NORTH AMERICAN QRP CW CLUB

NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 247 JANUARY 2019

KEY CLICKS

- CHECK YOUR PARTICIPATION RECORDS. Near the end of this month we will be choosing our Participation Award winners for 2018, with one luck member winning a free years membership (or renewal) in FISTS. Please go to http://www.naqcc.info/awards_participation.html to see the details about this award. Also, after the December challenge results are finalized about the 11th of this month, please go to that same page to double check your personal participation points. If you believe that there is a mistake in your point total please contact Hap, K7HAP, at k7hap2 AT gmail DOT com as soon as possible.

- LOOKING FORWARD INTO 2019. This October will mark the NAQCC's 15th anniversary, and since we just talked about your 2018 participation points here is a reminder for the new year. Do you remember those great top-tier prizes that were given away in our 14th anniversary celebration? Only 32 people qualified for that drawing, giving each one of them almost a 10% chance at winning a prize. Those are pretty good odds for a prize drawing! So how did those 32 people qualify for that drawing? By participating throughout the year in our monthly sprints and challenges. A combination of 9 sprint and challenge participation points between now and October will qualify you for this years top tier prizes. So start working now on your club participation for 2019 to give yourself a good chance in the 2019 anniversary drawing.

- 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."


HAPPY
NEW YEAR
2019

Batteries For Portable Ops

By Jody, K3JZD

I began doing portable QRP operation in parks several years ago. One thing that has evolved has been my choice of batteries. While my Yaesu FT-817 has an internal battery, using it only provides 2.5 watts out. I needed to use an external battery to get the full 5 watts out. I started out by using a small 1.4 Ah sealed lead acid battery (SLAB). While small and fairly light, I soon found out that 1.4 Ah did not provide me with very much capacity. The voltage dropped pretty fast.

I then bought a Amstron HR1234W2F high rate AGM battery. It was rated at 5-9 Ah, depending upon how it was discharged. It had plenty of capacity - I never ran that battery down with my FT-817 during any park outing. It always got the job done for me. But, this battery weighs in at 5.7 pounds.

Whenever I volunteered to go out onto the North Country Trail for the “Light up the Trail” event back in 2016, I envisioned a lot of activity and I did not want to risk running out of battery. So, I borrowed a Genesis XE13X 13 Ah deep discharge battery to use during that outing. Well, carrying that 12 pound battery over two miles of the North Country Trail to get to the high spot that I had selected turned out to be a chore. I think both of my arms got longer that day. As it turned out, the weather was really bad all along the trail, the activity was much lower than anticipated, and I used very little of that big heavy battery. This outing taught me that carrying a 12 pound battery was not a good plan.

While I still do some park operations, they are now typically at parks that are further out and at higher elevations. I have begun to do Summits On The Air (SOTA) activations. So, nowadays everything I need goes into my backpack, where size and weight matters. Whenever I had that 5.7 pound SLAB in my backpack, I knew that it was there !!

From listening to the SOTA gurus, I soon learned that smaller and lighter is better. And that having a spare battery is a good plan as it often takes a lot of uphill walking to get to a SOTA activation site. After doing that walking, one does not want to have to abort the activation due to a battery failure.

So I switched to using battery packs that were made up of four inexpensive Westinghouse branded 2000 mAh 18650 Li-Ion cells. I found these Westinghouse branded batteries in the garden department at Wal-Mart and on-line. I found the four-cell battery holders on eBay, and I added heavier wiring and PowerPole connectors. Each four cell pack weights 7 ounces. So, carrying two of these 4 cell packs was easy compared to that 5.7 pound SLAB. I measured it once I and found that I was getting very close to the rated 2000 mAh from these Westinghouse branded cells (many no-name eBay specials do not come anywhere close to providing their advertised capacity). I have done some SOTA activations where I will do two summits in one day, with about 20-25 QSOs during each activation, and have only used one battery pack. I do have to watch the battery voltage so that I do not let it go below 10.0 volts though.

But, it takes a little fussing around to use these Li-Ion cells. I like to cycle them, so whenever I come home from an outing I take a partially discharged pack down to 10.0 volts before recharging. I built a small Arduino based device to watch the pack voltage as the battery is being discharged into a small incandescent automobile backup lamp that draws about 2.0 amps. Whenever the Arduino sees that the battery pack has dropped down to 10.0 volts, it automatically disconnects the battery from the lamp and keeps it disconnected. I bought a battery charger that charges all four cells at once, but individually. So I have to take the four cells out of the holder to charge them and then put them back into the holder once they are charged. And I always check the voltages of the individual cells before and after charging to make sure that I do not have a weak cell in my set of four un-managed cells. And I do charge these batteries in an open area on my rear patio as Li-Ions can catch fire while being charged.

Four 18650 Li-Ion cells are 16.4 volts when fully charged. A bit above the 13.8 volts specified by Yaesu for the FT-817. While not recommended, I have connected these packs directly to my FT-817. They tend to lose a little voltage as soon as I begin to transmit, so that full voltage is not imposed for real long. So far, I have not seen any adverse effects from doing this (however, your mileage may vary).

But whenever I got my KX3, the KX3 said no-way and immediately shut down as soon as it saw that 16.4 volts. So, I had to make up an inline adapter with two diodes in series to lower the voltage to below 15.0 volts to make the KX3 happy. Then I have to watch the watch the External Supply Voltage on the KX3 display and take that voltage dropping adapter out of the line whenever I see it reading around 12.0 volts. So, it actually takes quite a bit of fussing to use these four cell packs of 18650 Li-Ions.

While my packs of four unmanaged 18650 Li-Ion cells have been working well for me for a couple of years now, I recently bought a no-fuss, idiot-proof, KISS, Bioenenno Power 3000 mAh LifePO4 battery pack and matching charger to see what I was missing. This is a 12v nominal battery pack which automatically manages and balances the individual cells whenever it is in use and automatically shuts itself off whenever it drops down to 10.0 volts. So, there is no chance of my running this battery down too far and damaging it. It came with PowerPole connectors, so it was plug and play. With the matching Bioenenno Power charger, it is simply connect it right to the battery pack and plug it in. The pack does the automatic load balancing when charging. These batteries do not need to be cycled and 12 volts is enough to produce a full 5 watts out on both the FT-817 and the KX3. And I'm told that the managed LifePO4 batteries in this pack will not catch fire.

Since I was able to get two SOTA activations from a 2000 mAh Li-Ion pack, then I should get three SOTA activations from this 3000 mAh LifePO4. On the plus side, it is certainly a KISS system, and it has increased capacity. On the negative side, it is heavier (13 oz compared to the 7 oz Li-Ion four cell pack), is a little larger, and is more expensive. The size and weight increase is no big deal whenever I'm doing a park activation, but impacts whenever I'm doing a SOTA activation. The larger issue whenever I do a SOTA activation where I have to walk a ways and be self sufficient, is the need to carry a spare battery. I could just buy a second Bioenno Power battery, and always carry two of them. But, that would be 1 lb – 10z of batteries compared 14 ounces with the Li-Ions. I could carry one of my Li-Ions as the spare, but that means having to also carry the voltage dropping diode adapter in case I have to use that spare. For the time being, I'm using with the second option. In the end, I suspect I'll capitulate and just buy a second Bioenno Power battery to keep it totally KISS.

Hopefully any of you who are considering getting out and getting some fresh air while doing some portable QRP operations will get something out of this tale of the path that I have gone down. It should convince you skip the first few steps with the SLABs if you intend to do your operation anywhere that you will have to carry the whole thing on your back for any distance. I'm sure that there are other very suitable batteries available – I just discussed the ones that had been recommended to me and that I have had experience with.

Jody - K3JZD - NAQCC 7936

DIY SWR METER BY GENE, N5GW

Here's a useful accessory to have in your shack for making sure your transmitter is properly matched to its load. While the newer, high end transceivers have built-in SWR meters, some of the simpler models as well as homebrew and vintage rigs do not.

The first pic shows the schematic (used with permission from the ARRL) which is from an April 1988 QST p. 26 article "Improving the HW-9 Transceiver", later reprinted in an ARRL publication, "QRP Classics", p. 131. The DC output to the meter is in series with a 10K pot (not shown). I liked its performance in my HW-9 so much that I built a free standing version for homebrew transmitters as well as one I put in an antenna tuner.

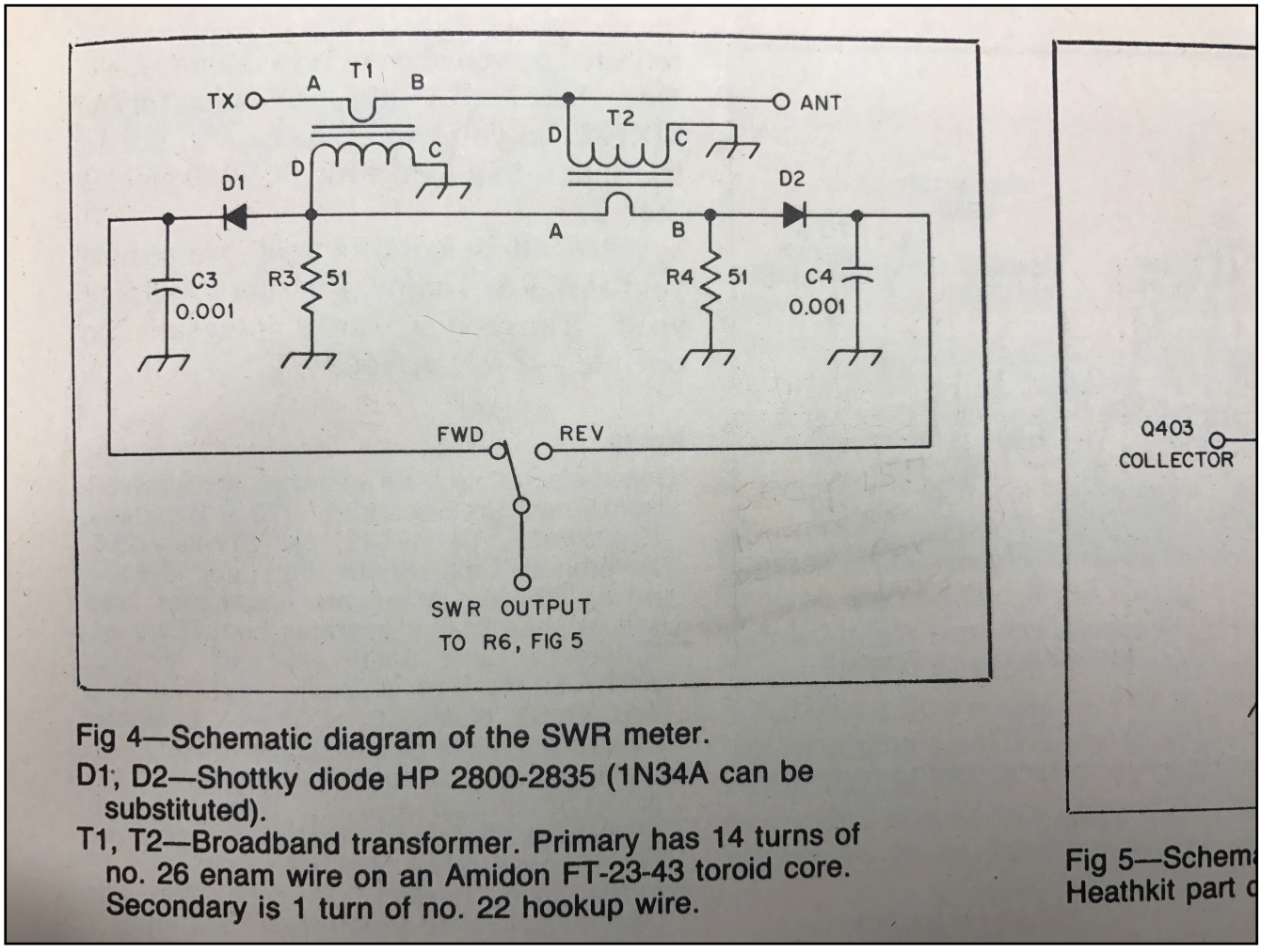


Fig 4—Schematic diagram of the SWR meter.
D1, D2—Shottky diode HP 2800-2835 (1N34A can be substituted).
T1, T2—Broadband transformer. Primary has 14 turns of no. 26 enam wire on an Amidon FT-23-43 toroid core. Secondary is 1 turn of no. 22 hookup wire.

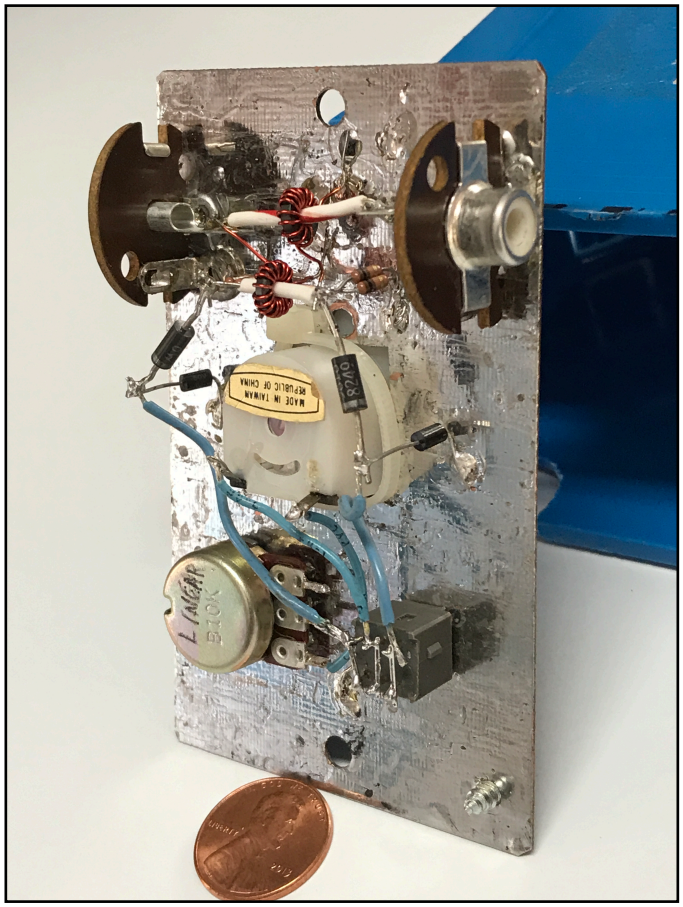
Fig 5—Schem
Heathkit part

The second pic shows the parts I used. The blue plastic a.c. switch or outlet box cost 26 cents! The front panel is made from 0.03 inch thick double sided circuit board, easy to cut out with heavy duty scissors and easy to nibble a hole for the meter.

My meter had a full scale movement of 200 microamps, a common value. The meter you use may have a smaller (50 microamps) or greater (1 or 2 mA) movement. The latter will not be as sensitive but will work as low as 5 watts. If you try to test your meter with a battery, use a current limiting resistor and 50K pot to prevent destruction.

Since I had four of these inexpensive meters, I opened one up, took out the calibrated face plate, removed the paint from it, and relabeled it once I had marked the 2:1 SWR spot. You may not want to try this with a high quality meter or unless you have a backup meter, as there is a real risk of damaging or destroying it. It may be better to use the existing calibration.

Pic #3 shows the finished product, and pic #4 reveals the innards. I tinned both sides of the circuit board using solder applied while slowly sweeping a low wattage iron back and forth. This dresses up the the front panel as well as facilitating the ground plane construction. Phono jacks are shown although BNC or other connectors can be used.



To test the SWR function, hook up a 50 ohm dummy load which can be two 100 ohm resistors in parallel. Put the switch in forward "F", feed in a few watts and advance the sensitivity pot for full scale. Then put the switch in "R". If it falls to zero (SWR of 1:1) all is well. Next use a 100 ohm load to find the 2:1 SWR point and either mark it on the meter face or make a note of it. Any reading lower than 2:1 indicates an acceptable impedance match; higher calibration points are not necessary and are usually inaccurate. The meter is left in-line to monitor transmitter output as well as the SWR.

This SWR meter agrees closely with my WM-2 wattmeter if the SWR approaches 1. Minimim full scale is about 500 milliwatts, but it can be used with even lower power if diodes with low forward voltage drop are employed.

If you are interested in how it works, there is a good explanation on p. 156 of "Introduction to Radio Frequency Design", another ARRL publication.

72, Gene, N5GW

THE ELECRAFT AX1 BY JOHN, W2SX

I received 2 early Christmas presents from Elecraft in December. One was a new Elecraft hat to replace the one that is now on the bottom of the Great South Bay. The other was the AX1 loaded mini-whip antenna.

I am a big proponent of using a full-sized antenna whenever possible. Most times, I use a Jackite pole and a 40-meter inverted V antenna. I use this at the beach, at state parks, and in my back yard. It works very well on 40 through 10 meters. I feed it with the old-fashioned TV twin lead and use a balun and tuner at the rig end. Any half-wave antenna is what I call “full sized”. It can be fed in the middle, at the end, or off-center (1/3 of the way from one end). There are several ways to make the half-wave wire work on multiple bands.

However, the AX1 caught my attention as an antenna that might be used when a wire antenna was not available, like on the boardwalk at Sunken Meadow Park. I had a few sips of the Elecraft cool aid and placed an order. (Total = $157 with bipod and tripod mounts!!! Not inexpensive. A wire is much, much cheaper.)

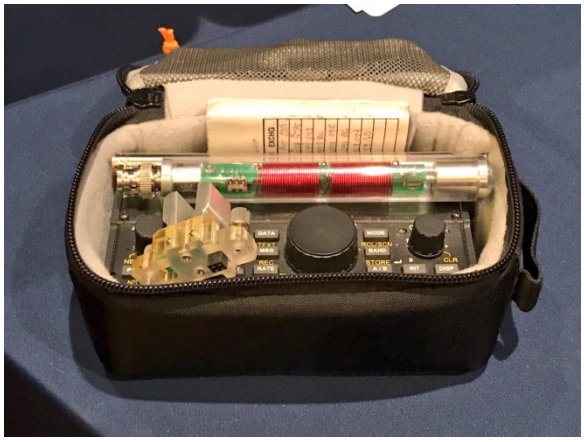
Soon after receiving the antenna I set it up in my dining room on a camera tripod. I connected it to my KX2 with a short piece of coax. After extending the whip to its maximum height (4 feet) and stretching out the 13 foot counterpoise, I let the antenna tuner find a nice 1:1 match on 20 meters. Then I tuned around the band and low and behold I heard some signals.

I settled on 14060 kHz and called CQ. Eventually, I heard Peter, AA2VG, in Huntington, NY (a few miles away from my Northport QTH). We had a nice QSO. He was using his QCX transceiver at about 3 watts. I was using the KX2 on its internal battery at about 4 watts.

The magic of radio is still there. Here I was, sitting at my dining room table, listening to signals from all over, using a very tiny radio and a tiny antenna.

Since the AX1 also covers 17 and 15 meters, I tried it on those bands but conditions were very poor. I can imagine that these bands will be a lot more fun when the solar cycle improves.

The entire set-up, including radio, paddles, antenna, etc., fits into the smaller portable bag offered by Elecraft.



I am looking forward to taking it with me the next time I go up to our local state park.
Here is the actual set up at the dining room table using the camera tripod mount. A pretty simple set up.

72,
John W2XS

NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT: We again have two sprints to enjoy this month. First up on Jan 17, 0130-0330 UTC, is our regular monthly sprint. Of course that's the evening of Wednesday the 16th in North America. Then just under a week later on Jan 23, 0130-0230 UTC (Tuesday evening 1/22 in North America), we have our annual 160-meter sprint for you top-band fans. Complete information about these sprints can be found at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201901.html and http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201901_160.html.

Complete sprint rules and instructions on how to submit your log can be found at http://naqcc.info/sprint_rules.html. On that page you will also find information about the different computer loggers that are supported for our sprints. The membership data files for those supported loggers can be downloaded at http://naqcc.info/contests.html. **Please be sure to always get the latest membership data for your logger about a day before the sprint.** A complete schedule for our upcoming sprints can be found at http://naqcc.info/sprint_sked.html.

LAST MONTH'S SPRINT RESULTS: The sunspot doldrums continued to plague our sprints in December with only 76 logs submitted for our regular sprint on the 12th. Then a week later 58 logs were submitted in our semi-annual QRPp sprint. That second number doesn't sound too bad for a milliwatt activity but 14 of those logs were actually goose-egg reports with no QSOs completed. I was one of those goose-eggs and I think that this was a first for me in more than 140 regular and mW sprints! Complete sprint results, including some great soapbox comments, can be seen at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201812.html and http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201812mw.html. High scores can be seen in the tables on the next two pages.

We would especially like to welcome our first-time sprint loggers and hope that they will return to participate often: AJ8S K0EW NF8H

PLAN YOUR PARTICIPATION: It's not too early to start your strategic planning for how you can collect enough participation points to qualify for the top-tier prize drawing during our October anniversary celebration. Regular participation in our monthly sprints and challenges will easily get you there. So jump in and get to work this very first month. Besides, it's not like you're going to the dentist. It's a lot of fun!

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1	KN1H	WB1GYZ	K1IEE
W2	KA2KGP	K2JT	WA2JSG
W3	KD3CA	KC3RN	AK3X
W4	WG8Y	K4JPN	N4WD
W5	N5GW	KE5YUM	-
W6	AI6SL	K6MGO	-
W7	KC7DM	-	-
W8	AJ8S	WB8LZG	NF8M
W9	NI9M	WB9HFK	W9CC
W0	K0FG	N0TA	KD0DK
VE	-	-	-
DX	-	-	-

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1	-	-	-
W2	WB2LQF	-	-
W3	K3WWP	-	-
W4	K3RLL	-	-
W5	W5ODS	NF5U	K5IX
W6	-	-	-
W7	-	-	-
W8	N8XMS	-	-
W9	N9SE	K9DRP	-
W0	KD0V	WD0K	-
VE	-	-	-
DX	-	-	-

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1	N2CN	KB1M	-
W2	N2ESE	WA1GWH	KC2MJT
W3	-	-	-
W4	W4OEP	AE4Y	K4BAI
W5	K5MBA	NF8H	-
W6	-	-	-
W7	AA7CU	-	-
W8	WA8SAN	AC8JW	N8IFU
W9	AB9CA	-	-
W0	WZ0W	AA0W	K0EW
Canada	VE3DQN	VE3GNU	-
DX	-	-	-

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
SK	-	-	-
BUG	-	-	-
K/K	-	-	-

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
SK	AJ8S	-	-
BUG	-	-	-
K/K	K0EW NF8H (TIE)	-	-

SPRINT PRIZE DRAWING WINNER
KD3CA

QRPp SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1	KN1H	K1MZM	W1PQO
W2	KA2KGP	W2SH	KN2G
W3	KD3CA	K2DEP	
W4	K4KRW	K4JPN	K4PQC
W5	N5GW	WA6EEM	KA5PVB
W6	-	-	-
W7	KC7DM	-	-
W8	AB8FJ	AA8R	N8XMS
W9	W9CC	WB9HFK	KC9IL
W0	AA0W	NN0SS	-
VE	-	-	-
DX	-	-	-

QRPp SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1	-	-	-
W2	-	-	-
W3	K3WWP	-	-
W4	K3RLL	-	-
W5	W5ODS	NF5U	-
W6	-	-	-
W7	-	-	-
W8	-	-	-
W9	-	-	-
W0	KD0V	-	-
VE	-	-	-
DX	-	-	-

QRPp SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1	N2CN	KB1M	K4RHG
W2	-	-	-
W3	-	-	-
W4	N4MJ	-	-
W5	-	-	-
W6	KX6A	-	-
W7	-	-	-
W8	WB8LZG	W8RTJ	N8IFU
W9	N9BC AB9BZ (TIE)	-	-
W0	-	-	-
VE	-	-	-
DX	-	-	-

QRPp GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
SK	-	-	-
BUG	-	-	-
K/K	-	-	-

QRPp SPRINT PRIZE DRAWING WINNER
KC9IL

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	76	80	217	4/17
Participants	101	125	269	2/13
Total QSOs	852	576	3154	4/17
Hour 1 QSOs	481	303	1704	4/17
Hour 2 QSOs	371	273	1450	4/17
20m QSOs	14	2	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	402	64	2203	4/17
80m QSOs	436	510	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	11.2	7.2	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+	NU7T(SK) KB8FE KQ1P KA9FQG NQ2W WY3H AA7CU N8QY K9OSC KB0ETU K6CSL K9EYT N5GW AK3X K2YGM KC2EGL VE5BCS(SK) N8LA KN1H K4ORD KF7WNS N4MJ WK6L KD3CA AB8FJ N2CN
75+	K4NVJ W4DUK KE5YUM KB3AAG WB8ENE K4KRW N2ESE VE3FUJ WX4RM WA8SAN NO2D N0TA WG8Y N8BB AA9L NA4O WD0K K6MGO
100+	K4BAI KU4A KD2MX NF8M K4JPN K3RLL K1IEE KD0V WA2JSG N4FI
125+	W9CC W2SH WB8LZG N8XMS
150+	W2JEK KA2KGP K3WWP

NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: Our challenge this month might cause many to say "I'll drink to that." Yep, it's an alphabet challenge with words that are all related to the history of distilling whiskey. The complete list of words along with some very interesting information about whiskey distilling can be found at http://naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201901.html.

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: Spring training for baseball usually starts in late February and our alphabet challenge next month will bring to mind your "field of dreams." We have a list of words that are all related to the manufacture of baseballs. Details can be found at http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201902.html.

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 submissions for our December Pan Am Clipper challenge is still a few days away but preliminary results can be seen at http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201812.html. Final results will also be available there shortly after the 10th of the month.

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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+	PA9CW NF1U WI5H KU4A K9OSC KD0V WY3H N1JI VE3HUR N9SE N1LU KD2MX WA2FBN G3JFS KJ4R
50+	PA0XAW VE3FUJ NU7T(SK)
75+	K1YAN
100+	K1IEE
125+	N8XMS W2JEK
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: WAVE (Worked All VE) Simple Wire Antenna Award

This award only requires 8 QRP QSOs using “Simple Wire Antennas” with the following regions of Canada: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Maritimes, Newfoundland, Ontario, Quebec, and Saskatchewan. Notice that the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island have been grouped together into the Maritimes region. Also the really challenging regions in Canada - Yukon, Northwest, and Nunavut Territories - are not required for this award but can be worked for an added endorsement. There are two categories for the award - QRP and 2xQRP. In addition to the Territories endorsement, there are also endorsements for Single Band and QRPp. Only QSOs made since March 1, 2011 can be applied and as with all of our awards, we take your word for it - QSLs are not required. Complete details on the WAVE award and how to apply for it can be seen at http://www.naqcc.info/awards_waveswa.html.

RECENTLY ISSUED AWARDS:

None

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 60m, and 80m QRQ Round Table Nets (FRN)	Sunday 4:00 PM PT 8:30 PM PT	Monday 0000 Z 0430 Z	5348 KHz ch2 3556 KHz	60m JB, NR5NN (in CA) 80m Rick, N6IET (in CA)
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CT	Tuesday 0100 Z	3564 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Midwest QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 7:30 PM CT 9:00 PM CT (?)	Tuesday 0130 Z 0300 Z (?)	7031 KHz	Bob, W0CC (in KS)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental 20/40 QRS Nets (RMRc)	Tues & Thurs 4:00/4:30 PM MT	Tues & Thurs 2300/2330 Z	14060/7062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
Pacific Northwest 80 m QRS Net (PNW80)	Thursday 4 PM PT	Friday 0000 Z	3556.5 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.

A NOTE FROM OUR NET MANAGER

First and foremost I want to wish all a very happy, prosperous and healthy 2019.

Secondly i was sitting in the shack ruminating about ways to maximize your operating success despite the band conditions. I would urge you to make use of the resources available to you via the internet, specifically the QRPSPOTS annunciator at http://www.qrpspots.com/. Although sponsored by the 4Sqrp Group it is open for every one to make use of, post your frequency and mode (no it's not specifically for CW!) and see who turns up.

I'll be getting the wire back up this weekend so look for spots from me and give me a call.

Also check out the 4SQRP web page peruse the number of great kits available to help you while away the winter hours while not actually operating or maybe build something while you operate - your call.

Anyone up for starting a west coast Net? we had an enquirey from a west coast member, I may try and talk him into starting one, who knows.

Happy and blessed 2019 and beyond to all. Wayne - NQ0RP

NET CONTROL STATION REPORTS

NAQCC FarnsWord 60m and 80m QRQ Round Table Nets (FRN)
Sunday evenings 5:00 PM PST, which is Monday 0100 UTC, on 5348 kHz (Ch 2)
Sunday evenings 7:00 PM PST, which is Monday 0300 UTC, on 3556 kHz +/-
60m NCS - JB NR5NN (California); 80m NCS - Rick N6IET (California)

NAQCC FarnsWord QRQ 60- and 80-meter Round Table Nets

These are 'social' nets for fun and head-copy practice. We try to use good character and word spacing. We start out around 21 wpm and go up from there. We usually do a check-in round including signal reports followed by a round of whatever you want to talk about (weather, new antennas and/or radios, contests, sprints and/or DX, portable/mobile adventures), and a final check-out round.

We encourage you to check in QRP for signal reports, but feel free to QRO when conditions warrant for good copy all around. We're covering a very large region (entire Pacific time zone), and we try to pick net times during which NVIS propagation is in effect with low D-layer absorption.

We think our current schedule (see below) is working as well as can be expected, given that we're at or near the bottom of the 11-year sunspot cycle, and it's winter. The early session begins on 60 meters but often moves to 80 meters when we lose NVIS - or just for fun.

The late 80-meter session gives all of us a chance to have dinner, and often we enjoy an NVIS rebound by then - but not always. If not, then expect some relaying.

New people are always welcome (if you can copy at least 15 wpm)!

FRN/60/80 Early Sessions at 4pm (0000z) on 5348 kHz (Ch 2) and 3556 kHz ±
Dec 02, 60m QNS (9) NCS: NR5NN, KW6G, K6GVG, K6JJR, KE6EE, N6IET,AI6SL, AI6U, WI6O
Dec 09, 60m QNS (7) N6IET NCS, NR5NN/m, K6GVG, KW6G, KE6EE, K6JJR, WI6O
Dec 09, 80m QNS (7) N6IET NCS, NR5NN/m, K6JJR, K6GVG, WI6O, AI6SL, KE5EE
Dec 16, 60m QNS (6) N6IET NCS, KW6G, K6GVG, AI6SL, KE6EE, K6JJR
Dec 16, 80m QNS (8) N6IET NCS, K6JJR, AI6SL, KE6EE, K0DTJ, NR5NN, WI6O
Dec 23, 60m QNS (4) NR5NN NCS, K6GVG, N6IET, KE6EE
Dec 23, 80m QNS (5) NR5NN NCS, KE6EE, K6GVG, N6IET, KW6G
Dec 30, 60m QNS (9) NR5NN NCS, N6IET, N6KIX, KW6G, W7SAG, AI6SL, K6GVG, KE6EE, K6JJR
Dec 30, 80m QNS (7) JB NR5NN NCS, K6JJR, K6GVG, AI6SL, KE5EE, N6IET, KW6G

FRN/80 Late Sessions at 8:30pm (0430z) on 3556 kHz ±
Dec 02, 80m QNS (7) N6IET NCS, K6GVG, KW6G, NR5NN, KE6EE, AI6SL, WI6O
Dec 09, 80m QNS (3) N6IET, WU7F, K7KY
Dec 16, 80m QNS (7) N6IET NCS, K6GVG, NR5NN, K0DTJ, KW6G, KE6EE, AI6SL
Dec 23, 80m QNS (8) N6IET NCS, NR5NN co-NCS, K0DTJ co-NCS, K6GVG, KE6EE, AI6SL, KW6G, WI6O
Dec 30, 80m QNS (7) Rick N6IET NCS, Roy K6GVG, JB NR5NN, Wolf AI6SL, Rob N6KIX, Charles KW6G, Brian K0DTJ

Commentary

When you get a lemon, make lemonade! That applies to ham radio, as well. The propagation gods are giving us fits and laughing at us, but because hams are resourceful and smart, we just adapt. This is turning out to be a very low and possibly prolonged solar minimum, but that just means adjusting our operating bands and times so that we can continue to communicate.

It's not currently impractical to have a multiple-round social net on 40 meters, because 40 meters hardly ever enjoys NVIS conditions, these days. So we moved to 60 and 80 meters. Then as the sunspots became less frequent, we moved our net times earlier. And we also discovered that for now we can often enjoy a rebound of NVIS on 80 meters later in the evening. Hopefully in a few years we can go back to having a 40 meter FRN QRQ roundtable net and maybe even hear each other QRP! Someday if I live that long! :-\

he CW traffic nets are talking about putting up 160-meter antennas and using that band as a backup when our 80-meter nets "go long" on us. Thus, we adapt.

72/73/77,
Rick N6IET (and JB NR5NN by proxy)

==========

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN)
Monday evenings 7:00 PM CST, which is Tuesday 0100 UTC, on 3561 kHz +/-
Main NCS - Allen KA5TJS (Texas)

12/04/18 QNI(3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YGA WI5H - Could just hear Andy when he checked in then he went to 579. He was QRO. Mike started out QRP but went QRO due to weak signal report and high QRN. A lot of QSB on 80 tonight but we got it done!

12/11/18 QNI(3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA - The band was in good shape last night. YUM was 599 and YGA 579. Both were QRO so I joined the high power crowd. Good conditions so maybe winter prop. is finally kicking in.
12/18/18 QNI(3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA - About the same as last week. Terry YUM was hitting 599 QRO and Andy YGA was as well when he checked in. Good QSO with Terry and band started changing at the end. Andy was 579 when I got to him about 20 after. Band was going long I think.
12/25/18 QNI(3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YGA WI5H - Great to hear Andy and Mike on Christmas day (Zulu time). Band was in pretty good shape. Andy pointed out that our next net will be on SKN which I had not noticed. Hope to see a few of you guys out there

Allen KA5TJS
==========

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)

No Report

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NAQCC MIDWEST QRS Net (MWN)
Monday evenings 9:00 PM CST, which is Tuesday 0300 UTC, on 7117 kHz +/-
Main NCS - Bob W0CC

2018/12/03 QNI W0CC - QRN: S-7. From looking at the Space Weather Report, this is what is expected. For me, 40 meters has been slow, but I have been able to work DX on 20 meters during the day. Next week, the conditions should be better!
2018/12/10 QNI W0CC (1) S-8 There was a split DX (Mali) station TX 7.025/RX 7.026 but else wise the band was very quiet.
2018/12/24 QNI W0CC - QRN S-8. Thought that it would be a "slow" night. No one was on the air. Next week should be interesting with the ARRL Straight Key Night event running at the same time!

Bob W0CC
==========

NAQCC Pacific Northwest QRS 80 Meter Net (PNW80)
Thursday evenings 7:00 PM PST, which is Friday 0300 UTC on 3556.5 kHz.
Main NCS - Stewart KE7LKW (Washington State)

12/06/18 - No net this evening.
12/07/18 QNI (4) NCS KE7LKW, WB4SPB. KG7JEB, AD7BP.
12/14/18 QNI (6) NCS KE7LKW/7, KG7JEB, WB4SPB, N0DA, K7JUV, K7ANM
12/21/18 QNI (4) NCS KE7LKW, W7ANM. KG7JEB, N0DA.
12/28/18 QNI (6) NCS KE7LKW, K7JUV. KG7JEB, WB4SPB, N6KIX, W7ANM.

Stewart KE7LKW, Randy WB4SPB, George WB4SPB
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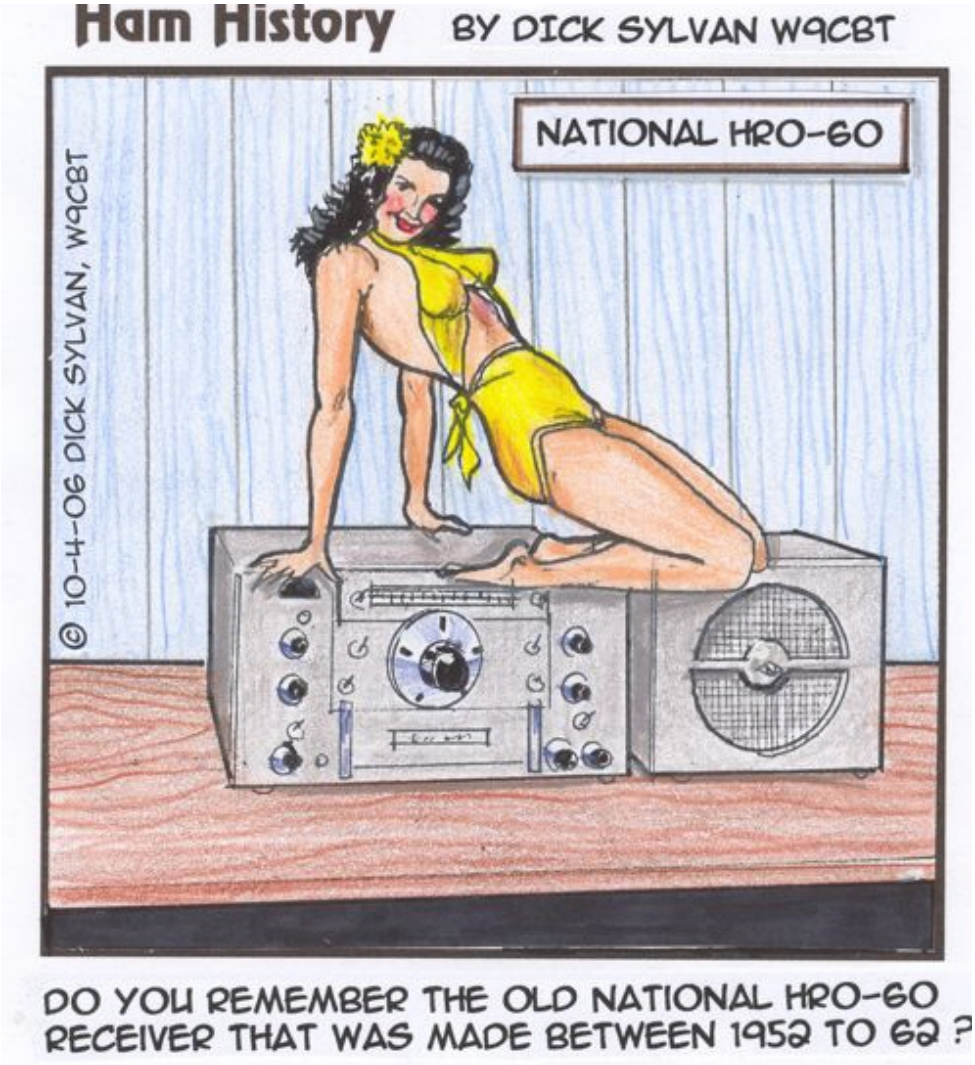
HAM QUIPS

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 nine local chapters - Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, West Florida, Central Texas, Illowa, Delmarva, Downeast Maine, Long Island, 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

NAQCC LONG ISLAND CHAPTER

Items in this section are from the Long Island Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should go to Howard, WB2UZE.

What a fun day we had on December 7. We started out as 5 at the Atlantis Diner in West Islip for breakfast. The food was good and conversation engaging. Walt W2TE arrived there on his big tricycle which was amazing for a fine CW Op in his 80s!

Afterwards we headed over the Robert Moses Causeway Bridge and the weather was crisp and clear to the horizon affording a beautiful view of Great South Bay, the Ocean and the Fire Island Lighthouse.

We arrived at Robert Moses State Park Field 5, in sight of the Lighthouse, and went to the far west end of the parking lot near the chain link boundary fence. The fence affords a sturdy mechanism to fix jackite poles to and acts like a secondary counterpoise too. Within 45 minutes we had 4 stations set up with operating from inside our cars to protect against the robust wind:

The four W2LCW CW positions were:

KF2TP: Ham stick about 6 feet long, no counterpoise. With FT 817 5w on 30m

W2OSR: Jackite pole 31 ft end fed with 9:1 balun. With FT817 5W on 20m (SSB operating as W2NMY)

WA2AKV: Jackite pole 31 ft end fed sloper with FT817 5W

W2XS: Jackite pole 28 ft Inv. Vee fed with twin lead with KX2 5W

We made 31 QSOs with the furthest ones being Alaska, Texas, Croatia, Germany and Hungary. We also heard fellow member Adrian KO8SCA, on his DXpedition in Polynesia as TX0M on 17m. He was working a pile and we knew it would be a long shot with 5W so we did spend much time calling. Bands used were 40-17m and conditions were good.

The advantage in using Field 5 is:
1) Low noise almost zero
2).Good bounce off the nearby ocean using verticals
3) Beautiful and relaxing location with facilities
4) Plenty of quiet and room
5) The chain link fence
6) Centrally located to many members
7) Good for Parks on Air and Lighthouse chasers

In past non QRP operations we have worked into the Pacific using 50w from Field 5 so this location is prime.

The wind was strong but we were very comfortable once inside the cars. We were getting out well and many Reverse Beacons were copying us strong as far as Finland and Arizona. (Go to reversebeacon.net and search for W2LCW and you can see many interesting spots) This was a new location for all the members present and they experienced right away how powerful a place it is to operate from.

Thanks go out to the following members who came out:

Bob KD2NFS
Walt W2TE
Mike KC2SYF
Nick KF2P
Hal WA2AKV With rig
Bob W2OSR With rig
John W2XS With rig
Rick KF2TP With rig

Rich K2UPS had a last minute conflict and unfortunately could not make it but he has been to Field 5 many times and there were 5 other members who were out of town that wanted to attend.

And appreciation to these members who took the time to listen for us or work us:

Gary WA5TED
Walt KA2CAQ
Bob K2YGM
Jim W2KFV
Bob K2TV
Gary KE2YK
Ron KE2UK
Bill W2IIT

NAQCC VP John N8ZYA who heard us weakly but could not reach us was very supportive and also spotted us on the QRP cluster.

We will do this same operation every month, even in the winter, as once in the cars its not unpleasant. So we encourage the club to come out Mid January. 14 Photos are attached and 5 videos are in the club file, always thanks to Ron KE2UK: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2sd7b3k25xckdkj/AADPkd6YwD6G7p39R6CmZi7ca?dl=0

Regards
Howard WB2UZE

A nice photo montage of the outing follows. - Editor

After breakfast with W2TE on his bike.

Sloper jackite going up.

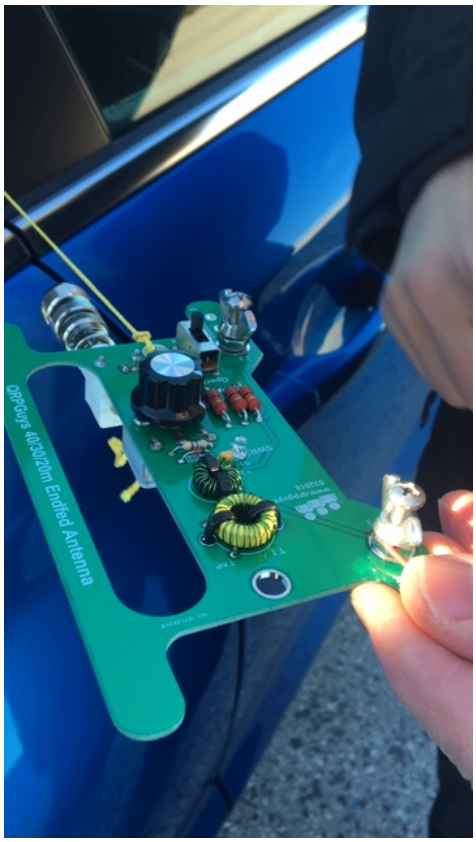
Rick KF2TP putting up his ham stick.

John W2SX putting up his jackite pole.

Bob W2OSR and Nick KF2P putting up a jackite pole.

Ham stick learning in the wind.

All three jackite poles up.



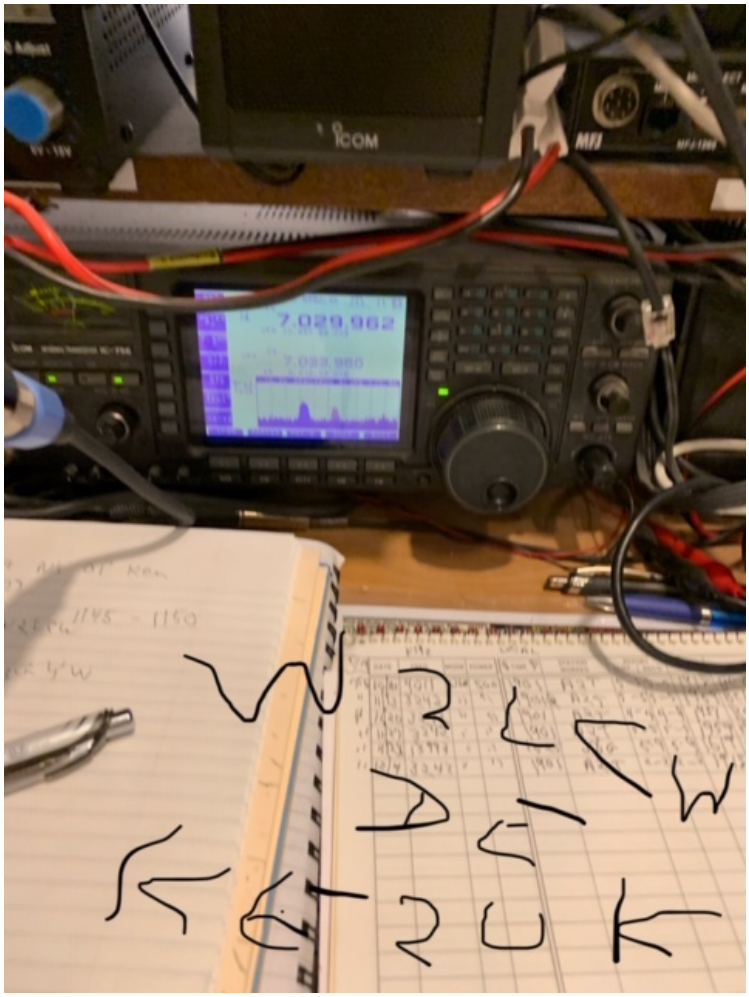
Hal WA2AKV's SOTA matching unit.

Bob W2OSR operating from his car.

Hal WA2AKV operating from his car.

John W2XS operating from car.

Rick KF2TP operating from car.



Ron KE2UK showing our signal on his rig.

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More Long Island Chapter news follows.

The Long Island Chapter will have its monthly outing, weather permitting, in the middle of January always from Robert Moses State Park near the Fire Island Lighthouse on the south shore of LI. This is an excellent location for transmitting, being right near the ocean with low noise for good reception

Meantime our 40 QRP members are always busy doing something with QRP and here is some of the latest news:

1) From Neil N2ADG our resident kit building enthusiast:

a) He will be updating and bringing back his QRP blog blog: fofio.blogspot.com, which is chock full of QRP kit building information
b) What he is currently building:
--K8TND DC 40 M Receiver Kit from QRPGuys.com
--MMM+ 40 M Transmitter from QRPGuys.com (designed to go with the above receiver)
--A Weber Tri-Bander from QRPKits.com
c) News Neil is reporting:
--Midway Electronics, which produces an updated version of the old Small Wonder SW-series radios has finally released the 20 Meter version of the radio. Available with a nice professional cabinet.
--EA3GCY from Spain has been selling the ILER series of SSB QRP kits for some time. He is now offering them with a nice finished cabinet as an add-on.
--The Four State QRP Group is now offering their Hilltopper kit in a 40 M version, and the simple Cricket Transceiver in a 30 M version.
--Everyone is patiently (impatiently?) awaiting the arrival of Hans Summers' new QSX radio, which is a SDR transceiver initially offered as a monoband design, but will grow multiband modules soon after it is introduced. Keep an eye on the QRPLABS page as well has Hans' own website.
--The SDR CUBE, which is a standalone multiband rig, based on Tony Parks Softrock will be available for purchase again on or around Jan 15. They have been awaiting new cases, and in the meantime, have found much more economical sources for parts, bringing the price of this neat rig WAY down. The mini kit version is quite a bargain. Check out the listing for Midnight Design Solutions in the guide for more info.
--Another mention goes out to Walford electronics, who produces some interesting kits on his farm in the UK. These are not widely talked about in the states, but worth a look for something different.

2) From Bill W2IIT: Bill has been taking CW lessons with the Long Island CW Club this year and is proficient enough now to make CW QRP QSOs with his new IC 7300 powered down to 5w. He reaching as far as Kansas. Our congratulations to Bill

3) From Bob W2OSR: Bob has added two items to his QRP equipment. 1) a new antenna, the QRPGuys 40m-10m UnUn Tenna Plus. It has a built in tuner and uses a 9:1 Unun. 2) The WindCamp lithium ion battery pack for the Yaesu FT817. With 3000 mah it should run quite a while between charges. About six months ago he had a bhi DSP unit installed which eliminated the annoying noise between transmissions.

4) From Hal WA2AKV: Hal is building a crystal controlled QRP CW transmitter based on the designs in Wes Hayward's (W7ZOI) book "Experimental Methods in RF Design" (ISBN-13: 978-0872599239). He has exchanged a few emails with Wes – he has been very responsive to some very basic questions

Hal says: "It is a wonderful project because I have spent the last 30 years writing software and have not touched a soldering iron for decades! The basic transmitter is completed (measured output is about 100mW), pretty clean waveform and I am now working on a 3-5 watt amplifier section."

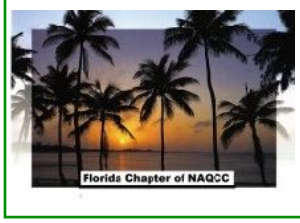
5) From Joe N2OUV: "This Argonaut 509 and 208 filter belonged to my recently SK friend Frank WB2LRR. It was given to me by his nephew who said his Uncle Frank wanted me to have it. Frank was the original owner and often told me of the DX he worked with the little rig in the 70's and recalled his most memorable contact was with a ham on a ship in the Pacific. I will be restoring it over the course of the winter addressing a stiff PTO and stretched dial cord which are common issues in these Argonauts. I also plan to add an outboard digital frequency display and upgrade the 4 pole IF filter to an 8 pole. "

6) From John W2XS: John is using a new Elecraft AX1 mini whip antenna from his kitchen table and making QRP QSOs. A full article can be seen with photos in this months member submissions. (*Actually it's a feature article earlier in this issue. - Editor*)

7) From Bob KA2ZIU: "I have been working QRP as of late (all CW), and had some great contacts a few days ago using only two watts. One guy in GA, and he gave me a 589, what a surprise." Bob likes the rag chewing aspect of QRP ops as opposed to a '599 QSO'

8) From Bob K2YGM: Bob will be operating from Florida until April 2. He will be using a new Alpha Mag Loop on a tri-pod from inside his residence and plans on working the NAQCC monthly sprints and also the CW Ops CWTs. All QSOs will be confirmed with a colorful card.

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: December 2018

We finally got to go out and play!

On Friday, December 21, 2018 the Florida Chapter of NAQCC arrived at a park – after three months of weather washouts! We held our latest "Operation in the Park" at Candace Strawn-Lake Dias Park in DeLeon Springs, Florida.

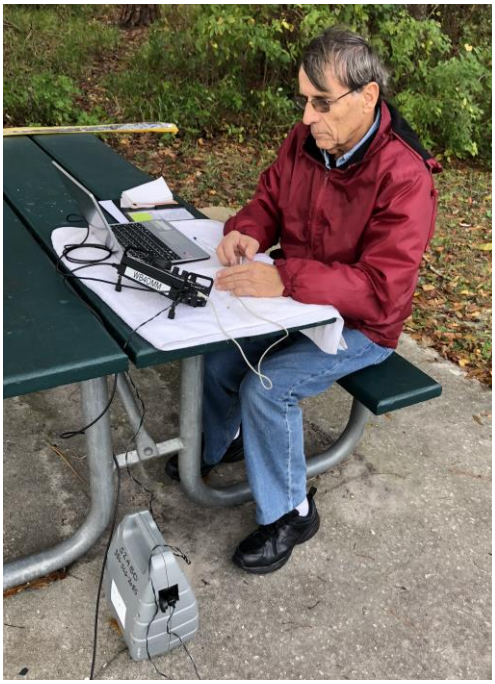
A small county park "sandwiched" between State Road 11 and Lake Dias, this park has a nice covered pavilion, adjacent parking, a restroom and several large picnic tables (many near the water), making for easy setup. We've been to this park quite a few times and it is one of our favorites. We arrived, to a temp of 61 degrees and 50% humidity, accompanied by mostly clear skies and a stiff, 20-30 MPH wind! Florida Winter. (No, it didn't last – we had two bouts of quickly passing very light rain before we left at noon).

This trip we had a total of 6 members/operators in our group to include: Steve WB4OMM #5274; Don K3RLL #1905; Art WB4MNK #5274; KD4JS #8019; Nikki KM4SBQ #8749; and Wally KG4LAL #6278.

Steve WB4OMM #5319
Steve's setup his trusty Elecraft KX-3 and a ground mounted Hamstick vertical for 40 meters with a Vibroplex Code Warrior Jr and GenLog.

Steve WB4OMM and Nikki KM4SBQ at the WB4OMM Station

Steve worked: WA9VFD NC (No #); KD3CA PA #6602; W8BUD MI #1243; W2GIW NJ #9668; AJ8S OH #6829; and WA8SAN OH #792



Don K3RLL #1905 used Steve's Elecraft KX3 on 40M to snag two more members in North Carolina: WG8Y Mark # 4405 and KB9ILT Paul # 5588

Wally KG4LAL # 6278 - Wally had a Yaesu FT-817, using a vertical wire antenna on a mast – operating from inside his RV.

Wally made 1 Q on QRP SSB on with a non-member.

Wally was smart. Not cold or windy in there.

Here is Wally and Don K3RLL in the "Big War Wagon"....yeah, a real recreational vehicle one! **It was really nice - and Wally let us eat our brown bag lunch in it!**

Another secret weapon …

hiding in plane sight!

Whoa! It's the hidden team of Art WB4MNK and John KD4JS in John's "mini War Wagon"!!
Yeah, they were smart too. It wasn't cold or windy in there either!

Art and John "cleaned up" - worked total 14 stations; 12 Members worked. 11 States worked WA, VA, CT, IL, MI, OH, FL, NJ, TX, LA, NH. 11 States Station: KX1 4 watts, 31 Ft vertical with 3 counterpoise wires, 9:1 UNUN. Tuner used was a Z-100 by LDG.

Yes, it was windy. It didn't stop the whole time we were there! (KD4JS's Antenna that Art was using)

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

NEXT MONTH'S SCHEDULED EVENT:

Friday, January 18th, 2019 starting at 10:00 AM EST Hontoon Island State Park (2309 River Ridge Rd DeLand, FL 32720) –
Park webpage with directions: *DIRECTIONS TO PARK AND INFO*

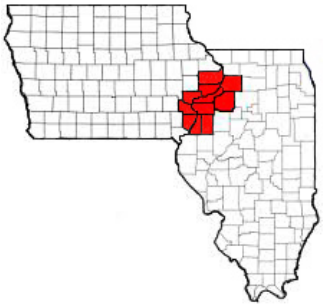
WHO: "The Usual Suspects" – Art WB4MNK, Steve WB4OMM, Rick AA4W, Don K3RLL, Wally KG4LAL, Bob W2EJG, John KM4JTE, John KD4JS, Phil Nikki KM4SBQ, John W2IV, Doug W4DBL (and whoever else can make it).

Visit our Web Page:
http://wb4omm.com/naqcc-fl-chapter/
Look for our announcement!

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

THE NAQCC-FL CHAPTER EXTENDS OUR MOST SINCERE WISHES TO ALL OF YOU FOR A SAFE, PROSPEROUS, AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!

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 monthly chapter meeting **on December 13th** at the Bettendorf Village Inn. In attendance were Mark, K0NIA, Dave, NI9M, Tony, N9YPN and Peter, NN9K.

We discussed a variety of NAQCC topics discussed, including maintaining straight key bases with powder coating and alternatives, propagation patterns, antennas (especially doublets and dipoles for operating portable), and various and sundry related topics.

Most importantly, we continued our discussion of our upcoming event. To wit:

It’s January, it’s cold, there is snow on the ground but the Illowa Chapter wants to hold an operating event so we decided to have coffee and donuts with Dave. Dave, NI9M has a big backyard with several wire antennas. He also has a big kitchen table where we can put radios and other “stuff”.

So on **January 19th from 16:00UTC to 20:00UTC** we will be operating from Dave’s house. We will have three radios operating near or on the usual QRP frequencies. Check QRPSPOTS.COM to see who is and where they are operating.

Some calls you may hear: NI9M, Dave (of course) N9BIL, Tim, N9MAT, Matt, K0NIA and NN9K, Peter. And if you happen to be in Silvis, Il stop by for a cup of coffee and a donut.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 10th at 7:00pm in the Moline Village Inn location.

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.

No report available.

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/.

No report available.

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.

No report available.

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.

No report available.

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.

No report available.

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 Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

I recently read a book that might be of interest to other members. It's called *The Innovators*, by Walter Isaacson. The book is a fairly detailed look at the historical development of the "digital revolution" from Charles Babbage and Ada Lovelace in the early 1800's through Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, and Larry Page of today. The story also includes plenty of other scientists, mathematicians, engineers, kid hackers, and entrepreneurial risk-takers, with a few heroes and villains sprinkled in. (And yes, Al Gore did actually play a part in the development of the internet!) Many of these people were hams and that fact is frequently mentioned in the book. I think that the chapters on the invention of the transistor and the microchip might be of special interest to members. The book is not especially new (2014) and I checked it out in a Kindle digital format from my local library so you might be able to get it from your local library as well.

From Gene, N5GW, #5353 —

I have often noticed directional effects in the radiation pattern of various simple wire antennas (SWA's) which I have used over the years. Such are most apparent when rapidly switching back and forth between two or more such antennas. Here are two anecdotes to illustrate:

I once experimented with an 80-meter inverted vee and an 80-meter vertical, using a hand-operated coax switch to allow rapid changeover. A given signal was often louder on one of the antennas, presumably mostly directional effects, but the ratio occasionally varied over a period of several seconds, sometimes louder on the other antenna. I attributed this to changes in the incoming wave angle, fading, or polarization effects. The vertical seemed mostly omnidirectional, but the inverted vee at times seemed to have nulls off the ends.

The second experiment was undertaken because my 108-foot multiband CFZ seemed to work much better in certain directions, especially on the higher frequency bands. So I erected a second such antenna at right angles to the first. Switching back and forth yielded surprising results. While some signals sounded about the same on each antenna, other signals could be loud on one antenna and weak on the other. Occasionally a station that was barely audible could be brought up three or four S units simply by switching antennas. The difference was most remarkable on 20 meters and above. I noticed that I could even predict whether a given station was East-West or North-South of my location.

My interpretation is that signal strength changes resulting from switching the orientation of a given such antenna is due mainly to filling in the radiation pattern nulls described in the antenna books.

The message here is that you may be able to improve your dipole, vertical or random wire antenna coverage by erecting an additional antenna of different orientation. Try it!

From Tom, WB7EUX, #6346 —

One morning recently I was well into my routine at our home in remote northeastern Oregon. Feed the cats, gather the morning weather data for Colorado State University, and check email. Something caught my eye out the north windows of my ham shack where my antennas are installed. I looked up and exclaimed, "My vertical antenna is missing!". Sure enough I could see it laying over on its side. My first thought was the wind had blown the vertical over. Then it dawned on me we didn't have wind the night before and, besides, the antenna was supported at two levels and with four anchor posts using durable fiber guy wires.

A closer inspection found the bottom part of the vertical bent over the wood fence enclosure and antenna sections stretched out across the pasture. Looking around I discovered most of the fence posts used for anchoring the guy wires were bent over. I concluded that a large mule deer or elk had hooked their antlers into one of the guy wires and took off attempting an escape. We commonly have from eight to 24 mule deer bedding down in our surrounding pastures at night and wandering through during the day. I found the remainder of the guy wires dragged to the far northern edge of our pasture. There was no evidence of the responsible party.

Fortunately I have ARRL Amateur Radio insurance and the entire cost for a new DXE 43-foot-vertical was covered. The insurance adjuster looked at the photos I took and told me there was no way the antenna could be repaired. I also replaced the fence posts with eight foot versions in hopes of avoiding another incident. Life at the edge of the wilderness!

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

For Straight Key Night this year I decided to try to make at least one QSO with every straight key that I could scrounge up. That ended up being 8 keys for 8 QSOs. Here are some pictures of the keys that I used and yes, one of them is actually a toy!

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 9500 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

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