

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 31

NUMBER 8

AUGUST 2010

CLUB OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT:

Ron Castro, N6IE
1355 N. Dutton Avenue, Suite 225
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
ron@n6ie.com

VICE PRESIDENT:

Josh Fiden, W6XU
15885 Coleman Valley Road
Occidental, CA 95465
H (707) 874-3940
w6xu@arrl.net

SECRETARY:

San Smith, N7PIB
PO Box 624
Vineburg, CA 95487
H (707) 939-1242
n7pib@att.net

TREASURER:

Jim Selmi, K6JS
7470 Monique Place
Rohnert Park, CA 94928
H (707) 664-9769
jselmi@hotmail.com

DIRECTORS:

Alan Eshleman, K6SRZ
210 Nila Mae Way
Penngrove, CA 94951
H (510) 540-8790
doctore@well.com

Bob Magnani, K6QXY
1500 Los Alamos Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95409
H (707) 538-3801
k6qxy@aol.com

Wally Pugh, N6AD
109 Alta Drive
Petaluma, CA 94954
H (707) 769-1065
n6ad@comcast.net

CONTEST CHAIRMAN & WEBMASTER:

Doug Bender, WW6D
3638 Hemlock Court
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
H (707) 526-5131
ww6d@aol.com

EDITOR:

Steve Bertsch, K6SAB
673 Plum Street
Novato, CA 94945
H (415) 898-5159
sabertsch@gmail.com

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

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Wednesday, August 11, 2010 at Gourmet Garden Restaurant, (the old Carrows) 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 **Paul Ewing, N6PSE**, who headed the recent **YI9PSE DXpedition to Kurdistan, Iraq**. Paul will make a presentation on his very successful DX adventure and give us a few hints about some exciting ones he is planning in the future.

REDXA President's Report

First off, I want to make sure nobody forgets that this month's meeting will be at a different location: The **Gourmet Garden**, at the corner of East Washington and McDowell in Petaluma, where we used to meet when it was Carrow's several years ago. We'll give this place a try, then I want to hear your feedback to see if we want to make this our permanent home once again.

I hope everyone enjoyed July's presentation by our NCCC friend **Stu Phillips, K6TU** on the **Weak Signal Propagation Reporting (WSPR)** system and its Internet home at WSPRnet.org. I first hooked up WSPR in my shack last year and was amazed to find that I could be spotted around the world on a dead band with a poor antenna and QRP power. Contesting and other distractions got me thinking about other things, but last weekend I decided to fire up the WSPR software and give it a try on 30 meters. Once again, I was delighted by the almost immediate results. I turned it on Friday evening and by Saturday morning, I had been spotted by some 44 stations in 10 DXCC entities in four continents including Africa! Longest DX was **VK9BN**, Grid Square **OF88**, 9,144 miles away. Rarest was a K2 running portable in Wake Island, **KH9**. All with 5 Watts (I can't



get the Orion II to run less than that) and a dipole at 29'.

WSPR and other new digital modes such as JT65A, MFSK16, MT63, OLIVIA and others are examples of how digital technology is changing the face of Amateur Radio and allowing communications in conditions we never thought could work. As this type of new DSP-based technology continues to evolve and grow, we should all strive to gain familiarity with it. True, these new modes are technically challenging, and they may seem 'cold' in comparison to the more traditional modes we're all used to communicating with in ham radio, but we don't want to stay 'stuck in the 60's' as the world around us continues to move forward. If there is anything hams love to do, it's tinker, and the new digital modes offer a treasure trove of opportunities to keep our minds stimulated and our hands busy. In the process, we'll be keeping up with the leading edge of communications technology which is where hams should always be!

If you want to try out the WSPR mode, just drop by www.wsprnet.org. If you are able to run PSK31, you are already set up for WSPR. Just load the software, read the instructions and you're good to go!

Since there was so much to present about WSPR, Stu didn't get around to telling us about the **Reverse Beacon Network (RBN)**, but it's really pretty simple and I can tell you most of what you need to know in the next paragraph or two. Not too long ago we heard a presentation at a REDXA meeting from "TV" **Bob, N6TV** about the CW Skimmer software. CW Skimmer has been very controversial among contesters, but Skimmer was not really developed with contesting in mind. The program's author, **Alex VE3NEA** says he originally wrote it for 'tailgating' in split CW DX pile-ups. He could instantly spot the station the DX just worked, then QSY immediately to that exact frequency and start calling.

Another use for Skimmer has emerged, that of 'reverse beaconing', where unlike traditional beacons where you spot the beacon and maybe report it on the packet network, with RBN, *you are* the beacon and CW Skimmer running at some remote location spots and reports *you* to a network. At any given time, there are dozens of stations with SDR's and Skimmer software watching wide swaths of the ham CW spectrum looking for stations sending CQ, and reporting on the network. So even if you don't know what reverse beacons are, you have probably been spotted and announced if you have called CQ in CW on almost any open band since April, 2008 when RBN started up. Want to give it a try? Point your browser to www.reversebeacon.net, go to "Main" and start calling CQ on any open band, then watch for your call sign to appear. That will tell you right away where you are being heard and the signal-to-noise ratio you were

heard at by each Skimmer that heard you. Pretty cool, eh?

Take a look at the screen-shots of my computer when I was participating as a receiving station back in March. My SDR was automatically switching around between 30, 20, 17, 12 and 10 Meters, spending two minutes on each band then moving to the next. You can see stations I spotted locally show up on the Reverse Beacon webpage. The list is filtered so that just spots from me show up.

A cool side benefit of using the Reverse Beacon Network is that you can compare your signal to others that may be on the band, especially during a contest or when calling in a DX pileup and see how your signal compares. I'd love to see how many dozens of dB's my signal is below N6RO's in a contest! You can also test different antennas, F/B ratio, etc. Give the Reverse Beacon Network a try next time you're on the bands.

At this month's meeting, we welcome **Paul Ewing, N6PSE**, who headed the recent **YI9PSE DXpedition to Kurdistan, Iraq**. Paul will make a presentation on his very successful DX adventure and give us a few hints about some exciting ones he is planning in the future. **Don't forget the special location for this month only, Gourmet Garden** (the old Carrow's where we used to meet) at East Washington and McDowell Blvd. See you there!

Treasurer Report

by Jim, K6JS

REDXA TREASURER'S REPORT

NO REPORT SUBMITTED

CallSigns

Freq	Utc	Call
18074.2	18:39:47	SP2QWH
18077.3	18:39:45	W7GB
18073.8	18:38:36	N6BJ
18159.3	18:37:25	EE5E
18081.0	18:37:21	NH6JC/M
18079.5	18:37:14	LY2PK
18094.0	18:36:51	N00R
28044.8	18:34:34	AD3E
21049.6	18:31:47	KJ4ADM
21040.0	18:31:23	K4UBJ
21040.0	18:31:07	M0EDX
21095.9	18:30:47	EA5EY
21010.0	18:30:45	I6C9I
21040.0	18:30:37	K6ED
21014.0	18:30:37	SV3ADM
14050.4	18:30:29	K4AEN
14024.9	18:30:23	XE1XZQ
14006.0	18:30:21	W3KL
14102.7	18:30:13	T5D
14113.6	18:30:09	KJ5T
14014.8	18:30:08	NV6M
14008.1	18:30:04	I4YCE
14008.8	18:30:02	PE9FP
14014.8	18:29:37	UA3TCJ
14050.7	18:29:31	KG4W
14046.0	18:29:04	W5LE/TU
14007.0	18:28:46	EA3JL
14006.5	18:28:41	PE2MC

Calls: 28

CW Skimmer 1.5 - Registered to Ronald E Castro

File View Commands Help

18080.00

0.86
0.85
0.84
0.83
0.82
0.81
0.80
0.79
0.78
0.77
0.76
0.75

NH6JC/M
W7GB

29% Decoders: 81 of 81 TIn: 1 user

DE = N6IE - Reverse Beacon Network - Mozilla Firefox

http://www.reversebeacon.net/dxsd1.php?f=0&c=n6ie&

REVERSE BEACON NETWORK

SSN:26 3F7:84 A:9 K:1 callsign lookup:

welcome main dx spots skimmers downloads about contact us

show/hide my last filters

DE = N6IE rows to show: 100

search spot by callsign

de	dx	freq	cq/dx	snr	speed	time
N6IE	NH6JC/M	18081.0	CQ	20 dB	20 wpm	1837z 21 Mar
N6IE	KJ4ADM	21049.6	CQ	4 dB	18 wpm	1831z 21 Mar
N6IE	K4AEN	14050.4	CQ	6 dB	23 wpm	1830z 21 Mar
N6IE	DL3DXX	14005.1	CQ	24 dB	29 wpm	1829z 21 Mar
N6IE	KG4W	14050.7	CQ	17 dB	20 wpm	1829z 21 Mar
N6IE	WB0CJB	14058.9	CQ	18 dB	18 wpm	1829z 21 Mar
N6IE	DL3AO	14029.9	CQ	15 dB	23 wpm	1829z 21 Mar
N6IE	N8DUS	14055.0	CQ	32 dB	16 wpm	1829z 21 Mar
N6IE	W0BF	14021.8	CQ	13 dB	21 wpm	1828z 21 Mar
N6IE	AB5X	18076.0	CQ	4 dB	21 wpm	1823z 21 Mar
N6IE	NH6JC/M	18075.5	CQ	9 dB	31 wpm	1823z 21 Mar
N6IE	YUSRA	14012.4	CQ	15 dB	25 wpm	1822z 21 Mar

options: show/hide

skimmers on

- AB7TB - 17m,20m,30m
- OK9BP - 12m,15m,20m,30m
- DL0LBS - 80m
- DL2CC - 15m,17m,20m,30m
- ES2MA - 40m
- JA4ZBK - 40m
- K1TTT - 15m,20m
- K4TD - 10m,12m,15m,17m
- KC0VKN -
- KC0VKN-1 -
- LASEKA - 15m,17m,20m,30m
- N4ZR - 15m,20m
- N8E - 15m,17m
- N8NC - 20m
- NA8B - 17m
- GH2XK - 17m
- QH8CT - 17m
- OL5Q - 80m
- PA1T - 40m,80m
- RA3AH - 20m,30m,40m,80m
- RM4VA -
- TF4M - 15m,20m,30m,40m,80m
- VE2WU - 20m
- VK6IA -

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING JULY 2010

by San, N7PIB

NO MEETING WAS SCHEDULED.

JULY MEETING MINUTES

by San, N7PIB

Our July 2010 meeting of REDXA was called to order at 7:36 P.M. by President Ron, N6IE. There were 24 members and guests in attendance. Guest's included Jim's daughter and Steve Merchant, K6AW, an NCDXF board member as well as our speaker Stu Phillips, K6TU.

The preliminary Field Day results indicated that we had 32 operators participating and a projected score of 10,176 points in the 3A category.

The minutes and treasurer's reports were moved for approval, seconded and passed as presented.

Old Business: Our August meeting will be held at the Gourmet Garden. This is at the same site as we used to meet when it was Carrow's. Ample parking on site and a projected cost of \$11.99 plus tax, tip, and beverage. We will be returning to Mr. McGoo's for the September meeting. In further notes on Field Day, while the bonus points showed a decline from the previous year, there were 3,195 contacts made and the participation and total projected points showed an increase from the previous year.

4

New Business: Doug Bender, WW6D, will be retiring

Special Meeting Notice for *AUGUST 11th*

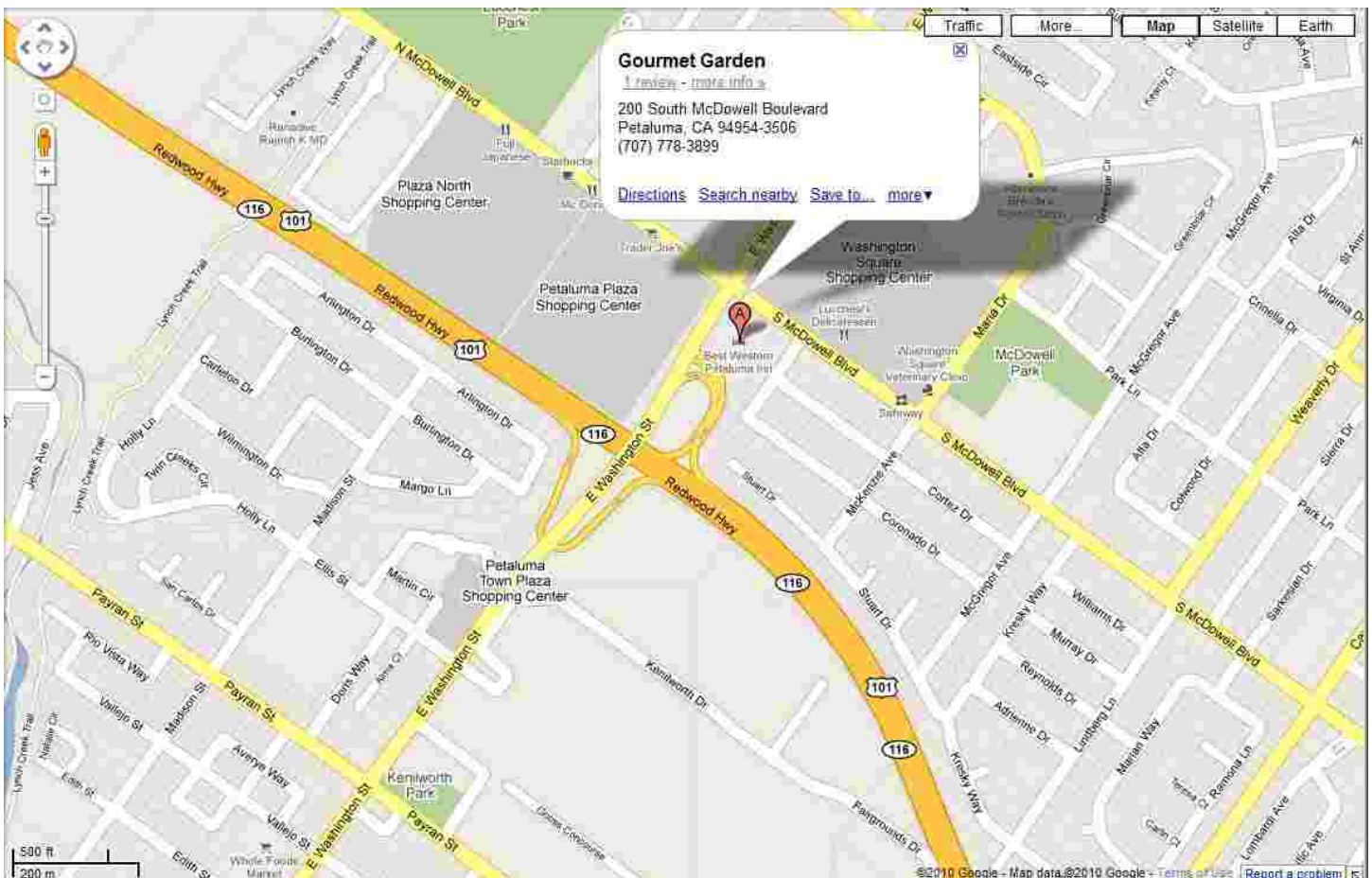
The REDXA meeting will be held at:

GOURMET GARDEN, PETALUMA
(All you can eat Asian and some American food)
\$11.99 plus tax tip and beverage
Happy Hour 6:00 PM in bar, meeting at 7:00

This is our old meeting location,
formerly known as CARROW'S.
We'll try this place once and then decide if we want to continue.

200 South McDowell Blvd.

Directions:
Get off 101 at the East Washington Exit
Go east until you come to McDowell Blvd.
Gourmet Garden is on the right



as contest chairman and REDXA needs a new member to assume the responsibility. The projected meeting topics and speakers for the rest of the year are: August--Paul Ewing, N6PSE, who headed up the recent Iraq DXpedition. September--Rick Eversole, N6RNO, on the Cal QSO Party. October--Alan Eshelmann, K6SRZ, on the wrap-up for Field Day with video. November--volunteer on DX vacation rentals still needed.

Prior to the planned program, Bob, gave us some equipment reviews on the 6M-1000 amplifier from MSquare. Cost is about \$2,000 and it weighs about 6 pounds.

The program was presented by Stu Phillips, K6TU, who spoke on advanced real time propagation networks with particular emphasis on the role of the weak signal propagation reporter, aka WSPR (whisper), a signal message containing the sender's callsign, Maidenhead (grid) square, and transmit power in dBm. It was very interesting to see that there are DX signals out there even if we do not seem to be able to hear them.

Monthly San Francisco Section News Summary

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



“Are you sure we actually *connected* the coax?”
(photo courtesy Marilyn N6VAW)

Contesting and DX News by Doug, WW6D

Bob K6QXY has been quite active this past month:

“This is [more] 6 meter Es ... and some good TRANS PACIFIC TROPO conditions.

- 7/2 JL8GFB
- 7/2 KL7/KB7Q, KP4EIT, C6ANX
- 7/4 J8/W8IF, FS/W6JKV, & C6ANX
- 7/5 CT1HZE (SSB & CW), VO1GO
- 7/5 JE1BMJ
- 7/6 VE8NSD, KL7NO,
- 7/6 KL7NO, JE1BMJ
- 7/8 JE1BMJ
- 7/11 JL8GFB,
- 7/12 K2ZD (EME)
- 7/13 KL7/KB7Q (EME)
- 7/19 JE1BMJ, JA7QVI, KL7NO
- 7/20 VE8BY/B (BAFFIN ISL FP53), VE8WD/D
DP22 (AURORAL Es)
- 7/23 TRANS PAC TROPO KH6HME/B 144.170
- 7/24 TRANS PAC TROPO KH6HME/B 144.170
[both days]
- 7/25 KH6HME/B 144.170 432.078, & 1296.250 (559)
- 7/25 KH6HME/B all in 1296 (519)
- 7/26 KH6HME worked S9+++++ on SSB.
- 7/27 All beacons still in

That's it so far. Es season is just about over [and] we should start to see some late night TEP events into S. PACIF around 0500Z on. It's possible to work E51, FO, 3D2 and possibly KH9 on TEP. New KH9/B [beacon] is on KH9/WA2YUN 50.014.”

Thanks, Bob for the report!

Be sure to set aside the 1st full weekend of October (Oct. 2-3) for the California QSO Party. Every log counts! For details, go to: www.cqp.org .

IARU

Call	Class	CW Qs	Ph Qs	Zones	HQs	Score
K6LRN	SOCWHP	381	0	51	44	134,995
K6SRZ	SOMXHP	714	51	80	56	363,528
WW6D	SOCWHP	203	0	39	33	43,272

NAQP RTTY - July

Call	Class	Qs	Mlts	Score
K6LRN	SOLP	191	75	14,325
K6SRZ	SOLP	354	111	39,294
K6UM	SOLP	81	41	3,321



“Who said we didn’t have enough food...?”
(photo courtesy Marilyn N6VAW)

673 Plum Street
Novato, CA 94945


MEETING: AUGUST 11, 2010



Calendar of Upcoming Events:

Aug 7-8	NA QSO Party CW
Aug 11	* REDXA Monthly Meeting <i>See redxa.com - special QTH!</i>
Aug 21-22	NA QSO Party SSB
Sep 8	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Sep 25-26	CQ WW DX RTTY
Oct 2-3	California QSO Party
Oct 13	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Oct 30-31	CQ WW DX SSB
Nov 10	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Nov 27-28	CQ WW DX CW
Dec 10	* REDXA Monthly Meeting

WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTION



Mark Nowell
Manager
W17YN

2210 Livingston Street
Oakland, CA 94606
(510) 534-5757 • 800-854-6046
(510) 534-0729 Fax

ANAHEIM, CA • ATLANTA, GA • BURBANK, CA • DENVER, CO
NEW CASTLE, DE • OAKLAND, CA • PHOENIX, AZ • PORTLAND, OR
SALEM, NH • SAN DIEGO, CA • SUNNYVALE, CA • WOODBRIDGE, VA