
Flying Pigs QRP Club

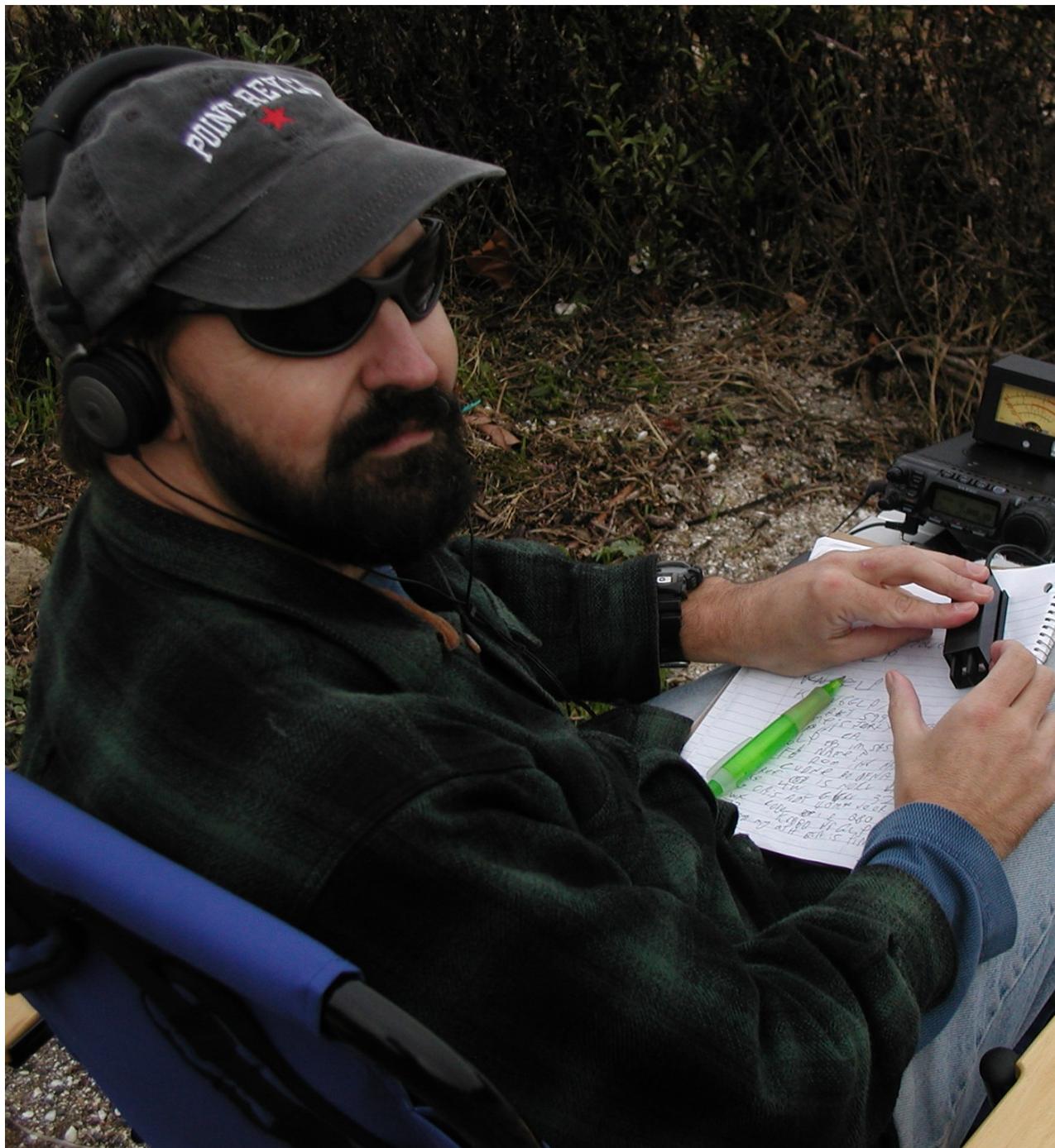
Bacon Bits Quarterly



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FPQRP [membership](#) is open to all licensed QRP operators who reside within 12,000 nautical miles of Cincinnati, Ohio.



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Rem, K6BBQ FP#-490 operates during FYBO 2008



The View from the Slop

By Rob, WOJRM FP#-330

Greetings, salutations, and whatnot to all you pigs out there. It's been a busy couple weeks here at the WOJRM household. I won't go into tremendous detail, but let's just say that this issue of BBQ has been thrown together a bit quickly. Please pardon any mistakes I overlook.

The focus of this issue is twofold: First, we look forward to the spring and summer backpacking seasons with articles on portable operation and equipment. Second, highlights and lowlights of the various FYBO efforts put forth by pigs and non-pigs.

Tom, N2UHC FP#1149 tells us all about his adventures in camping with QRP radios, and the equipment he takes along with him.

We'll hear from Brian, KB9BVN FP#-57, who organized a group build and had a great turnout.

On top of all that, Hank-Fred will give us the low-down on phased verticals for the down-low bands! Get out your calculators, 'cause this one's kinda technical (for a change).

This is the largest Bacon Bits Quarterly that I've had the privilege of putting together so far. I would like to sincerely thank each of you who contributed to this issue! Keep it up gang, we're doing a great job!

Like most of you, I'm anxiously awaiting the return of warm weather. This has been a record-setting year for snowfall in Iowa, as I'm sure it has been in other places as well. As I set here in my 49F shack and look out the window at yet another single-digit day, my thoughts begin to wander to spring hikes at Sharon Bluffs State Park. Those hot and humid days spent in the garden... mosquitoes... ticks... thunderstorms blowing up my equipment... you know, maybe winter ain't so bad after all.



I can't wait for spring. Note the falling snow, the ice storm debris in the background, and the lovely house slippers...

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Announcing the EU-QRP-Foxhunt

By Tom, DM4EA

Intentionally we don't want to compete with the nerve-wrecking wwdx- or wpx-like top-score-hunts, but offer a fun-run- or winter-sports-like opportunity to meet friends!

The 1st hunt will start on Monday, 07 Jan, 1900UTC and last 60 minutes. This will be continued for every Monday till 31 Mar. Bands are 80m and 40m around 3560 & 7030, but choice of bands, certain QRG or eventual QSY are up to the foxes.

The hunters' aim is to catch the foxes, foxes should try to give as many as possible hunters a chance to grab them, but without a certain rush; also for that reason the CW-speed is determined by the slower partner!

Of course, both foxes & hunters must not exceed the QRP-limit of 5W, but are free to run VLP ;o)

QRP-operators from all over EU should apply for doing the foxes, portable-activities are especially appreciated, but not required.

The calls of the depicted foxes will be announced by proper means in time.

To get away from the stupid 5nn###, we'll exchange a real report, Name, QTH, rig, power and antenna used. Additional remarks, greetings etc are highly appreciated to make this a friendly event as long as you don't exceed it to rag-chewing and seriously hamper others from the original idea of catching the fox.

The foxes will file their (preferably) electronic logs to a certain destination to be put into a database, that verifies the QSOs and leaves only the fun to you: just participate, enjoy and wait for your special QSL that will be generated, as soon as your 1st contact gets into the DB. It comes via buro.

The general rule is: less rules, more fun ;o)

By the end of the series, there of course will be awards spread amongst the most successful hunters and most active foxes by mail as .pdf, so that you can print it.

For more info, visit <http://www.qrpforum.de/hmportal.php>

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Phasing Verticals for Fun and Gain

Technical details by Fred, K3DCB FP#-940

Proofreading by Hank K8DD FP#-281

There was a discussion on the FP and qrp-l.org reflectors about phasing verticals for fun a few more dB's. It was suggested that two 1/4 wave verticals spaced 1/4 wave apart will give you some decent gain on 40M. I use two 1/4 wave verticals on 80M and they work great.

Last summer I got out my trusty Easy-Hang slingshot and fired a line over one of the 80 foot oak trees in the woods on the south side of the property and hung a 66 foot wire on a strong string and pulled it up. I took an SO-239 and soldered the wire to the center and hooked some ground wires to the flanges. Then I took a 5 foot piece of steel angle – about 1 1/2 inches on each side – and pounded it in the ground to hold the bottom steady.

Next I measured 66 feet to the north-east and pounded in another piece of steel angle, took the Easy-Hang and shot up another 80 foot oak and hung the second 66 foot piece of wire pretty much the same way. All I had was enough wire for 5 quarter wave radials for each vertical, so they got stretched out under the verticals.

Then, since it was getting dark, it was time for a nice cool Fosters. The next day I ran about 160 ft of RG-213 from the shack out to the first vertical. Excellent SWR at 3530. Checked the second vertical – same results. Now it was time for the phasing lines. I went to what I call the “Bible for the Low Bands” - ON4UN's Low Band Dxing. I have every edition that has been printed since it was a small, stapled thin book, but it has yet to steer me wrong!

There are several ways to set up the phasing on 2 (or more) verticals – the easiest being coax cable phasing lines (the Christman method). In the past, in the Hy-Gain Notes on phasing verticals, and in the vertical book written by Cmdr Paul Lee sometime in the 80's, they said to use equal length feed lines to each vertical, preferably 1/2 wave, and then insert a 1/4 wave line one side or the other of the main feed line to switch the direction of the end fire. This gave a 90 degree phase shift for verticals spaced 1/4 wavelength apart.



NE Vertical with Deer tracks in the background



SW Vertical with more deer tracks in the background

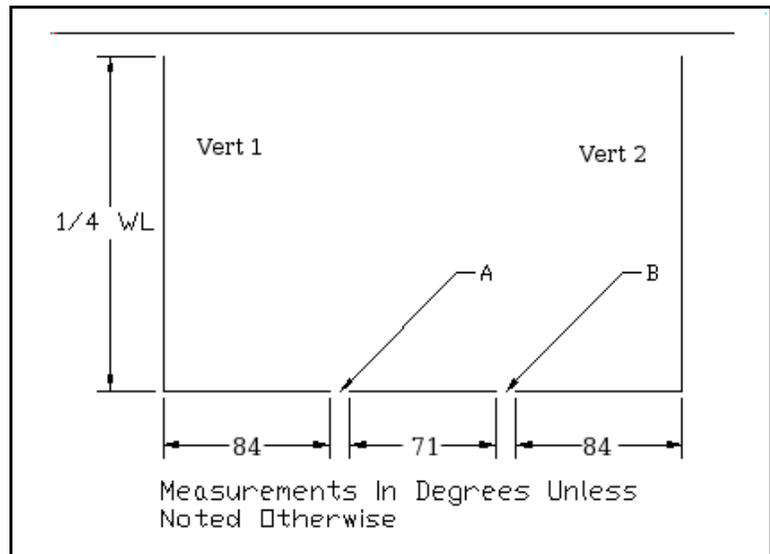
Then came the ON4UN book a few years later. He suggested feeding the verticals with 84 degree phasing lines and using a 71 degree phasing line to switch directions as shown in the next figure.

If fed at point A with a barrel connector at point B, it will be directional toward vertical 2.

If fed at B with a barrel connector at point A, it will be directional toward vertical 1.

Remove the 71 deg line and feed both 84 degree lines and it will be broadside with a higher SWR.

The next question would probably be how long are the 71 and 84 degree lines?



84 degrees at 7050 will be 90 degrees at 7553 kHz (7050 X 90/84). The 71 degree phase line will be 90 degrees at 8936 kHz (7050 x 90/71).

So then the 1/4 wave line at either 7553 or 8936 KHz would be something like $(248 * VF) / \text{freq in MHz}$ Cut it about a foot long so you can check it with your MFJ 259, or what ever you use as an antenna analyzer. The quarter wave lines at 7550 KHz would be approximately 21.7 ft each and the quarter wave line at 8936 KHz would be approximately 18.3 ft You can check the resonant frequency with your antenna analyzer.

With my 80M array set up with a coil of coax (the 71 degree line) and the two 84 degree lines feeding the verticals I could hear Europe, but I could not work them. The next trip to the Tractor Supply store got me a half mile of #17 aluminum fence wire and I added 15 more 66 ft radials to each vertical. And I have a lot of wire to add a LOT more radials next spring!

At this point I had to run out in the woods to change directions from NE to SW – not a good thing to be doing after dark with radial wires all over the woods! In the big box labeled “antenna stuff” I had an older Ameritron remote coax switch. The older ones have open relays rather than the printed circuit board relays that the newer ones have. Since the remote switch grounds the unused antennas, I removed the ground buss wire and now I could switch NE, SW or feed both without the delay line, for a broadside pattern. The remote switch is wrapped up in a canvas spare tire cover under about 8 or 10 inches of snow so there is no picture of it!

In the ON4UN books, and I'm sure others, it has changed. You now want two 84 degree lines to feed the verticals and one 71 degree line for the switchable phasing line to switch end fire directions.

Don't use the 71 degree line, feed them both and you have a broad side pattern and about 1 dBd gain. End fire is about 3 dBd. According to the ON4UN Low Band DXing book, this is because the 90 degree phase shift is not necessarily the best solution – at 90 degrees shift, the verticals should be 105 degrees apart.

It's usually easier to put them 90 degrees ($\frac{1}{4}$ wave) apart and use a 105 degree phase difference. Keep the array at or close to 50 ohms, so the lines shown in the drawing are the optimum lengths for the best operation of a two element vertical phased array. Another reason for getting away from the 90 degree phasing lines is they assume that the impedance of the verticals is 50 ohms resistive. This is something that doesn't happen very often.

Will it work with 90 degree ($\frac{1}{4}$ wave) lines? Sure. Will it work better with the 71 and 84 degree lines? You bet, and have an increased F/B ratio or 10 to 15 dB. And at low power or QRP levels, every dB can make a difference.

Personally I feel that with a 40 meter ground mounted vertical I'd like 30 plus radials; approximately 33' in length is great. For 40 meter radials I pound two sticks in the ground 33' apart and tie one end of the spool of wire to one stick. Then start walking around both sticks, keeping the wire tight. After you make 20 complete revolutions you should have 40 wires between the stakes. Cut all the wires at both ends, strip the wires at one end and wrap them together to attach to your vertical ground and spread them out around the base over 360 degrees.

A lot of radials do work and although much has been written about radials on the ground – pro and con, I have found that every time I add another dozen radials it just gets better. Maybe if I ever hit 100 radials under my verticals I will decide that the next 12 didn't make all that much difference.

In the past I have always used copper wire for radials and they worked very well. But with the price of copper going up – it seems weekly - I have switched to aluminum wire not only because of the cost, but it is much lighter to carry out of the store while you are running from the security guards! And it should most likely last as long as I live.

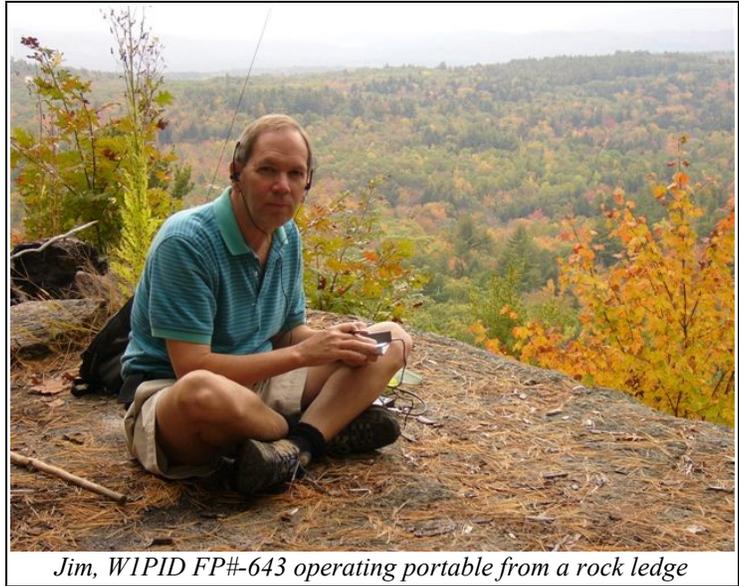
And I hope, without going into a whole lot of detail or formulas ($20+j15$ ohms and all that), this all makes sense. I put my 80M phased verticals up while the weather was a bit milder! I did work VK6HD long path on 80 CW in early December about a half hour before dusk but it wasn't QRP - well, maybe it was to some of those 80M Dxers.

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Everybody Needs a Pocket Radio

By Jim, W1PID FP#-643

When you go out for a walk, you take your handie, right? 2 meters... 440... between the two you can usually hit a repeater somewhere. The concept is good. But without much trouble you can make it better... like a few thousand miles better. All you need is the HF equivalent of a handie. So here it is: the Guide to HF Portable (REALLY portable. I'm not talking suitcase here.) for those who like being outdoors, like ham radio, and who want the thrill of a lifetime.



Jim, W1PID FP#-643 operating portable from a rock ledge

During the last couple of years of experimenting and reading, I've got my HF portable gear pretty much down to the size of a handie or two. It's shirt pocket stuff, and I rarely leave home without it. Not for emergencies or anything special... just for fun, just for the thrill of working California or the Ukraine from the edge of a brook or field along the way. You don't need anything elaborate or expensive. You can put together the entire setup for \$100 or so. My setup is for CW, but you can do the same thing for SSB. The phone rigs are generally a bit bigger and a bit heavier and, of course, more expensive.

Yesterday was a pretty typical portable excursion. I took a brief hike North on Mountain Road to Dearborn Pond. I hung a 20 meter dipole from a couple of tree branches. I forgot to bring string so I just tied the ends of the wire (33 feet total) to a couple of branches maybe 8 feet off the ground. Usually I'd throw it up 25 or 30 feet. I sat down on a rock overlooking the pond. It was beautiful... so was 20 meters. There was a contest going on, and the band was pretty active. I worked 15 states in 30 minutes. The contacts included California and Washington, and I even had a QSO with England.

Putting together a miniature field-ready radio is neither difficult nor expensive. Here's a description of the gear I brought and some websites where you can see some of the stuff. First of all the entire setup weighs less than 2 pounds. I carry everything in a small Tupperware box.

1. Small 20 meter rig. A kit runs between \$85 and \$100 dollars. I like the Small Wonder Labs DSW-20. Also check out the SST from Wilderness Radio. It's smaller and lighter but only covers 10 KHz of bandwidth. I've also used the MFJ Cub. These three rigs put out 2 watts. Take a look at the Elecraft KX1. It's a multiband rig with an antenna tuner. Also check out the tiny ATS rigs from Steve Weber, KD1JV. Steve is a real genius.

2. Antenna – I took a simple 20 meter dipole. It's made with 33 feet of light wire and 25 feet of RG-174 coax. The RG-174 is very thin and light. A dipole like this eliminates the need for a tuner. I keep the whole thing on a small plastic reel. But I often use a simple wire. A 30 vertical over a tree branch works great, but you'll need a tuner. Look at the T-1 from Elecraft.

3. Earphones – A standard lightweight pair of ear buds does perfectly.

4. Key or Paddle – I use an inexpensive paddle that I bought from Electronics USA. It's model MK-44 and costs around \$18. I often use a miniature straight key from Morse Express. It's all brass and is about the size of your thumb. It's called the mini Sox key. Morse Express has the "mini Palm" paddle which is superb.

5. Battery pack - This can be the heaviest part of the station. I've reduced my battery pack to 8 AA NiMH batteries from Radio Shack. This pack is rated at 9.6V but starts out at 11.2V or so. It's 1600 mAh and will run one of the little rigs for about 4 hours of QSOs. It only weighs a few ounces. Check out Radio Shack No. 23-331B. I also use some Lithium Ion packs that are half the weight.

Ok... so you noticed it's CW. You're scared. Get over it. There are a lot of guys out there doing 5 WPM and entire sections of the band where people hardly ever go over 10 WPM. No matter how bad your code is, you can still make contacts and have fun. And... your code will get better. It's not different from the first time you tried anything else. A little clumsy at first, but you got better pretty quickly.

If you can't stand code and you still want to try HF portable, here are a few suggestions. You may be over the \$100 bracket, and it will add a couple of pounds to the load, but it's not difficult. Look at the MMR-40 from QRPKits. This is a small, portable SSB rig designed for outdoor use. It works on 40 meters and costs just a little over \$100. Also look at the Yaesu FT-817. I often take this rig when I hike. It's bigger than the little CW rigs, but it's also a lot more versatile. It's got 2 meters and 440 plus all modes, all bands HF. It works like a champ on SSB. The Elecraft K2 is excellent on SSB. All three of these rigs are lightweight and draw very little battery current.

John Harper, AE5X, who's been hiking with radios for years, has a site with information. He tells all about lightweight radios, antennas, and batteries and how to put them all together.

The Adventure Radio Society sponsors several outdoor QRP events each year and also holds a monthly Spartan Sprint contest for outdoor radio enthusiasts. Their site is loaded with information on small, lightweight radio gear.

My own site has loads of pictures and stories about outdoor radio adventures. Give me a call anytime. I'll be glad to help you get started with pocket HF.

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Portable Hamming

By Henry, W5HNS FP#-1039

I am not a backpacker but I do like to do hamming with portable setups. For low power battery operated outings, I use an Elecraft K2 with a 7 amp or 12 amp battery. Antennas usually are inverted vees strung from trees or from one of my telescoping poles. One antenna is dedicated to 40 meters, another is 40 and 17 meters. Both can work 15 meters. Another choice is an endfed wire with counterpoise that is divided up among four bands using insulators and alligator clips to choose.



This bag contains the Yaesu FT100d, MFJ 45w p/s, cables and accessories. Foam padding beneath the bubble wrap.

I will operate portable in my local area from parks, roadside, etc. If I am not QRP, I use a Yaesu FT100d that I can take up to 100 watts. It is also capable of QRP 5 watts. That must either be done from the car with the engine running or from a location with power to drive the MFJ power supply. Coax is RG8X and I usually have a 50 foot roll and possibly an additional 25 foot roll.

If I am visiting my children in other cities and I need to fly to get there, packing for the flight is not a problem. If I am carrying the FT100d, I pack everything in a dedicated piece of luggage. The radio and P/S are wrapped with bubble wrap and the luggage is lined with foam padding. There is room for the few accessories such as keyer paddle, cables, logbook, two three foot lengths of rope, slingshot with fishing line and weights. Also the rolled up antenna of choice and the coax.

The weight of the luggage is under 50 pounds. I have traveled this way four times all on Southwest Airlines. They have a 50 pound per bag limit and you are allowed 3 bags per person. I will check this bag with the airlines along with a cardboard tube which houses the telescoping pole. That tube counts as a bag. If my stay is more than a few days, I may throw in the bag, a soldering iron and a few tools in case antenna repairs are necessary.

Antennas are rolled up on a very handy plastic kite line dispenser which was purchased at a local Fry's Electronics for \$3. My antennas are using bulky insulators and I recommend making your own and keeping them small as this makes rolling up and unwinding much easier. With my MFJ pole, the inverted vee is usually up about 25 feet and the 40 meter end insulators are about 7 feet off the ground with about 12 feet of line out beyond the insulators. Fifty feet of coax usually is enough but the other 25 feet can be added with a coax adapter. No tuner is used with the FT100d.



Spool on left still has kite string on it. These are designed to reel out kite string for kite flying. Next one is 65 feet of wire and a 33 foot counterpoise. Notice it is less bulky than the next one due to smaller insulators. The bulky one is a 40/17/15m antenna with insulators and alligator clips for band changes. The one on far right is another 40m inverted vee or dipole. Any ONE of these will fit in the black check in bag, two of the smaller ones will fit in the carry on bag. For local portable activity, they ALL fit in the trunk of the car.

If I am packing the Elecraft K2 and using Southwest Airlines, I usually take it on as a carry-on. On Southwest Airlines, my particular is a tad large to put under the seat but it will go overhead. For me, I usually know that I have commercial power available so I take a small P/S and no battery. Also pack a QRP Z match tuner.

This carry-on has room for the K2, the tuner, P/s, keyer paddle, cables, slingshot and fishing line, and one rolled antenna. The coax goes in my regular luggage. This bag is lined with foam padding which also holds everything snugly in place. Sometimes this bag will get inspected but not always.

For local portable operating, so far that has been only QRP. My carry on bag becomes a go box. My telescoping pole

and its support post are thrown in the trunk of the car. There are two support posts available for the telescoping pole. One is a metal stake which can be driven into the ground. It is fashioned with two wood blocks to hold U clamps for the pole.

The other is my home brew "big foot" which goes beneath a car tire. With either one, the U bolts need be tightened only hand tight. But I still recommend a 2 inch diameter sleeve of PVC pipe over the telescoping pole for protection. This can be one long piece or two rings cut large enough to fit behind the U bolts. These U bolts are 2.75 inches across and 5 inches long.



Two pole supports. One is held up by the car and the other one is driven into the ground and has U clamps that support the telescoping pole.

I chose to construct the "big foot" with a hinged vertical piece made of 2x4. The base piece is a 2x10. The vertical is braced with a metal strap. IF you make one of these, use the stoutest bracing available in the hardware stores. Mine is fashioned with one brace attached to an angle bracket on the base. I recommend a brace on BOTH sides of the vertical 2x4.

The simpler model is to use a pipe flange with threaded pipe to place the telescoping tube over. I fear damage can easily be done to the bottom section of the telescoping pole with this set up and you would have to remove the bottom cap on the pole. But to remedy that, one could use a 2 inch diameter PVC sleeve over the threaded pipe and then slide the pole inside the PVC to rest atop the threaded pipe.

Should Murphy try to take over and I cannot erect the telescoping pole, then I am looking for tree branches and the slingshot, fish weights and line come into play at that time.

The Houston QRP Club (using call W5MSQ) has outings in an area park and it is always fun to use this setup there. The antenna can be up in less than fifteen minutes.

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Introducing: Brow-agra

By Walter, K5EST FP#-840

This morning while splitting firewood there was this wire looking eyebrow hair that was twitching every time I would adjust my glasses. Not only was this eyebrow hair twitching it was ugly, stiff like a corn stalk, and sorta looked like a hair horn of about #24 AWG wire. Well, I plucked that thing. You know if it had a hole in one end it could be a sewing needle.

Then, it come to me. "Brow-agra"this would be a common persons Viagra substitute. Shoot, its gonna last longer than that 4 hour worry they tell you about on TV. And you could either grow your own, or if you are too active then you could buy some of them off of the "Pig List" at a oo's membership discount.

Whoa, I am getting ahead of the game. Well, we still got to get those little hair wires washed, dried, quality checked, and then into some capsule pill. Speaking of quality checking, I am going out on an ice covered pond and say I bet those with a light touch of gray highlight are going to be the A++++ grade and the total gray are going to be too droopy and only make the A+ grading. Still to be determined is what color is going to be best and then a certain shade or highlight that will be the "Brow King."

Now, just in case you are chuckling and thinking you are going to make a million out of my ideas, you just hold up with plucking yourself. We have to put some kind of disclaimer on the bottle of "Brow-agra" that would not be deceiving to the folks that have to purchase instead of pluck.

It is right at 11 1/2 deg. F at lunch time and I have to finish some wood splitting and get it stacked for the next snow storm tomorrow. After that I'm going to hit the recliner and grab a mirror and start counting brow hairs cause this just couldn't be a dream!

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Flying Pigs Land at Capitol City Hamfest

By Ev, N5MZX FP#-1192

The Flying Pigs get together was held on the first and second of February at the Capital City Hamfest in Jackson, Ms. The weather was perfect for the event and we had a large turn out. This Hamfest is put on by the Jackson Amateur Radio Club (W5PFC) and is the ARRL's Mississippi State Convention. Information about the the Jackson Amateur Radio Club and it past Hamfests can be found at www.msham.org. I would like to especially Mike Duke (K5XU) The Hamfest chairman and club president for all of his help. The JARC has a long tradition of supporting and promoting Amateur Radio, QRP operating, and in its community service activity.

The Flying Pigs QRP Club International again had three tables for the display of radios, accessories, and informational hand outs. The handouts included information about kit building, The Amateur's Code, Vibroplex, Vecronics, MFJ, Ten Tec, and a Altoids tin.

MFJ Enterprises donated the coffee cups, bags, and Vecronics catalog. I want to thank Martin Jue (K5FLU) and Randy Stubbs for their generosity. Door prizes were donated for each of the forums. During the first forum a CODE MITE Key was donated by The Vibroplex Company Inc of Mobile, Al. I want to thank Betsy Hopson and all the folks for their help.

The second forum door prize was an MFJ-9380W 80 meter transceiver. Two very nice ARRL books were donated by WD4DDA. Also a NoGA Pig was given away. I want to thank each and every prize donor for their help and I encourage everyone to trade with them.

Foot traffic was huge at our table. We answered questions about the club, QRP, and the rigs on display. We were surprised to to have a visit from George and crew of Amateur Logic TV. I ask every ham to visit their website. George and group do a great job. The interview was conducted with me wearing a pink Flying Pig hat. They had to had a good sense of humor to do the interview with me.

Last year we had one forum on general information on QRP, and it was presented by by N5iB Jim Giammanco to a stand up crowd. This year we had two forums. The Saturday 10 AM Forum was about building Surface Mount Technology kits. We were very fortunate to have ED Laughery N5XN for the presenter. We were treated to a Power Point presentation that covered the basics to being able to build your very own SMT kit.

We had a interesting question and answer period that followed the presentation. Amateur Logic TV filmed the presentation and chances are that we will be able to see it in the future.

(Ed. Note – this particular episode of Amateur Logic TV can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIuskLndYUs>)

The 2 PM forum was presented by ED Laughery N5XN. This forum was about batteries. We learned how to select the proper battery for the job. The care and feeding of them. Solar Panels, charge regulators, and batteries were also discussed.

This year was a departure from last years general information forum. The SMT forum this year was scheduled because of your input. I need you to suggest themes for next years forums. I need you if you have something to share like a QRP Special Event, or QRP participation in a DX expedition, or if you have any technical expertise for 2009. I need your help. I want to thank all those who helped especially Ed Laughery N5XN, and Ben Mc Kinney K5HQV.

Each one of us who registered got an Altoids tin in their pack. I encourage everyone to build a kit, or something home brew for Show and Tell. This is not intended to be a contest but to encourage yo to build something. It does not even have to work. But if you are going to build try to get it working. Each person who has built and brought his project back to the Hamfest will be entered for a prize.

I am eager to see you again next year and I urge you to bring a friend. I want to thank each and every one of you for your participation and the chance to share our common interest in QRP Amateur Radio. See you all next year.

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Successful Build-A-Thon Follows Mid-State Amateur Radio Club Meeting

By Brian, KB9BVN FP#-57

We did a group build-a-thon on Saturday after the local ARC meeting. They had never done anything like that before and we ended up having the largest meeting turnout that we've had in years!

The kit was the Elenco M1006K. We bought them from Marshall Emm at Morse Express for \$19.95 each plus a couple bucks shipping.

Took me just under two hours to build mine. 12 yr old Braxton got his done in about 2.5 hours and this was his first kit. Ivin W9ILF got done at right about 2 hours. The kit is great soldering practice, and comes with a really nice assembly manual including resistor charts and some theory behind operation.



Brian, KB9BVN FP#-57 and Ivan, W9ILF FP#-1256 display their handiwork

It's no Fluke meter but that wasn't the point. Most if not all the hams involved have been licensed for less than a year and most of them had never soldered anything in their lives. Reports are rolling in today that everyone had a blast and they are all looking forward to next month's building sessions.

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

QRP Camping

By Tom, N2UHC FP #1149

One of the most enjoyable things I like about camping is the ability to take along a portable QRP station and operate in the great outdoors. Ever since I got into QRP and homebrewing, I've enjoyed taking radios along while camping and making QSO's away from home. Every year I camp out with other members of the Four State QRP Group at a state park in Oklahoma for Field Day.

When I camp I usually camp in our popup camper. This makes a nice spot to operate from if weather conditions are less than ideal. I have been on several QRP campouts where the rain didn't cooperate, and if I'd been stuck in a tent I'd have been crowded, cramped, & miserable. Having the camper made all the difference.



Operating during Field Day 2004 behind our camper

There are some locations I camp where the camper can't go, so I rely on a tent. I still load everything into my pickup. I haven't yet tried backpacking and QRP operation, but may have to try that in the future. If I do, though, I'm going to have to radically scale back the equipment I take since I would be weighed down too far to hike.

It helps to have everything stored in one spot so that when you are ready to go, you can easily locate your gear. I keep & transport my QRP equipment in two gym bags, the radio, batteries, and other accessories in one bag and all antenna gear in another. In the past I tried to keep everything in one bag but quickly found that it was a bit too cumbersome to lug everything together. Perhaps if I wanted to try a scaled-down operation it would be easy to lug it in one bag, but as it is now everything fits better in two. If I ever have to get a third bag, I know I'll need to scale it back.

One thing I've learned from camping & portable operating is that it never hurts to have a set of tools with you, including a soldering iron. Understandably, if you're backpacking you won't want to lug a bunch of tools with you, but if you drive to the campsite like I usually do, having a fully-stocked toolbox will come in handy more than once.

You'll probably want to check all your equipment beforehand to make sure it's operational. It won't be fun to get out to the field and find your batteries run down, a connection that needs re-soldered, or anything else that you could easily fix before you leave that would be a pain to fix in the field. And don't forget extra batteries. I always take a few extra batteries along because it seems like they always go dead at the worst possible time.

The radios I've built for QRP operation are Dave Benson's Small Wonder monoband CW transceiver kits, the SW+ series. I have built them for 20, 30, and 40 meters. The boards are nice & small once completed so can fit in small enclosures. However, for some reason I chose to larger enclosures. The first one I built I fit into a CB case which worked great. The other two I fit into aluminum cases.

When I constructed all three rigs I made sure to standardize all jacks, so that the antenna, power cord, CW key, and headphone connections would work with each radio, and to change bands all I had to do was swap out radios. This worked fine for a couple years, but I soon realized that the bag with radios & batteries I was lugging around was quite heavy. Plus it was a pain to have to keep switching radios to switch bands.



The MultiWonder - Details at geocities.com/n2uhc_3/multiwonder.html

Eventually I ended up dismantling all three radios and combining the PC boards into one radio that I call the MultiWonder. Just having one radio and flipping a switch to change bands is far easier than having to swap out radios. It's not quite as nice as an Elecraft K2, but it does make a nice 3 band transceiver.

The other major consideration for portable operation is what type of antenna to use. I have seen a lot of shortened verticals like the PAC 10 and PAC 12 used with success, and the smaller size makes them easy to transport. I, however, opt to use a dipole antenna fashioned in an inverted-V wire dipole. It's easy to transport since all you have to do is roll it up. It's also easy to put up while camping, since you can usually always find a convenient tree branch to throw a light rope or string over. I do this by using a large, 8 oz. fishing weight.

The main thing to remember when putting up an inverted-V is to attach the coax before hoisting it up. I can't count the times I've gotten the antenna up nice & neat and then realizing there was no cable attached. I'm sure I'll continue to do it many times in the future.

The dipole I use is not a standard dipole, however. It is a tri-band dipole which has elements for 40, 30, and 20 meters, all fed at the same feedpoint, similar to a fan dipole but all elements are parallel. I built it this way so that I can use the same antenna for all three bands without having to change anything. And since each part of the dipole is resonant for a particular band, no tuner is needed. This lightens my load a little when I camp.

Plus, since my radio transmits at 2 Watts, a power-robbing tuner is not what I really want to add into the antenna system. Plus the full-length dipole is quite a bit more efficient than any shortened antenna with coils. The antenna elements are spaced apart using short lengths of 1/2" PVC pipe, which caused

some puzzled looks from some non-ham campers when I was once pulling it up into a tree. A lady asked me what it was, and after I explained that it was an antenna, she told me she thought it was a Jacob's Ladder or something.

When I once conducted emergency communications in a disaster zone caused by a tornado, there was a distinct lack of standing trees to mount an inverted V, or any kind of wire, from. I purchased a 25 foot aluminum portable flagpole which really fits the bill in getting a mounting point up for the inverted-V. It is the telescoping kind so is easy to put up & take down. The only problem I have with it is, even though I use a dipole made of light wire, it still tends to bend near the top where the sections are thinner. I solved this by using two guy ropes.

These two ropes along with the inverted-V itself guy the mast straight. I simply tie the guy ropes and the support ropes from the ends of the antenna to four tire irons which I stick into the ground. I'm sure large tent pegs would work fine too, but nothing really beats a good, handy tire iron. They're easy to push into the ground if it's soft, and easy to pull out again. One final thing I do for safety purposes is since the wire of the dipole is thin and covered with black insulation, I tie some bright orange caution tape onto the antenna from around 6 feet high down toward the ground to keep people from walking into it.

To power my radio I usually take a couple of gel cell batteries. I have a couple of 4.5Ah as well as a larger 7Ah cell which provide more than enough juice to keep me running for a weekend. Since my radio only uses around 1 amp on transmit, the gel cells last quite a while.

To keep them charged, I take along a solar panel array that I built. I connected four 3V solar cells in series on a thin piece of board. This provides a nice trickle charge at around 40mA. However, I later purchased a larger solar cell, the type you leave on the dashboard of your car and plug into your cigarette lighter to keep your car battery charged, which provides more current and charges up weak batteries a lot faster.



Operating during the "Look Around in the Field" contest in May 2004. My solar panel can be seen keeping my battery charged.

A second power option I have available to me is a portable vehicle jump start power pack. It consists of a 17Ah battery in a plastic case with a convenient carrying handle. A cigarette lighter jack provides power out. I use 2 conductor weatherproof connectors in the power cord for my radio. This allows me to quickly change out whatever connection type I need, whether it be a cigarette lighter plug, spade connectors, or lug terminals. This way, no matter what power source I have,

be it a cigarette lighter jack, gel cell battery, or power supply, I can easily connect the right end to keep me in business.

The versatility pays off. For instance, one campout I soon discovered that all my gel cells were weak, but my power pack was charged up. Since I was able to switch connectors, I didn't have to wait for the batteries to charge.

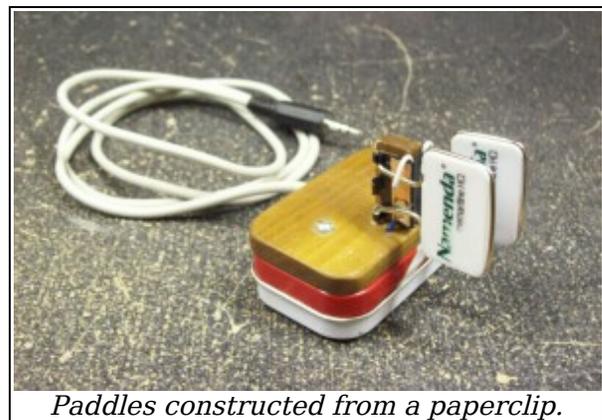


Operating during the "Spring Fling" event April 2004. The keyer is open with a clip lead connected to it. This is because one of the wires from the battery broke & I didn't have a soldering iron to fix it.

Since I operate CW when portable, I always need to make sure I take along some sort of CW key or keyer. After a meeting of the Four State QRP Group, we adjourned to a local park to operate. I set up my entire station, only to learn to my dismay that I had neglected to pack a CW key, paddles or keyer. A CW transceiver without a key is called a receiver. I was able to listen but not participate. Since then, I make sure my radio bag has at least one CW key in it.

For a CW keyer, I installed a Norcal keyer kit into a computer mouse body, and used the mouse cord to plug into the radio. I can either use the mouse buttons to key CW, or I can plug a keyer into a jack I installed in the side of the mouse body. This worked great until I decided to build the MultiWonder mentioned above, at which time I decided to install another Norcal keyer kit into the radio itself. This way I'm never without a keyer, nor do I have to worry about making sure a standalone keyer has a full battery.

There are many considerations for using CW keys or paddles while portable. You may not want to lug your favorite heavy key or paddles to the field, and instead build a set to take along. I have built several cheap but highly functional keys & paddles which are lightweight, and though I put many hours of work into constructing them, I won't feel quite as bad if they get lost or damaged as I would my Bencher paddles.



Paddles constructed from a paperclip.

I built a simple CW key called the 1 cent key which can be read about in the January 2005 issue of BBQ on the Flying Pigs website. Basically it's a simple key that uses a PC slot blank as a lever and a penny as a contact plate.

Secondly, I have a set of CW paddles constructed from a large paper clip. This is the type of clip used to hold many sheets together that you squeeze to open.

When modified and mounted on a mini Altoids tin filled with bird shot, it makes a really nice set of portable paddles.

Lastly, I have a set of micro paddles that I won at Ozarkcon. This paddles are constructed by Dennis Foster KK5PY and are very tiny. They would be perfect for backpacking since they and the cord that's attached to them fit inside a 35mm film can. In fact, they're so small they're almost difficult to use. I first tried holding them in my left hand and keying with my right, but my left hand got so tired I had to come up with a different plan. I took some Velcro tape which I wrap around my left index finger and use to hold the tiny paddles in place. I just bend my finger at the knuckle and key the paddles with my other hand.

Operating QRP in the great outdoors is always a fun experience for me, even if conditions are less than ideal. Whether it be camping in 100 degree heat, the time we camped out near the river and were treated to dead fish odor all weekend, the time the raccoons got into the leftover food from a Four State QRP Group campout dinner, to the time I camped out in a thunderstorm and had wet, brown jelly falling on me from the evergreen tree I mounted my antenna from, every QRP campout is an adventure.



Getting some help operating 20m CW during the QRP to the Field event in April 2003.

When you go, make sure you dress appropriately. I once operated a Polar Bear FYBO event from a local park with Bart, WO1IT. It was sunny but cold with a brisk breeze blowing from the north. I had a coat & gloves on, but I had forgotten to wear a hat. My head was frozen from the cold breeze I was constantly getting. At least the headphones kept my ears warm.

While not strictly a campout, I and several other hams once operated from the spot where the state lines of Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri meet. It was a fun day out operating, though we didn't make a lot of contacts, but was neat to operate from a unique location. Sadly, we probably won't be able to do so any more. The property has been taken over by a casino development company so will most likely be off-limits to any future 3-corner operation.

One trip I'm planning for the future is to operate for a weekend from "Mt. Sunflower", the highest point in Kansas (el. 4039 ft.). I have planned to do this for some time, but something else always came up. Since Mt. Sunflower is just a few miles from Colorado and I live just a few miles from Missouri, I'll have a 6 or 7 hour drive one way to get there. It may not be an exotic DX location, but will be fun to travel to this spot in my home state. Part of the fun of portable QRP operation is finding new & neat locations to operate from.

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

VHF Contesting below 0°C

By Paolo, IK1ZYW

January 2006. At 7:15am I glance out of the window. The forecasts were correct: it is cloudy!



Those clouds over the mountains seem to be high enough to let me enjoy my first SOTA activation. Ate an energetic breakfast and hit the road. I should meet a couple of friends at Colle del Lys at 9 am. They have no idea what SOTA or a VHF contest are, but they nevertheless accepted to join me in the ascent to Monte Arpone (that is a new-one for all of us).

At the Colle del Lys parking lot light snowfall and Northern breeze welcome us. My backpack contains: 12V 7Ah gel-cell battery, FT-290R and the homebrew 4 element Yagi with 2m fiberglass mast, two sandwiches, water and dry clothes. My friend Paolo is kind enough to carry a bag with coax and some tools.

The hike is relatively easy on compact and frozen snow, we often have to jump around too. We reach the first Arpone peak (just in time to confirm the forecasts: frozen snowfall and wind. We are at the lower clouds level. A thick snow layer cracks under our feet on the way to the main peak.

Although temperature is -5°C, Paolo and I manage to assemble the beam with its comfortable 3mm bolts and to tie the backpack-support in a vertical position. The band sounds crowded but people don't hear me. While my two friends have a rest and eat, I realize my setup does not handle 2.5Wpep, so I have to switch to 500mW. I don't mind QRPP, but many stations seem to have their antennas beamed to South and do not hear me. I collect 7 QSOs in 35 minutes, and then Mr. WX quietly suggests us to come back in Spring. The descent is frozen and I slip a few times. Fortunately the plastic frame of my backpack prevents me from sliding down, but it partially breaks.

I think I have found the lower operating limit of my VHF /P setup. Walking between trees with the Yagi dipole attached to the boom requires some care because your profile occupies a 2x1m area.

My setup has gradually evolved and lighted up. I came back to the same peak in March 2007 and I posted two videos on youtube.com (search for "ik1zyw"). I now own an FT-817 that is powered with 8xAA NiMH 2600mAh cells: more than enough energy for 4-5 hours of SSB operation. I also developed a no-screws version of the VHF 4 el. Yagi and an mp3 pen voice keyer is almost ready.

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Notes on Portable Operation

By Rem, K6BBQ FP#-490

THE PORTABLE BBQ - QRP

My portable station changes from shorter to longer operations. What doesn't matter whether if I'm out for an hour or camping for a weekend is the antenna. I take the Buddipole with me. This antenna becomes everything from a shortened horizontal dipole, to a sloper and a vertical as well as this year becoming a two element six meter antenna. Also this year, I added some additional antenna arms and made some counterpoises for a full quarter wave vertical on 15 and 20 meters. But I am getting ahead of myself. Let's not put the RP in front of the Q, ok?

My current rig of choice is the Yaesu FT-857D, currently used only on HF CW and SSB, plus 6 meters. No PSK, No RTTY, No Hell, No Whiskey Soda.

PORTABLE POW WOW

For Portable Power I always take at least one gel cell battery with me. I usually take either a 12v 12ah or 12v 7.5ah gel cell for for my portable QRP operations lasting only a short time out (1-3 hours). I've even ran 35 watts with a 7.5ah for a ragchew as well as having a 10 watt SSB QSO with Nicaragua in October too.

The 12v 12ah gel cell has been taken both on portable and HF tricycle mobile operations when I am not running a lot of power over a long time.

For sunny days and longer trips, I take a 10watt flexible (Uni solar) solar panel with me. I will usually hook this up directly to the battery so the battery is getting energized all of the time. I've never supplied too much power to the rig or the battery as I am always drawing enough that there is room to put some energy back in.

If I am camping, then I will use a charge controller so the battery doesn't overflow nor empty either while I am getting an afternoon siesta or having an afternoon beverage with my camp hosts.

Antennas – 100% Buddistick and Buddipole. As I wrote earlier, this “antenna system” is excellent. Did you know that Elecraft is the only company allowed to sell the Buddipole and Buddistick outside of Budd and Chris themselves at Buddipole?

You all know what a high standard of quality Wayne and Eric have for all of their kits and rigs, so likewise, for them to carry someone else's antenna, it has to be good, very good. I have turned a lot of people onto these antennas over the years and for someone like me who lives in an apartment and needs a quick to set up, quick to break down antenna both at home and on the road, this is THE antenna!

This year I started using a full quarterwave vertical for 20 and 15 meters. Before I decided to focus about 75% of my hamming onto QRP, I toyed around with 5 watts during last year's CA QSO Party. I had this 20 meter quarter wave vertical over salt water and turned the power down to five watts. I heard the Hawaiian station call CQ, I answered him and he came right back with my call. I told him I was doing five watts and he sounded surprised and said I was doing very well for QRP. This five watts was SSB!

Since then I've used this vertical at home and while the gain isn't as high, it still is amazing. Five watts in November and I had a CW QSO with Japan. It was my closest to 1,000 miles per watt with a reading of 986 MPW. I have plenty of other Buddipole and Buddistick stories, but you get the idea. This antenna is small, portable, versatile and what all piggies like, FUN!

How I pack it all – Always different each time, especially when packing it back up. I take different items, even for some of the same items, I will put them in different bags. Large padded computer briefcases bought at a garage sale will hold my Alinco DM-330 power supply and FT-857D for a weekend or longer away without roughing it.

If things might get more rough and tumble I will pack the rig, FT Meter, Mini Palm Paddle and a few other items into a medium sized Pelican case. I saw a great deal on one at the annual hamfest and got it. From the store, these things are three times the price. Whatever you put your gear in, remember things happen, bags drop, items can fall out, etc. What's it worth to have your gear in operating condition when you arrive at your portable QTH? Protect your gear, pad it with t shirts, towels or dense foam.

EXPERIENCES and STORIES

Until last October I had only dabbled in QRP, about one to three times a month. But in October I was operating a special event QRP station for a month and was having a lot of fun. I started limiting myself in a DX SSB and DX CW contests by only running 5 watts and was amazed! I didn't think I could work Canadians with 5 watts from inside the shack.

From home and from portable locations I was getting 5 watts SSB to Hawaii, the Caribbean, Venezuela and the Galapagos Islands. I used the Buddipole as a quarter wave vertical for 20 meters this year and was able to be heard by a ham in Vermont. Five watts CW and a ham in Vermont answered me. The stations I QSO with while operating QRP never ceases to amaze me.

(Ed. Note – I was sent the following pictures of one of Santa's Elves relaxing and doing some beachfront operating. No wonder I didn't get what I wanted for Christmas... all the toymakers are out lakeside drinking "holiday cheer" out of Flying Pig mugs...)



===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Running the Elecraft K2 Off-Grid

By Dennis, WB0WAO FP#-347

My K2 has all the options installed except for the internal battery pack. So my base current draw is higher than a K2 without all the options. According to the K2's built in metering circuitry, on receive I can get it down to 220ma if everything is turned off that can be turned off - LCD, S-Meter, DSP, OPT set to BATT and NB off. With the above turned on, it draws about 400ma - about twice what it does with everything off. According to the manuals I have, here are the current requirements for the following optional modules:

K2 - base unit 180-250ma

KIO2 - 5-10ma

K60XV - 1-2ma RX/2-15maTX

KSB2 - 10-15ma

KNB2 - 2ma off/13ma on

KAT2 - <5ma/10-30ma during TUNE

KDSP2 -60ma active/10ma bypasses

K160RX - 0 ma

K6XX Tuning Indicator - unknown but probably <5ma

As you can see, the ma's start to add up after a while! If all the modules are active, that is around 100ma of additional current being drawn from the battery. So, let's look at some possible settings to reduce the drain on the battery.

K2 Menu Item GRPH: There are three options here - OFF, DOT and BAR. According to the manual, *each* segment requires 6ma in NITE mode and 18ma in DAY mode (DAY/NITE is the LCD backlight options). In the OFF mode, the meter will go into DOT mode on TX. I have mine set to DOT mode - I still want to have some idea of the other stations relative signal strength. I have also installed a K6XX Tuning Indicator that lights up the rightmost segment when I have properly tuned in a station on CW. My "cost" for this setting (with the tuning indicator - 12ma in NITE mode/36ma in DAY mode.

K2 Menu Item LCD: This turns the backlight on/off. In DAY the backlight is off and in NITE it is on. The backlight draws around 40ma. Now let's look at some numbers. Assuming you are tuned in on a CW signal, the following applies - DAY (LCD - 0ma) + (2 Segments - 36ma) = 36ma total; NITE (LCD - 40ma) + (2 Segments - 12ma) = 52ma total. NOTE: Without the K6XX Tuning Indicator the totals would be DAY 18ma/NITE 46ma.

K2 Menu Item OPT: According to the manual, setting this to BATT reduces the I.F. post-mixer amp current 40ma and forces the GRPH into DOT mode. In experimenting with this setting, I can see very little difference so I have mine set to BATT - saving me 40ma.

KDSP2: Talk about a power hog! 60ma when active and 10ma when bypassed. This was a no-brainer - it is turned off 99% of the time. Bad thing is that when I bypass it and turn the K2 off, the next time I turn it on, it is

active again and I have to manually bypass it again. I checked the specs for the “old” KAF2 and it draws 10ma, and I don’t think that it can be bypassed or turned off.

KNB2: In my situation, I leave it off all the time. Not much ignition noise around here! I can afford and accept the 2ma “overhead” just in case I do need it.

So, overall with my settings and the modules I have in the K2, I draw about 240ma on average in DAY mode and around 280ma in NITE mode according to the K2’s metering circuitry.

If I were starting over from scratch, would I build the K2 differently? Yes, I would – I would “optimize” it for off-grid usage. Here, IMHO, is the best off-grid configuration:

KAT2 – I personally don’t want to mess with using a manual tuner or tweaking antennas to get a “perfect match”. The <5ma draw in standby is well worth the ability to push a button and tune the rig as well as having two antenna jacks.

K160RX – With a 0ma cost, why not put it in? Besides it gives you 160m capability as well as a RX antenna jack.

KAF2 – In my opinion, the KAF2 is a better choice for off-grid operating than the KDSP2. It uses 1/6th of the current that the KDSP2 uses when active and the same amount when the KDSP2 is bypassed. While the KDSP2 may be much more versatile, the power costs are just too high in my book.

KNB2 – With only a 2ma overhead, I would include it “just in case” it was needed.

This configuration would give you a very capable K2 that would draw around 200ma in DAY mode and around 240ma in NITE mode or less.

Now lets look at a few numbers for TX (figures were derived from the K2’s metering circuitry):

Mode	CW	3560kHz	7030kHz	14060kHz	21060kHz
5w		1.6a	1.4a	1.4a	1.4a
2w		1.1a	1.0a	0.9a	1.0a

Notice that it is pretty consistent, at around 2w you draw around 1 amp in TX and at 5w you draw about 1.5 amps. Running 2w will give you about 50% more “QSO time” before you need to swap out batteries.

Overall, I think for fixed off-grid operating, you can’t beat a properly optioned and configured K2. The versatility of being able to pick and choose the optional modules as well as its native operating features make it the rig for off-grid use IMHO. Yes, you can find other rigs that use less power, but not with the features that are in the K2.

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

HBO FYBO REPORT

By Klaus, DF2GN and Tom, DM4EA

Klaus (DF2GN) & I, Tom, (DM4EA since 01Nov'07, formerly DL4NSE) know each other from www.qrpforum.de In early spring we decided to provide the qrp-community a relatively rare-one in a typical FP-way - less rules, more fun! Preparations were kept down to the necessary minimum (just grab what you might need and try not to miss the appointment). Klaus lives some 70km away, it's another ~3hrs-journey into HBO, then.

Intention was not to rush through the pile-up, but to meet friends. Reality looked a tad wee different...

17 May, 0500 loc.: trunk filled with IC-703, kent-paddle, straight key, batteries, 12.5m fibre-pole, chicken-ladder-fed doublet, no-counterpoise-vertical, 20m-monoband-vertical, baluns, z-match, cable-ties, coke, coffee, cookies, fruit, ...

0600: arrival at Klaus' qth: trunk swallows even more equipment: Speaky- & BCR-trx, palm-paddle, another pole, another bag with various wires, T1-ATU, more coke, cookies, fruit.

Before noon: arrival at a parking place nr. Gaflei/ Silum at 1498m asl, E 9° 32.680/ N 47° 08.520, faced nasty weather (some 2..3°C), started setup, no outdoor-radio-activities possible, but two radios operated in parallel out of the same car interfered even at qrp-levels.

Operation out of the same car means: me in the trunk, Klaus on the passenger's seat. Not very comfortable, but vy funny. At least for the few spectators...

Klaus mentioned, that he knows of band-filters stored in his cellar. tried to hit him, but he got away due to my limited range (headphone-cords too short) ;o) flip-flopped in operation, later on I took over the main part of the radio-business and Klaus focused on optimizing the antennas. main ant. was the big doublet, which suddenly came down with a big bang due to the gusty winds. already had said goodbye to my fibre-pole, but it had survived!

Klaus mentioned, that he remembers triple-leg-pole-mounts in his garage. Imagined, how useful they could have been.

Resigned from again trying to hit him, since he was punished enough by the pouring rain...

Set up the doublet together again.

Whilst trying to build a longwire, he overturned a big waste bin, to what he had fixed his pole. Learned about leverage the practical way ;o) called him the waste bin-dancer from now on.

In the course of the operation, Klaus experimented with all kinds of verticals, but conditions were not with us.

At least he managed to get Orkney-Isl. on 20 as our one & only SSB-qso. On the other hands, quite a lot of 2xQRPcontacts as intended, even if the continuous calls hampered us from chatting to well known ops

Ended up with some 200 QSOs (not too bad, isn't it?). K4LTA was the only to make it over the Atlantic. rest was EU (31 DL, 15 G/GM, 8 F/ PA, ..) 75% of the QSOs happened to be on 40.

Brought down both poles close to midnight and cleared the place without severe losses. Returned home at around 0430.

Received warm feed-back via forum and mails, so it was very much worth the attempt. and: yes, we're going to go again!

After two days and some extended walks ,I could use my legs as I was used to it the days before that 'trunk-yoga'.



My car is the dark green one. locals had come up with the red car. No clue why they felt the need to park that close to us, there have never been more than 3 or 4 cars up there.



Tom, DM4EA, setting in the trunk



Klaus, DF2GN, operates his palm-paddle. He is well known for his outstanding SOTA-activities and was awarded by the SOTA-board this year.



===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

W8PIG FYBO Report

By Hank, N8XX

The day started at the local IHOP, with Matt, K8KLP; Rick, WB6JBM; and Hank, N8XX starting off with a warm breakfast (It was 28°F outside at the time.) After feeding at the trough, we ventured to the Voice Of America Park, in West Chester, Ohio near the city of Mason, and started setting up. By 1350Z we were ready - a 67' inverted Vee, fed with 450 Ohm ladder line at 30' at the apex.

First contact was made @ 1409Z on 40 meters with AD7AN in California! Outstanding for 3w to a Yaesu FT-817! An elderly MFJ tuner was giving us fits, so an even more elderly Johnson Matchbox was put into service, and made a perfect match on both 40 and 20 meters. Sorry, we couldn't get the antenna to match on 80. We did snag N8IE on 40, but some of our Ohio friends and others close by probably missed out. Our apologies.

Conditions were variable - at times it seemed like signals were all over the band, other times almost nil. Twenty meters didn't open until after 1500Z - with N4BP in their 599+++ - almost burned up the matchbox with RF from his signal. The only other 20 meter contact for the next hour was KIØG in Texas.

The temperature was slowly rising to 33, then 34°F, but also the wind was increasing, from a slight breeze at 1400Z to 15 to 20MPH by 1500Z. Wind chill was getting lower and lower (is there a multiplier for wind chill? :)

We'd alternate operators every 2 or 3 contacts, lest the fingers freeze and QLF? would become more prevalent. 20 meters really opened up after 1630Z. We had a casual visitor about that time. Rick, WB6JBM had a great time telling our visitor about the bunch of nuts.... errrr.... hams who go outside in freezing weather and try to contact as many similarly situated nuts... errr.... hams.

The fellow was very interested - he said he had a friend who dabbled in ham radio. As the clock marched toward 1700Z, the possibility of frostbite was overcoming our will to work more contacts, so we shut down after working KK6MC on 20 meters in New Mexico. We never did hear NQ7RP - though we listened carefully.

The tear down was complete before 1730Z.... Sorry to have disappointed folks who listened for us after that, but as the Arizona Scorpions say, "This is a fun contest, NOT an episode of Survivor. Be aware of the temperature and the possibility of cold injury! PLEASE be careful." We figured valor was the better part of discretion.

For a Flying Pig operation, it was nothing like past mass group efforts, but we had fun! We learned - a windbreak is a good idea! Testing of the rig/antenna combination in advance would be a good idea. Having the possibility of getting out of the immediate elements while still operating (like a large van or similar) would be a useful addition.

We did make 20 contacts in 17 SPC's and can claim a score of 13600! Not bad for a couple of porcine and one polar bear friends.







high y'all

By Joel, KE1LA FP#190

yea it's cold and lonesome up heah... roof's full of sneaux, yard's full of sneaux.. and sneaux don't talk back u kneaux.

just last nite i talked to a flake (sneaux) as it fell and got neaux answer, i talked to it on the ground and got neaux answer... it didn't even hollar when i took out my bic and put the flame to it, turning it to water... not a sound.

no one, nuttin seems to want to talk to me... i tried talkin to god and got put on hold... sumthin about dem prayers from california overloading the prayer lines... not even the devil had time for me as he was busy snatching souls from california...

so i thought mac ovah in fla would surely take time for me, i couldn't find his email add...

then i thought i would geaux up to the chimney and breathe in the hot air and float while the wind blew me somewhere else... too much seaux on the roof... both the house and mine... to make the climb up thair....

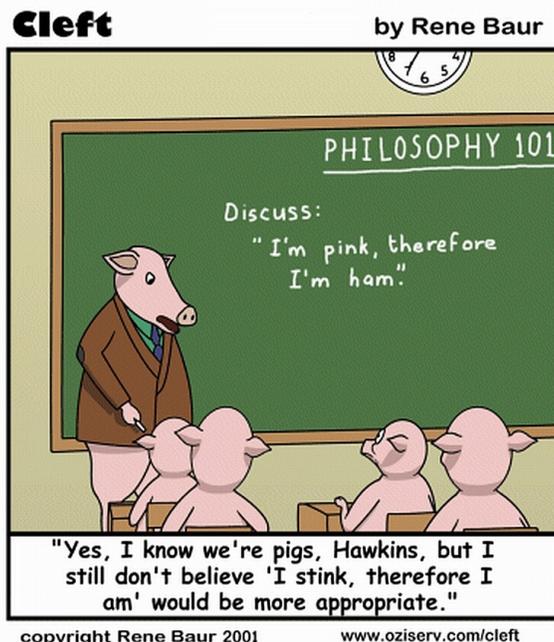
sew i thought i kneaux what ah could do... just sit heah and be miserable... so ah sat thair and ah started thinking about my life and started laughing at the things ah done....

and how smart ah thought ah was at times... only to realize ah wasn't so smart after all... ah mean it's easy to say ABC.... but other folks could say the entire alphebet... in spanish even...

at least they said it was the alphabet... how would i kneaux?
finally ah walked out into the sneaux and scooped up a handful and brought it inside, stuck it in front of the fireplace and watched it melt into cold water...

what aver was so mysterious bout that glass of melting sneaux ah don't kneaux... however ah went to sleep and slept all night... now ah is up wondering what is so mysterious about a glass of melting sneaux.... do u kneaux?

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====



FPQRP Net Reports

DECEMBER 2, 2007

HIGH Y'ALL

HEARD A ab9ca or ak9ca
you were very light, appreciate u trying ... u is
checked in worked k8btd... K8BTD... GIL

GUESS THE BAND WAS OUT ON US
TONIGHT... JOEL
DEC 02 07

DECEMBER 9, 2007

Wow...what a rush!

Didn't hear Joel but did hear quite a few other
piggies stomping in the mud, so thought I
might jump in as a temp NCS...like I said - A
Rush!!!

Thanks to all for putting up with me. I had
met Brian earlier on 80 mtr and we had a nice
chat. He caught me with a soldering iron in
hand but it was a blast. I'm wondering if
maybe 80 meters might be an option for the
FP net until the conditions on 40 finally settle
down...

OK, for tonite's net:

1. N2JNZ 579 George
2. N0JRN 599 Jerry (yea I know now I
keep sending N0JRM...which was a surprise
when I looked up the call and saw it was a
Susan and not the Jerry I know...LOL. Thats
buddy...long time since we Q'd.
3. K4KO 589 Greg
4. KB9BVN 599 Brian...you were louder
on 40 than 80 which was a surprise to me.
Thanks for two great Q's tonight ... and no
more PB. I'll call Anne and get some more
dirt on you and come up with a new
nickname...LOL
5. AB9CA 339 Dave...not real loud but still
Q5 copy.
6. KQ0I 559 Mark
7. N8WS 599 Bill...glad you hung in
there...signals being up and down makes it
hard.
8. W9NX 599 Kent...very loud into
southern Michigan tonight.
9. AF4AY 339 + lots of QSB Jay...wow it
was a thrill to hear you on Jay. You, Brian
and Jerry (aka Susan) were the only calls I
know from memory...we have have been away
way too long....thats for the Q.

Not sure where Joel was...but it very seldom
he misses this net. Maybe a Guinnie had him
busy or maybe Ms Gracie had him doing
Honey-Do's...hehehe. When Joel is not on the
net, he is sorely missed.

I just gave my two week notice at the
company I work for. It has been hard
working from Michigan all the way to North
Dakota these last few months. I needed a
change in careers and hopefully this new
position in January will allow me to be home
more than on the road and in strange hotels.
I sure don't want to miss any more FP events.
Everyone start practicing with their SK's and
lets have a FP SK party this New Year's Eve.

Again, thanks for the fun tonight and for
putting up with my bad CW and even worse
ears! C U all next Sunday...

72's & oo's...Mikey, WB8ICN

DECEMBER 16, 2007

HGIH Y'ALL

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND ALL THE OTHER
HOLIDAYS AND HOLIDAYS THIS TIME OF
YEAR...

AH THANKS UWE FAR THE BIRTHDAY
CHECK IN...IT WAS GRATE TO HERE SO
MANY PIGGIES TALKING TO EACH OTHER
AND THE NET... JUST LIKE NORMAL...

AND BRIAN YES I HERD UWE AND K8BTD
TALKIN AND WONDERING WHARE AH
WAS...

TO LET U KNEAUX, AH WAS RITE THAIR
LISTEN TO UWE BOTH... GOT U TOO
CHECKED IN....

MY FIRST CHECK IN WAS KQ0I A GREAT
PIGGIE HE IS...A SALUTE TO UOO,,JOEL

CHECK INS...

KQ0I,,,,,,,,,THANK YOU

W1DN,,,,,,,,,THANK U ALSO

AJ4AY.... GOT U TWICE...

N8WS. A KW AT LEAST. MAN U WAS LOUD..

KA2KGP... HA GOT YA...

JANUARY 13, 2008

KB9BVN... SNEAKY BRIAN...

-- NO REPORT --

K8BTD...NICE SIGNAL

JANUARY 20, 2008

W9ILF... THANKS IVIN

YEA BIG NET TONITE... GEAUX PATS

K3ESE... THE MAN WITH THE MOST
WANTEE CALL... THANKS..JOEL

HOPE AH DIDN'T MISS NO BODIES... IF
SO WRITE IN

OH I'M STILL LISTENING ON THE NET
FREQ.... IT'S QUIET...

HEARD A FEW STATIONS THAT DID NOT
HEAR ME.. AND GOT SOME CHECKINS
TONIGHT... GREAT NET...i WAN'T ALONE

CHECK INS

SUNDAY NITE
DEC 16/17 9PM EASTERN
KE1LA NCS

K8BTD... THANKS U WERE 55

N8WS... PRECIATE UR WAITING, STARTED
TO QSB

DECEMBER 23, 2007

High y'all

KA8FTS... LOUD SIGNAL, THANKS FOR
CHECKING IN RODGER..

yea man we had a sunday nite net 9pm
eastern, and guess who checked in....
AJ4AY...JAY... IN ALI-BAMI...

HEARD KC2EGL REAL LOUD SRY WE
MISSED EACH OTHER....

THANKS JAY u is my onlyiest check in..
heard someone else but could not make out
the call and that was all...

FP NET SUNDAY NITE
SUN JAN 20 08

JANUARY 27, 2008

maybe next week things be more crowded....
thanks to all what tried to check in... it forty
degrees and rainy up here.... joel

I am calling for you Joel....Don't hear
anything. I did hear N0JRN a moment

JANUARY 6, 2008

ago, but that's all....anyone else there? I am
still listening.

yes the net is heah....

Aron Brown
NN1F
FP#122

ah just got thru callin cq fp for 15 minutes
and not a peep...

the band is like my ex, gone ...
sry guys and gals 40 meters is just not
cooperating at all

--
Nutten down here hunny:

joel, in a group all by his self....

My ears are plugged and no can hear
anythen. Gots stuff to do since I
gots to be at work in the morning at 5:00am.

ps ah is still monitoring the net freq...

--

Howdy to the gang and sorry I missed you Dr.
Joel.

I called a FP Net on 7044 at 9PM EST to
about 9:10PM EST and got one check
in.

OO Jerry N0JRN

W9IVN checked in - he is about 40 miles from
me. We didn't hear a peep. 40m was real
gone man. -- KB9BVN

Aron...I heard you call...and I heard Jerry...I might have heard Joel but

FEBRUARY 17, 2008

who ever it was was so way down in the junk I could not make it out. The band is pretty el-stinko tonight...so it seems.

YEP AH WAS THAIR... 9PM EASTERN 7.044

KB9BVN

THE BAND WAS not thair tonite, i heard nothing, anywhere near the net freq... the only checkins ah got were my two guinea pigs and my rabbit, valentine or bun bun as we call him...

--

SRY GUYS, I DIDN'T POST i WENT TO PORTLAND CIVIC CENTER to listen and see the rangoo guards or sumthing like that...

hope the rftb went better... c u all next weak...joel ke1la

FEBRUARY 24, 2008

xyl must do and all that

WELL praise the qrp lord CHECK INS TONIGHT..... REALLY....

ce u next weekend...

agn sry i didn't post... joel

MY APOLOGIES to all concerned about my antenna being bad for so long... it was only after I walked about 30 ft through 4ft sneaux to get to my ant rope and let the ant down did i see that a wire to the balun had broke! then the other side broke off in my hands... hopefully it will stay fixed for a while....

FEBRUARY 3, 2008

YEP, AH WAS THAIR..... EVERYBODY ELSE WAS WATCHING THE SUPER BOWL...

GEAUX PATRIOTS....

sunday nite net
CHECK INS

JOEL

AB9CA DAVE IN AL... GOOD 55 SIGNAL INTO MAINE TNX...

FEBRUARY 10, 2008

high averyone

N0JRN JERRY OUT SOMEWHERE... 5BY 5 INTO MAINE... THANKS

well ah was thair at 9pm 7.044... no checkins... however an xe2 did decide to take the freq away from me and he and a kf4 are still yaking away...

ALSO HEARD
K4EG

guess i need to make another antenna or something... the wind outside right now is gusting up to 50mph and the sky is overcast, no sneaux for the last hour or so... wood heater burning...

N0NBD... VERY LOUD GUESS I WAS OFF UR FREQ TO MUCH

i'll listen for a while longer in case anyone wants to check in...

WHAT A NET... CHECK INS.... HOW NOVEL.. AMAZING WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I FINALLY HAVE A WORKING ANTENNA, SRY IT TOOK ME SO LONG TO BRAVE THE SNEAUX DRIFT AND LOOK CLOSELY AT THE ANTENNA... JOEL
SUNDAY FEB24,08

joel, ke1la

===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Fresh Pork

The members of FPQRP would like to welcome the following new members to the pigpen:

1818 Keith - KR7RK	Tucson, Arizona
1819 William - KB2ZXI	Avon, New York
1820 Francis - WA8QFE	Braymer, Missouri
1821 Martin - KC2CWN	Binghamton, New York
1822 Dennis - KA7IIV	Orting, Washington
1823 Preston - WA4DDA	Tarpon Springs, Florida
1824 Julien - ON3JLA	Tielt, Belgium
1825 Jay - KD8EUR	Lewiston, Michigan
1826 John - KO6EF	Santa Rosa, California
1827 Roy - W7ROY	Sandy, Utah
1828 Ed - VE7JA	Surrey, British Columbia
1829 Tom - AA8UZ	Macomb Township, Michigan
1830 Brock - W6GMT	Marcell, Minnesota
1831 William - WA0YPL	Beryl, Utah
1832 Peter - KG4WEZ	Greenville, North Carolina
1833 John - KB2SIV	Ballston Spa, New York
1834 Steve - WA0PWK	Wichita, Kansas
1835 Dick - WB9PWQ	Joliet, Illinois
1836 Igor - VA3ZNW	Toronto, Ontario
1837 David - KO4MC	Brighton, Tennessee
1838 Robert - W2ARP	Northfield, New Jersey
1839 Royden - VE4EE	Beausejour, Manitoba
1840 Lionel - KB5JSG	Slidell, Louisiana
1841 Tom - KF4TZK	Sylva, North Carolina
1842 Alan - KC2RYT	Brooklyn, New York
1843 Donald - WA3ZBJ	New Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
1844 Rod - W5GZT	Kearney, Missouri
1845 Peter - KB1LZH	Littleton, Massachusetts
1846 Henry - W5HNS	Pasadena, Texas
1847 Cory - N1URA	Sabattus, Maine
1848 John - KE7JSL	Renton, Washington
1849 Paul - N4LCD	Cartersville, Georgia
1850 Clark - N8CBW	Ann Arbor, Michigan
1851 Everett - KC8ZWP	Canton, Ohio
1852 Bob - VE3XNB	Waterloo, Ontario
1853 Will - WD5WR	Culleoka, Tennessee
1854 Ronald - K3CEL	Prospect, Pennsylvania
1855 Christopher - WX5CW	Ruston, Louisiana
1856 Pete - K4TTR	Clover, South Carolina
1857 Frank - KB2VYZ	Ocean City, New Jersey
1858 Greg - OH2FFY	Helsinki, Finland
1859 Bob - VE3AKV	Carleton Place, Ontario
1860 David - ZL1DGK	Hamilton, New Zealand
1861 James - N8DOD	Warren, Ohio
1862 Rich - KC0ZVR	Belle, Missouri
1863 Vincent - W7VTR	Chubbuck, Idaho
1864 Joe - N9IFG	Ingleside, Illinois
1865 Wesley - VA3WLC	London, Ontario
1866 Dan - SA3ARK	Gavle, Sweden
1867 Ian - K3IMW	Irvine, California
1868 Fredrik - SA3ARL	Gavle, Sweden
1869 BB - KG6YGC	Chino Hills, California
1870 Jack - VA3JFW	Bobcaygeon, Ontario

1871 Freddie - KD4WEN
1872 Dennis - [K1YPP](#)
1873 Bob - [K3BM](#)
1874 Ulf - K1ULF
1875 Jim - KD5KJ
1876 Harry - K2ATX
1877 Richard - AB6TY
1878 Gary - VE3GSS
1879 Matt - [W5LL](#)
1880 Edward - KB2UXX
1881 Kevin - [N0IWK](#)
1882 Brent - KI9G
1883 Jeff - [K8KZB](#)
1884 Rick - WB9TWQ

Las Vegas, Nevada
Sarasota, Florida
Laporte, Pennsylvania
South Windsor, Connecticut
Lakeview, Arkansas
Williamstown, New Jersey
Paso Robles, California
Port Carling, Ontario
Brookston, Texas
New York Mills, New York
Russellville, Missouri
Seymour, Indiana
Columbiaville, Michigan
Albuquerque, New Mexico

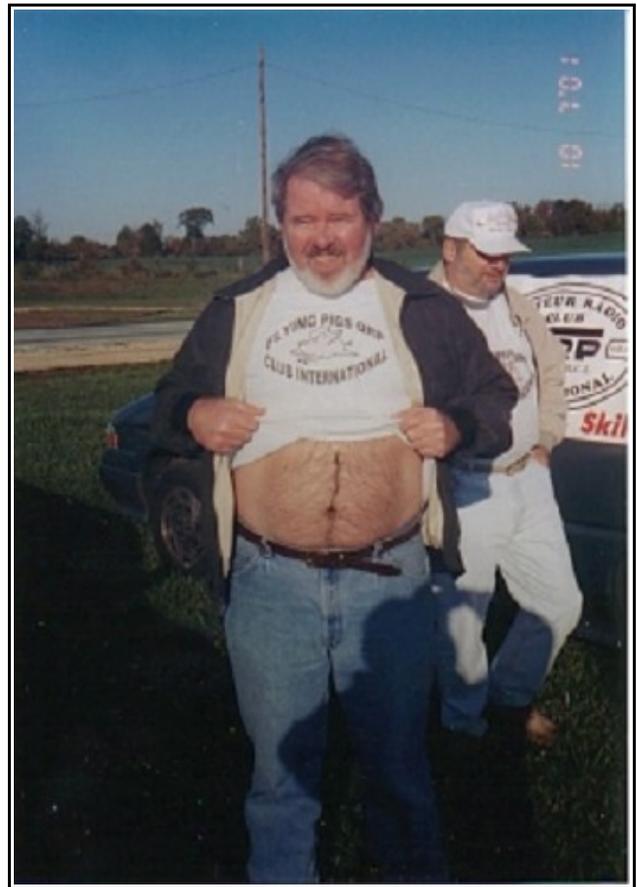
===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

Bits 'n' Pieces

In the rush to get this issue of BBQ finished, I inadvertently excluded a couple articles intended for this issue. I sincerely apologize for those who got left out. No fears though, as your submission will appear in the next issue.

While looking around the old pictures located at the club webpage, I found this *adorable* picture of pappy. I couldn't help sticking it in here.

My only question: Did he get his Jerry Beads?



===== (Flying Pigs QRP Club International) =====

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ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS:

Any and all contributions from all who wish to submit them, pig or not, ham or not, are welcome. Prior publication is not an issue, provided the original publisher allows such. Please submit articles as a plain-text file attached to an email. Please DO NOT format the submission. If pictures accompany your submission, attach them to the email and include a plain text file with descriptions/captions. If you wish, article text, photos, and photo descriptions can be placed in a compressed archive. Please send all submissions to Rob Matherly, w0jrm, jimrob@gmail.com.

Suggested topics are QRP (duh); homebrewing; antennas; public interest stories such as hamfests, club meetings, group builds, etc.; contesting; beer.

OUR MISSION:

- 1: Have Fun.
- 2: No rules.
- 3: Have a group of Friendly Hams who enjoy Amateur Radio, and sharing their skills with their fellow Hams.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP:

To join The Flying Pigs QRP Club, visit <http://www.fpqrp.net/join.php>

CLUB EMAIL REFLECTOR:

To subscribe to the club email reflector, send a message to majordomo@mpna.com with the subject "subscribe fpqrp-l". Please note that HTML emails are NOT accepted by the server, and will die silently.

CLUB EMAIL POLICY:

These are not rules, just common sense. Club email is not moderated, as we are not a stuffy group. You can send off topic messages about most subjects, but please keep it clean and in good taste. We do like good-natured ribbing and joking with each other, but we will not tolerate flaming other members or spamming the group. We will remove offenders who abuse our open policy. The word eBay is allowed.

CLUB WEB PAGE:

The club web page is our forum for sharing projects, and information about us. You are encouraged to submit your ideas and projects to be added to the web page. <http://www.fpqr.com>

OUR MONTHLY CONTEST – RUN FOR THE BACON SPRINT:

This event is held on the 3rd Sunday Night (EST) of the month. For full details on how to participate, see the website address of: <http://www.fpqr.com/fqrprun.html>

OUR WEEKLY NET:

A weekly net is held every Sunday at 9PM Eastern time, except if there is a Run For The Bacon Sprint that evening, on 7.044 Mhz.

PROBLEM REPORTING:

If you are having problems with email, the web pages, or a fellow club member, please report this to either:

Diz, W8DIZ at w8diz@cinci.rr.com

Jim, W0EB at W0EB@cox.net

Rick, WB6JBM at ripowell@mpna.com

Dan, N8IE at n8ie@who.rr.com

We welcome all to join the Flying Pigs QRP Club, and we hope you have fun!

