

# NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 218 AUGUST 2016



## KEY CLICKS

● **K3WWP COMPLETES AN AMAZING 22 YEARS!** On August 4, 2016 John, K3WWP, #0002, cofounder and retired Vice-president of the NAQCC, marked 22 years for his QRP CW QSO streak. That's 22 years - 8036 days - of making at least one QRP CW contact every single day! When John started his streak in 1994 President Bill Clinton had been in office for about a year and a half, the World Trade Center was still standing, and most of us were not on the internet. (Netscape Navigator, one of the first popular browsers, wasn't released until the fall of that year.) Think about all that has happened in the world, and in your personal world, over the last 22 years. Now think about making at least one QRP CW QSO each and every day over all of that time - solar minimums and geomagnetic storms, personal business appointments, illness, and neighborhood power outages - letting nothing get in the way! I don't know of anyone else, QRP or even QRO, who claims to even come close to that accomplishment and we certainly extend a big **CONGRATULATIONS** to John for this. You can learn more about the streak and follow the next 22 years on John's website at <http://k3wwp.com/>.

● **N#A OPERATORS NEEDED FOR OCTOBER ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION.**

Plans are well underway for our 12th anniversary celebration to be held October 10-16 and we are now recruiting volunteers to put our special call signs (N1A, N2A, N3A, ... N9A, N0A) on the air during that week. 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 that week please indicate that as well (first come first served). Detailed instructions for special event operators will be sent out by the end of September but if you have any questions just ask. Additional information can be seen at [http://www.naqcc.info/main\\_n3a.html](http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html).

● **PROBLEMS WITH A SPRINT LOG SUBMISSION?** This is just a reminder that if any issue comes up involving your sprint log submission please contact the appropriate managers listed at the top of the webpage for that particular sprint. For example, if you have made a correction to your log and need to resubmit it please email the sprint managers before reusing the autologger.

● **REMEMBER TO PROMOTE THE NAQCC.** Don't forget to include a mention of your membership in the NAQCC in things like your [QRZ.COM](http://www.qrz.com) bio page or on your QSL card. A link to the club's website is also a great idea.

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- **EXCEL VERSION OF THE ALPHABET CHALLENGE SPREADSHEET NOW AVAILABLE.** An Excel version of the spreadsheet described in last month's newsletter ([http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter\\_217.pdf](http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter_217.pdf)) is now available for download at the bottom of our Alphabet Tutorial webpage at [http://www.naqcc.info/challenge\\_tutorial.html](http://www.naqcc.info/challenge_tutorial.html).

**BREAKING NEWS** - An even more powerful tool is now available! See the *Challenge* section in this newsletter for more details.

- **AG1T IS THE NEW QSL MANAGER FOR N3AQC.** Gary, AG1T, #4034, has agreed to become the QSL manager for our club callsign, N3AQC. All requests for an N3AQC QSL card now go to him. (SASE required.) We certainly appreciate his willingness to help out with this important job. By the way, some of you may not know that the N3AQC call can be signed out and used by members for their special QRP/CW operations. Contact Paul, N8XMS, for more information about that.
- **N3AQC QSL CARDS DONATED TO THE CLUB.** Hal, K6RF, #0171, of [CheapQSLs.com](http://CheapQSLs.com) has donated a nice supply of QSL cards for our N3AQC club callsign. You can see what they look like at [http://www.naqcc.info/n3aqc\\_info.html](http://www.naqcc.info/n3aqc_info.html). We certainly appreciate Hal's generosity and encourage you to check out his fine designs if you are in the market for a new card for yourself.
- **NAQCC WEBSITE HACKED.** Last month we discovered that our club website had been hacked by some unknown intruder. The hack appears to have been designed to redirect a visitors browser to an unknown website if they tried to do a web search (Google, Bing, etc.) for pages on our club website. The actual functionality of our webpages was not impacted and there was no danger of a computer virus infection. Files have been cleaned up, access passwords changed, and the website is being carefully monitored for any additional hacking activity.
- **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 who 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."



# NAQCC SPRINT DEFS

BY PAUL, N8XMS

*Last month we published an excellent article by K3WWP entitled "NAQCC SPRINT ABCs." We follow that up this month the "DEF's" - help and advice for newer CW operators who would like to give our sprints a try.*

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Recently I eavesdropped on a conversation between a new CW operator and his elmer. Here is how the conversation went...

K3PRO: Hey Joe, did ya read the article in last month's NAQCC newsletter by K3WWP about how to operate in the sprints? It was really good. You should read it and give the sprints a try.

N3NEW: Yeh, I saw it and I even tried to listened in for a few minutes on the sprint last month but it just seemed too confusing to me. My speed just isn't up to what those high-speed guys are doing.

K3PRO: Hey, I've worked you a few times and I know you've also had a bunch of other QSOs. Your fist sounds good and you've been able to copy most of what I've sent. I always tell ya that timing and accuracy is a lot more important than speed. I think you're ready to do a sprint and they really are a lot of fun.

N3NEW: I don't know, Mark. When I was listening last month I wasn't even sure that I could get the callsigns straight of the guys that were calling CQ NA! They just seemed too fast.

K3PRO: Listen Joe, I can give ya some tricks that can help ya with all of that. But I'll be honest with ya, you've got a mind barrier that ya need to break through, not a speed barrier. It's like that time that you came over to my shack to make your first CW QSO. Do ya remember? You were so nervous that your palms were sweating. And you were concentrating so much that ya didn't even know that I left and went to the kitchen for some more coffee!

N3NEW: You got up for more coffee? I didn't know that! I really was nervous but it did get a lot better as I went along.

K3PRO: Sure it did, and the sprints will work the same way. Ya just need to give it a try and pretty soon it will get easier - and fun.

N3NEW: OK, I'll think about it. So what are these tricks that you're talking about?

K3PRO: Well, first let me give you a fact, not a trick. QRP CW operators are among the best that you will find on the bands, and I don't just mean their skills. Most of them are really nice people too. They'll usually slow down to match your speed so make sure that ya don't send any faster than you can comfortably receive. Now I'll admit that you'll find some ops in the big contests who refuse to slow down, but our NAQCC sprints run at a much more relaxed pace. A majority of the participants actually use straight keys and ya never hear anyone using a function key on a computer to spit out canned exchanges at 40 wpm. And remember, there's no shame in asking someone to slow down. Do you remember the Q-signal for "slow down?"

N3NEW: Yeh, I think it's QRS, isn't it?

K3PRO: Yep. Just send PSE QRS whenever you need and there's not a QRP/CW op that I can think of who won't be happy to slow down to help you out.

N3NEW: OK, but what if someone is sending their CQ too fast for me to even copy their call? I can't call them if I don't know their callsign.

K3PRO: Well, I've got a couple of tricks for that. First, ya can just monitor them for a minute or two. Each time they send their call you'll probably get a little bit more of it. Once your sure that ya have their complete callsign you can answer their next CQ at your own speed. And like I said, if they don't automatically slow down when they send their exchange just ask them to QRS and repeat their information - AGN? PSE QRS BK

The other thing that ya can do is to let them come to you. Just find an open frequency and call your CQ NA DE N3NEW K at your speed. Ya won't get an answer from every CQ but plenty of sprint participants spend at least part of their time searching around for CQs - we call that "search and pounce." They'll find ya.

N3NEW: OK, but I just know that I'm going to mess up the exchange sometimes.

K3PRO: Of course ya will. Everyone does, even the old pros. But remember there's no shame in asking for a repeat. With poor band conditions and our QRP power levels it's not uncommon to need two or three repeats before you're sure that ya have it OK. ... And ya can always use your crutches.

N3NEW: What do you mean by crutches?

K3PRO: It's always easier to copy the CW if ya know ahead of time what's going to be sent. So take a post-it note and write "RST - STATE - NUMBER" on it. And under that someplace write your own membership number so there's no way that ya can forget it. Then stick it up someplace where ya can see it without even moving your head. You'll be amazed at how helpful that little "cheat sheet" is! I use one for every sprint - at my age my memory needs all the help that it can get!

The other crutch that you can use is the GenLog software that K3WWP talked about. When ya enter the callsign of the member that you're working it will automatically fill in all of the exchange info into your log, except for the RST. Now, you should never completely rely on that to the point that ya don't even try to copy the info yourself. Sometimes someone will be operating portable from a different state or something so the GenLog data isn't always 100 percent. It's good but not always perfect. But it can be real helpful when, for example, ya weren't quite sure whether he sent a 3 or a 4 in his membership number or something like that.

N3NEW: I don't think that GenLog will work on my computer.

K3PRO: Oh, I forgot that you have that Mac laptop. But that's OK because they have a spreadsheet for Apple computers that works the same way. You could just use that.

N3NEW: I can see how all of that could help but it's gonna be kinda embarrassing when my puny results get published on the website next to all of those high scores!

K3PRO: (laughing) Come on! Ya know what really happens when the results get published? People go to the page and look at their own results! They might glance at some of the other scores but no one really cares what other people get. The real use for those results is so that you can see how well ya did compared to yourself in previous sprints. Compete against yourself, not against other people! As time goes by I'll bet you'll see a big improvement in your scores. When I was still a school teacher I use to have a poster up on my wall that said "An expert in anything was once a beginner."

N3NEW: Ok, Ok, enough Mark! I'll give it a try sometime.

K3PRO: "Procrastination is the thief of time." ... Next month!

N3NEW: (laughing) Boy, you sure are getting preachy! Ok, I'll give it a try next month.

This is obviously a fictional conversation, but I'm sure that you get the point. If you are a seasoned sprinter are you doing what you can to help and encourage the beginners? Do you QRS when you come across someone that obviously needs slower speeds? And do you patiently give repeats, or do you find yourself getting irritated with the delay? What's really more important - helping someone learn to enjoy CW/QRP contesting, or a few extra seconds of your personal operating time?

If you are a CW contesting novice please study the suggestions given last month and in this article, and then conquer your stage fright and jump into the next sprint with both feet. It's easier than you think and it's a lot of fun! You will also find that it helps you out with all of your CW operating. To quote the soapbox comment of K1SN from a few months ago, *"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."*



# SDR DONGLE UP CONVERTER

BY GREGG, WB8LZG

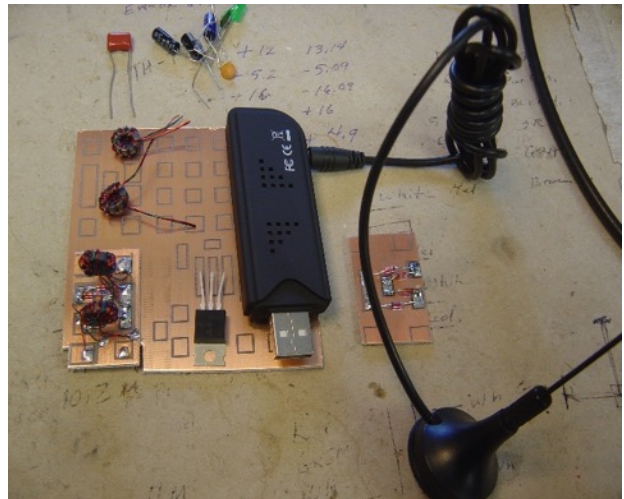
I was hooked from the moment I turned to the page in the January 2016 QST with the simple SDR receiver based on a widely available DVD Dongle, and a simple up-converter to bring in the HF spectrum.

I ordered a Dongle on Amazon for \$10. Wow, simply an amazing little gadget! As soon as software was loaded, I was receiving the "39" repeater on the computer. What possibilities!

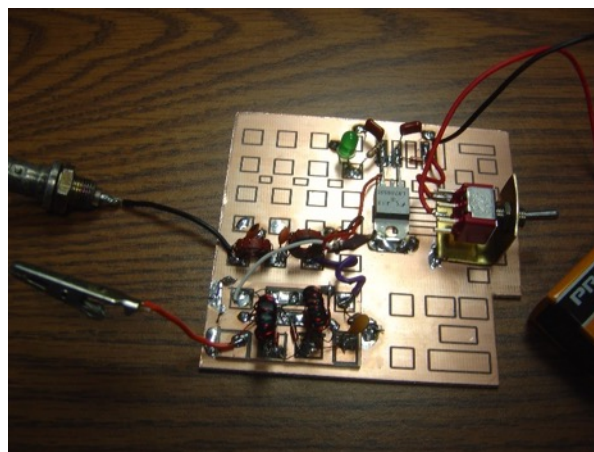
Here is a simple project that can be made with all new parts for under \$20. It is perfect for a "group build" for a club. But first, I had to build one and get a prototype working to insure that it was a "Do-able" group project.

I already had a bunch of the toroids and caps, resistors, diodes, and wire. The only things I had to buy were the 100 Mhz oscillator chips. So I "bit the bullet" and ordered up an oscillator chip to test. I got the SMT chip version due to discontinuation of the larger "hole thru" part. No problem, I'll just solder wires onto them. To keep it cheap, I decided to "roll my own" Double Balanced Mixer instead of buying the commercial one in the article. This kit was the combination of the DBM from the old 2N2222 XCVR kit, of Nor-Cal fame, and the QST version, with Manhattan building techniques. Here is a pictorial of the prototype to finished project build.

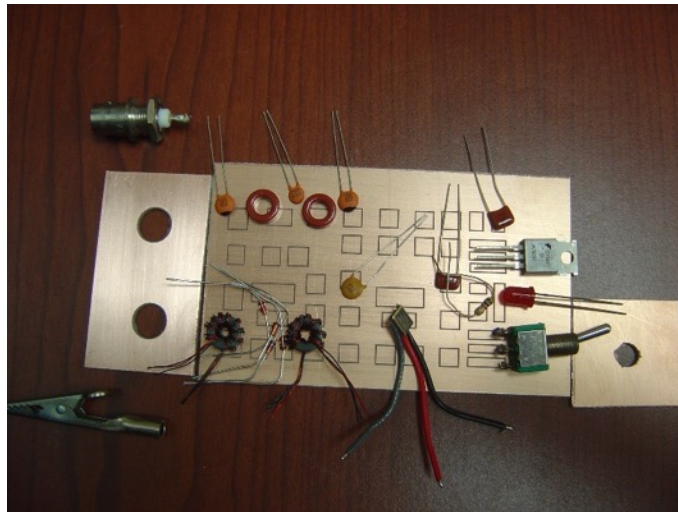
This is a shot of the first attempt on the DBM. The small PCB is the diode bridge of the mixer. The PC board was cut from FR-4 material, but any PCB board should work just fine. None of the parts or layout are critical. Just follow the schematic. Start by winding the toroid coils, being careful when "baring" the copper wire for soldering. Mount the diodes for the DBM. Then the coils, being careful not to mix up the windings. Then the coils and caps of the low pass filter. Then put the power regulator in and test it for good voltage before soldering in the 100 Mhz crystal oscillator. Now for just a few interconnections, and we're ready for the "smoke test". I used an alligator clip to attach the "dongle" antenna to the converter, so I did not have to damage the dongle unit in any way. The first unit ain't pretty, but allowed me to work out the "bugs" to build a better second kit.



Here is the finished prototype.



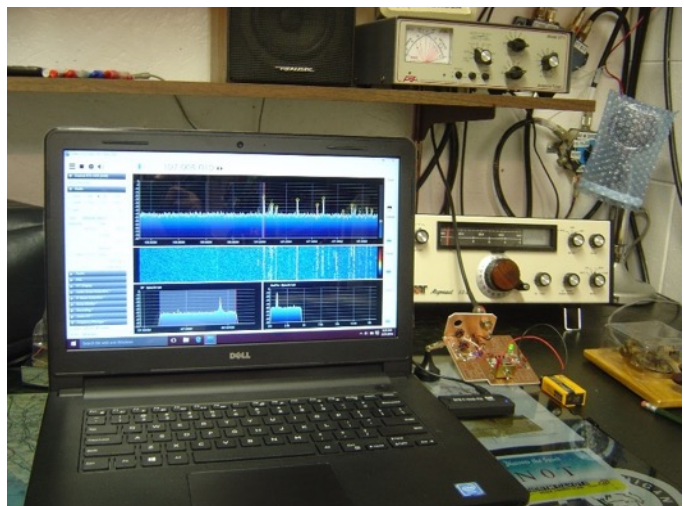
Here is the first “kitted” version.

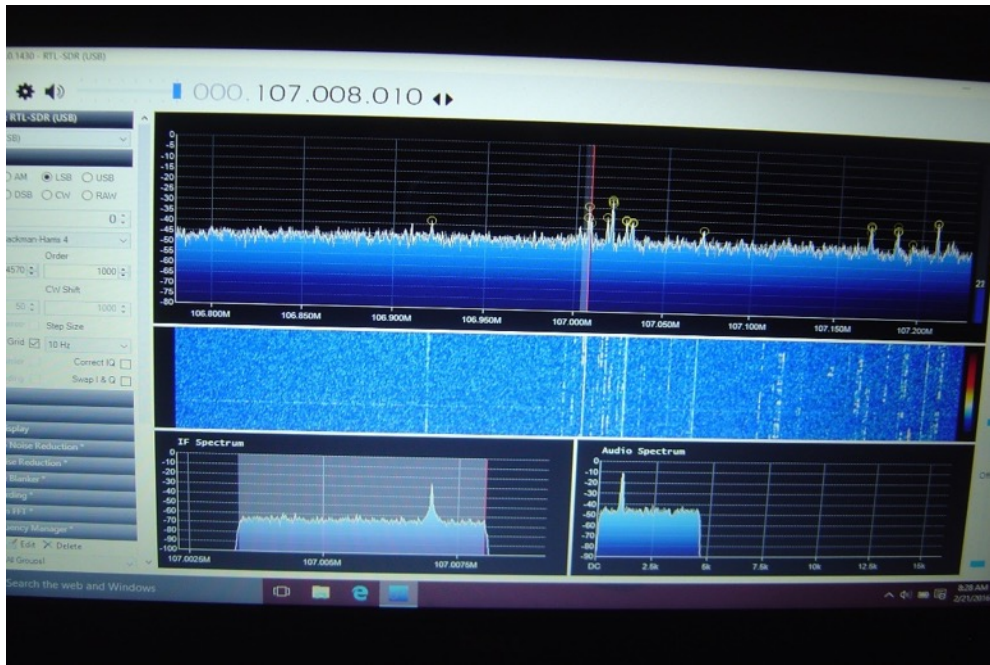


The “build night” at MSU ARC in the maker space in the Electrical Engineering Building. Students and Alumni enjoyed “melting solder”. The only problem was we ran out of time before everyone completed their kits.

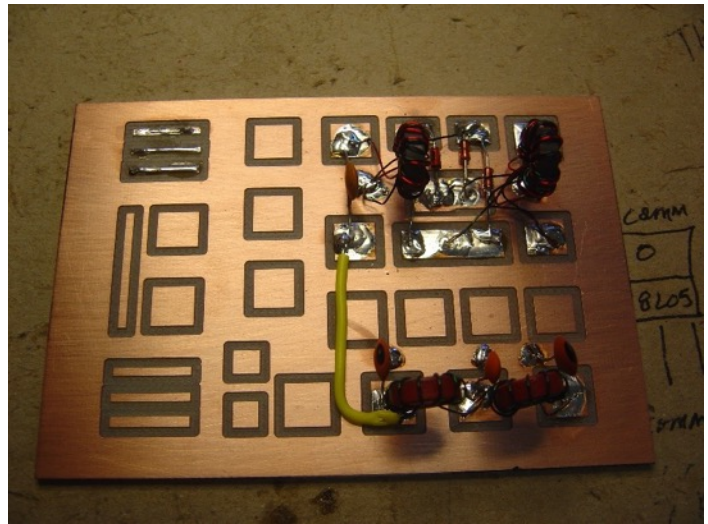


Here’s a photo of the prototype unit testing during the ARRL CW contest on 7.008 Mhz. The top slot highlights signals peaks, the middle is a “panadapter”, the bottom two are the IF spectrum and the AF spectrum. On the left side of the screen the bandwidth and filters may be activated, adjusted, and varied to allow manipulation of the signal. Playing around with these filters results in some very interesting audio output.

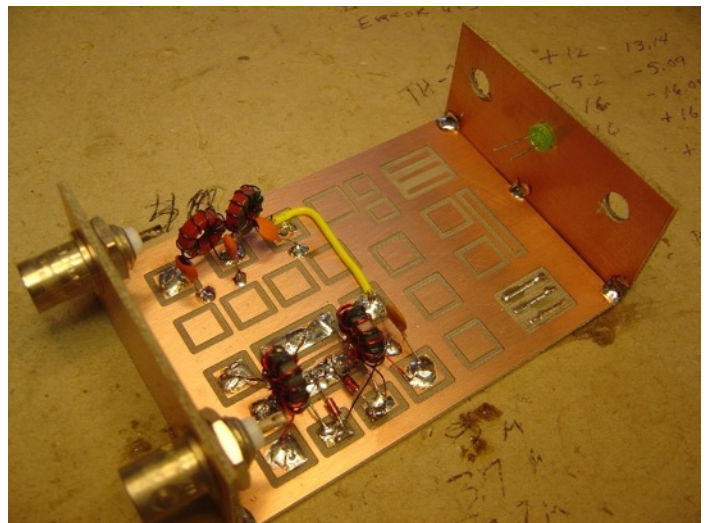




The start of prototype #2 with bigger pads.

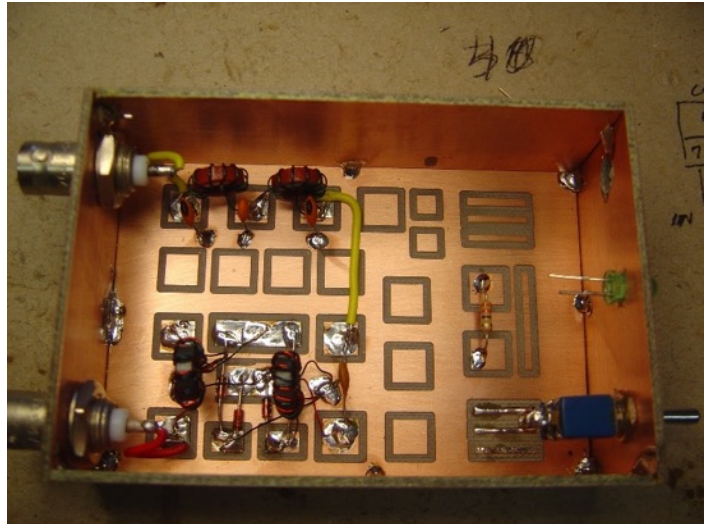


The addition of the "homebrew panels".

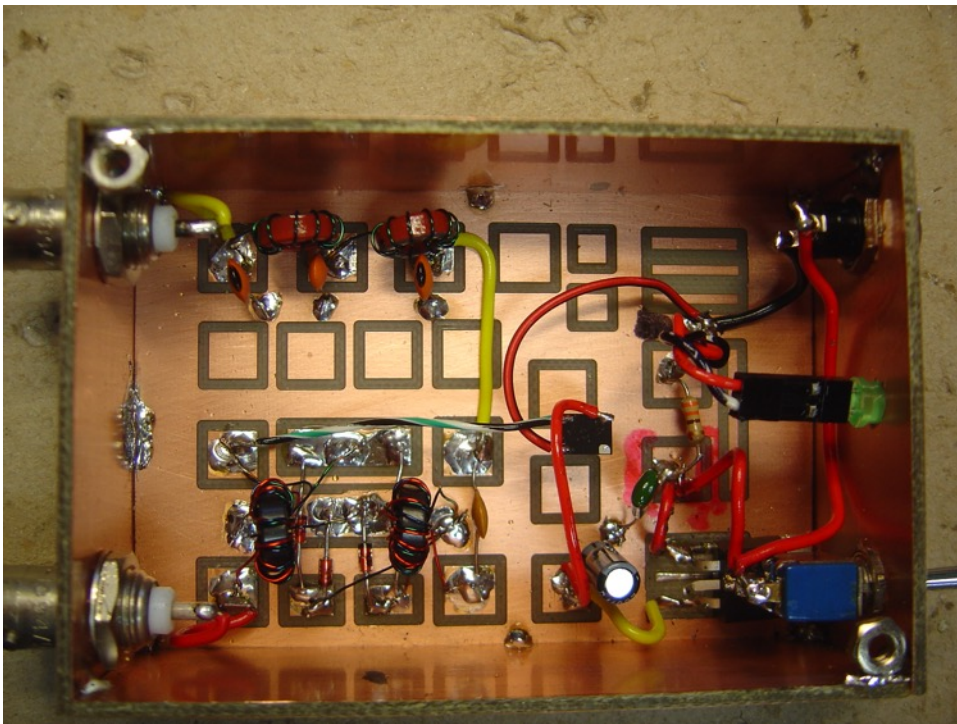




Next, the sides, LED, and power switch.



This is the converter with the power jack wired in and the power regulator under the switch. Small nuts were soldered to the corners to secure the cover. The 100 Mhz surface mount oscillator chip is the black square in the center. Antenna input to LP filter is upper left; DBM and IF input are lower left. The finished size is about 2.5" x 3.5", powered from a wall wart or 9v battery. It will give a good account of itself demonstrating the finer art of Ham Radio.



I have already been copying color SSTV pictures with this little gem and the experimentation isn't over yet. Software Defined Radio is the future of our hobby. As hams, perhaps it's time to "roll up your sleeves" and learn something new. I hope this will inspire others to build one also.

# SUMMER POPSICLE TREAT

BY JOHN, K3WWP

This article describes and shows pictures of how to use some very basic pieces of “junk” to make a telegraph key that can be used on the air to make CW contacts. It costs virtually nothing depending on what you have on hand. Actually the article is a story of three versions of the key and how each version led to improvements in the next version.

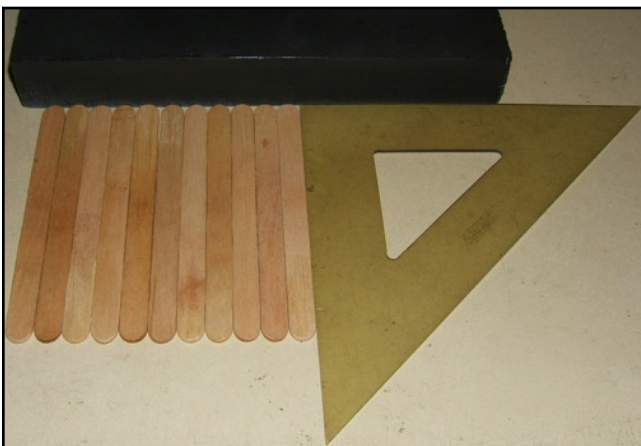
The parts list is very basic and consists of the following:

1. Around 35-40 Popsicle sticks (fewer actually used but you need to cull out the bent/distorted ones).
2. Thumbtacks for contacts (later replaced with contacts from an old relay as described).
3. Two #8 bolts, 4 #8 nuts, 2 #8 washers.
4. A foot or so of small diameter insulated wire.
5. Phone plug and cable to connect to the rig.
6. Wood glue.
7. Some sort of knob.
8. Miscellaneous tools.

A few years ago I went on a Popsicle eating streak and accumulated a few hundred sticks which then just languished in a drawer waiting for something to be done with them. I had thought of a key some time ago, but never got around to actually building one till now. All the time, plans for how to do it were ruminating in my brain. I always do a lot of thinking before engaging in any project.

I started out by building a platform from 22 of the sticks with a layer of 11 in one direction topped by 11 more in a layer at right angles to the first. They were glued in place using an Elmer's white glue clone in my case, but any kind of wood glue would work.

First I laid out 11 sticks side by side using a block of wood and a plastic square to be sure they were aligned squarely. Next I glued on the first of the perpendicular sticks about 1/8 inches in from the edge of the base of 11 sticks.



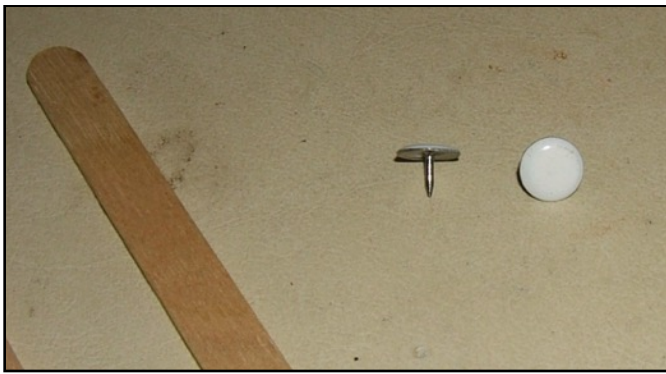
Then I laid a stick (no glue) at the other end of the base to keep things level while I set a block of wood and a weight on the assembly till the glue dried on the first stick. This makes it more secure and keeps all the initial 11 sticks in alignment.



Once the glue set up firmly, I proceeded to glue the rest of the 11 stick top layer in place. I kept the sticks even by butting them up against a block of wood.



Then I weighted it down in the same fashion as above till the glue thoroughly dried. While the base was drying, I went ahead with the working parts of the key. It seemed to me that thumbtacks pushed into two sticks a little ways from the end would do the trick. I scraped off all the paint from the heads of the thumbtacks and made them as smooth as possible with sandpaper. In version one, I apparently did not do a complete job of removing the paint and smoothing the heads as the contacts would become a bit intermittent at times. In version two, paying more attention to the cleaning gave better results, however still not perfect. Eventually I abandoned the thumbtacks and used some contacts stripped from an old relay as will be described and shown as the article progresses. I'll still show the use of the thumbtacks for anyone who may want to try that method.



In version one, I found that just pushing the tacks through the sticks split the wood, so I drilled a pilot hole with my Dremel clone, then pushed them through. In version two I carefully and slowly punched a hole through the sticks with a tiny awl. Either way works. I put some super glue under the head of the tacks and pushed the sticks down on to the tacks.



With the tacks in place, I drilled a hole in the end of the stick that would become the moveable arm of the key. That was for mounting the knob which I got from my junk box. It was either from an old cheap key or maybe a drawer pull. I made the hole just a very tiny bit smaller than the threads on the bolt in the knob so I could just screw it in place. That worked perfectly in version one and again in version three. In version two the stick split slightly in the process, but I went ahead anyway and added some super glue to be sure the knob was in solidly despite the split.



I then soldered a short piece of wire to the point of each tack for eventually connecting to the rig through terminals at the back of the key. It is important to scrape the point to be sure it is as clean as possible so the solder adheres well. I used my battery powered Cold Heat soldering iron for the job.



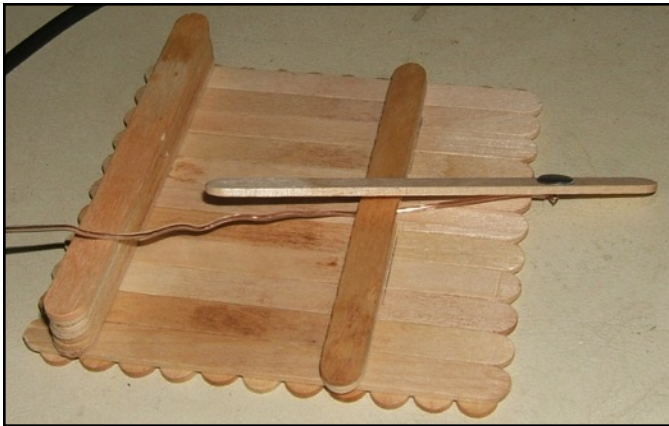
Since the point projected through the stick about the thickness of 1 and a half sticks, I decided to mount the stick with the fixed contact onto two stacks of two sticks each. One stack is just in front (toward the far end) of the fixed contact, and the far end of the stick goes on the bottom two sticks of the rear stack. That meant I had to split the bottom stick of the pile near the contacts to let the wire pass through. Then the split pieces were glued to a full sized piece to make the stack near the contacts. The splitting could be eliminated by mounting the stack between the contacts and the knob instead of in front of the contacts. Either method works just fine.



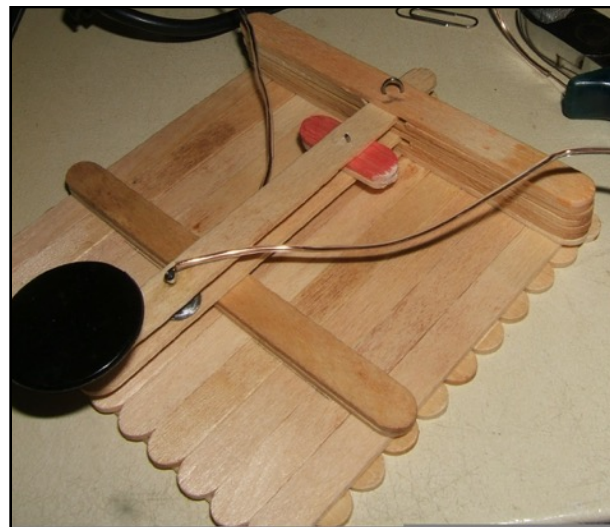
The back stack was constructed similarly but it was a mix of 5 full sticks and 2 split sticks to allow for insertion of the contact sticks in the gaps. The sticks were laid out and glued together as shown. Then both stacks were mounted on the base.



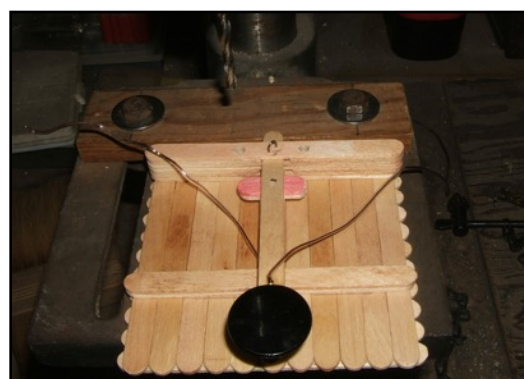
The next step is mounting the contact sticks in the gaps. In version one, I glued the contact sticks in place. This time I wanted to allow for removal of those sticks so I simply pushed them in the slots and added a couple pins through them to keep them aligned. That way, if the contacts ever give me trouble I can pull the pins and replace the contact sticks with different or better ones. First the bottom fixed stick.



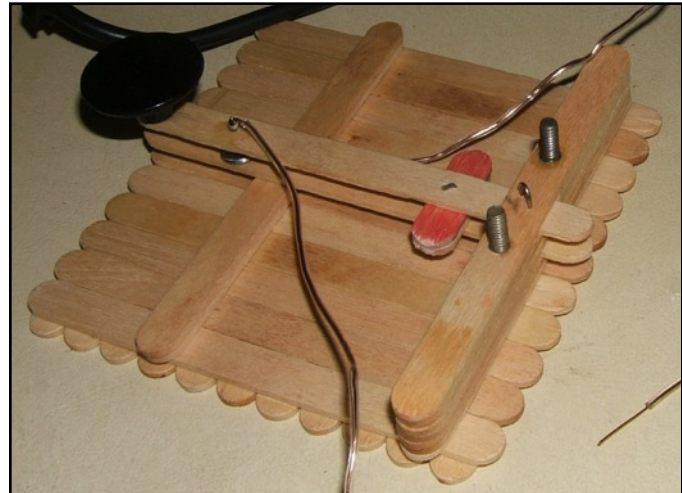
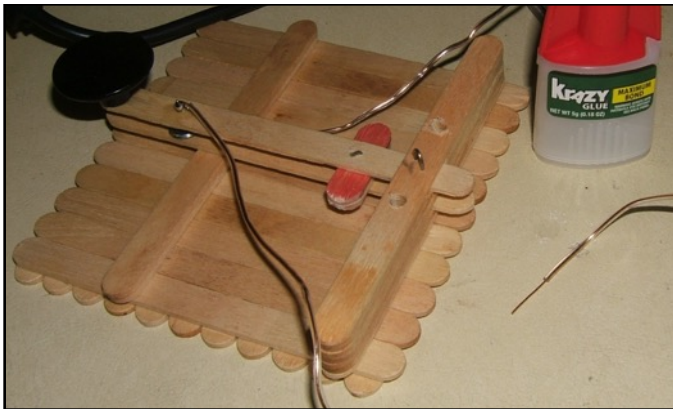
Then I did the top moveable stick. When I made version one, I found the springiness of the moveable contact stick was just right to firmly break the contact after it was made. The spacing was much more than I was used to since I normally set my straight keys with a contact separation of about the thickness of one piece or maybe two pieces of paper. This time it was about the thickness of a Popsicle stick. After using it with the wide spacing, I found I could handle it and even rather liked it. This time in version two, although the springiness was the same, I found since Popsicle sticks are not uniform by any stretch of the imagination, the contacts were almost touching. So I made up a little pad from two parts of a stick and put that between the contact sticks. I pushed it toward the back till the spacing was the same as version one.



All that was left now was to provide some terminals to replace the clip leads I was using for testing. After some more thought on that, I simply got a couple of #8 bolts and cut off the heads in my vise. Then I drilled two holes with my drill press very slightly larger than the bolts in the rear stack of sticks.



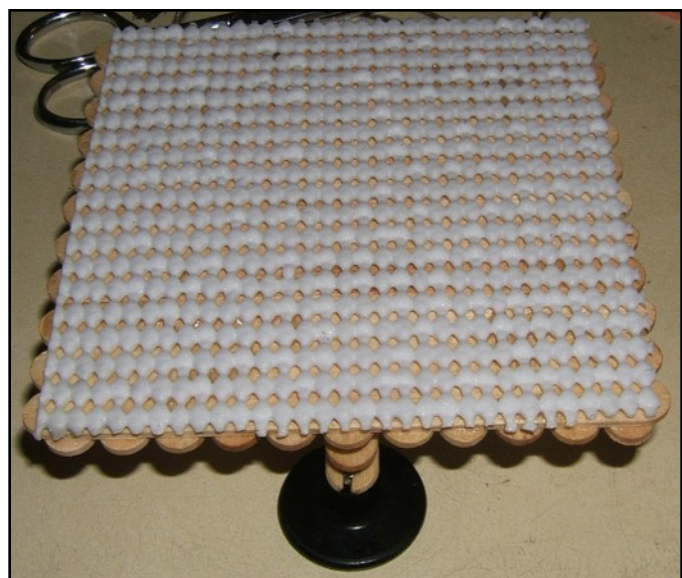
I dropped a few drops of super glue into the holes and pushed in the bolts making sure to push the cut end into the hole leaving the clean end exposed for easier threading.



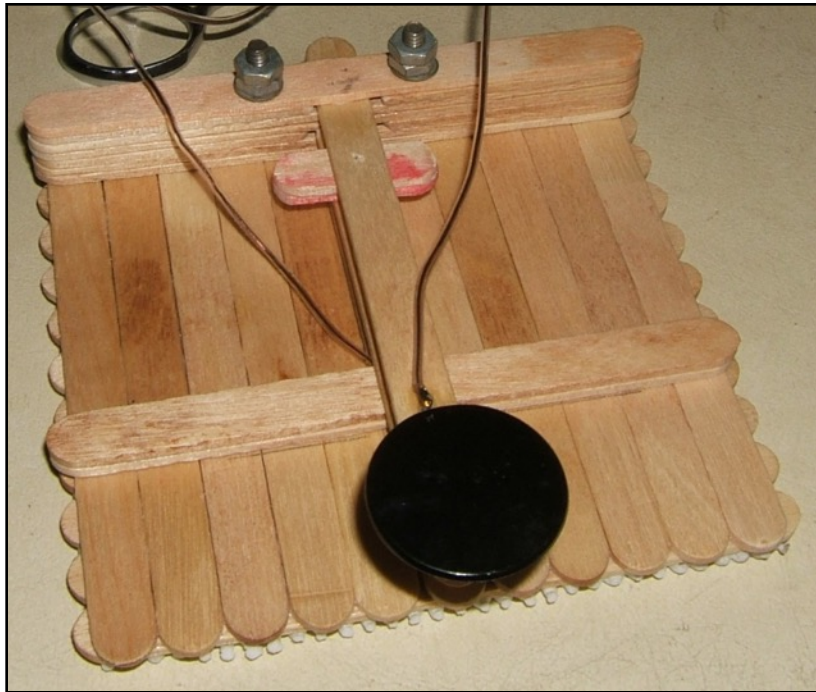
After the glue hardened, I added a washer and two nuts to each bolt. I fastened the wires from the contacts between the washer and bottom nut. Later between the two nuts I would fasten wires going to a phone jack for plugging into the rig. Another option which I did use on version one was to put a solder lug on the wire and put it between the wood and the bottom nut. Version three has the wires from the contacts between the washer and the wood. All methods work well.

The idea of putting a pin or pins in place to hold the contact sticks in place did not work as well as planned and the sticks moved around in their slots while being used. So I removed the pins and glued the sticks in place.

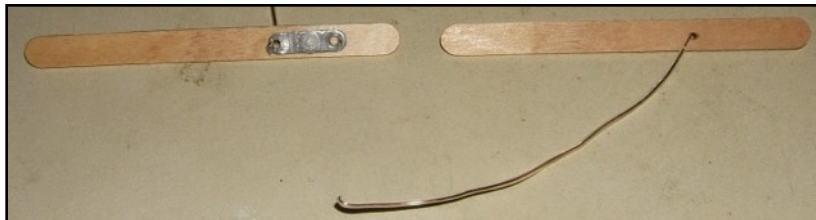
Although I have a very light touch with all my keys, bugs, and paddles and the wide base of the key keeps it very stable, I did add a thin sheet of rubber non-slip matting to the bottom of the key to keep it even more stable. I cut the matting to size and fastened it with some rubber cement on the four corners of the base.



Here is the final version two Popsicle key with the alterations mentioned in the article made. All that is left to do is to hook the wire to the terminals and add a phone jack to plug it into a rig.



After using version two some more, I found the thumbnail contacts were still not perfect, so I made a version three which uses some contacts salvaged from an old relay to replace the thumbtacks. The contacts are super glued to the sticks with the wire soldered to the contacts and passed through a



small hole drilled in the sticks. Other than that, version three is a copy of version two with one other change as shown below.



At left is the finished key with cable connected and the new relay contacts clearly visible. At right instead of the rubber mat, I used one Popsicle stick near the front and back with a piece of sandpaper at each



end of the front stick, and one piece in the center of the rear stick. That is a triangle shape for maximum stability even on a slightly rough surface. Version three has worked perfectly for several days now. I learned a lot of little tricks while building the three keys, so the project was definitely worthwhile. Any time knowledge is added to the brain, that is a great thing.



# 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.

## DAVE LAWMAN, KG5HCF, #7880



I obtained my first license in 1988 but let it expire. A local ham, Denver WD5BGP, encouraged me to get back active in radio and invited me to the local club, W5HAR. I started going to the local club meetings about a year ago and I was hooked. After passing the General test I got an MFJ 9200 QRP rig and a ground mount vertical antenna. I really enjoy the NAQCC activities. I now also have an ICOM IC-718 and have built several dipole antennas and a windom with an air-wound balun that seems to work well for me.

Probably 90% of my radio activity is QRP CW. Ham radio has helped to keep me active in my retirement and I have met a lot of extremely nice people on the bands. I retired as Chief Deputy from the Phillips County, AR. Sheriffs Office. I learned morse code in the Army Security Agency where I served from 1970 to 1973. I never dreamed I would enjoy CW so much later in life. My second favorite hobby is building cigar box guitars and diddley bows and attempting to play them. I hope our great hobby continues to grow.

73 es BCNU  
KG5HCF/Dave



# NAQCC SPRINTS

**CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT:** Our sprint this month is scheduled for August 10, 0030-0230 UTC. That's the evening of the 9th here in North America. Complete details can be found at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201608.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>.

And a reminder that if any issues come up involving your sprint log submission, please contact the appropriate managers listed at the top of the webpage for that particular sprint. For example, if you have made a correction to your log and need to resubmit it please email the sprint managers before reusing the autologger.

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:** Participation was down again this month with only 102 submitted logs and 155 total participants. Undoubtedly summertime activities along with thunderstorms and summer propagation had a lot to do with that. I enjoy reading the soapbox comments and always find it interesting that one person might report "good" band conditions while someone else, who is not too far away, will report "poor" band conditions. Is this really a function of propagation or personality? The "cup half full" vs. the "cup half empty" kind of thing? Personally I tend to be a lot like Gerald Massie of the USAAF, who in 1944 reportedly said, "any landing that you can walk away from is a good landing." If I was able to make a QRP contact, it was good propagation!

Complete sprint results, including soapbox comments, can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201607.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: WB4BIN KD9EBS AE7US KF5RZG KA1DBE VA3YT N3CKI NX1K KC3DOF

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KN1H		
W2	W2SH	KA2KGP	
W3	N3HEE	K3WWP	
W4	K4KRW	N5GW	WG8Y
W5	WB5UAA	KE9DR	
W6	WK6L		
W7	AA7VW	KF7WNS	
W8	WB8LZG	NF8M	
W9	NN9K	NX1K	
W0	N0TA	WB0PYF	
VE	VA3YT		
DX			

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1			
W2			
W3			
W4	AK4NY		
W5	W5ODS		
W6			
W7	N7QR AE7US		
W8			
W9	AA9WP		
W0	KD0V		
VE			
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	N1JI		
W2	K2YGM		
W3	KB3AAG		
W4	N4KS	AB9CA	
W5	K5MBA		
W6			
W7			
W8	AC8JW		
W9	K9EYT		
W0	K9OSC		
VE	VY2/ W1OH		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	K4BAI	G3RSP	

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	KC3DOF	KA1DBE	
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
N4EWT			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	102	110	194	2/13
Participants	155	173	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1337	1634	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	762	881	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	575	753	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	486	668	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	803	867	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	48	99	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	13.1	14.9	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+	KA9FQG K6MGO NA4O WG8Y N8BB AA7CU KC2EGL VE5BCS N2ESE K6CSL N8QY WA8SAN N0TA WX4RM WD0K K4KRW NQ2W KB8FE NO2D WY3H AA9L KQ1P W4DUK KE5YUM WB8ENE NU7T
75+	WA2JSG VE3FUJ K1IEE N4FI KD0V K3RLL NF8M KU4A K4JPN K4NVJ KD2MX KB3AAG
100+	N8XMS K4BAI WB8LZG W2SH W9CC W2JEK
125+	KA2KGP K3WWP



# NAQCC CHALLENGES

**CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE:** Our August challenge is another alphabet challenge (see the computer tools item below) working with words that are associated with the famous, but short lived, Pony Express of the American west. You can find the complete list of words along with some additional information about the Pony Express at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201608.html>.

The European challenge for August involves the names and areas of European river basins. Details at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/august-2016-challenge-2/>.

**NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE:** In September we will have an interesting challenge where you will be asked to accumulate miles with milliwatt QSOs (1 watt or less). Your goal is to get a total of 5000 miles/watt and example calculations and full details can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201609.html>.

The European challenge for September will be an alphabet challenge working with the names of famous artists and the dates of their first solo exhibits. Details at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/september-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 July Barbecue challenge is still a few days away so final results are not yet available. You can go to <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201607.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/july-2016-challenge/>.

**ALPHABET CHALLENGE COMPUTER TOOLS:** There are now two different versions of the alphabet challenge spreadsheet available for members to download. The original Mac OS X version was described in an article in last month's newsletter ([http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter\\_217.pdf](http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter_217.pdf)). The Windows Excel version works the same way. You can download either version from the links located at the bottom of the alphabet tutorial page on our website at [http://www.naqcc.info/challenge\\_tutorial.html](http://www.naqcc.info/challenge_tutorial.html). Either version should be saved as a template and then copies should be used for your actual challenge work. And as a "teaser" I'll add that there is an even more powerful alphabet challenge tool under development that will be available in the coming months. So "stay tuned!"

**STOP THE PRESSES!** That more powerful web-based app is now here and was announced in an email to the membership on August 1. If you missed that email complete information will be available later this month on the club website and also in the September newsletter. The app can be found at <http://naqccletters.azurewebsites.net/>.

**CHANGES TO THE ANNUAL FIELD DAY CHALLENGE:** Some very sharp-eyed members pointed out some issues that we had with our Field Day Challenge back in June. These issues all involved the confusion between the terms “state”, “province”, and “section,” and resulted from our instructions not matching the official ARRL FD instructions, as well as some internal inconsistencies in our instructions. We have taken steps to correct this problem for next year and have even added some very nice enhancements to the challenge. I (N8XMS) apologize for any problems that resulted from this issue. My rain slicker and safety goggles are on so feel free to launch your rotten tomatoes!

**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: DXCC AWARD

This month we would like to remind you of our NAQCC DXCC award. Work at least 100 DX entities using QRP power and “simple wire antennas” and you will qualify for this award. Endorsements can be earned for 100 2X QRP QSOs as well as 25, 50, 75, and 100 QRPp DX entities. Complete information can be found at [http://www.naqcc.info/awards\\_dxccswa.html](http://www.naqcc.info/awards_dxccswa.html).

## RECENTLY ISSUED AWARDS:

### 1000 MPW AWARD

0518	VK7CW	KF7WNS	-	16,116	07/30/16	Vertical
0517	VE3DQN	ZS4TX	-	1,632	07/17/16	Cushcraft R-7
0516	VE3DQN	JA3YBK	-	1,290	07/17/16	Cushcraft R-7
0515	VA3YT	5W0COW	-	1,403	07/11/16	1/4 wave elevated vertical
0514	W4DUK	G3RSP	-	4,268	07/05/16	End-fed Zepp @20'

### WAC AWARD CATEGORY A (QRP)

0032	VE3DQN	ZS4TX - JA3YBK - EA2LU - N6RK - KH6NX - P49Y	07/17/16
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### 30-30 Award

0038	K3WWP	Jul 2016	7/30/16
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# NAQCC QRS/QRQ NETS



We have a number of nets (QRS = slow speed, QRQ = higher speed) designed to help people build up their CW operating skills. Complete information about these nets can be found at [http://naqcc.info/cw\\_nets.html](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)
Farnsworth 40 m QRQ Net (FRN)	Thursday 7:30 PM PT	Friday 0230 Z	7056 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

First, I want to thank David Moss KE8DI for his time and service volunteering for the Great Lakes net GLN net control operator. The Great Lakes net is currently suspended at this time... Anyone wishing to volunteer to take over the Great Lakes area net please let me know via email. Thank you again David we all look forward to hearing you on the radio...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!!!**

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

Dave WV8DH was doing the best I've ever heard him at about 13 miles straight line distance. John W8GDP had a very weak signal from me from about 3 miles. Eric AC8LJ was loud a clear with a 599 signal but he shut down operations due to strong lightening near his home. Two hours after the net, a strong bolt of lightning struck our neighbors home. (Two houses from us). This lightning bolt destroyed a section of their ceramic roofing tiles and showered the adjoining home with roofing material. Several cars were damaged. The bolt of lightning kicked out our upstairs bathroom circuit breaker but there was no damage to our home.

72 John N8ZYA ... *(So glad no one was hurt!!! The weather has been crazy!!!!... Scotty NU0S)...*

### **07-11-2016 NAQCC Midwest QRS Net (MWN) Scotty Long NU0S, Nebraska**

Very nice to hear everyone tonight we had local storms again tonight with thunder boomers; still had a good time...

### **07-13-2016 NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN) John Smithson N8ZYA, West Virginia**

A short net this evening talking about breakfast this morning and the local weather today. We had another strong thunderstorm in Charleston this early afternoon with 2.5 inches of rain falling (per Joe WA8SIE) very fast. We do NOT need any more rain in our state. Many of our small towns are recovering from massive flash flooding last week. We hold our breath every time it thunders now.

### **07-19-2016 NAQCC Midwest QRS Net (MWN) Scotty Long NU0S, Nebraska**

Very good net tonight; the band 40M was in good shape for the most part. We are having a heat wave all around our great country by the reports and check INS. I hope we get a reprieve soon from all the bad weather going around. Thank you for all the check INS...Great to hear my friends and family on the radio...73/Scotty/NU0S...

### **07-26-2016 NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) Allen Matthews KA5TJS, Texas**

Well, I could just hear Danny and Andy having a QSO but they could not hear me. We had just had a thunder storm move thru the area and the QRN was S9+ and also had QRM from SSB on the freq. While I was on vacation I got an email that said some ops had a chat on the net but nothing to report.

Allen KA5TJS

### **07-26-2016 NAQCC Midwest QRS Net (MWN) Scotty Long NU0S, Nebraska**

What fun, I started out with the long wire antenna and worked John AC8JW like he was next door on a land line he was +20 easy. Next had a great chat with Dave KB7KY and Ken N7ADA I had to switch to the vertical as they could hardly hear me at 25 Watts into the long wire antenna, notified via Twitter thanks Dave... Also checking in was Ron K6JTA from Paso Robles, California...Thanks everyone can't wait till next week for more rag chews...Missed Nick K0JFJ tonight, hope you are well and safe travels my friend...

73/Scotty/NU0S

### **07-27-2016 NAQCC West Virginia NET (WVN) John Smithson N8ZYA, West Virginia**

No net last week due to the Sprint - First check-in this evening was from K3NLT in Broadway, VA with a good signal here into Charleston. We exchanged reception reports and club numbers. John W8GDP and I talked briefly about the hot humid WX here all week. Much too hot to ride the bikes (mid 90's for about 5 days now with a heat index in the low 100's). We also discussed the Sprint last Wednesday. We still have scattered thunderstorms in the area and I'm being very careful about lightening. The week before (just after the net) we had a lightning bolt strike our neighbors house. There's about a hundred of those heavy tiles still missing on their roof.

72 John N8ZYA

**NAQCC CW Net QNI Reports All Stations**July/2016 Please note: *Dates are in UTC***NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) Richard (Rick) Stutsman N6IET, California****40M 7.056 MHz**

07-04-2016 QNI (4) NCS N6IET, NR5NN, N7HRK/M, W7SAG  
07-11-2016 QNI (7) NCS N6IET, N7HRK/M, KE6EE, W6SBE, NR5NN, W7SAG/P, K7S/KE7LKW  
07-18-2016 QNI (7) NCS N6IET, NR5NN, N7HRK/M, W7SAG/P, KE6EE, KW6G, WI6O  
07-25-2016 QNI (4) NCS N6IET, NR5NN, N7HRK/M, W7SAG/P

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

07-08-2016 (4) NCS NR5NN, N6IET, K7KY, W7SAG  
07-15-2016 (5) NCS NR5NN, WU7F, N6IET, W7SAG/P, N7HRK/M  
07-22-2016 (4) NCS NR5NN, N6IET, KE6EE, N7HRK/M  
07-29-2016 (5) NCS NR5NN, N7HRK/M, KE6EE, WA7SAG/P, N6IET

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

07-05-2016 QNI (0) NCS KA5TJS, Independence Day Weekend!!!  
07-26-2016 QNI (3) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YGA, N5DRG

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

07-05-2016 QNI (0) NCS NU0S, Independence Day Weekend, I was at the lake fishing and fireworks!!! Thank you Veterans!!!  
07-11-2016 QNI (5) NCS NU0S, KB7KY, KD0DK, N7ADA, KF2TV  
07-19-2016 QNI (5) NCS NU0S, KD0DK, WW8A, KB7KY, K0JFJ  
07-26-2016 QNI (5) NCS NU0S, AC8JW, KB7KY, N7ADA, K6JTA

**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)**

07-07-2016 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, AA7CU (2X), NS7E  
07-20-2016 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, N6IET, NK6A, AA7CU  
07-21-2016 QNI (1) NCS WC7S

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

07-07-2016 QNI (4) NCS N8ZYA, WV8DH, W8GDP, AC8LJ  
07-13-2016 QNI (3) NCS N8ZYA, W8GDP, WA8SIE  
07-27-2016 QNI (3) NCS N8ZYA, K3NLT, W8GDP

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

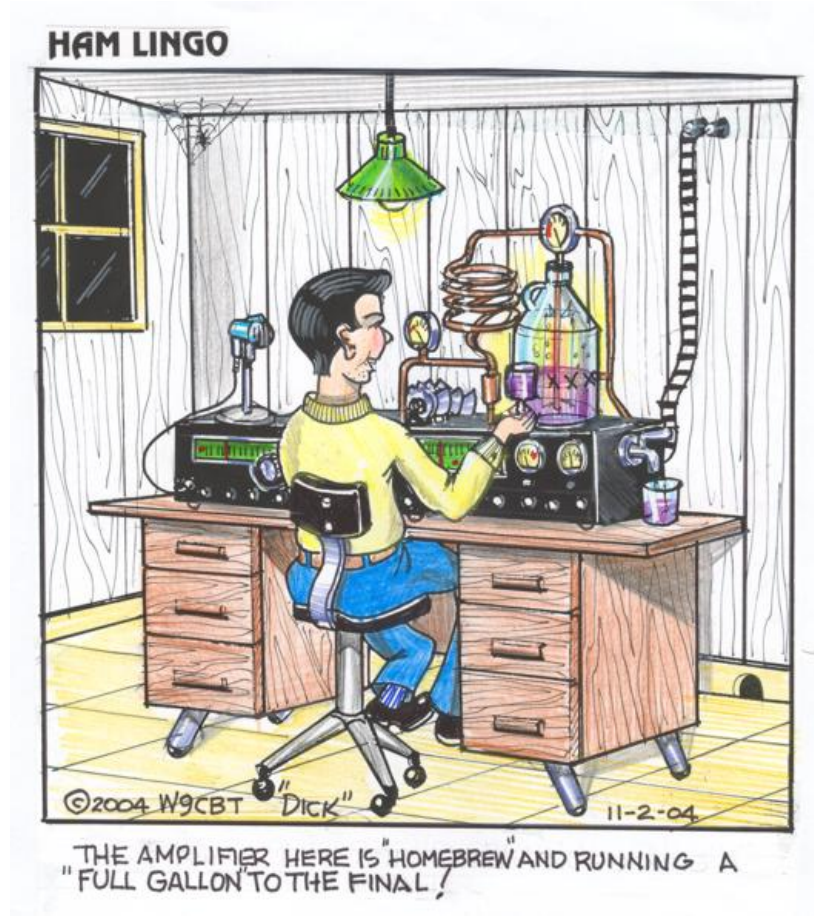
07-01-2016 QNI (7) NCS KE7LKW, N7TES, KG7JEB, WB4SPB, K7JUV, W7ANM, AK7R  
07-08-2016 QNI (6) NCS KE7LKW, KE7JOG, WB4SPB, KG7JEB, N7TB, AD7BP  
07-15-2016 QNI (6) NCS KE7LKW/7, N6KIX, KG7JEB, WB4SPB, N7TES, AD7BP  
07-22-2016 QNI (7) NCS KE7LKW, N0DA, WB4SPB, N7TES, KG7JEB, AD7BP/7, K7JUV  
07-28-2016 QNI (8) NCS WB4SPB, N7TB, NB7M, KE7LKW/M, KG7JEB, AD7BP, N0DA/7, N7TES

**NAQCC Great Lakes Net (GLN) Currently suspended**

# 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).



# NAQCC CHAPTER NEWS

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

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

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

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

Chapter Reports Begin On The Next Page

## CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER



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

The chapter is located in the Austin, TX area.

The weather has been a typical Texas Summer, just warm nights and even warmer days :^) So that being said the Central Texas Chapter has did it's best to have another QRP In The Park radio adventure.

We held our pseudo monthly meeting at Devine Lake Park again which lays just to the north and a little west of Leander, Texas <http://www.leandertx.gov/parksrec/page/devine-lake-park> , the Texas summer has not yet cause all of the water in this small soil conservation lake to evaporate, so there were many patrons on the lake and in and around the park.

Participants for our August outing were Kenny K5KGK, Larry WB5BEK, John KN5L, Ron AE5WW, and myself Danny N5DRG.

Band conditions were well to put it in its most appropriate term was horrid, okay maybe not so much horrid, but just plain lousy.

We started setting up about 8 am and were radioactive at 9 am until about 11:30 when we had enough of the rising temps, and the falling bands.

John KN5L made a total of six contacts, three each on 20 & 30 meters. John was using his new home brew antenna, using his home brew voltage balun, and with a little help from a couple of the Sota Beams Pico Traps wound for 30 meters. All supported by the Jackite Pole which we have discussed in earlier newsletters. There will be a link to KN5L's balun and the Sotabeams, as well as the other web pages at the end of this writing.

Ron AE5WW was using his Buddie Pole antenna set up which unfortunately took a dive with a wind gust and broke off of the telescoping antenna end sections Ron was using his FT817 rig.

Kenny K5KGK brought out his Elecraft KX3, Pan Adapter and his straight key, Kenny's antenna was the Miracle Antenna, Kenny made a couple contacts.

Larry WB5BEK put up a 40 meter dipole, and was using his Elecraft K1, and brought his first Home brew QRP rig, a rock bound 40 meter from the early to mid-1990's. Larry called CQ for some time, and made no contacts

Danny Brought out his FT817, and a tuned 40 meter dipole no contacts, but he did have to run off for a while as work called him away.

Danny also for the first time brought his Raspberry Pi Single Board Computer, with a 7 inch touch screen to use for logging. The logging software was Linux Xlog running on Ubuntu MATE 16.04 LTS.

Danny said he is drinking the Kool-Aid, an inside joke with fellow Ham, and great friend Max KD5SFK.



**Park Monument**



**John KN5L**



**Larry WB5BEK**



**Kenny K5KGK**



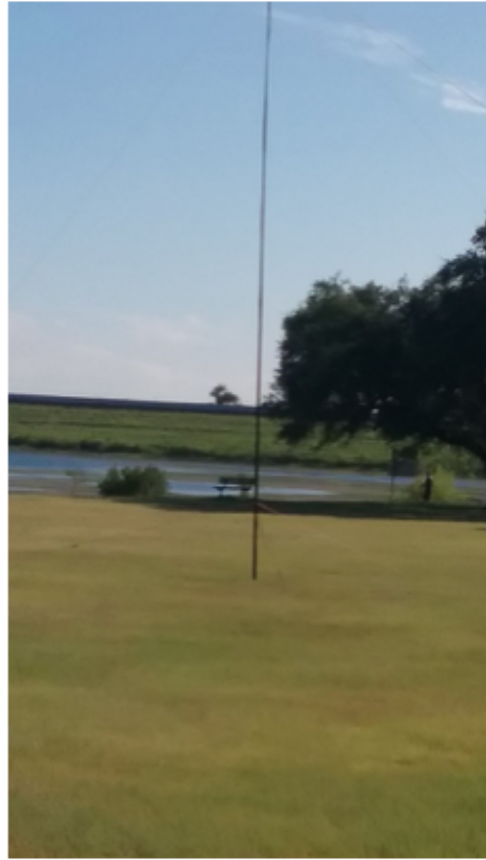
**Ron AE5WW**



**Danny N5DRG**



**KN5L 20/30 Meter Antenna**



**N5DRG 40 Meter**



**AE5WW Buddie Pole**

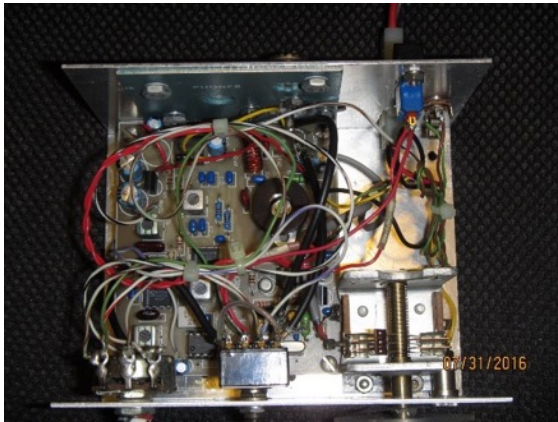


**K5KGK Miracle Stick Antenna**



### WB5BEK's Vintage QRP Rig

Fixed crystal transmit frequency of 7.040, with about a 1.8 kHz filter, so not great for selectivity, but it works OK.



### KN5L Webpages

<http://www.kn5l.net/Balun/FT114-61-Balun.jpg>

The antenna was a 20 and 30 meter trapped Inverted Vee using SOTABEAMS 20 watt traps and a Ruthroff Voltage Balun using a FT114-61 ferrite toroid core. The antenna was mounted on a DK9SQ Mast.

### Sotabeams

<http://www.sotabeams.co.uk/hf-antenna-traps-kit-pair/>

### Raspberry Pi 3B

<https://www.raspberrypi.org/products/raspberry-pi-3-model-b/>

### Jackite Telescoping Poles

[http://www.jackite.com/index.php?cPath=41\\_44](http://www.jackite.com/index.php?cPath=41_44)

### Miracle Antenna

<http://www.universal-radio.com/catalog/hamantht/3256.html>

### LiPoFe4 Batteries

<https://www.bioennopower.com/collections/12v-series-lifepo4-batteries/products/12v-6ah-lfp-battery-black-w-pvc-pack>

These were purchased at Ham-Com, and these do have the on board battery conditioner

### NAQCC Central Texas Chapters Webpage

<http://www.naqcc-centraltexas.net/>

We are a little behind on updating it due to minor technical difficulties.

Please Stand By "AS"

As always,

**Keep Calm  
&  
QRP ON**

## DELMARVA CHAPTER



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

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

No report available.

## NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER



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

The European Chapter has its own monthly challenges to compensate for the Atlantic Ocean. However all are welcome to participate, not just members in EU, and we regularly receive challenge logs from North American participants. Please see the chapter website for dates and details at <http://www.naqcc-eu.org/>

No report available.

## NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



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

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

The Florida Chapter operations are on hold for the sweltering Florida summer. We will resume in September.....watch for our announcement in the September issue and on our webpage – <https://wb40mm.com/naqcc-fl-chapter/>

72/73, Steve WB4OMM

## NAQCC ILLOWA CHAPTER



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

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

### Illowa Chapter Regular Meeting 14 July 2016

Attending: Tony, N9YPN, Mark, K0NIA, Peter NN9K. Low attendance was due to cleanup efforts after the severe weather on July 13th.

Several spontaneous outings have taken place by individuals since the last meeting but none as a group. Mark, K0NIA found a good location for a group outing at the Illinois Welcome Center that overlooks the Mississippi River. It's close, convenient to get to and is on our list for a future group outing.

The SOTA tuners arrived and have been distributed to the members that ordered them. This was to be a construction meeting. We started on the SWR bridge portion of the tuner and since neither of us had wound a toroid before it was a situation of helping each other and paying lots of attention to the pictures in the instructions. After we had all of the discrete components mounted on the SWR bridge circuit board we decided to call it an evening and continue the construction at home.

The next Chapter meeting will be held on 11 August at the Moline Village Inn.

Peter, NN9K

## NAQCC WEST FLORIDA CHAPTER



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

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

We did Lattuce Lake Park Saturday, July 23rd. Was hot. Larry, KR4X showed and we spent most of the time just talking. I did have one QSO, Allen, KA5TJS, Texas, IC7410, 14.051 MHz CW.

I used my FT817 with 20m HamStick dipole. My dog was excited with the other dogs, but heat got to her.

Thinking about next month. There is TARCfest Aug 20 (local tailgator), might do from there.

I really want to go back to Cypress Point Park in west Tampa. It is on the bay and can provide for nice setup. We did in January, but was bad timing in that was cold, 52 deg, and windy. Should be good now with the cool breeze coming in off the water.

73, ron, n9ee/r a know code Extra  
NAQCC Nr 6145





## NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER



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

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

I've been a ham radio operator now for about 25 years and I still learn something new every day. The latest lesson I've learned is about respecting the weather. We're still recovering from massive flash flood damage in the state, and if not more flooding, the high temperatures have been record breaking.

Two weeks ago, while finishing the weekly QRS net, a strong storm arrived in the valley. Eric AC8LJ had just checked in and had to shut down due to some very strong lightening near his home. Eric has quite a bit of aluminum in the air, not to mention some long wires stretched between the trees on his lot.

We continued the 9:30 PM net for a few quick minutes and then I shut down for the night. I unhooked the antenna connection on my IC 703. The storm passed very quickly.

I've never thought lightening to be a big issue for me since my antenna's are indoors. I use a 50 foot random wire and two Isotron antennas for my station.

I keep the Isotrons on a painters pole which is bungee corded to the bed post in a spare upstairs room. The Random Wire runs around the perimeter of the room and across the hall and is tied off to the wooden stair railing downstairs.

They're NOT in the attic.

My wife and I are both late night hoot owls. Many times I tune into a SWL station or listen to a portion of the ham bands. I keep the radio on in the background as I do computer work.

I no longer considered the weather to be any danger to me and the house was running smoothly again. The storm had passed and I re-hooked to 703 to my indoor antenna system.

At almost 11 PM, on the second, there was a tremendous ear splitting clap of thunder. It was almost heart stopping and we heard a strange "tinkling" sound outside. None of the lights flickered, the computers ran smoothly, and the sound of the Icom 703 running in the background was normal.

We noticed the lights in the upstairs bathroom were not functioning. That room is beside the radio room.

Nothing else in the house was amiss and a quick run downstairs to the basement breaker box revealed the "one" lone breaker had kicked out. I quickly re-set it and considered us to be the two luckiest people in the world.

I heard some noise outside and could tell my *immediate* next door neighbor was roaming around in the dark with a bright flashlight. We walked down to the third house from us which was pitch dark now.

We discovered the "tinkling" sound, we heard earlier, was due to a "whole bunch of roofing tiles" crashing to the ground. It seems the lightening had struck the very tallest part of the house. Remarkably it did NOT catch fire.

I returned home, (hardly a cloud in the sky) turned off the computers and my Icom 703. The next morning we were able to see more of the damage to the home.



Heavy roofing tiles had scattered all over my neighbor's yard and his automobiles. Some of these very heavy tiles were blown clear across the street.

I didn't realize the 703 wouldn't transmit until Saturday morning.

The Icom was returned to me today (8-1-2016) A service note included with the packaging said " IC 101 main unit board defective. Diode D1 main unit board defective. Replaced IC 101 and D1".

I'm still puzzled as to why all the other electronic items in the house were not damaged. My only theory is the damage to the Icom 703 has to do the big coils in the Isotrons?

Perhaps some of the technical folks in the club might be able to explain it in better terms.

72's  
John N8ZYA

## NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER



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

It was probably about an average month for WPA Chapter activities. Some are mentioned in my personal news below and some in my web site diary at [k3wwp.com](http://k3wwp.com). Since I took up so much space with my Popsicle key article above, I'll keep the chapter report short this month.

Although not a ham radio activity, Mike KC2EGL and I got together for a visit to the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum near Washington, PA on July 5. After the visit, we finalized and submitted the WPA FD report for our N3AQC operation with Mike, Tom WB3FAE, and me. We were pleased with our 617 QSOs - of course all CW, all QRP, all simple wire antennas. Mike and I also visited my shack before he had to leave. We worked a couple 13 Colonies stations, but no DX.

It was nice to get together with fellow WPA Chapter member Don K3RLL. We don't do that often, since he spends over half the year down in Florida. We had a sub at Subway, and played around with my PX3 which he hadn't seen yet. I think we both learned something about it during the playing. Actually it's one of those devices capable of doing several dozen things, but most folks only use it for a few special things and don't pay attention to the rest. It is good to have them available for those who may use them. All too soon our 3-4 hour visit came to an end and he headed home to New Bethlehem.

The next chapter event was a get together with Mike and Tom at the Butler County ARA picnic on July 17 where we set up Mike's KX3/PX3/jumper dipole antenna to continue a QRP/CW demo I gave at their club meeting last November. Unlike at the meeting when conditions were horrible along with some other problems, this time we did make around a dozen QSOs.

Mike and I got together Wednesday evening July 27 for a regular monthly visit for pizza, ham radio, and whatever else we get into for a few hours. We worked some DX including DL1NKS. Also a NPOTA station. While there Mike tried out my Popsicle key and liked it, so I gave him my key version two.

We closed out the month with an activation of N3AQC in the Flight of the Bumblebees Sprint on the last day of the month. After a little trouble setting up, things went well despite poor band conditions. As I was using my golf ball launcher to get the jumper inverted vee antenna up into a tree, it got stuck. With Mike's help we did retrieve the golf ball, but the string remained. After some improvisation, the antenna got mounted as shown here: (next page)



Mike also had some trouble setting up his mast, but he also succeeded as pictured here:



OK, now that the antennas were set up, we set up our stations as shown here (Mike at left, John at right):



Next step was to start operating. We both got off to a quick start with Mike on 40 and me on 20. However my quick start died quickly after 3 QSOs while Mike was already up to 10. I can't speak first hand for 40 meters, but from what Mike said, it was pretty much overall like 20. That meant that there were hot and cold spells. I would go maybe 20 minutes or more without a single QSO. Tuning across to check the band at times often showed only 2 or 3 signals at most. Then for a brief period QSOs would come rapidly. I see a 5 minute period with 4 QSOs around 1800Z, and near the end from 2045 to 2058Z I logged 8 QSOs. Some signals were extremely loud and really rattled my ears, others were mere whispers. All in all, very up and down conditions. Also skip would vary from short to long rapidly so that I might work NJ, then a few minutes later CA. I think that sums up conditions pretty well. Here are Mike (L) and me (R) hard at work digging out or being blasted by some stations:



How did we make out? Pretty good all things considered. Mike made 35 QSOs on 40. I was right behind him with 34 on 20. There were 22 states and ON in our log. We both had a really great time. The weather was beautiful as shown here looking out over Community Park from our sheltered tables:



# 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 Carlos, CO8CML, #3908 —

Hi, Paul. I'm Carlos, CO8CML, NAQCC nr. 3908. I want to take a chance to celebrate NAQCC 12th Anniversary, and so I'll be on the air as CO8CML/qrp to meet as many members as I can do, working mainly at the evening and weekend, holiday style, from now till October 16. I'll be using 5W to an inverted "V" dipole from my QTH in Las Tunas City. I will be operating mainly on 20m, 14060 kHz + - qrm. I hope to meet a lot of members on the air!! Sorry for my English.

73's best regards.  
Carlos, CO8CML  
NAQCC Nr 3908

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

After 39 years of marriage my wife and I have established a pretty good division of labor. On July 12th we had a MAJOR housecleaning to do and my job was to "stay out of the way and don't make any more mess!" Now what this meant was that, with the occasional interruption to move furniture or to reach something that was too high for my wife, I got to spend more hours on the radio than in the previous three weeks combined! It was a perfect chance for me to work on the alphabet challenge for the month. I had already started the challenge and had a few letters collected but I had a very long way to go. Daytime band conditions were poor with a solar flux about 90 and conditions listed as "unsettled." But I started making some contacts (20 and 40 meters) and adding letters to my challenge. By the time the house was clean I only had 2 more letters to go to complete the challenge! I think that I would have made it all the way but a strategic evacuation became necessary when my wife's vacuum cleaner rolled through the door into my office/shack! Resisting that attack would have been my "last stand!" I ended up working into 10 states and 1 Canadian province, ranging from Oklahoma in the southwest, Alabama to the south, and New Brunswick to the northeast (I'm in Michigan). All with 5 watts to my old trap vertical antenna. And on bands that were sparsely populated, with pretty deep QSB, and some significant QRN static crashes from time to time. Not too shabby! Oh, and the house looks really great as well.

From Joe, N3HEE, #0239 —

*After winning the drawing for the vintage Morse Code materials described in Help For Beginners in last month's newsletter Joe sent this...*

I received the material today. This is an absolute treasure !! I really enjoyed the introduction letter from W6HHT. It's amazing how relevant this course still is today.

At CW Academy we use some of the Candler principles. I will carefully read and study the Candler material for the extra tid bits that we are not teaching and hope to incorporate them into our curriculum this fall.

Again, many thanks to all of you for this priceless piece of Morse code history ! You have enriched the lives of many new CW operators to come.

Joe,  
N3HEE

From Gene, N5GW, #5353 —

Transporting your portable field operations equipment over outdoor terrain can be labor intensive. I have found that a wheelbarrow works well as long as the land is fairly level and not too rough. It is amazing how well a wheelbarrow can be pushed along trails or even through the woods between trees and around obstacles, carrying fairly heavy or bulky loads. The single wheel provides mobility at the cost of stability.

The first pic shows the 'barrow loaded up and ready to go. The cooler chest contains a bag of ice, sports drinks and lunch. A padded case with strap contains the transceiver and accessories. A boat cushion and a ratchet strap are also visible. Notice the plywood rectangle bolted to the back of the support legs. It will serve as an operating table.



The next pic reveals the station set up in the woods. The wheelbarrow is leaned up against a suitable tree or other support and stabilized using the ratchet strap. A transceiver and other gear is then placed on the table top. An outboard battery can be placed on the ground. A comfortable seat at the appropriate height is provided by placing the boat cushion on top of the cooler.



The final pic is a close-up of the operating table including the transceiver, headphones and paper log. There is actually room for an additional item or two, such as a compact laptop, outboard keyer, paddles or a mini-tuner.





From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

It has been getting harder and harder to maintain my DX streak as the sunspots decline and consequently make propagation conditions poorer and poorer. Although that is the main factor, there are others as well. With fewer and fewer hours each day that working DX is possible, it is hard to have to sit there many hours on some days to even have the chance to work some DX. I do have other interests in life that I can't ignore simply to make a DX QSO. As conditions do decline, it seems fewer and fewer DX stations are getting on the air. That is a snowballing effect and before long, there just are almost no DX stations whatsoever available for working. At best they perhaps get on for a few minutes and if they don't get any response, they shut down. Basically it is possible to work DX each and every day even with minimal QRP like mine IF (huge IF) there is some there to be worked AND enough time to get on the air. I've worked DX under very poor conditions when the DX signals are at best S4 or even lower. The folks I work under those conditions are really great operators with a great receiving antenna setup and a great, quiet, location. That having been said, the DX streak has reached day # 1,250 on August 1 starting the 42nd straight month of daily DX QSOs

That sums up the DX streak. Now a quick glance at my other activities during the month. For a more complete roundup of my ham activities, you can always check my web site diary at [k3wwp.com](http://k3wwp.com).

The month started off with me working a couple of the special event 13 Colonies stations. After I had logged a few of them, I decided to go for all 13. NY was the elusive one of the 13, but I finally got him on the last day of the event. It must have taken about a half hour of trying before he wound up in the log. I also worked WM3PEN along the way. I applied for the 13 Colonies certificate and received it within a couple weeks. It's beautiful. See my web site diary for a picture of it.

On July 5th, Mike and I visited the Trolley Museum in SW PA. That was extremely enjoyable.

My big project in July was building my Popsicle stick straight keys. That's described in detail earlier in the newsletter.

It was nice to visit with fellow WPA Chapter member Don K3RLL. More about that in the WPA Chapter News.

As regular newsletter (and diary) readers know, I did a QRP/CW demo at the Butler County ARA last November. At that time we had some trouble with the KX3/PX3 part of the demo - poor conditions, makeshift antenna, lost cable, etc. So I promised to come back to 'complete' the demo some time. That time was the BCARA picnic on July 17. Mike, Tom (WB3FAE) and I had a great time and in between eating, QRM from folks talking, a dog barking, we actually made some QSOs to show off the KX3/PX3.

During the month I modified my KX3/PX3 homebrew stand so the PX3 was held more at an angle which made it more stable and eliminated some reflections from the screen. If you are interested in seeing the modifications, look in my diary. Later in the month I painted it black, and I think that made it look more attractive. You can judge for yourself from the diary pictures.

I would add pictures here in the newsletter, but I think I used up my picture quota in the Popsicle stick key article above. HI

The month closed with a visit from Mike on the 31st when we went to the Community Park to operate in the FOBB sprint. More about that with some pictures in the WPA Chapter news above.



# NAQCC CLUB INFORMATION

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

From NAQCC President Paul Huff, N8XMS

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

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

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

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

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

The North American QRP CW Club was founded in 2004 by WY3H and K3WWP and now has over 8000 members world wide. Membership is free and anyone interested in CW/QRP operating is welcome. Complete information about the NAQCC, including a membership application, activities schedule, and useful resources, can be found on our website at <http://www.naqcc.info/>. Inquires can also be sent to

Club President Paul Huff, N8XMS  
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Additional contact information can be found on the next page.

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