

THE NUGGET



Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

The Newsletter of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

April 2020

Volume 25 Number 4

From the President – NC6R

COVID-19, shelter in place, toilet paper shortage and the loss of employment. Who ever saw that coming, certainly not me?

Affected by the loss of my job, the bright spot has been more on the air time. ANTO contacts in the log, completing WAS on 30 meters (now 7 band) and a boost to my Marathon contacts all help to make “shelter in place” much more tolerable.

For those of you that weren't at our last meeting you missed a great time! The COVID threat notwithstanding, we had 22 in attendance. Dave, K6TQ gave a great talk on his tower installation. He related several things to do and a number of things to avoid. A big plus was the help he obtained from MLDXCC member Jim, K6OK who as an engineer was able to help Dave navigate some of the permitting pitfalls.

Sue (K6SZQ) MLDXCC treasure reports you guys have been doing a fantastic job with your dues payments! MDXCC is becoming the premier DX/Contest Club and our continued success can't be done without you. Thank you for your membership and participation.

Which of you recently participated in the CQ WPX Contest? Were you aware it was a focus contest for our club? There were a number of logs initially seen that posted to 3830 with credit given to NCCC. It's your log and your choice, but I would hate to see the club lose standing. In the future please consider selecting “Mother Lode DX/Contest Club” when uploading your log. Thank you.

As always, here are a couple of good websites to review that list upcoming contest and DX announcements -

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>

Stay safe, stay healthy.

73 & good DX, Steve / NC6R

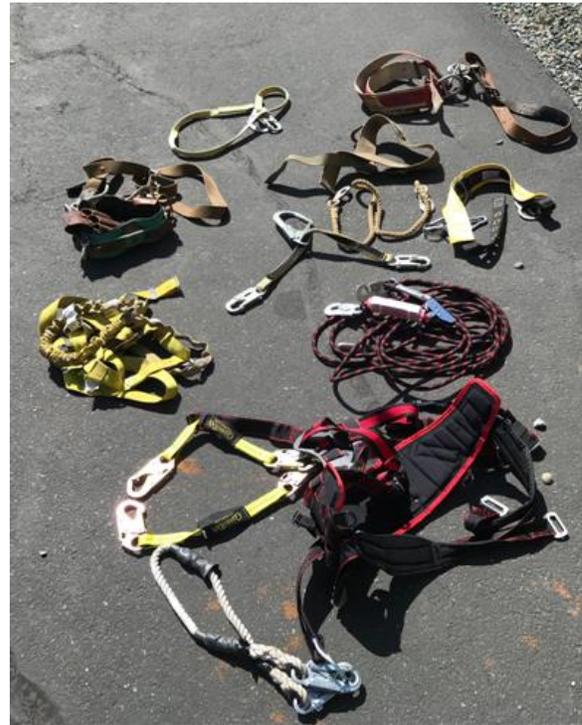
From the V.P. - W1RH

Normality? When will it return? Well as far as the Mother Lode club goes; expect another on-line meeting in May, unless things change pretty soon. I've got a few things in mind, so stand by.

Our first on-line meeting came off well. Our members who are new to Zoom were able to figure it out pretty quickly. It really is pretty easy to use. It was really nice to see some who rarely or never attend our meetings because they are so far away. Rick (N6XI), Jim (K9JM) and Joanna (K6YL) come to mind.

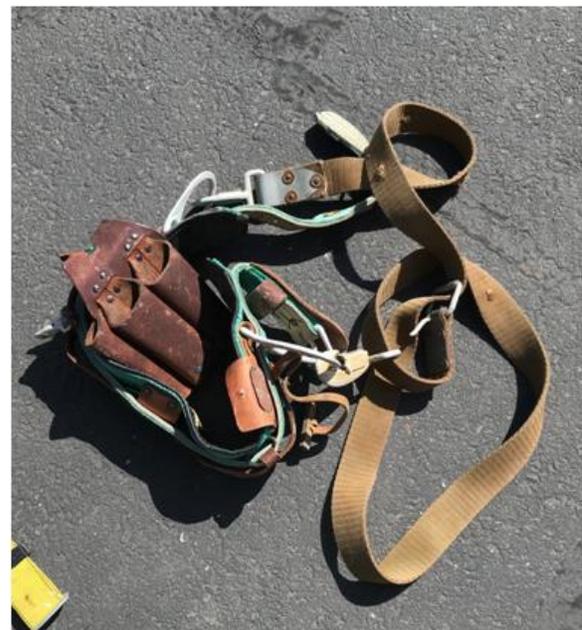
The speaker, Jim (K1IR), gave an excellent talk on tower safety and climbing gear. I had met Jim at a few YCCC meetings when I lived in the Boston area. He's a terrific contester and currently has a passion for preaching tower safety. This talk is posted on-line and really is required viewing for anyone who has a tower or will be installing a tower in the future.

The idea for the talk came up when Martin, AA1ON, came here to CQP with the W1SRD team in Tehama. He asked me to see my climbing gear and I brought out a bunch of stuff that I've used over the years. I believe I heard the OMG expression when he saw some of the stuff. Martin encouraged me to have Jim talk to NCCC and MLDXCC and also suggested I throw some of this stuff away.



If you take a look at this stuff, you can see what is probably only one or two pieces that would pass Jim's test.

I'm sure Jim would say to throw away (actually probably destroy) this one:



And this:

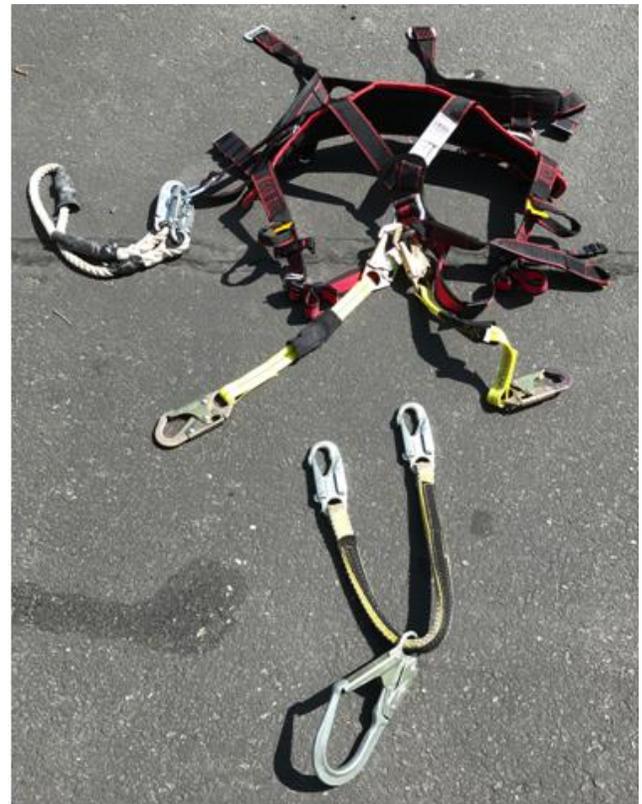


A Few years ago, I bought this full-body harness at the Visalia International DX Convention (everything in red) and later added the lanyards to attach to the back of the harness to be used when climbing so that I'm always attached to the tower. I do believe this one will pass Jim's approval for the most part. The rope lanyard is getting a bit long in the tooth however.

And this (especially the leather lanyard):



This is the belt I have used mostly over the last several years. I believe Jim said this is still an OSHA approved belt but it's really not good for tower climbing:



And, just because, I bought this, along with some additional really expensive ropes. This is a rope-grab fall-arrest piece that I have never used and, frankly, I'm not sure how to use it if at all. Any suggestions welcome.



So, you can probably guess that I've done a lot of tower climbing over the years, and this includes both commercial and amateur towers. I've done some really dumb things, like free-climbs hundreds of feet up a tower. NO MORE! I'm too old and much wiser. The full-body harness along with some of the lanyards in the pictures is my tower climbing gear of choice now.

I currently have two towers on the property and I still climb them. Fortunately, I've always had some pretty good crews to work with when doing ham radio tower jobs. Safety for the guy on the tower is of utmost importance, but the guy running the winch and the guys on the tag lines also need to know what they're doing. A winch operator or tag line guy who isn't paying attention or doesn't know what he is doing can definitely ruin the day for the guy on the tower, and possibly cost him his life.

Be careful!

One way or another, I'll see many of you in May. Probably online. I'm hoping our talk, whether online or in person, will be a dxpedition presentation.

Bob W1RH

Next Meeting

Date: May 9th

Time: TBD

Location: TBD

Presentation: TBD

MLDXCC Treasurer - K6SZQ

MLDXCC Treasurer's Report- March 2020

2/29/2020	Opening Balance		\$2,833.10
	Income		\$409.12
	2020 Dues - Paypal	\$179.12	
	Badges - Paypal	\$40.00	
	2020 Dues - Checking	\$130.00	
	Badges - Checking	\$60.00	
	Expenses		\$751.33
	ARRL- RTTY Roundup	\$80.00	
	Plaque Sponsorship	\$660.33	
	Sign-tek - Awards	\$11.00	
	Stamps		
3/31/2020	Ending Balance		\$2,490.89

From the Secretary - KI6YYT

General Meeting Minutes

MLDXCC April 18, 2020 Meeting Notes

By: Secretary Emilia Seiferling, KI6YYT

The meeting was called to order by President Steve, NC6R at 11:46 am on a Zoom conference meeting. There were 21 members and guests on line.

It's time to pay your 2020 dues; \$20-single, \$30-family. A form to make sure that club records are current should be filled out at the time of renewal.

There were no minutes or treasurer reports for this meeting. They will be done at the next meeting.

Two new members were nominated for club membership. Ken Beals, K6MR, in Anderson, CA and Jim Duffy, W6EU, in Truckee, CA. Motions were made, seconded and passed. Welcome to the MLDXCC!

Steve asked if there were any announcements from club members on recent achievements. He worked a station in Chad on 20m FT8 and he & Sue, K6SZQ, worked the WPX as multi op single transmitter and racked up over 1 million points. Norm, N6JV, is now on 60m. Rich, NC6H, worked the WPX contest, single operator, for 27 hours.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 9th. The type of meeting, Zoom or a face to face meeting is to be determined.

The formal portion of the meeting was adjourned at 11:54 am.

The speaker for our Zoom meeting was Jim, K1IR, in Boston. His presentation was on tower safety. He has given this many times to clubs and on Ham Nation, episodes 431, 432 & 433. After the presentation he answered questions from members.

Overall the Zoom meeting went quite well. A few people received messages on their screens that their internet connection was unstable, us included. That was no big surprise for us. We had a few frozen screens that lasted less than a minute, but we made it through to the end of the session.

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

Contest Results

The CQ WW WPX SSB is over, how did you do?

Club Log Standings

Overall

1	N6JV	Norm Wilson	186
2	K6YK	John Lee	157
3	WU6W	Rick Palio	145

CW

1	K6YK	John Lee	145
2	N6JV	Norm Wilson	141
3	NA6O	Gary Johnson	90

Phone

1	NC6R	Steve Allred	112
2	K6YK	John Lee	95
3	WC6H	Rich Cutler	90

Data

1	N6JV	Norm Wilson	134
2	WU6W	Rick Palio	114
3	K7QDX	Michael Steiner	107

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

Member Reports

K6YK got this award



#1 Team of NC6R & K6SZQ (both recovering from bad head colds) operated for the first time as a Multi/Single in WPX.

1615 Q's Prefixes = 510 Total Score = 1,168,920

It makes me wonder what we could have done if we'd both felt better.

2 Worked & confirmed T6AA (Afghanistan) on 20 CW for a ATNO.

3 NC6R completed WAS on 30 meters for a 7 band WAS. (10, 15, 20, 40, 80, 160, and now 30). 😊
Steve NC6R

WE6Z's

NC-98

Project:

This month's project is the restoration of a National NC-98 Receiver.

I received this beautiful boat anchor receiver from a friend a few years ago. He gave it to me and told me it didn't work any more. It was his grandfather's receiver.

I told him when I get some time I'd take a look at it and try to restore it to its former glory.

It is actually very clean cosmetically.

As with most boat anchor receivers, it has been worked on in the past. Upon initial inspection I identified one broken trimmer capacitor, one incorrect tube, and one disconnected capacitor.

I replaced all of the paper capacitors, the filter capacitors, and the broken trimmer capacitor.

All of the tubes had been replaced at some point. After testing all of the tubes, I only had to replace 4 of the 9 tubes.

After a full alignment, adding a fuse, two bulbs, and some DeOxit, it works great!

It was a lot of fun to restore this receiver.





Norm's 60 Meter Project

I have always wanted to try 60 meters. I have two 80 meter wire verticals that could work with some impedance matching. W6SR used a model of the vertical and looked like it would be close with a 50 to 200 ohm transformer. Four to one UNUN transformers are easy to make if you have a good core. I had several and finally found one that would work at 5.3 MHz. A sealed box was used to mount the transformer, a trimmer cap and a vacuum relay. The antenna still needs to be used on 80 meters, so the relay keeps it connected to its feed line. When 28 volts is applied to the relay, it switches to the capacitor, transformer and the 60 meter feed line.

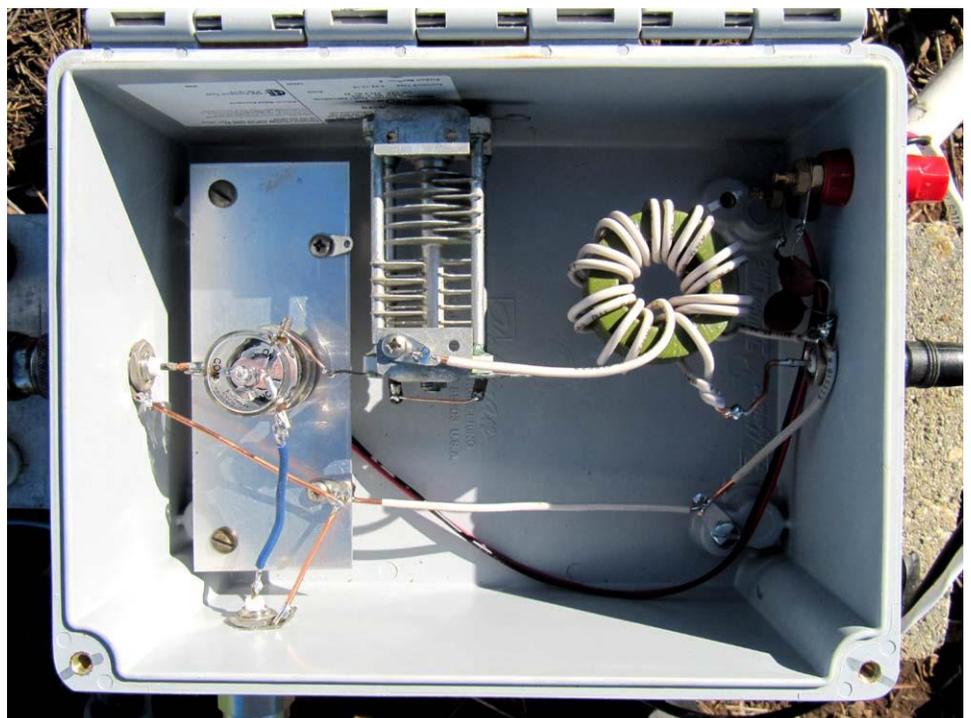
So far, with 100 watts output using FT8, I have worked 60 countries on all continents. The segment with most of the FT8 activity is 5357– 5360.

N6JV

To see more pictures and details see my blog.

<https://national-nc-98-restore.blogspot.com/>

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

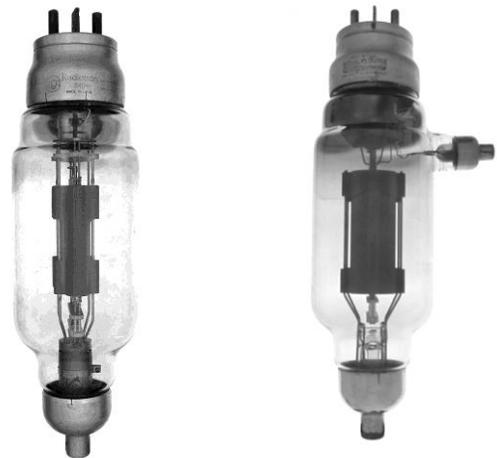
849(*)

The original “250 Watter”, the 204/204A, was one of the first tubes capable of high power to be produced. A single tube had an output of 250 watts up to 3 MHz. In 1927 the basic tube was redesigned for higher power output and designated the 849. This tube produced 350 watts output. The low frequency was still a problem, so the 849A was introduced. It operated with up to 3000 volts at 500 ma to produce 1200 watts output. They also changed the interelectrode capacities so the tube could operate up to 7.5 MHz at full power.

The 849 type tubes were often used for audio applications, but there was interest in using them more for RF in transmitters as well as industrial heating applications. Lead length and high minimum capacity were the factors limiting frequency. In the early 1940’s, Amperex and United modified the 849A by bringing the grid out the side of the envelope. This reduced the lead length and reduced the input capacity by 25%. The new tube was called the 849H by Amperex and 949H by United. This tube could be used up to 30 MHz.

The examples shown were made by RCA and United. We usually look at a tube with the base down, but these tubes are usually shown upside down. The

tube marking reflects this orientation. Before WWII, ham radio transmitters as well as commercial units were usually built in racks. Enclosed racks protected the operator as well as his cat, but open racks were common. The heavier components had to be mounted in the bottom of the rack and any low power stages needed to be near the top so you could tune up or change plug in coils. Stages needed to be in close proximity in order to couple the output to the input of the next stage. By mounting the amplifier stage under the driver stage and mounting the power tube with its grid close to the driver stage, adequate drive could be available. Coupling feed-lines were mostly twisted pairs as coax wouldn’t become common until after the war.



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.

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 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>

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.

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
N6TV

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

I have the following available:

Signalink external soundcard interface for FT-8, in original packaging, excellent condition \$80

(3) HP 606B RF signal generators. Clean and working, \$100 each.

(3) HP 200CD wide range oscillators. Untested but have more for parts if needed, \$40 each.

(1) HP 400D VTVM RMS volts and decibels. \$25

(1) HP 400L VTVM RMS volts and decibels. \$25

(2) HP 400H VTVM RMS volts and decibels. \$25

Vintage 120vac Variac \$30

Tripp-lite PR-15 12vdc power supply \$40

Henry 2-KD classic HF amp, clean \$800

W6BRY Brian

2020 Meeting Dates

January - 25
Feb - none
March - 14
Apr – 18 Zoom
May -9 (Probably Zoom)
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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The MLDXCC Newsletter

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