



CWops Events

On-Air Monthly CWT

Next: **13, 27** April 2011

Start time:

1300Z Asia/VK/ZL region

1900Z Europe Region

0300Z (14,28 April) NA region

1-hour each region

Exchange name/number (members)

Exchange name/SPC (non-members)

CWops “neighborhood”

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

CWops “Happy Hour”

1900 local, every day, on or near the “neighborhood”
frequencies – just call “CQ” or answer someone else.

CWops Officers and Director

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Vice President: Art Suberbielle, [KZ5D](#)

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From the president...



A Time of Reflection...

If you read my bio last month, you may remember my mentioning one of my Elmers - Perry, ex

W2YOM. I learned last week that Perry became SK. I'm glad that we kept up our relationship and got to see each other now and again. Keeping close with your friends is perhaps easier these days with all the tools at hand but I can tell you that nothing beats face-to-face contact. You can't transmit a hand shake or a hug via radio.

This leads me to again urge all members to come to the dinner in Washington, DC on May 6-8. If you need details, please see the Members Section on the CWops web page or contact me, N3JT or W4ZYT. It really is an event you should consider attending. Many of us will be there and we'd love to meet as many CWops members as we can. You definitely will have a great time. See you there?

If you can't make Washington, seek out other ham gatherings and link up with your fellow CWops members. You will be glad you did.

The Elmer Program

The development of this program is going well. A team is working on the details and

I'm hoping to be able to tell you all about it next month, if not sooner on the CWops Reflector. There are a number of unique concepts and approaches that I'm sure will be of interest.

But, a key component of the program is having members who are willing to lend a hand to the newbie. Once we release the details, I hope everyone will consider raising their hand and become an Elmer. Remember, the CW operators that we nurture today will most likely become the CWops members of tomorrow!

Dues

Some of you may be receiving a dues reminder email if our records don't show you as having paid. If you did and get one of the emails, please let N3AM know that you did pay so he can chase it down. If you haven't paid yet, I hope you will and help us continue the promotion of CW.

CWT

There are some great changes in this popular monthly event coming. Check KZ5D's column for details. If you haven't tried the CWT, come join the fun in April.

Pete, W1RM

From the VP/Activities Chairman...



One of the most popular activities for CWops members is the monthly mini-CWT. And now, we're delighted to announce two major changes as a result of feedback received from a number of our members.

As you know, the mini-CWT is held over three (3) one-hour sessions. The early session start time is being changed to better accommodate the lifestyles of our membership. The early session will begin at **1300z** effective immediately. So mark your calendars with the date and new time. Next mini-CWT on **Wednesday, April 13: 1300z, 1900z, and 0300z** (Thursday, April 14).

The second major change is a result of members clamoring for "more of a good thing." Many of you have asked for a second date each month. Your Activities Team has decided to implement your request by adding the 4th Wednesday of each month as another mini-CWT date. So while you are adding dates to your calendar, put this one in: **Wednesday, April 27: 1300z, 1900z, and 0300z** (Thursday, April 28).

Now let's encourage our member friends who may not have yet discovered the fun of CWTs to participate. It's nice to tune across the bands and hear so much activity. Presently we're using 3 bands: 20, 40, and 80. Members are encouraged to use any frequency between x.018 to x.028 on these bands, but often due to high activity, you'll hear participants above and below this 10 kHz range. Find a clear spot and call CQ CWT and get set for some fun!

Besides joining in just for fun, you'll also discover that this is an easy way to increase your ACA and CMA numbers. Whether you're chasing after the awards or just tracking results to know how you're doing, we invite members to share their totals with us each month.

Reports listed below reflect all information received through March 28, 2011 Stations with an asterisk * next to their calls have updated their reports this month.

Call	ACA	CMA
W4AU*	349	712
N5RR*	312	1449
KZ5D*	284	1421
EA8AY*	221	571
W1UU*	206	609
W5ZR*	205	1107
W6KY*	187	774
K6RB	184	898
N2UU*	181	733
W1RM*	174	1087
N1ZX	172	220
DL8PG*	157	268
W4PM*	150	1249
KR3E*	120	579
W4BQF	106	340
V31JP*	100	137
N5TM	90	215
N3JT	77	650

N3AM	63	778
W6RKC	60	464
K4GM	52	462
W1UJ	52	
AD1C*	51	377
K2VCO*	51	365
K6DGW	43	333
W2LK	36	406
OK1RR	2	282
HB9CVQ		479

See you in the mini-CWT on Wednesday, April 13 and Wednesday April 27.

73 de

Art, KZ5D

From the Editor...



There are some important things brewing. As Pete mentioned, the Elmer program is really moving forward. There is now a framework developed that describes objectives, requirements, and so on. The ultimate goal of the Elmer program is to share the love...the love of CW, that is. The metric by which we will determine its level of success will be the number of hams that become comfortable with and active CW operators, going forward.

If you look at what's been done by the world's national licensing authorities, you'll see that today's licensing requirements appear to work toward the detriment of CW operation. Morse Code is no longer a licensing requirement, and the concept of a "novice" license, where you aspire to getting a higher grade, permanent license has been history for a long while. As a result, many new hams never get much beyond the "shack on the belt" ham radio experience.

The novice bands that some of us remember from the 1950s and 1960s is long gone. Those were sub-bands where the newbies worked each other and attained improved skills in the process. A

key ingredient, then, were the experienced operators who would work the newbies and teach by example what good procedure should be. Looking back, we all smile at the memories of some kid sending a sequence of 25 CQs followed by 12 repetitions of his/her call. Then, he would hear a “general” operator call CQ three times, give his call three times, and send “K.” Wow, you don’t have to send CQ 25 times to get a reply. That mix of newbies and OTs, getting their feet wet, learning the ropes, and moving on to higher skills, were hallmarks of the novice bands, that are now fond memories. Well, it doesn’t have to be that way. And, CWops’ Elmer program will attempt to recreate that environment that worked so well for so many of us.

The second big thing that is brewing is the MAX-CWT. We have a proposed date (in August), proposed times, bands, and so on. The key question that we need to answer is whether this first one is an “honor system”-type mini-CWT on a more protracted scale...or a serious effort, with real scoring adjudication, awards, and so on. We already have the resources in place to do the former – an “honor system” outing. If we want to do the second, there are a lot of pieces that still need to come together, including a volunteer to “own” MAX-CWT. That person would be responsible for managing the resources working on all the pieces that need to be in place well before August.

Here is my thinking on the subject. A mid- to late-August event is great timing. There are no other major ham events at that time. A serious event, with adjudicated scoring, would entice a lot of players. The proposed rules and scoring are unique to ham radio. We have a lot of differentiating factors that will propel CWops to a position of noteworthiness among CW operators, worldwide. In other words, this could really “put us on the map.” But, more important, if it works as envisioned, a lot more potential members are likely to participate and experience the excitement that well-timed and well-conceived CW activities can spawn.

73,
Rob K6RB

The “Extra” Adventure

Vidi la Grange, ZS1EL

About 30 years ago, some technical problems surfaced at a Chicago manufacturer of steel furniture. I was the Technical Representative of the producer of the cold rolled steel for this company in South Africa. While I was enjoying a QSO with Tim on 20m CW one evening, I had a phone call from my manger to discuss the Chicago issue. To cut a long story short, I found myself on an airline headed for Chicago within a week from that phone call. Despite the mad house of getting all the arrangements made, I still found time to let my friend Tim know that I

will be in the area. The way things worked out I spent a weekend with him and his family before the Chicago mission. He was a Volunteer Examiner and suggested I try to pass the novice test.

I thought this was a wonderful opportunity of getting a true and worthwhile memento. Tim gave me a crash course in American radio regulations and allowed me to do some cramming before taking the written test, which I managed to scrape through. Having known Tim for a long time on 20m CW and chatting at 25wpm + most of the time, he decided that he could certify my ability of sending and receiving 5 wpm code without putting me to a formal test, which could have been fun anyway. In those days the requirement was 5wpm for a novice license. After returning home I received my American novice license. It was a long and complicated call, KA3AOG, but nevertheless I was very proud of it.

I met my wife, Hester, born in Ohio, on 20m CW. After a long radio romance and visits back and forth, we realized that we needed to be together on a permanent basis. During Hester's visit to South Africa, I took her out for dinner one evening, with an engagement ring hidden in my pocket. I proposed to her in the moonlight on the banks of the Vaal River. Although pretending to hesitate, it was a quest she could not easily turn down. She had come to South Africa in great anticipation with a one way ticket. But this is a story on its own, which I will keep for later. We settled in Vereeniging, an industrial town south of Johannesburg. I set up a station in the apartment we bought and it did not take long for Hester to apply for DXCC using her new South African call sign, ZS6ESU.

In 1999 we decided to plan a visit to family and friends in the USA. Her family and most of our mutual friends were spread out all over the USA from east to west and north to south. The most practical way of making the best of time and resources at our disposal was to fly to a starting point in the eastern USA and then work our way around the continental USA by Amtrak. They offered a 30-day travel pass which allowed travel from any destination to any destination in the USA, within 30 days, from getting on a train for the first time to getting off for the last time.

Planning started about 4 months before our departure. Word spread like wild fire amongst family and friends about our plans and it was difficult to match a wish list with what was practically possible. Family visits were priority number one. Visiting started with a few days at friends in Asheville, NC. From there we continued in a large counter clock wise circle, first north then west to Washington state then south down the coast of California. The last leg of the journey was east via Arizona and New Mexico to Dallas where the Amtrak trip ended.

Spending so much time on a train was delightful and many hours went by in the glass top observation car on the second deck of the train. I will never forget the vast planes of Montana, the spectacular Rocky Mountains and the forests of Washington State. As I will tell you, shortly,

one of the important ham visits on the agenda was with our friend, Henri de Wet, N5KA. He and his wife, Rikki, are originally from Cape Town and decided to settle near Dallas, Texas many years ago.

As soon as the planning for this trip started, my mind went straight back to the American Novice license I got during my visit with Tim. What if I could upgrade to an American Extra license! The idea really took hold of me and I became quite enthusiastic and even obsessed with the possibility...the main question being: "How do I go about it?" Henri, a good mind reader, started thinking about what could be done to make a four-in-one test session possible.

Taking all the constraints into consideration, this was not an easy task. In the first place Henri was not allowed to be part of a Volunteer Examiner team due to him being a personal friend of mine. What was more, we only had one night stay over with Henri and Rikki, which gave the project a very small window of opportunity. I had one chance to attempt passing Technician, General, Advanced, Extra and a 20wpm code test in succession with, maybe a cup of tea or coffee in between.

This was quite a mission but the very thought of a possible American Extra ham license got me enthusiastically searching for study material on the Internet. As soon as the date of the visit to Whitewright was fixed Henri stated assembling a local Volunteer Examiner team for that one evening. Long before leaving South Africa, I downloaded pages and pages of exam material in the form of questions and answers from the Internet to work on. Fortunately the technical parts were not hard to learn because I have been a ham for many years. The real tricky parts were to memorize the different satellite modes and other regulatory matters, which were very different to what I was used to in South Africa.

The trip went very well, visiting with relatives who I have never met before, getting back on a train, traveling for a few days then visiting again. During quiet times of the journey, I kept practicing answering some of the test question sets I had printed. As time went on, and we got closer to Texas, I started feeling more and more confident.

The De Wet hospitality started when Henri met us at the Dallas railway station at about noon. He drove off to Whitewright, about 40 miles north of Dallas. On the way he called a friend on the 2m repeater and insisted I talk to him to show off my South African accent...I did not quite know what to say but did receive a few comments about my strange accent. After that brief chat we had a few other callers in succession. I felt like rare DX on a 2m repeater! Fortunately Henri did not allow this to go on for too long, as I was dying to hear more about the test session planned for that evening. He told me that Rikki had cleared her sewing room and that he had a table and chair set up there for the test. The Volunteer Examiners team was made up of three

local VEs, who were scheduled to assemble at his house just after 7:00pm. We arrived at his house, which is on a smallholding, in the late afternoon. After unpacking we visited for a while and were shown around the shack, antenna farm, and of course the vegetable garden. Then, back in the house, I was shown the sewing room. There was nothing except a table in the middle of the room with a straight back wooden chair behind it. My gosh, I felt the nerves choking me up and looking at this set up it reminded me of what I have visualized about electric-chair-style executions!

Then, soon after sunset, the team rolled up and I was introduced to Mike Ihry, N5KB, a huge, kind of formal guy wearing a blue checkered shirt and a baseball cap; Scott Durham, AC5RF, a young, serious looking slender guy with a mustache; and Day Davis, K5SK, who appeared about as nervous as I was. They carried several filing boxes into the sewing room. After some small talk, Mike suggested I take a seat behind the table so that they could get the ball rolling on what could become a very late night. With me sitting on the edge of the ‘electric chair’ Mike started digging into a filing box marked: TECHNICIAN.

The first thing my eye caught was a rather old-fashioned cassette player carried by Day. As I later found out, none of the Examiners were code operators, but they were equipped with an FCC tape recording and paperwork to carry out a 20wpm code-receiving test. At this point I had a bright idea and asked whether they would mind giving me the 20wpm Extra code test to start with, to calm my nerves down. They looked at me and at each other with puzzled expressions as the code part was usually the biggest stumbling block of all their previous candidates.

All three guys disappeared into the living room where I could hear some lively discussions going on. Then Mike showed up and said it was fine to start the proceedings with the code test. Day Davis came into the room and placed the recorder on one corner of the table, hooked it up to an outlet behind me and inserted a tape. He pushed ‘play’ and during listening to a lot of slow “V’s,” adjusted the volume for my comfort and then hit the pause button. I was given a piece of blank paper to take notes, told to take a deep breath and relax. Then I realized I did not have a pencil to write with.

Henri offered me a 5mm clutch pencil and an eraser for corrections if needed. Mike and Day made doubly sure that I was ready and then Day released the pause button. The code from the loudspeaker was machine perfect and easy to copy. I opted to write down everything instead of only taking notes of things I could be questioned about like names, QTH and so on. After writing about 5 words the 5mm lead of the clutch pencil snapped. I pushed and poked at the pencil but to no avail...no more lead appeared! I glanced at Mike, his eyes were getting bigger as he reversed out of the room. In the mean time the code message continued and I just stored the information in my mind. When Mike returned I had already taken a ball point pen from my

shirt pocket and stated catching up with the code and write down the rest of the 5 minute message.

Based on the reaction from the team, I took it that they had never seen code taken down word for word at 20wpm before. The text I copied was in the form of a typical QSO and at the end I had to be able to answer questions such as was the guy's name Harry or Larry, the temperature 65 or 75 degrees, the QTH NJ or NY and so on. Day read my notes to the team members who poured over a print-out they had from the ARRL. After a short deliberation it was agreed that I passed the code test with flying colors and that the rest of the testing could start.

The Technician questionnaire was placed in front of me. Correct answers had to be picked and marked with an 'x' in the appropriate space. Correct answers easily came to mind as I worked my way through the paper. After a short break with coffee and some delicious home-made Zucchini bread, the same routine was followed for the General and Advanced papers. But when I was given the Extra questionnaire my confidence was shattered.

Oh boy, I had not seen any of the questions and answers before and my head started spinning. Guessing brought me nowhere. Needless to say, this was a brand new questionnaire, which had not been published on the Internet yet. I was sure that I had failed whole sail, boots and all! Due to my earlier successes, Scott became suspicious. Checking numbers on the questionnaire and the overlay used for marking, he discovered that the wrong overlay was used! Scratching around in the EXTRA filing box by a few red faced Examiners, Scott came up with the correct overlay.

Re-marking of the paper in a different color pen created quite a mess and confusion to figure out my score. Mike then decided to stop everything right there and call it a day because head office would never accept such a messy piece of work. I was very disappointed that the Extra test turned sour in this way, due to something completely out of my control. Well I had to accept what happened and realized that even with the correct overlay I might not have made the grade.

The team disappeared into the living room again for some serious deliberations. After a few minutes Mike showed up, now with his baseball cap pointing backwards and said the team decided that due to their error I would be allowed to be re-tested there and then if I wish to do so. After yet another cup of coffee and a slice of Zucchini bread a fresh questionnaire was handed to me. With a great sigh of relief I discovered that this questionnaire was one of the older stock for which I was well prepared. Checking my answers took a few minutes and then Mike said that I passed the test and that I qualified for an Extra license!

The team congratulated me and was still talking about the code test up to the time they drove off into the dark. After Henri, Hester, Rikki and I had a short recap of everything that happened that

evening and a nightcap. It was time to make a crash landing in bed! So ended a day I will never forget and a vanity call of which I am very proud: K1VL

The next morning Henri took us to Sherman for breakfast with a group of local hams. It was very nice to get to know the gang and share ham talk for a good part of the morning. We left, filled with wonderful memories of warmth and hospitality extended to us by the De Wet family and the three Examiners. Up to this day Henri and I have regular skeds and built a friendship that will never change.

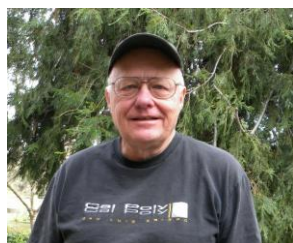


L to R: Scott, Day, Vidi, Henri and Mike

CWops Member Stories

Fred Jensen, K6DGW, CWops 142

Getting Started



I think I was about seven or eight years old, TV was just coming to Los Angeles, and we had a Philco console radio in the living room. I discovered that there was more to receive on it than KFI, KHJ, and KFWB where my Dad and I listened to the Hollywood Stars baseball games in the Pacific Coast League.

Just above the broadcast band there was a woman's voice which Dad said were "police calls," and on the next band up, I found guys talking to each other in the evenings. Dad said they were "Ham Radio Operators." That was the beginning of radio in my life, and when we got a TV [a huge console thing with two phonographs, a radio, and a 12" screen], Dad moved the Philco into my bedroom where I explored and found stations broadcasting in foreign languages, all sorts of strange noises, and one very strong station transmitting what I finally figured out was Morse code. It would turn out to be KOK, where I would work part-time during my senior high school year.

DATE TIME	STATION CALLED	CALLED BY	HIS FREQ OR DIAL	HIS SIGNALS RET	MY SIGNALS RET	FREQ. KC	EMIS- SION TYPE	POWER INPUT WATTS	TIME OF ENDING CQ	OTHER
11-13										
1130	Test	X	—	—	—	3714	F1	32	1233	First Time CQ
1245	Test	X	—	—	—	3714	F1	32	1247	
1337	W6RNM	X	2152	5950	594	3714	F1	32	1345	Cross band go on
2000	KN6BAM	X	7194	599	599	3714	F1	32	2020	stand, 80 W 40,
12-17										
1840	CQ	X	—	—	—	3714	F1	32	1843	First CQ / Use
2023	W6TZA	X	—	—	—	3714	F1	32	2035	No Contact
12-25										
0920	Test	X	—	—	—	7196	F1	19	0923	W6TZA Reconn
1353	Test	X	—	—	—	3714	F1	28	1300	
11-27										
1200	Test	X	—	—	—	3714	F1	28	1225	
1300	CQ	X	—	—	—	3714	F1	28	1333	
1355	Test	X	—	—	—	7196	F1		1326	Wouldn't Recon
1425	CQ	X	—	—	—	7196	F1	24		
1427	CQ	X	—	—	—	7196	F1	24		
1435	W6VDA	X	7194	599		7196	F1	24	1427	No Contact
1500	W6VDA	X	7194	599		7196	F1	223	1452	No Contact
1505	Test	X	—	—	—	3714	F1			
2100	CQ	X	—	—	—	3714	F1	16	2109, 2112, 2114, 2117	
1-18										
1-18	Test	X	—	—	—	3714	F1			New RATED

At about 12 years of age, I met Art Lux, W6RMK, who lived about three blocks from home. Art taught me the code and coached me from the ARRL license manual, and occasionally let me talk to his son, Paul, away at college. Of course, Art was in control of the rig. Art drove me to the FCC in downtown Los Angeles, where I passed the Novice.

My days in ham radio officially began at age 13 on 12 Dec 1953 right after I got home from school and found the

envelope from the FCC with my Novice license, KN6DGW. I know this for a fact because not too long ago, I found a box packed by Mom 54 years ago when I left home for college, containing my early logs ... including my first one.

The photo is the first page. It's a bit yellowed, it looks like it got damp somewhere along the way, there's some mold on the cover, and my handwriting sucked. It still does. I'm a leftie but everyone in school had to write right-handed, something I've never been able to do, so I printed.

The year 1953 was starting the run-up to the fabled Cycle 19, and radio just got better and better. I upgraded to General in the middle of 1954, and to Extra in 1956, after the two-year service period.

Different Modes and QTHs

Over the years, I've dabbled in most aspects of the hobby on most modes. Like all new Generals, then, I rushed to somehow modulate my transmitter, but like some, only to find that I was more comfortable on CW. I got a little bit less than a year in Coastal Marine Service as a high school senior; and in college, I was marginally active with weekly CW skeds on 40 with my friends in Southern California.

I operated as KL7FBK in 1963 from Galena AFS on the Yukon river where I got to hear the aurora on 80m, and stand under it. I got a three week window as HS1FJ [legally] in 1965, and I signed 3W1FJ once just for grins [no license and we were in the northwest part of North Vietnam which I'm sure had a different prefix then].

HF SSB mobile was a big thing for me while assigned to NASA in Houston TX during Apollo, satellites were new then and I spent a lot of time working them. It's likely Tom, K5RC [CWops #108], and I met over a NASA conference table, then, but we wouldn't figure that out until a couple of years ago. Packet, RTTY, DX'ing more recently, and of course contesting: I've enjoyed it all. But, most of all, I've enjoyed all my friends, and CW, my most comfortable mode.

First Stations

My first rig was a homebrew 6AG7/6L6 on 40/80 with a borrowed Hallicrafters S-38C receiver. I've gone through more homebrew transmitters, generally ending in one or two 807's, had ARC-5's on 80, 40, and 20 with an SX-28 for most of high school, Collins S-Line, Swan 500C [Andrea bought it for me as a present for surviving SE Asia], and several Yaesu/Kenwoods.

My current station is an ad for Elecraft. I run a fairly vanilla K3, I have an LK 500-ZC amplifier, a tribander, and some wires for the low bands. I use my K2 mainly in QRP mode for field events and summit activations, and my KX1 when I really need small space/low weight, such as K6DGW/MM on a trip through the Panama Canal in 2005 and the Spartan Sprints. I have an ICOM IC-2800H dual band in my truck, and an FT-847 at home for VHF/UHF and LF SWL'ing.



Future station additions

I'll likely get a KPA-500 with the tuner when it is released and give up my KW. It's very heavy and I forget to drag it along onto a new band when the radio is so easy to QSY, and I can weather a 3dB loss.

I doubt I'll ever do SO2R, I left most of my hearing on the other side of the planet and plain old monaural audio at afterburner-roar seems to work best for me. I may spring for an Elecraft P3 if Andrea continues with her needlepoint hobby [likely]...we have an Equal Hobby Allowance agreement, and long-term, needlepoint is about as expensive as ham radio. ☺

Other modes to explore

I've pretty much done them all at one time or another. I finally dropped my AMSAT membership from 1968; I just don't have any satellite interest anymore. Packet folded for me with the "Internet at home" and I don't have much interest in the new digital modes. I'm active on VHF and UHF FM, mainly on the Cactus-Intertie, I manage one of the NCCRA sites, and am their Admin Dude. I was active in NTS as a teen, and I'm sort of lurking around the edges of it now, thanks to K9JM's encouragement, after all, it's on CW, "The first requirement." ☺

Right now, I'm pretty focused on CW DX'ing and Contesting with increasing interest in Summits On The Air.

Everything else: Ham radio has been a great romp through life for me and it continues unabated. Except for the four years in the two Vietnams and Laos, I've been, active in some manner for 57 years. Raising the kids and supporting a family sort of constrained a lot of activity to weekends, if even then, but retirement in 2000 opened new vistas! I can take all of our non-ham friends in *any* geography quiz. I just got my card from C5A today and I can actually point to it on the map. No one I know, except hams, have as many friends in as many places as I do.

I've often wondered if a 12-year old, seeing the tower and beam out back, knocked on my door as I did on Art's 58 years ago, "Would I do for that kid what Art did for me?" No knock yet, but if it happens, I hope the answer will be "Yes." Art passed away a dozen or so years ago, W6RMK is now held by his Grandson Jim, who I know.

Vic Rosenthal, K2VCO, CWops 5



In 1948, my parents had a Philco radio that stood on the floor of our apartment in Brooklyn. They never turned it on, preferring to listen to the little table radio in the kitchen, but I adored it.

I moved it out from the wall and stuck my head in the back to enjoy the fragrance of the hot tubes. I loved the way the massive 12-inch dynamic speaker in the bottom part of the cabinet hummed as it warmed up, the yellow

glow of the dial and the pinpoints of light from the filaments. It had several bands, most of which produced unintelligible noises. Once I asked my father about that. “That’s ship-to-shore,” he said, knowing about as much about it as I did.

Later, after we moved to Long Island, a friend invited me to his house where *his* father, who worked for NBC, was trying to get him interested in electronics. They were building a one-tube regenerative receiver. I guess he could see the excitement in my eyes, because he told me to get a piece of wood and I could build one too. He taught us to read color codes and solder, and the radio worked! Mostly it received Press Wireless RTTY signals, since we were a few miles from their powerful transmitters. My friend moved on to other interests, but I did not.

When I was 12 years old, I joined the Boy Scouts. One of the merit badges required a knowledge of Morse, and I built a little code oscillator and tried to teach it to myself. It was hard going, until I discovered that a local radio club had a Novice license class! All week I looked forward to Wednesday nights. On September 30, 1956, I came home from school to find my ticket in the mailbox: Kn2VCO. Note the small ‘n’ – that’s how we always wrote our calls.

I already had a receiver – a National NC-101X that I bought for \$50 that I was given for my Bar Mitzvah. Then I built a transmitter – actually a series of them – mostly from free parts taken from old TV sets. But some things had to be bought with paper-route money, like the crystal. I got 7178 kc. Bad move – apparently Radio Moscow was on 7180. I put up some kind of wire antenna and called CQ. And called CQ.

By this time it was January 1957 and I still hadn’t made a contact. Finally future CWops member Kn2VUI took pity on me and made a sked. Since he was about a mile away, even my worthless antenna and Radio Moscow didn’t prevent a QSO!

When I was in high school I discovered traffic handling. I loved the camaraderie. Some of the best operators turned out to be my age, and a surprising number of them are now CWops members. Prior to this I was a mediocre CW operator, but having to write the messages down was great practice. Soon I was able to get a 35 WPM code proficiency award.

I went away to college and thanks to my ham experience got a First Class Radiotelephone license and a job at a local radio station. I worked six days a week in the mornings and took classes in the afternoon. Ham radio and a state scholarship put me through school. Try that today.

Later I went to graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh. The radio club, W3YI, had a KW and a beam on top of a 10-story building! Along with CWops member, K6QU, I worked huge amounts of DX. From then on, DX was my thing.

From 1979 to 1988 I lived in Israel, on Kibbutz Glil-Yam. What a great QTH – about 2 km from the Mediterranean with a takeoff over sloping farmland. I had the call 4X6GP. My favorite story from that period happened when China came back on the air after many years of no ham radio. A European guy was operating from China as a demonstration for university students; I think he was an OK. He was S9+20, I was running 600 watts and had a beam at 50 feet. But I couldn't seem to get through.

After a while I realized that he could hear me. But he wasn't allowed to answer for political reasons. So I waited a while, and then we had this exchange:

Me: GP

Him: GP 599

Me: BY1... DE 4X6GP 599 TU

Him: (stunned silence)

Later I caught up with him at home in Europe on SSB. "Remember the time I worked you in China?" I asked. "You almost got me shot!" he said. "Luckily the officials that were watching couldn't copy CW. I didn't dare log you, of course." No, I did not get a QSL.

Like all Israeli citizens I had to do military reserve duty. When I was drafted, I proudly explained my qualifications and asked to be a radioman. "We have something better for you," they said. "You will be in the Air Force." I was excited – would I get to work on secret electronic countermeasures? You can guess what's coming: I got an M16 and the privilege of standing guard duty at places where there were secret electronic countermeasures! I did enjoy looking at the antennas and trying to guess what they were for.

Back in the USA in 1988 I had little money, but old friend K2VUI (he had dropped the 'n' by then) lent me a radio and I was back chasing DX.

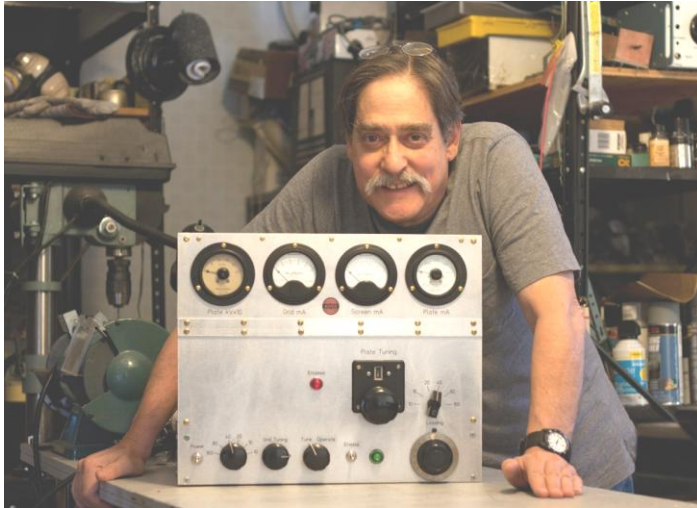
One recent highlight was being asked to be part of an early focus group when Elecraft was developing the K3, and then to become a field tester. It was exciting, and the K3 is incredible.

Today I must admit that in radio terms, I'm richer than in my wildest dreams. I am the proud owner of Elecraft K3 serial no. 0007, a P3 panadapter, not one but two amplifiers and a 4-element beam at about 15m. I have wire antennas for 160-30, various receiving antennas and a whole bunch of gadgets. I have an Elecraft K2 in QRP trim, and several old National receivers including an NC101X like my first one.

I also enjoy scratch-building things, like the amplifier in the photo. And nothing is more relaxing than building a kit while listening to classical music. I operate QRP with my K2 in the field, and

especially enjoy Field Day. I do some non-serious contest operating – I like the ARRL Sweepstakes, when I might put in 20 hours in a good year – and the CWTs, although I haven't been as active as I'd like.

As the solar cycle progresses, I'm looking forward to working more CWops!



K2VCO and the 2 x 813 amplifier he promised to build in a previous Solid Copy.

John Silva, N3AM, CWops 6



It all started when I was 13 years old and my Dad let me use his Hallicrafters Sky Buddy receiver. Dad had purchased the radio in 1939 when he planned to get his amateur radio license. But shortly after that, he met my Mom and forgot all about ham radio.

So, the Sky Buddy sat unused for many years until I set it up next to my bed and listened to foreign broadcasts late into the night, usually falling asleep with the headphones on. That Christmas, I got a Knight Kit 12-in-1 electronics kit and immediately built the AM transmitter. While it was fun broadcasting my voice to the far end of the house on a radio tuned to the AM broadcast band, I had a yearning for some real DX.

I tuned the Sky Buddy to WWV, which at the time was located in nearby Greenbelt, MD and thus very strong, and fed the audio into my AM-band transmitter. I found that my re-broadcast of the WWV signal was quite readable on a portable radio about 800 feet away when I placed the radio next to a power company ground wire. This was great stuff!

After listening for weeks to hams on the 75 meter band, I finally decided that I wanted to be able to talk to these guys, rather than just listen to them, even though that meant I would have to learn the code. We had the 1959 ARRL Handbook, which listed the “Continental Code” and the “International Code,” which were not identical, and I was afraid that I might pick the wrong one to study. That was soon sorted out when I played a 45-rpm AMECO code practice record, which played code characters generated by a rough sounding sawtooth oscillator. Not the best introduction to the Morse Code, but at least I knew which one to study.

In those days, we had small reel-to-reel tape recorders and I set up the Sky Buddy on a broadcast carrier and used the BFO to create an audio tone in the speaker that I could key on and off with a straight key. I figured if I could copy a recording of my own sending, perhaps someone else could as well.

As luck would have it, the father (K3DBM -SK) of one of my schoolmates was a ham who lived up the street from us. After a few code practice sessions with his Navy J38 straight key, he gave me my Novice exam and some pointers about the format of a QSO. He also taught me some strange lingo, like “lid” and “fine business.” Three long weeks later, in August, 1962, my license (KN3URZ) arrived in the mail and I was ready to go with the Knight T-60 transmitter that I had built, feeding a dipole antenna about 10 feet above the ground. I was rock-bound on 7173kHz with a single crystal. Much to my chagrin, when I keyed the transmitter, the Sky Buddy overloaded and I could hear multiple signals all over the band. The question was, “which one is my real transmit frequency?” I found that by shorting the antenna terminals on the receiver, I could eliminate all of the birdies and correctly tune to my TX frequency.

I upgraded to General Class the following February and added the Knight VFO to my T-60 transmitter. I was enjoying my new freedom to roam the bands when the phone rang one day. It was the radio technicians from nearby Andrews Air Force Base calling to say that 5MHz parasitic transmissions from my radio were being received on Air Force One, President Kennedy’s plane! The two techs were quite congenial and visited my shack in an attempt to cure the problem, but without success. That ended my use of that VFO and provided incentive to change rigs.

During the summer after I graduated from college, I built the Heath SB-102, my first transceiver. I put it on the passenger seat of my Fiat 124 convertible and installed the solid state switching power supply in the trunk. It worked great until one cold morning when I flipped the radio to the “on” position, and noticed that the radio didn’t come on; there was none of the familiar high pitched “singing” from the trunk-mounted power supply. I found that the supply just needed a kick-start, provided by a hot cigarette lighter applied to one of the switching transistors. This became standard practice as long as I had that rig in the car. I still operate mobile CW today, but

with an ICOM 706 in the trunk and a Little Tarheel screwdriver antenna mounted on the trunk lid of my Honda Accord.

My current set-up in the shack includes an Elecraft K3, Alpha 87A amp and an SB-220 amp, recently modified for 6 meters. I use a Bencher Hex key to key the Logikey K3 keyer. I have a single 70-foot Rohn 45 tower with beams for 40-2 meters, plus 70cm and wires for 160 and 80. I also have a K9AY RX antenna, which I find to be quite beneficial for reception on 80 and 160.

I was attending a wedding during the fantastic June, 2010 6 meter opening, but will be home this year for what I hope will be a repeat performance on 6 meters.

Now, I have to wonder.... would any of this have happened if Dad hadn't bought that Sky Buddy receiver?

Rick Tavan, N6XI, CWops 4



When I started listening to shortwave broadcasts at the age of ten on a friend's Heathkit AR-3 "communications" receiver, little did I know that it would lead to a life-long hobby. But I knew immediately that there was magic in radio waves and I wanted to know more.

I nagged my father for my own AR-3 which came through on the next gift-giving occasion. He felt I was too young to handle a soldering iron, so he insisted on doing the construction himself. He had no background in electronics but he did enjoy building plastic ship models, so Heathkits were a pretty natural follow-on. And he was probably right that I would have screwed it up. He didn't, and I began to enjoy SWLing from my Silver Spring, MD bedroom with the AR-3 and a random wire hanging out the window.

Eventually bored by the rock crushing likes of VOA and Radio Moscow, I began to seek out weaker signals and quickly located the Professional Freeloaders Net, a leisure-time extension of the identically-acronym'ed Pennsylvania Fone Net. They were loud on 40M AM in the Washington, D.C. area and I enjoyed eavesdropping on their banter, the first ham radio conversations I can remember.

Around the same time, I began to pay attention to a huge tower up the street (learning later that it was a Vesto). I figured it might belong to a ham, so my Dad and I knocked on the door and met Ken Cox, W3VNF. He explained amateur radio to us and showed off his enormous Johnson Viking 500 AM transmitter. We found the local ham radio store, Uncle George's Radio Ham Shack in Wheaton, MD. An early visit scored a Radio Amateurs Callbook where I found an address for Katie Gibson K3BHU of the PFN groups. I wrote to her, receiving a gracious

response and more encouragement. Together, my Dad and I read the *ARRL License Manual* and *Learning the Radiotelegraph Code*, learning Morse by sending to each other. We took our Novice exams at Uncle George's in the Spring of 1961 and I became KN3QDD at age 12. Dad got KN3QDC, a call he kept as K3QDC until he passed away in 2010. He sprang for a luxury Hallicrafters HQ-170 receiver and an Eico 723 Novice transmitter, his second kit. I bought some crystals with allowance and lawn-mowing money. We printed up a nifty QSL card with both calls, proclaiming ours "The Father and Son Station."

My Novice days were brief but exciting, including the worst report card I ever shamefully carried home from school. This resulted in a post-homework restriction to my operating but did not dampen my interest. Conditions were good and I managed to work a bit of DX with a simple vertical and a 15M rotary dipole built from a QST article.

Around the end of our Novice days, having passed the General Class exam at the FCC headquarters in D.C., I submitted an entry in a 25-words-or-less contest sponsored by Hallicrafters. I completed the sentence "Hams should use VHF for local communication because..." with the rather obvious "...it frees up the HF frequencies for the amateur's vital public service work," winning a VHF transverter! I had no idea what to do with it, so we traded it in at Uncle George's for a tower, beam and rotator. In retrospect, that seems like a rather favorable exchange, so I suspect my Dad threw in a little more of his hard-earned cash. Our station improved and I got involved in contesting through Field Day with the Rock Creek Amateur Radio Association W3RCN and CW traffic handling on the MDD NTS net through the encouragement of Art Boyars K3OAE (now K3KU). It was the start of a life-long passion for all things amateur radio.

Art was certainly my #1 Elmer back then before we had even invented that folksy term for a radio mentor. He taught me more about contesting and gave me rides to meetings of the Potomac Valley Radio Club, all the way around the Beltway in Northern Virginia. Four years ahead of me in school, Art left Silver Spring for MIT when I was still in junior high school. We ran weekly CW skeds between W1MX and K3QDD and I relayed messages to his parents. This saved a lot of "real money" on long-distance phone calls. Art's conversations turned the mythical MIT into a practical reality and encouraged me to apply during my senior year in high school. This led to my admission in 1966 to a great school that, as it turned out, had a connection to every dollar I earned during my career. Thanks, Art, for the encouragement! The first person I met when I walked into W1MX on a pre-admission visit to the school was Rusty Epps K4BVD, now CWops member W6OAT, a former 40CW friend from school days. Like Art, Rusty was just graduating and has kept showing up with infectious enthusiasm at various times in my radio life.

I have used a number of call signs over the years. While in college, I acquired W1DVH as a secondary station call but I did most of my operating during college and for years thereafter from

the club station W1MX, serving as trustee while working at MIT's C. S. Draper Lab after graduation.

When vanity calls became available in the 70's, I changed to K1RC, a great call that didn't work well when I moved to California, two years before it became legal there. The best I could do at that point was N6XI. During a short-lived fantasy of some day moving to 7-land, I changed briefly to N7TN but couldn't get used to it and switched back to N6XI. It's not a great CW call but it's me and I'm now resistant to change, at least in that department.

I spent a year in Italy in the 70's on a tour of duty for Draper Lab, operating at the home of Joe Molinaro I1MOL. I did my first and only iron-man contest effort as 4X/N6XI in 1983 at the 4Z4HF club station at Kibbutz Sasa, as guest of Joe Lieberman, SK. During the next century, as a



member of the Northern California Contest Club, I had opportunities to operate at other DX locations, including wins and second-place multi-op efforts at ZF2NT, HC8N, 6Y2A and P40L, all on CW, of course. Perhaps the pinnacle of my contesting career was as teammate to K6XX in the 2010 World Radiosport Team Championship outside of Moscow, Russia as R31A. That almost-all CW contest was an amazing experience that I will cherish forever.



In the real world, I moved from Boston to Italy and then to California for Masstor Systems Corp., now defunct, pursuing a career in software engineering. I retired in 2002 after 16 years with TIBCO Software and built a reasonably competitive 1 ½-tower station in a great mountain location in Truckee, CA, near Lake Tahoe and Reno, NV. I'm set up for SO2R with a pair of Elecraft K3s, a KPA-500 and an Alpha 87A. Antennas include a 4el SteppIR, a Mag 240N, an 80M rotary dipole, a Force 12 C4S and Tornado 80/40 vertical.

I split my time between that QTH and the old homestead in Silicon Valley. I still have a station there but it is cursed by suburban consumer electronics. It works OK when the noise abates, though! My wife Ann is KD6MOB. My children are Jeremy KC6YEW and Dan. Neither of my licensed family co-conspirators are active hams but they did use FM during the boys' Boy Scout years. Jeremy and his wife now live in San Jose, CA and made us doting grandparents in 2010.

He is an IT group manager at Stanford University. Dan is general manager of a Shake Shack restaurant in Miami Beach, FL. Although I remain active in radio and was a former NCCC President, I am trying to balance my retirement with other hobbies including flying (private pilot, instrument rating), SCUBA diving, skiing, fly fishing and community service, usually sitting on a non-profit board or two and the occasional business board. My wife and I travel often but I usually refrain from mixing ham radio with family trips.

For more on my radio and other interests, see my personal Web page <https://sites.google.com/site/rtavan/> or my QRZ.com pages for N6XI and WF6C.

Jack Schuster, W1WEF, CWops 48



I owe my introduction to Radio to my Dad. As a young boy, I couldn't wait until he would let me work in his store, "OK Radio Sales and Service". It wasn't Ham Radio, but in those days of AM radios there was a need for radio service. FM hadn't even gained popularity in 1950, but dial cords needed restringing, filter caps and selenium rectifiers were always going bad, capacitors got "leaky," to say nothing of tube failures. The reliability of today's electronics was unheard of. TV was just arriving in

Springfield Ma around that time, and Dad was involved from the start with a kit TV set he built, when the nearest station was in NYC and with a 30 ft tower on the roof and a big antenna he could show customers early television if they used their imagination.

Dad didn't let me go to "work" until I was 13, but I became interested first in a crystal set with a catwhisker and galena crystal, and then in building one-tube radios. I can remember getting up in the middle of the night to see what I could hear on that radio with the hot new 1L4. I remember the one with a 1S5 that I built a wooden cabinet for, and later the 6BN6 model. I got my circuits from publications like Hugo Gernsbach's "Radio News" to which Dad subscribed.

In those days there were FIVE radio parts wholesalers in Springfield! Three sold ham gear and one sold radio kits. I bought a five-tube superhet kit, and then copied it using scrap parts to build more of the same.

When I was about twelve years old and working on a Boy Scout radio merit badge, an older boy introduced me to ham radio. We visited some hams with impressive stations, and both decided to

start studying for a “second class” license together. When we were just about ready to take the exam, the Novice license was introduced, and we learned we could take the exam at an upcoming hamfest in 1952. I became WN1WEF, and Bob was WN1WEN.

Like other CW Ops you’ve read about here, I practically filled my first log book with CQs. I had a crystal on 3547 for my 6AG7 crystal oscillator with a pi network, and after 2 weeks of CQing I had the thrill of VE1II coming back to me. From then on, it seemed to get easier, and I started to make friends on CW with repeated ragchews. I can’t really recall if the Novice roundup was my first contest or if it even was introduced during my Novice days, but it wasn’t long before I looked forward to Sweepstakes and CD parties. Before a year was up as a novice, I upgraded to General. You only had a year to do so or lose your license.

The neighborhood was loaded with hams, and the bands had far more activity than they do now. About 100 ft from my shack (my bedroom) window was the end of another ham’s long wire (W1JYH aka W1AX). On the next street was another CW op, W1KFV, along with W1QWJ who built several amplifiers in the League handbooks. At one end of my street was W1CCH who had an impressive two meter array with 144 elements. Two blocks away was W1QUQ who I remember had drawers full of 3-inch meters.

Everyone had homebrew gear of some kind, including me with several different homebrew 807 and 6146 rigs, and 813 single-band amps. The upgrade from the Hallicrafters S40B (that my folks bought me) to the HRO5TA1 that I bought from Roger, W1JYH, was a huge step forward. I became very interested in CW traffic handling on Western Mass Net...and ultimately was NCS of EAN and TCC liason to CAN on 80M. I was still strictly CW, but remember when I made my first phone contact, giving Roger a Q in a CD party while shouting into the coil on my grid dip meter that was coupled to my wire antenna!

During college years at U Mass where I majored in EE, I was president of the radio club for three years and operated some from W1PUO, the club station. I never chased DX in those early years, and when I graduated and went to work for Sperry Gyroscope on Long Island, I started an 18-year hiatus, even though I moved back to Springfield and went to work for Pratt and Whitney Aircraft for the next 32 years before retiring. I was lucky to be able to take an early retirement offer when I was 54 and have enjoyed every minute of it!

While at Pratt another ham got me interested in getting back into the hobby. I expected to be out of work for several weeks in 1978 with a double hernia operation (now it’s more like a couple days) so I put up dipoles for 20 and 40 and bought a TS520S...a transceiver! I don’t think there was such thing as a transceiver when I became inactive in ’60. Before I went back to work I had DXCC mixed and WAS, and will always remember my contact with a guy on Easter Island. I think it was CE0AE who remembered me from our Novice days when he was a W2 and we

frequently chatted on 80CW. I'll always be W1WEF so old friends can recognize me. After all, Trey used to be WN4KKN and still won contests with that call, so I can't blame my long call...hi.

I was married in '66, and had two kids, a boy and a girl and a wife who probably didn't know what ham radio was when we were married. She couldn't be more supportive of my hobby, and her only demand is that I not drag her to another Ham banquet where the speaker is of absolutely no interest to her! We now enjoy our four grandkids growing faster than we can believe.

I have enjoyed CW contesting more than any other aspect of the hobby but almost enjoy doing antenna work as well as operating. Aside from CQWW and ARRL DX, the CW NA Sprint has been a favorite. I did become a DXer and have worked 'em all, mixed Phone and CW, but don't enjoy record keeping so haven't chased band/mode countries. For the past three years, when I'm home I've enjoyed going into the League as a volunteer in DXCC.

After retiring, we RV'ed across the Southern states, coast to coast during winters for 15 years. Of course I always had a rig in the RV and a vertical I could set up in ten minutes. We always tried to visit at least one ham on each trip. I've operated mobile CW from my car for about 30 years, and made many FOC friends while I was a member for 30 years.

Other hobbies included skiing...I met Natalie on the slopes at Killington. We were both avid skiers, skied Colorado for many years as well as Vermont. We brought our kids up on skis from the age of 4, and both became ski bums and excellent skiers after college, living in Colorado before coming back to New England and settling down. I always wanted to build a house, and did finally do it, designing and building a chalet in Vermont during my working years, doing everything myself except the masonry work. I also rebuilt and added on to the house we're in now, as well as doing much of the work on two houses on Cape Cod where we spend our summers.

I enjoy salt water fishing, especially going out of Chatham after tuna on my son in law's boat with my grandsons.

My station today is a FTDX 5K which is the best radio I ever had, and an AL1500. I've tried SO2R and decided it was too much like work! I have a single tower with a XM240 at 116 ft, and a stack of three TH6s. On 80 I have a wire 4-square in the woods with ground radials, and on 160 an Inv L with about 85 ft vertical. I think my days of trying to put a lot of hours in the chair during contests may be over, but I've been happy setting a goal and competing with myself and sometimes making top-ten in far fewer hours than the guys who beat me with multiple towers and SO2R.

I was fortunate to have operated in ARRL DX ten times from Curacao with my good friend John Thompson, W1BIH, where we usually were among the top few World multi singles, and even No1 WORLD once or twice. I love running (not on foot...on the radio), and was enjoying the runs so much on 20 in last year's CQWW, I said the heck with score or looking for mults, and just stayed on 20 all day Sunday. I had some great runs in ARRL CW this year, where my time was restricted due to a severe back problem that I'm still fighting.

One of these day's I'll remember the CWT. I know I shouldn't feel guilty for not supporting a club competition, but I often do. In 30 years in FOC I only entered the Marathon seriously once, and won NA, but believe it or not, forever after that year we were always away...in the RV or on a cruise...our newest "hobby." I hope to make it to Dayton again this year, and maybe have an eyeball with some of my CWops compadres.

David Bunte, K9FN, Cwops 557



I listened to short wave broadcasts on an old Silvertone Radio that my father helped me repair when I was about 10 years old. The repairs involved determining which tubes were bad, and replacing them, but in the process my father explained the concept of a tube as an electron valve.

When I was 11 ½ I heard an evangelist at a local church talk about his past life of crime, which included wiretaps and bugs for criminals. A book of his included a reference to ham radio, and I wanted to learn more.

We were living in Wheaton, Illinois at the time, and my father rode the train to his office in Chicago. He walked right past Lafayette electronics on his way from his office to the train station, and one day he came home with the ARRL package of books that included the License Manual, a book on learning the code, and one on becoming an Amateur Radio Operator.

I devoured those books, and took the exam in late summer fall of 1957, and in October I got my ticket, KN9LIH. My test was administered by a neighbor, W9EMB. Bill worked for Zenith at the time they purchased Central Electronics, and I remember being at his house one day, and getting to use the Prototype 100R receiver he helped design. There was a great write up about that receiver a few years back in QST. I feel privileged to have actually used one.

My first rig was a Hallicrafters S-85, and a Heathkit DX-40. Dad helped me build my first antenna, the driven loop of a 15 meter quad. With the only crystal I owned, I proceeded to work about 38 countries as a novice. I still remember the thrill of working OK3KGI at about 11:00 pm when I did not know the band would likely be dead, but just had to turn on the radio one more time before going to bed.

I took the train into Chicago for my General exam early in 1958. That was back in the days when we had to draw schematics... and I was really worried. I was solid on the CW part of the exam, but less so on the theory. When I was done I feared I had flunked the CW, but thought the written exam was a breeze. Guess my nerves were kicking in.

While I was still in High School, I picked up an SX-101A and a used Heath Apache with an SB-10. Thus, I was one of the first hams in town to get on SSB. The ease with which I could then work DX on SSB tended to pull me away from CW. I was a die-hard DXer and chased countries on whichever mode I could find them, but if I snagged one on SSB first, I often did not even try on CW... I was just trying to build my Phone and Mixed mode totals. I also replaced the 15-meter antenna with a tri-band quad. Before I got married, I replaced the Apache with an HT-37. After I got married I built up a single 3-500Z grounded grid amplifier, and replaced the Hallicrafters gear with a Drake TR-4. I obviously was paying more attention to SSB than CW by then.

I got my BS in Radio & Television from Southern Illinois University in 1967, and landed my first full-time job at Purdue University, where I held a variety of jobs at WBAA-AM, the oldest broadcast station in Indiana. After 41 plus years, I retired at the end of 2008.

When I first moved to Indiana I lived in an apartment, and used a slinky antenna, which worked pretty well on 20 & 40 with a home brew L section tuner, and I hung an inverted Vee in the spare bedroom. The antenna was for 10 meters, and with alligator clips I added wire for use on 15 meters, which allowed me to snag my first QSO with Cocos Keeling. That, of course, was with Don Miller... so who knows where he actually was?

After my wife and I bought our first house, I put up the Hy-Gain Hy-Tower that I had used in Southern Illinois, and then added a 48' Spaulding Tower and 2 element Quad. At our next house I raised the Spaulding tower to 64' and put up the TH-3 that CWops members N9MM and N6NA had used on Kingman Reef. I later replaced the TH-3 with a used TH-6, before landing a great deal on a 100' free standing Pi-Rod tower. That beauty deserved a larger antenna, so I built a 4 element 20 meter mono-bander, and mounted a 2 element Cush Craft 40 meter beam on the same boom. In the meantime I had upgraded to a Drake C-Line and started to work more CW, primarily in contests, and got some great tutoring and experience working alongside of N9MM at the 20 meter position of the multi-multi efforts under his call, from the QTH of W9ZRX.

The arrival of three daughters, and the pursuit of my MS in Management from Purdue University cut into my operating somewhat, but I still managed to snag 5BDXCC and Honor Roll #1 status.

As I got older, and had some health challenges, I was no longer able to climb, and it became increasingly difficult to find anyone locally to do tower/antenna work. My wife and I moved in 2001 to a nice house, with restrictions that precluded an outdoor antenna. My wife knew that would be very hard for me, but since I could no longer climb, I decided I could live with those restrictions, and turned my attention to HF mobile. I did not actually get back on the air until May 2006, but since then have worked 220 countries from my Pick-up truck, and have spoken at a couple of Midwestern hamfests about HF mobile operation. My first QSO from the truck was on SSB, but increasingly I have focused my attention on CW. I no longer keep a mic hooked up in the truck... I am truly having the most fun in the hobby that I have ever had. Rag chews on 40 CW, along with some fun in CWT's have been a great way to stay active.

In my pickup truck I run an IC-7000 and an SGC-500 amp to a PREDATOR antenna... a large screwdriver type antenna made right here in Indiana. I use a single lever Begali paddle and a MicroHam CW keyer. I have a RAM mount in the truck to help my laptop computer for logging etc. That is nice when travelling, so I can make a few QSO's while my wife drives. She does not like to to operate CW while driving, but if we are travelling during a CWT she usually takes over before 1900 so I can get setup and have some fun. Even the interstates in America are rough enough to make quality sending a bit elusive while riding in a truck. Recently, friend and neighbor W9RGB helped me run coax from my basement to my garage, which I can then run down the driveway and connect to the Predator antenna on my truck. Vic also loaned me his K3, so I am able to do some of my operating from the hamshack I am building in the basement.

During the past year, I have helped Vern-W9FAM CWops # 826, get back on the air, by repairing several of his antennas. I have also decided to erect a "flag-pole" vertical. The Home Owners Association rejected my request for permission to erect a vertical antenna... but made it clear that they can say or do nothing to discourage installation of a flag pole, if it can really hold a flag... and it is entirely my business if I wish to also use it as an antenna.

My wife Mary is an artist, and for a few years now has focused her energy on the creation of "Art Quilts". One of them recently completed a three-year tour of the nation, and another has just embarked on such a journey as well. One of these days I want to learn how to create a web site on which her quilts may be displayed for others to enjoy.

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