

THE NUGGET



The Newsletter of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

August 2018

Volume 23 Number 8

From the President NJ6G

What a great gathering at the Old Spaghetti Factory in Stockton on July 28th. John Miller K6MM gave a wonderful presentation on the Baker Island KH1/KH7Z DXpedition. If you missed it this time, I'm sure he'll be presenting it at another time. Don't miss it! The meeting also gave us a chance to meet and greet with members of NCCC that we might not see as often as we'd like. We hear 'em on the air but always nice to put a face to a call.

No MLDXCC club business was conducted at the

Next Meeting

Next meeting is August 25, 2018
11:30 AM – Richmaid Restaurant in Lodi
100 S Cherokee Ln, Lodi, 95240

Main topic will be the upcoming CQP.

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

meeting, just socializing and watching John's presentation. So if you're looking for meeting minutes, there aren't any. NCCC conducted business in voting in some new members.

On the equipment front, I picked up a used KX3/PX3 combo that is waiting patiently for me to get it on the air. I'm not tearing apart my home station, and it's just been too hot to go anywhere to set up a portable station. K6VNA and I did go camping a couple of times in our new trailer but we were down in a deep valley along the Silver Fork American River, so QRP SSB wasn't going to accomplish much. Hopefully I'll get a chance in a few weeks when we head up to the Olympia area for a few days.

It's time to start thinking at CQP. It sounds like several club members have a sizable county expedition planned to a rare county, hopefully they'll get lots of attention and rack up the points. What are your plans?

Speaking of CQP, we need to think about what category we as a club want to enter. Last year we lost medium club category to SCCC, and no-

body entered the large category. SCCC had 34 out of 35 possible entries while we had 51 entries, of which 35 counted. If we had both entered the large category we would have beaten them on sheer numbers. Personally I think we should enter the large category, as 16 of our entries didn't have their points count towards our total. I'd like to think that if somebody is competing for us their points are going to count. Believe it or not, we are a big club based on how many active DXers and contesters we have. SCCC was only able to manage 34 entries. Strong entries, but not a lot of them. If they want to act like a medium club, let them. We can justify going for large club. I'll be looking for your feedback at our next meeting or on the reflector.

The next meeting is August 25th at Richmaid Restaurant in Lodi. Hope to see you there!

73, Dennis NJ6G



John Miller K6MM talks on Baker Island



Glen W6GJB talks CQP



Jim WB6BET and Emilia KI6YYT

Secretary Report

From Dennis, NJ6G, President – No official club business was conducted at the July 28 2018 meeting.

From the Treasurer K6TLR

Tyler’s been busy paying the bills and will have the July Budget available for the next newsletter.

Paying Dues:

The Dues period runs from Jan 1 to Dec 31. This is a change from last year. If you paid dues through 6/30/2018, those dues have been extended through the end of this year.

Paypal – Send to:MotherLodeClub@gmail.com. and 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

2018 January VHF Contest Report

Submitted by Bob Ress N6GHZ

Bill N6GHZ placed 1st in the Sacramento Valley Section in the 3 Band, single operator category, and also won the Pacific Division.



Bill N6GHZ's winning certificate

Nice job Bill! – NJ6G

Product Tip

Recently the soft cotton covers on my Radiosport RS60CF headset lost their elasticity and fell off the ear muffs. I was able to find replacements on Amazon for \$7.99. They also fit the Heil Proset headsets. Google search “cloth ear cover headset” to see the Amazon results, any of the aviation headset covers will work.

Dennis NJ6G

ARRL News

FCC Proposes \$18,000 Fine in Louisiana Amateur Radio Interference Case

07/25/2018

The FCC has issued a *Notice of Apparent Liability* ([NAL](#)) proposing to fine Jerry W. Materne,

KC5CSG, of Lake Charles, Louisiana, \$18,000 “for apparently causing intentional interference and for apparently failing to provide station identification on amateur radio frequencies,” the FCC said.

“Mr. Materne was previously warned regarding this behavior in writing by the Enforcement Bureau and, given his history as a repeat offender, these apparent violations warrant a significant penalty,” the FCC said in the *NAL*, released on July 25.

Dits and Dahs

Dave Sanders (x-K6KNS) has a new call, K6TQ

Steve Allred NC6R won First Place SOHP Phone for the SV section. Nice job!

Dennis NJ6G is now the proud owner of a used KX3/PX3 combo. Gotta learn how to use it!

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!

In 2017, the FCC received numerous complaints alleging that Materne was causing interference to the W5BII repeater, preventing other amateur licensees from using it. In March 2017, the repeater trustee banned Materne from using the repeater.

Responding to some of the complaints, the Enforcement Bureau issued a *Letter of Inquiry* (*LOI*), advising Materne of the allegations and directing him to address them. Materne denied causing interference but admitted to operating simplex on the repeater's output frequency. In

June 2017, the FCC received an additional complaint alleging that Materne had repeatedly interfered with an attempted emergency net that was called up as Tropical Storm Cindy was about to make landfall. The complaint maintained that Materne “repeatedly transmitted on the repeater’s input frequency, hindering the local emergency net’s ability to coordinate weather warnings and alerts on behalf of the National Weather Service,” the FCC said in the *NAL*.

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://edarc.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!

Local amateurs were able to track the interfering signal to Materne’s residence and confirmed their findings to the FCC, prompting a *Warning Letter* advising Materne of the complaint and pointing out that his behavior “as described in the complaint would be a violation of Section 97.101(d) of the Commission’s rules.” Materne responded to the *Warning Letter* to argue that it was legal to transmit on the repeater’s output frequency, further stating that “he was tired of this trash harassing me,” the FCC said.

In the wake of further complaints, FCC agents visited Lake Charles, tracked transmissions on 146.130 MHz to Materne’s residence, and monitored them for up to 7 hours. The agent reported hearing Materne “playing music on 146.130 MHz and warning other amateur operators that the local Amateur Radio club would not be able to conduct their net later that day.”

That evening, the agent watched as Materne drove to a location near the W5BII repeater, where, the agent said, Materne “began transmitting an amateur digital radio signal from a hand-held radio in his vehicle,” disrupting the net and failing to identify. Subsequently, the agent, accompanied by a deputy from the Calcasieu Parish Sheriff’s Office, approached Materne’s vehicle and confirmed that he possessed a radio capable of operating on 146.130 MHz. “Audio recordings captured by the agent demonstrate that the intentional interference ceased as the agent and the Sheriff’s deputy approached Mr. Materne’s vehicle,” the FCC said in the *NAL*.

The FCC said that based on the evidence before it, Materne “apparently willfully violated Section 333 of the Act and Section 97.101(d) of the Commission’s rules by intentionally interfering with other licensed amateur communications,” and that he “apparently willfully violated Section 97.119(a) of the Commission’s rules by failing to transmit his assigned call sign.”

“[W]e find that Mr. Materne’s apparent repeated, intentional, and egregious apparent violations of Section 333 of the Act and Section 97.101(d) of the Commission’s rules warrant an upward adjustment of \$10,000 to the proposed forfeiture,” the FCC said. “In applying the applicable statutory factors, we also consider whether there is any basis for a downward adjustment of the proposed forfeiture. Here, we find none.”

And going hand-in-hand with that article, we have...

ARRL Board Adopts Volunteer Monitoring Program; Official Observer Program to be Retired

07/31/2018

The ARRL Board of Directors has adopted the recommendations of the Official Observer Program Study Committee, which would retire the Official Observer (OO) program and institute the Volunteer Monitoring (VM) program. The Board took the action at its July 20 – 21 meeting in Windsor, Connecticut, instructing that the transition “be implemented as soon as practicable.” Under the terms of the new program, current Official Observers will be invited to apply for appointment as Volunteer Monitors (VMs). The Board expressed its appreciation for the OOs and their dedicated volunteer service over the years.

The Board said the action is expected to re-energize enforcement efforts in the Amateur Radio bands and was undertaken at the request of the FCC in the wake of several FCC regional office closures and a reduction in field staff. Coordination of cases and evidence gathering would become the responsibility of ARRL Headquarters staff, while the FCC will retain the responsibility for final decisions regarding action in specific cases.

The study committee report spelled out the additional steps necessary to launch the Volunteer Monitoring program. Among them would be the appointment of a dedicated Headquarters staff member or an independent contractor working under the direction of ARRL Headquarters to administer the new program and interface with

its participants. The Volunteer Monitoring program administrator would, among other duties, create a vetting and accreditation process for prospective Volunteer Monitors. The authority to accredit, appoint, and dismiss Volunteer Monitors would be assigned to ARRL Headquarters staff. Section Managers will continue to be a part of the vetting process for VMs, although they will not have appointment or dismissal authority.

Volunteer Monitor accreditation would be limited to a 3-year term, renewable by satisfying requirements necessary to ensure competency. A new *Volunteer Monitoring Training Manual* is in the final stages of development.

The administrator will create a target for the number of geographically distributed Volunteer Monitors. Preliminary plans would include up to five Volunteer Monitors per ARRL Section and up to 250 Volunteer Monitors overall.

In other duties, the administrator would “develop a rubric or other aid for program participants to highlight offenses and other criteria that the FCC considers a priority,” the motion said. The administrator also would be charged with organizing periodic webinars, highlighting technologies, techniques, and other continuing education topics that would assist, motivate, and better enable Volunteer Monitors. The FCC will be actively involved in the development and presentation of these training opportunities.

The new Volunteer Monitor program would continue to send notices recognizing good on-the-air operating practice. Under the new program, positive or negative operator notices eventually would be sent from ARRL Headquarter-

ters, not by individual Volunteer Monitors, in part to maintain their anonymity.

Another function of the Amateur Auxiliary — Local Interference Committees — will continue to be part of the total package, although their work is not directly addressable by the FCC.

The Board directed the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer to study the feasibility and cost of developing a centralized, web-based IT system that Volunteer Monitors as well as ARRL and FCC staff could access, in order to maximize the efficiency of administering the modernized program.

The action further authorized ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, to terminate the standing *Amended Agreement* between ARRL and the FCC Field Bureau regarding the use of amateur volunteers and execute a new *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)* between the ARRL and the FCC Enforcement Bureau. The *MOU* is under final review.

In other action, the Board:

- unanimously adopted recommendations of the ARRL Executive Committee to update ARRL's *Articles of Association* and *Bylaws* (see the July 2018 issue of *QST*, p. 74, or refer to Minutes 22 – 25 of the Board's July 20 – 21, 2018, meeting, when they are posted).
- established a 3-month general comment period for the *ARES Strategic Plan* with comments, due no later than October 31, after which the Public Service Enhancement Working Group (PSEWG) will present the final plan to the ARRL Annual Board of Directors meeting in January 2019 for consideration for adoption.

- received the preliminary final report of the PSEWG regarding the rollout of the ARES-Connect program, which will be announced in the September issue of *QST*. The Board agreed to obtain additional field input this fall.
 - received an update from the CEO Search Committee.
 - was informed, as part of the CEO's report, of current work under way in preparation for World Radiocommunication Conference 2019 (WRC 2019). The issue of wireless power transmission (WPT) continues to be a concern leading up to the international conference.
 - heard greetings from International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) President Tim Ellam, VE6SH/G4HUA, and from Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) President Glenn MacDonell, VE3XRA. Both attended as guests of the Board.
 - heard the report of the ARRL Foundation from its president, New England Division Director Tom Frenaye, K1KI, who reported that the Foundation recently approved the award of approximately 80 scholarships totaling some \$130,000.
 - accepted and discussed [reports](#) from standing committees as well as ad hoc and advisory committees of the Board.
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QST Antenna Design Competition Submission Deadline Looms

7/31/2018

The deadline to submit a design for the 2018 *QST* Antenna Design Competition is just ahead — September 1! The competition challenge is to design the best LF, MF, or HF antenna *for limited-space applications*. ARRL can only accept one entry per person (or team), but there's not much time left to complete building and testing of your design. Full details appeared in the June

2018 issue of *QST*. Three cash prizes are on the line: First place is \$600, second place is \$250, and third place is \$150. Even designs that don't win a prize might still be eligible for future *QST* publication.

Antennas must be designed for one or more bands between 2200 meters and 10 meters, must fit within a 30 × 50 foot area, and stand no taller than 30 feet at any point.

All submissions must include...

- drawings with dimensions (hand drawings are okay), a list of materials, and photos.
- a description and summary of any measurements taken, including modeling and files (modeling is not a requirement).
- a discussion of observed on-the-air results and any comparisons with other antennas.
- the submitter's name, mailing address, and email address.

All antennas based on submitted designs must be the sole creations of the entrants and not available for sale. Winners will be chosen based on ingenuity of design, mechanical and electrical safety, expected performance, and durability. The judges' decisions are final.

Entrants must be ARRL members. ARRL staffers and *QST* advertisers are not eligible.

Mail entries to *QST*, ATTN: Antenna Design Competition, 225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111 or [email your entry](#), including call sign, with the subject line of "2018 Antenna Design Competition." If submitting more than 6 MB of material, use separate email messages. *Do not send* compressed ZIP files, as these will be rejected.

Significant Changes in Store for FT8 and MSK144 with WSJT-X Version 2.0

7/25/2018

WSJT-X co-developer Joe Taylor, K1JT, has announced that major changes are coming to the FT8 and MSK144 digital protocols when WSJT-X version 2.0 arrives in a few months. Taylor said version 2.0 should be ready for prime time by January.

"Much of the necessary programming is fin-

2018 MLDXCC Meeting Dates

January 27

February - None

March 10

April - none (Visalia)

May 12 – *Canceled*

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.

ished," Taylor said in a post to the Packrats reflector. "Many of the new features have been tested on the air, and we find them to work well."

Taylor was quick to point out that the new capabilities are not yet publicly available, not even in beta form. He said that he, Steve Franke, K9AN, and Bill Somerville, G4WJS, have been developing "enhanced versions of the

MSK144 and FT8 protocols that extend the message payload to 77 bits.”

“Don’t rush to download something,” he cautioned. “There is more testing and code optimization to do.” He said current plans call for a beta-testing period “probably starting in mid-to-late September,” with a full release “possible a couple of months later.”

Taylor ticked off a few possibilities WSJT-X version 2.0 will bring to the table:

ARRL Field Day operation with standard Field Day exchanges.

ARRL RTTY Roundup operation with standard contest exchanges.

North American VHF contest operation with full support of grid exchanges and Rover (/R) call signs.

European VHF contest operation with the exchange of six-digit grids, QSO serial numbers, and portable (/P) call signs.

Better and more user-friendly support for compound and nonstandard call signs.

A special “telemetry” message format for exchanging arbitrary information up to 71 bits.

Support for the existing “FT8 DXpedition Mode,” with a more powerful DXpedition Mode possible too.

“All of these features work seamlessly and automatically,” Taylor said. “No ‘contest mode’ checkboxes are needed. In most situations, decoding sensitivity will be slightly better than at present for FT8; for MSK144 it will sometimes be about 0.5 dB worse. Occupied bandwidths will be the same as they are now, and false-decode rates will be significantly lower.”

Taylor said WSJT-X version 2.0 will be available in time for users to digest the new documentation and to practice it before actually getting

on the air with it, but he offered one important caveat. “The new protocols cannot be backward compatible with the existing ones,” he said in his post. “We will probably provide some temporary ‘bilingual’ capability for FT8, but not for MSK144. It will be essential for users to upgrade to version 2.0 in order to use the new features and communicate with others who have made the upgrade.”

Taylor promised “plenty of advance notice” about the transition period and a must-upgrade-by date.

Tube of the Month

5575/100

There are several very large tubes in the museum that people have wondered what they were used for. These are examples of very high voltage rectifiers. One of the largest and tallest is the 5575/100 made by Marshall Electronics. Hams often deal with high voltage on the order of 4000 volts DC. The 5575/100 rectifies 150,000 volts at a peak current of 1 amp. Insulation is a problem at this voltage, so the tube is 25 inches tall.

Tubes of this type and voltage range have been around since the 1930s or before. I think many of them were used to power X-ray tubes especially the ones used to test welds in thick armor plate. When pollution became a priority about 60 years ago, the industrial smoke stacks were an instant target. Regulations were put into place that required the particular content of the discharge be reduced. One process was the use of an electrostatic precipitator or scrubber. A common type of scrubber was built into the

smoke stack itself. A grill that was mounted inside the stack was negatively charged. The particles in the smoke would become negatively charged as they passed through the grill and as they moved further upward, they would pass by plates that had a very high positive voltage. The particles would be attracted to the plates and then fall into troughs where they could be collected and removed. I think 150,000 volts would attract a lot of dust.

Marshall Electronics also called this tube the ML-100 which I assume is the reason for the odd type number.



Visit the museum at N6JV.com

Norm N6JV

MLDXCC Website update

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.

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>

ARRL Awards Checkers

Ken Anderson, K6TA
(DXCC, WAS, VUCC, 160M)

Rick Samoian, W6SR
(DXCC, WAS, VUCC, 160M)

Dennis King, N6KD
(WAS, VUCC)

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

Lodi ARC Monthly Meeting – Aug 2

North American QSO Party – CW – Aug 4

North American QSO Party – SSB – Aug 18

MLDXCC Monthly Meeting – Aug 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>

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>

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.

Dennis NJ6G has the following items for sale:

Astron RS-50 Power Supply - \$95 OBO

M2 RC2800 Rotator Controller - \$225

SDRplay RSP1 – New in box - \$80

Dennis, NJ6G dennis@mail4life.net

Rick Samoian W6SR has the following items available:

Two 2Mtr computer optimized 17 element Yagis (which are capable of EME with 500W) in excellent condition. Pickup only Make offer

Bird 43 wattmeter, with peak-reading mod. Includes the following slugs, 2.5KW 3-30MHZ, 500W 50-125MHZ, 25W 200-500MHZ, 250W 100-250MHZ, 50W 100-250MHZ. \$300 or best offer, won't split, U ship or pickup.

Ameriton AWM-30 3KW wattmeter 1.5 to 50MHz in excellent condition. \$75 u ship or pickup

HY-Gain T2X with controller, in good shape. \$350 U ship or pickup

BTW: I can send photos of any item, contact me via e-mail or home phone # 530 344-9085

First come first serve

New! ["The Serial Box"](#) (S-BOX) 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

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

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