

NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 222 DECEMBER 2016



KEY CLICKS

- **FOUR MEMBERS EARN CLEAN SWEEPS.** Four members (that we know of) managed to earn clean sweeps in our October anniversary celebration by working N#A stations in all 10 US call districts! Congratulations to AH6AX, WB4M, N5KIP, and KA3OCS on this significant accomplishment.
- **PLEASE SEND IN YOUR SPRINT LOGS!** We have commented on this before but here is another appeal. If you participate in our sprints please be sure to send in your log - even if you only made a contact or two. Consistently every month some 25%-35% of our sprint participants do not bother to send in their logs. Not only does this add some issues for our log cross checking but it potentially hurts our collective club ego when we dip below the 100-log mark, as we did this past month. Sending in your log is easy to do using our autologger. Information on how to use the autologger can be found at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_rules.html and http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_tips.html.
- **WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES.** If you happen to find a new piece of radio gear under your tree this Christmas please consider writing a review of it for the newsletter. We always appreciate any submissions about QRP and CW hamming.
- **CHECK OUT OUR MONTHLY POLLS.** Jerry, VE6CPP, puts up an interesting poll on our club website each month. You can cast your vote in the current poll and see past poll results using the links on the main club page <http://www.naqcc.info/>. The more people that cast a vote, the more interesting the results.
- **THANK YOU FOR THE DONATIONS!** A big "THANK YOU" goes out to everyone who has made a recent donation to the NAQCC treasury. The NAQCC has no membership dues and we depend on your generous donations to cover our operating expenses. If others would like to help out with a donation there are two ways that you can do it. The first way is to use *PayPal* to electronically send your contribution to Club Vice President John, N8ZYA, using the email found on the last page of this newsletter. To avoid any additional fees please be sure to check the box that says "I'm sending money to family or friends." Also please add a note indicating that this is a donation to the NAQCC and include your call sign. The second way to make a donation is to mail a check or money order made out to *The North American QRP CW Club* and send it to *John Smithson, 1529 Virginia St E, Charleston, WV 25311*. Assuming that we have your correct email address on file, your contribution will be acknowledged by email with a carbon copy sent to a second club officer as a "check and balance."

IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Key Clicks</i>	1
<i>The Fist - part 2</i>	3
<i>Lunchbox Radio</i>	7
<i>Member Spotlight</i>	15
<i>Sprints</i>	17
<i>Challenges</i>	20
<i>Awards</i>	22
<i>CW Nets</i>	23
<i>Ham Quips</i>	25
<i>Chapter News</i>	26
<i>Member Submissions</i>	40
<i>About The NAQCC</i>	44
<i>Contacts</i>	45

- **BEST WISHES OF THE SEASON TO YOU AND YOURS!** We want to wish all of you a very blessed and joyous holiday season. Hopefully all of you have been good little QRPers will find some great ham radio goodies in your stockings! - 73, Paul N8XMS and John N8ZYA



Using CW of course!

THE FIST (PART 2) BY GREGG, WB8LZG

Laughter broke out on the other end of the landline. I knew it! He's never gonna believe..... "Hey Phil, quit laughing and tune to 7.065 and hear for yourself". "Yeah, yeah, so really how's that bug ? She play perty good does she?" "No, really Phil, I ain't kiddin'. Tune down on 40 and see". "Alright I'll meet you on 40." Click.

I heard a few dits from him on 7.065, so I started right in with CQ. Sure enough, as soon as I get through my call, my hand starts sending away. I couldn't stop. I tried to pull away but couldn't. After a few minutes of listening, I could hear Phil trying to break in between letters.

Rrrrring. I grabbed the landline with my free hand. "You done?" "It's got my hand man!", I yelled into the phone as I dropped it on the shack desk. I reached over and hit the switch. My hand came back off the key. "I'm not kidding Phil. I get done with my call and the damn thing grabs me, and keeps on going. Weirdest damn thing I've ever seen. "

"Really? ...you ain't BS'n me now." "Not joshin' ya man! This thing is just plain strange!" "Well, you know what else is strange?", Phil said. "What you're sending," he paused for a moment, "sounds to me like old Japanese Morse." "Really?" "Not sure, but let me make a call and I'll get a Japanese friend of mine to give his take on it."

"The sooner the better man, this is bugging me now OM !" "Buggin me , Ha , good one ! Call you back." Click.

So I get a landline from Phil in an hour, all excited. "I found an old guy named Shin in the old club", he says. "He's Japanese and can do Japanese Morse. He's free tomorrow after 11 AM and will come by with me to take a look. You still getting grabbed ?" "Yeah, and I'm afraid to mess with it." "Don't worry , I'll see you in the morning." "Look for you then."

As I hung up the phone I glanced over at the bug that was causing all the commotion. It was indeed beautiful, and again I was drawn towards it. I stood above the the operating desk admiring the intricate workmanship. I reached out to pick it up, and stopped. An eerie feeling came over me. No, I'll wait until tomorrow, I thought to myself. I opened the fridge, grabbed a Miller, and turned out the light, all in one fluid motion, and headed up the stairs to try to get some rest. "Whew! What a day!" I mumbled to myself as I topped the last step.

I awoke the next morning in a cold sweat. I'd been dreaming about the old man who had sold me the bug. I dreamed he had gone to the local doctor's office after hours, broken into the place, and then used the physician's operating equipment to amputate his own hand. The "look" of a madman was in his eyes. He sliced into the hand at the wrist and after a few moments of extreme pain, the lifeless hand hit the floor with a slopping sound. With the remaining good limb, he wrapped the stump at the end of his wrist with gauze as the blood gushed a trail out the door and down the street. All the while screaming with elation, " I'm free! I'm feerrreeeee!"

"Whoa man ! Crazy dream! " A quick shower, and a bowl of Cherrios, and I was feeling a bit better. The guys would be coming soon and then we'd figure this thing out.

Now I could hardly wait. I paced around nervously for a while and made a pot of coffee. I had the bug all set to go on the operating desk. "Hey Old Man!", Phil hollered as he walked up to the house . " Hey good morning guys", I said as they peeked in the back door. I greeted Shin warmly and thanked him for coming. Then pouring them both a cup of joe, I led them down to the shack.

Shin was obviously from a generation or two preceding ours. His face showed the wear of the years, yet he had a gentle smile and an air of honesty about him. Phil had already explained to him what was happening, and somehow did not have any difficulty persuading Shin to check out this weird story. Shin spotted the bug right away and he gravitated towards the key; paused and carefully picked it up to examine the workmanship. He said nothing for several minutes as he turned the key in every axis to investigate possible clues to its origin. Phil finally broke the silence. "So spill it Shin, what's the scoop with this key?"

"Well" he began slowly, "This is very fine machining, I haven't seen anything like it in maybe 50 or 60 years." He sighed, "see the fine lines on the posts, they haven't done them like that since before WWII. I thought I've seen just about every key made but I never saw one with this fine workmanship."

On the bottom was the makers name in Japanese, along with some inscription about the maker. "Have you tried to contact the family yet?" I shook my head. "You may have a one of a kind here", he said with some authority. "I've heard of a ham before the war that made special order bugs for princes, sultans, emperors and high dignitaries, but I had always thought they were folklore or in museums. I'd never actually seen one before now. Show me what happens when you try to use the bug", he said before setting it gently down on the operating desk.

I cautiously sat down at the operating desk. I plugged the bug in and turned on the rig, tuned around for a clear spot and sent a quick string of V's. "Works great until I get to my call." "Continue", Shin said. I started a CQ and de my call. When I got to the last letter, instead of the AR, the dang thing kept right on going. I wanted to let go but it had a hold on my hand and the key just kept pounding away. "Are you in pain?" he asked. "No, but I can't stop unless I cut the power."

"Keep going", he said in amazement. "It's old Japanese Morse." My hand kept on pounding away, and Shin sat quietly deciphering what was being sent. Phil just stood there wide-eyed, trying to take in what was happening and make some sense of it all. He had previously thought it was all a stupid joke that I was playing on him, but now realized it wasn't a joke and certainly not funny at all.

I was into about the second minute of sending when the look on Shin's face changed dramatically. He turned white as a sheet and blurted out, "Stop! Stop! Stop sending!" I tried to obey, but the key had ahold of me more tightly than ever and just kept sending away! "Noooo!", Shin cried out, as I reached across the desk and pulled the plug. As the pilot lamps dimmed so did the constriction on my hand. For a moment, relief.

Shin looked at the key, and then at me. "I hope we stopped you in time". There was dead silence. Shin's face was still white as a ghost and he had the look of terror in his eyes. And now so did I. "What? What did I send?", I pleaded.

"You were sending in old Japanese Kumo code. I have not heard it used for many years. It's what you sent that has me afraid for you George." He regained some of his composure. "You sent the name Tsune Ishibashi, the officer who had the key." He also told of his son who would inherit the key from the emperors nephew."

He then turned very serious. "Officer Ishibashi would invoke a curse not in use since centuries ago by mystic sects of Tong warriors who were charged with the protection of all of the emperors' sacred possessions. They used both the living, and the dead to accomplish this mission. They were pledged to the death in the charge of their duty, and were not above using the dark arts of sorcery.

Phil and I were still stunned. "So how do we get rid of the curse?", I said in earnest. "We have to find the owner and return the key", Shin said. "This Ishibashi's son must be somewhere." With renewed conviction, Shin said, "I know of a man who may be of some help. If there is a record of this man's son,

he will find out.“

“So in the mean time what do I do about the curse?” I pleaded. “Do NOT try to use the key again until we find the owner.” Shin said. “No matter what happens, if you want to keep your hand, do not use the key. The more you use the key, the more that this curse will creep into your hand and eventually consume your entire being!”

I was really afraid now. All this curse stuff had me very worried, and already I felt like my “fist” wasn’t mine.

“Why don’t you come to my place for dinner tonight”, Phil said. “We can watch some TV and have a couple beers and try to forget about this for a while.” “Good idea, I could use a little R-n-R after the dreams I had last night”, I said trying to calm myself down a bit. “What about you Shin?” “No. I’m going to go down to the park, There’s a man I know of there who may be able to help us. I just hope I can find him. I’ve not talked with him for some time.....he is old and may not remember.”

I thanked Shin for coming and said goodbye to him wondering what he would find out, and wondering just how long I’d have to wait to be rid of this curse. “Come on , we’ll go get us a brew or two and you’ll feel better”, Phil said to reassure me. We headed out the door and jumped in the pickup. In a few minutes we were on Phil’s patio, cracking into a cold 807.

After about four beers I began to relax a little and he turned on the tube to see what the scores were for the day. “ Well, that key is the damndest thing I ever saw. If I hadn’t seen it with my own eyes I wouldn’t have believed a word”, Phil mused. “ I’m glad it’s you and not me”, he said with a chuckle, trying to relieve the tension. “But don’t fret, ol’ Shin will figure this out . I just know it.” Phil took his last swallow and popped another cool one. “Shin knows all about this Japanese hocus-pocus stuff, and he’ll fix you up for sure.”

One more beer and I was ready to turn in for the night. “ Thanks for the suds OM”, I said gratefully, “but I got to be getting home now.” We said our goodbyes and Phil said “I’ll call you in the morning , and see how your doing, OK ?” “OK, thanks”.

On the way home all I could think of was the key. I looked at my hand..... I flexed my fist.....looked again. Seems OK to me I thought, trying to reassure myself. I rounded the final turn and up the driveway and went inside. I walked right past the cellar door that led to the shack, and into the den and onto the chesterfield to watch some TV. The beer was doing it’s job , and I felt sleepy.

As I crawled off to bed , I felt a bit more at ease. Surely Shin would be able to help. I consoled myself and soon fell into a slumber..... and dreamed.....

I dreamed I had succumbed to the key’s “power” over me. I was drawn down to the shack and the key called to me. I slowly felt the paddles, and their smooth surface. The feeling was electric, tantalizing, and I started sending, and sending, and not understanding a word or even a letter! I tried to remove my hand. No good. It had me!

Soon my arm began to tire, yet I couldn’t stop sending. I pulled and pulled, my hand was in severe pain! Still sending, I reached over and grabbed the cord and yanked the plug with my left hand fully expecting to be out of the noose, and still I kept sending! Now my entire arm was in pain. I cried out “HELP” at the top of my lungs knowing full well that no one could hear me. I yelled and jumped around in the chair like a man with pants on fire! Then I heard someone upstairs enter the back door. Thank heavens I thought.

“Phil is that you ?”, I cried out.

Still sending in agony I gasped for breath when I spun my head around to see the old man who sold me the key! His one hand gone at the wrist, still wrapped in bloody gauze dressing and in the other hand was a scalpel. His eyes were pure evil, and in a voice that came from the damned, "I'm here to set you free."

Still sending I started swinging at him with my free arm, trying to keep him away. All the while my sending hand was imprisoned by the key! "Get away you old geezer! Leave me alone!". He stayed just out of reach as he wielded the scalpel back and forth. "You'll soon beg me to free you, the longer you wait the more of the arm will have to come off"

I felt the rest of my body going into cramps of pain as my hand continued to send. Before I knew it I was helpless, just sending, and sending. Like a petrified zombie I was the key's prisoner! The old man slowly approached me and lifted my sending arm from under with his bloody stump, still swinging the scalpel around. "Now I'll have to take it off at the elbow" he sneered. He held my forearm down with the stump while sizing up the spot he was about to amputate.

I was helpless and could only gaze in terror at what was about to happen. "Please help me", I managed to mumble. "Yes ... I'm going to free you now.... freeeee." He plunged the scalpel into the flesh just above the joint in the elbow! I screamed in pain, "Nooooooooo!"

He continued to sever all of the tendons and started to saw through the spot between the bones. Tears were clouding my vision as I begged for mercy. He dug in deeper and I screamed for all I was worth! In one final push, he was through. The arm and hand fell limp and the key fell silent.

RRRrrringggg! I jumped up in bed at the sound of the phone, sweating like I'd just run a marathon. I looked at my hand, and reached over to pick up the phone. "Hallo" "Hey Phil, I'zat you?" "Yeah man, get up! You ready for the swap?"

"Oh man, I don't know if I want to go to the swap, yer not gonna believe what just happened to me".

"Get ready! I'll be there in five minutes. We've been planning this for a long time, you're not gonna wimp out on me!".

"Ok, but promise me you won't let me buy any Japanese bugs or keys today".

"What are you talking about?"

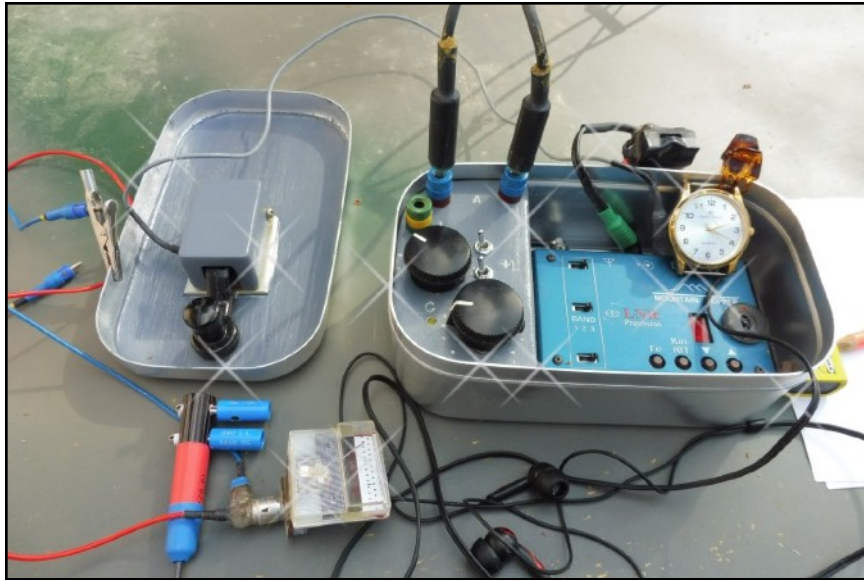
I looked at my sending hand and defiantly made it into a FIST. "You're not gonna believe this". "Believe what?".

"I'll tell you about it on the way to the swap."



LUNCHBOX RADIO

BY DIJAN, SA3BOW



Allegedly Ishy, the last of the Californian Yana Indians said: “Any stick, him do for bow — arrows kill deer!” Transformed to radio it could be: “Any old transceiver do for QSO - but antenna system reach friend”.

There I stood with a little blue CW transceiver, sporting the 20, 30 and 40 meter bands with an output of about 2.5 W @ 9 V in my hands. Now what? How to get it on the air? How to tinker with a simple, smallish and self-contained “ready-to-go” set?

It had to sport an efficient ATU mainly for ladder-line-fed wires, a common-mode choke, some tuning aid, and a fused power source. And it should be simple to make. No required tooling or materials that can't be used on a kitchen table.

This is the story of how I made it. Hopefully the photos compensate for any short comings of my explanations. A few things are better explained in the links at the end. Read them! They are good.

Instead of a seat-of-the-pants approach, I formed a plan from a few questions:

What is my operating style?

Either a QAD (quick and dirty) shoot and scoot thing, throwing wires over a bush and on the ground or from a public bench table with a nice view, possibly using a telescopic mast.

What about antennas, feed line and impedance matching?

All antennas will be simple wires. End of story.

A feed line is not needed and direct feeding is simple, handy and requires only a simple ATU. But a low antenna cramps performance. Adding a feed line brings the most current-carrying antenna part higher. A ladder line is low loss. Even an “all impedance matching network” for 20 to 40 meters is comparatively small in range.

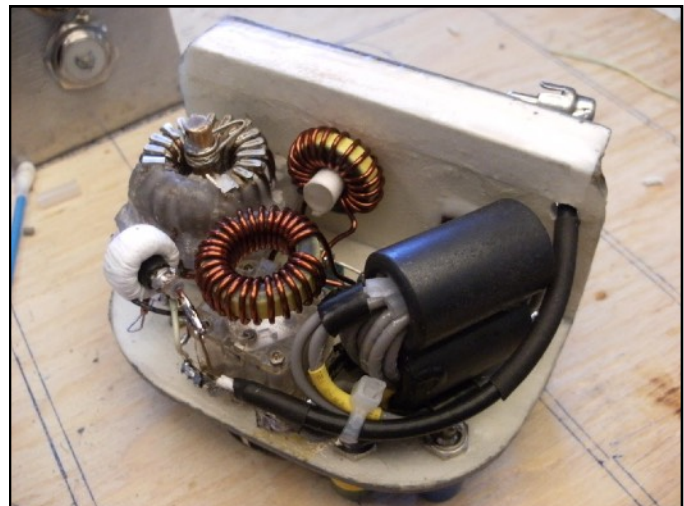
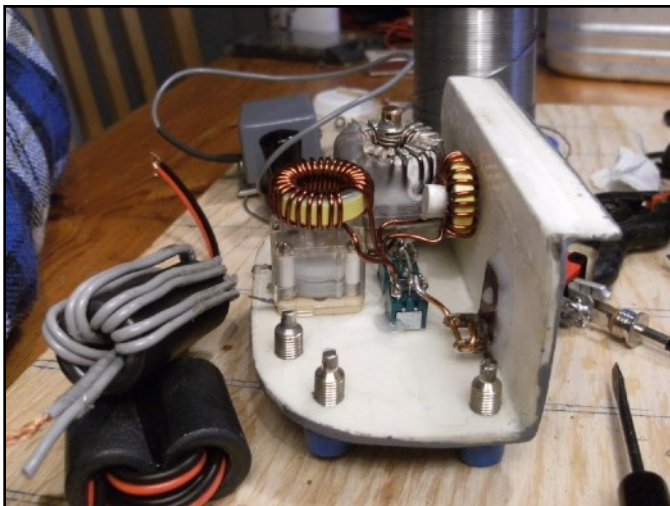
If one drops low impedance antennas (shortish $\frac{1}{4}\lambda$ for example), the needed range is further reduced. Even with The Little Blue's limited bandwidth, and a few antenna/feed line combinations, an ATU is needed to sort out varying impedances.

I opted for a L-network. It is efficient and simple to DIY. What is the needed range? An end-fed antenna for 40-meters is the worst case scenario with feed point impedances of ...2000 Ω to 3500 Ω . To transform between 50 Ω and 3500 Ω takes $\sim 9.5 \mu\text{H}$ and $\sim 54 \text{ pF}$ and at 2000 Ω : 7.1 μH and 71 pF. An end-fed antenna in the real world would be more like 2500 Ω giving values around 7.9 μH and 68 pF. If you think that is too much for your L-net, then there are two workarounds: Don't use exactly a $\frac{1}{2}\lambda$ wire or add a bit of impedance-transforming feed line.

How to make all this and with what?

Design goals are easy to list but making the right trade-offs is another story. Some calculations, with antenna + feed line in mind, pointed out that the maximum needed inductance would be less than 8 μH . For that, a single coil could be used; either variable or with a multi-position switch.

"Variable" could be an air coil and a crocodile clip. Simple and cheap to make, with an unlimited number of settings, but not small or neat. Multi-position switches tend to be bulky and add strange stray stuff (technical term) and a "roller coaster" hard to make on a kitchen table. The use of a single coil is debatable. The not-used parts of a coil are preferably shorted out but still live a life of their own. Calculations, tests and measuring suggested to use three "yellow/-6" toroid coils activated with DPDT switches. One with multi-settings and two fixed.



Choosing My Toroid

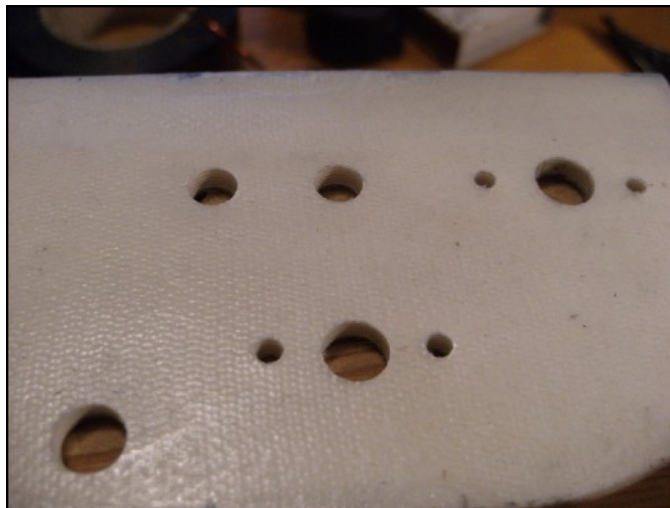
The smallest practical combination of toroid and thickest possible wire was empirically found to be a 94-6 and enameled 1.18 mm wire (slightly thicker than AWG 17). It was tuned to $\sim 2.25 \mu\text{H}$. Every turn, except the first 3-4 turns (giving very little inductance) got a piece of silver wire “u” soldered on top. The toroid is attached to the porcelain base of a WW2-type trim capacitor. The capacitor's axle is robbed of it's plates and slightly lengthened and given a silver wire arm. The second toroid is $\sim 2 \mu\text{H}$ and the third is less than $4 \mu\text{H}$ with AWG 18 enameled wire. I used as large toroids as I could fit once I got a grip of the enclosure, size of other parts etc. They are way bigger than needed but ensure low loss. The overlaps make it possible to fine-tune adjustments between 0.2 to $\sim 7.5 \mu\text{H}$.

The 2-gang capacitor is of the “sugar cube”-type. Connected only to the stators, it gives less capacity but better voltage handling. At twice the output (5 W) and 3000Ω impedance, one expects 125V over the capacitor. Easy peasy! Here the benefits are that tweaking capacitance is less touchy and there are no lossy contacts. With no need for low Z settings, the capacitor is fixed to the output side and thus one switch is saved.

Making the Enclosure

Mind you: there is a “toggling” between design goals, efficiency, weight, size, stuff at hand, etc etc. All a part of the fun in DIY! For enclosures, I tested a case for drills, a PC-drive cabinet, a sewing machine parts box, a first-aid box, and an old camping box for storing iced butter. In the end, I bought a new lunch box. The use of lunch boxes is not new: <http://www.crypto7museum.com/spy/30156/index.htm>

Using slow-curing epoxy and multi-layers of cotton aquarelle paper, finished with thin, woven-glass fabric on both sides, a dividing wall was formed. It contains the ATU and divides it from The Little Blue.



The glass is overkill, a tight woven fabric is enough. Such a composite is very strong and much simpler than working sheet metal in a kitchen. The composite idea was nicked from my boat building days: <http://www.duckworksmagazine.com/00/DM1999/articles/dejan/index.htm>

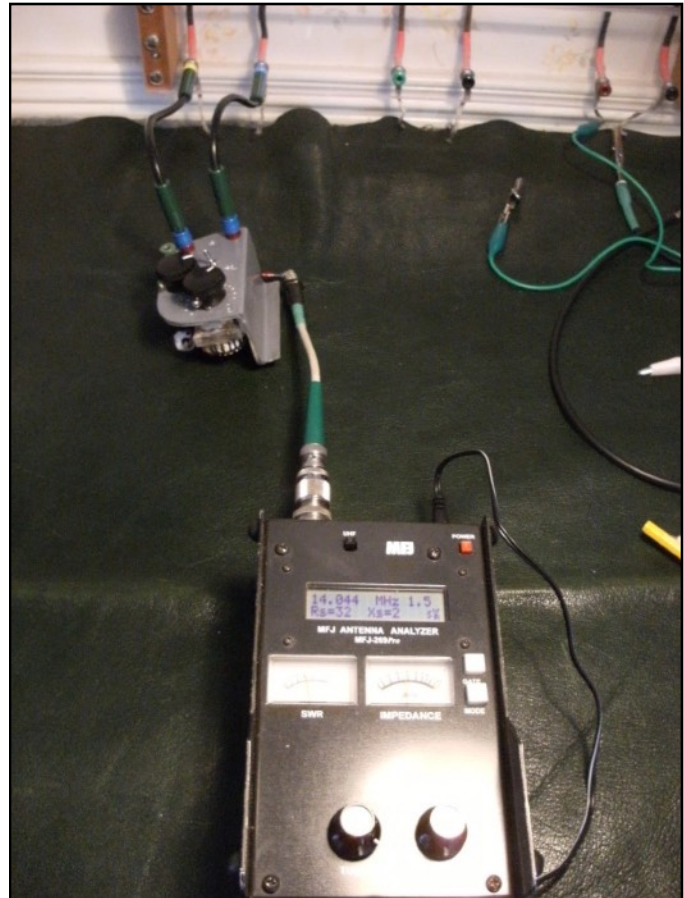
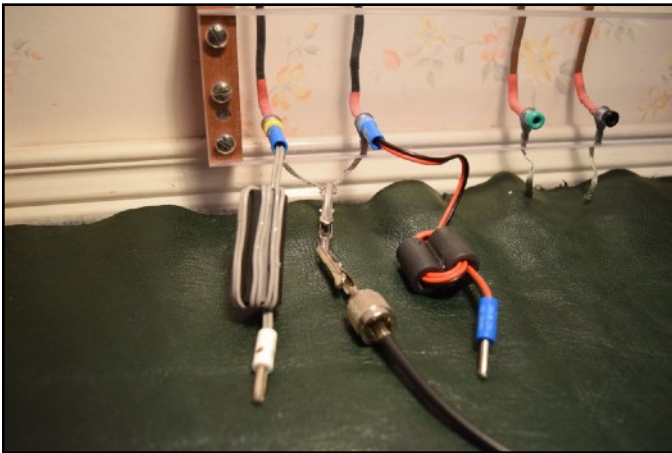
So far everything was simple. The next two parts were not: a common mode choke and something to aid tuning. The last part proved to be tricky indeed.

Making the Current Choke

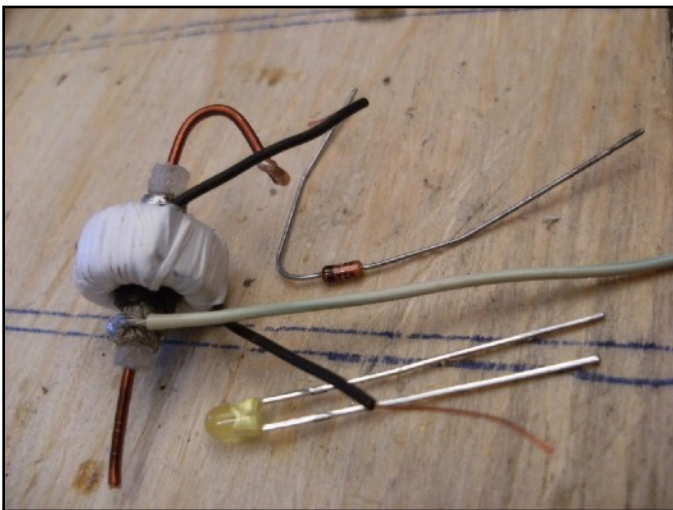
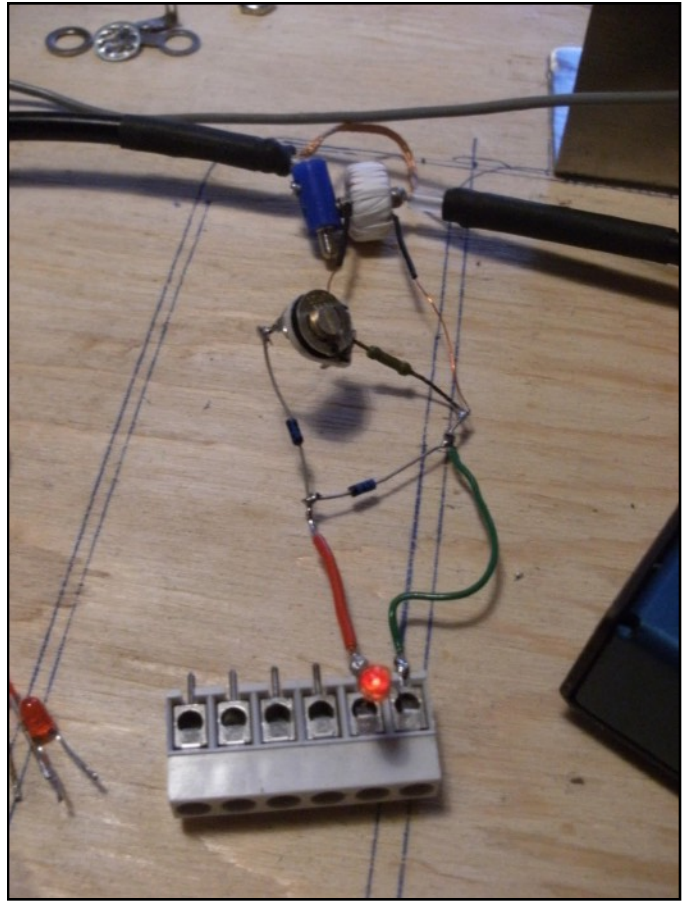
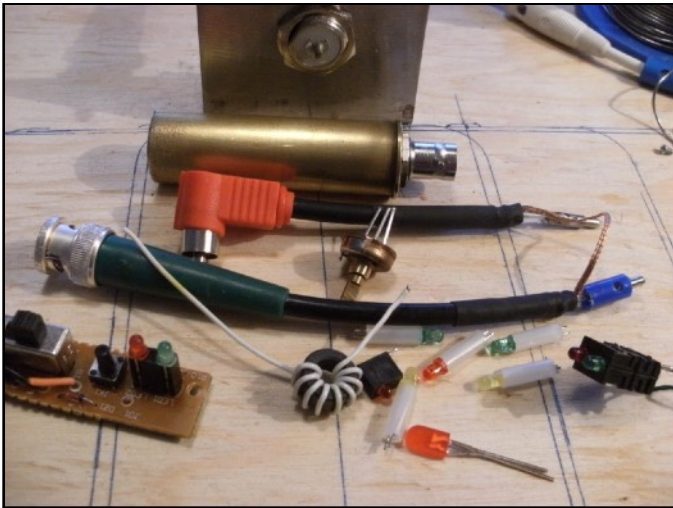
While perhaps this is overkill for a 2.5 W station used outdoors, but I wanted to fight common mode (CM). For this I used two ferrite tubes and teflon-insulated, stranded wire. Sounds simple? I wanted to

bring down any CM at least 20 dB on all three bands. Measuring that is way out of reach for my antenna analyzer. But there is a workaround.

Make a current choke and connect it to a S-measuring receiver. Toggle between choke and no-choke on frequencies of interest. I used a IC-718. A professional ICOM tech guy told me that this S-meter is true from “9 and up”. Interesting enough, he also said that, no matter of brand, only high-end transceivers have decent S-metering. I tested several different ferrite tubes and number of turns.



While receiving steady S9 + 20-30 dB stations, I toggled between chokes and “straight input”. This method is time consuming but straight forward. Note that both wires are connected during testing. That is how common mode runs. It proved to be easy to reach -20 dB on three bands with any ferrite tube. But I could not make a really small choke for HF + top band. Best, but way too large, was a Würth 74270057, ~51x19 mm with a 11.5 mm hole (material similar to -43). Two cut-down ones, glued together, was also tested. As wire outside a tube gives no contribution, “binocular-style” is favorable. I ended up using two unknown tubes found in a flat-TV screen and five turns of wire taped together.



Now the Tuning Indicator

“The Little Blue” lacks a tuning indicator and protective circuitry. Anyone knows that for a generator to deliver full power to a load they must have the same impedance. In an antenna system, the maximum radiation comes from maximum antenna current achieved by good tuning. How to indicate that? With a tuning aid! It only needs to tell when one gets “max smoke”, the absolute value is not important. Max smoke! So what to use as tuning indicator?

Maybe a Taylor SWR indicator/bridge? It has a few shortcomings and it does not necessarily point out the sweet spot. Even if the parts count is low, it is not minimal and requires yet another switch. With a current transformer, one can tap the antenna current and indicate max current with something; a lamp, a LED, or a meter. Lamp or meter was an issue in the past too. Check this out from 3:50:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B73SwHqCbU4>

I used an unknown ferrite toroid, 36 turns of wire, a fast switching signal diode, a yellow LED and a 300Ω resistor. And I spent hours testing various angles, components and combinations of this seemingly simple contraption. Current transformer maths is simple but not always intuitive. There are very bad advice on the web. I found out that few turns on the toroid give high losses. One needs to “gear down” the current to fit the LED/meter/lamp, not limit current with a resistor.

In this case, tested LEDs normally worked with +40 turns at full 9V battery voltage. With a high AL toroid

material, one can expect better response over a wider frequency range. The Faraday shielding used here might be pure fancy stuff. LEDs are peculiar animals! They don't follow the law of Ohm and they are way too slow for HF. The recovery time is so long that the LED is open both ways. With rising frequency the LED dims out.

Two LEDs end-to-end is not enough to protect from back current/voltage. They do need a protecting signal diode. I picked a NOS 1N4448, but a 1N4148 works perfect too. The 1N400x series is way too slow. As there is no voltage regulator, the output (and thus the antenna current) lowers as the voltage sinks. To be useful, I "adjusted" components to work also with weak batteries.

LEDs come with several voltage and current ratings. Test what you have. The new, super-bright, white, low-current LEDs might be a better choice. Although big, a sensitive meter measures at lower current, lacks LED troubles and gives far better readings than a LED. The number of turns on the toroid should be largely increased. To really be able to fine tune, I also made a two component (meter and germanium-diode) field strength indicator. The current indicator was, in the end, tinkered with to put the tuning close and the field strength indicator spot on. The 300Ω resistor adjusted the brightness for this.



An added bonus is that this device tells if the antenna or feed line suddenly fails and before the battery dies: the LED simply goes out. A fuse holder was glued to the battery holder.



Finally the Antenna Connection

My home and garden antennas were cut only for convenience and not to fit a limited range ATU. So would they work ok? Using the antenna analyzer, I tried to find settings for a few spots on the Little Blue's bands. Then I noted found settings. Those settings were then used with the transceiver. The antenna current indicator (AKA "tuning aid") showed that the lowest SWR found with the analyzer was NOT giving the best generator/load combinations. Tweaking a bit whilst glancing at the indicator LED found a better setting. Then a final touch aided by the field strength indicator again proved that this was a better than SWR measuring with an analyzer. The settings were recorded. Portable antennas have been tested the same way. But they are a different story.



In this paper I make a few claims that you should not take for granted. For further info and excellent explanations I suggest further reading here:

Balun stuff:

<http://owenduffy.net/blog/?p=5308#more-5308>

http://www.w8ji.com/tuner_baluns.htm

<http://owenduffy.net/blog/?p=4578#more-4578>

<https://www.dxengineering.com/techarticles/balunsandfeedlinechokes/baluns-choosing-the-correct-balun>

Reading about common chokes and math is one thing but understanding is another. Experimenting and measuring coils and toroids gives a deeper understanding. Not really needed but very handy was that I had, from the start, access to an antenna analyzer. I could wrap a few turns of wire on a ferrite stick or tube and on all sorts of toroids. What the formulas said was what most often was measured. And most important: the “buts” accompanying formulas was proofed. Impedance of a coil changed with frequency and not always in a predictable way. For more sensitive circuitry, one needs to measure to get it right. Poke around in the links!

SWR bridge:

<http://vk5ajl.com/projects/swrbridge.php>

[SWR - the persistent myth](#)

Current transformers

http://www.g3ynh.info/zdocs/bridges/Xformers/part_1.html

A piece of plywood on the kitchen table made it possible to push the whole shebang aside for meals with the family. A final “say so” goes to Ishy: “*Any* young man, him make a *bow* — *old* man, many years experience make arrows.” Try to make that into ham stuff!

72, Dejan de SA3BOW



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.

MERLIN WILLIAMS, KD0V, #2002



I love operating portable. This photo was taken by my XYL while we were on vacation at Gun Flint Pines Resort in Northern Minnesota about a half-mile south of the Canadian Border. The radio is a NorCal 40A and a Buddie Stick antenna is in the back ground.

I was first introduced to morse code as a boy scout in the 1950s. It has been a real challenge in my life ever since. I learned the morse code the wrong way, by memorizing it as a boy scout and starting out at 2 wpm when I started learning it to get the novice license. I still suffer from it. My father-in-law, W7OZJ, Paul, helped me get started in ham radio, shortly after I got married. In 1965 I was first licensed as WN7FAE. I was unable to get my code speed to anywhere near 13 wpm while in college and lost my license at the end of one year. After graduating from college, I started working on mastering the CW again. I did so by sending CW and recording what I was sending and then using the tape for practice until I had it memorized. Then I would start over again. After about a year I was up to around 15 wpm. I passed the General test and became WA7JUK, and a month later passed the Advanced test.

We moved to Minnesota in 1974 and my call was changed to WB0MPN. After several years of operating as WB0PMN, I decided to really challenge myself and get my code speed up to 20+ wpm and get the Extra Class. I spent a half an hour every evening after work pushing myself with on-the-air CW contacts. I passed the Extra examination and became, KD0V.

A couple of years after passing the Extra examination I went into business for myself. That was the end of CW until 2005. I was using some old Collins gear, a KWM2 and a 75S-3B. I got involved with FISTS and started playing around with QRP. I purchased an Elecraft K2 Kit. I earned the FISTS QRP Award #107, and the Two-Way QRP Award #18 and somehow along the way got involved with NAQCC. Also I got involved with SKCC and earned their QRP Awards, #6 for the One-Way and #2 for the Two-Way.

The K2 really changed ham radio for me. It was my first solid state radio, and I found it so amazing. The receiver performed better than the Collins 75S-3B. Because of the K2, I decided to sell my Collins gear and use the money for solid-state gear. I got enough money from the sale of the Collins gear to purchase a Tentec Jupiter. My ham radio activity exploded. The recession helped, my business collapsed. I have since replaced the Jupiter with an Elecraft K3.

I used a straight key so much that I got carpal tunnel in my left wrist. I cannot use a straight key any more so I learned to use a bug. I can use a bug with both my right and left hands. It is sure nice during the Sprints to be able to write with the left hand and send with the right hand.

Last June, 2015, I had my right hip replaced. The bad hip slowed down my portable QRP activity for several years. I am doing much better now and I am looking forward to portable operating in the future. This fall I will attempt the October NAQCC Sprint as KD0V/7 from Idaho, using the NorCal 40A and Buddie Stick, I hope it works.



Finally, here I am operating the FYBO Event in February of 2012 in my back yard. It was cold that day. The flexible solar panel helped keep the batteries up.



NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT: In December we have two different sprints to enjoy. First up will be our regular monthly sprint on Dec 14, 0130-0330 UTC. That's the evening of the 13th here in North America. Details can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201612.html>. Then on Dec 22, 0130-0330 UTC, we will have one of our semi-annual milliwatt sprints - <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201612mw.html>. With our recent propagation conditions that should be quite a fun challenge!

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. Alternatively, a logging spreadsheet for Mac OS X computer users is available at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_macs.html.

LAST MONTH'S SPRINT RESULTS: Conditions for the November sprint were almost universally reported as being very poor. (For me they were almost the worst that I can remember) This is probably what contributed to the very low log count - 96, and participation count - 131. Even with the crummy conditions plenty of operators managed to have fairly large QSO counts. There were 14 logs submitted that had 25 or more QSOs in them and the total number of QSOs in all of the submitted logs was 1140. 80-meters seemed to be the best band.

An editorial comment: *It is a little frustrating to see every month the rather large difference between submitted logs and the number of participating stations. Please, if you participate we would really like to receive your log! Our autologger system makes it pretty easy to do and we have a lot of information and help available on our website at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_rules.html and http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_tips.html.*

Complete sprint results, including soapbox comments, can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201611.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: K8LBQ, KB3MOW, VA2GLU

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	WB1GYZ	KN1H	
W2	W2SH	W2JEK	
W3	AB3RU	KD3CA	
W4	WG8Y	W4OEP	K4KRW
W5	N5GW	W5WIL	
W6	WK6L		
W7	KF7WNS		
W8	WV8DH	N8BB	
W9	WB9HFK		
W0	WB0PYF	N0TA	
VE	VE3IDS		
DX			

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	K1SX		
W2			
W3	K3WWP		
W4	AK4NY		
W5	NF5U		
W6			
W7			
W8	N8XMS		
W9	N9SE		
W0	KD0V		
VE			
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KB1M		
W2	K2YGM		
W3	WB4OMM		
W4	W4QO	K3RLL	
W5	K5MBA		
W6			
W7	AA7CU		
W8	KE8DI		
W9	N1RU		
W0	K8UDH	K9OSC	
VE	VA2GLU		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
		KB3MOW	K8LBQ
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
N4FI			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	96	126	194	2/13
Participants	131	193	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1140	1982	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	615	1054	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	525	928	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	0	118	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	283	1262	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	857	602	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	11.9	15.7	19.3	9/11

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

NUMBER OF SPRINTS	MEMBERS
50+	K9OSC KB0ETU KA9FQG K6MGO NA4O N8BB WG8Y AA7CU KC2EGL VE5BCS N2ESE K6CSL N8QY WA8SAN N0TA WX4RM WD0K K4KRW NQ2W KB8FE NO2D WY3H AA9L KQ1P W4DUK KE5YUM NU7T
75+	WB8ENE WA2JSG VE3FUJ K1IEE N4FI KD0V K3RLL NF8M KU4A K4JPN K4NVJ KD2MX KB3AAG
100+	N8XMS K4BAI WB8LZG W2SH W9CC
125+	W2JEK KA2KGP K3WWP



NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: Our December challenge is an alphabet challenge involving words associated with different versions or dialects of Morse Code. The list of words and some interesting information about the different versions of can be found at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201612.html>.

The European challenge for this month involves some very interesting underground rivers that run under some major European cities. Complete information is at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/december-2016-challenge/>.

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: In January we will have an alphabet challenge with words associated with different new-year traditions. <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201701.html>

The European challenge for January has not yet been posted as of this writing date.

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

LAST MONTH'S CHALLENGE: The deadline for submitting entries for the November challenge is still a few days away so final results are not yet available. You can go to <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201611.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/november-2016-challenge/>.

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

NUMBER OF CHALLENGES	MEMBERS
25+	N1JI PA0XAW 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: The Participation Award

This is a very special award and it comes with a special prize - a free membership in FISTS, The International Morse Preservation Society. Each year our members earn points by their participation in our monthly sprints and challenges. One point is earned for each sprint or challenge that you participate in, and an extra point is awarded if you participate in both of these activities in a single month. In other words, a maximum of 3 participation points can be earned each month thus producing a total of 36 possible points for the year. At the end of the year the member with the highest number of participation points wins the prize. (Actually the winner is usually determined by a random drawing from the several members who end up in a tie with their points.) You can see the complete details about this award, along with the points that you have individually earned so far this year, at http://www.naqcc.info/awards_participation.html.

RECENTLY ISSUED AWARDS:

DXCC AWARD (Category C - QRPp - 25 Countries)

0005 - K1YAN 11/13/16

WAC AWARD (Category A - QRP)

0033 - WA7QCC EA8TL - 5B4AMM - PI4DX - N6PG - V73NS - ZP6CW 11/13/16



NAQCC QRS/QRQ NETS



We have a number of nets (QRS = slow speed, QRQ = higher speed) designed to help people build up their CW operating skills. Complete information about these nets can be found at http://naqcc.info/cw_nets.html. Questions should be directed to Net Manager Nelson, NP4LW.

NAQCC NET SCHEDULE

Net	Local Time	UTC	Freq +/-	Primary NCS
Farnsworth 40/80 m QRQ Nets (FRN)	Sunday 4:00/6:00 PM PT	Monday 0000/0200 Z	7056/3556 KHz	Rick, N6IET (in CA)
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CT	Tuesday 0100 Z	3561 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Midwest Net QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 9 PM CT	Tuesday 0300 Z	7117 KHz	Scotty, NU0S (in NE)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Nets (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 4:00 PM MT	Tues/Thurs 2300 Z	14060 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Nets (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 4:30 PM MT	Tues/Thurs 2330 Z	7062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
West Virginia QRS Net (WVN)	Wednesday 9 PM ET	Thursday 0200 Z	7117 KHz	John, N8ZYA (in WV)
Pacific Northwest 80 m QRS Net (PNW80)	Thursday 7 PM PT	Friday 0300 Z	3574 KHz	Stewart, KE7LKW (in WA)

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

From NAQCC Club President Paul, N8XMS

Due to some technical difficulties we have not been able to publish complete net reports for October and November. I apologize for this and we hope to have our issues all worked out for the January issue of the newsletter.

CW Net Reports for November (incomplete)

NAQCC Farnsworth Net (FRN) QRQ 40/80 Meter Nets

Sunday evenings 4:30 PM PST, which is Monday 0030 UTC on 7056 kHz +/-

Sunday evenings 6:30 PM PST, which is Monday 0230 UTC on 3556 kHz +/-

Main NCS - Rick N6IET (California); Backup NCS - JB NR5NN (California)

2016-11-07 40m QNI (6) NCS N6IET, WU7F, N7HRK/M, K7KY, NR5NN, W7SAG

2016-11-07 80m QNI (2) NCS N6IET, W7SAG

2016-11-14 40m QNI (5) NCS N6IET, N7HRK/M, KE6EE, W7SAG, NR5NN

2016-11-14 80m QNI (4) NCS N6IET, WU7F, W7SAG, NR5NN

2016-11-21 40m QNI (4) NCS N6IET, K7KY, W7SAG, N7HRK/M

2016-11-21 80m QNI (2) NCS N6IET, K6GVG

2016-11-28 40m QNI (3) NCS N6IET, KE6EE, N7HRK/M

2016-11-28 80M QNI (3) NCS N6IET, K7KY, KE6EE

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN)

Monday evenings 7:00 PM CST, which is Tuesday 0100 UTC, on 3561 kHz +/-

Main NCS - Allen KA5TJS (Texas)

DATE??? NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA WI5H

NAQCC MIDWEST QRS Net (MWN)

Monday evenings 9:00 PM CST, which is Tuesday 0300 UTC, on 7117 kHz +/-

Main NCS - Wayne NQ0RP (Kansas)

NAQCC Rocky Mountain Regional/Continental QRS Nets (RMRc)

Tuesday/Thursday at 4:00 PM MST, which is Tuesday/Thursday 2300 UTC, on 14060 kHz

Tuesday/Thursday at 4:30 PM MST, which is Tuesday/Thursday 2330 UTC, on 7062.5 kHz.

Main NCS - Dale WC7S (Wyoming)

NAQCC West Virginia QRS NET (WVN)

Wednesday evenings 9:00 EST, which is Thursday 0200 UTC on 7117 kHz.

Main NCS - John N8ZYA (West Virginia)

2016-11-10 NCS N8ZYA WV8DH AB8RL

NAQCC Pacific Northwest QRS 80 Meter Net (PNW80)

Thursday evenings 7:00 PM PST, which is Friday 0300 UTC on 3574 kHz.

Main NCS - Stewart KE7LKW (Washington State)

11-17-2016 QNI (7) NCS W7ANM, KE7LKW/5, N7TES, AD7BP, K7JUV, NT7B, WB4SPB



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.

HAM LINGO "POUNDING BRASS"



MEMBERS OF THE BRASS POUNDERS LEAGUE GET TOGETHER TO "POUND SOME BRASS".

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.

Season's Greetings to all.

The Central Texas Chapter has been silent for last few months, but hope to get back on the monthly QRP in the Field adventures soon.

On December the 17th some of the Chapter members will be participating in most likely our last National Parks On The Air event from McKinney Falls State Park.

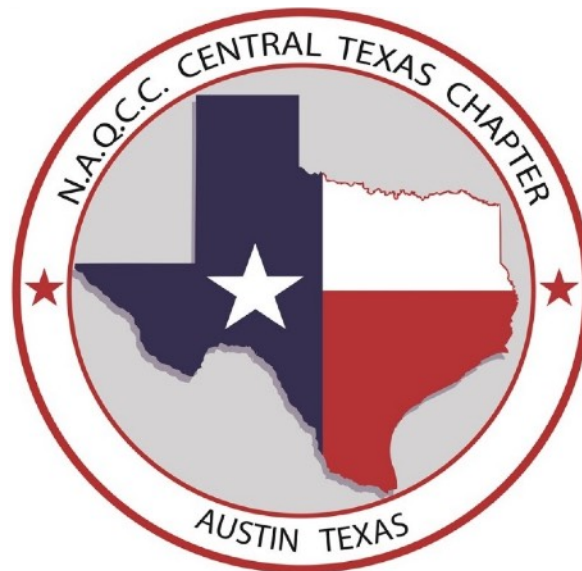
<http://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/mckinney-falls>

It will be classified as **El Camino Real de los Tejas National Trail** or NPOTA **TR20**

This activation is scheduled for December the 17th please check the NPOTA activation page for further details <https://npota.arrl.org/nps-events.php>

Please listen for us.

Happy Holidays & Best Regards



The Central Texas Chapter

Larry WB5BEK, Joe K5BRY, Allen KA5TJS, MAX KD5SFK, Russ KK5E, Scott W5TS, Lester WD4IFU,

Kenny K5KGK, Jon N5MHI, Gerry K5TXG, Patrick W5DVG, John, KN5L, Steve KF5OYI,

Danny N5DRG

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

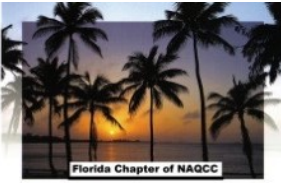


Items in this section are from European Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Matt, MWOMIE.

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 of NAQCC held their November Field Event in Colby Park, located near the Spiritualist settlement of Cassadaga Florida. No fortune tellers or mystics visited the park while we were there and, unfortunately, not all that many RF signals either.



A grand total of seven contacts were made despite the best efforts of our erstwhile group on this sunny November morning. Four of our contacts were NAQCC members kind enough to listen for us and it was Art WB4MNMK made the lone DX contact with Bert, F6HKA #7267.

Art, WB4MNMK on the left, was running his trusty KX1 at 4 watts to a 28 foot end fed and a 16' counterpoise.



Rick, AA4W, on the right, utilized his well-traveled KX3 to a vertical Buddypole section and a wire counterpoise.



Don, K3RLL, was on his KX3 to a 31' vertical wire fed through a 9:1 HB Unun.

The 'entire November crew' is shown braving the November weather altruistically bringing QRP signals to club members literally 'world wide'. What we won't do to perpetuate QRP, portable operating and simple antennas!

Many thanks to VE1BA, KD3CA, KG9HV and F6HKA for listening and helping to make our November event a success.

Next month, our group will convene at Lake Diaz Park, about ten miles north of DeLand FL, on Friday morning December 16th. Hope to 'hear' you then.

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 10 November 2016

Attending: Tim, N9BIL, Tony, N9YPN, Peter, NN9K, Ann, W0ANN, John, WS0G, Bob, W9PZ and Dave KD9VT

We’re all getting ready for winter. John brought us up to date on his coax switching arrangement that allows him operate his KX2 from his easy chair in the living room. Although he couldn’t attend Mark, K0NIA shared some email and photographs about his living room setup. HB1B, paddles and log sheets mounted to a board with an end-fed antennas to 20 and 40-meters within easy reach. Football and QRP operation seem to be a good pairing.

We continued the group building project discussion we started last month. A decision was reached to use the Sea Sprite transceiver from qrpmc.com as the kit to build. This kit has a small parts count and the circuit board has lots of room between pads so that the novice builder shouldn’t have problems with solder bridges. Peter will take care of the kit ordering and Tim will guide everyone through the building process. Tim will send everyone links to soldering videos for those that haven’t done any kit building as well as arranging a time and meeting place to get everyone started on their Sea Sprites.

There was a good discussion about the Reverse Beacon Network and its mapping option. The RBN is a good tool for looking at antenna patterns as well as instant propagation information for your station and location.

Show and tell:

-- Dave and Peter both brought miniature straight keys to show the group. Peter also brought a set of Bulldog paddles that he occasionally uses.

--Tim brought a 9:1 unun based on a design by the EARC Emergency Amateur Radio Club. The unun was nicely packaged in a waterproof, clear plastic case he found at T. J. Max. (It always pays to keep your eyes open for items that can be adapted for homebrewing uses).

--Ann brought two large binders of QSL cards from the 1930s. Her father, W0LOU (a silent key) was very active with homebrew equipment and antennas. A nice collection of cards and a definite family treasure.

Dave brought us up to date on the NAQCC Anniversary operations. He participated as N9A and had an enjoyable experience.

The next chapter meeting will be held at 7:00PM on December 8th at the Bettendorf Village Inn.

NAQCC WEST FLORIDA CHAPTER



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

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

No report available.

NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER



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

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



I've been a member of the Kanawha Trail Club for many years. One of the advantages of membership is the use of an old 4H Club lodge in Kanawha State Forest. This forest is about a half hour drive from my home in Charleston.

Although I've hiked in this forest for years, I never considered operating radio from this location. There was a pond here once, fed by a small stream running between the steep hills on both sides of the ravine. The elevation is nearly "sea level" and around only 600 ft. I would think a "poor" spot to operate HF, especially at QRP levels?



My decision to spend an afternoon here was a surprisingly good one. On one of the very few nice days in November, on a “spur of the moment”, I packed up my new YouKit HB1B, my 40-20-10 meter PAR end fed Zepp, 50 ft of coax, a spool of 110 lb kite string, the trusty old sling shot and headed for the woods.



This trip was a “test run” with the hopes of spending some quality radio time while day hiking. There’s also the possibility of spending a few days in the lodge on cold winter days.

A big reason for buying the HB1B was the elimination of a large heavy battery which I usually carry when operating the IC-703. The 703 is in good condition now after spending time in the shop as a result of very close “lightning bolt” on the neighbor’s house; but it’s much too heavy to carry any distance, especially with a bad back.



I'm also making other changes in my portable station. Sadly, the MFJ tuner was also damaged in the lightening strike on the neighbor's house. I've replaced it with a newer version (MFJ 902B) and I've added a "palm paddle" to replace my little Vibroplex straight key. Both of those items are working well for me.

I was able to get the antenna up in the trees at about 50 feet high. I found 40 meters open and worked several QRP stations. All were NAQCC Club members.

Soon after throwing out my call sign, I worked club member **WA4MQW** in North Carolina who was QRP and sitting in his backyard watching smoke from a forest fire.

I worked club member **K9FHJ** who was QRP in Wisconsin. Perry was using a home brew 3 Watt station (one tube) with a rhombic antenna.

I also had a nice long chat with club member **AH6AX** who was in Maryland. I had been listening to him in another QSO and marveled at his very unusual antenna. I was glad that he called me. Larry was also QRP but experimenting with "tape dipole". I've been playing radio for about 25 years now and had never heard this antenna. He picked it up in a "trade" for some other gear. The dipole is composed of two spools of wire stretched out to the appropriate length for the HF bands.

Although my other contacts were at least 559, Larry's signal was a good "solid" **599** for both of us. My understanding was that the antenna was used by Special Forces in Vietnam.

One of the things I like most about QRP portable operations is the surprising contacts possible with only 5 watts of power and a simple wire antenna. I did NOT send out advance notice on this "spur of the moment" trip to the woods. I dropped the antenna and drove home near dark with the headlights on as I returned home. Considering the location, I was happy to work stations easily from this steep hollow on a dead end forest service road.

I'll be doing more "day hiking" with the radio now that I know everything is easily carried in a day pack. The smaller and lighter tuner, the palm paddles, and the smaller HB1B, there's even room for a small wood stove. I can have a light warm meal in the cold winter months.

I also hope to operate more from this lodge as time and weather allows.

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.

Just a couple of gatherings of WPA Chapter members to write about this month.

November 11 - Mike (KC2EGL) and I spent the day together having an even more enjoyable time than usual, if that is possible, after the elections. We started out by watching a couple of films about the German WWII code machine Enigma. We both have computer simulations of the Enigma and may just try sending coded email messages to each other some day.

We also did a bit of research to find out how to disable the touch pad on Mike's laptop. It wasn't completely obvious, but we did figure it out, and he'll take care of it when he gets home.

Next it was off to Applebee's for one of their delicious Veterans Day meals. Mmmmm.

We stopped off at Best Buy after that, and both of us bought a paper shredder. My first one as I need to think about getting rid of a lot of old papers now that I'm getting old(er). Mike had one before which gave up the ghost, and he needed a replacement.

On the way home here, we stopped at the local Belmont Complex (skating, etc.) to get Mike's ice skates sharpened.

Back home again, it was up to the shack for some DX hunting. Since I already had my DX for the day and didn't hear any exotic new DX to work, I let Mike sit at the controls the whole time. He worked Honduras AC8J/HR9 and Bonaire PJ4/N5JR. He also chased the USS Hornet station (NB6GC) in Alameda, CA, but never could get through the pileup.

We also did some planning for our proposed trip to the USS Requin the day before Thanksgiving as well as a trip to the PA Trolley Museum in December for their extended trolley ride.

November 23 - Mike and I had a good day today as always when we get together. We left for the Requin a little after 9 AM and arrived there a little after 10 AM only to find out from Art that the sub was closed. However that didn't really matter since Art said we could operate anyway. So we went to the radio room and proceeded to set up. However we had some trouble with the sub's antenna tuner. It was just refusing to work. We pattered around with it for quite a while without any luck. We finally figured we'd take a chance that the tuner was just in bypass mode and tried it on that assumption using the built-in KX3 tuner. Well that worked fine, so apparently the sub's tuner is bypassed or shorted out or something. So we proceeded to operate starting around 10:40AM or so. We continued until 2:00PM and along the way we made 27 QSOs from 15 SPCs. It was strange having the whole sub to ourselves, especially when Art left to go for some kind of meeting. I kidded Mike that we should commandeer the sub and take it for a joyride up the river.

The sub finally did open for visitors around Noon or so when those in charge (not Art) decided that it was warm enough to do so. I won't go into that any further except to say it really wasn't all that cold to begin with. After that we enjoyed chatting with the visitors as we operated. This time a large percentage seemed really interested in what we were doing and asked a lot of good questions which we did our best to answer.

When we left the sub, we headed to the Pittsburgh Mills and in particular Dick's Sporting Goods where I got a pair of new shoes and Mike got some gloves. Then it was off to Best Buy followed by Applebees where we had a couple great dinners. I had a shrimp platter and Mike had some kind of steak platter.

Next up, it was off to here where Mike did some work on the foam insert for his carrying case he uses for the KX3, PX3, etc. That being done, it was time for Mike to head home and me to head to the shack. We took some pictures on the sub which you can see here now.

OK, here we go. First the Requin sitting quietly at rest on the Ohio River near the Science Center on the North shore across from downtown Pittsburgh.



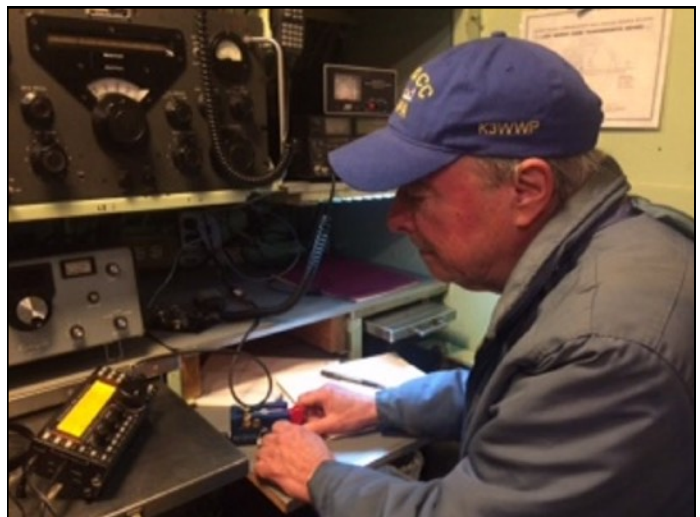
Here is a wide angle view of the small radio room on the sub. Some of the equipment was in use when the sub was active while some was added later when the ham radio station NY3EC was installed.



A closer view of our setup using Mike's KX3 and Begali Traveler Lite paddle. I added the appropriate circle and line to that Mickey phoney thing.



And Mike (top) and me (bottom) wearing our NAQCC WPA Chapter hats busy making contacts.



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 Jock, N1JI, #7012 —

Jock won one of the prizes in our anniversary sprint prize drawing and sent this in. - Editor

The clock arrived a few days ago and, since I didn't already have one in my shack, it is a very welcome addition! Thank you to all the folks who contribute to the NAQCC through your time, donations and participation. 73, Jock N1JI



From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

This month, and maybe for future months, I've decided not to re-invent the wheel. Everything I mention here is simply copied from my web site diary. So to save space here and time for me, if you are interested in my ham radio (and sometime other) doings, simply go to http://k3wwp.com/home_ss_diary.html.

From Werner, N8BB, #1692 —

Werner won the 2nd place prize, an MFJ Cub transceiver kit, in our anniversary sprint drawing and he sent this in. - Editor

I finished the build in one evening and everything was fun to assemble even if my high tech solder station quit and I finished with an old solder iron and carefully completed the build with no problems. The alignment went pretty easy although I wish they included the tweakers for tuning the slugs but managed with other tools. My antenna seems to be off a bit for resonance so I am putting out about 700 milliwatts but have worked 7 contacts and received some decent reports with it.

The best part of winning the drawing was the fact I almost forgot because of my mothers health issues but wanted to help keep the log counts going for the group. This made it specially sweet and makes me really want to continue being a part of the NAQCC tradition and promoting CW.

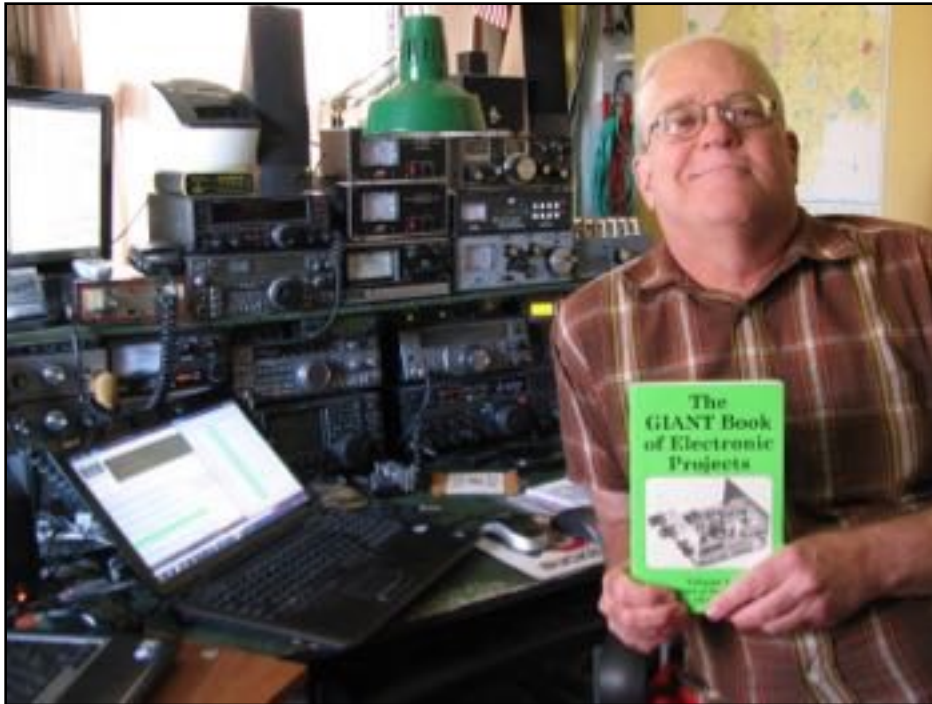
Thanks to everyone that made this event what it is, fun and friendship.

Thank you
Werner N8BB



From Chris, KU4A, #1960 —

Here is a picture of KU4A with his 7th place prize from the anniversary sprint drawing. - Editor



From Lloyd AA4W #1628 —

Ultra-lite DXpedition December 6-14

Three veteran members of the "Buddies in the Caribbean" DXpedition group, which specializes in low-power radios and the Buddipole portable antenna systems, and a new friend, are heading to **St Croix, December 6-14, 2016.**

Ops will demonstrate "ultra-lite" DX operating from magnificent "vista" locations using portable radios, lightweight antennas, battery power, and most of all "having fun" . There will be four stations operating from Mountain Breeze, a villa centrally located on St. Croix and home to the station of NP2N.

We will also be entering the **ARRL 10 meter contest on December 10-11.** With a CW and a Phone station operating at the same time.

The four operators are: **KP2/K4ZGB, KP2/AA4W, KP2/N8WD, and KP2/KE4AL.** QSLs and LOTW are up to each op. Check QRZ for that information.

AA4W, NAQCC number 1628 will be operating at the QRP level throughout the trip.

We will be operating for 80 through 10 meters. CW and sideband. Check the DX spotting boards for us.

We hope to work many of you while we are there.

From Joe W3TTT #5320 —

Checking Zero Beat Suggestion

I would like to add a suggestion to those offered by Gene N5GW last month for checking zero beat. To check or practice, I tune in WWV. The carrier is guaranteed to be exact. Then, zero beat with that carrier, and see how you do.

And let me send a big thank you to everyone who works or volunteers for the NAQCC. It makes it all possible.

From John, N8ZYA, #2279 —

This time of year, I always listen for Santa on the HF bands. A few years ago, I worked the official Santa Clause station in Finland. Band conditions aren't that great now but imagine a few of the club members are still able to hear the reindeer and bells.

72's John N8ZYA

Information about this special event station can be found on the OF9X QRZ.com page. - Editor



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

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Additional contact information can be found on the next page.

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