

# SUNSPOTS

REDWOOD EMPIRE DX ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 750834, Petaluma, CA 94975

Volume xxv

Number IV

April 2022

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## Meeting Announcement

Yes, we're meeting oWednesday May 11 at the Boulevard Café. Gathering starts at 6:00 PDT with program TBA at 7:00.

## President's Commentary

Hello REDXA members and quests! Nice to see you all in person last month. Although we didn't have our standard old meetings with a presenter it was a nice warm up. I expect most of our meetings will still be ZOOM until further notice. With the big screen TV we can also get folks who are unable to make the meeting but still want to drop by and listen in. Who knows where Fred might be?!

Thanks to the San Francisco Dx group(Tony Dowler) I was able to deliver all of the qsl cards to them so they can get that mess sorted out. It was almost two year's worth of cards but they will handle it all.

I'll check in with Dan the owner of the restaurant this week but I wanted to get an idea if it's better for him to have the usual set menu with three choices or if he's good with everyone choosing their own. I think it may be easier for him to have the 3 items since he has to open up the restaurant just for our group. I am overjoyed that he

*President's commentary continued from previous page*

wants to continue doing Wednesday nights.

This month's program is—as far as your editor knows—TBA. If I get more information, I'll post a bulletin

In the meantime, I hope everyone is doing well and our hearts go out to Joe Olsen AA6BV who's wife Nora (KE6UVR) passed away on April 4th. Take care everyone!

## Treasurer's Report

Outgo: \$350.00 (Field Day deposit to Marin Rod and Gun Club)

Income: 2 dues at \$20.00= \$40.00

Raffle from live meeting:\$37.00

Balance as of April 20: \$3,385.27

Submitted by:

Fred Leoni- N6YEU Treasurer

[Sent from the all new AOL app for Android](#)

## April Minutes

We had our first Wednesday evening meeting at The Boulevard Cafe in quite some time. We also met for a Saturday lunch at the Café during March, where we ordered individual dishes off the main menu. Saturday lunch meetings are not proving popular.

Our Zoom presenter was Carl, K9LA, who shared his DXPedition experiences to Market Reef and other exotic locations and his thoughts on the current sunspot cycle.

We need about 20 attendees to make it work financially for the Cafe. The fixed price of \$35 per attendee was also not popular. We decided to augment our payment to the Cafe from club funds if we don't have enough attendees the next time. This plan will be reviewed again at the next meeting.

Our president, Bill WX6B, announced a REDXA contest to see who can work the TX5N Austral Island (Raivavae) expedition (4/15- )with lots of awards! The expedition leader, Steve, W1SRD, has been a REDXA guest with excellent presentations. TX5N has good ops, equipment and antennas and some top operators from the Bay Area so It should be a good DXPedition! [ed: it is!]

From the TX5N Web site:

We will be using Elecraft K3 radios, a Flex PGXL amplifier and two Elecraft KPA-500 amplifiers. Several items will be hand carried to the island, including a Gemini DX-1200 amplifier and RadioSport headsets. Antennas are monoband VDAs for HF, one inverted-L for 160, two SteppIR BigIR w/80m vertical antennas and an NA4RR hexbeam for 10-20m. The team will operate CW, SSB and Digital. As Internet is available the logs will be uploaded daily.

It was decided that with COVID holding down participation, field day is likely cancelled for for this year. [ed. Not sure if this a done deal.]

## March Minutes

Our President Bill WX6B chaired our our first in-person meeting in several years at the Boulevard Cafe on Sat. noon 3/12/22. Attendance was good with 19 and Fred N6YEU was onboard via Zoom in Ohio as he continues his travels and POTA activations.

It was agreed that future meetings would resume in-person on 2nd Wed. at 6pm at Boulevard Cafe.

Bill WX6B gave an update on his rebuild after the fire followed by Bob K6QXY who lost not only his home and station but his commercial site on the mountains. In general the insurance companies received higher grades than the county! Bob had some 6M equipment at Josh's (W6XU) QTH. Bob and Josh received a new 1.5kw solid state 6m amp and have already used it to work some EME dxpeditions!

Field Day is on at the Rod and Gun Club. Ron N6IE put out a detailed plan into March Sunspots.

Bill WX6B inherited the W6 qsl cards from the former Bureau manager, who is now a silent key. We are looking for people/organizations to help continue the service and take over the job of W6 QSL bureau QSL manager. Bill has a large number of cards which appear to be presorted by callsign. This is a chance to give back to a hobby we all love. NCDXC sent out this email which goes into more detail: [see following page]

### *Members-*

*By now you may have heard that we have lost fellow member and Manager of the 6th District Incoming Bureau, Robert Devine KC6AWX (SK). He will be greatly missed, and our condolences go out to his surviving daughter.*

*The Northern California DX Club has been approached by Pacific Division Director, Kristen McIntyre (K6WX) in hope of finding a replacement for Bob as soon as possible. So, I ask you*

*to think about taking on the position. It would be of great service to our California DX community. A bit of information of which you should be aware. The 'buro" as it stands is in*

## Continued from previous page

*a bit of a mess. Before his passing, Bob was having staffing problems, having lost a few sorters to health issues. The new manager will need to take care of the associated bank account, Bureau website, and a healthy back log of QSL card boxes that have not yet been forwarded to their sorters.*

*On the "back log" there may be a chance of forming a team to help clear that out to help the new volunteer.)*

*Yes, it's a lot to ask of someone, but it is a necessary position that must be filled. Please, if you feel that you might like to try handling this job drop me an immediate email to*

*Thank you!*

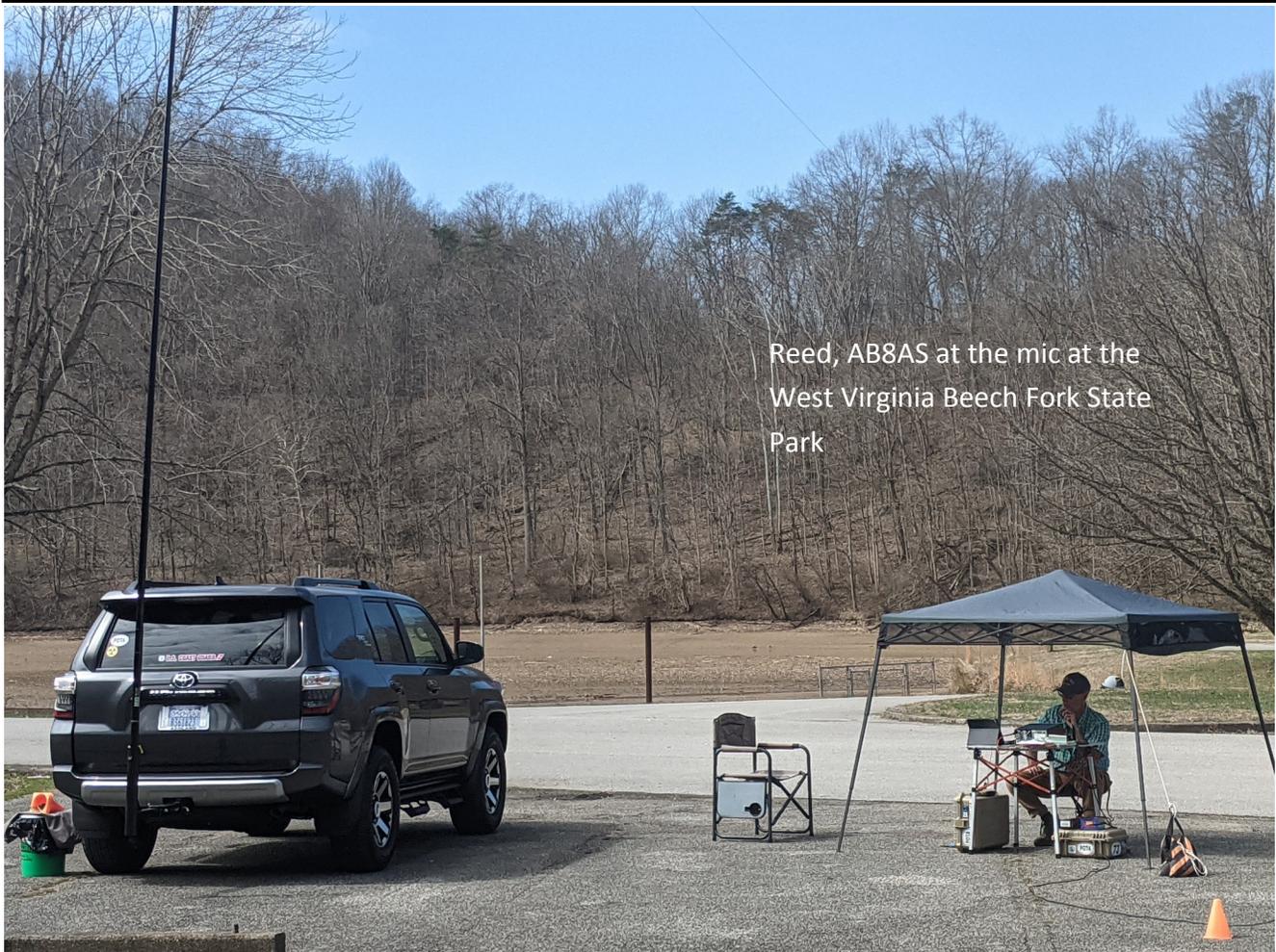
*73 de,*

*Tony Dowler K6BVPresident, NCDXC*



## N6YEU's Further POTA Adventures

While on a recent trip back to West Virginia and later to Disney World I was able to do a Parks on the Air activation while in WV. I did not bring along my radio gear this time. How did I activate then? Well about a month before the trip I had a qso with AB8AS - Reed who lives close to my daughter's place and is a big POTA activator. He said to look him up when I got back there so I did. He invited me to tag along to the local Beech Fork State Park ( where I have activated in the past). He provided the radio gear and antenna. He made 20 qsos or so then handed the mic to me. I made just over 60 qsos in about an hour on 40 ssb and 20 ssb ( including San N7 PIB). It was nice to have an " eyeball" qso with Reed after working him 3-4 times over the years. Good fun was had by both.





## The 800-pound gorilla in the shack

By your editor

The past few weeks have been an absolute delight for us DXers. The SFI has been more than 160 for days on end. Ten meters—remember 10 meters?—has been open all over the globe. DXpeditions are happening. We can check the spotting networks, wade into the pileups, and try to find the best place to work split. And we can check Club Log or LOTW to see if they got our call right and maybe even confirmed an ATNO.

We're also having the opportunity to give our nifty new equipment a good workout. SDR and advanced signal processing makes it easier on our ears. And if we have solid state amps—as so many of us now do—we can check a spot and jump right in without having tubes to warm up. FT-8 has made it possible to work stations we can't even hear.

*It's all good except...there's an 800-pound gorilla sitting in the corner of the shack.*

At our most recent REDXA meeting it became apparent that there weren't enough attendees to cover the Boulevard Café's costs, even with the new \$35/plate charge.

The twin scourges of COVID and the inexorable march of age are thinning the ranks of "classical" DXers. Climbing under the operating desk to fix a loose wire has actually become physically demanding. Lifting an amplifier into place on a shelf is a recipe for back strain. Climbing a tower is completely out of the question for all but a few.

The hoped-for influx of new, young HF operators hasn't materialized. QST periodically runs stories about school and club-based efforts to get batches of young people licensed. While the stories may be true, there has not been a corresponding increase in HF operators. In truth, when most of these new hams get on the air it's to ping a repeater with their HTs.

Imagine if you are, say, a 12-year old boy or girl with a cell phone and a high speed broad band connection for your desk top at home. What are the odds that you are going to do the study and purchase the equipment needed for HF work? How many of these kids (and their parents) are going to go through the permitting process to put a 35-foot tower in their backyard and likely incur the wrath of their neighbors?

*It's not happening and it's not going to happen.*

Why would it? Why when you have a device that fits in your pocket and gives you instant access to the Internet, and, more importantly, to your friends who all have the same kind of devices in their pockets or purses?

The 800-pound gorilla—to continue with zoological references—says we are dinosaurs, plodding along to the next ionospheric waterhole. Have you ever entered the All Asian contest? The contest exchange is the year you were first licensed. As you might suspect the number of years between "first licensed" and one's current age has been increasing.

So what's a dinosaur to do? I'd say accept your status. Don't obsess over schemes to increase the numbers of HF operators. *Be a happy dinosaur.* Get some exercise and take your meds. Share your knowledge and resources with other hams. If you do encounter a youngster (or an adult) who is interested in what you are doing with that big antenna in your yard, invite them to visit your shack and see what it's all about.

In the meantime, gather ye ATNOs while you may.

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“Sunspots” welcomes arguments to the contrary



Ron Castro, N6IE

Field Day Chairman

Redwood Empire DX Assn.

**2022 Field Day is June 25-26.**

***Please join us***

Ed: Ron will likely do a Power Point presentation at the meeting just preceding Field Day.

**Back to the Marin Rod and Gun Club for Field Day 2022**

