

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, June xx 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: Field Day Chairman, Ron, N6IE will discuss plans and logistics for the REDXA/MARS Field Day operation at the Marin Rod and Gun Club site



REDXA President's Commentary

This is your editor at the keyboard. There's no President's commentary this month (unless one is received before I finish typing this) so I'll do my best to fill in.

President Bill, WX6B, is alive and well. I received email from him that mentioned that he was pouring the concrete for a new foundation as part of the long process of recovering from the fires of October.

Saraj, KU6F, has a new home in Bennett Valley complete with a K3 connected to a random wire hanging out the window. According to



the latest issue of QST, Saraj and I took first place in the 2017 SSB Sweepstakes. She can hang the plaque on her new wall. Our first place plaque for the 2014 event was reduced to cinders and blobs of brass in the great fire.

And Doug, WW6D, our other REDXA fire victim, has a new home and is on the air (thanks for the points in the VHF contest!).

2018 has seen a revolution in HF operating modes. FT8 appears to have taken the bands by storm. Is this a good thing?

On most mornings, I turn my antennas to the west and work into Asia, Australia, and Southern Africa on CW or SSB. Lately, however, I've noticed a dramatic drop in activity in those modes. But, if I tune to 7074—the designated FT8 frequency—there are wall-to-wall signals out of Asia.

Yesterday I fired up the rig on 40 M FT8, called CQ, and then had to run back into the house to answer the land line. When I returned to the shack, the WSJT-X screen (WSJT-X is the suite of sound card modes that includes FT8) informed me that I had a completed QSO with a station in Indonesia. It was all automatic right down to the 73 and the only details were the Indonesian station's call and grid square. I don't know the Indonesian's name, what sort of equipment he or she might be using, or how was the weather in Jakarta.

So, I'm a bit conflicted. On the one hand, when I get on the air I want to make QSOs and at certain times FT8 is really the only thing happening. On the other hand, unless the QSO represents some sort of ATNO (a new country on "digital" or maybe a new state on 6 meters) I find it strangely unsatisfying because it's so automatic.

Your take on FT8 may differ. I recently exchanged email with the WriteLog developers, asking why their software didn't include a check-off for

FT8. The answer was "WriteLog is a contest programs' and that is why they won't support FT8. The inference is that FT8 isn't a contest mode. The WriteLog developers might need to take another look: during last weekend's ARRL VHF contest the majority of QSOs were by FT8.

Enough of this. Please join us for Field Day at the Marin Rod and Gun site. Set-up begins on the morning of Friday, June 22. We should have three stations—CW, SSB, and GOTA. GOTA, the "get on the air" station for those who are relatively new to ham radio, may even include FT8!

Thanks for the bandwidth.

—Alan, K6SRZ

P.S. To fill some of the blank spaces in this month's issue I've used some of my Africa pix. Don't hesitate in the future to share some of your own words and pictures.

Here's a little video to get you in the mood for **Field Day**. It requires QuickTime to view, I think.



DSCN1822.MOV

REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events

by Doug WW6D

Have an event for the calendar? Let me know!

*Jun 13 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Jun 16-17 All Asian DX CW

Jun 23-24 ARRL Field Day

*Jul 11 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Jul 12-16 WRTC Team Championship 2018

Jul 14-15 IARU HF Championship

*Aug 8 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Sep 1-2 All Asian DX Phone

Sep 8-10 ARRL Sep VHF Contest

*Sep 12 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Oct 6-7 California QSO Party

*Oct 10 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Oct 14-16 ARRL Pac Div Convention

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



A popular lion at the Somalisa bush camp

African Skies

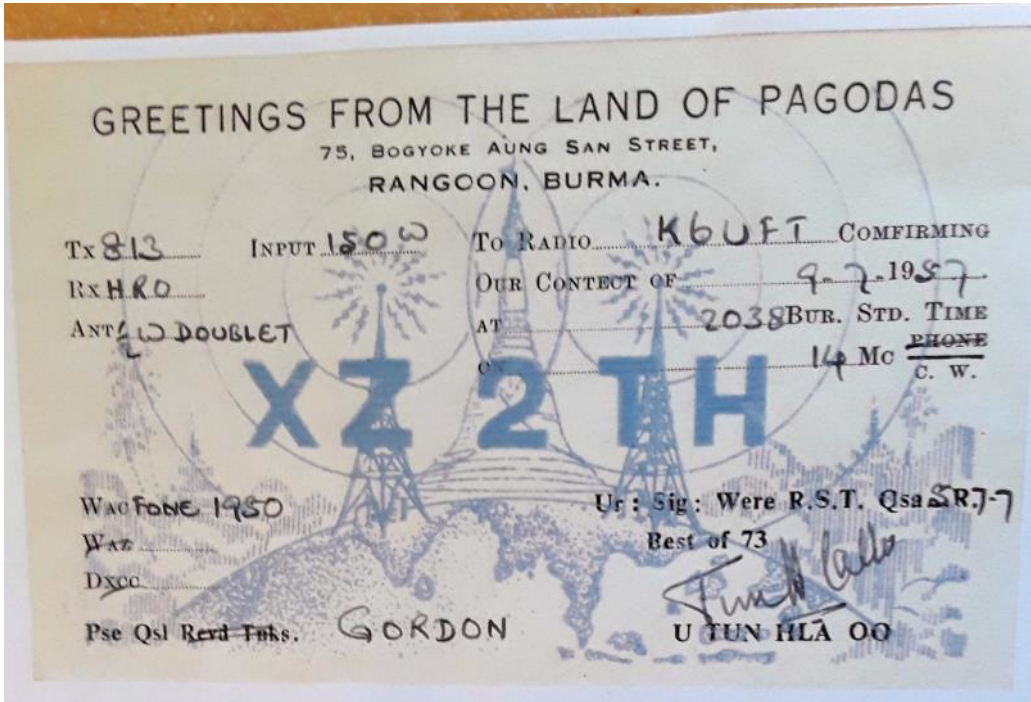
As many of you know, your editor has recently returned from a “bucket list” trip to South Africa (ZS), Botswana (A2), and Zimbabwe (Z2). I didn’t do any ham radio on the trip, but I did see some amazing sights and amazing Animals. Pictured below, late afternoon over the Zambezi River at Mana Pools, Zimbabwe. The hills in the background, across the river, are in Zambia (9J).



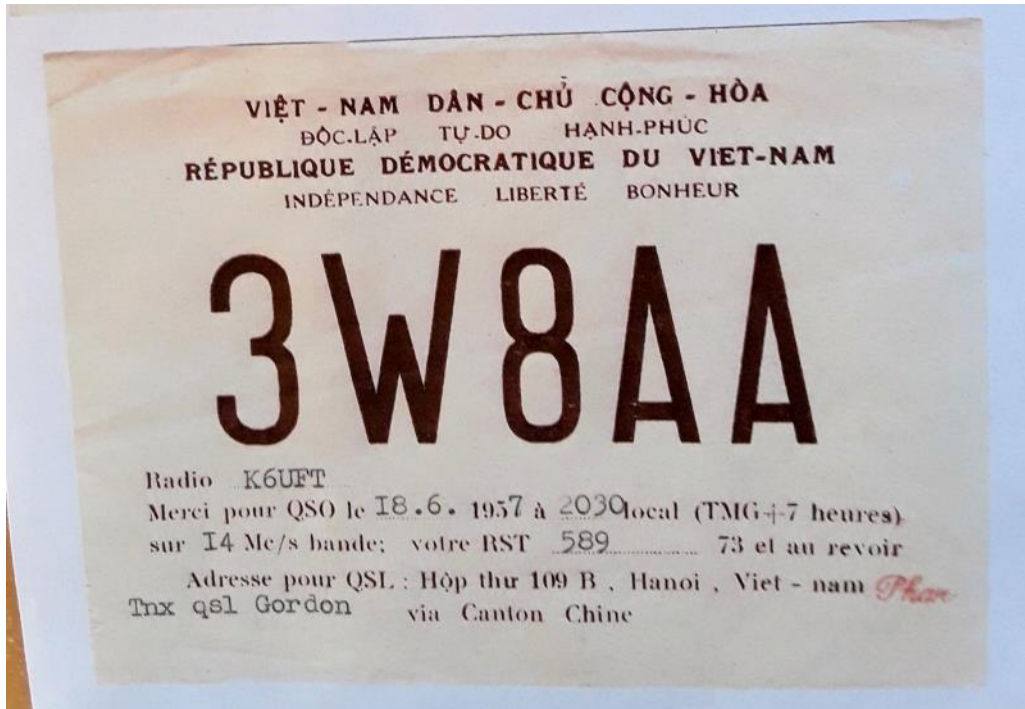


The operating position at K3RC featuring the new KPA 1500 amplifier and ICOM 7610. Look closely and you'll see that Roger is using FT8, the mode that is sweeping the nation (the world actually). If you have a computer with a sound card—perhaps the same interface you use for AFSK—you're already set to do FT8. You can download the entire WSJT-X suite, which features FT8, here:

<https://physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/k1jt/wsjt.html>



More historical QSLs from Gordon, K6PT, who was K6UFT at the time. The following pages—from the QST archive—discuss how the list of banned countries came to be



At the time, QSOs between US hams and stations in Vietnam was forbidden. The statute of limitations has surely run by now but Gordon, as a teenager, wasn't aware of this at the time and when he found out he was scared

Banned countries from the QST archives for 1961(

BANNED COUNTRIES

Most amateurs are vaguely aware that there are certain countries they are not supposed to work, but there is some uncertainty as to why, and which countries are involved. First, let us say it has nothing to do with the "cold war" or the state of diplomatic relations between these countries on the one hand and the U.S. and Canada on the other. Neither do our own administrations take the initiative in placing a country on the banned list.

It originates with Article 42, Section 1 of the Radio Regulations attached to the Atlantic City Convention of 1947¹ which says:

"Radiocommunications between amateur stations of different countries shall be forbidden if the administration of one of the countries concerned has notified that it objects to such radiocommunications."

The United States and Canada, as signatories to the Convention, would not be living up to their treaty obligations if they did not publish and enforce, among their amateurs, the provisions of this section.

Unfortunately, some of the countries have worded their notices to the I.T.U. somewhat ambiguously. The U.S. interpreted these one way,

¹ On May 1, 1961, the Radio Regulations attached to the Geneva (Radio) Convention of 1959 become effective. Article 41, Section 1 of the new document is identical with Atlantic City's Article 42, Section 1.

Banned Countries (cont.)

the Canadian government the other. Another country notified the U.S. Department of State that it no longer objected to international amateur communications, but did not notify Geneva or Ottawa. Thus, we have the slightly confusing situation of one banned list for Canada, and another for the U.S.!

Canada

Canadian amateurs may not work amateurs in the following countries: Laos, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Thailand, Roumania, and Jordan.

United States

The U.S. version of the list comprises Laos, Cambodia, Viet Nam and Indonesia.



Above, the view from our tent at Mana Pools, Zimbabwe. The elephant came within a few feet of the tent flap and my own socked feet.

Left, Mama leopard who was feasting on an impala (note the bloody chin) . Okavango Delta, Botswana



Mr. Cloud, safari guide and tracker at Mana Pools, Zimbabwe. The large bore rifle is protection against hippos and elephants, but has never been needed.

For canoe trips on the Zambezi River, he carried a revolver. Again the weapon has never been needed. The guides told us that the only time they've been fired is at the range.



A descendant of **Cecil the Lion**. Cecil, you may recall, was illegally killed by a bow-hunting dentist from Michigan. The dentist was busted, apparently, because he didn't realize that Cecil's radio tracking collar was still transmitted even after it was removed to hide the evidence.

MAY MEETING MINUTES

President Gabe KJ6AZQ called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm, May 9, 2018 at the Boulevard Cafe, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were 17 members and guests.

He led a short discussion about the programs and requested that members submit their ideas and suggestions to any board member.

Bill W6IYS then made the Treasurer's report. We currently have 68 paid up members with 6 still in the "not yet renewed" category. See Bill to get back on the roster.

Ron N6IE then presented a report on the upcoming Field Day plans. We are returning this year to the Marin Rod and Gun Club location. REDXA will continue to co-manage the event with the Marin Amateur Radio Society (MARS). Ron announced, via correspondence from Marilyn N6VAW, that our ex-REDXA member Phil K6PHD is now a Silent Key. You all may remember Phil as active in the 90's and then devoted more of his attention to the MARS organization. He was responsible for the Field Day AC power for many years.

The FD category that we are hoping to activate is 3A but we currently need a "band caption" for that 3rd station. Please contact Ron to help out. Bill WX6B has a trailer for us to use for FD and will work with Fred N6YEU on the preloading since all the various antennas, coax, power cables, etc. are stored at Fred's house.

The program for the evening was an impromptu discussion of current DXpeditions and a recap of various observations from the Visalia DX Convention held last month. Take away's were: 1) Lots of comments and empathy for the Bouvet DXpedition, 2) trend toward SDR based transceivers as opposed to the older superhet technology, 3) handling noise especially in urban environments, and 4) the observation of less vendors' displays this year compared to last year's. (However, the big players, like last year, were ICOM, Elecraft, FlexRadio, Yaesu and Ham Radio Outlet.)

The raffle was won by Ron N6IE, who received \$40 and the club \$41. Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted by Doug WW6D, Co-Secretary

Club scores
CQWW WPX Contest, CW 2018 May 26 Claimed Scores

SO(A)AB HP

Call	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Time	Score	Club
N3RC		765	418		614,878	NCCC
AK6M(K6MM)		550	371	15	430,731	NCCC
K6RIM		412	306		318,546	NCCC
WQ6K(N6IE)	x	306	293	6	245,031	NCCC

SOAB HP

Call	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Time	Score	Club
KU6F(K6SRZ)		1530	632	26	2,273,304	NCCC
NB6U(N6ZFO)		976	486	21:30	1,039,554	NCCC

SOSB20 LP

Call	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Time	Score	Club
K6LRN		379	293	17:45	215,941	NCCC

Soapbox

K6RIM SO(A)AB HP 318,546

Excellent openings to EU on 20M at (almost) all hours.
 Spent a little time running, but mostly S&P for DX.
 First test run in a contest for new amp (KPA1500). No issues!
 Thanks for the Qs! 73, Al, K6RIM
 IC-7610, KPA1500, Traffie Hexbeam, SteppIR Big IR Vertical
 Logger: N1MM+

NB6U(N6ZFO) SOAB HP 1,039,554

great conditions on 20m. . improved score slightly from last year, but then was using amp; this time just 200w. (Multi-single last year as Kd0pz With NOKQ)
 Most unusual call sign: OL90ITALIA :

Radio Club OK1KLV will activate the special call sign OL90ITALIA from May 25, 2018 to June 8, 2018 that will honor the memory of the adventurous and tragic Polar expedition of the Airship ITALIA that in 1928 crashed near the North Pole. More details:
<https://www.italia-90.cz/>

Thank you , Mark, K6OWL for the use of NB6U, the call sign of the Owl Contest Club. With, apparently, the only NB6 in WPX, many multipliers were handed out.

Late Saturday 80 sounded covered in QRN. . but soon 6-point JA's emerged with a smattering of South Am. stations, easily worked through the noise.

FT-1000MP MkV; 200w, Force 12, Innov, K7NV multi-mono-band beam 10,15, 20; 40m DE zepp for 40 and 80. 73 Bill n6zfo

AK6M(K6MM) SO(A)AB HP 430,731

Always a fun contest. Great openings to EU most of the weekend on 20M. Thanks for the QS. 73, John, K6MM (AK6M)

K6JS SB20LP

Operated portable from Lake Tahoe. One end of the multiband dipole had come down over the winter
 I was able to use a trout pole to get it back up about 60', dipole was slanted from 90' to 60'. Murphy came along for the weekend as I was unable to get N1MM to install on my new laptop. I ended up using N3FPJ daily logging program, so haven't had a chance to calculate score. Also, I was unable to get the WinKeyer to be seen by the laptop. 50 Q's sent old school style. It was great to hear all the EU sigs all day/night long on 20, too bad they couldn't all hear me. great conditions on 20m. . improved score slightly from

New England QSO Party 2018 May 5 Claimed Scores

Single Op HP

Call	CW-Dig Qs	Ph Qs	Mults	Time	Score	Club
K6MM	34	9	33	2	2,541	NCCC

Single Op LP

Call	CW-Dig Qs	Ph Qs	Mults	Time	Score	Club
N6ZFO	41	8	49	4	3,150	NCCC



K6SRZ and XYL Carol
 Jeremy, from France, gave us a free helicopter ride
 over the Okavango Delta. The headset is the closest
 I got to radio on the entire trip

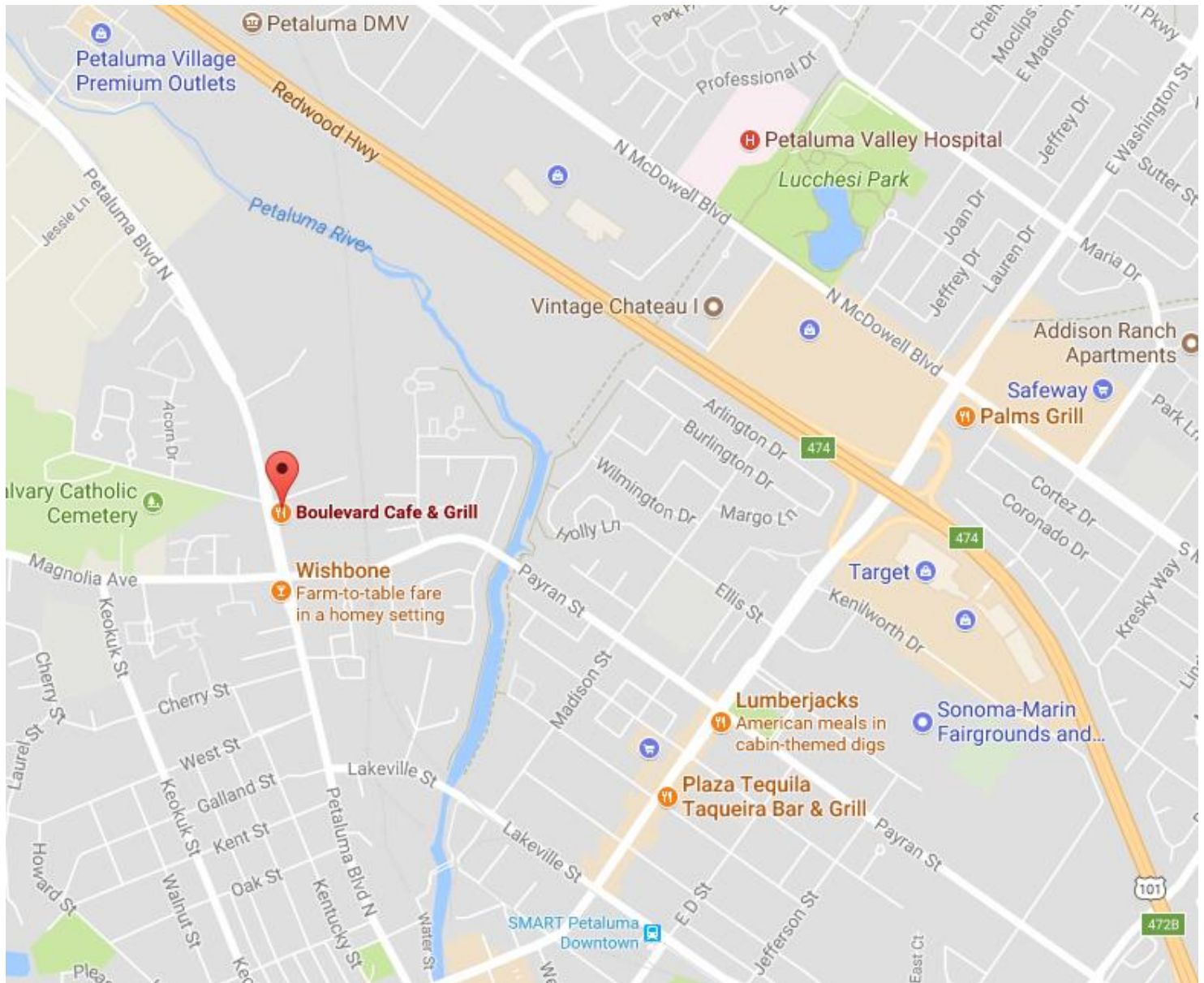


Marily, N6VAW, operating one of her first contests from Rich, W6UDS's, station.



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.