

SANDUSKY VALLEY

Amateur Radio Club Notes and News

Notes from the
President:

2 Meter Repeater

New "QRN Column"
Contributed by Joe
Hoffman, W8JH

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Topic for the Month:
Planning for ARRL
Field Day 2026



Notes from the President

Fellow Hams and Friends,

Ever think of Amateur Radio as a health preserving hobby? Two of the most important things we need to maintain in good health is, our mind and our brain. There are pills that aid our memory and other brain functions. Something that almost all experts agree on, is that we must keep busy. We keep busy physically by making, testing, and putting into use equipment and antennas. Technological aspects of Ham Radio, provides all the mental exercise anyone would ever need. So, stay busy, physically and mentally while enjoying the greatest hobby on Earth and beyond.

Jay K8VCE

Repeater Operations

Should any one have any trouble accessing the repeater, please just drop me a note at rondyke2000@yahoo.com or text me at 423-231-6315 and I will be glad to see what can be done to make things better.

The “QRN” Column

Contributed by Joe Hoffman, W9JH

Morse code is also called CW. This comes from the fact that a Continuous Wave (CW) signal is a tone generated and then broken up into dits and dahs. Although you will see the CW characters on paper as dots and dashes it is helpful to only think in terms of dits and dahs so you can get used to the sound and avoid your brain having to visualize dots and dashes and convert them to letters. With practice, you will learn to recognize the sound of each character without thinking about the components that make it up. The letter A will then just be didah instead of thinking dot and dash. Learning CW is no longer a requirement to obtain an Amateur Radio license but this method of communicating remains as popular as ever, squashing fears that it would become a lost art when the license requirement was removed back in 2007.

This QRN column will focus more on the abbreviations used in CW rather than the history. Just know that the Q code is a standardized, three-letter shorthand system, beginning with 'Q', created around 1909–1912 by the British government for maritime radio operators to communicate efficiently via Morse code, bypassing language barriers. It was formally adopted internationally in 1913, later becoming a staple in aviation and amateur radio for shortening transmissions. Let's cover some other abbreviations, in addition to the more formal Q codes.

Perhaps the most commonly heard CW abbreviation is CQ. You send this on the air, along with your callsign, whenever you are interested in contacting anyone, anywhere. With a simple CQ call you never know who will answer your call and that is half the fun. Although there is no definitive answer it is generally accepted that CQ is used since it sounds like **seek you**. Another quaint abbreviation used is hihi. When you send those four letters in CW it sounds a bit like laughter and that is how it is used. You will also hear this on

voice modes at appropriate times from hams who have used it on CW for years.

Now let's discuss some of the commonly used Q codes. Naturally I will start with QRN, the namesake of this column. QRN means atmospheric, random or natural noise. You would send QRN to let the other ham know you are having difficulty hearing due to natural noise. As with all Q codes, adding a question mark after the Q code asks the appropriate question. If you wonder if they have noise on their end you just add a question mark. For example, QRS means slow down your CW sending speed, I can't keep up! On the other hand QRS? asks if you would like me to slow down, which is courteous if you suspect the other ham is having a hard time copying your CW due to you going too fast. It is always good practice to slow down without being asked if you're going 30wpm (words per minute) and someone answers you at less than 20wpm.

A simple google search brought me to the following website which lists nearly fifty Q codes, far more than we have space to discuss further today: https://radio.fandom.com/wiki/Q_code In the interest of brevity I should only mention a few more commonly used codes. QST means information for all amateurs and happens to be the namesake of the ARRL's magazine. QRM is interference from other hams who may not be able to hear your signal and may transmit "on top" of your signal. Before calling CQ it is always good practice to send QRL?, which is asking if the frequency is in use. If one of the partners in an ongoing QSO can hear you, despite the other one not being able to (due to propagation vagaries), that person will let you know the frequency is in use. A QSO is a two way communication, either active or complete. You may say "I made 100 QSO's last month" while bragging at breakfast about how active you've been. Your QTH is your home or station location. I could go on but hopefully that is a good knowledge base for use and further study. Until next month.....

73,
Joe, W8JH

Monthly Contests: MARCH 2026

- **April 2 - 3 -- Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest (CW)**

- April 4 - 5 -- YBDXPI SSB Contest (Phone)
- April 4 - 5 -- EA RTTY Contest (Digital)
- April 4 - 5 -- Louisiana QSO Party (CW, Phone, digital)
- April 4 - 5 -- Mississippi QSO Party (CW, Phone, digital)
- April 4 - 5 -- SP DX Contest (CW, Phone)
- April 11 - 12 Yuri Gagarin International DX Contest (CW, Phone)
- April 11 - 12 New Mexico QSO Party (CW,Phone, Dig)
- April 11 - 12 Missouri QSO Party (CW,Phone,Dig)
- April 11 - 12 North Dakota QSO Party (CW,Phone,Dig)
- April 11 - 12 Georgia QSO Party (CW,Phone,Dig)
- April 17 - 20 Florida State Parks On The Air (CW,Ph,Dig)
- April 17 - 18 Worldwide Holland Contest (CW,Phone)
- April 17 - 18 Texas State Parke On The Air (CW,Ph,Dig)
- April 18 - 19 Worked All Provinces of China DX Contest
 - (Phone)
- April 18 - 19 Georgia State Parks On The Air (CW,Ph,Dig)
- April 18 - 19 Michigan QSO Party (CW,Ph,Dig)
- April 18 - 19 EA QRP CW Contest (CW)
- April 18 - 19 Ontario QSO Party (CW,Ph)
- April 19 ARRL Rookie Roundup, SSB (Phone)
- April 25 - 27 Nebraska QSO Party (CW,Ph,Dig)
- April 25 - 26 Florida QSO Party (CW,Ph,Dig)

(Reprinted From Great Lakes Newsletter, April QST)

Please Check the ARRL, QST and Great Lakes Contest pages for a complete list of the April times, dates, frequencies, etc.

Special Events: March 2026

Apr. 11 - Apr. 12, 14002 - 22002, W4AC, Nokomis, FL. Tamiami Amateur Radio Club. **Shark's Tooth Festival**. 14.034 14.260 28.034 28.460. QSL. Tamiami ARC, P.O. Box 976, Nokomis, FL 34274. www.tamiamiarc.org

Apr. 11 - Apr. 12, 15002 - 01002, KC50LO, Abilene, TX. Key City Amateur Radio Club. **Atlas Missile Silo**. 14.250 21.300 28.400. QSL. Key City Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 2722, Abilene, TX 79604. <https://keycityarc.org>

Apr. 14 - Apr. 19, 08172 - 08172, W4S, Lakeland, FL. Lakeland Amateur Radio Club. **Sun & Fun Aerospace Exposition**. 7.40 14.40 18.93 28.40. QSL. Lakeland Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 90853, Lakeland, FL 33804. Please send a self-addressed stamped envelope for QSL card. info@lakelandarc.com

Apr. 16, 09002 -16002, W9W, New Castle, IN. Henry County (Indiana) Amateur Radio Club. **Wilbur Wright 159th Birthday Event**. 14.340. QSL. Dave Peters, 3517 Hampton Ct., New Castle, IN 47362. W90B@yahoo.com or <https://w9ob.org>

Apr. 16 - Apr. 21, 0600Z - 06002, N5I, Gonzales, LA. Ascension Amateur Radio. **Louisiana Purchase Special Event**. 14.300. Certificate. K5ARC, P.O. Box 1617, Gonzales, LA 70707. www.k5arc.org

Apr. 17 - Apr. 20, 12002 - 2359Z, W4AC, Nokomis, FL. Tamiami Amateur Radio Club. **Florida State Parks on the Air Contest**. 14.337. Certificate. Tamiami ARC, P.O. Box 976, Nokomis, FL 34274. www.fspota.org

Apr. 18, 12002 -16002, KG4NXO, Ocala, FL. Marion County Florida **Emergency Radio Team (MERT)**. MERT-22. 443.875 reflector 30C KG4NXO; 3.950 7.235 14.275 (± 20) SSB. Certificate by email request. KG4NXO, 7199 SW 95th Ct., Ocala, FL 34481. MERT-22@KG4NXO.com

Apr. 23 - Apr. 27, 0500Z - 0500Z, K4H, Camden, SC. Kershaw County Amateur Radio Club, **KC4RC. Battle of Hobkirk's Hill Commemoration**. 3.825 7.225 14.325 21.325. Certificate upon request. info@kc4rc.com

Apr. 24 - Apr. 26, 19002 - 1900Z, W0ZSW & W0EQO, Minneapolis, MN. Handiham Radio Club & Handiham Radio Club of Minnesota. **Handiham Program 59th Anniversary QSO Party**. 7.200 14.250 21.350 28.350. QSL.

Handiham Program, 3915 Golden Valley Rd., Mail Route 78446, Minneapolis, MN 55422. www.handiham.net

Apr. 25, 13002 - 20002, W2GSB, Babylon, NY. Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club. **Marconi Day**. 7.27514.245 21.325 28.500. Certificate. GSBARC Marconi Day, 200 E. Sunrise Hwy., Lindenhurst, NY 11757. www.gsbarc.org

Apr. 25, 13002 - 2100z, K3S, Baltimore, MD. Nuclear Ship Savannah Amateur Radio Club. **International Marconi Day Official Station**. 7000. QSL. Ullis Fleming, 980 Patuxent Rd., Odenton, MD 21113. Check spotting networks on all bands for frequency. www.qrz.com/db/K3S

Collected from April QST 2026

Working special event stations is an enjoyable way to help commemorate history. Many provide a special QSL card or certificate!

Certificates and QSL cards: To obtain a certificate from any of the special event stations offering them, send your QSO information along with a 9 x 12-inch self-addressed, stamped envelope (3 units of postage) to the address listed in the announcement. To receive a special event QSL card (when offered), be sure to include a self-addressed, stamped business envelope along with your QSL card and QSO information.

Monthly DX Information:

This week's Bulletin is made possible with information provided by The Daily DX, 425 DX News, DXNL, OPDX, Contest Corral from QST, and the ARRL Contest Calendar and WA7BNM websites. Thanks to all.

THE GAMBIA, CS. F4AGG & F5RAV are ORV as **C5C**, and **C5D** from **April 25 to May 8**. Activity on HF Bands and using CW, SSB, ATTY, PSK, and FT8. OSL via LOTW or F5RAV.

BAHAMAS, C6. Paul, WA4PAW is ORV as **C6APS** until **April 12**. Activity is on 20 to 10 meters using CW, SSB, and FT8. OSL to home call.

SOUTH ORKNEY ISLANDS. Ramon, LU1 DMZ plans to be active as **LU1 DMZ/Z** and **LU1 ZA** from **Base Orcadas on Laurie Island, IOTA AN 008**, during all of 2026. Activity is in his spare time. OSL via operators instructions.

GREECE, SV. Members of the Radio Amateur Association of Western Greece are ORV with special callsign **SZ40A until May 31 to celebrate forty years of continuous presence, service, and contribution to amateur radio.** Activity is on various HF bands and modes. OSL via ON3UN.

CENTRAL KIRIBATI, T3. Group of operators are ORV as **T31 TTT on Kanton Island, IOTA OC-043, until April 8.** Activity on is 160 through 6 meters using CW, SSB, FT8, FT4. OSL via ClubLog.

BENIN, TY. Red, DL 1 BUG is ORV as **TY5FR from Cotonou until April 5.** Activity is on 80 through 1 O meters using CW and SSB. OSL to home call.

ANTARCTICA. Tom, VK2TBC plans to be ORV as **VKOTBC from Casey Station until the end of the year.** Activity is in his spare time on the HF bands using SSB and FT8. OSL to home call.

COCOS KEELING ISLANDS, VK9C. Mark, VK6BSA and Deena, VK6DEE are ORV as **VK9BSA and VK9DEE, respectively, until May.** Activity is in their spare

VANUATU, VJ. Aki, JK1JXZ is ORV as **YJ1JXZ from Port Vila, IOTA oc 035, until April 3.** Activity is on 80 through 6 meters. OSL to home call.

HELENA ISLAND, ZD7. Jun, JL8AQH is QRV as **ZD7AQH.** Activity is on 40 through 1 O meters using CW. **His length of stay is unknown.** OSL direct to home call.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. co WW WPX Contest, SSB, Bill Windle oso party, and the Africa All Mode International DX Contest are all scheduled for this weekend.

K1 USN Slow Speed CW Test, OGX Challenge, ICWC Medium Speed Test,

OK1 WC Memorial (MWC), OGX Challenge, ICWC Medium Speed Test, Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest, QRP Foxhunt, Phone Weekly Test, A 1

Club AWT, CWops Test, Mini Test 80 CW, Mini Test 40 cw and the UKEICC 80 Meter CW Contest are on tap for March 30 to April 1st. Please see March OST, page 77, and the ARAL and WA7BNM contest websites for details

Hamfests: (Fun places to go to!) (from ARRL Website)

04/11/2026 - Cuyahoga Falls Amateur Radio Club 70th Hamfest

Location: Cuyahoga Falls, OH

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Cuyahoga Falls Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Website: <https://www.cfarc-hamfest.org>

04/25/2026 - Tusco Amateur Radio Club's 2026 Hamfest, Computer & Electronics Show

Location: Dover, OH

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Tusco Amateur Radio Club W8ZX

Website: <http://www.w8zx.net/hamfest>

04/26/2026 - Athens Hamfest

Location: Athens, OH

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Athens County Amateur Radio Association

Website: <http://ac-ara.org>

Swap and Shop:

For Sale:

DX Engineering OMNI-Tilt Vertical Antenna Tilt Base, Brand new never set up, List price at DX Engineering is \$163.97. Would like to get \$100.00.

Icom 7300. Asking \$950.00

Yaesu FT-891 Asking \$500.

Please contact Dan Whitt, W8DJW at 419-366-3256

From a recent Silent Key the following items are available:

SPE Expert Amp 2K. List \$6,995.00. Asking \$5,000.00

Kenwood TS 890S Transceiver. List \$4,329.95 Asking \$3000.00

Kenwood SP 890S Speaker. List \$ 285.99 Asking \$200.00

**Kenwood TS480HX. 200 Watt Unit no Automatic Antenna Tuner List \$1499
Asking \$800.00**

MFJ Deluxe RF Preselector II. Asking \$75.00

**MFJ. HF/SWR Analyzer Asking \$175.00 each
2 Available**

**Max 2000 Antenna. HF Base Station 24 FT (New, still in Box). List \$319.00
Asking \$250.00**

If interested in any of the above items, please contact Ron Dyke, KZ4CW
at 423-231-6315 or email address. rondyke2000@yahoo.com

Topic for the Month

Start Planning for ARRL Field Day 2026

It's not too early to gear up and get ready for ARRL Field Day! Field Day 2026 takes place June 27 – 28 and will bring together more than 30,000 amateur radio operators for one of the most popular on-the-air events in the US and Canada.

This year's Field Day theme is "Amateur Radio: A National Resource." Combined with the ARRL Year of the Club, it provides the perfect opportunity for radio clubs to set up stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill, and service to our communities and our nation.

All of the information you need to get started can be found on the Field Day web page, including how to join the ARRL Field Day Facebook Group, where you can share your plans, tips, and tricks for a successful Field Day.

The overall objective for Field Day is to contact as many stations as possible on the 160-, 80-, 40-, 20-, 15- and 10-meter HF bands, as well as all bands above 50 MHz, and to learn to operate in less than optimal conditions. Many clubs choose to set up in camp-style fashion with portable equipment, temporary antennas, and off-grid power sources.

Field Day is open to all amateurs in the areas covered by the ARRL/RAC Field Organizations and countries within IARU Region 2 (North and South America). DX stations residing in other regions may be contacted for credit, but are not eligible to submit entries. Each claimed contact must include contemporaneous direct initiation by the operator on both sides of the contact. Initiation of a contact may be either locally or by remote.

Also check out the Field Day site locator page to help find participating stations near you. As an added incentive for anyone participating in ARRL's yearlong America250 Worked All States (WAS) Award, contacts made with ARRL Affiliated Radio Clubs all year, including during Field Day, will count toward your America250 WAS Affiliated Club Endorsement. Check out those details at www.arrl.org/america250-was.

Attention Everyone

Next meet is April 4, 2026 Breakfast at Denny's at 7:00 AM and social hour starting around 8:30 AM at Sandusky County Chamber of Commerce Building, 1245 Napoleon Street, Fremont, Ohio. Meeting starts at 9:00 AM.
D. Ron Dyke, KZ4CW