

We'll be ZOOMing our next Meeting

Time 7:00 PM January 12
(Wednesday)

ZOOM: meeting 899 2044 1717

[Here's how to join a ZOOM meeting:](#)

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89920441717?
pwd=U29pSGlXa1BJc2lxLy9xVWZJUFhSZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89920441717?pwd=U29pSGlXa1BJc2lxLy9xVWZJUFhSZz09)

There's also a direct link to ZOOM posted at:

[http: www.redxa.com/](http://www.redxa.com/) Check your email for the "Meeting ID" and password. You should have received an email with this information. If not, contact one

SUNSPOTS



REDWOOD EMPIRE DX ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 750834, Petaluma, CA 94975

Volume XXIIIV

Number I

January 2022

Club Officers:

PRESIDENT:

Bill Sirvatka, WX6B
billys95402@icloud.com

VICE PRESIDENT:

Roger Cooper, N3RC
rogern3rc@gmail.com

SECRETARY:

Roger Cooper, N3RC
rogern3rc@gmail.com

TREASURER:

Fred Leoni
N6YEU@aol.com

DIRECTORS:

Josh Fiden, W6XU
Ed Schuller, K6CTA

EDITOR:

Alan Eshleman, K6SRZ

Meeting Announcement

ZOOM Meeting January 12

Please look at Bill's President's commentary. The questions it raises will form the basis of our meeting discussion. Dealing with them will help ensure that REDXA has a positive future.

President's Commentary

Make REDXA Great Again

2022

Well, where does one start? How about "happy to put 2021 behind me" and hoping for a better 2022?

As your newly designated President once again, I'm going to have to invoke the nuclear option and take you all back to the good old days and I suspect this won't be easy. Ham radio and its operators

Commentary continued on the following 2 pages

are a very unique and miniscule group of people engaged in a rare and somewhat obscure hobby. Folks who visit my newly rebuilt fireproof homestead wonder what the hell those big antennas and towers are for and what is the point of it all. This is probably a question we all ponder at some point.

We spend thousands of dollars, sit in front of a radio and communicate in some form or fashion to perfectly innocent people around the world and call it fun. What aspects of this hobby are those that keep you coming back and engaged? You can choose SSB, CW, FT8, digital, SOTA/POTA contesting, chasing DX and so forth. You may like to build radios, erect antennas and towers or rag chew. There are numerous directions to take and if this is truly your passion, you'll never get bored.

What is it that gets *you* to sit down and play radio? Each of us is different and we probably have evolved or will over time to keep this enthusiasm alive. With that being said, we need to define/redefine our purpose within REDXA. What is our reason or the direction we want to take as a club? With Covid, sub par band conditions, apathy and attrition setting in, it will be imperative that we have discussions around what makes us a club. How will we maintain membership and what will attract members to REDXA meetings?

When we meet live in March our meeting will be centered around regrouping, sharing ideas and finding out what it is that will keep us moving forward. There has to be some value in attending club or zoom meetings. Without value we have seen just a handful of members actually engaged in any of the past meetings. The hard and realistic question is: "what's the point of being a club" if there's no value or content? We need to get back on track, stimulate our members, and deliver enough interest that people will want to show up!

So be prepared to share your thoughts in March. I want to get the biggest attendance ever and celebrate the hobby. I want to see all of your ugly faces in person (women excluded here), eat, drink and be merry. We can outline our future and re-establish our mission statement as a club and get drunk. To ease back into this protocol, I have chosen to meet quarterly this year and throw in some zoom sessions between our in-person meetings. We can see how it goes. Daniel, the proprietor of the Boulevard Café has opened his doors to us on Saturdays. This may be problematic for many of us. Perhaps as things evolve, we can get back to monthly Wednesday night meetings. Right now, we'll see what the members want and confirm the direction we will take as a club. We will try those Saturday meetings for now.

On a more positive note, we have turned the corner with the sunspot cycle and maybe this will be instrumental in getting our blood flowing again. Maybe we try to do a few more contests as a club that are better organized. There will be new rules and codes to live by this year as I've tried to instill in the past. You will clean yourselves up and be presentable in public. You will need to get off the chair and start exercising your waste lines (the word waste is intentional). Those of you with experience, talent, skills and huge stations will need to open up your doors to the underlings and educate/help those less fortunate or new to the hobby. If you all continue to stay the old course this club will fail and you'll find yourselves old, cold, cranky and lonely once again. We will revisit the roster and delete those who have left for one reason or another. We should all try to attract new members and invite them to attend meetings.

Our plate is full if we want to have a REDXA club. You will need to show up and maybe

take on some responsibilities that will keep us motivated.

Enough of my lecturing for now. It will continue as will the beatings if you don't change your behavior!

Happy New Year. Best of health to all of you. Stay safe and dust yourselves off. The sheriff is back!

Bill, WX6B





Xiegu G1M

A QRP rig



Xiegu X6100

Also QRP using Linux-based SDR

From Roger, N3RC

Radioddity, a new ham radio equipment supplier.

With the new RV, I have gotten into Parks on the Air(POTA).

Did my first activation in Sonoma County State Park a couple of weeks ago I used a Hustler whip on RV ladder and worked about a dozen folks, mostly 20 CW. It was lots of fun. I used my TS-2000. Then I decided to buy a new rig for the RV.

I ordered a Xiegu G1M(5W), XP125B 100w amp, and X6100(10w SDR) which were to ship in Feb. I Received the G1M within a week. The G1M had a firmware upgrade, which, after installing that did not work. So I sent email to Radioddity (they are in Hong Kong) and lo and behold a ham who is their rep in the States called me up. We went through the firmware update again and he declared the rig inoperative. I immediately got a refund on Pay-Pal. The rep was very good and told me that Xiegu is small (100 employees) and Radioddity is a bunch of young folks in Hong Kong.

I joined the Xiegu [GROUPS.IO](https://groups.io/g/xiegu) and watched all the YouTube videos on the X6100. The X6100 rig has great possibilities, especially at about \$650. It is a Linux based SDR which someone hacked about a week ago which means users can change the software, a two edged sword but a very powerful one.

The customer service was fast and superb. Keep them in mind!

73 Roger N3RC

DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

by Doug WW6D, Secretary

The monthly meeting was held on Zoom December 8, 2021. Social hour began at 6:30 pm, hosted by President Roger Cooper, N3RC. Formal meeting began at 7:02 pm. During the meeting, 15 participants were noted, including the speaker.

Program: 'JTAlert' for WSJT-X by Rob NaNoce AG6RK. Rob made a wonderful presentation, first going over the basics of WSJT-X and then expounding on the many useful features of JTAlert, a free download that greatly makes use of the WSJT-X program when using FT8 or other related modes. JTAlert was written (and continues to be supported) by Laurie VK3AMA and is available at: <https://hamapps.com/>. A particularly useful feature is the "worked B4" capability to eliminate unnecessarily calling a station you've already worked.

Old business: Following up from last month, Al K6RIM has been calling people urging them to renew. Out of about 25 calls, 9-10 have indicated that they will renew. Fred N6YEU our treasurer reported that several people are now using the on-line system to pay their dues. The Petaluma post office box is still a viable method; here is the address:

REDXA
PO Box 750834
Petaluma, CA 94975

New business: Minutes and Treasurer's report for November were approved as published in the Sunspots newsletter.

Roger then reiterated the current slate of officers and directors up for election:

President: Bill WX6B
VP: Roger N3RC
Secretary: Roger N3RC
Treasurer: Fred N6YEU
Director: Josh W6XU
Director: Ed K6CTA

(Note: other positions, subject to the new Board of Directors approval are Newsletter Editor, Alan K6SRZ, Contest Chair, Roger N3RC and Webmaster, Doug WW6D.)

After Roger prompted for a motion to approve, Jim K6JS did so. It was seconded and unanimously approved by voice vote of the meeting participants.

The meeting then continued with discussion about in-person meetings. Roger was hoping for more information by meeting time but there are several loose ends to tie up before we get the go ahead. It is expected that we will meeting on a Saturday around noon at the Boulevard Café in Petaluma. Check the web site for updates.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events

by Doug WW6D

Jan 12 * REDXA Monthly Meeting ???

Apr 8-10 **Visalia International DX Convention**



Treasurer's Report

Balance on 30 November: \$3,272.58

December income: \$274.74
(dues from checks and online Square app)

Expenses:

December : \$21.43 (call badge)
 \$100.62 (Zoom renewal)

Balance as of 31 December: \$3446.70

Respectfully submitted by
Fred-N6YEU Treasurer





Most of you in REDXA know that Bob, k6QXY's commercial and ham radio site was destroyed by one of the wildfires swept through the county. The good news is that Bob is rebuilding. Bob is having help from Adam, KD6POC and from Steve, W6SFK. Steve contributed a series of elegant drawings to help with the permitting process. Permitting was apparently easier for the commercial operation than for the ham radio towers.

Here's a note from Bob to Steve;

"Hi Steve,

*I cannot thank you enough for ALL
YOUR GREAT HELP !!!!!*

I am slowly re building my station I now have a FT DX 10 Josh [W6XU] set me up with a new high speed computer and two monitors for FT 8, JT65 & Q65. All the gear remains with W6XU for testing,

I have new feed lines from my one good tower to temporary shack with a pair of 8 element beams fixed on Asia in place and a pair of 6 element beams for Europe ready to go up. After that, I will stack a couple of 5-el yagis on the SCRA tower and aim them for the South Pacific.

WE have a new W6PQL amp over at Josh's for EME. I will bring my old M2 S/S amp back up to Castle Rock so I will have a KW on 6 METERS.

MORE LATER. Again, thanks for all your HELP !!!!!!!!!!!!!

Here's hoping for some REAL DX in Cycle 25,



N6YEU/P at Jack London State Park

Parks on the Air Activity, from Fred, N6YEU

As I've previously mentioned, I have been enjoying participating in the Parks on the Air (POTA) program both as a "hunter" and an "activator". During my cross country trip this past fall I operated from 18 different parks in CA, WA, MT, ND, Ontario, VT, RI, PA, WV, TN, VA, MS, TX and AZ. I made more than 3,000 QSOs during the trip.

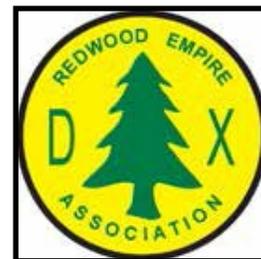
After being home for a few weeks, I started going through activation withdrawal so I decided to hit a couple local parks. I went to Trione-Annadel State Park K-1124 (parked at a rear entrance near Kenwood side of park) and had 55 qsos. I moved later to Jack London State Park K-3448 for 116 qsos. Good fun!

As a "hunter" here at home I recently earned POTA Worked All States (at least one park in all 50 states) and achieved an award for 600 parks worked. Two other REDXA members that are quite active as "hunters" are San, N7PIB and Mel, AB6QM who are way ahead of me in the POTA standings.. Joe-AA0BV has also activated several local parks. Congrats guys!

While I am sitting around waiting for the DX conditions to improve (especially to Mount Athos-SV2RSG/a-for an ATNO) I will continue to hone my skills chasing parks. For more information go to <https://parksontheair.com/>



Your editor is no fan of FT-8, but, c'mon this is 2022. The sexist stuff is getting old. There are plenty of female CW operators that can leave you in their dust. This is from the POTA Facebook page.



Kathleen Parkin, born in Bolinas and grew up in San Rafael. She's been featured on these pages before

Allow Us to Present Miss Kathleen Parkin, Expert Radio Operator at Fifteen Years of Age. She has made her own apparatus.

Editors Note

First, my thanks to Saraj, KU6F, for stepping in as “Sunspots” editor at the point that I simply could not carry out many of my duties.

As some of you know, my wife died unexpectedly in October. The grief process and the accompanying depression made it more than I could handle with respect to maintaining a home, dealing with bankers, getting enough exercise, DXing, and putting out a monthly issue of “Sunspots” to name but a few activities.

It gets a little better day-by-day, but it will never go away completely. I know that. You can help by sending me material for the newsletter.

When more energy returns, perhaps I can generate my own material.

Thanks for your understanding,

73 & 88,

Alan, K6SRZ

