



TALES FROM THE SWAMP

TALES FROM THE SWAMP

December 2018

Author: Frank KG4IGC

From Your President:

November sure has been a busy month for the club. Our club has been very busy working several contests this past month. It is really great to see our member's active on the bands! Several of our members have been stepping up their game this year. We have guys with new antenna setups, new rigs, faster PC's, and of course, multiple monitors.

We have guys working very hard to improve their CW skills and others who are getting their stations set up for FT-8 and RTTY. At the same time, we have a few guys in the process of setting up their stations for S02R. Seeing this type of activity within the club is certainly exciting to say the least!

The annual club meeting date has been set for January 26th, 2019 at 3PM. The meeting will be held at our usual place, the Lizards Thicket, 4616 Augusta Road, Lexington, SC and their phone number is 803-785-5560. We would like everyone who plans on attending to please bring a picture of your station as we would like to have everyone tell us a bit about your station and your favorite contest and mode. I would like everyone to please think about some suggestions of where you would like to see some improvements within the club that we can talk about.

For those of you who worked the Worked All Europe DX Contest RTTY, I have received word from the WAEDC manager Marco DJ4MH that the RAW scores of the WAEDC RTTY 2018 have been published. You can find the RAW scores [here](#).

I would really like to express my thanks to each and every one of you for making the Swamp Fox Contesting Group a success. Although we are a small contesting club compared to others, this club has the ability to be a very competitive club that can run with the best of them. I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and I hope the New Year brings you and your families good health, wealth and happiness in the coming New Year!

Notable Mentions:

W4SLT celebrated his birthday on Nov. 25th. On behalf of the entire club, Happy Birthday Steve!

Member Contributions:

Ham Safety Concerns

By: Kevan Nason N4XL

We all run the risks of hurting ourselves or being hurt every day. I was recently disturbed when I learned how Paul Bitner, W0AIH, met his end. I do not know the details, but what I did read brought my company's Safety Training to mind.

We are constantly talking about how you need to fight becoming complacent and ignoring the dangers of things you have been doing all your life. The tired excuse of "I have been doing that for 20 years and have never been hurt" doesn't mean you aren't running a risk of hurting yourself, or others, every time you do whatever it is you're so good at. You should evaluate every task you set out to do as if it is the first time you have done it – even if you have done it without incident 237 times over the last 50 years. We stress your coworkers all have the obligation to speak up if they think something isn't right. We require everyone to gather together and talk about the hazards and how to prevent injury before starting work.

I used Paul's story in my work training topic today. I decided I would take some time in our next Ham club meeting and list some hazards we as Hams need to be aware of and mitigate. This list is definitely not all-inclusive. I only spent about 10 minutes thinking about it. I hope people think about it though when they start their next Ham Radio activity. It's a start to them safely finishing. These are only bullet points of hazards. Feel free to ask if something is too cryptically abbreviated to understand why I included it.

- **Falling - normally antenna installation**
 - Tower
 - Tree
 - Ladder
 - 2nd story window
 - Roof
 - Man lift
 - Things fall on you from others doing overhead work
- **Electrocution**
 - Working on equipment
 - Amplifiers
 - Tube amps can have thousands of volts
 - Solid State amps can have high currents
 - “Ordinary” tube radio has hundreds of volts
 - Capacitors retain charge
 - Running 120/240 volt power to shack
 - Contact with Power Line while hanging antenna
 - RF burn from contacting transmitting antenna
 - Improperly grounded shack equipment and home-made faulty equipment
- **RF exposure due to being in antenna radiation field**
- **Cuts/Punctures/Burns**
 - Using hand tools to assemble things
 - Prepping coax
 - Putting up antennas
 - Rope burn
 - Soldering iron
 - Arc Flash
 - Skin burns
 - Eye damage
- **Chemical exposure**
 - Cleaning solvents
 - Lead from soldering
 - Coax weather proofing materials

- Battery acid
- Gases from charging lead acid batteries
- **Heat stroke**
- **Heart attack from overexertion**
- **Ergonomic issues – Sitting a long time at operating station**
 - Blood clots in legs
 - Carpal Tunnel - Repetitive motions
 - Neck/Back/Eye strain
- **Environmental exposure (freezing, heat, mosquito borne disease, etc.)**
 - Portable operations
 - Field Day
 - Emergency response deployment
 - DXpedition to Spratly or Bouvet Island
- **Misc**
 - Air bag deployment from installing radio in car – or inadvertently disabling a car safety feature.
 - Distracted driving
 - Thieves, rebel groups or Somali pirates
 - Fire/Asphyxiation
 - Portable generator use
 - Portable propane heaters
 - Overloading extension cords, automobile power lines, or house circuits
 - Hearing loss
 - Long periods listening to loud signals in headphones

Club Happenings:

🐾 N4XL discussed some lessons learned in the CQWW CW contest about skewed path contacts that were made more

Southerly than their usual great circle path. Kevan also made some long path contacts with JA's and VK's

- 🐾 WU0B mentioned that he was able to get his audio set up with N1MM so that he could do voice keying in the ARRL Sweepstakes.
- 🐾 W1TEF asked for some help in setting up his Elecraft KX3 for FT-8. Tom AJ4UQ told Tom about his setup using Signalink interface. From Tom "The cables plug into the mic and phone jacks on the radio. To hear the radio rx audio you need to run a cable from the Signalink Monitor port to the PC microphone, then in the volume mixer select "listen to this input". I suppose you could also run the monitor port to an external speaker." He also mentioned that with digital modes when he drives the 100 watt amp, the KX3 runs 5 watts full time and gets hot. Guides for setting up can be found on [Tigertronics website](#).
- 🐾 Dave WN4AFP gave a couple of good tips on adjusting your mouse so the cursor would move faster or slower, and also something very useful, how to quickly find your cursor using the Ctrl button. This tip really comes in handy when you have a busy desktop and multiple screens. These settings can be found easily in Windows 7, 8, & 10: Start/Control Panel/Mouse. Be sure to hit "apply" once you change any settings.
- 🐾 Bill N4IQ informed the club about a mock RTTY RU contest using the new Beta WSJT-X V2.0.0-rc4 with its new contesting mode. NOTE: v1.9 *will not decode* new FT8 signals.

- 🐾 Frank KG4IGC informed the club that the 2018 election results for ARRL Director, Vice Director election results have been officially announced. We have a new Division Director George Hippisley, W2RU.

- 🐾 Kevan N4XL started an interesting thread about a comparison of N3FJP & N1MM. Several members commented why they like or dislike each program for contesting.

- 🐾 Al NE4EA got MMTTY working with his TS-480 HX and Signalink interface. This encouraged him to get FLdigi up and running as well, so now Al has fully operational digi abilities!

- 🐾 WB4HRL asked for some assistance in setting up his Icom IC-7300 and computer. He wants to use more than one program at a time but is limited to one com port on his PC. KG4IGC recommended using [Virtual Serial Port Emulator \(VSPE\)](#). This program was originally recommended by Bill N4IQ who runs multiple programs on his S02R station. *Note: The program is free if you are using Windows 7, but there is a small fee for the Windows 10 version.*

- 🐾 Kevan N4XL shared a [high energy podcast](#) from K0MD who is the editor of the National Contesting Journal on how important it is to enjoy contesting.

- 🐾 Dave WN4AFP informed the club of a long time and well known contester Paul Bitter, W0AIH's passing from a tower accident.

 Frank KG4IGC shared a file on how to do QTC's for the WAE DX RTTY Contest.

Tamitha Skov's YouTube Channel:

[Thanksgiving Day Reprieve: Solar Storm Shortie 11-22-2018](#)

Contests:

CWops Mini-CWT Test 1300z Nov 28

N4IQ [SO2R](#) 108 Q's 100 Mults 10,800

WN4AFP 60 Q's 60 Mults 3,600

CWops Mini-CWT Test 1900z Nov 28

N4IQ [SO2R](#) 85 Q's 79 Mults 6,715

WN4AFP 27 Q's 27 Mults 729

CWops Mini-CWT Test 0300z Nov 29

WN4AFP 17 Q's, 17 Mults 289

CQWW DX Contest, CW Nov. 24

N4XL SO(A)AB LP [SO2R](#) 610 Q's, 88 Zones, 277 Countries, 607,360

WN4AFP SO(A)AB LP 363 Q's, 51 Zones, 162 Countries, 206,397

NI7R SO(A)AB LP 285 Q's, 46 Zones, 150 Countries, 157,192

KG4IGC SO(A)AB LP 52 Q's, 23 Zones, 38 Countries, 8,784

K7OM SOAB HP 356 Q's, 67 Zones, 157 Countries, 212,128

KG6MC SOAB HP 203 Countries, 55 Zones, 132 Countries, 102,663

NJ4F	SOAB HP	116 Q's, 30 Zones 74 Countries, 31,720
NJ4F	SOAB HP (Classic)	116 Q's, 30 Zones 74 Countries, 31,720

Club Aggregate Score: 1,326,244

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB Nov.17

KG6MC	SOHP	547 Q's, 79 Sections	86,426
KG4IGC	SOLP	240 Q's, 78 Sections	37,440
NE4EA	SOLP	104 Qs, 44 Sections	9,152
WN4AFP	SOLP	64 Q's 29 Sections	3,712
WB4HRL	SOLP (Unlimited)	171 Q's, 77 Sections	26,334
WU0B	SOLP (Unlimited)	102 Q's, 49 Sections	9,996

Club Aggregate Score: 173,060

LZ DX CW NOV 17

K70M 43 Q's 9 Mults 4,040

ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW Nov. 3

K70M	SOHP	143 Q's, 56 Sections,	16,016
WN4AFP	SOLP	355 Q's 76 Sections,	53,960
NI7R	SO Unlimited LP	364 Q's 82 Sections,	59,696

Club Aggregate Score: 129,672

SFOTA

Current Leaderboard

Reminder: Please remember that there is a 10 day rule for submitting your contest data to the SFOTA leaderboard.

2018 OVERALL STANDINGS

	CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1)	N4IQ	122	9732	453	16	6130	16331
2)	K7OM	42	2149	797	16	4859	7821
3)	WN4AFP	85	4251	1220	0	0	5471
4)	NI7R	16	2116	183	0	754	3053
5)	KG4IGC	20	547	1075	0	1034	2656
6)	N4XL	4	990	1570	0	0	2560
7)	NJ4F	10	467	20	0	1494	1981
8)	WU0B	8	0	1073	0	307	1380
9)	KG6MC	4	463	621	0	0	1084
10)	KS4YX	4	229	0	0	692	921
11)	NE4EA	9	496	242	0	0	738
12)	W4SLT	6	0	581	0	0	581
13)	WB4HRL	2	0	283	0	0	283
14)	AJ4UQ	6	1	132	1	119	253

2018 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS

CALL	CW QSO'S	CALL	SSB QSO'S	CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S	CALL	RTTY QSO'S
N4IQ	9732	N4XL	1570	K7OM	16	N4IQ	6130
WN4AFP	4251	WN4AFP	1220	N4IQ	16	K7OM	4859
K7OM	2149	KG4IGC	1075	AJ4UQ	1	NJ4F	1494
NI7R	2116	WU0B	1073			KG4IGC	1034
N4XL	990	K7OM	797			NI7R	754
KG4IGC	547	KG6MC	621			KS4YX	692
NE4EA	496	W4SLT	581			WU0B	307
NJ4F	467	N4IQ	453			AJ4UQ	119
KG6MC	463	WB4HRL	283				
KS4YX	229	NE4EA	242				
AJ4UQ	1	NI7R	183				
		AJ4UQ	132				
		NJ4F	20				



SFCG Newsletter December 2018