



Solid Copy

The International CWops Newsletter

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“Big, Bad, Black Begali” – the Expedition

CWops “CWT”

12, 26 February 2014

Start times: 13Z, 19Z, 03Z (9, 23 January)

1-hour each session

Exchange: name/number (members)
name/SPC (non-members)

CWA Days

5, 19 February 2014: 1300Z, 1900Z, 0300Z(+1)

CWops “neighborhood”

Look for CWops on 1.818, 3.528, 7.028, 10.118,
14.028, 18.078, 21.028, 24.908, 28.028, 50.098

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President's Message



The New Year is off to a good start. The first CWT was a rousing success – lots of newcomers and lots of activity. I hope it is a portent of things

to come. Also, the CW Academy is now in full swing with the January-February semester. We have a lot of students and very diligent advisors. Thanks to all.

In 2012, Hank, W6SX, announced participation awards for CWTs in 2013. He has his list of recipients compiled, and we have commissioned a company to strike some

really handsome medallions. These should be in Hank's hands by mid to late March and in the mail soon after.

For the QTX crowd, once John K1ESE has settled on the winner for 2013, a very smart looking plaque will be awarded.

Not to be left out, CW Academy will be presenting service awards to those advisors who complete six semesters of training of CWA students. That's the equivalent of two full years. A second award will be given when advisors log 12 semesters.

Dean NW2K is in the process of commissioning the CW Open trophies and plaques, and these should be done and shipped sometime in February.

Don't forget the CW Enthusiast's Weekend coming up again in May near Washington D.C. This weekend is always a fun, low-key one where we get together for pizza on Friday night, for brunch on Saturday morning and for dinner on Saturday night. It's completely informal and open to any and all CW enthusiasts.

Two weeks after that, CWops will be staffing its booth at Dayton for a third year. As always, we need volunteers who plan to attend Dayton to help with staffing the booth. Friday and Saturday will be broken down into two-hour shifts and we'll be looking for at least two people per shift. This year we have even more to talk about with the awards for CWT, for QTX, and about the success of CW Academy.

I am also putting the finishing touches on my message about the new CWops "ambassador" positions. In order for the club to represent itself properly, worldwide, it needs ambassadors in specific geographies who can enthusiastically champion the club, explain its activities, and help find advisors to open up CW Academy services in Europe, Asia, South America, Africa and Oceania. Alex PA1FOX and James VK4TJF have already established a foothold for CW Academy in Europe and Oceania, respectively. The people I will be appointing as ambassadors are active CW operators who know the ham media in their areas, speak prevailing local languages, and are enthusiastic about our mission to increase the population of competent CW operators worldwide.

Finally, one of our newest CW Academy advisors, Cap W0CCA found that when he met with his Level 2 students on the air, he was often tail-ended by other hams who were interested in getting help to improve their CW skills. I suggested that as a way to make Wednesdays a standard on-air day for us, when there's a Wednesday with no CWT, we should make it a CWA Day. Get on the upper portions of the bands, slow down the keyers to 20 wpm or less, and work hams who already know Morse but could use the practice as well as the first-hand examples of good operating procedures. I've been doing it whenever I have free time, using my old Globe King 500/75A-4 station, and racking up the QTX points while spreading the word about CW Academy. Won't you join me?

73,

R0b K6RB

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From the Editor



The long-awaited FT5ZM DXpedition is on the air from Amsterdam Island in the Indian Ocean! I haven't worked them yet but life has been conspiring against ham radio and I haven't had much time to try. North Americans will find this one challenging as it is close to our antipodes and the pileups are huge because it's a true Rare One. As I write this, they are in and out of the noise on 40M SSB, obliterated by rock music and disgruntled seekers 90% of the time. I see from Club Log that many CWops members have already worked them, mainly on CW, but for some reason, every time I listen they are working only Europe or active only on phone. Onward!

Speaking of pileups, hams seem to be adopting new tools for dealing with them at an accelerating pace. My favorite is the panadapter or spectrum scope. Many current generation, top end radios have them built-in. Some are pretty crude – too slow, too small, too coarse – but the Elecraft P3 accessory scope is superb, with a fast, detailed, color screen and a variety of display modes. It interfaces seamlessly with Elecraft's K3 transceiver but also with just about any superhet receiver that provides an I.F. output. The P3 also has an optional video adapter so you can enlarge the display to fit a large monitor. It's good for finding signals on a seemingly "dead" band, finding holes in a contest-crowded band and generally assessing conditions. For DXing, though, it really shines. Even if the DX is weak, the pileup is immediately obvious. Just tune around below it and, if the DX is audible at your QTH, you'll find it. When the DX signs "UP," you can often see the other station pop right up on the display. If you're feeling loud, you can call on that frequency or one nearby. If you're at a signal strength disadvantage, you can see holes that the DX may well tune through while seeking the next intelligible caller. Sweet! (And, like most things in ham radio, this all seems to work best on CW.)

I hope you like this month's issue. In addition to the regular columns and reports you will find a memoir by W7VSE about the [grand old days of landline Morse](#) and the original Morse Telegraph Code and the third installment of K6RB's [travelogue on Mozambique](#). The new [News & Notes](#) column is shorter than I had hoped. I'd like to read more of these quick vignettes that help to keep us all up to date on each others' accomplishments, challenges and lives in general. An N&N contribution should be brief – just a few sentences on whatever has been happening with you during the month. Send them to Jerry AC4BT at jweisskohl@gmail.com.

73,

Rick N6XI

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THE MORSE TELEGRAPH NETWORK

Vic Seeberger W7VSE

I worked about three and a half years at the FAA radio station KSF, the San Francisco Overseas Station, during the Korean War period (1950 to 1954). After the war ended, that FAA station was no longer needed, so my job was abolished, and I was transferred to FAA radio station SLC, in Salt Lake City, Utah. I was a Watch Supervisor there for almost a year. The FAA was in the process of changing all the CW (Morse code) communications over to voice and Teletype. This hurt my feelings. I had been working and enjoying CW since 1941 and liked it so much I wanted to keep using the code. So this encouraged me to get a book and learn enough radio theory and regulations to pass the FCC exam for my General Amateur Radio license W7VSE in early 1954. I bought a surplus WW2 aircraft transmitter and receiver from another ham and constructed my own antenna, quite a technical achievement for me, as I had only known how to be an operator for the previous 13 years.

When I finally got the amateur station ready, I found out how to load the transmitter by hooking it up to a 100-watt light bulb. With the telegraph key closed in the transmit mode, I adjusted until the light bulb glowed at maximum brightness. Then I stopped adjusting, connected the output to the antenna, and the transmitter was ready to be used – obviously putting out power enough to make that light bulb bright.

I then called CQ. This was a special event in my life and I was secretly hoping that my first contact would be with a distant station in some faraway land. A station did immediately answer me. It was another amateur, of course, but he was only across town a couple of miles in the city limits of Salt Lake City! Oh well, at least it proved my rig was working and during the next few months I was on the air quite a bit and made many more contacts. Most of them were in the USA, but I did get a few foreign countries. And I got to use my beloved code whenever I wanted to.

But a vacancy was advertised for Medford, Oregon, so I bid on it, not thinking I would be accepted. But I was picked and soon moved to Medford to work in the FAA combined Station and Tower. This would give me a chance to break into Air Traffic Control. Also, it meant coming home for my wife and kids. We arrived in Medford around Thanksgiving in 1954 in our 1940 4-door Desoto. We had been gone for seven years. We had moved from Medford to L.A. and then to Oakland, CA, and then to San Francisco, and on to Salt Lake City and finally back to Medford. It was great to be back with the family and friends. I was tired of moving and vowed to remain in Medford the rest of my time with the FAA, if possible.

One of the other watch Supervisors at SLC was named Lloyd Byars and he had been an amateur for a lot longer than I had. His call was W7MY. He had helped me get started. We got along and had a lot in common. So we made an oral agreement that we would get together on the ham bands when I got set up in Medford.

In a couple of months, I put up an antenna, got in touch with him and we began a daily schedule on 40 meters. We both worked shifts so we were home in the daytime quite a bit and every day at a given time we would show up on a given frequency, or nearby if that frequency was busy. Some days there was no answer but a majority of the time we had a daily sked. After several months of this, we had just about learned all there was to learn about each other. I found out that he had

worked a short time using the original Morse Telegraph code, just as I had when I worked for Western Union for almost two years. I suggested that we use the Landline Morse code in our conversations to improve our proficiency in that code. He thought this might be illegal. "So," I said, "how about sending our radio call signs, as required, in the International Morse code, to make the FCC happy, and converse in landline code." He agreed this should be OK. We did this on a regular sked, almost every day, for several years, and it was fun!

At this point, I'd like to point out that back before radio or telephone was invented, Morse Telegraph was the "only kid in town." Everything was handled by Morse Telegraph. It was the only means of communications available except the stagecoach, and briefly the Pony Express. There were thousands of active Morse operators handling messages over telegraph wires that covered the whole continent. Newspaper copy, stock market reports, telegrams and a multitude of other information was sent by hand over those copper wires. The Morse code was probably a bigger advancement in communications than the recent invention of the computer is today. (I bet someone would want to argue that point.)

President Lincoln communicated by Morse telegraph to the generals and others in command of the armies during the Civil war (1860s era). Messages by horseback were very slow. Sometimes the battle would be over before Lincoln's message arrived. Morse Telegraph possibly shortened the Civil War and saved many lives.

Those telegraph company poles and wires, which covered the continent, would provide leased-wire space for the new-fangled telephone companies that came along after the telephone was invented. Later on, the telegraph was forgotten and everyone started calling them "telephone" poles.

Another thing about the original Morse code – it was different from the International code used by our military and amateur operators. Some of the letters in Morse Telegraph had spaces within the letters. All the numbers are different except the number four. The punctuation was completely different. And it had an abundance of different letter combinations, like the dollar, cents, and British pound symbols and many more things that had to be spelled out when communicating with the International Morse code.

Some weeks or months after W7MY and I started using that landline Morse code on the air, we had hams break in on us and ask if we were using Chinese or something. Once someone broke in on us, using the Telegraph code, and asked us what was going on. It was a ham that had earned his living at one time using the original Morse code. We welcomed him and told him we were trying to improve our skill at the telegraph code and invited him to come back on our sked. He taught us a lot, and I think he spread the word, because other ex-telegraphers started showing up. Soon it got so crowded that Lloyd and I and some others would need to move off to a different frequency in order to talk to each other. It became a regular net and had some assigned Net Controls. The net met in the morning and again in the evening.

These old guy telegraphers were experienced and sure knew how to organize. They formed a club, elected a President and a Secretary and they named it, "The "Western Amateur Radio Morse Code Network". The secretary, Linda WB6ZSE, mailed a newsletter, in November 1974 and listed all of us. She referred to the list as "the Pecking Order." Lloyd Byars was number 3 on the list and I was number 6. There were FORTY-FIVE active members at that time, and six "Silent Keys." (I have a list of members, available on request). One of the members was W6FZZ, his name was Samuel F. B. Morse III, and he was a direct descendant of the man that invented the Morse code back in 1844.

I talked with “Frank” quite often. He was a highly skilled operator in either Telegraphy, or International Morse code. Once I talked to him on Radiophone. He lived in Southern California at the time. But when I heard him speak, it was like a letter from home. He had a distinct Texas drawl. I was born in Texas and all my folks had that same “twang” in their voices.

When I worked for Western Union in 1946-1947, I used very little Morse code, as Teletype had almost replaced Morse by then. Only a few small, outlying stations that had not been equipped with Teletype machines still used the code and the messages were few and far between. I did have to work a Wire Chief (WC) in Portland, Oregon on the wire, as we took care of some leased Teletype wires for the FAA. The WC had to slow down a bit to communicate with me, but we made it.

I don’t know how long that Morse Network lasted. I became more interested in using the other code, working traffic, chasing DX, working all states, trying to work all 3036 U.S. counties, etc. on the Ham bands and didn’t go to the net very often. I finally quit altogether.

I retired from the FAA in 1977 after 30 years of service. My military time in the U.S. Army Air Corps counted toward my retirement from government service, so I had 35 years altogether.

I would imagine that all, or most all, of those old Morse telegraph operators have gone to the “Great Telegraph Station in the Sky” by now. But I know we all had fun while it lasted..

I had an Uncle and a Great Uncle, who earned their living by using the Morse telegraph code all their working lives. Both of them worked for pipeline companies in Texas. But the original Morse Telegraph had almost disappeared by the time I was grown. The International code had taken over. Now it is has been replaced by more sophisticated means of communication.

But I am proud to say that I believe Lloyd Byars and I were the “cause of it all!” in using the original Morse code and getting those operators together and that Morse Network on the air. I am honored to have been a part of that group. I feel like I had a chance to peek into the past by working so many of those grand old Morse Telegraph Operators.

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My Ultimate Wireless Adventure

Rob Brownstein K6RB

[This is the third installment of a fascinating travelogue by our President K6RB. Stand by for more! – Ed.]

The Weather and the Bugs

We arrived in Xai Xai last Sunday night, and it has been sunny and warm every day. At night, it cools off a bit, and the onshore breezes pick up, but I mostly covered myself with just a sheet at night. This morning (Saturday) while I was immersed in my 4 to 8 AM shift, it began to rain, and has continued. The winds are stronger than usual, and I can hear howling outside the walls of my sleeping unit. Mosquitoes are the primary bug problem. And in Xai Xai, annually, 50,000 children die of malaria. So, we try to minimize our mosquito exposure. We all wear repellents, and the longest clothes that the weather will bear. In late afternoon, we’ll spray our rooms and keep the bedroom doors shut. I have

managed to be bitten many times since arriving. Our building is being used as the communal kitchen, and they keep the door open to let out the heat. It also allows in the mosquitoes, unfortunately, so we have kept our rooms closed all day and spray in late afternoon.

Morale

As the week wears on, the team is weathering the shifts, weather and bugs very well. There have been no short tempers or arguments. It is a very congenial team.

Schedule

Each day, Don downloads our individual laptop logs and compiles the updated totals. As we analyze where we have had the most QSOs, we emphasize spending more effort on the bands where results are thinner. This weekend should see the greatest number of QSOs because most hams are at home. So, we will really be grinding them out.

After the weekend, we will see smaller pileups and fewer daily increases. By Wednesday night, we will have disassembled and packed all the antennas and equipment and be ready to head out around 4:30 AM.

As you may imagine, a DXpedition can be a costly undertaking. Even if much the equipment is loaned, the cost of shipping to get it to the final destination can be quite high. The organizers (Don and Tom) had to estimate a budget for all of the tasks. The 14 participants each kicked in \$750 plus their travel and boarding expenses on the way to Xai Xai. Our accommodations and food at Xai Xai were covered under the \$750 per man funding. Because a DXpedition is meant to provide new countries on new bands to many hams worldwide, the organizers anticipate some amount of appreciation donations. In the end, the expenses may not be fully covered and participants could be called on to up the ante. Therefore, in the back of everyone's mind is the need to make as many QSOs with as many different hams as possible to increase the likelihood of donations, later.

To put this DXpedition in perspective, the \$750 ground costs are not bad. Some DXpeditions to islands near Antarctica have required participants to kick in over \$10,000, each. Much of that funding was to cover the costs of five days of chartered boat travel to and from the island using a port near the southern end of South America.

Saturday October 19

During the early morning on Saturday, I awoke hearing what sounded like sirens or a car alarm. As I was becoming more conscious, it stopped, so I went back to sleep. It turned out that one of the power lines near the road in front of our compound had found a path to the wooden pole, and the pole was on fire.



The power pole on fire near the top.



Xai Xai fire department to the rescue.

The siren I heard was the fire engine coming to put it all out. Interestingly, we never lost power during the whole episode. Later on Saturday, the power company men showed up with a replacement wooden pole, and proceeded to dig a second hole (by hand) near the first pole. Then, using a block-and-tackle, they put the new pole in the hole (by hand) and moved the wire over to it. The burned pole was removed. Again, all during this procedure, our power remained intact.



Power company men replace the burned pole with a different wooden pole and move the wires over to the new pole.

Sunday October 20

On Saturday I had a noon to 4 PM shift and on Sunday a midnight to 4 AM shift and another noon to 4 PM shift. The midnight shift began on 80 meters which had a very high noise level and almost no signals coming through. During my first hour, I made just one contact with a station in Brazil. So I went to 40 meters and found the band populated by stations from Germany doing some kind of radiosport event. I could not find a frequency that was in the clear so I went back to 80 meters. I found myself sitting there with my eyes closed, repeatedly soliciting calls and getting none. So, with about 90 minutes left to my shift, I moved to 30 meters. There, after a few CQs, a pileup erupted with stations calling from India, Europe, and North America. There were even a few Brazilian stations. My rate quickly got up to over 100 per hour for most of the remaining time but about 15 minutes before my shift ended, the 30-meter band just evaporated. Those signals I could still hear were very watery sounding and nearly impossible to decode.

Rusty came in to start his 4 to 8 AM shift, and I left to go back to my room and grab some sack time. I set my clock for 6:30 AM so I wouldn't miss having some breakfast and was prepared to go back to sleep in preparation for my noon to 4 PM shift.

At 6:30 my alarm roused me and I made my way downstairs to have a quick shower. When I hit the light switch, there was no light. I thought "hmm, the bulb burned out" but then I realized that there were no

lights on in the building. Right around 6 AM, Xai Xai was hit by a massive power outage. Our four stations were off the air. There was some debate about using the emergency generator but the reading on the unloaded output was 270 volts which appeared to be too high for our equipment. As the team discussed possible solutions – running a hot plate on the line to load it, for example, six of us took our van into Xai Xai. For several of us, this was our first view of the town besides the nighttime view we had upon arrival. The traffic lights were all out, of course, and most shops were closed. A modest supermarket, however, was open. This allowed us to buy some food for lunch and dinner. It also gave us a chance to see the town, the outskirts, and the people.

At 11 AM the power was still out. We decided to try our luck with the emergency generator and found that it could power up two radios, without amplifiers. So, for now, we had the two CW stations at just 100 watts, operating on two HF bands. My noon to 4 PM shift would take place, after all. Then the power returned at 11:15 AM.

Monday morning, October 20 I did a midnight to 4 AM shift and then grabbed a few hours of sleep. I forced myself to get up around 6 AM so I could have some bran cereal and coffee. If I sleep through it; I lose it ☺. Instead of my alarm clock awakening me, it is very loud peals of thunder that do the job. Around 2 AM, while I was in the middle of a huge pileup on 30 meters, lightning began striking the sea nearby and we decided to cease operation. Not only that, we disconnected all the antennas lines to all the radios, and sat it out. I resumed operating around 25 minutes later after hearing no thunder nor seeing any lightning for five straight minutes. During the remaining hour and a half, I enjoyed a very consistent run of stations from India, Asia, Europe and North America. My rate meter had hit over 150 per hour at times, then it would drop down below 100 as I struggled to pull callsigns out of the wall of sound.

At 4 AM Rusty relieved me and was given the gift of a still-going-strong 30 meter pileup (that continued for another two and half hours!). I headed back to my sleeping quarters and was unconscious by 4:30 AM.

My next shift was noon-to-4PM, assuming this storm moved on by then. There were still frequent thunder crashes, which meant there's lightning somewhere close by. I hadn't ventured out of my building to see if the stations had ceased operation, but I am pretty certain they did.

Xai Xai Africa

We were located at Xai Xai beach which is more than a dozen kilometers from Xai Xai town. There is a dirt road that passes parallel to the beach and right by our two operating buildings. Every morning we saw local men, women, and teens walking from Xai Xai town to jobs at the far end of the road near a small collection of bars and restaurants. Here at our compound, each morning several women came by to tidy up the buildings and to help Ian prepare the breakfast and lunch.

During my noon to 4 PM shift I faced a window that looks out on the road and the dunes leading to the beach. I saw a steady parade of women carrying large bundles of wood (mostly small tree limbs) on their heads. They usually held it in place with one hand while walking, but some of the women do not hold them at all. They are adept at balancing that load as they walk. Quite amazing. Realizing that those bundles probably weigh at least 30 pounds, I feel a sympathetic ache in my spinal column imagining the two inches of height I would lose carrying those bundles on my head.



Some of the locals going home in the afternoon carrying wood to either sell or use for cooking.

During our ride into Xai Xai town the previous morning, we passed many different dwellings on the sides of the road. Some were large houses, well constructed, surrounded by walls and fences. Others looked like make-shift shacks of corrugated tin, cinder blocks, and improvised windows and doors. Once we hit town, we saw that most of the stores were small ones that were essentially functional but far from enticing looking. The people were mostly milling around (it was Sunday). Judging by the dwellings, it was clear that most of the people had meager incomes. The currency – MediCais – trades for 30 to the dollar. Some of the crew members arranged for the women at the compound to do their laundry one day. Each man paid 100 MediCais to have his clothes washed and hung out to dry. That's the equivalent of about \$3! And, it seemed like the women were very happy to get that much. I found myself thinking about how spoiled so many of us are, taking for granted things like supermarkets, cars, cell phones, and the like. I'm hoping that my appreciation of what I have lasts for a long time after I return.

Next shift

I'm on, again, from noon-to-4 PM. Let me explain the difference between the two shifts (midnight to 4 AM and noon to 4 PM). The midnight shift focuses entirely on the lower-frequency HF bands (30, 40, 80 and 160 meters). The noon shift focuses on the higher frequency bands (10, 12, 15, 17 and 20 meters). In general, the noise level is lower on the higher frequency bands. But, there's no guarantee that there will callers, or that we will hear them. One day at the noon shift, we heard no one on 10, 12, and 15 meters. The 20 meter band had some moderate activity, but the 17 meter band was really jumping. The previous night, there was some activity on 80 meters but the noise level was very high so it was difficult to pull out a callsign. The noise would rise and fall, and the signals would fade and then rise, and it all happened very rapidly so that you would hear a character or two, and miss a character or two. It would take a sustained fade or burst in order to pull out all the characters, or repeated attempts hoping that the fades would occur at different points in the callsign to allow you to fill in what you missed. On 40 meters it was a little less noisy but the signal levels were higher. Unfortunately, there were not many callers. So, after nearly an hour, I had logged only 13 QSOs on the two bands combined. So, by 1 AM I went to 30 meters and after a few CQs, I found myself sitting on a sizeable pileup. I love pileups. It is a real challenge to pull callsigns out of the cacophonous stir. You'll hear a character or two of one station then he/she is buried by the other caller that lagged behind a second or two. You find your brain focuses on the audible frequency of that station and hopes he/she will repeat the callsign after the others pause, and you'll get the whole thing. You can't wait too long, though, because then everyone starts calling again, at various times, and it becomes chaotic. So, even if you missed a callsign, you will send "tu C82DX up" (translation "thank you, this is C82DX listening up above my calling frequency"). This is the same exchange you give when you've actually completed a two-way. It serves to synchronize the callers, again, and to stop the free-running morass of callers.

I've never had to deal with a pileup from this perspective before. In the past, when I decided to participate, I was one of the callers. So, I would listen to the DXpedition operator and not be sending when he was sending, and then look at the panadaptor to see if there was a hole in the mass of callers. If I spotted one, I would move to that frequency and on the next pause, call until I hear the DXpedition operator calling either me or someone else. And, I would just repeat that process.

As the DXpedition operator, I am sending on a single frequency and tuning around at least 1 KHz above that frequency looking for discernible callsigns. It is also my responsibility to control the pileup so that it does not devolve into a chaotic mass of uncoordinated callers. I have gained a new respect for DXpedition operators who do this job well.

Weather report

It is 8:40 AM, now, and the lightning and thunder have ceased. I should try to grab an hour or two of sleep in preparation for my noon shift. Rusty is having a quick breakfast bite and asked me to tell folks that the Titanex, which was bent nearly horizontal during yesterdays rain and wind storm is now mostly vertical, again. That's the beauty of having antenna sections that conform to their original shape once the wind abates.

It's Tuesday morning, October 21. My shift has changed from the previous 12-4 AM and PM and noon to 4 PM. I start sets of 8 to 12 shifts. So, for the first time in many days, I got to sleep for more than three hours at a time.

The weather is rainy, windy and gray. Good weather to be sitting at a radio station.



The angry sea during the storm



A small lake is starting to form in front of our compound. This dirt road has many depressions, and all are filling with water.

It's just short of 7 AM and I'm hoping to have a quick bowl of bran cereal and cup of coffee before starting my 8 AM shift.

[to be concluded]

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News & Notes

Jerry AC4BT

This is a new column where members can report their activities, happenings and achievements, both radio-related and personal. Please send brief notes to Jerry AC4BT at jweisskobl@gmail.com.

Rob K6RB: I am making a late resolution to get on using my Globe King 500/75A-4 station and work slower OPs up the band, spreading the word about CWops and CW Academy. So, chances are if you hear me on the air - and it's not CWT - I'm operating the antique station from 1954/1955. I'd love to get comments about how it sounds, too :-).

Glenn VE3GNS: Writing to the gang from the frozen white wilds of Eastern Ontario. Winter arrived with a vengeance in early December with cold temperatures and an extended period of freezing rain, driving mishaps and power outages. This winter is more like the winters of old and COLD. Wind chills have approached -40C. So far, no serious problems with antennas, as each time there is a freezing rain or wind warning they are lowered. I can still load a lowered antenna but I create a little more QSB. Groundhog Day is this weekend, which simply means that winter is half over, HI.

Jim N3JT: I am spending winter in South Florida this year, in Boynton Beach. I am remotely operating my Virginia station at 100 watts and am about to put up a temporary vertical antenna, with fingers crossed that the HOA doesn't create too big a fuss. Meanwhile, John N3AM is also spending the winter in Boynton Beach, but not close enough for a wire between the two QTHs! John is using a wire and making contacts.

Jay W5JQ found himself employed from April through November doing what he loves doing; geological field work exploring for new mineral deposits in the western United States. He does this on a consulting basis and the workload meant that he had to pass the CW Academy reigns to the capable hands of Rob K6RB, and Jack W0UCE. This obviously put a dent into CW operating.

After all these years of being a field geologist and playing handball, his hip became more of a nuisance which led to its replacement the middle of January. He's up and walking, back on the air, and ready for some CWT's, rag chews and working DXpeditions. He also will be back to the field this April, but this time with a K2 and portable antennas for his trailer home out in Nevada. He looks forward to many QSOs with members from his home station in Colorado and from his portable locations out west when the field season begins.

Gary KR8V will be activating W1AW/8 from Michigan during the week of Feb. 18 – 25 for ARRL Centennial credit. He has signed up for 16 hours of CW operation throughout the week. He will be easy to find, even if propagation doesn't favor your path – just look for the pileups!

Fred K6DGW (a.k.a. Skip, especially on SOTA) reports that Roy, G4SSH, who has been collecting the international SOTA news for the SOTAWatch reflector, has encountered some serious family issues (son with terminal cancer). Fred has been reporting the North American SOTA activities to him, and decided his contribution to help Roy out would be to take on the job as an Interim SOTA Reporter until a UK candidate can be identified. The reflector can be viewed

at www.sotawatch.org and Fred encourages anyone who is involved in Summits On The Air to forward your activity reports to k6dgw@foothill.net. Roughly 2/3 of all SOTA Q's take place on CW, and there are a number of formerly phone-only troops racing to learn the code.

Pete W1RM reports that the following CWops members are on the air from FT5ZM: EY8MM, K4ZLE, K9CT, UA3AB, WB9Z. Go work 'em!

Peter N4UP is still getting settled in to the new QTH, nearly 15 acres in Lunenburg County, VA. He lost his hex beam a few weeks ago so he's back to using the 160 meter OCF dipole on the higher bands. The new HDX572 tower has arrived so he's now just waiting for the 10-element LPDA and the professional tower installer (Don Daso, K4ZA). Hopefully everything will be installed and operational by early spring.

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CW Academy

Rob K6RB and Will WJ9B

We have finished the first half of the January-February semester. There have been a few students who left the program due to schedule conflicts that emerged after they started but, by and large, our largest group of students is still in place and continuing to make progress.

There has been a lot of sharing of ideas by the advisors that has helped to improve our program. Cap W0CCA has provided us with information about iCW, and online CW network, which could allow the Levels 2 and 3 students to engage in online CW using paddles while avoiding the QRM, QSB and other issues of practicing on the air. Jerry AC4BT has been using a program for creating MP3 files of typical QSO exchanges so that he can give realistic practice files to his Level 2 students.

Our signups for April-May 2014 have been full for several weeks now and the signups for Sep-Oct 2014 are near full. In essence, we have an almost 12 month backlog of signups. That is both good and bad. It's good because it means the program is growing in popularity. It's bad because it requires signups to wait for almost a year to participate in the program.

How do we fix this? The answer is simple – we need more advisors. And, for those members who cannot earmark two one-hour online sessions a week for eight weeks, please consider being a “utility advisor” who is assigned to one student who also cannot accommodate a fixed schedule and work with that student online or (for Level 2 and 3) on the air. If you think you can help out with CW Academy, please go to the CW Academy tab and follow it to the advisor section, and fill out an advisor signup sheet. Thanks.

73,

Rob and Will

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CWT Mini-Tests

by Hank Garretson W6SX

Recruiting new members. CWTs are a great opportunity to grow CWops. If you work a non-member a few times, please consider asking if he or she would like to join CWops. First step is to review the CWops membership page <http://www.cwops.org/membership.html>. Then check the Status Chart <http://www.cwops.org/members/status.html>. Probably the best way to ask the potential recruit is via email. You can explain what CWops is all about and include a link to the CWops website. Once the ham says yes, go to <http://www.cwops.org/members/nominationsignup.html> to start the formal process. After you nominate someone, it helps to post to the CWops list encouraging other members to sponsor the new nominee.

TUs. I appreciate a friendly TU as much as the next guy. But ... ending your S&P exchange with a TU is asking for trouble. Maybe it's just me or maybe I'm just too fast on the draw, but an ending TU always throws me for a loop:

CQ CWT W6SX
w3xxx
w3xxx HANK 61
W6SX BOB PA **TU**
TU W6SX

I'm very likely to send my TU right on top of w3xxx's TU. It is just built into my brain that a contest S&P exchange does not end with TU. Fortunately I run full QSK and can abort and then send another TU. But many operators do not have QSK and a double results. It doesn't matter that much in our fun CWTs, but in other contests, the double causes confusion at best and a NIL at worse. If you want to send TU, try sending it at the beginning of your S&P exchange.

W6SX TU BOB PA

The advantage this way is that, for some, the TU can be a sync byte.

The same confusion applies (in spades) to BK or K at the end of an exchange. BK, K, and other ending signals generally are confusing and unnecessary in contest exchanges.

CWT activity continues to grow. Yee Haw. CU all in the next one.

In the photo below, Gary KC9EE sports the CWops hat he won for being the second to accomplish a QRP CWT Hat Trick. The K3 is brand new--Gary used a KX3 for his Hat Trick. We still have one QRP and two HP Hat Trick hats to give out--who's next?



CW Exuberantly,

Hank W6SX

CWT Manager

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CWops Awards

Pete W1RM

ACA/CMA

<u>Call</u>	<u>ACA</u>	<u>CMA</u>
VE3KI*	205	2417
N1EN*	152	355
W1RM*	152	2930
F6HKA*	146	2293
K6RB*	134	2356
N5RR*	132	2852

W0VX*	112	1443
AD1C*	109	1098
KZ5D*	101	3020
K1ESE*	100	1215
W9ILY*	74	1691
K6DGW*	74	1149
W1UU*	62	1305
OH2BN*	45	530
NN6T*	44	1145
EA8OM/DJ1OJ/EF8O*	41	1896
FG8NY*	41	1355
W4VQ*	0	1351

* Updated in January

The Annual Competition Award (ACA) is based on the number of members worked each calendar year. You get one point per member worked, once per year. It resets to zero at the beginning of each year. The Cumulative Member Award (CMA) is based on how many members you've worked since January 3, 2010 on each band and continues to grow in perpetuity. The CWops Award Manager (CAM) software, available at no cost, will help you keep track of your ACA and CMA totals.

DXCC

<u>Call</u>	<u>Total</u>
W1RM	121
OH2BN	112
W4VQ	105
F6HKA	92
EA8OM	85
N5RR	81
EA1WX	80
KZ5D	77
VK3KI	74
K1ESE	73
KR3E	73
W9ILY	69
AD1C	65
NN6T	63
W1UU	61
FG8NY	59
W6KY	52
4Z1UF	50
K6RB	48
K6DGW	28

WAS

<u>Call</u>	<u>Total</u>
N5RR	50
F6HKA	49
W1RM	49
AD1C	48
K6DGW	48
K6RB	48
KZ5D	48
NN6T	48
VE3KI	48
W6KY	48
W9ILY	48
EA8OM	47
K1ESE	47
KR3E	47
EA1WX	46
FG8NY	46
W1UU	45
OH2BN	42
4Z1UF	36

WAE

<u>Call</u>	<u>Total</u>
W1RM	41
OH2BN	40
EA8OM	36
F6HKA	35
N5RR	35
KR3E	34
KZ5D	34
FG8NY	31
EA1WX	30
K1ESE	30
W9ILY	30
VE3KI	29
W1UU	28

AD1C	24
NN6T	24
4Z1UF	21
K6RB	21
W6KY	16
K6DGW	8

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Secretary's Report

by Jim Talens N3JT and Colin Jenkins KU5B

With great pleasure we welcome the following new members to CWOps:

1249	AB9YC*	Anthony
1250	AA7V	Steve
1251	AC5GG	Lee
1252	N0AC*	Bill
1253	K2MF*	Barry
1254	WA2TGE	Mike

* = Life Member

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Current Nominees

As of January 30:

Need Sponsors: CO8CY, N1DC, K5UTG

Invitations Extended: K7VM

For more details about nominees and status, check the "members only" on the Website: www.cwops.org

For information about joining CWops, check the Website under "membership."

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QTX Report

Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

2013 Wrap-up and A New QTX Program for 2014

QTX is a program for members who enjoy casual CW QSOs. Any time you have a QSO that goes over 20 minutes, jot down the call sign of the other station, and before the fifth of the next month, go to the [CWOps website QTX page](#) in the Members Only section and put in your total.

2013 Final Scores

It's been a great year for QTX in 2013 and we have a new champion. This year Steve Massey N6TT set a new high mark for the QTX program with 725 QTX points. What's more amazing, Steve didn't even turn in a report for January so his total is for just eleven months. You can't earn those numbers unless you really enjoy rag-chewing and conversational CW. I know Steve doesn't do it for the numbers; he does it for the conversations. Congratulations, Steve. A suitable plaque will be on its way to commemorate your achievement.

Second place again this year goes to Bill Billingsley N5IR. Bill always has a strong, consistent showing and will take the top spot one of these years, I'm sure. Good job, Bill.

Third place went to Glen Hinkley NN6T. He had a great total with just eleven months of reporting. Fourth was Don Haywood WB6BEE who is a fellow to watch for next year. Don managed fourth with just six months of reporting.

Here are the final 2013 standings:

<u>Call</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>CY2013</u>
N6TT		51	77	55	63	59	54	53	81	69	57	106	725
N5IR	41	24	44	41	23	44	46	36	40	41	18	51	449
NN6T		39	42	41	49	36	31	44	43	36	14	41	416
WB6BEE							34	47	69	71	51	104	376
K4AHO	31	24	26	20	21	31	34	35	32	22	45	42	363
K5LY				36	41	26	46	36	25	28	26	27	291
K5KV	10	19	5	5	3	34	24	20	16	37	45	71	289
N1ZX					16	24	18	18	30	44	33	53	236
WA3NZR	28	13	20	19	18	12	11	18	3	5	24	30	201
KI4XH								25	14	50	54	54	197
AA5SR			12	66	48	24							150
JE1TRV	9	11	23	7	5	11	8	10	13	6	7	4	114
KE6OIO			14	11	7	11	15	12	9	13	11	10	113
K6RB	14	3	6	8	3	6	21	5	8	2	10	18	104
K0DTJ	6	6	4	18	9	13	5	16	6	1	4	4	92
WA8IWK	8		8	6		7	9	5	14	8	5	9	79
N4SR				15	12		20	7				13	67
K8QI		7	10	8	8	3		8	2	6	7	6	65
N5RR				11	6	9	12	3	2	7	7		57

VE7ALQ			22	31									53
K6HTN	6	2	4	3	1		5	3	3	3	4	3	37
W5JQ		7	5	2	2			1	2	2	2	3	26
N3IQ			9	5	3	5	4						26
W0VX									9	11	3		23
W6JMP	2	2	2	3					6				15
K6RQT					9	6							15
HB9CVQ		2		1	2	3							8
W1UU			7										7
KC9EE										2	5		7
G4CPA					3	1		2					6
DL8PG	4												4
W4VQ					2						1		3
N1DG		2											2
KC0VKN									2				2
K3GHH								1					1
K2XX				1									1

Congratulations to all those who kept conversational CW alive and contributed to the QTX program!

2014, Something Different

Since QTX began, we have treated it in the same way we treat contests, as a competition. For some members that is part of the fun. But for most participants QTX is about enjoying CW on a regular and consistent basis. If keeping score encourages participation, great. But, perhaps, there is another way to encourage conversational CW.

Those thoughts led to the development of an additional recognition for members who enjoy rag-chewing. The new awards are “achievement” awards. As such, everyone willing to put in the time and effort can achieve the highest recognition – no winners, no losers.

Here’s how it works. The awards will be QTX Achievement Medals much like these -



As you can see, there is a Gold Medal, a Silver Medal, and a Bronze Medal. Each of these can be earned by meeting the following levels:

- Gold Medal - 400 QTX points
- Silver Medal - 300 QTX points
- Bronze Medal - 200 QTX points

Here are the rules:

All the usual rules for QTX apply. One point is earned for each CW QSO of 20 minutes or longer.

All points must be within one calendar year, in this case 2014. Your count will start over each year on January 1.

You don't have to report your QTX totals each month. It would be nice but is not required. You do have to tally your totals as of December 31, 2014 and report them by January 5, 2015.

In January 2015 we will determine for which one of the three medals you qualify in 2014 and you will be awarded that medal.

This will not replace the QTX standings or the competition for the 2014 QTX champion plaque. It is in addition for members who prefer to be recognized in a different way. The regular QTX standings competition will still require monthly reporting and late reports or year-end totals will not be considered in the QTX standings. If you have any questions on how this all will work, please send me an email and I will try to sort it out.

Thanks to all for your participation.

73,

John K1ESE, CWops #792

QTX - Encouraging Conversational CW

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