

MEMBERSHIP DUES REMINDER

It's that time of year again. We will be collecting 2018 dues at the January Club meeting. Cash or checks—made out to REDXA—are fine. Regular members are \$20, families are \$25 and full time students under 18 are \$10. If you prefer, you can mail your check to REDXA, POB 750834, Petaluma CA 94975. Please note that if you do not pay your dues by February 1, 2018 your SWR will jump to 10:1 and your license will expire without further notice.

By the way, paying your dues every 12 months can be a nuisance so please consider paying a year or two in advance. A number of members pay two or three years in advance and avoid the hassle of writing a check every year. Give it a try.

Bill, W6IYS

Treasurer.

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, January 10th 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

PROGRAM: *The future of DX and DXing with illustrations from the 2016 VK0EK DXpedition to Heard Island . Learn more about our guest here: www.qrz.com and search KK6EK*

Presented by
Robert Schmieder, Ph. D.



REDXA President's Commentary

What a year! We've all reflected on the past year—on the joys and sorrows that came with it. I hope that on balance it was a good year for you and yours. And now we close the book on 2017.

In 2017 I was reminded of how diverse our hobby is. I use my HT for paragliding flights. Looking over all the contests, and awards to compete for, I realize how many I've yet to discover. Josh, W6XU, just told me about a new digital mode (FT8) that is gaining popularity [sweeping all of ham radio, actually—ed.]. EMCOM was a top priority during the fires. And what year would not be complete without a neglected resolu-



tion? I never did get my butt in gear and submit anything for my grand SOTA plans.

What are your plans for amateur radio 2018? I ask that you help the club we all love to continue strong in 2018. My head is spinning just figuring out where to start my own HF adventures: contesting? DXing? a new antenna? learning the code?

And the club needs your help. Yours. We need every member to step up - just a little - and help out. Send your ideas for speakers and topics to the Program Committee or join it and make it happen. Volunteer as a Field Day Captain and teach (and learn from) others how to do it right. Spread the word and recruit new members, new Hams, new blood, new ideas. Pitch in and write an article for *Sunspots*. As diverse as our hobby is, so are the experiences, skills, and ideas from our members.

No one can predict all of what 2018 will bring, but I am hopeful and excited about the prospects.

73 and Happy New Year!

Gabe KJ6AZU



Past-President Bill Srivatka, WX6B, in good spirits at our 2017 holiday party



Club competition eligibility list for ARRL contests

From the editor

The ARRL requires all affiliated clubs that plan to enter one of their sponsored contests to supply a list of all eligible members (as their call signs) prior to a particular contest. Eligible means that they are members in good standing.

I recently checked into REDXA's status regarding an eligibility list. I discovered that we have not updated our list since November 8, 2016 according to the ARRL Web site: <http://contest-clubs.arrl.org/viewlists.php?action=clublist&clubabbrev=REDXA>. It's likely that our eligibility list has changed.

I was interested in eligibility largely because the upcoming RTTY Roundup is a major focus contest for the Northern California Contest Club. The NCCC has no dues requirement. If approved, an applicant to the NCCC is not required to pay dues (though if one does not pay dues, he or she is no eligible for any club awards). Dues paying is strongly encouraged by NCCC and is a requirement for membership in REDXA.

You can also check to see if you are on NCCC's list by going here: <http://contest-clubs.arrl.org/viewlists.php?action=clublist&clubabbrev=NCCC>

REDXA is listed as a small club with a 35-mile diameter circle, centered on N6OJ's QTH according to the most recent update. NCCC has a 175-mile diameter circle centered somewhere near Grass Valley.

I'm not sure who submitted REDXA's list in the past, but it should be easy to get it updated.

REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events

by Doug WW6D

Have an event for the calendar? Let me know!

Jan 10 * REDXA Monthly Meeting

Jan 13-14 North American QSO Party CW

Jan 20-21 North American QSO Party SSB

Jan 20-21 ARRL January VHF Contest

Jan 26-28 CQ 160m Contest CW

Feb 10-11 CQ WPX Contest RTTY

Feb 14 * REDXA Monthly Meeting

Feb 17-18 ARRL Intl DX Contest CW

Feb 24-25 North American QSO Party RTTY

Mar 3-4 ARRL Intl DX Contest SSB

Mar 24-25 CQ WPX Contest SSB

Mar 14 * REDXA Monthly Meeting

Refer to <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/> for more contest infor-

Ham Radio and the Great Tubbs Fire of 2017

At 11:02pm, October 8th, 2017, I answered my landline.

“THIS IS SONOMA COUNTY SHERIFF EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION – EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY – THIS IS AN EVACUATION CALL – THIS IS NOT A DRILL – EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY – THERE IS A WILDFIRE AND MARK WEST SPRINGS ROAD MUST EVACUATE”.

I don’t remember the exact wording, but that robo-call really wanted me to wake up and pay attention. I had already been patrolling my driveway for an hour. There was too much thick choking smoke, although I could not see fire anywhere. I have chronic asthma and I am always alert to such pollutants. My husband and son were traveling out of state, so this was a solo evacuation; I was on my own.

October 7th was the annual California QSO Party. My friend, Carole Whiteberry, W6TTF, had travelled up from Fresno to join me for a well needed, laid-back contest. We weren’t running numbers this year, just having fun. Her husband, Jan, WA6WTF, had become a Silent Key in July. This was the CQP to have fun. We made just 90 QSO’s in 24 hours. No rush, no worry, no sweep. At the end of the contest, for the first time in my ham life, I sent in our log before shutting down the computer. Good move. Several hours later, my house was vaporized. But I digress.

My dad, KU6F, moved to a skilled nursing facility in 2006. I moved his ham radio equipment to my household knowing “I can listen, but I can’t press the red button”. Darnn it! After 50 years of avoiding his ham overtures, he’d finally caught me. I earned my tech license in 2006, KI6TII. I earned my Extra in Oct 2009 and was granted his call, KU6F, on December 23, 2009. I had a new



addiction – contesting and net control. I joined the ACS (Auxillary Communications Service), got my Sheriff’s volunteer ham radio operator ID, trained in traffic control and emergency services, and learned how to stay safe in an emergency. This saved my life and those of my immediate neighbors; who knew?



After I sent in our log for CQP 2017 and sent Carole on her way back to Fresno, I settled into

my evening routine. After nightfall, I started smelling wood burning smoke, and too much of it. I had feeds for the sheriff and City of Santa Rosa Police notices forwarded to my cell phone. My memory is rather blurry, I’m relying on the official sheriff and SRPD published feeds to confirm times. At approximately 10:45pm, I received a feed that Porter Creek had received evacuation orders – at which point I put both cats into their carriers and “staged” them with

my briefcase, purse, phone, Rx bag, and power cords at the front door. My dog was passed out on the bed. I walked to the top of the driveway and watched the full moon go from crimson red to completely blacked out – not good. At 11:02, I received the EmComm call on my landline. I raced over to the closest neighbors and woke them up; and phoned the further neighbors, rousing them – FIRE – GET OUT NOW – EVACUATE NOW!!!

After loading both cats, my luggage, and my very old, slow walking dog into my car, I went back into the house for food. As I reached for the dog food, I heard in my head “NO!”, so I moved away towards the front door. I asked “what do I need before I leave?” and heard in my head “YOU

NEED TO GET OUT NOW! LEAVE NOW!”

It was actually more expletive, but you get my drift. I grabbed my flashlight and sleeping bag, locked the front door, got into my car, and drove away.

At 11:26pm, I left my driveway, two-tenths of a mile north-east of Riebli Road. Driving down Mark West Springs Road was surreal. I knew there were fires at Riebli and Sky Farm, visible from the road, but all I could see was dark smoke, like an inverse valley fog. There was no one on the road with me till I got to Old Redwood Highway where the sheriff had set up a road-block. I drove south on 101, again finding no one on the road with me heading southbound. I was in a between-evacuations bubble, for which I am grateful. Emergency vehicles sped north on 101. I drove to our shop in Roseland where I spent the night watching the emergency feeds, talking with various friends “yes, I am safe”, helping other friends figure out what was going on. What a crazy night that was. How thankful I had my office in Roseland with both cats and the dog.

Fast forward to November 18th. Alan, K6SRZ and his wife, Carol, are hosting my family and our pets up in their home in Penngrove while we search for our new home. We are safe, we are loved, and Alan and I are doing a M/S for the ARRL November Sweepstakes SSB – it’s a perfect book ending of ham radio; how it keeps me happy as a hobby, how it prepared me for this emergency. Thank god for ham radio.

I am also grateful to my quilting guild, synagogue and temple, RSCDS, the greater Sonoma County community, and my friends Margaret & Chet, who we are with in December while waiting to close escrow. I used to think I had too many hobbies! Thank goodness for them all. It takes an extraordinary community for such

mega-disasters. I’m also grateful for my studies in Kaiju. This fire definitely qualified.



The photo below is my house several weeks after the fire.



How the hell the antenna stand and rotor stayed up I have no idea. The pole the rotor is attached to was stainless steel, but the chimney cap was aluminum, thick aluminum, true, but it should have melted! There are rolls of LM-400 coax in The backyard—they shrunk by about 400% and shattered. Weird.

—Saraj, KU6F

DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES



Acting President Gabe KJ6JZU called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm, December 13, 2017 at the Boulevard Cafe, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were 45 members and guests (a possible record!). He welcomed everyone and is looking forward to a great year ahead for the club.

Past President Bill WX6B then made introductory remarks and thanked the club for all the support he has been receiving in his recovery from the NorCal Wildfires which destroyed his home.

Alan K6SRZ, who has graciously stepped into the role of Sunspots Newsletter, addressed concerns about those who did not receive their December issue. Please send him, and also Bill W6IYS, our treasurer, your current valid email address. Alan received many kudos for his publication of the December issue.

Bill W6IYS presented the Treasurer's report. He further noted that DUES are now DUE! \$20 a year payable as of December 1. Send to the club PO box or bring to the next meeting.

We then all participated in the traditional Holiday Raffle. Among the various prizes were gift certificates for \$100, \$75, and \$50 at Ham Radio Outlet.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08pm.

Respectfully submitted by Doug WW6D, Co-Secretary

Doing things the hard way from W6QXY

Dave, KJ9I was the first and our own Josh, W6XU, was the second to work W7GJ's EME DXpedition VK7XGJ to Christmas Island. Bob, K6QXY, put VK9XGJ in his EME log a few days later for DXCC #177.



Bob reports that VK9CGJ, Cocos Island, and VK9XGJ were the last two VK9s he needed. He's worked VK9C, VK9L, VK9M, VK9N, VK9W, & VK9X.

Bob is the second ever USA operator to be awarded a Six Meter *Worked All VK Call Areas* certificate. This award required him working all the VK states and call areas, including VK0 (Macquarie Island). Further, it required 3 QSLs from each of the states. Working three VK6s, Bob reports, was very difficult and Working VK0 was pure luck. As luck would have it, an Australian weather serviceman stationed on Macquarie got on six meters.

Bob hopes that he and Josh will have a shot at the upcoming 3Y0X expedition to Bouvet Island. The Bouvet team plans to have both two- and six-meter EME. From Sonoma County they will only be able to see the 3Y0 moon set with a 45 minute window each day.



Photos from the REDXA Holiday Party



L to R N6YEU, WW6D, W6UDS



W6XU and friend at the Boulevard Café for our 2017 holiday party



KK6JJ and W6WR



W6SFK and K6JS



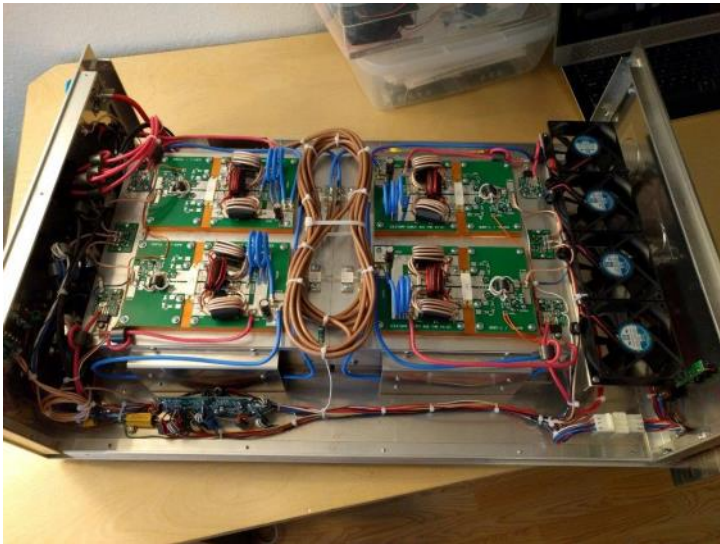
K6ANP and K6RIM



New toys for REDXA boys

On the left, a *Tashjian LM-354E* tower being installed at K6SRZ. Its twin now resides at K6ANP and a taller version is up at K3RC.

One of the virtues of the design is that the collapsed tower pivots on its support structure allowing easy access to most antennas with booms of 20 feet or less all from an 8-foot step ladder



This is K6QXY's brand new 4 pallet LDMOS 6 METER amplifier as built by Jim Klitzing, W6PQL. Jim is local, residing in Fremont.

Jim builds a variety of HF, VHF, and UHF amplifiers. You can see his work on his Web page www.w6pql.com

Take a look at his creations—very impressive!

This amp as pictured is model 6M3000 It is capable of very high power—it can manage 4KW output with 30W of drive and 3KW out in JT65 WSJT-X 100% duty cycle.

Wow! Look out Moon!



For those long contesting hours in the chair

Some of the damage at WX6B





A familiar sight in Sonoma County these days



A hopeful sign! Save the base of my tower. I'll be Back—WX6B

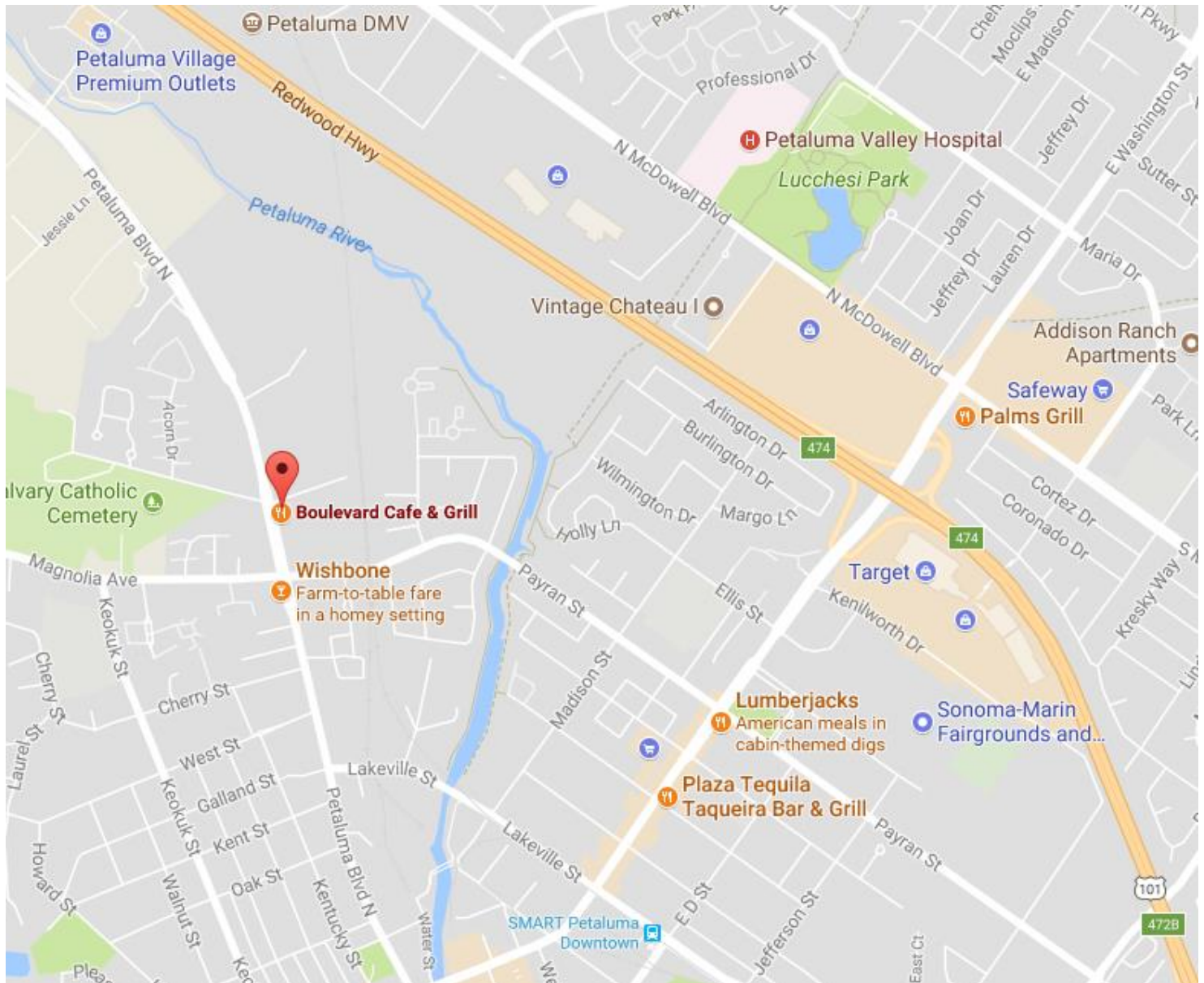
Treasurer's report for December 2017

Bal. Brt. Fwd.	12/1/2017		<u>\$3,352.85</u>
Receipts			
	Raffle (net to Club)	\$286.00	
	Dues	\$465.00	
	Badge	<u>\$ 21.00</u>	
	Total Receipts		<u>\$772.00</u>
Disbursements			
	Christmas Raffle Gifts	\$350.00	
	Misc Office supplies	\$16.93	
	MS Publisher-Sun Spots	\$ 109.99	
	Palmgrens (Badge)	\$ 15.35	
	Refund (Badge Overcharge)	\$ 5.65	
	Misc. Postage (2017)	\$28.01	
	Total Disbursements		<u>\$525.93</u>
Cash Flow			<u>\$246.06</u>
Balance 12/31/2017			<u>\$3,598.01</u>



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.

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IC-7600 | All Mode Transceiver

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IC-7200 | HF Transceiver

- 160-10M • 100W • Simple & tough with IF DSP • AGC Loop Management • Digital IF Filter • Digital Twin PBT • Digital Noise Reduction • Digital Noise Blanker • USB Port for PC Control



IC-7100 | All Mode Transceiver

- HF/50/144/430/440 MHz Multi-band, Multi-mode, IF DSP • D-STAR DV Mode (Digital Voice + Data) • Intuitive Touch Screen Interface • Built-in RTTY Functions



ID-5100A | VHF/UHF Dual Band Digital Transceiver

- Analog FM/D-Star DV Mode • SD Card Slot for Voice & Data Storage • 50W Output on VHF/UHF Bands • Integrated GPS Receiver • AM Airband Dualwatch • FM Analog/DV Repeater List Function

ID-51A | VHF/UHF Dual Band Transceiver

- 5/2.5/1.0/0.5/0.1W Output • RX: 0.52-1.71, 88-174, 380-479 MHz** • AM/FM/FM-N/WFM/DV • 1304 Alphanumeric Memory Chls • Integrated GPS • D-STAR Repeater Directory • IPX7 Submersible



TH-F6A | 2M/220/440

- Dual channel receive • .1 - 1300 MHz (cell blocked) RX • FM, AM, SSB • 5W 2M/220/440 TX, FM • 435 Memories • Li-Ion Battery

KENWOOD



TS-590SG | HF/50MHz Transceiver

- Equipped with 500 Hz/2.7 kHz roofing filter as standard • ALC derived from TS-990S eliminating spike issues • Antenna output function (shared with DRV connector) • CW - morse code decoder function



TM-D710G | 2M/440 Dualband

- V+V/V+U/U+U operation • Built-in GPS • Built-in TNC for APRS & DX-Cluster operation • 50W 2M & UHF • 1,000 memories • Dual receive • Green or amber backlight colors • Latest APRS firmware w/new features • Sky Command II remote functions



TM-V71A | 2M/440 Dualband

- High RF output (50W) • Multiple Scan • Dual receive on same band (VxV, UxU) • Echolink® memory (auto dialer) • Echolink® Sysop mode for node terminal ops • Invertible front panel • Choice of green/amber for LCD panel • 104 code digital code squelch



TM-281A | 2 Mtr Mobile

- 65 Watt • 200 Memories • CTCSS/DCS • Mil-Std specs • Hi-quality audio



FT-60R | 2M/440 5W HT

- Wide receiver coverage • AM air band receive • 1000 memory channels w/alpha labels • Huge LCD display • Rugged die-cast, water resistant case • NOAA severe weather alert with alert scan

YAESU
The radio



FT-991 | HF/50MHz/2M/440 Transceiver

- 160 M-440MHz - SSB/CW/FM/C4FM Digital/AM/RTTY/PSK • 100 W (2M/440: 50 Watts) • 3.5" TFT full-color touch panel operation • High speed spectrum scope • Roofing filters: 3kHz & 15kHz • 32-bit high speed floating point IF DSP



FTDX1200 | 100W HF + 6M Transceiver

- Triple Conversion Receiver With 32-bit Floating Point DSP • 40 MHz 1st IF with selectable 3 kHz, 6kHz & 15 kHz Roofing Filters • Optional FFT-1 Supports AF-FFT Scope, RTTY/PSK31 Encode/Decode, CW Decode/Auto Zero-In • Full Color 4.3" TFT Display



FT-450D | A100W HF + 6M Transceiver

- 100W HF/6M • Auto tuner built-in • DSP built-in • 500 memories • DNR, IF Notch, IF Shift



FTM-400DR | 2M/440 Mobile

- Color display-green, blue, orange, purple, gray • GPS/APRS • Packet 1200/9600 bd ready • Spectrum scope • Bluetooth • MicroSD slot • 500 memory per band



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