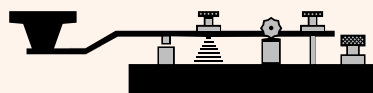


NAQCC NEWS



ISSUE 303 • SEPTEMBER 2023



KEY CLICKS

• **IN THIS ISSUE**

The Prez Sez... go to a park; The club's 19th Anniversary is upon us; QSO Parties are in the homestretch; Member polling to help us make a band plan; The Rube Goldbug (you have to see this!); A flightier than usual Challenge; Strange things afoot at the top of your tower? Drone to the rescue; A bunch of Chapter Reports; Sprint reports; Soapboxes; Member polls; Nets; and more.

• **CALL FOR N3A OPERATORS**

This year we will be celebrating our club's 19th anniversary from October 8 through 14 (UTC) and, as in past years, we need volunteers to put our special event callsign on the air during that week. No special equipment is needed other than your regular QRP/CW gear. Your operating schedule is completely flexible, and logging "paperwork" is kept to a minimum. See the details on page 3.

• **IT'S STILL A GREAT TIME TO START QSO PARTIES**

If you haven't joined the fun yet, but think you might want to next year, this is the perfect time to get some practice in. Think of these events as the next step up in friendly contesting from our monthly Sprints. Speeds are generally only a little faster and most ops will QRS. If you do a few this year you'll be ready to set a goal when they re-start in the spring.

• **YOUR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS REALLY NEEDED**

Summer submission doldrums are upon us! Please take a few minutes to tell us about your latest excursion, that thing you built, your favorite rig, or something funny. As long as it relates to QRP CW. Send it to Paul KD2MX: kd2mx@arri.net

• **UPDATE YOUR MEMBER INFO**

Any time you change your QTH, email, or callsign, you can update your member info with a simple on-line form. First, check your information at <http://naqcc.info/memberlist.php> to make sure the rest of the fields are correct and then fill out the member update form here: http://naqcc.info/member_updates.html

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THE PREZ SEZ...

Fall is ahead, September 3 here in Maine has a touch of fall in the air and the leaves are starting to change color. Looking back on the summer we hope that you have stayed cool and dry and out of harms way. Many have suffered flooding and severe storms including three hurricanes and more brewing, the Boy Scout Motto "be prepared" certainly applied to many of us. We will be starting our trek back to Florida, originally scheduled for the 19th but probably sooner.

We could always use more N3A OPs for the October Anniversary contact Rich Berger hamberger@ptd.net if you want to take a turn.

Fall season, is a great time of year to visit your local parks whether you are doing an official POTA, SOTA, BOTA, or just getting out. The weather moderates, fewer crowds and warm sunshine abounds. Probably many like the comforts of home to operate from, but there is a real joy making QSOs from the outdoors, especially with equipment that you have built. I like to work some of the events from the field whenever I get the chance.

The **September Monthly Sprint** will be held on Wed Sep 20 8:30-10:30P EDT / Thu Sep 21 0030-0230Z. Please take the time to log your scores and use the soapbox for your comments as this helps us ensure the accuracy for the scoring.

CW Assistance

Perhaps you are just learning or returning to CW and you have questions on operations or you just need a practice buddy.

Check out the [CW Assistance link](#) on our website and you will soon be on your way to refreshing and improving your CW skills.

Donations - thank you for mailing your check to:

North American QRP CW Club, Inc
35 Heather Circle
Cave Spring, GA 30124

We are getting close to meeting our Anniversary goals but we do need some additional help.

I wonder how many **Kit or Antenna builders** we have in NAQCC ? It would be great to see how much interest there is for one thing and greater if you could piece together a few words and a photo or two for the monthly newsletter, even a few words on your last outing would work also. I personally enjoy making and successfully using homebrew gear in the field. Drop me an email with your thoughts.

The **Participation Page** is behind, we are hoping to have an easier method developed soon to handle the tedious task. One of our members has purchased a laser machine and has agreed to make up the plaques for '21/'22 & '23. We had lost our previous provider a few years ago due to retirement.

CW RBN for Clubs is worth looking at. I often use this website to find like-minded members that are on the the air. You can sort by bands, clubs, time and so much more. You will have to use it some to appreciate all of the features. Check it out <https://rbn.telegraphy.de/>

Don't forget the **Poll Question** each month on the home page of our website. This month's poll is spot on! Give us your 2¢ please.

72/73!

John KK4ITX #7249

NAQCC President



A little bit of QRP on a wire goes a long way!

19TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Planning continues for our NAQCC 19th Anniversary celebration the week of October 8. Special event stations will put N3A/# on the air from locations all over the country and we are recruiting volunteer operators for that purpose. Of course, a big part of our celebration each year is the special anniversary sprint and monthly challenge, with their associated prize drawings.

No special equipment is needed other than your regular QRP/CW gear. Your operating schedule is completely flexible, and logging “paperwork” is kept to a minimum. Last year we had only 7 signups at the beginning of September; this year we have 35 operators, from all districts on the continent; we are still looking for HI, VI and PR. There is no maximum number of N3A operators.

PRIZES

We usually don't reveal the prize list ahead of time but will list them in the months to come.

PARTICIPATION COUNTS!

Please remember that there is a throughout-the-year participation requirement to be eligible for the best prizes. It's easy to rack up enough points, even if you started late. See http://www.naqcc.info/prize_drawing_19th_anniv.html for drawing details.

MORE DETAILS

For more information about our celebration, and to see summary reports from previous years, go to http://www.naqcc.info/main_n3a.html.

We can put our special N3A callsign on the air from all 10 US call districts, Alaska, Hawaii, the US Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

OPERATE AS N3A IN THE OCTOBER SPRINT

One operator from each district will be exclusively designated to use the special call in the Sprint that week. That person should have some previous Sprint experience. We still have openings for the designated Sprint Operator in districts 1,2,3,6, AK, HI & US VI.

SIGN UP NOW

Other than that, there are no special requirements. If you are a member of the NAQCC and can operate QRP/CW (any speed) on one or more HF bands, you qualify. There is no limit to the number of people who participate so “the more the merrier.” If you have not volunteered before, it's a great experience and a chance to make QRP contacts across the US and Canada and maybe work some DX stations. The anniversary may be combined with Parks on the Air or Summits on the Air if you can manage it.

If you would like to be one of our special ops, or if you just need some questions answered before making a commitment, send me an email. If you want to be the one designated N3A sprint operator for your district let me know that as well—first come first served. (Please be sure to include your call district and NAQCC membership number in your email.) —Rich, KC3MIO
hamberger@ptd.net

I will be sending out instructions to all ops signed up so far, sometime during the first full week of September. In the October newsletter, I will include a list of all ops.



NAQCC STATE QSO PARTY CHALLENGE

BY DON VE3DQN

#5846

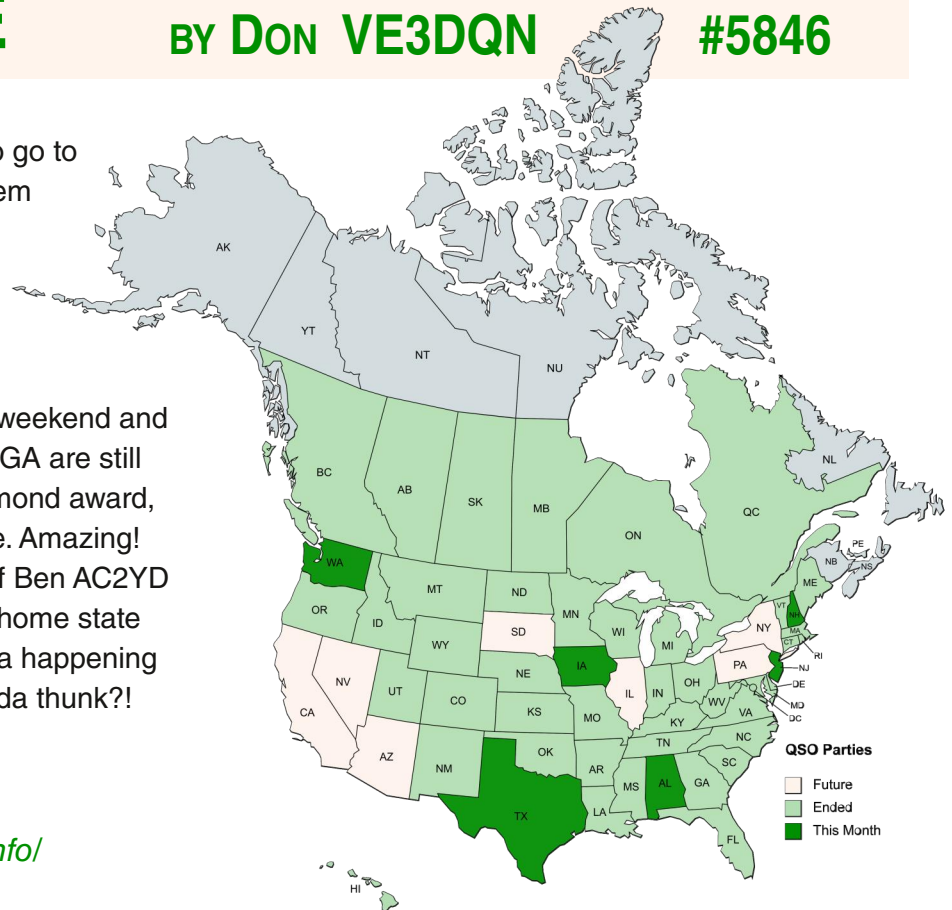
Only 13 more State QSO Parties to go to complete the 2023 season, 6 of them occurring in September between this Newsletter and the one published in October: AL, TX, IA, NH, NJ, and WA (Salmon Run).

I check the Scoreboard after each weekend and see that Alan KR4AE and Lee AA4GA are still on target to reach the coveted Diamond award, the top level for the SQP Challenge. Amazing! All QRP and CW. And who knows if Ben AC2YD can reach it with a big score in his home state NJ QSO party? Folks, lots of drama happening in the SQP Challenge :-) Who wudda think?!

LEADERBOARD

Complete results at http://naqcc.info/qso parties_scores.html

Member	Mult	QSOs	Score	Award	Pace
Alan KR4AE, #5847	34	1,761	59,874	Platinum	114,413
Lee AA4GA, #5415	32	1,713	54,816	Platinum	104,748
Ben AC2YD, #10378	30	1,145	34,350	Platinum	65,639
Steve NI8W, #11335	31	821	25,451	Platinum	48,634
Chris KU4A, #1960	31	730	22,630	Gold	43,244
Brent WT4U, #9019	30	597	17,910	Gold	34,224
Mike W7LG, #10391	27	597	16,119	Gold	30,802
Don VE3DQN, #5846	31	514	15,934	Gold	30,448
Kevin NN3E, #9851	28	555	15,540	Gold	29,695
Will NQ2W, #4839	20	578	11,560	Gold	22,090
Sean KK9U, #10869	13	880	11,440	Gold	21,861
Dave AB9BZ, #9309	29	315	9,135	Silver	17,456
Rick KYOQ, #9647	19	394	7,486	Silver	14,305
Dick N9EEE, #11389	24	293	7,032	Silver	13,437
Bob N2EIM, #10373	16	266	4,256	Bronze	8,133
Ernie N2DGQ, #11090	16	261	4,176	Bronze	7,980
Don KI4MZC, #10922	11	370	4,070	Bronze	7,777
Anthony K8ZT, #412	18	196	3,528	Bronze	6,742
Dave N3CKI, #8478	6	424	2,544	Bronze	4,861
Dan W9SAU, #10073	15	113	1,695	Bronze	3,239
Marie NG8S, #3261	14	114	1,596	Bronze	3,050
Kevin KI4DEF, #247	16	78	1,248	Bronze	2,385
Brock W6GMT, #2390	5	101	505	Bronze	965



And have you been checking the Soapbox comments that participants send in after each weekend's activities? http://naqcc.info/qso parties_soapbox.html

That's where we see personality behind the callsign, where folks give operating or strategy tips, where we learn about surprising catches, or the one-that-got-away. Check out these comments; it's all part of the fun.

Happy partying!

UPCOMING EVENTS

State	Times	IN	Out	Freqs	Links
Alabama	Sep 9 1500Z to Sep 10 0300Z	RST County	RST ST	3.545, 7.045, 14.045, 21.045, 28.045 and above	rules
Texas	Sep 16 1400Z to Sep 17 0200Z & Sep 17 1400Z to Sep 17 2000Z	RST County	RST ST	20 kHz to 40 kHz up	rules
Iowa	Sep 16 1400Z to Sep 17 0200Z	RST County	RST ST	1.820 and 40 kHz up	rules
New Hampshire	Sept 16 1600Z to 2200Z & Sept 17 1600Z to 2200Z	RST County	RST ST	1.815, 3.545, 7.045, 14.045, 21.045, 28.045, 50.095	rules
New Jersey	Sep 16 1600Z to Sep 17 0359Z	RST County	RST ST	50kHz up	rules
Washington	Sep 16 1600Z to Sep 17 0700Z & Sep 17 1600Z to Sep 17 2400Z	RST County	RST ST	1.830, 3.550, 7.045, 14.050, 21.050, 28.040, 50.095	rules

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

- Work the QSO Parties. Rules differ slightly by state, so check those. Work at least two stations in each QSO Party.
- Post a summary of your results for each QSO Party to the appropriate page on <https://www.3830scores.com> The links to the submittal forms are on the left side of the page in yellow.
- Under “club” choose “other” and then type in NAQCC. If enough people do that we can get added to the pulldown menu. If you're already committed to another club, don't worry about it. It won't affect our friendly competition, but it's nice to get NAQCC some visibility.
- Some QSO Parties lump CW together with digital or other modes. If that happens, send a note to QSO Party Challenge Manager Don VE3DQN at don@hekman.net and

let him know that you worked strictly CW, or if mixed, how many of your contacts were CW.

- Check the NAQCC Newsletter each month to see how everyone is doing.

NOTES

- Individual QSO Parties will do their own official scoring based on uploaded Cabrillo logs. We're just looking at the summary you post to 3830scores.
- To participate, you must enter as a QRP station. You don't have to limit yourself to CW operation, but only those QSOs will count toward the NAQCC QSO Party Challenge.
- Questions? Read Don VE3DQN's [November 2021 article](#) or contact him at: don@hekman.net

QSO PARTY SOAPBOX SAMPLER

Chris KU4A #1960 The Kansas QSO Party was just amazing. Great participation. With the exception of KS0KS, everyone seemed to be using a special call. Best small-state QSO Party that I've seen so far.

Will NQ2W #4839 OH QP - Lots of activity...always someone new to work when I sat down at the radio. KS QP - The mobile/rovers, especially the ones on county lines, did a great job. HI QP - Worked every HI station that I heard! Thank you and 72,

Dick N9EEE #11389 WVQP: Patience, patience and more patience. Nothing heard all day. I didn't give up. Around 9:45 pm suddenly two WV stations showed up just 1kHz apart. I got my two. Shut 'er down. And whistled my way to the next room. Thanks for running the NAQCC QP program and writing up the soapbox. It's fun to see how everyone fares at this. --73-

Ben AC2YD #10378 MD/DC - I got 8 Qs altogether, spending a good amount of time with 7045+/- sounding in the background while I did other chores close-by, and checking 80 and 20 from time to time. Got 1 Q on 80, 7 on 40, never heard anyone on 20m (except WAE, which I've worked in the past, but did not want to jump in this year, due to other distractions/chores) ... but I'm pretty close to MD, so I didn't expect a "big opening", especially with my vertical ... that's my last state for 20m WAS, so I was hoping for a miracle ... not this year. 72!!

Don VE3DQN #5846 The MDC QSO Party happened to fall on my wife's birthday weekend, with an out-of-town son as a houseguest and an open-house drop-in birthday celebration. So you know what that means ;-). Yes, I managed to sneak in three quick "peeks" on the bands and each time snagged two MDC QSOs. Which makes 6, all on 40m. Surpassing my expectations. Yes, I'm concerned too about the KH6 party in a couple weeks. Hardly a "party" as KH6-land is in shock as we all are. Is there a Q-code for "Be Strong"?

Steve NI8W #11335 It's good to be back to working the QSO parties. I'm still hoping to successfully work all of them that remain. MDC worked out pretty well for me. 20m skip must have been too long for me. I heard others working MDC stations on 20m, but I couldn't hear them. All of my QSOs were on 40m. 72/73

Ben AC2YD #10378 For WVQP, again very abbreviated op time, with family event and jazz gig during this 12-hour QP, but it doesn't look as if I missed all that much, based on looking at other 3830scores entries ... 7 Qs total, 5 on 40 and 2 on 80, very first Q was W8WVA! See you all in August, and Happy Field Day to all!

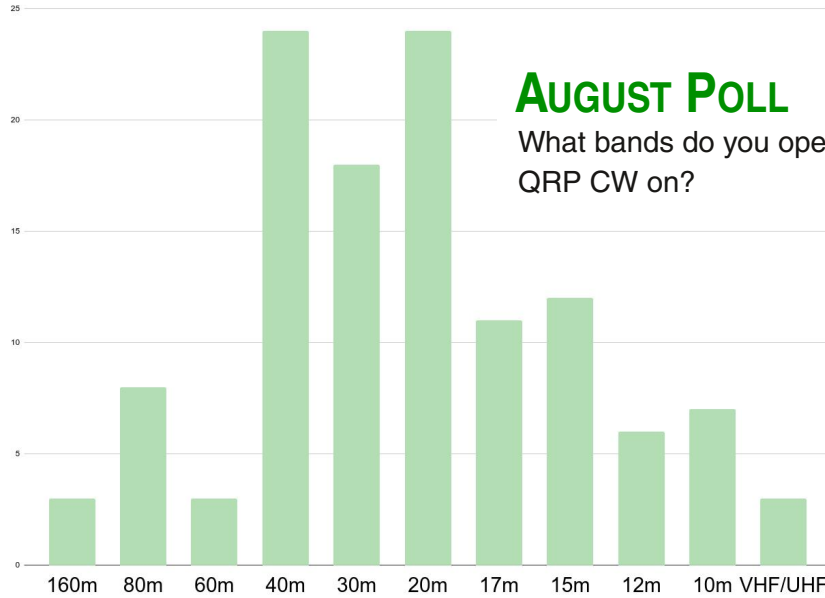
Brent WT4U #9019 I didn't get the new fan dipole unraveled (printed some better spreaders and I'll try again), but I did manage to eke out my two Hawai'i contacts on 20m after flirting with each of them for a bit and surfing the light QSB.




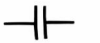










MEMBER POLLS

SEPTEMBER POLL

From last month's poll I see 20 and 40 meters are still the bands of choice. Should we try a different approach.. say the start of a 'WARC Week'? Members would pick a day on either 30M, 17M, or 12M to focus on? Let us know at http://naqcc.info/poll_new.html Comments are open.



CIRCUIT SYMBOLS

<p> DRAWBRIDGE</p> <p> OVERPASS</p> <p> POGO STICK</p> <p> EARTHQUAKE</p> <p> SHEEP</p> <p> TWO SHEEP IN LOVE TRAPPED ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF A FENCE</p>	<p> BATTERY</p> <p> BAERTTY</p> <p> BATTTTTTT-TTTTTERY</p> <p> CHECK OUT THIS REALLY COOL DIODE</p> <p> WAVE POOL</p> <p> TROLLEY PROBLEM</p>
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THE RUBE GOLDBUG

BY GENE N5GW #5353

Occasionally I also like to participate in the SKCC's Weekend Sprintathon which is held monthly on the HF bands. Each month has its own theme, and the one for August is "home brew keys." Since I had previously constructed a few home made straight and iambic keys, I decided to tackle a bigger project - a semiautomatic "bug." It turned out to be much more complex than I had initially imagined, but after a few weeks of experimentation and frustration, the result is shown in the two pics.

I named it after the celebrated cartoonist, Rube Goldberg and his "impossible" machines. However my bug key is not a true classic RG, because mine works!

RAIDING THE JUNK BOX

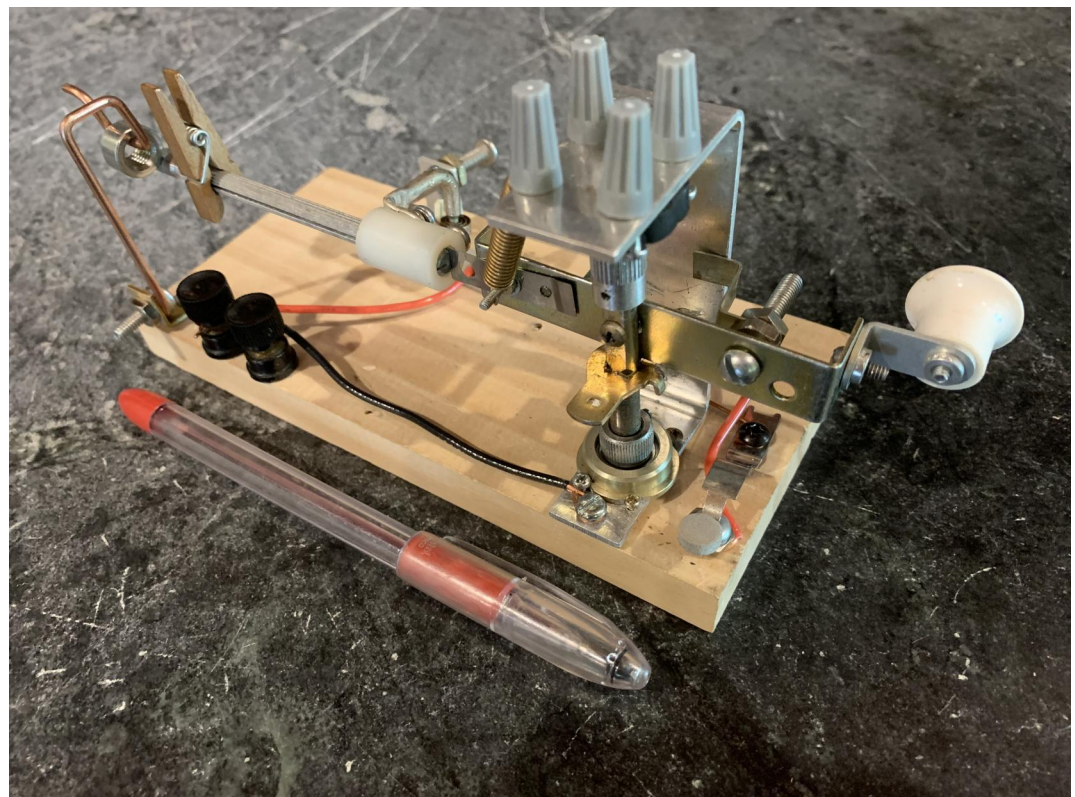
Here are some details: I used my new Vibroplex left-handed bug as a model. The pivot is made using a pair of bearings from my junk box. It is important to have no wobble or play in this mechanism. The pendulum (arm) is an aluminum extension shaft from a vintage volume control. Its spring is a flat piece of metal of unknown origin.

I found an old thermostat spiral spring to use as a dot contact. I got lucky with the damper - the first thing I tried (a round

nut supported on a folded stiff copper wire) worked well! The miniature clothespin slows the dot speed to about 12 wpm. Notice the dash key is a simple straight key, separate from the dot lever. I was afraid it would upset the motion of the pendulum if it was on the same pivot.

TIPS AND TRICKS

Adjusting the dot contact spacing is a bit critical, requiring rather wide spacing. However I came up with what is probably an improvement over some of the commercial bugs - I employed adjustment screws having fine rather than coarse threads! Initially the dots sounded "scratchy." A magnifying glass traced this to a high frequency vibration of the dot spring. This is mentioned in some of the Vibroplex literature. Placing a small piece of double sided foam tape within the spiral spring greatly reduced the unwanted vibration,



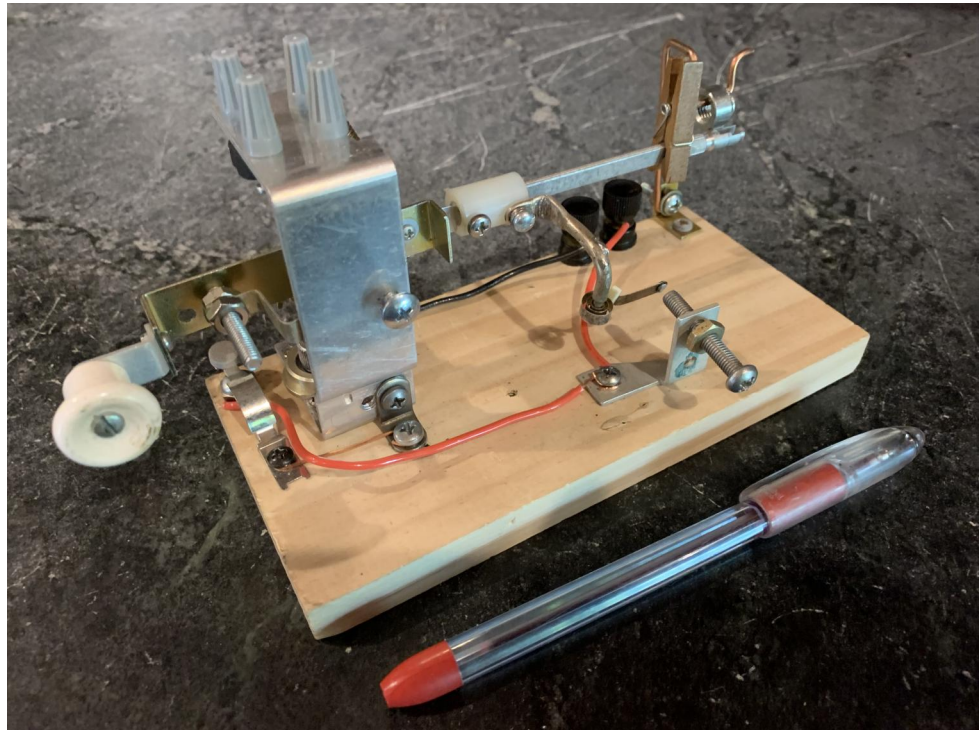
and resulted in disappearance of the scratchiness.

Apparently the old thermostat spiral spring has enough compliance to prevent contact bounce. An interesting quirk of the dot key is that it will produce only seven or eight dots before it becomes continuous. However only a maximum of five dots are ever needed!

It's A TRAP!

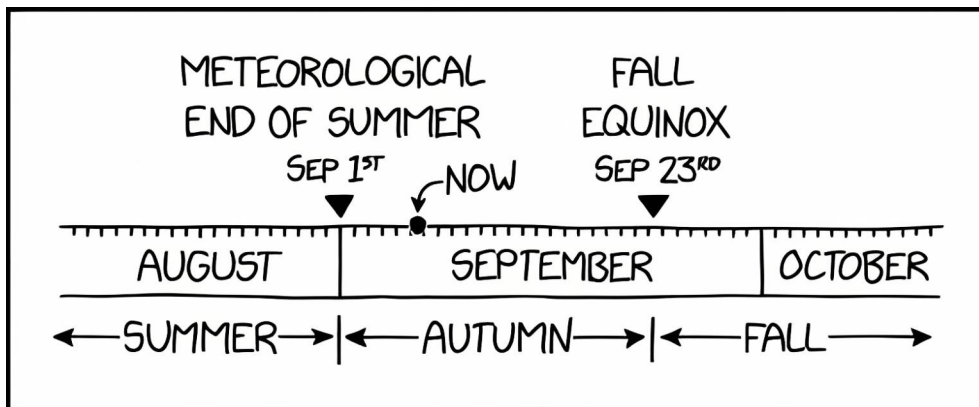
The whole assembly is put together on the back of a Victor rat trap because the piece of wood happened to be the correct size. (There's a message here somewhere, but I'm afraid to think about it!). Since it is lightweight, I have to clamp it to the table.

I have been able to make several CW contacts using this toy. It will maintain its settings for quite a while. The hams on the other end say they can even read the morse if I have it properly adjusted.



I will not recommend trying to duplicate this project unless you have machinist skills. I feel I am somewhat lucky that this contraption.....er....device works. One thing I learned is that, although the semiautomatic bug key looks simple on the drawing board, the devil is indeed in the details.

73, Gene N5GW



NOW THAT SUMMER IS OVER, THE FIRST DAY OF FALL IS JUST A FEW WEEKS AWAY!

NAQCC CHALLENGE

BY GARY K1YAN #2365

THIS MONTH'S LETTER CHALLENGE: SQUAWK CODES

Your flight and a number of others are all converging on their destination airport. It is the job of the air traffic controller to get you on the ground and others into the air with no mishaps. He will need to accurately pinpoint all the aircraft in his area to accomplish this. When your flight first took off, the tower gave your pilot some directions, one of which was "squawk XXXX" (XXXX is a four-digit code). Your pilot then entered this code into the plane's transponder.

The transponder, named for its functions of transmitting and responding, will send a package of data when polled by the airport's secondary radar system. This exchange is done at 1090 MHz. The squawk code allows the air traffic control radar system to pinpoint and identify a particular aircraft. The system will receive an aircraft's altitude, call sign, data about destination, fuel, number of passengers and crew on board and more.

Transponders come in different modes. A mode Alpha, typically found in non-commercial aircraft, responds with only position data and squawk code. Some areas may not be legally entered

Fine-Feathered Fact

The term "squawk" comes from an RAF World War II identification friend or foe (IFF) system, code-named "Parrot."



with this minimal data. The next step up is the mode Charlie unit which adds altitude to the position data and squawk code. Then there is the top of the line, mode Sierra, which is found on commercial aircraft. It provides a full blown data response as well as data link messaging capability. Rules and regulations governing the type of transponder required and its use may vary by country.

In addition to providing location and data, the transponder can be used to communicate several emergency messages by setting one of three specific, internationally recognized, squawk codes. A code of 7500 indicates that a hijacking is underway and will set off a series of responses on the ground. Should you lose all your other radio communications a code of 7600 will tell the controller that you can no longer hear his directions. In response to this the controller may land you by using other means such as light signals. Finally a code of 7700 indicates an emergency that requires immediate assistance from the controller.

That is the story of a very handy piece of electronics you will have working for you when you next take to the air.


WORDS

- SQUAWK CODE
- 1090 MHZ SECONDARY RADAR SYSTEM
- 7500 HIJACKING
- 7600 LOSS OF COMMUNICATIONS
- 7700 EMERGENCY

CHALLENGE TRACKER:

0	1	5	6	7	9	A	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	Q	R	S	T	U	W	Y	Z

Every time you work a new station this month, mark off the lowest box under each letter of the call to track your progress and see what letters you still need. You can download a printable version of this month's tracker at: http://naqcc.info/challenge_tracker.pdf

 Entering the Challenges earns you participation points so you're eligible for the best prizes in the annual anniversary drawings.

SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY

The easiest way is to use the great tool hosted by Robby WB5RVZ. Create an account, choose this month's challenge, and paste in all the eligible calls you worked. It will apply the letters, tell you what you're missing, and fill out the email for you. <http://naqcc.wb5rvz.org>

If you want to do it by hand, or got some but not all of the words and want to pick up a participation point, send an email to charlie.wilber@gmail.com

Subject: (your call) NAQCC (month year) Challenge

Body: your call:
word1 - call1 call2 call3
word2 - call1 call2 call3

RULES:

Just make ALL the words from calls of stations you work subject to the General Challenge Rules. (Any spaces in the phrases should be ignored. For example the challenge phrase "INVERTED V ANTENNA" should be treated as if it is the single word "INVERTEDVANTENNA.")

Each letter in a callsign you work during the month can be used twice to complete the challenge words. Complete rules, information, and a helpful tutorial on how to organize your work for an alphabet challenge along with detailed general rules and submission instructions can be found at http://naqcc.info/challenges_rules.html

NEXT MONTH'S CHALLENGE

Next month's Zodiac Challenge is in your stars.

<http://naqcc.info/challenges/challenges202310.html>

LAST MONTH'S CHALLENGES

The deadline for submissions for the Big Ben letter challenge is still a few days away. You can see what has been submitted so far at <http://www.naqcc.info/challenges/challenges202308.html> and final results will be posted on that page shortly after the 10th of the month.

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://naqcc.info/challenges_schedule.html.

Number of Challenges	Members
25+	N4OW AC2C DK1VD KU4A N1JI K9OSC KA5PVB KD0V KC5F WT4U W2ITT WY3H AB9BZ NN9K KI4IO WY7N KI8I VE3HUR ND9M N1LU NN3E KD2MX W1BLU
50+	WA2FBN W3IQ AK3X VE3FUJ KJ4R VE3DQN AH6AX NF1U WB4OMM G3JFS N9SE KB1M
75+	PA9CW PA0XAW WI5H
100+	K1IEE
125+	K1YAN
150+	N8XMS W2JEK K3WWP

CHALLENGE SOAPBOX SAMPLER

AK3X - Fun challenge as usual. Needed one more H to complete it and my friend HA8RM came to the rescue. Took longer than usual because I was in the hospital for a week. Missed the August sprint but at least did the challenge. 72 to all, Peter

N8XMS - It took me almost the entire month to finish this one up. But that just means that the fun lasted longer!

N2TNN - My first challenge and it was a challenge. Next month should be better.

KO4WFP - This was a difficult challenge, partially because all of that was going on in my life that limited my radio time but also because the letter "H" proved elusive until near the end. However, I enjoyed the challenge and hope to participate again in the near future. Thanks!

VE3DQN - Always a fun Challenge. Thanks to all who support this NAQCC activity.



NAQCC AWARDS

FEATURED AWARDS:

QSO-A-DAY

This award, which is renewed annually, is designed to encourage hams to spend more time on the CW bands thus increasing the CW presence there which is so important in this day and age. The award was initially suggested by K4UK in a QSO with K3WWP late in 2004. It is based on K3WWP's 'streak' of having made (and continuing to make) at least one QRP/CW QSO each day since August 5, 1994.

Note the new additional DX endorsement.

TIME FRAME FOR QUALIFYING QSO's:

January 1, 0000Z through December 31, 2400Z of the current year. The award starts over again each year.

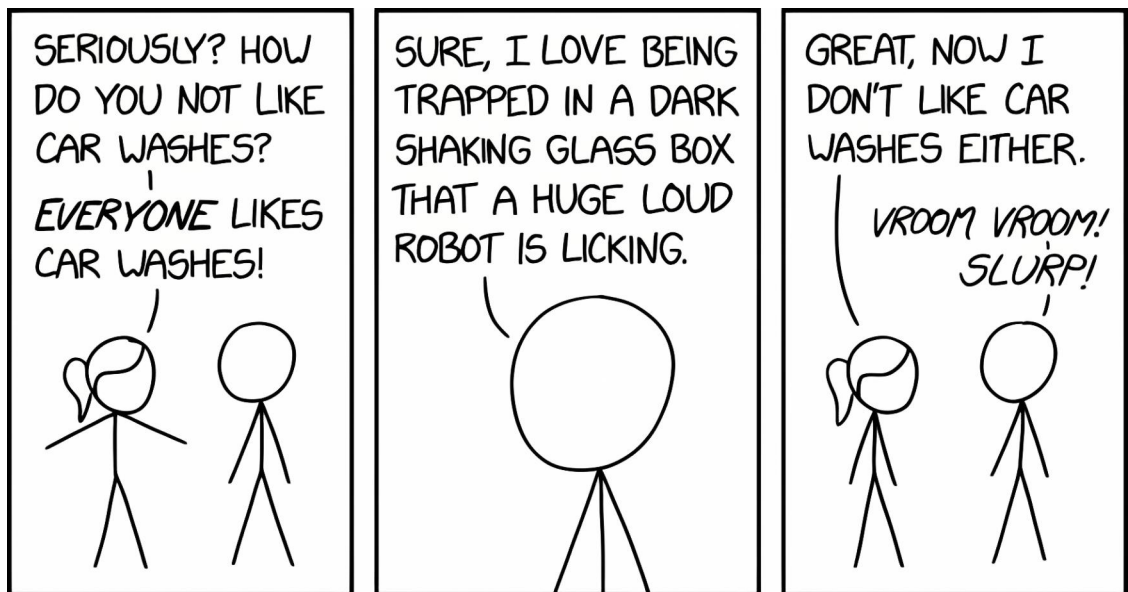
BASIC AWARD PREMISE:

Make at least one QSO per day.

CATEGORIES:

1. FULL YEAR - Make at least one QSO on each of the 365 (366) days during the calendar year.
2. PARTIAL YEAR - Make at least one QSO on each day of the following number of calendar months in the calendar year:
 - 2A. 11 MONTHS
 - 2B. 10 MONTHS
 - 2C. 9 MONTHS
 - 2D. 8 MONTHS
 - 2E. 7 MONTHS
 - 2F. 6 MONTHS
- 3A. 30 DAYS - Make at least 1 QSO on each day of a consecutive 30 day period during the year. The 30 days can span months.

You may already be a winner! NAQCC has an extensive list of awards. Check your log to see if you're close, or just need to submit. Complete details can be found at <http://naqcc.info/awards.html>.



A HIGH-ELEVATION YAGI MYSTERY SOLVED WITH A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

BY GLENN N4MJ #6587

My Hy-Gain TH11-DX yagi was put up about two years ago—fall of 2021. It performed in outstanding fashion until this past spring when the winds were quite fierce.

CONFUSING SWR CLUES

After the winds I noticed a sudden and erratic change in the S.W.R. Sometimes the S.W.R. was 3.4:1, sometimes 1.2:1. Sometimes the S.W.R. would change after rotating the antenna, sometimes it would change during/after a rain shower.

This S.W.R. change affects the 20m, 17m, 15m, and 12m, and 10m bands.

The characteristics of the antenna are intact, that is the forward directivity functions as it should. Side and rear rejection also function as expected.

Some things are easier to see from up close and above than 60' below

A couple of things happen that I cannot explain:

1. When using low power (5w) the S.W.R. shows 1:1, or thereabouts.
2. As power is increased the S.W.R. begins increasing.

While attempting to determine the problem several possibilities were considered:

1. Bad connection to the balun input
2. Bad connection at the balun output
3. Failed trap
4. Defective or chafed coax



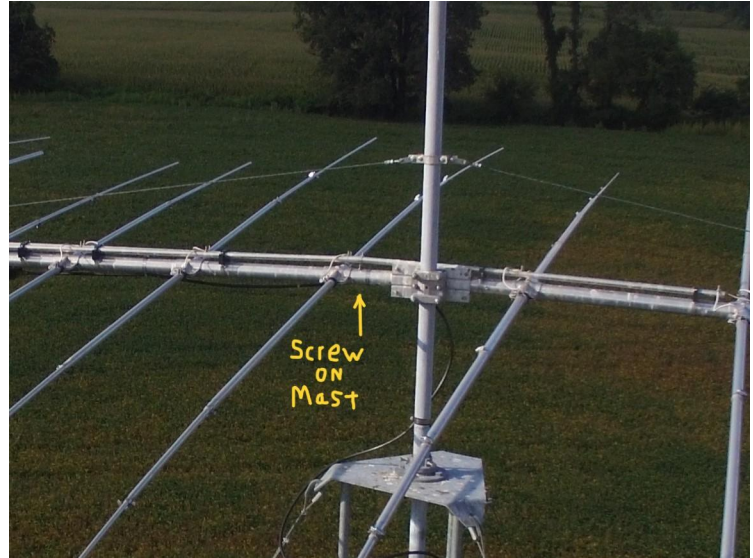
TAKING TO THE SKY

As fall/winter is rapidly approaching I am getting somewhat desperate to find the issue and get it repaired.

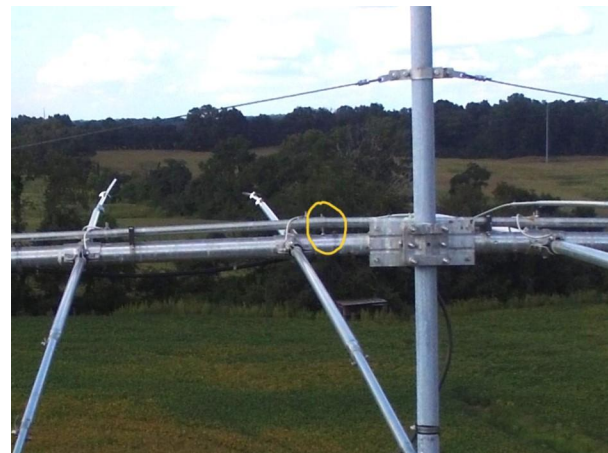
I flew my drone up over the TH11-DX and took a photo looking down. I wasn't happy with that photo so I flew it up again and took a few photos at different angles.

Upon visual scrutiny I saw the culprit. A nut has come off a screw that holds two pieces of the phasing/feedline together. The screw has dropped down onto the mast—hence the high S.W.R.

I had tried finding the problem using a high powered telescope, just didn't work out. When I zoomed in, the slightest vibration made it impossible to identify the problem.



A screw on the mast—Looking at the side of the mast and phase lines. Here you can see the screw above the yellow arrow.



Screw circled—A different angle above the antenna shows the phase lines and the hole the screw and nut fell out of.



THE FIX

The cure—use a jam nut or a nylon lock nut and/or Lock Tight on potential screws/bolts to prevent future events.

The ol' drone worked great.

As of this writing I await a climber.

Caveat—any time a complex antenna is put in the air use Lock Tight, jam nuts, and/or nylon lock nuts to prevent events like this one.

NAQCC SPRINTS

SEPTEMBER SPRINT

Our regular Sprint this month will be on Thursday, September 21st at 0030-0230Z. That's the evening of Wednesday, September 20th in North America. Complete information at <http://naqcc.info/sprint/sprint202309.html>.

RULES

Complete sprint rules and instructions on how to submit your log can be found at http://naqcc.info/sprint_rules.html. On that page you will also find information about the different computer loggers that are supported for our sprints. The membership data files for those supported loggers can be downloaded at <http://naqcc.info/contests.html>. **Please be sure to always get the latest membership data for your logger about a day before the Sprint.** A complete schedule for our upcoming sprints can be found at http://naqcc.info/sprint_sked.html.

AUGUST SPRINT RESULTS:

Complete Sprint results, including all of the soapbox comments, can be found at <http://www.naqcc.info/sprint/sprint202308.html>. High scores can be seen in the tables on the next page.

We would especially like to welcome our first-time regular sprint loggers and hope that they will return to participate often: VA2NW

August Sprint				
	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	85	79	217	4/17
Participants	117	107	269	2/13
Total QSOs	958	1,055	3,154	4/17
Hour 1 QSOs	564	666	1,704	4/17
Hour 2 QSOs	394	389	1,450	4/17
20m QSOs	179	266	1,232	8/13
40m QSOs	735	767	2,203	4/17
80m QSOs	44	22	1,417	2/13
Avg QSOs/Station	11.3	13.4	19.3	9/11

SWA STRAIGHT KEY CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	AC1KV	K1MZM	N1BRI
W2	KA2KGP	W2SH	AA2VG
W3	KC3MIO	KD3CA	KE3V N3CAA (TIE)
W4	KC5F	N2TNN	W4NLT
W5	KA6J	N5GW	KE5YUM
W6	K6GPB	-	-
W7	K9PM	KJ7KDB	-
W8	W8GG	-	-
W9	K9NUD	WB9HFK	N8HWW
W0	N0TA	W1TM	AA5LH
Canada	VE3IIM	VA3KRJ	-
DX	-	-	-

SWA BUG CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	-	-	-
W2	N2DGQ	-	-
W3	K3RLL	NN3E	-
W4	-	-	-
W5	-	-	-
W6	-	-	-
W7	N7QR	-	-
W8	K8NGW	KI8FV	-
W9	N9OL	KD9EBS	-
W0	KD0V	-	-
Canada	VE3IDS	VE3HUR	VA2NW
DX	-	-	-

SWA KEYER/KEYBOARD CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KB1M	-	-
W2	WY7N	WA1GWH	N2ESE
W3	-	-	-
W4	N4MJ	K4KBL	KB4VU
W5	-	-	-
W6	-	-	-
W7	KI7LW	-	-
W8	WA8SAN WI8J (TIE)	-	WB8ENE NF8M (TIE)
W9	KY0Q	K9EYT	N9EEE
W0	KC2MJT	-	-
Canada	VE3DQN	VE3SIF	VE6VIC
DX	-	-	-

GAIN CATEGORY			
KEY	1st	2nd	3rd
SK	-	-	-
BUG	-	-	-
K/K	NQ2W	K3WWP KC2EGL (TIE)	-

FIRST-TIME ENTRANT HIGH SCORE			
Key Type	1st	2nd	3rd
K	-	-	-
BUG	VA2NW	-	-
K/K	-	-	-

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+	N7QR KF7WNS KC7DM K4KBL VE3GNU WD4OHD KB0ETU K2YGM AA7CU K1IX AA5LH N8QY WY3H N8HWV K6CSL W5UAA KE9DR AB8FJ NN9K KC2MJT KC2EGL WK6L K2HT VE3HUR W4HH K4ORD K5GQ N1JI KC3RN KD9EBS KD0DK KB4QQJ KB9ILT WA2NYY K3JZD VA3NU WT4U AB9BZ
75+	KD3CA K9EYT KQ1P K4NVJ KB1M WA1GWH VE3DQN WB9HFK WB4OMM VE3FUJ K9OSC N2CN WA2FBN WD0K N8BB WB1GYZ NQ2W K6MGO NF5U WI5H AA0W NN0SS KJ4R N8APO
100+	KL7IEE AK3X W4DUK N5GW NA4O KN1H AA9L NO2D KA9FQG WB8ENE N4MJ KD2MX N8LA
125+	N2ESE KE5YUM WX4RM WA8SAN WG8Y N4FI N0TA K4KRW
150+	K3RLL NF8M K4BAI W9CC N8XMS K2CWM KU4A K4JPN KD0V
175+	W2SH W8GG
200+	K3WWP KA2KGP W2JEK

SPRINT SOAPBOX SAMPLER

VA2NW - My first NAQCC sprint!

K9PM - Murphy struck! As the Sprint began we were in the middle of a severe thunder/hail storm. My 133' end fed showed an infinite SWR. I grabbed my Begali Blade straight key, my phone and a headset, and made a beeline out the door to the car in pouring rain. I dialed down the power to 5W on my FT-891, hooked up the key and headset, went to 20m, tuned the antenna and started listening for "CQ NA." It was a challenge to work stations on a 6-ft long mobile antenna running QRP but I managed to make 6 QSOs!

KA8HDE - First sprint in a couple of years. Glad to be back on the air after finally getting an antenna back up. Even had a nice QSO with a non-member. 72 de chuck

AA5LH - It was a good night on 20M. Not so much on 40M, with the Static Crashes. Thanks everyone for the Q's. Enjoy the rest of your summer. Take care. 73/72

K9EYT - Tnx for the Q almost missed out I was testing out a 40 yr old trap dipole and heard the CQ NA still the ant works good and the band sounded OK on 40 was it the band or the cleaned up contacts on the ant?? that Hour was fun better then a week on FT8 HI HI next time 72

N3CAA - Perfect WX for operating in the backyard this evening. Very little heard on 20m, but better on 40m despite S5 QRN. Called CQ a few times with no takers, so all contacts were S&P. Thanks for the QSOs and looking forward to next month!



NAQCC NETS

We have a number of nets (QRS = slow speed, QRQ = higher speed) designed to help people build up their CW operating skills. Complete information about these nets can be found at http://naqcc.info/cw_nets.html. Questions should be directed to Net Manager Mark, W8EWH.

NAQCC Net Schedule				
Net	Local Time	UTC	Freq +/-	Primary NCS
East Texas QRS Net (ETN)	Monday 7pm CDT	Tuesday 0000 Z	7067 kHz Summer 3566 kHz Winter <i>new frequency</i>	Allen KA5TJS (TX)
Midwest QRS Net (MWN)	Monday 7:30 CDT	Tuesday 0030 Z	7031 kHz	Bob W0CC (KS)
Pacific Northwest 80m QRS Net (PNW80)	Thursday 7 PM PDT	Friday 0200 Z	3556.5 kHz	Stewart KE7LKW (WA)
Wyoming Daily QRS 80 Meter Net (WY80)	Off the air			Steve KE7UUJ (WY)

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 MIDWEST QRS NET (MWN)

Monday evenings 7:30 PM CDT, which is Tuesday 0030 UTC, on 7031 kHz +/-
Main NCS - Bob W0CC (Kansas) — Assisted by Dave AB9BZ

Aug 07 – No Net

Aug 14 – QNI (1) W0CC (The band was quiet. Maybe next week!)

Aug 21 – QNI (3) W0CC, WB7GR, KI4MZC

Despite the QRN, Greg 10 miles outside of Cheyenne, WY and Don in Cleveland, GA came through well, probably because they are both GREAT Operators!

Aug 28 – No Net

NAQCC PACIFIC NORTHWEST QRS 80 METER NET (PNW80)

Thursday evenings 7 PM PDT, which is Friday 0200 UTC on 3556.5 kHz +/-
Main NCS - Stewart KE7LKW (Washington State)

Aug 04 – QNI (8) NCS KE7LKW, WB4SPB, KI7SJE, WB7WHG, N7TB, N0DA/p, NB6M, AD7BP

Aug 11 – QNI (7) NCS KE7LKW, WB4SPB, WB7WHG, N7TB, KB7DYP, W7RPK AD7BP

Aug 18 – QNI (5) NCS KE7LKW, KI7SJE, KB7DYP, W7RPK, K7JUV

Aug 25 – QNI (5) NCS K7JUV, WB4SPB, KB7DYP, KE7LKW/P, AB7BP

MAY 29 – NAQCC WYOMING DAILY QRS 80 METER NET (WY80)

Currently off the air.

Main NCS - Steve KE7UUJ (Wyoming)

NAQCC EAST TEXAS QRS NET (ETN)

Monday evenings 7PM CDT, which is Tuesday 0000 UTC,
on 7067 kHz +/- (Summer) or 3566 kHz +/- (Winter) *new frequency*
Main NCS - Allen KA5TJS (Texas)

Aug 01 – No net tonight.

104 deg. and my window AC unit don't work that good. Hope for cooler WX soon.

Aug 08 – No net again today.

Temp was 102 inside and outside the shack in the garage. Window AC ain't that good! May try turning it one 2 hours before the net time next week as the forecast is for this heat to continue thru August maybe into September.

Aug 15 – QNI (2) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YGA

Great signal last night from AR. Andy was 599. Terry YUM could not get his antenna to tune last night so could not check in. Digital QRM again about 23 min after. Temperature still hot 105 yesterday but managed to get the shack cool enough for a net.

Aug 22 – No net tonight.

The temp in the shack in the garage was 105 deg. and did not try to cool it down with the window unit! Be glade when this heat wave goes away. Making life pretty miserable in ETX.

Aug 29 – QNI (3) NCS KA5TJS, KE5YGA, WI5H

Good signals tonight. Andy was 599 and Mike was 589. Great to hear Mike again. YUM has antenna problems and N4NN had thunderstorms in GA. More Digi QRM tonight about 7:25pm. Getting consistent. Think we will slide up to 7.067 and see if it follows us!



NAQCC CHAPTERS

The North American QRP CW Club currently has seven local chapters - Western Pennsylvania, West Florida, Illowa, Downeast Maine, Long Island, Florida, and Green Swamp WCF—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 John KK4ITX.

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 Steve, 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 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 Please contact call sign trustee, Club President John KK4ITX, to schedule the use of N3AQC.

NAQCC LONG ISLAND CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Long Island Chapter unless otherwise credited.

Questions and comments should go to Howard, WB2UZE.

RECAP OUTING TO BELMONT LAKE STATE PARK K2013 8-3-23

For a last-minute outing the QSO volume wound up to be good for a somewhat small turnout and here is who attended:

Ron KC2PSA and **Drew N2AKJ**: Set up a brand new FT891 and a Chelegance MC750 vertical antenna with radials. They got as far as Russia which was a first for Ron who has been doing a lot of portable work lately.



Ed N2GSL: Also had an FT891 and his very efficient EFHW. Ed worked a lot of DX in Europe and also down to Uruguay on 15m



Owen KD2VXW: Had an MFJ 9030 which is only 30m and an EF Triband antenna. Owen worked around the US up to about 1000m so not a bad outcome

The Chelegance MC750 vertical antenna with radials set up by **Ron KC2PSA** and **Drew N2AKJ** worked all the way to Russia and all over the EU



Conditions for DX were generally good and we worked many EU stations on the first call. I sat with everybody and made the rounds which I like to do.

Regards
Howard WB2UZE

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 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/967110089994401/>.

EAGLE POINT PARK - AUG 19, 2023

Had a great time this last Saturday, Aug 19, at Eagle Point Park in NPR with SARC members.

I had my IC705 and 20m endfed wire. Frank did excellent job getting it up, practice makes perfect, hi.

The hot dogs were great.

Had a few visitors, **Dan AB4AN** with **Bill N7CGC**, the WCF Vice Director. Also **Chuck KA4CEM** who just got his Tech and now see he has ordered a G90 QRP rig.

LOG: **Ron N9EE**, IC705 with EleCraft Tuner and 20m End Fed Wire with a 49:1 balun.



TIME	CALL	RST	FREQ	COMMENT
1042	N9ZWL	569/429	14.0606	Dave, IL
1050	KG4BIG	559/559	14.063	Ron, KY
1102	KB9UYC	559/559	14.065	IN
1158	NM8GS	589/579	14.0535	Stan, MI ILLW
1217	W4TRA	579/449	14.053	POTA
1227	K3S	589/579	21.036	IN

Bands were not so good. The hot dogs were good, all had a good time.



ERNIE WAVER YOUTH PARK - AUGUST 26, 2023

Had a great time Saturday, Aug 26, at Ernie Waver Youth Park with the Hernando Co ARA club after our Saturday breakfast.

Ron N9EE had his IC705 and 20m End Fed Wire with 20 ft portable flag pole holding up the high end. Goes up in about 5 minutes, great for a park event.

Doug N8QY with his G90, 40m End Fed Wire high end in a tall tree.

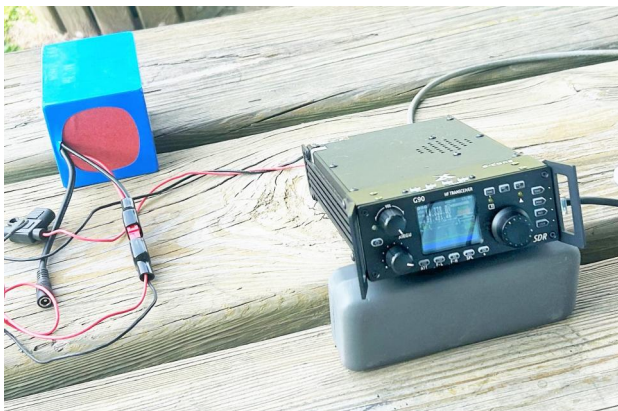
LOG: Ron N9EE, IC705 with EleCraft Tuner and 20m End Fed Wire with 49:1 balun.

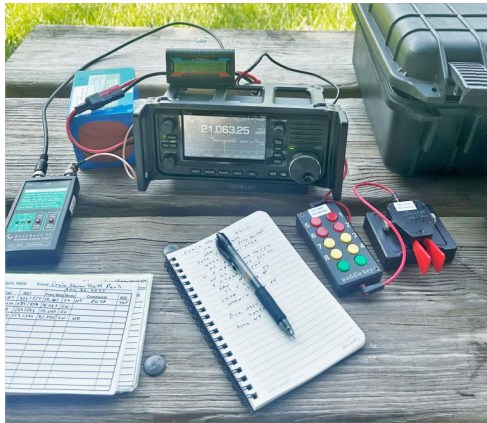


TIME	CALL	RST	FREQ	COMMENT
0954	AC4BT	339/559	14.061	NY, POTA
1001	W0MM	589/559	14.063	TX
1004	K9ABR	569/599	14.066	IL
1012	W1AW/0	559/599	21.0475	ND
1113	W2PE	599/599	14.051	KS, KSQSOP
1115	N0P	599/599	14.052	KS, KSQSOP
1118	K0P	599/599	14.041	KS, KSQSOP, BUT
1119	W0K	599/599	14.040	KS, KSQSOP, LSA
1125	K0Y	599/599	14.036	KS, KSQSOP, SHA
1128	W0O	599/599	14.035	KS, KSQSOP, JOE/MIA
1129	N0L	599/599	14.033	KS, KSQSOP, LEA
1131	N0D	599/599	14.0306	KS, KSQSOP, SHA
1135	N0UM	599/599	14.028	KS, KSQSOP, SHA
1144	W0Y	599/599	14.045	KS, KSQSOP, REW
1146	AA5XX	599/599	14.0455	NC, POTA
1148	KS0KS	599/599	14.049	KS, KSQSOP, JOH
1150	W8GM	579/559	14.0505	POTA
1153	N5QLZ	599/599	14.055	Red, MS, SK 25227T



Obviously the Kansas QSO Party offered some good QSOs, Lots of 1x1 calls. Sun was getting high in the sky so at 12 noon packed up.





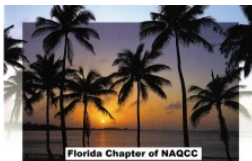
NAQCC DOWNEAST MAINE CHAPTER



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.

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Florida Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should go to Nikki, KM4SBQ.

NAQCC ILLOWA CHAPTER



Items in this section are from the Illowa Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should go to Tim, N9BIL.

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

NAQCC GREEN SWAMP WCF



Items in this section are from the Green Swamp WCF Chapter unless otherwise credited. Questions and comments should go to Gary N3OS.

The chapter's website is <https://www.zaarc.org>.

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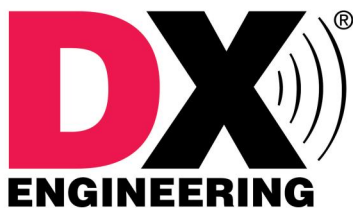

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NAQCC CLUB INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Amateur radio has something for everyone. For a growing number of folks, the challenge of "doing the most with the least" makes QRP (and QRPp) CW operating the greatest thrill available in amateur radio. The North American QRP CW Club Inc. exists to promote and pursue designing, information sharing, building, and operation of low power, Morse Code enabled Amateur Radio (FCC Part 97) equipment with simple wire antennas for both emergency and personal communications purposes, an exciting facet of the hobby.

The NAQCC provides numerous opportunities for hams to operate in QRP/CW activities. For contest types we have a popular monthly 2-hour sprint that runs at relatively low CW speeds and at a fairly relaxed pace to increase code skills and experiment with different antennas. Three special sprints also take place during the year for 160-meter and QRPp (less than 1W of power) 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, sharing information on low power Morse operations. 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 these web pages and we are more than willing to answer any questions about QRP, CW, and simple wire antennas 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.

REPRINT POLICY

Unless otherwise stated in the article, local clubs and other ham radio organizations are free to reprint featured articles from this newsletter, provided appropriate credit is given to the North American QRP CW Club and the author of the article. If at all possible a link to the club website at <http://www.naqcc.info/> should be included.

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NAQCC CW Nets	Mark W8EWH	mark.yergin@gmail.com

NOTE: These email address are not automatic links.
They are given here in graphic form to avoid harvesting by spambots.

The North American QRP CW Club Inc., is organized exclusively for scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code to advance, promote, and pursue designing, information sharing, building, and operation of low power, Morse Code enabled Amateur Radio (FCC Part 97) equipment with simple wire antennas for both emergency and personal communications purposes. No dues or membership fees - open to any licensed radio amateur or shortwave listener (SWL) worldwide with interest in CW/QRP operation. Encouraging the use of CW and helping all hams increase CW speed and proficiency is a top club priority. Club activities are dedicated to QRP/QRPp operation, using CW and emphasize using simple wire antennas.

The North American QRP CW Club was founded in 2004 by WY3H and K3WWP and now has over 9500 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 be sent to:

Club President John Leahy KK4ITX
3513 Aquamarine Way
Zephyrhills, FL 33540 USA

