NORTH AMERICAN QRP CW CLUB

NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 228 JUNE 2017

KEY CLICKS

- JUNE IS A VERY BUSY MONTH FOR THE NAQCC. We have double the fun scheduled this month! There are two different challenges and two different sprints to enjoy in June. See the appropriate pages in this newsletter for the complete details.

- SPECIAL PRIZE OFFERED FOR NAQCC FIELD DAY CHALLENGE. Please remember that one lucky member/participant in our Field Day challenge this month will win a great field pack that is suitable for taking QRP gear out into the field. See the *Challenges* page in this issue for more details.

- A REMINDER ABOUT NAQCC CHALLENGE QSOS. This is just a friendly reminder that contest and sprint QSOs are normally not allowed in our monthly challenges unless specifically listed in the rules for that month. And it doesn't matter that you are not "doing" the contest. If the person on the other end is participating for points (like a state QSO party) it is considered to be a contest QSO and cannot be counted for your challenge entry. The complete rules for our monthly challenges can be seen at http://www.naqcc.info/challenges_rules.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."

IN THIS ISSUE

BAND CHARACTERISTICS By John, K3WWP

It seems that a lot of folks are returning to the ham bands, especially with CW, during the past several years due to the encouragement from clubs like FISTS and the NAQCC. Some of those probably returned right near the peak of the latest sunspot cycle and had a ball on all the bands up through 10 (even 6) meters working DX, rag chewing, contesting, and so forth.

Of late, I'm sure those folks have noticed a change in the bands as the sunspots decline toward a minimum in the latest cycle. NAQCC president Paul N8XMS and I thought perhaps a rudimentary article dwelling on propagation at various spots in a sunspot cycle might be in order so the folks will comprehend the changes they are encountering on the ham bands.

One of the basic measures of how good propagation is on the ham bands is called the solar flux. It is pretty much directly related to the number of sunspots which in turn is related to the current point in the approximately 11 year sunspot cycle. When the cycle is at the point called the maximum, the number of sunspots visible on the sun is at its maximum. At the minimum of a cycle, there may be no visible sunspots at all, or only a very few at most. Correspondingly, the solar flux may be as high as 400 on some days around a sunspot maximum (roughly in the 150-300 range in actuality), but only in the low 60s around a minimum.

It's not an exact science by any means, but generally it holds true that around a sunspot maximum, propagation on the ham bands allows easy world wide communications on the higher bands 17 through 10 (even 6) meters. It's then that working the world with one watt and a coathanger for an antenna on 10 meters is not all that far from the truth. Conversely around a sunspot minimum, those same high bands may go days on end with nary a signal to be heard. Actually although we are not going into the topic here, a contributing reason the high bands are dead is that everyone believes them to be dead and no one goes there. There are actually some fairly good openings on the higher bands around a minimum although by no means as good, nor as many, as those around a maximum.

When I was the QRP columnist for the FISTS publication Keynote, I wrote 100 columns before I retired, some of which dwelt on propagation. All 100 are available on my web site at http://k3wwp.com/cw_ss_column.html. Here I would like to present updated excerpts from two of those propagation articles.

From column #95 originally published in Keynote # 4 - 2012:

This column starts with a general statement akin to "If you want to be successful on the bands, get set up to operate all bands from 160 through 10 (6) meters. That way no matter what the propagation conditions, you should always have at least a couple of workable bands on which to get some action. Then I move on to the following description of the bands.

Each band description starts with the number of US states, countries, continents, and CQ zones I've worked on that band updated now through March 2017. This will give you a quick idea of how the band works for CW/QRP/simple antennas.

160M - 42, 3, 1, 3 - It is very hard to be successful on this band with a minimal QRP setup. My only non-W/VE contact was a VP9. It takes a really big, well designed antenna to work much beyond a few hundred miles easily. Small or low antennas if not vertically polarized will emit high angles of radiation that are greatly attenuated by the large number of hops they take to reach a distant destination. Those stations I've worked in the western states (CA, OR) copied a signal from me that was well down in the

milliwatts by the time it got there. I have had many good rag chews on this band with local (0-400 mi. or so) stations. This is pretty much a winter only band for QRP as static during the other months will almost obliterate a minimal QRP signal. I believe this band works better near a sunspot minimum when the ionosphere is not as absorptive. I have easily made around 250 QSO's in the 160M contests when near a minimum, but near a maximum it was very hard for me to get to 100 QSO's.

80M - 49, 59, 5, 13 - This band is similar to 160M but the antenna limitations are not as bad. A simple antenna will work pretty well here. I probably will never work EU on 160M, yet I have done so on 80M several times, working as deep into EU as OK. This is a very good rag-chewing band, especially in the late fall, winter, and early spring seasons when static levels are low. Signal levels are steady over long periods of time with little fading. As with 160M, this seems to be a better band near sunspot minimums.

40M - 50, 126, 5, 23 - If you're a rag-chewer looking for a single band, this is probably the one for you. There is always someone around, day and night. Minimal QRP works well here, even for DX. When conditions are right it is possible to easily work the world here, perhaps with the exception of those places that require your signal to pass near the highly absorptive polar regions of earth. For me, that means Asia, and I haven't worked that continent yet on 40M. I seem to easily work VK and ZL with a single call in contests or some rare Pacific Island on a DXpedition just as easily. There have been times in DX contests when I could work EU and AF almost as well as on 20M. This band does not change all that much during a sunspot cycle. One thing on the down side is the large amount of digital and phone junk that is creeping into the Morse areas of the band.

30M - 50, 155, 6, 26 - This is a favorite band of mine. You can come here and work DX very easily, and then have a nice long rag chew with a domestic station. It is often open worldwide, especially in the evenings. I have had stations from Australia and Turkey answer my minimal QRP CQ's on this band. Like 40M, this band doesn't seem to change all that much from sunspot minimum to maximum.

Then I continued with the higher bands in column #96 originally published in Keynote 1 - 2013:

First a general statement about all the bands from 20 through 10M. Except near the sunspot maximums, they are mostly daylight bands, and will be dead at night for much of the 11-year sunspot cycle.

20M - 50, 183, 6, 34 - This is probably the best overall band if you're interested in working DX with your QRP over the entire duration of a sunspot cycle, although 30M might also fit that description. 20M has the advantage of being a contest band while 30M is not. Contests are great places to pick up new states, zones, countries, etc. Also the main county hunters net frequency (14.056) is on this band if that is one of your interests. One disadvantage of this band is that you will have a lot of competition from high power stations as most hams who operate QRO have very solid setups for 20M with powerful signals. There is a lot of FISTS and NAQCC activity on this band. It's a decent band for rag chewing although if some rare DX shows up - as it often does - near your QSO, the quickly developing pileup will probably bring a premature end to your QSO.

17M - 43, 143, 6, 31 - I like this little band quite a lot. It is not open quite as often as 20M when the sunspots are down, but it is often open when 15M and the higher bands are not. This statement is true of all the bands from here on up - fewer openings than the next lower band, but more openings than the next higher band. When the high bands are all open, this band, along with 12M are often places to go to get away from the crowds. There almost always seems to be less activity on 17 and 12M than on the mainstream non-WARC bands. Of course when a rare DX station shows up here, that situation changes rapidly and the whole CW segment may be full of DX chasers. A lot of the activity here is DX oriented and I find it harder to work USA stations than to work DX, since most of the USA stations are here to chase DX and not to rag chew. However if you do like to rag chew and can find someone to do it with, it is a good band for that as signals are often stable for some lengths of time. The problem as I emphasize often is finding someone else who wants to rag chew.

15M - 50, 178, 6, 31 - With the exception of the fact that it's not open for as much of the day nor as much of the sunspot cycle, the description for 20M applies to this band. Being a contest band, it's an excellent source of states, zones, and countries. There is not as much county hunting activity here outside of contests. When both 15 and 20 are open, 15 will be better for working QRP DX, as it will generally provide better propagation for the lower power stations although the specific openings to a certain area may not last as long. As we go higher in frequency, propagation changes more rapidly and what may start out as a long ragchew will come to a premature end as conditions change.

12M - 27, 115, 6, 28 - As the description for 15M matches 20M, so 12M matches 17M. It is open much less often than 17M, but the openings often provide stronger signals for the QRPer. For my situation with simple antennas, I notice this band only provides really good conditions for approximately 3-4 years of the sunspot cycle, while the rest of the time it is only sporadically open, if at all. It is even harder on 12M than 17M to work domestic stations here, as it is perhaps of all bands, the one most devoted strictly to DX.

10M - 48, 153, 6, 31 - Someone once told me that when this band was open, you could work the world with 1 watt and a coat hanger for an antenna. That was in the depths of a sunspot minimum and it was hard to believe, but as cycle 23 neared its maximum I came to believe. Although I didn't try it, I did find my simple minimal QRP setup provided me with easy QSO's with any part of the world. Contesting in big DX contests on this band is a delight with QRP. In the approximately 3-4 years surrounding a sunspot maximum, the band will provide wall to wall DX in contests from 28000 to 28200 and beyond. It's not as good for long ragchews in most cases as conditions often shift rapidly as I mentioned above. It's fun to call CQ on this band with minimal QRP and get answers from all around the world.

Since my original article back in the late 90s or early 00s, the 60 meters band became available. I haven't really explored it that much, but it seems to logically fit in between the conditions described for 80 and 40. I only have 1 DX QSO (England) there and 12 states worked, but that is mainly due to a lack of time spent on that band.

I hope that sheds some light on how the bands react at different points in a sunspot cycle. Right now for example as we transition from a maximum to a minimum, most of the time 15, 12, and 10 will turn out pretty much devoid of signals although 15 will pick up during big contests. 17 and 20 are still pretty good especially in morning and early afternoon at your locality, but they are definitely slipping away. Conversely 160 and 80 should be getting better as we approach the minimum, at least as I see it here. 40 and 30 will be pretty much their usual selves although they suffer somewhat also around sunspot minimums.

AN EASY ATTENUATOR BY JIM, KJ4R

I've enjoyed participating in many of the NAQCC club activities since I became a member in 2016. One activity that my participation was limited in was anything that was related to QRPp. QRPp is defined as having an output power of 1 watt or less. I wasn't sure if I could reliably adjust the output of my Icom IC-756 Pro 3 down to the mw level. Also, my Hendricks PFR 3B QRP rig has a fixed output that varies around 4 to 5 watts depending on the band. I didn't want to be left out of the QRPp fun so I decided to look into building an attenuator that would step my 4-5 watt output down to 1 watt or less. I did some browsing on the internet and came across a very good website by Bert, PA1B, who is NAQCC member # 2038. Here is a link to Bert's page: https://a29.veron.nl/hams/pa1b/

Bert has lots of good QRPp information on his site and he has a useful Excel based attenuator calculator that can be downloaded and used to determine the values needed to build various attenuators for ham radio use.

I plugged in the values I wanted and ran the calculator, which yielded the results shown in Figure 1.

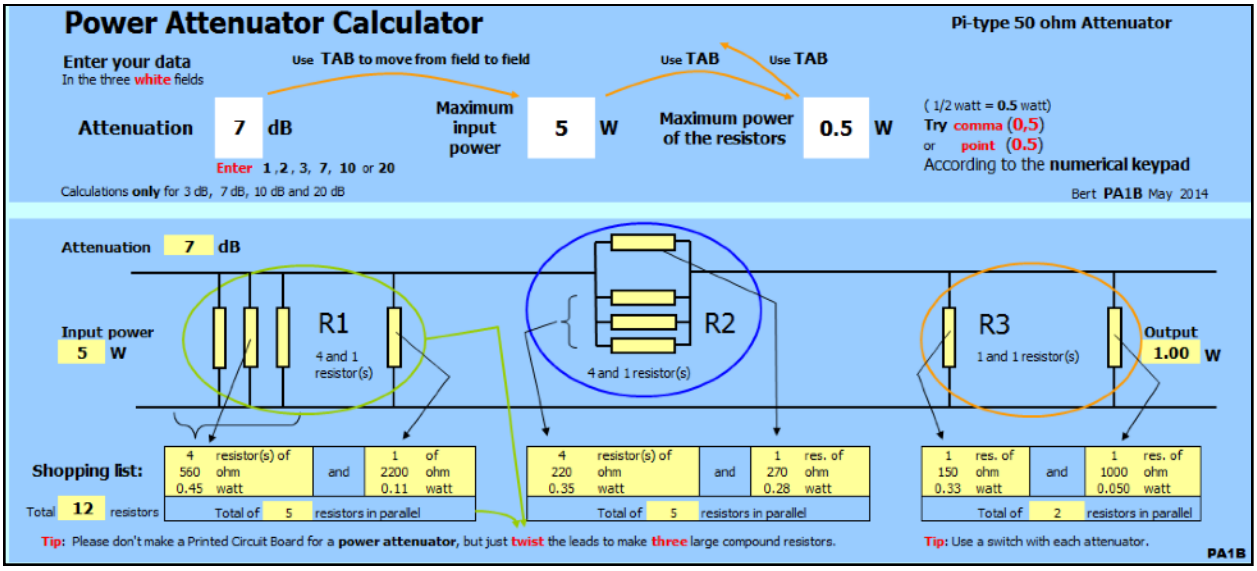

Figure 1

The calculator provides the resistance amounts needed and displays the needed configuration to yield the desired attenuation. I needed the following .5 watt resistors to build my attenuator: 560 ohm (4), 2.2K ohm (1), 220ohm (4), 270 ohm (1), 150 ohm (1), and 1K ohm (1). All of the resistors I needed were available at a Radio Shack location not far from my QTH. While at Radio Shack, I also purchased a short coax jumper cable that I could use to feed the signal into and out of the attenuator. I looked at some project enclosures, but in the true spirit of QRP I felt like I could scrape up something from 25 plus years of collecting odds and ends that "I might be able to use one day". Sure enough, I had several Altoids tins in my junk box that I've wanted to put to good use. The small size and simplicity of the attenuator would make a perfect fit for the Altoids tin. I decided to use a small piece of Radio Shack PC board that I had lying around to mount the resistors on. I just put the resistors through the pre punched holes on the board and soldered the ends together as needed on the non-component side of the board. To finish off the project I used two more items from my well stocked junk box; two standoffs to support the PC board inside the Altoids tin, and a miniature toggle switch. I felt like it would be a good idea to be able to switch the attenuator in and out of the signal path as needed.

Figure 2 shows the interior of the Altoids tin with the board mounted. Note that I used some small cable ties cinched down on the coax cable on the inside of the enclosure to provide a strain relief.

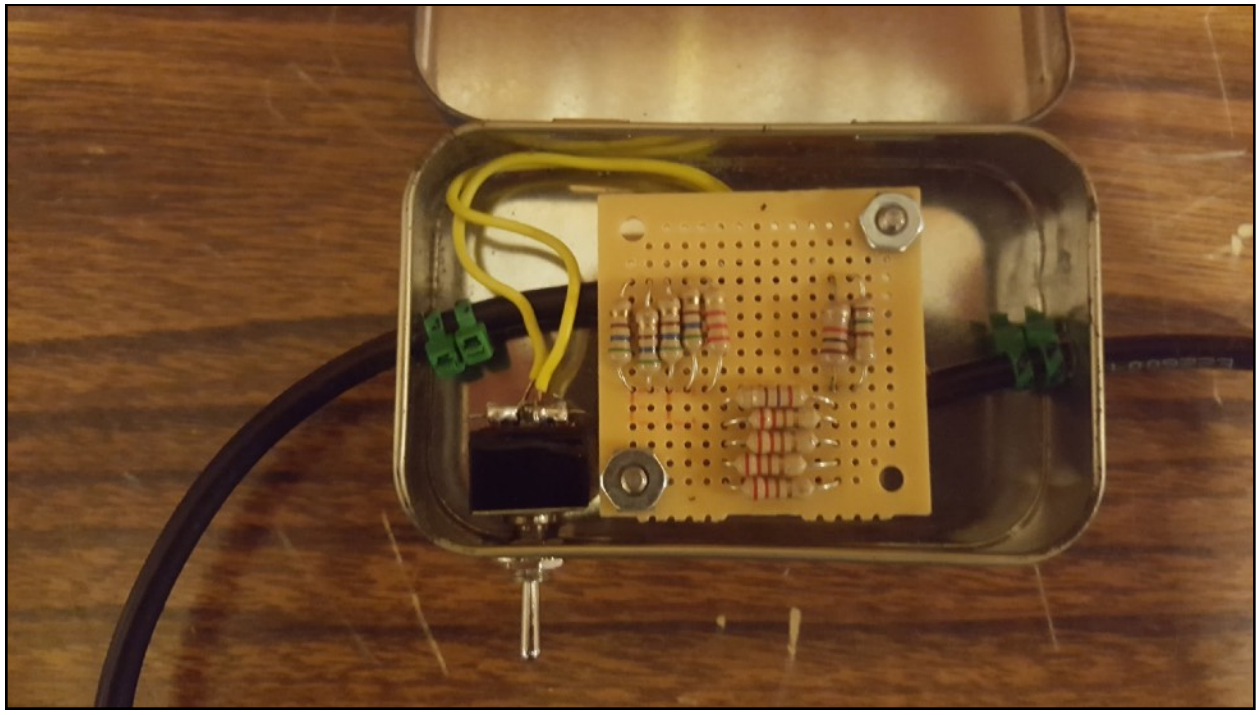

Figure 2

Figure 3 shows the finished product connected up to my PFR3B.

Figure 3

I found that the attenuator does a good job of getting my signal down to the QRPp range. Using the PFR3B, the output displayed on my Oak Hills WM-2 wattmeter is around 950 mw, with an input of around 4.5 watts.

This was an easy project and allowed me to participate in a club activity that I otherwise would have missed out on. It's February 10th as I type this and so far I've worked 6 contacts with not a lot of effort for the monthly QRPp challenge. Two of them were DX, a CO8, and a KP2. I'm still amazed at what you can work with 5 watts and now more amazed at what can be done with less than 1 watt. I would like to thank Bert, PA1B for making his calculator available. If you haven't given QRPp a try, build this simple project and see for yourself what can be accomplished with 1 watt.

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.

DON HEKMAN, VE3DQN, #5846

This is my favorite ham radio photo. Okay, I admit, the photo is of me 15-20 years ago (I'm 71 now). Still, it shows what for me is an ideal ham radio—and camping and canoeing—outing. This one was in Waterton National Park of Alberta, Canada.

In many ways my ham radio profile will sound like that of many (most?) of the readers of the NAQCC newsletter, but with some “twists.” First licensed as a young teen in 1960 in California (WV6NOS), I ate, slept, dreamed, and drooled ham radio activities during those high school years. Activities slowed down a lot during college, marriage, post-grad, and young family years. But moving to Canada (VE2DUN) and living in the coveted CQ Zone 2 from the mid-1970's through the 80's brought on the adrenaline rush of modest DX chasing, this time with a Drake TR-4 and a Mosely TA-33jr at 50ft. Finally, with only occasional on-air activity, I achieved the coveted DXCC. Almost all of it SSB, as my straight key CW just didn't cut it with the DX crowd. Then with a move or two or three, and changes in work responsibilities, many years passed of little ham activity until I retired five years ago. Enter QRP.

First though a word about the “twists.” I wonder sometimes what got me into ham radio. As a youngster I didn't know anyone who was a ham. I was fascinated with electricity, and on our farm blew more than a few fuses with my wiring experiments. I think I found an ARRL publication in the bookmobile that came by once a week, and my best guess is that's what introduced me to ham radio. My most treasured Christmas gift was the crystal radio kit I received at age 11. The next year it was a one-tube radio kit. I never had an Elmer, but my school and church buddies Harold and Dennis were also interested in ham radio, so together we pored over the License Manual and practiced code. We were Elmers for each other.

Ham radio is a great hobby for stimulating the dreams. As I rode into the foothills of central California, I dreamt of operating portable or Field Day out there. But that would require a generator—and much more—and we three ham buddies didn't have the means or know-how for that. I dreamt of homebrew equipment, pored over schematics and how-to articles, and acquired a garage full of discarded electronic gear. But I can't recall ever making something that actually worked. I dreamt of pursuing an engineering career, but life presented its own twists and turns, and my chosen career involved both linguistics and theology. I dreamt of operating from coveted DX entities, but by the time my work gave me opportunity to actually live or be in those countries (Cameroon, Chad, Kenya, Cape Verde, Guyana, San Andres Island, St Lucia, Thailand, others) my ham radio skills were too rusty to be easily refreshed.

Enter QRP and retirement in 2012. Frankly, I chose QRP for re-engaging in ham activity because I didn't want my slow CW and poor operating skills blasting out for all to hear. I figured QRP was the way to dip my toes in the water again. Getting on the air again was almost as scary as making that first contact as a novice. This time though I had several Elmers who were a huge help. My engineer brother Ed WB6YTE, is my key advisor, interpreter, fixer, and purchaser in all things technical. And my key encourager. The other Elmers are guys in the Ottawa Valley QRP group (OV-QRP). This informal group meets once a month in an Ottawa restaurant; among them “never is heard a discouraging word.” They've shared generously their experience with computer logging, antennas, equipment, components, special operating events, contesting, and Field Day. For those of you wanting to get back into ham radio, find or create a group like the OV-QRP. I want to nominate them all for QRP ham(s) of the year.

Bob VA3RKM introduced me to contesting and the NAQCC. I remember that in the early months of my ham radio return, Bob mentioned that a DX contest was on that weekend. I said that my CW was still so rusty that I didn't think I could ever keep up with the CW whiz-kids. He told me there's no better way to start than to try. Listen to a call long enough to finally catch it. The exchange is simple. Then jump in and try. So I tried it that weekend. It completely blew me away, that they could actually hear me—I got 30-some countries/entities that weekend—and that I could copy the call and exchange. I'm still a S&P guy, and limit myself to 4-6 hours in the bigger contests, but at least this began to fill my log. I also learned what big contest stations are like: 150 ft towers, stacked beams, and I picture guys huddled over their receivers with stethoscopes to pick out weak signals. Kudos to the big DXers for QSOs with little guys like me!

In the past five years I've enjoyed other ham radio activities that keep me motivated. Including NAQCC sprints and challenges and awards—thanks for the certificates!; Field Day with the OV-QRP group—my first FD in 55 years of hamming!; learning to send CW with a keyer and breaking the 15wpm plateau—thanks to the CWOP course and regular skeds with CW buddy Chuck AB1VL; and building a few (very) small projects that actually work—thanks to the suppliers of kits and to brother Ed WB6YTE for trouble-shooting from across the continent.

Since I reactivated, I've used a 35-year-old Icom IC-730 and more recently a Yaesu FT-450D turned down to 5 watts. (Oh, yes, I admit to turning up the power for some DX contacts.) I select one of four antennas, a Cushcraft R-7 vertical, a 40M Delta loop, or 80M and 160M dipoles. For portable I've used an NW40 or an ATS-3a. As I write this I'm in limbo, just having moved to an antenna-challenged subdivision and about to buy an FT-817 for more versatile portable activity. I might rebuild my wire-antenna farm at our daughter and son-in-law's property five minutes away. We live in the small town of Kemptville, Ontario, 45 minutes south of Ottawa.

My forever-YL wife is a big encourager. I have other priorities in life (family, community, church) and other hobbies/interests (kayak, canoe, snowshoe, cycling, volunteering, reading), and try to keep ham radio from “owning” me. However, Jim my psychologist friend tells me that when I talk about ham radio, my eyes light up. I want to stay active as long as I can into my elder years, so that when it's my time to move into an assisted living residence, I can still bring with me a mag loop and a QRP rig. It activates the dreams, keeps me young at heart, and massages the brain cells.

NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT: We have two sprinting opportunities this month! First up is our regular monthly sprint on June 14, 0030-0230 UTZ. That's the evening of Tuesday June 13 in North America. Then the following week we have one of our semi-annual Milliwatt sprints on June 22, 0030-0230 (21st in North America). Complete details can be seen at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201706.html and http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201706mw.html.

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 a pretty good turnout for our sprint in May with 124 submitted logs and a total of 173 participant callsigns found in those logs. (Why did almost 50 people participate but not submit a log? I don't have any idea!) Complete sprint results, including some great soapbox comments, can be seen at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201705.html and summary information can be seen in the tables on the following page.

We would especially like to welcome our first-time sprint loggers and hope that they will return often for some great fun: W4NLT N9DMA KM2KM KM4BPE KG7VAK(nm)

PARTICIPATION ELIGIBILITY: Remember that participating in a combination of sprints and challenges will make you eligible for the top-tier prizes in our anniversary drawing in October. So start working on it now. Eligibility details at http://www.naqcc.info/prize_drawing_12th_anniv.html.

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1	WB1GYZ	K1IEE	
W2	W2SH	W2NRA KA2KGP (TIE)	
W3	K3JZD		
W4	W4OEP	WG8Y	NJ4V
W5	N5GW	W5WIL	
W6	K6MGO		
W7	N7KM	KC7DM	
W8	NF8M	WB8LZG	
W9	K9JWI	AA9L	
W0	AA0W		
VE	VE3EDX	VE3IDS	
DX			

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1			
W2	WB2LQF		
W3	K3WWP		
W4	KJ4R	AK4NY	
W5	NF5U		
W6			
W7	N7QR		
W8	W8AM		
W9			
W0	KD0V		
VE			
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1	N2CN	KB1M	
W2	K2YGM		
W3	KC3RN		
W4	N4MJ	K4KRW	W2BJN
W5	AC5T		
W6			
W7	KF7Z		
W8	WA8SAN		
W9	W9PZ		
W0	K9OSC		
VE	VE3GNU		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY==>	**SK**	**BUG**	**K/K**
	K4BAI		NN9K

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	**SK**	**BUG**	**K/K**
	W4NLT		N9DMA
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
VE2BZO			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	124	217	217	4/17
Participants	173	263	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1892	3154	3154	4/17
Hour 1 QSOs	1113	1704	1704	4/17
Hour 2 QSOs	779	1450	1450	4/17
20m QSOs	267	334	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	1440	2203	2203	4/17
80m QSOs	185	617	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	15.3	14.5	19.3	9/11

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

NUMBER OF SPRINTS	MEMBERS
50+	K4ORD K9EYT KB0ETU K9OSC KA9FQG K6MGO NA4O N8BB WG8Y AA7CU KC2EGL VE5BCS(SK) N2ESE K6CSL N8QY WA8SAN N0TA WX4RM WD0K NQ2W KB8FE NO2D WY3H AA9L KQ1P NU7T(SK)
75+	K4KRW KE5YUM W4DUK WB8ENE WA2JSG VE3FUJ K1IEE N4FI KD0V K3RLL NF8M K4JPN K4NVJ KB3AAG(SK)
100+	KU4A KD2MX N8XMS K4BAI WB8LZG W2SH W9CC
125+	W2JEK KA2KGP
150+	K3WWP

NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: As we do every June, we have two different challenges that you can participate in. (But only one participation point is possible.) Our month-long challenge is an alphabet challenge working with words that are all related to old-time ham radio homebrewing. Details can be seen at http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201706.html.

In June we also have our annual Field Day challenge - http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201706fd.html. The rules have been modified a little bit for this year so please be sure to read them over carefully. Going along with the Field Day challenge we have a special prize giveaway. One lucky member/participant will win a nice little field pack for carrying QRP gear out into the great outdoors. The details can be seen on the next page.

The European challenge this month is an alphabet challenge working with the names of some famous European medical doctors. See http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/june-2017-challenge/ for details.

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: Text … In July we will celebrate "Old Glory" with an alphabet challenge with words that all relate to the United States flag. You will find some interesting flag history as well on the webpage: http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201707.html

The European challenge for July can be seen at http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/july-2017-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 May home-brew gear challenge is still a few days away. You can go to http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201705.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 European challenge results will be available at http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/may-2017-challenge/.

PARTICIPATION ELIGIBILITY: Remember that participating in a combination of sprints and challenges will make you eligible for the top-tier prizes in our anniversary drawing in October. So start working on it now. Eligibility details at http://www.naqcc.info/prize_drawing_12th_anniv.html.

SPECIAL PRIZE FOR THE FIELD DAY CHALLENGE: Hugh, WA2ZOT, has donated the great little SOTA-style pack shown in the picture below and we are going to give it away to one lucky member-participant in our Field Day challenge this month. Simply follow the rules to participate in the challenge, submit your report by the challenge deadline of July 10th, and you will be automatically entered into a drawing for the prize. The drawing will be held shortly after the submission deadline. Good luck to all!

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+	N9SE N1JI PA0XAW KD2MX N1LU KD0V K9OSC VE3HUR KU4A WY3H
50+	K1YAN VE3FUJ NU7T(SK)
75+	K1IEE
100+	N8XMS W2JEK
125+	
150+	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: ALPHABET PREFIX AWARD

This month's featured award is a simplified version of CQ Magazine's popular WPA award. The goal is to work as many letter/number combination prefixes as possible using QRP CW and SWA. There are two categories for the award - World Prefixes, and USA Only Prefixes. Handy tables showing all of the possible prefixes in both categories are available for downloading from the award web page. Basic awards are earned with 200 world prefixes or 50 USA prefixes and certificates are issued at the 400 and 100 prefix levels. Complete details on this award can be found at http://www.naqcc.info/awards_wpxswa.html.

RECENTLY ISSUED AWARDS:

WAVE AWARD BY K1YAN

Category A:
0008 - VE3CBK 05/03/17
Northwest Territories Endorsement:
0008 - VE3CBK 05/03/17
Yukon Endorsement:
0008 - VE3CBK 05/03/17
Nunavut Endorsement:
0008 - VE3CBK 05/03/17
20m Band Endorsement:
0008 - VE3CBK 05/03/17

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 Wayne, NQ0RP.

NAQCC NET SCHEDULE				
Net	**Local Time**	**UTC**	**Freq +/-**	**Primary NCS**
Farnsword 80 m QRQ Nets (FRN)	Sunday 8:00 PM PT	Monday 0300 Z	3556 KHz	Rick, N6IET (in CA)
Farnsword 53 QRQ Net (53N)	Sun & Thurs 6:00 PM PT	Mon & Fri 0100 Z	5332 KHz (Ch 1)	JB, NR5NN (in CA)
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CT	Tuesday 0000 Z	7065 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Midwest Net QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 7:30 PM CT	Tuesday 0030 Z	7117 KHz	Wayne, NQ0RP (in KS)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental 20/40 QRS Nets (RMRc)	Tues & Thurs 4:00/4:30 PM MT	Tues & Thurs 2200/2230 Z	14060/7062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
West Virginia QRS Net (WVN)	Wednesday 9 PM ET	Thursday 0100 Z	3556 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)

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.

NET CONTROL STATION REPORTS

NAQCC Farnsword Net (FRN) QRQ 40/60/80-Meter Nets
Sunday evenings 5:00 PM PDT, which is Monday 0000 UTC on 7056 kHz +/-
Sunday evenings 8:00 PM PDT, which is Monday 0300 UTC on 3556 kHz +/-
Main NCS - Rick N6IET (Los Angeles); Backup NCS - JB NR5NN (SF Bay Area)
NAQCC FarnsWord QRQ Nets (FRN) - Rick N6IET
7056, and 3556 kHz at 17:00 and 20:00 PST Sunday
(0000 and 0300 UTC Monday), respectively

NAQCC FarnsWord QRQ Nets (FRN) Rick N6IET
7056, 5332* and 3556 kHz at 5PM and 8PM PDT Sunday
(0000, 0100 and 0300 UTC Monday), respectively

2017-05-01 40m QNI (5) NCS N6IET,NR5NN, K6GVG, AI6SL
2017-05-01 80m QNI (3) NCS N6IET, K6GVG, NR5NN/M (and Co-NCS)
2017-05-08 40m QNI (5) NCSs N6IET and NR5NN, N6KIX, KE6EE , W7SAG, K6GVG/M, KW6G
2017-05-08 80m QNI (8) NCS N6IET, KW6G, AI6SL, KE6EE, K7KY, K6GVG, W7SAG, NR5NN

2017-05-15 40m QNI (5) NCS N6IET, KW6G, KE6EE, K6GVG, K6JJR
2017-05-15 60m QNI (6) NCS N6IET, K6GVG, KE6EE, K6JJR, NR5NN, K7KY
2017-05-15 80m QNI (6) NCS N6IET, KE6EE, W7SAG, K6GVG, AI6SL, KW6G
2017-05-22 40m QNI (8) NCS N6IET, NR5NN, K6JJR,, W7SAG/P, KE6EE, AI6SL, KB7KY, WI6O
2017-05-22 80m QNI (7) NCS N6IET, KE6EE, W7SAG, NR5NN, AI6SL, K6GVG, WU7F
2017-05-29 40m QNI (6) NCS N6IET, AI6SL, KE6EE, W7SAG/P, AI6U, K6GVG
2017-05-29 80m QNI (8) NCS N6IET, KW6G, AI6SL, KE6EE, K6GVG, K7KY, NR5NN, AI6U

* I took over JB's 53N 60m net one week and so included its QNI here.

Commentary

We had great participation in May, despite sometimes challenging band conditions on 40 meters. Often we didn't have NVIS propagation on 40 meters, even at 5pm local time, which means some of the closer stations couldn't hear each other. You can't really have a good roundtable discussion or practice much QRQ 'head copy' unless everybody can easily copy each other.

80 meters provided consistent NVIS during most of the sessions, but the distant stations (over 600 miles away) didn't always fare well through the absorptive D and E layers. We're probably trying to cover too much area, which, besides California and Oregon, often includes Utah, Idaho, Montana, and occasionally Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico and all the way down to Ensenada, Mexico.

We welcomed several new check-ins including John WI6O and two additional members of the Sacramento-based Samuel F. Morse Amateur Radio Club, Chris AI6U, and Mark K6JJR. (Long-time FRN netizen Rob N6KIX is also an SFM ARC member).

We are also enjoying the active participation of fairly new check-ins Roy K6GVG down in San Diego County (sometimes) and Wolf AI6SL in Sunnyvale, who recently got a new KX2 to replace his old Heathkit HW-8 QRP rig.

John W7SAG and JB NR5NN are each enjoying their fairly new KX3s.

And yours truly has finally almost mastered iambic keying (mode B) with my DLPs.

I have decided to put the 40-meter FRN on vacation for a couple of months until NVIS propagation becomes more likely in the evenings, probably in August or September. I'll keep 80-meter FRN at 8pm Pacific time (0300 UTC) during the month of June.

The June FRN schedule should read as follows:

NAQCC FarnsWord QRQ Net (FRN) 80 Meter Net
Sunday evenings 8:00 PM PDT, which is Monday 0300 UTC on 3556 kHz +/-
Main NCS - Rick N6IET (California); Backup NCS - JB NR5NN (California)
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NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN)
Monday evenings 7:00 PM CST, which is Tuesday 0100 UTC, on 7065 kHz +/-
Main NCS - Allen KA5TJS (Texas) NAQCC 4512

2017/5/2 QNI (5) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA WI5H N5DRG
Best conditions we have had in months. All stations were solid copy and no QRM or QRN to speak of. I was QRP the whole net and got 559 to 599. YUM and H were QRP and solid copy.

2017/5/9 QNI (4) NCS KA5TJS N5DRG KE5YGA W5WIL
Signal levels were good but band was changing. QSB was pretty bad.
PS: I have gone to 7.117 for two weeks after my net and NiL. Maybe later this month I hope.

2017/5/16 QNI(6) NCS KA5TJS N5DRG K5BRY KE5YUM KE5YGA WI5H
Best group we have had in a while. I had cataract surgery today and was not sure I would make the net but am very glade I did. Great job guys and hope to see all next week.

2017/5/23 QNI(2) NCS KE5YUM KE5YGA
Well I had cataract surgery on my left eye today and came home a crashed on the couch and did not wake up for the net. Andy and Terry had a nice QSO in my absence. Glade they had good conditions and plan on being there myself next week.

2017/5/30 QNI(3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YGA WI5H
Not bad conditions last night. I think all stations were QRO. Had to move down to 7.064 due to some QRM on 65 but 2 found me.

Allen KA5TJS

==========

NAQCC MIDWEST QRS Net (MWN)
Monday evenings 7:30 PM CST, which is Tuesday 00:30 UTC, on 7116 kHz +/-
Main NCS - Wayne NQ0RP (Kansas), Backup NCS Paul N0NBD (Kansas)

2017/5/2 No Net
2017/5/9 QNI (3) NCS NQ0RP, K4JER, KD0DK
2017/5/16 QNI (3) NCS NQ0RP, KB9ENI, WU8G
2017/5/23 QNI (4) NCS NQ0RP, W5WIL, WU8G, KC9TYA
2017/5/30 QNI (3) NCS NQ0RP, KD0DK, K1PUG

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NAQCC Rocky Mountain Regional/Continental QRS Nets (RMRc)
Tuesday/Thursday at 4:00 PM MST, which is Tuesday/Thursday 2300 UTC, on 14060 kHz
Tuesday/Thursday at 4:30 PM MST, which is Tuesday/Thursday 2330 UTC, on 7062.5 kHz.
Main NCS - Dale WC7S (Wyoming)

5-02-2017 QNI (2) NCS WC7S, (ME ON EACH FREQ.. WITH NO OTHER CHECKINS)
5-04-2017 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, K0DTJ(2), AA7CU
5-09-2017 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, K0DTJ(2), N1ELO
5-11-2017 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, WC7C,AA7CU,K0DTJ
5-16-2017 QNI (2) NCS WC7S, (ME ON EACH FREQ.. WITH NO OTHER CHECKINS)
5-18-2017 QNI (5) NCS WC7S, W6WTD,N7KM,AA7CU,N6VYS
5-23-2017 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, K0DTJ (2)
5-25-2017 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, K0DTJ (2), AA7CU
5-30-2017 QNI (2) NCS WC7S , (ME ON EACH FREQ.. WITH NO OTHER CHECKINS)

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NAQCC West Virginia QRS NET (WVN)
Wednesday evenings 9:00 ET, which is Thursday 0100 UTC on 3556 kHz.
Main NCS - John N8ZYA (West Virginia)
2017/5/3 QNI (5) NCS AB8RL WV8DH W8GDP K8NYG WV8AH
My thanks to Tom AB8RL for running the net again. I listened to Tom AB8RL and K8NYG easily from a software defined radio on the internet. I will return from the Outer Banks on Sunday.

2017/5/11 - Our Sprint conflicted with our normal QRS net this week - so no net.
Dave WV8DH continues to do very well in the W8 division. I was able to work 16 stations in 12 different states with my indoor random wire.
AC8LJ and I talking about the upcoming Dayton Hamvention (Xenia). I will not be able to attend this year but him and Frank KA8SYV will be there all weekend. I expect a report from both on their return to WV. My grandson has been in the hospital going on 3 weeks now so need to hang around home. Gary K8NYG was having a tough time hearing me and gave a 329 report.

2017/5/24 QNI (5) NCS N8ZYA K3NLT W8GDP AB8RL K8NYG
Great net this evening although QSB was very deep at times. For the most part, I copied everyone 599. Unfortunately my simple station is not easily heard. With the exception of AB8RL and K8NYG who heard me at a little better than 569, most other stations were hearing me at 339. It was very nice to hear everyone and make a short contact with comments.

2017/5/31 QNI (3) NCS N8ZYA W8GDP K8NYG
Weak signals this evening due to propagation and noise. A quick check in for everyone. Perhaps next week will be better.

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NAQCC Pacific Northwest QRS 80 Meter Net (PNW80)
Thursday evenings 7:00 PM PST, which is Friday 0300 UTC on 3574 kHz.
Main NCS - Stewart KE7LKW (Washington State)
PNW is doing something a little different this year.
Second Thursday is Boat Anchor Night if you have one.
Third Thursday is QRP rig night.
Fourth Thursday is portable night: everyone goes out and operates from the field as possible.
This has been working well so far. Everyone enjoys the variety.

2017/5/5 QNI (2) NCS KE7LKWS, WB4SPB, Short due to Lightning.
2017/5/12 QNI (7) NCS KE7LKW, WB4SPB, KF7TTY, K7JUV, AD7BP, KG7JEB, N7QR
2017/5/19 QNI (4) KE7LKW NCS, WB4SPB, KG7JEB, W7ANM.
2017/5/26 QNI (7) KE7LKW NCS, WB4SPB, KG7JEB, W7ANM, N0DA, K7JUV, AD7BP
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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:

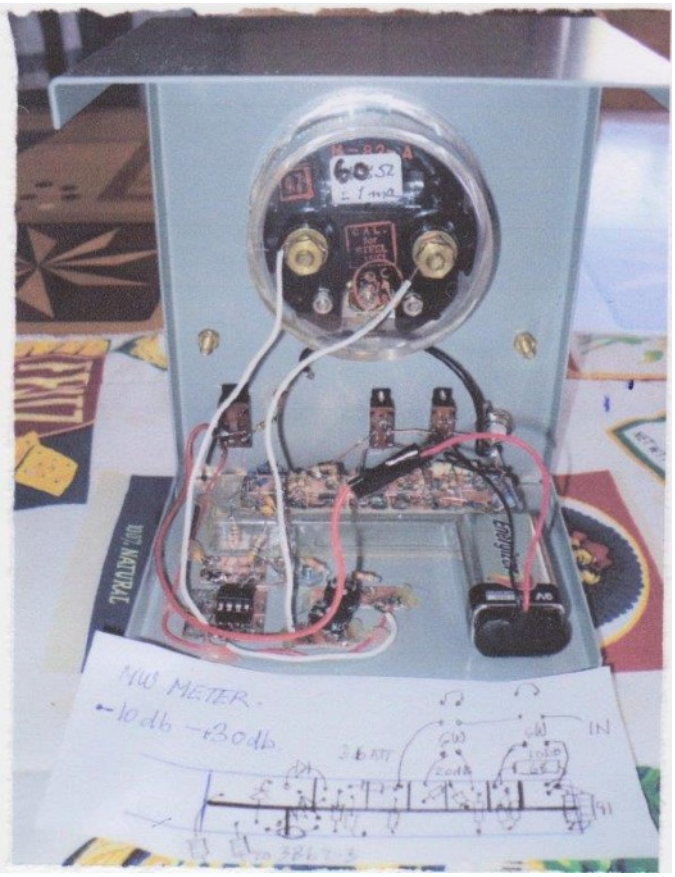
As I mentioned last month this is an endeavor to encourage myself as well as others to do some Home Brewing.

So I started my HB project - a -10 to +30 db Meter and higher with appropriate attenuators consisting of a 10 and a 20 db attenuator an RF detector and a meter protector and a large 1mA meter I had from an old defunct overseas picture tube checker (220V job) with a very large meter I had bought at a flea marked, it went reasonably well right (as there weren't all that many components) up until just before the smoke test ------- I ran out of room for the last component. PROBLEM, I had started the project with everything sorted out ---- in my head ----- or so I thought.

Back to the drawing board. ------ Giving it some thought, I decided to start over again. SOOOO. this time I made a small pictorial of the circuit board, and drew in all the component and connections up to the last component going to the LM 386 Amp (configured as a DC amp) leg 2 - 3. As I already had some various ready amps made up ready for use I didn't think it necessary to draw that up. Again things went well, however, the smoke test revealed a set-back --- I could not achieve full scale deflection. Looking over the circuit I could not find anything wrong. Went for a cup of Tea (about 20 mins) came back looked again, still nothing wrong detected.. Hmmmm --- decided to have yet another look, Voila, some how I had got a bypass capacitor connected before the detector instead of after, I corrected the error ------- the meter worked flawlessly. I'm attaching a couple of small pictures of the project. Hope they are large enough. (*See next page*.)

Next project, I have decided will be a 40M DC receiver. See you next month.

Brion


60 Ω
1 ma
MW METER
-10db -30db
GW
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10
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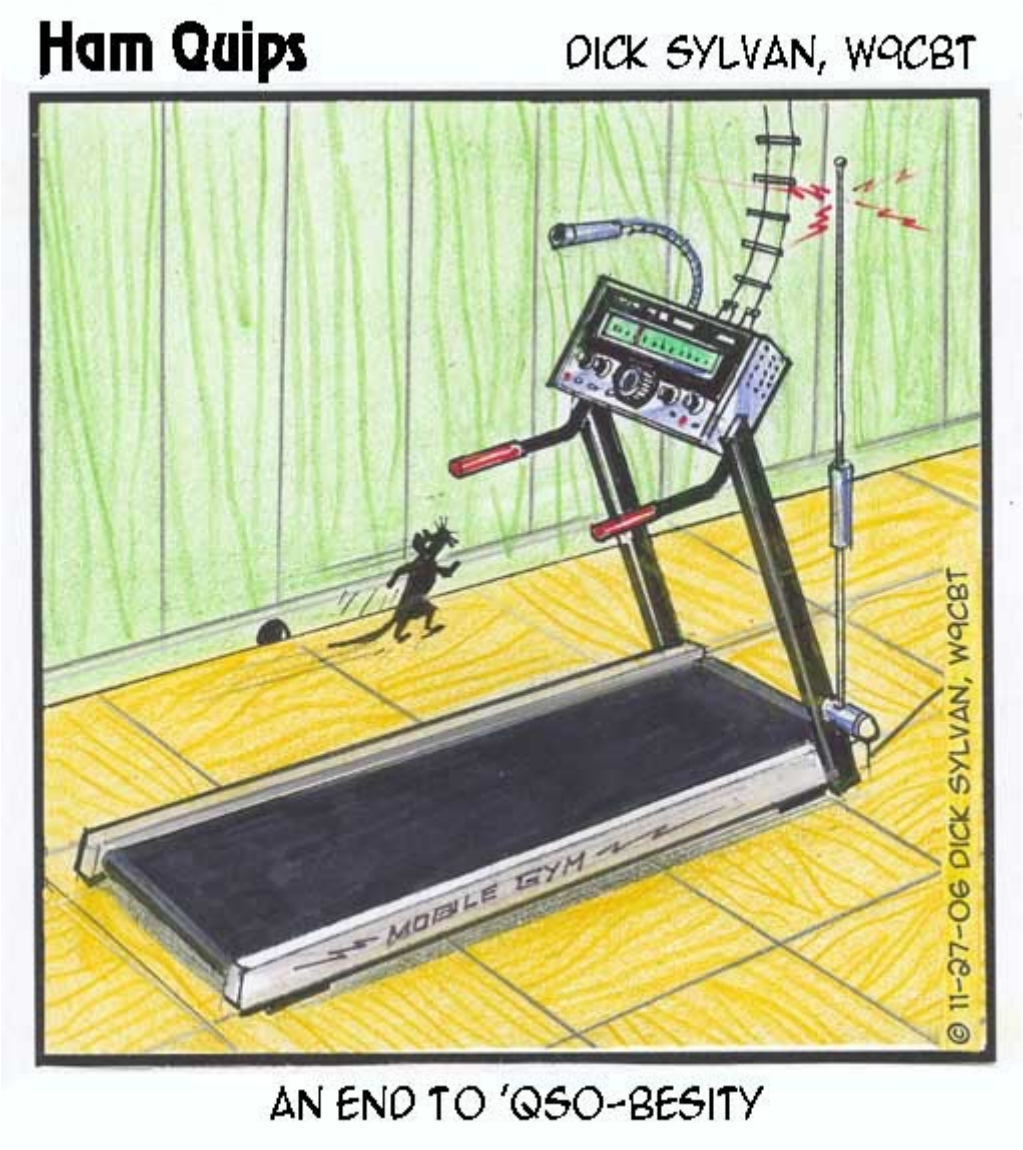
B&K
MADE IN U.S.A.
OFF
PWR OFF
10 ATTS 20
ON

HAM QUIPS

Dick Sylvan, W9CBT, #2062, has been a QRP/CW operator for a long time. He is also a very accomplished ham radio cartoonist and his work has appeared previously in the K9YA Telegraph newsletter. His book "HI HI - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" is available at www.lulu.com.



NAQCC Chapter News

The North American QRP CW Club currently has eight local chapters - Europe, Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, West Florida, Central Texas, Illowa, Delmarva, 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 the Central Texas Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Danny, N5DRG.

The chapter is located in the Austin, TX area and maintains a website at http://www.naqcc-centraltexas.net/index.html.

Greeting to all,

It has been a while since our last posting, but as summer is here the Chapter may have more time for outdoor activities, until the Mercury explodes from atop the thermometer.

The central Texas Chapter is holding our first Field Day this year under the call sign of N5A, great CW call we think, a true Book End call -. ….. .-

Our F.D. will be taking place Berry Springs Park & Preserve

1801 Co Rd 152, Georgetown, TX 78626

30.686389 North, -97.640556 West, or 30.41.11.15 North, -97.38.26.17 West

https://www.wilco.org/Departments/Parks-Recreation/County-Parks/Berry-Springs-Park

Also listed on the ARRL Field Day Locator http://www.arrl.org/field-day-locator

We hope the RF deities will be in agreement that weekend, and all will be making a great amount of contacts.

Regards,
Danny Goodrum-N5DRG

Keep Calm
&
QRP On

DELMARVA CHAPTER

Items in this section are from the Delmarva Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Bill, N3IOD.

The chapter is located in the Delaware-Maryland-Virginia area.

The Delmarva Amateur Radio Funsters travel to FDIM and The Dayton Hamvention

With all bags packed and ham radio items in the trailer our group heads west. Ed W3ZY, Paul NR3P, Bill N3RNJ and Bill N3IOD ride together for our trip. We met Jay K3BH, Ed N3OB, Pat KW3Z, Bill KB3KYH and Denny KB3MJ at the Hamvention.

FDIM was lots of fun with Ed W3ZY winning a new KX2 at the Saturday evening banquet. Bill N3IOD won a box of goodies donated by DX Engineering. The food was great! The seminars provided lots of useful information for everyone. We can't wait until next year.

We had a terrific spot in the flea market at the hamvention! I must say that I like the new location and we all thought that everything went well for the first time at the new spot. I know that the folks that run things will work out all the bugs.

During our time in Dayton OH Bill N3RNJ, Paul NR3P and Ed W3ZY visited the AirForce museum and had a blast.

As we headed back home on Sunday all the talk was about next year and all the fun we expect to have. We may need a bigger vehicle to travel in as many more "Funsters" want to go, I hope so.

See you next time with FD2017 exploits.

72/72.5/73, Bill N3IOD "Thumbs Up For Fun"

DOWNEAST MAINE CHAPTER

Items in this section are from the Downeast Maine Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Jeff, KA1DBE.

The chapter is located in the Hancock and Washington counties area of Maine.

Greetings from Downeast Maine! Tourist season has officially begun!

The month of May was "Projects Month". Most of the spring is spent fixing anything that had fallen down over the winter. Two of the projects that are in the works are a 40 meter transceiver by Joan, N1NUA and a 6 meter portable Moxon by Jeff, KA1DBE.

N1NUA's Oak Hills Research Station

Joan writes:

The rig on the left is the 40meter QRP kit that I just finished. The radio on the right is a 20 meter OHR kit that I built in 2008. The DD1 is a digital dial from OHR that I built and to the far right is OHR's QRP wattmeter. The quality of the products and the service from OAK HILLS RESEARCH is excellent.

The second project is a portable 6 meter Moxon. A lot of people do not associate VHF with QRP but they are perfect companions during E season. This design comes from John, K5JS. All parts with the exception of the SO-239 and coax comes from the "Big Box" hardware store. Driveway markers for the arms, PVC pipe for the mast, and PEX fittings to keep the wire in place.

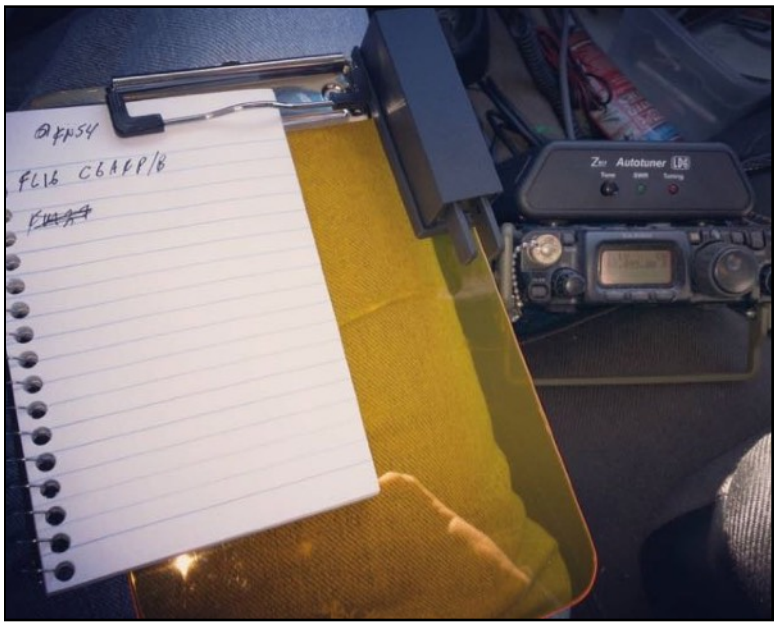
First set up of the portable 6 meter Moxon

After the initial build, I set it up on my porch railing just to see what adjustments I might need to make. The initial SWR was 1.5:1 so there was nothing to be done. Next stop, the field!

Set up on Cadillac Mountain at the Blue hill overlook

Set up was pretty easy for one person. I had it affixed to my painter's pole and used elastic straps to

attach it to my truck. It was very windy up there so I decided to operate from inside. I did make one modification and that was to add a piece of PVC to support the coax. Also makes a good visual pointer.



The operating position

Well, I didn't make any contacts but I did hear a beacon in the Caribbean (C6) and picked up a few out in Michigan. I still consider it a good test and it proved to have good directivity. I am looking forward to the ARRL VHF contest. I also tested my clipboard wth two washers glued to it to keep my Palm mini paddle in place. It worked well and is now in the kit.

73/72,
Jeff, KA1DBE

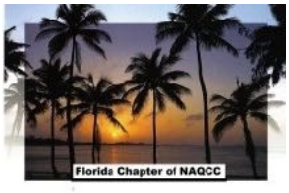
NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER

Items in this section are from European Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Matt, MW0MIE.

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 website for dates and details at http://www.naqcc-eu.org/

No report available.

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



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

The Florida Chapter website is http://wb40mm.com/naqcc-fl-chapter.

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER MEMBER NEWS:

The Florida Chapter of NAQCC held its most recent field event on Friday, May 12th, starting at 9:30 am, in Buschman Park in Port Orange, Florida.

For the unknowing, this Municipal Park is the result of a "drug related investigation seizure" by the City some 20 plus years ago. The family that owned and lived on the 30-acre tract with a live creek were adjudicated as, "a problem property" from years of arrests and issues. The City ultimately "took it". MORAL – *Don't Sell Drugs Out of Your Home!!*

Steve WB4OMM #5913 was at a countywide hurricane tabletop exercise (he absolutely had to go), so he missed this operation.....but he would have preferred to be out "hamming" with the NAQCC folks!!! (he is still writing this report!)

It is a great radio friendly site, and is lightly populated during the week (like most parks).

Today, we had 4 stations: Art WB4MNK/John KD4JS; Phil NW4X; John KM4JTI; and Wally KG4LAL. Mike K8NS joined us and gave us some good pointers on wire antennas. All Stations made contacts. The signals were not great -just ok - on any of the bands today, with some deep QSB. Propagation continues to be our biggest challenge – oh, for the return of sunspots! Thanks to John KD4JS for the photos!

But the weather was grand! The temperature was around 75 degrees with a light breeze, bright, blue skies....and several of us were able to get on the air...and to quote Art WB4MNK.....always a great time! It was an absolutely a beautiful day for NAQCC- FL at Buschman Park!

Art WB4MNK #5274 (and Mike K8NS) used a KX1 at 4 watts to a Zeppelin antenna – John KD4JS put the high end in the trees with his, "launcher". QSOs made with WI5H Curtis TX; KC9TYA Mark IN; WN9U Gary WI; K3SWZ Glenn PA; W3NP Dave WV; WA2JSG Curt NJ; and WB2LQF Stan NY. All contacts were Members of the NAQCC.

Here's **Phil #1905** taking the "bench" approach....look closely, you can see his "stuff". His "Felix the Cat" case of tricks is in the background. Never can tell what might appear outta dat case!

Phil used his new KX-2 with a 31' UNUN Vertical antenna. Not a lot of contacts but did work ES3X on 18.079. Not bad for 5 watts and a vertical!

This is **John KM4JTE #7966**, our newest NAQCC-FL member.....he brings his gear, puts up an antenna.

New to CW, he's gettin' there too! Came with his KX-2 running 5W to an end fed wire with 9:1 balun – he made one non-NAQCC QSO – sitting on the ground! A real patient and meticulous fellow - Drives from Gainesville, over an hour away! Dedicated!!

Here's **Wally KG4LAL #6278** – he loves QRP, uses his Yaesu FT-817 to a wire antenna.

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

Because of the horrendous Florida heat, soaking wet humidity, severe summer thunderstorms with associated lighting and flooding, and hordes of mosquitoes the size of German Shepherds, we tentatively "suspend" our outside activities for the months of June, July, and August.
Yeah, we love it here!

Our next "officially" scheduled operation is in September.

If we orchestrate a "spontaneous QRP-CW field operation", we will announce it over the reflector with ample notice.

Have a Great Independence Day and Labor Day Holiday Weekend!

NEXT SCHEDULED EVENT:

Friday, September 15th, 2017 starting at 9:30 AM EDT
Spruce Creek Park, Port Orange, FL (6250 Ridgewood Ave., Port Orange)
Park webpage with directions: DIRECTIONS TO PARK AND INFO

Visit our Web Page:
http://wb4omm.com/naqcc-fl-chapter/

***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 and comments should go to Mark, K0NIA.

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

The Illowa Chapter website is at https://sites.google.com/site/naqccillowa2/.

The Illowa group had a chapter meeting on May 11th at the Moline Village Inn with Dave KD9VT, Tony N9YPN, Tim N9BIL, Bob W9PZ, Mark K0NIA and Peter NN9K attending.

Conversation topics included operating procedures, new QRP transceiver kits (including the Cricket), and opportunities to operate as a chapter. There was interest expressed in building the Cricket as a group. We continue to be very active as a group, meeting monthly and routinely placing first in several categories in the NAQCC monthly sprints, but would like to increase opportunities to operate together. We discussed the WWFF Parks on the Air website and the possibility of activating several local parks currently listed on WWFF website. This last weekend, we were able to venture out to a local city park and enjoyed operating for a few hours.

Our next meeting will be held June 8th at 7pm at the Bettendorf Village Inn.

NAQCC WEST FLORIDA CHAPTER

Items in this section are from the West Florida Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should go to Ron, N9EE.

The chapter's web site is at https://www.facebook.com/groups/967110089994401/.

No report available.

NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER

Items in this section are from the West Virginia Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should go to John, N8ZYA.

The chapter's web site is at http://n8zyaradioblog.blogspot.com/.

I spent the first week of May at the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Although I didn't bring my radio (this is family time) I was still able to listen to everyone back home using an internet software defined receiver.

Our club member Tom Gladis **AB8RL** took over the Wednesday QRS night net for me. I was able to copy both Tom AB8RL and Gary **K8NYG**, from the nearby town of Dunbar, with a Pennsylvania web SDR receiver. I find this tool a great way to maintain my daily CW fix, even though my radio is at home. Mike Pfaeffle **K3FEF** has a very nice website and I used his SDR receiver at that time.

While at the Outer Banks, I was also able to send some dots and dashes over the internet using another remote internet tool. The **Morsecode.me** website allows you to use the *spacebar* on your computer to imitate a "straight key".

This Morsecode.me program allows you to communicate with anyone in the world at 12-15-17-20-22- or 25 wpm. This site also broadcasts the latest news (in Morse code) from the New York Times, Reuters, and Techcrunch at 17 wpm. Although not "real" radio by any means, I've had some very long CW QSO's with a friends in Germany using the Morsecode.me program. My most amusing CW QSO has been with a Ham using a web app on his cellphone while making the daily train commute into New York City.

I had a very nice 17 wpm Morsecode.me CW QSO with **Andrew Whaley** in the **United Kingdom** while at the Outer Banks. Andrew isn't a licensed Ham yet but his CW skill, at 17 WPM was impressive. Although I can send comfortably at 17 wpm using the spacebar on my laptop, I'd much prefer a real "key". Andrew was using his GHD straight key by using an Arduino device plugged between his key and the USB port on his computer. I always promote the NAQCC Club on these CW QSO's. We exchanged e-mails and I wished him the best on his upcoming test for his Ham license.

If you're interested in this type of Morse code over the internet, his detailed explanation is on his "tech" blog here: **Morse Code through a USB Port .** I really like the idea of using a "real" straight key with this system.

Driving back and forth from the Outer Banks made me think of the common “AM car radio” on the long eight hour drive. We take this radio for granted but it has a very interesting history. A good friend sent me this internet link: **History of the AM Car Radio**

Our WV Chapter monthly breakfast meeting is always a nice experience. We talked about the new location of the Dayton Hamvention this year which is a little closer to WV now. I stayed home this year because of health problems with my Dad and also my grandson John. My grandson was flown by helicopter to the Cincinnati Children's Hospital where he spent three weeks. His lungs weren’t fully developed due to early childbirth. Being born prematurely has left him with breathing problems; this is a serious condition.

My Dad’s artificial hip is giving him a lot of trouble. At 96 years old, it simply “pops” out of the socket easily. Although not life threatening, a dislocated hip is very painful. He has been to the emergency room three different times. The doctors sedate him, force the hip back into the socket, take an E-ray, and send him home.

Our club member Dave Higley **WV8DH** has installed one the new “hex beams” at his home. I’m looking to hear about his results. One of our Texas club members recently worked the Cook Islands with his “hex beam”. BTW/ Dave **WV8DH** continues to be one of the top winners in the 8th division monthly Sprint.

Every Sunday morning the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Charleston hosts an hour long discussion about all kinds of different subjects. I spoke to them about the Ham radio hobby this month. It was well attended and there were many questions about my version of “portable radio”. The UU group has a large TV in this room and I was able to connect my laptop directly to both it and the internet. The NAQCC video is a great way to present the club to the general public. Most of my hour discussion was about the NAQCC Club.

That’s about it for the WV Chapter this month. I’m looking forward the the new “challenge” this month, and of course, “Field Day”.

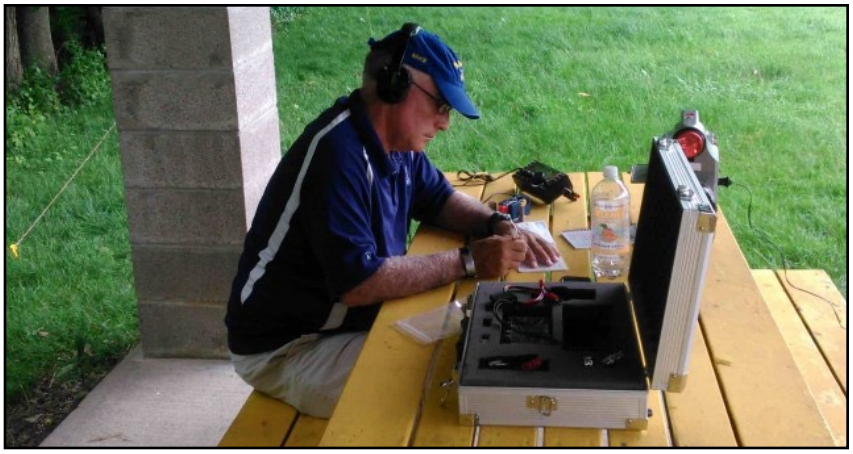
Happy Trails,

John N8ZYA

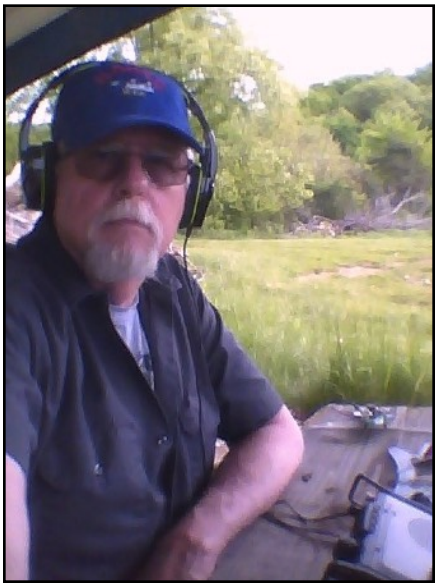
NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

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

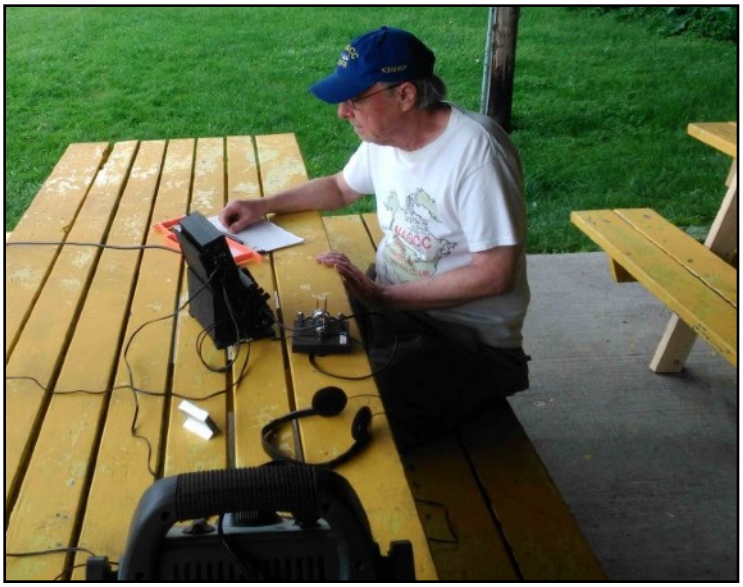
We got in a parkpedition to Kittanning Community Park during May. That was on Sunday May 21 when Mike KC2EGL, Jody K3JZD and I dodged some rain to operate for a couple hours. The few days before the event had rain predicted for Sunday but finally the area of rain slowed its movement, and we decided to take a chance on setting up. Unfortunately with the uncertainty, we couldn't really publicize the event as we usually do other than an email just before we headed to the park. Another thing with the last minute decision was that Mike and I couldn't communicate with Jody about our change to a different pavillion in the park, so Mike and I set up at one, and Jody set up at another one. Finally we did get together for the last hour or so. All in all we made 19 QSOs which was not bad with only the last minute publicity plus rather poor conditions with a lot of QSB and some QRN. Here are pictures of the three ops at work and my antenna setup



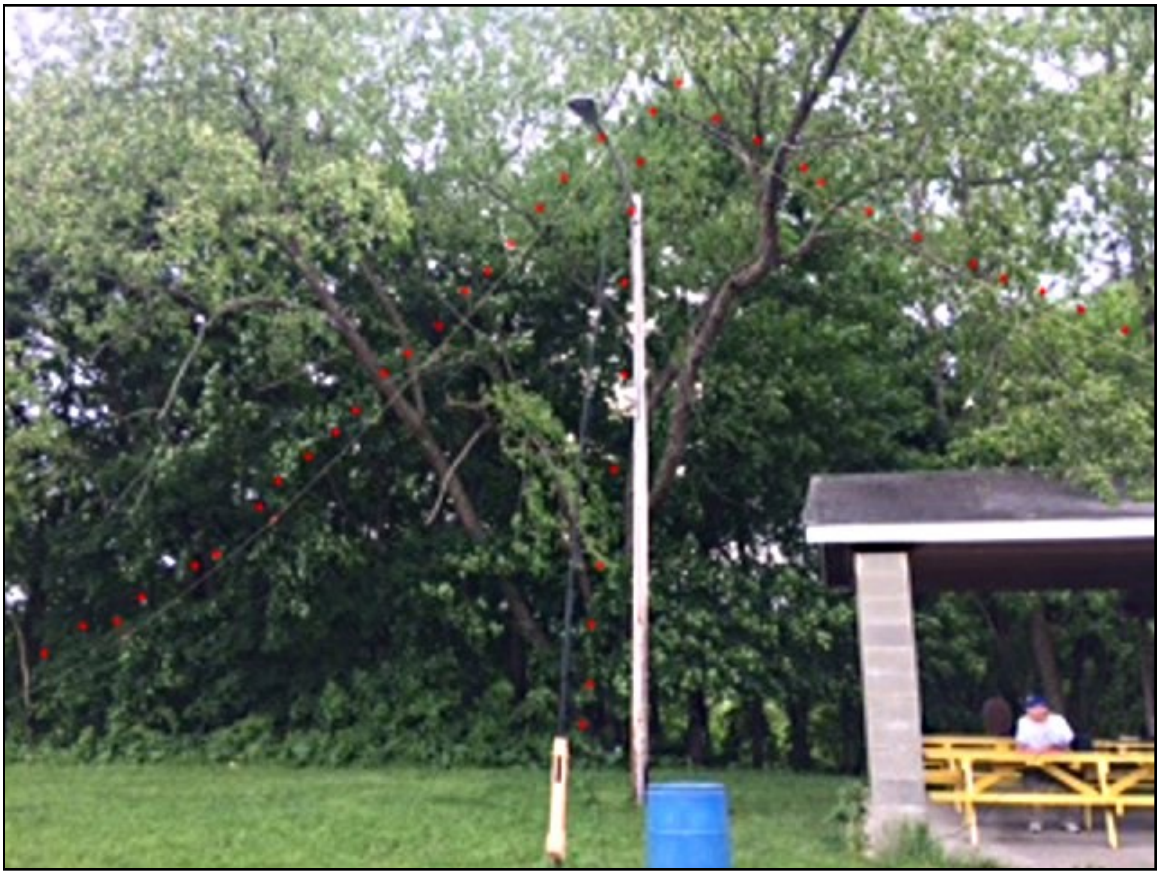
Mike KC2EGL



Jody K3JZD



John K3WWP



My Jackite pole, mount and antenna. I inserted some red dots to make it easier to trace out the pole and inverted vee antenna. The Jackite is the black pole in the foreground, not the lighter park light pole in the background.

I did find out that my Jackite antenna pole with my homebrew mount worked perfectly. The mount and antenna are described more in detail in my personal news later in the newsletter.

After we tore down, Jody had to head home so Mike and I came back to my place.

A couple of days before the parkpedition, Tom WB3FAE was kind enough to go up to the park with me where we gave the mount its initial test. We also used Tom's antenna analyzer to check the antenna. It was close to 1:1 on both 20 and 30, but was a little bit long for 40 and resonated around 6.7 MHz. I'll have to shorten it sometime.

Back to Sunday now. Mike and I headed to Wendy's for some burgers and fries, then back here again to chase some DX after putting my station back together. Unfortunately the DX wasn't cooperating.

Mike really liked my Jackite mount and wants to build one for himself. So we're making that a project for his vacation around July 4th. We'll try to document the build for the newsletter should anyone be interested in duplicating one.

On May 1st we got word from Art WA3BKD that for the second time, our chapter subpedition to the USS Requin had to be postponed. It's now scheduled for June 11. We'll send out a reminder on the NAQCC email list a few days before the event.

Mike visited on May 11th for most of the day. We discussed our upcoming chapter activities. We made a Post Office run to mail some things and stopped for a Vocelli pizza on the way back home. A trip over to the Ol' Station Marketplace to see if there was anything interesting to buy. I got a mini hacksaw, but Mike

didn't find anything. Back home again to try to work some DX. Conditions weren't very good and it was mostly a case of no answers from the DX till Mike finally worked CO2SG to get at least one DX station in the log.

Finally for the chapter-related activities in May, a visit from Mike on the 24th. We tried again for some DX. Just before he arrived, I worked HD2RRC, and then later Mike worked him as well. Mike added a YL from Ukraine to his log when he worked UR5WA. I didn't realize it was a YL till we looked later on QRZ, or I would have tried to work her also.

It will probably be history when you read this, but chapter members will be attending the Breezeshooters hamfest in Butler on June 4 as we do every year.

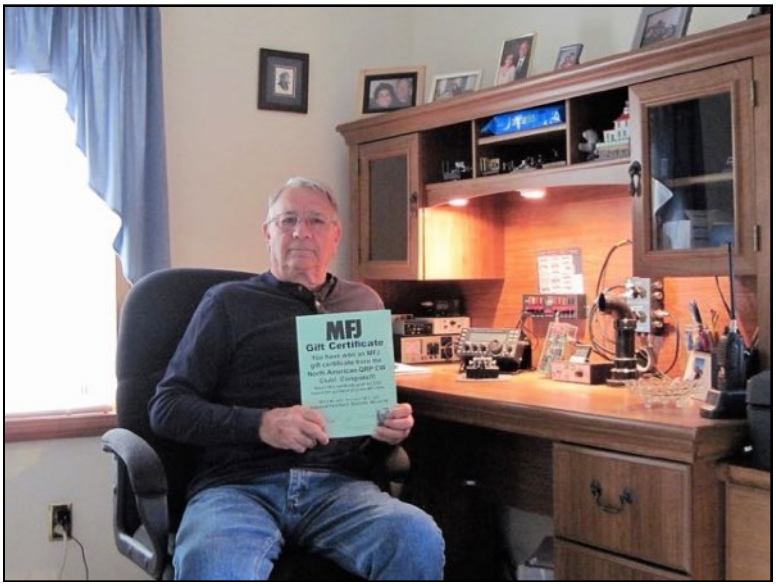
MEMBER SUBMISSIONS

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 Mike, WA8SAN, #0792—

WA8SAN was the winner of the special prize drawing that was held for the participants in our 150th regular monthly sprint back in April. He sent this along after receiving his prize. - Editor



I would to thank the NAQCC club for the $150 Gift Certificate From MFJ Enterprises, it is greatly Appreciated . I`m not sure what I will use it for at this time, but the catalog is on my desk and open!! I would also like to take the time to thank all the people behind the scenes who keep the club running On a day to day basis, without them we don't have a club. Thanks again and enjoy Summer.
73/72 Mike (WA8SAN)

From Brad, WF7T, #3333 —

John and the group! Thanks much for the certificates for the April sprint. I had a blast, and that's what it's all about.

72 Brad WF7T.

From André, VE2BZO, #8893 —

André won the prize drawing for the participants in last month's sprint and picked a K2 spinner knob crafted by Gregg, WB8LZG. - Editor

J'aime bien faire partie de votre groupe
merci
73 ve2bo

From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

I mentioned in the WPA Chapter news above, I'd have more info here about my homebrew Jackite pole mount and antenna. To keep from re-inventing the wheel as they say, I'll refer you to a pdf file on my k3wwp.com website about it. Just click or type in http://k3wwp.com/jackite_pole_mount_small.pdf to view it. Or if that doesn't work, you can access it via my website diary entry for May 23 at http://k3wwp.com/home_ss_diary.html.

Other than that it was pretty much business as usual during May. The DX streak continued through the month passing the 1,550 day mark on the 28th. It was tough a couple days, but mostly the QSOs came in the usual 0000Z hour.

I had another fun sprint (as always) in May with 51 QSOs. Both QSOs and SPCs at 51/18 were down from 64/24 in April, but then we only had 173 participants in May vs. 263 in April which probably accounted for my drop off more than anything.

I was delighted with a KX3 firmware update this month. What? You don't know about the KX3 and its firmware? Every so often Elecraft basically provides KX3 owners with a free new KX3. Not physically, but via an easily applied update to the firmware controlling the rig. This month they added a second set of ATU settings. Now it is possible to take my KX3 to the park and use the second set of settings with my portable antenna. Then come back home and simply switch to the primary settings for my home antennas. Before I had to retune each time I switched from my home QTH to the park QTH and back again. Great job, Elecraft! Just another reason to own a KX3.

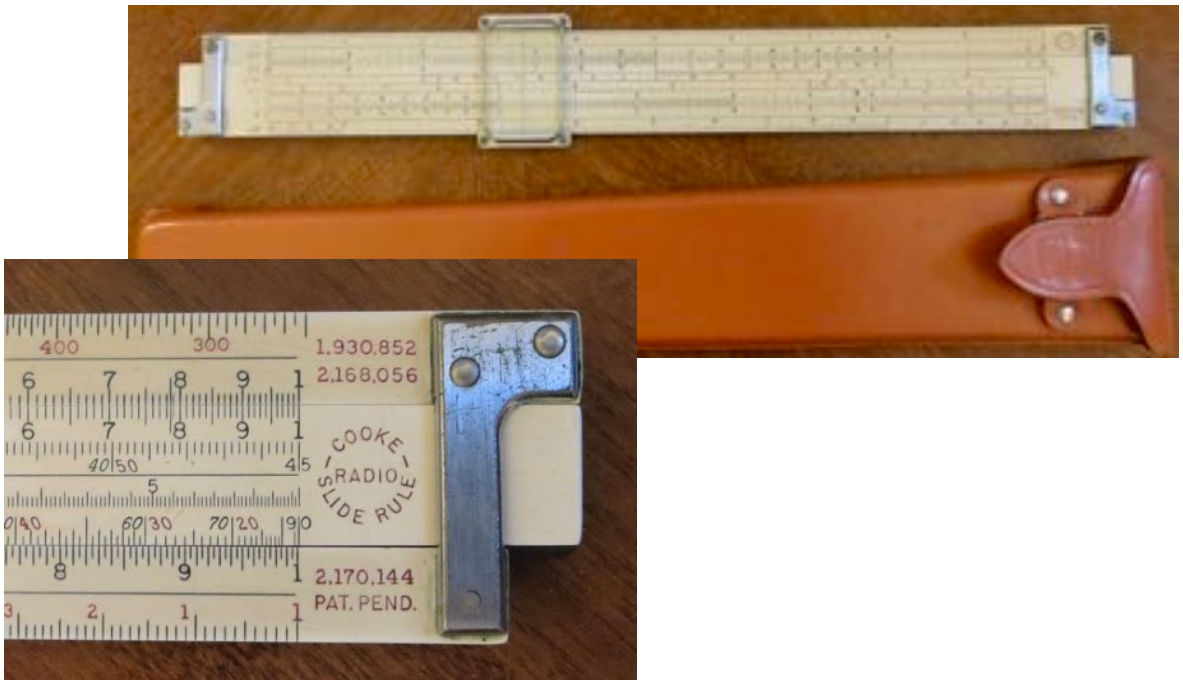
Speaking of portable operation, on May 9th I figured out how many QSOs I've had away from home in my 54+ years of ham radio. Seems as of May 9, I've made 92,623 QSOs, of which 3,638 are from a location away from home using K3WWP/3, WA3IXO (a second call I had for a while at my Pittsburgh apartment), N3AQC, N3A, NY3EC, K3MJW and perhaps a couple others. That's 96.1% from home.

I also figured another stat. Of my 1,521 days of DX as of the end of April, 964 of those days or 63.4% contain at least one DX QSO that has been verified via card, LoTW, and/or eQSL.

I've taken up a lot of newsletter space with my and the WPA Chapter news. So if you want more, just take a read of my diary at http://k3wwp.com/home_ss_diary.html.

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

May was a very busy month for me and operating time was limited. I only had a total of 20 QSOs during the month but I do have one very cool thing to report that is related to ham radio. One of my other hobbies is collecting antique slide rules and a couple of weeks ago I managed to acquire the Cooke Radio Slide Rule shown below. (The last slide rules were manufactured in the early 1970's so every slide rule today is an "antique.") This slide rule was manufactured by a major slide rule company called Keuffel & Esser and is an early model, probably dating to about 1942. The celluloid surface is yellowed with age but otherwise it is in very good condition and fully functional.



The Cooke Radio Slide Rule has special scales, and a scale layout, that are designed to optimize many of the calculations needed by radio engineers - especially resonance and reactance calculations. The slide rule was developed by a rather remarkable man named Nelson Cooke.

Nelson Cooke was born in 1903 and was orphaned when he was 12 years old. At age 16 he enlisted in the United States Navy and over a 32-year career rose to the rank of Lieutenant Commander. With on-the-job training, self study, and intense personal drive, Cooke became one of the youngest sailors to obtain an Electrician's Mate rating. In the 1920's Electrician's Mates were responsible for maintaining the radio gear on Navy ships and Cooke served in that role on the seaplane tender USS Wright. In 1934 he was sent to the Warrant Officer's Radio Engineering School and was then promoted to Chief Radio

Electrician. He then returned to sea duty, including service on the aircraft carrier USS Saratoga. In 1938 he was assigned to a teaching staff position at the Radio Engineering School where he helped to develop a program of study designed to produce the large number of skilled radio engineers and operators that were needed in WW2. It was a very intensive 10-month program of 12-hour study days that graduated about 30,000 Navy and Marine radio officers with roughly the equivalent of an electrical engineering degree. Cooke wrote a book (which I also own) called “Mathematics for Electricians and Radiomen,” and designed his Radio Slide Rule for use in the school’s curriculum. He authored several other technical books and after leaving the Navy founded a successful engineering company. He never went to college.

I don’t know if Nelson Cooke ever held an amateur radio license but I do know that a lot of those radiomen that he helped train did become hams when they returned to their civilian lives after the war.

So do I know how to use this slide rule? Yes. Do I use it for any sort of “real world” calculations that I need to make? No. Would I ever replace my graphing calculator or computer with a slide rule? Of course not. But I do frequently grab a slide rule from my collection and exercise a few brain cells with it. It helps keep the mind sharp and there is something special about holding and using antique tools that were used to design radios, build skyscrapers, win wars, and put men on the moon. (Slide rules were actually carried on board Apollo spacecraft!) And in a way, using a slide rule does perfectly fit the QRP philosophy of “doing the most with the least.”

(Let me add that I am 62 years old and if you are my age or older you have probably used a slide rule but if you are even just 4 or 5 years younger than me you might not even know what a slide rule is - the species became extinct that fast! I used one in my high school chemistry and physics classes but in college my slide rule was lost in the bottom of a drawer and a Texas Instruments “scientific” calculator became my mathematical weapon of choice. That first calculator was an “SR-50” and the “SR” stood for “Slide Rule!”)

NAQCC Club Information

Statement Of Purpose

From NAQCC President Paul Huff, N8XMS

Amateur radio has something for everyone. SSB, FM, AM, the digital modes, and QRO power levels all have their place in this great hobby and we certainly recognize the importance of these modes as well as the enjoyment that they give to many. But for a growing number of hams the challenge of *"doing the most with the least"* makes QRP (and QRPp) CW operating the greatest thrill available in amateur radio, and the North American QRP CW Club exists to promote this exciting facet of the hobby. As part of our focus we also encourage, but do not limit operators to, the use of simple wire antennas.

The NAQCC provides numerous opportunities for hams to enjoy QRP/CW operating. For contester types we have a popular monthly 2-hour sprint that runs at relatively low CW speeds and at a fairly relaxed pace. Three special sprints also take place during the year for 160-meter and QRPp operators. For a month-long activity we offer our members a Monthly Challenge that can be anything from forming a list of words from the calls of stations worked, to making a prescribed number of contacts using home-brew gear. There is also an extensive awards program to recognize the significant QRP/CW accomplishments of our members.

We also serve as a resource for people who are just getting started in QRP and/or CW. Our slow-speed CW nets are a great place for beginners to practice Morse code under real on-air conditions. Beginners will also find a wealth of helpful information on our club website and we are more than willing to try to answer any questions about QRP and CW that you might have. An extensive monthly newsletter is filled with useful projects and news from fellow QRPers.

A number of local NAQCC Chapters offer opportunities to get together for in person socializing and QRP/CW activities. Portable operations are especially popular with the local chapters.

Whether you are a veteran ham radio operator who is looking for a new challenge in the hobby, or a beginner who is intrigued by the possibilities of QRP/CW communication, we cordially invite you to join us. Membership is free and the benefits and fun are significant.

The North American QRP CW Club was founded in 2004 by WY3H and K3WWP and now has over 8000 members world wide. 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
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Livonia, MI 48150
USA

Additional contact information can be found on the next page.

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