

We'll be ZOOMing our
next Meeting

Time 7:00 PM

January 13 (Wednesday)

ZOOM:

meeting number *****

password *****

See page 19 of this issue for
fur-ther instructions if you're
not familiar with ZOOM (it's
not difficult)

SUNSPOTS

REDWOOD EMPIRE DX ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 750834, Petaluma, CA 94975

Volume XXIII

Number I

January 2021

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Meeting Announcement

For January 13, propagation expert Karl Luetzelschwab , K9LA will discuss the latest predictions for Sunspot Cycle 25. Please join us by ZOOM and welcome our new slate of officers for 2021

REDXA President's Commentary

Happy holidays to my fellow REDXA members.

It is honor to be your new president. I'm Hopeful that by the end 2021 we can resume meetings in person!

I am a pretty junior member of the club so really need your feedback/help on programs. Obviously Zoom presenters are easier to get than live presenters.

To date we have lined up:

Jan 13 Carl Luetzelschwab K9LA- New optimistic theory, Sunspot Cycle 25

Feb 13 Cezar Trifu VE3LYC- Why Chase Islands(IOTA)

Mar 10 Joe Eisenberg K0NEB- New Modes with WSJT-X & Why FT-8 so popu-lar

Apr 14 Rob Sherwood NC0B Latest Transceiver Performance including FT DX10, IC-705 and K4? (continued next page)

President's commentary (cont. from previous page)

I have commitments for following presentations with no dates so a little feedback would be appreciated on what you would like to see:

**Eric WA6HHQ Elecraft K4 and ?
Hank W6SX dB for Free**

I would ask each of you to reach out to potential presenters on the clubs behalf.

Some ideas for presentations/programs include:

Yaesu - FTDX10,FTDX101MP/MF/HF and other new products

Icom - IC-705 & other new products

LF - 630M, etc.

Software

DXLab

WJST-X(new modes)

HRD

N1MM+

SOTA

SDR Rcvrs/Xcvrs

Tailoring Your Audio

RBN

HotSpots

Fusion/DMR/D-STAR

Pt. Reyes MARITIME historical society



FCC Matters

FCC Reduces Proposed Amateur Radio Application Fee to \$35

The FCC has agreed with ARRL and other commenters that its proposed \$50 fee for certain amateur radio applications was "too high to account for the minimal staff involvement in these applications." In a *Report and Order (R&O)*, released on December 29, the FCC scaled back to \$35 the fee for a new license application, a special temporary authority (STA) request, a rule waiver request, a license renewal application, and a vanity call sign application. All fees are per application. Administrative updates, such as a change of mailing or email address, are exempt.

ARRL had filed comments opposing the FCC's \$50 fee and application fees and [urged its members](#) to follow suit.

As the FCC noted in its *R&O*, although some commenters supported the proposed \$50 fee as reasonable and fair, "ARRL and many individual commenters argued that there was no cost-based justification for application fees in the Amateur Radio Service." The fee proposal was contained in a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)* in MD Docket 20-270, which was adopted to implement portions of the "Repack Airwaves Yielding Better Access for Users of Modern Services Act" of 2018 -- the so-called "[Ray Baum's Act](#)."

"After reviewing the record, including the extensive comments filed by amateur radio licensees and based on our revised analysis of the cost of processing mostly automated processes discussed in our methodology section, we adopt a \$35 application fee, a lower application fee than the Commission proposed in the *NPRM* for personal licenses, in recognition of the fact that the application process is mostly automated," the FCC said in the *R&O*. "We adopt the proposal from the *NPRM* to assess no additional application fee for minor modifications or administrative updates, which also are highly automated."

The FCC turned away the arguments of some commenters that the FCC should exempt amateur radio licensees. The FCC stated that it had no authority to create an exemption "where none presently exists." The FCC also disagreed with those who argued that amateur radio licensees should be exempt from fees because of their public service contribution during emergencies and disasters.

"[W]e are very much aware of these laudable and important services amateur radio licensees provide to the American public," the FCC said, but noted that specific exemptions provided under Section 8 of the so-called "Ray Baum's Act" requiring the FCC to assess the fees do not apply to amateur radio personal licenses. "Emergency communications, for example, are voluntary and are not required by our rules," the FCC noted. "[W]hile the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary noncommercial communications service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications, is one of the underlying principles of the amateur service, the amateur service is not an emergency radio service."

The Act requires that the FCC switch from a Congressionally mandated fee structure to a cost-based system of assessment. The FCC proposed application fees for a broad range of services that use the FCC's Universal Licensing System (ULS), including the Amateur Radio Service, which had been excluded previously. The 2018 statute excludes the Amateur

More from the FCC

FCC to Require Email Address with Applications and on File

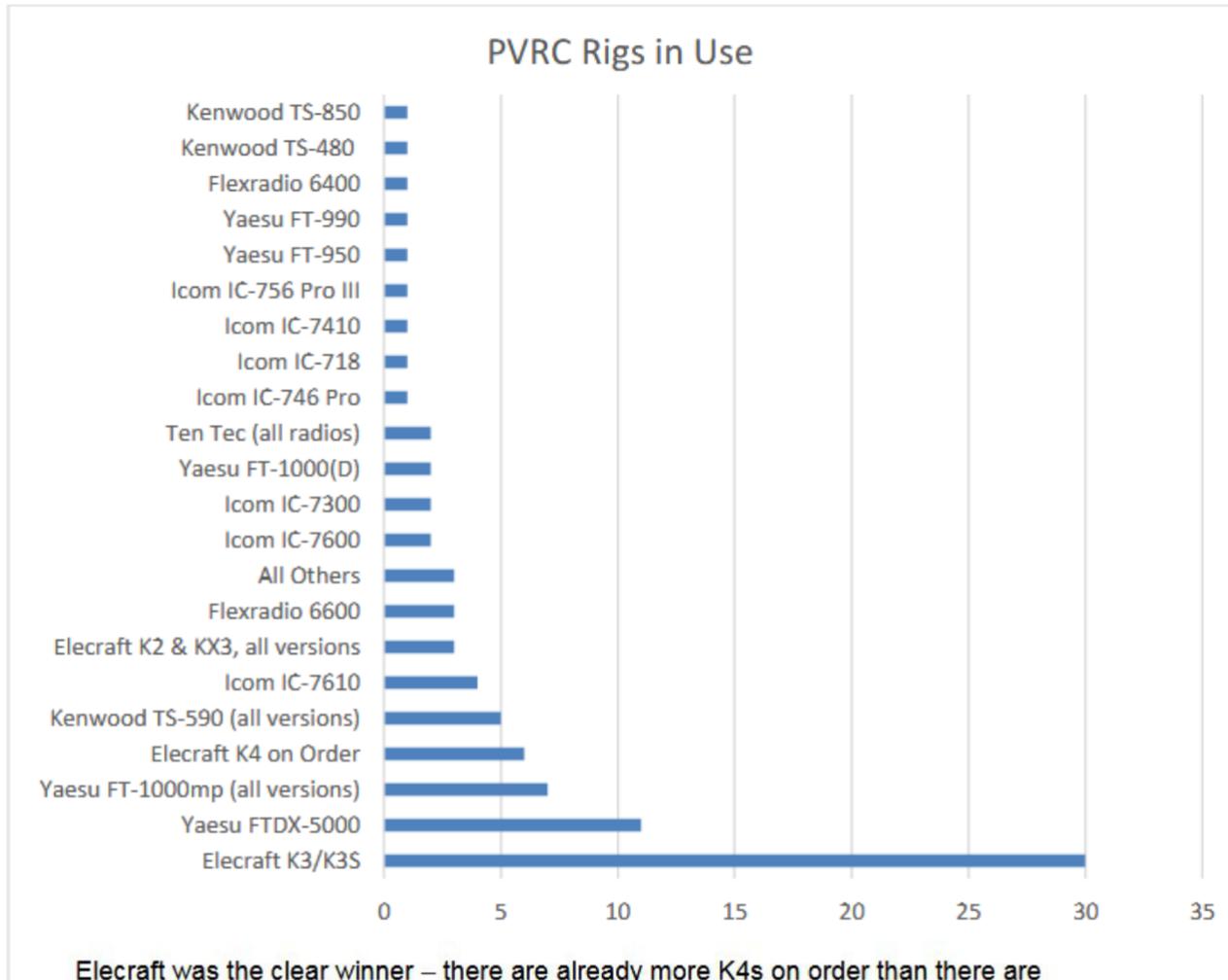
Effective on June 29, 2021, amateur radio licensees and candidates must provide the FCC with an email address on all applications. If no email address is included, the FCC may dismiss the application as "defective." On September 16, the FCC adopted a *Report and Order (R&O)* in WT Docket 19-212 on "Completing the Transition to Electronic Filing, Licenses and Authorizations, and Correspondence in the Wireless Radio Services," which [appeared](#) on December 29 in the *Federal Register*. The FCC has already begun strongly encouraging applicants to provide an email address and will email a link to an official electronic copy of the license once it's granted.

While many, if not most, amateurs already have provided an email to the FCC, this also will become a requirement. Under Section 97.21 of the new rules, as amended, the holder of a valid amateur radio station license "must apply to the FCC for a modification of the license grant as necessary to show the correct mailing and email address, licensee name, club name,



PVRC Transceiver Choice Survey – Jim WX3B

Jim WX3B asked PVRCers what transceivers they are using, and the results are below:



Elecraft was the clear winner – there are already more K4s on order than there are Kenwoods being used! Jim notes that Flex is probably underrepresented, as ops like N3KS and N4YDU are using them but didn't respond to the survey call.

Oddly, no one was using the Heathkit SS-9000...



Shared by our new President, Roger, K3 RC, a former PVRC member

Study Propagation (and maybe win a radio!)

Contest University will host Propagation Summit on January 23, 2021. All times are USA EST.

11 AM - "Update on the Personal Space Weather Station Project & HamSCI activities for 2021" - Dr. Nathaniel Frissell, W2NAF

Noon - "Solar Cycle 25 Predictions & Progress" - Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA

1 PM - "Maximizing Performance of HF Antennas with Irregular Terrain" - Dr. James Breakall, WA3FET

2 PM - "HF Ionospheric Propagation" - Frank Donovan, W3LPL

Drawing for an Icom IC-705 donated by Icom America and DX Engineering - both CTU sponsors. Winner must be present on Zoom to win.

To register for this free CTU Propagation Summit Webinar please go to :https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dflvFDxaTyakOWd_C7_puw

73, Tim, K3LR

Contest University Chairman



3Y0I Bouvet Island News 5 January 2021

Some members of the Rebel DX Group have arrived in Cape Town, South Africa. After several Covid protocols we are in the good hands of our ZS friends and local supporters. Just to remind you, the whole of our expedition equipment from the first Bouvet "attack" was secured at the QTH of Andre ZS1AN. What a great guy he is!! We will check again all our expedition gear during the coming days. We had a very busy day yesterday with Shawn ZS1SBW, working on important paperwork for upcoming projects. More info on that soon. The Bouvet (3Y0I) trip is on track. Still some budget is missing but we are hoping to get some of the missing \$\$\$\$. Our last attempt cost us over \$250K private money (donations were just 7%) and sadly that went to the "vessel chimney" (for fuel). Let's hope, this time we will be more lucky. Here is a link if you are willing to help. <https://www.gofundme.com/f/3yi-bouvet-island-expedition> For your information, we will not apply for financial support to any DX Foundation or big Clubs as their conditions are not acceptable to us for a trip to one of the most wanted DXCC entities; and one of hardest places to go on our planet.

Credit:DXNews

Editor's note: for some of us, a confirmed contact with Bouvet is all that's standing in the way of reaching the top of the DXCC Honor Roll. They need your money!



REDXA's own Joe Olsen, AA0BV, is a Summits on the Air (SOTA) aficionado. Some of his recent operations were featured in the December issue of "Sunspots". Apropos of SOTA, here are some comments by Rod, K6RB, in the CWOPS newsletter:

Solid Copy

The CW Operators Club Newsletter



“Finally, one of the more recent ham-radio activities is Summits on the Air (SOTA), where people climb to the peak of a mountain, set up a portable antenna, and take out a small transceiver and proceed to work a bunch of people. Some of those people who climb or are worked are interested in collecting summits. Some of them just blunder into the mix and add a QSO. What a great way to combine the fun of exercise, being in the outdoors, and ham radio. But don't try that with digital because it means carrying a computer up there with you. And don't try that with SSB because, pound-for-pound, with the low power and greater bandwidth, the signal-to-noise ratio may limit how many QSOs you'll have. After nearly 10 years of advising CW Academy groups, my subjective finding is that at least 25 percent of the more than 200 students I've worked with came to CW by virtue of SOTA. My feeling is that when younger folks see the fun you can have using CW for SOTA, or radio sport, or just chatting (like texting), there will be some who will rise to the challenge of learning Morse and getting on the air. There may never be as many young hams as there were in my novice days of 1958, but I wouldn't bet that HF CW will simply shrink to nothingness over time.”

The CWOPS CW academy is an excellent way to really learn CW operation—to learn CW well enough to actually jump into a contest featuring CW. You can learn more at <https://cwops.org/cw-academy/cw-academy-options/>

From Fred, N6YEU

Back on December 16 I saw an invitation to join watching a live video on YouTube with Tim Duffy- K3LR as host featuring a ham discussing his receiving units for antennas. During the video Tim said that Ray Novak from ICOM offered to cover the cost of giving away some DXengineering coffee mugs to those who sent in an email. I quickly sent an email and later heard I was one of the lucky winners. Free is good!👍

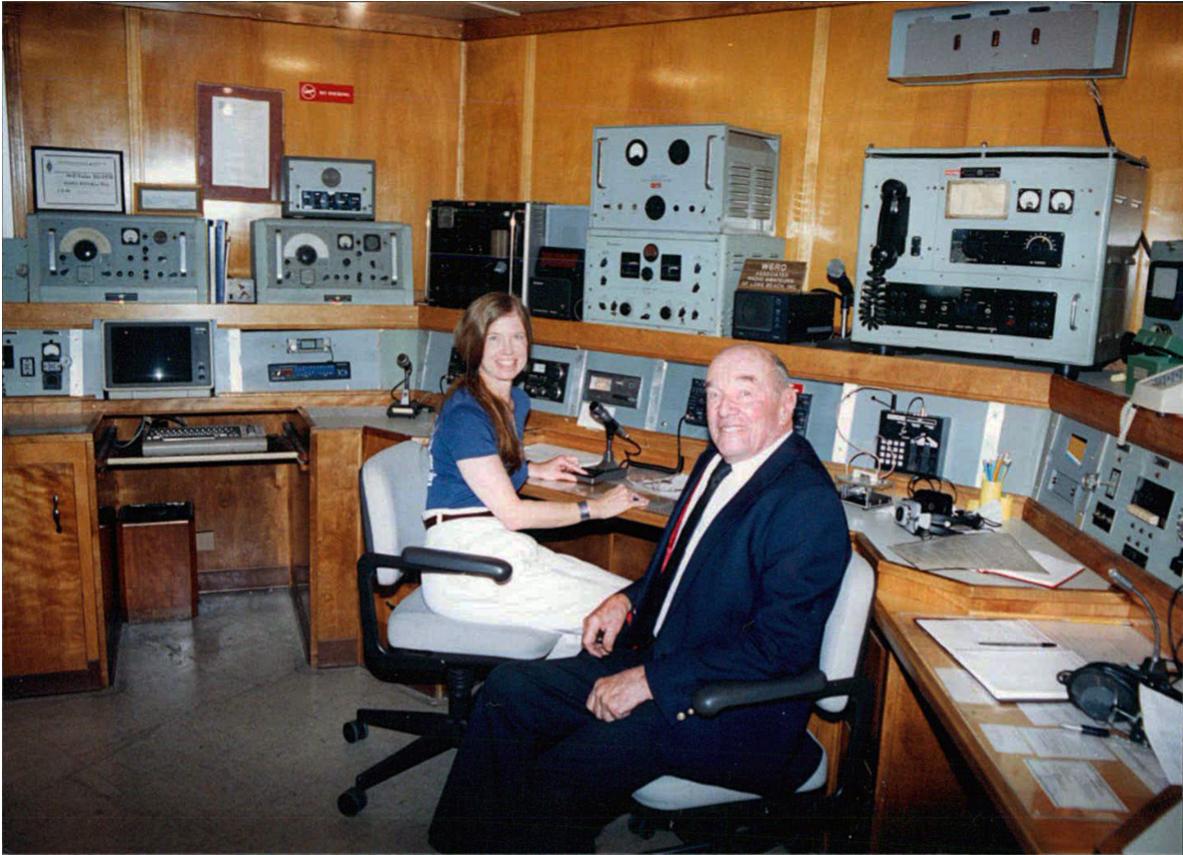


Here's a tip for any of you who want to score some ham radio swag:

Manufacturers—especially manufacturers who sponsor contests—are always pleased to hear from hams who received awards that they have sponsored or who just want to say thanks for their support. Doing this sometimes results in a gift of the sponsor's own, branded merchandise.

Your editor has a nice (in blue, his favorite color) ICOM Contest Team T-shirt obtained from a thank-you letter.





Marilyn, N6VAW, in the radio room of RMS Queen Mary

The Queen Mary is berthed now in Long Beach CA, where her luxury suites are now hotel rooms. We hams should know what "RMS" stands for in electronics, but what is RMS in a ship name?





Me-ter monobander somewhere above the Caribbean

Contest scores

ARRL 10 Meter

Call	Class	CW	SSB	Mults	Score
N6ZFO	SOMHP	606	251	100	292,600
N6IE	SOMUHP	485	128	97	200,596
K6SRZ	SOCWUHP	695		72	200,160
N3RC	SOCWHP	236		197	46,400
K6RIM	SOMUHP	133	27	48	28,128
N6TQ	SOMHP 144			47	25,850
N6YEU	SOMLP 113	45		46	24,932
K6JS	SOCWULP	78		26	8,112
K6MM	SOCWHP	64		23	5,888
K6CTA	SOCWQRP	9		4	144

Soapbox

N6ZFO - Thanks for the many Q's. Missed AK, ND, VT, RI.

Just one Asian worked. 4D3X.

Enjoyed a few meteor scatter Q's on Saturday night, enhanced by the Geminid Meteor Shower.

N6IE - Now that was fun! From a band that was nearly dead a year ago to get over 500 QSO is quite amazing! Activity was pretty hot Friday night, much more so than Saturday, but lots of stations on during the daytimes. Huge number of TX, CO, AZ and FL stations. Phone was a little slow and pretty hard to get any kind of a run, but it helped with mults. Worked all US states and DC except for ND, VT and NH.

I got the last multiplier and the only Asia QSO during the contest in the very last minute of operation from JF2QNM...a real 'hail Mary'!

K6SRZ - Propagation was interesting at the start--especially after dark on Friday--and then downhill after that

K6JS - DX worked VK, FK, CX, LU and PY. All S+P - 20 minutes here and 20 minutes there.

RAC Winter

Call	Class	CW	SSB	Mults	Score
K6SRZ	SOCWHP	528		38	115,216
N6TQ	SOMHP	142	39	50	99,900

N6YEU	SOMLP	29	16	16	8,320
K6CTA	SOSB20LP	45		5	1,340

RAC contest soapbox

K6SRZ - Always fun. I had other commitments on Friday evening so wasn't able to take as much advantage of 80 and 160. Divided time on Saturday between the contest and televised sports. The last hour and a half of the RAC contest overlapped with the Croation CW DX contest, which had an identical (RST + serial number) exchange so I assume my few DX QSOs in the Croation test will count toward RAC. Very loud EU signals starting around 22:30 UTC.

N6YEU - Basically a check log. Enjoyed what time I could spend in contest.

K6CTA - "something to do".....for a short time

RTTY Roundup

Call	Class	Rtty	Digi	St/ Pr	DX	Score
N6IE	SOArtyHP	154 0		56	45	155,54 0
W6DR	M/S HP	868		54	43	84,196
N6ZFO	SOrttyHP	863		56	33	76,807
K6RIM	SOrttyHP	402		47	11	23,316
K6SRZ	SOrttyHP	301		45	14	17,759
K6ELE	SOArtyHP	213		38	9	10,011
K6MM	SOAMHP	102	63	43	8	8,41 5
N6YEU	SOrttyLP	118		40	4	5,19 2

Soapbox

N6IE - This year was an improvement over last year, probably due to more participation but also due to slightly better conditions. 80 meters was greatly improved. Only a few technical problems, the biggest of which was the DB42 that gets stupid on 40 meters when it rains. SWR was around 2.5:1, but the tuner in the KPA1500 handled it fine at full power, hour after hour. It still seemed to play pretty well even though one of the elements was out of tune. It finally calibrated properly (SWR <1.2:1) for one hour of Sunday morning, and was fine in the 3:00 pm hour when I went back to 40.

Propagation to Asia wasn't great. EU was a little better on Sunday morning where I snagged some good mults.

Great to hear so many KB's on the air!



N6ZFO - Upon noting the score ending in 807, decided it was a good time to quit. Two Eu worked on 80m. . sn8r and an IK, somewhat after Italian sunrise. All 50 states worked with ND on Sunday afternoon on 20m.

K6SRZ - almost all the QSOs were low power, but maybe a dozen were HP. Hope the points help. How 'bout a T-shirt or something if we win.

K6ELE - Improved my score from last year with the better conditions.

K6MM - SteppIR has pneumonia. Limited to wires and a vertical. Only had a few hours to operate this year. Thanks for the QSOs.

N6YEU - First ever RTTY contest for me! Operating portable away from home with IC-7300 and very low dipole I was amazed how well things went. Good fun!

While visiting friends in Oakhurst for a few days around New Year's I brought my IC-7300 and linked dipole to try some qsos on Straight Key Night which turned out to be a flop. I received an email from NCCC encouraging members to participate in the RTTY ROUNDUP contest 2-3 January. I have had only 4 qsos ever on RTTY due to almost no activity outside of contests. The ICOM 7300 comes with a built in RTTY decoder and the ability to program some transmit messages. Tuning is tricky but I figured it out and after downloading my trusty N3FJP software which I used manually hand entering the qso information I was able to participate. I ran 90 watts to my dipole (ex PJ5) at about 20 feet off the ground for both 20 and 40 meters. I played around during the contest as best I could. Just about everyone I heard I worked. There were a couple of stations who never even asked?? I ended up with 118 qsos with 44 multipliers. I missed 12 states plus DC but all the ones I did work were ATNOs! I also worked KH6, KL7, JA and PY for ATNO DX! Considering my set up was minimal at best I was quite pleased with my first ever RTTY contest. I continue to be amazed how well /portable Operating works. My QTH was in Oakhurst in Madera county at our friend's place, which was also my CQP 2019 QTH. Now I just wish there was RTTY activity outside of contests. FT8-4 seem to have taken over.

73, Fred-N6YEU

Treasurer's Report

The REDXA Balance as of January 1 is \$3,585, reflecting \$165.00 recent dues payments sent to our PO Box.

Submitted by Fred-N6YEU (treasurer)



Our treasurer at Field Day 2002,
credit Marilyn, N6VAW

DX 425 NEWS

425 News—the Italian Weekly Bulletin for serious DXers, as it calls itself—will celebrate the publication of its 1500th weekly issue. The bulletin, which is published in English, truly is a nice resource for DX news. It's available for free, on line at <https://www.425dxn.org/>



Italian call signs by region

DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

by Doug WW6D, Secretary

The monthly meeting was held via Zoom on December 9, 2020 with social hour beginning at 6:30 pm, hosted by President Jim Selmi, K6JS. Formal meeting began at 7:22 pm. 18 participants joined the meeting including one guest, Joe Reid, KC6RKY.

A motion was made to approve the minutes and treasurer's report from the November meeting as published in the September Sunspots. Motion was seconded and approved.

Old Business. None.

New Business. The main purpose of the meeting was to prepare for the year ahead, including the election of officers and directors. President Jim K6JS presented a slate that he prepared for nomination:

President:	Roger N3RC
Vice President:	Bill WX6B
Secretary:	Doug WW6D
Treasurer:	Fred N6YEU
Director:	Josh W6XU
Director (Past Pres.):	Jim K6JS

A motion was made and seconded to approve the slate by acclamation, and subsequently approved.

Fred N6YEU headed up the annual REDXA Spirit Award committee and reported on this year's awardees: Jim K6JS and Alan K6SRZ will jointly receive the award. A suitable memento will be procured and presented at a later time.

Program: No formal program was scheduled. Meeting adjourned around 8:00pm.

REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events

by Doug WW6D

*Jan 13 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Jan 16-17 North American QSO Party SSB

Jan 29-31 CQ 160m Contest CW

*Feb 10 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Feb 12-14 CQ WW WPX, RTTY

**Feb 20-21 ARRL Inter.
DX Contest, CW**

Feb 26-28 CQ 160m Contest, SSB

**Feb 27-28 North American QSO Party,
RTTY**

**Mar 6-7 ARRL Inter.
DX Contest, SSB**

*Mar 10 * REDXA Monthly Meeting*

Mar 13-14 Stew Perry Topband Challenge

**Mar 27-28 CQ WW WPX,
SSB**

Refer to <https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html> for more contest information.

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REDXA is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Election of Officers

Presentation of Spirit award

Discuss ideas for Zoom meetings, Sunspots, Field Day, equipment

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://marincounty-org-dpw.zoom.us/j/91781892793?pwd=MjJwUmhXaUFZMTQ0Qlg2MUdRTjBCZz09>

Meeting ID: *****

Password: *****

One tap mobile

Dial by your location

+1 213 338 8477 US (Los Angeles)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 206 337 9723 US (Seattle)

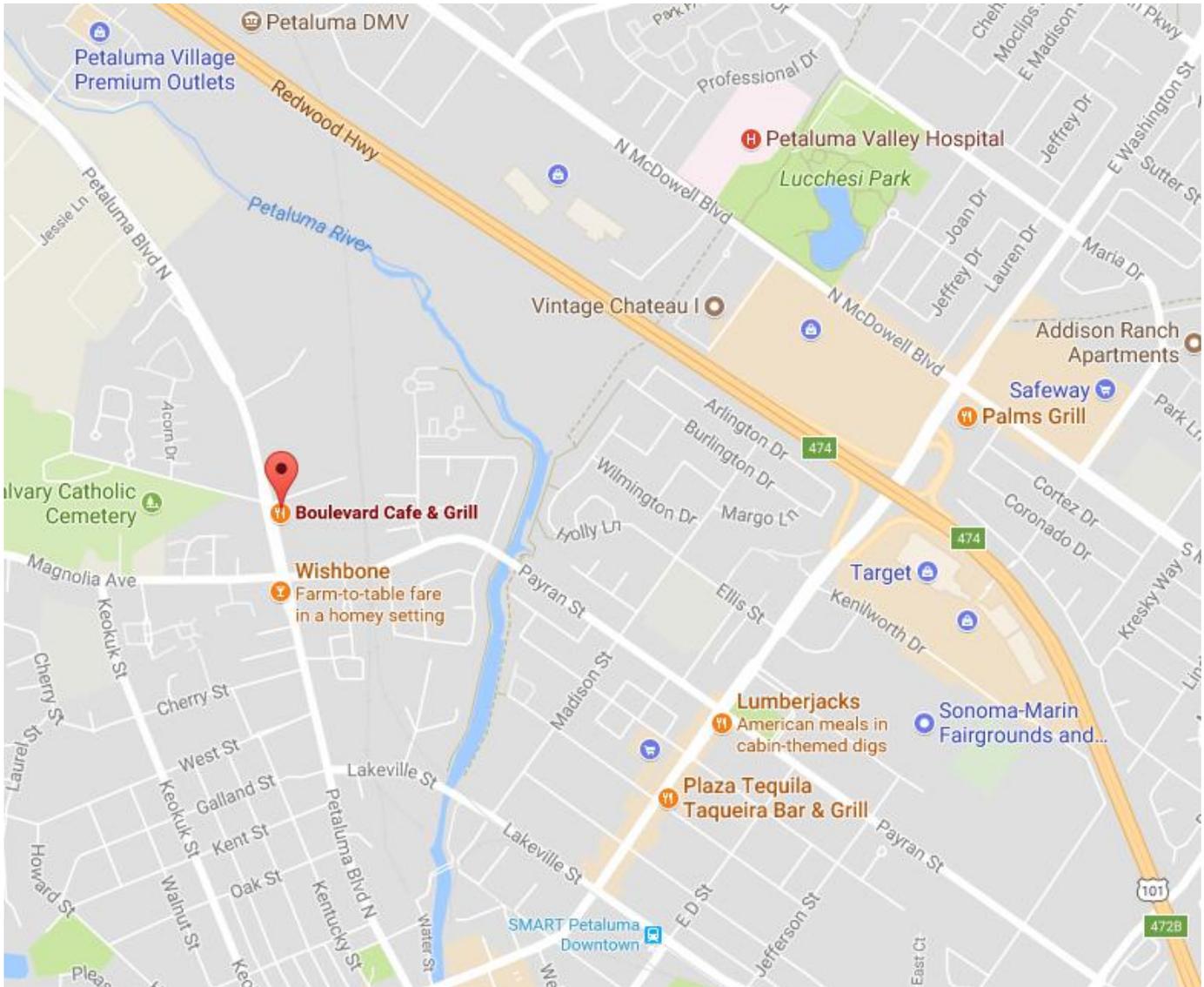
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Boulevard Café & Grill
1096 Petaluma Blvd. North,
Petaluma, CA

Alert: as of January 7, the Café is again closed for all dining

The Café is open again for socially distanced inside and patio service. They're not able to host gatherings like our REDXA meetings, but I encourage you to stop in for breakfast or lunch. It's one way to thank Daniel and his staff for their support over the past years.





My GOOGLE search for <Italian Ham Radio> also retrieved Italian Ham sans radio as witnessed by this shot of prosciutto preparation

