

# Solid Copy

The CW Operators Club Newsletter

September 2018 — Issue 104



## Antenna Problems



Could this be the cause of antenna problems at K9WX? See "From the Editor" page 3

### CWops "CWT" Every Wednesday

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

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

### Avoid DX pileups!

Next slow speed CWT is November 14-15

### 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](#)

Director: Vidi La Grange [ZS1EL](#)

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

Webmaster: Dan Romanchik [KB6NU](#)

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

## President's Message

August was a busy month. CWops had its Call Sign Copy Competition set up in a booth at the Huntsville Hamfest in Huntsville, AL. There were 41 members and non-members who participated and had lot of fun. Certificates of Participation are being sent out to the participants showing the top speed achieved and a score related to timing and accuracy. This activity is also set up to pass out information about how to learn Morse Code which leads them to our CW Academy. To those who approach the table we have a great chance to talk with and en-



(Continued on page 2)

## Table of Contents

<a href="#">President's Message</a> .....	1
<a href="#">From the Editor</a> .....	3
<a href="#">News &amp; Notes</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Enigma Reloaded</a> .....	14
<a href="#">WRTC2018: AE6Y and N6XI</a> .....	15
<a href="#">WRT2018: K4BAI</a> .....	21
<a href="#">WRTC2018: KG5HVO</a> .....	26
<a href="#">CWops Tests</a> .....	31
<a href="#">CW Academy</a> .....	34
<a href="#">New Members</a> .....	35
<a href="#">CWops Members Awards</a> .....	36
<a href="#">CWOpen: Points to Ponder</a> .....	39
<a href="#">QTX Report</a> .....	41
<a href="#">An Antenna Tip</a> .....	43
<a href="#">Operating Events</a> .....	29
<a href="#">My Story: New member bio's</a> .....	47

*(Continued from previous page)*

courage them to enroll in a class. We also see hams who haven't been active with CW for a long time and want to find out how we can help them with their CW skills. In every case our CW Academy has a solution for them. They like the mentoring approach that our Advisors provide. Through word of mouth among their friends they have heard about CW Academy and are eager to learn. They are really happy to hear that the wait time for a class has been reduced to nearly real-time. What we are doing is successful and some of the 4,000+ students have stopped by our table and expressed appreciation for the help and success they have had with CW.

CWops has a corps of Ambassadors who are located in six of the eight regions in America and Canada. You can see the names under the CWops website tab, "About." We have two vacancies that I would like your help with. One region is the South Central US.

The map of the area is also under the list of named ambassadors. The other vacancy is in the Western Canada region. If you would like to be considered for one of those positions please email me, vadenmac@aol.com. We have far too many unfilled Ambassador positions outside of North America. My goal is to get them filled by the end of 2018. Each Ambassador needs be residing in the region they will represent.

Here is a description of what the Ambassador's role includes. The Ambassador must be a licensed ham radio operator, a member of CWops in good standing and willing to meet with amateur radio clubs, groups, attend major hamfests in the region. The plan is to promote CWops and CW Academy by giving presentations, having conversations and passing out pertinent information sheets to anyone interested in Morse Code. One of the objectives of CWops is to keep communications with CW present and growing on the ham bands. To do that we like to recruit new members who are qualified as well as train our own cadre of future members via CW Academy.

Internationally, we have the same purposes and we want to become better known around the world. Finding candidates for the Ambassador positions may be easier for someone who is a member and can speak the native language of the future appointee. Help is needed from within our ranks for members who are bilingual and can help us find potential ambassador candidates. If you are multi-lingual that's even better. If you can help in any way it would be appreciated and hopefully you will email me with more information.

The Annual CW Open is over and the logs are being processed. I had a lot of fun participating in the three sessions. The number of Qs was proportional to the QSB/QRN experienced. We look forward to recognizing the 2018 winners soon. We like to thank Icom for sponsoring the winner trophies and appreciate their continued support.

Enjoy CW any chance you get.

**73**

**Mac**, NN4K, President

### ***President's Message . . .***

CWops has a corps of Ambassadors who are located in six of the eight regions in America and Canada. I have two vacancies that I would like your help with (and) we have far too many unfilled Ambassador positions outside of North America.



**Thanks, Icom, for sponsoring the annual CW Open awards.**

# From the [Editor](#)

## Fun with Antennas

The antenna rebuild article by Mike W7GF in the [August issue of Solid Copy](#) reminded me of a recent adventure I had with my Butternut HF9V, an antenna very similar to his.

I'm on the low end of sophistication when it comes to antennas. I use a multiband dipole for most work but have the Butternut available for the WARC bands and also when I need the second antenna for SO2R contesting.

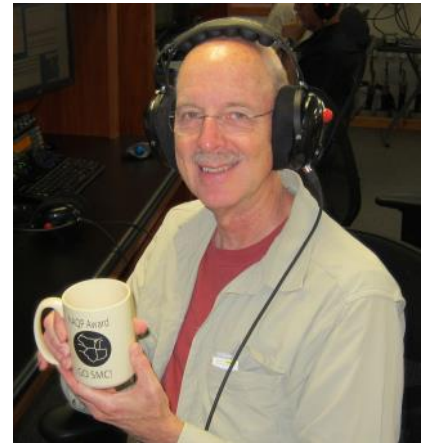
In early August I was trying to work something on 17 meters, so I switched to the Butternut and gave it a shot. Much to my surprise, I found the SWR was off the chart, a bad sign because the Butternut is resonant on 17 when properly adjusted and typically shows a very low SWR across the entire band. I tried to tune it (foolishly, with the benefit of hindsight) with my Elecraft KAT500 but that didn't go well so I gave up and moved on.

A day or two later I made it outside to visually inspect the antenna. It's installed in the woods behind my house; not an ideal location but you work with what you have. And my highly trained, sophisticated ham radio eye and brain quickly zoomed in on the problem.

The antenna works on 17 meters using both a coil and a strip of aluminum that sits on top of the coil to provide capacitance. The aluminum strip is horizontally mounted to the top of the coil with a single bolt. Normally, that is. I found the strip had rotated on the bolt (in the 20 years I've had the antenna I've learned that the bolt can work itself loose over time) and on this occasion it had rotated enough to short against the 30 meter coil which sits beneath the 17 meter coil. The antenna was probably resonant somewhere but not on 17 or 30 that day.

To add insult to injury, my attempt to tune the thing melted the insulator that sits on top of the 17 meter coil. It didn't melt through but did give it an artistic twist. So, repair work was limited to rotating the strip back to the horizontal position and tightening the bolt.

What caused the strip to rotate to that extreme? We have hawks nesting in the ravine behind the antenna. My theory is that one of these, or



*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

some other large bird, had perched on the strip and, when it took off to go find lunch, Newton's third law came into play. Local friend Vic W9RGB opined that it was probably just a squirrel, but I like the hawk theory as it's much more elegant. Although I must confess that the squirrel theory is a likely possibility as we have lots of the little buggers and they love to eat the paint on the garage doors ([see photo on page 1](#)).

There is no moral to my story and I hope you didn't read this far expecting to find some deep insight, we're just telling war stories here, okay? Ham radio often reminds me of that tag line used in the 1960's American TV show, [The Naked City](#): "There are eight million stories in the naked city. This has been one of them."



**73,**

**Tim**, K9WX, Editor

---

## News and Notes

### **Jerry Weisskohl AC4BT**

**Sadly, we report that on August 9, Summer Hartzfeld VE5SDH became a silent key, and that on September 1, Jarda Bazant OK1WF became a silent key.**

**Jim, N3JT:** Two of our CWops members, K1VR and W2RU, are running for ARRL Director in their respective Divisions (Northeast and Roanoke). Both will be great directors.

**Dick, WN7S:** I participated in the 2018 CWO from my HOA in northern Virginia. I have a modest shack and antennas with little or no gain. I currently use wire and a vertical. I do have an amplifier and can shoot out about 700 watts when required.

At this phase of the sun spot cycle, 40 meters is usually my meat and potatoes band for QSOs during the weekly CWTs. However, during the CWO, 40 meters was unusually noisy during all three sessions. It seemed like every QSO was fuzzy and a challenge to copy. In spite of mediocre band conditions, the big guns in California and Texas came booming in. Also, I was surprised to work as many Europeans... some with strong signals. However, the majority of my QSOs were weaker than normal.

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

I especially liked the three, four-hour runs. At my age (72) I could stay awake (read focused) and have fun. My total QSO count was well, well, well below the count of the “big guys.” I fall in the “nickel and dime” category – towards the bottom of the queue. That is ok – I still had a ball. As indicated in some of my previous musings, my contest days were in the 80s and 90s. Those were the pencil, paper and no auto keying days of yesteryear. Time passed me by. I have been contest -dormant for a long time – but continued to chase DX and rag chew.

The CWTs have reinvigorated my interest in contesting in spite of the challenges of HOA and a poor QTH. Old Buzzards like me have come to realize that here are many compromises in life – and this is one of them.

For methodology, I use both the ‘Run’ and ‘search and pounce’ techniques without computer spotting. My one main regret is not being able to pull out a number of stations that respond to my “CQ calling.” I hope they understand and take no offense. Oh, since I’m all thumbs, I probably spend more time trying to hit the right keys on my N3FPJ logging program. Improvement of my typing skills will never happen!

CW Open Recommendations: None & I sincerely appreciate the organizational hard work instituting and promoting the CW Open. It is a bright spot that I look forward to each year.

#### **Chuck, NO5W:** CWops Call Sign Copy Competition – A Crackerjack I Know

If memory serves the baseball song goes something like this: “Take me out to the ballgame, take me out with the crowd, buy me some popcorn and cracker jacks ...”. Cracker jacks, cracker jacks, let me tell you about cracker jacks, or I should say a crackerjack I know.

It must be a fundamental law of baseball that if you hang out in the dugout for enough years, eventually a player with the talent of a fictional “Roy Hobbs” aka “[The Natural](#)” will slide down the bench, sit down beside you, and begin picking your brain for any wisdom you’ve managed to acquire in 60+ years around the game. Congratulations, you’ve just been called up to the “big”, the majors. You’re now a mentor, or as tradition has it in amateur radio, an Elmer. It’s time to recall when you were starting out at 14 or less and those that helped you along. It’ll be fun and, who knows, you might witness a home run.

It was about three years ago when Bryant Rascoll – KG5HVO, at eleven years and decked out in his baseball uniform, strolled through the door of the Jefferson ARC Saturday morning open-house with his mom, Lauren, close behind. My first thought was, perhaps they were looking for directions to one of several diamonds located in the Wally Pontiff Metairie Park Playground



*(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from previous page)

where the JARC shares space with baseball diamonds and other fields of friendly strife. But no, they had just come from a game and had a few hours before the next one and Bryant, with a newly minted Technician class ticket, wanted to check out the radios, meet some of the locals, pick up a few operating tips, and find out the schedule for the next General class study group. The study group, along with study on his own while being home schooled, paid off and about three months later in August 2015 he returned with a General class ticket in hand, to be followed not long afterward by an Extra class ticket, and a whole notebook of questions, including several about CW!

There wasn't much required to send Bryant on his way as a CW operator. It was sufficient to explain and emphasize that he should think of CW simply as sounds with their pitch, volume, and rhythm – no counting of dits and dahs, no pictograms, no memory aids and definitely no decoders, just simple sounds learned from many listening sessions until those sounds become second nature just like a throw from third to first after many hours of practice. And when ready to do some contesting and the need arises to manage a pileup visualize the pileup as a symphony and your goal will be to listen to the wall of sound created by the pile of instruments and focus on the individual signals with their distinguishing pitch, volume, and speed, not allowing yourself to be distracted by other signals in the wall. And when not listening to Morse, listen to music with the same goal. Now write that on your operating desk and run with it.

Well, you can see from the photo that he ran and ran and ran some more, eventually leaving his advisors in the dust! Hams are generally known for their ingenuity in solving problems they encounter in the pursuit of the hobby and Bryant is no exception. For example, in your toolbox I hope you have the proper tools for laying of radials. If not, then you should certainly send for Bryant's construction tips outlining how to drive a nail into a 2x4 to create such a tool. Tips for operating the tool are available on request.

And although you know that a beam laying on the ground is pretty much useless and you have no tower or push-up pole on which to raise it, don't dismay. Hang the aluminum from a tree and you'll enjoy several db of gain over the "ground-mounted" version.

Now you might think that, with all the things that Bryant has accomplished, and the accolades he's received including the Dave Kalter Memorial Youth DX Adventure Award in 2017; selection for a youth team in WRTC



(Continued on next page)



*(Continued from previous page)*

2018; and selection as the Young Ham of the Year in 2018; that the headband in his baseball cap is now stretched several sizes beyond the original. But no, due to both nature and parental nurture Bryant maintains a level perspective and continues to treat his elders in the ham community with respect, as long as there is not a contest involved - see photo again. He is self-confident and comfortable making presentations to his elders. Even so, he does not walk with a noticeable swagger, at least not in public, but I'm told by his mom that on certain Wednesday mornings around 1400 UTC when he emerges from the groove known as CWT she can tell by the swagger in his walk just how he did against arch, but friendly, competitors like K1DW and NO5W and the rest of the CWT regulars.

Early on in one of our open house sessions a suggestion was made to Bryant that one of the beautiful things about ham radio is that it is cross-generational and now that he had joined the community we could be on a first name basis. Neither he nor his mom would have any of that and it looks like I will forever be "Mr. Chuck". [I've even grown somewhat comfortable being addressed that way but I have a trick in mind for the CWT - instead of CHUCK 311 I'm going to be MRCHUCK 311 when I work KG5HVO. Maybe that bit of curve ball treachery will be sufficiently distracting for me to gain the upper hand].

It should be obvious, but needs to be said, that Bryant's parents, Tim and Lauren, have been key supporters of his ham radio adventures from the get-go including trips to Hamvention, Costa Rica, WRTC 2018 in Germany, across the lake for multi-op contesting from KN5O and across state lines to Georgia for multi-op contesting at WW4LL, not to mention weekly trips to the JARC for meetings and open house. None of that would have been possible without their support.

I could go on with more thoughts and anecdotes but I see by the clock on the wall that I need to wrap this up because it is Wednesday about 1230 UTC and there is a 14-year-old crackerjack operator over near Montgomery, Alabama, who is eager to dispel the oft-quoted notion that "experience and treachery will always win over youth and exuberance".

**Gary, N5PHT:** I had a nice lunch in Overland Park, KS. We had 6 hams present and 5 are CWOps members. Thought it would be fun to share the picture and the calls and numbers (in alphabetical order by first name). Who can do the matching? Present:

Bill KOVBU - 844  
Brad K0TRL - not member.  
Dragan K0AP - 370  
Drew K3PA - 1046  
Gary N5PHT - 1489  
Russ KOVXU - 836



*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

### **Duncan, G3WZD: Operating A62A, Emirates Amateur Radio Society (EARS) Club Station**

I am a frequent business visitor to the UAE and, thanks to Konrad, A65SP (CWops #2045), I have been fortunate to visit the EARS HQ in Sharjah and operate their club station.

EARS is located in the Emirates Scout Mission headquarters in the Barashi district of Sharjah. The club facility is well equipped and has a small shop which stocks a range of accessories. Aside from a VHF station, it features two very well-equipped HF stations each comprising a TS590S transceiver and OM2500 auto-tune amplifier, with microHAM station controller. One station feeds a 17-ele OptiBeam at 70' and the other a SteppIR, at the same height on a second tower. Logging is with N1MM or UCX. I always operate the OptiBeam equipped station.

I have operated A62A on several previous occasions and on my first visit in September 2017, hosted by Konrad A65SP, I was very happy to meet Abdullah (Abu Mousa to his friends) A61Q, who I have worked on a previous occasion as G3WZD. Abu Mousa learned his CW as a signaller in the army back in the 1960s when it seems an essential skill was the ability to operate a straight key while atop a rocking camel! He is a dedicated CW practitioner and operates exemplary high-speed CW with a straight key.

My most recent visit was on 26<sup>th</sup> August with a 90-minute spell on 20m and 40m. I was delighted to be able to work CWops members Axel DL6KVA (my first QSO of the evening!), Mats RM2D and Theo SV2BBK (for the second time). I could faintly hear a GM0 calling me, which I later discovered was Peter, GM0EUL, but we never made a QSO as I was only RST 229 with him thanks to deep QSB and QRM. Peter was about the same with me!



**The EARS HQ station**



**G3WZD operating A62A**

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

Although well equipped, the local noise can be really horrible, and this is largely due to a profusion of pylons carry high voltage lines which crisscross the area.

Armed with my own Palm Mini paddle, I always seem to be able to generate a pile-up and this visit was no exception. I called CQ on 14.028 (thinking to find some CWops members!) at 14:15z and had had the first contact within minutes, moving to 7.028 about an hour later.

Propagation conditions were poor and, combined with the high noise levels, it



**A gathering of EARS members**



**G3WZD with Abu Mousa A61Q**



**G3WZD with EARS President, Sheikh Abdulla bin Faisal Alquassimi A66A**

every visit has resulted in a higher QSO total. I managed 40 Qs on this occasion. I also looked at the RBN and it was interesting to see my signal was copied in 3B8 and VU2, pretty much of the side/back of the beam.

Should you wish to operate A6/YourCall, you will need to apply for a permit in advance and this takes time. EARS can assist with the application process, but you will need a UAE immigration reference number for the application to be processed. I have therefore been unable to operate A6/G3WZD thus far, but hopefully will be able to do so on some future occasion.

was very rare to be able to copy a caller on the first attempt, so most QSOs were the result of multiple ?? or AGN AGN! Things were certainly not helped by my relative inexperience of being at the sharp end of a pile-up but, and as the saying goes, practice makes perfect, so

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

The EARS members are extremely welcoming, and I have enjoyed super hospitality on my visits. Even though I was there on my own during the last visit in March, the secretary, Mr Nader, still made me feel very welcome and opened the shack for me. I would therefore encourage any CWops members who may be visiting UAE to make contact – you will be assured of a very warm welcome!

**Mike, K4GMH:** On Sunday, 12 August 2018, a micro-burst with winds over 80 MPH plus rain hit my QTH outside of Fredericksburg, (south Stafford County) Virginia, which cause considerable damage. Unfortunately, the QTH was at the center of the damage area including destroying the tower and all the antennas.

The tower, 130 feet of Rohn 45, was doing okay in approximately the first half of the storm. No movement of the tower was seen looking at it through the kitchen window. Unfortunately, about then, a neighbor's tree was blown over on the tower's northwest set of guy wires. About that same time, another tree fell on top of the house followed a few seconds later by the tower's mast coming to rest on the that tree. Now all I could see out the kitchen window was limbs and branches from the tree and a twisted antenna element. Although the mast sticking out of the tower came to rest on top of the tree on the house, the actual top of the tower had smashed into the whole house generator. Yes, you guessed it, commercial power then went out.



The whole house generator still started even after the tower smashed it. Unfortunately, it didn't provide any electricity. Had to go outside in the wind and rain to shut off the gas going to the generator to get it to stop. The good news is the commercial power came back on after being out for less than seven hours.

When the power came back the downstairs AC had stopped. A limb had penetrated the outside unit and stopped the cooling fan. Again, very fortunate the removing of the limb allowed the fan to start working and once more had AC.

The "Tower Top" picture shows a tree on the house roof, wiped out generator, the tower top, the remains of a 4 element SteppIR, a 40 meter Moxon and the bent 2 inch dia., 1/4 inch wall, chromoly steel galvanized mast. The tree saved much more damage to the house by absorbing the falling top of the tower rather than the house.

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

At the time of the tower being destroyed it was decked out with a pair of 40 meter Moxons - one at 140 feet and the other at 70 feet, a 4 element SteppIR at 130 feet and an 80 meter inverted vee with the apex at 120 feet and the ends at 80 feet. Only "pieces and parts" of the antennas remain.

Next tower will be a crank up as still too many trees that would have to be cleared to safely put up a guyed tower.

Here's hoping your Sunday was better than mine!



**Will MIOWWB:** I am currently in Canada and have jotted down some of my operating experiences in VE3 Land.

In August my wife and I visited her sister in Markham Ontario on vacation, so it was an opportunity to bring the KX2 for some radio operating in another jurisdiction.

My kit was simple, the KX2, a 6-meter telescopic pole and the Sotabeam Bandspringer Midi, effectively an end-fed long wire. It was fortunate that our bedroom had a void in the ceiling which almost permitted me to fully extend the pole to support the long wire, which I propped up in the far corner of the room. Anyway, the wire was strung up across the bedroom and the antenna tuned on 40, 30 and 20 meters and signals were clearly heard.

The Wednesday CWT sessions provided the perfect test and I logged stations on both 40 and 20 meters. This was also a learning experience, with no computer to assist me. Adding VE3/ to my callsign also provided a little inconvenience by rendering my callsign even longer. I used old fashioned pen and paper and struggled with the time difference between Canada and the UK and then adjusting for Zulu time. I quickly learned that if I used the MacLoggerDX app on my iPad that it simplified my time issues.

I am conscious that many operators are using N1MM and keying from a computer keyboard and they have the whole process fine-tuned for optimum efficiency. But I rather enjoyed the challenge of doing things manually. As yet I have not operated portable from a nice outdoor remote location; I wonder how much improvement there would be with the antenna properly installed and extended? But to be honest, it's far too hot for outside operation. Us Brits aren't used to the heat!

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

**Gary, NA6O:** This has been a tough year for on-the-air activity. Last February, my neighbor installed 20 LED light fixtures, and the RFI is absolutely incapacitating. S9+10 dB on 40 meters, right up through 6 meters where it's S5 and the lights are usually on 5:30 am until almost midnight. There is no reasoning with this guy... I'm getting much help from the ARRL RFI team, and at this moment a case is in progress at the FCC. No telling how long it may take to resolve.

Thankfully, I'm a regular operator at the N6RO super-station, and Ken lets me use the new Flex 6400M via remote for some of the CWTs. Also, another nearby ham is offering his station for remote access in the near future. If you've ever wondered what an RFI nightmare is like, this is it. But I'll get by with a little help from my friends.

Here is a video I made back in March, showing the root cause and effects: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnVkReLObyc>

**Joe, AA8TA:** Regardless of how well a Wednesday might otherwise be, it can always be made better by a CWT session or three. Since I still have a full-time job, the two daytime CWT sessions are while I'm at work. With my schedule and the distance to where I work, I cannot be home for either one. The late CWT session is too late during daylight savings time (that's a rant for another day).

I can, however, slip out for a short break and try to connect remotely to my home station from work. Making that work has been a very trying adventure for over a year.

After trying many things, I settled on TeamViewer to share the screen on my shack computer. That way I could remotely operate my logger to control the radio and operate the Winkeyer. Due to a quirk with Mac computers (which is what I use on both ends), one cannot turn on the audio from the remote side unless one is physically there to do so. If I was physically there, I would not need to be operating remotely, now would I!

To solve the audio issue, I used two Skype accounts. This means starting TeamViewer and Skype on both ends. That mostly worked for about a year. Until TeamViewer informed me that it detected that I was connecting from a business and I would therefore have to cough up big bucks to continue.

An appeal was sent pleading why I am not in fact doing business stuff. They are rather slow to respond but finally said that they were giving me the A-OK. Great! Except I apparently gave them the wrong ID. So, another appeal was sent, another long wait and another A-OK. Still no joy; I don't know what I did wrong (maybe nothing).

In the meantime, I started exploring other screen-sharing options. With a Mac, there is a built-in VNC (virtual network computing) option which I tried before and found to be problematic. But with limited options, I went back to that. After many server and firewall adjustments, I finally got that to work. It is sensitive to constant IP address changes which necessitated getting my wife on the phone from home to change some settings while I tested from work.

Next was audio: although Skype seemed to work, the audio quality was never great plus there is

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

the dreaded latency. I heard about Zello but that does not run natively on a Mac. I also heard about Mumble and decided to try that. So, I set up a Mumble server on my home server computer and then spent time making many adjustments to the audio settings in Mumble clients.

Bottom line: after being AWOL (absent without leave from the CWT officiants) from the CWTs for a month, I got back! Plenty of opportunities for certain improvements to be made, including to the author of this screed.

All these many hours for a few minutes of CWT fun. Is it worth it? Most definitely!

**Peter GM0EUL:** I had another few days away camping in my truck, this time to the English Lake District to celebrate my brother's birthday. There wasn't much operating opportunity, but I did make a few QRP contacts across France, Spain and Germany with my YouKits EK1C and a 20 meter end-fed half wave running up a 7 meter SOTApole and across the roof to a 4m pole.

My 1945 Vibroplex Champion has arrived. It was a bit bent and grubby, but I've dismantled it, cleaned all the bits, straightened the trunnion rod and damper and put it all back together properly adjusted. It looks great and works well. I'm practicing my bugging using my CWA sending practices, back to the 'quick brown fox ...'! And I'm planning to use it in my level one class starting next week. I've used it on the air a couple of times and I'm working up to a CWT.

Finally, had fun in the CW Open as part of TeamUK operating as GM2CWO using my home-brew 20 meter Hexbeam and an 80 meter EFHW that also worked well as a full-wave wire on 40 meters. Thanks to all who worked me.



**GM0EUL works on the Hexbeam**



# CWops to Activate Station for *Enigma-Reloaded 2018* Operators Needed

[Bill Gilliland W0TG](#)

The goal of Enigma-Reloaded 2018 is to promote radio amateur activity celebrating the history of the Enigma Cipher Machine and its crucial role in the final outcome of World War II. CWops will be an activating station using the call sign K3CWO in association with the Enigma collection at [The Enigma Museum](#) founded by Dr. Tom Perera, W1TP. Tom is pictured (right) with several machines from his collection.



Tom W1TP (Photograph courtesy of The Enigma Museum)

Most of you are probably familiar with Enigma, the cipher machine used by the Germans to encode messages during World War II. Breaking it was a turning point in the war and has been the subject of many movies, most of which are not accurate. We suggest that you read the true story and learn the technical details of the machine at The Enigma Museum Website. Many versions of the Enigma were used. Pictured here is a typical example in its wooden box. The Website has many more examples along with historical information and technical details of its operation as well as how it was broken by the Allies. There's even a video re-enactment of typical use of an Enigma to pass messages between German military units.



Photo by Karsten Sperling, <http://spiff.de/photo>

CWops will participate in The Enigma Award beginning Friday, September 28, 2018, at 0700 UTC and ending Friday, October 5, 2018, at 23:59 UTC. During this period K3CWO will communicate with stations worldwide who are attempting to contact as many activating stations as possible in order to qualify for awards. Details of the event can be found at <http://enigma-reloaded.it>. The Website explains the event pretty well, but you may also contact Bill, W0TG, ( [bill@w0tg.com](mailto:bill@w0tg.com) ) with any event participation questions. Our participation will be CW only.

(Continued on next page)



*(Continued from previous page)*

To be a successful activator requires that we keep K3CWO on the air as much as possible during the event, and we're asking for volunteers from the CWops membership who hold a valid USA amateur radio license to sign up for operating shifts. To sign up, use the Website at <http://cwomc.org>. Select the call sign K3CWO and be sure to enter your call sign, email address, the event title Enigma Reloaded and the start and end dates/times. The start and end date fields will accept both date and time information. We will contact you via email to confirm your slot.

This is our first time to participate and the fifth time that this event has been held. Please help us make this a successful event by signing up for an operating shift as K3CWO and also by participating in the event as a regular contestant. CWops members who operate K3CWO during the event will receive a certificate commemorating their participation.

---

## WRTC Diary: AE6Y and N6XI

[Andy Faber AE6Y](#)

### Tuesday, July 10 - Thursday, July 12

The flight on Delta to JFK was uneventful, as was the flight to Berlin TXL after a several-hour layover. I had two suitcases, each weighing 37-38 pounds. The smaller one was heavy because it held the 16-pound TS-590S, which I was bringing as a spare radio. The larger one had the Astron 30 amp power supply, the SixPak and most of the tools and cables. In the backpack, I had my K3 with enough cables to hook it up, and my Koss headphones. The computer bag held the laptop and K3 accessories, the K-Pod, Winkeyer, paddle, and some cables. Also, miscellaneous travel stuff. I'm flying light on clothes; for example, taking only running shoes, and no spare footwear at all (I think for the first time ever). Altogether a lot of stuff, but not overwhelming; I'm sure some of the teams were bringing much more. Although I was flying something called Comfort+ on Delta (as a sort of mild upgrade over plain economy), the second bag cost me \$100 – the good news is that I could check them all the way to Berlin.

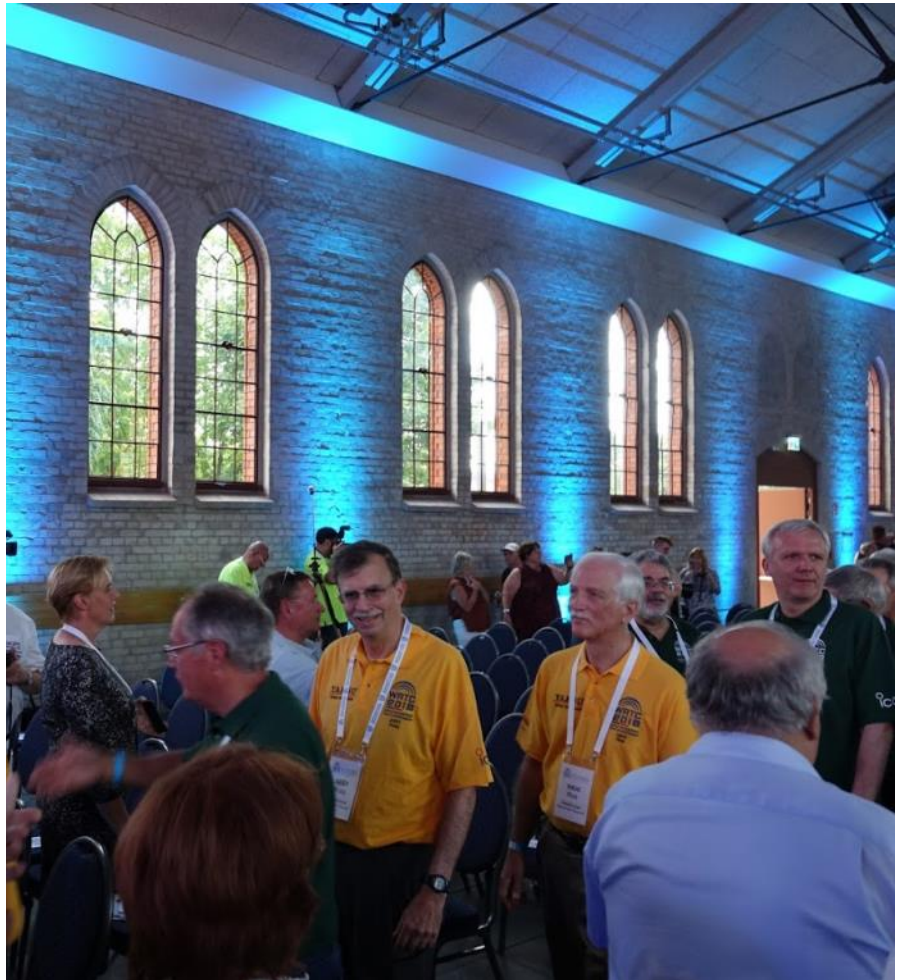
My Team Leader, Rick Tavan, N6XI, had arrived at the airport an hour earlier from Boston, and we found each other due to the miracle of cell phones. We picked up our Hertz rental car, a very expensive Ford S-Max diesel van. It's a five-passenger vehicle i.e., it has two seats up front, and a bench in the back, with a large luggage space, into which all our luggage actually fit. It's a modern car with 42k km on the clock and has a nav system, which we used in tandem with my Garmin to find the hotel. They occasionally disagreed, but generally provided good guidance. Strangely for us Americans, it's a 6-speed stick shift, though quite easy to drive. I did all the driving, and Rick was a very good navigator, even consulting the actual paper Michelin maps of Germany and Denmark that I had brought.

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

Arriving at the hotel, there were lots of people milling about downstairs, and more kept arriving. I got an immediate beer, next to fellow CWops members Sandy, DL1QQ, and Tim, K3LR, then registered for WRTC. That went smoothly, and the packet included two shirts, a polo shirt and a t-shirt, both bearing my name and callsign. Also, a very nice souvenir booklet about WRTC, with lots of interesting material including write-ups of all the competitors and referees and organizers. It shows, BTW, that I am the fifth oldest competitor of the 126 (and Rick and I were the third oldest team). No computer monitors, however. We had ordered and paid for two 25-inch monitors to be delivered at registration, so I hoped they would turn up eventually.



**AE6Y and N6XI at the opening event (K5ZD photo)**

The Opening Event was lots of fun. The first part was a parade of the countries into a large hall. We competitors wore our yellow polo shirts, and the referees wore their green ones. We all marched in, emulating Olympic athletes, to cheers, cameras flashing, handshakes, etc. Just like being a real celebrity. We took an oath of integrity and sportsmanship, then there were several speeches, including a welcoming address by the Mayor of the City.

They finally announced the callsign block assigned to the contest, which were various calls like Y81A, etc. This had been a closely guarded secret for a year.

## **Friday, July 13**

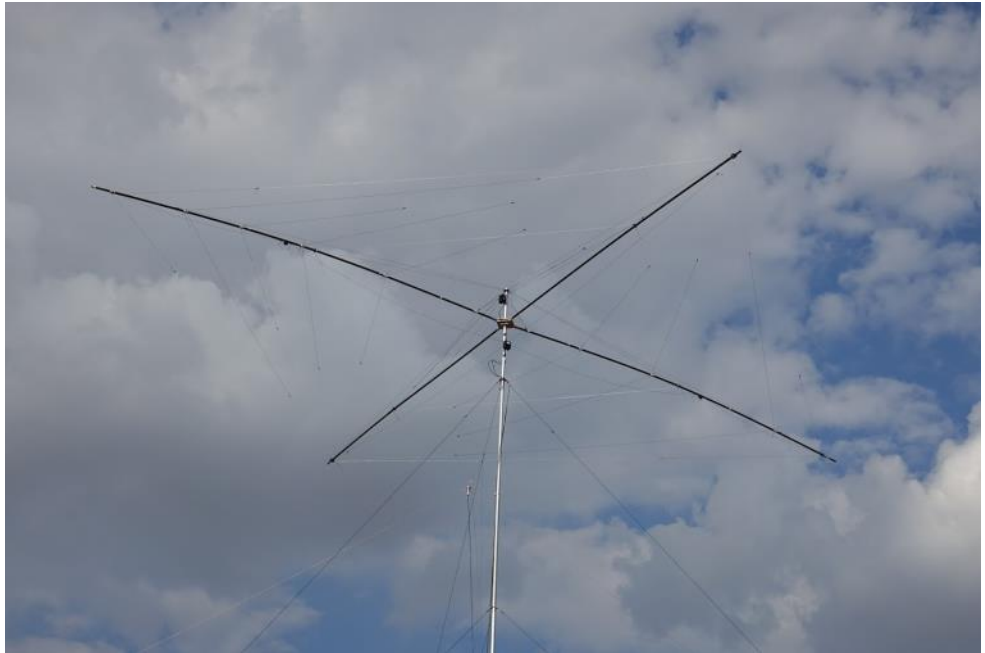
A nice breakfast, then the rather chaotic station draw. We were 30th or so, and ended up in OEH-4, one of a cluster of sites east of town. It's about 40 km away. We had loaded all our stuff in our van, which was still parked in the hotel garage. We pulled out on the street, then followed our site manager, Stefan, who drove up in an older Ford Galaxy like ours. It's near the town of Linda, in a field with the nearest house about 200 meters away. A very lovely site.

The tent was a large camping tent, perhaps 8 by 12 feet, with a wooden floor and headroom over six feet in the middle. Inside were two tables, three chairs, and a light and small fan on each ta-

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

ble, along with two power strips fed by the generator. The power strips featured European two-prong outlets, but we had brought American power strips to plug into them with adaptors and had verified that all our equipment worked on 220 volts. The site also contained a Honda 2000 generator 50 meters away, the porta-potty another 50 meters away, and the manager and his helpers, Tobias, Bernd, and Aro, staying in a small caravan and large brown tent with a covered shade area where they have a table and chairs set up. And, of course, a beautiful 14-meter rotating tubular mast, sitting on top of a Yaesu ground-mounted rotor. The mast was guyed at three points with slip rings to allow rotation.



**The antennas (K5ZD photo)**

The Spiderbeam effectively had three wire elements on 20, 15 and 10, along with a 40-meter shortened dipole mounted along the boom (and thus at right angles to the other antennas). There was also an 80-meter inverted vee suspended from the top of the mast. It had power pole connectors at the ends to lengthen or shorten each end by two feet or so (we just left them in the long position, and the antenna had SWR under two to one over the range from 3.5 to 3.7 MHz). The 40 also had a two to one SWR bandwidth from 7.0 to 7.2 MHz, a surprisingly large range for a shortened design.



**A typical operating tent (K5ZD photo)**

It was all very civilized, but hot in our tent. We got there before noon and immediately started to set up our radio gear at two tables at right angles to each other. We used the new Dell monitors

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

that I had bought, but there was an immediate problem in that it was so bright in the tent that the monitors washed out. The helpers rigged up a tarp that they had been provided with, using duct tape to fasten it to the guy lines to darken it a bit at my end (which faced east), and that helped somewhat, though Rick, facing north at the west end had a similar problem later, so they moved the tarp to his end.

Everything seemed to work ok, and we found absolutely no inter-station interference. This had been a problem during testing at Rick's Truckee, CA location, but not here. This is consistent with the wisdom from W2SC that inter-station interference is never a filter problem. Dave, G4BUO, our referee, was great. After we networked our comput-



**With referee Dave G4BUO (K5ZD photo)**

ers successfully, he set up his "score reporting computer" a black box prepared by Ben, DL6RAI, with its own cell antennas built in to allow real-time score reporting. Also, the power monitors, which were two cubes about three inches on a side, one for each radio, attached to a small readout box placed on top of the SixPak controller. The box had green, yellow, and red lights, calibrated for 100 watts. It was very sensitive and they would react to a one watt change in the K3 knob. Generally, we had to be in the green with some yellow flickering allowed.

## **Saturday, July 14**

After breakfast we drove out to the site, arriving at about 10:30. There was some more set-up to do, and more problems of one kind or another developed and had to be dealt with. At one point my communication with the rig failed but rebooting solved it. Right before the contest, I concluded the spectrum window on the Airspy was not really seeing the proper signals. After some frantic fumbling around, Rick found that I had set the offset to 8215 kHz (a relic from trying it out earlier on the K3 IF output line, instead of taking its input as normal from the RX ANT in/out). Setting that to zero solved the problem. Whew!

Fifteen minutes before the start, Dave opened the envelope and gave us our Y82L callsign, which we programmed into N1MM and the K3's voice messages. However, I screwed up and didn't change the N1MM exchange to ITU Zone 28 (since I had just been sending RSTs before), so for the first few minutes of the contest I was frantically reprogramming. Not a good start.

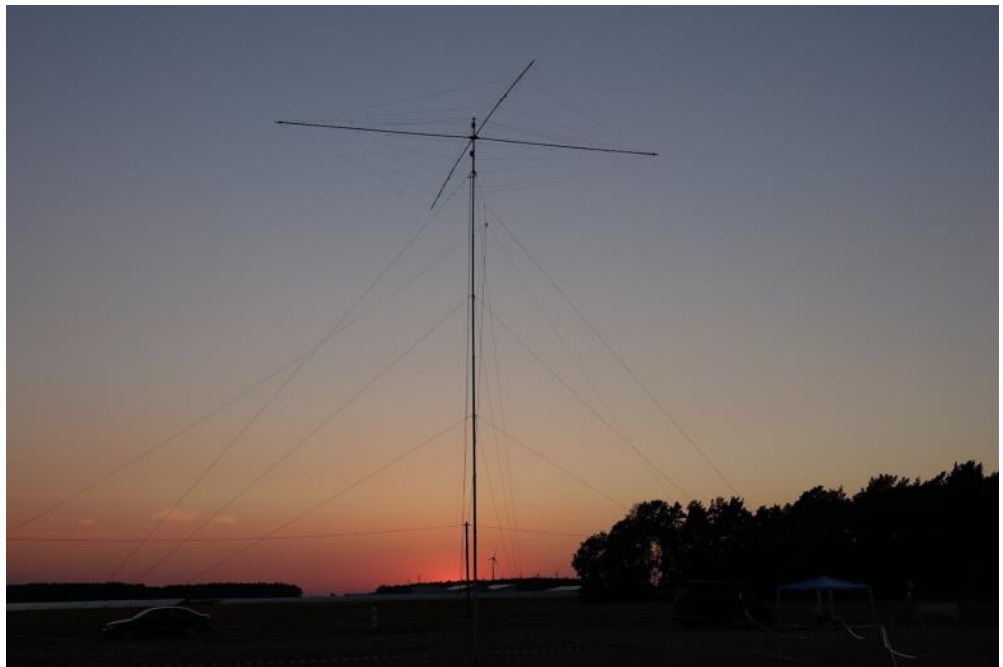
*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

## The Contest

These are just a few recollections. We had started out with a plan to keep one station on 20 most of the time, moving the other one around to 10, 15, and 40 during the day, with the 20m station moving to 80 at night. We started out switching the 20m station every two hours, but as Admiral Scott, K0DQ, always says: the first casualty of war is the plan, and we ended up essentially operating as two stations moving bands without much coordination, except for seeing where the other guy was. Overall, we spent not enough time on phone, particularly 40 meters, which turned out to be heavily populated with German stations during the day. Phone generally seemed to be harder to get runs going on, though I did have a nice one on 20 Saturday, and on 80 in the evening. For the latter, I remember working about 80 stations, almost all the DLs, at a very good clip.

The equipment all worked just fine, and we were both impressed with the antennas. There was no inter-station interference, except for the expected direct second harmonics, which were narrow. The 40 meter antenna continued to work without an antenna tuner all the way from 7000 to 7200 kHz, and the 80 also worked from 3500 to 3700 when set for CW with the extra few feet added with the jumpers. We did seem to be getting 20 meter SWR of two to one or even a bit higher in the phone band, but the K3s handled it easily, and it didn't require us to reduce power below 95 watts or so.



## What We Did Well

- We had worked out all equipment and interfacing in advance, so that we had no equipment failures. We did have many spares, including a power supply and my TS-590 radio, but fortunately didn't have to use any. Our practice contests showed the need, for example, to take apart the SixPak relay box to clean all the relays; during the contest all antenna switching worked fine (to simplify antenna selection, we didn't bring decoders, just using the SixPak control box manually). The dynamics of operating Y8xx were totally different than our rather difficult practice run in the 2017 IARU operating remotely from a German station – in WRTC, the same contest except for our status, we had moderate pileups almost all the time and were able to run, even on SSB.

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

- Basic equipment was great. K3s and the Airspy SDRs (in place of P3s) were excellent. N1MM+ worked well for us with no hiccups.
- We had brought appropriate cables, tools, etc., so with the rented monitors nothing additional was needed.
- Basic operating and pileup management was fine.

### **What We Did Wrong (A Longer List)**

- In talking to various referees after the contest, I've concluded that Rick and I used the wrong operating strategy, acting basically as two independent stations, instead of as a team trying to maximize our collective score. The top stations very actively moved multipliers between the two stations. They also looked for odd openings late at night on 10 and 15 and worked a lot more 40 phone in the day. So basically, we didn't have very good strategy of working as a team.



**Gedas LY9A and Mindis LY4L (center) finished ahead of second place team Manfred DJ5MW and Stefan DL1IAO (left) and third place team Daniel N6MJ and Chris KL9A. DL1IAO and KL9A are CWops members. (K5ZD photo)**

- We had over 1000 QSOs on 40 CW and about 300 on phone, with Rick having a great run there in the last hour or so of the contest. Clearly, we should have been more on 40 phone, and probably on phone generally.
- OTOH, if we hadn't lost about 40 minutes Sunday morning due to generator failure, we would have moved up six to eight spots in the standings, as there were many teams clustered just a bit above our score, and I was in the middle of a good 80 meter run at the time.
- We also should have rotated the beam more looking for multipliers. Finally, we should have had a list of common EU HQ stations to make sure we didn't, for example, miss DARC and VERON on 80 (as we did).
- Although we were the third-oldest team at the competition, I can't believe that had anything to do with it....

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

## **Sunday, July 15 – Monday July 16**

After the contest ended at 2 p.m., the guys were worried about my ability to drive after being up for so long. I felt ok even after we broke down all the equipment and packed it up, but after drinking a beer with the group, I felt sleepy and agreed. So Aro drove us back, we unloaded, and I parked the car on the street.

On Monday I was going to get up early and go running but didn't set an alarm. I did wake up at six, but promptly went back to sleep, finally waking at 8:30. Then it seemed clear that I needed a cuppa joe more than exercise, so I went down to breakfast, sitting at a table with Rusty, W6OAT, and Bill. Then off for a guided walking tour of the city, leaving from our hotel at ten. After the tour ended at noon, we made our way to an Asian restaurant, sitting outside in perfect weather. Then back to the hotel for a while. I repacked all my radio gear in the large suitcase and the computer bag, thinking that I will then only need to carry the small suitcase with clothes and the backpack with my K3 for safekeeping into hotels, and can leave the large suitcase and the computer bag (with the computer removed to the backpack) in the car under the privacy shade. Rick did something similar, and it greatly simplified getting in and out of hotels for the rest of the trip, a road trip through Germany and Denmark .

At a little after five I put on my WRTC polo shirt for the closing ceremony. This was held in the same large hall where we had the opening ceremony. Speeches and lots of applause and the various winners were announced. Then another buffet dinner. OK food, but better desserts, and good beer as always here.

And our WRTC2018 was over.

---

## **WRTC-2018 My Experience**

**[John Laney K4BAI](#)**

The German WRTC 2018 Committee were wonderful hosts for the event held usually every four years. Sixty-three of the top two-person contest teams from around the world converged on Wittenberg, Germany (yes, the Wittenberg of Martin Luther) for a competition held to coincide with the annual IARU HF Championship July 14-15, 2018. Current rules allowed each member of the teams to make QSOs independently of the partner for 24 hours. Modes are CW and SSB, although the greater part of the activity seems to be on CW.

Also present were a referee for each team, judges, WRTC Sanctioning Committee members, and many guests. The headquarters hotel was, of course, the Hotel Luther. A station was set up in the hotel for use by visitors and participants before the competition began.

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

The “stars” of ham radio contesting, past, present and future were gathered. There were some meetings to explain rules and answer questions and a lot of food and drink with old and new friends.

I was a referee and a representative of the “past” having been a competitor for four WRTC’s and a referee for one. The “future” was represented by several youth teams, whose ages were 25 or younger. On my plane over and back, in addition to referee Larry K4AB (CWOps #704) and his wife, were the youngest competitor, Bryant, KG5HVO (CWOps #1795), age 14, and his mother Lauren KG5TQO. Bryant’s team partner was Mathias CE2LR (previously CE2MVF) from Chile. The two had practiced together during the CQ WPX CW Contest in May at Bryant’s QTH in Montgomery, AL. The future of amateur contesting certainly will be bright with such youthful contesters. Most of them seem to be coming from Europe, many from Germany.

Most of us flew into the Berlin TXL Airport on Tuesday before the competition. Ours was an overnight flight from Atlanta with a stop and airplane change in Amsterdam. A number of tours around the area of Wittenberg and Berlin were available by bus and on foot for education and entertainment of the participants, family members, and visitors. Several arrived by train and more in their automobiles from around Europe.



**The train to Wittenberg (K5ZD photo)**

Among the attendees as a referee was Rusty, W6OAT (CWOps #28), my friend from high school in Columbus, GA in the 1950s and his spouse, Bill, who put on the second very successful “Ham Widows’ Ball” attended by only the spouses of the hams present.

It was a great time to catch up with old friends and to make new ones. Interesting to me was that the team I had refereed in Boston four years ago at the last WRTC had qualified again. They were Gedas LY9A and Mindis LY4L from Lithuania. They had finished sixth in Boston despite a computer failure that took one of their stations off the air for about 80 minutes. I had noted that their CW speeds were generally 46 WPM, which I thought was too fast, but they proved me wrong. They appeared to have trained for the event and ate and drank very little during the contest period resulting in each of them using the “facilities” only once during the 24 hours of the contest. So, they had again qualified for WRTC and I am sure that they had at least one spare computer.

On Wednesday, there were opening ceremonies, including the entrance into the building of the teams by nations. They were kind to allow the referees to march under our home countries’

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

names. On Friday, competitors and referees met and the competitors drew for team sites and were matched up with their referees. The host committee had been very diligent to find at least 65 very equal sites on flat land in the vicinity of Wittenberg with exactly the same tents, tables, chairs, fans, porta-potties, generators, and antennas. The competitors brought their own radios and peripherals from home. Power was strictly limited to 100 watts with a power meter on each rig that could be seen by the operators and referees. Each location had a ground crew and antenna team. The antennas had been erected at each site and consisted of a tribander, a 40 meter rotary dipole, and an 80 meter inverted vee dipole with a jumper that could be used to change the resonant frequency between the CW and SSB segments of that band. Changing required physically changing of the jumper by the operators. My team used an antenna tuner and never physically changed the jumper. The ground team at each site populated the sites from set up to take down, provided food and drink to the operators and referees, and kept any visitors away from the operating tent area. There were



**Opening ceremony (K5ZD photo)**

also team members with automobiles to take the competitors and referees to their locations for set up on Friday, back to Hotel Luther that night, to the tent locations on Saturday before the start of the competition and return to the hotel exhausted when it was over. Local start and end times were 2 PM Saturday to Sunday. So, the operators and referees had been awake more like 35 hours (or more) by the time they returned to the hotel.

There was real time score reporting to a scoreboard for the entire contest period, which made it interesting for nonparticipants back at the headquarters hotel and throughout the world. The participants and referees were not allowed access to the real time score reporting. Some of the scores reported real time were not accurate since some of the authorized logging programs were not up to date on scoring points for the call signs used by the competitors.

For WRTC purposes, CW and SSB QSOs were of equal value with different point values for QSOs within and outside Europe and with HQ stations. Multipliers were countries worked on each band regardless of mode.

I drew the Swedish team, or rather they drew me. They were CWops member Ingo, SM5AJV and his partner Gunnar SM3SGP. They had come from Sweden by automobile along with Ingo's wife,

*(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from previous page)

transporting their well-equipped stations and peripherals. All teams had to have a triplexer in order to use the triband beam on two bands at the same time.

The Swedish team were perfect gentlemen who were very driven and very talented on each mode. Their raw QSO totals per mode were 2410 CW and 888 SSB. Their final score put them in 28<sup>th</sup> place out of 63.

Hams all over the world had an opportunity to help WRTC scoring by submitting their contest Cabrillo files to the WRTC webpage within six hours of the end of the contest. A committee of judges and computer experts checked the competitors' logs against all logs submitted by the end of the submission period. The judges' decisions were final. I am not aware of any controversy regarding the final standings. For a narrative of the 2014 score finish see the book "Contact Sport" by Jim George, N3BB (CWops #70). Jim also covers the travails of my Lithuanian team in his book.

(Editor's note: Jim N3BB's article detailing the backstory on the writing and publication of his book will appear in the October issue of Solid Copy.)



**K4BAI with Gunnar SM3SGP (left) and CWops member Ingo SM5AJV (right) (K5ZD photo)**

Perhaps it was fitting that, when the smoke cleared, the winners were the Lithuanian team of LY9A and LY4L who had had such bad luck in Boston four years earlier. Second were N6MJ and KL9A (CWops #1576) and third were DJ5MW and DL1IAO (CWops #1884). I had first met Stefan, DL1IAO at WRTC in San Francisco in 1996 when he was a teenager. He is now a medical doctor. The complete final results may be viewed at <http://www.wrtc2018.de>.

The youth teams did not finish in the medal chase, but Bryant and his partner had the highest reported QSO to point ratio, meaning presumably that they worked more DX stations on other continents than any other team percentage-wise.

At the awards ceremony on Monday night, awards were also given for highest CW score and highest SSB score (with a requirement that at least 35 percent of the total QSOs be made on the opposite mode). Winning for CW were ES5TV and ES2RR from Estonia. Winning for SSB were the father-and-son team of K1ZM (VY2ZM) and KK6ZM. The Estonian team was also recognized for having the highest multiplier total. The most accurate log was submitted by OR2F and ON5RA,

(Continued on next page)

*(Continued from previous page)*

the Belgian team, which meant that they had only a very few not-in-log QSOs claimed or busted call signs in their log.

On Monday, I had made a trip to the cathedral where Martin Luther posted his theses. The original door was lost in a fire in the 1800s, but the door is replicated in its original position. There is a very tall bell tower which may be climbed after purchase of a token for €3. I was treated to this challenge by Steve, the son of NW6P who were visitors to the HQ hotel after the competition was over. I did succeed in climbing all those steps up and down and the view from the top was worth the effort.

During the years when Germany was two countries politically and for DXCC purposes, the East German call signs originally used the DM prefix, but later changed to Y calls, such as Y61AA. Since reunification, the German government had never authorized the use of a Y prefix call sign until WRTC 2018, when the contestants used Y8 prefix call signs. The Swedish team signed Y87U. Therefore, many new prefixes were available for prefix hunters. I think the only previous use of a Y8 prefix call sign was for an East German Antarctic station many years ago.



**Touring Wittenberg (W6OAT photo)**

The call signs were kept secret by the referees until 15 minutes before the start of the competition when they were released so the teams could program them into their computers. All participants were prohibited from revealing their home calls or countries and all communications were in the English language. This was designed to prevent “cheerleading” by stations from any country working only their national team and not all the others. No doubt some voices or operating styles may have given clues as to the operators, but every effort was made to encourage everyone in the contest to work as many competitors as possible and not just their friends or fellow countrymen.

Many of the participants on site in Germany for WRTC were members of CWOps and most of the others should be candidates for membership.

At the conclusion of the award ceremony on Monday night, the WRTC Sanctioning Committee through its chairman, Tine, S50A from Slovenia, who was a competitor again this year, announced that the 2022 WRTC competition will be held in the Bologna area of Italy. I am looking forward to that event and hope that I will be able to participate again in Italy or at least from my home station.

# Around the World in Twenty-Four Hours

**Bryant Rascoll KG5HVO**

An American playwright once said, "Youth and exuberance will never beat old age and treachery." That was never more true than what I experienced in WRTC 2018.

It's a blur. I'm not going to lie. The amount of experience and data I collected over the course of one week and culminating in an exhilarating and exhausting twenty-four-hour grab and go style race across the world will take me months, maybe years to process, sort, and apply. The very best testers on the planet met to battle it out on equal turf at the World Radiosport Team Championship (WRTC) 2018 held in Wittenberg, Germany July 11-17. Who are these testers? They are the most genuine, sincere, cordial ladies and gentlemen outside the tent. I experienced first hand how radio transcends cultures and languages and I can be immediate friends with someone who lives thousands of miles from me and that I have never met. They shake hands, share dinner, and swap stories. Once in the tent though, they are treacherous robots striving to crush the competition with their skill, speed, composure, and stamina. Oh yes, there is much detailed strategizing and planning involved. Some even ventured on a reconnaissance mission the summer before to feel out the propagation and get the lay of the land in the German countryside. Many years and even decades of testing have transformed these hams into elite competitors. In contrast, at fourteen years old I claimed the title of youngest and newest to radiosport. Admittedly, I had not even heard of ham radio when WRTC 2014 was going on in New England.

## Before the Contest

My road to WRTC began in October 2017, nearly a year prior to the competition when I woke up to an email informing me that I was chosen to be Mathias' CE2LR partner. Mathias is one of the top testers in South America and qualified for one of three youth team leader positions for WRTC 2018. We met at Hamvention 2017 after having made a few CW contacts in recent contests. A mutual friend, Scott KOMD, was aware that Matt applied for a team leader position and knew I was interested in being a youth partner. Initially, after being selected the two of us had to overcome a few hurdles. We lived 4500 miles apart and we did not have all the necessary equipment. At 13 years old, my



CE2LR (left) and KG5HVO (right) (KG5TQO photo)

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

income was limited to mowing lawns - not a very lucrative money source. The nice people at Elecraft took pity on my situation and generously loaned me a K3S to use. Bob N6TV pointed us in the right direction for assembling the recording system. Bob Heil K9EID, gave Matt and me Pro 7 headsets and foot switches. Dozens of others walked us through technical issues and with this supportive network, we were able to piece our stations together. In May, Matt ventured up to my QTH and we tested all the equipment during the CQ WPX CW contest. Our next meeting would be at the headquarters hotel in Wittenberg, Germany about ten months after that first email.

After the months of planning, I finally found myself and a few hundred pounds of equipment on board an airliner headed for Germany! A festive non-stop party greeted us on our arrival. Immediately, I spotted friends I knew personally, friends I only knew on the radio, and legends I had only heard about. It was a big frenzy of meeting and catching up with other contestants. The Ham Widows Ball and the opening ceremony were more opportunities for everyone to socialize and enjoy the event.

Friday morning was all business. This was the day we drew for our site location. We were assured that much time and effort went into selecting and testing all sites to ensure equal conditions. Some were just a few minutes outside of town and others were closer to one and a half hours away. The teams were drawn from a



**With referee S50XX (KG5TQO photo)**

bowl of bright yellow plastic eggs. Matt and I waited impatiently for our team to be picked from the bowl. Finally, we were called to the front and met our referee, Kris S50XX from Slovenia. We smiled for pictures and quickly joined the chaos in the lobby of the hotel. All the teams were trying to get their gear loaded and get out to their sites. Our driver, Axel DL7UPN, greeted us and drove us about forty minutes out into the German countryside to our site. After the craziness at the hotel, the quiet and secluded farmland was a definite change of scenery. The Spiderbeam antenna and tent definitely stood out. When we got out of the car, we found ourselves surrounded by sunflower and wheat fields. Totally flat. Totally quiet. My capable team leader and I would hunker down here in isolation yet somehow attempt to connect with world over the next twenty-four hours. The other site crew members who had the responsibility of setting up the site and maintaining things for the duration of the event, quickly greeted us. They were eager to help and seemed genuinely happy to have us there. Quickly, gear was unloaded, unpacked, set up, moved around, connected, unconnected, and reconnected over the next couple of hours. As peaceful as

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

our surroundings outside the tent were, the tent interior was a cozy chaotic mish-mash of cable, boxes, laptops, transceivers, water bottles, Coke bottles, Cheez-Its, and M&Ms. Kris, who is an avid contester and a former referee in WRTC 2014, helped us with a few technical issues. The generator was started. At that point, we had no choice but to flip the power supply switch and hope everything worked and nothing sustained damage during the thousands of miles of travel. Our Pelican cases and other luggage had endured being wedged in and out of vehicles and tossed around airport cargo ramps several times. Thankfully, everything appeared to be in good working order.

The next hurdle was getting audio to our referee. He needed to hear both stations simultaneously. This is something Matt and I normally do not have to do in a contest, so again the stress factor was high. We did not get it on the first shot but with a few adjustments we finally got the double thumbs up from him. A huge weight was lifted. We had a working station. Things were coming together. Surprisingly, there was no noise on the S-meter. I am used to the S-2 noise level at my home QTH. Using DL/CE2LR and DL/KG5HVO, we made quite a few QSOs with other competitors and several EU stations on 20 and 15 meters. As hard as it was to walk away from the tent, it was necessary to get a good night's rest. We returned to the hotel feeling good about our station setup. It was definitely not as elaborate and high tech as some, but we felt ready. Time for dinner and rest.



**Setting up (KG5TQO photo)**

## **During the Contest**

If you can visualize the moments before track runners start a race, you may see some jumping or stretching or other physical movement to help with nerves. I haven't figured out what testers do in those minutes prior to the start time...or actually the time before opening the envelope to reveal our unique WRTC call sign which would be our identity for the next twenty-four hours. Everything had been tested, retested, tweaked, tested again, tweaked...It would have been great to catch a little cat nap considering I would not see sleep for a while, but there was no way I could sleep. I couldn't even get my heart rate to a normal level. Once the envelope revealed that Y83Z would be our identity, Matt and I got busy programming the software and voice keyers with our call. When the clock hit 12:00, we were off running EU on 20m and 15m CW. Our rate was okay for the first hour and stayed steady for the next few hours of the contest. We stayed on CW most

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

of the time but went to SSB when rates slowed. Band conditions were very good during the contest, and we tried passing multipliers to each other but with limited success. North America opened up late afternoon and stayed open long into the night. I was really surprised at how loud NA stations were on 40 meters since we were only using a loaded dipole at 40 feet. Even though our rates were steady, the temperature was not. It dropped rapidly after the sun went down. Living in the southeast United States, I am not accustomed to the feel of fifty degrees in July. I layered on a sweatshirt and sweat pants and endured what felt like an arctic blast with numb fingers. (I have to stop and wonder here for a moment what it would be like if WRTC were to be ever be held in southeastern USA. How would Scandinavian competitors fare in our mid-summer humidity?) Towards the end of the contest we went SSB where I ran one of the biggest pileups in my life! It was energizing to watch our rate meter steadily increase as we fired off one QSO after another. Mathias and I were determined to finish the race strong!

## After the Contest

Sprinting hard that last hour of the contest, Matt and I experienced that brief moment when we saw the clock roll to 1400 local. No one said or did anything for a few seconds. We were processing. It's over. We're done. Then the collective sigh of exhaustion followed. Headphones came off and we stiffly stood from our radio throne - a wobbly plastic folding chair. Hand-shaking. Muscle stretching. Joint popping. Shortly after, our site crew joined us for more handshakes. The adrenaline was waning. Our last official duty was to get the recording and log files safely stored on a USB thumb drive and into the hands of our capable referee who was every bit as exhausted as Mathias and me. Trying to disassemble our station and pack it away was daunting. The night had caught up with us. It probably took us ten times as long as it should have simply because we were wondering around each other and the tent just moving things around but not really making progress for the longest time. After our sympathetic site crew helped us load it all into the car, we climbed in for the ride back to the headquarters hotel. I am sorry I cannot share what happened next - only because I do not remember anything. It seemed like most of the oth-



**"A sigh of exhaustion followed." (K5ZD photo)**

er...

*(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from previous page)

er competitors and referees were ready to party back at the headquarters hotel and enjoy the World Cup. I was not one of them. I slept for the next fourteen hours.

When Matt and I learned of our standing a few minutes after the contest, we were disappointed. When I woke up the next morning, I immediately started the “shoulda, coulda, wish I woulda” game in my mind. I felt dull. My mood improved immensely when I made my way downstairs for breakfast. Everyone seemed happy. Really genuinely happy. No one seemed bothered by a less than stellar performance. Things seemed like they had transitioned back to our arrival day - just a bunch of contest-er friends hanging out. I had a much-needed therapy session with a seasoned contest-er friend and three-time WRTC champion, Dan K1TO. We talked a little about the competition but talked a lot about baseball. I really wanted to wallow in my misery more, but no one else seemed to care. When I



(KG5TQO photo)

ran into my team leader, he was partying with Julio AD4Z, Luca LU1FAM, Dale VE7SV, and Roberto CE3CT. Clearly, this competition was over and people were moving on. I still had a ten-hour plane ride ahead of me and made my mind up to soulfully ponder my performance then. The energy was too contagious and I begin to enjoy my surroundings and a great dinner. Quickly, we were all immersed in more “war” stories of tower climbs, lighting strikes, and catastrophic power outages. *Working By Numbers* (formerly *Spurious Emissions*) treated everyone to a lively concert to end the evening. My disappointment was filed away.

While only a twenty-four hour contest, the months of preparation, the week of the event itself, and the post-WRTC digestion of it all left me with so much. So much more experience, so much more appreciation for contesting, and so many more friendships. Although WRTC is known as the Olympics of radiosport, I am more of a baseball fan and often compare radio with it. I was thinking that if my baseball team had the opportunity to go play a game with the Chicago Cubs, we would jump at the chance. We would fully know we were going into a situation where we would be soundly defeated, but we would still be able to walk away from it exclaiming, “How awesome was that?!?! I’ll remember it forever!” And maybe...just maybe I’d be thinking, “I can’t wait to do it again!” That’s how I feel about WRTC 2018.

# CWops Tests

[Rich Ferch VE3KI](#)

This time around I thought I'd say a few words about techniques for increasing your score in the CWTs. Not everyone is trying for maximum score, but there are enough people posting comments like "my best score yet!" to make me think that increasing your own score is a fairly common objective for CWTers.

My first suggestion? Call CQ. Even when it feels as if no-one is responding to your CQs, don't give up too quickly. Unless your signal's strength is below average, calling CQ generally results in higher QSO rates than searching and pouncing. Of course, the louder you are, the easier it is to hold onto a frequency and attract callers, but even with a pipsqueak signal it can be worth doing at least some CQing. After all, if the only people who call CQ are the big guns, then the only stations anyone else will be able to work are those big gun stations. If you want to increase your score, you need to try to work some of the little pistols as well.

If you are serious about trying to increase your score and are not yet using computer logging, doing so would be my next suggestion. It's something that's easy to do (after all, everyone reading this has a computer, don't they? And there is good contesting software available at no cost), and it pays off in increased efficiency, both in the actual logging and in associated tasks such as checking for duplicates, etc.

You might have noticed that the majority of stations making the highest scores in contests, including the CWTs, are using two radios (SO2R). I can't really give any advice on how to get going in SO2R and acquire the skills to master it, not having done it myself, but simply looking at the scores makes it clear that SO2R is the way to go if you are really serious about achieving high rankings in the contest results.

The screenshot displays the CWops software interface during a contest. The top window shows a frequency display on the left and a band table on the right. The band table lists various US states and their corresponding call signs, with columns for 'Worked', 'Expected', 'Spotted', and 'Spotted (Dist Multi)'. The middle window shows a 'Score - 9,595 Points' summary, including QSOs, Pts, and Pts/Q. The bottom window shows a 'Call Log/Master/Telnet/Call history/Reverse lookup' table with columns for 'Call', 'Freq', 'Mode', 'Name', 'Exch', and 'M1'. The table lists several calls and their corresponding frequencies and modes.

Call	Freq	Mode	Name	Exch	M1
09-05 13:56 N5Z0	7041.42	CW	MARK	1224	
09-05 13:57 N250	7041.42	CW	CHAS	1435	✓
09-05 13:57 KF3G	7041.42	CW	SAM	PA	✓
09-05 13:59 AA4LS	7041.42	CW	CHARLES	MC	✓
09-05 13:59 NA1VT	7041.42	CW	ANDY	2050	✓

(Continued on next page)



*(Continued from previous page)*

Even if you can't or don't want to move up to SO2R, though, there are a lot of other things to consider that can affect your contest and CWT scores, including hardware changes, software aids, and operating techniques.

The biggest hardware payoff probably comes from improving your antennas. There's not a lot I can say here about that, but if your QTH situation permits, antennas are usually the most cost-effective station improvement you can make.

Naturally, transmitter power plays an important role, but at least in the CWTs it may not be quite as large as you might at first expect. I usually use one of three different power levels in the CWTs: 5 watts, 100 watts, or 500 watts. Increasing my transmitter power from 5 watts to 100 watts, a 13 dB increase, seems to result in approximately twice as many QSOs in a typical CWT session. The additional 7 dB from 100 watts to 500 watts adds maybe another ten percent to my QSO total, which does not seem to represent much bang for the buck (especially since the dollars per watt ratio seems to go up rapidly as the power level increases). Of course, I am located in eastern North America where I have easy access to a large population of stations in the CWTs. Someone in a less advantageous geographical location might see things differently.

Another technique that may help your scores, especially if you spend much time searching and pouncing, might be to use spotting assistance. Nowadays, basically anyone in a populated area who calls CQ (other than QRP to a wet noodle) will very quickly be spotted by one or more of the CW Skimmers in the Reverse Beacon Network. These spots are forwarded through the regular DX cluster system, and there are quite a lot of cluster nodes that can be configured to provide Skimmer spots with a simple command. The result is a bandmap in your logging software that is filled with call signs color-coded to indicate their worked/multiplier status. When you are searching and pouncing, you can find new stations to work quickly by using hotkey combinations to jump from one spot to the next in the bandmap. You still need to listen to make sure the station you are hearing is who you think (and hope) it is, but you can make the tuning process more effective than you can achieve by turning the big knob on the radio.

There are some tricks to this. There are validation filters available at many cluster nodes that allow you to reduce the number of bad calls spotted, and it is a good idea to use those, otherwise you may waste a lot of time waiting for someone new only to find it is actually someone you have already worked whose call sign was mis-spotted. You can also limit the spots you receive to spots from Skimmers in a particular geographical area, which can help avoid stations that you have little chance of hearing. The ultimate step in this direction would be to use a CW Skimmer located at your own station using your own antennas.

One other piece of advice about using spotting assistance: If your objective is a high contest score, don't let yourself be seduced into DXing and spending too long chasing a station just because it is rare DX. It is very easy to lose a lot of time at this, which might (or might not) be enjoyable for you (depending on whether you snag the DX or not), but which does not contribute much to your QSO count and contest score.

There is another aid to finding stations that is not classed as "assistance" in most contests, but

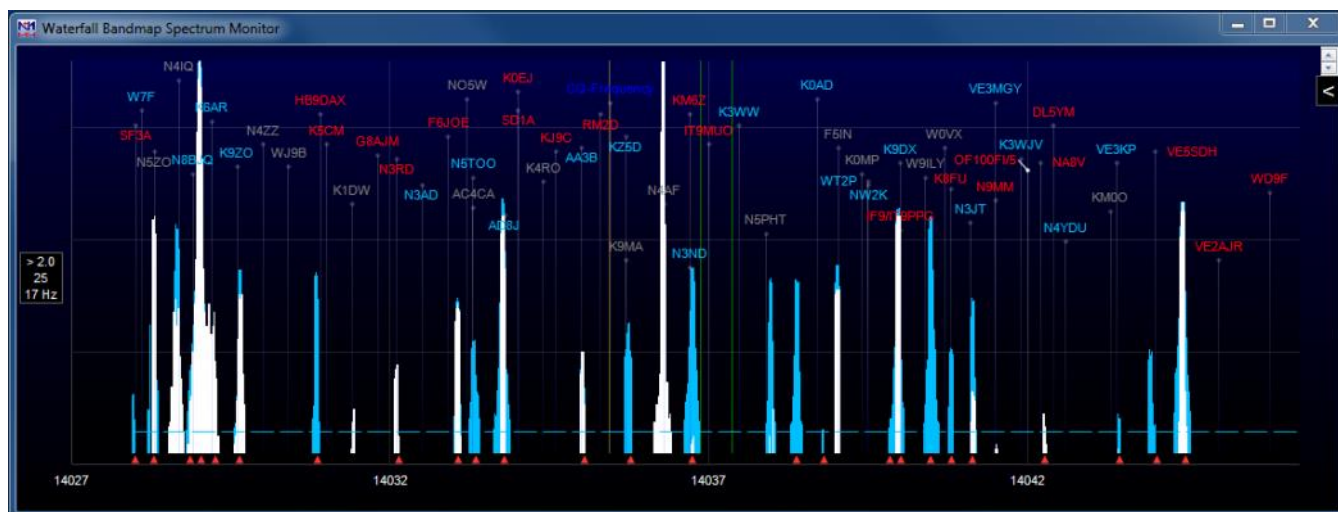
*(Continued on next page)*





(Continued from previous page)

that is almost as good (or maybe even better) than using spotting assistance (of course, the assisted/unassisted distinction doesn't apply in the CWTs). This is the use of a spectrum/waterfall display, if possible integrated with your logging software. There are some newer radios that can



feed spectrum information directly to your logging program, or you can add the capability to your station with a relatively cheap SDR receiver. In N1MM Logger+, you can jump from one spectrum peak or waterfall trace to the next with a simple hotkey combination, and once you have worked a station, that station's signal peak in the display will be skipped over from then on as you jump around in frequency. Personally, I find this to be more helpful than outside spotting assistance, because the spectrum peaks or traces you jump between are there right now, not signals that may have been spotted many minutes ago and have long since moved on.

There's a whole area that I have not even touched on yet, and that is the actual content of your transmissions – but I think I'll save that for next time.

After all this talk about increasing your QSO rate, I will now step back and remind readers that on November 14, we will be holding our regular "special" slower-speed CWTs to welcome new CW Academy graduates. Instead of or in addition to the usual goals, in those sessions we have an additional goal of welcoming and encouraging new participants who might find the speed of the regular CWTs too daunting. Let's show them that we can be considerate and that they can get their feet wet and make contacts in a contest setting, even though they are not yet up to the same CW skill level as the CWT regulars.

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

**73,**

**Rich,** VE3KI, CWT Manager

# CW Academy

## [Jerry Weisskohl, AC4BT](#)

CW Academy (CWA) Fall semester (September/October 2018) has just kicked-off. Many of our classes are already underway and the rest of the classes will begin the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3rd weeks of September.

If you love CW and want to join us in our mission to ensure that CW remains relevant and continues to prosper, please consider joining the Academy's elite team of Advisors. All it takes is a love of CW and a desire to help aspiring students learn to use CW. It's fun and rewarding and you will make many new life-long friendships at the same time!

More information about becoming a CWA Advisor can be found at the [CWops website](#). The link for the sign-up form for [becoming a CWA Advisor is here](#).

For this semester's CW tip, I wanted to mention a great online CW tool that can be used by all levels of CW students to help them practice CW and increase their CW skills.

The free CW tool is called 'Morse Player' and runs under the Chrome Browser as an Extension. Morse Player was written by a former level 3 student of mine, Jim Poponea WA5C.

Once installed, you can browse the web and select any text from any webpage, do a right-mouse click on the selection and Morse Player will convert it to CW and play it. Morse Player plays very pleasing sounding CW with no clipping even at the higher speeds.

You can select the speed to use, The Farnsworth setting, and you can also record the selection to a MP3 file that you can download and use for your practice sessions. The ability to record any selected text to an MP3 file is a great feature. You can email yourself the MP3 files and then listen to them on your smartphone when driving or anywhere else.

You can easily convert your email to CW and listen to it or go to a news site and find an interesting story to listen to. The possibilities are endless. Have fun and practice CW at the same time. It doesn't get better than this!

The Chrome browser is free and can be [downloaded here](#) if you don't already have it. Once Chrome is installed go to the [Chrome Web store and download Morse Player](#). It's free and installs automatically.

Once Morse Player is installed, you will see an icon in the upper right-hand part of the screen with 'MP' in it. Click that icon and you can configure the speed (adjustable from 13-50 wpm) and Farnsworth, and whether you want to record the CW audio and download it as an MP3 file for later practice.

**73**

***Jerry***, AC4BT, CW Academy Manager



# New Members

## Trung Nguyen W6TN

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

CWops	Call	Name
2102	K7JOE*	Joe
2103	K9JWI	Clyde
2104	K5GP*	Gene
2105	NJ5N	Chris
2106	VE7DZO*	David
2107	K4KSR	Bill
2108	KA3OCS	Bob
2109	KJ4M*	Gene
2110	VE1OP*	Scott

CWops	Call	Name
2111	WC4X*	Ned
2112	ND8MS	Mark
2113	WD9Q	Mat
2114	AD0AB*	Jim/Jaime
2115	AB5EB*	Mike
2116	G4DYC*	Mike
2117	W9OD	Craig
2118	AA6XA*	Jeff
2119	K8NZ*	Ron

CWops	Call	Name
2120	VE3VTG*	Enzo
2121	K2UA*	Rus
2122	N6EED*	Terry
2123	KB8GAE*	Richard
2124	K5PI*	Rob
2125	SM0FPR*	Sudden
2126	CT7AGZ*	Ken

\*Life Member

### Current Nominees

As of September 8, 2018

**Need Sponsors:** IZ0KBW, KK6I

**Invitations Extended:** N7BV

For more details about nominees and up-to-date status, check the “Membership” then “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](mailto: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/](http://www.bbcyber.com/cam/)

Call	ACA	CMA	Call	DX Total	Call	WAS	Call	WAE	Call	WAZ
AA3B	1006	7431	<b>W1RM</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>N5RR</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>W1RM</b>	<b>49</b>	W1RM	38
W1RM	855	5436	<b>F6HKA</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>W1RM</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>F6HKA</b>	<b>47</b>	F6HKA	38
VE3KI	790	4734	<b>W4VQ</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>W4VQ</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>DL6KVA</b>	<b>46</b>	W4VQ	37
N8BJQ	757	5032	<b>G4BUE</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>F6HKA</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>OK1RR</b>	<b>44</b>	N5RR	37
F6HKA	755	4949	<b>DL6KVA</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>W1UU</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>N5RR</b>	<b>44</b>	G4BUE	37
N5PHT	744	3090	<b>N5RR</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>VE3KI</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>G4BUE</b>	<b>44</b>	VE3KI	36
K3DMG	718	1773	<b>N8BJQ</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>G4BUE</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>N8BJQ</b>	<b>43</b>	N5PHT	36
K5AX	659	3395	<b>VE3KI</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>EA8OM</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>W4VQ</b>	<b>42</b>	DL6KVA	34
K8AJS	648	2076	<b>OK1RR</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>W0EJ</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>VE3KI</b>	<b>42</b>	I5EFO	33
DL6KVA	603	2606	<b>OH2BN</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>F6JOE</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>I5EFO</b>	<b>42</b>	VK7CW	32
K0MP	600	1075	<b>EA8OM</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>W6KY</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>EA8OM</b>	<b>42</b>	IK0YVV	32
WN7S	596	1133	<b>K1ESE</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>N1EN</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>AA3B</b>	<b>42</b>	F5IYJ	31
NA6O	546	2528	<b>I5EFO</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>N5PHT</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>OH2BN</b>	<b>40</b>	RM2D	29
K4WW	514	814	<b>AA3B</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>F5MNK</b>	<b>50</b>	W1UU	38	JF2IWL	25
K1DJ	507	1440	N5PHT	97	<b>K5IX</b>	<b>50</b>	K1ESE	38	N1DC	22
K9WX	469	2715	EA1WX	97	<b>K3SEN</b>	<b>50</b>	SM6CNN	37	W6NS	19
K1ESE	456	3248	W9ILY	95	<b>AD1C</b>	<b>50</b>	KR3E	37	G4NVR	19
AA8TA	441	1207	W0VX	94	<b>AB7MP</b>	<b>50</b>	K3MD	37	G4ILW	17
KE4S	424	1720	SM6CNN	93	<b>AA3B</b>	<b>50</b>	IT9MUO	36	K8AJS	12
NN4K	412	1748	IT9MUO	87	<b>K5AX</b>	<b>50</b>	F6JOE	36	NN4K	9
W0VX	411	3219	N1EN	86	<b>I5EFO</b>	<b>50</b>	EA1WX	36	ND1R	5
WT2P	381	1925	KY7M	86	<b>VK7CW</b>	<b>50</b>	W9ILY	34		
N1DC	357	2131	VK7CW	84	<b>DL6KVA</b>	<b>50</b>	W0VX	34		
KT5V	355	1701	F6JOE	84	<b>K0TC</b>	<b>50</b>	RM2D	34		
F6JOE	320	2900	AD1C	83	<b>KY7M</b>	<b>50</b>	KZ5D	34		
CM8NMN	312	419	KR3E	82	<b>NA6O</b>	<b>50</b>	IT9VDQ	33		
HB9ARF	300	1121	4X6GP	82	<b>K1DJ</b>	<b>50</b>	G4ILW	33		
K3SEN	289	1490	PA7RA	79	<b>N8BJQ</b>	<b>50</b>	N1EN	32		

(Continued on next page)



(Continued from previous page)

Call	ACA	CMA	Call	DX Total	Call	WAS	Call	WAE	Call	WAZ
W1UU	274	2211	K5AX	79	K9WX	50	KY7M	32		
VK7CW	270	1524	DL8PG	79	WT2P	50	HB9ARF	32		
KE4RG	265	685	KZ5D	78	K1ESE	50	F5MKN	32		
I5EFO	252	890	F5IYJ	78	WN7S	49	4X6GP	32		
W8DN	233	501	W1UU	73	W9ILY	49	PA7RA	31		
VE1OP	225	313	RM2D	73	W0VX	49	K5AX	31		
W4VQ	222	2687	N1ZX	70	NU7Y	49	DL8PG	31		
G4ILW	220	527	IT9VDQ	68	NN4K	49	IK0YVV	30		
G4NVR	210	526	F5MKN	68	N1DC	49	F5IYJ	30		
4X6GP	197	1306	NN6T	67	KT5V	49	NN6T	29		
NU7Y	196	847	GW0ETF	67	KR3E	49	N1ZX	28		
AB7MP	189	873	N1DC	66	KE4S	49	K8AJS	28		
W9ILY	187	3192	DL4FDM	65	K8AJS	49	GW0ETF	28		
N5RR	182	4577	NA6O	64	K6RB	49	G4NVR	28		
F5IYJ	178	729	K3DMG	63	K6DGW	49	G4HZV	28		
G4HZV	169	527	KE4S	62	K3MD	49	AD1C	28		
K6DGW	166	1817	KT5V	60	K0MP	49	N1DC	27		
RM2D	152	1182	K8AJS	58	IT9VDQ	49	KE4S	27		
G4BUE	149	3405	K1DJ	58	GW0ETF	49	K1DJ	27		
KB4DE	149	173	IK0YVV	57	AA8TA	49	K3DMG	26		
EA1WX	129	1886	W6KY	56	WB9G	48	JF2IWL	26		
IT9MUO	116	1702	K6RB	56	W6NS	48	G0MGM	26		
G0MGM	108	479	HB9ARF	56	SM6CNN	48	VK7CW	25		
DL8PG	104	1789	K0TC	53	NN6T	48	NA6O	25		
AJ1DM	91	97	K9WX	52	N1ZX	48	N5PHT	25		
IT9VDQ	81	1399	G4DRS	52	KZ5D	48	DL5DBY	25		
G4DRS	45	549	JF2IWL	51	K3DMG	48	K6RB	24		
JF2IWL	28	931	G4ILW	50	IK0YVV	48	G4DRS	24		
K6RB	0	4032	4Z1UF	50	EA1WX	48	4Z1UF	21		
KY7M	0	3252	WT2P	48	DL8PG	48	K9WX	20		
KZ5D	0	3239	WB9G	48	AD5A	48	K2ZC	20		
IK0NOJ	0	3093	G4HZV	48	4X6GP	48	WB9G	19		
EA8OM	0	2758	NN4K	47	VE3MV	47	NN4K	19		
SM6CNN	0	2477	K3SEN	46	K4WW	47	KT5V	19		
AD1C	0	2101	G0MGM	45	K0DTJ	47	K3SEN	19		
W6KY	0	2088	DL5DBY	43	JF2IWL	47	WT2P	18		
K0TC	0	2048	K3MD	41	WX7SJ	46	W6KY	18		
N1EN	0	1928	G4NVR	41	KG5U	46	VK4TJF	18		

(Continued on next page)



(Continued from previous page)

Call	ACA	CMA	Call	DX Total	Call	WAS	Call	WAE	Call	WAZ
N2UU	0	1774	K6DGW	39	IT9MUO	46	G3YJQ	18		
K3MD	0	1734	W6NS	38	HB9ARF	46	AD5A	18		
OK1RR	0	1618	K2ZC	37	G4DRS	46	KG5U	17		
NN6T	0	1577	W0EJ	36	F5IYJ	46	K0TC	17		
KR3E	0	1461	VK4TJF	35	CM8NMN	46	K4WW	16		
GW0ETF	0	1451	KG5U	35	OK1RR	45	K3WJV	16		
KG5U	0	1322	AD5A	35	KE4RG	45	VE1OP	14		
PA7RA	0	1200	WN7S	32	K3WJV	45	WN7S	12		
F5MKN	0	1111	K0DTJ	30	K2ZC	45	W6NS	12		
W6NS	0	1090	G3YJQ	27	W8DN	44	VE3MV	12		
AD5A	0	1071	K3WJV	25	RM2D	44	K6DGW	12		
4Z1UF	0	1032	AA8TA	25	PA7RA	44	W0EJ	10		
W5ASP	0	1018	K5IX	24	VK4TJF	43	G3XLG	10		
PA4N	0	955	K4WW	24	KM4FO	43	K0MP	9		
N1ZX	0	940	VE3MV	23	G4NVR	43	CM8NMN	9		
K5IX	0	892	AB7MP	23	OH2BN	42	K5IX	8		
WB9G	0	888	NU7Y	22	G4HZV	41	AA8TA	8		
K3WJV	0	882	W8DN	21	VE1OP	38	W8DN	7		
K0DTJ	0	828	VE1OP	21	NV9X	38	W5TM	7		
K2ZC	0	767	CM8NMN	21	G3YJQ	37	KE4RG	7		
IK0YVV	0	767	K0MP	20	4Z1UF	36	K0DTJ	7		
W0EJ	0	754	G3XLG	18	KB4DE	35	G0DJA	7		
KM4FO	0	721	KE4RG	13	G0MGM	34	AB7MP	7		
VE3MV	0	664	W5TM	11	DL5DBY	33	KM4FO	5		
DL4FDM	0	632	KM4FO	10	W5TM	32	AJ1DM	5		
WX7SJ	0	610	G0DJA	10	G3XLG	31	NU7Y	3		
OH2BN	0	530	KB4DE	7	G4ILW	27	KB4DE	3		
VK4TJF	0	430	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								





# Points to Ponder about CW Open

[Rob Brownstein K6RB](#)

On September 1 2018 CWops sponsored its seventh CW Open. This contest remains unique in that it comprises three, separate, four-hour sessions wherein each session is scored and awarded. So, it's essentially three contests within one 24-hour period. Furthermore, the rules on points and multipliers are not skewed toward high power and distance. If 500 participants within 100 miles of a participant were to get on and be logged, that person would most likely win that session. Of course, louder stations will do proportionately better, all things being equal, simply because they stand out more. But, low power stations with modest antennas could still rack up impressive scores. You won't see that in CQ WW CW.

This latest CW Open was clearly affected by our current sunspot cycle position. The first session at 0000Z, in North America, was limited to 20 meters and successively lower bands. There was virtually no 15 or 10 meter activity. In prior years, a station in California could have done a four-band effort (e.g. 10, 15, 20 and 40) but this year it was primarily 20 and 40. For those who were further east it was the same two bands probably in different proportions. For example, in CA at 0000Z, 40 is not yet open whereas in NY 20 may be slightly passed its prime while 40 is emerging. Couple that with the much higher operator density, and you would expect to see a log with proportionately more 40 m QSOs from, say, N3JT than from K6RB in session 1.



Session 2, which starts at 1200Z is far too early for solid 20 meter propagation in CA but 20 should be okay in the east coast whereas 40 may be absorptive as daylight has been in full swing for an hour. So, the second session in CA is disproportionately active on 40 meter compared to NY, where there would likely be a higher proportion of 20 meter action. In a high sunspot cycle, the east coast would also benefit from good openings on 15 and 10 whereas the west coast would benefit far less.

Finally, session 3, which begins at 2000Z, favors the west coast with 20 meter action whereas the east coast has both 20 and 40 to work with. One would expect more 20 meter QSOs from a K6's log than from, say, a K2's log. In fact, a west coast station might be relegated to a single band effort (20 meters) because 40 meters never really opens well enough by the time 2359Z rolls around.

The middle of the country, furthest from the Atlantic and Pacific, would find their proportions somewhere between those of west coast and east coast with regard to bands and QSOs. Like east and west coast, though, they, too, suffer from a lack of propagation on 15 and 10.

*(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from previous page)

## But Don't Despair

For contests like CQ WW CW, ARRL DX, and other well attended international contests, the low sunspot cycle position makes record-breaking final scores less likely to occur. With the poorer propagation, one would simply end up with fewer QSOs and fewer multipliers.

However, in contests like CW Open and ARRL Sweepstakes, records may be broken during low sunspot cycle positions. In fact, if you look at the history of ARRL Sweepstakes, you'll find that records are often broken at such times. Why? The score depends upon working a station only once and multipliers are limited to ARRL and VE sections. Poor propagation will have less of an impact. In similar fashion, CW Open is blessed with rules that support decent scores regardless of sunspot cycle position. Consider that if 1000 participants per session were active in North America, one could crank out a record-breaking score without having made one DX QSO. In fact, if 500 participants were active in California in each session, a CA operator could break old records without working a single out-of-state QSO!

2018 CW Open Logs Received*	
Session 1	217
Session 2	243
Session 3	243
Total Logs	703
*As of 11Sept2018	

Sunspots matter but only in as much as they limit the number of bands one can operate in a session. Since a multiplier is gained the first time you work a station, there is really no advantage other than points in working that station on other bands. So, if a lot of players were to congregate on 20 and 40 during each session, in North America, it would hardly matter whether we were at peak or null in the sunspot cycle. If 800 participants in US and Canada were on 20 and 40 during any session, AA3B would never run out of stations to work in that session. And, neither would W1UU running QRP to a 43 foot vertical.

## The Upshot

What makes CW Open and CWTs so much fun is that by limiting the timeframe to four hours and one hour per session, it ensures that lots of action is poised to occur from the start to the end. I saw a few emails posted that lamented the fact that only one or two bands were usable during a session. That's only a problem if there is a relatively low turnout. If we could ensure that, say, 400 operators in EU, 400 in AS, and 400 in NA would participate in each session, we would all have a blast and our scores would be determined more by skill than by power and antenna gain. So, the moral of the story is talk up CW Open at club meetings, at hamfests, during QSOs, and on reflectors, and mark your calendars for next year's event. This is one contest where it matters a lot less whether you're running 1.5 KW or 5 watts, and have towers of Yagis, or an end-fed long wire. If we can get enough people on the bands during those sessions, it would be an amazing experience.



# QTX Report

## Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

[Gary Stone N5PHT](#)

You have probably read in the reflector or Facebook that we are moving from Texas to Iowa. Our home is in disarray and our lives have been turned upside down – contract on our home of 30 years here and contract on new home in Iowa. Our simple retirement life will be anything but simple for awhile. If I missed a report or a comment I apologize but do let me know. It will be a month or two before things settle for thanks for bearing with me in this process – it is all good but it will just take a while and the XYL and I are excited but it is very emotionally and physically tough!

If you have any questions about QTX or MQTX don't hesitate to ask N5PHT via email. If you want to be added to the QTX listings please send in your count for QTX and for MQTX for the month from the Members Only Section of the Web Page. Please do consider sending in your points.

### Rag Chewer Comments

**CORRECTION:** Last month I attributed comments from K5IR and that should have been Bill, N5IR. Sorry about that Bill and here is this month:

**N5IR:** I went on a QTX binge this month. The Bug Users Group was up and running around +/- .035 and bugs were coming out of the woodwork.

**I5EFO:** A few days with some sunspots allowed some good QSO more.

**AB7MP:** My last MQTX of the month came from a friend that called me as I was shutting down a slow speed net. We chatted for about 13 minutes. Really can't claim any miles/watt credit - I can see his house from my kitchen window!!

**K5KV:** I HAD SEVERAL SKCC MARATHON RAG CHEW QSOS LASTING AN HOUR OR LONGER. THIS IS THE GRAND DADDY OF RAG CHEW AWARDS. PLUS ALL OPS USING BUGS.

**N6HCN:** My longest ragchew ever, just minutes shy of 2 hours of rapid-fire QSK on 40m with Don W6JL, both running homebrew stations, mine was 1W solar off-grid in the Eastern Sierras. Made my day.

**W0ITT:** My priorities went into kit building this month, so I was not as active as I sometimes am. Still I had a fine antenna discussion with George W4BUW (an hour and 20 minutes). I also talked an hour with Rob K6RB about how operating practices were different in the days of crystal control. (An opportunity for an on the air event?)

**W9EBE:** Another fun month of quality ragchewing! My longest QSO was with fellow CWops mem-

*(Continued on next page)*





(Continued from previous page)

ber Bill/W3IL which lasted 1 hour, 12 minutes. We could have undoubtedly gone on longer, but the Station Manager here (my XYL, Steph) needed to pull the Chief Op (me) out of Studio A to do other chores around the station complex. hi hi

**N4PIR:** Had a 75 minute ragchew with W7RN, Bill Crane, a wonderful CW operator. I believe he had more CW experience than any other ham I've ever run across. This was by far one of the longest and nicest chats I've had on the air.

**K2KRG:** One QTX that stood out this month was with Paul, G4AFU on 17M. It was great fun to have a nice rag chew with a guy on another continent.

Remember that we give out QTX Medals at the end of the year for 3 levels: (QTX – MQTX recognition not developed as yet).

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

MEDALS for 2018 already: We have GOLD: Bill, N5IR has earned GOLD. So far silver: N5PHT, K1ESE and W9EBE. And four earning Bronze: KC0VKN and K2KRG and K5KV.

Like last month the QTX is listed along side the MQTX for each member. I listed it in order of highest QTX and down. (Same arrangement in the 2018 totals).

### QTX / MQTX TOTALS FOR AUGUST 2018

Call	QTX	MQTX	Call	QTX	MQTX	Call	QTX	MQTX	Call	QTX	MQTX
N5IR	95	0	K5YQF	21	17	WA8IWK	5	10	N5LB	1	2
K5KV	48	87	HB9CVQ	13	9	K6DGW	4	13	W3WHK	1	3
W9EBE	41	24	KB6NU	11	6	K8UDH	4	3	AB7MP	1	6
K1ESE	36	14	N5PHT	10	25	N4PIR	3	4	N4DT	0	9
K4AHO	34	10	KC0VKN	9	0	AI6O	3	0	G4ILW	0	0
K2KRG	33	17	N6HCN	9	3	VK7CW	2	1	WA3GM	0	2
W0ITT	27	17	N9SE	5	1	WB6TOU	2	14	G0MGM	7	0
I5EFO	25	11	SV2BBK	5	19	KG4Q	2	3	WA3GM	1	2

Our leaders for the Month of August: First place in QTX is N5IR with a huge 95 then second is K5KV with 48 and third is W9EBE with 41. For the new MQTX category first is K5KV with an amazing 87 (and his 48 QTX! Wow) and second is N5PHT with 25 and very close is W9EBE with 24. All great scores and adds to the fun.

(Continued on next page)



(Continued from previous page)

### QTX / MQTX 2018 Totals

Call	QTX	MQTX	Call	QTX	MQTX	Call	QTX	MQTX	Call	QTX	MQTX
N5IR	484	0	K4AHO	129	16	K6RB	43	0	WA3AER	8	0
K1ESE	364	27	K6HP	113	0	AJ1DM	36	0	W5JQ	7	0
N5PHT	352	63	W0ITT	105	64	W3WHK	35	5	G0MGM	7	0
W9EBE	345	40	F5IYJ	99	5	WA8IWK	32	19	AI6O	3	0
K5KV	284	160	N4PIR	91	16	K6DGW	28	0	VK7CW	2	1
K2KRG	282	37	HB9CVQ	83	16	N9SE	25	3	KG4Q	2	3
KC0VKN	281	0	N6HCN	82	7	K0DTJ	25	0	WA3GM	1	4
N7YT	235	0	K8UDH	65	5	DL5DBY	25	0	AB7MP	1	6
I5EFO	170	21	N4DT	64	9	N5LB	17	3			
KB6NU	155	24	W3PNM	47	0	SV2BBK	16	43			
K5YQF	151	19	G4ILW	46	0	WB6TOU	14	16			

And LEADERS for 2018 for far: N5IR in first with 484 and K1ESE for second with 364 and N5PHT in third with 352.

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

---

## Antenna Pruning—The Easy Way

**[Hank Garretson W6SX](#)**

It's fall in the north, spring in the south. Time for antenna work. Here's a hint. Use a pigtail.

Make the main part of your wire antenna a bit shorter than you calculate it should be. Make the main wire plus the pigtail a bit longer than you calculate it should be.

Using an SWR meter or antenna scope, trim the pigtail as needed.

Maxwell won't care. The electrons won't care. The guys you work won't care.



# 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 Distance Challenge is a unique contest - held on 160 meters - which occurs near the solstice in December. This contest uses grid squares for the exchange and a QSO point system which awards points in proportion to the distance between the stations making the QSO. There is also a generous power multiplier (x2 for 100 watts and x4 for 5 watts) and a multi-operator category. There is even a multiplier for those who work QRP stations (x4) - making it worth the extra effort to pull them out of the noise." It features a somewhat lower activity level than either of the major 160 Meter contests and hence less difficulty in making intercontinental QSOs.

In case you've forgotten the FOC QSO Party, unlike the FOC Marathon, is open to all radio amateurs world-wide. The only restriction is that non-members may work only FOC members, not each other. FOC members can be distinguished by the addition of their FOC Number to their exchange.

You'll notice that there are a host of state QSO parties ... one or more each weekend. These events can be a lot more fun if you check their website, e.g. just Google "...State Name... QSO Party". You can find the rules, a list of the state's counties, and usually a rundown of the mobiles and their planned routes. A printed copy of the latter is a good way to track what's going on. Of course the CalQP can be an awesome couple of days with Out-of-State QSO counts of 1,000 or more. The Texas QP may not reach these lofty levels but with 254 counties there's more than an adequate variety of mults. And the PA affair is a much beloved event "back East". One nice thing about these events is that there is usually sufficient time between counties to "step away" from the rig and "multi-task", e.g. page through that neglected stack of magazines, or browse your backlog of email. But don't get too busy and miss the next mini-pileup.

For those with a limited time there's quite a variety of "sprints" coming up in the weeks ahead. Together with the CWTs they provide good sessions of CW between the major events that will keep the skills honed.

Till next time ... Keep on pounding.

## **SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER EVENTS**

Scandinavian Activity Contest, CW  
<http://www.sactest.net/blog/rules/>

1200Z, Sep 15<sup>th</sup> to 1200Z, Sep 16<sup>th</sup>

*(Continued on next page)*





*(Continued from previous page)*

All Africa International DX Contest <a href="http://www.sarl.org.za/Web3/Members/DoDocDownload.aspx?X=201712180812348XdiUz5yFy.PDF">http://www.sarl.org.za/Web3/Members/DoDocDownload.aspx?X=201712180812348XdiUz5yFy.PDF</a>	1200Z, Sep 15 <sup>th</sup> to 1200Z, Sep 16 <sup>th</sup>
FOC QSO Party <a href="http://g4foc.org/qsoparty/">http://g4foc.org/qsoparty/</a>	0000Z-2359Z, Sep 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Stew Perry Topband Challenge <a href="http://www.kkn.net/stew/">http://www.kkn.net/stew/</a>	1500Z, Oct 20 <sup>th</sup> to 1500Z, Oct 21 <sup>st</sup>
ARRL School Club Roundup <a href="http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup">http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup</a>	1300Z, Oct 15 <sup>th</sup> to 2359Z, Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>
FISTS Fall Slow Speed Sprint <a href="http://fistsna.org/operating.html#sprints">http://fistsna.org/operating.html#sprints</a>	1700Z-2100Z, Oct 6 <sup>th</sup>
FISTS Fall Unlimited Sprint <a href="http://www.fistsna.org/operating.html#sprints">http://www.fistsna.org/operating.html#sprints</a>	700Z-2100Z, Oct 13 <sup>th</sup>
Iowa QSO Party <a href="http://www.w0yl.com/IAQP">http://www.w0yl.com/IAQP</a>	1400Z, Sep 15 <sup>th</sup> to 0200Z, Sep 16 <sup>th</sup>
New Hampshire QSO Party <a href="http://www.w1wqm.org/nhqso/NEW_HAMPSHIRE_QSO_PARTY_RULES.pdf">http://www.w1wqm.org/nhqso/NEW_HAMPSHIRE_QSO_PARTY_RULES.pdf</a>	1600Z, Sep 15 <sup>th</sup> to 0400Z, Sep 16 <sup>th</sup> and 1600Z-2200Z, Sep 16 <sup>th</sup>
Washington State Salmon Run <a href="http://www.wwdxc.org/salmonrun/salmon-run-rules/">http://www.wwdxc.org/salmonrun/salmon-run-rules/</a>	1600Z, Sep 15 <sup>th</sup> to 0700Z, Sep 16 <sup>th</sup> and 600Z-2400Z, Sep 16 <sup>th</sup>
New Jersey QSO Party <a href="http://www.k2td-bcrc.org/njqp/njqp_rules.html">http://www.k2td-bcrc.org/njqp/njqp_rules.html</a>	1600Z, Sep 15 <sup>th</sup> to 0359Z, Sep 16 <sup>th</sup> and 1400Z-2000Z, Sep 16 <sup>th</sup>
Maine QSO Party <a href="http://www.ws1sm.com/MEQP.html">http://www.ws1sm.com/MEQP.html</a>	1200Z, Sep 22 <sup>nd</sup> to 1200Z, Sep 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Texas QSO Party <a href="http://www.txqp.net/">http://www.txqp.net/</a>	1400Z, Sep 29 <sup>th</sup> to 0200Z, Sep 30 <sup>th</sup> and 1400Z-2000Z, Sep 30 <sup>th</sup>
California QSO Party <a href="http://www.cqp.org/Rules.html">http://www.cqp.org/Rules.html</a>	1600Z, Oct 6 <sup>th</sup> to 2200Z, Oct 7 <sup>th</sup>
Nevada QSO Party	0300Z, Oct 13 <sup>th</sup> to 2100Z, Oct 14 <sup>th</sup>

*(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from previous page)

<http://nvqso.com/contest-rules/>

Pennsylvania QSO Party 1600Z, Oct 13<sup>th</sup> to 0500Z, Oct 14<sup>th</sup> and  
1300Z-2200Z, Oct 14<sup>th</sup>

<http://www.nittany-arc.net/pqppdf/paqso17rules.pdf>

Arizona QSO Party 1700Z, Oct 13<sup>th</sup> to 0500Z, Oct 14<sup>th</sup>

<http://www.azqsoparty.org/>

South Dakota QSO Party 1800Z, Oct 13<sup>th</sup> to 1800Z, Oct 14<sup>th</sup>

<http://www.sdqsoparty.com/>

New York QSO Party 1400Z, Oct 20<sup>th</sup> to 0200Z, Oct 21<sup>st</sup>

<http://www.nyqp.org/>

Illinois QSO Party 1700Z, Oct 21<sup>st</sup> to 0100Z, Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>

<http://www.w9awe.org/ILQP%202017%20Rules.pdf>

NCCC Sprint Ladder 0230Z-0300Z, Sep 14<sup>th</sup>

NCCC Sprint Ladder 0230Z-0300Z, Sep 21<sup>st</sup>

NCCC Sprint Ladder 0230Z-0300Z, Sep 28<sup>th</sup>

NCCC Sprint 0230Z-0300Z, Oct 5<sup>th</sup>

NCCC Sprint 0230Z-0300Z, Oct 12<sup>th</sup>

NCCC Sprint 230Z-0300Z, Oct 19<sup>th</sup>

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

SKCC Sprint 0000Z-0200Z, Sep 2<sup>nd</sup>

SKCC Weekend Sprintathon 1200Z, Oct 13<sup>th</sup> to 2400Z, Oct 14<sup>th</sup>

[http://www.skccgroup.com/operating\\_activities/weekday\\_sprint/](http://www.skccgroup.com/operating_activities/weekday_sprint/)

NAQCC CW Sprint 0030Z-0230Z, Sep 20<sup>th</sup>

NAQCC CW Sprint 0030Z-0230Z, Oct 10<sup>th</sup>

<http://naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201808.html>

Classic Exchange, CW 1300Z, Sep 23<sup>rd</sup> to 0800Z, Sep 24<sup>th</sup> and

1300Z, Sep 25<sup>th</sup> to 0800Z, Sep 26<sup>th</sup>

<http://www.classicexchange.org/sep17/sep17ann.html>

**73,**

**Joe**, W5ASP, Upcoming CW Operating Events

# My Story: New Member Biographies

## T.J. "SKIP" Arey N2EI

I was first licensed as WN2GHA in 1976. I've been active in most aspects of the radio hobby most of my adult life. This long enjoyment of the hobby led to a successful book "Radio Monitoring a How to Guide" that managed to make it to two editions. I now make that book available for free under Creative Commons license through [The North American Shortwave Association](#). It's a bit dated now but feel free to give it a look.



I was contributing Editor at Monitoring Times Magazine from 1988 through 2010 writing their Beginners and Ham Radio Columns. I also wrote the Ham Radio Column for the Canadian International DX Club "CIDX Messenger" online magazine from 2011 through to the present (although I am stepping down from this project in September to work on a new book.) I have had articles published in QST, CQ, QRP Quarterly, et al.

I have most of the standard "Wallpaper" WAS, WAC, DXCC, WPX, etc. Still looking to fill out 5BDXCC on 80 Meters and I'm still a few short on WAZ but I'm plugging along.

Over the years my interests gravitated to QRP and, of course CW operation (Hey, you need all the advantages you can get when you're a Peanut Whistle.) I've managed QRP WAS, WAC, and DXCC along with multiple 1000 Miles per Watt Awards.

Current primary station is an Elecraft KX3 with a PX3 Panadapter and (when needed) a KXPA 100 Amp into an Alpha Delta DXCC Doublet. Main Keys are a Kent KT-1 and Kent TP-1B Paddles. I also have an extensive collection of other keys, paddles and bugs that I swap in from time to time. There may be a mic in the shack somewhere but I'd really have to look around for it. I'm also fond of the Heathkit QRP rigs and keep an HW7, HW8, and HW9 alive and on the air on a regular basis.

I am an ARRL Life Member (member for over 40 years). I served as Southern NJ Affiliated Club Coordinator from 2013-2014 and became SNJ Section Manager in 2015. I finish my term as SM in December to devote more time to enjoying the hobby in semi-retirement. I am currently a Senior Adjunct Professor in the Liberal Arts Department of Rowan College at Burlington County.

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

My XYL and I enjoy trailer camping and I bring an Elecraft KX2 on all such excursions so keep an ear out for me. Other non-ham interests include bicycling, kayaking, and acoustic fingerstyle guitar.

## **Bob Gebeaux KA3OCS**

I was licensed in 1984 and have kept my novice call sign as I like the OCS suffix having been an officer in the navy even though I did not attend Officers Candidate School. I am pretty much a CW only operator but will use my mic on occasion to check into a few SSB nets or to snag a DX contact.

In 1986, While cruising the Caribbean and Bahamas in my 37 foot sailboat I started CW net with the purpose of helping novices reach 13 and 20 wpm. that net is still active today but since the removal of the code requirement the net has become a rag chew net. The net meets at 7057 KHz 7 am eastern standard time daily.

I generally use either a straight key or a bug but as the CW ops like 25 wpm I use my Bencher paddle and my K2 for keying when sending that fast.

I look forward to working you all one day soon.



## **Joe Fitter K7JOE**

I got interested in radio in grade 6; an elementary school counselor, John Siebel KA0BAI sparked a radio interest by setting up an HF station in the classroom. He got us on the air.

I earned my novice license in 1986 (KA0ZDH); Mike Marx (WB0SND, CW Ops member) was a neighbor in St Louis, MO, and inspired me to become a better CW operator way back then. I worked toward my 13 wpm code and passed in 1987 (N0IAT). We had a fun group in St Louis, MO, where I grew up.

Later ham influences included Indiana University Physics Professor Dr. Daniel W. Miller, KQ9I (SK), who ran the atomic accelerator/cyclotron at IU. Aside from being a physics professor, he was the ham radio club sponsor, and the small crew at K9IU radio club at Indiana University helped me along. Thanks to Pat (ex-WA8YVR now N9RV), also one of the faculty sponsors and members of the K9IU for introducing me to contesting and specifically into CW contesting....woah...even better than field day.

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

First time as DX: In 1989, I was an exchange student to Ljubljana (Loo-Bee-Yah-Nah), (former Yugoslavia) Slovenia. At the time, the so-called Iron Curtain was still up and the cold war was on; the Berlin wall had yet to fall down. I was able to operate from behind the iron curtain (from the other side) while living in Ljubljana and met a few very kind, technically proficient and interesting hams. I visited a few mega-stations (YU3EA, what is now S56A).

Briefly spent time in Dallas TX and active in the Texas Instruments Employees Radio Club crew (that club call-sign: K5OJI)

and there I met N9CO Charlie Ocker (also CW Ops member). He was also a great CW operator and inspired me to keep active in the hobby when work, and other life events of a 20-something could have overwhelmed me and put ham radio into the proverbial back seat. But I stayed at it. I worked my way up the ranks and earned my Advanced and then my Extra including the 20 wpm CW - that was early 1992.

Japan/7J1AOF: In late 1992 I moved to Japan for a work assignment and quickly got licensed with a "Gaijin" call-sign (all foreigners had 7J-prefix); I was a member of TIARA, the Tokyo International Amateur Radio Club and attended the Harumi Tokyo Ham Fair (Dayton Hamvention equivalent in JA) several times.

Here's a photo of my shack in JA in 1993. I used this setup from 1993-1995. No computer logging back in those days. I worked DXCC from my apartment balcony on 50 watts and mobile antennas. Note the Vibroplex; sold it for a Begali a few years ago.

Taiwan ROC/BV/N0IAT: In 1995, I transferred from Japan to Taiwan and that got me connected to Tim Chen (BV2A, BV2B ..now SK). Tim was the godfather of ham radio in Taiwan and was huge help to me in navigating the system and applying via the CTARL (Chinese Taipei Amateur Radio League) for one of the first "foreigners" ham radio license for the Republic of Taiwan. I worked almost exclusively CW -mostly on 17M as BV/N0IAT. With a young family, and busy work life I didn't have a lot of time to operate....but I got on the air when I could.

USA/OREGON(K7JOE): Moved back to USA in 1998 (Portland, OR), changed my call to a vanity callsign, K7JOE. Did some contesting with Rush Drake (W7RM-sk) and a thrill was to win our zone in 1999 CQWW-CW with N0AX, K9JF and several other top gun testers.

PHILIPPINES/(DU1/K7JOE): In 2000, we moved to Manila, Philippines on another work assignment. I brought along an Icom IC-751A and was licensed as DU1/K7JOE. My rig got stuck in cus-



**K7JOE as 7J1AOF in Japan, 1992**

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

toms for more than a year – end result was that I was not very active, I was busy with career, small kids, and life. In 2004 we moved back to the west coast for a few years, and while active, I operated as time allowed.

CHINA/(BY1/K7JOE) 2007; work again moved me and the family to China and I secured an operator's license, but a station license was not available in the People's Republic of China, so only club station operation was possible during that time. Again, I found that I was busy with career, kids, and living life in China. Ham radio took a back seat for all of those 8 years, plus some, although I did have a receiver at my house and listened from time to time.

CAREER: I hold BS/MS degrees in finance from Indiana University Kelley School of Business. After 25 years in the semiconductor industry I changed careers and am now a Professor in the Kelley School of Business, Finance Department, at Indiana University. I also mentor the K9IU Amateur Radio Club at Indiana University – we are very active in resurrecting it and getting younger hams / students on the air.

OPINION: I believe CW is/was an essential element of amateur radio – the skill develops good listening and overall important communications skills. It is nice to know that there are like-minded CW ops who can help preserve this skill and art. I also have found there are few if any hams in their 40's left on CW. I wish there were more. Be a mentor to younger hams, help them get on the air and get active. It's what hooked me and think that's what hooks people into the hobby.

CW Forever...

## John O'Neill K0VW

I was first licensed a WN3KOO in Philadelphia in 1957.

After college I became a military fighter pilot (USMC). Upon completing military duties, I went on to commercial flying. I retired a few years ago and now am member of the faculty at a technical college here in Minneapolis.

Amateur radio has always been a major interest and has given me valuable technical support over the years in the aviation business.

I look forward to Wednesday evening and the CWOps contests; lots of fun and gives a major boost to the operating ability. Thanks for all you do with this.



*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

## **Björn Ekelund SM7IUN**

I returned to ham radio just a little more than two years ago after a 25-year break but, as for most hams, it all started very early. Up to second grade primary school I lived in Jönköping in the southern half of Sweden. The neighbor's son (who I years later was able to identify as SM7CCP) was about ten years older than me and tinkered with tube electronics and radio in their basement. Watching and "helping" him, plus of course following the Apollo program with awe, laid the foundation for a lifelong passion for electronics and radio.



Initially I channeled this into shortwave broadcast listening but soon found there was a way to have your own callsign and permission to transmit. In the late spring of 1977 I bought a text book and a set of eight code training cassettes. In August that year I took the theory and 8 WPM tests with full score. I wish it was as easy to learn things these days. A few years later (having reached the required age of 18) I got my full class A license.

My first station consisted of a Star SR-700A receiver with a Hallicrafters HT-40 transmitter. The HT-40 was initially controlled by WWII surplus FT-243 crystals, tuned to useful frequencies using wet sand paper and pencil lead. When it was time, I did my military service as a radio op which was excellent training and brought me my 40 wpm diploma. The service also gave me some of my most valued friendships, which include some fellow CWops members. Then, joining college with studies and later academic research in electronics put ham radio very much on the back burner. Living in an apartment with no real antenna possibilities did not help either. With the birth of our first son in 1993 I was definitely QRT.

I am married to Katarina, also an electrical engineer. Since I was a very active ham when we met in 1982 she can "understand" my rekindled passion, but that does not mean she shares it. The same goes for my three children, unfortunately.

Professionally I have spent over 30 years with analog and digital radio technology, doing every-

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

thing from basic research to product development and marketing. Since a few years back I am now in corporate R&D working with advanced electronics and antenna research.

In the spring of 2016 I was invited as a guest lecturer to the place of my military service and that, together with some gentle encouragement from old friends relit the passion. Forcefully.

I brought my old FT-101ZD out of its hibernation and put up a simple off-center-fed multiband dipole and it was pure joy. To my great pleasure (and honest surprise) my code skills were intact. Transmitting, however, took a few days to get back, and may not ever return to its former glory. I blame age.

Chasing DX has always been my main interest but since I never applied for a DXCC when I was young and my entire QSL collection was lost in a move many years ago, I started out with a completely blank LoTW account. Initially a huge disappointment, but soon found to be a blessing. Working up to half a dozen new band-entities per day some weeks, has been great fun. I have been quite dedicated in my chasing, (my XYL prefers the term "obsessed") so earlier this year I got my DXCC Challenge 1000 plaque and a 5BDXCC, and I am currently only two entities on 12m shy of an 8BDXCC. The 9<sup>th</sup> band will have to wait; I do not really have the land for 160m antennas.

I also enjoy the software side of ham radio, something that did not really exist in the seventies. I have designed several Windows programs for station and radio management, written scripts for contest programs and I am also frequently assisting Dave AA6YQ in his work with the DXLab suite of programs.

My station is quite modest. Until early spring this year it consisted of two OCF dipoles (each about 30ft up) and an IC-7300. However, given its obvious advantages in both DX pile-ups and contesting I wanted a radio with a sub-receiver and realizing I may take forever to get an 80m DXCC barefoot I now also have an IC-7610 and an ACOM 600S amplifier.

Over the past year my interest in contesting has gradually increased. I have been greatly inspired by my friends' passion and successes, not to mention doing over 4000 high-paced QSO with the special call signs 7S1FWC and SJ9HQ which on a very physical level reminded me of the fun and adrenalin associated with contests. I am starting to dabble in SO2V operation, which is great fun and keeps you far busier now when sunspots are low. Doing this I really treasure my service training, receiving with both ears.

Since my work brings me to many places I was thrilled to be able to participate in the August 8 CWT as M/SM7IUN with my KX2 and 50ft of wire out a hotel room window in Cambridge and the August 21 CWT as W6/SM7IUN with a portable magloop in a hotel room in Santa Clara. In the next few months I hope to do the same as I5/SM7IUN from Pisa and perhaps also VE2/SM7IUN from Montreal.

I am happy and proud to be accepted into the ranks of CWops and want to thank my friends and kind sponsors Mats SM6LRR/RM2D, Ingo SM5AJV/SE5E, Lasse SM5GLC, and Ed DK1WI.

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

## **Bill Cunningham K4KSR**

First licensed as WN8OKT in 1953, followed by W8OKT in 1954 and active until through high school. Operating time was spoty during college years. Licensed as DL4VY when stationed in Germany in 1960s, using unit's HF rig. Fairly active in NC and PA until about 1970 when kids, job, grad school collided. An Army Reserve assignment led to a long term career as DA civilian in VA. Very little activity as K4KSR until retirement in 1999 when time and new QTH in York County, VA made it feasible to enjoy the hobby again. Came back with a DX-60, the best boat anchor ever owned. Became adept at totally clandestine antennas, primarily two 40m Windoms at 45° angle that provided fantastic coverage on 20m and some 70 QSOs with Rex, ZL3DY (SK).



Discovered the DX-60 puts out 4.7W carrier in the (keyed) AM mode and just under 500 mW in TUNE mode and became hooked on QRP/QRPP. Adding a few dB more than DX-60 at full power wasn't going to make much difference and serious high power was not an option. QRP simply provided more fun for the dollar and effort invested. The DX-60 gave way to a K1 that I still use for portable operation. Built experimental filter board for 10/17 mod to K1. Not much over 1W output, but enough to know I would want a K2. QRPP started as a lark because it was available, but provided surprising results when conditions permitted. It took a while, but completed WAS and DXCC at ½ watt. My only plaque for contest achievement is for second place (non-TX/QRP) in Texas QSO party running 100mW. Conditions were good and the chase was on to lower total power output for WAS and DXCC.

We moved inland to central Virginia in 2010 — into a house on a hill with tremendous attic space and HOA forbidding any transmitting antenna. That started a series of projects to fit fan dipoles under the high peaked roof. One covers 80-10m with full size 40m dipole that also serves 15m. The second is perpendicular to the first, covering 40-10m and providing great complementary coverage. A third fan dipole covers WARC bands. A used K2 provided access to 10m that really opened up QRPP opportunities. N4BP contributed a 20 dB attenuator, permitting output down to 1mW. Total power for 50 states is now just below 2.0W and “best 100” DXCC is just below 20W. While this sounds impressive, it is possible only with very good ears and major antenna at the other end. Current solar inactivity puts this quest on hold, but 5W still does pretty well if you have realistic expectations.

The great bureaucratic achievement has been getting HOA rules changed to permit wire antennas and self-standing verticals — although I see little incentive to build such because the modest attic antennas are remarkably effective and RF grease doesn't wash off. Portable antennas have progressed through a series of projects. The primary truck mounted vertical is now a 50 year old 12AVS with homebrew extension to cover 40m, approximating a 4BTV. The home brew “packemup” vertical with 3ft sections has evolved to include a trap for 15m that reduces 20m height to 15.3 ft with manually tapped load coil to cover 40m & 30m. That height raises 40m ra-

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

diation resistance just enough to be useful.

Operating time has become fragmented, but CWT provides a cherished outlet despite very modest results. Non-ham activities include grandkids, square dancing and church choir.

## **Ned Mountain WC4X**

I was first licensed as KN3IHT in 1959 at the age of 10, causing lots of TVI in Johnstown, Pa. Amateur Radio has played an important part of my career and my life. I was previously the President and COO of an Atlanta area satellite communications manufacturing company. My career has involved several companies including Motorola, UA Columbia Cablevision, and Wegener Communications. Multiple business trips to Australia resulted in obtaining the call VK2GCW. We lived in Switzerland for some time and I had the call HB9JBM in Canton Zug.

My wife and I built in our dream retirement QTH about 100 miles north of Atlanta in the North Georgia mountains. We have 14 acres and no covenants--life is good!

I am trustee for our 3 local club repeaters. (K4GAR). In 2013, finally applied for and received my DXCC certificates for CW, Phone, and Mixed!

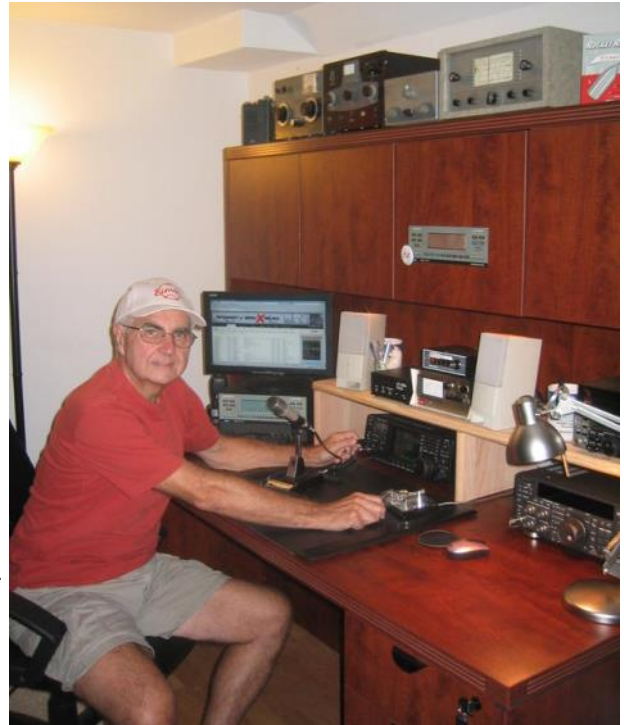
Calls I have had during my ham career include: KN3IHT, K3IHT, W9MDE, W8KQI, N8NM, KG5S, VK2GCW, HB9JBM, and finally---WC4X.

I am active on HF and a little VHF and still favor CW--One of two direct digital inputs to the human brain. (The other is Braille.) I have worked 46 states and 33 countries QRP SSB from my bicycle in the early 90's. Finally achieved 9 band DXCC (11/2017) and I'm proud to be a 20 wpm Extra.

Other activities include long distance bicycle touring, running, and kayaking.

Equipment:

- Elecraft K3s Transceiver
- Elecraft KX3 Transceiver
- Elecraft KPA 1500 Amplifier
- Cushcraft 8 element HF log periodic
- Tennadyne T 28 VHF UHF log periodic
- Dipoles for 80, 40, and 30
- T Top vertical with 4 elevated radials for 160
- W8GNM designed reversible beverage for LF receive. This antenna, The Bev-Flex 4 is now being manufactured and sold by JK Antennas. Check it out at [JKAntennas.com](http://JKAntennas.com)



*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

## **Jaimie “Jim” Charlton AD0AB**

My first FCC license was not a ham license, but a 1st Class Radiotelephone license. I got it so I could move from being a kid disk jockey to an engineer at a local radio station. My first ham license was a tech ticket back in 1960 (more or less) but I didn't use it much since my main interest was experimenting with VHF- microwave transmitters.

My gear was all homebrewed and made from WW2 surplus “junk” from the surplus houses in Chicago. Well, back then, you could only reach so far with 2 meters running 10-15 watts AM and another 10-15 watts of splatter – an early form of spread spectrum communication.

Moon bounce was not in my budget and 6 meters was only mobile due to TV interference on a weak channel 2 in our area. The mobile also created heavy TVI, but by constantly moving, I spread the pain around. Anyway, my interest in ham radio declined as my interest in girls rose. I kept the commercial ticket for quite a bit longer as it made money for college.

I graduated as a EE from the University of Wisconsin and got a really good and interesting job in a research and development lab. There I re-learned all the math I figured I'd never need while in engineering school.

Now, with plenty of money, a sports car, a house right on Lake Michigan and a sailboat I was in bachelor heaven! Then I discovered scuba diving. My new objective was to dive all the great places - or even not great, but interesting places - I could find. My employer was generous and extended my normal two-week vacations to six weeks so I could travel farther, and I did. After hitting the Bahamas, Florida Keys and Cozumel, all awesome dive spots, I set my sights on the South Pacific. The Barrier Reef was even awesomer! I love Australia and the South Pacific. Somewhere around that time I retired from my job.

I did spend a couple of years bumming around the South Pacific repairing marine radios and crewing on sailboats. My longest stay was on Kiriwina Island in Papua New Guinea where I turned 30. I worked at a guest house and discovered they had an unused SW transceiver. I fixed it, got some crystals and the guest house was on the (non-amateur) air. We handled actual post traffic, albeit on AM voice. Our antenna was a long wire strung very high between two palm trees. The base station we communicated with was on Samarai Island, about 200 miles away. We took part in a daily net where we passed paid traffic. It was fun to hear other islands as well as some Peace Corp traffic. It was possible to make a voice phone call (simplex) over this setup, but the quality was terrible. I called my parents one Christmas and I didn't hear a word they said. All I heard was the voices of various operators relaying their comments word-for-word.



*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

I eventually discovered a problem with retiring young - you can run out of money. Crewing on sailboats doesn't pay very well (usually it pays nothing except food and passage). Leaving the island ended my radio career for quite a while. I went home, got my old job back, went back to yacht racing on Lake Michigan and met and married my wife, Kathy.

Leap forward about 40 years, Kathy (KE0HWE - SK) has passed away, I am a bachelor again, I am retired again, and, as of 2012, I am a ham again. So, I guess I am either a new old ham or an old new ham. I still work 2 meters locally and enjoy it but now I use an HT instead of a table full of home brew and converted military surplus equipment. Wow, during my 40-50 years of down time, somebody figured out how to put both the transmitter and receiver in the same box!

You will often hear me on 160-6 meters CW as well as 2 meters and 70 CM FM and Fusion and if you do, please give me a call. I have some great Elmers who have been teaching me CW. On the air, I use the name "Jim" in CW and DX and contesting because it is an easy send and everyone recognizes it as a name and not some strange call sign. Locally where everyone knows me on 2 meters, I use my nick name "Jaimie". I don't care what name people use to call me.

I finally bought (2013) my very first new piece of equipment that wasn't someone else's new piece of equipment first - a Yaesu FT950. My station then consisted of that transceiver driving an old Swan Mk 2 linear amplifier that I restored. The Swan outputs only 500-600 watts continuous depending on the band because a previous owner rebuilt the power supply and its voltage is a bit low. On the other hand, it does run off 115v AC instead of the recommended 240.

I have since upgraded to a Flex 6600M, and an Ameritron 1306 amp with an MFJ 998 tuner. This combo easily puts 1200 watts on 160-6m and is automatic! No more messing with amp tuning knobs. Life is too short for QRP!

I like to experiment with antennas. I currently have a Carolina Windom for 20 meters and dipoles for 12/17 meters, 10/15 meters and for 40, 80 and 160 meters. Unfortunately, the highest point of any of these antennas is only about 25' off the ground.

I may be retired, but I still work. I run an event video production business and am an Adjunct Professor at a local community college. I like to both rag chew and contest in CW and SSB on 80-6 meters. I have tried PSK31 and FT8, but quickly got bored because the radio doesn't need me. I am also playing with SDR because I am interested in digital signal processing - at least the mathematics of it.

I respond to all QSL cards except eQSL. They became overwhelming. If you send me yours, I'll send you mine. Bureau or direct, foreign or domestic, it doesn't matter to me. BUT, the bureau is VERY slow, it takes over a year for bureau cards to get to me. If you want fast response, send your card with SASE directly to my address. I upload all contacts to LoTW.

I am a member of the ARRL and the Johnson County Radio Amateur Club. I am also a "S" member of the Straight Key Century Club (#9667S) so, if you work me during one of their sprints, I'm worth 15 bonus points.

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

## **Mark Soulard ND8MS**

My call is ND8MS. formerly KC5QPO and KK5ZN. Thank you for allowing me to join CW OPS!

I was first introduced to Morse Code while in the Army. At this time, I was also introduced to HF radio. This was in the early 1980's. I didn't receive my ticket until '90's though. HF radio was my attraction then and remains so today. I enjoy POTA and operating QRP portable because I live in an apartment with strict antenna rules. When I first received my ticket (Tech Plus) I quickly gravitated toward the CW mode and became proficient throughout the years. However, in 2015 I suffered two strokes that made sending more difficult than receiving because of small muscle control.



I enrolled into CWA and met Jerry who has been instrumental in helping me get up to speed again. My voice isn't great but I never use phone mode anyhow!

I have tried digital modes like FT-8 but found that lacked in satisfaction.

Professionally, I'm a retired Proposal/Grant writer and also worked in the transportation field. I lived most of my life in a small South Texas town (Seguin) but moved back to my birthplace in Michigan to help my folks.

Besides QRP and portable operation, I enjoy playing the Cello and kit building. I also hit the gym about everyday.

I'm looking forward to working each of you! CW forever!

## **Walter H. Hoppe WA8KBU**

My interest in amateur radio started when my Uncle John let me use his Hallicrafters S38-E receiver to listen to shortwave broadcasts. My father's friend, Gus, K8WPD, helped me to learn Morse code and enough theory and regulations to pass the Novice and Technician tests in June 1963. I received the call signs WN8KBU and WA8KBU. I increased my code speed and eventually got my General and Advanced tickets. I won a scholarship to The Lawrenceville School in Lawrenceville, New Jersey for high school and ham radio was put on hold for a few years. I went to Case Western Reserve University and majored in electrical engineering. While at Case I subjected my future wife, Christine, to listening while I communicated with other hams using CW while using Case's club station, W8EDU. Christine married me in spite of this.

After graduation from Case, I worked as an electrical engineer at a number of large corporations in the Cleveland, Ohio area for the next 42 years. Along the way, Christine and I had a daughter named Lynne. Lynne is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, a Naval Aviator and a

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy stationed in San Diego. I am extremely proud of her and all that she has accomplished.

Unfortunately, the extra activity in my work and personal life meant that ham radio had to be put on hold again until my retirement. In late 2015 I retired as an electrical engineer and became interested in ham radio again in early 2017. After passing my Amateur Extra test, I started to put together a station. My station is rather modest consisting of an IC-7300 and an FT-891, several paddles an LDG Z100Plus antenna tuner and an 88-foot long end fed wire antenna. I read about the CWOps and signed up for the CWA Level 2 course starting in January 2018 taught by Bill Perkins KC4D. Bill encouraged me to practice with Morse Runner and RufzXP to increase my Morse code speed.



I want to thank Bill KC4D for nominating me for membership in the CWOps. I also want to thank Bo K4WW, Howie N4AF, and Paul K1SEC for sponsoring me for membership in the CWOps. I am very proud to be member #2085 in the CWOps and I will continue to try to improve my CW speed, head copying ability and operating technique. I am signed up to take the CWA Level 3 class starting in September 2018.

One of my other hobbies is making, solving and collecting mechanical puzzles. Also, I am an amateur machinist and enjoy machining working live steam locomotives in the 1.5-inch = 1-foot scale.

I am a Life Senior Member of The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers and SKCC #16912.

## **Enzo Greco VE3VTG**

I was born in 1965 and grew up in Toronto. Married with a 4-year-old daughter. I was a late bloomer!

First licensed in 1988. Prior to that I have memories of having my father, WW 2 Veteran, going on top of the roofs peak to install a long mobile whip antenna that was used for the CB band. Yes, a I owned a CB radio. All this excitement began at the age of 9-years old.



*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

One of the neighbors had a large quad like antenna, maybe a Moonraker, i think that's what they were called? Looked like 4 el quad to me. That's the time when I began to be fascinated by the phenomenon of radio communication.

I could hear all kinds of people talking. Lots of Americans and people that sounded different from other countries. I LOVED IT!! So I began to try to speak to these people on the radio with my mighty 4 watts!

Little did I know anything about SWR, what was that? I must have had a mismatch of 20:1 no tuner maybe even a short in the cable? Who knows how bad it really was?

Then eventually I met my Elmer VE3ANI (SK) who spent countless hours trying to teach me CW in an ill lit room filled with smoke. Took me about 1 year to learn all the numbers and letters on a straight key. Eventually building me up to a Bencher paddle.

During all those years I was involved in the family business. My father owned 3 retail seafood stores. Eventually with the big box stores that business plan no longer worked.

So, we converted a couple of the building from Commercial to residential units. I now manage these properties!

## **Ron Harps K8NZ**

TEACHERS! Aside from becoming one later in life, one of the best I ever knew led me down a path to the wonderful hobby of Amateur Radio. In 1958, John Phillips, K8OBC, who was my 8th grade science teacher, often left electronics catalogs (Allied Radio, Heathkit, etc) on his desk. Anyone who didn't have regular schoolwork to deal with during our daily study hall was welcome to look them over. These books served several purposes. They piqued the interest of some and for others it gave them something to do instead of making paper airplanes. Somehow, I graduated from the latter to the former and soon found myself immersed in the world of short wave listening and eventually ham radio.



*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

I first became licensed in 1959 as KN8RMK and the following spring upgraded to General. After a brief flirtation with the novelty of AM and SSB, a trip to Bernie's HamShack (one of several stores that catered to hams in Cleveland) resulted in the purchase of a Hallicrafters HA-1 TO Keyer. I set aside the Vibroplex bug with my distinctive "Lake Erie Swing" and embarked on a lifetime love affair with CW.

For the next 15 years college, career, marriage, and two daughters placed limits on my ham radio activities. However, my interest in radio, CW and most specifically contesting grew with the help of early Elmers like W8AEB and W8SZF. Radio clubs such as the Indian Hills RC (Euclid, OH) introduced me to lifelong friends such as K8AZ, N8AA, W8KIC (SK) and K8MR. The birth of the Mad River RC in the fall of 1970 taught me the power of team building and group competitive spirit. A decade or so later the founding of the North Coast Contesters allowed me to meet and interact with some of the best testers in the world. A typical early NCC meeting often included K3LR, K3TUP, K3UA, K5ZD, N9RV and VE3EJ.

Membership in the NCC led me to eventually represent it as a competitor at WRTC 2000, which was held in Bled, Slovenia. As Team Leader of S526O, with teammate John Crovelli W2GD, this became the experience of a lifetime. The organization, kindness and hospitality of the Slovenia Contest Club made the first WRTC outside of the USA truly memorable.

My friendship with Tom Lee K8AZ has shown me the power of relentless effort and positive thinking. We built one contest station on a shoestring (my 3-tower station in Mentor, OH 1976-1984) and then a second station at the current K8AZ QTH in Chesterland, OH. Over the years we have experienced great success building a fine station and hosting many multi-op teams. This was done while somehow managing to walk the fine line between serious competition and a relaxed attitude of having fun first. The "A zed" Team has allowed me to build more friendships with great people like WT8C, KQ8M, W8CAR and W3YQ.

Retirement and a move to the Ft. Myers, FL area in 2004 led me to join the Florida Contest Group and began great friendships with K1TO, N4TO (SK), WF3C, K5KG, N4WW, W4LT and AD4Z/HI3A among others. Operating the FL QSO Party with K1TO was always a highlight of my FL activity. The fact that we decided to do things "old school" by logging on paper and sending by hand increased my CW skills many fold. Making 3000 CW QSO's using 100w and Hamstick antennas from my "FQPmobile" minivan was an accomplishment of which I'm extremely proud.

The birth of our only grandchild in 2011 led me back to Ohio with a full-time residence in the Columbus area. In 2017 Angela (KC8FOD) and I fulfilled a lifelong dream and bought a lakefront property near London, OH. Our little patch of paradise has room for a vertical and a wire antenna or two, so I'll be much more active than I've been in many years.

Life outside of ham radio and family was supported by my 35-year career as a high school history teacher and athletic coach at East Technical High School in Cleveland, OH. I taught World History and coached varsity softball, baseball and football. I believe that these amazing young people who came from the most difficult of circumstances often taught me much more than I ever taught them.

*(Continued on next page)*





*(Continued from previous page)*

## Scott Nichols VE1OP

It was December 25, 1973. I was 10 years old and busily opening Christmas gifts with the rest of the family. When the wrapping paper was removed from one particular gift, I discovered a box with "Heathkit HD-16" written on it. "Huh?", I thought to myself, "What's a Heathkit? Do they make yo-yo's?, Maybe a new watch. or a fancy light for my bike?" It was too small



to be a new hockey helmet or pair of skates. "Hmmm...Needs further investigation." Written on the box was "Code Practice Oscillator." "Wow, a James Bond 007 secret code thingy...yay!" Well, it wasn't quite that, but that day was the very day my Ham Radio career got started. The kit was proudly completed before New Year's and I was in the business of learning Morse code. I was also now hooked on electronic gadgets.

Skip ahead 13 months. My dad had heard about an upcoming Ham Radio course and asked me if I was interested in taking it with him. He figured that I should have Morse code mastered by now and I could teach him. (It was then I knew why I received the HD-16 a year earlier). I was all in and a few months later we both graduated with our "Amateur Class" tickets. The government issued the calls VE1BHX to dad (now VE1AN) and VE1BHY to me (now VE1OP since 1997). A little over a year later, we both passed the "Advanced Class" tests. I think I could still likely draw that gigantic receiver schematic we needed to be able to draw and explain, must have practiced it a thousand times.

My first few years as a ham were very active, as I was still living at home with dad forking out all the cash for radios, towers and antennas. There was often a foot race down to the shack after supper, when we both wanted some op-time, but I was usually quickly reminded about who the boss was and that I should be doing homework, or mowing grass, or shovelling snow. Then, I graduated high school and moved out, into the real world. Nine years of university, then a wife and kids. Ham radio activity took a backseat to all of that, as work moved me all over the place frequently. Eventually the kids grew up and left, a permanent QTH was found in a perfect ham radio location and it was time for some towers and radios. Finally, I was back in business.

Today, I'm the CEO of a large multi-national fishing company based in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

(IOTA NA-010). After 25 years at it, I'm looking forward to retirement fairly soon. New Grand-kids are popping up with surprising regularity, so that keeps the XYL and I busy, but I still can't wait to get to the shack every day after work, and during weekends, to see what's happening on the bands. Unfortunately, none of my kids ever caught the ham-bug, but at least there were no foot races down to the shack after supper in my house. Maybe someday, one of the grand-kids will catch an interest. I plan to bring out the old Heathkit HD-16 and give it to one of them at some point, maybe it'll spark the same interest in one of them, as hit me that Christmas day back in 1973.

CW has always been my favourite mode within ham radio and 43 years later the rigs rarely get tuned above the CW portions of the bands. Contesting time makes up the majority of the hours that I'm on the air, but I'm always on the lookout for new DX or even the odd rag-chew. My current gear includes a Yaesu FTdx5000 MP, a couple of backup FT1000 Mark V's, an Alpha 87a amp, a tri-bander and wire antennas. Nothing too fancy, but it works to my liking.

My job takes me all over the planet and I soon plan to start taking radio gear to some great places I've scouted out over the years, mostly in the warmer climate of the Caribbean. A fishing rod in one hand, a CW keyer in the other, with a view of palm trees and non-frozen water. That's life! Watch out for VE1OP/somewhere warm.

I'm pleased to be CWops new member # 2110 and hope to work you all soon.

## **Rich Slutz KB8GAE**

I have always been fascinated by radio. In the fifties I got a 6-transistor radio for my eighth birthday back when every transistor was a huge deal. It was great fun to DX the broadcast band late at night. I built a crystal radio and was amazed that it could hear a station without needing a battery to power the receiver.

In middle school I built a Knight Kit Span Master regenerative receiver and spent hours listening to stations all over the world. My interest in radio and electronics led me to become a Hound Dog Missile Technician in the USAF and eventually an Associate Degree in Electrical Technology.



*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

I had wanted to get my ham ticket for a long time and in 1988 I took classes with the 20/9 club and finally did. I bought a used Kenwood 430 and put up a dipole. It was enjoyable working CW in the novice sub bands and before the end of 1989 I had upgraded to extra class. Sun spots were plentiful and it was a great time to work DX.

The old Novice Roundup was my introduction to CW contesting and the Elmer's that worked me were patient and helpful. I have enjoyed casually participating in contests ever since.

I worked as a Field Engineer on computer networks and banking machinery. The job and family took up most of my time until I retired in 2012 after 34 years. Ham radio has been a wonderful retirement pastime and I am never bored when in the shack.

My station consists of a Yaesu Ftdx3000, a Kenwood TS590sg, an OCF dipole at 30 feet, and a G5RV Jr. at 30 feet. A club presentation on LoTW got me back into chasing DX and I have been having a ball seeing what a CW signal can do with 100 watts and a wire. I don't seriously contest but really like to get on for a few hours here and there. The CWT's are lots of fun and great for testing out hardware and software. I also enjoy rag chewing and support both ARES and Skywarn.

Local clubs do a lot to promote ham radio and my ham radio experience has been enhanced by always being part of one. Club programs and activities have exposed me many different facets of our hobby. The friendships I have made are priceless. I am a VE with both the ARRL and W5YI. In the picture I am running CW on Field Day with the Mahoning Valley Amateur Radio Association. I would like to thank Hank W6SX for nominating me and K4WW, N6WIN, and NN5O for sponsoring me. I am excited to be part of an organization that is so effective at promoting CW and am hoping to meet all of you on the bands.

## David Samu VE7DZO

I was licensed in late December 2017 and I have been active since January 2018. Currently I am 14 years old and an avid CW operator. I enjoy contesting, DXing and the social aspect of ham radio. My QTH is about 1000km North of the US border, just north of a town called Prince George.

As I have only been licensed for a few months, I don't have much of a story yet in amateur radio. Although I have been involved in radio since I was very young. At our old QTH in Kelowna, BC



*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from previous page)*

my father (VE7KY) had a 50-ft tower with a Mosley CL-36 on it and I did participate in a few contests using his callsign. I really enjoyed it, although I was just too young to realize the potential in amateur radio. That was it, until I got my license. After that everything took off! I have worked over 150 DXCC entities, made over 5000 QSOs, was a team member in the 2018 Youth DX Adventure to Curacao (PJ2Y), participated in most major contests and have learned CW at 50 wpm plus. All in a matter of a few months. So that just about brings us back to current day.

My main goals in ham radio are, to participate in WRTC, be a team member on at least one major DXpedition and to make life-long friends on the way!

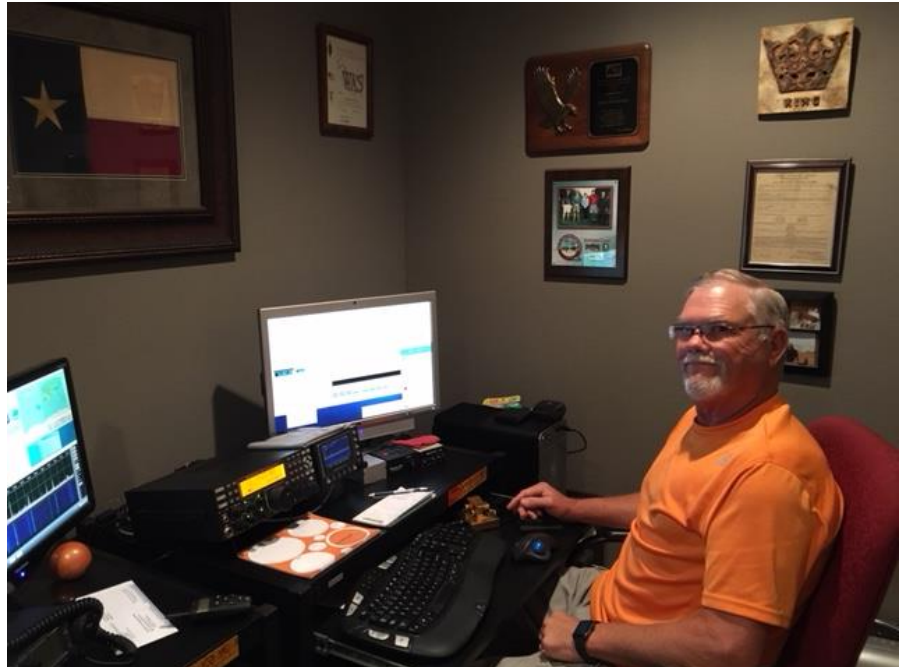
I would like to thank my good friend and my biggest inspiration, Dale VE7SV. I learned lots from him, any time I need encouragement I think of him and what he has accomplished. Anything can be done! Thank you, Dale!

A huge thank you goes out to Bryant, KG5HVO for introducing me to the CWops CWTs. As well as Larry, NN5O for nominating me to be a CWops member and all my sponsors.

Hope to work you in the coming contests!

## **Chris Bradford NJ5N**

I was a short wave listener for a number of years before deciding to pursue an amateur radio license. Not knowing any ham radio operators, I went to the local Heathkit store and bought a copy of "Tune In The World" which had the rules as well as a cassette tape to teach Morse Code. I was originally licensed in 1982 as N5ESC then KD5TK that same year, I upgraded in 1983 and received the current call of NJ5N. I preferred CW from the very beginning and have been 99% CW for the past 36 years.



Like most others, my activities have been up and down over the years with all the things that life throws at you, however I managed to have something on the air during the majority of my time being licensed. From the beginning my main activity has been CW and chasing DX and I have always been intrigued by

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

being able to talk around the world from my home. Of course, this point in the Solar Cycle has slowed my DX chasing significantly, I am stuck at 330 current countries confirmed.

I, of course, had heard about CWOPS for a while but never really looked into the club until a few months ago when I was helping teach a local Tech Class through our Club. One of the students told me of his desire to learn and become active on CW, he told me he had signed up for the CW Academy. I went back and read about the CWOPS organization and was glad to see the emphasis on helping new hams learn CW. This led me to get active on the Wednesday CWTs which I have enjoyed very much even though I am not a regular tester.

The members I have communicated with both on the air and via email have been very friendly and helpful. I look forward to working all the members and helping to promote continued use of CW.

## **Jeff Kabel AA6XA**

I was first introduced to ham radio on a week-long canoe trip I took with my Boy Scout troop in middle school. One of the leaders had a dry bag marked with a mysterious "AB1AV". I asked what it was, but it wasn't until the evening when the radio was set up that I saw how cool it really was. Back at home that fall I earned the Radio merit badge with Bill, AB1AV. He then offered to help me get my ham license. I took him up on the offer. He also convinced me to learn CW, and I practiced with him. After a few months of study and practice I was ready for the test.



My parents drove me to the testing location where I started with the code test. I managed to get a minute of solid copy, much to my relief. I then took element 2 and passed it. I went home with my Tech plus license that morning. My callsign arrived in the mail, KB1KXL. My birthday was a few weeks later, and I got a Small Wonder Labs SW-40+ kit which I assembled. With some help from Bill, I got a dipole into some trees outside my bedroom window and was on the air. I only made a few contacts with it, being a busy high schooler. I was more active on the local repeater with my HT. A bit more than a year later, I was ready to take the General exam. I passed this, but sadly my credit for element 1 had expired, so I was still only a tech plus. A few months later, the code requirement was dropped, so I quickly started learning the Extra material, so I

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Continued from previous page)*

could pass that test before my element 3 credit expired. I passed it, and now had an Extra license.

I was off the air for a number of years in college and grad school. After graduating with a degree in electrical engineering from the University of Rochester, I took a few months off to thru-hike the Appalachian Trail. Back at home after my hike I started looking for a job. I got one in the SF Bay Area and moved from New Hampshire to California. About two years ago I got back into radio. I only had my HT and CW rigs, so I started relearning CW. I quickly discovered SOTA, and after getting an MTR 3B I started activating. Since then I've gotten heavily involved with SOTA, activating most weekends. I've also discovered the fun of CW contesting, particularly the short, CWT-like sprints and big DX contests. If I'm not too busy in the evenings, I'll tune around and listen for a CQ for a ragchew. After a year of heavy use of my old callsign, I decided I could get a better one. I had noticed that some SOTA chasers had calls that sounded really good, so I looked for one that flowed nicely. I think I've found one in AA6XA. It is a bit of a mouthful on voice, but that's not a big problem for me.

My home station is a KX3 and KXPA100. I enjoy homebrew, both kits and designing my own stuff. When I'm not on the radio, I like to play the organ and piano. On Sunday mornings you can usually find me subbing for area churches. I also enjoy orienteering and rogaines, but haven't had a chance to do ARDF yet. I'm looking forward to more CWTs and ragchews with all the members of this great club!

