



NAQCC News

January 16, 2010

[NAQCC Web Site](#)

Issue #110

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1. SPRINT: Our regular monthly sprint is this Thursday, January 21st at 0130-0330Z.

We no longer have a special award certificate for our sprints. Instead beginning this month we are giving a first-timer certificate to the highest overall score submitted by someone who has never before submitted a log for one of our sprints. You don't need to tell us if it is your first time. We have a complete database of everyone who has ever submitted a log or even participated in any of our sprints.

If you are entering one of our sprints for the first time, we welcome you and hope you will be a regular participant from now on. Last month we welcomed W3RL, VE1RSM, KM6NN, W8GX, W4HH, K0MIS, as first time log submitters. Had we been giving out first-timer awards then, W3RL would have been the winner with a score of 80 points - the highest among the group of 6. That may explain the first-timer award a bit better.

This month, as we did last month, we are having a second sprint. It's our annual 160M sprint. It will be held on Thursday, January 28 at 0130-0330Z. 160M should be very good again this year as it always is near sunspot minimums. Better take advantage this year as the sun seems to be finally awakening from its overly long rest and starting to decorate its face with spots once again. 2011 may not be as good for 160M as 2010

should be.

Since our December mW sprint took place after our last newsletter, we owe you a newsletter report of results. Tom KA2KGP was the champion having both the highest score for a 1st place certificate and the most QSO's (11) for the prize of a book of ham radio cartoons donated by its author Dick W9CBT, our newsletter cartoonist. John K3WWP came away with a 2nd place certificate. Congrats to Tom and thanks to the 34 folks who submitted logs - a new record for one of our mW sprints. Making the switch to December this year with its inherently lower QRN levels really helped increase the activity.

Remember this is only a very brief overview of the coming sprints. Be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprints [here](#).



2. DECEMBER CHALLENGE RESULTS: We had some real 'gabby' people enter our December rag chew challenge. Topping the list was our mW sprint winner Tom KA2KGP who in addition to winning the mW sprint also topped the list of rag chewers with 44 during the month. Second place went to Tom WY3H with 24 followed by John K3WWP with 19. I think that says something about propagation. It must be good if so many QRP QSO's can last so long. If the bands sound dead it must just be that no one is on, or everyone is just listening and not calling CQ.

As always, full challenge info and results can be found [here](#).



3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: - We've got a lot of new things for 2010 at the NAQCC so let's tell you about them after we report a bit of sad news. Dave K4TWJ (#0384) suffered a massive heart attack on New Year's eve. At that time he was given only a 25% chance of surviving, but seems to be making progress although still not out of the woods. Dave was the first member to donate a prize to the NAQCC when he donated two of his books on key collecting. He has always been a friend and supporter of the NAQCC having written about it in his CQ magazine QRP column. Tom WY3H and I (K3WWP) sent a get well card, and we hope you will do so also. It is probably best to just send it to his QRZ address.

● - Ever since we initiated our club worked members award, I've thought it needed a better name. That might encourage more of you to work towards the award. I hope so anyway, as that is one facet of our club that is really lacking. Other clubs do better with their worked member awards like the FISTS Century Club, for example. One thing that may slow down our award is that we want it to be more than just a number exchanging award like other clubs. We want our members to go beyond exchanging numbers and get to know each other better in their on-air QSO's - to become friends. That led me to the idea for the name of our award - the Friendship Club Award. That is the new name for our Advanced Worked Members award. We are eliminating the Basic Worked Members Award. It will be implemented over the next couple weeks. Those who have already earned the award will be sent an updated certificate with the new name. We

have been adjusting the rules slightly the past week or so. Be sure to check the rules NOW for the final version. If anything seems confusing to you, let us know.



• - As you know, we have reached and surpassed the 4,000 member mark and are heading towards 5,000 now. We think that places us in the top echelon of ham radio clubs, and we need to do some things that are expected of such a club. Although we already do have a logo, our publicity manager Dave, VA3RJ thinks we should also have an 'advertising' banner, and Tom and I agree. I've come up with the following which we are going to use for now.



However with 4,000+ members, we think that some of you could come up with something better. Think about it, and if you do, make a .jpg graphic of your idea and email it to NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET. It should be 234 x 60 pixels in size. If we decide one of the submissions is better than that shown above, we'll give the designer some sort of prize.

• - Other clubs have local chapters, and while we don't like to copy what other clubs are doing, we feel this justifies an exception to that rule. Again with 4,000+ members, we now should have a concentration of members in the more populated areas of the country and world. It would be nice if members in an area could get together and engage in some local NAQCC-related activities, whether it be operating portable, having code practice sessions, building equipment..... The list is endless and only limited by the members of a chapter. We'll have to let you decide if this is a good idea or not, and if you would like to participate. We'll see where the idea goes after we hear from you.

Email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** with your thoughts.

• - Don't forget our hidden call sign in the newsletter. Those who read the newsletter regularly know all about it now, and are just searching and waiting for their call to show up somewhere. So we're not going to say much more about it other than a short announcement each issue from now on. The hidden call sign will be composed of upper and lower case letters and be in an obviously out of context place. If it's yours and you let us know via **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** before the publication date (January 30) of the next newsletter, you win 100 NAQCC QSL's. If it's not yours, you get the satisfaction of finding it, nothing more.

• - Something else new in 2010 is the newsletter feature Member Spotlight. Paul N8XMS is in charge of this feature. He selects members at random and invites them to send in a picture and short bio similar to our Featured Member page on the web site only the pix and bio will appear in the newsletter for one issue vs. being on the web site for a full month. Just read on down the newsletter to see this new feature.

• - Thanks to a Herculean effort by our new Awards Manager Rick AA4W, we believe we are now caught up on all certificates for our sprints and challenges, all award applications, all requests for QSL's and certificates from our 5th anniversary operation in October, and all the thank you certificates for those who operated a N#A station during the anniversary celebration. There was quite a backlog due to the illness of Fred KC8FS and the transfer of material from Fred to Rick for processing. However all QSL's and certificates have been put in the mail as of January 11th.

However something could still have slipped through the cracks, so if you have not received an earned or requested QSL or certificate after a couple weeks to allow for any delays in the postal system, please notify us at **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** and we'll make it right.



4. FEATURED AWARD OF THE MONTH: - As mentioned above, our Advanced Worked Members Award has gotten a brand new name - Friendship Club Award. You get the award when you earn 200 points in the following manner. Each QSO with a member is worth points as follows.

1 point for a QSO with a member before they joined the club.

1 point also for a QSO that does not go beyond the standard RST QTH Name Rig WX common type of QSO.

2 points for a contest or sprint QSO since contesting is an excellent way to hone CW skills.

Now here's the kicker why we call it the Friendship Club Award. You get 4 points for a QSO when you become friends with a member. How? By having a QSO where you find out about his job, hobbies, family, etc. That is, if you find out he served on a destroyer in WW II, works in the post office, breeds dogs, collects stamps, loves walking, and so on. The list is endless and anything like that makes it a 4 point QSO.

5 points for any type of QSO with our club station N3AQC or with the previous call of KB3MQT or any of our N#A calls. The 5 points can be claimed only once since all club calls carry the club number 1100, and a club number determines what is a different member.

When you accumulate 200 points, you get a FC number, a certificate, and a web 'honor roll' listing. The web listing can be updated each time you add 100 points to your total. Those who already earned our Advanced Worked Members Award are automatically grandfathered into the Friendship Club. Here's a list of those members and their numbers and current points level. Each will be issued a new certificate when we get one designed.

K3WWP #0001 - 1300
KI4DEF #0002 - 300
KD2MX #0003 - 200
NU7T #0004 - 400
K4PBY #0005 - 200
VE3HUR #0006 - 200

We suggest that you get into the habit of giving out your NAQCC membership number in your QSO's. Then if the person you work is also a member you can continue to rag chew and make it a 4 point QSO. If they are not a member, we still want you to continue to rag chew and tell them about the club. Then if they later do become a member, that makes the QSO a pre-membership 1 point QSO. We do not encourage simply exchanging numbers and then going QRT. Number exchanging is not the bottom line with this award. Making friends is.

You can also earn a Friendship Club Award and FC number by simply contacting 200 different members and counting each as one point regardless of what type of QSO it is. The choice is yours.

Full NAQCC Awards info [here](#).



5. THE NAQCC ELMER PROJECT - FROM K5DUZ and N3IJR: -

The Elmer project is completely co-ordinated by Ron and Karl. If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:

K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**

N3IJR - **N3IJR@YAHOO.COM**

The NAQCC QRS Net convenes each Monday at 0130Z when Standard time is in effect and 0030Z during Daylight savings time (Sunday evening at 8:30PM here in the USA Eastern time zone) on 7122.5 kHz from April through October and 3575.0 kHz from November through March. Everyone is invited to check in for some hands-on CW teaching and learning. QRO is permitted for this one NAQCC activity since learning CW is so important. NCS (Net Control Station) is Karl using the club call of N3AQC.

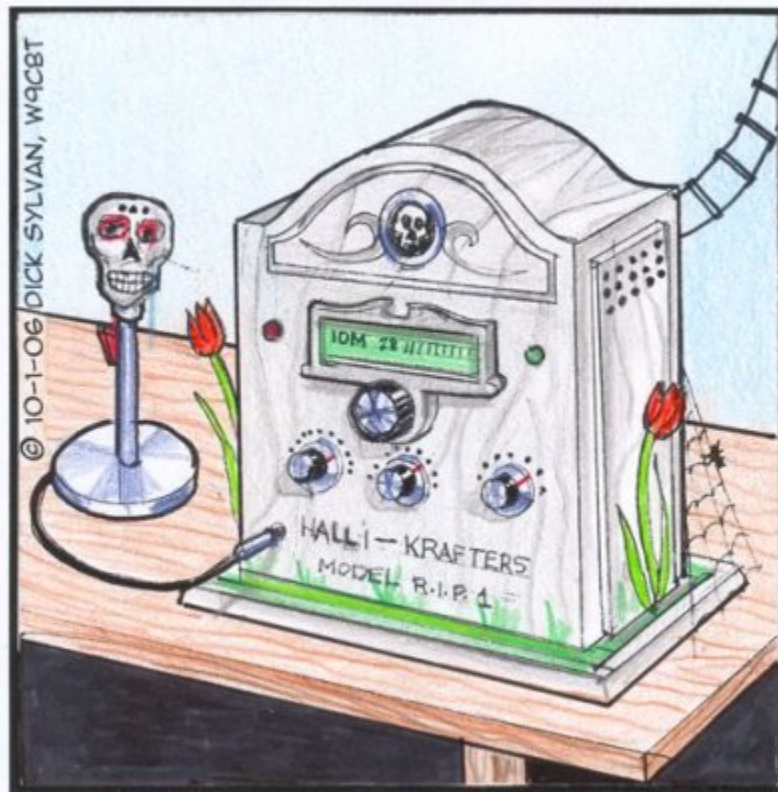
Also see [Elmer Project](#) on the web site for much more info of help to those needing it.



6. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH: Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist, and he is supplying a cartoon each month for the newsletter. The NAQCC is very honored to be one of just two organizations to feature Dick's cartoons. In addition to our newsletter, Dick's cartoons appear monthly in [The K9YA Telegraph](#), an on-line only Ham Radio E-zine where he is the staff cartoonist. Dick has also

authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via [his web site](#). A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters.

HAM QUIPS BY DICK SYLVAN W9CBT



A RARE HELLI-KRAFTER TRANSCEIVER MODEL R.I.P-1 DESIGNED ESPECIALLY FOR OPERATING ON DEAD BANDS.



7. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to N8XMS@ARRL.NET. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be ~~w8eRv~~ featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Here is our initial offering:

Ed Neubauer KB3SZZ #3787



Hello All:

At age 47, I am fairly new to ham radio, having earned my Technician class license in June and upgrading to the General in July. I am so glad to have discovered this wonderful hobby because of the fun that comes with meeting new people through the strange language of Morse code. The challenges of building my skills and speed with the code, working out of a small townhouse with the power output of a nightlight, and learning Mother Nature's capricious ways with the ionosphere are all part of the fun for me.

Virtually everyone I have met through ham radio has been incredibly friendly and helpful. I am especially grateful to John Shannon (K3WWP) for his encouragement as I was struggling to get started with the hobby, and Jeff Peters (K9JP) whose elmering has been and continues to be invaluable regarding antennas, gear, and troubleshooting.

My two rigs are an Elecraft K1 and an Icom-718. The "antenna farm" includes a Par 10/20/40 end-fed dipole, attic random wire, plus a 40-meter dipole in the attic. I have plans to expand "the farm" in the future. I am very attached to my KK1 straight key, although someday I would like to learn how to use a paddle. My antenna tuner is an old MFJ 949-C, which sometimes works better when I give it a rap on the side.

When conditions permitted, I really enjoyed the Sunday night QRS net on 7.022 MHz. My most memorable NAQCC contact was on October 15, 2009 when I was demonstrating CW for the students in our new Ham Radio Club at Eastern Technical High School where I teach. By luck, I had a QSO with NAQCC's special event station N1A!

Personal Info: Besides CW, I enjoy spending time with my wife, son, and daughter - although I can't seem to interest any of them in ham radio. :) I also like to garden, hike with our dog, and read. Between the end of August and the middle of June I also teach science and grade lots of papers.

Gud DX and 73,
Ed Neubauer
KB3SZZ
(NAQCC #3787)



8. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS: 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. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at KD2MX@ARRL.NET. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

(disclaimer) Any views expressed here are those of the member submitting them, and may not be in agreement with those of the NAQCC.

● **From John K3WWP #0002** - I spend a great many hours both on this newsletter and on the club web site. I am very disappointed that so many members seemingly never read the newsletter or look at the web site.

That was proved to me vividly recently. Despite publicizing our NAQCC QRS Net over and over again in the newsletter and on the web site in the Elmer section, when I sent out an informational email to our mail list about the net last Sunday, January 10, Karl and I received many emails from members saying they had no idea the net existed. Karl said he was overwhelmed with check-ins last Sunday and one member said he heard perhaps as many as 50 people trying to check in.

Now had members been reading the newsletter and studying the web site, we could have been having that kind of turnout in each of our nets since it was started many months ago and many members could have been getting the kind of help they need to improve their CW skills.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE CLUB, TAKE TIME TO THOROUGHLY READ THE NEWSLETTER AND THOROUGHLY EXAMINE THE CLUB WEB SITE. You might find just what you've been looking for and need out of ham radio there.

● **From Oleg RW4NX #3862** - Happy New Year 2010! I would like to buy a NW Series Monoband CW transceiver for 40 meters. But, I live in Russia. Is it possible for me to purchase this equipment and under what conditions? I need some advice and help in buying. Please email me at: rw4nxqrp@mail.ru. Thank you.

● **From Paul N8XMS #675** - I was able to turn some Christmas vacation free time into a good learning experience. In my opinion, one of the most interesting NAQCC awards is the 2-way QRP QSOs award. I use LOGic for computer logging and I knew that I had a good number of these QSOs in my log, but I didn't really know how I could efficiently pull them out to apply for the award. Well, it took some effort but I finally figured out how I could filter them out in LOGic, send them to a text file, import that file into a spreadsheet, and tweak the spreadsheet into a workable format. (Never stop learning new stuff!) I was pleased to see that I already have over 900 points, and I hope to hit the 1000 point level within the next few months. (Assuming we can have some decent conditions for our sprints!)

Also...Just after the New Year I took a very big plunge and ordered an Elecraft K2 with 20-watt auto tuner, analog audio filter, and SSB board (for some future soundcard digital modes). So far I have read through the owners manual and made the updates listed in the errata. I hope to inventory parts and start construction soon. I enjoy building so I always work at a relaxed pace and I expect that this will take me at least 2 or 3 months to complete. I will send in progress updates from time to time.

● **From Elwood WB0OEW #2816** - I just wanted to share a personal accomplishment. Today I received my ARRL W1AW Certificate of Code Proficiency for a minute of perfect copy at 20 WPM on December 5, 2009. Since I got my Extra license in 2008 after the code requirement was dropped, I have felt the need to uphold the historical tradition of CW in amateur radio in some other manner. Plus, I settled for the Advanced class in 1974 because I failed the darned 20 WPM element then, now I have finally settled that score.

Code has never been easy for me, it takes a lot of practice, but for some reason I can't explain, even though I am an accomplished electrical engineer, CW still means something special to me. Maybe when I'm on the air I can still hear deep in the static the messages of those bygone maritime ops out in the lonely reaches of the mighty oceans; maybe I can still hear the echos of the pioneers with their spark gaps and first glowing tubes; or maybe it's just the wonder of radio itself and the simplicity, elegance and sheer audacity of communicating with a simple keyed tone.

I also wish to add my special thanks to NAQCC for their high standards and persistent promotion of CW which served as a constant source of encouragement. Best wishes to all for the new year.

● **From Gary K8KFJ #265** - An article in a previous newsletter told how the the Air force trained CW ops. The potential ops went to school five days a week for 32 weeks. In the end they were copying 25 wpm and were working on 30 wpm. Here's the story of my time in the "CW Service".

I went through the same school, around 1960, at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, MS. Being a General Class amateur at the time and an avid CW op, I breezed through the school. I did however have to learn four or five additional sound patterns that I had never heard before. The reason was that I would be dealing with a language overseas that had more letters in it than the 26 in our English alphabet. As you've probably already guessed, that language was Russian.

One of those additional Russian characters looked like a backward R. It has the "ya" sound as in "doswidaniya". We were trained to hit the QUOTE KEY when that particular character (sent as a double A) was heard. We couldn't practice on actual tapes from overseas because they were classified and our Top Secret Crypto Clearance was still being worked on by the FBI in our home towns.

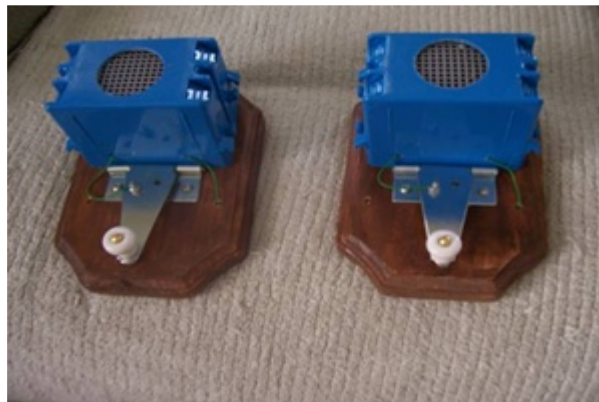
Later after finishing school, I got orders to report to Bremerhaven, Germany. There, I had a rack with two R390 receivers and a pair of headsets. There was a mill (all upper case letters) with a continuous roll of perforated paper in it.

I had an intercom connection with someone who I called "the antenna guy". I could get on the intercom with him and say something like the following, "I have on my top receiver station K3WWP on frequency 7030 and need a antenna check". He would then bring up that same station on his receiver and try all the antennas in our antenna field. Later, he would call me back saying "I've put a 60 degree rhombic on your top receiver". Gosh, I loved being pampered like that.

Later, I would get orders to report to Peshawar, Pakistan to do a little listening regarding the Soviet Cosmodrome at Baykonur which was north of us in Kazakhstan. However, our most valuable intercept was probably the telemetry we gained during the actual launches themselves and not what I did from the CW side. At Peshawar, we endured an earthquake, which badly cracked our movie building, plus a war with India. During the Pakistani/Indian war, the brass at our base ordered the windows in our barracks to be mudded down so there would be no reflection from a very bright moon to aid Indian bombers. Hmmm .. I'm still wondering about that strategic move. The bombers still found their target at night, delivering one 500 pounder near our base in an attempt to damage the main runway at the airfield so Pakistani military aircraft couldn't participate in the war. The daily C-130 from Karachi which brought us our mail and Chow Hall supplies was grounded for days. Let's just say that I wasn't in the greatest frame of mind during that time.

Finally, the day arrived when I could hang up my earphones for good and head back to the good ole USA. I left the Air Force having visited some great countries and places (such as Hamburg, Copenhagen, Paris, etc.).

• **From Larry KE8LF #1169** - The picture below shows the two code practice oscillators that I made for my grandsons as Christmas presents this year. Most of you will recognize the enclosures, plastic electrical boxes. I was unable to find the size I needed at Radio Shack. The other parts are also easily recognized. For more information feel free to contact me.



The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless they specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the [NAQCC Web Site](#).