

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 14, 2012 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 be John Miller, K6MM's light hearted presentation on the Dayton Hamvention – "The Good, The Bad, The Ugly".

REDXA President's Report

Last month we were treated to a presentation by Stu Phillips, K6TU, on Software defined radios and contesting. The flexibility in desktop configurations and remote operation are endless. Remote setups are easily configured using common software applications for VOIP, virtual ports and remote desktop access. Search and pounce turns into point and click and the flexibility of the receive filters is impressive, which should be a plus during a contest. The Flex control knob peripheral offers touch and feel tuning, something that seems to be missing in digital systems.

You don't want to miss John Miller, K6MM's light hearted presentation on the Dayton Hamvention – "The Good, The Bad, The Ugly". Have you ever wondered what the Dayton hamvention is all about? Take a stroll with John as he presents an account of his visit last year. See the largest ham flea market in the world as well as hundreds of vendors selling products some of which you'll never see in this country, from 10KW amps legal in VK land to USB QRP rigs in the huge Hara



Arena. If you've been to Hamvention before you'll enjoy John's casual, good humored perspective. If you've been thinking of going and have been on the fence, this just might be the presentation you need to see to convince you to go.

I look forward to seeing you all on March 14th for another REDXA gathering.

73, Jim K6JS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING FEBRUARY 2012

by Rick, N6GY

NO MEETING WAS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES

by Rick, N6GY

President Jim K6JS called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm, February 8th, 2012 at the Gourmet Garden in Petaluma. There were 43 members and guests in attendance. This was the joint REDXA and NCCC meeting.

Everyone was asked to introduce themselves around the room, and did so.

Jim entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting as published in SUNSPOTS. The motion was made, seconded, and approved.

A motion was made to make a contribution to the Northern California DX Foundation again this year. Seconded and approved.

A further motion was made to increase that donation from \$250 to \$300. Seconded and approved.

Membership application was received from Mike AI6II. He was approved as a member.

Someone is needed to procure a REDXA table for Visalia this year. Ron N6IE said he could do that.

A letter was received from the Mother Load DX and Contest Club thanking REDXA for sponsoring

a plaque for the California QSO Party.

Cal QSO T-shirts still available to order until February 15th.

REDXA dues are due now. Please contact Saraj KU6F as soon as possible to renew.

Old Business -none.

The evening's presentation was done by Stu K6TU on SOFTWARE DEFINED RADIOS FOR CONTESTING. He spoke at great length on his personal favorite the FLEX 5000.

The 50/50 raffle was held, raising \$123. Earl W6GMP won and received \$62 BUT immediately generously contributed \$32 of it to the Northern California DX Foundation.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Treasurer Report

by Saraj, KU6F

REDXA TREASURER'S REPORT

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| 1/31/12 Balance Forward | | \$3,103.33 |
| INCOME | | |
| Donation from W6GMP | 32.00 | |
| Dues | 80.00 | |
| Raffle | <u>61.00</u> | |
| TOTAL INCOME | | 173.00 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Badges | 42.66 | |
| QSL Bureau | <u>30.00</u> | |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | | (72.66) |
| 2/29/12 Ending Balance | | <u><u>\$3,203.67</u></u> |

REDXA membership renewal is due. Please submit your dues to Saraj, KU6F, ASAP. Dues can be mailed to me via my home address which is current on QRZ.com or mailed to the REDXA P.O. Box or given to me personally at our regularly scheduled meetings.

Contesting

by Jim, K6JS

The ARRL DX SSB and CQ WW WPX RTTY are now in the logs with some impressive scores posted by some REDXA members. Kudos to all!

Al, K6RIM had Fun, fun, fun in the ARRL DX CW contest.

He experienced excellent ops and decent conditions on the higher bands. 15M was his money band; usually it's 20M.

40M was excellent too with lots of loud EU, especially on Friday night. The conditions were poor on 80M and he spent very little time there.

A few things to keep you busy this weekend. The North American RTTY Sprint, RSGB Commonwealth CW Contest, AWA John Rollins Memorial CW DX Contest, QRP CW Fox Hunt, NCCC Sprint, AGCW QRP CW Contest, QRP ARCI HF Grid Square CW Sprint, EA PSK63 Contest, Idaho QSO Party, SKCC Weekend CW Sprintathon, UBA Spring CW Contest, NSARA SSB Contest and Wisconsin QSO Party will certainly keep contesters busy this upcoming weekend. The NAQCC-EU Monthly CW Sprint is scheduled for March 12. The CW QRP Fox Hunt, RSGB 80-meter Club CW Championship and CWops Mini-CWT CW Test are scheduled for March 14. There is the CQ WW WPX SSB contest to look forward to on the March 24th and 25th. Check out the WA7BNM Contest Web Sites for additional details.

<http://hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

Monthly San Francisco Section News Summary

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

DX News

by Jim, K6JS

Let's hope we all have St. Peter and St. Paul rocks in the log. It appears the future status of the entity is in limbo. EA5KY reports that "Amateur Radio expeditions to St Peter and St Paul Archipelago are not allowed because they do not conform to the continuing program of maintenance, conservation, management and the utilization of natural resources of the archipelago." They are listed as #16 on the Most Wanted list.

The Six Meter Report:

Bob, K6QXY says he is receiving almost daily ZL video and some VK video indicators. On February 8 at 0119Z he worked FK8CP and again on February 23 at 0334Z. February 12th he managed a sporadic E(Es) to Trans-Equatorial Propagation(TEP) link to Jack, OA4TT in Peru at 0428Z. The next day on the 13th he worked Remi, FK8CP in New Caledonia again at 0150Z on SSB and CW with strong signals. A little over an hour later he worked a few more South Americans, OA, LU and CE. On the 28th he again experienced Es to TEP with XE2WB/b, LU8EEM and CX9AU at 0001Z and again on March 4th, XE2/B, OA on SSB and on the 5th XE2/B, ZP5 and FK8 on CW.

A partial listing of stations to look for on the bands. A more detailed listing of announced DX operations can be found at:

<http://www.his.com/~wfeidt/Misc/adxo.html>

LESOTHO, 7P. Gert, ZS6AYU is QRV as 7P8GF until March 13. Activity is on 40 to 10 meters using only CW. QSL to home call.

MALTA, 9H. Peter, G3PHO is QRV as 9H3C from Gozo Island, IOTA EU-023, until March 15. Activity is on 80 to 10 meters and possibly 160 meters. This includes an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth contest. QSL to home call.

KUWAIT, 9K. Some members of the Kuwait ARS are QRV as 9K2F from Failaka Island, IOTA AS-118, until March 12. QSL via 9K2HN.

TONGA, A3. A group of operators are QRV as A35YZ until March 24.

Activity is on 160 to 6 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY, SSTV and PSK31 with several stations active. QSL via DL7DF.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, DA. Special event station DQ0STRATEX is QRV until January 31, 2013 to commemorate the March 10 and March 24 launches of the stratospheric balloon projects named StratexB. Activity is on all bands and modes. On the balloons an APRS beacon will be on 144.800 MHz and a speech beacon on 430.375 MHz FM. QSL via DK4REX.

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA, E7. Special event station E720RS is QRV until the end of 2012 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the founding of Republika Srpska, the Serbian entity in Bosnia-Herzegovina. QSL via E78CB.

DOMINICA, J7. Simon, G7SOZ is QRV as J79SZ until March 15. This includes an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth contest. QSL to home call.

JAPAN, JA. Special event station 8N5KOCHI is QRV until March 22 to mark an ARISS school contact from Kochi on Shikoku Island, IOTA AS-076. QSL via bureau.

DENMARK, OZ. Stefan, DL7AOS is QRV as 5P5K until March 24. Activity is on 80 to 6 meters. This includes an entry in the upcoming Russian DX contest. QSL to home call.

SLOVENIA, S5. Members of the Radio club Skofja Loka are QRV as S540DKR until the end of April in celebration of its 40th jubilee. QSL via S59DKR.

SEYCHELLES, S7. Tom, DL5NEN and Claudia, DO5NEN will be QRV as S79NEN from Mahe and La Digue, both IOTA AF-024, from March 12 to 28. Activity will be on 40 to 10 meters using CW, SSB and RTTY. This includes entries in the upcoming CQ WPX SSB and BARTG HF RTTY contests. QSL via DO5NEN.

CHAD, TT. Elvira, IV3FSG is QRV as TT8ES from N'Djamena until March 18. Activity is on the HF bands using SSB and digital modes. QSL via IK3GES.

BERMUDA, VP9. Bob, G3PJT is QRV as VP9/G3PJT until March 15. This includes an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth contest. QSL to home call.

VIET NAM, XV. Retu, OH4MDY, plans to be QRV as XV2RZ from March 14 to April 16. QSL to home call.

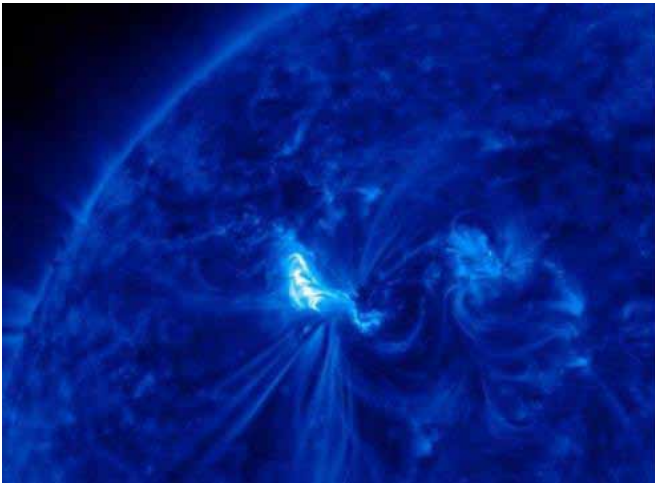
CHATHAM ISLANDS, ZL7. Dave, VO1AU is QRV as ZL7/VO1AU until March 13. Activity is on the HF bands using CW and SSB. This includes being a Single Op/All Band entry in the RSGB Commonwealth contest. QSL via VO1MX.

OPERATIONS APPROVED FOR DXCC CREDIT. The following operations are approved for DXCC credit: Somalia, 6O0M, 2011 operation. If you had this operation rejected, send a note to bmoore (at) arrl.org to have your record updated. Burundi, 9U3TMM, reported as December 2011 and January 2012. If you had this operation rejected, send a note to bmoore (at) arrl.org to have your record updated. Afghanistan, T6BP, current operation commencing in 2011. Macquarie Island, VK0TH and AX/VK0TH, current operations. If you had VK0TH rejected, send a note to bmoore (at) arrl.org to have your record updated.

Solar news

As we get closer to the equinox and the "E" season, we'll see a lot of TEP and these "ES" to TEP links. March, April & May are our best TEP months to South America.

VHF operators greet CMEs as a welcome opportunity for unusual, enhanced propagation. "CMEs can trigger the Aurora Borealis," explained ARRL Contest Branch Manager and VHF aficionado Sean Kutzko, KX9X. When auroras occur, the electrons hit the ionosphere at the North and South geomagnetic poles, creating ionization. Waves that would normally travel off into space are bouncing off the aurora and being redirected back toward Earth. This can create opportunities for long-distance propagation via VHF and UHF. It will be interesting to see what Bob has to report next month.



The solar numbers are: SF:146, A:76 and K:4 as I type this. An X-1.1 class solar flare erupted from the Sun on Sunday, March 4 at 11:13 PM EST (0413 UTC March 5), sending an explosion of plasma and charged particles -- a coronal mass ejection (CME) -- hurtling through space. Forecasters at NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center are saying that the CME should miss Earth, but will hit Mercury and Venus.

The sun unleashed a cosmic double whammy Tuesday (March 6), erupting with two major flares to cap a busy day of powerful solar storms. One of the flares is the most powerful solar eruption of the year, so far.

Both of the huge flares ranked as X-class storms, the strongest type of solar flares the sun can have. They followed several weaker, but still powerful, sun storms on Tuesday and came just days after another major solar flare on Sunday night.

www.space.com/14780-sun-storm-solar-flare-eruption.html

The first big solar storm was also the most powerful one, ranking as an X5.4-class flare after erupting at 7:02 p.m. EST (0002 March 7 GMT), according to an alert from the Space Weather Prediction Center operated by the National Weather Service. It is the strongest solar flare yet for 2012. The big X5.4 solar flare erupted from the giant active sunspot AR1429, which was also responsible for the major sun storm on Sunday.

The second event occurred just over an hour later, reaching a maximum strength of X1.3.

When a CME hits the Earth's atmosphere -- approximately 72 hours after exploding on the Sun-- the low bands will be depressed and signals will be weaker the lower the frequency. The absorption rate will be most severe on 160 meters, less on 80 and somewhat better on 40 meters. The maximum usable frequency will be lower and auroral propagation on the VHF bands is quite possible.

Astronomers rank solar flares by strength using five categories: A, B, C, M and X. The A-class flares are the weakest sun storms, while the X-class events are the most powerful solar flares.

This ranking system was designed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and resembles the Richter scale used for earthquakes in that each category is 10 times stronger than the one before it, NASA officials have said. So a B-class solar flare is 10 times stronger than an A-class event, while a C-class solar storm releases 10 times more energy than B-class flare (or 100 times more energy than an A-class event).

The categories are also broken down into subsets, from 1 to 9, to pinpoint a solar flare's strength. Only X-class solar flares have subcategories that go higher than 9. The most powerful solar flare on record occurred in 2003 and was estimated to be an X28 on the solar flare scale, NASA officials said.

This week's bulletin was made possible with information provided by NC1L, the OPDX Bulletin, 425 DX News, The Daily DX, DXNL, The Weekly DX, Contest Corral from QST and the ARRL Contest Calendar and WA7BNM web sites.

Thanks to all.

REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events:

by Doug, WW6D

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Mar 14 | * REDXA Monthly Meeting |
| Mar 24-25 | CQ WPX SSB |
| Apr 11 | * REDXA Monthly Meeting |
| Apr 20-22 | Int'l DX Convention, Visalia |
| May 4-6 | EMCOMM Reno, NV |
| May 5-6 | 7th Call Area QSO Party |
| May 9 | * REDXA Monthly Meeting |
| May 26-27 | CQ WPX CW |
| Jun 9-11 | ARRL June VHF QSO Party |
| Jun 13 | * REDXA Monthly Meeting |
| Jun 16-17 | All Asian DX Contest CW |
| Jun 23-24 | ARRL Field Day |
| Jul 1 | RAC Canada Day Contest |
| Jul 11 | * REDXA Monthly Meeting |
| Jul 14-15 | IARU HF World Championship |
| Jul 21-22 | NA QSO Party RTTY |

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



April 20-22, 2012

Visalia pre-registration is due March 20. At this year's convention, the Friday afternoon session will include **two** Contest Academy classes, one for beginners and one for advanced contesting techniques. Check out all the convention details at dxconvention.org.

Pre-register (Before March 20, 2012) to be eligible for pre-registration drawing.

The 63rd Annual International DX Convention sponsored by the Southern California DX Club will be held at The Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center Visalia April 20, 21, 22, 2012.

www.holidayinn.com/hotels/us/en/visalia/visap/hoteldetail

The International DX Convention is the world's foremost DX convention. If you are a DXer or interested in any aspect of ham radio you need to be at Visalia. Top DX operators from around the world will be there. Meet the big guns from the US, Asia, Europe, Africa and Oceania. Meet the people on the other side of the mic or key. The YL's always have a great Saturday tour and this year is no exception as they will spend the day in Hanford enjoying its history, antiques, gardens, and shopping.

Top DXpeditioners from every continent tell you how they did it. Learn the secrets for big signals on the top band, how to have fun and adventures chasing IOTA, contest forum, DX forum, seminars for everyone from the seasoned pro to the beginning DXer. Bring your latest QSL card arrivals for checking. Join the CW Pile Up Competition. Visit the manufacturers' midway where you can talk to the people who design and use the latest and best equipment. K6V will be on the air from the Hotel. Try the latest rig with the newest antenna. Don't forget the raffle prizes which top even the famed Dayton Hamvention!

For the early arrivers, DX University will be offered all day on Friday beginning at 9:00am involving some of the world's best DXers. This will be a must for the novice or seasoned DXer! Check back for more details and the latest updates. Check out www.dxuniversity.com for all the details. Check out their webpage for additional information. www.dxconvention.org/index.html

March Contest Scores

ARRL DX CW

| Call | Class | Q's | Mults | Score |
|-------|------------|------|-------|---------|
| K6SRZ | SOAB(U) HP | 1063 | 288 | 918,432 |
| K6RIM | SOHP | 727 | 336 | 732,816 |
| K6MM | SOAB(U) LP | 548 | 199 | 325,962 |
| N6ZFO | SOAB LP | 331 | 157 | 155,430 |
| K6CTA | SOSB/15 HP | 251 | 86 | 64,758 |

CQ WW WPX RTTY

| Call | Op. | Class | Q's | Pfx | Score |
|-------|-------|-------------|------|-----|-----------|
| WQ6K | N6IE | SOABHP | 1560 | 552 | 1,704,576 |
| NC6CC | N6ZFO | SOAB HP | 631 | 312 | 408,096 |
| K6LRN | K6LRN | SOAB HP | 554 | 303 | 350,268 |
| K6SRZ | K6SRZ | SOAB HP | 468 | 265 | 270,565 |
| AK6M | K6MM | SOAB(TS) LP | 175 | 149 | 63,772 |
| K3FIV | K3FIV | SOAB LP | 158 | 120 | 47,040 |

NAQP RTTY

| Call | Class | Q's | Mults | Score |
|-------|---------|-----|-------|--------|
| K3FIV | SOAB LP | 381 | 139 | 54,483 |
| N6ZFO | SOAB LP | 307 | 144 | 44,208 |
| K6LRN | SOAB LP | 254 | 121 | 30,734 |

According to Google, February 22 was the 155 birthday of Heinrich Rudolph Hertz, the developer of first rental car company. Gigahertz to you.

Or Gigglehertz, or Googlehertz, whichever applies.

Rick N6GY



March 2012



Conducted by K6JS



REDXA Honor Roll

WARC BANDS

| 30M | | 17M | | 12M | |
|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|
| W6XA | 320 | W6XA | 333 | W6XA | 323 |
| K6RIM | 319 | K6RIM | 329 | K6RIM | 294 |
| N6OJ | 221 | N6OJ | 317 | N6OJ | 233 |
| K6ANP | 169 | K6ANP | 162 | K6ANP | 72 |
| K6SRZ | 145 | K6SRZ | 131 | W6SFK | 55 |
| AG6V | 3 | W6SFK | 70 | K6SRZ | 38 |
| W6SFK | 3 | N6GY | 8 | N6GY | 5 |
| WW6D | 2 | WW6D | 6 | AG6V | 2 |
| | | AG6V | 2 | WW6D | 1 |

XA still at the top

W6SFK moving on up

W6SFK jumps in the fray

ARRL DX Challenge

| | |
|-------|------|
| W6XA | 2980 |
| K6RIM | 2530 |
| K6ANP | 2131 |
| N6OJ | 1674 |
| K6SRZ | 1605 |
| W6SFK | 275 |
| N6VAW | 248 |

W6XA pads his lead

160 Meters

| | |
|-------|-----|
| W6XA | 222 |
| W6OSP | 174 |
| K6ANP | 158 |
| K6SRZ | 143 |
| K6RIM | 55 |
| N6OJ | 57 |

3 new ones on the top band for W6XA

1.5K Club

| | |
|-------|------|
| W6XA | 1688 |
| K6RIM | 1588 |
| K6ANP | 1371 |
| N6OJ | 1352 |
| K6SRZ | 1124 |
| W6SFK | 387 |
| N6GY | 148 |

W6XA added a couple new ones


Rules for REDXA Honor Roll Listings.
Provide me with your total IOTAs worked, or countries (including deleted) worked for: WARC Bands, 160 Meters, Digital modes, Mobile, 6 Meters or your total for 80,40,20, 15 and 10 for 1.5K Club. Countries do not count until HQ Awards Committee takes action and announces a start date for a new country.



Six Meter DXCC

| | |
|-------|-----|
| K6QXY | 167 |
| W6XA | 130 |
| K6RIM | 14 |
| K6ANP | 6 |
| W6SFK | 2 |

W6XA adds one more on the magic band



RTTY/Digital

| | |
|-------|-----|
| N6OJ | 298 |
| K6RIM | 253 |
| W6XA | 145 |
| K6SRZ | 128 |
| K6ANP | 123 |
| W6SFK | 117 |

OJ adds a new one this month.

Send your REDXA Honor Roll updates to:
jselmi@hotmail.com

Mobile DX



| | |
|-------|----|
| K6JS | 66 |
| W6SFK | 3 |


5 new ones for K6JS

DXCC Mixed

| | |
|-------|-----|
| K6RIM | 366 |
| N6OJ | 360 |
| W6XA | 352 |
| W6OSP | 350 |
| K6SRZ | 245 |
| W6SFK | 175 |

OJ is creeping up

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MEETING: MARCH 14, 2012

