Bacon Bits

Flying Pigs QRP Club International, W8PIG

1900 Pittsfield St, Kettering, Ohio 45420

E-mail: w8pig@yahoo.com Web Page: http://www.fpqrp.com

FPQRP membership is open to all licensed QRP operators who reside within 12,000 nautical miles of Cincinnati, Ohio.

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NETS:			
DAY	TIME	FREQ	NCI
Sun	0100Z	7.137	KC8NYW
Mon	0100Z	7.044	WB8ICN
Thurs	0100Z	7.044	KE1LA

(All days/times listed are UTC)

CLUB FREQS.	
1,814 kHz	3,564 kHz
7,044 kHz	10,110 kHz
14,062 kHz	18,100 kHz
21,064 kHz	24,910 kHz
28,064 kHz	

ALL FPqrp frequencies are UP 4 kHz
from the standard qrp frequencies
except for 20 meters.

Jim W0EB – Blows them away with QRP at the Hutchinson Kansas Hamfest

In this issue:

Ramblings

Wow gang, what a month. My dad had to have open heart surgery about two weeks ago and my youngest son has run off and joined the United States Marine Corps. I have been on the air very little lately but I am anxiously awaiting the first ever Flying Pig "Run for the Bacon" sprint. Read on for more details.

Once again, I would like to say thanks to everyone that has submitted articles this month. I can't write this stuff all by myself.

Our resident Cajun Piggie is once again a welcome feature. Don't miss it!

73 de KB9BVN

RUN FOR THE BACON SPRINT!!

The first ever Flying Pig QRP Club International "Run for the Bacon" sprint will be held 00:00Z on August 4th and will run until 02:00Z

For most of us in the USA this means Sunday Aug 3rd in the evening. Don't miss out!!

For all the details, visit the website listed below.

http://www.fpqrp.com/fpqrprun.html

W0EB Wows them in Kansas

Hi Piggies,

There was a small hamfest/swapfest yesterday in Hutchinson, Kansas, about 40 miles Northwest of the Wichita area (where I live). I decided to take the MFJ-9040 and my "Crappie Pole" antenna support with me. After I got there and looked over the flea market, I announced that there would be a "CW QRP" demo under the shade trees in the parking lot. Was surprised, but got a lot of the newer hams out to watch the setup etc. The older guys started laughing and jeering about how QRP was for idiots etc. It's a sad day when the old timers don't even know how to copy CW anymore.

I set up the PVC support (designed by Lew Pacely, N5ZE and featured on his website www.pacely.com) and hung a NORCAL "Halfer" half wave end fed wire as a sloper with the high end 25 feet in the air. Hooked it and a 33 foot counterpoise wire to the NORCAL BLT tuner, got out the 9040, keyer and my big 12 amp hour gel cell. Put the rig on a TV Dinner table I use for portable, and sat down in my canvas folding chair and fired everything up. I set the rig to about 7.040 and quickly adjusted the tuner till

the led went out. After tuning around a little, I heard Tom, K5IRH from near Shreveport, LA calling CW down near the lower end of the band. I gave him a 1 x 2 call, amidst the jeers of the aforementioned oldtimers telling me that he'd never hear the 4 watt signal on 40 in the QRN.

All jeering stopped and mouths dropped to the ground when Tom answered my call and gave me a 449/QRN report. We carried on a QSO for over 5 minutes even with the QRN and a few repeats on my part to make sure he got "Name, QTH and Report" He was suffering from lightening crashes due to the tropical storm/hurricane in the gulf, and still pulled me out.
After the demo was over, five of the newer hams went back in to the flea market area, and within ten minutes, there wasn't a hand key or paddle key left on the tables and the old Ameco code tapes were gone too. Not to brag, but "I done my part", and there are at least a few more new hams studying the code.

The old guys, almost to a man, came up and apologized for the earlier catcalls, and went away with more respect for QRP and CW. I was too busy operating to take pix of the setup, but several friends had digital cameras, and I'll post pix on my website at http://members.cox.net/w0eb as soon as they email them to me.

Jim, W0EB

Proud Piggie #616
Wichita, KS

[ED Note: Jim is a REAL QRP Evangelist!!]

KE1LA – Still Misplaced

High Y'all

Yea Margarette it's me again... yea still lost in Maine.. Did I tell u about my building projects? Funny things, electronic parts... take for instance resistors... I built this kit and put all them resistors in backwards... ah puts them little color rings the opposite they showed in the book.... and nuthin happened... project worked just fine....

Well on the next project ah decided to put the capacitors backwards.... kind of a mixed result....

some, what had the + - marked at the ends blew up, some smoked and sum just sat thair...had to replace most of them capicators before the project would work....

Ah tried reversing them diode things in the power supply but the caps kept blowing along with the diodes so ah reversed the caps also.... other things burnt... so ah don't reverse diodes any more...
Ah tried reversing a power transistor once... u kneaux ah figure they must solder that top cap over them transistors cause as soon as the solder melted, the top cap flew across the room... and smoke! Man like u never saw the likes....

Now me and the xyl gots one of the kits what got the teeny weeny parts... ah yes the rocket miter.... gonna geaux got some magnifying glasses for this project... how come dem engineeries types wait till ur eyes geaux then use all this small stuffs?
It bees another day and ah gots a nutter mind set... and a bum back...got sumthin what an't in the right place, no martha, mah haid is screwed on right...women.... geeezzzzzzzeeeeee
Ban looking at that Moxon antenna and reading up what ah can get mah hands on...cute little antenna, gots lots of curves on it like a good looking cajun gal... Hope to put one up soon,,, soon as ah can stand up straight again and walk even...

Dang computer just went phoey and ah lost the next several paragraphs... sry... gotta learn to save meaux often...

Like ah said, but u don't kneaux that, that Lobster con thing was different from the FDIM thing, HOWEVER it was fun and informative... got to even operate a k1 on thirty meters ....even some dx.... that salt water around us musta ban helping out... cause averybody was either makin contacts, dx included or lying about it all... it was facinating to see the little 4ah batteries and them little qrp rigs pullin in the signals... downright amazing...

Things went smooth too... whoever what done the work to got this thing together done it right... FDIM, LOBSTERCON.... MAKE EM iffin u can... u gonna come home the better for it...

Oh, inspired by Lobstercon, ah done started to put together a portable station to take to such things....

got the K2 on top the mfj tuner with the battery on side of the radio.... looking good so far... regret not getten a tenna tuner in the K2... sure save space and make life easier....

Ah just picked up the package with the rockmite-30 in it,,, me and the xyl got one of them u kneaux... thank u brother Dave... U kneaux he done gave each one what went to lobstercon one of them... for free...ah would say meaux and brag on Dave some... however...he bees the quiet type and would probably got his self offended... Lets just say he sawed a good thing to do for qrp and he done it... we all thanks u Dave....

Now u take that arrl guy, oh what's his name, Ed sumthing or other... well, he sent some fine pieces of equipment for averyone to grab whatever they wanted and not pay a thing for it either.... lots of good caps thair... thanks Ed .... & ARRL....
Guess ah might join the arrl again, however ah saving mah monies now so ah can renew my licence... incentive re-licensing.... Another sun set in the west up heah, well meaux or less west... and ah write a bit meaux later... oh, yea the week late field day.... wow...

KE1LA JOEL
IN MAINE
FREEZIN

Breaking the Microsoft Habit – KD5KXF

For some reason, QRP'ers all seem to have computers and a huge majority enjoy internet access. The average computer user of our age tends to use the computer as an internet appliance and usually has some applications they run and the various assortments of toys. The vast majority of you are running some version of Windows on your system and paying for your software.

There is an alternative, and any of you paying attention to the QRP-L list will notice that there have been many messages on Linux as of late. Linux is actually an abbreviation for the real title GNU/Linux. Linux itself is just a base kernel that is overseen by Linus Torvalds and is basically a disk operating system. When most users refer to Linux they are actually referring to a entire distribution of program packages that are included in a distribution of Linux.

There are many various distributions and the users of each will debate the merits of each with the same ferocity that the code/no code debators have.   Each distribution has various merits and some differences in how they setup the system. Most of them have the same software packages. In the beginning days of Linux most users were UNIX people and because of that fact, Linux has carried a stigma of being a difficult operating system to work with. Nothing could be further from the truth in 2003. There is a learning curve involved with using Linux but it is no steeper than the one associated with Windows. Why would anyone want to switch operating systems on their computer?

Well, in word I will sum it up... FREE! Linux is open source software and the vast majority of the software you can run with it is FREE! Like free beer...   I hear some of you grumbling saying yeah it is like free beer but you have to have a different bottle opener for it! I am writing this to hopefully break some of those stigmas and tell you about my experiences with Linux and the good and bad I have found with it.

Last summer there was the usual slew of new virus email attachments making their rounds and I got an attachment from someone I knew and was expecting an attachment from. The next thing you know, my system was infected and it was to the point I couldn't even reformat the drive and reinstall windows. I was sick of the virus of the week club anyway and I just unplugged and dropped out. I didn't touch a computer at home for several months. I use a computer at work everyday and said to myself, "I don't need a computer at home ". I had to use some Linux app's in my job, but had always accessed them via a windows 2000 machine from the network. I got curious... I poked around a bit and soon borrowed a set of Red Hat 8.0 install disks and installed them on my home machine. I wasn't sure what software came with a distribution or if I could even make heads or tails of installing. I was amazed when a graphical install came up and was given options galore of either letting the installer handle things automatically or having control in the process. The installer got to the part where you choose what software packages you want to include and I was dumbfounded. Office software packages, games, software development packages, client and server packages, the list went on and on. I installed them

ALL! I discovered that like UNIX, the GUI's were all running on top of X. What I was not prepared for was the quality of those GUI's and how I could go from point and clicking in windows to pointing and clicking in Linux. I had always heard you have to know all of these parameters about your hardware before you could install Linux and that you had to know how to use the command line prompt... It just was not true. My hardware was auto-detected, even my printer. The office package would allow me to save items as Word documents so what work I did at the house could be used at the office. I also found I could open Excel spreadsheets and manipulate them with the Open Office system. (they have recently ported this free software package to Windows for those of us who are stuck with it at work and love the Open Office Package)

In a nutshell, I was hooked. I started checking to see what ham software was out there. Could I run my Warbler on PSK with Linux? Sure, no problem and more than one flavor to choose from. The only hardware issue that was difficult was configuring my PC Tel winmodem to work in Linux. That problem was the beginning of another discovery... The Linux How To and Mini How To's. They were installed right on my system and there were a heck of a lot of them. I learned a lot making that modem work and then discovered the internet tools on Linux. It is all there, browsers, email programs, irc chat, instant messaging. I began digging deeper into Linux with free tutorials and learning that there was even more power than I first realized.

Linux is a multiuser environment that grew up on the internet and was built to network. Linux also would run on a less than optimum system or a multiprocessor server. I can't even begin to tell you how much there is in the Linux world. If you like UNIX there is even FreeBSD, OpenBSD and others that are FREE!

The distributions are amazing, imagine buying a Windows operating system that included every office suite Microsoft offered, all of their games, and their NT package for under $100 and being able to put it on as many machines as you wanted to, share it with the neighbors, take it to ham meetings, burn copies for friends.   Linux has changed the way I look at software and I support the Open Source Software and Freeware folks. I have several machines now, built

from things my company was going to throw out in upgrades and have numerous distributions. My favorite distro right now is Slackware 9.0. But who knows, it may be something else tomorrow. There is a whole FREE world out there for your computer, just take a look and see. Give it a try, you don't even have to lose windows... you can run a bootloader and keep windows and still have linux. Redhat and SUSE will set it up automatically for you. And really, when you think about it... Hams share technology with each other freely and openly. Why should your computer software and operating system be any different?

Anyone interested in learning more about Linux should get on www.google.com and read the Linux FAQ. I am glad I found it and kicked the Microsoft habit.

Great Filter Review – W0EB

First of all, I just re-kindled my love of QRP CW operating a couple of months ago after reading an article on Small Wonder Labs' Rock Mite transceiver in QST. One look, and I hit SWL's website for a closer look.

It wasn't 5 minutes after seeing the price, etc., that I had one on order. After I had it built and operating, I was plagued by SEVERE AM broadcast interference. It turns out that I live less than a mile from the antenna farm belonging to the most powerful AM station in Wichita, not to mention that their directional pattern has a major lobe crossing right over me.

The Rock Mite, having a direct conversion receiver, is very succeptible to this kind of problem, and I went looking for a solution. I had seen the QRPp-I website and it had a highlighted "kits and parts" item as well as crystals available for sale, so I clicked on it to see what was available.

The first item up was a little $8.00 kit purported to be a 5 pole chebychev high-pass filter to reduce or eliminate BCB interference in QRP rigs. I figured, "What the heck, I can't do more than lose eight bucks, so I punched up the "Pay Pal" button and ordered one. I waited and waited and waited, and after a couple of weeks and several unanswered

emails to KA8MAV, I spotted a post on several of the reflectors indicating that he had a major computer crash and had lost all order info dating back several weeks. I forwarded a copy of the Pay Pal receipt, and not only did he send the kit by priority mail, he threw in his little 5 watt dummy load kit in consolation.

I was getting ready to build it in an "Altoids" tin when a friend handed me a much smaller, hinged lid, tin that had contained "Xtreme" mints. This was just the perfect size for such a filter, (see photos) and I headed to the local surplus electronics dealer here in Wichita to find some BNC connectors. I found a single hole chassis mount BNC male. for less than 2 bucks, so bought a bunch of 'em along with the usual single hole mount females. I carefully drilled the 3/8 inch holes in each end of the tin, and mounted the connectors. Next, I got out my Adel nibbling tool and carefully notched the lid to clear the connectors when closed. Using the case for ground, I constructed the filter freestyle between the connectors.

I was quite pleased with the results both aesthetically and electronically. I hooked up the 20 meter Rock Mite to the Cushcraft A3S tri-bander, and yup,

there was the AM station LOUD and clear, by far overriding the couple of CW signals on 14.060. I put the filter in line, and wiii-giii, no more broadcast interference. The cutoff frequency is just below 80 meters, so it would have to be re-designed with a cutoff just below 160 meters if one wanted to use it with an FT-817 or some such rig that covers 160.

All-in all, it was worth the eight bucks and the wait.

The QRPp-I website is at http://www.qrpp-i.com

Jim Sheldon, W0EB
FP#-616
Wichita, Kansas

Lightning Detector – N4VBV

I recently received my new "STRIKEALERT" lightning detector from Provantage.com. It arrived in 2-3 days from ordering via UPS Ground. Ordered online, they gave great service.

Now the detector - First saw it at a SKYWARN refresher class where the NWS instructor had a personal unit he checked frequently. He did pass out the web site where he ordered his (provantage.com, approx. $49.95) as one source. Next day I checked Google and some places had them for up to $99.95 for the same unit.

The unit is the size of a small pager with belt clip and uses one AA battery. It has a row of LEDs across the top labeled "24-40", "12-24", "6-12", and "0-6" along with a green "PWR" light. The two farthest range LEDs are yellow and the two closest ranges are red. The power switch switch can be pressed inboard for another function. It can be set (via slide switch) for silent (lights only) or to beep, as well as "OFF".

When turned on, the unit performs a battery test, lighting up the LEDs from red to green, stopping at an LED that indicates approximate battery condition, then goes on to normal operation. When it detects a lightning strike, it lights an estimated range LED and beeps according to the lit LED (unless "silent" is selected, in which case only the appropriate LED will illuminate). As the appropriate LED lights, the unit beeps corresponding to one of the ranges listed above (one beep for the farthest range, increasing to four beeps at the closest range).

The LED will stay illuminated for two minutes after the strike. If another strike farther away occurs, the farther range LED will light (with corresponding number of beeps) for two seconds, then the display will revert to the closest strike LED that was originally illuminated (unless the two minutes have expired). If the succeeding strike is closer, then the closer LED will stay illuminated for the two minutes, indicating the closest strike.

If the "PWR" slide switch is pressed towards the center of the unit, the LEDs will flash to indicate storm movement. If they flash from green to red the storm is approaching, and indicate storm movement away by flashing red to green. If the unit determines the storm is stationary, the LEDs will flash from the center out to each end at the same time. This also indicates the unit can't determine movement due to insufficient information (not enough strikes to determine movement).

The "PWR" light also functions as an interference indicator. If the green light is flashing the unit is detecting interference. The manual indicates that computer monitors, etc. may cause interference, just move the unit a few feet away. The manual also mentions that it may miss some strikes if the storm is very close, but by then a storm is pretty obvious. In my 2000 Ford Explorer the turn signals (probably the signal relay) and brake lights will cause the unit to indicate close storms. My FT-8100 on 50W VHF will not trigger the unit, but 5W UHF does. It will not trigger next to my HW-9/longwire setup even sitting next to the rig (at least on 40m when I was testing by using two wires for a key). You can guess what the Bug Zapper does to it.

So how does it work? Great for what I bought it for. I spend quite a bit of time outdoors with my 3 yr old daughter fishing, horseback riding, flying (haven't tried it in a plane), and generally exploring, so it's an added safety net. Here in South Carolina the storms blow in quick or build quickly, and are sometimes hard to see due to haze/tall trees until you hear lots of thunder. The Strikealert gives a little more warning. Also a good reminder around the house to ensure antennas are disconnected.

The approaching/departing feature corresponds pretty good with the weather channel. I did use the

five second rule (between flashes and thunder) to check the closer ranges, and it worked fine, indicated the correct ranges. I really like leaving it on the "beep" setting to indicate a storm, especially on the hot, humid afternoons here in the South.

One case in point - As a few of us were leaving work last Friday, a golfer friend was interested in the Strikealert, so I was giving a demo. It started beeping, indicating an approaching storm. I thought it was just my NOMEX flight suit (the manual does mention that static-prone clothing may trigger it). So we had a laugh and he thought I had gotten taken, as I was starting to wonder myself as the sky we could see was clear with only a few clouds. Forgot all about it until a half hour later when I walked out of a store and the sky was VERY black (had left the unit in the truck). Ten minutes later the rain and hail had visibilities to a couple hundred feet and the lightning was very intense. I think I'll keep my Strikealert.

QRP applications: Field work, antenna reminder during storm season, camping, other outdoor (non-ham) activities like fishing, boating, etc.

Where to get it: a Google search is always good, but I bought mine from Provantage.com for $49.95 plus $5 UPS. Other places had them up to $99.95. More Strikealert details can be found on the web at " strikealert.com ".

No financial connections with Strikealert.

Mike, N4VBV

WAP Contest Update

Currently we have 44 Flying Pigs that have posted their ongoing results to the website. (http://www.fpqrp.com)

As of 07/30/2003
Rank, QSO #, Callsign
==================

1 81 K3ESE	2 56 K4FB
3 55 AF4PS	4 52 W8DIZ
5 48 KG4FSN	6 48 N0JRN
7 34 AC5JH	8 33 KB9BVN
9 28 AJ4AY	10 26 WB8ABE
11 25 KC8AON	12 22 N7MFB
13 20 K9DI	14 19 NN1F
15 19 WN4M	16 17 W9FCC
17 16 K8FP	18 14 N8IE
19 13 KI8JM	20 13 WB0WAO
21 12 KC4URI	22 10 VE3VG
23 10 W0EB	24 9 KB5ELV
25 8 W0CH	26 8 W0JRM
27 7 W7ILW	28 6 VE3CRM
29 6 VE3FAL	30 6 WU9F
31 5 K6MMC	32 5 K8PZ
33 5 KG0TW	34 5 KJ0C
35 4 KG4LDY	36 4 WR5O
37 3 AG4NY	38 3 KC5GXL
39 3 W9HL	40 3 WB6JBM
41 3 WB8YYY	42 2 W8KEB
43 1 K8ZT	44 1 WV9N

Remember piggies, we have fabulous prizes on the line!

August QRP Contests – TNX to Ken N2CQ

N2CQ QRP CONTEST CALENDAR
August 2003

Summer FOX Hunt - Sundays through August 10 2200-2330Z
Info: http://www.cqc.org
Truffle Hunt 30 min before Fox hunt.
http://fpqrp.com/pighunt2.html
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Ten-Ten SSB Contest ... QRP Category
Aug 2 - 0000z to Aug 3 - 2400z
Rules: http://www.ten-ten.org/
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TARA "Grid Dip" Contest (PSK/RTTY) ... QRP Category
Aug 2 - 0000z to 2400z
Rules: http://www.n2ty.org/seasons/tara_grid_rules.html
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North American QSO Party (CW) ... <100W. (/QRP noted on entry)
Aug 2 - 1800z to Aug 3 - 0600z
Rules: http://www.ncjweb.com/naqprules.php
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RUN FOR THE BACON (CW/SSB/PSK) *** QRP CONTEST! ***
Aug 4 - 0000z to 0200z
http://fpqrp.com/fpqrprun.html
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Adventure Radio Spartan Sprint (CW)
Aug 5 - 0100z to 0300z (Monday Evenings US/Can local time)
Rules: http://www.arsqrp.com/
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Worked All Europe DX Contest (CW) ... <100W category
Aug 9 - 0000z to Aug 10 - 2400z
Rules: http://www.sk3bg.se/contest/waedxc.htm
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Maryland/DC QSO Party (SSB/CW) ... QRP Category
Aug 09 - 1600z to Aug 10 - 0400z
Aug 10 - 1600z to Aug 10 - 2359z
Rules: http://www.w3cwc.org
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North American QSO Party (SSB) ... <100W. (/QRP noted on entry)
Aug 16 - 1800z to Aug 17 - 0600z
Rules: http://www.ncjweb.com/naqprules.php
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NJ QSO Party (CW/SSB)
Aug 16 - 2000z to Aug 17 - 0700z
Aug 17 - 1300z to Aug 18 - 0200z
Rules: http://www.qsl.net/w2rj/
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Hawaii QSO Party (CW/SSB/Digital) ... QRP Category
Aug 23 - 0700z to Aug 24 - 2200z
Rules: http://www.karc.us/hi_qso_party.html
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TOEC WW Grid Contest (CW) ... <100W category
Aug 23 - 1200z to Aug 24 - 1200z
Rules: http://www.qsl.net/toec/contest.htm
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Ohio QSO Party (CW/SSB) ... QRP Category
Aug 23 - 1600z to Aug 24 - 0400z
Rules: http://www.mrrc.net/oqp
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BUBBA Summer QRP Sprint *** QRP CONTEST! ***
Aug 23 - 1800z to 2200z
Rules: http://www.extremezone.com/~nk7m/
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Colorado QRP Club - Summer QSO Party (SSB/CW) *** QRP CONTEST! ***
Aug 24 - 1800z to 2359z
Rules: http://www.cqc.org/contests/
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YO DX HF Contest (CW/SSB)
Aug 30 - 1200z to Aug 31 - 1200z
Rules: http://www.hamradio.ro/contests/yodx_eng.htm
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SLOVENIA CONTEST CLUB RTTY Championship .. 100W Category
Aug 30 - 1200z to Aug 31 - 1159z
Rules: http://lea.hamradio.si/~scc/rtty/htmlrules.htm
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Thanks to SM3CER, WA7BNM, N0AX(ARRL), WB3AAL and others for assistance in compiling this calendar.

Please foreward the contest info you sponsor to N2CQ@ARRL.NET and we will post it and give it more publicity. Anyone may use this "N2CQ QRP Contest Calendar" for your website, newsletter, e-mail list or other media as you choose

72 de
Ken Newman - N2CQ
N2CQ@ARRL.NET

http://www.amqrp.org/contesting/contesting.html
http://www.njqrp.org/data/contesting.html
http://www.n3epa.org/Pages/Contest/contest.htm
http://www.qsl.net/cqrp/contests.html

About the Flying Pigs QRP Club International

OUR MISSION:
1: Have Fun.
2: No rules.
3: Have a group of Friendly Hams who enjoy Amateur Radio, and sharing their skills with their fellow Hams.

CLUB EMAIL POLICY:
These are not rules, just common sense.
Club email is not moderated, as we are not a stuffy group. You can send off topic messages about most subjects, but please keep it clean and in good taste. We do like good-natured ribbing and joking with each other, but we will not tolerate flaming other members or spamming the group.
We will remove offenders who abuse our open policy.

CLUB WEB PAGE:
The club web page is our forum for sharing projects, and information about us. You are encouraged to submit your ideas and projects to be added to the web page.

PROBLEM REPORTING:
If you are having problems with email, the web page, or a fellow club member, please report this to either:
Diz, W8DIZ at w8diz@cinci.rr.com
Rick, WB6JBM at ripowell@mpna.com
Dan, N8IE at n8ie@who.rr.com
We welcome all to join the Flying Pigs QRP Club, and we hope you have fun! Ω