concerns of the ARRL.

Ron, N6IE will present the results of the joint REDXA-MARS W6KB Field Day operation



REDXA President's Commentary

Jim, K6JS is off on vacation so no president's commentary this month. There will not be an issue of "Sunspots" ahead of our August meeting, but there definitely will be a program by WC6J on the Summits on the Air (SOTA) program. I'm sorry I couldn't caption everything, but I did try to use as many pictures as I could. There will probably be more in the next issue.

—Editor



President's Commentary

Field Day was another big success. Reflecting back on the 2019 joint REDXA and Marin Amateur Radio Societies Field Day. The entire weekend was organized and well attended. We also broke the 2,000 QSO barrier which is nowhere near the 3,785 we scored in 2012 when we had sunspots. A big thank you goes out to this year's organizing team. Things would not have run so smoothly without the expertise of both clubs and the willingness for all the members to step up and get the job done.

I'm always impressed with the turnout for setup on Friday and the crew that stuck around to tear down and pack up the gear on Sunday afternoon. The only visit by Murphy seemed to be my K3 displaying the dreaded "ERR 12V" error, which is an old defect on early serial number K3 rigs. The fix is to replace a 15 pin metal connector with a 15 pin gold contact connector. Of course, it happened during primetime on Saturday afternoon. Many thanks to Alan, K6SRZ for making the trip to Penngrove to grab his trusty FT1000MP. We also had some choppy computer generated CW at the CW station. I'm pretty sure it was the Prolific Chipset USB to Serial adapters we were using.

A few additional thank yous are in order:

- To Fred for the storage of our antennas
- to Marilyn for picking up the food on Friday
- to Rich for his efforts and coordination with MARS and the Marin Rod and Gun Club.
- to Bill's trailer service and John Tagliaferro for his annual muscle work placing the towers
- and to all the great ops who kept the rate going for 24 hours.

It was great to see the youngsters on the FT8 station cranking out the Q's. I extended invitations to join us in Petaluma for REDXA meeting.

Enjoy the July meeting with Jim Tiemstra, K6JAT ARRL Pacific Division Director. **Discussing the current affairs at the ARRL.**

Looking ahead at future meeting presentations, we'll have Jordon, WC6J, SOTA regional manager for the Northern Sierra Nevada and the Sierra Nevada Region in August. September brings N6SJ, Steve Jones and CW for DXing and Eric from Elecraft in the Fall with a presentation on the new K4.

I'm on vacation for a couple weeks, so I'll see you at the August meeting.




Field Day 2019

Another REDXA/MARS Field Day is now in the record books and we have a lot to be happy about. First off, we had spectacular weather conditions all three days including setup day on Friday. Second, our setup procedures went very smoothly, and after the number of years we've been doing this, there was no reason why it shouldn't have! Although participation was lower than past years, we still had a good number of folks show up to help with setup and operations.

The final score beat last years by a considerable amount, with a grand total of 7,436 compared to 6,462. We missed beating 2017's score by only 136 points, but considering the band conditions, that's a very good showing! I'll do a brief recap during the next REDXA meeting. Hope to see you all there! —Ron, N6IE



Redwood Empire DX Association



P.O. Box 750834
Petaluma, CA 94975
Club Call W6KB

**A DX and Contest Minded Amateur Radio Club Serving the California Coast
North of the Golden Gate Bridge**

The photos from Field Day on the following pages are courtesy of Marilyn Bagshaw, N6VAW, Stephen Sahrhad. KK6VZE, Jim, K6JS, Steve, W6SFK, and Alan, K6SRZ. Some of Stephen's photos were featured in a recent HamNation broadcast. To see the full set of Marilyn's and Steve Sahrhad's Field Day photos go to:

<https://marilynbagshaw.smugmug.com/2019-Field-Day-Saturday/n-Xb7mS6/>

<https://marilynbagshaw.smugmug.com/Field-Day-Set-Up-2019/n-Mps27G/>

<https://stephensarhad.smugmug.com/Field-Day/Field-Day-2019/>

<https://stephensarhad.smugmug.com/Field-Day/Field-Day-2019/>



W6UDS working on the SteppIR

K6JS running CW





Above: installing the SteppIR for the CW station. Below, on the right, George Couch, KK6UNO, general class. Eleven year-old George provided both a youth bonus for Field Day scoring and several FT8 QSOs from the third station. George was a great addition to the FD team. I believe the boy on the left is the son of one of the Rod & Gun Club managers.





Sighting the AB577 tower





Night shift at Field Day





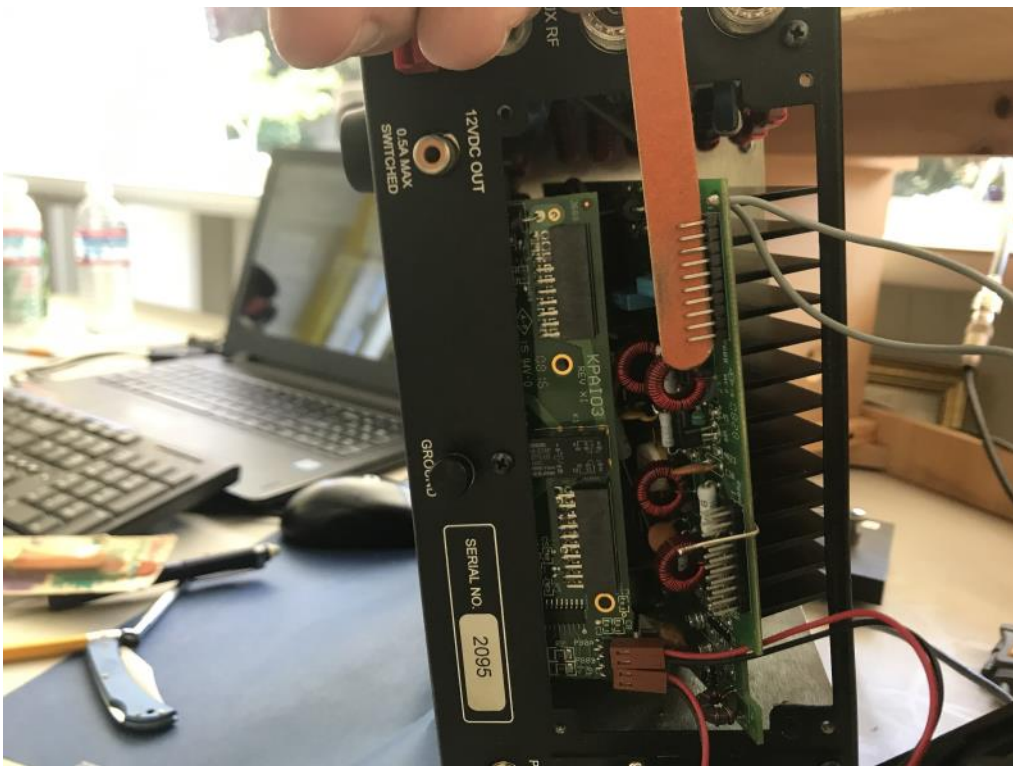
Left: the W6KB umbilical cord. The two red squares to the left of the generator are archery target backdrops. Part of the Rod & Gun Club is now an archery range (but not in use during Field Day).

Below: field repairs of the CW station K3. The contacts supplying power to the 100 W module failed from oxidation, forcing us to run QRP (10W) until K6SRZ made a run back to Penngrove and retrieved his trusty FT1000MP.





Our visitor from the San Rafael Fire Department. It was nice to have her visit (and garner a few bonus points for FD). Unfortunately, I don't have her name



Using an emery board to clean the oxidized contacts for the K3 100 watt module. Sadly, it didn't work. The radio is now off to Elecraft and should be ready for next year.



Faces of Field Day



The best laid plans, as Robert Burns would say, oft gang a glee (cf. Murphy's Law). Despite having a fast, new WIN 10 machine and a K3 (see comments elsewhere in this issue) the Field Day CW station was putting out a signal that sounded like the CW op was drunk. There was no way to fix the awkward weighting, either in N1MM+ or any of the K3 menus. The problem—solved too late for FD—was that the set up was using a Prolific USB to serial cable.

Bob, N6TV, made a great presentation about using USB to serial interfaces for contesting at this year's Dayton Hamvention. You can see Bob's Power Point presentation here: <https://bit.ly/USBserial>.

The decision throughout the computer industry to eliminate true serial ports on newer computers has caused not a little grief among hams over the years. Your editor has used an old DELL Win 7 laptop with a true serial port for his own expeditions (the machine cost \$50 used off of Craig's List). It works great.

But who am I to blow against the wind? (bonus points if you know the source of that quote). Below is Bob's #1 take home point regarding USB to serial interfaces. The presentation has illustrations of the correct interfaces.

All Prolific USB to Serial adapters should be sent to Electronics Recycling as fast as possible.





Adam, KD6POC, installing a new broadband microwave dish at W6SFK





Bob, K6QXY and Josh, W6XU were able to work Peter, JW7QIA on his Svalbard Island 6 meter expedition by EME. This was on the Fourth of July at about 2218Z, which was Peter's Moon Set and our Moon Rise. JW7QIA had a very good signal using a single 6-element yagi and a KW. This was 6 Meter DXCC # 181 for K6QXY.

Svalbard, until 1925, was known by the Dutch name Spitzbergen. Another island in the same archipelago is Jan Mayen (JX) which is a separate DXCC counter. Svalbard was occupied by Germany during WWII. Today, Svalbard is a territory of Norway. Svalbard's income is supplied by mining and tourism. The photo above shows housing for the coal mine workers of Svalbard. There is an abandoned Russian mining village on the island complete with a bust of Lenin on a pedestal.

JUNE MEETING MINUTES

by Doug WW6D, Secretary



President Jim Selmi, K6JS, called the meeting to order at 7:53 pm, June 12, 2019 at the Boulevard Cafe, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were only 17 members and guests despite having a live speaker and an interesting program.

Old Business. Jim first asked and received motions and seconds to accept the April and May minutes and the corresponding months' treasurer reports. Motions were approved.

Kudos were given by many members to Terry K6TER's YL Geri in the preparation of the latest roster. Thank you Geri! This has now been posted on the club's website.

New Business. Jim led a brief discussion on a potential upcoming joint meeting with NCCC (Northern California Contest Club). Several venues and suggestions were made and Jim will take these to his counterpart in NCCC.

KM6XO has an MA-40 tubular tower, rotor and tribander for sale. Contact him directly if interested.

Ron N6IE outlined the final details on the combined Marin Amateur Radio Society (MARS) and REDXA Field Day. The REDXA Club Call W6KB will be used; operating category will be 3A; FT8 will be used for the first time; the location is the Marin Rod and Gun Club. Ron announced that operators, especially during the wee hours of Sunday, are needed. Contact him to reserve a time slot.

Program was presented by Ron N6IE. He dramatically detailed his company, Results Radio, response to the Carr Fire in the area of Redding CA and to the Chico-Paradise areas. The cooperation of many organizations as well as the innovation of the members of his team showed that they could put several vital and important commercial radio stations back on the air so that the public could receive updates from the various emergency services and other public agencies. His team's efforts were recognized in receiving the MusicMaster World Wide Radio Summit (WWRS) "Radio for Good" Humanitarian Award for 2019. Congratulations and gratitude to Results Radio!

The raffle sales came down to \$37.50 for the club and \$37.50 to John KM6XO.

Adjourned at 8:58 pm.



REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events

by Doug WW6D

*Jul 10 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Jul 13-14 IARU HF World Championship

Jul 20-21 CQ WW VHF Contest

Aug 3-4 North American QSO Party CW

*Aug 14 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Aug 17-18 North American QSO Party SSB

Aug 24-26 Hawaii QSO Party

*Sep 11 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Sep 14-16 ARRL September VHF Contest

Sep 28-29 CQ WW RTTY

Oct 5-6 California QSO Party

*Oct 9 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Oct 18-20 PACIFICON

Oct 26-27 CQ WW SSB



June Treasury Report

Beginning Balance. \$4526.57

June raffle. 37.50

Dues paid. 40.00

Bills paid.

Insurance paid. -(300.00)

Field day to MR&GC. -(512.50)

Marilyn FD Food. -(116.22)

MR&GC. 2020 reservation. -(25.00)

Ending Balance. \$3650.35

Terry Tinagero

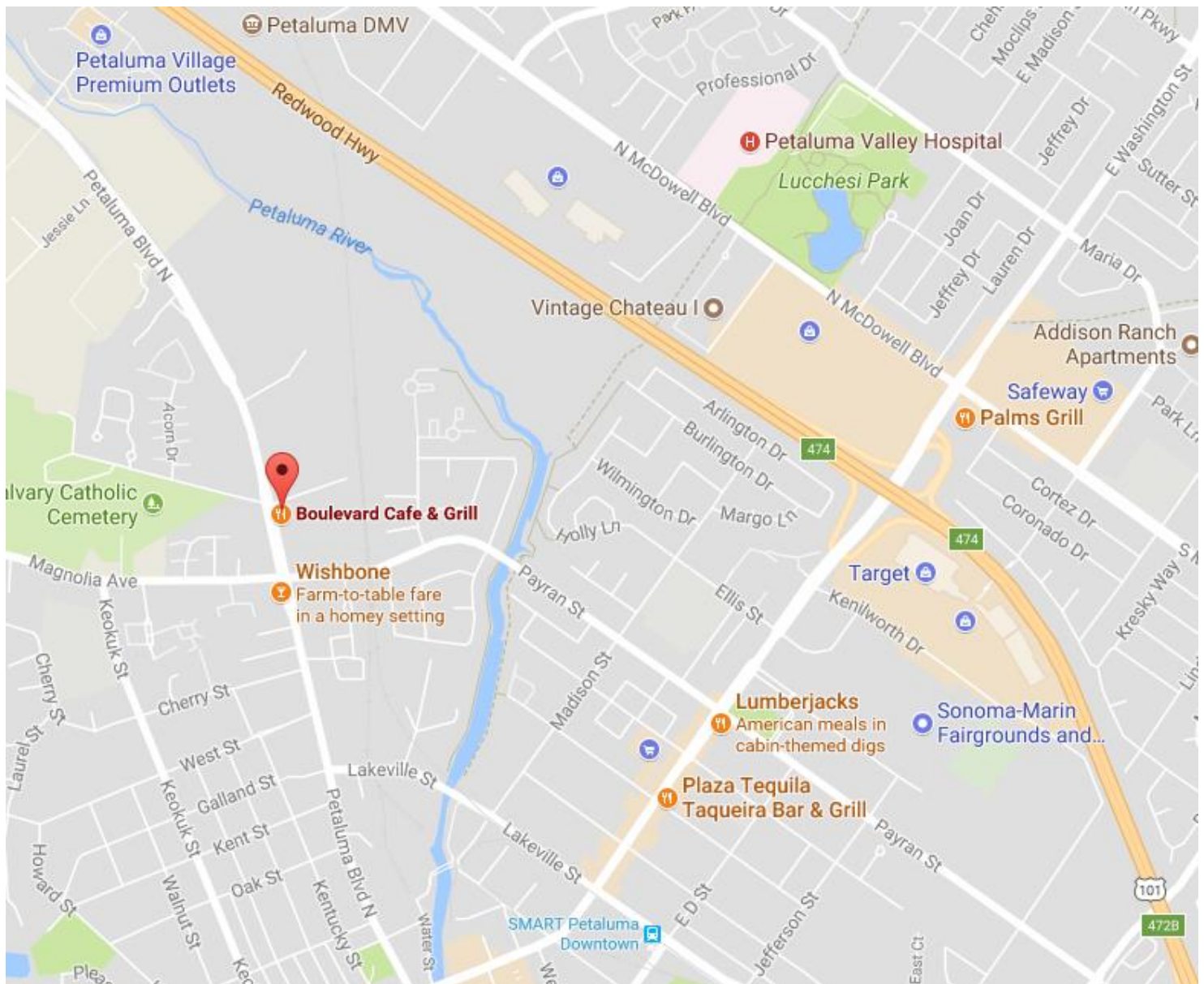
K6TER

Semper Fi



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.