

QRA NEWSLETTER

QUANNAPOWITT RADIO ASSOCIATION

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CLUB CALL: W1EKT

ON THE WEB AT: WWW.W1EKT.ORG

DECEMBER 2017

VOLUME 57, ISSUE 4

QRA WAS FOUNDED ON NOVEMBER 18, 1948

IN WAKEFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

1948-2017, OUR 70th YEAR

CLUB OFFICERS

President – Don Melanson, KA1MAP
Vice President – Mike Rioux, W1USN
Secretary – Bob Reiser, AA1M
Treasurer – Jeff Hollis, W1CKH
Club Webmaster – Brian Gudzevich, WO1VES
Club Call Trustee – Dex Wheeler, W1TUM
QRA Equipment Manager – Dave Libby, N1SJB
Nominating Committee- Barbara Day, KA1EDV
QRA 2-Meter Net- Brian Gudzevich, WO1VES
Education Committee- Jim Fisk, W1HL
Tom Cefalo Jr.- W1EX
Tim McNulty, K1TIM
Field Day Committee- Walter Callahan, KC1ENI
Jim Powers, KC1ENJ

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Bill Watt, W1HN	2016-2018
Rob Woltag, W1AFP	2016-2018
Fred DeVries, KC1FIZ	2016-2018
John Carrick, KB1YEF	2017-2019
Tim McNulty, K1TIM	2017-2019
Brian Gudzevich, WO1VES	2017-2019
Membership committee -	VACANCY
Archives Trustee – Bob Reiser, AA1M	
Christmas Committee - Jim Fisk, W1HL	
Speaker Committee - Mike Rioux, W1USN	
John Carrick, KB1YEF	
Banquet Committee- John Carrick, KB1YEF	
Barbara Day, KA1EDV	
Jim Fisk, W1HL	

IS IT TIME TO PAY
YOUR DUES ?
STILL ONLY \$15.00

Dues can be paid to the club treasurer at the next meeting or sent to him at:
QRA c/o Jeff Hollis, W1CKH, 46 Bond St., Reading, MA 01867-2432

NEW INFORMATION

QRA IS ON THE WEB AT:
WWW.W1EKT.ORG

and

<http://www.facebook.com/QRAWolfPack/>

FT-8: I'M NOT REALLY FEELING THE MAGIC

Partly out of curiosity and partly because Jeff, KE9V, shamed me into it, I setup my Signalink interface, downloaded WSJT-X, and started operating FT-8, the latest “shiny object” from the K1JT team. As you probably know, this mode has really caught on with the digital crowd, and the waterfall is chock full of FT-8 signals. Part of the reason for this is that it has some of the characteristics of JT-65, but is not as excruciatingly slow.

Over the past couple of days, I've made 32 QSOs, including a couple of DX contacts. It's been fun to try something new, but to be honest, I'm not really feeling the magic.

Part of it is that I don't feel like I'm really doing anything. I downloaded the software, plugged in my digital interface, fooled around with the settings a bit, and then, the computer started making contacts. I have to click a few on-screen controls to make contacts, but even that's a step that could be easily programmed in by the WSJT-X developers. (In fact, I wonder why they haven't done that already!)

Taking a look at the screenshot to see how a typical contact happens. When a CQ appears in the “Band Activity” window, you double click on it. When you do this, the software begins listening for signals on that frequency. In this case, I double-clicked on the CQ by WA9THI. When I double-clicked on the CQ, the program began decoding signals on that frequency and display the transmissions in the “Rx Frequency” window.

Then, I clicked on “Enable TX” and the program began the contact sequence, sending “WA9THI KB6NU EN82.” EN82 is my grid designator. This is shown as the first yellow line in the Rx Frequency window. The transmissions that I sent are highlighted in yellow. The transmissions sent by WA9THI are highlighted in red.

The sequence of transmissions shown there comprise a complete contact, and that whole process takes less than two minutes. And, once WA9THI received my first transmission, the sequence is all automatic. You just sit there and watch the two computers talk to one another.

While I can certainly appreciate the thought and the work that went into the design of the protocol and programming to implement it, sitting and watching the computers talk to one another just doesn't excite me. On the other hand, if you're one of those guys who wants to make contacts, but doesn't really want to talk to anyone, than this is the mode for you!

Here are a few more notes about FT-8 operation:

- Not surprisingly, synchronizing your computer with the other stations computer is very important. To do that, you need to get your computer to use the network time protocol (NTP). I failed to do this when I first installed WSJT-X, and while my waterfall was full of FT-8 signals, WSJT-X just wouldn't decode them.
- I got my PC laptop to talk ntp by installing Meinberg NTP software. Once I did that, WSJT-X magically started decoding transmissions.
- Most of the cool guys seem to be using Meinberg NTP, but there are other options. One of the guys in our club is using a program called Dimension 4, for example.
- Apparently, you don't have to limit your power output as you would with PSK-31. At first, I set my output power to 10 W. I had a bit of success at 10 W, but I expected more. When I asked on Twitter how much power other guys were using, most of them said that they were using more than that.
- For the last couple of sessions, I've been setting my output power to 25 W, and I've been having more success. I worked my first European on 30m this afternoon, for example.
- Even at 25 W, my signal reports are more often than not, not as good as the signal reports I'm handing out. I haven't figured this one out yet. This doesn't happen to me when I'm operating CW, so I don't think it's my antenna.
- When I'm operating, I write down the calls of stations I've contacted. The reason for this is that while WSJT-X does have a logging function, it doesn't have a log window, so unless you have a great memory, you could end up working guys two or three times a session. That's probably not a big deal since contacts are so quick, but I'd rather avoid doing that if I can.
- WSJT-X works “split.” While most contacts take place on the same frequency, a station can call you anywhere in the passband of your receiver and WSJT-X will decoded the signal and begin a contact. This threw me the first time or two that this happened, and I tried to change my transmit frequency to match the other station's. In doing so, I messed up the sequence. I now just let the contact proceed normally, and it works out great.
- When I work the other digital modes, I set my IC-746PRO to the USB-D mode. In this mode, the receive passband is narrower than for working phone. When operating FT-8, however, you don't want to limit that passband. Signals will appear across the entire 2.6 kHz of the USB signal, and if you narrow the passband, you won't be able to work those stations.
- WSJT-X checks the validity of call signs. This afternoon, there was a guy who had typed in his call as “WAMAD” and was calling CQ. WSJT-X wouldn't let me answer that CQ.
- Operating this mode opens up the possibility of working more stations whose callsigns spell words and adding those QSL cards to my collection. I have, for example, already worked K1GUY and N5SLY. I'm guessing that these two guys don't operate CW.

All told, I've found this to be an interesting foray into a new digital mode. While I'm not feeling the magic that some others seem to be feeling when operating FT-8, it certainly will be a change of pace to operate this mode from time to time. Give it a shot and tell me what you think. (By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU)

QRA ON FACEBOOK

Join us on our combined Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/QRAWolfPack/> and keep up to date with information about QRA and the Wolf Pack Repeater System. Both are being run by Brian Gudzevich, WO1VES.

NEXT QRA MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS THURSDAY DECEMBER 21, 2017

AND WILL BEGIN AT

*** * * 7:00 PM * * ***

**THIS MEETING WILL BE OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY WITH
FOOD FROM LESTER'S IN BURLINGTON
PART OF THE GET- TOGETHER-WILL BE A YANKEE SWAP. BRING A
WRAPPED GIFT IF YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE.
SPEND NO MORE THAN \$10.00**

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, it's that time of year again to dress warm, prepare for the holidays and set goals and the famous New Year's Resolution. We here at the QRA have a lot to be thankful for with all the history of the club and all the supporting members. It's all of us that make the QRA the club it is and more importantly the direction we are headed in. I am grateful to all the members that have stepped up doing presentations and giving their time to support the club and ham radio. I am also thankful to all the officers and committee members who have supported and led this club to where it is today, the club we should all be proud of. I am very impressed reading the old newsletters which gives me a great understanding of where we have been and what all of you have done in the past.

At this time I would like to give a personal Thank You to Mike, W1USN, and Bob, AA1M for helping and assisting me in my new position as your President. I would also like to give a Thank You to all the committee members listed in the first page of our newsletter, it's your support that keeps this club going, and finally to all the Members of The Quannapowitt Radio Association, THANK YOU for all you have done.

Now for the future. I am hoping with all your support to get involved with the membership in setting up classes for Morse code, Tech Classes, and Upgrades along with FIELD DAY. As you all know we will be celebrating our 70th anniversary and hopefully do something special. I will be talking about it at the meetings but would also like to do more with your support and help.

We are in the process of getting a new and higher repeater location which will greatly improve coverage. Brian WO1VES has updated the web page and also created a Facebook page for the QRA with upcoming additions for all the members.

In closing please have a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, Happy New Year and a Safe 2018

Your President, Don Melanson KA1MAP

QRA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The QRA holds its membership meetings at the Reading, MA Senior Citizen Center at 49 Pleasant Street in the old fire house. All are invited and holding an Amateur Radio license is not required. Meetings begin around 7:00 pm on the third Thursday of each month, September through June. We have very interesting speakers. Come join us and bring a friend with you.

OCTOBER QRA MEETING MINUTES

The October 2017 QRA membership meeting was called to order at 7:04pm by club president Don Melanson, KA1MAP. After introductions, Don noted this meeting was the 69th anniversary of QRA and we would be celebrating with a cake and coffee. He then read a letter from a former novice and recognized Dex Wheeler, W1TUM as being the longest membership holder and asked Don to be the one to cut the celebration cake.

Don gave an evaluation on the report on the club questionnaire held last month.

Member Ron Draper, WA1QZK gave a very informative talk about being prepared for any type of emergency. Mike Rioux, W1USN brought a "GOBOX" with a 2 meter rig, power supply and an info link ([HTTPS://WWW.READY.GOV](https://www.ready.gov)) to the meeting to go along with the talk.

Plans are in the process for the meal for the Christmas party to be from Lester's BBQ in Burlington.

A Yankee Swap is planned for the December meeting. You need to bring a wrapped present not costing more than \$10.00 to the meeting to be able to receive a present.

Don mentioned he would like to have reports made at the membership meetings including a repeater report, the club treasury report and news about the weekly club 2 meter net.

Brian Gudzevich. WO1VES is looking into finding a better place, maybe along 128 in Wakefield, to relocate the repeater.

A discussion about keeping or discarding [WWW.W1EKT.COM](http://www.w1ekt.com) and to keep [WWW.W1EKT.ORG](http://www.w1ekt.org). It was voted to discard the .COM.

Brian has been paying for the web sites and the club will pay from now on.

President Don is planning to set something up for the 70th anniversary next year. Some of the ideas brought up were to have a club field event and to ask the ARRL to be involved somewhat.

Two items were auctioned off for a total of \$8.00 for the club.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm. (Submitted by Bob Reiser, AA1M club secretary).

PACEMAKERS AND MAGNETS

I received this from a NH veteran. Good information to pass on as we get older. Last week a friend of mine was attending the wedding of his son in Manchester. While approaching the church, he fell, face first to the ground, unconscious. He was rushed to Catholic Medical Center where they determined the magnet holding his boutonniere on his lapel shut down his Pacemaker.

I'm passing this on for your awareness of anyone wearing pacemakers.....be careful of magnets.

Ron Draper, WA1QZK

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**COME JOIN THE QRA 2-METER NET ON TUESDAY EVENINGS
WA1RHN/R AT 7:30 PM ON 147.075**

FOR YOUR MORNING GIGGLE

Did I read that sign right? "TOILET OUT OF ORDER. PLEASE USE FLOOR BELOW ." In a Laundromat: AUTOMATIC WASHING MACHINES: PLEASE REMOVE ALL YOUR CLOTHES WHEN THE LIGHT GOES OUT.

In a London department store: BARGAIN BASEMENT UPSTAIRS...

In an office: WOULD THE PERSON WHO TOOK THE STEP LADDER YESTERDAY PLEASE BRING IT BACK OR FURTHER STEPS WILL BE TAKEN.

In an office: AFTER TEA BREAK, STAFF SHOULD EMPTY THE TEAPOT AND STAND UPSIDE DOWN ON THE DRAINING BOARD.

Outside a secondhand shop: WE EXCHANGE ANYTHING - BICYCLES, WASHING MACHINES, ETC. WHY NOT BRING YOUR WIFE ALONG AND GET A WONDERFUL BARGAIN?

Notice in health food shop window: CLOSED DUE TO ILLNESS...

Spotted in a safari park: (*I sure hope so.*) ELEPHANTS, PLEASE STAY IN YOUR CAR.

Seen during a conference: FOR ANYONE WHO HAS CHILDREN AND DOESN'T KNOW IT, THERE IS A DAY CARE ON THE 1ST FLOOR.

Notice in a farmer's field: THE FARMER ALLOWS WALKERS TO CROSS THE FIELD FOR FREE, BUT THE BULL CHARGES.

Message on a leaflet: IF YOU CANNOT READ, THIS LEAFLET WILL TELL YOU HOW TO GET LESSONS.

On a repair shop door: WE CAN REPAIR ANYTHING. (PLEASE KNOCK HARD ON THE DOOR - THE BELL DOESN'T WORK.) Proofreading is a dying art, wouldn't you say?

Man Kills Self Before Shooting Wife and Daughter This one I caught in the SGV Tribune the other day and called the Editorial Room and asked who wrote this. It took two or three readings before the editor realized that what he was reading was impossible!!! They put in a correction the next day.

Something Went Wrong in Jet Crash, Expert Says Really? Ya' think?

Police Begin Campaign to Run Down Jaywalkers Now that's taking things a bit far!

Panda Mating Fails; Veterinarian Takes Over What a guy!

Miners Refuse to Work after Death No-good-for-nothing' lazy so-and-so's!

Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant See if that works better than a fair trial!

War Dims Hope for Peace I can see where it might have that effect!

If Strike Isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last Awhile *Ya' think?!*

Cold Wave Linked to Temperatures Who would have thought!

Enfield (London) Couple Slain; Police Suspect Homicide They may be on to something!

Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges You mean there's something stronger than duct tape?

Man Struck By Lightning: Faces Battery Charge He probably IS the battery charge!

New Study of Obesity Looks for Larger Test Group Weren't they fat enough?!

Astronaut Takes Blame for Gas in Spacecraft That's what he gets for eating those beans!

Kids Make Nutritious Snacks Do they taste like chicken?

Local High School Dropouts Cut in Half Chainsaw Massacre all over again!

Hospitals are Sued by 7 Foot Doctors Boy, are they tall!

And the winner is... Typhoon Rips Through Cemetery; Hundreds Dead. Did I read that right?

(Thanks to Bob Tadgell, WIPIN)

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Visit: www.kdaembroidery.com, email to kdace@aol.com or call Kathleen at (781) 942-0421.

WRECK OF USS INDIANAPOLIS FOUND

The final resting place of a World War II ship made famous by its last mission, sinking and heroic rescue of its survivors has been found. The ruins of the USS Indianapolis, a cruiser that played a crucial role in ending World War II, were found Aug. 19 in a remote section of the Pacific Ocean.

On July 30, 1945, the Indianapolis was struck by two torpedoes from a Japanese submarine. The cruiser was returning to its base in the Philippines from Tinian, where it had delivered components of the atomic bomb subsequently dropped on Hiroshima, Japan. About 800 of the ship's 1,196 sailors and Marines survived the torpedo attack. But after five days of floating in the ocean, only 316 survived. Those who died succumbed to exposure, dehydration, drowning and – as related in a famous fictionalized account in the 1975 movie "Jaws" – shark attacks. It was the single greatest loss of life at sea from a single ship in the U.S. Navy's history.

The exact location of the wreck – found by a 13-member research team led by Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen and assisted by the Naval History and Heritage Command – is confidential. The site is more than 18,000 feet below the surface.

Since it contains the remains of sailors and Marines, the wreck is considered a war grave. According to the U.S. Code (18 U.S.C. 641) it is illegal to disturb any portion of the ship or remove any items from it.

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