



December 2023

Editor: Kevan Nason, N4XL

Thank you to our group leadership:

President – Ed, K3DNE

Vice President - Dave, WN4AFP

Treasurer – Scott, KG9V

Secretary – Kevan, N4XL

Web Master – Frank, KG4IGC

SFCG Webpage: [swampfoxcontestgroup.com](http://swampfoxcontestgroup.com)

### Welcome New Member AA4SD

Please welcome Kraig AA4SD to the Swamp Fox Contest Group! Kraig lives in the Charleston area and has been contesting since 2008.

He enjoys CW contesting in both the ARRL and CQ contests usually in the QRP class. He was first licensed in 1985 after his dad bought him a Heathkit HD-1416 code oscillator when he was in 5th grade and was then "hooked"! His station consists of a Kenwood TS-590 and an Elecraft K2. Antennas include a multiband vertical, G5RV, 160M Inverted-L, and delta loops for 10, 15 and 20M.

Kraig: Welcome to the Swamp Fox Contest Group.

73

Ed K3DNE

Editor: Like several other SFCG members, Kraig uses a TS590. He also has a K3 and an ATS-3B. I had to look the latter up. It claims to be "the worlds smallest and lightest multi-band CW HF rig."

### Welcome New Member KE4EA

Please welcome Dave KE4EA to the Swamp Fox Contest Group!

Dave got his start in ham radio in 1967 as a Novice while in junior high school in WI. He upgraded to Advanced but then work and family dominated his attention and he became inactive for over 20 years. In

March of 2016 he re-tested up to Extra and notes that "the hobby really changed in a just a few short decades!" If his call or photo on QRZ.com is familiar, he and fellow SFCG member Gary W4EEY are ARRL license instructors on YouTube. He's also a VE under the West Carolina ARS and the ARRL.

Dave and his XYL Vikki (KS4VJ) live in Spartanburg. Dave's favorite mode is CW, he chases some DX on FT8 and occasionally will use SSB. He enjoys POTA, SOTA, Field Day, State QSO Parties (including SCQP) and recently CW contesting (CWT, MST and SST) and has been accepted into CWops. He op'd in CQ WW WPX and ARRL SS this year and states both were great and were "toe in the water" events for him and now that he knows what's going on, he will give it a much greater effort going forward and jump into some of the other CW contests (Dave: CQWW DX CW is next weekend!).

Dave is also a member of the Greer ARC, SCDXA, NC DX and Contest Club and the Isothermal DX and Contesting Club.

His shack includes an Icom 7610, an IC-7100 and an Elecraft KX3 in the field (he's on the way to a "Mountain Goat Award and earned the Double Shack Sloth Award). CW is his primary mode for SOTA. His antenna farm: Endfedz EF-Quad for 40,20,15 and 10m at 50 feet, an 80m endfed half-wave. His QRZ page discusses a 60 foot tower and and SteppIR beam waiting to go up soon!

Dave: Welcome to the Swamp Fox Contest Group!

73  
Ed K3DNE

Editor: A glance at 3830 tells you KE4EA loves CW. As many know Dave is an excellent instructor and there are many online videos of him working with other hams teaching licensing classes. As one student, Joe KE5CLJ, put it "Gary W4EEY & Dave KE4EA are AWESOME with these classes." Thank you Dave and our other SFCG member that Joe mentioned, Gary W4EEY, for your volunteer instructor work.

### Welcome New Member KE4EA

Please welcome Joe WA4LDU to the Swamp Fox Contest Group! Joe holds an Advanced class license (I'm glad I'm not the only Advanced class SFCG member now!) and lives in Lexington. Joe states he enjoys operating the ARRL VHF, CQ and ARRL 160m contests and the SC QSO Party. His favorite band is 6M (mine too!) and enjoys all VHF/UHF weak signal work - his 2'nd favorite band is 160M. He prefers SSB and also operates FT8 and CW. Joe's station includes: HF: TS-590SG and IC-7300, VHF: IC-9700. The WA4LDU antenna farm: 6M: 7 elements at 50 ft., 2M: 14 elements at 60 ft., 70cm: 16 elements at 66ft and on HF: Inverted V's for 160, 40 and 15M at 50 ft.

Joe: Welcome to the Swamp Fox Contest Group! Check out Joe's QRZ page and see his 1<sup>st</sup> place certificates.

73,  
Ed K3DNE

Editor: And yet another TS590 user! We're taking over!

## Contest Tips:

- From N4XL. The traditional way people have used their spot filter is to have it show the most recent spot at the top of the list. Then the op can jump on it and get to it before the pileup starts. That's how I was taught. As a Mult operator at a Multi-Multi I learned I had less than 5 seconds before my counterparts at other Mult stations started showing up. I carried that lesson into my own SOLP(Assisted) station and that worked well for a few years. Times have changed. Far more people are using spots these days and it seems everyone knows that "trick". So many strong stations are getting there early now that I rarely pick up the mult before the pileup starts. In the interest of getting the best rate for my station I now filter spots by directional antenna bearing. Self-explanatory for a yagi. If I happen to be using an omnidirectional antenna like a vertical or L, then I use frequency and jump up/dn the band from spot to spot just as I do when turning a VFO to find a new one. If I'm using a directional receive antenna, I again use bearing. I start an S&P pass through the band by filtering spots to show only mults. I work that list down and then open it up to all spots, so I maintain a decent rate rather than wasting precious time trying to bust large pileups. After a bit I again filter for just mults to pick up recent spots. I find that I can more easily pick up the "average" new spot much easier by getting there AFTER that initial spot crush has ended. As for those juicy rare mults? I give them a few tries while I do my normal spot jumping. They appear along with every spot of a station I haven't work yet. Sometimes I get through after a couple-three tries. If not, I move on and catch them next time.
- Tips from Taking Digital Contesting to the Limit, Ed Muns, W0YK  
(Note: These are tips for Digital operation. They may or may not apply to other modes. For example: AGC should be in Fast for CW and SSB)
  - Turn off AGC
    - or, at least minimize it, e.g., AGC=Slow
    - ☒ Fast AGC increases error rate in modern software decoders
  - Minimize headphone monitoring fatigue
    - Use minimum discernible headphone volume. Only need to know start/stop of signal
    - Low Tones, e.g., 915/1085
      - Low tones are less fatiguing
        - Use high tones for secondary audio stream(s)
      - Low/High tones can be mixed to put two audio streams in one ear:
      - SO2R plus SO2V per radio (4 streams)
      - SOnR (3+ streams)
    - Possible TX harmonics with AFSK
  - Narrow IF filters (Roofing & DSP)
    - 500 Hz - normal
    - 250 Hz - extreme QRM only
    - Tone filters – don't use!
      - Icom Twin Peak Filter

- K3s Dual-Tone Filter
  - Decoder audio level
    - Band noise 5% of fullscale
    - Maximum dynamic range
    - Weak signal decode
  - Call Sign Stacking, “Slow Down to Win”
    - Sailboat racing analogy:
    - Pinwheel effect at mark-rounding
      - Let pile-up continue 1-3 seconds after getting first call sign
      - Increase chance for another call sign or two
      - Increase chance for QSO-phase-skip
    - Apply same tactic for tail-enders ... pause
    - ½-second before sending TU/CQ message
  - Ed explains why to use Multiple Decoders and gives examples of his setup in the presentation slides which can be found here:
    - [https://www.contestuniversity.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/13-W0YK-Taking-Digital-Contesting-to-the-Limit\\_2019.pdf](https://www.contestuniversity.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/13-W0YK-Taking-Digital-Contesting-to-the-Limit_2019.pdf)
- Operating SSB (or other voice modes) brings its own set of challenges: (From the Contesting Wiki)
  - Talking for 40 odd hours over a 48 hour weekend always calls for fluids and not succumbing to the flu - in any of its mutations.
  - Being kind to your ears. Keep volume levels manageable, and where the feature of audio level limiting exists, it helps deal with that 20/9 station that calls you after listening in the noise.
  - If English is not your first language, have a set of alternate phonetics handy for your callsign or exchange. Sure the NATO phonetics are standard, but be flexible and try others if you encounter 'repeat?' or 'again?'. There is no award for sticking rigidly with the NATO phonetics.
  - If you are working a station who's first language is not English, it is usually well regarded and helpful to have some basics of your own callsign in that language to complete the contact.
  - Record your contest receiver output.. simplest is to use the WSJT audio recorder - it timestamps the recording in 30 second or 1 minute increments. recording is valuable to see what you were doing at 2:30am on 20m !  
(Editor's note: Other programs are now available too)
  - Use a headset with a boom microphone - this keeps both hands free for tuning, tweaking etc. use of a PTT footswitch as well as a secondary PTT switch means you will not succumb to cramped foot or finger - it is great to alternate especially in the 48 hour class events.

## Help Wanted

It's a bad time of the year, but Dave NJ4F needs tower help if you can make it. "... I need help pulling up the last two sections of tower. Can't do that by myself. Rohn 45 sections are heavy, takes at least two hams (three non-hams) to pull up, and I will be up the tower. It would also be nice to have someone else up there with me to make it easier, but I could probably manage alone. Planning on Saturday Dec 23. I have one ham down here that can help, and another two that may or may not be able to make it." Some have answered his call since that posting. Others, like me, feel bad because we had earlier said we would help but the holiday scheduling forced us to make choices. But Dave could really use someone to help climb the tower with him.

## Officers Wanted

It's time to give back to the SFCG. There are always reasons why you can't, or won't, help. Get over it. Give back. Ed has been President for years. Time for someone else to take the lead. Without getting permission, I'll speak for the other officers too. Like you, all us Officers have other things in our lives that demand our time. But we know that for some reason people won't volunteer. We feel the SFCG is important enough that it should continue so we stepped up. I wouldn't mind someone else taking over for a bit. I'm sure the others feel the same way. Our President Ed K3DNE wrote:

Officer nomination period continues to be open until midnight Sunday, 12/31/23. I have nominated the present officers: Dave WN4AFP (Vice President), Kevan N4XL (Secretary) and Scott KG9V (Treasurer) for continuance for their respective offices. Nominations are open for any member to nominate any other member of the club (or themselves) for any officer position for 2024. Note: All positions may have a member nomination even where the present officer(s) have elected to run for continuance. Nominations may be sent either directly to me (via direct email - k3dne@...) or the entire club (via our groups.io reflector or by responding to this email) - your preference. PLEASE, before nominating a member check with that member to gauge interest. Elections will be held at our upcoming annual meeting.

73,

Ed K3DNE

President, Swamp Fox Contest Group

Editor: Let me know if you'd like to take over the newsletter. I don't mind keeping it, but several other things have entered my life lately and I also wouldn't mind letting it go for a bit. I thank Scott N2OG for giving me a break from it a couple years back. If one of you would like the chance to be Editor-In-Chief let me or Ed know. New Editorial blood might bring some new vitality to our Group.

## Annual Meeting

SFCG's annual meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 28'th at the Lizard's Thicket in Lexington SC at 2PM**. 2PM is the earliest weekend time they had available (last year we met at 3PM and couldn't get into the room till 3:30) where they can *partially* guarantee that the banquet room will be available for a private event (apparently business is booming and they use that room as a regular dining room on weekends). I pushed and attempted to negotiate with the regional manager to move it from 3PM to 2PM and she reluctantly agreed but can't guarantee that all previous customers will have finished and be out of the room by 2PM - last year we had to wait about 1/2 hour for the room to clear and be re-arranged for our meeting. Also last year, I let timing get away and due to driving distances, some had to leave during the primary presentation (Sorry Matt). This year I'll be sure to keep to a better timing schedule.

Spouse or a guest are welcome. If you know of a potential member please feel free to invite that person as a guest.

The Lizard's Thicket is located on US-1 between I-26 and I-20 west of I-26 in Lexington SC (see address and phone # below). There are many Lizard's Thickets in SC - I went to the wrong one in 2020 and was late to the meeting!

Lizard's Thicket  
4616 Augusta Rd.  
Lexington, SC  
803-785-5560

In addition to the usual business meeting, SFOTA award presentations, lunch (order off the menu and pay individually), there will be a presentation by Bill N4IQ: "Wired Fun at N4iQ". Bill will offer an overview of his station, wire antenna system and how he's made that work successfully both in contesting and obtaining DXCC Honor Roll.

I'm sure that Covid and its variants (and the flu, RSV or other infectious calamities) remain on everyone's mind and is a continuing concern. We will monitor and if the pandemic raises its ugly head again to dangerous levels, I will discuss with the club officers to determine if cancellation is prudent and QSY to a Zoom meeting. Attendance is *not* mandatory, so if a member is not comfortable attending due to health concerns, by all means, do not attend. This is a personal decision and will be left to the individual member.

Minutes will be posted on our website as soon as available.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

73,

Ed K3DNE  
President, Swamp Fox Contest Group

## From the Reflector:

- Burton KY4ID broke the top 10 in the CW Open Low Power category. That's a great accomplishment for a fairly new CW operator considering all the great CW operators that participate in that contest. Of particular note is He was only 7 and 13 q's behind the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> place finishers. Great job!
- Ed K3DNE has been doing a great job recruiting folk to play in contests. Thank you Ed!
- Matt NU4E is soon going to be a serious force to be reckoned with. He is buying K9RX's station in Piedmont, SC. From QRZ... Antennas: R55 148' rotating tower system with: 6/6 on 15 (15M6DX-125 45' boom) at 90/45; 5/5 on 20 (20M5LGS-100 50' boom) at 135/75; 4el on 40 (OB4-40) at 123', rotary F12 Magnum 80/75 dipole at 144' and a 7 el 6 at 51'. 160M is a ~85' vertical "T" with 36 ~120' radials. 60M 1/4 wave elevated GP 10' up with 4 radials. RX Array: 8 el Hi-Z 60' for 160/80/40, taken down in the summer months. 6M: 6M7JHV @ 50' and 4 X 7 EL WOS LFA2 array AZ/EL for terrestrial and EME.
- Bob KZ3P has been snagging some DX. H44WA, V73ML,
- Burton KY4ID has a unique excuse for not putting enough BIC time. He wrote, "Dealt with escaping piglets all day Saturday and Sunday am, and had to spend a few hours putting the shack back together." An interesting image of piglets in his shack comes to mind.
- The virus that keeps on giving. Van N4VGE had to put up with COVID during the ARRL SS.
- Ed K3DNE made these observations in a post about the ARRL SS, "N4IQ is presently at the top of the SOHP(U) Limited Wires category on 3830 and has anyone else noticed WB4HRL's rise up the SFOTA standings? Zero to 9000+ Q's since April!!!"
- Rumor has it Dave WN4AFP had to rent a truck for his recent trip to Costco. We all know he receives an award nearly every week. I've been razzing him for years about how he needs one of those video picture frames that rotates images all the time to show them off. Dave had a better idea though. He wrote "I finally went to Costco and pick-up a jumbo pack of those command strips. I ran out of the strips halfway through my wall hanging project.. I'm expecting another plaque for the 2023 NYQP so I've got a spot for it below the 2022 plaque. I'll send another pic soon with more. I'm saving the side wall for my SFCG awards too."
- Bob KZ3P might be making a run on displacing Dave WN4AFP from the top of the State QP list though. Bob showed off his certificate from the 2023 Maryland QP for 2<sup>nd</sup> place Out-of-State Unlimited Category.
- Matt NU4E showed off a great image of what the CQ WW DX Contest would look like if it was in some type of video game. It's impossible to describe, but worth a look. Check out post #25481 on the reflector. <https://swampfoxcontestgroup.groups.io/g/main/message/25481>
- Many great scores were made by the SFCG membership in the CQWW CW contest including Matt NU4E's amazing claimed 4,978,925 points in the SO(A)AB HP category. Check out the list at the end of this newsletter, but I'll also mention here the efforts of Dennis K2SX,

3,101,553 SO(A) HP; and the inaugural M/2 team effort at W7WZ using Bill N4IQ's call sign, 7,732,503. The M/2 team was W7WZ, N4IQ, WN4AFP, N4XL, and AA5JF.

- About the CQWW CW, Ed K3DNE wrote: "Usually I say that our scores are trickling in to 3830 but they poured in after the end of CQ WW DX CW! Thus far, we're up to 18M points and 14 stations (18 operators) participating and I'm guessing there are a couple of SFCG score additions pending. Great effort and fantastic participation - our 2 newest members: AA4SD and KE4EA contributed and posted scores! In the SSB leg we had 14M points (3830 data). Combined, we are now at 32M points and counting - and shattered our previous club record (set last year) of 16.2M points! I was traveling back from MD on Saturday and when my XYL was driving and saw that I had my nose in my iphone and she asked what I was reading so intently. I told her I was watching the scoreboard and she asked "which game?". My answer was: "SFCG vs. the world!" - she got quite a chuckle out of that. I did enjoy watching our scores accumulate on the on-line scoreboard!"
- Bill N4IQ showed how ARRL Sweepstakes Mugs have changed between his 1999 and 2023 mugs.
- Several SFCG folk, particularly those on the W7WZ M/2 team, are working to improve their CW skills using the MorseRunner feature built into N1MM. See what you guys have shamed us into Dave WN4AFP, Matt NU4E, and Dennis K2SX?
- Ed K3DNE posted a link to some exceptionally talented 2BSIQ operators.  
[https://youtu.be/OEA\\_Ky2Lg24](https://youtu.be/OEA_Ky2Lg24)
- Many Foxes had a great time in the ARRL 10 meter contest. Wish I was free that weekend. See how people did at the end of the newsletter.
- Ed K3DNE listed some worthy sites you might contribute to.

The following (one donation covers all) are soliciting donations for their continued operation and support to the contesting community.

- [3830scores.com](http://3830scores.com)
- [WA7BNM Contest Calendar](#)
- [Web-to-Cabrillo Forms](#)
- [Live Scores Distribution Server](#)

Personally I use 3830 after every contest, the contest calendar weekly for the "This Weekend in RadioSport!" emails and in most contests I use the live scores distribution sever to go to the on-line scoreboard. The club also has a link to the contest calendar on our website. These are very useful resources for our niche in the hobby. If you'd like to donate you can open any of the links above to a new window and see the "Donate" button highlighted in a yellow oval



## YJ Dxpediton

By Van N4VGE

# Vanuatu DXpedition

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 30, 2023  
Issue: 3.0

**Contact:** Van Herridge, N4VGE  
Team Leader  
843-303-1885  
[vanherridge@gmail.com](mailto:vanherridge@gmail.com)

### **YJ DXpedition Accepting Applications**

CHARLESTON, SC - Not every DXpedition (an amateur radio expedition to a distant country) for ham (amateur) radio operators has to be a trip into the wilderness or to an island in a rubber raft. YJ (Vanuatu) is number 74 for single side band (number 105 for all modes) of the top most wanted DX entities, has commercial airlines service, rental homes, and electrical power. In addition, there are lovely beaches from which ham radios and antennas can be set up to talk to other hams from around the world.

The YJ DXpedition planning is well underway for a group of Amateur Radio Operators (hams) to participate in a DXpedition to Efate Island, Vanuatu, Oceania, in the South Pacific for two weeks in October 2024. This will allow them to take advantage of the Southern Hemisphere springtime propagation for radio signals and to take part in several contests including the CQ WW DX Phone Contest on October 26-27.

We expect to make over 40,000 contacts over the 14 days of operation including two days of contesting. There are openings in the group for three to four more hams and their spouses. We are expecting excellent spring propagation for making European and North American contacts. Of course, the location will bring an abundance of Asian contacts as well. Antennas we plan on taking and erecting include parasitic phased verticals, BuddiHex Hexbeam, 160 Cable Help long wire, and 40-80 meter GRV long wires.

We have been able to find luxury housing through Vanuatu Luxury Holiday Homes. They have several 4 - 5 bedroom houses that are on the beach and have plenty of room for antennas. The total budget per person for eight is less than \$5,000 and includes round trip flights, housing, insurance, meals, and a car.

The Team Leader, Van Herridge, N4VGE, can be contacted at [vanherridge@gmail.com](mailto:vanherridge@gmail.com) or 843-303-1885.

## Observations by the Editor:

- A thread on the RSGBTechnical Groups.io reflector dovetailed with thoughts I had while topping off the spare batteries I keep available for home emergencies or radio deployments. I've added a Lithium Phosphate battery to the group. Now when I grab a charger for the batteries, I must ask myself if the one I picked up will charge the battery I'm attaching it to. The RSGB thread discussed replacement batteries for home devices like programmable thermostats. You can't just grab a battery and put it in anymore. Many home devices use built in chargers to maintain their batteries. And since those chargers are often decades old, they are not designed for batteries using newer technologies. Not only do you need to install rechargeable batteries, but you must also know type of battery to ensure they aren't damaged. Improperly matching the battery type to charger type can cause improper charge capacity, premature battery failure, and possibly battery overheating and a fire. Fires inside a device attached to an interior wall of your house falls on the "Bad" side of the Good/Bad meter.
- It took years for me to realize an antenna switch does not completely disconnect the RF from my radios. I was working on a project while sitting in the shack with the rig on and tuned to a very strong SSB signal. I needed to concentrate, and the talking was distracting. Rather than turning the volume down I reached up and selected an unused antenna port on my MFJ tuner. It was much weaker, but I could still hear the SSB conversation. That was my clue that not all switches are created equal. If you are trying to copy a weak signal, then poor port-to-port isolation can be a problem. It can be a significant problem if you run a SO2R or Multi-op station, particularly when using high power. My automatic antenna switch is from Hamation (Array Solutions uses a similar, if not the same, design) and is rated at 60 dB isolation. The actual value varies by frequency. The manual recommends not putting harmonically related bands next to each other on the switch outlet connections in order to minimize port to port signal transfer. Green Heron switches are said to have better isolation. I personally know the switch in the old MFJ tuner doesn't do nearly as well as my Hamation switch does. The following was posted by W0LEV on the RSGB Groups.io reflector:

A typical amateur coax switch will exhibit between 60 and 80 dB of isolation - I've measured a few... 80 dB is an exception. MFJ does not accomplish good isolation and ballparks around 40 dB of isolation (YMMV with MFJ). Most of mine are Alpha-Delta and come in around 70 dB of isolation.

The following specifications are for a Green Heron GHE\_Select-8 remote switch:

Port Isolation (Typ)

5MHz = 80 dB

7 MHz = 70 dB

14 MHz = 60 dB

28 MHz = 48 dB

50 MHz = 40 dB

Keep that in mind if you are building a SO2R or Multi station. Some had recommended to me that I should put my 70+ dB Band Pass Filters (BPF) on the outlet (antenna) side of my antenna switch. Since the switch only had at best a 60 dB port-to-port isolation rating I was essentially throwing away the extra 10+ dB isolation the high dollar BPF's were giving me. Also consider your switch application. If you are depending on a switch to protect a highly sensitive receiver circuit, it must have very good isolation. An example of such a situation could be if you used an antenna analyzer to adjust a manual tuner before sending 1500 watts from your amplifier (which you connected to another port of the same switch) to the tuner. I'd do some digging into switch isolation specifications before putting that \$400 analyzer in that set up. Using a switch with only 40 dB isolation. 40 dB down from 1500 watts would send 150 mW to the analyzer. That might be enough to cause damage. I'd much rather have a switch with 60 or 80 dB isolation.

- On the N1MM reflector a ham reported spurs on 20 meters. "Spurs were every 40 khz 20dB out of my noise with some small 60/120hz sidebands." He eventually found his problem to be "Turns out it was a bad shield end to end connection in the USB cable from computer to K3S. Was around 22 ohms end to end -new cable is less than 2 ohms and bingo no spurs. Kinda amazing - nothing had been moved in weeks [it] just decided to give up."  
*(Editor's Note: It's hard to remember, but if obvious things fail to find the cause of a problem, I ask myself "What assumptions am I making?" Then verify those assumptions are valid. A bad USB cable is being mentioned much more frequently as the years roll by. Assuming the USB cables are good has moved off my list of "They are good because they worked yesterday" and is now on my initial list of possible culprits. If changing the cable fixes the problem I immediately throw the old cable out. It might be good, but sometimes a wire is broken or a connection had become corroded. Wiggling the cable only seems to fix the problem, but too often the issue later returns. USB cables are reasonably inexpensive. I'd rather not take the chance of the problem coming back in a month or year so just change them out. Throw them away so you don't reuse the suspect cable.)*

### N1MM+ Tips:

NOTE: Unless otherwise specified references to problems people are having, solutions, and tips come from the N1MMLoggerPlus Group.io reflector. A search there for items described should turn up the original posts and replies.

- It's bad enough Windows changes what device uses what audio paths, but it now we've another thing to watch out for. On the microHAM Groups.io reflector Bary K7GS had trouble betting his new FTdx101MP working. He had pulled the old FT2000 radio out and put the 101MP one in. Windows decided it had a new sound device connected. Gary received a 'Can't open sound card' message. Windows recognized the new rig, but wouldn't let him use it. He wrote, "Problem Solved! Something (Microsoft) made an unwanted change to my Privacy settings allowing audio input ONLY from the Microphone. Simple change."

- Mike N2GC wrote “Nothing happens when I hit Alt-R. When I hit Ctrl-Alt up or down arrows the screen flips upside down. When I hit Shift-Ctrl-Alt nothing happens. Other Alt functions seem to be working.” Tom N1MM replied “It’s your display adapter. Turn off the features that do that.” Such a thing has cropped up in my station too. Other programs I have open are sharing the same shortcut keys used by N1MM.
- Not everyone uses a Spectrum Display thinking it minimally useful at best. Pete N4ZR says most of his S&P work comes from referencing the M&Q and Band Map windows. He wrote: The ability to sort by time of arrival (newest at the top) is precisely why I use the Available window for assisted S&P, rather than either the Bandmap or the Spectrum Display. On the other hand, the Spectrum Display is great for finding a Run frequency. Different tools for different jobs.” But if you are unassisted and don’t see spots then the M&Q window and Band Map, and to many, even the Spectrum Window seem useless to you. They believe the Spectrum Window is superfluous since many rigs have one built into their rig. I agree the M&Q window doesn’t help unassisted operation. But not with the other two.

Bandmap. You can spot stations you find on your own but can’t work on your Band Map. N1MM has an option under Config to “QSYing Wipes the Call & Spots QSO in Bandmap (S&P)”. That is NOT Assisted operation since you found the call and frequency yourself.

Spectrum Display. Any signals displayed in that window that is strong enough to move the signal peak above the dotted blue line in the Spectrum Display window is checked against the spot table integral to N1MM. Unassisted ops will not have any calls in that table since they don’t receive spots so every signal will cause a match check to fail. When the check fails a red dot is placed at the base of the signal. You don’t have to pay attention to the call signs at the top of the window, just the red dots. Using Shift+Up/Dn Arrow will cause N1MM to jump from one unknown strong signal to the next. On a crowded 20 meter band this is mostly useless. But if you go to a quieter band like 15 meters at 2200z or 80 meters at 0800z things are different. You can quickly make a S&P pass through a band instead of tuning each signal in using the VFO. Using red dots is also a quick way to check if a band has any signals on it at all.

- Things learned by folks on the newly formed W7WZ teams.
  - Some did not use the Enter Sends Message (ESM) method of automating sending information and logging. Those of us who already did pushed them to try it. We told them that initially they were sure to make some mistakes, but to hang in there and give it a chance. At the end, most agreed ESM is a valuable contesting aid and well worth learning. One piece of advice that helped at least one person was “If the QSO is proceeding along normally all you must do is hit Enter. If anything deviates, don’t push enter. Sit on your hands a second and think. Instead of Enter, reach up and push the Fkey for the message you need to send or use your Mic or paddles.”
  - Some were not aware that to change frequency all you need to do is type it into the Call Sign block of the Entry Window using KHz. For example:

- If on 20 meters and you want to go to 10 CW type in 28020.
  - All you need if changing within the same band is three digits. If you have tuned up the band and are at 7298 and you want to start over all you need to type is 128 and you are moved to 7128.
  - Decimals work too, as in 1800.2, but be careful to not use 18002 as I once did or you'll end up on 17 meters.
- Typing the desired mode (i.e: CW SSB RTTY) into the Call Sign Field changes rig operating mode.

### Upcoming Contests:

See the WA7BNM webpages <https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html>

## SFOTA Current Leaderboard:

Wow! We're getting a lot of members! I had to resize my computer monitor to fit all the calls into a single image for a screen shot.

**Dec-16-2023**

### Current Leaderboard

#### 2023 OVERALL STANDINGS

CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1) N4IQ	54	6875	1806	1390	3384	13455
2) WB4HRL	139	7556	858	1184	1293	10891
3) K3DNE	19	989	9245	388	102	10724
4) WN4AFP	79	7039	3324	0	0	10363
5) NU4E	11	3685	6618	16	0	10319
6) K4FT	104	8072	644	0	182	8898
7) N4XL	10	5814	2638	0	0	8452
8) K4QQG	53	0	6895	0	259	7154
9) KG4IGC	22	1265	907	0	3715	5887
10) KZ3P	57	0	5776	0	0	5776
11) N4QI	88	3093	911	0	531	4535
12) K7OM	28	1362	0	0	3065	4427
13) KD4S	18	1699	169	128	774	2770
14) N1UZ	13	386	0	596	1569	2551
15) KY4ID	21	2477	0	0	0	2477
16) AC4MC	5	769	933	0	0	1702
17) NJ4Z	4	267	968	0	0	1235
18) NE4EA	7	630	477	0	0	1107
19) WA2BCK	6	724	210	0	0	934
20) N2OG	7	287	473	0	119	879
21) KS4YX	4	122	0	0	718	840
22) W4EEY	1	0	721	0	0	721
23) NI7R	3	559	0	0	0	559
24) AA4SD	6	487	0	0	0	487
25) KG9V	1	0	465	0	0	465
26) KE4EA	4	213	0	0	0	213
27) KM4RK	3	0	100	0	0	100
28) KB1QU	1	0	57	0	0	57

#### 2023 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS

CALL	CW QSO'S	CALL	SSB QSO'S	CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S	CALL	RTTY QSO'S
K4FT	8072	K3DNE	9245	N4IQ	1390	KG4IGC	3715
WB4HRL	7556	K4QQG	6895	WB4HRL	1184	N4IQ	3384
WN4AFP	7039	NU4E	6618	N1UZ	596	K7OM	3065
N4IQ	6875	KZ3P	5776	K3DNE	388	N1UZ	1569
N4XL	5814	WN4AFP	3324	KD4S	128	WB4HRL	1293
NU4E	3685	N4XL	2638	NU4E	16	KD4S	774
N4QI	3093	N4IQ	1806			KS4YX	718
KY4ID	2477	NJ4Z	968			N4QI	531
KD4S	1699	AC4MC	933			K4QQG	259
K7OM	1362	N4QI	911			K4FT	182
KG4IGC	1265	KG4IGC	907			N2OG	119
K3DNE	989	WB4HRL	858			K3DNE	102
AC4MC	769	W4EEY	721				
WA2BCK	724	K4FT	644				
NE4EA	630	NE4EA	477				
NI7R	559	N2OG	473				
AA4SD	487	KG9V	465				
N1UZ	386	WA2BCK	210				
N2OG	287	KD4S	169				
NJ4Z	267	KM4RK	100				
KE4EA	213	KB1QU	57				
KS4YX	122						

### 3830 Activity:

Contest	Call	Class	Power	Score
ARRL 10				
12/11/23	AA4SD	SO CW Unlimited Limi	LP	28,820
12/11/23	K2SX	SO CW Unlimited Limi	HP	241,280
12/11/23	K3DNE	SO Mixed Unlimited	HP	643,578
12/11/23	K4FT	SO CW Limited-Ant	LP	25,016
12/11/23	K4QQG	SO SSB Unlimited Lim	HP	57,760
12/16/23	K7OM	SO CW	HP	7,440
12/11/23	KB1QU	SO CW Unlimited	LP	54,960
12/11/23	KG4IGC	SO Mixed	LP	171,234
12/11/23	KZ3P	SO SSB	HP	88,320
12/11/23	N1UZ	SO CW	LP	15,600
12/11/23	N2OG	SO CW	LP	2,684
12/10/23	N4QI	SO Mixed Limited-Ant	LP	19,400
12/11/23	NI7R	SO CW Limited-Ant	HP	20,736
12/10/23	NN4SS	SO CW Limited-Ant	HP	300,192
12/12/23	W7WZ	SO Mixed Unlimited	HP	155,400
12/12/23	WA4LDU	SO SSB Limited-Ant	LP	7,392
12/10/23	WB4HRL	SO Mixed Unlimited	HP	34,408
12/11/23	WN4AFP	SO Mixed Unlimited L	LP	131,720
ARRL 160				
12/3/23	AA4SD	Single Op Limited-An	LP	10,720
12/3/23	K4FT	Single Op	LP	39,930
12/3/23	KB1QU	Single Op	LP	11,798
12/3/23	KD4S	SO Unlimited	HP	30,228
12/3/23	KY4ID	SO Unlimited	LP	35,586
12/5/23	N4IQ	SO Unlimited Limited	HP	37,996
12/3/23	NU4E	SO Unlimited	HP	40,579

Contest	Call	Class	Power	Score
CQWW CW				
11/27/23	AA4SD	SOAB	QRP	10,440
11/28/23	AA4VT	SOAB	HP	129,404
11/27/23	K2SX	SO(A)AB	HP	3,101,553
11/26/23	K3DNE	SO(A)SB10	HP	50,787
11/27/23	K4FT	SO(A)AB	LP	537,120
11/27/23	KD4S	SO(A)AB	HP	309,519
11/27/23	KE4EA	SOAB Classic	LP	18,450
11/26/23	KG4IGC	SO(A)AB	LP	306,560
11/27/23	KY4ID	SO(A)AB	LP	8,265
11/27/23	N1UZ	SOAB	HP	102,340
11/27/23	N2OG	SOAB	LP	103,104
11/28/23	N4IQ	M/2	HP	7,732,503
	(N4IQ,WN4AFP,N4XL,AA5JF,@W7WZ)			
11/26/23	N4QI	SO(A)AB	LP	58,692
11/27/23	NN4SS	SOAB	HP	457,520
11/27/23	NU4E(@K4SV)	SO(A)AB	HP	4,978,925
11/27/23	WB4HRL	SO(A)AB	HP	266,954
CWopsT				
11/22/23	AA4SD	Single Op	LP	1,368
12/14/23	AA4SD	Single Op	LP	2,601
11/23/23	AA4SD	Single Op	LP	1,332
11/30/23	AA4SD	Single Op	LP	1,763
11/22/23	K2SX	Single Op	HP	3,192
11/23/23	K2SX	Single Op	LP	2,184
11/22/23	K2SX	Single Op	HP	8,148
11/16/23	K4FT	Single Op	LP	5,320
11/29/23	K4FT	Single Op	LP	5,084
12/13/23	K4FT	Single Op	LP	4,503
11/29/23	K4FT	Single Op	LP	5,293
12/14/23	K4FT	Single Op	LP	4,851
11/30/23	K4FT	Single Op	LP	3,520
12/13/23	K4FT	Single Op	LP	361
12/13/23	KE4EA	Single Op	LP	1,640
11/30/23	KE4EA	Single Op	LP	1,600
11/22/23	KE4EA	Single Op	LP	1,444
12/13/23	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	12,765
11/30/23	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	19,591



Contest	Call	Class	Power	Score
12/6/23	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	18,084
11/22/23	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	16,482
11/29/23	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	16,891
11/22/23	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	15,624
12/13/23	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	17,608
12/6/23	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	15,006
11/29/23	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	17,556
11/29/23	N4QI	Single Op	LP	2,162
11/29/23	N4QI	Single Op	LP	1,470
11/23/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	3,752
11/30/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	4,071
12/7/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	4,020
12/14/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	3,770
11/16/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	3,828
11/23/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	1,521
11/30/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	3,953
12/7/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	5,168
12/14/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	4,891
11/23/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	5,183
11/30/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	5,850
12/7/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	4,416
11/16/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	3,960
12/14/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	3,640
11/16/23	WN4AFP	Single Op	LP	1,224
FT RUp				
12/4/23	N1UZ	SO Unlimited	LP	22,411
12/5/23	N4IQ	SO Unlimited	LP	66,339
12/4/23	WB4HRL	SO Unlimited	LP	24,090
KRC SST				
11/20/23	K4FT	Single Op	LP	210
LZ DX				
11/20/23	N4QI	SO CW	LP	52
SS SSB				
11/20/23	K3DNE	SO Unlimited	HP	209,780
11/20/23	K4QQG	Single Op Limited-An	HP	104,040
11/20/23	KY4ID	Multi-Op	LP	14,756

Contest	Call	Class	Power	Score
	(@KY4ID)			
11/20/23	KZ3P	Single Op	HP	76,752
11/20/23	N4IQ	SO Unlimited Limited	HP	136,340
11/20/23	N4QI	Single Op	LP	3,392
11/20/23	N4VGE	Single Op Limited-An	LP	1,610
11/20/23	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	45,684
11/22/23	WN4AFP	Single Op Limited-An	LP	14,740

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73 es QRT de N4XL