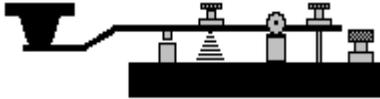


NAQCC NEWS



ISSUE 189 MARCH 2014



KEY CLICKS

IN THIS ISSUE:

<i>Key Clicks</i>	1
<i>A Tribute to WZ8C</i>	3
<i>NAQCC Sprints</i>	5
<i>NAQCC Challenges</i>	7
<i>NAQCC Awards</i>	8
<i>Member Spotlight</i>	9
<i>Ham Quips</i>	10
<i>Chapter News</i>	11
<i>QRS Nets</i>	20
<i>CW Assistance Project</i>	22
<i>Member Submissions</i>	23
<i>Club Information</i>	30

- ◆ **N#A OPERATORS NEEDED.** Operators are needed for our special event N#A callsigns during our 10th anniversary celebration October 13-19. It's a lot of fun and it's simple to do. All that's required is to spend some time putting the N#A callsign on the air and to send in a log report once the operation is completed. Your actual operating time and frequencies are completely up to you and the only stipulation is that everything is done with CW and QRP. (You can see more details in the "Sneak Preview" article in the February newsletter.) If you would like to be an N#A operator please send an email to me with you callsign and US call district. If you are interested in using the special event call during the sprint that week indicate that as well (first come, first served). Additional instructions will be given when we get closer to the time. You can find my email address on the last page of this newsletter. - Paul, N8XMS

- ◆ **NEW PRIZE DRAWING RULE REMINDER.** Please remember that a new participation requirement rule is now in effect for the October Anniversary Sprint prize drawing. You can read the details in the "Sneak Preview" article in the February newsletter. Basically, to be eligible to win one of the great prizes that will be offered, you must have participated in at least 4 sprints and 3 monthly challenges by the time of the October celebration. So check out the sprint and challenge schedules at <http://naqcc.info/contests.html> and <http://naqcc.info/challenges.html> and have some fun as you look forward to the fall celebration!

- ◆ **INTERESTING SPRINT STATISTICS.** Our record keeper "par excellence", VP John, K3WWP, has compiled some interesting participation statistics from our 2013 sprints.

US Call District	# Of Members	Avg Participants Per Sprint	% of Members Participating In Sprint
1	366	9.2	2.5%
2	410	15.6	3.8%
3	425	9.3	2.2%
4	1324	26.3	2.0%
5	688	17.3	2.5%
6	428	5.1	1.2%
7	648	9.4	1.5%
8	524	12.9	2.5%
9	456	9.0	2.0%
0	568	11.3	2.0%

Although the 2nd district has the highest per capita participation, there is really nothing to brag about here! I know that there are a lot of people, *myself included*, that are just not the contesting type. But I think that our sprints are different. They are shorter and much more relaxed than the typical contest, and the bonus that is given for using a straight key makes your CW speed a non-issue. I know that I will never be able to compete against the likes of W3NP and N8IUP (take a look at their amazing 8th district scores in just about any of our sprints), and that's OK. I only compete against myself and I have a lot of fun doing that. As a matter of fact, if you take a look at the soapbox comments from our sprints you will see that a common theme is "FUN" - even from the members who only make a couple of contacts! So let me encourage all of you to give our sprints a try. I know that you will have fun and it's even possible that they will "grow" you to the point where you will give a bigger contest a try someday!

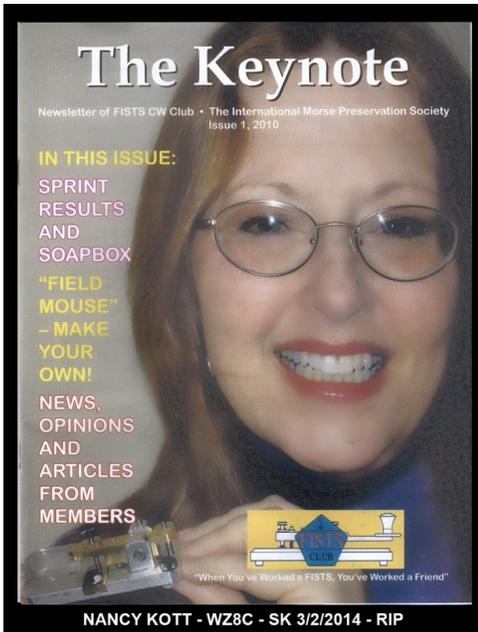
- ◆ **I'M BACK.** I'm now back from my two-week vacation in beautiful Arizona so I can once again respond to any of your NAQCC questions and concerns. (My email address is on the last page of this newsletter.) My wife and I had a great time and we really packed our days full with things like desert trail hikes, scenic drives, and visits to historical sites. In between I even managed to do a little portable operating and you can see a short report about that in the *Member Submissions* section. Let me say that I have a new sympathy for our members living in the southwest. Sure their weather is a lot better than mine but they don't have very many trees, and using cacti to hang their SWA's (simple wire antenna) must be a little tough! - 73, Paul, N8XMS

- ◆ **THANK YOU FOR THE DONATIONS!** A big "THANK YOU" goes out everyone who has made recent donations to the NAQCC treasury. If others would like to help out with a donation there are two ways that you can do it. The first way is to use PayPal to electronically send your contribution to Paul142857@gmail.com . To avoid any additional fees be sure to check the box that says "*I'm sending money to family or friends.*" Also please add a note indicating that this is an NAQCC donation. The second way to make a donation is to mail a check or money order made out to Paul Huff (*not NAQCC!*) at 9928 Eckles, Livonia, MI 48150. Assuming that we have your correct email address on file your contribution will be acknowledged by email with a carbon copy sent to a second club officer as a "check and balance."



A TRIBUTE TO WZ8C, BY JOHN SHANNON - K3WWP

On March 2, 2014 the CW world lost one of its major proponents when Nancy Kott, WZ8C, leader of the North American branch of the world's premiere CW Preservation Club, FISTS, passed away at age 58. A whole (large) book could be written about her dedication to keeping CW alive as well as other aspects of her life - and I hope that book will be written to honor this remarkable lady. I certainly would be one of the first to purchase such a book.



What I have to say here would only be a small chapter in such a book, but it needs to be said. I want to tell the story of the role she had in helping to make the NAQCC what it is today. From the very beginning of the NAQCC until the present, the two clubs have never had any conflicts or differences because of the wonderful and generous character of Nancy.

First a little background. I joined FISTS in the mid-1990s as # 2002. Not too long after that, Nancy found out about my interest in QRP and asked me if I would be interested in writing a QRP column for the FISTS magazine Keynote. I thought about it briefly and agreed to do so. My first column appeared in issue # 9 for 1996.

Fast forward now to 2004. When Tom and I formed the NAQCC, I somewhat timidly asked Nancy if it would be OK with her and FISTS if I mentioned our new club in one of my QRP columns. I told her we had no intention of competing with FISTS in any way. I told her our club was dedicated solely to the QRP and simple antennas aspect of CW. Her response was magnanimous and she whole-heartedly said it would be fine. I said I would write something for her approval. I did, and the article appeared in issue # 8 for 2004. As soon as that Keynote reached the FISTS membership, applications to join the NAQCC increased dramatically and on January 31, 2005 just a couple months after the article we signed up member # 720. We owe Nancy a great deal of thanks for her help in getting ourselves firmly established.

Over the following years, Nancy often asked me how the NAQCC was coming along, and always encouraged me to mention the club in my column whenever I wished. Just as one example, in 2007 for issue # 9/10 I provided a history of the NAQCC to that time.

Once again timidly (as one does when they approach someone they admire and respect as I did Nancy) I asked her if she would consider offering a free one year FISTS membership or renewal as a prize for the NAQCC member who participated in the most NAQCC sprints and challenges during the year. With no hesitation at all, she agreed to do so, and has done so since 2007.

To close this brief tribute to a wonderful lady, I want to add that I will miss you very much. Although I regret we never met in person, we had extensive communications via email and had 8 contacts on the ham bands. I feel I can say we became good friends as we both had similar ideas of the best ways to promote CW. RIP Nancy.

Now the subject turns to the best way the NAQCC as a whole can express their thanks to Nancy and sympathy to her remaining family. Please check the FISTS web site to see the family's wishes for sympathy

(Continued on page 4)

cards and other relative info. As for the thanks, I feel the best way to say thanks and honor Nancy's memory is to do whatever we can to help FISTS to continue as she would want it. I would suggest that if you are not a FISTS member that you join this wonderful club. If you are a member, continue to renew your membership and participate in all of the FISTS activities. Again see the FISTS web site for details during this time of transition. I'm sure it will bring a huge smile to Nancy similar to the one pictured above from a Keynote magazine cover as she looks down to see 'her' club continue and grow.

(Footnote): The FISTS web site is at <http://www.fists.org/>. The referenced Keynote columns can be found at http://home.windstream.net/johnshan/cw_ss_column.html.



NAQCC SPRINTS

CURRENT MONTH SPRINT: Our next sprint is scheduled for March 20, 0030-0213 Z. That’s the evening of the 19th here in North America. (Remember to watch out for your local daylight savings time changes.) *Remember that there is now a sprint participation requirement for eligibility in the anniversary prize drawing in October. See the February newsletter for details about that.*

Please remember to strive for that perfectly formatted “SILVER LOG” submission. It really helps our log processing. There will be a prize at the end of the year for the most SILVER logs.

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

LAST MONTH SPRINT RESULTS: This was our 112th sprint and we bounced back from a little dip in January to once again break the 100-log level with 111 submitted logs. Of those 111 logs, 95 of them were perfectly formatted Silver logs. (45 members have submitted Silver logs for both sprints so far this year.)

Congratulations to the winners and a big “THANK YOU” to all of the participants who submitted a log. Every time that you do so you are casting your vote for CW and QRP!

We would especially like to welcome our first-time loggers: KI6FCT N1JI K1IX AI4UN N9EGT VE3LZ. We trust that you had a fun time and hope that you will continue to participate and submit your results.

Complete results including all of the soapbox comments can be seen at <http://naqcc.info/sprint201402.html> . Result summaries are shown in the tables on the following page.

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

Number of Sprints	Members
50+	N8QY K1IEE WA2JSG WB8ENE AA9L VE3FUJ KD0V KB3AAG WY3H N4FI K3RLL NF8M KU4A K4JPN N8XMS NU7T
75+	WB8LZG K4BAI KD2MX K4NVJ W2SH W9CC W2JEK
100+	KA2KGP K3WWP
125+	

CERTIFICATES			
SWA CATEGORY			
Division	1st	2nd	3rd
W1	KN1H		
W2	AA2VG	K2YGM	
W3	K3WWP		
W4	K4BAI	WG8Y	WX4RM
W5	N5GW		
W6	K6MGO		
W7	WD7Y		
W8	W3NP	N8IUP	
W9	AA9L		
W0	K9OSC	KI0I	
VE	VE2TH		
DX	C6AKQ		
KEY CATEGORIES			
Straight Key (x2)	K9OSC		
Bug (x1.5)	AA9L		
Keyer (x1)	C6AKQ		
OTHER CATEGORIES			
Gain	NQ2W		
First-Time Logger High Scorer	KI6FCT		
Prize Drawing	N4MJ		

	Current Month	Previous Month	All-Time Record	Record Date
Logs	111	97	194	2/13
Participants	162	145	269	2/13
Total QSOs	1868	1148	2804	2/13
Hour 1 QSOs	990	641	1468	2/13
Hour 2 QSOs	878	507	1334	2/13
20m QSOs	317	2	1232	8/13
40m QSOs	948	367	1534	4/12
80m QSOs	603	779	1417	2/13
Avg QSOs / Station	16.8	11.8	19.3	9/11



NAQCC CHALLENGES

CURRENT MONTH CHALLENGE: The challenge for March is a “Block Party” and it is certainly not too late to join in on the fun. The basic idea is to simply enjoy some great non-sprint QRP/CW QSOs with fellow members of the NAQCC. You can find complete details about the sprint at <http://naqcc.info/challenges201403.html> . *Remember that there is now a challenge participation requirement for eligibility in the anniversary prize drawing in October. See the February newsletter for details about that.*

NEXT MONTH CHALLENGE: In April we will return to another one of our alphabet challenges. This time the words and phrases will all be ones associated with the famous ride of Paul Revere made on the night of April 18, 1775 warning the Patriots about the coming British forces. (He sure could have saved himself a lot of work with a little QRP rig and a piece of wire!) You can find the list of words at <http://naqcc.info/challenges201404.html> .

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

LAST MONTH CHALLENGE: The February challenge was an alphabet challenge to complete the names of various weather predicting rodents from around the country. 15 members participated in the challenge and 13 of them were able to complete it.

Complete results along with “soapbox” comments from participants can be seen at <http://naqcc.info/challenges201402.html> .



NAQCC AWARDS

We have an extensive list of awards that you can earn. Complete details can be found at <http://naqcc.info/awards.html>. Here are the certificates and endorsements earned this past month:

1000 MPW AWARD

0387 - WA8SAN	VK7GN	-	1,996	02/20/14	40m G5RV@25'
0386 - WA8SAN	VK3TDX	-	2,421	02/20/14	40m G5RV@25'
0385 - LZ1NIM	W3BGN	-	1,907	02/19/14	delta loop
0384 - LZ1NIM	W1UE	-	1,808	02/19/14	delta loop
0383 - KC0CCR	LW9EKA	-	1,135	02/16/14	160' longwire@22'
0382 - N5FSN	PY2NGN	-	1,368	02/13/14	G5RV@50'
0381 - N3CU	PI4CC	-	72,641	02/09/14	Center-fed Zepp@50'
0380 - WU1V	AH6V	-	1,002	02/07/14	Dipole@30'

KMPW 100 AWARD

0009 - WB2JNA 02/02/14



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Each month one of our members is randomly selected and asked to share their ham radio biography with all of us. Questions or comments should go to Paul, KD2MX, at kd2mx@arrl.net.

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

GENE WARREN, N5GW, #5353



I was first licensed in 1960 as a novice in the small town of Columbia, MS, at age 16, thanks to an Elmer who helped four of us high school students get a ticket. Then I upgraded to general with the call K5FSQ, now owned by the Fort Smith QRP Club. In 1972 while living in Dallas, I was able to pass the extra class exam. When the vanity calls first came out in 1977, I was able to get the call sign N5GW, because the manager of Texas Towers beat me to K5GW! Since 1975 my home has been Vicksburg, MS.

Homebrewing is one of my favorite pastimes. The first xcvr was a 40M W1FB design running one watt. I call it the "Kilomilliwatt". Other QRP homebrew rigs include the "Smurf" for 20M; another 40M job, the "Bandblaster"; a 17M rig, the "Work of Art" (reduced to "W. Art" and finally "Wart"). Finally the latest 40M receiver, the "Mere Ear" matches a one watt transmitter, the "Peanut". The shack cabinet is full of keyers, audio filters, SWR meters and other homebrew gadgets. The latest creation, iambic keyer paddles, uses old yard rake tines as the levers/springs. They work great!

Also the QRP sprints and contests are lots of fun. My regular QRP activity rig has been the K1 up until I got a KX3 for birthday this year. The vacation rig is the IC-7000. Only antenna up is a 40 foot high CFZ hanging between two big oak trees.

I'll be listening for all you QRPer's, 160-6 meters.



NAQCC CHAPTER NEWS

We currently have five chapters—Europe, Texas, Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Florida—but we would be very happy to expand on that list. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by NAQCC members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines from the NAQCC. They provide opportunities to have fun and to promote our parallel passions of QRP and CW. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area email Paul142857@gmail.com and information will be sent to you.

If your chapter is planning a portable operation activity and would like to have it promoted, send an email with the subject “NAQCC portable operation”, and with the exact wording of the announcement to kd2mx@arrl.net. Please be sure to submit a summary write-up of the activity, including pictures, to Paul142857@gmail.com for posting to this section of the newsletter.

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER:



Items in this section are from European Chapter President Matt, MW0MIE unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to matt@naqcc-eu.org. The European Chapter website is at <http://www.naqcc-eu.org/>.

The European Chapter has its own monthly challenges to compensate for the Atlantic Ocean. However all are welcome to participate, not just EU members, and we regularly receive challenge and sprint logs with trans-Atlantic QSOs. Please see the chapter web page for dates and details.

No additional report available.

=====

NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER:



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

NAQCC-FLORIDA - held their February Field Event at Buschman Park in Port Orange, Florida on February 21, 2014. Our erstwhile group convened around 9 AM under threatening skies but pleasant temperatures in the mid 70s.



In attendance were Wally KG4LAL #6278 , Art, WB4MNK #5274, Darryl AB8GU #6913, Neil KJ4CIA #6122, and Don K3RLL #1905. Steve WB4OMM #5913 stopped by to lend moral support on his way to work.

Buschman Park is comprised of 30 acres of mixed environment with the following amenities: a beautiful lake, 3/4 mile walkway around the lake, restrooms, a boardwalk into the lake, a nature trail and covered pavilion picnic (a.k.a. operating) tables.



Our field event stations spread around the small inland lake there in the park were comprised of Wally's FT-817, Art's KX1 and Don's KX3. We had a number of interested non-ham visitors literally from all over North America there walking around the lake but drawn in by that captivating sound of CW. That provided the opportunity to give a brief description of our hobby and our activity that day.

Propagation was fairly good resulting in good solid contacts around the country as well as The Netherlands, France and a near miss to Hungry.

Many thanks to those members who saw our Spots, our Yahoo Group announcement, listened for us and those whom we were fortunate to work. We now just hope for conditions and weather this good for our March field event. 72/73 de NAQCC-FL

=====

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER:

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

Not really a lot to mention about February. As told in my member news below, Mike KC2EGL and I got together twice. I won't repeat that here. Other than that, of course no outdoor activities because of the whole month being miserable as far as weather goes. We're looking forward to the better weather so we can start up our parkpeditions again and perhaps operate from the submarine Requin again. Hopefully this year Don K3RLL and Tom WB3FAE can join us on a subpedition. Both are looking forward to it. The Requin is supposed to put in some time in dry dock for overhaul this year so that may affect our plans.

Other plans call for Mike and I to do one of our 'tag team' contest efforts in April. We'll try the second weekend when there are at least five CW contests including the always active GA QSO Party and the Japanese JIDX contest. Hopefully Mike can get his first Japanese QSO in that one. Last year in the third weekend of April there were eight contests, and we made many 'tag team' contacts in seven of the eight

To close, just a brief note to congratulate and thank the new WV Chapter for being so active. We would love to see more chapters formed to join us in the delightful fun activities that can only be part of a chapter. It's wonderful to have personal fellowship with other like-minded hams in a geographical area. There are a lot of things that can be done including portable operations, kit building, DX chasing, multi-op contesting. The list could go on and on.

=====

NAQCC TEXAS CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from TX Chapter Director Ron, K5DUZ, unless otherwise credited. Questions or comments should go to webmaster7388@naqcctx.com. The TX Chapter website is at <http://www.naqcctx.com/>.

No report available.

=====

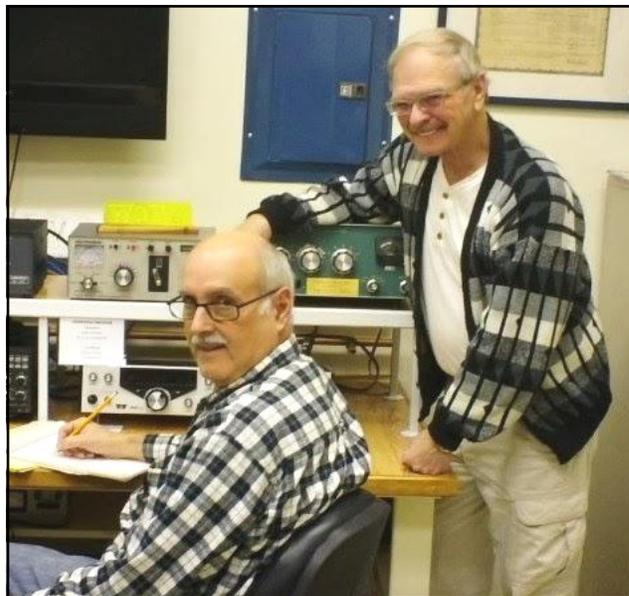
NAQCC WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER:



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



The West Virginia Chapter of the NAQCC club had a delightful day on Feb 8th at the Huntington Museum of Radio and Technology. We used the club call sign N3AQC on this Special Event. Joining me above is (N8ZYA) on left and Joe (WA8SIE) from Charleston. In the bottom pictures are Bill (KB8QLG) from Sissonsville, WV and Steven (KC4URI) from Mineral Wells, WV.



WA8SIE and KB8QLG

(Continued on page 16)

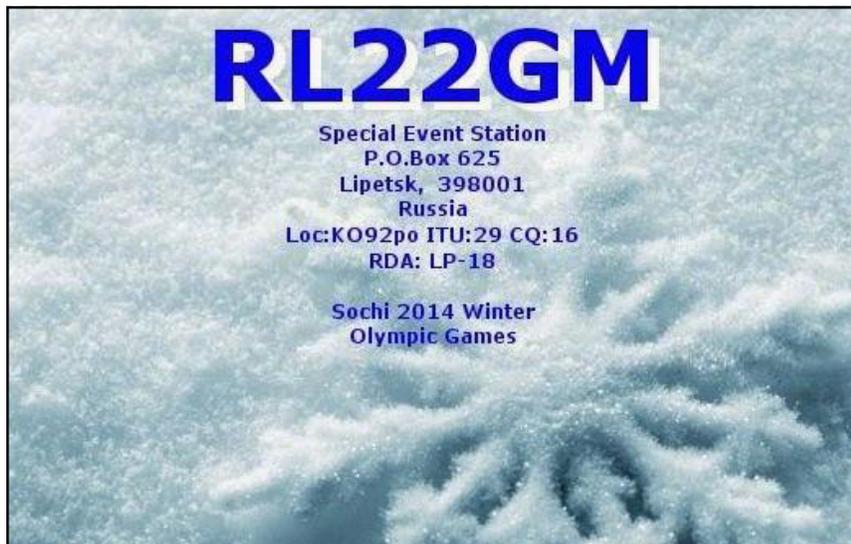


KC4URI

This was the first time I've put a nine element Mosley beam behind a five watt QRP radio. The results were both puzzling and amazing. I rotated the beam 360 degrees several times on 40 meters but only made a few contacts with KD3CA and WB3GMC in Pennsylvania and N4EDE in North Carolina. I heard very little on this band and soon came to the realization that I was shooting right over the heads of anything remotely thought of as "routine" contacts. By the end of the day end, I was able to work only six more United States stations WB0PYF, WD4EXI, K5BOT, KA2KGP, K4CQF, in Missouri, Georgia, Texas, South Carolina, and New York.

This nine element beam was a totally different animal to me with its directional characteristics but specific selectivity and sensitivity. I've mixed feelings about its effectiveness for multiple short distance QRP contacts. I was forced to spend most of the day on the 15 and 20 meter bands with the hopes of working more stations. Upon the change to those bands:

I immediately worked VE3EDX in Thunder Bay Canada, and soon afterwards, I worked an unfamiliar "RL" call, which I knew was a Russian station, but an unknown new "prefix". I've worked Russia many times (20) but this was the first "RL" call I've heard and there's a good reason for it.



(Continued on page 17)

This "special event station" (RL22GM) was commemorating the 2014 Winter Olympic Games now being held in Sochi Russia! As time moved onward, I worked some more DX contacts which were very exciting for me. I worked Italy twice during the next hour. The first station (I3UKY) was what I would call "normal DX" but the second Italian station was a real prize, not because it was the second contact in Italy, but because this station (I5NOC) was operating QRP at 5 Watts of power! Here's a confirmation e-mail from him:

Hello John, I confirm our qso on 15 meters 8-02 at 16,25 cw. My station is qrp by Elecraft KX3 only 5 wats and antenna 3 elements Hygain. Hope receive ur qsl via k3wvp, my qsl sure via bureau. Tks again for the qso and hope call you again. Best 73 and greetings from Italy.....ciao I5NOC Giampiero

The QRP station in Italy ((I5NOC) is the most distant 2 x QRP contact I've ever made at any time. The distance was 4,570 miles.

AIR MOBILE

I5NOC

Giampiero Nocentini
via dei frati nr. 51
Arezzo, 52100
Italy

Loc:jn53wk ITU:28 CQ:15
Icom ic.756 pro3-yaesu ft897
ant.hygain th3 10/15/20
Dipoli full size 160/80/40
dualbander 144/430

To: N8ZYA This confirms our 2-way CW QSO
Date: February 8, 2014 Time: 16:25 UTC
Band: 15m UR Sigs: 599

We found this station from Poland (SP6JOE) to be an interesting catch. I asked for the name and he responded with....., what else ? "Joe".

Polish Amateur Radio Station

SP6JOE

Logos: PY ZSK, SP DXC, FI R S A, MECS

(Continued on page 18)

Another contact was EA3DD in Spain:



I'm somewhat disappointed in the number of club stations we worked while at this event but think it had more to do with poor 40 meter band conditions and a "beast" of an antenna in the hands of a new operator. Those two combinations demanded operation on the longer range bands.

I can't say enough about the Museum of Radio and Technology. We plan to operate there again during these cold winter months. They were the perfect hosts for us and we rejoiced in the fellowship of the operating staff which was there during the special event.



There were times when the radio room was actually crowded with those interested in the QRP event. The Tri State Amateur Radio Association held VE testing that morning and added three new hams to the HF portions of the hobby. There were also hams from other states wandering around the museum.

(Continued on page 19)

The Museum of Radio and Technology also has dipole antennas. On our next trip, I'll use them to make more "club" QRP contacts. The beam had good and bad points. It brought us some great DX contacts but when right overhead of most the local stations.



I created this card from the "paint program" on my computer and entered the text with the N3AQC call sign and uploaded it to my E-QSL profile on the web. I sent it to those who had an account established with them.



NAQCC QRS NETS

Additional information about our slow-speed CW nets can be found at http://naqcc.info/cw_nets.html .
Send any questions to Net Manager Chuck, KB1ZMX at cfytech24x7@gmail.com.

NAQCC QRS NET SCHEDULE				
Net	Local Time	UTC	Freq	Primary NCS
Main Net	Sunday 8 PM EDT	Monday 0000 Z	7060 KHz	Ron, WB1HGA (in MA)
East Texas	Monday 7 PM CDT	Tuesday 0000 Z	7065 KHz	Allen, KA5TJS (in TX)
Midwest Net	Monday 9 PM CDT	Tuesday 0200 Z	7123.5 KHz	Steve, WB0QQT (in NE)
Rocky Mtn Regional / Continental	Tues/Thurs 4 PM MDT	Tues/Thurs 2200 Z	14062.5 KHz	Dale, WC7S (in WY)
East Coast	Thursday 8:30 PM EDT	Friday 0030 Z	3560 KHz	Robert, KG4KGL (in SC)
Pacific Northwest 80	Thursday 7 PM PDT	Friday 0200 Z	3574 KHz	Stewart, KE7LKW (in WA)
Pacific Northwest 40 (<i>Move to 8 PM in April?</i>)	Monday 7:30 PM PDT	Tuesday 0230 Z	7122 KHz	JB, KR5RR (in CA)

QRV! Renewing operations from winter layoffs, the PNW40 QRS net and the MWN QRS net are doing experiments with net format. Their work is based on balancing the needs of the CW noobie with that of the regular checkins to the QRS nets. J. B. Still and Steve Sellmeyer, along with many other club members in the western half of the US, are trying the Farnsworth method and a home-grown method J.B. has named FarnsWORD. The results so far are encouraging and we hope you will tune into their nets and hear for yourself.

For those of you not familiar with the Farnsworth method, the main idea is to send individual characters and words at speeds of at least 20wpm, but to leave longer spacings between, giving an effective lower speed while learning the morse characters. The main advantage is that the student learns the sound and rythm of individual characters at high speed from the beginning, avoiding the trap of counting dits and dahs, a bad habit which leads to barriers to copying code faster than 10wpm. It also builds confidence because the student hears his/herself copying code at high speed from the very beginning.

Once the morse character set is learned, the next goal is to use morse as a language. Summarizing, this is based on head copy practice of common words and letter combinations found in the average QSO. This is the basis for what J. B. calls FarnsWORD and will be part of the experiments in PNW40 and MWN net sessions in the coming weeks. Note that this is similar to the approach used by many advanced morse instructors, such as CWOPS instructor Jack Ritter W0UCE. Check out his site at <http://www.w0uce.net> for some interesting study materials.

In any event, J.B and Steve will listen for your QNI and adjust their speeds to your preference. As always, all of our NCSes will do what they can to make everyone feel comfortable and welcome. Have a go; it's easier than you think!

(Continued on page 21)

Note: There have been several changes to our net schedule. The table above should be up to date so check it carefully.

72, chuck kb1zmx

Net Report for February...

NAQCC Main QRS Net (NQN) - Sunday, 8:00 PM Eastern Time, 7.060 Mhz

02-02-2014 No QNI
02-09-2014 No QNI
02-16-2014 No QNI
02-23-2014 No QNI

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN) - Monday, 7:00 PM Central Time, 7.060 Mhz

02-03-2014 (2) NCS KA5TJS KA0ENU
02-10-2014 (6) NCS KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA N5DRG K5BRY KA0ENU
02-17-2014 (6) NCS KA5TJS KE5YGA K5BRY KE5YUM WB0QQT KG0YR
02-24-2014 (4) NCS KA5TJS K5BRY KE5YGA KE5YUM

NAQCC Midwest QRS Net (MWN) - Monday, 9:00 PM Central Time, 7.123.5 Mhz

Net operations suspended until later this Spring.

NAQCC Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS Net (RMRc) - Tuesday/Thursday 5:00 PM Mountain Time, 14.062.5 Mhz

02-04-2014 (?) NCS WC7S No report submitted
02-06-2014 (6) NCS WC7S AA7CU KG0YR KF7WNS KA5TJS KA0ENU
02-11-2014 (5) NCS WC7S K6MGO KE6OIO KF7WNS N6MY
02-13-2014 (6) NCS WC7S AA7CU K6MGO KE6OIO KF7WNS NE5DL
02-18-2014 (6) NCS WC7S KE6OIO AA7CU N6MY KF7WNS W9JDH
02-20-2014 (7) NCS WC7S AA7CU K0DTJ W2SH K6MGO W7PBI W6RO
02-25-2014 (5) NCS WC7S AA7CU K0DTJ KE6OIO KF7WNS
02-27-2014 (8) NCS WC7S KI4FD KE6OIO KF7WNS NE5DL KD5ONS N1CK AA7CU

NAQCC East Coast QRS Net (ECN) - Thursday, 8:30 PM Eastern Time, 3.560 Mhz

02-06-2014 NCS KG4KGL KA0ENU WB0QQT
02-13-2014 NCS KG4KGL No QNI
02-20-2014 NCS KG4KGL No QNI
02-27-2014 NCS KG4KGL No QNI

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

02-06-2014 (7) NCS W7DK AD7BP KE7LKW KE7WPK N6KIX N5DJY WN0WWY
02-13-2014 (7) NCS W7DK AD7BP KE7LKW KE7WPK N6KIX N5DJY WN0WWY
02-20-2014 (6) NCS W7DK N6KIX KR5RR AD7AB W7MWF W7SWB
02-27-2014 (6) NCS W7DK AD7BP KR5RR K7ZNP VE7DWG N6KIX

NAQCC Pacific NorthWest QRS 40 Meter Net (PNW40) - Monday, 8:00 PM, PacificTime, 7.123.5 MHz

Net is suspended until sometime this Spring TBD.



NAQCC CW ASSISTANCE PROJECT



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 at ve3fuj@wrightman.ca. Additional help is also available on our website at <http://naqcc.info/cw.html>.

As emphasized last month, a lot of Hams may not know the Morse-code Alphabet at all, but they still want to try their hand at CW. All well and good, so a visit to, or a revisit (for those who knew it once but are very rusty) to the Morse alphabet is in order. Google up "Morse code" and you will find it there. You will also find a nice Morse code translator ("click on it") that will translate any typed in message to audible code. You can set the pitch and speed to your liking. If you were to set the speed to say 30 wpm and the Farnsworth speed to 10 wpm, the words would come at 30 wpm but the spacing would be for 10 wpm. That's great for increasing your listening speed. I have personally tried it out and find it excellent for that purpose. It is especially helpful with the letters and words you may have trouble deciphering, and you can keep repeating the message to your hearts content.

When you get to, say 14 wpm, it may be beneficial to start listening for whole words instead of individual letters. It will be a help later on should you wish to increase your copy speed even higher. It's also the best thing to do if you want to copy in your head without writing it down.

Sending at higher speeds will come gradual if you keep practicing on a regular basis. Don't rush it. If you do you may become sloppy, and what's worse it may develop into a bad habit.

There is no way you can become a "Speed Whiz" overnight, so just settle down and keep practicing at a speed that is just a little faster than "comfy", where you will make a few mistakes but things won't get out of hand. Before you are even aware of it your speed will have progressed to a higher level.

Remember to keep things accurate and precise and keep checking on it, by RECORDING yourself from time to time and listening to it critically. That way you can forestall any sloppiness that might have crept into you keying. When you do record yourself be sure to leave a few days, say 4 -5 or longer, before you listen to it. That way you get a better picture of what your CODE actually sounds like.

MEMBER SUBMISSIONS



This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Just about anything that would be of interest to our members would be welcomed. Send your items to our news editor Paul, KD2MX, at kd2mx@arrl.net.

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

From Bill, K6MGO, #0259 -- Buyer Beware

I just had a strange experience that might be of interest to everyone while also providing a heads up to anybody selling or buying equipment on the internet.

Around last Christmas time, I got the "bug" to sell my K3 and buy a KX3, so I placed an ad for the K3 on QRZ.com, which I have used very successfully for years to both buy and sell ham radio equipment. QRZ now requires a personalized photo of the transceiver to prevent fraud. I took a picture of my K3 with one of my QSL cards propped up under the knobs of the K3 to satisfy this requirement. I submitted the photo and ad to QRZ.com and got one inquiry about it, but nothing happened. I had second thoughts about selling my wonderful K3 anyway, so I didn't renew the ad or take any more action in the matter.

A few days ago (Feb. 3-4), I got several emails from hams asking if I really was selling my K3 and P3, and why was I selling it so cheaply on QTH. This confused me, as I hadn't listed the K3 for sale on QTH, but on QRZ, and I don't have a P3.

To make a long story short, it turns out that someone copied the photo of my K3 with my QSL card, made up an ad for QTH using my name and call sign and giving an email address of "k6mgo73@AOL.com". This person not only listed my K3, but every filter and accessory that I think Elecraft sells, as installed. The K3 was described as just about a year old with a serial number in the 200s. The listed price for the whole works was about \$2950 USD. You can imagine the response there was from that.

A day ago, I got a phone call from a fellow ham asking if I had indeed placed that ad and if I was selling all of the listed equipment. When I told him that I didn't place the ad and it was bogus, he told me he had emailed the person and asked if Paypal would be accepted for payment. Of course the answer was no, just send a check. This of course made him suspicious and that is when he went to QRZ, looked me up and saw that my email address was different than that in the ad. So he did some further checking and found my phone number.

After getting the emails about the ad, I went to QTH and searched for the ad, but couldn't find it so I assumed that someone had reported it and QTH had removed it. But the fact that someone would be so bold as to steal a personalized photo of my K3, make a bogus ad and open up an email account at AOL with my name and call shakes me up. This will make me think twice about ever buying or trying to sell anything used again.

I am submitting this just to warn everyone that nowadays you can not trust everyone who is a ham, and you should be extra careful when buying or selling anything online. Check out the person very carefully, and

(Continued on page 24)

make sure they are who they say they are and don't send personal checks or Postal Money Orders to pay for something unless you are very sure the person is legit.

From Paul, N8XMS, #0675 -- AZ Portable Operations

Almost every winter my son-in-law is sent for a couple of months by his work to Phoenix, AZ where he does dynamic testing of vehicles in the warmer environment. Our daughter accompanies him on these work trips and his employer rents a furnished apartment for them to stay in. This year the apartment happened to have two bedrooms and they extended an offer to my wife and me to come for a visit. - Let's see now, 83° under cloudless Arizona skies, or 15° with 4-inches of new snow on the ground? In the middle of the second snowiest winter in Detroit history it wasn't too hard to take them up on their offer!

I didn't have any specific ham radio plans for this trip but there was plenty of room in my carry-on luggage to fit my little Elecraft KX1, a battery pack of 8 AA batteries, my usual end-fed portable antenna made from 40-feet of steel "bead wire" with three 16-foot counterpoise wires, Palm mini-paddle, and mini-log book. I usually use a slingshot to launch my antenna line into the trees but I knew that the TSA would frown on that so I packed my alternate launcher in the form of a golf ball with a small eye-screw in it for attaching to the fishing line on the end of my antenna. I then use a traditional "Armstrong" method for launching.

This was the first time that I have travelled by air with ham radio gear and I wasn't sure of how it would go. My bag went through the scanner for carry-on luggage without setting off any alarms and I was surprised that they didn't even ask me to open it up and explain those suspicious looking coils of wire and other strange items.

For our first couple of days in Arizona I kept my eyes peeled for possible operating sites. I quickly learned something important - Arizona is not Michigan! At home I can expect to find plenty of trees in parks and backyards to hold my antenna up, but in the Phoenix area there just aren't that many trees! They do have a lot of saguaro cacti but they don't have many branches and most of them are not all that tall. Most of the local parks also have a good number of tall palm trees but I doubted my ability to accurately toss my golf ball over a palm tree's small spread of foliage. Besides all of that, my snow-bleached northern skin would need some nice shade to be able to spend any significant time operating outside. I finally settled on a less than ideal spot that could possibly work. In an interior area of my daughter's apartment complex there was a little play area for kids that included a modestly sized tree and a bench that was usually in the shade. The ground in this location dipped about 6 feet below the level of the sidewalk and all four sides of the play area were surrounded by 2-story apartment buildings. It was really a lot like operating from a small canyon – very fitting for operating from "the Grand Canyon State!"



Not a lot of options for hanging an antenna here!



My "Grand Canyon" operating site.

Hiking desert trails, touring Native American cliff-dweller ruins, and all of our other wonderful activities did not leave me with a lot of time to play radio. But I did manage to have a few operating sessions and was pleased with the results. With about 2.5 - 3 watts of output I was able to make contacts on all the bands that my rig can work (20, 30, and 40 meters). I worked stations in KS, CA, TX, and WA. For me the most significant QSO was with W1AW/0 in KS. He was working split and although my KX1 doesn't have dual VFOs, I was able to use the rig's RIT to bust the minor pileup!



My Elecraft KX1 ready to go.



Enjoying the sun and sunspots!

Let me mention one interesting thing about my portable operating with the KX1. I do not use the Elecraft paddle that attaches directly to the rig. Instead I use a little Palm paddle that I hold in my left hand (picture gripping a short piece of pipe) and work with my right. This way I don't need to sit at any sort of table. I'm good to about 20 wpm with this but I can't claim that my sending is perfect. (I am right handed but in my home shack I always work my paddle with the keyer in reverse mode and with my left hand. I work my straight key with my right hand. I don't seem to have any trouble switching back and forth.)

We had a wonderful time and all too soon it was time to return to the cold and snow of Michigan. So I am now sitting here looking at my Arizona pictures and itching for the spring weather to arrive so that I can

(Continued on page 26)

start to enjoy some portable fun here at home.

From John, K3WWP, #0002 --

The big highlights of February were two visits from Mike KC2EGL, my continued pursuit of the W1AW/# WAS, and my performance in the ARRL DX contest.

In addition to that, my effort to complete our two NAQCC challenges almost came right down to the wire, but I made it. The letter T was the hangup along with lack of time, poor conditions the second half of the month, and a continuing increase in my always present local noise. However on the 25th all changed. Noise was down, conditions up, and I had some time. I got the last 9 letters for the European Chapter challenge, including a T from ES1TU which at the same time also finished our Groundhog challenge.

I'm glad we don't include contest QSOs in our challenges. That would make it much too easy and not really a challenge. I don't know how many times over I could have completed both challenges in the ARRL DX contest, for example. I made 480 QSOs in that one from 76 countries (191 band-countries). That was my biggest effort in a contest since the days of the last sunspot peak in the early 2000s. There were a lot of thrills along the way in the 20 hours I operated. My most memorable was making a WAC (Worked All Continents) in 6 straight QSOs in just 9 minutes as follows: Between 0025Z and 0034Z Saturday I worked KH6MB RT0C NP2N CS2C CR3L P40W. I plan to write a full story of the contest for my web site at <http://home.windstream.net/johnshan>. It's almost done now and may be posted by the time you read this.

The QSOs with W1AW on the way to a WAS are going perfectly. As of my writing this on March 6, I have worked all 20 of the states that have been activated so far. Most QSOs have come very easily and in the first day or so of activation. One pair I got within a few minutes of the start. And some folks say QRP and simple wire antennas don't work. SIGH! I guess it's best to just ignore them since they have no idea what they are talking about.

Mike made a quick whistle stop before the local ham radio club meeting on February 26. We didn't do much in the way of ham radio, but instead played a computer hidden object game. Then after the meeting we went to Subway for our second favorite activity of eating. HI

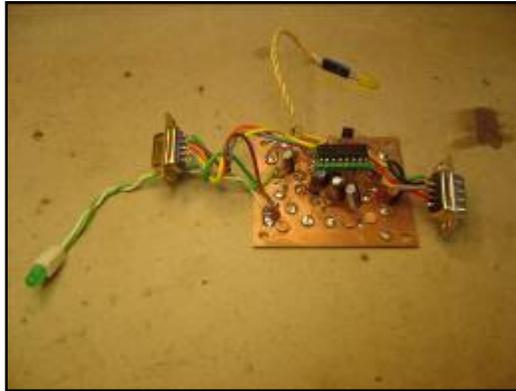
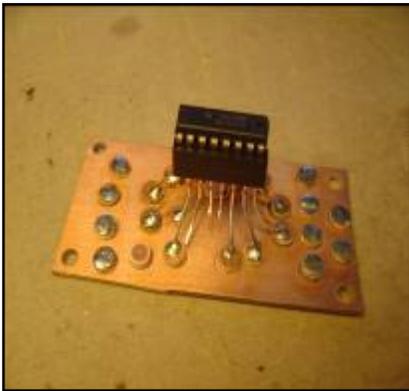
Mike's visit on President's day was longer and more involved. First we packaged up our NAQCC banner to ship to N8ZYA to display at a NAQCC WV Chapter event. Then I gave him his copy of the certificate we both earned for the NAQCC in the Skeeter Sprint last summer. Next up we took care of some NAQCC prizes that we will be awarding in our NAQCC 10th Anniversary sprint in October. After that off to the shack to work some DX. The bands were rather empty, but we did manage some DX and Mike worked the W1AW/6 and W1AW/9 stations in two sessions separated by a visit to Ponderosa for a mid-day meal. I don't remember all that Mike worked. Most were stations I didn't need so I didn't work them except for JW/DL5CW whom we both worked. He also worked Z35LC on 12M for one that I remember. I think he also got J38XX. Then we had a pizza from Vocelli's that evening following a visit with Nancy and Bruce (and Roscoe of course - he'd bark if I left him off here). To close out the day we watched another episode of the British comedy Doctor In The House before he left a bit early to avoid a coming snowstorm. All in all a full and enjoyable day once more.

(Continued on page 27)

From Greg, WB8LZG, #1444 -- Building a CAT interface for your shack

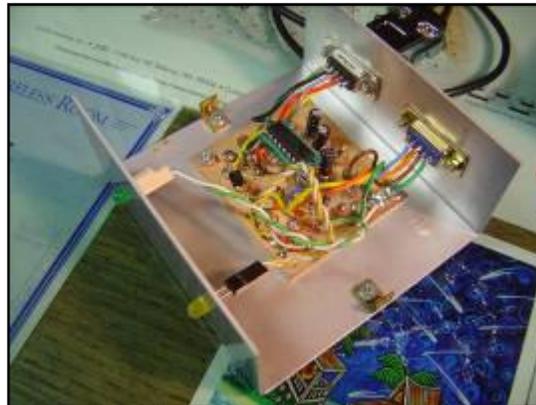
With my recent interest in contesting, I decided to build a computer Interface to help with logging during contest operation. For simplicity I chose "Manhattan Style" building in case I had to experiment a bit to get the rig to "talk" to the computer. The circuit needs only one chip and a handful of parts to make it work. A MAX232 comm chip is the heart of this project.

Step 1. Mount the chip socket to the PCB, bending the feet out to provide room to mount parts.



Step 2. Mount the five caps, one diode, three resistors, two LEDs, and connectors.

Step 3. Find an enclosure. I had some extra Ten-Tec-style boxes in my "junk box" so I started drilling holes for the jacks and LEDs. You may have an old box lying around gathering dust.



Step 4. Mount the completed unit into its new home and test! Total build time was about three hours.

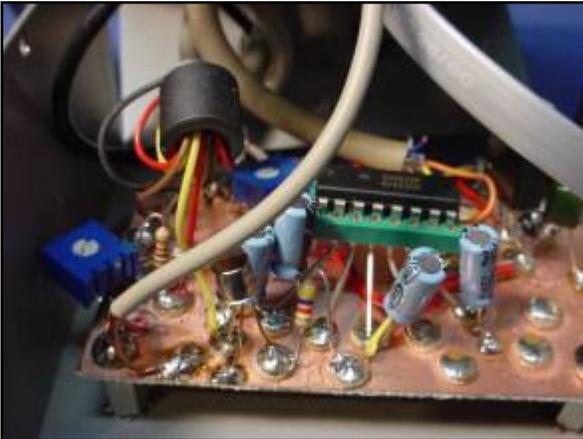
The circuit gets its power from the computer DTR line, and PTT is accomplished by using RTS through a NPN transistor switch. I used "Ham Radio Deluxe" as the control program, as it is easy and works with many of the new rigs on the ham market. This circuit will control Icom, Ten-Tec, Kenwood, and Yaesu radios, with only slight modifications needed to the interface between rigs.

(Continued on page 28)

Here's a shot of the one I made for my Yaesu FT-990 shoehorned into an old Radio Shack box.



This one for the Yaesu FT-817 is complete with audio interconnections.



This is a screen shot of the interface in action.



These were simple and fun to build and work like a champ. Oh, and did I mention CHEAP! The Max232 chips are only a couple of bucks new, and the rest of the parts are in most QRPer's "junk" boxes. I've built five of these units for my rigs at home as well as for the local club shack to be used for contesting and logging.

I hope you enjoyed the photos and hope you'll be inspired to build one of these circuits for your own.





Complete information about the NAQCC, including a membership application, activities schedule, and extensive contact list is available on our website at

<http://naqcc.info/index.html>.

Questions can also be sent to Vice President John Shannon
478 E. High Street
Kittanning, PA 16201
naqcc33@windstream.net

CLUB INFORMATION AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

by Founding President Tom Mitchell, WY3H

We realize that QRP and CW operation do not appeal to everyone. We have no "axe to grind" with the QRO (high power) fraternity. We recognize that there are times when QRO operation is invaluable. During disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes or terrorist attacks, radio amateurs provide vital, life-saving communications for which QRO operation is often necessary. QRO operators also provide an invaluable public service in health and welfare traffic and routine traffic handling.

Amateur radio has something for everyone, including SSB, other forms of digital communication and AM and FM operation. However, for a small but dedicated group, QRP (and QRPP) CW operation provides the greatest challenge and thrill amateur radio has to offer.

Each month the club will host a different challenge such as the GAW (Get Acquainted Week) or the Turkey challenge (making words relating to Thanksgiving from letters in callsigns of stations worked). Also we will have a 2 hour sprint each month alternating between Tuesday and Wednesday evenings with a bonus multiplier for using a straight key.

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

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

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



The NAQCC Newsletter is edited by Paul Huff, N8XMS. You may contact him at Paul142857@gmail.com

