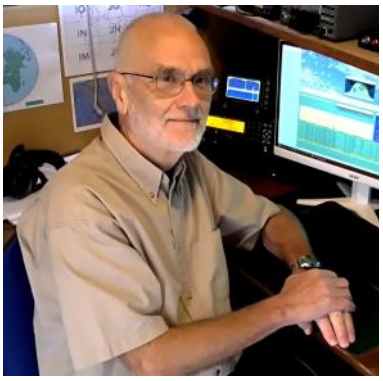
Solid Copy

The CW Operators Club Newsletter
July 2023 — Issue 162

Field Day stories and pictures are scattered throughout this issue, including a recount from the all-CW team, Blazing Paddles on page 13.

President's Message



I occasionally hear or see comments about potential members of CWops having to demonstrate the ability to operate Morse at 25 words per minute and the suggestion, explicit or implied, that we are being elitist. This requirement has

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CWops "CWT" 1 hour 'tests
Every Wednesday at 1300z and 1900z
Every Thursday at 0300z and 0700z
Exchange: name/number (members)
name/SPC (non-members)
Avoid DX Pileups!

CWO Mini-club 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"

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been part of CWops Bylaws since its inception with the aim, in my understanding, of ensuring we are a club populated by committed, active members who all show a basic level of CW ability. Whether this could be called elitism is perhaps a moot point but it certainly isn't intended that way. Open access clubs in any field will often have many members who join on a whim and then spend years stagnating and doing very little to contribute. The founders of CWops wanted a club of like-minded individuals keen to support CW by being enthusiastic and dynamic and decided to adopt this approach. On the whole I think it does a pretty good job.

I've had a couple of experiences recently in my Giving Back sessions that have caused me to think about this some more. One evening in particular I had back-to-back QSOs with two "G" stations who were both using hand keys with admirable aplomb. I suspect they knew each other and the second called after hearing his friend having a welcome ragchew with GW2CWO. In the course of these lengthy contacts I learned that hand key CW is their forte and they just enjoy 'plodding along' at 15-20wpm conversing with whoever comes along. I built up the impression that neither wanted to move to a paddle or bug and build up their speed but in their own way were enthusiastic, committed and had a real love for CW. Naturally I referred them to CWops but never felt there was any real desire to join our crowd. They seemed happy just doing their own thing. I will of course listen out for them again just in case they've become a little more 'mainstream' but in the meantime these lone 'outliers' will definitely get a mention in *Solid Copy* in the future and certainly in the QTX column.

My CWT participation has been suffering from outdoor activities in our recent fine weather. I have however been more successful finding time for the post-breakfast 0700z session and have found them a great way to start the day. It's now 2 years since they were first introduced although they only became official scoring sessions at the beginning of 2022. Browsing <3830scores.com> indicates they have settled into interesting but fairly relaxed affairs with submitted logs in the range around 80-100; enough to make it worthwhile coming on for but never the hectic bun fight like at 1300z and 1900z. Many just do part of the hour (before setting off for work in EU perhaps) and there is normally more working the same call on different bands. Understandably, Europe is the main focus of activity but there's a surprising and very welcome contribution from many on the East coast and Midwest North America who are either super keen, can't sleep, or like me have to get out of bed in the middle of the night for whatever reason(!) and can't resist turning on the radio. Personally I've never been tempted by the 0300z CWT because my shack is in a shed at the bottom of the garden. Time to investigate local remote networking...!

One of the reasons behind selecting this time slot was the potential for working members in some interesting and less common DX locations throughout the year. Despite the relatively low activity, this seems to be bearing fruit. In recent months, the North American West coast and Rockies have been putting good signals into Europe and Stan AH6KO on the Big Island of Hawaii has been easily worked and one morning was the loudest signal on 20m with me. Allan VK2GR is a regular 'beacon' signal and I sometimes work him on more than band. New Zealand has been difficult though but this could change as the grey line shifts in its cycle through the year. Japan is a mystery as I never seem to hear them despite Ken-san JN1THL being a regular participant at 0700z as well as in the Japanese A1 Club's AWT before the 1300z CWT each week (which I must

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remember to check!). I would encourage members in all these areas to give the 0700z CWT a go even if for only a few minutes. Have a listen, give out a few calls, check the Reverse Beacon Network. And don't assume because we're talking DX you need a big station in an elevated location with power and big antennas. During Cycle 22 in the late '80s and early '90s I was a keen QRPer and worked lots of JA, VK and some ZL with just 5 watts and an open wire fed doublet. And last year I surprised myself by working ZL in the mornings on 80m on my low NVIS dipole by taking advantage of the grey line. One of the things that always puts the grin into my day is getting replies from the DX with my K2 and its 10 watts. Propagation is an endless box of delights and surprises…

See you on the air, dit dit.

73, Stew **GWØETF,** President (CWops #919)

SC

Editor's Notes:
The CWops "Fist"

A recent fluff-up on the reflector regarding the lack of presence by GB13COL, and its operating style in a seeming one-time CW appearance, brought out suggestions from our UK members that they represent that call sign at next year's 13 Colonies special event in early July.

Duncan, G3WZD, one of the salivating ops-in-waiting, and I discussed those challenges which validates my observation about the on-air prowess of CWops members. Especially from those who participate in the weekly CWTs or CW Open, there is an unmistakable "fist" that is most definitely recognizable in other contests and QSO Parties; a cadence and exchange protocol that efficiently (and pleasantly) moves through pile-ups as well as maintains a flowing presence between them. Certainly, we have a number of CWops that also participate in DXpeditions and are used to running split and dealing with QRM and the "UP" police. The expertise and skill of CWops members are finely honed after many hours of practice and application.

So, to me, a highly biased QRP station that would like to work GB13COL in a future event, it makes total sense that CWops members - especially Duncan and Stew who have raised their hands - would be among the first to be called upon for representing the CW portion of that special event marathon. Good luck guys. I hope you get your chance next year. And stay hydrated; there's a lot of stations that would like to work you.

Also, thanks to the CWops members who've responded with stories about their Field Day experiences this year which appear in the following pages. And big kudos to the all-CW group Blazing Paddles - what a great story behind the name.

73, Dick **N9EEE,** (CWops #3113)

Editor, ***Solid Copy*** (SolidCopy@cwops.org)

News and Notes

Duncan (Mac) Fisken, G3WZD

We regret to report that the following Members have become Silent Keys :

Chris Eldridge, G4CCX #2003 on 17th June 2023
Bob Warmke, W6CYX #47 on 23rd June 2023

Condolence cards have been sent on behalf of CWops

Thanks to our contributors for another varied selection of topics sent to this month's News and Notes mailbag. Please keep the submissions coming and don't wait until the monthly call for articles (deadline for the next issue is 1st August).

Firstly however, we noted last month the sad passing of Ben, DL6RAI #2776 in a tragic tower accident. The following note from Luise DL2MLU, Ben's XYL, was received via DL1MGB and the CQ-Contest email reflector.

"We want to say goodbye to Ben on July 15, 2023, from 1 to 3 p.m. This is at a small field chapel on a hill near Stockensau (48°31'11"N 11°11'27"E). Ben liked this place very much. The small chapel can be reached via several dirt roads within walking distance. If you come by car, please park on the tar roads, if possible, only one-sided, so that farmers with their large tractors can pass. Cars directly at the chapel would not be appropriate.

There will be a picture and a "lectern" at the chapel. Here you will find time your time and space for contributions from you. As far as I'm concerned, there aren't any further planning and there will be no priest or similar.

Unfortunately, flowers, arrangements, wreaths or similar cannot be laid down at the chapel. I will set up a large vase for individual flowers. There is no graveyard at the chapel. Cards can be placed in a standing box. Expressions of condolences on site are not desired."

Guy, VA7GI #3256 I'm delighted to announce that EDGE Books will publish my science fiction novel *Super-Earth Mother* (see cover art below) this Summer/Fall. Gayle is planning a big book launch party at a public venue in Vancouver on Sept 18th. You're invited – save the date! Bring a friend.

Super-Earth Mother is now available worldwide on Amazon as an eBook. Preorder print paperback for a September 1 delivery.

The fictional AI, Mother-9, communicates with colonists from orbit using radio. But there's no ham radio (yet) on the planet Valencia.

If I get invited to do a sequel, then early radio may appear.

The following is an unsolicited review by author, Rebecca Bradley: *"From high-tech installations on the moon, to a startlingly conceived interstellar transport, to low-tech settlements on a distant exoplan-*

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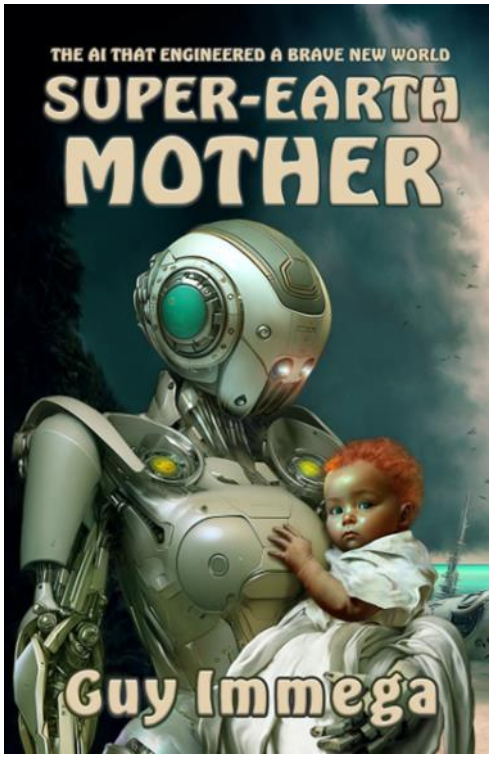
et, Super-Earth Mother explores one of the great cosmic truths: that the universe and everything in it is out to kill you. Humankind is reborn, midwifed by AI nursemaids into an alien ocean; a Great Mother watches from the sky. This new Eden, however, is no paradise, the motherly AI machines are not immortal, and the new breed of human is all too human, for better or worse. With rich, meticulous world-building and a seamless merger of hard and soft SF (ed: Sci-Fi), Guy Immega creates a stage on which the new breed plays out a range of social—and antisocial—approaches to the task of survival."



A further review appears on Amazing Stories.

FYI, I have recreated Marconi's original transatlantic 1901 spark gap transmitter and coherer receiver. No tubes! Of course, I'm running QRP spark gap at only 20 mW (less power than your Wi-Fi router). My longest DX is 25 feet (across the room on 10 M). But it works! I can send rough but readable Morse code at 5 WPM with sparks.

Jim, N3JT #1 I now hold the license VY1JT and will use it (via remote means) on occasion.

Tom, DF7TV #2613 A new CW event started in May 2023 and a second event took place in June 2023. Organized by Drew AF2Z, it is the **"RandomGram"** test. Exchanges are random 5-letter groups (available from Drew). A description of this test is available here. I enjoyed participating in both events and these tests are very suitable for SWLs and new CW operators as well.

Mike, VE9AA #1347 Imagine my surprise finally receiving one of these huge ARRL DX plaques out of the blue.

Out of the dozens of ARRL contests I've entered over the last 30 or so years, I think this is my very first ARRL plaque. I didn't even know I was a contender as I had not checked the results.

Thank you so much to Carl, K9LA for sponsoring it and to Paul, N1SFE and others @ the ARRL for keeping the ARRL DX CW going.

It's definitely one of my favs and now even more so.

(News and Notes Editor's note: Congratulations, Mike!)

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Theo, PA3HEN #2481 A CW Key Contradiction: The HAM Radio Friedrichshafen show has already been many years on my wish list for a visit. Finally, a visit was scheduled for 2023. Together with three other Ham operators, I started early morning for the 820-kilometer (507 miles) trip to the South of Germany. We arrived late afternoon. A fantastic time to enjoy a drink at Lake Bodensee.

Next day we went to the Messe Friedrichshafen. I was very interested in CW keys and paddles as a CW enthusiast. At the Flea Market I found a very nice paddle, but it needed some love. After some discussion with the seller about the price, the paddle became mine. The seller didn't want to go down in price so soon as he had still 2 days left..... I got it with some nice discount.

Above is the picture of this beautiful paddle after I spend a few hours of cleaning and brushing. This paddle is of Spanish origin, from The Balearic Islands to be specific (EA6). The maker was LLAVES TELEGRAFICAS ARTESANAS.

On the internet I found the following: "Handmade telegraphy keys" or LTA was founded in Spain, in the Balearic Islands and was active until Don Guillermos Mestre Janer (EA6YG), one of the founders, passed away in March 2008. According to the references of the website of this company, the pieces are totally handmade.

But then, the modern key: I cannot imagine a bigger contradiction: A Solid State paddle.

The maker of this keyer is still active and is 9A5N. No, I have no shares. He makes several models; both single and dual lever. I played a bit with this key and I have to say honestly - impressive. As the name already says: Solid State. There are no moving parts in this keyer. No needs to readjust now and then etc. It's fully electronic. See the website of 9A5N for more information.

Steve, K1RF #3003 I operated in a multi-club Field Day hosted by K1WAS, the Westport Astronomical Society site, which is near the highest point in Westport, CT. Participating clubs were the Housatonic ARC, the Greater Norwalk ARC, the Greater Fairfield ARC, and the Westport astronomical Society ARC operating in class 3D in CT. I was the sole CW operator in the group, making 501 CW contacts. I also gave an educational presentation on simple wire antennas for bonus points. We were fortunate to operate in an air-conditioned classroom. Photos of our Field Day operation can be seen here.

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That's me in the first photo; I'm the one in a purple shirt, emulating a dipole!

Charles, K5KXJ #3057 W5RRR, Johnson Space Center ARC with the Clear Lake ARC ran 10 stations in Field Day this year.

There were 3 phone, 3 digital and FOUR CW stations on the air for the event on 40/80, 20, 15 & 10/6. All 4 CW stations were on the air while I was there as a guest op.

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I had a blast operating the 15-meter CW station.

The CW Village was set up by Dave, W5OC and Terry, N5LOW. Great job!

Dan, KB6NU #1418 has published an update to his *No Nonsense General Class License Study Guide.* As you may know, in the U.S., the question pools for all three license classes are updated every four years. The new question pool took effect on July 1 of this year and will be in effect through June 2027. See here for more information on Dan's study guides.

John, N7HCN #1914 I have recently relocated to Cofax, WA and changed my call as well. N6HCN is now N7HCN.

Jim, N3JT #1 In the wake of this year's very successful DC-CW weekend, arrangements have been made for the weekend of June 7-9, 2024. Same hotel as this year. It's never too early to make reservations! It's the Fairview Marriott in Falls Church, Virginia. More info will follow, of course.

Until the next News and Notes, dit dit.

***73, Duncan,* G3WZD** (CWops #1979)

ANNOUNCING THE 2023 CW Open Contest

Now that summer is here, at least for those of us in the northern hemisphere, the weather is getting warmer. In less than two months the annual running of the CW Open will occur. That also means it is time to get your rigs warmed up and check out your antennas and contest logging software!

The dates and times for the 2023 sessions are:

Session 1: Sept 2 (00:00 – 03:59 UTC)

Session 2: Sept 2 (12:00 – 15:59 UTC)

Session 3: Sept 2 (20:00 – 23:59 UTC)

It is also an excellent time to start to organize your team and get it registered. Last year there were 25 registered teams with members from all three ITU regions. The team rosters ranged from a full 10 member team down to 3 members. Talk to your ham buddies and sign up! They do not need to be CWops members to be on a team. It is always more fun being part of a team and might just increase your BIC (Butt in Chair) time and score!

If you have not yet participated in the CW Open, you should give it a try! Each session is a standalone event and is only 4 hours long. With that flexibility you can operate as little or as much as you want. You can even win an award by only participating in one session. Unlike the weekly CWTs, the CW Open is more of a contest and less of a sprint. You don't need tons of aluminum in the air and KWs of power. Low power and dipoles work just fine for this event. Plaques and Trophies are awarded for all power classes.

While talking about plaques and awards, I would like to thank ICOM America for their continued sponsoring of the trophies and plaques for the 2023 CW Open.

For additional information please refer to the CW Open website at the following URL: https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/cw-open/ Look down the web page for the team sign-up link. It is lots of fun as a single op but even more fun to be part of a team. The team membership has NO GEOGRAPHIC RESTRICTIONS. It can be local, national, or international.

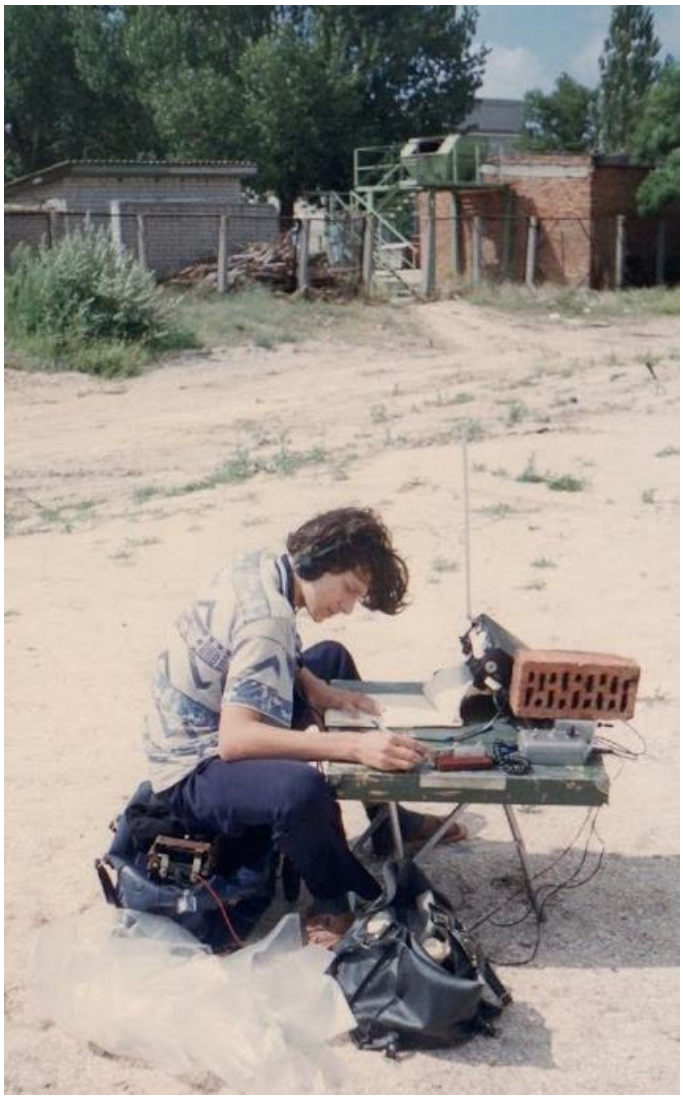
Hope to get you in my log for one or even better, all three session!

73, Bruce N1LN
CW Open Manager

How We Were

Hank Garretson, W6SX

UR5ECW, Alex Chiharkov, CWops # 3230



“1996 when I was 16 years old. In this photo, I'm operating in the annual Ukrainian Championship (kind of WRTC style) which took place at the Arabat Spit, a territory now occupied by Russian army.”

Please send your How We Were picture(s) and story to w6sx@arrl.net. Then-and-now pictures particularly welcome.

CW Exuberantly,

***73, Hank,* W6SX** (CWops #61)

Avoiding Cut Numbers, When It Counts

Pete Smith, N4ZR (CWops # 1277)

As I write this, CQWPXCW is less than 24 hours in the rear-view mirror, but my experience over 19 hours and 1243 QSOs has convinced me that this needs to be said. Rather than fire off an e-mail to CWOps, I think the subject is worth a little more considered approach. But let's be clear, going in, that I think cut numbers in contests are a lousy idea. If you're still with me, I'll explain why.

First, we need to acknowledge that serial number contests are hard. You need to be able to copy what could be one to four digits through QRM, QRN and, too often, just plain lousy sending. I lost count of how many times I heard ops send a number with dots at the end, only to drop at least one. How many times did you hear "B" instead of "6" during the contest.

In my opinion, full-form CW numbers offer a couple of crucial advantages – internal redundancy and consistent rhythm.

The first is pretty simple. Every full CW number consists of 5 elements, in some combination of dits and dahs. If you hear the first "dah-dit" of a 6, you KNOW what it is, even if the rest is obliterated. Same with every number – if you can hear the transition between dits and dahs, or the lack of transition, then you're pretty much home free (though rhythm plays a part too, as I'll suggest below).

What do I mean by rhythm? Each of us learned early on that there is a standard ratio in length among dits, dahs, intra-character spaces (between dits and dahs), inter-character spaces, and spaces between words (or full numbers, in this case). When we listen, under difficult conditions, to CW numbers, our minds expect these and anticipates what may be next. Even if our copy is mangled by QRM or QRN, these more-or-less unconscious expectations help us copy full numbers much more easily than cut numbers, particularly long ones. We "know" approximately when the next number will begin, based on when the last one began or ended.

This is even helpful in cases where cut and full numbers are mixed, which is why I'm not totally against one common cut number. N, the cut form of 9, is itself internally redundant, and when followed with a word space is pretty recognizable. On the other hand, T for zero always leaves me hanging, waiting for the rest of the number, and never mind E or A. It also occurs to me to ask, "Why does nobody use cut numbers in callsigns?"

OK, end of rant. Comments welcome.

Enough comments on the reflector and articles in *Solid Copy* suggest this topic will be an ongoing discussion for some time to come and therefore warrants its own graphic to accompany this and future articles. A previous article based on information aggregated by ChatGPT in the March issue of *Solid Copy* may now be out of date due to the inclusion of information from the above article. And the beat goes on. - *Editor*

Field Day: 111 Fahrenheit in the Shade

Roger Rose, W5LXS (CWops #3105)

The Midland ARC Field Day effort, KD5C, 3A WTX was a good one this year. We operated at the old National Weather Service building near the Midland Airport and enjoyed a low noise level and badly needed air conditioning. We had a total of 13 ops and used Elecraft K3Ss on CW and sideband, a K3 on digital, and a Yaesu FT-891 on GOTA. The CW and sideband stations used Butternut HF6V antennas with 32 radials each, a delta loop on digital, and an OCF dipole on GOTA. We made 12 solar powered contacts and the rest were a combination of commercial power and generators. This was the first year in several that our three CWops members were able to operate due to health and other issues. We lost one of our faithful CW operators and since most of our membership came onboard after the code requirement was dropped, John, WA5PFJ, #1629, Alan, N5NA, #3354, and Roger, W5LXS, #3105 made up our entire CW crew. We had a well attended code class that was derailed by Covid-19, and I hope we will resume studies and get some new CW ops in our midst. Since it was a club effort, the other modes were provided to get the rest involved; our sideband group was the most improved over recent years. The digital station ran FT4 and FT8 and did well. Setup and teardown went smoothly although we elected to wait until Monday morning for teardown as the temperature was pushing 111F at quitting time. Being new to CWops, taking part in SSTs, MSTs, and CWTs really helped my contesting, especially being much more familiar with S&P operations. Hope to work you next year!

L to R: Alan, N5NA , Roger, W5LXS, and John, WA5PFJ

Blazing Paddles: CW-only Field Day Team

Anthony Willard, AB9YC (CWops #1249)

It took 364 days of planning, meetings, discussions, and emails to get to this point. It was Field Day, 2023. Blazing Paddles took to the air once again as 1A IL.

It had not rained in our area for over 4 weeks, but the weekend forecast called for hot on Saturday, rain overnight into Sunday, with high winds and possibly hail. So it goes at Field Day.

I arrived at the location, a soccer field provided by the local park district, with my grandson Logan, around 8:30. I usually bring a pair of 10x10 pop-up shelters, tables, generator, power cords, antenna, coax and other pieces, more than will fit in my 4 door sedan, so I rented a moving van.

No sooner did I put it into park, when another team member showed up. It was Charlie, N9CO, and he provided the operating position this year for our all CW operation, which consisted of an IC-7300, computer, monitor, key, and something 'extra.'

Since we arrived first, we got to discuss the basic layout. Each year, we try to address ideas from last year. We decided to locate the antenna in the usual location relative to the operating position, about 100' east and a bit south of the radio. We decided to put the pop-up shelters in the same orientation, north to south, separated by a few feet. This allowed them to share tie downs for the shelters, and also made protection from the sun easy to manage.

The previous year, we had the generator placed to the south of the operating areas, but had a problem with the wind pushing exhaust in our direction. We relocated it to the east-northeast. That worked out last year, so we put it back there this year. Yeah, I know, wind is wind, and it can change in an instant. We all know this, but more about that later.

We began unloading the pop-up frames, bins of side panels, tie downs, and the like. We're on a soccer field, so there is no hiding from the sun, shade is priority number one right now. As we were staging the frames, tops and panels, two more operators showed up, Joel, N9LQ and Peter, N9POL, our VHF operator who brought a 10x10 shelter, and the VHF operating position. They both joined in getting the shelters set up.

The shelters went up quickly with so many hands, and that's a plus, for sure. With 3 shelters set up, we now had a place to dodge the summer sun. Logan was assigned to secure the shelters. We don't use pegs or stakes, but rather the corkscrew style dog stakes. These don't easily come out, and can handle decent loads from wind, experience has proven this. The ground was so hard, screwing in the stakes was not going well. We ended up putting splashes of water, letting it set, giving the stake a turn, repeat, until all 8 tie-downs were secure. Then we lashed the structures; we were then set for shade.

We began lugging out tables, chairs and operating gear. Also, we unloaded the generator and power cords, and carried them to their designated location. That could all just sit there until we were ready for them.

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VHF antenna on the left, the fan dipole in the back right.

While Charlie and Peter set up their stations, Paula, K9IR and John, K9XW arrived and joined in the effort to get things staged and ready for setup. Joel and Logan joined in the task of hauling out the antenna support, guys and antenna.

Our tried and true antenna of choice for Field Day is a 3 band fan dipole for 80M, 40M, & 20M. We raised it up on a surplus style military mast assembly, up to about 40 feet tall, and hung the dipole in an inverted V style. All the guys are already secured to a guy ring, and it's necessary to unroll the lines out straight and ready to use. This can be an exercise in patience depending on how neatly the lines were stowed last year. This took a bit of time.

The station setups were coming along and would soon be ready to test their setup. I got to work on the generator. The generator was a Ryobi 2300, which had 1.5 gallons on board. It was augmented with a 3 gallon outboard fuel tank, so we avoided the complications of fueling. The nominal runtime for typical load was estimated at about 28 hours. We should be good for the duration. I fired it up and it was purring along, and ready for duty. I covered it with an A frame style tarp, which keeps it out of the direct sun, protects it from rain and keeps it generally out of sight. Blazing Paddles Power & Light was now online. I uncoiled the heavy duty power cord to the two

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operating positions and rested the plug ends off the ground, a preemptive step to avoid the impending rain.

The antenna crew was ready, and we had a quick meeting to discuss the procedures, just so everyone was clear. We have two on the mast, and one on each of the guys. As we construct the mast, the guy team works to keep the mast vertical. Progress was quick, and we secured the guys. Well, we tried; the ground was very hard from the recent lack of rain and was not taking the tie downs and needed more "moisture therapy".

Once the mast was secured and standing erect, we hoisted the dipole, oriented the elements, 80M/40M running east to west, 20M running north to south. A thing of beauty in its simplicity. Total setup time for the antenna was less than 15 minutes. We unspooled the feedline to the HF station, and that task was done.

The operating positions were configured, powered and initial checks indicate all is good. SWR is good, all the connections are secured, the operating positions were cleaned up for easy operation.

Antenna, check.

Power, check.

Radios, check.

We set up an auxiliary 12x12 shelter, a lighter duty unit that provides copious shade, which is certainly welcome, and also a place to relax. We were set up over 2 hours ahead of go time, so we discussed lunch options. We settled on takeout from a local chain eatery, and when it arrived, we sat around and discussed operating plans, schedules, and tactics. Yep, we are good at sitting around discussing Ham radio.

Here is where Charlie explained his station addition. He brought along an SDR setup with the associated skimmer software. He explained that it's hooked up in such a way that it skims off the TX antenna. This is a plus, because if it can hear it, we should be able to work it. Also, a plus, the 3 band nature of our antenna means it can skim additional bands unlike a mono-band antenna. This should help us monitor for band activity. We were all excited about the possibilities this might bring.

At 1800z, we are key down. Since it's Charlie's station, he took the first shift, giving it a shake down, making certain everything was working as expected. As usual, the opening 20 minutes of Field Day were slow, but activity picked up and more Field Day operations got on the air.

We put Logan on the VHF station so we could land his youth bonus, and he's in the log in short order. The only real activity on VHF seems to be FTx, so that's where the action is. Logan, having done his part to help with setup, and got us some bonus points, departed. He got a lunch out of it, so he was happy.

We settled in for the duration. Those not operating were cleaning up, stacking excess gear from

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setup, setting up chairs, and making ready for whatever was next. We were in a public location, near some houses, and while we were setting up, several individuals walked their dogs past our activity. Many returned to inquire about our presence in the open field.

Firefighters talking with Paula, K9IR

We had plenty of walk-ins, and we took turns shepherding them around our operation as we explained our purpose. Some were just curious what we were doing there, others were actually interested in hearing more. One plus for being in a publicly accessible location.

Being situated across from a local fire station, we get fire crew visitors each year. At least, when they are not otherwise occupied in their primary duties. This year, we had 3 firefighters walk over, and it's always good to know they are interested; and it's nice to get a nod regarding our safety procedures and setups.

The typical rhythm of Field Day was in full swing. The CW station was manned, with a new operator about every hour or so. Everyone wanted seat time before dark, just to be familiar with the station. This was good, but all the comments said the same thing, 20M was not very strong, was a bit noisy, with deep QSB. This was unusual for 20M at Field Day, but it is what it is.

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Joel, N9LQ operating the station

When we reached dinner time, and in between playing tour guide for the occasional visitors, we decided on pizza. Pizza is always a good option, minimal gear, easy to eat standing around, keeps well, and it's pretty easy to eat and operate if necessary.

Just after our first transition from 20M to 40M, and still daylight, I hopped into the chair. Being fresh meat and on the first foray on a new band, I was busy. It seemed that 40M was in much better condition than 20M, and I was pushing a steady rate in the 95-100 range. It was normal Field Day activity, typically slower pace than a full-on contest, but as many on the other end are seasoned contesters and CWops members, they know the drill. (I find it refreshing to work with many seasoned operators operating "incognito" behind an unfamiliar call, and get the occasional dit-dit of recognition. Thanks to all who got out for Field Day and gave us a shout, even if I was not at the key.)

When I was relieved, it was cloudy. We kept an eye on the possible weather we were concerned about, which was not due to arrive until closer to midnight. Weather radar confirmed that. The temperature was cooling off only slightly, but the breeze from the incoming front was welcome. We policed up the loose items in preparation for darkness. If a storm were to pop up suddenly, we didn't want to be chasing our stuff all over a soccer field in the dark!

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I made a pass around the site, checked on the antenna, the guys were all secure, checked in on the generator, still humming along and secure. All seemed in order as we moved toward darkness. We decided on the operators for the overnight duty, and arranged to get some rest as we could ahead of the long overnight. Weather radar showed the storms were about an hour or so away. Charlie was resting on a cot under the 12x12. I climbed into my moving van, and tried to grab a few winks before my shift. It was hot and sticky, but I had to try.

It might have been more than a few winks, but way too few. I heard the tink-tink-tink of raindrops on the roof of the van. I jumped up, exited the van into the night, midnight to be exact, with a mild drizzle. I rushed over to the CW station and installed the remaining walls and made fast the stakes and gear. Rain was coming, the station was secure and protected.

John continued to operate, the rain was just a nuisance; until it wasn't the only thing to be concerned about. A flash of lightning, and we disconnected the antennas and went offline. Blazing Paddles was now QRT due to weather. Once the thunder became regular, John retreated to his car for a nap. I decided to hunker inside the shelter. It was secure and dry. Peter shut down the VHF station, and went to his truck to sleep. We've used the same shelters for years, and they are sturdy and weather ready. Again, the corkscrew dog stakes help here.

But, they really got tested this year. The wind picked up and began to buffet the shelters. The 10 foot wide panels are giant sails, and the wind seemed to be coming from different directions. I moved the coolers around to provide stability to the corner posts. The rain was no problem, but the stout wind was annoying. In between the waves of rain, I looked outside, peeked at the antenna. Yep, it was still there, and still standing. The generator was still covered and secure.

After about an hour of on and off rain, and wind gusts, it slackened enough that Peter and I emerged to just look around. The radar showed the gaps in the weather, and we would get a few more rounds before it was all over. We checked our surroundings, the 12x12 had gotten hammered, and Charlie was asleep in his car. We still saw flashes on the horizon, we were not yet clear, and it began to rain again.

After another half hour of weather, Peter and I emerged again. According to the radar, the weather had moved on. But we still saw plenty of flashes all around. I counted after seeing a flash, to determine how far away it was. Only to be disappointed when it was too close. This continued for almost 30 minutes, until we saw no more flashes of light, in any direction.

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I was the only CW operator awake, so I made the call. I brought the station back online, reconnected the antenna. After a 2 hour rain delay, we were back on the air. Overnight is always a slog. The rate was weak, with only sporadic mini-runs. The trick was to keep moving. Here was where the on-site skimmer was a benefit, it kept us aware of the action, light though it may be. Keep moving, be frequency agile, and keep logging Q's. It had turned cooler, and my shorts were not cutting it. I took a quick break to put on some sweats and sleeves, then went back to operating.

Charlie made his way into the shelter around 5 am. I was beat and I welcomed the relief. I asked about his canopy, and he just shook his head. It would have to wait for daylight to determine the damage. Charlie sat down and went to work, while I retreated to my van to sleep.

I woke up a few hours later and saw that Mark, AG9A had joined us, as had Bob, WG9L who was operating. Both had Saturday obligations, but committed to show up on Sunday for the final push.

My XYL texted me that breakfast was on the way so I cleared a place to land it all. Breakfast with Blazing Paddles has become a tradition at Field Day, and is the one thing everyone agreed on - who could pass up baked apple french toast, bacon, sausage and juice! When it arrived, we dug in. John was finished first, he relieved Bob so he could enjoy breakfast.

A survey of the site showed it had weathered the overnight in pretty good shape. The antenna was in good shape, the generator was secure and running fine, and had plenty of fuel. The 12x12 canopy, however, had collapsed. Probably repairable, and this was a topic as everyone got to review the damage and offer ideas.

With several hours still to go, we were joined by John, K9JK, who normally operates mobile for Field Day. We chatted about various topics, shared stories about the overnight "adventure", and just enjoyed the company. We kept cycling operators, keeping a fresh set of ears at the radio, trying to keep up the pace.

The wind started to pick up with about 2 hours to go. It was refreshing, but would make cleanup a bit troublesome, packing up 10x10 canopies in the wind can be a real challenge.

With 90 minutes to go, we began the process of securing all the extra gear. The primary operating gear remained in place, but the extra chairs, coolers, tables and supplies were getting packed away. No sense waiting until the final Q to start cleaning up if you were not operating.

At the final bell, our last QSO in the log, we were done for this year. Blazing Paddles was QRT. Time to clean up.

Considering it takes anywhere for 2 to 3 hours to set up, tear down usually only takes about an hour; this year, only 58 minutes. Antenna was down, and stowed, the mast assembly stored, the canopies dismantled and loaded. Everything was packed up. We headed to a local Chili's for lunch and discussion, then departed. We had a great team, we had a great time operating, sharing friendship and camaraderie.

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Thanks for all the Q's, and look for us next year.

Blazing Paddles. Left to Right: Peter, N9POL; Bob, WG9L; John, K9XW; Joel, N9LQ; Paula, K9IR; Mark, AG9A; Anthony, AB9YC; Charlie, N9CO

Why Blazing Paddles?

Many radio amateurs get their first exposure to structured, organized, even contest-like, on-air operating from Field Day hosted by a local Amateur Radio Club (ARC). Field Day run by a local ARC can demonstrate a broad spectrum of Field Day activities, including various operating set-ups with radios, antennas, location layout, and, oh yeah, FOOD!

The broad spectrum of activities present in many general interest ARC's, while contributing to the overall longevity of the ARC, can manifest in a Field Day effort that can leave some operators wanting more. It often seems that the planning meetings spend more time debating FOOD decisions, and far too little time on the operational side of Field Day. You'll see more activity around where the food is than any of the operating positions.

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This is where I found myself, wanting more out of Field Day, wanting more focus on operating, wanting to have a better setup.

I am primarily a CW operator, and really enjoy CW contest operating. For me, Field Day is about operating. However, this didn't align neatly with the local ARC. This got me thinking about running my own Field Day, the way I wanted to run it, and with operators who felt the same way.

I talked up the idea with a few CW friends and we assembled a small team to operate Field Day on our own. We would operate CW and follow a KISS approach to setup and operating.

While we could just operate and have a fun time, it might be better if we had a name, something we could use to refer to our operation. Since we were all-CW, we felt the name should reflect that. We went through many tongue-in-cheek names, some rhyming, others tongue twisters. When someone said "How about Blazing Paddles?" there was silence. Talk about hitting the nail on the head, that was the moment.

Want to let someone else do the Field Day planning? Want to just show up and operate? Want to talk for hours on end with your fellow HAM's? Want some free food? Then stick with Field Day with your local ARC.

Perhaps you want more enjoyment out of your Field Day experience. Maybe you want more focus on operating. Maybe you want to enjoy Field Day with similarly minded HAM's in support of a particular goal. Consider branching out and organizing your own Field Day operation. Figure out what **you** want out of Field Day, set that as your goal, and start planning to support your goal.

A typical ARC Field Day has a budget, funds available for all things related to Field Day, food, supplies, resources, permits, etc. If you decide to strike out on your own, you won't have a budget, at least not outside of what you and your team are willing to contribute. Well-chosen team members probably have resources which, combined with what other team members can offer, can make for an operational Field Day setup. You don't have to do it all yourself, so include others on your team to share the effort.

If you follow the KISS approach, it can be amazingly simple, and you will have a really fun time. Start with a minimal setup, and build from there.

Trust me on this, you won't be able to organize a decent Field Day effort in a 20 minute discussion. Sure, you might go someplace and operate, but there are myriad details (securing a location, getting any permits, arranging for portable toilets, setting an operational strategy and schedule, getting any bonus points, gathering up the results and posting your results), so start your planning now for 2024! You can use monthly planning meetings over dinner and enjoy food, company, and planning. - Anthony AB9YC

eField Day

Bob Patten, N4BP (CWops #2463)

This was the next best way to avoid the heat and mosquitos that this old body can't take any more!

The Bolt is a little car with a BIG battery. The name Chevy chose is very appropriate, it really does BOLT when you push the pedal. But even for its small size, it needs special tires to carry all that weight.

All of its interior accessories use a 12V AGM battery (infotainment center, A/C, lights, window and door motors, etc.). This battery is charged from a hefty inverter connected to the 300V battery. It would be complicated - and dangerous! - to try and tap directly into the big battery with an inverter, but easy to connect to the 12V AGM.

Here's where it gets tricky. To keep from shutting down (including charging of the AGM) after 2-3 hours, the car must be in drive mode.

I have a short check list:

- Close the seat belt (the car needs to be aware of a driver)
- Put on the parking brake and put the transmission in "L". "L" is complicated, but basically stops forward motion without pedal pressure and activates maximum regenerative braking. One-pedal driving, I almost never use the mechanical brakes!
- Shut off all interior battery drainers like infotainment console, headlights, A/C.
- Leave the "key" in the car

Everything in the shack is connected to one UPS. My 1KW 12/120V Samsung inverter connects to the AGM battery through a giant APP connector. Oddly the Bolt allows you to drive with the hood up and the Samsung sitting atop all the Bolt's electronics! I ran a long extension cord from the garage to the shack UPS and I have a power source that lasted for the full FD period and only used up about 70 miles of the Bolt's 260 mile range.

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Of note: The Bolt was also powering three other desktop computers for the entire period!

Bonus: In the event of a power outage (hurricane), I can run the entire house, except for A/C, range/microwave, and water heater, for a week. My breaker panel is wired to accept the output of the Samsung inverter.

I've used this setup so far with outages of 3-4 hours. While the Bolt is doing its duty, I can get around on my two wheels, a Yamaha V-Star 1300 Tourer.

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Call Used: N4BP ARRL/RAC Section: SFL Class: 1E

Participants: 1 Club/Group Name: (none)

Power Source(s): Battery

Power Multiplier: 2X

Preliminary Total Score: 7,450

Bonus Points:

100% emergency power	100
W1AW Field Day message	100
Entry submitted via web	50
Total bonus points	250

Score Summary: (Cabrillo log/dupe sheet file: N4BP.log)

	CW	Digital	Phone	Total
Total QSOs	1800	0	0	
Total Points	3600	0	0	3600

Claimed Score = (QSO points x power mult) = 7,200

Submitted by: Bob Patten, N4BP n4bp@bellsouth.net

Band/Mode QSO Breakdown:

	CW		Digital		Phone	
	QSOs	Pwr(W)	QSOs	Pwr(W)	QSOs	Pwr(W)
160m	0	0	0	0	0	0
80m	50	100	0	0	0	0
40m	500	100	0	0	0	0
20m	829	100	0	0	0	0
15m	404	100	0	0	0	0
10m	17	100	0	0	0	0
6m	0	0	0	0	0	0
2m	0	0	0	0	0	0
222	0	0	0	0	0	0
432	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satellite	0	0	0	0	0	0
GOTA						
TOTAL	1800		0		0	

The CWops Duo of Coconino

Brian Betz, W7JET (CWops #2993) and **Red Brown, NJ7V** (CWops #3061)

In the beautiful Coconino National Forest located in Northern Arizona, among the pines and the allure of nature, the annual ARRL Field Day event unfolded once again. Among the crowd of radio enthusiasts from the Superstition Amateur Radio Club operating with the 1x1 call K7K, one CW Ops duo stood out from the crowd: Brian W7JET #2993 and Charlie "Red" NJ7V #3061, two passionate Morse code operators. With a membership of around 225 individuals, our club always boasts an impressive turnout, but when it comes to Field Day, it's Brian and I who consistently take the lead in racking up the points for our club. This year's event was no exception, as we continued our tradition of camaraderie and challenge that Field Day brings, while never losing sight of the joy and fun that makes this hobby so special.

We arrived at the Field Day site on Thursday and wasted no time in setting up our campsites. Initially, the site was occupied by only a small group of around 6-8 people. Later that afternoon, my wife Sandy W7NRS and I left camp and drove to Baker Butte for a Summits on the Air (SOTA) activation.

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Upon reaching the location, we spent some time talking with the person manning the fire lookout tower. Once we broke away from this talkative person, we took turns operating the radio equipment on different frequency bands, until we were each satisfied. While Sandy was managing her activation, I pulled out my HT and contacted a few individuals back at our campsite. Additionally, I was able to reach out to some friends in Phoenix, despite the distance of approximately 100 miles, using only my HT and its rubber duck antenna.

The next morning, on Friday, we set out for another SOTA activation, as did Brian and our friend Dan. While Sandy and I were still on our summit, Brian completed his first activation and then met up with us on our summit as we were packing up. I let him use my station since it was still up and among his 15 QRP contacts on 20 meters, he worked YC2VOC, from Indonesia. Brian then went on to do a 3rd SOTA summit while the rest of us returned to camp.

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Later that afternoon we all assisted with setting up the club's station equipment.

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Our club runs multiple stations every year, operating 4A, with one of those stations designated as CW only. Brian and I handle this station, and this year we set up in our usual spot at the eastern end of our campsite. Brian utilized his homebrew contraption, consisting of a fishing reel and a slingshot attached to a painter's pole. With great accuracy, he shot the weighted line over two towering 50-foot trees, allowing us to hoist and secure a Controlled Current Distribution (CCD) dipole antenna between the trees, positioned at a height of approximately 40 feet. For a comprehensive explanation of this unique antenna design, please refer to: http://on5au.be/content/a10/wire/ccd.html

We operated a Kenwood TS-590s using the N1MM software for logging. Our key was a Begali Traveler and the K1EL Winkeyer USB interfaced with N1MM and the trusty 590s. Our average operating power was kept under 75 watts to preserve the 100 ah Lifepo battery. Given the remote location we had an S-zero noise floor so pulling out even the weakest contacts was a breeze. The club sets up a local wireless network, so all the logging computers are networked together. This is great as we were able to keep tabs on how we were doing compared to the Phone Ops by using the score summary window. We also had some fun giving each other a hard time over the messenger feature.

Field Day in Arizona officially starts at 11:00 am on Saturday. Since we had already prepared everything the previous afternoon, we found ourselves with a little extra time to complete a service project. A portion of the fence around the private property we were using had been damaged during the winter and washed away. A group of us spent a couple hours fixing the fence. Although we are not ranch hands, I think we did a decent job.

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Finally, we started working the Field Day event. Brian and I would take turns, one at the computer while the other listened in and offered corrections if needed. It was a tag team effort trading off the primary position. However, with only two ops, there were gaps on our operating time when we both needed to be away from the radio. We started operating on 20 meters and did so off and on until after dark. Then we switched to 40 meters until we retired for the night.

The next morning at 5am we picked up where we left off on 40 meters. An hour or two after sunrise we switched back over to 20 meters and finished out there.

Over the years, Brian and I have become a little more serious about accumulating CW points for the club, but we still have a lot of room to grow. We estimate that we were on the air for approximately 8 hours, between all of our other club duties. However, this year was a fun balance of working contacts and enjoying the outdoors. Our preliminary estimate is that we worked a little under 500 contacts this year. Not bad for a couple of guys just out to have some fun.

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RFI Intermittent Problem

Jim Talens, N3JT (CWops #1)

For some months, I'd been plagued with a very intermittent problem characterized by sudden inability to type letters into the N1MM log window. I would get only question marks. It happened maybe once during a CWT. I put a few more toroids on leads to and from the laptop computer. Still, it would happen with maddening infrequency, essentially once an hour of operating (at most). The only way I could resolve it was to reboot the computer. Restarting N1MM+ Logger would not help. It occurred too infrequently to try turning the antenna, reducing power (already "down" to 800 Watts), etc. One suggestion was that weak batteries in the external keyboard I use might be causing a problem with the laptop keyboard translation circuit. I replaced the batteries and the problem did not recur for some days so I thought that was the solution, but a few days later during Field Day (Class D) it happened again. Bad computer chip? RFI? I vaguely recall trying to prepare an email and getting the same result, but now am not sure I did that.

It happened again at 1320z during a CWT a week or so ago. This time, before rebooting, I tried typing text in an MSWord document to be sure the problem was happening in other applications besides N1MM. To my surprise, when I typed letters on the blank MSWord screen they were running from right to left and were in Hebrew, one of the various language fonts I have installed on the laptop. I realized then that somehow, perhaps accidentally striking two keys simultaneously in the frenzy of the CWT, I had switched to the other language font. I returned to English on the laptop and the "???" syndrome was gone in N1MM. I am now told by 4X6GP that striking the SHIFT-ALT changes the language, so that's what I must have been doing unintentionally from time to time.

It is interesting how happy one can become in resolving a long festering problem, especially when its cause is a "duh" source.

SC

Did your **CALL SIGN** change recently?

Did you move to a **NEW ADDRESS** or change your **NAME** ?

Congratulations!

Help us keep our **DATABASE UP-TO-DATE**

Click HERE to update your contact information.

What a Day! CW Guys Visit KPH

Rob Brownstein, K6RB (CWops #3)

On June 17 2023 five CW operators visited the last coastal marine radio station, and what a day it was. The station is KPH, and its history goes back 109 years when Marconi had a station built in Bolinas California. But its lineage goes back even further. In 1904, the PH in KPH was for Palace Hotel, the site of one of the first wireless radio entities, located at that hotel in San Francisco. After the quake of 1906, and the destruction of the Palace Hotel, KPH moved around a bit.

The Marconi station of 1914 was a spark-transmitter station. But, with the advent of first arc-based stations, and, later, the Alexanderson alternator-based radios, KPH kept up with the times. And, it was still cooking with new technologies as vacuum tubes were invented and improved versions were introduced. Marconi's enterprise had been bought by RCA between World Wars I and II, and the Bolinas California transmitter site grew in the numbers and types of transmitters installed and used there.

Here's what left of the Bolinas Building 1 where the Marconi station was installed in 1914.

It was common, in those days, to locate the transmitter site some distance from the receiver site, and KPH was no exception. About 20 miles north of Bolinas, at Point Reyes National Seashore, a receiving site was put in place. Operators at the receiving site would key the transmitters at Bolinas using landline-based remote links. One of the reasons for the separation was to minimize the interference from transmitted signals at the receivers. In addition, the transmitter site was quite noisy, physically, so that it was hard to hear audio signals, too.

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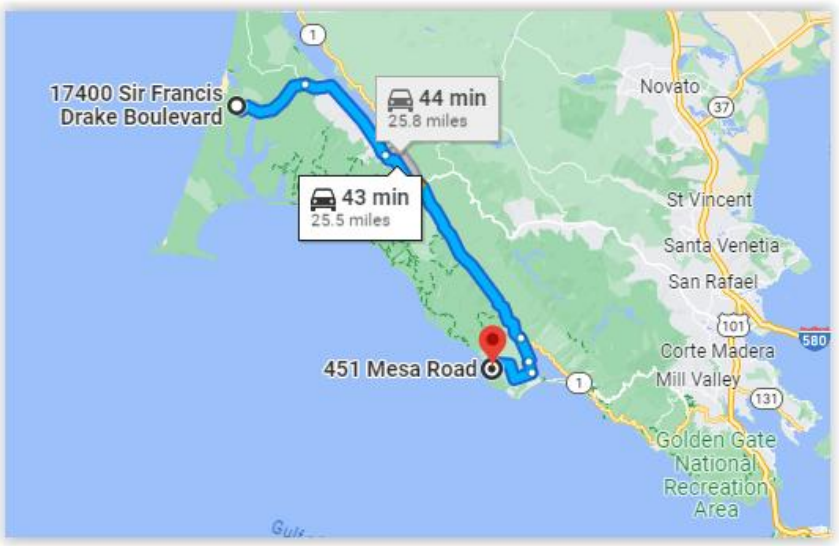

The transmitter and receiver sites are about 20 miles apart.

Stations like KPH were used both for commercial ship-to-shore communications and for point-to-point communications. Between World War I and II, and for a while after, commercial point-to-point and ship-to-shore communications was quite lucrative, and it paid for the buildings, equipment and labor needed to keep everything up and running.

To be sure, the history of KPH is both fascinating and rich. A book-sized document could do it justice. But I want to talk more about what we saw that day, so I recommend that those interested in the history of KPH check out these websites: https://www.nps.gov/pore/planyourvisit/kph_treetunnel.htm and https://www.radiomarine.org/

Beginning the Journey

My first inkling that a visit might be in the works came by virtue of an email from Bob, WO6W, who had been one of my intermediate, and then advanced, CW Academy people. He asked if I had any interest and I responded with a definite "yes." While I was away in May, things had progressed, and when I returned Bob had set up a visit to KPH for five of us: Bob, me (K6RB), Roland (AE6VL), Jim (W6JIM) and Rob (W2ITT).

None of us lived close to Bolinas or Point Reyes, so we carpooled. I drove to Bob's house in Menlo Park, and so did Rob (W2ITT). Then Bob drove the three of us to Bolinas, later Point Reyes, and then back to Menlo Park. (Thanks, again, Bob). Jim and Roland met us at Bolinas. We all arrived there around 9 am and were met by Bob Venditi (W6AW), a volunteer with Marine Radio Historical Society (MRHS) and National Park Service.

L to R – K6RB, W2ITT, W6AW and W6JIM. Behind Jim is AE6VL. The transmit site is on the left. (Bob, WO6W, took the photo)

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Bob V. took us inside and began showing us around the Bolinas transmitter site. We were awaiting the arrival of Bill Ruck, a MRHS/National Park employee. He would be the one to provide all the information about what we were seeing and how it all came together. More about Bob V. and Bill R., later.

Inside Building 2

I estimate that Building 2 was about 20,000 square feet (10,000 on the first floor, and the same on the second floor). The action was on floor 2. It was the site of all the different transmitters, the power-distribution system, a control center, parts department, a small lunch room and a bathroom.

Some of the many transmitters on floor 2 at Building 2 in Bolinas.

Bill Ruck tells about the various transmitters, when they were used, and how they were maintained.

When the market for point-to-point and ship-to-shore CW began to dry up, the commercial Morse stations, like KPH, began to disappear. In 1997, what had remained of KPH's equipment and facilities was bought by Globe Wireless and essentially left unused and in place. In 1999, the last ever commercial Morse transmission was made by KFS (Half Moon Bay California) in July and on that very same day, July 12, the MRHS was created.

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Working together with the Point Reyes National Seashore, MRHS took over KPH. Much to its surprise, it found that the equipment was largely still in place, and some was even operational. Over the last 24 years, MRHS has restored several transmitters and gotten the TX and RX sites linked up, again.

In Bolinas, there's a control room that monitors all the gear operation, but actual sending and receiving of CW takes place at the Point Reyes RX site. Visitors without prior arrangement do not go to Bolinas. Yet, to a CW operator, it is a very interesting location. The lines and lines of transmitters are impressive. And, the storeroom/parts room is replete with passive and vacuum-tube components. It is truly a ham "treasure trove." And, the enthusiasm of Bill Ruck for the equipment, the spare parts, and the stories that go with them is palpable.

KPH has been a part of radio since its earliest days of spark. Sitting on the floor is a fixture that at one time was the heart of an arc transmitter where instead of an intermittent spark, a continuous arc was struck inside a sealed, gas-filled, metal vessel. Not long after, sparks and arcs were being largely replaced by Alexanderson alternator-based transmitters. None of those alternators remain at KPH but a plaque describing such was recently discovered and is proudly displayed at Bolinas.

Bill points to a somewhat rusted-out vessel that at one time provided the arc core of an arc transmitter.

The working transmitters are all massive, tube-type, transmitters. You won't find a solid-state amplifier anywhere. There's a constant thrum of sound produced by HVAC and power supplies and fans. It made sense, and still makes sense, to have the RX site separated from the TX site for the sake of being able to receive RF signals unimpeded by high-powered adjacent RF signals as well as the audio that is produced.

Taking a Short Break before the Trek to Point Reyes

After being regaled by stories of equipment past and present, the group was invited into the small lunch room for some caffeinated brew and some pastries brought by Bill Ruck from a bakery in San Francisco. While we ate and sipped, Bill and Bob V. told us hair-raising stories about poles, towers, wires and "riggers." During its heyday, KPH had full-time riggers whose job was to fix whatever needed fixing on those poles, towers, and wire antennas. It turns out Bill and Bob V. had also done their share of pole and tower climbing at other venues. When Bill talked about fixing an antenna, on a tower's side, with nothing between his shoes and the ground except for 900 feet of space, I had a hard time imagining what that felt like.

The ride to the RX site would take 40 plus minutes driving the 25 miles of winding, narrow, roads. The plan was to stop, first, at a market near Point Reyes, in Inverness, and pick up some sandwiches and drinks for lunch, then proceed to the RX site.

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Bill and Bob V. at the far end kept us entertained with hair-raising stories.

The Trip to KPH Point Reyes

Anyone who has never visited the beach towns of Marin County is missing one of nature's bountiful areas. With Bob (WO6W) driving his new hybrid Honda, yours truly in the co-pilot seat, and Rob (W2ITT) owning the back seat, we proceeded to follow Bill Ruck to the RX site. This place was timeless. The small beach towns were quaint and compact separated by huge swaths of rolling hills, meadows, trees, and occasional grazing animals.

When we arrived at the locked gate, Bill opened it, and we drove in to what was a unique, long driveway to the RX site. The road passed through a magnificent tunnel of trees which is often photographed and included with the photo of the RX building, an art-deco structure.

The tree-lined driveway leading to KPH's RX site.

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The tree-lined driveway ends here.

Nearby is Point Reyes National Seashore's gorgeous beach.

Once we arrived, Bill escorted us through the "guests" front entrance (as opposed to the visitor's side entrance).

Getting the royal "guest" treatment.

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Each cubicle has a key, at least one RX and a control setup that determines whether you will be transmitting on a marine frequency, as KPH, or an amateur radio frequency, as K6KPH. At each operating position, you can see which other stations are active, and which band each is on by eyeballing red LEDs on each panel.

A short hallway led us back to the operator's area.

The stations are set up for both marine and amateur, and a switch selects to which set of bands the operator will have access. When set to amateur bands, there is a choice of five – 80, 40, 20, 17 and 15 meters. The frequencies are crystal controlled at 3.550, 7.050, 14.050, 18.0975, and 21.050 MHz.

Once you select a band, and tune the receiver to your operating frequency, you are ready to go. Plug in a hand key, or a bug, or a keyer set up to handle -8 volts to ground, and have at it.

With some of the group operating the positions simultaneously, it was interesting to note that there was virtually no sign of their signals on the band you chose. It turned out that 20 m was both a bit noisy and there were a few stations close enough to 14.050 to pose a QRM issue. So, we operated 40, 17 and 15 meters.

Jim (W6JIM) brought along a small, side-action, bug. Rob (W2ITT) used one of the available hand keys, so did Bob (WO6W), and I elected to use an MFJ keyer that was set up to key my operating position.

[Left]

Bob (WO6B) operating 40 meters with a hand key.

[Right]

Rob (W2ITT) is stirring up action on 15 meters.

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Rob (K6RB) kicking out the jams on 17 meters.

What you are actually keying is one of the transmitters we saw back at Bolinas, and you are running 1.5 KW to boot. I first started on 15 meters and immediately worked JK1YWW but signals were not very strong. It was probably 5 am in Japan, a bit early for 15 meters. On 17 meters, I ended up working two JAs, a W8 in Florida, a W3 in Maryland, and a K7 in Seattle. The K7 was 599 plus. Each of us who chose to operate worked at least one station, usually several.

After getting our fill of operating, we all went into the small lunch room and ate the sandwiches we had gotten in Inverness. There was true consensus that this was an interesting, rewarding visit. On our way out, Bill took us into a room where there were shelves of receivers dating back to before WW II through the 1960s – all tube type. In a closet were a bunch of keys. Again, a ham "treasure trove."

I applaud Bob (WO6W) for having arranged the visit, and for driving me and Rob (W2ITT) from Bob's home in Menlo Park and back. He did a masterful job of driving. I also want to thank both Bill Ruck and Bob Venditi for being great hosts, and being enthusiastic founts of information.

KPH is open to visitors and guest operators every Saturday. If you choose to visit, impromptu, you are most welcome at the Point Reyes station. You need to make arrangements, beforehand, to visit the Bolinas station. It is a trip truly worth the time.

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Damped Waves

Fred "Skip" Jensen, K6DGW (CWops #142)

Editors are always on the lookout for new fodder for publication and occasionally some fool suggests the possibility of supplying some. Such is the case for this issue of *Solid Copy* and possibly some in the future. Having become decidedly historical myself, I find past - and sometimes not-so-past - technologies and their histories to be intriguing. At any rate, we'll see how this goes. Feel free to send our Editor a "thumbs down" if you think the ink could be better used. We'll plagiarize the title from the popular "How We Were" feature in Solid Copy.

How It Was

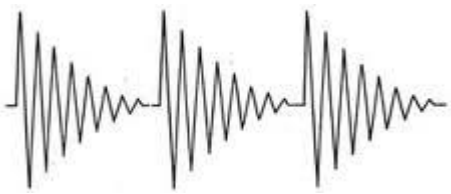
In The Beginning

Beginning with a trivia question, and any use of Google, Wikipedia or (gasp!) an ancient printed text is considered very bad form and cause for a DQ. Most everyone in the hobby knows or has heard that the first radiotelegraph Morse code transmissions involved a lot of sparking and they produced damped waves. Indeed, the radiotelegraph operators acquired the nickname "Sparks" as a result. "Funken" is "spark" in German, hence we also have Telefunken. Most everyone also knows it was a somewhat crude and noisy method for generating electromagnetic waves. And, everyone knows that it fell out of favor and was ultimately legally banned when better, much more narrow bandwidth technologies came along.

So, "In what year was the last damped wave transmitter finally turned off?" Answer is at the end.

It's a little hard to define exactly when "radiotelegraphy" was invented. In the late 1870's, James Maxwell showed mathematically that coupled electric and magnetic fields would propagate in space and that they carried energy, but it would take another 25 years or so before Heinrich Hertz discovered that a spark created by discharging a high voltage across a gap would cause a spark in a small gap not connected to the first one. His apparatus happened to generate electromagnetic waves around 50 Mcs which would make 6 meters the first ham band, but Hertz also commented that there was no practical use for this other than it showed that Maxwell was correct. Others would discover otherwise.

Many folks believe that Thomas Edison's greatest invention was the electric light bulb, however financial evidence suggests that his greatest inventions were the electric power company and the monthly power bill. In like manner, many believe that Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi's invention of radiotelegraphy was his greatest but there is strong financial evidence that his greatest was by far the wireless telegraphy company that bore his name and earned a gazillion dollars. Marconi (and others) realized that a circuit with a capacitor connected across an inductor formed the electrical equivalent of a bell; if you banged it with an electrical pulse, it would "ring" producing damped waves.



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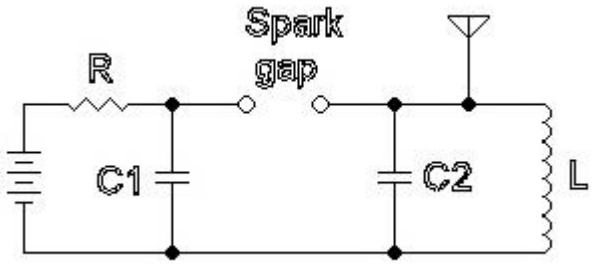
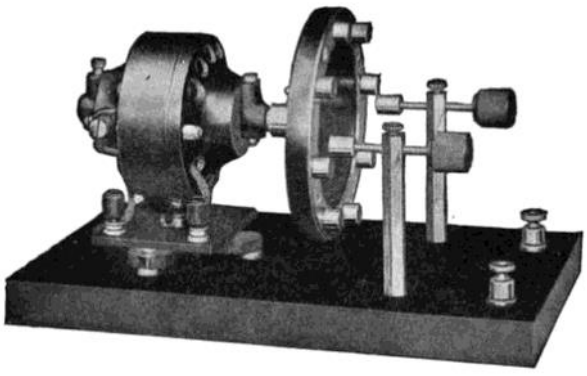
The initial pulse would cause the circuit to ring at its resonant frequency, and the power would slowly die out due to circuit losses – and power radiated if an antenna structure was connected.

So, at its simplest, Marconi's "transmitter" looked like:



The bottom end of the inductor would have been connected to an earth ground or the hull of the ship, and there would be a mechanism for keying the Morse code. The battery charged C1 through R until the voltage on it and across the spark gap rose high enough to create a spark. That very rapidly discharged C1 into the circuit formed by C2, L, the antenna, and the ground wire. That combination resonated somewhere in the radio frequency band, and the energy from the spark's "bang" caused it to ring at that frequency, producing the signal inside the triangles. After the very rapid discharge, C1 began to charge again and the cycle repeats, producing the triangles.

I had mostly thought that spark transmitters were invented, were pretty crude, didn't evolve much technology, and were finally replaced by vacuum tubes (aka "valves") when DeForest invented the audion and "real" radio began. Turns out, that's far from the truth. A huge improvement came with the rotary spark gap in which a disk with electrodes was rotated next to a stationary disk.



This regularized the spark rate and gave the damped wave a somewhat musical sound and a slightly narrower bandwidth. Marconi discerned that if he fed the transmitter with high voltage AC and synchronized the rotation such that the sparks all occurred at the peaks of the AC cycles, he got a lot more power from his transmitter.

Several observed that the energy in the tail end of the damped wave was contributing little to the range of the transmitter but consumed energy. Mechanisms such as blowing out the spark right after it fired with a blast of air or other means were developed to "quench" the spark. This had the additional effect of further narrowing the bandwidth of the damped wave signal even more creating more room for stations. Since the antenna is part of the resonant circuit in a spark transmitter, any variations in it such as swaying or even changes in humidity affected the center frequency of of the damped waves and to reduce

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(but not eliminate) this effect, the antenna was inductively coupled rather than being directly connected.

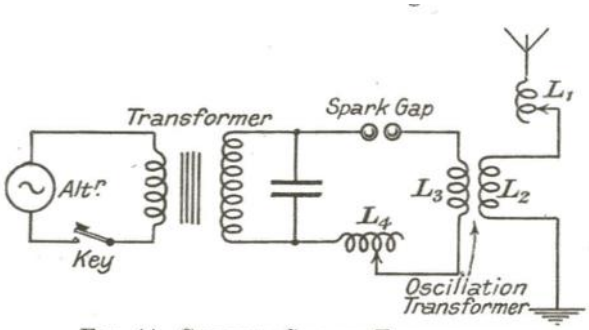

FIG. 44. COUPLED CIRCUIT TRANSMITTER

It had been known for some time that continuous electrical arcs such as arc lights exhibited a negative resistance characteristic where higher voltages resulted in lower currents. A negative resistance element in a resonant circuit can be made to oscillate.[1] Danish physicist Valdemar Poulsen succeeded in building what he called "The Arc Converter" that would both produce semi-continuous instead of damped waves, and would do so at frequencies up to a couple of hundred Kcs or so and producing enormous powers approaching a megawatt. Arc Converters were not particularly well suited to shipboard installation, but the US Navy (and others) used their huge power in shore stations for worldwide communications.

And, while not a spark or arc-based invention, Earnst Alexanderson, a Swedish inventor, experimented with generating true continuous waves with high-speed, many-poled alternators. Frequencies were limited to less that 25 Kcs due to mechanical limits, but powers up to 300 – 400 KW were easily achievable. They too were not well suited to shipboard use. There remains one operational Alexanderson alternator in working condition today at SAQ which operates near 17 Kcs and its preservation society fires it up at reduced power of 100 kW or so (due to it's age) a couple or three times a year on auspicious radio dates.

Keying these noisy rigs posed a problem in itself since they involved high voltages and currents. Small transmitters could be direct keyed in the primary of the power transformer and the key knob with the disk "skirt" evolved to help keep operator and electrons separated a bit. Keys with long arms were also popular. In really high power systems, large electromagnetic relays were employed. There is a 30 minute video of a commemorative transmission from SAQ at www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJXhbE1bDOk. All the narration is in Swedish but it offers a close look at a 200 kW transmitter from the early days, including a couple of shots of the relays doing the keying. It also shows the long-ish arm key being used in what for some of us would be an unnatural position.

One unique scheme for keying high powered spark transmitters was to switch a capacitor into the resonant circuit with the keying relay. This shifted the transmit frequency down and thus out of the passband of the receiver(s) during key-up intervals. That signal, called the "backwave," was the inverse of the sent code; basically all the spaces between elements, letters, and words. [2] And, with radiotelegraphy rising as a world-wide communications medium, a handful of intrepid

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experimenters tried various means of modulating the less damped waves, one by putting a carbon microphone in series with the antenna lead. Doubtful if he was close-talking the mic.

So, it turns out that spark transmitters did in fact evolve, showed a variety of technological changes and improvements, and persisted until the vacuum tube was invented. Silent, reliable, and capable of creating true very narrow band continuous waves into the low Mcs range, they began to replace the sparks, arcs, and ultimately in 1934, damped waves were outlawed, or so Wikipedia thinks. The transition from spark did not happen quietly in the amateur community, just as SSB did not happen gently in the 1950's, and FT-somethings are not happening really gently today, but change was inevitable, and it still is.

But wait! There's more! WW2 sparked (sorry, couldn't resist the pun) a massive effort to apply radio frequency technology to the business of maritime and aircraft navigation. A number of systems were developed world-wide, one of which was LORAN which stood for Long Range Navigation. LORAN is a hyperbolic navigation system which involves comparing the difference in time of arrival of synchronized radio pulses from widely separated stations. The first in the late 40's and early 50's was LORAN-A. It operated in or near our 160m band with peak pulse powers in the 100-200 kW range. It made a huge racket, our power was restricted on 160 m, and that's why amplifiers of the day (SB-220 and others) did not include 160m. It didn't matter for those of us who lived on the coasts, the LORAN-A racket was unbearable anyway.

LORAN-A was replaced by LORAN-C. Every LORAN-C station was on 100 Khz, with varying pulse rates, peak powers of over a megawatt, and using very large vacuum tubes and huge capacitively loaded antennas. In the early 2000's, some of the LORAN-C transmitters were replaced by “Accufix” transmitters produced by Megapulse Corp. Quite oddly, they did not have vacuum tubes oscillating and amplifying to huge power levels. Instead, they had a huge bank of capacitors, charged to very high voltage, and periodically discharged using SCR's controlled by a roomfull of high tech electronics and cesium beam atomic clocks. The discharge banged a circuit/antenna resonant at 100 Khz, and you should be able to figure out the rest by now. They produced damped waves and that long tail from the ringing of the resonant circuit was just as inefficient as a century before, so they “quenched” it. Only they called this quenching the “Tailbiter.” The Tailbiter created a perfectly shaped LORAN-C pulse with exactly the right number of cycles. LORAN-C became a worldwide navigation system and the most powerful station was located at George, WA which was part of both the Pacific and Canadian LORAN chains using two different group repetition rates at 1.6 megawatt pulses. The Accufix transmitter produced about 1.3 megawatts.

By about 2010, LORAN-C, which cost a lot for the US Coast Guard to operate and maintain was becoming obsolete with the advent of GPS, Russian GLONASS, and other satellite based systems, and it was finally shut down in 2011, answering the original trivia question, “When was the last damped wave transmitter turned off.” For those wondering, “What happened to LORAN-B?”, it never really got off the drawing board.

[1] The more mature of us can readily remember the Heath Tunnel Dipper that contained a tunnel diode which also exhibits negative resistance and was used as a flea-powered oscillator.

[2] Heathkit Tunnel Dipper

POTA + CWT = AEØQ

Glenn Pladsen, AEØQ (CWops #2878)

About 18 months ago I got the idea to go out to a WWFF / POTA "park" on Wednesdays (when the WX is OK) to activate the park for the park hunters for a few hours, and then roll into the 1900z CWT. The portable antenna and park locations are a LOT better than the home wire in a tree in the noisy city, and all my high CWT scores come from being portable.

I try to activate the park for as many park hunters as possible so I use a TT Eagle at 100w, one of a couple of EFHW antennas on a 32 ft mast, and a QRPworks SideKar Extreme (built-in WinKeyer) for CW and logging.

When you schedule a "park activation" ahead of time with both WWFF and POTA, the RBN being fed to their site spots me automatically on their spotting pages, it works great. I always get small piles of park hunters calling in the 2 hours before the CWT.

Then it gets interesting, and challenging. I ramp up from my POTA speed of 24-25 wpm (kinda high for POTA but that's where I enjoy it) to 30 wpm just before the CWT starts. But I'm still getting spotted on POTA and all during the CWT I randomly get called by a park hunter at 15-20 wpm. I always slow down and usually get the typical POTA exchange, an RST and their State.

Hopefully dragging park hunters into the middle of the CWT will eventually make for more seasoned CW ops.

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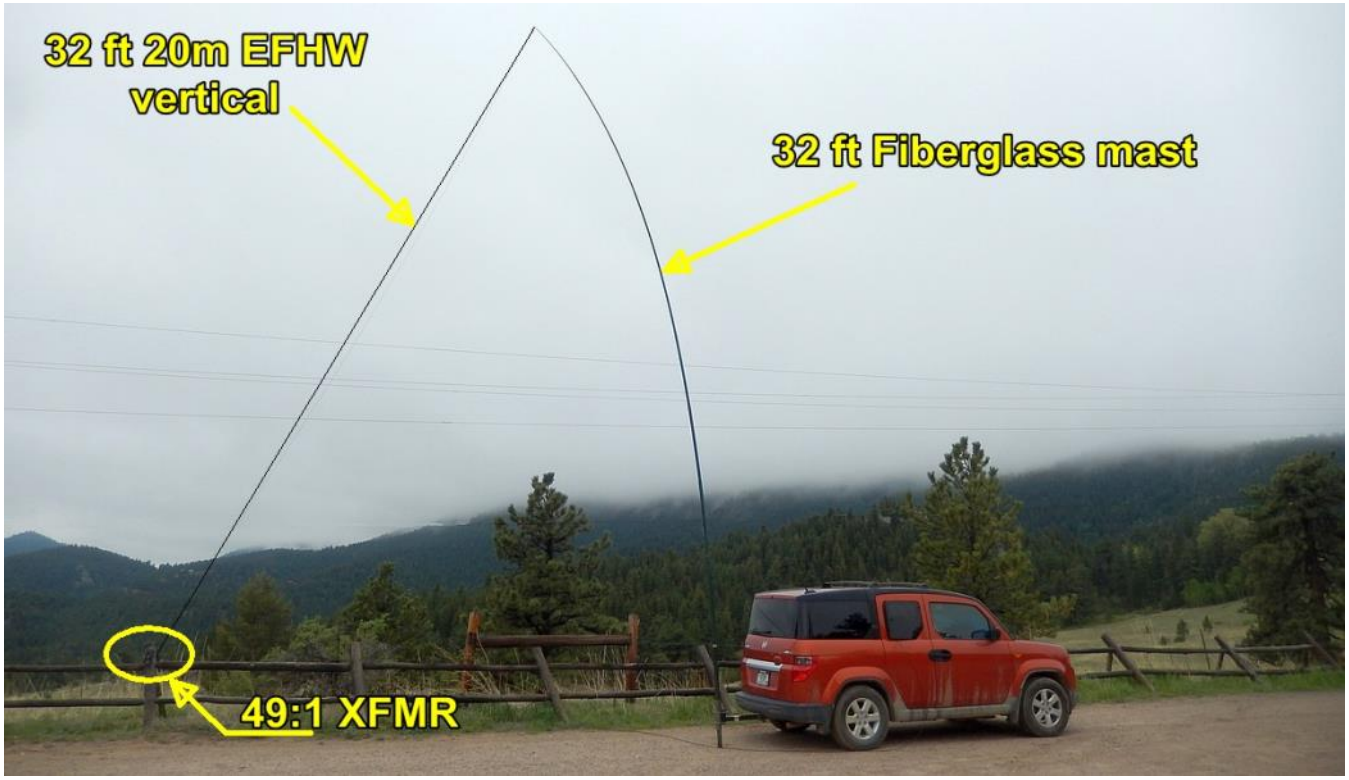
Custom hitch. Telescopic mast. EFHW antenna.



Notes on the 0700z CWT Session

Jim Talens, N3JT (CWops #1)

For many months now, in fact since its inception, I have participated in the 0700z CWT session almost every week. Well, if not every week it certainly feels like every week. Getting up at 3 a.m. local time (2 a.m. in winter) is not something I necessarily look forward to. However, I find that by consuming a fair amount of fluid before going to sleep I awaken at about the right time.

To be sure I time it more exactly, I rely on smartphone alarm. Going back to sleep afterwards is never a problem and it gives me an excuse for skipping my usual morning early-bird swim, which in summer is at 5 or 5:30 a.m. Once I stumble downstairs to the shack I settle in quickly and find the session great fun, and very different from the other sessions.

At the outset, it is clear there are far fewer participants overall in the 0700z session. That's because most North Americans (NA) are not inclined to lose their beauty sleep by hearing the beckoning siren of a CWT session in the middle of the night! But there are a few others on the East Coast who do regularly appear, like K3MM, N4BP, W7LG, K1DJ, KO4VW. Others, in the Midwest and West, are also on, and it's not such a convenient time for them, either! VK2GR is usually in there, too!

If the conditions are good you can get 3 bands going between NA and Europe (EU), 80m, 40m and 20m. I rarely see all 3 open, however; it is typically 40m that is best. But some nights, with the SFI high, it is 20m that provides the heavy duty skip.

The purpose of the 0700z session was to enable EU operators to participate at a more convenient time of day when propagation might favor them. This session, unlike the others, is focused on NA-EU so it gives EU operators a chance to work NA without the heavy NA competition characterizing the other sessions during which many East Coast NA operators point their beams west rather than east. And at least one band is usually open. But there is also good skip within NA. I believe I've read that some 10-15% of the membership participate in CWTs at 1300z, 1900z or 0300z; I suspect the EU percentage at 0700z is a comparable, maybe lower**.**

So far, despite all my huffing and puffing, I've been unable to break 100 QSOs in the 0700z session, though a few times I've made it to the 90s (once 98). But some of those contacts are NA stations on 2 or more bands. It would certainly be nice if more EU operators participated at the 0700z session. I've more than once shut down early, having worked everybody I could find and after calling multiple CQs without answer.

Another possibility for increased activity would be for more NA participation! Whether by insomnia, enthusiasm or a conveniently timed potty visit, if you're in NA and up at 0700z consider wandering into the shack to check out the 0700z session once in a while!

Giving Back Update

Rob Brownstein, K6RB (CWops #3)

CWops' Giving Back (GB) program is meant to provide on-air QSO experience and practice for anyone who wants it. It was initially intended as a way for our CW Academy students to get some -air experience. We all know that when there is activity on the bands, these days, it's usually a DXpedition pileup or a contest. Today's CW aspirants have had little chance to work others who are skilled at CW, operate at moderate speed, and are committed to helping. That's the mission of Giving Back. The GB volunteers get on the air at approximately 7 PM local time and seek out CQers, or call CQ, and engage in routine QSOs including some conversational tidbits. The operators' schedule appears on the next page.

Here are the June results (GB hosts are shown in **bold**):

AAØYY: KD8AZO, N9DDC, K7DRQ, VE7AHF, N6ZI, KC9YI, KI5IO, K3JN, WD4MSM, W1HRB, N4DT, KN4ZQ, N9EEE, WS2C, WA3TFS, N9FGC, KI5OEZ, KI4PS
E25JRP: HS2KWO, E25FUK, E25HGQ (2), HS3OY (2), HS8LOG, HS3PFB (2), E2ØMWE, HSØZNO, E24ZST, HS1OVF, HSØGWL, HSØDJU, HS9UAC
GW2CWO: DF2SJ, PA2WLE/P, G3RXA (2), F6DZS, GØDFC, GØAOE, DG4SKN, F5IDC, DK6JK, DK7FZ, OK1YR, GØTUE, IW2HTH, G4NEY
JJ1FXF: VK4TJ, JG1BGT(6), JK1QEV, JN1FAO, JE2OUK, JJ5QLV, JF5XPJ(2), DS5DPB, JE6AJO, JJ0SFV, JA9RPU, JK1MVC(2)
JM4AOA: 7N1OEX, DS5DPB, HL5BLF, JA4FVE, JA4GCL, JA4IIJ, JE6AJO, JF5XPJ(5), JF6AOI, JG1BGT(2), JI3VXW, JJ1IZY(6), JJ1SWI, JJ2JVU, JK1FYU(3), JK1GSP, JK1MVC, JK1QYL, JL3FJX, JM8QGN, JN1FAO(2), JQ2NUD, JQ3FRX, JS2OCY, JN1FAO(4), JN6ILN, JQ3FRX, JS2LOG, JS2OCY, JS6THD
JO1DGE: 7K2IJR, JA1IAZ, JA4IIJ, JA5DTR/3, JF5XPJ(6), JF6AOI, JG1BGT(15), JG2QCA, JG3NIN, JH1KYI, JH1UXQ, JJ0SFV, JJ1SWI, JJ2JVU, JJ5QLV, JK1DAS, JK1MVC(3), JM8NSW/8(2), JN1FAO (2), JO1MXR, JQ3FRX, VK8MC, WA6RSV, NR6O
K6RB: N6ZI, W6DAC, KD6GBY, K7JPF, VE7BGJ, K7QH, W4BOS, AAØKR, WA6APN
K7NJ: N2KW, KN6EZE, K7THM, KM6JP, W5OBT, NO6R, KD2FSH, VE4ACM, W7TRL, KR2Q, K8KV, KØAT, VE3SSR, AA5LH, W7ONE, AD7HI, AG5XU, WØDQ/7, W7ZDX, K7NNR, LU4KED, KG8DA, W2SH, KN6QER, W7RCS, WB6RVP, N2DA, KD7ZNC, W5SG, W8DXU, W7NNR, WØKOM, N2FJR, KN6QER, W7RCS, WB6RVP, N2DA, KD7ZNC, W5SG, W8DXU, W7NNR
KV8Q:K8MPH, WM4U
N5OT: K3AJ, W1WCC, K7TAA, UR4UQZ, LZ2RS, HA2RQ, ZL2ALA, WD9BMW, VE3IID
W2XS: N9EE, VE3OF, KC3C, AC1AE, K8VA, K4EWG
W7ZDX: WAØJLY, KA2MLH
W8OV: K4IBZ, W4YGT, WB8APR, WA4YDJ
7N2XZB: JG1BGT(9), JJ5QLV, JJ0SFV, JF6AOI, JF5XPJ(6), JL3FJX, JN1FAO(2), JH4RCT, JA5QJX, JK1MVC(2), HL5BLF, JE6FRW(2), JFØIUN, JJ1SWI

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Giving Back Operating Schedule - 7 PM Local October - April: 40m & 80m | May - September: 40m & 20m Frequencies: 14.035 - 14.039, 7.035 - 7.039, 3.535 - 3.539 MHz											
UTC+9	**UTC+7**	**UTC+3**	**UTC+2**	**UTC+1**	**UTC/BST**	**UTC-1**	**EST UTC-4**	**CST UTC-5**	**MST UTC-6**	**PST UTC-7**	**Hawaii UTC-9**
MON											
JO1DGE					G2CWO		W2XS	AAØYY		N6HCN	
TUE											
JR1WYW	E25JRP		SV2BBK		GW2CWO		N4TMM	W8OV	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
7N2XZB							WE5P			K6RB	
WED											
JM4AOA											
THURS											
JJ1VNV			SV2BBK				KV8Q	N5OT	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
FRI											
JR1WYW			SV2BBK		GW2CWO		N2GSL	AAØYY		K6RB	
SAT											
JJ1FXF											
JM4AOA											
SUN											
JJ1FXF							W5DT			K6RB	
JM4AOA											

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CW Academy

Joe Fischer, AA8TA Bob Carter, WR7Q Roland Smith, K7OJL

The May-June 2023 CW Academy semester has come to an end. The following is a summary of the completed classes as of the time that this article was written.

This semester had 263 students successfully complete a class. We were very fortunate to have had 50 advisors leading our classes.

We greatly appreciate the dedication and efforts of these **advisors** who led groups of students:

Joe, AA2IL; Ken, AC5EZ; Buz, AC6AC; Jed, AD7KG; Dave, AD8WR; John, AJ1DM; Jack, AK7O; Chris, GØJPS; Duncan, G3WZD; Jerry, KØES; Bruce, K1BG; Rich, K1DJ; Michael, K1LHO; Mark, K5GQ; Charles, K5KXJ; Kate, K6HTN; Tom, K7MOZ; Dan, K7NXL; Roland, K7OJL; Steven, K8BZ; Bruce, K8UDH; Gregg, KA7MDM; Ken, KD2KW; Christian, KF7WX; Mike, KI7OMH; Joseph, KK5NA; Roy, KK6M; Serge, KK7RR; David, KT5V; A. Chris, KT9N; Roger, MIØWWB; Jim, N3EJG; Marcus, N3VO; John, N6FVY; Gary, N8LR; Kevin, NB7O; PHILIP, NEØS; Leon Dusan, S55AC; Mark, VE3BXG; Bill, WØEJ; Tom, WØFN; Greg, WØGAS; Bill, W3PNM; Carl, W4IF; Gregg, W7GEM; Terry, WBØJRH; Steven, WJØC; Bob, WR7Q; Nianfeng, WU6P and Hanz, YL3JD.

The following students successfully completed an **advanced class** (29):

AA7TO; ABØWW; AD4SA; GØOBQ; G4XWJ; GM5TDX; JP3REM; K7IOL; K9HXO; K9VEG; KD2VXW; KF5JC; KG5IF; KM4JEG; KN6RDC; KZ5H; MØLRQ; MØSDB; N1ETO; N3RTW; N5GG; W7JKC; W7PAT; WA7ECF; WB0RLJ; WD4FMG; WS4K, WN5T and ZL4BDG.

The following students successfully completed an **intermediate class** (86):

9A3QY; AA6ST; AB3LF; AC3IE; AC7FX; AE5EZ; AG6ZE; AI8AI; DD2JB; DL8TG; DW9KAY; EA3IKB; GØTRT; G4WWZ; G7BED; GM3JW; GM3STM; HB9HKN; IK5LSR; JK1MVC; K3JAS; K7BPM; K7UOU; K7ZCW; KAØRTB; KAØRTM; KB1VUN; KB7DYP; KB9TZQ; KC3RYH; KD2WAI; KD2YMM; KD9UYC; KE5WCP; KE8LQR; KI5PGL; KI7JRZ; KM6HJP; KM6VOV; KN4YTA; KN6QZH; KO4DCD; KO4TFE; KO4WJU; KQ4DAP; KU1T; KX4OU; M0WXG; Steven Mills; NØEIA; NØOLD; N2PLG; N3ALS; N6VL; NB0X; NM5D; NUØI; PA2PIM; SV1SYY; VE6LK; VE6VIC; VK6MK; VK7ZA; VU3SPD; WØABE; WØBM; WØGIB; WØNY; W1HRB; W1MVY; W1RBG; W2RAL; W2TJ; W4SGN; W5DLM; W7ETF; W7QF; WA2TAX; WA4YDJ; WD4MRI; WE7DW; WI9P, WY8V, AF4PX, AI7PR and K4WSD.

The following students successfully completed a **fundamental class** (61):

2EØXKZ; AB3OO; AC0LV; AC5OS; AC9KX; AD8JL; AEØSB; AE5JT; AE8Q; Edson Brusque; G4LXX; G6VSM; HB9HNT; IU2OQK; K7MG; K7QH; KC3RBB; KC3ULX; KC7TAK; KC9GLR; KDØWGH; KE2ABA; KF7HP; KI5YGT; KI7KOH; KJ3D; KJ6JUS; KJ7QBK; KK6WKI; KK7FIM; KM6QYV; KM6VOW; KN4GOS; KN6AZZ; KN6RUQ; KN6VJT; KO4ELL; KO4OVZ; KO4RW; KQ4EHE; KQ4FJS; KQ4JWL; KW4NJA;

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KW6SEA; KX4HV; MØLZN; MØSUY; MØUFC; MØVTS; MMØJTV; MMØMMN; NØXJA; N9PG; PC8M; SP9PAZ; SQ1WO; VA3DXP; W2BLT; W7LHT; WA7SZH and YU4EWW.

The following students successfully completed a **beginner class** (87):

2EØIBS; ABØMS; AC3JX; AC4H; AD2CD; AD2EK; EI9ILB; K3THS; K4DAR; K5MEC; K6MNO; K7KYU; K9SPY; KA1VPU; KB5VKP; KB7ASH; KD2ZIW; KD9OBG; KD9QNY; KD9VNL; KE8EON; KFØKDI; KFØMIL; KF7BBU; KFØKJP; KG4JGJ; KG5NWI; KG7QXE; KI5LAU; KI5MM; KI5OEZ; KI5UBL; KJ7VRI; KK4OYE; KK7HTV; KL4TQ; KM4EIB; KN4IDB; KN6BKS; KN6PQV; KN6TAC; KN6TAL; KN6TRY; KO4MPF; KO4WYA; KR6ATC; KW4DL; KZ4U; MØVKR; M7NBX; MWØKXN; MWØSAW; N2LNX; N5DOT; N5EI; N7BIO; N8LH; N9AZW; NG1M; NOØBS; NP3JD; NX8I; OH2ZUU; PHØRAL; Terry Roberts; SP5ATP; SQ3HLB; SQ3HLL; VA2LLZ; VA3JPI; VA3YOM; VA7OYO; VE1MJF; VE4WJM; VE6DKE; W3KBG; W4GOP; W4YOE; W7TDM; Kiri Wagstaff; WGØMEZ; WP4TZ; WV4P; YO3JAV, ZL2MIK, KC1KZT and KE8VVN .

It is great to see students from outside our traditional North American and European areas starting and advancing through the CW Academy. We hope that trend continues.

The following students listed above have become CWops members since the semester began:

N5GG, AA7TO, ABØWW, GM5TDX, MØSDB, K9VEG, MØLRQ, WØNY, ZL4BDG, G4XWJ, GØOBQ and JP3REM, AE5JT, AF4PX and KW4DL.

There could well be additional students who have been nominated, so if you are a CWops member, please check if you can sponsor them.

We are now on our summer break and a few of us are preparing for the autumn semester when we will do all this again. As an advisor, it is a truly wonderful feeling to see students do something that many of them doubted they could do. Despite the challenges, many students get a lot out of our classes and enjoy the learning experience. As always, we are interested in discussing advising with a person who has a passion for CW and would like to pass on that passion. You do not need to be a CWops member to be an advisor.

***73, Joe,* AA8TA** (CWops #1821)

CW Academy is a program put on by the CW Operators' Club aimed at increasing the number of competent CW operators on the HF CW sub-bands. It addresses all levels of enthusiasts: from those aspiring to become licensed operators who want to learn and use Morse code; to veteran operators who are intent on increasing their CW skills, speed and activity.

CW Academy semester description:

- Eight-weeks long and held three times per year (Jan-Feb, May-Jun and Sep-Oct)
- Twice weekly sessions are usually held on Mondays and Thursdays each week typically starting at 7 PM or 8 PM
- Visit our web page for more information, class descriptions, and requirements

New Members

Trung Nguyen, W6TN

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

CWops	Call	Name	CWops	Call	Name	CWops	Call	Name
3374	KW2A*	Phil	3380	M0LRQ*	Pete	3386	VK3OU*	Andy
3375	GM5TDX*	Ted	3381	W0NY*	Nick	3387	G0TZZ*	Christopher
3376	M0SDB	Danny	3382	ZL4BDG*	Ben	3388	HA1AS*	Turi
3377	KA0PQW*	Matt	3383	WA4IAR*	Rick	3389	AE5JT*	Jeff
3378	K3JWI	Ken	3384	G4XWJ*	Tim	3390	JP3REM/K3BP*	Bill
3379	K9VEG*	Jeff	3385	G0OBQ*	Gerry			

* Life Member

As of July 8, 2023:

Need Sponsors: WB4AJL

For more details about nominees and up-to-date status, check the "Members only" page on the website. For information about joining CWops, check the "Membership" page on the website.

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

73, Trung **W6TN** (CWops #1707) Membership Manager

SPEED	XST	DAY	TIME (UTC)	EXCHANGE	SPONSOR LINK
20 - 25 wpm	**MST**	Monday	1300 - 1400z	Name and QSO serial number	International CW Council
20 - 25 wpm	**MST**	Monday	1900 - 2000z	Name and QSO serial number	International CW Council
20 - 25 wpm	**MST**	Tuesday	0300 - 0400z	Name and QSO serial number	International CW Council
25+ wpm	**CWT**	Wednesday	1300 - 1400z	Name and CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
25+ wpm	**CWT**	Wednesday	1900 - 2000z	Name and CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
25+ wpm	**CWT**	Thursday	0300 - 0400z	Name and CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
25+ wpm	**CWT**	Thursday	0700 - 0800z	Name and CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
< 20 wpm	**SST**	Friday	2000 - 2100z	Name and S/P/C	K1USN
< 20 wpm	**SST**	Monday	0000 - 0100z	Name and S/P/C	K1USN

CWops Tests (CWTs)

Rich Ferch, VE3KI

We are now halfway through the year. For those who subscribe to the cwops group at groups.io, the list of call signs with CWT participation points is in a file called topslist.txt in the Files area at groups.io, at https://cwops.groups.io/g/main/files/topslist.txt . If you have used more than one call sign in this year's CWTs and find results listed separately for two of your call signs, let me know at ve3iay@gmail.com so I can combine your scores from the two call signs. The participation awards are for participating operators, regardless of how many call signs they may have used.

There are four CWTs every week, for a total of 104 up to the end of June. Out of the 1173 call signs in the topslist file so far, there are two intrepid CWTers who have reported claimed scores for all 104: K4PQC and N4BP. For those of us in North America and Europe, the gold medal level at the end of the year will be 120, so anyone who has at least 60 scores reported as of the end of June is on track for gold. 146 of you have reached that point.

If four hours of CWTs a week is not enough to satisfy your craving for CWT-style operating, there are a few other weekly events in the same vein. Two of them, the SSTs and MSTs, cater to people who are not yet ready for the 30-40 wpm mayhem of the CWTs but are trying to learn. There are several CWops members who take part in these as a means of encouraging relative newbies to CW and CW contesting.

The K1USN SSTs (Slow Speed Tests) take place on Fridays at 2000z and again on Mondays at 0000z (Sunday evening in the Americas). As the name suggests, these are low-speed CW events, with CW speeds in the 15-20 wpm range. The exchange is name + state/province/country, and score reporting is to 3830scores.com, just as for the CWTs. The intent of these slower speed tests is to give people who are just learning CW a place to develop their contesting skills. CWops members are encouraged to take part to help train learners, but are asked to slow down to below 20 wpm. See http://www.k1usn.com/sst.html for details.

Then on Mondays at 1300z and 1900z and Tuesdays at 0300z (Monday evening in the Americas), there are the International CW Council's MSTs (Medium Speed Tests), with CW speeds in the 20-25 wpm range. The exchange is name + a QSO serial number, with score reporting to 3830scores.com. This event is a good one for people whose CW and/or contesting skills have almost, but not quite, reached a level where they are comfortable in the CWTs. The same way as they are in the SSTs, CWops members are welcome to participate, but should keep their CW speeds down to 20-25 wpm. See https://internationalcwcouncil.org/mst-contest/ for details.

The newest member of the family of one-hour weekly tests is the Japanese A1 Club's AWT test, which is held on Wednesdays at 1200z, i.e. immediately before the first CWT session. The exchange in the AWTs is a signal report + name, with score reporting to 3830scores.com as for the others. CWTers who are preparing for the first CWT session are invited to point their antennas at Japan and try to work JA friends in the AWT. See https://a1club.org/contest/awt/AWTen.pdf for details.

Enjoy the CWTs and keep those reported scores coming!

73, Rich, **VE3KI** CWops #783)

CWops Member Awards

Bill Gilliland, WØTG

Monthly Update

During June, additional members submitted logs and the number of active participants in the awards program increased to 220 participants. The QSO totals and rankings for the first week of July 2023 have the same familiar calls in the top four positions with **KR2Q** remaining in first place and leading second place **AA3B** by 205 QSOs. The changes in the top ten rankings this month have **KG9X** moving into fifth place followed by **NA8V, K7QA, KC7V, and N5TJ** in sixth through ninth place and **KY4GS** tied with **N5ZO** for tenth place. The top ten (11) this month are **KR2Q, AA3B, K3WW, N5RZ, KG9X, NA8V, K7QA, KC7V, N5TJ, KY4GS** and **N5ZO.**

No one recorded a new CWops DXCC this month and the number of members who have contacted CWops members in 100 or more DXCC entities remains **68**. The number of participants who have accomplished CWops WAS grew to **190** this month with the addition of **AG4EA**. You can see complete rankings for all award categories at https://cwops.telegraphy.de/scores.

CWops Award Tools Participation

The Top 100 ACA scores reported in *Solid Copy* represent active participants only, meaning you must have submitted a log in the current year. Since ACA scores reset to zero at the beginning of each year, active participants are those shown with a non-zero ACA score.

At the end of 2022, we had 289 active participants in the Member Awards Program. As of July 4, 2023, we have 220 active participants. If you have not yet submitted any logs for 2023, please do so soon, and we can include your score among the participants.

Inactive participants previously achieved scores in categories other than ACA that are not shown in the Searchable and Sortable Scores Table. To see rankings and scores for both active and inactive participants please use the Score Overview Table where inactive participants are listed with ACA scores of zero, but their scores in other categories are listed at the highest level that was previously submitted.

You can see the final 2022 scores or final scores for any other year by going to the Score Overview Table and selecting the desired year from the "Final scores:" list at the top of the page. All scores categories on the page will then show the final scores and standings for the end of the selected year.

The Searchable and Sortable Table can graph your current year's ACA scores by date and allows you to compare your progression to that of others. Check the Plot button for the calls you wish to see plotted and they will all appear on the same graph.

The CWops Award Tools website main page provides a means of printing your CWT Participation Certificate. You may request a downloadable certificate by clicking the "CWT certificate download" selection at the top of the page. View this webpage for more information about CWT Participation Awards.

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About the CWops Member Awards Program

Several operating awards are available for contacting CWops members. These include Annual Competition Award (ACA) recognizing the total number of CWops members contacted in a single year, Cumulative Membership Award (CMA) recognizing the total number of members contacted on each amateur band since January 3, 2010, CWops WAS Award for contacting members in all 50 states, CWops DXCC Award for contacting members in countries on the ARRL DXCC list, CWops WAE Award for contacting members in Europe, and CWops WAZ Award for contacting members in each of the 40 CQ zones. All contacts must be via CW and between current CWops members. To qualify for these awards, you must submit your logs via the tool at the CWops Award Tools website . You can also print out your awards certificates at that same website.

A set of tools for managing your awards status is provided on the CWops Award Tools website and if you regularly upload your logs your awards will be automatically tracked for you. To view complete data for all currently active participants and see where you and others rank among active participants in the awards program, use the online tools. For more details on the tools provided, see the August 2021 *Solid Copy* article.

Please Join Us!

Fabian, DJ5CW, who created the website and the tools, made it extremely easy to participate in the awards program. If you are not among the CWops members who are currently participating, please join us! It adds a lot of friendly competition and fun to your operating.

More Information

View our website for more information on the CWops Awards Program. Send your feedback, questions or comments to cwopscam@w0tg.com.

Current ACA Top 100 as of July 4, 2023:

Rank	Call	ACA	CMA	DX	WAS	WAE	WAZ	Rank	Call	ACA	CMA	DX	WAS	WAE	WAZ
1	KR2Q	1679	8451	169	50	57	37	12	OM2VL	1133	6616	101	50	44	33
2	AA3B	1474	13214	132	50	49	38	13	K3WJV	1048	7586	117	50	49	32
3	K3WW	1414	10429	135	50	50	38	14	W1RM	1038	8838	219	50	62	38
4	N5RZ	1324	9156	128	50	46	37	15	K9WX	1037	5573	109	50	44	32
5	KG9X	1238	6571	99	50	43	31	16	K1VUT	1026	5780	81	50	41	26
6	NA8V	1210	8424	113	50	47	35	17	N5AW	1016	6458	103	50	48	33
7	K7QA	1192	6494	90	50	39	30	18	AA2IL	1014	2988	70	50	29	27
8	KC7V	1171	6219	94	50	38	33	19	W0UO	966	4363	72	50	39	25
9	N5TJ	1156	4313	85	50	43	30	20	W8FN	948	4608	76	50	38	24
10	KY4GS	1147	3139	66	50	32	22	21	K1DJ	936	5167	113	50	46	30
10	N5ZO	1147	8990	112	50	46	35	22	K6NR	930	5198	71	50	35	29
11	N7US	1136	6522	115	50	44	34	23	K3QP	923	3527	82	50	40	26

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Rank	Call	ACA	CMA	DX	WAS	WAE	WAZ
24	K4WW	911	5478	84	50	38	29
25	K3JT	909	5941	104	50	46	31
26	VK2GR	903	2965	80	50	40	31
27	WT9U	901	5986	103	50	41	30
28	AA5JF	897	4487	94	50	44	31
29	DL6KVA	896	7396	191	50	63	38
30	N5KD	895	3061	94	50	43	33
31	VE3TM	893	4206	94	50	44	28
32	WN7S	884	4750	81	50	39	26
33	K0WA	860	3064	48	50	24	19
33	WA4JUK	860	4245	87	50	42	27
34	VE3KI	857	7583	143	50	53	37
35	NJ3K	849	3954	80	50	41	27
36	CO8NMN	846	4727	76	50	35	25
37	WT3K	817	4780	86	50	42	27
38	SM6CUK	812	5182	158	50	57	38
39	W0VX	808	6160	131	50	46	37
40	9A1AA	789	4722	127	49	52	38
40	N4CWZ	789	3611	63	50	34	23
41	OZ3SM	788	3384	108	49	51	36
42	KT5V	780	3689	81	50	31	29
43	KK0U	768	2806	59	50	31	23
44	K8JQ	764	5405	70	50	35	23
45	K3ZA	753	2820	55	50	34	21
46	EA6BF	747	2627	80	48	43	29
47	WS7L	740	3305	65	50	29	27
48	F5SGI	738	2710	106	50	52	33
49	DF7TV	730	3275	109	50	50	34
50	K1SM	727	4463	133	50	46	36
51	N5XE	723	3840	82	50	37	30
52	N9UNX	719	1608	27	50	14	12
53	W9ILY	716	6467	136	50	45	37
54	KV8Q	711	3163	70	50	35	23
55	N3CKI	698	2421	57	50	31	17
56	K4TZ	690	2983	43	50	20	16
56	W6AYC	690	3901	59	50	27	26
57	WU6P	688	2274	43	50	23	19
58	W4CMG	678	2239	49	50	24	19
59	N4FP	676	3024	60	50	32	20
60	AF5J	664	3015	62	50	25	23
61	K3PP	648	5664	108	50	45	30
62	SM0HEV	646	2874	113	50	49	33
63	W0GAS	641	2474	49	50	22	22
64	N2UU	640	5495	112	50	46	31
65	NA4J	636	3852	78	50	37	24
66	AF4T	631	3229	74	50	37	28
66	VE7KW	631	2199	37	50	18	19
66	W1UU	631	4621	115	50	41	33
67	KW1X	621	1105	34	49	19	13
68	KM4FO	617	3232	48	50	19	17
69	N1DC	611	5167	91	50	40	26
69	OK1RR	611	4124	150	50	52	38
70	W1AJT	610	4184	98	50	45	33
71	N2EIM	597	750	43	48	28	17
72	K1RF	596	1540	43	50	26	15
73	K5VG	589	1145	46	47	26	15
74	VE3MV	587	3889	88	50	41	27
75	AC6ZM	582	4400	67	50	36	23
76	EA3FZT	571	2661	82	49	45	29
77	M0RYB	569	2637	88	48	47	29
78	K0TC	557	3326	64	50	29	22
79	DJ5CW	550	3448	103	48	53	35
80	VE3NRT	548	2280	63	50	35	24
81	W0TG	547	3384	70	50	31	26
82	W8EWH	542	1333	45	50	24	20
83	VE3KIU	539	1722	41	49	28	16
84	N8BJQ	531	7607	133	50	48	39
85	K3ZGA	529	2408	61	50	33	19
86	G4PVM	517	2997	106	50	49	33
87	AG4EA	516	2068	53	50	28	17
88	W9CF	510	1842	28	50	11	16
89	W2VM	505	2563	64	50	33	19
90	K2YR	504	2601	53	49	32	19
91	W3WHK	501	3288	76	50	37	21
92	PA0INA	497	2388	91	49	44	31
93	G3LHJ	491	1489	64	44	41	20
94	HB9ARF	487	2854	89	48	47	27
94	N1EN	487	3581	129	50	47	35
95	4X6GP	477	2945	117	50	46	34
96	W4WF	475	4941	94	50	43	32
97	SP4JFR	473	1176	59	42	37	22
98	W0NF	472	1796	29	50	12	16
99	NB7O	470	1241	25	50	9	17
100	K4GM	469	4065	85	50	37	27

***73, Bill* WØTG** (CWops #1873)

CWops Operating Awards

QTX Report: Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

Enzo, MØKTZ

Several regular members have reported a slight decline in QTX/MQTX activity this month, which I guess is somehow expected, as many of us have taken advantage of the new season and the better WX to spend more time out of the shack. This time of the year can be a real treat for /P operations, and during June I have been /P on at least 3 occasions myself, with some very enjoyable MQTX QSOs including a few of them from a quite warm beach in Kent and one from a park near my QTH. All good fun!

I have received several other contributions for the *Solid Copy* article on ragchewing, and I guess I have enough material to put together a working draft to circulate more broadly. I think you have provided a wealth of very interesting comments and suggestions, which I am sure will serve well the cause of enthusing more CWops friends to give a stab to longer conversational CW sessions.

Thanks to the work of the great Fabian DJ5CW, we have been experimenting with an additional way to submit your QTX/MQTX monthly scores, i.e., through the CWops web tool. Note that this is intended to be yet another way of submitting your QTX/MQTX scores, in addition to the neat web form we already have (thanks Dan KB6NU!). The new additional system is already computing QTX and MQTX scores from the logs you upload, but is still under development, so please hold your horses before getting too much excited about it, as we are still testing a few things there. The rationale behind it is that many CWops members already use the web tool by Fabian to compute their scores for all the other CWops Club Awards, so there is no reason not to make the same infrastructure available to ragchewers. As somebody has asked it in the comments: well no, the web tool will NOT read through your comments, HI, It will just take the date, callsigns, band, time-on, time-off of each of your QSOs, and use them to check whether they qualifies for QTX or MQTX. In any case, you will still be responsible for submitting your monthly QTX/MQTX scores by clicking on a button (not yet available at the time of writing), and you will have the chance of including a soapbox comment, which is what makes this column interesting! More news will follow soon, as we might need you to test the system before it goes live.

I am happy to report that I made a (shaky, to be honest) MQTX contact with our Chuck WS1L, on 20m during early evening UTC. Well, it was not really too much of a ragchewing experience, as we were taxed by heavy QSB as QRM, but it was nonetheless great for me to have the chance of getting another QTX regular in my logbook. Another notable QSO this month was with Paul 9H1GH, very early morning UTC. This is an example of why you must always check a “dead band”, and possibly call CQ in there! That morning I was just trying to understand if my antenna was dead, as I couldn’t hear anything on 40m, 30m, 20m, 17m…until I went to 15m and a quick sweep revealed a solid signal calling CQ on that proverbially dead segment of the RF spectrum. It was most surprising to find that Paul was using an old rig which works only on 15m (!) as he has not had the chance of repairing it. We had a very nice 20+ minutes chat, and I found out that Paul also speaks a very good Italian.

I would like to welcome Tom DF7TV and Rick WA4IAR, who have joined our happy gang this month. It is very good to see that more operators support this interesting and most rewarding

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aspect of our hobby. I know Tom very well, as we have chatted many times on the bands and he happened to be one of my CWops sponsors HI.

Please read through your soapbox comments below, which areas always very interesting. Thank you, keep chatting on the bands, and HPE CU SN ON AIR.

K8UDH: This summer has been filled with fun activities, but I miss CW ragchewing. I'm looking forward to more QTX and Mini QTX QSOs.

K9OZ: Tough conditions this month made rag chewing hard this month.

K5YQF: Very little activity here. Hope to get back in the game soon.

KG5SSB: This month I worked some old friends and made some new ones. One guy told me I was his first contact since he left the hobby more than 45 years ago. Thanks for the QSOs!

W3WHK: I notice there is now a QTX tally on the CWops Award Tools page. How are my QTX/MQTX QSOs being accessed? Does this access mean my log remarks can be read? What if I've called someone a lid? Also, my lifetime tally says 4/3 and my 2023 tally says 4/3. How is that possible?

AJ1DM: This month I had my first QTX (a mini) with my student AF4PX. FB Darrell!

DF7TV: Being at the club station for the new SKCC RandomGram" event (organized by Drew AF2Z, random 5-letter groups are exchanged), I had some time between the two sessions. So I looked around on the bands and found Carlos CT1BQH on 20m with a very strong signal. Knowing that he likes to do QRQ, we had a 30+ minutes conversation. This has been my first one at 40+ wpm of such a duration and it was very enjoyable!

WS1L: I decided to spend more time on the higher bands and have been rewarded with several QTX QSO's with European stations on 20, 17 and 15 meters. In particular 17 meters has been a really good band in my late afternoon, with stronger signals than 15 and less noise than 20.

VE3WH: So much fun! Just finished a QTX with a YL in Texas. She was using vintage gear and had a career in commercial radio with a fantastic Vibroplex bug fist! Also very encouraging are Hams returning to the CW mode. One of them asked me to be a CW buddy and we now have a weekly sked. It has been a rewarding month.

W9EBE: Too many activities have prevented me from being very radio active lately. I hope to soon be able to get on the air more often.

W8OV: Bit of a slow month as too many things going on, including construction work that surrounded my antenna and damaged it slightly. Had a couple repeat QSOs, along with a brief one with a former CWA student till QSB ended it.

K5KXJ: An important MQTX for me this month with, Greg, NØXJA, student in my May/June 2023 CWA Fundamental class.

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PG4I: Nothing much going on this month, only a few QSO's because of a looooong and enjoyable holiday in Brittany. Next month better!

N6HCN: This was my last month ragchewing as N6HCN. As of July 1, keep an ear out for my new call, N7HCN. The station is on a nice hilltop spot near Colfax, WA. Probably it will take my fingers a year not to send the "6".

WA4IAR: I am a new member and a friend of mine ND4K asked if i could submit June numbers; I was not a member all month. If anyone would object just let it go. I'm not chasing awards.

WB4IT: My longest QSOs for June were around 60 minutes. For both QTX and QTX mini, my time spent ragchewing in June was 1121 minutes or 18.7 hours. 861 QTX minutes and 263 minutes for QTX minis.

AAØYY: N2GWT Fabio had one of the nicest fist this month.

GWØETF: Some enjoyable lengthy QSOs in Giving Back sessions this month....

KB6NU: I haven't hit my goal of one QTX per day for a couple of months now. I need to get back on track. :)

YL3JD: Made some nice QSOs in mother language with Dutch station, large parts of Belgium also speak Dutch by the way. As soon as i start the QSO in Dutch the other station understands it will going to be a ragchew QSO.

AB4PP: Had a 65 minute QSO with K5MEG on 40 meters. Not a CWops member.

ND4K: I had a great and fun month. Thanks for all the Qs. A special thank you to WD4CFN and WB4IT who are my most regular QSO partners. Especially memorable was a 46 min QSO with Rune, SM5COP, who is not a cop, btw, and another with a station in CA with whom I had a long QSO, but can't remember his call. He was using a Hustler mobile antenna on the deck of his multi-story building, on the west side - away from me.

N9EEE: it started with my Facebook account being hacked and deleted, then a freakish strong wind whipped through the area and broke a large branch and tossed it onto my EFHW taking me off the air. The third calamity hasn't hit yet, so I'm hoping no computer issues arise so I can get this newsletter out the door.

Awards and Medals for 2023

Gold – 400 QTX QSOs

Silver Medal – 300 QTX QSOs

Bronze – 200 QTX QSOs

73, Enzo MØKTZ (CWops # 3206)

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QTX for June 2023

Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX
WA4IAR	71	K9OZ	24	AJ1DM	10	W9EBE	2
ND4K	56	KY4GS	21	KØALT	7	DF7TV	2
WS1L	47	KB6NU	20	K8UDH	5	PG4I	1
VE3WH	35	M0KTZ	14	KR2Q	4	AB4PP	1
WB4IT	28	AAØYY	14	KG5SSB	4		
F5IYJ	27	N6HCN	11	K5YQF	4		

MQTX for May 2023

Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX
WA4IAR	71	WB4IT	20	KR2Q	10	K8UDH	1
KY4GS	35	ND4K	20	AJ1DM	5	K5YQF	1
AAØYY	30	YL3JD	16	W9EBE	4	K5KXJ	1
WS1L	28	GWØETF	13	W8OV	4		
VE3WH	23	KG5SSB	11	PG4I	3		
MØKTZ	22	DF7TV	11	N6HCN	2		

QTX Totals for 2023

Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX	Call	QTX
VE3WH	313	K5YQF	80	KF6NCX	29	GWØETF	6
K9OZ	223	WA4IAR	71	W9EBE	28	YL3JD	5
KY4GS	216	MØKTZ	70	KK6CN	22	AB4PP	4
WS1L	206	N2DA	61	WØGAS	20	WT9Q	3
WB4IT	165	KG5IEE	59	K5KXJ	15	WA9ZZ	3
KB6NU	151	AJ1DM	55	K4AHO	15	SV2BBK	2
N5IR	144	KØALT	52	WA2USA	14	NØBM	2
KCØVKN	139	N9EEE	48	W8OV	12	DF7TV	2
F5IYJ	137	K8UDH	46	NEØS	10	AB7MP	1
N6HCN	103	K6DGW	42	W7JRD	9		
AAØYY	103	KR2Q	40	W3WHK	8		
ND4K	84	KG5SSB	33	PG4I	7		

MQTX Totals for 2023

Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX	Call	MQTX
KY4GS	260	PG4I	64	KF6NCX	21	KK6CN	9
M0KTZ	252	ND4K	53	SV1DAY	20	N9EEE	6
AA0YY	154	SV2BBK	50	K8UDH	20	W3WHK	5
WB4IT	146	WS1L	49	N6HCN	18	K4AHO	5
VE3WH	126	GW0ETF	40	K6DGW	17	G3WZD	4
YL3JD	97	W9EBE	37	W8OV	14	W7JRD	2
KG5IEE	93	AJ1DM	34	AB7MP	13	NE0S	2
KG5SSB	77	KR2Q	27	W0GAS	12	N0BM	1
WA4IAR	71	K5YQF	24	DF7TV	11	K5KXJ	1

My Story: New Member Biographies

Compiled by Tim Gennett, K9WX (CWops #1462)

Sandor Miskey, HA5BMS #3372

I was born in 1972, I live in Budapest with my children. I became interested in ham activities at the beginning of the 1980s, as a 10 or 11-year-old child. From the beginning, I preferred the CW operation and participated in HST competitions, where I achieved quite favourable results. In the very early 1990s, as a young adult, I turned to computer technology, which was in its golden age at the time here in Eastern Europe. So I was away from the Ham life for a few decades, but I always knew that at some point I would be active again, and I was extremely happy when I had the opportunity to hear the rhythm of CW anywhere and anytime.

I then renewed my license in 2021, luckily I got my original callsign back: HA5BMS. Since then I have been very active, despite the limited antenna installation possibilities, I participate in many CW contests - like the weekly CWTs. I got my DXCC within a month of getting my license back, and I make more than 20k QSOs a year. Furthermore, I became a member of my former club again, so if I can't be heard with my own callsign at a CW contest, it is most likely because I am active in the HG5C team.

I am very happy to be a member of the CWops club and I hope to connect with as many of my fellow members as possible soon.

Phil Gibson, KW2A #3374

After a couple years of short wave listening, I got my Novice license in 1983. The Vienna Wireless Society class was a big help in learning code as was practice with my father, WB4NBI, and my mother, who was a code intercept operator at Bletchley Park during WWII.

I quickly upgraded and became N4KEZ. I held that call until I realized how often I was entered in contest logs as N4CZ – the "KEZ" suffix is terrible for CW contesting! I upgraded to Extra and became KW2A, a much better call for CW.

When I began CW contesting I realized that I'd have to get serious about using paddles so began practicing with the CW Academy lessons along with sessions on RufzXP software.

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My greatest difficulty was breaking the years-long practice of copying with pencil and pad. The Academy lessons emphasized "head copy" and RufzXP drove it home by drilling keyboard entry at higher and higher speeds. As my copy speed increased and I got used to typing directly to a logger, I really began to enjoy contesting.

My wife and I both grew up and worked in the Washington, DC area where I spent 30 years as a photographer for the American National Red Cross headquarters. My son works in the same field with a group of photographers and digital technicians in Portland, OR.

I enjoy sailing and motorcycling and still do a little photography. My radio interests center around QRP contesting, DXing and experimenting with simple antennas. Since we anticipate moving to a retirement community within the next few years, I've been testing indoor antennas so I have a plan to keep contesting even when I can't have an outdoor wire up.

Pete Jacobson, ABØWW #3371

In high school in New Jersey in 1970 I got a Novice license, WN2IRY. W2KXD (SK) lived down the street and gave me the 5 wpm CW and theory exams. With two years of paper-route money, I bought a used SX-115 receiver at Harvey Radio in Manhattan. I built a one-tube transmitter with a 50C5, and W2KXD got it going (replaced a bad paper capacitor). Worked a few states with a low dipole before my Novice ticket expired, and I went QRT for decades.

Jump ahead to 2002, and I took the theory exam and another 5 wpm test at the Red Cross in St. Paul, Minnesota and got my extra call, which I still have. Bought a used TS-820 from a local ham, who kindly threw in a Cushcraft R5. I put a folded dipole up in the trees and started making regular QSOs with those antennas.

Moved to California in 2009 and kept using that TS-820. Built a Norcal 40 kit and did some QRP. A few years later I got a KX3 and spent a year doing CW QRP only (propagation was great – worked the world on 10 watts). Then in 2013 an extremely good friend and business partner gave me an Elecraft K3, amp, tuner, and panadapter, my current main station. Took down the vertical and folded dipole and put up an 80m OCF inverted V (it doesn't know it's not supposed to work on 30m and 15m). Put the microphone away and became a CW ragchewer. A few months ago, W7ZDX got me interested in CWops, advised me to enroll in CWA and do some CWTs, and here I am!

My wife Caroline is a strong supporter of my ham radio hobby – even with my shack in the living room. We have five kids, all grown up and scattered across the US: in Hawaii, Minnesota, Minnesota, New Jersey and Oregon. The youngest has a Technician ticket, but she and I are the only hams in the extended family. Lucky to be able to visit my parents in New Jersey every three

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months – they just celebrated their 72nd wedding anniversary.

My work has always been in engineering for "active implantable medical devices" such as pacemakers and defibrillators. First with a plutonium-powered (!) pacemaker startup near Pittsburgh, and then 30 years with a French manufacturer, including 15 years living and working in France. After that I was a founder (and worker) at two startups in Silicon Valley. Pretty-much retired a year ago.

A more recent hobby is flying single-engine airplanes, which I rent from a local club. Been a jogger since high school. I like to read fiction, mostly modern American, and recommendations are always welcome. Counting on making new CWops friends on the air – especially ragchewers.

My thanks to my nominator, sponsors, and my CWA class: Joe KK5NA (great teacher and leader), Chuck WA7ECF, Glenn NE1TO, and Tim G4XWJ (fine classmates and new friends too.

Jeffrey Porter, K9VEG #3379

My introduction to the world of radio began during my time in the U.S. Army, where I worked as a satellite communications earth station repair technician. After leaving the army, I transitioned through a couple of companies and eventually landed a management position. Sadly, the days of hands-on electronics work were behind me.

In late 2015, a local Ham, Alan McCormick (WA2GTT), passed away, leaving his entire estate to his niece. She was a friend of my wife's and knew about my interest in antique radios, and as luck would have it, Alan had an incredible collection. Although my collection is modest, I couldn't resist the opportunity. I visited Alan's house and ended up purchasing five antique radios, all of which were in excellent restored condition. But that wasn't all. I stumbled upon Alan's ham shack, filled to the brim with intriguing hardware, boxes of notebooks containing his meticulous notes, and an abundance of cool equipment. As I delved into his world, reading his notes and examining his possessions, I found myself becoming more and more intrigued. A few weeks later, I was completely hooked. In 2016, I took and passed the Tech exam, followed by the General a few months later, and finally, the Extra. Alan became my first Elmer, even though I never had the chance to meet him while he was alive.

Once I obtained my license, I found myself unsure of what to do next. While the equipment was fascinating and building wire antennas proved enjoyable, I was left wondering about the next steps. I made a few SSB contacts, which were fun, but I yearned for something more. Then, in 2017, I stumbled upon Morse code. Initially, it seemed like a jumble of random sounds, but

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something about it sparked my curiosity. I set out on a mission to learn Morse code, spending time listening and practicing sending. That's when I discovered Parks on the Air (POTA), a fantastic activity that allowed me to chase people operating from parks while earning awards. I desperately wanted to activate parks myself, but there was one obstacle—I didn't have a portable rig. Determined, I purchased a used You Kits HB1B. The only catch was that it operated exclusively in CW. So, I taught myself enough code to get on the air. The whole experience was exhilarating.

Fast forward to 2021, and I decided to retire. The following year, I realized that my Morse code skills were lacking. While I could manage a POTA QSO, I knew I had room for improvement. That's when I made the decision to enroll in a CW Academy class, determined to take my skills to the next level. Thanks to the support of my classmates, and advisors, I've made significant progress. My code has improved, but I'm fully aware that this is a long-term endeavor. I'm immensely grateful for the encouragement and assistance I've received from the CW academy and the sponsors who believed in me and approved my CWops membership. I eagerly look forward to continuing my growth in this amazing hobby.

Danny 'Yorkshire' Bower, MØSDB #3376

Two main things to know about me; I am from Yorkshire, the county known as God's own country (with good reason) and I can rock a hat, any hat. More on why I am now known as Yorkshire to come shortly and my picture is proof of my hat wearing ability.

So to matters ham. I was first interested in ham radio at around the age of 13 or14. I am not sure where the interest came from, my father wasn't into the hobby and I did not have any other relatives or friends who were. However, interested I was but I was put off by having to learn CW (as was the licence requirements back then) and the cost. As a teenager with very limited funds I thought an actual radio would have been beyond my means and I never thought I would be able to learn CW. So I did what a lot of teenagers did back then and bought a CB. Which I didn't use much at all…

Fast-forward 20+ years and I was browsing Amazon for 'stuff' and saw the price of Baofeng HTs and thought, 'wow, they're much cheaper than they were when I was a teenager. I could actually buy one of those' and promptly researched ham clubs in my area. Pretty soon I was attending meetings and studying for my Foundation licence.

Licence acquired (Sept 2013) and I quickly realised HF was where my interest was. I bought a secondhand Kenwood TS430 and I was away and hooked but I still had no desire to learn CW. Over time though I did very sporadically try and learn 'the code' and I'd get a few characters un-

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der my belt and then drift away, forget everything I'd learned and then start again many, many months later, rinse & repeat.

In 2022 though I decided to make a real attempt to learn and kept seeing people mention the CWops Academy so decided to sign up for Beginners and had my first class 2 May 2022. There were three Dan's so to keep things clear, one got named Oz, one DL and I got 'Yorkshire'. Don't know why, I had only mentioned I was from there half a dozen times.

My first QSO followed on 15 June 2022 and that was it, I was hooked on CW. I went straight onto Fundamentals then cleared off Intermediate and have now graduated from Advanced as a full CWops member. I never thought I'd get this far and I am utterly delighted to have done so. I cannot thank Shawnna KEØLUA, Bill WØEJ, Kit GØJPS and Keith GØHKC enough nor say enough good things about CWops.

I still have many goals I want to complete but can now contest comfortably and just about hold a decent QSO. My next challenge is to be an Advisor, help others to start their CW journey and I have signed up for the September Beginners classes. I just hope I can be half as good as my advisors have been…

Ben Gilbert, ZL4BDG #3382

My path to CW has been a bit of a slow and iterative journey for me, after operating SSB for a number of years I decided to try and learn Morse code. This was about the same time as the pandemic hit in NZ. I started with Lock Down Morse, but never managed to progress much further than recognising 50% of the letters at slow speed, then I moved onto a locally run CW net geared towards teaching locals Morse. This was more successful but I was still only copying 75% of letters at a slow speed, then a QRS CW net started in NZ (run by Peter ZL1PX) aimed at newcomers. This got me up and running at 10 wpm. Peter motivated me to enroll with CW Academy and the rest is, as they say, history.

My ham radio journey is similar. I have always been interested in electronics and my mum has many stories about me pulling pieces of electrical equipment apart as a youngster to see what was inside. My aunty bought me a screw driver set for my second birthday and this further enabled my curiosity. Sadly, my skills didn't extend to putting things back together again. I'm not quite sure what my mum thought. I'm definitely not getting my 3 year old son a screw driver set! I studied electrical and electronics engineering at Canterbury University. After graduating I went onto various embedded software engineering jobs and then moved into main stream software engineering. I'm now a Solution Architect. In my 30s I moved to the UK to do the traditional kiwi OE (except this was about 10 years later than most do it). It wasn't until I moved back to NZ and

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starting having children that I decided to get my ham radio license in 2019.

I'm now married to my lovely wife Liz, and I have two young kids. Family life keeps me quite busy but I still manage to sneak in a few hours of radio each week. My eldest daughter has started making beeping sounds to mimic Morse code and Liz, my ever forgiving wife, is accepting of my growing antenna farm (very modest by American standards) in the backyard.

Outside of ham radio I enjoy challenging myself. I like the outdoors and hill walking / climbing. I've climbed Kilimanjaro, driven round the Nürburgring, and run numerous half marathons. Nowadays I'm happy if a get a few hours to myself. How children change our lives!

Finally I would like to say thank you to Buzz AC6AC for helping me learn Morse code and keeping the journey interesting and rewarding. Thank you also to all my sponsors. It's not easy to get CWTs from NZ and I appreciate your sponsorship and kind words.

Zsike Turi, HA1AS #3388

I am Erzsebet (Zsike) Turi, and I am very glad to be a new member in the CWops.

My English is sadly very poor. My story is: when I was 4 -5 years old, my uncle worked at the railway and he used Morse communication there. I saw that and it was very awe inspiring for me. So at the high school in 1968-72 I have taken a Morse exam and got an operator licence at the city club of Gyor (HA1KSA). Then in the university years at the city club of Szeged (HA8KCK). My own licence HA1AS I got in 1988.

I use almost only CW, and more less SSB in Hungarian and German. I can read quite a lot English, but I cannot speak.

I am a mathematician, and I work as computer programmer in the small own firm with three colleagues. I am already retired, but we work furthermore. My partner also has a Ham licence, he is HA7JDU, and he is interested in construction, and mostly in DIGI mode, more, less in SSB and CW. Unfortunately nobody else from the family is interested in Ham radio, children have other hobbies.

Now we already have a little more time for hobby. Our rigs are Yaesu FT 920, FL-7000, ICOM IC-746, IC-7400, homemade amplifier. Antennas are 4 element Yagi, pyramid and dipoles. I am especially very glad because my number, 3388 is very-very nice. I see, that it's not a coincidence, since 3386 and 3387 are missing. Thank you very much for that. Of course I will participate on activities and read the newsletter too.

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