

THE NUGGET



Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

The Newsletter of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

December 2019

Volume 24 Number 12

From the President - NC6R

As this is the last newsletter for 2019, I'd like to take a moment and thank the outgoing MLDXCC officers, board members and newsletter staff. Without your selfless efforts we could not continue to be a First Class club. I'd also like to thank the incoming officers, board and newsletter editor for your willingness to step up and be a part of the MLDXCC team.

Well, the ARRL 10 meter contest just wrapped up; how did you do? A heartfelt thanks to all the MLDXCC members who turned out, without your participation it would have been pretty bleak. Conditions were spotty at best; signals were often weak with deep fading. Friday night's thunderstorm didn't help matters either.

What about the ARRL Sweepstakes results you ask? Last I heard from Bob W1RH, we were poised to claim our 5th victory in a row in the medium size club category! This is really quite an achievement! The medium size category allows a maximum of 50 logs (CW & SSB combined). Next time you're at a MLDXCC meeting, take a good look around. We're not a

big club; in fact we average about 20 members at any given meeting. To achieve victory for the 5th straight year it took all of MLDXCC working together as a team. I'm very proud of our effort.

The November meeting was held at Mountain Mikes Pizza in Martell. During the business portion of the meeting the slate of officers for year 2020 was presented, a vote taken and was passed unanimously. Lively conversation could be heard around the room as Sweepstakes Phone strategy was discussed.



Again a big shout out to Doug, WE6Z for stepping up as newsletter editor beginning in January 2020.

Although we've been focusing lately on CW & SSB contests, we are also a DX club. The CQ DX Marathon accepts any DX that you've worked during 2019 to be counted toward your final score at the end of the year. Although it takes a full year to see the results, as a club MLDXCC has continued to improve its ranking. Your participation in the CQ DX Marathon contest is highly valued. Please take a moment and submit your log to CQ Marathon, listing MLDXCC as your club. Thank you.

As always, good website resources for upcoming contest and DX announcements are -

Contest calendar dates are listed at - <https://www.contestcalendar.com/index.html>

DX operation announcements can be found at - <https://www.ng3k.com/misc/adxo.html>

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.....see you in 2020.

Steve / NC6R

From the V.P. - W1RH

Hello DX'ers and Contesters and seasons greetings!

Thanks to everyone who helped out in our effort for a 5th Sweepstakes win in a row. This includes those of you who worked your fellow members but didn't submit logs as well as those who did submit logs on behalf of MLDXCC.

As we have every year, we absolutely kicked butt in SS Phone but we can't win the gavel without those CW scores too. This club just

rocks Sweepstakes! Below are the claimed scores for the top clubs in the Medium Club Category (I've included CCO and FCG, even though they currently show over 51 logs. That could change):

CW score/ logs	SSB score/logs	Total	logs		
Mother Lode DX/Contest Club					
1,930,128	24	2,470,960	25	4,401,088	49
Southern California Contest Club					
2,174,740	29	1,259,826	19	3,434,566	48
Florida Contest Group					
1,916,996	27	1,193,460	24	3,110,456	51
Contest Club Ontario					
1,860,424	34	830,730	20	2,691,154	54
Western Washington DX Club					
1,114,666	18	1,244,954	15	2,359,620	33
Mad River Radio Club					
1,716,770	25	464,740	15	2,181,510	40
DFW Contest Group					
1,311,474	19	843,990	12	2,155,464	31
Arizona Outlaws Contest Club					
1,595,956	22	483,036	11	2,078,992	33
Northern California Contest Club					
994,930	25	717,008	23	1,711,938	48
Willamette Valley DX Club					

857,276 11 728,788 11 1,586,064 22

Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado

973,152 13 569,202 7 1,542,354 20

Central Texas DX and Contest Club

909,902 13 479,266 8 1,389,168 21

I never want to claim a win until the ARRL officially announces the results, which won't be for a while. Log checking, QTH location verification, and member eligibility, for each club, are all factors in the final results and which club wins the gavel. All I can say, is that MLDXCC did awesome this year. May the best club win the gavel and let's cross our fingers that is us!

We're also waiting for the results of the 2019 California QSO Party. I did not tally the scores because I'm just not sure which club entered in which class. Generally, it's between MLDXCC and SCCC, but if SCCC entered on the Unlimited Club Category, and MLDXCC entered in the Medium Club Category, both clubs may end up getting an unopposed win. A win is a win, but I always like competition, even if we lose. Let's see how this all pans out. I'm expecting we will hear the results soon.

For the DX'ers in this club, I want to remind everyone to upload their logs to ClubLog. Rich, WC6H, is working on the 2019 awards, which will probably be presented at either the January or March meeting. I think Rich will be basing some awards on the 2019 DXCC totals submitted by our members to ClubLog. There's some tight races so take a look. We've got a few more days left in the year and there's still lot's of DX left to work.

Look for another interesting year of presentations at our meetings. Our next

meeting will be January 25th. There will not be a meeting in February and the March meeting date will be announced soon. Although we haven't settled on whether he will present in January or March, one talk you're going to enjoy is John's (K6MM) talk on the 2013 dxpedition to Wake Island. John gave this talk to the club in 2013, but most of our current members were not with the Club at the time and haven't heard the talk. John's presentation will be an update of the original and I'm sure he will also give us a few clues as to just where he might be headed next.



Although he hasn't left for South Orkney yet, another 2020 presentation I'm really looking forward to is from Steve, W1SRD, who will be headed to the Antarctic island with his fellow members of the Perseverance DX Group. I'm pretty sure we can twist Steve's arm to do a talk after he returns. If you haven't donated to the dxpedition, it's never too late. Go to <https://sorkney.com/> to support their effort to give many of us a new one.



Remember to thank Norm, N6JV, for taking on the job of temporary Nugget editor. After this issue, our new editor is none other than Latrobe's top DX'er and contester, Doug, WE6Z. Many thanks to both Norm and Doug for continuing the tradition of the MLDXCC Nugget.

Whether you're a contester, a DX'er, ore both, I'm wishing you all a great 2020, full of big scores, lot's of DX, and good health.

From the Secretary - K6SZQ

Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

General Meeting Minutes

November 9th, 2019

Mountain Mike's Pizza, Martell

Meeting was called to order at 12:20 p.m. by Steve Allred, NC6R. 29 members were in attendance.

Steve started by asking for guests and members to introduce themselves. We then went around the room and each person introduced themselves.

October minutes were published in the November newsletter. Ron Eaves, W6RPM moved to accept the minutes as published. Ken Anderson, K6TA seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

There was no Treasurer's report.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Dan Levien, KN6AZZ submitted a membership application. Steve had Dan tell a little about himself and his station. Steve Allred, NC6R nominated him as a member, Bob Hess, W1RH seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Announcements:

- Bob Officer, N6TCE gave the solar report. He stated that there were two spots last week, and that we are inside the butterfly pattern for the start of a new cycle. He confirmed with a friend who is a solar physicist that we are indeed in the beginning of Cycle 25.

- Steve reminded members to check Ng3K.com under "announced DX" for a list of upcoming DXpeditions. Rick Karlquist, N6RK mentioned that the 3YOI group is currently raising funds for another try at Bouvet Island.

Member Achievements:

- Bob Officer, N6TCE was proud to announce that he had received his DXCC certificate.

- John Litz, NZ6Q announced that Annie Lewis (N6ACL) received a plaque from ARRL for 1st Place Multi-Single Low Power - San Joaquin Valley that they operated.

Elections:

Ballots were distributed. Rick Samoian, W6SR asked if anyone else was interested in running. No one was. Rick then moved that rather than voting by ballot we accept the entire slate as presented. Ron Eaves, W6RPM seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Officers for 2020 are:

- President - Steve Allred, NC6R
- Vice President - Bob Hess, W1RH
- Treasurer - Sue Allred, K6SZQ
- Secretary - Emilia Seiferling, KI6YTT
- Directors - Jeff Stai, WK6I; Rich Cutler, WC6H; and Steve Dyer, W1SRD

Sue Allred, K6SZQ will make arrangements with the bank to update the signers on the account.

Club Achievements:

- None to report, although it is looking good for another Sweepstakes win! Bob Hess, W1RH reported that MLDXCC will once again compete in the Medium Club category, which allows for 50 logs total (combined between CW and Phone). Bob passed out an analysis of where we stand after the CW portion of the competition, and the group discussed ways to maximize our participation and score for the upcoming Phone portion. Everyone was reminded that the Sweepstakes contest exchange is a long one, so don't get tempted to chat. It was agreed that members would rally on 80 meters at 2 p.m. on Sunday so that club members could assist in providing additional contacts.

Next Meeting:

January - date and location to be announced.

Rick Samoian, W6SR moved to adjourn; Steve Dyer, W1SRD seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Allred, K6SZQ - Secretary

MLDXCC Treasurer - K6SZQ

Paying Dues:

2020 dues are due!

The Dues period runs from Jan 1 to Dec 31. Dues are \$20.00 individual, \$30.00 family

Paypal – Send to: MotherLodeClub@gmail.com. Use the Friends and Family option.

Cash or Check - Given to a club officer at a meeting. Or mail to the Treasurer - Sue Allred K6SZQ, 17610 Red Mule Rd. Fiddletown, CA 95629

Two Interesting QSL Cards

Bob, W1RH

Every year, the City of Placerville lines the south side of Highway with lit Christmas trees. It's a holiday tradition that goes way back. The trees are sponsored by individuals, clubs and businesses on a first come, first served basis. This year, the El Dorado County Amateur Radio Club decided to sponsor a tree, and a very special tree it is.

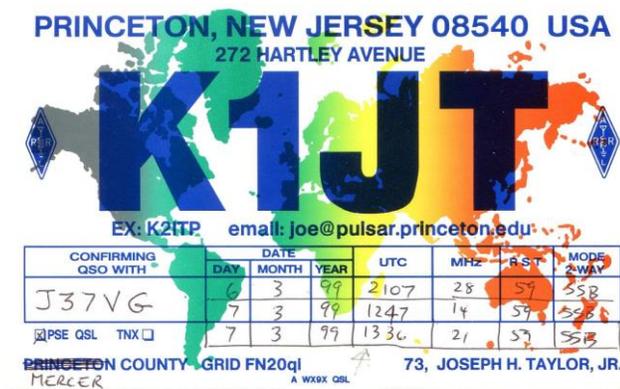
The club call sign, AG6AU, was a vanity call chosen to represent the Periodic Table elements silver (AG) and gold (AU).

The tree was decorated in silver and gold. The lights send the club call sign in Morse Code and it's very noticeable when driving on Highway 50. MLDXCC and EDCARC member Stefan, AF6SA, programmed an Arduino Computer to trigger the lights, effectively sending the call sign in CW.

We needed ornaments. What to decorate it with? I came up with the idea of using QSL cards from all over the world. MLDXCC and EDCARC member Jay, KE6GLA, came up with the original idea for the tree. His wife, Nancy – KG6PN, laminated 200 QSL cards and each card is attached to the tree with ty-wraps.

I needed to come up with some cards and found a batch from an ARRL DX contest dpxpedition three of us did to Grenada in 1999. In going through the cards, I found two that caught my eye that I set aside, saving them from a second life on a Christmas tree along Highway 50.

Recognize the call sign on the first card?



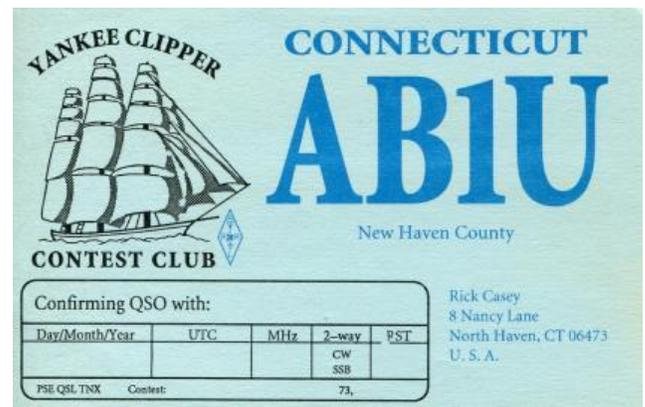
Yep, it's Joe Taylor. The same "JT" who responsible for WSJT software and the JT4/9/65 digital modes. Also, the same "T" used in FT4 and FT8. The "F", by the way, represents the "F" in Franke, as in Steven Franke, K9AN, the co-developer of the FT modes.

So, who'd of guessed that the guy who will forever be remembered for developing these great weak-signal digital modes also worked DX in a phone contest? You'll note that he worked us (J37VG – J37 Visit Grenada) on 10, 15, and 20 meters. Here's the back of his QSL:

J3

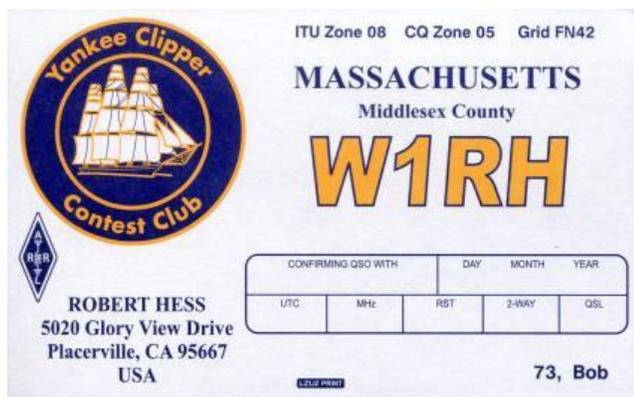
Thanks for contest QSO's – please QSL!
73 – Joe, K1JT

The second card I saved from the exhaust fumes of Highway 50 was from Rick, AB1U, better known as MLDXCC member, W6RKC. The report was on the back of the card, along with the call and location he worked us with – W6RKC, Pine Grove, CA. I'm guessing Rick had recently moved from "1" land and didn't have his new cards yet.

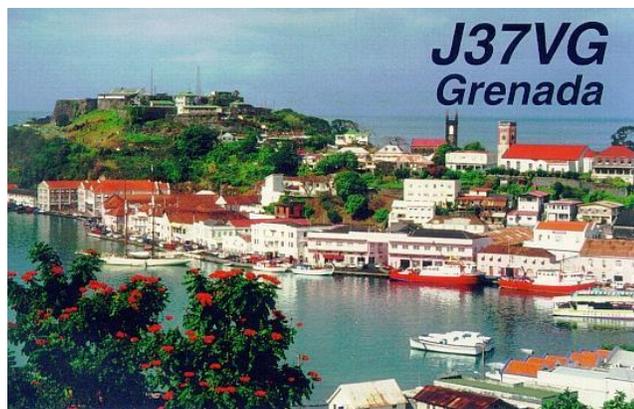


As you can see, Rick was a member of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club, as was I.

I don't have my old Massachusetts cards, but I printed up some new ones when I moved to "6" land so I could confirm contacts made from my Massachusetts QTH.



Below is that card that we – hopefully – sent to both Joe and Rick.



Contest Results

ARRL 160 Meters:

N6RK	171,648
N6JV	127,328
WE6Z	12,042
W1RH	1,890
N6RO	550
WQ6X	528
WB6BET	8

ARRL 10 Meters:

N6US	29,520
NC6R	6,594
K6YK	4,520
N6JV	2,680
W1RH	1,368
K6LRN	700
WB6BET	32

Club Log Standings

Overall

1	N6JV	Norm Wilson	257
2	K6YK	John Lee	210
3	K7QDX	Michael Steiner	190

CW

1	N6JV	Norm Wilson	203
2	K6YK	John Lee	197
3	NA6O	Gary Johnson	152

Phone

1	NC6R	Steve Allred	137
2	N6JV	Norm Wilson	116
3	K6YK	John Lee	90

Data

1	K7QDX	Michael Steiner	188
2	N6JV	Norm Wilson	163
3	NJ6C	Bob Fruehe	140

Club Log Standings are based on worked entities during the calendar year.

Member Reports

N6JV

N6JV worked A50BOC for #287 on 80 meters and TT8SN for #335 on 40 meters. These two put the annual CQ marathon score to 301.

N6JV has also upgraded the station with a K3S transceiver.

NK7I

NK7I (WA6NHC) finally has his antenna complete.



WA6ZTY

WA6ZTY, Mike, has added a new backup power system.



It has 540 A/H of LiFePO4 battery storage, a 35 amp charger, 600 watt sinewave inverter, and 3 x 100 watt solar panels. It lives in the crawl space under the hamshack and was completed 15 minutes AFTER (with headlamp) the last PG&E PPS event began. It normally powers the shack, but will run the kitchen refrigerator for 4 days if I stay off the air

ARRL Contesting Certificates

If you have participated in ARRL Contests by submitting your log, enter your call sign and see your available certificates. You can view and download them. The certificates show where you placed in the contest.

<http://contests.arrl.org/certificates.php>

Awards Checkers ARRL

Ken Anderson, K6TA

(DXCC, WAS, VUCC, 160M)

Rick Samoian, W6SR

(DXCC, WAS, VUCC, 160M)

Dennis King, N6KD

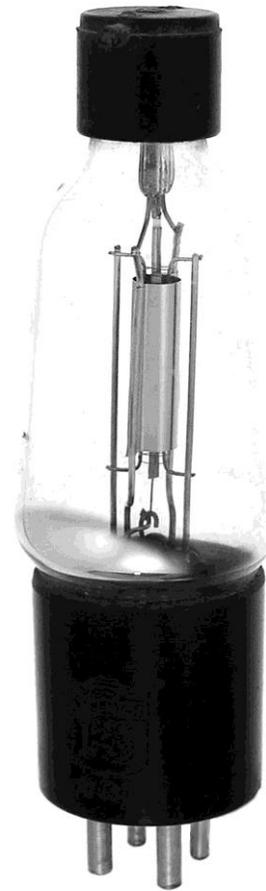
(WAS, VUCC)

Tube of the Month

KELLOGG 401A

When AM radios in the home became popular in the mid-1920s, vast numbers of the UX201A tubes were produced. In a previous article I noted that over 775 different makers or re-branders flooded the market with tubes. Most of these tubes had 5 volt DC filaments. Power for these radios was supplied by batteries. Car batteries were 6 volts so could power the filaments with a dropping resistor. The plate power required a "B" battery or a couple of them in series. Many of the cities had been wired with AC voltage distribution systems, but the REA (Rural Electrification Act) didn't start until 1936. Out in the country, the farmer's radio had to use B batteries and often needed to park the Model-T near the window where filament wires could be attached to the Flivver's battery. Families who had AC power could buy a B eliminator which was a case with a transformer, a capacitor and an 80 rectifier to produce the DC for the plates, but you still had to supply higher current for the DC filaments.

These early triodes had a simple filament and if you applied AC to the tube, it worked but the AC hum made it un-useable. The McCullough and Kellogg companies came up with a new type tube in 1926. They isolated the filament circuit from the grid and brought it out the top. This required a separate cap socket, but it did work.



Any success was short lived as there was the potential for some big money to be made and the big tube makers were designing tubes with new filament combinations and heated cathodes that would work with AC. The 401A and the 403A (the amplifier version) were only produced for a short time, but GE/RCA did experiment with the top filament cap until they added more pins to the base. The tubes proved to be more of a collector's item than a commercial success as they weren't suitable for mass production.

Visit the museum at N6JV.com
Norm N6JV

MLDXCC Focus Contests

The following lists all contests in which MLDXCC would appreciate your efforts.

ARRL SS CW/PH
ARRL DX Phone*
ARRL DX CW*
ARRL 10M*
ARRL 160M*
California QSO Party

*Proposed and approved at the November 12, 2016 MLDXCC general meeting.

Northern California Contest Club (NCCC) announced their focus contests at their August 2018 meeting. This list can be found in the Aug 2018 NCCC newsletter.

ARRL RTTY RU
CQ WPX RTTY
CQ WPX SSB
CQ WPX CW

MLDXCC – Outgoing ARRL Bureau

The Mother Lode DX/Contest Club will provide Outgoing QSL Bureau services to current paid club members. The policy is as follows:

The club will cover packaging, shipping, and the \$7.00 ARRL fee. Members will be responsible for the \$1.15 per ounce fee, payable to the club. A scale will be provided at the designated meetings to weigh the cards.

Twice per year, at the March and October meetings, members may bring their outgoing cards (or have delivered by another club

member) to the meeting for collection and collating.

All regulations set forth by the ARRL must be met, including:

Members must be ARRL members to use outgoing bureau.

Must provide proof of membership (QST mailing label, ARRL membership card)

Cards need to be sorted according to ARRL requirements when brought to club.

The after-meeting program at those meetings would be dedicated to weighing, merging the cards, and making sure the paperwork is in order.

For more information regarding the ARRL Outgoing Bureau, please visit <http://www.arrl.org/outgoing-qsl-service>

The NOAA Solar Update

Click the link below to display the latest NOAA solar predictions.

<http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/products/weekly-highlights-and-27-day-forecast>

UPCOMING Events

For the latest contest info. click on the following link:

<http://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcalendar.html>

UPCOMING DX and DXpedition

Click the link below to display upcoming DXpeditions.

<http://www.ng3k.com/Misc/adxo.html>

MLDXCC Reflector

The MLDXCC reflector is maintained at groups.io. Visit <https://groups.io/g/mldxcc>

We also maintain a spotting reflector at <https://groups.io/g/MLDXCC-Spots>

We are also on Facebook!
<https://www.facebook.com>

Classifieds

Members are requested to review their classified ads each month for accuracy and to resubmit their ads or confirm their desire to keep it running in the next issue.

For sale: Kenwood TS-590S. This one has the Kenwood installed daughterboard to fix the ALC overshoot problem (have paperwork for that). Cosmetically 9/10, no dings or significant scratches. Original box, manual, mic, power cord. \$600 firm. Can meet most members halfway to hand off.

73 Jim K6OK

k6ok@arrl.net or can text me at 916 too oh too 6458

Flex 6400 and a Maestro "B" version for sale.

\$1650 shipped for the Flex 6400,

\$850 shipped for the Flex Maestro "B" version.

Mike WU7Q/4 (916) 224-5189

FOR SALE—FROM THE ESTATE OF W6HFM

This is a VK3YNG Sniffer 4, which is one of the best transmitter hunt devices on the market. To get one of these, you need to order it from Australia. I paid about \$300 for mine. This one

comes with the beam and I believe we also have some books on transmitter hunting that can be thrown in. This unit works by automatically attenuating the signal as you get closer to the hidden transmitter. An audible tone changes frequency as the signal gets stronger. The club will be doing a transmitter hunt soon. If you want to be competitive, you'll want this. It works on the 2 meter band and also the aircraft beacon location channels. \$175.



Contact Bob, W1RH w1rh@yahoo.com

Dennis NJ6G has the following items for sale:

Astron RS-50 Power Supply - \$95 OBO

M2 RC2800 Rotator Controller - \$225

Dennis, NJ6G dennis@mail4life.net

New! "[The Serial Box](#)" (SBOX) by N6TV – Combination Serial Port Splitter, ACOM / Elecraft / SPE Amplifier Interface, FSK/CW/PTT keying interface, and Breakout Box

<https://www.eham.net/reviews/detail/13971>

Serial Box



Serial Box

"[The Y-BOX](#)" by N6TV – 4-way Elecraft K3/K3S ACC port splitter, Elecraft Amplifier Interface, and Breakout Box

<https://www.eham.net/reviews/detail/13296>



Y-Box

Need QSL cards, business cards, club banners?
Contact Vina K6VNA vina@sign-tek.com

2020 Meeting Dates

January 25

Feb

March

Apr

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

Dec

Dates are arranged to accommodate major contest dates. Meeting dates are subject to change. MLDXCC traditionally holds a mid-year combined meeting with NCCC.

Area Clubs

Northern California Contest Club -

<https://www.nccc.cc>

Lodi Amateur Radio Club -

<http://www.lodiarc.org>

Stockton Delta Amateur Radio Club -

<http://www.w6sf.org>

Pizza Lovers 259 –

<https://www.pl259.org>

El Dorado Amateur Radio Club -

<http://edcarc.net>

Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club -

<http://www.w6ek.org>

Redwood Empire DX Association -

<http://www.redxa.com>

Please contact the editor to have your club listed here.

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