

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

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

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at Gourmet Garden 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 Elecraft's co-owner Eric Swartz, WA6HHQ. Eric will fill us in on the latest developments of the popular 'K-Line' and show us some new accessories that may soon find a home in your shack!

REDXA President's Report

The New Ascendance of Amateur Radio

In the three decades following World War II, amateur radio went through a major growth period, spurred by several factors, including large numbers of communications-trained military personnel who served in the war and later turned their training into a hobby, the growth of the suburbs where hams could put up at least modest antennas, and the generally good post-war economy. Plus, it was 'cool' to be able to talk across the country and around the world for free at a time when long-distance phone calls were expensive and required the help of an operator.

In 1964, ham radio scored big points for public service during the massive Alaska earthquake that knocked out all commercial communications and even military communications with the 'lower 48'. Off-the-shelf equipment from companies like Viking, Heathkit, Collins,



Halicrafters, Hammerlund and others made getting on the air easy and within the budgets of people of ordinary means. Young folks like me and many members of our club were attracted to ham radio and got our licenses while we were still teenagers. Famous people were hams, like Arthur Godfrey, Walter Cronkite, Senator Barry Goldwater, General Curtis LeMay, Marlon Brando, and even “Peggy Sue”, the object of Buddy Holly’s hit song became a licensed ham!

All of that began to change when cell phones, inexpensive long-distance phone rates and the Internet became ubiquitous. Men had walked on the moon, people had computers on their desks and satellites could be accessed directly from users’ homes for TV broadcasts. Our ability to send signals to distant places lost its luster. Been there, done that. As the ‘old-timers’ from the early days began to pass on, ham radio’s numbers began to dwindle. It looked like our hobby, which had been so vibrant just a few decades earlier was headed for the great dust-bin of history.

Now the good news! Since the FCC removed the code requirements, there are signs that ham radio is making a come-back and we’re seeing more evidence of this every day. I was struck by this two weeks ago when Leo Laporte dedicated his entire Sunday program on KGO, which was broadcast from the Pacificon convention in Santa Clara, to amateur radio. Bob Heil’s Ham Nation podcast on TWiT TV has been attracting large audiences and has moved hundreds of viewers to start studying for their exams. On the public service side, hams have been active and visible in major emergencies such as hurricane Katrina and many that have occurred since then. On the tech side, the Internet has become so common-place that those who like the cutting edge are beginning to find it boring, are looking to new horizons to explore and rediscovering the excitement of throwing an electromagnetic wave into the air and finding the exotic places where it lands. The ARRL has redoubled its efforts to reach young potential hams with its fine educational programs being offered to schools around the nation.

This phenomenon is not only happening in the USA, but around the world as well. Thailand

recently introduced a new basic ham radio license program and in the past couple of years an astounding 250,000 Thais have become hams. Many of our top DXpeditioners are leaving some of their equipment behind in the rare places they visit so that local populations can build an interest in ham radio and get on the air.

I believe that Ham radio is once again in its ascendency and I believe that those of us who have enjoyed this hobby for so many years of our lives should do what we can to help it grow to the popularity of previous decades. We should talk about the fun of amateur radio whenever and wherever we have the opportunity. Invite people to visit our annual Field Day exercise or to join us at a REDXA club meeting. Encourage people you know to learn more about our exciting pastime. Be an ambassador for ham radio!

One of the great things about ham radio is how small American businesses have been able to successfully challenge and compete with the big Asian companies by introducing innovative, high performance equipment, backed by excellent customer service, to the marketplace. One of the most successful among them is Elecraft, headquartered in Aptos, CA., which is why we’re honored to have as our guest speaker this month Elecraft’s co-owner Eric Swartz, WA6HHQ. Eric will fill us in on the latest developments of the popular ‘K-Line’ and show us some new accessories that may soon find a home in your shack! Join us for a great REDXA presentation, Wednesday, November 9th at the Gourmet Garden in Petaluma.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING OCTOBER 2011

by Wally, N6AD

The vendor call list for the Christmas Party prize solicitation effort was distributed.

The slate of board candidates for 2012 was reported as complete.

Alan K6SRZ and Josh W6XU were recruited for the Spirit Award committee.

OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

by Wally, N6AD

President Ron N6IE called the meeting to order at 7:42 pm, October 12, 2011 at the Gourmet Garden in Petaluma. In attendance were 24 members and one guest. Ron requested a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting and the Treasurer's Report as published in Sunspots. Both were moved for approval, seconded and adopted.

Old Business:

Regarding this year's recent CQP effort, Ron remarked that as of this writing REDXA is ahead of Motherlode DX and Contest Club. We could win!

Ron attended the Marin Amateur Radio Club Annual Picnic. It was a great time, despite the yellow jackets.

New Business:

Pacificon will be held this year October 12 - 14 at the Marriott Hotel. There will be many seminars, including one hosted by our presenters this evening. 7000 hams are expected. Check out <http://www.pacificon.org/>

Chuck N6OJ suggested updating club roster addresses etc by passing around a list at the next meeting.

Rick K6ZWB reported on his recent vacation at the bed and breakfast establishment of KH6RC on the Big Island of Hawaii. Nice station, great breakfasts, black sand beaches. For more information look Randy up on QRZ.

Upcoming Meetings:

November	Eric Swartz WA6HHQ on new Elecraft products
December	Christmas party and REDXA elections
January	N6PSE on ST0R DXpedition to Southern Sudan
February	Joint meeting with NCCC
March	Open

The raffle was won by Bruce W6OSP, who graciously donated back to the club.

The main feature of the evening, Paper Antennas for 432 mHz and Above, was presented by John Watros K6PZB and Glenn Elmore N6GN.

Our distinguished presenters described their Flying Antenna model, which uses Surface Wave Transmission Line (SWTL) and conical shaped 'launchers' made of metalized paper, all suspended by helium filled balloons at heights of 100 to 250 feet or more. The system is very broadband and light weight. Spectacular results are possible using only a few watts. We were treated to a live demonstration. For more information see <http://jwatrous.org/AntennaArticleDraft7.3.pdf>

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Treasurer Report

by Jim, K6JS

REDXA TREASURER'S REPORT

9/30/11 Balance Forward		\$2,106.77
INCOME		
Dues	160.00	
Raffle	80.00	
TOTAL INCOME		240.00
EXPENSES		
Meals	30.05	
TOTAL EXPENSES		(30.05)
10/31/11 Ending Balance		<u>\$2,316.72</u>

REDXA membership renewal is due. Please submit your dues 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.

Monthly San Francisco Section News Summary

Here is the link for the News Summary:
<http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=SF>

REDXA Contest Scores

by Jim, K6JS

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB

Call	Class	QSOs	Zones	Countries	Score
AA6YX	SOAB HP	576	91	183	430,728
K6SRZ	SOAB(A) HP	251	80	172	182,413
K6JS	SOAB LP	283	76	146	178,932

Contesting and DX News

by Jim, K6JS

Our CQP rivalry with the Motherlode DX/Contest club is going down to the wire. I checked the CQP log submission webpage after the log submission deadline. It appears the MLDXCC submitted 24 logs for 2,951,841 points and we submitted 28 logs for 2,908,006 points. They are ahead by a mere 42,835 points. These are preliminary numbers as log checking is still in progress and I'm sure some of the scores from the Multi Multi's need to be divided. We'll just have to wait and see how this one plays out. Kudos to all the members that participated! Thank you all for a commendable effort, this is our best effort to date.

Speaking of MLDXCC, I was reading their October newsletter and they mentioned the idea of a joint meeting between MLDXCC and REDXA just to get members of the two clubs to meet and get to know each other better. Visalia was suggested as a location. It's a good opportunity for a meeting of perennial CQP rival ops.

The band conditions were awesome for the CQWW SSB contest. The K3LR, KC1XX and W3LPL super stations posted some amazing scores. K3LR came out on top with over 37 million points. Don't miss the fun of CQWW CW on November 26th and 27th, which will close out the month for contests.

The 78th annual ARRL November CW sweepstakes is happening this weekend. The fun starts this Saturday, Nov 5th at 2pm (2100UTC) local time and runs through 6:59 pm local time(0259) Monday Nov 7th. Remember the clocks roll back an hour during the contest. Last year the Solar Flux for the CW Sweepstakes was a wimpy 84 and 10m never

showed up, this year should be quite different with the solar flux presently at 154. The predicted SFI value is forecasted at 135, a huge improvement over last year and recent conditions show that 10 and 15 are wide open. Even with an elevated K index, domestic conditions have been good and the K value is declining as we head into the SS CW weekend. 10m will be open with strong signals into the mid-West or better and should give up Q's for a few good hours before you have to move to 15M, but don't QSY too late or you'll miss the opportunity of staking out a 15M run frequency.

If CW is not your thing, consider joining the fun on November 19th – 21st, which is the 78th running of the ARRL's November Phone sweepstakes.

Our own K6SRZ received a 1st place plaque for 2010 November Sweepstakes CW for the San Francisco division and he set a new section record. Way to go Alan!

Additionally, another REDXA member received 2 division sweepstakes plaques. Bill, N6ZFO received the 2010 SS CW Pacific Division high score plaque in the "A" category. He also received the Pacific Division high score plaque for 2010 SS Phone "A" category. Bill's goal for this weekend is a new SF section record in the "B" category. Great Job and good luck Bill!

I was twirling the dial on 10 meters on my way home from work the other evening. Low and behold I hear REDXA member NM6E CQ'ing away. Javier and his growing family now live in Austin, Texas. He mentioned he has a 3rd harmonic on the way. Congratulations to the soon to be new addition to their family. Javier is always great about giving us Q's during CQP and he mentioned he heard and worked numerous REDXA members. He was surprised at the amount of activity out of the North Bay. We had a great ragchew for about 30 minutes as I drove north up highway 101 until the sun dipped below the coastal mountains and so did the QSO. He was gone just like that, it's nice to have 10 meters back...

On the DX Front

The bands were hot as a pistol at the start of October as robust solar activity continues. The daily sunspot number broke another record for Solar Cycle 24 when it rose to 207. You have to look back

to November 26, 2003 when it was two points higher – 209 -- to find a number at least as high. REDXA members were very active filling band/mode slots with T32C, a quick check of Club Log shows K6RIM with 36 of 39 slots, N6OJ and W6GMP round out the top 3. We now have 19 members and are the number one club based on average DXCC's. Our closest competitor is 11 DXCC's away. Many REDX'ers worked T32C on 10 meter FM, I even worked them on 10 meters FM mobile!

Bob, K6QXY reports we are finally seeing some real F2 on 6. He's seeing ZL video almost daily at 45.240, 250, and 260 MHZ and some VK video at 46.172MHZ. These are the MUF indicators for the South Pacific path. They also have been experiencing Transequatorial propagation(TEP) around 0400Z to the South Pacific. He has managed to work several VK, ZL stations along with FK8, TX7, and OA4. These paths generally start appearing around 3pm to 8pm local time. This has been quite a month for October F2 to South America and F2, TEP to the South Pacific. Look for the JA path to improve in November.

The following will stations will keep you busy during the month of November. A complete list of current DX operations can be found on the NG3K website.

5Z, KENYA (Update/Date Change)
Sigi, DL7DF, will be on holiday with his XYL Sabine in Kenya between November 23rd and December 6th. He plans to be active as 5Z4HW and operate on all bands, 160-10 meters using CW, SBB, RTTY, PSK31 and SSTV as often as possible. The location is the Diani Beach at the coastline of Kenyanear Mombasa. QSL via his home callsign, direct or by the DARC Bureau. For more details and updates, visit: <http://www.dl7df.com/5z/index.html>

7Q, MALAWI (Update)
Operators Rob/GM3YTS and Gav/GM0GAV will be active as 7Q7GM between October 31st and November 13th. Activity will be CW only with a focus on the low bands, especially 160/80m. They are hoping to have an online log available. Look for all QSOs to be uploaded to LoTW as soon as they return home. QSL via GM4FDM. They now have a

Blog page for this operation with news and updates at:<http://7q7gm.blogspot.com>

9H, MALTA

Zoltan, HA5PP, will be active as 9H3PP during the CQWW DX CW Contest (November 26-27) as a Single-Op/All-Band entry. He will be there between November 24-29. Activity outside of the contest will be on 80-10 meters mainly on CW (possibly some SSB) while testing out the antennas for the contest. QSL via HA5PP.

9L, SIERRA LEONE

Dr. Karl-Heinz Ilg, DK2WV, will once again be active from here and lead another team of operators consisting of Jan/DJ8NK, Andy/DL5CW, Andreas/DL9USA and Heye/DJ9RR. They will be active as 9L0W from Banana Island (AF-037) between November 22nd and December 4th. Activity will be on 160-10 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK. Operations will also include participation in the CQWW DX CW Contest. QSL via DK2WV. For more details and update, visit: <http://www.mdx.org/910w>

9N7MD, NEPAL

The dxpedition is organized by the Mediterraneo Dx Club, in Nepal from 13rd to November 25th, will be on air. <http://www.mdx.org/nepal2011/>

AH0, MARIANA ISLANDS

Kazuo, JH8PHT, will be active as AH0KT from Saipan on Northern Mariana Island (OC-086) between November 24-28th. QSL via his home callsign. PLEASE do not QSL to Saipan.

ED9, CEUTA & MELILLA

Operators Paul/DF4SA, Jorge/EA9LZ, Axel/DL6KVA, Zoli/HA1AG, Laszlo/HA3NU and Robert/N5KO will be active as ED9M from Ceuta during the CQWW DX CW Contest (November 26-27th) as a Multi-Single entry. The team will use Spiderbeams and vertical antennas. QSL will be via HA1AG. Log will be automatically uploaded to LoTW "AFTER" the CQWW log submission deadline.

ER4, MOLDOVA

Serge, UT5UDX, will be active as ER4A during both the CQWW DX SSB Contest (October

29-30th) and CQWW DX CW Contest (November 26-27th) as a Single-Op/All-Band entry. QSL via RA4LW direct only.

RADIO ARCALA TEAM POISED TO STRIKE HARD IN CQWW DX SSB CONTEST

A press release sent out by Jarmo, OH2BN, from Helsinki, dated October 25th, states:

"It is that great time of the year when the Northern folks typically head South but now increasingly also allow their own hardware to speak for Nordic supremacy.

MARKET REEF, OJ0X -- Challenging the soon-to-be freezing sea, they try to activate Market Reef for the first time as a CQWW SSB Contest multiplier. If lucky on this week's Thursday landing, OJ0X will be aired by Timo/OG9X, Olli/OH0XX, Martti/OH2BH, Harri/OH6VM and Teemu/SM0W in the Multi-2 category. You can follow their adventure at:<http://www.qrz.com/db/OJ0X>

AZORES ISLANDS, CR2X -- Early Tuesday morning, Toni, OH2UA heads to Radio Arcala's Atlantic outpost to see how improved 10M propagation can push his score to new heights. The Azores station is now furnished with a new dual FTdx5000 setup, with OM Power auto amps at all Radio Arcala stations.

ALAND ISLANDS, OH0X -- The world renowned OH0W site in Brando, Aland Islands, is now integrated into the Radio Arcala station network as OH0X, and an old warhorse Pertti, OH2PM, will be shooting for Northern Europe SOAB honors. Here the old wisdom is to face the challenge of young energy. OH0X cut the finish line first in the recent Polar Battle (CW) - the Scandinavian Activity Contest - with Toni, OH2UA, at the helm.

NORTHERN FINLAND, OH8X -- The Radio Arcala mother-ship on the Arctic Circle is to be manned by Kim, OH6KZP, amid good prospects for openings with polar propagation on all three higher bands. The station recently won the SSB Polar Battle (SAC) with Tonno, ES5TV at the controls.

SOUTHERN FINLAND, OH2BH -- With a slightly different propagation out- look to North and West, Pasi, OH6UM, will try to maneuver somewhere in

between, aiming to show up as a dark horse in this battle and ride the Northern Lights to another mathematical marvel while Martti is seaboard at OJ0X, now in his 50th consecutive CQWW. You have five runners from the Polar Region to look for and nail down. Following the CQWW, these serious stations will present their 'clean sheets' - their success of staying up for 48 hours, without touching their bed sheets! All four are true all-band single-ops committed to following the newly promoted Contesting Code of Conduct due to be released after the race in the upcoming Contest Club Finland's PileUP! magazine, themed 'The Last Blast'.

All CQWW QSOs, SSB and CW, by Radio Arcala stations will be confirmed on a single X-rated QSL card and via LoTW. It is contesting time again at Radio Arcala.

T7, SAN MARINO. Ivo, 9A3A/E73A, will activate the Amateurs Radio Republic of San Marino (A.R.R.S.M.) club station T70A during the CQWW DX CW Contest (November 26-27th) as a Single-Op/All-Band/High-Power entry. QSL via T70A, by the Bureau. Also via LoTW.

XU7 & XV2, CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM. Mal, VK6LC, will be on a "DX Vacation". He is expected to be in Cambodia (XU7) between November 5-20th; callsign was not provided, and he did not mention if he will operate. From XU7, he will then return once again to Vietnam and will be active as XV2LC from Vung Tau between December 2-8th. He states that this will be a dedicated 30 day "Culture Tour" of Cambodia (XU7) in November and Vung Tau, Vietnam, in December (on route for 7 days in October, he will be in 9M2 Malaysia). Activity will be on 20/17/12 meters using CW and SSB. QSL via his home callsign, only direct. He does NOT use the QSL Bureau.

ZD8, ASCENSION ISLAND. Operators Allan/W6HGF/ZD8F and Tom/K7ZZ/ZD8ZZ will be active from Garden Cottage on top of Green Mountain on Ascension Island (AF-003) sometime in early November for two weeks. Look for Allan to focus on RTTY, while Tom will provide the CW operations. QSL via their home callsigns direct only or LoTW.

Many thanks to QRZ DX and OPDX newsletters.

Have fun and good DX.

REDXA Calendar of Upcoming Events:

by Doug, WW6D

Nov 5	ARRL Sweepstakes CW
Nov 9	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Nov 19	ARRL Sweepstakes SSB
Nov 26-27	CQ WW DX CW
Dec 2	ARRL 160 m
Dec 10	ARRL 10 m
Dec 14	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Dec 17-18	Stew Perry Topband Challenge
Jan 1	ARRL Straight Key Night
Jan 11	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Jan 14	NCJ NA QSO Party CW
Jan 21	NCJ NA QSO Party SSB
Jan 27	CQ 160m Contest CW
Feb 4	NCJ NA Sprint CW
Feb 8	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Feb 11	FIST Winter Sprint

Feb 25	NCJ NA QSO Party RTTY
Mar 14	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Apr 11	* REDXA Monthly Meeting
Apr 20-22	Int'l DX Convention, Visalia

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

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MEETING: NOVEMBER 9, 2011

