

The Nugget

The Newsletter of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

MEETING DATE, LOCATION & PROGRAM

When: Saturday, January 28, 11:30AM-2:30PM

Where: Round Table Pizza in Martell.

What: Propagation Forecasts at the bottom of the Sunspot cycle. By Kay, K6KO/P40K and Ken, K6TA/P40TA. An analysis of 10 meter propagation from Aruba, P4 during the 2005 ARRL 10 Meter contest against predictions as provided by N6BV. Using Dean's hour by hour prediction charts we'll show you what really happened. Dean N6BV will be attending the meeting as well. Don't miss this one!

FROM THE PREZ

Congratulations to the new slate of officers and Board members. I'm sure I can speak for all by saying that we look forward to supporting our club through 2006. As one of the new kids on the block, I'll be leaning on everyone to help me guide Mother Lode where you want it to go in 2006. Let me know what you need for fun in 2006.

President; Rich Hill, NU6T

Vice president/contest chair, Rick Karlquist, N6RK

Secretary; Kay Anderson, K6KO

Treasurer; Carolyn Wilson, K6TKD

Board members; Ken Anderson, K6TA and Dick Wilson, K6LRN

January meeting agenda (Time "suggested"):

11:30 (Pre-meeting Board Meeting)

12:00 Call to order and Agenda Review

12:05 Officer Roll Call

12:08 Old business

- Minutes review and acceptance
- Treasurer report, including presentation of proposed budget or issues
- Committee reports, if any
- Meeting dates (approve/amend)
- CQP "extra logs." What action is needed?
- Weekly Net suggestion review

12:30 New business

- New Members?
- Upcoming contests

- Upcoming DX
- Presentation ideas
- FD and CQP initial planning
- Review action items

13:15 Recognition of achievements, milestones and other.

13:30 Guest Speaker/presentations:

Ken/Kay, P40/K6TA-K6KO Aruba - DXpedition

15:00 Adjourn

2006 Meeting Dates and Presentations

The meeting dates for 2006 are in this Nugget and on the web page. Let me know if I missed an important contest or event and we need to revise the meeting dates. Please bring ideas for meeting presentations to our January meeting. VP Rick, N6RK, is the presentation guru this year. Several topics have been suggested including DXpeditions, contest software, contest strategies, station development, digital contesting (RTTY), VHF contesting, Field Day preparations, and CQP strategies. We'll bring a calendar and perhaps we can set some targets.

DUES ARE DUE!

Basic dues are \$15 minimum. It is \$10 more, if you want a paper copy of the 'Nugget'. Donations gladly accepted. Please, pay at meeting...next best, mail to Treasurer, Carolyn Wilson, K6TKD at Box 273, Somerset, CA., 95684-0273.

Contest Planning

As the contest season begins to wind down, we will begin planning our 2006 Field Day and CQP efforts. Jim, Rick, Rick, Ron and others are asking questions to improve our operation. Please come to the January meeting with your ideas to find a few more points in 2006, and share company with a few more members. CQP is a bit further off, but we could start thinking about boosting our 2006 score. REDXA is gaining on us.

This will be a good time to identify the contests Mother Lode members want to support this year. Field Day and CQP are obvious. What other contests are important for the club? We'll work around contest dates for club meetings and to find useful presentations to help improve your scores, fun factor, or both.

DX?

How's DX? I've managed a couple of new band-countries this fall and am hoping for a few more in 2006. With 148 worked and 131 confirmed, and no sunspots to speak of, DX ISn't. I need all the help I can get. Perhaps you have a DX presentation you've been wishing for. Let us know and we'll see what we can arrange. I'm looking for ways to contact zones 23, 26 and 34 to complete WAZ. What do you need?

New Members

We welcomed new member Lyle Meek, W6WF, and wife, at the December meeting. Let's make a goal of adding more new members this year. One new member a month could add a dozen new logs for each Mother Lode contest effort. How can we make it happen?

Rich; NU6T@ARRL.net; 916-962-2431

THE VP SEZ

I am still getting used to my new job as VP. I've never been a radio club officer before so bear with me. I have a program in place for next week's meeting. For future meetings, I have the following ideas in the hopper:

1. Comparison of WL, N1MM, etc logging programs.
2. K7C video and/or live talk.
3. K6RK presentation on 160m DX'ing, which I attended at NCDXC last week. Chuck, of course, was, or is, also a member of MLDXCC. (I am going to steal program ideas from other clubs whenever possible!)
4. Perhaps a tutorial on RTTY if I can get one of a number of RTTY gurus to come up to the meeting. There was one of these talks at NCCC a few years ago. I recently figured out how to get the FT1000D FSK interface to work and tried out MMTTY in the RTTY RU. Although I did make QSO's, it was apparent how much I didn't know about RTTY.
5. PVRC publishes some contest seminar DVD's. We could possibly show parts of these as a program. May be more interesting that the usual DXpedition travel-logs. If

anyone has any of these DVD's we could borrow for the meeting, let me know. If not, the club might purchase a set for \$71. According to the PVRC web site: "Nobody Should Be Allowed To Have Anything To Do With Contesting Until They've Watched This 12 Hour, 6-DVD Program at Least 5 Times!" Wow, I've got meeting programs covered for the next 5 years HI.

It had been proposed that I host a BBQ at my QTH in the spring. My current thinking is that it would be better to postpone that until next year due to too many things at the ranch being under construction/repair at this time.

I recently found out that as VP, I am also the contest organizer. My first task is going to be to scope out the contests already "claimed" by NCCC. I am a double agent of sorts being a member of NCCC who actually goes to meetings since I live in the bay area. I will try to compile a list of possible contests that are available and we'll see how much interest there is.

My philosophy is to do a few contests well, and just goof around in the rest, since my time is limited. With our small club, we should be realistic about how many contests we can effectively support.

It occurs to me that in the NAQP, we might field an "MLDXCC team", but that team could still contribute scores to NCCC. The advantage of the NAQP is that it is short enough that most people can put in a decent effort.

In the recent NAQP, I decided to test drive the N1MM logger, after having used Writelog for 7 years. IMHO, N1MM is better in every way and I am never going back to Writelog. This encourages me to try to organize a meeting program about this, but I need to find an N1MM expert; I'm just an enthusiastic beginner. I would especially like someone to explain SO2R setup under N1MM.

As you may know, I put up a 106 ft crank-up tower last year, but only used it for low band antenna experiments. I just ordered a MonstIR to go on the top of it and recently acquired a second

TIC ring rotator. Eventually, the plan is to stack 4 element SteppIR's below it. Who knows, maybe a multi-two operation some day?

Finally, I would like to mention a real neat web site where you type in a zip code, and it shows a map of all the hams in that zip code. Super cool. This might be useful for finding possible new members. See:

http://www.perconcorp.com/google_ham.html

I would encourage everyone to be on the lookout for possible new members.

Rick N6RK

Member news & feedback & stuff for sale

My new call is NZ6O. Ron (Former N6NIA) NZ6O Congrats Ron!!!

EDITOR'S NOTES

Not much radio going on at the old' QTH. What with the holidays, lots of rain (high static), and high winds, I was not on the air much. Speaking of wind, I had to repair one of the 80M verticals that had it's base insulator snapped in half during the high winds around Christmas. And I guess I have been resting on my laurels since completing my 5BWAZ. Would you believe this? CQ has already sent me my 5BWAZ plaque! So why does it take years for us to receive our contest awards? I may even bring my 5BWAZ plaque to one of our meetings, if all of you promise not to drool on it, HI HI

Over the holidays, I did complete the GS-35B (Triode) multi-band HF amplifier that I have been building on an on-again, off-again, basis for the last 2 months. And if there is enough interest, I could bring it to a meeting for a show and tell. I run 3300 volts on the plate, with 90 watts of drive I get 700 plate mills and 1650 watts CW output. I have been told it will put-out 2500 watts if you push it, but that ain't legal is it?. This is great since the tubes can be purchased for around \$100! In my book it sure beats spending \$700 on an 8877.

I will be volunteering a few hours each month to the El Dorado County Sheriff Dept. from now on. I have completed my STAR (Sheriff's Team of Active Retirees) training and graduated on Jan 20th. As it happened, the 20th was also Karen's birthday; I mentioned this to our training officer. And at the beginning of the gradation ceremony, which was held in the El Dorado County Board Of Supervisor's chambers, the El Dorado

County Sheriff, his Under Sheriff, the Captain, a couple of Lieutenants plus about 100 guests sang "Happy Birthday" to her. Yeah, she was surprised and I heard about it later, but I know it made her day!

Tuesday (the 24th) I am scheduled to have surgery to repair a couple of hernias, too much tower work I guess? I still plan to make the meeting on Saturday, but I'm sure I will be moving a lot slower than usual, HI HI. **C U all then de Rick W6SR**

MLDXCC - FINANCIAL REPORT DECEMBER 2005

Balance December 1, 2005: \$733.44

Income:	Donation:	15.00
	Dues	<u>195.00</u>

210.00

Expenses:	Donation/NCDXF	100.00
	QSL Postage/etc.	<u>14.24</u>
		114.24

Balance December 31, 2005 \$829.20

Treasurer, Carolyn Wilson, K6TKD

DX STUFF FROM THE 425 DX Bulletin

3V The Lufthansa Amateur Radio Club will be active as 3V8DLH from Borj Cedria, Tunisia on 24-31 January. Plans are to operate on 6-160 metres SSB, CW, PSK31, RTTY and SSTV. QSL via DJ3FK. On-line logs and pictures will be available on http://www.dj3fk.com/dxp/3v/3v_start.html [TNX NG3K]

5X Shabu, 5X1RI has been active on 20-40 metres SSB and CW and will remain in Uganda through 2 February. Look for him on 7004 kHz starting at 22.30 UTC. QSL to WD4ELG. [TNX WD4ELG]

9Q Pierre-Luc, F5HRH expects to be QRV as 9Q/F5HRH/p from the Democratic Republic of Congo on 22-28 January. QSL via home call. [TNX F5NQL]

CO The IOTA activity from Cayo Jutias (NA-093) [425DXN 765] is expected to take place on 23-29 January. Look for CO3JN/1 (PSK31), CO2WL/1 (SSB), CO3LF/1 (SSB), CO3CJ/1 (SSB), CO3VK/1 (SSB) and CO3ET/1 (CW) to operate on 15, 17, 20

and 40 metres. On 28 January they will use a special callsign, T41JM, for the Jose Marti Day, a Cuban public holiday. All QSLs direct to IZ8EBI (http://xoomer.virgilio.it/iz8_ebi/). [TNX KP4RV]

PY - Look for Rick, PY2EL/p and Wal, PY2WC/p to operate from Comprida Island (SA-024) on 26-30 January. They plan to be active on all HF bands, plus 6 metres and 144/432 MHz, on CW, SSB and digital modes QSL via bureau. [TNX www.rsgbiota.org]

S9 - Jose, CT1APE and Filipe, CT2GLO will once again be active as S92RI from Ilheu das Rolas (AF-023) on 18-28 January. Expect activity on all bands and modes. QSL via CT1APE. [TNX CT1EEB]

TY - Ronald/PA3EWP, Andrea/IK1PMR, Claudia/K2LEO and Tom/GM4FDM, all of T33C fame, will operate from Benin on 15-20 March. Requested calls are TY5WP, TY1MR, TY2LEO and TY4TW respectively (they will collect their licences upon arrival). They hope to be active on 160-10 metres all modes, with 100 watts and maybe a linear using verticals and wires from a near beach location. Expect some activity during the BARTG RTTY Contest and maybe the WPX SSB Contest. QSL TY1MR and TY2LEO via IK1PMR, TY5WP via PA7FM and TY4TW via GM4FDM. [TNX GM4FDM]

TZ - Paul Van Impe, ON7ASL will operate as TZ6PVI from Bamako, Mali this year. He expects to be active mostly on 40 metres during his evening hours. QSL via homecall or direct to ON4LN. [TNX NG3K]

V3 - Martti, OH2BH (V31BH) and Pertti, OH2PM (V31PP) will be cruising in the Caribbean with their ladies to activate Belize in the ARRL DX CW (18-19 February) and SSB (4-5 March) contests as multi-operator all-bands. On the way to the Caribbean, Martti will stop over in the Azores to activate CU2A in the CQ 160-Meter CW Contest (28-29 January). QSLs to their respective home callsigns. [TNX OH2BN]

XE - XE2HWB, XE2K, XE2Q, XE2TG, N6JV and N6VR will be active as XF1K from on of the islands in the the NA-124 IOTA group on 3-5 February. They plan to have three stations up and running simultaneously on 10-80 metres CW and SSB. QSL via N6AWD. [TNX XE2K]

***** 4 2 5 D X N E W S *****

****** GOOD TO KNOW ... ******

ANTARCTICA AWARD ---> The Award Manager (Gianni Marruccella, IZ8CGS) reports that all of the certificate requests received as of 31 December 2005 have been processed and mailed along with the complimentary map of Antarctica published by the Australian Antarctic Division [425DXN 700]. Up-to-date score tables are available at www.mdxc.org/antarctica/award.asp.

HAM RADIO BLOGS ---> Christian, DL6KAC is putting together a directory of amateur radio blogs (<http://ham-blogs.net/>). "I know that there exists a huge bunch of weblogs out there", he says. "I set up this website as an effort to offer a comprehensive directory of ham radio related weblogs, but to achieve this goal I need the help of the amateur radio community. So if you are a blog user, please submit your site to the web-directory". FAQs can be found at <http://www.dl6kac.de/blog/2006/ham-radio-blogs-webdirectory/>

QSL 3C2MV ---> Gerry, VE6LB reports that all the bureau cards for 3C2MV have been processed and sent to the VE outgoing bureau. All special prefix cards for VE6JO, regular VE6JO and UA6U/VE6JO cards have been cleared as well. If you do not get your cards for any VE6JO operation, please resubmit to VE6LB at the qrz.com address.

QSL 6W7/F8PDR ---> Benoit, F8PDR reports that all direct cards received through 14 January have been processed and mailed. Some 3,000 QSLs have been sent to the REF bureau. [TNX F5NQL]

QSL KG4SB ---> Jose Castillo, N4BAA reports that he now has a QSL manager to assist him. QSLs for all 2006 KG4SB contacts can go to N4BAA himself or via EA7JX, either QSL route will be good.

QSL S79RRC ---> QSLs for S79RRC/A, S79RRC/F, S79EC, and S79NAN should now go to RZ3EC, as K8SIX and VE6VK have run out of cards. [TNX IK3QAR]

QSL XE1/DL6KAC ---> Christian, DL6KAC has been notified that so far quite some pile has accumulated in Germany.

Please be patient as he will not be able to respond to these QSLs until he returns to Germany in March. He hopes to mail out the first cards around May. [TNX DL6KAC]

QSL YE7P ---> Al Bailey, K8SIX is no longer able to confirm contacts made by North American stations with YE7P (OC-269) in September 2005. Those who still need a direct card should send their request to YB1TC (P.O. Box 151 BMD, Serpong 15330, Indonesia). [TNX YB1TC]

WRTC 2006 REFEREES ---> The 47 selected Referees for the World Radiosport Team Championship to be held in July (<http://www.wrtc2006.com/>) are: DJ2YA, DJ6QT, DK2OY, DL6LAU, EY8MM, G3LZQ, G3XTT, G4BWP, G5LP, GM4AFF, HA3NU, I4UFH, IV3TAN, JH4RHF, JK3GAD, K1CC, K1KI, K2LE, K2SX, K3NA, K8NZ, K9JF, KC1F, KC7V, N2AA, N2GA, N3AD, N6CW, NF4A, OH2KI, PY2YP, PY8AZT, S50R, S56A, SM3CER, SM3DMP, TG9AJR, UA3AB, UA6HZ, VE3DZ, VE7AHA, VE7SV, W0GJ, W4OI, W6OAT, W6UM and WX0B. They have been selected by Committee vote, taking into account all-round contesting-skills (both SSB and CW), contesting-career, previous WRTC-experience and application-date. This list may change if any selected Referees become Competitors, either as Team-Captains, or Team-Mates, or Multi-Single/Multi-National participants. Therefore there is also a list of Back-Up Referees (namely DL2OBF, HA6ND, K0TG, LY2TA, PY2NY, RA9AB, SP9W, YO3CTK and YU1LA) who will be asked to replace Drop-Outs. [TNX PY5EG]

QSL INFO.-----

5B4AHJ Alan Jubb, Psathi Village, 8749 Pafos, Cyprus

5Z4ES Enrico Li Perni, P.O. Box 39256-00623, Nairobi. Kenya

CE3BSQ Radioclub Manquehue, P.O. Box 27064, Santiago, Chile

DL3APO Peter Kohde, Adolph-Menzel-Str. 2, 04157 Leipzig, Germany

EI5IF Patrick Molloy, 71 Bannow Road, Cabra West, Dublin 7, Ireland

F6AJA Jean-Michel Duthilleul, 515 Rue du Petit Hem, 59870 Bouvignies, France

G0KBO Vladislav Kravchenko, Post Restante, Royal Mail, Lampeter, SA48 7DZ, Wales, UK

I2YSB Silvano Borsa, Vle Capettini 1, 27036 Mortara - MI, Italy

KG4WW Bill Walker, USNH GITMO, Box 4, FPO AE 09589, USA

LA9VDA Trond Johannessen, Helgedalen 13, N-1528 Moss, Norway

N2OO Robert W. Schenck, P.O. Box 345, Tuckerton, NJ 08087, USA

NN7A Art Phillips, P.O. Box 201, Flagstaff, AZ 86002, USA

PAORRS Richard Smeets, Schoorveken 100, 5121 NM Rijen, The Netherlands

UA1RJ Yuri Sinitso, Box 10, Vologda, 160000, Russia

VK4FW Bill Horner, P.O. Box 612, Childers, 4660, Australia

VQ9LA Larry Arneson, PSC 466 Box 24 (DG-21 Annex 30), FPO AP 96595-0024, USA

MLDX/CC Meeting minutes 17 December, 2005

Meeting was called to order at 12:05 PT by Club President Dick Wilson K6LRN Club Officers in attendance where VP Jim WX6V, Treasurer Carolyn K6TKD, co-Director Gary KI6T, co-Director Ray ND6S, Secretary Ron N6NIA.

Newsletter Rick W6SR and QSL Manager Norm WA6SJQ were also in attendance.

There was no board meeting preceding the regular club meeting.

Lyle Meek, W6WF was re-introduced as the newest MLDX/CC club member along with his wife Pam, this was followed by introduction of all club members in attendance. The club happily welcomed Lyle as a member in good standing.

Also recognized by the chairman was the presence of past President Rick Casey W6RKC in attendance. Rick had been unable to attend meeting for almost two years because of work related commitments. We are happy to see him in attendance and glad he still actively on the air.

Dick K6LRN asked those in attendance if everyone was getting their Newsletter in a timely efficient manner. There was one issue that will be handled by resubmission of an updated email address. Other response was positive.

Dick K6LRN announced the list of nominees for club office. They are:

President	Richard Hill	NU6T
Vice President	Richard Karlquist	N6RK
Director	Dick Wilson	K6LRN (mandatory outgoing pres.)
Director	Ken Anderson	K6TA
Treasurer	Carolyn Wilson	K6TKD
Secretary	Kay Anderson	K6KO

A motion was made to elect these members into office. The motion was seconded, voted upon and the motion was carried.

President Dick Wilson K6LRN received a letter from Fred Leoni N6YEU representing REDXA challenging some of the logs that were submitted for MLDX/CC in the '05 CQP. The challenge centered on certain submissions that were from non-current members. Dick discussed the nature of these logs and the importance of fair competition. Consensus from members in attendance was that these logs should not be counted towards the CLUB competition plaque for CQP and that even though MLDX/CC's roster size is roughly ½ the size of REDXA's club, we would still prefer to beat REDXA fairly.

There was additional discussion concerning the geographical location of the club and future club competitions.

Club Treasurer- Carolyn Wilson K6TKD made an important announcement that the club till came up short during the last meeting. Someone did not pay, and funds were taken out of the club treasury to compensate. All members in attendance are asked to remember that to not pay at the counter when ordering food, but to take their yellow order tag and take their funds to Carolyn. Tell the folks at the counter that you are part of the Mother Lode Radio Club and they will add your order to the club's check. Carolyn will make change and pay RTP for the entire club.

Director Gary Stilwell KI6T made announced that there will be new postal rates starting in 2006. It was recommended to keep this in mind when sending cards. Also that the Area 6 Bureau is not so much interested in your manila envelopes but that you have sent them

sufficient funds for postage and address labels.

Newly elected President Rich Hill NU6T asked members in attendance for ideas concerning presentations for future meetings. Response included Logging Software, contesting methods, DXpeditions, etc. There was also discussion about making a serious effort to increase our overall club score in CQP, and Field Day for '06.

Richard also made the point that MLDX/CC may want to work with NCCC to determine what contests the NCCC will not be concentrating on and help direct participation towards MLDX/CC. That suggestion was enthusiastically received.

Director Ray Parker ND6S asked those members in attendance if there was interest in holding weekly club nets on a local repeater. Ray reminded us that when the club held weekly nets, it was much easier to pass on DX and Contest information and participants often found out valuable information earlier than what was distributed via email reflector or other methods. People might have found out about announcements like recent KP5 DXpedition a week earlier than what was seen via email.

A request was made for the new BOD to determine the clubs meeting dates for 2006 as soon as possible. It was determined that the January meeting will be held on the 21th.

Director Gary Stilwell made a motion for the club to donate \$100 to the NCDXF, the chair heard discussion that included the current state of the treasury, and programs that the NCDXF sponsors including DXpeditions like the FT5XO operation, HF beacons and scholarships. The motion was seconded, a vote was taken and the motion was carried. The treasurer will issue a check in the amount to the NCDXF.

Dick N6TNX announced that he had had three amps for sale. An Alpha 87, a 91B and a Commander 2100.

Dick K6LRN reminded those in attendance dues are due for 2006. Pay Carolyn K6TKD as soon as possible.

There was a viewing of the FT5XO Microlite expedition video that was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

There was a meeting following the FT5XO presentation by some of the core members of the Field Day group. Discussion involved the merits of relocating to a different location for Field Day '06. Also, various topics from the '05 debrief including computer failures, the need for a pre-field day equipment setup/checkout event, antennas, etc. There was a comparison of other class 2A club efforts, their scores and our need to find additional operators. Two comments seemed to hold promise for our '06 event. The first was the possibility of involving new hams, perhaps their first experience in a contest with elders at their side, the second was looking for help from a local boy scout troop for setup and tear down.

The meeting was adjourned at ~15:00PT
Minutes respectfully submitted by Ron N6NIA

UPCOMING EVENTS

Foothill Flea Market

2nd Saturday of each month from **March** through **October** at Lockheed, Sunnyvale.

Livermore Swap Meet

1st Sunday of each month (see website for new location), 7:00 AM to noon, all year. Talk in 147.045 from the west 145.35 from the east. Check at: larkswap.com

UP-COMING CONTESTS

CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW 0000Z, Jan 28 to 2359Z, Jan 29
 BARTG RTTY Sprint 1200Z, Jan 28 to 1200Z, Jan 29

February, 2006

Vermont QSO Party 0000Z, Feb 4 to 2400Z, Feb 5
 10-10 Int. Winter Contest, SSB 0001Z, Feb 4 to 2359Z, Feb 5
 YLRL YL-OM Contest, CW 1400Z, Feb 4 to 0200Z, Feb 6
 Minnesota QSO Party 1400Z-2400Z, Feb 4
 AGCW Straight Key Party 1600Z-1900Z, Feb 4
 Delaware QSO Party 1700Z, Feb 4 to 0500Z, Feb 5 and 1300Z, Feb 5 to 0100Z, Feb 6
 Mexico RTTY International Contest 1800Z, Feb 4 to 1759Z, Feb 5
 North American Sprint, SSB 0000Z-0400Z, Feb 5
 ARS Spartan Sprint 0200Z-0400Z, Feb 7
 CQ WW RTTY WPX Contest 0000Z, Feb 11 to 2400Z, Feb 12
 New Hampshire QSO Party 0001Z, Feb 11 to 0001Z, Feb 13
 Asia-Pacific Spring Sprint, CW 1100Z-1300Z, Feb 11
 YLRL YL-OM Contest, SSB 1400Z, Feb 11 to 0200Z, Feb 13
 Louisiana QSO Party 1500Z, Feb 11 to 0300Z, Feb 12
 OMISS QSO Party 1500Z, Feb 11 to 1459Z, Feb 12

North American Sprint, CW 0000Z-0400Z, Feb 12
 ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW 0000Z, Feb 18 to 2400Z, Feb 19
 CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB 0000Z, Feb 25 to 2359Z, Feb 26
 Mississippi QSO Party 1500Z, Feb 25 to 0300Z, Feb 26
 North American QSO Party, RTTY 1800Z, Feb 25 to 0600Z, Feb 26
 1500Z-1700Z, Feb 26

PROPAGATION FORECAST

Propagation Forecast Bulletin 3
 ARLP003 From Tad Cook, K7RA Seattle, WA January 20, 2006 To all radio amateurs As we cruise into the low part of solar cycle 23, the sun has been very quiet, save for some coronal holes providing solar wind streams. This week average daily sunspot numbers were up nearly ten points compared to last. The geomagnetic field has been mostly quiet, although a little more active than the previous week. Over the next week expect solar flux to stay around 90, with geomagnetic conditions quiet, except for some unsettled to active conditions around January 23-24. Geophysical Institute Prague expects quiet conditions January 21, quiet to unsettled January 20 and 22, unsettled January 25 and 26, unsettled to active January 23, and active conditions (higher A and K index) on January 24.

Rich DiDonna, NN3W of Virginia writes that, "While conditions on the high bands may stink, conditions on the low bands have been spectacular. 40 meters is opening to Europe as early as 2100z from the East Coast with reliable openings to the Middle East, and long paths to Southeast Asia. 80 and 160 have also been amazing. So, while Old Sol may be in "nap" phase, one should not assume that there is a lack of DX to work!"

Jon Jones, N0JK of Kansas echoes Rich's comments about the lower frequencies in a January 14 email. He writes, "160 meter propagation to Europe from the Midwest and western USA is picking up. For a low band propagation beacon I listen to the 1.2 megawatt AM station from Kvitsoy, Norway on 1314 kHz. Its signal has been very strong the last couple of evenings. Great 160M conditions were noted by W8CAR and others the same time to Europe." Jon also noted an extensive 6 meter E layer opening on January 13-14 in which W1, W2, W3 and W4 stations were coming in.

Charles Lewis, S9SS of Sao Tome and Principe (an African island in the Atlantic Ocean about 150 miles west of Libreville, Gabon) was one of the stations reported in a recent bulletin by K7HP in Arizona as worked on 10 meters. Charles writes, "The reason Hank worked me that night is that I also use propagation beacons. On 10 meters, I primarily depend on the W3VD beacon in Laurel, MD. That evening, as I often do, I had the receiver tuned to the W3VD beacon while I worked at the computer across the room. About 2110z I heard the beacon rise dramatically out of the noise. I checked and found the band was becoming live with 10 meters stations. I fired up my amp and called CQ. In a period of about 40 minutes I worked about 40 stations. I would have worked many more, but it took a while of ragchewing before I was discovered by the crowd." He continues, "These late 10 meters openings are not very unusual for me in the 2015 to 2130z time frame. They more often start around 2030 to 2040z. They might last a few minutes or they might last a couple of hours. Until early last year, they were nearly nightly. Now they are a lot more scarce. There have been many times that I heard W3VD with a good signal and could raise no one or perhaps had a long rag chew with someone followed by no takers afterward." Charles goes on to say, "I also had a very good opening on 12/11, the second day of the ARRL 10 Meters Contest that began about 2010z. I worked about 115 contacts coast to coast in NA over a period of about 50 minutes until it died. In that case also, I was working at the computer and heard W3VD pop out of the noise. The band usually dies about as suddenly as it comes to life." He continues, "I am only about 20 miles north of the Equator. There is only about a 20 minute variation in sunset time over the year. The sun is usually down well before 1800z, so these openings are long after my sunset".

Charles says that on 20 through 12 meters he uses the IARU beacon system, and on 12 meters he often hears 4U1UN in NYC coming in strong, while no one else seems to be on the band. He says 20 meters is his best band for working the USA, and is the best way to communicate with friends near his vacation home in Western North Carolina.

Charles has an interesting challenge operating from his QTH, and that is from a huge Voice of America transmitter site that seems to hover over his station in a photo he sent. Check out a similar image on the web at, <http://groups.msn.com/s9ss>.

A couple of weeks ago Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA had some comments about SSNe, or Effective Sunspot Numbers, and the T-Index. He continues with more comments below, through the end of this bulletin.

Carl begins, "In the January 6 Bulletin, I said the T Index and SSNe were similar methods that give a better picture of what the ionosphere is doing "now." Both represent an effective sunspot number based on real-time sounding of the F2 region critical frequency. Let's look at the basic difference between SSNe and the T Index. "SSNe is calculated from a worldwide set of ionosondes at geomagnetic latitudes lower than 50 degrees. The SSNe plot also shows the RMS % difference between the foF2 values used to derive SSNe and foF2 calculated from the model using that SSNe as input. This parameter typically runs about 20% or so - if it exceeds 30% this indicates that the global ionosphere is departing more from the model expectation than usual. And if it exceeds 50%, buyer beware! "The T Index is calculated from 14 ionosondes in the Australian sector. The regional maps (Australasia, Europe, and North America) show the difference between the predicted monthly T Index (which is in tabular format at www.ips.gov.au/HF_Systems/6/4/1) and the current observed hourly conditions in the desired region. "Which one is best to use? That's a tough call, but I'd personally give the edge to SSNe for global predictions as it is based on worldwide data. "To reiterate from the January 6 Bulletin, neither gives us a daily model of the ionosphere. But both do allow you to assess whether the current conditions are generally equal to, better than, or worse than the median value from your propagation prediction program when using the heavily averaged smoothed sunspot number (or smoothed solar flux). "Thanks to Jim Secan of Northwest Research Associates in Tucson for information on SSNe and for forwarding the T Index information from Garth Patterson at IPS." If you would like to make a comment or have a tip for our readers, email the author at, k7ra@arrl.net.

For more information concerning radio propagation and an explanation of the numbers used in this bulletin see the

ARRL Technical Information Service
propagation page at,
<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/propagation.htm>
1. An archive of past propagation bulletins
is found at, <http://www.arrl.org/wlaw/prop/>.
Sunspot numbers for January 12 through 18
were 12, 0, 0, 32, 42, 36 and 50 with a mean
of 24.6. 10.7 cm flux was 76.5, 76.5, 77.4,
80.9, 83.8, 82.5, and 85.6, with a mean of
80.5. Estimated planetary A indices were 3,
2, 3, 4, 14, 8 and 5 with a mean of 5.6.
Estimated mid-latitude A indices were 2, 4,
2, 4, 8, 10 and 9, with a mean of 5.6.

**MLDXCC 2006 Meetings 3rd Saturday (pending
contest or other conflicts).**

Jan 28

Feb 25

(Feb 11: CQWW WPX RTTY; NHQP; LAQP;

(Feb 18: ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW)

(Feb 25: CQ 160m SSB; MSQP; NAQP RTTY)

Mar 18:

Apr 15:

May 20

June 17

July 15

Aug 19

Sept 16

Oct 21

Nov 11

Dec 16

Membership Criteria

Membership criteria may be obtained by
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The MLDXCC NEWSLETTER

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See the W6 Bureau home page

(<http://www.kqlz.com/qslbureau6/>)