

THE NUGGET



Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

The Newsletter of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

December 2023

Volume 28 Number 12

Treasurer's Report

MLDXCC Treasurer's Report - September 2023

8/31/23 Opening Balance \$3209.07

Income: \$20.00

2023 Dues - Paypal

Expenses: \$0.00

9/30/23 Closing Balance \$3229.07



Sue Allred, K6SZQ

Secretary's Report

Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

General Meeting Minutes

December 16, 2023

Los Hermanos Restaurant, Sutter Creek

Meeting was called to order at 12:53 p.m. by President Greg Glenn, NR6Q. 18 members and 2 guests were in attendance.

Greg welcomed everyone, and each person present introduced themselves.

The minutes of the August 26th meeting (the last one held) were published in the September newsletter. It was moved and seconded that those minutes be accepted as published; motion passed unanimously.

The September treasurer's report was published in the October newsletter. It was moved and seconded to accept the report as published. The motion passed unanimously. Sue Allred, K6SZQ also reminded everyone that dues are due in January - \$20 for individuals and \$30 for a family membership.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

· Since we did not have a November meeting, elections will be held this meeting for Officers & Directors. Greg mentioned that we had a slate of individuals who agreed to serve, and asked if anyone else present desired to run for office. No one did. Greg presented the following slate of officers:

President – Steve Allred, NC6R

Vice President – Bob Hess, W1RH

Secretary – Lee Gravesen, KM6VNZ

Treasurer – Sue Allred, K6SZQ

Directors (3)

Steve Dyer, W1SRD

Rich Cutler, WC6H

Greg Glenn, NR6Q

Ron Eames, W6RPM moved to accept the entire slate; Rick Karlquist, N6RK seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

· Sue Allred, K6SZQ stated that we traditionally sponsored one of the plaques for the CQP contest, and that it was needed to be paid. It was agreed that we want to continue sponsoring and Sue will pay NCCC for the sponsorship fee.

· Steve Allred, NC6R noted that our member Steve Dyer, W1SRD will be going on the TX5S Clipperton Island DXpedition as part of the Persistence DX Group. It was suggested that MLDXCC might want to help the project with some funding. After some discussion, Steve moved to give \$1000 toward the DXpedition; Bob Hess, W1RH seconded the motion. Motion pass unanimously.

· Sue Allred, K6SZQ stated that we needed to appoint a new trustee for the club call since it was still in Ken Anderson's name (K6TA). The individual who would hold this call for the club cannot hold another club call. Steve Dyer, W1SRD stated that he would be eligible and would like to serve as club call trustee. It was moved and seconded to appoint Steve to the position; motion passed unanimously. Sue will complete and submit the paperwork to ARRL.

Announcements / Discussion:

· Greg Glenn, NR6Q gave a quick run-down of the upcoming DX opportunities from the Weekly DX Bulletin.

· Steve Allred, NC6R reminded everyone that the CQ DX Marathon for 2023 finished the end of December and files will be due. It was stated that it is now even easier to submit with an ADIF log file. There was some additional discussion/information on the Marathon and members who had not participated in the past were encouraged to do so in 2024.

Presentation:

Bob Hess, W1RH shared his thoughts and some statistics on the recent Sweepstakes contest.

Next Meeting:

TBD

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Gravesen, KM6VNZ ,Secretary



April 12, 13 & 14, 2024



Do you have a great idea for a program? Want to be a vendor? Are you a DX station that needs assistance? Please see the contact page to e-mail the appropriate person for your questions.

The International DX Convention has been proudly sponsored alternately by the Southern California DX Club & Northern California DX Club for the past 75 years.

The 75th Annual International DX Convention sponsored by the Southern California DX Club and to be held at the Visalia Convention Center.

The International DX Convention is the world's foremost DX convention. If you are a DXer or interested in any aspect of ham radio you need to be at Visalia. Top DX operators from around the world will be there. Meet the big guns from the US, Asia, Europe, Africa and Oceania. Meet the people on the other side of the mic or key. Shake hands with the person you have had that sked with for the past 10 years. Renew friendships.

Top DXpeditioners from every continent tell you how they did it. Learn the secrets for big signals on the top band, how to have fun and adventures chasing IOTA, contest forum, DX forum, seminars for everyone from the seasoned pro to the beginning DXer. Bring your latest QSL card arrivals for checking. Attend the traditional Saturday night banquet where great friends and good food are met with lively presentations. The Sunday breakfast buffet has ample selection and variety. Visit the manufacturers' midway where you can talk to the people who design and use the latest and best equipment.



Early Christmas

On Christmas eve, LOTW came up with confirmations from ZD9W for QSOs on 160 and 80 meters. I had been waiting for those to come in for a long time. I promptly made a DXCC application on LOTW. Endorsement stickers will be 225 on 160, 300 on 80, 325 on 12 and 150 on 6 meters. My DXCC Challenge total sits at 2980. ARRL has already processed my application on the day after Christmas. The next big milestone is 3000 on challenge, but those 20 QSLs will be hard to get. de N6JV

DELETED COUNTRIES

CANAL ZONE

The Canal Zone was an 10 mile wide area on the Isthmus of Panama which included the Panama Canal. Established in 1903 as a territory of the United States where the canal would be built. In 1979 the region was given back to Panama, probably a bad decision. Nevertheless, Panama gave the US unlimited use, occupation, and control of the region. The US military protects the canal to this date.

Before 1903 the area belonged to Columbia and in 1904 it was supposed to revert back to France. The US backed a rebel contingent who declared Panama a separate republic from Columbia and quickly put together a treaty with the newly formed country. The Panamanians looked to the US for protection even writing it into their constitution. Construction of the canal began in 1904 and was finished in 1914.

As one would assume the Panama Canal has strategic military importance. It shortened the long and dangerous passage from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean by several days and allowed swift access for naval vessels between the two coasts of the United States. This served US interests well during all major conflicts since the canals opening.

Again, unlimited and permanent US access to the waterway was granted by treaty. There was no formal boundary between the Canal Zone and Panama. People crossed between the two simply by crossing a street. The real issue revolved around the fact that the canal cut Panama in half. It was difficult to transit between the two regions. The US did build a bridge however, Panama was not permitted to fly its flag on either side of it. This created tension between the US and Panama that did not cease until the zone was returned to Panama. The Panamanians and "aliens" working in the zone were also paid less than US employees and had limited access to the commissary which supplied most of the food for the zone. This did not help the problem. Also, citizenship of persons born in the Canal Zone was a major issue. It was treated like all other territories. If the father was a US citizen at the time of the child's birth then the baby was a US citizen. Was the child a "natural" born citizen? That was debated when John McCain ran for president in 2008. He was born in the Canal Zone in 1936 to US citizens. One other notable person who lived in the Canal Zone is Stephen Stills of the music trio Crosby, Stills, & Nash. Stills graduated from Lincoln High School in Costa Rica.



In 1989 the US invaded Panama and ousted the de facto leader Manuel Noriega. This action was the result of a failed coupe to overthrow Noriega, backed by Cuba. In fear that Panama would become a Communist puppet, it was decided that the corrupt long time CIA and DEA friend had to go. Noriega worked both sides of the street giving drug lords all over the Americas and the CIA access to Panama for shipment of their illicit products and banking their money (now where did that money go Mr. Bush?). Noriega was spirited away in his red underwear to a federal prison. Years later he was tried and convicted of drug trafficking, racketeering and money laundering. In that trial Noriega stated that he was paid more than \$10,000,000 by the US Army and CIA for "services" rendered. That testimony was suppressed citing relevance. He was sentenced to 40 years but was extradited to France, tried and imprisoned. He then was extradited and imprisoned in Panama. He died after surgery removing a benign brain tumor in 2017 closing the worst chapter in American/Panamanian history.



Thanks to the Southern California DX Club Newsletter

Tube of the Month

4X500A/F

In late 1945, EIMAC was busy developing a new line of power tetrodes. One concept was to make the plate structure external. Experiments were made using copper strap folded back on itself to make a plate that cooling air could be forced through. The X-429 in the first illustration, was made in San Bruno, California, in February, 1946 (B6 on the glass). The final 500-watt tube was introduced in [1947](#) as the [4X500A](#) using the same odd 4 pin base as the experimental tubes used, but with a larger and stronger external plate. It was marketed for TV and FM use in VHF up to 120 MHz in class C and 220 MHz in class B TV video amplifier service. The external anode also allowed its incorporation in a VHF cavity. The tubular shape allowed a resonate pipe or cylinder to directly mount to it or “plumber’s delight” construction that became very popular with hams using 2 meters.

The final version could use a maximum of 4000 volts on the plate at 350 ma. The filament was 5 volts at 13.5 amps. Several other manufacturers made this tube for many years. In Europe, the tube is the QBL4/800. It was one of the last glass tubes that was still being re-built as there was a commercial demand. The special base was a problem with cash starved hams and was never promoted for amateur use. To make it more useable, they made the [4X500F](#) that sported the common 5 pin base that was used on the 4-250A and 4-400A tubes that hams were very familiar with. It never caught on and the “F” tube is very scarce today.

Visit the museum at N6JV.com



FT8 Time tip from W6DE:

What time is it?

FT8 Time tip: FT8 needs your computer clock to be within 1/10 of a second from UTC to insure error free decoding of FT8 signals. How do you know the accuracy of your Computer Clock? Visit this web site to see how close your computer's clock is to UTC: → time.is ←

Computer clocks are notorious for drift. For accurate millisecond time keeping you need to add accessory time keeping software to your computer.

Meinberg is the most accurate as it replaces the Microsoft time keeping software with its own time keeping system. https://www.meinbergglobal.com/english/sw/ntp.htm#ntp_stableIt

Meinberg measures the drift rate of the computer's motherboard clock and generates a steady time hack for the computer. However, the set-up is a bit complicated. I stopped using Meinberg because it would fail several times a year and it was difficult to re-start. The instructions for the free software is lacking—it uses non-common terminology without defining the terms used.

Another time sync tool is <https://timesynctool.com/> this is simple to set up and run. Its flaw is that it abruptly changes the clock time each time it updates the Computer's clock [i.e., the "one second" unit of time interval when it updates may not be exactly one second long.]

So don't set the update interval too frequently. I use NetTime and have it set to update every 15 minutes and each update is between 0 and 4 milliseconds. When your computer is shut down its computer clock runs on the mother board's 'coin' battery. My computer clock drifts about a second per day when powered down. YMMV or YCMV.

Club Log Standings 2023

Overall

1	W1SRD	Steve Dyer	262
2	NK7I	Rick Bates	256
3	K6OK	Jim Varney	251

CW

1	K6YK	John Lee	209
2	K6OK	Jim Varney	155
3	K6MM	John Miller	139

Phone

1	NC6R	Steve Allred	170
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2	W1SRD	Brian Mathews	163
3	K6YK	John Lee	148

Data

1	NK7I	Rick Bates	245
2	W1SRD	Steve Dyer	244
3	W6DR	Dave Ritchie	241

Awards Checkers ARRL

Rick Samoian, W6SR

(DXCC, WAS, VUCC, 160M)

Postal Increase

Product	Price before Jan. 24	Price after Jan. 24
Letters (1 oz.)	66 cents	68 cents
Letters (metered 1 oz.)	63 cents	64 cents
Domestic Postcards	51 cents	53 cents
International Postcards	\$1.50	\$1.55
International Letter (1 oz.)	\$1.50	\$1.55

MLDXCC Focus Contests

*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

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>

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

Upcoming Events

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

<http://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.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.

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

COAX FOR SALE

For Sale: 272 feet of 1 ¼" Andrew Superflex VXL6 Heliax. \$750, connectors available. Brand new, still on original 5' diameter spool. All or nothing, no cutting to shorter lengths. Good for long run to antenna field. 0.146 dB attenuation per 100' at 30 MHz. 0.996 dB attenuation per 100' AT 450 MHz. I will deliver with-in most of Northern California (distance and location negotiable) for cost of gasoline. This will take a pick-up truck or large flat-bed trailer to move. Pick-ups with a 5' bed you will risk breaking your cab back window, plan accordingly. Dave, W6DE, 530-409-7877

I wish to purchase an antenna tuner, specifically an Ameritron ATR-30 or Palstar AT2K.

***May consider other tuners if they will handle full power and have multiple inputs. What have you got in that's excess to your needs?

Please reply to my email address, or phone (530) 672-2885 to keep reflector traffic

down.

Thanks de Rick, W6SR

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/>

Tuolumne County Amateur Radio Electronics Society (TCARES)
<https://tcares.net/>

ARRL Pacific Division

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The MLDXCC NEWSLETTER

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