

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, March 9, 2011 at Gourmet Garden 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 feature our ARRL Section Manager, Bill Hillendahl, KH6GJV who will update us on the latest activities and projects of the League.

REDXA President's Report

Me and You and the ARRL

What comes to mind when you think of the American Radio Relay League? For most folks, the first thing you think of is amateur radio's most popular magazine, QST. QST has been in nearly continuous publication since 1915, a year after Hiram Percy Maxim founded the ARRL as an extension of the Radio Club of Hartford (CT) for the purpose of relaying messages beyond the range of early ham stations. Although QST has been one of the big attractions that have drawn folks to become League members, the ARRL is far more than just a magazine! Since the topic of our meeting this month is an update on ARRL activities, I thought it might be a good idea to review some of important contributions of this venerable organization.

Among the numerous essential activities of the ARRL is representation in Washington, DC. Did you know that ham radio almost met its demise shortly after WWI? A bill was introduced in Congress in 1918 that would have put all radio communication, including amateur, under the control of the Department of the Navy. Maxim went to Washington to testify before Congressional committees and the ARRL organized members to



lobby in opposition to the bill. In its first legislative effort, the ARRL, and amateur radio won and the bill was defeated. The League has waged many battles against threats to our valuable spectrum allocations at both the national and international level and has succeeded against long odds to preserve, and in many cases expand our bands. In the past few decades, we have seen the restoration of 160 meters, the addition of the WARC bands and 60 meters, international expanded use of 40 meters and the removal of short-wave broadcast stations from a 100 kHz swath of the band, and if all goes well, in a few years we will be enjoying our first use of frequencies around 500 kHz. In the meantime, we have seen increasing threats from BPL and attacks on our VHF and UHF frequencies, particularly at 70 cm. The ARRL is there to lead the defense!

Besides fighting for our spectrum rights, the ARRL has kept pressure on local and state governments who have adopted overly-restrictive antenna regulations. In 1985 the League gained limited federal preemption of regulations with the FCC's landmark PRB-1 ruling which has been used by judges in striking down numerous over-reaching ordinances and setting precedents that can be used in other cases. An orchestrated effort has led to many states, including California, to incorporate the essential language of PRB-1 into state law. The ARRL provides legal information, funding and volunteer council to help its members in this increasingly complex area of law.

Growing our hobby is necessary for its survival. The League is instrumental in this area with publicity, education, volunteer examiners and advice in every conceivable aspect of ham radio for those just getting into the hobby. For newbies and old-timers and everyone in between, the ARRL provides valuable services such as technical articles, construction guides and laboratory testing of ham radio equipment to give us objective performance evaluations so we can be better informed consumers when we spend our money.

Where would we be without the useful and well-written reference materials the League provides? The ARRL Handbook and Antenna Book and numerous other books and guides on a host of topics are available at rock-bottom prices, and their technical accuracy and usability are so good that they are found in the libraries of many professional engineers and commercial equipment designers and manufacturers.

Emergency communication has been at the core of the League's objectives since its founding nearly a century ago. Nothing demonstrates that more than Field Day. Wikipedia describes Field Day as "...typically the largest single emergency preparedness exercise in the country, with over 30,000 operators participating each year." That of course includes several dozen proud members of REDXA and MARS!

In addition, the ARRL provides a network of hams who coordinate emergency operations and readiness on the national, regional and local levels.

I have only managed to scratch the surface on the many areas where the ARRL provides support. Contests, DXCC, QSL and LoTW services, the Dayton convention, training, classroom activities, and the list goes on and on. For nearly 100 years, the ARRL has been there for us, enhancing the value of our hobby.

This month's meeting will feature our ARRL Section Manager, Bill Hillendahl, KH6GJV who will update us on the latest activities and projects of the League. If you have any specific areas you would like Bill to address during his presentation, please feel free to post them on the REDXA Yahoogroups reflector, or email them directly to Bill at KH6GJV@ARRL.net. I look forward to seeing you all there!

73,
Ron N6IE

Treasurer Report

by Jim, K6JS

REDXA TREASURER'S REPORT

1/31/10 Balance Forward		\$2,705.54
INCOME		
Dues	160.00	
Raffle	<u>74.00</u>	
TOTAL INCOME		234.00
EXPENSES		
BizMark	148.41	
NCCC CQP Award	<u>45.00</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES		(193.41)
2/28/11 Ending Balance		<u>\$2,746.13</u>

REDXA membership renewal is due. Please submit your dues ASAP. Dues can be mailed to me via my home address, which is current on or QRZ.com mailed to the REDXA P.O. Box or given to me personally at our regularly scheduled meetings.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

FEBRUARY 2011

by Wally, N6AD

NO MEETING WAS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES

by Wally, N6AD

President Ron N6IE called the meeting to order at 7:41 pm, February 9, 2011 at the Gourmet Garden in Petaluma. In attendance at our annual joint meeting with the Northern California Contest Club were 50 members of both clubs plus three REDXA members to be. Ron N6IE reported an error in the January meeting minutes, noting that John K6MM is a new board member and web master for NCDXF and not NCCC. Ron requested a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting with this exception and the Treasurer's Report as published in Sunspots. Both were moved for approval, seconded and adopted without further revision.

Old Business: REDXA coffee mugs - Still waiting for CQP participants with 100 or more QSOs who have not yet claimed their mugs to contact President Ron N6IE.

New Business: Three new members were admitted to the club by acclimation: Paul KF6RXB, Lou KF6RXC, and Ken N6KM. Jim K6JS noted delays in getting new badges due to health problems of the vendor. Upcoming Meetings - At the March meeting San Francisco SCM Bill KH6GJV will bring us the latest from ARRL. April will see a presentation on the ZK2A DXpedition by Alan K6SRZ.

The raffle was won by NCCC visitor Barry K6RM who took home half of \$148.

Our program consisted of a presentation by visiting NCCC member Stu K6TU on 80 meter broadband antenna options. Several solutions for obtaining low SWR over a wide segment of 80 meters without a tuner and without altering physical length were examined: 1) N6LF Folded Dipole 2) Bat Wing dipole 3) Transmission Line Coax Antenna 4) Coaxial Resonator Dipole 5) Switched Capacitor 6) Dual Dipoles at 90 Degrees 7) Birdcage Dipole. And the winner is ... the Coaxial Resonator Dipole! This antenna yields an SWR of 1.6 to 1 or better from 3.5 to 3.85 MHz and requires only a single support and 45 minutes of construction time. For more information see QST April 1989 pp 22-27 and/or Google > Ethergeist

Following the presentation NCCC President Jack W6FB invited REDXA members to attend the awards meeting next month. RSVP to Barry K6RM. Jack noted that several big contests are on the horizon. Thursday night is Sprint night. Check <http://www.nccc.cc/> for details on this and all things NCCC.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 pm.

Contesting and DX News

by Jim, K6JS

Ol' Sol is finally showing signs of waking up two years into cycle 24 with a huge X2 class flare on February 15th. We've seen the solar flux go above 100 a few times this month and stay above 100 for days at a time. This is the first time this has happened in years. As I write this we are at SF:113 A:15 K:3.

The month began with VP8ORK being the talk of the 6.49 simplex group. They were not loud, but workable on all bands. Many REDXA members worked them on numerous bands and modes. Also this month 6W2SC in Senegal and J5UAP in Guinea Bissau have been active and operated by Peter, HA3AUI. He'll be in Africa through the end of March. I worked him in 6W2-land a few times and he had a good signal, although he seemed to be weaker from J5. You can QSL via home call and check out his website at <http://cqafrika.net/>

The middle of the month brought us a DXpedition to Cameroon, TJ9PF where they had to endure episodes of no water, showers or air conditioning. Intermittent AC power from the Hotel's generator, along with a theft of 150 meters of copper wire they had erected for a beverage. Even under those conditions this multi-national team made over 67K Q's in nine days. Checking the Club Log website (www.clublog.org) for TJ9PF - Zone 3 QSO's, you will find a handful of REDXA members in the top 100. N6OJ at #2 in Zone 3 and 73rd in North America; K6ANP 8th, K6RIM 16th and K6MM at 33rd from Zone 3.

The first couple weeks of the month also had Sao Tome, S9DX activated by a German group. This is a small island nation off the western equatorial coast of Africa. This team made close to 67K Q's in thirteen days.

Rounding out the month saw VK9C activating Cocos Keeling, a small island in the Indian Ocean. This two man operation activated VK9C on February 22nd. This has been a difficult Q for my little pistol station to get in the log. I'm running out of time as they depart the island on March 5th.

Rumors are that Heard Island VK0-H will once again be activated by a thirteen member team from VK land which is on the perennial top ten most wanted list. The last time it was on the air was in 1997. I look forward to 2013 when they plan to activate this remote sub-Antarctic island as I was unable to work them in

1997.

One of our own Saraj, KU6F joined the ranks of the Palos Verde ARC and activated Santa Catalina Island (NA-066) during late February.

Looking ahead to March's announced DX operations we find the entities of Togo, Vietnam, Cambodia, Ghana and Revilla Gigedo and Guantanamo Bay to name just a few. Another DXpedition to look for is Crete SV9/Dj7RJ. I just recently started playing around with RTTY and PSK and was able to work them on RTTY, these guys had a booming signal and a clean print on 20 meters.

Announced DXpeditions can be found at <http://www.ng3k.com/Misc/adxo.html>

February also had a busy contest calendar. The month started off with NAQP - CW, the following week we had CQ WW RTTY WPX, ARRL International DX CW, CQ 160 SSB, NAQP RTTY.

Major contests coming up in March are the ARRL Intl. DX SSB and CQ WW WPX SSB. Don't forget logs are due for NAQP RTTY, ARRL Intl. DX CW and CQ 160 SSB during the month of March.

In closing, I want to share this excerpt from Bryce Anderson, K7UA's online handbook titled "The New DXer's Handbook". He used an interesting analogy between DXing and hunting. I've always noticed the same similarities between DXing and flyfishing.

Listening - The key to successful DXing: *The humble student approached the Zen Master, bowing and slowly gaining the courage to ask: "Master.... What is the secret of working DX?" The Master smiled and simply replied: "Listen. Always listen, Grasshopper." Listen? Why? Listen for what? In the most literal sense an accomplished DXer is truly a hunter. Great hunters know what they are hunting, what it looks like, what it sounds like, and where it is likely to be found. They don't just tromp through the woods hoping that their prize will just stand in front of them saying "Hey, shoot me!" They know when and where to look to improve their odds and they keep a keen eye open to find the big game before someone else does.*

You can find the complete book at: http://www.udxa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=148&Itemid=124

ARRL DX CW

CALL	Class	QSO	Mults	Total Score
K6RIM	SOAB HP	610	294	538,020
K6SRZ	SOAB HP	599	277	497,769
K6MM	SOAB HP	445	182	242,970
NM6E	SOAB HP	226	170	115,260

CQ 160 CW

CALL	Class	QSO	PTS	STA	CTY	Total Score
WW6D	SOAHP	65	164	25	2	4,428
N6ZFO	SOLP	35	105	19		1,995

NAQP RTTY

CALL	Class	QSO	Mults	Total Score
K6SRZ	SOLP	587	154	90,398
K6MM	SOLP	501	148	74,148
K6CTA	SOLP	173	58	10,034
NM6E	SOLP	77	42	3,234

CQ WW WPX RTTY

CALL	OP	Class	QSO	Mults	Total Score
WQ6K	N6IE	SOAB HP	1412	510	1,628,940
KY0W	K6SRZ	SOAB HP	1236	448	1,193,002

Please send your scores to Jselmi@Hotmail.com.

Calendar of Upcoming Events:


Mar 5-6	ARRL International DX SSB
Mar 9	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Mar 26-27	CQ WPX SSB
Apr 13	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Apr 15-17	Int'l DX Convention Visalia
May 11	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
May 28-29	CQ WPX CW
Jun 8	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Jun 11-13	ARRL June VHF QSO Party
Jun 18-19	All Asian DX Contest
Jun 25-26	ARRL Field Day
Jul 1	RAC Canada Day Contest
Jul 9-10	IARU HF World Championship
Jul 13	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Jul 16-17	North American QSO Party RTTY
Jul 16-17	CQ WW VHF Contest

See <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/> for more Contest Schedules.

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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673 Plum Street
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MEETING: MARCH 9, 2011

