NAQCC News

| January 12, 2013 | NAQCC Web Site | Issue #175 |

In this issue:

1. JANUARY SPRINT: - Our January sprint is this coming Wednesday evening, January 16 from 8:30 to 10:30 PM EST or converting to the more common date and time used around the World in ham radio, that's Thursday, January 17 from 0130Z to 0330Z. Perhaps you got a new QRP rig for Christmas, but haven't had the time to give it a workout in a contest or sprint. Here's your opportunity. Our sprints have grown to be extremely popular and every month we approach or exceed 200 participants. Last month was a record-setter as you'll see in the December sprint stats below. Maybe we can do even better this month. So come join in the fun, be you a veteran contester or a rank newcomer to sprints and contests. Our sprints suit both as well as everyone in between those extremes. They are slow paced so as not to scare off the newcomers and they emphasize participation, not making high scores. We want our members to get in the sprints to have fun, improve their CW skills, and move scoring down on the list of priorities.

Be prepared for a lot of activity on 80 meters again this month, but you might want to check 40 before heading down to 80. It can surprise at times. There's not too much hope for activity on 20, but it wouldn't hurt to check, especially if you are one of the ones with a big and/or high antenna for that band. Oh, and if you say you don't have an antenna for 80 meters, that's not true. With a good antenna coupler, most antennas that work on 40 will work on 80 as well. Give it a try a couple days before the sprint, and in most cases, you'll see that is correct.

If you were a prize drawing winner in the last couple months of 2012, and haven't replied to an email from our prize manager notifying you to choose your prize, you have till the end of January to do so. If we don't hear from you, we will have a re-drawing for those months. So check the results to see if you were a winner, then if you've changed emails recently, notify us of your new email address. That could be why we haven't heard from you. Also be sure that ALL the email addresses on the Contact Us page on the web site are in your approved senders or white list so our emails to you won't be blocked.

From now on, a prize winner will have until the following sprint to make his/her choice of prizes. If we don't hear from you in that time, you will become ineligible for future drawings. Even if for any reason you don't want a prize, still let us know, so we can have a re-drawing for that sprint. We will also have a re-drawing if we don't hear from you in the required time.

Our new 2nd and 3rd place certificate scheme seems to be working well, although some divisions have not had the required participation to take advantage of this. Remember a division needs 10 participants to warrant a 2nd place certificate and 20

participants for both 2nd and 3rd place certificates.

If you are new to the sprints, please read the complete sprint rules carefully so you'll know exactly what we need in the form of logs. While it is not necessary to use a computer program for your sprint logging, if you do use our recommended GenLog program correctly, then submit via the autologger, it will take you the least amount of time to compile and submit your log and report, and the least time for us to process your submission. If you have any doubts about using GenLog, check out our illustrated tutorial on using the program and/or look at this check list to go over your log before submitting.

Please note that there were some initial problems with GenLog running under Windows 8. However that has now been solved with a new GenLog version (8.0 or later). Please read the article by Bob K9OSC in the General Club News section below for a very thorough analysis of the matter, and be sure to update GenLog if you are using Windows 8.

There is a plain text file (one for each continental USA time zone) of upcoming sprint dates for all of 2013. See the 'Print a Schedule' page in the 'Contests/Sprints' section of the web site. Print it out and post it somwhere prominently so you won't miss a single one of our sprints.

Oh, and lest we forget, there is a second sprint this month - our annual 160M sprint. That will be on January 25 (UTC) 0130-0330Z. We'll send out a reminder of that on the day of the sprint as we do with all our sprints - regular and special. That will make for an excellent warm-up exercise if you plan to enter the CQWW 160M contest starting at 2200Z on the 25th.

As always, the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint are found here.

1a. DECEMBER SPRINT RESULTS: - We set a new record with 148 logs for the December sprint. Conditions seemed to be good pretty much uniformly around the country for a change, and that certainly contributed to the record. However the main reason for the record is your dedication to the club and its activities which we appreciate very much. This was the last month in which Dean NW2K was able to take care of updating the sprint results page. Beginning in February Andy N2CN will take over that job for the even numbered months. Our thanks to Dean for a fine job in the time he could serve. We're sure Andy will also do a good job. We made most of our sprint comments in the above section, so let's just get on with the December stats now:

Stats	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Mo/Yr
Logs	148	122	148	12/12
Participants	221	175	221	12/12
Total QSOs	2,234	1,819	2,484	4/12
Hour 1 QSOs	1,152	940	1,254	4/12
Hour 2 QSOs	1,082	879	1,230	4/12
20M QSOs	8	50	1,056	8/12
40M QSOs	853	991	1,534	4/12
80M QSOs	1,373	778	1,373	12/12
Avg QSOs per stn	15.1	14.9	19.3	9/11

CERTIFICATES			
SWA Category			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	N2CN	KN1H	-
W2	NW2K	W2SH	-
W3	K3WWP	-	-
W4	W4AU	KB4QQJ	K4ORD
W5	W5YDM	N5GW	-
W6	N6VOH	-	-
W7	AE7UT/KE7YTE	-	-
W8	W3NP	N8IUP	-

W9	W9CC	K9FO	-
W0	KI0I	K9OSC	-
Canada	VE3EDX	-	-
DX	-	-	-
Other Categories			
Gain	K4BAI	-	-
First time entrant high scorer	W4AU		
Paddle/bug handle - K1/K2 knob insert drawing	KG3W		

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually there are no non-winners. Everyone who participated AND SENT IN A LOG is a winner because you have helped add to our voice shouting the praises of CW and QRP that shows the ham radio world that there are still many folks using and enjoying CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

Very special thanks to those who reported their results even though they made only a few QSO's. Your reports are equally important.

This month 20 stations who didn't submit a log showed up 5 to 46 times in the 148 logs we cross-checked. Hopefully they and many others will be back next month AND submit a log. Remember submitting a log doubles the strength of your statement that you support CW operation.

We welcome these 21 hams who submitted a sprint log for the first time. We hope they will continue to participate and report their results:
W4AU NI9Y N3ER K5FSE KB1OIQ KT4OM WR9H K0PE N8ME KB8KIK KB3YOW AE7UT AB9YC W4SR K5ND AF9W K9ANF WM4P WB7EUX VE3DQN NQ6E

GOLDEN LOGS. This feature of our sprints continues to be immensely popular among members. As N3PDT said, "...I get as much pleasure from turning in a Golden Log as I do my score...". Many others seem more concerned with being a GOLDEN LOG than getting a big score. I get many comments along those lines. If there is still anyone who doesn't know, a GOLDEN LOG is a log in exactly the correct format as defined in the rules with every bit of info correct. Instead of penalizing mistakes, we reward perfection with a GOLDEN LOG listing.

There is a prize awarded to the one who has the most GOLDEN LOGS each year. In case of a tie, the one having the most total QSOs for the year will be the winner. The winner for 2012 with 12 GOLDEN LOGS was W4DUK. NQ2W also had 12, but was ineligible as a previous winner since a member can only win once.

GOLDEN LOGS were submitted by 72 of 147 participants (one was a late log and not cross-checked) this month. To see if you're one of them, check the results page. That's a new record as well, shattering the old record of 64 set a couple months ago. It's the fourth month in a row we've had over 60 GOLDEN LOGs.

Here's a Top 5 (+ ties) list of most GOLDEN LOGs in 2012:

ALL 12 - NQ2W W4DUK
11 - KU4A
10 - K4KRW N2ESE N8XMS W9UX WA2JSG

Thanks to all GOLDEN LOGgers for making my cross-checking job that much easier. Remember anyone can submit a GOLDEN LOG with just a bit of effort and checking on their part before submitting.

Here's a summary (through the latest sprint) of the number of GOLDEN LOGs:

```
Year    #GLs    #Logs    %GOLDEN
2010     402     1076      37.4
2011     544     1317      41.3
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2012    707    1471    48.1
Total  1653    3864    42.8
```

So you see we were above average last year and the percentage has increased each year and grew each month last year. That's rewarding to see as it means our members are getting better at log keeping and log submitting. Congratulations!

Full sprint info here.

1b. DECEMBER mW SPRINT RESULTS: - We had a second sprint in December although by listening to the bands you wouldn't know it. With generally poor propagation plus storms over a large area of the country, it was very hard for most participants to even hear that many signals, let alone make contacts. Still our wonderful members stuck it out for the most part and we wound up with 73 logs, third most for one of our NAQCC Special (160 & mW) sprints, behind only 85 for the June 2012 mW sprint and 79 for the December 2011 mW sprint. We don't cross-check logs for our Special sprints, so there are no complete stats available normally. However I did figure a couple things this time just out of curiousity:

Logs - 73
Participants - 96
QSOs - 370
Avg. QSOs per log - 5.1
States represented - 35 + BC ON SK

Impressive, considering conditions

The winners can be found on the results page on the web site.

2. DECEMBER CHALLENGE RESULTS: - The End of the World challenge proved to be popular despite it being at Christmas time when many folks including hams are busy with a variety of other things. The following 12 members mastered the challenge fully: WY3H K3WWP N8XMS K9OSC KC9SNC KD0V W9UX WN0WWY KR9Z K1IEE K1YAN KB1PBA. These four folks participated, but didn't make all the required 41 QSOs for complete mastery: KU4A W2JEK PA5LR VE3FUJ.

Full Challenge results can always be found here.

2a. FEBRUARY CHALLENGE: - I guess it has become somewhat of a tradition for our February challenge to be a Groundhog challenge. Just like the Thanksgiving challenge in November. So once again in 2013 we challenge you to make the names of groundhogs from letters in the calls of stations worked during February. Have fun and good luck!

2b. CURRENT CHALLENGE: - A somewhat unusual combination rag chew / alphabet challenge. I think it is well enough explained in the rules, and I'm not going to try to repeat them here. It sounds like a lot of fun - well that applies to all our challenges. I think you can see from the results that once someone becomes hooked on our challenges, they show up in the results consistently. Why don't you give it a try. You may become hooked as well, and it's a great reason to put more CW on the ham bands where it is desperately needed to save our CW spectrum.

Full challenge info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

● - Did you get one (or more) of our NAQCC items such as hats, tee shirts, plaques, QSL cards for Christmas? Dave W4DUK did. His Santa (XYL) got him one of our beatiful NAQCC hats which he shows off proudly in his gallery picture on the web site, and says, "My wife Linda gave me the NAQCC hat as a Christmas gift. Astrid sure does a nice job with the embroidery! 73, Dave."

But YOU didn't get such a gift? Shame on Santa. Well, the items are still available 365 days a year for a birthday, Easter, or for no occasion at all. Think how great you'd look wearing a NAQCC cap and tee shirt to the next ham radio event you attend. Or

how nice a NAQCC plaque would look prominently displayed in your shack. Of course it's always great to use a QSL card that shows off your membership in your favorite club, the NAQCC. If that whets your appetite, just check the main page of the web site for links to ordering information.

🔵 - There will be an article about the NAQCC in the upcoming March issue of CQ magazine. Tom WY3H and I (K3WWP) wrote the article and submitted it to Rich W2VU Chief Editor at CQ magazine after being contacted by Cam N6GA - QRP Editor for CQ Magazine who said, "CQ Magazine will be running its annual QRP Special Edition in the March issue this coming year, and I was wondering if you'd like to have some coverage for the NAQCC in this special issue. You guys have really become active with your nets, sprints, awards and other activities. Do you think you or one of your officers might be interested in writing something about the club?"

After submission, we received this prompt reply from W2VU, "...I just finished reading the article. It is excellent and will definitely go in the queue for the QRP Special..."

So if you are a CQ subscriber, keep an eye on your mailbox (or Internet) for the March issue. Or if you'r not a subscriber, I'm sure your local newsstand probably stocks CQ, or at least it should. Then be sure to share it with your non-NAQCC friends so they can see what they are missing.

Our thanks to CQ for the opportunity to get more publicity for the club so we can extend our mission of preserving CW on the ham bands.

🔵 - This article about GenLog is from Bob K9OSC (#3894) who writes, "For many years I used a Dell Dimension computer running the Windows XP Professional operating system. It worked well and quite frankly I had no issues running any of my amateur radio software while using it. A very stable platform it had clearly withstood the testing of time.

Last December that computer ceased to function properly. It was simply time to change to a more modern computer system and one that was new. So, I looked around and finally decided on a new HP Pavilion desktop computer running Windows 8 with 8 Gb. RAM and lots of other nice features. A review of Win8 by Steve Ford, WB8IMY in QST recently indicated that his experience with Win8 was that we should not see any issues with that operating system. Microsoft even chimed in with their agreement to that statement.

For the most part they were correct. Virtually all my software ran correctly and quite fast using the new system. However, GenLog was the exception. I could load it into the computer and run the personal information page, but after completing that page and switching to the contest section I would get a message "Runtime Error '53003', Unexpected Error" and the program would halt. After deleting the software I ran it under the Compatibility option provided by Win8. This option asks a couple of questions as to what system the affected software worked previously and then moved on to loading it. It attempts to remeby differences between the various operating systems. Unfortunately, GenLog didn't behave any differently.

I wrote Dave Mascaro, W3KM the author of GenLog asking for guidance. Dave is one terrific fellow. He not only responds quickly but gives detailed information as to what the problem may be and if there is work around. My first set of emails to Dave resulted in his telling me that he developed his software using something other than a Win8 computer. He didn't have one and was therefore unable to give me any further help. He needed some information from that system as well as the ability to do further testing. Fair enough. I thanked him for his frank and honest answer and understood that all software has to meander through many iterations if it is to work on the myriad computer operating systems in use today.

Meanwhile, I had let John, K3WWP know about what I had determined so that if he were queried about the matter he would at least be privileged to know what I had researched thus far. John made some suggestions but they either had been tried or I opted not to attempt any modifications to Win8.

This past weekend I received an email from Dave, W3KM. He wrote asking if I could please run a new GenLog VB6 version installation file and see if the error was fixed. He provided access to the executable file and I ran it. GenLog worked perfectly. It loaded correctly, took all the personal information and then moved on to the contest section. I also ran the most recent update from his website and all installed as before and ran perfectly. I ran several test logs. I modified some files to see how they would react and all ran just fine. My initial problem was solved and GenLog was ready for the next Sprint!

Dave has been more than responsive and helpful. You just can't give him enough credit for continuing to work on the problem and ultimately finding a solid solution. Turns out he worked on a Win8 computer for a friend and he took the opportunity to find the solution!

The logger also supports CW keyboarding for use in contesting. Initially I had some problems getting it to work, but when using the newly revised GenLog everything worked perfectly. Dave offered these suggestions which I am passing along for those who may have difficulties:

'This is what I did. I have a USB interface that connects to my RIGblaster Pro, which I plugged into a USB port. Then I checked the Device Manager, Ports (COM & LPT), to see which COM port it was connected to. It said COM4. In GenLog`s COM setup I selected USB interface, COM4 and clicked OK. I calibrated the CW speed control and hit the Test button. CW and PTT work perfectly. The DVK worked too and keyed the PTT line.

Now, I do know that when you remove USB interfaces (or anything USB), a new COM port can be assigned when you plug it back in, especially if another device was plugged in before that. So, verify the COM port for your USB interface in Device Manager. Also, in GenLog`s COM port setup, try reversing the DTR/RTS by selecting the checkbox.'

I think that we are very lucky to have both Dave, W3KM and John, K3WWP who are willing to do everything they can to support ham radio software and the applications to which it is put. Rest assured that the updated GenLog VB6 version works well with Win8."

Thanks Bob, and we in turn are very lucky to have members like you who are so devoted to the NAQCC that they go to such lengths to help us out, and who so regularly participate in our club events. We also thank Dave W3KM, and think it would be k1TeS nice if you use his GenLog program to send a small donation to him to help with further development of this great program. You can get his address from QRZ.com. We are going to send him another donation from our club treasury.

So don't forget to upgrade your copy of GenLog if you recently upgraded to Windows 8. The link to the GenLog site is found in the Contests/Sprints section of our web site.

 - As we documented in a NAQCC email list mailing, we recently had two members become Silent Keys just before Christmas. Since we covered the info thoroughly in the emailings, we won't repeat it here other than to offer our sincere condolences to the families of Bill W4CUX and Rich K8IG.

 - As hopefully you know from our mail list and the info in last month's newsletter, we now have our own scheduler where you can easily announce when and where you can be found on the air so other members can easily find and work you to earn points toward our Friendship Club award. As expected, it's off to a slow start, but is slowly picking up steam as more and more of you begin to use it. Don't be discouraged if it doesn't bring results immediately, and keep on posting your schedules so we can get up a full head of steam. Just go to the main page of the web site where you'll find prominent links to the scheduler noted by little yellow 'NEW' icons.

 - As we mentioned above in the sprint section and think it is important enough to repeat here, our prize manager Mike KC2EGL has been having problems getting in contact with some prize winners lately. He gets no reply to the email he sends out when there is a choice of prizes to be made. It seems to us that anyone winning any kind of free prize should be eager to claim it as quickly as possible. There are a couple possibilites. Perhaps the winner has changed email addresses and never updated it with the club. Or perhaps they gave us an address that they never bother to check regularly. Also it could be that you don't have ALL our NAQCC email addresses on the Contact Us page on the web site on your approved sender or white list, and as a result our emails to you are being blocked. We urge you to take care of the situation quickly so you won't miss out on any prizes or any important club news. In a related matter, everytime we send out an email on our NAQCC email list, inevitably there will be report of at least 5-10 bounces, and after 3 bounces to the same address, that email address is automatically removed from the list. We can't list every email address anywhere, so think a moment if any of the above situations apply to you, and if you think we might have an old email address for you, send us one you know is good and that you check regularly.

 - One of our newer members Lee AA4GA (#5415) mentioned to me that he has a web site with a QRP DX "Honor Roll" on it. I immediately submitted my QRP/CW DX totals of 214/209 to him, and he says it will be posted there whenever he next updates the page. In looking at the list, I see of the 14 (including soon-to-be-listed me) hams listed there, the majority are NAQCC members: NU4B (#0532), GM4YLN (#4123), W5YA - op KT5X (#5324), W4QO (#1743), AA4GA (#5415), K9JWV (#1974), AC4UR (#1540), K7HV (#1759), K3WWP (#0002). It's not strictly a CW list, and some of the non-members listed say they used other modes for their totals. Congratulations to all the members listed there. Check it out here if you're a QRP DXer.

 - We're very pleased with the way many of our newly signed up members are responding to the request for their picture to include in our picture gallery of members. I just counted, and I see 442 members now have their mug shots on our gallery page. Are you one of them? No - why not? All you need to do is email a photo showing your face, and we'll take care of the rest. The photo can be any size, but for the best looks, the area of your face should be at least 120 x 120 pixels. Larger photos shrink nicely and still look great, but smaller than that become fuzzy and blurry when expanded to the 120 x 120 size. Preferred format is .jpg, but we may be able to work with .gif, .bmp, and .png with a little more effort here if that's all you can send us. We'll even take a regular photograph sent via regular mail, but the results that way are unpredictable.

 - Just a quick reminder we're continuing with the hidden call sign idea originally suggested by Bill KB3XS even though it's been a while now (almost a year) since anyone has claimed their prize. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member
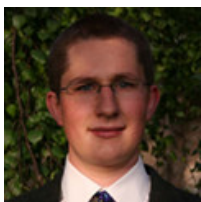
in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (Feb 9) and win a gift certificate for 100 NAQCC QSL cards produced by the CheapQSLs.com company run by Hal K6RF (#0171) and donated by the NAQCC thanks to your generous monetary donations to the club. Cheap refers only to the price, not the quality of the cards. They are beautiful and a great way to show your pride in being a NAQCC member. See the main page of the web site to find out how to purchase your own cards.

4. CHAPTER NEWS:

Here is where our club chapters present news about their chapter activities. We currently have four chapters - European, Texas, Western Pennsylvania, and Florida. We're looking forward to expanding that roster further, and we do have two more info packages out to folks wanting to form a chapter in their area, but we have yet to hear anything further from them. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines under the auspices of the NAQCC. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area, let us know and we'll send a copy of the guidelines. Remember our latest perk for Chapter members: Those who are members of one of our chapters can publicize any portable operations done as a Chapter function similar to what WPA Chapter members Mike (KC2EGL), Don (K3RLL), and I (K3WWP) have been doing for our parkpeditions via our NAQCC email list. If there isn't yet a chapter in your area, you will have to form one to take advantage of this. Just send an announcement exactly as you want posted to **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** and we will post it for you. Make the subject of the email "NAQCC portable operation" for quickest action. Be sure to mention the Chapter somewhere in the announcement, and be sure to submit a write-up on your operation for posting in the Chapter News section of the newsletter. Such a write-up goes to **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from EU Chapter President Matt MW3YMY unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK** The EU Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcc-eu.org/

Sprints

The results of the December European sprint have now been published on the website and the results of the January sprint, which took place last Wednesday, will be processed and made available over the next week. Many thanks to all who took part and we look forward to hearing you on the bands again in February!

The full schedule of 2013 sprints is given in the table below. This information is also available on the website in a printer-friendly format, should you wish to keep it for your records:

Month	Sprint date
January	Wednesday, 9th
February	Monday, 18th
March	Wednesday, 13th
April	Monday, 15th
June	Monday, 17th
July	Wednesday, 10th
August	Monday, 19th
September	Wednesday, 11th
October	Monday, 21st
November	Wednesday, 13th
December	Monday, 16th

The European sprints are fun, informal, monthly contests designed to be enjoyable to radio amateurs with all degrees of

contesting experience. Please take part to support your local chapter and increase activity and awareness of QRP/CW on this side of the Atlantic. All are welcome to participate, not just members in Europe, and we now regularly obtain reports of trans-Atlantic QSOs in our sprints.

Monthly challenges from Ton, PA5LR

June 2012 saw the beginning of our EU challenges, which have been running bimonthly since. They aim to provide alternatives to the main challenges and are directed specifically at CW enthusiasts in Europe, although we do welcome entries from everybody regardless of their QTH. In fact both John K3WWP, who sent in the first ever entry, and Terry W9UX in the USA are among our regular participants, just like Rien PAPYR and Ton PA5LR on this side of the Atlantic.

As can be seen on the website, these members are very positive about the challenge but we should like to attract a larger number of participants so that we can make a real statement about how effective the QRP/CW combination is. In February, we shall be restructuring the challenges to make them more accessible to members who can't spend as much time operating. Check out the challenges page for more information.

2013 worked all Europe (WAE) challenge

This year we are trialling a new challenge, which will be similar in style to the NAQCC WAS and WAC awards. The challenge will run over a full 12 months and is open to all NAQCC members. Once you have worked all our specified countires and submitted details of the required QSOs, we shall send you a certificate confirming your success. If you make all the required QSOs using less than 1W, we shall send you a special mW version of the certificate. The full version of the rules and details of log submission will be posted on the website; please watch this space for further details.
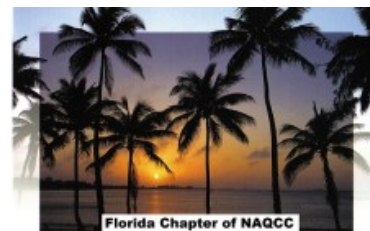
European chapter prize

We are very fortunate to have been donated a GQRP Club "Limerick Sudden" transmitter kit. The prize will be awarded to the NAQCC member whom, over the course of 2013, has contributed the most to European chapter activities. We shall award two points for participating in a European challenge (both monthly challenges and WAE) and one point for participating in a European sprint. The person who has the most points by the 1st of January 2014 will be sent the transmitter kit. As with all chapter activities, the prize is open to all NAQCC members, not just those who reside in Europe. Pictures of the kit are available on the GQRP Club website.

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from the FL Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to NAQCCFL@YAHOO.COM

The Florida Chapter of NAQCC will be holding their January gathering at Lake Diaz Park, north of DeLand FL on Friday, January 25th -- weather permitting.

With a selection of QRP radios and antennas that only a group of avid QRP portable operators can assemble, we will endeavor to once again set new standards in something or other to do with QRP. Listen for us near the standard QRP operating frequencies of 40, 30, 20, 17 and 15 meters.

Our Florida Chapter of NAQCC may be reached at the email address above.

NAQCC TEXAS CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from TX Chapter Director Ron K5DUZ unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to **WEBMASTER7388@NAQCCTX.COM** The TX Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcctx.com/

ETN Net

The East Texas QRS Net (ETN) meets each Monday evening at 1900 CST (0100 UTC). The net has now moved to 3560 +/- 3 KHz until next spring. Conditions have been reasonably good the past few weeks, but area storms sometimes raise the QRN level to S9. Remember that QRO power is acceptable on the ETN net, so crank up the power if necessary to make yourself heard. The ETN net is open to all comers, not just stations in Texas, so if you hear the net in session please check-in with Allen, KA5TJS, #4512, the NCS.

December Sprint Results

A record number of logs and participants in the December Sprint in spite of a dead 20m band and marginal 40m band. 80m was good for most participants. Robert, W5YDM, #3295, snagged 5th place overall. Well done, Robert! Evan, W5IQS, #3924, only worked the first 30 minutes, which held down his usual high score. K5GQ, WB5UAA, K5ND and KD5MMM did their part in providing a Texas multiplier to the rest of the country. I hope that many of our members have resolved to enter the NAQCC Sprints in 2013 and to contribute to keeping CW active on the ham bands!

The January Sprint will be on Wednesday, the 16th (Texas time).

Please show your support for QRP CW by making at least one contact in the Sprint and submitting a log. Full details are on the NAQCC website. See you in the Sprint?

Remember that all NAQCC members located in Texas (387 at last count) are automatically members of the Texas Chapter. We would love to hear from you about any of your recent ham activities, new QRP rig or antenna.

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from John K3WWP unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** All chapter news can be found ONLY here in this section of the newsletter.

No parkpeditions to talk about, as Don is down south where it's warm, and neither Mike nor I enjoy freezing while trying to operate. We are looking forward to going out with our KX3s when it does start to warm up in either April or May. Perhaps Don will have a KX3 by then also. What say, Don?
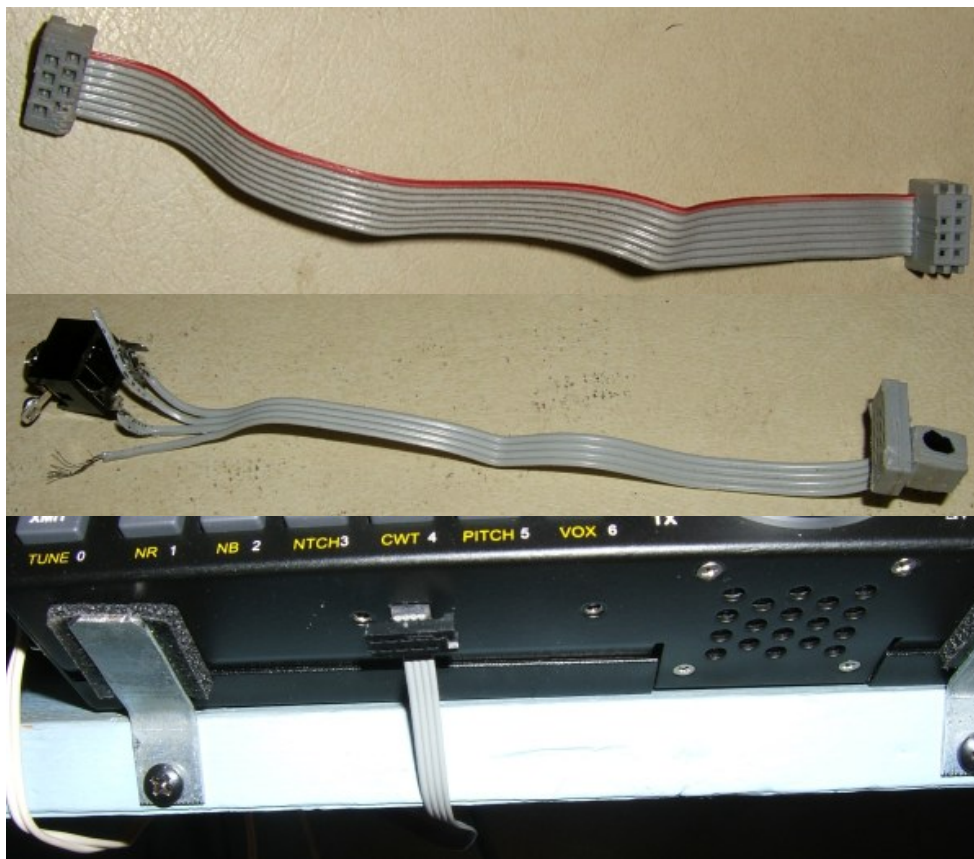
Mike and I have been getting together regularly meanwhile for our always enjoyable sessions eating (top priority - HI), ham radio projects, and too long a list of other things to mention here. That's the great benefit of our NAQCC chapters - a means of personal fellowship with other members. It's hard to get together with a member in California if you live in Pennsylvania, but finding other members in your area via a local chapter is easy. It's hard to understand why more areas don't form chapters of their own.

One of our projects was figuring out a way to be able to switch among our different keys while using the KX3 without having to go through a menu setting. The solution was simple. Just find a way to attach paddle type keys to the little jack on the KX3 made for the built in paddle, and straight keys and bugs to the other key input jack. Set one to keyer operation and the other to hand key operation.

The problem was finding a plug for the little jack. I scoured my junk box and found some old computer cables that looked like the spacing was exactly what was needed to match with the four little connectors in the jack. That led to another minor problem. The jack required 2 x 2 connectors - the computer cables had a mix of # x 2 configurations, but no 2 x 2 so I took a 4 x 2, disassembled the plug on the cable, took a hacksaw blade and cut off the unneeded connectors so I wound up with a 2 x 2 configuration as required. Some filing to trim it a bit further to fit in the tight little space, and then reconnecting the cable to the plug, figuring out which pin was which, and hooking it up gave me the desired results at no cost. There is also a commercially made plug that would work, but it probably costs the proverbial arm and a leg.

Here are three pictures:

Top - the original cable
Middle - Mike's version of the nearly finished cable
Bottom - How it plugs into the KX3

Mine was hard to take in and out, so I modified it a couple times along the way. The bottom picture above shows an intermediate version. The final version plugs in and out nicely. The middle picture shows the stereo jack into which a Y splitter is plugged for using two paddles. A similar Y splitter is plugged into the side of the KX3 key jack for a bug and straight key.

I think that shows with a little ingenuity and a well stocked junk box that a lot of money can be saved in ham radio.

Anyone with a KX3 interested further can contact us via the WPA email address in the header of this section. Or there is further info including more pictures, pin-out info, etc. in the Diary on my web site here. Entries are archived every 30 days, so you may have to go to the archives depending on when you look for the info.

5. NAQCC QRS NETS:

News and net reports in this section are from QRS Net Manager Craig N4PLK unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to N4PLK@VERIZON.NET

We are still in need of an NCS for ECN. Please email me if you are interested.

I hope everyone had a great holiday season. Thanks to all for your continued participation in the nets. Special thanks to our NCS's and alternates whose efforts make the QRS Nets a success.

73, Craig N4PLK
QRS Nets Manager
NAQCC # 5775
n4plk@verizon.net


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NAQCC Main QRS Net (NQN) - Sunday, 8:00 PM Eastern Time, 3.560 Mhz
12-9-12 N4PLK (NCS) -4- N4PLK K3NLT W4HH KE3HL
12-16-12 N4PLK (NCS) -7- N4PLK K3NLT W4HH W3HI N8IUP N9RLO N1QLL
12-23-12 N6TLU (NCS) -1- N6TLU
1-7-13 N4PLK (NCS) -9- N4PLK KE3HL K3NLT N8IUP N6TLU KA1KU KD8FKD K1IEE N9RLO

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) - Monday, 7:00 PM Central Time, 3.560 Mhz
12-10-12 KA5TJS (NCS) -3- KA5TJS KE5YGA K3NLT
12-17-12 KA5TJS (NCS) -4- KA5TJS KB0ETU KE5YUM K3NLT
12-31-12 KA5TJS (NCS) -5- KA5TJS KE5YGA W5AI K5AVJ W5PDW
1-7-12 KA5TJS (NCS) -5- KA5TJS KE5GRQ N9RLO KE5YGA KE5OCW

NAQCC Pacific NorthWest QRS Net (PNW) Thursday, 7:00 PM, Pacific Time, 3.574 mHZ
12-13-12 KE7LKW (NCS) -5- KE7LKW N6KIX WB4SPB WN0WWY KD7HXN
12-20-12 N6KIX (NCS) -3- N6KIX KE7LKW/7 WB4SPB
12-27-12 KE7LKW (NCS) -4- KE7LKW WB4SPB KGoYR KR7W
1-3-13 KE7LKW (NCS) -3- KE7LKW N6KIX K7ZNP
1-10-13 KE7LKW (NCS) -5- KE7LKW N6KIX K7ZNP KA6AIL WB4SPB

NAQCC Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMR) Tuesday, 3:00 PM Mountain Time, 14.0625 Mhz
12-11-12 WC7S (NCS) -5- WC7S KC2EE NO0N W5HNS KA4RUR
12-18-12 WC7S (NCS) -4- WC7S NO0N AF9W K1IEE
1-1-13 WC7S (NCS) -4- WC7S N7EDK K2HT AF9W
1-8-13 WC7S (NCS) -7- WC7S N8UPZ K2HT KG0YR KE6OIO AF9W K0DTJ

NAQCC Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMR) Thursday, 3:00 PM Mountain Time, 14.0625 Mhz
12-13-12 WC7S (NCS) -5- WC7S JA7QVI K2HT K0QH N9RLO
1-3-12 WC7S (NCS) -3- WC7S K2HT KG0YR
1-10-12 WC7S (NCS) -6- WC7S K2HT NE5DL K0TDJ KE6OIO N3SW

NAQCC East Coast QRS Net (ECN) - Thursday, 8:00 PM Eastern Time, 3.560 Mhz
None
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6. NAQCC CW ASSISTANCE PROJECT:

Items in this section are from CW Assistance Project Coordinator Ron K5DUZ unless otherwise credited.
If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET

In the December issue of the newsletter I announced my return to "active duty" as one of the NAQCC "Elmers", aka CW mentors. As I recall, the origin of the term "Elmer" is lost in the dusty archives of ham radio, but I assume that long ago there was a ham named "Elmer" that assisted newcomers to ham radio and somewhere through the years the term "Elmer" began to be used to describe anyone that mentored those aspiring to become hams.

I enjoy helping people that are interested in learning about ham radio and its many facets, but I particularly enjoy helping them learn Morse Code/CW. My fascination with CW probably began in the late '40's and early 50's when I watched movies and documentaries about WWII such as "Victory at Sea". Seeing and hearing the CW operators receiving and sending CW somehow really intrigued me. I remember asking Santa for a telegraph set (two keys with buzzers and 50 ft of wire). I was delighted to find it under the Christmas tree, but I had to pay my younger brother to send to me! Years later I learned to copy five wpm CW by listening to the Novice CW bands. Now, some fifty plus years later I'm still fascinated with the "art and skill" of CW.

The NAQCC "CW Assistance Project", formerly known as the "Elmer Project" is aimed at promoting the use of CW on the ham bands by providing guidance in the proper method of learning CW. As I've stated in previous columns, I learned the Morse Code in the worst possible way so I can speak with some authority on how not to learn it. I first visually memorized the table of characters with their corresponding "dots and dashes", When I listened to "the code" I listened for each dot and dash and then matched what I had heard with the corresponding character in my mental look up table. This was done while listening at five words per minute (wpm) or less. Later, as my receiving speed approached about ten wpm I began having difficulty further increasing my speed. I later learned that ten wpm is about the speed limit for using the mental look up table method of copying CW.

Fortunately, I was loaned a set of U.S. Navy, 15 wpm, random, five letter group code records that I successfully used to relearn "the code" at 15 wpm. Years later I realized that I had unknowingly used the "Koch method" of learning the code, which emphasizes learning each character by its unique SOUND when sent at a typical speed of 15 to 20 wpm. This speed range is sufficiently fast to preclude the use of the mental look up table copying method. Once the characters are learned, they will sound exactly the same as characters sent during CW contacts made in the typical speed range of 15 to 20 wpm! Eliminated is the long, time consuming, frustrating and boring process of learning "slow code' and gradually increasing receiving speed!

Rather than repeat all that I've written on the subject of learning the Morse Code/CW using the Koch method, I direct you to the NAQCC newsletter archives, beginning with newsletter 135 where I begin with discussing "motivation". Each subsequent issue up to issue 145 contains further information. This information will soon be reorganized and put in the CW Assistance section of the NAQCC web site.

I am available via e-mail to answer any question you may have about learning CW or increasing your receiving speed. I can also answer most questions about QRP rigs, antennas, etc If I don't know the answer I will try to find someone that does.

Until next time, HPE CU SN ON CW! Ron, K5DUZ

For much more helpful CW info, see the CW Assistance/QRS Nets section of the web site. As Ron stated, a full overhaul and update to this section will be coming soon.

7. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT NAQCC #2062. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the K9YA Telegraph, a free ham radio eZine, where he is staff cartoonist. The NAQCC is very honored to reprint Dick's cartoons originally published in the K9YA Telegraph. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. Dick's cartoons made their debut in our NAQCC Newsletter Issue #058, November 17, 2007, and a new cartoon currently appears in every issue.

HAM QUIPS "Clean Sweep"

Hoping For A "Clean Sweep" In The Sweepstakes Contest, Rudy Sweeps Up The Floor Of The Ham Shack.

8. RECENT AWARD WINNERS:

Friendship Club Awards:
0015 KU4A - 11/1/12
0016 N8XMS - 12/10/12
0017 K1YAN - 1/9/13

Endorsements:
300 Points: 0015 KU4A - 11/1/12
300 Points: 0016 N8XMS - 12/10/12
400 Points: 0016 N8XMS - 12/22/12
500 Points: 0016 N8XMS - 12/22/12
600 Points: 0016 N8XMS - 12/22/12
700 Points: 0016 N8XMS - 12/22/12
2100 Points: 0001 K3WWP - 11/16/12
2200 Points: 0001 K3WWP - 12/25/12

1000 MPW Awards:
0151 WH6LE - 11/29/12
0152 WH6LE - 11/30/12
0153 WH6LE - 11/30/12
0154 WH6LE - 11/30/12
0155 WH6LE - 12/02/12
0156 WH6LE - 12/10/12
0157 WK3N - 12/23/12
0158 ND9M - 1/9/13

KMPW 100 Awards SWA:

KMPW 100 Awards SWA/GAIN:

Honor Roll SWA Update:

K3WWP 1,039 - 12/1/12

Honor Roll SWA/GAIN Update:

Participation Awards:
Year 2012
W1: K1IEE - 1/1/13
W2: W2JEK - 1/1/13
W3: K3WWP - 1/1/13
W4: KU4A - 1/1/13
W5: TBD (KE5YUM and/or W5IQS)
W6: TBD (K6CSL, KA6AIL, WK6L, K6MGO still mathematically alive)
W7: NU7T - 1/1/13
W8: N8XMS - 1/1/13
W9: W9UX - 1/1/13
W0: K9OSC/KD0V (tie) - 1/1/13
VE: VE3FUJ - 1/1/13
DX: PA5LR - 1/1/13
FREE FISTS Membership/Renewal - W9UX

QSO-a-Day Awards:
Full Year 2012:
0001 W9UX - 12/31/12
0002 K3WWP - 1/6/13

Endorsements :
0001 W9UX Full Year 2012 - Simple wire antennas for all QSOs
0002 K3WWP Full Year 2012 - All 9 HF bands used
0002 K3WWP Full Year 2012 - Simple wire antennas for all QSOs

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2XQRP Awards:

30-30 Awards:
One month
0021 K3WWP (Oct 2012) - 10/31/12
0022 WY3H (Oct 2012) - 11/5/12
0023 K3WWP (Nov 2012) - 11/16/12
0024 WY3H (Nov 2012) - 12/3/12
0025 WY3H (Dec 2012) - 12/10/12

Magnum:
0008 WY3H (Oct-Nov-Dec 2012) - 12/10/12

Alphabet Prefix USA Awards:

Alphabet Prefix World Awards:

Honor Roll USA Update:

Honor Roll World Update:

DXCC Category A (QRP) Awards:
0010 - N8XMS - 12/4/12

DXCC Category C (QRPp 50 countries) Awards:

Suffix Words - SWA Awards:

Suffix Words - SWA/GAIN Awards:

Honor Roll SWA Update:
N8XMS - 200 - 12/4/12

Honor Roll SWA/GAIN Update:

WAC Category A (QRP) Awards:
0022 - N8XMS - 12/4/12

Endorsements:

WAS Category A Awards:
0019 - N8XMS - 12/4/12

WAS Category B (2X QRP) Awards:

WAS Category C (QRPp) Awards:

Endorsements Category A:
NW2K - 40 METERS - 11/6/12

WAVE Category A Awards:

WAVE

Heartiest congratulations to Gary Meyn K1YAN on becoming the 17th member of our prestigious Friendship Club award. Gary did it strictly with contest/sprint QSOs from the looks of his number of QSOs. Many more of you are eligible for the award solely from your NAQCC sprint QSOs. In fact there are many ways to earn the FC award:

1. Simply work 200 different members since 1/1/2005 - either before or after they became a member - no need to exchange numbers on the air. Those are one point QSOs.

2. Simply work 100 different members in our NAQCC sprints - in this case, they have to have been members at the time of the QSO - easy to tell from your sprint logs because they will have sent you their member number. Those are two point QSOs, as are all contest/sprint QSOs.

3. The best way to honor the true meaning of the Friendship Club award - make 50 QSOs with members after they became members and get to know them better by finding out more than just their rig and weather. Perhaps they work on a newspaper, are also a member of FISTS, love fishing or hunting, are an active gardener... and a myriad of other things. Those are four point QSOs.

4. Any combination of the above three methods that takes you to the required 200 points for the basic FC award. It takes a little more effort than earning other club's 'worked members award', and we think that makes it more meaningful than getting an award by just exchanging numbers.

For a complete listing of our award winners and more details, see Awards on the web site.

9. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to **N8XMS@ARRL.NET**. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Mike Malone KD5KXF #3436

I obtained a no-code tech license in 2000 and I did everything a no code tech could do, but I knew I would never be happy until I could upgrade to HF Privileges so I upgraded quickly and passed my 5wpm code test. At that point I had been using an HW8 to listen to CW, so being broke I put that HW8 on the air with a Radio Shack straight key and I covered my shack wall with QSL's. I built an OHR 40 meter rig that was an amazing step up from the HW8. I then built a SW+ for 30 meters and used that rig for a year, getting my Extra along the way. I then built a K2 from Elecraft. I got the QRP bug and I never looked back.

These days, my preferred and favorite mode of operation is outdoors, in the field and I have a number of rigs that are conducive to that including some KD1JV designs that are housed in altoids tins. I love to go hike and setup for a bit of operating. My most notable QSO's have been with K4TWJ Dave Ingram (now SK) on 30 Meters and with W0RSP Ade Weiss on 40 meters. I have truly enjoyed building and operating QRP.

I tend to hang around the CW qrp watering holes and basically just rag chew. I am not a contester but I do try to get out and operate a few sprints and I like to participate in the QRP takes to the Field events. I work a bit of DX, mostly just to show that my little mint tin can cross oceans. I do have a home station set up and have an old bug that I like to run with a Ten Tech Century 21. Like most CW buffs, I have several keys and a lot of mine are homebrewed paddles for portable work. Currently, I am building a Handbook Station with the Mini R2 and Universal TX Improved so if you work me on 40 in the near future from my home QTH, it will probably be that one.

My wife Shannon is very supportive of my amateur radio hobby and attends local club functions with me and actually encourages my forays to ham fests and building new rigs. I am active in the Ham Association of Mesquite and I try to make it up to FDIM / Dayton when I can... so far I have only been twice, but I have some good friends out there and it is always a thrill to hear their call when I am on the air and catch up with them. Our little qrp rigs are small and our footprint in the RF is tiny, but the joy I get from CW QRP is huge.

72 de KD5KXF

For past member spotlights and past featured members, see the Featured pages on the web site.

10. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS:

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Examples might include, but not limited to, antenna projects, QRP and/or SDR equipment, tuners, battery technology, keyers, logging, or other related topic of interest to the QRP community.

Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at KD2MX@ARRL.NET. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is Feb 7. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra

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

🔵 **From John K3WWP #0002 FC 1** - Not a lot of news to talk about this time. Some of it is in the WPA Chapter section above. Most all of my ham activity has been working on NAQCC events - even more so than usual. Just about all my QSOs the past month or so came either because of that or to continue my 'streak' of at least one CW/QRP QSO per day which as of December 31, 2012 stood at 6,724 consecutive days. The first 10 QSOs of 2013 were all 20 minute rag chews for the first part of our January NAQCC Challenge.

🔵 **From Don K3RLL #1905 -** The work of Steve Szabo WB4OMM, NAQCC #5913, of Port Orange Florida, is shown along with a full-color photo on page 86 of our new January issue of QST Magazine. Steve's efforts with emergency preparedness and CERT are explored in the Public Service pages of QST. Steve is yet another NAQCC member serving others through Amateur Radio. He is a member of the Florida Chapter of NAQCC.

🔵 **From Randy KB4QQJ #2086 and Milt K4OSO #1801** - I'm (KB4QQJ) hosting and Milt, K4OSO is managing a QRP challenge for the K3Y Special Event this year. Here's the info from Milt: Hi QRP'ers. It's time again for the K3Y QRP Challenge. I will be managing it, using a separate web page, QRP log submission, results page, prizes etc. This year's Challenge is open to all Hams so, it should be a real blast. It will run from: 0001 January 18 UTC thru 2359 January 31 UTC 2013 For complete rules and access to score submission and review results once the event is under way, go to: www.qrpchallenge.com. Prizes to be announced on the web site. You might ask; Why QRP Challenge? For bragging rights, of course! :-) Hope to see you all in the Challenge. 73, Milt k4oso QRP Challenge manager

Note from K3WWP: Be sure to include your NAQCC number in any correspondence about the event, when reporting your score, etc. Thanks

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Club email address - **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the <u>archives</u> indexed by Don K3RLL.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the <u>NAQCC Web Site</u>.