THE NUGGET

The Newsletter of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

February 2021 **Volume 26 Number 2**

From the President – NC6R

Congratulations to MLDXCC as a club and to those members for a great showing in the 2020 DX Marathon. I won't call out names for fear of missing someone, but suffice to say the list of achievers is loaded with MLDXCC members! Congratulations to each of you for an outstanding effort.

For those of you (like me) who desire to know where you stand in your yearly DX Marathon count, a new log sheet for the 2021 CQ DX Marathon has been released and is now downloadable. Here's a link to the 2021 info - https://www.dxmarathon.com/Submission/2021/Submission2021.htm

While not exactly a radio topic, but none the less relevant, is rodents and wiring. Although they call this wireless, we as ham operators certainly have a lot wires in our shack and stored around the garage or workshop. On two separate occasions I've had chewed up wires under the hood of the car. A neat deterrent I heard about from a local auto mechanic was to place scented dryer sheets under the hood of your car. It seems the little critters don't like the smell. So far it's working well!

Did you participate in the Winter Field Day contest? I was able to operate only for a short time (4 hours) on 20 SSB, but managed to log 560 Q's with a sustained rate of 146 Q's per hour. During one stretch my rate was 186 Q's for a 15 min period, what rush! Who knew a contact with a SV station (Sacramento Valley) would be in such a demand?

With encouragement from several MLDXCC mentors I've delved into RTTY contesting. I've found it to be an enjoyable mode while adding to your QSO total. A nice side benefit is the lack of speech activity needed during a contest. Although I was not able to

participate in the RTTY WPX contest for its entire duration, I found that unlike after a long SSB contest, I was still able to talk when it ended.

Have you been able to avail yourself to our online meetings? We've had quality speakers on various subjects and a number of attendees logging in from numerous locations.

Several of our members have asked when we might be going back to in person meetings. Like you, I too miss the person to person contact. As things progress I see MLDXCC going to a modified approach between "in person" and "online" meetings. Doing so will allow us to secure that online speaker that we might not have otherwise had the privilege of listening to in person.

The latest info coming out regarding our current solar cycle is that it could be one of the best yet. Keep your fingers crossed as this would be great for both DX and contest operators.

Upcoming contest and DX announcements can be found at -

Contest dates at - https://www.contestcalendar.com/index.html

DX operation at - https://www.ng3k.com/misc/adxo.html

73 & good DX,

Steve / NC6R

MLDXCC President

From the V.P. - W1RH

From the VP

The California QSO Party's results have been announced, and in record time. For a contest, with over 1,000 logs received, getting results out this quick is just awesome. The contest organizing committee deserves a big attaboy!

I have a lot to say about the Club Competition, but I'm going to leave that for next month's column, assuming that the 2020 Sweepstakes results have not been released.

This month, however, I want to point out our member's achievements in the 2020 California QSO Party.

COUNTY RECORDS

Alameda County

Dave, WD6T, set a new record for Single Op, Assisted, with a score of 87,920

Ian, W6TCP, along with W6NV and KM7M, set a new record in the Multi/Single category, with a score of 302,122

Amador County

Using the call sign, N6US, Fred-K6IJ, and Rick-W6SR, set a new record in the Multi/Single, Low Power category, with a score of 182,799

Lake County

Using the call sign, W6I, one of the Sequoia stations, Bill, N6ZFO, set a new record in the Single Operator, Assisted Category, with a score of 200,928.

San Benito County

Don, AA6W, set a new record for San Benito County in the Single Operator, QRP, Category, with 10.512 points.

San Joaquin County

Using the call sign, W6Q, one of the Sequoia Stations, a large group of MLDXCC members (John-NZ6Q, Annette-N6ACL, Bob-N6TCE, Dave-N6LHL) set a new record in the Multi/Multi, Low Power, Expedition Category, with 139,755 points.

Shasta County

Ken, K6MR, using the Sequoia call sign, K6I, set a new record in the Single Operator Category, with 282,095 points.

Sierra County

MLDXCC member Dean, N6DE, along with W6MY, set a new record in the Multi/Single category, with 270,180 points.

Sutter County

MLDXCC member Bob, W6BO, along with K6EI, W6ESL, and NT7Q, set a new record in the Multi/Multi Low Power category, with 152,247 points.

Yolo County

Using the great call sign of K6CQP, MLDXCC member Giuseppe, KE8FT, along with W6AW, set a new record in the Multi-Single Category, with a score of 141,960.

OTHER MLDXCC MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS:

Alameda County

Gary, NA6O – Single Op, Assisted, 28,980 points.

Alpine County

Brian, W6BRY, and Doug, WE6Z – Multi/Multi, Low Power Expedition Category, 96,301 points

Amador

Brandt, K6BEW – Single Op – 19,082 points.

Rick, W6RKC – Single Op, Low Power – 16,488 Points

Sue-K6SZQ and Steve-NC6R, using the Sequoia call, N6I – Multi/Single, 143,782 points.

Calaveras County

Rich, WC6H, using the Sequoia call sign, W6A – Single Operator, with a whopping 337,120. Rich did not break his own record for the county in this category, with the 2014 score of 343,215.

Ron, W6RPM – Single Operator Category, 2,150 points.

Contra Costa County

Using the Sequoia call sign, N6O, and operating from the N6RO Super Station, MLDXCC members, Bob-K3EST, Ken-N6RO, Chris-N6WM, Matt-WX5S, Dave-WD6T, along with K6AW and KN6OIB – Multi-Multi Category, 594268 points.

El Dorado County

Steve, W1SRD, using the Sequoia call sign, W6S – Single Operator Category, 260,188 points.

Dick, K6LRN – Single Operator Category, 167,908 points

Stefan, AF6SA – Single Operator, Assisted Category, 90,530 points

Eddy, K6AAM – Single Operator Category, Low Power, 80,136

Jay, KE6GLA – Single Operator Category, 66,696 points

Jim, K6OK – Single Operator Assisted Category, 49,020 points

Bob, W1RH, using the call sign, N6T – Single Operator Assisted Category, 28,350 points

Bob, W6RC – Single Operator Category, 7,812 points

Bill, N6GHZ – Single Operator, Low Power Category, 7,140 points

Tony, W6QA – Single Operator, Low Power Category, 5,104 points

Glenn County

Bob, W1RH and Tyler, K6TLR – Multi/Single Expedition, 15,908 points

Nevada County

Jim, W6EU – Single Operator Category, 151,305 points

Jim, K9JM – Single Operator Category, 64,168 points

Bob, K6NV – Single Operator Assisted Category, 56,127 points

Placer County

Operating from MLDXCC member Jim's, WX6V, station, KU8E – Single Operator, Low Power Category, 126,846 points

Plumas County

Rick, N6XI – Single Operator, Low Power, 26,400 points

Sacramento County

Norm, N6JV – Single Operator Category, 241,280 points

Rick, N6RK – Single Operator, Assisted, 120,615

Dave, K6TQ – Single Operator Category, 88,880 points

Mike, K7QDX – Single Operator, Low Power, 4,756 points

Emilia, KI6YYT – Single Operator, Low Power, YL, Mobile Category, 1,276 points

San Francisco County

Emilia, KI6YYT – Single Operator, Low Power, YL, Mobile Category, 598 points

San Joaquin County

John, K6YK – Single Operator Category, 35,814 points

George, N6NFB – Single Operator, Low Power, 2,016 points

Emilia, KI6YYT – Single Operator, Low Power, YL, Mobile Category, 864 points

Santa Clara County

Bob, N6TV, using the Sequoia call sign, N6U – Single Operator Category, 301,056 points

John, K6MM – Single Operator, Assisted Category, 170,544 points

MLDXCC members, Dave-W6DR, Kevin-K6TD, along with N9YS – Multi/Single Category, 147,668 points

Solano County

Jim, N6JS, using the Sequoia call sign, N6S – Single Operator Category, 148,654 points

Jerry, KD6WKY, using the call sign, N6GK – Single Operator Assisted, Low Power Category, 41,160 points

Emilia, KI6YYT – Single Operator, Low Power, YL, Mobile Category, 216 points

Sonoma County

Emilia, KI6YYT – Single Operator, Low Power, YL, Mobile Category, 560 points

Stanislaus County

Bert, K6CSL – Single Operator, Low Power Category, 4,356 points

Tehama County

Bob, W1RH and Tyler, K6TLR – Multi/Single Expedition, 15,908 points

A FEW NOTES:

- If I missed anyone, please let me know. I did my best to match our members off of the most recent ARRL Club Eligibility List.
- Not every MLDXCC member submitted a log on behalf of MLDXCC, which is fine. Some of our members belong to multiple clubs.
- El Dorado County had 12 logs submitted. Of those 12, ten were MLDXCC members.
- Placer County had 21 logs submitted. Of those, there was only one MLDXCC member log.
- Placer County is the next Mother Lode county north of El Dorado County. It would appear that there are a few new contesters we can recruit.
- Emilia, KI6YYT, operated mobile in five counties.
- Bob, W1RH, and Tyler, K6TLR, operated on the Glenn/Tehama county line. The single score counts for both counties, thus doubling the score.
- 53 logs were submitted on behalf of MLDXCC for the Club Competition. Since we entered in the Medium Club Category, only the top 35 logs were accepted. More on this next month.

Our meeting this month will be on March 20. Our guest speaker will be Rob Sherwood, who will give a presentation on his receiver testing data. This should be a terrific meeting, via Zoom.

It is my hope that we may be able to meet in person in April, but no decision has been made yet by the Board.

Bob W1RH

Next Meeting

Date: March 20th

Time: TBD

Location: Zoom

Presentation: Rob Sherwood - Receiver testing data

MLDXCC Treasurer - K6SZQ

MLDXCC Treasurer's Report - January 2021

12/31/2020	Opening Balance		$2,016.98
	Income		$318.83
	2021 Dues - Checking	$170.00	
	2021 Dues - Paypal	$148.83	
	Expenses		$56.00
	P.O. Box Rental	$56.00	
1/31/2021	Ending Balance		$2,279.81

From the Secretary - KI6YYT

MLDXCC Meeting Notes

None for February.

Next Meeting:

February – No meeting

March – 20th

Emilia Seiferling, KI6YTT

CLUB 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

Club Log Standings

Overall

1	NJ6G	Dennis Moore	148
2	N6JV	Norm Wilson	132
3	WU6W	Rick Palio	113

CW

1	N6JV	Norm Wilson	100
2	K6IJ	Fred Honnold	80
3	WE6Z	Doug Phillips	79

Phone

1	NC6R	Steve Allred	34
2	K6YK	John Lee	13
3	WU6W	Rick Palio	9

Data

1	NJ6G	Dennis Moore	143
2	WU6W	Rick Palio	103
3	N6JV	Norm Wilson	95

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

In the news

ZD7 St Helena Island has been active in early February, and will be active in the ARRL DX CW contest.

Member Reports

OY1R 20M FT4 Faroe Island
Took a while but I got him, ATNO.
73, Dennis NJ6G

ATNO: ZD7BG St. Helena
I got them on 15 meter CW during the ARRL DX CW
Doug WE6Z

Here's a little item for the "brag" section:
Got a nice award in the mail from ORARI, the national amateur radio society of Indonesia, for 1st place North America single op in their 1st annual Batavia FT-8 contest. Polished brass plate, it's like a mirror, hard to photograph.

Jim K6OK

I have a new radio! Santa brought me a "Xiego G-90". Those not familiar with this unit may not know it's a QRP radio. Not QRP in the true sense, but it runs 20 watts full output. And it has a LOT of features and a great color display screen with spectrum scope and waterfall. And a great built-in tuner.

So, I got it hooked up and started to learn how to work it. (On the air, or course!). During this training session, I worked WAS in 9 days. And 50 countries.

The band conditions are pretty bad, but not all that bad. Also, I found that I placed first in the SJV section, single operator high power in the ARRL 2020 DX contest, both CW and PHONE. And first place single operator high power in San Joaquin County in the 2020 CQP.

73,

John, K6YK

Each year I reset the WAS log count to zero and start over. I have worked 49 states, using mixed modes, in the first 35 days of 2021. I use contests to achieve my goals. I rarely submit a log for the particular contest, unless it's a MLDXCC focus contest. Besides achieving my goal, it also helps the true contesters by giving them a contact. They appreciate every one. I also keep my list by mode to make it more challenging. I only use SSB, CW, & RTTY; no FT8. That gives me 150 slots to fill in. Emilia does only SSB and she has 34 states in her log for 2021.

WB6BET & KI6YYT

73,

Jim

N6RK

I recently completed construction of a 9 element circular receiving array for 160 meters. It is made from 2 inch diameter aluminum irrigation pipe. There are 9 verticals, each 30 feet high, arranged around a circle with a diameter of 290 feet. The spacing between adjacent verticals is just under 100 feet. Each vertical is top loaded with four "umbrella wires" 22 feet long and uses four ground radials 30 feet long. Only four of the nine elements are used at any one time. They form a Broad Side End Fire (BS-EF) array with about 7.5 dB array gain over an individual vertical.

It is similar to the 8 element circular arrays already used at a number of 160 meter stations, except that the addition of the ninth element increases the available number of azimuths from 8 to 18. In the nine element version, the BS-EF cell is no longer exactly rectangular, but instead is slightly rapezoidal, with corner angles of 80 or 100 degrees. I am hoping to put it to use during the upcoming CQWW160 SSB contest. For the first time, JA stations will be allowed to participate in this contest. Possible, the new array will enable a phone QSO with Japan.

I am planning to build an 80 meter version that will fit inside the 160 meter array. I have attached a photo of the 9 circle. This is looking due North, and the verticals are numbered from 1 to 9, starting from the North-most element and going clockwise. It occupies around 2 acres of land. The five short white poles in the foreground (spaced 50 feet apart) are supports for the 450 ohm open wire line that is the feedline for the 90 foot transmit vertical, which is out of view, several hundred feet beyond the left edge of the photo. The enclosure for the phasing network can be seen directly in front of vertical #1,

but 145 feet closer to the camera, at the center of the circle.

Rick N6RK

Part 2: N6RK ARRL DX CW score

I used this contest as warm up for the upcoming CQWW160 SSB contest next week. It gave me an opportunity to experiment with my new 9 circle receive antenna. I tried to hear a lot of EU stations that were spotted (beaming 20 degrees azimuth) and never heard even a trace. I copied only the stateside end of many QSO's. I worked some Caribbean countries, but the 9 circle is not great in that direction since it is looking at the city of Galt. One new thing I can now do is to tell where local noise is coming from very accurately. It is fortunate that the noise floor is low when beaming JA (at 300 degrees). I saw ZM4T spotted and he popped up above the noise as soon as I set the azimuth to that direction. Easy QSO. On Saturday night, starting at 9:00Z, I tried CQ'ing and was able to work a JA every minute or two. It was clear that the 9 circle worked better to JA than anything I had tried previously. I put 33 JA's in the log in about an hour. A fair number were only running 100 or 200 watts. Around 0230Z, I believe I worked UZ3DD, supposedly in Ukraine. He is listed in SCP, but not on QRZ, so I'm not sure about the QSO. Anyway, he was armchair copy with the circle 9 still pointed at 300 degrees for JA. WFWL?

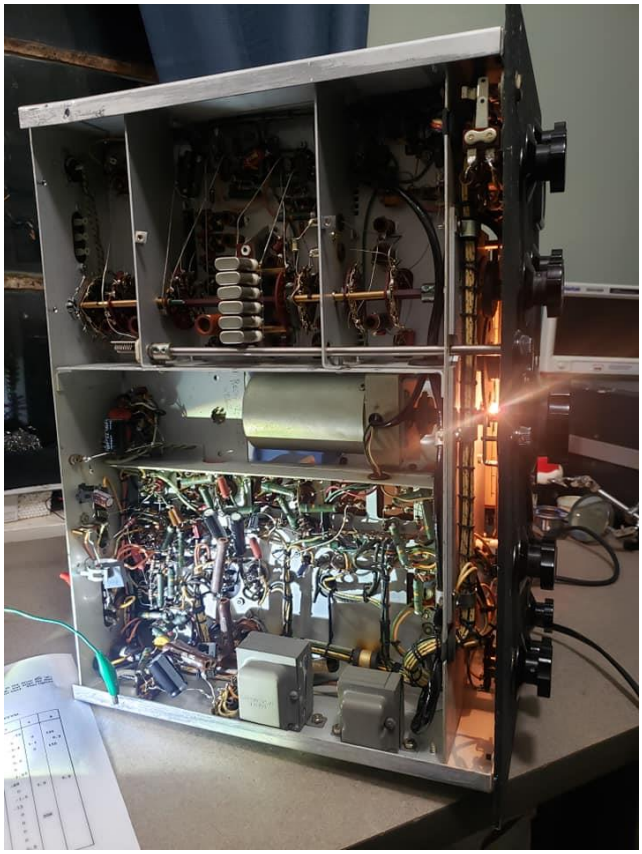
I now feel prepared for next weekend.

Results:

3 hours operating time per N1MM. 48 Q's, 10 countries, 1,440 points. 160 meters only.

Rick N6RK

Doug's 75A-3 restoration



This is Collins 75A-3 receiver that I recently acquired. Everything is there, all of the tubes. And the outside looks to be in excellent condition.

Initial inspection of the Collins 75A-3 looked good. The Filter capacitors were replaced in the 60s, and a product detector mod was installed around the same time. It looked like about a dozen caps would need to be replaced.

While working on replacing capacitors on the 75A-3, it took almost 2 hours of research to identify a mystery Aerovox capacitor. It turns out that it is part of the product detector modification and that's why it wasn't on the schematic.

After replacing all of the suspect capacitors, it seemed a little deaf and had an overload issue. I did an alignment on the 455khz IF, and it came to life. The overload issue looks to be solved as well. Now, according to what I can measure, it looks like it is 10 dB SINAD at .25uV. That's excellent!

After working on it for a few hours I finally finished the alignment.

Here's a playlist of YouTube videos of the receiver in action, receiving signals on AM, CW, and SSB.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLPuaq7V41U5sqriDtWxEH_l_SS-XZyCXq

Doug WE6Z

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

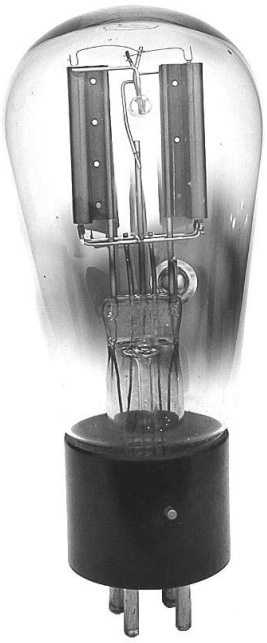
(DXCC, WAS, VUCC, 160M)

Rick Samoian, W6SR

Tube of the Month

UX-280 - 80

If you want to build a small power supply today, you can take a couple silicon diodes and hook the cathodes together and you have a full wave rectifier. That wasn't the case in the early days of radio. When receiving tubes were developed that operated on AC filaments, a rectifier was needed for the plate supply. RCA announced the full wave UX-280 rectifier in 1927. The 80 would supply 275 VDC at 55 ma. All the early AC receivers I can remember used the 80 in their power supply. Consumers that had AC power, but their receivers were DC, could buy a "B" eliminator. Batteries that were high voltage for plate supplies were called "B" batteries. Automotive batteries could still light the filaments.



The 80 was used in many commercial and ham receivers like my RME-69 and most of home entertainment radios made in the 1930s. In 1932 the 80 was modified with mercury added for higher current and that became the 83. In 1935, the 80 got an octal base and became the 5Y3G. In the buildup for WWII, there were many pieces of electronic gear that required higher voltage and current than the 80 could handle. In 1936, the octal based 5U4 and its 4-pin version the 5Z3, could handle 1500 volts at 225 ma. In 1942, the 5R4 was designed to handle 2100 volts at 250 ma at high altitude. The 80 rectifier was still in common use into the 1970's.

The photo is of the early UX-280 version. The "B" eliminator shown here, contains a transformer, the 80 rectifier and a small electrolytic capacitor. The knobs operate a pair of wire wound potentiometers that act as voltage dividers for the lower voltages.

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

QSL bureau rates have changed.
Outgoing QSL Service
QSL Service Fee Structure (effective May 15, 2019)
ARRL members — including foreign members, QSL Managers, or managers for DXpeditions — should enclose payment as follows:

Effective May 15, 2019, the rate structure is:
$2 for 10 or fewer cards in one envelope.
$3 for 11-20 cards in one envelope, or 75 cents per ounce, for packages with 21 or more cards.

[For example, a package containing 1.5 pounds of cards -- 24 ounces, or about 225 cards -- will cost $18.]

Under the new fee structure, there are no transaction service fees.

You should use an accurate scale to weigh your cards. Most post offices have scales that you may use.
Please pay by check (or money order) and write your call sign on the check. Send cash at your own risk. DO NOT send postage stamps or IRCs. Please make checks payable to: "The ARRL Outgoing QSL Service."
Packages received with insufficient payment will not be processed until the balance is paid in full. The outgoing QSL bureau does not keep money on account.

UPCOMING DX and DXpeditions

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

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/contestcal.html

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.

The Northern California Swap
Thursday evenings at 8 PM local on the N6ICW repeater system 147.195 +123
Join Armand WB2ZEI and the group to buy, sell, or trade amateur radio related gear. Check-ins and visitors welcome.

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

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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

N6TV

For Sale:

I have a COMMANDER AMP 2500E (3X - 3CX800A7s 1500 +++) Has QSK

$3000.00 will deliver

JIM... N6JS n6js@sbcglobal.net

For Sale:

IC-765 transceiver. Asking $500. Great sounding radio.

N6JV@N6JV.com

(916) 689-3534 (916) 330-7334 (CELL)

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

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For Sale:

National NC-125 receiver. Restored. All paper and electrolytic caps replaced. All tubes checked and weak ones replaced. Aligned and ready for a new home. Asking $150.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b627ubsCLEI

For Sale:
National NC-98 Restored. All paper and electrolytic caps replaced. All tubes checked and weak ones replaced. Aligned and ready for a new home. Asking $125.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o32vO2Ijsf4

For sale:
Hallicrafters SX-96 with matching R-46B speaker. Restored. All paper and electrolytic caps replaced. All tubes checked and weak ones replaced. Aligned and ready for a new home. Asking $300

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INAFa0MIjZI

Contact Doug WE6Z, we6z@hotmail.com

2021 Meeting Dates

January – 23rd Zoom
Feb – none
March – 20th
Apr – 17th
May – 15th
June – 5th
July – 24th
August – 28th
September – 18th
October – 23rd
November – 13th
Dec – none

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

Calaveras Amateur Radio Society
http://calaverasars.org/

Please contact the editor to have your club listed here.

ARRL Pacific Division

Pacific Division Director
Kristen A. McIntyre K6WX
k6wx@arrl.org

Pacific Division Vice Director
Vacant

East Bay Section Manager
Jim Siemons, W6LK
jim@siemons.com

Nevada Section Manager
John Bigley, N7UR
n7ur@arrl.org

Pacific Section Manager
Joe Speroni, AH0A
ah0a@arrl.org

San Francisco Section Manager
Bill Hillendahl, KH6GJV
kh6gjv@arrl.org

Santa Clara Valley Section Manager
James Armstrong
nv6w@arrl.org

Sacramento Valley Section Manager
Dr. Carol Milazzo, KP4MD
kp4md@arrl.org

San Joaquin Valley Section Manager
John Litz NZ6Q
john@litz.com

Officers of the MLDXCC

President, Steve Allred, NC6R
sallred@volcano.net

Vice President, Bob Hess, W1RH
w1rh@yahoo.com

Director, Rich Cutler, WC6H
wc6h@yahoo.com

Director, Steve Dyer, W1SRD
w1srd@arrl.net

Director, Jeff Stai, WK6I
wk6i.jeff@gmail.com

Secretary, Emilia Seiferling, KI6YYT
ki6yyt@arrl.net

Treasurer, Sue Allred, K6SZQ
sueallred@volcano.net

Publicity Manager, Bob Hess, W1RH
w1rh@yahoo.com

Editor, Doug Philips, WE6Z
we6z@hotmail.com

Webmaster, Norm Wilson, N6JV
n6jv@n6jv.com

The MLDXCC Newsletter