



Solid Copy

The International CWops Newsletter

October

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© Rick Tavan N6XI

Get Off My Frequency!

CWops “CWT”

Every Wednesday

Regular Tests: Full Speed

Start times: 13Z, 19Z, 03Z (+1)

1-hour each session

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

(Avoid DX pileups!)

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

With just three months remaining in this, my second presidential term, I am preparing to



hand the reins to my successor at the end of December. Many of our members are fairly new to the club, so some of its history may be new to them. So I feel it’s important for them to have more

of a context.

The idea for the club was first bandied about in November and December 2009. There were about a dozen hams involved in that discussion. The one thing they all had in common was a love of CW. Some were testers; some were DXers; some were ragchewers. Several lived in the US but there were others in both Asia and Europe.

We came up with a set of By Laws that we poured over and revised until there was consensus. The ties that bound us were for CWops to be international from the outset, and to make use of Internet technology to keep the costs of communicating and maintaining the club down to \$1 US per month per member. The club was launched on January 1, 2010 and each founding member compiled a list of charter members they wanted to invite to join. By launch, we had grown from a dozen to well over 100 members.

After that, the current process of nomination and sponsorship kicked in. And in six years, nearly 1700 hams have been invited to join. Today (Sep 30), the active membership list is 1303 and 688 (more than half) are life members.

Some of us during our ham careers have joined other clubs. Some were local radio clubs; some were contest clubs; some were even CW-focused clubs (FOC, FISTS, SKCC, etc.). From the beginning, the motto of CWops has been "If it's CW, we support it." We hoped to provide a hospitable environment for contesters, DXers, and ragchewers. The overarching goal was to preserve and grow the interest and participation of hams in this our favorite mode.

Early on, we came up with CWT as a monthly activity that occurred on the first Wednesday of each month at 1100, 1900, 0300Z. The first session was moved up to 1300 because our Asian members said 1100Z saw them still on their way home from work. Originally CWT was a low-band event. People were limited to 40, 80 and 160 meters because we thought it would be more regional than global. We were wrong! Today, of course, CWT has grown to an every Wednesday event and each of the three one-hour sessions often exceeds 100 participants, worldwide. People receive recognition for participation rather than scores, and it is clear that it helps bring out the players every week.

Our second endeavor was an annual contest that was actually adjudicated and awarded with plaques and trophies. The first was held in 2011 and we called it "The CW Open." Over its five year history, this contest has been holding its own and growing. It is unique in that it is actually three separately scored and awarded contests held within a 24-hour period. It is also unique in that multipliers (as in CWT) are call signs rather than countries, counties, or zones. Those who win do so because they work a lot of different participants, located anywhere, rather than working the same ones on different bands.

To show our support for rag chewing, CWops came up with its QTX program where members keep count of each QSO that exceeds 20 minutes, and post their numbers each month. At year's end, the highest score receives a plaque and people who have exceeded increasing milestone numbers receive bronze, silver, and gold medallions.

By far, though, our most notable program is CW Academy. A mentoring effort was first proposed by Pete, W1RM, after his experience in ARRL's Rookie Roundup CW in 2010 or 2011. CW Academy is the outgrowth of that idea. Jack, W0UCE (SK), came up with a key element of it – using the Internet to create virtual training rooms. And, the rest is history. Today, we have about 40 volunteer advisors training over 300 hams per year.

Someone who is not a member of CWops might not know about CW Academy or QTX. Instead, his/her view is skewed by hearing CWT's each Wednesday. The take away, of course, is that CWops is a contest club. And, they are correct. But it is also a ragchewers club and a DXers club. More important, it is a mentoring club that goes beyond picking and choosing among hams who already have CW skills and instead devotes itself to helping hams acquire or improve those skills. Like the

elephant and the blind men, depending upon where you touch CWops, you may come up with a different impression of what it is, and who we are. You really need to see the whole elephant to get a true picture.

If you look at the numbers, with 1303 active members, you'll see that there is no majority of members who focus only on contesting, DXing or ragchewing. We are a diversified group, and that is by design. Each and every member, regardless of his/her operating preferences, can feel proud of the club for its mentoring program. Last night, at the end of my second CW Academy class meeting, one of my students said something like "I have been a ham for over 20 years. I passed the 20 wpm test but until I took CW Academy, I never appreciated CW. It has really changed my interest in ham radio." He was thanking all of us, because we all made it possible.

73,

Rob K6RB

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From the [Editor](#)



Short Editorial!

Solid Copy is a bit later this month than I like, so I'm deferring some material to the November issue ... such as a real editorial! Thanks for your patience. We do have some good articles and the usual array of columns for your enjoyment and edification. The best part of this job is how promptly our column editors submit their material each month. Thank you!

In this issue, Rob Brownstein K6RB offers a [proposal](#) to rejuvenate ham radio by targetting a surprisingly promising demographic – teenagers! Rob's proposal seems comprehensive, but he eagerly seeks feedback, suggestions, and volunteers. Vic Rosenthal 4X6GP documents [elsewhere](#) his long and rewarding career in ham radio. He notes that he and his friends used to print their Novice calls on QSL cards with a small "N" like K_N2VCO. I guess they would cross out the "N" once they upgraded to a higher license class. My buddies and I were perhaps a bit more optimistic. I used my future general-class call K3QDD, writing in a little "N" by hand until I upgraded. Remember those days?!

We're on TV! Our Founder Jim Talens N3JT was the subject of an interview on WUSA TV in the Washington, D.C. area. Check it out [here](#).

73,

Rick N6XI

Editor

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News & Notes

[Jerry Weisskohl AC4BT](#)

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

Ned, K1GU: CW Open. I operated in the last two of the CW Open sessions from the back of my wife's SUV in my driveway. The radio was a KX3 running on a Bioenno Power 6AH battery to inverted-Vee 20m and 40m fan dipoles on a 10m push-up mast. The point of the exercise was to rehearse for the Tennessee QSO Party the following day. My time on 40m was productive and the QSOs had some surprisingly good distance. Twenty meters was generally a waste of time and quite disappointing. The same was true on Sunday in the TNQP but I did get to operate from three counties and two NPOTA parks.



Mac, NN4K: In support of my role as **CWops Southeast Ambassador**, I set up the CWops Call Sign Copying Competition exhibit at SEDCO this year. The location in the Radio Shack was perfect.

Vlado N3CZ is especially recognized for his hospitality and actually helping out with the contestants while I took a break. It seemed like everyone had a good time and enjoyed the activity. There were 18 contestants who were able to work in an attempt during the break times. Nate Moreschi, N4YDU, achieved the highest performance. His top speed was 58 WPM and a score of 15,780 which reflects accuracy and timing. It's one of the highest scores I have recorded so far in doing these competitions. Excellent! Seven of the calls are already members of CWops. Certificates of participation will be going out to all competitors this week. The W4DXCC/SEDCO Convention was another "10" this year. Great speakers, new material and plenty of vendors to attract the interests of hams all made for a great experience.

Dan, KB6NU: On September 17, I taught another one-day Tech class here in Ann Arbor, MI. 15 out of 17 students passed the test and one of the two that failed has told me that she's determined to study more and pass the next time. This class included four high school students and four women. Most were under the age of 40. If any of you are interested in teaching one of these classes, get in touch with me. I can help you get started.

I've also started teaching some basic electronics classes at our public library. About a year ago, the library opened up a "hackerspace," and my classes are part of that program. I've already taught classes on how to use multi-meters and oscilloscopes (both of which the library makes available for patrons to check out), and basic transistor circuits. This fall, I'll be teaching basic soldering techniques and basic Arduino. These classes are a lot of fun to teach, and one of the best things is that they actually pay me for doing it!

John, K3TN: **A boy and his Keys:**

Sending CW would seem to be a simple thing – after all, just by touching two pieces of wire together you can do it. But one of the best aspects of any hobby is the toys and amateur radio is no different. For Morse Code enthusiasts, the key you use to send becomes your favorite "toy" and over the years the series of keys you use tends to mirror the different stages of life.

I was first licensed a little over 47 years ago, as a novice back when novices could only operate on CW. My neighbor and I were both teenagers interested in radio and we went to the local Lafayette Radio store and bought code practice oscillators and garden variety plastic straight keys. Our bedroom windows were opposite each other across the gap between the two properties, and years earlier we had strung up a clothesline between our windowsills for pulling written messages across. We used the "message handling" clothesline to pull dual runs of speaker wire between our CPOs, which allowed us to send Morse Code to each other – a crude form of wired telegraphy. I passed my Novice, my friend did not, and my now decades long love of CW began – with that cheap plastic straight key.

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CW, DX and Me: Reflections on 60 Years as a Ham

by [Vic Rosenthal 4X6GP](#)

It's an indelible memory: coming home from school on a crisp day in early October, 1956, and finding a small envelope from the FCC in the pile of mail on the kitchen table. I ripped it open. What would my call be? Please, let it be something cool!

It was KN2VCO or, as we wrote our Novice Class calls on QSLs, K_N2VCO. Cool enough, I thought. It took me almost three months before I successfully made a QSO, though. During that time I built several transmitters from a combination of ARC-5 parts and components cannibalized from old TV sets. I doubt that any of them put out more than 15 watts. I put up a dipole in my back yard at about 10 feet – my mother hated it – and bought a crystal for \$2.95. Unfortunately, the only one they had at the local radio store was for 7178 KC. If you are as old as I am, you remember that this was precisely the frequency of one of Radio Moscow's massive flamethrowers. Nobody ever heard me.

Finally, my schoolmate and current CWops member K_N2VUI pointed out that since he was about a mile away, I would probably be at least as loud as Radio Moscow, and we made a sked. My first QSO! After that I took some more of my paper route earnings and managed to get a crystal for 7161 KC, which was much more in the clear. I raised my dipole to about 15 feet and started making QSOs. I feel sorry for the operators I worked, because my CW skills, both sending and receiving, were nothing to brag about.

What I wanted was to get on phone. Cycle 19 was starting up, and I enjoyed listening to 10 meters AM with the NC101X receiver that I bought for \$50 of my bar mitzvah money. But in order to do that, I had to actually learn the code and upgrade my license, so I stayed on 7161 working other Novices on the East Coast. DX was for the other guys, the ones with beams and real transmitters. My NC101X didn't even cover the 15 meter band, where K_N4RID (now W4ZV) earned DXCC as a Novice.

Finally, just as my Novice license was about to expire, I managed to pass the 13 WPM code test in New York, administered by the famous Charlie Finkleman with his omnipresent cigar. By this time Cycle 19 was in full bloom, and what I *should* have done was get on the high bands. But instead I raised my dipole another few feet, and built a transmitter that had about 75 watts output and VFO control, and stayed mostly on 40 meters. For some reason I became interested in traffic handling, and stuck with that until I went to college in 1960. It helped my CW skills immensely, but meanwhile the greatest DX conditions in history went by me practically unnoticed.

I worked my way through college as a transmitter engineer at WKOP in Binghamton where I learned lots of good stuff (and "borrowed" lots of parts for my transmitter projects), but operated almost not at all. I finally got serious about DX when I went to grad school at Pitt in the mid-late 1960s, Cycle 20. I had a DX60 (my first commercial transmitter) and a homebrew amp with one 813 to give it some punch. My antenna was a 20m inverted V on the roof of my three story apartment building in the middle of the city. The antenna was held up by a TV mast and the legs were attached to bricks. When I needed to rotate it, I would jump out of my kitchen window to the fire escape, climb up to the roof, move the bricks, and run back down again. Luckily, the pattern of the antenna was somewhat broad! I worked a bunch of DX and earned my DXCC. I worked even more DX

from Pitt's W3YI station, with its KW and beam on a 10-story building, but I scrupulously never signed my own call from there (although I was tempted).

When cycle 21 started up in the late 1970's, I lived in New Jersey, and had a tiny 2-element beam up about 35 feet. But I worked even more DX! Here is a picture. There are some interesting cards on the wall:



Shortly thereafter, I moved to Israel, where I stayed until 1988. I obtained the call 4X6GP then. I finished off cycle 21 with a TH4 at about 50 feet, 600 watts and an absolutely top-notch QTH at Gilil-Yam, near the coast. I worked even more DX than I had ever imagined possible!

In 1988 I returned to the US, this time to Fresno, California. I sold my gear, and the box with all of my QSLs and logs since 1956 didn't make it back. Too bad – I could really use some of those 4X6GP cards today. In Fresno, when Cycle 22 was blazing around 1990, I used various verticals and other simple antennas and low power. I finally got a two element quad up 40' around 1997, followed by a KT34 a little later. Cycle 23, a stubby, broad cycle in the early years of the 21st century, provided a reasonable amount of DX, but I struggled with a noisy QTH.

When we planned our move back to Israel in 2014, I knew I was going to have to live in an apartment. I told my wife from the start that she could live anywhere she wanted, as long as it was on the top floor of a building of at least 6 stories, with roof access. And my daughter, whom I love so much, found us an affordable place on the top floor of a 10-story building with an attached ham shack on the roof! (OK, they intended it for a bedroom, but it was obviously a shack.) I am limited to simple antennas (see last month's *Solid Copy*), but my rotary dipole here works as well as my beam in California. The very so-so Cycle 24 is now on its last legs, but it got me from zero to 281/252 and a DXCC Challenge award in about three years.

I can't talk about DX without mentioning QSLing. I hate everything to do with it – the difficulty of finding correct routes, the expense, the excruciating paper work, and the interminable waiting. For

much of my career, I just ignored it. If I got a card, I would answer it, but I didn't bother sending them, even for new ones. After all, I knew what I'd worked, right?

But what if I worked a pirate? Did I *really* work that station that was so weak that maybe I only imagined hearing my call? There is only one way to be sure, and that is to confirm your QSOs. Back in my Pittsburgh days I used the marvelous W3KT QSL Service. Jesse, who was himself one of the top DXers, knew everything about QSL routes. He would batch up the cards from his clients (he charged us a few cents per card) and send them to QSL managers or even direct. DX QSLs were then returned to Jesse in batches, saving enormous amounts of postage. He would then send them to his clients via the ARRL bureau system. Incidentally, I met his daughter some years ago at Visalia. When I told her how wonderful the service was, she told me that he used to have her sort the cards, and she doesn't remember it being wonderful!

Anyway, Jesse isn't around any more, but we have LOTW, which is also wonderful. It's free, and if you use computer logging, as most DXers do, then uploading your QSOs to LOTW and checking your confirmations is a matter of clicking a button. I wish every DXer and DXpedition would use LOTW.

Now as I look back on 60 years (and hopefully forward to cycle 25), I notice that I never did get on phone very much! I still enjoy working weak signals with polar flutter, or the thrill of figuring out the listening frequency of a DX station in a massive pileup, and carefully dropping in one or two calls to make the QSO. I enjoy looking at historical spots and examining propagation predictions in order to help me lay in wait for the rare ones. I have certainly done my share of ragchewing and contesting, but so far nothing quite matches the excitement and interest as working DX.

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Youth CW Academy

by [Rob Brownstein K6RB](#)

As many of you know, I have been grappling with an idea for bringing youth back into ham radio. In August, I put together the whole plan into a proposal which I shared with the officers and directors of CWops. All were very supportive of the program. Now I want you all to see what I have in mind. What follows is the proposal as sent to the leadership.

Needs Analysis

Amateur Radio is a hobby that is now more than a century old. During its first half century, operators often relied on home-made receivers and transmitters and virtually all operators who used the HF bands had to pass exams requiring ability to send and receive Morse Code, some understanding of radio science and technology, plus regulations covering amateur radio operation.

The U.S. Novice license was first established in 1951 and by the late 1950s had become a popular means of entry into amateur radio. From 1955 to 1965, baby boomers literally flooded into ham radio via the Novice license. By the early 1960s, the average age of a ham operator was under 30. Today, the average age is over 60. If amateur radio is to continue for another 50 years, it clearly needs to be rejuvenated in a way that rivals the success of the Novice license vis-à-vis young would-be operators.

Today's young folks have many more possible distractions than the youth of the 1950s and 60s. Back then, schoolwork, sports and television were the primary competitors for mind share. Now we have school, schoolwork, sports, social media, games (on computers, phones and tablets), and videos (on television, computers, phones and tablets). In the 1950s and 60s, interest and participation in amateur radio by young people was seen as relevant to careers in electronics and communications. Today, programming and computer science have supplanted amateur radio in large measure.

Interestingly, though, radio technology has now risen to a high level of relevance once again, and many of the principles one learns using radio in the HF spectrum can be applied to wireless technologies used in the 2.4, 5 and even 60 GHz bands. The demand for engineers with RF discipline is rising much faster than that of software engineers because of increasing ubiquity of wireless connectivity (e.g. WiFi).

So there is a case to be made with today's youngsters about the relevance of HF amateur radio to their future education and careers. But, of the modes popularly used on HF (CW, RTTY, SSB), only one mode has been found to evoke curiosity and interest. That mode is CW. Today's teens are jaded by wireless access and voice communications. They have radio transceivers in their shirt pockets. They're called smart phones.

Consider how many kids use text-oriented applications like Twitter and Facebook. Or consider the number that take videos with their mobile phones and post them on YouTube. How often do you see a kid actually talking on a mobile phone? It's pretty rare. So VHF/UHF handi-talkies are really boring to these kids. And, quite frankly, so is HF SSB. CW, on the other hand, they find intriguing. As one 11 year old neighbor pointed out to me, "CW is cool because it's like texting, only it's

secret.” So if we want to make the case that amateur radio has relevance, we need to introduce kids to HF CW in a way that makes it even more intriguing. That could be the early primary demand generator.

Next, we need a program that is effective in conveying radio and CW knowledge and skills. And, as part of that program, it should help these youngsters apply for and pass the exams for a license class that affords them HF CW privileges.

If we stopped there, however, the overall effort would be a failure. We would have achieved an increase in licensees, but failed to encourage them to take the next step – getting on the air and operating HF CW. We need a way to do that, too.

So in summary, there is an opportunity for a rejuvenation of amateur radio by enticing youngsters and teenagers to become licensed, active operators. We need to find and communicate the things that will spur interest and demand. CW may just be that secret sauce.

Then we have to have a way to convert the demand into acquisition – learning the skills, getting licensed, and being ready to put what they learned into practice.

The final piece relates to how we can encourage these newly minted young hams, with HF CW training and skills, to get on the HF bands and make use of those skills.

These are the three key needs that must be addressed.

Proposal

Youth CW Academy is a proposed program that aims:

1. to create interest in HF CW among folks in the 11 to 19 year old age range;
2. to enable interested target folks to acquire the skills to meet licensing requirements and to practice the art of CW on the HF bands;
3. to encourage those who acquire these skills to put them into practice as soon as they are licensed and skilled.

Create Interest

Initially, the Youth CW Academy will begin recruiting early adopters to its program. With five advisors who specialize in advising youth, we can begin with a first semester of 25 students. These students would be recruited through modest marketing and word-of-mouth. We don't want to initially bite off more than we can chew.

Convey Skills

Once we have recruited our first participants, we will use tried-and-true CW Academy methods for conveying CW skills. The groups will be organized into age peers (e.g. 11-13, 14-16, 17-19) and advised in groups of up to five per advisor.

In addition to CW skills, for those participants who are currently unlicensed, or need a different class of license to obtain HF CW privileges, we will offer an adjunct program of advisory services aimed at passing the qualifying test.

The objective of Youth CW Academy is have each student be licensed for HF CW privileges and have the skills to engage in QSOs at 15 wpm or faster.

Encourage Activity

Youngsters between the ages of 11 and 19 most likely live with parents. Some 18 and 19 year olds may be going to college away from home. In general, though, the bulk of the students will be living at home. Home, however, is likely to be in an antenna-restricted neighborhood, at least in the U.S. and some other countries. In addition, the cost of HF-capable radios may exceed the budget of many of these kids. So Youth CW Academy will have an “equipment loaner” program for such students. It will not be all that difficult to get donations of working, 100 watt, HF transceivers and power supplies. In addition, having field tested portable antennas comprising a tripod and Buddipole or mobile antenna with counterpoise, it is possible to offer a relatively low cost portable antenna that can be easily assembled or disassembled, used outdoors during operation, and then taken back inside afterward. In nearly every case, such a portable antenna would not break any community rules with regard to outdoor antennas. Such antennas have been shown to work effectively when used with transceivers at 100 watt power output levels. The loaner program would be available to qualified students and be consummated by a signed agreement (co-signed by a parent) that stipulates the student must use the equipment for some minimal number of hours per month. The idea is to encourage a group of students to continue to use what they’ve learned by QSOing with others in their group, or other hams, by using the loaner equipment.

Details

Here are more details about the key elements of Youth CW Academy. The program would be given an initial budget of, say, \$5,000 for a feasibility/pilot program. Budget allocation follows below.

Creating Demand

Initially, because of limitations imposed by the number of advisors available for the pilot program, the first marketing effort would be low key and personal to ensure that we have at least 25 students signed up. Ideally, we would like to have a good cross section of age groups, but that should not be a constraint. If we have five groups of students all between the ages of 14 and 16, for example, that would be okay. No budget has been allocated to the marketing program for PR or advertising. We don’t want to create a flood...just yet!

Conveying Skills

Much of the CW skills part of this program has already been well developed in CW Academy Level 1. All of that material should be usable, and the methodology would not change.

For the technical knowledge required for exam qualification, we would not allocate funds but take advantage of volunteer work for creating a self-taught curriculum, much as we did with CW Academy.

The program would be eight weeks long. For now, rather than creating a special Level 2 or 3 course for Youth CW Academy, we would try to group these kids into the regular CW Academy Level 2 and Level 3 courses, as needed and, where possible, try to give an advisor at least two youngsters as part of his/her group.

Encourage Activity

The loaner program gives Youth CW Academy significant leverage in encouraging activity. The loaner agreement would stipulate some minimum number of hours per month, for example. If a student failed to live up to the agreement, the equipment would be recalled. So ultimately we will need to have a system in place for testing, shipping, and keeping track of the loaner equipment. For the pilot phase, however, it is likely that only some of the initial 25 will want to borrow equipment, but we will budget \$200 per student to cover worst-case (e.g. 25 loaners).

The \$5,000 budget would cover the cost of any shipping or antenna components required. A further feasibility study will compare the effectiveness of, say, a Buddipole on a tripod with a Hustler or HamStick on a tripod with a counterpoise. If the mobile antennas are effective, they would be the less-costly option.

Next Steps

To launch Youth CW Academy will require some management, coordination, and, of course, approvals.

These would make sense from a step-by-step approach:

1. Get approval for the proposal after some deliberation and revisions (if required). Approvers should be directors. Reviewers should be directors, and officers. Others may be included in the review cycle, too.
2. Once approved, a budget should be allocated, and a manager chosen to manage the program. Youth CW Academy would be a program separate from CW Academy, but cross-pollination is desirable.
3. With a manager in place, a schedule for recruitment, pilot kick-off, equipment acquisition, and advisor recruitment should be developed.
4. Follow the schedule.

I look forward to getting feedback from the membership on this proposed program. I would also like to receive messages from those who would like to be involved in the program. We're going to need advisors, a manager, people to check out donated gear, and so on. The ancillary program for learning the concepts covered by the licensing tests would also be conducted using the Internet, just as we do with today's CW Academy. We will need people to help develop that curriculum and trainers to help with that aspect of the program. Let me know what you think and what you can do to help.

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CW Academy

[Jerry Weisskohl AC4BT](#)

We are only a couple of weeks away from completing the September/October 2016 CW Academy (CWA) semester. The CWA semester runs for eight weeks with two class sessions a week.

This semester I am advising both Level 1 and Level 2 classes and it is very rewarding seeing the progress that is being made by my students as we near the finish line. All it takes to be successful is a commitment by the student to focus on CW and work hard for an eight week period.

The CWA offers a unique program to the ham community. The virtual classroom environment presents an added dimension – each student interacts with other fellow students and at the same time interacts with the Advisor. This allows many to succeed in learning CW where they may have given up in frustration if they were tackling this on their own. The group environment provides structure, support, and encouragement – elements that are not present in self-study. There aren't many opportunities to participate in such an enjoyable and productive group setting, especially considering the busy nature of our lives. As we go through life there also aren't many opportunities where people with expertise are willing to share their knowledge and experiences. CW Academy offers all of that and at no charge.

I just checked our database of student sign-ups and we are nearing 2,000 students who have signed up to take our CW programs! That is quite an accomplishment.

If you know of any ham operators who would benefit from our programs, please tell them about CW Academy. If you want to get personally involved in helping others learn CW, then volunteer and become part of our CW Academy family. By working together we can make a difference.

73,

Jerry AC4BT

CW Academy Manager

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How We Were – K9JM

by [Hank Garretson W6SX](#)

Jim Michener, K9JM, CWops # 909:



Jim says, "... attached is me and the 'shack' circa 1965. I was 12 when the picture was taken. Now, I pity anyone who had any of the rigs that I had but it somehow made contacts ... Lafayette KT340 and a Knight T-60 with an Eico VFO. The only part of this shack to survive was me. Call then was WB2SMD."

Like me, Jim is a Matchbox fan. See <http://k9jm.com/Matchbox/Matchbox.html> . Be sure to play the video.

Please send YOUR *How We Were* Photos to w6sx@arrl.net

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CWops Tests

by [Rich Ferch VE3KI](#)

A couple of recent experiences with remote control have brought home to me how accustomed I have become to using panadapter software. The remote control method I was using did not give me any way to see the spectrum display and waterfall in my panadapter, and without that, tuning up and down the band felt like looking into a room through a keyhole.

A panadapter gives you an instant view of what is happening across the band. I usually set mine to display 15-20 kHz of the band during the CWTs. This gives me a good idea of what conditions are like and how active the band is, where to find CQing stations, both loud and not so loud, and where there might be a gap where I can try calling CQ myself. The software lets me click on peaks in the spectrum display or traces in the waterfall to tune the radio, but this involves focus switching between the logger (N1MM+) and the panadapter software, so most of the time I find it easier just to tune the radio the old-fashioned way with the big knob on the radio.

Another way of gauging the band is to use spots from the DX cluster. When I am operating in this assisted mode, I usually limit the spots I receive to validated CW Skimmer spots from RBN nodes in a few neighbouring states and provinces. That way the spots correspond reasonably well with the signals I can actually hear from my station. This view of the band is not quite as immediate or current as the panadapter display, but on the other hand the call sign information lets you know which frequencies are occupied by stations you have already worked versus new unworked stations.

With a software-based panadapter, you can get the best of both worlds – current signals on the spectrum and/or waterfall, labelled with call signs from the cluster whenever they have been there long enough to be spotted. In the case of RBN spots this usually takes only a couple of CQs. The call sign recognition and validation routines are not perfect, and you still have to listen to verify that what you see on the display is really correct. Nevertheless, you can save a lot of time that would otherwise be wasted listening to signals that turn out to be dupes.

Does all this automation give the operator an advantage? In terms of the ability to make contacts more quickly, yes it does, just as many other technological advances have done (VFOs vs. crystal frequency control, computer logging, keyers and paddles vs. straight keys, dual VFOs; SO2R vs. SO1R, and so on). Does it take all the fun out of it or does it make the experience more enjoyable? That's a very personal call; only you can decide for yourself.

Turning my attention to the CWTs, as of the first of October we have completed 117 CWT sessions in 2016, exactly three-quarters of the total for this year. That's not quite enough for North American CWOps members to have reached the gold medallion qualification level of 120 CWT sessions, but by the time you read this there should be several who have reached this level and joined the four European members who have already reached their qualification level of 90 sessions: UR5MM, F6HKA, SM3CER and F6JOE.

According to my totals, which are based on my compilation of the scores submitted to [3830scores.com](#), N5PHT has a perfect "attendance record," having made at least 10 QSOs in every one of the 117 sessions. Two other CWOps members, UR5MM and K3WW, have submitted scores in all 117 sessions, but each had one session in which they made fewer than 10 QSOs, so their

qualifying totals were 116. Tied at 116 submitted scores are KA7T and N4FP, with NN4K right behind at 115, and K3WJV and WJ9B at 114. By the time you read this, all of these folks will likely have reached the 120 level.

In addition to the four who have already reached the gold level, there are 48 who have reached the silver medallion level: 38 in North America, nine in Europe, and one (JF2IWL) in Asia. The bronze medallion level has been reached by 46 more members and two non-members (AD0LI and KM6Z).

Those of you who keep track of the totals at topslis.com may have noticed some discrepancies between the totals there and the numbers reported here. The toplis numbers are generated from the postings to the 3830 list by an automated script. If someone made fewer than 10 QSOs (five QSOs for operations from outside North America or Europe), they will not qualify for a participation point for that session, but the toplis totals do not take that into account. If someone misspells their call sign or forgets to note their home call sign when operating under a different call, their QSOs will be distributed between two different calls in toplis instead of being combined into one. In one session, one station reported two scores, one under his own call sign and one under a special call sign. Because of these and similar issues, the final participation totals used to determine who gets which medallions will not be identical to the toplis totals.

With three more months to go, there will be more members who reach the qualifying levels by the end of the year. If everyone simply continues participating at the rates they have established during the first nine months of the year, we may expect to have 38 gold medallists, 41 silver medallists, and 53 CWOp members in line for bronze medallions. Compare that with last year's totals of 27 gold, 41 silver and 38 bronze.

In the 117 sessions so far, there have been a total of 13,636 scores reported. That's an average of over 116 scores reported per session, as compared with last year's average of just below 97. The maximum number of score reports for a single session is 139. By coincidence, the maximum reported number of multipliers in any one score is also 139. There are quite a few participants, CWOp members as well as non-members, who do not always (or ever) report their scores to 3830scores, so I think it's fair to conclude that the average number of people taking part in each session this year has been above 120. That's quite a crowd compared to the bands the rest of the week.

Till next time, let's all keep on having fun in the CWTs.

73,

Rich, VE3KI

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CWops Member Awards

[Pete W1RM](#) and [Peter W1UU](#)

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.

In the table below, members whose call sign is in **RED** have achieved a milestone: 100 DX entities, 40 WAE entities, 50 states (WAS).

Call	ACA	CMA	Call	DX Total	Call	WAS	Call	WAE	Call	WAZ
AA3B	773	5786	W1RM	168	N5RR	50	W1RM	48	W1RM	38
W1RM	739	4376	F6HKA	152	W1RM	50	F6HKA	44	F6HKA	38
VE3KI	657	3929	W4VQ	140	W4VQ	50	N5RR	43	W4VQ	37
F6HKA	629	4185	G4BUE	121	F6HKA	50	G4BUE	43	G4BUE	37
N8BJQ	608	4094	N5RR	117	W1UU	50	VE3KI	42	N5RR	36
N5RR	593	4068	VE3KI	112	VE3KI	50	OK1RR	42	VE3KI	35
K1ESE	515	2388	OH2BN	112	G4BUE	50	EA8OM	42	IK0YVW	32
G4BUE	498	3184	EA8OM	111	EA8OM	50	W4VQ	41	N5PHT	29
K6RB	456	3403	N8BJQ	109	W0EJ	50	N8BJQ	41	VK7CW	28
IT9MUO	436	1337	K1ESE	98	F6JOE	50	OH2BN	40	JF2IWL	25
K5AX	423	1927	SM6CNN	93	W6KY	50	AA3B	40	W6NS	19
N5PHT	405	1799	OK1RR	93	N1EN	50	SM6CNN	37		
NA6O	379	1465	AA3B	93	N5PHT	50	F6JOE	36		
IT9VDQ	368	923	EA1WX	89	F5MNK	50	W1UU	34		
W4VQ	353	2407	W0VX	88	K5IX	50	W0VX	34		
W1UU	347	2042	N1EN	86	K3SEN	50	KZ5D	34		
W9ILY	326	2639	F6JOE	81	AD1C	50	KR3E	34		
W0VX	325	2633	AD1C	81	AB7MP	50	K1ESE	34		
NN4K	306	955	IT9MUO	80	W9ILY	49	IT9MUO	34		
K3SEN	299	918	PA7RA	79	W0VX	49	IT9VDQ	33		
K6DGW	291	1620	KZ5D	78	VK7CW	49	W9ILY	32		
W6NS	289	1084	DL8PG	77	N8BJQ	49	N1EN	32		
DL8PG	288	1704	W1UU	75	K6RB	49	F5MNK	32		
VK7CW	276	1055	KR3E	73	K6DGW	49	EA1WX	32		
W6KY	271	1966	N1ZX	70	K5AX	49	PA7RA	31		
F6JOE	265	2545	K5AX	70	K1ESE	49	DL8PG	31		
KE4S	257	918	F5MNK	68	GW0ETF	49	IK0YVW	30		
			NN6T	67	AA3B	49	NN6T	29		
K3WJV	238	882	GW0ETF	67	WB9G	48	N1ZX	28		
EA8OM	235	2758	VK7CW	62	W6NS	48	K5AX	28		
NU7Y	232	479	N5PHT	62	SM6CNN	48	GW0ETF	28		

Call	ACA	CMA	Call	DX Total	Call	WAS	Call	WAE	Call	WAZ
W5ASP	231	1018	IT9VDQ	62	NN6T	48	AD1C	28		
AD1C	209	1919	W9ILY	57	NA6O	48	JF2IWL	25		
N1EN	200	1928	IK0YVW	57	N1ZX	48	K6RB	23		
K5IX	200	630	W6KY	55	KZ5D	48	HB9ARF	23		
N1DC	199	698	K6RB	54	KT5V	48	VK7CW	22		
I5EFO	186	284	JF2IWL	50	IK0YVW	48	I5EFO	22		
G4NVR	174	239	4Z1UF	50	DL8PG	48	G4DRS	22		
JF2IWL	144	906	WB9G	48	NU7Y	47	N5PHT	21		
K2ZC	112	767	NA6O	48	KR3E	47	KE4S	21		
4X6GP	109	975	G4DRS	45	JF2IWL	47				
AB7MP	86	617	KE4S	43	WX7SJ	46	4Z1UF	21		
G4HZV	54	59			NN4K	46	K2ZC	20		
KZ5D	0	3239	HB9ARF	41	KE4S	46	WB9G	19		
SM6CNN	0	2477	W6NS	38	KG5U	46	G4NVR	19		
N2UU	0	1774	K6DGW	38			G3YJQ	18		
EA1WX	0	1655	K3SEN	38	K0DTJ	46	W6KY	17		
OK1RR	0	1618	K2ZC	37	IT9VDQ	46	NN4K	17		
NN6T	0	1577	W0EJ	36	IT9MUO	46	NA6O	17		
GW0ETF	0	1451	KG5U	35	EA1WX	46	N1DC	17		
KG5U	0	1322	I5EFO	34	N1DC	45	KG5U	17		
PA7RA	0	1200	NN4K	32	K3WJV	45	K3WJV	16		
KR3E	0	1136	KT5V	32	K2ZC	45	K3SEN	15		
F5MNK	0	1111	N1DC	28	PA7RA	44	W6NS	12		
PA4N	0	955	G4NVR	27	OK1RR	44	K6DGW	12		
N1ZX	0	940	G3YJQ	27	KM4FO	43	KT5V	11		
WB9G	0	888	K3WJV	25	HB9ARF	43	W0EJ	10		
KT5V	0	814	K0DTJ	25	G4DRS	43	G3XLG	10		
IK0YVW	0	767	NU7Y	21	OH2BN	42	W5TM	7		
W0EJ	0	754	AB7MP	21	NV9X	38	G0DJA	7		
HB9ARF	0	723	K5IX	20	I5EFO	37	K5IX	6		
K0DTJ	0	668	G3XLG	18	G3YJQ	37	K0DTJ	6		
WX7SJ	0	610	WT2P	14	4Z1UF	36	AB7MP	6		
WT2P	0	574	W5TM	11	WT2P	34	KM4FO	5		
OH2BN	0	530	KM4FO	10	G4NVR	34	WT2P	4		
KM4FO	0	500	G0DJA	10	W5TM	32	NV9X	1		
N7WY	0	403	NV9X	4	G3XLG	31				
G4DRS	0	353	KE6K	4	KE6K	17				
W5TM	0	235			G0DJA	8				
G3YJQ	0	234								
G3XLG	0	201								
NV9X	0	149								
KE6K	0	116								
G0DJA	0	23								
PA1FOX	0	5								

Members who wish to track their totals for these awards can use the CAM software developed by N5RR. It's available at no cost here: <http://www.bbcyber.com/cam/>

73,

Pete W1RM

CWopsCAMScores@comcast.net

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New Members

[Colin Jenkins KU5B](#)

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

1673	K3UL	Bob
1674	WT9U*	Jim
1675	AF5CC	John
1676	7X3DA*	Hamid
1677	K9IBM	Dan
1678	DL6KVA*	Axel
1679	I5ECW*	Vanni
1680	N5FO	Sam
1681	K7INA	Russ
1682	CO8ZZ	Raúl
1683	K0DEQ*	Bill
1684	KN4Y*	Ed
1685	WD5BZN	David
1686	N2JNE	Charlie
1687	WA3QNT	Bob
1688	KE4D	John
1689	W8WTS	Jim
1690	N3ZN*	Tony
1691	N5LB	Lionel

* = Life Member

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Current Nominees

As of October 13, 2016:

Need Sponsors: N3AAK, AD0BL, VE3ABN, W3UL

Invitations Extended: MM0LID, TZ4AM, W4SIG, VK5EEE

For more details about nominees and up-to-date status, check the “Members Only” pages on the Website: www.CWops.org.

For information about joining CWops, check the Website under “Membership.”

QTX Report

Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

by [John Huffman K1ESE](#)

QTX is a way of counting conversational CW QSOs. One point is awarded for each QSO of 20 minutes or longer. We have two ways to recognize QTX activities - the QTX Plaque and the QTX Achievement Medal.

QTX Monthly Standings

Below find the June QTX reports received:

<u>Call</u>	<u>Sept.</u>
N5PHT	112
K5KV	71
KI4XH	51
N5IR	51
K5YQF	48
K1ESE	42
KB6NU	25
K4AHO	21
KC0VKN	19
W3WHK	9
I5EFO	9
HB9CVQ	8
NN4K	8
K6RB	6
WA8IWK	3
AB7MP	2

Gary N5PHT was easily first this month with another total over 100 QSOs. That's an amazing rate. Benny K5KV takes second with 71, which would have been first place for the month most times. Fred KI4XH and Bill N5IR tied for third.

We had 16 stations reporting, down three, and QSOs were at 485, down by 728 from last month.

Personal bests for the year were submitted by KC0VKN and I5EFO.

QTX Medal Standings

We award QTX medals for the following totals at the end of the year -

Gold Medal - 400 QTX points

Silver Medal - 300 QTX points

Bronze Medal - 200 QTX points

It will be fun to see if you can accumulate the contacts needed to reach each level.

QTX Year to Date -

<u>Call</u>	<u>YTD</u>
N5PHT	543
K5KV	539
KI4XH	497
K1ESE	474
N5IR	452
K5YQF	367
AC4BT	240
K4AHO	227
KB6NU	199
NN6T	161
KC0VKN	123
K6RB	122
K6HP	111
HB9CVQ	80
W3WHK	78
KE6OIO	47
I5EFO	46
NN4K	45
N1ZX	39
WA8IWK	31
N9SE	27
WC5W	17
K0DTJ	15
K3TN	12
K8UHD	10
K6DGW	8
W5JQ	7
AB7MP	2

We have a new leader! After starting a few months late, Gary N5PHT has taken the lead for this year's plaque. Don WB6BEE has dropped out of the program. We will miss his reports.

Benny K5KV is not that far behind in second place with solid showing every month. Fred KI4XH is the third station at just under 500 QSOs for the year.

So far the Gold Medal lineup is K5KV, KI4XH, K1ESE, N5PHT, and N5IR. Congratulations guys!

Here's who has qualified for the other medals:

Silver - K5YQF

Bronze - AC4BT, K4AHO

Good luck!

Thanks to all for your participation.

73,

John K1ESE, CWops #792, *QTX Manager*

QTX – Encouraging Conversational CW

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Upcoming CW Operating Events

[Joe Staples W5ASP](#)

This brief list of operating events is intended to provide members with options for using and improving their CW skills in less intense and more casual on-the-air activities.

Few, if any dedicated CW operators in North America need to be reminded that the first weekend in November hosts the ARRL Sweepstakes CW contest. If the code is your thing, you've got to be involved in one way or another. For those who are not as intense in maximizing their score, there are other options such as securing a "Clean Sweep" or logging a targeted number of Qs in a preset time interval. A little creative thought will suggest other paths to utilize your CW skills. *[Your Editor likes to beat stations that put in more time and not get beat by stations that put in less time!]*

The Worked All Germany, WAG, contest may be a bit of a "stretch" for most stateside operators but it's worth a try. As you might expect, only contacts with German stations count. However, the number of DLs active assures a high level of activity. Over two thousand logs were submitted last year. Check out their website for a full set of details. This should be a good one for our European members.

According to the SE3CER Contest Service, "The Stew Perry Topband Distance Challenge is a unique contest - held on 160 meters - which occurs near the solstice in December. This contest uses grid squares for the exchange and a QSO point system which awards points in proportion to the distance between the stations making the QSO. There is also a generous power multiplier (x2 for 100 watts and x4 for 5 watts) and a multi-operator category. There is even a multiplier for those who work QRP stations (x4) - making it worth the extra effort to pull them out of the noise." It features

a somewhat lower activity level than either of the major 160 Meter contests and hence less difficulty in making intercontinental QSOs.

One of the more unique CW groups on the air is the *Radio Telegraphy High Speed Club (HSC)*. It is a collection of high speed Morse code operators founded in Germany in 1951 with about 1400 members currently. Full details can be found on [their Web site](#). While it may not be a suitable venue for the average CW operator, it certainly merits looking into. Who knows, it just may just be the incentive you need to ratchet up your code speed and run with the "big boys."

Five state QSO parties and a varied collection of sprints round out the schedule. These together with our weekly CWT sessions should certainly keep your fingers on the paddles.

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER EVENTS

Worked All Germany Contest http://www.darc.de/referate/dx/contest/wag/en/rules/	1500Z, Oct 15 th to 1459Z, Oct 16 th
Stew Perry Topband Challenge http://www.kkn.net/stew/stew.rules.txt	1500Z, Oct 22 nd to 1500Z, Oct 23 rd
ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, CW http://www.arrl.org/sweepstakes	2100Z, Nov 5 th to 0300Z, Nov 7 th
High Speed Club CW Contest http://www.highspeedclub.org/	0900Z-1100Z, Nov 6 th and 1500Z-1700Z, Nov 6 th
Iowa QSO Party http://www.wa0dx.org/IAQSO/	1400Z-2300Z, Oct 15 th
New York QSO Party http://www.nyqp.org/	1400Z, Oct 15 th to 0200Z, Oct 16 th
South Dakota QSO Party http://www.kb0wsw.com/SDQP/page_home.html	1800Z, Oct 15 th to 1800Z, Oct 16 th
Illinois QSO Party http://www.w9awe.org/ILQP%202016%20Rules.pdf	1700Z, Oct 16 th to 0100Z, Oct 17 th
Kentucky QSO Party http://www.wkdx.com/mainsite/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=45:wkdx&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid	1400Z, Nov 12 th to 0200Z, Nov 13 th
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Oct 21 st
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Oct 28 th

NCCC Sprint
NCCC Sprint
NCCC Sprint
<http://www.ncccsprint.com/rules.html>

0230Z-0300Z, Nov 4th
0230Z-0300Z, Nov 11th
0230Z-0300Z, Nov 18th

SKCC Sprint
SKCC Weekend Sprintathon
http://www.skccgroup.com/operating_activities/weekday_sprint/

0000Z-0200Z, Oct 26th
1200Z, Nov 12th to 2400Z, Nov 13th

NAQCC CW Sprint
www.naqcc.info/

0130Z-0330Z, Nov 17th

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