

Solid Copy



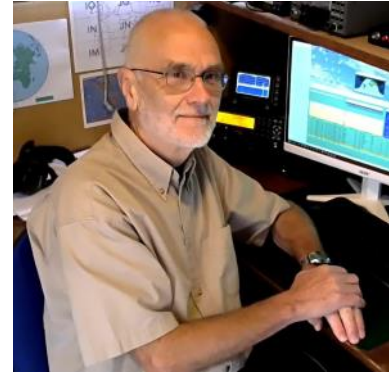
The CW Operators Club Newsletter
March 2024 — Issue 170

President's Message



Learn about our [new members](#) like Craig, AE7I, who enjoy their CW skills outdoors.

I'm writing this after returning from a 3 week overland tour in South Africa with the XYL. It's been on the bucket list for a while particularly for my wife whose parents were quite active in the anti-apartheid movement for many years. Africa is a fascinating and complicated continent.



(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"

CWops Officers and Directors

- President: Stew Rolfe, [GWØETE](#)
- Vice President: Peter Butler, [W1UU](#)
- Secretary: Jim Talens, [N3JT](#)
- Treasurer: Craig Thompson, [K9CT](#)
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- Director: Ken Tanuma, [JN1THL](#)
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- Newsletter Editor: Dick Strassburger, [N9EEE](#)

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In 1975 I travelled overland to hang out with a friend who was a VSO volunteer in Tanzania. My route from Egypt accompanied by a handful of random other independent travellers met en route, was later retraced by Michael Palin in his 'Pole to Pole' TV documentary and it was interesting seeing him and his team facing the same difficulties that I'd experienced particularly with route choices. I often imagine the chaos I could have produced on the HF bands if I'd had a radio and a bit of wire with me but at that time radio was far from my mind and anyway something like a Collins S-Line in a rucksac?! The original intention was to make it to South Africa and find some work; in the end I couldn't resist a cheap 'monsoon' ticket on the SS Karanja from Mombasa to Bombay and ended up in India!

I'm now looking forward to some spring weather and the chance to get out and sort some niggling antenna issues. We've had a poor winter in North Wales with seemingly endless spells of storms and damaging high winds. My Hexbeam has been fully lowered since before Christmas although I've still been having QSOs, managed to work TX5S for an All Time New One on a couple of bands once things had quietened down somewhat, and generated pile-ups in the January World Wide Award as the sole CW operator of GB6WWA - and all with the base at no more than 2.5m above the ground. I'm a pragmatic and easy to please type of individual and it continues to surprise me what can be achieved with sub-optimal antennas. My 'antenna farm' is wire only with not a tower in sight. After reading and hearing some of the tower mishaps like the G3LDI horror show in the January *Solid Copy* I'm probably glad I don't have the stress and worry (not to mention the expense) of maintaining towers safely! The first job on my 'to do' list however is to raise the Hexbeam to its normal height where it looks far more attractive than when hidden behind the bushes....;-)

We arrived back on the Friday evening before the first running of the CWops Activity Weekend. Chris's (VK3QB) Listserv reminder took me somewhat off guard but I managed to get everything set up on Saturday morning (except perhaps my brain which at times seemed stuck in holiday mode) and did some operating between other more mundane tasks and catching up with grandchildren on the Sunday. This was always going to be something of a trial and with the UBA contest and a couple of NA QSO parties running I decided to use 12 and 17m (a SWR problem on my 30m vertical still needs tracking down). Using GW2CWO clearly attracted some interest and I was slightly disappointed not to see or hear other CWO club calls being aired - I think we may be missing a trick here.

Just so I don't get completely outdone by N3JT's photos in his excellent Patagonia travelogue last month I'll finish with a couple of shots from my South African holiday. Both taken with my phone - the White Rhinos were in the Hluhluwe Game Reserve between Swaziland (eSwatini) and Durban and yes some really were that close.



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The sunrise was from a pre-breakfast visit to the top of Lion's Head with the low cloud streaming in off the ocean between us and Table Mountain; and all this just a 15 minute Uber ride followed by an hour walk/scramble from the centre of Cape Town! The locals told us we got lucky with these unusual weather conditions so it was a nice way to close out the trip.

Back to the bands.

73, Stew GWØETF, President
(CWops #919)



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Editor's Note: A Better Mousetrap

It still amazes me that learning a 100+ year old communications mode like Morse code is still an evolving educational activity. You'd think we would have reached perfection by now...the US military certainly thought so last century. But canvassing the various amateur radio CW organizations who offer classes, such as CWops' CW Academy, and other highly skilled learning curricula from individuals, we're still in pursuit of a learning style that efficiently and effectively instills this skill into one's autoreflex portion of their cranium. The styles vary greatly – and often those styles are defended with great passion – perhaps because behaviorists have suggested that a universal learning style may be less effective for some. This bears out in my recent Beginner's class where two of my students struggled mightily despite their deep commitment to daily practice. (I require a practice log be kept by each student so I can see where their challenges and struggles are – and how much practice time they've put in - and adapt my counsel accordingly).

Later in this issue John AD1JM offers up a tool for identifying the effectiveness of ICR training. It's a "better mousetrap" in that it's a diagnostic tool for advisors and a training tool for students. This follows on last month's article from two students who offered their advice for learning Morse code – practice, practice, practice – and identified "Better-ICR" as their go-to tool for improving ICR and head copy. As experienced CW operators know, that skill leads to many enjoyable and memorable QSOs as well as the feeling of accomplishment when operating CW.

73, Dick N9EEE, (CWops #3113)

Editor, Solid Copy (SolidCopy@cwops.org)

News and Notes

Duncan (Mac) Fisken, G3WZD

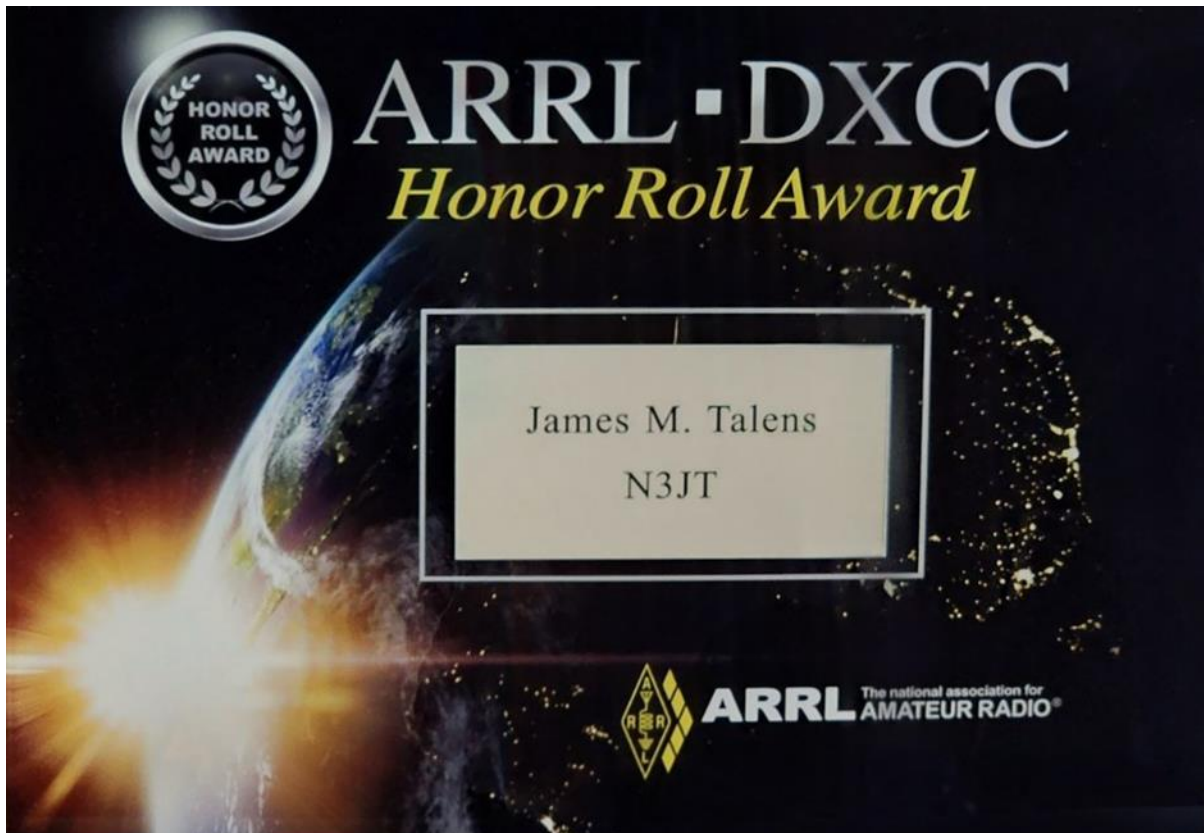
We regret to report that the following member has become a Silent Key:

Rick Graham, AB6XG #1754 on 13th February, 2024

A condolence card has been sent on behalf of CWops

Welcome to another News and Notes, and my usual thanks to all contributors for the varied selection of topics. Congratulations to all those who made notable achievements in DXing or contesting! Do keep the submissions coming, but please don't wait until the monthly call for articles or reminder (deadline for the next issue is 3rd April).

Jim, N3JT #1 N3JT hasn't sent out QSLs for decades but decided to see how many countries he has confirmed through his early days of QSLing and by LOTW in more recent times. Turns out 350, and Honor Roll inclusion.



Bruce, NJ3K #2431 I participated in the ARRL CW DX Contest of February 16 & 17, 2024. I have been licensed for 50+ years and the conditions were some of the best, if not the best, I have ever seen. I started off doing S&P to pickoff some easy multipliers. After about 45 minutes I went to 10 meters to run but ended up way up the band, like 88KHz up, to find an opening.

Pileups were difficult to work through with so many stations calling. I ended up with 2,302,962

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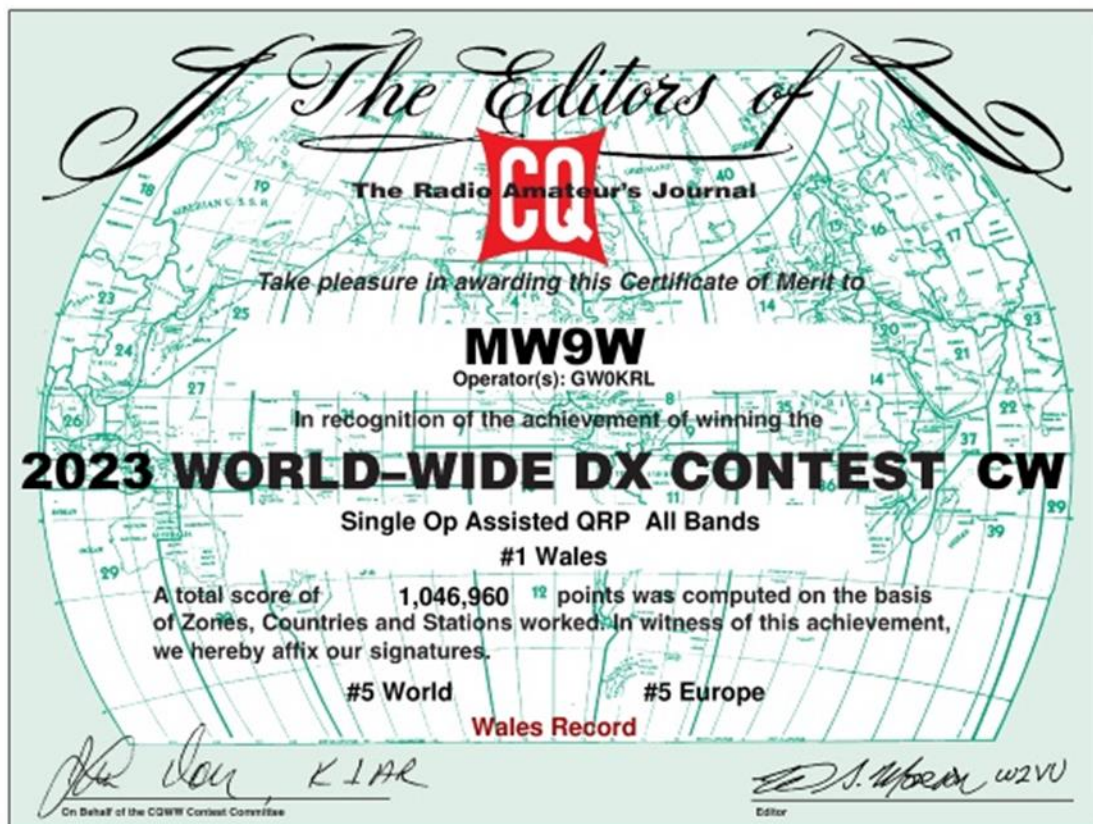
points and 1,667 QSOs. I worked 120 DXCC entities. I was operating Low Power Single Op All Band. I have a tri-bander at 40 feet and dipoles for 80 and 40, an inverted "L" for 160. Along the way I worked 173 CWops Members, thank you.

I hope the WPX CW test in May is equally as good.

Mike, VE3GFN #1119 Looks like VE3GFN took high Canada in his category, in the recent ARRL DX CW contest ... single op, low power, assisted, 10M only (only one score posted in this category, makes it easy, hi!)

Ian, GWØKRL #2896 I'd like to thank you (Duncan) for the idea to fire a line over my non-turning Yagi. It worked like a dream and interestingly "fixed" the rotator at the same time. Allowing me to tilt the tower and watch the water pour out of the end of the driven element. All back working properly again now... until the next storm passes through.

Also, I would like to thank everyone that I work in the CWTs each week for the practise I get. It has allowed me to get better scores in the 'big' contests. I think I'm getting the better at it now!



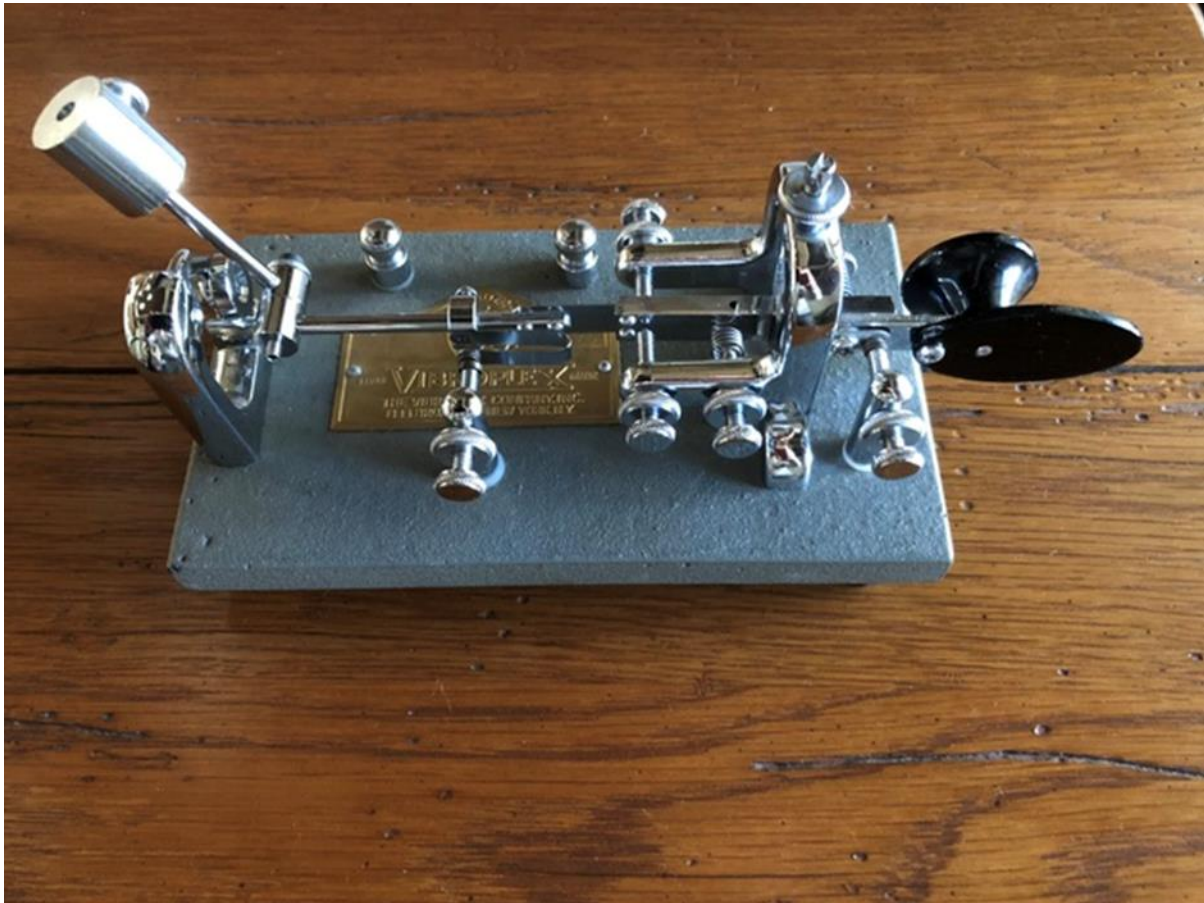
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Mike, ZS6MSW #3247 The [COOL CW Operators Club](#) is first CW club to have been established in South Africa since 1925, when the SARL (South African Radio League) began.

It was in December of 2023 when a need was seen to create a place where South African Morse code operators could gather, and where all would feel comfortable in visiting. There are quite a few ham radio operators in South Africa who are proficient in the use of the Morse code. The Club has also launched the [COOL](#), a Community On-line Open Logbook.

Gregg, KE2SX #1941 January was a pretty good month for me: I participated in several CWTs and SSTs. I finally found a Vibroplex Original Standard bug in great shape from the early 1970s, just like the one I had as a Novice in 1972. And after 34 years as an Advanced class licensee, I finally upgraded to Extra on January 6. Nice to not have to worry about that lower band limit any longer. I also became a VE and sat for several exam sessions in the past month. All in all, a good start to the new year.



Saul, W3WHK #1392 reports that his local club, Holmesburg ARC, of which he is president, has been invited to set up a ham radio exhibit/demo at the Northeast Philadelphia (PA) History Fair in April. The event is sponsored by the Friends of Northeast Philadelphia History, and usually consists of both lectures and of authors and history organizations making contact with the public.

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We will have tables exhibiting QSL cards and ham radio literature. The history connection here will be our collection of QSLs and certificates from the annual 13 Colonies operating event, where we represent our city as WM3PEN. The CW connection: We'll have a key and code-practice oscillator set up, so that adults and kids alike can try their hand at sending Morse code. We also hope to put WM3PEN on the air out in the adjoining parking lot if weather and logistics cooperate.

Dave, N6NZ/ZF2NZ Today's mail brought me a true day-brightener, a plaque for the ARRL DX CW contest of 2023, for the category of North America Single Op QRP. Please pass along my thanks to the entire board of CWops. The large number of plaques that CWops sponsors is truly generous, and I share your hope that it encourages more CW activity.

My little score was the result of cutting aside a few hours for a bit of radio fun on a trip that was mainly focused on giving my XYL a warm winter vacation. The plaque will always be a fond reminder of the trip.



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Antenna was a random wire held up by a broomstick I found in the closet plus some zip ties.



Trung, W6TN #1707 Members Roster update; I have removed all non-paid members so, as of 14th February, the list includes 2,620 paid members.

Until the next News and Notes, QAC...

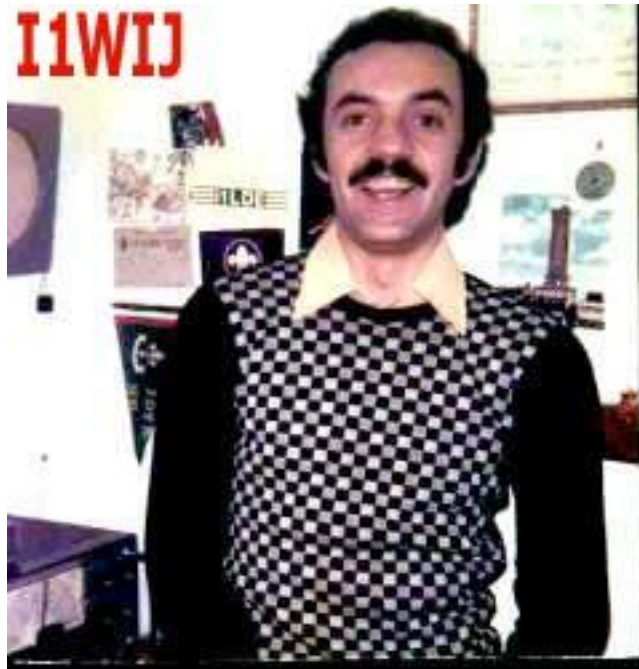
73, Duncan, G3WZD (CWops #1979)

NewsAndNotes@CWops.org

How We Were

[Ian Capon](#), GWØKRL

Bob Soro, I2WIJ, CWops #2406



The photo was taken in my first shack, in the basement, in 1976. At that time I was living in a valley in the north west part of Italy. My setup was a Geloso G4/216 receiver and a G4/223 transmitter, 75 Watt output, only CW and AM!! Antennas were an Hy-Gain 12-AVQ vertical for 10/15/20 mounted on the roof of the house with 6 radials (2 for each band) and an home made "More-Gain" folded dipole for 40/80 meters also mounted on the same roof. By the way, that vertical is still in use today, actually mounted on the ground at my country-side QTH!!!

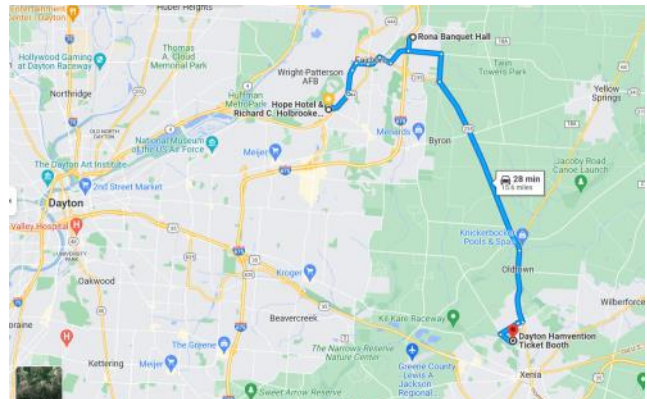
So now it's your turn, do you have a picture to share accompanied by a brief paragraph description, of your early days in radio, experimenting, exploring or just "being a ham". Please send it to [Ian Capon](#).

73, Ian GWØKRL (CWops #2896)

The 2024 Dayton Hamvention CWops Dinner

Thursday, May 16 - 7:00 pm

Last year we held our annual Hamvention CWops dinner at a new venue, near Xenia and not far from the Hope Hotel and Conference Center. For many years before that we held it at the Spaghetti House in downtown Dayton, but our need for more space necessitated a new approach. Again in 2024 we will hold our gala event at the Rona Banquet Hall, 1043 Rona Parkway Drive, Fairlawn, OH 45324. There is space for 150 people with plenty of parking, and we will have our own caterer. Those who attended last year were very happy with the event and we expect this year it will be even better! During dinner we will have our usual interesting presentations and updates, with lots of opportunities for chatting with folks you have only met on the air – or maybe saw last year at this event! It is certainly the CWops social event of the year!



The Rona Banquet hall is ours from 10 a.m. until 11 p.m. on Thursday, May 16, meaning it will be possible to have private or group meetings there before the dinner, subject to coordination with W1UU for access. (Note that several of us will be busy on Thursday gathering supplies for the dinner.) Our buffet dinner will commence at about 7 p.m. (No alcoholic beverages will be available at the event). Soft drinks will be available with a donation request of \$1 each (via a basket that will be placed next to the beverages.)

The cost of the dinner is \$39 per person. You may make your reservation and pay by going to [CWops 2024 Hamvention Dinner – CWops](#) Gerry, W1VE, will manage the [list of attendees and track payments](#).

At the dinner we will have a list of those who have paid. There can be no refunds because we will be giving the caterer an attendance number that will be the basis for our club payment.

It is not too early to reserve your spot for the 2024 CWops dinner! See you there!

73,

Peter Butler, W1UU (#91)

Jim Talens, N3JT (#1)

NORTH AMERICAN CW WEEKEND

June 7 - 9, 2024

As in the past, the Weekend is primarily aimed at those amateur radio operators with a particular interest in Morse code (CW) operation - FOC, CWops, SKCC, FISTS - but anyone with an interest in Morse code communication is welcome.

After two years of cancellations due to COVID restrictions, we had good get-togethers in 2022 and 2023. We are delighted to welcome regulars back, and look forward to meeting some new players.

With the recent increased concerns about an upturn of Covid-19, we are asking participants to be vaccinated and to use good sense with respect to any recommendations about COVID in force at the time of the weekend. At this point, masks are not required.

There is a nominal registration of \$25 per couple or \$15 per single person. This will help defray costs and fees. Any excess will be donated to the CWops Scholarship fund. Please send your check, made out to:

Don Lynch W4ZYT
1517 West Little Neck Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23452-4717

QUESTIONS/INQUIRIES:

Email any questions to Don at: w4zyt.don@gmail.com

Event Summary:

North American CW Room Block

Start Date: Thursday, June 6, 2024

End Date: Monday, June 10, 2024

Last Day to Book: Friday, May 12, 2024

Hotel:

Fairview Park Marriott (This is the usual for the past several years)

[3111 Fairview Park Drive](#)

[Falls Church, VA 22042](#)

Phone: 703-849-9400

Reservations: 800-507-8235 (Event is: "North American CW Weekend")

Rate: \$ 119.00 plus taxes/night (Friday/Saturday)



The View From The Top

[Dick Strassburger](#), N9EEE CWops #3113

If you look at the various CWops programs - CW Open, CWT, QTX, and CWops Member Awards (CMA, WAZ, WAE, WAS, ACA, and now ACMA) - you'll notice something in common. They all have rankings identifying participants who excelled at their specific activity based on their performance or achievement. And within each ranking, there is one call sign that resides at the top of that list. Certainly, they are doing something worth noting, especially if you're wondering how they got to the top of the list.

I asked them - the top dogs, the crème de la crème, the stars of the show, the top of the heap - to divulge what they felt got them to the top of the list. Equipment? Strategy? Skill? Sleepless nights? In each case, they were very humble about that ranking, so you can take ego out of the equation. Interestingly, not everyone at the top of a list responded, so clearly there are some secrets being held close to one's chest, or their humbleness precludes them from weighing in on this topic. My thanks to the following CWops members who did respond and wished to share their perspective and insights so we can have a glimpse of how they got there.

My question was simply, "What did it take to be #1 for your award?" Below is a compilation from those who responded. They are presented in no particular order or ranking.

CWops DXCC: W1RM, Pete (CWops #8): Any time there is a DXpedition announced, I check their website to see who the operators are. If any of them are CWops members then I pay attention to working them on every band I can. I check ClubLog to see who the operator was that I worked and if the op is a member, then I record that in the tracking tool.

I use DXLab Spotkeeper to watch spots for the DXpeditions as well. Otherwise, it's very straightforward.

CWops CMA: AA3B, Bud (CWops #242): Regarding the CMA award, I believe the reasons that I am number one are:

- I am charter member of CWops which means I have been eligible for this award since its inception.
- I made nearly a million (972,149) CW QSOs between February 2010 and the end of 2023.
- I participated in a number of high-profile special events that attracted CWops members including the W1AW activations in 2014 and 2023, 13 Colonies, WRTC 2018 and WRTC 2022, and the CWops 10th anniversary.
- My trips to V26K resulted in many QSOs with club members.
- The CWops Award Tools developed by DJ5CW are fabulous and I am rigorous about uploading all my logs to the system.

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CWops WAZ: AA3B, Bud (CWops #242): Regarding the WAZ, many members have achieved 38 Zones, but I appear first when the calls are tabulated alphabetically.

CW Open: AA3B, Bud (CWops #242): Regarding the CW Open, I think the main reasons that I won Region 2 are:

- I participate in the 13z, 19z and 03z CWT's almost every week which is outstanding practice for the CW Open (and many other contests).
- I belong to the Frankford Radio Club (FRC) and the FRC members enjoy forming teams for the CW Open – this fosters competition.
- I have a competitive contest station.

CWops ACA: KR2Q, Doug (CWop #438) The Annual Competition Award recognizes those members who work other members. The goal is to contact as many different members as possible during any given calendar year. Seems simple enough.

In my opinion, the CWops sponsored activity with the most member participation is the CWT every Wednesday/Thursday. I have found that entering as many sessions as possible is necessary, but not sufficient to reach the top of ACA. Personally, I have yet to participate in even one 0700 UTC session.

CWops members comprise a diverse group. Not everybody is into CWT. To “work the most” members (just one time is all that is needed per year), one needs to engage in other CW mode activities.

So, besides CWT, I have worked “new ones” during ragchews. Sometimes, I will hear that the person at the other end hates contests and hence hates CWT. Further, some CWops members are active on POTA and SOTA. Be sure to listen around their watering holes. Another big group of CW operators belong to the SKCC group. So, dig out your mechanical key and get active there too (it’s free to join and having an SKCC member number helps). And don’t forget ragchewers; perhaps more difficult to find, but they are out there.



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And then there are the various nets. Often, they are happy to have you join in. Around Halloween, you can find the QRP Zombies and some of them are CWops members too. I have worked "new ones" during SST and MST. But other CW contests will also bring out "rare" members: NAQP, CQWW and ARRL DX contests, Sweepstakes, 160m contests, and lots of state QSO Parties. There is really no limit to where to find CWops members that do not normally "do" the CWT sessions.

If you want be more technological (I am not), connect your logger to DX Cluster/Telnet or maybe HamAlert. I really can't give you more details because I don't use these (yet?). I have never been able to "point and click" on spotting networks. Based on CWT scores, using SO2R will boost your score by a lot. But working only CWT will limit your available inventory of CWops.

In closing, the answer for me is to just be as active as possible and don't limit yourself to only one to two types of CW activities. My real goal is to find enjoyment in life and (despite still working full time) I do enjoy all these different "types" of CW operating, in and of themselves; they are not simply a means to an end.

[Ed: Doug was featured in *Solid Copy* in the January 2022 article (page 27) about Tracking ACA and his ascent up the rankings. <https://cwops.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/solid-copy-2022.01.1.pdf>]

CWops WAS: KR2Q, Doug (CWops #438): (no additional comment)

Mini-QTX: KY4GS, Amanda (CWops #3208):

For the purpose of CWops awards, the Mini QTX is defined as a QSO in CW mode over 10 minutes and under 20 minutes. Of all the members who submitted last year, I was at the Top of the list for the mQTX Ragchewing category.

Why are so many of my QSOs in the 10-20 minute range? I have no idea how I got to the top of the list, aside from being active on the air. Speed, signal strength and propagation can be factors of QSO length.

I engage in QSOs of various lengths, up to 2 hours. These include contests, POTA, DX, minimal exchanges, longer QSOs, ragchews, ongoing conversations, and so on. I don't always have QSOs with the same stations, but I have a few favorite ragchew buddies (when our schedules coincide). I will work operators of different skill levels and try to match the speed of the other operator.



As is true in our non-ham lives, sometimes it's nice just to say hello to your friends, which may

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turn out to be a shorter QSO. And it's also fun to work your old pals on a new band (even though conditions may not allow for a long QSO). Sometimes after many contest QSOs, it's fun to finally have a short chat with the other operator.

If you hear KY4GS on the air, please say hello. It doesn't matter how long the QSO! I will be happy to get you in the log.

QTX: VE3WH, Sam (CWops #3046):

1/ Don't be afraid to try sending a simple CQ.

2/ Be attentive and ask questions. It's not a race, it's a conversation.

3/ Set time aside as often as is reasonable to become engaged in chats. Over time Ragchewing will come to you naturally.

4/ When logging your contacts, include topics you have discussed for future reference.

(photo and story)

With every conversation in Morse Code, we are preserving our art.

In the photo, I'm holding my first set of paddles. They are a Super Squeeze Key SSK-001, made by Nye, Wm. M. Co. Inc., from the late 70s. Not a Begali, but very rugged. Most of my logged CW was achieved using this paddle from 1980 to present. I had way more CW/M QSOs than home QTH Qs. Head copy was a must, and this key could easily be strapped to my right leg. Had to laugh when I was in CW Academy as one of the other students asked what key I was using during a Zoom CWA class. I held it up to the camera and everyone had a look of wonder and a smile on their faces.

About two years ago, I was talking to a friend Chip, W9EBE on 30 meters shortly after becoming a member of CWops. He mentioned that this QSO counted towards a QTX. What is QTX? "QTX Definition : Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW". I had to look that up and see what it was all about. Bruce Murdock, K8UDH was the QTX Manager in 2022, and graciously allowed me to start posting my QTX eligible



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conversations from the beginning of the year, even though it was well into March 2022. April of that year was my first posted score.

Last year's winner of the QTX award was Cecil K5YQF. Cecil is the SKCC Marathon Manager and has a passion for mechanical keys. Thanks to Cecil and his encouragement, I became interested in mechanical keys and restoring semi-automatic keys. In March 2022 I earned the SKCC Marathon Award, which is one of SKCCs conversational CW awards. Working towards the Marathon Award helped me with my conversational skills. Like many CW operators I am active in more than one CW club.

CW operators' common thread is our appetite for Morse code. Conversational CW is the desire to share ideas, thoughts, or a snapshot of ourselves. For some, it will be talking about the newest software/hardware driving their cutting-edge stations. Others will want to tell you about boat anchors they refurbished and are using on the air. Amateur radio enthusiasts are an assortment of people with various occupations and goals. A QSO with a submariner at the start of a day may end with a chat with a trucker at the end. It is not uncommon to get technical advice from the other side of the world during a QSO.

I encourage you to try Ragchewing and submit your score to the QTX awards.

Have you noticed any patterns emerging from these high performing respondents? My thanks to Bud, Doug, Pete, Sam, and Amanda for allowing me to ask the question and publish their responses. Bridging from my sailing background, whenever two boats are randomly headed in the same direction, captains eye each other to gauge their speed, and thus a race ensues. The same may hold true with CW operators. But not this group. For them, its Strategy and Opportunity.

sc

A Better-ICR

[John Merkel, AJ1DM](#) (CWops #1973)

In his February 2024 Solid Copy article "CW - Two Journeys and the Impact of Instant Character Recognition," Tony VE2KM mentioned my app, Better-ICR. The editor, Dick N9EEE suggested *Solid Copy* readers might appreciate a separate article explaining Better-ICR in detail. I am happy to provide that explanation here.

For the last four or five years I have been assessing where my incoming CWA Intermediate Level students stand with respect to Instant Character Recognition (ICR). I started out with a time-consuming manual process, but have recently developed a web app, Better-ICR, to make the process easier for both the students and myself. Along the way I realized I could tweak Better-ICR to also serve as a practice tool to help my students achieve ICR. Better-ICR has been more success-

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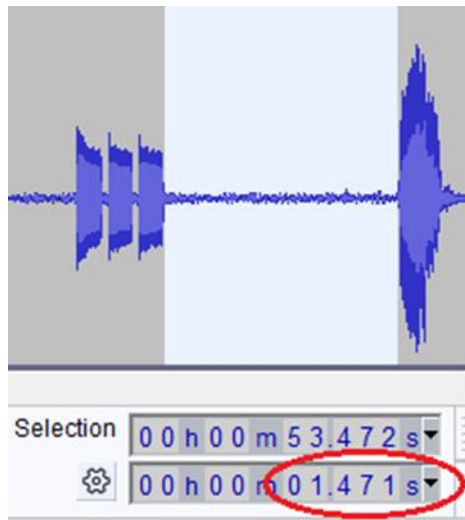


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ful than I had reason to hope in both assessing and improving ICR for Intermediate level students.

More recently Tony VE2KM has used Better-ICR successfully with Fundamental students. And as I write this article, Mark W8EWH has tried it with Beginner students. It seems obvious that Better-ICR will need significant adaptation to serve Beginners most effectively – more about that later.

The concept at the heart of Better-ICR is that we can get a good idea of how close someone is to ICR by measuring the time it takes them to vocalize a character they've just heard transmitted in cw. Here's what that looks like in the Audacity audio editing tool:



The app sent dah-dah-dah and the student responded 1471 msec later (blue-highlighted area and red-circled value) by saying the letter “o.” Before you jump to the conclusion that this student’s response was not instant you have to realize that the 1471 msec time period included not just the recognition time, but also the time it took for the student’s lungs, vocal cords, lips, tongue, etc., to organize themselves to vocalize the character.

When I first started using this approach to measuring ICR I did this assessment on a number of individuals I had good reason to believe had achieved ICR (myself and several CWops friends). As a result of that work I concluded that vocalizing a character takes about 600 msec. So when I see a result like the recording above, I estimate that the student spent almost 900 msec decoding the letter “o,” then another 600 msec vocalizing it.

So Better-ICR uses 600 msec as the criterion for deciding whether a response was instant or not.

Of course, response time means nothing if the student decoded the character incorrectly. To determine accuracy, the student types the character into Better-ICR after vocalizing it. So the sequence is: hear the CW, vocalize the character, type the character. I advise the student to vocalize the character as quickly as they can, then take their time to find the key on the keyboard corresponding to the character they spoke.

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Now we have the two pieces of information needed to confirm ICR: response time and accuracy.

You might ask, why not cut out the middleman and just have the student type the character, then measure the time between code and keystroke? My feeling, which I know some other CWA Advisors share, is that exercises of the form “hear-a-character-type-a-character” are anathema to learning head-copy. Somehow it seems that typing the character bypasses the cognition part of the brain – almost like the muscular reflex that jerks your hand away from a hot object before your brain has time to sense the temperature. So I’m naturally distrustful of typing as a measure of ICR. It’s more complicated for both my students and the app to use vocalization, but that is key to the validity of the method.

Better-ICR has two modes.

In Assessment Mode, Better-ICR cycles through the 40 characters we emphasize in CWA (26 letters, 10 digits, and the punctuation symbols: period, comma, question mark, and slash) once each, in random order, capturing the response time and accuracy for each character. Then Better-ICR emails me a report containing the detailed data for all the characters, along with summary statistics, such as percent accuracy, percent ICR, and maximum, minimum, and average response times.

Better-ICR also uploads a recording of the entire assessment to the cloud. I access that recording and use it to validate the results. Validation consists of manually determining response times for several characters to make sure that the student’s audio setup is clean enough for Better-ICR’s math to work properly.

Once I have validated the assessment, I email the report to the student’s Advisor (advisor name, student name, and student call sign are collected by Better-ICR before starting the assessment). The Advisor can use that report to inform the student where he or she stands with respect to ICR. I used to use the data from the report to suggest how my student should focus their practice time (usually numbers and punctuation) – but that is no longer necessary due to the other mode of Better-ICR.

Once a student has completed a valid assessment, the Advisor provides instructions to access the Adaptive Practice Mode (this is the aspect of Better-ICR John GØUBE referred to in Tony’s article). Instead of sending each of the 40 characters once, as in Assessment Mode, Better-ICR cycles through the characters continuously until the student chooses to stop. The response pattern is identical to Assessment Mode: hear the CW, vocalize the character (quickly), type the character (carefully).

Another difference from Assessment Mode is that Better-ICR keeps track of the student’s past response times and uses that history to influence which character to send next. In other words, the characters that the student has tended to copy inaccurately or slowly are sent more frequently than the characters the student tended to copy quickly and accurately. So the student gets more practice where most needed. And as the student’s trouble spots evolve (learning being non-linear) the history changes and Better-ICR shifts the probabilities accordingly. That is why I no longer have to counsel a student to practice numbers, for example – if their numbers are

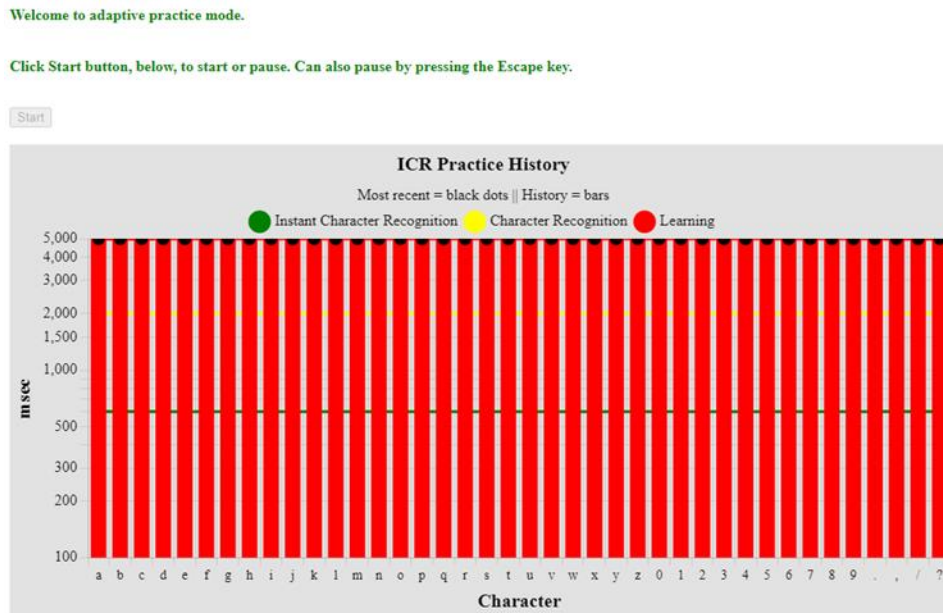
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weak, Better-ICR will figure that out and send more numbers.

Finally, unlike Assessment Mode, the student can see their results in real time, in the form of a graph. At the start the graph looks like this:



Each vertical red bar represents one of the 40 characters. The height of the bar represents the historical response time in msec. The student starts with a history value of 5000 msec. The black dots (in the starting configuration they appear above as half circles at the 5000 msec mark – you’ll see them better in the examples coming up) represent the student’s most recent response for that character.

As the student proceeds in Adaptive Practice mode, the black dots and the red bars shift up and down based on the student’s accuracy and response time. The red history bar height is calculated as a Weighted Moving Average (wma) of all previous results for that character. The WMA is weighted so as to give the most influence to recent results and the least to older results.

An incorrect response is scored as though it was copied correctly, but with the default response time of 5000 msec.

The horizontal yellow line corresponds to a response time of 2000 msec. This is a new feature added for Beginning students. Based on some experiments done in Mark W8EWH’s Beginner class, we believe that a response time of 2000 msec means that the student has achieved Character Recognition and with further practice can achieve Instant Character Recognition.

Once the history for a character falls to the yellow line, the history bar turns yellow. Here’s a progress graph for a student who has achieved Character Recognition for two characters:

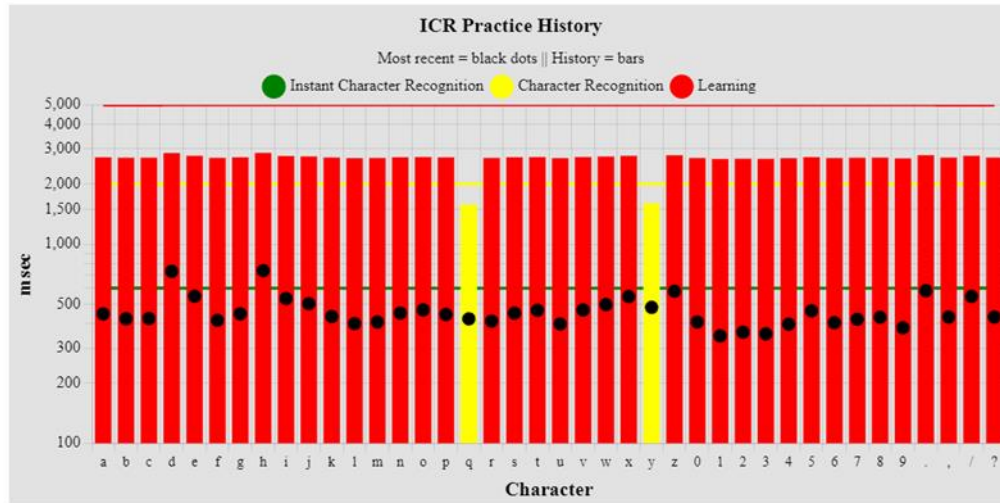
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Welcome to adaptive practice mode.

Click Start button, below, to start or pause. Can also pause by pressing the Escape key.

Start

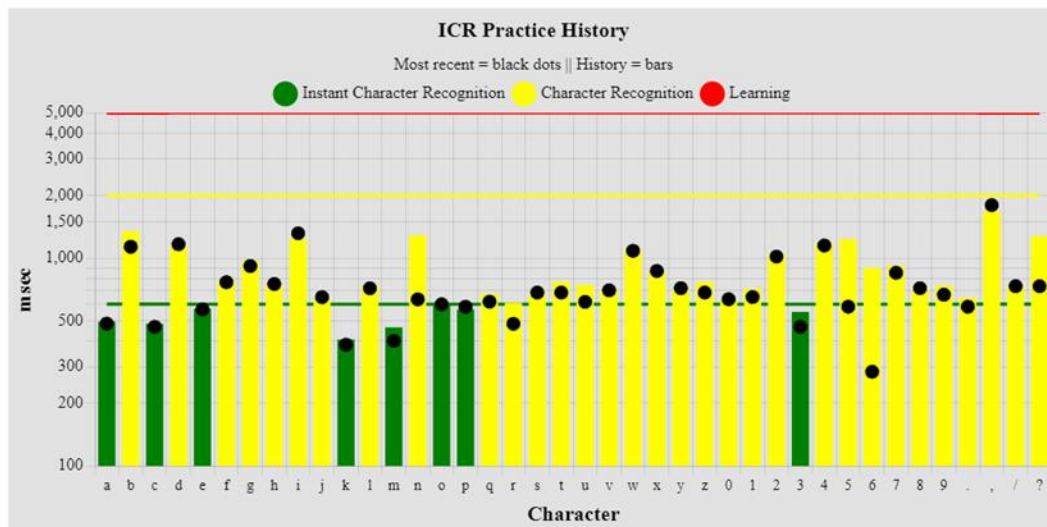


The horizontal green line corresponds to a response time of 600 msec, the Instant Character Recognition benchmark I described above. When the history for a character falls to the green line, the history bar turns green. Here's a progress graph for a student who has progressed through Character Recognition and has achieved ICR for a few characters.

Welcome to adaptive practice mode.

Click Start button, below, to start or pause. Can also pause by pressing the Escape key.

Start



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My early results with Better-ICR surpassed my modest expectations. I've seen Intermediate students improve from 1200-1500 msec to ICR in two to four weeks. Tony has seen positive results with his Intermediate and Fundamental students.

John MØUBE described Better-ICR as addictive, like a video game. Others who have used the app describe it similarly. That has resulted in an unexpected problem: students sometimes recount using the app continuously for an hour or more. It's almost too much fun! However, I discourage practice sessions, for any CW exercise, of more than 10-15 minutes in duration, because our brains need time to assimilate new learnings. So I added a session timer. After ten minutes, Better-ICR gives the student a friendly reminder that they should take a break. I originally set the timer for 5 minutes, but students complained that was too soon! Clearly, Better-ICR makes learning enjoyable for students.

As mentioned above, Mark has now tested Better-ICR on Beginners. Though we are optimistic that it will be useful for them, we identified at least two adjustments needed to accommodate Beginners:

- The first has already been implemented – having a target response time Beginners can strive for. In the original implementation of Better-ICR there was no yellow line and no yellow bars. The bars changed from red to green once the history hit the ICR threshold. No one expects a Beginning student to achieve ICR; that's what Fundamental Level is for. Hence a Beginner may never see a red bar turn green, which would rob them of an important incentive. So Mark and I agreed on the 2000 msec CR threshold and added yellow history bars for meeting that threshold. This change was just implemented, so we will have to see how it works out in practice.
- Second, for most of the duration of the semester a Beginning student won't know all the characters. But Better-ICR sends all 40 characters and by design, will favor sending the ones the student doesn't know. I couldn't imagine a more frustrating experience for a CW learner! For purpose of our experiment, Mark waited until his students had been exposed to all 40 of the characters before asking them to try the app. In the future, I will modify the app so that a student can select a subset of the 40 characters for practice. Then Better-ICR could be used by a Beginner at any stage of the course.

Very recently Randal KG5IEE and Craig N2DA have been using Better-ICR with their Beginner students and the feedback has been very positive.

In summary, Better-ICR has demonstrated its usefulness in helping both Fundamental and Intermediate students achieve ICR; we have begun exposing Beginners and hope that it will prove similarly helpful, especially after some further modifications. So a broad range of students may find Better-ICR to be helpful in their CW journeys. If you are an Advisor who would like to try Better-ICR with your classes, please contact me at aj1dm@arrl.net.



Fun With Maps

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

I had a lot of fun hunting during the first "contest day" of the CW ARRL DX contest recently. 10M was wide-open, with runners up as far as 28.160. Set a personal record for QSOs worked, including 35 CWops members, and confirmed enough new DX countries for CW DXCC. (thanks, **Guyana!**).

For those interested in constructing their own DX-ish map, here is an online tool I found that gets you pretty close, some of the tinier entities aren't going to show up (there is a premium version for \$40/year that has a more detailed world map as well as US-county level). Go here: <https://www.mapchart.net/world.html> to open the web page and follow along with my instructions.

Step 1: Color and Edit the map (In the settings (bottom left))

- Optionally enable country names (I left them off)
- Optionally, set the Background to transparent (click on the white box, transparent will be the little checkerboard pattern on the bottom right). This will give you flexibility if you want to use the image on a website or personal blog.
- Select the "Split the UK" slider to show discrete countries (e.g., Wales, Scotland).
- Set border color (if desired; default is black, I made it white)
- Click the box next to "Select Color" (I chose red)
- Select each DX country - you can get the list by going to LOTW click on **Awards**, click on **Select DXCC Award Account**, then click on **CW** (or eye-ball it from the teeny QRZ DX map.) If you make a mistake, you can deselect with shift-click (or right click for a bunch of options). **To zoom, click on Zoom Mode (on the left)** - you can then zoom in and out with the middle mouse wheel.
- Optionally add more breakdown. For example, I wanted to depict countries that were new to me (blue) as well as unconfirmed (gray).

Step 2: Add a legend:

- Fill in a title, "WT8P CW DX Map", only use your own call!
- Define the labels
- On Legend Options, select Size: **Extra Large**

You can move the legend wherever you want.

Step 3: Get a map (when you're happy with it)

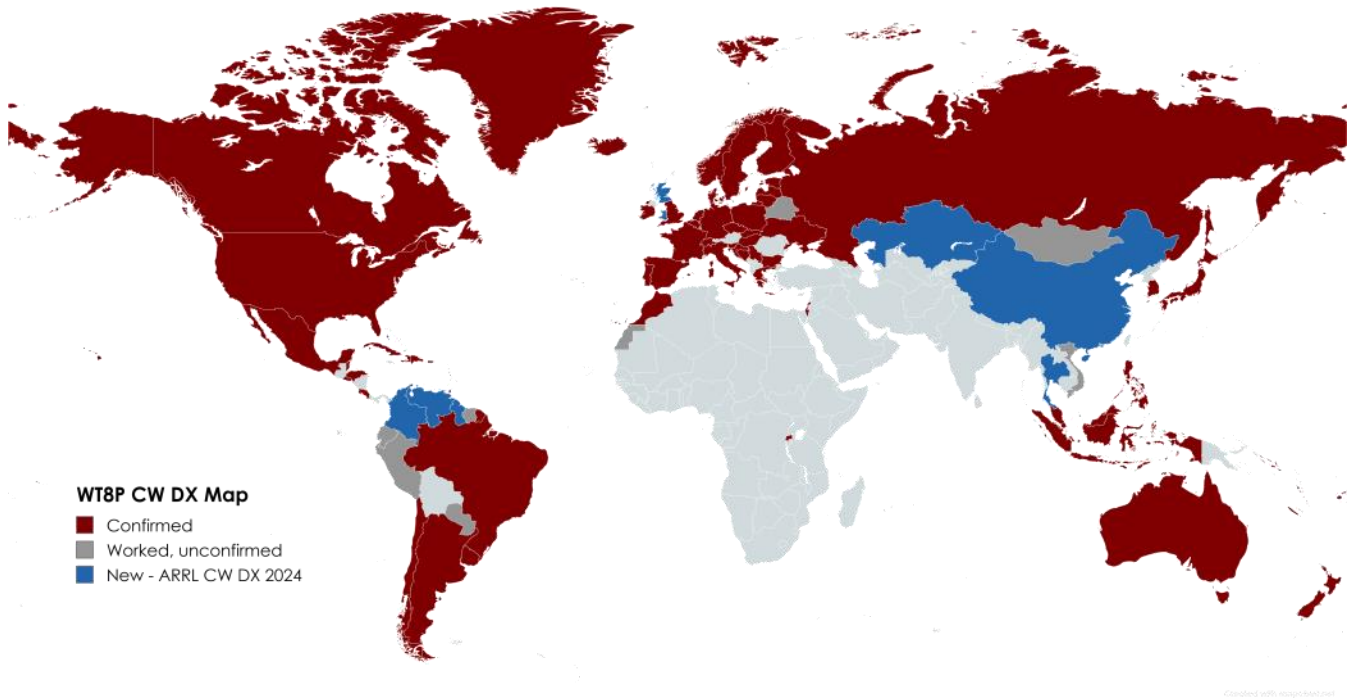
- Click **Save/Load Map Configuration** then **SAVE CONFIGURATION** (this will download a text file to your machine to use as a backup/amend in the future).

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- Click **Download Map** - this will download a .PNG file.



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The Engraved Long Island Telegraph Key

[Ed Goss](#), N3CW (CWops #1509)

It is not uncommon to see or own an engraved telegraph key. To a collector, an engraved key can be a mixed blessing. If the engraved call or name belongs to a well-known ham, it may add to the key's value. But if the name or call is not easily recognized by the general ham population, your key is less valuable...or is it? What can we learn from an engraved key?

The key shown on the next page is called the Long Island Mercury. It is beautifully-made by Richie Stamile, KG2ED, and is a clone of the famous N2DAN magnetic paddle. This particular KG2ED version has the call "N4EO" engraved on the base, and was obtained from an estate seller. Based on the serial number, this key is estimated to be about 20-25 years old. For key collectors, any pre-owned key ideally has no engravings or marks from the previous owner. I will admit that my first thought after I unboxed this key was "maybe I can have a new base made."

While this key itself (and N2DAN) are worthy of more detailed study, this key brings along a couple of side stories that are equally worthy of discussion. At first, one might think a high-end paddle, its former owner N4EA, key engraving, and estate planning are somewhat random unrelated topics. However, at least to me, they all tie together in a way that I thought would be of interest to my fellow CW Ops.

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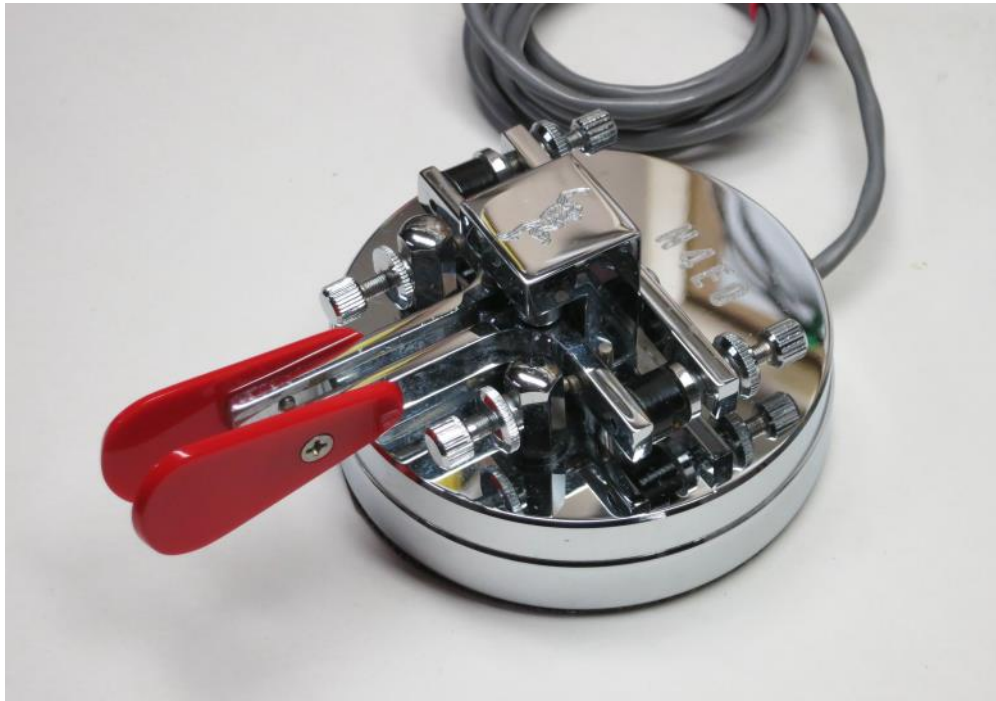


Figure 1. KG2ED/N2DAN key S/N 025 as obtained from estate seller

I wanted to know just who N4EO was. What I found was fascinating and inspiring, and caused me to banish the thought forever of having a new base made for this key. I can now appreciate this key and the engraving for the unique artifact it is, and I can be reminded each time I look at it how special the previous owner was. Since there are several aspects to this Long Island Mercury key story which may intersect with CWops member background and interests, I thought I would first present this brief story of N4EO. I have no doubt there is more to know about N4EO, but just his biographical highlights are enough to make me re-evaluate my own ham life and the importance of how it affects others. Additionally, the manner in which I obtained this key has prompted me to take a closer look at estate options for my own radio gear which will one day need to be re-homed.

So consider this a somewhat unusual telegraph key story with several aspects of potential interest to CWops members. I think that the components of this “unusual” story may offer at least one aspect that could benefit CWops members, be it on key collecting, setting life priorities, or estate management.

A Closer Look at N4EO

N4EO was Colonel Jerry Mark Brown, M.D., U.S. Army (retired). He was born in 1947, and passed away in 2022 due to injuries suffered in a fall. From his obituary, we learn that Dr. Brown received undergraduate and master’s degrees in electrical engineering from Vanderbilt University. He then focused his studies on medicine, specifically internal medicine, nuclear medicine, and radiology. After joining the U. S. Army, Dr. Brown achieved the rank of Lt. Colonel before leaving to work in private practice in the field of radiology. The 9/11 tragedy caused him to put aside his medical practice and petition Congress for allowance to re-enter the Army, where he served another six years before retiring with the rank of Colonel.

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Dr. Brown began his association with ham radio at the early age of 13, and eventually obtained the callsign N4EO. He previously held HL9EO and YI9EO, and was very proud of his wife Maria's KH6EO callsign. His radio interests included DXing and QRP. Although his Tennessee home station featured a 120 foot rotating tower system, he was just as fascinated with the performance of an EFHW antenna using #22 wire hanging out his hotel window, which he used while running 3 watts from an ATS-3 in Korea.

Deciding to not rest on his many accomplishments, Dr. Brown set his priorities on missionary and teaching work. He was a vital part of Servant Group International, and contributed time and vast knowledge to many in Mexico and Iraq. With a background in engineering, medicine, and the military, it is Dr. Brown's church and missionary work that most of his friends seemed to remember him for. Many friends and colleagues attested to how their lives were changed because of Dr. Brown's beliefs, and application of his technical and teaching skills to his missionary work.



Figure 2. Colonel Jerry M. Brown, N4EA. (Photo courtesy of Heritage Funeral Home)



Figure 3. Colonel Jerry M. Brown marker, Ft. Bliss National Cemetery, showing N4EO engraved on marker

Estate Management – A Side Note

I mentioned that this key was obtained from an estate seller. While that is true, the manner in which the key found its way to me is the result of an estate management approach that may be of interest to many CWops members. Andre VanWyk, NJØF, founded HamEstate.com to help alleviate the family's burden of equipment disposal after the passing of a ham. Services offered can

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be reviewed on the Ham Estate website. In addition, current estate equipment offerings are available for buying consideration.

Summary

I would encourage those who come across ham radio-related items at flea markets, auction sites, hamfests, or local yard sales to pay a bit more attention to each item's history; learn as much as you can, especially while you have access to the seller. After all, in a way you are buying that history along with the object. Sometimes, documenting a previous owner's life or how the object was used over time can add to the monetary value of the item. Keep in mind though that the object's value may not always be measured in dollars, but in lessons-learned. At the very least, you may come to know enough about the previous owner that your own life might be changed in unexpected ways.

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2024 Bug Roundtable Swings Into Action and Closes with "QAC"

[Dwight \(aka Wolf\) Baker, KB4WLF](#) (CWops #1982)

[Jim Talens, N3JT](#) (CWops #1)

The Bug Round Table (BRT) has been slowly growing over the past few months, initiated by KB4WLF, Wolf, and W4MA, Bill. The BRT is attracting operators who have a nostalgic passion for the mechanical and audio qualities of a bygone era of ham radio. Its focus is on the use of bugs in an environment of old-time net operation.

Many of us who use bugs think of ourselves more as jazz musicians than anything else, straying from the "PARIS"- perfect teachings of the Koch and Farnsworth methods of learning and sending Morse Code. We frolic in being dismissively referred to as "albatrosses that mess up your code skills." As emphasized in Chris Rutkowski's "The CW Way of Life," swinging the "dit-train" gives us the feeling of sending rhythmic patterns of words and phrases created by hand and mind instead of a keyer. It makes sending with a bug feel like playing a musical instrument. Many hams started with bugs before moving on to keyers, but few have returned to those days of ham radio when each CW character was unique to the sender's fist.

The BRT has been firing up on Wednesday nights at 8:30 pm EST (or EDST) on about 3558 kHz. All bug operators are welcome. There is no net control station (NCS) at first. If 3558 kHz is in use, QSY up or down to find an opening and call "QRL?" The first station on the scene calls CQ BUG and is at the top of the list. This "top station" then passes it to the next station heard or copied, and so on. That "top station" keeps the order and conveys the order to the other stations. That operator also calls QNI when it comes back to him or her to ask for new check-ins. The new order is then transmitted. As stations call in, the station that is next to transmit (or "up") will let the

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calling stations know who is at the top and bottom. In that way they will know who and when to pass the transmission back to the top station. It sounds confusing, and it can be, but it does not matter because ultimately there are transmissions and exchanges using bugs and somebody will always reign in the check-ins. It's fun, and it's bugs

The BRT is proving to be a great place for meeting other bug users and enjoying a wide variety of classic keys and sending styles. Perhaps perceived as somewhat iconoclastic, the BRT encourages conviviality and a casual approach to the world of amateur radio CW nets.

Finally, in the spirit of Mort, G2JL, and his alluring British sense of humor, I plan to frequently "tie the ribbons" with his original Q code: QAC. It means "with all compliments" and covers 73, 88, happy holiday, stay well, and so on. Underlying this is a tribute to Mort and what has brought to CW over the decades. [See accompanying article, "Advice from G2JL on Standards of Operating."]

The BRT will meet on 7118 kHz from April through September.

CU bugsters on the air, Wolf, KB4**WithLeftFoot** (KB4WLF)

Advice from G2JL on Standards of Operating

Mort, G2JL, developed a sagacious conduct provision that appears on his QRZ.COM page. It provides, in part:

Article 9 of Articles of Association of South Hampshire Int'l Telegraphy Society:

It shall be a condition of Membership that Operators shall strive to promote high Standards of Work and to maintain a courteous and considerate Attitude to other Practitioners of The Mode, whether Operators or not. They shall reply, when called, even to Clickers and Chirpers working from undistinguished Locations. Having been informed that their Strength is Nine, they shall eschew the Practice of repeating their Name and Location more than seven times; they shall not call CQ over more than three DX Stations on the same Frequency; they shall not use open DX Bands for local Chitchat; they shall not send at Thirty Words per Minute to a station clearly preferring Four; and amongst themselves they shall promote the Use of the Code QAC, which shall be taken as implying "All Compliments" and shall include:-

VY 73 73 OM CUL BCNU & mni tnx fer nice/FB/rotten QSO GL GB hope cuagn wid gud/btr/wrse condx mri Xms Hpi Nw Yr mni hpi rtrns gtgs fer Rosh Hoshanah/May Day/Tksgvg, 88 to XYL/YL/Widow Ciao Cheerio & gud/FB/best DX or any Part or Parts thereof in any Permutation or Combination. An Operator, having been in Receipt of a Report of S6 or better, shall send QAC but ONCE.

Note: Mort is currently suffering from worsening dementia. Those who knew him well are encouraged to call Mary, his XYL, and chat briefly with Mort. Contact [N3JT](#) for the phone number.



A Night On Kirk Fell

[Matthew Barker](#), MØMZB (CWops #3468)

Pre-Ramble

I joined CWops in January 2024. I'm a keen outdoors radio operator and thought you might like to read about one of my recent adventures.

On Friday 9th February I set out cycling from home to head up into Wasdale. I didn't have a clear plan, other than to spend a couple of nights out camping, with one of those nights being atop Kirk Fell. This was to continue my ongoing challenge to camp on top of as many of the higher Lake District summits as possible. The first few years of these adventures have been chronicled [in a book I recently published](#). These adventures were one of the main reasons I started learning CW 2 years ago, so that I could operate on HF with a lightweight CW-only radio, and a small battery.

The weather was unsettled and cool as I set off, however, a fine, still night was forecast for Saturday. My intention was therefore to spend Saturday night atop Kirk Fell and operate CW through the night, but I was undecided what my route should be to take me to the summit over the following day.

As I cycled past Wastwater I eyed-up Scafell Pike, and eventually paused the cycle at the turn off for the national trust carpark. I was considering heading up the Hollow Stones route, with the possibility of camping in the derelict stone shack on the summit. However, the forecast was for a wet and windy night, so it didn't seem a good idea. As I was watching, a dark cloud rolled over the summit and made-up my mind. Instead, I decided to park the cycle at Wasdale Head, and head towards Esk Hause via Styhead.

I locked the cycle to a notice board at the parking area at Wasdale Head green, and changed into walking boots. With winter conditions evident from about 500 m and above, I was carrying ice-axe and crampons, along with two VHF radios, my CW-only radio and several antennas plus a 6m pole. I had 3 to 4 days worth of food in case my plans changed.

Onwards and upwards

Heading past St Olaf's Church, I looked up at the route to Kirk Fell, along Kirk Fell nose. This route is notorious for being a laborious slog; its the only route up to Kirk Fell that I have never yet tried. From this angle it didn't look too bad, and was ear-marked as a possible descent route.

Part way up the walk to Styhead a steady rain/sleet started to fall. I took the opportunity to stand behind a large boulder and change out of my cycling shorts, and into leggings/waterproof trousers. Now feeling much more comfortable, I started walking again, and soon starting crossing patches of snow. By the time I reached Styhead Tarn there was a good covering of snow on the ground.

The tarn looked wild and lonely in the dull light of the wintery day. Mist covered the summit of

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Great Gable, and the stone steps heading towards Sprinkling Tarn vanished into a snowy mist. The dark chasm of Piers Gill, the bane of several walkers, frowned at me from across the hill side.

A whiff of tobacco smoke caught my nose as I approached the tarn, and I found a gent lying inside the stretcher box, smoking. I walked past giving a quick wave, and crossed towards the route up to Sprinkling Tarn. The snow was now thick and powdery, knee-deep across much of the path and providing a significant impediment. Unfortunately nobody had broken the ground ahead of me, so the going was slow as I ploughed through the snow.

Sprinkling Tarn looked magical in the mid-afternoon light, with snow lying all around. This is a busy spot during summer, but today it was quiet and peaceful. After a short break at the tarn I set-off again, and was caught by two young lads, out for a walk from the Keswick side of the Scafell massif. We chatted about our plans; they were navigating using a route plotted on Google maps (essentially just following a red line on a 'phone screen, without much else shown on the map). We took turns to break the ground, until just short of Esk Hause when we had another chat about onwards routes. Their plan, it seemed, was to head over Allen Craggs and back down to Keswick.

The conditions at this point were very wintery, thigh deep snow in many places, a brisk wind, and a threat of heavy snow/rain fall in an hour or two. Fortunately, the two lads realized that returning back along their tracks would be the best option, and we parted ways.

A hasty retreat

Emerging onto Esk Hause, the wind was at about 30 mph and carrying a light snow fall. It was now about 1530 hrs and I decided to try camping in the shelter on the south side of Great End - marked as "Bield" on OS maps, The shelter (really just a wall to shield from the wind) was buried in snow, so I used my ice axe to carve out a platform for my tent. I then sat in my bothy bag for 5 minutes rest, and checked the met office forecast.

Despite being sheltered by Great End, and the wall of the bield, the wind was whipping about me. The elevation here is about 850 m, just short of the summit of Great End. The weather forecast suggested things would deteriorate for the next few hours, before brightening up mid-morning on Saturday. In the interests of getting a quiet night sleep, I dropped back down to Sprinkling Tarn, at an elevation of 650m, to pitch my tent. It would have been fun to camp at the bield, but I wanted a good sleep without the wind rattling my tent all night.

Having broken through the snow on the way up, the descent to Sprinkling tarn took about 15 minutes or less. By the time I reached the tarn it was raining heavily. I carefully pitched my tent on a small prominence, and then filled my water bottles before diving into my tent. It felt like such a relief to get under the canvas. The rain started to become rather heavy and I was glad I had descended. The snow platform I had made at the bield would risk turning to slush if this was also falling as rain higher up.

I cooked my meal, Pasta a la Funghi, did a little Morse practice (listening to W1AW files down-

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loaded from the ARRL) and then watched a film for a little before dropping off to sleep. I slept soundly for most of the night, only waking to hear the rain a wind a couple of times. I was using a Hilleberg Akto tent, which can stand up to quite ferocious conditions, and using a PHD sleeping bag with waterproof outer, so I had no worries about staying warm and dry.

Trekking to Kirk Fell

The following morning revealed a thaw had taken place over night, there was still plenty of snow around, but going would be much easier. I took down my tent, and was heading off just after 0800 hrs. The walk up to Esk Hause was easier than the previous afternoon. As I headed around the back of Great End, I could see that my snow platform from the previous evening was still in good condition – maybe it would have been fun to camp here after all?

A heavy snow shower set in as I climbed over Ill Crag and descended to Brad Crag Col. The ascent to Scafell Pike from this Col can bank-out in thick snow, and become quite hazardous with loose drifts. The thaw had removed most of the snow, however the mix of rock, ice and slush made the going tricky in places.

Cresting the summit, I was pleased to have Scafell Pike briefly to myself. I stood at the main summit shelter and called CQ on my HT making a total of 17 QSOs before closing down. Heading off the summit, I was aiming for the corridor route, descending first towards Lingmell Col where there was now a steady stream of walkers, and the cloud was starting to lift. I turned right at the Col, to join the corridor route, with Styhead Tarn visible ahead and below me.

The corridor route is a pleasant jaunt along the hillside, and allowed me to complete a full circle of the summit by the time I got back to Styhead. After a quick spot of lunch I headed up Aeron slack, my favorite route to approach Great Gable. The going was fairly easy, with a blue sky above me, and the stream trickling along the slack as an excellent water source. The last bit of the ascent is a scramble over rocks, which was much more pleasant than when I last took this route (in descent) back in March 2023 in foul weather. Atop the summit, it was now 2 pm, and starting to get a bit chilly. I called out on 2 m using my HT and again made a good few contacts.

With the pre-work complete it was now onto my main objective of Kirk Fell. After packing away I started the descent to Beck Head. This is an unpleasant route at the best of times, as I always seem to lose the path and end up scrambling over boulders. Today, the patch was covered in ice, and I was glad to have my crampons to secure my descent. Sure-enough I deviated from the path at one point, and was again glad of my crampons as I traversed across a patch of ice and snow to regain the route.

Overnight CW on Kirk Fell

I hurried across Beck head and up the eastern side of Kirk Fell, pleased to reach the grassy top of the fell. I walked along the southern edge of the plateau and filled by water bottles with about 3 litres of water from a small stream before heading up to the summit proper.

I scouted around for a few minutes before setting on a pitch that was situated just a stone throw

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from the summit point. Once the tent was pitched I set about getting my EFHW lofted, and then connected up the radio.

As an antenna I was using a 20 m long EFHW with a tiny QRP 49:1 balun. The antenna was raised using a telescopic six meter pole, which was guyed using a 3D-printed guying plate and sturdy guy lines. The antenna sloped upwards away from the tent, and a trekking pole was used to increase the angle of slope near to the tent. A length of paracord was tied to the mast end of the end of the antenna wire, and with use of a tautline hitch I was able to tension the wire nicely.

The radio was a simple Venus SW-3B 3-band CW only radio, connected to the 49:1 balun via about two meters of RG58. This allowed the radio to be on the inside of the tent, where I could operate through the night from the snug of my sleeping bag.

The radio was powered from a USB power bank. The powerbank has a USB port capable of USB Power Delivery. The radio was connected to the power bank with a USB Power Delivery cable, producing 12V for the radio. The radio has no speaker, so a set of earbuds was used to listen.

For my key I used a BaMaKey TPIII. This is a small set of finely engineered dual paddles that are a joy to use, and most importantly, light weight. I have a metal plate that I can strap to my thigh, to which the paddles magnetically mount; however, most of the time I just hold the paddles in one hand and key with the other.

With everything setup I gave an eager call out on 40 m, however conditions seemed fairly lacklustre and I only managed a couple of contacts on 40 m. Instead, I settled down for dinner, making Curry Fruit Rice – and listened around on the bands for a while, before taking a wander around the hill side in the dark. A light atop Pillar suggested that someone else was also out camping on a summit tonight. I eventually got into my sleeping bag, and headed off to sleep, leaving my HT tuned to the 2 m calling channel.

At shortly past midnight I awoke to have another wander around, and watch the stars. I like having a midnight wander during summit camps. The Milky Way was clearly visible, as were the twinkling lights of West Cumbria. At a few minutes past midnight, I heard GM4WHA calling on 145.500 MHz, and we had a quick chat before heading off to bed.

Next morning I started on 40 m CW at about 0730, and made a good mixture of contacts, including a good chat with DL1HBT, with whom I shared some of my adventures of the previous day, I then starting scanning around for S2S on HF, and noted VK3HN/P calling on 20 m from a summit in southeast Australia, near Melbourne. I was amazed that I could clearly hear his signal, and when his pileup had subsided I started calling. I was delighted to hear him respond with “MØM?”, and after several repeats he managed to construct my callsign and receive my signal report. As I write this a few weeks later, I am still delighted at getting a summit-to-summit contact on CW all the way to Australia using just 5W and my simple EFHW.

The QSOs continued on 20 m and 40 m CW, I was busy calling and made a total of 46 contacts over the morning. This included a number of CWops members, including G7KSE with whom I had a brief chat on 40 m CW.

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By about 10 am I decided to pack away and head down the slope to Wasdale Head, pleased with an excellent night of CW.



Camping at Sprinkling Tarn



Looking back at Great Gable from Beck Head

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Layout of station – Hilleberg tent at left, with EFHW connected to 6m pole at right. Mountain in the background is Pillar



The working conditions for MØMZB/P – a Venus SW3B powered by a USB power bank and using a BaMaKey TPI-II dual paddle

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End fed Half Wave for 40 m ,as a sloping antenna using a 6m pole. The 49:1 balun is located at the tent

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>
3479	N7BAS*	Bobbie	3492	KQ4EFL*	Mike	3504	VA3TAR	Ted
3480	VE3MRX	Bill	3493	EA3VN*	Enric	3505	WØNV*	Niles
3481	VU2CDP	Deepak	3494	G3SQU*	Chris	3506	IU3QEZ*	Simo
3482	WI6X*	Jim	3495	SQ5AZY	Bogdan	3507	KØPF*	Chris
3483	WI9P*	Reed	3496	SP7AJ	Arek	3508	N7LL*	Dave
3484	DF7CB*	Chris	3497	W8TWF*	Tim	3509	MMØUMH	Les
3485	K7MG*	Jeff	3498	F6DXE	Dick	3510	YE4FNN	Abet
3486	MWØSAW*	Steve	3499	VU3SPD*	Speed	3511	W1HRB*	Howard
3487	UR8UQ	Alex	3500	WO5T*	Sam	3512	WP4TZ*	Manuel
3489	KM6VOV*	Steve	3501	WO2T	Al	3513	IK5LSR*	Ste
3490	LZ1PID*	Plamen	3502	W4SGN*	Steve	3514	K4EVT*	Jeff
3491	K4LFL	Mark	3503	IZ4VSZ	Mark			

* Lifetime member

As of March 6, 2024:

Need Sponsors: YB2DX, K8YX, K7IM, KE7UAE

Invitations Extended: DL1ROT

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

CWops Tests (CWTs)

[Rich Ferch, VE3KI](#)

No report this month.

Enjoy the CWTs and keep those reported scores coming!

73, Rich VE3KI (CWops #783)

CWT 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 February results (GB hosts are shown in **bold**):

AAØYY	N4TRS N4PDY	N9FZ N1RIP	N2DA K9QAG	KV5V AD4UB	K4IBZ	W2PDY	W4ZIP
AF4PX	K3WWP AAØYY	KR4IS	KY4GS	N3TM	K1AQ	K2TNO	NW4A
GW2CWO	G7KFZ	EA4JJ	PA3FAK	HA1OW	M7BBI		
JG1UQD	JD7DOR	JN3CEL	JK1QYL	JS2AHG	JN1FAO		
JJ1FXF	BH4FRW JF5XPJ	JA4IJJ(3) VK1CT	JQ2NUD(3) JA3EBL	JQ3FRX JE1LGY	VK4JM JI3VXW	JE2HSH	JAØKGY
JM4AOA	BH6BEZ JH1TMX JL3TII JR6SBI JK1PWT(2)	HL5JZ JI1KUL JM4RRC JS2KOO JØ2NUD(5)	JA2VEV JJØGML JM8SMO W4UAT	JA6BZH JJ0SFV JN1FAO(2) JR0DIL	JE2HSH(2) JJ2OXS JO1UFB JR1ADA	JG1BGT JK1PIG(2) JR1TUE JR2AWS	JG1WKA JK1UWK JR2AWS JS6ULK
JO1DGE	6L5TSF JA3PST JF7URV JJ3TIM(4) JR2AWS	BH6BEZ JA5BQC JG1BGT(5) JK1PIG(3) JR3IEO	BI6ODD JA5IOY JH5FVM JK1PWT JR6SBI(2)	HL1MIM JA6BZH JI1BJS JK1UWK JQ2NUD(11)	JAØKGY JA6FOF JI3VXW JN4BNV	JA1LNQ JA7KED(2) JI7KNV JN7DOR	JA2MYA JF5XPJ JJ0SFV JR1FVV
K6RB	WB0UWE	K9KP	KN6BEZ				
K7NJ	N6OVP WAØCTZ	W6WR	W0ITT	KB8RXT	AC5P	G4RMV	K1LGQ
N4TMM	K4PY	KØRO	KD4ZFS				
VK3QB	VK5GG	VK3VB	VK2NAD	G3NKQ	N4GO	W8XW	

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7N2XZB	BH6BEZ	BH4FRW	JA4IJ	JE6AJO	JK1QYL(2)	JR9GUZ	JQ2NUD
	JH2URW	BI5ODD	JE2HSH	JH2UNG	JA3EBL	JA6LIM	BI6ODD
	BH2SMF	J18PLY	JG0RJU	JG1BGT	JJØSFV	JN1FAO	JK4GDB
	JK1PWT	HL2BM	JA6BZH				

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 | JA - 7.028

UTC+10	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												
	JØ1DGE							W2XS	AAØYY			
TUE												
VK3QB	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](#)

Advisor Portal



In the November 2023 *Solid Copy* article, we explained we added an additional layer of security to our system, by implementing a username and password process. So far, that process is working very well.

In addition to that effort, we created the Advisor Portal. This is now the area that contains all transactions related to your activity and items you need to either look at or take action on, for your student and classes. I'm going to clarify a few points that have been causing a bit of confusion for some of the advisors...

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.

Display Recent Reminders Displays recent reminders starting with the most recent reminder. Displays 25 at a time

Sign up for an Advisor Class

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

This program allows the advisor to specify the parameters for the assessment and which students are to take the assessment.

Advisor Resources

Use this link to access the advisor resources hosted on cwops.org

Manage Advisor Class – at anytime during the semester, if one of your students situation chang-

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es and they need to drop-out of your class, you quickly go here and change their status, to 'withdrawn' and leave a note explaining the reason they left. This better helps us to know what to do with them in the future.

Display Recent Reminders – to see any action items we have sent you to accomplish, for example: view assessment requests and results; class signups; evaluate students for 'promotability'; display reports; etc. This will include all the history for any action items that have been sent since we started sending them through the portal. Each reminder has an expiration date. For instance, the request to do a Morse Code Proficiency Evaluation has an expiration date three days after the request is sent. The reminder will disappear from the top of the Advisor or Student Portal when the task is completed, or the reminder has expired. In either case, the Portal link to Display Recent Reminders can retrieve completed or expired reminders.

Order Morse Code Proficiency Assessments – this process allows you to select the speed, number of questions, and difficulty you want to send to any or all of your students. You can send these at the beginning, middle and end of the semester, or as often as you feel it would be helpful information for you and your students.

Advisor Resources – this includes all the same information that is currently on the CW Academy website.

If you have other items you have questions about, contact the respective person at:

<https://cwops.org/cwa-class-resolution/>

CW Academy Session Results - Jan/Feb 2024

59 Advisors

75 Classes

59 29 Beginner 20 Fundamental 17 Intermediate 9 Advanced

652 Registered Students

59 568 Verified

60 84 Did not verify, refused the class, or dropped out

568 Assigned Students

59 225 Beginner 153 Fundamental 118 Intermediate 72 Advanced

451 Students Completed the Class

59 164 Beginner 123 Fundamental 96 Intermediate 68 Advanced

15 Unassigned Students

9 Beginner 6 Fundamental **73, Bob Carter, WR7Q** (CWops #1423) CWA Admin



CWops Member Awards

[Bill Gilliland](#), WØTG



Monthly Update

During February, 17 additional members submitted logs and the number of active participants in the awards program is currently 184.

The **ACA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of February 2024 have **KR2Q** in first place and leading second place **AA3B** by 158 QSOs. The top ten ACA totals this month are: **(1) KR2Q, (2) AA3B, (3) KY4GS, (4) N5RZ, (5) NA8V, (6) KC7V, (7) N5ZO, (8) K7QA, (9) K3WW** and **(10) KG9X**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 475 QSOs.

The **ACMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of February 2024 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **KR2Q** by 734 QSOs. The top ten ACMA totals this month are: **(1) AA3B, (2) KR2Q, (3) N5RZ, (4) KY4GS, (5) N5ZO, (6) OM2VL, (7) K7QA, (8) NA8V, (9) KC7V** and **(10) K3WW**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 1578 QSOs.

The **CMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of February 2024 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **K3WW** by 3137 QSOs. The top ten CMA totals this month are: **(1) AA3B, (2) K3WW, (3) N5RZ, (4) N5ZO, (5) KR2Q, (6) W1RM, (7) NA8V, (8) DL6KVA, (9) F6HKA** and **(10) K3WJV**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 5915 QSOs.

The number of members who have contacted CWops members in 100 or more DXCC entities grew to **81** this month with the addition of **N5KD, N5TJ** and **K1AJ**.

The number of participants who have accomplished CWops WAS grew to **229** this month with the addition of **KR3E, OZ3SM, SP1D, W5AL** and **WS5D**.

You can see complete rankings for all award categories at <https://cwops.telegraphy.de/scores>.

CWops Award Tools Participation

At the end of 2023 we had 271 active participants in the Member Awards Program. As of March 5, 2024, we have 184 active participants. If you have not yet submitted any logs for 2024, please do so soon, and we can include your score among the participants.

The Top 100 and the Searchable and Sortable Scores Table show rankings and scores for active participants only. To be an active participant and be included in awards scoring including the ACA, ACMA and CMA competitions, you must have submitted a log during the current year. To see rankings and scores for both active and inactive participants please use the Score Overview Table where inactive participants are listed with ACA and ACMA scores of zero, but their scores in other categories are listed at the highest level that was previously submitted.

You can see the final 2023 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.

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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. For more information about CWT Participation Awards, please go to <https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/>.

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 during the current year, **Annual Cumulative Membership Award (ACMA)** counting QSOs with members on all bands (once per band) during the current year, **Cumulative Membership Award (CMA)** counting QSOs with members on all bands (once per 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.



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Here are the Top 100 ACA, ACMA and CMA QSO totals as of February 5, 2024:

ACA

Rank	Call	ACA
1	KR2Q	1393
2	AA3B	1235
3	KY4GS	1112
4	N5RZ	1056
5	NA8V	980
6	KC7V	979
7	N5ZO	932
8	K7QA	931
9	K3WW	930
10	KG9X	918
11	N7US	816
12	K1VUT	809
13	DL6KVA	808
14	NJ3K	789
15	KO4VW	782
16	OM2VL	779
17	K3QP	774
18	W0UO	769
19	F6HKA	752
19	K3WJV	752
20	K9WX	750
21	AA2IL	708
22	N5TJ	703
23	K0WA	701
24	WT9U	684
25	W4CMG	675
26	WN7S	657
27	K6NR	654
28	VE3TM	650
29	KM4FO	635
30	K1AJ	630
31	KK0U	594
32	K1DJ	591
33	N5KD	585
34	KW7Q	580
35	OZ3SM	573
36	N9UNX	572
37	N5XE	559
38	EA6EJ	554
39	W9ILY	552
40	VE3MV	549
41	K3JT	544
42	WS1L	541
43	WS7L	524
44	K1SM	522

ACMA

Rank	Call	ACMA
1	AA3B	3776
2	KR2Q	3042
3	N5RZ	2878
4	KY4GS	2392
5	N5ZO	2307
6	OM2VL	2296
7	K7QA	2294
8	NA8V	2256
9	KC7V	2253
10	K3WW	2198
11	DL6KVA	2095
12	KG9X	1918
13	K1VUT	1702
14	KO4VW	1668
15	N7US	1611
16	K3WJV	1516
17	F6HKA	1452
18	K9WX	1445
19	NJ3K	1419
20	AA2IL	1413
21	W0UO	1404
22	K3QP	1320
23	K0WA	1308
24	K6NR	1295
25	WT9U	1294
26	WN7S	1272
27	N5TJ	1270
28	KM4FO	1238
29	W4CMG	1220
30	VE3TM	1190
31	N5XE	1189
32	OZ3SM	1163
33	K1AJ	1145
34	VE3MV	1142
35	KW7Q	1086
36	EA6EJ	1081
37	WS7L	1056
38	WS1L	1050
39	K1DJ	1043
40	SP1D	1039
41	KK0U	1038
42	W0VX	1018
43	EA6BF	1005
44	K3JT	1000
45	N9UNX	974

CMA

Rank	Call	CMA
1	AA3B	13894
2	K3WW	10757
3	N5RZ	9849
4	N5ZO	9726
5	KR2Q	9310
6	W1RM	9138
7	NA8V	8956
8	DL6KVA	8640
9	F6HKA	8234
10	K3WJV	7979
11	VE3KI	7804
12	OM2VL	7168
13	KG9X	7158
14	K7QA	7155
15	N5AW	7019
16	N7US	7006
17	KC7V	6922
18	W9ILY	6865
19	W0VX	6538
20	WT9U	6496
21	K1VUT	6349
22	K3JT	6308
23	N4DW	6255
24	K9WX	6109
25	K3PP	5886
26	N2UU	5702
27	K6NR	5650
28	K1DJ	5610
29	SM6CUK	5560
30	W4WF	5381
31	N5TJ	5290
32	9A1AA	5245
33	WN7S	5217
34	G4BUE	5201
35	WT3K	5166
36	AA5JF	4945
37	W0UO	4875
38	K1SM	4841
39	VE3TM	4772
40	AC6ZM	4719
41	F6JOE	4666
42	W1AJT	4621
43	NJ3K	4602
44	KY4GS	4587
45	GW0ETF	4571

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ACA

Rank	Call	ACA
45	VE3KI	514
46	WT3K	513
47	KV8Q	508
47	VE3KIU	508
48	EA6BF	505
49	K3ZA	499
49	KW1X	499
49	W0VX	499
50	SP1D	495
51	9A1AA	488
52	W2CDO	483
53	F5SGI	475
54	N2UU	470
55	AF5J	467
56	N2EIM	466
57	AA5JF	460
58	K1RF	459
59	WA4JUK	455
60	W9CF	454
61	W0BM	450
62	KT5V	445
63	W8EWH	438
64	N3CKI	436
65	M0RYB	434
66	W2VM	433
67	W3WHK	421
68	W1RM	420
69	K4TZ	418
70	K0TC	417
71	HB9ARF	415
72	K2YR	411
73	W0TG	408
74	VE9KK	406
75	W7LG	401
76	K4GM	392
77	SM0HEV	382
78	VK2GR	380
79	W4WF	377
80	AC6ZM	369
81	OK1RR	367
82	SP4JFR	366
83	N5ER	365
84	N5AW	360
85	F6JOE	351
85	G4IZZ	351
86	G4BUE	347
87	GW4MM	342
88	DJ5CW	341

ACMA

Rank	Call	ACMA
46	VE3KI	952
47	N5KD	938
48	N2UU	937
49	W9ILY	934
50	F5SGI	893
51	W0TG	892
52	AF5J	877
53	W2CDO	874
54	VE3KIU	872
55	K1RF	865
56	M0RYB	846
57	SM0HEV	838
58	K1SM	832
59	KV8Q	829
60	KW1X	811
61	W0BM	790
62	9A1AA	782
63	W9CF	769
64	K3ZA	764
65	WT3K	759
66	AA5JF	755
67	W3WHK	753
68	HB9ARF	752
69	W1RM	744
70	W2VM	726
71	W8EWH	706
72	K0TC	704
72	OK1RR	704
73	K4GM	692
74	G4BUE	690
75	F6JOE	689
76	GW4MM	686
77	WA4JUK	681
78	W4WF	678
79	K4TZ	677
80	N3CKI	676
81	VE9KK	643
81	DJ5CW	643
82	K2YR	622
83	W7LG	617
84	VK2GR	616
85	G3LDI	585
86	IN3FHE	563
87	KT5V	560
88	SP4JFR	556
89	N5ER	545
90	N5AW	541
91	AC6ZM	533

CMA

Rank	Call	CMA
46	WA4JUK	4421
47	N5XE	4366
48	OK1RR	4286
49	K4GM	4267
50	VE3MV	4173
51	I2WIJ	4172
52	NA4J	4134
53	K3QP	4131
54	W6AYC	4129
55	KT5V	4078
56	WS7L	4045
57	K1AJ	4000
58	AA2IL	3899
59	OZ3SM	3898
60	N1EN	3762
61	DJ5CW	3740
62	W0TG	3711
63	KM4FO	3677
64	DF7TV	3650
65	K0TC	3647
66	VK2GR	3644
67	W3WHK	3623
68	KO4VW	3588
69	WS1L	3549
70	N5KD	3530
71	KV8Q	3465
72	AF5J	3456
73	W2CDO	3447
74	K0WA	3440
75	KK0U	3423
76	G4PVM	3397
77	EA6BF	3353
78	AF4T	3326
79	F5SGI	3225
80	HB9ARF	3216
81	SM0HEV	3188
82	K4TZ	3154
83	M0RYB	3086
84	4X6GP	3049
85	KW7Q	3038
86	K3ZA	3018
87	K2YR	3017
88	W4CMG	2947
89	N3CKI	2919
90	W2VM	2902
91	CT1DRB	2857
92	G3LDI	2852
93	IT9VDQ	2845
94	W8OV	2803

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ACA

Rank	Call	ACA
89	G3LDI	331
90	WB9G	330
91	WW3S	328
92	IN3FHE	314
93	VE3WH	312
94	K5VG	302
94	W8OV	302
95	DM6EE	301
96	KC8J	300
97	DF7TV	299
98	KB4DE	293
99	W6AYC	289
100	SM6CUK	286

ACMA

Rank	Call	ACMA
92	G4IZZ	530
93	VE3WH	529
94	DM6EE	520
95	WB9G	518
96	W8OV	513
97	G4PVM	504
98	K5VG	490
99	N2EIM	488
100	WW3S	487

CMA

Rank	Call	CMA
95	SP1D	2774
96	K3SEN	2763
96	W7GF	2763
97	KT4XN	2680
98	IN3FHE	2620
99	DM6EE	2615
100	KC8J	2588

73, Bill WØTG (CWops #1873)
CWops Operating Awards



SPEED	XST	DAY	TIME (UTC)	EXCHANGE	SPONSOR LINK
20 - 25	MST	Monday	1300 - 1400z	Name and QSO serial num-	International CW
20 - 25	MST	Monday	1900 - 2000z	Name and QSO serial num-	International CW
20 - 25	MST	Tuesday	0300 - 0400z	Name and QSO serial num-	International CW
25+ wpm	CWT	Wednes-	1300 - 1400z	Name and CWops # (or S/	CWops
25+ wpm	CWT	Wednes-	1900 - 2000z	Name and CWops # (or S/	CWops
25+ wpm	CWT	Thursday	0300 - 0400z	Name and CWops # (or S/	CWops
25+ wpm	CWT	Thursday	0700 - 0800z	Name and CWops # (or S/	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



QTX Report: Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

[Enzo](#), MØKTZ

A somewhat slower month for the QTX/MQTX gang, with a slightly lower number of fellows reporting their monthly scores. However, we got the good surprise of two new ragchewers joining the QTX gang, namely Les MM0UMH and Danny M0SDB.

I mentioned last month that sometimes operators arrive to ragchewing from different trajectories, with some starting with POTA/SOTA activations and then finding themselves chatting on the bands for hours (see the soapbox comment by Danny M0SDB). But it also happens that a ragchewer gets to try something new and ventures into POTA activations. This is what happened to me in February. I visited my family in Sicily (IT9) for a couple of days, and I decided to activate two POTA references nearby. The first one was a coastal park, where I used to go to swim in the summer when I was a kid. I set up my station (Rybakov and MCHF Clone) just a few meters from the sea, and bagged 14 QSOs in less than one hour, before joining the first Zoom meeting of my "remote-working" day. Despite POTA activations are meant to be based on short exchanges, I managed to bag two mQTX points there anyway HI.

The other activation was I-1000 Parco dell'Etna, the natural reserve on the Etna volcano. I made two attempts at activating that reference. The first one, at about 1200m asl on the east side of the volcano, went very well, with just less than 40 QSOs in about 1.5 hours of early morning activity (different day, but same Zoom meeting looming over the activation). Also on that occasion I managed to have two mQTX chats, despite I knew there were at least a couple of stations waiting for their QSO: a ragchewer can't just resist saying "Hi and bye", right? The second attempt was the day after, at another location about 1800m asl on the south side of the volcano, was not successful, as I got only 8 QSOs before he started raining and I had to call it a day. In that case, the temperature was -1 C, with pretty strong and chilly gusts. Overall, a very nice experience, and I am sure I will mix in some POTA activity in the future.

Total hours ragchewing this year so far: not less than 536

72/73, Enzo MØKTZ CWops #3206

Total ragchewing hours in 2024 so far: not less than **285.7**



MIØWVB: 10 QSOs for ten minutes plus; 9 QSOs for twenty minutes plus and 5 QSOs for 30 minutes plus.

JS2AHG: Due to system down of the remote control system, I could not QRV most of the month in February/2024.

KCØVKN: Long dark winter up here in Mi :). A little CW makes it much better!

N9EEE: Nice mini-Q with Doug, KR2Q on 40 meters.

IU3QEZ: A nice month, finally. I could enjoy a few "good QSO", including a ragchew from a SOTA summit under a snowfall.

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MØMZB: Great QSO with DF7TV about increasing sending/receiving speed, started at 30 wpm and ended up with a few overs at 35 wpm (my current limit for receive, and with very rust sending). A good chat with G5VZ on 17 Feb, talking about my new paddle that I bought to celebrate 2 years of learning CW (a Begali sculpture - very posh!). Also talked about benefits of ambidextrous sending and whether to embark on learning to use a bug.

A real highlight was talking with WØVTT on 20 m at 30 wpm, we talked about playing trombone, places in Minnesota I have visited and different types of Morse keys. Was great to spend over half an hour in a transatlantic CW QSO. Highlight of the month was a very short QSO on 5W using a Venus SW3B to VK3HN/P while I was also portable and camping on top of Kirk Fell in the Lake District at an elevation of 800 m - but that only lasted a minute or so.

AF4PX: This was a busy month family wise, but managed as many Qs as could fit in the spare time!

ND4K: Thanks for the QSOs, it was good to work some familiar folks and to meet may new folks on the air.

YL3JD: Now 10 meters is doing good and with my home made Moxon some nice QTX minis with Japan. Also i would like to thank Simone IU3QEZ and Stefano IK5LSR for the QTXs in our new set up net meeting.

PG4I: All of the QTX QSO's are from the 80m European Sideswiper net on Sunday evening. Also came across Jim SV8ANW who is always good for a ragchew :-)

KR2Q: Total hours for Feb 2024 is 19.96667 (call it 20 hours). Hope we can get that field added to this template Enzo! de Doug KR2Q (and tnx for the QRP QSO on 20m).

WB4IT: I put up a 160 m 1/4 wave inverted L this month and had my first ever QTX on 160 m. The other station was NN2L.

AAØYY: QSO with Brad KV5V. Currently 81 years of age. He SCUBA dived all over the world, certified cave diver. Doc made him stop after some health issues. Lives on 10 acres and has a 2 element Yagi on 40 m up 80 feet. Very interesting man.

VK3QB: A slow month for QTX. But I made another 12 with VK1CWO for the Activity Weekend. Of note was another really nice QSO with Scotty W7SW - always a pleasure.

DF7TV: Had two nice "last minute" QTXs with K6AR (10 m band) and MØMZB (80 m band) on February 29 -- so I had to re-enter my scores. I really enjoy to work hams, whom I often worked in contests/CWTs - but I do not really know who is that person at the key. Also enjoyed some mQTXs with very "fresh" members of CWops.

MØSDB: I am new to ragchewing however it was my goal from the beginning to learn CW in May 2022 to be able to do it and to be just comfortable chatting in CW for any length of time. It has taken me some practice to get here however this month I have managed 4 QTX's and 11 mQTX's

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and they have been great fun. My first qualifying QTX was when I knew I was close to cracking it - when you are talking about the CB days, past redundancies and, lorry driving falling into bags of sand all in the same QSO you know you are truly ragchewing!! 2 of my QTX's were whilst out on a POTA activation. I usually like to crack through QSOs when out /p however if someone starts chatting I always feel rude trying to hurry things along so end up having a chew anyway.

KB6NU: Fell just short of my goal of one QTX/day, but had some nice QSOs with CWops members.

N7HCN: I'm lucky to have a father in law (K6YUF) who is a CW guy and lives 3 days drive away. We share a lot of family news by CW each week via QTX.

GWØETF: Away most of February but a nice 26 minute QSO with N5KD in the Activity Day and 4 x 10 minute Qs with beginners in the last and only Giving Back session - the best yet.

N2DA: Light QTX month, was out of town with QRP rig and conditions for skeds were poor. Had a nice ragchew QSO with a new to CW ham though - that is always enjoyable!

2024 Total Number of Hours Worked: 531.6

(based on avg 20 min QTX, 10 min MQTX)

<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
WA4IAR	73.2	KB6NU	18.7	N2DA	7.7	N9EEE	5.0	N5LB	1.7
WB4IT	53.7	AA0YY	17.5	KC0VKN	7.7	DF7TV	5.0	K8UDH	1.7
KY4GS	45.2	M0MZB	15.2	PG4I	7.3	AJ1DM	4.3	K7VM	1.5
M0KTZ	40.7	N7HCN	12.7	YL3JD	7.0	KE4I	3.7	GW0ETF	1.5
KR2Q	36.2	IU3QEZ	9.3	MM0UMH	6.5	M0SDB	3.2	WT9Q	1.3
VE3WH	33.8	AF4PX	9.3	MI0WWB	6.3	KG5SSB	2.5	VK3QB	1.3
ND4K	33.7	F5IYJ	9.0	K6DGW	5.5	W9EBE	2.3	JS2AHG	0.8
K9OZ	24.0	KG5IEE	7.8	N1ZX	5.3	G4IVV	1.8	W3WHK	0.7

Awards and Medals for 2024

Gold – 400 QTX QSOs

Silver Medal – 300 QTX QSOs

Bronze – 200 QTX QSOs

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QTX for February 2024

<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	85	KB6NU	25	MI0WWB	14	M0SDB	4	K8UDH	2
WB4IT	81	M0MZB	24	PG4I	13	N9EEE	3	GW0ETF	1
ND4K	49	KY4GS	21	IU3QEZ	9	N1ZX	3		
VE3WH	46	M0KTZ	19	AF4PX	9	DF7TV	3		
K9OZ	30	AA0YY	15	MM0UMH	7	YL3JD	2		
KR2Q	29	N7HCN	14	N2DA	5	N5LB	2		

MQTX for February 2024

<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	41	IU3QEZ	26	DF7TV	19	MM0UMH	8	N9EEE	3
WA4IAR	34	M0MZB	22	YL3JD	18	PG4I	7	N7HCN	2
KY4GS	34	AA0YY	22	M0SDB	11	N1ZX	5	W3WHK	1
KR2Q	28	VE3WH	21	AF4PX	11	GW0ETF	4	K8UDH	1
WB4IT	27	ND4K	21	MI0WWB	10	VK3QB	3	JS2AHG	1

QTX Totals for 2024

<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	184	KB6NU	56	PG4I	16	KE4I	8	K7VM	3
WB4IT	133	N7HCN	35	MM0UMH	14	N1ZX	7	G4IV	3
ND4K	87	AA0YY	31	MI0WWB	14	W9EBE	5	DF7TV	3
VE3WH	82	M0MZB	27	IU3QEZ	12	N5LB	5	YL3JD	2
KY4GS	73	F5IYJ	27	AJ1DM	12	WT9Q	4	W3WHK	1
KR2Q	73	N2DA	23	N9EEE	11	M0SDB	4	GW0ETF	1
K9OZ	72	KC0VKN	23	KG5IEE	10	KG5SSB	4		
M0KTZ	56	AF4PX	18	K6DGW	9	K8UDH	4		

MQTX Totals for 2024

<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	132	YL3JD	38	N1ZX	18	N9EEE	8	W9EBE	4
KY4GS	125	M0MZB	37	K6DGW	15	KG5SSB	7	K7VM	3
WA4IAR	71	IU3QEZ	32	PG4I	12	GW0ETF	7	W3WHK	2
KR2Q	71	ND4K	28	MM0UMH	11	N7HCN	6	K8UDH	2
WB4IT	56	KG5IEE	27	M0SDB	11	KE4I	6	AJ1DM	2
AA0YY	43	DF7TV	24	MI0WWB	10	JS2AHG	5		
VE3WH	39	AF4PX	20	VK3QB	8	G4IV	5		

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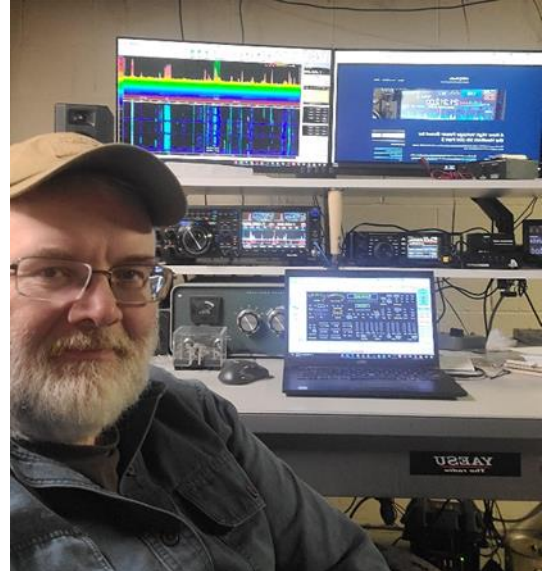
My Story: New Member Introductions

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

Ed Brady, AE8Q # 3478

I wish to thank KV8Q - Tom for nominating me and my sponsors K8MP - Joe, M0WXG - Shirley, VA3SB - Serge, and AC6AC - Buzz. All of you whom I know personally, thru CW Academy or CWT sessions.

I'm honored to be CWops member #3478 and delighted that I was nominated by the person whom I had my first ever CW contact with, Tom - KV8Q. Tom lives local to me, but our paths had never crossed until I joined CW Academy as a Beginner. Near the end of the course, Tom announced that he would be participating in the weekly K1USN SST on Friday and encouraged all of us to contact him. I had never made a CW on the air before but decided to put my apprehensions aside and give it a go. My keying was about what you would expect for a nervous beginner, and I think on my reply exchange, instead of sending his name as Tom, I sent "Mom" instead (hi hi). Afterwards, Tom indicated that he rarely ever sends QSL cards out but makes an exception for anyone whom he shares a first CW contact with.



Fast forward a year and I am near completion of the Advanced CW Academy class and participate in one or two CWT sessions each week to improve my skills. During a CWT, I once again contacted Tom, (I think I must have sent the exchange a little better this time!). Afterwards, he asked if I would be interested in doing a ragchew sometime, and possibly being nominated for CWops. Anyway, you can figure out the rest.

As for me, I consider myself "A proud, but displaced, Hillbilly from KY." I am an electrical and embedded firmware engineer for 28 years now but have pretty much lived in OH for the last 25 years.

I became a ham in 2014, callsign KD8YQQ, but due to life getting in the way (and no money), I washed out of the hobby in about 6 months. Around 2018, my interest returned, and luckily had the time and a little more money to pursue the hobby. I also discovered the Delaware Amateur Radio Association (K8ES). A truly awesome club, with a bunch of great, hams who make the hobby successful for me.

After passing the Extra exam I took the vanity callsign AE8Q but decided that it just didn't feel "right" that the Extra exam did not include some type of CW code proficiency requirement. Around that time, I also heard about this club called CWops, and they had something called CW

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Academy, put on by volunteers, that could teach you a thing or two about becoming a CW operator. I figured it MIGHT be worth checking out (hi hi). Anyway, that's me and how I got here.

Bill Rubenstein, VE3MRX #3480

I am a 76 year old retired Oral Surgeon. I did oral surgery for 50 years almost, and have been a ham for not quite as long, about 44 yrs.

As my first call sign was a Novice license KA3GKW, it was only CW and started at 5 wpm. I have enjoyed it ever since, and got my worked all states CW award in 1981. Now retired I can devote more time to my hobbies. I do have a "class" that I mentor at my local club called CWOperations and there has been some success getting new hams on the air. My other ham related interests are kit building, QRP and POTA both as activator and hunter. I am a casual contester, My interest in CWops came from my experience taking the advanced course with Joe Spencer KK4NA, who is a fine example of the best a ham can be.

Other interests include music. I play mostly guitar but some other stringed instruments and drums. I camp and fish, have a dog to walk and recently took up drawing with ink and watercolor.

Thanks so much for nominating me, VE3EJ, KK5NA, NJ3K, and KA3GM. I will extend the same kind of welcome to others.

Reed Christiansen, WI9P #3483

I recall, as a fifth grader, poring over the 1966 ARRL Radio Amateur's Handbook that my parents bought for my older brother. Through high school and college, I read through QSTs at the local library, studied the late Bill Orr, W6SAI's Radio Handbook, and worked through various ARRL books, such as *Understanding Amateur Radio*. But I never learned the code until I was in graduate school.

The 1980s introduced code tapes that grad students could afford! After some study, I was licensed in 1986 as N9GFG as a 5 wpm Technician and then upgraded to Advanced later that year, once I passed the 13 wpm test. A few months before I defended my PhD dissertation in 1990, I passed the 20 wpm test and qualified for Extra as WM9I. I later traded that in for WI9P when several folks miscopied the final "I" as "E" during CW QSOs.



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Both in and after grad school, I was active on the air, including some contesting. (Dupe sheets, anyone?!) My activity dropped off as my chemical engineering career progressed, our son was born, and I went back to law school. Once our son was older, I slowly started back into CW and RTTY, and had a brief fling with the Joe Taylor digital modes. I joined the Minnesota Wireless Association. to get back into contesting.

I retired in 2023 from my roles as Deputy General Counsel and Chief Patent Counsel of a medical device company. I am active in CW contests, including CWops' weekly CWT.

My wife is also retired and our son is graduating from college this spring. She and I took a northern Pacific cruise (Vancouver/Alaska/Tokyo) just after I retired and we plan to take many more.



Jeff Pearce, K7MG #3485

I live in Bainbridge Island, Washington with my wife Anna, 10 year old son James, and a hyper-enthusiastic Black Lab named Bubba. I'm currently a software engineer but hope to retire in 5 - 7 years.

I was first licensed in 2022, partially because my wife is the neighborhood Captain for the island's emergency preparedness plan, and they like every neighborhood to have at least 1 ham. I'm a licensed ARRL VE, and help teach classes and administer tests for new hams for our local club - about once per year. I started learning CW from CW Academy in January 2023, and it quickly became my favorite mode.



In addition to ham radio, I like to race FPV drones, and I'm an amateur musician. I also write software in my spare time - I recently wrote some logging software for macOS and iOS, because I didn't come across anything that did what I wanted.

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Deepak Pathak, VU2CDP # 3481

I would like to thank Gopan M0XUU for nominating me and AA3B, NJ3K, and VU2PTT for supporting the nomination. It is an honour to be invited to a club with notable names in its ranks!

I discovered ham radio in a science magazine in high school though I was not unfamiliar with short wave radio - having spent many summers listening to my grandfather's BC receiver when visiting him. I was licenced in 2003 and enjoyed chewing the rag on the local repeater in the initial years. The first HF radio in 2006 with 100w to a 20 m dipole up on the roof of my parents' house became the gateway to DX heaven.



After running out of DX countries to work on phone and still not addicted to the cluster (I was tuning the band every day), I realized if I had to achieve DXCC then I would have to learn CW. Digital modes didn't attract me then and I remain ambivalent towards them till this day. The first CW QSOs began in 2008 and soon I was dipping my toes in contests and pileups with some success.

In 2011, quite fortuitously, I found myself starting VU4PB operations on 20 m CW – talk about learning to swim at the deep end of the pool! This was followed by a new IOTA activation and then a huge learning curve of putting together an operation under the leadership of W4VKU. VU7AG (2013) and VU4KV (2014) taught many lessons in handling governmental bureaucracy, logistics planning, scheduling, operating and QSLing apart from teaching how unforgiving DXers can be! Another trip to VU4 in 2017– my third – but in the company of veteran DXpeditioner and CWops director 9V1YC, helped pave the way for future VU4 operations (VU4G, VU4W, VU4T) by greatly reducing the uncertainty surrounding VU licencing and operations from Indian overseas territories (VU7W most recently).

I was also fortunate to be invited to the multi-multi operations at A44A in 2017 and then again in 2018. A great experience operating alongside some famous names in contesting! Having put more QSOs in logs as a hired gun, I have recently started operating portable from remote locations. This is largely dictated by my current life situation with a young family and a high-pressure job that saw me make three house moves in the last two years. Originally from Mumbai, I currently live in Pune in an RF-unfriendly neighbourhood. Professionally, I hold a bachelor's degree in engineering and an MBA. I started out as an electronics engineer but made a career switch and have now been in financial services for over 15 years.

DXCC totals are 310 Mixed and 302 CWI look forward to working many CW Ops' members as the sunspots increase.

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Craig Sande, AE7I #875

My father is the person I credit for instilling my interest in electronics which eventually guided me into the hobby of amateur radio. In my pre-teens he provided me with a soldering iron, VOM, Heathkit shortwave radio kit, and all of the subsequent equipment necessary to explore radio communication.

As a teenager in 1975 I had the good fortune of meeting Mike Anagnosti, W7LX (SK). He was a retired Navy radio operator who was capable of chatting with me on the phone while simultaneously carrying on a high speed CW conversation on the air. He was a CW-only operator who kindly tutored me in the art of Morse code and provided used gear to help me get started. After I was licensed, we had many evening QSOs on 40m and to this day I can still hear his distinctive bug swing in my memory.

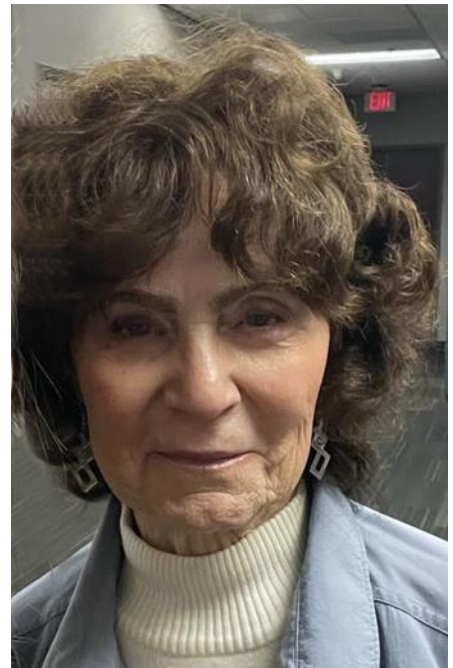


Barbara Smith, N7BAS #3479

Becoming a CWops member is an honor for me. My thanks to N7JI for the nomination, and the wonderful sponsors, WU7X, K6NF, and WJ7S, who believe in me. Morse code is my mode of operation. Sending good CW is important to me - I've had excellent advisors in CW Academy helping me along the way. I'm a member of an amazing LICW group, who constantly challenge each other to become better CW ops.

I'm retired from the accounting field, and I do miss working. Mostly it's my co-workers who became my extended family I left behind. But then I found something to replace work: ham radio.

I am not new to ham radio - I got my general license at the NY FCC Office in 1960. Life got in the way, and I had a 30 year break from the hobby. Moving to Oregon 5 years ago, from New Jersey, I was re-tested and got my General license back in 2020, then upgraded to Extra in 2022. My modest station is an ICOM 7300 for the high bands. and an ICOM 2800H for 2 meters.



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My QTH does not allow antennas, so inside my apartment I have a magnetic loop tuned from 10-40 meters. Still I'm limited when it comes to operating. That doesn't stop me, as I'm portable and work POTA, or search for a good QSO, as often as the weather allows. Weekly I join a group of CW operators on 10 meters for an hour of fun. In the ham community, I am active on several nets, jump into local simplex contests, and take advantage of W7QF's (daughter) station when I can. That 90 foot tower is a BIG advantage.

On a regular basis I volunteer at the Eugene Science Center radio station, W7PXL. We introduce the community to ham radio. Adults and children have an opportunity to talk on the hand held microphone, on 2 meters through the club repeater. At times we have over 60 children from local schools waiting to take turns.

As much as I love the hobby of CW and ham radio, there's another life I live. In nice weather gardens become my first love - I fill the terrace where I live with flowers of all colors. After a day in the garden, I go inside and prepare delicious meals. In-between time, I sit at my computer and click out stories. Another love of mine is writing. During the season, I skip out to the local theatre for opera - streaming from New York. La Traviata is one of my favorite.

There's nothing to compare with a walk in the park, check out the birds, hold a grass hopper in my hand, or put my feet in the cool creek. Life is good, learning is fun, and everywhere I go, Morse code keeps me company in my head. Hope to meet you on one of the bands.

I was first issued the call WB7CJA in 1975. After working up from General to Advanced and finally Extra Class, I was assigned the callsign AE7I. I still recall the fear and thrill of going through Morse code tests at the FCC offices in San Francisco.

While an undergraduate at Stanford University I enjoyed having access to the club station W6YX. In my senior year I taught an accredited course entitled "Amateur Radio, The Art of Radio Communication." Those were wonderful years!

After graduating with a B.S. in biology, I went on to medical school at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, internal medicine residency at Jewish Hospital of St. Louis, and finally gastroenterology fellowship at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. I had a gastroenterology practice in Reno, Nevada for 30 years and am now enjoying retirement.

Ham radio has always been a part of my life, but even more so now that I have retired. I prefer CW mode and enjoy ragchewing, occasional contesting, casual DXing, and more recently SOTA and POTA. I have always enjoyed hiking summits, but now I have added the fun of ham radio. It has been a blast!

My other hobbies include backpacking, fishing, hunting, and mountain biking.

It is with a sense of great joy and pride that I have been accepted to CWops. I wish to thank AA6AC for nominating me, and N4DPM, AA3B, M0WXG and G7BED for being sponsors.

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Christoph Berg, DF7CB #3484

We had been playing with CB radios as kids for some time when I learned that a classmate's dad was a radio amateur. Over several visits, Gerhard DL5VT became my Elmer showing me around in several areas of the hobby. I got a copy of the official questionnaire and went off to learn by myself. In December 1994 I passed the "C" license exam (technician) at the age of 17 and got issued the callsign DG8VD.



Keen to also explore the shortwave bands, I had to get back to learning for the CW exam. This time jointly with other hams from the local radio club, led by Elmer Herbert DL8DL

(SK). I upgraded to the full "B" license in October 1995 and got my current call DF7CB. Back at that time, 12 wpm seemed like a lot. Later that year I took over the class from Herbert and taught a bit of the CW that I had learned.

I was mostly operating 40 m CW QSOs and contests at that time using a doublet antenna in my parents' garden. Sunspots were low, but it worked. The other passion was packet radio on 70 cm, I joined a group of sysops for a local mailbox.

I then finished high school and went to university, where antennas were difficult to set up and interests shifted even more to computers, so I was more and more off air except for running in the DARC XMAS contest each year until that stopped as well in 2006. I graduated in computer science, became deeply involved in Open Source in general and Debian Linux in particular, and didn't think about ham radio anymore.

Fast-forward to December 2018. Now with a family, a house, and a job with a few hams among the colleagues, I decided to get back into the old hobby. I put a Windom antenna across the house and the garden, hooked up the old IC-706, and went on 80 m. My CW was still working after all that time, and I did quite a few QSOs on that day. Sunspots were again low, but I got active again.

Of course I also tried the new digital modes that had appeared while I was away. But the thing I really enjoy is CW contesting, that's where I spend most of the time. In the meantime, I've upgraded my station to a IC-7610 and a Spiderbeam on the roof. Now is actually the first time in my 30-year ham career that the sunspots are high while I'm actually active, and I do enjoy the high bands a lot.

For the Rhein Ruhr DX Association (RRDXA) I'm operating the club logbook with some competitions for the members, and since the club is turning 60 this year, there's an RRDXA60 award people can apply for when working club members.

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I was operating contests at 24 wpm since I was afraid I would get run over when I called faster, but of course a lot of stations are faster. In "canned" QSOs, I could copy faster, but as soon as anything non-standard appeared, I was off track. So I signed up for CW Academy in the hope to improve my head copy skills and general operating speed. I was assigned to Buzz AC6AC's advanced class. I've enjoyed the course very much, and while I still haven't digested all the material offered, I'm already at 28 wpm for the contesting. Thanks Buzz for teaching and nominating me for CWops, and also thanks to AC6AC, N4DPM, AA3B, M0WXG, G7BED, F5SGI for sponsoring me!

Enric del Rey, EA3VN #3493.

I started learning CW years ago but I was misled and took the wrong way, so I was stuck at very low speed and the lack of advice from an "Elmer" made me to switch to other things. .. until one day that I was luckily invited to belong to a nice group that owns a big antenna farm for contesting (many thanks to EA3CCN, EA3EBN and EA3EZD). There a CW team was created and, surrounded by good operators, I started again, training a lot from LCWO to RufzXP and Morse Runner, and so started in CW contesting.



But there was something missing.. I usually was lost when someone sent something out of the classic contest exchange. Therefore the desire to be able to copy more increased and I started to search ways to learn that thing. First computer programs, then advice from other HAM's and finally discovering the CW Academy.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the CW Academy and to my advisor Buzz AC6AC, and co-advisors Shirley M0WXG and Rich N4DPM, their support was helpful and much appreciated. Also all the colleagues that I met at the academy that had the patience to listen to my sending ;o) .., everybody was nice and committed.

So there I am, trying to improve my skills to do less "599 and bye bye" and find hams to ragchew and enjoy the CW mode, the oldest of them, maybe special and maybe a little mysterious.

My working life started by chance as a watchmaker, just at the beginning of electronic watches. I was self-taught in watchmaking and had enough knowledge in electronics so I was at the right moment and at the right spot. After 3 years doing so, I moved to my real profession, as an electronic technician in TV where I spent all my working career.

As for hobbies, I have been keen on mechanics and electronics since childhood and so my workshop has both, one half for mechanics, equipped with lathe, milling machine, etc. and the other

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half for making electronic circuits and repairing and restoring radio equipment. So a small heaven for me, especially now that I am happily retired.

Well, also waiting for the retirement of my XYL, a bit younger than I, to enjoy travelling abroad (and maybe doing DXpeditions ;o)

Working only CW mode, CU on the bands.

Sam Mauldin, WO5T #3500

I first became a ham in the fall of 2022 after years of my grandpa K5NU, and close friend,

Erich KG5KEY, persuading me to do so. Like many hams these days, I can't set up an antenna at home, so when I discovered Parks on the Air, I was intrigued. While researching portable radios and antennas, I started to get interested in CW and its advantages. I could work with weaker signals, use smaller radios, and carry around smaller batteries. I learned the alphabet over a few weeks with LCWO, borrowed an Elecraft K2 from my grandpa, and went out to try a POTA activation with CW at Lake Tawakoni State Park. After gathering up enough confidence to call CQ, I made enough contacts with some very patient operators to qualify the activation.

From there, I was hooked. It was only two days before my next activation, and a few more that week. I also tried my hand at contesting in a NA QSO Party that spring. I loved the experience, and that gave me the motivation I needed to improve. Fast forward a year, and I was once again setup in the park for NAQP, now as a confident CW operator. I still have things to improve on, but it's safe to say that you'll find me participating in contests for years to come.

Outside of radio, I enjoy spending time outdoors. You'll find me camping, backpacking, or taking a hike - and stringing up an antenna while I'm there, of course. By day, I work as a software developer.

Joining CWops was one of the milestones I set for myself when I began to learn CW, so I am very happy to be a member. I thank the many people who have helped me get here, and I look forward to a lifetime of enjoying ham radio.



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Steve Nagy, W4SGN #3502

First, I appreciate the opportunity for membership in CWops. Looking forward to meeting more of the club members, and of course many thanks to those who nominated and sponsored me: Bill VE3MRX, Joe KK5NA, Sean N3RTW, Bud AA3B, Mike K5UV, and Glenn N2CJ. Thanks also to the entire CWA team, including my instructors, Joe KK5NA and Buzz AC6AC, for volunteering countless hours of your own free time to share and grow the hobby.



I was first licensed in fall 2022, beginning my radio journey with QRP rigs working POTA, which naturally and very quickly led to CW. I had not imagined being interested in Morse code, but I got hooked, enrolled in CWA, and started working the CWTs with the fine members of this club.

As it goes with many of us, my radio interests have evolved to focus on CW and tinkering. I have built a couple QRP rigs and would love to start designing and building from scratch, but I am not quite there yet. On rare occasions, I do operate sideband with my kids when they ask to get on the air.

Apart from radio, I enjoy having fun outdoors (camping, hiking, biking, skiing, board sports, and running).

Originally, I am from Kansas City, but these days, I live in Springfield, VA, with my wife and our three children (currently 8, 5, and 2). There is never a dull moment around the house. As they say, the days are long, but the years are short.

Professionally, I am a patent attorney in Washington, DC.

Reflecting on my radio journey (so far), CW has emphasized the value of accepting and even sometimes seeking out mistakes along the path to improvement. That attitude requires a supportive community, and many of the hams I have met — including CWops members specifically — have been incredibly patient and helpful along the way. Thank you!

Ted Rosen, VA3TAR #3404

I was introduced to radio activity in 1985 during a mountaineering ascent of Mt. Logan,

Canada's highest mountain in Kluane National Park. During the 3 week climb, our team radio operator departed early, and I assumed his responsibilities. My amateur radio license was obtained to learn radio communications and for future expeditions.

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My first station (VE3SCK) was established in 1990, After the VA3 prefixes became available I changed my callsign to VA3TAR. Radio activity continued for 10+ years, including assisting my college student radio club.

To avoid conflicts when a neighbor constructed a multi story house addition adjacent to my 40' tower and beam, I dismantled the tower, and closed my station. During the following 20+ years I pursued outdoor activities including sailing, canoeing, fly fishing, hiking, backpacking, climbing, skiing, ran the Boston Marathon and raced triathlon, completing 10 Ironman races including the world championship in Hawaii.



The COVID pandemic put a halt to social activities and racing in 2021. My interests shifted to photography and water color painting. With winter approaching in 2023, the thought of re-establishing my radio station (there was a new neighbor) became something of an obsession.

When first licensed, I met Mike, VE3GFN on a Toronto VHF repeater net while commuting to the college where I taught Architectural Technology. As I needed help establishing a new station, I telephoned Mike (the only ham I had maintained contact with), and he graciously brought me up to date regarding amateur radio developments, providing valuable advice. Little did I know, he was a highly successful DXer, Contester, and CWops member. His enthusiasm was infectious, as was his encouragement for me to join the Contest Club of Ontario. I was further interested in QRP POTA and SOTA activities, giving me opportunity to pursue CW portable outdoors. This also lead to my learning about CWops and the CW Academy.

Late October 2023 I purchased my IC-7300 transceiver, power supply, lambic key and installed an end fed antenna from my house roof ridge, down our narrow city lot to the rear yard.

I anticipated listening for a few months while I relearned CW , but found that the 20+ year lapse in radio activity did not prevent me from quickly regaining my CW skills. I immediately applied to the CW Academy and fortunately was accepted in the Advanced Level for January/February 2024. Hanz, YL3JD, our course advisor, welcomed me and my fellow students in December, setting the stage for our twice a week zoom meetings commencing January 2024. As the course concluded, the prospect of CWops membership was discussed. Hanz confirmed that we had achieved the needed sending and receiving abilities and nominated me for CWops membership.

Many thanks to YL3JD, W6SX, K1VUT, KR2Q, and N8DNA for their thoughtful support.

Mark Sheffield, K4LFL #3491

My interest in being a ham was from my dad, K2LFL. I remember his rig in the basement in

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the early 60s, a converted wartime military tube set. I didn't really have the bug then, but in the early 80s when I was close to 30 I decided to become a ham with a friend of mine. He had an old paper-tape code practice machine that we sat around trying to figure out how to get to five words a minute to pass the Novice test, it was brutal.

I was initially licensed in 1982 as a Novice and had at least weekly QSOs with my dad from my QTH in Massachusetts to his in upstate New York on 80 meters. My first contact with another ham was with AE1T; I called CQ with 3 watts, he responded, and we worked... after a fashion.

The QSO was a white-knuckled total panic, but he was a real pro. Over time, I went through the licensing steps to Extra but was never confident in my ability with code; the only reason I got to Extra was the format of the test was, if I recall correctly, a recorded QSO and 10 questions. I had an opportunity to improve with a FISTS member and did that for a while but work travel overseas effectively killed that after a few months. I listened to a lot of ARRL code practice but never was able to really become "proficient."



Fast forward, I was pretty much out of radio for about 15 years until 2019 when I came to North Carolina and decided to set up a station at my new QTH. I retired after a nearly 50-year career as an EE in 2023, got involved with a club, and took part in the ARRL Field Day for the first time. It turned out to be a rude awakening on how badly my already-not-too-good code skills had fallen and I decided that I needed to remediate. I poked around the internet and finally came across a CW Academy referral on Kurt AD0WE's website so I signed up as an Intermediate and the rest is history.

The Academy program was a blessing, there isn't anything like it.

73 to all, thanks to my sponsors AC6AC, AA3B, M0WXG, G7BED, N4DPM, and K1VUT for helping me join this organization; and thanks to all for creating and running your amazing school.

Chris Kelly, KØPF #3507

I want to thank CWops and my instructors and sponsors for their many hours and advice in improving my CW.

My radio experience started when I was young, listening to shortwave broadcast stations, writing for QSL cards. My Elmer, W5FT, gave me the Novice test and I was issued WD5IBS in about 1976. I always loved CW but it was difficult for me, and I also learned some bad habits like writing everything down. I earned a 20 wpm Extra just before CW was de-emphasized and received the KØPF callsign, which has good "swing" as my Elmer would say.

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I attended Colorado State University for graduate work and there I met my wife Debbie at the square dance club. We took several years off dancing to raise children, but we again dance and are co-presidents of the local club today.

My five sons are all Eagle Scouts and 3 have their tickets, as does Debbie. Our scouting activities led me to help build a ham radio station at a local scout camp, WØBSA for the club station (see QRZ.com).

I worked for Hewlett Packard as a R&D designer producing many small instruments: Function Generators, DMMs and Data Acquisition instruments, earning 6 US Patents for my inventions. I retired in 2021 and find myself busier than ever.



After I retired, I met Chris, WØCWA, who square dances and who spent many years helping scouts, so we have a lot in common. I sometimes took a NorCal NC-40 on scout camping trips so POTA (Parks on the Air) is a natural extension for my ham radio activities, and that means getting more serious about CW. Chris shares that interest and told me about CW Academy, so we both signed up and attended the Intermediate class in January – February 2024. It is great to have a local “accountability” friend to encourage me.

CW is the most effective and lightweight mode for QRP portable operation and there is a challenge and a mystique to speaking this special language. Over the years my skills have waxed and waned, but I always valued the ability to understand Morse.

I have a Elecraft KX-2 transceiver for portable work. Even with simple EFHW and EFRW wire antennas I can work at least all North America from a picnic bench in a park. There are lots of National and State Parks around me, so look for me on the POTA spotting page and around 14060 or so in summer.

I am grateful to the CWops on SST, MST and now CWT for their skill and patience when I am on the air. My ears are getting faster just hanging out with you folks during these events.

Many thanks to CWops for organizing these classes which have taught me to move past my bad habits in CW and moving me into new speeds and skills like head copy. One of my goals in the Advanced class is to copy CWT callsigns the first time... how do they do that?

Simone Fabris, IU3QEZ # 3506

Here I am, 51 years old, father of 3 and married to a wonderful woman, Alessandra. Her only flaw is not being a ham herself.

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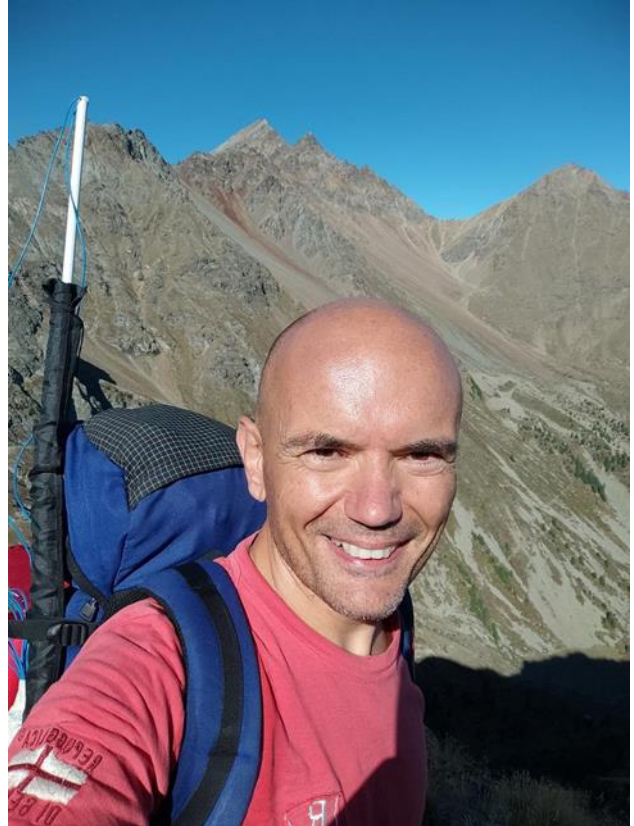
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My studies were in Chemical Engineering but this is something I never did in my life. I had the opportunity to switch focus a few times during my career. I can't explain my actual job - I think I would need a full article here in *Solid Copy*, but let's say it's mostly about chemical safety in consumer goods.

I got my license not long ago, in 2022 even if my interest with radio started at an early age.

The only missing piece was the right connection. As a kid I went multiple times to my local ham club, only to be told "you're too young, if you want this is what you have to study by yourself."

Finally in 2021 I discovered that ham operators are going in the mountains for an obscure thing they call "SOTA." In a rush I took my license, a QRP rig and at the beginning of 2022 I was in the mountains doing SOTA activation. I also joined a QRP club, "The Mountain QRP Club," where I am now very active as a member of the management.



Yes I loved mountains and going with the QRP radio was fun but speaking on a microphone is not really my thing. Something magic was missing in the mix - it's name is "radiotelegraphy." I discovered this "strange thing" while listening to a podcast of a local ham, Franco IK7XJA. It was March 2022, and immediately after I signed up for a CWA beginner class. This was the beginning of my new life as ham, after this exact moment antennas started growing on the roof of my house and my eldest son soon relocated in another part of the house in order to accommodate my shack.

My first advisor has been Roger MIØWBB, one of my sponsors. As I told Roger during a QSO he really inspired me. He instilled in me the "obsession" for telegraphy. Then Bob WR7Q, who always monitored my progression in CWA - Thanks Bob!. Then Mike N5KB, other advisor and sponsor. Kit GØJPS, my sponsor, and Keith GØHKC who together with Hanz YL3JD (who nominated me) brought me on the right side - I was obsessed by speed, always calling CQ well beyond my capabilities and comfort zone, making mistakes. And I wasn't really enjoying QSOs as they were stressful. After I slowed down the keyer I could appreciate the sensation of really being in touch with the guy on the other side, sharing rhythm and breath. If you live a QSO in this way, yes, having a QSO in CW is like sharing vital energy between operators, feelings, breath, air everything..

Of course, there are times where you have to play with speed, because it's fun or because you have the "right one" on the other side, but 99% of ragchews are done between 20 - 25 wpm.

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And I could not be here without the help, encouragement and also corrections of the other operators that also "forged" me: Enzo MØKTZ, Sal IK7UKF, Ben I8QFK, Luigi IZ8VKW, Pietro IN3GYO, Ugo IU4NVY, Danilo IUØPJJ and Sal IKØOJM (I can't put all the guys of CW QRS here.. SRI!).

I also had the honor to join CW Innovations, Glen W4YES, Jon KC1FUU, Andrew KØAWG, Dave K3FT - thanks for giving fresh meat to my practice time.

And last but not least my last classmates. All great friends, great ham and great CW Operator: Ted VE3TAR, Stefano IK5LSR, Kim K7IM, Rich KG5IF It has been a lot of fun guys, thank you!

Les Mitchell Hynd, MMØUMH # 3509

Grateful thanks to Kit GØJPS for being my tutor on the advanced course and for nominating me. Thanks also to my sponsors MIØWWB, SV2BBK, MØRYB, G3XLG, G3LDI and G3YLA.

I was born on the east coast of Scotland in 1953 and although I was on the fringes of our school radio club, my funds didn't stretch any further than buying a couple of amateur radio books. I wanted to leave school at sixteen to train as a marine radio officer, but my mother persuaded me to stay on at school. However, at the back of my mind there was always a feeling of an ambition unfulfilled. When my cousin Jean died a few years ago, she left behind a description of my paternal grandmother which said "Granny worked in the Post Office and was expert at Morse code for sending messages," so perhaps it's in my genes.



After a career as an Information Systems Director and university lecturer, I finally managed to take up the radio hobby as I approached retirement, getting my first licence in 2009. We lived in the East of England at the time and I joined the Norfolk Amateur Radio Club where I was fortunate in having a number of fantastic CW tutors. Roger G3LDI, author of the RSGB Morse book and one of my sponsors, recently wrote in our club newsletter that he thought I would never make a CW operator. I probably wouldn't have if it hadn't been for Roger's emphasis on the need for perseverance.

When I did finally retire, my wife Ursula and I took to the English canal network for a four year continuous cruise on our canal boat and the radio hobby had to go on the back burner for a while. Meanwhile, our eldest daughter had relocated with her family to the Hebridean island of Islay to take up a post as one of the island's doctors. We visited, fell in love with the island, and decided to move to the village of Bruichladdich on the shores of beautiful Loch Indaal.

Our house is the old blacksmith's house and workshop and was built in 1860, a few years before the Bruichladdich distillery. I tell people that my radio shack is converted from the smithy work-

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shop but the grandson of the last blacksmith recently informed me that it was actually where his grandfather kept his pigs and chickens.

Having accepted the challenge of learning CW, I am now 100% devoted to that mode and my log tells me that my last SSB QSO was almost four years ago. I'm a ragchewer rather than a contest-er and, for two years now, have had half hour QSOs with my German friend Alex DL2GWZ three or four times a week. Alex visited with his eldest son last summer and so we have plenty to talk about when we chat.

I'm honoured to have been accepted into CWops and couldn't be happier if I had been crowned King of Scotland. If we haven't already worked, I look forward to meeting you on the bands and if you're a whisky drinker, look for an Islay single malt next time you go shopping. I can't possibly drink it all myself.

Kraig Keyes, AA4SD #3475

I grew up in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and was introduced to amateur radio when my dad brought home a Heathkit code oscillator after talking to a ham friend. It was intended to be a father-son activity where we would both get our tickets, however, my dad didn't pursue the hobby in part because of the code requirement at that time. As a young kid who scored well in manual dexterity and perfect pitch, code became my "second language." I finally passed my Novice license in 1985 and was issued KB4PAG followed by N4MYQ after passing the General and Advanced exams. In 1986, I received my current callsign.



With a TS-520s and straight key, I worked the world using a miniature MFJ-1682 portable vertical antenna. QTX was my primary interest, and I was rewarded with learning from so many interesting hams who shared valuable experiences across a wide spectrum of topics, including careers, education, family, faith, and other hobbies. Many of these QSOs originated when master-level CW operators would visit the Novice frequencies to help mentor new hams. As a result, my code skills improved, so I moved up to a Bencher paddle followed by a Heathkit HD-8999 keyboard.

In college, I helped revive the amateur radio station that was crammed into a basement closet next to the Physics Department. After removing the cobwebs, I found a Drake TR4 receiver/transmitter set. The roof supported a tower with a beam, but the rotor remained inoperable during my entire time at the school. In the pre-computer and cell phone era, I had fun soliciting ARRL Radiograms from classmates, which were forwarded via the CW NTC nets.

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I was bit by the contesting bug later in life and enjoy competing in the QRP and barefoot categories in most major contests. There's always something to tweak or improve. Recently, I completed the CWops Advanced Course and had a wonderful time learning from other code aficionados. Our Class Advisor, Phil (NE0S), was a fantastic instructor; his passion for code was palpable. The comradery was instant among the classmates, which included Steve (AD7KR), Gary (K7UOU), and Dick (WD8SDH). It's a fantastic course and the experience certainly helped me improve my skills. I'm thankful for NE0S, K5UV, and W6SX for their CWops nomination and sponsorship.

As for non-radio activities, I work for a large organization deploying software solutions used by Human Resource teams to train in both the classroom and remote locations. When not working, I'm either with my family or out riding motorcycles.

I'm thrilled to be a member of CWops and hope to meet you on the air.

Chris Kim, AG6CK #3477

First, thanks to my CWA advisors K17OMH, WU6P, and membership sponsors AAØIZ, K7RL, W8CAR, WC7Q and WS7L.

I was born and raised in Seoul, Korea. When I was a scout I learned about the ham radio hobby from scouting and hobby electronics magazines in the late 70s. After college, I moved to the US with my family in my mid-20s.

I got my Novice license in 1990 with the call KC6LUV and upgraded to Technician. I have

also taken upgrade tests to pass the General and Advanced written exams, however I never finished the upgrades because I didn't master the code. In 2010, I upgraded to an Amateur Extra. In 2012, I changed to a new sequential call AG6CK.

I have been volunteering as an adult leader in scouting units since 2008. As a volunteer I have attended the National Scout Jamboree in 2013 and 2017. In the 2013 Jamboree, I staffed for the K2BSA Amateur Radio station and had great fellowship with hams from all over the country.

Over the years, I have been on and off on hobby activities for various reasons, work, family, etc.

Recently my hobby interest got reignited 2022, and started to hunt the Parks On the Air activators. The POTA made me much more active in the hobby than before. As I was challenged to break through the pile ups to make contacts in the voice mode, I was intrigued to get into the CW mode with the code skills that I gave up on improving 10 years earlier. As I started making contacts in CW, it became my primary mode of operation.



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In the Fall of 2023, I started taking CWops CW Academy intermediate class and then Advanced class in the past two months. The CWA has been a great help for my improvement in CW skills and enjoyed the fellowship and camaraderie thoroughly.

As I have become proficient in CW mode, I have activated a POTA in CW mode, and am planning to activate many more in the future. I enjoy participating in SST, MST and CWT these days.

I am a software engineer by trade, and volunteer for a scouting and RACES group in my city.

I am looking forward to having great fellowship and fun through CWops!

Sreevathsa (Sree or Speed) Mohan, VU3SPD #3499

I would like to thank Buzz AC6AC for nominating me to CWops and Rich N4DPM, Shirley MØWXG, Ed AE8Q, Chris G7BED for sponsoring the nomination.

I am very much interested in doing electronic projects from my childhood building DIY electronic project kits assembly from my school days and used to be an active shortwave listener, Listening to AM/FM broadcast stations on radio during my college days. My favorite channel used to be Sri Lanka Broadcast Corporation (SLBC) listening to the show hosted by Victor Goonetilleke - 4S7VK. I am originally from Nandi Hills (MK83UI), a hill station (Elevation 1478m) which is 60 kms from Bangalore. On this hill station there are microwave stations, wireless repeater stations from various government agencies and in my school days I used to visit all these places regularly.

This interest of listening to radio stations grew with me and I wanted to be a ham radio operator owning my own radio setup, to achieve this I took up the ham radio exams in Dec 1990 and cleared it. Eventually, after a long wait of 2.5 yrs I got my license in May 1993. Repeater Society of Bangalore 1st VHF Repeater (VU2RSB) has been installed in Nandi Hills at my uncle QTH here.

Initially to own a VHF, HF transceiver in India was very expensive, with lots of documentation followed with license approval to be received for buying the equipment. I had to save every penny to own my first Delcom IC2A VHF handy and was very active on VHF. I took part in events specific to ARDF, been a VHF net controller, JOTA operations, providing communication to Motor Rallies, Hill topping, etc. I bought my IC-718 HF Transceiver, G5RV 80 - 10m antenna 10 years later. On getting my HF transceiver I was using a Marconi telegraph straight key and a home-brew



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straight key for doing on air CW QSOs slow speeds. Due to MQTH schedules I was off the band for some time and returned back to the hobby 5 years back.

My activities involved taking part in contests, SOTA, Field Day operations and working DX stations both on SSB and CW. Due to my location constraints being in a low lying area which I term it as a urban valley I have a block towards NA, AF and EU with major opening towards Oceania and South East Countries. A good band opening I will be able to make few contacts with EU stations.

To improve my CW skills I enrolled into the CWops Beginner program in Jan 2022, followed with Fundamental in May 2022, Intermediate in May 2023 and Advance in Sep 2023 and Jan 2024. This program was really a great one which helped me to improve my skills in head-copy, taking part in CW contests, having QSOs, ragchews, working DXpeditions/IOTA stations and got confidence in working CW with DX stations at comfortable speeds. The course curriculum is very well defined and practicing it daily has improved our CW listening and sending skills. The classes were really interesting with lot of tips and techniques being shared, focusing on the accuracy, rhythm of the speed in sending, sending good code, LCWO word training exercises, simulated 80 m net QSOs, sending/receiving name city call sign prefixes, RufzXP callsign practice etc. The advisors were friendly and helped us in improving our mistakes done while sending and copying the code and suggested with correct approach to follow and practice the same. I would recommend this CW course to every new ham here in India and promote it.

On my day job I am a IT professional skilled in cybersecurity, software quality and networking, working in a IT service organization here in Bangalore. On a personal note I am married, my wife Mala takes care of my family, my first son Nishchal is doing his masters in cybersecurity in US and my second son Ujwal is in his tenth grade and he is passionate about going to flying school.

Finally I would like to thank all my advisors Carl Severance - W4IF, Steven Robbs - WJ0C, Buzz - AC6AC, Enzo - MØKTZ, Rich - N4DPM, Heather - AH7RF, Shirley - MØWXG, Marv - W5DT who have given there valuable guidance and bringing in self-care and self confidence in me.

Al Rossi Sr., WO2T #3501

I was first licensed in 1984 and earned my Extra in 1989.

I'm an avid DXer and have earned Honor Roll on both SSB and CW.

My current DXCC count is 338 / 347. About 8 years ago I got into contesting and I'm a member of the Frankford Radio Club and belong to FISTS #17261.

I have been an operator for several special events, but my favorite is 13 Colonies as a K2I Station on HF and Satellite.

I retired as VP of manufacturing from a lifelong career in corrugated packaging and fulfillment.



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My other interests are boating, hotrods, and spoiling my 7 grandchildren.

I am honored to be a part of CWOPS and hope to put you in my log.

I first got my Foundation license in the UK in 2008 and within a year I had completed my intermediate and full license in Dec 2009. Born in Wales in the early 70s, I graduated with an electronics degree from Cardiff University in 1994. I lived in Oxfordshire in England for 10 years, but I'm back in Wales living near Cardiff.

Steve Wheatstone, MWØSAW # 3486

I would first like to say a big thanks to Buzz AC6AC for nominating myself for CWops membership and also to my sponsors Rich N4DPM, Shirley MØWXG, and Chris G7BED.

I first got my Foundation license in the UK in 2008 and within a year I had completed my intermediate and full license in Dec 2009. Born in Wales in the early 70s, I graduated with an electronics degree from Cardiff University in 1994. I lived in Oxfordshire in England for 10 years, but I'm back in Wales living near Cardiff.



All my working career has been involved with electronics and software design so my love of radio seems to be a perfect fit. We didn't have mobile phones as teenagers and like many CB was my first encounter with radio communications.

In recent years my radio interests turned to QRP/Portable/SOTA. I started to self-learn CW about 3 years ago, and in 2023 a friend persuaded me to join his CW academy beginners class being led by Roger MIØWWB. I briefly joined the Fundamentals level the following semester, and after a couple of sessions transferred to the intermediate with Bob WR7Q, having made such good progress in the first class. I joined Buzz's advanced class Jan 2024.

It's been such an enjoyable and rewarding time. Thanks to all my instructors, co-advisors and classmates. When learning is so much fun, motivation is something you never need to question.

I'm very grateful to the CW Academy for all the support, and proud to have now become a CWops member. I have made so many amazing new friends along the way from around the world.

Howard Belkin, M.D., D.D.S., J.D., W1HRB #3511

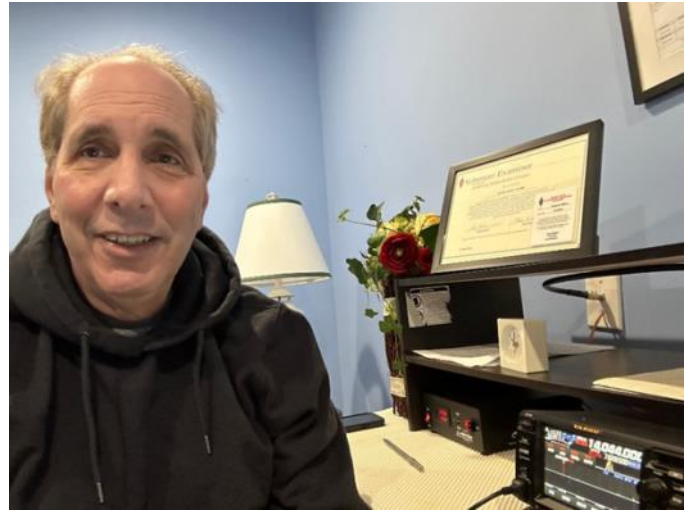
I want to thank Joe KK5NA for nominating me and K1DJ, N2PLG, and K1EBY for sponsoring my membership to CWops. I am grateful to be a member of this incredible club. My ham radio story is shorter than many of the other hams I have met, as I was first licensed less than two years ago

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and did not begin my journey with CW until September 2022 when I first learned about CW Academy.

My actual first exposure to amateur radio was when I was still in junior high school and I went over to the house of a classmate whose father, K8IGW, had a station set up in his basement. As an 11 or 12-year-old, it was about the most fascinating piece of electronic equipment that I had ever seen and the fact that he had a personalized license plate, and a Thunderbird was even better. Although my only entry at that time into getting on the air was to buy a pair of Realistic walkie talkies, I never forgot the fascination I had with knowing that people could use radio to communicate with people around the world.



Fast forward several decades and I was talking to a friend who mentioned that he was a ham and that it was an enjoyable hobby. That passing comment reignited my interest in ham radio, and I studied for and passed my Tech, General, and Extra licenses in June and July 2022. However, I soon realized that, aside from using a handi-talkie on the local repeaters, I had no idea at all what to do with my license. I began searching around and I stumbled across CWops and the CW Academy. The thought of learning CW sounded fascinating and a real challenge, so I signed up for the beginner class, having literally no concept of a dit or a dah. It took me a couple months before I was confident enough to get on the air, but once I did, there was no turning back. About 18 months after I sent my first dit in my first CW Academy class, I completed the Advanced class and became a member of CWops.

I could never have done this without some great advisors/Elmers who have all been huge influences on me. Bruce K8UDH, Jeff W0HY, Dallas K1DW, Frank K1EBY, and especially Joe KK5NA were fantastic teachers and mentors and I appreciate them all, especially Joe who was so patient with me in three separate classes. I also want to give a shout out to my classmates, all of whom are not just great operators, but kind human beings. You could not find a better group of people.

As a relatively new ham, I am just starting to get into contesting and DXing and enjoy my time on the radio. My station is modest; I have a Yaesu FTDX10 and an EFHW. Since the only mode I use is CW, I have plenty of opportunities to improve my skills. I am also a member of LICW, FISTS, SKCC, and NAQCC, as well as being a VE. In my non-radio life, I practice psychiatry full-time and am married with three college-aged daughters. I am also a guitarist and a magician and try to get outdoors and ride my bicycle when the weather in southeast Michigan permits me to do so.

I plan on becoming actively involved in the club and continue to work on my CW and enjoy this great hobby of ours.

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Chris Clarke, G3SQU # 3494

I first became interested in radio at age 10 through twiddling around on a friend's family radio that tuned LW through to SW, whilst my family received only BBC radio programmes by cable. Subsequently I was given a crystal set for Christmas and began twiddling at home on MW with a long wire antenna from my bedroom window and cold water pipe earth.

My interest in Morse code was kindled in 1960 by the Sunday afternoon TV series "Counter-Attack," which followed the Enid Blyton-esque escapades of a small group of children during the WW2 occupation of the Channel Islands in June 1940. The children had obtained a CW transmitter which enabled them to communicate with London by Morse code and to pass messages to the Islands resistance movement. Four years later, at age 14, I had discovered ham radio, joined Isle of Thanet Radio Society and made ham friends, in particular G3PNI, who would help me to build radios, learn Morse code (mandatory for the only licence then issued) and gained my ham licence.



I operated CW for 4 years, beginning on 160 m with a homebuilt 807 PA transmitter into a long-wire, and various war surplus receivers. A move from my home in Kent led me to a career with the UK Meteorological Office in a variety of roles including met observer, computer programmer, instrument scientist and, latterly, quality assurance manager. During this period I married and had 3 sons, sadly none of whom have displayed a scientific bent, and was inactive as a ham until 1996 when I constructed a 40 m DC solid state kit receiver and using an old Star ST-700 valve transmitter operated with 70W into a mobile whip antenna.

But in 1998 my operations stalled once more and it wasn't until 2012, in retirement and having moved from SE England to the NE city of Newcastle upon Tyne, that I turned to ham radio and to CW again, a skill comparable to that of riding a bike: once learned, never lost. Initially, I operated 40 m and 20 m QRP with Ten-Tec TT-1340 and MFJ-9020 rigs using mobile whip antennas, then graduated to a Ten-Tec Century 22 giving up to 25W on 40-10 m into a home-brew doublet following the NorCal portable design.

A move into the 'big time' followed and I am now running an IC-746 running 100W into an end-fed 10 m vertical antenna supported by a fishing pole (clinging to a tree), with radials and a 9-1 balun allowing operation from 80-10m and varying degrees of efficiency and efficacy! Until 2024 my operation had been almost completely CW, 99.9% using a straight key right out of the 1950s but with 0.1% employing my ability to send my callsign at 'contest speed' using a recently acquired Hi-Mound dual-lever paddle.

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A desire to improve my CW conversational reading and sending speeds next led me to be accepted into the CW Academy Advanced Course, during which I treated myself to the luxury purchase of a shiny new single-lever paddle key from UR5CDX. And so today I face a new, emboldened life in CW accompanied by my new class-mates from the CW Academy.

I wish to extend my gratitude to G3PNI, without whom I wouldn't have made the first step into CW, and to the CW Academy, in the persons of my Advisor Buzz (AC6AC) and his Co-Advisors Rich (N4DPM) and Shirley (MØWXG), for bringing me to the honour of election to CWops. I would also like to thank Buzz for nominating me and to Bud (AA3B), Chris (G7BED) and Shirley for their sponsorship.



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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