

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, May 12, 2010 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 concern
Field Day preparations along with the K4M video by
James Brooks.**

REDXA President's Report

The 'Newbie' at Visalia

The sixty-first gathering of the Visalia International DX Convention is now history, and as a "first-timer" at this convention, I have come away with new-found inspiration about our hobby. Never before have I been exposed to such a large congregation of experts, award winners, record holders, and 'movers and shakers' in the DX community. The famous (and I suppose a few of the infamous...although I didn't see any of them!), the ordinary, the old and the young, including a boy and girl, each age 11, sporting ham radio call sign badges, were there. Some 750 avid DX'ers enjoyed the camaraderie and exchanged valuable ideas and experiences. The wonderful weekend was enhanced by the perfect weather that made our outside "Attitude Adjustment Hour" on Friday and Saturday afternoon a great setting to talk to old friends and meet new ones.

As I walked into the Holiday Inn on Friday, the first person I saw was Chip Margelli, K7JA, who is famous for appearing on Jay Leno as part of the team that used Morse Code in competition with another team of '20-somethings' using Blackberries to see who could send a message fastest,



and as we all remember, the Morse Code team won. REDXA was well represented at the convention as was NCCC. The event was truly international with hams from Europe, Asia, South America, the Caribbean and more in attendance. I even spotted Frank, W6KPC, former owner of Tri-Ex Tower and one of the principal designers of the Spruce Goose aircraft. Frank is famous for the amazing 36-element 20 meter array that graced the cover of QST back in the 1980's. He is also the former owner of the tubular crank-up tower I keep hoping to erect in my backyard...any day now!

NCCC put on their very popular Contest Academy where I attended the advanced session and saw presentations from Dean N6BV, Bob N6TV, Jack KF6T and Ira ND2T. The beginners were treated to lectures from Rob K6RB, Kevin K6TD, John K6MM, Tom K5RC, Mark "Mork" K6UFO and Jim K9YC, all well-qualified experts in ham radio contesting who have worked tirelessly to keep the west coast well represented in the contest world.

A big attraction at any convention is the vendor display hall, and despite the economic slow-down, there was a fine array of manufacturers and retailers showing their goods to the delight of the crowd. The Elecraft booth was particularly busy as they displayed their brand new KP-500 linear amplifier, a solid-state device with 500-700 Watts output, 160-6 meters with a true linear (*not* switching) power supply, all of which fits into a tiny package the exact same size as the matching K3 transceiver. They also demoed their new P3 pan adapter that gives simultaneous spectrum and waterfall display capabilities to the K3 and potentially to other brands of radios as well.

Not to be outdone, the folks from Flex drew a crowd with their spectacular line of Software Defined Radios, including a new QRP Flex 1500, all of which featured dazzling spectrum, waterfall and control displays on bright, clear, eye-catching video monitors.

We also saw product line displays from ICOM, Yaesu, Heil, and M-Squared while Force-12's new owner demonstrated a new 2-meter beam with an unusual loop-shaped driven element design that results in one of the tightest F/B F/R ratios ever seen, in addition to a very smooth main lobe pattern.

For the QRO-hungry, Alpha showed off their current line of 'big iron' pile-up busters and accessories, including the new 8410, featuring a *pair* of powerful 4CX1000A finals. We old-timers remember that venerable vacuum tube from when a single one powered the Collins 30S1, perhaps one of the finest amplifiers ever built. CPI/Eimac rates the tube at 1,630 Watts output, continuous service. With two...well, you do the math!

Hi-Q Antennas, in addition to their large line of mobile

screwdriver antennas, had on display a highly modified version in a 'V' configured pair they are developing for NASA who intends to land it on an asteroid as part of a ground-penetrating HF radar system to determine the asteroid's composition. Fascinating stuff!

If you ever wanted to know what the insides of a prop pitch rotator looked like, you could see all the parts displayed at K7NV's booth. It's amazing that these devices that were integral parts of the propeller system in our military aircraft in WWII are still seeing service today, spinning our beams in the 21st century thanks to K7NV's refurbishing service.

Just outside of the exhibit hall and away from all the noise, NCDXF had an elegant display set up where they signed up many new members, myself included.

The most talked-about new gadget at the show was SteppIR's newest antenna, the DB11, so new that as of this writing, it has not been mentioned on their website. This is a miniature version of the DB18E, employing three half-sized 'trombone' elements to build a high-performance beam for 20-6 meters on an 11' boom that takes up only about a third of the area occupied by a full-size tri-bander. Sitting atop a 106' trailer-mounted, crank-up tower, it was hard to get a feel for the size. This is a break-through for folks with space restrictions or esthetic concerns as well as for DXpeditions.

Speaking of DXpeditions, the K4M guys, including our very own Bruce, W6OSP were very prominent at the convention, wearing their logoed tee shirts and being a part of the various dinners and forums. Team leader Tom, N4XP was keynote speaker at the Saturday night banquet, and Bruce spoke on the topic at the Top Band dinner Friday night. As promised, Bruce has obtained a copy of the professional-quality DVD production of the K4M video by James, 9V1YC and that will be our featured program at our meeting this month. I hope to see you all there!

Treasurer Report

by Jim, K6JS

REDXA TREASURER'S REPORT

3/31/10 Balance Forward		\$3,007.27
INCOME		
Commcats	120.00	
Dues	80.00	
Raffle	50.00	
TOTAL INCOME		250.00
EXPENSES		
TOTAL EXPENSES		(0.00)
4/30/10 Ending Balance		<u>\$3,257.27</u>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING APRIL 2010

by San, N7PIB

NO MEETING WAS SCHEDULED.

APRIL MEETING MINUTES

by San, N7PIB

Our meeting was called to order by President Ron, N6IE, at 7:54 p.m. at Mr. McGoo's Restaurant in Petaluma. There were twenty members and eight guests in attendance. The guests were: Wayne Mills, N7NG, from Jackson, WY (formerly a staff member at ARRL headquarters in Newington, CT); Dave Dammuller, KD6FIL, from Santa Rosa; Donna Hinshaw, AG6V, from Petaluma; Saraj Cory, KU6F, from Santa Rosa; Earl Gordon, W6GMP, from Sonoma; Carla Bisagno, KF6KYB, from Petaluma; Bill Sirvatka, WD6FTB, from Santa Rosa; and Gary York, N6UGJ, from Cotati. Saraj, KU6F, was formerly voted into the Club, and both Bill, WD6FTB, and Gary, N6UGJ, have indicated that they wish to become members.

The minutes and treasurer's report for March were moved for approval by Chuck, N6OJ, seconded, and passed.

New Business: None to report.

The raffle grossed \$100, and former former president Al, K6RIM, won his half of a true 50/50 split, with the Club receiving the other half.

Quite a number of our members indicated that they will be going to Visalia for the International DX Convention on April 16-17. Also, a couple of our members indicated that they will be heading to Dayton for the mid-May convention.

Notice was given of the Valley of the Moon ARC Hamfest at the Sonoma Veteran's Building on May 1.

Advance notice was given of the CQP contest on the first weekend in October. Last year we came in second with c.1.97 million points.

The program was on DX-Oriented Shack Automation Software with President Ron, N6IE, as lead presenter. Before that talk began, Wayne Mills, N7NG, was asked to say a few words. He mentioned that the new ARRL website is up which I can verify was true at least in part as of April 15. Also, DX Summit has reopened its website with a new service that allows filtering of spots on an individual basis and log-ins

with password control. Wayne also discussed LOTW and the continuing tale of 7O1YGF and its final approval for credit for DXCC.

Ron presented the intricacies of LOGic8, which is particularly strong in allowing for the compiling of award information in seemingly limitless variety.

Dave, KD6FIL, and Jim, K6UUW, presented the HRD (Ham Radio Deluxe)freeware program.

Chuck, N6OJ, presented the CommCat program along with a special offer that allows for a complete version of the program to be available to anyone who contributes \$20 to the REDXA Club treasury (normally the program sales for \$49). The program, available at CommCat.com, has been put together by a local ham, Howard W6HN from Healdsburg, who is very amenable to adding features for individuals in our area.

The May meeting will concern Field Day preparations along with the K4M video by James Brooks.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Contesting and DX News

by Doug, WW6D

The Visalia 2010 DX Convention is now history but certainly did not disappoint. Several interesting presentations; for me, I particularly enjoyed the one entitled "TF4M The Northernmost Contest Station". By northernmost, Stan SM7WT, the presenter, referred to magnetic north. What was remarkable was how Thor TF4M built his station, essentially by himself; to get idea, go to QRZ.com, enter his call and read his entry. Incredible!

On the new products/technological front, Yaesu was showing off their new FT-5000, which is targeted as the upgrade path for all those FT1000 owners out there and competition with the new Icom IC-7600 which was also on display. Elecraft displayed their previously announced "P3", a matching panadapter for the K3 transceiver but surprised everyone with a small 500 W self contained amplifier approximately the same size as the K3. Former REDXA member Bob W9KNI was selling his new book "A Year of DX" documenting his 2008 adventure in pursuit of the CQ DX Marathon award. (An excellent read I might add!)

Many REDXA members attended and the banquet noted over 730 attendees -- a record, I think. Next year's convention is to be hosted by the Northern California DX Club, April 15-17, 2011. The Holiday Inn is not yet taking reservations but check the web site, dxconvention.org, for the latest details.

Calendar of Upcoming Events:

May 8	CQ-M DX Contest
May 12	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
May 15	Manchester Mineira AA CW
May 29-30	CQ WW WPX CW
June 9	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
June 12-14	ARRL June VHF QSO Party
June 26-27	ARRL Field Day
July 10-11	IARU HF World Championship (and WRTC 2010)
July 14	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
July 17	NA QSO Party RTTY
Aug 7-8	NA QSO Party CW
Aug 11	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Aug 21-22	NA QSO Party SSB
Sep 8	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Sep 25-26	CQ WW DX RTTY

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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MEETING: MAY 12, 2010



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