

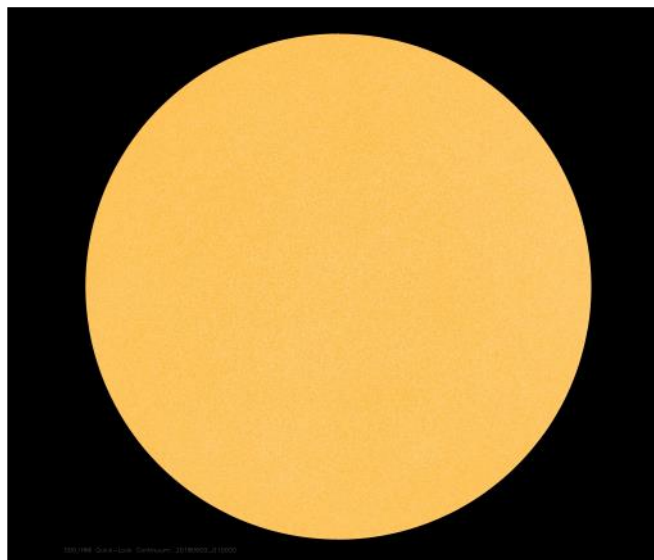
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The CW Operators Club Newsletter

June 2018 — Issue 101



Cycle 24 Update



June 9, no sunspots. See "Cycle 24 Solar Minimum" by Frank W3LPL, [page 10](#)

CWops "CWT" Every Wednesday

Start: 13Z, 19Z, 03Z (+1), 1 hour each session

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

Avoid DX pileups!

US Vanity Callsign web site:

<http://cwomc.org>

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 "and up"

13+ wpm practice: Tuesday, Friday, Sunday 6-8 pm "local time" 7.035-7.045

CWops Officers and Directors

President: Mac McDonald [NN4K](#)

Vice President: Peter Butler [W1UU](#)

Secretary: Jim Talens [N3JT](#)

Treasurer: Craig Thompson [K9CT](#)

Director: Stew Rolfe [GW0ETF](#)

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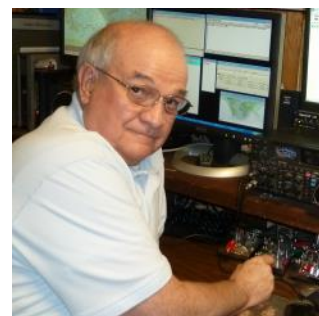
Director: Nodir Tursoon-Zade [EY8MM](#)

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Editor/Publisher: Tim Gennett [K9WX](#)

President's Message

The Dayton/Xenia Hamvention was the main activity in May. CWops had a booth that was always staffed with enthusiastic members ready to answer questions of visitors or promote learning Morse Code through our CW Academy. They also covered topics like our CWT and CWO events. Many of the visitors were CWA students and enjoying their newly developed skills with CW. We had a sign-up sheet on the table for members to sign their call and member number; 110 signed in and I'm assuming there were several more who missed it.



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In the back of the booth and new this year was the CW Call Sign Copy Competition with a laptop running the RUFZXP program, a separate position with a full-sized keyboard and 20-inch flat screen display. Head phones helped participants cope with the back-ground noise as they listened to 30 call signs and typed them on the keyboard. The program measured the response time and accuracy and scored the point for each call sign. If the call was copied correctly, the following call was sent at a 3% increased speed. Conversely, if the call sent was recorded with errors, then the following call sign was sent 3% slower. The process was for fun and enjoyed by 30 competitors.

Those who inquired about our CW Academy were given a flyer with information showing how to find our CWops website and the direction to sign up for a class. We no longer have to tell folks there is a long waiting list. Our CW Academy Manager, Jerry Weisskohl has done an excellent job recruiting and training more Academy Advisors so we can place enrollees in the next semester. Thanks to everyone who has responded to the call to help. Getting applicants into a class right away helps keep their interest and motivations high. CWops has built up an excellent reputation in the ham radio world by rising to the needs of those who want to become cw operators. The training is top notch and the individual attention to students by Advisors goes way beyond what any commercial course provides.

The second Wednesday of the month following the end of a CW Academy semester (March, June and November), the CWTs are conducted with exchanges limited to 20 wpm. This is slowed down in order to give the new academy graduates a chance to experience a CWT. The Advisors have told the students about this and since most of them will be doing 'search and pounce' give a listen for any and all signals that may be responding to a member's CQ CWT. Hopefully working some of the newbies will give them lots of encouragement to continue to improve their skills/speed for the regular QRQ versions.

Some of us are trying to increase activity among the CWA students making QSOs at 20 wpm or less. The idea is call CQ CWA around 3.035 and 7.035 and 14.035 +/- at 7:00 your local time. Which band you choose will be influenced by propagation. Spend an hour calling/working CWA's and then members in other time zones (EST to PST) can pick up and hour and work some CWA students in their time zone. I think this will take some patience to get it going. Advisors can send emails to former students alerting them to this activity but you don't have to be an Advisor to start calling CQ for QSOs. Let's push this during June through August and see what develops.

The NA CW Weekend was held June 3-5 in the Washington DC area. The weather was good on Friday but Saturday and Sunday were impacted by rain. Still, we enjoyed an excellent brunch hosted by Jim and Nina Talens (N3JT) at their home Saturday morning. There were about 40 CW enthusiasts attending and having a good time visiting.

The next major CWops activity is our CW Open (CWO). Similar to the CWT but there are three 4-hour sessions. Mark your calendars for September 1, 2018 and have fun this summer getting your antenna farm in good shape for the Fall/Winter/Spring contests. See the cwops.org website for full details.

73

Mac, NN4K, President



From the [Editor](#)

Field Day Reinvented



Note: Most months I get, at most, one or two emails commenting on what I write here. My column from July of last year, covering the ARRL Field Day, generated more than the typical number of comments. That event, covering primarily North America, runs at the end of this month and I thought I might get a bit more mileage from that column by reprinting a shortened version this year. Not to ignore the rest of the world, an article on the recent Region 1 CW Field Day is scheduled for the August issue. Stay tuned for that.

One of the things that makes Field Day unique is the wide range of abilities among participants. From seasoned veterans to newbies, Field Day brings us all together, often in the same geographic location, and most certainly on the air working each other.

Here's the Field Day thing for me, at least prior to 2017. I identify myself as a contester, and primarily a CW contester. Looking back, Field Day for me has always been another contest, albeit operating as a group instead of as an individual. But in my mind still a contest, and almost everything I did in past Field Days stayed true to the Prime Directive of trying to make as many QSOs as possible. Both for the benefit of my group, to claim bragging rights over other groups, and as an individual to claim bragging rights within my Field Day group. Consequently, I often found more frustration than joy working stations whose operators slowed me down.

In any contest you always have some QSOs that take longer than others due to the skills of the other op, but FD has a much higher incidence of slow QSOs. It's not just the slower CW speed of the other op that hurts your rate, it's the other op's inclusion of non-contesting debris in the QSO. Worst case scenario: they answer my CQ by sending my call twice followed by de and then their call twice, include a signal report in their exchange (not required for the ARRL FD), repeat each element of their exchange twice including the signal report, and liberally sprinkle TUs RRRs, BKs and 73s throughout. At the least it slows your rate (there go the bragging rights) and in a worst-case scenario you lose your run frequency because you spend so much of your time listening instead of transmitting.

If you're a CWops member and you have been paying attention, you have noticed our organization's commitment to teaching and mentoring CW, especially through the CW Academy. If you hang out very long in the presence of other members, this commitment is even more apparent, and it's a wonderful thing.

A discussion on the Society of Midwest Contesters Listserv had its members reminiscing about their first Field Day experiences and how those experiences got them hooked on CW and contesting. A comment from CWops member Pat WW9R was typical: "My first FD was in 1982. I logged for the novice station all night. In the morning Dave WB9BWP gave me the novice CW test. I took my novice test at his home a month later. My novice call KA9OIZ arrived in September. FD has meant great memories for me."

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All of this inspired me to take a different approach to Field Day for 2017. “To hell with rate,” I said. I resolved to call CQ more slowly than usual, knowing there were CW ops at other stations who might find a slower rate more inviting. If my CQ was answered by someone who was sending even slower than I was, I would QRS to their rate to complete the QSO. I’d take lots of deep breaths during those extra-long exchanges to maintain my inner peace. And while I didn’t always do it, I ended some of my QSOs with a “dit-dit,” my way of giving the other op a Gold Star.

How did I do? Our group finished 4th in our chosen 1A category out of 139 entries, which is typical of us. And, my approach may have cut my rate a bit, but I operated enough total hours to still claim the QSO-beast title for my club. So, I can’t say my strategy either hurt our score or my total QSO count.

However, I worked a lot of slower stations, especially during those typically tedious, overnight hours. I’m a decent-enough CW op, but I was reminded of the gap between my CW skills and the skills of many CWops members who are so much better at “celebrating the unique art form” than I will ever be. There is always room for improvement and when it comes to CW, that room for me is huge. It also felt pretty good to complete a Field Day QSO at 15 wpm, send the other op a “dit-dit,” and have them send a “dit-dit” back to me.

The most important thing I may have accomplished was giving my Field Day efforts a new focus going forward. Even a hobby needs an occasional refresh and, this one feels pretty good.

From the Editor . . .

“‘To Hell with rate,’ I said. I resolved to call CQ more slowly than usual. . . .”



Running 80M at sunrise at W9LDX, 1A IN. (K9WX photo)

73

Tim, K9WX, Editor

News and Notes

[Jerry Weisskohl, AC4BT](#)

Silent Keys

Sadly, we report that on June 6th, Kip Edwards, W6SZN, CWops #251 became a Silent Key.

Helder, CT7AJL: To Mac NN4K:

Mr. Chairman of CWOPS:

I hereby thank you for the support you have given to the CQWW contests, namely my winner card in the "World Rookie CW" category, in the CQWW DX 2016 competition.

This plaque will be proudly featured in my shack!

CWops member Ted Rappaport N9NB, author and wireless technology expert, was recently interviewed by Tim Duffy K3LR (also a CWops member) as part of Contest University at the Dayton Hamvention. Ted became a ham as the result of a "lucky break." You can watch the [eight minute interview here](#):



Rick, VE3KI: While at Dayton this year I took the FCC exams and now have the US call sign AC1FE.

I use this when operating a US station remotely. I have used it in one CWT so far.

Bill, KOMP: Our Level 1 CW Academy class had a huge breakthrough yesterday with Brien, K7X-PO making his first CW SOTA QSO on top of a never before activated summit south of Tucson. Congratulations Brien!! It makes an old Advisor very proud!

John, K1AR (CWops # 1741) Named Director of CQ World Wide DX Contest

Former CQ magazine Contesting Editor, CQ Contest Hall of Famer and longtime CQ World Wide DX Contest Committee member John Dorr, K1AR, has been named Director of the CQ World Wide DX Contest, CQ magazine Publisher Dick Ross, K2MGA, announced today. John succeeds Doug Zwiebel, KR2Q, who has been CQWW Director for the past two years, and who has stepped down for personal reasons.

The CQWW DX Contest is amateur radio's most popular contest and may be the world's largest competitive sporting event in terms of numbers of participants.

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Gary, K9GS: I recently operated as V31GS for a few days in Belize. Antenna was a Steppir CrankIR vertical over salt water. Depending on the tide, the antenna was 150 feet from shore. See the picture at top, right.

The results were amazing with 100W. Antenna is on the left in the picture.



Duncan, G3WZD: My planned vacation-style mini-DXpedition to ZL went ahead in late April as scheduled and, although I did not manage to get in as much operating time as I had hoped (serious socialising and sightseeing were the primary diversions), I did enjoy some good spells on the air.

The first location was Manuka Island, close to the small coastal town of Mapua and in the vicinity of Nelson on New Zealand's South Island. This was a perfect spot as my holiday cottage was just a few yards from estuarine mudflats so the ground plane was just superb. Although I had originally planned to take an FT817 and operate QRP, I took my Icom 706 figuring that 100W would be better given current propagation conditions. My antenna of choice was a SOTAbeams 3-band linked dipole for 40/30/20m (thereby avoiding the need for an ATU) and this was erected as an inverted Vee with the apex at 6m agl, supported by a SOTAbeams telescopic pole.

In the interests of weight and space I also did not even bother to pack a microphone (of course, I hear you say – why would I??). I enjoyed several spells of operating and was surprised to be on the receiving end of pileups of European stations. I also worked a few VKs and was even of interest to some ZLs. All Qs, in the



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event, were on 40m and the best DX was G.

I moved locations to Havelock on North Island but the site was inland and nowhere near as good as Manuka Island; all I could manage was some Qs with VK and JA.

The total weight of all the kit; transceiver, cables, antenna, telescopic pole, AC Mains PSU, key (Palm Mini Paddle), 20cm copper earth stake and tools/ cable ties/spare fuses etc, was only 4.2kg and was easily accommodated in my small wheelie bag, leaving plenty of room for clothing etc (40+ years of frequent business travel has taught me to pack light!).



This was a fun experience and validated my choice of equipment; I'll be looking to repeat it in due course.

Bill, K3WJV: I've had my new Elecraft KPA1500 amp a couple weeks now using it on the CWTs and this past weekend on the CW WPX contest. It has replaced my trusty but 'manual tune' Alpha 89.

Being SO2R is not exactly a good mode for the Alpha as I used to just keep it on either 80 or 40 meters depending on the contest situation. The new amp is nice but I still

prefer tube amps like my Acom 2000a which is where I sit the new KPA1500 on, hi.

Fan noise and heat are a side effect of this solid-state amp and I imagine it is the

same with some of the other ones with heavy duty cycles.

Rick, N6XI: I had some slow fun in WPX CW signing WF6C, practicing M/2 Low Power for the upcoming WRTC with teammate AE6Y.

Spectacular openings on Friday night and early Saturday reminded me of our long-lost ionosphere. Imagine near world-wide propagation on both 40 and 20 at the same time!

I Installed an Airspy HF+ SDR with N1MM Logger+ Spectrum Display window for the contest - terrific!

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Dale, K3SEN: I attended a Loudoun Amateur Radio Group (K4LRG) luncheon on Memorial Day. One of the members, Bill, K3WD, had a big surprise for me. Pictured (top right) is a QSL card from me to Bill, then KN3SDO for a novice QSO we had on 80 meters on 23 February, 1962. I was 14 at the time! That was only 56 years ago!

The receiver listed is a HQ-160 and the transmitter is a Globe Chief. My original receiver was a Hallicrafters S-38E. Since the card lists a HQ-160, I must have been ready to upgrade to General Class. BTW, the stamp on the card is 3 cents! Ah, the good old days!



Emil, I5EFO: In the picture (bottom right) we see Emil I5EFO admiring the beautiful and new Vibroplex Original Gold Bug (value ~ 400 USD) for taking first place in a competition held in 2017 in FISTS North America. The Gold Bug comes directly from Scott W4PA (owner of Vibroplex) at the request of Dennis K6DF (FISTS Award Manager).

It seems that Emil wants to put tomato sauce on it and take a bite, so that Bug must be really appetizing! ...Original Gold



Lar, K7SV: I fear y'all are going to get sick of hearing of my antennas woes! After reporting everything squared away in the May Solid Copy, a derecho came through on 14 May and pretty much tore everything up. One of the 40M dipoles stayed up, but one end of a 20M dipole wrapped around it. The other end of that 20M dipole wrapped around the driven element of the A3S at 30ft. The 80M dipole got wrapped up in the tree below it. The wire of the second 20M dipole parted with enough force to

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blast most of it into the tree tops, but I managed to get it down. The same happened with the second 40M dipole but it's still up somewhere in the tree tops. The wire on one side of the horizontal portion of the 160 TEE broke, but it simply fell to the ground.

One thing I learned from this is to use 14 or 12 gauge Copperweld rather than stranded copper for antennas supported between trees. I mentioned that leaves on the trees make it more difficult to get lines in them. I usually use one ounce sinkers but knowing we have new leaves on the trees I ordered ten 1.5 ounce sinkers. Even that has been difficult.

I found that if I give the end of the line leading up to the sinker a slight tug and quickly release it the sinker will drop some small distance. Doing that I managed to get lines in trees yesterday so I now have single dipoles on 80, 40 and 20. It might be time to build or buy a tennis ball canon! If we get a break in the rain I should get the 160 TEE back up in the next couple of days. I'm going to order some Copperweld before I rebuild the second dipoles for 40 and 20. The A3S is on the ground for tip adjustment and to replace the trap caps. I think I'm going to raise it from 30ft to 40 or 50 before it goes back up.

Had a great time and met a boatload of great CW Ops guys at Dayton!

Peter, GM0EUL: I just returned from a few days driving around the Isle of Mull and the Ardnamurchan Peninsula in the north west of SCO. It was also my first attempt at portable QRP operating and quite successful. I managed at least one qso each time I set up the radio and all will be confirmed via LOTW in the next day or so both to GM0EUL and GM0EUL/P to make sure none are missed.

I worked a couple of familiar CWops which was nice, Axel (operating as DP80FOC) and, my best dx of the trip at almost

6000 km (3600 miles), Howie (N4AF). Other contacts were OT70TLS, OK2RZ, TM6GAL, 9A2UN and OE100WMA. Equipment consisted of a YouKits EK-1C (5 watts), homebrew pico-keyer, homebrew Lazerbeam filter (fantastic piece of kit from SOTABeams with variable band width from 200Hz to 3.5KHz and continuously variable center frequency. Antennas were a 20m end-fed half wave and another wire matched as a 40m EFHW or a 20m EFFW.



Here are some pics of the truck at campsites on Mull and Ardnamurchan. The Ardnamurchan site is the one with my good friend Brendan standing in the foreground. The mast on the truck is

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a 7m SOTA pole. The other character is the assistant radio-operator hard at work. We had outstanding weather with high temps of 28C but the midges were out in force and we would have been eaten alive if we hadn't used plenty of repellent and midge nets whenever necessary.

73,

Jerry, AC4BT, News and Notes



Cycle 24 Solar Minimum: A Potentially Lengthy Period of Very Low Solar Activity

[Frank Donovan W3LPL](#)

What is a solar precursor?

Solar precursors -- correlating ongoing observations of solar physical phenomena to expected solar activity a few years in the future -- have proven to provide more reliable forecasts than traditional statistics-based forecasts. Precursors also provide more reliable estimates of the future intensity and timing of the Cycle 25 solar maximum than traditional statistics-based forecasts.

One type of precursor -- spotless days -- can be used to assess progress towards what is likely to be another deep and potentially lengthy solar minimum with similarities to the deep and lengthy Cycle 23 solar minimum. But it's important to understand that ongoing Cycle 24 has many unique characteristics, unlike any other recorded solar cycle in the behavior of many of its physical phenomena. Likewise Cycle 25 will have its own unique characteristics, distinguishing it from any prior recorded cycle. These unique characteristics can produce unexpected outcomes.

What precursors of solar minimum have already occurred?

The first precursor of the Cycle 24 solar minimum occurred when nine spotless days occurred in June 2016. There were 31 scattered spotless days during all of 2016 and only 9 percent of the

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days were spotless.

Periods of spotless days lasting more than two weeks in a row are precursors of a deep solar minimum with potential similarities to the last solar minimum. There were 16 spotless days in a row in March 2017 followed by 14 in a row from late July through mid-August. The frequency of spotless days accelerated when 13 spotless days in a row occurred in November followed by more than 50% spotless days during every subsequent month through April 2018, signaling the beginning of the period of very low solar activity known as solar minimum. There were 109 spotless days during 2017 and 30 percent of the days were spotless. And, 74 spotless days have occurred from January through May 2018 and 50 percent of the days were spotless.

How long will this solar minimum last?

Frequent spotless days are forecast to continue at least through July and are likely to continue through at least part of 2019 and perhaps into 2020. This chart (Figure 1) shows the number of spotless days -- in red -- since the tenth spotless day of the decline of Cycle 24 in July 2016. Shown in blue are the average numbers of spotless days during solar minimums following weak sunspot cycles similar to Cycle 24. This data suggests that we've just begun a deep solar minimum with frequent lengthy periods of spotless days that are likely to continue for at least 12

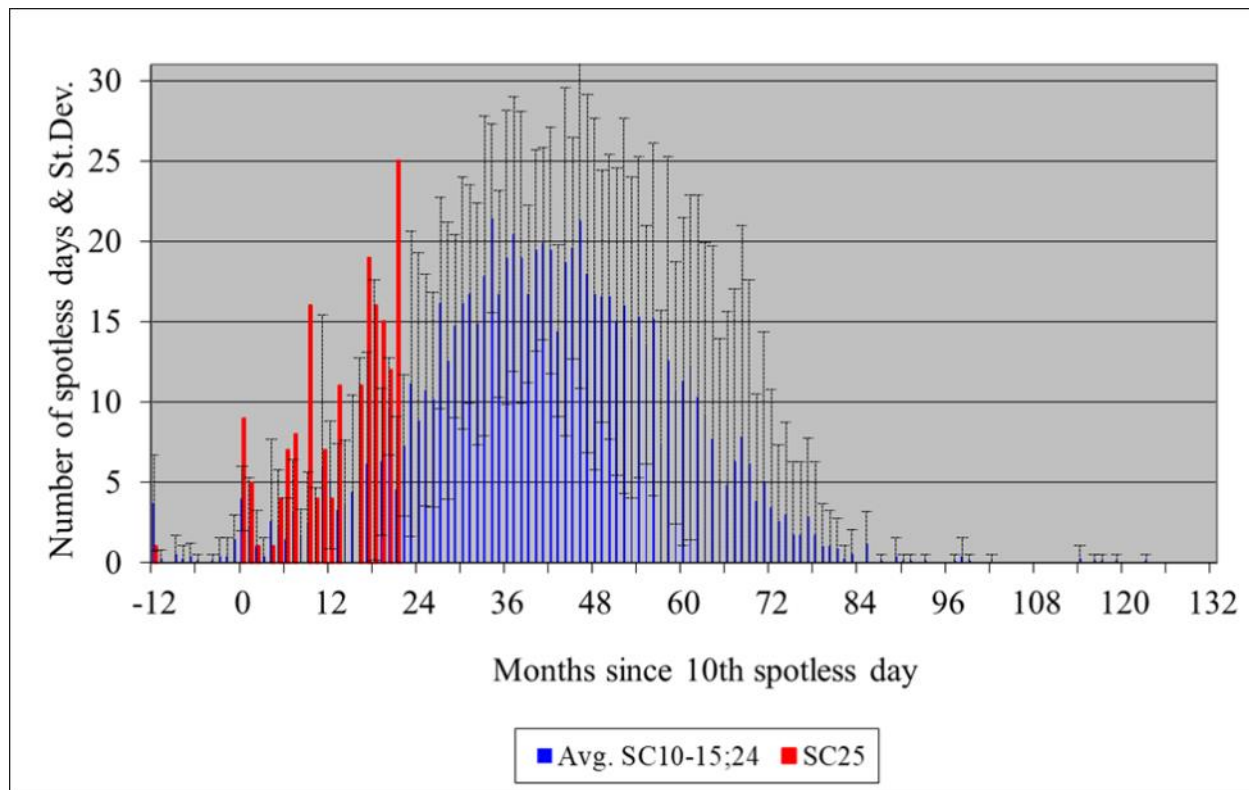


Figure 1

months., but possibly much longer.

Recent published reports prematurely suggested that solar minimum may have already been reached based on the unexpected occurrence of many spotless days from March through mid-

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April 2018. However, the continuing slow increase of solar polar magnetic field strength through at least May 2018 suggests that we've just begun a deep and potentially lengthy solar minimum extending into 2019 and possibly much longer.

Will this be another deep solar minimum like we experienced last time?

A precursor of a deep solar minimum -- which is just beginning to emerge -- is frequent periods of spotless days each lasting more than two weeks. We had 16 spotless days in a row in March 2017, 14 in a row from late July through August 2017, 13 in a row in November and 14 in a row in March 2018. More lengthy and more frequent periods of spotless days are likely later in 2018.

Year	Month	Monthly Average Adjusted SFI
2017	Nov	70.70
2017	Dec	69.46
2018	Jan	67.78
2018	Feb	69.96
2018	Mar	67.58
2018	Apr	70.45
2018	May	72.53

Table 1

Long periods of spotless days will occur much more frequently as we progress deeper into a potentially lengthy solar minimum. For example, during the 24 months of the deepest part of the last solar minimum there were 15 lengthy periods of spotless days, each having a duration greater than two weeks.

Another precursor of a deep solar minimum is a sustained monthly average adjusted 10.7 cm solar flux index less than 72. Monthly average adjusted solar flux below 71 from November 2017 through April 2018 signaled that Cycle 24 has now entered a deep and potentially lengthy solar minimum. Monthly average adjusted SFI rose to 72.5 in May 2018 caused by 21 days of weak sunspot activity. See Table 1 (top right).

When will the next solar cycle begin?

SILSO's forecast of the remainder of Cycle 24 calls for a solar minimum later this year and the onset of Cycle 25 early in 2019. Unfortunately SILSO's statistics based forecast is significantly at odds with current observations of ongoing solar physical phenomena. See Figure 2 (bottom right).

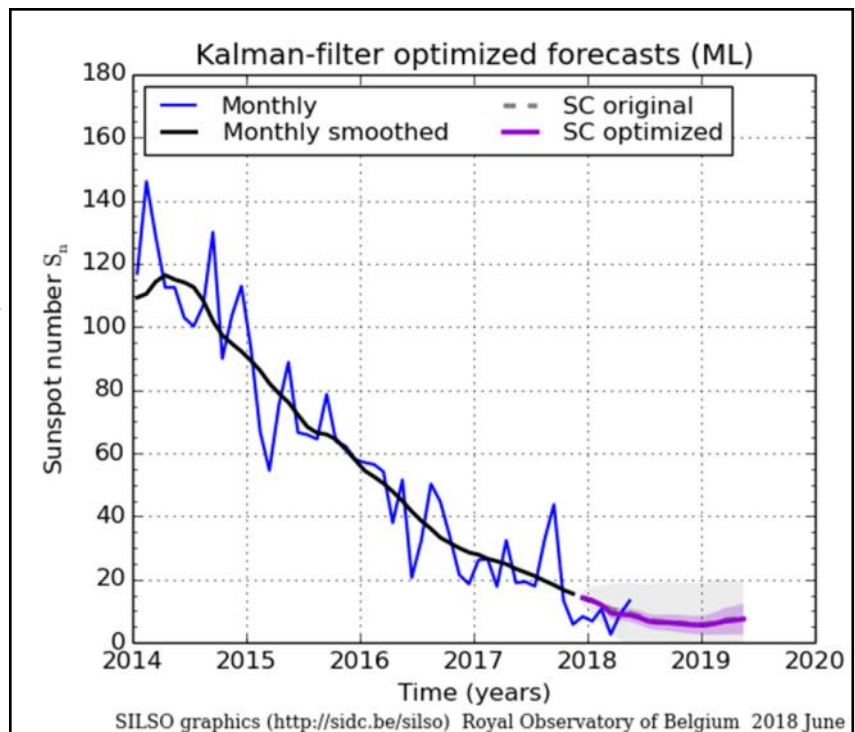


Figure 2

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A precursor of the onset of Cycle 25 will occur when more intense high latitude, opposite polarity sunspots begin to appear, perhaps later this year but more likely during 2019. The onset of Cycle 25 will occur approximately when the number of sunspots from declining Cycle 24 and emerging Cycle 25 are about equal.

Figure 3 (below) from the 2-8 April issue of the [Solar- Terrestrial Centre of Excellence \(STCE\) Newsletter](#) shows the progress of old Cycle 24 sunspots shown in black and new Cycle 25 sunspots shown in white. As of April 2018, only four very weak, short duration Cycle 25 sunspots have thus far been observed, signaling that the onset of Cycle 25 is likely to occur late in 2019 or possibly later.

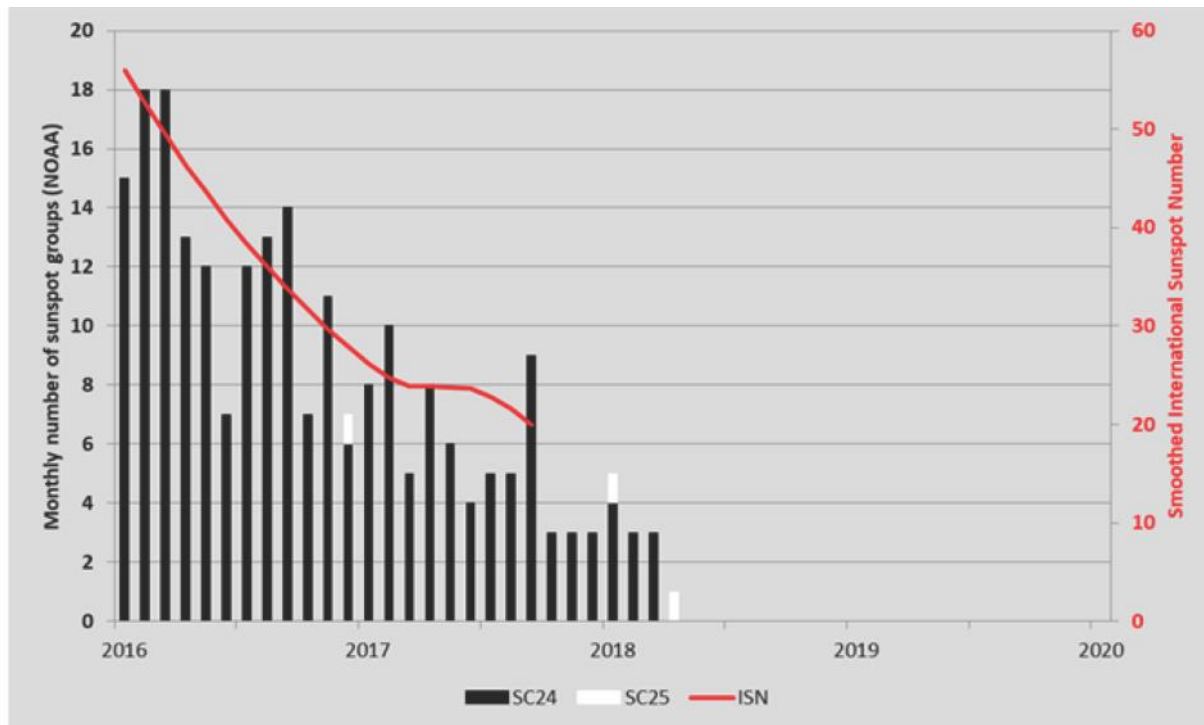


Figure 3

What about the future intensity of Cycle 25 solar maximum?

Although an accurate forecast isn't possible until a few years after the onset of Cycle 25, a precursor -- likely to occur very soon -- will provide a more refined estimate of the future intensity of solar maximum. Another precursor providing an estimate of the future timing of solar maximum will occur several years in the future.

A precursor of the intensity of solar maximum is the total solar polar field strength. A more refined estimate of the intensity of solar maximum can be made when both the north and south solar polar field strengths stabilize, likely to occur later in 2018. The onset of Cycle 25 is likely to occur at least a year after both the north and south polar fields become stable.

While the south solar polar region field strength reached a stable peak during 2017, the north polar region has not yet peaked, suggesting that onset of Cycle 25 will occur no earlier than mid-2019. The good news is that the polar field strengths are already slightly stronger than they were

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prior to the last solar minimum, providing physical evidence that Cycle 25 solar maximum will be somewhat more intense than Cycle 24 and that another Maunder Minimum is very unlikely during Solar Cycle 25.

A precursor of a more intense than expected Cycle 25 solar maximum will occur if lengthy periods of spotless days end by early 2019. Conversely, a less intense than expected solar maximum will be indicated if lengthy periods of spotless days continue well into 2020.

What about the future timing of the Cycle 25 solar maximum?

Steady, sustained increase in monthly average solar flux – perhaps in 2020 or possibly even later -- will signal the onset of Cycle 25. The rate of increase of solar flux will provide an early estimate of the timing of Cycle 25 solar maximum. Monthly average solar flux increased unusually slowly during the initial years of Cycle 24. Hopefully Cycle 25 will exhibit a more rapid increase, signaling a stronger than expected Cycle 25.

Accurate forecasts -- rather than estimates -- of the intensity and timing of solar maximum will be possible about two years after the onset of Cycle 25.

Image credits: graphs and tables by the author, as cited. Page 1 solar image from [JSOC at Stanford University](#).

WRTC 2018

WRTC 2018 takes place in Wittenberg, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany, July 12-16. Congratulations and best of luck to these CWops members who will be involved as either participants, referees or judges. You can find more information [here](#).



Participants										
AA3B	Bud		EA8RM	Juan		KG5HVO	Bryant		N5AW	Marv
AE6Y	Andy		K1DG	Doug		KL9A	Chris		N6XI	Rick
DL1IAO	Stef		K2PO	Bill		N2NL	Dave		NP4Z	Felipe
DL1QQ	Sandy		K3LR	Tim		N2NT	Andy		OM2VL	Laci
DL2CC	Frank		K3PA	Drew		N3AD	Alan		VE3DZ	Yuri
E21EIC	Champ		K5WA	Bob		N3KS	Kam		VE7CC	Lee
EA5KA	Raul		K9VV	Fubar		N4YDU	Nate		W2GD	John

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Referees				
K4AB	Larry		N2GA	George
K4BAI	John		N2IC	Steve
K7BV	Dennis		NF4A	Charlie
K9ZO	Ralph		RM2D	Mats
KC7V	Mike		W1UE	Dennis
KU5B	Colin		W1VE	Gerry
N0AX	Ward		W6OAT	Rusty

Judges	
DL3DXX	Mar
EY8MM	Nodir
DL5AXX	Ulf

Guest Column

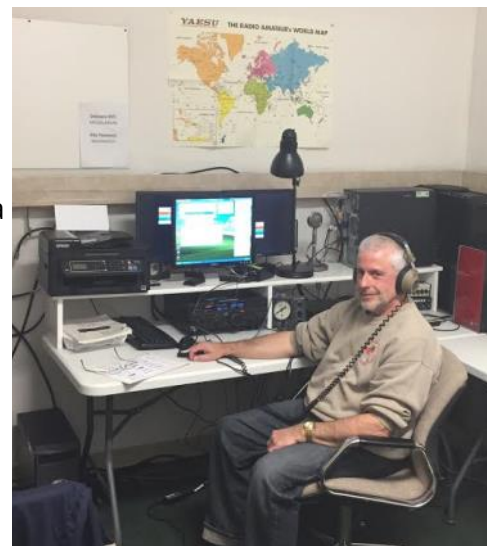
Another View of “Young” Hams and CW

[Joe Fisher AA8TA](#)

In my brief tenure (1 year) as a Level 1 advisor in the CW Academy, in talking to some people in my local ham radio club and in reading some things in ham radio-related Internet forums, I have noticed something: not only are young people interested in getting an amateur radio license, they want to become fluent in Morse code and want to operate portable from a park, a summit or some other such place.

Let’s break this down a bit. “Young” in amateur radio parlance usually means someone younger than 50 years old. The demographic I’m observing are in their 30s or 40s.

Learning Morse code means picking up the ability to copy call signs, names, locations and a few other tidbits at speeds ranging from 13 to 20 WPM or so. They are not generally interested in high-pressure contesting at 35 WPM in crowded conditions. They have apparently heard, at least a few times, that CW “works” and offers a simplicity that digital modes do not. Certainly, with a battery-operated radio and a low antenna, CW is probably the best way to go in order to get a signal out the farthest and maximize battery life.



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Portable operating appeals because many people like to get outdoors and do something different. They enjoy the fresh air, hiking through trees, seeing flora and fauna that they do not see in their suburban neighborhoods and meeting other like-minded souls. Amateur radio related activities, such as [Parks On The Air \(POTA\)](#) or [Summits On The Air \(SOTA\)](#) can quickly become an obsession. Another biggie: small housing lots, condominiums, apartments and such with their noisy environments and very restrictive antenna policies, or no room for antennas, makes portable ham radio operating about the only option they have.

Every class I have advised has included at least one student who has done, or very much wants to do, POTA or SOTA activations. I had one “young” guy who was a very serious SOTA “goat” and infected the other students to investigate it.

Locally, I have talked to a (young) guy who loves to load his family into his camper and head out somewhere. He’ll even go by himself and may end up only a few miles from his home but, no matter, it is a different world wherever he is. He is becoming our expert at tackling camper electrical noise and getting a radio on the air quickly. These people like to pack up (many are loaded up and ready to go at almost any time) and head out somewhere to experience a different world.

Of course, a camper is not required. A backpack or a tote is enough to experience some portable operating.

I do not know who is telling these young people that CW is the way to go. But they fully believe the gospel and usually have tried a couple of different ways to learn Morse code. To them, the idea of a small radio, such as an Elecraft KX3 or a QRP kit for the Maker types, some wire or a simple vertical and some coax sounds like a lot of fun. They just want to throw the wire into some trees or put the vertical on a tripod nearby, hook up their rig, which is probably running on batteries, hook up a key or paddles and go. The idea of hooking up a laptop and loading up the FT8 program does not fit into that vision. They have been told that their low-power, simple antenna situation is not good for SSB and that they will make more contacts using CW.

Speaking of Maker types, what better Maker project than a low-power, simple radio that runs on a solar panel and rechargeable batteries and is small and easy to carry to the top of a hill? There is no room for a laptop to run digital modes but there is room for small paddles.

These guys can be as infectious with their enthusiasm for making a few dozen CW contacts from a hill within a few hours’ drive from their home as the guy who got a clean sweep in Sweepstakes. Guess whose eyes light up if they are asked to help set up a Field Day site? They want to, they just need to be asked. They operate Field Day style several times a year.

So, how do we get young people interested in amateur radio and CW? Sounds to me like there is an untapped market out there and already a lot of interest. The question now is: what can do about it? I really do not know; it is a phenomenon that I’m just picking up on and think that we (me) should look into it more. What do you think? Have you observed this? I know we have members who have done these things and have probably encountered some people like the ones I’m talking about. How about sharing your experiences on our email list?

TU

Hank Garretson W6SX

Check out [The Amateur's Code by Paul M. Segal](#), especially Number Four: The Amateur is Friendly.

What does Friendly mean in a contest?

My rule for contests is that completing the contact in shipshape fashion as quickly as possible is the most friendly thing I can do for the other guy and for the other guys waiting. And, it's generally the most friendly thing you can do for me. The running station sets the tone. If the CQing station, even if he's my best friend, sends me a standard-issue exchange, the most friendly thing is to send him a standard-issue exchange without pleasantries. If he says HI HANK, then he's giving me the go-ahead to loosen up a (little) bit. It's a contest—be contest friendly during the event and regular friendly afterwards.

How about TU? TU can have multiple meanings in a contest. It says Thank You. It also acknowledges or QSLs. At the end of a contact, TU means both. I encourage the use of TU.

But TU at the wrong place can cause problems, both for the TUser and for the guy on the receiving end.

```
CQ CWT W6SX
W7xxx
W7xxx HANK 61
W6SX BOB AZ TU
```

Many of us, through decades of contesting, are primed and conditioned to send TU W6SX as soon as we get the exchange information from W7xxx. Which means we double on top of the W7xxx finishing TU. Yep, it's our fault—we should hesitate a little bit before hitting F3. But, being creatures of habit, we often don't, and we double. If we're running QSK, we immediately realize our goof and hand send another TU W6SX. If we're not running QSK, we're often no less the wiser, and poor W7xxx is left wondering, Did I have a contact or not?

If you want to send TU, Try something like this

```
CQ CWT W6SX
W7xxx
W7xxx HANK 61
W6SX TU BOB AZ
W7xxx TU W6SX
```

We're still being friendly AND there will be fewer doubles and less confusion. End result, more contacts and fun for everyone.

CW Exuberantly,

Hank, W6SX



Hamvention 2018

CWops activities at the 2018 Hamvention started with the traditional Thursday night dinner at the Spaghetti Warehouse with over 100 in attendance. Dinner organizer Bill KC4D and CWops president Mac NN4K spoke to the occasion and a number of awards were given out, including the annual CWops Award for Advancing the Art of CW.



Bill KC4D



Mac NN4K

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Rob K6RB handed out medallions to those present who had earned a participation award for the 2017 CWTs.

He went on to recognize all of the CW Academy Advisors present, thanking them for their hard work and for making CWA the success that it is. Special recognition was given to Dallas K1DW for having achieved the impressive milestone of advising 24 CWA classes. In recognition of his accomplishment, he was presented with a CWops leather jacket, which had been previously earned by K6RB and Jerry AC4BT.



Dallas, K1DG, Jerry AC4BT, Rob K6RB



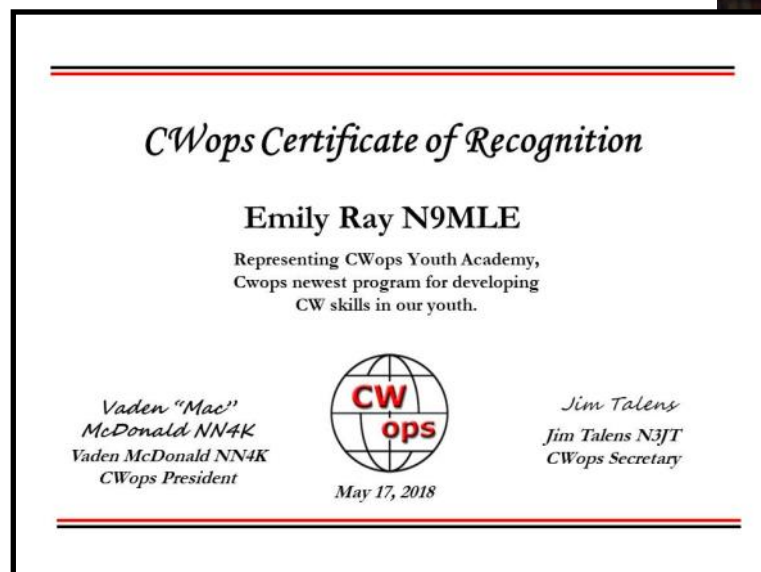
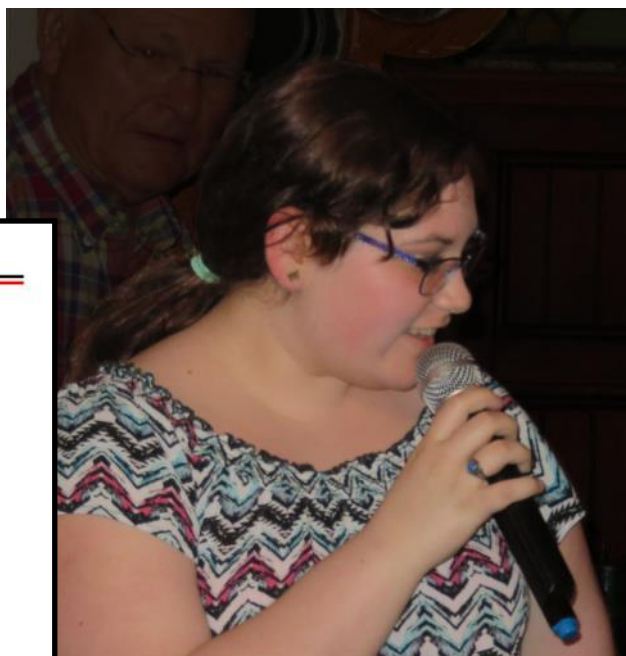
Junior 7Q7JN was recognized as having traveled the farthest (from Malawi) to attend the dinner.



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Emily N9MLE was recognized as a graduate of the inaugural CW Youth Academy class.



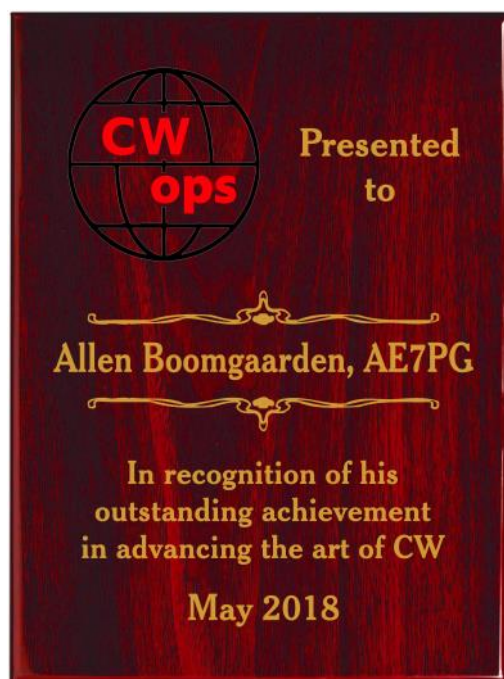
The CWops Award for Advancing the Art of CW

The purpose of this yearly award is to recognize individuals, groups or organizations that have made the greatest contribution(s) toward advancing the art or practice of radio communication by Morse Code. This is the third year CWops has made this Award.

CWops emails a call for nominees to about 50 publications, clubs and others soliciting nominations for candidates for this award. Riki K7NJ chairs the selection committee, collects the nominations and disseminates the information to members of the committee which include Art K6XT, Alan AC2K, Ricardo EA4ZK, Vic 4X6GP/K2VCO and Mac NN4K.

K7NJ was not able to attend this year's dinner so the announcement of the winners was made by Mac NN4K.

Alan Boomgaarden AE7PG: Alan has maintained a unique CW practice net, 6 days a week for 7 years. The net meets on 75 meters each morning, Monday through Saturday, using voice to check student's progress and CW for practice. Allen's unique method includes students copying trivia questions, poems, stories, call signs, radiograms and

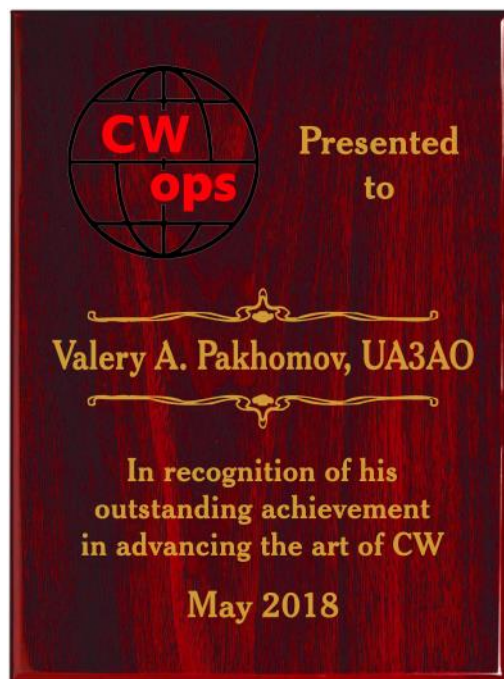


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much more. Each morning Allen starts off by asking: Who is here for code practice and what speed do you need? Students all respond with a hearty verbal “bingo” when correctly copying the CW. Alan could not attend the dinner but sent this note via email: “I have received the fantastic plaque and I showed it . . . at our local hamfest. I . . . will display it with pride. Once again, thank you and your organization for the presentation!”

Valery Pakhomov UA3AO: Known for his continuing authorship of books and articles promoting CW in the Russian language. Most notable is his Russian language book entitled, *Keys Connecting the Continents – A History of the Pioneers of Telegraphy Including 150 Pictures of Keys*. Three of his many articles were awarded diplomas for “Best Publications of 2015” by the Russian magazine, *Radio*. Valery began the “CW for Beginners” forum in QRZ.ru (Russian). He also designed a two lever bug which was built and demonstrated on YouTube. Valery could not attend the dinner but sent this note via email: “Thank you so very much for your congratulations. I couldn’t ever suppose that my popularization of The Art of CW would be appreciated by such friendly way.”



Straight Key Century Club (SKCC): For 12 years a very active organization promoting CW through activities, awards and helping newcomers. SKCC has over 18,000 members and promotes CW on the air as well as maintaining an excellent program for teaching CW. They have a awards program including 14 different CW awards. Their operating activities include two monthly sprint contests, an annual straight key month, a monthly straight key night and a monthly 36 hour “Sprintathon” contest. Accepting the award for SKCC was CWops member Steve Szabo WB4OMM who is also the ARRL Northern Florida section manager. He remarked: “This is not my award. I am honored to accept this award on behalf of the thousands of dedicated members of SKCC, and most importantly, those few members that make the



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activities and awards possible for hams all over the world. Morse code is the universal language – CW, TU, SK all mean the same no matter the culture or country. It is one of the binding common threads of Amateurs across the globe. It is my honor to accept this award on behalf of SKCC, one of the premier international clubs that support and perpetuate the continuing use of Morse Code using one of the basics of ham radio, a straight key. Sincere thanks to CWOps for this award."

The plaque was on display in the SKCC Hamvention booth for the remainder of the convention.



SKCC treasurer Ron AC2C with plaque in the SKCC booth



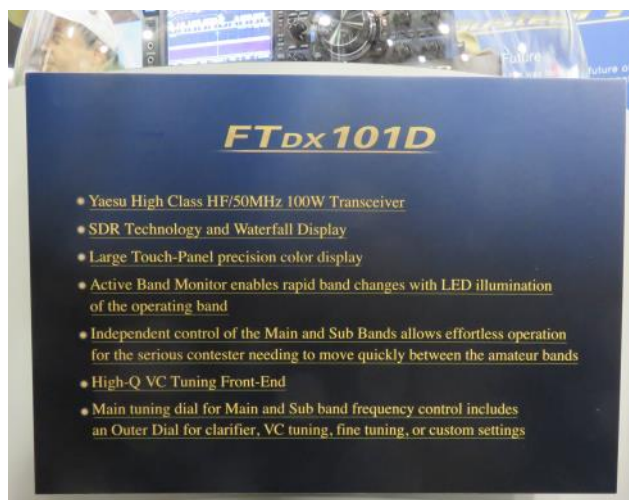
Hamvention would not be complete without the obligatory group photo outside the CWops booth on Friday morning.

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Other Hamvention news:

Both Kenwood and Yaesu announced new HF rigs. Yaesu had a prototype on display but under glass. Kenwood had pictures only.



Spotted in the parking lot by Glenn K3PP. The owner must be a CW Academy graduate.



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Hamvention always celebrates the international reality of our hobby.



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So many keys, so little time. One can easily be overwhelmed.



Photo credits: K3PP, K6RB, K7NJ, K9WX AND N3AM.

CWops Tests

[Rich Ferch VE3KI](#)

There are many different ways to play in the CWTs. Some people treat them pretty much like full-out contests. Some folks like to use them to try out the latest software and hardware gimmicks. And for some, they are just a chance to keep your hand in and practice CW without having to hunt around for someone to communicate with and think about what to say next. All of these are fine; as long as you are having fun and not interfering with someone else's fun, pretty much anything goes.

I've been thinking about some of the software aids some of us like to use in CWTs and how they relate to the ways we copy CW.

There seem to be a couple of different mental pathways involved in copying CW. One is what we might think of as a reflex – when an operator copies code groups or third-party traffic, the information seems to go directly from the ears to the fingers on the keyboard, with no conscious thought process in between. That's not a very good way to carry on a ragchew, though – writing down everything the other person sends and then reading what we wrote is hardly an efficient way to acquire the information he is trying to convey. Instead we learn to use “head copy”, which is much more like the way we respond to speech – we use our knowledge and experience to fill in gaps and think ahead of what we are actually hearing. Afterwards, what we actually remember about a conversation is the gist or meaning, not the exact sequence of characters that was used to put the message together.

During contests, the reflex technique appears to predominate. We need to copy the call sign and the exchange exactly as sent (allowing for variations like cut numbers in serial number exchanges – sort of an upper-case/lower-case equivalent for numbers). Copying that information in reflex fashion is quicker and more efficient than head copying the entire exchange first and then typing it in. For some of us at least, it is also less error-prone. For example, you are less likely to transpose two letters or digits if you are typing them in one at a time than if you listen to the entire number or word first before starting to type.

Using call history files to prefill exchanges based on call signs is among other things a way to give us an opportunity to use head copy techniques to supplement reflex copying. When I am copying the exchange from someone who is not in my prefill file, I find it works best if I simply copy like an automaton, and only look at it afterwards to see if it makes sense. On the other hand, if the exchange is prefilled, I can stop reflexively copying and instead focus on whether what he is sending agrees with the prefill. If he sends something different, I have to decide whether that means I miscopied his call sign, or just that he is abbreviating his name or spelling it differently, and that brings the cognitive aspects of head copy into play. The end goal is still the same (copy what was sent), but the mental processes involved in arriving at that end point may change.

Having call signs posted to the bandmap or spectrum display window from cluster spots brings different decision-making processes into play. Especially in CWTs, where there are no geographical multipliers to hunt for, one of the main functions of cluster spots is to keep the bandmap filled. Not only do spots tell the S&Per where to listen next, they also give the mind a head start in

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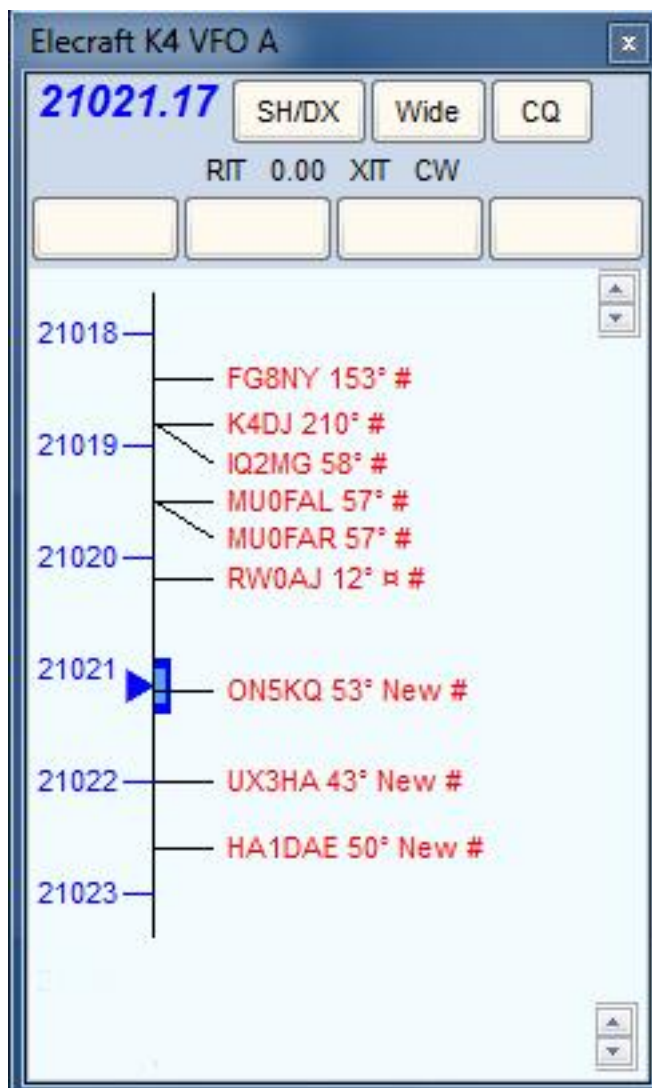
determining whether you are hearing the running station or someone responding to him. It also makes the process of copying the call sign more of a head copy exercise as opposed to a simple reflex action.

Just as different people have different preferred learning techniques, different operators also have different preferences among the mental processes involved in copying CW. It should not surprise us, then, to discover that different people use operating aids in different ways. In the CWTs, we can experiment with various techniques without having to worry about whether or not they fall within the rules or might require us to change entry categories. These can become serious issues in major contests, but they are not a worry in the CWTs.

We do the CWTs because they're fun; let's all make sure they continue to be fun for everyone.

73,

Rich, VE3KI



CW Academy

[Jerry Weisskohl, AC4BT](#)

The April /May 2018 semester of CW Academy (CWA) is coming to an end. Most of the classes have completed but we still have several ongoing classes that are now approaching the last few sessions of the semester due to a later start date. I will have a complete report of our Spring 2018 graduates next month.

Student signups to our popular and unique service for teaching CW continue to roll in at a record pace. We have had over 700 new signups since the beginning of January 2018 and continue to be in need of additional CW Advisors to provide timely and high-quality instruction to our students anxiously waiting to get into a CW class.

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CW Academy needs additional Level 1 and Level 2 Advisors. Becoming an Advisor is very simple. You just need to fill out and submit the advisor form at <http://www.cwops.org/cwa-advisor-su.html>. I will then contact you to schedule the new advisor training. Advising level 1 is very easy due to our well-structured level 1 manual which has all the lesson plans for each class logically laid out for you in an easy to follow manner. The same is true for advising level 2. Volunteering to become a CW Academy Advisor is very rewarding. We are seeing a small revival in the interest of learning CW and CW Academy is playing a major role. Become an Advisor and join in on the fun. This is an opportunity to give back to a hobby that has given you so much satisfaction.

I have mentioned, several times, in past columns, that the success of CW Academy is entirely due to the dedication and expertise of our CW Academy Advisors. We have some of the most talented CW operators as members of CWops. There is nothing comparable for aspiring CW students than being mentored by an experienced, well-seasoned team of CW Advisors.

The next CW Academy semester will be September/October 2018.

73

Jerry, AC4BT, CW Academy Manager

CWops USA Vanity Callsign Update

[Bill Gilliland, W0GT](#)

The U.S. CWops Vanity Call Sign Committee along with the station trustees is happy to announce that we have completed acquisition of vanity call signs for CWops clubs located in all 15 ARRL divisions. Many of the call signs have already been on the air in the CWTs. All of the calls are available for use by U.S. CWops members who can request use of a call by going to <http://cwomc.org>. More information is available on the Website. The Website is a work in progress, so expect to see changes during the next few months as we gain more experience in administering the calls and the logs. The clubs and their callsigns are listed below:

Atlantic CWops Club	K3CWO	Northwestern CWops Club	W7CWO
Central CWops Club	W9CWO	Pacific CWops Club	W6CWO
Dakota CWops Club	W0CWO	Roanoke CWops Club	KX4CWO
Delta CWops Club	KN5CWO	Rocky Mountain CWops Club	WY7CWO
Great Lakes CWops Club	KN8CWO	Southeastern CWops Club	K4CWT
Hudson CWops Club	KE2CWO	Southwestern CWops Club	KE6CWO
Midwest CWops Club	N0CWO	West Gulf CWops Club	KT5CWO
New England CWops Club	W1CWT		

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Our thanks go out to the many CWops members who volunteered to be officers and members of the clubs and especially to those who volunteered their ongoing support as trustees.

Please help us promote the CW Operators' Club and encourage the use of CW by signing up and using one of the call signs in your area. Use of the call signs is not restricted to CW operation or events. We'd like to promote CWops on all modes and bands to draw folks interested in CW to the main CWops.org Website and the divisional clubs' QRZ pages. Let's put the calls in use!

New Members

Trung Nguyen W6TN

With great pleasure we welcome the following new members to CWops (*Indicates a Life Member):

CWops	Call	Name
2026	NZ30*	Byron
2027	N3LBJ*	Jim
2028	W8MET*	Met
2029	NJ1F*	Brian
2030	K2CUB*	Scott
2031	K8GT*	Gerry
2032	K1VSJ*	Howie
2033	SM7FCU*	Bengt
2034	W7RX*	Scott
2035	K0PD*	David

CWops	Call	Name
2036	N2NT*	Andy
2037	KE1J*	Lars
2038	KB1W	LPL
2039	KM4CH*	John
2040	W8LVI*	Ron
2041	W0ITT	Gary
2042	W1TO*	Tom
2043	K8AQM*	Ted
2044	AD4ES*	Chuck
2045	SQ6GIT	Konrad

CWops	Call	Name
2046	KA9SXV*	Joel
2047	HB9EGA*	Marcin
2048	N0PP*	Juerg
2049	VA1RST*	Roger
2050	NA1VT	Andy
2051	K2DIW	Seth
2052	WB7DKZ*	Andy
2053	K7SS*	Danny

Current Nominees

As of June 7, 2018

Need Sponsors: N8MTV, ND8MS, NN7W, WQ2E
Invitations Extended:

For more details about nominees and up-to-date status, check the "Members Only" page on the website: <http://www.cwops.org>.

For information about joining CWops, check the "Membership" page on the website: <http://www.cwops.org>

Notes: If you have updated your personal info, e.g., new QTH, new callsign, or additional callsign, please send it to membership@cwops.org so I can add it to the roster. Vice versa, if your callsign becomes inactive I can remove it, too. Then the roster will be accurate and current for our usage. Thank you.

73,

Trung, W6TN, Membership Secretary



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). 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: www.bbcyber.com/cam/

Call	ACA	CMA	Call	DX Total	Call	WAS	Call	WAE	Call	WAZ
AA3B	874	7227	W1RM	181	N5RR	50	W1RM	49	W1RM	38
W1RM	665	5234	F6HKA	169	W1RM	50	F6HKA	46	F6HKA	38
VE3KI	664	4572	W4VQ	148	W4VQ	50	DL6KVA	45	W4VQ	37
F6HKA	658	4810	G4BUE	129	F6HKA	50	OK1RR	44	N5RR	37
N8BJQ	633	4875	DL6KVA	122	W1UU	50	N5RR	44	G4BUE	37
K8AJS	549	1895	N5RR	120	VE3KI	50	G4BUE	44	VE3KI	36
DL6KVA	542	2527	N8BJQ	117	G4BUE	50	N8BJQ	43	N5PHT	36
K5AX	473	3154	VE3KI	115	EA8OM	50	W4VQ	42	DL6KVA	34
K1ESE	467	3188	OK1RR	115	W0EJ	50	VE3KI	42	I5EFO	33
W0VX	411	3219	OH2BN	112	F6JOE	50	I5EFO	42	IK0YVV	32
NA6O	406	2343	EA8OM	111	W6KY	50	EA8OM	42	VK7CW	31
K9WX	401	2494	K1ESE	106	N1EN	50	AA3B	42	RM2D	29
NN4K	382	1720	I5EFO	102	N5PHT	50	OH2BN	40	JF2IWL	25
WT2P	381	1925	AA3B	102	F5MNK	50	K1ESE	38	N1DC	22
K1DJ	365	1253	EA1WX	97	K5IX	50	SM6CNN	37	F5IYJ	21
N5PHT	352	2784	W9ILY	94	K3SEN	50	KR3E	37	W6NS	19
KE4S	343	1613	W0VX	94	AD1C	50	K3MD	37	G4NVR	19
N1DC	312	2096	SM6CNN	93	AB7MP	50	IT9MUO	36	G4ILW	16
AA8TA	248	1098	N5PHT	92	AA3B	50	F6JOE	36	K8AJS	14
K3SEN	242	1446	IT9MUO	87	K5AX	50	EA1WX	36	NN4K	9
W1UU	235	2197	N1EN	86	I5EFO	50	W9ILY	34	ND1R	5
HB9ARF	214	1056	KY7M	86	VK7CW	50	W0VX	34		
W4VQ	201	2668	F6JOE	84	DL6KVA	50	RM2D	34		
KE4RG	199	580	AD1C	83	K0TC	50	KZ5D	34		
W8DN	199	458	VK7CW	82	KY7M	50	W1UU	33		
VK7CW	188	1447	KR3E	82	NA6O	50	IT9VDQ	33		
G4ILW	186	457	4X6GP	80	K1DJ	50	N1EN	32		
G4NVR	183	501	PA7RA	79	N8BJQ	50	KY7M	32		
N5RR	182	4577	K5AX	79	K9WX	50	G4ILW	32		
K0MP	180	1006	DL8PG	79	WT2P	50	F5MNK	32		

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Call	ACA	CMA	Call	DX	Call	WAS	Call	WAE	Call	WAZ
I5EFO	175	743	KZ5D	78	K1ESE	50	PA7RA	31		
W9ILY	161	3180	F5IYJ	75	W9ILY	49	K5AX	31		
RM2D	152	1182	W1UU	73	W0VX	49	DL8PG	31		
G4BUE	149	3405	RM2D	73	NN4K	49	IK0YVV	30		
AB7MP	138	838	N1ZX	70	N1DC	49	4X6GP	30		
K6DGW	133	1803	IT9VDQ	68	KT5V	49	NN6T	29		
4X6GP	133	1188	F5MKN	68	KR3E	49	HB9ARF	29		
F5IYJ	129	704	NN6T	67	K8AJS	49	F5IYJ	29		
F6JOE	127	2782	GW0ETF	67	K6RB	49	N1ZX	28		
IT9MUO	116	1702	N1DC	66	K6DGW	49	GW0ETF	28		
DL8PG	111	1788	DL4FDM	65	K3MD	49	AD1C	28		
G0MGM	100	469	NA6O	64	K0MP	49	N1DC	27		
NU7Y	97	729	KE4S	60	IT9VDQ	49	KE4S	27		
AJ1DM	91	97	KT5V	59	GW0ETF	49	K8AJS	27		
IT9VDQ	81	1399	K1DJ	58	AA8TA	49	K1DJ	27		
KT5V	53	1467	K8AJS	57	WB9G	48	JF2IWL	26		
G4DRS	45	549	IK0YVV	57	W6NS	48	G4NVR	26		
JF2IWL	28	931	W6KY	56	SM6CNN	48	G4HZV	26		
K6RB	0	4032	K6RB	56	NU7Y	48	G0MGM	26		
KY7M	0	3252	K0TC	53	NN6T	48	VK7CW	25		
KZ5D	0	3239	HB9ARF	52	N1ZX	48	NA6O	25		
IK0NOJ	0	3093	G4DRS	52	KZ5D	48	DL5DBY	25		
EA8OM	0	2758	K9WX	51	KE4S	48	N5PHT	24		
SM6CNN	0	2477	JF2IWL	51	IK0YVV	48	K6RB	24		
AD1C	0	2101	4Z1UF	50	DL8PG	48	G4DRS	24		
W6KY	0	2088	WT2P	48	AD5A	48	4Z1UF	21		
K0TC	0	2048	WB9G	48	4X6GP	48	K2ZC	20		
N1EN	0	1928	NN4K	48	VE3MV	47	WB9G	19		
EA1WX	0	1839	G4ILW	48	K0DTJ	47	NN4K	19		
N2UU	0	1774	K3SEN	46	JF2IWL	47	KT5V	19		
K3MD	0	1734	G4HZV	45	WX7SJ	46	K9WX	19		
OK1RR	0	1618	G0MGM	44	KG5U	46	K3SEN	19		
NN6T	0	1577	DL5DBY	43	IT9MUO	46	WT2P	18		
KR3E	0	1461	K3MD	41	HB9ARF	46	W6KY	18		
GW0ETF	0	1451	K6DGW	39	G4DRS	46	VK4TJF	18		
KG5U	0	1322	G4NVR	39	EA1WX	46	G3YJQ	18		
PA7RA	0	1200	W6NS	38	OK1RR	45	AD5A	18		
F5MKN	0	1111	K2ZC	37	KE4RG	45	KG5U	17		
W6NS	0	1090	W0EJ	36	K3WJV	45	K0TC	17		
AD5A	0	1071	VK4TJF	35	K2ZC	45	K3WJV	16		
4Z1UF	0	1032	KG5U	35	F5IYJ	45	W6NS	12		

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Call	ACA	CMA	Call	DX	Call	WAS	Call	WAE	Call	WAZ
W5ASP	0	1018	AD5A	35	W8DN	44	VE3MV	12		
PA4N	0	955	K0DTJ	30	RM2D	44	K6DGW	12		
N1ZX	0	940	G3YJQ	27	PA7RA	44	W0EJ	10		
K5IX	0	892	K3WJV	25	VK4TJF	43	G3XLG	10		
WB9G	0	888	K5IX	24	KM4FO	43	K5IX	8		
K3WJV	0	882	AA8TA	24	G4NVR	43	K0MP	8		
K0DTJ	0	828	VE3MV	23	OH2BN	42	AA8TA	8		
K2ZC	0	767	AB7MP	23	NV9X	38	W8DN	7		
IK0YVV	0	767	NU7Y	22	G3YJQ	37	W5TM	7		
W0EJ	0	754	W8DN	20	4Z1UF	36	KE4RG	7		
KM4FO	0	721	K0MP	19	G4HZV	35	K0DTJ	7		
VE3MV	0	664	G3XLG	18	G0MGM	34	G0DJA	7		
DL4FDM	0	632	KE4RG	13	DL5DBY	33	AB7MP	7		
WX7SJ	0	610	W5TM	11	W5TM	32	KM4FO	5		
OH2BN	0	530	KM4FO	10	G3XLG	31	AJ1DM	5		
VK4TJF	0	430	G0DJA	10	G4ILW	27	NU7Y	3		
G4HZV	0	428	AJ1DM	7	ND1R	24	ND1R	2		
DL5DBY	0	326	ND1R	5	AJ1DM	24	NV9X	1		
W5TM	0	235	NV9X	4	KE6K	17				
G3YJQ	0	234	KE6K	4	G0DJA	8				
G3XLG	0	201								
NV9X	0	149								
KE6K	0	116								
ND1R	0	67								
G0DJA	0	23								
PA1FOX	0	5								

QTX Report

Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

[Gary Stone N5PHT](#)

Welcome to our May QTX report. I am happy to tell you some exciting QTX news!! Numbers and reports are down a bit for May but with the band conditions and several made trips to Dayton it was a slower month for QTX. However, please note the news below!!

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Additional new category of QTX (MQTX) starting 0000z on July 1, 2018

QTX enhancements begin July 1, 2018. Yes, change can be a good thing!! The current 20 minute or more QTX qsos will not change. However, we are adding a new category of QTX. It is MQTX (mini QTX). Any QSO with anyone that lasts from 10-19 minutes counts for MQTX. MQTX contacts will count starting 0000z on 1 July 2018. I will be asking Dan to change the online submission form to include an option for MQTX numbers.

For example you have a QSO that is 20 minutes - that is a QTX (as always). A single QSO counts only once and should be reported as either a MQTX or QTX but not both. So, you have a QSO that is 10 minutes long and one that is 40 minutes long your numbers would be: QTX: 1 MQTX: 1.

Again, the current QTX counting remains the same. We are simply adding a category to track some shorter rag chews. The Newsletter column will reflect the new MQTX numbers and for the time being no specific awards or medals have been developed for the MQTX - lets see how it goes. It is hopeful this will be a fun and interesting addition to the QTX program. The MQTX count starts 0000z on July 1, 2018.

Medals for 2017: Now that the participation medals have been delivered it prompted me to do a little checking and I found 6 members received medals for 2017 in both the QTX and the CWT - congrats!!

QTX Gold and CWT Gold: N5PHT, Gary.
QTX Gold and CWT Silver: K1ESE, John.
QTX Gold and CWT Bronze: N5IR, Bill.
QTX Silver and CWT Bronze: G4ILW, James Dingwall
QTX Bronze and CWT Gold: I5EFO, Emil.
QTX Bronze and CWT Bronze: DL5DBY, Thomas Maass

If you want to be added to the QTX listings please send in your count for the month from the Members Only Section of the Web Page. Please do consider sending in your points. Each month I work a few QTX with members that never send in their scores so if you are reading this and it applies please consider sending them in to me.

Rag Chewer Comments

(Note: interesting to see 2 members each commenting on the same QSO neat!)

I5EFO: Although made in QRS seven hours of CW QSO for me are many, also because I use my very faithful Straight Key. But this activity of my "fist", together with a lot of other physical activity, helps me to feel more "young" than my 71 years of age.

K2KRG: One enjoyable QSO this month was with Chip, W9EBE. We were on for about an hour

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chewing the fat about gardening, deer, camping and encounters with black bears. Great fun as always!"

W9EBE: I had some very enjoyable QSOs this month, although not as many that qualified for QTX as preceding months. My longest was another fun QSO with Steve/K2KRG (a fellow CWops member) -- a pleasant 60 minute ragchew on 30 meters.

KC0KVN: Bit of a dip this month! Travel for work, condx. Looking forward to some June QSO's.

N6HCN: Longest QTX for May goes to Bob, AB5X, a true ragchewer and fellow homebrewer, hoping we spend another hour on CW soon.

K6DGW: Been working on the CWops Mini-Club project which cut into my on-air time. The MQTX addition may raise my numbers some, 10 min Q's seem to be more common than 20 min ones, at least for me.

K1ESE: Busy month with contests, trip to Dayton and Michigan. A couple of my regular CW ragchew buddies were unavailable. The MQTX program sounds like fun.

WA3AER: Ron, VE3FXX, and I are back into our weekly chats. Our longest was 75+ minutes (new record) and the shortest was 30 minutes. Luckily for us the 40M band condx in early evening have been kind to us, particularly when Ron is operating from his lakeside cottage. I look forward to the day when I don't torture Ron with sending foibles that even leave me wondering What's That Mean (WTM)? Frustrating when you just can't get a word to come out of your head, into your hand, and through the key. It's even worse when you aren't able to come up with a quick alternative word! Now that CWA is over I'm looking forward to making more QTX to even up the score with all the '599 TU' DX contacts. --- Ted

WO1TT: Hi - I just joined CWops. I am a confirmed ragchewer: I really enjoy talking to and learning about the people I work. There are lots of interesting people out there. My long one this month was 60 minutes with NJ8D in Michigan on 40 meters: we talk regularly.

AJ1DM: Slow month due to travel and other considerations, but still rag-chewing when I can.

Remember that we give out QTX Medals at the end of the year for 3 levels:

Gold Medal – 400 QTX Points
Silver Medal – 300 QTX Points
Bronze Medal – 200 QTX Points

MEDALS for 2018 already: Earning Bronze: N5IR, KC0KVN, K1ESE and W9EBE. I am sure those will all be GOLD before the year is done!! Maybe this will be a record year for QTX medals.

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QTX TOTALS FOR MAY 2018

Call	May	Call	May	Call	May	Call	May
K5KV	39	K1ESE	18	W3PNM	9	AJ1DM	3
K2KRG	36	K4AHO	17	DL5DBY	8	N5LB	2
N5PHT	35	W0ITT	15	N4PIR	7	SV2BBK	2
N5IR	34	F5IYJ	12	W3WHK	5	W5JQ	2
W9EBE	31	KC0KVN	10	K6DGW	5	WA8IWK	2
I5EFO	23	N6HCN	10	WA3AER	4	N9SE	2
N7YT	21	HB9CVQ	9	N4DT	4		
KB6NU	20	K5YQF	9	K8UDH	3		

Our leaders for the Month of May: First place is K5KV then K2KRG and third is N5PHT.

QTX Totals for 2018

Call	2018	Call	2018	Call	2018	Call	2018
N5IR	269	K5YQF	109	HB9CVQ	46	N9SE	14
KC0KVN	245	I5EFO	102	K6RB	43	SV2BBK	9
W9EBE	244	K4AHO	71	G4ILW	35	W5JQ	8
K1ESE	237	N4PIR	68	WA8IWK	27	WA3AER	8
N5PHT	198	F5IYJ	64	W3WHK	27	K3TN	7
K5KV	169	K8UDH	57	DL5DBY	25	G0MGM	7
K2KRG	168	N6HCN	56	AJ1DM	24	N5LB	7
N7YT	134	N4DT	49	K0DTJ	22	WA3GM	1
KB6NU	112	W3PNM	47	K6DGW	18		

And LEADERS for 2018 for far: N5IR in first and KC0KVN at second and very close is W9EBE for third.

Hope to cu on the bands. NOTE: If you ever find me with missing reports, numbers or anything on this column please email me so I can get it corrected!

73,

Gary, N5PHT, QTX Manager

Upcoming CW Operating Events

[Joe Staples, W5ASP](#)

This list of operating events is intended to provide members with options for using and improving their CW skills in not only the more popular contests but also in other more casual on-the-air activities.

The Stew Perry Topband Challenge is a favorite of many low band operators. Most likely you'll run across a lot of the more serious 160 gang. So make it a point to join in the fun.

The annual "it's-not-a-contest" ARRL Field Day should be a definite "to-do" for all CWOps members in North America. It's a unique opportunity to mentor new and prospective CW operators in a relaxed environment with adequate activity levels. You shouldn't have any difficulty in locating a local Field Day group ... they're everywhere.

This year the Canada Day Contest falls on a Friday, a bit more convenient than during mid-week. It's a good opportunity to say "Hi" to your neighbors to the north. Lots of them will also be CWOps members. They'll appreciate your stopping by.

The Marconi Memorial contest commemorates the second century of radio and its father, Guglielmo Marconi. It's a World-Wide competition where everybody can work everybody, but only on CW. A special feature is the "Live Contest Score Server" available via <http://cqcontest.net>

The IARU HF contest has become one of the more popular events since the inclusion of the WRTC competition. Although it is a mixed mode event the CW portion provides plenty of variety and solid activity levels. It's on most operators "Must Do List". Don't miss it!

Till next time ... Keep on pounding.

JUNE / JULY EVENTS

AI Asian DX Contest, CW https://www.jarl.org/English/4_Library/A-4-3_Contests/2018AA_rule.htm	0000Z, Jun 16 th to 2400Z, Jun 17 th
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Stew Perry Topband Challenge http://www.kkn.net/stew/	1500Z, Jun 16 th to 1500Z, Jun 17 th
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ARRL Kids Day http://www.contestcalendar.com//contestdetails.php?ref=224	1800Z-2359Z, Jun 16 th
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ARRL Field Day http://www.arrl.org/field-day	1800Z, Jun 23 rd to 2100Z, Jun 24 th
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RAC Canada Day Contest http://wp.rac.ca/rac-canada-day-contest-rules/	0000Z-2359Z, Jul 1
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Marconi Memorial HF Contest http://www.arifano.it/contest_marconi.html	1400Z, Jul 7 th to 1400Z, Jul 8 th
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IARU HF World Championship
<http://www.arrl.org/iaru-hf-championship>

200Z, Jul 14th to 1200Z, Jul 15th

West Virginia QSO Party
<http://www.qsl.net/wvsarc/wvqp/wvqp.html>

1600Z, Jun 16th to 0200Z, Jun 17th

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

0230Z-0300Z, Jun 15th
0230Z-0300Z, Jun 22nd
0230Z-0300Z, Jun 29th
0230Z-0300Z, Jul 6th
0230Z-0300Z, Jul 13th

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

0000Z-0200Z, Jun 27th
1200Z, Jul 7th to 2400Z, Jul 8th

NAQCC CW Sprint
www.naqcc.info/

0030Z-0230Z, Jun 21st

FISTS Summer Slow Speed Sprint
FISTS Summer Unlimited Sprint
<http://www.fistsna.org/operating.html#sprints>

0000Z-0400Z, Jul 7th
0000Z-0400Z, Jul 14th

73,

Joe, W5ASP, Upcoming CW Operating Events



My Story: New Member Biographies

Barry Gardner W3FV

First licensed in 1956 as WN3JSX at the ripe old age of 14. I became interested in electronics several years prior as a cub scout and boy scout with xtal sets and walkie talkies, etc. A neighbor down the road, W3BUR (SK) had a big Telerex beam mounted on a pair of telephone poles with a cat walk at 70 feet. That really got my attention! I walked back the road and asked Bill's wife if they wanted the lawn mowed. She said yes and when I finished she said Bill was in the other room and I should get paid by him.



When I entered the room (his shack) my eyes must have nearly popped out of my head and he noticed! From that point forward my ham radio journey started. Bill was very good with CW and I picked it up quickly from him. I passed my test and built a xmtr (6AG7) oscillator and (6L6 final), xtal controlled of course and a Halicrafters S20R receiver. Had lots of fun. Shack was in the attic of our row house.

Dad helped me put a pole on the garage and we ran a wire from the garage to the third-floor chimney. I was really excited to make my first CW QSO with a W2 with no wires connecting us. From that time till the time I met Gerry Mathis, I finished high school, college and the US Army. My MOS back in the day was 053 "high speed Morse code and radio teletype".

W3GM was my mentor for contesting. He moved from the city to a property just down the road from my apartment. I didn't know him, but when I saw those towers going up I knew I had to meet him. Eventually he sponsored me for membership to the Frankford Radio club in 1970 and I have been an active member ever since. I just love contesting, particularly CW and RTTY. For many years I operated a W3GM's station and learned everything about contesting and station building from him. After Gerry passed away I went on several expeditions to V26B, WP2Z, KP2M, etc. Great fun! Its nice to be hunted instead of the hunter, hi hi. Now I have a small 1.5-acre lot with two 70-foot towers (5 el 10M, 5 el 15M, 4el 20M and 2 el 40M Yagis). Have a 65ft, 4 in irrigation tubing GP for 80M which can be changed to an inverted L for 160M. Inside I have an SO2R station with old xcvs and amps. It provides a lot of fun times for me. I have also been a regular for a number of years at the great stations N3RS and WE3C. What a great experience that is!

It's a pleasure to join CWops and I look forward to our future QSOs.

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Jim Sarfert, N3LBJ

I became a Ham in 1991 while a Marine officer stationed in Adak, Alaska (NA-039). My major at the Naval Academy was Systems Engineering with an emphasis in communications systems and my occupational specialty in the Marines was Signals Intelligence...so ham radio was a great way to turn my interests toward a great hobby. I was also very fortunate to have Elmers and volunteer examiners serving on our



little island with me. I was assigned a 3 area call sign because my home of record and place of birth was Pennsylvania, and as I moved up to Extra class I kept my original issue call because "Lyndon Baines Johnson" got me noticed in several pileups. I loved CW from the beginning, but also was forced to use CW when I could no longer use the microphone while my pregnant wife was sleeping in the next room. I had a straight key back then and used my IC-735 and Butternut vertical to make many contacts as N3LBJ/KL7.

I lived and operated outside of Detroit for 3 years before moving to Winston-Salem, NC where we have lived for 21 years. There is a gap in my log from 2002 through most of 2013... when I was raising 3 kids and other important stuff. When I set up my old rig and connected it to the wires in our attic to be sure it still worked before selling it...I got the bug again! Now I'm on the air several times a week. I've tried the digital modes and I sometimes use the microphone to get the DX contact, but I mostly enjoy DX hunting with CW.

I have an IC-7200 and an IC-7300 is in the mail (can't wait!) and I have defied the HOA with a stealth vertical and an end-fed horizontal wire. The ground mounted Hy-Gain vertical includes about 30 radials buried under the grass. The end-fed horizontal allows me to work 80M – which I find to be a must during this part of the solar cycle. I use a Begali paddle, but have recently been using keyboard keying – I use UA9OV's CW Type on top of HRD's DM780 – an \$8 USB to serial adapter and a 1/4" stereo splitter allow me to use the keyboard and the paddle interchangeably.

I am an IT executive at a large and growing logistics company, and my family will always be my first priority, but I do manage to find time to get on the air and to pursue my other interests which include basketball, soccer, football, target shooting, working out and teaching youth Sunday School. During the summer, I tend to spend weekends and money on our old boat on Belews Lake, NC.

Thanks for letting me in the club! I found you on Wednesday nights at 0300 UTC and now look forward to finding ways to participate and to give back to our "unique art form".

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Metro Sinko W8MET

With my parents AM/FM/ Shortwave radio in the 60s, as we were listening to Polka on the AM band, I asked my Dad what was I hearing and he told me that it was Morse Code. He said that they were talking. He took me to either Allied Radio or Lafayette Radio and I found a book from ARRL on how to learn the Morse Code. I was 15 years old at Strongsville High School and during my study hall I learned the Morse Code from reading this book. I took



my Novice and code test and passed the 5 wpm in March of 1968 and was licensed as WN8ALM. I was allowed to use 75 watts and xtal control on my Drake 2NT xmitter and Gotham V-160 vertical and my first QSO was on 15 meters CW to Nebraska. I then took the General and Advanced and passed the 13 wpm and became WB8ALM. At that time, I was using the J-38 key. All of this in 12 months.

I spent much time with W1AW and my Hammarlund HQ-110 listening at all the code speeds from 5-35 wpm and in 6 months earned my ARRL Certificate of Code Proficiency of 25 wpm while the receiver kept drifting and learned also about QSB, QRM and QRN real fast. Now, I am 16 years old and I want to drive a car, so I took the driver's test and another world opened. I graduated and start working for Ohio Bell Telephone Company. After working for 32 years as a Tester I retired in 2003. I made sure I renewed my radio license over the years. So, after 30 years of making a life and being inactive, I decided in June of 2002 to take the Extra test and then received my vanity call of W8MET. I still knew the Morse Code, so I decided to start buying some equipment. I currently am using the Yaesu Ftdx5000 to a SteppiR 3 element beam and SteppiR vertical and some low-slung dipoles for 160, 80 and 40 meters as spotter antennas with the QRO-2500 and ACOM 1500 amps. I still enjoy going to the mail-box and hoping for QSL's (receiving QSL's makes it a great day). I am also an ARRL Volunteer Examiner. My XYL Linda, N8LRS says Morse Code is difficult for her since she had difficulty in learning and playing any musical instrument and I had music training for 10 years and learning the code came easy for me. I wonder if she is correct in the music theory? Also, we enjoy motorcycling and bicycling. I am always trying to get my weight down to a tenth-of-a-ton (200 lbs.).

I came across the CW OPS contest one day as I was tuning the bands and looked on the internet for more information. Being close to Field Day and thinking this would be a good way for me to be CW ready in June, I entered the Wednesday mini CW events and was nominated by N5PHT and then sponsored by W6SX, K3WW, OK1RR and K1DJ. Thank you for considering me worthy to join the group.

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Howie Bromberg K1VSJ

First licensed in January 1962 as KN1VSJ when I was in the 8th grade with 2 friends of mine. We received adjoining calls; VSI, VSJ, and VSK. As a novice I spent a lot of time on 15 and 40 with a crystal-controlled rig working some DX and getting my code speed up to pass my general. I couldn't wait to get my hands on my dad's (W1SGA now a SK) KWS-1 and 75A-4! Eventually upgraded to Extra. I was on the air regularly through high school and occasionally during college.



I got married shortly after graduating from college and lived in an apartment, so my only operating was with a FT-101 in the front seat of the car. We bought a home in 1975 where I was able set up a station and put up a tower and beam. We moved to our current home in 1985 and the current setup is an ICOM 756 pro 3, Mosley CL-33 at 55 ft, and a 40/80 inverted V. We live on a small lot, so I'm limited on antennas. Even with limited setup, I'm very close to DXCC honor roll and have worked 5BDXCC. Also, have worked all the U.S. counties (not easy!) I am usually active in the major DX contests as well as Sweepstakes but in recent years concentrate mostly on the CW contests. During the summer, I operate from the island of Martha's Vineyard and participate in the IOTA contest. Several times in the past I've operated as PJ7/K1VSJ from Sint Maarten.

I've lived in Rhode Island my entire life and am recently retired from the retail business. Now looking forward to spending more time on the air and with our 4 grandchildren. Besides Ham Radio my other hobbies include fishing, growing vegetables and playing guitar and bass.

It was a pleasure to meet K6RB and N3JT in Dayton and thank them for getting the ball rolling for me to join CWops !!

Ron Hardin W8LVI

Licensed in 1953 K2DQB at age 12 Private Pilot in 1959, owned three airplanes and stopped flying in 1971 with 1200 hours. No airplane cost more than \$1800.

Bell Labs computer programmer from 1963, some tactical military programming, data reduction and then physics and math research. Retired in 2008.

Study of AI by way of language, particularly works of Cavell, Wittgenstein, Derrida, Levinas, Cole-ridge and Vicki Hearne 1980-1986.

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1971- Long distance bicycle riding (replaced flying). Continues today. 1985- Dog Training, Koehler method, always a Doberman

2000- Began cutting my acre of grass with a scythe, a few 10-foot wide swaths a day, as a pleasant exercise.

2016 After a 53-year QRT I bought a KX3 to put on the computer desk where the coffee cup was, and put up a 1/4 wave 40m vertical in the backyard. Still wrestling with iambic against my bug reflexes.

Continue as a contributor to oeis.org The Online Encyclopedia of Integer Sequences, mostly computed in the winter when running long computations on computers helps heat the house.

I always regarded Morse as very musical, though fists have become very homogenized by keyers.

Does anybody remember a FSK station just below the 15M band that sent over and over VVV VVV VVV DE OLU OLU OLU in the late 50s? The interesting thing was, if you listened only to the back-wave (the key-up tone), it was the most musical thing ever. Ongoing question: I used to listen to NSS sending 5-letter code groups in the early 50s to raise my code speed. The question is, what speed was that?

Gerry Treas K8GT

I was first licensed as a Novice, as KN8QLK, July 29, 1959 at age 15, and became K8QLK when I received my General Class license in April of 1960. I passed my Advanced Class license in early 1969 and passed my Extra Class exam in February 1990, keeping my K8QLK call since Extra Class calls were, by then, AA8--, 5 characters, the same as I had, just missing the last of WZ8- 2x1s.

When Vanity calls became available in 1996 I applied for and got K8GT. With K8QLK ending in "K" which caused lots of problems during contesting and I wanted to get rid of the "Q". It wasn't until after I received K8GT that I realized that I hadn't gotten rid of the "Q". Run the Morse code characters "G" and "T" together and you get "Q". CWops member, Joe, N8EA, always refers to me

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as "Q" after I mentioned that to him.

When asked, by a friend, what got me interested in radio, I mentioned that my dad showed me shortwave listening, at age 4, on the floor model console radio that I was already listening to all the broadcast radio shows, dramas, comedies, adventures, since we didn't have TV yet in 1948. But reading through my baby book that my mother meticulously kept (I was the oldest, my later siblings, not as much). She wrote about my first Christmas at 9 months old, writing, "Gerry isn't interested in the tree, ornaments, lights, gifts or wrapping paper. All he wants to do is play with the knobs on the radio."

My early interests in radio led to my attending Electronics school following High School. I had my first job in my chosen profession in Broadcasting doing the "Preacher Feature" Sunday morning shift at a local FM station at age 18. One of the on air staff and the Chief Engineer were friends. I also worked at Reno Radio, a ham radio store in downtown Detroit from early 1964 through 1965 except for a 4 month break during the summer of 1965 when I worked as a vacation relief engineer at WJR 760AM "The Great Voice of the Great Lakes" clear channel.

Several radio stations and a TV station later led me to WKBD-TV50 Detroit, that I worked at and retired from in 2012 after 45 years. At the time of my retirement TV50 was affiliated with the CW Network. As a mainly CW op, I had always said that I wanted to work at a TV station that ran CW. Hi hi.

Visit my QRZ page for more pix, particularly one of me and my station in 1961.

I'm very pleased to be a member of CWops, a group that has been so welcoming. I've enjoyed I've enjoyed my first 2 CWTs.my first 2 CWTs.

Andy Leckart NA1VT

First licensed in Taunton, Massachusetts - Novice ticket as WN1ISH in 1967, General as WA1ISH in 1968, Advanced in 1969. WAS while still in high school. Stupidly let my license expire in the 1970's. Got back into this great hobby with my Technician ticket as KC1AMC in September of 2013; got my General and re-acquired my WA1ISH call in December 2013. Finally, in August of 2014, I passed the Extra exam. In January of 2015 I changed my call from WA1ISH to NA1VT.

Running a Yaesu FTDX3000 with Palstar AV1500CV tuner on HF with an Acom A1000 amplifier. Antennas include a 43' vertical, 54' end



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fed longwire, and on the tower are a dual band EA 2M/70CM Yagi topped with a 6 band NA4RR Hexbeam. For backup there's an FT450D; I also am involved with DMR and the Connecticut Valley FM Association – public service events, etc.

My working days encompassed two careers. The first 20 years were spent in radio broadcast, mostly in engineering. I then worked for 22 years in the retail digital print industry (though it was hardly digital when I started). I retired in early 2017.

Have done a lot of JT675 and FT8 in the past 2 years but wanted a challenge and it was to get back into CW. Thanks to CW Academy, Chris W4ALF and Jerry AC4BT, that has happened. With that I find that the door to QRP has opened, so that will be one of my priorities this summer. I also hope to mess around with some satellite work before the Vermont winter returns.

Roger Stein VA1RST

It was 1960, 5th grade and a crystal radio just had to be built! My dad, an EE, accompanied me to the local electronic store to pick up the necessary magic, a gale-na crystal and a cat whisker!

The rest was done by following the Boys First Book of Radio instructions. I wore that book out checking it out many times from the public library. Luckily for both of us, there was a 5kw AM station on 1320 line of sight a few miles away, the crystal set was a success! (Later on, their 3rd harmonic on 3960 kc proved very frustrating!!)



My neighbor, Ren, was W7SJ, (7SJ 1924) He noticed my interest in radio, and he gave me some unknown vintage shortwave receiver in a homemade plywood case, the kind where the 40M band was a ¼" wide spot on the dial. But it had something called a 'band spread' knob and a BFO.

I had 'discovered' Popular Electronics magazine and the really small ads for electronic catalogues in the back of the magazine. Companies like Burstein & Applebee, Lafayette, Allied, Heathkit, Eico

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and others. I sent off letters requesting their catalog with a copy of their ad clipped out of the magazine and stapled to my letters. Many hours were spent listening to that receiver, logging stations heard and thumbing through those catalogs.

By the time I was 12 I was mowing his lawn and many others, I needed to fund this radio hobby. He asked if I would like to see 'the shack'. Ren had a separate room in the basement for his station housing a beautiful HRO-60 next to a Collins 310-B-3 CW transmitter. Morse code was coming through the National speaker and Ren put on the "cans," sat down next to his "mill" typewriter and banged out the conversation while talking to me at the same time! He had been a CW operator in the Navy.

My question was, "How old do you have to be to do this?" "You can get ticket right now, Roger" was his reply. "There is no age requirement, you just need to learn the Morse Code, study the license manual, build your station and I can give you the test."

Well, Dad, the EE said first off you need some test equipment in order to build anything, so off to Heathkit went an order and my lawn mowing \$ for a VTVM! Back to the local electronic store for a Weller 90/125W soldering gun. This was later followed by a Heathkit HR-10. Time was moving on and Ren gave me a March '64 QST that had a two band 80/40 novice transmitter article. That kept me busy for quite a while, learning to do octal sockets (3) with a twist drill and a half round file!

The code test was passed, and the written test was given. Off it went in the mail to the FCC in some place called Gettysburg. My license finally arrived and was taped to the inside of the glass window of the locked back door so I could see it when I got home from school. My mother's sense of humor! I had one crystal for 7176 kc and a DPDT porcelain knife switch for my antenna change switch. Ren helped me test the transmitter into a 40-watt light bulb.

So began my ham radio adventures as WN7BOC in October of 1964 at the age of 14.

My first contest was the Novice Roundup in 1965. I worked hard at making as many QSO's as I could and received the Section Award for Washington State. I got my General just after that, Advanced in 1969, and finally my Extra in 2002.

I went through a boatload of ham gear and many antenna configurations over the years.

I applied for the vanity call K7SJ to honor my Elmer W7SJ. My Dad did become a ham as well, WA7NHM, now a SK at the age of 99.

As life's journey turned out, I met a lovely lady from Halifax via the internet in 2010 and moved there to marry her. I became VA1RST in 2018 and "found" CWOPs. Jerry AC4BT was a fabulous instructor and I am honoured to be #2049. I had a career as a Civil Engineer, pulp and paper, roads and bridges, in the States and finally Municipal engineering here in Nova Scotia.

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Gary Freeman W0ITT

My ham radio history started with a chance encounter on the street with Al Baker, WØCBV, who was then the projectionist at a local movie theater. He invited me to his shack, and the first QSO I ever heard was Al talking to VK4AF in Brisbane, Australia. I was hooked. Al gave me the Novice test, and I was first licensed in 1969 as WNØZSU at age 15. I got my WAØZSU call after a visit to the FCC Field Office in Kansas for the General Exam and code test in 1970.



I have always been primarily a CW operator, and I have a long-standing tendency toward rag-chewing. I like to introduce additional (some say strange) topics into my contacts.

I spent what should have been study time in high school chasing DX (including a memorable contact with WBØCUB/KC4 at Byrd Station Antarctica one evening on 20CW). I was a regular operator at University of Missouri Club Station WØZLN while at college.

After college I joined the CARI (Chess and Amateur Radio International) club, which promoted playing chess via ham radio. I played lots of games on the radio, including playing first board in a match between a USA chess team and one from Oceania. The US won 3-2.

My work in finance led me into consulting, which includes lots of travel as a rule. I got on the air occasionally, but eventually I put my gear away. I was away from radio for several years.

I returned to ham radio courtesy of a good Samaritan. A ham in Idaho acquired a QSL collection, and he returned to me a card I had sent out to one of my first QSOs in 1969. That rekindled my interest, and I decided to find a way to get back on the air inexpensively.

In February 2017 I returned (in a small way) with a CRK10-A QRP transceiver, a QRP antenna tuner and a hand key. I also put up a garden variety 40-meter dipole at about 30 feet. QRP operation with the little radio is a special experience: it has no on-off switch, no tuning knob, no RIT control, and no volume control. You must really want to be on the air to use it! But it works well, and most nights I got on and made 2 or 3 QSO's on 40 meters CW. I am up to about 150 QSO's with it.

Meanwhile, I unboxed my old station, including a veteran ICOM IC-730 (usually turned down to 5 watts), and an MFJ9020 for occasional jaunts into 20 meters QRP.

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In August 2017, I sold the ICOM and added to my QRP portfolio by buying a Yaesu FT-817nd (and the excellent 300 Hz narrow CW filter). This great little rig gives me a chance to explore another interest: operating portable. The radio has an internal rechargeable battery, and I added a larger battery as well. I really want to be able to be active from anywhere.

Shortly after I bought my "big boots", a little amplifier so I can now run 50 watts (handy for CWTs).

I officially retired in mid-2017, and since I had the time I built a list of ham things I wanted to do. One of my early goals was to re-do Worked All States, which I finished in September. Another important thing to do was upgrade, and I passed the Extra Class exam in October.

And then I changed my call sign. A lot of friends knew me as WAØZSU, but I did a financial analysis (I was a financial consultant), and the "Time Value of Morse Code" suggested that 11 dashes and 9 dots was too many. (In contests, I often found when I called a station by the time I sent the last dash of my call they were already talking to someone else).

So, I looked at available call signs with an eye to shortening my call. I requested and got assigned WØITT (9 dashes and 3 dots: once I get past the Ø it flows much faster on CW.) I also found a nice slogan for it: It Takes Time. (From a John Wooden quote: "It takes time to create excellence.") So, to my friends: I am still around, just using a different call. I will see you all on the air.

Another thing I want to do now that I have time is to get back into building kits and home brew equipment. My compliments to a friend in Texas who liked our long rag-chew QSO so much he sent me a Pixie ½ watt 40-meter transceiver kit. I built it and it worked: I made a dozen QSO's with it. I'm currently finishing up the QRP Labs QCX transceiver, and I have several other projects lined up.

All things said, my big passion is talking to and learning about other hams. (There are really interesting and intelligent people out there.) I also like to learn new things (about propagation and solar activity, for instance) that can make my operating more effective.

And (of course) I love to work CW. One of my most meaningful recent accomplishments is being accepted into CWops – thank you to the club and to the people who sponsored me.

Helga Picelli IN3FHE

A few years ago, in 2014, I discovered that in the early morning in 40m there was a short contest even during the week. I liked to answer the USA stations (at the time they were heard much better than now, other propagation). My fairly casual participation must have been noticed by my Italian colleagues. Soon I discovered the CWT and CWops. I asked Giu IT9VDQ for help explaining how and what to do to participate in the CWT. Once the software was set up it was a great fun. At the end of the session I entered my poor results in 3830 and some comments.



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Then at the end of 2016 I got the nomination to join the CWops, which I accepted with enthusiasm and pride, and now I'm here to fight for my first silver medal.

I've been licensed since 1974 and started to QSO on January 1, 1975. That day my husband forced me to take the microphone and greet the OMs he was talking to. But since that day, the radio has slowly become my kingdom.



In 1979 I started to study again the CW on my own, listening to a station in 80M transmitting every evening groups of 5 letters or 5 figures for 2 hours in a row. Since then, the CW occupies 90% of my activity, the rest is SSB (a little) and RTTY.

I have a small station: a vertical multiband antenna from 10 to 80m, a K3, an Icom756pro3 that I need as backup radio, a series of dipoles that help me receiving in noisy conditions, and no linear amplifiers (never had one).

I have a lot of patience, which is needed every time I'm not being heard or when I hear an ? from the other side, just before listening to the DX CQing in my face.

I live in center of my city, surrounded by high mountains, so I can't do much. Furthermore, I am afflicted by any kind of electronic noises, and every year there are new ones adding. Even at night the noise is not lessened.

Despite my poor resources, my DXCC-CW, has reached 316 countries. Since I retired 4 years ago, I made a big jump ahead, being able to stay at the shack in periods in which in previous years I was busy at work. I was an accountant.

In 2009 I received an invitation to participate to a contest in the IR4M team as a guest. For work reasons I could join the team only for the CQWW DX CW: it's been an incredible experience, first time in an important team, and in the main cw contest of the year, the first time in a run with a lot of stations responding (and it was not the Morse Runner, they were true OMs!).

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Being the first woman operating from the team (still I'm the only one), I think I did not have be-
have badly, as the following year I was invited again and so on until last year.

I like to stay at the shack without anxiety of having to necessarily work the DX. When it happens,
I'm happy, otherwise it will be for another time.

In 2016 I placed 3rd in the DX-Marathon and 5th in 2017 (using 100w), but being country winner
in CQ WPX CW 2017 was even better.

Even a nice rag-chew with a DX is always a great satisfaction, although for my poor English the
QSO doesn't last more than 15/20 minutes. It's very nice, during a contest, to hear "TU Helga" (or
"Ina", my nickname), even if sometimes I can't remember their name, because I know it's one of
those that I work every Wednesday/Thursday.

John Marks KM4CH

From the first time I saw a man come and work on our old black-and-white
TV magically make Superman come
back, I knew I wanted to work around
electronics.

So, I became an electrician with elec-
tronics and later radio is my hobby.
Eventually I became an electricity in-
structor and later on an administer in
Career and Technical Education. Start-
ed out in citizens band radio in the 70s
and eventually tired of that. Finally
met a local ham who invited me to a
Novice class and I immediately accept-
ed (I guess I was a ham waiting to hap-
pen). Thanks to a great group of local
hams and Elmers in Madisonville, KY, I
passed my Novice exam and in 1986 I
got the call KB4UXC. I then proceeded
to work all states as a novice using an
80M inverted L and a borrowed SWAN
700cx with a Radio Shack straight key.
My first contest was the Novice
Roundup, which really whetted my
contesting appetite. After one year I
took my 13 WPM, General and Ad-
vanced tests the same day. At that



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time I received the Advanced Call KM4CH. A year after I passed my 20 words per minute code and written exam and got my Extra license.

Have always enjoyed helping people learn CW and helping people get their amateur radio license. As a matter of fact I taught a CW class at the library in the morning. I'm located in Lawrenceburg, KY. My station is modest Ten Tec Omni 6 and a fan dipole up about 20 feet. I also enjoy QRP with my Yaesu 817 and end fed antenna. I give all the credit for finding CWops to my "cousin in law" and good friend #1436 KM4FO Dwight Orten. I encouraged him many years ago to get his amateur radio license and now he is encouraging me to become a better CW operator.

My wife and both sons are licensed amateurs. When I first moved from Western KY to my new job in Frankfort Kentucky we had no cell phones, so each morning my wife would wake me up on a set 80M frequency with CW; we would then have a short QSO before I went to work.

I initially learned my characters using a 73 Magazine tape (which if anybody remembers Wayne Green is actually kind of funny) and later on I studied the Jerry Zilliak (KB6MT) tapes which helped me with my character speed. I've never been a great CW operator but CWT Wednesdays have really helped me to improve.

I was very saddened when the FCC dropped the CW requirement for the amateur radio license and felt that it would be the end of CW; but I must say, I think I may have been wrong. There seems to be a lot of interest these days with CW! So, I'm really excited about the future. It seems that several of the new members in our club are interested in learning code and I hope I have had some influence on them.

Thank you for nominating and accepting me into the CW ops family, be patient with me and I'll keep trying to get better.

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