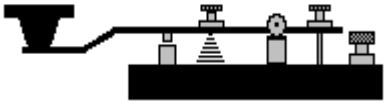
NORTH AMERICAN QRP CW CLUB

NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 191 MAY 2014



KEY CLICKS

IN THIS ISSUE:

- N#A OPERATORS NEEDED. Operators are needed for our special event N#A callsigns during our 10th anniversary celebration October 13-19. It's a lot of fun and it's simple to do. All that's required is to spend some time putting the N#A callsign on the air and to send in a log report once the operation is completed. Your actual operating time and frequencies are completely up to you and the only stipulation is that everything is done with CW and QRP. We currently have no volunteers in district 2, and there is still plenty of room for operators in all of the districts. If you would like to be an N#A operator please send me an email with you name, callsign, and US call district. If you are interested in using the special event call during the sprint that week indicate that as well (first come, first served). Additional instructions will be given when we get closer to the time. You can find my email address on the last page of this newsletter. An up-to-date list of operators and additional information is available at http://naqcc.info/main_n3a.html . - Paul, N8XMS

- IS ANYONE INTERESTED IN FORMING A NYC CHAPTER? John Rogener, W3JAR, is looking into forming a Metropolitan New York City chapter of the NAQCC. The purpose of local chapters is to provide various activities for NAQCC members to enjoy in person. If you live in the NYC area and would be interested in participating in a local chapter please contact John at jrogen01@gmail.com.

- THREE NAQCC MEMBERS PUBLISH ARTICLES IN CQ MAGAZINE. Three NAQCC members, N6GA, W2LJ, and N0EVH, had QRP related articles published in the February issue of *CQ* magazine. (The issue actually didn't come out until early April.) The articles are great reading and indeed the entire issue is dedicated to QRP. Most of you probably know that *CQ* has been having some publishing troubles lately and they did not actually create a print edition for February. But there is a silver lining to this cloud because the pdf version that they did publish has been made available for free download for anyone, even if you do not subscribe to the magazine. The link is http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com/cq_highlights/2014_cq/2014_02_cq/CQ_2014_02_OPT.pdf . It's a big file, about 24 MB, so you probably don't want to do this with dial-up! (Hopefully the link is still active when you read this item.)

- NAQCC IS A RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION ON HAMCALL. The *Hamcall* online database (sometimes called Buckmaster) now includes the NAQCC as a club or organization that you can check off as being "interested in" in your interest profile. It is also listed as one of the clubs that can be checked off under "current memberships." I would encourage you to include these items in your *Hamcall* profile to let others know about our club. Just go to http://hamcall.net/call, login, and check the NAQCC boxes in your profile. Membership in *Hamcall* is required to do this but it's free.

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- DO WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT EMAIL ADDRESS? We recently received a notice from our email list provider that there was a potential problem with our membership list. Because of some changes at Yahoo there was the possibility that any member with a Yahoo email address had been automatically removed from our list due to excessive email bounces! We immediately investigated this situation and were greatly relieved to learn that it had not impacted any of our list members. During that investigation we did, however, find several members who had apparently changed their email addresses but had not sent us the update. We do not have the time nor the resources to track all of these people down so we are reminding you to please remember to let us know if you change your email address. We only send out an average of about two or three emails each month, but if you don't remember seeing any NAQCC emails for a while you probably need to check into the situation. First check to make sure that messages from *paul142857@gmail.com* or *naqcc-news@mailman.qth.net* are not being filtered out by your software or email provider as spam. If you have changed your email address please be sure to send your new address to Dave, VA3RJ, at dave.va3rj@gmail.com.

- NANCY KOTT, WZ8C, MEMORIAL COMING IN SEPTEMBER. As was announced last month, we are planning to honor the memory of Nancy Kott, WZ8C, with some special activities in September. There will be a memorial sprint on the 2nd and the challenge for the month will also be dedicated to her memory. As details are worked out they will be posted on our club web site at http://naqcc.info/nancy.html as well as in the newsletter.

- THANK YOU FOR THE DONATIONS! A big "THANK YOU" goes out everyone who has made recent donations to the NAQCC treasury. 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 Paul142857@gmail.com. To avoid any additional fees 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 an NAQCC donation. The second way to make a donation is to mail a check or money order made out to Paul Huff (*not NAQCC!*) at 9928 Eckles, Livonia, MI 48150. 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."

PROPAGATION 101, BY JOHN SHANNON - K3WWP

When Paul asked me to write an article about propagation for the NAQCC Newsletter, my first thought was to look back through my past FISTS Keynote columns to see if I had covered that topic there in any of the previous 99 columns I've written about QRP/CW. I did find an article there from which I took a lot of the specific band info below. It was a two-part article in Keynote # 055 from October 2002 and Keynote # 057 from March 2003. All my older FISTS QRP/CW articles are available via http://home.windstream.net/johnshan/cw_ss_column.html. My second thought was that dealing with propagation is like dealing with antennas in a way. The subject matter can range from the sublime to the ridiculous as the old saying goes. You can study both propagation and antennas until you get a royal headache, and you still won't be any better off unless you are trying to absolutely max out your performance to the nth degree such as with a big contest station. For the rest of us a very minimum knowledge of both will do. Then I thought perhaps the best way to approach such an article would be to start off with a basic overview of some propagation info then talk about how it applies to each of the HF ham bands.

There are many many terms and intricacies dealing with propagation. However most everyone only really needs to know a couple of basic things while leaving others like coronal mass ejections, solar flares, auroral propagation, meteor scatter work, moonbounce and so forth to the ones who specialize in such matters. If you know about solar flux, A index, and K index, you're pretty well set to know what to expect on the HF ham bands when you turn on the rig. If you do want to know more, the Internet has a wealth of infomation available via a simple Bing search at http://www.bing.com/search?q=radio+propagation&form=HPDTDF&pc=HPDTDF&src=IE-SearchBox. This in turn leads to one especially good source on Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radio_propagation.

So rather than reinvent the wheel, I'll let those sources be the bulk of this propagation info. I'll just summarize briefly with my own observations of how Solar flux and the A/K indices seem to work in my case. As stated in the articles, Solar Flux is a measure of activity on the Sun that is pretty much directly related to the number of sunspots, hence it is low during sunspot minimums and high during maximums. The activity is measured at a 10.7 cm wavelength, and numbers range from the mid 60s or so up to over 400. Very generally the figures in the 60s come and persist during a sunspot minimum, while during a maximum the numbers may range from roughly 150 to 200 or so. As stated elsewhere in Wikipedia, "Sunspot activity has a major effect on long distance radio communications particularly on the shortwave bands although medium wave and low VHF frequencies are also affected. High levels of sunspot activity lead to improved signal propagation on higher frequency bands, although they also increase the levels of solar noise and ionospheric disturbances. These effects are caused by impact of the increased level of solar radiation on the ionosphere." Thus for example, 10 meters may be open for propagation at sunspot maximums and pretty much dead during sunspot minimums.

The A index and K index both measure the ionospheric disturbances mentioned in the Wikipedia quote. The K index is a short-term measure of ionospheric activity taken every 3 hours and ranges from 0 to 9. The A index is based on a formula using the K indices which is too complicated to discuss in this simple article. The daily A index can range from 0 when all K indices for a day are 0 up to 400 when all K indices for a day are 9.

Now having said that, you can simply look for high solar flux numbers along with low A and K indices for the best propagation. A more detailed look at my performance and observations for each band from 160 through 10 may explain the relationship more clearly. Right after each band number below are the number of states, countries, CQ zones, and continents that I have worked on that band with (of course)

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CW/QRP/simple wire antennas.

The first 3 bands are mainly nighttime bands except for local communication which is good during the daytime.

160M - 42, 3, 3, 1 - It has been my experience that this band is better at a sunspot minimum than a maximum. When the SF is down in the 60s and 70s, the ionosphere is not as active and signals in this range are not absorbed as much when passing through it on the way to their destination. Not strictly an effect of propagation, but this band suffers greatly from atmospheric static, and hence is better in the winter than in summer. As an example I find it easy to make 250 or so QSOs in 160M contests near a sunspot minimum, but struggle to make 100 near a sunspot maximum.

80M - 49, 57, 15, 5 - This band is similar to 160M, and is perhaps somewhat better at sunspot minimums, but not as noticeable as 160M. It is also somewhat poor in summer due to static, but is better in fall and spring than 160M. Propagation on 80M is better for DX than on 160, at least for the minimal QRP station. I have only 3 countries on 160, but 57 on 80 as you see. This is a very good rag-chewing band, especially in the late fall, winter, and early spring seasons when static levels are low. Signal levels are steady over long periods of time with little fading.

60M - 12, 3, 3, 2 - I haven't done a lot of operating on this band, but it seems to behave as expected from its position in the spectrum between 80 and 40. I think working DX would be a little easier than on 80 but not as easy as on 40. I've only worked one DX station from England so far. The channelized operation here makes it more difficult to find and work DX. It is much easier to work W/VE stations from here at my location.

The next 2 bands are good throughout the day and night for the most part, although working DX is best in the nighttime.

40M - 50, 124, 26, 5 - If you're a rag-chewer looking for a single band, this is probably the one for you. There is always someone around, day and night at any stage of a sunspot cylce, be there low, medium, or high SF. Minimal QRP works well here, even for DX. When conditions are right it is possible to easily work the world here. There have been times in DX contests when I could work EU and AF almost as well as on 20M. This band does not change all that much during a sunspot cycle. The only real problem I have here is working Asia, mainly because the best time for that seems to be very early in the morning, and I don't get on the bands much in that time frame.

30M - 50, 150, 26, 6 - This is a favorite band of mine. You can come here and work DX very easily, and then have a nice long rag chew with a domestic station. It is often open worldwide, especially in the evenings. I have had stations from Australia and Turkey answer my minimal QRP CQ's on this band. Like 40M, this band doesn't seem to change all that much from sunspot minimum to maximum and responds well with any range of SF numbers.

As we continue upward and reach 20 meters, now we are getting into the territory that is affected more and more by SF and A,K indices. Also these bands are mostly daylight bands except at times of very high solar activity when they may be open 24 hours.,

20M - 50, 176, 34, 6 - This is probably the best overall band if you're interested in working DX with your QRP over the entire duration of a sunspot cycle. It does perform better at higher SF values, but not as much so as the following bands. You can work anywhere in the world if you are there at the right time. Sunrise and sunset are particularly good times for very long distance contacts because of grey line propagation which is a term that means signals travel especially well when their route lies along the sunrise/sunset

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demarcation line on the globe.

17M - 42, 137, 33, 6 - I like this little band quite a lot. It will not be open quite as often as 20M when the sunspots decline, but it is often open when 15M and the higher bands are not. This statement is true of all the bands from here on up - fewer openings than the next lower band, but more openings than the next higher band.

15M - 50, 167, 32, 6 - With the exception of the fact that it's not open for as much of the day nor as much of the sunspot cycle, the description for 20M applies to this band. However, when both 15 and 20 are open, 15 will be better for working QRP DX, as it will generally provide better propagation for the lower power stations although the specific openings to a certain area may not last as long. As we go higher in frequency, propagation changes more rapidly.

12M - 25, 109, 29, 6 - As the description for 15M matches 20M, so 12M matches 17M. It is open much less often than 17M, but the openings often provide stronger signals for the QRPer. For my situation with simple antennas, I notice this band only provides really good conditions for 3-4 years of the sunspot cycle, while the rest of the time it is only sporadically open, if at all. It seems much easier to work DX than W/VE stations. I think that is because other W/VE stations are only there for the most part to work DX. Hence my low total of states worked here vs my DX total.

10M - 48, 151, 32, 6 - Someone once told me that when this band was open, you could work the world with 1 watt and a coat hanger for an antenna. That was in the depths of a sunspot minimum and it was hard to believe, but as cycle 23 neared its maximum I came to believe. Although I didn't try it, I did find my simple minimal QRP setup provided me with easy QSO's with any part of the world. Yes, when it is open near a sunspot maximum, this is the band to have fun working DX with a simple station. It's a shame a lot of the little QRP rigs don't cover this band. It would surely introduce many hams to the thrill of DXing if they did.

The above are only general observations, and there are many exceptions since propagation is not yet (nor probably never will be) an exact science. You can find good openings on 10M at times in the middle of a sunspot minimum, for one example. One thing I'd like to mention is Sporadic E propagation. This occurs most often during June with a minor peak in December. I used to love using this mode when I was into TV DXing when TV broadcasting was geared to on-air propagation, not cable or satellite as it is now. I could be watching channel 2 in nearby Pittsburgh, when pretty much suddenly another TV station on channel 2 would completely override the Pittsburgh station. It could be from as far away as Minnesota, North Dakota, or Colorado, for example. Propagation via Sporadic E is very good although only sporadic (hence the name) and unpredictable. It also provides solid skip signals on the higher HF bands and is a lot of fun when it happens during the doldrums of a sunspot minimum which it can do. As a general rule, the maximum distance for a Sporadic E hop is about 1400 miles, but under certain conditions, double hop can occur also. I've worked California on 10 meters that way. Well, a whole 'nother article could be written about Sporadic E. I got a bit carried away with it here because it is very exciting when you catch such an opening.

There is just so much more to propagation that could be said, but a lot of it is beyond the scope of this article. If it has whetted your appetite for more info, delve into the sources mentioned above, and you'll find out perhaps more than you thought possible to find out about how this radio stuff works for ham radio operators.

NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH SPRINT: Our next sprint will be on Thursday, May 22, from 0030-0230z. Of course that's Wednesday evening in North America.

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 a Silver Log can be found at http://naqcc.info/GLCheckList.txt . There will be a prize at the end of the year for the most SILVER logs.

Complete sprint rules and information on log submission can be found at http://naqcc.info/contests.html.

LAST MONTH SPRINT RESULTS: This was our 114th sprint and we once again easily broke the 100-log level with 119 submitted logs. 45 of our last 49 sprints have been at or above this level and we are proud of that fact - more correctly, we are proud of our membership who do so much to keep QRP/CW as a major presence on the bands!

96 of the submitted logs were perfectly formatted Silver Logs and we currently have a 22-way tie amongst sprinters with all four logs on the year being Silver.

Congratulations to the winners and a big "THANK YOU" to all of the participants who submitted a log. Every time that you do so you are casting your vote for CW and QRP!

We would especially like to welcome our first-time loggers: K4ARQ, AJ1DM, KK4ALS, WB0USI, KQ3Z, AE7AP, N8NH, VE3NWN, N6PG. We trust that you had a fun time and hope that you will continue to participate and submit your results.

Complete results for all of our past sprints are available at http://naqcc.info/contests.html . Result summaries are shown in the tables on the following page.

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

Number of Sprints	Members
50+	KQ1P N8QY K1IEE WA2JSG WB8ENE AA9L VE3FUJ KD0V KB3AAG WY3H N4FI K3RLL NF8M KU4A K4JPN N8XMS NU7T
75+	WB8LZG K4BAI KD2MX K4NVJ W2SH W9CC W2JEK
100+	KA2KGP K3WWP
125+	

CERTIFICATES			
SWA CATEGORY			
Division	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**
W1	N2CN	W1SFR	
W2	NW2K	K2YGM	
W3	K3WWP		
W4	W4UX	N5GW	WG8Y
W5	W5ODS		
W6	WK6L		
W7	K9JWV	AA7VW	
W8	AC8LJ	AD7TN	
W9	KB9ILT		
W0	K9OSC		
VE	VE2TH		
DX	CO8CML		
KEY CATEGORIES			
Straight Key (x2)	NW2K		
Bug (x1.5)	W5ODS		
Keyer (x1)	W8RTJ		
OTHER CATEGORIES			
Gain	W8RTJ		
First-Time Logger High Scorer	K4ARQ		
Prize Drawing	W4UX		

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	119	125	194	2/13
Participants	162	189	269	2/13
Total QSOs	2118	2199	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	1137	1038	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	981	1161	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	854	686	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	1122	1409	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	142	104	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs / Station	17.8	17.6	19.3	9/11

NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH CHALLENGE: Our North American challenge for the month of May is to make at least 10 QRP/CW contacts using a piece of homebrew gear *that you made*. Your entire station does not need to be homebrew and most, but not all, kit rigs qualify. You could also use something like a homebrew key or paddle to make your QSOs. Complete details on what constitutes "homebrew," along with all of the other challenge rules, can be seen at http://naqcc.info/challenges201405.html .

Results for this challenge have already started to come in including some pictures of homebrew gear that can be seen in the Member Submissions section of this newsletter.

The European challenge for May is an alphabet style challenge involving the names of common European birds. Complete information on the challenge can be found at http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/may-2014-challenge.

Remember that there is a challenge participation requirement for qualification for the prize drawing in our October anniversary celebration. This challenge would be an easy one to do in order to partially meet that requirement.

NEXT MONTH CHALLENGE: June will see another alphabet challenge with a list of words that all relate to the 6 June 1944 D-day invasion of WW2. The words and rules are available at http://naqcc.info/challenges201406.html. The European challenge involves the names of the smallest European countries like San Marino and Vatican City. The names and rules are available at http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/june-2014-challenge.

Complete information about our challenges including a helpful tutorial on how to organize your work for an alphabet challenge is available at http://naqcc.info/challenges.html .

LAST MONTH CHALLENGE: First a word about the challenge back in March. At the time of the last newsletter the deadline for submissions for our "Block Party" challenge was still a week off and very few reports had been received. I had made the comment that it had been a tough one for me personally, and indeed I had not been able to complete the challenge. Well, it turns out that it was a tough one for everybody. Of the 10 reports that were eventually received only one member, K9OSC, was able to complete the challenge! Congratulations to Bob for a job well done on a very difficult challenge.

In April, in North America, we returned to an alphabet challenge with words that were all related to the famous "midnight ride of Paul Revere." 25 logs were submitted and 17 members were able to complete the entire list. The complete results can be seen at http://naqcc.info/challenges201404.html.

Results for the April European challenge, which involved the names of famous Swedish inventors, can be seen at http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/past-challenges/april-2014-challenge.

NAQCC AWARDS

We have an extensive list of awards that you can earn. Complete details can be found at http://naqcc.info/awards.html. Here are the certificates and endorsements earned this past month:

Awards issued during April…

2XQRP Award (50, 100, 250, 500, 1000 point levels)
0019 - UR5FA/mm 04/10/14

DXCC Award
0013 - KC2EGL 04/17/14

WAS Award
0023 - KC2EGL 04/17/14
0024 - K9JWV 04/17/14

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, at kd2mx@arrl.net .

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.

DON YOUNGER, W2JEK, #1135

The ham radio bug bit when my father Charles Younger W2ND [SK] built a 2 meter station with a super-regenerative receiver and modulated oscillator transmitter in 1946. We were living in an apartment in Staten Island, N.Y. In early 1947 I built a 117n7 transmitter. Later we moved to River Edge, N.J. There he made several contacts with it using the TV lead in for an antenna.

I got my Novice and Technician license in December 1951 and upgraded to General in 1952. I became somewhat inactive for a few years. Then after getting married and buying a house the bug bit again. Got on the air using a Johnson Ranger and Drake 2B. In 1978 I built an Heathkit HW-8 and got started in QRP and used it to make DXCC. Upgraded to Extra in 1986. Added a Ten-Tec Argonaut 505 to the shack in 1987. Started building kits consisting of 12 tranceivers and a 6M transverter.

My current station consists of a Yaesu FT-840 as the main rig and an Oak Hills OHR-500 rig used for homebrew bonus points and for milliwatting. Antennas are a 40m dipole, a 20m roof mounted ground plane, and an end fed wire 110 feet long.

My favorite key is a Signal Electric straight key. Also have several other keys. I have some old tube rigs that get put on the for the Classic Exchange at a station in my cellar. One set is a Harvey-wells TBS-50C xmtr and Hallicrafters S-76 rcvr that was part of my Novice station. Also the Ranger and Drake 2B.

I am retired after working for the phone company for 47 years. My wife and I have two daughters and one granddaughter .

Contesting and chasing DX are favorite activities. Memberships include ARRL. NAQCC, QRPARCI, FISTS, SKCC, and G-QRP

HAM QUIPS

Dick Sylvan, W9CBT, NAQCC #2062, has been a QRP/CW operator for a long time. He is also a very talented cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the K9YA Telegraph, a free ham radio eZine published by the Robert F. Heytow Memorial Radio Club (http://www.k9ya.org/). We are very pleased and honored to be allowed to reprint his cartoons here. Dick has also authored the book "HI HI — A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" which is available at http://www.k9ya.org/w9cbt/.

NAQCC CHAPTER NEWS

We currently have four chapters—Europe, Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Florida—but we would be very 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 would be interested in starting a chapter in your area email Paul142857@gmail.com and information will be sent to you.

If your chapter is planning a portable operation activity and would like to have it promoted, send an email with the subject "NAQCC portable operation", and with the exact wording of the announcement to kd2mx@arrl.net . Please be sure to submit a summary write-up of the activity, including pictures, to Paul142857@gmail.com for posting to this section of the newsletter.

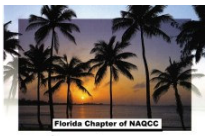
NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from European Chapter President Matt, MW0MIE unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to matt@naqcc-eu.org . The European Chapter website is at http://www.naqcc-eu.org/.

The European Chapter has its own monthly challenges to compensate for the Atlantic Ocean. However all are welcome to participate, not just EU members, and we regularly receive challenge and sprint logs with trans-Atlantic QSOs. Please see the chapter web page for dates and details.

No additional report available

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER:



Items in this section are from the Florida Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to naqccfl@yahoo.com.

The Florida Chapter of NAQCC held its April field event on Friday, April 25th, starting at 9am, in Colby Park in Cassadaga, FL. For the unknowing, Cassadaga in Volusia County is home to numerous seers, clairvoyants, fortune tellers, psychics, soothsayers, and spiritualists. But no one could tell us if the bands were open!!

Art WB4MNK (20M with his KX-1 at 4 W) whipped us all (as usual!) with 10 contacts in NJ, PA, MD, OH, MI, and VA. Don K3RLL (another KX-3 with 5W) got 5 on 40M/30M, including, FL, AL, NC, and PA. Ron KI4TI worked FG8NY on 10M and VE2FOU on 15M with his FT-817ND. Steve WB4OMM (40M on his KX-3 running 5W out) made 1 contact in VA. Wally KG4LAL searched the airwaves with his FT-817 but had no luck – we think he should get a crystal ball and divining rod!

Antennas included: Steve's Buddipole arranged for 40M; Wally's dipole; Don's 31' vertical bottom fed with 9:1 HB Unun - no counterpoise required; Ron's 10 meter J-pole antenna which also loaded well on both 12 and 15 meters. The antenna is direct-fed with 50 ohm coax with ferrite cores acting as a balun; Art's LDG Tuner & 31 foot 9:1 Unun end fed vertical wire, using his coax as a counterpoise.

Steve WB4OMM #5913, Art WB4MNK #5274, Ron KI4TI #4280, Don K3RLL #1905, and Wally KG4LAL #6278.

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Note that Steve now has his hat (and Darryl AB8GU got his too, but he didn't make the trip this month) …..but now Ron needs a hat…..and an official shirt too!!!

We quit at 11:30 and had a "picnic" lunch, punctuated by our usual wild CW QRP "tales". Another great day!! The weather was nice (clear, warm, but with a light breeze, 85F) and the bands were, "Marginal to Fair".
Many thanks to those who listened for us and helped make this yet another successful NAQCC event.

NOTE FOR NEXT MONTH: Due to the Dayton Hamfest falling on the third weekend, our monthly field operation will be held a week late on Friday, May 23rd. Watch your e-mails for more information!!

72/73 to all!... NAQCCFL@yahoo.com

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from John, K3WWP, unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to naqcc33@windstream.net .

Mike KC2EGL and I got together the weekend of April 11-13. Here are Mike's writeups from my web site diary (http://home.windstream.net/johnshan/) from each day to serve as our WPA Chapter news. We also had another brief get together on April 23rd after Mike attended the local ham radio club meeting. Time was limited then and band conditions were not very good so we just chatted, checked out the bands unsuccessfully and played a computer game before he had to head north to get to bed for an early wake-up for work the next day.

Friday April 11 - What a busy day. It all started when I arrived at John's QTH for a weekend visit around 1800Z. First order of business was lunch. Being that it is Friday during lent we did the fish thing for lunch (and dinner) at Wendy's. We followed that up with a couple of games on John's computer. He has a decent selection of games from bowling to mini golf, billiards (which was very frustrating) to some mystery games where you have to find hidden objects that go along with the plot of a story. We pretty much did nothing but play games during the afternoon.

Around 2230Z we headed out to the Kittanning TWP Firehall for their fish dinner. We were quite impressed. They had a great selection buffet style for $11.00 all you can eat. Both of us over did it. I may not have to eat for another day or so. Hi-Hi!!!!

When we returned to John's place we hit the airwaves to hunt some DX. Both of us logged a station from Mexico. There were a few other DX stations out there but they had some very large and very wide pileup's. I also worked W1AW/4 (VA) and W1AW/1 (MA). The Virginia station was very easy to work. The Massachusetts station took a while to log. He had one of those rude pileups where someone would be calling during his exchange with another station and a station that was calling on his calling frequency when he should have been up 2. We worked on updating the NAQCC prize page and worked on the NAQCC quarterly sprint drawing.

John was in the middle of a bowling game when his neighbor Nancy called to see how he was doing. When John finished his game we went next door for a visit. Nancy's dog Roscoe still doesn't like me. He just barks and runs like a mad dog when ever I go visit. After our visit with Nancy and Roscoe it was my turn for a bowling game. Video bowling games are much easier on the arm but are much harder than real bowling. Go figure. I also submitted applications for my NAQCC WAS [#0023] and DXCC [#0013]. Just to let you know that applying for those awards proves beyond a reasonable doubt that QRP is D E A D, DEAD!!!! Hi-Hi!!!!!! I love to 'shove' it in the face of the doubters when they say 'QRP does not work. You need to crank up the power in order to log plenty of DX.'. If they would only give it a try. They would prove themselves wrong.

Saturday April 12 - Good eveing everyone. Yes it is John's favorite fill-in guest writer. It was a very relaxing start to the day. The morning consisted of a few games on the computer followed by breakfast at Pondersoa. Upon our return to John's QTH we set up our operating position for the weekend operating activities. Our plan was to operate the Japan DX contest, Georgia QSO Party, New Mexico QSO Party, and the Yuri Gagarain anniversary contest. So far the Japan DX is a bust. We heard a few hams working stations from Japan but did not hear any from Japan itself. The New Mexico QSO Party so far is a bust. We have one station in the log for the Yuri Gagarain contest. Last year I logged 12 stations for the same contest. The Georgia QSO Party picked up late in the evening. So the day's operating has not been a total bust.

(Continued on page 16)

In between operating stints we took a dinner break. We had a Vocelli's southwest steak pizza. It was very tasty. We also got in a brisk paced 1.6 mile walk around town today. All in all it was a very good day. I can not recall ever having a bad day hanging out with John.

Sunday April 13 - This was a very busy and rewarding day. It started out with my first three QSO's from Japan via CW. If the rest of the weekend was uneventful the morning operating would have made up for it. John worked all three of the JA stations as well. We had a productive day operating in the Georgia QSO Party. John logged 73 and I logged 71 from Ga. We mixed in some other DX and W1AW anniversary stations just for the fun of it. Unfortunatley the conditions were not good enough for a productive run in the Yuri Gagarian anniversary event. I think we only logged 2 or 3 for the great Yuri Gagarin. And of course we had our usual meal runs. Breakfast at Ponderosa and dinner from Vocelli's. We had Vocelli's subs for dinner. They were quite tasty. And to top it all off we got in a brisk 2.8 mile walk. Now it is almost time for me to head North. These operating weeknds seem to fly by. Seems like I just arrived and I have been here since Friday afternoon. Like the saying goes. Time flies when you are having fun.

Until next time de Mike KC2EGL

I also had an email exchange from chapter member Tom WB3FEA. We're planning to get together for some Parkpeditions as the weather gets better now. Also our snowbird member Don K3RLL will be flying (driving?) north in June to join in our chapter get togethers. We hope to include Don and Tom in a Requin subpedition sometime this summer depending on whether or not the Requin is available. It has been scheduled for some work in dry dock to conduct some needed repairs and maintenance.

The WPA Chapter on behalf of the entire club will be setting up a table at the Butler, PA hamfest on June 1. If you would like to attend, details are at http://www.breezeshooters.net/html/hamfest_calendar.htm. Be aware though that the feature attraction of presenting President Tom WY3H with his surprise retirement gift had to be moved up. Circumstances leading to the change as well as pictures of the presentation will be in the June newsletter. Despite the change, Paul, Mike and I would still like to meet you at the hamfest. Yes, Club Manager Paul N8XMS will still be attending the hamfest despite the change of plans regarding Tom's gift.

NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from John, N8ZYA, unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to John at jspiker58@gmail.com. The chapter's web site is at https://plus.google.com/communities/102627005227155262259?hl=en&partnerid=gplp0.

First of all, I'd like to congratulate Paul (**N8XMS**) on that great April Fool Joke about bouncing a ten meter signal to Mars and back. I thought it was one of the best I've read in a long time! I came close to passing it along on the local two meter net just to see who would catch it. Hihi

The WV Chapter had a few decent days qualify for outdoor operations since last month, but with time restrictions and very short windows of opportunity, we concentrated on other events. Hopefully now with warmer weather, we can get in some outdoor operating very soon.

The International Space Station has made some good passes over West Virginia during the last month. That in itself isn't unusual. Sometimes with clear skies, and near sunset and sunrise, it resembles a jet plane approaching an airport. The sunlight reflecting from the giant solar arrays can be very bright in contrast to the dark sky. I've always enjoyed watching it as it crosses the early morning or early evening skies.

The Hams aboard the ISS are a very busy group of people and it's become rare to hear an actual "conversation" from them in the short window of an overhead pass. In April, the International Space Station scheduled a conversation with a science class in Maryland and our member Eric Lassiter (**AC8LJ**) actually recorded the event as an MP3 file.

This event also brings into focus some other activities of our WV Chapter members who have excelled in the field of science, space and engineering.

Jeff Imel (**K9ESE**) has been working with a group of high school kids to launch a high altitude balloon as a science project. On April, 19th the balloon successfully reached an altitude of 96,000 ft before coming back

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to earth. The balloon had a package attached which recorded video and was successfully recovered in a farm field near Xenia Ohio. I found it extremely interesting to see the footage shot from both horizontal and vertical cameras. It was also extremely interesting to also see the curvature of the earth.

Jeff also has other projects happening in the next few months. About this launch, Jeff says;

> "The students have had a few days to reflect back on what they did this weekend - successfully insert a satellite into near space and recover it intact from a 100,000 foot fall. The students in my group don't throw 60 yard touchdown passes, they don't make three point shots, they don't run sub-six second 40's - but today everyone (everyone at the school) is talking about what they did this weekend. This weekend they discovered the power of combining science, technology, engineering, art and math. And that power carries unlimited potential and that potential has the power to change the world around them**. I have students who were saying "Can't" at the beginning of the semester who are now saying "CAN!" That is powerful!"**

Congratulations to Jeff (**K9ESE**) on a fine event and a great inspiration for the younger generation. Perhaps there are future hams in this group?

This coming week, Eric (**AC8LJ**) and I will be going to the **Dayton Hamfest**. On May 16th, I'll be riding along with him to my "first" visit here. I'll be looking at "keys", QRP radios, and watching for familiar call signs. I'll also be watching for NAQCC hat's and t-shirts.

NAQCC QRS NETS

Additional information about our slow-speed CW nets can be found at http://naqcc.info/cw_nets.html .
Send any questions to Net Manager Chuck, AB1VL at cfytech24x7@gmail.com

NAQCC QRS NET SCHEDULE				
Net	**Local Time**	**UTC**	**Freq**	**Primary NCS**
Main Net	Sunday 7:30 PM EDT	Sunday 2330 Z	7060 KHz	Ron, WB1HGA (in MA)
East Texas	Monday 7 PM CDT	Tuesday 0000 Z	7063 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Midwest Net	Monday 9 PM CDT	Tuesday 0200 Z	7123.5 KHz	Steve, WB0QQT (in NE)
Rocky Mtn Regional / Continental	Tues/Thurs 4 PM MDT	Tues/Thurs 2200 Z	14062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
East Coast (suspended)	Thursday 8:30 PM EDT	Friday 0030 Z	3560 KHz	Robert, KG4KGL (in SC)
Pacific Northwest 80	Thursday 7 PM PDT	Friday 0200 Z	3574 KHz	Stewart, KE7LKW (in WA)
Pacific Northwest 40	Monday 7:30 PM PDT	Tuesday 0230 Z	7122 KHz	JB, KR5RR (in CA)

Our QRS NCSs continue to report spotty conditions so it seems the bands have not settled into warm weather propagation yet. But there are some fine days for propagation so be sure to get a code buddy and do some practice, or organize your own net with friends.

NCS KG4KGL was off the air for all of April due to illness and has decided to step down as ECN NCS. Accordingly there will be no ECN QRS nets until further notice. We appreciate the fine effort Robert has made to keep the ECN going and wish him good health and a quick recovery. The posted schedule will updated by the time you read this.

NQN NCS WB1HGA Ron has changed the Sunday night NQN net start time to 7:30 EDT effective Sunday May 18, 2014.

ETN NCS Allen Matthews is interested in organizing another QRS net, most likely for a weekend daytime. Please let him or myself know if your are interested in participating.

72, Chuck AB1VL

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NAQCC Main QRS Net (NQN) - Sunday, 8:00 PM Eastern Time, 7.060Mhz
04-06-2014 (5) NCS WB1HGA KB0YR W3UEC VE9BEL AB1VL
04-13-2014 No QNI
04-20-2014 No net due to Mother's Day.
04-27-2014 No QNI

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NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) - Monday, 7:00 PM Central Time, 7.063MHz +/-
04-07-2014 (2) NCS N5DRG KE5YGA
04-14-2014 (6) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA K5BRY N5DRG KG0YR
04-21-2014 (5) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA N5DRG N7NET
04-28-2014 (4) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA N7NET

NAQCC Midwest QRS Net (MWN) - Monday, 9:00 PM Central Time, 7.123.5 MHz
04-07-2014 (3) NCS WB0QQT KE7LKW KG0YR
04-14-2014 (5) NCS WB0QQT WA0ITP KE7LKW NI2F KR5RR.
04-21-2014 (3) NCS WB0QQT KE7LKW K9EYT
04-28-2014 (4) NCS WB0QQT KE7LYW K9EYT WA0ITP

NAQCC Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc) - Tuesday/Thursday 5:00 PM Mountain Time, 14.062.5 MHz
04-01-2014 (4) NCS WC7S AA7CU N6MY K6MGO
04-03-2014 (6) NCS WC7S WA0ITP NE5DL K0DTJ KE6OIO KF7WNS
04-08-2014 (5) NCS WC7S N35DL W5HNS K6MGO VE5CUL
04-10-2014 (4) NCS WC7S KE6OIO K0DTJ KF7WNS
04-15-2014 (5) NCS WC7S N6MY WB4SPB CU2BV KF7WNS
04-17-2014 (5) NCS WC7S AA7CU K0DTJ WA0ITP NE5DL
04-22-2014 (8) NCS WC7S NE5DL W2SH W3HZZ N4RAY KE6OIO KF7WNS K7INU
04-24-2014 No net.
04-24-2014 (7) NCS WC7S KE6OIO N6MY VE7FWZ AE7CG K0ZK

East Coast QRS Net (ECN) - Thursday, 8:30 PM Eastern Time, 3.560 MHz
04-03-2014 NCS KG4KGL No net due to NCS illness.
04-10-2014 NCS KG4KGL No net due to NCS illness
04-17-2014 NCS KG4KGL No net due to NCS illness
04-24-2014 NCS KG4KGL No net due to NCS illness

NAQCC Pacific NorthWest QRS 80 Meter Net (PNW80) - Thursday, 7:00 PM, PacificTime, 3.574 MHz
04-03-2014 (4) NCS KE7LKW N6KIX AD7BP K7ZNP
04-10-2014 (5) NCS KE7LKW WB4SPB K7ZNP VE7DWG N6KIX N7QR WN0WWY KE7LKW
04-17-2014 (5) NCS W7DK N6KIX AD7BP VE7DWG KE7LKW
04-24-2014 (4) NCS KE7LKW N6KIX AD7BP K7ZNP

NAQCC Pacific NorthWest QRS 40 Meter Net (PNW40) - Monday, 7:30 PM, PacificTime, 7.122 MHz
04-07-2014 (6) NCS WB6SPB KE7LKW WB0QQT N6KIX AD7BP KF7YHB
04-14-2014 (3) NCS KR5RR KE7LKW KF7YHB
04-21-2014 (2) NCS KE7LKW N7HRK
04-28-2014 (4) NCS KE7LKW N7HRK/M WB4SPB KW6G

HELP FOR BEGINNERS

Items in this section are from CW Assistance Project Coordinator Brion, VE3FUJ, unless otherwise credited. If you are interested in helping out or need some help yourself please contact VE3FUJ at ve3fuj@wrightman.ca . Additional help is also available on our website at http://naqcc.info/cw.html.

Q-Codes, you know, "QSL", "QRM", "QRN", "QRL?", "QRT", etc. Every time you hear one it floors you, and you have to get the book out and look it up.

The best way to learn them is to start using them yourself. On one of the shelves in front of me in the Shack I have stickers pasted (1 1/2 - 3" address labels) upon which I have written some of the Q-codes that I don't readily remember. The ones I do remember --------- well I remember them, and there's no need to cue myself on them. You do the aforementioned and before long you'll remember, at least some of them. Then change the labels and write the ones you still have trouble with, don't bother with the ones you already know, but do keep using them as often as you can. They also save time in getting a message across.

Now how to use them. ----- A Q-code by itself is a statement that is usually followed by additional information. A question mark on the end of the Q-code turns it into a request for information. For example, I hear a lot of stations using "QRL?" = (r u busy?) to see if the frequency is clear, hopefully after having listened for some time. If no one sends a reply (often just a “C”) the frequency is probably clear, however you should still do a bit of listening after the "QRL?" then proceed with calling CQ.

Commonly used Q-signals are "QTH" = (my location is), or "QTH?" = (what is your location?). "QSO" is often used as "Tnx QSO" = (thank you for the contact). The actual meaning of QSO = (I can communicate with ----) and “QSO ?” = (can you communicate with -----). "QRT" = (I'll stop sending) and "QRT?" = (will you stop sending?).

"QRM" and "QRN" are basically interference that you may tell the other station about. "QRM" = (man made interference) such as a welder, car ignition, fluorescent lights, electric machinery in general, and also nearby stations. "QRN" = (Atmospheric noise) like static crashes, thunder bumpers, etc. Also remember that wind, rain and snow can cause static. If you adorn these with a question mark it means that you are asking them about the conditions that they are experiencing. By the way, there is no need to put "have u” in front of these, just QRM? or QRN? should be enough.

Another pair of Q-signals is "QRO" = (increase power) and "QRP" = (decrease power). Again no need for "shall I” or “will you" in front.

Still another common pair is "QRQ " = (send faster) and "QRS” = (send slower). I generally send "QRS pse" to make it a request rather than an ORDER. If you send "QRQ?" or "QRS?" you asking the other station if he wants YOU to either increase or decrease sending speed.

Most of the other " Q-signals can largely be ignored unless you go onto a "net" where an important Q-signal is "QNI" = (net stations report in). There are other special signals for nets but they are mostly for use by the control station only.

That’s only 10 Q-signals and they should take care of most of the situations that you come across.

I may expand on this at a future date. 72 Brion -30-

MEMBER SUBMISSIONS

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect 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, at kd2mx@arrl.net .

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 David, N0WKZ, #6828 --

I can still remember vividly nearly one year ago, sitting in front of my new rig, listening intently to the mysterious strings of dit's and dah's that clutter the 40 meter band at night. At the time, I wondered how could anyone make sense of the varied tones so close together, and what was the traffic? What veiled message could be so important that it would be encoded in a seemingly endless tense of audio and tonal music. I can remember straining to catch one or two of the only characters I knew at that time; K and N. It was a blaze of mind bending speed beeping to be sure. At least it was then.

Now, I spend my evenings doing part of my practice either copying W1AW or one of the many random contacts taking place a guy can choose from. Now, the mysterious chant of echoed song is made plain. Who would have thought? Operators chatting about work, the weather, kids, grandkids, radios, and all manner of ordinary talk. Who would have guessed? Guys making ordinary human mistakes while others tap along like a computer generated CW program. Straight key operators who key with express style so musical it might do well on the top 40. Contest operators operating with the speed of a modem. Who would have guessed? One operator calls and suddenly there is a flood of responses that even now sounds like an unintelligible push button phone gone haywire. Strong signals, weak signals, some that have blown a cap or have a rotten power supply. Whoop whoop... Who would have guessed. But everyone seems to seamlessly participate no matter the skill or tone and most seem to grasp the time hardened art of CW. On some nights it seems a dance of orchestrated chaos funneled into the very origins of high order.

For me, the spectral visage cover of CW has been somewhat blown. VHF repeater style conversation with the time honored class of Amateur Tradition, and all the finesse of the human mind. I suppose some of the coolness factor has been taken off the edge of things for me, but not the excitement. Not the trepidation and fear I still get when attempting to work CW live. Like that impending stomach floating thrill of that first monster dive you take on the latest rage in roller coasters. Not yet anyway. There is still something new and cool about hearing your call echo back to you after answering a CQ that the phonic humdrum of voice cannot replace. A Whistle of technical jazz playing the electromagnetic spectrum in resonant cadence.

I find all the operating modes fascinating. Every operator seems to find an affinity with at least one of them and there is no shame in that. Each has a unique and steadfast place in the world of Amateur Radio. But for me, CW is still, just too cool...

Amen and GB
73
D Keath - N0WKZ

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From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 --

Well my excitement for the month, and perhaps for the year, came on April 11th at 1452Z on 21.021 MHz when I heard a very fluttery, but moderately strong, JT1AA/3 working a pileup. I listened for a little bit, adjusted my keyer speed to match his, and jumped into the fray. After only two or three tries I could hardly believe it when I heard "N8XMS 599 K". I sent my "599 TU" and sat back in amazement! I had just worked Mongolia with 5-watts and a vertical antenna - not only a "new one" for me, but in my mind a really "exotic" location. Mongolia brings to mind images of Genghis Khan, yurts, and endless steppes, not to mention bd's Mongolian Barbecue restaurant! My excitement was only slightly dampened when I saw on QRZ.com a "No" for all of the different types of QSLs. I did find one person who claimed that JT1AA did an LOTW upload last fall, so who knows, I might get the contact confirmed someday. Since I'm pretty much done with applying for wallpaper I'm happy with knowing that I worked him even if I can't get confirmation. (If any of you have information that this was a pirate operation please let me bask in the glow for a little longer before you tell me!)

From Jenny, SM5MEK, #6959 --

Jenny sent this picture and a link to a YouTube video (http://youtu.be/UURqILoX0Ic) of the portable setup that she used to already complete her May challenge.

From Pete, MW0RSS, #5835 --

Pete sent us this information about the homebrew magnetic loop antenna that he used to quickly complete his May challenge…

It is basically the result of some internet research and a little thought about how I would like to use it. I used some of G4ILO's ideas - he has an excellent web page about his Wonder Loop (a flexible loop, capable of being packed away quite small for travel).

Most loops you see are mounted on poles but I decided I would like to be able to sit mine on a table next to me. I only use it with 5W or below - I wouldn't trust the capacitor to withstand higher powers because of the high voltages developed across it (and most of my operation is QRP anyway).

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When I moved into my house years ago I found several pieces of 1/2" diameter aluminium tubing in the shed, about 10' in length. The loop is one of these, bent carefully and gradually over my knee to form a close approximation to a circle. It covers from 7MHz to 21MHz.

The variable capacitor is pulled from a transistor radio, and I chose it because it has built-in gearing, with a ratio of approximately 3:1 (useful because magnetic loops have very high Q and are difficult to tune with a normal variable capacitor). It has two sections, and I intended making one section switchable but this was not necessary, so I just used the larger section (about 300 pF, I think).

The only critical thing is to ensure the driven element is 1/5 the size of the main loop. The driven element is some thick multi-strand cable left over from my 10MHz dipole. I used some spare plastic plumbing pipe as the main support and this carries the co-ax feeder inside it, to keep things neat.

Hopefully the pictures will show how it is assembled. I was quite careful to drill holes that provide a snug fit for the tubes. The bottom of the plastic support piping is cut so that it is held in place by the lid of the plastic box once it is screwed on. Cable-ties abound, as you can see!

The main loop is connected to the capacitor by copper braid, which seems to work OK. It is not the most sturdy of designs but it works and is lightweight.

Hope that is enough info - please get in touch if anythings needs more clarification.
All the best, Pete MW0RSS

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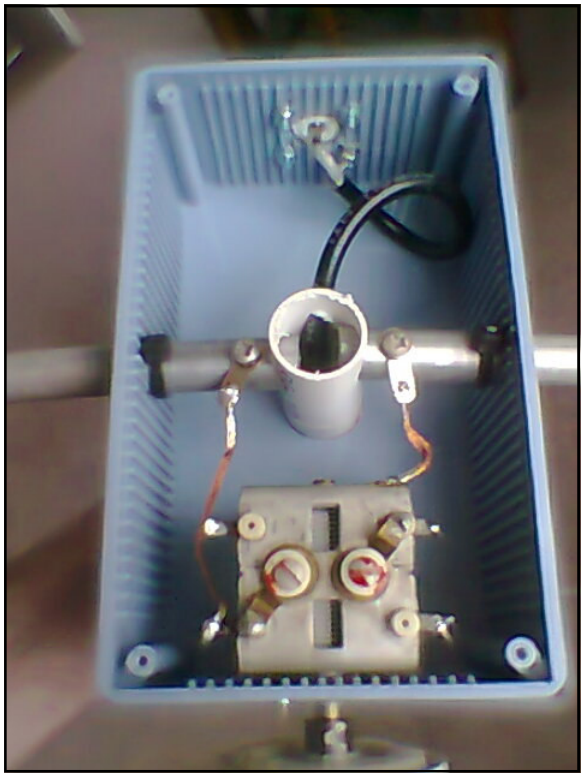

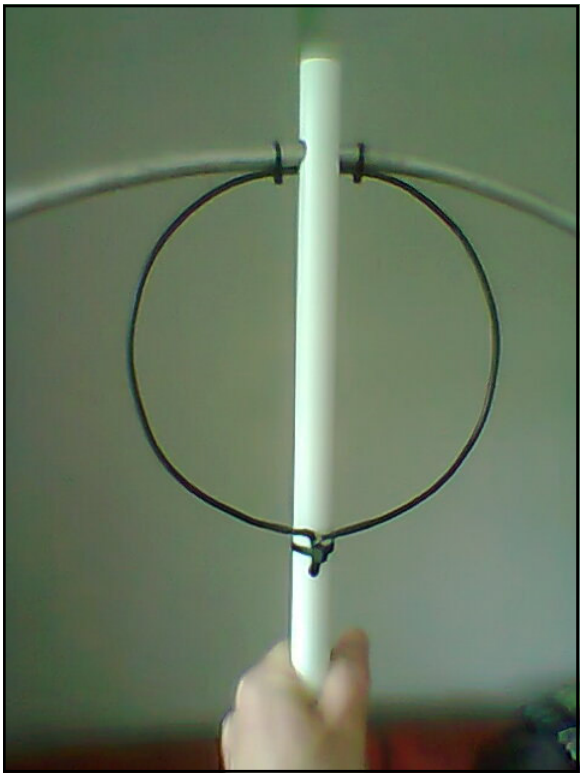

(Continued on page 26)

From John, N8ZYA, #2279 --

It's taken a while, but when I finished tallying up my countries, there were 102 countries in the DXCC logbook last month, and I had just sent in my WAS (worked all 50 states) data in February, and received my certificate for that award a month earlier.

It's taken me about three years to achieve both these awards, with never more than 5 watts of power, and indoor "stealth" antennas.

How did I work DXCC (100 different countries) with such simple (indoor) antennas, and such a simple station? I attribute my DXCC award to two specific things. Number one was the ability to get my code speed into the 20+ wpm range. Number two was being able to string an indoor "random wire antenna" which allowed me to use "all bands" through my small tuner.

I worked nearly all of my WAS contacts (48) with my Isotron antennas on either 40 meters or 20 meters.

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Alaska and Hawaii were my two most difficult states; I worked those with a 50 ft length of "Radio Shack" speaker wire which I strung around the perimeter of a spare room in the house. The wire runs from my tuner, across the windows, which have wooden curtain rods, across the hallway, over the top of an "open" wooden door, and is tied off the the "downstairs" wooden stair railing. It's a tough way to do it, and it's a true "random wire", but I've enjoyed every minute of the challenge it took to work those 102 countries.

The process accelerated a little before September of 2012 when I started using "dedicated band dipoles" for my DX contacts. My indoor "upstairs" space is very limited but I'm able to stretch out a dipole for 10 meters and 15 meters. Those two dipoles barely hang between the wooden curtain rod, on one side of the house, and the bathroom window sill, on the opposite side of the house. This picture below shows my "end fed" 10 meter antenna. The 15 meter dipole antenna requires an "open door" and an extended length to the bathroom window frame.

Those two antennas work well on those bands (even indoors) but the 50 foot random wire, which allows me easy access to the 17, 12, and especially the 30 meter band, were the true deciding factors in my DXCC award.

What are my immediate goals now?

There's DXCC on a "single" band, working the "capitol cities" of every country and state, or perhaps working DXCC with "outside antennas" while operating in the field. I'm not sure what it will be now that I have the QRP DXCC award but I'm sure something will soon grab my attention.

The North American QRP CW Club has always been my favorite organization. I hope my addition of the NAQCC DXCC QRP Award will be an inspiration to those of our members who think working over a 100 different countries with five watts, or less, of power and "simple wire antennas" is impossible.

Those 17, 12, and 30 meter contacts were actually done with about 3 watts of power. Never say the word "never" when it comes to QRP. I've been an optimist when it comes to my QRP operations. I'm looking forward to the next challenge, whatever it might be.

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From John, K3WWP, #0002 --
April was a pretty good month. Topping the list of "good" was the weather. After the grueling winter, it was nice to have some warmer temperatures, no snow, and plants coming back to life again.

It was good for ham radio as well. DX was back solidly again. Evidence of that was my completing the European Chapter challenge in the first 5 days of the month after finishing the Paul Revere challenge a day earlier using only DX stations to do so. Also my daily DX streak stood at 426 consecutive days on April 30 and still continues into May as I write this report.

As was detailed in the WPA Chapter news, Mike spent the weekend of April 11-13 here and we had a ball as usual, working some contests in our 'tag team' style and chasing DX when not in the contests. The highlight for Mike (well, and for me also) was his working Japan for the first time with QRP/CW - three stations in fact. Many years ago before he was 'saved', he had worked Japan on some other mode called SSB (whatever that is?).

Near the end of the month I placed an order with Elecraft for their new PX3 which is a panadapter designed to work with the KX3. They will be shipping probably in July. It will be nice to have a dedicated panadapter instead of using the computer program HDSDR as one. It will make contesting much easier for one thing, having the computer dedicated solely to the logging program now.

The first and last of the month brought a new band-country - HH2/N5JR on 12M and 9L1A on 15M respectively. I also got my QSL card from TX6G for my 10, 12, and 15M QSOs. That was entity #208 verified overall.

I continued perfect in my quest for the W1AW Anniversary WAS Award at 34/34 states which is now 36/36 as I write on May 2nd. That has been a lot of fun chasing the new states as they are activated. I try to get them as soon aws possible in the first hour of activation. My best was 0000Z when I think I was the first station to work VT (at least on 20M) a few weeks ago. Oh, and all states so far have been verified in the LotW - at least the first 33, as the last three haven't uploaded their logs yet. The ARRL is starting to repeat states now, so the opportunity to complete the WAS won't occur until Maine is activated the first time the week of August 27th. I thought at first it was to be 50 states the first 25 weeks, then repeat the 50 the second 25 weeks, but I guess that would have been too simple and logical.

I'm looking forward to the Butler hamfest on June 1st, although as described elsewhere in the newsletter, what was to be the main attraction of presenting Tom with his retirement gift had to be altered due to circumstances that will be explained in the June newsletter.

Complete information about the NAQCC, including a membership application, activities schedule, and extensive contact list is available on our website at http://naqcc.info/index.html.

Questions can also be sent to
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CLUB INFORMATION AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

by Founding President Tom Mitchell, WY3H

We realize that QRP and CW operation do not appeal to everyone. We have no "axe to grind" with the QRO (high power) fraternity. We recognize that there are times when QRO operation is invaluable. During disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes or terrorist attacks, radio amateurs provide vital, life-saving communications for which QRO operation is often necessary. QRO operators also provide an invaluable public service in health and welfare traffic and routine traffic handling.

Amateur radio has something for everyone, including SSB, other forms of digital communication and AM and FM operation. However, for a small but dedicated group, QRP (and QRPp) CW operation provides the greatest challenge and thrill amateur radio has to offer.

Each month the club will host a different challenge such as the GAW (Get Acquainted Week) or the Turkey challenge (making words relating to Thanksgiving from letters in callsigns of stations worked). Also we will have a 2 hour sprint each month alternating between Tuesday and Wednesday evenings with a bonus multiplier for using a straight key.

In addition to QRP CW operation, the club encourages (but does not limit operators to) the use of simple wire antennas. The club offers free membership to any licensed radio amateur (or shortwave listener) anywhere in the world who is willing to use and promote QRP (or QRPp) CW for at least part of their operating time.

We don't have all the answers, but we are willing to answer questions concerning QRP and CW operation from newcomers to the hobby and veteran amateurs alike. Let's put the thrill back into amateur radio and work together to encourage everyone to just give it a try.

We welcome all who share our view to join us and become part of an elite amateur radio fraternity.