

**NAQCC FLORIDA CHAPTER MEMBER NEWS:** On Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the Florida Chapter of NAQCC returned from our notable absence in January due to the wicked Florida winter weather. We held our latest “Operation in the Park” event at Lake Ashby Park, located off State Road 415 in New Smyrna Beach. Actually, while that may be the park’s address – it ain’t nowhere near the beach! (It’s really some 17 miles as the crow flies to the Atlantic Ocean!!)....and it’s not in New Smyrna Beach either!! (Unincorporated County).



**AB8GU**

**WB4MNK**

**WB4OMM**

**K3RLL**

**KG4LAL**

**AA4W**

This park has a several covered pavilions, loads of picnic tables, BBQ grills, restrooms, a water fountain and Coke machine. Easily accessible adjacent parking made for easy setup. Some of us have been to this park a few times before, and it is another one that’s kinda’ “off the beaten path” and was devoid of any other human activity!! We had the entire park and all the pavilions to ourselves.

Like I said earlier, it is “winter” here in Florida. No, not like winter up North, but we do live in **NORTH** Florida! We arrived with cloudy skies, a temp of 52 degrees with 70% humidity, accompanied by a steady wind of 8-12 MPH. I know, it doesn’t sound like much, but with the wind chill at about 41 degrees, after two hours in this crummy weather it started to get pretty uncomfortable. It stayed like that all morning, although it got to a balmy 55 degrees before we left. It was not Chamber of Commerce weather for the “Sunshine State”. And 40 degrees less than Tuesday’s high of 81! Note we are ALL wearing jackets and two are desperately trying to keep their hands warm in their pockets! We had six of us show up today, and some new “toys” to play with. Weather aside, it is ALWAYS a GREAT day with GREAT people. Today’s escapees from reality were Steve WB4OMM, Art WB4MNK, Don K3RLL, Darryl AB8GU, Wally KG4LAL, and Rick AA4W. The photo was taken by a Volusia County Parks employee - thanks!!!



**Steve WB4OMM #5913** brought out his new toy, a 4SQR Cyclone 40 transceiver, serial #33, running 4W out to a 40M Hamstick on a ground mounted tripod with 4 radials. He got skunked!! (Never happened before!) Not a contact, although he bravely faced the steady breeze in the open pavilion (and he really did, the wind was out of the North, and that's which way he was facing!!). He called CQ NA for over two hours and got zilch. Wasn't the radio – that seemed to work FB (and he's actually made contacts with it before). 40M was **HORRIBLE**, with deep QSB and few signals to be heard. The stations that were fairly strong faded in and out and the 4W just wasn't penetrating that heavy cloud cover and frigid temp.

And Steve is sticking to that story!



**Art WB4MNK #5274** used his Elecraft KX1 running 3W, used a Dirt Cheap paddle, and brought out his new toy, a homebrewed magnetic loop antenna (that was matched with a 1.2:1 SWR).

Art built this loop from scratch and was the brains of the operation, using RG8 coax cable, copper tubing, a variable capacitor, and PVC pipes. And like many things in life, it was a conspiracy!! Don, Wally and Darryl helped in the design and the construction of the loop – all shared in the development and the success. It worked FB! Nice work fellas!

Art made 5 QSOs with folks in NJ, IN, NY, IL, and VA. All 5 QSOs were with NAQCC members. He always beats Steve!!



**Don K3RLL #1905** brought his trusty Elecraft KX3 running 5 watts; Don made 5 QSOs, all with NAQCC members – from KS, NY, VA, CO, and PA - all on the magnetic loop. Don made a comparison of the magnetic loop with his usual antenna, a 31' wire vertical on Push-up pole fed through a 9:1 Unun with WB3T, who said the loop was EXACTLY THE SAME as the 31' vertical.

Don's had very good luck with that 31' Unun antenna. And he's happy as a clam to be using the magnetic loop!!!!

And Art couldn't get his antenna back! Hence, the evil laughter of Don as he works the airwaves with Art's loop and is caught red handed slapping the paddle!



**Rick AA4W #1628** made the hour plus trek from Crescent City, some 65 miles away – now, **THAT'S** dedication! He not only braves the cold, but also the rush hour traffic! All for QRP portable in the field with us East Coasters. Wadda' guy!

Rick used his Elecraft K-1 with a “speaker wire doublet” antenna and worked 15M. It showed! He got the DX!! He made 8 QSO's (the most today) including PJ7AA, F5FMO, PJ40D, A45XR, EA8TL, WA7NCL, HI3LFE and N3IK.....wow, very impressive for QRP!

Rick brought a few toys too...a homebrewed PowerPole distribution center in an Altoids tin, and he got Steve all excited by bringing his HardRock-50 50W amplifier with built-in antenna tuner! Nice stuff!!



**Wally KG4LAL #6278** doesn't usually do CW on our ops, but does QRP SSB with his Yaesu FT-817 to a wire dipole.....and he makes a few contacts here and there....until today (Hear that Steve? **EVEN WALLY MADE A QSO!**) Yeah, Steve hears.....

Wally's QSO was with a fella in ND who gave him a 55 report – and couldn't believe Wally was QRP in the field.....ah, the magic of QRP!

Wally liked Art's magnetic loop antenna too.....and see, his hands are cold too! The “sugar sand” in the photo foreground sure looks like snow....brrrrrr!

If he could have used the magnetic loop he would have....and I think this picture was taken as Wally was trying to think of a way to snatch it away from Don!

**Darryl AB8GU #6913** the NAQCC-FL Chapter Official mascot, technical advisor, and self-appointed “go fer” in our outings, spotted us on the internet, helped with antennas and transport, and kept us “informed” on the other's progress. He got the last of Steve's coffee from his thermos....betcha' **THAT'S** why Steve got skunked.....no coffee!! (Refer to previous NAQCC-FL Chapter outing reports as to the “who still has coffee factor” .....hi hi hi!); actually, Darryl was offered the coffee by Steve but Steve is **NOT** ready to give up that excuse!

We quit just before noon and enjoyed lunch at a local fast food restaurant....the warmth was welcome!

**Many thanks to those who listened for us and helped make this another successful NAQCC-FL event!**

**NEXT MONTH: The next monthly outing of the NAQCC-FL folks is scheduled for Friday, March 27th, 2015 at 9:00 am. Look for our announcement!**

72/73 to all –

Steve WB4OMM, #5913

[NAQCCFL@yahoo.com](mailto:NAQCCFL@yahoo.com)