

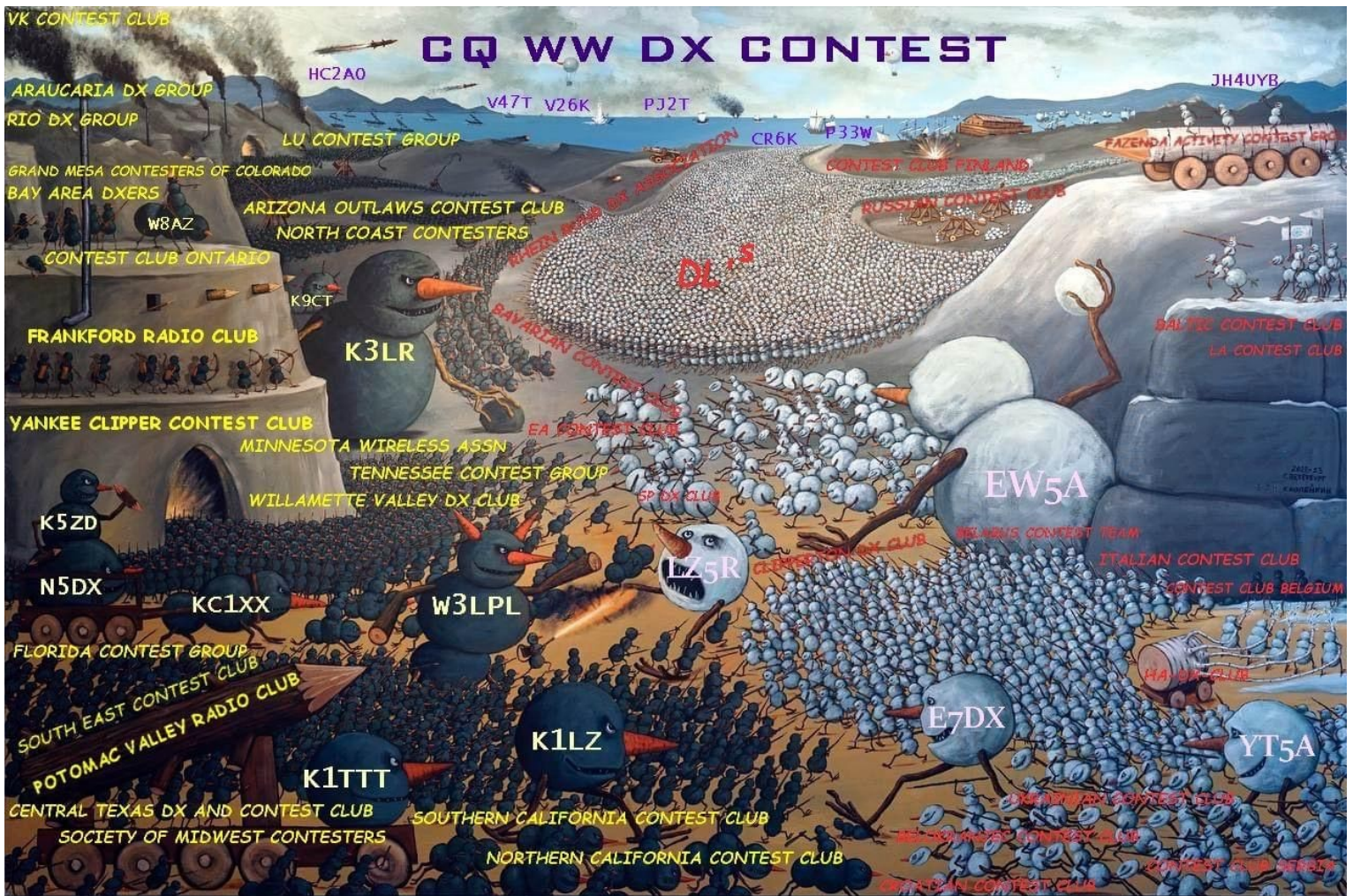
TENNESSEE CONTEST GROUP

Where Radio is a Contact Sport



News and Events — December 2023

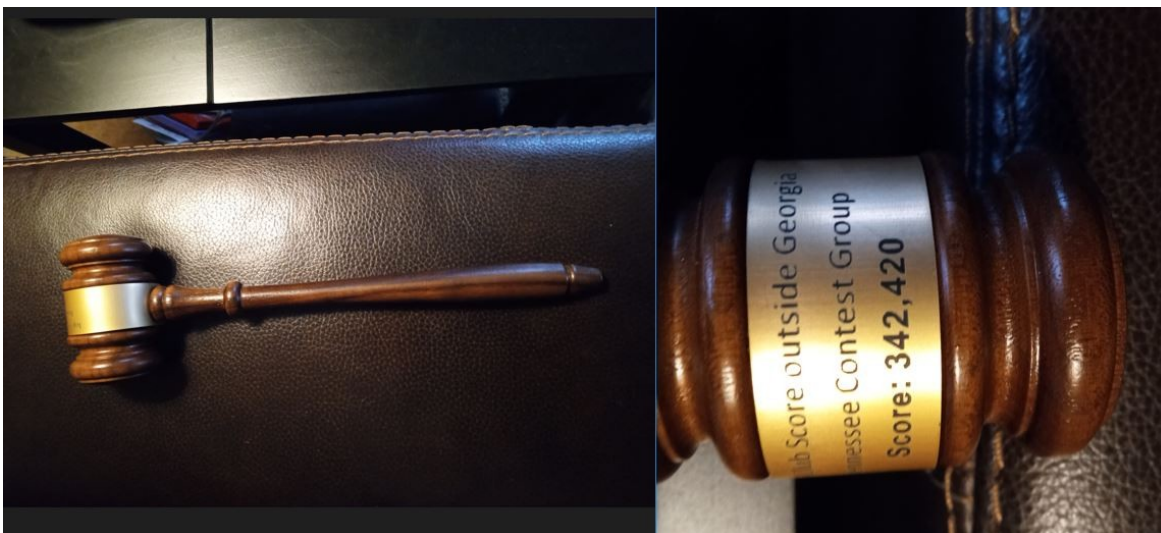
Welcome to the middle of major contesting season, and season's greetings to all TCG members far and wide. It's been quite a month for contesting in TCG. With the solar flux at levels not seen for a decade, the high bands have been jumping with activity, and TCG is generating tens of thousands of QSOs per month. As this newsletter is being typed, the ARRL 160 contest has just ended, and the ARRL Ten Meter contest is just about to begin. It's contest time! Be sure to explore 3830scores.com to see your fellow TCG operators working the bands in grand fashion. Graphic below courtesy of EW5A.



GEORGIA QSO PARTY

Congratulations to TCG for a club win the Georgia QSO Party. Per TCG convention, the gavel will go to AD4EB, who along with AC6ZM, generated an incredible score, amassing close to 3000 QSOs in 20 hours during the party. Boggles the mind to even type those numbers. This was also their very first mobile outing together as a team. Way to go Jim and Juan, and thanks for making TCG look good. You can read about their adventure at Jim's 3830 score post:

<https://3830scores.com/showrumor.php?arg=NdaBzbyfgcqa8>



TENNESSEE QSO PARTY

TCG recently conducted a couple of surveys in an attempt to determine how the membership felt about potential changes to the TN QSO Party. Note that these were surveys only, and were not official votes on TQP rules or scoring changes. TN QSO Party Chairman W0AG is carefully considering any possible changes, with an emphasis on *not* "fixing" anything that isn't broken. Mike is also joined now by AD4EB and WF7T. Mike, Jim and Brad constitute an an informal sub-committee to guide the TN QSO Party into the future. TQP is in good hands, and we are grateful for their support. Below is a summary of the informal survey results.

Rover Category

1. YES - Add a rover category to the TQP (39 votes, 90.7%)
2. NO - Do NOT add a rover category to the TQP (4 votes, 9.3%)

County Line QSOs

1. YES - Allow county line contacts (37 votes, 86.0%)
2. NO - Do NOT allow county line contacts (6 votes, 14.0%)

VHF/UHF

1. YES - Continue including VHF/UHF bands in the TQP (17 votes, 39.5%%)
2. NO - Drop VHF/UHF bands from the TQP (26 votes, 60.5%%)

Digital modes

1. YES - Include digital modes in the TQP (15 votes, 34.9%%)
2. NO - Make the TQP a strictly CW/SSB event (28 votes, 65.1%%)

Remember, this was simply a survey, and does not reflect any planned TQP rule changes.

TCG CALL HISTORY FILE

N9TF took it upon himself to create a TCG call history file for use with logging programs:

I was looking on the TCG web site for a TCG call history file and could not find one. I still struggle to remember everyone's name in the heat of a contest. So, today I modified an old general call history file that I had for my own use. Then I thought, "why not share it with y'all?" Some of you probably have already made your own, some may not have one. I've attached the file to this email. This is just a TCG members call history pulled from the latest roster on line. This will make things so much easier for me at least, to see when I'm working a TCG member, who it is, and I can give a quick acknowledgment.

73 Gene, N9TF

[Ed. Thanks for taking the time to do this Gene!]

TCG DECEMBER ZOOM SESSION

Please mark your calendars for the next TCG Zoom session, scheduled for Thursday December 14 at 7:00 PM Central time. That's 8:00 PM Eastern time.

This month's session will be an open net discussion of the recent contests since our last Zoom session: SS SSB, CQWW CW, ARRL 160 and the ARRL Ten Meter contests. Let's recap what we learned over the last month on the air... what worked, what didn't work, surprise openings, and so forth. I'm sure that everyone has a story from the pileup trenches.

Stay tuned for more details on how to join the session. Until then, please mark your calendars for Thursday evening, December 14. We hope that you will join us for some fun contesting discussion.

TCG DUES RENEWAL REMINDER

TCG members will soon receive a dues renewal notice from the Ham Club Online system. The easiest and most efficient way to renew your membership dues is use the PayPal link provided. Other methods include sending a check to our treasurer, K0EJ, or sending dues directly to the TCG PayPal address, available directly from K0EJ. It takes considerable time to keep up with the edge cases. We appreciate our members paying dues promptly, thus keeping your TCG membership current.

HOW IT ALL STARTED – Billy Cox, AA4NU

While living in Germany in 1963 (I am an Army dependent) my father gave me a small radio to listen to. I used it so much he had to teach me how to wire 6 x 1.5-volt D cells which lasted much longer. We lived in third floor base quarters and I listened for English-speaking stations I could hear as I was in kindergarten at the time. (And yes, I still have the radio!). I was SWLing when Kennedy was shot and had to ask my mom what all the fuss was about. During a trip back to Murfreesboro, I found two books at the library, a 1958 ARRL Handbook and a 1963 "So You Want to Be A HAM" by W2DJJ. The Army moved us frequently, so it was hard as a too young dumb kid to meet local hams. As I rode the school bus I learned to spot where hams lived by their antennas. I would then watch and see if the latest storm or wind took them down.

My dad asked "how much would a ham radio cost?" (I am the oldest of 7) My reality check was that "neat new gear" in the Newark Radio catalog would cost about what our family car was worth, and I decided if I was ever going to be a ham, it was NOT going to be via new gear! So, I built a KnightKit LC-1 code practice oscillator kit when I was ~8. I built more things that didn't work than did (including antennas) but learned a bit more each time I attempted something new. Next, from my "business" (I mowed yards) I saved up \$55 to buy a very old but still working BC-342 WW II surplus RCVR, a HB

CW only crystal rig. (ARRL handbook 80/40m 6CL6 osc, 6CL6 driver, 6146a final tubes), and dipoles for 80 and 40, with 75-ohm coax lines cut exactly per the old handbooks said including velocity factor! That was my SWL "listening post" since I didn't have a ticket, I couldn't call it a station yet. More "savings" went into my 'library' providing ideas from ARRL, CQ, and W6SAI handbooks. On the Army base, I'd ride my bike out to the MARS station and dream of "someday". They had Collins S lines, amps, several rhombics (each room had a sign that read "Europe" or "Asia"), and a Log Periodic Yagi on a tall telephone pole with a TH6. I was in Scouts and WB4LSD, a high speed (and I mean HIGH speed) traffic type op was the Radio merit badge counselor. I spent hours at his kitchen table trying to copy what he was sending on his bug and I would ride my bike home mumbling I'll never EVER get this code stuff. KP4CNW/W4 then moved into our housing with his B&W 5100B/SB10, Drake 2B and HB 2X 4-400 amp and DID NOT operate CW so I thought there's hope for me! His TA33 at 30' looked like a monster antenna. After saving up (read mowing more yards) I added a Gotham vertical to my antenna farm. Later and back in TN, I replaced the BC-342 with a National NC-183 I repaired, completed my Radio merit badge, my Eagle rank, and today enjoy many modes including CW.

Finally in 1972, thanks to JR, K4CM (sk), a great friend from high-school times, Tom, K4TTA invited me and my younger brother Stephen over one school night "just to meet" after JR told Tom I had been waiting years to take my Novice. Tom had us sit in his shack, and listen before doing a bit of CW practice. His station was a Drake 4 line (first time outside of the Allied Radio or Lafayette "wish books" I had seen any Drake gear), a National NCL-2000 amp, and HB 3 EL quad at 60'. When Tom called CQ DX on 20m and the ENTIRE WORLD answered, I knew I HAD to pass my test ASAP! Tom was great making us both at ease. Next thing I heard was him sharing our CW practice time was over for the night, AND we'd both passed the 5 WPM Novice code test. WN4ZLJ (Stephen) and WN4ZLK were issued after what seemed like a forever wait!! More study and I passed my General, Advanced, and Extra before an FCC examiner while still in high school and after building a Heathkit SB102 which I used for many years. 73, Billy, AA4NU
<Below, KB4HFI and AA4NU Photo courtesy of K8CX>



NEW MEMBERS

No new members to report this month.

UPCOMING CONTESTS

Following is a list of the upcoming contests which qualify for the TCG Most Radioactive Award. For more information on the MRA, please refer to K4TCG.ORG under the TCG INFO section. Thanks to AD4EB for this list, and to Ted W4NZ for administering the TCG Most Radioactive Award.

December 1, 2023	ARRL 160 Meter Contest
December 2, 2023	FT-8 Roundup
December 9, 2023	ARRL Ten Meter Contest
December 16, 2023	OK DX RTTY Contest
December 30, 2023	RAC Winter Contest – Dec
December 30, 2023	Stew Perry Topband Challenge-Dec
Canceled	Ukrainian DX RTTY, Classic
Canceled	DRCG RTTY
January 6, 2024	ARRL RTTY Roundup
January 13, 2024	North American QSO Party, CW Jan
January 20, 2024	ARRL January VHF Contest
January 20, 2024	Hungarian DX Contest
January 20, 2024	North American QSO Party, SSB Jan
January 26, 2024	CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW
January 27, 2024	BARTG RTTY Sprint

Good luck to everyone in the ARRL Ten Meter contest this weekend!

73, —Kirk K4RO