

SUNSPOTS



REDWOOD EMPIRE DX ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 750531, 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, July 9, 2008 at Mister McGoo's Restaurant, 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 Dean Straw, N6BV. Dean's topic "Propagation 101".

REDXA President's Report

I planned to start this column with a light-hearted review of Field Day 2008, but, since my blood is boiling and steam is coming out of my ears, let me vent. The object of my ire is the People's Republic of Berkeley. There is a ham radio connection.

For many years, Berkeley has required residents to purchase on-street parking permits. The permits run from June 30 to June 30 of the next year, apparently to conform with the city's fiscal year. In 2007 I applied for a permit and bumper sticker for my newish Volvo with license plate K6SRZ. I sent the Berkeley office a copy of the registration and proof of insurance.

"Sorry," said Berkeley in reply, "there's no record of any vehicle with that license number. We can't issue a permit." So I went on down to the permit office with a stack of documentation, took a number, and stood in line. When my turn came, the clerk demonstrated to me how the license wouldn't come up on her computer.

"Try K6 [space] SRZ," I said. Still nothing, and she would not accept the totally valid original copy of my registration. So I went on over to the Triple-A office where, in a matter of 15 seconds, the clerk retrieved the

registration information for K6SRZ. Armed with that printout, I went back to the Berkeley parking office where they grudgingly took my \$30.00 and issued the permit. Total elapsed (wasted) time was about 2.5 hours.

Fast forward to 2008. This year Berkeley allowed me to order a new parking permit by mail. I sent in the forms three months in advance of the June 30 deadline. June 30th came and went and no parking permit for K6SRZ arrived. So, it was back to the parking office, taking a number, and standing in line.

“Sorry,” said the clerk, “there’s no record of any vehicle with that license number. We can’t issue a permit.” I was trapped in the parking permit version of “Groundhog Day.”

“Hah!” I said, and with a flourish spread out on the counter every piece of documentation from 2007, including Berkeley’s receipt for issuing a parking permit for K6SRZ. I could see the wheels turning within the clerk’s head as she searched for some further way to deny my request, but came up empty. So I got the permit.

“How do I avoid this hassle next year?” I asked. “We’ll look into it,” she said.

“Y’know,” I said, “California has been issuing ham radio license plates for many, many years. You should really update your records.”

And, to myself, I thought “my move to Penngrove is almost complete and next year you can take your parking permits and...”

Ah, Berkeley. Berkeley is a “nuclear free zone”. Berkeley uses its citizens’ money to sue the University of California over a non-virgin grove of oak trees surrounded by city streets. Berkeley went out of its way to piss-off the U.S. Marines. And the Berkeley parking office appears not to have heard of amateur radio license plates.

In other news, the W6SG Field Day effort was a big success, including Saturday’s highlight when the REACH helicopter made its appearance [I’m looking over the video of the event and will shortly be generating some .jpeg stills suitable for the cover of QST]. I spent the weekend with Dean, N6BV, running the CW station for W6CUS, the East Bay Amateur Radio Club, at the Berkeley Marina. This was a responsibility I took on prior to being elected your president. QSO totals continue to be down from the years when 10 and 15 meters were open for Field Day, but we still managed to grind out about 1050 CW QSOs. The big surprise this year was PSK, where totals were way up over 2007. We’ll have a full report on the W6SG effort at our next meeting, and, if time

permits, pictures of the helicopter visit.

Dean Straw, N6BV, editor emeritus of the ARRL’s antenna book will be our speaker at the July 9th meeting. Dean’s topic “Propagation 101” promises to be a great presentation, so be there!

I’ll also be making some remarks about NCCC’s “Vision” project, which is part of that club’s plan to again win the Sweepstakes club competition.

And don’t forget to mark your calendars for the REDXA social at the San Francisco Yacht Club in Tiburon on August 9.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING JUNE 2008

by Doug, WW6D

The Board of Directors met at Mr McGoo’s restaurant on June 11, 2008 prior to the regular meeting. Meeting was called to order at 5:45 pm by President Alan, K6SRZ. Board members present were Jim KE6UAR, Jim K6JS, Bill KH6GHZ, Al K6RIM and Doug WW6D. The purpose of the meeting was to review the state of current membership which is currently around 68.

Alan K6SRZ suggested several factors have contributed to the loss of members, notably lower sunspots, older average age of hams and the current economy. It was noted however that the drop in membership has not been significant compared with other clubs. Bill KH6GHZ noted that clubs like REDXA, which focus on a specific area of amateur radio, tend to have more stable membership through the years.

Alan K6SRZ also proposed that some method of notifying members prior to the meeting, in addition to already receiving the Sunspots newsletter, might help get people to attend. Doug WW6D offered to set up a “calendar notification message” using the REDXA reflector.

Another draw to bring in members was proposed by Jim K6JS. He stated that many people are attracted to the hobby because of the technology, so more “tech topics” as programs may help. Other suggestions by several people included:

REDXA “Mini DXpedition” (IOTA, etc).
Field Day in another public location (and/or publicize more and in advance).
California QSO Party Multi-multi.
More “team” approaches toward County Expeditions in CQP.
More mentoring.

This will be an ongoing topic for more discussion. The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

JUNE MEETING MINUTES

by Doug, WW6D

President Alan K6SRZ called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm, June 11, 2008 at Mr. McGoo's Restaurant, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were 18 members and guests. Guests were Jim Lamping (soon to be licensed) and Ron KG6KTP.

Motion was made to approve the minutes from the May meeting and Treasurer's report as printed in Sunspots. Motion was seconded and passed.

There was no old business.

New business. Jim Lamping, who is working toward his Amateur Radio license, applied for membership. He paid his dues and was voted unanimously into membership.

Fred N6YEU conducted the REDXA raffle. \$56 was collected. The winning ticket was Al K6RIM who won \$28. Since Al had won last month, he chose to donate his win to the club. (Thanks Al!). The club thus retained \$56.

Alan K6SRZ passed around a clipboard for membership to note the club's membership in other clubs. He will likely present the results of this survey in the future.

It was noted that Alan K6KKL has a new tower up in Napa. Doug WW6D has updated the web site with a "current propagation status" box. Look for it on the left side right above "Quick Links".

There was a brief discussion regarding the new software for CW operators called "CW Skimmer". This program analyzes the CW signals within a given bandwidth and notes the call and other pertinent information. Some club members first saw this demonstrated at the Visalia convention this year and the technology has created some controversy regarding its use by "single ops" in the contesting community.

Al K6RIM announced that the San Francisco Yacht Club Social will be held on Saturday August 9. Check the web site and newsletter for more information as it becomes available.

The primary focus and program for the meeting was Field Day Final Planning. Jim KE6UAR, one of our Field Day Co-chairs, presented the current status. There will be 3 towers. One tower will have the club's 3 element SteppIR, another tower will use a borrowed 2 element SteppIR and the third tower will have a 2 element "shorty forty" beam. The other 40 m antenna will be a Butternut vertical (2 band version) and wire antennas for 75 and 80 meters. At the time of the meeting, it had not yet been determined whether the

club would enter as "3A" or "2A". The Marin Amateur Radio Society will be providing the GOTA station and potentially the VHF/UHF station. Station captains are Ron N6IE (SSB) and Bruce W6OSP (CW). The logging software will be by N3FJP. It is a "freebie" so people can download it if they want to practice beforehand.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Treasurer Report

by Jim, K6JS

REDXA TREASURER'S REPORT

5/31/08 Balance Forward		\$3,415.95
INCOME		
Raffles	56.00	
TOTAL INCOME	<u> </u>	56.00
EXPENSES		
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u> </u>	(0.00)
6/30/08 Ending Balance		<u><u>\$3,471.95</u></u>

Contesting and DX News

by Doug, WW6D

All Asian DX CW

Call	Class	Qs	Mlts	Score
K6SRZ	SOABHP	124	70	8,750

ARRL June VHF QSO Party

Call	Class	Qs	Mlts	Score
N6ZFO	SOLP (6 m only)	5	5	25

Calendar of Upcoming Events:

Jul 9	REDXA Monthly Meeting
Jul 12-13	IARU HF World Championships
Aug 9	San Francisco Yacht Club Social
Aug 13	REDXA Monthly Meeting
Sep 13-15	ARRL September VHF QSO Party
Oct 4-5	California QSO Party
Oct 25-26	CQ WW Phone
Nov 1-3	ARRL Sweepstakes CW
Nov 15-17	ARRL Sweepstakes SSB

Annual REDXA Social at SFYC Saturday, August 9th

WHAT: REDXA Social - Bring your Spouse/Friends!
No formal program, just a gathering of friends to eat
drink and be merry. The SFYC is one of the most
beautiful places on the planet; don't miss this! (This
is in addition to the regular August meeting).

DATE: Saturday, August 9, 2008

TIME: Happy Hour: 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM
BBQ Dinner: 6:00 PM

Note: They stop serving dinner at 7:00 PM. So, suggest
arrival around 5 P.M. if you want time to do some
serious drinking - hi! Dinner served until 7:00 PM.

PLACE: San Francisco Yacht Club, 98 Beach Road,
Belvedere (101 South; Tiburon Exit; Left at stop sign;
continue on Tiburon Blvd. approximately 4 miles to
Beach Road. Turn right to Yacht Club. Go slightly
past the Yacht Club (around the curve) and turn left
into the large parking lot). Price: For BBQ Dinner
including salad, dessert and beverage): \$13.00, tax
and tip included. No host bar available. No reservations
are necessary; just show up!

673 Plum Street
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MEETING: JULY 9, 2008




Monthly San Francisco Section News Summary

Here is the link for the News Summary:

<http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=SF>

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