

Solid Copy



The CW Operators Club Newsletter
August 2023 — Issue 163

President's Message



144Q sponsored by CWops in the WRTC 2022 World Radiosport Team Championship. Their story begins on page 32.

I write these opening columns each month with no idea of what will appear in the following pages of each edition of *Solid Copy*. When I mentioned the 0700 CWT last month, I didn't know Jim N3JT had submitted a piece on the



(Continued on page 2)

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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President: Stew Rolfe, [GWØTEF](#)
Vice President: Peter Butler, [W1UU](#)
Secretary: Jim Talens, [N3JT](#)
Treasurer: Craig Thompson, [K9CT](#)
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same topic despite us exchanging emails on the Board email group fairly regularly. There was no collusion and our similar views on activity and the potential for some interesting propagation at that time of day were completely our own and reached as a result of both of us being regular participants. And kudos to Jim and all the others over there for sacrificing all that valuable beauty sleep, at least he has some company! I missed the first 0700 CWT since publication, but note the 3830 submitted logs had crept up into 3 digits which hasn't happened for a while. Perhaps between us we piqued interest a little in what is an interesting time to be on the air – give it a go if you can!

During my regular perusing of the CWops discussion 'channels' (referred to generically by my kids as 'the socials'), I caught a mention of CW code readers this month. This happens every now and then and brings out the usual negative reactions by most respondents. I've tried the K3 version occasionally over the years and been struck by how fiddly it is but once set up and given the chance to settle it works quite well. I can never imagine using it routinely however, it's far too distracting. Hopefully learners, who will undoubtedly be experimenting with them despite what we say, will come to the same conclusion fairly quickly. If their use helps give a learner a confidence boost for head copying that's a bonus but in the end there's nothing like the decoder between your ears. I have for many years though used a code reader while transmitting (part of Microham CW Keyer software) and find it valuable for checking the quality of my sending and in particular the spacing which the software seems quite fussy about. Even when I feel my sending is reasonable and appears to make sense to the other end of the QSO, I occasionally see my spacing is getting sloppy. Probably does no harm to be reminded to take care as I personally have great problems trying to copy CW with little attention paid to correct spacing. Recording some of your own sending, either sidetone or off air, is also a good way of casting a critical ear of self appraisal over one's own sending. I will never assume my CW can't be improved.

On a more general note Ofcom, the UK licensing authority, is conducting a review of the amateur radio regulations in the UK and has put out a consultation document for comment. Some of the proposals are probably not that controversial such as increases in power limits (1000 watts for full licensees!) but one that is attracting attention is the use of so called Regional Secondary Locators (RSLs). These are the prefix variations to indicate which DXCC of the UK we are operating in and mean I'm GWØETF and not GØETF, as indicated on my licence, when I operate from home. At the moment I'm obliged to alter the prefix if I operate in other regions but having been advised by their lawyers that there is '*no legal basis for RSLs*', Ofcom are proposing to make them optional. It's true that RSLs have always been odd but they're well established and understood, here and elsewhere, and form the basis of the DXCC concept in the UK. The feeling is that the lawyers (and according to rumour a new computer system..;-) will push this through regardless of the consultation, and this will lead to doubt and confusion about which (UK) DXCC someone is actually working - outside of contests where their use will obviously be mandated in the rules. We will know the outcome sometime after the end of the consultation period in early September.

Finally the CW Open is coming up on the first Saturday of September. This is the only bone fide contest on the CWops calendar and is open to all so tell your friends and spread the word. With its unique format of 12 hours of contesting split into three sessions it provides opportunity for

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meals, rest, sleep and even playtime with the kids or grand kids. Once again I hope to be part of a UK team of CWops members which could be airing some of the club 'CWO' calls. I plan to use GW2CWO again and have decided I will use the name 'Ron' to celebrate the life of Ron Stone GW3YDX (#100) who passed away very recently way too early. Ron used this call once in a previous Open; he was an awesome CW contester and would undoubtedly have made my proposed attempt at emulation look very mediocre indeed. RIP Ron...

73, Stew GWØETF, President (CWops #919)

sc

Editor's Notes: Thanks Hank!

Solid Copy may be losing one of our popular columns following the "retirement" of Hank Garretson, W6SX. How We Were has appeared on and off over the years featuring a number of CWops members' interesting "flashback" moments in time. Some were the novice days, some were interesting episodes, and all harkened to one's moment in their history of amateur radio. Moments that we marveled at or appreciated someone else's ham radio experience. Hank provided us with these snippets of our ham lives of the past that unavoidably pushed our own memories down a rabbit hole remembering our own days gone by. For me, its not too hard to think back in black and white of my early days in the hobby...if only I could find those pictures. And that, I think, was the hardest part of Hank's job...finding hams who have pictures of their earlier days in the hobby. Well done, Hank! Thanks for the memories.

It's only fitting that we focus this month's column of How We Were featuring, of course, on the exuberant Hank Garretson, W6SX.

If you've appreciated Hank's column and would like to continue stirring up memories and take on a similar role at *Solid Copy*, please contact me to discuss it further. No requirements.

One additional entertainment piece I'd like to grow; a monthly cartoon illustration of everyday life in ham radio. If you're an illustrator with a sense of humor, please contact me about this.

73, Dick N9EEE, (CWops #3113)

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



News and Notes

[Duncan \(Mac\) Fiskén, G3WZD](#)

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

Bill Ewing, K1YT #44 on 15th July 2023

Merv Schweigert, K9FD #987 on 23rd July 2023

Bob Schwer, K3ZGA #1811 on 25th July 2023

John Meyer, K9QVB #159 on 27th July 2023

Ted Wieworka, W3YR #2719 on 5th August 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 September).

Didier, FO/F6BCW #2898 I am settled for vacation and "retreat" from May to October this year on the island of Huahine [QRA Locator BH43LF54](#), (we can see the shack), the IOTA is OC-067.



I traffic 3 to 4 times a week for 4 hours with a K3, 100W, CW 80%, SSB 20%, no data mode. I remain a radio craftsman. My QSL manager is Paul F6EXV, (LoTW – OQRS) but I answer direct requests for those who want an envelope stamped from Huahine.

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My antennas are a Quad 2 el 5 bands specially made to be in aircraft hold luggage (8.5Kg). VDAs in support of the quad that I made locally with bamboo and fiberglass fishing rods,. A delta loop 30m directly on the lagoon, whose tip is hung 12m above the lagoon by a halyard and pulley that I passed over a coconut tree. I had a full size vertical for the 40m, but given the low 40m radio traffic at the moment, I took it apart.



My signals are weak but heard since I have made a little more 4,000 CW QSOs and 1,000 SSB QSOs for 2 months.

Next November, I am organizing the DX'p TX7L, in the Marquesas we will be 10 Op. I will be on site from October to prepare the antenna systems. TX7L will be 55% CW, 30% SSB and 15% Data.

We have asked the major DX Foundations and DX Clubs around the world to help us pay for air freight, transfers, pick-up rental for the transport of large antenna cases. The list of our sponsors is on the TX7L website.

My 73 QRO to all members of CWops, long live the CW, Didier F6BCW in FO.

Jim, N3JT #1 A number of CWops members are avid bicyclists, or at least occasional bicyclists, maybe wannabe bicyclists. Or maybe former bicyclists! A new CWcyclists reflector has been created for sharing comments about bicycling, including activities involving CW operating where that is of interest, routes taken or planned, gear, questions about equipment, etc. It is intended to link CW ops who are interested in bicycling. To subscribe send an email to this address:

CWcyclists+subscribe@groups.io

You will be approved and then receive emails from the group.

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More from Jim, N3JT #1 Not Ham Radio, but a ham in the news:

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Wednesday, July 5, 2023 | Delray Sun

OPINION

DELRAY SUN

News editor: Karl Barnett, 561-228-5566, kabarnett@sun-sentinel.com
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Life without a phone?

Can you live without your smartphone for a week, or longer? How would you contact your friends or check your bank balances? Or get the weather, the news—or text family? We do almost everything on our phones. (Let's keep sex out of this.)

But the unavoidable can happen, as it did to me. I survived, albeit barely. Let me share.

While bicycling scenic State Road A1A in Florida, listening to an enthralling audiobook, I stopped at a traffic light. But a few seconds after I resumed riding, the audio stopped. This sometimes happens and just requires hitting "resume" on the audio app. But when I reached into my bicycling shirt rear pocket there was no phone. My new Samsung S22 Ultra had been levered out of my rear shirt pocket by the front edge of the bike seat as I resumed riding. I turned around and arrived at the intersection just in time to see the phone disappear under a car's tires. Despite the Otterbox Defender case, the screen was just shattered.

Back at my car, I headed to the local T-Mobile store only to be told they could not fix this phone. For that matter, they couldn't even sell me a new one without a new and expanded calling plan (which later turned out to be not true). So I sped to Best Buy, but it no longer repairs broken phones. Finally, I stopped at a UBreaks-iFix store. They said they could fix it, but the screens were backordered some weeks.

Left with no choice, I sent it back to Samsung, by overnight carrier. Three business days later, I called to inquire. They had replaced the display, but the phone failed their quality test and needed a new main circuit board: \$650. Some five days later, they said that my phone had been assigned to a higher level technician. Who knew there is a hierarchy for phone repairs?

During all this, the online repair status page consistently said "under repair — no completion date." How helpful. More days, more calls. Finally, after nearly two weeks they said the

phone had been repaired and I'd receive a tracking number by email. Two days later, no email. More calls. Now they told me the phone was repaired but needed to pass their quality test. More days, still no update. Another week, and a breakthrough! They told me that the whole facility had shut down for several days because of an ice storm that struck Dallas that week.

Finally, though, after three weeks the phone was shipped. But that's just the beginning.

Many of us grew up without smartphones and survived nicely. Not home for a call? They'd either call back or you might actually own an answering machine. Today? It is almost inconceivable not to have instant access to searching, texting, talking and shooting world-class photos — and being accessible virtually 24/7 by text or voice.

If we can't think of a movie name, searching with a few vaguely related words gives us the entire cast and the personal lives of each actor. How did we settle arguments before smartphones?

My missing phone was a significant disruption, tantamount to ripping out the heart of my lifestyle. Without a phone, I felt isolated. The transition today from smartphone-reliant user to phone-less status is a massive and shocking change that can cause emotional challenges. For me, those challenges included panic and anxiety.

Certainly, the panic arising out of a car-flattened phone incident is no surprise. But the frustration of being unable to find a solution in a day or two served to worsen the overall feeling of helplessness and disconnectedness. One might think that a damaged phone could be repaired by any big-name retailer or repair facility in just about every shopping center. Not so.

After the first week, I was especially anxious as I imagined what a headache it would be to restore photos and applications, a process that was fresh in my mind from a few months earlier when I had updated from a Samsung S8. As repair delays cascaded, my anxiety

escalated. By the time the phone arrived, I was just short of apoplectic, in part because the phone had been swept clean of all data by Samsung. Would I ever be able to restore the data and apps in the repaired phone, find the passwords, reinstall email accounts, and reload the thousands of photos without which I felt I cannot exist? Even if I ever got the phone back, how many dozens of hours would it take to restore it to its pre-damaged state?

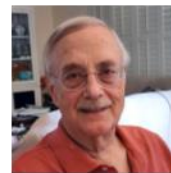
I felt so much dread and anxiety that I consulted my family physician, who prescribed a mild sedative to prevent me from awakening every few hours worrying and an anti-anxiety medication to help with the fear factor. These helped, but I still worried. At least I could sleep.

Photos had been saved in the Google cloud, but when downloaded to the phone were not in the familiar Gallery folder but in a data storage location. I can live with that. I successfully restored contacts from Google, and most apps reappeared; though some would no longer function and none had their passwords. Fortunately, I had recorded those in a Rolodex file.

One of my email accounts just would not "take" no matter what. Hours and hours of trying the Verizon/AOL third-party special password approach did not work, either. I paid AOL for a month of tech support, exhausting myself talking to them, but they just repeated what I had done. They said the problem was with Samsung. And Samsung concluded that the problem was with AOL.

Ultimately, after multiple emails and contact with higher-level people at AOL, I was given the secret of how to generate a special password on my laptop and transfer it into the account setup on the phone. Ta da! AOL tech support definitely needs a refresher course in email troubleshooting.

I was surprised at my level of anxiety when I was phone-less, both during the repair period and through data restoration. After all, there was no divorce or



James Talens

death involved.

Put in perspective, the phone should have been like any other appliance, a matter of inconvenience and then repair. But in our lives today the smartphone has become much more, especially if it is unavailable for a matter of weeks. For me, its loss invoked deep reactions I had not imagined.

But there may be an upside, after all. I've now set a new personal goal of relying on my smartphone far less for routine needs. I can now wait until I get home to use my laptop to look up an actor or send an email. I am already texting less, which means I am not looking at the phone at restaurants or when I am a passenger in a car. I've given myself permission to turn off the ringer and notifications when I am with other people. I'm now a more focused and interesting conversationalist.

Put differently, I'm free. My cellphone no longer controls my life. I keep it where it belongs: in my pocket for an emergency, or to listen to audiobooks when bicycling (now with a more secure rear shirt pocket).

Psychologists suggest that once a traumatic event occurs, you may be more susceptible to an acute emotional response from a similar event, a kind of PTSD. I know two things now, though: First, I can indeed survive without my smartphone for three weeks (OK, there will be considerable discomfort, but I can survive). Second, and more important, I know that if something happens to my smartphone again, I will not find it as traumatic because I will not be as dependent on it for my daily interactions and needs. May you be so blessed.

James Talens is a (mostly) retired telecom attorney who lives seasonally in Boynton Beach.



LETTERS, COLUMNS & CORRECTIONS

The Delray Sun welcomes your 200-word letters and 500-word guest columns on local topics; they may be edited and should include the author's full name, phone number and address. We will publish a correction or clarification when it is determined we made an error or published misleading information. Visit DelraySun.com and click "Submit letter," or mail to Karl Barnett, Delray Sun, 3335W 12th Ave., Deerfield Beach, FL 33442.

ABOUT US

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In other news, CWops sponsored a CQ WW DX Contest plaque and we were pleased to receive a letter of appreciation from [WWROF](http://www.cqwwdx.com) (Worldwide Radio Operators Foundation, Inc.).

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Worldwide Radio Operators Foundation, Inc
P O Box 529
Fredericksburg, TX 78624-0529 USA
Tax ID: 27-1435449

Donor: CW Operators Club
Date of Receipt: July 31, 2023
Type of Contribution: Cash
Amount of Contribution: \$520.00 U.S.
Purpose: CQ WW Contest Plaque Sponsorship

Dear CW Operators Club:

On behalf of Worldwide Radio Operators Foundation, Inc., thank you for your generous donation as noted above.

WWROF is dedicated to improving the skills of amateur radio operators around the world, utilizing education, competition, advancement of technology and scientific research, promoting international friendship and goodwill, and preparing them to better serve society in times of communication need.

Donations are tax deductible under IRS 501 (c) (3) provisions. No goods or services were provided to you for this donation.

Sincerely,

Worldwide Radio Operators Foundation, Inc.

<https://wwrof.org/>

Manos, SV1DAY #3334 With help from Costas, SV1DPI, the latest revision of the Beginner CWA course is being translated into Greek with the expectation that I will deliver the course to local students during the September/October semester.

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Jim, AC0E #2780 A great eyeball QSO at Dayton-Xenia!



L-R: Jim AC0E #2780, Dale KG5U #1241 & Jim N3JT #1

Terry, GM3WUX/MM0T #2826 Jeremy Browne G3XCG (SK 26th October 2022) was my best friend for some 59 years. We grew up together, so he was the nearest I had to a brother. Sadly, he died of cancer last October. This is a terrible way to go, so I'd like to do a little thing that might help stop this happening to others.

During the week of my 73rd birthday (2 - 8 October) I plan to walk 73 laps round a familiar loop of paths in Queens Park, Glasgow, I understand each lap is about 1.4 miles with about 200 feet of ascent. So, the whole walk would be about 100 miles, including over 14,000 feet ascent. I, like Jeremy, am totally blind so would complete this unassisted, using my long cane.

Since Jeremy and I were both radio hams and the number 73



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means "Best Wishes," I'm calling this walk "Jeremy Browne - 73 Cubed - £389,017 for Cancer Research". That's a 73-year-old person, doing 73 laps wishing all 73s for a cancer free future.

Understanding the causes of different cancers and preventing more cases could save many thousands of lives. Help fund **Cancer Research UK's** research programmes that look into ways to help reduce people's risk of developing cancer.

Please visit my [fund-raising page](#). Thank you!

Steve, KO4VW #3096 One from the archives!

CWops Team Members - 2011 VP8ORK South Orkney Islands DXpedition

Tom (ND2T #110), Wes (W3WL #868),
John VE3EJ #513), Jerry (WB9Z #707),
Ralph (K0IR #519), James (9V1YC #66),
Don (N1DG #2), Nodir (EY8MM #815)



Saul, W3WHK #1392 Jim N3JT's recent summer visit to his hometown of Philadelphia PA was the impetus for a nice lunch gathering at a restaurant in Center City Philly organized by KC3WGJ. Since N3JT is an alumnus of the University of Pennsylvania and trustee for their club calls (W3ABT, W3KZ, N3KZ), we were heavy on Penn alumni: N3JT (#1) and his buddy Steve (unlicensed), KC3WGJ, and W3WHK (#1392).

The Holmesburg ARC, which has worked with the Penn club and whose main repeater antenna for WM3PEN/R is atop a high-rise dormitory building on campus, was represented by officers WA3PZO (WM3PEN trustee) and W3WHK. We were very glad to meet Alan KU2Y in person; he is an AMSAT Vice President, and a Villanova University professor and advisor to the ham radio and CubeSat clubs there.

We discussed ways to encourage undergrads and grad students to consider ham radio among their other avocational pursuits like ballooning and rocketry, and to attract new freshmen to ham radio. A fine time was had by all, despite the extreme heat encountered enroute.

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Duncan, G3WZD #1979 I was delighted and certainly humbled to receive this fabulous plaque, which now graces my shack. Thank you to all the folks who do such a fine job keeping the CWA machine running so smoothly!

The Last Word

Thanks to Ted, W3TB # 2477 for this great one-liner:

“CW is the original digital mode on the original social network”

Until the next *News and Notes*, as Roger G3LDI #1843 would say, “May the Morse be with you!”, dit dit..

73, Duncan, G3WZD (CWops #1979)



Did your **CALL SIGN** change recently?

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

Congratulations!

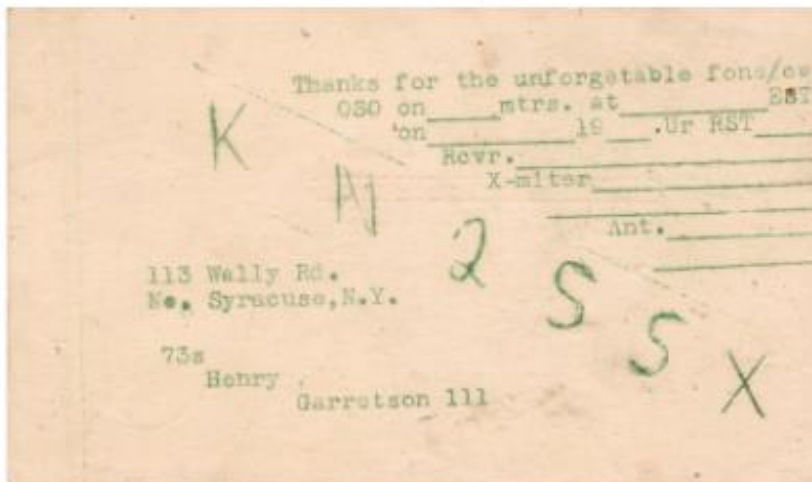
Help us keep our **DATABASE UP-TO-DATE**

Click [HERE](#) to update your contact information.

How We Were

KN2SSX (aka W6SX), Hank Garretson, CWops #61

11 years old. North Syracuse, NY. 1956. Heathkit AR-1 with Q multiplier and BC-455 receivers. WRL Globe Chief replaced home-brew transmitter on shelf above head. Wire antenna at 46 feet, just like I have today--some things never change.



CW Exuberantly,

73, Hank, W6SX (CWops #61)

ANNOUNCING THE 2023 CW Open Contest

By the time you read this, the 2023 CW Open will be less than 30 days away. This may be YOUR YEAR to win one of those beautiful trophies or plaques provided by our sponsor ICOM AMERICA!



If you have operated in the CW Open before, then you know it is comprised of three individual sessions, each four hours long. These sessions are all on September 2, and spread across a 24 hour. Regardless of the ITU region you are in, the timing of at least one of these sessions should work for you. Operating in all three is even more fun! If you have never participated in the CW Open, here is your chance to have some GLOBAL fun!! You don't need to be a CW Ops member to participate

Here is the schedule for the three sessions:

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)

Below are a few of the contest details, but for a complete description go to: <https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/cw-open/>

- ◆ **Each session is separately logged, checked and awarded. 3 separate contests!**
- ◆ **Who:** Open to all amateur radio operators, worldwide
- ◆ **Modes:** CW only
- ◆ **Operator categories:** Single operator

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- ◆ **Power categories:** HP (more than 100 watts); LP (more than 5 watts up to 100 watts); QRP (5 watts or less)
- ◆ **Use of spotting:** No limitations on using clusters, RBN or skimmers, but please, no self-spotting.
- ◆ **Exchange:** QSO number + given name (e.g. 12 John).
- ◆ **Scoring:** 1 point per QSO per band (each session); 1 multiplier for callsign the first time it is worked (each session). Scores start at 0 for each session. Work someone once per band per session.
- ◆ **Reporting:** Separate logs for each session. Logs must be in Cabrillo format and may be submitted via <https://cwops.contesting.com/> Paper logs are NOT accepted!
- ◆ **Logging:** CW Open is supported by many logging programs. See <https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/cw-open/>
- ◆ **Teams:** Team competition is supported (see <https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/cw-open/#team> for signup). No geography limitations.
- ◆ **Awards:**
 - ◇ Trophy, high score, each session, each ITU Region (max of 9 trophies)
 - ◇ Trophy, high combined score (all sessions), each ITU region (max of 3 trophies)
 - ◇ Plaque, high score, each of HP, LP and QRP, each session, each ITU region (max of 27 plaques)
 - ◇ If the same entrant wins multiple awards, the awards may be combined.
 - ◇ Minimum of 100 QSOs (after log checking) is required to qualify for and win an award in each session

73, Bruce N1LN
CW Open Manager



The Making Of A Lustful Key: W1SFR Torsion Bar Keys

an interview with Steve Roberts, W1SFR

Name of Company: W1SFR.com

Owner's Name: [Steve Roberts](#)

HQ Location: Sudbury, Vermont

History

N9EEE: *Tell us a little about Steve Roberts.*

With an MFA in photography, I am an accomplished photographer, videographer, and graphic designer having worked with a number of advertising agencies with local and national clients. Given my QTH in rural Vermont, and with a downturn in the local economy, I found myself downsized just as I was about to retire. In order to keep the coffers healthy, I decided to investigate making keys. Interestingly, at this point, I had no machine shop experience, so I learned from others, especially Dave Larsen, N9ZXL, who is a retired machinist and key maker in the Chicago area. I cobbled together parts in the shop and set about to design and create a unique key other CW operators would admire as well as delight in function, the W1SFR torsion bar key. My first customer was Jim Leahy, NØVV, who purchased several keys to give to his friends. The lucky recipients raved so much about the new key design; I knew I had something to build on.



My first ham-related business was KX3Helper.com. I made accessories for KX3 owners as well as an extremely popular QRP antenna, the End Fed Random Wire. Over 1000 of these antennas were sold around the world. As the key business became more demanding and “everybody and his brother” started making the same antenna and selling them on eBay, I decided to halt the antenna making and focus on making and expanding the line of Torsion Bar keys.

From those humble beginnings, I built up the shop to include the necessary metal work equipment to produce more of the W1SFR keys and do it efficiently. The production process has been refined over the last 10 years to yield a run of four to five keys a week at a comfortable pace while working three days a week in the shop. The shop is located between my house and barn on 10 acres of pristine land in Sudbury, VT. With all that natural beauty surrounding me, it should be no surprise that lately, I've also become a landscape painter.

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How did you get your start/passion for CW?

I learned CW when I was a Radioman CT in the Navy back in 1969. I was stationed on an island about 1 mile from Midway. It's called Eastern Island. Never sent a single character of code while I was in the Navy.

I think one thing that stuck in my head all these years was a guy on our CT crew who was a ham and hooked me up with a call to my wife from the ham shack there. It was all a mystery to me, but he was one of those guys that had been a ham all his life, could send and receive at blazing speeds while talking to me. I was impressed to be sure.

After the Navy I really had no interest in being a ham but at the urging of a friend and a longtime ham (N2RDG) I took the test and got my ticket in 2012. (excerpt from QRZ.com)

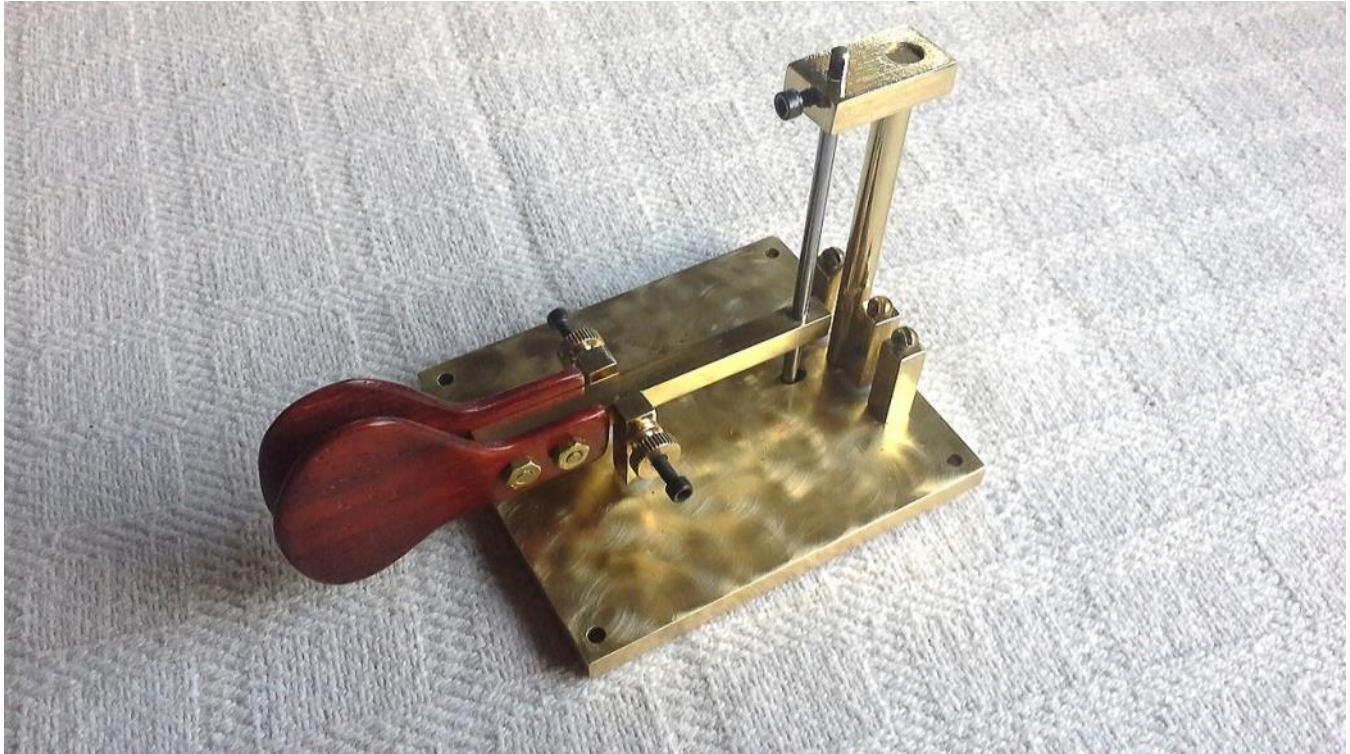
What year did you start production?

I made my first key in 2013, one year after getting my ticket. I created a variation of a Torsion Bar key shown in a December 1982 article in QST magazine. Intrigued by its unique design and not

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being able to find anything commercially that I could try, I decided to make one for myself to see what it was all about. It turned out to be my first prototype for all of my future key designs. I found that the sideswiper (cootie) single lever design perfect for what I was after...an elegant, quiet, and ergonomic key.



How many people work in your business besides you?

Me. It's a part-time job. Though the love of CW and design has merged into an interest of creating keys unique for CW operators, it's also a business that provides sustenance for my wellbeing.

How has your business evolved since the first day?

I now have a deep appreciation for the process of creating a handmade product that is as consistent and perfect as humanly possible but within the confines of time and money constrictions. The slightest imperfection is not tolerable yet as a human being you know that perfection is impossible, so it's a very long learning curve to make commercial products with so many hand finishing operations. That need to take the necessary time to deliver to such a high standard and still make money is quite challenging, to say the least!

How do people find you? What's your marketing plan?

Word of mouth. No advertising. No hamfests. I rely on word of mouth. I'm not competing with other spring-return or magnet-return paddle manufacturers, so I rely on the uniqueness of the paddle to be the appeal and generate interest among CW operators. It's as much a work of art as it is a functional paddle, and that functionality is a very fluid, smooth action like no other paddle can provide.

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What is your “why” (the reason for being in the business of building and selling CW paddles?)

I was an excited new ham seduced by the romanticism of communicating by Morse code. As such, I went through a number of keys, analyzed how they operated, and picked them apart to find how I could improve them. This led to my preference for sideswiper designs and the Torsion Bar concept. I wanted to make my own designs and share them with other CW ops. I felt this design was a significant improvement in the feel of the paddle and would make operating more pleasurable. I was compelled to share these designs with those who would appreciate a smoother, quieter, softer feel.

Products

How would you describe your products?

Blend of function and design. The Torsion Bar Key is one of the best keys I’ve ever used...I can’t use another key now. Functional art. The cootie (sideswiper) has been instrumental for keeping hams with hand issues (ETI, arthritis) on-the-air. Customer feedback includes, “changed my life.”

Product line-up:

All W1SFR keys are single lever keys. As single lever keys, they can all be wired as paddles or cooties. They all operate around the torsion bar principle. The lever is the only moving part hinged by a pin. The lever is moved from side to side and the contact screw makes contact with a nickel silver strip attached to the lever. The strip cushions the movement of the lever and the combined feel is softer than a typical key. It’s much quieter and has a smoother feel. Paddles can be easily



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converted to Cooties via an adapter. Inversely, Cooties can be converted to paddle via snipping a common wire. Most keys are sold as cooties. It's unknown how many remain in the configuration. The focus of the product line-up is cooties/paddles.

What materials are used in production?

Keys use various materials for the bases. I use Vermont Green Marble, stainless steel, and brass/wood. Key top parts are all solid brass. Contacts are nickel silver. I hand turn the Straight key knobs and skirts. I even polish the nuts! I mean, who does that? Hi Hi.

What is your pricing (range or by product)?

\$225 - \$335

How do you position (view) your products against others in the marketplace?

Elegant, quiet, easy on the hands. Low impact. The most common response from my customers is first they say it's a beautiful work of art and then they say it's the smoothest and most unique key they've ever used. One customer who purchased my Horizontal Straight Key said, "I'm not kidding. I've used every straight key on the planet, and they all killed my hands after about 15 minutes of use. I just completed my SKCC Marathon (a one-hour QSO) with your key in ONE DAY and my hands have no more pain!"



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What is your personal reference for a key?

The Sideswiper hands down. For me, it's the perfect combination of the freedom of the straight key. The ability to change your timing literally between key strokes if you want. To pause for emphasis, to speed up or slow down and not be controlled by automatic keyed timing. It also creates an unmistakable on-air personality for each user.



Future

What are your future plans?

Keeping the business going for as long as I hold interest and physical ability to do so. I will be looking to sell the business within the next three or four years, and *really* retire.

N9EEE: *Steve, thank you for sharing your professional and amateur radio background, views of your lovely home in Vermont, and the W1SFR Torsion Bar Keys story. While your keys all look marvelous, my eye is on the marble-based "Green Machine." Very lustful.*

SC

Field Day in the Mountains

[Jim Carson](#), **WT8P** (CWops #2456)

I wrapped up another field day with my friend Paul (W7PEZ) in Eastern Washington. For the two days, I had 204 contacts, broken out roughly as:

| Band | CW | SSB | Digital |
|--------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| 40M | 22 | 11 | 7 |
| 20M | 67 | 16 | 13 |
| 15M | 36 | 24 | 8 |
| Total: | 125 | 51 | 28 |

(Yes, I worked SSB. It was kinda **Frankfurt United Norway**)



WT8P is sporting the 6-day salt and pepper look

Paul worked 200 contacts, nearly all CW. Both are personal records. Neither of us were “running,” which would certainly have bumped up the totals, nor did we operate all the time, because most

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of the fun of Field Day is Everything Else.

Although our site is at the end of a long, windy, sometimes awful forest road (which I realize is redundant) that few people venture, Paul got there late morning to claim the spot. On the drive out, we out, we scouted alternate locations should this space be unavailable next year.

I had some work to do in the morning, but left home mid-afternoon, picking up ice, a steak, and sundry items that were omitted (knife, cutting board, saute pan, dish soap, paper plates). On my way there, the first of a series of thunderstorms were rolling through — not much rain, but gusty. We waited until it looked done before anchoring down everything *very well*.



Yeah, I packed too much...

Now that my K4D officially is beyond its factory warranty, I had little hesitation at bringing it this year. The [Elecraft Pizza Box](#) worked well for transport, I just wish it had more cutouts or bigger pockets for essential cables to keep everything in one spot.

The K4 was a *niiiiiiice* improvement over the KX3 for a variety of reasons:

- I could run at up to 100W (versus a max of 10 with the KX3). In practice, I stuck around 50 unless I was trying for an east coast station on SSB.
- Pan adapter was useful in quickly checking if there was any activity on a band (e.g., 10m: no, 15m and 40m: yes)
- Recent familiarity. Last year, after not using the KX3 for four months, I had a *senior moment* when I had to remember the controls. After fifteen minutes, muscle memory was back.
- Better filtering. Although this is a low-noise environment, Field Day is band mayhem as people practice poor radio operator-ship, working on top of each other and calling without listening. Being able to filter adjacent noise was helpful to productivity.

Things that worked well:

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Field Day setup. In the distance, a pair of Okanogan Wildland Fire vehicles looks for hot spots from a lightning storm that blew through on Friday.

- **Both of us facing the same direction.** Last year, we sat opposite, which was great for being able to talk across the table or me watching cat videos while pretending to operate (*just kidding*). Having both of us on one side avoided sun on the monitor, and left a lot of room to get behind them and play with wiring. This was especially important when we were swapping ...
- **Band-pass filters.** Last year there was interference between radios, primarily the 7300 (at 100w) to the KX3 (at 10w) when PEZ was operating on 20m and I was trying 40 or 15. This year, we each bought band-pass filters (these allows only a range of frequencies in or out) for the bands we planned to use (e.g., 10, 15, 20 and 40m) and swapped those to reduce interference on the other.
- **Battery + generator.** This was a great backup, letting us run two stations, two laptops, and charge devices as necessary. I'd acquired a 100Ah lithium-ion battery to use as the primary power for my K4 while Paul had a 20Ah (as his Miady 35Ah had died a few days earlier). In receive, my radio drew about 2A. During transmit time at maximum (100W) power, it'd draw about 20A, though I tended to keep around half power (12A). Paul brought his generator, which we ran periodically to top off the batteries and laptops.

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- **Separate good antenna systems.** Last year we had the 80m horizontal loop and an end-fed. When I was running low power, the loop was great, and the end-fed was acceptable on Paul's 100w. This year we had ... a lot of options (see below), but used primarily the 80m loop and a vertical DX Commander spaced apart. The loop was still superior, but the vertical was comparable.



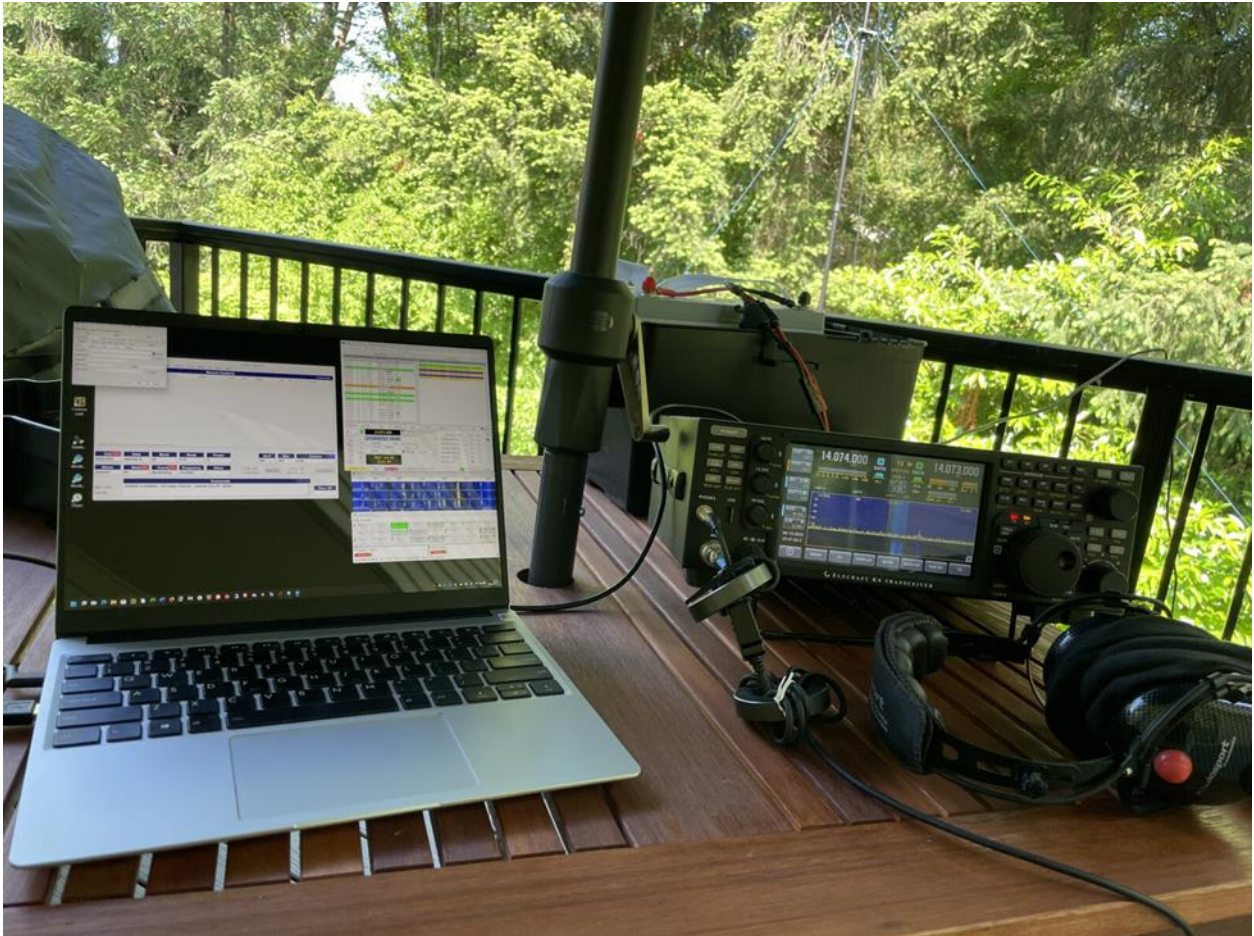
Hoisting the 80m loop between four trees.

- **Antenna launching setup and Flagging tape** – we had a pneumatic (pressured with a bike pump) tool to shoot a projectile and fishing line over trees. When this was done, another (old) fishing rod & fluorescent line, thicker rope would be pulled back. Then, finally, Dacron line attached to it as the neon line rolled back. The fishing reels prevent the line from being twisted, which affects how well it unspools during launch. Once the four Dacron lines were run, we added a piece of flagging tape for visibility as it let us see where the corners were. Flagging tape is also useful on shelter tie-downs to reduce the likelihood of running into them in low light.
- **Having a clean shirt/underwear/socks for each day, separate sleeping clothes.** Being able to swap out clothes close to skin helped deal with the lack of showering. It was also helpful to go for the soft layers at night. When I got home, I noticed *everything* had a campfire smoky smell to it.

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- **Having two sun/wind screens to attach to the shelter.** Our site had a predominantly southern view. Mounting the sun/wind screens on two sides kept us from direct exposure most of the day because we could leapfrog the screens as the day went on. By the evening, it was below the tree line.
- **Luggable Loo.** *Shit's eventually going to happen.* Last year, I did the dig-a-hole-and-squat before burying everything. At my age, it was a bit awkward. I think that's when I picked up a tick. This year, I could sit on a 5-gallon bucket with a toilet seat, poop into a plastic pouch with bio-gel, and neatly pack it away in garbage. It was a relative luxury.



Like it's 2017 again, only I have a much better idea of what I'm doing. And fancier toys.

- **Practice setting up the K4D on the patio.** This was a lot how I first operated in 2017. The main benefit is to ensure I have all the necessary components, connectors, software, and batteries needed for the real thing.
- **Paper plates** – These can later feed a fire, saving the need for more water, heating it, then dumping it elsewhere. By the end of the day I really didn't want to do dishes.
- **Pre-tuning the DX Commander.** The antenna is something I purchased last year (after Field

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Day 2022), but had recently started assembling. I had a few iterations of setup-adjust-repeat (and later, “give up on the stock wiring, make everything color-coded”) that got it *close enough*. It was ready to go on 10/15/20/40m for Field Day. There are still opportunities to adjust the connectors to make it quicker to set up. (Also the insulation on the color-coded wire is not that great and wears off easily.)



Campfire, DX Commander swaying in the breeze.

Improvements for next time:

- **Don't Bring So Much Stuff.** I had succumbed to might-need-it-itis severely to the point I needed to Tetris things into my car (a minor superpower honed from moving my kids into and out of college dorms). A few things I could have done without: second shelter (we never unpacked it, just like last year), extra antennas like the ZSBKW (an optimized G5RV), off-center fed (aka Widom).
- **Larger tent/smaller cot.** I didn't bring my older LuxuryLite cot (from my first [Cycle Oregon in 2008](#)) because it saw a lot of wear and tear during its 4-month use as my daughter's primary apartment bed. I had picked up (impulse buy) at Costco an USFS Cot that looked great in theory but was too large for my REI Half-Dome tent. Fortunately, Paul's tent was cavernous, and he let me use half. I wouldn't mind bringing a larger tent next year because I

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sleep longer & get up to pee at night more often than most.

- **Pre-make certain food items.** My attempt at Caesar Salad dressing *from scratch* in the field was awkward, and I'd forgotten the lemon. Doing it in advance would have less stress and mess.
- **Better chair.** Again, impulse buy at Costco, found a lightweight lounge chair that was great to sit in. But because it was so lightweight, it was prone to being blown into the fire. Another impulse buy was a small, foldable bench to use for better sitting position when operating. While it did the trick, a cushion would have been nice.
- **Bring more water.** It wasn't a problem *this time* because the weather was perfect, but when Paul went to the site the next week with his wife and dogs, he'd consumed a lot more water than planned. I have some 2.5g water cubes that I could use next time. I just need to remember to fill them...
- **Bring more garbage bags and a littler grabber tool.** The camping area had a *lot* of garbage dumped in it by previous tenants. The worst was their unsuccessful attempt to burn cans, glass, and (FFS) their lounge chairs. I hauled two shopping bags out but could have done more.

General operating comments:

SSB is always the toughest mode for me. While easiest for anyone to jump on, on Field Day, it seems to attract a lot of bad/lazy behavior like *talking without listening first*, usually evidenced by someone jumping over everyone (high power), then wasting airtime asking the runner *what their call sign is*. Had they listened first, it would have been self-evident.

And let's talk standards. Having earned my pilot's license decades ago, I was taught the [NATO phonetics](#). That's also the ICAO official standard in Ham Radio. Except that falls apart on SSB (voice) events where some operators seem to make up their own. Examples I heard:

| | | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|-----------------|---|----------------------------|
| A | America | J | Japan | S | Sugar, Sweden |
| B | Boston | K | King, Kilowatt | T | Tokyo, Texas |
| C | Canada | L | London, Lincoln | U | United |
| D | Denmark | M | Mexico | V | Victoria, Venezuela |
| E | England, Eiffel* | N | Norway | W | Washington, William |
| F | France, Florida | O | Ocean, Ontario | X | Xena the Warrior Princess* |
| G | Germany, George | P | Pacific, Peter | Y | Yokohama |
| H | Henry | Q | Queen | Z | Zanzibar, Zed |
| I | Italy | R | Radio | | |

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For some reason, people occasionally copy me as Whisky *Echo 8 Papa*. If, after trying twice, they're still getting it wrong, I will *reluctantly* try "Tokyo" so they hear the T. Each time I do, I feel sad, as if I've bounced a landing so hard, I need to go around, while the controller shakes her head disapprovingly.

CW: This remains my mode of choice, despite there being the gamut of skills and styles. For the life of me, I *struggle to understand CW sent by bugs*. I found there were several folks who were sending without listening first, and it was worst with someone with a long call sign, sending slowly, multiple times, at ultra-high power. It was best to either move on and come back until they'd gone elsewhere. Conversely, it was pleasant working an experienced op who could be very business-like and efficiently complete a QSO, even in a pileup.

Digital (FT8/FT4): This was not too bad because WSJTX will handle tracking the exchanges, something that wasn't available in 2018 when I tried it on Field Day last. I used it primarily to work some calls when I needed a mental break because, let's face it, it's a lot of clicking on things.



Yeah, the view is nice.

So overall, a great time and one I'll look forward to next year.

SC

POTA, Boy Scouts, and the Boundary Waters

[Sean Walberg](#), N3TRW (CWops #3357)

As the father of sons in Boy Scouts, I'm fortunate to be able to join them on the unique adventures the program offers. I've learned to Scuba dive, gone hiking, whitewater rafting, and had many other fun and character building experiences with them and their friends. Officially, I'm there to supervise and ensure safety, but the truth is I have as much fun as the boys do.

One such adventure was an extended canoe trip through the Boundary Waters Wilderness Area (BWCA) in Superior National Forest, which runs up to the Canadian border. It's over a million acres of pristine wilderness and freshwater. Groups load all their gear and provisions into a set of canoes and paddle from lake to lake. When you reach the end of the lake, you pick everything up and carry it to the next lake, then set it down and do it over again. Over the course of 10 - 12 days a crew of 9 people and 3 canoes can log over 100 miles and ideally, see more wildlife than they do other human beings.



I first did that trip in 2019 with one of my older sons. This was before I was licensed, so the thought of mixing radio with a canoe trip didn't register.

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But in 2021, my youngest son was old enough to do the same trek the next summer and he was excited to go. As I had made contacts through Parks On The Air (POTA) by that time, I knew I wanted to find a way to bring radio into my next canoe trip.

POTA is an international program where amateur operators go to designated parks and set up a radio station, trying to make contacts with the hunters who are trying to find them. Make a minimum of 10 contacts and the activator is said to have activated the park. It's fun for everyone and there's a variety of awards and achievements to keep you interested. Superior National Forest was a designated POTA park, K-4491, so I was going to find a way to activate it on this trip. My only problem was, I'd yet to activate a park and I wasn't sure my CW skills were up to it.

A goal is a great thing to motivate you so I got on the air as much as possible to improve my CW. I also built a QRP Labs QCX Mini for 40m which I planned to use for this activation. I paired it with a homebrew end fed halfwave and a 3D printed key. Weight was not a big issue on this trek but space was, so I wanted something that could fit in the bottom of my dry bag and take a small amount of abuse. Eventually I got the confidence to test my kit out at a local park for my first successful activation.

The time came for our trip in the summer of 2022. When our guide was checking our gear before we set out, he asked if any of us had anything that wasn't on the suggested list. I responded with "a 5W Morse code transceiver", which earned me a funny look. But set off we did, with my radio packed away in my dry bag.

A few days into our trip we got into camp early enough that we got all the chores done and I had enough energy to set up and operate. One of the boys helped me throw a line over a tree to get my antenna set, and I dutifully started operating. Except I couldn't hear a thing. After too much time troubleshooting, I saw that the capacitor on my antenna got bent enough to short the driven side to ground. Once that was fixed I could hear signals. I started calling CQ again.

Things were going well. I made two contacts before I realized that with the time zone I was in, it was almost midnight UTC. In POTA, you need to make your 10 contacts in a single UTC day, so I was about to fail my activation. Undeterred, I started calling again at 00:00 and managed 11 contacts over the next 45 minutes to activate the park with one extra. I decided to pack it in and enjoy the rest of the evenings before the hordes of mosquitoes arrived.

The second half of the trip was just as amazing as the first. In the end our crew managed just over 125 miles and a lifetime of memories. My son has already asked to go again.

Since that trip I've brought my radio on some of our regular weekend scout trips to try and get some of the boys interested in the hobby. I've gotten some passing interest and even run a few boys through the Radio Merit Badge, but that's about it. I've activated two more parks as part of a Scout camp, and several more just on my own. Radio is a great addition to an outdoor adventure, and the POTA program ensures a healthy supply of eager callers.

SC



II9HQ: An IARU World Championship Experience

[Giu Giunta](#), IT9VDQ (CWops #1538)

This year the "Italian national team" during the IARU HF World Championship did not have an official participation role. To give the world of Radio Amateurs the possibility of having the "Italy" multiplier, a group of Oms was chosen in Sicily and operated for 24 hours as II9HQ. All organized in a fortnight by Joe IT9BLB. The southernmost part of Italy was deliberately chosen to give the stations **I41A** to **I49Y**, that competed in the WRTC in the Emilia Romagna area, as many opportunities to work the MULT Italia.

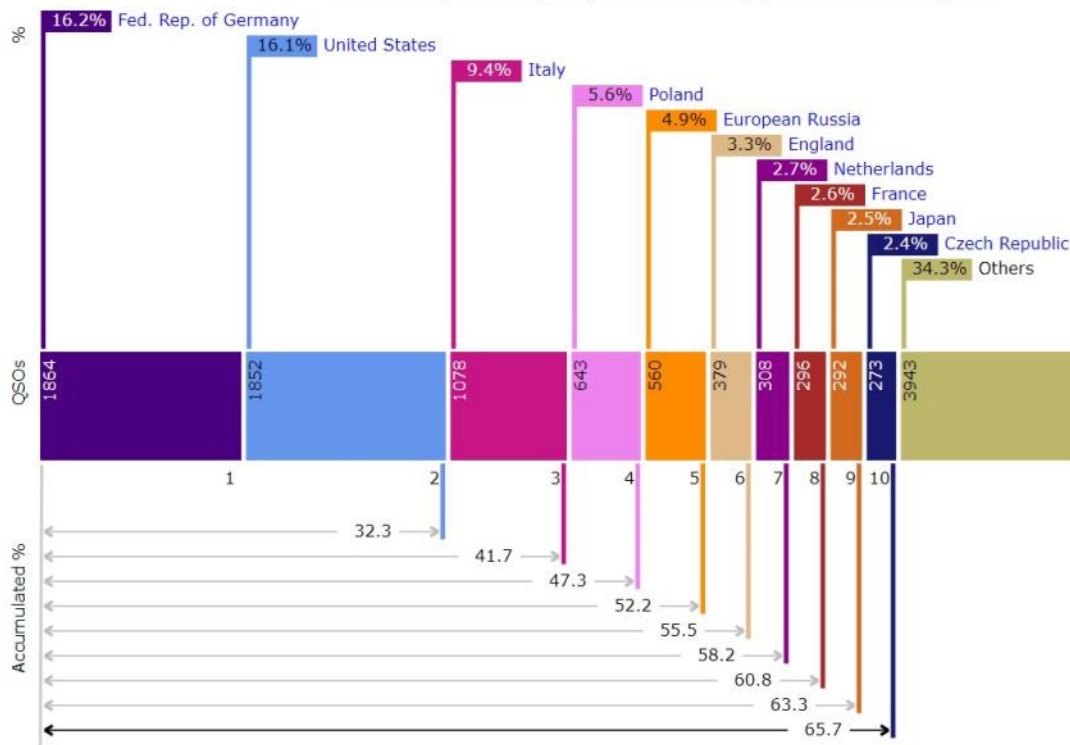
Some figures: 11488 Qso, 130 Dxcc Countries, 40 CQ zones, 53 ITU zones, 1410 Pfx, 5252 Unics Calls, 2.19 Qso/station, 3248 Km/Qso, Fields 91, software QARTest by Paolo IK3QAR.

| Summary | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|------|------|---------|---|-------|------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Band | CW | | Digital | | Phone | | All | | Countries |
| | QSOs | % | QSOs | % | QSOs | % | QSOs | % | |
| 160 | 66 | 0.6 | | | 11 | 0.1 | 77 | 0.7 | 33 |
| 80 | 301 | 2.6 | | | 286 | 2.5 | 587 | 5.1 | 53 |
| 40 | 805 | 7.0 | | | 779 | 6.8 | 1584 | 13.8 | 71 |
| 20 | 2077 | 18.1 | | | 1289 | 11.2 | 3366 | 29.3 | 94 |
| 15 | 2056 | 17.9 | | | 1493 | 13.0 | 3549 | 30.9 | 116 |
| 10 | 1540 | 13.4 | | | 785 | 6.8 | 2325 | 20.2 | 84 |
| All | 6845 | 59.6 | | | 4643 | 40.4 | 11488 | 100.0 | |

Top 10 countries

Band: 160m 80m 40m 20m 15m 10m All

2023 ADIF_LOG II9HQ - Top 10 countries by QSOs - All - 11488 QSOs



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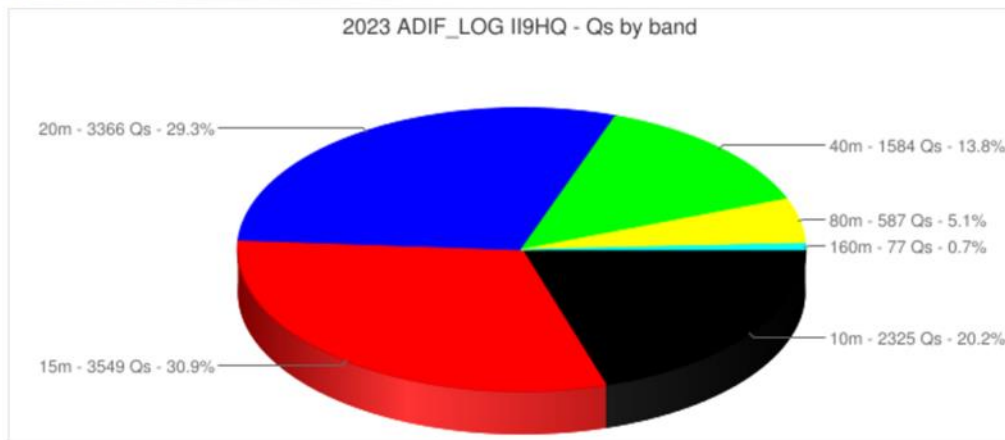
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DXCC countries: N. America 15, S. America 12, Europe 59, Africa 10, Asia 25, Oceania 9.
 PA6HQ, SK9HQ and SN0HQ worked I19HQ 12 times each.

Continents

| Continent | QSOs | | | | | | | | % | CW | Digital | Phone |
|------------------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----|---------|-------|
| | 160 | 80 | 40 | 20 | 15 | 10 | All | | | | | |
| NA North America | | 17 | 268 | 789 | 800 | 183 | 2057 | 17.9 | 1598 | | 459 | |
| SA South America | | | 8 | 23 | 54 | 23 | 108 | 0.9 | 46 | | 62 | |
| EU Europe | 75 | 559 | 1267 | 2399 | 2195 | 1993 | 8488 | 73.9 | 4662 | | 3826 | |
| AF Africa | | 3 | 1 | 7 | 19 | 8 | 38 | 0.3 | 14 | | 24 | |
| AS Asia | 2 | 8 | 39 | 131 | 424 | 115 | 719 | 6.3 | 498 | | 221 | |
| OC Oceania | | | 1 | 15 | 55 | 3 | 74 | 0.6 | 24 | | 50 | |

Qs by band



CWops:

| # of QSOs | CW ops member? | | Grand Total |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| mode | Yes | no | |
| CW | 152 | 6693 | 6845 |
| PH | 5 | 4638 | 4643 |
| Grand Total | 157 | 11331 | 11488 |

They worked on it:

3 times: OL8R, N8II, PC4H, W1GD, W3UA, W8FJ

2 times: HB9ARF, I2WIJ, M1X, N1RM, N2GC, N3AM, N3RD, N4AO, N4BP, NE2V, NF3R, NR4M, ON6WP, PC4E, PE2K, UR2Y, UZ1WW, W1WBB, W1WEF, W2CS, W2YR, W3KB, WA3AAN, WA8Y, WN7S, WW3S. The others all once.

I take this opportunity to thank **Doug KR2Q**, for helping me extrapolate much of the data above.

SC



I44Q: A WRTC 2022 Experience

Todd Bendsten, VE5MX (CWops #2540)

[John Sluymer, VE3EJ](#) (CWops #513)

The NA8 team of VE5MX and VE3EJ would like to express our sincere gratitude to CWops for the sponsorship of our site at WRTC 2022(3) in Bologna, Italy.

We operated under the CWops banner as I44Q and were extremely proud of our association with the organization. Thanks to CWops for their generosity.

Here is their story:

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. The extension cord.

The journey to WRTC 2022 began with a seed planted by VE4EA and VE3CX on visit to the VE5MX in July 2019. With the completion of my station build in the Fall of 2018 they suggested that the timing was right to take a serious run at qualifying for the upcoming WRTC.

The hard work paid off and I was able to qualify as the Team Leader for the North America 8 area. Along the way I had the good fortune of VE3EJ agreeing to partner with me.

July 2nd found us boarding a flight bound for Venice with enough radio equipment for two complete stations plus a spare of everything. Throughout the week I had the pleasure of meeting many hams, and CWops members, for the first time as I tagged along with John while he renewed old acquaintances.

Thursday's competitor referee meeting resulted in our team being paired with Krisztian, HA5X as our referee.

Friday morning was the draw for site selection, and we drew RA01, located on an agriturismo (vacation farm) in the neighboring province of Ravenna, a short 40-minute drive from WRTC HQ with my son in law Quinn hauling all the equipment in a rental car.

John and I immediately set to work assembling our stations in a large room with lots of windows and ample table space. The only thing lacking was a power socket a reasonable distance from where we planned to set up the stations. The solution was to send Quinn on a mission to a nearby town to acquire an extension cord and some other supplies, snacks, water, etc... that we required for a successful operation. Before Quinn could return, the agronomist for the farm, Fabio, stopped in to check on us and was able to provide an extension cord. We were ready for business! We were pleased to find the location was relatively noise free once we had the 2 stations up and running. Quinn returned from his quest with a stand-up fan, plenty of water and an assortment of wonderful snacks and fresh vegetables. And a 25m extension cord on a reel, the only one available in town. It was somewhat pricey, and we debated returning it as we had solved the problem with the farm's extension cord but in the end the decision was made to hang on to it to power some of the accessories and Krisztian's equipment at his referee setup.

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We got on the air as I4/VE5MX and made some contacts, checked for interstation interference and other problems that may have crept up. The issues were minimal, and the setup was considered sound when 9N7AA called in on 15m CW! We shut down the station for the night and returned to the agriturismo for a delicious dinner and a good night's sleep.



Todd, VE5MX and John, VE3EJ at the ops position.

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The morning of the contest we started with breakfast at the agriturismo and then our site manager Alessandro, IZ2QEY, hauled the three of us back to the station where we would spend the next 27+ hours. We spent the morning trying out the bands, tinkering, and trying to get some rest before the contest. At 1145Z Krisztian handed me the envelope containing our WRTC callsign – I44Q

Function keys and voice keyers were quickly programmed and cards with the callsign in large letters placed in clear line of sight for both operators to aid once tiredness set in.

At 1200Z we were off and running. We spent a good deal of time bouncing between bands and modes to find the most productive combination. Three quarters of the way through the first hour and we found our rhythm and settled in. We had set the lofty goal of 4800 contacts, 200 per hour, ahead of time and the next 12 hours was a blur as we were able to maintain a pace ahead of that goal when suddenly - at 2338Z - BAM! We are sitting in the dark. What happened? What's going on? After the initial shock of everything coming to a screeching halt we began to work through the problem. Krisztian called our site manager to report the issue as John and I started investigating why we had no power. We quickly realized that the rest of the yard and indeed different parts of the building we occupied still had power so we began searching for an electrical panel hoping to find a tripped breaker. After that search came up empty we were more or less resigned to waiting for Alessandro to show up, hopefully with a solution, when suddenly Krisztian blurted out "Why don't we see if we can find an outlet that still has power?" We split up to search and quickly located one down the building and around a corner. John grabbed his multimeter to check if it had power. I had a more practical solution and turned on the light switch it was connected to and we had power. It was a long way from the operating position. There's no way we have enough cord to reach this I thought. We quickly fed the end of the 25m extension cord through the window and started walking toward the operating position while winding the cord off the reel. I kept going and going, finally reaching the end of the line. We had made it much farther than anticipated, with the addition of a spare power bar and moving some stuff around at the operating position we were able to use the farm's extension cord to reach the power bar. Success!!

We were back in business, barely. We had enough to run the bare minimum. The radios, computers and monitors and the referee equipment. No lights and no fan, as these were on the main building circuit that was still out of commission but we were back on the air and making contacts

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after a nearly 40-minute outage. Meanwhile, Alessandro arrived on the scene and began making phone calls trying to find someone who could help restore the lights for us. None of us is certain how long we operated in the dark, the consensus seems to be in the range of 2 to 2.5 hours, but we do know that it was our friend Fabio the agronomist who eventually produced the key to the room with the tripped breaker sometime before dawn.

Remarkably we were still on our pace, even with the power outage. Shortly after dawn we ran into a power outage of another kind, the combination of the heat, being awake for 20+ hours, and the heart pounding exertion of the power outage began to take their toll on John and I. We fought through the “brown out” and regained our footing for the sprint to the finish.

In the end we finished with 4,142 QSO's and a final score of 5,414,360. Good enough for 29th place out of 58 teams, right in line with our pre-contest expectations. It is hard to quantify how the operation would have fared had it not been for that very important extension cord.

Monday evening, we all gathered for the awards and closing ceremonies. At that time we learned of the difficulties and problems that some of the other teams encountered during the contest. Putting things in perspective, ours was maybe not all that bad.

The Monday night celebration brought an end to an incredible week of new friendships and camaraderie. It was an honor to operate under the CWops banner and we thank CWops for their generosity.

Of interest to Solid Copy readers, fully a third of the 116 competitors in WRTC 2022 are CWops members. Team NA8 made fully 80% of our QSO's on CW. Long live the code!



SC



AI Poetry Corner

[Ron Burkholder](#), KB3AAY (CWops # 1866)

Here is a poem about a 75 year Morse code operator who will be working the NAQP CW contest:

The Old Man and His Cat

The old man sits at his radio,
His fingers flying over the keys.
He's been working Morse code for 75 years,
And he's still one of the best.

His cat, Bunky, sits next to him,
Tail swishing, ears perked.
He loves to watch the old man work,
And he's always there for moral support.

The old man is working the NAQP CW contest,
And he's determined to do his best.
He's made hundreds of contacts already,
And he's not stopping yet.

Bunky watches the old man with pride,
His green eyes filled with love.
He knows that the old man is a champion,
And he's proud to be his cat.

The old man works through the night,
His fingers never tiring.
Bunky sleeps soundly at his feet,
Safe and secure in the old man's love.

In the morning, the old man wakes up,
His eyes bleary but his smile wide.
He's made over a thousand contacts,
And he's set a new personal high.

Bunky stretches and yawns,
Then jumps up on the old man's lap.
The old man rubs his head,
And Bunky purrs contentedly.


The old man and his cat are a team,
And they've worked together for many years.
They're both champions,
And they're both loved.

SC




From The Hearth With Pain Radio Amateur Radio

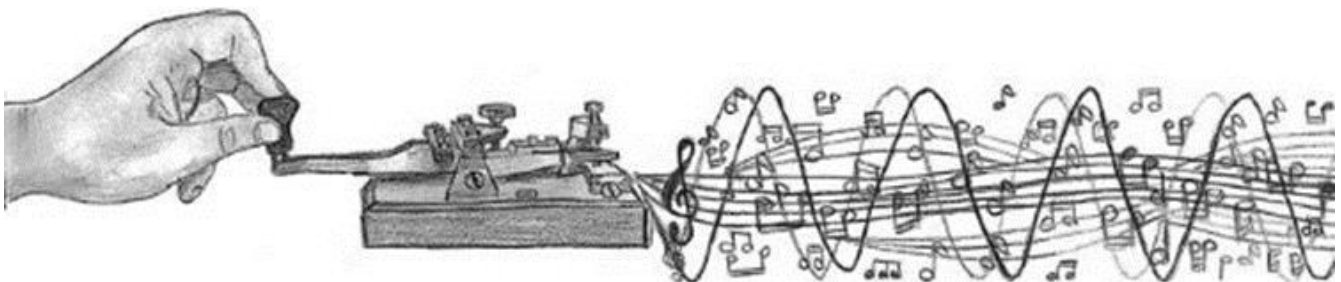
[Fred Eisel](#), HB9DAX CWops #687



CW is not disease, nor a mental defect, it is the lifestyle of the good telegrapher who was the ability to listen and transmit **CW** by hand without using a computer or other help, says **HB9DAX** *fred*



I was born in 1940, so I'm no longer the youngest, but I have a lot of experience in amateur radio, especially in the CW telegraphy mode. The virus to become a radio amateur came only at 30 and has rapidly developed into a chronic disease. i.e. « Morse telegraphy » My pain factor is about 200, but can live well with it. The family has become accustomed with these difficult to understand symptoms and after 52 years of marriage with a tolerant woman who loves music and everyone knows telegraphy is like music. Now at 83 years old is still a long time to wait for a cure for the CW virus. Keep it up and you will not get bored, the brainwaves will thank you says Manfred „FRED HB9DAX“



CWA Student Feedback

[W.R. Bradley](#), MIØWWB (CWops #2081)

I have just completed my current beginners class and it has been the most successful class I have taken so far. I have been advising for about five or six years. With this semester (May/June) I started with six students, four more came to me via word of mouth. Only two dropped out leaving me with eight students.

Their enthusiasm was infectious and it was obvious from the beginning that they were putting in the practice. By the end of the course I had worked four students on air and most were able to copy short stories from the fundamental course files, we even managed a bit of head copy, without using a pencil.

Receiving feedback after the course ended is hugely rewarding and it gives you motivation to keep going. Below is feedback given by Kevin, MWØKXN, one of my current students, who has become a seasoned operator:

Would you recommend doing the course, if yes why?

I would highly recommend this course. In short, it works. I have attempted to learn morse on my own several times and failed, and what is worse I taught myself bad habits. What are the chances that you are going to stumble across a successful way to learn morse code that is better than the carefully crafted CW Academy course? Whilst I am learning CW for myself I also feel a sense of obligation to Roger and John our tutors and want to show that their commitment has been worthwhile. There have been highs and lows in the past 6 weeks and it has been good to feel that our group have been in this together. The support and encouragement from class mates has been invaluable.

What did you personally get out of the course?

The course has got me over the hump of learning the characters to a point where I can make a QSO. Perhaps more importantly it's taught me how to learn and given me the tools to progress.

How hard was it?

Learning the new characters was tough. You have to keep sight of the progress you are making as there are few tangible rewards until you've learnt enough characters to decode text. After a couple of weeks I recognised a pattern with a sense of achievement coming into each Zoom session followed by a sense of disappointment and despair when the new characters appeared to dislodge the ones that I thought I had learnt. At around week 4 I was mentally exhausted and can only put this down to my brain wrestling with this new skill.

Did the course work for you and if so why?

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The course has worked well. Learning CW is not easy for many people. The course is well structured. The learning materials and resources are excellent. The pace is probably about right; the treadmill of new characters felt far too fast at the time, but looking back I appreciate that you have to get the class through this stage and experiencing some success before people give up.

How much practice did you have to put in?

I put in an hour's practice a day, 7 days a week, in sessions of no more than 10 minutes as prescribed. This sounds a lot easier than it was in practice. I am lucky enough to run my own business mainly working from home, which gives me some flexibility. I scheduled practice sessions 7:00, 9:00, 11:00, 13:00, 15:00 and 17:00 with a session available in the evening to pick up any slippage. I can see that it would be difficult for those in regular 9 to 5 employment to schedule sessions throughout the day, but others in the group succeeded despite work commitments and young families. I have done practice sessions in motorway service stations, cafes, laybys and quiet corners. It would be easy to say that this level of obsession is too much, but it didn't feel like I had done enough practice when I struggled with decoding in the Zoom meeting. For me I think that this is what was/ is required.

What did you like about the course?

I liked Roger and John. They are good folk, warm, open, honest about the challenges, and they looked out for everyone in the group. The CW Academy training material is fantastic. I particularly enjoyed reading some of the supporting material: Zen and the art of radio telegraphy; and the essays by Nancy Kott, WZ8C, explaining the psychology of learning.

What did you not like about the course?

Having read Zen and the art of radio telegraphy; and the essays by Nancy Kott, WZ8C, I banished any negative thoughts relating to CW from my mind.

Would you like to change any part of the course?

The Zoom platform seemed very temperamental and poorly suited to CW training. I experienced repeated audio drop outs and there were several occasions when class members dropped out of the session only to rejoin a few minutes later. I am unable to recommend a better platform but this would be worth exploring.

In summary: If you want to learn CW this is a great way to do it.

How do you intend to use the skill?

I thought that I was learning CW to allow myself to do CW SOTA activations, it turns out that I can do that now, at least to some extent. Grasping a callsign, recognising a 5NN report and assuming/ hoping that the rest was just a TU, Name, GL, etc is no longer enough for me. I am still going to be predominantly a SOTA operator, but I have started to see the beauty in the craft. I am now at a point where I am enjoying the learning and want to continue.

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What do you intend to do next?

Once I have grasped the QSO protocol, I want to work on the courtesies that add warmth and friendship to a QSO. My UR5CDX paddle is a thing of great beauty and I want to become more accomplished in using it. I want to get out for some super light weight portable activations with my QRP labs QCX mini 20m kit (I wish I had built it for 40m). I want to build a QRP labs, QCM 5 band, transceiver kit. I want to build a homebrew QRP CW transceiver, inspired by Colin, M1BUU.

It would be tempting to say that now that I have put the hard work in I will continue with self guided learning at a more relaxed pace. One learning/ realisation from this course is that it is tough trying to do this alone. I have registered for the CW Academy fundamentals course in September.

I am very grateful to Roger, and John, our course advisors, all at CWops, and those who have gone before them. Looking back on the past 8 weeks, it is remarkable what we have accomplished with good guidance on this well-structured course.

73, Kevin. MWØKXN



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 |
|-------|--------|---------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|
| 3391 | K9EI* | Matt | 3395 | N7WA* | Mike | 3399 | PC4H* | Henk |
| 3392 | A0Z | Kyle | 3396 | W0BM* | Pat | 3400 | HA6NL | Laszlo |
| 3393 | AF4PX* | Darrell | 3397 | VK5GG* | Graeme | 3401 | WA9PWP* | Paul |
| 3394 | WZ0W | Scott | 3398 | LY4L | Mindis | 3402 | K7GM* | Rick |

* Lifetime member

As of August 8, 2023:

Need Sponsors: WB4AJL, F5PXP, YO3HEX

Invitations Extended: R2BW, K5JR

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



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 on-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 July results (GB hosts are shown in **bold**):

AA0YY: N4DT, KD9WOY, KG5IEE, KI5EGH, KA6DOY, KK4AC, W4LGJ, AG4EP, N9JYJ, N9KWC, KA3WGF

E25JRP: HS0GWL(2), HS0DJU, E25KAE, HS8LOG, HS3OY(3), E25HGQ(3), HS4QKN (3), E24ZST, HS2NS, E27DPX, HS9UAC, E22MAL, VU2IXN, E15ETT

GW2CWO: M0MXL, SM3CNH, G3WZP, DJ8NGC, G4GIY, G3RXA, G4MZN, MW0BFY

JJ1FXF: JG1BGT(7), JA4IJJ(3), JR2AWS, JJ0SFV, JA7CUA, JK1MVC(2), 7N1OEX, HL5JZ, JN1FAO, JF5XPJ(7), JQ3FRX, JJ5QLV, JF6AOI, JH3KDZ, JR3MVF, JL1RAP

JM4AOA: 6K2HJI, 7N1FAO, 7N1OEX(2), HL5JZ, JA3EBL, JE6WGA, JE6XFK, JF5XPJ(9), JG1BGT (5), JH1UXQ, JI4HCE, JJ0SFV, JJ1IZY(2), JJ5QLV, JK1RET, JL1RAP, JM4RRC(3), JN1FAO, JQ3FRX, JR2FBM, JR7DIJ, JS2LSB(2), JS2OCY, JS2OCY, JN1FAO(4), JN6ILN, JQ3FRX, JS2LOG, JS2OCY, JS6THD

JO1DGE: 7N1OEX, BH4FRW, DS4FAM, JA1XIL, JA4IJJ, JE6KYE, JF5XPJ(5), JG1BGT(12), JH9PVV, JJ0SFV(2), JJ5QLV, JK1AZX, JL1RAP, JM4RRC(3), JQ3FRX, JR2FBM, JS6THD, NR6O

K6RB: N5DF, W5NU, K6ACJ, KI5DAD, KD9REA, W6QX, WB4ZBI, KG5SSB, AH6EZ/W7, W1PID, KD2FSH, WA6LJW, KK6QON

K7NJ: KD9RPZ, WD9DWE, WB6ZFG, K5GQ, PY3NT, PY2LEE, KC5GNU, KB9PT, W7ONE, AD7HI, AG5XU, W0DQ/7, W7ZDX, K7NNR, LU4KED, KG8DA, W2SH, KN6QER, W7RCS, WB6RVP, N2DA, KD7ZNC, W5SG, W8DXU, W7NNR, W0KOM, N2FJR

W5DT: K2LNS, NR8M, K8TO, AB8AV, NQ4A, NJ8D

W7ZDX: WU6X, N7KM, W7AEH

W8OV: NU2J, WA4YDJ, KB0HXL, WA0JLY, K7ZAD, K0CDJ

7N2XZB: JJ1LFO, JJ0SFV(2), JI3VXW, JG1BGT(2), JK1QYL, JF5XPJ(5), JA4IJJ(2), JQ3FRX, JM8QGN

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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**

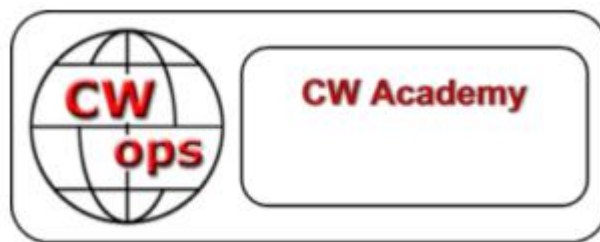
| UTC+9 | UTC+7 | UTC+3 | UTC+2 | UTC+1 | UTC/BST | UTC-1 | EST UTC-4 | CST UTC-5 | MST UTC-6 | PST UTC-7 | Hawaii UTC-9 |
|--------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|---------|-------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|
| MON | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 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 | | | | | | | | | | | |



CW Academy

[Joe Fischer, AA8TA](#) [Bob Carter, WR7Q](#) [Roland Smith, K7OJL](#)

Before launching into this month's article, I want to sincerely apologize for overlooking Enzo, MØKTZ, as an advisor in last month's review of the May-June semester. We appreciate the efforts of Enzo and all other advisors who are part of our team.



The CW Academy is blessed to have, and to have had, many dedicated advisors who have helped our thousands of students to succeed. This month let's look at the role of the advisor.

It is worth pointing out the important distinction between being a teacher compared to being an advisor in our program. The role of teaching is taken on by our students and we provide guidance or advice to the students over the course of a semester. Each of our four levels has a written syllabus which the students will follow and which provides direction to the student on what they will be working on and the practice that they will do.

The advisor reviews the work that the students have done, makes sure that they are progressing, helps them avoid getting stuck, helps them to overcome challenges and encourages them to keep a positive attitude and keep progressing. We believe that the twice-weekly online meetings between advisors and students is important in order to ensure that the students are trying and helping them to not get stuck.

Students sometimes experience a confidence hurdle, almost like a mountain in some ways, where they start a class feeling that they do not have the skill levels to succeed. Advisors can help them to realize that they can succeed and that they will if they spend some quality time practicing and not giving up. As the old saying goes: "success breeds success" and many students find that they reach a summit where they realize that they do have the skills needed and that success is fun and they want to experience more success which leads to more fun.

Advisors can go back over the previous few days of the syllabus and review the exercises in class and enhance the reviews with their own exercises. There are fun things that advisors come up with that help make the classes enjoyable and perhaps generate a laugh or two. With some recent changes to our scheduling system, many classes have students from a variety of areas, including different countries, and advisors can come up with simple question-and-answer sessions using CW that can make the classes interesting. There are a lot of possibilities available to the advisor subject to his or her imagination. Although the syllabus is available to students and advisors, the advisor can use this as guide and may create their own day-to-day or week-to-week programs based on the syllabus and their past experiences.

Many of us have seen that confidence is the biggest obstacle to achieving success in the CW Academy. Oftentimes, an advisor will spend time proving that learning challenges are just a part

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of learning and that the students can feel good and confident when they try and resolve to keep trying.

Given all this, we may actually teach a few things but much of what we do is coaching. Many of us advisors have experienced the same things our students do and can draw on how we got through those challenges and how much fun we had as we did.

It is not too unusual to see a student at the beginning of the class who wonders why they are there and who thinks that they are not going to do well. But near the end of the class the same student is feeling much more confident and is happily sharing his or her on-air experiences with the class. This is what makes advising so rewarding and, more importantly, means that we are sending new CW operators forward who want to make contacts and have a good time with CW on the air.

We welcome potential advisors, who do not need to be members of CWops, to contact us about advising. We also encourage potential students who would like to experience the success that thousands of students have to sign up for a class.

73, Joe, AA8TA (CWops #1821)

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Get Your Speed On!

In a previous article, it was noted that CWops members outnumbered non-members in the recent WRTC 2022 World Radiosport Championship. Where did they hone their proficiency and expertise? See below for the answer.

| 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](#)

I have added some more reporting capabilities to the custom software I use for keeping track of participation in the CWTs, so I can now report on overall participation, participation by individual operators, and by total QSO counts. For data geeks like me, here is a synopsis of some of the information derived from these reports:

As of the beginning of August, we had completed 120 CWT sessions, enough so that anyone who had participated in every single session would now have reached the gold medal level. There are two CWops members who have done that: K4PQC and N4BP, both with 120 participation points as of 1 August. The gold medal qualification levels are lower in continents other than North America and Europe, reflecting the lower levels of participation in the CWTs outside NA and EU, and there are three others who have also reached the gold medal criterion applicable to them: AH6KO with 104 points, VK2GR with 64 points and JN1THL with 62 points.

The list of those with 100 or more participation points so far is as follows:

K4PQC, N4BP, KO4VW, G3LDI, SM5IMO, K5VG, KI7Y, K3MM, K1DJ, N3JT, G4DYC, AH6KO, NB7O, OK5MM and W4CMG.

Another parameter for ranking participants could be the total number of QSOs reported. The first two on the list ranked by QSOs are K3WW with 22,088 QSOs in CWTs so far this year, and AA3B with 20,371 QSOs. K3WW also holds the record for the highest QSO count in a single CWT: 298 QSOs in the 1900Z CWT on February 15th of this year.

The list of those who have reported totals of more than 10,000 CWT QSOs so far this year are: K3WW, AA3B, K3MM, W8FJ, AD4EB, N4BP, N3RD, N7US, NØTA, K3WJV, KG9X, N3JT, N5ZO, DK9PY, N5RZ and KR2Q.

Looking at the overall numbers, there have been 33,365 CWT scores reported by 1,301 different operators, with a grand total of 1,967,969 reported QSOs. Of course, most of those QSOs were reported twice, once by each station, so we can safely conclude that there have been nearly a million QSOs made in the 120 CWTs so far this year.

Session by session:

The 1300Z session averages 376 reported scores with an average of 58.6 QSOs per reported score. The 1900Z session averages 388 reported scores with an average of 60.7 QSOs per reported score. The 0300Z session averages 258 reported scores with an average of 65.0 QSOs per reported score. The 0700Z session averages 89 reported scores with an average of 35.7 QSOs per reported score.

Enjoy the CWTs and keep those reported scores coming!

73, Rich, VE3KI CWops #783)



CWops Member Awards

[Bill Gilliland, WØTG](#)

Monthly Update

During July, additional members submitted logs and the number of active participants in the awards program increased to 229 participants. The QSO totals and rankings for the first week of August 2023 have the same familiar calls in the top six positions with **KR2Q** remaining in first place and leading second place **AA3B** by 210 QSOs. The changes in the top ten rankings this month have **N5ZO** moving into seventh place followed by **K7QA**, **N5TJ**, and **KY4GS** in eighth through tenth place. The top ten this month are **KR2Q**, **AA3B**, **K3WW**, **N5RZ**, **KG9X**, **NA8V**, **N5ZO**, **K7QA**, **N5TJ**, and **KY4GS**.

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 **194** this month with the addition of **EA3FZT**, **EA6BF**, **KE6K** and **KW1X**. You can see complete rankings for all award categories on the next page.

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 August 6, 2023, we have 229 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.

Online listing of the current [Top 100](#) for all award categories.

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 | 1735 | 8543 | 171 | 50 | 59 | 37 | 13 | OM2VL | 1156 | 6646 | 101 | 50 | 44 | 33 |
| 2 | AA3B | 1525 | 13252 | 132 | 50 | 49 | 38 | 14 | K1VUT | 1108 | 5851 | 81 | 50 | 41 | 26 |
| 3 | K3WW | 1456 | 10490 | 135 | 50 | 50 | 38 | 15 | K9WX | 1088 | 5631 | 109 | 50 | 44 | 33 |
| 4 | N5RZ | 1388 | 9211 | 129 | 50 | 47 | 37 | 16 | AA2IL | 1079 | 3109 | 71 | 50 | 29 | 27 |
| 5 | KG9X | 1305 | 6639 | 99 | 50 | 43 | 31 | 17 | W1RM | 1074 | 8858 | 219 | 50 | 62 | 38 |
| 6 | NA8V | 1265 | 8476 | 113 | 50 | 47 | 35 | 18 | K3WJV | 1048 | 7586 | 117 | 50 | 49 | 32 |
| 7 | N5ZO | 1240 | 9056 | 114 | 50 | 47 | 35 | 19 | WØUO | 1033 | 4460 | 72 | 50 | 39 | 25 |
| 8 | K7QA | 1235 | 6537 | 90 | 50 | 39 | 31 | 20 | N5AW | 1024 | 6461 | 104 | 50 | 48 | 34 |
| 9 | N5TJ | 1215 | 4430 | 85 | 50 | 43 | 30 | 21 | DL6KVA | 997 | 7466 | 193 | 50 | 65 | 38 |
| 10 | KY4GS | 1208 | 3309 | 67 | 50 | 33 | 23 | 22 | K1DJ | 993 | 5213 | 113 | 50 | 46 | 31 |
| 11 | KC7V | 1188 | 6232 | 94 | 50 | 38 | 33 | 23 | WT9U | 985 | 6071 | 103 | 50 | 41 | 30 |
| 12 | N7US | 1157 | 6558 | 115 | 50 | 44 | 34 | 24 | VE3TM | 982 | 4315 | 95 | 50 | 45 | 28 |

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| Rank | Call | ACA | CMA | DX | WAS | WAE | WAZ | Rank | Call | ACA | CMA | DX | WAS | WAE | WAZ |
|------|--------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|--------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 25 | K3QP | 980 | 3566 | 82 | 50 | 40 | 26 | 66 | WU6P | 688 | 2274 | 43 | 50 | 23 | 19 |
| 26 | K4WW | 978 | 5512 | 84 | 50 | 38 | 29 | 67 | N2UU | 687 | 5514 | 112 | 50 | 46 | 31 |
| 27 | VK2GR | 976 | 3060 | 80 | 50 | 40 | 31 | 68 | SM0HEV | 683 | 2905 | 114 | 50 | 50 | 33 |
| 28 | K3JT | 961 | 5971 | 104 | 50 | 46 | 31 | 69 | KC4WQ | 679 | 3646 | 62 | 50 | 29 | 25 |
| 29 | AA5JF | 960 | 4527 | 95 | 50 | 44 | 31 | 70 | KM4FO | 670 | 3269 | 48 | 50 | 19 | 18 |
| 30 | K6NR | 951 | 5215 | 71 | 50 | 35 | 29 | 71 | EA3FZT | 664 | 2746 | 82 | 50 | 45 | 30 |
| 31 | W8FN | 948 | 4608 | 76 | 50 | 38 | 24 | 72 | K3PP | 648 | 5664 | 108 | 50 | 45 | 30 |
| 32 | WN7S | 935 | 4809 | 81 | 50 | 39 | 27 | 73 | WØGAS | 641 | 2474 | 49 | 50 | 22 | 22 |
| 33 | CO8NMN | 917 | 4777 | 77 | 50 | 36 | 25 | 74 | AF4T | 634 | 3234 | 74 | 50 | 37 | 28 |
| 34 | NJ3K | 915 | 4005 | 80 | 50 | 41 | 28 | 75 | OK1RR | 633 | 4140 | 150 | 50 | 52 | 38 |
| 35 | N5KD | 895 | 3061 | 94 | 50 | 43 | 33 | 76 | K1RF | 631 | 1574 | 43 | 50 | 26 | 15 |
| 36 | KØWA | 891 | 3076 | 48 | 50 | 24 | 19 | 77 | VE7KW | 631 | 2199 | 37 | 50 | 18 | 19 |
| 37 | VE3KI | 882 | 7604 | 143 | 50 | 53 | 37 | 77 | W1UU | 631 | 4621 | 115 | 50 | 41 | 33 |
| 38 | WA4JUK | 880 | 4257 | 87 | 50 | 42 | 27 | 77 | K5VG | 630 | 1222 | 47 | 47 | 27 | 15 |
| 39 | WS7L | 877 | 3466 | 66 | 50 | 30 | 27 | 78 | N2EIM | 629 | 777 | 44 | 48 | 29 | 18 |
| 40 | WØVX | 873 | 6222 | 131 | 50 | 46 | 37 | 79 | W1AJT | 610 | 4184 | 98 | 50 | 45 | 33 |
| 41 | KT5V | 840 | 3727 | 83 | 50 | 33 | 29 | 80 | MØRYB | 609 | 2677 | 88 | 48 | 47 | 29 |
| 42 | WT3K | 833 | 4786 | 86 | 50 | 42 | 27 | 81 | VE3KIU | 590 | 1782 | 41 | 49 | 28 | 16 |
| 43 | SM6CUK | 832 | 5200 | 160 | 50 | 57 | 38 | 82 | VE3MV | 587 | 3889 | 88 | 50 | 41 | 27 |
| 44 | F5SGI | 799 | 2770 | 106 | 50 | 52 | 33 | 83 | KØTC | 585 | 3341 | 64 | 50 | 29 | 22 |
| 45 | W9ILY | 798 | 6504 | 136 | 50 | 45 | 37 | 84 | DJ5CW | 584 | 3475 | 104 | 48 | 54 | 35 |
| 46 | EA6BF | 795 | 2694 | 81 | 50 | 43 | 30 | 85 | EA4OR | 569 | 3101 | 90 | 50 | 47 | 31 |
| 47 | OZ3SM | 794 | 3394 | 108 | 49 | 51 | 36 | 86 | W4WF | 567 | 4980 | 94 | 50 | 43 | 32 |
| 48 | KKØU | 792 | 2855 | 59 | 50 | 31 | 23 | 87 | K4GM | 565 | 4113 | 85 | 50 | 37 | 28 |
| 49 | 9A1AA | 789 | 4722 | 127 | 49 | 52 | 38 | 88 | N8BJQ | 563 | 7619 | 133 | 50 | 48 | 39 |
| 49 | N4CWZ | 789 | 3611 | 63 | 50 | 34 | 23 | 89 | WØTG | 560 | 3400 | 70 | 50 | 31 | 26 |
| 50 | K3ZA | 786 | 2848 | 55 | 50 | 34 | 21 | 90 | W3WHK | 558 | 3313 | 76 | 50 | 37 | 21 |
| 51 | KW1X | 777 | 1462 | 42 | 50 | 25 | 15 | 91 | W8EWH | 557 | 1359 | 45 | 50 | 24 | 21 |
| 52 | DF7TV | 776 | 3319 | 110 | 50 | 50 | 34 | 92 | W2VM | 550 | 2592 | 64 | 50 | 33 | 20 |
| 53 | N3CKI | 771 | 2525 | 57 | 50 | 31 | 18 | 93 | VE3NRT | 548 | 2280 | 63 | 50 | 35 | 24 |
| 54 | AC6ZM | 768 | 4550 | 70 | 50 | 38 | 25 | 94 | HB9ARF | 538 | 2899 | 89 | 48 | 47 | 27 |
| 54 | KV8Q | 768 | 3217 | 70 | 50 | 35 | 23 | 95 | G3LHJ | 533 | 1529 | 64 | 44 | 41 | 20 |
| 55 | K8JQ | 764 | 5405 | 70 | 50 | 35 | 23 | 96 | K3ZGA | 529 | 2408 | 61 | 50 | 33 | 19 |
| 56 | K1SM | 759 | 4484 | 133 | 50 | 46 | 36 | 96 | W2CDO | 529 | 2978 | 68 | 50 | 38 | 24 |
| 57 | N5XE | 746 | 3867 | 82 | 50 | 37 | 31 | 97 | W9CF | 525 | 1867 | 28 | 50 | 11 | 16 |
| 57 | N9UNX | 746 | 1649 | 28 | 50 | 15 | 12 | 98 | W7LG | 524 | 1376 | 37 | 48 | 26 | 13 |
| 58 | W6AYC | 726 | 3927 | 59 | 50 | 27 | 26 | 99 | G4LPP | 518 | 2398 | 91 | 49 | 46 | 32 |
| 59 | K4TZ | 724 | 3007 | 43 | 50 | 20 | 16 | 100 | G4PVM | 517 | 2997 | 106 | 50 | 49 | 33 |
| 60 | KYØQ | 723 | 3309 | 68 | 50 | 31 | 28 | | | | | | | | |
| 61 | N4FP | 718 | 3069 | 61 | 50 | 33 | 20 | | | | | | | | |
| 62 | W4CMG | 716 | 2278 | 49 | 50 | 24 | 20 | | | | | | | | |
| 63 | AF5J | 711 | 3054 | 63 | 50 | 26 | 24 | | | | | | | | |
| 64 | NA4J | 701 | 3890 | 78 | 50 | 37 | 24 | | | | | | | | |
| 65 | N1DC | 697 | 5194 | 91 | 50 | 40 | 26 | | | | | | | | |

73, Bill WØTG (CWops #1873)

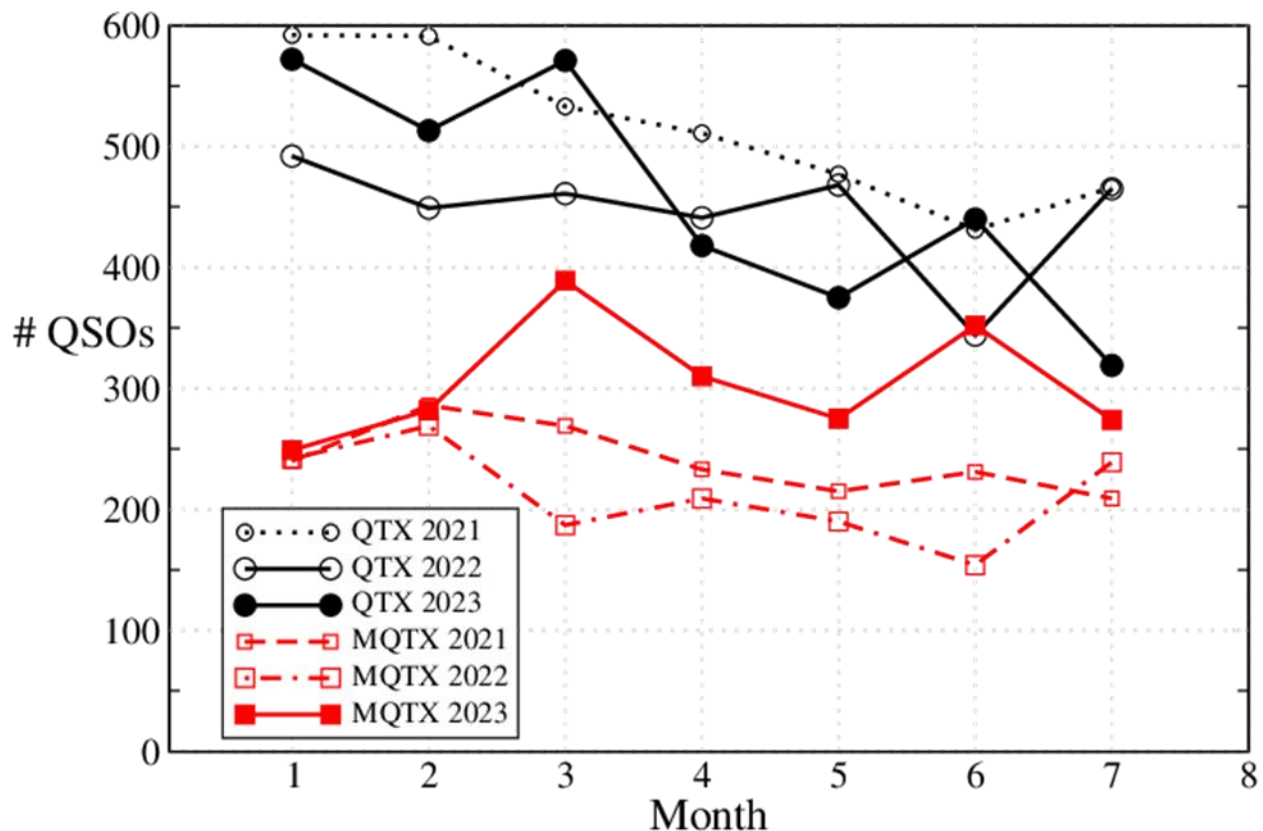
CWops Operating Awards



QTX Report: Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

[Enzo, MØKTZ](#)

Every now and again we hear fellow OMs complaining that “Conversational CW is dying! The bands are awfully silent! There used to be so much more traffic back in ye days of auld! We are doomed! Folks only get on air for contests! CW is dying! The bands are awfully silent!.....”. And, there are also several soapbox comments appearing in this column every month which lament somehow low or lower activity during the past weeks, with a promise of “getting more active” soon. Since I have taken this post, I have been looking with amazement at the monthly reports submitted by our loyal ragchewers, and I have grown the impression that the situation is not a gloomy as it might seem to some of us. I have the clear impression that CW , and in particular the art of conversational CW, is not dying at all, and it is actually alive, and kicking, and getting stronger by the day. But impressions are subjective, and whatever I can say I feel about CW does not help much to cure the depressing views of some of our colleagues. So I decided to provide some objective assessment of the health of CW ragchewing, as seen from this corner of ham radio world that we call QTX/MQTX. I looked at some statistics of monthly and yearly participation to QTX and MQTX, and I decided to share the results with you by commenting on two plots.



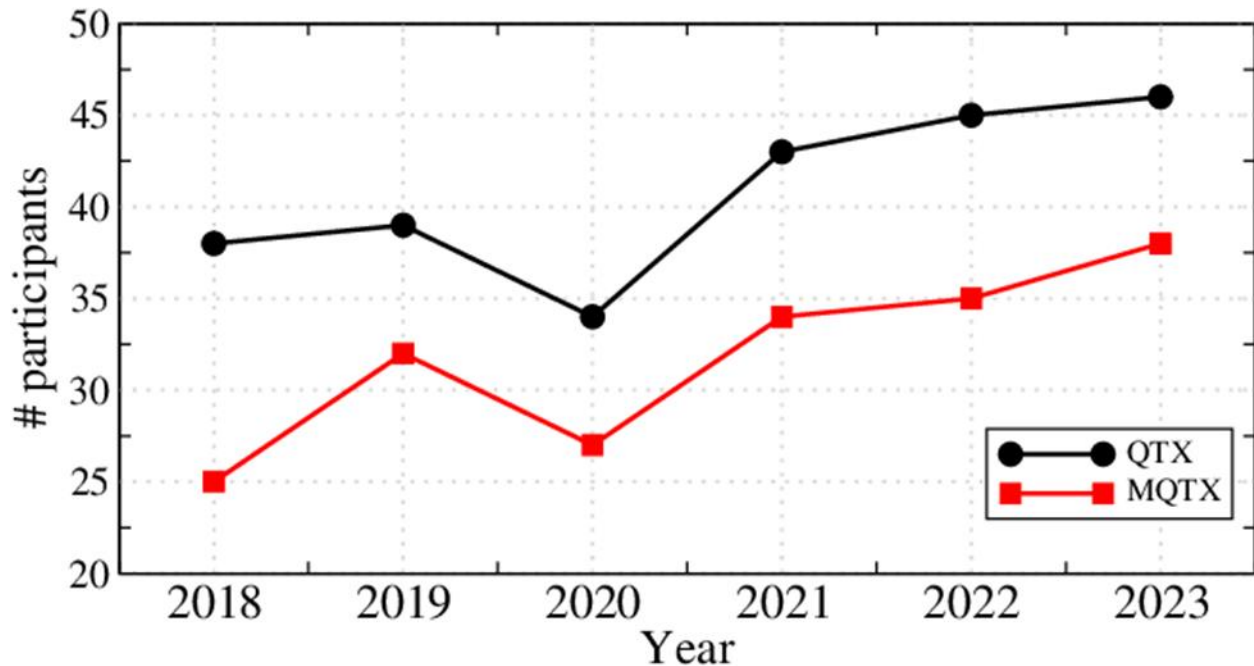
The first plot (above) shows the bare number of QTX and MQTX QSOs reported monthly so far, compared with the same numbers in 2022 and 2021. Looking at QTX values (black lines) we see that there has been indeed a slight decline in activity going from winter to spring to summer, but this is not new or particularly pronounced in 2023, as the same trend has been there at least for

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the past three years. It looks more like a natural consequence of days getting longer, WX getting better, and OMs/YLs spending more time out of the shack, which is definitely a sensible thing to do. For some reason, the number of reported MQTX QSOs (red lines) is more stable over the same period. Actually, by looking at the total number of QTX QSOs reported in the first 7 months of the year (not immediately visible in the plot), we notice a slight but steady increase in the last three years: we had 3072 QTX QSOs reported between January and July 2021, which grew to 3120 in 2022, and tallied to 3208 in 2023, for a net increase of about 4.5% over the three years. Things have gone even better for the total number of MQTX reported in the first seven months of the year: there were 1458 in 2021, 1490 in 2022, and this year the total is at 2131, for an astonishing increase of 46%!!! So much for the pronounced death of conversational CW HI!



Even more interesting is the plot of the number of participants submitting logs for QTX/MQTX up to August *Solid Copy* (so for QSOs up to July) in each year since 2018 (above). For QTX we have seen a 21% increase over the numbers seen in 2018 (from 38 to 46 contributions) while for MQTX we have registered an astonishing 52% increase (from 25 participants in 2018 to the current 38). Although these two plots provide only a partial view of the state of CW ragchewing, I believe they tell an interesting story: conversational CW is far from dead, at least as long as we will have committed YLs and OMs populating the bands with interesting discussions happening over the notes of Morse Code. I hope this little digression has made you feeling a bit more confident in the future of our beloved mode.

On my side, I have had lots of fun in many 2-way bug QSOs, including some with Hanz YL3JD, Kees PA5XM, Tord SM3EVR, Jan PAØSIM, Nando EA4BB, Gerry DK8IT, among the others. And a couple of very interesting and entertaining QRQ ragchews with Tom DF7TV, where we have tried to see how fast The Quick Brown Fox Could Jump Over The Lazy Dog's Back without tripping and falling miserably! HI.

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This month we welcome to the ragchewers crew two new entries, namely Darrell AF4PX and Stan N1ZX. We also note that our own John N6HCN has moved and got the "new" callsign N7HCN. All the totals this month reflect those changes. For Saul W3WHK: bear with us, we are getting there in having the CWops web tool up and running.

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

KG5SSB: Thanks to Rob (K6RB) for the nice QTX during "GB." Rob, I enjoyed hearing your bug! Also, thanks to Benny (K5KV) for a great QSO during FOC Bug Day. 73 – Dan

KC0VKN: Bumped into some folks from Dayton on the bands this month, that was a lot of fun!

AF4PX: Really was able to enjoy "armchair copy" with an easy head copy fist from AAØYY, and WØFN. They are now on my Ham Alert app for future QSO's! FB Mark and Tom

DF7TV: Thanks for the 20+ minutes QSOs in July to DK4LX, K4EWG, KP4DX, M0KTZ, N1GKE, ND2O and W1FCV. Sometimes the miracle just happens -- I immerse into the exchange of ideas, forget about time and even forget that I am doing CW.

YL3JD: Thank you Enzo MØKTZ and Jo PG4I for the nice chats very nice to meet you Enzo and with Jo we regularly have a nice chat and always with mechanical keys. For me the cootie is the key for ragchews. The cootie gives relaxation to the conversation not only by just the handling of the key but for sure the rhythm of it.

VE3WH: It was another intriguing month for conversational CW. I had Three DX MQTXs into France, Mexico and Cuba. With conversational CW you run into many hams who you are simply extending previous QTX or MQTX chin wags.

K9OZ: Another quiet month on the bands. I don't remember having to work this hard to find QSOs last couple of summers.

W9EBE: Roy/K4LJB and I had a nice 32 minute ragchew. I hope to be more radio active in the coming months. 73 es ZUT

K5KXJ: Fun ragchew with John, KL7QZ. First DX QTX for me. Great to chat Houston to Anchorage.

N1ZX: 07/24/23 QSO with WA3RSR 1hr 1min

KG5IEE: A lot of mini-QTX this month. I am amazed at how many hams I QSO with know where the little town I live is located, have been here, have relatives here, or have lived here in the past. Never know what you will find out in a ragchew.

N7HCN: New QTH and call!!! Better antenna site, lots of fine QTX this month. Zero cell service at the house, so CW ragchewing is replacing social texting. Great to work WA6MCL, K6YUF, NEØS, even DX Mini QTXs on 20m after sunset.

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WB4IT: Slow month for me, both with available time and responses on the air.

AAØYY: KD9WOY John, 80 yrs old and new to CW, QSO was 37 minutes long and he said it was "the most fun he has had in a long time." That's a long QSO for a beginner. I was very impressed and also had fun.

W3WHK: Still don't understand why my Awards Tools tally lists as below (Omissis). I have had many more ragchews than this!

KØALT: I was very happy to meet Jalmar, OZ8CW on CW. He let his pileup wait for a while and we chatted about the little island in Denmark where my grandmother grew up. He knows it well. What a small world, he said, and I agree!

KB6NU: I've been working a lot of POTA this summer and not doing as much ragchewing. It's all fun!

AJ1DM: I guess I wasn't on the radio as much as I thought this month. The good news is that one of my ragchews was with one of my CWA students, K4SNH, which is always fb! 73 and tnx for all the Qs!

PG4I: Two QTX QSO's worth mentioning this month: a 24 minute straight key contact with LA9FG, 84 years old and still going strong and a 21 minute QSO with Mark PA4M, both using a cootie.

N9EE: New neighbor at the lake home is emitting S9+ QRN. Patiently practicing neighbor diplomacy and hope to resolve soon. No QTX or MQTX this month. Meanwhile, I'm relegated to POTA.

73, Enzo MØKTZ (CWops # 3206)



Awards and Medals for 2023

Gold – 400 QTX QSOs

Silver Medal – 300 QTX QSOs

Bronze – 200 QTX QSOs

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QTX for July 2023

| <u>Call</u> | <u>QTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>QTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>QTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>QTX</u> |
|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| VE3WH | 44 | K9OZ | 20 | DF7TV | 8 | KØALT | 5 |
| WS1L | 40 | WB4IT | 17 | PG4I | 7 | N1ZX | 4 |
| KY4GS | 33 | AAØYY | 17 | KG5SSB | 7 | GWØETF | 4 |
| KCØVKN | 25 | KR2Q | 14 | KG5IEE | 7 | W9EBE | 2 |
| N7HCN | 21 | F5IYJ | 9 | K5YQF | 7 | K8UDH | 1 |
| KB6NU | 20 | MØKTZ | 8 | AJ1DM | 7 | | |

MQTX for July 2023

| <u>Call</u> | <u>MQTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>MQTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>MQTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>MQTX</u> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| WS1L | 43 | W9EBE | 19 | N7HCN | 7 | GWØETF | 2 |
| MØKTZ | 33 | YL3JD | 17 | KR2Q | 7 | K8UDH | 1 |
| KY4GS | 33 | SV2BBK | 17 | N1ZX | 4 | K5KXJ | 1 |
| VE3WH | 25 | DF7TV | 17 | KG5SSB | 4 | AJ1DM | 1 |
| AAØYY | 25 | WB4IT | 12 | PG4I | 3 | | |
| KG5IEE | 21 | AF4PX | 12 | K5YQF | 3 | | |

QTX Totals for 2023

| <u>Call</u> | <u>QTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>QTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>QTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>QTX</u> |
|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| VE3WH | 357 | ND4K | 84 | W9EBE | 30 | W7JRD | 9 |
| KY4GS | 249 | MØKTZ | 78 | KF6NCX | 29 | W3WHK | 8 |
| WS1L | 246 | WA4IAR | 71 | KK6CN | 22 | YL3JD | 7 |
| K9OZ | 243 | KG5IEE | 71 | WØGAS | 20 | N1ZX | 4 |
| KCØVKN | 187 | AJ1DM | 62 | K5KXJ | 17 | AB4PP | 4 |
| WB4IT | 182 | N2DA | 61 | K4AHO | 15 | WT9Q | 3 |
| KB6NU | 171 | KØALT | 57 | WA2USA | 14 | WA9ZZ | 3 |
| F5IYJ | 146 | KR2Q | 53 | PG4I | 14 | SV2BBK | 2 |
| N5IR | 144 | N9EEE | 48 | W8OV | 12 | NØBM | 2 |
| N7HCN | 124 | K8UDH | 47 | NEØS | 10 | AB7MP | 1 |
| AAØYY | 120 | K6DGW | 42 | GWØETF | 10 | | |
| K5YQF | 87 | KG5SSB | 40 | DF7TV | 10 | | |

MQTX Totals for 2023

| <u>Call</u> | <u>MQTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>MQTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>MQTX</u> | <u>Call</u> | <u>MQTX</u> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| KY4GS | 293 | SV2BBK | 67 | KF6NCX | 21 | W3WHK | 5 |
| MØKTZ | 285 | PG4I | 67 | K8UDH | 21 | K4AHO | 5 |
| AAØYY | 179 | W9EBE | 56 | SV1DAY | 20 | N1ZX | 4 |
| WB4IT | 158 | ND4K | 53 | K6DGW | 17 | G3WZD | 4 |
| VE3WH | 151 | GWØETF | 42 | W8OV | 14 | W7JRD | 2 |
| KG5IEE | 135 | KR2Q | 35 | AB7MP | 13 | NEØS | 2 |
| YL3JD | 114 | AJ1DM | 35 | WØGAS | 12 | K5KXJ | 2 |
| WS1L | 92 | DF7TV | 28 | AF4PX | 12 | NØBM | 1 |
| KG5SSB | 81 | K5YQF | 27 | KK6CN | 9 | | |
| WA4IAR | 71 | N7HCN | 25 | N9EEE | 6 | | |



My Story: New Member Biographies

Compiled by [Tim Gennett, K9WX](#) (CWops #1462)

Matt Bonadies, K9EI #3391

My first interest in radio began back in the late 80's and early 90's with talking to truck drivers on family vacation drives. Then I met a "CBer" who lived down the street from me. He had a gigantic 11 meter band 3 element Quad antenna on his roof. Skip? What's that? Texas?!?! How is that possible?? Hooked.

I realized what I was doing was illegal and frowned on. Not being the one to ruffle feathers, I decided that I was going to get my (ham) license. Enter the year 2000 and I became a Technician - I waited because of the code requirement - with callsign KB9YOJ. Quickly becoming bored with VHF/UHF repeater work, I gave home built antennas a try. I succeeded with a copper J-Pole made from pipe, and it worked great! Another hook. Then I went to Dayton Hamvention in 2000. Whoa! Blown away. Hooked.



For about 10 years I worked in cabling, alarm systems, management, more cabling, and then a career at Indiana University in Networks and Telecommunications. I purchased my first house, and upgraded to General in 2010. From 2012-current I have worked as a Wireless Network Engineer.

I erected a second-hand Butternut HF6V with a DX Engineering radial plate and 60 radials. Paired with my Kenwood TS-570SG, my first HF station was on the air. I was inactive and found SSB to be silly at times. The proliferation of strangeness that existed on 80 and 20 meters SSB kinda turned me off. I hated the license frequency limitations too, and that half of my bandwidth was basically "unused".

Then I got married, had kids, became inactive, and moved again. I needed a challenge. I decided that I wanted to "do the things that I had always wanted to do" in ham radio. That meant CW and Amateur Extra. In 2018 I started a ham club and we put on our first Field Day. I was instantly blown away by my good friend and Elmer Joe K9UR at Field Day running the CW station. He made CW look easy! And super cool. Thanks Joe! Hooked again!

Since then I completed CWA Beginner, became involved with LICW, and created a business building EFHW antennas. I upgraded to Amateur Extra and callsign K9EI. I got involved with a contesting group, met and played radio with some of my favorite Ham Radio icons, and dove head first into Parks on the Air. I also mess with YouTube a little bit. I've been organizing our local Field Day

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since 2018, and love operating CW. I'm still learning and practicing and I just signed up for CWA Fundamental. My next challenge is head copy proficiency, ragchewing, and CW contesting. I should have done this sooner! To think I was scared of CW back in the beginning is now funny. Look at me now!

Besides amateur radio, I enjoy the solace of fishing and spending time with my family. Thanks for the support and nomination to CWops!

Darrell Morgan, AF4PX #3393

He built his own antennas back in the day. I was so impressed that a length of wire or one in the shape of a square could be used as an antenna! Later on as a teenager other things became more important, and radio took a backseat, but never left.

In 1999 working as a Fulton county firefighter, one of my fellow firefighters exposed me to his 2m radio and showed me his phone patch. "Hooked" again by the radio phenomena, my thoughts were Wow! Better than CB radio, now I can be like a TV police and get patched through to a telephone system. I took the Tech test and passed. I went on to become a 20 wpm Extra in less than a year. This is when real radio began for me with CW. I became obsessed with CW, it being similar to golf where you never get a low enough score. I was always wanting to be better and was competing against myself.



I met one of my Elmers on the 2m repeater. He (K4BEH Pat) took me under his wing and helped me with my CW by introducing me to traffic handling. I got involved with the Ohio Valley Training Net where I learned how to send and receive messages with Pat's guidance as I needed it. It wasn't long and I was able to send and receive messages on the Georgia State Net at 20 wpm. Of course writing everything down. Then I began enjoying ragchews, and wearing a pen and paper out. I couldn't understand how Pat could drive down the road, carry on a conversation with me in the car while having a QSO in CW.

I skipped about 10 years of ham radio with family life and work, only to return to CW and Amateur Radio in 2019. Now retired from the fire service, I began to enjoy CW again. My wife said, "This is déjà vu", She has de-de dah-dah, coming from the shack again. My good friend Hal (WB4AEG) told me about the CW Academy. He said, some of the higher speed ops are coming out of the CWA." So I signed up! I set a goal of head copy and a speed of 25 wpm. Hopefully one day I can be like my Elmer, SK K4BEH. There's much owed to the CWA and my advisor AJ1DM for giving me tools necessary to increase my CW vocabulary and achieve my goals. "Always challenging, but not crushing." Although I'll never be as good as I want to be, I'm as good as I can be because of the CW Academy!

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Byron "Pat" Cahill, WØBM #3396

First licensed in 1974 as WNØKRY. In 1979, I upgraded to Advanced and received the call NØADQ. Once the 20 wpm test was waived, I received my Extra license, and a while back got the vanity call WØBM.

I began my professional career at Mayo Clinic as an electronics engineering technologist shortly after. I moved into Information Technology in 1987, working in the ECG lab as an application programmer. In 1990, I moved into the electronic medical records world. I continued in that arena for the rest of my 43 year career as part of the IT teams taking Mayo Clinic from paper records to the current Electronic Health record systems.

I am recently retired, and one of my goals was to finally become adept at CW. I recently completed the CWA Intermediate class. I have participated in a number of CWT sessions, and met one of my goals, being able to "run" during Field Day this year. I made over 100 Field Day contacts. And then I was nominated and sponsored to CWops.

See you in CWT!



Jeffrey Tillman, AE5JT #3389

I was born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas, where I currently live with my wife and two lab mixes. My interest in amateur radio began as a backup form of communication while spending time hunting in more remote portions of Texas, and my interest has continued to grow exponentially since. In November 2021, I took and passed both my Technician and General exams and became licensed as KI5SMF. I did not like that call sign, so I quickly applied for a vanity and became K5JMT. In May 2022, I upgraded to amateur extra and became AE5JT.

I really enjoy Parks on the Air and activate as often as I can, and often hunt parks from home as well. There is something peaceful about enjoying our wonderful hobby outside. I also enjoy working on and improving my portable setup. I am also involved in Fort Worth RACES, ARES, and Skywarn. Lastly, I am a member of Cowtown Amateur Radio Club (K5COW).



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I began learning CW at the beginning of this year and seemed to take to it quickly. I have really enjoyed the process of learning CW. The CWops Academy is a fantastic resource. Without it, I would be nowhere near competent.

Other than radio, my hobbies include hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, and bird watching. It has been a lot of fun integrating radio into the pre-existing hobbies.

I would like to end by thanking several very special CWops members. First, I would like to thank my CWops Academy advisors, Mike (KI7OMH) and Bob (KC9JVB). Their dedication to helping our class learn CW and positive attitudes were instrumental to the success of our class. Second, I would like to thank my nominator and sponsors: Bob (N4BP), Shelby (K4WW), Joe (W6AYC), and Jim (N7AUE). Lastly, I would like to thank Sam (NM5N). Sam introduced me to CW and suggested I attend CWops Academy. He has also put up with an endless stream of questions from me and helped me immensely through my CW journey. I am truly grateful for all of these fine ops and for the opportunity to be a CWops member.

Bill Perrin, JP3REM #3390

I am a long-time resident of Japan and a relatively new ham. In 2016 I discovered that the FCC has VE teams in Japan and that I could test locally to get licensed. Under a reciprocity deal between the US and Japan, I could use that FCC license to get an equivalent license in Japan. I thought that I would give it a try. I had no idea what that would lead to.

After studying for a bit, I passed Tech and General in one sitting, and missed Extra by one question. I received my license in February 2017, and my reciprocal Japan ticket in March. I was hooked. By 2019 I had gone back and taken the Extra exam which I found useful when traveling internationally.



I was using mostly SSB and digital modes but I had always wanted to try CW. After almost 2 years on the CW Academy waiting list I finally got a class in June 2022. Thanks to the pandemic and my newfound ability to work at home I was able to put a lot of time into my CW studies. After passing Beginner and Fundamental with WJØC, I took Intermediate and Advanced with K5GQ.

The CW Academy classes took me from zero to being able to get online without too much difficulty. I'm still quite early in my CW journey but I was honored to have been nominated to CWops. Learning and using CW has become my new passion.

I work for a large Japanese manufacturing company in the IT department, where I do a little bit of everything from maintaining servers, running e-mail systems, creating websites, controlling DNS, maintaining a global domain portfolio, and heavy involvement with security. I enjoy tech-

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nology and was even encouraged by one of the directors to get my ham license.

Although not an engineer, I enjoy the technical aspects of connecting my radio gear to my PCs (only Linux). I have also found interest in experimenting with antennas. Given the lack of space in Japan I have to be a bit creative.

When asking around about how I might get on 80m with limited space, A1CLUB/CWops member JJ1FXF told me about a popular antenna in Japan that uses a carbon fiber fishing pole as a driven element. This fishing rod is hooked to a tuner at the base, and with a few radials in place I have a working vertical that allowed me to work from England in the west to Delaware in the east in the recent All Asian DX contest. I was pleasantly surprised by this antenna's performance. I plan to experiment more.

I am still studying CW and trying to get involved with as many online activities as my schedule will allow. I would like to thank Mark K5GQ for the nomination, and to those who sponsored me for CWops membership. I never expected to come this far so fast.

Paul R. Goemans, WA9PWP #3401

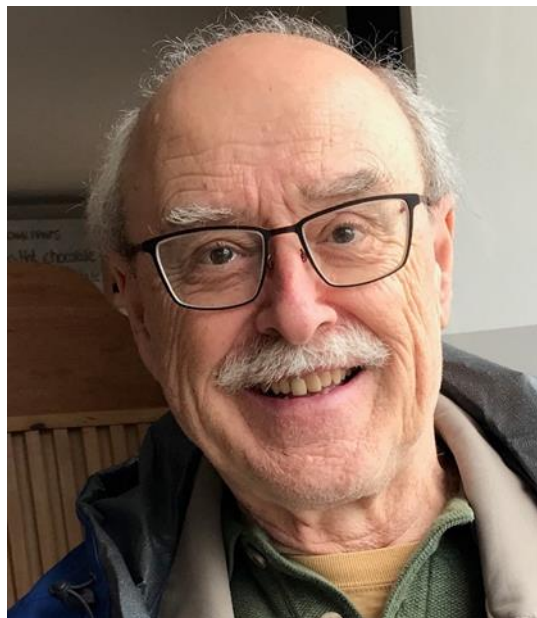
My first exposure to ham radio was seeing an older cousin, Dick, K9BBT's ham radio station at his boyhood home. It was mysterious to me at my young age. By the time I was in high school, I was into electronics and shortwave listening. I joined the school radio club where after being Elmered by the club president, WA9FRQ, I passed the Novice license test and became WN9PWP in 1965. I took to CW easily, set up a station in my bedroom, and was off and running! I became WA9PWP in 1966.

Moving from Green Bay to Madison, Wisconsin, I met some local hams, and more in the University of Wisconsin EE Program. Local clubs kept me on the air.

I married in 1969, to a woman who became N9AWW (SK). Two sons also were licensed at an early age, one is still N9HAD. I enjoyed a 41-year career as a consumer electronics service professional, repairing to component level. Needless to say, I melted a lot of solder. That's probably why I got interested in QRP with the tiny CW kit rigs. I retired in 2011.

I am not a great DXer but will work it if I can. I still love CW for its ability to get through when signals are borderline. I am an ARRL Life member, ARRL A-1 Op, DXCC, and a member of FISTS, 4 State QRP Group, QRP ARCI. I'm not a contester but may jump in and give out some points now and then!

I was totally surprised to be nominated, sponsored, and asked to join CWops recently. I consider it a great honor and acknowledgement of my love of CW. I will continue to enjoy, and promote CW!



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Graeme Morgan, VK5GG #3397

First, I would like to thank my sponsors – Chris VK3QB, Ian ZL2AIM, Pat ON7PQ and Nando EA4BB.

I'm 51, married to Xuemei, and work in the electricity distribution industry here in Adelaide. My interest in radio began as a 10 year old when I discovered the shortwave broadcast bands. Later I came to learn Morse code when as a 16 year old, I enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) as a radio operator, serving more than ten years.

I was first licenced in 2006, and have held callsigns in VK2, P29 and now VK5. You may also hear me as B8/VK5GG when holidaying in Guiyang, China.

My station is simple, 100w and a vertical, I enjoy ragchewing, working DX, some contesting, and operating QRP when conditions allow.

I look forward to meeting more club members on the air, and also operating in the CW Open this September.

Henk Plantjé, PC4H #3399

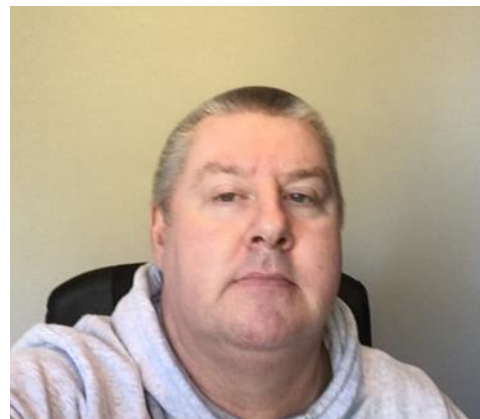
As a child I became interested in radio when I was 9 years old.

It started with a CB handheld HT which was illegal in that period, and later radio transmissions on the 3 meter FM in stereo. At that time I was a boy scout and my leader was working at the agency to locate illegal radio stations. He heard me and gave me a warning. He introduced me in the early 70s to a ham with an impressive Heathkit line.

I became interested right away, and with his help started to build my own Heathkit HR10b receiver. I was very active as SWL with that receiver and was highly ranked in the Dutch SWL competition. I was also very interested in radio technics and at age 16 I passed for the C license radio amateur exam.

When I became 18, I got my first 2 meter Yaesu radio. I still was interested in HF operation so I decided to learn Morse code for the A (full) license exam at 12 wpm. In 1990 I became the A license and call PA3FMC. I got more interested in contests so had to improve my CW further.

I did some more practice and decided to participate in CW contests. During weekdays I discov-



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ered the CWops activity which I really like. You will hear me in many contests and I am also still a member of scouting and active during Jamboree on the Air.

The last 5 years also active from LX9S during Jamboree on the Air. There I like to introduce Morse code to the scouts and do workshops with it.

I am very happy to be part of the CWops community and hope to work you soon.

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Solid Copy is a monthly newsletter focused on the amateur radio world of Morse code (CW) and is written by members of The CW Operators Club (CWops) providing news and information, technical articles, member activities, contesting, operating events, awards, and club announcements. All content (text and images) remains the property of the author and/or originating source who should be contacted for reprint permission. Permission is granted—in fact, encouraged—to post this newsletter on social media outlets or forward to friends with attribution to the author and the source being CWops' *Solid Copy*.

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