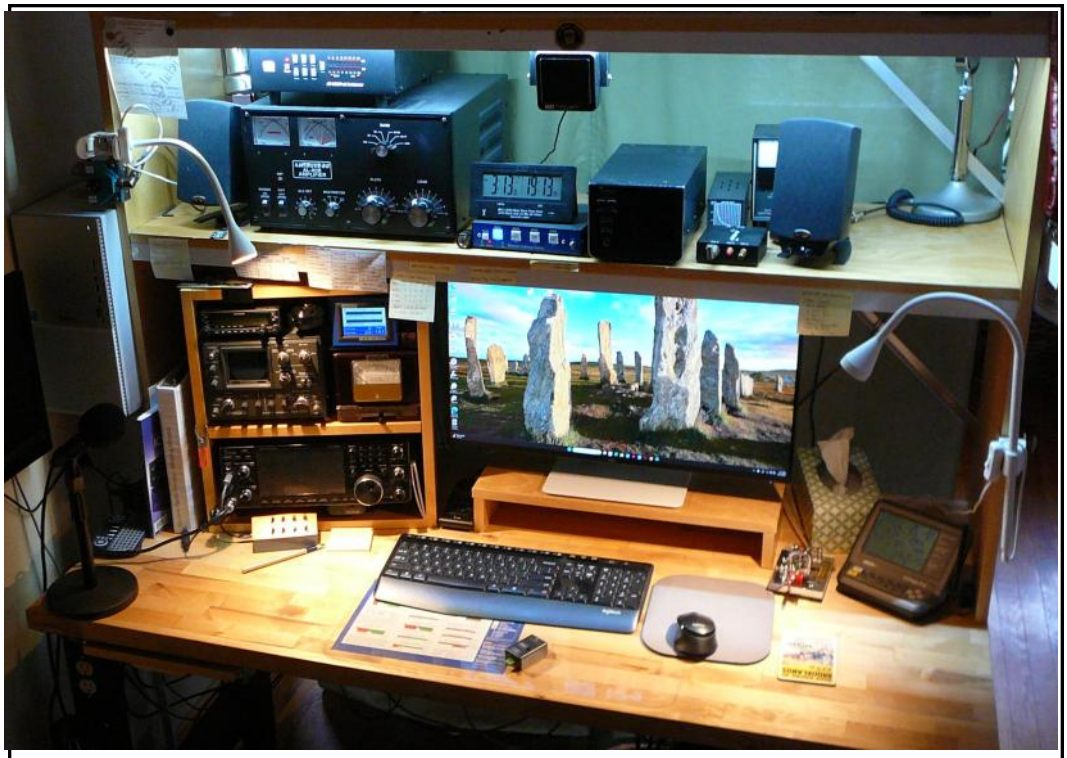
SKYVIEW
Skyview Radio Society, K3MJW
K3MJW
2335 Turkey Ridge Road
New Kensington, PA 15068

Q5er – The Official Newsletter of the Skyview Radio Society



2026 is Skyview's 66th Anniversary !!

April 1, 2026

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- Why Do People Use QRP?
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- . . . . And More . . .
-

Sunspot Cycle is on the Down Side

Exercise the 10-12-15-17-20 Meter bands during the Open Days

Inside this issue:

The Skyview Radio Society Clubhouse is the "Every Tuesday Place" . . .

Something is going on at 'the joint' each and every Tuesday evening, from about 1900 hours to whenever.

See the general schedule of Tuesday events on the Skyview Web Page: http://www.skyviewradio.net

For the latest up-to-date plan, check the Groups.io Reflector at : https://groups.io/g/K3MJW

Directions are on: http://www.skyviewradio.net Guests are always welcome !!

From the Editor

Enjoy this issue

Jody - K3JZD

Remember: The number of people older than you never increases, it only decreases

Ham Radio is a Contact Sport

From the Treasurer

We are looking good for 2026 in our Operations Account.

Used a bit more Propane this Winter. And Electric costs have risen.

But my estimate of costs for 2026 project that we have it covered.

Jody - K3JZD

ADVENTURE: The respectful pursuit of trouble.

Skyview Radio Society is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a charitable non-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. Donations to Skyview are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

As much as I hate to point it out, COVID is not 100% gone. There are still daily hospitalization admissions for the more serious COVID cases.

Sharing is not caring. If you are not feeling well, please stay home.

Tact is the knack of making a point without making an enemy. – Isaac Newton

Skyview Business Meeting Minutes

Don - WA3HGW

Skyview Radio Society

Monthly Business Meeting – March 3, 2026

Call to Order: 7:30 PM by President Brian Sauk, KC3VNB.

Attending – 3O members: WA3HGW, AC3IE, KC3TTK, N3WMC, KB3DVD, KA3CBA, W3IU, NJ3R, W3UY, AG3I, N3WMI, N3KAC, K3FAZ, KB3OMB, WA3KFS, KC3LHW, KD3BYT, AB3GY, KU3J, AC3GB, N2GBR, KE3IF, W1MP, KC3PXQ, KC3LVG, NM3A, AC3KI, WC3O, K2STL and KC3VNB.

Meeting Minutes: The February business meeting was cancelled due to the snow storm making the club grounds inaccessible. The minutes of the January 6, 2025 meeting were distributed for review. A motion to accept the minutes as presented was made by N3WMC and seconded by AC3KI. The motion passed without objection.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Jody, K3JZD, reviewed the 28 February, 2026 Financial Report (attached). 2026 operation costs at this time are projecting a small deficit. It is likely adding a few new members during the year will avoid a year-end deficit. Increased electric and propane prices are the main reason for the projection. Two T bills were sold and 2 were purchased. The club had received a grant of $9,895.80 for the purchase of a back-up generator. This was added to the generator fund. The generator equipment was purchased now to avoid an upcoming cost increase. The grant stipulated the installation must be installed by a licensed contractor. The BOD decided we could allow up to $10 K for installation costs without further approvals. Unallocated income was from VE testing and a small banquet surplus. The banquet surplus was added to the Unallocated Funds Account. A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by AG3I and seconded by AC3KI. The motion passed without objection.

Membership Report: Tom, AB3GY, advised there are two new membership applications this month. AB3GY made a motion to open the membership rolls, which was seconded by WA3KFS. Applications are from James Large, KD3BXY from Pittsburgh and Ted Zeigler, N3KAC, from Pittsburgh. AB3GY made a motion to accept the new members, which was seconded by AB3GY. The motion passed without objection. AB3GY made a motion to close the membership rolls, which was seconded by KC3PXQ. Membership now stands at 154.

Radio Officer Report: Bob, WC3O, reported that all radios were operating normally, and survived the last weekend NAQP RTTY contest. Some trees near the 80 Meter phased array location were cut down while the towers are on the ground. This is to provide more clearance space around the towers to avoid damage should any trees could fall and cause antenna damage. Brush from the trees needs to be cleaned up and branches hauled up the hill and cut for firewood.

Kitchen Report: Bob, WC3O, reported that kitchen current balance is $173. Snack and beverage prices will need to be raised due to price increases at the store. Chocolate costs are significantly higher.

VE Report: There were three candidates in February. One new Technician, one upgrade to General and one upgrade to Amateur Extra class. At the time of this writing, there are two candidates for the March VE session.

Newsletter: The February Q5er is now out with lots of great articles. New material is requested by March 15 for the Aprilissue.

Building Committee: Marty, AG3I, reported the project is still on track for completing the zoning application. One more document is needed to be able to submit the application. Then we may need to proceed with a variance request if required. If all goes well, we should look forward to a ground breaking sometime this spring.

Calendar of Events:

March 14 – ARES meeting. 10:30 AM at the new American Red Cross building in the Blawnox RIDC Park.

March 14 - Breezeshooters Groundwave Contest, Phone.

March 15 – You'll Shoot Yer Eye Out Kid. 11 AM at the Trafford Sportsman Club.

March 21 - Breezeshooters Groundwave Contest, Digital.

March 28 – WEARSfest. Greensburg Masonic Lodge, 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

April 19 – Two Rivers ARC Hamfest. Lincoln Borough VFD, 8:00 AM to noon.

May 14 – 4 Days in May - QRP event, kickoff to the Dayton Hamvention.

May 15 to 17 – The one and only Dayton Hamvention, Xenia Ohio. Be there!

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Weather Night:
K3FAZ reviewed the January 23 big snow storm. The Skywarn net was active for 10 hours and passed 173 weather traffic messages. Steve thanked all of the Western PA hams who participated. He announced the new weather link on the Skyview web page. At the bottom of the main page click on the Weather box and have access to local weather information. NWS Nashville Weather 101 online courses are available now. Next weather night topic will be announced on the club email reflector.

Elmer Night: March 24. Zoom session by Bill Sayers, AJ8B, host of DX Mentor on YouTube.

Smoke and Solder: Various projects still underway. Feel free to bring your own projects to work on.

Net Report:

January: 1/1 WC3O at 28, 1/8 K3STL at 41, 1/15 W3UY at 33, 1/22 KB3YRM at 43 and 1/29 KC3TTK* at 39. Average weekly for January is 36.8 check-ins.

February: 2/5 KC3PXQ at 30, 2/12 K3FAZ at 41, 2/19 K3WM at 46, 1/26 WC3O* at 49.

Average weekly for February is 43.5 check-ins.

*Highest weekly check-ins for the month.

50/50 Drawing: Total amount collected is $43 with $21.50 going to Brian, KC3VNB. Thanks to Brian for donating the proceeds to the club treasury.

Meeting Adjourned: Brian, KC3VNB, requested a motion to adjourn The motion was made by AG3I and seconded by AC3KI. The motion passed without objection. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Don Stewart – WA3HGW
Secretary; Skyview Radio Society, Inc.

Skyview Computer Etiquette - WC3O

- Please NEVER install additional antivirus programs on any of the computers. This causes more grief and aggravation than allowed by law. Trust me. If there is ever a problem we will handle it on a case by case basis. We have VERY few issues that way.

- If you're wanting to look at music or sports web-sites I recommend that you do it on the computer in the meeting room. I get the feeling that these types of sites load lots of mysterious crap onto the computers that slows them down.

- NEVER make network changes. If you feel some-thing should be changed let me know and I will run it past "my guys" and see if it's a good thing or bad thing and act accordingly.

- If you want to add programs to the computers please confer with me first. Most radio related things are fine, but I would like to know what has been changed or added.

General computer guidance:

- Always shut the computers down "the right way". If you don't know how, just ask me. It is very easy.

- When shutting the computers down, leave both computer monitors on. They go to sleep and use very little current. This way you don't need to "find" where the ON/OFF buttons are. You startup the computer, the monitors wake up on their own.

- The ON/OFF buttons on the computers do not stand out very well. Because of this I put little square white stickers right next to the power buttons. Just look for the little white square and BOOM! There's the button.

Thank you

de Cooky - WC3O

Skyview Radio Officer

Skyview VE Sessions

Skyview provides VE Testing at the Skyview Clubhouse each month (Details provided later, near the end of this newsletter)

Here are the recent success stories

February 2026

KD3CIG - Cheryl Houge - General

N3BOV - Michael Cardinale - Extra

KD3CRK - Galen Fitzgibbons - Technician

March 2026

KD3BYF - Brady Bottegal - Extra

KD3CLV - Robert Yost - General

de Bill - N3WMC

OpenHamClock

Jody – K3JZD

HamClock has been a nice free ham utility that many have used for several years. It is a small application that runs in a minimal Linux computer or in a Raspberry Pi. But it will not run in Windows. An enterprising individual found a very small inexpensive device, repurposed it as the Inovato Quadra, and dedicated it to running just the HamClock software. He sold these small units rather cheaply.

I initially had one of those inexpensive plug-and-play Inovato Quadras. But I found that it ran pretty hot and the WiFi communication was pretty unreliable. I pitched it and I have had the HamClock software running on a little RaspPi Zero 2 W ever since.

Original HamClock

On January 29, 2026, Elwood Downey (WB0OEW), the sole developer of the free HamClock software, ended his own life. He was 96. He had no backup. His HamClock software went to his grave with him. It has been announced that Elwood's original HamClock software will cease to function in June 2026.

Software developers in the ham radio community acted on this news very fast. An Open Source version named OpenHamClock became available in Mid-February. This OpenHamClock software is being worked on by a team of software developers from all over the world. The stated goal is to carry on Elwood's legacy with a modern, open-source implementation that the community can maintain and improve together.

I got my OpenHamClock software running on 16FEB26. Just about two weeks after the project was started. It is not finished. A lot of things work; some things are still in various stages of development. But, only two Weeks from start to something usable – WOW !

I'm writing this on 21FEB26. By the time you read this early in April, it will be much further along. I chose to write this up now rather than later when it is more complete because it is very fresh in my mind right now.

The specification / goals for OpenHamClock are at https://github.com/accius/openhamclock

Scroll down until you find them. Pretty darn ambitious. The overall goal is to provide one single screen with just about everything that you could ever want to know about propagation forecasts and the real time activity on the ham bands. And it is free to obtain and use.

OpenHamClock

This photo shows the view that I like to use. It shows all of the FT8 signals going into or out of Grid Square FN00. That data comes from PSKReporter. And it shows the DX CW signals originating from North America. That data comes from DX Cluster. All of the signals are color coded to show the band. The FT8 signals show what 'might be possible' with other modes. If FT8 is not getting there, then no other mode will. This view gives a very quick snapshot of the current band conditions. It is better than propagation forecasts.

However, it is more than what you see here. There are many filters and settings which allow you to customize what you see. A lot of the sections on the left and right side can be changed to see something different. The features will continue to evolve.

But there is a down side. Elwood's original HamClock was a small dedicated Linux application that would run in minimal hardware with very little horsepower and very little memory. It runs from a command line and manages its own GUI. Very efficient.

OpenHamClock is different. It runs its GUI in a browser. It requires a computer with more horsepower and more memory. While I got OpenHamClock to load on my RasPi Zero 2 W, I could not run it there. My RasPi Zero 2 W froze up whenever I tried to open the RasPi browser. My RasPi Zero 2 W might have had the horsepower, but it had too little memory.

OpenHamClock is written in JavaScript. JavaScript is suitable for doing a parallel development. One reason for the very fast development it that a lot of existing JavaScript software that is out there was able to be stitched together.

The OpenHamClock software runs as a JavaScript server. This server collects the data from all over, manages updating that data to keep it fresh, and applies the user selected filters.

The browser then connects to that OpenHamClock server and provides the User Interface. That makes it very portable. The JavaScript server will run in any Linux computer. And it will run in a Windows computer. I have successfully managed to run OpenHamClock in both my Ubuntu Linux computer and my Widows 11 computer.

It has been said that it will run in a RasPi 4 or a RasPi 5, as long as the RasPi has 4GB or 8GB of memory. I do not have either one of them, so I did not try it.

However, one needs to do a little setup to be able to run the JavaScript server component. The OpenHamClock documentation walks you through what all you need to install using a terminal window. A Linux system install tends to prompt you for any dependencies that are needed and offers to go ahead and install them for you. A Windows system install does not do that quite as well – you kind of need to know to download and pre-install the *Node.js* and *git* software first.

The OpenHamClock server component must be manually started. Once you have it running, you can leave it running. However, it is constantly getting updated data from everywhere whenever it is running. So, shutting it down when not in use could help the data suppliers. If you reboot your computer, you will need to restart the server component all over again.

If you have a home network, the OpenHamClock server that is running on one computer may be accessed from a browser on any other computer on your network. I leave my OpenHamClock server running on my Ubuntu Linux computer that sits off to the side. and I use the browsers on two of my Windows 11 computers to access that server component. Having just one source gathering the data, with multiple users. Pretty slick.

I feel that OpenHamClock will end up being much more capable and much better than the original HamClock. Perhaps Elwood did us a favor by putting an end-of-life on his original HamClock software. While it takes a little patience to get OpenHamClock installed, setup, and working, I think it is going to be a really great tool to have.

de Jody – K3JZD

Getting Back On The Air

Richard - N2GBR

It's been a few years… nearly five to be more exact since my last Summits On The Air (SOTA) activation while visiting Colorado. When we got back from that trip, we'd bought a "house" that needed significant work…. but that's another story. After that project finished… I'd already got back to bicycle training and well that takes time also.

BUT, in the second week of January this year (2026) I decided to dust-off the quiet corner of the basement where my Radio is and get back on the air. The aim of this article is to cover the tools I used to reacquaint my brain with Morse-code.

Morse Code for SOTA is not really that challenging, the exchange is very simple and as an Activator (the operator calling CQ) the hardest part is reading the Chasers call-sign and not being flustered by a pile-up as several Chasers arrive at once. This is NOT rag-chewing, the exchange is usually orderly… with just a few niceties thrown-in… a FB, TU, GM etc. I'd say most SOTA QSO's happen at around 18-22WPM.. so that can be somewhat of a challenge for the new CW op.

Getting back on the Air required me to…

- Brushup on Letters, Numbers, characters and ProSigns.
- Get my ICR (Instant Character Recognition) speed up… goal is 25WPM
- Work on sending accuracy

A lot has changed in the last few years with respect to the learning tools available for CW. In 2017 I used CW Teacher a side app from the N3FPJ logging software guy. But now with the popularity of the Long Island CW club and CW Ops there are a range of new APPs and Internet tools available.

I'll briefly cover the tools I have been using:

MorseMania: iPhone APP… I started using this in January… its easy to use and simple to just take a few minutes and fly through a section or challenge. I set my character speed to 15WPM and by February moved it to 20 and now it's at 27WPM.

Vail CW online: has a daily practice feature… takes 15mins… I ran through this at least twice a day.

Morse-Runner: its still fun! Vail has a similar feature… but Morse-runner is more realistic. It doesn't have a Farnsworth setting so be careful if you crank up the WPM… wear a helmet!

Vband: uses a dongle ($30) to connect your Iambic Paddle or Straight Key to your computer for Internet QSO's in virtual channelized communication. It works better than it did a few years ago, according to those that know, and its good to get some sending practice. You can turn off the generated characters and use it for head decode also to just listen to QSO's as you could on the Radio waves (if the speed is good for you)… but I'll bet you find a more reasonable speed QSO available in a vband channel.

Morse Invaders…. Its like Space Invaders…. Use your vband dongle… you shoot the words down before they reach the bottom of the page to get a score…. Make one mistake on a word or call-sign and you can't just dit.. dit.. dit… you have to restart sending the word again. Set a WPM speed you cant quite deliver and go for it.. This and vband really helped my sending accuracy…

With words of the "Morse Code Ninja" himself in my mind, Google him, I set out to reach 85-90% accuracy of decode and sending. So I'd started slow but each time I consistently reached a 95% level I would increase speed again.

So now I'm a bit stuck… 2 months in… I can send comfortably at 20wpm… ICR is OK with letter speed

at 25WPM… but I still need that Farnsworth spacing to about 10/12wpm. I should probably look into CW Ops or LICW club to get to the next stage.

I hope that anyone reading this far will take-away from this that there more good tools available today than ever before and that they are little easier to use and access. It still takes desire though and some work… but I think that with some many options its easier to find tools you like making the learning easier. Time to get stuck-in!

3-6-2026 Success! I did my first SOTA activation since July 2021. I ran at 17wpm sending speed and the majority of the Chasers were around that speed in their sending. I recorded 15 QSO's in the log in about 35mins on 40m and 30m. I did something different when I responded to a Call sign answering my CQ or QRZ… I sent their callsign twice before the signal report… if I'd read it wrong they would have had a chance to let me know and I got to do more sending! Anyway, I felt very comfortable with my character recognition and that was reflected by the tidy appearance of my paper-log …. So, mission success!

de Richard // N2GBR

Lighting the Ham Shack

Don - WA3HGW

In the summer of 2024 I decided to move my ham shack from the back of my garage to a corner in the living room. My living room was largely unused except as a place for guests to toss their coats on the sofa. Most entertaining was done in the family room, or just as often, the kitchen. I bought a nice butcher block workbench, and brought the plywood hutch up from the beat up old wood desk in the former shack.

The new setup was nice, with one exception: The lighting. In the garage I had installed track lighting on the ceiling, so I could aim light where I needed it. I wanted to make every change in the living room easily reversible, so no track lighting here.

The hutch I made has two shelves. Most of the ham equipment sits on the bench top, with the HF transceiver, VHF/UHF rig, watt meter, etc in a movable box I can position as needed. On the first shelf resides my linear amp (heavy!) remote antenna switch, antenna tuner, etc. The shelf has a 1 inch steel angle support on the front edge to prevent sagging under the weight of the amplifier. (It also gives me a place attach notes using small magnets.) The second shelf is not used right now.

Lighting in this corner is poor, so I purchased a couple of LED goose-neck clamp lights from Ikea. I placed those on the side uprights of the hutch. Now I could direct light to where I needed it on the operating position. That works well, except there is no light for the shelf. That's OK, because the only thing I need to see up there is the linear amp. I don't use it often, but when I do, I need to see the controls.

What to do? I used some of those 12 volt self-adhesive LED lights that come in a continuous strip. I stuck th em to the underside of the shelf. My shack DC power supply is set to 14.2 volts for charging a LiFePo backup battery. That 14.2 volts made the LED lights way too too bright. I needed a voltage regulator to lower the voltage to dim the light output.

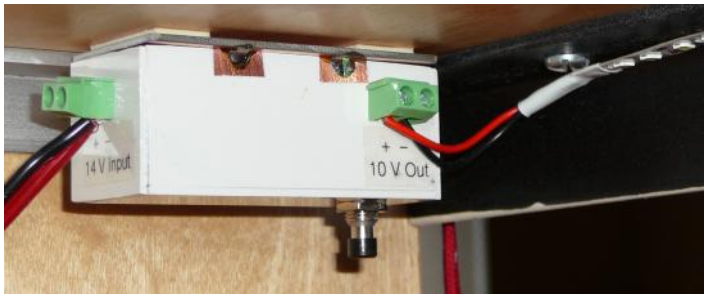
My first thought was to use a linear adjustable voltage regulator, like an LM317. I breadboarded one up, but the LM317 (good for about 1 amp) got warmer than I liked.

This is where Amazon came to the rescue. I did some searching and found a LM2596 DC-DC buck module. A linear 3 terminal voltage regulator works like an automatic/variable voltage dropping resistor. It pulls enough current to drop the supply voltage across the "resistance" to the desired value.

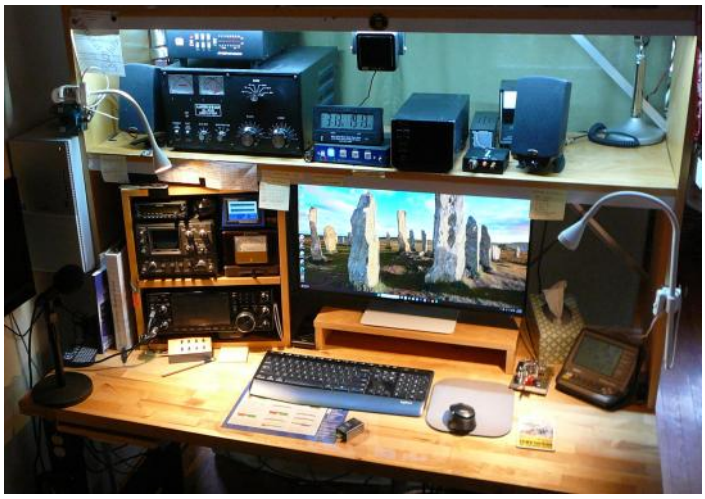
The current needed to drop the voltage is turned into heat. The larger the voltage drop the more heat the chip needs to dissipate. The DC DC buck module is essentially a small switching power supply. The one I bought switches at 150 KHz and is good for 2 to 3 amp and has up to 92% efficiency. The result is I can drop the 14.2 volts to 10 volts with minimal heating of the device. That gave me about the right brightness. The best part, the Amazon price is 6 for $10.

I mounted the buck module in a box fabricated from double sided PC board material.

The inside edges are soldered together to make a 5 sided box and then a cover is soldered on the outside copper. You can see the solder tacks in the photo. You can also



see three of the strip surface-mount LEDs in the photo. Because of the 150 KHz switching, I checked for any RF interference in my radios. Thankfully none was found, so I didn't need to look for a Plan C. I usually leave the LED strip lights off, but if I'm using the linear amp. A push of the switch gives me light.



(Cookie: You can stop reading now because I'm going to talk about cars!)

These little DC-DC modules can come in handy for one of my MG cars. The fuel and temperature gauges operate on 10 volts. MG uses a "voltage stabilizer" in order to operate those two gauges. The voltage stabilizer is quite the electro-mechanical device. It has two terminals: Battery voltage (somewhat variable) input, and "stabilized" 10 volt output.

It consists of a bi-metallic strip wrapped with resistance wire with the input terminal which is connected to the car's battery. The and the other end of the strip having a contact to the output terminal to the gauges. The bimetallic strip is normally closed. The current flowing through the resistance wire, through the contact and out to the gauges causes the strip to heat up, and start to bend. That continues until it breaks the contact, whereby it begins to cool, and will reestablish the contact, continuing the cycle.

The output is basically a square wave producing an average of 10 volts. Don't the gauges wildly jump back and forth with that switching output? Well no, since the gauges also operate using a similar bi-metallic principle. It gets the job done pretty well for 1940s technology.

So why do we need a modern electronic replacement? It seems we may have lost the precision mechanical ability to make something like this. There are "exact" replacement voltage stabilizers available for purchase. Most, and probably all, are manufactured off-shore, typically in India or China.

The original British built parts tend to run for a very long time, but do eventually fail. Users report these off-shore replacement parts can fail quickly, or are occasionally bad right out of the box. The parts suppliers know this, so they also sell electronic voltage stabilizers. They're really just an LM7810 or equivalent voltage regulator mounted in an original style can. These too have been problematic.

Some users don't realize the can needs to be grounded to the car to operate while the simple original doesn't. Also there are no capacitors used on the input and output to help filter out the various voltage spikes which can happen in a car's electrical system. I think this may be a cause of some failures.

Since I had some extra LM2596 modules, I mounted one in a small plastic box to have a replacement. The cost of parts was under $10. Not too bad since the major British car parts supplier in the US charges $21.00 plus $11.50 shipping for their electronic voltage stabilizer.

If anyone is interested, I can make kits available, with without on/off switch, for Smoke & Solder night.

de Don WA3HGW

My New Pal MORTTY

Bob - WC3O

Yes, this is another nothin's easy story.

As you may know, we do RTTY contesting from the clubhouse. When we started, we used West Mountain RigBlasters for a sound card interface, plus PTT (Push To Talk) and to trigger the FSK (Frequency Shift Keying) that is required to send FSK RTTY.

The RigBlasters were connected to the sound cards in the computer, plus two actual COM ports. These was very stable and worked well for many years.

Things have changed.

Today, radios have built-in sound cards and many radio control aspects are usually handled by a single USB port in the back of the radio. Different radios have different capabilities.

The ICOM IC-7300 has a USB port on the rear panel. The ICOM software driver creates a single "Virtual" COM port to communicate with the radio. For RYY, Those items include CI-V data (Bi-directional communications between the radio and computer), receive audio, PTT and FSK keying.

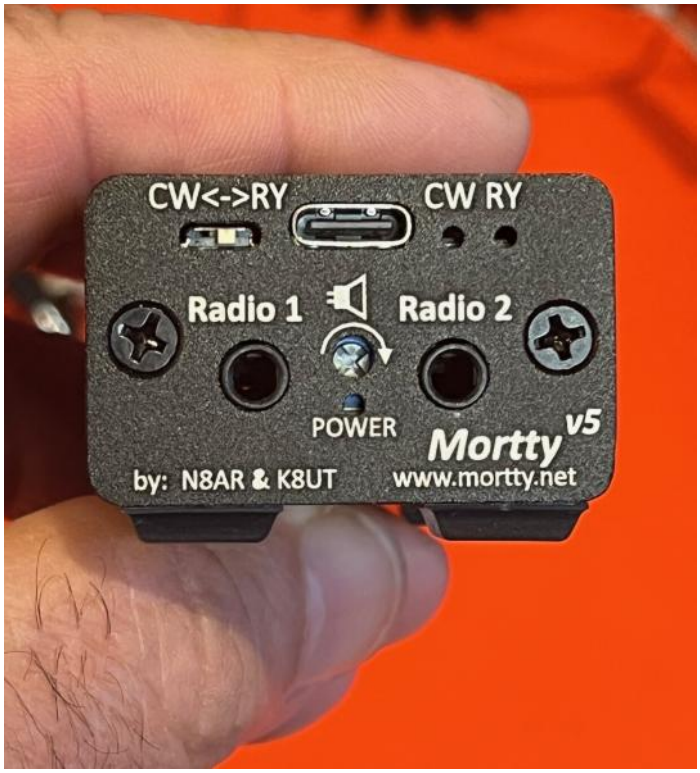
This works great until we get to FSK RTTY, it falls short. I "think" the USB port can only handle a limited number of tasks at the same time. So when it comes to FSK RTTY, there is one more task than this single port can handle.

To make the 7300 work for us at the club I need to use the CI-V data jack on the back of the radio to handle data with the logging software, then the USB port can handle audio, PTT and FSK. It works, but it's a pain to set up.

Furthermore, depending on the horsepower of the computer that you are using and number of operations that the computer is handling (Such as logging software, RTTY engines, external hardware communications, DX cluster, score reporting and more) the computer can cause inaccurate FSK timing - Also known as jitter. In noisy contest conditions, this jitter can cause the receiving station software at the other station not to correctly decode the RTTY transmission.

Enter MORTTY

The idea of the MORTTY is that it is a separate mini computer whose only job is to send FSK to the radio. Because this is its only job, the FSK timing can be very accurate. No jitter.



There have been a number of evolutions to MORTTY over the years. The earlier versions were based on Arduino computers. The Arduinos had enough horsepower to do the job, but just barely. The current version (V5) of MORTTY uses a Raspberry Pi-Zero. The RasPi Zero has MUCH more horsepower. It's a nice piece of kit.

MORTTY connects to the computer via a single USB-C connector. The driver software creates a virtual COM port that will be used to communicate with MORTTY. The FSK output of the MORTTY V5 is a 4- conductor 3.5mm jack, TRRS.

I needed to make up a cable that handles the PTT and the FSK coming from MORTTY. The other end of the cable connects to an 8-pin DIN connector that plugs into the ICOM radio. (Actually, the 7300 uses a 13-pin DIN connector. ICOM sells a splitter cable that breaks out the

13-pin DIN into 2 of the older legacy ICOM DINs, a 7-pin DIN and an 8-pin DIN. I have one of these on our 7300) The ICOM part number is OPC-599. Look on ebay or Amazon for the best price. MUCH easier to connect to than the 13-pin DIN.

BTW MORTTY also does CW keying similar to the WinKey. There's a mini switch on the back of MORRTY to switch between CW and RTTY. (Easy to accidentally break the switch)

I heard a number of folks talking about how great these MORTTYs were and how simple they were to hook up. I said to myself, this will be easy!

Ummmm, not so much.

The problem:

I purchased the MORRTY V5 to use with our IC-7300 at the club. There are some instructions on the MORTTY website. I followed them. It didn't work. I tried this. I tried that. I talked to people. They talked to me. I scoured the Internet. I checked YouTube. There is a video of step by step instructions. I did them. It didn't work... WHAT THE HELL! Am I this stupid? What am I doing wrong!

Well, I wasn't doing anything wrong... Here is what I believe happened.

The MORTTY was developed by Larry, K8UT and Steve, N8AR. Very unfortunately, Larry, K8UT passed away. (If you watch the instructional videos on the N1MM website, that was Larry. He was also one of the N1MM developers. A really great guy and a great loss to our amateur radio community)

I get the feeling that Larry never got to write the driver software for the MORTTY V5, now based on a Pi. The driver on the website is for the prior MORTTYs based on the Arduino. I don't think that Steve, N8AR was aware of this issue. Working with Steve we were not able to get the MORTTY V5 working.

I had about given up all hope of ever getting this thing working. After an extended time Rich, K3RWN recommended that I join the MORTTY Groups.io. I did. After some time back and forth it was figured out what was going on.

Steve and (I believe a JA amateur) wrote a new driver for the V5. I got my hands on it and installed it on the Yellow computer (the 7300 station) at the clubhouse. HOLY CRAP IT WORKED!!! (I think I heard angels singing)

My new friend MORTTY!

I like it. It's very small, not very expensive, easy to set up and configure. Shweet! Now I bought a second MORTTY V5. I plan on using it on the 4th station at the clubhouse. (I was using another interface on the 4th station, but MORTTY is much simpler and cleaner)

As of this writing, I set it up and it worked perfectly the first time out. It will be used with one of our older IC-7600s. The 7600 has a USB port, but it does not have the same capabilities at the newer ICOM radios. From the USB port on the 7600 you can use the internal sound-card on the radio plus CI-V data.

So RTTY receive will be handled by the radios internal soundcard and transmit will be handled by my old pal MORTTY. No jitter here buddy! It works slicker than snot on a hoe handle.

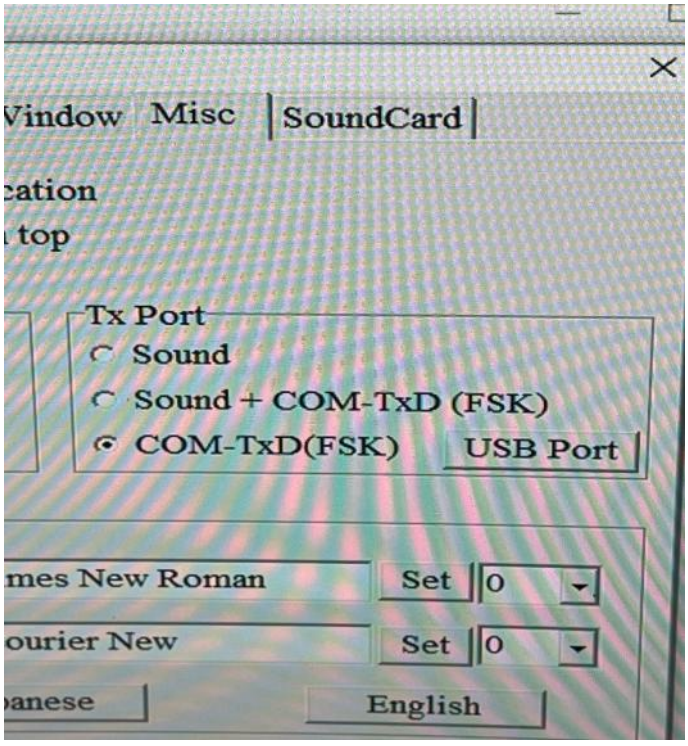
To my knowledge, the correct driver software is still not on the MORTTY website. I have it if you might need it.

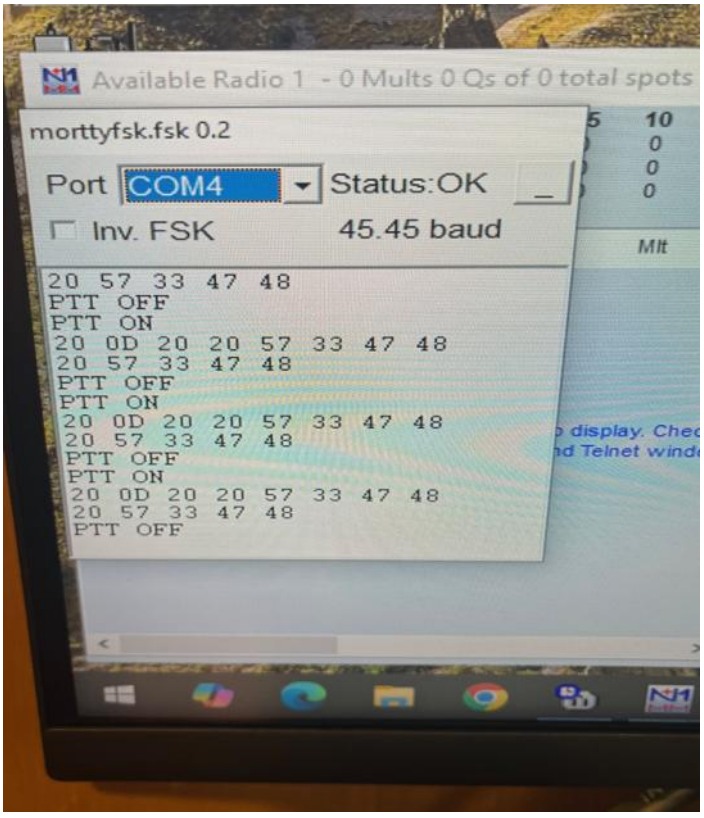
So there you have it. Nothin's easy. Not one damn thing.

de Cooky - WC3O
Skyview Radio Officer

-

Here is the N1MM+ Setup for MORTTY:





Why Do People Use QRP Power?

Jody – K3JZD

US Amateur Radio Operators can use up to 1500 Watts PEP on most HF Bands. 60 Meters is limited to 100/15 Watts and Novice and Technician Operators are limited to 200 Watts PEP on the HF Bands.

Most of the current HF radios are 100 watts PEP. A few are 200 Watts PEP.

What is QRP?

As a Q-Code, *"QRP?"* actually means "Shall I reduce transmitter power? And *"QRP"* actually means "Reduce the transmitter power". However, over time, QRP has also become a noun meaning using low power. Like: "I am running QRP".

QRP Power is generally defined as 10 Watts PEP on SSB and 5 Watts on CW.

For reference, 5 Watts of RF power is the energy required to light up a tiny 3-Volt incandescent flashlight bulb. Almost to full brilliance. It is not enough energy to burn out the filament in that tiny bulb.

While QRP SSB (and the Digital Modes that send tones over SSB) can be done, it is pretty tough sledding. It is hard to pull the intelligence out of low powered audio signals. With the QRP SSB signals that are often not very much above the ambient noise level, and may be fading in and out with the QSB, a lot of what you will hear is easily garbled.

Many who start out using QRP SSB will bite the bullet and learn CW. The ability to use CW is no longer a licensing requirement in the US. Now we learn CW 'for the fun of it'. Often to facilitate having more success while using QRP power.

The QRP CW signals are just as weak as the QRP SSB signals, and suffer from the effects of QSB just the same. But when listening to a weak CW signal, you are concentrating on hearing just one tone that is either on or off. CW signals are narrower, which allows you to set your receiver filters tighter. That will usually get rid of a lot of the ambient background noise and allow you to hear the CW tones better. It is safe to say that overall, QRP CW operators have more success than QRP SSB operators.

I use QRP CW, so the rest of this story will be focused on using QRP CW, not QRP SSB.

Caveat: Running QRP CW is not anything that I would ever recommend for a new ham. Many operators will not listen for nor answer a weak CQ. So, sitting there calling CQ or replying to a CQ while using 5 Watts QRP will typically be very disappointing. Being disappointed is not any way to get started with ham radio CW. So, if you are new, use 100 watts for now. Hold off on using QRP power until later on.

Back to Why Use QRP?

So, why do some people choose to use much less than the allowed power and less than what their present HF radio will produce?

Perhaps the greatest reason is that it is challenging. We are already challenging ourselves by communicating wirelessly. On the HF bands we try to overcome the peculiarities of the ever-varying propagation to communicate with other hams around the world. Doing it with 1500 watts is rewarding. Doing it with 200 or 100 watts is rewarding. Doing it with only 5 watts is very rewarding.

In my case, with any of my transmitters that produce a tiny 5-Watt QRP CW signal, that signal has to make through one or two of my 5-way Alpha Delta "Rig Selector Switches", my Power/Watt Meter, and my very mature generic 6-way "Antenna Selector Switch", and all of the interconnecting coax jumper cables in use.

Then once the signal leaves my Antenna Selector Switch it has to make it through around 75 feet or so of very mature coax cable before arriving at some antenna where it is finally radiated into to air. So, whenever I am being heard by some US station that is across the country, or by some DX station, and it results in a QSO, I sit back and say WOW!

Many CW QRP operators tend to participate in small contests or contest-like events. Birds of a feather flock together. They typically seek out QRP events where everyone else will also be listening for the smaller weaker

signals. There are various small QRP CW events that are held annually, quarterly, and monthly. There are even some that are held weekly. There are ample opportunities to test your radio and antennas while using QRP power. Here are some, but not all, of them: https://qrpcontest.com/

However, some QRPers will challenge themselves and will also use QRP power during the large worldwide events, where much higher power is the norm. Usually always chasing rather than trying to run a frequency, and with a lot of waiting in line.

Does It Work?

Yes. The 2025 PA QSO Party is a recent example. Four QRP stations were setup at a portable location in a stste park during the 2025 PA QSO Party. Temporary wire antennas were used. They were in the Portable Multi-Op QRP Power Class. They used the callsign W2G. Two stations used QRP CW. Two stations used QRP SSB. There were only four operators, so none of these four QRP stations were on the air full time.

When the results were published, W3G came in Third Overall In PA. Right up there with the big guns running Multi-Op High Power stations with better antennas. Running QRP during this event gets a 2x Multiplier. If W3G did not get that 2x QRP Multiplier, W3G still would have come in Tenth Overall in PA. Yes, QRP works.

	CW	PH	Total Q	CTY	SEC	DX	Total M	Score	category	
K3CT	1,125	1,541	2,666	67	82	1	150	570,250	**Multi Op** High Power	
AA3B	975	930	1,905	67	82	1	150	432,800	single Op High Power mixed	
W3G	**570**	**252**	**822**	**66**	**64**	**1**	**131**	**365,904**	**Portable Multi Op QRP Power**	Actual
W3GH	715	835	1,550	67	78	1	146	332,090	**Multi Op** High Power	
WQ3N	702	669	1,371	67	74	1	142	295,966	Portable **Multi Op** Low Power	
N3ZK	409	1,177	1,586	67	79	1	147	294,265	Portable **Multi Op** Low Power	
W3VPJ	765	423	1,188	67	77	1	145	283,785	single Op High Power mixed	
N3FR	601	284	885	65	63	1	129	192,094	single Op Low Power mixed	
N3GJ	529	401	930	67	62	1	130	190,470	Portable Single Op Low Power	
W3G	**570**	**252**	**822**	**66**	**64**	**1**	**131**	**183,552**	**Portable Multi Op QRP Power**	NO 2X
W3GV	582	196	778	67	64	1	132	180,120	**Multi Op** Low Power	
W3SO	361	0	361	54	51	1	106	153,664	**Multi Op** QRP Power	
W3SO	0	991	991	67	72	1	140	139,140	**Multi Op** High Power	

Compilation de Mike - AB1A

How Can I Do QRP?

Most of today's 100-200 watt HF radios will have an output power control. Having a radio where you can control the power makes it very easy to reduce your power output down to just 5 watts. Do that, and you can be running QRP power without making any further investment.

There are quite a few very small QRP power transceivers. Some as kits. Some as fully assembled and ready to use right out of the box. These small QRP power transceivers are relatively inexpensive. So, many QRP'ers end up with a collection of them.

Whenever you work someone out on the West coast, or snare some DX while using a very small QRP radio that you can stick in your pocket, you will feel the magic in this hobby. If you are powering your small QRP transceiver from a small battery, it becomes even more enchanting.

If you find yourself owning some small QRP transceiver that you are powering from a small battery, you might be on a path to exploring outdoor operating. Build a simple inexpensive wire antenna. Temporarily string up that wire antenna in your backyard and then try operating outdoors with your battery powered radio during some QRP event.

After achieving success with that, then you are ready to go out and have even more fun by operating at some Parks on the Air (POTA) or Summits on the Air (SOTA) location. During POTA or SOTA operations, you are being sought after. Typically, you will spot yourself, so everyone will be listening for your weak QRP signal on that frequency. You will be successful. And you will enjoy your accomplishment. Warning – it is habit forming.

Summary

So, I guess the answer to the "Why Use QRP?" question has many answers. Personal accomplishment and enjoyment may be at the top of the list. The satisfaction that you get by 'beating the odds' by making long distance QRP QSOs using only the energy needed to light up a small flashlight bulb. Being in a select group of hams who do QRP CW. Participating in the Annual, Quarterly, Monthly, Weekly QRP CW events.

Once you begin to recall a name and location from hearing a familiar callsign, you will begin to feel a camaraderie with these QRP folks from around the world. I always enjoy working Fred – DK1VD on 40m during the NAQCC QRP CW events.

And working QRP provides a path that can lead to getting outside and going someplace where you will enjoy making contacts with your small battery powered QRP radio and temporary antenna. I always enjoy working many of European regulars that I will work while using QRP CW from various SOTA sites.

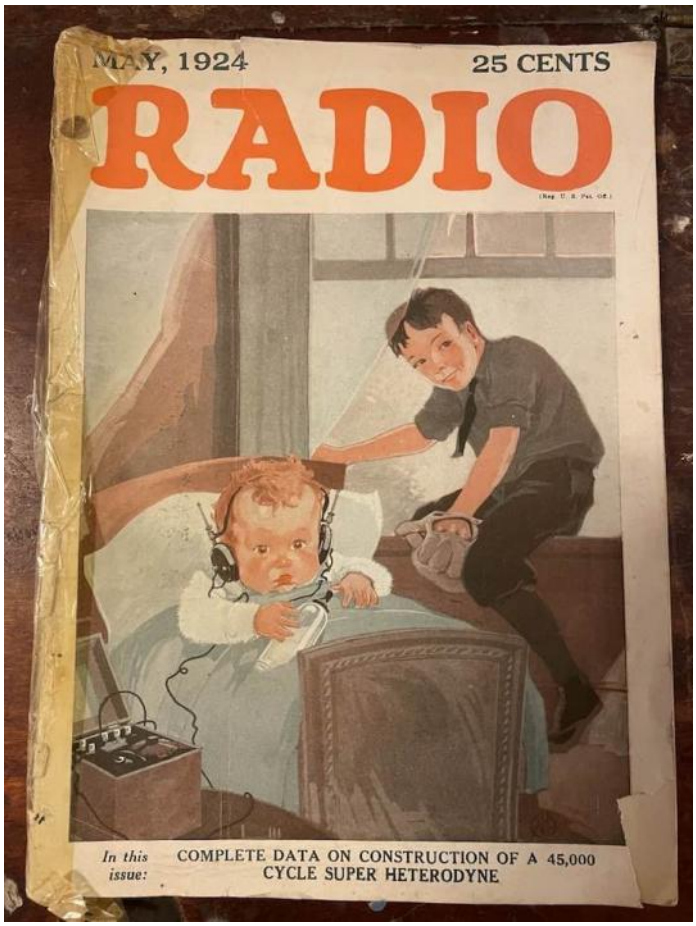
I have chased some of the DXpeditions using QRP power. I have usually managed to make a contact with most of the ones that I try. It is not going to work on the first day that they are out there. But within a few days, or during odd hours, it can work.

I think you have the idea by now. QRP operating is only one of the many possible ways to enjoy this hobby of ours. It is a path less travelled. But it is an interesting path that you might want to explore some time.

de Jody – K3JZD

QRP RADIO ??

(MAYBE SOMEDAY)



Ham Radio Operator uses coaxial cable he placed in his garage in 1976 just in case he needed it

Welcome New Members !!

Welcome the following Skyview Radio Society Members who have joined us since publishing the February 2026 newsletter:

KD3BXY - Jim Large — Pittsburgh 15217

N3KAC - Ted Zeigler — Pittsburgh 15205

Remember that something is going on up at 'the joint' every Tuesday. Sign up for the K3MJW Groups.io Reflector to get the latest news and event announcements by email.

If you are a reader who is interested in becoming a Skyview member, then go to: http://www.skyviewradio.net/ for information.

If you are a reader who is not yet a ham, and you are interested in becoming a ham, , then go to: http://www.skyviewradio.net/ for information.

Skyview Radio Society Roster as of 31 MAR 26

NM3A	AB3GY	AC3NA	KX3V
K3AEB	KC3GZW	KB3NSH	KC3VCX
KD3AET	NY9H	AJ3O	KC3VNB
N3AFS	WB3HFP	WC3O	K3VRU
KD3AMZ	WA3HGW	WO3O	N3VXT
KD3ANT	KB3HPC	KC3OCA	KC3VYK
KD3AQP	K3HSE	KC3OCB	W3VYK
NAØB	AK4HZ	K3OGN	N3WAV
N3BAH	AG3I	KB3OMB	W3WC
W3BRL	AC3IE	K4PDF	KC3WCJ
KD3BUF	KE3IF	KC3PIM	K3WM
W3BUW	KC3IIO	K2PMD	N3WMC
KD3BXY	AB3IK	KE3PO	N3WMI
KD3BYT	WB3INB	W3PRL	KA3WVU
KF3C	W3IU	KC3PSQ	K3WWP
KA3CBA	KU3J	KC3PXQ	N3XF
KC3CBQ	K3JAS	AC3Q	W3XOX
K2CI	WB3JHC	NU3Q	KC3YEZ
K3CLT	N3JLR	KC3QAA	N3YJN
WB6CQA	KA3JOU	N3QZU	KC3YMC
N5DB	ND9JR	NJ3R	W3YNI
K3DCG	K3JZD	K3RMB	W3YS
N3DL	N3KAC	W3RRK	KB3YT
N3DRB	WA3KFS	I2RTF	KE3Z
KB3DVD	AC3KI	KI2RTF	K3ZAU
KC2EGL	ACØKK	K3RWN	KB3ZFC
KC3EJC	K3KR	KQ3S	KC3ZOH
KA3EKO	KC3KXZ	K3SBE	W3ZVX
AB3ER	WE3L	WA3SCM	
WA3ERT	WA3LCY	KC3SDJ	
N3ERW	AC3LD	KC3SNZ	
K3ES	KC3LHW	KB3SOU	
KG3F	WB5LLI	K3STL	
WB3FAE	KB3LND	KC3STV	
K3FAZ	K3LR	W3SW	
KC3FEI	KC3LRT	N3TIN	
K3FH	AB3LS	W3TLN	
K3FKI	KC2LVG	KK3TM	
KC3FWD	KB3LYA	N3TTE	
NG3G	N2MA	KC3TTK	
AC3GB	KC3MBM	AA3TZ	
N2GBR	KC3MIQ	AG3U	
AC3GE	K3MJ	NS3U	
K3GIR	W1MP	WU3U	
KB3GKX	K3MRN	KB3UIO	
KC3GPM	N3MRU	KC3UNP	
K3GT	KS3N	W3UY	

Notes: Only Call Signs are being published. Refer to QRZ.COM for more information. (Unable to publish those without Call Signs.)

Kul - Links

Jody - K3JZD

There is lots of stuff out on the Internet… Some of it can brighten your day. Some of it can educate you.

I can't really copy and past it all in here.
But, I can point you to some of it . . . . .

— — **Nothing This Month** — —

I'll consider any Kul - Links that you find.
Email then to me at: K3JZD AT ARRL DOT NET
They might just end up in the next issue

Previous Issues

Previous Issues of the Q5er are available at

http://www.nelis.net

Next Newsletter will be June 1, 2026
Closing Date For Submissions : May15, 2026
K3JZD AT ARRL DOT NET

Become Well Known Publish in the Q5er

The Q5er goes to other clubs and is available to all on our web site.

Submissions to : K3JZD AT ARRL DOT NET

>>>>>> WARNING <<<<<<

An Alarm System has been installed up at the joint. Do Not go in there on your own until you learn how to disarm and rearm it.

**** Skyview VE Testing ****

For Testing Dates, See :
http://www.arrl.org/find-an-amateur-radio-license-exam-session
Time: Usually 8:15 AM

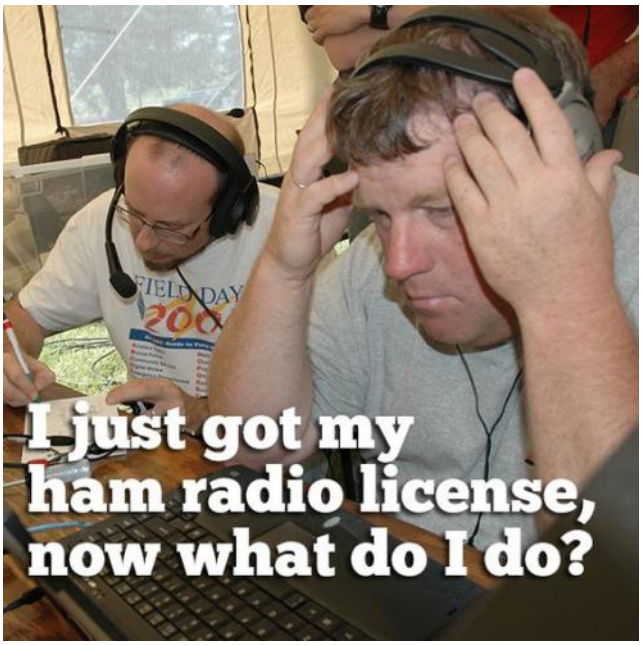
Location: Skyview Clubhouse Meeting Room
2335 Turkey Ridge Rd
New Kensington PA 15068-1936

Contact: Bill Dillen - N3WMC
(724) 882-9612
Email: bdillen@comcast.net
http://www.skyviewradio.net/ve-tests/

Please E-Mail or call to register!!!
– NO WALK INS—MUST REGISTER –

Q5er Editor & Publisher: Jody Nelis - K3JZD

email your comments and article submissions to: **K3JZD AT ARRL DOT NET**



That's Easy . . . .

Come up to the Skyview Clubhouse on any Tuesday and ask !!!

And See : https://tinyurl.com/y79tqsr8

All General Information about the Skyview Radio Society is at http://www.skyviewradio.net

Subscribe to K3MJW **groups.io** reflector for All Current News & Activities : https://groups.io/g/K3MJW
If you want to keep up with what is going on NOW, that is the place - have it forward msgs to your email

Is this how your dining room looks ??

Send in pictures of your Ham Shack