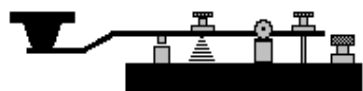


NAQCC NEWS



ISSUE 227 MAY 2017



KEY CLICKS

- **SPECIAL PRIZE DRAWING FOR FIELD DAY CHALLENGE PARTICIPANTS.**

Thanks to a donation from Hugh, WA2ZOT, we have a great prize for the member participants in our Field Day challenge next month - a small backpack that is perfect for hauling QRP into the field. See our *Challenges* page in this issue for further details.

- **MFJ VERY SUPPORTIVE OF THE NAQCC.** We want to give “credit where credit is due” and publicly thank the fine folks at MFJ, and in particular Rich Stubbs, for the support that they continue to give to the NAQCC. Many of the prizes that we have given away in our various drawings have been purchased from MFJ and they have always given us a very nice discount on the price. So please remember their generosity when you are shopping for ham gear.

- **MAC SPRINT LOGGER SPREADSHEET UPDATED.** The spreadsheet that can be used as an alternative to *GenLog* by people logging our NAQCC sprints on a Mac computer running the OS X operating system has been updated. Version 2.0417 is now available on our website at http://www.naqcc.info/sprint_macs.html. The update is not a significant change from the earlier version (2.1015?) and there is no need to do the update if you have already been successfully using the spreadsheet. But the most important news about the update is the fact that there is now also a version available that will work on computers that are running older versions of the Numbers software and OS X operating system. (Both versions are contained in a single zip file.) So if you have an older Mac computer and have not been able to get the logging spreadsheet to work you will want to check out this “retro” update. Additionally the instructional videos that go along with the spreadsheet have now been moved to YouTube where they will be much easier to view. (The link to the videos is provided on our webpage.)

- **APRIL MONTHLY SPRINT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!** We had as our goal for our 150th regular monthly sprint to have at least 150 logs submitted. Not only did we meet that goal, we absolutely smashed it with a record 217 logs! Several other long-standing records were also broken and a complete report can be seen in the *Sprints* section of this newsletter. The winner of our special drawing for a \$150 gift certificate from MFJ Enterprises was Mike, WA8SAN.

- **NEW NAQCC LOCAL CHAPTER FORMED.** We are very pleased to announce the formation of a new local chapter of the NAQCC. The *Downeast Maine* chapter is located in the area of Hancock and Washington counties and is under the leadership of Dave, KA1DBE. See their page in this newsletter for more details.

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- **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.”



FINDING BEAUTY WITHIN

BY GREGG, WB8LZG

For a very long time Gregg, WB8LZG, #1444, has been using his considerable woodworking talent to craft some wonderful items that the NAQCC uses as prizes for our monthly sprints and challenges. He does this work for free and we can't thank him enough for it! (Those prizes can be seen at http://www.naqcc.info/main_giveaways.html.) I asked Gregg if he would be willing to tell us how he makes these items and he replied with this great article. I guarantee that some of these pictures will make you drool! - Editor

For many years now I've been making wooden finger pieces for prizes in our sprints. It all started about 30 years ago when I came home with a broken down, beat up key from a Ham Swap. I had a piece of walnut and decided to try to fabricate my own finger paddles.

Some of you have wondered just how they're made. Well I can tell you there is a lot more to it than meets the eye. Here's a pictorial of how it's done.

First I buy "end cuts" from the lumber yard to keep the costs down. The cost of wood is skyrocketing more than gold ! Ebony and Tulipwood are over \$120 per foot ! Some woods aren't even available any more due to moratoriums in certain countries.

Here's what I start with. Blocks of different wood, chosen for a knot, or curl, or nice grain.



Then I cut 1/4 " slabs off the blocks with a band saw.



Then they get the 1st rough sanding at 100 grit on a sander to get a uniform smooth surface.



Then the paddle shapes are traced on to these strips and they are cut to shape on a jig saw.



The pieces are then “lined up” and “bookmarked”, then sanded to shape with 150 grit on a belt sander.

Once they are shaped, they are then “hand sanded” with 220 grit to smooth the corners and bring out the beauty in the wood.

Next step is the finish. I use “minwax” TM clear gloss polyurethane for extra shine. 2 coats per side, and drying 3 or 4 days between coats. This is what takes the most time.



Next is the hard part. Drilling nice exact holes. Sometimes I'll get a very nice pair of them go up in smoke because of a "slip" while I'm drilling the mounting holes. But when I get it right, they are very FB to see and feel. A quick inspection for flaws, and their ready for your key.



Vibroplex Iambic Deluxe with Canarywood Knot pieces.

This has also expanded to making other items for the "shack " too. Spinner knob inserts for K1's es K2's, as well as a tuning knob insert for the big rig. Along with side panels for the Elecraft rigs.



Spinner insert for my Argo 509 of Brazilian Kingwood.



Insert for the Big Rig tuning knob.

Other things like Keychain Paddles with callsigns “wood burned” into them have also become popular items. Several other “custom” paddles have also been fabricated.



Vibroplex logo woodburned into a maple finger piece.

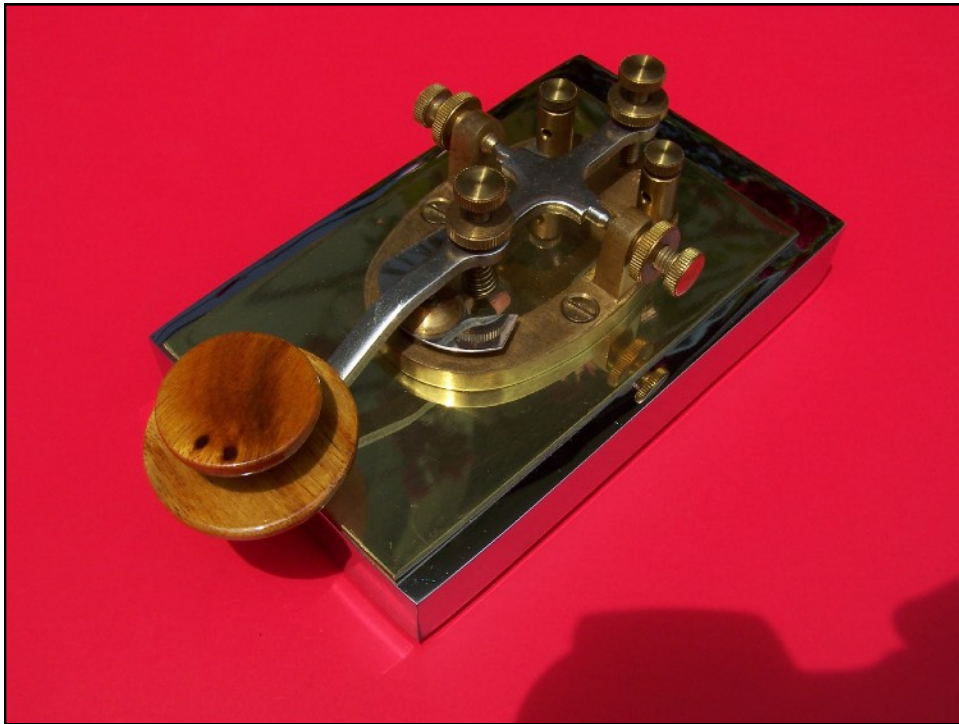
They don't always come out perfect, and many go into the "seconds" box, but when they do come out, they will dress up a paddle like nothing else can.



Here's the custom set for Michigan State University.



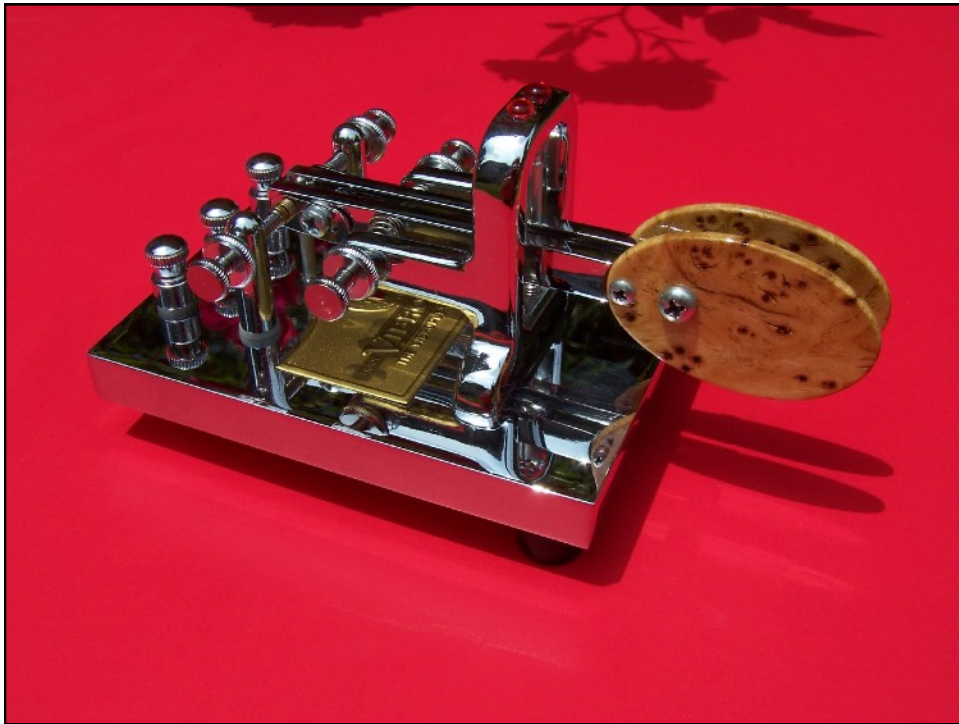
Vibroplex double key with African Padouc pieces.



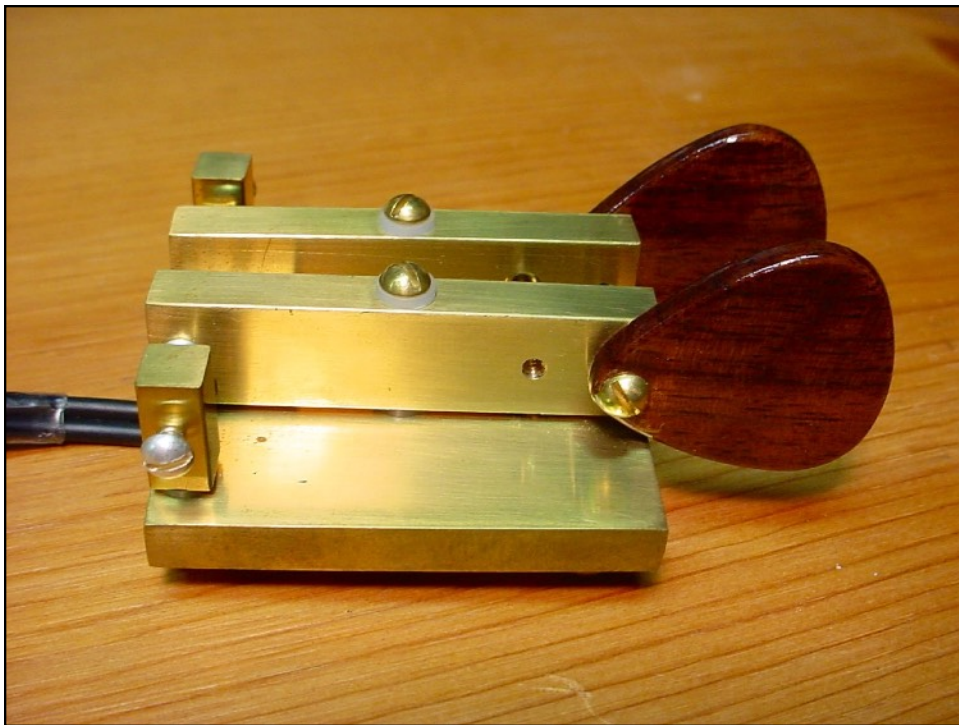
Homebrew straight key knob from Canarywood.



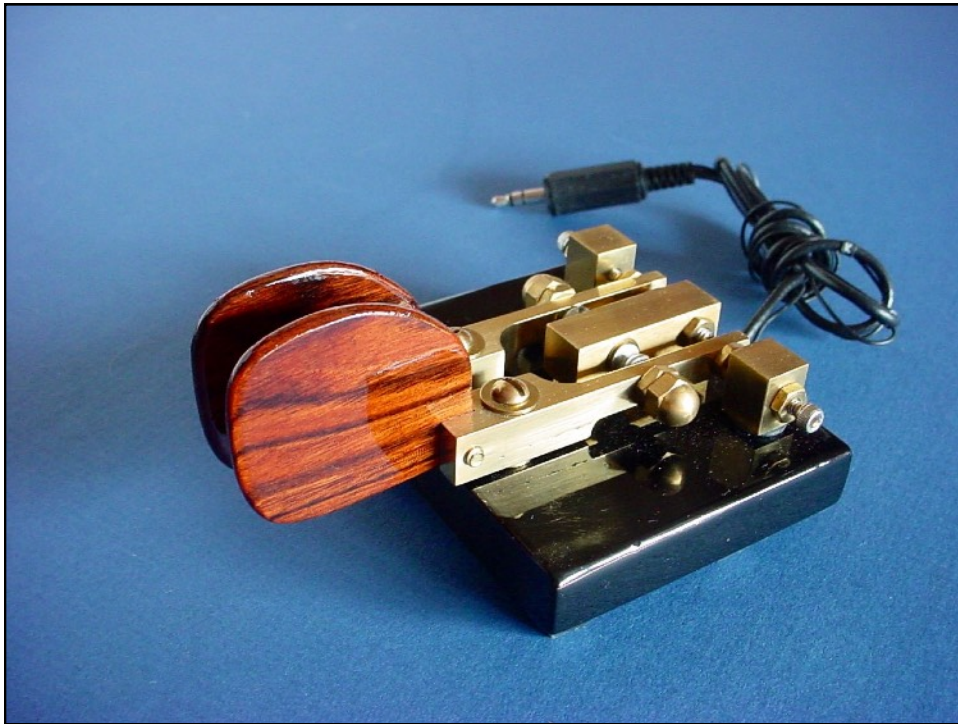
Vibroplex "Presentation" with Kingwood finger pieces.



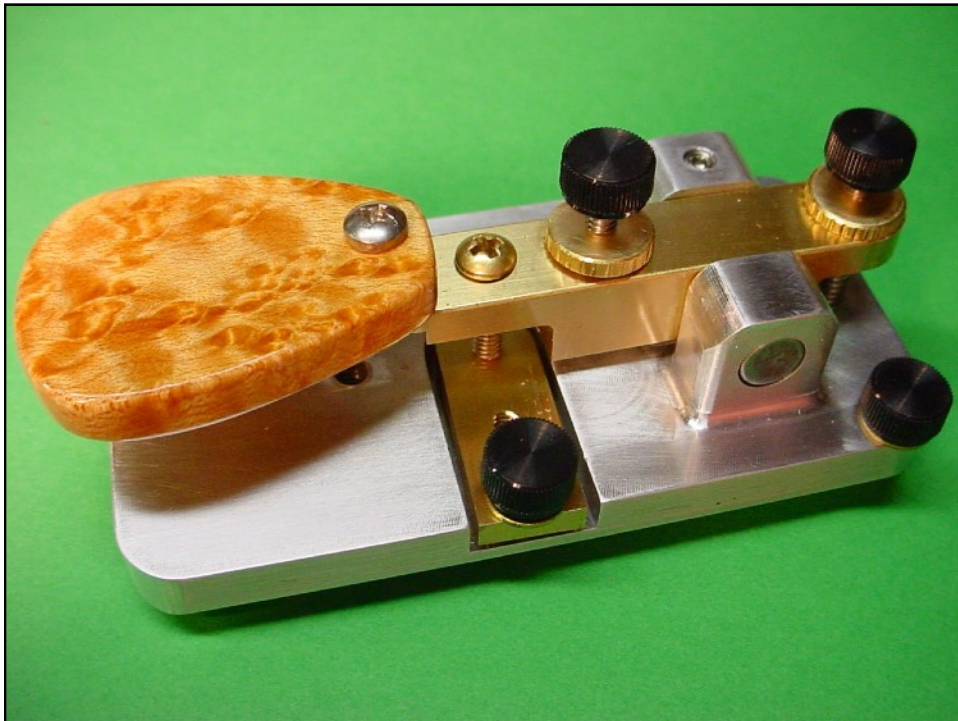
Vibroplex Deluxe with Burl Maple pieces.



Let's not forget the Kit Keys. AZsrpions paddle.



And the K8FF kit key.



Don't leave out the KK-1 Kit from Doug Hauff. A Birdseye Maple finger piece makes it a winner !

If it looks like a lot of work, it is. But it's a labor of love, and I'm still looking for that "perfect knot".

Well I hope you enjoyed the pictorial on how they're made. Perhaps you will be the lucky winner in our next sprint !



INDOOR ANTENNAS

BY BILL, K6MGO

Hoping I'm not preaching to the choir here as I would imagine that most everyone here in the club is on the air and making contacts, but just on the chance that there might be someone who is struggling with antenna restrictions and/or are unable to erect an outdoor antenna, I'd like to offer some observations from more than 30 years of having to use indoor antennas to make contacts on the HF bands.

I don't claim to be an "expert", nor do I do extensive field-strength tests and give you quantitative test results, just my observations from the various antennas I have tried and used for over thirty years. One of the biggest aids to evaluating my antennas in recent years has been the Reverse Beacon Network, that gives you reports of your signal strength at the various stations who can hear your signal, which has to be a CW CQ in the CW parts of the HF bands. These stations which are located all over the country and world, monitor the CW bands and by use of the internet, will send you signal reports of your CQ giving you date, time, frequency, and signal strength so that you can tell where you are being heard, and how well. This is truly an amazing and useful tool for antenna testing. And this service is free, although you are urged to donate something to help maintain the system.

First let me say that no indoor antenna I have built or used, will match a properly built and installed outdoor antenna that is in the clear and at a decent height. Any indoor antenna is going to be a compromise, but, I have found that some of them work a lot better than others do. So if you know what to expect from an antenna, you are ahead of the game when it comes to putting one up.

Before I moved into my present home, which is in a condo community, I lived in a two story Townhouse of wood frame and siding construction. I read the ad's and decided that a small loop would be a good antenna for me. So I purchased the 36 inch loop made and sold by MFJ, and it worked. How well it worked, I have no idea as this was before Reverse Beacon Net, but I will tell you, that in use, I would check into several nets, and I was always the weakest station checking in. In fairness to MFJ and mini-loops in general, I'm sure that had I installed this loop outside and in the clear, it would have worked much better, but as I was limited to indoor installation, that's what I had, and I made contacts and had fun with it.

For the last 20 years, I have lived in a condo community in a "free standing" home which means that the house is not attached to another house, but is on a "zero lot line". This means that the lot my house sits on is not much bigger than the house's footprint other than for a small patio along side one side of the house. The house is two story wood frame and siding construction which is a help with getting a signal out and in to it, and I have a two car garage attached to the front of the house. So after talking to some friends and doing some reading up on indoor antennas, I decided to put up a doublet in the garage as my main antenna. The interior of the garage is unfinished, which means the wall studs and ceiling rafters are exposed and open. The roof of the garage is a peaked roof on four sides. As I wanted to be able to work as many bands as possible, I opted for a doublet over a single band dipole. I had a 55 foot coil of number 14 solid copper wire and so that became my antenna. I wanted the center feed point and high current part of the antenna to be at the highest point that I could get it at, so after cutting the 55 foot coil of wire in half, and making some insulators out of few pieces of 1/2 inch PVC tubing I had laying around, I built my antenna. The center rafter of the garage roof was about 12 feet over the floor, and ran for about 10-12 feet before sloping down to the side walls of the garage at the 8 foot level. So this is where I centered the feed point of the antenna which I fed with 450 ohm window line. So from the center of the garage at the 12 foot high level, each half of the antenna ran to the edge of the rafter and down at a 45 degree angle to the junction of the rafter and wall stud and made a

90 degree turn and followed the wood cap plate atop the studs around the perimeter of the garage until all of the 27 and 1/2 feet of wire was used up. In making the turns at the end of the rafter, one leg of the doublet went to the right and the other went to the left, in a "Z" configuration. The ends of the doublet came within a few feet of meeting almost making a "loop". The 15-20 feet of window line hung down from the center fed point and came over to the back wall where I had my station set up. This antenna worked fairly well, allowing me to make contacts on the bands from 40 meters to 10 meters including DX to Japan and Europe when band conditions were open. This antenna became my "benchmark" antenna and the one I have judged all the others against.

After installing the doublet in the garage, I tried using my rain gutter as an antenna from an article in QST but being a two story house, with the gutter up over 20 feet, all I had access too without risking my neck climbing a very high ladder, was the downspout. I had no easy way of determining if the downspout made a good RF connection to the horizontal section of the gutter or not and that didn't work very well at all.

Next I started reading some posts by Bonnie of the Backpackers website in which she was conducting some "shoot outs" of portable, backpackable antennas. Most of the antennas she tested and reported were verticals of some shape or form. Some were center loaded others were not, and most had trailing wire ground systems. I built several of them and they worked, although, again, I had no way of determining how well they were working for me, used as indoor radiators .

About this time the Buddie Pole antenna came out from some articles that Budd had written and I decided to build the homebrew version of his buddiepole. It was a series of vertical elements with coil loaded units and a series of different length wires for a radial system. I was using these verticals in the house rather than out in the garage, as winter had come and even in Southern Cal, the winters can be uncomfortable out in an unheated garage. Along came a metal version of a small vertical with a tuning coil made with a sliding metal shell that would tune it from 40 meters to ten meters, I think called a Super antenna. It came with a very small telescoping top whip that I replaced with a MFJ approximately 6 feet long telescoping whip. I again made up a series or resonant single band ground radials which I ran out on the floor of our condo behind the operating position here in the house. These vertical whip antennas worked but not as well as the doublet out in the garage.

Next I started reading about a vertical antenna made using 31 feet of wire on a 33 (approx.) foot fiberglass flag pole with a 9:1 Unun to a run of RG-58 coax to the rig, which also served as the ground radial using the coax shield. This antenna was designed by a Hawaiian Radio Club and sold as a kit and who also published the plans on their website for free download. I opted for the home-brew do it yourself version. I was able to install this right outside my garage door, on our little patio. The antenna leaned against the garage roof and was within 10 feet of two, two story houses open at the ends but shielded by the two houses for most of it's pattern. I would set-up this antenna and take it down after a sprint or period of operation, before the "antenna police" in our condo association would see it and complain. This antenna worked, but was about two "S" units low on signal reports from Reverse Beacon Network as compared to the in garage doublet, on most of the bands from 10 meters down to 40 meters.

Having my operating position inside the house about half way between the back bedrooms and our living room in a fairly open floor plan, I thought that a doublet from from the closet in back of the bedroom to the bookcase in the living room might work as well as the one out in the garage. Using a couple of feet of 1/8 inch nylon rope at the end of each leg of the doublet as insulators I was able to install a total of about 45-46 feet of light weight Radio Shack speaker wire, split in two conductors as the doublet, with it's center fed point right over my operating station, and about 3 feet over my head. I fed this doublet with about a 4-5 foot piece of 450 ohm window line. I first had used 300 ohm TV line as a feed but it kept breaking with the taking down and putting up. I install this indoor doublet I fondly refer to as "The Bedroom Special" only when operating, as the XYL is not particularly enamored with it's

addition to our decor, but being a very good sport, she tolerates for short periods of time. I try not to push it, if you know what I mean. This antenna seems to work as well as the garage doublet, and with it being indoors has become my antenna of choice this winter season. I use it for the NAQCC Sprints as it will tune very nicely with just about any commercial or home-brew tuner. I have used it with 1:1 and 1:4 baluns and all work just fine. It will tune on 80m with a good tuner, but I'm sure that the efficiency is way down and I've only made a few contacts on 80m with it. But on 40 and 20 meters it works just fine. During the Sprints I have worked stations in the midwest, northwest and east coast on 20 meters at 5 watts. And all up and down the west coast and into Colorado, Nevada, Utah on 40 meters, from my home here in the Los Angeles area, at the 5 watt level.

About a year or two ago, I was reading some reviews on the MFJ Loop Antenna Tuner, of which MFJ makes about 3 versions. They make a plane version without any metering to determine tune, and they make two models with meters to help tune if your rig doesn't have a SWR meter. I bought the middle model and built a stand made of PVC 1/2 inch tubing to support some loops. I made a 36 inch loop out of some 1/4 inch copper tubing from Home Depot and some larger loops made out of #10 copper wire. I placed the loops on top of the bookcase here at the indoor operating position and must say they really seemed to work very well, even compared to the "Bedroom Special". I made one loop 12 foot diameter for 40 meters and was surprised at how well it performed. The only drawback to the mini-loops was having to change the loops for the different bands and the tuning being very sharp, you can't QSY very much without having to retune, a-testing to the high "Q" of the mini-loops. Also, the loops took up much less space in the house, and were much less objectionable to the XYL.

To sum up, I would like to tell anyone faced with outdoor antenna restrictions, that you can usually work around that, and enjoy HF Radio from your home. You may not be a world class contester or DXer, but you can still participate and have lots of fun. Also, in the case of my "Bedroom Special" with the fed point of the antenna about 3 feet over my head, I don't run more than 50 watts, and mostly only 5 watts of power per the Safety data published by QST and others. I am amazed by how well 5 to 15 watts does on CW at HF frequencies. Of all the antennas I have tried I would say the most successful have been the cheapest to make, the 45 to 55 foot doublets. Even though they are very close to ground, and indoors, I have had very good results with them. The next best I would say has been the Loop Tuner by MFJ was very satisfactory for me. Just remember, almost anything will radiate RF energy, it's all a matter of degree. We've all heard the story of the guy working out using a dummy load, and I have done that myself, so I hope that I have helped maybe a few of you who were reluctant to get on the air because you couldn't erect a super antenna 65 feet in the clear outdoors.



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.

MIKE BLAMA, WA8SAN, #0792



I got my novice ticket in 1966 with the call WN8SAN and nine months later went to the FCC Office in Pittsburgh, PA. to get my general class license. The call was now WA8SAN and I never had a reason to change it.

Like a lot of amateur radio operators of the '60s, Heathkit was my best way to get on the air. The DX60 did the trick with CW and AM phone. After a few years, SSB was taking over the bands, so it was back to Heathkit for the HW100 and many years of beams and chasing DX.

Life has a way of taking over when you're not looking and I'm no exception. With family and job I was in and out of amateur radio for many years until the VHF bug hit and I had to have the IC-02AT. It was a great rig for driving back and forth to work and you could even make a phone call with it!!!!!!!

Fast forward to 2001 and it was time for me to retire and find something to do with my time. Thanks to my wife and kids; they found the solution, Amateur Radio and a new Icom 746 Pro Radio for the old man to play with.

I tried phone for a few years but found myself going back down the band to see if I could still copy CW. I could still pick out letters but this was going to need some work, so I started small with a Rock Mite (so few would hear my poor CW with only 3 Watts).

That turned out to be a wake up call because half the world could hear that QRP signal and my poor

CW. I needed a lot more work and that's when I found the NAQCC on the internet. After a few sprints I found that most of the Ops would slow down and take the time to get you into their log. I want to thank those guys for that help and all those that I still work today. GREAT CLUB! 72, MIKE

Editor's Note: It is a complete coincidence that our Member Spotlight this month is featuring WA8SAN who was also the winner of the special drawing for our 150th monthly sprint in April. Paul, KD2MX, works ahead of time to get these spotlights and he was also not a part of the sprint drawing process. Apparently lightening can strike the same place twice! - N8XMS



NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH'S SPRINT: Our May sprint will be on the 11th from 0030-0230 UTC. That's the evening of Wednesday, May 10, here in North America. We really hope that the great participation that we had for our April sprint will continue into this one. Complete details can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201705.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. 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: As you know, our sprint on April 11th (12th UTC) was our 150th regular monthly sprint and we wanted to celebrate in a special. We have had more than 150 participants in most of our sprints over the past six or seven years but only twice have we had more than 150 logs submitted. So we set that as our goal - if we could get at least 150 submitted member logs then we would hold a special drawing for the member-participants for a prize worth \$150. Not only did we meet that 150-log goal, we absolutely smashed it, and in doing so a number of new sprint records were set. Here is the list of new records:

SUBMITTED LOGS:	217	(194, 2/2013)
TOTAL QSOs:	3154	(2804, 2/2013)
1st HOUR QSOs:	1704	(1468, 2/2013)
2nd HOUR QSOs:	1450	(1334, 2/2013)
40m QSOs:	2203	(1534, 4/2012)

Those records are great but there was another unspoken goal that we had and only time will tell if we met this goal. We really wanted show members, who perhaps have not previously participated in our sprints, just how much fun they can be. Based on the many soapbox comments that were left I am optimistic that we met this goal as well. Here is a sampling of comments from a few of our newer sprinters (some have been slightly edited or truncated):

AD4XX - This is my first NAQCC Sprint. It was a lot of fun even though I only worked the first hour. I will be back!

K4BB - First Sprint. Good fun.

W2NRA - My second NAQCC Sprint. More Qs, more fun. Wish they were longer! Thanks for the QSOs.

WK8S - This is my first sprint and log submission. It was fun.

K1SWL - This was the first time I've participated. Thanks- good activity levels and good fun!

KC1SA - This was my first Sprint and the first QRP activity I've participated in. It was a challenge but was enlightening to see the distance one can get with a SWA and 5W.

WK4WC - New member #8919. Thanks for a great event!

VE1JFA - This was my first time on the air since 1999. A big thank you to my contacts for bearing with me. I used the Macintosh spreadsheet. Thanks for providing that.

W3PNM - My first Sprint. I had a ball!

N8LR - My first time entering this contest. Thanks!

K4KAY - First time, was a lot of fun .

WU4B - My first sprint; my first use of GenLog. Very enjoyable.

KN4VV - First Sprint. Even though I didn't make many Qs, I had fun while practicing with straight key!

WA2DII - First time in sprint. Haven't done CW in 50 years! Fun time , thanks.

And how about this comment from one of our veteran sprinters:

K3WWP - My best ever number of QSOs beating my previous high by 7 QSOs. I made 64 QSOs this month. ... 38 were on 40 and 26 on 80. Fun, fun, fun. Thanks to all for the QSOs. ... Wow, I'm still on a ham radio high.

Finally, one more comment from another veteran sprinter who missed this month:

WB8LZG - Hello Sprinters! I was in Las Vegas during sprint. I let the XYL make the vacation plans, es didn't realize it was gg to conflict with sprint! AHHHHH ! Tuesday eve I was gg into "massive sprint withdrawals" ! Even the nite life es girls in Vegas can't compete with the fun in our sprints! ... From the sounds of the Soapbox comments, I missed a gud one. Hope to be entirely "cured" by joining in the fun next month! See u all then!

The prize drawing for the member-participants in the sprint was held on April 23 and the winner of a \$150 MFJ gift certificate was WA8SAN. Congratulations to Mike but also a big CONGRATULATIONS and THANK YOU to everyone who participated in the sprint. We certainly hope that everyone will continue to participate and enjoy this great activity in the future.

Complete sprint results, including many more great soapbox comments, can be seen at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201704.html> and summary information can be seen in the tables on the following page.

We would especially like to welcome our first-time log reporters. We hope that you had a great time and will return often: WF7T W8DN K4BB AD4XX WE1C WA5IEK K8CMO K1SWL KI8FV WK4WC WA2ZOT WU4B AE4ZR KC1SA KC9TYA K8ANM KN4VV K4KAY AC7FF N8HWV VE9BEL VE1JFA WA7QCC NT4Z WA2DII KB1KXL KD0STU K0TC W3PNM N8LR (nm) NG4Z (nm) AD0BI (nm) KP3SK (nm)

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	W2SH	W2NRA	KA2KGP
W3	KD3CA	W3TS	
W4	N4KS	W4MPS	WH6LE
W5	N5GW	W5WIL	WI5H
W6	K6MGO		
W7	KC7DM	N7KM	
W8	WV8DH	AA8MI	AB8RL
W9	KD9VT	AA9L	WB9HFK
W0	KA8HDE	N0FN	AA0W
VE	VE2BZO	VE3IDS	
DX			

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	K1IX		
W2	WB2LQF		
W3	K3WWP		
W4	AK4NY	W4EDN	
W5	W5ODS		
W6			
W7			
W8	N8XMS		
W9	KC9TYA		
W0	KD0V		
VE			
DX			

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	N2CN	N1JI	
W2	N2ESE	K2ZD	
W3	KC3RN		
W4	WF7T	N4MJ	AA4W
W5	AC5T		
W6	KG6UBG		
W7	KF7Z	N0DA	
W8	AC8JW	WA8SAN	
W9	W9PZ		
W0	N0TA	K9OSC	
VE	VE3DQN		
DX			

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	K4BAI		NN9K

FIRST TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
KEY==>	SK	BUG	K/K
	W8DN	KC9TYA	WF7T
PRIZE DRAWING WINNER			
K0PF (regular), WA8SAN (special)			

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	217	105	217	4/17
Participants	263	158	269	2/13
Total QSOs	3154	1931	3154	4/17
Hour 1 QSOs	1704	1079	1704	4/17
Hour 2 QSOs	1450	852	1450	4/17
20m QSOs	334	28	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	2203	1066	2203	4/17
80m QSOs	617	837	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	14.5	18.4	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(SK) N2ESE K6CSL N8QY WA8SAN N0TA WX4RM WD0K K4KRW NQ2W KB8FE NO2D WY3H AA9L KQ1P NU7T(SK)
75+	KE5YUM W4DUK WB8ENE WA2JSG VE3FUJ K1IEE N4FI KD0V K3RLL NF8M K4JPN K4NVJ KB3AAG(SK)
100+	KU4A KD2MX N8XMS K4BAI WB8LZG W2SH W9CC
125+	W2JEK KA2KGP K3WWP



NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: In May we have our very popular home-brew gear challenge to work on but this time we have a little added requirement. This year we have to make at least 15 QRP CW contacts using home brew gear and they must include at least 6 states and 2 DX entities (your own country counts for one of those). See <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201705.html> for all of the details including just exactly what can be counted as "home brew" gear.

The European challenge is an alphabet challenge that works with the names of a number of European kings and queens. <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/may-2017-challenge/>

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE: In June we always have two great challenges to participate in. Our regular month long challenge is an alphabet challenge working off a list of words that would have been extremely familiar to home brewers in the early days of ham radio. Details can be found at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201706.html>.

Our other challenge in June is our annual Field Day challenge where the goal is to encourage everybody to make QRP/CW contacts during the ARRL Field Day (June 24-25) from either the field or your home station. This year we have some new rules so you definitely need to read through those at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201706fd.html>. We also have a great prize to go along with this challenge. See the item on the following page for complete details.

The European challenge for June can be seen at <http://naqcc-eu.org/eu-challenges/june-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 April challenge is still a few days away so final results are not yet available but there was also a challenge inside of the challenge asking if you could name the manufacturers of the different candy treats in the list. Here are those answers:

*3 MUSKETEERS - MARS
ALMOND JOY - HERSHEY
SNICKERS - MARS
KIT KAT - HERSHEY
JUICY FRUIT - MARS
PAY DAY - HERSHEY
MR GOODBAR - HERSHEY
MILKY WAY - MARS
ALTOIDS - MARS
GOOD AND PLENTY - HERSHEY*

You can go to <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges201704.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/april-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.

SPECIAL PRIZE FOR THE FIELD DAY CHALLENGE: Hugh, WA2ZOT, has donated the great little SOTA-style pack shown in the picture below and we are going to give it away to one lucky member-participant in our Field Day challenge next month. Simply follow the rules to participate in the challenge, submit your report by the challenge deadline of July 10th, and you will be automatically entered into a drawing for the prize. The drawing will be held shortly after the submission deadline. Good luck to all!



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+	N9SE N1JI PA0XAW KD2MX N1LU KD0V K9OSC VE3HUR KU4A WY3H
50+	K1YAN VE3FUJ NU7T(SK)
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: 2X QRP AWARD

I have often thought that a great deal of the credit for a successful QRP QSO should actually go to the operator on the receiving end of those radiated QRP watts, and our 2X QRP Award gives you the chance to see what you can do on that end of the QSO. To earn this award you not only need to transmit at QRP power levels, but the person on the other end must be doing so as well. Any kind of QSOs are allowed for this award, including contest QSOs, so our NAQCC sprints can be a fertile place to earn your points. QSO points vary based on whether or not the other person is DX and whether or not they are an NAQCC member. Certificates are issued at several different point levels and numerous endorsements for things like single band, home-brew gear, or straight key use are also available. Complete details for the 2X QRP Award can be found at http://www.naqcc.info/awards_2xqrp.html.

RECENTLY ISSUED AWARDS:

1000 Miles Per Watt Award

0532	VE3CBK	TY2BP	-	1,068	03/12/17	20m Inverted V @20'
0531	NQ0RP	VK6CW	-	1,849	04/11/17	Wire Doublet



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	7065 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Midwest Net QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 7:30 PM CT	Tuesday 0030 Z	7117 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)

NAQCC FarnsWord QRQ Nets (FRN) - Rick N6IET
 7056, and 3556 kHz at 17:00 and 20:00 PST Sunday
 (0000 and 0300 UTC Monday), respectively

2017-04-03 QNI (7) NCS N6IET, NR5NN, AI6SL, KE6EE, W7SAG/P, N7HRK/m, K6GVG
 2017-04-03 QNI (7) NCS N6IET, KW6G, AI6SL, KE6EE, WU7F, K7KY, K6GVG
 2017-04-10 QNI (4) NCS N6IET, Co-NCS W7SAG/P, NR5NN, KE6EE
 2017-04-10 QNI (6) NCS N6IET, KE7LKW/7, W7SAG, AI6SL, KE6EE, WU7F
 2017-04-17 QNI (8) NCS N6IET, N7HRK/m, KE6EE, K6GVG, AI6SL, K7KY, N6KIX, NR5NN
 2017-04-17 QNI (5) NCS N6IET, W7SAG, AI6SL, K6GVG, NR5NN, WU7F
 2017-04-24 QNI (3) NCS N6IET, NR5NN, KE6EE
 2017-04-24 QNI (4) NCS N6IET, KW6G, AI6SL, KE6EE

Comments

Our latest schedule is working as well as can be expected. Covering such a large geographical area will always be a compromise. Sometimes the 40 meter band, even as early as 5pm PDT, is too long for close stations to hear each other. Sometimes in April the foF2 (NVIS max) never reaches 7 MHz, even in mid-afternoon. Any earlier, and the distant stations would be swamped by D absorption, as in fact, they were anyway these past two weeks.

I like to keep track of the fxF2 (NVIS max) for each net, based on DIDBase ionosondes taken at Point Arguello. This is how JB and I know when to change times and bands for each net. I'm prepared to drop 40 meters entirely in June if we can't get a good balance between NVIS, long distance D absorption in order to accommodate our more distant but enthusiastic stations, like W7SAG in Idaho and N7HRK in Montana while still being able to copy close stations. Summer bottom-cycle (few sunspots) conditions make this iffy on 40 meters.

One of our favorite topics is single-lever vs double-lever paddles and iambic mode A vs B. JB and PBR and others have shunned double-lever paddles, believing (rightly) that they cause more errors than are justified by any savings in effort. I couldn't agree more, and some data supports this.

But key preferences aren't always rational (as with many of the other choices we make in life). If we were rational beings, we might choose PSK31 or RTTY over CW. Or just use our smart phones for communications and scrap ham radio. But it can be fun to learn and exercise a skill, even if that skill is of little practical use.

For example, I recently learned how to use a bug for the first time in my four dozen years as a CW operator. I had no practical reason to buy and learn to use a bug. But it's been fun!

Likewise, a few weeks ago I also decided to start using iambic keying, since I've always owned double-lever paddles. Prior to that I never deliberately squeezed both levers at the same time but was often plagued with errors from accidentally doing so.

So now I routinely send C, F, K, L, Q, R, Y, <AA>, <AR>, <AS>, <SK> and periods using squeeze iambic. So then the question becomes, do I use mode A or mode B? I seemed to do better with mode A, except sometimes sending K instead of C. But my FT-857 only does mode B, and switching back and forth between mode B on my Yaesu and mode A on my Kenwood caused me all kinds of grief, especially with the letter C. And I would often add extra dits to other characters, too, when using mode B. But since I can't change the mode on my balcony rig, I've decided to make both rigs the same - both mode B. I'll get used to it, I'm sure.

Incidentally, did y'all see that QST article titled "Increase Your CW Speed with Wordsworth" (May 2017, p. 74)? "Wordsworth" is exactly what we're calling "FarnsWord", and it's purpose is to help you master 'head copy'.

72/73 de Rick Stutsman, 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)

2017/4/4 QNI(2) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM

Well, we are into the 80/40 summer problems. Terry I could just hear in the S8 noise and I called for a QSY to 7.064 and that worked better but the QSB was terrible. Andy KE5YGA said he could hear nothing in AR. Terry said I was loud and clear on 80 but I could not hear him. I checked into the MWN at 7:30 and Wayne gave me a 599 so 80 meters was long for sure last night. We will stick with 3.564 for rite now and QSY to 40 as needed.

2017/4/4 QNI(3) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA

The band was noisy but we hang in there on 3.564kc and got it done. Both Terry and I were QRP but i had to turn it up for Andy to hear me.

2017/4/18 QNI(4) NCS KA5TJS KE5YGA W5WIL WI5H

The static crashes was killing me on copy but I got most last night. All stations were 579 and the noise was peaking S9. Welcome to Dennis W5WIL. I think we are going to have to try 40 meters next week. We will probably try 7.065kc and see how that works. We will slide up in the event of QRM as the Tentec net is on 7.063.

Please post that we will be moving to 7.065kc as of 4/25. All other info remains the same.
Monday19:00 CDT / Tuesday 00:00z

2017/4/25 QNI (1) KA4TJS

No check ins tonight. Solar flare activity wiped out short skip on the first 40 net. I could hear KE5YUM just above the noise but he could not hear me.

NCS Allen KA5TJS
NAQCC 4512

NAQCC MIDWEST QRS Net (MWN)

Monday evenings 7:30 PM CST, which is Tuesday 00:30 UTC, on 3556 kHz +/-
Main NCS - Wayne NQ0RP (Kansas), Backup NCS Paul N0NBD

2017/4/4 QNI (3) NCS NQ0RP, KA5TJS, KD0DK
2017/4/11 QNI (3) NCS NQ0RP, AA0W, KD0DK
2017/4/18 - NO NET
2017/4/25 QNI (2) NCS NQ0RP, KA4PNE

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)

2017/4/4 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, W7IZ, W2IX, AA7CU
2017/4/6 QNI (2) NCS WC7S (ME ON EACH FREQ.. WITH NO CHECKINS)
2017/4/11 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, KE6EE
2017/4/13 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, VE7EK, WA8IWK, AA7CU
2017/4/18 QNI (1) NCS WC7S
2017/4/20 QNI (2) NCS WC7S (ME ON EACH FREQ.. WITH NO CHECKINS)
2017/4/27 QNI (3) NCS WC7S, K0DTJ (2)
2017/4/29 QNI (4) NCS WC7S, K0DTJ (2), AA7CU

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)

2017/4/6 QNI (4) NCS AB8RL W8GDP K8NYG WU8G
A line of storms approaching were very close causing QRN - static almost
20 over s 9 at times

2017/4/12 QNI (3) NCS N8ZYA WA8SIE W8GDP
Nice breakfast this morning. John W8GDP and I talked briefly about the latest Ham Nation broadcast. Joe WA8SIE was running
100 watts into a 160 meter antenna - Great signal. Band conditions seemed better this week.

2017/4/19 QNI (4) NCS N8ZYA W8GDP K8NYG AC8LJ
Strange band conditions tonight. I was weak into most stations but had a very good copy on K8NYG and AC8LJ who were
peaking at 599. Nice weather in WV today.
Eric AC8LJ and I hope to meet for breakfast soon. I sharpened the blades on the lawn mower this afternoon. The lawn looks
like a golf course now. lol

2017/4/26 QNI (5) NCS AB8RL W8GDP KC3RN K3NLT K8NYG WV8DH
Tom AB8RL took the net for me while I was out camping. Two new stations checked into the net from his QTH - KC3RN K3NLT.
He has great ears!

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.

2017/4/7 QNI (10) NCS KG7JEB, W7ANM/7, KE7LKW/7, WB4SPB, K7KY, N7TES, AD7BP, N0DA, N7TB, K7JUV

2017/4/14 QNI (5) NCS KG7JEB, WB4SPB, K7KY, AD7BP, N7TES

2017/4/21 QNI (3) NCS KG7JEB, KE7LKW, WB4SPB

2017/4/28 QNI (6) KE7LKW NCS, WB4SPB, K7JUV, N7TES, AD7BP, KF7TTY



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>.

Brion, VE3FUJ, who is in charge of our Help For Beginners section of the newsletter, has recently been re-bitten by the home brewing bug and has started on a series of construction projects that will be of interest to both beginners and experienced home brewers alike. He will be providing us with periodic reports on his progress and we will be publishing them here in the Help For Beginners section even though they will not be just for beginners. So be sure to check this page for his interesting reports and perhaps for a little bit of inspiration for doing your own projects. - Editor.

I'm writing this to encourage myself as well as others to venture into the Realm of "Home Brewing" and through the newsletter will keep you posted as to how it goes for me.

For a long time I've been thinking about home brewing but never had the guts to start, except back in the tube days (mid 60's) where I built an SSB Trncvr of about 25 W a single 6146. It was fairly successful in so far that it worked, but for a bit of carrier leak through and that was due to the 4 surplus X-Tal's being marked wrong. I found that out when a kindly Soul offered to check the X-Tal's for me and not having a frequency counter myself I took him up on it. Counters were scarce in the Shack back then.

Another thing I like to mention was the fact that it also had a inter-stage single ended to balanced Trnfr that blew on me, and trying to find a new one ended in failure. They were no longer being made I was told. So that ended the effort of HBing then and possibly contributing to my reluctance to try again. So I drifted away from HBing ---- and ---- radio due to marriage commitments.

In 2005 we pulled up stakes and moved to a small Rural town. I got back into Radio in 06 Qrp on the "cheap" 1 1/2 W Rock and separate RX, I fell in love with QRP, and that's when the HB urge emerged anew, that is kit building. But having tried a few I'm a bit disenchanted both with the simple as well as the more involved with their assortment "Bells and whistles", I no longer consider bells and whistles essential.

The reason for the renewed attempt at HBing ---- I've discovered I like things simple. I don't particularly like the modern Trncvrs as they are too complicated for me both to operate and Fix when something goes wrong as it will sooner or later, and then there's the cost, I've had a few of those. I've discovered that even simple RX's in various kit forms are no longer so simple as in the earlier days of Solid state. Some of the simple Kits feature " DC " technology which is fine with me as my between the " Ears " filter works fairly well. However having tried a few, I find that with VXO they are nice and stable but is a bit short on coverage. The few that I've tried with wider "LC" coverage has been too drifty for my liking, I've also had a few of those.

I don't have any degree in electrical engineering or electronics so I have to go by what others have done, with a few little mods thrown in. But now the urge has come over me again and my first project is a indicating Watt-meter indicating from - 10db (100uW) and up with the help of Attenuators, so it can

be used to check the output of oscillators. Next I plan to build a RX using the 602 mixer 386 Combo either a "DC" or "Superhet" with possible Rf amp before the 602 to improve the noise figure, and possibly an amp in the audio chain as well to make use of the balanced output of the 602' but definitely a separate "LO". The 602 I understand is a little fuzzy on LO injection, too little and the conversion gain suffers, too much and spurious frequencies develop. More on this in the future. Brion

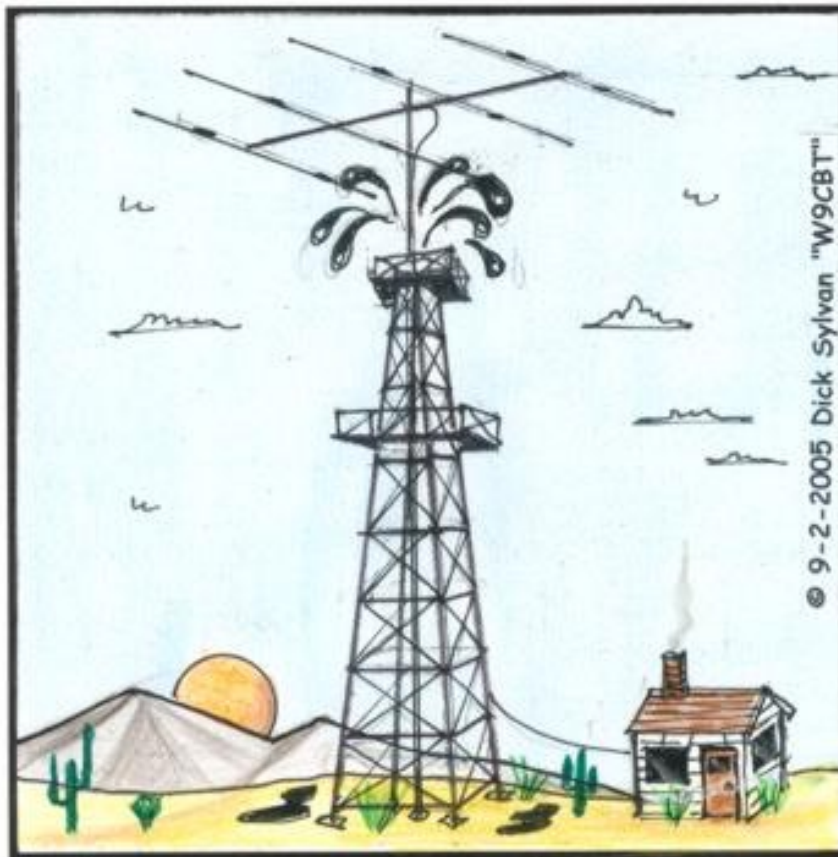


HAM QUIPS



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 "Gushing DX"



"Expensive Antenna Location"



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.

DOWNEAST MAINE CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Downeast Maine Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Jeff, KA1DBE.

The chapter is located in the Hancock and Washington counties area of Maine.

On April 13th, 2017 at the Ellsworth Amateur Wireless Association's Monthly meeting, a discussion took place on establishing a local NAQCC chapter in Downeast Maine. That evening the Downeast chapter of the NAQCC was born. The charter members were:

Richard, W1KRP (#8396)
 John, KQ1P (#3113)
 Joan, N1MA (#2068)
 Phil, N1EP (#8954)
 Jeff, KA1DBE (#1570)



A river runs through it.

Our first outing was shortly after that. We set up a station for the QRP to the Field event. We were fortunate to set up on the banks of the Union River. (Because Who wants to try and send Passadumkeag or Narraguagus for an exchange!)



Our Station

Our station consisted of an FT-817 feeding an End Fed inverted L. We used TLF (Linux contest logging program) for logging. The day started out a little chilly at 38 degrees and a slight breeze. (The high that day was 40!) Everyone helped with the set up and we were a go at 1400z.



Keeping the rain in check

As luck would have it, not only were the band conditions bad, but so was the weather. It rained off and on for the rest of the day. An emergency tarp was rigged just in case the weather worsened.

By 1800z we had worked 7 stations. 3 of them were river stations, a museum ship, and a SOTA station. We deemed it a success and packed everything up to seek a warmer environment. A good day was had by all and even other members of the local radio club stopped by to see how we were doing and to say hi.

We are looking forward to participating in some future events and growing our membership.

73/72
Jeff, KA1DBE

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER

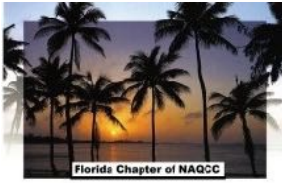


Items in this section are from European Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should be directed to Matt, MWOMIE.

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/>

No report available.

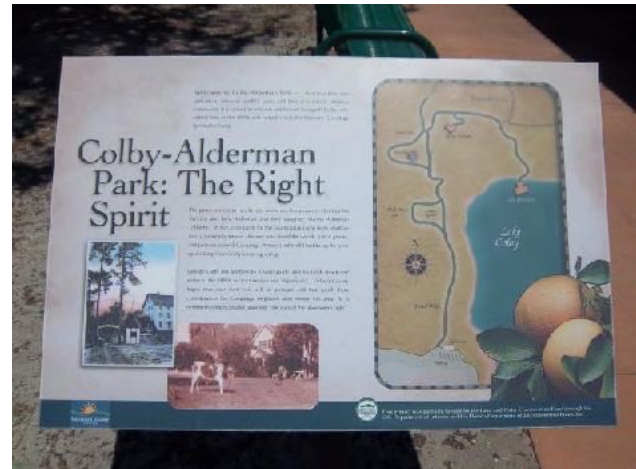
NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



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:



On Friday, March 24th, 2017, the Florida Chapter of NAQCC returned to another local park for our monthly adventure. We held our latest "Operation in the Park" at Colby- Alderman Park in Cassadega, Florida – but first, a bit about Cassadega (a Seneca Indian word meaning "*Water beneath the rocks*") - a small unincorporated community located in Volusia County, Florida, United States, just north of Deltona.

It is especially known for having a large number of psychics and mediums, and has consequently been named the "Psychic Capital of the World". The Cassadega Spiritualist camp began circa 1875 when the Southern Cassadega Spiritualist Camp Meeting Association was founded by George P. Colby, from Pike, New York, a trance medium who traveled to many different states, giving readings and seances. He was well known, and in his travels, Colby was referred to as the "seer of spiritualism. Colby worked with several spirit guides who would give him knowledge. One of his spirit guides was an Indian named Seneca, who had manifested to Colby during a seance in Lake Mills, Iowa. According to Colby, Seneca had instructed him to travel south to Florida, where he eventually arrived at a place called the Blue Springs Landing, near Orange City, Florida. According to Colby, the area that Seneca had led him to was the same area that Colby had seen during the seance in Iowa.

Colby had arrived in Florida in 1875, and on December 18, 1894 the charter was granted to form The Southern Cassadega Spiritualist Camp Meeting Association. The people who came to the Spiritualist Camp in the early days of its formation were affluent and well educated. The Cassadega Spiritualist camp was named after the small Spiritualist Camp community found outside of Lily Dale, New York.

The 124-acre Colby-Alderman Park boasts fishing and plenty of shady spots for visitors to while away a lazy afternoon. Playground equipment awaits energetic youngsters, while a volleyball court stands ready for older athletes. In addition to several picnic tables under shade trees is a smaller, roofed picnic pavilion. Lotsa trees just right for wire antennas! There were only a few other folks that stopped by the park while we "took it over"! (But we share freely!)

This trip, we again had 10 operators/visitors in our group (5 ops, three helpers, 2 visitors). Another big outing! We had 4 stations on the air at the same time. Special thanks to John KD4JS our newly dubbed official photographer (and what a great job he does!)

Today we arrived to our site with bright blue skies and a temp of 75 degrees with 60% humidity, accompanied by a light, cool breeze. It was very comfortable for us to operate. The weather was again Florida "Chamber of Commerce" and absolutely beautiful! When we left, it was up to about 86 degrees and starting to look like it might rain (as usual). It didn't rain (as usual).

The signals were just "OK" today, with some pretty deep QSB. 20M and 30M had a few signals but 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 non-member I2WEQ in Italy for some great DX...W2EJG, operating the WB4OMM station, was not to be out done...he worked non-members F5UQE and DL6UNF in France and Germany plus **NF1U Fred #7982** (CT), **KB1M Walt #8058** (NH), and "usual suspect" **Curt WA2JSG #3457** (NJ) – all on 20M. Bob W2EJG and John W2IV #6150 (one of our visitors) look on as Steve makes his measly one contact.



Art WB4MNK #5274 used an Elecraft KX1 @ 4 watts to an Up and Outer antenna fed with 300-ohm line on 30m. Stations worked: **WA2JSG Curt #3457** (NJ); **WA9TUT Dirk #8375** (IL); **KC9TYA Mark #8671** (IN); and **K9VP Roger #3763** VA. Operated from the top of the hill which was at least 30 feet above the park below. Hey, that's high down here in FL!! Sure was a great turnout and again a bunch of fun.



Phil NW4X #8927 brought his brand new Elecraft KX-2 (below), using a 29.5 foot non-resonant vertical with a 9:1 Balun. He made a QSO with **N4DT Dan #7495** in Spartanburg, SC on 40m running 5W.

Congrats on that fine, new radio!! Enjoyed the day, great fun!!



Ken N4KS #7626 used his Elecraft K2 and 20M hamstick.....and was "motorcycle mobile" (kind of!)

He made a bunch of DX QSOs on 20M including ON4UN, XE2V I2WEQ, and F5UQE plus "locals" **KB1M Walt #8058** in NH and **Bill K5LN #7319** in TX.

Below Art, Ken, Don, and Phil looking at Ken's FB motorcycle trailer.....



Bob W2EJG, Steve WB4OMM and Nicole KM4SBQ at the WB4OMM table



Don K3RLL, Art WB4MNK and Visitor Steve WB4FDY at the WB4MNK table



Steve brought his newest addition, the 4SQRP Bayou Jumper (a WWII Paraset 40M crystal controlled imitation) and 4S-Tuner, but 40M was not cooperative while we were there! Maybe next month.....



***From left front to back: Bob W2EJG, Art WB4MNK, Ken N4KS
From right front to back: Phil NW4X, Steve WB4FDY, John, KD4JS, and Don K3RLL – not pictured, Nicole KM4SBQ, John W4IV, and Steve WB4OMM (taking photo).***

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! WE HAD FUN!!!!**

Once again, 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. Another great NAQCC-FL day!!

Special thanks to our visitors John W2IV, who took the time to stop by and say, "Hi", and visit for a while. He heads "back up North" and will return (we hope!) to sunny Florida in the fall.....safe travels OM, hope to "see you" on the air! Steve WB4FDY a local who is always a welcome addition stayed with us for the day. John KD4JS took photos and helped out, as did Nicole KM4QBQ. Our good friend Don K3RLL "just visited" for the day, providing much needed moral support!

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

NEXT MONTH'S SCHEDULED EVENT:

Friday, May 12th, 2017 starting at 9:30 AM EDT (NOTE START TIME!) Buschman Park, Port Orange, FL (4575 Spruce Creek Road, Port Orange, FL) – Park

webpage with directions: [BUSCHMAN 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, Ken N4KS & 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, KONIA.

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/>.

No report available.

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/>.

No report available.

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/>.



Springtime has finally arrived in WV. On a very warm April day this month; Steve KC4URI and I decided to test our camping skills and spend a night at the forest lodge near Charleston. We had a very warm 86 degree daytime temperature with the nightly temperature forecast in the low 60's.

I had trouble getting the antenna high into the trees because of a broken fishing reel. One end of the Zepp antenna was up around 50 feet but the reel broke on the second "shot". I had to improvise and attach the other end to a "kite pole" at only 30 feet. This created a "sloper" which, for the most part, forced most of my signal into the steep mountainside. Such is life; one needs to work with what they have, and make the best of a bad situation.



I didn't make many contacts but managed to work a few stations. I could hear Jock N1JI in New Hampshire but too much of my signal was absorbed by the mountainside for him to hear me. My best contact was a nice QSO with a station in Daytona Beach Florida.

I like this location very well although it's between sharp hills and along a small stream. I even took my guitar and dulcimer along on this trip; but nature presents it's own music in the springtime. Steve saw a very large Coyote in the early evening as sunset neared and the sounds in the woods started to become loud. It's nice to hear Owls talking to each other, along with the birds and a few frogs, in the immediate area.



We both enjoyed ourselves at this location and plan to operate again from here. I especially enjoyed the view of the night sky from the field where I slept. When the park is closed and locked up for the evening, it's very quiet in this area. Perhaps on the next trip with the antenna more level and at nearly 50 feet, the band will be more responsive.

With warmer weather finally here, I hope to do more camping with the radio's. The little town of Grantsville is a great Astronomy site. Perhaps our next outing will be where the Milky Way can be seen from horizon to horizon.

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.

It was another quiet month for the WPA Chapter. One reason is that most of our little core of members are still in the work force and have family events to take care of as well. That leaves little time to get together for chapter activities. I was kidding with Don K3RLL who is a member of our chapter as well as the Florida chapter. I said it would be nice to have a bunch of retired folks up here like they have in Florida. It's no wonder their chapter has so many activities. Also they can continue right through the winter season down there since it is so warm. OK, enough of that. Let's get to what we actually did do during April.

We did have a subpedition planned for early April. However that had to be cancelled due to some work that had to be done on the Requin. The work which took longer than originally planned finished on the 28th. If I get an OK call from the caretaker of the sub, Art WA3BKD, we are going to have our subpedition this Sunday, which as I type means May 7. Well, I got the call just after typing this, but it wasn't what I expected. There are two events in Pittsburgh May 7, both of which would affect a subpedition. The Pittsburgh Marathon and a Pirate game. Because of the Marathon, the sub will not be open till later in the day. At any rate, I worked in Pittsburgh during a few Marathons, and it is chaos. Both Art and I thought better of trying to fight those conditions. So we checked each following Sunday. May 14 - Mothers Day - out. May 21 - Art will be out of town. May 28 - Memorial Day weekend - out. June 4 - Butler Hamfest - out. June 11 - looks good as of now. Stay tuned for more info. Whenever it all does work out, we'll announce the operation via our NAQCC email list.

Mike KC2EGL and I went to our second fish dinner in Lent at the Kittanning Twp. Fire Hall on Good Friday. After the wonderful dinner, it was on to my shack for some DX. Almost as soon as I sat down, I worked KP2BH, then after checking to be sure he was in the Virgin Islands (he is), Mike worked him also along with VP5/K3NK. Then we both worked W0N, the special event station for the 150th year of Nebraska statehood. Some hidden object games on the computer, then Mike headed home.

Mike and I got together again for our usual 4th Wednesday evening visit and of course started off with a pizza. Then since it was his birthday, I presented him with a cake which was pretty quickly devoured as well. In my shack a little later we worked some DX. After that it was some of our favorite hidden object computer games.

One chapter related development was my building a mount for my 28 foot Jackite antenna pole I purchased recently. When he was here, Mike looked it over and gave me a couple good ideas that I incorporated into it. Tom WB3FAE and I are going to give it some testing sometime early this month. Then I hope to use it when our chapter has a parkpedition on May 21.



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 Paul, N8XMS, #0675—

Recently I enjoyed a very rare event - a couple of "duty free" hours! This issue of the newsletter was coming along and in good shape and thunderstorms prevented lawn work and made it prudent to disconnect the antenna. So what to do? Well, I had recently seen an item in an on-line forum that most of the issues of *Morsum Magnificat*, a magazine published from 1986 until 2004 that was dedicated to all things related to Morse Code, are now available in pdf format on the internet. The copyright holder, G3ODK, has given permission for non-commercial use of the files and N7CFO has made them available at <http://www.n7cfo.com/tgph/Dwnlds/mm/mm.htm>. Years ago someone had given me a copy of this magazine but I had never subscribed to it. So I went to the website and started to peruse some of the issues. What a wonderful treasure! If you have any interest in the history of Morse Code, telegraph keys, radio communications, military signal intelligence, etc., you will really want to spend some time at this website. To give just one example, I found in issue #4 from the summer of 1987 that the reason we use "es" as an abbreviation for "and" is that "dit dit-dit-dit" was the American Morse code for the ampersand character - I've always wondered about that! I doubt that I will ever find the time to be able to read through all of the magazine's issues but I am certainly looking forward to more thunderstorm browsing!

From Chris, K0PF, #0652 —

Chris recently won one of our prize drawings held for the participants in our regular monthly sprints. He sent this after receiving his prize. - Editor

Thanks very much for the beautiful paddles (Canarywood) which I have installed on my Kent key, as seen in this photo. The handsome wood nicely complements the brass of the key mechanism, and they are comfortable to use, with a nice texture and warmth compared to the plastic paddles that came on it. In the background is the KX2, listening to 40M CW (of course)!

73,
Chris



From Dejan, SA3BOW, #6935 —

Last month's newsletter included a contribution by Dejan, SA3BOW, on using tile spacers in the construction of ladder lines. The photo showing the spacers "in action" was omitted and is included here. It clearly shows how nicely the spacers work. Also apologies to Dejan for misspelling his name not once, but twice! - Editor



From Chris, N3MLB, #8274 —

I thought I would share my experience with the current solar conditions and QRP operations and how you shouldn't let the numbers discourage you. After discovering NAQCC early last year, I've been an avid QRP operator. To be accurate, the last time I raised power above 5 Watts was in May of 2016. Since then, I've made at least one QRP contact a day. It's not close to "The Streak" nor do I have an ambition to take on such a colossal goal.

Since I started doing QRP, I've run into a habit of checking the band conditions. As the laptop boots up, I have just enough time to turn on the KX3, check the solar panel charge controller, swivel my chair to the iMac that's always on and in my browser, I pull up bandconditions.com, reversebeacon.net and QRZ.com. QRZ gives me a quick look at the solar numbers and what bands are open. Bandconditions.com gives me an accurate account of active bands and I use reversebeacon.net to test my signal strength. Once the KX3 is tuned, I make sure my power is set for two Watts and I listen carefully for an opening.

After hearing no response to my QRL?, I send a quick "CQ CQ de N3MLB K". I then watch the map on reversebeacon.net for my call sign to appear and take note of who hears me and what the dB gain is. I mentally take note of the Solar Flux number, the A and K index, the websites telling me which bands are open and my signal strength on reversebeacon.net. Then I'm ready to roll with a pretty good idea of how good or bad my signal will be.

On April 18th I sent out a series of CQ's and quickly heard a booming signal from New York. "K2VN", I heard but it wasn't a standard reply. He didn't send my call and this wasn't a contest. Should I respond? New York is only a few hundred miles away. Why wouldn't I? The band conditions didn't seem very good but it wasn't horrible.

I answered "K2VN de N3MLB K". I turned it back to him hoping it was me he wanted. He quickly replied with my call and gave me the standard information. He gave me a 599 report. Really? 599? Maybe he's being kind. To keep my transmission short, I replied with abbreviated information, just in case he couldn't hear me very well. After giving him my name and QTH, I told him I was "QRP QRP 4W 4W QSL? BK".

There was a slight pause. Did he hear me? That same booming signal replied with "QSL CHRIS FB ON THE QRP". He went on to tell me he was operating from the Nassau Amateur Radio Club and his home call was K2UPS and he likes to operate QRP when he's at home. Tonight, he was at the club with other hams and he was operating 75 Watts.

After a few more exchanges, Rich went on to tell me I was now twenty over and I could lower my power if I wanted. "Well now!" I thought. My adrenalin was pumping like the first time I went QRP and my wife had to peel me off the ceiling. Sure I would lower it. I went down to two watts and sent "RR. NOW AT 2W BK".

Another short pause and he replied. "STILL 5NN KEEP GOING BK". I went down to 800 mW and sent the same information. Rich replied "589 TRY 1/2 WATT". At this point I must tell you I started laughing out loud and my Australian Sheppard Bo who was lying next to me, lifted his head off the floor and glared at me. I told Bo, "We're going lower buddy" and I dropped the KX3 to 500 mW. I got the same reply from Rich, "57 58 KEEP GOING BK".

I dropped it to 200 mW and this time there was a longer pause. Did Rich hear me? "Uh oh" I thought, that was the limit. But then Rich replied "56N". At this point, let's just say Bo left the room never to return.

Rich and I went on for another few minutes chatting about our set up and eventually he told me the fellas in the room didn't believe I was at 200 mW. I quickly grabbed my cell phone and took a video of me sending to him and him replying. I made sure to show that I was at .200 and told Rich I would upload it to YouTube for him. Trust me, this wasn't my best FIST. Recording it and sending CW while the adrenalin was still prevalent was rough enough, but never the less it was proof. I went on to make another QRPp contact at 200 mW before I called it a night.



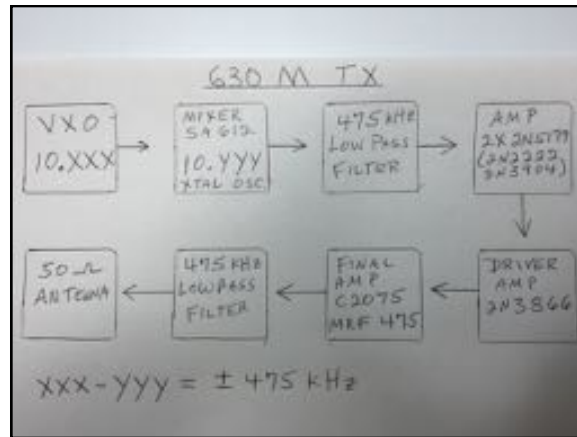
From Gene, N5GW, #5353 —

A 630 Meter Home-brew Transmitter

I cobbled this transmitter together back in 2012, anticipating we would be awarded a new ham band from 472-479 KHz. Well it took a while, and even though we still don't quite have access to the band yet, it's time for home builders to get a head start and be ready.

The nucleus of the transmitter is a heterodyne VXO (variable crystal oscillator) which uses two crystals in the 10-13 MHz range. The crystals are separated by a frequency of approximately 475 KHz. One of

them is used in an outboard VXO whose output is fed into an SA612 mixer. The other input signal is derived from the onboard beat crystal oscillator of the mixer. An output of 475 KHz is extracted, passed through a low pass filter, amplified and then filtered as shown in the block diagram (first picture).



The second picture shows the prototype layout (a rat would be horrified!), including almost two watts of output into a 50-ohm load at 230 mA using a 12V SLA battery. At 13.8 V the output is over three watts.



When I first thought of the HVXO, it seemed that it would be difficult to find two crystals with the proper frequency separation. I had a box of about eighty 10 MHz assorted crystals I had collected over the years, so I arranged them in columns by hundreds of KHz. To my amazement, when I began looking for suitable pairs, within about ten minutes, I had discovered no less than four pairs which seemed to be candidates.

I plugged them in for a test, including swapping the VXO and beat crystals, and two of the pairs worked very well. I dug around in my other crystal boxes and finally came up with a total of six pairs of crystals that worked well, including one pair at 11 MHz and two pairs at 13 MHz. I figured it was like the mathematician's birthday "paradox" in which it seems counterintuitive but true that two people in a relatively small group are likely to have the same birthday. Speaking of paradoxes, with one of the 10 MHz pairs, the frequency coverage over the entire variable capacitor range is almost exactly 472-479 KHz!

Other crystal frequencies will also work; however below about 10 MHz, the range over which the crystal can be "pulled" may be less than 7 KHz. Crystals at 14-18 MHz should work, but fundamentals higher than this are hard to find.

The transmitter seems to be very stable as would be expected from crystal control. I plan to do some tweaking of the circuits including a keying method and will wind up with about five watts out. This may be enough to work a ham buddy across town or maybe the next town or farther. Otherwise additional amplifiers may be needed.

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 —

One of our members recently sent me a link to a cute little \$39.95 QRP transmitter - <https://www.etsy.com/shop/QuirkyQRPHamRadios>. I have not tried one of these rigs so this is certainly not a product endorsement but I thought that it was worth sharing with the membership. These tiny radios are being built and sold by Jim, KH2SR, who also happens to be a member of the NAQCC.



From John, K3WWP, #0002 —

As mentioned in the WPA Chapter news above, I built a mount for my Jackite antenna pole which I hope to be using on our portable operations this year. We may have an impromptu parkpedition early this month when Tom WB3FAE and I hope to be able to do some testing of the mount along with fine-tuning my antennas with his antenna analyzer. Then our first scheduled parkpedition will be May 21. I'll have some pictures of the mount in my June news for the newsletter as well as on my website at k3wwp.com sometime in May. There are a couple pictures in the diary already of a very early alpha version.

Otherwise it was another month added to the DX streak. Most days the DX came in the evening and in many cases it came from the Caribbean and Latin American countries. In fact, there were only 4 days I didn't get the DX till the following morning. Six days the contact came from EU. There were never any days when it was really rough, although some days did take some searching to find a workable DX station. Sure a big difference from a couple years ago when DX from all over the world was easily workable just about any time of day. It's only going to get worse as we sink deeper into the upcoming sunspot minimum. It will be interesting to see just how far into the minimum I can still work (or even hear) DX. I never tried anything like this long a DX streak before so I don't know exactly how rough it will be in a sunspot minimum.

I celebrated the 54th anniversary of receiving my first ham license as KN3WWP on April 3. Then in my web site diary at k3wwp.com I presented a history of the first part of those 54 years. That brought back a lot of memories as I was writing the diary entries.

For a long time now, I had been hoping to crack the 60 QSO barrier in one of our sprints. That's not a tough barrier for those with big antennas and great locations, but with my minimal setup, I just have never been able to do it. Until this month in our 150th sprint, that is. I made 64. I think it was largely due to the greatly increased activity with our emphasis on it being a milestone sprint with a nice prize available to one member via a random drawing among all member participants. 217 logs received and 263 participants showing up in those logs was a record. More about that was already mentioned above in the newsletter so I won't dwell on it further.

The April Challenge was another story. Lack of time to get on the air with the nice weather all month -

it was the warmest April in my weather records which I started keeping in 1959 - and a lot of outdoor activities kept me from completing the challenge for only the second or third time in our 160 or so challenges. I came up 8 letters short - 6 of them being Ts. Oh well.



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 contester 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

Club President Paul Huff, N8XMS
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Additional contact information can be found on the next page.

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REPRINT POLICY

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