TALES FROM THE SWAMP

February 2018

Author: Frank KG4IGC

From your President:

It was really nice to see the SFCG well represented at both the Greenwood hamfest and Charleston Hamfests this year. Sarah and I had a great time at the Greenwood hamfest. We got to chat with N4XL, W4STR, W4SLT, & KS4YX and had plenty of good conversations with several hams from the upstate. I also got to meet one of our newest members, WB4HRL.

The Charleston Hamfest was fun as well, I got to meet a couple of guys who expressed interest in the club and several of our flyers were taken by prospective members. I had a chance to talk with Marc Tarplee N4UFP for a few minutes. He apologized for not being able to attend our meeting as planned, but he was sick with the flu. I told him not to worry about it, and filled him in on the abridged version of our meeting. For those of you that were unable to attend

the club meeting, minutes from the meeting can be found [here](#) on the club website. Dr. Jim Boehner, N2ZZ also took time to stop at our table and expressed his thanks to the SFCG for our participation and sponsorship in the upcoming SCQP.

Just as a reminder, the SCQP is right around the corner on February 24th, 1500z through Sun 0159z. Our club call WW4SF will once again be a bonus station. Dave WN4AFP is looking for bonus station operators, so if you are interested please let him know ASAP either email or on the clubs reflector.

The NAQP RTTY test will be the same weekend, so if you would like to be on the NAQP RTTY team, please contact Dave NJ4F. Last year we had two teams, team 1 made 131,793 points and team two made 33,942 points.

For those of you who use Facebook, Gil KS4YX has created a [Swamp Fox Contest Group Facebook page](#). If you haven't visited the page, please take the time to check it out and join us! We just recently added Tammy Livingston, N4TAL who is the SC ARRL Public Information Officer and a SFCG member, so look for some interesting upcoming events posted by her in the near future!

As everyone is aware, we have now moved from the old Yahoo group to Groups.io and already the improvement is ten-fold. There are many new features that the old group did not have, and over time it should be obvious that we made a good choice to move. Take some time to explore all of the new features; I'm sure you will like them!

Brag List:

W4SLT received a certificate the California QSO Party High Power; Home Station; Rank #1 SC and #37 USA.

N4XL received a certificate for operating WJ4X in the CXWW WPX Contest, CW #1 United States 4th Call Area SOALP AB #4 NA #3 US 1,824,634 points

WN4AFP received a bag of Sweet Baby Ray's Honey Barbecue Beef Jerky for his efforts in the ILQP. He also got a bag of rice from MNQP.

WN4AFP received a certificate for the PAQP Top QRP 34,452 points.

WN4AFP: CQWW WPX CW #2 US 4th call area Tribander/Single Element 204,732 points

WN4AFP: CQWW WPX CW #4 US 4th call area SOLP 40 Meters 204,732 points

WN4AFP: CQWW WPX SSB #2 US 4th call area SOLP 40 Meters #3 NA #3 US 84,480 points

Member Contributions:

Lessons Learned
Oso, Washington ARES deployment
By Kevan Nason, N4XL

A major reason Ham Radio still exists despite pressures for commercial use of radio spectrum is our capabilities to respond to disasters is recognized as valuable. Times are changing. With the decline of new blood willing to participate and the recognition by governmental organizations amateur support is increasingly

unreliable I question if the hobby will survive. It can be convincingly argued Ham Radio is becoming irrelevant due to the apathy we ourselves display. We have heard our own County's ARES and radio club leadership asking for help over and over again. Too often it is the same old call signs you hear responding. Old calls that just keep getting older.

George Boswell, K7YHB is a member of ARES/ACS in Snohomish County and the Snohomish EC and District 1 DEC. He wrote these comments in reply to a request to provide lessons learned to a mudslide response. I've read after action reports several times over the years. They've been an extremely valuable source of effective real-world knowledge learned the hard way. Here are some excerpts from the latest one I pulled up. Read his words in context of the previous paragraph and draw your own conclusions. Hopefully you will ask yourself "What am I doing to give back to my hobby?"

- Don't plan on using just amateur radio. There are other forms of communications… Most of our communications were by means of the 800MHz trunked radios and cell phones, once the lines were replaced and temporary cell towers were setup between Oso and Darrington. Most of our duties were in monitoring a dozen or so different frequencies, both amateur and government, and documenting what was reported from the field…
- We learned that we can count on only about 15% of our members responding to an initial call out and were scheduled within the first 7 to 10 days. Only 27% of our members responded during the 5 week period we were operational. If the incident goes beyond one week, it is best to ask for outside assistance, from neighboring counties.
- Some of the responses we got from our membership to the call out were:

- o I have a job and can't get away.
  - o I have family responsibilities.
  - o I have job responsibilities.
  - o You expect me to tell my boss I can't make it in, maybe if you could schedule 3 or 4 weeks out I might be able to find some time to help out.
  - o If the disaster occurs in my neighborhood, give me a call
- I'm not sure how much help this will be for your group, but to sum it up in a nut shell, plan on using any form of communications available to you to accomplish the job, not just amateur radio. Train your people in all forms of communications equipment, government radios, phone communications, fax machines, email, and of course amateur radio. It isn't enough to know how to operate a radio, you need to do so efficiently.

Some of those excuses are true, valid, and personally apply. They were true when I started with ARES type groups in 1983. However, there used to be many more Ham's actively involved doing whatever needed doing. That allowed for dividing the work among many people. It is people doing things that make that keep this hobby alive. Besides helping others, involvement helps you grow individually. Are you satisfied with how much you give back to your hobby?

Other News:

Gil KS4YX had an issue with getting N1MM to key CW in the NAQP CW contest. After pulling his hair out for a day, he found that he had the PTT selector for CW set wrong, the setting needed to be set to semi-break-in. Gil mentioned there was a ham who posted great instructions on how to set-up N1MM+ and MMTTY for those of us who use the Microham interfaces.

Frank KG4IGC noted that several members have had trouble uploading messages, pictures, and files to the Yahoo reflector.

Dave WN4AFP mentioned that there are a lot of Swamp Foxes on the ARRL Grid Chase leaderboard, with AJ5E on top of the pile. He also reminded the group that the last day to submit scores for the 2017 SFOTA was Jan. 15th.

Concerning 2018 SFOTA contest, He reported that there will be a new RTTY only category, separate from digital modes. There will also be a Most Improved Contester category. Dave has asked the club members that when you set-up a "New Event" (Contest) on the leaderboard, that you please check all the modes that someone could use in the contest. If you are unsure, but you know that it's more than one, please check all of the mode selections.

Dave NJ4F reported that he had some computer issues that were causing his Windows 8 PC to crash while running N1MM. The problem still persists as of the CQ WPX RTTY. Frank KG4IGC is experiencing similar issues with his new Windows 10 machine, which crippled him during the CQWW WPX RTTY contest.

Thomas AJ4UQ advised that certain AMD processors will blue-screen with the new MS security patches. Microsoft has since stopped that patch.

Gil KS4YX put together a great PowerPoint Presentation on the 2018 SCQP. If you would like to view it, the presentation can be downloaded from our new resources page on the club website *here*.

Dave NJ4F gave us a heads up on the preparation for departure of the 3Y0Z team. Unfortunately, the trip to Bouvet Island was aborted

because of high winds, low clouds, fog, and rough seas. Here is an update from co-leaders K0IR, K4UEE, LA6VM:

"During the last 72 hours we continued to experience the high winds, low clouds, fog, and rough seas that have prevented helicopter operations since our arrival at Bouvet. No improvement was predicted in the weather forecast for the next four days. Then, last night an issue developed in one of the ship's engines. This morning the captain of the vessel declared it unsafe to continue with our project and aborted the expedition. We are now on our long voyage back to Punta Arenas. As you might imagine the team is deeply disappointed, but safe. There is already talk about rescheduling the DXpedition."

Kevin N4XL let us know that he has one place lined up for the contest class presentation about 20 miles South of Greenville. Frank KG4IGC will be looking for a place in the Low country for a second class as well. Anyone who has some ideas, please email KG4IGC@att.net

Bill N4IQ congratulated Kevan N4XL for the great job he did on his presentation to the SCDXA.

Frank KG4IGC informed the club that we have two new members, Dean KK4ZMK from Florence, SC and Ed WB4HRL and welcomed them to the group.

Al NE4EA had some High SWR problems with his antenna in the NAQP SSB.

Thomas AJ4Q & Gil KS4YS reported that there was little activity on the VHF bands for the ARRL January VHF contest.

Bill N4IQ told us that one of his BOGs was dead. After doing some checking, he found that squirrels had eaten the feed line box , transformer and connecting wires.

Frank KG4IGC asked Phil NI7R about the construction of his 160 antenna. Phil is using a 17 foot whip with a counterpoise that is mounted on 1.5 inch PVC and has about 165 turns. He also has 20 feet of wire from the coil lying on the ground to the antenna, which is mounted on a 6 foot all metal ladder with a few more short radials connected to the ladder. Phil then adjusts to the resonate frequency.

Frank KG4IGC shared a memo from John K4BAI, The MT QSO party was listed for Sat in the WA7BNM contest calendar. However, as WN4AFP has pointed out, there will be no MT QSO Party this year due to the resignation of that contest director. They hope to return next year.

Thomas AJ4UQ told us about how he brought his KX3 to Virginia so that he could operate in the Winter Field day while visiting his parents. His father had a good laugh watching him try to untangle his end fed wire that he had crammed in his pocket.

Dave WN4AFP informed the group that the results for the PAQP have been published, results can be found *here*.

Phil N7IR shared an email from Steve N2IC that a bug has been discovered in the Cabrillo generation for the CQ 160 contest. If you edited an exchange in the Log window, the previous exchange will be written to the Cabrillo log. This is obviously wrong. There is a fix in http://n1mmplus.hamdocs.com/ tiki-list_file_gallery.php? galleryId=20

Select and install the "Fix for CQ 160 Cabrillo" version. You must use this version for the corrected exchange to be in the Cabrillo log. If you already sent your Cabrillo log to the sponsor, create a new Cabrillo log using the fixed version, and resend the log to the sponsor.

Bill N4IQ informed the group that the new Groups.io reflector has been created and awaits approval. The group was approved and the Yahoo reflector was moved to the new groups.io Frank KG4IGC made sure that all of the files and pictures were transferred to the new reflector.

Dave WN4AFP reminded the group about the upcoming SCQP on Feb. 24th.For more information please direct your browser to www.scqso.com

Contests:

North America QSO Party, CW

Swamp Fox Contest Group (Team)

WN4AFP   26,600

K7OM   21,600

NI7R   16,660

NJ4F   12,483

Team Total: 77,343

KS4YX   143

North America QSO Party, SSB

Swamp Fox Contest Group Team 1

K7OM	8,280
WN4AFP	6,960
NE4EA	1,472
Team Total:	16,712

Swamp Fox Contest Group Team 2

KG4IGC	66,294
WU0B	34,823
AJ5E	13,320
Team Total:	114,437

CQ 160-Meter Contest

K7OM	SOHP	41,965
NJ4F	SOHP	31,752
WN4AFP	SOLP	234
N4IQ	SOAHP	64,878
NI7R	SOAHP	46,315

Winter Field Day

KS4YX   470

AJ4UQ   4,504

CQWW WPX RTTY

N4IQ SO2R T-WIRES SOAB HP   1,011,840

K7OM SOAB HP   590,690

NI7R SOAB HP   277,726

NJ4F SOAB HP   205,282

KS4YS SOAB LP   184,725

KG4IGC SOAB LP   34,882

SFOTA:

Congratulations to the following Swamp Foxes for winning the following categories in the 2017 SFOTA contest:

Overall Winner with Most QSOs:

Bill N4iQ - 16,983

Most Contests:

Bill N4iQ – 123

Digital Category Qs:

First Place – Ted K7OM 4317

Second Place – Bill N4iQ 3992

Third Place –Dave NJ4F 1868

SSB Category Qs:

First Place – Steve W4SLT 1523

Second Place – Dave WN4AFP 1420

Third Place – Ted K7OM 991

CW Category Qs:

First Place – Bill N4iQ 12626

Second Place - Dave WN4AFP 3886

Third Place – Phil NI7R 2361

2018 Current Leaderboard

2018 OVERALL STANDINGS

	CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1)	N4IQ	28	2888	0	0	2500	5388
2)	K7OM	8	546	120	0	1606	2272
3)	NJ4F	4	406	0	0	826	1232

4)	NI7R	4	515	0	0	584	1099
5)	WN4AFP	22	869	135	0	0	1004
6)	KG4IGC	2	0	522	0	404	926
7)	KS4YX	3	143	0	0	692	835
8)	WU0B	2	0	359	0	302	661
9)	NE4EA	5	222	46	0	0	268
10)	AJ4UQ	5	1	0	1	119	121

2018 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS

CALL	CW QSO'S
N4IQ	2888
WN4AFP	869
K7OM	546
NI7R	515
NJ4F	406
NE4EA	222
KS4YX	143
AJ4UQ	1

CALL	SSB QSO'S
KG4IGC	522
WU0B	359
WN4AFP	135
K7OM	120
NE4EA	46

CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S
AJ4UQ	1

CALL	RTTY QSO'S
N4IQ	2500
K7OM	1606
NJ4F	826
KS4YX	692
NI7R	584
KG4IGC	404
WU0B	302
AJ4UQ	119

Upcoming Contests

NCCC RTTY Sprint, Feb 16, 0145z to Feb 16, 0215z; RTTY; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: February 18.

QRP Fox Hunt, Feb 16, 0200z to Feb 16, 0330z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: February 22.

NCCC Sprint, Feb 16, 0230z to Feb 16, 0300z; CW; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: February 18.

ARRL International DX Contest, CW, Feb 17, 0000z to Feb 19, 0000z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; W/VE: RST +

(state/province), non-W/VE: RST + power; Logs due: February 23.

[SARL Youth Day Sprint](#), **Feb 17, 0800z to Feb 17, 1000z; SSB; Bands: 40m Only; RS + age; Logs due: February 24.**

[Russian PSK WW Contest](#), **Feb 17, 1200z to Feb 18, 1159z; BPSK31, BPSK63, BPSK125; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RU: RST + 2-letter oblast, non-RU: RST + Serial No.; Logs due: February 23.**

[Feld Hell Sprint](#), **Feb 17, 1900z to Feb 17, 2059z; Feld Hell; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6m; (see rules); Logs due: February 21.**

[AWA Amplitude Modulation QSO Party](#), **Feb 17, 2300z to Feb 18, 2300z; AM; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20m; Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: March 7.**

[Classic Exchange, Phone](#), **Feb 18, 1400z to Feb 19, 0800z, Feb 20, 1400z to Feb 21, 0800z; AM, SSB, FM; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6, 2m; Name + RS + (state/province/country) + rcvr/xmtr manuf/model; Logs due: April 30.**

[Run for the Bacon QRP Contest](#), **Feb 19, 0200z to Feb 19, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + (state/province/country) + (Member No./power); Logs due: February 25.**

[QRP Fox Hunt](#), **Feb 21, 0200z to Feb 21, 0330z; CW; Bands: 80m**

Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: February 22.

Phone Fray, Feb 21, 0230z to Feb 21, 0300z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15m; NA: Name + (state/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: February 23.

CWops Mini-CWT Test, Feb 21, 1300z to Feb 21, 1400z, Feb 21, 1900z to Feb 21, 2000z, Feb 22, 0300z to Feb 22, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Member: Name + Member No., non-Member: Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: February 24.

AGCW Semi-Automatic Key Evening, Feb 21, 1900z to Feb 21, 2030z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + Serial No. + "/" + 2-digit year first used a bug; Logs due: March 15.

VHF+ CONTESTS

See the SKCC Weekend Sprintathon, and Classic Exchange, Phone, above.