



Issue 1

Welcome to the Club!

Welcome to the first edition of the Indiana Fireflies QRP Club Newsletter. My name is Mike and my call sign is NR9R. If you are new to the club have no fear because the club is new to everyone. With help from my good friends Ivin W9ILF, Gary WE3NR and Brian KB9BVN we hosted a variety of “QRP in the park” events over the last two years and had a blast making new friends and sharing our excitement for the hobby with others. This year we decided to take the next step and turn our group into a “club” and invite others to join us. Now, when I say “club” don’t worry. We don’t charge any dues, we don’t really have any rules other than treat others with kindness and respect and practice good amateur radio techniques, and we don’t require anything from you other than the willingness to have a good time. What you get out of this club will depend very much on what you are willing to put into it. Our mission is to promote QRP and enjoy the hobby of amateur radio. If you are wondering how we came up with the name Fireflies, it is in honor of our state insect the Say’s Firefly. The Say’s Firefly is a great example of doing “more with less” which is the backbone of QRP. I look forward to having you join us this year as we continue to grow.

If you have any ideas you would like to share, please email me at NR9Radio@gmail.com
72 de Mike NR9R

Hello, my name is ...?

This newsletter needs a name, what do you think we should call it? Please send us your ideas and we will list out all entries in next month's newsletter for a vote from all members. You can send in your names to FirefliesQRP@gmail.com

#QRPizza



**PIZZA
KING**

The Fireflies QRP Club does not have regular formal meetings like most clubs. Instead we choose to meet at a local pizza restaurant to swap stories about recent QRP adventures, show off our latest creations, and plan future outings and contest. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 5:55 PM local Indiana time. All are invited to attend.

Our next #QRPizza event will be held at:

Pizza King
270 North Monroe Street
Mooresville, IN 46158

We do not have a location yet for the month of May. If you have a place you enjoy going, share it with the rest of us and we can join you for #QRPizza! FirefliesQRP@gmail.com

Donuts in the Park



Over the last two years we have hosted a variety of “In the Park” events and shared everything from donuts to chili dogs. These were our most popular events and we plan to do several more in 2019. During an “In the Park” event we invite anyone and everyone interested in operating QRP to join us at a local park and get on the air. They can bring their own station or use one of our stations already setup. One of our favorite memories to date for one of these events was when Ivin W9ILF assisted Jermaine KD9GZJ with his first ever CW contact on the air. Jermaine had a great fist with his MFJ straight keyer and was smiling ear to ear while completing the QSO. Since then Jermaine has been a CW machine and making contacts around the world using morse code.

Would you like to try CW out for yourself? Do you enjoy operating outdoors? Join us at our next “In the Park” event scheduled for April. We will be kicking 2019 off with our world famous “Donuts in the Park” next month. We hope to see you all out there! Will this be the year that we see an appearance from the much sought after but never seen chili cheese dog? You won’t want to miss out!

Join us next month:

Donuts in the Park
April 6, 2019
Hummel Park (Plainfield IN)
Shelter house located by the basketball courts
7:55 AM – 10:55 AM



Firefly QRP Adventures

Each month we would really like to share one of your adventures with the rest of the group. If you have a QRP story you would like to share please send it to us at FirefliesQRP@gmail.com

This month's story comes to us from our friend and QRP legend, Brian KB9BVN. This story was originally posted in the Flying Pigs QRP Club newsletter which Brian served as Editor for several years. Thanks for the contribution Brian!

QRP Camping by KB9BVN/QRP

On January the 26th, 2001 I left my employer in Cincinnati and headed off towards one of my favorite events. This was the 2001 Pathfinder District Boy Scout Camporee near Connersville Indiana. I love winter camping and this would be my 10th Winter Camporee in a row. We've had all kinds of weather from below zero, up to the 50's. This time we had rain...and snow...and sleet...and wind, and I mean WIND. I arrived at the campsite well in advance of my troop so I could pick out a suitable spot for my antenna. This time I am using a Gusher cut for 40m that I borrowed from Aron, N1ODL when I visited him and his lovely wife Kim, back in January. They live in New Hampshire, in the cold, in the snow, and they gave me a very warm welcome. Anyway, this is what our camp looked like the next morning.



I found a nice spot under a big dead oak tree...but then I started thinking about how heavy that tree was and began to wonder if I'd even feel it when it landed on my gourd whilst I lay there in my peaceful winter slumber...so we moved the "shack". I ended up over by a nice healthy live tree and after a half an hour I finally got the antenna up in the boughs and both ends tied off to a couple of trees with big thorns. I figured the thorns would keep the boys away.

NOTE: Bring something to tie on the end of the hoisting rope, makes it much easier to toss over tree branch.

I didn't set my tent up right away because it had started sleeting. So I climbed back in my 1990 Toyota Camry and set my station up for operation.



Here is a picture of my station, from the inside of my tent. I have a NC40A, a ZM-2 antenna tuner, a HUGE BIG GIANT set of Ten Tec paddles, and some headphones. The Diet Pepsi can was for me to use later. Winter campers know what I mean by "later". Power was 12v-lead acid battery.

It took me about 10 mins to get everything setup in the front seat of the car. Did I mention I was getting buried in sleet and freezing rain? After tuning around, I settled on 7043Khz and sent out a CQ or two. Nothing. AGN AGN..NADA. Huh, I was getting a little frustrated when I heard NX3X from Altoona PA calling CQ. I answered him...he answered me!! We had a nice 10-minute QSO and I got a 579 and gave him a 599. Larry was a nice op and overlooked the hard time I was having trying to work those huge paddles from the front seat of my small car. Most excellent!

The next QSO came about 20 minutes later, it was now snowing and sleeting, and I was wondering if my Gusher being iced up was holding my 1.2 watts of power back. I call CQ, BLAMMO, W3RDF from South Carolina answers my call with a 559 report. Don was also running QRP but before I could get any more info, the QSB killed the QSO.

It had now stopped precipitating and I decided it was now or never on getting my tent pitched. So I bailed out of the car and began setting up the tent, installing the sleeping bags, and all that stuff. This took about an hour and it was now getting dark and still no sign of my troop yet.

Finally the boys arrived, and now it was raining again. Temps had jumped up to about 38 and everything was getting wet. Here is a picture of my tent/shack. Note the RG174 coming in

on the right. The Gusher is a really neat antenna. Very handy little dipole. Joe Everhart N2CX makes and sells them at a very reasonable price.



After we got the whole place setup, it started snowing again, and the wind started howling, and I mean it was HOWLING. We were encamped on the edge of a good sized pine forest, the

scent was incredible, but anyone that has camped in the pines can verify that when wind comes through in a big gust, it sounds like a freight train. At about 10PM the temp had dropped down to about 27 and the wind was getting worse. So we decided to make some cobbler, eat it and go to bed. Oh yeah, Peach AND apple. Mmmmmmm!



After stuffing my gut with hot cobbler, I retired to the shack in hopes of working a few more stations. I bet I laid there in my sleeping bag for an hour calling CQ and got nothing. NADA. So I crawled out and started doing some investigation. CRUD, I had a loose wire in my ZM-2 tuner. After fumbling with the flashlight and electrical tape I finally got the LED to dim and gave it another try.



Here I am, the next day, lounging around with our Scoutmaster, Duane. Nice shades...eh? The theme of the campout was "Luau in Siberia", I am wearing a lei. I am on the left. We just ate...again.

So anyway, there I was...calling CQ, the wind is blowing, the temps are dropping (at midnight it was 15 F), and all of a sudden I hear....

KB9BVN/QRP DE W9JOP/4QRP K

I about had a cow. It was BOB in Virginia on his Tuna Tin 2 at a whopping 250 mw. We sent 579's and blabbed on and on for at least 45 minutes. He was pretty sure I was off my rocker when I told him about the WX and my portable shack. It was the highlight of my whole night.

That was my last QSO, I tried calling with W8PIG for a while but I broke my ZM-2 again and could not get a match. My cold battery was having a hard time as well. So at about midnight, I used my Diet Pepsi can, checked the temp (15F IN my tent), went QRT and hit the hay.

Take your rigs to the great outdoors! It's a ball. WB6JBM is the club expert at camping ops!

73 de KB9BVN

Safety Tips and Trail Etiquette while Hiking

Spring is here and you may be thinking about planning your next hiking trip in the near future. Remember to pack light when bringing amateur radio equipment along with you on a hike. Heavy lead acid batteries can really add a lot of weight to your pack. We hope to share an article with you in the near future about light weight power source alternatives for hiking with amateur radio.

Listed below are some general safety and trail etiquette tips from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to remember when planning your next hiking adventure.

STAY ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

Stay on designated footpaths whenever possible, and do not trespass on private property. You are responsible for helping maintain good relations between hikers and private property owners.

WEAR BRIGHT COLORS ONLY WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SEEN

Wearing bright colors during hunting season, particularly deer season, is a good idea. In fact, it may prevent injury or death. However, during other times of the year, bright reds, oranges and yellows serve to actually shrink the outdoors by visually intruding into the wide spaces and solitude which are part of the outdoor experience. When drab colors (browns, blues, and greens) are used for clothing and tents, individuals are visible at less distance, and more people can use the same general area without knowing of each other's presence.

FINDING AND PROTECTING THE WATER

Sources of water in many areas are often limited and can fail during dry periods-plan ahead! Remember to treat all collected drinking and cooking water by boiling for several minutes or with a commercial water filter. Always wash your dishes or yourself a few feet away from the edge of a lake or stream. This way the soil acts as a filter, preventing soap suds and scraps of food from polluting the water. After washing your dishes, rinse them a safe distance from the bank. A few feet can make a big difference.

TICKS

Ticks are going to congregate where they have the best chances of finding a host (human or pets) for hatching their larvae. It is best to avoid tall grass and thick brush. The most effective commercial insect repellents contain the active ingredient DEET or PERMETHRIN. Once a tick becomes embedded, it's best to remove the tick using tweezers. You want to grasp the tick close to its head firmly pulling it straight out. Apply antiseptic to the bite after removal.

PLAN YOUR TRIPS

Before starting out, study maps of the area and learn the terrain. Be sure you are familiar with all the options of time, alternate routes, and weather. Do not forget the shorter daylight hours during late fall and winter. Be sure to travel with a first aid kit, map and compass, and cellular telephone (if available) and know how to use them. Remember to register at the nearest property office or gatehouse; for your safety, someone needs to know where you are.

PROPERLY DISPOSE OF LITTER

Burying trash and garbage was once the ethical way to dispose of litter outdoors. However, animals and frost action usually undid the efforts after the campers were on their way. Today, the problem is compounded by the high number of people using the same areas. The best policy is to carry out what you carry in. You might consider going one step further and carry out any trash less thoughtful people may have left behind.



Indiana QSO Party

Mark your calendars; the Indiana QSO party is just 6 weeks away over the weekend of May 4th. Good luck if you are participating in this fun event and May the 4th be with you! ☺

For more information check out: www.hdxcc.org/inqp/

George Dobbs G3RJV - SK



Rev. George Dobbs G3RJV became a silent key on March 11, 2019. George was pioneer in QRP amateur radio and he is known around the world for his passion of the hobby. He was a huge believer in "minimalist radio" and founder of the G-QRP in Great Britain. George was the editor of Sprat Magazine for many years and the author of several QRP books including QRP Basics and the International QRP Collection. In 2015 George received the Technical Excellence Award at Hamvention. Thank you George for everything you did for amateur radio. You left some really big shoes to fill but we will continue to share your legacy with future QRPers for years to come.

Equipment for Sale

Do you have anything amateur radio related that you would like to share here? Email us at FirefliesQRP@gmail.com

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read this, the very first issue of our monthly newsletter. If you have something you would like to share in future issues, PLEASE send it to use here at FirefliesQRP@gmail.com

Please remember to include names, call signs and photos.

Until next time, 72 and have fun!

