

NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 208 OCTOBER 2015




KEY CLICKS

- OUR 11TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IS NOW HERE!** We have been looking forward to this for a long time and now it has finally arrived - our NAQCC 11th anniversary celebration. Activities will take place during the week of October 12th with special event stations located all over the country, a fun evening sprint, and a great prize drawing for the sprint participants. Complete details were given in the “Celebrate” article in last month’s newsletter (http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter_207.pdf) and additional information can be found on the anniversary webpage at http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html.
- NAQCC TEAM TAKES TOP HONORS IN THE 2015 NJQRP SKEETER HUNT!** Our Western Pennsylvania chapter used the NAQCC club call, N3AQC, to win “First Place Overall,” “Top PA,” and “Top Multi-Multi” in this year’s Skeeter Hunt sponsored by the New Jersey QRP Club (<http://www.njqrp.org/>). A complete report on their operation was in last month’s newsletter and there is more in the *Chapter News* in this issue. Our congratulations to KC2EGL, WB3FAE, and K3WWP! Additionally, when you scan through the Skeeter Hunt results, NAQCC members keep popping up as winners in most of the categories and/or states. NAQCC members with top-honors include N3CU, K4YA, W2LJ, N5GW, NK9G, W4MPS, K2ONN, W4QO, AB9CA, K2WO, K3RLL, W3BBO, NW2K, WD8RIF, N2JJF, VE2DDZ, VE3LFN, W1PID, W3HZZ, W1ZU, KB1ZHU, NU7Y, and KC5FM. Well done NAQCC!
- CHALLENGES AND CONTESTS DON’T MIX.** Recently we have had several people mistakenly think that they could use contest QSOs (such as sprint or QSO Party contacts) to complete an NAQCC challenge. According to the General Rules for challenges (http://www.naqcc.info/challenges_rules.html) this is not allowed. Even if you are not “participating” in the contest, if the other person is getting points for the contact, it’s still considered to be a contest QSO. So this rule gives all of us a good excuse to get on the air and do a little more operating - “but honey, I’m just two QSOs away from completing my NAQCC challenge!”
- ANYONE INTERESTED IN A VIDEO PRODUCTION PROJECT?** Bob Heil, K9EID, has indicated that he would be interested in airing a 2-3 minute video segment about the NAQCC on his popular Ham Nation webcast. I’m visualizing a slide show with screen shots from our website, pictures of QRP rigs, and pictures from some of our local chapter portable operations, with an audio narration over the top describing our club. This is way beyond my ability to do but it might be your “cup of tea.” If you would be interested in working on such a project please email me and we will see if we can put a team together for this. - N8XMS

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- **2015 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE.** We want to encourage all of you to “talk up” the NAQCC and as an incentive we will be offering a prize each quarter of 2015 to the person responsible for the most new membership applications during that quarter. (The application form includes a field where the person can indicate how they heard about the NAQCC.) The prize will be a gift certificate for 100 free QSL cards from <http://cheapqsls.com/naqcc.html>.
- **CHECK OUT OUR MONTHLY POLLS.** Jerry, VE6CPP, puts up an interesting poll on our club website each month. You can cast your vote in the current poll and see past poll results using the links on the main club page <http://www.naqcc.info/>. The more people that cast a vote, the more interesting the results.
- **THANK YOU FOR THE DONATIONS!** A big “THANK YOU” goes out to everyone who has made a recent donation to the NAQCC treasury. The NAQCC has no membership dues and we depend on your generous donations to cover our operating expenses. If others would like to help out with a donation there are two ways that you can do it. The first way is to use *PayPal* to electronically send your contribution to Club Vice President John, N8ZYA, using the email found on the last page of this newsletter. To avoid any additional fees please be sure to check the box that says “*I’m sending money to family or friends.*” Also please add a note indicating that this is a donation to the NAQCC and include your call sign. The second way to make a donation is to mail a check or money order made out to *The North American QRP CW Club* and send it to *John Smithson, 1529 Virginia St E, Charleston, WV 25311*. Assuming that we have your correct email address on file, your contribution will be acknowledged by email with a carbon copy sent to a second club officer as a “check and balance.”



DESIGN SPREADSHEETS BY CHUCK, N8NK

The spreadsheets described in this article are available in a downloadable zip file on our club website at www.naqcc.info/n8nk-spreadsheets.zip.

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Hi fellow QRPer

I love to design and build my own transceivers- as well as modify transceiver kits. For example- I bought a Small Wonder Labs SW-20 board. It worked so nicely that I had to change it! I converted it to the 30M band by changing the VFO frequency, the Rx mixer output bandpass filter and the Tx mixer output bandpass filter, the Tx output low pass filter, changing the IF to 16 MHz, added a buffer amp between the Rx mixer and the IF crystal filter, and I reduced gain in the product detector for improved gain distribution. It worked so well on 30 that I had to change it more! I then added a fine tuning control, RIT with a center detent pot, an off-board AF amp module and off-board RF amp module capable of about 10 watts output. I of course reduced the drive trimmer for an output of 5 watts. If I wasn't restricted to a short indoor wire for an antenna- I would have probably also added a switch to be able to switch this amp in and out of circuit. And with these mods- my new radio was done! Well, until I decided to add AGC with selectable threshold level. With the AGC addition- it was done- and I christened it my N8NK SW30++.

Its fun is to adapt portions of other designs, whether published in our favorite magazines or online... as well as those designs being sold in commercial kits. Its a time honored tradition among the homebrewing rank and file! We don't need to keep reinventing the 'wheel'- we just need to modify the 'wheel' to fit our new 'vehicle'!

But modifying an existing design for different frequencies, impedances, etc., can be a chore when one has to keep referring to formulas and using a calculator- whether that calculator is on our PC or held in our hand. So I developed two spreadsheets that REALLY help save time when doing such 'chores'. I use them (especially one of them) constantly when throwing together a design for a new transceiver.

We all use toroids in our designs... and the spreadsheet for calculating toroid inductance and turns saves me a tremendous amount of time! When using that spreadsheet, it takes but a minute to convert a published design for output filters, bandpass filters, VFO inductors, etc. from one band to another. I keep a decent stock of toroids. When I need a particular inductance, I'll enter that inductance into the column for 3 or 4 toroids... copying and pasting the value (I'm lazy)... and I'll use the core that gives me the number of turns that's closest to an even integer. It takes 15 seconds to do. Try THAT on your calculator!

This spreadsheet I laughingly call my 'N8NK Turns-XLCF Numerical Calculating Machine'.

It also lets me do the following:

<u>Given:</u>	<u>It will calculate:</u>
L & C	Resonant frequency
C & F	The required inductance for resonance
L & F	The required capacitance for resonance
F & C	Capacitive reactance
F & L	Inductive reactance
Frequency	The length of an antenna in feet and inches for 1/4 wave and 1/2 wave antennas

I also use the other spreadsheet quite a bit when designing RF circuitry and when testing and evaluating RF circuits that I've built. This spreadsheet I call (laughingly) my 'N8NK db-EIRZ-Po Numerical Calculating Machine'. It performs the following calculations:

- Basic Ohm's law calculations using E, I & R
- Common power calculations using P, E, & I
- Common power calculations using E, I & R
- Conversion of E or I from P-P to RMS and RMS to P-P
- Output power of an amplifier stage using V_{cc} and Z
- E_{P-P} using a known impedance and power (generally used for calculating RF output voltages)
- Power ratio to db
- E & I ratio to db
- Convert one power level & db to the unknown power level
- Convert one E or I level & db to the unknown E or I level
- Convert a power level to dbm
- Convert E or I (either P-P or RMS) & R to dbm
- And just for fun- and because its a hassle when the two values are not equal- conversion of two parallel resistors or two series caps to the total value. This really is handy when you don't have the part with the correct value in your junk box!

Want to have a little fun or maybe scare yourself? Use the above spreadsheet, go to the section called 'Output Power, Impedance, Voltage & Decibels' and see what RF voltage is present at the output of your transmitter or center point of your half wave dipole at the 5 watt level. Ouch. It would burn you. Then plug in a power value of 1500 watts! In the Biomedical Engineering field- this voltage is higher than the output of an electrical surgical generator (ESU). It would fry you!

I hope these spreadsheets prove useful to you. Feel free to change them, correct them, modify them, add to them, share them, laugh at them, and even remove my boastful names and call sign from them! Make them your own. Or delete them if you don't find them handy :)

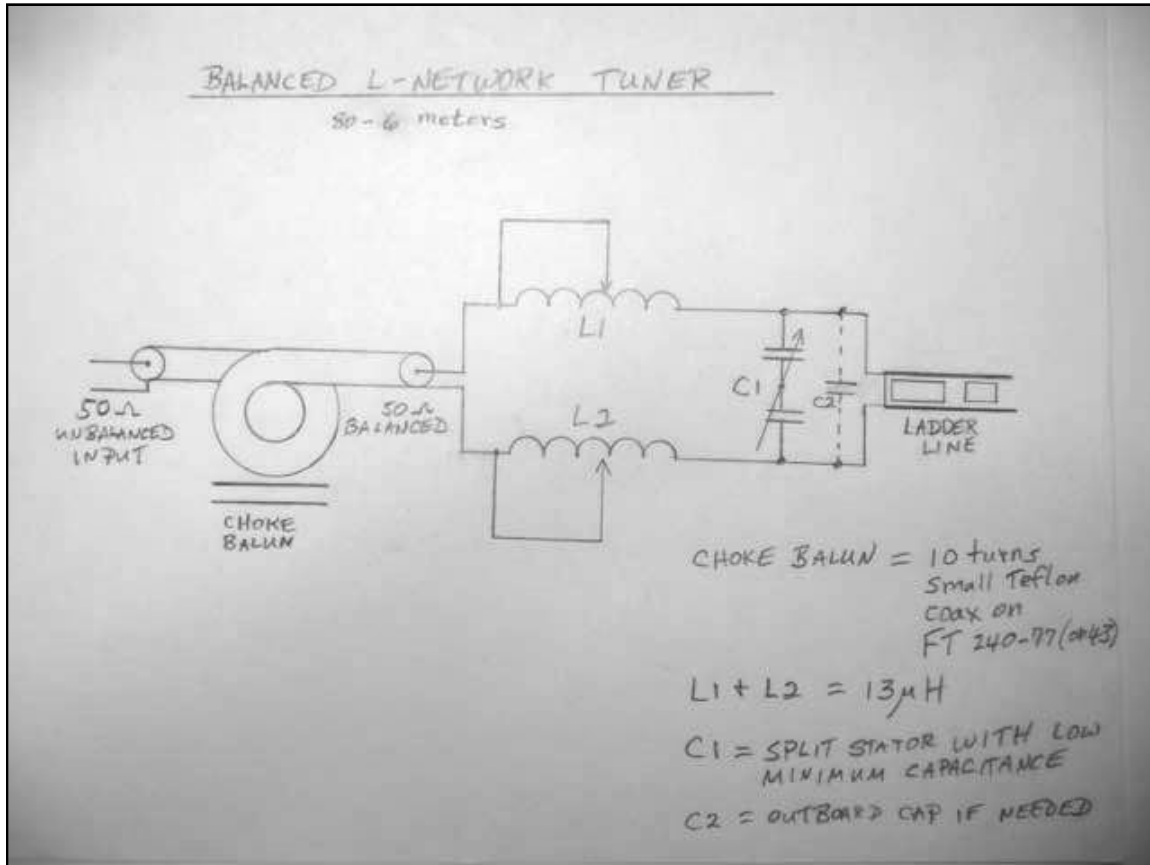
Chuck,
N8NK

www.naqcc.info/n8nk-spreadsheets.zip

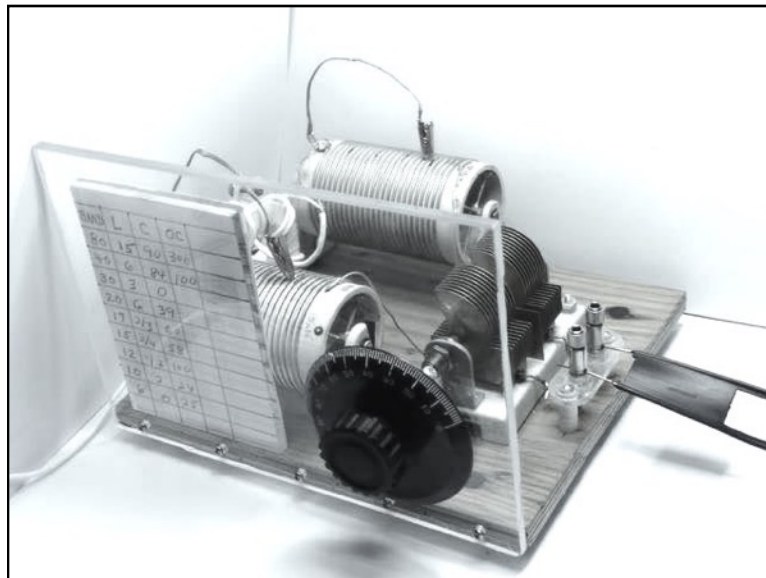


BALANCED-LINE TUNER BY GENE, N5GW

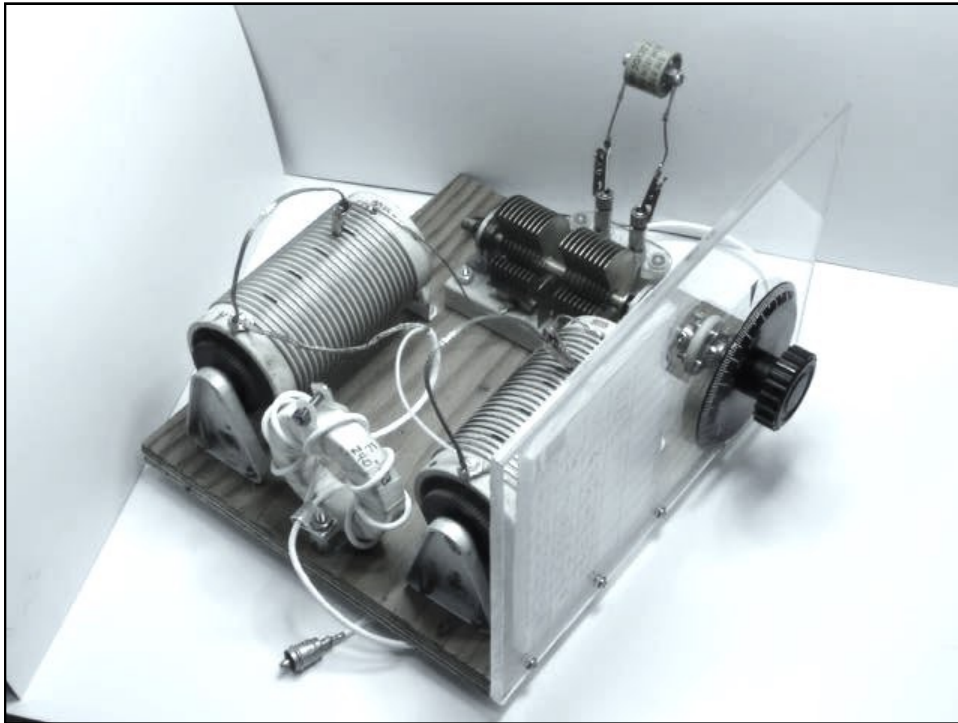
Here are the details of a balance L-network antenna tuner that I built. The first picture is the schematic diagram.



The second pic shows the tuner built on a piece of plywood flooring to which is attached a Plexiglas front panel. Two tapped inductors on ceramic forms and a split stator tuning capacitor with numbered dial are visible.



An input choke balun is better seen in the third pic which also includes an outboard clip-on capacitor at the output. A table of tuner settings for each band is inscribed with a china marker on a Plexiglas rectangle which can be slid out from behind the front panel.



The 13 microHenry tapped inductors work better than roller inductors because the settings can be changed faster, and a turns counter is not needed. Black paint markers on every fifth turn (third pic) allow rapid visual counting of turns through the clear front panel. The taps can be connected almost directly to the capacitor if low (less than one microHenry) inductance is needed, such as in the six meter setting.

In addition to its tuning function, using a split stator capacitor adds four benefits: it halves the minimum capacitance, halves the tuning rate, doubles the voltage rating, and helps preserve balance. Minimum capacitance of not more than 2 or 3 pF is desirable to allow coverage of the higher bands. If additional capacitance is needed, fixed outboard capacitors are clipped onto the output in parallel with the split stator. Reducing the tuning rate is also helpful. This is because with an L-network, tuning may be sharp or critical. Doubling the voltage rating means higher power can be used, or closer plate spacing can be allowed. Split stator symmetry helps prevent the capacitor from disturbing the line balance.

A choke balun at the low impedance input serves to balance the currents in the transmission line. It is constructed of about nine turns of miniature Teflon coax wound on an FT 240-77 or 43 toroid. Toroid size may seem like overkill for QRP, but must be physically large to accommodate the coax and achieve a large amount of inductance with few turns.

On some bands, this type of multiband antenna tuner system may be susceptible to common mode voltage loops at the tuner end of the line ("rf in the shack") However the loop can usually be "moved away" by attaching a ground or random length of wire to the rotor of the capacitor.

I have had success using this tuner on 80 through 6 meters with a center fed dipole having leg lengths of 54 feet fed with 18 gauge ladder line of 71 foot length.



SPRINT LOG ISSUES

BY JOHN, K3WWP

John, K3WWP, does an amazing job each month with cross checking all of the sprint logs that we submit. I asked him to share with us the issues that he sees in our logs that give him the most trouble. Let's take a look at what he says and make every effort possible to help him out by eliminating these problems in our submitted logs. - Editor

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First of all, a proper question. Why cross-check logs? Well, all major contests do it. That's not really a reason. Why do they (and we) do it? To ensure accuracy in the results. If A works B, that QSO should show up in both the log of A and of B. If it doesn't, something is wrong and the QSO will be deleted from the log of the one in which it is shown - for example A. Now, we vary from other contests. They simply delete the QSO and sometimes enact other penalties as well to reduce the score further beyond what the QSO deletion caused - period. The NAQCC, on the other hand does this. If station A sees the score adjustment resulting from the deleted QSO with B, and asks us why, we notify A to give him a chance to check with B to see why he didn't log it. If B says it really should be there, he simply forgot to transcribe it to his log before submitting or some other legitimate reason, then we restore the deleted QSO to A's log and add it to B's log without any penalties. If B says there was no QSO, there are still no other penalties beyond the removal of the not-in-log QSO from A's log.

In order to do the cross checking, all logs are fed into a master computer program which does most of the work after they are fed in. However a lot of manual work is involved in preparing the logs for the cross-checker. There are numerous errors that must be fixed so the program doesn't choke on them.

Let's look at some logging problems that give headaches to the log cross-checker, may cause the program to malfunction, and which you can easily and quickly correct by taking a minute or so to examine your log before submitting.

1. ***The worst and most common error and the easiest for you to correct is putting a 1 in the last column when it should be a 2 for a member QSO.*** This can easily be corrected by simply glancing at your log before submitting. If someone gave you a number, the last column should be a 2. If they gave you a power, it should be a 1. If you use GenLog with an OLD GenLog data file, it will not recognize newer members with high numbers as being members, and will put a 1 in that last column. This is easily remedied by always updating the GenLog data file each month on the day of the sprint. Then every member will get a 2 except for anyone who joined a few hours before the sprint. If you can't update the file for any reason, then simply glance at your log after you paste it into the autologger and manually correct any erroneous 1 to a 2. The cross check program uses this to calculate the final score based on member and non-member QSO totals.

2. ***Failing to update the GenLog data file also provides another headache.*** Hams are very mobile and seem to move around a lot. An OLD GenLog data file will still contain their old QTH, not their new one. I see at least one instance each month of WG8Y listed as being in OH when he has been living in NC for well over a year now. There are others as well such as K3RLL splitting his year between PA and FL. Even a new GenLog data file won't take care of that. You know the very best way to fix this is to ACTUALLY COPY what is sent, using GenLog's info only as a check.

3. ***One of the biggest headaches is logging times incorrectly.*** Often this will involve manual checking of QSOs to get correct times from the stations worked. Always use UTC (Z) time and check to be sure all times are between 0030 and 0230 when daylight savings time is in effect and between 0130 and 0330 when standard time is in effect in your area. The cross-check program expects to find a QSO

within a certain number of minutes in each log, and if it doesn't, a time consuming manual check must be made to be sure the QSOs really match despite one of the times being way off.

4. **Logging calls incorrectly.** This can often be a simple fix. For example, I'm certain a logging of K4BIA was really K4BAI. Sometimes though, the call is so botched, it's impossible to figure out and in this example a logging of WB2SJG who was actually member WA2JSG will probably be counted as a non-member QSO unless his correct number is logged and can be checked.

5. **Three things that are definitely not needed and waste time in fixing are putting colons in times, omitting leading zeroes from times, and putting 'm' or 'M' after bands.** The following are correct and incorrect examples for the three:

BAND: 80, 40, 20 - DEFINITELY NOT 80m, 80M, 40m, 40M, 20m, 20M

TIME: 0035, 0105, 0220 - DEFINITELY NOT 00:35, 01:05, 02:20

TIME: 0035, 0105, 0220 - DEFINITELY NOT 35, 105, 220

6. **Be sure to use a hyphen (-) in the next to last column of your log entries if the SPC is not a new one.** Number new ones consecutively. Note these entries:

K3WWP 40 0035 K4BAI GA 0644 1 2

K3WWP 40 0041 WY3H GA 0001 - 2

K3WWP 40 0045 KC2EGL PA 1236 2 2

The first GA QSO got the number 1, then when I worked it again, it got a hyphen in that next to last column. When I worked PA it was the second different SPC and got the number 2, and so on.

7. **Each log entry should contain EIGHT items in a DEFINITE order as in the example log in item 6 above.** If there are more or fewer items - or the items are not in the correct order, something is wrong and needs fixing. It is not necessary to waste time trying to align the columns neatly in your log. The only requirement is that there is at least one space between each of the eight items. If you have more than one space or tabs between items, they are automatically reduced to a single space in log preparation for cross-checking anyway.

Our members are very inventive, and each month I seem to find some new kind of error that is somewhat unique. A couple come to mind. One log had the QSOs listed in reverse order. Others add in the unneeded RSTs. Some omit one of the eight items. The list is endless and I can't mention them all here, but if you follow the 7 items above, you should have a SILVER LOG as well as saving the poor cross-checker a headache.

With the big anniversary sprint coming up in a few days, I hope everyone reads, understands, and follows the above into. With around 200 logs expected, you can save me a LOT of time beyond what it normally takes to deal with our recent average of just 120 or so logs. A big thank you to all who help me out.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Each month one of our members is randomly selected and asked to share their ham radio biography with all of us. Questions or comments should go to Paul, KD2MX.

DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the submitting member and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

PETE WALTON, MW0RSS, #5835



It's all my dad's fault! One evening when I was about 12 years old he threw a piece of wire out of my window and tied it to a tree. He then plugged the other end into a MW transistor radio and left me to it. Wow! Stations from all over Europe came blasting out of the little speaker. I soon acquired the family's 'redundant' old valve radio to listen to SW broadcast stations, and some amateur AM transmissions. Unresolved SSB and CW sounded other-worldly and caught my ear. I wanted to know more.

Seeing my interest in radio develop, my parents gave me a lovely WWII-era Eddystone 358x for Christmas, which had a BFO that enabled me to resolve SSB and CW. I was fascinated by the sound of CW, and how musical good code was to listen to.

I wanted to understand code, so I taught myself by memorizing the Morse characters from the 1960 Collins Radio Diary. I listened a lot, and practiced sending using a doorbell buzzer and a key made of a bent paper clip and drawing pins on a piece of wood (I am sure this drove my parents nuts!). It did not occur to me that you could be taught code. None of my friends were into radio, so I just got on with it, blissful in my ignorance.

I studied for the Radio Amateurs Exam at an evening class in the local technical college, and passed at

the age of 14, the minimum age for a license at that time in the UK. I also passed the 12-wpm CW test at our local coastal radio station, Anglesey Radio. This was both a thrill and nerve-racking!

Two amateurs were very supportive of me at that time: Ron (GW5YB) and Tony (then GW4CZK, now G4CZK). They both encouraged me and were fine role models. Both good CW ops too.

All was going well, but just as I prepared to get my license I discovered rock music, girls and then motorcycles! Its a hormonal thing. My interest in radio dwindled, and then followed a long gap until the late nineties, by which time I had sold the old Eddystone (much to my regret).

In 1999 I saw a Radio Shack DX-394 receiver for a good price and snapped it up. I began casual listening; my CW came back quite easily. I was happy as an SWL until someone at work mentioned that licenses were now available on-line, at no cost. I finally received my license in 2011. Better late than never!

My first transceiver was an Icom IC-750, and the only antenna I had was the not-very-long wire I had been listening with. This is the main reason I started using QRP; my computer reset if I used more than about 10W! I started to have success with low power so decided this was a good way to go. I have since put up several decent wire antennas with proper feeders.

I love winking out DX with QRP CW or having a chat at a speed that stretches my brain a little. I don't really like big contests and sometimes feel bullied off the air when the 'big guns' fire up. I enjoy homebrewing and have built several kits. I have also modified and fixed a few rigs. I appreciate good operating, and despair of stations who get my call sign wrong several times then give me 599. I think proper use of the RST code has diminished. You won't upset me with 329 if that's how my signal arrives at your end.

I was introduced to the NAQCC by Carl (GW0VSW) who used to write for Practical Wireless here in the UK. I take part in some NAQCC challenges when time permits, and have done several including Homebrew, Milliwatt, and Europe. I have the NAQCC to thank for getting me into QRPp!

I own several radios, all QRP except an FT-990, which I use for QRP on digital modes. Favorites include my HW-8 (a boyhood dream finally come true!), and my K2. I also have a NorCal 40A that I love but which doesn't get quite as much action as it should. My YL is very supportive (tolerant?!) of my hobby, and I have a Ten-Tec Century 22 at her house, which gets occasional use, usually when she is out. There is a 'menu-driven' FT-817 too, which has done great service from hotel rooms and is getting some use on 6m at the moment.

I have several NAQCC certificates, including KMPW 100 and DXCC QRPp. I am working towards a 200 KMPW endorsement. I also have a few 1000 MPW awards, but stopped applying for these a long time ago – the shack wallpaper is fine as it is.

One of my most memorable QSOs was breaking a 'split' pile-up with the HW-8. I heard 1A0C (The Order of Malta's Italian Relief Corps CISOM) calling on 40m one evening, listening 1kHz up. I tuned to where the pack were calling and set the filter wide. A couple of calls got me through. Great fun!

I am most comfortable with a straight key, and own several old UK ex-military keys, including a few 8 Amp No 2 keys and an Air Ministry 'Type D' and have recently bought a Vibroplex Original, which I am learning to use. I also use paddles when things get pacey.

I enjoy cycling and sometimes take a little rig out with me for portable operation. I also play double bass and a few other instruments, so I am never bored!

In my professional life I am a sound engineer for a well-known broadcasting corporation in the UK. No other family members are involved in radio – they just smile sweetly when I get excited about propagation or dits and dahs!



NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT: Our sprint this month is *THE BIG ONE* - our 11th anniversary celebration with a boat-load of prizes to be given away to the member-participants. It will be on October 14, 0030-0230Z, and of course that's the evening of the 13th here in North America. The prize drawing will be held a couple of weeks after the sprint and you can see the details at http://www.naqcc.info/prize_drawing_11th_anniv.html.

Be sure to read the "*Sprint Log Issues*" article found earlier in this newsletter.

Please remember to strive for that perfectly formatted "SILVER LOG" submission. It really helps our log processing. Everything that you need to know about how to have a Silver Log can be found at <http://naqcc.info/GLCheckList.txt>.

Complete sprint rules and information on log submissions can be found at <http://naqcc.info/contests.html>.

We occasionally get questions from sprint participants about how to use the GenLog software to log and report their contacts. Most of the time the answers to these questions can be found in the excellent illustrated tutorial written by KB8FE and found at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_genlog_tutorial.html. Alternatively, a logging spreadsheet for Mac OS X computer users is available at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_macs.html.

LAST MONTH'S SPRINT RESULTS: We had 110 logs submitted for the September sprint which is down a little bit from our usual count, but it's still a good showing. (Our January through August average was 125 logs.) 184 participants and 1905 QSOs can be found in those logs. I don't know why 74 participants chose not to send in their logs. I have heard that some have had issues with using the GenLog software. If that is your situation I would suggest that you take a look at the GenLog tutorial pages that we have on our website and if you are a Mac computer user there is now a logging tool available for you as well. Of course special logging software is not absolutely required for submitting a sprint log. Unless you are one of the "big count" sprinters, it's really very easy to create a basic text file log of your sprint QSOs in the required format for our autologger. Information on all of this can be found on the various pages linked above.

Complete sprint results, including soapbox comments, can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201509.html> and summary information can be seen in the tables on the following pages.

We would especially like to welcome our first-time log reporters. We hope that you had a great time and will return often: KW4MG KV4KS K7TQ

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	N2CN	KN1H	
W2	KA2KGP	W2SH	
W3	K3PXC	N3HEE	
W4	N4KS	WH6LE	N4SX
W5	WI5H	W5IQS	
W6	N6IET	K6MGO	
W7	N7KM	K9JWV	
W8	NX8Y	N8BB	AC8AP
W9	W9CC		
W0	WB0PYF	NO2D	
VE	VE2TH		
DX			

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1			
W2			
W3	KD3CA		
W4	AK4NY		
W5	NF5U		
W6			
W7	N7QR		
W8	W8LU		
W9	KA9DVX		
W0	KD0V		
VE			
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	K1SX		
W2	WA2FBN		
W3	KB3AAG		
W4	KU4A		
W5	N5GW		
W6	KG6UBG		
W7			
W8	WA8SAN		
W9	K9EYT		
W0			
VE	VE3DXK		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	KI0I		W8RTJ

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	KW4MG		K7TQ
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
KV4XD			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	110	127	194	2/13
Participants	184	180	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1905	2049	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	982	1090	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	923	959	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	340	336	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	1499	1677	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	66	36	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	17.3	16.1	19.3	9/11

SPRINT HONOR ROLL: We honor the following members for their outstanding participation over the years in our sprints. Exact counts can be seen at http://naqcc.info/sprint_dates.html.

NUMBER OF SPRINTS	MEMBERS
50+	N8BB KC2EGL VE5BCS N2ESE K6CSL N8QY WA8SAN N0TA WX4RM WD0K K4KRW NQ2W KB8FE NO2D WY3H AA9L KQ1P W4DUK KE5YUM WB8ENE WA2JSG K1IEE N4FI VE3FUJ KD0V NU7T KB3AAG
75+	K3RLL NF8M KU4A K4JPN K4NVJ N8XMS KD2MX K4BAI WB8LZG
100+	W2SH W9CC W2JEK KA2KGB
125+	K3WWP



NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: The North American challenge for October will send chills down your spine with an alphabet challenge involving words associated with Halloween. The list of words and other details can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201510.html>.

The October European challenge is a little bit more philosophical and works with the names and dates of some very famous Greek thinkers. Details are found at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/october-2015-challenge>.

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: In November in North America we return to our traditional Thanksgiving alphabet challenge. <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201511.html>

The European November challenge works with several major European volcanoes. <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/november-2015-challenge>

Complete information about our challenges including a helpful tutorial on how to organize your work for an alphabet challenge can be found at <http://naqcc.info/challenges.html>. Detailed general rules for our challenges can be found at http://naqcc.info/challenges_rules.html.

LAST MONTH'S CHALLENGE: The deadline for submitting entries for the September QRPp challenge is still a few days away so final results are not yet available. You can go to <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201509.html> to see what has been posted so far, and the final results will also be posted there shortly after the 10th of the month.

The September European challenge results will be available at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/september-2015-challenge>.

IMPORTANT NOTE: We have recently been receiving a number of challenge submissions that include various contest QSOs as part of the challenge effort. According to our challenge rules, contest QSOs like sprints and QSO Party contacts cannot be used in challenge submissions. Even if you are not "participating" in the contest, if the other person is getting some points from the contact it still counts as a contest QSO and is not allowed in our challenges. The complete challenge rules can be found at http://naqcc.info/challenges_rules.html.

CHALLENGE HONOR ROLL: We honor the following members for their outstanding participation over the years in our monthly challenges. Exact counts can be seen at http://www.naqcc.info/challenges_schedule.html.

NUMBER OF CHALLENGES	MEMBERS
25+	KD2MX N1LU KD0V K9OSC VE3HUR KU4A WY3H K1YAN
50+	VE3FUJ NU7T K1IEE
75+	N8XMS W2JEK
100+	
125+	K3WWP



NAQCC AWARDS

We have an extensive list of awards that you can earn. Complete details can be found at <http://naqcc.info/awards.html>.

FEATURED AWARD: WAC Simple Wire Antenna Award

This is the classic Worked All Continents award with our usual club twist - you have to do it with CW/ QRP and a simple wire antenna. See <http://www.naqcc.info/faqsinfo.html> for our club definition of a "simple wire antenna." Essentially it's a non-gain type of antenna even though it might not actually be made of wire. The award has endorsements for 2XQRP and QRPP. You can see complete details at http://www.naqcc.info/awards_wacswa.html.

RECENTLY ISSUED AWARDS:

DXCC Basic Award QRPP - 25 Countries

0005 - K1YAN

09/22/15



NAQCC QRS/QRQ NETS



We have a number of nets (QRS = slow speed, QRQ = higher speed) designed to help people build up their CW operating skills. Complete information about these nets can be found at http://naqcc.info/cw_nets.html. Questions should be directed to Net Manager Scotty, NU0S.

NAQCC NET SCHEDULE

Net	Local Time	UTC	Freq +/-	Primary NCS
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CT	Tuesday 0000 Z	7065 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Farnsworth 40 m QRQ Net (FRN)	Sunday 7:30 PM PT	Monday 0230 Z	7065 KHz	Rick, N6IET (in CA)
Farnsworth 80 m QRQ Net (FRN)	Sunday 8 PM PT	Monday 0300 Z	3555 KHz	Rick, N6IET (in CA)
Farnsworth 80m QRQ Net (FRN)	Monday 8 PM PT	Tuesday 0300 Z	3555	J.B., KR5RR (in CA)
Midwest Net QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 9 PM CT	Tuesday 0200 Z	7117 KHz	Scotty, NU0S (in NE)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 4 PM MT	Tues/Thurs 2200 Z	7062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 4:30 PM MT	Tues/Thurs 2230 Z	14062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
West Virginia QRS Net (WVN)	Wednesday 9 PM ET	Thursday 0100 Z	7117 KHz	John, N8ZYA (in WV)
Pacific Northwest 80 m QRS Net (PNW80)	Thursday 7 PM PT	Friday 0200 Z	3574 KHz	Stewart, KE7LKW (in WA)
Great Lakes QRS Net (GLN)	Thursday 9 PM ET	Friday 0100 Z	7117 KHz	David, WA8AXF (in MI)

Note: On the rare occasions that there is a conflict between one of our scheduled nets and one of our regular sprints the sprint will take precedence.

From Net Manager Scotty, NU0S

Wow the months are flying by too fast, hard to believe September is over...Now to October; soon the Trick or Treaters will be out and about. Thank you to all of our net control operators and great membership...Please keep a good eye on the nets schedule page for any changes...Hey follow me on Twitter **@NU0Slong** for live net updates and QRP CW in the field...Please contact me anytime with questions or concerns with any of our NAQCC Scheduled Nets...72/73 Scotty Long NU0S NAQCC 3715 MWN NCS / Nets Manager-Coordinator.

Quick Notes from our Net Control Station Professional Ops!!!

09-01-2015 NAQCC Midwest QRS Net (MWN) Scotty Long NU0S, Nebraska (Steve WB0QQT) NCS

Kind of a poor night tonight Scotty with all the SSB Qrm on 7.117. Anyway I picked up the following: Went for a round of comments but the qsb and qrm kept plaguing me. Called CQ a couple more times nil, so closed it down at 0226Z. Had no further check INS after the round of comments. Barring any unforeseen circumstances I should be able to pick it up next week also. You have been at it a long time my friend and certainly deserve a break. Hope you and the xyl enjoyed a FB evening together for your anniversary. Congratulations on the 19 years. *(We've been together for 23+ years can't understand why she keeps me around Scotty/NU0S)*
Steve/WB0QQT

09-01-2015 NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) James (J.B.) Still KR5RR, California

Ugh! That was fun and frustrating at the same time! First off, WELCOME to Gary/K7ZNP. Sorry the QRN was so high you couldn't stick around, but understand. Nice strong signal while you were with us. Tonight, if the QRN didn't get you, the QSB did. The first thirty minutes were mostly OK, but then every one went from S9+ to uncopiable in the noise, back to S9+, and then repeat - all in just a couple minutes! If you tried to check in and one of us didn't acknowledge, well, that's the way it was tonight. Discussed mostly single lever keys, a little contact enhancer, band conditions, sending and receiving speed, and how we kept fading out and peaking back up over S9. Question: How does one close out a net when NCS can't hear half the stations, and they can't hear half of each other? There's got to be a better way than just quitting. Thanks guys for the effort and endeavor.
73/JB.KR5RR

09-08-2015 NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) James (J.B.) Still KR5RR, California

OK, VINDICATED!!!!

Mark wrote: "**As I type this, it sounds like some digital junk on the net freq. It's peaking about 5 or 6. Okay - I just found you at 7066. Cool.**" Thanks Mark! OK, I just know the rest of you guys were pulling my leg about not hearing that Digi signal. Well, at least PBRick had an excuse - - 'err, explanation! BTW the ID at the end of that Digi signal was KE0CMB, and wouldn't you know it, he's a Technician with 38 lookups, no bio, and no email address. Bummer. Can't email him to find out what mode. Topics tonight: great band conditions; head cold (mine); rain (PBR not Rick or I); empty bands, no one on (PBR & I); /M ops; PBR's new antenna and the TEST; Rick's paddle; my Rick jinxed paddle; and the all-around solid copy everyone had. Sure was refreshing to copy everyone. Mike appointed John the loudest signal, I concur, but Mike & Rob - the closest to me - were the weakest. I had to bail after two rounds. Head cold and drugs getting to me, probably incoherent, surprised ya'll stuck it out. Thanks to Rick for taking over NCS. Next week I've got a proposal for the one watt September NAQCC challenge. Preview: Sometime during net I'll switch to the FT817 at one watt and see how many of you I can work. More QRPp: This weekend I worked Chuck/K7QO in AZ a couple of times on 20m with one of Kits & Parts new \$44 One Watter's. [<http://www.kitsandparts.com/1watter.php>]. Sounded great and Chuck was using a two ham stick dipole at 21 feet. Great signal until QSB got us! Check out his web page [<http://www.k7qo.net/onewater.html>] Thanks Chuck! 72/73 de JB.KR5RR

09-15-2015 NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) James (J.B.) Still KR5RR, California

WOW! Crazy band conditions tonight! First, THANKS again to Ron/wx4rm in North Carolina for the 2,200 mile check-in. Good to hear you. Second, THANKS to N6IET, N7HRK/M & W7SAG for the 500 milli-watt QSOs. I got zero spots to my CQ, but you guys fine ears were able to pull me out. Also got AB6OJ about 9:15. Four down, six to go. It was all about conditions tonight. Did OK until bottom of the hour, pretty much like last night. First we lost Ron, then Mort. Then Rick went from 20/9 to, well gone, in one transmission. John & I carried along for a couple then he went from 10/9 to nothing, back to 20/9 in about 40 seconds. As we closed there was someone else trying but neither John nor I could copy. First time I've experienced six meter like QSB on 40 meters in my very short time back on. John had a lot of fun getting his solar panel to run with a new controller, and made a bunch of KX3 QRP contacts in the SKCC WES. I had about 20 but they were not QRP. I also had fun in the V/UHF contest, with the highlight being several 100 plus mile QSO on 223.500 FM with 300 milli-watts from my VX-7R and a vertical dipole at 35 feet. Awesome! Neighbor Dick told me that if I'd get on 1.25m I'd be surprised how many I'd work - and he was right - thanks Dick! TWINS! Twins, I tell you. Rick & I have twins! Twin keys, that is. We traded. Rick now has fraternal twins, a gold and a blue AME Porta-Paddle double lever paddles. I have identical twin blue AME Mini-B single lever paddles. Must say, his was adjusted a whole lot better than mine - still tweaking to duplicate that. Nice touch Rick. Rick & I both signed up for N6A duties next month. This is going to be interesting since I can't send a "6" for beans! Notice I never give anyone a 569 RST? You're either a 559 or a 579. I'll be hanging out weekdays on the 20m QRP frequencies around 5PM PDT (00h00z) with the FT817 at 500 milli-watts. Listen closely! Thanks all and 72/73 de JB.KR5RR, PS: Rick moved Sunday night FRN 30 minutes earlier, and to 7065.000

09-22-2015 NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) James (J.B.) Still KR5RR, California

First, WELCOME to newcomer John/WB6UBK in Fair Oaks, CA. And I thought last night and last week was a MESS! HA! Ole Sun showed us! Propagation was, ah, less than, uh, cooperative? Started early, about 7:45, Rick/LA was 599 - 10 minutes later he was gone, not to be heard again on 40m. John could copy both of us so turned NCS over to him. Then he could not hear PBRick or Mark. Frustrating! Then we lost PBRick. At 8:30 we QSY'ed to 3555, Rick's new proposed Sunday night frequency and.... All was good again! 599s for everyone! John and Mark were running open wire fed 40m dipoles on 80m and JB used a 135' twin lead fed doublet. Only Rick was coax fed, that to a vertical, and no tuner! Since all had good copy we ran QSK for

about 35 minutes, until JB started flaking out. Then John/WB6BUK joined us. Been reading the mail, huh John? He just had to get in his CW fix so we QSO a short while. Invitation extended, join us again next week. I expect Rick will announce moving Sunday FRN to 3555 sometime this week. I'll make it official with Scotty tomorrow that Monday night FRN is moving effective next week, but still at 8:00 PM PDT. If you don't have an 80m wire of some type hung, get 'er done, cause looks like 40m night time is done for the fall/winter season. If I remember correctly, PBRick's 80m dipole is only six to 10 feet off the ground, so most anything will work. John/W7SAG has a remarkable signal with a 40m attic dipole on 80m. And he has a heck of a 40m signal - the whole house must radiate! Check his RBN spots for tonight - CAN to PR, CA to MA - awesome! 73 all 'till next week de JB.KR5RR

09-29-2015 NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) James (J.B.) Still KR5RR, California

Welcome back to John/wb6ubk, in Fair Oaks, CA. Well, sounds like we didn't run him off, says he'll be back again! Rick checked into Scotty's mid-west net - getting to be that time of year where we can do that on 40m. 599 signals all around. Got a good introduction to John's setup. Really loud signal here from his 80m loop, 100 km distance. Seems like we have a couple of "tube" guys, John & Chas, that keep their shack warm the vintage way, Hallicrafters, Hammerlund, Globe, Drake, and such. And a couple of "vertical" guys, Chas & Rick, that we're not sure do NVIS or not (that's a whole 'nother thread!). After three rounds, we went open forum. With just three others it is pretty easy to know who is sending without ID's, each has a distinct sound or slightly different pitch. Really fun exchanges! Couple/three times had a little QRM, tune ups and some random characters, but for the most part clear channel. 80 meters is working well right now for covering the western USA. Thanks to all and 73 de JB.kr5rr

09-01-2015 NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas

The band was in good shape and all were 599 but Dave in MO.
Allen/KA5TJS

09-08-2015 NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas

Not bad for a holiday Monday. Terry had a new key and sounded good. Roger was testing a new antenna.
All stations were QRP tonight.
Allen, KA5TJS

09-15-2015 NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas

The band was in good shape and all were 599 except for Dave (KG0YR) in MO. He was 549.
Allen KA5TJS

09-22-2015 NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas

I worked the net with the FT-817 at 5 watts and got good reports. Terry (YUM) was QRP on a Buddystick and was 589 most of the time. Hello to Russ (NLT) from VA. First time check in. The band was in good shape. Cooler WX is helping I think.
Allen KA5TJS

09-07-2015 NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) Richard (Rick) Stutsman N6IET, California

It went pretty well, last evening. I was on the correct frequency this time, and there was no digital QRM noted - just the usual strong CW station testing for a few seconds right on top of us without giving his call or responding to my QRZ? My noise level was the usual S7. Polar Bear Rick (PBR), N7HRK/M was 369 to 589, getting stronger and with less QSB as the sky got darker - the best signal I've ever hear from him. We're 1000 miles apart. We invited him to test and compare two different antennas - his mobile vertical (with the new Hi-Q 40m coil) against a dipole in his back yard. None of us could hear much difference, and two of us who did think there was a difference had opposite opinions as to which was stronger. Mort to the South of PBR said the dipole was definitely better. But in either case the nearly equal signals speak well of PBR's mobile vertical. One doesn't usually think of a mobile whip as being able to hold a candle to a half-wave dipole. Mike, KE6EE, had his usual 599 signal at my end QSB'ing to zilch suddenly about an hour later as the band continued to lengthen. But Mort and JB gave him lousy reports, probably because they were much closer to each other. There's been no NVIS propagation on 40m the last few sessions after sunset. Mike put his recently assembled DZ Sienna kit (see <http://www.dzkit.com/>) on SSB for the first time this past week. What a great rig! Congrats, Mike! Mort, N7NLN, checked in from his summer job QTH as Forest Ranger in Mesa Verde, CO. Nice to hear you, Mort! He said he might return to his home QTH in (or near) Tucson, AZ, in Nov. Must be nice to have perfect summer and winter QTHs. JB, KR5RR/M, was driving with his wife, who asked him not to send CW while driving. So he mostly listened, chiming in a few times. He had a nice strong signal - 589 most of the time. It seems we FRN'ers are practically the only CW ops that ever get on the 40 meter band in the mornings above 7030 kHz. I ran into PBR and Mark, WU7F, in QSO at 7046 about 1527z the same morning. Mark was running 5 watts. And PBR says he has worked Wyatt, KF7YHB, three mornings in a row. Perhaps they hooked up again this morning for a 4th consecutive QSO (I listened at 1530z and heard nothing). And I've run into KR5RR a few times in the mornings, sometimes mobile. I look forward to this evening's Monday FRN!
72/73 de Rick N6IET

09-13-2015 NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) Richard (Rick) Stutsman N6IET, California

Call me crazy! (My new handle?) I'm one of the members of a club (the Westside ARC) that participates in the annual Route 66 Event and have been using the call W6B since Friday evening to represent the City of Los Angeles, through which the old Rt. 66 passes. W6A represents Santa Monica (where Rt. 66 originated or ended, depending on your perspective), and our club

members living there may also use that special event call. About 20 other clubs along the old Rt. 66 to Chicago are also participating and using calls W6C thru W6U. Long story short (too late?) I decided to invite each FRN check-in to work W6B and so checked into FRN with that call (but still used N6IET to run the net). W6B exchanged signal reports with each check-in. I hope nobody was too confused by what was going on. That also explains why I decided to call the net on exactly 7066.0 instead of 7065.5 - in celebration of the Rt. 66 event. Anyway that signal report exchange went well. You can find more information about the event at W6B's QRZ.com page. But then the band changed drastically, and all of a sudden half of us couldn't hear the other half. I couldn't hear JB or Mort. JB couldn't hear Mark or John, PBR couldn't hear ... and so forth. In short, the net became fragmented, and I closed it at 0347z. I think something similar happened to JB's FRN last Monday (was it?). It's kind of frustrating when that happens, and I think we might have to either move the net to a half hour or an hour earlier or to 80 meters. The shame of it all is that the most distant stations become quite strong while the close ones disappear into the noise. We cover such a large area that no time or band is going to allow all of us to hear each other well. Oh, and speaking of our wide coverage, we had a new check-in from Ron, WX4RM in Alexander, NC. Thank you for joining us, Ron, and you're quite welcome to QNI. However, I can't guarantee that we'll always be able to hear that far, especially if we change the time or band so that closer stations can hear each other. At least most of us could copy you just fine, because you weren't too close to any of us. Mark, WU7F initially checked in running 900 mw (QRPP), and I actually heard him. I gave him 349. Then he QRO'ed to 70 watts, and I gave him 589. But I like it when members check in running QRP (we are a QRP club, after all), just to see who can hear him. 73 everybody, and I hope to hear you again tomorrow evening or next Sunday.
Rick N6IET/W6B

09-20-2015 NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) Richard (Rick) Stutsman N6IET, California

Well, we still had long skip, even at the earlier start time, and nobody closer than about 600 miles apart could hear each other. I could hear everybody, except for one very weak station trying to check in that nobody else could hear, either. I suspect it was Ron, WX4RN or another distant station. I did hear JB, KR5RR quite well when he checked in late, and he is only 350 miles from me. Polar Bear Rick, N7HRK/M, has a new CW decoder in his car so that passengers can follow his CW QSOs. It also accurately measures your per-character sending speed. John, W7SAG tried out a new solar collector in his back yard, but he wasn't able to get any response to his CQ. Mark, WU7F, checked out early when he realized I was the only station he could hear and that could hear him. JB, KR5RR, made 26 contacts using QRP in the SA (Salmon Run?) contest on 40 meters. JB and I have been comparing notes about trying to accurately measure our power output in comparison to the PWR menu settings in our FT-857s and his FT-817. It turns out that measuring power accurately is difficult. But it seems to be the case that a rig's digital PWR setting can be off by as much as 20% in either direction, based on JB's oscilloscope Vrms measurements and calculations. I'm thinking that when many netizens (check-ins to the net) cannot hear each other, it might be better for me as the NCS to engage in a more interactive exchange (frequent back-and-forth) with each station so that other stations can follow what's being said and not have to sit for a minute or two hearing nothing. Let's try that, next time. Another idea might be to send pairs or trios of stations that CAN hear each other up or down a couple of kHz to talk amongst themselves, while I chat with any members that can only hear me.
73 de Rick N6IET

09-27-2015 4M/80M NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) Richard (Rick) Stutsman N6IET, California

John, W7SAG, emailed me his regrets, due to a business trip. So tonight was a formal implementation of the experiment performed last Monday by JB, KR5RR, when he moved the net from 40 meters to 80 meters half an hour into the net, because several of us were not hearing each other on 40 meters. I think it worked well! The main topic was the rising Blood Moon, which we were all observing at net time. And, sure enough, 20 minutes into the 40 meter net, JB and I went from 599 to no copy. JB, PBR, and Mike couldn't hear each other, and PBRick and Stewart weren't hearing each other very well. So, at 0255z, I informed the net that I would move to 3555. Stewart had signed in and out, and PBR also said his goodbyes. So JR and Mike joined me on 80 meters at 0255z, and we were all hearing each other at S9+ for the rest of the net, which lasted another hour. I've been noticing an occasional anomaly ever since I started using my FT-857 in full QSK mode, during which I would hear a sort of "click" or brief echo of my own signal between each code element, but only when the band I was on was experiencing NVIS propagation. Typically, that would be 80 meters right after sunset (SCN) and sometimes on 40 meters during the first half hour of FRN - always when NVIS was in effect and D-layer absorption was low. Early on I surmised that I was hearing my own signal reflecting back to me a few milliseconds delayed, but it didn't occur to me until recently that when a band supports NVIS, any signal going straight up is going to bounce straight back down at whatever delay is required for a signal to make a round trip of about 500 miles (to and from the F2 layer). I've calculated that the delay would be about 3 milliseconds, which sounds about right to describe what I'm hearing. I would be hearing one or two milliseconds of my reflected signal each time the receiver came on following the end of each code element. I shared my speculations with JB and Mike, both of whom were skeptical. But I told them "That's my theory, and I'm sticking to it!" :-). By 0330z the moon had started filling back in with a bright white, thickening crescent across the bottom, as the historic "Blood Super moon Lunar Eclipse" was coming to an end. I closed the net at 0352z. 73 de Rick N6IET

09-09-2015 NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN) John Smithson N8ZYA, West Virginia

It was a stormy night all along the east coast this evening. I was surprised to hear a new check in from Ocala, Florida (KA4WJB). Joseph was QRP with a mag loop? Weak but able to copy most of his transmission. John Lancaster (W8GDP) and I had breakfast this morning. We talked about a club member still in the hospital for around 7 months now. A little lightning and thunder makes the band sort of quite. Hi Hi

09-23-2015 NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN) John Smithson N8ZYA, West Virginia

John (W8GDP) and I talked about his Ten-Tec rig with comments about the WX and future plans for the upcoming week. Eric (AC8LJ) was back from work early but didn't catch him on the net. Missed him by only a few minutes. Followed up both with a phone call....72's John N8ZYA

NAQCC Great Lakes Net (GLN) David Moss WA8AXF, Michigan

As the days get shorter, and 40 meters longer I am considering changing to an 80 meter frequency for the winter months. Any Changes will be posted on the net page at www.naqcc.info.

**NAQCC CW Net QNI Reports All Stations
September/2015 Please note: Dates are in UTC**

NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) Richard (Rick) Stutsman N6IET, California, 40M, 7.065 MHz, 80M 3.555 MHz

09-07-2015 40M QNI (5) NCS N6IET, N7HRK/M, KE6EE, N7NLN, KR6RR
 09-13-2015 40M QNI (8) NCS N6IET, KR5RR, N7HRK/M, N7NLN, WU7F, WX4RM, W7SAG, W6B
 09-20-2015 40M QNI (6) NCS N6IET, N7HRK/M, W7SAG, WU7F, N7NLN, KR5RR
 09-27-2015 40M QNI (5) NCS N6IET, KE6EE, N7HRK/M, KE7LKW, KR5RR
 09-27-2015 80M QNI (3) NCS N6IET, KR5RR, KE6EE

NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) James (J.B.) Still KR5RR, California, 80M, 3.555 MHz

09-01-2015 QNI (5) NCS KR5RR, N7HRK/M, K7ZNP, N6IET, W7SAG
 09-08-2015 QNI (7) NCS KR5RR, N7HRK/M, N6KIX, N6IET, WU7F, W7SAG, KE6EE
 09-15-2015 QNI (7) NCS KR5RR, N6IET, N7HRK/M, W7SAG, WX4RM, N7NLN
 09-22-2015 QNI (6) NCS W7SAG, KR5RR, N6IET, WU7F, N7HRK/M, WB6UBK
 09-29-2015 QNI (4) NCS KR5RR, KW6G, WB6UBK, N6IET

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas, 40M, 7.065 MHz

09-01-2015 QNI (6) NCS KA5TJS, N5DRG, N5RWK, KE5YGA, KG0YR, KE5YUM
 09-08-2015 QNI (3) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YUM, N5RWK
 09-15-2015 QNI (6) NCS KA5TJS, N5RWS, KE5YUM, KE5YGA, KG0YR, N5DRG
 09-22-2015 QNI (5) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YUM, N5RWK, WA5YZD, K3NLT
 09-29-2015 QNI (3) N5DRG, KE5YUM, N5RWK; no official NCS

NAQCC Midwest QRS Net (MWN) Scotty Long NU0S, Nebraska, 40M, 7.117 MHz

09-01-2015 QNI (4) NCS WB0QQT, AC8JW, WB4RM, KB7KY, *(Thank you Steve for taking nets short notice Scotty/NU0S)*
 09-08-2015 QNI (1) NCS WB0QQT, No net due to storms in local area Steve
 09-15-2015 QNI (5) NCS NU0S, N7DC, K5UOS, KA4WJB, KB7KY
 09-22-2015 QNI (8) NCS NU0S, AC8JW, W4OEP, KB7KY, N7ADA, WU8G, W7MWF, AE7TG
 09-29-2015 QNI (6) NCS NU0S, AC8JW, KB7KY, AK9A, N6IET, N7ADA

NAQCC Rocky Mountain Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc) Dale Putnam WC7S, Wyoming, 20M, 14.062.5 MHz and 40M, 7.062.5 MHz

09-01-2015 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, WG0AT, N7GES
 09-01-2015 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, KK5IB, N6IET, KR5RR/M
 09-03-2015 QNI (6) NCS WC7S, WB0QQT, KU7Y, AA7CU, W3HZZ, K0EVZ
 09-03-2015 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, WX4RM, N1IX, KE6OIO
 09-03-2015 QNI (1) NCS WC7S
 09-08-2015 QNI (2) NCS WC7S, N6IET
 09-10-2015 QNI (1) NCS WC7S
 09-10-2015 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, KE6OIO, AJ4UQ
 09-15-2015 QNI (2) NCS WC7S, NQ0N
 09-15-2015 QNI (2) NCS WC7S, N6IET
 09-17-2015 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, N7GES, AB4TC, AA7CU
 09-17-2015 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, AA7CU, KE6OIO
 09-22-2015 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, N7GES, N7NLN, K0EVZ
 09-22-2015 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, N6IET, KE6OIO
 09-24-2015 QNI (6) NCS WC7S, K0EVZ, KK5IB, AA7CU, N7GES, AB4TC
 09-24-2015 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, AA7CU, NE5DL, KA5T
 09-29-2015 QNI (1) NCS WC7S
 09-29-2015 QNI (1) NCS WC7S

NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN) John Smithson N8ZYA, West Virginia, 40M, 7.117 MHz

09-03-2015 QNI (3) NCS N8ZYA, WU8G, NU0S
09-09-2015 QNI (3) NCS N8ZYA, W8GDP, KA4WJB
09-23-2015 QNI (2) NCS N8ZYA, W8GDP
09-30-2015 QNI (2) NCS N8ZYA, AC8LJ

NAQCC Pacific North West QRS 80 Meter Net (PNW80) Stewart Fletcher KE7LKW, Washington State, 80M, 3.574 MHz

09-03-2015 QNI (4) NCS WB4SPB, KE7LKW/7, K7JUV, AD7BP
09-10-2015 QNI (3) NCS WB4SPB, N6KIX, VE7DWG
09-17-2015 QNI (3) NCS WB4SPB, KE7LKW, AD7BP
09-24-2015 QNI (2) NCS WB4SPB, KE7LKW

NAQCC Great Lakes Net (GLN) David Moss WA8AXF, Michigan, 40M, 7.117 MHz

09-04-2015 QNI (3) NCS WA8AXF, K4WRZ, WN0I
09-11-2015 QNI (3) NCS WA8AXF, WE8UPJ, K4WRZ
09-18-2015 QNI (6) NCS WA8AXF, K1IEE, K4WRZ, AC8JW, K9EYT, N3FCS
09-25-2015 QNI (3) NCS WA8AXF, K1IEE, N3FCS



HELP FOR BEGINNERS



Items in this section are from CW Assistance Project Coordinator Brion, VE3FUJ, unless otherwise credited. If you are interested in helping out or need some help yourself please contact VE3FUJ. Additional help is also available on our website at <http://www.naqcc.info/cw.html>.

Hi all. Now that Fall is upon us it may be a good idea to check your antenna System, so perhaps to prevent a breakdown when the snow is flying and its not so pleasant a job to do the fixing.

Pay special attention to such things as halliard chafing at pulleys and where it is tied to any insulator, undo any knots and check thoroughly perhaps cut that part off and redo it in unused halliard. Also check the pulleys themselves and perhaps re-grease them. There's nothing worse than a frozen pulley for chafing. And while you are at it, it maybe a good idea to check the integrity of any weather proofing you may have on any joint in the system. Maybe even check the integrity of the coax, if its more than a few years old, to make sure its up to snuff and that no moisture has entered. You know as Murphy's law has it, " if anything can break it will " and as you also know it will happen in mid winter just minutes before you favorite contest. So check it now while the Wx is still nice.

If you have a tilt tower also check the mechanism that takes it up and down in a thorough way and re-grease any joint that may need it.

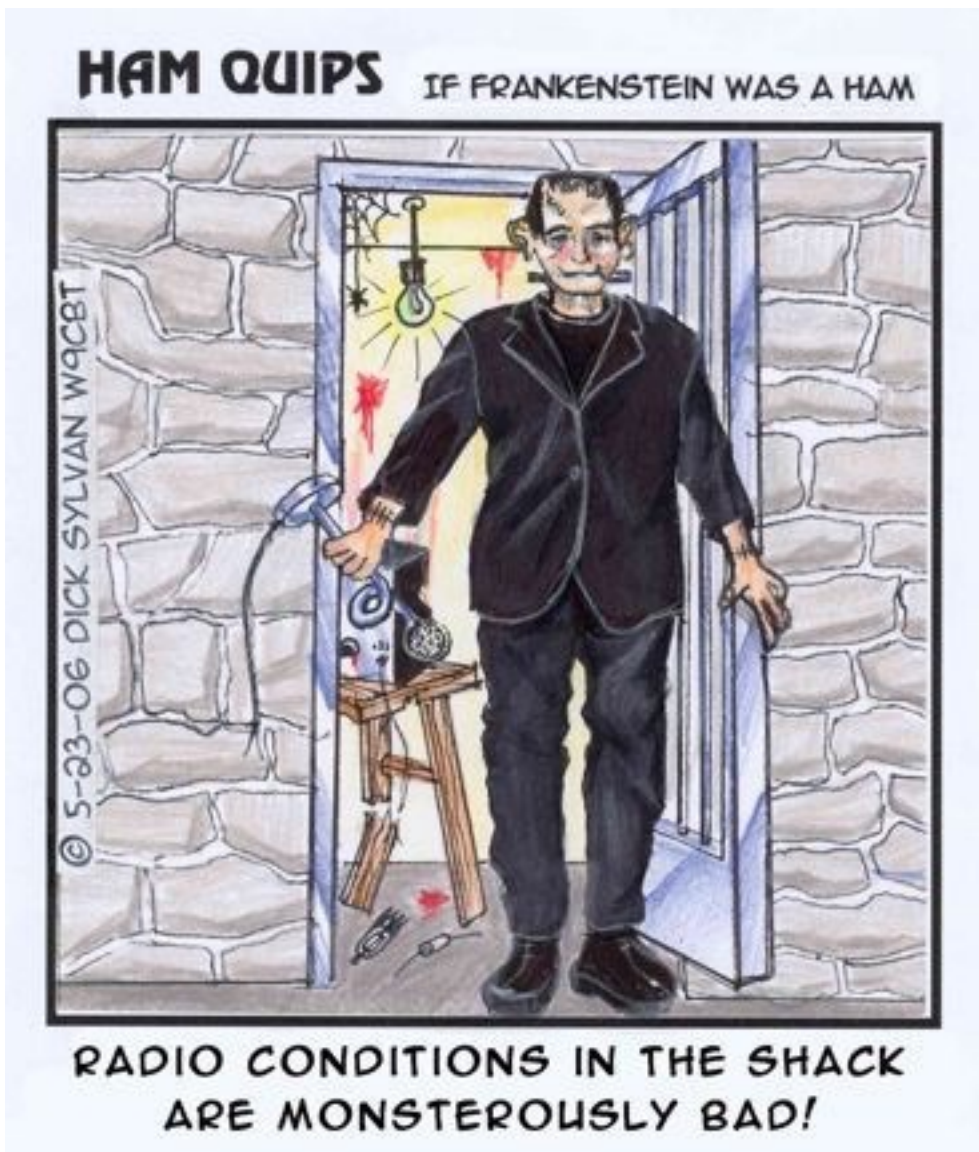
If you attend to those thing now it should be "Happy Hamming all through the winter season". 72. Brion VE3FUJ



HAM QUIPS



Dick Sylvan, W9CBT, #2062, has been a QRP/CW operator for a long time. He is also a very talented cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the *KY9A Telegraph*, a free ham radio eZine published by the Robert F. Heytow Memorial Radio Club (<http://www.k9ya.org/>). We are very pleased and honored to be allowed to reprint his cartoons here. Dick has also authored the book *HI HI - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons* available at <http://www.ky9a.org/w9cbt/>.



NAQCC CHAPTER NEWS

The North American QRP CW Club currently has seven local chapters - Europe, Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Shenandoah Valley, Central Texas, Illowa, and Florida - but we would be more than happy to expand on that list. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by NAQCC members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines from the NAQCC. They provide opportunities to have fun and to promote our parallel passions of QRP and CW. If you are interested in forming a local chapter please contact Club President Paul, N8XMS.

If your chapter is planning a portable operation activity and would like to have it promoted on the club email list or in the newsletter, send an email with the subject "NAQCC Portable Operation" and with the exact wording of the announcement to Vice President John, N8ZYA, at the email address listed on the last page about a week before the operation. Please be sure to include the UTC time for the event and not just the local time.

A report about your chapter activity should appear here. Please send them to KD2MX or N8XMS at the email addresses listed on the last page.

NAQCC chapters located in the United States are welcome to use the NAQCC Club call, N3AQC for their special operations. Please contact call sign trustee Paul, N8XMS, to schedule the use of N3AQC.

Chapter Reports Begin On The Next Page

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER



Items in this section are from Central Texas Chapter President Danny, N5DRG, unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to him.

The chapter is located in the Austin, TX area.

No report available.

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER



Items in this section are from European Chapter President Matt, MW0MIE, unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to him. The European Chapter website is at <http://www.naqcc-eu.org/>.

The European Chapter has its own monthly challenges to compensate for the Atlantic Ocean. However all are welcome to participate, not just members in EU, and we regularly receive challenge logs from North American participants. Please see the chapter web pages for dates and details.

2016 Challenge Theme: Call for suggestions

For 2016, we're going to introduce an overarching theme for our alphabet challenges. This theme will govern six -- precisely half -- of our 2016 chapter challenges, so it needs to be a good one! We're asking members to submit their ideas for what this theme could be.

By way of an example, one possible theme could be "The Royal Navy of the 18th and 19th centuries". Then the January alphabet challenge might have the premise "Ships and their dates of commissioning", the March challenge might be based on "Battles and number of ships engaged", and so on.

We ask that the theme applies in some way to Europe -- perhaps historical events, perhaps interesting places, perhaps notable buildings -- or something else entirely! The only requirements are that the theme is interesting and varied enough to provide the premise of six challenges that will be of interest to wide variety of people.

You can suggest a theme by using the form here: <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/challenge-theme-suggestions>

The more suggestions we receive, the better! You can suggest as many themes as you like. You don't have to live in Europe or to have previously taken part in a challenge to make a suggestion: we really value the input of all NAQCC members!

In December, we'll open voting on what the theme will be. You, as part of the community, will have the chance to decide which of the suggestions will be the theme for the 2016 alphabet challenges!

August activity day results

The chapter's third activity day took place on Wednesday 19th August. The activity days are fun, informal events designed to be enjoyable to radio amateurs with all degrees of CW experience. The goal is to boost CW/QRP activity and awareness, whilst enjoying ourselves at the same time.

We received five entries: from EA1XN, K1IEE, MW0MIE, PA0XAW and SM5ELV. PA0XAW gained the most points by a huge margin. The results can be found here: <http://naqcc-eu.org/august-2015-activity-day>

Thank you to all for taking part and helping us increase awareness for CW/QRP activity in Europe!

Past challenges

We had six successful submissions for the August challenge: from K1IEE, K3WWP, PA0XAW, RW3AI, SM5ELV and SM5MEK. Congratulations to all!

There are still a few days left to submit your entries for our slightly unusual September challenge. So far, we've had six entries. Full details can be found at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/september-2015-challenge>

The premises of both the August and September challenges were based on the results of the recent Tour de France, although the two challenges were very different from each other in what had to be done to complete them!

It was nice to see the callsign OM2015TITANIC in logs from entries for both challenges and the activity day. OM2015TITANIC is transmitting from the Titanic exhibition in Bratislava, Slovakia, until December of this year. Large pile-ups have been reported whilst trying to work this station, so its presence in so many logs is a real testament to the power of the CW/QRP combination that we use.

This month's alphabet challenge

This month sees a return to our usual alphabet challenges. The premise of the October challenge is to construct the names and dates of birth of four ancient European philosophers from the letters and numbers in the callsigns of the stations that you work. More details, including the rules and how to submit your log, can be found at: <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/october-2015-challenge>

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Florida Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to Steve, WB4OMM.

Yes, we're back!

On Friday, September 25th, 2015, the Florida Chapter of NAQCC resumed our monthly forays into the wilds of the Volusia County (FL) park system for new QRP-CW radio adventures. We held our latest “Parkpedition” event returning to one of our all-time favorite locations, Candace Strawn/Lake Dias Park, in DeLeon Springs, FL. Yes, we probably sent you “Pierson, FL” as the QTH (as it is actually closer and easier to send – hi hi!) but the address really is in DeLeon Springs.



This 20-acre park includes a free boat launch, RV camping, playground, pavilions, grills, picnic tables and restrooms. It is usually lightly populated, and today was no exception. A few boat trailers (two launched when we arrived), a few folks camping in a tent a couple of hundred feet away from us, and a guy on a jet ski that drove us nuts most of the morning.



Our group composition has changed some over the summer we lost our great friend and NAQCC member #6913 Darryl Peterson to cancer on Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 you can view his local memorial page, read about him, and view his eulogy here :

http://www.daytonacert.net/?page_id=313. Darryl was a Charter member of NAQCC-FL and dedicated “Parkpeditioner” since the start of our little group. He is already greatly missed!

We were joined today by two new folks (their first Parkpedition with our group) – local Daytona Beach denizen Bob W2EJG (a long time ham and avid CW operator, but not yet a NAQCC member – and yes, we’re working on that!); and John KM4JTE #7966 who hails from Gainesville, FL. Yes, John drove the roughly 90 miles, hour and a half trip to join us! He is a newer ham, but is actively working on his code and is moving forward nicely.

Today we arrived to our site with partly blue skies and a temp of 78 degrees with 60% humidity, accompanied by a light breeze. It was very comfortable for us to operate. Much better than the last few months of 90-95 degrees with 90% humidity! The weather was absolutely beautiful! It warmed up to about 82, but the slightly overcast skies kept us “feeling cooler.

The signals were “OK” today on most of the bands we used. 15M was marginal. 20M was nice and quiet, and came alive after about an hour of operations – it felt like being DX with folks calling Steve, one after the other! 30M some weak signals. 40M was horrible as usual (we can’t wait for the “winter” signals to return!). Conditions were just like the last outing.

Steve WB4OMM #5913 brought his ol' reliable Elecraft KX-3 with Vibroplex Code Warrior Jr paddle, running 5W out to a 20M Hamstick on a ground mounted tripod. Steve made 13 QSOs with 12 NAQCC members in 10 different states (AR, CO, NJ, OH, LA, WI, MI and 2 in PA, and 3 in TX). Included was regular Curt WA2JSG #3457 (NJ) and our own Don K3RLL #1905 (PA). The furthest away was WØRW #2500 in Colorado!

Art WB4MNK #5274 used his Elecraft KX1 running 4W, a Dirt Cheap paddle, 2.2 amp LIPO power supply, 28' end fed wire antenna on 30M. Art made 5 QSOs with 3 NAQCC members in 4 different states (OH, CO, OK, IN, and NJ).

Rick AA4W #1628 brought his Elecraft KX-3, running 5W, he used an End Fed Zepp and worked 15M making 5 QSOs in 4 states (MO, VA, TX and FL x2) with 1 NAQCC member.

Bob operated Steve's station and made 4 of the QSOs - John "studied, observed, and learned" watching Steve, Art, and Rick operate. He'll be on next month!

We quit around noon and enjoyed a "brown bag" lunch at the covered pavilion in the park. As usual the discussion revolved around our previous great ham radio adventures, future outings, and all of the great facets of our noble hobby. The weather was great, the location was great, the food was great....and the friendship was great! A GREAT day! And great to have two new "operators". While operating, Bob W2EJG commented, "It was wonderful to be out here", followed by an e-mail: "Had a super time yesterday. Haven't operated like that in a while". John KM4JTE was visibly enjoying all of the new information he was getting (believe me, we probably overwhelmed him with advice coming from all 4 of us other ops!)



*Facing, from left - Bob W2EJG, John KM4JTE;
The "back" or Rick AA4W, and Steve WB4OMM
Art WB4MNK is the photographer*

Many thanks to those who listened for us and helped make this another successful NAQCC-FL event!

NEXT MONTH'S SCHEDULED EVENT:

Friday, October 23, 2015 starting at 9:00 AM EDT

Lake Ashby Park, New Smyrna Beach, FL (4150 Boy Scout Road, New Smyrna Beach, FL 32130)

Park webpage with directions: [LAKE ASHBY WEB PAGE](#)

Art WB4MNK, Steve WB4OMM, Rick AA4W, Don K3RLL, Bob W2EJG & John KM4JTE already confirmed (plus whoever else can make it). <http://wb4omm.com/naqcc-fl-chapter/>

Look for our announcement!

72/73 to all – Steve WB4OMM, #5913 - NAQCCFL@yahoo.com

NAQCC ILLOWA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Illowa Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to Pete, NN9K.

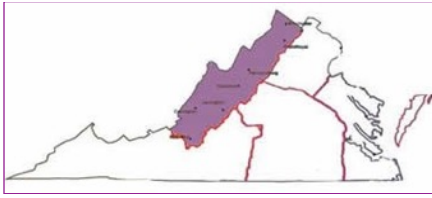
The Illowa Chapter operates in the “Quad Cities” area of Davenport, IA / Moline, IL.

No report this month except that one of our members is going to try to set up an outing in one of the Iowa parks hopefully for October or possibly early November. Will keep the membership posted.

Thanks,

Peter, NN9K

NAQCC SHENANDOAH VALLEY CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Shenandoah Valley Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to Russ, K3NLT.

Shenandoah Valley Chapter of NAQCC September report:

This month I made a special plea for reports from members and received a good response in return. Like I reported before, the members have been very busy with travel and family responsibilities which crowded out their ham activity. However several did report their fun times with ham radio.

Foster, WF4O, reported getting side tracked with D-Star, but is looking forward to the resumption of our CW net and the monitoring of a specific frequency where we may find someone monitoring for a quick QSO.

Phil, K4NE, said he is purging his shack of old HF equipment in the hopes of investing his profits in new antennas.

Clay, K3NGV, and wife went to the White Mountains of NH and he took along his HF radio but didn't have much success, however he did make a few VHF QSOs via repeater. He indicated that it was a "learning" experience and he wants to try again soon. He inadvertently left part of his antenna system at home and this may have been why he didn't get out well. He admitted it was a good SWL adventure. He is awaiting the return of his HB-1B MK3 radio from the repair shop.

Brian, W3ATT, has an horrific work schedule but still got out to activate a summit, W4V/HB-034, Little North Mountain on August 30th with Eric, K9JEP, for summits on the air. He also made a dipole antenna with homebrew current binocular 1:1 current balun. He reported poor band conditions this summer as I have reported earlier.

My wife and I, Russ, K3NLT took a three day trip into West Virginia, to Black Water Falls and I took the KX-1 along, but we found so many things to do I did not get it out. However at home last week on Thursday I did get it all set up and worked WA2USA/p on Walnut Mountain, in Virginia, and his signal peaked when I gave him a call on 40 meters, and he gave me 579. Not bad for 2 watts on internal battery, and my LNR Trail Friendly antenna. I think we are all looking forward to the Fall weather and better band conditions!

Howard, K4LXY, has been working on several HF and CW projects. His grandson has been with them part of this summer and that has taken a good bit of his time.

Russell Mumaw K3NLT, NAQCC #2906

NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the West Virginia Chapter unless otherwise credited. The chapter's web site is at <https://plus.google.com/102627005227155262259?hl=en&partnerid=gplp0>. Questions or comments should go to John, N8ZYA.



The WV activities revolve around our weekly QRS nets and our breakfast gatherings. As I've noted previously, several of our core-group members are recovering from health issues. There's been no outside radio activity again in the month of September.

This month I'd like to suggest ways to practice CW, even if you don't have access to your HF station. I'm going out on a limb to write about three methods I'm using to send and receive Morse code over the internet. Make no mistake about these methods; they're not "real radio" in conventional terms. These methods have much more to do with "information technology" (IT) than radio.

But.....

Morse code IS still the most effective mode of communications ever devised which is decipherable with *only* the human ear. I've found that simple QRP radio and a telegraph key is all I've needed to have years of fun on the air. Here are a few methods I'm using when I can't use my regular QRP rig for daily CW practice:

I've used software called "Morsecode.me" for a couple of years now to get my daily "CW fix". This particular software allows you to send CW with the spacebar on your computer. I talk regularly with a ham in Germany using this method. If you want to just "practice" code, this method is a real "piece of cake" because the software actually deciphers the dots and dashes and displays it on your computer screen. This site is open to the general public and you do NOT need to be a licensed ham to use it. I've talked to students in Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, and all over the United States.

I also have two other methods of regular CW QSO's which is now available to me. You must be a licensed ham to use these two services.

Last month, I downloaded software called CQ 100 to my computer. This software is more "ham friendly" since it has a "built in keyer" with both "speed and pitch controls" on a "virtual desktop transceiver". Morse code is sent via the computer keyboard *but* you must decipher CW with your ears. I recently had a nice "hour and a half" CW QSO with a 94 year old ham near London England using this method. This software also comes with a neat tool called QSO TV. I've been talking regularly with a ham on the USS Missouri which is moored in Hawaii. It's "real nice" to display your QSL card directly on this television screen, as well as graphics uploaded from the hard drive of your computer.

The third mode I'm using is called Echolink. This software has been around a "long time" and is known primarily for "repeater operations"; it also has possibilities for using Morse code.

I much prefer listening to Morse code sent with a "real" key, and both "CQ 100" and "Echolink" software allow the use of "modulated CW" with an external "keyer". I ordered a very small battery powered keyer a few days ago from "Ham Gadgets". This small keyer will literally fit in my shirt pocket. This small "kit" will allow me to use both a straight key and my iambic paddle when I'm "on the road".

As always, the best CW experience of all is "real time on the air". Internet based methods of CW are always dependent on software, a computer, and a phone line. However, when it's not possible to travel with your favorite QRP rig, an accompanying antenna, and a power supply; you can ease those CW withdrawal pains by using a few of the above methods.

To close; free time has been precious this month. I was out of town for a week this month and my father, who is 95 years old, is in the hospital recovering from hernia surgery.

I miss those "outside special events" but under the circumstances, keeping my CW skill sharp with alternate modes will have to suffice. I'm looking forward to our 11th Anniversary event. I'm looking forward to hearing some "on the air" stations. There's really nothing to compare with the "fist" of a good CW operator using a real paddle. Hi Hi

Happy Trails,
John N8ZYA

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Western Pennsylvania Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to John, K3WWP.

Saturday, September 5 - Chapter member Don K3RLL paid a visit today for our first visit of the summer while Don is up north here. It seems that various circumstances forced several postponements of the visit. It was just a visit with no major projects involved. Mostly we discussed computer matters. Both of us have been playing and working with them since the days of the abacus and clay tablets. Well, at least back to the days of programmable calculators for me and big mainframe computers for Don. It was indeed a long time ago. A visit to Subway topped off the visit. Hopefully Don and I can manage a parkpedition before he heads south again for mid-fall through late spring.

Sunday, September 13 - Here are excerpts from my web diary (<http://k3wwp.com>) written by Mike KC2EGL who spent the day here.

The day started out around 1215Z when I arrived at John's QTH. Our plan for the day was to attend the BCARA annual hamfest at the Unionville VFD. This is the fourth year we have attended this quaint little hamfest. It is the only one where we get to roam around and enjoy the event without setting up a station. We met Tom WB3FAE shortly after we arrived. We visited with some friends we only get to see from time to time.

We departed the hamfest around 1515Z and headed back towards Kittanning. We stopped at Radio Shack to pick up two project boxes for a homebrew power pole distribution box project. Then it was back to John's QTH to reassemble my Orion power supply. The gel cell battery gave up the ghost so to speak around a month ago. We moved on to doing some research on power pole connectors. We found a video showing how to assemble our project followed by ordering a batch of 30A power pole connectors.

Then we needed a break for dinner at our new favorite eatery, Clarks Landing. Great food in mass quantity. After dinner we put together a list for a scavenger hunt. The corrector lens on my telescope is in need of a cleaning. During our last stargazing session I was not able to connect my dew zapper to keep the dew from accumulating on the corrector lens. The dew was so awful that night that it collected on the inside of the corrector lens (I have a Schmidt Cassegrain 9.25" telescope). SO it needs a good cleaning. John found a cleaning process published by an astronomy club in Arkansas. They have a detailed process to clean the optics of your telescope. They also have a very particular list of items you will need to get the job done properly. You would not believe how tough it is to find all eight items in one place. We are here to tell you that it is impossible. One item is available by mail order only since we did not feel like driving all over Pittsburgh looking for it. The rest of the items we found by searching a local Rite Aid drugstore and Walmart. Everything we need to clean my scope is here at John's QTH except for my scope. This will be a project for a day with low humidity. The instructions say that a humidity level above 65% will cause streaking on the item being cleaned. We shall keep an eye out on the WX report to see when will be the best time for this task.

Then it was time for a bit of relaxing with a hidden object game. Shortly I will be heading North to my QTH because tomorrow is the beginning of my work week. Lucky John doesn't have to worry about such things anymore.

And my follow-up take on the hamfest from the next diary entry.

First I really enjoyed meeting several of the BCARA members, especially Rick N3VKM who is the one who contacted me about doing a QRP/CW demo at the November BCARA meeting. We discussed that a bit, and I found out that we should be able to erect an antenna of sorts at the church where they hold their meetings. It was also nice to visit with members of our local Armstrong County club. Since I'm not a member, that's about the only time I get to see them. Then of course there was Bob WC3O from Skyview. We always mention him, but I don't think we've ever had him in one of our pictures. I mentioned that to Mike yesterday and we remedied that as you see here:

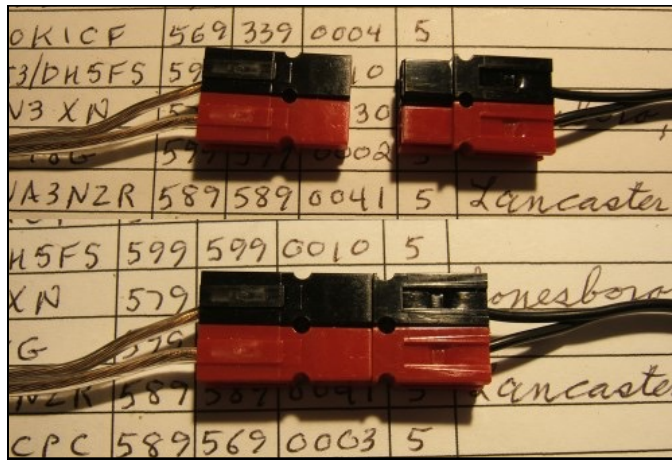


From L to R it's me, Tom WB3FAE, Bob WC3O, Mike KC2EGL.

Another good friend from BCARA I'd like to mention is Bruce AA3LX. He mans a booth for the club and is sometimes busy, but we always find time to chat for a while. He usually winds up giving me some little (or not so little sometimes) gift from the table that I am interested in. This year it was the following comic book. We were trying to find a copyright date on it, but couldn't till I read it in bed last night. I noticed right on the front cover in fine print the year 1986.



September 27: The day of our planned power pole work. For those of you who are not familiar with power poles, briefly they are a very clever way of distributing power to various pieces of equipment. They do not have male and female connectors as such, but simply plug into each other using two pairs of connectors as shown here - red for positive and black for negative.

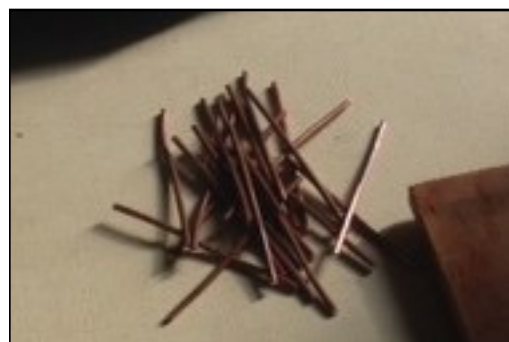


I think this construction article will make it a little clearer. If not, there is a lot of info on the Internet that can be found via a Bing search.

Mike KC2EGL arrived shortly after 9 AM, and after some chatting, we got started on the project. The first thing was preparing some short pieces of #14 solid wire. I had some old house wiring that contained 2 conductors of just that size wire as shown here.



We stripped off the outer and inner insulation and cut off four 12 inch lengths of wire. After cleaning off the very old wires, we then cut them into 2 inch lengths which gave us 24 pieces, a few more than what we needed for the project. Here's the pile of them:



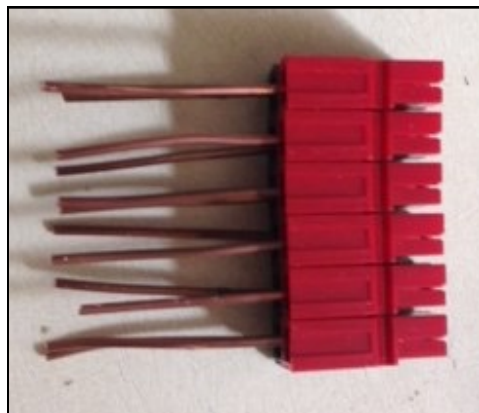
The next step was to solder the wires to the little connectors that slip into the power pole casings. This can also be done using crimp connections, but we chose solder rather than buying a somewhat expensive specialty crimping tool which is needed to do a proper job of crimping. If soldering, it is necessary to be careful the solder does not flow onto the contacts or the outside of the little barrel that holds the wire. The easiest way to do that is to stand the wire up, pop on the connector and heat it, feeding the solder in from the bottom and letting it wick up into the barrel. We did that using a couple holes in a board as you see here:



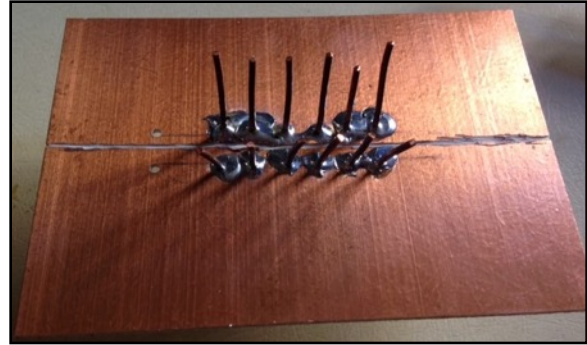
After a while we had a collection of wires with the attached connectors as shown in this picture:



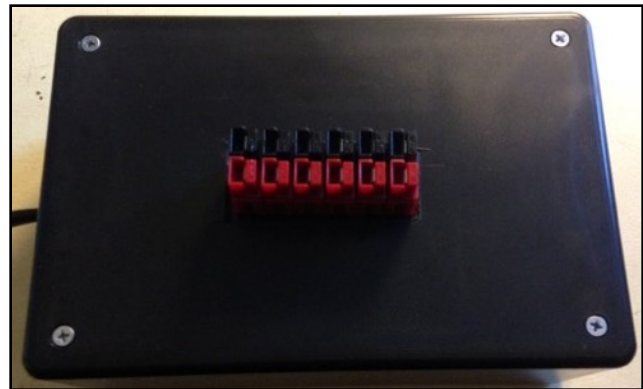
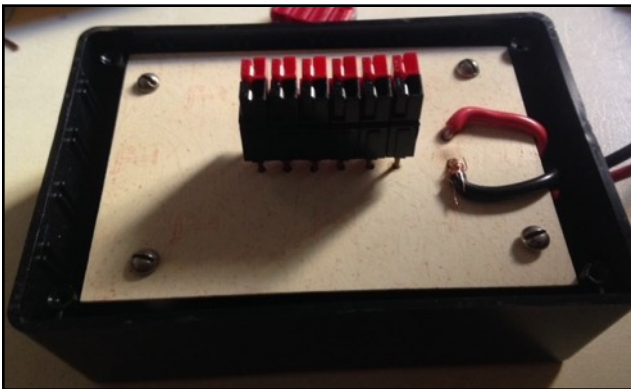
Now the connectors were pushed into the housings until they snapped over a little retaining clip. This proved to be a little difficult at times and it took a bit of effort to get some of them to seat correctly - not so much with the stiff #14 wire but later when we put the mating connectors on the end of the various power cables for the KX3, PX3, etc. Those wires were softer and would bend as we pushed. Finally we had to resort to using a small tool to bypass the wire and press directly on the connector to seat it. Anyway we wound up with six red and six black connected together with 12 connectors and wires installed:



Next the unit was mounted on a printed circuit board. First the board was divided into two sides, one positive, one negative by using a Dremel tool to remove a narrow strip of copper from the middle of the board. Then a tricky moment inserting the twelve wires into twelve holes drilled in the board. It actually went pretty well and quickly, and we had this strange looking unit below. Left before soldering and right after soldering the wires to the board.

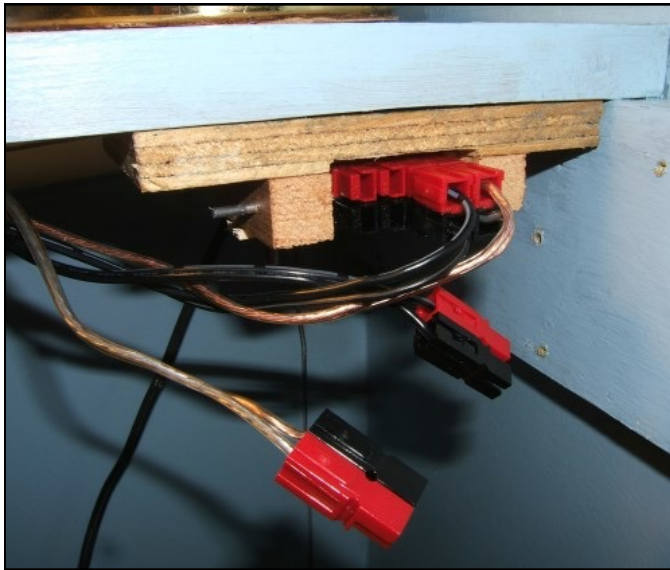


We "neated up" the solder connections after the picture was taken, and we next mounted the unit inside a Radio Shack project box using spacers after soldering the input wires to the board (at right in the first picture). The spacers were sized to let the connectors project through the lid of the box after we laboriously cut a slot in the lid. We started using an Exacto type knife which was going very slowly, then went to drilling holes, and using a keyhole saw and rasp to finish the slot. Here are the final pictures of Mike's unit:



The description above was for Mike' distribution unit. After that, as mentioned above, we put the mating connectors on the end of each of his cables from his gear, and that finished Mike's part of the project.

Similar to the first five pictures above, along with Mike, I made my unit with four red and four black connectors. We also hooked up the connectors to my power supply, KX3, PX3, and K2 cables. One for each of the four connectors. I wound up mounting mine differently though as I thought the project box was a bit big for my setup. So I'll use the box for something else someday. Mike had to leave early to run an errand. After he left, I put in a lot of thought as to just how I would mount mine and came up with the following. Instead of the circuit board, I simply connected all 4 positive and 4 negative connectors together by bending and soldering the two inch wires. Then I used some pieces of wood from my wood junk box to attach the unit firmly to the underside of the shelf on which my gear resides. The connector housings have a hole through them for pins that lock them together. I simply passed a wire straight through all 4 holes and through two pieces of wood at the side of the unit, fastened those pieces to a small wood board which I then mounted to the shelf. Here's a picture with two connectors hooked up and two empty slots with the mating connectors dangling loose to maybe show better just how things go together.



The next two chapter activities will be one mainly dealing with astronomy, and the other pretty much strictly ham radio. Remember, hams are balanced with other activities besides ham radio, and I (we) like to demonstrate that to club members.

The astronomy one will involve cleaning the corrector lens in Mike's Celestron 9.5" scope as mentioned above. That may happen on October 4.

Then on Columbus Day, October 12, Mike, Tom, and I will be heading to the Kittanning Community Park for our annual traditional activation of N3A for NAQCC Anniversary Week. Check the NAQCC Scheduler page for more info, and we'll also send out a reminder via our email list just before the activity. Hopefully the weather will cooperate unlike it didn't do a couple times in the past. Hope to work you then.

MEMBER SUBMISSIONS

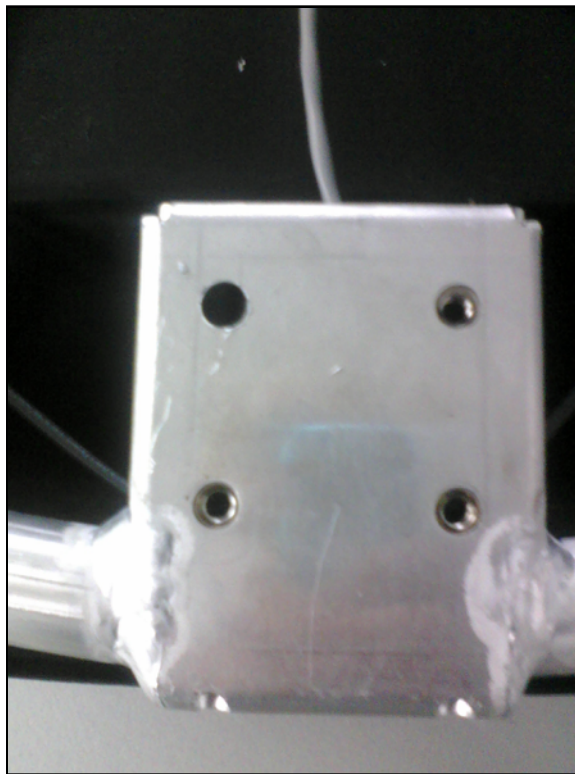


This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit a short article dealing with some aspects of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Just about anything that would be of interest to our members would be welcomed. Send your items to our News Editor Paul, KD2MX.

DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the submitting member and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

From Steve, W3UEC, #6224 —

Recently I got a really good price on a "like new" magnetic loop antenna (MFJ 1786). I don't want to shock or scandalize you, but the reason I got such a good deal on this otherwise perfect antenna was a construction fault; namely that one of the holes which accept the bolts for clamping a mast lacked threads. Although the metal was adequate, it is too thin to make reliable threads with a tap. It is also much too inaccessible to use a conventional nut.



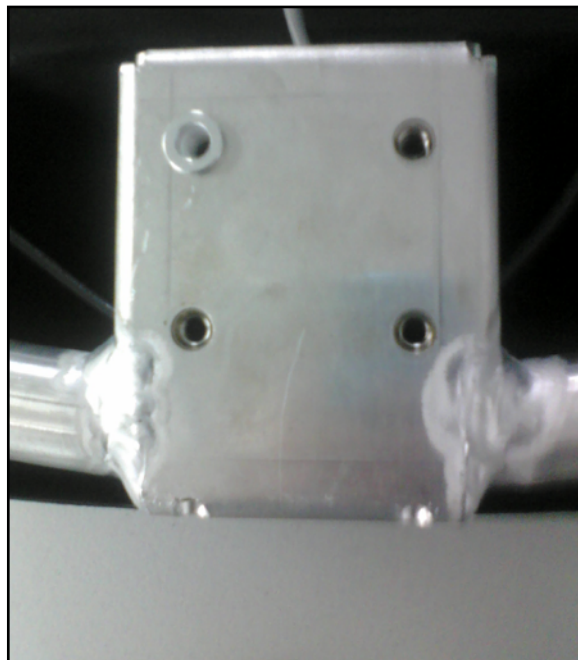
My fix was to use a rivet-nut or "Rivnut." A rivnut is like a wide hollow pop rivet with internal threads. A variety of tools with a bolt or stud with the matching thread can be used to make the barrel of the insert expand tightly within the hole. After unscrewing, or otherwise removing, the tool, you have a clean secure threaded receptacle without need for access to the back side of the material. Numerous web pages (e.g. http://www.aimfasteners.com/about_rivnut.html#.VengwRovqeQ) and videos (e.g. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_uu_ba6qAM) give detailed instructions on how to install them with or without special tools.

The tool I use is a combination pop riveter and rivet nut inserter that I got from Harbor Freight,

(Item #1210) with four nose pieces and 40 assorted inserts for about \$22.00.



The final result, which has allowed me to set up and break down the antenna rapidly and securely, is shown in the third picture. Since doing this "fix." I have found several additional projects - especially portable antennas - where use of rivet nuts beat regular pop rivets or self-taping screws for convenience in assembly and disassembly.



Note: "Rivnut" may be a trademarked name.

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

Sometimes I almost feel guilty calling QRPp challenges like we had this past month a “challenge” because making contacts at under a watt just isn’t all that tough to do. (Much of the credit should really go to the great equipment that is available nowadays on the receiving end of the QSO.) My first opportunity to turn on my radio for this one was on the evening of the 7th (Labor Day). The solar flux index was in the 80’s and every HF band was listed as “poor.” Conventional wisdom from the QRO folks would have said to turn off the radio and go watch some TV. But I set my power to 900 mW and in a short amount of time I had 4 fine QSOs in the log. From here in MI I worked TN, GA, NJ, and CT on 30 and 40 meters. These were certainly not “gold-star” record-breaking kinds of contacts but I received good signal reports and a couple of them were extended rag-chews. And understand that I did this using an old Cushcraft R7 vertical that has been up since 1993 and is in such bad shape that it actually “gives” me a 1:1 SWR on 80-meters where it’s not supposed to work at all - can anyone say “significant loss” in the dummy-load err antenna?!?! After that, completing the “challenge” was just a matter of finding time in my schedule to turn on the radio. So if you have never tried to see “how low you can go” give it a try. It’s easier than you might think and just imagine the look on the QRO operators face after he gives you a “569” and you then tell him you were running milliwatt power! (I really love doing that! I never indicate anything about my power before I get my signal report.)

From Gregg, WB8LZG, #1444 —

This really isn't a QRP/CW activity but I think that it's a very cool idea even though this Wolverine editor is usually allergic to anything that is "Green and White." Watch out on Oct. 17!

Hello Radio friends,

The 1st Spartan Radio Tailgate Party was a good one ! We had the chance to meet and play radio with several of the new incoming Hams ! It looks like we're off to a great start this year ! Ed Oxeer, Reece Cole es I went to the shack a bit early to make sure all was in readiness for the event. There was a crock pot full of Ed's famous "busted QSO chili" , and lots of snacks and chips, including MSU Football cupcakes ! Wow, this really is a tailgate party ! At the starting bell the students took right over and started making QSO's ! They did quite well too. A rough tally shows 44 QSO's, in 19 states, the Galapagos Is, Martinique, El Salvador, and others. Just to keep things exciting they also had a few pileups!

Alumnus Mike, KB8ZGL helped out by connecting to the "Mike LINC" so that we could garner some more check in's via "echo link". This proved very worthwhile also as we had many hams reach us on that link. Big thanks there OM !



I believe Ed and I were a bit surprised as to how smoothly everything went. We were quite happy to sit outside the "shack" and ragchew while we watched the students do the Tailgate Party with very little outside help. We both commented on how nice it was to see the shack FULL of students all having fun, as well as learning from each other. To sum it up, our 1st installment to the "Spartan Tailgate Special Event" went very well. Sending along a picture of the fun. I'm already looking ahead to next weekend !

Go Green , Go White ! 73 Gregg WB8LZG

From Scott, N0HOT, #6645 (via Paul, N8XMS, #0675) —

We normally don't include commercial advertisements in the newsletter so let's call this a "product review." (Besides, at \$0.99 I don't think that Scott is planning on funding his retirement with this!) N0HOT has a cute little app for iPhone/iPad available on the iTunes store at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/morse-email/id1021100263?mt=8>. The app takes any text that you type in, converts it into a .wav file using Morse code, and then attaches it to an email to be sent to anyone that you want. The speed and tone of the CW is user selectable. Of course there are many other ways to create Morse code audio files but this is a really convenient one for iPad/iPhone email users. Scott has a limited number of free-app promo codes that he would like to give away to NAQCC members. If you would like a free copy of this app, while supplies last, please contact him at scott@n0hot.us. — N8XMS

From Jim, K9JWV, #1974 —

Diz, W8DIZ, has initiated the design and kitting of a range of 1 watt single band cw xcvrs.

Cost - \$46.00 (affordable, eh?)
Rcvr MDS is -137 dbm (not too shabby, 'eh?)
VXO controlled - range dependent on specific band)

Go here to see which bands are currently available: <http://kitsandparts.com/> (look down the left hand side -- 17, 20 and 30 meter versions with more bands on the way)

Great following with lots of feedback and ideas on improving or adding bells and whistles via a chat room Diz set up. (Info on how to join found at his web page.)

I have no financial interest in Diz' efforts just appreciative of the opportunity to witness the birth of a fun radio kit, designed in the U.S. and supported by fellow U.S. hams (via build and testing feedback that provide lessons learned)!

With the advent of copy cat Rockmite kits from China and poorly designed amps from EUs, the timing couldn't be better for a U.S. generated quality QRPP kit to spur operating fever (let's get this thing on the air and make some Qs) and instill a "what else can we do to improve this bad boy" movement.

71.5 de Jim Rodenkirch K9'JWV

From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

September, for the most part, had some great weather, and I took advantage of it with a lot of outdoor activities like fishing, walking, and gardening. That didn't leave all that much time for ham radio except for the 0000Z hour to get my streak QSOs. The streaks (regular and DX) did continue through the month - or at least through the 29th when I am writing this. For the most part, the DX QSO came in that 0000Z hour, but there were a few days when it took longer (18th in the 1600Z hour for example). Still there was no real close call any day. Barring failure, day # 1,000 of the DX streak will come on November 25. Being around the CQWW DX contest then, the last few days should be easy ones, but between now and then, there may be some rough going as the sunspots decline and propagation conditions along with them.

September was rough for working Europe since I didn't get a chance to get on in late afternoon that much which now seems the best time for the 'across the pond' QSOs. As a result I came up short on

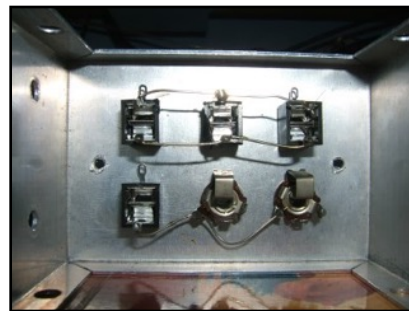
the European Chapter challenge this month. However it took only a few days at the beginning of the month to complete the "USA" milliwatt challenge with 900 mW.

I'm looking through my web site diary at k3wvp.com to remind me of anything else worth mentioning here. Of course the WPA Chapter activities in the Chapter news section above are prominent there. I won't repeat them here.

It was nice to have a conversation with Tom WY3H via landline. We hadn't talked much lately and it was good to get caught up on a variety of things. He is doing well after some shock treatment to get his heart back in rhythm again. He's still enjoying the club gift of the KX3 when he gets the chance to get on the air from down there in GA.

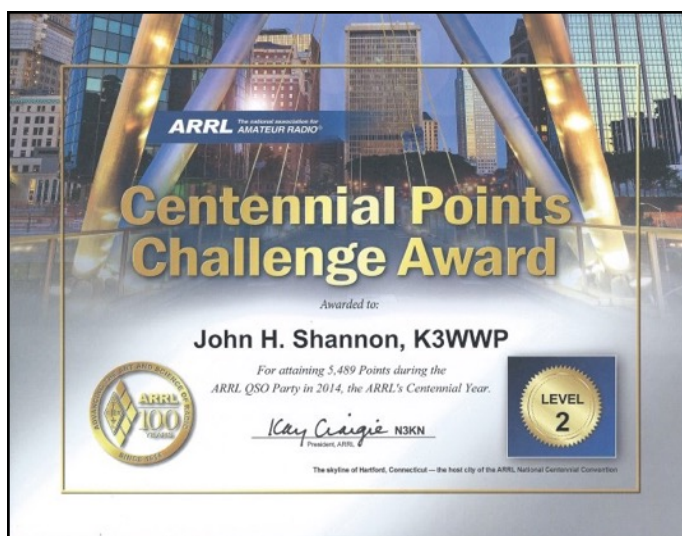
On the 19th, I worked an interesting special event station XE719SEP. According to QRZ, that was a commemoration of two severe earthquakes that struck Mexico on Sep 19/20, 1985. It was only active from 7:19 AM Mexico time on the 19th through 7:40PM Mexico time on the 20th. The times of the two quakes.

On the 17th, I did a bit of homebrewing in "neating up" my key collection connections to the KX3. I made a little project box from a very old aluminum minibox as shown here and then mounted it to the underside of the shelf that supports my gear. It made for a much neater setup than having the wires just dangling under the shelf:



K1 and K2 refer to the two key inputs on the KX3. The paddles are my Begali and ARRL Centennial ones. The SK my Begali Blade, and the Bug my Vibroplex Lightning given to me by Larry W2LJ several years ago. So all 4 are actually gifts related to the NAQCC. Thanks.

Speaking of the ARRL Centennial, I learned that I was eligible for the Centennial Points Challenge Award so I applied for and received the following certificate:



If you use the ARRL Logbook of the World, you don't even have to do any figuring or submitting of a log for the award. It's all computed for you in the LoTW. All you need do is apply and submit payment. See <http://www.arrl.org/centennial-qso-party> for full details. I never even bothered keeping track of, nor even trying to work toward the award, yet I still earned the second level award. Perhaps you have also. You should check. It's an attractive certificate as you see, and there won't be another similar one until 2114 for the ARRL Bicentennial.

September 4: I had a QSO with NAQCC member and LONG-time friend Ken WA8REI. One thing we mentioned was that it is almost 10 years now since we had our 40th anniversary QSO on August 25, 2006, having worked for the first time on August 25, 1966. So we made plans for a 50th anniversary QSO on August 25, 2016. Hopefully as we get older and more forgetful, we will remember. HI I've already had a 50th anniversary with WA4FAT who is the one who donates space on his server for my k3wwp.com web site.

From Gene, N5GW, #5353 —

Another key creation.

The base for this one is made from a defunct motorcycle sprocket resting on stick-on rubber feet. The levers, springs and contacts are old relay parts. Paddles are glued-on aluminum fender washers. The key is not very heavy, but the spring touch is very light.



From Dejan, SA3BOW, #6953 —

A measuring gadget.

Suppose you urgently need to measure voltage and suddenly realize that your Fluke disappeared for good. That is, it has been returned to its rightful owner. To complicate matters further, your valve voltmeter is currently busy keeping the radio corner door open. OK, no matter really: you've forgotten how to operate it anyway.

Remaining is your \$9.99 multimeter from a close out sale of fire-damaged stuff. It works, admittedly,

quite OK but, as with so many other multi-meters, it suffers from at least two sets of problems for this particular measurement:

1. Test leads are fixed, too short, too hard and the points too exposed. And they won't stick in position. Bad, for you have but two hands.
2. The multimeter is too big for the contraption's innards where you need to measure: you can't place it in a readable position.

One way to solve this, and future problems, is by fiddling together a tiny integrated voltmeter/LED with two small "stickinplacers" (technical term). Add some shrink tubing of varying size and colour and everything is ready with a flick and a swish at the cost of \$1.50.

In this example, all stuff came from a Hong-Kong-based online trader of el cheapos.



NAQCC CLUB INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

By Founding President Tom Mitchell, WY3H

We realize that QRP and CW operation do not appeal to everyone. We have no "axe to grind" with the QRO (high power) fraternity. We recognize that there are times when QRO operation is invaluable. During disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes or terrorist attacks, radio amateurs provide vital, life-saving communications for which QRO operation is often necessary. QRO operators also provide an invaluable public service in health and welfare traffic and routine traffic handling.

Amateur radio has something for everyone, including SSB, other forms of digital communication and AM and FM operation. However, for a small but dedicated group, QRP (and QRPp) CW operation provides the greatest challenge and thrill amateur radio has to offer.

Each month the club will host a different challenge such as the GAW (Get Acquainted Week) or the Turkey challenge (making words relating to Thanksgiving from letters in callsigns of stations worked). Also we will have a 2 hour sprint each month alternating between Tuesday and Wednesday evenings with a bonus multiplier for using a straight key.

In addition to QRP CW operation, the club encourages (but does not limit operators to) the use of simple wire antennas. The club offers free membership to any licensed radio amateur (or shortwave listener) anywhere in the world who is willing to use and promote QRP (or QRPp) CW for at least part of their operating time.

We don't have all the answers, but we are willing to answer questions concerning QRP and CW operation from newcomers to the hobby and veteran amateurs alike. Let's put the thrill back into amateur radio and work together to encourage everyone to just give it a try.

We welcome all who share our view to join us and become part of an elite amateur radio fraternity.

The North American QRP CW Club was founded in 2004 by WY3H and K3WWP and now has more than 7000 members throughout the world. Membership is free and anyone interested in CW/QRP operating is welcome. Complete information about the NAQCC, including a membership application, activities schedule, and useful resources, can be found on our website at <http://www.naqcc.info/>. Inquires can also be sent to

Club President Paul Huff, N8XMS
9928 Eckles
Livonia, MI 48150
USA



Additional contact information can be found on the next page.

NAQCC CONTACTS		
NAQCC President Newsletter Editor	Paul - N8XMS	paul142857@gmail.com
NAQCC Vice President West Virginia Chapter	John - N8ZYA	jspiker58@gmail.com
European Chapter	Matt - MW0MIE	matt@naqcc-eu.org
Florida Chapter	Steve - WB4OMM	wb4omm@arrl.org
Shenandoah Valley Chapter	Russ - K3NLT	k3nlt@comcast.net
Western Pennsylvania Chapter	John - K3WWP	naqcc33@windstream.net
Central Texas Chapter	Danny - N5DRG	n5drg@naqcc-centraltexas.net
Illowa Chapter	Pete - NN9K	nn9k.peter@gmail.com
Help For Beginners	Brion - VE3FUJ	ve3fuj@wightman.ca
Member Submissions Member Spotlight	Paul - KD2MX	kd2mx@arrl.net
NAQCC CW Nets	Scotty - NU0S	nu0s@hotmail.com