

# NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 215 MAY 2016



## KEY CLICKS

- **OUR NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE IS A GREAT RESOURCE.** Recently I needed to compile a list of the “Ham Quip” cartoons that have appeared over the years in our newsletter. All of our newsletters going back to March 2007 are available in an online archive at [http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter\\_archive.html](http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter_archive.html) and many of the issues have been indexed for content. What I originally thought would be a tedious chore ended up being a lot of fun. Not only did Dick’s past cartoons generate a lot of smiles, but I also found myself getting distracted from my task by a lot of really interesting articles. So the next time you have some off-air free time (spring thunderstorms?) check out a back issue or two.
- **WE ALL NEED TO REMEMBER TO QRS.** I recently received an email from a member that reminded me of the importance of slowing down our CW speed to match the person that we are working. In part the email said, *“I still work more SKCC members than NAQCC members because I’m just not fast enough to work the NAQCC sprints. I’ve tried a few times and people are just going too fast for a newbie but I’m slowly working my speed up and hope to be able and participate more this year.”* I can sympathize with this member. Although I’m completely comfortable at the speeds that we normally find in our sprints, I’ve sometimes found myself trying to work the computer generated 40 wpm crowd that seem to be so prevalent in some of the “big” contests. And some of these guys won’t slow down for anything. (I think that they forgot to program one of their function keys to QRS!) Let’s be honest, the pace in our sprints is not so intense that slowing down to help somebody out would really cost you in your QSO counts. So let’s make sure that we help these newer CW operators out by slowing down when they need it. I’ve often made the claim that QRP CW operators are among the most considerate people on the bands. Let’s all do our part to make sure that claim is true.
- **CW OPERATORS ARE SPECIAL.** Dave, KD9VT, agrees with my assessment of QRP CW operators in the item above. In his soapbox comments for the April sprint he said, *“I had a great time. I love contesting and sprints like this are great fun. I have been operating CW for only 2 months and I love it. It will be my main mode from now on. The CW folk are a different breed....in a very good way. Thanks to all of you.”* Well said Dave and welcome to a great fraternity.

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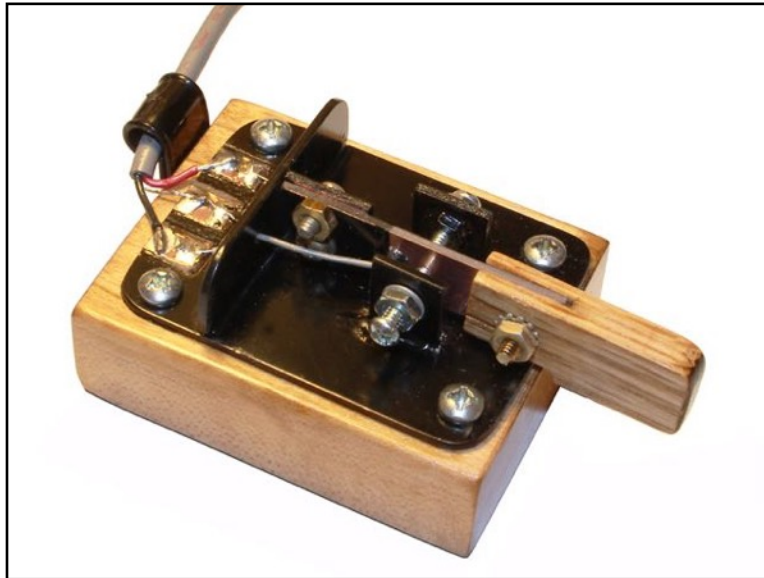
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- **NAQCC SPRINTS ARE A GREAT WAY TO IMPROVE YOUR CW SKILLS.** This item is somewhat related to the last two items on the previous page. Our sprints are a relatively relaxed, low-stress, way to improve your CW skills under real on-air conditions with QRM, QRN, and QSB, not to mention the challenge of copying a fist that might be “less than perfect.” The soapbox comment from K1SN in our most recent sprint exactly illustrates this fact. Marshall said, *“This was my first NAQCC Sprint...as one struggling with improving my CW performance, I noticed a definite improvement in my copying skill after the Sprint...yes, Virginia, it really does work!”* Like the old joke about the person who asks the street musician how to get to Carnegie Hall, it’s “practice, practice, practice!” And participating in our NAQCC sprints can give you a lot of that.
- **OUR TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IS IN THE WORKS.** Plans are already under way for our club’s 12th anniversary celebration in October of this year. Special callsigns have been reserved and we will start to recruit volunteer operators for that operation next month. Details will be announced here and on our webpage at [http://www.naqcc.info/main\\_n3a.html](http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html) as they become available. *For now, be sure to make yourself eligible for the great prizes that will be given away by regularly participating in our monthly challenges and sprints.*
- **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*. 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.”



# TRAIL FRIENDLY PADDLE

BY BOB, K9OSC



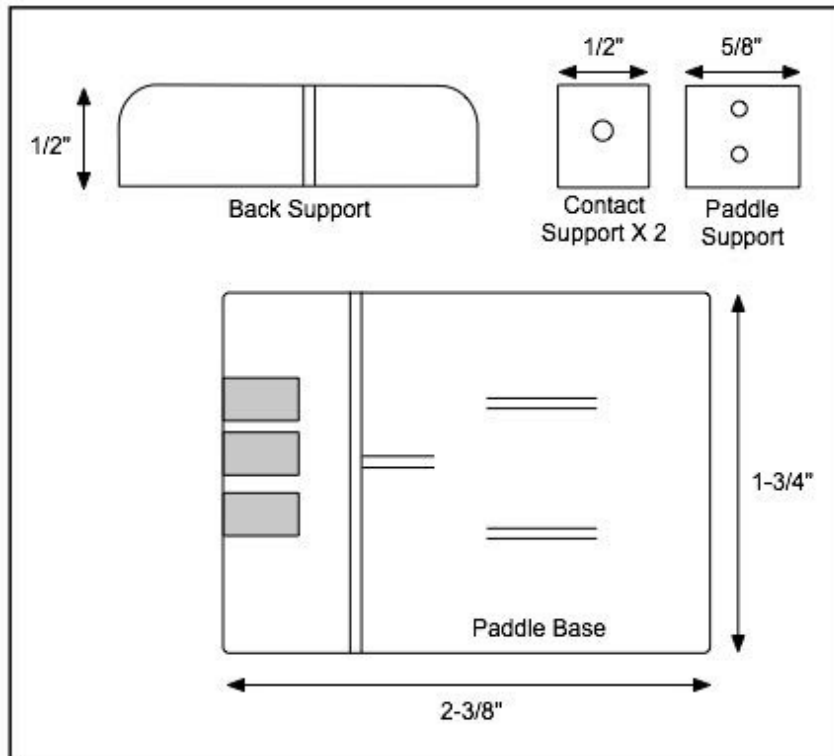
Every time I head out of the house with a radio there is always the question which key to take with me. While I have lots of keys and several that I have made myself, my preference is a paddle so I can use the keyers in my radios. Lugging a Bencher or some heavy weighted paddle around has not been my preference.

Every so often someone posts a photo or video of a key or keyer paddle that just piques my interest. That happened not long ago when Steve, WGØAT posted a picture on Facebook of a paddle he made from a kit offered by QRPGUYS.com. Steve is a consummate builder and does excellent work. QRPGUYS have numerous kits that are trail friendly and quite inexpensive. However, frugal as I am, the builder in me thought that a paddle like this could be duplicated and made more to my individual taste. The paddle described in this article was easy to build, keys very smoothly, can be set to a close tolerance and weighs in at only 2.75 ounces including the base! Measuring 1-3/4 by 2-3/8 inches it's small too! Another nice feature is it can be mounted just about anywhere or you can use it as a standalone unit.

Basically, the paddle is made using double sided PC board material. Four pieces are carefully fit together and soldered to a base also made of PC board. Small 4-40 hardware is used to assemble the paddle pendulum to the base and also serves as contact points. It is really a pretty simple paddle.

I started with a small piece of double sided PC board that I cut to a width of 1/2-inch. From that strip I cut the various pieces required, with the exception of the base. This project utilizes very little PC board. Starting with the base, I carefully marked all the location points where the various pieces needed to be soldered. Using a small machinist square really helps with the layout and assembly. It is important to keep things square and well aligned.

Shown on the next page is a diagram I developed that shows dimensioning and layout. To duplicate this paddle one can simply size the diagram and use it as a full sized template for layout and cutting. It is recommended that you drill the various holes before cutting each piece to size as it is far easier and safer to hold or clamp a large piece instead of trying to drill a small piece. All holes are drilled using a 7/64 bit. Alternatively, just measure and mark on the piece of PC board you are going to use.



Assembly is easiest if just one corner of each piece is tacked onto the base one at a time. That way you can move the piece into position, square it to the base and then tack the opposite corner. When alignment is to your liking then solder one side at a time. It is amazing how strong the assembly becomes.

When it came to assembling the contact points brass nuts were used. Using a steel machine screw the nut was tightened up on the inside of each mount and then soldered into place. It is best to clean the nuts with some 200 grit sandpaper as it not only polishes and removed grime from the metal it also provides microscopic grooves on the surface and edges which will help the solder adhere to it. Brass is a good metal to use here as it solders very easily.

For soldering I used a variable temperature soldering iron set to 800 degrees and a pointed tip. A small chisel tip would work just as well. It is important to keep the iron hot and clean. First, place the iron where you want the solder to flow and then, using a small diameter solder, flow the solder onto the joint.

Rather than having to etch traces on the base to accommodate the wiring of the paddle I used two small pieces of stranded wire soldered to each side of the pendulum. A groove was cut on both sides of the pendulum to isolate each side of the piece used here. Both wires are routed through the back to solder pads where they can be attached to a cable that connects to the radio. To cut the grooves I used a small bit on my Dremel tool. But, you can use the edge or corner of a file and that will work just as well.

When assembling the nuts and bolts, use a lock washer. That way nothing will loosen up and the contact points will stay where you place them.

Because the paddle will be used in the field my intention was to hold it in my hand or use one hand to hold it down on a table or rock and key with the other. To accomplish this I attached a small piece of maple for a base. Adjusting the key I find I can easily send at a constant 24 wpm speed without difficulty, although for field work typically speeds are much lower than that.

Rather than leave the paddle with the PC copper exposed, I chose to spray it with some black lacquer. The copper will eventually tarnish and that would compromise it's overall appearance. Where I didn't want paint to adhere I used some painters tape as a mask cutting it to fit with an Xacto knife. For a finger piece a small piece of oak worked nicely. The wood pieces were lightly stained and carefully sealed with clear gloss fingernail polish. The polish dries quickly and leaves a hard durable finish.

My experience with this paddle has been very satisfying and I am well pleased with it. The touch and ease of use makes CW operating just that much more fun. It's even fun using it in the shack. Mistakes made with it while sending are limited only to the operator and not the paddle.



# A TALE OF 2 ANTENNAS

BY TOM, VE4AKI

As a recent new member of the NAQCC I thought it wise to get familiar with the various standards that apply to the club activities. While looking over the page concerning antennas on the website I got to thinking about all the antennas I have used in 31 years of ham radio. As an avid antenna experimenter I would estimate the list is more than 25 different designs and configurations excluding VHF and portable antennas. In reminiscing about these antennas of yore two stand out for their simplicity and effectiveness.

Firing up the wayback machine let's go back to the late 1990's. The QTH at that time consisted of a 2 story house on a large city lot which was ideal for an " antenna farm". Of all the antennas I experimented the one that stands out was a sloping dipole. Actually it was a half size dipole for 20 Meters about 17 ft. in overall length with loading coils at the mid point of each leg. It was strung from the peak of the house at approximately 24 ft. down at about 45 deg. to a handy tree about 6 ft. from the ground. For more info on coil loaded antennas see K7MEM'S website.

Instead of feeding it with co-ax I used heavy duty 300 ohm twin-lead from Radio Shack [ you remember Radio Shack don't you? ] The twin lead was fed to a MFJ Versa Tuner in the shack and the idea was to use it as a multi-band antenna. The antenna sloped in a westerly direction dictated by the location of the tree. When installed I had no idea how well this antenna would work ie. its takeoff angle or radiation pattern.

My experience with this antenna came as a complete surprise. It loaded without difficulty on 20M, 17M and 15M and worked well in all directions. It became my "go to" for these bands in preference to other antennas I had [ a vertical and inverted L ]. I worked a lot of DX from all continents running 5 watts with the sloper as well as QRP ARCI contests during the 1995-99 period. Perhaps it should be renamed the sleeper antenna.

Now let's reset the wayback machine to 2004. Having retired and moved to a new QTH, a single story bungalow on a small lot, I've got a new set of problems to solve. With no trees or tall buildings how to get an antenna up at a reasonable height? A quick inventory of my antenna junk-box produced some 3/4" and 1/2 " aluminum tubing salvaged from C.B. antennas. Perhaps a self supporting antenna will solve my problem. The aluminum tubing was sufficient to fabricate a dipole of 12 ft. per side. I thought it desirable to have a bit more length for better results on 20M but the small diameter tube did not lend itself to the addition of loading coils.

Instead I used linear loading. Linear loading is used by a number of beam manufacturers and some believe it is more efficient than coil loading. A loop of wire of approximately 5 ft. length was added to each side of the dipole. I figured I could mount the tubing to a crossarm and mount it to the brick chimney on the house. But wait I see a problem. About 10 ft. from the side of the house is a high voltage power line. If I mount a horizontal 24 foot wide dipole favoring a north south direction on the chimney it comes a bit too close to the power line for comfort. I decided to modify the arrangement to a vertical vee configuration [ think big rabbit ears ]. With a 90 deg. angle I get more clearance to the power line and the radiating portion of the antenna is at a greater height.

This was the configuration I used. The tubing was mounted to a wooden plate at a 90 deg. angle using insulated clamps. The wire loops made from 14 ga. solid insulated wire were stood off from the tubing by plastic strips and hose clamps. The plate was mounted to a 6 ft. 2x3 which was strapped to the chimney. This put the apex of the antenna at about 25 ft. from the ground. I chose to feed the antenna with 300 ohm twin lead with the intention of using it as a multiband antenna.



So how does it play you ask? This antenna has worked so well for me that it has been my primary antenna for the high bands for over 10 years. It also loads easily on 30M and has worked well on that band as well. Many QRP contacts have been made [ including K1N and K5N ] using this antenna.

The old adage that a dipole at a reasonable height and in the clear is hard to beat is surely true in this case.



# 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.

## ART HEJDUK, WB8ENE, #2878



I was always interested in electronics as far back as I can remember. My brother-in-law, Eric (WA8HEB at the time) was a ham, so that was my first exposure to amateur radio. Since I liked to build things, I decided to assemble a Heathkit GR-64 short wave receiver. I really didn't get interested in obtaining an amateur radio license until I was around 14 and in junior high school. I played baritone horn, and I needed a piano accompanist for the solo and ensemble contest. I went to my accompanist's house to rehearse, and it turned out he was a ham. I remember he had a Collins 75A-1 receiver and a 40-meter dipole strung up between his parents' house and garage. I was hooked. I got my Novice ticket in 1969, and was licensed as WN8ENE.

My next construction project was a Heathkit DX-60B transmitter. My GR-64 didn't work too well for amateur use, so I ended up purchasing a used Hammarlund HQ-145X receiver. My first novice contact was with a station in North East, PA on 80 meters. He was only about 120 miles from me, but what a thrill that was. I had my Novice license for only six months before upgrading to Technician class. My brother-in-law warned me about getting stuck as a Technician, and he was right. It was six years before I finally got my code speed up to 13 WPM and got my General license. Six months later, I got my Advanced, and kept that license for twelve years. The most exciting contact I made after I got my Advanced class license was to Australia on 10 meters, using a cut down CB beam and a Yaesu FT-101E on SSB.



In 1988, I got motivated again when my boss was taking all the amateur radio tests, working his way up from Novice to Extra class after he let his license lapse. I never thought I could do it, but I got my code speed up to 20 WPM. The written tests always came pretty easy for me. It was the code that took most of the effort.

There were several years when I wasn't very active, but in 2007, I saw an advertisement in QST for an Elecraft K1 QRP CW transceiver. This got me interested in ham radio again. I decided it was time to build another kit. Since then, I have also assembled an Elecraft W1 wattmeter, an Elecraft K3, an Elecraft T1 QRP antenna tuner, two rock-mites, a Peaberry V2 QRP software defined radio, a Hardrock-50 amplifier, an AAZ-0914A antenna analyzer, and a SoftRock Lite II for use as a panadapter with my K3.

On April 3, 2008, I made a QRP CW contact with John K3WWP on 80 meters, and he told me about the NAQCC. Since becoming a member, I have participated in 68 NAQCC sprints, and I'm hoping to achieve the 75 sprint milestone before the end of this year.

I am also a member of the Straight Key Century Club. On October 12, 2014, during the SKCC weekend sprintathon, I made a contact with Bert F6HKA using one watt. That is over 3,500 miles per watt! By the way, it took me 40 years, but I finally got my ARRL Worked All States award in 2010 after making many contacts in the NAQCC and SKCC CW sprints.

I enjoy participating in CW sprints. I also enjoy operating HF mobile since I commute to and from work a total of two hours every day. The mobile rig is a Yaesu FT-857D, and I have a quick disconnect antenna mount on the trunk of the car on which I use hamstick antennas for 40, 20, 10, and 6 meters. I also manage to work some fixed mobile CW while I'm waiting for the XYL at the antique malls.

I have been married to my beautiful and understanding wife Della (N8PPD) for over 33 years. I have two sons, one grandson, and two (soon to be three) granddaughters. I currently work as a test engineer, but I'm looking forward to retirement so I can spend more time on amateur radio activities and having fun with my grandchildren. I hope to get at least one of them interested in amateur radio.

My other hobbies include woodworking, target shooting, listening to music, and playing valve trombone in the Hiram Community Band every fourth of July.



# NAQCC SPRINTS

**CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT:** Our sprint this month will be on May 12, 0030-0230 UTC. That's the evening of Wednesday the 11th here in North America. Complete details can be found at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201605.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](http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_genlog_tutorial.html). Alternatively, a logging spreadsheet for Mac OS X computer users is available at [http://www.naqcc.info/sprint\\_macs.html](http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_macs.html).

**LAST MONTH'S SPRINT RESULTS:** The April sprint had very strong participation with 124 logs submitted and 195 total participants listed in those logs. Conditions were reported as being generally good throughout the country. Several participants report new personal records and everyone had a great time. Here are a couple of soapbox comments showing how our NAQCC sprints are a great place for newer CW operators to hone their skills:

*K1SN - This was my first NAQCC Sprint...as one struggling with improving my CW performance, I noticed a definite improvement in my copying skill after the Sprint...yes, Virginia, it really does work!*

*KD9VT - I had a great time. I love contesting and sprints like this are great fun. I have been operating CW for only 2 months and I love it. It will be my main mode from now on. The CW folk are a different breed....in a very good way. Thanks to all of you.*

If you have never tried one of our sprints before please join K1SN, KD9VT, and the many other newer CW operators who are finding it a really fun thing to do!

Complete sprint results, including soapbox comments, can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201604.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: AA4JW N4WD K4JTP W7PAZ K2ZD K1SN KK4KO KA1JHH W5LIF

***Please be sure to read the editorial item in Key Clicks on page 1 about QRSing during our sprints.***

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KN1H	WB1GYZ	
W2	W2SH	KA2KGP	
W3	KD3CA		
W4	WH6LE	WB4OMM	WG8Y
W5	N5GW	WB5UAA	
W6	N6IET		
W7	AA7VW	KC7DM	
W8	N8BB	N8XMS	WB8LZG
W9	KD9VT		
W0	WB0PYF	K0CW	
VE	VE3FUJ		
DX			

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1			
W2			
W3	K3WWP		
W4	N2WZP	W4HH	
W5	NF5U		
W6			
W7			
W8	AA4JW		
W9	N9SE		
W0	KD0V		
VE			
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	W1ZU		
W2	N2ESE		
W3	KB3AAG		
W4	N4MJ	K4KRW	
W5	N5DUX		
W6	W5LIF		
W7	AA7CU		
W8	KE8DI		
W9			
W0	K9OSC		
VE	VE7YU		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	NQ2W		

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	N4WD	AA4JW	K2ZD
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
KJ4R			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	124	110	194	2/13
Participants	195	184	269	2/13
Total QSOs	2108	1905	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	1145	982	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	964	923	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	769	340	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	1200	1499	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	140	66	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	16.9	17.3	19.3	9/11

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

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



# NAQCC CHALLENGES

**CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE:** Our challenge this month is our very popular annual home-brew gear challenge. To complete this challenge you simply need to make at least 10 contacts using a piece of home-brew gear, and yes, most kits qualify as home-brew. Antenna tuners, keys, and even antennas might also qualify for this challenge so take a look at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201605.html> for the complete details. (Pictures of unique or special home-brew gear will be published on the results page.)

You just might recognize yourself in the European challenge this month since it involves the callsigns of recent challenge participants. The full details can be seen at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/may-2016-challenge>.

**NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE:** Our challenge in June will be an alphabet challenge working with a list of words associated with the "Ghost Army" of WWII. Go to <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201606.html> for information about both the challenge and the Ghost Army.

In June the European challenge will work with the names of several rivers that form the borders between various countries. The complete list of rivers and countries is at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/june-2016-challenge>.

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

**LAST MONTH'S CHALLENGE:** The deadline for submitting entries for the April alphabet challenge is still a few days away so final results are not yet available. You can go to <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201604.html> to see what has been posted so far, and the final results will also be posted there shortly after the 10th of the month.

The European challenge results will be available at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/april-2016-challenge>.

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

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

NUMBER OF CHALLENGES	MEMBERS
25+	KD2MX N1LU KD0V K9OSC VE3HUR KU4A WY3H
50+	K1YAN VE3FUJ NU7T
75+	K1IEE
100+	N8XMS W2JEK
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: 2X QRP AWARD

I have often thought that a great deal of the credit for a successful QRP QSO should actually go to the operator on the receiving end of those radiated QRP watts, and our 2X QRP Award gives you the chance to see what you can do on that end of the QSO. To earn this award you not only need to transmit at QRP power levels, but the person on the other end must be doing so as well. Any kind of QSOs are allowed for this award, including contest QSOs, so our NAQCC sprints can be a fertile place to earn your points. QSO points vary based on whether or not the other person is DX and whether or not they are an NAQCC member. Certificates are issued at several different point levels and numerous endorsements for things like single band, home-brew gear, or straight key use are also available. Complete details for the 2X QRP Award can be found at [http://www.naqcc.info/awards\\_2xqrp.html](http://www.naqcc.info/awards_2xqrp.html).

## RECENTLY ISSUED AWARDS:

### FRIENDSHIP CLUB AWARD - 700 points endorsement

0018 - W4DUK 701 05/03/16

### 1000 MPW AWARD

0506	SB4OMM	IT6TSJ	- 5,626	03/27/16	Loop @35'
0505	K8FAC	KH6ZM	- 1,138	03/27/16	G5RV Inv V @35'
0504	AB9YC	IT9MUO	- 1,011	03/27/16	Inverted L
0503	K4ARQ	P2VX	- 1,662	03/27/16	EF Zepp @50'
0502	K4ARQ	4P2MWA	- 1,855	03/27/16	EF Zepp @50'
0501	WB3T	9A3KS	- 2,864	03/27/16	Dipole @20'
0500	K9OSC	K8CIT	- 4,545	03/27/16	CF Zepp @30'
0499	DL5WW	ZL1BYZ	- 2,261	02/27/16	

### 30-30 AWARD

0037 - K3WWP Apr 2016 05/03/16

### DXCC AWARD (Category A - QRP)

0018	- VE3DTI	02/27/16	Endfed wire
0019	- DF5WW	03/27/16	Doublet @12m



# 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](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
Farnsworth 40 m QRQ Net (FRN)	Sunday 7:30 PM PT	Monday 0230 Z	7056 KHz	Rick, N6IET (in CA)
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CT	Tuesday 0000 Z	7065 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Midwest Net QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 9 PM CT	Tuesday 0200 Z	7117 KHz	Scotty, NU0S (in NE)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 4 PM MT	Tues/Thurs 2200 Z	14060 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 4:30 PM MT	Tues/Thurs 2230 Z	7062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
West Virginia QRS Net (WVN)	Wednesday 9 PM ET	Thursday 0100 Z	3565 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)	1st, 2nd, and 4th Thursday 9 PM ET	Friday 0100 Z	7117 KHz	David, KE8DI (in MI)
Farnsworth 40 m QRQ Net (FRN)	Friday 7:30 PM PT	Saturday 0230 Z	7056 KHz	Rick, N6IET (in CA)
Farnsworth 80 m QRQ Net (FRN)	Friday 8:00 PM PT	Saturday 0300 Z	3565 KHz	J.B., NR5NN (in CA)

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

### From Net Manager Scotty, NU0S

Hello gang hope all is well with everyone. The nets are going well; and my ruptured ear drum is finally healing so I can get back on the radio again without pain...Please check out the nets schedule page often for updates as well as the SPOTS page, it's a very handy tool to spot ops and schedules. Have a great one and check in often to all the nets. If the band conditions are great you can check in to several nets...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!!!**

### **04-04-2016 NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) Richard (Rick) Stutsman N6IET, California**

The K index was 4, with weaker than usual DX signals and a bit of QSB. But the band started out NVIS and remained pretty short for the next 90 minutes; nobody stopped being able to hear anybody halfway through, this time. Signals here in Los Angeles ranged from 229 (Mark's QRP signal at 600 miles) to Mike's and JB's S9 signals (QRO at 345 miles). John helped relay Mark's information to me. (I think everyone else copied Mark just fine.) Either my IC-761's front end is going bad, or the 40m background noise was 3 S-units weaker than usual today at S-2. Did anybody else notice a difference? Polar Bear Rick secured the frequency for us with a pre-net QSO with a Canadian. Today was his Polar Bear group's last swim of the season in water that was 45.2°F (I think he said, because QSB always seems to take out at least one digit) - balmy! (NOT!) Once we got everybody checked in, our first round was basically an exchange of signal reports. I should keep a chart, but what would be the point? We had a few early checkouts due to other net and family obligations. It was a great round table! I came in first for the W6 region in last month's NAQCC sprint with 161 points in the Keyer category. I was the only contender in that category. But that's because I failed to indicate that I was actually using a straight key (with my Patriot). I would still have won in the Straight Key category with 322 points, had I filled out the online Log correctly. Not that 322 points is anything to write home about!! JB said he has made that same mistake at least twice, with the same result. Maybe because of the 2x bonus, most NAQCC sprint ops use straight keys, making it a very casual and enjoyable sprint.

72 de Rick N6IET

### **04-05-2016 NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas**

Finished the first QSO with Terry and the SSB QRM hit +10 over. Called for a move up 2kc and went on from there. Great to have Craig check in from WV. He was QRP and 549. Allen KA5TJS

### **04-12-2016 NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas**

We had QRN from thunder storms up in AR. but signals were good. Joe (K5BRY) I think was a first time check in. Lost Dave (KG0YR) on the tail end. The band was changing on us

### **04-19-2016 NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas**

Conditions were ruff with storms and flooding around the state but we got it done. Jon (N5MHI) checked in from the Austin area where they got 5 inches of rain today. The other two stations were from AR. where it was a little dryer.

Allen KA5TJS

### **04-26-2016 NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas**

Very good conditions last night on 40 meters. Noise level here was S2. All signals were 599 except Dave (KG0YR) who was 449 on his new KX3 at 1 watt. Joe (K5BRY) was using his new OCF Dipole for the first time and was hitting 10 over.

Allen KA5TJS

### **04-07-2016 NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN) John Smithson N8ZYA, West Virginia**

Band conditions were average this evening but stormy weather coming quickly into the valley. Wind gusty and temperatures dropping to the freezing point tonight. QRN and QSB a factor but a really good net. Moving to 80 meters seems a good idea. Dave WV8DH could be heard at 5 W but needed to QRO. It's nice to hear a good strong signal from him. Joe WA8SIE used 10 watts this evening but Craig AB8DY and John W8GDP were heard clearly at 5 watts. John W8GDP and I talked briefly about cutting the grass this evening before sunset. The temperature today was 70 F degrees. Difficult to imagine but there's snow forecast for the weekend.

72's John N8ZYA

### **04-13-2016 NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN) John Smithson N8ZYA, West Virginia**

Another good net this evening and a new check-in from WB8MZI. A few of us had breakfast this morning. We talked about the use of the operating signal QSP. I had hopes of picking up a few new contacts. I talked to AB8DY just before the net. After my first QNI request, I could tell a few stations were in the noise but too weak for me to work. John Lancaster W8GDP did the relay for me. I was nice for him to QSO with WB8MZI (first time check-in). Dave Higley WV8DH was the next check-in and after the initial contact, he called QNI too but didn't hear anyone. I did some testing with another ham NX8Z in the lower end of the valley but conditions weren't good. Maybe next week we will be able to pick him up. I'm looking forward to next week.

### **04-20-2016 NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN) John Smithson N8ZYA, West Virginia**

Horrible band conditions tonight but was able to wish John W8GDP a Happy Birthday. John also QSP with WV8DH who was barely above the noise level tonight from my QTH. John and I talked briefly about his dinner at a local restaurant. Can the bands get much worse? 72's John N8ZYA

### **04-28-2016 NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN) John Smithson N8ZYA, West Virginia**

A short net this evening with poor band conditions again. I was difficult for most members to hear me with rain and storms in the area. 72's John N8ZYA

**April QNI Report: NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) James (J.B.) Still NR5NN, California**

Just PBR & Chas tonight. Was actually pretty good conditions, except.... Had to QSY down 500 Hz, because of man-made QRN. So if you were looking up freq and didn't find us please let me know. Chas had very strong QRN, TV noise I believe, and had trouble copying PBR. PBR had no problem copying us, but he faded into noise a couple of times. I had the 7056.15 heterodyne back, a little bit more than S9, and I could not notch or IF Shift it out. Man that is a loud, pure, steady signal. I'm sure it's coming from neighbors as I've unplugged and powered down everything in and around the house. Goes away when I unplug the East side antennas - Don't hear it at all on the West side, short vertical. My SDR radio has an auto-notch function and will take it right out, but can't transmit with it connected to any antenna. OK, you know what's REALLY ANNOYING? As I type this, 15 minutes after we closed net, the heterodyne is GONE! Grrrrrr!!!! Thanks Everyone and 73/JB. NR5NN

**NAQCC CW Net QNI Reports All Stations**  
**April/2016 Please note: *Dates are in UTC***

**NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) Richard (Rick) Stutsman N6IET, California****40M 7.056 MHz, 80M 3.556 MHz**

04-04-2016 40M QNI (8) NCS N6IET, N7HRK/M, K7KY, WU7F, W7SAG KE6EE, N6KIX, NR5NN  
 04-10-2016 40M QNI (8) NCS N6IET, NR5NN, N7HRK/M, KE6EE, W7SAG/P, WI6O, N6UG, KW6G  
 04-17-2016 40M QNI (6) NCS N6IET, N7HRK/M, NR5NN, WI6O, W7SAG, KE6EE  
 04-25-2016 40M QNI (6) NCS NR5NN, N7HRK/M, WK6G, W7SAG/P, KE6EE, WI6O

**NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) James (J.B.) Still NR5NN, California****40M 7.056 MHz, 80M 3.565 MHz**

04-02-2016 QNI (7) NCS NR5NN/N6IET, N7HRK/M, KW6G, WU7F, KE6EE, W7SAG  
 04-09-2016 QNI (5) NCS N6IET/KE6EE, KW6G, N7HRK/M, W7SAG  
 04-16-2016 QNI (2) NCS NR5NN, KW6G, N6ZI, [KE6EE W7SAG K7KY not heard]  
 04-23-2016 QNI (3) NCS NR5NN, N7HRK/M, KW6G  
 04-25-2016 QNI (6) NCS NR5NN, N7HRK/M, KW6G, W7SAG/P, KE6EE, WI6O  
 04-30-2016 QNI (4) NCS N6IET, N7HRK, KE6EE, W7SAG

**NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas****80M, 3.560 MHz**

04-05-2016 QNI (6) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YUM, KE5YGA, KG5HCF, N5DRG, AB8DY  
 04-12-2016 QNI (6) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YUM, KE5YGA, KG5HCF, K5BRY, KG0YR  
 04-19-2016 QNI (4) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YGA, KG5HCF, N5MHI  
 04-26-2016 QNI (7) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YUM, KE5YGA, N5DRG, WI5H, KG0YR, K5BRY

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

04-05-2016 QNI (0) NCS NU0S, No net sorry folks been sick  
 04-12-2016 QNI (0) NCS NU0S, No net sorry folks been sick  
 04-19-2016 QNI (4) NCS NU0S, KB7KY, N7ADA, KA4WJB  
 04-26-2016 QNI (6) NCS NU0S, N7ADA, NA9E, KB7KY, WI5H, KA4WJB

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

4-05-2016 QNI (2) NCS WC7S, AA8DY  
 4-07-2016 QNI (7) NCS WC7S, K4QQ, AA7VW, AA7CU, KE5YGA, K0EVZ, KX2P  
 4-12-2016 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, K1SN, N6IET  
 4-14-2016 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, W1EJ, W2RM, AA7CU  
 4-19-2016 QNI (6) NCS WC7S, N6IET, N6HC, AA7CU, KD9VT, NX1K  
 4-21-2016 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, NZ2Z, WI9Z  
 4-26-2016 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, AA7CU (BOTH FREQ) W6VNR  
 4-28-2016 QNI (6) NCS WC7S, AA7CU, K4QQ, N6IET, KD5ZC, AA7CU

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

04-07-2016 QNI (5) NCS N8ZYA, WV8DH, WA8SIE, AB8DY, W8GDP  
 04-13-2016 QNI (5) NCS N8ZYA, AB8DY, W8GDP, WB8MZI, WV8DH  
 04-20-2016 QNI (3) NCS N8ZYA, W8GDP, WV8DH  
 04-28-2016 QNI (4) NCS N8ZYA, W8GDP, AC8LJ, WA8SIE

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

04-01-2016 QNI (5) NCS KE7LKW, W7ANM, WB6DR, N6KIX, WA6BKD  
04-08-2016 QNI (7) NCS KE7LKW, KG7JEB, AD7BP, WB4SPB, W7ANM, N7QR, KG0YR  
04-15-2016 QNI (5) NCS KE7LKW, KG7JEB, AD7BP, WB4SPB, K7JUV  
04-22-2016 QNI (5) NCS KE7LKW, KG7JEB, WB4SPJ, K7JUV, AD7BP  
04-29-2016 QNI (6) NCS KE7LKW, K7JUV/7, WB4SPB, KG7JEB, N7TES, W7ANM

**NAQCC Great Lakes Net (GLN) David Moss KE8DI, Michigan  
80M, 3.534 MHz**

No report for April



# 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>.

Last month we announced a drawing for 2 sets of audio CW practice cassette tapes produced several years ago by the ARRL. Eight entries for the drawing were received from members by the April 20th deadline. On the 22nd we held a random drawing with much pomp and circumstance and the winners are Ron ND2Z, #6216, and Terry VE6TEP, #6234. The tapes have been mailed out to Ron and Terry and we hope that they will find them helpful.



# HAM QUIPS



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

## HAM LINGO

### Rotary "Beam" Antenna



"A Real Rotary Beam Antenna" It's Particularly Effective At Night.



# NAQCC CHAPTER NEWS

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

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

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

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

Chapter Reports Begin On The Next Page

## CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER



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

The chapter is located in the Austin, TX area.

Greeting from Central Texas.

The Central Texas chapter made one outing this past month to participate in the ARRL NPOTA in the Big Thicket National Preserve, in East Texas.

The Big Thicket is an area of about 170 square miles spread out over several Texas Counties.

It also has about 1 Billion Mosquitos per foot, or so it seemed.

The bands were not very friendly the weekend that we were there. The only band that was open was 20 meters, and it died about mid-afternoon. We came to the conclusion that it was a solar flare that was the issue.

Chapter members is attendance were.

Left to right Larry WB5BEK, Danny N5DRG, Lester WD4IFU, & Allen KA5TJS





Larry WB5BEK at the Key.



Allen KA5TJS verifying the log.





Lester WD4IFU looking out for Mosquitos.



Danny N5DRG was camera shy mostly.

Until next time  
Keep Calm  
&  
QRP On!

## NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER

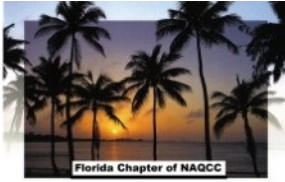


Items in this section are from European Chapter President Matt, MW0MIE, unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to him. The European Chapter website is at <http://www.naqcc-eu.org/>.

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.

## NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Florida Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to Steve, WB4OMM. The Florida Chapter website is <http://wb40mm.com/naqcc-fl-chapter>.

## NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER MEMBER NEWS:



On Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the Florida Chapter of NAQCC returned to a local park for our monthly adventure. We held our latest “Operation in the Park” at Sunrise Park North, in Holly Hill, Florida.

This lovely park, set on the Halifax River, offers pavilions, a large fishing pier and grills. It’s a great setting for hamming in the outdoors!

This trip, we had 2 members/operators in our group (well, maybe we were really a “pair”!! Hi hi hi). We arrived to our site with partly cloudy skies and a temp of 62 degrees with 50% humidity – we had a pretty stiff breeze most of the morning, so it seemed a bit “chilly” – the high for the day never made it past 70! We pretty much had the park to ourselves.

The signals were not good on 20M today, with some deep QSB. Propagation has been really bad on our last few outings!! 30M not much better.

**Steve WB4OMM #5913** - Elecraft KX-3, Vibroplex Code Warrior Jr paddle, 5W to a ground mounted vertical Hamstick setup for 20M. Steve made a total of 5 Qs in 5 different states - worked 3 members in 3 states on 20M including Mike - WI5H #7128-TX; Glenn - K3SWZ #3793-PA; Walt – KB1M #8058-NH; Jim - KA3UNQ-MD and Walt - N8PZR in OH.



**Art WB4MNK #5274** used a KX-1 at 4 watts with a “dirt cheap” paddle to an end-fed wire up around 20 feet.

Art also made 5 Qs on 30M, including one member Curt - WA2JSG #3457-NJ an all-time regular; and non-members NR8M-OH, KN4Z-VA, W2EJG-FL, and Don W8HOG-OH.

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

***NEXT MONTH'S SCHEDULED EVENT:***

**Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 starting at 9:30 AM EDT  
(Yeah a week early, and Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> to boot!)**

**Buschman Park, Port Orange, FL (4575 Spruce Creek Road, Port Orange, FL) – Park webpage with directions: [DIRECTIONS TO PARK AND INFO](#)**

**WHO: “The Usual Suspects” – Art WB4MNK, Steve WB4OMM, Rick AA4W, Don K3RLL, Wally KG4LAL, Bob W2EJG, John KM4JTE, John KD4JS, Paul NU4C & Charlie WX4CB (and whoever else can make it).**

**Visit our Web Page:**

**<http://wb4omm.com/naqcc-fl-chapter/>**

***Look for our announcement!***

**72/73 to all – Steve WB4OMM, #5913 - [NAQCCFL@yahoo.com](mailto:NAQCCFL@yahoo.com)**



## NAQCC ILLOWA CHAPTER



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

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

The April meeting of the Chapter was held on Mat 20th. I was unable to attend but the feedback I received indicated that in addition to the usual radio related conversation two important topics were discussed. One was moving the Chapter meeting date and the other planning our next outing.

Everyone agreed that moving the monthly meeting date to allow Chapter members to participate in the monthly NAQCC Sprints was a good idea. Our meetings will now take place on the second Thursday of the month with the time remaining at 7:00PM.

Outing--no firm decision was made as to a location but everyone agreed with the weather warming up it was time to get outside and operate. More to come after the next meeting. As usual when an outing decision is made we will have the information posted to all the NAQCC members.

Peter, NN9K

## NAQCC WEST FLORIDA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the West Florida Chapter unless otherwise credited. The chapter's web site is at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/967110089994401/>. Questions or comments should go to Ron, N9EE.

### NAQCC-WFL April 2016 Event

Anclote Park  
 Holiday, FL  
 April 16, 2016

For our NAQCC-WFL April event we met at Anclote Park in Holiday. Will operated mostly 20m for 40m was essentially dead.

#### Results of event:

#### Attending:

Ron	N9EE	Spring Hill, FL	6145
Joe	KW1K	Spring Hill	
John	KK4ITX	Zephrhills	7249
Knight	W8PNS	Port Richey	
Mike	WB8ONY	Holiday	

#### Log

TIME	CALL	RST/MY RST	FREQ	COMMENTS
1012	N4CD	599/339	14.041	National Park op
1015	K2GOT	589/559	14.051	Bob, NY, 5266
1047	W2MM	599/599	14026	
1057	W9ZN	599/559	14.047	Bill, IL, 1 kW
1120	K1PU	589/559	14.052	Hank, CT, SKC12486, 95W, 3 ele beam
1200	SM5CA	589/449	14.062	Lars
1204	WB7TOK/8	599/599	14.062	David, WV, 100W, long wire

20m was very good start to finish, 40m was dead.

Pictures are on the next page.

73, ron, n9ee/r a know code Extra



## NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the West Virginia Chapter unless otherwise credited. The chapter's web site is at <http://n8zyaradioblog.blogspot.com/>. Questions or comments should go to John, N8ZYA.



The biggest news in West Virginia area this month is the early arrival of three new grandchildren. Jaylee Mae (2lb. 5 oz), Jacob Ryder (2lb. 3oz), and John Ryker (3lb 1oz) arrived early at 28 weeks on April 12, 2016. All are doing well in the neonatal unit of the Women and Children's Hospital in Charleston. My son Mike, his wife Jamaica, and all the family is excited and looking forward to them coming home in a few months. Prognosis for healthy normal lives is excellent. They are very small but very active. John Ryker has been classified as "feisty" by all the nursing staff. I now have eight grandchildren.

It's also been a good month for radio this month. In the March sprint, I was able to work more "states" (**13**) that anyone else in the 8<sup>th</sup> district. In this month's April sprint, I had my best score ever with **1,020** points for 17 contacts with **15** different states. As I noted previously, my station is very modest. I live in a historic district beside an eleven story apartment building. I only compete with myself and do the best I can with what I have to work with. I am happy with that status.

I continue to be amazed at the stations that can work 25-28 different states in this two hour event. Considering all stations are at 5 watts, most using simple wire antennas, this is an amazing thing to see every month. QRP Works !!



**W8 Division**

<b>N8BB</b>	45	43	88	23	2024	x2	4048	Dipole@50'
<b>N8XMS</b>	31	30	61	20	1220	x2	2440	R7 Vertical
<b>WB8LZG</b>	23	23	46	16	736	x2	1472	Dpl@30'
<b>N8ZYA</b>	17	17	34	15	510	x2	1020	Indoor Random Wire - abt 50 ft long
<b>WV8DH</b>	16	16	32	13	416	x2	832	ZS6BKW G5RV @32 FT
<b>KA8KUF</b>	15	15	30	10	300	x2	600	Window up 30 feet
<b>WB8ENE</b>	11	11	22	8	176	x2	352	20M dipole @ 20' / 40M dipole @ 15'
<b>NF8M</b>	5	5	10	4	40	x2	80	80m OCF dpl @35ft
<b>KD8FKD</b>	6	4	10	4	40	x2	80	Dpl@35'
<b>AB8DY</b>	4	4	8	4	32	x2	64	OCF Dipole at 40'

I've made some changes to the **WV QRS** net this month. I'm having greater success with an eighty meter frequency (**3.565 MHz**) at 9 pm local time. With the help of **QSP** stations, I'm seeing new calls on the net. John Lancaster **W8GDP** and Dave Higley **WV8DH** have been a great help relaying for me and calling QNI when needed.

This month's "Challenge" was rewarding. I thought I would never get the last couple of R's but was finally successful. I've heard from both **WV8DH** and **AB8DY** that the R's were difficult for them too. I might add that I'm extremely happy to see both these call signs as active WV Chapter members right here in the Charleston area.

On April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the West Virginia Chapter held an event at the Hurricane Wave Pool Park in the Kanawha Valley.

It seems we had the same band conditions as our other state chapters have had this month. Band conditions were just horrible. I worked only eight stations but was happy to make contact with **VE4AKI**. I've tried for years to get my last province in Canada for the **NAQCC WAVE AWARD**.





I've always said these events are a lot like fishing. You never know what you're going to catch until you throw the line in the water. Amazingly, I worked club member **KB5JO** in Texas. Unexplainable he responded with the power of 1 watt. I wanted to be sure of this and sent him a follow-up e-mail. Surprisingly, the official power was **800 mw**. I responded with "must be using a beam?"- He sent back the antenna as an 88 ft doublet. Four stars to him!!

Despite bad band conditions we had a great time during the Hurricane Wave Pool Park. It was rewarding to see Jim Stephens **NX8Z** again. Jim has a new pacemaker which is now working well for him. We were visited by a few lower Kanawha Valley hams while operating from this picnic shelter. Tom Gladis **AB8RL** stopped by during his lunch time. He has since joined the ranks of the NAQCC WV Chapter.

I'm encouraged to see the activity of our new members. Participation in the Sprint, the monthly Challenge, and our QRS net leads me to believe our Chapter is looking forward to a nice summer experience. Our member Steve Ashcraft **KC4URI** and I have plans for a camping trip to Grantsville WV in a few weeks. We've operated from there previously. It's the darkest place in the entire state and, on a clear night, you can see the Milky Way from horizon to horizon.

Eric Lassiter **AC8LJ** and I will drive up and back to the Dayton Hamvention on Friday the 20<sup>th</sup> of May. I have plans to meet Steve Szabo **WB4OMM** at the ARRL Sport Table. I hope to see *any* other club member at the Hamvention this year. After a quick trip through the arena, I plan to lounge around the table of the **WV DX Association**. Their tent is always next to the food and beer both in the flea market. I'll be tuned to 146.55.

72's for now,

John Smithson N8ZYA

## NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

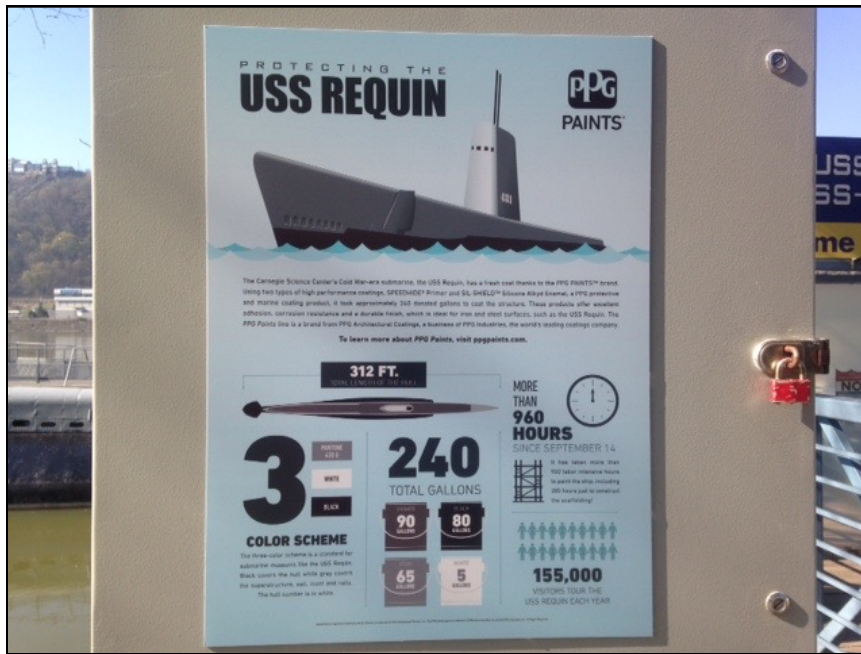


Items in this section are from the Western Pennsylvania Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to John, K3WWP.

The first major WPA Chapter activity of 2016 turned out to be somewhat unsuccessful in some respects, but a lot of fun in other ways. Let's get the disappointments out of the way first. On April 17, WB3FAE, K3WWP, KC2EGL, and N3CU headed to Pittsburgh for a subpedition on the USS Requin. This was the first WPA Chapter activity of any kind for Ken N3CU, and it was great to have him aboard. Since the rest of us have done subpeditions before, it didn't take long for us to get set up for the operation with some assistance from the sub caretaker Art WA3BKD. As soon as we started operating however, it became apparent something was not right. Mike and I decided to let Ken and Tom (WB3FAE) do the bulk of the operating since we had done a lot of the operating in previous subpeditions. Here's Ken at the key with Tom looking on.



Normally the first few CQs bring a whole raft of responses. However this time there was nothing at all the first half hour on 40 meters. A switch to 20 meters proved almost as dismal although we did make 5 QSOs between 1430 and 1515Z. Worked then were K1JD (NM), KE7YTE (AZ), AF5KA (TX), KZ5J (TX), W5BM (OK). All 5 QSOs were like the proverbial "pulling teeth". Then a big gap in the log until 1759. Still very slow as only 6 more QSOs were added until shutdown time at 1900Z - K8DSS (FL), N0EVH (MO), F6HKA, N4BP (FL), N5GW (MS), K5SSR(NM). All were on 20 except N5GW on 30. F6HKA and N4BP were worked in the Manchester Miniera contest. There were two reasons for the poor results, neither of which we had any control over. One was propagation (which also affected a WV Chapter activity a couple days later as written up in the WV section). There were virtually no strong signals around despite there being at least a half dozen contests going on that day. The stations we did work had QSB with ups and downs rapid and extreme. For example, K8DSS was S9+, but quickly slipped right into the S3 or S4 noise, never to return. The second reason was a problem with the Requin's antenna. Art took a look up at the vertical on the conning tower with binoculars and noticed that an antenna clamp was just not right. Apparently it was disturbed by the painters during their repainting of the sub the past several months as detailed in this poster outside the sub.



Hopefully we can make up for the poor showing with another subpedition sometime in June by which time the antenna will be repaired and hopefully propagation will be better.

Otherwise the four of us did have a great time. Ken enjoyed his maiden 'voyage' on the Requin. The weather was beautiful and as we usually do, Mike and I took advantage and enjoyed our lunch outside in the sun next to the Carnegie Science Center at right in this picture.



We also took a brief tour through the Center, especially the souvenir shop. We didn't buy anything, but it was enjoyable seeing just what they have there. Back aboard, it was great interacting with the visitors to the sub, answering their questions and just generally chatting with them. As always, Art was his usual fun self. I think Mike described Art best when he said he's a very serious, dedicated person in his job as sub caretaker, yet just a ton of fun to be around at the same time. We also learned that Ken fits in perfectly with our zany little group, and it's nice to have him as an active member of the chapter. Hopefully he will be joining us for other events.

Here's Mike (L) at the key, and me (R) doing our share of the operating:



In a side note, my neighbor was very interested in visiting the sub some day. He is a big guy, so Mike took this picture of me going through one of the bulkheads (carrying my sandwich) to give him an idea of the size of the bulkhead. I'm 5' 9" and 160 pounds so that will also give others who may want to visit the sub an idea of what they will have to go through. I didn't count, but there are around a half dozen bulkheads to navigate along with 3 or so sets of pretty narrow steep stairs.



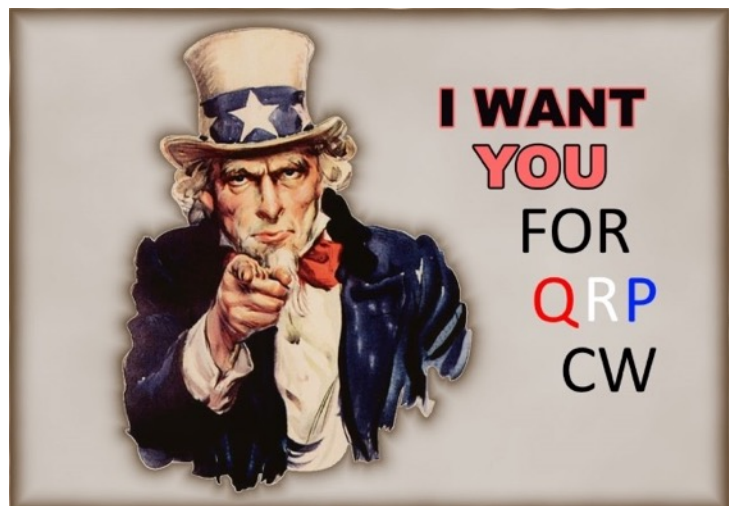
We all headed home around 1900Z (3PM) so we could beat the Pirates baseball game traffic madhouse. Here' the radio crew - WB3FAE, K3WWP, KC2EGL, and N3CU (L-R) in this picture taken on the Requin walkway as we were leaving the sub at the end of the day.



It was clear sailing for Mike and me, hopefully for Tom and Ken as well. Mike and I stopped at the Pittsburgh Mills for dinner at one of our favorite places - Chili's. At home here we hung out for an hour or so. We got on the bands for a bit. They were still poor, but I think Mike did work a couple DX stations if memory serves.

On Wednesday evening April 27, Mike and I got together for a pizza. I worked S01WS before Mike arrived. But when he came about a half hour later, conditions had changed and then S01WS QRT before Mike had a chance to work him. After that, we discussed the upcoming Butler hamfest. Also about doing an encore presentation on QRP/CW at the BCARA club meeting in Butler, PA. In November we had a very well received presentation on QRP/CW except that conditions on the bands were horrible and we couldn't really show off the KX3/PX3. We hope to attend another meeting and this time be able to demonstrate the KX3 under better conditions.

Mike and I also did some work on a new club banner to be unveiled at the Breezeshooters Hamfest on June 5th in Butler, PA. It's based on our original club banner designed by Tom KA2KGP and his brother Mike N2COD several years ago which has served us well over the years. The updated banner will be an all weather type that we can use in any situation. Here's a sneak peek at one of the items which will be on the banner. It may or may not wind up exactly as shown here, but you get the idea.



Our next "chapter activity" will be on May 9th, when hopefully there will be clear skies so that Mike and I can observe the transit of Mercury in addition to a couple other projects.

Then on Sunday, June 5th, we'll be setting up at the Breezeshooters Hamfest in Butler, PA. As we do each year, we'll man a NAQCC table and have a KX3 set up to make some contacts. If you live in WPA, you are automatically a WPA Chapter member and would be welcome to help us man the table. Email K3WWP via the 'contact us' page on the web site.



# MEMBER SUBMISSIONS



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

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

From Ed, KJ4R, #8048 —

*KJ4R was the prize winner in the random drawing for the participants in our April sprint. When I informed him of his win he sent this email reply. - Editor*

Wow that's pretty cool. Only about the second time in my life I think I've actually won something! And to think I almost didn't participate. Don't know if you saw my soapbox entry, but I have a very playful boxer and he and I were doing our usual wrestling around on the floor when he jabbed me in the eye with his front paw. They don't call them boxers for nothing! My XYL has warned me over and over that no good could come of the playing with him, but hey he's a good dog and he just wants to play. Well I should have listened to her. It was the most painful thing I've experienced in my 52 years. When I got to the eye doctor the next morning after a night of intense pain and no sleep, he told me I had a nasty cut / tear on my eyeball. I had to wear a patch for a day, a contact for a day and although the pain is gone my vision is still not back to normal. The doctor says it will return in time so I'm thankful for that. It's amazing how fast the eye can heal is all I can say!

Anyway I'm hooked on the sprints and really look forward to them every month now. I waited all month for the April one to get here and I wasn't about to go down without at least making a few QSO's. Glad I did now. I love CW and the NAQCC is a first class group and I'm glad I finally got a QRP rig and joined in the fun. I subscribe to QST and CQ but in all honesty I find myself looking forward more to the NAQCC newsletter these days than either one of them. You guys do a great job!! I need to get off my duff and send in some support soon. I'll try to do that this week.

Thanks to you for your work as president, to Tom and John for getting this whole thing rolling and Gregg for the great prizes.. Speaking of prizes.....I like H13 if they are available.

Take care guys and thanks again!  
72, Ed KJ4R

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

I am really looking forward to our May home-brew challenge! (See the *NAQCC Challenges* page in this newsletter for details.) Since most of my regular gear is home-brew, making the required 10 QSOs is not really going to be an issue for me. But I'm putting a personal twist onto this challenge. I'm going to pull off the shelf as many of my old home-brew projects - little rigs, keyers, tuners, paddles, etc. - as I can find and use them to make my contacts. So things like a hacksaw key, a little shirt-pocket Rockmite, and a scratch-built 40-meter transmitter built around 1980, are all going to have another "moment in the sun." It's going to be a lot of fun and I'll be sure to give a report on it next month.



From Tom, VE4AKI, #8145 —

As we all know QRP operation is a challenging and rewarding facet of ham radio. Our current position in sunspot cycle 24 is on the downward side toward a sunspot minimum in a few years. This means that the challenge is only going to become greater in the ensuing years.

I was first licensed during the minimum of cycle 22 and survived cycle 23 without throwing in the towel. I'd like to make a few suggestions that might be helpful in ensuring your continued enjoyment of QRP and CW activity.

As much as QRP operation presents a significant challenge by itself, it will only become more challenging over the next few years. When conditions are good almost any receiver can do an adequate job but the future will require the best of receivers to deal with the weaker signals, noise and QSB. Recent development of noise reduction systems, digital signal processing and similar features will become increasingly valuable. As much as I enjoy operating simple, often homebrew equipment, remember the old saying "if you can't hear them, you can't work them"

Another factor that can make a huge difference is your antenna. I suggest that you put up the best antenna that your conditions and budget allow. Makeshift antennas are fine for portable and casual operation but for serious work an antenna with high efficiency will be beneficial if not a necessity.

Your operating skills will also meet additional challenges. Weaker signals and QSB will become your foes. Sharpening your listening skills and the use of good headphones and "tuned" speakers will assist you in hearing those signals buried in the noise. Your sending skills also should be optimized to make your signal easier to copy under poor conditions. QSB can be a challenge to cope with. I have found that slower, clearly sent code is easier to copy when QSB rears its ugly head. If the code speed is too fast, a large portion of an exchange may be lost during the fading. Some ops seem to feel that speed is more important than correct spacing but well spaced code at a slower speed is much more effective under rough conditions.

It is also best to keep exchanges short as conditions can change quickly. Losing a contact during a long winded exchange can be frustrating. Also, there is no need to keep exchanging callsigns once a contact is established. Use the BK sign to indicate you are ending your exchange and turning it over to the other station.

In spite of all these difficulties there are still lots of interesting activities you can get involved with. The NAQCC offers many activities such as sprints, challenges and awards suitable for all levels of skill and degrees of dedication. Many other organizations such as the ARRL, QRP ARCI and other clubs also offer other awards you can strive for. Pursuing these activities is useful in focusing your ham activity toward some attainable goal while also developing your skills. If you have a rig that covers the 6M band you might try 6M QRP. I have been operating 6M QRP for a few years with very satisfying results. 6M antennas are small and easy to construct and low power on 6M can be very effective when propagation is favorable.

Lastly you might consider constructing useful equipment to augment your station. There was a time when hams "had" to construct their stations themselves. Those days are long past but homebrewing useful accessories such as keyers, keyer paddles antenna tuners etc. can be very satisfying and can help advance the performance of your station.

I hope these ideas will be helpful in dealing with the challenges presented by the upcoming current sunspot minimum. Ham radio has a long history of getting through when the going gets tough. As QRP CW ops, we can set an example for others and uphold that tradition.

From Glenn, K3SWZ, #3793 —

*The NAQCC is of course a CW club but we are including this submission for the benefit of those members that might occasionally stray to the “dark side.” - Editor*

Recently, I was told about a new QRP transceiver for digital modes. I went looking and found a site called “The Transverter Store” run by Serge, UT5CW in Ukraine. <http://transverters-store.com/> He makes a complete line of VHU/UHF transverters, low power HF digital transceivers, as well as some other associated products. I purchased the 20 Meter PSK-31 version that is crystal controlled on 14070.0 KHz, which is the common PSK-31 frequency. It arrived in a few weeks, after making it’s way through U.S. Customs with no problem. I was amazed at how small it was. This transceiver is fully self-contained. All you need is +12 VDC, a 20 Meter antenna and a computer with a Sound Card. The computer must be running Digi-Pan (available free on-line) or an equivalent digital communications program. It is connected to the computer by two STEREO audio cables. (Mono cables will not work!) As soon as it is powered up, you see the “water fall” and see the presence of signals on the band. Operating it is just like another transceiver in the PSK-31 mode, except there are no controls! It really works! Power output is only 1.5 watts. The first day I had it on the air, I worked 5 or 6 states, plus 6Y5 and CO7. Conditions were not good that day... I did copy a few Europeans. Serge makes PSK-31 models for 15, 20, 30 and 40 Meters, plus JT-65 models for 15, 20 and 40 Meters. The price is \$125 U.S, including shipping. I determined was that it would be nice to have a bit more power... I e-mailed Serge and inquired if he ever considered building an amplifier. He said in his prompt reply, that he offers a 10 watt amplifier. It has just not made it to his web site. (I think it has been recently added) The price for the amplifier is \$120 U.S, shipped.. He does take PayPal, which makes it painless to deal with him... I am sure this radio would be perfect for back-packing, portable, etc. I am an old RTTY’er and not into the “digital modes of the week”, but this is a blast to play with!



73

Glenn Kurzenknabe, K3SWZ

From Steve, K7EW, #7742 —

*Steve mentioned to me in an email that he was going to be operating in the April sprint using a “stove pipe vertical.” I asked him for details and he replied with the following. Ham radio creativity at it’s best! - Editor*

The place is my sister's home, pretty isolated, on the High Desert of Central Oregon. We're house- and animals-sitting for her for about a week. It's a beautiful, very quiet and restful place, with lovely fresh air, and off the grid, built by her and her two daughters.



There are scattered Juniper trees on the property, 10 to 20 ft high. The land is a pretty flat rocky sagebrush area, cut by a 100' deep canyon.

I tried some indoor wire antennas, with some success, because the construction is straw bale and adobe. But the roof is metal.



At one point, I thought I had a bright idea: how about using her "metalbestos" stovepipe/chimney as a vertical?

The pictures show the house and chimney, which goes about 8 ft above the gently-sloped roof. Other pictures show the woodstove inside, and my little red cliplead attached to one leg of that stove. Some thin insulated blasting cap wire runs 6 ft from there under a rug to my operating position...and about another 30 ft are counterpoise, first under the rug, then up and strung in a straight line under the wood ceiling.

My KX-3 ATU quickly finds 1.1 or 1.0 all over most of the main bands I use: 80, 40, 30, 20, 15...what a nice surprise!

I think the metal roof is playing some kind of role in this, because the chimney has a few metal connection to it. Maybe her solar panels, too! Some parts of those panels may go to an excellent ground...

### From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

April was a quiet month hamradiowise for me personally. Basically it consisted of three activities. Of course, first and foremost, was continuing my DX streak concurrently with my big main streak. It seemed easier in April than it was in March to work DX and virtually all my DX QSOs came in the 0000Z hour. Not much in the way of new band countries worked except for S01WS on 40 meters. I did receive QSLs for a couple other band countries via the ARRL buro though - IQ6CC 12M and TK5MH 17M. I don't know what took so long to get a QSL from Italy on 12. At the end of April the streak stands at 1,157 for DX and the big streak at 7,940 days. If you are not familiar with the streak(s), they are simply making at least one QSO per day using CW/QRP/simple wire antennas. The regular streak started on August 5, 1994 and the DX streak on March 1, 2013. They are done to prove to the skeptics that QRP and simple wire antennas work, especially when CW is used. According to comments over the years, many folks have been convinced and are now enjoying ham radio with the only minimal type of station that could be set up in their situation. Many more details on the streak and many other QRP/CW matters are on my web site at <http://k3wwp.com/> or via a Bing search for K3WWP.

Secondly, work on the NAQCC April "wire" challenge. Actually it wasn't really work and I never had to go searching for letters. They all just came naturally via my normal QSOs and I was finished by April 17th. However with conditions to Europe not being good at the times I could get on the air (mostly the 0000Z hour), I could not complete even one of the words in the European challenge.

Thirdly, the NAQCC sprint was a delight this month. The horrible S8 to S9+ noise I've been experiencing here the past several months seems to have disappeared (for good?), and with the noise at S3 to S5 now I could really get serious about the sprints again. I wound up making my second best showing ever with 56 QSOs from 24 SPCs for a raw score (pre key multiplier) of 2,640 points. That was only topped by 2,688 points way back in the pre-noise era in December 2010. My best QSO total was 57 that same month. Best SPCs 25 in June 2013. Of course it's not the big scores in themselves that are exciting or fun, but just the joy of being able to work many of my club friends in the sprints again. It was great to work those whom I hadn't been able to work for a while now due to the local noise. Hopefully things will continue this way from now on.

Of course there were a couple WPA Chapter activities in April also, but those are other stories covered in the WPA Chapter news earlier in the newsletter.

Hope to meet up with some of you at the Butler, PA Breezeshooters hamfest on June 5. We'll have a NAQCC table set up there to greet members, sign up new members, and demo the KX3/PX3.

### From Dejan, SA3BOW, #6935 —

Untangling ear bud wires is not fun! It feels like you're wearing boxing gloves. My remedy: Keep 'em untangled with the aid of tiny hair clamps. Works admirably. Cost is like a buck for half a dozen and can be found in all colors, with kittens, flowers, ponies and what not. When not used store them in your hair or beard!

*Tiny hair clamps keep ear bud wires untangled and in fashion. Here in "woodland camo"... OK, tortoiseshell.*



From Dejan, SA3BOW, #6935 —

At my low level of DIY, finding an enclosure is often difficult. Recently I failed to find an enclosure for a badly needed dummy load. So I asked #4 overtone what to use. He blinked once, stretched and handed me a 16ga G. Egestorff\* Linden B/H brass shell from a shelf above me. My X-mas tree decoration! A perfect fit for my tiny junk box's stuff.

Note the following:

1. BNC females comes in many shapes. The BNC female fitting this layout has a front thread.
2. I used eight 1% ½ W resistors. They fit well. But many and long leads make it harder to get a 50Ω pure resistive load over a wide range of frequencies. I suggest using short leads and few resistors. This one measured 50Ω DC but 49Ω centre HF. Good enough for my 2.5 W 20-30-40 meter transceiver.



# 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 over 8000 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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Additional contact information can be found on the next page.

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