

NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 202 APRIL 2015



KEY CLICKS

- **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 callsigns 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.
- **NO MORE MAILED IN LOGS.** We have always had the option for our sprint and challenge participants to snail-mail their logs and reports, but over the years not more that 4 or 5 logs have ever come in that way. So we are now ending that option and requiring electronic submission (autologger or email) for all sprint and challenge logs.
- **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.
- **NAQCC VP N8ZYA NAMED AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR OF THE YEAR.** Our NAQCC Vice President John Smithson, N8ZYA, was named the "Kanawha Valley Amateur Radio Operator of the Year" at the Charleston Hamfest on March 21. (The Kanawha valley includes Charleston, the largest city in WV.) John believes that his work with founding the WV chapter of the NAQCC and promoting CW QRP is largely responsible for his receiving this honor and he is quick to credit the other members who have worked with him. Well done John and congratulations! See the *Member Submissions* pages for some pictures of John and his well deserved award.

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- **NAQCC PRESIDENT INTERVIEWED ON W5KUB WEBCAST.** I was recently interviewed via a Skype connection about the NAQCC on a webcast show called “Amateur Radio Roundtable” produced by W5KUB. If you missed the live webcast you can view a video of it on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/KZY8ED8UK0E>. The NAQCC portion of the show starts about 29:00 minutes in from the start. (By the way, thanks to everyone who has already sent me comments about the interview.)
- **NAQCC NEWSLETTER HONORED BY SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.** In its continuing effort to document the cultural history of the United States, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC has selected the October 2014 edition of the NAQCC newsletter to add to its collection of important cultural artifacts. It will be joining on display such items as Michael Jackson’s hat, Julie Newmar’s Catwoman costume, and the original Veg-O-Matic II. In an induction ceremony held on the 1st of this month, Smithsonian spokesperson Amy Piltown said, “this newsletter represents the antithesis of sapient prose and serves as an archetype for the potential deleterious productivity of word processing technology.” A high honor indeed! Ms. Piltown declined to comment on what those other artifacts might say about American culture.
- **KF4TAP SERIES WILL CONTINUE.** Space constraints with this issue have resulted in our not having enough room for the continuation of KF4TAP’s series of articles about his home-brew station. The series will pick up again next month.
- **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.
- **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.”



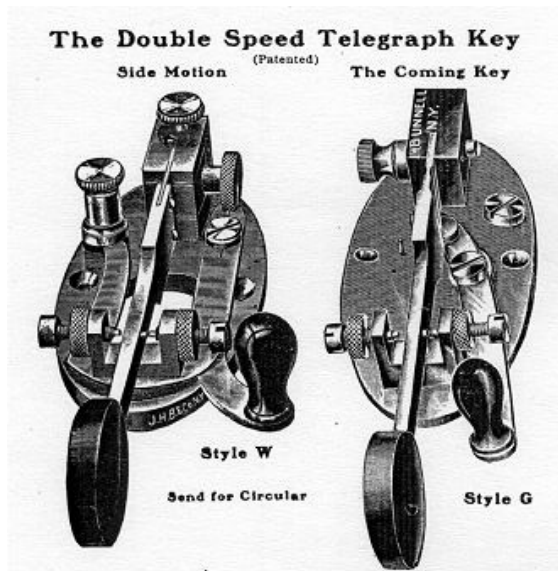
THE FORGOTTEN KEY BY STAN, WB2LQF

Looking for a new challenge? Try 'Swiping!'

No, "cooties" are *not* infesting insects and "sideswiping" will *not* increase your automobile insurance rates! Sideswipers, affectionately known as "Cootie Keys," are part of the early history of telegraphy. According to Jerry Bartacheck KD0CA, sideswiping (or simply "swiping") represents "... a code keying method that requires no external power source and no expensive electronic keyer. This rarely used but very natural-feeling keying technique is rapidly fading from use and is often misunderstood by today's hams who've never seen a genuine J.H. Bunnell & Co. double speed key which came to be called the cootie key or side-swiper"¹.

Early History

It is widely accepted that J.H. Bunnell & Co. introduced the first sideswiper as an antidote to the career-ending paralysis called "glass arm" that plagued early professional telegraphers. The up-and-down pumping motion required of a straight key eventually caught up with even the most robust wrist. Today, we refer to such repetitive motion injuries as carpal tunnel syndrome. Bunnell's new creation was called a "double speed key." "Double" because it had two contacts and "speed key" because one could send faster than with a straight key. It used a side-to-side motion to close the circuit via one contact on the left and one contact on the right. This provided an easier, gentler rocking motion of the wrist and forearm.



The first ad showing both the "W" and "G" styles.
From the *Journal of the Telegraph*, October 21, 1907.²

Exactly *when* the first sideswiper was introduced to the market is not absolutely clear. According to most accounts, the Bunnell double speed key was patented in 1888. This is sixteen years before Horace Martin began selling his Autoplex semi-automatic key ("bug") in 1904. However, according to John Casale W2NI there is no evidence of a patent filing that resembles the double speed key granted to either Jessie Bunnell or the Bunnell Company.² Casale's argument is further strengthened by his

research into period advertisements, Bunnell catalogs of 1889 and 1898 and *American Telegraphy* by William Maver, Jr., a comprehensive volume which was actually published by Bunnell & Co. in 1892.²

In any case, sideswipers had a relatively short professional lifespan. Regardless of when they were actually introduced to the market, we can accurately state that sideswipers were in professional use from *at least* 1904 through the early 1920s. We can say this because this timeframe correlates with their appearance in advertisements and print media and their eventual media sunset. Some telegraphy historians speculate that one of the reasons for the demise of the sideswiper was related to its lack of portability. Unlike a bug, the sideswipers were usually screwed to the desk whereas the ubiquitous Vibroplex bug of that era was better balanced, more stable and even came with a carrying case! However, a more reasonable explanation might just be that the “bug” won out in terms of ease of use and speed. Bugs cut the operator’s workload in half because they make all the dits automatically. It was – and remains – pretty challenging to send with a sideswiper at over 25 wpm. Most bugs *start* at this speed!

How Do You Use This Thing?

In a nutshell, you move the contact arm left and right with your thumb and forefinger, never using the same finger twice in a row within a word (and preferably *never period!*). If you think about it, it’s a perfectly natural movement. Hence, you don’t really have to learn anything new; you just need to harness the energy and practice “command and control.” Is it difficult to learn the art of “swipery?” I don’t think so and this is from a guy who tried and failed to learn to play the piano, tried and failed to learn to play the guitar and tried and failed to learn iambic mode keying. Like most things in life (except piano, guitar and iambic keying) it just takes commitment and practice!

Unlike a straight key, you let your fingers leave the finger piece at the end of each stroke. Note that there is a ‘hard stop’ when using a straight key because when you pump down and make the contact... well, there’s nowhere else to go. With a sideswiper, the movement of your fingers continues and this is another plus for comfortable use and reduced strain on the wrist and arm. In fact, while early sideswipers were constructed with inflexible arms, this eventually gave way to flexible arms. Perhaps the best example is the popular use of an old hacksaw blade for the contact arm. K4VIZ of Vizkey, prior to his retirement, produced a wonderful (and inexpensive) Cootie out of a hacksaw blade. If you are handy in your shop, you can easily build your own sideswiper with a broken hacksaw blade, some off-the-shelf hardware and some wood.

The significance of a flexible arm is that it provides “overtravel” which is also known as “a soft landing.” As previously stated, this makes all the difference in comfort and feel which leads to more consistent and accurate sending. For this reason, I don’t use my single lever paddle as a sideswiper although it’s certainly possible to do so by just setting the keyer menu to “Hand” and giving it a shot. At least it’s a low cost way to sample ‘swiping’. If you own a Begali HST paddle, you even have a switch to choose between “paddle” or “sideswiper” mode.

We’ve all heard how a picture is worth a thousand words so here’s a short video that was made by Carlo Consoli, IK0YGJ. In this video, you can see the benefit of the flexible arm, the advantage of alternating finger strokes and the fingers leaving the fingerpiece at the end of each stroke: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfLrgYHlpjo>.

Another video that is quite attention-getting was filmed by Bjarne, SM7FBJ. In this video, Bjarne moves from paddle to straight key to sideswiper and proves that sideswiper sent code is not subject to inevitable aberrations such as the Lake Erie Swing or the Banana Boat Roll. View Bjarne’s video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmIEHSMGRO>. Look very closely at Bjarne’s homemade sideswiper. Yes, it’s a steak knife! Also note how it’s C-clamped to his desk.

Sideswipers in Today's Market

Paddle makers abound; there is sufficient demand to support many producers. When it comes to bugs and straight keys, we have fewer producers but certainly no dearth. Among them is Vibroplex, an American original successful for over 100 years. But even this company has expanded into selling other amateur products in addition to bugs, straight keys and paddles. Vibroplex does not – and never did – produce a sideswiper. They would have been competing against themselves.

Sideswiper producers have never been in abundance because the demand has never been there. Today, we can send Morse on a computer keyboard and, since it is “perfectly sent” Morse, the other operator can just read it off his own computer screen, deep QSB notwithstanding. Then we have the paddle, keyer and keyer memory aficionados who enjoy a nearly equal potential for flawless code at very high speeds. This is where the money is in today's amateur radio marketing segment and thus where the demand is too. Supply follows demand.

If you want a sideswiper today you have some options. You can build one yourself, you can buy one on the “used” market or you can purchase a brand new one from a very small number of manufacturers.

If you are handy and motivated, building your own ‘swiper is a very practical project. You've already seen Bjarne's steak knife in action. A search of the internet will produce ideas and examples that range from all-metal works of art to the old favorite (and nearly impossible to mess up) design centered on a hacksaw blade, a few screws and a chunk of pine.

The second hand market is another option. If you run across a pristine, original Bunnell double speed key with documentation, expect to pay upwards of \$1200. If you ever see a VIZKEY Cootie on eBAY, gobble it up! A Wanted-to-Buy query on one of our online amateur radio buy/sell forums might encourage someone who is trying to clean out some old stuff to give you a shout. You never know!

If you want to explore the market for new sideswipers you won't find a large number of producers. However, you will encounter quite a range in terms of price, design and quality.

A Tour of Three Modern Sideswipers

Piero Begali I2RTF expanded his *Sculpture* line in 2014 to add the Begali *Sculpture Swing* sideswiper. This is a high end product that costs more than many transceivers. This is a Cootie key unlike anything I've ever seen. The price reflects the engineering effort that went into its design and the specialized factory equipment required to produce such a stainless steel gem of AISI-304 grade. You don't build a key of this caliber at home! Once acquired, the owner need not worry about blemishes incurred in everyday use because any fine abrasive compound can be used to restore the Swing to its original beauty. Jeweler's rouge or car polishing compound will work.



To adjust the “feel,” Piero designed a moveable contact carriage assembly that can slide forward and backward. The position chosen will determine how stiff the contact arm feels. The contacts are solid 14K gold. Near the front there is a cam and spring loaded stops – like pistons – which center the arm and provide the desired amount of return force. Moving the long paddle arm moves the small diameter needle arm in the opposite direction – the Begali version of a flexible hacksaw blade. A barrel-shaped, fully adjustable gold plated contact maker will touch the contact post on the carriage assembly for a “soft landing” vs. an abrupt stop. Unlike other sideswipers, contact is made at the far end of the key.

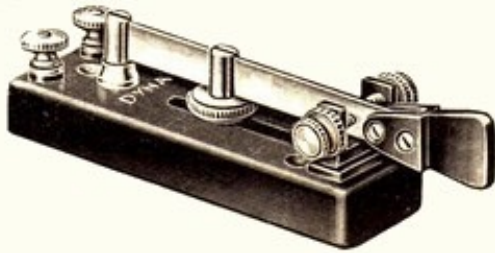
I do not own a *Swing* but I’ve had the opportunity to use Ulrich N2DE’s for the past several months and to provide a review. In my opinion, the *Swing* represents the ultimate sideswiper because of its innovative design and because operating it has been such a joy.

When you buy a Begali product, you pay for it immediately and it usually arrives on your doorstep within a week or less. Ah, the wonder of a well-equipped CNC manufacturing facility, DHL WorldWide Express and Piero’s super-efficient daughter, Bruna. However, rest assured that Piero personally checks out every key before shipment. Landed cost depends upon the strength of the dollar at the time of purchase, currency conversion and any markup costs resulting from your method of payment and shipping, but figure on spending around \$600.00.

I have a short video I made of the loaner *Swing* that readers might find interesting and you can view it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xauFU8StN08>

Product information is available at: http://www.i2rtf.com/html/sculpture_swing.html

Alberto Frattini I1QOD resurrected an historic sideswiper – the *Dyna Maniflex* which was built in France circa 1930s through 1950s. The following original advertisement⁴ bears a striking resemblance to Alberto’s modern reincarnation seen below.



MANIFLEX

Ce système, la main reposant sur la table, supprime la fatigue du poignet et permet de très longues transmissions sans arrêt. Les contacts se font dans les deux sens, d'où vitesse doublée, tout en donnant des signes très cadencés. C'est le manipulateur de grand trafic.

— N° 29 406 MANIFLEX. Manipulateur à double contact. Socle en aluminium fondu protalisé noir 1/2 brillant, contacts latéraux en tungstène, réglage du levier flexible par glissière, double vis de réglage avec contre-écrous, toutes pièces nickelées. Socle 40×130, hauteur 40^{mm}, poignée en saillie de 40^{mm}, poids 400 gr. Tension claquage à 50 périodes : 2300 volts.

DYNA Catalog 1938



In contrast to Piero Begali's approach, Alberto Frattini handcrafts each and every key in his home workshop which he refers to as his "laboratory." He works in brass and chromed brass and prefers to execute more conventional and historic designs such as this *Dyna Maniflex* and his J-36 bug. Alberto is a master craftsman and he is recognized for putting just as much effort into the details on the hidden areas of his products as he does to the more visible surfaces. Frattini keys are flawless and they all have his trademark "massive silver contacts."

This is the key I own and use every day. Unlike the Begali *Swing*, the Frattini 'swiper completes the circuit near the finger piece. The adjustment seen midway on the flexible arm can be loosened and moved fore and aft to adjust the overtravel which influences how rigid the action feels. The only other adjustment on this key is for contact spacing and arm centering. Also noteworthy is that the original instructions for use still apply to this modern rendition. You can read the translated instructions here at: http://www.telegraph-office.com/pages/Maniflex_instructions.html.

So how does it play? Fabulous! Which do I think is better? Sorry, apples and oranges here. Two totally different approaches, both executed with flawless precision. Each delivers superb action, range of adjustment and accuracy. The Begali *Swing* represents forward looking innovation; the Frattini *Dyna Maniflex* represents a salute to tradition.

When you buy a Frattini, you begin with an email stating your intentions. Alberto puts you on his schedule but accepts no money until he is ready to deliver. When your key is ready, Alberto emails you and asks you if you are still interested. Well...of course you are because the waiting has only accelerated and deepened your desire to own a handcrafted Italian masterpiece! How long will you wait? Figure on three to six months. How much will you pay? I'll let you take that up with Alberto!

Product information is available at: <http://www.i1qod.it/prima.htm>

One of our own NAQCC members, Steve Roberts W1SFR (#5881), produces an excellent sideswiper that also doubles as a straight key and a single lever paddle. I learned about this key while working Steve one night on 40 meters. His fist sounded remarkably and consistently good for a 'swiper so I asked him what he was using. After reading up on it, I just had to have one of his goofy looking creations and that's "goofy" in a *good* way!



Steve calls this his *TBK II* single lever key. Steve explains the design, "*The Torsion Bar Key uses a very clever method of centering the keying lever after it is depressed which has historically been achieved by using springs or more recently...magnets. The movement is very subtle and quite elegant. As you move the lever to either side, torsion is applied to the vertical 1/8" bar that is locked in place at the lever bar and the top BUT is free at the base. So that twisting motion puts tension on that vertical bar. When the pressure is released the tension is also released and returns the contact bar to center.*"

Notice that the arm is solid brass but Steve added stainless steel flat springs on either side to provide the soft landing required for effective 'swiping. When I got my new key I realized that I'd never experienced quite this "feel" with any previous Cootie. I was surprised and delighted at the same time. It was a nice change to feel warm Tiger Maple between my fingers instead of plastic or carbon fiber. I think the very lightweight finger pieces play an important role in the great "feel". The key is an attractive combination of highly polished brass and a sandblasted brass base. I tried it out as a single lever paddle and I was quite pleased with its performance in that role. Ordinarily, I prefer the customary "dead stop" of a traditional paddle but within a few minutes I was quite comfortable with the *TBK II*'s softer landing. This key comes prewired for use as a Cootie, a straight key or a single lever paddle. Steve includes a custom cable, a 1/16" hex wrench for adjustments and a brass nameplate. Steve makes all parts by hands, fits them and polishes them. The cost for a *TBK II* is \$245.00 and production time is approximately two weeks.

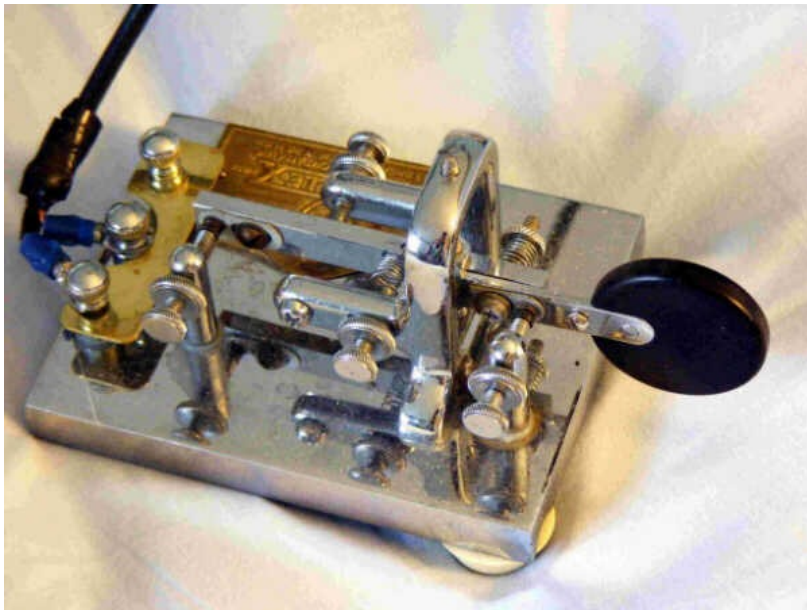
Steve's website is: <http://kx3helper.com/single-lever-keys/> .

American Morse produces a Cootie *kit* for \$99.00. It's called the *Bushwacker* and it too is a combination sideswiper/single lever paddle. I have no experience with this key but according to eHAM reviewers, it's well regarded.



Check it out yourself at the American Morse website: <http://americanmorse.com/bushwacker.htm>

I've often heard that a *Vibroplex Vibrokeyer* with the dot/dash contacts jumpered together and with a different style finger piece makes a superb Cootie key because it doesn't chatter and because the tension can be independently adjusted on each side! The term "chatter" refers to the tendency of a flexible arm to continue to vibrate after being released. David Ring N1EA converted his Vibrokeyer (see below) and you can view his pictures and write-up at his website: <http://www.sideswipernet.org/keys/n1ea-keys.php> . So cruise your next hamfest and keep an eye out for a *Vibroplex Vibrokeyer* that looks like a good candidate for such a conversion.



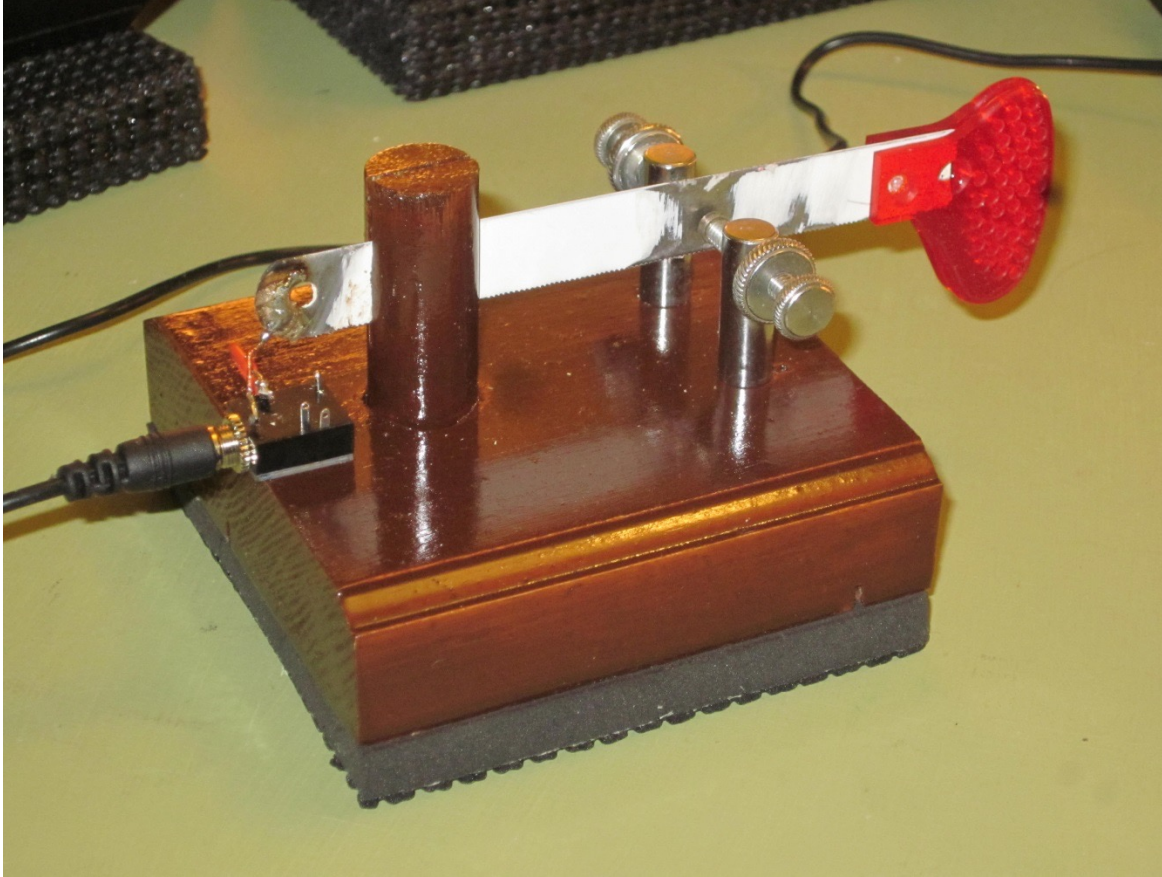
Conclusion

Sideswiping is alive and well albeit lesser known and practiced today. But it doesn't have to be this way.

There is a wide range of ways to get into the Cootie game and it doesn't have to cost a lot of money. Be creative, do some research and give it a try. There are also many interesting internet sites where one can learn more about Cootie keys and view what others are using. Those who build their own Cooties often publish pictures online. There is one website in particular that aims to bring together like-minded 'swipers to promote the use of Cootie keys. Visit them at: <http://www.sideswipernet.org/index.php>.

If you participate in our NAQCC Sprints, be advised that a Cootie qualifies for the X2 multiplier. That's because, like a straight key, the operator makes both the dits and the dahs. So, according to current NAQCC rules, a Cootie is a "straight key."

In closing, here is my own homebrew Cootie key. It cost me absolutely nothing to build because I used what I had. It was a spur-of-the-moment four hour project done during a winter snowstorm. About half the time was spent rummaging in the junk box and garage for the raw materials.



The base is pine. A piece of 1/2" dowel is used to mount the hacksaw blade. Since I had the blade, I just sawed into the dowel, then cut the blade down to 5" and used some instant glue to secure it. A 5" blade gives a nice feel and minimizes chatter; in fact this key doesn't chatter at all. For contacts, I used a pair of old Vibroplex dit and dah contacts and sanded down the blade in the area of contact. Because I dislike keys with attached cables, I mounted a stereo phone jack at the front and connected the hacksaw blade to the tip and the two contacts to the barrel. The ring is unused. For finger pieces I had a pair of unused plastic ones that I glued onto the hacksaw blade. I glued some non-skid material to the bottom. And that's all there was to it. I use my homebrew Cootie key when operating portable. You can't go wrong with a hacksaw blade!

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

¹ <http://mtechnologies.com/cootie.htm>

² <http://www.telegraph-history.org/bunnell-double-speed-key/index.html>

³ <http://www.sideswipernet.org/articles/f9wt-french-sideswipers.php>



A TRIBUTE TO NU7T

BY JOHN, K3WWP

I was greatly saddened when I belatedly learned of the passing of Steve NU7T. Steve was very important to the development of the NAQCC, and his personal club history tracks well with the history of the club overall. Steve was one of an initial group of several hundred hams who joined the NAQCC within the first couple months of its founding in October 2004, being assigned #0434. Steve was also a member of FISTS for many years. He devoted his ham career to the promotion of CW on the ham bands so he fitted in well with these two clubs and their devotion to promoting CW.



Steve Lybarger NU7T
SK February 20, 2015

He was the fourth member to earn our prestigious Friendship Club award in September of 2007 and had it endorsed for 200, 300, and 400 points by December 2008. He was very prolific in earning many other NAQCC awards and honors as well, including the following:

1000 MPW #0004 - December 29, 2004

KMPW #0004 - April 2, 2010

Leader in the SWA/GAIN category of the KMPW honor roll with 371 1000MPW contacts - October 15, 2012

Participation Award for W7 in 2013, 2012, 2011, Western USA in 2010, 2008, 2007 (tie)

2XQRP (50 points) #0004 in 2005, endorsed for 100 points (#0004) in 2005, 250 points (#0002) - January 26, 2006, 500 points (#0003) - May 22, 2006, maximum 1000 points (#0003) - October 24, 2006. Noteworthy is the fact all points were earned during a sunspot minimum.

30-30 #0007 awarded April 19, 2009 for the month of April 2009 (even before the month ended).

30-30 Magnum awarded August 17, 2009 for the months of April, July, and August, 2009.

Alphabet Prefix USA (100 prefixes) #0006 - December 10, 2008

Alphabet Prefix Honor Roll World (300 prefixes) - December 3, 2011

Alphabet Prefix Honor Roll USA (top of the list with all 120 possible prefixes) - January 22, 2010

DXCC Basic #0007 - March 28, 2010

Suffix Words SWA/GAIN category #0001 - December 17, 2008

Suffix Words Honor Roll for 245 words in the SWA/GAIN category

WAC #0002 - December 29, 2004

WAS #0002 - February 4, 2005

I think that shows by the size of the list just how devoted to the NAQCC that Steve was. He will be sorely missed.

The awards are just a part of his contribution to the club. He also entered 73 of our regular sprints from December 2004 through December 2013. In those 73 sprints he made 476 QSOs for an average of about 7 QSOs each sprint. Although that figure may seem low at first glance, it must be mentioned that for a good number of those sprints, participation from west coast stations was low and 20 meters in the sunspot minimum years was not all that good for coast to coast contacts. Yet Steve kept at it for the full 2 hours in many of those sprints. Oh, and he also entered 4 160M sprints, and 7 mW sprints for an overall total of 84 sprints, a figure matched or exceeded by only a very few other members.

Steve was just as devoted to our challenges. He entered 52 of them from 2005 through 2013. Personally I admired Steve's approach to the challenges. They weren't challenging enough as is, so he challenged himself to complete some of the alphabet challenges using only contacts with DX stations.

Although our gratitude to Steve is immense for his participation in all of the above, he also earned our gratitude for his monetary contributions to the club treasury which helped us do things we couldn't otherwise do.

Steve also donated many prizes to the club. Most of those were awarded in conjunction with our special anniversary sprint drawings. The donations included a Vibroplex Know Code straight key and many ham radio CDs and books. We still have yet to award some of Steve's donated prizes.

It should also be mentioned that Steve wanted to donate an Elecraft K3 to the club as a prize to be awarded. However we felt that was just too big and expensive a prize and we turned down that offer. I think it does enforce clearly Steve's generosity and his devotion to the NAQCC. Before closing this tribute which was naturally geared toward Steve's experiences with the NAQCC, we would be remiss in not mentioning some of Steve's other contributions to ham radio and CW.

Steve was a past president of the Sierra Nevada Amateur Radio Society of Reno and was one of the founders and a driving force of the Reno QRP Group.

He was an ARRL VE Examiner and had served as Official Observer Coordinator for a period of time.

He was well known for his own on the air code classes.

Finally, although it's well over a month since his passing we should mention he leaves his wife Mimi of 2346 Roman Drive Sparks, Nevada 89434 should you wish to send condolences. If you care to make a donation in Steve's memory, please send your tax deductible donation to Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northern Nevada, 323 Maine Street, Reno, Nevada 89502.

We miss you, Steve. The NAQCC extends our sympathies to your remaining family members and many friends.



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.

GARY EKKER, KF7WNS, 6631



I enjoy being a member of the NAQCC. I joined in April of 2013 and have really had fun working the monthly sprints. Last year I started working on the challenges too. Some of the word challenges have taken some work to complete.

I was first licensed in the mid-sixties as a Novice, WN7JAV and worked my way up to Advanced Class while still in high school. I let my license lapse while in the Marine Corps during the 70s. In the following years, I thought many times about getting licensed again. So, when a friend told me about classes being offered by the local radio club (which I had been a trustee for as a kid), I jumped at the opportunity.

I passed my Tech in July 2012 and General in August 2012. I found a couple of radios that I had always wanted as a novice, the Drake 2NT and R-4B. I still love the nostalgia of the old tube rigs and the R-4B has a great CW filter. I worked exclusively CW back in the early days running a DX-100B and HQ-110. As it turned out I still remembered morse code and it didn't take long to get back up to speed.

I'm not sure where my interest in low power came from, but I operate almost 100% QRP now. I have joined many of the QRP/CW clubs: NAQCC #6631, SKCC#9895T, QRP-ARCI #15193, 4SQRP #687, and FPQRP #3242. I work as many sprints as time allows. My interest in QRP led me to building some of my own gear. I started with a few kits from 4SQRP group and then stumbled on an old book, "W1FB's QRP Notebook."

I built some of the simple transmitters and have made many contacts with them. My favorite project though is a two tube transmitter (W1TS design) that I built inside an old computer case (see my QRZ page). It works great, lots of fun to use, and I get good reports with it. It puts out 3 watts and I've made contacts all around the country with it on 30 and 40 meters.

CW, QRP, home built rigs; that's ham radio for me.



NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT: Our April sprint is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, 0030-0230 UTC.

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: 121 logs were sent in for the sprint that we had on March 29. For the most part good conditions were reported throughout the country in spite of the fact that a major geomagnetic storm had played havoc with HF communications just a day or two before. Logs averaged a respectable 14.8 QSOs each and soapbox reports indicated that everyone really had a great time.

Complete sprint results, including soapbox comments, can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201503.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: N6IET, K5BRY, WA5SAT, N4OW, WX1M, KF2P, N1BBR, NQ0N, N8TNA

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	WA2NYY	
W3	AB3RU	KD3CA	
W4	N4SX	WG8Y	K1RA
W5	W5TVW	KA5TJS	
W6	WK6L	N6IET	W6WW
W7	K9JWV	KF7WNS	
W8	N8BB	WA8AXF	
W9	W9CC		
W0	WB0PYF	N8LA	
VE	VE3FUJ		
DX	CO8CML		

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1			
W2	WB2LQF		
W3	K3WWP		
W4	AK4NY		
W5	WI5H		
W6			
W7	KE6K		
W8	AB8FJ		
W9	AA9L		
W0	KD0V		
VE	VE5BCS		
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	N1BBR		
W2	N2ESE		
W3	KB3AAG		
W4	N4MJ	KU4A	
W5	N5GW		
W6	KG6UBG		
W7			
W8	WA8SAN		
W9	AB9YC		
W0	K9OSC		
VE	VE2DDZ		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY=>	SK	BUG	K/K
	K4BAI		XE2IF

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY=>	SK	BUG	K/K
	N6IET		K5BRY
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
NO2D			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	121	118	194	2/13
Participants	188	186	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1792	1942	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	942	1006	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	851	936	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	490	438	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	1191	1284	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	112	220	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	14.8	16.5	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+	VE5BCS N0TA WA8SAN K4KRW NQ2W W4DUK NO2D KC2EGL KB8FE K6CSL KE5YUM KQ1P N8QY K1IEE WA2JSG WB8ENE AA9L VE3FUJ KD0V KB3AAG WY3H N4FI K3RLL NU7T
75+	KU4A NF8M K4JPN N8XMS WB8LZG K4BAI KD2MX K4NVJ W2SH
100+	W9CC W2JEK KA2KGP
125+	K3WWP



NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: The North American challenge for April is an alphabet challenge with words that are all associated with the commercial maritime wireless system that operated on 500 KHz and came to an end on July 12, 1999 which is now referred to as the "Night of Nights." The list of words and complete rules can be found at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201504.html>.

The European challenge for April is also an alphabet challenge working with the names of several European pioneers of telecommunications. See <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/april-2015-challenge> for details.

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: In May in North America we offer our annual home-brew challenge where the goal is to make at least 10 QSOs with a piece of home-brew gear. See <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201505.html> for our rather generous definition of what you may use as your home-brew gear.

The European challenge in May is an alphabet challenge involving some well known train routes. <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/may-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 deadline for submitting entries for the March challenge is still a few days away so final results are not yet available. You can go to <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201503.html> to see what has been posted so far, and the final results will also be posted there shortly after the 10th of the month. The challenge involved obscure sports terms and here is the list of the words and the sports that they come from along with a brief explanation of their meanings:

SLIOTHAR = Hurling, the ball

TAKEOUT = Curling, removal of a stone from the playing area by hitting it with another stone

ALBATROSS = Golf, 3 under par on a single hole (a double eagle)

KEEPER = Soccer, the goal tender

FALL LINE = Ski racing, the most direct and usually the fastest line down the hill

LUTZ = Figure skating, a type of jump named for Austrian skater Alois Lutz

STUMPS = Cricket, the three vertical wooden pieces along with two horizontal "bails" that make up the wicket

SCRUM = Rugby, a formation of players used to restart play after a minor infraction

BUG BOY = Horse racing, an apprentice jockey

DRAG SUIT = Swimming, suit used in training to increase drag while swimming

LACING = Boxing, using the bottom side of an open glove to rub the opponents face and cut it

HIGH HOUSE = Skeet shooting, an enclosure for the trap machine that throws the targets

March European challenge results can be found at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/march-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 N1LU KD0V K9OSC 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: FRIENDSHIP CLUB AWARD

This month we feature our Friendship Club Award where the goal is to work, and get to know, your fellow club members. The basic award is earned with 200 points and there are endorsements for earning additional points beyond that level. A QSO with a member consisting of RST, QTH, NAME, RIG, WX, and NUMBER is worth 1 point. A sprint QSO is worth 2 points. But a rag-chew kind of QSO with a member where you learn at least one additional piece of information about the person beyond the 6 items listed above will earn you a whopping 4 points. A QSO with club call N3AQC or one of our N#A stations during our anniversary celebration is worth 5 points. You can find complete details about this award at http://www.naqcc.info/awards_workedmembers.html. You will also find on that page a link to a tutorial on how you can use GenLog to help keep track of your point progress.

AWARDS ISSUED LAST MONTH:

KMPW 100 HONOR ROLL

K3WWP 1937 3/18/15

SUFFIX WORDS AWARD

0009 - N1JI 3/18/15

WAC AWARD

0030 - N1JI EF8U - JA7NVF - F6SKA - 6Y2T - YE3CT - CW5B 3/18/15



NAQCC QRS/QRQ NETS



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

NAQCC NET SCHEDULE

Net	Local Time	UTC	Freq +/-	Primary NCS
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CT	Tuesday 0000 Z	7065 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
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)

Scotty Long NU0S, NAQCC Midwest QRS Net (MWN) Net Manager-Coordinator Member 3715

The bands have been very busy great to hear all the activity, all the nets have been very active with great turn out. I encourage all members to take advantage of a great opportunity to improve your CW; and show support to all the volunteer net control operators by checking into your local nets... The Midwest net has been very active with regular check INS thank you very much and we also get some new check INS off and on greatly appreciated as well. I removed the ground rod, lifted the ground rather at my ground mounted Hustler BTV4 vertical antenna under direction of an EE and my sky wave has improved as well as my local noise level dropped, hey you live and you learn. Now that the weather is nice I can get the dipole antenna back up...Just a quick note as always please check the nets schedule page on the website for any updates, as well as the NAQCC Spots page. Thank you everyone for all your hard work/fun and hope to hear you on the radio...I hang out and listen 40m on or around 7117 kHz most evenings, as well as 30m on or around 10118 kHz so give me a shout and rag chew. Or contact me anytime to set up a schedule...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...

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

John Smithson N8ZYA, NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN)

Soapbox comments: Our club member K9ESE is back to WV per comments using his rain gutters for an antenna. (599) signal here by the way. Snowing heavily at the time with ice dropping out of the sky during the net. Flash flood warnings all over the state with both local and state wide flooding. A surprise check-in from New York was KA2PJO who was practicing his code at about 10 WPM. I sent an e-mail with the hopes he would join the NAQCC Club. Sort of like sitting around a campfire again tonight, although a very cold one.

A good net this evening with the usual check-ins and the additions of K4AXF and KG0YR.

Jim (K4AXF) is not only a NAQCC member but is net control for the "Sunrise Net" on 7.123 MHz many mornings. He was kind enough to relay for KG0YR this evening.

I've been ill for a few days but recovering quickly now. Much of the conversation revolved around my health status and plans to interact with a local high school group wishing to learn CW. All Check-Ins were NAQCC members.

I'm going to do some experimenting and might change to an 80 meter frequency with the hopes of more check-ins.

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

A big hearty welcome to Mike KD7UUB, Mark's son! Glad to hear you on and hope to hear you again. First time on CW in a long time - and you were not that rusty! Good show!

First off, a very hearty welcome to Rick N6SEX, in Los Angeles. Rick just got back on the air three months ago after a 21 year QRT. Huuummm, sounds like a bunch of us, heh? Says he's waiting on a new vanity call sign. Looking forward to having him join us again.

Kind of spread out tonight but great conversations! Had some QSK working tonight - great fun guys! Stewart made it back from Portland even though the wind rolled over his tug boat over 360d - made it back to shore OK. He's got lots of rain and wind - you can keep the wind but wish ya'll could send some rain down this way. Rick/IET is suffering through a LA high 90's heat wave by cycling to the beach for brunch with friends - more than a 10f+ drop in temps. He got his new call sign but looking to do the lottery for a 1x2 call. He also has a new Ten Tec 40/30 QRP rig on the way, think we'll hear that one soon on Monday night.

Rick/HRK checked in early /M, but does not quite have the IC735 setup well enough for 80m - - Huuummm, thought you'd retired that one Rick? Good old equipment never dies, right? Volleyball went well and hope to hear you Monday. Rob & I failed to connect at Loomis ham fest. Small swap meet but I scored a couple of ham sticks and a Hustler fold over mast. Rob was looking for keys but found none - I think I helped sell the only one there by expressing an interest - guy holding it promptly bought it, no dickering. Rob & I are going to try eyeball QSO again 4/25 at the Sonoma Valley of the Moon ARC fest. Rob was a little late having NCS'd the PARG net - been a member for more than 20 years.

Doug checked in late after a date with XYL, I was tired by that time and making way too many keying mistakes, so switched to straight key to end it. J38 from novice days - good old equipment never dies, right?

Hope ya'll don't mind, but starting something new tonight with **FRN Hangout** frequencies. Several of you have asked were to find me non-net times, and most of you have spots you regularly visit. For example, I pretty much know where to find Rick/HRK and I've worked Stewart on 30m QRP frequency a couple of

times, and heard him several more. So check out the **PS**.

Thanks again everyone for your participation!

72/73 de JB.kr5rr

Really happy with the way the band held up tonight - solid copy for all from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles! Main topics tonight were bumper band conditions earlier this week with the solar flare, how good signals were tonight, QRP rigs, and last week's sprint.

Sprint: Doug and Mark made a few contacts and Rick participated in his first sprint and, yes (!), he turned in a log! Looks like he placed 2nd in the W6 area with 17 QSO - way to go Rick! Can't tell you how many of these I did without turning in a log - now it's kind of fun to do so. Chas does the DX contests but never a sprint - gotta get him in the next one! Thinking of trying something special for that one..... Stay tuned. BTW, Sorry I missed it for Grand Kids baseball game, but.....

Mark is having fun with a You-Kits QRP rig and Rick is waiting delivery of a new Ten-Tec Patriot - looking forward hearing it and you telling us about that one. Chas was able to stay with us tonight as his local QRN was not active. Rick experienced some but still had mostly good copy. Got a couple of new additions to hangouts - Thanks for your participation!

WELCOME to newcomer, and first time CW Netter, Daniel, WB4RFQ in Prineville, OR. I think I got a quick email from him saying he copied about 75% of the stuff we sent, but I seemed to have fumbled it out of the inbox somewhere I can't find it, so please resend Daniel. Don't be a stranger, join us again on 80m or 40m. You'll only get better listening to these guys! And, oh BTW, I never copy them 100% either, just do a lot of guessing! HI!

72/73 de JB.kr5rr

FRN Hangouts:

KR5RR-JB: 14055+/- M-F 23h30z-00h30z; otherwise, 40-10m between SKCC & QRP

N6IET-Rick: QRP frequencies, 80-10m

K7KY-Doug: 7112

KE7LKW-Stewart: QRP frequencies; 80m regional nets

N7HRK-Rick: 7046+/- S-S after ~03h00z

W7SOM/7-John 21051 S-S, 00h30z-01h30z

WU7F-Mark: 7112

Allen Matthews KA5TJS, NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN)

The band was in good shape and new member Roger checked in for the first time.

73's Allen KA5TJS

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

Thanks for great March Participation. We talked about CW and QRP at the local Club this month, running net at W8VY from Club Station.

**NAQCC CW Net QNI Reports All Stations
March/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

03-02-2015 QNI (6) NCS KR5RR; KE6EE, WU7F, K7KY, N6SEX, N7HRK

03-09-2015 QNI (2) NCS KR5RR; N7HRK

03-16-2015 QNI (6) NCS KR5RR, KE7LKW, N6IET, N6KIX, K7KY, N7HRK/M (early check-in)

03-23-2015 QNI (6) NCS KR5RR, KE7LKW, KW6G, WU7F, K7KY, N6IET

03-30-2015 QNI (4) NCS KR5RR, WU7F, N6IET, N7HRK

40M, 7.123.5 MHz

03-03-2015 QNI (9) NCS KR5RR, KE7LKW, N7HRK, KD7UUB, NM5S, N6SEX, KE6EE, WU7F, WH7TT

03-10-2015 QNI (6) NCS KR5RR, N6SEX, KE6EE, N7HRK, N6KIX, K7KY

03-17-2015 QNI (6) NCS KR5RR, N6KIX, N6IET, N7HRK, WU7F, KW6G

03-24-2015 QNI (6) NCS KR5RR, N6IET, N7HRK/M, WB4RFQ, KW6G, WH7TT

03-31-2015 QNI (7) NCS KR5RR, KE6EE, N6IET, NM5S, N7HRK/M, K7KY, WH7TT

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

03-03-2015 QNI (6) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YUM, N7NET, N5DRG, KE5YUM, WB0QQT

03-10-2015 QNI (4) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YGA, N5DRG, N7NET

03-17-2015 QNI (4) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YUM, KE5YGA, N7NET

03-24-2015 QNI (6) NCS KA5TJS, N5DRG, N5RWK, KE5YGA, KG0YR, N7NET

03-31-2015 QNI (4) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YUM, K5BRY, N5RWK

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

03-03-2015 QNI (6) NCS NU0S, WB0QQT, AC8JW, W0MFQ, KB7KY, AK4JM

03-10-2015 QNI (8) NCS NU0S, W0MFQ, WI2W, KC9UNL, WB5HQO, KB7KY, NI2F, K0NG

03-17-2015 QNI (7) NCS NU0S, WB0QQT, WA0ITP, WI2W, KB7KY, KK5IB, KG0YR

03-24-2015 QNI (9) NCS NU0S, WB0QQT, AC8JW, KC4URI, N4OW, KB7KY, N2OB, KA4WJB, N3TS

03-31-2015 QNI (10) NCS NU0S, AC8JM, K5IBK, KK5IB, KB7KY, N3FCS, WB0QQT, W6NFU, KG7PVT,
WB5HQO

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

03-05-2015 QNI (10) NCS WC7S, K6MGO, N6MY, AA7CU, W3HHZ, W0MFQ, W9JDH, KG0YR, KK5IB,
N7GES

03-10-2015 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, N6MY, AA7CU

03-12-2015 QNI (5) NCS WC7S, N7GES, AA7CU, N6MY, K3JHT

03-17-2015 QNI (4) NCS WC7S K0DTJ, W6BHY, N6MY

03-19-2015 QNI (5) NCS WC7S, KO6X, K0DTJ, VE1BA, NE5DL

03-24-2015 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, N4CJ, KU7Y, N7GES

03-31-2015 QNI (6) NCS WC7S AA7CU, W5HNS, WD8NHK, W0WKZ, N7GES

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

03-05-2015 QNI (5) NCS N8ZYA, K9ESE, W8GDP, AC8LJ, KA2PJO

03-12-2015 QNI (7) NCS N8ZYA, W8GDP, K9ESE, K4AXF, KG0YR, AC8LJ, WA8SIE

03-15-2015 QNI (3) NCS N8ZYA, W8GDP, K9ESE

03-25-2015 QNI (3) NCS N8ZYA, W8GDP, K9ESE

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

03-06-2015 QNI (6) NCS KE7LKW, AD7BP, K7ZNP, K7JUV, WB4SPB, N7QR

03-13-2015 QNI (5) NCS KE7LKW, AD7BP, K7JUV, WB4SPB, N6KIX

03-20-2015 QNI (7) NCS KE7LKW, AD7BP, K7ZNP, K7JUV, WB4SPB, N6KIX, W7ANM

03-27-2015 QNI (5) NCS KE7LKW, K6KIX, WB4SPB, AD7BP, W7ANM

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

03-06-2015 QNI (5) NCS WA8AXF, AC8JW, K9EYT/4, KC9UNL, WE8UPJ

03-13-2015 QNI (8) NCS WA8AXF, K9EYT/4, AC8JW, WE8UPJ, W3HI, KG4GCX, KC2WRG, VE2DDZ

03-20-2015 QNI (3) NCS W8VY, AC8ED, VE2DDZ

03-27-2015 QNI (7) NCS WA8AXF, K9EYT/4, KU4GW, W3HI, KQ3Z, KG4GCX, KG0YR



HELP FOR BEGINNERS



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

Hello again.

I recently purchased a Key-Board Keyer/Reader. Upon reading the instructions I came across the word "Weight" and not being familiar with its exact meaning I keyed into it and altered the settings up and down to find out what effect it would have on the code. What I found was, that weight has much to do with code's readability. Too heavy code will sound Thumpy and increasingly harder and harder to read as weight is increased. Going the other way code becomes thinner and choppy and again harder and harder to read. With no intent of blowing my own Horn, I've had a few comments about my fist ranging from "nice fist", "easy to read fist", to "must be in the top 1/2% of manual code generators." That last statement was supported by the comment that musical training has a positive effect on timing.

That's what started me wondering how those people arrived at that conclusion. So I started off to find where my own straight key generated code fell on the "weight scale." I tried to match my code to the machine and found it to be between 60 and 65. (50 being the default setting on the machine on a scale of 1 to a 100.) Weight seemed to affect the character spacing by either shortening or lengthening the space "that is heavy or light" in that order but not entirely eliminating the space going heavy. From my experiments I gathered that a fist with a weight of +63 with a bit of Farnsworth between words must be it. I also like to add that I take a lot of pain to keep my fist easy to read and nice by recording it at least every other week and then giving it a severe listening test lest some undesirable habit has crept into it.

More on the subject later. 72 Brion VE3FUJ

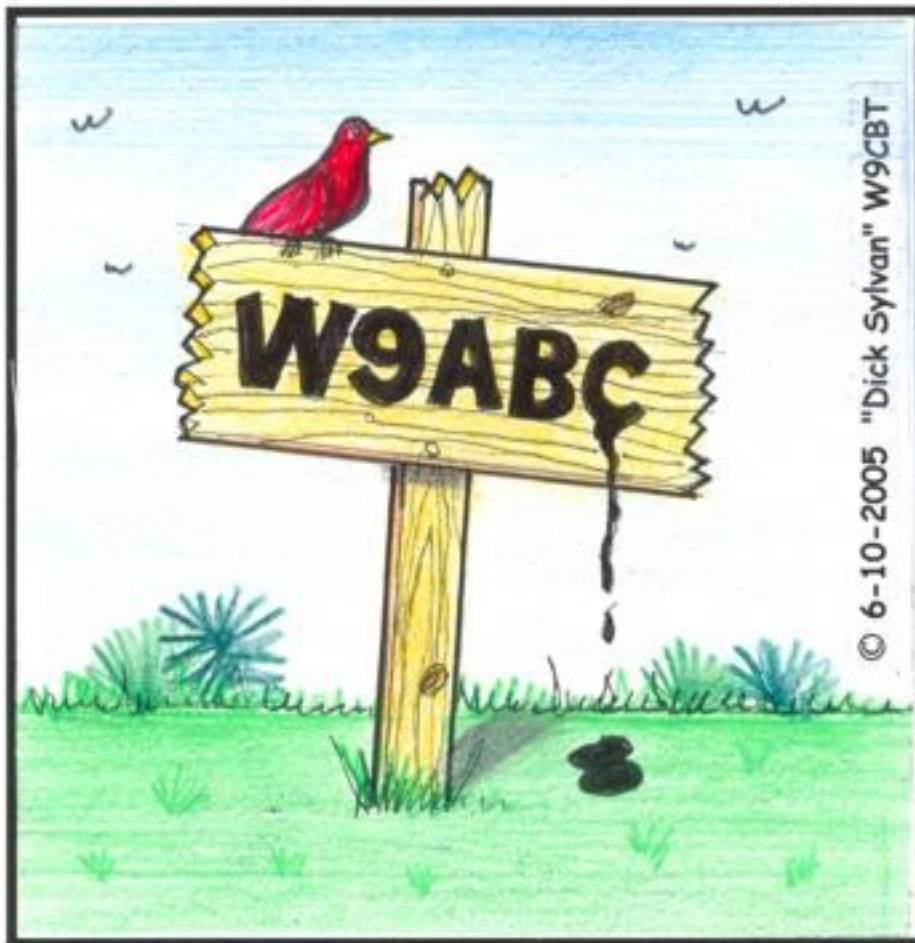


HAM QUIPS



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

HAM LINGO "Ham Radio CallSign"



"Call-Sign"



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.

Plans are in the works for some special activities so stay tuned.

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.

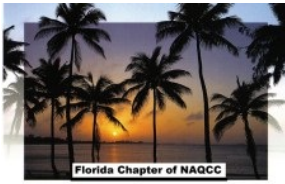
The European Chapter's challenges continue to flourish. They are based around making contacts with stations in Europe and are based largely around European themes.

The March challenge proved somewhat easier than our unusual premise in February, and has so far been completed by six stations. Congratulations to K3WWP, SM5ELV, PA0XAW, K1IEE, EA4BL, and DH0DK, who have all submitted successful entries. There are still a few more days remaining to submit entries and be awarded a certificate!

The April challenge is also now open for entries! Its premise is to construct the names of four European pioneers of telecommunication systems and the year of the demonstration of their inventions. There are 55 letters in total to find in the callsigns of the European stations that you work over the course of this month.

To celebrate the continuing success of our challenges, the European chapter are offering a prize of a beautiful Kent KT-1 Professional straight key to the person who completes the greatest number of challenges over the year of 2015. The key has arrived with us, and we'll be posting pictures of it on the website soon! We have some very interesting challenges planned for later in 2015, which will be somewhat different from our usual format!

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



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

On Friday, March 27th, 2015, the Florida Chapter of NAQCC returned to the local park system for our monthly adventure. We held our latest “Operation in the Park” event at Gemini Springs Park, located off Dirksen Drive in DeBary, FL. Gemini Springs is a sprawling 210-acre park with a natural spring on property that is adjacent to Lake Monroe, and was acquired by a local government consortium in 1994. It was originally part of the estate of Frederick DeBary, who in 1868 made this his winter retreat (the city is named for him). DeBary’s 458 acres included growing timber and citrus, and tapping longleaf pines for turpentine (a really big Florida industry). Later, cattle and sugar cane (including a cane press for making “sugar juice”) was the choice of industry.

This park, like many of the others we have visited, had several covered pavilions, loads of picnic tables, BBQ grills, restrooms, water fountains and easily accessible adjacent parking. It also sports a “dog park”, canoe launch, horseback and hiking trails, spring house, and camping sites. On our arrival, we pretty much had the entire park and all the pavilions to ourselves. We chose a pavilion close to the water and away from the other activity sites. By the time we left, the park had lots of folks there!

The three days prior to our operation it had rained and was quite windy, with temps in the mid-80’s. Fortunately, today we arrived to our site with clear, blue skies, a temp of 68 degrees with 60% humidity, accompanied by a light breeze. It was a “Chamber of Commerce Day” for us to operate!



After we got setup and on the air, we were quite surprised to have a fella stop by and introduce himself – John “Jack” Fenimore WQ2E, a new NAQCC # 7698! Jack is a “snowbird” who lives in NY but winters in New Smyrna Beach, FL. He is a “recycle”, who received his license some 25+ years ago, but recently got restarted in the hobby. He just purchased an Elecraft KX-3 and

is looking to get active in CW/QRP. We had several discussions about operating and resources for learning about new modes and operating techniques. He also said he was “getting up to speed on his code” and was at 15WPM solid copy. We all agreed he had plenty of speed and need not worry! Jack stayed with us until we secured at 11:45 am, and he was gracious enough to take our usual “mug shot” at the park entrance sign. He is heading back to NY in a few weeks, but we all have a suspicion he will be back in the fall and will join us in our fun! We hope to work him on the air in the coming months.

The signals were good on both bands we used. 20M was nice and quiet, but 30M had some noise. 40M was again, horrible (few weak signals and lotsa noise) just like last month. No joy there!



Steve WB4OMM #5913 brought his trusty Elecraft KX-3 with Vibroplex Code Warrior Jr paddle running 5W out to a 20M/30M Hamstick on a ground mounted tripod with 4 radials. He didn't get skunked this month – 8 QSOs.

Steve made QSO's with 8 members in 8 different states including NJ, VA, IL, NY, and TX on 20M; AL, TN, and NC on 30M.



Art WB4MNK #5274 used his Elecraft KX1 running 3W, a Dirt Cheap paddle, 2.2 amp LIPO power supply, 28 FT end fed wire up 10 feet with 16 feet of counter poise.

Art also made 8 QSOs with members in 5 different states - NY, WV, IL, MI, IN, and NJ.

Curt WA2JSG #3457, Bob K2YGM #6159, and Pete NN9K #6887 all worked both Steve and Art today! Thank you for being there!

Darryl AB8GU #6913, the NAQCC-FL Chapter Official mascot, spotted us on the internet, helped with antennas and transport, and kept us informed on each other's progress. He got some of Steve's coffee from his thermos....but there was plenty left -so there it is, Steve's success is dependent on having coffee – hypothesis proved!! Hi hi hi

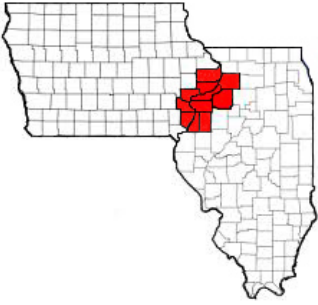
We quit just before noon and enjoyed lunch at a local BBQ restaurant in Orange City, FL. What a day!! The weather was great, band conditions great and the food was great....as was the friendship!

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 tentatively scheduled for Friday, April 17th, 2015 at 9:00 am. Look for our announcement!

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

NAQCC ILLOWA CHAPTER



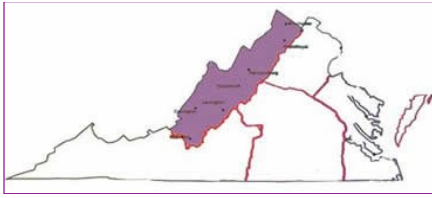
Items in this section are from the Illowa Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to Bob, W9PZ.

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

With continued cold throughout the upper Midwest, the Illowa Chapter had a meeting at the Village Inn on Wednesday, March 18th, with Pete NN9K, Bob W9PZ, and Tony N9YPN in attendance. The Illowa chapter will try for an outing near the end of April as warmer weather is predicted for early April. An announcement via the club email list will be made soon.

Bob, W9PZ

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.

February brought a lot more than usual cold temperatures to the Valley, so there were no "to the field expeditions", plus we had more than usual snow falls and accumulation. We did have a bit of CW QRP getting together while staying on the warm side of the walls. Temperatures were frequently near or below zero in the mornings and often did not get above freezing during the day.

The lack of a March report from SVQC was not due to inactivity, but too much "busyness", if I may coin a word. On March 8, my wife and I arrived in Sarasota, Florida, where I soon had an antenna in the air and tried to keep schedules with some members of the Shenandoah Valley QRP Club. In spite of a huge pileup of strong signals trying to work a DX station I could not hear on our usual frequency, I managed to make contact with two of the members Foster, WF4O, and Howard, K4LXY, on different evenings. Due to DST coming into the picture, we found that later was better for our 80 meter frequency.

With some limitations relative to antennas here, I took down my 80 meter antenna, and will spend some time later this week, tuning my new LNR antennas. The temperatures have been in the high 80s, so most outside activities have been in the morning before the heat builds up. A "cold front" is to pass over us this week and cool it to more normal March temperatures, so I am hoping to try out the antennas by seeing who I can work whenever I have some time from tourist type activities. There are some nice state parks around here and I will try a little outdoor operating in one or two of them.

I am not the only member of SVQC in the warmer South, Howard, K4LXY, is also in one of the other Gulf states, but we have no further times set for QSO, so we will pick up with each other after Easter.

April is often the beginning of more outdoor activity in Virginia, so next month's report may have accounting for a few more expeditions to some mountain top operations on Skyline Drive in the Shenandoah National Park.

Report from Russ, K3NLT, in sunny Florida

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.



This newsletter entry for the West Virginia Chapter of the NAQCC Club will be brief this month. In essence, we did another power point presentation at the Charleston Hamfest. That event is covered elsewhere in the club news and you can also read about this event from my online [radio blog](#) .

This year I was awarded the Charleston Hamfest “**Kanawha Valley Amateur Radio Operator of the Year 2015 Award**”. I would not have received this award without the support and help of our club members. I'd like to use the newsletter space this month to highlight our WV Chapter “core” members.

The West Virginia Chapter is now on good solid ground. I didn't realize when Eric (**AC8LJ**) and I had breakfast a few years ago; this chapter would grow to where it is today. I always look forward to our monthly breakfast and listening to the news from our group; it's a great time for friendship and fellowship.

First of all, the folks in the above picture all have a good working knowledge of electronics (me being the exception). They've forgotten more about electronics than I'll ever know. They're always kicking around a new idea or bringing a project along for the groups review.

I'll always remember meeting Steve (**KC4URI**- the first top left) at the Mineral Wells Hamfest two years ago. Our decision to meet at the Cedar Lakes Conference Center, for our first field event, was the beginning several other activities. Steve has talked me into camping with QRP gear again. Something I never expected to do since I started having back problems several years ago. He's an excellent woodsman as well as a radioman.



John Lancaster (**W8GDP**- second left) is a retired engineer. John loaned me a Johnson Viking transceiver when I first got on the air. We talked to each other for many years as he walked with a hand-talkie from his home to the WV Dept of Highways. Those are good memories.

Jeff Imel (**K9ESE**- third left) works with a high school science group which launched a high altitude balloon last year. Last week, their science group had a personal meeting with the President of the United States in Washington D C.

Eric (**AC8LJ**-top right) is a college professor. He is a compulsive antenna experimenter. Eric is also a recipient of the NAQCC DXCC award. (That makes two of us here in Charleston)

I rode along with Eric to my first trip to the Dayton Hamfest last year. This month we drove to meet other WV hams (**AA8SH** and **KD8GV**) at the [Summersville Dam](#). We drove past the [Summersville Lighthouse](#). I want to transmit from there this year. This was a great trip!

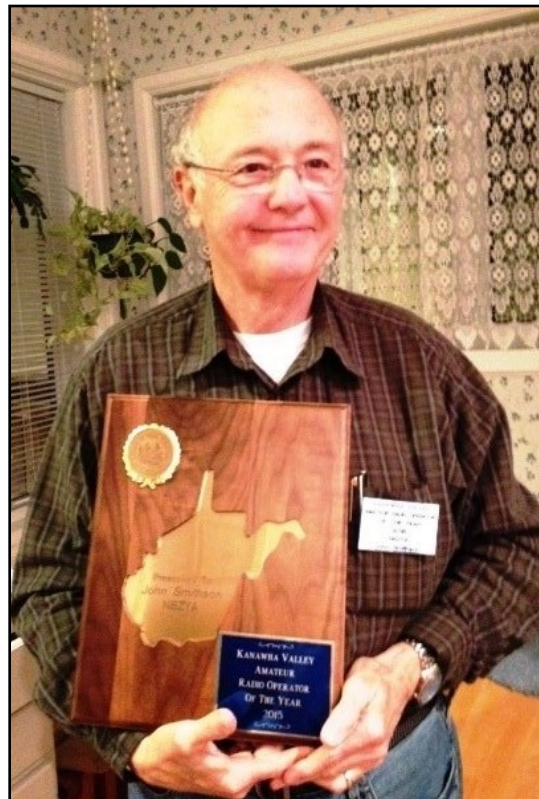


There are others that support us regularly. Joe Redd (**W8SIE**- bottom right) was with us at the Huntington Museum of Radio and Technology last year. Joe usually checks into our WV QRS net every week.

Jim Stevens (**NX8Z**) is always ready to operate from the Hurricane Wave Pool Park. This event always brings a few questions from walkers in the park.



These guys are my support group without which I could never have earned this award. I thank them all from the bottom of my heart!



We're ready for warmer weather this month and look forward to more outdoor events. I've had enough of freezing winter conditions to last me for the next ten years. Cabin fever has been bad this year. I hope the warm temperatures are here to stay.

On an ending note, I was able to work the Florida Chapter Parkpedition a few days ago. A follow up e-mail brought forth the fact that Art (**WB4MNK**) was using 2.5 watts with an antenna only ten feet off the ground. I'm truly amazed at this early morning contact. I also envy their warm weather.

Happy Trails to all,
John #2279

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.

Very little WPA chapter activity this month, but there will be more soon as the weather continues to improve and the Kittanning Community Park looks more and more inviting for a parkpedition. We've also been tossing around plans for the chapter FD activity in June. We're going to explore operating from the QTH of chapter member Tom WB3FAE. That would be a better location than we've had before, I believe. At least we'd be out of the valleys at the WY3H QTH and my QTH. We'll see how that pans out.

As far as activities this month, Mike KC2EGL and I got together on the Ides of March - the 15th. I'll let him tell about it as he wrote my web site (k3wwp.com) diary entry for that day.

Good evening everyone. John has decided to take a night off from his diary. So I shall be filling in. It has been a while since I last filled in for him.

Our day started off shortly after 9AM when I arrived at John's QTH. We headed out for breakfast around 10:00AM. We had planned on our usual Ponderosa breakfast only to learn that Corporate Headquarters forced the local franchise to shut down its weekend breakfast buffet. We were advised by the manager that they opened at 10:30AM serving lunch. So we made a Walmart run to pass the time. Both of us picked up a few items followed by returning to Ponderosa.

After we ate our meal we returned to John's QTH to commence with the activity planned for the day. I recently purchased a new laptop and John graciously assisted me with transferring programs and setting up security software. That took just about the whole afternoon. We did take a break to play a new hidden object game that John found. Afterwards we finished up some small details on my computer and I uploaded some software for a Garmin Virb Elite and a Garmin bicycle computer. Now my new laptop is set up for two of my favorite activities.

Here is how our computer "workshop" looked at the peak of our computer activity.



We did not forget about dinner. We decided to try a place we have been wanting to try for quite a while. Only to find out they close at 3:00PM on Sundays. So we settled for one of our favorites. A trip to Wendy's.

John continued both streaks with one QSO. He logged KL7QZ in Anchorage, Alaska. The op on the other end of the QSO has been a ham for 60 years but had been away from CW for 50 years. He is just getting back into CW and was very rusty and slow which is very understandable.

Other than that not much happened today. I will be heading home shortly. I am still in the workforce which means I have to be up bright and early to start the week tomorrow morning.

So until next time, DE Mike KC2EGL. -30-



MEMBER SUBMISSIONS

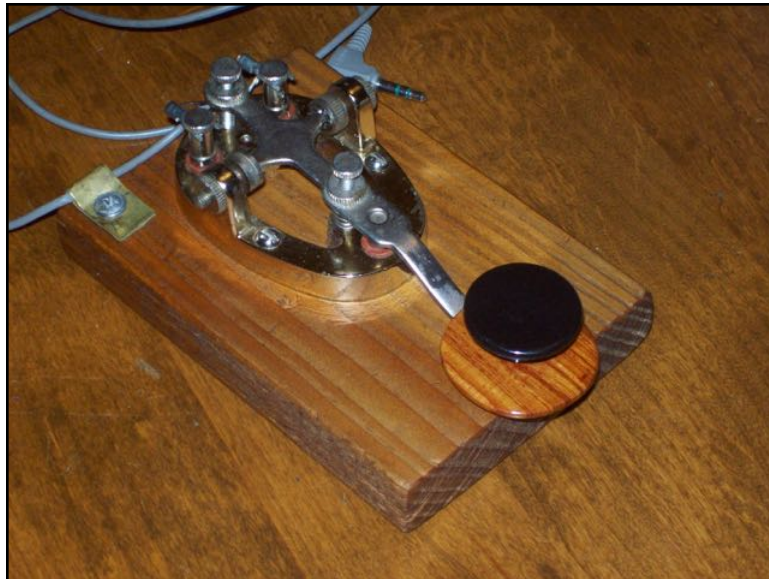


This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit a short article dealing with some aspects of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Just about anything that would be of interest to our members would be welcomed. Send you items to our News Editor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

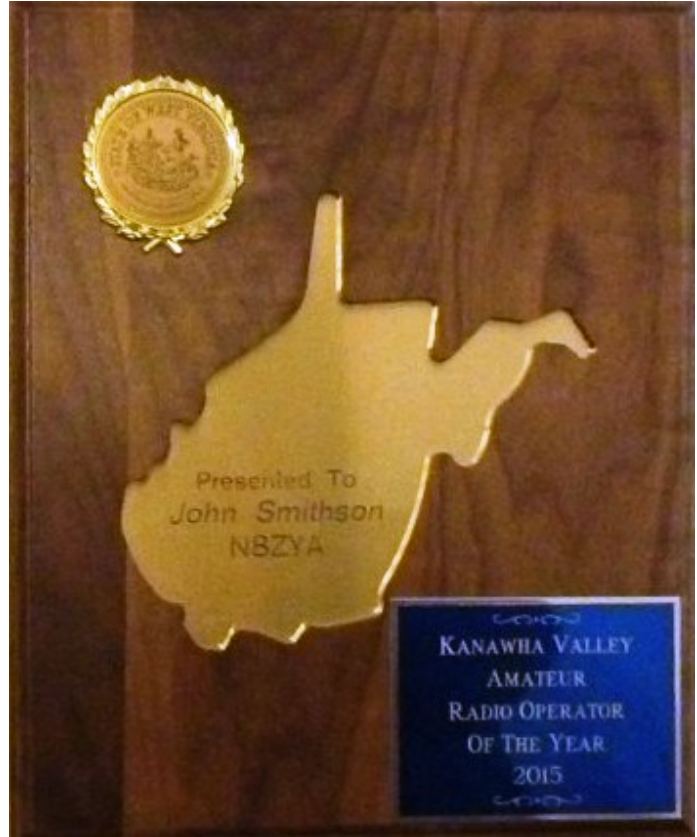
From Jim, K0FNR, #6852 —

Jim won a poker chip finger rest in the February challenge and he sent along this picture. - Editor



From John, N8ZYA, #2279 —

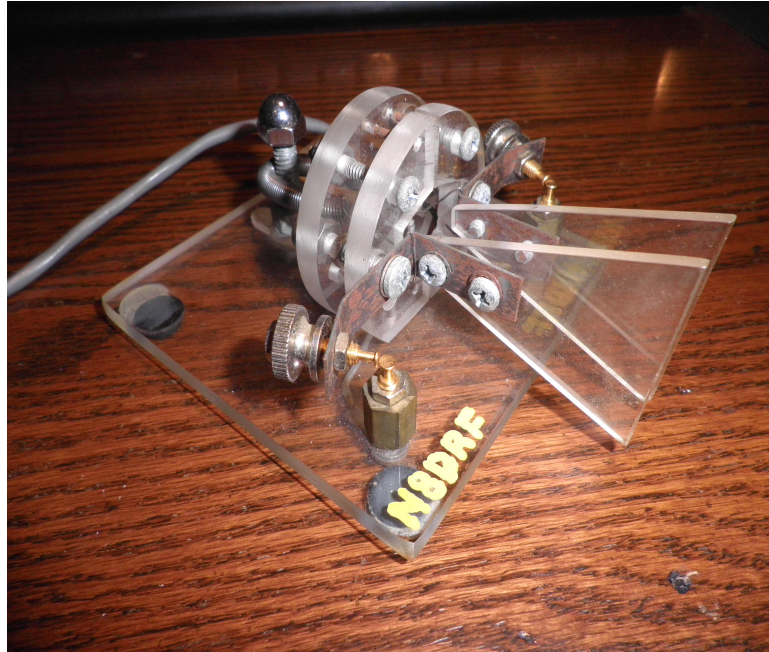
Here is a picture of NAQCC VP John, N8ZYA, with the “Ham of the Year” award that was presented to him at the Charleston, WV Hamfest. - Editor



From Chuck, N8NK, #7519 —

“An Embarrassment of Riches”

In the beginning (long ago) I was too anxious to develop a decent 'fist'. I had little patience. I liked modern looking things. Futuristic looking things. I liked plastic. So, out of necessity (and fear of a straight key) came paddles! Homebrew paddles!

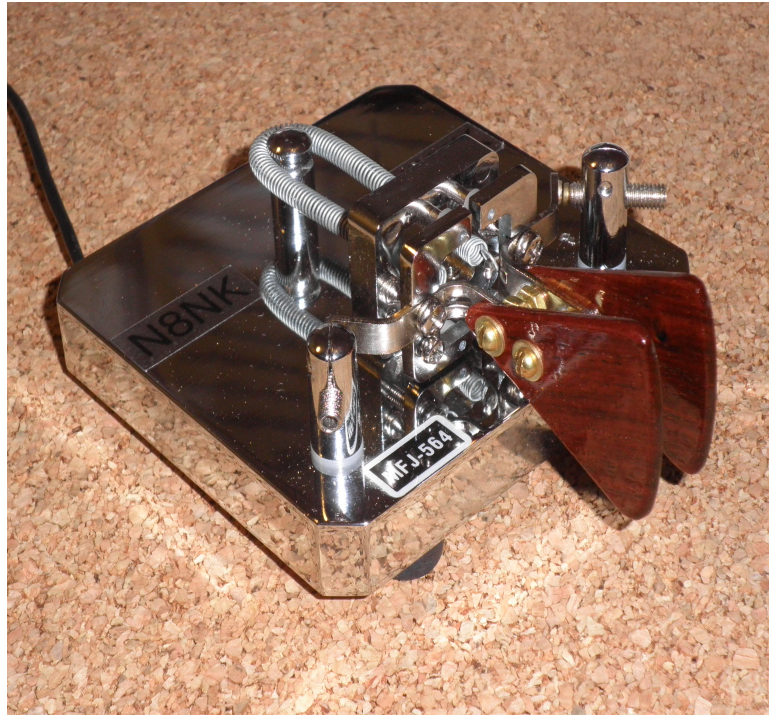


The decades flew by. My callsign changed several times (I upgraded my license class). My harmonics (kids) grew up, they created their own harmonics (my grandkids, who are technically my 'second order harmonics'), and I discovered the NAQCC!

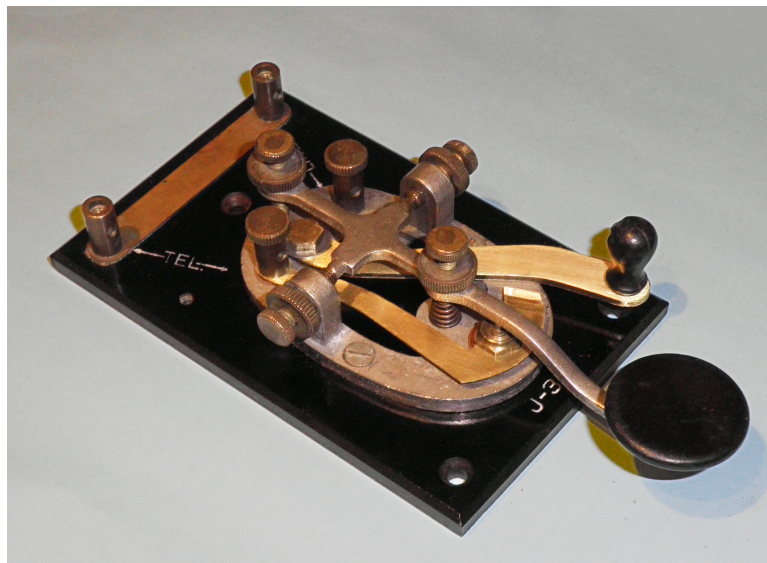
I entered my first sprint, and from this remote Northwest outpost of our great nation, I worked a total of four QSOs. Willing to be the root cause of great laughter by the NAQCC volunteers, I submitted my log. And I won a great prize!

As a life-long homebrewer of all things metal, plastic and electric, I have been reluctant to let conversation steer itself around to the topic of my paddles. And if this did occur, I 'may have' lied and said “paddles here are homebrew, old man” or something to that effect. You see, a few years ago, I took the easy way out. I cheated. I bought commercial paddles by MFJ. An excess. An embarrassment of riches for a homebrewer.

Thanks to the NAQCC as an organization, its volunteers, and specifically, Gregg (WB8LZG), I no longer have to fear being asked the dreaded question about my paddles. I no longer have to stretch the truth. I no longer have to lie! I can now reply that I'm slapping 'modified MFJ paddles'!



And now I can continue into another endeavor, one which the impatience of youth prevented: I'm learning how to pound brass! Never again will I submit a sprint log of four QSOs to the NAQCC, not in that darned category of 'keyboard / keyer'. Seriously guys? 'Keyboard / keyer'? That is just wrong! There's a LOT of difference between the two! I mean my paddles uh... were... homebrew. And so is my keyer! How can one lump that combo in with a computer keyboard? But I digress. I no longer have to worry about such things because I'm the proud new owner of:



Thank you, NAQCC, and thanks to Gregg, WB8LZG.

From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

Except for a couple things, March was a pretty forgettable month. After not mastering the NAQCC European Chapter challenge at all in February, this month I finished both challenges quickly. The "American" one on the 5th and the "European" one on March 7. Since I missed the European challenge last month, I thought I'd go ahead and see if I could complete it a couple more times this month using a completely different set of stations each time. The second time came rather quickly, finishing it on the 10th, just 3 days later. The St. Patrick's Day CME on the 17th kind of wreaked havoc on the NA-EU path here, and the lowered SF figures didn't help either. But I finally finished the third time around on the afternoon of the 27th. Here are the three times:

FRANCE 550000 - F5HPY, DL65DARC, EU7A, YU7GMN, DL65DARC, EU7A, 9A5M, 9A5M, M0IKE, M0IKE, HF90IARU, HF90IARU
 GREECE 131957 - YU7GMN, DL65DARC, EU7A, EW8W, DL65DARC, EW8W, DL1BUG, UA3KW, DL1BUG, 9A5M, DL65DARC, YU7GMN
 ITALY 301263 - M0IKE, HA3FTA, EU7A, DL1BUG, YU7GMN, UA3KW, SP90IARU, I1YRL, DL2AJB, DL65DARC, HA3FTA
 SPAIN 504782 - SM5CAK, F5HPY, UA3KW, M0IKE, YU7GMN, DL65DARC, SP90IARU, IZ4ZZB, YU7GMN, EW8W, DL2AJB

FRANCE 550000 - SP2KF MI0SRR 9A2G S59N I13ICZ IK2DED LY25LY LY25LY MI0SRR MI0SRR YU90HST YU90HST
 GREECE 131957 - 9A2G MI0SRR IK2DED ES3AX I13ICZ ES3AX UX1HW I13ICZ UX1HW 9A2G S57S S57S
 ITALY 301263 - IK2DED YU90HST 9A2G LY25LY LY25LY I13ICZ SN40KRF DJ1RP IK2DED DL6LBI ES3AX
 SPAIN 504782 - MI0SRR SP2XF OK2LA IK2DED S59N S57S SN40KRF LY4A S57S US8ICM IK2DED

FRANCE 550000- DL5FCZ UR3ICM YT90IARU EA6UN DL5FCZ SM3EVR S55DX S55DX YT90IARU YT90IARU LZ90IARU LZ90IARU
 GREECE 131957 - UR7GO UR3ICM SM3EVR EA7ATE DL5FCZ EA7ATE OK1MBZ IK3VUT OK1MBZ YT90IARU DL5YM UR7GO
 ITALY 301263 - IK3VUT YT45CW YT90IARU DL5YM DL5YM IK3VUT OG3077F S51WO LY2PX LZ386SKI UR3ICM
 SPAIN 504782 - S55DX LY2PX HA3UU IK3VUT EA6UN DL5YM OG3077F YT45CW UR7GO LZ386SKI LY2PX

That was a lot of work, and now I feel punished enough for missing the February challenge. HI Shhh, don't tell anyone, but it was actually much more like fun than punishment.

Otherwise, I received a quick QSL card from S01WS on March 9th for entity #210 confirmed (of course with QRP/CW/simple wire antennas) just 25 days after the QSO on February 12.

Western Sahara
CQ 33 - ITU 46
Tifariti IL46rd
Bir Lehlu IL56kb

Sahrawi Amateur Radio Union
Club Station
Bir Lehlu / Tifariti

QSL Via: EA2JG
Arsel Ekeguren
C/ Barrera 6
01408 Luitaondo
Alava, Spain
arselia2jg@gmail.com

SØ1WS

الجمهورية العربية
الصحراوية الديمقراطية

BIENVENIDOS

We all share the same passion. Ham Radio, and we are more than pleased to spend a bit of our time in the project. However, the installation and maintenance of a station in Western Sahara is very expensive and Saharawis cannot afford it. Therefore, if you want to support amateur radio activity in Western Sahara, you can make a donation through PayPal. It will be greatly appreciated. The funds raised will be used first to purchasing equipment and antennas, also to its maintenance. PayPal is a secure system for transferring funds from your credit card safely without registering or owning an account. Your collaboration is very much appreciated. More info: <http://saharadx.jimdo.com>

QSL courtesy EA8AK

SØ1WS confirms QSO with K3WWP
12/02/2015 02:31 on 30m 2xCW RST 599

Of course there was the melting of the ugly white stuff which occurs annually here, usually in March. It was certainly nice to see bare lawns, sidewalks, and streets again. Another good happening this month was of course, March Madness. That is my favorite sporting event of the year.

Probably the best thing though was a visit from Mike KC2EGL which is written about in detail in the WPA chapter news.

The CME I mentioned brought the A index to 117 on the 17th - the great St. Patrick's Day solar storm it's being called. That 117 was the highest A value in over 10 years. It was 181 on November 10, 2004.

Continuing with the brief comments about the variety of things happening in March, I observed the nova in Sagittarius on two consecutive clear mornings on the 22nd and 23rd. As far as I can recall, that's the first nova I've ever seen in all the years I've been interested in astronomy.



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

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



Additional contact information can be found on the next page.

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