

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

VOLUME 29

NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER 2008

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Visit our Web Site at <http://www.redxa.com/>

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Wednesday, September 10, 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 by Al and others from the Northern California DX Foundation.

REDXA President's Report

August 2008 had the distinction of being the first month since June 1913 in which astronomers saw no sunspots. Cycle 24 is overdue and hams throughout the world are crossing their collective fingers that we are not seeing the start of another historic minimum like the Dalton, Maunder, or Spörer minima of the past "<http://www.dailytech.com/Sun+Makes+History+First+Spotless+Month+in+a+Century/article12823.htm>".

But, as the days grow shorter, some predictable patterns are reemerging. During the last few weeks, for example, the short path to Europe and the Middle East has opened on 40 meters. In a few more months, when the rains return, it's my hope that the power lines will be washed clean and the resulting decrease in 80 and 160 M QRN will make for exciting DX possibilities on those bands.

August also saw the return of the most excellent REDXA social event at the San Francisco Yacht Club in Tiburon, which featured good weather, good fellowship, and a great menu, including those amazing sautéed sandabs. Thanks again to Al, K6RIM, for making this possible. And thanks too to Bob, K6QXY, for his talk on sporadic E propagation at our August meeting.

Al and others from the Northern California DX Foundation will be giving the program at our September 10 meeting. By all accounts this is a program not to be missed.

The weekend of October 4-5 marks the 34th running of the California QSO party under the sponsorship of the Northern California Contest Club. If you've never participated in this event, you're missing a really enjoyable event. As a California station, you will experience what it's like to be the object of a pileup! This is easily the most popular state QSO party. A few years ago when I helped with mailing out the CQP awards I noted that the number of logs submitted for CQP was close to 40% of the number submitted for the ARRL CW Sweepstakes!

I have to confess some parliamentary ineptitude. A few weeks ago I posted something on the REDXA Yahoo group about our club purchasing the 2-element SteppIR that we have been using for Field Day. This was really a matter for the REDXA BOD, not the full membership. Happily, only BOD members did respond to my posting and I have now configured my own address book for BOD-only communication.

Here's the story on the SteppIR. In the past, we've picked up the SteppIR every year at Visalia and then shipped it back to Washington after each FD. Shipping costs have been about \$80 each year. This year-on short notice-we learned that SteppIR would sell us the antenna at a bargain price. The BOD concurred that this was a good idea and Bruce, W6OSP, sent a check to SteppIR/Fluid Motion. Our plan is to use our treasury to cover half the cost with funds available (which are more than enough) and to raise the other half--\$350--of the cost through donations from members. This seems painless to me, but certainly we can discuss this under the heading of new business at the next meeting.

I'm still looking for speakers for October and November and need your help. There's always the possibility that I'll be the speaker for one of those months since I'm anxiously awaiting word from the US Fish and Wildlife Service about whether or not my group of Dxpeditors will be chosen for permission to activate KP5.

There are some ten different groups of Dxpeditors who have applied to F&WS for permission to go to KP5. Only one group will be chosen. Cross your fingers. The wheels of government are grinding slowly.

Finally, we have completed our move from Berkeley to Penngrove. I'm registered to vote here and the Press-Democrat is in the driveway every morning. While I wait for the bands to improve, I'm spending more time bicycling in the wide-open spaces of rural

Sonoma and Marin. Many of my rides conclude with a run through Chileno Valley and down Western Avenue into Petaluma past W6WR's impressive antenna farm.

I'll see you at Mr. McGoo's.

73, Alan/K6SRZ

Treasurer Report

by Jim, K6JS

REDXA TREASURER'S REPORT

7/31/08 Balance Forward		\$2,913.76
INCOME		
Dues	40.00	
Raffles	39.00	
TOTAL INCOME	<u>79.00</u>	79.00
EXPENSES		
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u> </u>	(0.00)
8/31/08 Ending Balance		<u><u>\$2,992.76</u></u>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING AUGUST 2008

by Doug, WW6D

NO MEETING SCHEDULED.

AUGUST MEETING MINUTES

by Doug, WW6D

President Alan K6SRZ called the meeting to order at 7:38 pm, August 13, 2008 at Mr. McGoo's Restaurant, Petaluma, CA. In attendance were 25 members and guests. Guests included Skip AF6HC, Jerry KG6TT, Frank WA6PXW and Dave AA6YX.

Old business. President Alan K6SRZ recognized and thanked Al K6RIM for pulling together the San Francisco Yacht Club Social. A round of applause followed.

After a revised treasurer's report was presented, Bob K6SEM moved and it was subsequently seconded to approve the minutes as published in Sunspots and the amended treasurer's report. Motion passed.

New business. Alan reminded the club of the

upcoming North American QSO Party SSB the weekend of August 16. There was also quite a bit of discussion regarding a possible Desecheo Island DXpedition. K6SRZ has been contacted as a potential medical officer for this trip.

Jim KE6UAR reported that the Field Day results have been submitted to the ARRL along with a short article with photos all put together by several members. Look for it in the December issue of QST.

Alan announced that the September meeting's program will be on the California QSO Party. Details to follow.

Three of our guests requested membership! Jerry KG6TT, Frank WA6PXW and Dave AA6YX all submitted their applications and it was moved, seconded and approved by the membership to accept them into REDXA. Note that Frank and Dave are actually belated renewals - hi hi. Welcome Jerry, Frank and Dave!

Fred N6YEU conducted the REDXA raffle. \$78 was collected. The winning ticket was Wally N6AD who won \$39. The club thus retained \$39.

The program "Sporadic-E Propagation" was presented by our own Bob Magnani K6QXY. Bob has been studying this unique propagation mode for many years and has worked with other hams as well, notably Dr. Jim Kennedy KH6CU. Bob has presented papers at Central States VHF Society meetings and these appear in the Proceedings of the Central States VHF Society Conference 2001. If you are interested in reading more from these Proceedings, copies are available from the ARRL. Bob passed around a copy during the meeting.

"Sporadic-E" is actually not as sporadic or random as it was once believed. Bob showed that it actually is quite predictable. We generally have 2 peaks in the Northern Hemisphere; late May through early August is the longest peak followed by a minor peak in November/December.

The E layer itself is roughly at a height of 65 miles and the layer's creation is still a research effort. The current theory is that the layer is generated by thunderstorm activity and/or wind shear. The frequencies of interest to radio amateurs are from 14 MHz up to 200+ MHz.

Besides the 2 peaks each year, other predictable characteristics are daily peaks when Es is the strongest: about 2 hours after local sunrise and 2 hours before local sunset.

Bob also discussed how "multi-hop Es" is really a misnomer. "Classic Es" provides propagation for about 1000 miles. Greater distances have been

observed and are not accounted for by our traditional "F layer" thinking of transmitting station to F layer to ground to F layer to receiving station etc. Distances of 2500 miles using Es are most likely caused by an E cloud to E cloud mode and then back to the receiver. He also discussed a recently published paper by JE1BMJ outlining a potential new Es mode called Shortpath Summer Solstice Propagation (SSSP).

With sunspots on the quiet side, the F layer has certainly not allowed a lot of DX lately. So, with Es, you have a new way of working a new one - and it does not rely on sunspots!

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Contesting and DX News

by Doug, WW6D

North American QSO Party -- SSB

Call	Class	Qs	Mlts	Score
N6ZFO	SOABLP	110	58	6,380
W6XU	SOABLP	83	32	2,656
K6SRZ	SOABLP	283	111	31,413

North American QSO Party -- CW

Call	Class	Qs	Mlts	Score
K6LRN	SOABLP	438	154	67,452
K6RIM	SOABLP	669	162	108,378

Calendar of Upcoming Events:


Sep 10	REDXA Monthly Meeting
Sep 13-15	ARRL September VHF QSO Party
Oct 4-5	California QSO Party
Oct 8	REDXA Monthly Meeting
Oct 25-26	CQ World Wide Phone
Nov 1-3	ARRL Sweepstakes CW
Nov 12	REDXA Monthly Meeting
Nov 15-17	ARRL Sweepstakes SSB
Nov 29-30	CQ World Wide CW
Dec 5-7	ARRL 160m Contest
Dec 9	REDXA Monthly Meeting
Dec 13-14	ARRL 10m Contest

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: SEPTEMBER 10, 2008

