

THE NUGGET



The Newsletter of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

March 2018

Volume 23 Number 3

From the President NJ6G

Lots of on-air activity in February, I hope all of you were able to work some good DX during the contests and numerous DXpeditions around the globe. I've picked up about a dozen ATNOs on the year in Phone, CW, RTTY and FT8. Of course, I have a lot more empty slots than many of you so those ATNOs are a bit easier to come by. I know Kosovo is the only new one available to some of you, and I've seen many of you getting them in the log. Good job!

Raise your hand if you're disappointed that 3Y0Z Bouvet Island wasn't able to bridge that last mile and activate the No. 2 most wanted entity. I can't imagine how that team must feel, so close and yet so far. Months and months of preparation all for naught. They spent 31 days continuous at sea before ending up a continent away from where they wanted to be. Let's hope their planning and preparation can be put to use in another attempt before too long.

The 69th Annual International DX Convention is fast approaching (April 20-22), this is a fun event that the XYL insists I take her to. How can I say no? We will again have a table set up in the main hallway to spread the word about our club and show off some of our awards. Be sure to stop by and say hi, maybe grab a seat for a while and run the table.

Only change to the station this month was the addition of another 27" monitor. Really helps during the contests when I don't have to keep moving overlapping windows around. I looked at the new curved monitors that are out but

Next Meeting

March 10, 2018

11:30 AM – Mountain Mike's Pizza in Martell
11974 CA-88, Jackson, CA 95642

Program will be Tips and Tricks for Logbook of The
World and Club Log

We are always on the lookout for new places to hold our meetings, or for volunteers to help make arrangements. Please contact the Activities Chair, Vina K6VNA if you can help out! vina@sign-tek.com

yikes they're expensive. One feature I do like about them is that you can have multiple inputs displayed at once, so I could possibly have my Elecraft P3 display on part of the screen. I'd probably just get frustrated that I couldn't mouse over to it and click on a signal.

73, Dennis NJ6G

From the Vice President NC6R

Representing MLDXCC, I had the pleasure of presenting Ken Anderson (K6TA) with the MLDXCC "Life Time Achievement Award". MLDXCC would not be the club it is today without your effort and vision. Thank you Ken for your many years of service and contribution to MLDXCC.



As we've all noticed, DX contacts on the HF bands have been sporadic and challenging lately. However, have you tried the FT8 mode? Several of our members report making numerous stateside and DX contacts. The interest in this mode is growing rapidly with LoTW being one of the preferred methods of confirmation.

An acquaintance of mine (W6KF) working FT8 confirmed WAS in one month (Jan) and also

worked (to date) 124 DXCC entities on FT8 since the first of the year. During a recent phone call he shared with me that he's also confirmed 48 states on 160 using FT8 since Jan 1st, nice job!

Recently while looking over my log I noticed I didn't have a lot of 80 meter DX contacts. My 80 meter inverted "V" seems to work well out to 600+ miles, but falls short on DX. With that in mind I did some research and decided that a vertical would be worth trying. I cut a ¼ wave length of stranded #12 wire, connected it to an insulator and ran it up 75' on a rope/pulley installed on the side of the repeater tower and then pulled it out at the bottom and feed it with LMR400 at the base through a choke. Next I connected the ground side to 4 radials and 300' of hog wire fence. While I concede it's not an ideal ground system, the darn thing works so well I'm now logging DX that I hadn't be able to work before (Japan, French Polynesia, Costa Rica). It must be the hog wire; guess it's time to build it a proper radial system.

73 and Good DX,
Steve / NC6R

From the Secretary K6SZQ

Meeting was called to order at 12:47 p.m. by Dennis Moore, NJ6G. 22 members and 5 guests were in attendance (2 of those guests were voted in as members later in the meeting).

We went around the room and each member introduced themselves.

Norm Wilson, N6JV moved to accept the minutes as published in the November newsletter. Dick Wilson, K6LRN seconded the motion

Dits and Dahs

Rick Samoian W6SR has Z60A confirmed on LoTW so is back to #1 Honor Roll. Congrats Rick!

Dennis Moore NJ6G got 80M WAS (finally!), finishing it up with FT8 to South Carolina.

Steve Allred NC6R ventured into NAQP RTTY with over 300 contacts, looks like a new RTTY contester is born!

Giuseppe Molinaro KE8FT travelled to Michigan for the 160M Phone contest and worked 671 contacts from there. Good job!

Fred Honnold K6IJ operated the ARRL DX CW contest from KH6LC.

Dennis Moore NJ6G worked KH6LC on all bands 160M - 10M in the ARRL DX CW contest. Thanks Fred!

Do you have something you'd like to see here in Dits and Dahs? License upgrade? Call sign change? New equipment? Send it to the editor!

which passed unanimously. Steve Allred, NC6R moved to accept the Treasurer's report as published in the December newsletter. Carolyn Wilson, K6TKD seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

The regular dues reminder was given.

Committee Reports:

Membership Committee – there was not a lot of action in this area - we are in need of a new person to lead the committee.

Award Committee – Presentation of awards will be at the end of the meeting.

Old Business:

Nugget Editor Volunteer - we are looking for a volunteer to take over the editor position.

New Business:

It had been suggested that MLDXCC pay for sending member QSL cards through the ARRL Outgoing Bureau. Dennis polled the group to see if there was any interest before the board made a decision. 8 people indicated that they used the QSL Bureau. Norm Wilson, N6JV stated that NCDXC sends a package quarterly. Rick Samoian, W6SR suggested that if we decide to do this there should be a nominal fee to the members participating. He also suggested sending them 2 times per year. Steve Allred, NC6R suggested that dues be raised to \$20 to offset that member benefit. It was noted that should the club decide to proceed with this venture, a volunteer would be needed to collect, sort, bundle and mail the cards.

Dennis reported that a letter had been sent to ARRL Board of Directors on behalf of the club regarding the recent events involving censure of a Board member. He apologized for overstepping and sending the letter before all Mother Lode Board members had a chance to approve. He also announced some changes to our ARRL Division Leadership:

- Bob Vallio, W6RGG, who had served as Pacific Division Director has been elected as ARRL Second Vice President.

- Former Vice Director Jim Tiemstra, K6JAT, will move up to Pacific Division Director.
- Kristen McIntyre, K6WX, has been appointed as the new Pacific Division Vice Director.

Recent club/member awards and DX bragging

- Doug Phillips, WE6Z made several good Asian contacts on 20 M FTB - Hong Kong, China, India, and Japan.
- Dave Marson, KG6SVF made contact with a Special Event station for the Olympics in South Korea on 20 M.
- Dennis Moore, NJ6G contacted Reunion Island on FT8.

Member Reports on Recent Contests/Events:

- Dennis announced that MLDXCC did NOT win CQP in the medium club category as we had previously believed, but came in second place. SCCC won the category with 34 logs submitted. The winner is determined using the scores from the top 35 logs. The difference between us and SCCC was 75,000 points.
- MLDXCC placed 2nd in North American and 5th in the world in the DX Marathon. Rick Prather, K6LE placed #1 in California in the Low Power Category.
- Several members received awards in the recent CQP:
 - Emelia Sieferling, KI6YYT was 4th place YL in California and 3rd Place, Low Power for Solano County

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!

- Jim Sieferling, WB6BET was 1st Place, Low Power for Solano County
- Dennis Moore, NJ6G was 1st Place, Low Power for Calaveras County
- Bob Officer, N6TCE did a county expedition, putting both Merced and Mariposa counties on the air.

Member Reports on New Equipment:

- John Lee, K6YK reports that he has a new TS 2000 (the one with the buttons).

New Member Applications

The following were proposed as new members and approved by the membership:

- N7TR - Rich Hallman

- N6GHZ - Bill Ress (who was in attendance)
- N6BU - Doug Murray (who was in attendance)

Upcoming Events:

- CQ WW CW 160M Contest – Jan 27/28 - submit points for MLDXCC
- CQ WPX RTTY Contest - Feb 10/11 - submit points for NCCC
- ARRL CW DX Contest – Feb 17/18 - submit points for MLDXCC
- CQ WW SSB 160M Contest – Feb 24/25 - submit points for NCCC
- NAQP RTTY – Feb 24 - submit points for NCCC
- ARRL SSB DX Contest – Mar 3/4 - submit points for MLDXCC
- Sierra Foothills ARC Hamfest – Loomis – March 17

Emelia Sieferling, KI6YYT pointed out that there was the YL/OM Contest on Feb. 9th and 10th which should be a lot of fun.

DX News:

- Bouvet Island 3Y0Z – January 2018 – the #2 most wanted. They are still on the boat due to weather issues.
- Baker Island KH1 – June 2018 for 10 days - #4 most wanted.
- Kosovo is now recognized as a DX entity. Contacts beginning January 21, 2018 count, and Z60A is operating now. Norm Wilson, N6JV and Steve Allred, NC6R indicated that they already have Kosovo "in the log".

- Refer to NG3K.com for current DX operations

Next Meeting:

After some discussion, it was determined to move the next meeting to March 10th so as to not conflict with the Sierra Foothills ARC Hamfest in Loomis on March 17th. Location of the next meeting will be announced once determined - most likely in Martell.

Rich Cutler, WC6H - Awards Committee Chairman, presented a variety of certificates and plaques to our members who had earned club awards for the year. A complete listing will be published in the newsletter.

We ended the meeting with the raffle - there was a large variety of prizes. Proceeds from the raffle go into our treasury to help with expenses, awards. etc.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m. There was no program.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Allred, K6SZQ - Secretary

From the Treasurer K6TLR

January 2017 Treasurer's report

January 23 Balance	\$2,580.64		
			Tender

Income:	WE6Z Lunch 1/27 Meeting	17	PP
	K6KNS Lunch 1/27 Meeting	17	PP
	WD6EIW Lunch 1/27 Meeting	17	PP
	KE8FT Lunch 1/27 meeting	17	PP
	N6GHZ Lunch 1/27 Meeting	17	PP
	NJ6G K6VNA Lunch 1/27 Meeting	34	PP
	K6LE Dues	15	PP
	N6GHz Dues	15	PP
	N6BU Dues	15	CASH
	Pd Lunch @ meeting- K6LRN, K6TKD, K6YK, N6LHL, KA6MEL, KG6SVF, N6BU, N6KZW, W6SR, WC6H, KD6MOO	187	CASH
	Raffle Ticket Income	208	CASH
Expense:	Award Plaques	-225	EDHSA

	Award Certifi- cates	-84	EDHSA
	Award Wines	-156	EDHSA
	Catering	-322	EDHSA
	Tri-Tip & Chick- en	-69	EDHSA
	Soda/Tea/Water	-25	EDHSA
February 27 Balance	\$2,258.54		

Tyler Laursen K6TLR
MLDXCC Treasurer

Paying Dues:

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 K6TLR, 3141 Rushall Ct,
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Mike Gould W6Fi - SK

From Rick Samoian W6SR:

We just found out that Mike Gould, W6FI re-
cently passed away after a 20 year battle with
Parkinson's. Mike was a member of the SCDXC,
and Palos Verdes Radio Club, for many years,
until he escaped to Northern California 15 years
ago. He joined the MLDXCC when he moved to
Placerville. Norm, N6JV and I helped him put up
a tower and beams. He remained active until
about 2 years ago, and could be found almost
every AM trolling for a rare one at 30+ WPM. I
knew Mike for almost 50 years, in fact we lived

across street from each other in Palos Verdes, in Southern California. Although not a contester, Mike was active on all the bands, his preferred mode was CW, and he was a first class CW op. Mike and I also shared a mutual interest in motorcycles and Corvettes, and it was a sad day when he had to sell his beloved Z-06 a couple of years ago. RIP my friend.....Rick Samoian, W6SR

ARRL News

ARRL has asked the FCC to expand HF privileges for Technician licensees to include limited phone privileges on 75, 40, and 15 meters, plus RTTY and digital mode privileges on 80, 40, 15, and 10 meters. The FCC has not yet invited public comment on the proposals, which stem from recommendations put forth by the ARRL Board of Directors' Entry-Level License Committee, which explored various initiatives and gauged member opinions in 2016 and 2017.

"This action will enhance the available license operating privileges in what has become the principal entry-level license class in the Amateur Service," ARRL said in its [*Petition*](#). "It will attract more newcomers to Amateur Radio, it will result in increased retention of licensees who hold Technician Class licenses, and it will provide an improved incentive for entry-level licensees to increase technical self-training and pursue higher license class achievement and development of communications skills."

Specifically, ARRL proposes to provide Technician licensees, present and future, with phone privileges at 3.900 to 4.000 MHz, 7.225 to 7.300 MHz, and 21.350 to 21.450 MHz, plus RTTY and digital privileges in current Technician alloca-

tions on 80, 40, 15, and 10 meters. The ARRL petition points out the explosion in popularity of various digital modes over the past 2 decades. Under the ARRL plan, the maximum HF power level for Technician operators would remain at 200 W PEP. The few remaining Novice licensees would gain no new privileges under the League's proposal.

ARRL's petition points to the need for compelling incentives not only to become a radio amateur in the first place, but then to upgrade and further develop skills. Demographic and technological changes call for a "periodic rebalancing" between those two objectives, the League maintains.

"There has not been such a rebalancing in many years," ARRL said in its petition. "It is time to do that now." The FCC has not assessed entry-level operating privileges since 2005.

The Entry-Level License Committee offered very specific, data- and survey-supported findings about growth in Amateur Radio and its place in the advanced technological demographic that includes individuals younger than 30. It received significant input from ARRL members via more than 8,000 survey responses.

"The Committee's analysis noted that today, Amateur Radio exists among many more modes of communication than it did half a century ago, or even 20 years ago," ARRL said in its petition.

Now numbering some 378,000, Technician licensees comprise more than half of the US Amateur Radio population. ARRL said that after 17 years of experience with the current Technician license as the gateway to Amateur Radio, it's urgent to make it more attractive to newcomers, in part to improve upon science, technolo-

gy, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education “that inescapably accompanies a healthy, growing Amateur Radio Service,” ARRL asserted.

ARRL said its proposal is critical to developing improved operating skills, increasing emergency communication participation, improving technical self-training, and boosting overall growth in the Amateur Service, which has remained nearly inert at about 1% per year.

The Entry-Level License Committee determined

2018 MLDXCC Meeting Dates

January 27
February - None
March 10
April - none (Visalia)
May 19
June 16
July 28
Aug 25
Sep 15
October 13
November 10
December - 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.

that the current Technician class question pool already covers far more material than necessary for an entry-level exam to validate expanded privileges. ARRL told the FCC that it would continue to refine examination preparation and training materials aimed at STEM topics, increase outreach and recruitment, work with Amateur Radio clubs, and encourage educational institutions to utilize Amateur Radio in STEM and other experiential learning programs.

“ARRL requests that the Commission become a partner in this effort to promote Amateur Radio as a public benefit by making the very nominal changes proposed herein in the Technician class license operating privileges,” the petition concluded.

Z60A organizers Pertti Turunen, OG2M; Martti Laine, OH2BH, and Henri Olander, OH3JR, will reactivate Z60A from Kosovo, the newest DXCC entity, starting on February 28, on the low bands and in the [ARRL International DX Contest \(SSB\)](#) March 3 – 4 (UTC). The previous Z60A operating sites are still equipped with antennas.

In the prior Z60A activation, operators were disappointed that high noise levels hampered reception on the low bands. Several local radio amateurs have been working to pin down noise sources, and, while 80 and 40 meters are “relatively clean” 160 meters “is still a challenge.” The operators plan to set out Beverage antennas as far as possible from noise sources.

The Finnish visitors will carry two complete stations for Kosovo’s IARU Member-Society [SHRAK](#), which local operators will put on the air. Meanwhile, a Czech DXpedition group has announced plans for its Z66D DXpedition from April 14 – 22. The first few days will be “limited” as the station is built up, and “full-bore activity” is expected by April 17. Operation will be on HF on SSB, CW, RTTY, and FT8 with seven radios and four amps. QSL will be via OK6DJ. — *Thanks to Martti Laine, OH2BH, and [The Daily DX](#)*

Plans appear to be on track for the upcoming 3B7A DXpedition to Saint Brandon Island, expected to kick off in early to mid-April. The DXpedition initially was planned for last fall. In a news release this week, the 3B7A team said the past year of preparations has been intense, and 700 kilograms of gear is now on its way to Mauritius, where it will join the generators and stock of fuel on the boat to Saint Brandon Island on April 3 with two team members.

A second vessel departing on April 5 will transport the other operators. The “pre-team” will oversee transit operations and identify sites to install stations and equipment, but no contacts will be made until the entire team is on site, the DXpedition’s organizers said.

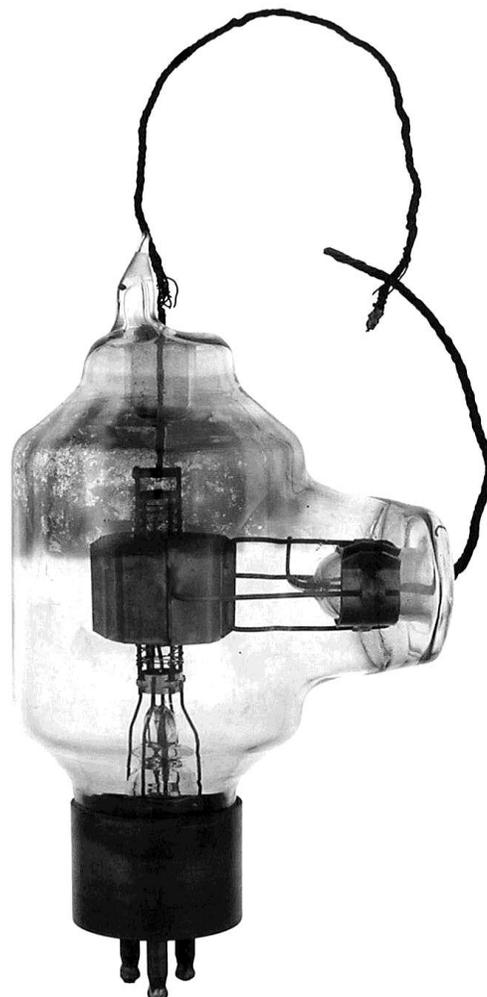
Once 3B7A is on the air, priority will be given systematically to the most difficult regions with the shortest band openings. The five identical stations are capable of working all modes available to the eight operators. 3B7A will not be active on 60 meters nor on 6-meter EME.

The DXCC entity of Agalega and Saint Brandon Islands is the 28th most wanted.

Tube of the Month N6JV

UNIVERSAL TRIODE

Many years ago, I was attending a swap meet and ran into a ham that I had bought tubes from before. His tale was that he had a very old tube that he thought was a DeForest. Naturally he had forgotten to bring it, but promised to have it the next month. I was dubious, but made sure I found him the next swap. He unpacked a wire



lead triode that looked almost homemade. I purchased the tube and in the coming days, tried to research it. I was having no luck, so I wrote a letter to Bro. Pat Dowd, W2GK, in New Jersey for his opinion. He responded that it was made by Universal Wireless, who was an early competitor to Western Union.

The Universal Wireless Communication Co. was licensed to conduct short wave experiments between New York and Chicago starting in 1928. The American Radio Relay League had been passing telegrams or “radiograms” since 1914, but the short waves offered a potential commercial means of spanning greater distances

without several relays and endless miles of wire and poles. High frequency tubes like the RCA UX-852 were available, but RCA had been known to refuse tubes to customers who weren't using RCA equipment. A similar issue was with Heintz & Kaufman who had to develop their "gammatrons" so as not to violate RCA's patents. This Universal triode seemed to be based on the 852 but with only 3 pins.



I have no information on how successful the company was, but this obvious patent infringement was soon discovered by RCA and by mid-1930 the company was liquidated. Only a few of these tubes have been found.

Visit the museum at N6JV.com

Norm N6JV

MLDXCC Website up-date

Norm, N6JV would like to up-date the "member's stations" section of our website. Many of the pics are old and outdated, and many of us have moved. So please send Norm a photo of your smiley face at your station, as well a photo of your antenna system. Let's get our website current.

Awards Luncheon Photos



1 A FEW AWARDS TO BE PRESENTED



2 KE8FT



3 NC6R



5 K6VNA



4 K6LRN



6 NC6R



7 K6LRN



9 K6YK



8 W6SR



10 MMM, LOOKS GOOD!



11 LUNCH IN THE OLD WEST

ARRL Awards Checkers

Ken Anderson, K6TA
(including 160M cards)

Rick Samoian, W6SR
(including 160M cards)

Note: ARRL Card Checkers can check DXCC, WAS and VUCC Awards.

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

ARRL International DX Contest – SSB Mar 3/4

MLDXCC Club Meeting – March 10

Stew Perry Topband Challenge – Mar 10/11

NA RTTY Sprint – March 11

Begin Daylight Saving Time – March 11

Sierra ARC Hamfest – Loomis – March 17

Russian DX Contest – Mar 17/18

CQWW WPX SSB Contest – Mar 24/25

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>

H40YM Temotu Province – 2/27 – 3/13

4B4B Revillagigedo – 3/1 – 3/15

3D2EU Rotuma Island – 2/26 – 3/16

Baker Island KH1 – June 2018 10 days – No. 4 most wanted

Classifieds

Dennis NJ6G has the following items for sale:
Astron RS-50 Power Supply - \$95 OBO

M2 RC2800 Rotator Controller - \$225
Dennis, NJ6G dennis@mail4life.net

From K6KM's estate, we have the following items for sale:

(5ea) Rohn GB-45 guy bracket, (2ea) Rohn 45 rotor plate, (1ea) Rohn GB-55D guy bracket, missing some hardware, (2ea) BLP, (6ea) Misc. guy wire assemblies. Don't know length but can verify if necessary. (5ea) PLP Big Grip BG-2144 1/4 inch, (2ea) Phillystran Big Grip HPTG-670001 / BG-MS-2755 3/8 inch, (1ea) 20 foot mast - quarter inch wall (approximate), (1ea) 15 foot mast - quarter inch wall (approximate). Also have a large lot of ICE grounding/surge protection items.

Most if not all of this stuff can be available at the Saturday MLDXCC meeting, with advance notice. I will deliver at the meeting. Rick, W6SR, will determine pricing and take your money.

Bob, W1RH W1RH@yahoo.com

Jim Marshall has the following items available for sale:

Alpha 87a fully automatic linear amplifier. Low hours, 1.5 kw+ tube amplifier. (will easily do 2 kw). Switched external fan installed, has latest firmware for "Alpha Max" and Alpha remote. (Connects via RS-232 to USB cable), with alpha remote software (included). Also including a dust cover with alpha embroidered logo.

Asking \$3,200 for the amp, and \$800 for a brand new set of Eimac tubes, still in boxes.

60 watts drive produces 1500 watts. Bullet proof amp that requires no set-up even when chang-

ing bands. (Great for contesting). Will deliver up to 100 miles from Minden NV.

F. J. Marshall, k6lr@arri.net



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

Dick K6LRN has the following items for sale:
Alpha 9500 HF Power Amplifier. Back from re-
pair & updates in un-opened carton. Asking
\$4700.

Yaesu FT-1000 MP. Has filters & a recorder.
Good condx, both electrically & cosmetic. Ask-
ing \$1100.

Dick, K6LRN k6lrn12@gmail.com

Doug Murray has the following items for sale:
Astron VLS-35M DC power supply
0-40 VDC metered 5-32VDC (front panel adjust-
able)

0-40 AMP metered, , 3-27AMP current limiting
(front panel adjustable) \$125.

Econco Rebuilt/tested (zero hours) 3CX3000A
tube \$500.

3CX3000A Socket: \$75.

FILAMENT XFMR:

7.5VAC 52A \$95.

50 AMP Filament choke: \$50.

HV XFMR:

Tapped PRI:220 VAC input

SEC. 5230-5670-6800-7480VAC 3AMP

\$350.

Doug – N6BU

209-286-9583

ARRL Pacific Division

Pacific Division Director

Jim Tiemstra K6JAT

k6jat@aol.com

Pacific Division Vice Director

Kristen McIntyre K6WX

kristen@alum.mit.edu

East Bay Section Manager

Position Open

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

kh6giv@arrl.org

Santa Clara Valley Section Manager

Brandon Bianchi, NI6C

ni6c@arrl.org

Sacramento Valley Section Manager

Dr. Carol Milazzo, KP4MD

kp4md@arrl.org

San Joaquin Valley Section Manager

Dan Pruitt, AE6SX

ae6sx@arrl.org

2018 Officers of the MLDXCC

President, Dennis Moore, NJ6G

dennis@mail4life.net

Vice President, Steve Allred, NC6R

k6sca@volcano.net

Director, Bob Hess, W1RH

w1rh@yahoo.com

Director, Chuck Tifft, W6RD

w6rd@arrl.net

Director, Ken Anderson, K6TA

k6ta@volcano.net

Director, John Kozusko, WD6EIW

jkozusko@sbcglobal.net

Director, Greg Glenn, NR6Q

nr6q@arrl.net

Secretary, Sue Allred, K6SZQ

sueallred@volcano.net

Treasurer, Tyler Laursen, K6TLR

tyler.laursen06@gmail.com

Activity Chair, Vina Moore, K6VNA

vina@sign-tek.com

QSL Manager, Chuck Tifft, W6RD

w6rd@arrl.net

Publicity Manager, Bob Hess, W1RH

w1rh@yahoo.com

Nugget Editor, Dennis Moore, NJ6G

dennis@mail4life.net

Webmaster, Norm Wilson, N6JV

n6jv@n6jv.com

The MLDXCC NEWSLETTER

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