

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, May 14, 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 a return visit from Jim Brown, K9YC. Jim's topic will be "Computer to Radio Interfacing Without Pain".

REDXA President's Report

May Meeting Program

For our May 14 meeting we are privileged to have a return visit from Jim Brown, K9YC. Jim's topic will be "Computer to Radio Interfacing Without Pain".

Jim writes "most hams (including authors of some ARRL publications) believe that transformers, expensive boxes, or even optical isolators are needed to connect computers and other gear to transceivers without hum and buzz. This is sadly (and expensively) wrong, and so are many of the solutions offered. An unshielded transformer or an improper shield connection may CAUSE hum, buzz, and RFI!

"[My] presentation shows simple and effective solutions, involving no more than a few feet of copper braid and properly wired cables that can connect anything to anything, without transformers, interface boxes, or optical isolators. Audio connections are addressed first, followed by rig control, sending CW, PTT, and RTTY."

Where are those sunspots?

The tower is up, the 3-element SteppIR is in place, and everything at K6SRZ Penngrove appears to be working just fine. Unfortunately, the sun is not cooperating. The solar flux is stuck somewhere around 70 (65 is about as low as it ever goes) and DX on 15 meters and above is just a memory. Looking through my old paper logs, I am amused to see page after page of QSO's with Europe on 10 meters and perhaps 60 separate DXCC entities worked with 5 watts way back in the early days of the 21st Century. Let us hope that those days come again soon.

In the meantime, what's a DXer to do?

The usual suggestions are to use the days of poor propagation to improve antennas, clean up the shack, and reconnect with friends and family. These are all good suggestions. I have another: consider getting more exercise.

A recent New York Times article quotes Dr. Frank Yu of the Harvard School of Public Health as saying "the single thing that comes close to a magic bullet, in terms of its strong and universal [health] benefits, is exercise."

Studies have shown exercise lowers the risk of "heart attack, stroke, hypertension, diabetes, obesity, depression, dementia, osteoporosis, gallstones, diverticulitis, falls, ED, peripheral vascular disease, and twelve kinds of cancer..." Further, exercise can improve the quality of life for folks who suffer from arthritis, Parkinson's disease, congestive heart failure, diabetes, and depression.

If you aren't a regular exerciser and you'd like to try something, the place to start is by talking with your doctor and choosing a form of exercise that's right for you.

One of the major predictors of success in amateur radio contesting is the ability to keep one's butt in the chair—the BIC factor--for hours on end. Success in exercise is just the opposite: the ability to get the rear end off the couch and out the door. Both can be fun!

Excuse my preaching. What did you expect when you elected a doctor?

73, Alan/K6SRZ

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING APRIL 2008

by Doug, WW6D

NO MEETING SCHEDULED.

APRIL MEETING MINUTES

by Doug, WW6D

President Alan K6SRZ called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm, April 9, 2008 at Mr. McGoo's Restaurant, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were 31 members and guests. Guests included KC6NDU Kam, K6GYL Diane, K6NOD Don, WB6VEX Bob (our guest speaker) and his wife Joan, and K6JS's daughter Devin.

Motion by Chuck N6OJ was made to approve the minutes from the March meeting and Treasurer's report as printed in Sunspots. Motion was seconded by Al K6RIM and passed.

There was no old business.

New business. Jim K6JS, our treasurer, announced that we currently have 64 members, 2 new members were recently added. 88% of the old roster renewed.

Jim also announced that KV6A Steve, who gives us free web hosting for redxa.com, is currently offering REDXA members a 10% discount for WiFi and DSL. If interested, follow the link at the top of the main REDXA web page.

Jim further announced that N6OJ will be picking up the ferrites for those people who recently placed orders for them, and he (K6JS) will distribute them.

Jim KE6UAR provided another Field Day update. A sign up sheet will be distributed at the May meeting – we do want your help in any way possible. The club, in conjunction with the Marin Amateur Radio Society, will operate in category 3A. The current plan is for a phone station, captained by Ron N6IE, a CW station captained by Bruce W6OSP and another station likely for VHF and other band checking. Another station captain is needed for that station so please let Jim know if you would like to handle this.

Bob K6QXY announced that his business partner and REDXA member Allen K6MXI is battling cancer and would appreciate hearing from club members in the form of a card or QSL.

Chuck N6OJ announced that he has a tower, rotor and beam available through the Northern California DX Foundation equipment sales. Please contact Chuck if you are interested.

With the Visalia convention coming up, Bruce W6OSP offered to arrange the seating for Saturday night banquet so that REDXA members can sit together.

Fred N6YEU announced that REDXA polo shirts are still available. See him if you want one.

Fred N6YEU conducted the REDXA raffle. \$64 was collected. The winning ticket was Chuck N6OJ who won \$32. The club retained \$32.

Bob WB6VEX, Emeritus Seismology Researcher at UC Berkeley then presented the program on Earthquakes. The parallels with amateur radio were very interesting. Their “receivers” pick up the waves from the earth instead of the electromagnetic waves of radio. The dynamic range of a seismograph in the 80’s was advanced from the previous 60 dB to 96 dB with the move to digital. Up until then, the seismograph was the commonly viewed “paper on the drum” that we all see in the media. Current methods provide around 160 dB of dynamic range but 240 dB is needed to see the weakest waves all the way up to the large ones. So, like our ham receivers, attenuation is used to cover the DR needed.

Bob also encouraged people to check out Project Earthscope (earthscope.org) – an interesting web site for tracking earthquakes and volcanoes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Treasurer Report

by Jim, K6JS

REDXA TREASURER’S REPORT

3/31/08 Balance Forward		\$3,505.90
INCOME		
Badge	12.00	
Raffles	32.00	
TOTAL INCOME		44.00
EXPENSES		
Meals	22.00	
REDXA Domain	99.95	
Transportation W6OSP	12.00	
TOTAL EXPENSES		(133.95)
4/30/08 Ending Balance		<u>\$3,415.95</u>

Monthly San Francisco Section News Summary

Here is the link for the News Summary:

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

Contesting and DX News

by Doug, WW6D

ARRL International DX -- SSB

Call	Class	Qs	Mults	Score
K6LRN	SOABHP	137	65	26,715
K6RIM	SOABHP	171	106	54,378


CQ WorldWide WPX Contest, RTTY

Call	Class	Qs	Mlts	Score
N6OJ	SOABHP	957	329	606,018

Calendar of Upcoming Events:

May 14	REDXA Monthly Meeting
Jun 11	REDXA Monthly Meeting
Jun 14	ARRL VHF QSO Party
Jun 28-29	Field Day
Jul 9	REDXA Monthly Meeting
Jul 12-13	IARU HF World Championships

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DX Convention Photos

Here is a photo taken by Jim Hill, K6UUW, at this years DX Convention. More photos taken by Jim will be put on REDXA's web site.



673 Plum Street
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MEETING: MAY 14, 2008

