



SK CC
Straight Key Century Club



Volume 11 Issue 4

The official newsletter of the Straight Key Century Club
"The Rag Chew"
K8AQM Editor

December, 2018

K3Y 2019

SKCC members in the ten US call areas, plus KH6, KL7 and KP4, will be operating under the K3Y call sign. Associated DX member stations in a number of Canadian provinces and each of six IARU continental regions will also be participating under their own call signs. Please help keep them busy with plenty of QSOs!

You can track your progress in working these stations by referring to the Stats section of the K3Y web pages throughout the month. Check for frequent updates on the number of areas, bands, K3Y operators, DX entities, Canadian provinces & US states that you have worked. K3Y QSL cards and Sweep Certificates will also



be available to document your success. You can earn a K3Y QSL card whether you make one contact, or work all ten US call areas; or US 0 through 9 plus KH6, KL7 and KP4. Perhaps you will even achieve a 19-area "grand sweep" card which includes all the above plus contacts with our DX event operators in six different continental areas.

The K3Y event provides an ideal opportunity for SKCC members to make progress toward various club awards: contacts with K3Y stations are valid for awards purposes. Additionally, if you choose to sign up as a K3Y Operator you can readily log dozens or even hundreds of award-eligible QSOs with SKCC members.

Would you like to be one of our K3Y Operators? Sign up for just an hour or two. Or operate regularly throughout the entire month. Code speed and station sophistication are not important. Please check out the US or DX Operator Guides and contact the Regional Coordinator in your area for more info. He or she will be eager to arrange a time slot for you. Having lots of K3Y operators is key to a successful event!

Be sure to check the K3Y web page at www.skccgroup.com/k3y/ for contact info, operator guides & schedules, QSL cards & sweep certificates, stats, operator location map and the 2019 SKCC print calendar.

73,
K3Y Planning Group

K3Y QSL Design for 2019



The 13th annual SKCC anniversary on-air event will start on January 2nd, directly following Straight Key Night. As usual we are calling upon SKCC members to come up with QSL card designs for this special event.

Designs will be uploaded to the K3Y page where SKCC members can view them and vote for their favorites starting on Dec. 15. The most popular design will become the official 2019 K3Y QSL card.

If enough card designs are submitted we will feature twelve of them in the 2019 SKCC print calendar. The calendar will include upcoming events of interest to SKCC members, also telegraphy and radio-related historical dates and astronomical data. You can see last year's calendar here:

https://www.skccgroup.com/k3y/k3y-docs/SKCC_2018_Calendar.pdf

There were many excellent and popular entries submitted for past events that did not win the top spot. Designers of these cards Following are required design specifications for card images:

- JPEG high quality format;
- Image size 1650 x 1050 pixels, or better
- Width-to-height ratio 5.5 x 3.5
- Layout should be horizontal;
- No text, logos or borders within 1/4" of edges (trim zone)

The following text elements should be included in the design:

- "K3Y";
- "Straight Key Century Club";
- "SKCC";
- "2019";
- "13th Anniversary".

Please submit your designs by Dec. 14th at the latest. If you submit a design before then you can modify it through the 14th.

You can submit several different designs. However, it is suggested that you not submit multiple entries having minor variations. For example: the same basic design with differently colored backgrounds.

If you include graphics or photos that are not your own they must either be public domain or you must have permission from the original owner. Please advise us if you are using graphics or photos that are not your own.

By submitting a card design you agree that SKCC has the right to use it for the K3Y QSL card, K3Y websites, anniversary logo, mug graphic and calendar. Also, a variant of your design may be used on K3Y DX QSL cards.

Please send any questions or comments to me at af2z[at]skccgroup.com, or post a follow-up in the SKCC group on Groups.io, and I will get back to you. Also send your card images to me. I will confirm receipt and have them uploaded when the 2019 K3Y page is up.

We'll be posting contest updates in coming weeks. In the meantime, get busy with your K3Y card design(s). Good luck!

73,

Drew — AF2Z

K3Y Planning Group

Do You QSL K3Y?

K3Y is coming up fast! Stop what you're doing and ask yourself, "Do I have envelopes in the SKCC Bureau? Do I plan on making QSOs with K3Y stations?"

If you are going to participate make sure you have envelopes on hand in the SKCC Bureau! The club makes a special QSL card every year for participating stations that have QSOs in the logs the K3Y stations turn in. The K3Y coordinator uses the bureau page to see who has envelopes on file and will print only those QSLs. Please get your envelopes into the bureau ASAP if you are looking forward to SKCC K3Y QSL cards for 2019!

QSLs are printed after the celebration ends in January. The cards arrive to the bureau sometime in February. By March all cards are sent out to awaiting stations; this keeps the bureau manageable for the next year.

Any requests for K3Y after the coordinator poles the bureau page can take some time. Having envelopes on hand not only insures you get your sought after K3Y QSLs, but also allows other bureau members to forward QSLs to you for your reply. As a general rule, K3Y cards requested after the initial printing will be sent when the envelope is either full or when the bureau gets purged after the celebration.

It is suggested to have 5 envelopes with postage on hand. One "Forever Stamp" will get you around eight QSLs returned to you. Outside of the United States please see the bureau page on the SKCC website for information on how to get postage. \$3 USD will get you 2 US Global Stamps and envelopes on file at the bureau.

The bureau page on the SKCC website also has information on how to address your envelopes for easier sorting at the bureau and a list of envelopes that are presently on file at the bureau. Please take a look at the website, if you have any questions don't hesitate to email Jeremy KD8VSQ at QSL_manager@skccgroup.com to get an answer.

73,

Jeremy KD8VSQ #13072t

SKCC QSL Bureau Manager

K3Y QSL Card

de Dave KB1WOD #10530s

Here is my 2018 K3Y QSL card. This one was special because I got the grand sweep. Other years I would only get 18 of 19. One year it was Asia and one year it was South America. Notice that I had gotten them all by the 9th. I wasn't taking any chances this year!! The reason I got it so late is because I was moving and didn't want to worry about having it sent to the wrong address. Especially since I was not sure where I would be for awhile.

Thanks to Drew AF2Z and Jeremy KD8VSQ for getting this QSL card to me!



The Straight Key Century Club was created by Tom Peterson, KC9ECL, on January 2nd, 2006. He was promptly joined by Melinda Alsobrook K14CIA, and Gordon Benjamin N6IVK. Tom began signing up new members; Melinda launched the information campaign; Gordon secured the club domain and web site. Now, on its 12th Anniversary, SKCC is more than 18,000 strong and continues to attract new members from around the world. The club remains dedicated to its founders' goals of promoting the art of hand-sent Morse Code via manual telegraph keys.

For more information please visit our website at www.skccgroup.com

SKCC K3Y 2018 - 12th Anniv. SKCC K3Y 2018 - 12th Anniv.

QSL: KB1WOD MODE: CW 2-WAY KB1WOD MODE: CW 2-WAY

Station	Date	UTC	Band	RST	Operator	Station	Date	UTC	Band	RST	Operator
K3Y/0	1/04	1736	30m	599	N3PDT MO	K3Y/KH6	1/09	2156	17m	559	KH6ZM HI
K3Y/1	1/03	1352	40m	579	NF1U CT	K3Y/KL7	1/06	2040	20m	599	KL7IDA AK
K3Y/2	1/02	1258	80m	599	W2NRA NY	K3Y/KP4	1/04	2330	40m	559	KP3W PR
K3Y/3	1/02	0009	80m	599	AC2C MD	K3Y-AF	1/03	1829	20m	339	ZS6JBJ
K3Y/4	1/02	1437	20m	579	N8KR/4 FL	K3Y-AS	1/06	1402	20m	339	4X1WQ
K3Y/5	1/02	1423	20m	599	K0RO MS	K3Y-EU	1/02	1336	20m	579	F6HKA
K3Y/6	1/03	1256	40m	559	K6ELQ CA	K3Y-NA	1/04	1310	40m	599	VE9BEL NB
K3Y/7	1/03	1729	20m	589	K9ZMD WA	K3Y-OC	1/03	1251	40m	569	VK7CW
K3Y/8	1/02	1501	40m	579	N8KQ OH	K3Y-SA	1/05	2336	40m	599	OA4DX
K3Y/9	1/02	1253	40m	599	KK0I WI						

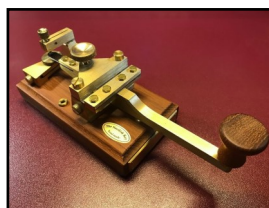
Facebook Pictures of Interest



Just wanted to remark how much fun working toward the new TKA has been. It reminds me of the fervor and excitement with which I jumped head first into my Quest for S. Kudos to the SKCC brain trust for their imagination and forward-thinking. Here's my modest 40M station, 6 keys at the ready ... listening for YOU. 73! Bill, WA4FAT



Good day in North East Ohio to play radio. 73, Tony KD8BBK



Here is my NOS Lennart Pettersson with its' crate. The last Lennart Pettersson was made in 2007.... 73, Mark-KM4AHP

Straight Key Night

Every day is a good day to send CW, but January 1 is reserved for Straight Key Night. Enjoy CW as it has been sent and enjoyed since the earliest days of Amateur Radio.

This 24-hour event is not a contest; rather it is a day dedicated to celebrating our CW heritage. Participants are encouraged to get on the air and simply make enjoyable, conversational CW QSOs. The use of straight keys, sideswipers or bugs to send CW is preferred. There are no points scored and all who participate are winners. So make your plans to join in the fun of SKN, you'll work many SKCC members but also many who are not members.

Did you know that SKN was the basis of the formation of the Straight Key Century Club? Yup, formed in January of 2006 following the Annual ARRL-Sponsored Straight Key Night (SKN). It started with a QRZ.com forum discussion on a Monthly Straight Key Night, Tom Petersen KC9ECI, formed the Straight Key Century Club and announced himself as SKCC #1. The purpose of SKCC is to promote use of Straight Key CW and to keep the spirit of Straight Key Night alive throughout the year.

Within days there were well over 100 members and an original goal was to contact 100 different members (our Centurion Award). As of October 1, 2018 there are 19,331 members of SKCC world wide and covering every continent and we're still growing!

73,
Ted K8AQM 1629s



Ho! Ho! Ho!



Just a reminder that if you have been a good SKCC operator and made your "dashes," "dits" and spacing just right, then I'll be visiting your shack and leaving you needed "goodies!"

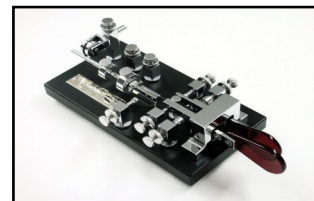
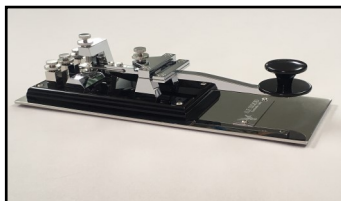
A second reminder now too, don't forget to drop a line and picture to my friend the editor (K8AQM), here showing and telling of the needed goodies you received for being such a good SKCC operator!

73 to all and to all a good night!

Merry Christmas!

Santa .-.-.

Triple Key Award is On!



Overview

The Triple Key Award promotes the use of all three SKCC accepted key types-- Straight Key, Semi-automatic (or bug), and Sideswiper (or cootie). It provides an incentive for members to operate with other key types than that with which they are most familiar.

Requirements

Make contacts, in any sequence or order, with a total of 300 different SKCC members as follows:

- 100 contacts using your straight key
- 100 contacts using your bug
- 100 contacts using your sideswiper

Please note: The total is 300 different SKCC members

The stations logged for these contacts don't need to be participating in the award and can use any accepted SKCC key type or exemption. Contacted stations do not need to state the type of key they are using during the QSO.

Exchange

The on-air exchange is the usual SKCC QSO format with the additional requirement that you must mention what key type or brand/model you are using. For speedier exchanges, sprints, etc. you can use abbreviations ("SK" for straight key; "BUG"; or "SS" for sideswiper). Only contacts made on or after November 10, 2018 are valid.

How to Submit your Triple Key Award Application

Include QSO details plus the type of key you used for each contact.

The administrators process all applications on a PC. Thus, all data must be entered into a PC before processing can begin. If you maintain a log in ADIF format, there are a variety of logging and award processing programs available from the [Files and Download Section](#). These programs will use your ADIF log file to create error-free application forms for you.

If you are submitting based on paper logs, there are two downloadable application forms available for your use: a [Word file](#) and an [Excel file](#). Both forms are fully compatible with the free Open Office programs.

If for any reason you are unable to submit a computer-readable application, please contact the award administrator before submitting your application to discuss alternatives.

All questions and submissions about/for this award and its endorsements should be sent to:

Triple Key applications go to Dave, W3NP, [the Triple Key Award Manager](#)

Miscellaneous

Some abbreviations to facilitate award hunting:

3KA = Triple Key Award, 3K Award

SK = straight key used in QSO as "KEY SK"

BUG = semiautomatic key: used as "KEY BUG"

SS = sideswiper or cootie: used as "KEY SS"

Good Luck!

Near-Fest: "North East Amateur Radio Festival"

Taken from Dave's (KB1WOD #10530s) Blog



This October was not a good one for Near-Fest. It was wet and cold. Not too many vendors or flea market guys showed up. So it was very sparse this year. However, I did run into [Mike N1STN](#) who had some interesting antenna launchers for sale. We have all seen this type of antenna launcher before; however, this one is a little different. It has an extension piece on the valve to make it easier to fire the launcher. It is also built with much better PVC material. Mike says he



routinely puts 100 psi of pressure into the launcher. He only makes a few and sells them only at Ham flea markets. He also makes one with an electric valve trigger, but those were sold out. They are completely assembled and very well constructed. I want to say they were \$120 but I can't remember now.



Of course the main reason I go to Near-Fest is for the home made desserts!

This year it was Dutch apple pie. Very good!!!



The local church group runs this food concession where they serve the pie.



Pie special this year: Dutch Apple Pie Ala mode! Yummy!!

Ran into this interesting looking trailer. Reminded me of the NestEgg trailers. It turns out this was a prototype trailer someone had built. The person had a complete Ham station inside



This is a home made "Egg"



Of course no visit to Near-Fest would be complete without stopping by the Nut Net table with Brian WO1VES and Harry WA1VVH. The Nut Net is an informal net that starts every night at 11:00 P.M. on the [NSRA](#) Danvers MA repeater and is open to everyone. Brian was telling me that there are not a lot of check ins, but he says there are a lot of listeners. He says a lot of people tell him how much they like listening to the Nut Net. I must admit it is quite informative as well as entertaining.

Homebrew a 6L6 with Keith, W4AFB #7196s

I had always wanted to build a homebrew transmitter. I had seen an article in the January 2018 QST about Bob Heil building and selling a homebrew transmitter kit. That rekindled my interest. Then in May 2018 I worked Randy, KB2PLW from Cocoa, FL who was running a homebrew 6L6 transmitter. After our QSO Randy and I emailed, and he was kind enough to mail me all the information he used when building his 6L6 transmitter. Thank you Randy!



The original article Randy referenced describing a vintage 6L6 transmitter was in the November 1992 CQ Magazine. I wanted to copy the vintage look and decided to find the oldest components possible. The 6L6

tube was introduced in 1936. Trying to look like I built it then, I used "pancake" caps, "end dot" resistors, cloth covered wire, old surface mount tube sockets and topped it off with an "arrow" knob from a 1930's Crosley radio. I bought an NOS Triplet meter from that period, but it was too big for the small front panel I wanted to use. I decided to use a DeJUR meter from Feb 3, 1959.

I decided to enclose most of the power supply wiring under the wood chassis for safety with the HV. I used an old Hammond organ transformer (A0-24110-1) for the power supply. The power supply uses a type 80 tube. It is mounted on a wood box. The transmitter is built on a wood plaque with a hardwood front panel. I bought the box and plaque at Michael's for a couple dollars each. I bought the front panel at Lowes. It was a small pre-cut hardwood board.



First SKCC QSO Party Results

Any event that includes a group of people requires a lot of planning. When you think about it, the word “group” is a relative term so planning for any group event brings with it unique challenges. It doesn’t happen overnight and sometimes, it never happens. Well... this time it happened. A year of planning, thinking and discussion brought us the 2018 SKCC QSO Party.

We had 88 score submissions. I hoped for more and am bit surprised that every entry made is by a SKCC member. I listened and tuned around for a bit and heard one or two non-members responding but never did see any submissions.

Some of the scores were very good but Ted Rachwal (K8AQM) and his group of 16 Dits (?) from the Dit Dah CW Gang (KS8KCC) came loaded for bear. With 299 QSOs and 170 grids, they managed to break the 50,000 point mark. Considering the fact that they had to shut down for a while for storms and at some point, someone let the smoke out of some equipment, that’s an amazing score. They must have had their Wheaties for breakfast that day. Congratulations Dit(s). Great job.

While we talk about amazing, Marty, N9SE came in second overall with 86 QSOs and 60 grids for a total score of 5160 points. Here is the amazing part...he did it running QRP with one hand tied behind his back...almost literally. He just had shoulder surgery and had only one hand to tune the KX3, send code and log with. That’s something Marty. Congratulations.

We had a total of 1977 QSOs reported. Fifty-nine of the entrants were running QRO, sixteen were running QROo and thirteen entrants ran QRP. The QRP bunch accounted for over 12% of the total QSOs at 244 for an average of just over 15 QSOs per entrant. The QRO gang accounted for 54% of the QSOs at 1078 for an average of just over 18 QSOs per entrant and the big guns accounted for 33% of the QSOs at 655 for an average of 40 QSOs per entrant. Pretty darn good showing considering the dismal band conditions of late.

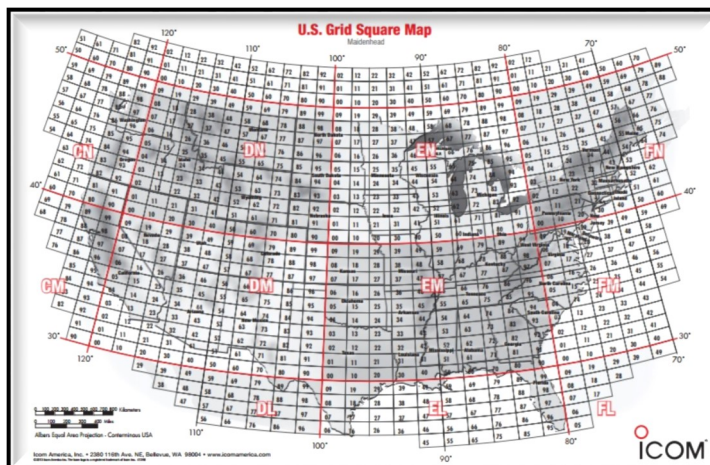
Speaking of conditions, it appears that the majority of the activity was in the eastern half of the country and points east and south. Steve, VK7CW managed to connect from Australia and the guys in France made a good showing.

Overall, I think our first attempt at a QSO party was a success. No, we didn’t have a huge turnout and even though we had some QSOs with non-members, none of them submitted their results. I suspect they were not actually participating in the QSO party. But... I think that if we all try to promote the event, build support and put it on our calendars for next year; we can look forward to another successful... and bigger SKCC QSO Party.

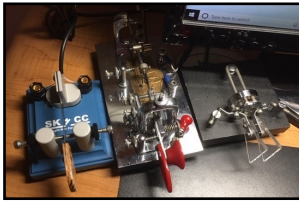
Thank you to all that participated this year. Each and every QSO was important and contributed to the success of this year’s party. Let’s make next year an even bigger success and put the SKCC on the contest map.

73,

Dave NI9M #15315s
QSO Party Manager



Results From the First-ever SKCC QSO Party



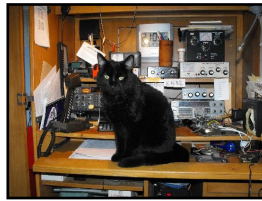
IC-706 to G5RVjr @ 35' -
- Great event with abundant signals, but sometimes life even gets in the way of ham radio. Yes, amazing. Great SKCC Cootie skill remains elusive but did get some more on-air practice. (My apologies to my victims.) 73 .. Don K3RLL



I was in and out, mostly out, but this was a good event. Participation seemed limited -- probably to be expected. The multiple contests, particularly on 20m were distracting, and probably caused some confusion. The arrival of some solar coronal hole wind gave a real boost to prop on Sunday afternoon. RST reports were tough with the rapid and deep QSB, but the signal peaks were amazing. Heard more sideswipers than before the last WES, so there appear to be some converts. Thanks to all for the QSOs. 73, John W1TAG



Wow, lets do this again! However, I'm afraid with a lady-friend in the hospital, I just didn't have much desire nor the time to participate as I had hoped for, so only had 22 QSOs. But they were all fun. Ran my TS-590SG at 75 watts to a multi-band vertical, and my Kent Str Key. 73, Curt WA2JSG



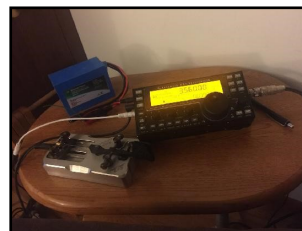
Had about 1 1/2 hours Saturday afternoon to work this event. Tried 20M first, no answers to my "CW SKQ" calls and then the freq was over run by another contest. I had better luck on 40M and finally finished my time available on 80M. Hope the next SKQP does not fall on the California QP contest weekend ! 73, John K8JD



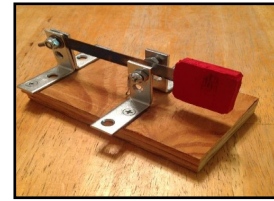
Not much time for radio this weekend, but managed to get in eight QSO'S anyway. Several other contest going on so made for slim pickings. 73, Don WA4SPJ



Whew! Great fun but the wx storms caused us to shutdown Saturday for a bit. 16 SKCCers showed and operated. We battled the CQP but even managed to get a few to send their grid and name to us. There was plenty of food, plenty of laughs along with lots of stories. All worked well until we "smoked" an MFJ RCS-4 switch..., do they stink! Thanks to all who called in. 73, "Dit" KS8KCC



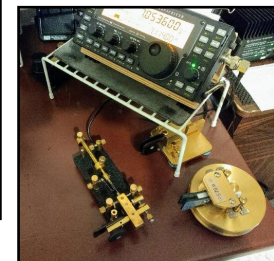
Seemed like a lack of activity. Anyway, it was a pleasant diversion right after having rotator cuff surgery. I am spending a lot of hours in the easy chair (including sleep) so had my wife help me set up the KX3 on battery power next to my chair. Tuned the radio, sent code and typed one handed :-). See you all next year. 73, Marty N9SE



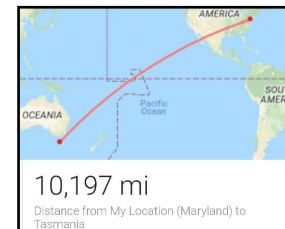
Still learning this little homebrew critter73, Bill KE3O



Lots of Fun ... I enjoyed sending on my fantastic SKCC Side-swiper by LNR Precision. Beautiful CW at a bargain price! 73, AL N4OW



Got back from trip in time for one contact with KS8KCC! Looks like I missed a good time. 73, Jay W8ES



Very timely event for me, as it got me 2/3 of the way to my T, after having my C for under a day. Extremely fun, and the highlight was working some of our DX brethren, notably Steve, VK7CW, with my wire antenna and five watts. My cooterization seems to be complete; all contacts were fully cooted. Lloyd K3ESE

KS8KCC and the SKCC QSO Party

KS8KCC, the club call for the “Dit-Dah CW Gang,” enjoys operating multi-multi; multi transmitters and multi operators. We are fortunate, we can operate five stations at the same time running QRO without interfering with each other. Along with our love of CW, we enjoy the comradery of operating together. There were 18 SKCC members operating during the weekend and two non-hams joining us.

The plan for KS8KCC and the SKCC QSO Party was to activate all the bands, especially the 15 and 10m bands considered to be “dead” during this propagation cycle. We didn’t have any luck on 10m (only one QSO logged ...with a local), although we tried to hear LW3EX and a few others spotted. Since we were in the “unlimited” category we used the sked page and packetclusters to our advantage making frequency announcements. Our efforts on 15 meters proved much better as we had 29 QSOs. Since we were “blessed” with thunderstorms and had to shutdown several times, 160m was a no-go, 20 over noise prevented hearing!

KA8HFN 2046s	K9TM 12335t	KC8CJG 15084	AC8W 2813
K8AQM 1629s	NU8Z 11237t	KD8VSQ 13072t	KE8CEW 15084
W8KBW 12557	W8IQ 75577	N8XI 15024s	NQ8T 5919
N8GAS 16455	KB8ECG 10169	KD8TTM 11614	K8KIC 2938t
AC8JF 10511	N8KQ 8934s	Nate (N8KQ’s Grandson)	“Jim” (friend)

Actually the best part of operation was the camaraderie among the operation. Many were first time operators here even though they were well known SKCCers. Did you know that Larry KA8HFN and Tim K9TM have extensive guitar collections? Mark NU8Z once played drums in a band and Larry KA8HFN also played and plays yet in get-togethers? Randy N8KQ (the membership manager) brought his grandson Nate (high school) who quickly jumped in to be a logger...man that kid is quick with a computer! As a result of experiencing the event Nate has promised to have a call by November and he’ll be back for our annual K3Y/8 operation.

No operation at this shack is ever without food, in fact, the standard joke is, “we consume more calories than we make QSOs!”... and it’s the truth! Depending on the length of the event there is chili, chips, cashews, coffee, water, sodas and other snacks; any beer consumed is held off until after the event for a celebration...cw and beer consumption seldom are a good mix! To this event Larry KA8HFN, brought two huge wonderful pies; apple and pumpkin! You can bet Larry’s offering was a great hit with all the ops! Apple pile disappeared quickly ... Stan AC8W scarfed the last piece before hitting the road for home ...geez, I wanted that last piece!

Check the next page for more photos



Wes AC8JF gives “sage advice” to Nate before grabbing food!



Just check out the collection of goodies here! There is one of those wonderful pies Larry KA8HFN brought.

Enjoy some of the photos from the operation at multi-multi unlimited KS8KCC.



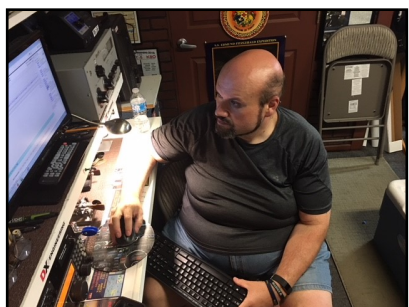
Front to back: AC8W Stan, KC8CJG George on 40m (K3 and Alpha 99 es death-ray dipole) and NQ8T Steve manning 15m (K3 Alpha 76 and 2 L Yagi at 70 ft).



Randy N8KQ logging on 40m for Ken K8KIC.



Front to back: Randy N8KQ at 40m, Steve NQ4T logging at 15m for Larry KA8HFN and Dave KB8ECG running 20m. (K3 Alpha 76A and log periodic at 105 ft.)



Jeremy KD8VSQ posting our operating frequencies on the sked page. Also looking on the packet cluster just in case there is a 10m opening.



Larry KA8HFN and Steve NQ8T scratching out those 15m QSOs.



George KC8CJG on 40m, "Man this is fun!"



Rick N8XI running on 20m with Dave KB8ECG logging for him.

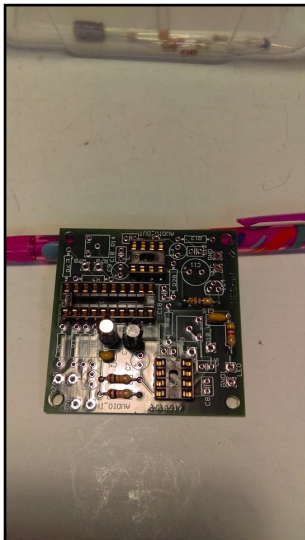
Nothing is more fun than operating with friends and enjoying a great SKCC activity! KS8KCC will almost always be a multi-multi operation, keeping it easy we always use the name "Dit".... Guess what our last name is..yes! "Dit" it is so...

73 from the Dit-Dah CW Gang,
Dit-Dit

PS For an "uncluttered" view of the KS8KCC station visit "K8AQM" on QRZ.com

The Deceptively Simple Audio Filter

Editor...The following is not an SKCC endorsement for any audio filter, it is simply a report on projects by SKCC members who are or have built an audio filter and their perspective on its use.



Working on another project. Building a SCAF, switching capacitance audio filter. These little gems work great and are a must for radios that are lacking cw filtering. They are put out by New England QRP Club. They are cheap and easy to build. 73, Tony KD8BBK

Combine it with DSP and the combo will knock your socks off. All of a sudden the old dictum "if you can hear them you can work them" begins to crumble, because you really can hear the signal that on either one separately is at the noise floor. At the least, you can use it between your headphone jack and phones. I've built a couple, this one for portable use. I replaced the pot that changes the center frequency with a fixed resistor to get everything to fit into the ubiquitous Al-toids tin.



73, Pete NM5PS

Built one for my HW-8. Really does a great job...73, Dave Colson

Just built mine! As good as DSP for cw! Excellent product! ..73, Kirk W0KM

They work great. I used mine with my MFJ-9040 during one field event and it allowed me to work a station running tens of mW from Georgia. I'm in north Texas. #110...73, Steve AA5TB

Here is the scoop on this particular audio filter: *QRP Club of New England*

The NEScaf is a switched capacitive audio filter. It is designed to be simple to build and use. It is more flexible than previous filters for QRP rigs. It has two panel-mounted controls — a single center-detent potentiometer that sets the center frequency of the filter's bandpass (default value settable between ~415Hz and ~1kHz), and a dual-ganged potentiometer that provides a continuously variable bandwidth control (from ~60Hz to ~1500Hz). This ability to **smoothly vary the bandwidth** is very useful.

The NEScaf is designed to be driven with a phones or speaker level signal. No hacking into your rig — **just connect it to the headphone or speaker output** of the radio. This makes it usable with several radios. The board is small enough, at about 2 inches square, to build inside many radios however, if you so choose.

This kit is **suitable for all experience levels**. It uses all thru-hole components, and the construction and adjustment is very straight-forward. It is reasonably priced and will be a nice addition to the QRPer's arsenal of tools.

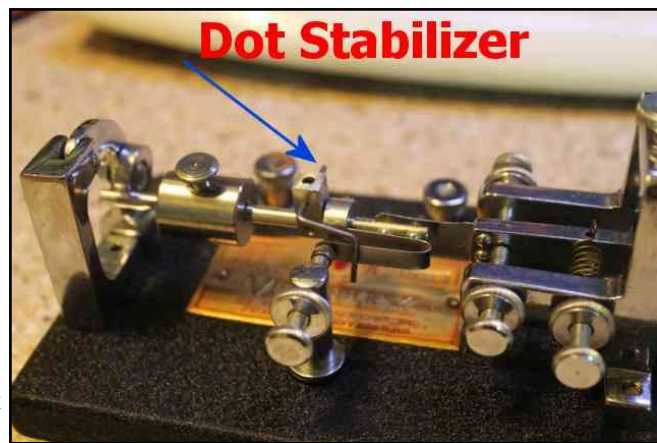
Theory



The integrated circuit at the heart of the NEScaf is made up of two CMOS active filters. These filters are extremely configurable (low pass, band pass, notch etc). We have chosen to set up both filters as Butterworth band pass filters and to cascade the filters. Butterworth filters have the characteristic of constant amplitude in the band pass region, while the cutoff knee is not be as sharp as if the filter were configured as a Chebychev. We considered this an acceptable tradeoff, wanting constant volume out regardless of the bandwidth or center frequency setting of the filter. There are two on-board trimmer pots. One is used to “calibrate” the center frequency pot. This allows you to adjust the frequency at which the center detent occurs. If you are using a rig with a transmit offset and sidetone of say, 700 Hz, you can use this trimmer to make that the center-detent frequency. The other on-board trimmer adjusts the audio level into the filters output amp. Using this pot, you can set the overall gain of the filter. This can be used to set the filter for unity gain, if desired. This way, the filter could be switched in and out, and still maintain a comparable volume level in the headphones. The NEScaf has no panel mounted volume control of its own. It is designed so that you use the volume or RF gain control (if present) on the rig it is being used with.

Dot Stabilizer

K2IZ here, been doing CW since Navy Radioman School back in '65, licensed since '71, tried for years to master a bug, not really to my satisfaction and those that I tried to make contacts with, I finally got an electronic keyer, then built a K1EL and used the Iambic paddles, Lately the only times I use the Iambic paddles is when we run a Special Events station, makes it a lot easier on these arthritic fingers, hand, wrist and arm. I've also been a SKCC member for quite a few years (5019), last month I got a reminder of the SKCC SP, I operated for two hours with a straight key and felt it the next day so, I had a Presentation Model that I had gotten a few years ago, never been used but 30 years old. I broke it out of storage, cleaned the contacts, aligned the contacts and spend several hours trying to make it sound like my keyer but no matter how I tried I was getting "scratchy" dots, annoying to me and I'm quite sure annoying to the station on the other end of the QSO. One of the club members (Great South Bay ARC) told me he came across this site and had ordered the Dot Stabilizer. I did a follow up check, turns out that Ted McElroy had come up with this exact same fix almost 100 years ago. Yet this was the first time I had heard or read about it, I saw the various fixes, putting a piece of sponge or clay in contact spring, I'm not sure how that would last, anyway I ordered the Dot Stabilizer, aluminum, (Brass is available) and installed it this evening...



.....What a difference!.....I have a few more adjustments to make but it sounds just like my K1EL keyer. For anyone wanting to tame their bug I would recommend contacting W0EB and ordering one, after installing it make the additional adjustments and I feel you will be very satisfied with the on the air sound of your bug.

73, John K2IZ

Editor....I have five of these “Dot Stabilizers” on various bugs and agree 100% with John!

Bug Advice from Ted McElroy

With the advent of the SKCC Triple Key Award, a number of us are spending more time with bugs. One of the tricks in switching between key types is to use very different styles of finger, wrist and arm movements. Some time ago, I came across an article in "Morsum Magnificat" (June 1997 issue) giving advice on bug setup and adjustment. There was an excerpt from a Ted McElroy article in an old "Radio" magazine. I finally located the original article on the americanradiohistory.com web site. The 1997 version had a number of edits, which I have kept to prevent introducing the concept of slapping one's mother-in-law, among other things.

From Radio magazine, February, 1935, pages 24 and 35.
"How Telegraphers Are Made"

By T.R. McElroy, World's Fastest Telegrapher

Take your present automatic and slide a book under it. Get those paddles about 2 ½ to 3 inches above the table where they belong. Take a look at your wrist. You'll see it runs smoothly straight. ...There is only one correct method of sending on an automatic. You've got to slap the paddle with your thumb, actuated by your whole arm, to make dots. And you've got to slap it over to the dash side with your whole arm ...with the wrist straight up and down and the index finger and large finger hitting the paddle with a full arm movement.

Try it! Put that automatic on the desk in front of you where it belongs, about where a letter would be if you were gonna sign it. It'll be somewhere around 12 inches in on the desk in front of you. Your arm diagonally across the desk with the fingers resting on the paddle, and the elbow just off the desk. And the hand up and down. Keep your wrist off the table. You send with your whole arm.

Do what I'm telling you. Just try it. It won't cost anything. If you could only realize how easy it is to be really good at this code racket, you'd go wild over it.

—...—

I confess that I have only done this part-way. I use a Viz-Key Vertical bug, mounted on a piece of ¾ inch plywood next to my straight key. I found the extra ¾ inch elevation to be enough to keep my wrist straight. That plywood is screwed directly to the table top. The bug mounting is done with a couple of nylon cable clamps from Lowe's. You can slap that paddle as hard as you'd like, and it will not budge. If your bug does move with keying, look into some method of securing it. Note that McElroy also advocates raising a straight key by the same amount. In any case, the ¾ inch is enough for me.

John Andrews, W1TAG

Adjusting Your Bug

SEMI-AUTOMATIC KEY ADJUSTMENT

by
BRIAN MURPHY, VE2AGO
originally published in QST MAGAZINE

Although the use of electronic keyers is increasing, many C.W. operators would prefer to keep their "bugs", especially if they could make them perform as well as, or better than, keyers. The performance one gets with a bug depends greatly on the adjustment, and no amount of skill can make up for a poorly adjusted bug. It has been my experience that there is a tremendous lack of understanding among amateurs over the maze of adjustments found on most bugs. There is also the belief that the adjustments are solely for one's individuality, and we therefore hear a lot of signals with choppy dots, poor ratio of dot length to dash length, and poorly timed spacing between dot groups and dashes (e.g. "•• tMHUD' for the number 'two').

The following will describe some techniques to use in adjusting your own bug, together with some hints on good character formation and better, error free sending.

GENERAL

Although different manufacturers have a few more or a few less adjustments on their bugs, most have the ones shown in the diagram in Fig. I. together with various types of spring tension controls. Admittedly, some of these adjustments have to be made by trial and error according to instinctive feel, but we will outline the general objectives:

- 1.) To make dots of correct length with correct ratio of dot to space length.
- 2.) To prevent high frequency vibrations of the moving dot contact F with resultant scratchy dots.
- 3.) To prevent any other undue motion (unwanted bouncing) of the dot contact (F).
- 4.) To keep the time between dot groups and dashes down to its proper level (the length of one dot).
- 5.) Proper mating of contacts.

PROCEDURE

The first adjustments to play with are C, D, and G on the diagram. The damper arm, G, may be non-adjustable on some some Vibroplex[^]-tugs, in which case D should be adjusted as follows: clear D, C, and E away so that the arm comes completely to rest against the damper arm G. Then advance D so that it slightly pushes away the lever, but not enough to clear the arm away from the damper arm. The result is correct if, when the arm springs to rest against the damper arm G and D, there is absolutely no visible bounce. This is to ensure that when another group of dots is started, the arm is not still vibrating. If G is also adjustable, there is just this much more latitude in making the alignment.

With E still clear, adjust C for optimum distance between D and C. This is probably the most difficult adjustment to make because some experimenting is required. When the paddle is pushed for dots, the lever butts up against C, which sets up the oscillations of the arm. Moving the lever from D to C takes time, so that transforming from dashes to dots is faster, and therefore smoother, if the distance is kept small; but then, unfortunately, the arm does not gain enough momentum to make long slow dots. This is where many hams fail to make the best compromise, and end up with very poor dots at speeds below 25 w.p.m.

Since there is seldom any problem getting fast dots on a bug, it is best to start with the D to C distance quite large. This will feel awkward, but try it with the weigh set for the slowest possible speed after setting up the dot contacts. The moveable contact F on the arm should mate evenly with its counterpart E. After checking this, adjust so that E and F just barely short together after making a string of dots. Lock E, and now connect an ohm-meter across the bug terminals. While making a string of dots, the average deflection of the meter should be mid-scale = 10% for both slow and fast speed settings. The reading should be taken for the first five or ten dots only, because after that it will start to change, depending on the E setting. It is typical to have too low a reading and, hence, have choppy dots. Too high a reading will probably result in mushy dots. Of course, adjust the screw E

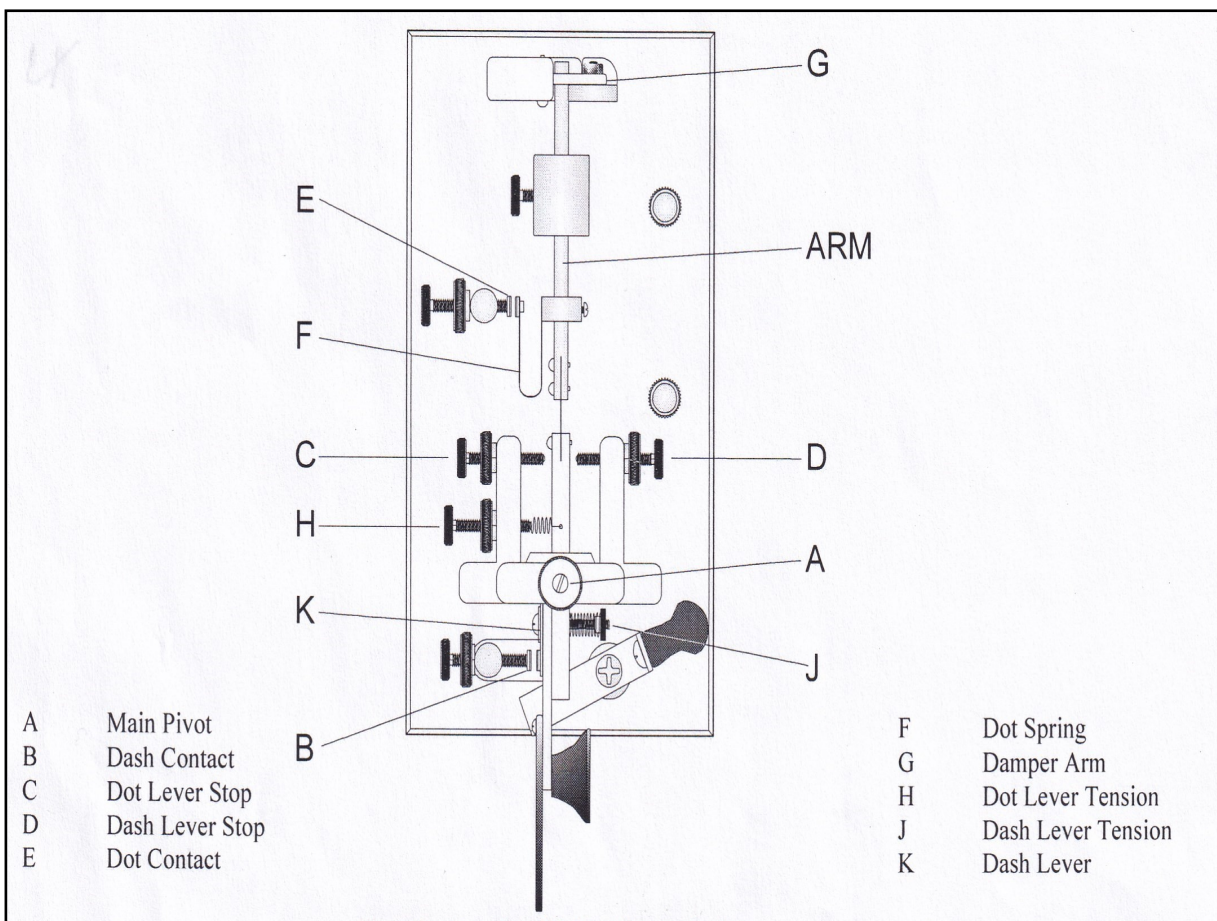
closer or farther as required. In case your meter has a poor transient response, a good ear is the final check for this test.

Now if the arm oscillations die out too quickly with slow dots, C has to be adjusted to increase the D to C distance and, hence, the lever momentum. This is also true if the dots cannot be made slow enough, say 20-25, words per minute.

If C is changed, E must be re-set before further testing; and so these compromise the bulk of the adjustments which affect your fist. If D to C is too large, one will find it too difficult to switch from dots to dashes smoothly and vice-versa.

At this point another problem occurs with many bugs: contact D is usually mounted on a hairpin spring which sometimes has a high-frequency vibration visible after some dots are made when the arm comes to rest. This vibration will make the next dot scratchy, a good cure for this problem is to cut out a small cubicle of fine grain, soft, synthetic sponge and fit it snugly - but not too tightly - inside the hairpin behind the contact, so that the vibrations are damped out. Use a small dab of glue on the back side to hold it in place.

The dash contact spacing B can be set to personal preference. Too wide a spacing and too much spring tension will result in jerky dashes, while small spacing and low tension may cause an occasional joining of what was intended to be two dashes. Contacts should mate perfectly for maximum life and may be cleaned with good silver polish; or they may be lightly scuffed with the very slightly abrasive material used to clean relay contacts, if they have become pitted, DO NOT use emery paper or sandpaper, as these leave an unwanted residue on the surfaces and can also excessively wear down the surface.



OPERATING

When using a bug, it is essential that it be firmly mounted, even if it is heavy and has rubber feet. It is sometimes inconvenient to attach it directly to the table top. If the table top is smooth, suction cups with protruding studs are available at hardware stores that can be stuck on the table around the sides of the bug, so that the studs keep the bug from sliding sideways.

The following will describe some ideas on how to send, at the risk of fiery disagreement from A1 operators across the land. Most surely, this is not the only way; but the basic ideas might lead one to recognize a weakness in his own method.

The hand should rest on the table, with the paddle located between the print of the thumb and the side of the index finger. Using the tip or the print of the index finger is all right provided the wrist action, not finger action, is maintained on dashes. Dashes should be made by rocking the wrist with the fore-arm resting on the table. No part of the hand, wrist or arm should feel constricted. When a row of dashes is made, the side of the index finger should remain in contact with the paddle, while the wrist is rocked back and forth, with no slipping on the table. This helps the continuity of the row, rather than hold the remaining fingers outstretched in midair, curl them under so that they may rest on the table. Most of this comes naturally; but it is mentioned to prevent beginners from starting off completely wrong.

There is a great tendency to set the dot speed too fast. Concentrate on sending good code at the slowest dot setting possible which should be a least down to 20-25 w.p.m.. A technique which produces amazing results is to send as slow as absolutely possible for one QSO, then, as fast as you are able for the next QSO. The effect of sending slow engrains good ration, spacing and general good form, while sending fast gives practice in timing and muscle control. I would strongly discourage leaving the speed control always set to the favorite spot, because this seems to lead to the freezing of bad habits, and definitely results in poor ratio when trying to vary the speed by varying the dashes only. On a bug, or keyer, variation of speed is the key to learning control.

For good practice, open up the telephone book as some page other than Smith, and send the names, addresses and phone numbers at slow, fast, slow, fast, ... speeds. Ten sets at 15 w.p.m. and 30 w.p.m. without one error is excellent. Those numbers are terrific practice for dashes!



W9BSP In SKCC?

I had the opportunity to operate from the historic W9BSP shack at the Ensor Park and Museum in Olathe, KS again today. Sat in the shack for about an hour and a half. Made 8 contacts, mostly SKCC members. Worked K6KPH, too, so there was about 200 years of combined radio history in that contact.

I'm working on the W9BSP club trustee to get a SKCC number. It would be fun to activate the station with its old call, and have a new number to give out.

In the photo, I'm not using any of the equipment visible, other than the key. The MEMO club has a Kenwood TS 930S in the shack. 73, Doug N3PDT

Ed... "Google" W9BSP to read the interesting story behind this call.

Flash News.... W9BSP is now #19301, great job Doug!

Want to Send with a Sideswiper or Cootie Key? Here's How!

By David, N1EA #587

Here are two ways of trying cootie key without much work are given below:

1. The bug rubber band method. Tie the vibrator to the damper with a rubber band, re adjust the dot contact adjustment to produce a good steady contact. This (of course!) is reversible.
2. Take a single lever paddle, short the dot/dash contact posts with a wire. Plug key into straight key jack.

Cootie key sending.

Sometimes a cootie (also called a sideswiper) is confused with an expert on the hand key. Some hand key operators can achieve 30 wpm which is also a fast cootie key speed recommended by some wire telegraphists and old timers and I found it very smooth but I also found it very confusing as I wanted to send with a bug and one key confused the other! I soon modified this to use this method:

Start each letter with the same hand motion as a bug, then alternate the closures from that point. Thus a Morse character beginning with a dash would always start with the fingers; a character beginning with a dot, the thumb. This was my only modification of the LRLRLR type (or RLRLRLRL etc.) type of motion.

I can force myself to send "fingers grab first" but it seems on the next letter, I'm leading as if I'm sending on a bug again. So I didn't fight it, I went with the flow. Unevenness - I have noticed that I occasionally get "confused" about which side to send on - but since a cootie is bi-directional, I have learned not to worry about it, so any delay or break in the flow is minimized. Basically I adopt the "if it feels like it should go this way in motion, do it." approach.

Adjustment of sideswiper: Most operators find that it is easier to send clearly with different spacings on the left and right. I give myself a bit more spacing on the left hand side (which closes with the push of my fingers). I also add a bit more spring on that side with the Vibroplex Sideswiper:

Check-out/in the SideSwiperNet.org and to the Net itself, we hold nets world-wide several times a week and would be very interested in gaining more members. The SSN was founded by Bob Shrader, W6BNB in California and during his 99 years of life spread internationally. Bob was the author of "Electronic Communication" and a radio officer for Dollar Line where he used spark, arc and CW. He also taught the subject in California.



Just-built KX1 - had been sitting in its box for some years - next to "big brothers" FT-840 and Argonaut 509 (a Rock Mite also sits atop the Argonaut); WT 8 AMP MKII straight key. First contact made yesterday with Bert, F6HKA, SKCC #6069S - merci beaucoup, Bert! 73, de Colin AE3A



EBay can be your friend. Just took delivery of this E.F. Johnson Speedx bug, 114-520. And it looks like it just came out of the (original) box. Mint!...Pete NM5PS

My Road into Amateur Radio

As an amateur radio enthusiast for 58 years, I have been asked many times, “How did you get into radio?” Here is my story, probably not so unique but always seemed of interest when told.

As a twelve year old (in 1960) and living with my grandparents, I was “ordered” to clean my room every Saturday morning before I could go out and play baseball. This was not my favorite thing to do. I had just become “interested” in music and girls (not too uncommon for a 12 year old boy!). I discovered a local AM radio station was playing “the top 10 hits” during the time of “the great room clean” (pre Beatles of course). This music made the work go much faster and made the chore much more bearable. Well, one Saturday-cleaning I was listening to the latest-greatest hits when my program was interrupted with;

“Ok, Thanks for the 59. The name here is Ray, Romeo Alpha Yankee and the QTH is Port Huron, MI and you’re also 59...K8RAY Over”

WHAT THE HECK! What was that crap and who is messin’ with my radio! And more.....

“Fine business Bob, your DX-100 and dipole are doing a fine job here. The rig here is a DX-40 running about 50 watts, HQ-145 receiver and a dipole. How copy?”

NOW I’M MAD! I JUST MISSED THE NUMBER FOUR SONG OF THE WEEK!

“Bob, I need a QSL from Iowa. My address here is Please QSL...Over”

Fortunately I wrote “Ray’s” address down as he gave it several times. After another exchange or two I was able to get back in time to catch the number 1 hit of the week (“Purple People Eater” I think) and finish my room cleaning.

This was not over! With “Ray’s” address in hand I hopped on my Schwinn Tornado and pedaled over to give “Mr. Ray” a piece of my mind about messin’ with my radio! When I approached this house I saw wires strung everywhere between trees but all connected in their middles with lampcord and all leading to a basement window. I heard voices coming from that curtained window and tried to hear what was being said. I don’t know if I caused a shadow or what but very quickly an old guy (all of 19 years old) pulled the curtain and yelled,

“HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE!”

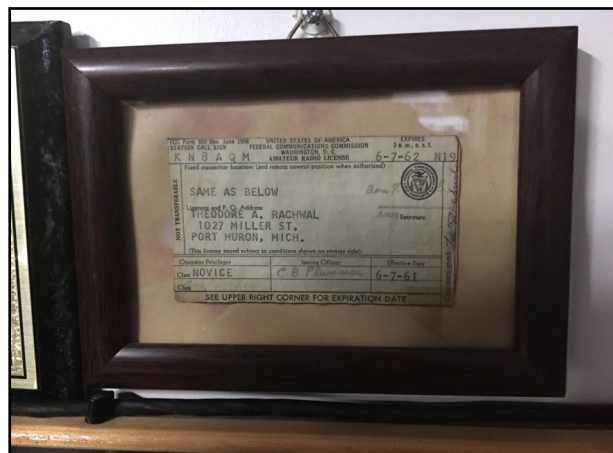
Shocked and somewhat frightened, I replied in my heroic voice, “Ummm, you’re coming through my radio and mess’ up my music.”

Long pause..... “Well,wait a minute, I’ll be right out.”

Little did I know this was to be the beginning of a life-long adventure into a great hobby. Ray came out and invited me into his “shack.” The shack was a remodeled “coal-bin” (remember those?) freshly painted and glowing with the warmth and smell that only old tube rigs can give. I explained what happened at my house with my radio (I lived about 12 blocks away). Ray said he would check into the matter and then told me to sit down and pro-

ceeded to call “CQ” and explain what he was doing. A VE2 came back to him and after some initial exchanges Ray handed the big D-104 mic to me and said to say hello to Alan who lived in Quebec City. Talk about a deer in the headlights!...I did manage to squeak out a “hello.”

And so I was hooked, which began a year of study and learning the code. By my 13th birthday along with a neighborhood buddy, we took our Novice tests. I was issued “KN8AQM” and he was issued “KN8CAI,” (re-issued calls). It was a great Novice year living on 3716 KHz and bringing cw to 20+ wpm. The “General” followed easily.



So that’s my story and by the way, “K8RAY” is Ray’s actual call and it was issued to him as KN8RAY, **just by chance!** Ray lives today about 30 miles from me and is active on VHF/UHF.

What’s your entry into amateur radio?

73,
Ted, K8AQM VE9AQM #1629s

Faith Hanna Lea, AE4FH de AH6AX

Remember young Faith Hannah Lea (AE4FH) from Florida, who was with her Dad and family at the 2015 Dayton Hamvention? Faith was in a picture taken at our table – she had just passed her EXTRA exam – I believe she was 10 or 11 years old at the time! Faith received SKCC # 14423. Well, young Faith has become an ambassador for youth radio and represented USA in South Africa where she attended the YOUTH ON THE AIR international conference.

EXTRACT FROM CQ MAGAZINE, OCT 2018 ISSUE – Pg 8 (ZERO BIAS: A CQ Editorial)

In the audience for the YHOTY (Young Hams on the Air) ceremony was equally-amazing young ham Faith Hannah Lea, AE4FH, along with her parents and three siblings, all of whom are hams. She and her dad, James, WX4TV, were barely off the plane from South Africa, where Faith Hannah represented IARU Region 2 (North and South America) at the annual Youth on the Air (YOTA) camp program.

Faith Hannah’s dad was telling me about Memorial Youth DX Adventure program in Costa Rica and related a story of the group being introduced to slow-scan TV and one of the campers asking what it could be used for. One example given was chess-by-radio, with moves photographed and sent to a fellow player via SSTV. Another participant suggested a different way to do that — substitute each chess move (e.g. q3r5) for the grid square (e.g., FN30) in FT8 data and transmit the moves via this quickly growing digital mode. He also volunteered to write the code when he got home to send the data to a chessboard on a computer screen and automatically show each move!

September WES Photos and Chat



Water in the basement caused my shack to be totally dismantled. So, I grabbed my recently-revived HW-8 and hooked things up! Between folding laundry and vacuuming water that was seeping in, I had a ball with QRP and an almost-cootie. I didn't have a key available easily, so I used a single lever paddle as a sideways straight key; my sending was not very good! 1.5 watts to my 120' window-line-fed doublet up about 30'. No computer... just me, the radio and a pen and paper. Thanks to all who heard and worked me... and to those who tried, too ;-)
72 & 73, Jim AF3Z



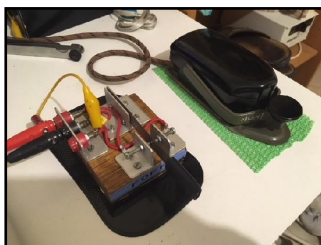
Fun time. Gave me a chance to practice my Cootie skills prior to the start of the new SKCC award. Great cootie fists out there - super impressed with Bert, F6HKA, who I heard had just started during the WES. He sounded experienced when I worked him. Thanks for all the QSO's, Cootie users and non-cootie users alike. Sure had fun. K3/Hexbeam/2 ZS6BKW Dipoles/Inverted-L/ Begali HST3 in Sideswiper mode...73, Harv K2PI



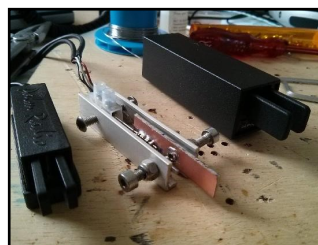
I finally had a free weekend and it just happened to fall on WES. Awesome!
20m was a gold mine for me this month. Lots of QSB early in the afternoon. In fact, my apologies to KE0NXV. I responded to his CQ (I think he was running QRP), but the QSB grabbed him and drug him to the bottom. I never heard from him again. [sad face]
Great event. Nice to work so many other cooties, too.
73, Todd N7TMS



Fun WES even with limited time. HB cootie and 5 mighty watts... it doesn't get any better. 73 Peter, AK3X



73, Jean F8FFI



Great fun WES, 20m was good to me on Saturday evening and I eventually got the hang of my home-brew cootie and really liked it. Cootie was inspired by my Palm paddles and seen here posing



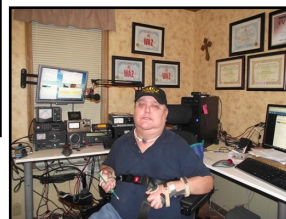
Decided at the beginning to use the FT-450d at 100w with band conditions earlier this week. Few stations heard, plenty of Qsb. K0RO, Ralph popped out of my noise floor suddenly at 1850 utc on Saturday morning. Worked him at 1855 utc, and by 1900 utc his signal disappeared never to return. Amazing to hear/work a station in Mississippi with current band conditions from 73, John AL7JK



Poor propagation again. Worked all 7 on 20m. 20m = K0RO, K4BAI, N9SE, F6EJN, IZ2QXG, KG6MC, W1TAG. Rig.. Kenwood TS-440SAT, 100w to Cushcraft MA6V Vertical, Marconi PS 213A key and a big B type key. 73. John G0RDO



Only had a couple hours this time. Was able to operate 10 watt portable at a nearby park. Good fun as always!
73, Warren KC9IL



73, David NM5Z

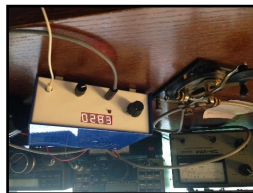
More September WES



Wired up some old paddles as cooties but after several attempts at Morse code I decided not to pollute the airwaves with some really bad cw. Reverted to my tried and true bug, a 1938 vintage Martin Flash Key. Operated mainly on 40 with a few contacts on 20. My one contact on 15 was with Max in HI, that was fun. Made good progress on my S



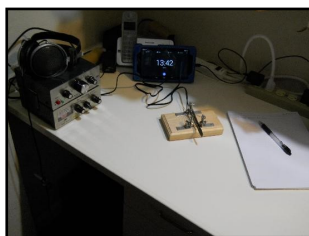
As always another fun WES with a great theme as I got to use my Russian KDM-2 Sideswiper (cootie). Had some great openings and was surprised at some of the great signals in these supposedly poor conditions. Thanks to all who worked me, 73 de Steve VK7CW # 10820S



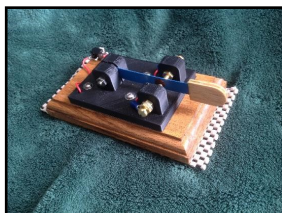
Fun WES this month, surprising how well 1W worked on 20M. Almost like days when there were spots. 73, Curt KB5JO



Caught the last hour. Not an idea place for qrp..6CL6 @ 5watts...73, Tom K7ROH



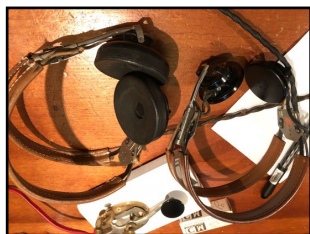
It works! But apologies for being a newbie "lid" with it. 73, Gary W6IRA



40 Meters was the best band to be on here. Got some great practice on the cootie.



Pulled my W1SFR and GHD cooties off the shelf for the first real test. Made plenty of mistakes but gave both keys (and my brain) a good workout. Found the W1SFR key to be much stiffer than the GHD key, but I needed two hands on the GHD key to keep it from moving, while Steve's key stayed put easier. Great fun... I'll keep the cooties at the rig now instead of on the shelf! 73, Al KC4ZA



That was fun! My K2/100 has an audio chain issue, so I went old school with a Heathkit DX-60B/HG-10B transmit combo, paired with a Drake R-4B receiver. Wish I'd had more time! 73, Doug N3PDT



Since I can only operate portable, WES was a challenge this year since we had pouring rain during both days, but I set up my portable station inside my truck and logged all I could! 73, Hayward K5HMG

That was a hoot!! Enjoyed every minute of it. I ran my club for the Sideswiper theme and made good use of the New SKCC SideSwiper. I never once had to chase it around the desk or use my hand to steady it.

There are some great SS fists out there also. I didn't realize just how many were going to show up for the party. Bands were in great shape Sat night but not so much Sunday day. I did get to make a lot of DX contacts for the club. Some new ones and some old friends. Bert, F6HKA and Bernard, F5DE were solid into NC. Several big signals at 40 over. EA1AOQ, Chus in Spain had a wonderful SS fist. Looking forward to the SKCC QSO party and the Triple Key award. Tonight I veered out of my QRP stable into the QRO (for me) world. Using my KX3 into an HF Packer Amp (35 watts) and the regular doublet and QUAD antennas at 33 feet. Never once went to a straight key or bug. However, it is really tough to send QRS on a Sideswiper! 73 to all and thanks for all the contacts! Randy_K4INC(aka KB4QQJ)

And Even More September WES!



A fun WES for me. High points working V_k7CW on 40&80 and VY2BR PEI answering a CQ ! Conditions were so-so but the activity seemed to be very good. 20 and 40 dominated - 80 tough with high QRN. The last half hour was madness ! Cu All next month 73 de AL N4ow 11375s (Love my Begali Swing!)



Joined the sprint Saturday evening, just scanning for a slow cq call to answer, heard Max calling WES and decided to try. I use a Vibroplex standard bug, but since I suck at using it as a bug (I mean, really really bad), I only use it one way as a horizontal key. I didn't know if that counted as a cootie, so I didn't send /co with my name in the exchanges. Thanks Max for slowing down for me! 73 Terry KD0STU



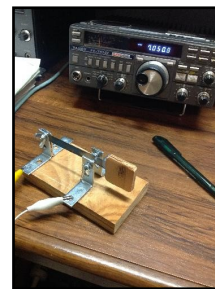
Great contest. The cooties brought out stations I never heard before. There were openings into Europe like I never seen before. I operated with a Ten-Tec Eagle into a G5RV up 60 feet in trees. Keys were a Vibroplex Original Bug and a Navy CLT-26012 strait key. 73, Bob K3CKO



Manage to squeeze in a couple of hours. Great fun, as always! 73, Marty N9SE



Had Fun. Lots of rain BUT little lightning! Thanks for the COs! Thanks for the Qs. 73 Dale K3SEN



After forty-six years as an amateur radio operator, I got on the air using a device other than a straight key. This WES gave me an opportunity to build and use, for the first time ever, a 'Cootie'... and it was fun. I began building my Cootie mid-day Friday, practiced that evening, and was on the air by 1500 UTC Saturday morning. My apologies to those who worked me (my bad fist), but I did the best I could with such limited practice. I really did not want to miss this opportunity. Rain was heavy here but propagation was pretty good on 20 and 40 mtrs as I logged FRA, POR and CA from the Atlantic Coast. Operating the radio S & P between other obligations, I logged twenty stations, nine of which were other /CO ops. It was a hoot! I really enjoyed using the cootie. With more practice and experience I will continue to improve my sending skills and join the Cootie following.

Hope to see you next time. 73, Bill, KE3O



My first contact in this month's WES was a pleasant surprise, an enjoyable half-hour chat/number exchange with a cootie op who wasn't even playing in the WES! The rest of the contacts were a bit shorter, resulting from some search and pounce as well as brief efforts to run a frequency. If this wasn't the first cootie-themed WES, then I am sorry to have missed the earlier ones. It was fun to hand out 15 bonus points to each of my contacts. I vote to keep this one in the roster at least annually. I will try to upload a photo of the HST I use as a sideswiper. It, and a Junker, occupy the space just left of my keyboard (I cropped the pic greatly to avoid showing the normal chaos at my operating position). 73, Gary K9ZMD



Fun WES. Used two cooties, Torsion Bar Key II from WISFR and a Begali Sculpture Swing. Very close in performance but the Torsion Bars edges it. K3 QRP , Hex Beam antenna on 20M and Butternut vertical on 40M. Thanks to those who pulled my sigs out of the noise. 73, Dave NE5DL

CW and Stroke Rehabilitation

By Dave White, KC2ICA 2206C

This summer, during an SKCC contest I had a stroke. Strokes are serious, with immediate, short-term, medium-term, and long-term physical and psychological effects. I'm recovering, and I thought it might be interesting to share some personal observations of the role CW can play in identifying disabilities that need specific therapeutic attention, and the role CW can play in general rehabilitation.

This isn't a scientific study; it's really more of a list of personal observations that I've jotted down for future reference, and as a guide for customizing my personal rehabilitation exercises and goals.

All strokes are the same. All strokes are different.

There are mini-strokes, mild strokes, moderate strokes, and severe strokes. Strokes can damage different parts of the brain, and therefore affect mildly or severely, different perceptual and physical abilities. It's doubtful my collection of impairments and their severity match anyone else's exactly. But, even the mildest of strokes at least temporarily can degrade one's CW ability and efficient station operation. But on the positive side, CW, along with associated ham radio operating skills offers a path and a focus for rehabilitation, and a set of clearly defined, measureable milestones to evaluate progress in rehabilitation and realistically evaluate the comparative value of individual and multiple therapies.

First things first. Think about the combination of learned skills, and simple physical actions that station operation and on-the-air cw requires.

You've got to have the strength, stamina, and dexterity to sit at your usual operating position in your shack and operate your equipment's controls. In my case this was, and is complicated in that I live in a high-rise urban apartment building with no terrace/balcony and no access to the roof. My usual way of operating hf cw is to sit at a picnic bench in the park across the street with my qrp rig, throw a wire over a tree branch, and start sending. Sounds simple, right? And let's say you (or I) were recovering from a broken arm or leg. It would be pretty simple to figure out how to accommodate a damaged limb. This is not necessarily the case with the combination of impairments and one's perception of those impairments, one (meaning you or me) has after a stroke.

After I got out of the hospital I was able to walk fairly well, but I didn't have the strength to toss a wire over a tree branch. Also, surprise, surprise, the XYL didn't want (allow) me to wander outside alone. So, to get my cw fix, I decided to do some listening until my strength came back after I went through physical therapy.

I couldn't copy cw. I mean I really couldn't copy, and although I never was a speed demon, now somehow I could no longer distinguish and decode two adjacent letters or numbers. Was my brain too damaged to process cw? Would I recover, could I recover? I went back to basics, namely listening to WIAW code transmissions and listening to the 5 wpm archived audio files on arrl.org. That seemed to help. After a few days I could recognize individual characters, but after about 45 seconds of copying, I could no longer focus, and this wasn't helped by my inability to use a pencil to write each character down legibly, even at 5 wpm. What to do? Enter physical and occupational therapy.

Therapy begins.

My inability to write my signature or print legibly 5 wpm characters convinced me that what I called my fine motor skills and simple brain processing were damaged, how damaged, and whether temporary or permanent I didn't know. So I began physical and occupational therapy. My doctor prescribed both, I didn't know why, but I soon found out. First of all, I went for an evaluation. The physical therapist reviewed my medical evaluation and then tested my strength and balance. The occupational therapist also reviewed my file and then tested my hand and arm for strength, coordination, and dexterity. They then both outlined a course of treatment/exercises designed to try to return me to pre-stroke strength, agility, balance, dexterity.

Listen to experts and make sure they listen to you.

I then told them about my concerns (terror) that my combination of perceived impairments would permanently prevent me from ever enjoying ham radio again. "What's ham radio, what's cw?" they said. I then gave them my canned 2 minute (although now it took 4 minutes because of speech problems) response that all of us who regularly operate in public parks have ready. They were fascinated. They wanted to know all the physical and mental steps required to operate. They wanted me to bring a key to show them. They wanted a list of the physical actions I didn't think I could do, and *my* perceptions of how my thought processes were impaired.

They then told me that many (almost all) of *my* current conclusions based on *my* perceived observations were wrong. For instance, technically my dexterity was minimally impaired. "How could that be?" I thought, since it took me seemingly forever to button my shirt. They explained. What I had on my right side was weakness, a very special kind of weakness, a kind of weakness I had never experienced before. This wasn't a pulled muscle or ligament, or an arthritic joint; this was my damaged brain trying to build new neural pathways to control my body's actions, but what about my mental abilities? Similar they said. "You're experiencing a new, very different kind of fatigue; a fatigue you have nothing in your life up to now to compare to."

I thought about this. On the scientific evidence side they had a series of CT and MRI scans. Now there's a lot science doesn't know about the brain, but science does know what parts control what. Ok, I thought, *maybe* they're right. Then I convinced myself they were right by reviewing and analyzing how my morning routine had now changed.

My usual morning routine goes something like this; wake up, wash my face, brush my teeth, take some pills (I take a whole lot more now), pick up the newspaper dropped off in front of the front door, make coffee, eat some cereal while reading the newspaper. Post-stroke, I told the XYL I wanted to try to keep to my regular routine. I expected balance problems, and doing tasks a bit slower. But what was unexpected and frankly astonishing was that I couldn't do anything without expressly focusing on a single task, executing that task, and then *thinking* about the next task. For instance, I seemed unable to pick up the cup of coffee to drink and *at the same time*, turn a newspaper page. This was weird, all of us are so used to doing multiple tasks simultaneously, the inability to do so was, how shall I say, , astonishing. But it was also in a weird way comforting. I literally had a revelation with my left hand holding a coffee cup in mid-air and my right hand not reaching for the newspaper. Could the multiple actions required to successfully copy and process a stream of incoming cw, even such seemingly simple skills as hearing a prosign and writing it down while the next character was sent be at the root of my problems?

I did a quick experiment. Listening to a 10 wpm arrl archive file, I closed my eyes and didn't try to write down what I heard. I still had problems, mostly mentally stumbling when I got tangled up anticipating a character or word, but overall, this was an improvement. I related all this to my therapists, who were of course unsurprised by any of these, to me, earth-shattering insights. But they did find it useful in customizing and modifying my treatment. They especially found mental exercises based around increasing cw comprehension skills useful in measuring overall mental acuity, in that speed and accuracy and either, improvement, diminishment, or plateaus can be accurately measured.

Over the next few weeks physical and mental improvements happened at a haphazard rate that sometimes helped re-acquire cw skills. For instance, some physical skills and strength came back gradually with the exercises assigned me. But others just came back, like a switch being tripped. Overnight, I could climb and descend stairs without concentrating on lifting on foot after another. The same thing happened with my handwriting. I had been practicing, and saw some modest improvement, and then suddenly one morning after breakfast my handwriting was just back, as if I never had a stroke. But when other skills didn't come back quickly, or I didn't experience gradual improvement, in skills such as *hearing* common words in a qso instead of having to decode individual letters, I became depressed. I would go days without trying to improve my cw comprehension.

My therapists advised me to try to actually operate, so we could better identify most if not all the problems keeping me from ham radio. I wasn't able to get my random wire antenna in the best position, but I could tune it and hear other stations. At first I just listened, and then I tried sending. I had big problems right away; even though I had been doing customized exercises to strengthen and control the dexterity of my fingers to operate my straight key, somehow I was adding a dit to certain characters. And my timing was all off. It probably sounded like someone learning to use a bug or paddles. Gentleman that they are, Ralph, K0RO 14800S, and Larry, KA8HFN 2046S exchanged greetings and pleasantries without negative comment. But I was depressed along with some elation at actually having some qso's. While I was never a great cw operator, I now realized how far I had to go to achieve my former barely mediocre level of skill. Also, since I've always thought of myself more as a swl'er who likes to make one or two cw qso's a week, but who really gets excited when I hear a new 10 meter beacon in say, Georgia, I've found it doubly difficult to put in the necessary time and frankly (to me) boring effort to improve.

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But I will. It's too embarrassing making mistakes. For instance, a few days before the October WES, I caught an afternoon opening on 20 meters. Bert, F6HKA was 599 into Brooklyn. I had been lucky enough to get a passing high school basketball player to erect my antenna. Then, in the middle of trying to re-adjust my key (for the hundredth time) to match my diminished level of control, I called him. He came back with 439. Not bad for 6 AA batteries pushing out about 1 watt. But, suddenly I couldn't seem to follow his sending. And my sending seemed (to me) wildly mis-timed and inaccurate. Then on the Sunday morning of the October 2018 WES, basically the same thing more-or-less happened during the four qso's (including Bert, F6HKA again) I allowed myself to attempt. What I've taken away from that experience is that I have responsibility to follow my carefully designed program of physical and mental exercises designed specifically around sending and copying cw for longer periods of time with increasing speed and a fanatical commitment to accuracy.

That's more than enough narrative. Let me conclude with a short bullet list of "insights" I've had during this ongoing rehabilitation process.

Insights

- **Safety first.**
Follow your doctor's instructions regarding medication, initial follow-up tests and exams. And be careful moving around. Just because you're initially stuck at home doesn't mean it's a good time to try to unpack your old Icom 735 and try to re-attach the plastic door you've been promising yourself to do for the last five years.
- **Start physical and occupational therapy as soon as possible. Don't wait to feel, "well". You want your brain to start re-establishing those neural pathways ASAP**

- **Make sure you have confidence in your therapists,**
Mine were great, and genuinely committed to understanding my rehabilitation goals. This unfortunately is not always the case. Some physical and occupational therapists just want to impose a “canned” set of exercises on you to get you to a “canned” level of rehabilitation. I know this is true from numerous reports from friends, and even my own Cardiologist who after knee surgery went through three teams of therapists before finding people who understood the importance of dancing and fly-fishing.
- **Work hard at re-acquiring your strength and skills. Hard work won’t kill you (I think). And even if you don’t achieve 100% recovery, 80% is better than 40%, so stop feeling sorry for yourself. After a while it’s boring being treated by everyone as that “sick” guy.**
- **Accept help.**
Friends, family, and especially other hams who reach out to help you really want to help you, and their help, really does help. I’ve had many offers of on-the-air practice skeds. Dick, K1NIE 2053 and Larry, KA8HFN 2046S are just two of the numerous SKCC’ers who have reached out to me. Believe me, offers of help encourage one to persevere.
- **Again, stop feeling sorry for yourself. Get to work, and get back on the air. You’ll be happier, and believe me, those around you will be happier too. And it could even be years before you hear, “if you bring one more radio into this apartment. . .”**

A “Stealthy” Story

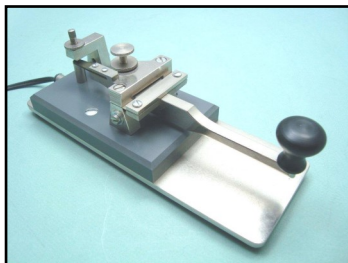
In the fall of 1986 I was working 30 miles from home in Erie Pennsylvania. If you know Erie Pennsylvania you know the bad lake effect snow storms south of the lake. I was a widower so I decided to move closer to work so as to avoid the long winter drive. I chose a trailer park near the air port and only 2 blocks from my work place.

Not wanting to cause any problems with my neighbors and park management I decided to put up a stealth antenna. There were a row of trees and brush between my row of trailers and the Air Port. I put up a 40 meter dipole made of #30 green wire wrapping wire that we used on the back plane of computers. The center insulator was made of 2 inches of Plexiglas. I used no end insulators but tied the ends to 20 pound fishing line which I threw over limbs and weighted with fishing sinkers. Of course most of the installation was done at night or when my neighbors were not home. The antenna was fed with RG8 coax which I brought out under the trailer and over to the center insulator tree through a section of black plastic pipe buried just under the sod. It then spiraled around the tree to look like one of the many vines in the area and connected to the center insulator. I had to clime the tree to tie the center insulator away from the tree trunk. The average height of the antenna was 20 feet. The wire and fish line were so thin one would have to look hard to see them even if they knew there was an antenna there.

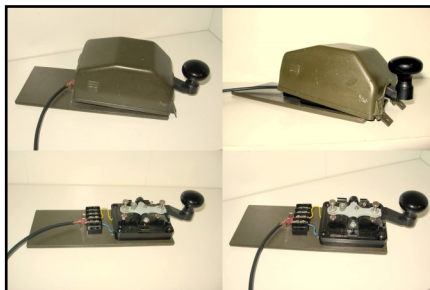
I operated CW all winter using a Kenwood TS530 transmitting 50 to 70 watts. The antenna held up good and did a good job for me. When fishing season started on April 15th I took down my antenna and moved back home.

Bob K3CKO SKCC 13811S

Facts and Photos from Facebook



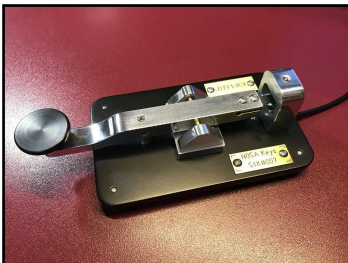
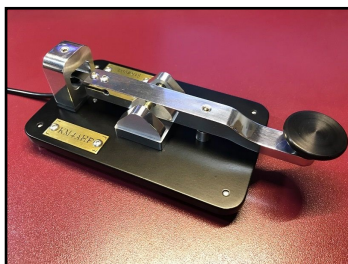
Sweet Swedish key.. de F9WT Christian Chefney



I recently was given a non-operative Junker. I scrounged it for parts, and used its cover and base for my Soviet Cherkassy TK...de AE7CG Loren



Brand new Cootie showed up about ten days ago. Spent about four hours a day getting the hang of this new method. Was frustrating at first but then it started coming together. WES was the perfect time to work the Cootie on-line! Worked 70 stations with 34 of them being Cootie operators. I didn't realize so many SKCC members had cootie keys! This was a fun WES and gave me a great deal of practice and confidence using a Cootie key. 73, Bill WB4DBO



Here is a Larry Naumann (N0SA) Magnetic Straight Key with a Swiss design. He let me know that he was making 12 of these and asked if I would be interested in one. I think you know the answer. 73, Mark KM4AHP



I know this key has been posted by others recently but here is my 2018 SKCC Sideswiper. 73, Mark KM4AHP



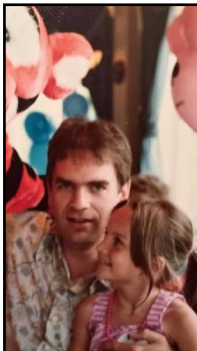
This photo is from the United States Navy Radioman group of which I am a member. These keys were from a destroyer which was being scrapped. The key on the left is what we had in radio central on the ships where I served. By those days CW was not used a great deal, but I enjoyed the chances I had to use it, even though my fellow RMs didn't understand how I could think of CW as being fun. This key was installed in an local operating position (LOP), recessed so American-style sending was used. I only saw them on the right side and do recall a least one left-handed RM being frustrated with that. In the center of the LOP would have been an old manual typewriter for copying code. When I became a Navy RM I already knew the code and I already knew how to type. I just had never tried to put the two together. It didn't take me long to master it.

The other key on the right is one which would have been installed on the signal bridge and wired to the yardarm blinkers, used by the signalmen. Notice how it has a cover which was to somewhat protect the key from the weather. ~ Wes W1LIC 1142S

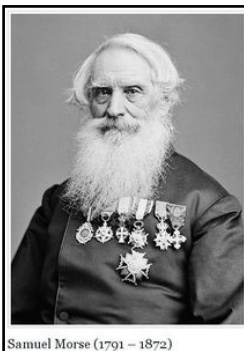


Here is part of my collection of Straight keys, at times I can't decide which one to use, even though the Begali key is a very sweet key I still enjoy my flameproof key. Also let's not forget the j38 keys. 73, Joe WA4ONV

August Brag Photos and Chat



Lots of fun this month despite the awful band conditions most of the time he he. Lots of duplicate QSOS, but that is only because you are such a friendly bunch! Thanks fellas! 73, Bry AF4K on Florida (photos is from about 1987)



Samuel Morse (1791 – 1872)

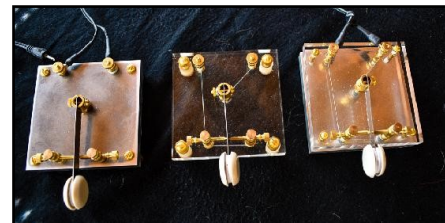
Delighted to work Steve, VK7CW on 40 and Curt WA2JSG on 28mhz ES. Brags and NAQCC challenges keep me at the key. 73 de N4ow Al 11375s



What a great group of people! SKCC is 99% of my on the air time. The new 289' Horizontal Loop is working pretty well. With 450 Ohm ladder line fed through my MFJ Tuner, I can load all bands 10-80 Meters. Thanks to Steve, VK7CW for serving as the Bonus Station for August. He was my forth contact this month. 73, Ed W0RJW



Really good Brag month. Hope I can keep it up next month. Thanks for all the QSOS. 73, Dave KB1WOD



What an anemic month (re. band conditions), so I invested my time with a new Chameleon Mag Loop antenna set up in the screened-in back porch, cabled through a wall to my KX3 at my recliner in the family room with home brew Cootie in my lap. All Brags were from that QRP station, most engaged with new members. Lots of challenge, but fun... Three of my HB cooties pictured here. 73, Mike K5MP



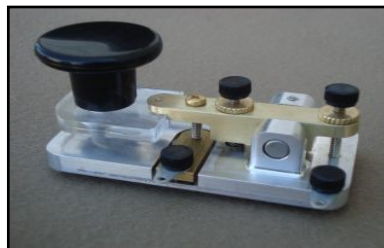
Still no bonus this month. My 10 watts to VK land is sketchy at best. I did finish my Tx8 and am 24 on my way to the Senate. Hope the band picks up some. 73, de Paul N0NBD



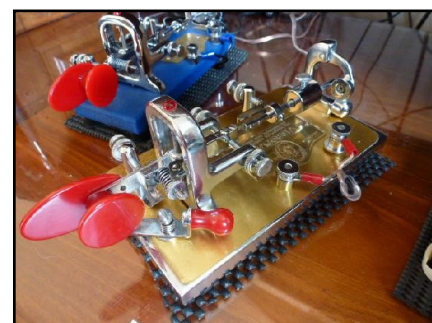
SALUDOS PARA TODOS LA E PASADO MUY BIEN E PODIDO MEJORAR EN LA LLAVE CUIDENSEN WP3PW 18766C 73S.



Not a lot this month due to vacation, etc... 73, Greg WA3GM



Made 9 QSO's, hopefully more than 10 next month. 73, Greg NU4M

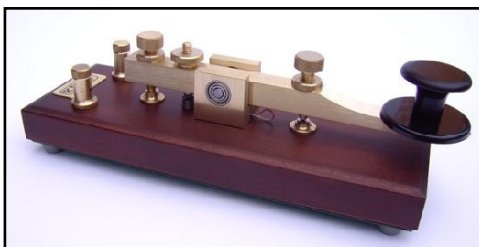


It was a great pleasure to be the Brag Bonus Station for August and I sure had fun. I was aiming for 100 QSOS for the month and only fell short by 1. It was very pleasing to be able to give out the bonus points to so many stations. Thanks to all the members who worked me and persevered in spite of the somewhat terrible conditions. I used my 1953 Vibroplex Presentation bug for nearly all of the brag QSOS this month. 73 to all de Steve VK7CW

More August Brag



With travel and shaky band conditions, not a great month here. Hoping to get more air time in September. Will also try to brush up on cootie skills unused since the mid-1960s. Anyway, thanks to all for the August QSO's. 73, John W1TAG



One a day for me, my (minimum) goal. Hope to average two a day soon. Many thanks to Steve VK7CW for being August Bonus Station and hearing my little signal on the other side of the planet. Also thanks to all my contacts. 73, Curt WA2JSG

News From FISTS!

Hi everyone. I'm Joe Falcone, N8TI SKCC 773, and also the President of the FISTS CW Club in North America. As President, the first thing I did was to eliminate dues for two years. I would like to make that permanent, but in the meantime, I would like to ask you to put a notice in your newsletter with the information that FISTS is now dues free. Just mention that people can drop a line to Dennis, K6DF, at. membership@fistsna.org.

Up and Running!



Do you remember the sad story of Dave VE9CB #12520 who woke up one spring morning and saw this out his kitchen window? Well I am happy to report that Dave's tower and antennas are backup and running. It took the summer and early fall to get everything back in place but all is well and working again.

I must say, the original "blue" tower now looks much better as galvanized silver!



Bandpass Filters and Interstation Interference

Putting two stations in close proximity on different bands can cause severe interference between the stations. Many Field Day operations have suffered through this issue...but it doesn't have to be! There are steps and procedures that can be in place to severely limit an often completely rid the operation of this interstation interference.

Modern transceivers are well controlled in eliminating generated harmonics but are often also very susceptible to interference from generated harmonics. The 40 meter station can "kill" operation on 20m and 15m in some situations while the 80 meter station can "kill" 40m operation! Here are steps to help (if not totally) eliminate interstation interference:

1. Make sure **ALL** equipment is properly grounded and also to each other. Don't rely on electrical ground, ground radios and amplifiers to a common ground. This includes other rf passing gear such as additional preamps and bandpass filters.
2. Keep antennas as far apart as possible from each other and if possible at right angle to each other. If right angles are not possible then the next bet is end-to-end. Try to never use multi-band antennas...an antenna that can transmit on other bands can also Hear those other bands.
3. Use bandpass filters at each station. Make sure these filters are also grounded to the station equipment.

Steps one and two are obvious steps but what exactly is a "bandpass filter?" Quite simply stated,

"a bandpass filter allows a selected range of frequencies to pass through while rejecting at a high level all other frequencies."

This is true for both the transmit frequency and the receive frequency! While allowing only a specific range of received frequencies to be heard it will also help "cleanup" any unwanted transmit frequencies! There are many articles written on the subject of bandpass filters, some very detailed and some more for the "user." One such article on building these filters is at:

<https://www.n1nc.org/Filters/>

This is an article from the Nashoba Valley ARC (NVARC) entitled, "The Ugly Filter Project." The article is both a "how it works" as well as a "how to build them" and well worth the read. These filters are used at the multi-multi SKCC station "K8CGE" and were built by Randy N8KQ. Another good article and a different build project can be found by the late Lew Gordon, K4VX in the September 1988 issue of QST:

"Band-Pass Filters for HF Transceivers"

Jeremy KD8VSQ built these filters and are used at the KS8KCC/K8AQM multi-multi station. The most common bandpass filters are made for 200 watts but there are filters that can built to allow legal limit power passing through...whew!

Of course there are commercially made versions of bandpass filters. "Morgan Manufacturing" (formerly ICE) makes many bandpass filters used in amateur radio and cover all the bands fro 160-6m. "DX Engineering" has a brand of very good bandpass filters including one box covering 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10m. "Array Solutions" also offers bandpass filters for the amateur radio service.

Randy N8KQ sent along these photos and comments regarding his building of "The Ugly Filter Project:"

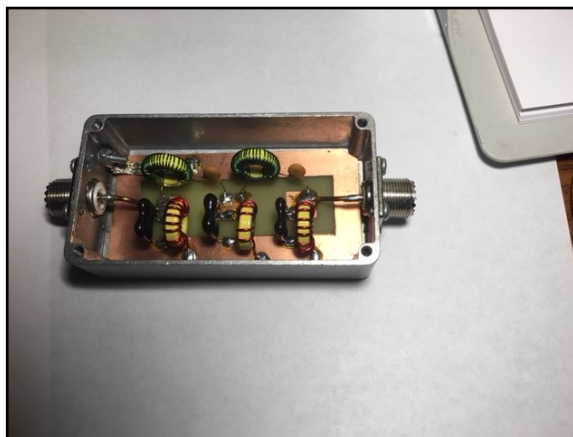


"Here are a couple pics of the 40M filter I put together. Since these pics, I redid a couple of the coils to get the windings tighter and also shortened the leads on the capacitors. It actually seems to work great with eliminating interference. I also redid the 40M dipole again (lol) and moved it again (lol) it all has helped. This was built from The NVARC Ugly Filter Project and if all works out as its looking, going to build some more. I am also going to order some decent enclosures. This one was an old switch box I had. OK just wanted

to show you how this turned out. OK TTYL 73 de Randy N8KQ SKCC #8934S SKCC Membership Manager"

Randy has made great improvements to the K8CGE station, it is a big signal on the bands in SKCC events. Mono band antennas, grounding and bandpass filters have made a big difference in performance and "fun."

Below are photos of the K4VX filters built by Jeremy KD8VSQ and used at the KS8KCC/K8AQM multi-multi station. This is a five pole filter and a bit better rejection of unwanted signals. The filters can also be built as a three stage but with a bit less signal rejection. Detailed information on these filters was published in an earlier issue of the Rag Chew.



Finally, here is a picture of the Morgan/ICE filter, this one is 17m. This type of filter is a three stage and has been used on many, many DXpeditions by several members of SKCC.



For really difficult interstation interference a "stub" can be added to transceivers (and amplifiers) along with bandpass filters...but that's an article for a later issues!

Contact KD8VSQ or N8KQ for additional information.

73, Ted K8AQM

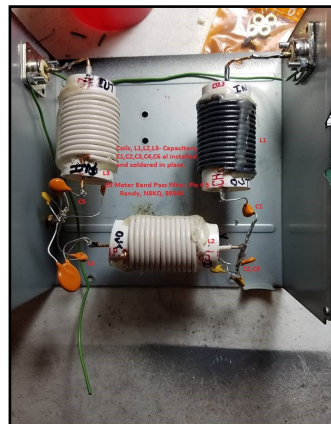
Anatomy of an “Ugly Bandpass Filter” Project

Ed...Randy N8KQ sent this pictorial of his recent 20m Ugly bandpass filter project. Enlarge to 400% to read picture text.....

“I finished the 20M Band Pass filter this morning. I may sell the 20M Morgan Filter I bought. It doesn't work near as good as these builds. lol I now have a 20 es 40 es will soon start an 80M which consists of almost double the parts. The designers suggest bolting 2 cases back to back with 5 coils and 6 capacitor sets.

Should be another fun project. I may decide to modify an old PC case for that one.”

73 de Randy N8KQ SKCC #8934S SKCC Membership Mgr.



Pictures and Comments From Facebook



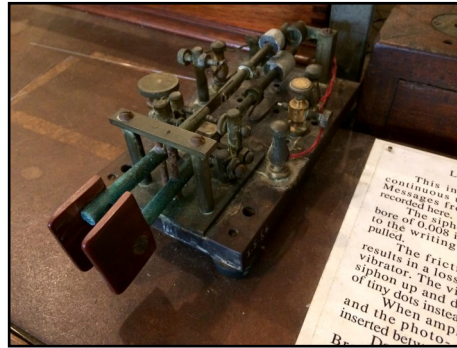
Hey buddies! You want something for dessert? This arrived today and I couldn't help but doing a couple of shots, not the typical ones though. I am into food photography and wanted to aim both worlds. Hope you enjoy it! I have enjoyed both, the key and the dessert! 73, Chus EA1AOQ



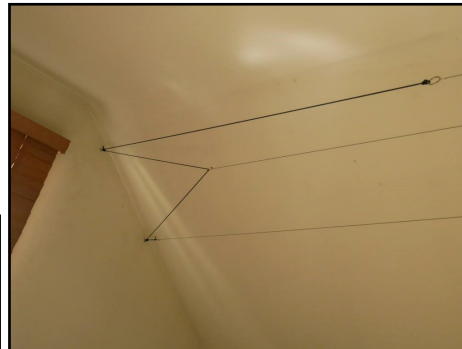
Guess what I got today! Dave KB1WOD



I had a go at portable operating with the KX1 (along with an antenna tuner and a Lionel J-38 straight key), in Lakeville CT, this past week. Tried an indoor wire loop (ala Al Sweet KG6HM; see his recent article in QST) and an outdoor long wire. No luck! Lessons learned: 1) Indoor wire loops don't work if you're on the ground floor, under other floors; 2) Outdoor random wires should be higher than 10 feet! But the scenery was nice, and I educated some onlookers! 73, Colin AE3A



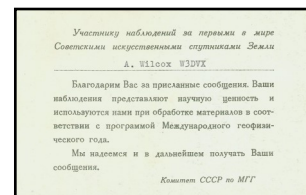
Here's an interesting double circuit bug, seen at the French Cable Museum on Cape Cod. The placard says it's a reversing key, used on landline cables where dit and dah are opposite polarities but the same length. However, the weights are different sizes, so maybe it is actually automatic dits and dahs with different lengths???73, Doug W0UHU



Light-duty bungee cord (1/8") suspends the ends of the fan dipole in my attic. No hooks - bowline knots and key-rings through soldered loops on the ends of the elements. 73, John AE5S



This is the bungee cord system I use for each leg of my inverted V. The antenna is a Carolina Windom up about 50'. I originally had bricks to compensate for tree sway but the bungee cords are much better. The cords hold the antenna without sag and can stretch more than foot if needed in the



Now that's quite a QSL! Alan said the signal was somewhere near 40m but couldn't remember for sure.

SKCC Sprints - - A Great Learning Tool Plus Fun!

Curtis Gidding KC9UL SKCC 8667S

If you are new to CW or trying to improve your copying ability, you should become familiar with the SKCC Sprints. There are two sprints per month. Just because they are called sprints doesn't really mean they are contests but operating activities to promote on the air activity of SKCC members. Some members like to perform like it is a contest and others merely get on the air and make a few contacts and hopefully work a couple of new SKCC numbers or Centurions, Tribunes, or Senators. Be sure to check out the various sprints on the web page.

Many hams that I talk to about starting to operate with CW state that they are "not ready yet". Believe me, you will still be feeling this way long after you could have had your first CW QSO. Since my first QSO on CW was in 1968, I can't really remember if I was really nervous or not - - but bet I was! I just remember that the first QSO was on a Friday evening on 40 meters with my Heathkit HW-16 from my apartment. I worked K9HMM, "Kap" Langley (now SK) who lived about 3 blocks away and I was thrilled. The next day I saw someone trying to find my antenna in the back of the apartment - - it was my new found friend.

The sprints are a good way to practice your copying skills. 40 meters is a good band because there is 7100-7160 where you can find slower operators. If you don't find any there don't quit! Go to 7050-7060 and look for slower CW. The exchanges used for a sprint are pretty consistent so you can easily get the pattern which will help you improve your copy. An example: CallSign, RST, State, Name, SKCC#. On the air, you will have the experience of QRM, QSB, and normal band noise. This isn't normally a factor in computer practice. It will give you the opportunity to improve your skills with adjusting your receiver with filters, AGC, and etc. to improve the signals. You will be surprised at how copying actual on the air signals for 15-20 minutes will improve your ability to copy over a period of time.

Try to remember that you can always copy a call sign in parts. If you only get a couple of letters, write them down. The next time the call is heard, you can complete the rest of the call. No need to panic! There are still times when I have to use this practice when I have a "brain freeze". Also, try to find an operator to copy at a speed you find comfortable and one that is sending with a consistent pattern. When you are learning, you want to work on copying the easier code. This will increase your confidence level.

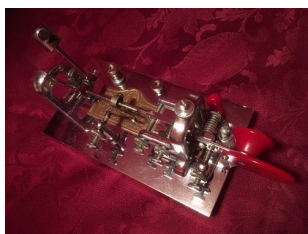
Last but not least, have your key ready and the transmitter ready to go. If you are feeling confident when you hear a station that you have copied sign off with his QSO or call CQ, GIVE HIM A CALL! There is never a better time to make your first QSO and make a new SKCC friend.



September SKS



Great time again on SKS! Using FT-450D and the simplest MFJ key I had a lot of fun on 40 and 80m equally. See you in the next event. 73 de AC2RJ,



1946 Vibroplex Deluxe bought in 1955 with grass mowing money served well this good evening with lots of signals and great ops. Much fun. Getting to really love SKCC. 73 ... Don K3RLL



Tried 20M, but nothing heard, 40M was hopping and at the end good to hear 80M opening up. Thanks to all who pulled out my QRP signal. 73, Steve K4JPN



From W8BTD, Bob



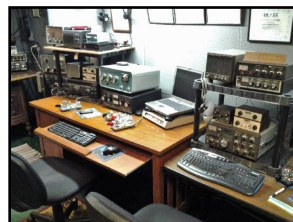
20 was good when I got on and managed one contact before wife needed some help. Returned in an hour and 20 was closed. Rest of contacts on 40 then 80. Condx not bad but lots of interruptions as usual. Argonaut V at 5 watts to 88 ft doublet. 72 Peter AK3X



Another chance to get home early and get in the action! didn't even try 20m since I was late getting started. But 40m was alive. Dropped to 80m for the last few minutes. Always fun to get in the SKS. It's a treat for me to get home in time to play. Nice surprise was Noel, CM8NMN in Cuba. Strong into NC. Spent 90% on the SKCC Sideswiper and the occasional hop over to the bug for 2xbug. Rig was Kx3 to LNR Quad at 33 feet. 73 for now and hope to do it again soon. 73, Randy



My first SKS; quite a good time was had. I enticed N3FZ to jump over to 30 with me, for one QSO only there, two on twenty, four on eighty, and the rest on forty. then I went back and read the rules again, and took out the illegal QSO on thirty. Most of the sprints I've worked in the past were all-QRP. not this one, though...and it's sure a different experience! I used my GHD 503; hope to be using my new SKCC cootie, next month! This may have gotten me to 68 QSOs toward my C...won't be long now! Thanks to all who dug my tiny sigs out, tonight. 73, Lloyd,



Nice to work some new members tonight on 80 meters. 40 also in good shape here. Thanks to all for a fun evening. 73 Larry K8TEZ

Elecraft K3 100 watts. 160 loop or 43' vertical. Benchner RJ-2 key. Stayed on a noisy 40 meters and called CQ on one frequency the entire two hours because I'm lazy :).

One of these Sprints I'm gonna put the KPA500 in line and work QRO just for the hell of it! 73,



Sure had FUN! Sorry to the Qs on 80M. I had terrible noise and static crashes. Thanks for all the Qs. 73 Dale K3SEN



Another fun night, thanks to all of you, greetings from Panama, 73 Ric HP1RIS



Nice to do real QSOs tonight. Too much FT8 in between a busy schedule the past few months. Glad to hear and work you all. 73,



Great difficulty for any activity, lots of QRM, also without propagation. A single QSO, Tnx dr Chas K3WW, image is my PS 213A key, best 73 Nathan P S 7 H D

More September SKS



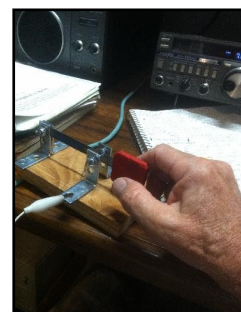
Got a little late start so went straight to 20 meters and only heard 1 station (thanks Allen) so finished the sprint on 40 meters. Ran 75 watts to a multiband vertical using a Kent Str Key. Always fun! 73, Curt WA2JSG



I had just a few minutes for SKS this evening. Good conditions here with some good signal reports on 20m. Thanks to all for making this such a great event! 73 Todd N7TMS



I used the trust Heathkit HW-101 and Navy flame-proof key. Bands not too bad, but QRN on 80m was a little loud. 73, Steve KE4OH



Another fun event getting practice using my newly minted hacksaw blade cootie. Looking forward to improved radio prop and more future QSOs. 73, Bill KE3O



Not bad condx tonight. Great to see lots of members on 40M. I even tried a few late QSO's with my new side-swiper, first time ever using one. Thanks for the great key, Steve W1SFR! See you all at the WES! 73, Roger VE3RDE

Home Brew Sideswiper

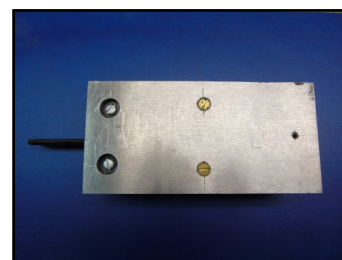
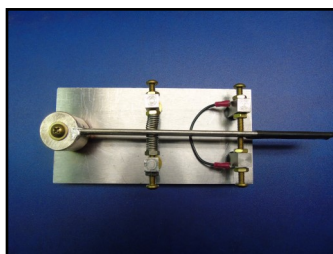
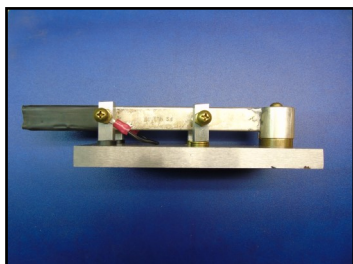
Ed....Got this neat project with a bit of a twist from normal sideswiper build, from Bob K3VYL. Nice build!

Only the contact pillars are insulated. They can be identified by the jumper wire that makes it a side-swiper, not a paddle. The springs are just some I found in one of two coffee cans full of springs I have. They are used in Joblonsky fashion. The brass nuts seen on the spring tower screws are the tension adjusters.

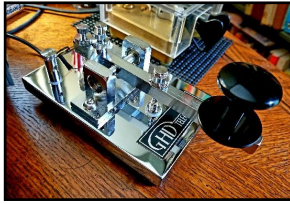
The pivot is a 10-32 screw with a short set screw underneath to allow for bearing clearance adjustment. The bearing is lubricated with conductive grease commonly used on conduit threads. (the copper type)

The arm was fabricated by milling a slot in a piece of a busman 60 amp 600 volt class shunt (silver plated) and soldering a cut off 100 amp 600 volt shunt (silver plated) into the slot with a torch. A fire resistant surface will allow jiggling up those parts for accurate soldering. More readily available brass stock can be used to make the arm.

73 for now, Bob K3VYL



September Brag Pictures and Chat



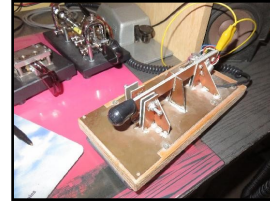
Out of the hobby for ten or twelve years, I recently returned. I've long been an all-CW and QRP op, but somehow I began doing all this straight-key stuff - and it's really a blast! Starting on September 14, I logged 45 SKCC QSOs, all on 40M, all with my 5W signal. I also acquired an astonishing number of devices for sending Morse code. 73, Lloyd K3ESE



Had Fun! Thanks for the Qs. See you next month. K3SEN Elecraft K3 + KPA 1500 & 6BTV Stealth Flagpole. 73, Dale K3SEN



Got my new SKCC cootie last week. Have fun using it to make some SS contacts for the triple key award. Thanks for all the brags! 73, Dave KB1WOD



Started using a homebrew cootie (used to be a single lever paddle, all made from PCB and relay contacts) ... I operate it with my left hand, and still need a LOT of practice ! But I think I like the simplicity of it ... Luc ON7DQ



73, Doug N3PDT



Not too much operating time this month. Been spending most of my time assembling my new antenna (see my QRZ Page). Next month will be the same and will probably be QRT toward the end of the month and



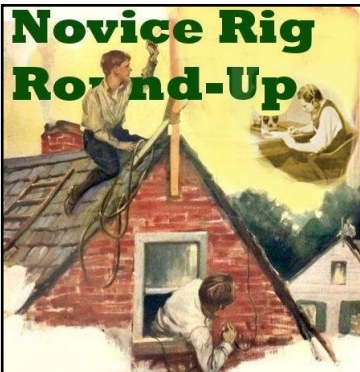
41 Brag QSOs for me in September... not too shabby for me (hi hi). Maybe more next month. 73, Curt WA2JSG



Got my new antenna up just in time before rotator cuff surgery. Now I have a new antenna and a couple of weeks off of work. See you on the air! 73, Marty N9SE



Not much time for hamming this month, so let me take this time to welcome that new SKCC Logo Cootie key to the mix and invite all those new owners to be sure to sign in to be counted in our SKCC Member's Cootie User list (link @ my QRZ page). So far there are 8 of you on that list. I hope to see many more. Here's my personal co-choice for keys of preference. This is the TBKII by W1SFR; the other is the TBKP Torsion Bar key also by W1SFR. 73, Mike K5MP



A light month for me due to some overseas travel that took me away for much of September. Always glad to contact SKCC stations. With conditions like they were in August and September, it is a good thing we have SKCC.

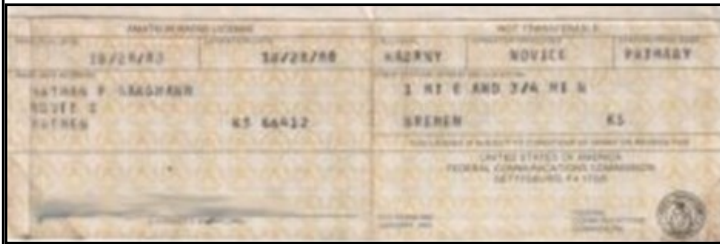
A reminder to everyone that MONDAY EVENINGS you will find a lot of stations on 7100 - 7125 kHz, most of whom are SKCC) running their older rigs CW in the NOVICE RIG NIGHT Weekly operating Event. See you there! 73, Bry AF4K

Ed...I ran across this article via the reflector and I think you'll enjoy the read. Written as a high schooler, it is very to the point on a young ham's view of what amateur radio means to him.

A Personal Milestone and a Look Back

Posted on 03 Nov 2018 by [Nate Bargmann](#) K0RNY

35 years ago on November 4, 1983 a somewhat nondescript government envelope arrived in the mail box. It was from the FCC and was the fulfillment of a dream. It was a Novice class amateur radio license issued in my name and it bore the call sign of KA0RNY. Here is a scan of that document.



At that time the term of the license was for five years. When I upgraded to Technician in early 1985, the term was ten years as it is for currently issued amateur radio licenses in the United States.

Now, a look back.

In early 1981 I was getting ready to graduate from high school “mid-term” as I had enough credits to graduate and would be working on the farm. However, the diploma would not be issued until May at commencement exercises! I was taking a required English class and needed to do a report by the end of the term. Normally, I did these reports on some aspect of dairy farming, but something made me decide that another report on dairy cows was not going to happen!

I recall going to the school library looking for ideas. Exactly why amateur radio came across to me as a possible topic, I'll never know at this point. Yet, I drew on what scant information I could find and possibly something I had at home as I had been quite interested in two-way radio what with the CB boom of the '70s and seeing various businesses using two-way radio.

To spare everyone of reading the longhand writing of a 17 year old, I have transcribed the report for your viewing pleasure.

Nathan Bargmann
Jan 6, 1981

Amateur Radio

Amateur radio is enjoyed around the world by more than 750,000 amateur radio operators, or hams. Hams are self-trained and self-supported, and can use their radios only for personal enjoyment or in time of emergency.

They perform public service in many areas, such as helping a doctor in South Africa talk to doctors in Chicago about a very important medical case, or carry messages from an overseas soldier to his family in the States. They experiment with space communications through amateur-built and financed space satellites, they set up emergency communications after disasters and the like.

There are about 275,000 amateur radio operators in the US who are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission, or FCC, in one of the five classes—Novice, Technician, General, Advanced and Amateur Extra. A rigid test over the International Morse Code and radio theory must be taken before a would-be ham can get his license and the test must be taken every year thereafter.

Greater privileges are granted with each new license class, i.e. Novices may communicate only in Morse Code and are limited to 75 Watts power in 4 frequency bands. Any of the 4 other license classes may use voice transmission and up to 1000 Watts of power in any of the following modes—code (CW), standard amplitude modulated voice (AM), the newer single sideband suppressed carrier voice (SSB), frequency modulation (FM), radio teletype (RTTY), facsimile, television, or even pulse transmissions, which are related to radar. An Amateur Extra licensee may use all of the above modes in 16 different frequency bands ranging from 1.8 – 24,250 Megahertz (MHz or million cycles per second) plus several above 48,000 MHz.

Hams are governed by Part 97 of the Rules and Regulations of the FCC. Unlike most radio services hams do not need to use “FCC type accepted” equipment which means hams are permitted to build their own transmitter-receiver (transceiver) radios and their own antennas. Recently, though, companies have been designing and building ready-to-operate equipment for ham use, this idea has been catching on because it means more dependable communications.

The freedom that is given to hams has enabled them to pioneer in different areas of radio technology. Short wave radio was one such advancement, other discoveries were made such as being able to reach much farther than the horizon, and it was even found that you could beam a signal to the moon, have it bounce off the moon’s surface and send it back to earth. This enables hams to talk to hams on the other side of the world.

Hams come from all walks of life so it is not surprising that almost 50% of the hams today are employed in some part of the electronics industry. The hams have their own associations to which they belong (just like every other special interest group) which ties them together and informs them of any important discoveries that an amateur may have made, such as when they discovered that they could talk on the short waves. The American Radio Relay League, founded in 1914, is a nonprofit organization with headquarters at 225 Main Street, Newington, Conn. 06111. It publishes “QST” magazine (QST is code for “calling all radio amateurs”) each month, Radio Amateur’s Handbook annually and 13 other publications covering various aspects of the hobby ranging from beginner material to complex subjects. The League has about 110,000 members and serves as a spokesman for hams in regulatory matters, presents technical developments to hams, organizes contests for hams’ enjoyment, and organizes emergency communications training. The League is also headquarters for the International Amateur Radio Union composed of some 85 similar national radio societies.



The Perfect Antenna!

When I used to call CQ, on HF, from this radio station I always got an answer. Of course 1000 watts, and the antenna at 25,000 feet made a little difference. The antenna you see coming out the back is for VLF not HF. The HF antenna systems go from the top of the tail down to the mount just forward of the wing or from behind the wing out to the end of the horizontal stabilizer then up to the top of the tail depending on which HF radio is in use. VLF only had the inverted J-pole you can see deploying with the drogues and 200,000 watts. Fun stuff this radio! 73, Jim W1RO

October Brag



Larry, AH6AX



Was tough to find Curt but I got him. I am just 68 QSOs away from my S. 73, Paul N0NBD



Lots of spare time in October. I was laid up for a few weeks after rotator cuff surgery. I had my KX3 set up next to the easy chair. 73, Marty N9SE



Focused on trying to catch one brag a day. Managed to do that then the plus of the SKCC QSO party helped too. Ran the IC7300 and both my "cootie" and 1919 Vibroplex Original. Nice seeing some new numbers too. Thanks for all the QSOs ...



First time really working on brags, great month and really enjoyed it. Used my mil-surp J-38 put together from a junk box for probably 98% of my brags, it's STILL sweet! Fun times even though noise levels were large deterrent for most. Appreciate all you folks on the other end and everyone who makes the brag happen 73, Gary K5MUG



This was a relatively good brag month for me. November's goal is 30 brags.

If I worked you this month, it was this silvery pair of spoons. See you down the log Tnx & 73 de N7TMS



Until decent Solar Flux numbers return I try to focus on helping newer members identified in the Skimmer with the high numbers. Makes for good Cootie practice also, through a broad range of speeds. Pictured below is my newest Torsion Bar acquisition from W1SFR; this being his Fat Boy, model TGF. What a joy this is to operate. Kinda pleasant to look at too. 73, Mike K5MP



I was recovering from a concussion, and CW QSOs were my therapy. all QRP, all CW, all cootie. 73, Lloyd K3ESE



Thanks for all the brags!! 73, Dave KB1WOD



Now the golf course is closed I will have more time all of my brag qso were qrp 5w KX3 vertical antenna Picture is where I work mowing greens Ravines Golf Club Saugatuck Mi. 73,



October Brag was my first full time use of my new Cootie key! I spent a few weeks of off line practice on the Begali HST Mark III and then gained confidence using the Cootie during October QSOs! am happy to see so many of our new members participating and exchanging numbers. Worked many in the high 18 thousands. Was able to give my S to many new members I had not worked before. Here is my new Cootie Key, Begali HST Mark III. The Mark III has a small switch on top that allows one to quickly go from Cootie mode to paddle mode. 73, Bill WB4DBO



Since there has been much talk lately about sideswipers, here's a pic of mine. Only problem, I have to sit down and learn how to use it (hi hi). But for now, it's just my straight key! Curt WA2JSG

October WES

Ed...Wow, more than 200 entries for the October WES. Here are just a few of the pictures and comments from those who submitted.



Only eleven contacts, all within only 45 minutes on the air, and all on 20 meters. Operating time cut short by a red squirrel who chewed the support rope which was attached to "his" black walnut tree. 73, Frank AA2XB



Was able to participate the last few hours of Sunday, and it proved lots of fun! 40 meter was a fantastic performer, loud signals and contacts from MO to FRA, thanks Bert, F6H-KA! No luck with the words' bonus. Can't wait to the next SKCC event. Thank you everyone. 73 de Ruben, AC2RJ.



Thanks to all who dug my signal out. It hasn't happened before to me but I got totally skunked on the first day. Stuck with the KX2 at 10W to the Precise RF loop though and had better luck Sunday. Probably some pilot error on first day with the new antenna. I wasn't hearing well and discovered the pulse-width modulated remote tuner was generating RFI. Once I tuned and then turned it off all got better. Also love my new little (very little) MK-32 Cootie! Great portable key. 73, Brad AI6DS/4



Saturday : 74 qso with only 100 watts. Sunday : 91 qso with 200 watts. All worths complete with qso only Saturday. 14 time of my number (508)WES very interesting with good spread. Thanks you very much for all QSO. My companion: British short hair blue. His name is Oregon of Summer Love !!! 73, Bob F6EJN



One more time thank you all for a pleasant event! F5UQE, W0VTT and GM0EUL worked on three bands. Just missing 3 "I" and one "P" to complete the autumn words. On the photo is my quick and easy way to select a speed on one of my bugs. 73 and see you all soon Bernard F5DE



Best ever WES for me. First one with "new" K2 and new Juma PA100-D amp. Mostly used my 1945 Vibroplex Champion, sorry for those who were afflicted by it! Also HiMound straight key if conditions were difficult. Hexbeam, dipoles and wire depending on band. Until next time, 73 all and thanks Peter GM0EUL



Wow ! That was fun ! 20m was the band here, and great to hear lots of CW. Any extra dots from me - sorry - just blame it on the boogie (age) 73 John



Thanks to everyone who organized and played in this fun event. My first WES! Lloyd K3ESE



Little time but lots of fun. K3ESE I think you wanted to know what key I was using so if you look at my QRZ profile it was two or three from that group..73 Larry K8TEZ



Just worked Saturday afternoon and most of Sunday. Had a lot of fun and bands were good for me. I got all but one bonus work. Needed one more "P" 73, Dave KB1WOD



Lots of activity! Enjoyed using the 2007 G3YUH Master Key. 73, Ken N8KR



Another oversubscribed WES weekend, so I made a few contacts here and there as time allowed. I normally run QRP, but after the first few calls that were no copy, I decided to kick in the afterburners and run my HPacker amp, giving me about 35w out. After that, I worked everyone I could hear. This WES was the maiden voyage of my new LNR SKCC cootie - what a lovely key. Stays put, and has a nice feel. Thanks to all the ops that make this such a great event, 73 Mike N2HHT

More October WES



Another fun weekend at the radios thanks to the SKCC. C U on the bands. 73, John AL7JK



Not much time to play this time. Sunday afternoon on 20 meters was quiet except for F5UQE and F6EJN - nice signals from France! CU in the next WES. 73, Russ KK4WX



Bonus word SWEEP! This is my first WES with my new W1SFR Sideswiper, which I absolutely love. I started 1 hour late and ended just before 11:00AM on Sunday, so I'm quite proud of my score this month. Lots of fun with the bands opening very wide at times. 73, Roger VE3RDE



I missed a lot of Saturday due to a very rainy hamfest. Did have a nice eyeball with KB1WOD there, though. So, my contest time was limited to later on Saturday and a chunk of Sunday. Conditions weren't bad here, though Saturday evening was disappointing with the RTTY contest on 40m. As always, it was heartening to hear and work newer operators. 73, John W1TAG



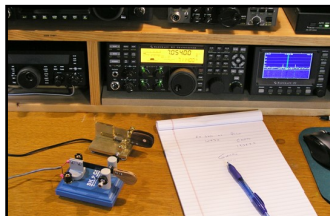
Anyone working my terrible fist deserves a multiplier! TNX for QRS! I enjoyed using my little "Pea Shooter" 73, QRS Steve NQ7T



VY Busy weekend. Good DX PROP on higher bands (Lot of beacons RX. Lack of STNs)
QSO Stats: 12 on 21MHz - 4 on 28MHz TA33 - 50W - HM DSK + JUNKER Semiautomatic key (Military version) Thank you everyone for the QSOs BCNU 73, Walt LW3EX- ...- ZUT



Did not make any bonus points, but had a lot of fun. Alinco DX-SR8t running 100 Watts into a fan dipole at 25' in the attic. Flameproof Navy CW Key. Thank you all. 73 Sergey KD9EBS



Band condx were not too bad - considering condx of late. The EU stations were strong on Sunday. I used my new SKCC cootie as well as the W1SFR torsion bar. I had 2X SKCC sideswiper Q's with Al N4OW and Randy KB4QQJ. Got 9 words before I ran out of E's and didn't work too many 8 call area stations. Rig: K3 @ 100w to 160 meter Horizontal loop @ 50'. Thanks to Emigdio WA3RF for the lone 160m QSO. 73 de Dave W3NP



Fun theme! I wish I had had more time to WES. (Can WES be used as a verb??) It seems like 40m was the place to be Saturday evening. Lots of activity. Using the spoons was fun. They are ugly, but it answered my question: Can it be done? Yup! Great group. I'll see you all down the log. 73, Todd N7TMS



This Missouri Outlaw slipped across the border on Saturday afternoon and operated from the historic 9BSP/9UA shack of Marshall and Loretta Ensor in Olathe, KS. Amateur radio has been operating here for 100 years. 73, Doug N3PDT



Could be there only on Sunday after 18:15 TU but nice to contact several NA station from AZ - CA - CO - FL - GA - IN - KS - MA - ME - MD - MI - NC - - NH - NJ - OK - PR - TX and only 5 stations outside USA from ENG - FRA - BEL - CAN - VEN (twice). 73, Leon OS0S

Still More October WES!



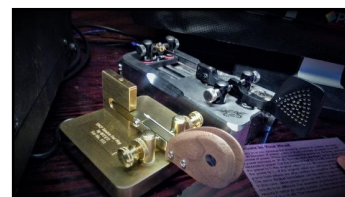
It was a great weekend to get some WES in here. I decided to use my Heathkit SB-102 and Navy Flameproof key. 103 of my 104 contacts were made on the SB-102, and I had a blast with it! Thanks to all!! 73, Jason N3YUG



Yaesu FT-857D @75 wts to 40M dipole on fence (5 ft). Vibroplex Straight Key. Nice to participate after several months off. Thanks for the QSOs! 73, Andy WA5RML



Going into this WES, I didn't imagine that I'd be sought after. But a bunch of folks wanted my letters to spell the bonus words! As for me, I ended the event still short two letter "O"s. The bands were pretty good this time around on both days. Many know that I only run boat anchor gear, but it's almost never a problem. Until this WES! My usually faithful Heathkit HW-101 let me down this time. Twice! Before my first QSO on Saturday, a rubber O-rig for the driver control broke. Then with an hour to go on Sunday, the circuit breaker popped. Both failures saw me fire up the only rig I have that can go from a cold turn-on to operational without major drift in just 5 minutes. That is my Tempo One. I ended up making about 1/3 of my contacts with it. It's quirky but fun to use on CW. But not during a contest! 73, Steve KE4OH



Using both my Begali Swing and newly purchased W1SFR TBSP This month to determine which one is best. They are very close! The Begali accommodates a heavier fist, while the TBSP favors a lighter touch. Both are Top Shelf Sideswipers! Thanks to all who put up with me this month! 73, Rich W4RQ



ow, great WES here. Got contacts on 80,40, 20 and 2 on 15 meters this weekend. Thanks to the guys in France for 6 DX contacts. Worked with the IC 7410 at 50 watts and the inverted Vee at 30 ft. Used both of the cootie's on this one. Great participation from EU and SA this weekend. 73, Allen KA5TJS



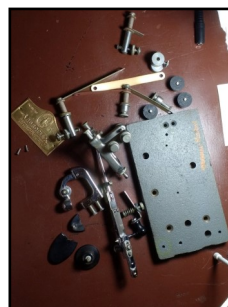
Always enjoy the word building challenges. Forty was the go-to band for me. Managed a few on 80, but was pretty noisy. Ran the HST "Cootie." Many thanks for all the contacts. 73 all and see you next month. 73, Jack KK0I



For 100% qrp 3 to 5 Watts level this was a great WES for me. I worked 4 DX entities in EU, NA, and SA. Maybe propagation is on the up tick..... I worked portable from the back yard. Thanks for answering my call. 73/72 Scott KD4EE

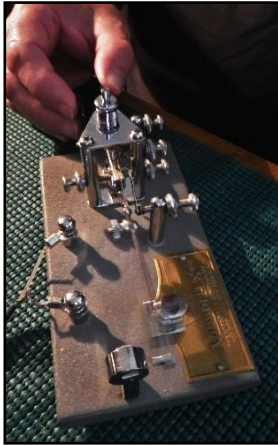


My Xmas gift project completed. Keys all cleaned up and new bases made. Now have to look for more work. 73, Gary VE3DZP

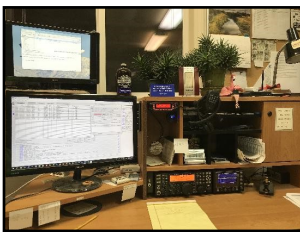


I love old bugs! Found this one and tore it down to replace some parts and clean all the nicotine off it. When it's done, I'll Probably run it for a few weeks or so and then put it on Ebay. 73, Jay W8ES

October SKS Photos and Comments



Another fun evening at the radios! The three stations I was able to complete a SKS exchange, Thank you for taking the time to work me, Qsb & weak signals. Was Qro tonite @ 100w. 73 to all hope to hear everyone on the bands. Cul73, John AL7JK



Great windup for the last SKS event before Standard Time returns. Lots of signals on 40. Couple on 80. Thanks to the organizers and participants. 73, Tom WB7EUX



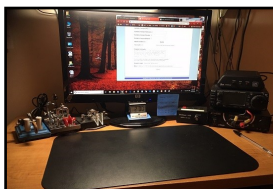
Really bad propagation tonight at 40 meters. 73, Ric HP1RIS



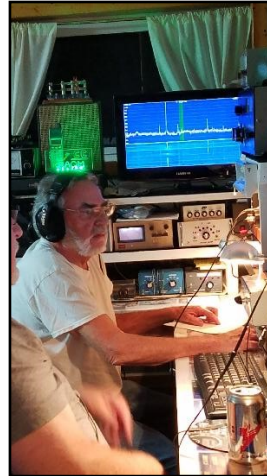
N3PDT, 73, Doug



The time just flies by! This time, the first thirty minutes produced 4 on 20, while the last thirty minutes produced a dozen on 80, with 8 new SPCs. remind me to jump up there earlier, next time, mkay? Worked K8XXX on three bands... thanks, Dah! I ran 5W from my K2 to a 20M EDZ up 50', and cooted with my brand-new TBCP FAT BOY cootie by W1SFR. 73,



IC-706 to G5RVjr @ 35' with 1946 Vibroplex Deluxe purchased in 1955 with grass mowing money. Some skilled ops and strong signals made this SKS even more fun than usual. Thanks for the great contacts. 73 ... Don K3RLL



The loneliest man on the band (W8KBW Max) wasn't so lonely but we saw little beads of sweat on his brow. Being new to SKS and 78 caused some worry but Max held up great with 14 Qs on 160m. The bands were great and it was fun to work K9TM and KB4QQJ on all four bands! 73 es TNX "Dah" K8XXX



TNX for everyone's patience copying my lousy fist. I used my "new to me" Junker. I really appreciate you SKCC folks! I may become a real Ham Radio operator yet! 72 Steve NQ8T



80 and 40 were good tonight. Noise was low, so I decided to try QRPP for the first time. I put in 1 hour and worked 6 stations, surprisingly with no problems. I even pulled a few 599s! I'll have to play QRPP seriously again one day. Used my KX3 at 1W into a 80M doublet at 30 ft, and my KN4YB 90 degree bug. I'm finding it's not real comfortable for a leftie... 72 from Appalachia Jay W8ES



Last SC contesting. CU all from the left coast next time. 73, Phil W6UG



First tin on SKS in months. didn't do well. Ten Tec Pegasus didn't tune well. Needs some work. Used a Vibroplex Original Bug and a speed-X 1957 model strait key. 73, Bob K3CKO

More October SKS



Lots of fun. Despite working the entire two hours of the sprint, score is low. A few things...got a slow start, and my tuner power cord fell out at one point, effectively muting my station (tuner when unpowered shorts the antenna connections to ground) so lost a bit of time. Lot's of nice QSO's, and worked two YL's, a first in any sprint where I seldom work any. Thanks WB9TFF and AA5UZ! Also, fun working K8XXX on two bands, and so many friends from past SKS'! ,73 Harv K2PI K3/Dipoles @60 Feet/100W



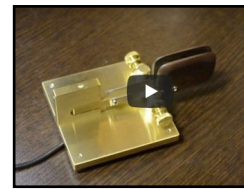
Had a little time this evening, so jumped on with the SKCC cootie - really like that key. 80m was booming, 40m not so much. 73, Mike N2HTT



I think this is the first time I've ever worked a bonus station - thanks Bruce for the 80 meter QSO! 73, Russ KK4WX



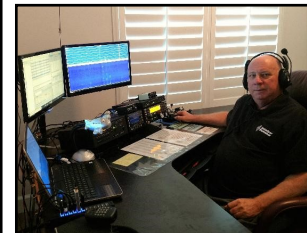
20m was slim pickings, 40 was a little better, and 80 was fun! A new Cootie key in the shack and I had to try it out, a W1sfr TBCP Fat Boy has taken its place right next to my Sculpture Swing, and I think it is definitely a Keeper! 73, Rich



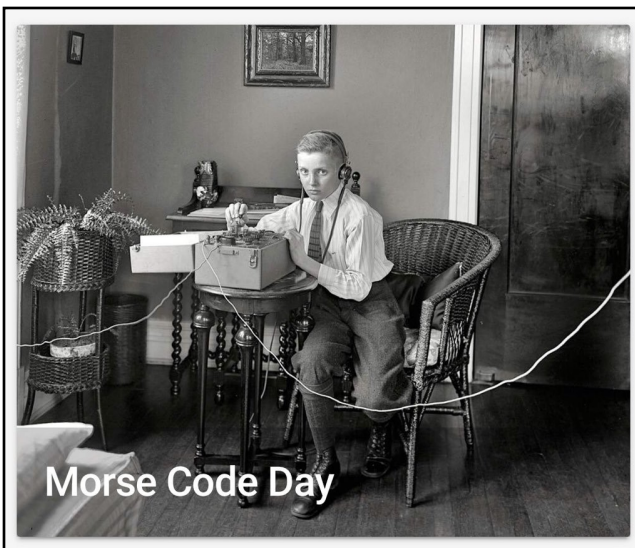
Only one QSO, my first SKS in a very long time. Nice to make are least a single contact @ 5 watts. Using a 40-ft trap dipole with a sideswiper/cootie made for me by W1SFR. 73, Rick WU1V



I had a lot of fun playing CW Spoons! It is so good to see the SKCC frequencies so crowded. See you all down the log. 73, Todd N7TMS



Sorry to all those I could not hear! I quit early because of the very high QRN and QSB. Started on 40 then to 80 hoping the QRN was better. It wasn't! Thanks for the Qs. Seems like lots could hear me I just couldn't hear you. 73, Dale K3SEN



Who Is This Guy?

Someone sent this to me and said they were sure this was Randy, KB4QQJ #3508s. Their reasoning was:

1. Polished appearance.
2. Handsome physical features.
3. Dedication to improving cw skills.
4. Elegant dress-tie and shoes.
5. Coiffed hair style.
6. Famous southern whicker furniture.

Having never personally met Randy I guess it could be. Those of you who have met Randy what do you think, could it be Randy is a very classy southern gentleman?

The First CW Decoder

By Bob K3CKO

In 1959 I was attending DeVry tech in Chicago. I rented a basement apartment a few blocks from school. It was a quiet neighborhood and I had a nice Land Lady. She let me put up an end fed wire from her chimney to a pole beside her garage. The wire from the basement to the chimney and across the yard made a serviceable inverted L antenna for 80 and 40 meters for my DX 100, tuner, and low pass filter.

In the late 50's there was a cheap television set made in Chicago that bragged about using a lot fewer parts than the expensive models. The tenant on the third floor of my building had such a TV. When I transmitted it tore up his TV badly. It didn't affect any other TV in the neighborhood. To try to keep the peace I offered to get him a high pass filter to put on the input of his TV. He would have no part of anything I offered.

One day at school during a mathematics lecture I got a note that said "Please report to the Dean's office". Wondering what kind of trouble I was in now, I went to the Dean's office. After asking me to sit down, he paced back and forth a few times in silence. Then he turned and said "Robert, Do you know you are wiping out TV in half of the West side of Chicago with your armature Radio"? I froze in my seat! "What have you got to say about that" he said. Stammering in shock, I told him the only complaint I knew about was the tenant on the third floor, and that I had tried to work with him. In fact my Land Lady had tried to get him to accept a high pass filter. The Dean said "yes, it was him who filed the complaint". "When I ask him how he knew it was you causing the problem, he said he read your name and address right off of his TV screen". The dean broke out laughing and I joined him. I think this may have been the first CW decoder in the history of Ham Radio.

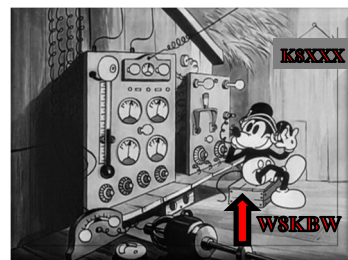
By Bob K3CKO SKCC13811S

Ed... Bob may be the first-ever to have applied for the "WATV" Award.....Worked All TVs!

Facebook Pictures



I'm trying something a little different and don't know if I'll master a bug....but I love the shape of this wonderful old key. My older Wm. M. Nye straight key sits and feels right to me. 73, Burt KA2L

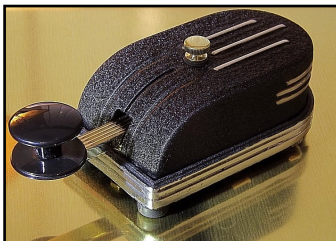


The loneliest man on the 160m band during the October SKS had to be Max W8KBW, #17557!

Max says he'll be back during the winter SKS events and under various calls. Help him not be so lonely...work him on 160m!



My straight key today 😊 :) and an awesome QRS QSO!!! 73, Eddie ZS6BNE



The Bigelow and Sons 1938 straight key is a perfect match to that receiver at the W9BSP station shown in an earlier picture by Doug N3PDT! 73,

A Visit with M. C. Hamner . . . #12301S

By Ken – N8KR



Who ever heard of Hurricane, Utah? If you're an active SKCCer, you'll quickly recognize that QTH every time you work Mike, KK7H and add Utah as a multiplier in our regular events. In fact, if you're chasing SKCC WAS, I'm guessing Mike will probably be in your log for your UT qso! I had the distinct honor to visit with Mike and his wife, Trish, This past October during my visit to six of the wonderful National Monuments Utah has to offer. Shortly after entering the southwest corner of Utah, fewer than 20 miles from Zion National Park, you'll find the KK7H qth. Imagine the beauty of living in that region! Meeting Mike lent credence to that ham

radio fact that no matter where you go, if you spot an antenna and knock on the door, you'll have an instant friend! In Mike's case, the antenna was not easy to see and fortunately we had this visit planned weeks in advance. Mike told me about the strict regulations Utah has about antennas. In fact, his nice Butternut Vertical antenna mysteriously grew and appeared in his backyard. His neighbors believe that he is an official monitoring station and appreciate his presence.

With a few radials on the ground, that antenna comes to life when Mike fires up his station. He loves his new Icom IC-7300 and that radio really packs a big punch when he puts that Acom amplifier in line! I looked around his shack and, like most of ours, a microphone was not to be seen. He loves his Vizkey camel back straight key which adds a touch of class to his station.

Visits with new hams never seem to be long enough. Learning about Mike and his passion for ham radio and SKCC and CW enriched my life greatly. It was especially cool when he told me that I was his very first SKCC contact! I found another friend . . . as we all do when we meet a fellow ham!



A Couple of "e"sse!!

November WES

Ed...Wow! The participation in this WES was huge! At the time of this writing there were 226 entries and one entry, Chas K3WW, worked more than enough stations to qualify and receive the first "Triple Key Award"congratulations Chas! Here are just some of the photos and comments submitted from the event.



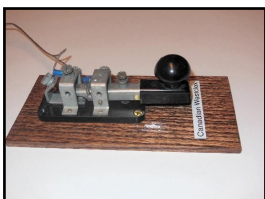
A ham friend bought this TenTEC Jupiter new but never used it on CW. Before he sells it, he wanted me to check it out to see if it worked on cw. Nice rig and after using it this weekend I think I will buy it myself. 73, Frank AA2XB



Yaesu FT-817nd @ 500mw's and 5 watts Antenna(s) 40 meter Hamstick and 20 meter Hamstick. Worked this WES stationary mobile from a very windy and cold Smith Point Beach parking lot in Shirley NY. Atlantic Ocean out the front window and Great South Bay out the back window...40 was in great shape and I managed the first 3 contacts with 500mw's and then bumped up the power to 5 watts for the rest of the time played in the sprint...Tha Hamsticks worked out quite nicely and produced surprising results for the hour and a half I worked the event! 73 de Jim K2MIJ



20m and 40m was in good shape both days but the 20m closed very early and the 40m was very QRM with the RTTY contest requiring frequent frequency changes. Despite that, I had a good time as usual. Thank you everyone for the QSOs and I hope to see you next month. 73 Bert F6HKA



Plagued with computer problems and struggled to keep the software driven TenTec Pegasus on the air. Had to work Veterans day Sunday. Even so, It was still fun. Used a Vibroplex Bug and a Westclox Model 2320 strait key. 73, Bob K3CKO



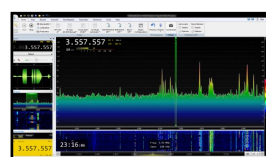
73, Walt LW3EX



Good fun. 20m the only band and that dropped out around 1600z. I did get 11 fun QSO's and used a Swedish Pump Key for all. TS-440s 100w MA6V vertical. 73 John / G0RDO / SKCC 2133s



K3 to stealth temporary vertical (HOA Restrictions) - Time was limited as life got in the way on this Veteran's Weekend. Yep, even us hams have a life ... at times. RTTY was big problem. Sure would be courteous to listen first; wouldn't it? Thanks for nice contacts. Bert F6HKA was actually strongest signal! 73, Don K3RLL



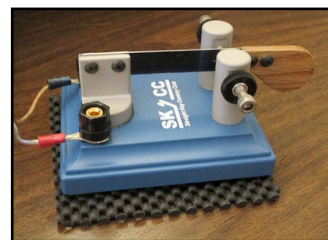
Fun WES. 73, Doug N3QW



Bought a 1942 Vibroplex bug on ARRL online auction received it just 2 days before the WES. So all QSOs were with the bug after cleaning years of dirt off 1st. 73, Joe K0IVK



A delightful way to enjoy a weekend. I moved up from a TBCP to a TBFB, and what a great key it is. Now to unwind with some music... Thanks to all who make this possible! 73, Lloyd K3ESE



Lots of band hopping in the last hour. Sunday 20 seem to take a dip about midday and recovered late. Good fun. Lots of good Sideswiper fists were heard. I enjoyed using my SKCC Sideswiper, a fantastic key. Thank you LNR for this fine Key. 73 de AL N4ow

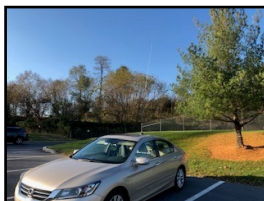
November WES #2



Took a break from hard core grid chasing since early WES activity seemed good. After 10 QSOS I realized some guys were sending key type, so I looked up the new award and decided to send key type. Stuck with the straight key (my novice Skillman Delux) for a few over 100 QSOS, not counting the first 10 and figuring there were multi band QSOs with a few guys. I went to the Cootie which was setting near the desk, and hooked it up with a Y connector. After working something over 100 with the cootie, I brought my 1944 (year I was born) bug off the shelf and swapped it for the cootie. It seems like somewhere close to 100 QSOs I was getting the feel of the cootie, and the bug was even harder, I added more weight and tortured a few over 100 new calls and some I had already worked with other keys (they don't count). Time to put the bug back on the shelf, but the cootie is easier on the fingers than the straight keys. For the bonus I did not count PR or Canada as countries but did count HI. Thank you to all our Veterans. 73, Chas K3WW



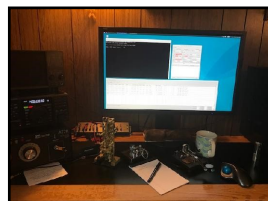
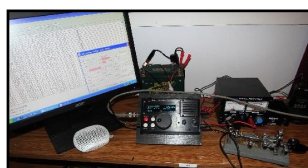
TNX to everyone who had the patience to copy my horrible fist and those who QRS'd for me! TNX to all for another enjoyable opportunity to spend time on the radio. 73 Steve NQ8T



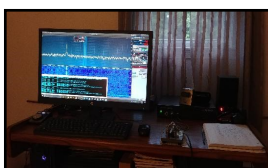
Operating portable at 10 watts with new KX2 while visiting in PA-- Thrilled to be able to operate minimally and able to decode CW. PA location had lot less RF noise than home station. Thanks to SKCC folks who responded to my calls. 73, Jim K3YMI



Fun as always. Used an old FT101 flea market find just liberated and rehabbed from Citizens Band Service as kind of a remembrance of my Elmer, Gary, WA9YQO, and other than the buzz that arrived just as the contest ended (can you say 597? :(the rehab continues...the HV caps already ordered) it performed flawlessly, and just like when I watched him unbox his in 1972. An old RAF Type 51 post-war Vulcan bomber key did the hard work. Thanks to everybody that dealt with my 50 watts and marginal anten-



Thanks for all the help on getting my SKCCLogger going on the linux desktop. Didn't have the Surface in my way while working WES. WHAT FUN! Picked up 13 new 'C' level stations toward Tx8. Only need 8 more and a couple spares now. 73 all. Thanks for the QSOs.73, Jim K5TSK



I had a slow start this WES. Thanks for all the QSOs! 73, Dave



73, GARY UTZ KE2YK

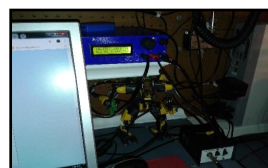


Tnx to all for the QSO's as always enjoyable time. 73, Steve NN0SS

Had very good time working the WES with wire antenna and vertical KX3 5 watts key bug. 73, Bud W8BUD



Darn, I didn't get a 2! Fun WES. Got contacts on 80, 40 and 20 this weekend. Thanks to Bert for the only DX I worked this weekend. Did not hear any Canadians. Used the 7410 at 50 watts and the 80 meter inverted vee and the HB cootie. The picture is the latest iteration of the shack in the garage. 73, Allen KA5TJS

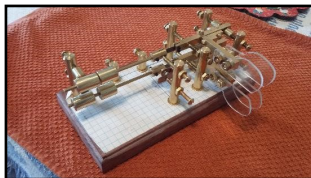


First event or contest using my "Made in India" uBITX and the LDG bal-un-fed 70' random. Had a great time, as always, and although my score isn't record smashing, using CW is the BEST part of it. Started late in the afternoon on Sunday...missing out on an entire day. See everyone next WES and for K3Y in 2019!!! 73, John KB2HSH



The rig I used in this WES was a recently built KD1JV Tri-Bander running 5 watts to an OCF dipole and a Begali Blade. Thanks to everyone for a great weekend of CW. 73, Larry W8DXU

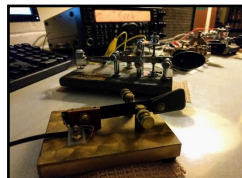
November WES #3



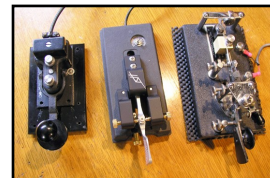
Kx2 g5rv 5wts 80 40 20 mtrs.. tnx board mbrs..agn f6hka bert my second month in a row for my first wes qso.. used DUBBUG and stkey.. on qrz, my vplx bug will be 100 yrs old in January... now hb'ing a COOTIE ... winter projects will be more DUBBUG keys.. take 73, Dave N9ZXL



I really enjoyed finding 20m hopping this morning. Since moving to a high-rise condo I'm limited to QRP/p - it's great to sip on a coffee while knocking off a few (and I mean just a few!) QSO. Bert, F6HKA - always FB to work you! 73 Andy VA3CW



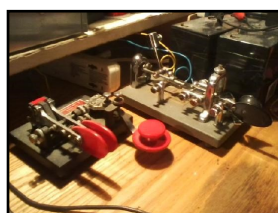
Thanks to the SKCC contest crew for another excellent Weekend Sprint! So pleased to have a little time to work this month's WES after a long absence. I was able to knock out a third of the Triple Key Award too, and I'm apologetic and thankful to those who endured my cootie fist. The 3KA has fired up my competitive spirit much like the Quest for Senator - what a fun accomplishment to strive for. With only 40 Meters for me, and sparse daytime operating as well, zones 6, 7, Hawaii and Alaska were out of the question from Alabama, but I was delighted to snag Bert, F6HKA, and Jose, KP3W, for a couple of DX bonus stations. If you're reading this and haven't jumped into a WES or weekday SKS you're missing out on a boatload of fun. Until the next WES, happy trails and good health to you all, my friends. 73, Bill WA4FAT



My main goal in this WES was to see how easily (or not) I could switch between a cootie and a bug. I had not tried it prior to the wes. Been cootie only since summer of 2017. I started with the SS for 20 or so, then to the SK for another 20 and then to the bug for 30 or so. The first 5 or 6 QSO's with the bug were a bit choppy since I kept trying to use the bug as a SS. Things smoothed out after that and I went back and forth between key types for the rest of the event. Ended up with 53 BUG, 21 SK, and 38 SS QSO's for a total of 112 unique. I used my Navy Flameproof SK, WW2 Army J-36 BUG with extra weight, and the HST II as the SS - no particular reason for those choices. Rig: K3 @ 100w to yagi on 20 & 15 and 160m horizontal loop on 160-40. Tnx to VE3IZS for my lone 160 Q, and to W8BFX for 15 meters. Got Max in HI on Sat. Had fun and learned a few things about switching key types on the fly. 20 was very unstable here, 40 went long and thin very early and can I say how much I really "dislike" rtty contests. 73, Dave W3NP



Great WES, Made 53 cootie QSOs towards my triple key award and has a blast. Also made one QSO on my newly acquired VizKey vertical bug (still have a ways to go with the bug). Thanks to all for the contacts we made and see you down the log.. VRY 73 DE KQ4MM - Brian



Growing an increasing disdain for RTTY ops who are "drifting" lower and lower into the 40 meter CW sub-band. 73, Jeff WN1MB



LOTS of activity! Great WES. It was fun working toward the new 3-key award. I knocked out all of the straight key QSOs and got a good start on the SS QSOs. See you all next time. 73, Marty N9SE



Time was limited by two football games but both my K-State Wildcats and KC Chiefs won! Also dinner out Saturday night. But had fun with my QRP Labs 40 meter QCX at 4 watts into a 160 meter loop fed with window line. Thanks to all who heard my tiny QRP signal. 73, Bill NZ0T



TU all for a fun WES, finally got a chance to make a few QSOs. Even had a couple on 15 and 80, mostly 40 and 20 even with the noise and other. Fr Richard WB8YXF

There are even more photos and comments on the web page. Check the "results" for the November WES

FCC SWITCHES TO NEW ONLINE REGISTRATION SYSTEM

The FCC is retiring its present version of the Commission Registration System, also known as CORES. As of March 1 of next year, anyone applying for an FCC Federal Registration Number, or FRN, must first create a username and password on the system before they can receive the FRN itself. That's already the case - but on the new CORES website anyone who already has an FRN from the old Commission Registration System will need to create a user name to continue managing it under the new system. You can find the website using the URL included the text version of this report.

This is especially important for Volunteer Examiners while administering amateur radio license exams. FRNs are used in place of Social Security numbers. Hams who do not have Social Security Numbers must instead use their Taxpayer Identification Number to get an FRN. An FRN is required for everyone using this system.

All hams who are already licensed and wishing to conduct business with the FCC, such as renewing their license or changing their address, also need to be registered properly through the new Commission Registration System so they have access to the online Universal Licensing System. It should also be noted that individuals with a new FRN will be able to log into the FCC's Universal Licensing System and set their preferences from receiving electronic copies of your documents to getting them on paper by postal mail, if desired.

Again, look at the printed version of this report at arnewsline.org and you'll find the link to the CORES website.

(<https://apps.fcc.gov/cores/userLogin.do>)*ARRL Newsletter*

New Address for the RBN Bandmap

As you might know, for the last 5 years I have been running an RBN bandmap web site showing CW Club member activity, at the address

<http://pa4n.xs4all.nl> .

I would like to inform you that the web site has recently moved to a different location. Would you please be so kind to inform your club members of the new location of the web site:

<http://rbn.telegraphy.de>

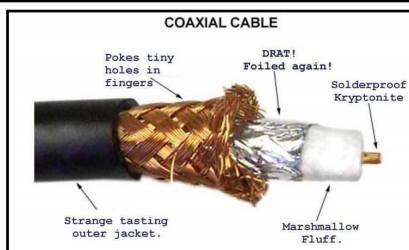
The old location will be dismantled.

The web site is now being maintained by the same person who came up with the original idea for the RBN bandmap web site, Fabian, DJ1YFK. If you have any questions regarding the web site, including issues regarding membership list updates for the web site, please contact

Fabian at: fabian@fkurz.net

I am glad that the web site has found a new home, and hope many CW enthusiasts will continue to use the RBN bandmap web site.

73 de Frank PA4N



Coax Issues

Jeremy, KD9VSQ sent this cartoon along and for sure there are many of us who can relate to the comments here! The one thing not mentioned that you probably faced at least once, is forgetting to put the outer sleeve on before soldering the braid!!!!

Ft. Wayne, IN Hamfest November 2018 ... de N8KR

The annual 2-day Fort Wayne, IN hamfest this year was also the home of the Central Division ARRL Convention. With that event came numerous forums throughout Saturday culminating with a banquet. Keynote speaker at the banquet was our League president, Rick – K5UR. Rick gave us a good view of the state of ham radio in the United States passionately talking about his love and experiences in our hobby. His achievements as a ham include: 370 countries (354 on CW), 320 countries on 160m, 10 band DXCC, worked all US grids, and 48 states on 2m. As he spoke of his love and vision for ham radio, his phone went off with a DX alert that Iran was spotted on 160 meters! He looked up in dismay and remarked that he needed Iran on 160! His message to us was a challenge: to passionately promote our hobby, to network with our ham brothers and sisters in support of each other, to reach out and mentor a new ham this year, to bring a new person into our hobby this year, and to work with our local clubs to achieve these goals and to instill new life and excitement.

Josh – W9HT and I set up and manned our flea market table which included 7 keys for sale (all but the leg-strap j-37 sold!) along with the “official” SKCC sign-in! 26 members stopped by for a visit including Jay-W9LW, Terry-K9FMX, Ed-WA9BBN, Rose-KA9GKE, Bert-K8HLQ, Mark-AA9MU, Greg-KE8CEW, Jeremy-KD8VSQ (QSL Buro Manager), Max-W8KBW, Tom-KU8T, Don-W8UZ, Stan-W8ATE, Donna-W8DIY, Ben-KD8VMU, Joe-WB9EAO, Mike-WB9DLC, Larry-KB9OS, Alan-AC9AP, Tim-K8NWD, Larry-W9CC, Brian-W9BGJ, Jack-WB8SCT, Carl-K9LA, Brian-KG8CO, Josh-W9HT, and Ken-N8KR.



Bert- K8HLQ # 17569



Larry – W9CC #469T



Jay-W9LW #6222S



Jeremy-KD8VSQ #13072T,
Max-W8KBW 17557
And Greg-KE8CEW #15805T



THE GROUP!!!!!!

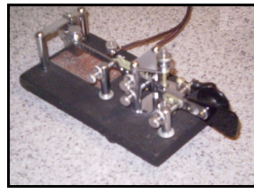
Pictures and Comments From November SKS



Like most other stations, I had poor conditions as well, high noise on 40m, so started straight on 80m and I was able to make some contacts. Didn't hear the bonus station. Yaesu FT-450D with MFJ key. Like always, it's a very enjoyable event. Thank you everyone. C U in the next. 73 de



Thanks to all, a few contacts and lots of fun on 40, greetings from Panama, 73, Ric HP1RIS



1945 Vibroplex Lightning to K3 to black, nite-only 4-BTV (HOA) - Only had 45 minutes this evening for radio but happy with the great ops I had the good fortune to run into. Big joy of the evening was Ric, HP1RIS. Thought I was miscopying his call! What a nice surprise. 73... Don K3RLL



Tried 20M, but nothing heard, worked a few on 40M, but 80M was hot. Thanks to all who pulled out my 4W sig-



We wish everyone in SKCC a very Happy Holiday Season & prosperous New Year! 73, Larry K8TEZ



Sad night on the bands here. After about an hour of dealing with the noise level, it was time to call it quits. Well, there is always next month. Thanks for those who persisted. Catch you on the bands. 73, Jack KK0I



Wow, 20 meters was dead here! Nothing from 14.025 to 14.065 on the SDR. Went down to 40 and lots of signals. TNX for the QSO's and had a lot of fun for an hour. Hope to CU guys in the WES next month. 73, Allen KA5TJS



TNX to Mark and all who had the patience to work me!



Only on for about 40 minutes, but 40M was really booming. Got to try out my new rig, an Aerial-51 SKY-SDR, and a newly installed G5RV. I really like the SKCC cootie, 4 more QSOs towards TKA-SS. Thanks to all the ops for another fun event. 73 Mike N2HHT



20 meters was shot, but 40 was pretty active here in California. A lot of fun to-night. 73, Roger W6LAX



A Mystery Bug came out of the Bat Cave for three of my contacts. Fun stuff. Thanks, 73. Lloyd VE4AEA



Thanks to all for a great time on the air. Still using my straight key, as I got to practice with the SS..... 73 and God Bless Fr Richard WB8YXF

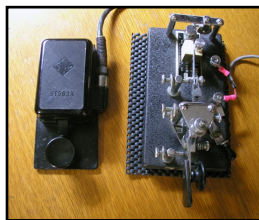


20m dead! 49 es 80 good, Max the 160m op and "loneliest man on the band did well and gathered 6 QSOs. Max is a happy camper! This is the best smile Max can



No luck on 160 and then ops cut short due to family visiting. Only 2 but sounded like everyone was having fun. 73, Les WB5JWI

More November WES



Stayed on 40 until the last 10 minutes - then went to 160 and wrked Mark NU8Z, then 80 for 3 QSO's. 40 started out very long and was surprised to hear W6LAX & WU6X in CA and then WA7RCT in UT & PS7HD in Bra coming in so well with nearby stns in the noise. 40 then dramatically shortened up and stations in NY were 599+. The bands have been so unpredictable these days. Switched back and forth between a German Telefunken SK and my US Army J36 bug. Rig K3/KPA-500 to 160m horizontal loop at 50'. Never heard the bonus stn. It was a fun eve with many newer members on - a big welcome to them!! 73, Dave W3NP



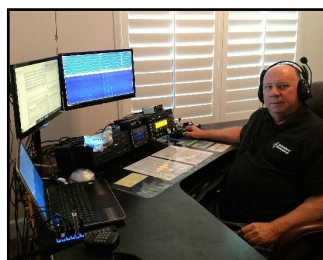
80 meters pretty active, 40 meters okay, nada on 20 meters. I Want to thank all who participated and made tonight another fun evening with CW. I'm really happy to work Randy KB4QQJ, Bill NZ0T, and Bill WB4DBO again, and meet a few first time QSO partners tonight. Ya All come back next month and help make the last SKS of the year a real Doozy! Rich W3RQ



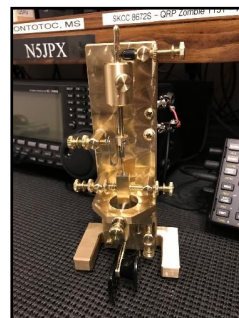
Thanks to those who manage and work to make this happen! 73, Carl KC4FLT



Gotta improve my antenna situation at home in MA. Had fewer contacts than expected, but did give the bug and Cootie some exercise. Still like the old W.U. 2A key the best, though. Thanks to all. 73, John



As the night wears on my QRN level increases. Sorry to those I just couldn't copy. Stayed to long on 40M but 80M was just terrible with QRN! Thanks for the Qs. 73 Dale K3SEN



I almost heard something on 20 meters but 40 and 80 were the place to be this evening. Thanks for the QSO's and thanks to the organizers that put these fun events together. KX3 @ 100 watts, Vizkey vertical bug to my 80 meter loop. 73, Jim N5JPX



ARRGGHH I couldn't figure out the time change, so only got about half of a sprint tonight. Pretty good conditions on 40 and 80; nothing heard on 20. Pictured, along with my trusty K2 #4442, is my new SK, the luscious PB213 by GONVT, which I use for my daily Bragwerke, and the inimitable TBFB cootie, by W1SFR, which I used for the fast, steady pace of the sprint. 5W was sent via ladder to a 20M EDZ at 50'. 73, Lloyd K3ESE

Becareful Buying Self Christmas Gifts!



Make sure to treat those wonderful supportive XYLs to a great Christmas gifts (no vacuum cleaners nor irons!) or you might just end-up as the ham coming home in this picture!

New Antenna Book

Editor... Here is a great book/pdf presented by Stan ZL2BLQ. If you want to know about the different types of antennas you could use and you're not into math and technical jargon then this is the book for you! It has been uploaded to the SKCC files at:

<https://groups.io/g/SKCC/files/ZL2BLQ%20Antenna%20Book/Ham%20Book.pdf>

I've included Stan's preface to the book/pdf here so you'll get a feel for what Stan is presenting. I highly recommend you download his pdf. Stan says it is a work of and from many helpful ops.

Preface

One reason for writing this book is to educate you so you can make an informed choice concerning the best antenna for you. Another reason is to dispel the many antenna myths that circulate in the amateur community. The third reason is a desire to teach basic antenna theory to the average ham. Therefore, to achieve that goal, you should read this book from cover to cover. It was written primarily for the newcomer and the non-technical old-timer.

This book is about common medium wave and high frequency (short wave) antennas, but the theory presented here relates to antennas of any frequency. It is in a condensed form and the antenna theory is explained so most hams can understand it. Realizing many hams are mathematically challenged, only simple mathematics procedures are used. If you can add, subtract, and divide using a calculator, you will not have trouble with this book.

A few principles in here are based on conclusions drawn from the Laws of Physics. Everything else in this book can be found scattered through The A.R.R.L. Antenna Book and nothing in here contradicts what is written there.

Thank You All

Another year has come to a close, the fourth issue of the Rag Chew for 2018 is now published. I want to thank all of you who have contributed articles and pictures during the past year. The editorial staff of the "Rag Chew" (me) has "reporters" numbering over 19,000! It is the work of you many "reporters" that make the Rag Chew possible and interesting.

The inclusion of the many pictures and comments uploaded for SKS, Brag and WES help introduce members to each other. Thank you for submitting your scores, pictures and comments.

Those of you who use Facebook and post pictures and comments help make the Rag Chew interesting...thank you for that (but if you would also post your call that would make it easier).

Thank you, thank you thank you.
73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM

