

NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 200 FEBRUARY 2015



KEY CLICKS

- **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!** Are you into numerology? I'm not but as a retired math teacher I can't help but notice numbers, and this month's newsletter is significant - 200 issues! That's a lot of newsletters! "But wait a minute," you say, "that should be more than 16 years and the club is only a little more than 10 years old." That's certainly true but for many years K3WWP wrote two newsletters a month. (How hard did that guy work?!?!) Ok, so 200's prime factorization is $2^3 \times 5^2$. In binary it's 11001000, in ternary it's 21102, in hexadecimal it's C8, and in Roman Numerals it's CC. So any way that you want to write it I hope that you enjoy the issue.
- **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR N#A OPERATIONS.** Yes, it's early, but you know what they say about the "early bird." We need volunteers to put our N#A special event callsigns on the air during our anniversary celebration October 12-18. It's a lot of fun, no special equipment or skills are needed, and your operating schedule is completely flexible. If you are interested in being an N#A operator please contact club President Paul, N8XMS (email on last page). There is no limit to the number of operators that we can have so "the more the merrier." If you would like to be the one from your district that uses the special call during the sprint please indicate that as well (first come first served). *If you have already signed up to be an operator but find that your schedule has changed and you now need to opt out please let us know.* (Having someone on the operator list who doesn't actually operate complicates our record keeping and wrap-up work at the end of the week.) Detailed instructions for special event operators will be sent out by the end of September but if you have any questions just ask.
- **PRIZE ELIGIBILITY REQUIRES PARTICIPATION THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.** Once again some great prizes will be given away to members participating in our 11th anniversary sprint in October, and just like last year there is a throughout-the-year participation requirement to be eligible for the top tier of prizes. The requirements are not excessive, just a few sprints and/or challenges through the year will do it. Complete details can be found at http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html.
- **2015 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE.** We want to encourage all of you to "talk up" the NAQCC and as an incentive we will be offering a prize each quarter of 2015 to the person responsible for the most new membership applications during that quarter. (The application form includes a field where the person can indicate how they heard about the NAQCC.) The prize will be a gift certificate for 100 free QSL cards from http://cheapqsls.com/club_naqcc.htm.

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- **PROMOTE THE NAQCC.** This is related to that last item about our membership drive. Please remember to promote the NAQCC on your personal websites, Facebook pages, and in your [QRZ.com](http://www.qrz.com) bios. You can let people know what a great club we have, give a link to our website, and you could even share things like our sprint, challenge, and net schedules. Club logos are available for your use at http://www.naqcc.info/main_logos.html.
- **MARCH ISSUE WILL BE DELAYED.** I will be doing some traveling from mid February through March 11 so the next issue of this newsletter will be delayed and possibly somewhat abbreviated. I hope to have the March issue out sometime around the 15th of the month.
- **MULTIPLE AWARDS PRIZE SUSPENDED.** Due to a supply problem with the prizes that we were giving away to members who earned two or more awards from a specified list of NAQCC awards, the Multiple Awards prize has been suspended. We will continue to keep track of members who qualify for this prize with the idea that it might be reinstated at some point in the future.
- **CHALLENGE ENTRY PROCESSING IS BEING UPDATED.** Hap, K7HAP, processes all of the entries for our monthly challenges. He is developing some software tools that will expedite this work and as a side benefit more of our entry mistakes will be caught. (The most common mistake made in our alphabet challenges is when a letter gets used more than 2 times.) Of course when a problem is found the submitter will be contacted and given the opportunity to fix the mistake.
- **NEED HELP WITH GENLOG?** We occasionally get questions from sprint participants about how to use the GenLog software to log and report their contacts. Most of the time the answers to these questions can be found in the excellent illustrated tutorial written by KB8FE and found at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_genlog_tutorial.html. If you are still stuck after reading through that tutorial please feel free to contact me (N8XMS) for additional help.
- **ALPHABET CHALLENGE RULES ARE BEING CLARIFIED.** Probably our most popular type of monthly challenge are the alphabet challenges where the goal is to make a list of specified words using the letters found in the call signs of stations that you work. The rules for what letters can and cannot be used have been clarified and can be found at http://www.naqcc.info/challenges_rules.html.
- **CHECK OUT OUR MONTHLY POLLS.** Jerry, VE6CPP, puts up an interesting poll on our club website each month. You can cast your vote in the current poll and see past poll results using the links on the main club page <http://www.naqcc.info/>. The more people that cast a vote, the more interesting the results.
- **THANK YOU FOR THE DONATIONS!** A big “THANK YOU” goes out to everyone who has made a recent donation to the NAQCC treasury. The NAQCC has no membership dues and we depend on your generous donations to cover our operating expenses. If others would like to help out with a donation there are two ways that you can do it. The first way is to use *PayPal* to electronically send your contribution to Club Vice President John, N8ZYA, using the email found on the last page of this newsletter. To avoid any additional fees please be sure to check the box that says “*I’m sending money to family or friends.*” Also please add a note indicating that this is a donation to the NAQCC and include your call sign. The second way to make a donation is to mail a check or money order made out to *The North American QRP CW Club* and send it to *John Smithson, 1529 Virginia St E, Charleston, WV 25311*. Assuming that we have your correct email address on file, your contribution will be acknowledged by email with a carbon copy sent to a second club officer as a “check and balance.”



SCRATCH STATION

BY KEITH FORD, KF4TAP

Editor - This is the first installment in a series of articles that KF4TAP is sharing with us. Over the course of several months Keith will document his efforts at building a complete QRP station from scratch using as many recycled parts as possible. Don't look for silk-screened circuit boards here - it won't be "pretty." But many would call this "real ham radio" harkening back to the days when a kid would "borrow" his mother's breadboard to build on and would cut up her cookie sheet for a front panel. It's all a "little rough" but I'm sure that you will enjoy it.

Winter is a slow time for me, I am always looking for some project to do. While for years I've been wanting to scratch build a radio station. Yes a radio station, but not any radio but an amateur transmitter and receiver. I have commented to several of my radio friends who are excellent designers to do some articles on small easy to build rigs using common materials and parts. So far none of them have and I have gotten tired of waiting.

So one evening while I was at my desk desoldering some boards from defunct consumer appliances I had several thoughts running through my my head. One was the WW2 spies that parachuted into occupied Germany with small transceivers called parasetts to monitor the German military. Two was listening on live radio to hams in the Caribbean tell step by step how to build rigs from scratch. Also they would reference web sites and books. Three, the legendary Doug DeMaw W1FB (SK) building gear from dead Tv's. This is in no order and there are plenty of others.



Now I have built prepackaged kits and often they did not work, or work well. W4JBM and I have discussed what the poor ham could do. Now Jim has written several excellent radio books that are available on KDP, but Jim is an EE and does not always dumb his conversation down enough for me to easily follow.

As usual inspiration always hits at a rather Inopportune time. I was at a family event just zoning out when pieces to my puzzle started falling into place. First there are many facets to radio, a couple are CW, morse code and low power operating QRP and very low power operating QRPP. The simplest transmitter is a crystal checker, I have several that I use for testing crystals, and I often take one with me to hamfest to test crystals that I consider buying.

Now a crystal checker is just an oscillator, an oscillator is only an amplifier. only a few common parts are required and those can usually be found on circuit boards if you want to recycle parts, or live in a part store desolate area like I do, or you are extremely frugal like I am. The checker I'm using in this text requires 3 capacitors, 2 resistors, 1 transistor and a few bits of material I'm sure you can scrounge up.

Not much at all! The bits are wire, solder, some sort of crystal holding device, and a board. I have some pieces of old plexiglass that are roughly 2X3 inches and up to 3X5 inches. I set out to cut some bits of PCB into small squares so I could super glue them to the plexiglass. Someone suggested using a hole punch, that did not work for me. I manage to break the punch. Then I got the frugally bright idea to cut pads from old circuit boards that I had stripped parts from! Out came the side cutters and I soon had a handful of pads!



Just to speak out here on cutting pads with side cutters, mine do not make a clean cut, more like a break. So the pad edges are not pretty. But it cost only a small amount of time and let me prove to myself it would work for me. Keeping in mind this is a "spy" project, some thing that can be built quickly, easily and disposable if need be.

I really dislike using super glue as I almost always glue fingers together or to something. I would like a glue gun but I cannot justify the expense for my hobby. I do have a package of glue sticks, and AA1IP sent me an article where he had cut a bit of glue stick placed on a board under the pad and while tinning the pad the glue melted and stuck the pad in place! It works beautifully! I glued six pads to the plexiglass in short order and tinned them.

Charged up I picked up the brown prescription bottle I had stored the parts in, and populated the board. In about fifteen minutes I had the checker completed! I rigged a hasty dummy antenna and key, connected a six volt lantern battery, turned on my RX tuned to the crystal frequency and sent a "CQ". Yes it worked on the first attempt! So out of curiosity I hooked an antenna to the checker and sent a CQ. Using a color burst crystal from a TV set and a 80 meter dipole at about fifteen feet up in the air I netted about a half dozen contacts. My best range was about 45 miles! Output I'm guessing is about 30 mW's, I'll check it later with a home brew tester.



The part in the bottle was an unknown NPN transistor which I think is a 2N3904. So if you have a new 3904 you can use it or any NPN transistor. a 22K ohm resistor, A 1K resistor, a 470 pf capacitor, a .01 bypass cap, and a 150 pf trimmer cap although I think a 170pf trimmer would be better. All these parts are salvaged from circuit boards. The pill bottle being good for storage can also work well as a coil form. If you are patient the checker/transmitter may be fitted into the pill bottle!

Now this is not the be all end all TX, it is meant to be the first step in building a station. The bonus's are now we have a value able piece of portable test equipment that we will use over and over, not only to check crystals but to use to aligned a receiver with when we are ready to build. Also it can be used as a band marker. Possibly could be used as a BFO (beat frequency oscillator). It can be used as a low power portable transmitter with the proper antenna or even an improvised antenna for short range / local communications if power goes out, or in a survival situation. The best of it is the parts can be recycled from dead consumer appliances!

Skills we learn are desoldering and soldering, often many projects don't work because of bad solder joints. A small bit of stuff is saved from the land fill, we save some money.

Tools you will need, a solder sucker, cause we want to reuse the solder, and a soldering iron. The used solder is good for tinning pads, making fishing sinkers, and slingshot ammo. If you strip a lot of boards you will soon have plenty of solder "BB's" to use. Suggested items are a L/C meter to test the value of capacitors and inductors you reclaim. A good DVM to test resistors with. A transistor tester to check those salvage transistors to see if they are good. It's a good idea to check new parts as I have gotten new bad parts in the past.

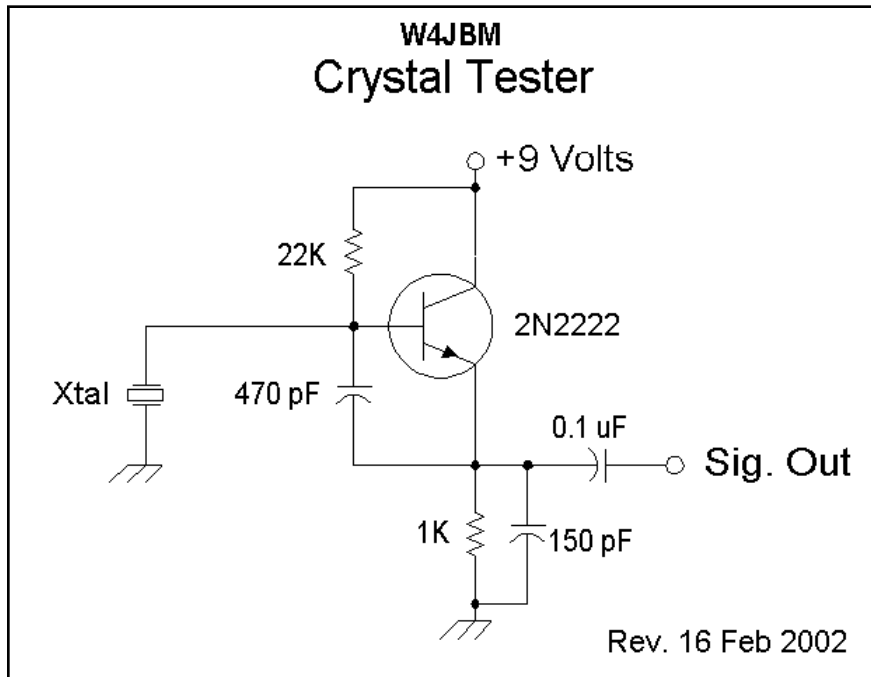


Always look up data sheets for transistors, to see if they npn or pnp, and their pin out, they are not all the same! It may be a good idea if possible to print data sheets and store them in the event the power grid goes down and your laptop does not work. Not all reclaim transistors are easily identifiable. If you study the board you may get an idea if they are usable to you.

The dummy antenna is a 56 ohm 1watt resistor, no reason I used this other than it was in the parts box. The main thing it worked, and the checker worked! Also I soldered the crystal in place, other wise I would have used a pair of alligator clips for checking rocks. Be aware that rocks are slang for crystals.

Very important statement that needs to be made, this device used as a transmitter is illegal as it is now, there is no output filter.

This is the circuit we will use when we add a Power Amplifier next. So be on the look out for a larger board and start scrounging parts! See you in the next installment!



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Each month one of our members is randomly selected and asked to share their ham radio biography with all of us. Questions or comments should go to Paul, KD2MX.

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

DAVE HOUDE, W4DUK, #0617



My QTH is in southwest-central Virginia, at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains and a few miles from the small town of Bedford, home of the National D-Day Memorial. I have been licensed since 1991.

My interest in QRP was born of necessity. For the first six years after getting my ticket, I ran 100W CW and SSB, doing just fine with a dipole on a larger lot. Then I moved into a townhouse with a very small back yard, using a sloping inverted-vee with the apex just outside of my second floor shack window. When I first fired up at 100W as usual, my digital shack clock began flashing strange digits and I could hear myself on my phone answering machine (remember those?). Since I could not easily change the location of my antenna, I decided that I had better reduce my power. Being familiar with the concept of QRP operation, I cranked my power down to 5 watts and gave it another shot. All the weird interference effects in the shack stopped. And what I discovered was that I was still making plenty of contacts. Cool! I have been operating QRP CW as my primary mode ever since.

My first HF rig was a used Ten-Tec Corsair II, and it continues to be my flagship CW rig to this day. It has a hot receiver with great filtering. I use it exclusively with straight keys, mostly a Speed-X standard key and, for special occasions such as ARRL Straight Key Night, a circa late 1800's Bunnell land-line telegraph key (shown in photo). That key was used by my great-grandfather in his general store and post office in rural western Pennsylvania. My other HF rig is a Yaesu FT-450D using either the Speed-X standard straight key, or Kent paddles with the rig's internal keyer. Both rigs drive homebrew simple wire antennas including my trusty end-fed Zepp that covers 160m to 12m, and a 10m folded dipole. I'm putting the finishing touches on a 40m Rockmite in an Altoids tin, and I look forward to getting it on the air very soon.

As far as NAQCC activities are concerned, I really enjoy the monthly sprints and try not to miss a single one. I also enjoy making contacts for the Friendship Club award, especially those longer ragchews that are worth four points each. Lately, I've been getting into the monthly challenges, which I do find...well...challenging! I will admit that I occasionally crank up the power and work other modes, so you may hear me running phone or data from time to time. However, QRP CW definitely remains my favorite method of communication.

I am retired from a career as a systems engineer supporting the Department of Defense. I stay plenty busy with my wife Linda working our little spread in the country, Duck Ridge, with its good-sized vegetable garden and fruit tree orchard. I tend to keep an eye on the sky, and volunteer as a SKYWARN severe weather spotter. My other interests include fishing, trains, machine maintenance/repair, and old-time clawhammer banjo.

72/73, and see you down the log.



NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT: Our February sprint will be on the 11th, 0130-0330 UTC. That's the evening of February 10th in North America. Details can be found at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201502.html>.

Please remember to strive for that perfectly formatted "SILVER LOG" submission. It really helps our log processing. Everything that you need to know about how to have a Silver Log can be found at <http://naqcc.info/GLCheckList.txt>.

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

We occasionally get questions from sprint participants about how to use the GenLog software to log and report their contacts. Most of the time the answers to these questions can be found in the excellent illustrated tutorial written by KB8FE and found at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_genlog_tutorial.html.

LAST MONTH'S SPRINT RESULTS: We had two sprints in January. First up was the annual 160-meter sprint on the 16th. This was our first sprint operating under the expanded keying device categories that were detailed in last month's newsletter. 54 people participated in the sprint and this is a tie with January 2011 for our highest number. You can see the complete results, including soapbox comments, at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201501_160.html and summary results can be seen in the tables on the next page.

On the 22nd we had our regular monthly sprint. 123 logs were submitted and this was way over the 97 that we had this time last year so let's hope that this is a sign of good things to come in this new year. This was our first regular sprint with the expanded keying device categories so a lot more people were able to earn certificates. The complete results, along with interesting soapbox comments, can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint201501.html> and summary results can be found in the tables that follow this page.

We would especially like to welcome our first-time log submitters. We hope that you had a great time and will return often: K4VIG, AK4NY, KF7ATL, KE4D, K3YP, WA2TRF, NG2D (nm), AE6SF (nm), W2IX, W6SU.

PARTICIPATION REMINDER: *Please remember that there is a sprint/challenge participation requirement to be eligible for the top-tier prizes that will be given away during our anniversary celebration in October. See http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html for the details.*

RESULTS FOR THE 160-METER SPRINT

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KN1H		
W2	W2SH	W2JEK	
W3	WB3FAE		
W4	W4UX	WG8Y	K4ZGB
W5			
W6			
W7	KF7WNS		
W8	NX8Y	WV8P	
W9	WB9CIF		
W0	K2HT	N8LA	
VE	VE3FUJ		
DX			

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	W1FMR		
W2			
W3	K3WWP		
W4			
W5			
W6			
W7			
W8			
W9	N9SE		
W0			
VE			
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1			
W2	W2JAZ		
W3			
W4	K4ORD		
W5	N5GW		
W6			
W7			
W8	K8TJ		
W9			
W0			
VE	VE3DXK		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	WB9CIF		W2JAZ
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
K4KRW			

RESULTS FOR THE REGULAR SPRINT

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KN1H	K1IEE	
W2	W2JAZ	W2SH	K2ZC
W3	KD3CA		
W4	K2YGM	WH6LE	WX4RM
W5	K5OAI	WI5H	
W6	WK6L	NS3C	
W7	AA7VW	KF7WNS	
W8	WA8AXF	WB8LZG	N8BB
W9	N9SE		
W0	N0TA	N8LA	
VE	VE2TH	VE3EDX	
DX	CO8CML		

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1			
W2			
W3	K3WWP		
W4			
W5	K5GQ		
W6			
W7			
W8	AB8FJ		
W9	AA9L		
W0	WD0K		
VE			
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	N2CN		
W2	N2ESE		
W3	N8XEE		
W4	K4VIG	N4MJ	
W5	N5GW		
W6	KR5RR		
W7	AA7CU		
W8	WA8SAN		
W9	K9FO	K9IS	
W0	K9OSC		
VE	VE6CPP		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	NQ2W		W2IX

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
K9OSC			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	123	106	194	2/13
Participants	195	165	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1664	1262	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	929	733	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	735	529	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	379	50	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	1108	783	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	177	429	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	13.5	12.3	19.3	9/11

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+	NQ2W W4DUK NO2D KC2EGL KB8FE K6CSL KE5YUM KQ1P N8QY K1IEE WA2JSG WB8ENE AA9L VE3FUJ KD0V KB3AAG WY3H N4FI K3RLL NF8M KU4A NU7T
75+	K4JPN N8XMS WB8LZG K4BAI KD2MX K4NVJ W2SH W9CC
100+	W2JEK KA2KGP K3WWP
125+	



NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: Our North American February challenge has some fun with Ground Hogs Day. Our North American February challenge has some fun with Ground Hogs Day. Hey, deja vu! It's an alphabet challenge working with the names of some furry friends from around the country. The word list and complete details are at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201502.html>.

The European challenge this month is a traditional alphabet challenge with a twist. The goal is to spell out the names of European countries using only stations from that country! The list of countries and complete details can be found at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/february-2015-challenge>.

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: The North American challenge for March is a real puzzle inside of an alphabet challenge for the real true fans out there. We're not just talking about baseball, basketball, and football here and you are going to need every one of those obscure sports channels that you have on your cable TV service! The list of sports terms can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201503.html>.

In March the European challenge will involve the names and areas of four European countries with mediterranean coastlines. Complete details at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/march-2015-challenge>.

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

IMPORTANT NOTE: Recently we have been receiving entries to our alphabet challenges in non-standard formats that complicate the processing of the submission. Please use a simple text report (the actual email or an attached file) where each word is listed on a separate line with the callsigns that form that word listed horizontally across that same line. For example...

WORD - K3WWP CO8CL W3WMMR KD9QS
NEXT - N8XMS K1EIR N8XMS N5PHT
etc.

LAST MONTH'S CHALLENGE: The deadline for submitting entries for the January "New Years" challenge is still a few days away so final results are not yet available. You can go to <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges201501.html> to see what has been posted so far and the final results will also be posted there shortly after the 10th of the month. Here are the new years greetings and the languages that they are in:

Afrikaans : Voorspoedige nuwe jaar
Czech : Stastny Novy Rok
Danish : Godt Nytaar
French : Bonne année
Hebrew : Shana Tova
Italian : Buon anno
Thai : Sawatdee Pi Mai

The January European challenge results can be found at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/january-2015-challenge>.

PARTICIPATION REMINDER: *Please remember that there is a sprint/challenge participation requirement to be eligible for the top-tier prizes that will be given away during our anniversary celebration in October. See http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html for the details.*



NAQCC AWARDS

We have an extensive list of awards that you can earn. Complete details can be found at <http://naqcc.info/awards.html>.

FEATURED AWARD: SUFFIX WORDS AWARD

This month we would like to talk about an award that many of you probably already qualify for - the Suffix Words Award. The idea of this award is simple, just use QRP and CW (duh) to work stations with callsigns that spell out words with the letters that are after the number (the suffix). For example K9**IT**, KB5**FOG**, or W1**MOO**. (All of the letters in the suffix must be used - W5ISX would not give the word "IS.") To remove any debate about whether or not something is a real word we use the official list of 2 and 3 letter words from the National Scrabble Association. Collecting 50 such callsigns will earn you a certificate. You can find the complete details about this award, along with the list of accepted words, at http://www.naqcc.info/awards_words.html.

AWARDS ISSUED LAST MONTH:

FRIENDSHIP CLUB - 2500 PT ENDORSEMENT

0001 - K3WWP 1232 01/03/15

1000 MPW

0469 - K1IEE	DP1POL/P	-	2,114	01/17/15	OCF wire
0468 - N8XEE	KP4ED	-	1,737	01/13/15	G5RV Jr @35
0467 - WA8AXF	AA6EZ	-	1,800	01/13/15	Doublet @40
0466 - N3CU	PV8ADI	-	97,750	01/13/15	CF Zepp @50
0465 - N3CU	K27D	-	365,800	01/13/15	CF Zepp @50
0464 - N3CU	VE2MF	-	96,400	01/13/15	CF Zepp @50
0463 - N3CU	W1MD	-	72,917	01/13/15	CF Zepp @50
0462 - N3CU	W4CB	-	57,200	01/13/15	CF Zepp @50
0461 - N3CU	S51TA	-	48,356	01/13/15	CF Zepp @50
0460 - PA7CG	RI1ANR	-	1,696	01/03/15	16.2m dipole in attic
0459 - WA2FBN	VK2DX	-	1,980	01/03/15	dipole @30'

KMPW 100 HONOR ROLL

K3WWP 1376 01/17/15

QSO-A-DAY AWARD

0002 - G3JFS	30	01/13/15	Month of November 2014
0002 - G3JFS	37	01/17/15	Month of December 2014

30-30 AWARD

0034 - G3JFS Dec 2014 01/17/15

30-30 AWARD MAGNUM (Three months)

0010 - G3JFS Oct, Nov, Dec 2014 01/17/15

PARTICIPATION AWARD 2014

W1	K1IEE	36	01/17/15
W2	W2JEK	32	01/17/15
W3	K3WWP	36	01/17/15
W4	W4DUK	28	01/17/15
W5	KE5YUM	10(tie)	01/17/15
W5	WI5H	10(tie)	01/17/15
W6	K6MGO	11(tie)	01/17/15
W6	WK6L	11(tie)	01/17/15
W7	KF7WNS	18	01/17/15
W8	N8XMS	36	01/17/15
W9	AB9YC	36	01/17/15
W0	KD0V	26	01/17/15
VE	VE3FUJ	26	01/17/15
DX	SM5MEK	9	01/17/15

DXCC AWARD

0015 - G3JFS 01/13/15 66' doublet or a "very bent" 100' long wire

DXCC AWARD BAND ENDORSEMENTS (Category A - QRP - 100 Countries)

0001 - K3WWP	01/03/15	15m
0001 - K3WWP	01/03/15	17m
0001 - K3WWP	01/03/15	20m
0001 - K3WWP	01/03/15	30m

DXCC AWARD (Category C - QRPp - 25 Countries)

0004 - K3WWP 01/03/15

DXCC AWARD BAND ENDORSEMENTS (Category C - QRPp - 25 countries)

0004 - K3WWP	01/03/15	10m
0004 - K3WWP	01/03/15	15m
0004 - K3WWP	01/03/15	20m

WAC AWARD BAND ENDORSEMENT - 30 meters

0001 - K3WWP 01/03/15

WAVE AWARD

0004 - N8XMS 01/13/15



NAQCC NETS



We have a number of nets (QRS = slow speed, QRQ = higher speed) designed to help people build up their CW operating skills. Complete information about these nets can be found at http://naqcc.info/cw_nets.html. Questions should be directed to Net Manager Chuck, AB1VL.

NAQCC NET SCHEDULE

Net	Local Time	UTC	Freq +/-	Primary NCS
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CST	Tuesday 0100 Z	7065 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Farnsword 80 m QRQ Net (FRN80)	Sun 7 PM PST	Mon 0300 Z	3574 KHz	JB, KR5RR (in CA)
Farnsword 40 m QRQ Net (FRN40)	Mon 7 PM PST	Tues 0300 Z	7123.5 KHz	JB, KR5RR (in CA)
Midwest Net QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 8 PM CST	Tuesday 0200 Z	7117 KHz	Scotty, NU0S (in NE)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 4 PM MST	Tues/Thurs 2300 Z	14062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc)	Tues/Thurs 4:45 PM MST	Tues/Thurs 2345 Z	7062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
West Virginia QRS Net (WVN)	Wednesday 9 PM EST	Thursday 0200 Z	7117 KHz	John, N8ZYA (in WV)
Pacific Northwest 80 m QRS Net (PNW80)	Thursday 7 PM PST	Friday 0300 Z	3574 KHz	Stewart, KE7LKW (in WA)
Great Lakes QRS Net (GLN)	Thursday 9 PM EST	Friday 0200 Z	7117 KHz	David, WA8AXF (in MI)

QRS Net activity has been stable for January, not bad considering QRM and mostly long propagation on 40M. Note that 80M has not been so good lately as both FRN and ETX nets are resuming operations on 40 meters because of poor conditions on 80M. Check the QRS Net Schedule page for the latest times and frequencies at http://naqcc.info/cw_nets.html

I have regrettably discontinued the NNN Tuesday night net due to low turnout, which might well be a result of QRM on the frequencies we have tried. If I have to QSY more than +/- 5kHz to find an opening then it seems logical that check-ins will have a hard time finding the net. If someone in New England wants to revive the net please let me know and you can try your hand at keeping it going.

The follow-on Tuesday nite 160M net experiment was a flop, with no QNI, so it has been discontinued as well. I was able to get 100 contacts in the CQ 160M CW contest on 5 watts with a simple half wave dipole at 50 feet. So if you have the real-estate and the gumption to try it, 160M can be a reliable spot devoid of QRM for local contacts, even at low power. I will be happy to resume operations on 160M so let me know if you have serious interest and we'll get an informal net together and try it again.

Your comments and suggestions always welcome.

From our NCSes:

02/01/2015 JB Still KR5RR: Several of the FRN regulars have suggested we move one of the nets back to 40m before DST starts. So, effective Monday 2/16/2015, the 7pm PST FRN net currently on 3574 will move to 7123.5 January produced some awesome net round tables, some running more than an hour, one an hour and a half. Got some great QSK stuff going a few times.

01/29/15 John Smithson N8ZYA: Eric (AC8LJ) and I both agree that my imitation of John Denver at Aspen will change Aspen for ever Hi Hi. Despite the low check-ins I enjoy these QSO's very much. Perhaps as the band starts to become less distant, numbers will pick up?

01/05/2015 Allen Matthews KA5TJS: Had to move down due to QSO on 3.561. Lots of QSB but managed good copy.

01/262015 Allen Matthews KA5TJS: The band was pretty good and signals strong.

01/272015 Scotty Long NU0S: I will brain storm and see what else I can do to promote the net. I know football and the current crazy weather has not helped. Have a great week 73.

72

Chuck AB1VL
QRS Nets Manager

=====

NAQCC Farnsword Net 80 Meter Net (FRN) - Sunday, Monday 7:00 PM, PST, 3.527.5 MHz +/-

01-04-2015 (5) NCS KR5RR KE7LKW N7NLN NM5S K7KY
01-05-2015 (7) NCS KR5RR NM5S N7NLN N7HRK KE7LKW K7KY KW6G
01-11-2015 (2) NCS KE7LKW N7HRK
01-12-2015 (0) NCS N7HRK no QN1
01-18-2015 (5) NCS KR5RR KE7LKW/7 KW6G K7KY N7NLN
01-19-2015 (4) NCS KR5RR WA8AXF KE7LKW N7HRK
01-25-2015 (5) NCS KR5RR KE7LKW/7 K7KY W7SOM WU7F
01-26-2015 (6) NCS N5DRG WU7F KW6G K7KY W7SOM N7HRK

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) - Monday, 7:00 PM CST, 3.527.5MHz +/-

01-05-2015 (3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA
01-12-2015 (3) NCS N5DRG KE5YGA
01-19-2015 (3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA
01-26-2015 (4) NCS KA5TJS KE5YGA N5DRG KG0YR

NAQCC Midwest QRS Net (MWN) - Monday, 8:00 PM CST 7.117 MHz +/-

01-05-2015 (4) NCS NU0S WB0QQT WB0QQT K0JFJ
01-12-2015 (6) NCS NU0S WA2DWX WA8AXF N7NLN K0JFJ N3FCS
01-19-2015 (0) NCS NU0S no QNI
01-26-2015 (2) NCS WB0QQT WA2DWX

NAQCC West Virginai Net (WVN) - Wednesday, 9:00 PM EST 7.117 MHz +/-

01-07-2015 (4) NCS N8ZYA AC8LJ KA8SYV W8GDP
01-14-2015 (4) NCS N8ZYA W8GDP AC8LJ WA8SIE.
01-21-2015 (0) no net.
01-28-2015 (3) NCS N8ZYA W8GDP AC8LJ

NAQCC North New England 40 Meter QRS Net (NNN) - Tuesday, 7:00 PM EST 7.052.5 MHz +/-

01-06-2015 (0) NCS AB1VL no net, QRM
01-13-2015 (3) NCS AB1VL VE3DQN NI2F
01-20-2015 (5) NCS AB1VL WI2B W3UEC KG9DW KB2DHG
01-20-2015 160M Net: (0) NCS AB1VL no QNI.
01-27-2015 (0) NCS AB1VL no net, QRM

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

01-01-2015 (4) NCS KE7LKW N6KIX AD7BP WU7F
01-08-2015 (7) NCS W7DK KE7LKW/7 K7KY W7MWF AD7BP K7JUV N7QR
01-15-2015 (3) NCS KE7LKW AD7BP KR5RR
01-22-2015 (7) NCS KE7LKW AD7BP K7JUV W7ANM KR5RR W7SOM K7ZNP
01-29-2015 (6) NCS KE7LKW K7JUV AD7BP W7MWF W7SOM KR5RR

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

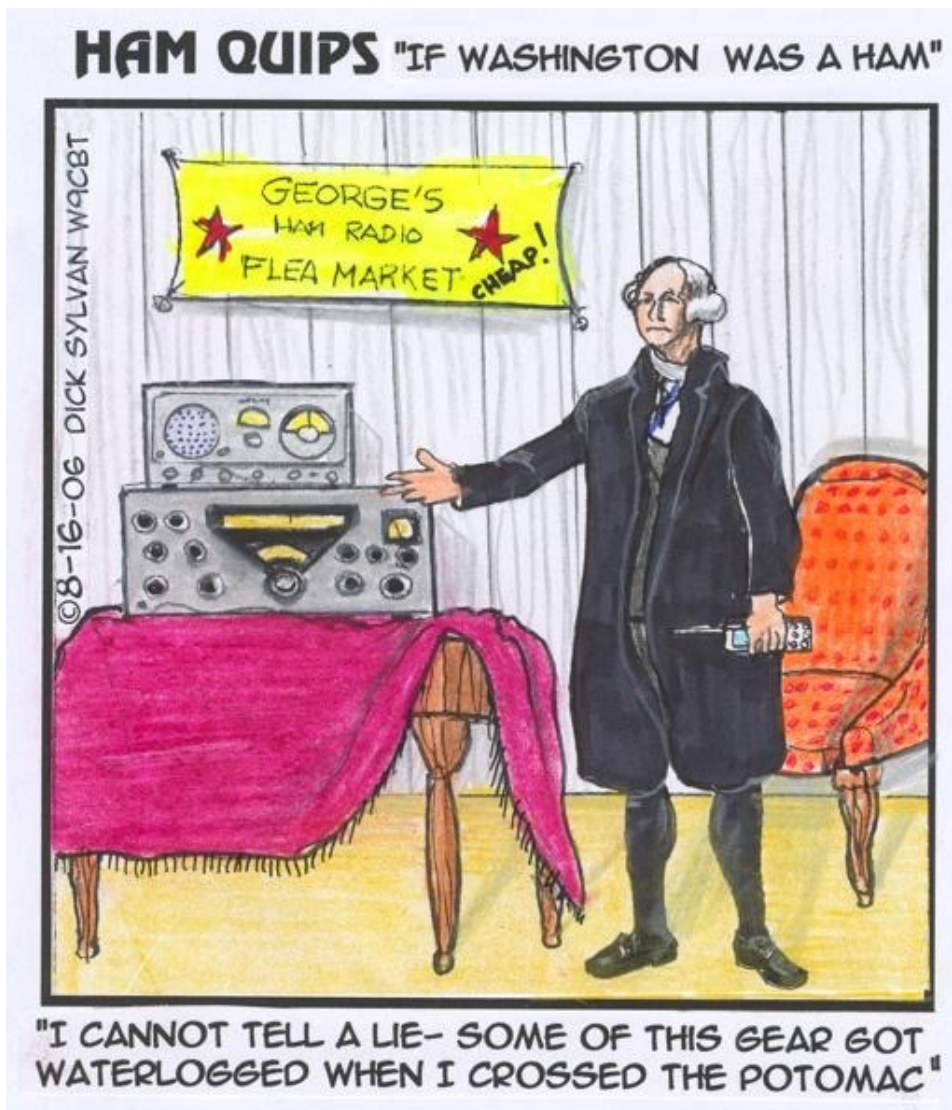
01-01-2015 (3) NCS WA8AXF K9EYT ND0CW
01-08-2015 (2) NCS WA8AXF WE8UPJ
01-22-2015 (4) NCS WA8AXF AB1VL N7NLN WE8UPJ
01-29-2015 (5) NCS WA8AXF WA2DWX KD5VGJ WE8UPJ W1Q



HAM QUIPS



Dick Sylvan, W9CBT, #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 *KY9A 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* available at <http://www.ky9a.org/w9cbt/>.



NAQCC CHAPTER NEWS

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

If your chapter is planning a portable operation activity and would like to have it promoted on the club email list or in the newsletter, send an email with the subject "NAQCC Portable Operation" and with the exact wording of the announcement to Paul, KD2MX, about a week before the operation. Please be sure to include the UTC time for the event and not just the local time.

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

Chapter Reports Begin On The Next Page

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER



Items in this section are from Central Texas Chapter President Danny, N5DRG, unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to him. The Central Texas website is at <http://www.naqcc-centraltexas.net/>.

The chapter is located in the Austin, TX area.

Greetings from Central Texas.

Just a few notes from the events of the Central Texas Chapter.

The weather has been winter, for our part of the nation; more rain and colder temps than normal, so the outdoor activities had been hampered to some degree. But as luck and Texas weather changes, the weekend of January 25th was spot on perfect! Temperature was in the high 60's to mid-70's both days, which afforded some of the chapter members to get out and "Play Radio".

Joe K5BRY, NAQCC #6666 was able to get out to Pedernales Falls State Park on Saturday the 25th to get in a five mile hike. At the mid-point of that hike there happens to be a small summit called Wolf Mountain, where he set up his KX3 and his Buddy-Stick antenna. Joe commented that he was able to stay long enough on the hill to work a few stations. See the Pedernales State Parks website here: <http://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/pedernales-falls>

Joe's setup, and a view of the Pedernales River.



There was another activity on this perfect weather weekend. Danny (N5DRG, NAQCC # 5861) was able to secure a spot in one of the local Parks, within five miles of his home. The park is called Brushy Creek Lake Park.

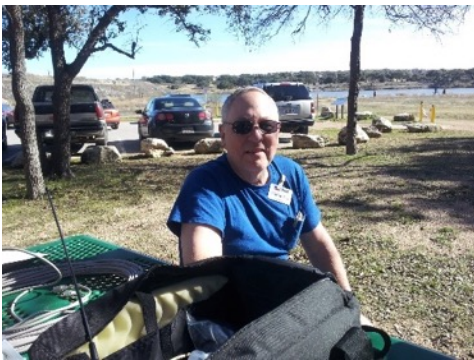
There, Danny was able to set up his 30 foot telescoping fiberglass "Jackite Brand" pole and use it to feed an end fed vertical antenna, 10 thru 40 meters, and a home brew zip line speaker wire dipole for 20 meters. The 75 foot roll of speaker wire was purchased for a dollar at a Ham Fest. **Worth every penny.**

Helping out in this QRV/QRP in the park was Kenny, K5KGK, NAQCC # 5615, and Lester, WD4IFU.

We started out on 7.065 MHz and worked a couple stations, including fellow NAQCC members Allen, KA5TJS NAQCC # 4512, and Andy, KE5YGA, NAQCC # 5493. After calling CQ for a while on 40 meters with little luck, we moved to 20 meters and worked several stations there.

Our portable setup was a Yaesu 857D running 5 watts, but had the Hendricks PFR-3 as stand by rig. The Hendricks will run all day and night without draining the batteries. The Yaesu, not so much.

You may notice the 857D has a microphone connected to it, as they were hoping some of the local non-CW hams would show up and at least get on air. The American Morse Express Porta-Paddle did all the work. ☺



Kenny K5KGK



Lester WD4IFU



Danny N5DRG



Rig & Paddle

The Chapter hopes to have this become a regular event, until the 100 plus degree days take control.

73 Y'all
De
Danny - N5DRG

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER



Items in this section are from European Chapter President Matt, MW0MIE, unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to him. 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 members in EU, and we regularly receive challenge logs from North American participants. Please see the chapter web pages for dates and details.

Current challenge

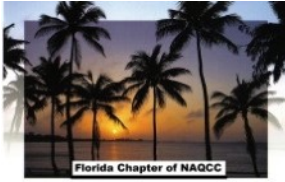
The premise of the current challenge is to construct at least five names of European countries, using only letters in callsigns of stations from that country. We are grateful to John, K3WWP, for suggesting this premise.

Full details of the challenge are available at: <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/february-2015-challenge> Interestingly, the letter 'Y' is very rare in the callsigns of Hungarian stations, so we are currently reviewing whether the premise needs to be modified. Please check the website regularly for updates. Any countries other than Hungary are unlikely to be affected.

January challenge

We have so far had 7 successful entries for the January challenge, from DH0DK, G3JFS, N8ZYA, K1IEE, K3WWP, PA0XAW and PA7PYR. The premise of the challenge was to construct the names and altitudes of four well-known European ski resorts. Congratulations to all who completed the challenge!

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



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

No report available.

NAQCC ILLOWA CHAPTER

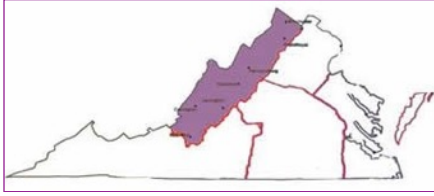


Items in this section are from the Illowa Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to Bob, W9PZ.

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

No report available.

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.

The Shenandoah Chapter of NAQCC has been mostly "indoors" for the winter. We have been trying to have 80 meter activity each evening at 8 PM EDST, and often have two to four operators on board.

Brian, W3ATT, #6282, has been trying 80 meter mobile operation with my Hustler antenna, and has 599 signal into the net. His job involvement has changed, so his availability is different, and we are trying to work it out to stay in touch with him.

Foster, WF4O, #7389, is a pharmacist, and is on call, so he has checked into the net, but was called away, before we had a chance to rag chew very long with him.

Howard, K4LXY, #7398, is frustrated with putting together an old Radio Kits 80 meter QRP SSB kit I had on shelf for many years. His wife is putting together a LARGE picture puzzle, and Howard said this is his puzzle. He is still trying to figure out the assembly instructions, which are frankly very skimpy. But he is getting an education in how home brewing might be if you build from "scratch". He is enjoying operating with his Kenwood TS-820 at 5 watts, that came back after a recapping job, and realignment. He says it is like a new radio.

Russ, K3NLT, #2906, has been working on several projects, the most current of which is an Index Labs QRP++. This radio is a CW/SSB transceiver, and from almost it's first day out in the hands of QRPers, there have been many modifications designed and attempted, to make it into a better radio. It does not at all compare to today's technology, and I think I will reverse one mod I attempted to try and then make it available on eBay. I notice they bring few dollars there. I have also found my friend Chuck Adams, K7QO, has an offering of two books in CW on his home page. I am working with the Wizard of OZ at 20 WPM, and have burned CDs for some of the other club members to try.

Today we are on the edge of a mix of winter weather, and we are longing for Spring to arrive. Next Monday it will be only 6 weeks away, no matter what the "Groundhog" says!

Russell Mumaw, K3NLT, #2906

NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER



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

January was another brutal month for outdoor radio operations in West Virginia. We did not have any field days but plans are soon to materialize at the Huntington Museum of Radio and Technology. Huntington is the home of Marshall University and one of the larger cities in our state. Last year we operated from this site and we look forward to February 14th for another great day. We will use their radio shack. They have a nine element beam. Last year I worked another QRP operator in Italy at that time. This year will be another opportunity to present our hobby to newcomers taking the VE exam which will be given that morning by the Tri State Amateur Radio Association.



Hopefully, the weather will improve quickly this month. One of our members (N8XZ) has built an "antenna launcher" which I'm looking forward to seeing in use. I've purchased one of those long fiberglass poles for field use which I haven't experimented with yet. Eric (AC8LJ) is putting his QRP rig in his car for mobile use.

We continue to enjoy our weekly QRS net, although band conditions on 40 meters are extremely long at our time slot. They're like sitting around a campfire and having a nice "chat" every Wednesday night with the folks here in the valley.

Breakfast is also a highlight of the month at the local restaurant. I have plans to shift our eating times to

an optional Saturday morning soon. This will allow the younger hams in the valley to learn more about us.

I've been in contact with the Charleston Ham fest committee too. Our club presentation went over very well last year and I will continue this year with another power point presentation.

Personally, I continue to enjoy the "monthly challenge" every month. Although I've been out of town for nearly two weeks this month, I completed the USA challenge very early. I nearly completed the European challenge but had problems with the "numbers" and came short of my goal. I could not enough "zeros" for completion. For those of you who have never attempted this game, you're missing a fun part of our club activities and the chance for a nice prize too.

That's about it here at the West Virginia Chapter this month. I'm looking forward to warmer weather and my fellow club member (KC4URI) and I camping again with the radios. West Virginia still has lots of places where we haven't operated from yet. We always keep the batteries charged up and the gear packed and stowed ready on a moment's notice. All we need is a little sunshine and warmer temperatures for an excuse to get outdoors in the woods.

72's

John Smithson N8ZYA

VP NAQCC Club

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER



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

The histories of CW and railroads are intertwined pretty securely. This month the main focus of the WPA Chapter activities centered on railroads. Model railroading to be exact. Mike KC2EGL and John K3WWP got together twice during the month and spent most of their time together working on Mike's railroads. Here's an excerpt from my web site diary at <http://k3wwp.com> that I wrote about the first day.

Let's get right to the heart of the matter today - model railroading. Were I not into so many other things, I would love to have one of those big model railroad setups like you see at various model railroading exhibits and museums around the country. I have always loved trains - probably one reason being the Pennsylvania Railroad lines ran just about a half block from my house and the passenger station was less than a block away. In addition to the main line there were siding lines that ran even closer to the house on their way to a railroad warehouse behind the passenger station and a brickyard up the line from that. I can remember from a very early age the American Flyer train my dad and I used to play with. That was followed by a Lionel steam engine set and then later a Lionel diesel set. Ah those were the days. Unfortunately I didn't really go further into the hobby once my dad died when I was 18 and then other interests including work took over my life.

That was why I was really excited when Mike said he was going to bring down a couple of his train sets that needed some work after not being used for several years. We spent some 4-5 hours or so cleaning the track and wheels and fixing other little minor things. When we got things running good, we both just sat on the floor like kids enjoying just watching the models going around in circles. Life doesn't get any better. Here are a couple pictures of our experience. First Mike cleaning his portion of the tracks. I was doing the same thing, but we never did get a picture of me at work. Then a picture of the magnificent Lionel steam engine. I think like CW is REAL ham radio, Steam is REAL railroading.



Altogether we spent about 12+ hours together and did some of our other usual things like checking the bands. Conditions weren't all that great when we were on together. Mike worked HK4CZE and that was about it for both of us.

Of course we had our usual meals. Lunch at Wendy's and a Vocelli pizza for supper. For the first time, my frosty at Wendy's was too thick to enjoy through a straw and I had to use a spoon. Our pizza was a 5 topping for the price of a 1 topping. We had pepperoni, meatballs, avocado, mushrooms, and tomato toppings.

Another usual thing is playing a hidden object game on the computer. We're both pretty much addicted to them. When it became 0000Z, I told Mike I'd go to the shack and see if I could get my DX QSO before he finished that particular HOS. Well, everything clicked and it took me less than a minute to find and work XE2I on 20 meters, and another 30 seconds to log him. Mike still needed to find 4 more hidden objects when I got back downstairs. I think that's the quickest I've gotten my DX streak QSO in ages.

All too soon Mike had to leave, but we got together again that Friday with the intention of building our Lil Squeal QRP transceiver kits and do a couple minor finishing touches on one of the train sets.

I'll let Mike tell the story of that day as he "ghost wrote" my diary entry for the day.

The day started when I arrived at John's QTH around 1500Z. We finished up on the O scale model railroad project we started on Monday. I will have to take my trolley in for a checkup. It would not reverse direction like it is designed to.

After the model railroad project we took off to Subway for lunch. Upon our return we started what we thought would be a straight forward project building our QRPME Lil Squall 40M transceiver's. Key word here is 'thought'. There are five step's to building the Lil Squall. We are only half way through step three. The instructions were not laid out very well. With the experience that John and I have assembling radio kits, this should have been a leisurely afternoon project. It has turned out to be anything but. It will require another visit to finish out the kit which took up at least eight hours of our day. We did break for dinner at Ponderosa for their Friday fish buffet. During one of the testing phases of working on the kit we checked the bands to see if we could find some DX. All we heard was CO8LY in Cuba. John and I have worked him many times over so we passed him by.

After we called it a night with the kit building we took on one of our favorite activities. A hidden object game which we continued from the previous two visits. When we finished our game we found a 'extra' game that gives us the perspective from another character in the game we just completed. We will continue with it the next time I visit.

As I type this out, John is walking laps on the first floor of his house. He obviously did not get enough walking in today. Neither did I. I will have to make up for it tomorrow morning on my indoor cycling trainer which is my Lemond Nevada City road bike connected to a magnetic resistance unit. I will pedal along as I watch a recording of today's stage of the Tour Down Under. It is the first event on the bicycle racing calendar.

All in all it was another very enjoyable day hanging out with John. I will have to figure out when my next visit will be. I plan on visiting at least one more time before our annual President's Day get get together.

Until then 73 de Mike KC2EGL

I think this news item shows clearly that hams don't have to devote 24/7 to ham radio, and do spend time on various other things as well. Even though it is a great hobby, ham radio should not take up anyone's complete time if one wants to be a well-rounded person.



MEMBER SUBMISSIONS



This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit a short article dealing with some aspects of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Just about anything that would be of interest to our members would be welcomed. Send you items to our News Editor Paul, KD2MX.

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

From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

January was about an average winter month in all respects - weather, indoor activities, ham radio, propagation, etc. Generally January seems to be a poor month for working DX, and this one was no exception. Several days during the month I was fearful that my daily DX streak that started on March 1, 2013 was going to come to an end. Although it wasn't as easy working DX as it was for the majority of the streak, the DX did come with some effort. Actually not all that much effort. I should say it involved getting on the bands at different times of the day than I usually do. As I pointed out in my web site diary entry for January 12 at <http://k3wwp.com>, I got my daily DX fix between 0000 and 0200Z on 84.9% of the 683 days at that point. However on 15.1% of the days, quite a few in this January I had to resort to the hours between 1300 and 2304Z for the QSOs. I won't delve further into the stats here so as not to bore those not interested. Those who may be interested can check out my diary entry.

Anyway the streak did continue and is continuing as I write this on January 29 when the streak reached 700 days. My next goal is to extend it to February 28 which will be day #730. You can see that's two full years of 365 days. If I make it that far, I don't know where I'll go from there. 1,000 days would be nice, but with the declining sunspots providing fewer days when DX conditions are really good, getting the extra 270 days may prove to be too time consuming, especially with good weather coming and outdoor activities being possible again.

I had gotten away from using my Lightning Bug for the past year or more, but I "fired it up" a few times during January just for the lack of anything better to do, and I've been having fun getting used to it again. I even used it in our January sprint. At least that provided some bug activity in our newly revised method of listing sprint scores and awarding sprint certificates.

Our January NA challenge was easy to master despite a rather large number of letters. However the European challenge is proving to be a different story. With 3 days left as I write, I still need 5 zeroes and 1 eight to finish. Conditions to Europe have been pretty good although not as good as a good part of last year, but it has just been hard finding stations with calls having those numbers. At least I made one of the ski resort names so I'll get a participation point, but that still will be just the second European challenge I've failed to master since their inception.

I think our club challenges are one of the best aspects of the NAQCC and I dearly love them. I love any kind of challenge where I have to put out a little effort to master. I really can't understand folks whose only challenge seems to be to live long enough to watch the next reality show on TV. I couldn't live like that. I like to challenge myself in some way each and every day, whether it deals with ham radio, walking, computer games, gardening, whatever. That's what life is all about.

From Chuck, N8NK, #7519 —

Remote operating?

I read in the magazines all the time how wonderful remote rig control is. I read about how this ham or that ham got bummed out when he couldn't make a contact with a DXpedition and almost gave up the hobby, but then found out about the miracle of a remotely operated station with a huge antenna farm. And by paying 'only a couple bucks a minute', he can operate the station of his dreams.

To me, this is no miracle. And to me, this is not ham radio. Where's the challenge? Where's the fun? To me, if one derives the level of fun in our hobby based upon the level of thickness of the wallet, this is nothing short of sad.

To me, the fun and the miracle in our hobby is that our signal 'takes off' from a simple piece of wire, 'lands' somewhere... anywhere... upon another simple piece of wire, and lets the two of us chat for a few.

To me, and after 41 years as a ham, this is still a miracle.

To me, when I work a station 5000 miles away, or 5 miles away, using a simple piece of wire as my 'aerial' and a few watts of power, this is DX. My DX. My joy and my fun. No Internet needed. And the thinnest of wallets will allow this miracle to happen!

Advice follows:

Forget that the Internet exists. Connect your little rig (the smaller the better) to a piece of wire. Get a suitable impedance match if possible. Or use ladder line (or no feedline at all!) and hope your output transistor doesn't blow. Regardless of the SWR on that ladder line, you're going to 'get out'. Note that if you have no feedline at all then you cannot lose any power in a mismatch condition! Connect a key and a pair of headphones. Now: enjoy the miracle of ham radio. You'll work plenty of DX! It might be only a few miles, or a few thousand miles away, but that doesn't matter. It is all the same: fun.

From Joe, W4ONC, #2102 —

My radio is the MFJ-9200 QRP Transceiver that I purchased in December, 2014. On February 3, 2015 I heard a VK3 calling CQ on 10.115 @ 6:30 AM EST. At first he went to two other stations but on the third try I kind of got him. He received W3ONC. After I made a correction to W4ONC and after five grueling minutes we were able to pass all of the necessary information for the QSO. His call sign is VK3IO, Ron in Cockatoo, Victoria, Australia. I have emailed him Direct and will be waiting for his return QSL. It still amazes me what five watts can accomplish.

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

As was mentioned in the *Key Clicks*, I will be doing some traveling from mid February through March 11 so the March issue of the newsletter will be delayed and possibly somewhat abbreviated. I will have email access most of the time so you can still get in touch with me if needed. I've also made arrangements for someone else to do all of the regular website updates that normally need to be done but there might be a few things that get delayed so please be patient. I plan on taking my little Elecraft KX1 and a wire that I can toss up into the

trees. I don't know how many opportunities I will actually have to operate but it's likely that I will be able to play a little radio so please keep an ear out for N8XMS/7 around the usual QRP frequencies on 20, 30, and 40 meters.



NAQCC CLUB INFORMATION

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.

The North American QRP CW Club was founded in 2004 by WY3H and K3WWP and now has more than 7000 members throughout the world. Membership is free and anyone interested in CW/QRP operating is welcome. Complete information about the NAQCC, including a membership application, activities schedule, and useful resources, can be found on our website at <http://www.naqcc.info/>. Inquires can also be sent to

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Additional contact information can be found on the next page.

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