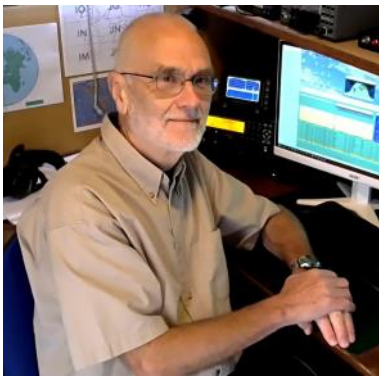
# Solid Copy

**The CW Operators Club Newsletter**
**April 2024 — Issue 171**


The picture of a happy CW operator. "The Making of a DXpeditioner" begins on page 15.

## President's Message



As President of CWops, my name goes onto welcome messages sent out to all new members. As a consequence, I regularly receive unsolicited personal emails from

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

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

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



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some of these recent inductees expressing appreciation and pleasure at being accepted as a member of our club.

I routinely read these while 'catching up' over a breakfast cup of tea and they always help set me off on a new day with a smile and a spring in my step. For many it will signify the culmination of months of effort to build up CW proficiency and is treated as a badge of honour; for the more experienced it can be an opportunity to associate with hundreds of like minded individuals including some of the best and most active CW operators around the globe.

When I joined back in 2011, I felt flattered that one of the founding members deemed me worthy of being part of such an illustrious group. While we all have to demonstrate a certain level of proficiency, CWops is a broad church of interests and ability and I've always considered myself as fairly 'middle of the road'. I can ragchew at 28 wpm and seem to manage to come in below the median point for both errors and points deduction in any contest I enter. At the same time, I'd like to make fewer errors while ragchewing and to reduce those intensely annoying S/H, 2/3, U/V, B/D errors that appear in my Log Checking Reports/UBNs. Reality suggests I'll never top the All Band High Power tables in CQWW CW or become a true QRQ ragchewer but I can and will enjoy my time on air and hopefully improve along the way. I believe that in any activity improvement will follow naturally from simply being active and motivated, no training program needed! Whether it's rock climbing, quilting or CW, just 'doing it' will inevitably result in increasing proficiency. And CWops has for me, and hopefully many others, done wonders for my motivation to spend time in the shack, in front of a radio and morse key.

I had reason to remember that old proverb that says "It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good" recently. My 'antenna farm' occupies a corner of a neighbouring field where the farmer is happy to loan some space for keeping a watchful eye on his sheep. There are many mature oak trees as well as the usual plethora of unruly blackthorn and brambles to tangle wires in. After a winter beset with rain and frequent storms, I noticed one particularly large and dense copse of blackthorn had changed shape; closer inspection revealed one section had succumbed to the winds and wet soil and, while still rooted, was now reclining towards the horizontal. Viewing this from a particular angle piqued my interest because as a result of this partial collapse I could see the makings of a clear corridor through the centre of this previously impenetrable mass to a nice oak up on the slope behind. I took this as a gift of Nature and after some judicial tidying soon had the fixing for the southern end of my 80m dipole extended from low down in front of this blackthorn through to the oak up on the far side. It remains to be seen if it performs better but that half of the dipole is now more flat-top and less acute Inverted Vee, with the end considerably more elevated off the ground.

You may have noticed recently that the pages on our website now have a clickable side tab that invites you to visit the latest edition of *Solid Copy*. Clicking this activates the 'Current Month' link under the 'Newsletter' tab and is the same link now sent out on the reflector each month; the previous pathway to the latest edition was via the 'Year 2024' link which now brings up the earlier editions. When Dick N9EEE our editor and SV2BBK and KB6NU who installed this feature and maintain the web pages took a closer look at the 'click data' (my term) it suggested the current *Solid Copy* was getting relatively few visits compared to the number of members we have. It's only data from one month so maybe not totally reliable but this caused Dick and the board to con-

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sider the possibility our newsletter isn't reaching many of our members. Besides being a first class ham radio publication and source of club information it is intended to keep the membership engaged and bound together. Our newsletter is an integral feature of CWops membership and the Board relies on it for disseminating important information; it's also an enjoyable read each month so make sure you read it and don't miss out! And it's now just a click away….

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

SC

# Editor's Note: It's DX Month!

With the number of significant DXpeditions occurring so far this year and with the daily 10m and 15m band openings in every direction, it's not hard to get into the DX mood. Even POTA activators in Wisconsin are pleasantly surprised when a typical stateside pile-up includes SM4 or IT9 working their way into the log. So, this month, we turn the feature articles in *Solid Copy* over to the DXers.

First off, a late announcement for the YJØVK DXpedition which was inadvertently left off the editorial calendar for the March issue. Mea culpa, our good friend Chris VK3QB, CWops #2949. Though the DXpedition has concluded, the announcement is being published this month because of the useful information it provides even after the event. Chris, we hope you and the team filled your logbook with lots of CWops members' call signs.

Fresh off the keyboard is the write-up for the TX5S Clipperton Island DXpedition from the team that some hail as the most professionally run DXpedition ever. Their level of communications via streaming log and daily blog posts, and perhaps most noticeably their consistency from operator to operator on all bands and all modes earned them high praise from the DX community.

And our final feature story is indeed a star feature.  I am extremely pleased to feature an article from Adrian KO8SCA, CWops #2408 who took time away from DXpeditioning, work, family, and contesting to write "The Making Of A DXpeditioner." It's an exclusive for *Solid Copy* with stories, insights, and photos chronicling his ascent in the DX world. Attention CW Academy students: you will want to read this article and pay particular note of his practice regimen.

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

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

# News and Notes

## Duncan (Mac) Fisken, G3WZD

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

**Steve Linley, WA8Y/C6AYW #2289 on 27th January, 2024**
**Steve Buroker, W7QC #1692 on 29th February, 2024**
**David Wood, G3YXX #493 on 15th March, 2024**

Condolence cards have 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. Do keep the submissions coming, but please don't wait until the monthly call for articles or reminder (deadline for the next issue is 1st May).*

**Glenn, VE1IJ #457** With acknowledgment to the ARRL March 2024 NTS Newsletter in which the following appeared.

"The Importance of Bulk Greeting Messages

In December 2023, I attended a meeting at New England Sci-Tech, a STEM/Makerspace in Natick, MA. Also attending were: ARRL First Vice President Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF; Western MA ACC Larry Krainson, W1AST; and Eastern MA ACC Bruce Blain, K1GB. We were involved in planning the 2024 ARRL New England Division Convention.

A young ham, Francesco Tron, KC1TTJ, of Wellesley, Massachusetts, also happened to be at New England Sci-Tech that morning.

***Francesco Tron, KC1TTJ***

The Makerspace leader interrupted us briefly and asked if Francesco could come in and show us something.

Francesco walked in and proudly displayed a paper that he received via the US Mail from a local traffic handler. It was a "Welcome to Amateur Radio" message originated by Glenn Killam, VE1IJ, from Saint Alphonse, Nova Scotia. Francesco was beaming, excited to have received this simple message affirming his entry into the world of amateur radio.

So, before you dismiss "Welcome to Amateur Radio" messages as unworthy of relay or delivery, please consider the impact that receiving this simple greeting had for this young amateur. I have no doubt that Francesco will treasure that piece of paper for a long time! -- Phil Temples, K9HI, Vice Director, New England."

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**Guy, VA7GI #3256** I've started a CW class for two neighbor boys: Chris (11) and Soarin (13) (and mom Elsa!). At such a young age, they need in-person instruction and the inspiration of an actual ham shack. They purchased straight keys and (with my help) constructed CPOs.

They just completed our first on-air QSO at a bumpy 5 wpm with VA7MM. Our local Orca DXCC radio club has posted a photo.

***Chris on the key***

**Mike, VE3GFN #1119** The annual North American CW weekend will take place in early June in Falls Church VA. See Pages 29 & 30 of October 2023 Solid Copy for full details of the event.

Having just taken delivery of a new Hyundai Kona N SUV (gasoline) in strawberry red, and suffering greatly from 4 years of pandemic-induced cabin fever, I've decided to make the trip from Toronto, and attend this event for the first time.

Having failed to find any interested company locally, I'm up for collecting a warm body of the CWops or FOC persuasion someplace along the way, to keep me company. The plan would be to leave Toronto on the Wednesday or Thursday, weather permitting, and make one overnight stop along the way, both coming and going. Half the fun should be getting there. I've not been to that area of the USA before, so some "touristing" and photography would be part of the trip priority.

With any luck, I'll have 2M FM capability, and the repeaters along the way programmed. I should have my Garmin GPS programmed as well, and paper maps as backup. The "second op" gets to play radio, and chief navigator. I'll also have a Bluetooth telephone, if I can figure out all those buttons. Name, callsign, email and telephone number, if interested, please? You can "check me out" on QRZ.com

**Jack, W1WEF #48** Two of my wire verticals in trees bent over the treetops when I first put them up years ago. Since the trees have grown another ten feet since then I decided to take another shot over the top and get them closer to VERTICAL. I use a ZEBCO 202 slingshot with a closed face reel mounted on one arm of the slingshot with a couple small hose clamps. It turned out I had 8 lb test line loaded on the reel, and there was no way I could shoot a one oz sinker over the treetops like I used to. I then remembered I used to use 6 lb test, and once I changed the line, I could shoot it over the empire state building!

The first task after putting the sinker over the treetop was to find it on the other side. I lucked out and found it easily, since I spray painted it fluorescent orange. Next, I tied the monofilament

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fishing line to a spool of pink BRAIDED nylon mason line., and I reeled in the BRAIDED line back over the tree top to then pull up the 14 ga insulated 66ft 2.5-inch wire. I normally would pull up a rope first, and then use the rope to support the wire with an insulator on the end, but this time I decided to do it differently since I found that one of the wires, I was replacing had been supported by mason line and had been up for years. I emphasized BRAIDED because I don't think twisted mason line would have stood up as well.

This time I didn't bother with an insulator on the end of the wire. To attach the mason line to the insulated wire, I tied two clove hitches around the wire, spaced about three inches apart. One clove hitch would have probably been enough because when you pull on the mason line the hitch near the end tightens up and you can't pull it off of the wire. I then wrap the line and wire with overlapping electrical tape and hoist it up through the tree branches with no insulator to get hung up. Ask me in ten years how it stood up, and I hope I can give you an answer...hi

P.S. Boy Scouts not only introduced me to Ham Radio, but the few knots I learned have been with me all my life!

**John, N6HI #3010** My, how time flies when you're having fun! Tuesday, March 19th, I celebrated being a licensed ham for exactly 60 years.

I got my first ham license in my teenage years, 60 years ago this week. I plan to find some creative ways to celebrate on the air! For sure, I will make a CW contact (or maybe a few!) with my original first key, an E.F.Johnson hand key that I received as a holiday gift from my parents before I got my license. It's still on the hunk of Formica that my dad mounted it on for me.

Now, mind you, this is NOT my favorite keying device to use! ... But I admit to being nostalgic about this key. It's the only remaining piece of equipment from my first ham station. When I was a teen, I learned the code by using this key to send random code groups into a reel-to-reel tape recorder with a code practice oscillator, and then comparing my copying to the original.

If you should happen to hear me on CW on my "Hamiversary" (possibly sending a bit slower and sloppier than usual!) please join my celebration and give me a call. THANKS to all of you who have helped fill my log with so many memorable contacts over the years!

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***WN8TLY/WA8LTY Station 1964. 60 Watts, all tubes. CW and AM***

**E.F.Johnson "Speed-X" Hand Key. Purchased from Allied Radio 1963 Catalog**

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**Mel, KJ9C #898** There will be a new award in the Indiana QSO Party on 4th May for the top Indiana Technician score. This might look like a 10M phone award, but to win, a tech should operate the full 12 hours, meaning after ten dies…. CW on the low bands. If there is enough Technician interest inside Indiana, we can maybe add an award for outside the state.

**Martin, OK1RR #87** Every April 18, radio amateurs worldwide take to the airwaves in celebration of World Amateur Radio Day. It was on this day in 1925 that the International Amateur Radio Union was formed in Paris. This is the reason for OL1WARD activity. This station will only appear on the air in April (1st to 30th) and may appear also in CWT. The operator will be Martin, OK1RR (#87).

**Dick, N9EEE #3113** I spent the month of March in The Villages, FL to escape Wisconsin's grip on winter weather and was pleasantly welcomed by The Villages Amateur Radio Club (TVARC) at their March club meeting. I've talked with Gary W2TR #2136 via his repeater in the past - see the cover photo of May 2023 Solid Copy - however we finally met in person at the club meeting. As I was introduced as a guest in front of 75+ members, a number of other CWops members emerged. Wayne, N4FP #1090 and Marty, N4GL #1644; Rusty, W3US #2668; George, K2DM #2652; and Tom K3WT #732.

Their club meeting is something to behold with 275+ members in the club, seemingly all best friends including the new ones who just joined, as helpful as is the rest of The Villages, "the friendliest hometown." The Villages is a planned community, pristine with palm trees, thousands of acres of golf landscape and ponds, recreation centers with swimming pools, and of course air-tight restrictions on antennas. Over the years, the science of stealth antennas has been a well-known hallmark of TVARC. In their March meeting, George K2DM, president of TVARC, provided the results of a member survey indicating that flagpole antennas were the predominant antenna of choice for "villagers." Wire antennas (under eaves) were a distant second. So how effective is this? Let me tell you. As a regular agenda item in their monthly meetings, they present members' DXCC rankings for QSOs made from within the boundaries of The Villages. I think the highest was 292 entities. This is a highly impressive and long list of members accomplishments when you consider the antenna restrictions. Out of curiosity, I researched the density of amateur radio operators within The Villages zip code I was residing in and was blown away at how many hams are immediate neighbors. A new game emerged on our golf cart rides through The Villages – can you spot the flag pole antenna?

Tom, K3WT is their newly installed POTA coordinator. So, I asked Tom to join me for an outing at Fort Cooper State Park, US-1870. He sports an Icom 7300, N3ZN paddle, HAMRS logging on his smartphone, and Wolf River Coil on a "magic carpet" of aluminum screening as his ground plane. I run an Icom 705 at 5 watts, CW Morse paddle (to be upgraded at Hamvention), EFHW cut for 40 meters. I kept my WRC in the bag for this outing. Tom worked stateside on 20 meters, while I worked DX on 15 meters. It was a beautiful day at Fort Cooper SP with 77 degrees and filtered sunshine. When the winds picked up to 30 mph and the whistling in my earbuds became louder than the CW signals, it was time to pack up. Activating a POTA entity with a fellow CWops member was a delightful first for me. Tom had many stories…kept surprising me with his DXpedition history…and is an exemplary host. Thanks all. See you next year!

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***Tom Means, K3WT***

***Dick Strassburger, N9EEE***

***Wolf River Coil with 17 ft whip on top of a "magic carpet" ground plane. Yes, it works!***

***Stealthy Spiderbeam 33 ft telescopic mast arching with 63 ft of wire to QRPGuys xfrmr.***

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**Duncan (Mac), G3WZD #1979** Several CWops members, me included, joined AGCW-DL and I received the following from Joachim, DL1AF, Board Member of AGCW-DL.

"AGCW, in conjunction with the DARC, is pursuing the recognition of Morse telegraphy as an "intangible world cultural heritage" by UNESCO.

There is a long way to go, and we'd like as many countries as possible to join in. To draw attention to this concern, we have created a new contest running from 6th to 10th May 2024."

Although the referenced contest is only applicable to ops in the EU, I thought the concept of world cultural heritage status for Morse telegraphy to be of interest!

Until the next News and Notes, QAC…

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

NewsAndNotes@CWops.org

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| 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 |

# How We Were

## Ian Capon, GWØKRL

Joe Grant, KK9TT, CWops #3261

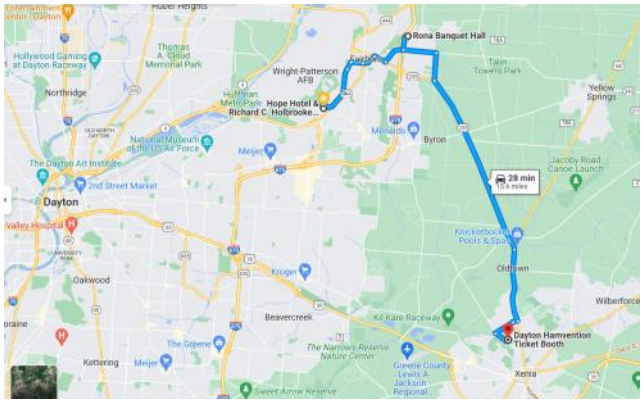
Here's my Novice station in the late '80s, an Icom 735 set bought with a credit card that took me almost 2 years to pay off. No CW key because although I eventually passed the code tests from Novice to Extra, SSB voice got all my attention until 2022. That's when I entered the CW Academy and am now proudly a CWops member. Along with many different radios, there are two Begalis on the desk now. They're all I use these days (and they're paid for!).

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)

# DXpedition To Vanuatu - YJØVK

**Chris Chapman, VK3QB** CWops #2949

Luke VK3HJ, Alan VK6CQ, Matt K0BBC and Chris VK3QB will be activating YJØVK on 40 through to 6 metres from 29 March until 11 April 2024. For the first week our focus will be on SSB and CW, with FT8 as a 'back-fill' mode. The second week will be CW and FT8.

We'll have an IC7300 and 500W amplifier for SSB and the CW station will be an Elecraft KX3 with an SPE amplifier. FT8 will radiate with an IC7000. Antennas will be DX-Commander Expeditions (with thanks to Callum) and a 40 metre doublet.

Thanks to Callum from DX Commander for his support. DX Commander Amateur Radio Antennas - DX Commander Antennas

As with our previous DXpeditions, this is a 'holiday' DXpedition. We will be enjoying the beautiful location and using the opportunity to see as much of Efate as we can. Having said that, we have three CW operators, so you can expect us to be pretty active.

Our QTH is on the remote northern end of the island, set back from the ocean about 30 metres.

If the pileups aren't too crazy, or we sound lonely, please drop by and say hello and have a bit of a chat.

If you want to get in the log, please listen to operator instructions.

- We will nearly always be operating split. Listen for instructions.
- If you cant hear us, please don't call.
- If we call for a specific region (eg. NA, EU, AS, AF etc) please allow those ops to call
- We will make a special effort to listen for QRP stations and little pistols - if you heard us ask for QRP stations pls QRX
- We want to get as many uniques as possible; big guns - pls give the little guns some breathing space
- We will follow the DX Code of Conduct

DX Code of Conduct (dx-code.com)

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**QSL Policy**

Charles MØOXO is our QSL Manager. Please visit his website for all matters related to QSLing. Do not email team members with broken calls or 'not in log'.

QSL Manager: MØOXO https://www.m0oxo.com
MØOXO OQRS: https://www.m0oxo.com/oqrs/logsearch.php?dxcallsign=yj0vk

Clublog: https://clublog.org/logsearch/YJØVK

If you'd like to stay up-to-date keep an eye on our QRZ.com page or follow us on Facebook.

I'll provide a bit of a write-up on the DXpedition in a future edition of *Solid Copy*. I really hope to hear a lot of fellow CWops members and look forward to filling some band slots.

Ed: While the above DXpedition announcement was omitted last month, much of the information remains useful. We hope they filled their log and everyone had a safe journey home.

SC

# The Making of a DXpeditioner

**Adrian Ciuperca, KO8SCA** CWops #2408

My First Exposure to Ham Radio:

When I was 8 or 9 years old, I spent a lot of my time reading (and playing with electronics) and was interested mostly in travelling books. My dad gave me to read a book entitled "Kon Tiki". The protagonist of the book, a Norwegian scientist, was crossing the Pacific in a balsa raft trying to prove the provenience of the Polynesian people but what amazed me is that he used ham radio equipment to stay in touch with the world.

That story and a few other movies involving amateur radio built up my interest in ham radio. And so, when I was 14 years old, I studied the required material and learned the Morse code on my own and was able to pass the required exam to obtain a license.

One Sunday evening, in 1990, noticing a large pileup, I tuned into a station with a strange callsign: ZA1A. Months later, when I brought the red ZA1A QSL card to the club station, my


***Kon-Tiki Expedition LI2B QSL card***

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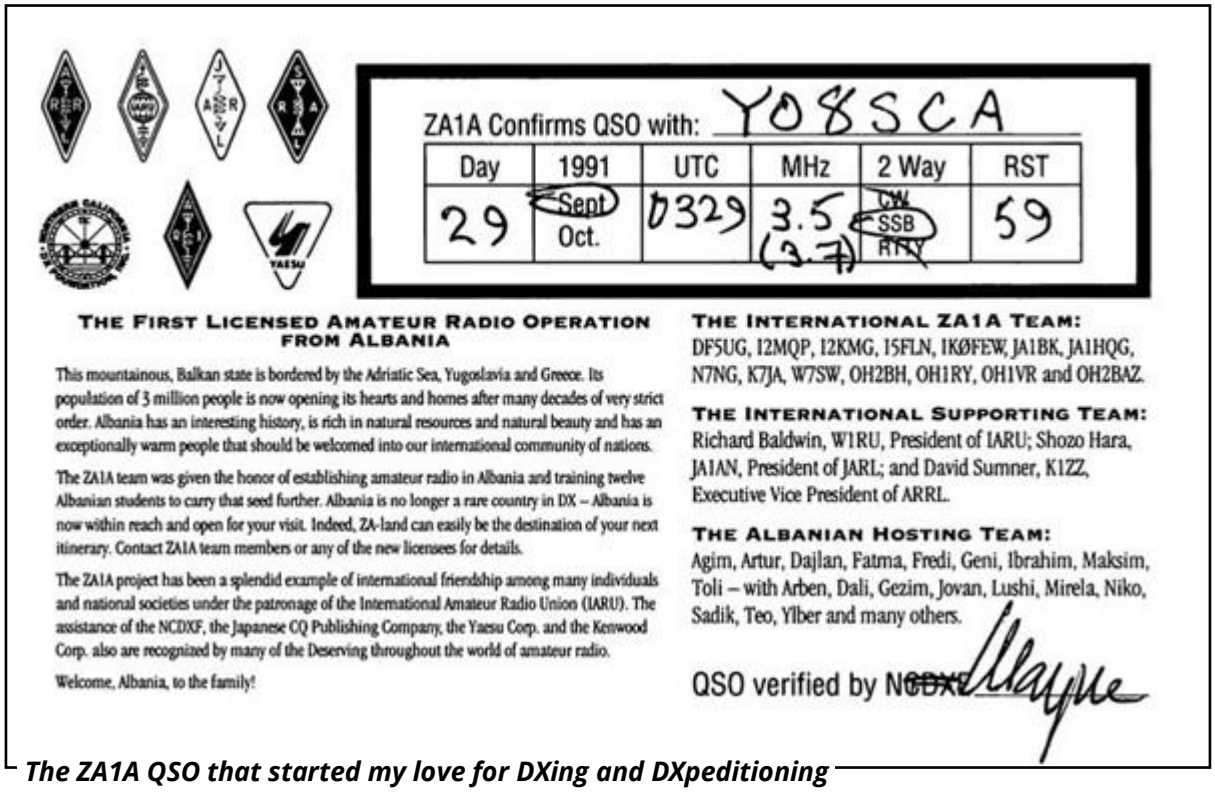
friends there explained what a DXpedition was and that ZA1A was the first activation of Albania, a new and rare DX entity for all hams around the world. And in that moment, I made it my goal to one day meet the ZA1A operator and organizer who had kindled my love for DXpeditioning: Martti Laine OH2BH. That finally occurred in 2019 on the VP2VB DXpedition.

ZA1A Confirms QSO with: YO8SCA

| Day | 1991 | UTC | MHz | 2 Way | RST |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 29 | ~~Sept~~ Oct. | 0329 | 3.5 (3.7) | ~~CW~~ SSB ~~RTTY~~ | 59 |

**THE FIRST LICENSED AMATEUR RADIO OPERATION FROM ALBANIA**

This mountainous, Balkan state is bordered by the Adriatic Sea, Yugoslavia and Greece. Its population of 3 million people is now opening its hearts and homes after many decades of very strict order. Albania has an interesting history, is rich in natural resources and natural beauty and has an exceptionally warm people that should be welcomed into our international community of nations.

The ZA1A team was given the honor of establishing amateur radio in Albania and training twelve Albanian students to carry that seed further. Albania is no longer a rare country in DX – Albania is now within reach and open for your visit. Indeed, ZA-land can easily be the destination of your next itinerary. Contact ZA1A team members or any of the new licensees for details.

The ZA1A project has been a splendid example of international friendship among many individuals and national societies under the patronage of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU). The assistance of the NCDXF, the Japanese CQ Publishing Company, the Yaesu Corp. and the Kenwood Corp. also are recognized by many of the Deserving throughout the world of amateur radio.

Welcome, Albania, to the family!

**THE INTERNATIONAL ZA1A TEAM:**
DF5UG, I2MQP, I2KMG, I5FLN, IKØFEW, JA1BK, JA1HQG, N7NG, K7JA, W7SW, OH2BH, OH1RY, OH1VR and OH2BAZ.

**THE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORTING TEAM:**
Richard Baldwin, W1RU, President of IARU; Shozo Hara, JA1AN, President of JARL; and David Sumner, K1ZZ, Executive Vice President of ARRL.

**THE ALBANIAN HOSTING TEAM:**
Agim, Artur, Dajlan, Fatma, Fredi, Geni, Ibrahim, Maksim, Toli – with Arben, Dali, Gezim, Jovan, Lushi, Mirela, Niko, Sadik, Teo, Ylber and many others.

QSO verified by ~~NCDXF~~ Wayne

***The ZA1A QSO that started my love for DXing and DXpeditioning***

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## Life Takes Over:

I moved on to college and studied computer science. I've gained a lot of electronics, radio and computer knowledge from my friends at the local radio club, many of whom were electronics engineers. That knowledge propelled me immensely during the college years and later on in my career and so towards the end of my studies I was offered a computer job at an IT firm in New York City.

In 1999, using my first paycheck from my new job, I purchased a second-hand Yaesu FT-840 radio and a 10m band Cushcraft beam. A few months later, I took the FCC written test and the Morse code test and became KC2FQU. But life takes over for most of us at that age and ham radio had to take a back seat to my family and to my career obligations, until 2013, when, those responsibilities having become more manageable, I happened to come upon my old Yaesu FT-840, which sparked a renewed interest in ham radio. So, in 2014, I obtained my Extra license and my vanity callsign KO8SCA, a callsign that reminded me of my teenage days as YO8SCA.

## DXCC Hunting:

In 2014, when I returned to my ham radio hobby, I started an intense DXCC marathon and went from 0 to 307 entities in just four years, by hunting down every new DXCC entity which I still needed as soon as they showed up on the bands. As the radio noise in New York City does not allow for too much radio communication, I worked DX from the different local NY radio clubs, from friends' home stations (thank you Steve N2AJ) or from portable operations in the mountains of New York State. I continue to be a keen DXer and am active on different DX programs (DXCC 318, 9BDXCC, IOTA 380), and I still get excited every time I work a new one. And finally, after working over 300 DXCC entities, my equipment setup was optimized to my satisfaction and was ready for DXpeditions.

## DXpeditions:

Initially I had a hard time joining other DXpeditions. My pleading to different team leaders yielded no results. It turns out that, if one has no DXpeditioning experience one can't join a DXpedition. But how do you gain experience if you can't join a DXpedition. A classic "chicken and the egg" problem.

**VP5, J3, FJ:** Starting in 2015, I began going to DXpeditions, either alone or with my wife or friends, in the Caribbean islands, such as VP5, J3, FJ. Ham radio licenses or permits are easy to get for these places where you can test your portable DXpedition equipment. You learn what works and what doesn't in a rough, sandy, hot, and salty environment; what equipment is essential, and what needs to be prepared upfront to get the antennas up and ready in two hours or less when you are on the island. (Figures 3 and 4.)

**VK9XI and VK9CI:** When in Dayton, Ohio for the large Hamfest, I met a group of VK hams and we became long-time friends; later they invited me on their DXpedition when one of their operators had to cancel. Their destination, Christmas and Cocos Keeling Islands, owned by Australia, in the Indian Ocean are far away from New York, but it was worth it! The large red crabs that you see

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everywhere makes Christmas Island a unique place, and Cocos Keeling Island, although a tourist destination, is so far away from mainland Australia that you feel you have the island all to yourself. While we were on that island, my VK teammates organized a ham radio test session, yielding two new resident hams on the island. (Figures 5 and 6.)

**9MØW:** Despite the ongoing political turmoil in the China Seas, Hrane YT1AD was able to put together a successful DXpedition to Layang Layang, Spratly Islands. Because it is a Malaysian military base, licensing and transportation were difficult. But Hrane was able to use the local 9M hams as an asset, a few of whom joined the V85SAA DXpedition several years later. This is where I met Krassy K1LZ, Chuck JT1CO, Jeff K1ZM, and Dave WD5COV, whom I met again on other DXpeditions.

**Z23MD:** The Italian Mediteranneo DX Club put much effort into organizing this DXpedition at a time when Zimbabwe was experiencing shortages of everything from fuel to food to bottled water. We were hosted in a private nature reserve, which gave us a glimpse of what the wilds of Africa are really like. Some of the DXpedition members got the chance to fly nearby, to the famous Victoria Falls.

**6O6O:** At Visalia, I met Ken LA7GIA, and we arranged to go to Somalia in 2018. Although 6O is not really a vacation spot, and we had to hire armed guards with AK47s and a bullet-proof car, I was impressed by Ken's logistical and organizational skills which gave me the confidence to go ahead with his plan. It was a trip full of challenges, but our multiple backup plans were able to meet those challenges and we ended up with a successful DXpedition. (Figures 7 and 8.)

**TXØA (OC-113) and TXØM (OC-297):** Sailing to the remote atolls of Polynesia with Cezar VE3LYC, a hard code IOTA chaser, to operate from these extremely rare IOTA islands, was quite an experience. As Cezar was also born in Romania, our common heritage made our friendship even stronger. Two weeks alone on these uninhabited atolls made us feel like Robinson Crusoe, catching lobsters and picking up oysters for breakfast, lunch, and dinner!

**V85SAA:** I was thrilled when Krassy K1LZ and Jeff K1ZM entrusted me with coordinating the many facets of this large-scale and complex DXpedition of 25 operators. Krassy and Jeff are fond of 80m and 160m bands, but to be successful in those bands involves complicated logistics, electrical power arrangements, and an extensive array of equipment and antennas, which were shipped in three different containers to Brunei. We enlisted the help of the 9M hams to conduct a site survey of the operating place in V85, so that we were able to prepare an optimal operating site. As the father of the future bride of the Sultan of Brunei is also a ham operator, we were treated as VIPs while we were there.

**YPØH (EU-183):** This IOTA DXpedition, put together in a couple of days with Gabi YO8WW and Sandro VE7NY, proved interesting, as we operated from a nature reserve, the Sacalinul Mare Island located in the marshes of Danube Delta in Romania, although we had to contend with large mosquitos and the extreme heat.

**K7TRI (NA-211):** Tillamock Rock is a rare IOTA, needed by 94% of IOTA chasers, although it is close to the Oregon, USA shore. This private island, an immense rock boasting a large seal popu-

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lation, is surrounded by heavy seas and flanked by sharp cliffs, which made using a helicopter the only safe way to get on the island. The team leader, Yuri N3QQ, sought for many years to get permission to operate on the island. I must admit that the constant wind, the aggressive aquatic wildlife, and the island's far-from-inviting ambient odor, made this DXpedition a challenging operation.

**ZK3A:** This was another DXpedition put together by Hrane YT1AD. Although Tokelau is not extremely hard to reach, it is off the average tourist's beaten path. Since the islands are small and are not able to host many visitors, special permission was needed to get a full radio team on Tokelau. Hrane visited Tokelau before the DXpedition and arranged, with the telecom and local authorities, the best possible approach to maximize the number of QSOs in the log. We were hosted on two separate islands, allowing us to operate in the same band but different modes at the same time. An advance team of three operators (I was one of them) went to the island to get antennas ready for the main team that arrived a week later. In Tokelau, we were able to see the local people enjoying life to the fullest, undisturbed by the modern world of technology.

**A5ØBOC:** A trip to Bhutan, a mysterious place for the Western World, organized by Zorro JH1AJT (SK) gave me the opportunity to enjoy pileups with some skilled operators, such as E21EIC, DJ9ZB (SK), and ON5UR. Zorro was there as the official Olympics consultant for the Kingdom of Bhutan. The visit to our operating shack by the brother of Bhutan's king, who is also a ham operator with the callsign A5A, made this trip very special, like some memorable others in which hams had the opportunity to work alongside other notable hams, such as (JY1) the late King Hussein bin Talal of Jordan (SK) or (EA0JC) Don Juan Carlos de Borbón, the former King of Spain. (Figure 10.)

**VP2VB:** This Yasme Memorial DXpedition in the British Virgin Islands, using Danny Weil's callsign (a prolific DXpeditioner in the 60s), organized by Martti Laine OH2BH was, for me, a significant point of my DX career. I was finally working together with the operator who gave me my first DX contact, in 1990, from ZA1A. The four team members operated from Anegada Island, a perfect location for a DXpedition, being a flat sandy island with radio views to all continents, which generated many pileups and many 160m contacts, especially with Asia, where the demand for VP2V QSOs is really high. (Figure 12.)

**OJØC:** Despite the COVID restrictions in 2021, my Finnish hosts were able to organize this 6M-focused DXpedition to Market Reef. This isolated, uninhabited island in the cold Baltic Sea, its only structure being a lonely lighthouse, is no larger than two football fields; covered by extremely aggressive ferns, it is an inhospitable place. But my Finnish hosts were, nonetheless, able to put together an enjoyable DXpedition. Market Reef is the smallest island shared by two countries (Sweden and Finland). From a ham operator's point of view, it is an RF paradise: an island with S0 environment noise where sloper antennas hung from the lighthouse worked as well as a beam antennas.

Contesting:

Contesting allows you to push your operating skills to the limit. My friend Tom K2AD, a CWOPS member, recommended that I join the YCCC (Yankee Clipper Contest Club) and, sure enough, that helped extend my contesting network. Later on, I also joined the Order of Boiled Owls of

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New York, a small local contesting club, and participated in contests from the K2LE station in Vermont. I was involved in a few Contesting DXpeditions in various places in the Caribbean, either individually or as part of a team: TO5W, VP9I, J8NY, PJ4G, PJ2T etc.

I also operated from NR4M and K1TTT, the latter being one of those stations that especially impressed me because of their open arms attitude. Their approach is simple: just show up; if you're an experienced operator, go ahead and dive into the pileups; if you are still learning, we'll teach you!

Operating from superstations K1LZ & LZ5R is really impressive: the tech people there are pushing the envelope as to the latest and greatest technology, sometimes making you feel you are the protagonist in a SF movie.

In June/July 2021, with the help of Martti Laine OH2BH, I had the privilege of operating from Aland Islands as OHØSCA from Aland Islands, OFØHQ during the IARU 2021 contest, and OHØSCA/8 from the Radio Arcala (OH8X) superstation at the Polar Circle.

**3YØJ**: In January 2023, a group of 12 hams landed on Bouvet Island, the second rarest DXCC entity (now #11), and I was part of that team. Bouvet Island is listed in the book of records as the most remote uninhabited place on Earth. The weather was not on our side when our sailboat arrived to the island and we were forced to scale down the DXpedition goals. We ended up swimming the freezing waters to get ashore and operated with only 2 radios and 100W. We all returned safely home after being away at sea for almost 2 months. It was certainly an adventure of a life time.

**W8S**: In October 2023, after 7 years of negotiations and setbacks this DXpedition was finally on the air from Swains Island, an uninhabited private island in the Pacific Ocean, part of American Samoa. This DXpedition had a team of 10 members: 2 from USA, 3 from Germany and the rest from the Netherlands. The island is covered by lush vegetation, in particular by coconut trees and it used to be a coconut plantation until 1960s when the copra (coconut meat) market collapsed and so the few people living there, left the island. Today the areas around the island is a Marine Sanctuary and a diving paradise. This was the 4$^{th}$ activation of Swains Island since it became a DXCC entity in 2006.

**4U1UN:**

In 2020, the Yasme foundation awarded the Yasme Excellence Award to James Sarté K2QI (4U1UN President Emeritus) and I, for our efforts in getting the famous 4U1UN station operational again. But many people were involved in this years-long project; it was a veritable team effort. And the UN management was open and flexible in helping us to get the necessary permissions. The technical solution to the many security restrictions was to have the antenna (BigIR) on the roof and the equipment (Flex 6600 radio, ACOM 2000A amplifier and the control devices) at the top floor (42nd floor) in a security-restricted location, but accessible remotely through a fiber optic link from the first floor of the UN building, where the operating room is located. (Figure 13 and 14.)

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WRTC:

WRTC is the equivalent of Ham Radio Olympics, taking place in different parts of the world, every 4 years. The next edition will take place in UK in 2026.

In 2017, Andy YO3JR asked me to be his WRTC 2018 teammate in Wittenberg, Germany. But as, at the last moment, he was not able to attend the WRTC because of personal reasons, Krassy K1LZ put me in touch with Adi S55M, one of his superstation operators. Krassy helped us put together our WRTC RF equipment by giving us his WRTC backup setup, even graciously offering to ship it to Germany. That kind of gracious conduct is rarely found in other sports besides ham radio. Elecraft sponsored us with K3S radios and P3 panadapters. Adi and I ended up somewhere in the middle of the pack in the final competitive ranking at the WRTC. (Figure 9)

We've made a good team overall and so we were able to repeat our performance at WRTC2022 in Bologna Italy in the summer of 2023, finishing again in the middle of the pack. (Figure 11)

Financing A DXpedition:

The general rule for financing DXpeditions is that half of the cost is covered by the team members and half of the cost by the ham community, clubs, organizations, sponsors etc. The DXpedition cost for each member of the team varies significantly and ranges from $1K to $20K. When a boat is involved (e.g. Bouvet Island) it gets closer to the higher end. When you are going to a destination you can fly to (e.g. a Caribbean Island), the cost is closer to the lower end.

Managing A Work/DX Balance:

The IT engineers, including myself, have discovered the advantages of working remotely long before it became mainstream during the pandemic. One can work on the go using just a laptop and a smartphone from an airport, a bus, a train, an airplane, hotel, coffee shop etc. Lately, using the StarLink Internet technology, one can work even from a remote uninhabited island. Working remotely is not always convenient or easy but it is doable, especially if the reward is enjoying the pileups from some remote exotic island.

Preparing For Pile-ups:

When I initially studied Morse Code on my own at 10 yo, the goal was just to get my amateur radio license. But then I realized that I actually love CW and for many years it was the only mode I operated from my NYC apartment with paper-thin walls. I always try to improve my CW skills and I train weekly using computer programs such as Morse Runner and RufZ. The pile-up feature in Morse Runner is so realistic that it is hard to tell that it is actually computer generated. There is no substitute for constant training if one desires to improve their Morse code skills. The long flights or down time during the different daily activities are the perfect moments to squeeze some pile-up training. And one of my favorite activities are the CWops contest sessions on Wednesdays: they are short enough (just 1 hour) that it is easy to fit them around my work schedule and it is also the perfect way to test new equipment, antennas etc.

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What's Next?

There are always plans to go DXpeditioning somewhere. The idea is that one has to work on multiple projects in the same time. Many plans don't yield any results, some take a long time to become a reality. So, there is always the possibility of something unexpected to happen.

A group of us are hoping to put together a DXpedition to Peter 1 Island in 2026, number 8 in the ClubLog most wanted entity list. This will be a large undertaking: landing on Peter 1 Island is only possible by helicopter as the pack ice around the island never melts. It will take a lot of effort in logistics and funding to go on the air from this entity.

Over the years, I joined several DX organizations and clubs (such as INDEXA, NCDXF, LIDXA, Araucaria DX, etc.) as I realized that none of the DXpeditions to the top 25 or even 50 DXCC entities is possible without these organizations' financial help. Being elected as an INDEXA director allows me to get even more involved in the DXpeditioning arena, and I am thankful to all those who trusted me and elected me to be one of its directors.

In 2023 I was inducted in the CQ DX Hall of Fame. The award was presented to me at the DX Dinner at the Dayton Hamfest. It was certainly unexpected and it increased my desire to work harder in activating more rare DX entities.

The technical aspect of ham radio and the lure of DXpeditions are what first attracted me to the hobby, and now I am able to travel extensively to indulge my love for ham radio, the best hobby in the world!

***Figure 3. VP5/KO8SCA, my first solo DXpedition, in 2015.***

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***Figure 4. FJ/KO8SCA, a solo DXpedition to St. Barts.***



***Figures 5 and 6. VK9XI and VK9CI, my first full blown DXpedition, joining a VK team.***

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***Figures 7 and 8. 6O6O DXpedition to Somalia with Ken, LA7GIA.***

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***Figure 9. Competing in WRTC 2018 in Germany, together with my team mate Adi, S55M.***


***Figure 11. Competing in WRTC 2022 in Italy, together with my teammate Adi, S55M and referee Wes, SP4Z.***

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***Figure 10. A50BOC DXpedition to Bhutan: Adrian, KO8SCA, A5B, The Prince of Bhutan and Zorro, JH1AJT (SK).***


***Figure 12. VP2VP My first DXpedition with my DX idol and friend Martti, OH2BH.***

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***Figure 13. 4U1UN activation during the ARRL DX SSB 2020 contest.***

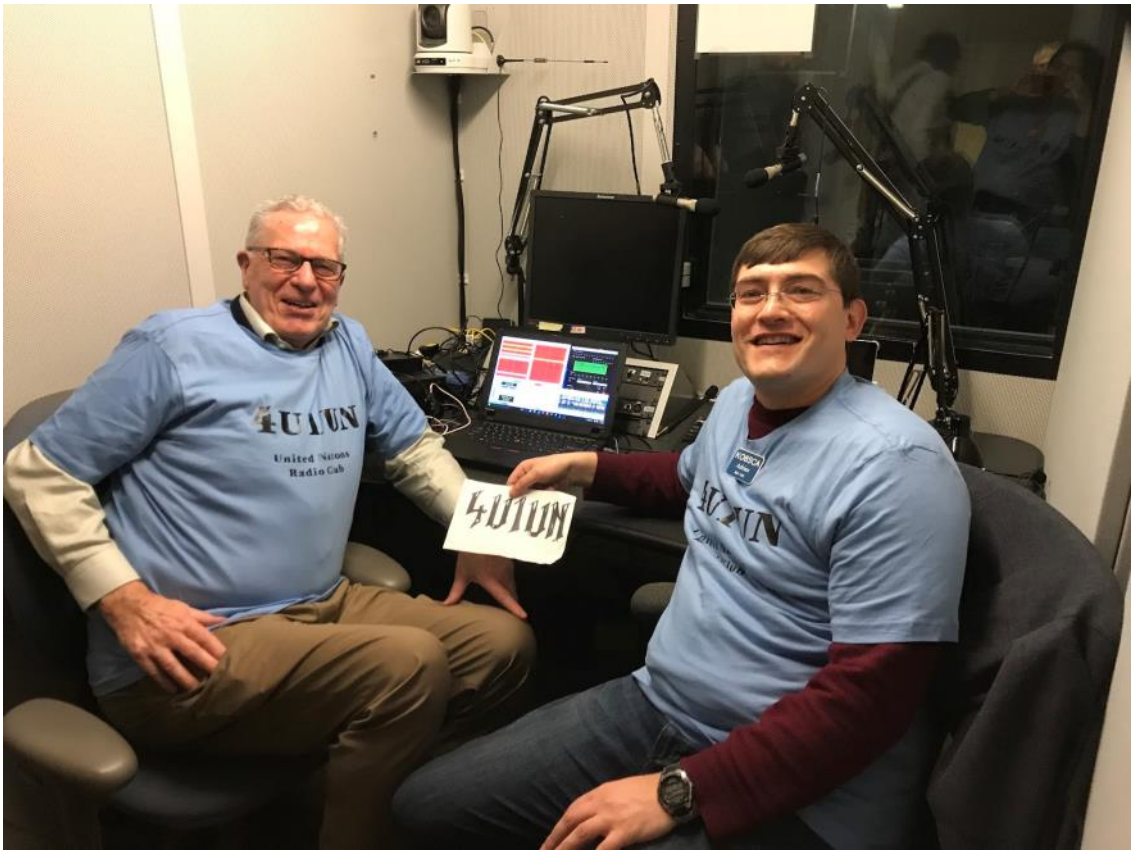


***Figure 14. Joe Taylor K1JT making the first ever FT8 QSO from 4U1UN.***

# Clipperton Island, TX5S

## By Gene Spinelli, K5GS

**Introduction to Clipperton Island**

Clipperton Island is in the Northeast Pacific Ocean, 1,626 miles (2,618 km) south of San Diego, California and 795 miles (1,280 km) west of Acapulco, Mexico. The island has a total area of about 4.6 square miles (12 square kilometers). The island is at sea level with only a few rock formations that protrude above the surface, the highest is Clipperton Rock at 95 feet (29 m). Situated in the center of the island is a large lagoon with only occasional intrusion of sea water. Occasional because the intervening sand / coral can be breached during storms, allowing salt water to enter the already brackish lagoon. The maximum water depth is 241 feet (73m), with the top layer being rainwater.


***Figure 1. Clipperton Island Location***

The lagoon is stratified (layered), the water doesn't mix. While in the past people living on the island drank the water, we were advised to avoid drinking the water, although several of the team did use the lagoon for bathing.

The ground is generally densely packed sand on a volcanic / dead coral base. One unique characteristic is the crab population has burrowed under the surface to create a maze of underground tunnels. When walking in these areas the ground will easily collapse beneath your feet and you will find your foot (feet) in a depression. We quickly learned to avoid those areas and to walk along a well-traveled, packed down, path between the beach and the campsite. The ground surface was rocky, and in some areas, soft sand.

There is very little vegetation on the island, the few palm groves, grasses, and tree tobacco plants were remnants of attempts to inhabit the island for commercial or military purposes. Wildlife consists of the ubiquitous masked booby, crabs and rats, the latter allegedly introduced by shipwrecks.

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The weather was hot, humid, and windy, rainfall was minimal. However, on the last morning while removing the overnight team and equipment from the island the sky opened with a monsoon-like downpour.

The United States claimed the island in 1856 but France had already made a claim in 1855. In 1897 Mexico stationed a garrison of military personnel on the island. By 1914 all inhabitants left the island. Today, Clipperton is a French possession, it's the only French Pacific Island in the northern hemisphere. For many years the US, Mexico, and France each laid claim to Clipperton. It wasn't until 1930 that France received full ownership when King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy adjudicated the dispute and awarded the island to France, whose original claim dates to the year 1711, thus the decision made some degree of sense.

All attempts to commercialize the island through guano (phosphate) harvesting and farming eventually failed. In 2016 France enacted a 200 nautical mile Marine Reserve around the island to protect its marine environment. Landing on Clipperton requires a landing permit issued by the French government.

Clipperton is far from an idyllic desert island with visions of palm trees and beautiful beaches. Clipperton is visually unappealing and lacks character.

## DXpedition Planning and Preparation

The global pandemic ended almost all DXpeditions, and the Perseverance DX Group (PDXG) had some time to think about the future. Unfortunately, a government agency we had been working with before the pandemic reversed a previous decision and declared that amateur radio was no longer an acceptable reason to visit their entity. Shortly after the world reopened in 2022, we did a 2-week fly-in to the Austral Islands as TX5N. It was fun, but we wanted another boat-tent- generator DXpedition.

When Clipperton came on the radar we didn't begin the landing permit process without first having a boat. In July 2022 a telephone call was made to Frank LoPreste, owner of "Shogun" from San Diego, California. Frank and the Shogun had been to Clipperton many times for scientific, sportfishing, and DXpedition projects. Frank knew the island well and one of his employees had also been to Clipperton several times.


***Figure 2. Shogun***

Shogun's sleeping arrangements include 13, two and three-person, passenger cabins.

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With a total of 19 passengers, we assigned two people per cabin and placed radio equipment in the unused cabins. The boat's dining/salon area was large enough to seat the entire team for meals and meetings. To avoid accidents, while underway, meals were served by the boat's crew, and there were always snacks and refreshments available in the galley. Shogun has four toilets and three showers which made it more comfortable than our previous DXpedition boats.

After receiving a commitment for a boat, the next hill to climb was the landing permit. Clipperton was administered from French Polynesia by the office of the High Commissioner. I enlisted Jacky F2CW/ZL3CW, a French national, to help and he asked Phillipe, FO4BM, to be our on-site Tahitian representative and to help me with the translation of our proposal(s) to French.

Several people said that a landing permit for Clipperton would not be issued because of changes to the laws governing the island. While the law did change in 2016, and ham radio wasn't considered a good enough reason to issue a landing permit, after many email exchanges and telephone calls Phillipe found a middle ground.

Under the new regulations a project must include scientific content. The next challenge was to enlist the help of bona fide individuals that had scientific standing with the French government. Phillipe, FO4BM, reached out to Anthony Tchekemian, a professor at the University of French Polynesia, an accomplished author who in 2016 published a book about Clipperton Island. Anthony wanted to return to the island, and he agreed to conduct additional studies during TX5S. Joining Anthony was Patrick Lelue, a professor from the University of Orleans. Also joining the team was Jean-Francois Beaulieu who represents an organization in Paris whose goal is to protect Clipperton's environment**,** The Association la Passion-Clipperton**.**

With a credentialed science team and a government approved boat we received the landing permit in March 2023. The next requirement was a call sign. We had worked with the ANFR (France's licensing agency) for the TX5N project, so we had good idea what they required. ANFR graciously agreed to reserve TX5S for us.

With a boat, a landing permit, and a radio license, the next task was to build the team. With Jacky ZL3CW/F2CW as the team leader, Steve, W1SRD; Dave, K3EL, and Gene, K5GS, as Co-leaders we went ahead staffing the team and building the project plans.

The project cost indicated we'd need a larger team than usual to keep the team member fees reasonable. The radio team included 16 experienced DX and/or contest operators: Jacky, F2CW/ZL3CW; Dave, K3EL; Steve, W1SRD; Gene, K5GS; Glenn, KE4KY; Rob, N7QT; Walt, N6XG; Heye, DJ9RR; Francesco, IKØFVC; Dave, WD5COV; Ricardo, PY2PT; Andreas, N6NU; Arliss, W7XU; Chris, N6WM; Nodir, EY8MM, and Paul, N6PSE.

Many of the team members knew one another from previous DXpeditions, or had met at ham radio events. We knew there would be significant interest from the DX community since the most recent major DXpedition to Clipperton was TX5K in 2013, eleven years prior to our proposed date. Anyone newly licensed or taking up DXing since the last project would need FOØ/C. Additionally, neither 60m nor FT8 operation had been used previously on Clipperton.

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***Figure 3. TX5S Team***

In preparing for the DXxpedition, we held several planning teleconferences. Topics included living on the island, radio/antenna planning, operator scheduling, travel planning, permitting and licensing. Each team member was required to have a French license in addition to their own license and the TX5S license.

At the 2023 International DX Convention in Visalia, John Kennon, N7CQQ, offered us equipment he used on previous Clipperton DXpeditions. John provided the power grid, several shipping cases, and 225 one-meter rebar stakes used to guy the antennas. This alone saved us several thousand dollars.

## Travel and Meeting the Team

Ten of the 16 radio team members live in the US, and seven within one day's drive to the boat. The team began arriving in San Diego, California on January 8, 2024. We spent a few days buying last minute items, including a three-day supply of emergency food should the weather make replenishment from the Shogun impossible. While previous DXpeditions required us to ship thousands of pounds of equipment across the world, departing from San Diego saved us about $25,000 in shipping expenses, plus drayage and port fees. We hired a truck and drove the equipment to the boat ourselves, a 12-hour drive.

On January 9th our equipment was loaded aboard the Shogun by the crew and several helpers from Fishermen's Landing, the firm that operates the wharf.

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We departed San Diego on January 11th for the planned six-day transit to Clipperton Island. A Garmin inReach personal locator allowed many of you (and our families) to follow our progress. The boat had a Starlink Internet Terminal, so email and telephone calls were available.

The local weather caused a late start, the seas would be rough and the boat pitching and rolling right out of San Diego. The skipper decided to wait out the weather front that was passing through the area.

The journey to Clipperton took about 1.5 days longer than planned. The seas were rough and the boat was getting knocked about quite a bit, several of the team retired to their cabins. When we arrived at Clipperton the skipper circled the island looking for the best landing zone. He chose to stay on the leeward side of the island where the surf would be less of a problem.

***Figure 4. The Reef***

## The Landing and Camp Site

Operating from an island can be challenging, especially an uninhabited island where you're completely on your own. One real concern was the landing situation. Clipperton is surrounded by a reef that lies just below the waterline, 25 – 50 meters from the beach. Watching the surf breaking over the reef is the first indication that landings won't be "routine," there is no protected bay or harbor.

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We were forewarned that transiting to and from the island would be dangerous. Both the High Commissioner that issued the landing permit and Shogun's owner Frank LoPreste made it very clear there would be challenges getting over the reef. During the 2013 TX5K DXpedition the team spent three days without replenishment because of dangerous surf conditions.

Shogun's crew used three custom made aluminum skiffs for the landings. The skiff's reinforced hull was less prone to damage when striking the reef or the rocky shore. It was only possible to go ashore during high tide during daylight hours. This, of course, limited our transit opportunities, how much equipment could be brought ashore, and when.

Only one crew member had been to Clipperton, the others were unfamiliar with crossing the reef. After a few tries, they learned how to navigate the reef. A defective fuel tank caused us an additional delay. As the wind and surf were building it became more challenging. We began taking people and equipment to the island. When one of the skiffs was swamped and some campsite equipment lost, further attempts to land on that (first) day were halted.

The team members on the island had some supplies for the night, although not all the tents they would need. The journey to reach Clipperton took almost 2 additional days, and the landing challenges increased our delay to almost 3 days. The plan for two campsites was changed to a single campsite to reduce the amount of equipment needed ashore and to get on the air sooner. Over the first few operating days the remainder of the camp was assembled, and the five stations became operational.

***Figure 5. TX5S Camp site***

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Meals, drinking water and generator fuel were brought over by the Shogun crew, supply runs timed for high tide during daylight hours. A total of 42 trips were made to transport people and equipment. Breakfast foods were stored on the island and regularly replenished by the Shogun. Weather permitting, each day additional meals were brought ashore. Except for the last day, everyone stayed on the island for the duration of the DXpedition.

The campsite consisted of eight sleeping tents, a kitchen/dining building, an HF operating building, a dedicated EME/6m/satellite operating tent, and an HQ tent. The shelters included "REI Wonderland 6" tents for sleeping, the EME/Satellite station and for the HQ tent. The operating and dining buildings were multi-purpose structures marketed as portable automobile garages by Shelter Logic. The dining tent was equipped with two small refrigerators, a microwave oven, a toaster, water boiler, food storage bins, and tables/chairs. The operating building consisted of five radio operating positions which could accommodate any band/mode.

Based on information from the Internet and other people that had been to Clipperton we expected to encounter a large presence of crabs, especially at night. We brought 600 feet of fencing to keep the crabs out of the camp, but we deployed no fencing. While there were crabs, their numbers were so low that they were not a problem. One possible explanation could be the presence of rats on the island. One theory is the rats decimated the crab population.

We're happy to report there were no serious injuries, only some sunburn and several conditions treated by the team doctor, Arliss, W7XU. Dehydration was always a concern, we provided plenty of drinking water and a supply of Gatorade to restore electrolytes.

## Radios and Antennas

Each operating position had an Elecraft radio: there were three K3s and two K4D transceivers. The amplifiers included two Elecraft KPA-500, two Elecraft KPA-1500, and one Flex PGXL.

The HF antennas were monoband Vertical Dipole Arrays (VDAs), and vertical antennas for 40, 60, 80, and 160 meters. We were close enough to the sea and the lagoon to achieve benefit from the saltwater amplifier effect. The 60m antenna was actually a 60/80m antenna, manually adjusted for each band when needed. Dave, WD5COV, designed and built this dual-purpose antenna.

The 160m antenna was the "Top Band Express," also designed and built by Dave, WD5COV. While it was always windy, we had very few antenna problems. The signal reports and never-ending pileups were good indicators that the stations and antennas were performing well.

The generators were a Generac 6.5kw unit and several AI Power 4kw units. We had no equipment failures, although the equipment did get covered with sand and silt that blew through the HF tent. Subsequently, all the Elecraft equipment was returned to the factory for cleaning, refurbishing, and calibration. The antenna filter and patch panel designed and built by Walt, N6XG, provided the flexibility to connect any antenna to any radio.

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## Radio Operations

The team's 16 radio operators were assigned as follows:

- Three teams of five radio operators per team
- EME/Satellite/6M was operated almost exclusively by Andreas, N6NU

Team staffing considered operator mode preferences and each team had a captain. On-shift operators agreed on bands/modes, and as propagation changed the operators worked together to meet team goals. Based on pilot input and over the air comments we knew the DX community was happy with our strategy to follow the propagation.

The pilot team was communicating with us via Starlink. This was the second DXpedition in which we used a Groups.io account for the DX community to provide input and communicate with the pilots. That too worked well, with over 500 registered users, there was plenty of daily traffic.

The first contact was made January 20th on 17m CW with NL7S, and the final contact was made January 28th on 40m SSB with NJ7G. We were delighted to find good propagation and reasonably strong signals to many parts of the world, not unexpected NA/SA being the best, followed by EU.


***Figure 6 Main Operating Tent***

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During periods of good propagation all five operating positions were in action. As high-band propagation waned during the night SSB usually dropped out first. The SSB operations would shift to FT8. The equipment plan included a rack of high-power bandpass filters manufactured by Low Band Systems (LBS). The combination of Elecraft radios and LBS filters proved to be very effective, we had very little interstation interference.

An important aspect of TX5S planning was operator scheduling. We used the same schedule that was used on South Orkney Islands, VP8PJ. For each four-hour shift operators were scheduled on the five stations, depending on expected band activity. Every few days each of the three radio teams would move their start time by four hours, thus over the project's duration each team experienced different geographic openings and band conditions.

## EME/6M /Satellite Activity

There was significant interest in EME, 6m, and working through the Greencube satellite from Clipperton Island. During the 2018 VP6D DXpedition to Ducie Island we made 28 6m EME QSOs. VP6D was the first time we included EME in a PDXG project. Andreas, N6NU, was the architect and station captain for these TX5S activities.

As Andreas writes:

> "How does one get to be the Satellite Captain for a major DXpedition? Satellite operators and 6M EME groups had reached out to us about possible activity. When the DXpedition co-organizer Gene, K5GS, asked the team who has Satellite equipment or some knowledge about it, I raised my hand. The result was: "Great, you got it, it's your project!" After a discussion with the team co-leader Steve, W1SRD, the decision was made to dedicate 100% of my time to activate Satellites, EME for 6M and 23cm, as well as 6M tropo when the station was not pointed at the moon. This was now a full-time effort and not an afterthought anymore. We had to plan for a separate operating tent, generator, and fuel."

***Figure 7.***

***Satellite/6m/EME Tent***

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Satellite operations on the island were a great success with 375 QSOs and 47 countries worked. The OZ9AA terminal software worked well and Jeff Schwartz, KIØKB, ended up being the ad hoc pilot for us staying in contact with the Facebook group. We managed to focus on some geographic areas during different passes and I would like to thank the satellite community for standing by and allowing us to work the hard ones at the edges of the coverage areas.

**Fi**

***Figure 8. 6m EME Antenna***

The first Moonrise operation yielded a handful of 6m EME Q65 QSOs. On the following day the second session brought a surprise. After working a few EME contacts the WSJTX screen started to show many strong signals coming in directly via tropo. The band had opened, and we worked as many stations as we could to make use of the opening. The final EME count was 17 QSOs and 3 countries; however, over the next few days, we added 197 6m tropo QSOs and 13 countries to the log. The band was open to NA, SA, AF, ZL, and VK.

The last band to be set up was 23cm/1296MHz. Due to the constant wind the 2.4m dish had to be converted from fabric to wire mesh. We made a total of 55 initial contacts in 17 countries.

I want to thank Dave, K3EL, for helping on 6m and the Satellite station as well as Arliss, W7XU, working many 23cm QSO's.

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Andreas wrote a more detailed report of his TX5S experience available on the TX5S.net website.

## TX5S Statistics

Total QSOs made was 113,736. We were using a new version of WSJT-X and when propagation was strong it was not unusual to see us running 4–5 slots making 350–400 QSOs per hour. We had no problem with FT8 dupes, and the overall dupe rate was 2.9%. Until the last few days the overall dupe rate hovered at 1.9%, the operators noted more SSB and CW dupes were occurring as the DXpedition close approached.

QSO distribution was: NA 48.1%, EU 29.4%, AS 17.8, SA 2.2% and AF 0.46% and OC 1.96%, with 23,810 unique call signs and 171 DXCC entities, see Figures 9 - 11 for additional details.

| MODE/BAND | 160 m | 80 m | 60 m | 40 m | 30 m | 20 m | 17 m | 15 m | 12 m | 10 m | 6 m | 70 cm | 23 cm | TOTAL QSO | TOTAL % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CW | 745 | 2700 | 0 | 2227 | 4664 | 4317 | 4434 | 3938 | 3204 | 3322 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 29551 | 25.98 % |
| FT8 | 1812 | 4580 | 1700 | 8410 | 8032 | 8982 | 7259 | 5204 | 5970 | 5724 | 207 | 0 | 0 | 57880 | 50.89 % |
| PKT | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 510 | 0 | 510 | 0.45 % |
| Q65 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 2 | 58 | 77 | 0.07 % |
| RTTY | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 369 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 369 | 0.32 % |
| SSB | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2233 | 0 | 5587 | 2437 | 4572 | 5662 | 4858 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25349 | 22.29 % |
| TOTAL QSO | 2557 | 7280 | 1700 | 12870 | 12696 | 18886 | 14130 | 14083 | 14836 | 13904 | 224 | 512 | 58 | 113736 | 100 % |
| TOTAL % | 2.25 % | 6.4 % | 1.49 % | 11.32 % | 11.16 % | 16.61 % | 12.42 % | 12.38 % | 13.04 % | 12.22 % | 0.2 % | 0.45 % | 0.05 % | 100 % | |

***Figure 9. TX5S Band / Mode Statistics***

The number of Not in Log/Busted Call inquires we received was amazingly low at only 268 inquires. For 113,736 QSOs this is an unusually low number, a good indicator that the TX5S operators paid close attention to logging accuracy. Many of those inquiries indicated inexperience with logging, in general, and using LoTW.

Each morning we'd look at the N1MM+ graphs and see that we were making between the 3,445 QSOs on the first partial day on the air to over 18,000 QSOs on the third day of operation. While averages don't always tell the story, we averaged an amazing 14,217 QSOs a day.

| DATE/MODE (last 20 days) | CW | FT8 | PKT | Q65 | RTTY | SSB | TOTAL QSO |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20240128 | 1147 | 1936 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 362 | 3445 |
| 20240127 | 2376 | 4976 | 56 | 2 | 0 | 3521 | 10931 |
| 20240126 | 3046 | 9619 | 5 | 16 | 0 | 3305 | 15991 |
| 20240125 | 5000 | 6518 | 42 | 20 | 0 | 3711 | 15291 |
| 20240124 | 4772 | 9817 | 41 | 25 | 369 | 2500 | 17524 |
| 20240123 | 5056 | 8967 | 59 | 13 | 0 | 3969 | 18064 |
| 20240122 | 5004 | 7814 | 134 | 1 | 0 | 4725 | 17678 |
| 20240121 | 2550 | 6782 | 173 | 0 | 0 | 3256 | 12761 |
| 20240120 | 600 | 1451 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2051 |

***Figure 10. TX5S QSOs per Day***

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| CONTINENT/BAND | 160 m | 80 m | 60 m | 40 m | 30 m | 20 m | 17 m | 15 m | 12 m | 10 m | 6 m | 70 cm | 23 cm | TOTAL QSO | TOTAL % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AFRICA | 3 | 22 | 10 | 59 | 56 | 79 | 68 | 67 | 86 | 67 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 519 | 0.46 % |
| ASIA | 443 | 1440 | 39 | 2857 | 2274 | 2937 | 2809 | 2366 | 2498 | 2494 | 0 | 58 | 4 | 20219 | 17.78 % |
| EUROPE | 398 | 2014 | 696 | 4548 | 5413 | 6850 | 3727 | 3261 | 3502 | 2931 | 0 | 94 | 32 | 33466 | 29.42 % |
| NORTH AMERICA | 1651 | 3559 | 909 | 4820 | 4494 | 8437 | 6874 | 7570 | 8223 | 7757 | 117 | 328 | 21 | 54760 | 48.15 % |
| OCEANIA | 36 | 154 | 20 | 312 | 233 | 281 | 374 | 429 | 165 | 189 | 20 | 13 | 0 | 2226 | 1.96 % |
| SOUTH AMERICA | 26 | 91 | 26 | 274 | 225 | 300 | 277 | 388 | 359 | 465 | 86 | 19 | 0 | 2536 | 2.23 % |
| Not Determined | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 0.01 % |
| TOTAL QSO | 2557 | 7280 | 1700 | 12870 | 12696 | 18886 | 14130 | 14083 | 14836 | 13904 | 224 | 512 | 58 | 113736 | 100 % |

***Figure 11. TX5S Continent by Band***

As with VP8PJ, it was interesting to see the popularity of FT8, not just amongst the callers, but also with the DXpedition operators; perhaps the chance to remove the headphones and relax was a welcome break from the adrenaline rush of working a pileup on the other modes.

During the voyage to Clipperton Island we operated as N6WM/MM, there was no /MM operation on the return voyage.

## Logs, Livestream and Starlink

During the project planning phase Steve, W1SRD, contacted Starlink to confirm availability at Clipperton. In a written reply, coverage was confirmed. Our two Starlink Terminals were online 24 X 7 while on the island. Team members were able to exchange emails with friends and family and/or use WiFi calling. Logging computers were Lenovo X-230 laptops running WSJT-X and N1MM+.

Both Club Log's Livestream and the traditional daily log uploads to the MØURX's Bespoke OQRS application were used. To the user, Bespoke OQRS System looks similar to Club Log. However, the Bespoke system automates many of the QSL manger's backend manual tasks. For example, the TX5S website's donation process seamlessly integrates with Bespoke. This relieves the QSL manager and the DXpedition team from manually entering and managing donor information. Label printing and LoTW upload files are easily created with a few mouse clicks. Almost all manual tasks are automated, making the manager's job less time consuming, and QSL card addressing errors almost nonexistent.

## The Science Team

The primary interest of the Science Team was to study the behavior of the rat population on the island. Using infrared camera and data recording instruments they recorded data on rat movements at night. Another aspect of their study was an assessment of future uses for Clipperton Island. These three gentlemen blended well with the radio team, and for the most part did their work away from the radio operations.

## Departure

A DXpedition team needs a departure plan. It begins by merging the team's plan with the skip-

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per's departure schedule, and removing non-essential equipment from the island as soon as we determine something is no longer needed. Antennas will gradually be removed, stations disassembled and packed for shipment. This process typically begins about two-three days before the planned departure date, but the actual departure will depend on weather and sea conditions. The skipper was providing regular weather forecasts. Our departure plan considered available daylight and high tide to transit the reef, the skipper's plan considered the sea conditions/ forecast on the route to San Diego, and they weren't looking too good.

Based on a building weather front, the skipper established the departure date to be no later than January 29th. On January 27th we removed equipment and some team members from the island. The remaining operators made QSOs until shutdown on January 28th. The morning's high tide allowed the team this additional operating time, but they also encountered a monsoon-like rainfall during the final take down. Once back on the boat it took several hours to store and secure all the equipment. The 8-day ride to San Diego was very rough and we were greeted by more rain upon arrival in San Diego.

The Shogun's crew and helpers from Fishermen's Landing offloaded all our equipment to a waiting truck for the next day's drive to Northern California.

**Corporate Sponsors**

We received support from manufacturers and distributors of amateur radio equipment: Elecraft loaned two K4D transceivers, and two KPA-1500 amplifiers; DX Engineering donated coax, connectors, tools, antenna parts, aluminum tubing and countless other accessories; Arlan Communications loaned eight RadioSport headsets; Bart SQ1K designed and provided the TX5S clothing. The DX Store subsidized the cost of several shipping cases; MØURX United Radio QSL Management Service and ON5UR QSL Print Services subsidized the cost of QSL card production. The *Daily DX* by Bernie, W3UR, was a financial sponsor. Low Band Systems, Spiderbeam, and Rig Expert supplied our previous projects with equipment used on Clipperton. The generosity and ongoing support of these manufacturers and distributors is greatly appreciated.

**Wrap Up**

We would like to acknowledge the help and support of the organizations and individuals that contributed to Clipperton Island 2024. We appreciate the major financial sponsorship from: the Northern California DX Foundation (NCDXF), the German DX Foundation (GDXF), the International DX Association (INDEXA), The European DX Foundation (EUDXF), The UK DX Foundation, and the Clipperton DX Club for their very generous support, and that of the many other clubs and foundations. Please review the list of Corporate and Club/Foundation sponsors at TX5S.net, they deserve your support.

Over 1,600 individual donations were processed through the website, including 73 Premier Donors (contributing $200, or more) and over 1,700 DXers added a contribution to their OQRS confirmation request.

The on-island team was supported by many individuals and, in particular, we want to recognize

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our Chief Pilot Curtis, WX4W, and his pilot team of: Joe, JJ3PRT; Claudio, PY2KP; Bjorn, ON9CFG; Alex, 4L5A; Andre, V51B, and Luke, VK3HJ. Managing the early donor program was Doris, KØBEE, and Tim, MØURX, who processes your QSL confirmations and uploads your LoTW confirmations.

Among the highlights of the project were giving many DXers an ATNO and/or band fills, logging the first FT8 and 60-meter contacts from Clipperton Island, and working with a fantastic team of amateur radio operators and a wonderful support team. For several people in the log TX5S was their first ever DXpedition contact. We must also recognize the Shogun crew who were as much a part of the project's success as the radio team.

Until the next time, thank you for your interest in TX5S Clipperton Island 2024.

**Note: permission was granted by Gene K5GS to print this article in *Solid Copy* as a thank you to the CWops members who had a role in the TX5S Clipperton Island DXpedition.This article is copyright by PDXG Expeditions, LLC and may not be reproduced in whole or in part.**

SC

# Inaugural Activity Weekend

## Chris Chapman, VK3QB CWops #2949

The last weekend of February was the fist Activity Weekend. If you weren't aware of this event please check the January 2024 edition of *Solid Copy*.

I am pleased to report I received a few emails and fifteen entries via the Google Docs feedback form. Many of the ops I worked had clearly looked up the VK1CWO callsign on QRZ.com as I got a few comments on-air. Personally, only one QSO was a "599 TU" QSO. The rest morphed into very enjoyable conversations; the weather, station details and even an exchange from one op who had travelled around VK some years ago.

So, thanks to everyone who participated. The next Activity Weekend is scheduled for:

18 May 2024: 0000z to 19 May 2024: 2359z

Please mark it in your calendars.

A few people have suggested that we call "CQ CWO" – which clearly would work well for CWops members, but might confuse those who aren't members or don't read this newsletter. I'm open to your feedback. Let me know your thoughts.

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CWops callsigns. I activated VK1CWO and I know Stew got busy with GW2CWO. I didn't hear any other "CWO" callsigns. If you're the trustee of a CWO callsign please drop me an email and I hope we can get more CWOs on-air for this event.

A selection of feedback is presented below.

| |
|---|
| Just back from holiday and stuff to do including catch up with grandkids on Sunday but will try to get on if I can.... |
| It was a good weekend of conversational CW. 7 QSOs, 2 into Europe, 5 in North America, 240 minutes, average QSO 34.28 minutes per QSO. 4 were from people I've worked before and 3 first timers, 80 through 10 meters. All were pleasant chats. |
| 9 watts, TX 500, T1 tuner and a random wire. |
| A mix of local and DX contacts over the weekend with some familiar callsigns and some new. I'll be back for the next Activity Weekend 73 |
| I enjoyed "long" QSOs with 13 other CWops members. Actually, this is my normal routine, so my Qs are more like "already built into the baseline" as opposed to doing anything special for this "event." The shortest Q that I counted was 10 minutes long. The longest was 41 minutes long, although I had another at 40 minutes. I don't think that I can pick just one that was "most memorable." They are all memorable! In all, I had 291 minutes of "long" QSOs. |
| Had a few ragchews this weekend - K8BYP, KF2AT, G4PQD, SM6DHU, N4UB all over 10 minutes. |
| Nice event. Thanks for creating this. I believe ragchewing is the best part of our hobby. Get to meet your fellow Hams! Let's do this more often. I reached Alaska, which is not too far, but the band was open and a good op was on the air. Good times! |
| FB chat. Number exchanges are so boring! |
| Good advice on CW and keys. Tnx! |
| FB QSO's and chats with K3DGR, Dave, KA1EFO, Ron, and K5LY, Lee. All good chats with some good CW and key advice. 73, Charlie (Chas) |
| Fun, most people worked were NOT CWops members |
| I'm on the bands every day, so I guess I technically participated. I had a 30 minute ragchew on 160m and some others on 30 meters. |
| I had some really enjoyable long-form QSOs. Using the VK1CWO callsign definitely attracted some interest. |

As always, your feedback and suggestions are welcome.

***73, Chris,* VK3QB** CWops #2949 vk3qb@hotmail.com

# How to Become a Ragchew Expert

## Name Withheld, NØCAL

Many CWops members love to contest and/or work DX. These QSOs are usually very short in duration. They are easy to do; call sign, 599, TU. Hard to get much faster than that! Very efficient, to be sure.

But we all know that deep down inside, these same folks are very jealous of the CWops member who is able to conduct ragchew QSOs. But they just cannot seem to get there. They don't know what to talk about. Even adding details about your rig, antenna, and weather just does not get you up the required 10 minutes (for mQTX) or, OMG, the coveted QTX (at least 20 minutes). Well, here is your detailed instruction set for making the transition.

1. Slow down. If you are used to 25-30 wpm, try sending at 12-15 wpm. That will guarantee you 2x for the length of your QSO.

2. Repeat everything the other guy/gal sends you. This will let them know that you are actually copying their transmission and will again almost double the length of your QSO!

3. Don't just talk about today's weather. What was the weather like yesterday? How about for the last week (be detailed!). And don't forget the forecast either.

4. Tell them your age today. If your birthday is close, let them know that soon you will be older.

5. Tell them first year you were licensed. Tell them whether or not it was at an FCC building and what it was like to take the code test in the FCC office. Did you take a code test?

6. Also talk about your first rig and antenna. And your favorite rig and antenna. Do you still have your first rig? If not, tell them how sorry you are that you got rid of it.

7. If you make an error while sending, don't just resend the letter; don't just resend the word; send the entire sentence again. Maybe you will get lucky and make another sending error and have to do it all again.

8. If you have taken the time to do a write-up about yourself on QRZ.com, be sure to send every word that is already published there. You do not even have to think about; just read and send.

9. Look them up on QRZ.com and tell them everything you found there that they already wrote.

10. Do not abbreviate. Do not send OP, send NAME. Do not send MS for your QTH; send MISSISSIPPI. Be sure fully spell out the name of your town. Do not send CPI when COPY is much better and takes longer. Why are you sending ANT? Don't you mean ANTENNA? Why send W when you really mean WATTS. EFHW? Nah. End Fed Half Wave.

11. If this is difficult to follow on your own, sign up for a class in Ragchew Academy.

None of this will come easily. You will need to practice to get it right. But that's OK; none of us were born knowing how to ragchew.

# CWops Give Back in Oceania

## Chris Chapman, VK3QB CWops #2949

## and Graeme Morgan, VK5GG CWops #3397

Objective: To provide a regular on-air activity to help CW operators improve their operational and conversational skills.

When: Monday evenings, 0800Z (1900-2000 VK3 time)

Freq: 7.028 MHz +/-

Call sign: VK1CWO

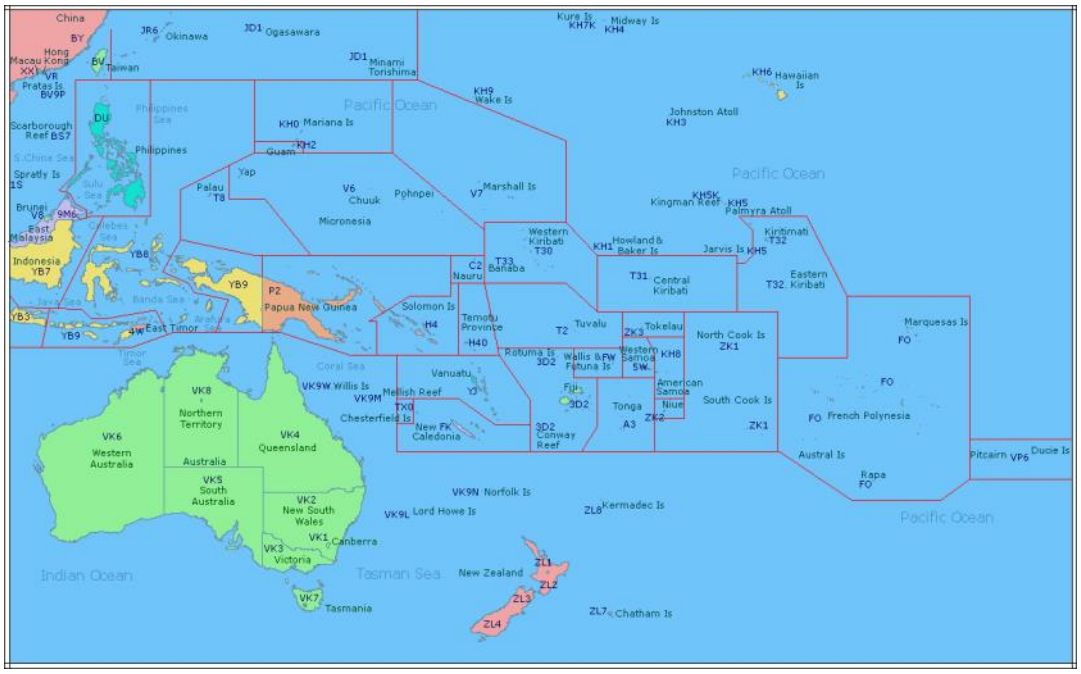
Format:

"CQ GB" and providing relaxed QSOs for operators looking to improve their CW.

Character speeds will be around 18-20 wpm plus, but we can Farnsworth as required. If you'd like to send or receive a little faster that's fine too.

For those looking to improve their CW speed and head-copy, the best approach is to challenge yourself. Listen to Morse Code at a speed above your comfort zone, this way you'll be teaching your brain to hear the characters, rather than interpret and "count" the individual dits and dahs. These techniques are successful taught by CWops and the Long Island CW Club – and are proven methods with thousands of students successfully completing the program.

If you're not yet comfortable with higher speeds, come along and listen in – copy what you can – in a relaxed fashion. Don't stress if you miss a character or word. Move on.



# New Members

## Trung Nguyen, W6TN

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

| CWops | Call | Name | CWops | Call | Name | CWops | Call | Name |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3515 | KE7UAE* | Paul | 3520 | K8YX | Roger | 3525 | WC3W | Mark |
| 3516 | K7IM* | Kim | 3521 | PP5OO* | Edson | 3526 | N8DD* | Chas |
| 3517 | W4YGT* | Tom | 3522 | VE1EM* | Jesse | | | |
| 3518 | ND8L | Ray | 3523 | EX0ET* | Bob | | | |
| 3519 | SM6OEF | Ben | 3524 | N5EIF* | Sam | | | |

* Lifetime member

As of April 7, 2024:

**Need Sponsors**: YB2DX, PP5WX
**Invitations Extended:** (none)

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

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

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

SC

Did your **CALL SIGN** change recently?

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

Congratulations!

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

Click HERE to update your contact information.

# CWops Tests (CWTs)

## Rich Ferch, VE3KI

As of April 1, we are now one-quarter of the way through 2024 with 52 CWTs in the log out of the year's total of 208.

Participation so far this year has been slightly lower than last year's and definitely down from the peak numbers we saw in early 2022, but overall it appears to be holding fairly steady. The most noticeable trend so far this year has been the effect of the change from standard time to daylight savings time in North America. This switch to daylight savings time has a significant negative effect on the number of participants in the 0300z CWT, just as it has in previous years. This year, though, there seems to have been a slight positive impact on participation in the 1300z CWT according to the numbers so far.

The most popular CWT session is the 1900z session, whose participation counts fall between 376 and 415 so far this year. The runner-up is the 1300z session, with 345-367 scores reported before the NA time change, and 374-380 scores in the three sessions since the time change. In both of these sessions, approximately 74% of participants are from North America, 22-24% from Europe, and the remaining 4-6% are from elsewhere in the world. The 0300z session has markedly fewer participants from Europe and the rest of the world (5% EU and 1.5% others), but there is also reduced participation from North America relative to the two earlier sessions, especially after the time change, so the overall numbers are smaller: 256-296 before the time change, and 214-228 after the change so far. The newest session, at 0700z, is by far the smallest, with 81-101 entries: 62% from Europe, 35% from North America, and 3% from elsewhere.

Like last year, there are a few dedicated participants who regularly attend all four CWT sessions. There are five people who have entered scores of 10 or more QSOs for all 52 CWT sessions so far: G3LDI, K1DJ, K3MM, K4PQC and KO4VW.

The very highest reported QSO counts are in the same range as last year's, but it looks as if typical "middle of the pack" QSO scores may have increased somewhat. Last year's median reported QSO count was 46 QSOs, whereas in the first three months of 2024 the median count was 50 QSOs.

I wonder whether people are setting slightly higher targets for themselves this year than last year. Last year, the most popular single reported score was 10 QSOs, followed by reports of 12 QSOs and 20 QSOs. This year so far, the single most-often-reported score is 20 QSOs, followed by 12 QSOs and then 10 QSOs. As before, round number scores generally (10, 12, 15, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50, 60 and 100 QSOs) seem to be popular.

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

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **AA0YY** | N4VH<br>KI5VIR | AF4PX<br>WB0DKL | K0WVL<br>W0ITT | NZ0T<br>N5NLP | WA4IAR<br>K0LRQ | WD4LZC<br>W4MA | N8RGA |
| **AF4PX** | W9RGB | K3LB | AA0YY | VE3RIA | K0RLQ (2) | KI6UP | K3JN |
| **GW2CWO** | DK6JP<br>IU5RFA<br>M0NDS | F5IYJ<br>EA1ANB<br>G0AOE | RA7KQ<br>OK2JOW | F5GVE<br>G4RJA | DJ3GS<br>OM3CND | DK3MT<br>DL8MGD | IZ2AVK<br>UT5ZC |
| **JG1UQD** | JK1PIG | JA3EBL | JA4IIJ | JA7TTU | JJ0XEQ | 7L2VPL | JL1STV |
| **JJ1FXF** | JL1STV<br>JA1SUA<br>JA4DCS<br>JG1BGT | JH5FVM<br>JN1FAO<br>JA4IIJ<br>JJ0SFV(2) | JK1NAG<br>JA2EMP<br>JI7KNV<br>7L2VPL | JH2ACP<br>JS2IMR<br>VK4ARE<br>JQ3FRX | JA2VXZ<br>WA6BKR<br>JG0RJU<br>JE6XFK | JQ2NUD<br>JS2OVO<br>HL5JZ<br>JF0IUN | JS1MRM<br>JF5XPJ(2)<br>JA1ORM |
| **JM4AOA** | DS5TXS(2)<br>JJ0SFV(2)<br>JQ7AMA | JA2KMC<br>JK1QYL<br>JR2AWS | JA5IOY<br>JM2LHM<br>JS6THD | JA6BZH<br>JM4RRC | JA7TTU<br>JN1FAO | JF0IUN<br>JN7DOR | JI3VXW<br>JQ2NUD |
| **JO1DGE** | 7L2VPL<br>JA4IIJ(3)<br>JF0IUN<br>JJ2JVU(2)<br>JK1XDX<br>JQ3IXG<br>JS1CII | BH6BEZ<br>JA5IOY<br>JG0RJU<br>JK1KDH<br>JK3OTH<br>JR1RFH<br>JS2OVO | DS5TXS(3)<br>JA9FNC<br>JG1BGT(4)<br>JK1MVC<br>JL1RAP<br>JR2AWS(2)<br>JS6BOA | HL1MIM<br>JE1FMZ<br>JH5FVM<br>JK1PIG<br>JN1FAO<br>JR2OIJ<br>VR2YKP | HL5JZ(2)<br>JE2OUK(2)<br>JI1CSQ<br>JK1PWT<br>JN7DOR<br>JR2WLQ | JA1BNT<br>JE6AJO<br>JI2OJV<br>JK1QYL<br>JQ2NUD(2)<br>JR3QLI/3 | JA4DCS<br>JE6XPF/6<br>JJ0SFV(2)<br>JK1WCW<br>JQ3FRX<br>JR6SBI |
| **K6RB** | WB0UWE | N7HCN | N7XJ | KD2WYO | | | |
| **K7NJ** | WA0HYS<br>W3FSA | WW2L<br>W3IGT | N7MM | W4MY | WB4DKF | WA4JYX | KE6ORO |
| **K8UDH** | KB0HXL<br>K5IP | N7AZZ<br>W7LW | KZ5HH | N1ZX | K3UT | NJ8D | KD4MV |
| **KV8Q** | W8YT | W8BJO | | | | | |
| **M0WDD** | 2E0MHJ | EI9LB | EU1AFR | G0IBN | G5CH | G7HSE | IU0JFZ |

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| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M0GJQ<br>M0RZE<br>MW0KAX | M0IYP<br>M0SDB<br>SP5NZF | M6IYP<br>M0UMH | M0KCJ<br>M5ABN | M0MBX<br>MI0PYN | M0MCL<br>MI0WWB | M0NVQ |
| **N4TMM** | KI4DBK | KD4ZFS | WB4U | | | | |
| **VK1CWO** | VK3VB<br>VK4DRK<br>VK3ACM | G3NKQ<br>VK3GB<br>AB5VI | VK3ADS<br>ZL2UN<br>ZL1HF | N4GO<br>VK5LA | W8WX<br>ZL1HJ | VK2NAD<br>ZL4BDG | N6TI |
| **W5DT** | WB9UBL | N3TM | KD9TWA | AB8CI | KK6QOR | | |
| **W7ZDX** | KC0WRE | NK2U | K7TXA | N5DY | AB6ET | | |
| **7N2XZB** | JH2HTQ<br>JR6SBI<br>JR1AGN<br>JF0IUN | HL5JZ<br>JR2BOE<br>JA7KED(2)<br>JG1BGT | JL1STV<br>BH6BEZ<br>N6OVP<br>BH4FUO | JQ2NUD<br>JJ2KJN<br>JE2OUK<br>JE6XFK | DS5TXS(2)<br>JA4IIJ(2)<br>JF6CYD | JF5XPJ<br>JJ0SFV<br>JQ3FRX | BI1JMM<br>JK1QYL<br>JA4MRL |

## 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+11 | UTC+9 | UTC+7 | UTC+3 | UTC+2 | UTC+1 | UTC/BST | UTC-1 | EST<br>UTC-5 | CST<br>UTC-6 | MST<br>UTC-7 | PST<br>UTC-8 | Hawaii<br>UTC-10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **MON** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VK1CWO | JØ1DGE | | | | | | | W2XS | AAØYY | | | |
| **TUE** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | JR1WYW | E25JRP | | SV2BBK | | GW2CWO | | WE5P | K8UDH | K7NJ | W7ZDX | |
| | 7N2XZB | | | | | | | | | | K6RB | |
| **WED** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | JM4AOA | | | | | | | | AF4PX | | | |
| **THURS** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | JJ1VNV | | | SV2BBK | | | | KV8Q | N5OT | K7NJ | W7ZDX | |
| **FRI** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | JR1WYW | | | SV2BBK | | GW2CWO | | N2GSL | AAØYY | | K6RB | |
| **SAT** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | JJ1FXF | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | JM4AOA<br>JG1UQD | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **SUN** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | JJ1FXF | | | | | | | W5DT | | | | |
| | JM4AOA | | | | | | | | | | | |

# CW Academy

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

## January / February Wrap-up

The 2024 January / February CW Academy semester is complete and preparations for the May / June semester are well underway. Almost 370 students graduated from classes in the January / February semester:

| Category | Beginner | Fundamental | Intermediate | Advanced | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Verified Students | 225 | 153 | 118 | 72 | 568 |
| Students Completing the Class | 164 | 123 | 96 | 68 | 451 |
| Students Evaluated as Promotable | 136 | 101 | 73 | 59 | 369 |
| Advisors | 28 | 15 | 11 | 5 | 59 |
| Classes Held | 29 | 20 | 17 | 9 | 75 |

CW Academy congratulates the following students.

**Beginner Level Graduates**

ADKINS, SHANNON (K8ADK); Arzamendi, Peter (KG5IYD); Auvinen, Alex (AC9XK); Axell, Emil (EAXELL); Bates, Wayne (VA3FMB); Bhasin, Saurabh (N6RUN); Brooks, Brian (2E0IER); Byers, Jim (VE7KAJ); Campbell, Jim (VE1KM); Cardenas Diaz, Jesus (VA2JDZ); Cavalco, Alex (N0MON); CH OSMENA, ALVIN JOHN (KM4DLF); Chalfant, Les (KI5GTR); Charles, Cacioppo (K2CMC); Churchwell, Brian (KB9WFS); Clark, Jeffrey (AK4LX); Condon, Michael (W9MNC); Connelly, Darrell (WK0C); Conti, Frank (AC3BQ); Cravens, Wes (W0WES); De Olaguibel, Juan Pablo (VA3JPI); Dean, John (K0JDD); Detmer, Kurt (KD9COP); Donaldson, Joanne (KF7UBX); Drzewiecki, Christopher (AC2AM); Edwards, David (KK7PZY); Ekstrom, Dale (KK7HVN); Erhardt, Terry (ERHARDT); Ferrington, David (M0XDF); Figueroa, Luis (KA6VVD); Fisher, John (N5EDF); Fontana, Luis (FONTANA); Foreman, Richard (KK7SL); Forest, John (KC1SRW); Forte, Jared (2E0JFJ); Fortin, Samuel (W7STF); Fourie, Eben (ZL2EF); Frampton, Krasimira (2E0MUY); Frankenau, Johannes (DF3TA); Freitas, Larry (N1KLF); Gilberti, Paul (W1PAG); Goth, Warren (AE0RX); Gutierrez, Jorge (GUTIERREZ); Harker, Alex (K9QL); Harper, Kristie (KL3HI); Harris, Charles (KI5WWH); Hartline, Jake (W4LJH); Hatherley , Stephen (AI5KH); Heijnens, Paul (DM7TW); Heilman, Clayton (KE7NGO); Hendrix, Jason (NY1W); Herb, Marsha (KG5NIP); Hernandez, Anthony (KF0GTR); Hernandez, Greg (KP4PK); Hill, Monte (W4MJH); Hinds, James (W5ATJ); Hoggard, Lucas (KI5ZND); Huseynov, Jay (KT5XL); Ives, Leah (K7IPT); Jackson, Robert (WN6AMS); Jeffrey, Cowan (WJ7V); Jensen, Adam (K7AMJ); Julian, Bob (KC1MOU); Karns, Robert (AB1AU); Keister, Robert (WZ5V); Kelley, Benjamin (KC0BLK); Knipe, Ray (KNIPE); Könz, Flurin (LB8TJ); Laevens, Tyson (VA3TYS); LaPorte, Dan (KG5WYV); Little, Scott (KI5WLJ); Lowther, Andrew (M0OYF); MacDonald, Reginald (KI7JOR); Markkola, Kurt (KE7HEV); Markus, Adling (DO4AMN); Massey, William (KJ5BWB); May, Robert (G7KFZ); McGough, Brian (KF4FO); McGuire, Martina (EI6IUB); Mennema, Jan (PA3MM); Michele, Braga (IU2RNU); Micuda, Peter

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(OM4AEI); Newman, Greg (K7GAN); Nourish, Bruce (W0MBT); Nyayapathi, Srinivas (VU2SFJ); Osborne, Richard (VE3OZW); Paik, Steve (K1APS); Park, Andy (M0ITM); Pham, John (KJ7GSK); Pitts, Ed (VA6EJP); Pohler, Jason (KD5CAF); Rait , David (KG2P); Raney, George (KG5LRB); Rasmussen, Terry (KF0ATX); Rauzi, Johnny (K7ZZQ); Ray, Cielencki (AC1BC); Reinhardt, Andrew (KF0DLU); REYTINAT-HARDOUIN, Jerome (F4IVI); RHEAUME, DALE (KB1TBK); Ricci, Albert (KN6WNO); Rice, Ericson (KO4OVZ); Robertson, Laura (MM7BFL); Rodden, Jeremiah (KF0KOW); Roesen, Gerd (DK6GER); Romagnano, Stefano (IV3JKE); Rosenbush, Scott (K7HSR); Ruhl, Richard (W5GLD); Ryder, Garnet (VE7GNR); Rypinski, Adam (KC1RVK); Sanchez, Jay (W4MBM); Santos, Bill (KN6UDK); Schlagel, Aaron (NY5V); Schrodel, Julio (W2SGT); Schutz, Nick (W0YEM); SHORT, ALAN (AB1QX); Smeltzer, Nick (G7IZR); Smith, Jay (AH6JS); Soto, Gladys (KI5QCB); Stewart, Robert (Bob) (N4JV); Suroshi, Devesh (VU3FVT); Tanzer, Jeremy (KI7BDP); Taylor, Greg (KX4GT); Trettin, Taylor (K6VOR); Turner, Butch (KA0WWT); VALDEZ, MAURICIO (W5SWX); Vincent, Tiffany (KC1NAF); Walker, Nelson (AA4NE); Wall, David (VK2HLG); Wasserburger, Michael (WF0M); Watkins, George (KA5NKD); Weir, Robert (AC1PK); West, Judy (N7PGJ); Wetzel, Robert C (N5ORO); Williams Sr, John (N5RUZ); Wilson, Doug (N1KB); Wirtz, Jeremy (AA4JW); Worrell, Dave (W0TV); Ziegler, Isaac (ZIEGLER)

**Fundamental Level Graduates**

Abdo, Mike (KE7KVR); Adam, Ziegler (KD9AIE); Adams, Kevin (VA3RCA); Allen, Marianna (KQ4HNK); Alley, Daniel (N0HE); Ayers, Bradford (W1ACC); Babler, Matthew (KQ4CCP); Baker, Michael (N4LSP); Bassett, James (M0GJQ); Beard, Dave (M0UDB); Blackett, George (KL7VX); Bockelmann, Carsten (DH7CB); Brodbeck, Martin (DG2SMB); Bumgarner, John (AA1RB); Cahill, Tom (KD9VNL); Calger, Leslie (AG5ES); Cantin, Norm (WA1NLG); Cates, Timothy (KC1QDK); Charalampopoulos, Babis (SV1UH); Charles, Seth (AC5M); Cheek, Jack (W6UA); Collins, Sam (2E1OCT); Cowan, Alan (MM0VPM); Crabtree, John (KK6ZAJ); Dickenson, Drew (KE5UBO); Dreyer, Gaby (DF9TM); Dunlap, Ronald (K0LRQ); Engley, Michael (KQ4DFV); Faneros, Miltos (SV1SXV); Fein, Ligia (KM6VOW); Fischer, Dominik (DC8DFI); Foster, Arthur (VE6ACF); Godefrooi, Joey (PA2PC); Haan, Andre (PA4OES); Habegger, Terry (W8UY); Harrison, John (G0UBE); HARWOOD, RICHARD (ZF1YG); Hawthorne, Timothy (KK7TH); Hayward, Wayne (KM4OPN); Hudelson, Dave (W8HUD); Iler, Brian (NA6ER); Ishmael, Rex (WD0AJG); Jabegu, Ingwahang (2E0MHJ); JIMENEZ, SALVA (EA4HZK); Kelley, Danny (KI4KXO); Knickenberg, Florian (DL9FK); Lappen, David (KO4OWS); Laurie, Ryan (W0WLY); Leach, Robert (K8VAN); Lebegern, Uli (DG4SFS); Lewis, Charlene (K8XCO); Lewis, Tom (KO4TCL); LINDEN, Greg (K0VU); Lovell, Andrew (SM6MOJ); Lukat, Mike (KY4EAR); MacIlroy, Becky (KA1VHF); Makrigiannis, John (SV2SZS); Manolis, Konstantinos (SV8SXF); Marriner, Bruce (K3FBR); MARTSOUKAKIS, GIANNIS (SV1PMQ); Marwick, Ben (WA7BEN); Mauldin, Michael (W7TDM); Mews, Gerald (DH1CAD); Meyer, Jürgen (DL2NJM); Minnick, Daniel (AG7AE); Moore, Clayton (VE1MJF); MORAIS, Victor (M7IBM); Munir, Elawar (N3PQ); Nolin, Mart (KJ5BNP); Olson, Adam (N1GVV); Otto, Ed (W3ETO); Panattoni, Dale (KJ7CJG); Pemantell, James (KB1HFP); Peters, Paul (VA3HYM); Pleace, Eric (KO4ZSD); R, Katrina (VA7WBT); Rahn, Mark (KN4GOS); Raßmann, Christian (DO3RCX); REDONDO, OSCAR (EA3FZO); Reynolds, Matthew (MW0KAX); RIGAS, ANDREAS (SV3SPD); Roberts, Terry (KK7PSO); Rogers, Todd (W5MTN); Rollins, Jonathan (KC8HCF); Royston, Adam (NV3K); Rybi, Daro (SP5RI); Sabo, Robert (AD9S); Salomatin, Andrei (DO1EQ); Samios, Theodoros (SV1SYM); Saravate , Prasad (KB3MDD); Scott, Ralph (VA3EKR); Shields, Thomas (W9VN); Simonds, Everett (KE5MMT); Sloss, Daniel (VK2NAD); Stefan, Münch (DF1EE); Swartz, William (N8TAU); Taylor, Kerrie (VK4KTT); Tegoli, Andrew (KW7AT); Thompson, Jonathan (K0ARG); Van Kleef, Trevor (G0TVK); Vaughan, Tim

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(N8TDV); Watt, Keith (G4MSF); Wendland, Karsten (DC2ZC); Wright, Kelly (KA7IMA); Wunram, Nicole (DD9NW); Ziegler, Thomas (HB9GVC)

**Intermediate Level Graduates**

Amirtharaj, Clement (VU2CWO); Andrzejewski, Mikołaj (SQ2C); ARMSTRONG, CHRIS (W0CWA); Atherton, Dave (WA6DWH); Atkins, John (G0SDF); Barnes, Mike (N7WPO); Billewicz, Jacek (SQ3HLB); Billewicz, Maciej (SQ3HLL); Bowman, Suzie (K5JZQ); Brasse, Jean-Jacques (F5IJO); Bromley, Sally (WQ5T); Brown, Dwight (N5WRW); Chancy, Erik (LB1KJ); Chrobot, Zbigniew (SP3UQW); Cooper, Martin (M0KHX); Cupal, Tom (WW8LA); Davies, Glenn (KO4NTA); Doug, Rehder (KD7DUG); Durant, Richard (W5SD); Ford, Ronald (W4RJF); Foster, Todd (W2TEF); Fox, Sr., Jasper (KD2ZUD); French, Lisa (AC3JX); Ganim, Rose (W1RBG); Guarino, Ross (WB2WJF); Haefner, Jack (NG2E); Hallybone, Huw (G8IBL); Imianowski, Andrew (G4KKU); Jaervinen, Samuli (W7GE); Keating, Barry (WD4MSM); Kelland, Gord (VO1KGZ); Kelly, Chris (K0PF); Koukoutsis, Vasilios (SV1JMC); Krause, Don (KN6TAC); Kuehnl, Martin (OE3KME); Lawrence, Wes (KO4WJU); Lim, Mary (VE3INE); Lladó Sabater, Juan Francisco (EC6PG); Long, Ritchie (VE1RL); Lowe, Ian (G0PDZ); Luther, Charles (N8DD); Martinson, John (W2JAM); Massey, Timothy (AD8JL); Mauldin, Sam (WO5T); Meier, Nick (NI0CK); Mersky, David (K5TRT); Moravec, Jim (N0COT); Nicholls, Kevin (MW0KXN); Ogborn, Roy (KI0ER); Oglesby, David (N7LL); Padilla, Alberto (EA3GNU); Powers, Greg (WG0MEZ); Riedle, Drew (N5GU); Roos, Cornelis Jan (PA0VLD); Said, Christopher (AE6Z); Sattler, Jay (N8JTR); Scott, William (W7LC); Scott, Matthew (K3VTS); Seghatoleslami, Saied (AD2CC); Sigler, Glenn (K8WS); Smith, Barbara (N7BAS); Stachoń-Haziak, Andrzej (SP9NT); STAMATI, ELENI (SV4SUR); Stevinson, Ben (KF0KDI); Steward, Robert (N6DOG); Taraba, Kurt (WB9TZY); Teklinski, Peter (WW2I); Thomas, Sigler (W4OKV); Tilstra, Willem (KI7SUT); Verrier, Hugh (KE2BRV); Volmer, Vincent (PE2V); Whitcomb, Kenneth (N8KDC); Williams, Thomas (WA1MBA); Young, Bruce (KC1TOG)

**Advanced Level Graduates**

Ayers, Jeremy (NM5D); Belkin, Howard (W1HRB); Berg, Christoph (DF7CB); Bottles, Kim (K7IM); BRADY, Ed (AE8Q); Burton, Noah (W1NGO); Chieffi, Stefano (IK5LSR); Christiansen, Reed (WI9P); Clark, Steve (AD7KR); Clarke, Chris (G3SQU); Commins, Joe (W4YDL); Curry, Glen (KC8LA); Cutsogeorge, Sue (W7QF); Dahl, James (WI6X); Del Rey, Enric (EA3VN); Dell, Dave (K9HIM); Dooley, Adrian (VE6ADZ); Dupuis, Robert (AI7FF); Edson, Brusque (PP5OO); Ersoz, Nathaniel (WB3ERS); Fabris, Simone (IU3QEZ); Fein, Steven (KM6VOV); Freeze, Tim (W8TWF); Gause, Thomas (W4YGT); Gerdes, Andre (DJ4DX); Jakubowski, Arkadiusz (SP7AJ); Kazmarek, Skip (K4EAK); Keyes, Kraig (AA4SD); Kim, Chris (AG6CK); Kingery, Robert (AE7AP); LaMont, Chuck (KA6AAE); Manuel, Velez (WP4TZ); Mark, Bradley (KC6EOA); McMahon, Richard (KG5IF); Mitchell Hynd, Les (MM0UMH); Mohan, Sreevathsa (VU3SPD); Nagy, Stephen (W4SGN); Niewiadomski, Boguslaw (SQ5AZY); Pearce, Jeff (K7MG); Peev, Plamen (LZ1PID); Perrin, Bill (JP3REM); Poteet, Ryan (KC7TAK); Rayner, Chris (G7BED); Rosen, Ted (VA3TAR); Rubenstein, Bill (VE3MRX); Sande, Craig (AE7I); Sheffield, Mark (K4LFL); Shumarov, Pavel (VA4ADM); Smith, Paul (KJ7DT); Steve, Wheatstone (MW0SAW); Taylor, Paul (KM4JHK); Telesco, Gary (K7UOU); Van Lieburg, Aad (PA1AVL); Vaught, Richard (W0NV); Wayt, Richard (WD8SDH); Weber, Thomas (DL1TW); Weiss, Jeffrey (K4EVT); Wilkerson, Ken (WM4D); Zhuravlov, Oleksandr (UR8UQ)

With about six weeks before the next semester starts more than 450 students have verified their

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availability to take a class starting in May. Forty-nine classes are in the catalog. Four new students are signing up each day, on average. CW Academy needs more advisors to sign up for classes! As of April 10th the statistics show that close to a hundred students will not be able to get into a class in May. If you are interested in being an advisor or have questions about being an advisor, please contact either Bob Carter WR7Q (kcgator@gmail.com) or Roland Smith K7OJL (rolandksmith@gmail.com)

***73, Roland Smith,* K7OJL** CWA Admin

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# CWops Member Awards

## Bill Gilliland, WØTG


**Monthly Update**

During March, 12 additional members submitted logs and the number of active participants in the awards program is currently 196.

The **ACA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of March 2024 have **KR2Q** in first place and leading second place **AA3B** by 214 QSOs. The top ten ACA totals this month are: **(1**) **KR2Q, (2) AA3B, (3) KY4GS, (4) N5RZ, (5) NA8V, (6) K3WW, (7) KC7V, (8) K7QA, (9) KG9X** and **(10) N5ZO.** The separation between first place and tenth place is 577 QSOs.

The **ACMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of March 2024 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **KR2Q** by 651 QSOs. The top ten ACMA totals this month are: **(1**) **AA3B, (2) KR2Q, (3) N5RZ, (4) KY4GS, (5) NA8V, (6) K3WW, (7) OM2VL, (8) K7QA, (9) KC7V** and **(10) DL6KVA.** The separation between first place and tenth place is 1706 QSOs.

We would like to recognize Amanda, **KY4GS**, for her amazing success in **ACA** and now **ACMA**. First licensed in 2021 and learning code late that year, Amanda has steadily progressed through the ranks of ACA and was in the top ten for much of 2023. And for all of 2024 so far, she has been in third place in ACA and top four in ACMA. This is despite running low power and modest wire antennas and competing with highly experienced contesters who are running big antennas and high power.

The **CMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of March 2024 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **K3WW** by 3155 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 5942 QSOs.

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The number of members who have contacted CWops members in 100 or more DXCC entities grew to **82** this month with the addition of **AA2IL**.

The number of participants who have accomplished CWops WAS grew to **232** this month with the addition of **PAØINA, W7LG** and **WE8L**.

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 April 5, 2024, we have 196 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.

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.

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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.

**Here are the Top 100 ACA, ACMA and CMA QSO totals as of April 5, 2024.**

**ACA**

| Rank | Call | ACA |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | KR2Q | 1509 |
| 2 | AA3B | 1295 |
| 3 | KY4GS | 1206 |
| 4 | N5RZ | 1123 |
| 5 | NA8V | 1071 |
| 6 | K3WW | 1039 |
| 7 | KC7V | 1030 |
| 8 | K7QA | 1003 |
| 9 | KG9X | 982 |
| 10 | N5ZO | 932 |
| 11 | N7US | 888 |
| 12 | K3QP | 877 |
| 13 | DL6KVA | 874 |
| 14 | OM2VL | 865 |
| 15 | F6HKA | 863 |
| 15 | K1VUT | 863 |
| 15 | KO4VW | 863 |
| 16 | W8FN | 846 |
| 17 | NJ3K | 842 |
| 18 | N5TJ | 836 |
| 19 | K9WX | 825 |
| 20 | AA2IL | 823 |

**ACMA**

| Rank | Call | ACMA |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | AA3B | 4079 |
| 2 | KR2Q | 3428 |
| 3 | N5RZ | 3145 |
| 4 | KY4GS | 2748 |
| 5 | NA8V | 2609 |
| 6 | K3WW | 2559 |
| 7 | OM2VL | 2558 |
| 8 | K7QA | 2550 |
| 9 | KC7V | 2523 |
| 10 | DL6KVA | 2373 |
| 11 | N5ZO | 2307 |
| 12 | KG9X | 2128 |
| 13 | KO4VW | 1926 |
| 14 | K1VUT | 1877 |
| 15 | W8FN | 1854 |
| 16 | N7US | 1848 |
| 17 | AA2IL | 1729 |
| 18 | N5TJ | 1690 |
| 19 | F6HKA | 1681 |
| 20 | K3WJV | 1669 |
| 21 | K9WX | 1648 |
| 22 | WN7S | 1589 |

**CMA**

| Rank | Call | CMA |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | AA3B | 13942 |
| 2 | K3WW | 10787 |
| 3 | N5RZ | 9878 |
| 4 | N5ZO | 9726 |
| 5 | KR2Q | 9370 |
| 6 | W1RM | 9175 |
| 7 | NA8V | 8999 |
| 8 | DL6KVA | 8703 |
| 9 | F6HKA | 8274 |
| 10 | K3WJV | 8000 |
| 11 | VE3KI | 7868 |
| 12 | OM2VL | 7235 |
| 13 | K7QA | 7194 |
| 14 | KG9X | 7193 |
| 15 | N7US | 7038 |
| 16 | N5AW | 7019 |
| 17 | KC7V | 6966 |
| 18 | W9ILY | 6893 |
| 19 | W0VX | 6554 |
| 20 | WT9U | 6511 |
| 21 | K1VUT | 6369 |
| 22 | K3JT | 6349 |

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## ACA

| Rank | Call | ACA |
|---|---|---|
| 21 | W0UO | 819 |
| 22 | K3WJV | 793 |
| 23 | W4CMG | 789 |
| 24 | WT9U | 758 |
| 25 | WN7S | 756 |
| 26 | K0WA | 752 |
| 27 | NA4J | 739 |
| 28 | VE3TM | 725 |
| 29 | K6NR | 724 |
| 30 | K1AJ | 717 |
| 31 | KM4FO | 710 |
| 32 | N5KD | 676 |
| 33 | OZ3SM | 669 |
| 34 | PA0INA | 668 |
| 35 | W9ILY | 664 |
| 36 | VE3KI | 660 |
| 37 | EA6EJ | 659 |
| 38 | K3JT | 650 |
| 39 | EA6BF | 634 |
| 40 | KK0U | 624 |
| 41 | N9UNX | 620 |
| 42 | N5XE | 605 |
| 43 | WS7L | 604 |
| 44 | K1SM | 601 |
| 45 | WS1L | 600 |
| 46 | K1DJ | 592 |
| 47 | F5SGI | 587 |
| 48 | 9A1AA | 582 |
| 49 | KW1X | 580 |
| 49 | KW7Q | 580 |
| 50 | VE3MV | 574 |
| 51 | W0GAS | 562 |
| 52 | KV8Q | 557 |
| 53 | W1RM | 556 |
| 54 | WT3K | 555 |
| 55 | W0VX | 554 |
| 56 | K3ZA | 548 |
| 57 | AF5J | 545 |
| 58 | N3CKI | 540 |
| 58 | WU6P | 540 |
| 59 | VE3KIU | 530 |
| 60 | SP1D | 528 |
| 61 | N2EIM | 526 |
| 62 | KY0Q | 518 |
| 63 | VK2GR | 514 |
| 64 | W8EWH | 505 |
| 65 | N2UU | 502 |
| 66 | W2CDO | 501 |

## ACMA

| Rank | Call | ACMA |
|---|---|---|
| 23 | W0UO | 1573 |
| 24 | NJ3K | 1563 |
| 25 | K3QP | 1497 |
| 26 | K6NR | 1493 |
| 27 | WT9U | 1491 |
| 28 | W4CMG | 1477 |
| 29 | NA4J | 1460 |
| 30 | K0WA | 1456 |
| 31 | OZ3SM | 1425 |
| 32 | KM4FO | 1417 |
| 33 | PA0INA | 1399 |
| 34 | VE3KI | 1378 |
| 35 | VE3TM | 1371 |
| 36 | K1AJ | 1353 |
| 37 | EA6EJ | 1336 |
| 38 | N5XE | 1321 |
| 39 | WS7L | 1306 |
| 40 | EA6BF | 1275 |
| 41 | K3JT | 1233 |
| 42 | W9ILY | 1228 |
| 43 | WS1L | 1226 |
| 44 | VE3MV | 1213 |
| 45 | N5KD | 1173 |
| 46 | W0VX | 1138 |
| 47 | KK0U | 1133 |
| 48 | SP1D | 1092 |
| 49 | KW7Q | 1086 |
| 50 | N9UNX | 1078 |
| 51 | AF5J | 1077 |
| 52 | N2UU | 1062 |
| 53 | F5SGI | 1056 |
| 54 | K1DJ | 1045 |
| 55 | W1RM | 1031 |
| 56 | W0TG | 1018 |
| 57 | M0RYB | 1010 |
| 58 | K1SM | 976 |
| 59 | K4GM | 970 |
| 60 | 9A1AA | 965 |
| 61 | KV8Q | 962 |
| 62 | KW1X | 956 |
| 63 | WU6P | 949 |
| 63 | KY0Q | 949 |
| 64 | K1RF | 943 |
| 65 | W0GAS | 929 |
| 66 | W2CDO | 928 |
| 67 | SM0HEV | 922 |
| 68 | VE3KIU | 917 |
| 69 | N3CKI | 879 |

## CMA

| Rank | Call | CMA |
|---|---|---|
| 23 | N4DW | 6255 |
| 24 | K9WX | 6139 |
| 25 | K3PP | 5894 |
| 26 | N2UU | 5708 |
| 27 | K6NR | 5688 |
| 28 | K1DJ | 5611 |
| 29 | SM6CUK | 5607 |
| 30 | N1DC | 5540 |
| 31 | W4WF | 5395 |
| 32 | N5TJ | 5353 |
| 33 | 9A1AA | 5281 |
| 34 | WN7S | 5271 |
| 35 | G4BUE | 5213 |
| 36 | WT3K | 5185 |
| 37 | W8FN | 5056 |
| 38 | AA5JF | 4945 |
| 39 | W0UO | 4901 |
| 40 | K1SM | 4864 |
| 41 | VE3TM | 4805 |
| 42 | KY4GS | 4731 |
| 43 | AC6ZM | 4730 |
| 44 | F6JOE | 4681 |
| 45 | NJ3K | 4634 |
| 46 | W1AJT | 4621 |
| 47 | GW0ETF | 4610 |
| 48 | NA4J | 4472 |
| 49 | WA4JUK | 4428 |
| 50 | N5XE | 4397 |
| 51 | K4GM | 4317 |
| 52 | OK1RR | 4316 |
| 53 | VE3MV | 4186 |
| 54 | I2WIJ | 4172 |
| 55 | K3QP | 4169 |
| 56 | W6AYC | 4129 |
| 57 | WS7L | 4085 |
| 58 | KT5V | 4078 |
| 59 | K1AJ | 4035 |
| 60 | AA2IL | 3976 |
| 61 | OZ3SM | 3966 |
| 62 | N1EN | 3762 |
| 63 | DJ5CW | 3755 |
| 64 | KM4FO | 3730 |
| 65 | W0TG | 3725 |
| 66 | KY0Q | 3712 |
| 67 | VK2GR | 3704 |
| 68 | KO4VW | 3699 |
| 69 | DF7TV | 3690 |
| 70 | K0TC | 3657 |

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## ACA

| Rank | Call | ACA |
|---|---|---|
| 67 | M0RYB | 494 |
| 68 | W2VM | 492 |
| 69 | K4GM | 491 |
| 69 | W9CF | 491 |
| 70 | K1RF | 489 |
| 71 | K4TZ | 482 |
| 72 | VA4ADM | 480 |
| 73 | W3WHK | 479 |
| 74 | WA4JUK | 478 |
| 75 | N9FZ | 464 |
| 76 | VE9KK | 463 |
| 77 | AA5JF | 461 |
| 78 | W7LG | 458 |
| 79 | W0TG | 454 |
| 80 | W0BM | 450 |
| 81 | K0TC | 448 |
| 82 | KT5V | 445 |
| 83 | SM6CUK | 444 |
| 84 | HB9ARF | 433 |
| 85 | W4WF | 428 |
| 86 | SM0HEV | 422 |
| 87 | N5ER | 414 |
| 88 | OK1RR | 413 |
| 88 | SP4JFR | 413 |
| 89 | K2YR | 411 |
| 90 | G4IZZ | 408 |
| 91 | G3LDI | 401 |
| 92 | GW4MM | 394 |
| 93 | F6JOE | 390 |
| 94 | AC6ZM | 380 |
| 95 | DJ5CW | 378 |
| 96 | DF7TV | 368 |
| 97 | WB9G | 361 |
| 98 | N5AW | 360 |
| 99 | G4BUE | 358 |
| 100 | NN4K | 357 |

## ACMA

| Rank | Call | ACMA |
|---|---|---|
| 70 | W3WHK | 870 |
| 71 | W2VM | 864 |
| 72 | W9CF | 860 |
| 73 | VK2GR | 858 |
| 74 | WT3K | 857 |
| 75 | K3ZA | 845 |
| 76 | W8EWH | 844 |
| 76 | OK1RR | 844 |
| 77 | K4TZ | 828 |
| 78 | SM6CUK | 802 |
| 79 | GW4MM | 794 |
| 80 | W0BM | 790 |
| 81 | HB9ARF | 788 |
| 82 | F6JOE | 769 |
| 83 | VE9KK | 768 |
| 84 | W7LG | 759 |
| 85 | K0TC | 758 |
| 86 | AA5JF | 756 |
| 87 | W4WF | 749 |
| 88 | G3LDI | 745 |
| 89 | WA4JUK | 728 |
| 90 | G4BUE | 712 |
| 90 | DJ5CW | 712 |
| 91 | VA4ADM | 673 |
| 92 | SP4JFR | 654 |
| 92 | N5ER | 654 |
| 92 | IN3FHE | 654 |
| 93 | G4PVM | 653 |
| 94 | G4IZZ | 639 |
| 95 | N9FZ | 633 |
| 96 | NN4K | 630 |
| 97 | K2YR | 622 |
| 98 | W8OV | 605 |
| 99 | VE3WH | 601 |
| 100 | N2EIM | 588 |

## CMA

| Rank | Call | CMA |
|---|---|---|
| 71 | W3WHK | 3647 |
| 72 | WS1L | 3645 |
| 73 | N5KD | 3582 |
| 74 | AF5J | 3495 |
| 75 | KV8Q | 3490 |
| 76 | K0WA | 3471 |
| 77 | W2CDO | 3460 |
| 78 | KK0U | 3432 |
| 79 | EA6BF | 3428 |
| 80 | G4PVM | 3425 |
| 81 | AF8A | 3345 |
| 82 | AF4T | 3335 |
| 83 | K9OZ | 3311 |
| 84 | F5SGI | 3285 |
| 85 | W0GAS | 3249 |
| 86 | HB9ARF | 3225 |
| 87 | SM0HEV | 3209 |
| 88 | K4TZ | 3172 |
| 89 | WU6P | 3129 |
| 90 | M0RYB | 3126 |
| 91 | 4X6GP | 3070 |
| 92 | NN4K | 3057 |
| 93 | KW7Q | 3038 |
| 94 | W4CMG | 3031 |
| 95 | K3ZA | 3029 |
| 96 | K2YR | 3017 |
| 97 | N3CKI | 2957 |
| 98 | W2VM | 2933 |
| 99 | G3LDI | 2906 |
| 100 | CT1DRB | 2857 |

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




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# QTX Report: Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

## Enzo, MØKTZ

It is always great to read through your soapbox comments, as they provide a great sample of the various ways in which different people enjoy ragchewing on the bands. I was happy to read about Andres EA2AJB joining HSC (Radio Telegraphy High Speed Club); that is indeed a cool club, and you can very often find HSC members on the bands, especially in Europe. HSC members are usually great ragchewers, and you will meet some pretty unique fellows there, who are able to QRQ if you wish so. I am pretty sure you have worked many of them already, perhaps unknowingly. I have worked Tom DF7TV many times, and we have the most enjoyable and fun QRQ ragchewing sessions HI HI.

I have seen a couple of comments who lament a difficulty in finding ragchew QSOs on the bands. My impression is that it is just a matter of giving it a try and being persistent. Well, it is true that a large proportion of operators prefer brief, rubber-stamp QSOs. But it is also true that if we do not try, we will not get an answer. I have a tiny personal story about that. Last weekend was the show-time for the SP DX Contest, which is apparently very popular. The bands were full with "TEST" signals, for most of Saturday and well into Sunday. I wanted to run the experiment of calling "CQ NO TEST" right on 40m on Saturday early morning, while the contest was in full swing. I received a few calls from SP stations whom I responded with a courteous "sorry no SP TEST" , but then I got a few more calls from stations who were not taking part to the contest, and enjoyed a 25 minutes QTX, a 16 minutes MQTX, and another shorter 8-minutes QSO, one after the other. I was running my usual 5W to a doublet, so I was not the biggest signal in town, and I had to keep calling for several minutes before getting a reply, but I nevertheless got a few of them, in the end. Had I just given up because "oh the contest stations will swamp my signal and nobody is interested in a NO TEST station right now" I would have been a QTX and an MQTX down, and most importantly, I would have missed out on three great chats. There is plenty of room for ragchewing on the bands. Being often on-air does help a lot, as other ragchewers starts identifying you as a chatty station, and will be more willing to calling you back in the future. I believe that good ragchewing fosters more good ragchewing happening in a sort of virtuous circle. So let us not give up!

This month we welcome (back?) to the QTX/MQTX programme two fellows, namely Ian GWØKRL and Pete ABØWW.

**Total hours ragchewing this year so far**: not less than **818.**


***72/73, Enzo*** M0KTZ CWops #3206

VK3QB: 1 QTX and 7 mQTX. One highlight being with Pete M3KXZ/P who was portable on the beach near Brighton 5W into a whip antenna.  PS (I'll be operating YJØVK 29 Mar - 12 April)

GWØKRL: Don't often ragchew but completed my Kanga 40m Rooster TX/RX kit and with a mighty 1 watt output had great fun. Also had a rare and exciting QSO on 2m, can't remember the last time I heard CW on that band!

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AF4PX: Lots of nice rag chews. KI6PU worked me over pretty well at 30+ wpm. A good fist goes a long way, thanks Jim.

DF7TV: In March, Andres/EA2AJB asked me to extend our QSO to 30+ minutes so that it would count as a test-QSO for his membership in the Radio Telegraphy High Speed Club HSC (https://hsc.lima-city.de/en/joinen.html). The expression "test-QSO" may sound threatening; but, be assured, we both enjoyed this conversation. The HSC has been founded in 1951, is very active, and its ideas fit nicely those of CWops' QTX program. My congratulations go to Andres, EA2AJB for now being HSC #2017.

MØMZB: Some nice QSOs with WØVTT - talked about how difficult Mississippi is to send in CW. Lovely QSO with GM3VMB using my Kanga Rooster (only 2W) and a Kent straight key, this was great fun. Also managed a couple of QSOs with the Clansman PRC 320 and Clansman Straight Key. Most of the QSOs were using a new Begali Sculpture, which is proving to be a luxurious key to operate with. A QSO with MWØBWZ turned into a long chat, turns out it was one of his first QSOs after returning from a 15 year break from radio.

WA4IAR: Had lots of good QSOs this month. and made some new friends. Was able to spend a little more time on the air than some months. Really enjoy using a Bug for all my QSOs.

MIØWWB: I aim for 30 minutes minimum, this month the longest QSO was 43 minutes.

VE3WH: Thanks for the many conversations which included topics of other interests. Playing carillon bells, analytical loop equations, and baking a strawberry shortcake to name a few. Using CW to develop friendships on the air.

ND4K: I had a pretty good month despite being on the DL following a surgery early in the month. As usual, thanks for the QSO's. A few that stand out were: A QTX with W1XY from his mobile; KK9TT who is a full-time RVer and a QTX and MQTX with Phil, NEØS.

MØSDB: Well I am finding this ragchew thing really quite addictive. I often find myself staring at my QSO timer trying to eek out another over from the other station and then feeling a pang of frustration when I fall a few seconds short! Thoroughly enjoying it though and it is just generally feeding my addiction for CW hihi. Vy 73 de Danny MØSDB

AAØYY: several nice chats with one of my hero's. He got a new F250 SuperDuty and he knows who he is .

N2DA: Good month for sked QSOs. Also had some nice ragchews with hams I hadn't worked before. Always enjoy making new friends on CW!

WB4IT: I had a good one this month with the King of QTX - WA4IAR. I found a 1964 Vibroplex Presentation at a local hamfest and had a nice 30 minute bug QSO with Rick using it. I also had some first time QSOs with a couple of ops whose YouTube channels I follow - N4LQ and K1OIK.

W3WHK: Always fun to catch up with Vic K9UIY(#505), this time for over an hour. Nice to have

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short ragchew with PY2UDB.

KR2Q: Still having lots of fun with QTX and mQTX QSOs. The average duration keeps getting longer. But I still get a tiny bit frustrated when a QSO ends at 19 minutes or 9 minutes, just missing the cutoff. Well, it's not a big deal, but wish it could have gone a little longer. <grin> The Qs that go over 30 minutes are very enjoyable and when they go over 60 minutes, well, it's just a GREAT QSO. Thanks to all my QTX partners (whether they know it or now).

N7HCN: Planning a station optimized for ragchewing in our new home to be finished in May.

K8UDH: March was a fun month. I had the opportunity to get on-the-air more than normal for some great CW ragchewing with folks like KD4MV who also enjoys Drake vintage gear.

K6DGW (02/2024): I'm late with this report, getting hard to find people who will spend time for a real QSO.

K6DGW: How can someone who is 85 and hasn['t been employed for 24 years not find time for more rag chewing. I made a lot of very short casual QSO's. Not sure if my month-late entry of Feb will count, but this is all for fun anyway

KG5SSB: A couple of Marathon QSOs were the highlight of this month.

ABØWW: I had one QTX and 10 mini-QTX in March 2024. Two of the minis lasted 19 minutes.

AJ1DM: Thanks to my rag-chewing friends. Great way to keep in touch! 73 de John AJ1DM

**2024 Total Number of Hours Worked: 817.8**

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

| Call | Hrs | Call | Hrs | Call | Hrs | Call | Hrs | Call | Hrs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WA4IAR | 116.7 | F5IYJ | 25.3 | KG5IEE | 12.5 | KG5SSB | 6.7 | W3WHK | 1.8 |
| WB4IT | 70.8 | M0MZB | 24.5 | MM0UMH | 10.5 | K8UDH | 5.5 | G4IVV | 1.8 |
| KY4GS | 65.8 | N7HCN | 21.2 | DF7TV | 10.3 | N9EEE | 5.0 | K7VM | 1.5 |
| M0KTZ | 61.0 | KB6NU | 18.7 | YL3JD | 10.2 | KE4I | 3.7 | WT9Q | 1.3 |
| VE3WH | 51.3 | KC0VKN | 17.3 | M0SDB | 9.3 | N5LB | 3.0 | JS2AHG | 0.8 |
| ND4K | 48.0 | AF4PX | 16.7 | IU3QEZ | 9.3 | VK3QB | 2.8 | GW0KRL | 0.7 |
| KR2Q | 46.2 | K6DGW | 14.8 | MI0WWB | 8.7 | GW0ETF | 2.8 | | |
| K9OZ | 35.3 | PG4I | 14.2 | N1ZX | 7.8 | W9EBE | 2.3 | | |
| AA0YY | 28.7 | N2DA | 13.3 | AJ1DM | 7.7 | AB0WW | 2.0 | | |

**Awards and Medals for 2024**

Gold – 400 QTX QSOs

Silver Medal – 300 QTX QSOs

Bronze – 200 QTX QSOs

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## QTX for March 2024

| Call | QTX | Call | QTX | Call | QTX | Call | QTX | Call | QTX |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WA4IAR | 106 | KCØVKN | 29 | KR2Q | 19 | MIØWWB | 7 | N5LB | 4 |
| F5IYJ | 49 | MØKTZ | 27 | AF4PX | 18 | MØSDB | 7 | W3WHK | 3 |
| WB4IT | 48 | KY4GS | 26 | N2DA | 17 | KG5IEE | 7 | N1ZX | 3 |
| VE3WH | 39 | N7HCN | 25 | PG4I | 14 | MMØUMH | 6 | KG5SSB | 3 |
| ND4K | 38 | MØMZB | 21 | K8UDH | 9 | K6DGW | 6 | VK3QB | 1 |
| K9OZ | 34 | AA0YY | 21 | AJ1DM | 9 | DF7TV | 5 | ABØWW | 1 |

## MQTX for March 2024

| Call | MQTX | Call | MQTX | Call | MQTX | Call | MQTX | Call | MQTX |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| KY4GS | 72 | KR2Q | 22 | PG4I | 13 | AF4PX | 8 | AJ1DM | 2 |
| MØKTZ | 68 | DF7TV | 22 | MMØUMH | 12 | WB4IT | 7 | W3WHK | 1 |
| WA4IAR | 49 | YL3JD | 19 | ND4K | 10 | VK3QB | 7 | N7HCN | 1 |
| VE3WH | 27 | K6DGW | 17 | ABØWW | 10 | KG5SSB | 6 | | |
| AAØYY | 25 | MØMZB | 14 | N1ZX | 9 | K8UDH | 5 | | |
| M0SDB | 23 | KG5IEE | 14 | GW0ETF | 8 | GW0KRL | 4 | | |

## QTX Totals for 2024

| Call | QTX | Call | QTX | Call | QTX | Call | QTX | Call | QTX |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WA4IAR | 290 | F5IYJ | 76 | PG4I | 30 | N9EEE | 11 | WT9Q | 4 |
| WB4IT | 181 | N7HCN | 60 | MIØWWB | 21 | MØSDB | 11 | W3WHK | 4 |
| ND4K | 125 | KB6NU | 56 | AJ1DM | 21 | KG5SSB | 11 | K7VM | 3 |
| VE3WH | 121 | KCØVKN | 52 | MMØUMH | 20 | N1ZX | 10 | G4IVV | 3 |
| K9OZ | 106 | AA0YY | 52 | K6DGW | 18 | N5LB | 9 | YL3JD | 2 |
| KY4GS | 99 | MØMZB | 48 | KG5IEE | 17 | KE4I | 8 | VK3QB | 1 |
| KR2Q | 92 | N2DA | 40 | K8UDH | 13 | DF7TV | 8 | GWØETF | 1 |
| MØKTZ | 83 | AF4PX | 36 | IU3QEZ | 12 | W9EBE | 5 | ABØWW | 1 |

## MQTX Totals for 2024

| Call | MQTX | Call | MQTX | Call | MQTX | Call | MQTX | Call | MQTX |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MØKTZ | 200 | YL3JD | 57 | IU3QEZ | 32 | GWØETF | 15 | JS2AHG | 5 |
| KY4GS | 197 | K6DGW | 53 | AF4PX | 28 | MIØWWB | 10 | G4IVV | 5 |
| WA4IAR | 120 | MØMZB | 51 | N1ZX | 27 | ABØWW | 10 | W9EBE | 4 |
| KR2Q | 93 | DF7TV | 46 | PG4I | 25 | N9EEE | 8 | GWØKRL | 4 |
| AAØYY | 68 | KG5IEE | 41 | MMØUMH | 23 | N7HCN | 7 | AJ1DM | 4 |
| VE3WH | 66 | ND4K | 38 | KG5SSB | 18 | K8UDH | 7 | W3WHK | 3 |
| WB4IT | 63 | MØSDB | 34 | VK3QB | 15 | KE4I | 6 | K7VM | 3 |

# My Story: New Member Introductions

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

**Abet Suhaian, YE4FNN #3510**


After inactive for about 30 years on the air (@QRZ.com), I began to come back for the activities in 2023.

Very astonished and happy to find out, many things had changed and also the mode that I was once always on, CW.

For the mode Digi ( FT8, FT4 ) Satellite, they are new to me and many friends asked me to operate on this new mode. I try to prepare the interface, etc. to suit the operation, as I knew that propagation was not good and this is the best mode to upgrade my DXCC (231 and now 257).

After on this Digi mode, I was still trying to look for CW QSO, but it was very difficult to have one, besides on the contest events.

And then I found out that many radio amateurs did CW QSOs using machine and applications, Fldigi, skimmer etc. I also found, on the happy side, that there is paperless and all logs are using online log, especially LoTW.

These radio amateurs also did not have any operating procedure. some I noted are: never using OP, abbreviation, Q Code, excessive speed, cannot ragchew in CW mode, etc.....

So I noted that, some CW operators are sending and receiving CW code by machine using keyboard, and some A1 operators are sending CW code using keyer and receiving code using their own's ears. As an A1 operator, we have to master operating procedure, abbreviations, Q codes, etc.

So, now make your choice, be CW Operator or be A1 operator!

**Paul Hamilton, KE7UAE #3515**

My radio adventure started as an RF test engineer for McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis , MO.  I looked after radio test benches for all the aircraft radios .

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I earned Technician, General and Extra licenses during an RF design class at Portland State University under my first Elmer, Rick Campbell KK7B. He did not administer the tests, only motivated me. I was privileged to also be Elmered by Wes Hayward, W7ZOI.

My RF journey has included testing for Motorola, cell phone manufacturers and signal integrity on computer motherboards for Intel.

Now I am retired and can focus on ham radio, my XYL, physical fitness and the grandkids. Here is the prettiest young CW operator of my acquaintance, her name is Lily and she is my granddaughter, learning her paddle skills. My shirt was a coincidence, but I greatly admire what Maxwell, Faraday, Ampere and Gauss did to bring us into the radio age.

I am so delighted to be invited to join CWops and thankful for all my Elmers , fellow students at CWA and LICW, and my sponsors in CWops membership.

**M. Kim Bottles, K7IM #3516**

First ham license was my Novice call in mid-1964: WN6LNT.

I was active on CW for the Novice year, but when I first took the general class exam at the FCC Office in downtown Los Angeles I easily passed the CW portion, but failed the theory portion. Then my Novice license expired. I studied up and returned to successfully pass the general exam a year or so later and became WB6ZGL.

When my younger brother Scott (N6SB) passed the Extra exam, that forced my hand, so I studied the theory carefully (my code speed was already good at 20+ wpm) and passed the Extra exam in the mid 1970's. I then became N6UT which I picked to be a good CW call. (My pal Pete Hoover W6ZH (SK) often called me "nutty" because of that call.)

When we moved to the Pacific Northwest in 1977 I saw that K7IM had never been issued, so I grabbed it. (Kim is my given middle name which I have always used, I have never used Michael my legal first name.)

CW has always been my favorite mode. Years ago I sat down and figured out how to write down

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each letter as efficiently as possible (for example I do "e" as a backwards three in one stroke) I print my CW copy as I have never used cursive.

I am dyslectic so I never even attempted to learned to copy in my head so I was limited to 20-23 wpm putting all copy down on paper. I enjoyed listening in on the bands and "reading the mail" in CW. I listened far more than I actually sent.

Then with the encouragement of some of my local ham pals I took the CWA Advanced class last month and with an excellent instructor Hanz YL3JD I managed to increase my code speed to the point where I was making progress on head copy and I easily passed the final assessment test.

I hope to increase my speed with more practice. I am doing words now at 28-30 wpm with reasonable success thanks to Kurt's Morse Code Ninja which has been my go-to website for practice.

Other than ham radio I raced bicycles, sailboats and rally cars for years. I am a retired CPA who bought a commercial construction company with a partner in the early 1990s from which I retired in 2014.

My wife is KB7KHP, one of our sons is K7DKB and his wife (our daughter in law) is KF7ZVQ.

**Bengt Frykler, SM6OEF #3519**

Bengt Frykler, but on the radio I call myself Ben for simplicity. My regular callsign is SM6OEF, but I also have a test callsign which is SC6O. I was born in 1951, and am married and we have 4 children and now 7 grandchildren. I worked as a police officer for about 40 years before I retired 9 years ago.

My interest in radio began in my early teens with CB radio, but I only became a radio amateur in 1983.

I got into CW early and have only a few SSB QSOs in my log book.

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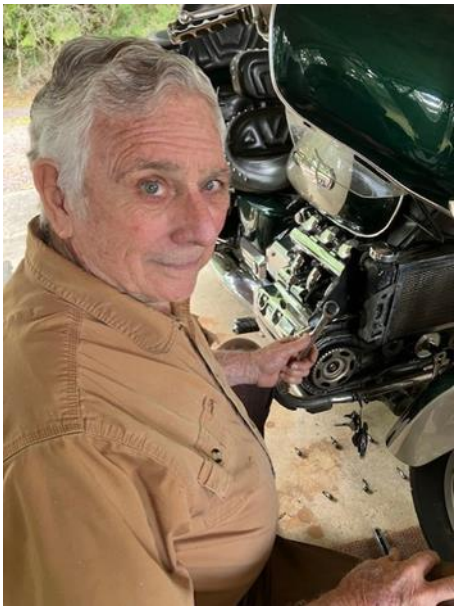
I have been chairman of the local radio club SK6EI for many years.

I have always used simple equipment, 100 watt rigs and wire antennas, but a few years ago I acquired an 8 meter mast with rotatable dipoles for the 15, 17 and 20 meter bands. My current equipment is FTdx3000, TS590S and FT891.

In recent years the interest in contests has increased and I try to run most of the short tests that are available every week, but also the occasional 24 hour test and of course SAC and CQWW.

In addition to this, I also run portable in Flora Fauna.

**Tom Gause, W4YGT #3517.**



I am very pleased to be invited into the CWops organization. It was a long, uphill struggle to gain enough CW competency to qualify. All of my advisors were helpful. From Bill Etter, Basic, to Joe Spencer, Advanced Class. Many thanks to all of them.

In the 1960s I worked with Douglas Aircraft on the DC-10 as a mechanical engineer living in LA. When my father died, the company was able to transfer me back to Florida with a position on the Saturn 5, Apollo program. I participated in several launches including the moon landings. It was a great experience for a young engineer to be working inside the rocket (prior to launch).

At the end of the Apollo Program, Pratt and Whitney offered a job in Jupiter, FL designing elements of aircraft turbine engines. I decided to pause the engineering career when the Government contract ended. Then various pursuits led to investments in real estate, mortgages, and equities.

Now, at 80 years of age, I have time for ham radio, rebuilding and riding old motorcycles, growing pine trees, and planning for the next twenty years. My wife of 55 years is my constant guide. She is the enabler!

**Manuel Velez, WP4TZ #3512**

I'm a 43 years old photographer born and raised in Puerto Rico. In love with surfing, cycling and rock climbing.

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I got interested in ham in the 90s but I never went through with it. What got me interested again was when I came across SOTA, I thought it would be a great way to do something I already loved and revive a lost interest. In the Summer of 2022 I got my Technician license and Extra by November. I've activated most of the tallest summits in Puerto Rico and I also love travelling and activating summits anywhere I go.

Around February 2023 I started getting into CW and have not stopped since. Little did I know how deep into it I would get. Never would I think about learning CW and now it is my main mode of operating. I did my first CW contest this year and I've been trying to be as active as possible on CWT. I'm active every week on POTA and at least once a month I try to do SOTA. I have a YouTube channel (elradiohead) where I post some of my CW activities. I'm practicing every day to improve my conversational CW skills.

I feel honored to be a part of this club and look forward to contribute any way I can.

**Jeff Weiss, K4EVT #**

I am privileged to now be a member of CWops!

I was nominated by my deeply knowledgeable Advanced instructor, Joe KK5NA, and I then received additional sponsorship from Marv W5DT, Jim WØUO, and Howard W1HRB.

CW has been a defining part of amateur radio for me: I was required to learn a blistering 5 wpm in 1974 when I was licensed as WN9NGD. I upgraded to WB9NGD and 13 wpm, clearly blowing past all the Caution and Speed Limit road signs.

My first radio was a loaned Heathkit DX-20 with several crystals and a nasty RF bite when I keyed it.

My extended Milwaukee-area ham radio group and high school radio club was the Glen Gates Gang: it was named for the physics teacher who mentored us and allowed us to talk dorky and work 40, unmonitored in the small clubroom next to his classroom.

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My efforts to extend ham radio in my high school club were boundless. One weekend I stole my mother's broom, decapitated it, and created a short loaded vertical with a pie tin capacity hat.

I was not allowed on the school bus with that contraption and had to modify my plans. Hopping on my father's bicycle, I took off for school, racing down misty, rain soaked streets and intersections to Nicolet HS. Unsurprisingly, I never made it to school that morning and instead woke up eight hours later in a hospital room. The antenna was destroyed, the bike frame was bent, and my head had stitches.

Two lessons learned: ham radio is exciting, and years later my children always wore helmets while bike riding!

I eventually left Milwaukee and, after completing a degree at UW-Madison, I took a job as a semiconductor research technician at Sperry in Minnesota. My call changed to NØIRR. Years later I moved with my growing family back to Madison, and my call changed again to K9UTC.

My wife insisted that we move from Wisconsin after my kids were through with high school. She had spent thirty years in Florida and thoroughly hated ice and snow. It took me a few years to find a professional opportunity in a place where the pieces lined up. Our move to Charlotte and search for a home allowed me to find a place with no HOA, trees, and a shack in which I can truly enjoy ham radio and CW with few compromises for the first time in many years.

I had not spent much time on CW over the years, but it had always held a mystique and magnetism for me. Maybe it was the early time I had spent on NTS 80m scribbling down Radiograms with a pencil with strong, friendly support from an Elmer and other hams in the tightly-knit CW operator cadre.

Today, I am nearly 100% CW since starting the CWA courses, and I do some ragchew, POTA, DX, and an occasional CWT.

My TS-890 is a great instrument for CW, and I'll take its older sibling, a TS-850, to Field Day this year.

Last year I took CWA Intermediate with Buzz AC6AC, Marv W5DT, and Heather AH7RF. This past Winter I took Advanced with Joe KK5NA. The wonderful guidance, support, and training I have received have given me a deeper connection and enjoyment of CW and the people who practice it. Onwards on this CW journey. Thank you!

(Ed: The following is a reprint to correct omissions and errors)

**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,

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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.

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.

**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

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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.

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.

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.

*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. 

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