

# 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

**VOLUME 33**

**NUMBER 9**

**SEPTEMBER 2012**

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

## MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

**Wednesday, September 12, 2012** at Cattlemens 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 Jim Selmi, K6JS and Fred Leoni, N6YEU who will show a presentation of their CQP County expeditions and rally the membership for their participation.**

## REDXA President's Report

Less than a month to go before the California QSO Party kicks off the 2012-2013 contest season. The excitement of the California QSO Party is in the air and the action is on the air! You can sit on one frequency and work Qso after Qso, making hundreds of contacts in phone or CW with the modest of stations. New contesters can build their confidence searching and pouncing for a while and then try running when you feel more comfortable.

Following on the heels of our success at Field Day, REDXA members will once again hit the airwaves in the contest that makes California stations the ones everyone wants to work. This is our opportunity to be #1 in the California Club competition. In 2010 we had 24 logs and 2,457K points and last year we had a record number of logs submitted, 28 logs and 2,857K points. Let's keep the momentum going and get on the air for one of REDXA's premiere events of the year.

So clear your calendars and get your chores done so we can once again



compete for the top California club. It's very important for all of us to get on the air for CQP. You don't want to miss the thrill of being in 6-land for the most popular state QSO party on the contest calendar. It's just too much fun to miss.

There are plenty of opportunities for portable or mobile operations too, as of this writing there were still 15 counties without any planned activity. If you're so inclined, a field day style effort to one of these counties can provide you with 24 hours of contesting fun.

Check out the CQP website at [www.cqp.org](http://www.cqp.org). You will find a ton of information, including the history of the event, FAQ's, free software, past records and results.

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING AUGUST 2012

by Rick, N6GY

NO MEETING WAS SCHEDULED

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## AUGUST MEETING MINUTES

by Rick, N6GY

President Jim K6JS called the meeting to order at 08:15 pm, August 8, 2012 at the Cattlemens Restaurant in Petaluma. There were 22 members and 1 guest in attendance.

He thanked everyone for their help at Field Day, and commented it was our best yet. He spoke about the recent tri-club meeting held a few weeks ago. We had 23 members in attendance and he thanked our REDXA CW operators for their effort in the CW Pile Up Competition.

He is working with Cattlemens for a more efficient distribution of checks, after the meal is served, but before the presentation. Ice cream was served as part of the price of the meal.

He asked that the minutes of the last meeting as published in "SUNSPOTS" be approved as published. The motion was made and carried.

Alan K6SRZ stated that plaques and wine for last

years CQP are ready to be picked up at the next NCCC meeting.

The 50-50 raffle raised \$73, with \$36 going to the lucky winner N6GY.

The presentation was a DVD on the South Orkney Island DXpedition VP8ORK.

The meeting concluded at 9:20 pm.

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## 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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## Treasurer Report

by Saraj, KU6F

### REDXA TREASURER'S REPORT

7/31/12 Balance Forward		\$2,348.22
INCOME		
Dues	20.00	
Raffle	37.00	
TOTAL INCOME		57.00
EXPENSES		
TOTAL EXPENSES		(0.00)
8/31/12 Ending Balance		<u>\$2,405.22</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

Can you believe another summer is behind us? I hope you all completed your antenna projects as time is running out. We are 3 weeks away from the 46th running of the California QSO Party on October 6th – 7th. Last year we came closer than we've ever been to beating the MLDXCC in CQP. Let's beat the nuggets out of them this year! For as long as I can remember, the MLDXCC has come in first place with REDXA being the runner up. Let's all try to get on the air and make some Q's for the club. 100 Q's will get you a CQP T-Shirt, but why stop there? Simply put, merely getting on the air, making a few hundred QSO's and, most importantly, submitting your log will do wonders for the club's overall score.

Also, checking the 'county list'. I noted that 15 counties do not show any activity. Launching a county expedition could also go a long way toward helping the clubs total score and is sure to be a lot of fun. Let's all try to keep our butts in the chairs and keep CQing, this is the contest where you can run for hours with a good rate. YOU are the hunted, so get out there and make some Q's. Let's put an end to this 10 year MLDXCC run.

Not too many REDXA members on County Expeditions this year. I'll be making my annual pilgrimage to Plumas County with KU6F. It is truly one of the highlights of radio sport for me. Over the years we've endured rain, snow and vehicle issues along with numerous visits from Murphy, but it's always a great time.

Staying close to home are N6ZFO in Lake, K6RIM in Marin, W6OSP in Napa and W6XU, N6GY and many others in Sonoma. Keep an ear out for these folks. I encourage you all to join in the fun and put in as much of an effort and time as you can afford.

Now is also a good time to make sure your logging programs and rig interfaces are working properly. This is also time to update your prefills if you use them and the all-important Country (CTY) Files which were updated on 27 August 2011. This is used by your logging software to keep prefixes and

DXCC entities and CQ zones straight, it's important to have the latest version. To install the file, follow the link to your software

There was a big drop in solar activity over the past week, with the average daily sunspot numbers declining nearly 42 points to 77.6, and average daily solar flux down 20 points to 114.7. It is expected to drop below 100 again on September 12-15. I started writing this at the end of August, look what happens a week later. There was a surprising jump in solar activity occurred the week of 9/6. The average daily sunspot numbers rose nearly 55 points (that's almost 74 percent) to 128.7, while the average daily solar flux values were up more than 28 points to 136.9. A pair of coronal mass ejections (CMEs) on September 3 and 4 excited Earth's geomagnetic field, causing A index values to jump. The middle latitude A index on September 2-5 was 14, 23, 14 and 24, and the planetary A index on those dates was 12, 32, 13 and 28. Ole Sol is up to its old tricks again. I found fantastic conditions on 15 meters last Friday August 31st. I worked numerous Europeans, Africans and into the middle east.

George Kutcher, K3GWK of Jenkinsburg, Georgia mentioned that "There is a simple sunspot data app for the iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch. The app is called 'Sunspot' by AMI Mobile. There is a cost for the app. 'Sunspot' is a simple application to display 3-hour WWV space weather and NOAA sunspot data on your iPhone, etc. Data is updateable on demand, as well as current trending from the previous data set."

Brendan Wahl, WA7HL of Bisbee, Arizona likes the N0HR Propfire program for the Firefox web browser. It displays the geophysical and solar data that WWV transmits at 18 minutes after each hour, and can also display sunspot number. You can get it for free at, (<http://www.n0hr.com/Propfire.htm>). I've been using this for years (Jim).

We'll be seeing a lot of this code for the coming months as the Mars Rover, Curiosity ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Curiosity\\_wheel\\_pattern\\_morse\\_code.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Curiosity_wheel_pattern_morse_code.png)), generates the Morse characters for "JPL" in its wheel tracks. In theory it's for distance calibration as Doug K1DG describes in his EDN blog

(<http://www.edn.com/electronics-blogs/a-ham-s-eye-view/4392142/Morse-Code-on-Mars-?cid=EDNToday>) - but we all know it was a great hack, too! (Thanks, Paul AA9GG)

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## DX News

by Jim, K6JS

If you missed last month's meeting, you missed a great "must have" DVD for a DXer's collection. 9V1YC, James Brook's talents have captured the workings of the VP8ORK DXpedition and the majestic scenery of the Antarctic on this video. Experience the stunning arctic scenery as the Microlite Penguin DXpeditioners bring one of the most rare and wanted entities on the air.

In 52 minutes you witness the loading of the radio equipment onto the ship "Braveheart" in Ushuaia, Argentina, the trip south to South Orkney dodging icebergs along the way, as well as the landing, unloading and setup of equipment and shelters on the island.

You get to see the extreme challenges the team endured installing antennas in the hard rugged terrain; including scenes of operators working the pile-ups and the many seals. Interviews by both operators and Nigel Jolly the owner of the Braveheart are a delight.

Staging a trip to a remote, stateless and international piece of land is a challenging and expensive proposition.

### Update from NH8S

September 6, 2012 @ 0800 UTC

We have arrived and everything is going well. SVDA's are up for both cw and ssb camps. The stations are getting setup and will continue in the morning. Lobster for dinner! Fantastic crew from the Jennings that have setup all of the infrastructure for our dxpedition. Unfortunately one of our crew was injured on the way to Swains. He has returned to Pago Pago for medical treatment. We feel very badly that he had to leave the group. We should be on the air tomorrow sometime. Several big antennas remain to be put up. They will be done first before we start to operate. The weather is quite hot

and humid. We have to be cautious about resting and dehydration. We are having a good time and are looking forward to getting on the air sometime today.

**3D2C, CONWAY REEF** (Press Release). Paul, N6PSE, sent out the following on August 7th: "After many months of careful planning, we are pleased to announce that our preparations for a large multi-national Dxpediton to Conway Reef are going according to plan.

Conway Reef is located in the South Pacific Ocean and is #35 on Club- Log's most wanted DXCC list.

The Team is meeting in Lami Bay, Suva and departing by ship to Conway Reef on September 24th. The Team expects to arrive at Conway Reef and become active on September 26th. We will complete our Dxpediton on October 5th, 2012.

The main goals of this DXpedition are to work every amateur radio operator who needs Conway Reef for a new DXCC country. In addition, we will be active on all bands from 1.8 MHz to 144 MHz, including the 5 MHz and 50 MHz bands.

We will be active on CW, SSB and RTTY. Special attention will be made to work far away stations such as Europe and Africa during those periods when propagation permits. The propagation window for EU and Africa is very brief at times and signals may be weak, so we ask everyone in the honored HAM SPIRIT to stand by when asked so that we may fulfill this need. Our destination will have a wide range of options and possibilities.

We plan to upload our logs on a daily basis to our on-line log. We will upload to LOTW approximately six months following the DXpedition.

We wish everyone good propagation and we hope that you enjoy working the 3D2C Team.

At this time, we are seeking additional Club and Individual Sponsors to help us defray the costs of carrying out this DXpedition. Our official website is: <http://www.yt1ad.info/3d2c/index.html>  
3D2C Team

### DXPEDITION VIDEOS OF THE WEEK.

With more and more DXpeditions putting their videos on YouTube and other Web services, we decided to list them(possibly) each week. For this week's listings:

2008 - KL7DX NA-234 Cleveland Volcano DXpedition: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=026fW4rYcwg>

2007 - C6ARI DXpeditions: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wTkbywWcdk>

2002 - VP6DI Ducie Island DXpedition: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAWSMeeSf7Q> (Part 1)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1P2K8kcaiA4> (Part 2)

## 6 Meter Report

Bob says 6 meters is starting to come alive with F2 & TEP. On 9/5 he worked E51USA @ 2347Z 5x9 on SSB. E51 is located on the South Cook Islands BG08CT. First F2 of season, on 9/6 he worked LU9EHF @ 0234Z and this was his first TEP of equinox season.

SOLAR FLUX is fairly high he hopes NH8S gets setup and on the air ASAP. We are at the peak of this 27 day solar rotation and it's downhill from now on. It won't peak again till after NH8S goes QRT. He's hoping there are some active regions on the back side of the sun.

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If you're interested in learning more about PG&E's SmartGrid system, The Engineering department at Sonoma State University will hold a lecture in Salazar Hall on September 20th.

"PG&E's Smart Grid, a Foundation for a Sustainable Electric System"

Mr. Suna Taymaz, Manager, Smart Grid & Technology Integration, PG&E

Thursday, September 20, 2012

Days & Dates: First and Third Thursday of every month

Venue: Cerent Engineering Science Complex, Salazar Hall Room #2009A

Reception: 4:00 to 4:30 p.m.

Lecture: 4:30 to 5:15 p.m.

Q&A: 5:15 to 5:30 p.m.

## REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events:

by Doug, WW6D

Sep 8-10	ARRL Sept VHF QSO Party
Sep 12	* <b>REDXA Monthly Meeting</b>
Sep 15-16	WA State Salmon Run
Sep 29-30	CQ WW DX RTTY
Sep 29-30	Texas QSO Party
Oct 6-7	California QSO Party
Oct 10	* <b>REDXA Monthly Meeting</b>
Oct 12-14	ARRL National Convention at Pacificon
Oct 27-28	CQ Worldwide DX SSB
Nov 3-5	ARRL Sweepstakes CW
Nov 14	* <b>REDXA Monthly Meeting</b>
Nov 17-19	ARRL Sweepstakes SSB
Nov 24-25	CQ Worldwide DX CW
Nov 30- Dec 2	ARRL 160 meter Contest (Note dates!)
Dec 8-9	ARRL 10 meter Contest
Dec 12	* <b>REDXA Monthly Meeting</b>
Dec 16	ARRL Rookie Roundup CW
Dec 29-30	Stew Perry Topband Challenge
Jan 1	ARRL Straight Key Night
Jan 9	* <b>REDXA Monthly Meeting</b>
Jan 12-13	NA QSO Party CW
Jan 19-20	NA QSO Party SSB
Jan 25-27	CQ 160 meter CW
Feb 9-10	CQ WW WPX RTTY
Feb 13	* <b>REDXA Monthly Meeting</b>
Feb 16-17	ARRL Intl DX CW

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

# California QSO Party



## CQP & improving your operating skills

Quick! Mark the weekend of October 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> on your calendar and start planning for a weekend of radio fun! The first full weekend of October marks the annual running of the California QSO Party (CQP) – the most fun you can have with a radio if you live in the Golden State! This year marks the 46<sup>th</sup> running of CQP sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club.

Why contest? From an operating point of view, most aspects of Ham Radio from Public Service, chasing DX to working contests have one thing in common – accurate and timely copying of information often under stress.

Entering a contest either casually to give some points or as a serious effort, is a great exercise in operating “under fire”.

The first full weekend of October (October 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> this year) sees the annual running of the California QSO Party – a great opportunity for stations in California because everyone else HAS TO WORK US!

We are the DX!

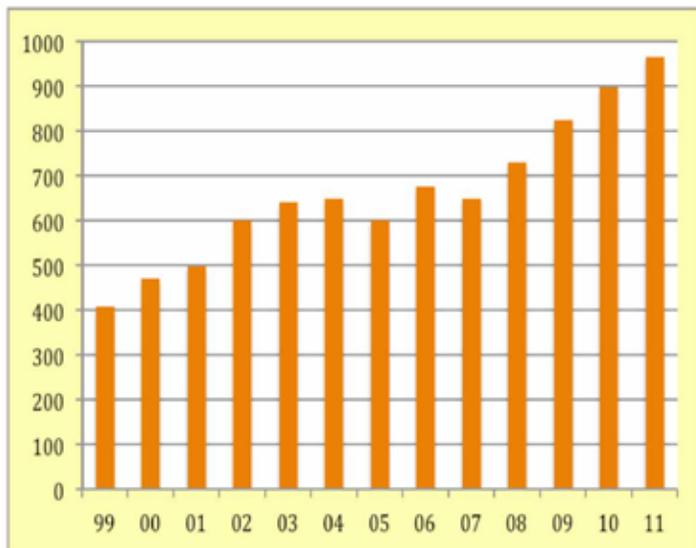
Whether you’re a “Big gun” or “Little pistol”, CQP is a great opportunity for you to be on the receiving end of a pileup or to search and pounce for other states and countries. You can easily Work All States in a single weekend especially with everyone looking for you. And there’s DX to be worked: it’s possible to work all continents during CQP.

For California stations the object of the contest is to work as many stations as possible on SSB and CW. You can work the same station on each band and each mode for score credit. Every US state and Canadian province you work counts as a multiplier – 58 total for us just like the number of counties in California.

Want to be on the end of a really big pile up? Plan a County Expedition to one of the rarer California counties--the rest of the world will beat a path to You. Check out the counties activation planning map on the CQP web site at [www.cqp.org](http://www.cqp.org) - you may be surprised that some of the rarest counties often lie on your doorstep.

Low Power, High Power? CW or SSB? CQP is a fun contest for all.

CQP is sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club, and led by a group of dedicated, experienced team members. NCCC volunteers help with PR, planning county expeditions and processing all the logs to score the contest.



CQP continues to see healthy growth in submitted logs. In 2011 we had almost 1000 logs submitted! CQP rivals many national and international contests in participation and awards. Our goal is to break the 1000 log level in 2012.

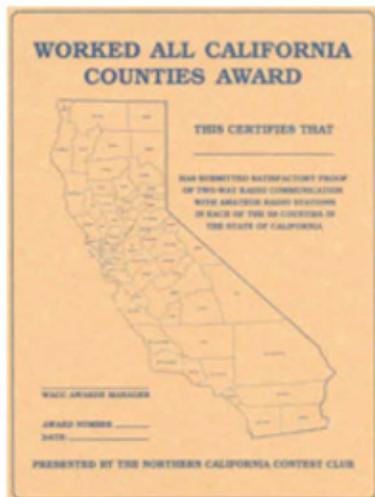
Every station that submits a log is eligible for an achievement certificate and there are several operating categories where the leader receives a special CQP plaque for proud display on the shack wall. Of course, since we are in California, the top 20 scores submitted in California and

Outside California qualify for a special award – a bottle of NCCC Private Reserve Wine with personalized label. The wine is graciously donated by Twisted Oak Winery and is a limited production Tempranillo crafted by wine maker and NCCC member Jeff Stai, WK6I.

Three categories are designed to encourage operation in contests:

- YL award
- Youth (< 18) award
- California New Contester

So if you've never entered a contest or have only dabbled in the past, this award category is for you!



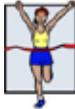
If you work all 58 counties, you qualify for the “Worked All California Counties Award” sponsored by NCCC.

You can find the full rules and award details on the CQP web site at <http://www.cqp.org>.

Part time or full, home operator or an expedition to a new county, CQP is a blast!

We hope you will join us this year and have a lot of Fun!

**Stu Phillips – K6TU, NCCC President**  
**Alan Eshleman, K6SRZ, CQP Chair**



### REDXA Honor Roll

WARC BANDS					
30M		17M		12M	
W6XA	326	W6XA	335	W6XA	327
K6RIM	319	K6RIM	329	K6RIM	294
N60J	221	N60J	317	N60J	233
K6ANP	169	N7PIB	167	N6IE	134
N6IE	165	N6IE	165	N7PIB	120
K6SRZ	154	K6ANP	162	K6SRZ	106
AG6V	3	K6SRZ	143	W6SFK	87
W6SFK	12	W6SFK	108	K6ANP	72
N6GY	3	N6GY	8	N6GY	47
		WW6D	6		

N6IE gets in the top 5

N6GY adds 25 new ones!

N6GY adds 42 new ones!

ARRL DX Challenge	
W6XA	2985
K6RIM	2530
K6ANP	2131
K6SRZ	1770
N60J	1674
N6IE	1256
N7PIB	1123
W6SFK	338

N6IE moving on up

160 Meters	
W6XA	224
W6OSP	177
K6ANP	158
K6SRZ	150
K6RIM	55
N60J	57
N6IE	37
N7PIB	15

N6IE enters the fray

1.5K Club	
W6XA	1689
K6RIM	1588
K6ANP	1371
N60J	1352
K6SRZ	1124
N6IE	1043
W6SFK	495
N6GY	148

W6XA still at the top

**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	169
W6XA	130
K6RIM	14
K6ANP	6
W6SFK	2

K6QXY adds another new one

RTTY/Digital	
N60J	298
K6RIM	253
N6IE	185
W6XA	162
W6SFK	135
K6SRZ	140
K6ANP	123

N6IE moves into 3<sup>rd</sup> place

Send your REDXA Honor Roll updates to:  
[jselmi@hotmail.com](mailto:jselmi@hotmail.com)  
 Updated 9-6-12

Mobile DX	
N7PIB	121
K6JS	66
W6SFK	3

N7PIB King of the mobiles in the Redwood Empire

DXCC Mixed	
K6RIM	366
N60J	360
W6OSP	353
W6XA	352
K6SRZ	346
W6SFK	222

W6SFK works 5 new ones

**California QSO Party**

**ADMIT ONE**

Here's Your Ticket To  
The Most Popular  
State QSO Party On  
The Planet!

**October 6-7, 2012**  
1600 UTC Oct 6 to 2200 UTC Oct 7



Grab a CA QSO or County  
For That New Certificate!

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USA Counties Award  
Worked All States  
Worked All California Counties

Great Prizes & Awards!

Complete Rules & Info:  
**www.cqp.org**

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**MEETING: SEPTEMBER 12, 2012**

