

NAQCC NEWS



ISSUE 195 SEPTEMBER 2014



KEY CLICKS

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- ◆ **N#A OPERATORS STILL NEEDED.** Our 10th anniversary celebration is just around the corner and there is still room for volunteers to operate using our special N#A callsigns October 13-19. We have operators for all 10 US districts but “the more the merrier.” Your actual operating time and frequencies are completely up to you and the only stipulation is that everything is done with CW and QRP. If you would like to be an N#A operator please send me an email with your name, callsign, and US call district. 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 .

- ◆ **ANNIVERSARY SPRINT OPERATORS NEEDED IN DISTRICTS 2, 3, AND 4.** To expand on the item above we would really like to have all of the US districts on the air with N#A stations during our anniversary sprint on October 14 and we still need operators in districts 2, 3, and 4. Super contesting skills are not needed and all you have to do is to put N#A on the air during the two hour sprint. If you would be interested in helping out with this please email me. You can find my address on the last page of this newsletter. - N8XMS

- ◆ **TWO-TIER PRIZE FORMAT FOR ANNIVERSARY SPRINT.** Some very nice prizes have been planned for the random prize drawing that will be held for the member participants in our 10th anniversary sprint in October. The drawing for the top three prizes will be restricted to those members who have completed the challenge/sprint participation requirements that were previously announced. Sprint-participating members who were not able to complete those requirements will still be eligible for a second tier of very nice prizes that will also be given away. We are not going to reveal what all of these prizes specifically are but you can be assured that the winners will be very pleased.

- ◆ **SEPTEMBER IS HONORING NANCY MONTH.** As has been previously announced we are honoring the memory of CW advocate and CQ Hall of Fame inductee Nancy Kott, WZ8C, during the month of September. By the time that you read this our special sprint in her memory will already be over so you can look for the results on our website. There is still plenty of time to participate in our second memorial event - a special alphabet challenge running all month that works with words (and numbers) that are all associated with Nancy. Complete details can be found at <http://naqcc.info/nancy.html> .

- ◆ **NEW SHENANDOAH VALLEY NAQCC CHAPTER FORMED.** We are very pleased to announce the formation of a new local NAQCC chapter in the state of Virginia. The Shenandoah Valley Chapter is now organizing local activities under the leadership of Russ Mumaw, K3NLT, #2906. They got off to a great start last month with a portable outing to the mountains and you can read all about it in the *Chapter News*

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section of this issue.

- ◆ **GODADDY PROBLEMS WITH SPRINT SUBMISSIONS.** Last month we had a few problems with the automatic log submission process where some submitted logs seemed to disappear into a GoDaddy black hole. We are not sure of why this happened and the technicians at GoDaddy have not been very helpful either. To help deal with this problem we have made a few adjustments to our submission confirmation process that you can read about in the *NAQCC Sprints* section of this issue.

- ◆ **THANK YOU FOR THE DONATIONS!** A big “THANK YOU” goes out to 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.”



A REVIEW OF THE MFJ *CUB*, BY BOB WOISH - WB3T



I am quickly running out of QRP projects as it gets harder to find a kit I have not already built. The MFJ cub was one of the few exceptions. This year I decided to try the 40 meter version as my “Fourth of July Week” vacation project. The build went pretty well and other than the paint on the edges of the front and back, the case looks a lot nicer than shown in the photos on MFJ’s web site. I used a Sharpie to cover the bare metal on the edges of the case and that worked fine, but I have to wonder, when MFJ had the unit in the spray booth with sprayer in hand, why not hit the edges too? The controls are nicely laid out and comfortable to use. MFJ has avoided the exposed dial pointers and other little funnies that have stuck out of (and eventually broken off of) some trail radios. The case is heavy-duty and I would have no reservations at all about throwing it into a backpack.

There were quite a few extra capacitors included in the kit. After completing the kit per instructions there were no empty holes on the board, and the radio works fine. This confirms these are in fact extra so don’t be concerned if you have leftover parts. One capacitor value was missing, and the kit included a wrong-sized hex nut for the volume control. Also sorely missing were the “helps” usually included with other kits – plastic tuning tools for the trim caps and small trim pots, and an Allen key for the tuning knob. You will also need a small jeweler’s screwdriver for the volume knob. Radio Shack should have what you need if you don’t already have it on hand.

I had seen youtube videos of other cubs in action and decided I did not need 60 kHz of range – and mine came out on the long side anyway, 85 kHz. That made for very touchy tuning. I removed R5, the 1k SMT resistor and replaced it with a 2.4k resistor under the circuit board from ground to the bottom of tuning pot R4. This gives me a range from 7.010 to 7.055, and centering the received signal in the rig’s passband is now much easier. There is plenty of DX on the low end of this range, and most of, if not all QRP activity on the upper end. If you have a General Class license, you may still want to include the lower band portion just to listen in and get some practice copying faster code speeds. Otherwise a range of 7.025 - 7.065 will give you all the band coverage you need for great QRP action, while providing nice smooth tuning. Instructions for setting your band edges are included in the manual.

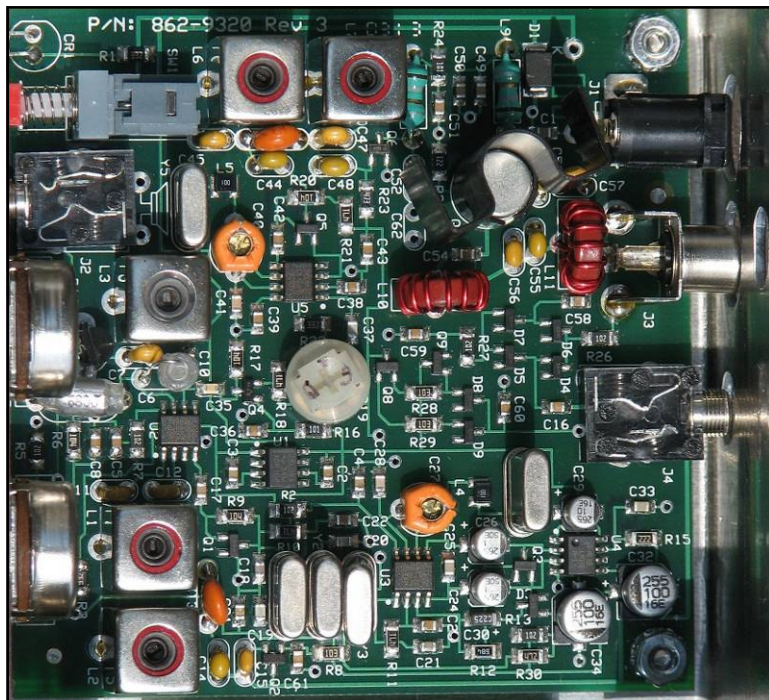
With a few minor exceptions, my negatives on the cub (MFJ does not capitalize but does italicize the “cub” moniker) relate to the kit and build rather than the final product. Most of the positives relate to what you end up with, and this I think is a good thing.

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Once built, I ran a long-term drift test that lasted over three hours. Drift in my cub was around 450 Hz per hour from a cold startup as well as during the second and third hours. In other words, it did not stabilize. Some users report worse numbers, some better. Some say theirs stabilize after 20-30 minutes of warm-up, but do not specify what they consider stabilized. I will just say that the cub as received was not as stable as my Ten Tec 1340 (40 Hz/hr) or Small Wonder SW Plus (30 Hz/hr), but more stable than my Elecraft K1 (1100 Hz/hr). That puts my cub somewhere in the middle, but I do find it a bit annoying to have to retune at every “k” during a QSO, and I tire of hearing “ur drifting...” I also noticed that the polystyrene caps provided for C6 and C7 were extremely sensitive to mild temperature changes. These went into the round file and were replaced with more stable silver mica units. As a next step I spent no less than three days making VFO mods and doing long-term drift tests. It takes quite a bit of time due to the need for allowing the circuit to cool completely after soldering, as well as after any power-on state to ensure you are seeing real data from a cold start. This takes at least three hours of cool-down time and 90 minutes of test time per attempt. Then there’s analyzing the data, determining the next move, and installing changes. Patience and determination required! As an afterthought, a pair of very small alligator clips installed in place of each capacitor in the VFO would have saved hours of time in drift testing. Once final temperature coefficients and values are determined, then it's time to solder in! (I realized this while finalizing this review... well, better late than never!)

In my 40 meter unit, when 33% of the value of C6 was of N750 type (negative 750 ppm/degrees C) and 67% silver mica (near zero temperature shift), things were far better. If I had a 470 pF N250 I could have used it for the full value, but I used what I had on hand. The result is a cub that drifts only +80 and -20 Hz from a cold start to one hour, and less after that. Results will vary somewhat from unit to unit due to differences in production varactors, SA602 oscillator/mixer ICs, and other VFO circuit components. Temperature testing is a fun project, even if a tedious one, and the result is gratifying – near DDS stability without the digital noise. Excellent weak signal reception, which is very important in the world of QRP, is delivered by the cub. The old truth still holds – you can’t work ‘em if you can’t hear ‘em! And you’ll hear them.

The PCB is an integration of surface mount and through-hole technology with many plated through holes. However, pads and plating give up the ghost very easily, so the cub is not a good choice for those wishing to experiment with modifications. I found this out by trying three different output transistors as suggested in the manual. I removed the original transistor (2N5109) and lost one plated through hole for Q7, tried a second transistor (2N3553), did not see enough improvement, so carefully removed that and lost a second circuit pad in the process. I decided to leave my third choice in place so as not to lose any additional plating or circuit pads. Fortunately, my RCA4013 from "Dan's Small Parts and Kits" did provide more output than the other two so I left well enough alone. I had to re-route one lead directly to components on the far side of a lost trace, and sneak a fine-tip soldering iron between the top of the board and the transistor body to make another connection in lieu of a lost pad on the underside of the board. My cub puts out 2.2 Watts at 14.0 Volts in. Good enough.



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I also lost two pads in the VFO while temperature compensating – one component removal was all it took for the traces to pull off. After that I replaced a missing trace with a clipped-off resistor lead, and installed “temporary” leads (which turned out to be permanent) where the VFO caps had been so I could experiment with different temperature coefficients using “tack solder” technique to avoid losing any more traces and pads. For the record, I am a retired RF engineer and former government certified solderer. I know my way around a temperature-controlled soldering iron, desoldering bulb, and solder wick and after having seen tens of thousands of PC boards over a lengthy career, have never seen a PCB so eager to fall apart. If you plan to experiment with the final output transistor, VFO caps, or any other components, be sure to install “tack leads” and never remove them. Just do a neat job and all will be well. Also, employ the old carpenter's rule of thumb – measure twice, cut once. In the world of PC boards, this means read the instructions twice and solder once! The same goes for double-checking component values and where appropriate, polarity – before soldering.

MFJ's Web site lists “Full QSK: Seamless electronic switching for smooth break-in” as a product feature, however unless you are sending at very slow speeds, say 5 WPM or less, the receiver does not switch back in between Morse characters or words. Only when you stop transmitting altogether can another station be heard, so there is no real break-in. There is no control for delay. The AGC circuit is a bit heavy-handed and produces a loud “snap” in the speaker or headphones on the first key-down of each transmission at speeds of about 13 WPM, and on each Morse character at speeds below about 13 WPM.

One last minus – the sidetone was very weak in my unit (entirely gone at all but max volume) so I added a 33 pF cap across the diode switch circuit to add to the RF “leakage” on which the sidetone relies.

There are lots of positives to talk about from here and I saved these for last. First, the cub is a blast! One of the first things I look for in a radio I like to use is the sound of the receiver. To me, if it looks good and sounds good, it's going to see some use. I prefer a pure analog receiver without the digital hash of DDS VFOs. I also do not like too tight an IF or audio pass band – those sound to me like the CW note has been strangled, and it also makes tuning difficult as it is easy to scoot right past a signal without hearing it. This would be especially true if you set up your cub for a wider range of frequencies. Fortunately, the cub uses a three-pole crystal IF filter where some other designs use four. In those cases I have been known to bypass one of the poles, especially in designs that do not allow for adjusting the bandwidth to taste. The cub as designed has a wonderful audio tone that I never get tired of listening to. The cub designer(s) I think found a great balance between tone and bandwidth. Same for the sidetone – once I got the level to where I could hear it, it's smooth and pleasant. None of this raspy stuff you find in some QRP transceivers that use (heaven forbid) a square wave or tri-wave sidetone. Grates on the ears after a short bit but the cub offers a pleasing, almost musical note on both transmit and receive. This is a radio you will want to leave on.

Power consumption is a low 42 mA on receive and 430 mA on transmit at 14.0 Volts in. This should run for quite a while in the field on a pack of eight to ten alkaline or NiMH AA cells and a long, long time on premium lithium cells. Alternatively, a three-cell Li-Po or Li-Ion rechargeable pack would fit nicely inside the cabinet – the usual cautions on lithium packs apply so be sure to educate yourself in this area if you go this way.

Other reports, and certainly enough of them, mention poorly installed SMT components on the PC board. These are older reports and it looks to me like the pick-and-place and solder reflow machines at MFJ (if used) are properly adjusted now, or at least the SMT assemblers are well trained; all of the SMT devices were expertly installed. (As of this writing that has been true of three cubs I have built for various bands, so no worries.) It is up to the builder to take the assembly process from there. The manual is clear to understand – very well done and better than most. There were zero addendums, which indicates a well-thought-out and properly proofread manual, or at least one that has been duly updated if and when errors had been found. There were no errors in the manual I received.

I like the ability to control the RF output of the cub. This provides the operator with QRPP capability, or

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Milliwatting. Just reduce to under a Watt out and you're in serious QRP country. NAQCC offers the "Thousand Miles Per Watt Award" for those making contacts using this ratio. And you don't need to cover a thousand miles either – a milliwatt per mile will do it. 200 mW, 200 miles, you qualify! See the NAQCC Awards section for details. The hole in the cub top cabinet allows access to the output trimmer. The cub manual cautions the user to set the output control just south of maximum when desiring full power to avoid overdriving the transmit circuitry into saturation, causing excess spurious output and risking the survival of the output transistor. I was not able to drive mine, even at full setting, so that any harmonic exceeded 42 dB below the carrier. Other spurs were near the noise floor of the analyzer, around -70 dBc. However, this can vary from unit to unit, so follow the instructions unless you have a spectrum analyzer and can verify your signal purity.

So now we have a QRP rig that looks and sounds great. Next, the acid test. I put the cub on the air and in the first day worked 11 different states from my Eastern Pennsylvania QTH. Antenna used was a homebrew 40 meter ground-mounted wire vertical with 16 buried radials. I got signal reports ranging from 339 to 599. Not "contest" 599s, but real ones in casual QSOs with two different North Carolina stations. Reports from New England to the Southern and Southeastern US were consistently 559 and up with solid copy. Ragchewing on 40 has been no problem. Other contacts out to the Midwest revealed the same.

All in all I give the cub three stars (out of five) mostly due to the inherent drift and lack of sturdiness of the PC board. Next I will add a K1EL keyer, there is enough room in the case for that. I also cut small white and red squares of vinyl tape to use as frequency indicators. White every 10 kHz and red for the halfway points between the white ones. In several tests I can come within 1 kHz of accurate using only these little markers, confirming frequency on my K2 after each QSO, even between the markers. Others have drawn up computer-generated frequency scales. I may try that but I like the little splash of red and white I have now. *(Bob completed these modifications right after submitting this review and they can be seen in the picture below. - editor)*

All told, the cub is a cool looking and sturdy radio ready for the trail and is fun to use. There it is, the bottom line – "fun." To me that says it all. This cub will see a lot of airtime.

SUMMARY

Hits:

- Excellent manual
- Nice sidetone
- Excellent IF/AF bandwidth
- Varactor tuning with good range
- Low power consumption
- Adjustable RF output level
- Fun to build and use
- Rugged cabinet

Misses:

- Frequency drift
- Weak printed circuit traces/pads
- Voids in the paint
- A missing part here or there
- QSK too slow



NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH SPRINT: Our sprint this month will be on September 18th, 0030-0230 UTC (the evening of Wednesday the 17th 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 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 118th sprint and once again we easily broke the 100-log level with 112 submitted logs. As usual, all of the participants had a great time.

We did have another glitch with the log submissions through GoDaddy, where a number of people had their logs disappear into an internet black hole. We extended the submission deadline a little bit and we believe that all of the submissions did eventually get through. In an attempt to prevent this from happening again you will now get two different email confirmations after using the autologger to submit your sprint log. The first email will be automatically generated by the autologger confirming that you made your submission. A day or two later you should get a second email from the sprint processor confirming the reception of your log. If you don’t receive these emails please contact the sprint processor for that month so that we can take care of the situation.

In the “battle” for Silver Log submissions we currently have a 10-way tie for first place with 8 perfect submissions so far during the year: AA7CU, K4KRW, KU4A, N2ESE, N8XMS, NQ2W, W2JEK, W4DUK, WA2JSG, WG8Y.

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: KA9DVX, N4NSS, KE2YK, K5ZU, W6OGC, KG6UBG, WU8R (nm). We trust that you had a fun time and hope that you will continue to participate and submit your results.

Complete results along with soapbox comments can be found at www.naqcc.info/sprint201408.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+	KC2EGL KQ1P N8QY K1IEE WA2JSG WB8ENE AA9L VE3FUJ KD0V KB3AAG WY3H N4FI K3RLL NF8M KU4A K4JPN NU7T
75+	N8XMS WB8LZG K4BAI KD2MX K4NVJ W2SH W9CC W2JEK
100+	KA2KGP K3WWP
125+	

CERTIFICATES			
SWA CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KN1H	K1IEE	
W2	W2SH	K2YGM	
W3	WB3T		
W4	K4ZGB	W4DUK	KB4QQJ
W5	N5GW		
W6	NS3C		
W7	AA7VW		
W8	KD8RUQ	NT8P	
W9	WB9CIF		
W0	N0TA		
VE	VE3DVC		
DX	CO8CML		
KEY CATEGORIES			
Straight Key (x2)	W2SH		
Bug (x1.5)	W5ODS		
Keyer (x1)	NQ2W		
OTHER CATEGORIES			
Gain	NQ2W		
First-Time Logger High Scorer	KA9DVX		
Prize Drawing	W5ODS		

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	112	115	194	2/13
Participants	181	159	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1714	1528	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	942	751	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	772	777	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	842	550	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	868	950	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	4	28	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs / Station	15.3	13.3	19.3	9/11



NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH CHALLENGE: We have three different challenges this month to enjoy. First up is the special challenge honoring the memory of CW advocate and CQ Hall of Fame inductee Nancy Kott, WZ8C. This challenge is an alphabet challenge working with words that are all related to Nancy. Complete details can be found at <http://naqcc.info/nancy.html> . (This challenge does not result in a participation point.)

Our regular North American challenge this month is an alphabet challenge working with words that are all associated with various QRP kit rigs. The complete list of words and other details can be found at www.naqcc.info/challenges201409.html. The previously announced QRPP challenge has been postponed as we look for appropriate sacrifices for the propagation gods.

The European challenge this month involves the names of famous European art museums. Details are at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/september-2014-challenge> .

NEXT MONTH CHALLENGE: In October be prepared for a real Halloween Howl with a North American alphabet challenge working with words that are all associated with that “trick-o-treat” of the year. Full details can be seen at www.naqcc.info/challenges201410.html.

The October European challenge works with the names and dates of construction of two beautiful European churches that date back to the early 1600's.. Details are at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/october-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: In August we had the opportunity to “Work All Continents” with an alphabet challenge working with the names of the continents - both current and ancient. Once the submission deadline has past you will be able to see the complete results, along with soapbox comments, at www.naqcc.info/challenges201408.html.



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:

No awards were issued during the month of August.



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.

Chris Gay, KU4A, #1960



Although I have been interested in ham radio for as long as I can remember, I was 20 years old before I met someone that was willing to Elmer me. I met Wally, now K0TSI, while we were both studying engineering at Ohio State. Despite us both being busy with school work, Wally kept after me and I got my Technician license one year during summer break.

The concept of "QRP" didn't mean much to me at the time, but I started out running low power anyway with a homebrew transmitter that I had built from plans in an ARRL publication. Technicians had novice privileges on some of the HF bands, and I was thrilled to be able to make some QSOs on 80m and 40m CW before packing up and leaving Columbus after graduation to take a job in Lexington, Kentucky.

Once I got settled in Lexington I typically operated at power levels closer to 100 watts. Somehow I came across the QRP-ARCI. In those days, "QRP" was considered "100 watts or less". So I qualified for "QRP operation". It wasn't too long after that that the generally accepted definition of QRP as "5 watts or less" was fairly universally adopted. But since my equipment was capable of more, I generally operated with 100 watts.

A few years back, Bob, AF4OI, decided to start a local QRP club called "KY-QRP". It was a great group, and I decided to get active in "true" QRP. Not content with "turning down the power" on a standard transceiver, I purchased an MFJ-9040 and began pounding brass on 40m. It was a lot of fun, and it took me back to my roots of enjoyable ragchews on CW. I also like various competitions, and Bob started a Miles-

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Per-Watt contest. Guess who won for 40 meters :-).

I wanted to expand my horizons a bit, and the introduction of the Yaesu FT-817 grabbed my attention. I bought one at the Huntsville, Alabama hamfest, and this great radio really ramped up my QRP operation. I had always been a contester, and I found myself more and more often entering the QRP category. And, I now could enter the Miles-Per-Watt contest on more than one band :-).

The current membership of KY-QRP is very big into field operation. It took me awhile to gather up everything, but I managed to put together a complete kit for field work, built around my trusty FT-817. We've operated from city parks, farms, and the Kentucky Horse Park campground. The fun and comradeship of those events is something special.

Somewhere along my travels around the Internet, I stumbled upon the NAQCC. The thing that I noticed about it that sets it apart from other clubs is that it is an OPERATING club, with many various operating activities and awards that can be obtained.

My favorite NAQCC activity by far is the monthly Sprint. I'm on the Honor Roll having operated in 63 of them. I typically make just a few QSOs in a half-hour or so. But in August 2013 I made 30 contacts which stands as my personal best. In any event, thanks everyone for all the Sprint QSOs down through the years!

Among the awards, the Participation Award is my favorite. In honor of K3WWP, I decided awhile back to try to maintain a streak of consecutive months with at least one participation point. Now, this is nothing like John's incredible QSO-a-day streak that goes back decades. But it is something that is a challenge for me. I've had at least one participation point every month since September of 2007. Some of the monthly challenges are interesting, too, so I often get the 3 points for doing both activities.

Another award I like is the Friendship Club, and I just recently got my endorsement for 500 points. I enjoy having a list of all the NAQCC members that I have worked, all sorted by membership number. I've worked many of you multiple times, but it is always great to add a new one to my list.

Around the shack I have two of the MFJ monobanders, and an Argonaut 509 as well. But for operating I always seem to gravitate to my beloved FT-817. At home I have a tribander at 45 feet, and various wire antennas for the other bands.

In 2010 I retired from IBM after 33 years of service as an electrical engineer and computer programmer. I do part-time contract work, but since I gave up the full-time grind I've had a lot more time for radio. So, I'm looking forward to seeing you all on the bands!



NAQCC CHAPTER NEWS

We currently have five local chapters—Europe, Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Shenandoah Valley, 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 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.

We are very pleased to announce the formation of a new local NAQCC chapter in the state of Virginia. The *Shenandoah Valley Chapter* is now organizing local activities under the leadership of Russ Mumaw, K3NLT, #2906. They got off to a great start last month with a portable outing to the mountains and you can read all about it in their chapter report later in this section.

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 logs from North American participants. Please see the chapter web page for dates and details.

The European chapter is now celebrating the start of its fifth year of operation. It was founded in August/September 2010 and has since been organising events to increase QRP/CW activity throughout Europe.

August Activity Day

The chapter's August activity day took place on Thursday 14th August. There were five participants; SM5MEK gained the most points (2250), F5MNM came second with 2033 points, and WU1V was third with 1674 points. The full results are available at <http://naqcc-eu.org/august-2014-activity-day>

The activity days are dedicated to increasing QRP/CW activity in Europe over a given 24 hour period. We understand that everybody has differing commitments, so we normalise scores based upon how much time over the proposed period stations have been able to operate. We hope to be able to work you on the air during the next activity day, which will be held on Monday 15th December. Please mark the date in your

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diaries!

EU2014

Over the course of the last month, we have received another two successful entries for the EU2014 challenge. K1IEE completed it on 7th August, having worked 44 countries across Europe, and SM5MEK completed it on 8th August, having worked 54(!) countries.

The core aim of the challenge is to promote QRP/CW activity in Europe over a prolonged period (the entire year of 2014). To complete the challenge, the successful applicant will have worked stations in at least 42 countries across Europe during 2014. Full details are available at: <http://naqcc-eu.org/europe-2014>

Monthly Challenges

The chapter holds monthly alphabet challenges. Our challenges manager, Ton PA5LR, has produced an analysis of previous challenge entries here: <http://naqcc-eu.org/challenge-statistics>

July challenge results

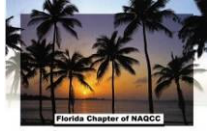
There were eight entries for the chapter's July challenge, which involved constructing names of the countries through which the Tour de France passed this year and the approximate distances covered in kilometres, from the letters and numbers in callsigns of stations worked. F5MNK, G3JFS, K3WWP, PA0XAW, PA7PYR, RW3AI, SM5MEK, and W2JEK all successfully completed the challenge.

August challenge

There are still a few days left to submit entries for the August challenge! The premise is to construct the names of three circuits that hosted a Formula One Grand Prix and the year of the first GP on this circuit. Full details and rules can be found at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/past-challenges/august-2014-challenge>

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NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER:



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

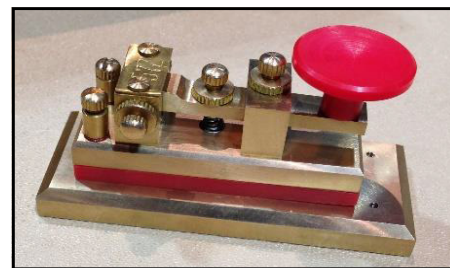
MEMBER NEWS: The Florida Chapter of NAQCC held its August field event on Friday, August 15th, starting at 9am, at Riverside Pavilion Park in Port Orange, Florida. This Municipal Park Complex is “sandwiched” between US Highway 1 and the Halifax River Intracoastal Waterway. While the “park” is a city park, the main building houses the Port Orange/South Daytona Chamber of Commerce; the Halifax Sport Fishing Club, and the Halifax Historical Trust. The building has a large covered wrap around deck on the sides and a larger partially covered deck in the rear of the building that overlooks the river. We had some nice large PVC tables, oversized cushioned chars for at least one person’s oversized bottom (me!) - Shade, bathrooms, AC power, water fountain and the beautiful sight of the river and beachside peninsula skyline!! Roughing it once again! Arrangements had been

made with the Executive Director of the Chamber group, who allowed us to use the rear deck of the building for the morning’s operation. Thanks Debbie Connors!!



Art WB4MNK #5274 used his KX-1 running 4W to a ZM-2 tuner feeding a 28’ x 16’ End Fed Wire on a 19’ push up pole attached to the deck railing. He made 7 QSOs in NJ, VA, PA, AZ, and FL..... 6 were NAQCC members.

Steve even let Art play with his new Chinese Birdy Key!!



ART WB4MNK MAKES ONE OF HIS 7 FB QSOs

The Birdy Key

Steve WB40MM #5913 (KX-3 running 5W out) made 3 contacts – GA, KP3 (PR), NY – only the KP3 was a NAQCC member. Here he is copying the KP3 information into the laptop. Learning much from previous



experiments with antennas and “pooling resources” by using various system parts together, he quickly attached his SuperAntenna “clamp mount” to the deck railing, installing an MFJ monoband “hamstick” and the 4 short radials from the SuperAntenna. The antenna was up and tuned with a 1.3:1 SWR on 40M in 7 minutes, start to finish! On this trip the 40M and 30M ‘sticks were tuned (the 40M was 1.3:1 “out of the box”, needing no tuning, and the 30M ‘stick only a few inches to get it to 1.4:1.) The 20M was 1.2:1 on the last trip. Steve made all Qs with a straight key (The Birdy Key from China).

WB40MM POUNDING THE BIRDY KEY BRASS – CHECK OUT HIS WILD HAIR!! (HUMIDITY???)

Darryl AB8GU #6913 our now famous “fixture” in our outings, spotted us on the internet, helped with antennas and take down, and kept us “informed” on the other’s progress. Neil Armstrong KJ4CIA #6278 stopped by to “check on us usual suspects” and just say, “Hi”. Neil, a true homebrew & CW/QRP supporter, is always a welcome addition to our outings and is a permanently smiling dude!!

The bands were, “blah” – the sunspot number was supposedly 108 and A index of 84..... but the QSB was so deep that at times neither of us could hear any signals on 20M or 40M; and the few signals we heard



were not all that good. There was S7 static on 40M all morning, and S3 noise on 20M. 30M was nil.....no noise, but no signals either! The bands were so “dead”, that Steve got bored – not a good thing - and he watched as Art would send “CQ NA” and then intently listen for an answer for what seemed like hours (it was about 2 minutes). After Art sent another long “CQ NA” on 20M for the 4th or 5th time, Steve answered it.....and he and Darryl watched as Art again so intently listened to the response, so serious and focused on the return call. Steve sent “WB4OOM” by accident, then corrected the call to, “WB40MM”. When Art got the call correction, he looked dazed, confused and bewildered....and then

WB4MKN DECIPHERS WB40MM'S MYSTERY CALL!!

Looked over to Steve’s position, where Steve was laughing uncontrollably – because during this whole time, Darryl (using his iPad) was “filming” Art’s raptly concentrated efforts to copy Steve’s 59+40 dB

(Continued on page 18)

signal! Art sheepishly started laughing too, saying, “Dang, when I got the first call I thought I had a good one”. Nope, sorry Art.....another one that got away!!! We all had a good healthy laugh, deciding, “It was time to go”.

We quit just before noon and enjoyed lunch at a local chain restaurant ...The weather was brutal again – hot and humid – 94 degrees, 90% humidity, that made it feel like Hades out in the sun, but, the shaded pavilion made it tolerable. All of us are praying for the cooler Fall Florida weather to arrive in October!!! (That would be 75 degrees with 60% humidity!)



We all agreed this was a great location to operate from, and walked around the small park and pier that goes out over the river, assessing various future operations!!

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE PO/SD CHAMBER FOR PERMISSION TO OPERATE AT THIS RADIO FRIENDLY SITE!

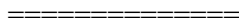
Many thanks to those who listened for us and helped make this yet another successful NAQCC-FL event!

NEXT MONTH: The next monthly outing of the NAQCC-FL folks is scheduled for Friday, September 19th, 2014 at 9:00am EDT. Look for our announcement!

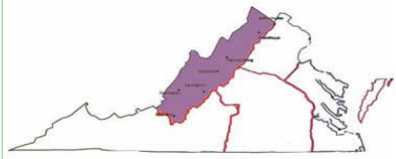
72/73 to all!
SteveWB4OMM, #5913
NAQCCFL@yahoo.com



"THE BOYS OF SUMMER"
WB4MNK, AB8GU, AND KJ4CIA POSE AT THE PARK SIGN – STEVE WB4OMM WAS TAKING THE PHOTO – HE WAS HAVING A “BAD HAIR DAY”!!



NAQCC SHENANDOAH VALLEY CHAPTER:



Items in this section are from the Shenandoah Valley Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to Russ, K3NLT, at k3nlt@comcast.net.

The inaugural operation of the Shenandoah Valley Chapter of the NAQCC...

Operators were Howard Zehr, K4LXY, and Russell Mumaw, K3NLT, both with Elecraft KX1 radios. Howard was running 4 watts output on forty meters, and I was running 2 watts on twenty meters.



K4LXY



K3NLT

We arrived at our mountain top location about 8:45 EDST Friday morning and immediately began our set up. Howard installed a multiband doublet with 300 ohm window feedline, and I put up the suggested 28 foot fed side and 16 feet on the "ground side". Both antennas loaded well on 20 and 40 meters with the built in KXAT1 auto tuners.



(Continued on page 20)

We both began calling CQ around 9 AM, and had a modicum of success until around 10:30 AM we both noticed there were no audible signals on the bands we were on and that included several QRO operators which we monitored a bit. There had been quite a bit of deep QSB for a while after 10 AM, but Howard, K4LXY, on 40 meters had continued to make a contact or two.

Since we have not had too much experience with the KX1s in portable operations like this, it was a good learning experience. I (Russ) have had many Field Day outings at this location with my K2 at 5 watts so I knew what the location is capable of. I had also operated in the late fall hunting season when the conditions can be considerably better.

The Shenandoah QRP Club is a newly forming group of active operators and is composed of six members. We have no formal organization and only randomly meet at various locations as it suits us. Three or four of our members are NAQCC members and we are encouraging the others to join so we will be better able to enter into the NAQCC activities. Our main purpose is to promote QRP and also continue the long history of the CW mode of operation. We will be planning for CW nets and rag chews this winter to help the newbies build their skill in CW. We want to help promote the activities of NAQCC.



Our future "___peditions" will be more local in nature, but Howard and I wanted to operate on the Virginia West Virginia line and give out QSLs for both states. The state line is defined as the ridge peak of the Shenandoah Mountain, and the hunting club where we operated is on both sides of that line.

Thanks to all those who heard us and answered our CQs, we look forward to more "minipeditions".

Russ K3NLT NAQCC #2906

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER:



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

SKEETER HUNT REPORT...

A fun day today with Mike KC2EGL, and a busy one, but then don't the two always go together? Of course the big event of the day was the Skeeter Hunt. Mike arrived around 9:30A or so and after chatting a while and playing some computer games, we went to Ponderosa for Sunday brunch with a quick stop at WalMart on the way home. Then we played some more computer games for a while till it was time to head to the Community Park for the Skeeter Hunt.

Our regular pavilion was occupied when we got there, and it looked like they were set up to stay a while, so we went to the secondary pavilion which is kind of weather beaten and unused as shown here. It makes a good operating position though and has a bit more elevation than the other one.



After we unpacked and were setting up, one fellow from a nearby softball game wandered over to see what we were up to. We explained that we were ham radio operators and he didn't know what we were talking about. Mike asked him his age and he said 34. I kidded him asking what he had been doing those 34 years. He laughed, and then Mike explained ham radio to him briefly.

We got our antennas up fairly easily. We both used the K3RLL jumper dipoles this time. I took some pictures of them, but antenna pictures don't show up well against a background of trees so I won't waste space here showing them. I'll just describe them a bit. As the name implies, they are dipoles cut for 40M (mine) or 80M (Mike's) with jumper clips along the way to shorten them to use on the higher bands. I set mine for 20 and Mike took 40. The center of mine was only up about 12 feet or so. Mike's somewhat higher. They both tuned beautifully to 1:1 with the KX3 built-in antenna tuner through the coax feed line.

(Continued on page 22)



Top – Mike KC2EGL, bottom – John K3WWP with our KX3s, paddles and laptops.

We started operating just about 1700Z when the Skeeter Hunt started. Conditions were nothing like last year when we had a stream of QSOs coming at us pretty steadily. This year it was work and wait, work and wait. Most of my 20M QSOs were from W0 land and in looking at Mike's log, I saw he was working mostly up and down the east coast. It could have been because our dipoles were at right angles. One surprise was working our fellow NAQCC WPA Chapter member Don K3RLL in New Bethlehem, PA about 20 miles away. That was on 20M and we figure it must have been ground wave from his hill to ours. We were both about S3 to S4 but with very steady signals as expected from ground wave.

Mike and I both struggled along making the occasional QSO in between the long waits. It did get better as the afternoon wore on. I tried to work stations in the WAE contest since the Skeeter Hunt rules allowed that and even counted DX QSOs as 3 points vs. 2 for those domestic stations with a Skeeter #, and 1 point for other non-Skeeter domestic stations.

It was rough working the DX though vs. last year when I was easily working Europeans before and after the Skeeter Hunt. This year most of the time I wasn't being heard at all, or if I was heard, I had to do a lot of repeating. Oddly a couple of my most distant QSOs with LY9Y and OK2RZ were bang bang no repeats

(Continued on page 23)

needed QSOs. Mike's computer battery gave out about a half hour before the end of the Hunt, and he shut down with 20 QSOs. I had 25, and I said I would like to make it a total of 50 if we could, so despite being a bit frustrated with the slow pace of the Hunt, I stuck it out for 5 more QSO so we could have 50. Actually when Mike recounted, he had 21, so we had a total of 51 which was 18 less than last year.

Back home again where we figured the score, got our logs together, and downloaded pictures we took. With 14 DX QSOs, 28 Skeeter QSOs, 9 other QSOs, 31 SPCs, a 4x bonus for homebuilt gear (our KX3s), and spelling the word SKEETER from letters in the calls we worked for a 100 point bonus we wound up with a preliminary score of 13,368 which was roughly 3,000 better than last year when we had 69 QSOs because of the DX QSOs and more SPCs (31 vs. 23). So we were pleased with the effort, and it was a nice day to be out in the field. Sunny and warm, but with nature's air conditioned breezes making it very comfortable.

Then it was back to Ponderosa for their dinner buffet, back home for my streak QSO (W1AW/2), after which it was time for Mike to head up north again after a very enjoyable day.

Two weeks later at Skyview (that story follows below), Don K3RLL was checking the scores from the Skeeter Hunt, and our N3AQC operation netted us second place overall, first place multi-op, and first place PA in the standings. See <http://w2lj.blogspot.com/p/njqrp-skeeter-hunt.html> for all the results.

USS REQUIN REPORT...

On August 14, the WPA Chapter had one of its USS Requin subpeditions. As you may know, the Requin is moored near the Carnegie Science Center across from the point in downtown Pittsburgh, PA which is about 40 miles from the QTH of John K3WWP in Kittanning, PA.



(Continued on page 24)

The other three members of the operating team arrived at John's almost simultaneously around 10 minutes of 8AM. The members being Mike KC2EGL, Don K3RLL, and Tom WB3FAE. After chatting together for about a half hour, Mike who was outside talking with Tom rang John's phone for him and Don to come out. Don and I figured it must be time to leave so we did go out.

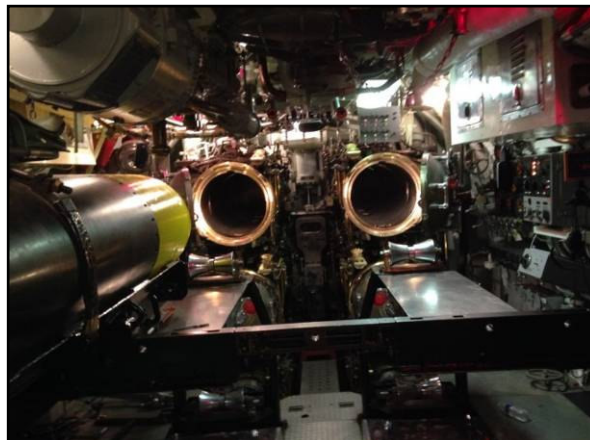
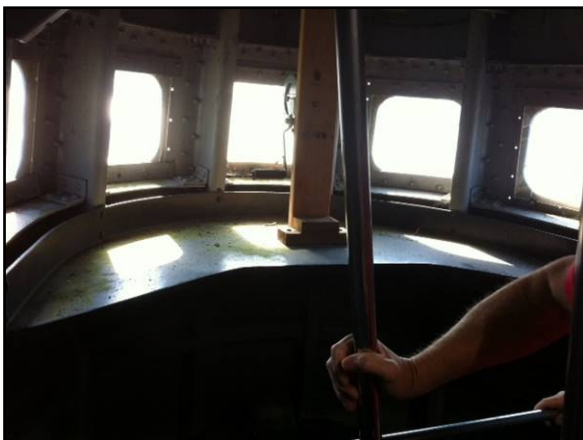
The four of us jumped in the car and headed off to Pittsburgh about 8:35AM. Along the way Mike and I played the alphabet game finding all the letters of the alphabet from billboards, license plates, traffic signs, etc. Tom and Don sat in the back seat wondering what the two crazy guys up front were doing.

We arrived at the Science Center parking lot around 9:35AM, got parked, gathered our gear from the trunk and headed off to the sub. After waiting around 10 minutes, Art WA3BKD who is in charge of the radio room as well as other aspects of the sub showed up to greet us. Art is a great guy with a sense of humor like ours. When we asked him for permission to come aboard, he said NO.

After we introduced Don and Tom and chatted a bit, Art took us all to the radio room where we got set up to operate. Since this was Don and Tom's first visit to the Requin, Art gave them a thorough tour of the sub leaving Mike and me to do the operating.



As soon as Mike called his first CQ, he was greeted by a huge pile up like we were on some rare DX island somewhere. That was unusual because on our subpeditions it generally takes a while for the activity to build up. This time everyone seemed to be at the ready waiting for us. He and I worked through the pileup and continued working stations for about an hour and a half or so until Tom and Don returned from their tour which included seeing things as shown here.



Left: A view from the sail. Right: The torpedo tubes.

(Continued on page 25)

We all brought our own lunches. Don was the first to eat his and he did so in the mess hall of the sub. Later Mike and I took our lunches out to the Science Center picnic area where we had this for a view.



We did some people watching before heading back inside the vessel. When we arrived, Tom took his break accompanied by Don. He also ate in the mess hall. Mike and I occasionally surprised (shocked?) visitors when they found a 'live' crew in the radio room, and we wondered if Tom and Don had any similar experiences while eating in the mess hall. Tom replied, "Actually some of the visitors asked us some questions. Don't think that we shocked anyone though. The next trip I will abstain from bathing for a week or so and sit there in my underwear while eating (as Art described to us on our tour). That might get me arrested....but it would probably shock/disgust the visitors." Don replied, "We had more interaction than I would have imagined."

The general impression was that we were 'plants', e.g., to make the sub look authentic. If those people only knew what Art told us about how the actual submariner's dressed while at sea!" Mike and I missed out on those stories – must have been interesting. After our lunches, we all returned to operating, but by now activity had slowed down somewhat from the earlier frantic pace. We continued operating switching between 20 and 40 meters with a brief interlude on 30 meters for one QSO there. Here are Don (L) and Tom (R) enjoying their operating sessions.

(Continued on page 26)



One of the pleasures of the event was interacting with the public. There were at least a couple hundred visitors who passed by the radio room, many of whom showed an interest in what we were doing. Some were surprised there were actual human beings in the radio room, and actually operating. All who passed by were very friendly and had some very good questions to ask. Many were surprised that we were using CW. A lot mentioned Morse code indicating they did know something about it.

And now that you've seen the view of our team from the back, let's close with a view of all four packed into the radio room like sardines.

Thanks to all of you who worked us. We're sorry if we missed hearing any of you, but it was a bit chaotic at times dealing with visitors and copying weak signals at the same time. Thanks especially to Art and the other 'crew' aboard the sub for putting up with us. I guess we did OK though, as we were invited back again. We hope for an encore performance the day before Thanksgiving if all works out.



L-R: Don, Mike, John, Tom.

Seeing that, it's hard to believe there was a crew of 80 some sailors on the Requin when it was on a mission. Even though they obviously weren't all in the radio room, how do you spell CLAUSTROPHOBIA. HI.

SKYVIEW REPORT...

On August 24, four NAQCC WPA Chapter members had an experience they will long remember. They got to see what it is like operating CW/QRP with a huge antenna farm as shown below:



Pictured below now are the four operators (L-R) Mike KC2EGL, Tom WB3FAE, John K3WWP, and Don K3RLL.



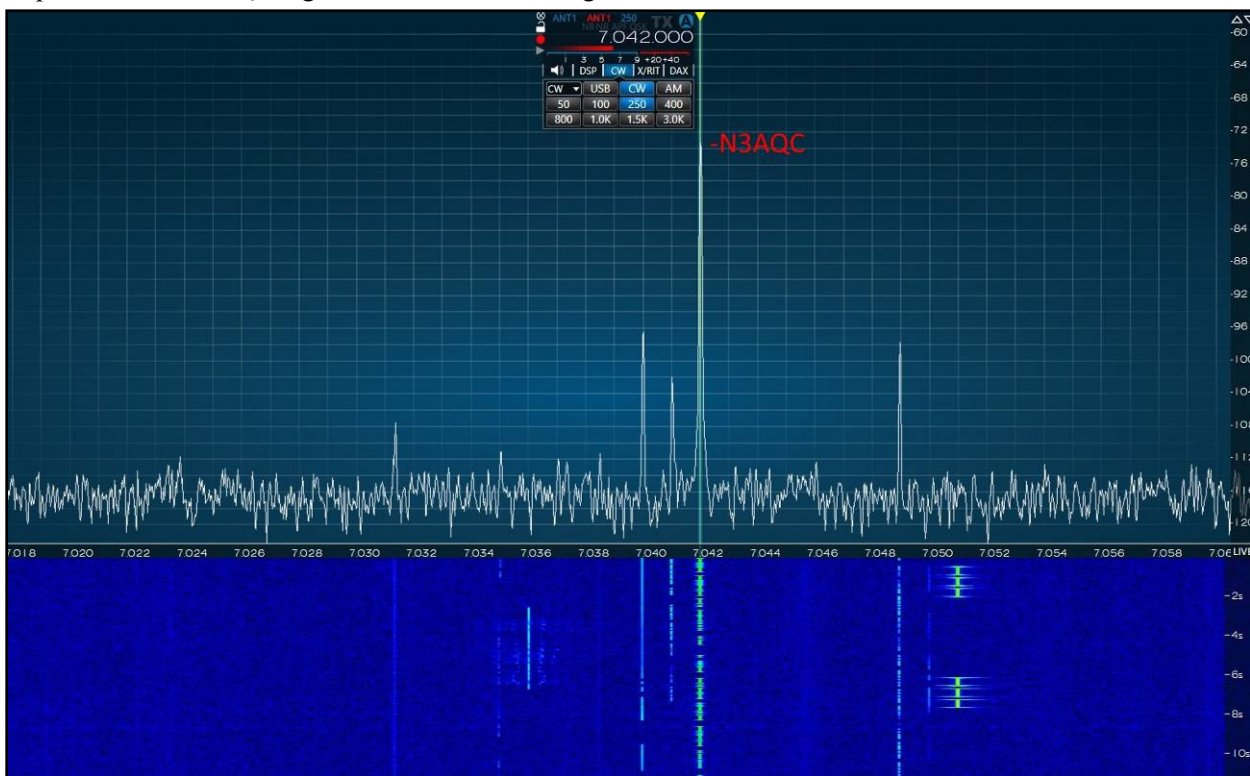
None of the four have ever used QRP with such a huge antenna system. The rigs were John's and Mike's

(Continued on page 28)

KX3s and Don's PFR3 which he is holding. The KX3s used 5 watts output and the PFR3 used 4 watts output. The three rigs were shared among the four operators. John's KX3 was connected to a dipole at 50 ft. It's a trap dipole cut for 80/40 meters, but with the KX3 tuner, it got a 1:1 SWR on all bands from 40 through 10. We didn't operate any 80 meters. Mike's KX3 was connected to a cubical quad at 50 ft. which was recently installed and was, as of then, not able to be rotated. It was used mainly on 20, but also tuned well on other bands including 30 with the KX3 tuner. Don's PFR3 was hooked to a multi-band vertical and was used mostly on 30.

Now that you have an idea of the antennas we were using, here's a summary of how they worked. John's very first CQ on 30 was answered by fellow NAQCC member Gary K1YAN (# 2365) in MA who gave N3AQC a 599 report. The 599 report was common throughout our operation.

This is a screen shot of our signal on a panadapter in MI at the QTH of Bob W8FB (NAQCC # 2832). Note the peak of our N3AQC signal well above other signals on the band.



The states and stations we worked by band were (NAQCC # in parentheses):

40 meters:

WV – WA8ULB (nm), N8ZYA (2279)

OH – AC8AP (3105), KF8R (1337)

MO – KA4RUR (1480)

IL – AB9YC (6319)

MI – W8FB (2832)

PA – KB3MMM (nm)

(Continued on page 29)

30 meters:

MA – K1YAN (2365)

CO – W4MQC (0481)

VT – K1ARR (2005)

20 meters:

CO – N0TA (2028), K0FTC (2481)

KS – W0CC (5363)

AZ – KE7YTE (4060), KE7MU (nm)

OK – W5BM (5655)

PA – W3IBT (nm)

GA – WA4RG (0112), K4JPN (0841)

TX – KB4BKR (nm)

AL – KE4WKH (7180), K4AKC (nm)

MO – N0EVH (0067)

The DX QSOs by band were:

17 – RU3ZL, UX1HW, XE2S, DJ5IL, OK1FTC, V44KAI

15 – F8DGY

All in all it was an interesting experience. The antennas performed well and were easily tuned to a 1:1 SWR in all cases with the KX3s. It was very evident that big high antennas do make a difference compared to the simple wire antennas the four of us use at home. Just to mention a couple cases - it was possible to get that great signal report from W8FB in MI as shown above and also to have a solid rag chew with Chris F8DGY in Paris, France. The majority of our signal reports were very good. Received signals were very strong and clear in most all cases. Our four ops got a chance to jump around from rig to rig and antenna to antenna as our all too short a time passed. Here's another collection of pictures.



That's "radio row" with Mike's KX3 in the foreground, John's KX3 on top of one of the Skyview rigs at

(Continued on page 30)

top right center and down at the end is Don's "yellow wonder" PFR3. Our little rigs seem almost lost amid the big Skyview rigs but they performed admirably nonetheless. We all used our own paddles as shown with our rigs.



Mike (L) and John (R) hard at work racking up those QSOs. Mike on 20 and John on 40 or maybe 17.



Tom (L) and Don & Tom (R) getting their turn logging QSOs. We're not sure of the bands except Don is on 20. Tom is perhaps on 30 with the "yellow wonder" and 17 with John's KX3.



And we close the pictures with another group shot as we were packing up ready to leave. It looks like we are all a little sad. However we have been invited to come and do it again either at a regular Skyview club meeting or for sure for the hamfest in August 2015.

We definitely want to thank the Skyview club for giving us the chance to play with their antenna farm. As stated above it was an experience we will remember. Thanks especially to Bob WC3O (NAQCC # 1365) for setting things up for us and to Tom W3TLN (NAQCC # 5990) for providing us with a lot of info on the antenna system. Also to all other members who were very helpful with various things that really made us feel welcome and at home. Oh, did I mention the great food (cooked by WC3O) they serve? Can't forget that when Mike and I are involved with anything. HI

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NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER:



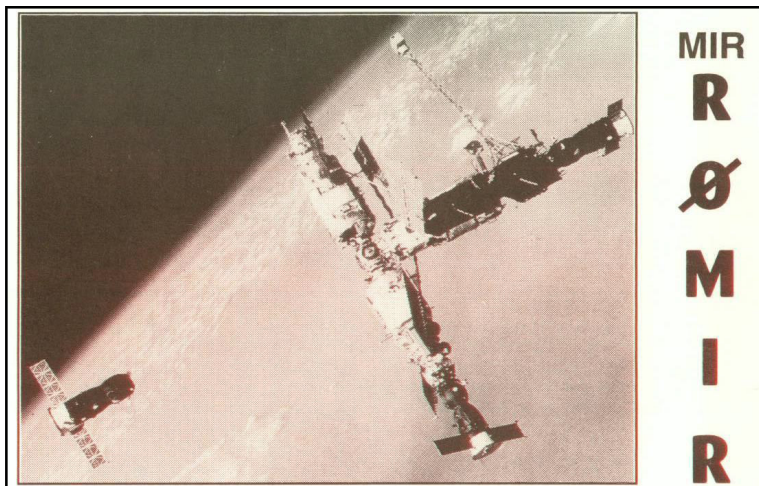
Items in this section are from John, N8ZYA, unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to John at jspiker58@gmail.com. The chapter's web site is at <https://plus.google.com/communities/102627005227155262259?hl=en&partnerid=gplp0>.



Free time has been scarce again this month. My wife and I are planning a trip this coming week, to Ireland, and accordingly, I've sent in this summary of the WV Chapter events a little early this month. I should be reading this month's newsletter from Dublin.

Several of our members were at the **Huntington Hamfest** this month, which is about an hour drive from Charleston. I rode along with Eric (**AC8LJ**) and while at the Hamfest met Bill Walker (**NK8Y**), Joe Redd (**WA8SIE**) and Charles Hawes (**KB8BFM**) from the Kanawha Valley. Bill Walker (**NK8Y**) is the person who motivated me to be a QRP operator. With his knowledge of computers, I once sat in a field near Charleston and sent a letter to the **Russian Space Station (MIR)** as it passed overhead. I used a two meter HT, and Kantronics TNC, and a hand held beam with a small "palm top" computer which I carried in my shirt pocket.

No too many people do this from a field (portable) and that event has always been a great memory from me.



The **Tri State Amateur Radio Association**, which is active at this event, usually meets at the **Huntington Museum of Radio and Technology**; our club operated from that site several months ago. They have a giant 9 element beam which works wonders with 5 watts of power. I hope to get back there as the weather cools down during the winter months.

I always enjoy meeting new people at these events. I bought a few items for the shack but no major purchases.

Our member Steve Ashcraft (**KC4URI**) had a good outing from near Elkins this month. Two weeks afterward, Steve spent a few days in the hospital, but has returned home now. He has plans to do more camping approaching the fall season as the temperatures continues to drop. Depending on time elements, I may be talked into going along on his next adventure? I have a new wood burning stove, which I'm itching to use in the mountains, and I can't think of a better place to operate QRP radio.

Should a camping trip materialize in September, I'll give everyone a "heads up".



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 (NQN) <i>SUSPENDED</i>	Sunday 7:30 EDT	Sunday 2330 Z	7060 KHz	Ron, WB1HGA (in MA)
East Texas (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CDT	Tuesday 0000 Z	7065 KHz +/-	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Rocky Mtn Regional / Continental (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 4 PM MDT	Tues/Thurs 2200 Z	14062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
Pacific Northwest 80 (PNW80)	Thursday 7 PM PDT	Friday 0200 Z	3574 KHz	Stewart, KE7LKW (in WA)
Farnsword Net (FRN)	Monday 8 PM PDT	Tuesday 0300 Z	7122 KHz	JB, KR5RR (in CA)
Great Lakes (GLN)	Thursday 9 PM EDT	Friday 0100 Z	7117 KHz	David, WA8AXF (in MI)

RMRc NCS Dale Putnam had a rough August. Here are his words:

"The prop princess has been rather cruel to us... with some nets being very light... and with this station taking not one, or two lightning hits.. but 3 very close but not direct hits, and incurring induced voltage damage. Two, with no antenna connected."

This prompts me to make a comment on grounding: with QRP we tend not to notice inefficient grounding so much, but it can make a big difference in fighting static buildup during stormy conditions. Not just in the summer, but in other seasons as well, when snow and rain can put quite a charge on your antenna(s). Be sure to ground both feed line connectors when they're disconnected, or at least before you reconnect. A surge can easily jump a few feet to your rig from a dangling feed line, as Dale can attest. Here's a link to the best article I've found on the grounding situation: <http://kc.flex-radio.com/KnowledgebaseArticle50426.aspx>. I have a second floor shack and use Alternative 2 - The RF Suppressor Ground System. My station ground rod is bonded to the mains ground, and I seed the rods with rock salt periodically as I have rocky soil, rated as poor ground in the ARRL charts. Shack RF problems are now history.

Other than that, not much else to report this month, except to say that our other NCSs are reporting nice activity, even when conditions are less than ideal. It seems that lately conditions are very spotty, especially on 40M, as evidenced by the wide range of signal reports in the monthly sprint soapbox comments. You just never know what you'll find, so give our QRS nets a try when you can.

Please note that everyone, even non-club members, is invited to our NAQCC Nets.

Your questions and comments are invited; please contact me at the email below.

72, Chuck AB1VL
cfytech24x7@gmail.com

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NAQCC Main QRS Net (NQN) - Sunday, 7:30 PM EDT, 7.060Mhz Note: Net has been suspended until Fall.

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) - Monday, 7:00 PM CDT, 7.065MHz +/-

08-04-2014 No report

08-11-2014 (6) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM N5DRG KE5YGA KD5SFK KG0YR

08-18-2014 (4) NCS KA5TJS N5DRG KD5SFK KG0YR

08-25-2014 (4) NCS KA5TJS N5DRG KE5YGA KG0YR

NAQCC Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc) - Tues/Thur 5:00 PM MDT 14.062.5 MHz

08-05-2014 (6) NCS WC7S KE6OIO K0DTJ W5HNS AA7CU KC7WNS

08-07-2014 (0) NO QNI VERY POOR CONDX

08-12-2014 (5) NCS WC7S KE6OIO KF7WNS KW5HNS AA7CU

08-14-2014 (6) NCS WC7S KE6OIO N6MY NE5DL K0DTJ AA7CU

08-19-2014 (0) No net, lightning damage

08-21-2014 (3) NCS WC7S AA7CU KA4RUR

08-24-2014 (0) No net, lightning damage

08-26-2014 (4) NCS WC7S K4EAY VE5BCS

08-28-2014 (0) No net, lightning damage

NAQCC Pacific NorthWest QRS 80 Meter Net (PNW80) - Thursday, 7:00 PM, PDT 3.574 MHz

08-07-2014 (7) NCS KE7LKW KD7HXN K7ZNP K7GYN KR5RR N7QR W7S0M

08-14-2014 (5) NCS KE7LKW N6KIX K7KY W7S0M K7JUV

08-21-2014 (5) NCS KE7LKW WB4SPB K7ZNP W7S0M N7QR

08-28-2014 (6) NCS KE7LKW N6KIX WB4SPB AD7BP K7KY W7MWF

NAQCC Farnsword Net 40 Meter Net (FRN) - Monday, 8:00 PM, PDT, 7.122 MHz

08-04-2014 (4) NCS KR5RR N7HRK KE7LKW AE7US

08-11-2014 (7) NCS KR5RR KE7LKW AE7US N7HRK W7SOM K7KY NG7IL

08-18-2014 (7) NCS KE7LKW AE7TE N7HRK AE7US WU7F K7KY W7SOM

08-25-2014 (4) NCS KR5RR N7HRK WU7F N6KIX

NAQCC Great Lakes Net 40 Meter Net (GLN) - Thursday, 9:00 PM Eastern Time 7.117 MHz

08-01-2014 (8) NCS WA8AXF AB3RU K1IEE K9EYT NI2FK VA3KOT VE3AB WA9PWP

08-07-2014 (5) NCS WA8AXF AC8JW K1IEE K9EYT NI2FK VA3KOT

08-14-2014 (3) NCS WA8AXF K9EYT WA9PWP

08-21-2014 (4) NCS WA8AXF N2KZ VA3KOT VE3AB

08-28-2014 (6) NCS WA8AXF AC8JW K9EYT VA3KOT KG0YR KU4GW



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 John, K3WWP, #0002 --

Of course the big news in August in addition to the WPA Chapter activities documented above in the Chapter News section, was the chase for the W1AW WAS as Maine was to be activated as the 50th state.

I waited patiently for August 27 to come so I could start my effort to get that final state and complete my WAS. I knew the initial pileups would be HUGE at 0000Z on the 27th, and I was right. They were awesome – perhaps bigger than any for the previous 49 states. In fact I was certain even beforehand that I wouldn't get ME that first evening. I knew a lot of folks wanted to be among the first to complete their W1AW WAS and they had a couple advantages over me – much stronger signals plus using spotting to find W1AW. The only chance I had was to catch them just as they started up as I did with a few previous states. That chance quickly vanished in a few seconds. In those few seconds it took to find them, they had been spotted and the pileup grew exponentially to its huge size in just a minute or two.

I didn't even try, but instead checked another strong peak on the panadapter. It was W1AW/7 in AZ. I already had AZ, but just for fun I gave a call, and I think I was the first to work them this time around. They were still simplex and no one else was yet calling. It took a while for their pileup to develop.

This is about ME though. I figured beforehand I probably wouldn't get them until the second or third day although I did try a few times that first hour before giving up – now convinced my assessment was true. However I proved myself wrong. When I woke up the next morning, I thought I'd give it a try. I tuned around and found them on 40 meters. I set up for split operation, and after waiting through a few other stations, I got them. It was a good solid QSO, and the op (whoever) commented on my QRP. I guess he knew me or my reputation since as you know, I NEVER use /QRP after my call.

I found it interesting to analyze how easy (or hard) it was to get the 50 states, keeping in mind all were gotten with QRP/CW/simple wire antennas naturally, and I never used spotting of any kind to find them. In looking back over the 50 states, KL7 was definitely the hardest for me. It didn't come until day 6. VT may have been the easiest as I think I was the first to work them or at least among the first few depending on how it went on the other bands at the time. I'm surprised to see NY took until day 5. I don't remember why now. The first two came late also since I wasn't really aware of nor prepared for what was going on. As you know my ham radio operating consists of getting on the air and seeing what is there. I don't get any advance info of special operations, DX spots, or anything like that. I just found the W1AW operations by 'accident' when tuning around the bands. THEN I checked to see what was going on, and the rest is now history. Those first week stations came on day 4 (NC) and day 7 (WV). After that with a few exceptions most states came on day one, many in the first hour as well. By days as follows:

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Day - Number

1 - 32 hour 1 (SC DE TX FL MI KY TN VT IA MA ND NJ NH CT CO AL AR MT IL MD) later in the day (OK GA WI ID AZ OH NM OR VA MS RI ME)

2 - 11 (MN HI CA KS PA NV SD MO WY LA IN)

3 - 3 (UT NE WA)

4 - 1 (NC)

5 - 1 (NY)

6 - 1 (AK)

7 - 1 (WV)

I was elated to finish the WAS, but shortly after that I felt a letdown. It's oftentimes more fun working toward a goal than finally achieving it. Like (was it) Alexander the Great who said he had no more worlds to conquer. Well, although it's sad to see the W1AW chase come to an end, unlike Alexander, there are many more 'worlds' to conquer in ham radio. Of course each month there are the NAQCC challenges, just to mention one.

I hope you all had as much fun and success as I did with the W1AW WAS. Remember if you did miss a state or two the first time around, there are still 35 (including AZ this week) that will have a second activation before it all ends on December 30.

Let's move on now to another subject. I'm still waiting for my Elecraft PX3 Panadapter. The operating/construction manual was just posted on the Elecraft site on August 27 and after reading through it, I'm even more anxious to get the unit. They should start shipping shortly, and then my station will look something like this.



Of course my KX3 would never be seen with that frequency or mode on the display, and I don't have, nor intend to get the tiny little paddle, but other than that..... You get the idea.

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 --

August wasn't much of a ham radio month for me. I didn't have very much on-air time but I did manage to work W1AW/1 in ME. So now I just need to catch up on the two states (MI and WA), that I missed back in February when I was travelling, to complete my W1AW WAS.

A huge chunk of my free time was spent setting up a new computer and transferring all of my old files to it from my old box. The new computer is an iMac and the old one was a Windows XP machine so there have been plenty of new things to learn. So far I am very pleased with this new machine and eventually I will be using it to publish this newsletter. But for now I'm down in the basement working with my old Windows Publishing software. By the way, does anybody have a recommendation for a GenLog replacement for our sprint logging?

From Nisha, VU2NIS, #2132 --

Report of the 10th Asia Pacific Regional Air/Internet Jamboree --

The Scout and Guide unit and Ham Radio Club of Hebbal, Bangalore, India conducted the 10th Asia Pacific Regional Air/ Internet Jamboree (JOTA/JOTI) on the 2nd and 3rd of August 2014. Shri Kumar Thakur, Principal of the school inaugurated the JOTA/JOTI at 10 AM on 2nd August in the Senior Computer Lab. He briefed the Scouts and Guides about the Jamboree.



Nineteen Scouts and 14 Guides participated in the event. The JOTA/JOTI Scouts and Guides contacted each other by means of Ham Radio and through the internet. Hebbal has the Ham Radio club with call sign VU2VLF issued by the Ministry of Communications & IT, Govt of India.

Smt. Nisha M Mohan (VU2NIS), PGT (Physics) and Coordinator of JOTA has installed Echo Link in the computer lab. She briefed the Scouts & Guides about Ham Radio Communication. Our students got the opportunity to talk to their counterparts from BS&G Headquarters in Kolkata and Mumbai.

Shri A Ranganayakulu, PGT (Chemistry), Smt. H R Shyamala PGT (Biology) and Miss Sinu K Narayanan, PRT the Scout and Guide Masters were present on the occasion. The Echo Link Communication continued up to 2.40 PM.

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On 3rd August, JOTI was started at 10 AM by an introductory session by Shri Pawanjeet Singh, PGT (Computer Science) and the Coordinator for JOTI. Miss Sinu K Narayanan, PRT helped the students to become the members of the community Bharat Scouts & Guides on Facebook.

Our Scouts and Guides could communicate to participants from Indonesia, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Germany and South Korea using Facebook. Deputy Director of Guides Programme Miss Machamma, DDGLT and Mr Qureshi, DDSLT addressed the Scouts and Guides through Skype video conference from National Training Centre in Pachmarhi.

A Valedictory Session was organized at 4 pm on the second day. The Principal gave a very motivating speech on the occasion and told all the Scouts and Guides to be ready for International Jamboree in the month of October, 2014. Sh A Ranganayukulu, PGT (Chemistry), HWB Scouts addressed the Scouts and Guides and briefed about the importance of Scouting and Guiding in the day-to-day life. Master Atul Ranjan of class X-C and Kum Syeda Ummer Ruman of class X-E expressed their happiness during their communications with the international participants.

From Jim, KB0MZF, #7088 --

Jim sent in the following link to a QRP-promoting organization based in Italy. They have several on-air activities that NAQCC members might be interested in: <http://qrrespect.jimdo.com/respect-days-2014/> .

From Cliff, KU4GW, #1491 --

Here's a link to the photos I took of the camper I stayed in all weekend and pics of friends I got to see and a couple good deals on HF rigs.. Had a great time! Thanks so much to W4WWF Dale for bringing his beautiful camper where I stayed a lot in the AC because it was so blasted hot with high humidity outside! Dale also rented us a golf cart for Friday & Saturday thank the Lord!

Check'em out at: <http://bit.ly/2014ShelbyHamfest>

From Anthony, AB9YC, #6319 --

Why don't more members use Logbook of the World (LOTW)? Sure, it's exciting to get a paper QSL in the mail, but mailing costs are making that an expensive alternative. With the vast number of computerized logging solutions available (free and non-free), it seems most operators should be logging with a computer. All of the common computer logging solutions support integration to LOTW, so uploading contacts is just a few mouse clicks of effort. While you may not care about electronic confirmations, bands, states, counties, grids, prefixes or any other details, there are those Radio Amateurs out there that do care and your contact may just be one they need to complete some award or milestone. Please, consider using Logbook of the World so your contacts can bring even more joy to fellow amateurs.

From Gregg, WB8LZG, #1444 -- MSU Amateur Radio Club gets a "Grrreat Visitor"

We at the MSU ARC are used to getting visits from many famous dignitaries, including Kings, Presidents, Sheiks, Emperors, Sultans, Knights, Generals, Ministers, Priests, Squires, Pages, and Pledges, just to name a few. When he heard W8SH had just received a new membership to the NAQCC, he was overcome with joy at the possibility of "Pounding the Brass" with the rest of the Cool Cats! So I grabbed a picture of Tony the Tiger and myself with straight key in "paw". As Tony says "Morse Code is the Cats Meow!" And those NAQCC members, well "They're GRRRREAAAT !!!!!"





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
Vice President John Shannon
478 E. High Street
Kittanning, PA 16201

naqcc33@windstream.net

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 call signs of stations worked). Also we will have a 2 hour sprint each month alternating between Tuesday and Wednesday evenings with a bonus multiplier for using a straight key.

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

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

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

