

NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 201 MARCH 2015



KEY CLICKS

- **NEW NAQCC NETS MANAGER.** Scotty Long, NU0S, is our new NAQCC Nets Manager. Scotty has been the NCS for our Midwest QRS net and he will continue in that role as well as taking over the manager position from Chuck, AB1VL. Questions about our nets should be directed to Scotty. His email address can be found on the last page of this newsletter.
- **NAQCC NET LISTINGS MODIFIED.** Our QRS nets have been very successful in helping new CW operators develop their skills, and now several of the nets have evolved to providing their regular check-ins practice at much higher speeds - in the low to mid 20's wpm. To reflect the fact that some of our nets are no longer operating at QRS speeds we are now including a QRS or QRQ indicator in our published net schedules on the website and in this newsletter. NCS's will still slow down to help beginners but if the net is listed as being a QRQ net they will soon start to pick up the speed.
- **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR N#A OPERATIONS.** Yes, it's early, but you know what they say about the "early bird." We need volunteers to put our N#A special event call signs on the air during our anniversary celebration October 12-18. It's a lot of fun, no special equipment or skills are needed, and your operating schedule is completely flexible. If you are interested in being an N#A operator please contact club President Paul, N8XMS (email on last page). There is no limit to the number of operators that we can have so "the more the merrier." If you would like to be the one from your district that uses the special call during the sprint please indicate that as well (first come first served). *If you have already signed up to be an operator but find that your schedule has changed and you now need to opt out please let us know.* (Having someone on the operator list who doesn't actually operate complicates our record keeping and wrap-up work at the end of the week.) Detailed instructions for special event operators will be sent out by the end of September but if you have any questions just ask.
- **PRIZE ELIGIBILITY REQUIRES PARTICIPATION THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.** Once again some great prizes will be given away to members participating in our 11th anniversary sprint in October, and just like last year there is a throughout-the-year participation requirement to be eligible for the top tier of prizes. The requirements are not excessive, just a few sprints and/or challenges through the year will do it. Complete details can be found at http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html.

IN THIS ISSUE

Key Clicks	1
Scratch Station 2	3
Member Spotlight	7
Sprints	8
Challenges	11
Awards	13
QRS Nets	14
Ham Quips	19
Chapter News	20
Member Submissions	32
About The NAQCC	42
Contacts	43

- **2015 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE.** We want to encourage all of you to “talk up” the NAQCC and as an incentive we will be offering a prize each quarter of 2015 to the person responsible for the most new membership applications during that quarter. (The application form includes a field where the person can indicate how they heard about the NAQCC.) The prize will be a gift certificate for 100 free QSL cards from http://cheapqsls.com/club_naqcc.htm.
- **APOLOGIES FOR THE LATE ISSUE.** I’m sorry that this issue of the newsletter is a little late in coming out. I’ve been traveling for the past 3+ weeks and I am now madly scrambling to try and catch up on everything. As a result there will probably be a few omissions/errors in this issue but I hope that they won’t be too significant. The good news is that I was able to do a little portable operating while away and you can see a short report about that in the Member Submissions section.
- **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.”



SCRATCH STATION 2

BY KEITH FORD, KF4TAP

Editor - This is the second installment in a series of articles KF4TAP is sharing with us about his efforts to build a QRP station completely from recycled parts and without any cash outlay. (He calls it a "spy station" - something that a spy could throw together from readily available parts without drawing any attention to himself.) Don't look for silk-screened circuit boards here - it won't be "pretty." But many would call this "real ham radio," harkening back to the days when a kid would "borrow" his mother's breadboard to build on and would cut up her cookie sheet for a front panel. It's all a "little rough" but I'm sure that you will enjoy it.

To catch you up... Last month Keith built a simple crystal checker/oscillator that could serve as the foundation for a basic transmitter. But he has since decided that he wants to keep that project as a piece of test gear so this month he starts over to build a very basic QRP transmitter that will become the foundation for future development and expansion.

In the last installment I built the crystal checker aka "spy transmitter". As it is, it's a basic piece of test equipment and in a pinch could be used as a TX over a short distance.

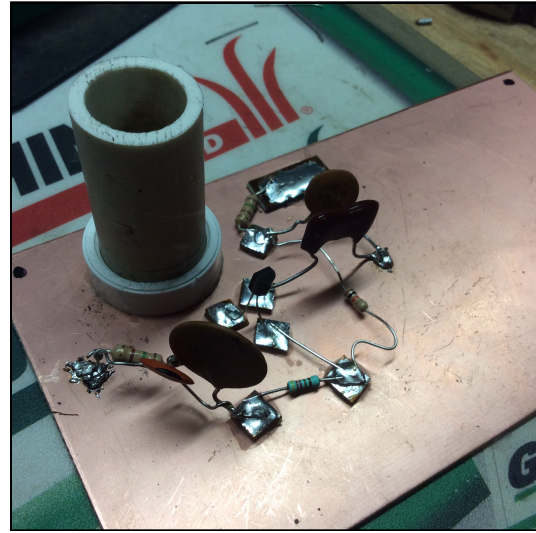
In this installment I shall make some improvements to the oscillator and make it somewhat better as a TX. I will start with another board because I needed the crystal checker as is. I'll use the same type of oscillator, I believe it is a colpitts type, for this build. My plan is to eventually have three sections, oscillator, buffer driver, and pa. So this stage will start and end something like a MMM, Michigan Mighty Mite. (*The Michigan Mighty Mite is a simple QRP transmitter circuit that has been around for a very long time. For example see <http://www.qsl.net/wb5ude/kc6wdk/transmitter.html>. - Editor*) Later I will add the following sections to increase the output up to 5-7 watts output. Although this will be built for 40 meters. Why? With the last circuit I found trying to operate in that portion of 80M's I was buried by the digital crowd. Antennas are smaller for 40 than 80 and the antenna I plan on using, with the materials in mind are normally free for asking.

Since the last article, I received and read "2 Eggs on My Plate", excellent book! Everyone should read it I think. In the interest of the "spy" rig I will attempt to spend no money except for maybe solder through this series. As the rigs go on the air if there is interest I'll make up some "spy" QSL's. So on to the build!

My first thought is power, the plan is to use rechargeable cordless drill batteries with this rig. The reason being that the "powers that be" will not look too closely at multiple batteries charging if the house is inspected. Cordless tools are in most every household, and eventually they go bad. So a while back I opened up one and found a string of c size cells in the case, just like RC packs! I ohmed each cell and removed two that were bad. I replaced them with cells from another pack. After assembly the pack charged and worked fine. Free power pack! I get quite a few each quarter from people who throw them away!

With the power source secured, I can now build the circuit, it is very similar to the checker. There are some additional parts, like the coil. Since there is no need to reinvent the wheel, I decided to use the MFJ-40T schematic, instead of the MMM. (*The MFJ-40T is no longer in production and MFJ gave us permission to publish the schematic. See the last page of this article. - Editor*) I have a bit of PCB for the base, more pads that I rescued, and all the components I've harvested from circuit boards. The circuit is really straight forward, it reminds me of the Tuna Tin 2 by Doug DeMaw W1FB (SK).

I drew the parts placement, gathered the pieces, laid them out and glued the pads, a few minutes for the glue to dry and then soldering.

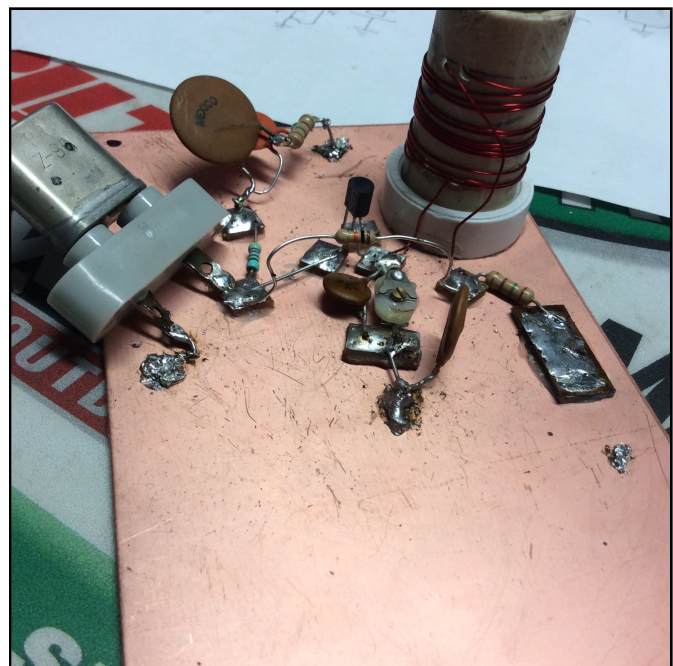


You see the coil form? It is a piece of PVC pipe, I understand there some folks don't like using this material for coils. The MfJ had a slug tuned oscillator, which I could not replicate just yet. I used a calculator and determined that I need 12 turns on the piece of 3/4 inch PVC. Next to make a socket for the coil form I cut a bit off a connector and glued it to the board, mainly if I need to make adjustments to the coil I can remove it without the hassle of removing glue and making a bigger mess! Which was good as I had to remove a couple of turns. The power level is so low that it should not be an issue. After building the Osc section and using a C9014 which seems to be quite similar to the 3904/2222.

Next is the buffer/driver/amp, I have a lot of hope for this section, I have a stash of 2N3866's, not a commonly available device in salvage, but I have them, an alternative would be a two 2sc711's in a darlington circuit, the 711's are common in old CB's. The intent here was to have between 500 mWatts and 750 mWatts to drive a PA up to and beyond 5 watts.

Another evening of glueing, placing, and soldering and I have the exciter ready to try. I connected the 18 volt battery, key, and dummy load. Tacked in a 7.058 Crystal and tapped the cootie bug / key. A bit of adjustment and I had a good tone in my RX.

I decided against about throwing this directly on the air. In my ARRL handbooks of the late 60's to early 70's there is a neat little device called an RF probe. N5ESE has a page devoted to this little device. The gist is for a few parts, you can build a piece of test equipment to check low levels of RF power. It can be built with all salvage materials. It is used with your DMM or VTVM And can be made in short order. Also the book EMRFD (I received this just as I was drafting the story) has the same circuit and description, but I think N5ESE gives a better dialog of the RF probe.



So the news? My little circuit is providing me in the ball park of 610 mWatts, still QRPp, but it is a useable power level with the dipole at 17 feet. Coverage should be about 150 mile radius of my QTH. A different buffer may bump it higher, or some "fine tuning" may increase power somewhat, but I am happy with it as it stands.

This little circuit could be a VXO for a tube circuit like a 6L6, 6AQ5, or any other tube you may find, trade for, or (cough) buy. The earlier mentioned IRF 510 will make a fine PA, there are other parts that will work.

A couple of thoughts I had after I nearly had this finished, a rotary switch like in a CB would let me use a group of crystals, a poly variable capacitor would tune each change. Maybe in the next board?

So now that I have a good start on the "spy" transmitter, I need to start working a back up receiver.

73. De kf4tap, Keith

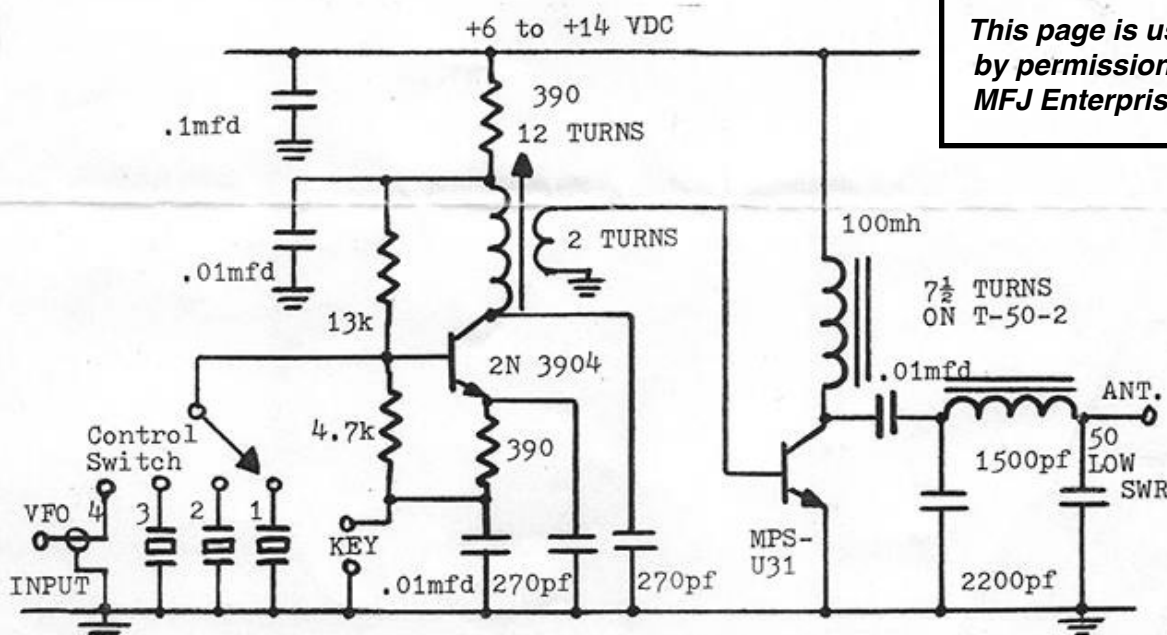
USING THE MFJ-40T QRP TRANSMITTER

Thank you for your purchase of the new MFJ-40T meter CW QRP Transmitter.

You will thrill to many hours of operating pleasure that the challenge of low power brings. But REMEMBER, success with QRP requires plenty of operating skill. The QRPp COLUMN by Ade Weiss, K8EEG, CQ for August 1974 is jammed packed with QRPp operating tips by VE3DQ and is recommended reading. Write and ask for a reprint if you don't have it handy. The MILLIWATT, National Journal of QRPp, will keep you up to date with QRPp. For a subscription, write to editor Ade Weiss, K8EEG, 213 Forest Ave., Vermillion, SD 57069.

Here are some notes on the MFJ-40T QRP transmitter:

1. No tuning is required for optimum performance over the 40 meter CW band (7 to 7.2 MHz). However, a low SWR 50 ohm 40 meter antenna is necessary for proper loading. Plug the antenna into the OUTPUT jack on the back panel.
2. The power amplifier output transistor is protected against burn out during temporary periods (30 seconds) of no load, dead short, or somewhere in between at the antenna output, so don't be afraid to experiment with different antennas.
3. Apply power to the POWER jack on the back panel. Use the accessory MFJ IC regulated AC power supply, MFJ-12DC, an equivalent low impedance power supply, or 6 or 12 volt batteries. Run 3/4 watt input a 6 volts, 5 watts at 12 volts and 7 watts at 14 volts. Do not exceed 14 volts.
4. The CONTROL switch positions 1 and 2 select the two internal crystals (remove the 4 screws on the sides to lift off top). Position 3 selects the external crystal jack on the front panel. For VFO operation, slide the CONTROL switch to VFO and plug the MFJ-40V VFO into the VFO jack on the front panel.
5. Plug a key into the KEY jack. We recommend the new MFJ CMOS-440 QRP keyer.



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MFJ-40T Schematic Diagram



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.

HAROLD SLACK, VE5BCS, #2436



Greeting to all NAQCC club members from VE5LAND. I started my interest in radio as a short-wave listener. My radio room was in a closet. I would pull up a chair and with earphones on, tune to Voice of America etc. While I was listening, a landline call would come for me and my wife would say "He is in the closet, I'll see if he can come to the phone".

I took amateur radio courses and moved up to 2-meters and enjoyed that for years. I tried CW for many years and finally passed the 12WPM test and received advanced privileges. I fell in love with 10 meters. The 10-meter band was hot in 1990 and I didn't even listen to CW during this time. Then, after many years, my radio buddy was continually beating me in most contests. My plan was to return to CW to get an advantage and it worked. I enjoy CW now too, and mostly do operate CW. If 10 meters is in, that is where you can find me.

I started out in QRP with some portable operating but did not have much success. I belong to FISTS, NAQCC, SKCC, and ARCI. I've operated at the Queen Mary in its Los Angeles dry dock, the Emerald Princess Cruise ship, and the CJ82 Boys Scout Jamboree with close to 300 boy scouts visiting the portable shack. I also operated club station VE5EEE for the 100th anniversary of the city of Prince Albert.

I enjoy some contest work and have worked John K3WWP on 80 meters CW. I mostly work 20 meters, as my signal gets out best there. I spent many years as club president, operated for Civil Air Search & Rescue, the MS bike event and a local triathlon. I made my living as a carpenter. I hope to work more of you with my FT817, HW8, or Icom 7000.



NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT: The March sprint will be on the 19th from 0030-0230 UTC. Of course that's Wednesday evening on the 18th in North America. Please note the time change due to the switch to Daylight Savings Time on the 8th. Complete details can be found at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201503.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.

LAST MONTH'S SPRINT RESULTS: Once again we broke the magic 100-log level in our February sprint with 118 submitted logs. Our expanded certificate categories seem to be generating interest and a few more operators took on the challenge of working the sprint with a bug. Conditions seemed fairly good and the average number of QSOs per submitted log was 3 higher than last month.

Complete sprint results, including soapbox comments, can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201502.html> and summary information can be seen in the tables on the following pages.

We would especially like to welcome our first-time log reporters. We hope that you had a great time and will return often: AA4CF, W9PZ, N3DQU, W7HD, KM4FXQ, N8NK, KC9TQR, WH7TT, WB7SDE, N2QFD, W0JRM

PARTICIPATION REMINDER: *Please remember that there is a sprint/challenge participation requirement to be eligible for the top-tier prizes that will be given away during our anniversary celebration in October. See http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html for the details.*

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KN1H	K1IEE	
W2	W2SH	K2YGM	
W3	AB3RU	WB3FAE	
W4	WH6LE	N4SX	K4KRW
W5	WI5H		
W6	WK6L	NS3C	
W7	K9JWV	AA7VW	
W8	N8XMS	K8RJW	WB8LZG
W9	KB9BVN	W9CC	
W0	N0TA	K0ALN	
VE	VE2TH		
DX	C O8CML		

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	K1SX		
W2			
W3	K3WWP		
W4			
W5			
W6			
W7	N7QR		
W8	AB8FJ		
W9	AA9L		
W0	WD0K		
VE	VE5BCS		
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	N2CN		
W2	N2ESE		
W3	W3NCR		
W4	WX4RM	KU4A	
W5	N5GW		
W6	KR5RR		
W7	W7HD		
W8	W8DW		
W9	NN9K	W9PZ	
W0	K9OSC		
VE			
DX			

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

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	AA4CF		W9PZ
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
N8NK			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	118	123	194	2/13
Participants	186	195	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1942	1664	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	1006	929	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	936	735	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	438	379	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	1284	1108	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	220	177	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	16.5	13.5	19.3	9/11

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

NUMBER OF SPRINTS	MEMBERS
50+	NQ2W W4DUK NO2D KC2EGL KB8FE K6CSL KE5YUM KQ1P N8QY K1IEE WA2JSG WB8ENE AA9L VE3FUJ KD0V KB3AAG WY3H N4FI K3RLL NF8M KU4A NU7T
75+	K4JPN N8XMS WB8LZG K4BAI KD2MX K4NVJ W2SH
100+	W9CC W2JEK KA2KGP K3WWP
125+	



NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: The North American challenge for March is an alphabet challenge that works with words found in some of our more obscure sports. The challenge inside of the challenge is to identify the sports. (The answers can be found on the webpage just below the list of words so don't peak!) You can find the list of words at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201503.html>.

The European Chapter challenge works with the names and surface areas of four mediterranean countries. Details at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/march-2015-challenge>.

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: In April in North America we will have another alphabet challenge with words commemorating the "Night of Nights" - the end of commercial Morse code operations in this country. Complete details are found at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201504.html>.

European challenge works with the names of four European pioneers of radio communications. Complete details can be seen at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/april-2015-challenge>.

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

LAST MONTH'S CHALLENGE: The Our February challenge was an alphabet challenge tribute to that all important weather forecaster - the groundhog. 21 reports were submitted and complete details can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201502.html>.

Details on the European February challenge can be seen at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/february-2015-challenge>.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Recently we have been receiving entries to our alphabet challenges in non-standard formats that complicate the processing of the submission. Please use a simple text report (the actual email or an attached file) where each word is listed on a separate line with the callsigns that form that word listed horizontally across that same line. For example...

WORD - K3WWP CO8CL W3WMR KD9QS
NEXT - N8XMS K1EIR N8XMS N5PHT
etc.

PARTICIPATION REMINDER: Please remember that there is a sprint/challenge participation requirement to be eligible for the top-tier prizes that will be given away during our anniversary celebration in October. See http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html for the details.

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

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



NAQCC AWARDS

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

FEATURED AWARD: 30-30 AWARD

Our 30-30 award is designed to promote the possibly underused 30-meter band. To qualify for this award you need to make 30 QRP/CW 30-meter QSOs during a single calendar month. You can find complete details about this award at http://www.naqcc.info/awards_magnum.html.

AWARDS ISSUED LAST MONTH:

1000 MPW AWARD

0471 - KE5YUM	LW3EX	-	1,077	02/08/15	Inverted Vee
0470 - VE3DTI	RI1ANR	-	1,815	02/08/15	Wire vertical

QSO-A-DAY AWARD

0001	G3JFS	31	02/21/15	Month of January 2015
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30-30 AWARD

0036 - G3JFS	Jan 2015	02/08/15
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NAQCC QRS/QRQ NETS

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

NAQCC NET SCHEDULE				
Net	Local Time	UTC	Freq +/-	Primary NCS
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CT	Tuesday 0000 Z	7065 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Farnsword 80 m QRQ Net (FRN80)	Sun 8 PM PT	Mon 0300 Z	3574 KHz	JB, KR5RR (in CA)
Farnsword 40 m QRQ Net (FRN40)	Mon 8 PM PT	Tues 0300 Z	7123.5 KHz	JB, KR5RR (in CA)
Midwest Net QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 9 PM CT	Tuesday 0200 Z	7117 KHz	Scotty, NU0S (in NE)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 5 PM MT	Tues/Thurs 2300 Z	14062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 5:30 PM MT	Tues/Thurs 2330 Z	7062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
West Virginia QRS Net (WVN)	Wednesday 9 PM ET	Thursday 0100 Z	7117 KHz	John, N8ZYA (in WV)
Pacific Northwest 80 m QRS Net (PNW80)	Thursday 7 PM PT	Friday 0200 Z	3574 KHz	Stewart, KE7LKW (in WA)
Great Lakes QRS Net (GLN)	Thursday 9 PM ET	Friday 0100 Z	7117 KHz	David, WA8AXF (in MI)

We are pleased to announce that Scotty Long, NU0S, #3715, has volunteered to be our new NAQCC Nets Manager. If you have any questions related to our nets please contact him using the email address listed on the last page of this newsletter. Scotty sent in this biographical sketch to introduce himself to everyone. - Editor

Hello Gang my name is Scotty Long, NU0S, NAQCC Member 3715, I live in Lincoln, Nebraska, my main purpose in life is to praise God and help others through all the gifts he has given me. I enjoy spending time with my wife of almost 20 years and our two daughters. I hold a (no code) licensed in 2009 Amateur Extra Class License and work almost entirely low power QRP, QRPp HF, VHF, UHF CW... I enjoy using a straight key the most for conversations it's less robotic, more personal like a hand written letter... My favorite CW straight key is the German "Junker".

I became interested in Ham radio at an early age. I have fond memories of listening to my dad's Halicrafters S40A receiver which I still have and wondering what those crazy dit's and dah's were all about and what they were talking about. My dad passed away while I was in high school and not to be a burden to my mom and family, and also tired of being told what to do, I enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and was soon off to boot camp MCRD San Diego CA. I went to Aviation Mechanics School at the

Millington Naval Air Station/Center in Millington, TN before assignment to my first Active Duty Squadron, the VMA-331 Bumblebees MCAS Cherry Point, NC. I was assigned to the first operational AV8B Model Harrier squadron in the U.S. Marine Corps. I worked as an aircraft mechanic and Plane Captain-Crew Chief my entire active duty career and made the rank of Sergeant E-5 in less than four years.

I also served in my local Army National Guard DET 2 109th Aviation, and Army Guard as a Helicopter mechanic Crew Chief and Weapons Instructor. I exited the military honorably in 1991 after the first Gulf war "Operation Desert Storm". I want to thank all of our veterans for their service to our country, thank you, thank you!

I have always worked hard, that and my Midwest work ethic and discipline my mom and dad instilled in me set me up for success in the Marines and for life. I am still in aviation 30+ years now, I work as an aircraft mechanic A&P, I.A., Aviation Electrician and avionics bench tech and am a licensed private pilot and serve as the Chief Inspector for an FBO, Fixed Base Operator FAA Certified Repair Station here in Lincoln Nebraska.

I like to build my own amateur radio equipment as much as possible and enjoy kit building and trouble shooting. One of my local Elmer's and good friend Steve Sellmeyer WB0QQT, an NAQCC member has given me many kits to build and got me hooked. My favorite kit radio is my OHR 100A 20m transceiver followed by my Elecraft K1-4 four bander. I would like to build an Elecraft K2 someday...

I really enjoy CW nets and nervously got started again by Steve WB0QQT and other local ops with a local 10m CW net that built my confidence. I learned Morse code at 22 wpm on the computer with a program called "Just Learn Code", so now it's hard for me to slow down because I hear the dots and dashes and not words at slower speed... so I often have to write down slower speed code. We have great Ops here in Nebraska Stephen May WA0ASM now a silent key SK taught me the "Art of Running a CW Net" a true professional honorable gentleman and Vietnam Veteran Radio CW Operator. Stephen was an arm chair copy CW op with great patience and willingness to share, I'll never forget him.

I now greatly enjoy the NAQCC family and all the opportunities they offer. I don't get to operate in many of the sprints due to work schedules and family commitments but am very privileged to serve as the NAQCC Midwest QRS Net Control Operator and now as the NAQCC Nets Manager and Coordinator, I'm very humbled and thankful for the opportunity. I honestly took for granted all the hard work the volunteers' do for this club. Chuck Yahrling AB1VL set a very high standard and tough shoes to fill. I'm still learning and look forward to playing radio and helping out as I can with the club CW nets. The NAQCC family has welcomed me and supports me better than any organization I have served with. The NAQCC Net Operators are great, please give them all your support by checking into your local nets. It's a lot of work to run a scheduled net most people, ops' don't know the time invested to keep a net operational and successful. Again please give them your support, and let me know if you ever have any questions or concerns or want to start a local NAQCC net in your location. 72, 73 and God Bless, now as I like to say... You-Know-What-To-Do... Go-Giver!!! Thank you. Scotty Long NU0S NAQCC Member 3715 dit dit.

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Hello gang we had a great February 2015 Net Schedule. We were all very busy and blessed with many check-ins QNI to our local nets. I want to thank everyone for your patience as I learn my new volunteer duties. A special thank you to all the volunteer NAQCC Net Control Operators. Just a quick note please check the NAQCC Nets Page often for updated time changes for daylight savings time or any other

schedule changes. With spring-summer sneaking up on us, yes hard to believe with all the cold crazy weather we have all had. Spring and summer propagation may make some nets change bands, times and frequencies so again please check the Nets Page often. Also please be sure to listen up and down on the bands as the published net frequency may be busy with a CW QSO at net time, we never ask someone to move off frequency for a scheduled net if there is a QSO in progress. Remember these are practice nets not formal traffic handling nets so always be courteous and move up or down as needed. To tell the truth I'm happy the bands have been busy, use it or lose it...

Please check band conditions/propagation and turn up your transmitter power as needed within your license class for reliable communications at net time, yes use the lowest power for reliable communication I normally run about 15-25 watts at net time. We are a QRP CW Club but for nets higher power is approved and encouraged. The goal is to have a nice reliable as possible chat to improve our Morse code CW skills. Remember you can't fix bad propagation with power...

I want to say for myself and I'm sure the other NCS Ops will concur that talking to everyone on a regular schedule at net time is a great pleasure, like meeting great friends for coffee every week. Thank you for all your support and great friendly encouragement...Hey follow me on Twitter @NU0Slong for live net updates and QRP CW in the field...Please contact me anytime with questions or concerns with any of our NAQCC Scheduled Nets...72/73 Scotty Long NU0S NAQCC 3715 MWN NCS / Nets Manager-Coordinator.

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

John Smithson N8ZYA, NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN)

Had to take his cat in for emergency surgery and had a fill in for his scheduled net he noted that he had a nice long CW chat, afterwards, on our net frequency, with KA8ONW about playing bluegrass music. Mark, who lives in Michigan, is one of our club members and plays the banjo and fiddle. It was a very nice QSO about music in general and I enjoyed it very much. I do not miss the days of playing rock and roll when I carried around big amplifiers and used an electric guitar. We both agreed acoustic music and voice harmony has its merits. We both enjoy playing very much.

James (J.B.) Still KR5RR, NAQCC California Farnsworth Net (FRN)

A really interesting month. Conditions really excellent some nights and really crummy ones, on both bands. Ed/WH7TT in HI really wants to participate in a net but is just too many time zones west for most. He had good copy on all of us on 40m this past Monday - that was the night none of us could hear each other. Thanks to all for your participation! 72/73 de JB.KR5RR

NAQCC CW Net QNI Reports All Stations

February/2015 Please note: Dates are in UTC

NAQCC Main QRS Net (NQN)

QNI (0) -This net is currently discontinued-

NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) James (J.B.) Still KR5RR, California, 80M, 3.574 MHz

02-02-2015 QNI (1) NCS KR5RR;

02-03-2015 QNI (5) NCS KR5RR; KE6EE KE7LKW WB4SPB K7KY

02-09-2015 QNI (5) NCS KR5RR, WU7F N7HRK KE7LKW K7KY

02-16-2015 QNI (5) NCS KR5RR, KE7LKW/7 N7REP N6KIX N7HRK

02-23-2015 QNI (5) NCS KR5RR, KE7LKW K7KY N7HRK WU7F

40M, 7.123.5 MHz

02-10-2015 QNI (8) NCS KR5RR, N7REP, WU7F, N7HRK, WA2DWK, K7KY, WH7TT, KF7WNS

02-17-2015 QNI (5) NCS KR5RR, N7HRK, KE7LKW/7, WU7F, N6KIX

02-24-2015 QNI (6) NCS KR5RR, N7REP, N7HRK, KE7LKW, KF7YHB, WU7F

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

02-03-2015 QNI (1) NCS KA5TJS,

02-10-2015 QNI (5) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YUM, N5DRG, N4LMI, KE5YGA

02-17-2015 QNI (4) NCS KA5TJS, N5DRG, KE5YGA, W5TS

02-24-2015 QNI (6) NCS KA5TJS, N5DRG, K5BRY, KG0YR, N7NET, KE5OCW

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

02-03-2015 QNI (5) NCS NU0S, K0JFJ, KG0YR, WB0QQT, K9HHY

02-10-2015 QNI (4) NCS NU0S, N8ZYA, WE8UPJ, WB0QQT

02-17-2015 QNI (9) NCS NU0S, K8VEE, KC4URI, K0JFJ, KK5IB, WA8AXF, AC0BQ, WN0WWY,
KG0YR

02-24-2015 QNI (5) NCS NU0S, K0JFJ, WA9PWP, WB0QQT, KB7KY

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

02-03-2015

2300 14.0625 WC7S (6) AA7CU, N6MY, KF7WNS, K6HPX/M, NF5U

2345 7.0625 WC7S (3) N6MY, KD5KC

02-05-2015

2300Z WC7S (6) AA7CU, W5SOC, K0DTJ, KR5RR, WA3Q

2345Z WC7S (1)

02-10-2015

2300Z WC7S (5) W5HNS, AA7CU, KR5RR, N6ZI

2345 WC7S (2) N7GES

02-12-2015

2300Z WC7S (7) W5HNS, W3HZZ, WA2DWZ, K9JWV, K0DTJ, AA7CU

2345Z WC7S (3) K9JWV, N7GES

02-17-2015

2300 WC7S (1)

2345 WC7S (1)

02-19-2015

2300Z 14.0625 WC7S (4) KE6OIO, W2SH, KG9DW

2345Z 7.0625 WC7S (3) N7GES, KG4BQQ

02-24-2015

2300z 14.0625 WC7S (10) K6MGO, W0XI, KR5RR, AE7CG, KG9DW WV4TN, AB1V, AA6BK,
W1PID

2345Z 7.0625 WC7S (2) N7GES

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

02-05-2015 QNI (2) NCS N8ZYA, WA8SIE

02-12-2015 QNI (2) NCS AC8LJ, W2DWX

02-19-2015 QNI (5) NCS N8ZYA, WE8UPJ, AC8LJ, NU0S, WB0QQT

02-26-2015 QNI (4) NCS W8GDP, KA8ONW, WA8SIE, WB0QQT

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

02-06-2015 QNI (9) NCS KE7LKW, AD7BP, K7JUV, WB4SPB, K7ZNP, W7MWF, VE6ADM, N7QR,
WN0WWY

02-13-2015 QNI (6) NCS KE7LKW, AD7BP, K7ZNP, N7QR, N6KIX, W7ANM

02-20-2015 QNI (8) NCS KE7LKW, AD7BP, K7ZNP, K7JUV, N6KIX, W7ANM, WB4SPB, N7HRK

02-27-2015 QNI (6) NCS K7JUV, AD7BP, N6KIX, W7ANM, WB4SPB, KE7LKW/M

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

02-06-2015 QNI (7) NCS WA8AXF, WB3K, K9EYT/4, W1QF, K9ES, WB0QQT, WE8UPJ

02-13-2015 QNI (6) NCS WA8AXF, WA2DWX, K9EYT/4, K1IEE, WE8UPJ, AC8JW

02-20-2015 QNI (7) NCS WA8AXF, K1IEE, K9EYT/4, AC8JW, WA2DWX, AC8ED*, WE8UPJ

02-27-2015 QNI (6) NCS WA8AXF, K9EYT/4, WB0QQT, KG0YR*, WH6YH*, W5BH*,

*FIRST TIME CHECK-IN



HAM QUIPS



Dick Sylvan, W9CBT, #2062, has been a QRP/CW operator for a long time. He is also a very talented cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the *KY9A Telegraph*, a free ham radio eZine published by the Robert F. Heytow Memorial Radio Club (<http://www.k9ya.org/>). We are very pleased and honored to be allowed to reprint his cartoons here. Dick has also authored the book *HI HI - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons* available at <http://www.ky9a.org/w9cvt/>.

HAM LINGO

"DRIFTING"



NAQCC CHAPTER NEWS

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

If your chapter is planning a portable operation activity and would like to have it promoted on the club email list or in the newsletter, send an email with the subject "NAQCC Portable Operation" and with the exact wording of the announcement to Paul, KD2MX, about a week before the operation. Please be sure to include the UTC time for the event and not just the local time.

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

Chapter Reports Begin On The Next Page

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER



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

The chapter is located in the Austin, TX area.

Greetings to all:

The Central Texas Chapter has had a fairly uneventful month of Chapter activities, unless you count the Great Mexican Food at the Chapter dinner that was held at Los Chilaquiles on the 21st. Good Food, Family and Friends.

The weather has not been in our favor to do much activities outside, not that the temperatures were too bad in relation to the north east of our Great Nation, but it was just cool enough, and wet enough to make a QRP outing next to impossible.

Next Month's upcoming Chapter events are:

April 4th is the Texas State Parks On The Air Contest. TSPOTA for short, so if you hears us call "CQ TSPOTA" that could be us. Frequencies: 7.065, 7.062, 14.040, and (28.028) MHz, if we are in the good Favor of the RF Propagation Deities.

Joe - K5BRY NAQCC # 6666 will be going to The South Llano River State Park to operate from there, and Larry - WB5BEK, NAQCC #7534, and myself Danny-N5DRG 5861, with possibly a couple more Chapter members (still undecided) will be traveling a little further south to Seminole Canyon State Park.

This will be a Divide & Conquer Central Texas Chapter Event.

From Austin, TX South Llano River is about 150 miles to the west. And Seminole Canyon is about 300 miles to the South West, these are road miles, and if we go any further south we will be in Old Mexico. Seminole Canyon State Park is right on the U.S./Mexico border. Yes, it's a haul to get anywhere in TEXAS.

The Chapter has posted these two events on the NAQCC Spotter Page.

Here is the link to both State Parks, and the Texas State Parks On The Air websites:

<http://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/south-llano-river>
<http://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/seminole-canyon>
<http://www.tspota.com/>

Also the Central Texas Chapter is pleased to add new Front Page on our Chapter Website with links to upcoming Amateur Radio events within Texas, Member QRZ Pages, plus a link back to the NAQCC main page. Many thanks to Joe -K5BRY for his skills in the art of HTML, & Alan KE5TNO for hosting the website. Please check it out, and let us know what you think. www.naqcc-centraltexas.net

Until next month, or On the Air!

73

Danny – N5DRG, #5861

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER

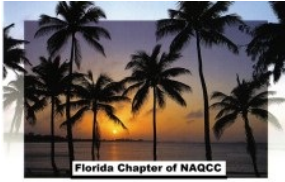


Items in this section are from European Chapter President Matt, MW0MIE, unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to him. The European Chapter website is at <http://www.naqcc-eu.org/>.

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

No report available.

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



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

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER MEMBER NEWS: On Friday, February 27th, 2015, the Florida Chapter of NAQCC returned from our notable absence in January due to the wicked Florida winter weather. We held our latest “Operation in the Park” event at Lake Ashby Park, located off State Road 415 in New Smyrna Beach. Actually, while that may be the park’s address – it ain’t nowhere near the beach! (It’s really some 17 miles as the crow flies to the Atlantic Ocean!!)....and it’s not in New Smyrna Beach either!! (Unincorporated County).



AB8GU

WB4MKN

WB4OMM

K3RLL

KG4LAL

AA4W

This park has a several covered pavilions, loads of picnic tables, BBQ grills, restrooms, a water fountain and Coke machine. Easily accessible adjacent parking made for easy setup. Some of us have been to this park a few times before, and it is another one that’s kinda’ “off the beaten path” and was devoid of any other human activity!! We had the entire park and all the pavilions to ourselves.

Like I said earlier, it is “winter” here in Florida. No, not like winter up North, but we do live in **NORTH** Florida! We arrived with cloudy skies, a temp of 52 degrees with 70% humidity, accompanied by a steady wind of 8-12 MPH. I know, it doesn’t sound like much, but with the wind chill at about 41 degrees, after two hours in this crummy weather it started to get pretty uncomfortable. It stayed like that all morning, although it got to a balmy 55 degrees before we left. It was not Chamber of Commerce weather for the “Sunshine State”. And 40 degrees less than Tuesday’s high of 81! Note we are all wearing jackets and two are desperately trying to keep their hands warm in their pockets! We had six of us show up today, and some new “toys” to play with. Weather aside, it is ALWAYS a GREAT day with

GREAT people. Today's escapees from reality were Steve WB4OMM, Art WB4MNK, Don K3RLL, Darryl AB8GU, Wally KG4LAL, and Rick AA4W. The photo was taken by a Volusia County Parks employee - thanks!!!



Steve WB4OMM #5913 brought out his new toy, a 4SQRP Cyclone 40 transceiver, serial #33, running 4W out to a 40M Hamstick on a ground mounted tripod with 4 radials. He got skunked!! (Never happened before!) Not a contact, although he bravely faced the steady breeze in the open pavilion (and he really did, the wind was out of the North, and that's which way he was facing!!). He called CQ NA for over two hours and got zilch. Wasn't the radio – that seemed to work FB (and he's actually made contacts with it before). 40M was HORRIBLE, with deep QSB and few signals to be heard. The stations that were fairly strong faded in and out and the 4W just wasn't penetrating that heavy cloud cover and frigid temp.

And Steve is sticking to that story!



Art WB4MNK #5274 used his Elecraft KX1 running 3W, used a Dirt Cheap paddle, and brought out his new toy, a homebrewed magnetic loop antenna (that was matched with a 1.2:1 SWR).

Art built this loop from scratch and was the brains of the operation, using RG8 coax cable, copper tubing, a variable capacitor, and PVC pipes. And like many things in life, it was a conspiracy!! Don, Wally and Darryl helped in the design and the construction of the loop – all shared in the development and the success. It worked FB! Nice work fellas!

Art made 5 QSOs with folks in NJ, IN, NY, IL, and VA. All 5 QSOs were with NAQCC members. He always beats Steve!!



Don K3RLL #1905 brought his trusty Elecraft KX3 running 5 watts; Don made 5 QSOs, all with NAQCC members – from KS, NY, VA, CO, and PA - all on the magnetic loop. Don made a comparison of the magnetic loop with his usual antenna, a 31' wire vertical on Push-up pole fed through a 9:1 Unun with WB3T, who said the loop was EXACTLY THE SAME as the 31' vertical.

Don's had very good luck with that 31' Unun antenna. And he's happy as a clam to be using the magnetic loop!!!!

And Art couldn't get his antenna back! Hence, the evil laughter of Don as he works the airwaves with Art's loop and is caught red handed slapping the paddle!



Rick AA4W #1628 made the hour plus trek from Crescent City, some 65 miles away – now, THAT’S dedication! He not only braves the cold, but also the rush hour traffic! All for QRP portable in the field with us East Coasters. Wadda’ guy!

Rick used his Elecraft K-1 with a “speaker wire doublet” antenna and worked 15M. It showed! He got the DX!! He made 8 QSO’s (the most today) including PJ7AA, F5FMO, PJ40D, A45XR, EA8TL, WA7NCL, HI3LFE and N3IK.....wow, very impressive for QRP!

Rick brought a few toys too...a homebrewed PowerPole distribution center in an Altoids tin, and he got Steve all excited by bringing his HardRock-50 50W amplifier with built-in antenna tuner! Nice stuff!!



Wally KG4LAL #6278 doesn’t usually do CW on our ops, but does QRP SSB with his Yaesu FT-817 to a wire dipole.....and he makes a few contacts here and there....until today (Hear that Steve? EVEN WALLY MADE A QSO!) Yeah, Steve hears.....

Wally’s QSO was with a fella in ND who gave him a 55 report – and couldn’t believe Wally was QRP in the field.....ah, the magic of QRP!

Wally liked Art’s magnetic loop antenna too.....and see, his hands are cold too! The “sugar sand” in the photo foreground sure looks like snow....brrrrrr!

If he could have used the magnetic loop he would have....and I think this picture was taken as Wally was trying to think of a way to snatch it away from Don!

Darryl AB8GU #6913 the NAQCC-FL Chapter Official mascot, technical advisor, and self-appointed “go fer” in our outings, spotted us on the internet, helped with antennas and transport, and kept us “informed” on the other’s progress. He got the last of Steve’s coffee from his thermos....betcha’ THAT’S why Steve got skunked.....no coffee!! (Refer to previous NAQCC-FL Chapter outing reports as to the “who still has coffee factor”.....hi hi hi!); actually, Darryl was offered the coffee by Steve but Steve is NOT ready to give up that excuse!

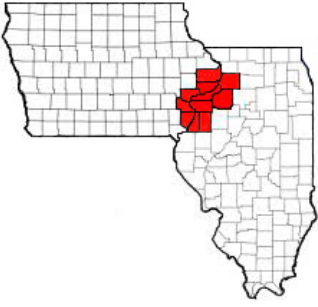
We quit just before noon and enjoyed lunch at a local fast food restaurant....the warmth was welcome!

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

NEXT MONTH: The next monthly outing of the NAQCC-FL folks is scheduled for Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 9:00 am. Look for our announcement!

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

NAQCC ILLOWA CHAPTER

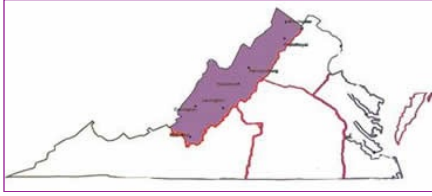


Items in this section are from the Illowa Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to Bob, W9PZ.

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

No report available.

NAQCC SHENANDOAH VALLEY CHAPTER



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

No report available.

NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER



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

The news from the West Virginia Chapter revolves around two activities this month; the N3AQC operation from the [Huntington Museum of Radio and Technology](#) and the [ARRL International DX CW Contest](#).

Despite long range planning, the weather played a precarious part in this year's Huntington event. I made the 40 mile drive to Huntington before a big storm, but the return trip back to home skirted a blinding snowstorm with white out conditions. I barely made it back inside the Charleston city limits before 30 mph winds created an impossible driving situation. The windblown snow made looking across the street impossible.

Our Valentine's Day Special Event had the gracious blessing of my wife. That evening, we had a lovely dinner in Charleston complete with flowers and our favorite red wine. She is a beautiful person in many more ways than one. I hope the rest of the NAQCC crew enjoyed a great day too.

The weather for the entire month has been brutal by my standards; but nothing compared to the folks up North. I talked to many hams this month with monstrous levels of snow on the ground. Many were afraid to open their front door and had fears of collapsing snowy roofs. We actually had over a foot of snow on the ground this month; this is very unusual since we live in a sheltered valley.

We woke one morning to find a broken water main and no electricity. The water main burst a few houses below us; it spared us, but created a geyser of ice water as it ran down the middle of the street. It encased several cars into solid blocks of ice. Our power outage was brief but a scary time in below zero temperatures.

We continue our monthly breakfast meetings. This month Steve Ashcraft (KC4URI) brought an interesting project to breakfast. He built a GPS unit using an Adrino board. Steve reminded me of the closing of a national radio parts supplier. Radio Shack closed their doors at the Charleston Town Center Mall, but not before I bought a new soldering iron and a crimping tool at a 60% discount.

Our weekly QRS net continues to churn along. The 40 meter band continues to be very long. Hopefully the change in daylight savings time will bring shorter range contacts. With the exception of local stations here in Charleston, the other check-ins come from Michigan, New York, and Nebraska.

On a different note, I wanted to make a personal comment about the ARRL DX CW International Contest. I've never heard such good conditions on the 40 meter band! I've *occasionally* worked DX on this band but this month the conditions were outstanding. I have a list of the stations I worked on my radio blog.

I spent very little time working the DX contest but added two new countries to my DXCC list. I'm not a big contester....don't have the station and don't have the antenna; but I worked several DX stations with the "bird house" 40 meter Isotron antennas which were more than 5,000 distance. This antenna is mounted on a painter's pole which is "bungee corded" to a bedpost in a spare upstairs room. I like keeping things simple.

Don't let anyone tell you DX can't be had with a "simple wire antenna". QRP operators are often intimidated by "pile ups" and don't feel competitive at this power level. It's true that working with QRP power and a simple wire antenna is challenging. You will not get "high numbers" but I suggest you "have fun" and set your "personal" goals. Compete with "yourself" ...and be happy with whatever stations you capture. Success is much more to do with good CW skills than anything else. I'm amazed at the [449 contacts made by John Shannon](#) with a long random wire!

That's about it for the WV Chapter this month. Eric (AC8LJ) and I have an interesting trip planned to the Summersville Dam in a few days, and the Charleston Ham fest is fast approaching. I'll be doing a power point presentation this year which highlights our club. I'll write about that in the next newsletter. Happy Trails,

John N8ZYA – VP NAQCC Club

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER



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

The month of February had three 'gatherings' of WPA Chapter members as described here.

Feb 16 - As usual, Mike and I had a good time all day for another of our annual holiday visits - Presidents Day. He arrived around 10:30 or so, and we chatted for a while and watched a couple old TV shows on the Internet. Remember Ernie Kovacs? We watched a couple of his skits as Percy Dovetonsils and another with the Nairobi Trio. Hilarious stuff from the 1950s.

After that it was off to Ponderosa for a lunch buffet. Next up a shopping trip to WalMart where Mike got his fishing license so hopefully we can do some fishing later this year. I picked up a couple things - new shoes, some card stock for printing QSL cards, and I stocked up on my favorite snack meat, Turkey Spam.

Back home again and on to our prime project for the day - finishing our QRP "Lil Squall" transceivers. It continued to be a bit of a struggle with the somewhat poorly written instruction manual even with our kit building experience. However after a couple hours we did finish them. Here they are:



After finishing the build, we took them up to my shack and hooked them up and lo and behold, they actually worked. We heard a lot of signals on 40 meters, and measured the RF output at something around 600 milliwatts. We didn't work anyone though because the bandwidth is very wide and we couldn't figure out exactly where we would be transmitting in relation to the stations we were hearing. Figuring that out will be a project for the next visit.

It was around 0000Z when we put the kits away, so I looked around for my DX QSO and found and worked C6AKQ with a single try on 17 meters. After I worked him, either the band changed or C6AKQ

changed beam headings, because he started working a run of JAs before Mike had a chance to get him. At least it wasn't something like Navassa Island, so Mike didn't feel all that bad about it.

Mike had to head north a little early as it looked like some snow was on the way plus he had to get up early for work the next day.

Feb 25 - Mike was a little late coming from a meeting he had here in town, but we had a good time eating the pizza I ordered and he picked up on the way here. Then we did some planning for what accessories we'll need for our Lil Squall transceivers when we make them fully operational the next visit. We also did some chatting about the weather and the extreme cold, etc. A short visit because of the late meeting, but still enjoyable.

Feb 28 - Tom WB3FAE and I had a great visit here. We shared a lot of info on contesting while comparing our results in the recent ARRL DX Contest. Although our operations were separate, I find it interesting to note that we made a total of around 800 QSOs using QRP/CW/ and simple antennas. Our locations are about 19 miles apart as the crow (or RF) flies. We found a lot of similarity in our efforts, but some notable differences also. He worked some countries I didn't, and vice versa. We both had trouble working Brazilian and Cuban stations.

After that, we went to my shack and compared our KX3s. After we did that, we did some listening mainly to the UBA contest. I heard a couple European contesting friends, and gave them a QSO, but no big effort.

Next we upgraded the firmware in Tom's KX3. Then played with the Pileup Runner program for a while before he had to head home for some grandkids sitting.

In March, Mike and I have at least one visit planned (14th and 15th) when we'll be concentrating on setting up a new laptop he bought, and then time permitting we'll do some ham radio stuff - maybe work some DX or play with our Lil Squall rigs or who knows what else. I'm sure we'll visit Ponderosa that Sunday morning for their breakfast buffet for one thing.



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 you 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—

This was spotted on our recent trip to Disney World inside the Seven Dwarfs Mine Ride.



Also from Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

Three days after returning from our trip to Disney World with our 4 year old granddaughter we left for a two week “adult recovery vacation” in Arizona. Our son-in-law works for a major auto manufacturer and every winter he is sent to Arizona for three months to do warm-weather testing of vehicles. He and our daughter stayed in a nice 2-bedroom apartment and invited us to come for a visit. (Our granddaughter is our son’s child, not this daughter’s.) I took my Elecraft KX1, and in between some great sight seeing and desert trail hiking (24+ miles), I managed to enjoy some portable operating from 7-land. The apartment was on the 2nd floor and had a small balcony. Just a few feet out from the balcony there was a row of small scraggly trees that ran along the side of the building. I was able to shoot (slingshot and fishing weight) an antenna wire from the balcony over these trees forming sort of a wide inverted-U shape rather close to the wall of the building. A counterpoise was wrapped around the perimeter of the balcony floor. The internal tuner in my KX1 was able to give me a good match on all bands (20, 30 and 40) and the six AA batteries produced about 1.5 watts of output. With all of our other activities, my operating time was very limited and usually was not during prime on-air times but I did manage to make 9 QSOs - 4 on 40, 2 on 30, and 3 on 20. I worked stations in CA, AZ, OK, and ID, but most of them were in CA. I can’t claim that “I could work anyone that I could hear.” There were plenty of people who couldn’t hear me and my signal reports typically had 3’s, 4’s, or at most 5’s for the strengths but I did have at least 2 really solid rag chews and I almost never had to repeat my information for anyone. It was a lot of fun and operating outside in 60 and 70 degree temperatures while it was in the teens back home made me really look forward to the coming portable operating season here in Michigan.

From Richard, K4KRW, #1815 —

I participated in the January 16th 160m sprint. I have no 160m antenna and relied on my 80m dipole and my antenna tuner. It was brutal. But, I did manage 2 contacts so I considered it a success. I found out later that I had won the sprint drawing. The 'grins' to 'number of contacts' ratio has to be a record.

I have a BY-1. So, from the available prizes I chose a mahogany set of finger pieces for that paddle. I ordered a new set of levers from Bencher which were around \$15 a piece. I could have modified the levers I had. But, I don't like doing things that I can't undo. The new levers came with the standard clear finger pieces riveted in place.

I used a Dremel #192 high speed cutter head to grind off the end of the rivet on the lever side. It was very easy as the bit centered itself in the rivet and ground through the soft metal without applying pressure. There was no damage to the levers.

At a local hobby shop I found a 'Great Planes' cap-head screw set (GPMQ3540). The kit contains 2-56 cap-head screws along with washers and lock nuts. I decided not to use the lock nuts as they were too thick. I used standard nuts which were also available (GPMQ3300).

Attaching the finger pieces was very simple. After installing, I did have to unbolt one of them and turn it over as they aligned better when I did that. I then used a cutting wheel on the Dremel to cut off the excess length of the screws.



It took a little adjustment to get the paddles in proper alignment for operation as the levers were slightly different in shape from the originals (my paddles are pretty old). If the levers are not aligned properly, the BY-1 can feel mushy.

The cap-head screws made a very clean looking installation. The finger pieces give the BY-1 distinctive look and a very nice feel. Last year my main project was to work on my CW copying speed. Thanks to the K7QO code course and many hours of practice, that was a great success. This year my main goal is to master sending with the iambic paddles. This newly enhanced BY-1 is already proving to be a great motivator towards my goal. I truly feel honored to have a set of Gregg's finger pieces. They are gorgeous. Hope to work you on the next sprint. That will be sprint number 50 for me. I can't wait.

From Jock, N1JI, #7012 —

Here is further proof that QRP works. I installed a TenTec R4020 in my car last December. My mobile operating is very casual and I spend most of my time listening. I've posted a map of stations I've worked QRP/mobile at <http://qsl.net/n1ji>. There aren't a lot of stations on the map yet but my list includes QSOs throughout the eastern United States and western Europe. As of March 1, all the QSOs have been on 40 meters using an MFJ "HF Stick" antenna while mobile in NH or VT.

Also from Jock, N1JI, #7012 —

I want to thank the NAQCC and Gregg, WB8LZG, for the decorative oval I won in the quarterly sprint participation drawing last December. Here is a picture of the oval in front of my paddles, but the photo doesn't do it justice. It is a beautiful piece of wood that is iridescent when held up to the light. It has a permanent home in my shack.



From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

February was a notable month. Topping the chart was my streak of working some DX each and every day (of course with CW/QRP/simple wire antennas as always) reaching 730 consecutive days on February 28. That's 24 months or two years. Stats on the streak are available on my web site at k3wwp.com. Look in the QRP section - DX Streaks page. It shows how my 4,296 DX QSOs during the streak were divided among time of day, bands, the 148 countries, all continents, month, etc. I think the streak should show anyone who has any doubts about working DX with a simple setup that those doubts are foundless.

February as always includes one of my favorite contests, the ARRL DX contest. Although far short of my record 633 QSOs in that contest, I was pleased to make 449 QSOs in 208 multipliers this year. Conditions were pretty good, although somewhat short of what they were for the contests in the late 1990s and early 2000s at the last sunspot maximum. NAQCC VP John N8ZYA wanted me to be sure to write up the story of the contest for the newsletter. I'm not doing that, but if you want to read more about it and see how I attack contests like that, again you can refer to my web site in the Contesting section - Stories page.

February also had a disappointment. For only the second time since the European Chapter started having their own monthly challenges, I failed to master one this month. It was a tough one that required more time to master than I had available. Congrats to Dick K1IEE who was the only USA station to master it this month. I wonder how many hours Dick had to devote to it. Perhaps being up in Maine closer to Europe helped also.

Of course as mentioned above in the WPA Chapter news, I had some enjoyable get togethers with Mike KC2EGL and Tom WB3FAE.

In some non-ham radio news, February was a bone-chilling record-setting month. I've been keeping daily weather records since 1959 (how's that for another kind of streak?) and three times during the month we broke the overall low temperature record for the month. It was -12 back in 1961, then we hit -13 this month followed a few days later by -16 then again a few days later we tied the -16. All of that led to the coldest average temperature for any February since 1959 and the second coldest month overall to January 1977. For the meteorologists reading this, there is more info in my web site diary available from the main section - Diary page.

Back to ham radio. Two new overall entities were added to my total when I worked K1N - Navassa Is. and S01WS - Western Sahara. K1N completed all current entities in North America - it wasn't an easy QSO by any means, but I sort of lucked out when I heard a WB8 or WA8 station (I forget which now) working them and he was something like 40 over S9. So I set my transmit frequency to his, and after K1N worked one other station, next he came back to me with that delightful "K3WWP 599" which I hadn't heard in a couple hours overall calling unsuccessfully before that. Those two entities brought my DXCC total to 223 now as well as 1,100 band-entities worked now. I just love working DX as I'm sure you can tell. I think it is the most exciting aspect of ham radio, and made all the more rewarding by doing it with a simple setup like mine.

From Rich, WD0K, #0664—

Back in early 1980 or so, Keith K0HJC and myself were quite active with the Anoka County Radio Club. Acquiring guest speakers was hard work. But one of our speakers was Ray Maurstad, W3HUV/0, from St. Paul. He agreed to address the club meeting and talk about his experience and tales while serving in the Merchant Marine.

He gave this presentation on an overhead viewer, line by line. All in CW. This is from his talk:

The date was July 26, 1956, CW SOS on 500 khz. 10:20 pm. Andrea Doria to all stations: Distress, Distress. Just collided with another ship. We are listing, impossible to put lifeboats at sea.

10:21pm Robert E. Hopkins to Andrea Doria: Your Distress message acknowledged. Please stand by for our position. (W2JNA/MM)

Ray Maurstad was a young officer on the tanker Robert E. Hopkins which was the first to reply to the SOS from the sinking luxury liner Andrea Doria on July 26, 1956.

He believed good fast communications was responsible for saving the lives of the 1655 passengers and crew.

Indeed other ships reached the Doria so swiftly and skillfully that it was a epic rescue as well as a nightmare of fear. That SOS was the most terrifying sound he ever heard. He recalled, "I could visualize the whole thing-all those people in the water about to drown, frantic for help".

We were the fourth ship to arrive at the scene although we were only 45 miles away. We were delayed by having to go around fishing vessels.

HL1CE, Ray Maurstad:

In June 1950, Ray was on assignment to establish a Merchant Marine Academy in Puson, Korea. It was Sunday morning and Ray was relaxing in his ham shack, chatting with a friend in Seoul. The conversation became urgent as Ray was informed that a large force of North Koreans had crossed the border and was invading South Korea at Seoul, starting the Korean War.

Mayday on 10 Mtrs.

Ray relayed the news to Gen MacArthur's Headquarters in Tokyo. For the next two weeks, he operated station HL1CD around the clock until they were evacuated to Japan.

Ray Maurstad finished his career by writing several books, including "SOS KOREA", which are available on amazon.com.

Sadly, after living a ham's life, enjoying Ham Radio, CW and family; Ray passed away in 2012.

From John, K8AG, #0492—

I really like the Elecraft K2. IMHO used K2s can be the best value in HF radios. They are compact, have really great receivers and a fairly complete set of features. In addition, K2s are highly serviceable. Schematics and construction documentation along with a lot of experienced builders are available online. K2s are small and easy to handle. Larger radios require significant effort to trace a signal that goes, for example, down below the radio chassis. A big carcass needs to be turned over with both hands and significant effort. With the K2 this is easily done with one hand.

I have two K2s now, both purchased used and both of them have experienced the same intermittent problem, dry solder joints. Once the problem was traced, it was easy to fix. But dry solder joints exhibit in an intermittent manner sometimes well after construction has completed. Tracing intermittent problems can take considerable time. In the K2 that I fixed today, the problem was causing all manner of nonsense with the BFO.

As I was resoldering the offending pad I noticed that a lot of the pads in the same area looked dry. The solder on the pads dipped down into the holes alongside the leads, rather than mounding up on the leads as they protruded from the board. I resoldered everything in the area and looked over the remainder of the rig for other possibly dry pads.

Many solder tutorials stress not putting too much solder onto a joint. This is important to avoid shorts between pads. But it is equally important to put enough solder onto a joint to fill the spaces between conductors. Following are my own recommendations for soldering. These are what I do, serving me well over the past 50 years.

1. Of course I use only solder made for electronic equipment. Rosin core solder 60/40 is usually fine. Radio Shack still currently sells decent electronic solder.
2. I never use a 25 Watt soldering iron. I always use an iron that provides 60 Watts or more. A temperature controlled iron is best. But an anemic soldering iron can contribute to bad solder joints, damaged boards and fried components. Why do I say this?
 - 25 Watt irons are inexpensive, but generally have insufficient ability to quickly heat parts to the melting point of solder. The temperature of the point being soldered takes a long time to come up to melt the solder. The heat has more time to raise board and part temperatures to a level that can be damaging.
 - A 60 Watt or more powerful iron will quickly raise the solder site temperature to the melting point of the solder. The solder will flow better into the joint and the soldering iron can be removed quickly, well before damaging heat has gotten into the component or under the PC board land.
3. I don't scrimp on solder or time. Just because the solder is melting does not mean that it has fully flowed into the joint. With a higher wattage iron you will melt the solder quickly. Waiting a second after the solder melts allows the solder to flow into the joint providing a solid electrical and mechanical contact without damaging anything.

These are techniques that I have used for a long time. They have worked for me well and I have built hundreds of pieces of equipment, both kit and home brew. I hope these comments help those endeavoring to learn soldering, and perhaps some who have been soldering for years.

From Peter, NN9K, #6887—

I'd like to respond to N8NK, Chuck's comments about remote operation in the last NAQCC newsletter. While I do somewhat agree with his feelings about our hobby and remote operation, there is another side to the topic that I think should be considered.

I have and use a remote station in addition to my home station. Why? Because looking into the future and the possible changes in my wife's and my living arrangements, a remote station is a real asset that will allow me to continue to enjoy our fine hobby.

My wife and I are in relatively good health. There has been a knee replacement, bulging disc, a funky lung disease that no one can figure how or where it originated, essential tremors (look that one up!), and of course everyone's friend, arthritis.

We plan to stay in our home as long as possible but what if our physical conditions get to the point that we are forced to move into an apartment or a independent/assisted care facility where antennas aren't allowed? How do I continue to enjoy my hobby? A club station? There are none in the area. Could I use a friend's station? Possible, but a little inconvenient at 2:00 in the morning when I can't sleep. How about a virtual station like QSONet or HamSphere? Those are possibilities but probably not as much fun, and besides there are no NAQCC Sprints in the virtual world!

However a remote station solves the problem and does it very nicely. As long as I have Internet access from a dedicated connection or even a hot-spot, I can operate my remote station.

My remote station is located about 20 miles from my home station and I share it with another ham friend. It is a simple setup with a tunable wire antenna but it works well. During the February NAQCC Sprint, a friend came out and operated the Sprint using my ground-mounted vertical and I operated the Sprint using the remote station. There wasn't anything said between us during the Sprint but we had a lively discussion afterwards regarding the band conditions and some of the stations we worked. It was kind of a multi-operator/multi-transmitter event, with no inter-station interference but with a lot of fellowship.

So to Chuck and others of you out there, the Internet and technology can be beneficial, you just have to tailor it to your needs.

From Rick, KL7CW, #2333—

Is 160 Meter QRP Operation Possible From My Location With Only a Modest Antenna ?

My most significant obstacle is that I live northeast of Anchorage, Alaska while the nearest significant ham population (for contacts) is in the Seattle area, approximately 1500 miles away.

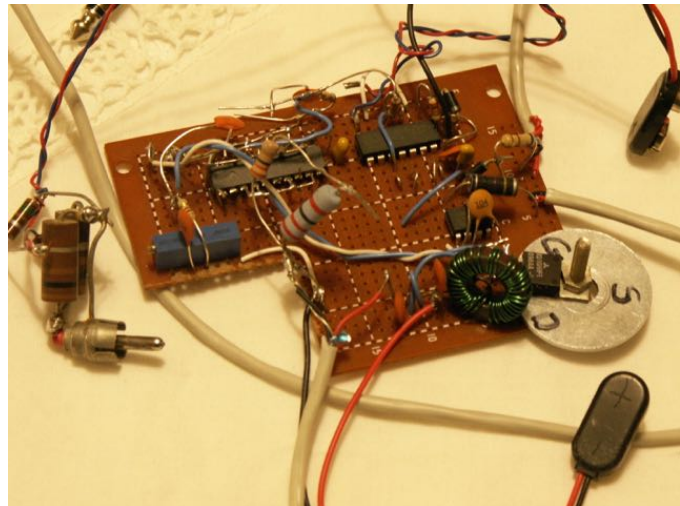
My antenna is an inverted L with a vertical section of 60 feet and a top wire of about 80 feet. The radial field consists of approximately 20 buried radials about 40 feet in length. I am over 40 miles from the nearest saltwater and am mostly surrounded by mountains, some as high as 13 degrees above the horizon.

Running 100 watts CW, 160 meter QSOs with the Seattle area are moderately difficult, and QSOs with the Southern California area (distance 2500 miles) are often very difficult or even impossible. In one of the 160 meter contests I was not successful with 25 watts, but when I upped my power to 100 watts, I began to have some success. I have made some QSOs with California with difficulty on 80 meters running 4 watts to better antennas than my 160 meter antenna.

So my erroneous conclusion for 30 years had been, it is not even worth trying for 160 meter QRP QSOs

beyond Alaska. Then a few years ago in a 160 meter contest when I was running 100 watts, I decided to turn down the power to 5 watts. Wow.....I actually made a few QSOs over 2000 miles distance. But was this real QRP, since I was using a big transceiver plugged into mains power?

Just before the next contest I decided to build a 160 meter battery powered transmitter. I did not have much time, so for the VFO I took the 3.6 MHz output from my old Heathkit HW8. I then used junk box parts for the rest of the transmitter. I ran the four-watt 3.6 MHz signal into an approximately 10 db pad to give me about 5 volts. This I used to drive a 74HC74 divide-by-2 chip to give me 1.8 MHz. I ran this into an inverter, then four parallel inverters in an octal inverter chip, to a power FET, and then a quickly built LPF. This worked great, giving five watts output with a 12-volt battery supply. There were some key clicks, but my nearest ham neighbors during this contest were over 40 miles away so I figured that my weak signal would not produce detectable clicks. Once again I made some contacts, some in excess of 2000 miles. But was this really QRP since I used my big transceiver to receive?



For the next contest I wanted to receive with a battery powered QRP receiver. I opened up my much modified Elecraft KX1 transceiver and temporarily soldered 1500pf capacitors across each of the two 80-meter receive antenna coils. Before the mod, the KX1 could only receive about an S7 or stronger signal on 160 meters. After the mod, the receiver was about 45 db stronger and I could copy weak DX signals equally on my KX1 and Ten-Tec Omni 6. I have very low noise at my rural location so with the mod the KX1 is definitely band noise limited, even if I introduce some extra RF attenuation with the RF gain control. This is definitely not a QSK set up, I need to flip several switches whenever I went from TX to RX. Eventually I will modify the KX1 so I can switch these capacitors in for 160 meters and out for 80 meters. Actually, 1620pf in parallel with the antenna coils would be better since it would center the pass band in the CW part of the band.

The purpose of this article is to encourage folks to try new bands, power levels, and compromise antennas, even if success seems logically impossible. My breadboard transmitter is probably the worst possible example of good engineering, but it served its purpose in demonstrating that 160-meter QRP is in fact a viable mode of communication. My next project will be to design or buy a proper QRP 160-meter transceiver. In only a few hours of operation I was able to work about six west coast states, Japan, and as far east as Texas. On 160 meters, over-water paths are many dB better than over-land paths. It is much easier for me to work Australia, Japan, Hawaii, and San Francisco, than say Idaho or Montana which are closer but mostly over land. Since my QSO base is over 1000 miles away a vertical antenna was the obvious choice. If your QSO base is much closer, a horizontal dipole or inverted V, even as low as 20 to 40 feet, will usually be much better than the vertical out to at least a few hundred miles on both 80 and 160 meters.

Noise, especially in urban settings, is usually a significant problem on 160 meters. I live in a quiet rural area several hundred feet from my nearest neighbors. However, many of our modern electrical devices radiate significant RFI, especially on 160 meters. My antenna is about 20 feet from the house and I need to turn off my 4 ft. fluorescent light fixtures, various light dimmers, and a waterbed thermostat before I operate. I understand some folks in urban areas have some success with separate receive antennas, such as loops.

If you decide to give 160 meters a try, do not be surprised if the band seems to be dead on most winter nights. It is in fact wide open most winter nights, there is just no activity. During a contest weekend or the occasional DX expedition the band usually is loaded with very strong signals, perhaps 20 dB over S9 or stronger from well over 1000 miles away during the night time hours. Unlike other bands, many of my 160-meter QRP contacts have been answering the very strong stations running QSOs at a very fast rate in the lower part of the band. Often I need to call them after each QSO they make, but it often eventually works. My conclusion is that a “normal” station running 100 watts in an urban area of California without an outstanding antenna or a separate receive antenna will just not hear my weak QRP or even 100 watt signal. A big contest station would often be in a quiet rural area and have a low noise beverage or other receive antenna.

From Gregg, WB8LZG, #1444—

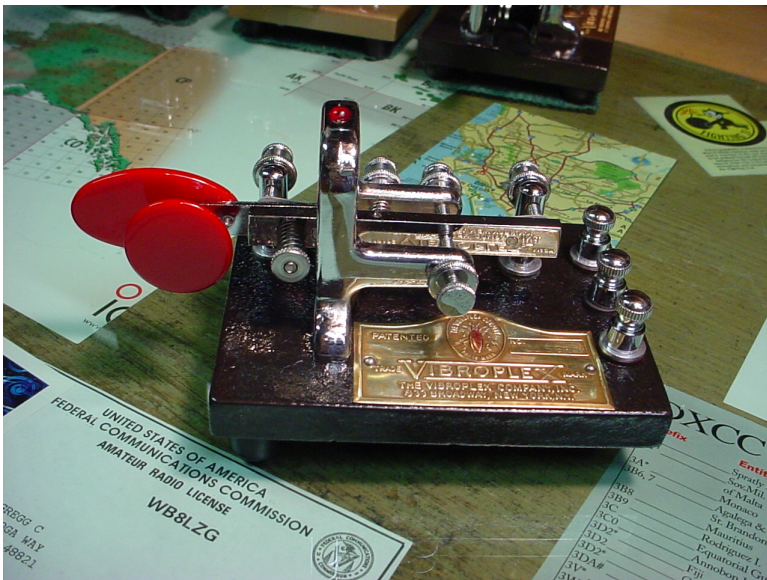
For those members that have been reading recent NAQCC newsletters, this is another example from my refurb file. A couple of years ago I purchased a Vibroplex Vibrokeyer from a friend who had come to the conclusion that he would never use it. So he wanted it to go to someone who would (plus the price was right !).

It was dirty and a bit “beat up”, but it had a 1960-era serial number which indicated that it was one of the very first Vibrokeyers ever produced. So it came home with a new owner and was placed upon the shelf to be attended to when I got some free time.

Fast forward three years. During the restoration of several other keys, I knew this one would finally get a place in line. This refurb was a bit different. Many times I will replace a nut or screw that’s rusty with a brand new one, but I wanted to keep this key entirely STOCK. All of the parts got the “once over” with rubbing compound and “elbow grease”. The chrome shined up nicely, but the base badly needed new paint.

Again, preparation of the base before painting was necessary for a beautiful finish. This included careful sanding to remove all loose paint and dirt.

I then spray painted the base with three coats of black “hammered finish” Rustolium™ paint. The results are a 55-year-old key returned to “like new” condition. The dilemma now is which key do I use to “pound the brass” ! With all of my nice “new” refurbished keys, it is becoming very hard to decide ! Here are a few pictures of the final product.



And also from Gregg , WB8LZG, #1444— (Some really nice “?eye candy.” - Editor)



NAQCC CLUB INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

By Founding President Tom Mitchell, WY3H

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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