

NAQCC NEWS

ISSUE 226 APRIL 2017



KEY CLICKS

- **SPECIAL SPRINT AND PRIZE DRAWING THIS MONTH.** Our sprint on April 11th (12th UTC) will be our 150th regular monthly sprint and we want to celebrate with a special prize drawing. We have had more than 150 people participate in most of our sprints but only twice have we had more than 150 logs submitted. So we are setting that as our goal. ***If at least 150 logs are submitted we will hold a drawing for member-participants for a prize worth \$150.*** You certainly don't need to be a seasoned contestor or even a competitive type of person to participate. If you can send and receive even slow CW at QRP levels you can join in on the fun. If you have never participated in one of our sprints take a look at the "First Time Sprinter?" article in this issue for some how-to help.
- **NEW GUESTBOOK FOR CLUB WEBSITE.** We have recently updated the Guestbook page for our club website. If you would like to sign the Guestbook or view comments that others have left go to <http://www.naqcc.info/guestbook.html>.
- **HOW HIGH IS YOUR ANTENNA?** This comment came to me from a sprint participant who pointed out that we need to be a little bit more specific in our sprint reports when we fill out our antenna information. Just saying "dipole" really isn't enough because there is a world of difference between a dipole at 15 feet and one at 45 feet. The whole reason that we collect antenna information for our sprint reports (and even have antenna categories in the report) is so that people can compare how they did with others using similar antennas. We certainly don't need a technical treatise on your antenna but including something like the height would be useful.
- **CAN YOU BE A SPRINT LOGGING MENTOR?** I frequently get emails asking me for help on how to use the _____ (fill in what you want) logging software for our sprints. Of course we have extensive instructions on our website (http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_genlog_tutorial.html) on how to use the freeware by W3KM called *GenLog*. We also have an option for Mac computer users. But for various reasons there are some who don't want to or who can't use that software, and they are the ones that send me the emails. Unfortunately I usually can't offer very much help since the particular logging program that I am being asked about is usually not the one that I personally use. But it might be a logger that you use. So if you use a non-*GenLog* logger for our sprints and have successfully figured out how to get a correctly formatted log out of it for our autologger submission page, would you please consider helping out? It would be great if we could publish on our website the instructions needed for these alternate loggers. Please contact me if you could help with this. - Paul, N8XMS

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- **PLEASE REMEMBER TO UPDATE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION.** Do you have a new callsign, mailing address, or email address? If so, we need to know about it and we have a special page on our website where you can report any updates for our database records. It's at http://www.naqcc.info/member_updates.html.
- **NEW 60 METER FARNSWORD NET.** NR5NN, N6IET, and W7SAG, have a new Farnsword CW net operating on 60-meters on Sunday and Thursday evenings. The Farnsword method sends words at a higher rate of speed with possibly longer breaks between the words and is excellent training for head copy of Morse Code. See our *CW Nets* page in this issue for more details.
- **FALL ANNIVERSARY PLANS ARE IN THE WORKS.** Our NAQCC 13th anniversary celebration will run from 0000 Z, October 9, through 2400 Z October 15. We have reserved our special 3-letter callsigns and will soon be calling for volunteers to put them on the air during that week. So please mark your calendars and "stay tuned" for more details. And don't forget that there is a throughout-the-year participation requirement to be eligible for the highest tier of prizes in the anniversary drawing. Details on those requirements can be seen on last year's prize page at http://www.naqcc.info/prize_drawing_12th_anniv.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."



ACOUSTICALLY SPEAKING

BY TOM, VE4AKI



Modern transceivers for the last 10 years or so have introduced some amazing features to improve CW reception. Improved filters and digital signal processing are just some examples. Many QRP CW operators like myself often use older rigs, homebrew, or kit built equipment that lack these advanced features. The following article outlines a rather low tech way to improve the readability of CW signals when using more basic gear.

To make CW signals easier to copy it is necessary to enhance the the signal while attenuating background noise and adjacent signals. This can be accomplished by using a speaker that is resonant at the audio frequency of the signal.

At one time there were a few resonant speakers on the market but they have disappeared except at flea markets. So, homebrew to the rescue. The junkbox turned up a 2" P.M. speaker with a good sized magnet of unknown origin. For the enclosure I repurposed a Heathkit lab meter cabinet with a sloping front ideal for this project.

The Heathkit cabinet had a hole for the meter of 2.25" in diameter, too large for the 2" speaker. For a solution I searched through the plastic pipe fittings at the local hardware store. I found a plastic ABS adapter fitting that fit the hole in the enclosure nicely and was about 2" long. Hot melt glue was used to fasten the fitting to the enclosure and the speaker to the inside end of the fitting. Wiring for the speaker was routed through a grommet in the rear of the enclosure. A phone plug was attached to the cable to suit the rig.

The exposed end of the adapter fitting provided a slip fit for 2" ABS pipe. A piece of scrap ABS pipe was cut to various lengths [1.5", 3", 4", 5"] Inserting these into the adapter fitting allows for "tuning" the resonance of the speaker.

Using the speaker is very easy. Plug it in, adjust the volume and tune in a signal. Quickly change the "tuning tubes" to find the one that enhances the signal the most. Slight retuning may be necessary. When the " sweet spot " is found the CW note is enhanced ie. it stands out from the background noise and adjacent signals.

Although this speaker won't replace a good CW filter it provides definite improvement for a rig that has only a wide SSB filter or older receivers without narrow selectivity. The completed unit was painted with semi-flat black automotive paint to give a more professional appearance.

73-----Tom VE4AKI



1 PIC = 1000 WORDS

BY GENE, N5GW

Many if not most hams either own or have access to both a smart phone and a PC. The phone contains a digital camera which may be of great but unrealized value to a radio operator/experimenter. Certainly we all take field day pics and such, but there are other uses we may not have considered.

How many of us have thought to take pics of our equipment including serial numbers? In case of fire or theft, this may be of great value. Pics are cheap and easy nowadays, so take more than one of each item.

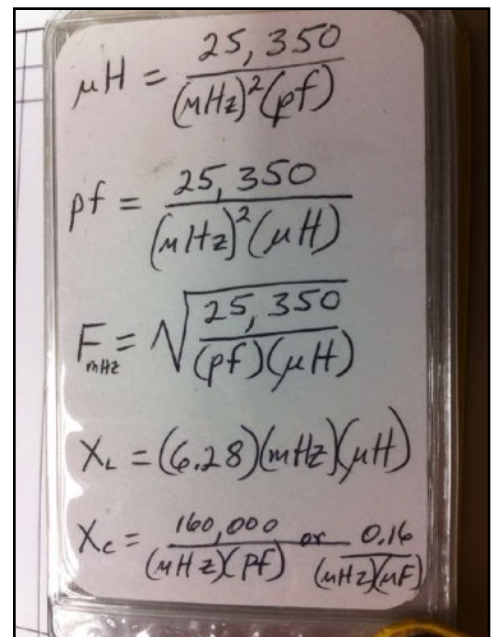
What about your station layout during that latest portable outing? If you're like me you may not be able to remember which rig you placed on which table, what you sat on, which battery, tuner or antenna you took along, and such. Camera to the rescue! The first pic is of my outdoor station for FYBO. Next year it will be easier to assemble after reviewing the pic.

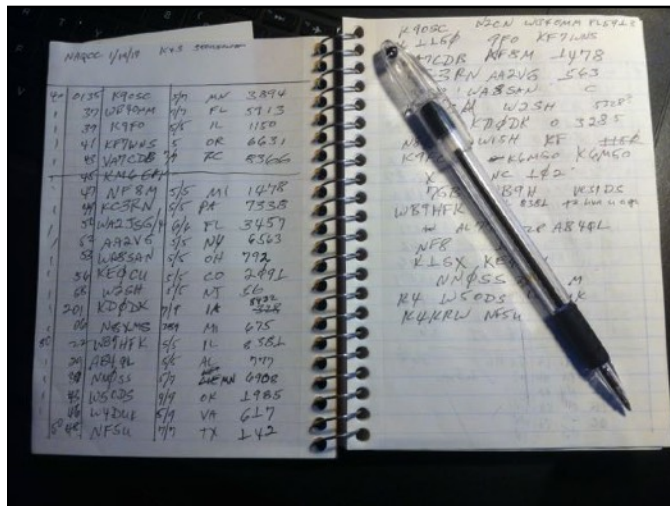


Another trap into which I fall is in disassembling a device for inspection or repair. Often I can't remember how it goes back together. If I have not been able to repair the device, I have made the situation embarrassingly worse! If only I had taken step by step pics, an easy thing to do, I could have gotten it back together correctly.

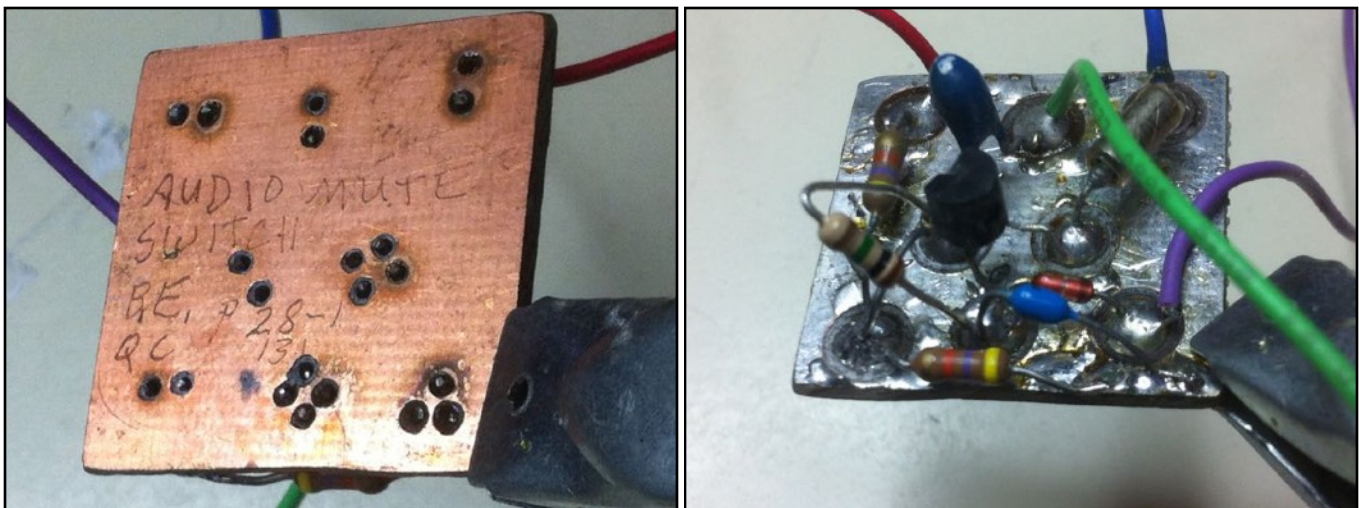
I often use formulas to solve experimentation problems, and keep them on placards on a bulletin board or tacked to the wall in front of my work desk. I hit upon the idea of photographing them all in case they are lost or I am portable or on vacation. Now all formulas are in my pocket for quick review! The second pic shows an example.

I still like to use paper logs (third pic) because they take up less space than a keyboard. After a sprint or other outing, a few quick camera snaps preserve the info even if the log is lost before being transferred to a computer logging program.





Think about that latest diagram or schematic you jotted down on a piece of paper. Is it going to get lost? Certainly! So pull out your camera and preserve it. The same goes for one shot PCB or point-to-point circuit boards you previously cobbled together and would like to rebuild. The fourth pic shows the underside of a 1X1 inch foil pad type of circuit board containing the name of the board and its source. The next pic reveals the topside. If several such pics are snapped from different angles it should be easy to replicate the circuit. Remember to include a label to aid in future identification of the circuit.



Even individual components may need to have their picture taken. I read of one ham who, after winding a small toroid with fire wire, would snap a pic and then magnify the image to facilitate counting of the turns. Try it! Also you can photograph a trim pot or trimmer capacitor in a circuit to remember the original setting. That may be easier than trying to mark it with a Sharpie. This works great for adjusting carburetors also!

Taking pictures of simple wire antennas is notoriously difficult, as they just don't show up very well without photo shopping or some other technique. However, that center insulator or strain relief device you invented may look good in a close-up.

Many other good photography ideas are out there. If you come up with some, let me know!

72, Gene, N5GW



FIRST TIME SPRINTER? BY PAUL, N8XMS

Even if you are an experienced sprinter it might be worth your time to read this reminder of our NAQCC Sprint basics.

We are just a few days away from holding our 150th monthly sprint and, as has been announced elsewhere, we are really pushing to get at least 150 submitted logs which will then have a prize drawing to go along with that. Of course this means that there is a good chance that we will have a number of first-time sprinters participating and the thought of doing so might be a little bit intimidating to some. So here is some basic information that should help our first-time participants. This is not so much a beginner's tutorial as it is a list of helpful resources that we already have in place for our sprints.

Our sprints are designed to be a very low-pressure introduction to ham radio contesting and absolutely anyone who can make a CW contact can participate. You don't need to be a high-speed operator. As a matter of fact, our most popular entry category is for using a straight key. There are other entry categories for other keying devices but the fact that so many participants use a straight key automatically keeps the speeds down. The exchange is very simple, just *RST - STATE - MEMBER #*. Very specific suggestions for how to operate in the sprint can be found in a pair of articles that appeared in the July and August 2016 newsletter as well as a "Sprint Tips" page on our club website - http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter/newsletter_217.pdf, http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter/newsletter_218.pdf, and http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_tips.html.

Logging sprint QSOs seems to be a major issue for many beginning sprinters. But that doesn't need to be the case because there are many different logging options available. If you only make a few sprint contacts, logging them with pencil and paper and typing them up later for submission is a good option. The format for sprint logs is simple but very specific. Each QSO must appear on a separate line with the following information in the exact order:

YOURCALL BAND UTC WORKEDCALL STATE MEMNUMBER MULTIPLIER POINTS

Very detailed information on the required logging format can be found at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_rules.html and you should read it carefully. We also had an article in the October 2015 newsletter that described the most common mistakes that are made in sprint logs and how to avoid them - http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter/newsletter_208.pdf.

But of course we are hams and we like tech tools so computer logging is the way that most of us want to go. An obvious advantage to computer logging is that two of the available logging tools will look up the callsign in our membership data and automatically fill in the state, membership number, multiplier count, and point value that are needed for your log. They will also produce a correctly formatted final log report for submission. Exports from these loggers into whatever software that you like to use for overall logging are also easy to do. (I personally use a logger called *RumLog* and I export my sprint QSOs from the Mac tool described below into it so that they become a part of my complete station operating records. It takes only a couple of minutes to do it.)

Windows computer users should install the freeware logging program developed by W3KM called *GenLog*. There is certainly a learning curve that goes along with this software so you should put in some practice time before the sprint starts. But once the software is mastered it is a very easy and useful tool for our sprints. You can find a link to this software and a very detailed tutorial on how to use it on our website at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_genlog_tutorial.html.

Mac computer users who have the *Numbers* spreadsheet software on their machines can use the *Sprint Logger.numbers* template that was specifically developed for our sprints. As with *GenLog* I recommend that you put in some practice time with this software before trying to use it in the sprint. An article on how to use this spreadsheet was in the September 2015 newsletter and more information, including some instructional videos can be found on our website - http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter/newsletter_207.pdf, http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_macs.html.

If for some reason you do not want to use *GenLog* or *Sprint Logger.numbers* (something about an “old dog with new tricks?”), you can probably figure out a way to use just about any other available logger that you have. But I will say three things about that:

1. You will work harder during the sprint without the automatic data fill-in.
2. You will work harder after the sprint trying to produce a log in the correct final format.
3. I probably can't help you with it. You will be on your own.

Please believe me, mastering *GenLog* or the *Numbers* spreadsheet is well worth the learning curve effort! They also help to keep our log processing people happy by always producing perfectly formatted logs.

Now there is just one more topic to discuss - submitting your log. And this is really the easiest part of all. Although there is a specified format that you can use to type up a text file for submission (http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_log_form.txt), I would almost question the sanity of anyone choosing to do that because there is a much easier way to go - our [Autologger page](#). This page is activated at the start of our sprints and remains available until the submission deadline. On it you are prompted to enter a few pieces of information into some text boxes - like callsign, key type, antenna description, etc. Next you paste in your log from your computer clipboard into a provided window (or you can just type it in if it's not too long). You can then add some soapbox comments and when finished you just click on a submit button. Not only will the autologger send your submission to our log processors, but it will also email a copy of it to you for your own records.

So check out the various links given in this article, do a little bit of logging practice, and get ready to have a lot of fun. And that really is the bottom line - *It's a lot of fun!*

**THE COMPLETE SPRINT RULES CAN BE FOUND AT
http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_rules.html**



SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

BY PAUL, N8XMS

Most of the information in this report is from an article published in the Piltown Picayune newspaper, dated Saturday April 1, 2017. Additional information is from telephone interviews that I had with some of the parties involved. - Editor

Mrs. Clara Edwards of 4117 Parkview Drive is being praised by authorities for her help in thwarting a possible terrorist plot in our community. Mrs. Edwards lives across the street from the Otis Campbell Memorial Park and as part of Homeland Security's "See something, Say something" program she has been carefully monitoring the activities in the park. Yesterday, as Mrs. Edwards was scanning the park with her binoculars, she noticed a strange man wildly dancing around a picnic table and pumping his fists in the air. Sitting on the picnic table was what looked like a miniature spy radio and she could also see a wire running up into the tree branches overhead.



*Concerned citizen
Mrs. Clara Edwards*

On seeing this suspicious activity Mrs. Edwards called 911 and Sheriff's deputy Barnard Fife was dispatched to investigate. On arriving at the scene Officer Fife reported seeing a man in a highly excited state shouting "EZ5...EZ5...EZ5..." over and over again as he pumped his fists in the air. As Officer Fife approached the man he turned to him with a wild look in his eyes and said, "I just got Turkmenistan with 3-watts on 20! It's number 18 on the most wanted list!" The man was taken into custody without incident and transported to the police station for further questioning.

At the station reporters asked Officer Fife what clue tipped him off to the danger of this situation. He responded by saying, "my dad had a CB in his pickup truck back in the early 70's so I know something about radios and there is no way that anyone could communicate that far with only 3 watts of power. And when I heard him talk about the Homeland Security most wanted watch list I immediately knew this guy must be a member of one of those terrorist cells that I've read about in *True Detective* magazine."



Officer Fife speaking to reporters.

Officials have identified the man as one Ernest T. Bass and neighbors of his have reported seeing other suspicious behavior from him in the past. They say that Mr. Bass can often be seen taking broken TVs

and computers from people’s trash on garbage pickup day. He has also been seen throwing rocks with strings tied on to them up into the branches of trees in his yard. Law enforcement officials have said that the statements that Mr. Bass has made to them are confusing and mostly incomprehensible, and that he has continued to mutter something about “EZ5” and “Turkmenistan.” A psychiatric evaluation has been ordered.



Mr. Bass launching one of his rocks.

Mr. Howard Sprague, a spokesperson for the Mayor’s Office said, “This is an example of the good things that can happen when observant citizens and dedicated law enforcement team up to make our community a safer place to live and work. Citizens of Mayberry can sleep safe in their beds because of the efforts of people like Mrs. Clara Edwards and Officer Barney Fife.”

In a followup telephone interview Sheriff Andy Taylor said that despite Deputy Fife’s fine work in this dangerous situation he still will not be allowed to keep his bullet in his service revolver.



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.

DON RICHARDS, VE3IDS, #8531



I really enjoy operating QRP and especially QRPp. I haven't tried portable operation except for a few Field Days in years past. I just like to operate in the comfort of the shack.

I started out as a kid listening to shortwave BC and sending reception reports and being thrilled to get QSLs and other souvenirs from distant lands. In high school, I would spend my spare periods up in the electronics shop, rebuilding old antique radios that my friends would haul in from home. Looking back, this was probably the definition of "Nerd" but it was fun! I had heard about Ham Radio but didn't know anything about it.

When I started working after high school, a fellow there was big into SW listening as well, and he had always wanted to become a ham and introduced me to the idea. Sadly, I don't think Doug ever did go for his ticket. Within a year I had wrote and passed my ticket in 1976 and built a Heathkit HW-16 and HG-10B VFO. I had a great time on 15-meters cw and didn't bother with phone even after I wrote my Advanced ticket. I have always had the same call and expect that it will stay that way.

I built the Sardine Sender that was in QST in 1978 or 79 and had a blast. I built a VFO for it on a salmon can and built a DC receiver for 80 for a complete ½ watt station. I built a few other things like keyers and test equipment, but was QRT for a long period until we had an empty nest. My son, Brian VE3IBZ, passed his ticket a few years ago and got me interested again. I got back on the air about three years ago and have been having a great time.

I operate 99% QRPp now, mainly with my One Watter kits and my IC-718 turned down to one watt on the bands that I don't have homebuilt rigs for yet. I also have built a Weber Tri-Bander which is an excellent rig as well, but I reserve it for my high power operation (5 watts). My antenna of choice is a 130' doublet with homebrew 4" open wire. It works better than anything else I have ever used.

I enjoy ragchewing and chasing new countries when the bands are open and I really like the NAQCC monthly sprints. I find that cw qrpers are among the best people that you could meet. They always seem to be friendly.

My wife and I really enjoy hiking and we live in a prime area for that activity. There are many great trails in the region. I also dabble in woodworking and have made a lot of sawdust over the years.

Hope to see you on the air, maybe in a monthly sprint.

The black and white rig in the picture is my 17-meter One Watter, the clear case is the 30-meter version, and beside my wooden straight key is the Weber Tri-Bander.



NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT: Our special 150th monthly sprint will be held on Wednesday, April 12, 0030-0230 UTC. That's the evening of Tuesday the 11th here in North America. This is a special event sprint with a chance for participants to win a really great prize. Details on the prize drawing can be seen below and the actual sprint page is at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201704.html>.

We would like to ask sprint participants to provide a little bit more information about their antennas in their submitted reports. Adding something like the height of the dipole or the length of the random wire can be helpful when participants want to see how they did when compared to others with similar antennas. After all, a dipole at 55 ft hardly compares to one at 12 feet.

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

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

We occasionally get questions from sprint participants about how to use the GenLog software to log and report their contacts. Most of the time the answers to these questions can be found in the excellent illustrated tutorial written by KB8FE and found at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_genlog_tutorial.html. Alternatively, a logging spreadsheet for Mac OS X computer users is available at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_macs.html.

LAST MONTH'S SPRINT RESULTS: I really don't know what to report about our March sprint. We were again able to break the 100-log mark with 105 submissions but we certainly hope to do much better than that next month. (See below.) Reported band conditions ranged from "bad" to "excellent." Participants made an average of 18.4 QSOs each and that is getting close to the record of 19.3 set in November 2011. Perhaps the best summary would be the soapbox comment from WB1GYZ who said, "fair cdx, good fun, great ops."

Complete sprint results, including soapbox comments, can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201703.html> and summary information can be seen in the tables on the following pages.

We would especially like to welcome our first-time log reporters. We hope that you had a great time and will return often: W8DXU (nm) , W2NRA, K3CKO, K4NYI

SPECIAL CELEBRATION FOR OUR 150TH REGULAR SPRINT: As mentioned in *Key Clicks*, our sprint this month will be our 150th regular monthly sprint and we are going to celebrate with a special prize drawing. Our first sprint was held in October 2004. We didn't have a sprint the following month but starting in December of that year they became a regular and popular monthly event. Since April of 2010 we have had over 150 participants almost every month, but only twice - in February and October of 2013 - have we had more than 150 logs submitted. We would like to see that change and **our goal is to have at least 150 submitted logs for our 150th monthly sprint. If we reach that submission level every member who has sent in their log will be automatically entered into a drawing for a prize valued**

at \$150. Detailed information about operating in our sprints and submitting your log can be seen in the “*First Time Sprinter?*” article in this issue as well as a pair of articles that appeared in the July and August 2016 newsletters at http://www.naqcc.info/newsletter_archive.html. A great deal of information can also be found on our website at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_rules.html and http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_tips.html. ***Please help make this special celebration work by participating in the sprint and submitting your log.***

PARTICIPATION ELIGIBILITY: Remember that participating in a combination of sprints and challenges will make you eligible for the top-tier prizes in our anniversary drawing in October. So start working on it now. Eligibility details at http://www.naqcc.info/prize_drawing_12th_anniv.html.

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KN1H	WB1GYZ	
W2	WA2NYY	W2SH	
W3	KQ3Z	KD3CA	
W4	K4JPN	WD4OHD	WG8Y
W5	N5GW	W5WIL	
W6	K6MGO		
W7	KF7WNS	KC7DM	
W8	AB8RL	WB8LZG	
W9	KD9VT	WB9HFK	
W0	K0NIA	KD0DK	
VE	VE3IDS		
DX			

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1			
W2	K3CKO		
W3	K3WWP		
W4	AK4NY		
W5	NF5U		
W6			
W7			
W8	N8XMS		
W9	N9SE		
W0	KD0V		
VE			
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KB1M		
W2	K2YGM		
W3	KC3RN		
W4	N4MJ	K4KRW	
W5			
W6	KG6UBG		
W7	WW7Y		
W8	N8NK	K8TJ	
W9	NN9K		
W0	K9OSC		
VE	VE3GNU		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	W2NRA	K3CKO	
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
WA1GWH			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	105	101	194	2/13
Participants	158	143	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1931	1406	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	1079	779	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	852	627	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	28	0	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	1066	663	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	837	743	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	18.4	13.9	19.3	9/11

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

NUMBER OF SPRINTS	MEMBERS
50+	K4ORD K9EYT KB0ETU K9OSC KA9FQG K6MGO NA4O N8BB WG8Y AA7CU KC2EGL VE5BCS N2ESE K6CSL N8QY WA8SAN N0TA WX4RM WD0K K4KRW NQ2W KB8FE NO2D WY3H AA9L KQ1P KE5YUM NU7T(SK)
75+	W4DUK WB8ENE WA2JSG VE3FUJ K1IEE N4FI KD0V K3RLL NF8M K4JPN K4NVJ KU4A KB3AAG(SK)
100+	KD2MX N8XMS K4BAI WB8LZG W2SH W9CC
125+	W2JEK KA2KGP K3WWP



NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: Unlike the military spec chocolate that was featured in last month's challenge, this month we get to enjoy some real treats. We have an alphabet challenge with a word list of popular candy treats. You might just need to take a break from the challenge for a trip to the candy isle in your nearest convenient store! The word list and complete rules can be found at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201704.html>.

The European challenge has a word list made from various European currencies. <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/april-2017-challenge/>

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: Our North American challenge in May is our very popular Homebrew challenge where the goal is to make at least 15 QSOs with a piece of home-made gear. This year we are adding the twist of some minimum state and DX counts. See <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201705.html> for complete details.

The European challenge for May has a list of the current kings and queens of Europe along with their ages. <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/may-2017-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>. Detailed general rules for our challenges can be found at http://naqcc.info/challenges_rules.html.

LAST MONTH'S CHALLENGE: The deadline for submitting entries for the March alphabet challenge is still a few days away so final results are not yet available. You can go to <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201703.html> to see what has been posted so far, and the final results will also be posted there shortly after the 10th of the month.

The European challenge results will be available at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/march-2017-challenge/>.

PARTICIPATION ELIGIBILITY: Remember that participating in a combination of sprints and challenges will make you eligible for the top-tier prizes in our anniversary drawing in October. So start working on it now. Eligibility details at http://www.naqcc.info/prize_drawing_12th_anniv.html.

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

NUMBER OF CHALLENGES	MEMBERS
25+	N1JI PA0XAW KD2MX N1LU KD0V K9OSC VE3HUR KU4A WY3H
50+	K1YAN VE3FUJ NU7T
75+	K1IEE
100+	N8XMS W2JEK
125+	K3WWP



NAQCC AWARDS

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

FEATURED AWARD: FRIENDSHIP CLUB AWARD

This month we feature our Friendship Club Award where the goal is to work, and get to know, your fellow club members. The basic award is earned with 200 points and there are endorsements for earning additional points beyond that level. A QSO with a member consisting of RST, QTH, NAME, RIG, WX, and NUMBER is worth 1 point. A sprint QSO is worth 2 points. But a rag-chew kind of QSO with a member where you learn at least one additional piece of information about the person beyond the 6 items listed above will earn you a whopping 4 points. A QSO with club call N3AQC or one of our N#A stations during our anniversary celebration is worth 5 points. You can find complete details about this award at http://www.naqcc.info/awards_workedmembers.html. You will also find on that page a link to a tutorial on how you can use GenLog to help keep track of your point progress.

RECENTLY ISSUED AWARDS:

1000 MPW AWARD

0531 VE3CBK TY2BP - 1,068 03/12/17 20m Inverted V @20'

WAVE AWARD BY K1YAN - Yukon Endorsement

0004 - N8XMS 03/21/17



NAQCC QRS/QRQ NETS

We have a number of nets (QRS = slow speed, QRQ = higher speed) designed to help people build up their CW operating skills. Complete information about these nets can be found at http://naqcc.info/cw_nets.html. Questions should be directed to Net Manager Wayne, NQ0RP.

NAQCC NET SCHEDULE

Net	Local Time	UTC	Freq +/-	Primary NCS
Farnsword 40/80 m QRQ Nets (FRN)	Sunday 5:00/8:00 PM PT	Monday 0000/0300 Z	7056/3556 KHz	Rick, N6IET (in CA)
Farnsword 53 QRQ Net (53N)	Sun & Thurs 6:00 PM PT	Mon & Fri 0100 Z	5332 KHz (Ch 1)	JB, NR5NN (in CA)
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7 PM CT	Tuesday 0000 Z	3564 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Midwest Net QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 7:30 PM CT	Tuesday 0030 Z	3556 KHz	Wayne, NQ0RP (in KS)
Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental 20/40 QRS Nets (RMRC)	Tues & Thurs 4:00/4:30 PM MT	Tues & Thurs 2200/2230 Z	14060/7062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
West Virginia QRS Net (WVN)	Wednesday 9 PM ET	Thursday 0100 Z	3556 KHz	John, N8ZYA (in WV)
Pacific Northwest 80 m QRS Net (PNW80)	Thursday 7 PM PT	Friday 0200 Z	3574 KHz	Stewart, KE7LKW (in WA)

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

NET CONTROL STATION REPORTS

NAQCC Farnsword Net (FRN) QRQ 40/60/80-Meter Nets

Sunday evenings 5:00 PM PDT, which is Monday 0000 UTC on 7056 kHz +/-

Sunday evenings 8:00 PM PDT, which is Monday 0300 UTC on 3556 kHz +/-

Main NCS - Rick N6IET (Los Angeles); Backup NCS - JB NR5NN (SF Bay Area)

Below are my QNI Reports for the month of March for the FarnsWord QRQ Nets (FRN). Even though I only scheduled the Sunday 40- and 80-meter nets, I also announced and conducted an experimental FRN on 60 meters at the time and frequency shown below on one Sunday evening.

For the month of April please publish the FRN schedule on the website as shown below. Note that the 80-meter net time has been moved later by one hour.

NAQCC FarnsWord Net QRQ Nets (FRN) Rick N6IET

7056, (5332,) and 3556 kHz at 17:00, 18:00, and 19:00 PST Sunday (0000, 0100 and 0200 UTC Monday), respectively

2017-03-06 40m QNI (9) NCS N6IET, N6KIX, AI6SL, KE6EE, N7HRK/M, KW6G, NR5NN, WI6O, K7KY
 2017-03-06 80m QNI (4) NCS N6IET, NR5NN, KW6G, KE6EE
 2017-03-13 40m QNI (6) NCS N6IET, Co-NCS N6KIX, N7HRK/M, KW6G, W7SAG, K6GVG
 2017-03-13 80m QNI (2) NCS N6IET, KW6G
 2017-03-20 40m QNI (11) NCS N6IET, Co-NCS NR5NN, WU7F, N7HRK/M, W7SAG, AI6SL, KE6EE, KW6G, WI6O, K6GVG/M, WO6M
 2017-03-20 60m QNI (6) NCS N6IET, Co-NCS NR6NN, W7SAG, KE6EE, WU7F, WI6O
 2017-03-20 80m QNI (8) NCS N6IET, KE6EE, K7KY, WO6M, WI6O, N6KIX, K6GVG, WU7F
 2017-03-27 40m QNI (9) NCS N6IET, Co-NCS NR5NN, K6GVG, W7SAG/P, K6JJR, N7HRK/M, KE6EE, K7KY, AI6U
 2017-03-27 80m QNI (5) NCS N6IET, KE6EE, KW6G, W7SAG, AI6U

We had previously experimented with having a 160-meter net and might resume that net next fall after summer lightning static subsides. But in the meantime, 60 meters appears to work well, with good NVIS and low D absorption, around sunset for our western states region. Several of us have either put up temporary or permanent 60-meter antennas or managed to get our existing antennas to load on that band.

I'm letting JB NR5NN be NCS of any 60-meter and/or 160-meter nets on his own schedule until I get a permanent antenna up for those bands. He's welcome to have the honor permanently. He calls the 60-meter net "53N" instead of "FRN".

72/73 de Rick N6IET

=====

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN)

Monday evenings 7:00 PM CST, which is Tuesday 0100 UTC, on 3561 kHz +/-
 Main NCS - Allen KA5TJS (Texas)

2017/3/7 QNI(3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA

Very ruff night here! I was only getting about 50% from both stations. We had S9 QRN and bad propagation.

Terry (KE5YUM) was QRP and Andy (KE5YGA) was QRO and I actually had a little better copy on Terry.

The time change is coming up so sure we will have fun with prop. for the next few weeks. We will stay with local time at 7:00pm CDT and 80 meters for now and see how it works as 40 will probably be long at that time of night still.

2017/3/14 QNI(2) NCS KE5YUM KE5YGA

Well I got tied up and did not make the first DST net. I got an email from Terry (KE5YUM) and he said he and Andy had a good QSO in my absence! I will be there next

2017/3/21 QNI(3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA

Terry was QRP at 5 watts and 579, good copy on all and I am sure Andy was QRO at 589. 80 meters was in good shape last night.

Looks like at least for last night the time change is working to our advantage.

At 00:30 I checked into the MWN and had a 599 report from Wayne. He was a 579 here but great copy. I was running 5 watts for the whole time.

3/28/2017 QNI(2) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM

Ruff conditions last night. The QRN was S9 +10 here and only heard Terry in NTX. He was QRP as was I and we managed a good QSO..

I guess summer is here. We will look at switching to 40 meters as soon as the band shortens up some so we can hear each other.

Allen KA5TJS

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NAQCC MIDWEST QRS Net (MWN)

Monday evenings 7:30 PM CT, which is Tuesday 0030 UTC, on 3556 kHz +/-
 Main NCS - Wayne NQ0RP (Kansas) Deputy NCS Paul - N0NBD

2017/3/7 QNI (1) NCS NQ0RP

2017/3/14 QNI (5) NCS NQ0RP, N0NBD, K4JER, AA0W, AF5AF

2017/3/21 QNI (5) NCS NQ0RP, KA5TJS, K4JER, AA0W, KD0DK

2017/3/28 QNI (4) NCS N0NBD, AA0W, KD0DK, K4JER

Wayne - NQ0RP

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NAQCC Rocky Mountain Regional/Continental QRS Nets (RMRc)

Tuesday/Thursday at 4:00 PM MST, which is Tuesday/Thursday 2300 UTC, on 14060 kHz
 Tuesday/Thursday at 4:30 PM MST, which is Tuesday/Thursday 2330 UTC, on 7062.5 kHz.
 Main NCS - Dale WC7S (Wyoming)

NAQCC Rocky Mountain Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc) Dale Putnam WC7S, Wyoming
 20M, 14.062.5 MHz and 40M, 7.062.5 MHz (BOTH FREQ SHOWN ON ONE LINE)

3-3-2017 QNI (5) NCS WC7S, VY1KX, KE6EE, W1CAL, AA7CU
 3-7-2017 QNI (5) NCS WC7S, K0DTJ (2X), AA7CU, N6VTS
 3-9-2017 QNI (6) NCS WC7S, WA2DWX, K0DTJ (2X), AA7CU, K4KBL
 3-14-2017 QNI (2) NCS WC7S, KE6EE
 3-16-2017 QNI (1) NCS WC7S
 3-21-2017 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, W4FM, AA7CU
 3-23-2017 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, WB5CTS/M, AA7CU
 3-28-2017 QNI (2) NCS WC7S, N4KV
 3-30-2017 QNI (2) NCS WC7S, AA7CU

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NAQCC West Virginia QRS NET (WVN)

Wednesday evenings 9:00 ET, which is Thursday 0100 UTC on 3556 kHz.
 Main NCS - John N8ZYA (West Virginia)

2017/3/7 QNI (2) NCS N8ZYA W8GDP

Soapbox comments:

Big storm today in WV with 50 mph gusts and heavy rain. John W8GDP and I had a long talk about in on the net this evening.

2017/3/15 No Net due to NAQCC Sprint

2017/3/22 QNI (6) NCS N8ZYA AB8RL AC8LJ/4 W8GDP WA8SIE K8NYG

2017/3/29 QNI (4) NCS N8ZYA WA8SIE AB8RL W8GDP

Strange band conditions tonight with QSB. Nice to hear everyone on the new 80 meter frequency.

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NAQCC Pacific Northwest QRS 80 Meter Net (PNW80)

Thursday evenings 7:00 PM PST, which is Friday 0300 UTC on 3574 kHz.
 Main NCS - Stewart KE7LKW (Washington State)

PNW is doing something a little different this year.

Second Thursday is Boat Anchor Night if you have one.

Third Thursday is QRP rig night.

Fourth Thursday is portable night: everyone goes out and operates from the field as possible.

This has been working well so far. Everyone enjoys the variety.

2017/3/3 QNI (5) KE7LKW NCS, NB7M, W7ANM, WB4SPB, K7JUV.

2017/3/10 QNI (5) KE7LKW NCS, KG7JEB, W7ANM, WB4SPB, K7JUV.

2017/3/17 QNI (6) WB4SPB NCS, KE7LKW, KG7JEB, K7JUV, N7TES, AD7BP.

2017/3/24 QNI (5) WB4SPB NCS, KG7JEB, K7JUV, W7ANM, AD7BP

2017/3/31 QNI (6) KE7LKW NCS, KG7JEB, K7JUV, W7ANM, WB4SPB, N4DAG



HELP FOR BEGINNERS



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



Hugh, WA2ZOT, has donated a brand new MFJ-550 straight key and we would like to get this into the hands of a beginning CW operator. This is certainly not a Begali, but it is a very usable key and remember that the person on the other end hears the fist, not the key. So if you are a beginner who needs a straight key, or if you are actively elmering beginners and would like to use this as a “loaner” for your students or as part of a simple code practice oscillator board that you could use in your teaching activities, we would like to give it to you.

Please send Brion an email (see the *Contacts* page for his address) with your name, call, NAQCC membership number, and mailing address. Also include a brief description of how you will be using the key. For example, “I teach a CW class at my local ham club and could use this with a CPO for students to practice on.” Or, “I’ve been learning CW with my computer but do not yet have a key to use on the air.”

Send your email to Brion by the 15th of this month and shortly after that date he will conduct a random drawing from the submissions he has received to determine the winner of the key.

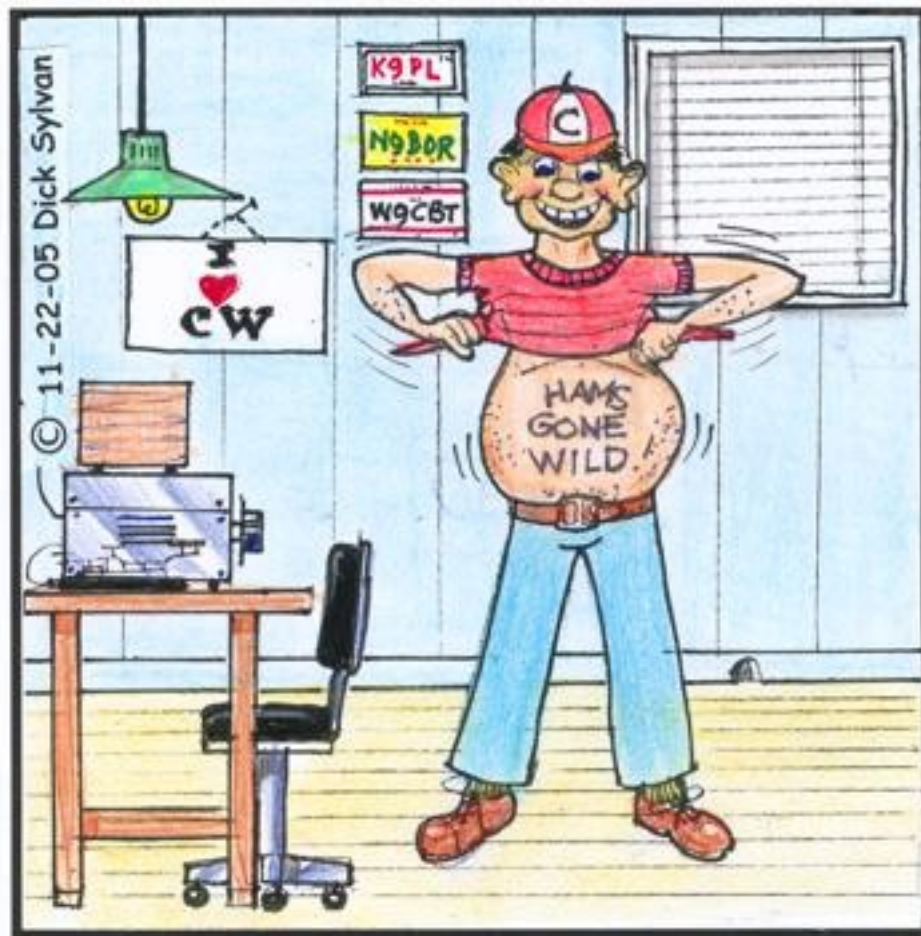


HAM QUIPS



Dick Sylvan, W9CBT, #2062, has been a QRP/CW operator for a long time. He is also a very accomplished ham radio cartoonist and his work has appeared previously in the K9YA Telegraph newsletter. His book "HI HI - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" is available at www.lulu.com.

HAM QUIPS "Ill Conceived Ideas"



Hoping To Make The Big Time, Dick Rehearses For His New "Hams Gone Wild" TV Video!

NAQCC CHAPTER NEWS

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

If your chapter is planning a portable operation activity and would like to have it promoted on the club email list or in the newsletter, send an email with the subject "NAQCC Portable Operation" and with the exact wording of the announcement to Vice President John, N8ZYA, at the email address listed on the last page about a week before the operation. Please be sure to include the UTC time for the event and not just the local time.

A report about your chapter activity should appear here. Please send them to KD2MX or N8XMS at the email addresses listed on the last page.

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

Chapter Reports Begin On The Next Page

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Central Texas Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Danny, N5DRG.

The chapter is located in the Austin, TX area and maintains a website at <http://www.naqcc-centraltexas.net/index.html>.

No report available.

DELMARVA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Delmarva Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Bill, N3IOD.

The chapter is located in the Delaware-Maryland-Virginia area.

No report available.

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER



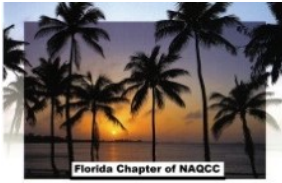
Items in this section are from European Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Matt, MW0MIE.

The European Chapter has its own monthly challenges to compensate for the Atlantic Ocean. However all are welcome to participate, not just members in EU, and we regularly receive challenge logs from North American participants. Please see the chapter website for dates and details at <http://www.naqcc-eu.org/>

So far, we've received six entries for our March alphabet challenge centred around famous European women through the ages. Many thanks to EA1KC, EA1XN, K1IEE, KB1M, PA9CW and RW3AI for their logs! There are still a few days left to submit your entries, do check your logs to see if you've already made all the QOSs required! See <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/march-2017-challenge/> for full details.

The April challenge is now underway. The premise concerns European currencies and exchange rates. The full details and rules are available on our website: please do take part if you can!

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



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

The Florida Chapter website is <http://wb40mm.com/naqcc-fl-chapter>.

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER MEMBER NEWS:



WB4OMM WB4MNK K3RLL AA4W KM4SBQ
(John KD4JS is the photographer)

On Friday, March 24th, 2017, the Florida Chapter of NAQCC returned to one of our favorite local parks for our monthly adventure. We held our latest “Operation in the Park” at Lake Ashby Park in New Smyrna Beach, Florida (as previously discussed, the park address is in New Smyrna Beach – but it’s 17 miles to the beach!).

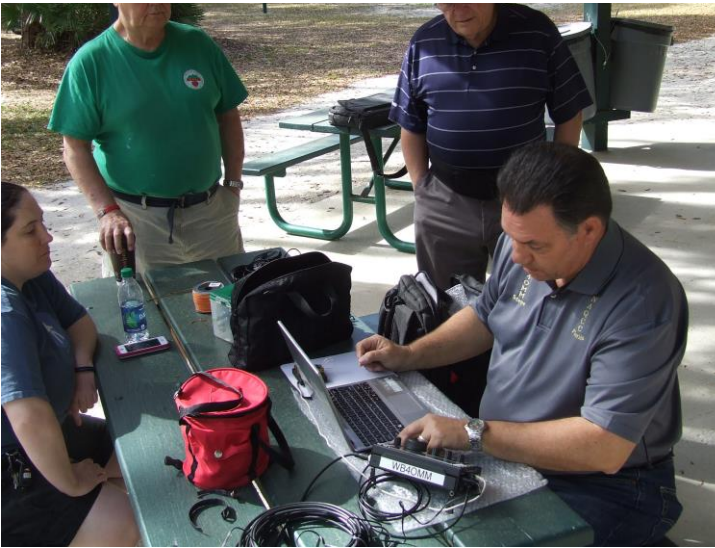
The 64-acre rural park includes primitive tent camping, a playground, volleyball court, nature/horse trails, boardwalks, fishing pier, grills, and pavilions with picnic tables. It also offers a free public boat ramp nearby and a 3,500-square-foot children's play area that includes a variety of climbers, swings and ladders. This popular waterfront park offers many outdoor recreational opportunities, including canoeing, fishing, walking and simply enjoying nature. Angling is permitted from a boardwalk and along the shore. Additionally, a launch site for personal watercraft is available. Lake Ashby was named for Major James A. Ashby, who helped lead American military forces during the Second Seminole War.

This trip, we had ten operators/visitors in our group (4 ops, two helpers, 4 visitors). One of our biggest outings to date! We had 4 stations on the air at the same time.

Today we arrived at our site with bright blue skies and a temp of 72 degrees with 50% humidity,

accompanied by a light, cool breeze. It was very comfortable for us to operate. The weather was a Florida "Chamber of Commerce" day and absolutely beautiful! By the time we left it was up to about 80 degrees and starting to look like it might rain. It didn't rain, but it was time to leave anyway so it didn't matter!

The signals were far and few between "OK" today, with some pretty deep QSB. 20M and 30M had a few signals but not much other than some noise. 40M was again not too good, just like the last few months.



Steve WB4OMM #5913 - Elecraft KX- 3 and Vibroplex Code Warrior Jr paddle, running 5W to a 53-foot End Fed Wire. Steve worked 1 member WI5H #7128 (Mike in "TX) and 1 non-member WB4DBO (Will in AL) on 40M.

Art WB4MNK and Nicole KM4SBQ and one of our visitors look on.



Art WB4MNK #5274 used a KX-1, 28- foot End Fed Wire with a ZM-2 ATU and Dirt Cheap Paddle. Art made 1 Q on 20M with member K1IEE #3966 (Dick in ME).

Pickings were slim!!



Rick AA4W #1628 brought his Elecraft KX-3 too.

Running 5W, he fed an 84-foot Zepp Antenna. He made 2 non-member QSOs, K7DZA on 20M and CT9/DF1ZA on 17M.

Great DX for QRP!



Don K3RLL #1905 used his Elecraft KX-3 running 5W – to a 9:1 Unun to a 31- foot vertical wire (anyone see a radio/antenna pattern here??).

He contacted members WI5H # 7128 (Mike in TX) and NF5U #142 (Jerry in TX), both on 20M.

Here Don is joined by one of our guests.

Special thanks to our visitors John W2IV, Phil NW4X, Rich K4MZE, and Steve WB4FDY who took the time to stop by and say, “Hi”, and visit for a while.

Lunch time! Antennas down, radios and stuff packed away. We “brown bag it”, and have a cornucopia of stuff to eat. Time to hob-nob with each other!

The discussion revolved around great ham radio adventures and all of the great facets of our noble hobby. It’s all about the collaboration, sharing, and fellowship – **NO DRAMA HERE!**

While the band conditions weren't all that good, the weather was great, the location was great, the food was great....and the friendship was great – AGAIN!!! Another great NAQCC-FL day!!

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

NEXT MONTH'S SCHEDULED EVENT:

**Friday, April 21st, 2017 starting at 9:30 AM EDT (NOTE START TIME!)
Colby-Alderman Park, Cassadega, FL (1099 Massachusetts St., Cassadega, FL)
Park webpage with directions: [COLBY-ALDERMAN PARK WEB PAGE & DIRECTION](#)**

**WHO: "The Usual Suspects" – Art WB4MNK, Steve WB4OMM, Rick AA4W, Don K3RLL, Wally KG4LAL, Bob W2EJG, John KM4JTE, John KD4JS Nicole KM4QBQ, & Paul NU4C
(and whoever else can make it).**

**Visit our Web Page:
<http://wb4omm.com/naqcc-fl-chapter/>**

Look for our announcement!
72/73 to all – Steve WB4OMM, #5913 - NAQCCFL@yahoo.com

NAQCC ILLOWA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Illowa Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should go to Mark, K0NIA.

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

The Illowa Chapter website is at <https://sites.google.com/site/naqccillowa2/>.

The Illowa chapter had its March meeting at the Village Inn in Moline on March 9, 2017, at 7:00pm. In attendance were Mark (K0NIA), Bob (W9PZ), Tony (N9YPN), Tim (N9BIL), Peter (NN9K) and Dave (KD9VT).

Among the topics covered were the following:

- How to use software to track monthly challenge participation
We discussed the NAQCC monthly challenges, and available software that makes it much easier to participate and track one’s progress in the challenges.
- Upcoming events: QRP to Field locations, Sasquatch Stomp
We discussed the possibility of operating as a club at upcoming events. The QRP to the Field event encourages operating from a site along a waterway, and we discussed the possibility of setting up at the Illinois Welcome Center along I-80, which overlooks the Mississippi River.
- Mark, K0NIA continues to offer used 12v 8ah SLA batteries free to chapter members. These used batteries still have plenty of life left in them. As part of that discussion, we also discussed the virtues of LiPo batteries for use when carrying weight needs to be kept to a minimum, such as hiking and backpacking to one’s operating location.
- We discussed various ways to reduce RF in the shack, with much of the conversation focused on the use of chokes. In particular, we discussed the virtues of using a choke placed close to the radio when using the feedline as a counterpoise (e.g., using EARCHI antennas). While not extremely important when operating QRP, chokes become increasingly necessary as one increases power.

In addition, our chapter has increased participation in NAQCC sprints. We are quite proud that four members of the Illowa chapter participated in the March 2017, and all earned a top 3 place in the results. In the Keyer/Keyboard category, Peter NN9k placed 1st and Bob W9PZ placed 3rd in the W9 division. In the Straight Key category, Dave KD9VT won the W9 division and Mark K0NIA placed 1st in the W0 division.

Finally, we now have a chapter website. We’re making a serious attempt to keep it updated with both chapter activities, as well as general information about QRP/CW.

NAQCC WEST FLORIDA CHAPTER



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

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

NAQCC-WFL March 25, 2017 Event Anna Maria Island

Ron, N9EE, log

Rig: FT817 w/MFJ manual tuner, 40m Windom up 18 ft AND 12V 18 AHr battery.

CALL	TIME (EDT)	FREQ	
CG3RIA	0955	14.020	Canada (special call), 599/579
K2NV	1014	14.028	Tony, 599/599
AA3B	1022	14.025	599/599
WA2JSG	1030	14.060	Curt, NJ, IC706, 579/549,
WK4WC	1105	7.060	NC, Ten Tec 100W dipole 50 ft, 579/579
N1VWD	1125	14.050	579/559
KI4VH	1148	7.056	589/569 Jim, GA Ten Tec 50W Hustler Vert
K5HQV	1235	7.030	569/349, TX
W8RDG	1242	14.060	(worked Ron who was local)

Ron Grew, W8RDG log

Rig: Youkit HB-1B QRP Transceiver, solar panel to maintain a good level of voltage on my 12v battery with 20m HamStick dipole up 8 ft

CALL	FREQ	TIME	
K0R	14.038	15:04 GMT	(1104 local)
N1VWD	14.038	15:29 GMT	
WA8REI	14.060	15:50 GMT	(1 Watt)
NG9D	14.060	15:56 GMT	
K8JD	14.050	16:06 GMT	
W2IX	14.062	16:17 GMT	
N9EE	14.060	16:45 GMT	

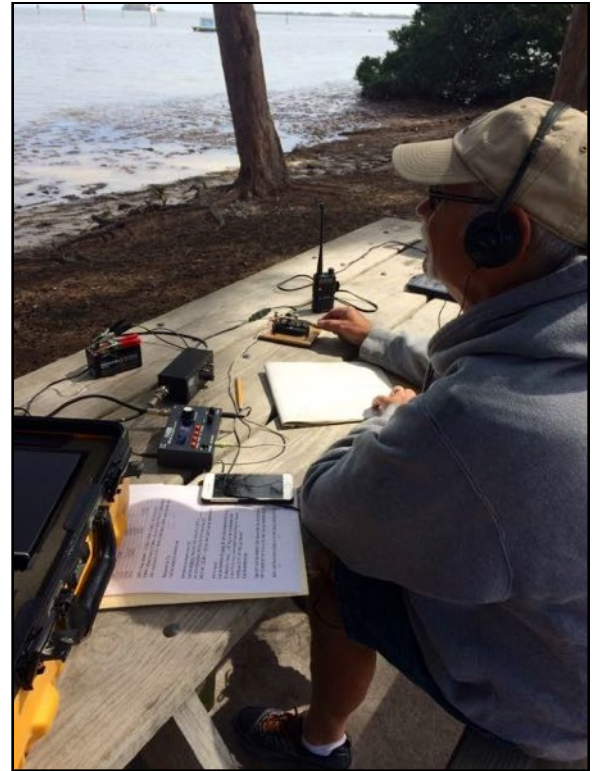
Pictures of the outing are on the next page.



Ron, N9EE



Ron, W8RDG



WA2JSG, #3457, in NJ used this rig to work N9EE

NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER



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

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



One of the great thrills of QRP CW is working new DX stations.

I now have my 115th DX station in the log book! I've worked three new ones since last month's newsletter.

I worked stations in **Antigua and Barbuda** which are two islands in the Caribbean and a relative short distance from me. (About 2,000 miles) The second new country was **Andorra** which is a small country between Spain and France. (About 4,000 miles) Over the years, I've worked several stations in the range of 5,000 miles to 7,000 miles but I've never worked a station at 10,000 miles until now. (I use an indoor 50 ft piece of Radio Shack speaker wire for my antenna)

On March 7th, I worked **VK3CWB** in Mildura Australia. The "straight line" distance between my location in WV and his town in Australia is 10,007 miles but this was a "long path" contact at very close to 24,000 km. (14,900 miles). That's almost 3,000 miles per watt.

The weather continued to be unpredictable last month. I cut the lawn in the middle of February, on an 80 degree day, but there continues to be cold wet weather with strong thunderstorms. The unpredictable weather still makes it difficult to plan an outdoor event.

The WV Chapter continues our monthly breakfast meeting. Our club member Frank **KA8SYV** built a very cool "spy radio" which I got to look at during the Charleston Hamfest. Eric **AC8LJ** is spending more time in North Carolina but is able to check into the WV QRS Net on the new 80 meter frequency. I'm now hearing and working Tom **AB8RL** in the lower end of the valley too.

Thanks to Frank **KA8SYV** and Eric **AC8LJ**, I'm using an external filter with my Icom 703. Steve **KC4URI** is still struggling with health issues but is feeling much better. Charles **KB8BFM**, who moved to Montana, is keeping in touch with WV friends through an Echo-link repeater here in Charleston. Tom **AB8RL** continues to be the Sprint winner in the 8th division and followed closely by Dave **WV8DH**.

After months (maybe a year) of doing my best to read lips in a crowded room, I had a hearing test at the VA Hospital. My hearing has moderately deteriorated in both ears and I've lost the high frequencies in the right ear. I can't believe the things I can hear now with new hearing aids.

Family obligations continue to occupy a lot of my time. My father, who is 96 years old and still living independently, dislocated his hip and spent a few days in the hospital. He's doing fine now but always a worry. The grandkids continue to struggle with health issues.

That's about it for the WV news. I made an entry on my radio blog about the Australian contact. I never thought I would see that country in the log book. I call the Australia contact one of my "[deer in the headlights](#)" moments.

I hope you find the QRZ Bio on [VK3CWB](#) interesting. I love his perspective on QRP CW.

72's John Smithson N8ZYA

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER



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

Very little to report for this month. The only get together of members was the monthly meeting with Mike (KC2EGL) and me (K3WWP) on the fourth Wednesday evening and that following Friday evening.

On Wednesday after devouring a pizza with Mike, we discussed a list of projects upcoming this year. Things like the hamfests we'd be attending, where we were going to do Field Day, finishing our little Tuna Tin rigs which have been in abeyance for some time now, our subpeditions, and so on. Sounds like a fun busy year.

We did have one setback to our plans. I received a call from Art WA3BKD, caretaker of the sub USS Requin. He told me that the sub would be undergoing repairs from April 8 through approximately April 22. That period included our planned April 9 subpedition which will now have to be postponed, probably sometime in early May. As usual we'll announce it a couple days in advance via our NAQCC email list.

After our plans discussion, we went to my shack where Mike worked PV8ADI on 40 meters. Mike then switched to 80 where there was no DX to be heard. Then while I wasn't paying attention, he switched to 160. To my surprise we heard an OZ7 station who was faint, but definitely audible. It's very rare for me to hear DX on 160, although actually I don't check that often. Perhaps I'd find more if I did.

The Friday visit was mainly for a Lenten fish dinner at a local fire hall. We did do one thing I'd been planning for a while. I (actually Mike) ordered (for me) a Jackite collapsible mast for our parkpeditions. I say Mike ordered because I do not do any Internet money transactions nor do I have any credit cards. I gave him the money and he did the transactions. It seems the number of companies doing business via money orders or personal checks which is the only way I pay for things, are diminishing rapidly. We finished out the visit with a trip to my shack. There was no DX to be worked for either of us. A little more about that in my personal news below. Remember you can also find WPA Chapter doings mentioned in my web site diary at k3wwp.com.



MEMBER SUBMISSIONS



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

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

From Bob, K8RJW, #6544—

Bob won the random prize drawing held for the participants in one of our recent challenges and selected a pair of paddle finger pieces as his prize and he sent this. - Editor

Thanks to the NAQCC Team. I can't imagine what it takes to keep everything together and it is certainly appreciated by all. I have truly appreciated being a part of the membership! '72 es TNX for the prize! They look and feel great. I'll make a lot of use of the new finger pieces.



Before



After



From Jim, K0FNR, #6852 —

Had to share my "new" 1970s Ten-Tec Century 21 transceiver. First contact was a KL7 IOTA activation. Look forward to many more QSOs as this is now my base station xcvr.

Solid state, but, the analog dial and power meter have a nice incandescent glow.

Pictured with my Chinese military key from Morse Express.

73
Jim K0FNR

TEN-TEC CENTURY 21. The Exciting New 70-Watt, 5-Band CW Transceiver That's Surprising Everyone, Beginner and Old Timer. With Its Super Performance and Low Cost.

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THE RECEIVER. Double-Direct-Conversion. Easy tuning. Just select the frequency and set the audio level. Excellent cross-modulation characteristics. Offset tuning so you can tune either side of zero beat to reduce QRM. Front panel control selects one of 3 selectivity curves: 2.5 kHz for SSB reception, 1 kHz for normal CW, and 500 Hz for when the QRM gets rough. Plus separate AF and RF controls, head-phone jack, and built-in speaker.

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THE SURPRISE OF THE CENTURY




From Chuck, N8NK, #7519 —

Can't we all just get along here?

It seems to me that over the past couple of years there has been an increasing problem of non-CW digital modes invading 'our portion' of the 40 meter band. The majority of my operating is done on 40. 80 meters is new to me, as I've only had an antenna up for 80 for a short while. I don't have any experience with, or opinion on, whether this is a problem on the other bands. But on 40, I am fully aware that the band **allows** 'digital / RTTY' operation from 7.000 to 7.125 MHz. Sadly, CW is considered a 'digital' mode. True, it is digital – an on and off carrier – but lets be for real here. In today's realm of digital communications... RTTY, Olivia, PSK-31, JT-65, etc. CW is just... different. And should be treated with distinction. I'm also fully aware that the ARRL promotes a 'gentleman's agreement' to encourage hams to be 'good neighbors' and civilly share the bands. Civil sharing of 40 meters is what concerns me. It seems to me that the non-CW digital modes have been increasing 'their share' of the band little by little – and lately I've heard them operating their EXTREMELY annoying modes as low as 7.030! I do admit that they were operating down to 7.030 during a CQ Magazine RTTY contest. I don't care. Contest or not, they shouldn't be down at 7.030! I routinely hear on a daily basis digital modes operating at 7.045 and above. I looked to see what the ARRL is suggesting, just for fun, and it wasn't fun at all. They are promoting 7.040 as the RTTY/Data DX frequency! Wow. Take a look at <http://www.arrl.org/band-plan>. There goes our time-honored QRP 'home' frequency... a frequency that has been recognized by the CW and QRP enthusiasts for a LONG time. In my opinion the ARRL has been neglecting the CW enthusiasts for far too long and is the reason that I am no longer a member. But to each his own regarding ARRL membership. Something needs to be done. I don't see any easy answer, if the ARRL doesn't seem to care much about CW, since new hams are steered in their direction. I wish the various forms of license study guides and texts could **seriously** include the subject of voluntary band segment sharing, civility, time-honored traditions and respect for each other as hams. I have a feeling that prospective new hams have no awareness of time-honored traditions in our wonderful hobby. And if they have no awareness, how could they possibly be expected to have respect for them? I'm **not** suggesting that this incursion into 'our portion' of the bands is due solely to newly licensed hams! But they should at least start their journey into ham radio with knowledge of the traditions – and from there, hopefully choose to be good neighbors. This incursion into 'our portion' cannot be stopped if organizations like the ARRL publish information that encourages operation of non-CW digital modes on 7.040 MHz. What inspired me to write this? While listening to the ARRL bulletin tonight, just for fun, and also to check the dial calibration on my old vacuum tube (remember those?!) Heath SB-101, a RTTY operator was operating, LOUDLY, right on top of W1AW! Although I found a sense of satisfaction in that, it shouldn't have happened. I used to depend on those code practice sessions when I was 14! Hopefully kids... and adults alike... sometimes still do.

N8NK

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

After reading the email from Chuck shown above, I got to thinking about my own personal experience with digital QRM on 40-meters. On a normal day I can usually find an open spot to operate, and on contest days I don't mind moving to 30-meters. But boy do I get tired of being stepped on by a digital station when I'm in the middle of a QSO! Do they listen before they transmit?!?! It sometimes seems like they must have their audio turned off and if they don't see a stream on their waterfall display for their mode they assume the frequency is clear! I know that our QRP signals can sometimes be hard to detect but everyone, ourselves included, should listen, listen, listen! The old saying that "God gave us two ears but only one mouth and they should be used in that ratio" seems to apply.

From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

Let me glance through my web site diary at k3wwp.com and pick out a couple highlights to mention here. With a rather winter-like first part of March, it was a good time to finish up some inside odds and ends before the great outdoors weather arrives.

Speaking of outdoors, I decided to compile a list of the different venues from which I've operated portable and with whom. I found nine of them with the Kittanning Community Park involved in 29 of the 55 operations from the nine locations.

I added a page to my web site dealing with portable operating including some good tips gathered from the 55 or so operations I've done. Also a section on the main page listing what's new on the site so regular visitors can know where the new things are.

I love stats as you know. I figured out the percentage of entities I worked from each continent. As expected NA is tops with all 50 current entities worked. Asia is at the bottom with 20 out of 55 worked. Overall for the world, I have 65.2 percent worked.

I was doing some cleaning up around the house and ran into some of my older keys. I decided to take a picture of my whole collection of 15 that I found. I know there were some more in the past that are gone now or loaned to someone.

It was frustrating hearing P33W on 80 meters which had I been able to work him would have given me Asia and an 80 meters WAC. He never heard me at all even when no one else was calling. After not finding any DX on the evening of the 26th at my usual 0000Z hour, I went back later and found and worked S01WS on 80 meters for a new entity on that band - #59.

Another stat collection was made of prefixes per country. Of course the USA topped the list with 778 of them. Who was second, third, etc.? The list is in my diary for the March 27 entry if you're curious.

Details for those who are interested, of all the above items are on my k3wwp.com web site, mostly in the diary there.

To close the news, my DX streak made it through another month when I worked HI3/N3SY on 40 meters on the 31st. That's 1492 (hmmm, that number sounds familiar) days now and I'm looking forward to hitting 1,500 days on April 8. Hope I can make it that far, and then move on from there. I think that should eliminate any doubts that YOU too can work a lot of DX with just a CW/QRP/simple wire antenna setup like mine.

From Dijon, SA3BOW, #6935 —

One of the great sports in amateur radio is to use things in ways the makers never intended. One example of this is to use tile spacers as spreaders in ladder lines. Tile spacers come in many sizes, and more or less suitable models. The spacers in this example came from a cheap outlet. Just scout for them where ever tiles are sold.

I used flush-cutting pliers to neatly trim off the extra material. A dab of hot glue is one way of sticking wire and spreader together. I used "standard-all purpose" sticks of glue. Mind you: "standard-all purpose" translates to: "not really good for anything". This glue, this spreader and this wire did not quite bond. With some effort one can pull a spreader along this slippery wire.

In hindsight it's good. When (not if) the ladder line snags on a crack in a garden table, a twig in a tree or what not, then the thin wire does not break but the spreader slide does. Something must yield and it better not be the wire.

With a short ladder like this (about 5 meters), it is easy to spot any irregularities from the ground. My glue gun is a cheap one with an inclination of featuring the Ketchup syndrome: First there is nothing, then there is nothing and then everything comes out at once and in the wrong place. I had to clean up the "pig tails" from the ladder line, again using the side cutter. All this was not as time consuming as one might think though.

Using glue in a tube might be neater. Another issue might be how well the plastic in the spreader weathers so I sprayed the finished ladder with cheap bumper paint just in case. OK, for occasional portable use this is of less concern. I just happen to like gray!



From Dijon, SA3BOW, #6935 —

Buy or make your own antenna wax? It is simple to create industrial grade in a normal kitchen. This text will show how and give you some additional hints and suggestions, all based on my own production.

The easy-to-get raw materials used are: beeswax from own apiary, lard from home slaughtered pig or boar, yellow petroleum jelly, bitumen-free rust prevention grease and children's hard wax crayons (see photo).

Mix #1 - The classic basic recipe

One part beeswax, and two parts lard. Mix slowly with a wooden cane. Low heat.

This mixture provides good chocking properties regarding atmospheric, galactic and thermal noise (Johnson-Nyquist noise). A possible simple explanation is interference phenomenon similar to the colors occurring when gasoline



floats on water. The big advantage is that VSWR is lowered over a wide impedance range as well as gain increases in all directions. If this is best explained by the peculiarities of the fluctuation-dissipation theorem (FDT) or as an improvement of the components of the Maxwell equations, normally approximated to be small, it is better left to the more math oriented hams.

This "Mix#1" , however, is not always long lasting. On bare copper wire it lasts over several seasons but disappears over summer on plastic insulated household wire. Here the petrolatum/mineral jelly additive enters as a savior.

Mix #2

A small amount of yellow mineral jelly is gently stirred into the mix #1 just before it solidifies. The emphasis is on "small amount"! If one succeeds in the art of adding too much, the crayons come to the rescue. Crayons, made from very hard wax, cancel mineral jelly almost "like for like". A side benefit is that crayons can color-code different blends. Too much, however, does make the mix brittle.

Experimental mix

So, what if you do not have bees or poach pigs yourself, or nobody next door can provide? It could be worth trying any cheap brand of rust prevention automobile grease (without bitumen). I planed on starting this experiment on April 1.

Hint 1: Processing lard is simple. Don't forget the left overs!!

Tip 2: Lard is easy to wash away from pots and pans but beeswax is a pain Therefore it can be recommended to keep an old container for molten beeswax.



NAQCC CLUB INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

From NAQCC President Paul Huff, N8XMS

Amateur radio has something for everyone. SSB, FM, AM, the digital modes, and QRO power levels all have their place in this great hobby and we certainly recognize the importance of these modes as well as the enjoyment that they give to many. But for a growing number of hams the challenge of *“doing the most with the least”* makes QRP (and QRPp) CW operating the greatest thrill available in amateur radio, and the North American QRP CW Club exists to promote this exciting facet of the hobby. As part of our focus we also encourage, but do not limit operators to, the use of simple wire antennas.

The NAQCC provides numerous opportunities for hams to enjoy QRP/CW operating. For contest types we have a popular monthly 2-hour sprint that runs at relatively low CW speeds and at a fairly relaxed pace. Three special sprints also take place during the year for 160-meter and QRPp operators. For a month-long activity we offer our members a Monthly Challenge that can be anything from forming a list of words from the calls of stations worked, to making a prescribed number of contacts using home-brew gear. There is also an extensive awards program to recognize the significant QRP/CW accomplishments of our members.

We also serve as a resource for people who are just getting started in QRP and/or CW. Our slow-speed CW nets are a great place for beginners to practice Morse code under real on-air conditions. Beginners will also find a wealth of helpful information on our club website and we are more than willing to try to answer any questions about QRP and CW that you might have. An extensive monthly newsletter is filled with useful projects and news from fellow QRPers.

A number of local NAQCC Chapters offer opportunities to get together for in person socializing and QRP/CW activities. Portable operations are especially popular with the local chapters.

Whether you are a veteran ham radio operator who is looking for a new challenge in the hobby, or a beginner who is intrigued by the possibilities of QRP/CW communication, we cordially invite you to join us. Membership is free and the benefits and fun are significant.

The North American QRP CW Club was founded in 2004 by WY3H and K3WWP and now has over 8000 members world wide. Membership is free and anyone interested in CW/QRP operating is welcome. Complete information about the NAQCC, including a membership application, activities schedule, and useful resources, can be found on our website at <http://www.naqcc.info/>. Inquires can also be sent to

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