

SUNSPOTS

REDWOOD EMPIRE DX ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 750834, Petaluma, CA 94975

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

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Wednesday November 14th 2018 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

"
[Hiroki, AH6CY](#), will tell a story of a QRP spy radio affectionately known as the Paraset by those who built it and used it behind the enemy lines during WWII and by hams who have been building its replica in the post-WWII era. It is a unique radio because it is a minimalist transceiver with absolutely no frills and you can still build it today and use it on ham bands. Hiroki will show you how with his own home-brewed replicas."



REDXA President's Commentary

I always enjoy seeing another antenna tower go up. Elsewhere in this issue you'll find photos of Jim's (K6JS) new tower. We had a few challenges and issues as one can see. Best to check things out when it's on the ground. It was put to good use for CQP and I think the owner is happy with his score and Ducie contacts this week. Who's next? I think Terry T needs to step up and get going now.

I'll miss the November meeting but look forward to seeing everyone in

President's Commentary (cont.)

in December. As a reminder we do have issues getting folks to step up and take on the administrative positions in the club. I worry about this for good reasons so if you're on the fence there's plenty of help to assist in the Pres, VP, secretary and treasurer slots. I don't want to see the club slowly diminishing. If attendance and participation decline we might need to look at future changes. 73, Bill



WX6B photo

Welcome Jim Selmi, K6JS, to the ranks of those who have a tower and beam... with the blessings of the Rohnert Park planning agencies. As you can see, it was a tight fit getting a 51-foot crankup tower and SteppIR DB18 up in the air.

The lower of the two photos is taken from the neighbors' yard across the street. I suspect the tower may rise a little bit at contest times.



K6SRZ photo

November's Guest speaker, Hiroki Kato,
AH6CY



Figure 1 — The author and the *Enola Gay*.

From Hiroki Kato's article

[The Radios That Started and Ended WW II in the Pacific](#)

"I was born in Hiroshima a month after the Pearl Harbor attack. I was three and a half years old and lived with my family 20 miles from ground zero on that day in 1945. Twelve years later I entered high school. The school building, located less than two miles from where the bomb was dropped, had been rebuilt. I got my first ham license in the same year and moved to the US after college in 1966. For all these years, I have wondered about the radios used in those two historic missions".

Right: a restoration of the radio operator's position aboard the *Enola Gay* (from the article).



Illustrations from Hiroki Kato's article
The Paraset: a WW II Spy Radio You Can
Build—the Ultimate Retro QRP Transceiver
(CQ Amateur Radio February 2016)



Photo J. Clandestine radio built during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands was contained in two tin boxes. (Photos J-L by and courtesy of Dick Lodge)



Photo K. The larger of the two tins contained the electronics of the radio itself.



Getting ready for a county expedition

Many REDXA members participated in the recent California QSO Party (CQP). K6SRZ, N3RC, AA6YX, KU6F, and N6YEU joined county expeditions. K6SRZ, Alan, N3RC, Roger, and AA6YX, Dave, were joined by K6DAJ, David, and AF6SA, Stefan, for an expedition to the wonderful Ma-gruder Ranch in Potter Valley, Mendocino. The MEND expedition signed W6PZ. N6YEU, Fred, made one of his many solo expeditions—this year a return to Trinity County. Saraj, KU6F, joined the Ridge Runners club for a major M/M expedition to San Benito County, signing W6BX (she also donated her 1/9 share of W6BX's big score to the REDXA entry in the CQP club competition).

This issue of Sunspots includes many photos from these expeditions. The content is heavy on material from the Mendocino expedition because your editor was on that trip and thinks you might find it entertaining.



W6PZ, Potter Valley, Mendocino for CQP 2018.

Ops K6SRZ, AA6YX, K6DAJ, N3RC, AF6SA. Apparently Mendocino County—especially Mendocino County on CW—has been a rare county in past CQP's. So, this year, I (K6SRZ), with a nudge from the CQP committee agreed to activate the multiplier, forgetting how much work these expeditions these take. Fortunately, we had a great location and wonderful hosts.

W6PZ was the call of Fred Gallien of Oakland. Fred was a Coast Guardsman who worked and operated throughout the Pacific. When he died, his widow called upon the East Bay Amateur Radio Club to help dismantle Fred's station. As a then officer of the club, I got the assignment. And, in appreciation, Ms. Gallien bequeathed the call to me and it now lives on as the Trinity County Contest Club.



K6SRZ

Above: the upper loft of the barn at Magruder Ranch. One end of our Carolina Windom was suspended by a line through the small upper window. Below: swimming hole and beach on the ranch (east fork of the north fork of the Russian River).



K6SRZ



K6SRZ

Kate Magruder (with the knife) and friend Laura (never did get her last name) loading the harvest from the Ranch's abundant vegetable garden. The W6PZ expeditioners had a healthy supply of fresh vegetables. (Below) ranch hand Kyle Farmer with K3RC and AA6YX. Kyle uses a drone to keep track of the herd on this large ranch.



K6SRZ



Magruder Ranch, site of the W6PZ expedition to Mendocino County comprises some 3000 acres. The ranch specialty is grass-fed beef. Here in Sonoma County you can sometimes sample their product at Bud's Meats in Rohnert Park.

Roger, N3RC, arranged for our accommodations on the ranch. We had our own house complete with beds, kitchen, and bathroom. The bathroom, I should add, featured a very eco-conscious (and very uncomfortable) composting toilet that produced both organic matter and many laughs.

We had almost unlimited space for setting up our stations, but not enough time to get a second tower up before the contest started. If we do this next year, we may emulate the W6BX plan with LARGE separation between stations.

If you'd never been to Potter Valley, you might think it was a mistake to choose this location for a radio operation. The road from Ukiah (state route 20 off of Highway 101) passes through a series of mountains with blocked take-off angles in all directions. And then, after 20 minutes on the road you enter a large, flat valley with unobstructed views in all directions.



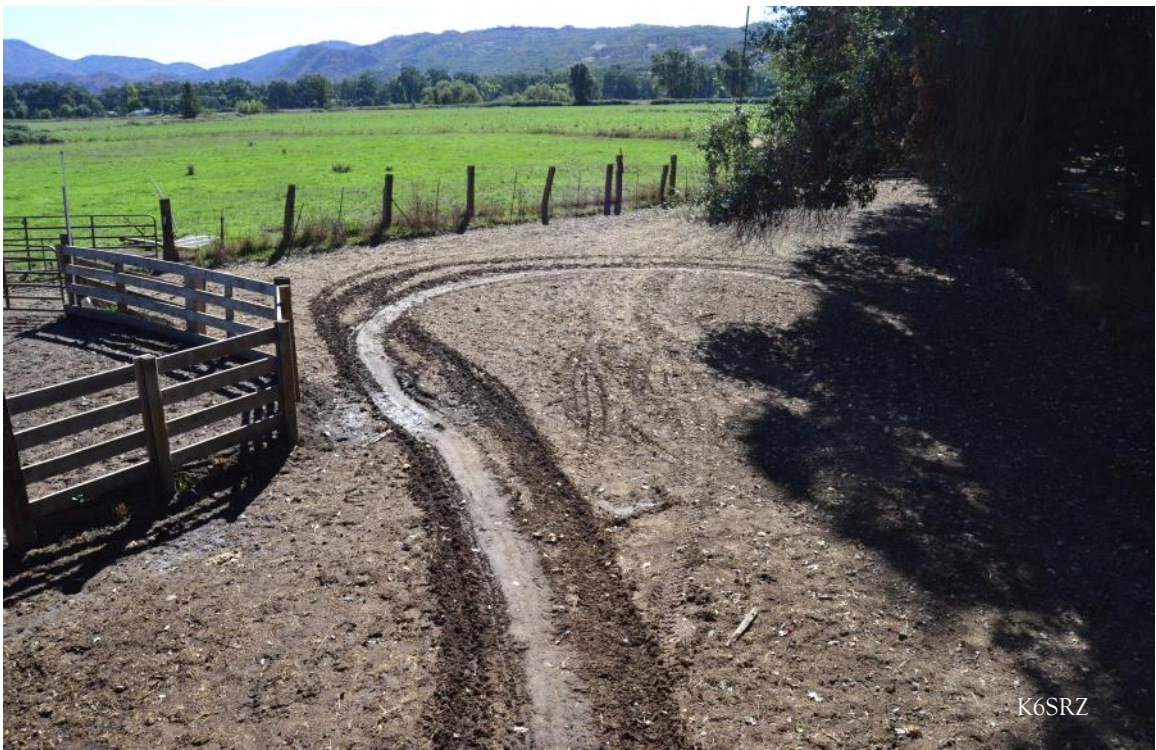
Good old Mendocino, one of the most important legs of the Green Triangle. This is at the entrance to Potter Valley's only restaurant. The small white sign above the window requests that you use "no alcohol or pot on the deck"



K6SRZ

Above: Canada geese on a foggy morning near the W6PZ antenna tower

Below: a sad trail through the corral. A dead steer left his mark in the mud as his body was dragged off to oblivion behind an ATV



K6SRZ

After operating last year at my daughter's place in West Virginia as N6YEU/8 I was ready to return to my annual portable operation as a County Expedition for CQP. This year I returned for the third time to Trinity County, one of the rarer counties CQP.

I begin preparing and gathering radio gear, antennas, camping gear etc. a couple of weeks before. I mounted my 4 Wheel Camper shell on my pickup and packed one of the REDXA AB-577 towers in my utility trailer. I had loaned Jim/K6JS my old Force 12 C3 antenna a couple of years ago and, while helping him put up his new tower, decided it might be nice to use the beam for CQP. With a little elbow grease and some paint it was good as new. A non-ham friend offered to come up and help with set up and tear down. While I try to keep a decent level of fitness, the year's are adding up and having someone else on site is nice to have in event of any mishaps.

After some last minute shopping for food and drinks I left for Trinity on Thursday. I drove north on 101 to north of Willits and then turned inland to Round Valley. I stopped in Covelo to fill my 5 gallon gas can to use for my Honda 2000 generator. I made a big mistake not strapping the can down: two hours later and after 28 miles of rough road I discovered the can had tipped over and over half of the gas had leaked out! Not good! I was able to get by for the weekend by shutting off the generator whenever I could.

Loss of fuel was bad enough but then while setting up my radio station inside my camper I discovered I had left the power cord to my ICOM IC7300 at HOME! Driving back home to get it (five hours each way) was something I did not want to do. Fortunately, I brought a backup rig, a YAESU FT450. I am not enamored of this rig but it was all I had. Next, I discovered that I couldn't figure how to get my K1EL USB keyer to interface with my N3FJP logging software and the 450. I then was forced to use my Bencher paddle to send all CW for the contest. All CQs and exchanges were sent by hand. I did pretty well but it was tiring so I did somewhat less CW than my normal amount.

I did not really try for a top score but concentrated more on making sure the TRIN mult was given out as best I could. I ended up with 673 qsos (452 SSB and 221 CW) for a claimed score of 87,752 I missed MS and VT for mults. After being near tears on Friday, I sat back and relaxed and did the best what the radio gods had dealt me. I sure didn't enjoy having another friend named Murphy come along with me this year. I did learn a couple of valuable lessons about pre-planning better!

Every year I tell myself that maybe I should stay home for CQP but I really enjoy the whole process and have spent some fantastic weekends in some beautiful country over the years. Now where will I go next year.....??

73, Fred/N6YEU

P.S. The coordinates of my QTH in Trinity were 40 ° 0' 28.7" North 123 ° 02' 25.1" West. If you have Google Earth check it out.

N6YEU SO LP County Expedition to Trinity County

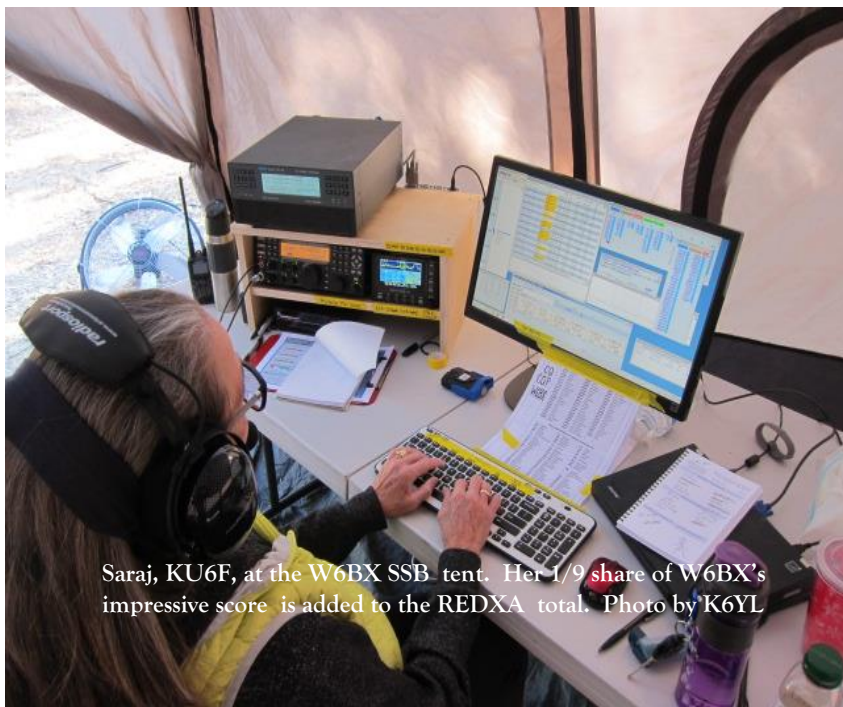




Note the separation between the SSB position (foreground) and CW site (tower) in the distance

K6YL

San Benito County W6BX, M/M HP County Expedition



Saraj, KU6F, at the W6BX SSB tent. Her 1/9 share of W6BX's impressive score is added to the REDXA total. Photo by K6YL

Regular members of our CQP team, N3ZZ, N6RNO, K9YC, and W6GJB were thrilled to be joined by K6YL, KU6F, and K6EU. K9YC and N3ZZ mostly manned our two CW stations with relief from K6EU and W6GJB; KU6F and K6YL ran our SSB station. We all pitched in for setup and teardown.

W6GJB contributed his wonderful contesting trailer, which housed the two CW stations AND supported antennas for 80, 40, and 20M. We set up a C3SS on a W6GJB-modified modular army surplus mast (the one built with 4 ft sections) and a third party tripod adapter. All stations used K3s; both CW stations used KPA500s, and SSB used Glen's SPE legal limit amp. Running on 120V, it probably ran about 1.2kW.

N6RNO brought his tower trailer, which supported his KT34 and wire dipoles for 40 and 75M. It was used for the SSB station. The ranch allowed us lots of separation between antennas -- our setup had SSB's tower trailer about 500 ft from Glen's contesting trailer.

San Benito county is extremely rural, with very low population density. We set up on a horse ranch (about 50 miles north of Pinnacles National Park) that boards and trains horses and rents a half dozen or so nicely appointed cabins. The owner is an old friend of W6GJB from the time when Glen boarded horses there. We also had use of a very nice Dining Hall, with showers, toilets, and a full kitchen. We used it as a community room when we were breaking from setup, operating, and tear down, and long into the evenings. Most of us arrived Thursday evening, sipped KU6F's wonderful rum, and retired. Setup was nearly complete by dark on Friday, with only a few details to finish.

Fairly early in the contest, the K3 in the SSB station started becoming erratic, and by around 04Z became unusable, because the front panel buttons had somehow gotten remapped. We couldn't turn on VOX, turn on RIT, and lots of other functions. SSB shifted to the trailer, using one of the CW stations. Meanwhile, N6RNO rode to the rescue, tenaciously finding instructions (buried several Tabs down in the K3 Utility Help) for going back to "ground ze-



**Above: Glen's (W6GBJ) contesting trailer
Below: the inside of the trailer with K3ZZ
and N9YC**



ro" firmware. Forty minutes later, the radio was back to normal and on the air, and the second CW station back on 80M. Monday communications with Elecraft suggested that there might be a defective button or button controller on the front panel board, that should be replaced if the problem returns. What really blew our minds is that the K3 that N3ZZ brought as a spare had the same problem!

By luck, we caught part of the 10M opening. It was my practice to go up to 10M every hour or two and call CQ for a while. I did that around 1930Z and heard N6TV working a W3, so I slid down one kHz and called CQ. And alerted the SSB station. Our last CW 10M QSO was at 2006Z, but SSB kept making QSOs for another five minutes. The opening covered a lot of area -- we worked VE3, W1, W3, W9, down to TN, FL, KP4, AL, and TX. From other comments, I learned that the opening started to SoCal and gradually moved up to us, about 70 miles E of Monterey. I'd

be interested to know how much of the opening we missed!

With stations separated by a city block, we found 2M talkies very useful, both during setup and while operating.

Needless to say, a great time was had by all, and we're looking forward to next year!

73, Jim K9YC



Congratulations to Bob, K6QXY, for logging two ATNOs on 6M moon bounce (Nauru and Albania). This brings his total to 179. The photos are of his 6M array. This was a home brew project that created an antenna with more than 16 dBD of gain.

Bob writes:

The water tight BOX in the CENTER of the ARRAY contains RELAYS that allow me to insert a 90° delay line between the upper two bays and the lower two bays . This changes the takeoff



angle from 2.5° to + 10°. This is useful on some single and double hop E-skip (higher angles) and also useful on some mixed mode propagation like E-skip or trans-equatorial propagation . For long haul E-skip or F2 propagation, the low elevation angles are always best.

When I first built the array I feed it with two phase-matched 1/2" Heliax cables . This allowed me to put on the upper two, lower two, or all four in PHASE. I went through solar cycles and all the "E" seasons in between with the following results:

- on long haul F2 all 4 in phase were always best
- on SINGLE and some double hop E-skip, the lower two were best.
- on long haul E-skip (like short-path summer solstice propagation (SSSP) to JA DU, HL, BV, BY) all 4 in phase are always the BEST.

My conclusion: what I needed was a single feed line with up tilt.

This was a huge project that has worked perfectly for more than 20 years.

Mike, K6MYC, and Dave, K1WHS, have both run the W6UXN design in MINI NEC & EZNEC and have confirmed the design. WE gave up ~.06db to make them broad band.

THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME :- :- :- by Hatlo



Jimmy Hatlo (1897-1963) was born in Rhode Island, but he can be considered a Bay Area local. After WW I he moved to San Francisco where he worked for the two newspapers that eventually merged to become the San Francisco Call-Bulletin. At the "Call", he did advertising art, editorial cartoons, and sports cartoons. He also created the cartoon strip "Little Iodine".

The journalist Bob Greene considers "They'll Do It Every Time" a fore runner of modern social media. Green writes: "Hatlo's genius was to realize, before there was any such thing as an Internet or Facebook or Twitter, that people in every corner of the country were brimming with seemingly small observations about mundane yet captivating matters, yet lacked a way to tell anyone outside their own circles of friends about it. Hatlo also understood that just about everyone, on some slightly-below-the-surface level, yearned to be celebrated from coast to coast if only for a day."

OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

President Gabe KJ6AZU, called the meeting to order at 6:50 pm, October 10, 2018 at the Boulevard Cafe, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were 19 members and guests.

First order of business was to set up a Nominating Committee since the annual election is held during the November meeting. Fred N6YEU volunteered to be the committee's chair. Terry K6TER also volunteered to serve on the committee. Gabe requested that anyone interested in an office or other position to let Fred and Terry know as soon as possible.

After an enjoyable dinner, Gabe then ran the club auction announced last month. Treasurer Bill W6IYS, passed out a thorough description of the various items for sale and assisted with the auction. As reported last month, club member Rick N6GY donated much of his excess equipment to the club. A lively round of bidding netted the club a significant amount - check the Treasurer's report for more details.

Jim K6JS, VP and Contest Chair reported preliminary results for the club's efforts in the California QSO Party. Top score so far was from Bill N6ZFO with over 251K points - excellent! We are entering as a "Small Club" where the best 10 logs are used.

The program for the evening was presented by Bob Naumann W5OV who is currently the Sales Manager for DX Engineering. He gave a wonderful talk, via Skype, with slides and photos about the history of the company and their current operations. He also addressed the issue of the new person entering the hobby in this day and age. Unlike many of the old timers, building and servicing your own equipment is not a priority; getting on the air, working with the computer software and social aspects are more important and DXE is striving to address those aspects into their business model.

After the program, Alan, K6SRZ, our Sunspots editor, again made an appeal to the membership for articles, photos, and links to material for the newsletter. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Doug WW6D, Co-Secretary

REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events

by Doug WW6D

Nov 14 * *REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Nov 17-19 **ARRL Sweepstakes SSB**

Nov 24-25 **CQ WW Contest CW**

Nov 30-Dec 2 **ARRL 160m Contest**

Dec 8-9 **ARRL 10m Contest**

Dec 12 * *REDXA Holiday Party and Raffle*

Dec 29-30 **Stew Perry Topband Challenge**

Dec 31-Jan 1 **Straight Key Night**

Jan 5-6 **ARRL RTTY Roundup**

Jan 9 * *REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Jan 12-13 **North American QSO Party CW**

Jan 19-20 **North American QSO Party SSB**

Jan 25-27 **CQ 160m Contest CW**

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**



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



CQP was on October 6, 0900 PDT or 1600 UTC. All HF bands, phone and CW.

Hope you had the chance to join in the fun.

www.cqp.org

Treasurer's Report for October 2018 prepared by Bill Zaner, W6IYS,
REDXA Treasurer

Bal. Brt. Fwd.	10/1/2018		<u>\$3,694.69</u>
Receipts			
	Auction (gear from N6GY)	\$280.00	
	Dues	<u>\$140.00</u>	
	Total Receipts		<u>\$420.00</u>
Disbursements			
	Total Disbursements		<u>\$0.00</u>
Cash Flow			\$420.00
Balance 10/31/18			<u>\$4,114.69</u>

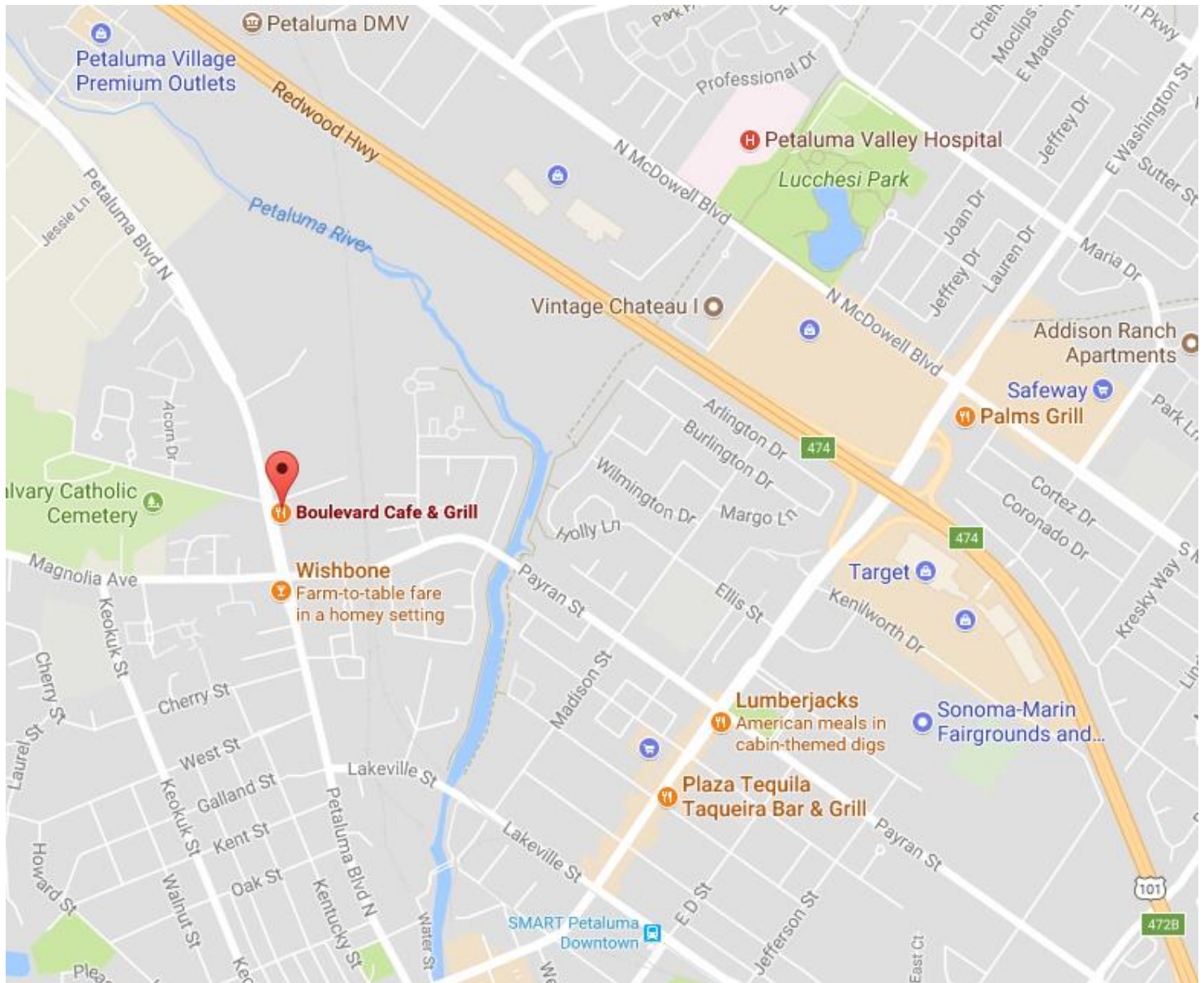
[Marilyn, N6VAW](#), sent us some wonderful portraits of members. I'll publish a few this month and others in subsequent issues of "Sunspots". These are from our Hawaiian Shirt Night when we hosted K6MM's presentation of the recent Palmyra Island (KH5) DXpedition





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.