

Solid Copy



The CW Operators Club Newsletter
December 2023 — Issue 167



President's Message

The topic of CW punctuations, prosigns and procedural crops up every now and then as it did recently on the CW Academy listserv group in relation to advising Academy students as



they prepare for their first live QSOs. There are

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

CWO Mini-club callsign web site:
<http://cwomc.org>

CWops "neighborhood": Look for CWops on 1.818, 3.528, 7.028, 10.118, 14.028, 18.078, 21.028, 24.908, 28.028, 50.098 "and up"

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a considerable number of these code elements available, most of which we as radio amateurs will be happy to ignore. If you tune into the W1AW code practice transmissions which are verbatim copies of pages from QST you will hear many of these and if you're like me can only guess at their meaning. Such things as quotation marks, opening and closing brackets, colon, percentage, ampersand – all easily ignored for usual amateur CW purposes. Stephen Philips who writes the software which accompanies the Academy course material has a fairly complete list on his website. We commonly use maybe 6~10 and ignore the rest and Advisors teaching in the Academy will be helping their students learn the way they are used on the air.

CW is a living language. Academic languages like Latin (Esperanto?) can be governed by rigorous sets of rules which are followed meticulously. CW is unique in that it is used all over the world by individuals whose spoken languages and cultures are many and varied; it's not surprising then that we find variations in the way these common 'meta-data' codes are used and continue to evolve. My memory may have become clouded but I seem to recall hearing AR in common use in North America to conclude a CQ call without the K more normally used in Europe and elsewhere. Seems less common now but I still hear it. The use of KN as an invitation for a specific station to respond appears to have fallen out of favour now and replaced by a simple K and assumption that the context will indicate a private QSO is in progress. Living languages adapt and evolve and it won't be long I'm sure before we hear a new Q-code (or why not simply XIT!) as a request for zero beat cluster generated pile-ups to spread out a few Hz.....! How we correct a mistake is an interesting one: the official prosign which is still published is 8 dits HH but when was the last time you heard that in a QSO? The almost universal method seems to be some variation on a couple of spaced dits preceding the re-sent word but there are others.

It's easy enough to provide a learner with a short list of prosigns and be confident that they will be understood. But what happens when they hear unfamiliar alternatives or familiar ones used in a different context? I normally cover all bases with something like *"Use X but you'll also hear Y as well, or even Z occasionally...."* I'm never surprised to pick up a sense of nervousness on the part of the learner when told this – a fear of the unexpected when what they want is certainty. My advice in that situation is to fall back on the time honoured technique of **listening!** This may have fallen out of favour over the decades but for many years time spent listening was the basis of an apprenticeship in ham radio in general and CW operating habits more specifically. It's a habit I still follow when 'tattooing' in the shack with a hot soldering iron or setting up software – my favourite at the moment is monitoring the antics surrounding the latest dxpeditions. And finally don't forget the sympathetic ear awaiting any Academy students in the Giving Back session at 7pm local time - <https://cwops.org/giving-back/>

Here in Western Europe we've been plagued by a constant procession of storms lately. My Hexbeam seems to stand up to most winds very well but I do keep a close eye on the pressure chart as each approaches and one recent named storm had me worried and saw me lowering the mast before conditions made it impossible. I use a 'linear actuator' arrangement to push up the mast (see Solid Copy June 2019) and being quite involved and time consuming I attempt to avoid lowering more than absolutely necessary; it's probably around 70% meteorology and 30% crossing of fingers! When it's fully lowered the base of the Hex is at my head height (~2m) and I'm pleasantly surprised how well it continues to perform, aided no doubt by the fact that the

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mast sits on a rise with the ground dropping away all around and particularly steeply to the west. On one particular afternoon on 10m running 100w I had many comfortable rag-chews right across to the Rockies; one fellow CWops member and Hex user in the US recounted how he found the same when he initially erected his antenna on a 2m pole so it's not just me. Sometimes it's fun to ignore the theory and just get on air and see what happens...

And so we head to what for many is another Christmas season of celebration. Even amongst the tight knit community of CWops wishing everyone a peaceful Christmas may for some sound incongruous but most will be spending valuable time with family and friends and enjoying their time together. Christmas greetings to all and hope 2024 fulfils your hopes and expectations.

Matt Frey CE2LR has served on the CWops Board representing South America as one of our Directors for the past 3 years. His tenure comes to an end this month so as President of CWops I'd like to thank Matt for his service on behalf of the whole Board.

With no nominations received the seat of Director for South America remains open for the moment. Ken, JN1THL is continuing for a further 3 years. James, 9V1YC is joining us as a new Director. We are very grateful to both!

See you next year.....!

73, Stew GWØETF, President (CWops #919)

SC

Editor's Note: Jumping In

I joined CWops a couple of years ago after "graduating" from an Intermediate Class with the CW Academy. Since then, I've occasionally participated in the CWTs; I don't claim to be a contester but enjoy the bite-sized sprints which are easy to jump in, or not. I joined a CW Open team, the Wiskeys. I proofread the Bylaws prior to publishing. And you know that I devote a fair amount of time to our monthly newsletter, *Solid Copy*. Not that I have more time to give - I'm also the President of our local club and highly active in its activities - but since I was re-introduced to CW via the CW Academy and their wonderful advisors, I decided to return the favor late last year by advising my own class. There was some added motivation for me besides self-satisfaction, though. I led a group of Beginners from my local club so I could grow CW within the club. There had been some pent up intrigue from my constant yet subtle references to the benefits of CW operating at Field Day and POTA outings. Out of seven students, I think I'll have three join me at the key next Field Day. What I didn't realize is how "into it" I would get and am now about to lead three US, two UK and one from Norway into the world of CW via my next Beginners Class with CW Academy. And I'm still looking at other ways to be immersed in CWops. To those who haven't put their toe in the water, just Jump In. The water is fine...its better than fine.

73, Dick N9EEE, (CWops #3113)

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

News and Notes

Duncan (Mac) Fisken, G3WZD

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

Gene Sochor, N9SW #798 on 20th September, 2023

Ken Beals, K6MR #1270 on 13th November, 2023

Condolence cards have been sent on behalf of CWops

My usual thanks to all contributors for the varied selection of topics. Please keep the submissions coming, but don't wait until the monthly call for articles or reminder (deadline for the next issue is 3rd January). In the meantime, I wish you all Very Happy Holidays!

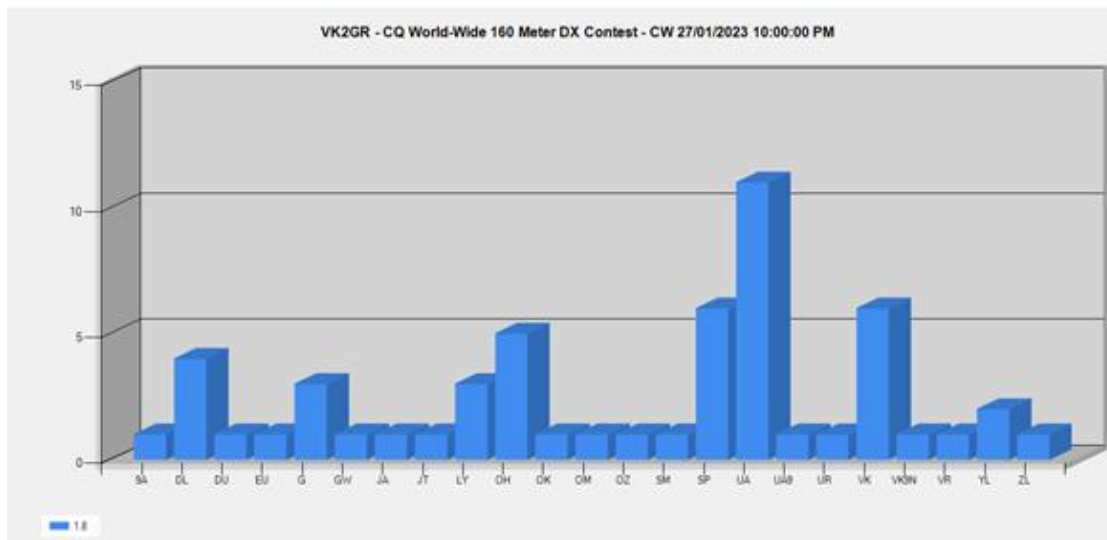
Allan, VK2GR #3087 I was surprised with an unexpected mail delivery this month. It was nagging at me as to why and how I was eligible for the CQ 160m Southern Hemisphere Single Operator CW plaque.

Reviewing the 2023 160m contest log revealed the following: evening summer storms on that weekend with no contacts to North or South America due to very heavy QRN. On day 1 from 1800 to 1900 UTC, the band was open to Europe with 32 stations contacted in a single run of 25 minutes. On day 2 for the same time, the band was also very good to Europe. A total 55 QSOs for 23 DXCC entities. In hindsight, the Gray Line and Ionospheric gods were smiling on me that weekend. Apart from the nearby Pacific islands, the 160m band is very difficult from south eastern Australia, I use a full sized 160m dipole, two Beverage antennas and a K9AY directional loop antenna; I have 116 DXCC confirmations on the 160m band.



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Thank you to Robert W7RH for the plaque sponsorship.

Saul W3JHK, #1392 Since WA2DNI does not do CW, his quite well-appointed station in Staten Island, NY would not have been able to contribute to our Frankford RC aggregate score in CQWW-CW. K2XR had the bright idea of hooking us up to operate WA2DNI remotely, and provided the necessary instruction and technical support.

We operated 28 hours, and I'm told our 1.5 million score is "quite respectable", especially with no 80 or 160 antennas. I did most of the operating, with K2XR doing "mornings for mults". We kept WA2DNI busy switching antennas and aiming the beam.

This was my first remote operation, and my first experience using high-power and decent antennas. I could get used to receiving a lot of immediate replies, and to effortlessly working many DX countries I rarely even hear at home.

Jim, N3JT #1 It is critical to have somebody available to fix things when you are operating your station 1,200 miles away. My 80M ground plane developed infinite SWR suddenly, after a wind-storm. A W4 friend went to the house and immediately saw that the wire between the coax center conductor and the support insulator was broken. He untied my granny-knot secured rope support, lowered the antenna, soldered the wire back in place and hoisted the antenna. Good as new!

Dan, KB6NU #1418 I have just been awarded an \$18,000 grant by [Amateur Radio Digital Communications](#) (ARDC) to bring amateur radio to communities that I think should have more radio amateurs, such as the hacker community, STEM community, and electrical engineering community. At these events, I will teach a Technician Class license class and arrange for a VE test session to be conducted concurrently. Part of the program may also be an introductory talk on amateur radio. The classes, class materials, and license testing will all be free of charge to attendees.

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Currently on the schedule are [DEFCON](#), the biggest hacker conference in the world, which will be held August 8-11, 2024 in Las Vegas, and [Hackers on Planet Earth](#) (HOPE), which will be held July 20-22, 2024 in New York City. I am currently looking for two other events to attend in 2024.

My fiscal sponsor for the grant is [Ham Radio Village](#), a club which promotes amateur radio and believes that wireless products and services would be safer, more secure, and more innovative, if more people were involved in amateur radio.

Marko, N5ZO #1224 This operation was a couple of years in making as we discussed with Jorge CX6VM via email, and then finally met during WRTC in Italy this summer where final plans were formed to come down and operate CW contest from his station from zone 13. This was one of the CQ zones I had not yet operated the CQWW contest from. The contest callsign was CW5W.

Due to some broken rotators and antennas, we decided that 10 m single band entry would be best, and I actually think I was able to make just as many QSOs on single band as I would have been able to do in All Band category effort from CX.

During weeks prior to the contest, Jorge replaced his big 60-metre high tower, and was able to complete re-installing the 6-ele 10M Optibeam monobander at the top of that tower for this contest. It was indeed a great antenna to use for Long Path to Asia and beyond. In addition, there



Marko N5ZO (L) & Jorge CX6VM (R)

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was a 3x5-ele fixed stack to US and also a 3x5-ele stack to Europe with the top antenna rotating also. So, there were plenty of weapons to use and beam multiple directions at the same time.

I travelled to CX over land border from PY and met Jorge actually in Bage, a small city about 60 km on the Brazilian side. Right after we arrived at the station on Tuesday before the contest, we had a huge storm pass through and power was out for a day or so, but fortunately nothing fell down from the towers, and everything worked fine during the weekend.

I brought some gear from my home station, and was able to use 2 K3 radios Jorge had in SO2V configuration. This allowed me to tune another radio at the same time I was running, to find un-worked stations elsewhere on the band.

Stretch goal was to try to make a new 10M world record. In the end, I could not quite get there mainly due to a lack of multipliers, especially in Caribbean/Central America but it is a new QSO record of any single band in WW CW. I'm sure I missed a few countries, but I did work everything I heard and did not need to waste time busting pileups, I usually got through with a couple of calls. I had European multipliers very well covered already after the first day.

Conditions were great especially on the first day and it only slowed to a crawl for a couple of hours the first night as I only got 20 Qs into the log. The second night was slower, and I slept for 3 hours and still went another 1.5 hrs before the band started to open.

My most memorable QSO was busting a huge 7O73T pileup with a couple of calls via long path over Pacific, China, and India all the way to horn of Africa. Another memory is what's with dupes; I worked another 248 duplicates! Jorge's station really gets out and I'm grateful for the opportunity to come down here; it was a contest to remember and we had great time. It was also my 37th zone to operate CQWW contest from. My 40 zones lifetime goal is very close now.

In addition to CQWW contest operation, I made few hundred 10M CW QSOs prior to contest as CX/N5ZO including a few QSOs in a couple of CWTs during the week before CQWW contest. 73 and tnx for QSOs!

Josep, EA6BF #3072 Finally I could make it through; the Remote station and antenna are now up and running.

This morning (6th December) with the help of some fellow hams, I could raise the SpiderBeam up. It's about 12m from ground and some 8-9m from the roof of the house.

Tested today in the 13:00 UTC CWT and even the conditions were not the best, the feeling has been good. Location is great and antenna works pretty good so I'm happy.!

I'm ready for the ARRL 10m Contest next weekend.!! I can't dedicate 100% time due to family commitments, but I will be on and off.

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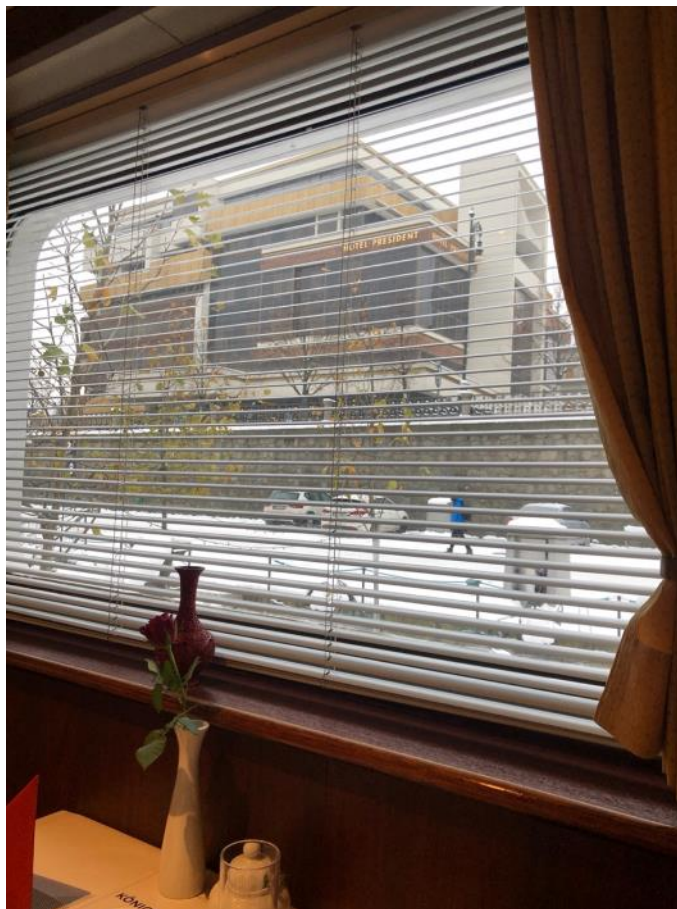
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Stew, GW0ETF #919 On a five-day trip to Prague. Travel Agent/XYL booked a plush river boat accommodation, but I looked out at breakfast and wondered if she got it wrong...



Duncan, G3WZD #1979 I've enjoyed using my Icom IC-705 on several trips, especially to EA6, SV8 and 9A. Problems that I'd tried to solve, without real success using several homebrew arrangements, were stability on an operating surface, and an appropriate height to allow easy adjustment of controls. Another was protecting the rig from damage during travel.

I came across the cage, from US manufacturer [Peovi Camera Mounts](#), at UK ham radio retailer [ML&S](#), and decided it would do the job. Please note, other than being a very satisfied user, I have no connection to or interest in either organisation.

My first impression was of the great care that obviously went into packaging the kit of parts, including a nicely detailed assembly drawing. Thoughtfully, the kit includes a 2.5mm hex wrench for the screws. All parts are very well engineered and in hard black anodised finish, and the assembly took only a few minutes.

The cage allows the radio to sit on a flat surface, stably and at a convenient angle.

This however didn't quite solve the problem of having the radio at a comfortable height for control adjustment. I'd tried small tripods but that resulted in the radio moving as I pushed buttons, so decided on an adjustable camera Z-mount, freely available from online sources such as Amazon. The mount screws directly into the threaded hole on the bottom of the cage.

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Until the next News and Notes.. dit dit!

73, Duncan, G3WZD (CWops #1979)
(NewsAndNotes@CWops.org)



REMINDER

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How We Were

[Ian Capon](#), GWØKRL

Tim Kirby, GW4MM / GW4VXE (CWops #2755)



"My first HF rig was an ICOM IC-740 bought from AmComm in London in 1983. I didn't drive at the time, so I went to London on the train, took the tube from Paddington to Ealing and picked it up. I remember having to carry it back from the rail station to my parents' home – a distance of about a mile. My arm ached at the end of that walk, but it was worth it! My own HF rig!

"I'd bought the rig when I still only had my class B callsign (at the time, restricted to 2m and above), G6TTU and I was frantically learning morse. I quickly put it to good use though, on the downlink of the RS satellites (29MHz) and had a lot of fun working DX (I remember TU2IT, OX3WS and others). Happily, shortly after, I passed my Morse test at the Marine Office in Cardiff and became G4VXE.

"The IC-740 went on to make many thousands of QSOs. The transmitter only packed up a few years ago and sadly, I don't have the rig any more, but it did me well! I do still have the Bencher you can see on top of the IC-740, and I'll bet it's worked a fair few of you!"

So now it's your turn, do you have a picture to share accompanied by a brief paragraph description, of your early days in radio, experimenting, exploring or just "being a ham". Please send it to [Ian Capon](#).

73, Ian GWØKRL (CWops #2896)

QST Cover Plaque Award Winner

Marcia Forde, KW1U (CWops #706)

Fred Kemmerer, AB1OC

Congratulations

July 2023

QST Cover Plaque Award Winner

*Fred Kemmerer,
AB1OC, and
Marcia Forde,
KW1U*

In their article, "The National Traffic System — A History and ARRL's Path Forward," Fred and Marcia share details on the past, present, and future of the National Traffic System.

QST Cover Plaque Awards are given to the author or authors of the most popular article in each issue. *You* choose the winners by casting your vote online at

www.arrl.org/cover-plaque-poll

Log in now and choose your favorite article in this issue!

The National Traffic System — A History and ARRL's Path Forward

Everything hams need to know about the past, present, and future of the NTS.

Fred Kemmerer, AB1OC, and Marcia Forde, KW1U

The National Traffic System (NTS) is an important resource for amateur radio public service and emergency communications. A major focus is to ensure that we can deliver traffic quickly and efficiently during emergency situations. It also serves as an enjoyable activity and training ground for amateur radio operators.

History

Amateur radio is many things, including a voluntary noncommercial communication service offered to the public. It was for this communication service that ARRL was created. Following the trunk lines of the early 1900s and a hiatus during World War II, the NTS was formed in 1949. Throughout its existence, the NTS has always been ready to assist in natural and manmade disasters.

Messages were relayed using radiograms patterned after the telegrams of the 1800s and early 1900s. Messages are now generally relayed through a network of traffic nets, both CW and voice. By the 1990s, a digital traffic network was formed using HF PACTOR and VHF packet and later, the sound card mode VARA HF. This network, with regional hubs across the country and operating 24/7, was designed with interoperability in mind, so messages can easily move between the various modes, and be delivered within hours rather than days.

The Current State of the NTS

Today, rapid and inexpensive means of communication are available throughout the world, leading some to question the future of the NTS. Modern communication methods have led to a dependence on the internet, which is subject to disablement due to cyberattacks and extreme weather events. For this reason, emergency communication via other means has become a major focus of many, including the amateur radio community and ARRL. A revitalization to better support emergency responders is a primary reason for modernizing the NTS. There is also a need to recruit



Ethan Hansen, KC1OIP, relays radiogram messages from his station via the NTS. (Photo courtesy of Ethan Hansen, KC1OIP)

new traffic handlers, standardize methods and training, and improve message delivery speed and reliability.

Plans for Improvement

In April 2022, the ARRL Emergency Communications and Field Services Committee chartered a project called NTS 2.0 to develop ways to improve ARRL's support for NTS and help it evolve and grow. The NTS 2.0 Steering Committee led the working group by surveying the current state of the NTS and developing goals for ARRL's support going forward. The Steering Committee's efforts include a comprehensive set of issues that must be addressed to realize the NTS 2.0 goals. Some important issues include:

- Improving ease and reliability of delivered messages
- Handling Incident Command System ICS-213 traffic in a consistent manner, including interworking standards to better enable transit via digital, voice, and CW modes
- Creating nationwide standards and tools for reporting traffic
- Developing measurement methods to assess and improve reliability, speed, and other performance issues
- Providing resources that enable the public and other emergency communications services to easily access the NTS to send and receive messages

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CQWW DX Contest (CW) - The TK4W Story

[Philipp Springer](#), DK6SP (CWops #2588)

The Contest

Start date : 2023-11-25
Contest : CQ World Wide
Callsign used : TK4W
Operator(s) : DJ2MX DJ4MX DK2CX DK6SP F5SNJ HA8RT
Mode : CW
Category : Multi-operator, two transmitters
Station : Fixed
Overlay :
Band(s) : All bands
Class : High
Gridsquare : JN42JO
Club/Team : Bavarian Contest Club
Software : DXLog.net 2.5.50
Operating time : 47h 00m

BAND	QSO	DXCC	ZONE	DUPE	POINTS	AVG
160	714	62	12	13	880	1.2
80	1755	100	29	37	2820	1.6
40	2201	118	35	50	3958	1.8
20	1122	111	32	21	2190	2.0
15	1961	122	36	26	3819	2.0
10	1586	120	33	13	3259	2.1
TOTAL	9339	633	177	160	16926	1.8
=====						
FINAL SCORE: 13,710,060						

We appreciated the many CWops QSOs during CQWW CW weekend!

Some of you already contacted me for an OP info of their according TK4W QSO(s). Please contact me in [private email](#), we are happy to provide the information for the CWops award.

--

73 Philipp, DK6SP | DQ5M

The TK4W Story

After slowly assembling our equipment for the upcoming DXpedition to 8R - Guyana in February 2024 (<https://8r-2024.com/>) over the past months, it was time for a final "ON-AIR" test.

When we learned that S50C would not be active as TK0C this year but would be QRV from the Cape Verde Islands, we quickly agreed on a small M/2 activity as TK4W from Corsica. An international team led by 3 out of 4 of 8R-DXpeditioners DJ4MX, DK6SP, and HA8RT, along with DJ2MX, DK2CX, and F5SNJ, was quickly formed. After finding a good AirBnB location near the TK0C QTH, booking the ferry from Livorno, and gathering all the necessary equipment, we set off for Italy last Tuesday evening. The callsign, inspired by the last BCC activity in 2011, was promptly organized by F5SNJ. So, we were well-prepared for our Corsican venture.

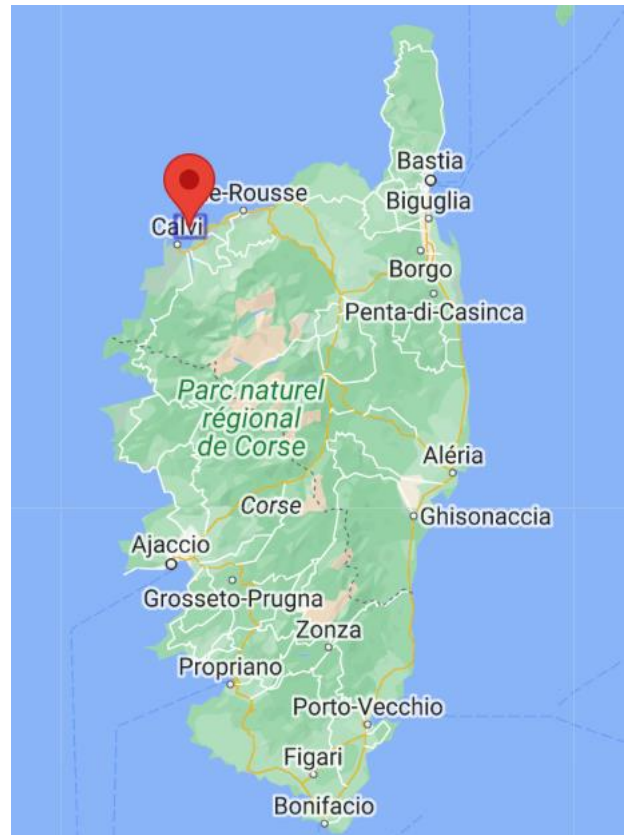
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Shortly after the Brenner Pass, we enjoyed our first good coffee, and everything was still going well. However, upon arriving at the port in Livorno early in the morning, things took a turn for the worse. Due to bad weather in Bastia, we couldn't sail and spent the night in Vada instead. Over pizza and beer, we discussed how to handle the lost setup day. Since we had set up and tested our equipment enough times before, we were confident that everything could be done in one day with the available resources.

So, when we arrived late Thursday evening at the QTH near Calvi on the north coast of Corsica, we quickly pre-assembled the Hexbeam and finished wiring the two stations in the house. After a relatively short night, we started early in the morning around 06:30 with the Lowband Verticals for 160m and 80m. After a few thorns in the calf, all planned radials were in place, and we continued with the assembly of the Hex-and Spider-



40 meters antenna

beam. These two antennas were also set up without any issues. Finally, we placed our 40m Vertical by the sea and connected the BOG receiving antenna. Fortunately, the mammoth project of assembling all antennas in just one day worked out. Exhausted from the day, the first shift took a few hours of rest, and the final touches were made to the station. We were QRV with two signals at 00:00 UTC... but not for long.

As it sometimes happens on the coast, there can be gusts of wind. Despite precautions with not fully extended and overlapping masts, we discovered a bent mast with the Spiderbeam and a Hexbeam repeatedly folding in the wind just before sunrise. To prevent further damage, both antennas were taken down from their respective masts. Unfortunately, one aluminum mast had to be shortened by about 1.5m. The second mast received the balun from the Spiderbeam, and the three dipoles for 10/15/20m were added as emer-

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gency antennas. These were then supplied with HF using our triplexer. With this improvised setup, we were active on the high bands until around Sunday noon ... and it worked quite well! The other antennas performed well and withstood the consistently present wind. On Sunday afternoon, we reinstalled our 3-band Spiderbeam on the dipole mast, this time with even more overlap. Fortunately, the wind stopped blowing just in time.

The dismantling on Monday was rather uneventful. All salt layers on masts and guy ropes were roughly removed and loaded back into the two cars. However, during the dismantling of the 40m Vertical, we received an SMS from Corsica Ferries canceling our planned ferry back to Italy on

Tuesday morning. So, we extended our vacation, AirBnb, and rental car, and enjoyed another day in Corsica. Since all antennas were already taken down, DJ2MX's SOTA equipment and a Vertical for 15/40m were hastily set up. This allowed us to log a few more QSOs in our TK/Homecall logs.



160 meters antenna

In summary, fortunately, not much went wrong, and the station performed exceptionally well. We will now repair and pack the equipment as necessary and sensible for the upcoming departure to 8R - Guyana.

An upload to LOTW was conducted already. If you want to receive a QSL card from the activity, you'll have to be patient for a bit. We are working on a design, Clublog OQRS is opened already.



Hexbeam



Spiderbeam

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RIG: 2x ICOM IC-7610, 2x Amplifier, 160m L, V80, 40m L/4, Hexbeam (20/15/10), Spiderbeam (20/15/10), Dipoles (20/15/10)

Many thanks to all sponsors and supporters (<https://8r-2024.com/sponsors/>).

On behalf of the TK4W team we would like to thank you once again for the many calls, it was a real pleasure to represent the TK Multiplier on the bands.

—

73 de Team TK4W



Youth Ops



Coming up in the January issue of Solid Copy...

Morse Code Mysteries Book Reviews

NA American CW Weekend

Hamvention CWops Dinner

Advancing the Art of CW

States QSO Party

Marconi Day Contest

...and more!

SC

Hokkaido Ham Fair 2023

[Ken Tanuma](#), JN1THL (CWops #161)

I exhibited CWops at the Hokkaido Ham Fair (Sapporo) on September 23 and 24. We promoted CWops and recruited CWT and CW Open participation as we did at the Tokyo Ham Fair. We were assisted by JF1UOX Misa (CWops #3011), JA8RUZ Toshi and the Asahikawa KW Group in running the booth.



JF1UOX Misa, and JN1THL Ken

JA8RUZ Toshi, JA5SUD President of JARL, with JN1THL Ken

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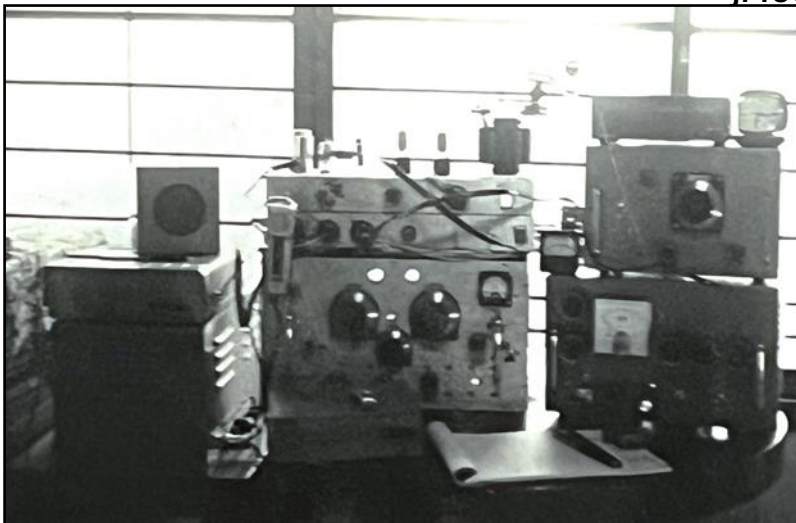


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JA8DYM Mrs. Nukaya (a Japanese CW code expert), whom we met again after 60 years, JI8KXC Mrs. Tsukahara, President of JLRS and JA5SUD President of JARL visited CWops booth.



JE1UOX, JI8KXC, and JA8DYM



For me, Sapporo is a place with deep memories since I started to use amateur radio in 1964, when I was in the second grade of junior high school. I made a TX 2E26 final with 6V6 PP plate screen simultaneous modulation and a RF1 IF2 receiver.

It was my first visit to Sapporo in a long time, so I spent some days there after the ham fair.

I met my amateur radio teacher, JA8PU Mr. Nakamura. 60 years ago, the night before the HAM exam, I stayed at his house and he taught me many things to prepare for the exam. He also taught me how to build a transmitter and receiver and how to operate.



My teacher JA8PU Mr. Nakamura

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JA8RUZ Toshi took me to Sapporo's large hill ski Jump Stadium, and sightseeing Sapporo city. 1972 Olympic was held

(Large Hill)



Then visited the contest station JH8JWF.

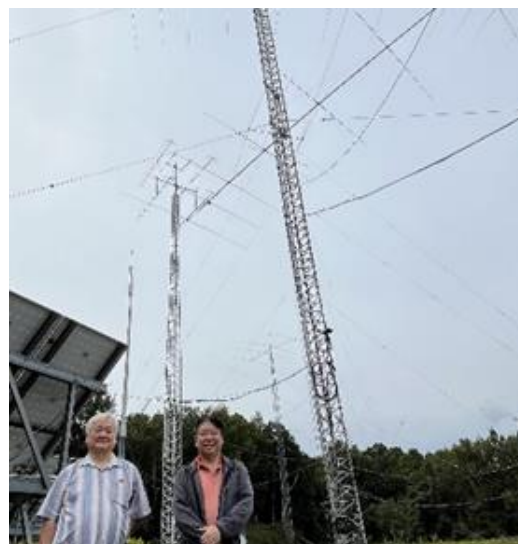
(JH8JWF Eiki with Ken)

He also took me to Asahikawa to see the Asahikawa HAMS antennas.

I enjoyed each day and I would like to visit again next year.

(Eiki's Nice antenna 6 towers)

Tram Operated by Sapporo City Almost same as 60 years ago.



Roll Your Own QSL Card

[Roger Carver](#), AE5EZ (CWops #3413)

So, you want to make your own QSL card, do you?

I thought I did and after much experimentation and hundreds of variations I settled on the following image, which was originally produced using an AI product. Using other image editing programs, such as Paint, and eQSL card editing feature, Figure 2 was the final product. The card in Figure 2 is printable and can also sent electronically.

In the immortal words of Clint, you've gotta ask yourself a question: "Do I feel lucky... Well, do ya, punk? "

Well, the truth is, with AI you don't necessarily need to feel lucky. Just better informed. There are a number of AI art programs out there, but for this article, I only want to talk about one. It's DALL-E 2 by OpenAI. *Disclaimer, I neither receive remuneration or have any commercial interest in OpenAI products.*

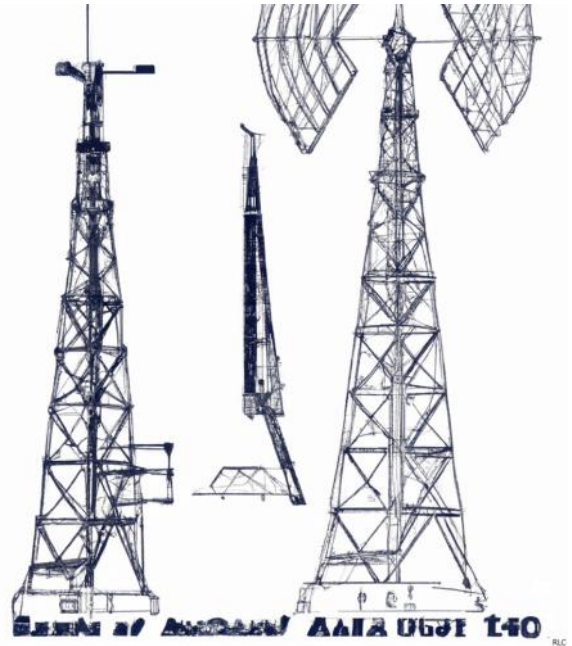


Figure 1 - AI original art image

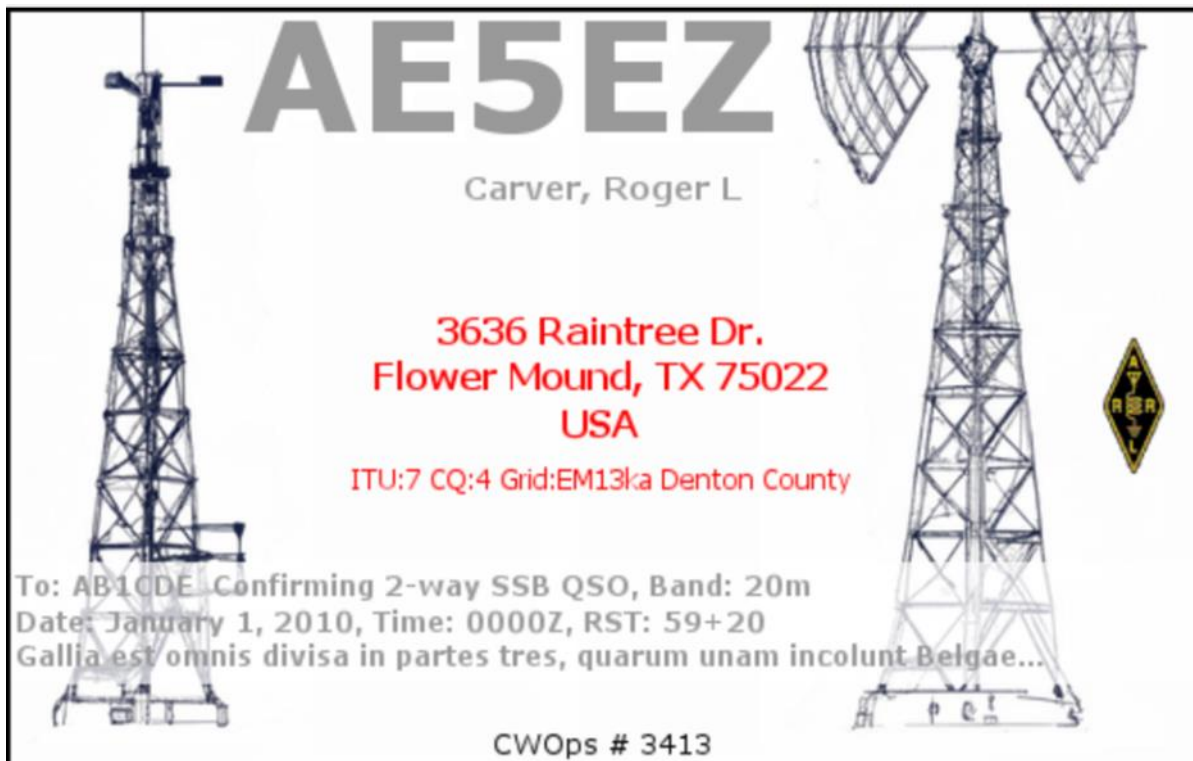


Figure 2 - Latest AE5EZ QSL Card Design

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DALL·E 2 is an art image generation program trained from over 6 million works by many, many artists. It knows styles and techniques from KODACHROME to da Vinci, from Amadeo Modigliani to Whistler. It understands common language, and can take your words and represent them in art form. For example, if I were to type into the description window shown in Figure 3, the words “KODACHROME detailed antennas on a space craft on a dark background” and press the ‘Generate’ button at the end of the input window, I might get something like the four panels in Figure 4.

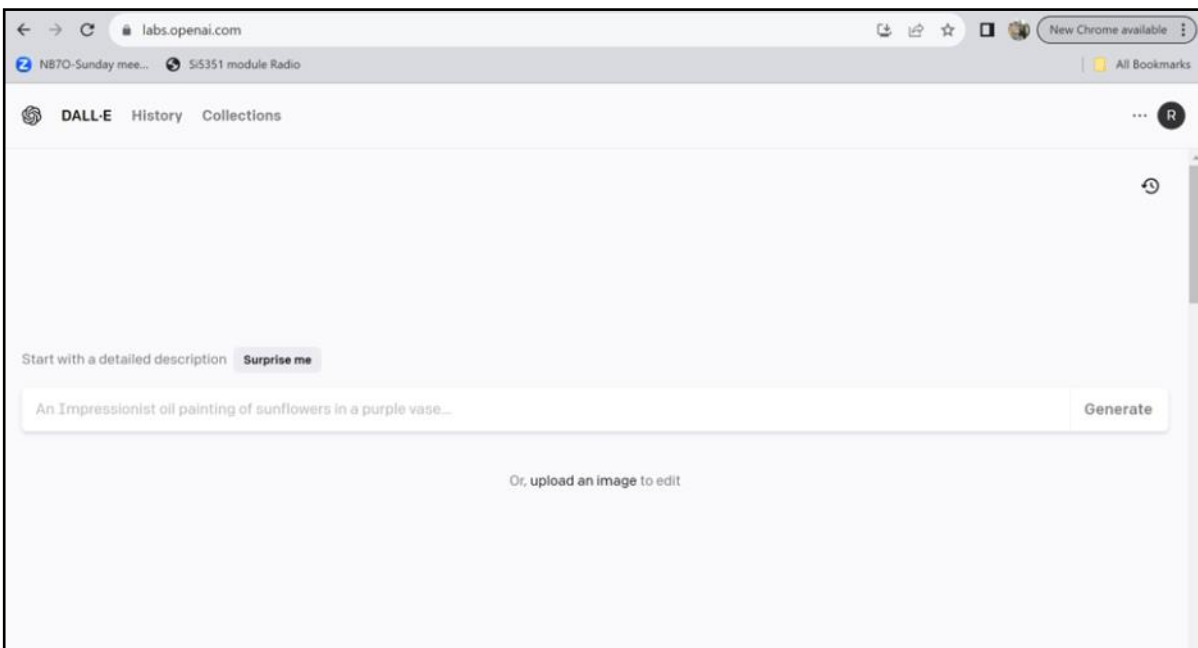


Figure 3 - DALL·E · initial window

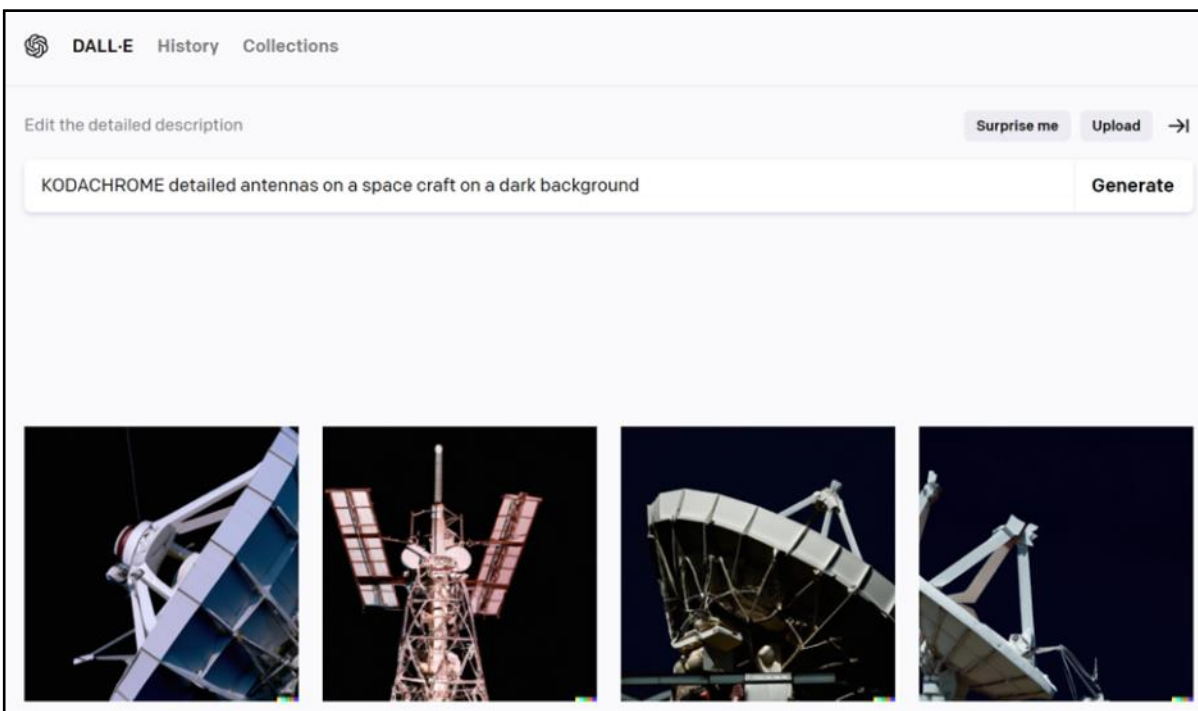


Figure 4 - Result of Query for “KODACHROME detailed antennas on a spacecraft on a dark background”

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Note: After an initial demonstration with about 15 credits, OpenAI requires that you set up an account and deposit money to bank credits. OpenAI currently sells 115 credits for \$15 USD. Each time you generate a panel of images, you are debited 1 credit. Some of the more tight fisted may be tempted to stop reading right here, but if you have just a bit of the adventurer, read on and play with this unique online software.

If I were to make this exact same query again, I would get four more totally different works that would be similar. Notice, that nowhere is there any “space craft” visible. DALL·E parses terms of your query very concisely. Now if your query had been “KODACHROME detailed of a spacecraft with antennas on a dark background” you might get closer to your desired product.

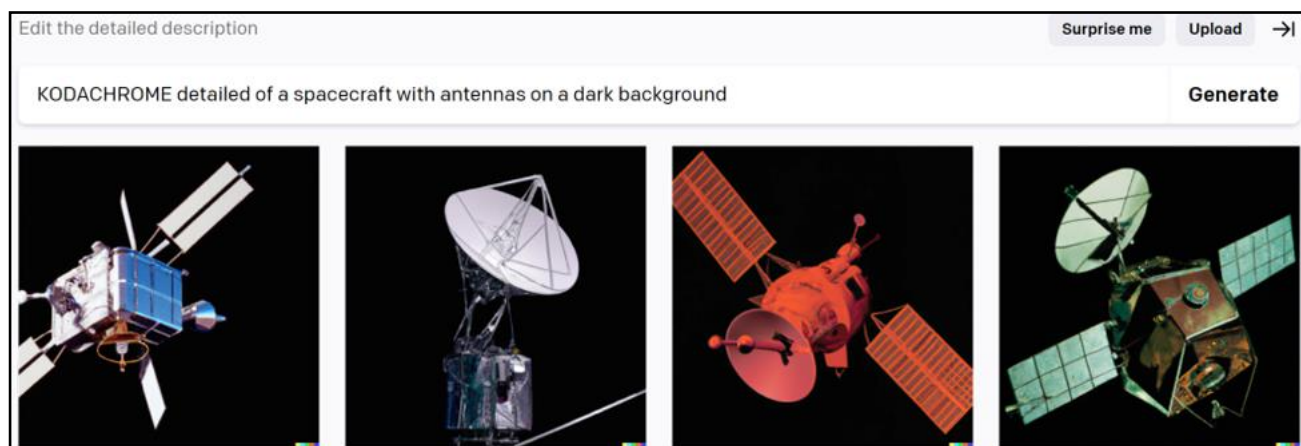


Figure 5 - Results closer to intended query

Changing the query to “detail of a spacecraft with antennas on a grey background *in the style of da Vinci*” will yield a slightly different product as is shown in Figure 6.

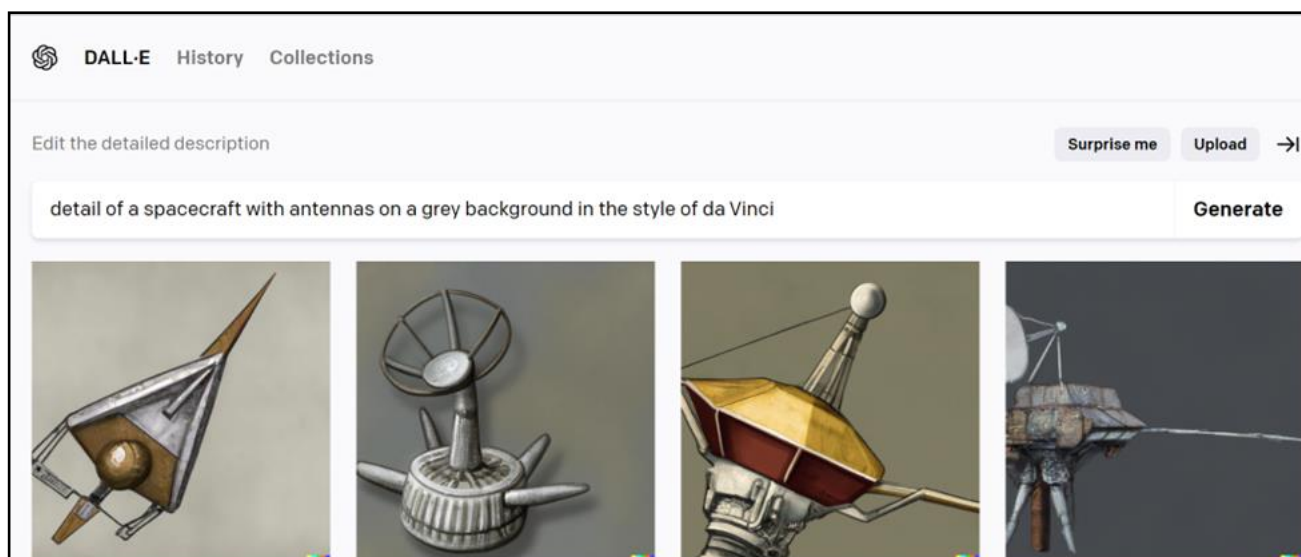


Figure 6 - Changes to background color and style of request

Once you get a base image that you are satisfied with, click on the image to select it, and enlarge it for editing if necessary or desired.

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At this point you may either edit, create variations, share, or save the image, as in Figure 7.

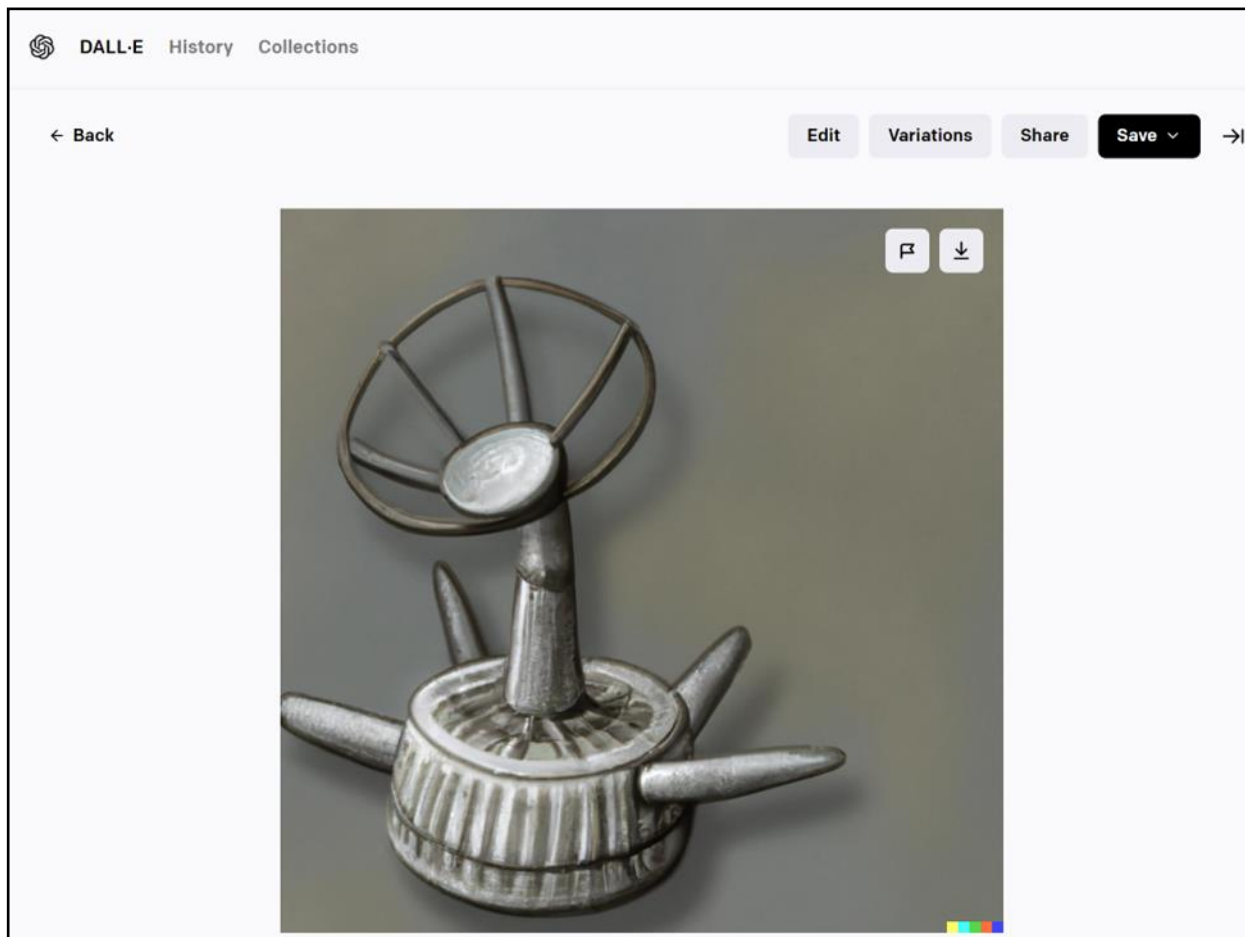


Figure 7 - Selected Image

Editing allows you to erase part of the image to edit, or add a generation frame to extend the image. This second option allows you to add to the base image in a process that is called "outpainting." As shown in Figure 8, you must include enough of the original image in the generation frame to give the AI an idea of what it is to continue in the expansion of your original. If you simply place the frame next to or adjacent to the original, it will generate a totally different image in the same style as the original query or request. Figure 9 is the result of the "outpainting." Notice that before you accept the newly generated image, you may use the slider below the new image to select one of four optional images.

In the case of Figure 7, I selected the first image to appear as an extension of the original frame. Each time you ask the AI to generate anything, it gives you four options based on your query, and uses one of your credits.

At this point you may choose to download and save or discard the image.

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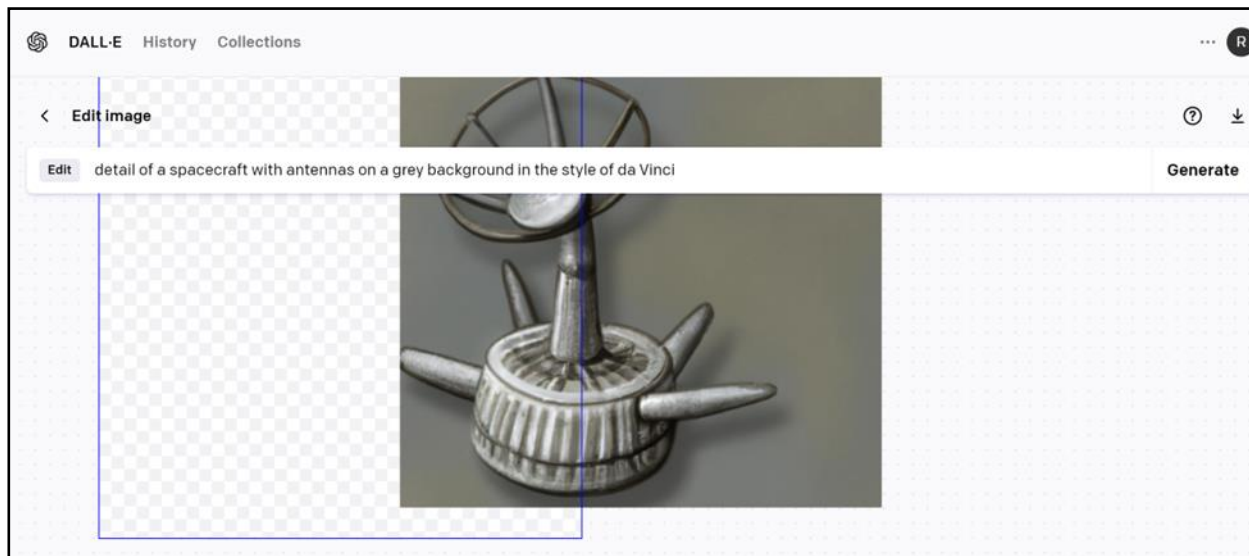


Figure 8 - Base image with generation frame added to left side

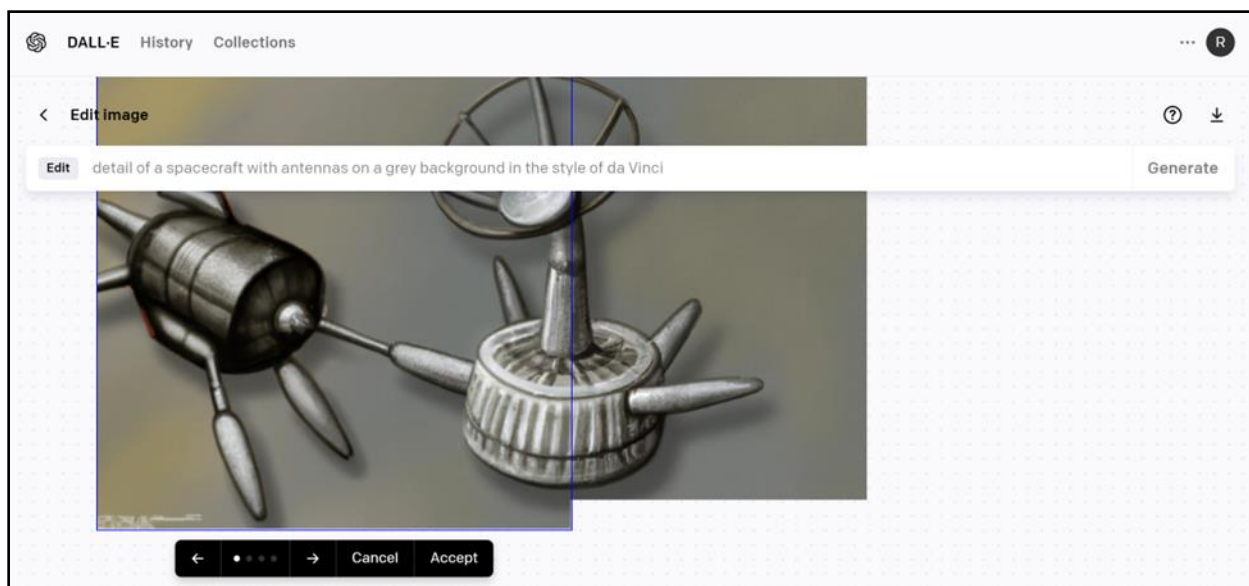


Figure 9 - Result of "OutPainting" on originally selected image

Open AI has a very good video introduction to DALL-E 2 at the link in footnote 1. Just scroll down to DALL-E 2 explained and click on the link.

I next opened the image for my QSL card in MS Paint and took out some of the extraneous parts of Figure 1 that I did not think added to the image for the QSL card. Following that I uploaded the image to eQSL and used their QSL card editing service to add textual components like the call sign, address, grid coordinates, exchange field, ARRL logo, and CW Ops #. When I want to send a paper copy of the card, I select the edit icon next to the contact I want to send paper to (Figure 10). When the selected log shows in the next window, select the "Display as Card" box in the center of the window, and when the card with info filled in shows in the next window (Figure 11), select "Printable 4x6 (A6) format" link below image of card. At that point you can right click on the

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image and either save, copy, or open the image in a new tab. I always choose the latter and print directly from the browser window. Then it is on to the next one.

And there you have it. Your very own QSL card design.





Action	Callsign 1st	Date/Time 2nd ^	Band 3rd	M (Su
LIMITS		01Nov23 - 30Nov23		
	AA2IL	02Nov2023 03:15	20M CW	
	AA3B	08Nov2023 13:31	20M CW	
	AA9H	08Nov2023 13:38	20M CW	
	AF2F	08Nov2023 13:25	20M CW	

Figure 10 - eQSL outbox listing

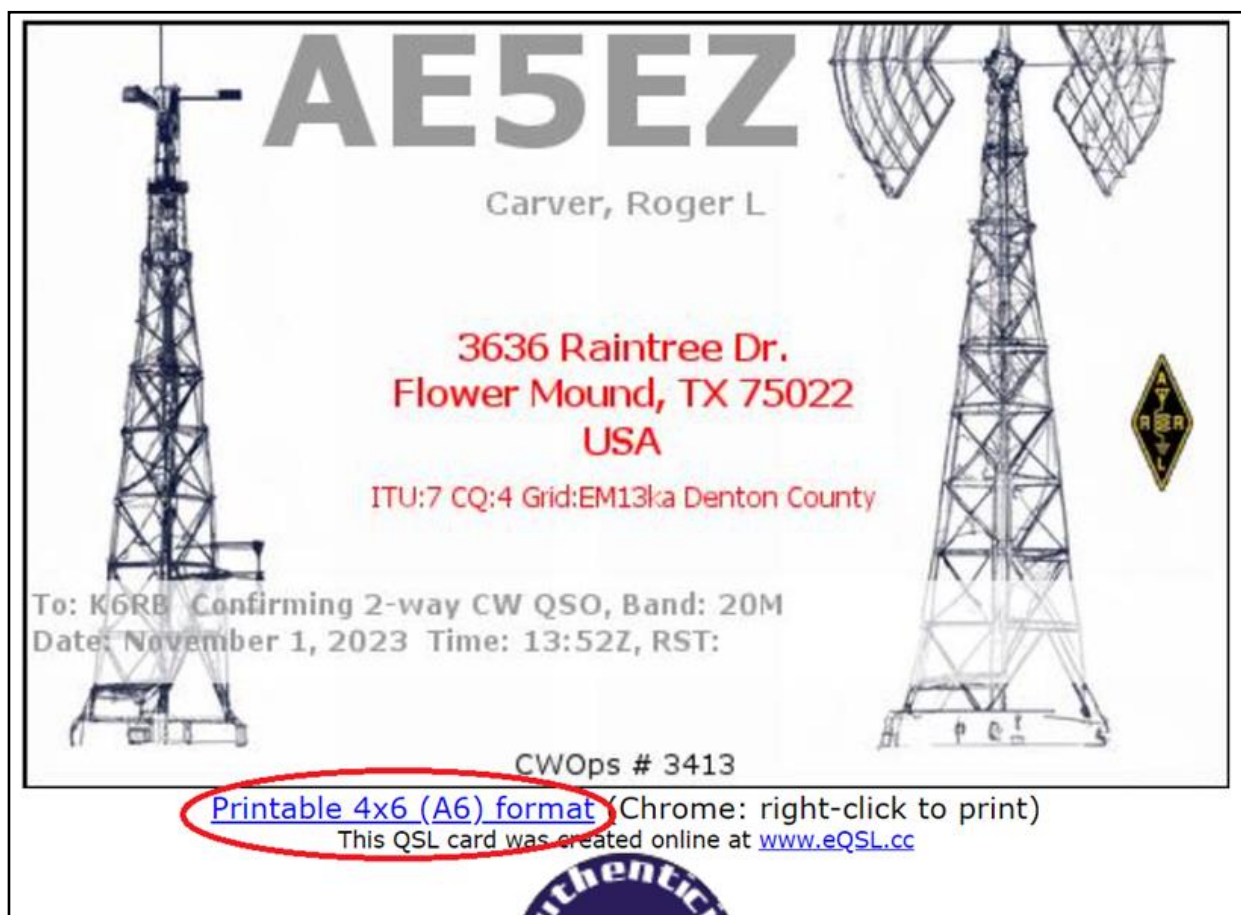


Figure 11 - Populated QSL card ready to print

CW Open Update

[Bruce Meier](#), N1LN (CWops #1141)

I have great news for all the 2023 CW Open award winners. ICOM shipped the awards to me, arriving last Sunday Nov 25. Since then, I have repacked and shipped all of them to the winners. By the time you read this article most, if not all, should be delivered. Here is a picture of Bud's (AA3B) plaque and trophy. Once again, I would like to thank ICOM America for sponsoring the CW Open and providing very attractive awards.



I would also like to correct an error in the statistics that I reported in the November Solid Copy. The program I use to extract the scores from the individual Session information and populate the teams section works great. The problem was, that for some reason, I had a 'space' character after Ken Tanuma's callsign (JN1THL) so his score did not transfer. I would like to thank Ken for notifying me of my error. Below is the corrected rollup of TEAM ASIA. I apologize to Ken for my error and, should anyone else notice an error, please let me know and I will correct it.

Until the next CW Open, I hope to work many of you in the weekly CWTs!

73, Bruce N1LN

Team Asia				
Call	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Total
1 JN1THL	896	1,628	667	3,191
2 JH1PXH	-	-	-	-
3 JA2ORW	-	-	-	-
4 JA2HYD	-	121	-	121
5 WA6URY	10,170	4,154	8,188	22,512
6 E21EIC	32	-	-	32
7 7K1JFM	64	361	16	441
8 JN1KMI	16	100	-	116
9 JO1PZR	1	4	1	6
	11,179	6,368	8,872	26,419

New Members

[Trung Nguyen, W6TN](#)

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

<u>CWops</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>CWops</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>CWops</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Name</u>
3442	KF5JC*	Jim	3447	K7BG*	Matt	3451	VE6GL	Jim
3443	K4WSD*	Al	3448	G4TVH*	David	3452	JF1UOW*	Mit
3445	AD4SA*	Scott	3449	G4YTK*	Steve	3453	YB0ECT	Pri
3446	N2PLG*	Frank	3450	NM5D*	Jeremy			

* Lifetime member

As of December 7, 2023:

Need Sponsors: KA6AAE, YB2DX, YE4FNN, K4TNE, JQ1LCW

Invitations extended: W4AUV, JM8SMO

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

— **SC** —

Did your **CALL SIGN** change recently?

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

Congratulations!

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

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

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 November results (GB hosts are shown in **bold**):

AA0YY	WB9ZN AB5X	AB9CA AA9U	W0KOM KA9PQB	NB3W WZ3J	KB8ERA	W8BJO	K4BAI
AF4PX	AA0YY	K0SN	N0ZT	AI5DQ	WA3VSO	WN9ZWC	
GW2CWO	IV3GSO DL2AOM EA8DIG	LZ2GS DF6IA OV5O	ON4ALZ UA1ZZ DK8ND	DF3BS RU1AQ	OM3TBG DL9OBM	EA/PA5JF PA3CWN	I0QMY EA3HIP
JG1UQD	JM4RRC	JA7WTH	JL1RAP	JF5XPJ	JL1STV		
JJ1FXF	JF5XPJ(3) JA6BZH	JA4IJ(3)	JF3AUB	JA7WTH(2)	JF7NWP	ZL3TK	JJ0IQS/3
JM4AOA	BI4THF JF6CYD JL1RAP	JA0KSB JG1BGT(2) JM4RRC(2)	JA1UWF JHIVMM JN1FAO	JA4IJ J17KNV(2)	JA4MRL JJ1FWH	JA7BWY JK1MVC	JF5XPJ JK1QYL
JO1DGE	HL4FBR JK1BET JP2HYX	JA5IOY JK1MVC JQ3GIP	JA6BZH(2) JK1QYL JQ6FFJ	JA6HTQ JL1STV JR1JWR	JF5XPJ(3) JM4RRC	JG1BGT(2) JM8NSW	JJ0SFV JN1FAO
K6RB	W6QX N0FIH	VE7BGJ (3) AA6GA/5	W4USR N6PE	N2JPR WA6APN	WB6ZFG	AA0RQ	AA7JC
K7NJ	W4YDL W7AEH	AA1UY ZS1BT	N4IAM N2TTL	K7XU	WB4DKF	WM3O	K7CH
N4TMM	W4MA	KB4WLF	N0ET				
W7ZDX	WA7SPY						
7N2XZB	JA6HTQ J11XJB JK2MVC	JQ3GIP JA8OXB JA6BZH	JF5XPJ(3) HL5BXW DS1RLZ	JA4IJ BH4FRW	JK1BET HL5JZ	JL1RAP HL5BLF	JN1XZB JR6SBI

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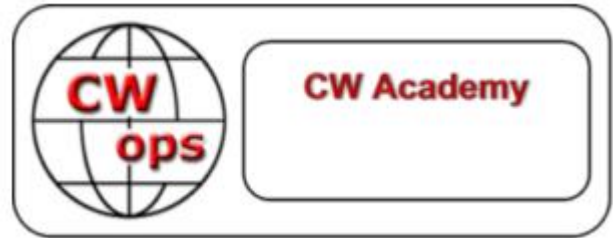
<div> <div>Giving Back Operating Schedule - 7 PM Local</div> <div> October - April: 40m & 80m May - September: 40m & 20m Frequencies: 14.035 - 14.039, 7.035 - 7.039, 3.535 - 3.539 MHz JA - 7.028 </div> </div>											
UTC+9	UTC+7	UTC+3	UTC+2	UTC+1	UTC/BST	UTC-1	EST UTC-5	CST UTC-6	MST UTC-7	PST UTC-8	Hawaii UTC-10
MON											
JO1DGE							W2XS	AAØYY			
TUE											
JR1WYW	E25JRP		SV2BBK		GW2CWO		WE5P	K8UDH	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
7N2XZB										K6RB	
WED											
JM4AOA								AF4PX			
THURS											
JJ1VNV			SV2BBK				KV8Q	N5OT	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
FRI											
JR1WYW			SV2BBK		GW2CWO		N2GSL	AAØYY		K6RB	
SAT											
JJ1FXF											
JM4AOA											
JG1UQD											
SUN											
JJ1FXF							W5DT			K6RB	
JM4AOA											



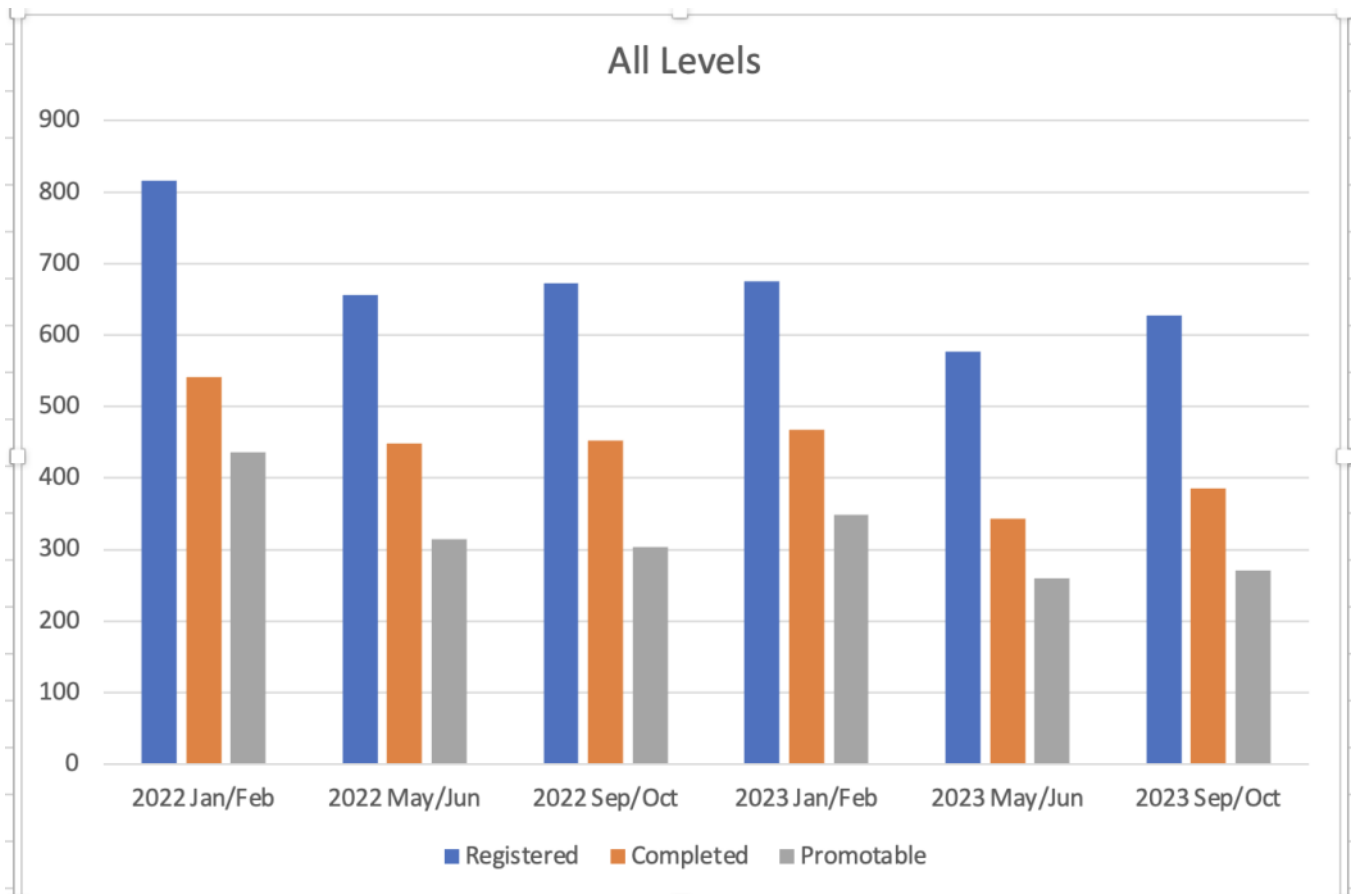
CW Academy

[Bob Carter, WR7Q](#) and [Roland Smith, K7OJL](#)

CW Academy has successfully completed another year and the registrations for January are indicating a busy 2024. Overall in 2023 CW Academy had 1,880 students register, held 223 classes at all levels and promoted 879 students. 98 advisors held at least one class during 2023.



We've been looking back at the past two years. The Covid-19 pandemic was easing during 2022 and as expected, the number of students dropped off as people came out of quarantine. 2023 shows a similar trend:



The dropout rate, that is the number of students that registered versus the number of students that completed the class was steady during the two years. About 25% of the registered students never start the class and about 8% of those who start drop out before the end of the semester. The Advanced Level classes have the lowest dropout rate while the Fundamental Level classes have the highest dropout rate.

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The promotion rate has also been stable over the past two years with about 75% of the students completing the semester evaluated as promotable.

The data shows that about 45% of Beginner Level students who were promoted went on to take the next level class. However, less than 10% of Fundamental students and less than 20% of Intermediate students go on to the next level class. Over the two-year period 17 students started at Beginner and passed all four levels.

Prior to the start of the 2023 Sep/Oct semester we did a survey of students who registered and then when they were asked to verify their availability, turned down the opportunity to be assigned to a class. The number one reason cited was changes to their schedules and not having the time to dedicate to a class. The second reason cited were health concerns.

During 2023 CW Academy made a few significant upgrades to the software that makes it possible to keep track of the students, advisors, and classes. The most impactful change has been the implementation of a process to assess student skill levels and help them sign up for the most appropriate class level. In early December we rolled out the next version of the software which will make CW Academy compliant with international data privacy and security requirements. Advisors and students will be able to look in one place to find any outstanding action items and manage their own personal data.

Advisors have an Advisor Portal which will show any outstanding action items as well as functions that advisors use on a regular basis:

PROGRAM LIST

Advisor Portal for /Your Callsign

Reminders and Actions Requested	Date Created
Student Participation Confirmation: Students have been assigned to your class. You should now contact each student, verify if that student will be attending, and then update the student status. Click on Manage Advisor Class to perform this task. Remove Item	2023-11-30 18:54:29

**Any Actions Needed will be listed here.
When completed, the item will be deleted**

Advisor Programs

[Manage Advisor Class](#)
This program displays the current class makeup and allows the advisor to specify student's status, request replacement students, check Morse Code Proficiency Assessments.

[View a Student's Morse Code Assessments](#)
This program allows the advisor to view one of his student's Morse Code Proficiency Assessments.

[Advisor Registration](#)
This program provides the ability to sign up for an upcoming semester and specify what class(es) the advisor wishes to hold, and when those classes would be held. It also provides the ability for the advisor to update that information as needed.

[Show Advisor Class Assignments](#)
This program shows upcoming advisor registrations (if any), current class makeup, and all past students

[Order Morse Code Proficiency Assessments](#) (function coming)
This program allows the advisor to specify the parameters for the assessment and which students are to take the assessment.

[Logout](#)

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Meanwhile, students also have a Student Portal:

PROGRAM LIST

Student Portal for **Your Callsign**

Reminders and Actions Requested

Date Created

Student Programs

Student Registration
Use this program to sign up for a CW Academy Class or to modify your registration details.

Check Student Status
The program displays the current status of your CW Academy class request.

2023 has been a good CW Academy experience and we're looking forward to 2024's challenges and opportunities!

73, Roland Smith, CWA co-manager

SC

CWops Tests (CWTs)

[Rich Ferch](#), VE3KI

By the time you read this, we will be into the final couple of weeks of the year, with just a handful of CWT sessions left to add to your participation counts.

As of the beginning of December, there were 117 members who had already reached the gold medal level for CWT participation in 2023. Another 140 members had reached silver, and 142 more were at or above the bronze medal level. In the four remaining weeks, no doubt a number of the silver and bronze level members will move up a level, and more members will reach the bronze level.

The procedures for requesting certificates and medals should be the same as last year:

One or two weeks into the new year, the list of callsigns qualifying for certificates will be sent to

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DJ5CW for uploading to the certificates web page. If you reported at least one CWT score during 2023 to 3830scores.com, once the list of certificates has been finalized you will be able to go to the [certificate web page](#) to enter your callsign and download your 2023 participation certificate as a pdf file. After verifying that the certificate is for 2023, look at the number of your reported scores. If that number has reached the gold, silver or bronze medal level, your certificate will automatically reflect that status.

If you qualified for a medallion and wish to order one, there will be a \$10 USD charge to help defray the production and mailing costs. First, you should check to make sure that you qualified for a medallion, either by checking the list that will be published in an upcoming *Solid Copy* newsletter and in the groups.io mailing list in early 2024, or by checking your 2023 certificate to see whether it is a gold, silver or bronze level award. If it is, you will be able to order your medallion through the CWT page on the [CWops website](#). The deadline for ordering medallions will be the end of February. Once the procurement order has been sent at the beginning of March, it will no longer be possible to add to the order, so you will need to get your orders in on time. To jog your memories, there will be reminder announcements on the groups.io mailing list and in the coming issues of *Solid Copy*.

Enjoy the CWTs and keep those reported scores coming!

73, Rich VE3KI (CWops #783)

SC

SPEED	XST	DAY	TIME (UTC)	EXCHANGE	SPONSOR LINK
20 - 25	MST	Monday	1300 -	Name and QSO serial	International CW
20 - 25	MST	Monday	1900 -	Name and QSO serial	International CW
20 - 25	MST	Tuesday	0300 -	Name and QSO serial	International CW
25+ wpm	CWT	Wednes-	1300 -	Name and CWops #	CWops
25+ wpm	CWT	Wednes-	1900 -	Name and CWops #	CWops
25+ wpm	CWT	Thursday	0300 -	Name and CWops #	CWops
25+ wpm	CWT	Thursday	0700 -	Name and CWops #	CWops
< 20 wpm	SST	Friday	2000 -	Name and S/P/C	K1USN
< 20 wpm	SST	Monday	0000 -	Name and S/P/C	K1USN



CWops Member Awards

[Bill Gilliland](#), WØTG



Announcements

The January 2024 Member Awards summary will reflect the final QSO totals for 2023. Please submit your December logs by January 2, 2024, so they may be included. ACA QSO totals will revert to zero to begin the new year on January 3, 2024.

As mentioned in last month's *Solid Copy*, we are announcing a new CWops Member Award, the **Annual Cumulative Membership Award**. It recognizes CWops activity across all bands and provides an additional award where newcomers can compete on a level playing field with long time CWops members. Think of it as CMA but resetting to zero on January 1 of each year. Scoring will begin on January 1, 2024, and participation requires no additional activity other than submitting your logs just as you have been. To be counted, each contact must be via CW between active CWops members. Top ten ACMA activity will be reported in *Solid Copy* in the same manner as ACA has been reported.

Monthly Update

During November, additional members submitted logs and the number of active participants in the awards program increased to 262 participants. The QSO totals and rankings for the first week of December 2023 have the same familiar calls in the top five positions with **KR2Q** remaining in first place and leading second place **AA3B** by **168** QSOs. The changes in the top ten rankings this month have **DL6KVA** moving into seventh place followed by **N5TJ**, **K7QA** and **NA8V** in eighth through tenth place. The top ten this month are **KR2Q**, **AA3B**, **K3WW**, **N5RZ**, **KG9X**, **N5ZO**, **DL6KVA**, **N5TJ**, **K7QA** and **NA8V**. The separation between first place and tenth place is **524** QSOs.

The number of members who have contacted CWops members in 100 or more DXCC entities grew to **75** this month with the addition of **KR3E**, **VE3TM**, **G3LDI**, **AA5JF** and **G3WZD**. The number of participants who have accomplished CWops WAS grew to **209** this month with the addition of **G3LDI** and **VE3KIU**. See [complete rankings](#) for all award categories.

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 December 4, 2023, we have **262** 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.

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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](#).

About the CWops Member Awards Program

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

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

Please Join Us!

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

More Information

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

Current ACA Top 100 as of December 4, 2023:

Rank	Call	ACA	CMA	DX	WAS	WAE	WAZ	Rank	Call	ACA	CMA	DX	WAS	WAE	WAZ
1	KR2Q	1913	8891	187	50	62	37	5	KG9X	1522	6900	105	50	46	31
2	AA3B	1745	13625	132	50	49	38	6	N5ZO	1507	9466	114	50	47	35
3	K3WW	1595	10637	137	50	50	38	7	DL6KVA	1431	8369	202	50	66	38
4	N5RZ	1553	9457	131	50	47	37	8	N5TJ	1423	4992	93	50	43	34

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Rank	Call	ACA	CMA	DX	WAS	WAE	WAZ	Rank	Call	ACA	CMA	DX	WAS	WAE	WAZ
9	K7QA	1392	6793	92	50	40	31	57	F5SGI	916	2964	106	50	52	33
10	NA8V	1389	8644	113	50	47	35	58	N3CKI	901	2745	62	50	33	20
11	KY4GS	1371	3801	81	50	37	27	59	N4CWZ	893	3677	63	50	34	23
12	KC7V	1327	6438	94	50	39	33	60	AF5J	884	3273	64	50	26	24
13	N7US	1320	6724	119	50	45	34	61	NA4J	882	4041	78	50	37	24
14	OM2VL	1278	6831	102	50	44	33	62	EA6EJ	874	1821	73	49	41	28
15	AA2IL	1251	3539	85	50	29	28	63	K3ZA	870	2963	58	50	35	21
16	K1VUT	1246	6049	81	50	41	26	64	AC6ZM	856	4635	70	50	38	25
17	K9WX	1245	5829	114	50	45	33	64	K3PP	856	5792	111	50	46	31
18	K3WJV	1239	7773	122	50	49	34	65	KM4FO	848	3447	49	50	19	19
19	K3QP	1232	3878	83	50	41	27	66	K4TZ	840	3078	43	50	20	16
20	W1RM	1207	9020	221	50	62	38	66	KT5V	840	3727	83	50	33	29
21	VE3TM	1189	4592	102	50	48	29	67	W2CDO	825	3253	77	50	40	27
22	K1DJ	1186	5449	119	50	47	32	68	WU6P	821	2544	46	50	25	21
23	K3JT	1170	6183	105	50	46	31	69	NE2V	819	2756	71	50	36	26
24	WT9U	1164	6225	105	50	41	31	70	W0GAS	818	2774	55	50	26	22
25	W0UO	1158	4645	74	50	39	27	71	W6AYC	807	3998	60	50	27	27
26	AA5JF	1148	4725	101	50	44	31	72	N2UU	806	5588	112	50	46	31
27	VK2GR	1140	3297	87	50	42	32	73	N2EIM	798	1052	47	49	30	18
28	NJ3K	1134	4293	82	50	41	30	74	KC4WQ	781	3769	63	50	29	26
29	KO4VW	1123	3183	69	50	34	25	75	N4FP	774	3129	61	50	33	20
30	K6NR	1120	5379	71	50	35	30	76	SM0HEV	773	3037	117	50	50	35
31	K4WW	1104	5610	85	50	39	29	77	K4PQC	770	1696	46	50	24	20
32	VE3KI	1090	7739	145	50	53	37	77	K5VG	770	1525	55	48	31	18
33	9A1AA	1075	5088	127	50	52	38	78	M0RYB	765	2936	93	49	47	31
34	W9ILY	1073	6706	138	50	46	37	79	K8JQ	764	5405	70	50	35	23
35	WS7L	1069	3823	68	50	30	28	80	VE3MV	762	3990	92	50	42	27
36	W8FN	1055	4683	76	50	38	24	81	AF4T	752	3320	75	50	38	28
37	WN7S	1049	4977	82	50	39	28	81	K2YR	752	2849	54	49	33	20
38	WT3K	1040	4980	89	50	44	28	82	K1RF	750	1758	45	50	28	15
39	KK0U	1035	3225	64	50	34	25	83	VE9KK	740	1374	47	48	30	17
39	N5KD	1035	3238	95	50	43	33	84	W3WHK	728	3435	76	50	37	21
40	N5AW	1024	6461	104	50	48	34	85	VE7KW	726	2326	42	50	20	21
41	KW7Q	1019	2709	83	50	38	31	86	KY0Q	723	3309	68	50	31	28
41	W1AJT	1019	4530	99	50	45	33	87	K0TC	717	3486	65	50	30	22
42	W0VX	1016	6369	131	50	46	37	87	W9CF	717	2129	32	50	13	17
43	SM6CUK	999	5431	161	50	57	38	88	W8EWH	708	1590	52	50	28	21
44	F6HKA	995	7865	207	50	58	38	89	W0TG	704	3548	72	50	31	27
45	K0WA	981	3157	49	50	24	19	90	VE3KIU	702	1920	42	50	28	18
46	CO8NMN	974	4835	77	50	36	25	91	GW0ETF	696	4461	117	50	50	36
47	KW1X	957	1945	53	50	33	18	92	W2VM	684	2754	65	50	33	21
48	WA4JUK	953	4363	87	50	42	27	93	DJ5CW	674	3604	105	48	55	35
49	DF7TV	951	3518	118	50	52	34	94	EA3FZT	664	2746	82	50	45	30
50	W4WF	939	5276	99	50	45	34	95	HB9ARF	655	3026	90	48	47	28
51	N9UNX	937	2034	30	50	17	12	96	G4LPP	654	2564	92	49	46	32
52	K1SM	933	4639	133	50	46	37	97	OK1RR	651	4164	150	50	52	38
52	W4CMG	933	2604	52	50	25	22	98	W7LG	648	1561	41	49	29	13
53	KV8Q	926	3355	72	50	35	23	99	EA2KV	642	2342	78	48	43	27
54	N5XE	925	4100	83	50	37	32	100	G4PVM	640	3142	108	50	50	34
55	N1DC	922	5392	91	50	40	26								
55	OZ3SM	922	3615	109	49	51	36								
56	EA1X	918	3729	87	50	44	33								
57	EA6BF	916	2952	83	50	43	31								

73, Bill WØTG (CWops #1873)

CWops Operating Awards



QTX Report: Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

[Enzo](#), MØKTZ

Many of your soapbox comments report on the use of mechanical keys, and some fellows ask whether there is any correlation between ragchewing and the use of non-electronic keying methods. I personally like to use all kinds of keys, but I often find myself calling CQ on a bug and ragchewing on a bug or on a straight key (or, lately, even on a bug used as a 90-degree rotated straight key, with the “dah” contact doing all the job HI). And I really bump into many operators who routinely operate using straight keys, bugs, or sideswipers.

On top of clubs completely dedicated to mechanical keying like SKCC (<https://www.skccgroup.com/>), there are many events throughout the year that are focused on manually-sent Morse Code, including the ARRL Straight Key Night (<https://www.arrl.org/straight-key-night>), the EUCW Straight Key Day (<https://eucw.org/euskd.html>), the FOC Mechanical Key Days and the Bug Days (<https://g4foc.org/Bug-Day>), the W6FSM Bug Roundups (<https://w6sfm.org/bug-roundup>), and the weekly Sideswiper Nets (<https://sideswipernet.org/>), among many others. It should also not come as a surprise that most of these events are not contests, and are instead focused on ragchewing and relaxed QSOs. So although we lack precise data, by looking at the impressions you have shared and at the flavour of the events listed above, we can conclude that there is indeed some prevalence of mechanical keying among ragchewers, and some inclination towards ragchewing by users of mechanical keys. Two weak correlations do not make a strong one, but it is undeniable that manual keying has a special appeal, and requires some time and determination to master and use on a daily basis. That is the kind of stuff for us ragchewers, as we are the sloths of ham radio HI

Another recurring comment we see in the Soapbox is about the age of CW operators, and the perceived “decline” of CW on the bands, and fears about its possible or imminent demise. I share with you a comment that I found at page 40 of *Morsum Magnificat*, issue 21, from Autumn 1991 (the full archive of *Morsum Magnificat*, a very interesting but defunct publication dedicated to all the aspects and uses of Morse Code, is available at <http://www.n7cfo.com/tgph/Dwnlds/mm/mm.htm>).

Those were the times when the possibility of removing the CW proficiency test for HF ham licences was being discussed for the first time. One of the readers, Rich PY3DK from Brazil, wrote: *“Imagine if CW were not necessary to pass the examination. Would you have learned the code without having to? Voluntarily, only for fun? Certainly not. It is my opinion that as soon as we have the codeless license, and that seems inevitable, nobody will learn CW any more and CW will slowly disappear with the death of the older hams. As a CW enthusiast and old man (76) I am glad it will not happen during my lifetime.”*

Well, we have had codeless licences almost anywhere for about 20 years now. If you read through the biographies of new CW Ops members in the last few issues of *Solid Copy*, you will notice that more than half of those OMs and XYLs were licenced well after the CW exams were dropped. Moreo-

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ver, a large percentage of those CW Ops members are well under 50, and some of them are in their 20s or 30s. The last CW Academy semester finished in October (which had 57 advisors contributing their time and efforts) saw more than 270 CW students at various levels progressing to the next step in their CW journey. They did not “need to” learn the code to get their ticket, and yet they are going to the lengths of learning and using CW “only for fun”. Many of the advisors routinely report about having long and satisfying QSOs with their advisees, showing that there is not just hope, but a bright future ahead for Morse Code on the ham bands.

I really wish our friend Rich PY3DK could still be around to see how wrong he was in predicting such a dire future for CW more than 30 years ago. We should really avoid to be the next Rich in line, and keep helping CW remaining alive and kicking by staying on the bands, having meaningful QSOs, and keeping it fun!

We welcome Lionel N5LB who has joined the QTX/MQTX gang this month. We really hope to work you soon, Lionel! Please send the December reports by the 5th of January 2024: the next column will feature the brilliant results that the QTX/MQTX family has achieved in 2023. And you will be mesmerized at finding out how much and how well each of you has contributed to this success.

72/73 de Enzo MØKTZ (CWops #3206)



DF7TV: This month I had the fun of a conversation with Don, 4O6DN. At an age of 87 years he is the oldest active ham in Montenegro. Then I enjoyed a long conversation with VE3GFN. So far, I knew Mike's call sign only from contesting. It is nice to have some background information and I'll remember that when we only exchange "5NN XYZ" during the next contest.

N9EEE: Laid up from back surgery limited my operating. Hope to make it up in December.

K9OZ: Most, if not all, of this month's rag chews were on my Bug. Who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

WA4IAR: Had a good bit of time to operate this month. Longest QSOs about one hour. I had two very interesting QSOs with guys using bugs from WW2 that knew the history of the operators that used them and one was from a ship, I forgot the ships name, and the other one was from a B17. They knew names service details and when they passed. I found this very interesting.

AA0YY: In my Qs, I like to get the persons age. By and large, 90% of the ops are past the age of 60 and most of them are in their 70s 80s, even 90s. I sure hope when I am my 80s, if I make it that far, that there will still be CW ops to work, and my fist is still copiable hi hi. This month I had a memorable QSO with NI9Y, Dan, who has been a ham over 69 yrs and is age 83 with 6 great grandkids, and not to forget his big Lab dog. I love ragchewing with these ole timers but we will need some younger CW ops if we want to keep CW alive.

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WB4IT: My longest and most interesting QSO of the month was with Sam NR4A. He's definitely one to add to your Ham Alert list.

VE3WH: This month I found a 1950 Vibroplex Blue Racer Deluxe in it's carrying case at a Scrap Metal Dealer. I 'm restoring it to operational condition. This comment sparked a lot of QTX and Mini QTX QSOs. Just having CW fun and enjoying the conversation.

KG5SSB: I made fewer contacts this month due to less operating time.

ND4K: Thanks for all the long chats! I had a higher number of QSO"s which lasted close to an hour than in previous months. CWops Marathon award?

PG4I: Many ragchews during the Essex CW Amateur Radio Club (ECWARC) activity week, the second week of November. Mostly on 80 meters. This month the first ragchews on 160m since a long time which was nice.

AJ1DM: Another slow month for QTX, but another month including a ragchew with one of my CWA students – FB!!

W3WHK: Nice QSO with ND4K (#2945)

YL3JD: Again very nice chats, i noticed that a lot of operators who are doing a ragchew use a mechanical key. How strong is the correlation between these two?

KF6NCX: My most interesting QSO, probably, was when I worked Dan, WBØSSC, in SD on 15 meters on Nov. 11. We had a good chat. When I asked Dan what he had planned for the day (this was at 1620Z), he said, he and his wife were going to get together with friends to play music that afternoon. I asked what kind of music? He responded bluegrass and old-timey. I told him that was my favorite music and that I liked to pick, too. I told him I'd come over and join the jam – that was a joke, of course, because it's a bit of a trip from northern CA to northeastern SD! Later, I sent him a Youtube clip of an obscure old-timey tune I'd found. He said he and his wife had never heard it, and they liked it!

N7HCN: I've enjoyed some DX QTX on 15m, and I am going to try for at least 1 QTX on each band in December just for fun.

K7VM: Had a nice DX QTX QSO with Yoshihiro in Shizuoka, Japan.

K6DGW: Busy busy busy, very low QTX total, and I'm late with the report also.

N2DA: I'm catching up on QTX reporting - I missed reporting Apr through Sept and will be going through my log to provide updates soon. Tnx, Craig

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QTX for November 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>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>
WA4IAR	70	WS1L	31	N2DA	13	N5LB	5	DF7TV	2
VE3WH	53	F5IYJ	27	KG5IEE	11	AF4PX	5	W9EBE	1
K9OZ	43	N7HCN	19	WA2TAX	10	K7VM	4	SV2BBK	1
ND4K	41	KY4GS	19	PG4I	9	K6DGW	3	KG5SSB	1
M0KTZ	38*	N1ZX	14	KF6NCX	7	W3WHK	2	K5KXJ	1
AA0YY	33	WB4IT	13	AJ1DM	7	N9EEE	2	GW0ETF	1

MQTX for November 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>	<u>Call</u>	<u>MQTX</u>
M0KTZ	129*	KG5IEE	24	YL3JD	15	DF7TV	9	K7VM	3
WA4IAR	43	PG4I	19	ND4K	15	WB4IT	8	W9EBE	2
WS1L	40	AA0YY	19	K6DGW	13	SV2BBK	7	N9EEE	2
KY4GS	35	KF6NCX	17	N1ZX	11	N7HCN	7	WA2TAX	1
VE3WH	28	AF4PX	16	GW0ETF	10	KG5SSB	4	AJ1DM	1

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>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>
VE3WH	625	N7HCN	193	N9EEE	55	WA2TAX	20	NE0S	10
WS1L	446	N5IR	144	K6DGW	54	AF4PX	17	W7JRD	9
WA4IAR	373	M0KTZ	142*	KF6NCX	52	JS2AHG	16	N5LB	5
K9OZ	362	KR2Q	113	PG4I	50	GW0ETF	16	AB4PP	4
KY4GS	339	KG5IEE	112	W9EBE	45	W8OV	15	WA9ZZ	3
F5IYJ	266	K5YQF	94	N1ZX	41	K4AHO	15	SV2BBK	3
KB6NU	244	AJ1DM	93	EI7LC	31	WA2USA	14	MI0WWB	3
ND4K	214	N2DA	89	DF7TV	29	W3WHK	14	N0BM	2
KC0VKN	210	K8UDH	64	W0GAS	22	K7VM	13	AB7MP	1
WB4IT	209	KG5SSB	62	KK6CN	22	WT9Q	11		
AA0YY	209	K0ALT	57	K5KXJ	21	YL3JD	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>	<u>Call</u>	<u>MQTX</u>
M0KTZ	498*	EI7LC	170	GW0ETF	74	K8UDH	27	WT9Q	6
KY4GS	458	PG4I	129	W9EBE	72	SV1DAY	20	K7VM	6
WA4IAR	291	KG5SSB	120	AF4PX	65	W8OV	19	K4AHO	5
VE3WH	290	ND4K	104	N1ZX	61	WA2TAX	15	G3WZD	4
WS1L	287	KR2Q	103	MI0WWB	58	W0GAS	13	W7JRD	2
AA0YY	274	DF7TV	102	AJ1DM	46	N9EEE	13	NE0S	2
KG5IEE	225	JS2AHG	84	K6DGW	42	AB7MP	13	K5KXJ	2
YL3JD	201	SV2BBK	82	N7HCN	41	KK6CN	9	N0BM	1
WB4IT	186	KF6NCX	74	K5YQF	32	W3WHK	7		



My Story: New Member Introductions

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

B. L. "Baz" Bolt, G0FGE #3436

My name is Baz I was licensed in 1984 and have been particularly interested in CW, always trying to improve my skills.

I am a retired welder having made vacuum vessels for the scientific industry and in my last year building work boats of about 100 ton.

I am a member of 2 radio clubs in Devon and feel really proud to be invited to be part of the CWops.

I am interested in motorbikes and own a Suzuki GSXR 1100, I also enjoy using my wood turning lathe and walking my dogs and going away in my motorhome.



Allan G Duncan, GM4ZUK #3441

I was always fascinated by radio and electronics and first saw ham radio at my school radio club aged 13. Little did I know what effect that ham radio and RF would have on the rest of my life! Whilst still at school, I attended evening classes at the local technical college, I passed the UK Radio Amateurs Examination aged 14 in 1981 and was issued with the "B" class call GM6JUK in 1982. This gave me access to the VHF bands and DX became my focus. I passed the Post Office Morse test in 1984 and gained my full call GM4ZUK. Having very limited space at my parent's home, HF activity was limited.

I joined the BBC as a Broadcast Transmitter engineer in 1988 working on everything from low power UHF TV relay stations, high power medium wave, UHF main station TV transmitters and short wave broadcast stations. Over the next twenty years I had a nomadic existence all over the UK which limited my ham radio activity. I regularly went portable for VHF contests over this time especially during a three-year spell in Jersey, Channel Islands as GJ4ZUK in the 1990's.

I returned to my home of Aberdeen in 2005, living in the city centre - portable operation was still the main focus. Shortly after, I met Louise and we were married in 2007. In 2010 we moved to a new QTH in Peterculter, just outside of Aberdeen with a few acres of garden and surrounded by farmland. This was a real life change in many ways. Our first child, George, was born in 2011 fol-



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lowed by Rachel in 2014. My HF activity in both contests and DXing (particularly on CW) really took off after the move to Peterculter. I also now hold the short contest call GM4Z.

Scott Avery, AD4SA #3445

A lifelong tinkerer (I was the kid who took all of his toys apart) I discovered that amateur radio opened up a whole new world of learning and I received my tech license in 2008 (original call KJ4CMA). Although my ham journey started after the end of the code testing requirement, I found myself fascinated with code and the opportunities it presented.

After a couple of “false starts” and some frustration with my autodidactic attempts at learning code, I found the relatively new CW Academy and signed up immediately. A wise choice, as I would later discover that the most difficult part of learning code with CW Academy was waiting for the start date!

Unfortunately, it wasn't long before my newfound skill and on-air activities in general had to take a back seat over the next few years as I began to realize that I would need to put all available resources into my pursuit of higher education if I wanted to complete my degree.

It wasn't until 2022 that I was able to seriously return to the air, and I discovered that the now extremely popular “Parks on the Air” program had an active CW component. This unintentionally started me in a CW “immersion” program by allowing me to get on the air and “hunt” a few contacts on a near daily basis, even if I was pressed for time. This led to my participation in the intermediate and finally advanced CW Academy courses, and code skill advancement was my priority. It wasn't long before I was reaching milestones I previously thought would be unreachable.

My current on air pursuits are almost all CW now - hunting and activating parks on the air, CW contests (the weekly SST, MST and CWT sessions in particular) and trying to make one CW contact every day for a year.

Most of my time is spent as a sales manager in the industrial HVAC and power generation equipment world. In my free time, aside from getting on the air, I enjoy working on and occasionally getting to use my “classic” boat and beekeeping, but most of all I enjoy spending time with my wife of 15 years and our three corgis.



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When I first found out about CW Academy, I made it my long-term goal to make it into CWops. I'd like to extend my most sincere gratitude to Larry (K7SV), Bill (W3PNM) and Mark (VE3BXG) for their tutelage during my CW Academy courses; and also thank Nick (WØNY), Hank (W6SX), Noah (NI9F) and Doug (KR2Q) for sponsoring me and helping me to reach my goal.

Joe Commins, W4YDL #3444

My first exposure to ham radio was in 2019. While living just outside of Philadelphia, I picked up a Baofeng UV-5R and programmed some repeaters into it, but never heard any ham traffic. I used the radio as a scanner, and that was it. Fast forward to February of 2023, I found the radio in a moving box, turned it on (still had some juice in the battery!) programmed in a repeater, and finally heard a couple folks talking! Two days later, I took my Tech exam and eagerly awaited my callsign. Finally got a mouthful of a callsign a few days later (KQ4FXU) and started calling CQ on a repeater (oops) and spoke with a gentleman that invited me to the local club meeting the next day.



A week later, I picked up an ICOM 7410 on Craigslist, built a 10m dipole, and hung it on my apartment balcony. I made my first contact to the Dominican Republic, and I was hooked! Lucky for me, 10m was booming, and I was making contacts left and right. After a month, I passed my General exam and applied for my current callsign, W4YDL.

This April, I began learning Morse code. In a few hours, I had the alphabet memorized, but more visually than anything. May 11, I finally had my first CW QSO with AE4R using my Speed-X straight key. It was slow going, but the excitement of completing my first CW QSO totally had me hooked! I couldn't believe how excited I was to use Morse code to "talk" with someone. From then on, my mind was consumed by Morse code. Any free time I had was spent playing the Morse Mania app on my phone, or listening to Kurt Zoglmann's videos on YouTube.

I did my first POTA activation on my birthday in August this year, using CW only. That was when things started clicking for me. The instant character recognition was forming, and having mini pileups was a blast! In November, I finally got my Kilo award at my local park (K-2734 Hammocks Beach State Park)

In October, I started in the CW Academy with K5GQ, and by the end of the course, Mark had

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nominated me for CWops membership! The Morse Runner and Rufz programs combined with Mark's curriculum really helped get my speed to where it is now. I'd like to thank K5GQ, WBØRLJ, JP3REM, and KD2KW for the nomination and sponsorship into this fine group.

CU on the bands!

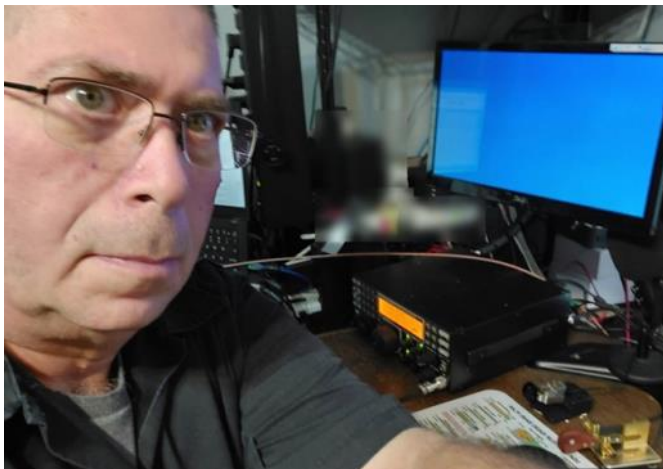
Frank Di Giovanni, N2PLG #3446

I want to start by thanking Joe Spencer, KK5NA and those who sponsored me: Thomas Jenkins W2TJ, "super-fast" Mark McCullough KD9UYC, and John Calnan W7JKC for taking the time to show me how much they believe in CWops and providing encouragement in my Morse code CW journey.

I was first introduced to the hobby in 1989 by a good friend and instantly fell in love. I had been in the telecommunications field working for a ILEC and CLEC all over the country just out of high school in '83 and was intrigued by my peers who were licensed and performing all sorts of tasks, building and tinkering. How could I resist? So I took the Tech test in 1989 and was on my way to building antennas and amps, becoming the tinkering fool. In the '90s I went to work for some startups in wireless which provided me all the measuring tools you could only dream of affording on your own. So that was fun.

My Morse code journey started later after a long stint away from the hobby. I found I needed something to challenge me as all the digital modes of operation were a simple task of figuring out how the software works and how it was written, in its simplicity still a valuable tool. CW, on the other hand, was a piece of software in my head that needs to constantly be trained to interpret sounds into an understandable "language," i.e. to me the same as any other language. This is the constant challenge for me, not to simply interpret short bursts of data dits and das but to interpret as I do my second language (Italian) which at one time was as one time my first, a language that to me when heard is no different to understanding someone speaking English. There is no decoding going on from Italina to English, just familiarity. This is my hope with Morse code, to become familiar with the combinations of sounds.

OR I got it all wrong, lol time will tell.



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Steve Hopley, G4YTK #3449

Before I start my story I would like to say a big thank you for my nomination and to my sponsors: I5ECW, KØMD, G3WW, I5EFO and MØNGN. Without these I would not be a member of CWops.

I was born in 1958. I remember way back in the early '70s when I became interested in ham radio. This interest came from my father, G4ETA. I must say at this point my granddad was a ham before the war with his call 5FG. His station was confiscated on the outbreak of the war.

Around 1980 I started to work towards the RAE, I passed my exam and I was given the call G6NOC. My RAE tutor was an old friend, G4DBR, who loved Morse. He was a former Royal Signal Army Operator.

It wasn't long before I decided to study Morse code. I passed the exam at 12 wpm at a coastal radio station and I gained the call sign G4YTK in 1984.

My first HF radio was an old KW200B and the antenna I used was a half size G5RV. I soon become very keen on CW, later exchanging my old KW for a FT-901 and then later for a TS450s, buying an R5 Vertical and a Samson paddle. By the way, my grandad did visit my shack and even though he was in his 90s and hadn't listened to Morse code for over 40 years he could still write down what he was listening to.

In 2004 I joined the police force and family life and the job was getting busy so this took me away from the hobby.

In autumn 2019 I retired from the police force and started to have more free time. Along with my wife and our border collie dog, we started to tour the UK in our caravan, did more walking and took up kayaking. Spring 2020 Covid and lock down started: what was I going to do now?

I looked in the cupboard and wondered if the TS-450 would work, well it did. Would the old R5 vertical work? I spent a couple of weeks stripping the vertical down, cleaning and rebuilding it. The country was in lockdown so my interest was re-ignited.

The big day came and the antenna worked. I dug out the old Samson paddle and found it was as rusty as me. My 20 wpm of yesteryear was long gone but I made a few QSOs.

Covid lockdown was still continuing and I decided to buy a new radio, an IC-7300, spending my daughters inheritance. Later I changed my old R5 Vertical for a DX Commander Classic, spending more of the daughters inheritance. My Morse was getting better and I had found my love for CW was coming back, spending my time chasing SOTA and POTA stations, and ragchewing.



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Covid ended and one day I paid a visit to a local ham radio store and walked out with a new FTDX10 before my wife noticed I had once again spent more of the daughter's inheritance. January 2023 I spent even more, buying a Begali Pearl twin paddle. What a dream of a Morse key.

Now I have another thankyou to K9KJ (CWOPS #3228), I found TJ on his YouTube channel during summer 2023. I don't know why I stopped on his channel, he talked about contests which I had never taken any interest in and also the CWops group. I never would have thought that I could become a member of CWops, as my Morse code speed fell way short of 25 wpm and I also have a problem with dyslexia. I believe anyone working me who was a member of the group would think my pauses were due to a poor Morse code, but I decided to give the CWT a try on a Wednesday. I struggled, only making 6 contacts over the hour. The next week I worked 10 stations and I was hooked. But how would I get over the dyslexia, yet alone build my speed? On YouTube I found lots of Morse videos on common 100 and 250 words. I ditched the pen and moved onto head reading concentrating on the word. My speed and accuracy in receiving and sending was improving. I noticed when we returned from our holiday which was once every month, my speed in receiving had increased. A week's break seemed to have helped.

So that's my story, come November I was nominated and had sponsors, 1st December I received a congratulations e-mail from CWops. Wow talk about being pleased, I can't explain how it made me feel.

I have found in life that whatever your hobby is, surround yourself with people who are better than you, (that's certainly true with CWops) because the love and commitment for the hobby will be passed on to you.

So I hope one day my love and affection for Morse code might be passed on to someone else. You never know, one day my grandson or daughters might take an interest. They do like to have a look at what I'm doing.

Other hobbies I have are weather forecasting where I have over 24k followers on Facebook, Cannock Chase Weather. I enjoy flying and filming with my drone and I present a musical show on the local radio station.

SC

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